



Active
Travel
England

Active Travel England
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Your Ref: 24/02889/FP
Our Ref: ATE/25/00059/FULL
Date: 27 June 2025

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

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

To: North Hertfordshire District Council

Application Ref: 24/02889/FP

Site Address: LAND AT ROUNDWOOD NES 3, CHURCH LANE, GRAVELEY, SG1 6HA

Description of development: Residential development of 281 dwellings and associated roads, parking, realignment of Back Lane, drainage, landscaping, open space, servicing facilities 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

ATE understands that the application has since been amended, with revised plans and documents submitted.

ATE has also received the document titled '*Applicant's Response to Active Travel Comments – 07.04.25*', which directly addresses previously raised comments. ATE thanks the applicant for taking the time to prepare this response.

ATE has now undertaken a review of the revised proposals and is submitting a **Conditional Approval** response, with further context provided below for each of the previously identified areas of concern.

2.0 Areas of Concern

Connections to the Public Right of Way (PRoW North)

ATE previously noted that the initial submission included three connections to the PRoW to the north; however, the revised proposals include only two. The applicant has confirmed that the third connection has been removed due to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)/ecological impacts associated with the removal of trees and hedgerows. While this is disappointing, ATE acknowledges the need to balance competing priorities and notes the presence of the remaining two connections, which provide access. This matter is therefore accepted.

Active Travel Route – Combined Cycling and Walking Route (Shared Footway/Street Surface)

ATE previously noted that the shared-use route through the site should consistently maintain a 3.0m width, in accordance with LTN 1/20, and sought justification for any pinch points.

The applicant has confirmed that the shared route tapers to 2.0m at one location due to extensive existing vegetation along the southern boundary. A raised timber platform is proposed to allow crossing over the existing ditch. The narrowing has been proposed to minimise the impact on Root Protection Areas.

ATE accepts the justification provided and recognises that a continuous route with pinch points is preferable to the absence of a route. This matter is therefore accepted.

Active Travel Route – Leisure Route (Including Equestrian Access on Back Lane)

ATE suggested that this route could be widened to 3.0m to better accommodate a broader range of users. The applicant has confirmed that a 2.0m width was agreed with the Council's Highways Officer during the pre-application process and was considered appropriate to support a leisure route as part of a wider hierarchy of active travel provision across the development.

It remains unclear whether the applicant has fully considered the needs of existing users of Back Lane, including leisure and commuting cyclists. Given its quiet character and proximity to an urban area, it is likely to be well-used for such purposes. Ideally, this route would be widened to 3.0m (or more) to ensure uninterrupted cycle movement. However, alternative

routes are available through the site to accommodate a range of users, although these will now interact with residential dwellings.

On balance, ATE accepts that connectivity will still be provided across the development, but to a lesser standard. While a 3.0m width would have been preferable, with appropriate management plans in place to prevent overgrown vegetation which may reduce usable width, and alternative routes, this matter accepted.

Cycle Parking

ATE sought clarity on the type of cycle parking proposed for apartment buildings. The applicant has confirmed that cycle storage will be provided in the form of Sheffield stands, as illustrated on drawing DES-716-265-0 (Bins and Cycle Storage Plans and Elevations) within the house type drawing pack.

ATE also recommended that cycle storage should accommodate a variety of non-standard cycle types. The applicant has confirmed that this provision will be subject to further technical drawings.

These matters are accepted, and a planning condition has been suggested should the Local Planning Authority be minded to approve the proposals.

Finally, ATE sought clarification on the type of cycle parking proposed for the dwellings. The applicant has indicated that this is shown on drawing DES-716-110 (Parking Location Plan). These secure cycle storage sheds will be appropriately sized to accommodate two bicycles. This matter is accepted.

3.0 Recommended Planning Conditions and Obligations / Reasons for Refusal

Condition:	Cycle parking plan	Condition: No development shall commence until details of the cycle parking in accordance with DES-716-265-0 (Bins and Cycle Storage Plans and Elevations) and DES-716-110 Parking Location Plan have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The cycle parking provision shown on shall accord with the guidance in LTN 1/20 on Cycle Infrastructure Design as a minimum unless local cycle parking standards are greater. The development or any phase of the development, whichever is the sooner, shall not be occupied until the cycle parking has been constructed and completed in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be kept free of obstruction and permanently available for the parking of cycles only.
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Reason: To comply with the guidance in LTN 1/20 on Cycle Infrastructure Design as a minimum

4.0 Next Steps

ATE requests that the local planning authority shares this correspondence with the applicant and their agents. ATE would be content to review further submitted information to help address the above identified deficiencies with a view to providing a further response and recommended conditions, subject to receiving this information.