



## WelHatCycling response to Campus East Welwyn Garden City planning permission reference 6/2022/2801/MAJ

WelHatCycling have been representing local utility cyclists in Welwyn Hatfield since 2008. Our focus is on people who use bikes of all types day to day to commute to work or school or ride to the shops. WelHatCycling takes no view on the merits of housing developments but concerns itself with ensuring that should a development take place, the provision for cycling and walking is sufficient to be a success and joins up with existing routes to ensure it will be well used.

We believe any housing or retail or employment development in Welwyn Hatfield should include cycling provision, lest the development simply add hundreds of extra cars to local roads leading to increased congestion, pollution and risk of accidents. We agree with the UK Government Guidelines for new housing schemes in LTN 1/20 *Cycle Infrastructure Design*, that such cycle routes should be planned to form a network of useful routes to incentivise cycling as soon as properties are first occupied.

### **Campus East – objection**

We object to this planning application as it does not conform to the UK Government LTN 1/20 standards by failing to provide effective connectivity for people on cycles to the centre of Welwyn Garden City, to Campus West, to local secondary schools or to the wider cycle network south to Hatfield. If additional cycle routes are provided as part of the development, then our objection will be withdrawn.

The Transport Assessment for the Campus East development of 313 flats makes no mention of LTN 1/20 which was published in June 2020. As a consequence, the plan for the cycle route across the development, shown in Cycle Strategy plan 8375/P121.2, fails to meet the requirements of LTN 1/20 section 14.3.7:

“... large new residential developments should offer external links to adjacent employment, education, administrative, transport interchange and retail destinations. “

In the case of Campus East there are two obvious cycle routes which the plans fail to provide:

- A direct safe cycle route from the development to Bridge Road where there is a brand new cycle path due to open in January 2023 and via that route to the town centre shops, rail and bus stations. This is a distance of just 0.1 mile. Instead, the developers propose people on cycles should head north out of the site via Gresley Close, Mundells and Bessemer Road to WGC, a distance of 2.1 miles.
- An of-road cycle route via Oaklands College to Campus West (library, cinema, roller skating) and then the Ayot Greenway, part of National Cycle Route 12. This is a distance of 0.3 miles. Instead the Transport Assessment simply assumes local roads are safe. The Campus is an



unsafe road for a child to cycle and is an extremely challenging road to cycle for an adult, due to high speeds and the need to cross merging and diverging traffic lanes.

If both the above routes were created, residents in the new properties would have direct access to the facilities listed above by cycle. Children living in the new flats would be able to use the cycle path via Bridge Road and Broadwater Road to access Stanborough High School, the closest secondary school to the development. In addition, the network effect of the two routes would enable residents of north Welwyn Garden City to access the town centre and station via a safe cycle route, reducing pressure on The Campus from traffic from this part of the town.

These routes around The Campus score as one of the top 20 cycling schemes to be implemented the Welwyn Hatfield *Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan* published in May 2022. It would therefore seem appropriate for the developers make a substantial Section 106 payment to fund the missing cycle routes.

LTN 1/20 14.3.12 states failure to provide these links means planning permission should be refused:

“14.3.12 Cycling facilities should be regarded as an essential component of the site access and any off-site highway improvements that may be necessary. **Developments that do not adequately make provision for cycling in their transport proposals should not be approved.** This may include some off-site improvements along existing highways that serve the development.

## Proposed new cycle routes

WelHatCycling will withdraw its objection if the following two routes are agreed to be provided and will be open to residents before the first flat is occupied:

- 1) **A 0.1 mile off road cycle path from the south-west corner of the site on College Way to the new cycle path on Bridge Road.**
  - A footpath exists to the west side of Waitrose or use the wide footway to the west of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council’s offices.
  - The existing traffic light controlled crossing of Bridge Road could be upgraded to a Toucan (pedestrian and cycle crossing) to enable a safe crossing to the new cycle path.
- 2) **A 0.3 mile off road cycle path from the south-west corner of the site on College Way via Oaklands College to Campus West and the Ayot Greenway.**
  - There is ample space along the footway around the edge of The Campus for this.
  - A safe signalised crossing of Digswell Road or a route under the White Bridge will be needed given the high traffic flows at this crossing.

Should the developers wish to contact WelHatCycling to discuss our objection and how it might be withdrawn, we would be very happy to discuss the issues with them. We can do so via Teams or Zoom or onsite.



Chair – WelHatCycling

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**WelHatCycling.org.uk**

**People riding bikes in Welwyn Hatfield**