

Luton Local Access Forum (LLAF) letter of advice re. 24/01415/AMEND - The Stage NMA Planning Changes

Date: 27 January 2025

Signatories: LLAF:

Mamnun Khan (Chair), John Mardle (Vice Chair), Louis Upton, Graham Simpson, Roy McCrudden

Dear Clive,

24/01415/AMEND - The Stage NMA Planning Changes

One of our members reviewed the above application. It appears that the Cycle Hub has been removed from the development. The removal of the Cycle Hub is a material change and should not be approved without proper consultation including with the Local Access Forum (LLAF).

The planning portal describes the application as a “Non-Material Amendment of planning permission 24/00157/FUL dated 26th April 2024. (Minor alterations to the layout, internal and external changes to the proposed buildings.)”. However tucked away on page 14 of “The Stage NMA Planning Changes” is the statement “Cycle hub omitted from WDC scope, the building may come forwards in future as indicated in planning drawings, or future operator may be given the opportunity to build the refuse stores in this location.” The Cycle Hub was included in the initial Planning Application as a significant community benefit of the development “promoting sustainable and active travel”. The removal of the Cycle Hub takes away a significant community benefit and goes against LBC’s stated strategy in many other areas (Climate Emergency, LCWIP, emerging LTP, current and emerging Local Plan).

We would like to understand:

- What was the Applicants rationale for removing the Cycle Hub?
- Who was consulted on this and why did the Planning team accept the amendment?

Notwithstanding the information, the Luton Local Access Forum (LLAF) members reject the amendment.

We would have liked to discuss this at our meeting on 12 March 2025. However, this is outside your target date for public responses (27 January 2025). Please confirm that you

will be able to take our recommendation of rejecting the amendment into account before making your decision.

As Chairman of the LAF, I am happy to discuss how the LAF works, whether a topic is a “relevant matter” for consulting us and how best we can support you with input from the LAF. As we get setup, we would like to agree a formal process for LBC to bring matters to LLAF’s attention for advice in a timely and proactive manner. This will be discussed at our next meeting, if you have any suggestions please let us know.

As you may know, the LLAF was inaugurated on 9 October 2024. It is a statutory body, whose function is to “advise as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area, and as to such other matters as may be prescribed”.

Regards,

Mamnun Khan

Chair, Luton Local Access Forum