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Your Ref: 23/01493/REM  
Our Ref: ATE/23/00153/RM  
Date: 20 June 2024

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

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

To: Cherwell District Council

**Application Ref:** 23/01493/REM

**Site Address:** PROPOSED HIMLEY VILLAGE NORTH WEST BICESTER,  
MIDDLETON STONEY ROAD, BICESTER, OX26 1RT

**Description of development:** Reserved Matters Application including access, layout, landscaping and scale pursuant to outline planning permission 14/02121/OUT for internal primary and secondary streets along with the partial discharge of conditions 12 (Building for Life 12), 16 (means of vehicular access), 17 (means of pedestrian/cycle links) and 19 (detailed surface water drainage scheme) for Phase 1B

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) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the reserved matters consultation regarding access, layout, landscaping, and scale for the internal primary and secondary streets of Phase 1B, pursuant to outline planning permission 14/02121/OUT for the proposed Himley Village, northwest Bicester.

ATE previously submitted a response to the initial consultation on 11 July 2023, focusing on:

1. Walking and cycling infrastructure along B4030 Middleton Stoney Road
2. Site access arrangements
3. The bus stop on B4030 Middleton Stoney Road

A subsequent response was issued on 18 April 2024, which included consideration of the internal site layout in addition to the points above.

## 2.0 Summary

ATE reviewed a series of updated plans and a cover letter detailing changes made following discussions with Cherwell District Council and Officers at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Highways Department. Initially, no direct response to ATE's comments was identified.

The applicant has now provided a direct response to ATE's comments in the "Cover Letter (amended) addressing comments from BBUG and ATE, 31 May 2024." This letter outlines changes made to the submission documents following ATE's feedback and provides justifications for the proposed approach where suggestions have not been implemented. Overall, it is felt a number of improvements have been made since the original review and reasonable justification has been put forward where suggestions have not been fully implemented. ATE is therefore issuing a Conditional Approval response, with further context provided below.

## 3.0 Areas of Concern

### **Walking and Cycling Infrastructure along B4030 Middleton Stoney Road - Accepted**

ATE recommended a segregated walking and cycling route along B4030 Middleton Stoney Road to enhance legibility, safety, and attractiveness for walkers and cyclists, in line with Figure 4.1 of LTN 1/20. While shared-use facilities were maintained, the following improvements were implemented:

- A 'lazy S' bend ensures a smooth transition between the on-site 4-m-wide footway/cycleway and the off-site 3-m-wide footway/cycleway.
- A continuous footway/cycleway is provided at the Secondary Street entrance from B4030 Middleton Stoney Road, requiring vehicles to give way.

These improvements were welcomed, with additional requests:

- Apply the same priority arrangement at the Primary Spine Road access as at the Secondary Street access.

- Include a buffer between the shared-use path and B4030 Middleton Stoney Road east of the 'lazy S'.

The applicant responded with:

- A cycle priority crossing has been added across the Primary Access Road, consistent with the Secondary Access Road crossing.

ATE welcomes this amendment.

- Regarding the buffer, the applicant cites land ownership constraints.

Whilst this is disappointing, it is noted that the agreed speed limit reduction from 40 mph to 30 mph along this section of B4030 Middleton Stoney Road will lessen the need for a buffer, and the position is accepted.

### **Site Access – Accepted**

The introduction of a priority crossing addresses previous comments.

### **B4030 Middleton Stoney Road Bus Stop - Accepted**

Concerns were raised about the proposed uncontrolled crossing towards the bus stop on the southern side of B4030 Middleton Stoney Road. A signalised crossing was recommended due to the nature of the road and expected increased movements.

The applicant referenced the speed reduction from 40 mph to 30 mph and Table 10-2: Crossing design suitability of LTN 1/20. The speed reduction reduces the need for a signalised crossing, and the position is accepted. Additionally, this facility does not connect to wider pedestrian or cycle networks.

### **Internal Street Layout – Accepted Subject to Condition**

#### **Primary Spine Road**

ATE welcomed segregated walking and cycling infrastructure on both sides of the Primary Spine Road and requested treatment at side roads.

The applicant updated the cycle crossing arrangements to prioritise cyclists across onsite roads. Crossings adjacent to main spine roads feature a 5-m setback, lining/signage (to be shown at detailed design stage), tactile indicators for pedestrians, and raised tables/ramps, following LTN 1/20, Figure 10.13 principles. These amendments are welcomed and accepted.

#### **Spine Road East-West**

##### **Bi-directional Cycle Track:**

ATE recommended a consistent and coherent approach by providing a 3-m (two-way) cycleway on either side of the highway, consistent with the Primary Spine Road (LTN 1/20, 1.5 Core design principles).

The applicant clarified that the S106 agreement specifies a footway/cycleway (no less than 3 m) on one side and a footway (no less than 2 meters) on the other. ATE accepts this clarification and the approach is accepted.

## Improving Links Between Cycle Tracks:

ATE suggested creating a logical link between the two roads at the junction. The applicant updated the design to show additional details and smoother alignments between routes, with finer details to be reviewed during the Section 38 Technical Approval process. The updated design is accepted.

## Treatment at Side Roads:

The applicant confirmed that the updated designs include several raised tables/ramps along the East-West carriageway, a welcomed design intervention. This position is now accepted.

## 4.0 Recommended Planning Conditions and Obligations / Reasons for Refusal

Condition: Infrastructure

**Condition:** No development shall commence until general arrangement plan(s) to a scale of 1:200 showing details of the walking / cycling infrastructure including works to the adopted highway have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall be submitted in accordance with guidance contained in LTN 1/20 on Cycle Infrastructure Design and Manual for Streets 3 and where applicable indicate proposals for:

- Existing levels of the finished highway tying into building threshold levels
- Alterations to waiting restrictions or other Traffic Regulation Orders to enable the works
- Signing, street furniture, street trees and pits
- Structures on or adjacent to the highway
- Extent of any stopping up, diversion or dedication of new highway (including all public rights of way shown on the definitive map and statement)

The development or any phase of the development, whichever is the sooner, shall not be occupied until the walking and cycling infrastructure for the development or phase of development has been constructed and completed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To comply the guidance in LTN 1/20 on Cycle Infrastructure Design and in Manual for Streets 3.

## **5.0 Next Steps**

ATE requests that these recommendations be provided to the LPA case officer and forwarded to the agent and applicant. ATE is willing to review further submitted information to address the identified deficiencies, with a view to providing a further response and recommending wording for planning conditions and obligations.