



Active
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Your Ref: 137226/FO/2023
Our Ref: ATE/24/00630/FULL
Date: 19 June 2024

Active Travel England Planning Response Detailed Response to an Application for Planning Permission

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

To: Manchester City Council

Application Ref: 137226/FO/2023

Site Address: Part Of Plot C And Plot E, Plot D Great Jackson Street,
Manchester, M15 4NP

Description of developments: Full planning permission for the demolition of existing structures and the phased construction of four residential buildings (two at 47 storeys and two at 51 storeys) to provide 1,746 homes (Use Class C3), flexible commercial, leisure, food and drink uses (all Use Class E) and / or drinking establishment (Sui Generis), basement car parking, cycle parking, landscaping and public realm, servicing and access arrangements, highways alterations and associated works.

Full planning permission for the demolition of existing structures and the erection of one residential building to a height of 71 storeys comprising 642 homes (Use Class C3) with food and drink uses (Use Class E) and / or drinking establishment (Sui Generis); and one office building (Use Class E); with basement car parking, cycle parking, landscaping and public realm, servicing and access arrangements, highways alterations and associated works.

Notice is hereby given that Active Travel England's formal recommendation is as follows:

- a. **No Objection:** ~~ATE has undertaken a detailed assessment of this application and is content with the submission.~~
- b. **Conditional approval:** ~~ATE recommends approval of the application, subject to the agreement and implementation of planning conditions and/or obligations as set out in this response.~~
- c. **Deferral:** ATE is not currently in a position to support this application and requests further assessment, evidence, revisions and/or dialogue as set out in this response.

- d. **Refusal:** ~~ATE recommends that the application be refused for the reasons set out in this response.~~

1.0 Background

Active Travel England (ATE) welcomes the opportunity to comment on two full planning applications; one for the demolition of existing structures and the phased construction of four residential buildings to provide 1,746 homes), flexible commercial, leisure, food and drink uses, basement car parking, cycle parking, landscaping and public realm and one on the adjacent site for full planning for one residential building to a height of 71 storeys comprising 642 homes with food and drink uses and one office building ; with basement car parking, cycle parking, landscaping and public realm.

ATE has not previously commented on these applications.

2.0 Summary

The proposed locations of each site in terms of proximity to local transport and amenities is generally supported. However, and following a review of the application, several issues have been identified that require further consideration and enhancements. It is considered these are necessary in order to adhere to current national policy to make walking, wheeling and cycling the first natural choice for local journeys, taking into account the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, together with the attractiveness of the routes connecting the wider area.

The submitted plans and access arrangements have been considered, together with the quality of the walking, wheeling and cycling network between the site and the surrounding area alongside national policy and guidance. In particular, ATE does not consider that the proposals in their current form comply with paragraph 116 of the NPPF, in that they do not consistently give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements in neighbouring areas, nor does the neighbouring area minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

3.0 Comments

Offsite infrastructure

According to the Transport Note provided by the applicant in response to comments provided by MCC Planning, *the proposed development has been designed with walking and cycling at the centre of the movement hierarchy, and is proposing significant infrastructure upgrades. This would ensure an accessible and safe physical environment for pedestrian and cyclists to promote active travel for commuting and leisure. Details are provided within the TA and associated plans/drawings, but includes a new signalised Toucan crossing on Melbourne Street connecting the footway/cycleway provision within the Site to the footway/cycleway proposed as part of CSP2 and the existing bridge over the Mancunian Way. This core route for active travel will be complemented by a shared space for pedestrians and cyclists along the southern side of Melbourne Street. An additional three pedestrian crossings will be provided across Great Jackson Street, including a signalised crossing in the vicinity of the stairs providing access to the bridge over the Mancunian Way.*

While the above commitment to walking and cycling is mentioned, it is essential that this is reinforced by ensuring that the surrounding infrastructure is appropriate. ATE notes that 3.4.8 of the TA describes shared cycle and pedestrian footways. These are only considered appropriate by LTN1/20 in a very limited set of circumstances. While the applicant refers to a '3m requirement for shared cycle and

pedestrian footways where cycle flows are below 300 per hour)', it does not justify why a shared path is considered appropriate in this location. ATE would highlight that the requirements of LTN 1/20 have been somewhat misinterpreted here and the applicant may therefore wish to clarify its position in light of this. LTN 1/20 paragraph 6.5.6 states that shared use may be appropriate in some situations and goes on to set out the situations eg places where there are few pedestrians, at and around junctions where cyclists will be moving at a slow speed. Table 6-3 sets out recommended widths for cycle flows of up to 300 but this table is only appropriate to apply for situations previously described at 6.5.6. The applicant should therefore provide justification where shared use paths are provided as to how they meet the requirements set out in this section of LTN 1/20.

The applicant's Transport Note also acknowledges that at the Great Jackson Street/Chester Road priority junction, *it is noted there have been three collisions in the study period which involved cyclists. It appears that these collisions occurred as cyclists were travelling on the two-way segregated cycle lane which is situated on the southern side of Chester Road (westbound lane) – see Figure 1 below: Figure 1 – Great Jackson Street/Chester Road Priority Junction This cycle lane was previously implemented as part of the wider cycle improvements in Manchester. It is noted at this location that the give-way line is set back before the segregated cycle lane and drivers are expected to wait and assess if any cyclists are passing the junction, before turning left on Chester Road. From both a desktop and site review, improved signage and/or refreshed lining/surfacing could improve the environment in this location for cyclists and vehicles. It is recommended that this junction is included within the scope of the Road Safety Audit in due course.* ATE requires clarification as to whether the applicant intends to include improved signage and refreshed surface treatment as part of its offsite contributions?

It is understood that a new signalised pedestrian crossing will be provided across Great Jackson Street, providing a link between the bridge and Manchester City Centre. *The existing ramped access will also benefit from a signalised Toucan crossing, linking the existing bridge with Chester Road and Deansgate via the proposed cycle lane across Great Jackson Street Phase 2 (CSP2). An uncontrolled crossing will also be provided across the service road to the rear of Plot D for pedestrians.* ATE also understands that Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) has recommended a review of the Traffic Regulation Orders in the vicinity of the development is undertaken, with a view to introducing additional parking restrictions as appropriate, as well as ensuring adequate parking restrictions remain in place, and are refreshed accordingly. *This will help to discourage pavement parking associated with the development and therefore assist in improving the quality of the surrounding public realm.* ATE would fully support this in light of ensuring footways are fully accessible particularly to those using wheelchairs or pushchairs/buggies.

ATE is also in agreement with other consultee comments that state that while the walking and cycling provision at the site appears of an acceptable standard, *the connections from the site to the City Centre fall below an acceptable standard. For example, with reference to the crossing of the Deansgate spur off Deansgate or Great Jackson Street, Deansgate doesn't provide any walking or cycling provision and the crossing of City Road North at the junction with Albion Street doesn't provide any improvements to make it safer and easier to cross the side roads. Additionally, providing a quality cycle lane along Deansgate and along Medlock Street would give appreciable benefits to cyclists to and from the proposed development.* ATE notes the applicants' response to this, however would agree with the view that the current infrastructure does not lend itself to being described as highly accessible, notwithstanding the relatively short distances involved. Given that these developments will yield over 5000 residents, it is considered that there are further opportunities to improve existing infrastructure as set out above in order to ensure that active travel is the most attractive option for them.

Cycle parking

The applicant states that *100% cycle parking will be provided for all residents, encouraging and promoting cycling as a realistic cycle choice for commuting/leisure trips.* It is not clear exactly what 100% cycle parking entails but assuming it means there will be one space per bedroom (thus ensuring 100% of residents have access to a secure, covered cycle parking space) this aspect is very much welcomed.

Travel plan

ATE notes the changes made to the travel plan by the applicant following consultee comments. Regarding the duration of the Travel Plan, ATE would request that it is in place for five years post development at full occupation. It is expected that the final document will take into account national targets to ensure that 50% of all short trips are walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030 and that the proposed uplift targets will be reviewed accordingly.

4.0 Next Steps

In the event that these proposals progress towards a determination, the dialogue between the LPA and the applicant must be continued in order to define the extent of physical and financial contributions towards off-site infrastructure to support this development (taking account of any local highway / connectivity proposals being promoted by the highway authority) with a view to agreeing a specific package of measures that are supported by appropriately detailed drawings. Before it is able to recommend approval of this application, ATE considers issues of particular importance to be:

- Ensuring that surrounding infrastructure is sufficiently safe and attractive in order to enable future residents to make the choice to use active travel modes. This is considered particularly important in light of the significant numbers of future residents this development will yield (over 5000).

ATE considers that the above will be essential in order to meet the pledges made by the applicant to deliver a sustainable development for all members of the community through ensuring that future residents and visitors to this development benefit from sufficiently safe and convenient linkages to surrounding amenities by walking, wheeling and cycling as an integral part of the wider network.

It is expected that a final travel plan will be required by way of a condition should these applications be approved. As set out above, the travel plan must be sufficiently ambitious in terms of its active travel targets for residents, and these targets must be agreed prior to the determination of this application with due regard had to the opportunities provided by off-site improvements. The travel plan must include measures to be introduced and actions taken to promote the travel plan and a summary of the modal split of residents from the monitoring surveys. The progress of the travel plan in achieving targets and identifying any amendments must be agreed in writing by the LPA in the event that targets are not achieved with a plan for future actions to be implemented. ATE would suggest that, prior to the commencement of the development, the developer should submit a performance bond to the LPA to secure an amount considered sufficient.

These recommendations should be provided to the LPA case officer and forwarded to the agent and applicant. ATE would be content to review further submitted information to help address the above identified deficits with a view to providing a further response and recommended wording for planning conditions and obligations.