



Active
Travel
England

Active Travel England
West Offices
Station Rise
York
YO1 6GA
Tel: 0300 330 3000

Your Ref: DC/25/1312
Our Ref: ATE/25/01321/OUT
Date: 23 October 2025

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

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

To: Horsham District Council

Application Ref: DC/25/1312

Site Address: Land West of Ifield, Charlwood Road, Ifield, West Sussex

Description of development: Hybrid planning application (part outline and part full planning application) for a phased, mixed use development comprising: A full element covering enabling infrastructure including the Crawley Western Multi-Modal Corridor (Phase 1, including access from Charlwood Road and crossing points) and access infrastructure to enable servicing and delivery of secondary school site and future development, including access to Rusper Road, supported by associated infrastructure, utilities and works, alongside: An outline element (with all matters reserved) including up to 3,000 residential homes (Class C2 and C3), commercial, business and service (Class E), general industrial (Class B2), storage or distribution (Class B8), hotel (Class C1), community and education facilities (Use Classes F1 and F2), gypsy and traveller pitches (sui generis), public open space with sports pitches, recreation, play and ancillary facilities, landscaping, water abstraction boreholes and associated infrastructure, utilities and works, including pedestrian and cycle routes and enabling demolition. This hybrid planning application is for a phased development intended to be capable of coming forward in distinct and separable phases and/or plots in a severable way.

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

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.

Assessment

Thank you for consulting Active Travel England (ATE) on the above planning application.

Overall, ATE recognises that the proposed development demonstrates a clear commitment to promoting active travel, through the provision of high-quality footways and cycleways, and a broad range of on-site facilities including new schools. While opportunities for improvement remain, ATE is supportive in principle of the development, given its intent to enable and encourage walking, wheeling and cycling journeys.

In addition to reviewing the submitted plans and reports, ATE has engaged with the local highway authority (WSCC) and subsequently reviewed its formal response. The WSCC comments identify several areas where further information is required, including, but not limited to: the continuity of active travel routes beyond the site boundaries; the funding and/or delivery of off-site improvements; the limitations of the Umbrella Travel Plan; and inconsistencies within the Design Code and detailed plans.

Given the breadth of WSCC's comments, ATE will not repeat these points here in order to support the applicant team in addressing each matter directly. However, ATE endorses the need for additional information and will review these details upon submission.

Notwithstanding the above, the following comments are provided to supplement WSCC's response and highlight further opportunities to enhance the overall design approach and active travel provision of the development.

1. The general arrangement plans for Phase 1A and 1B highway infrastructure show a mix of segregated foot and cycleways (with widths of 2-2.5m/3m and 2.6-4m respectively) and shared use routes for both pedestrians and cyclists.

2. ATE strongly supports the provision of separate facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. However, it is recommended that, where practicable, a circa 500mm separation strip be provided between footways and cycleways to improve comfort for both user groups. Where this is not feasible due to land constraints, the proposed 2m/3m facilities should remain as shown. Nonetheless, there is merit in reducing the overall width of wider route sections to incorporate a landscaping strip between the footway and cycleway.

3. Shared use provision is proposed in areas around crossings and where there are width constraints (e.g. adjacent to bus shelters). These instances are acceptable. However, ATE notes that a 6m-wide shared use route is proposed alongside part of the CWMMC, and 4m-4.5m shared use sections are also proposed to link with residential areas (see Phase 1B Highway General Arrangement Sheets 2 and 3). It is recommended that shared use routes within the development are limited to locations where they are strictly necessary, to maximise pedestrian comfort and ensure clear legibility between off-road cycleways and on-road provision.

4. ATE also notes the inclusion of "Cyclist Dismount" signs on several General Arrangement plans. The need for such signage should be reviewed, as this will interrupt journey continuity and disadvantage cyclists who are unable to dismount, including those using recumbent cycles. Where shared use areas are designed with adequate space for both pedestrians and cyclists, particularly around crossings, ATE recommends removal of these signs in favour of clear design cues indicating shared use.

5. With specific reference to Phase 1B Highway General Arrangement Sheet 1 of 7:

- The controlled crossing of the CWMMC should accommodate cyclists in a single phase, as illustrated in Figure 10.9 of LTN 1/20.
- While noting WSCC's comments in paragraph 136 of its response regarding the need to reduce kerb radii at certain side roads within Phase 1A, similar consideration should be given to the crossings shown on the referenced Phase 1B drawing.

6. While ATE does not normally promote shared use routes in line with LTN 1/20 guidance, given the presence of a shared use facility on the northern side of Ifield Avenue towards Crawley, ATE agrees with WSCC's assessment in paragraph 13 of its response

that there is merit to extending this to the CWMMC junction to provide a more complete arrangement. However, some design refinement of the new junction is required to ensure cyclists can safely transition on to and off the carriageway from other adjoining roads.

7. Given the above, ATE considers there to be clear value in collaborative discussion of the key transport-related issues identified by statutory consultees, alongside any other matters raised by local residents and stakeholders, prior to the submission of an amended suite of plans and updated reports. As such, ATE would welcome further dialogue with the applicant team, WSCC and other relevant parties in the coming weeks where this can be accommodated.