

# Harworth

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## Thoresby Vale, Edwinstowe Proposed Cycling Hub

September 2020



Harworth

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Following an initial feedback call with British Cycling and Sport England the project team have reviewed the proposed scheme.

The project team are keen to express to British Cycling and Sport England that should the opportunity arise then this project can quite easily be scaled up. Newark and Sherwood in partnership with Harworth are extremely keen to develop an exemplar facility at Thoresby Vale and also have the appetite to do so. Whilst this site will have circa 800 residential dwellings; which will provide an immediate catchment for the cycling facilities; they will also serve residents from nearby Edwinstowe, Ollerton and Clipstone, and attract many of the approx. 500,000 visitors a year who go to Sherwood Forest. Newark and Sherwood District Council is currently leading a masterplanning exercise for the Forest Corner. One of the key strands of this masterplan is to improve accessibility to and around the area including active travel routes between Forest Corner, Thoresby Vale and Edwinstowe. It is envisaged that this would include active travel links to the proposed cycling hub. Harworth are also committed to ensuring that residential area's at Thoresby Vale are inclusive to all and encouraging residents to be more active around the site remains a priority which will include easy to navigate Active Travel routes around the residential zone, to the new onsite school and the cycling hub and community provision.

Furthermore, Newark and Sherwood District Council have engaged with Active Notts and the proposed scheme aligns with Active Notts' vision which is "to make physical activity the norm for people who live and work in our communities by ensuring everyone can easily take part, volunteer and engage in sport and activity as part of their everyday life".

The proposed scheme site is adjacent to Ollerton and Boughton, which is one of Active Notts' priority areas as one of the most deprived areas in the country. Health deprivation data for the area to be developed shows that it is within the worst half and nearby Ollerton is within the worst 20%. Sport England's Active Lives Survey shows that the development area is within the 2<sup>nd</sup> worst quintile (25.8%), and Ollerton is within the 1<sup>st</sup> worst quintile (30.6%) for the number of people (16 years+) who are currently physically inactive.

## **Active Travel/Connecting Communities**

This project aims to provide a multi-use facility that connects newly developed infrastructure and residential, providing employment and physical activity opportunities introducing prospective cyclists from across the borough through engagement with Newark and Sherwood District Council and Active Notts initiatives; therefore increasing travel and activity opportunities for residents in surrounding communities.

Harworth are committed to providing Active Travel links to and from the Thoresby Vale site and working with Newark and Sherwood District Council and Nottinghamshire County Council. Providing quality links with wayfinding to surrounding communities such as nearby Edwinstowe, Ollerton and Boughton. The latter two being identified as target areas for Active Notts to increase activity among the 16+ category.

It is also envisaged that as part of the ongoing 5G work there will be a autonomous bus service that will travel from Ollerton bus depot which will allow people who are unable to access Active Travel opportunities or who do not own a car still to access the onsite facilities at Thoresby Vale.

As this site will include a new primary school the proposal is to engage with this school and other surrounding schools to promote activity, Active Travel through the usage of this onsite cycling hub.

## **Key Components**

The elements of the initial scheme have now been revised taking into consideration the feedback received and the key components are as follows:

- Learn to Ride Area
- Perimeter trail for all abilities with some blue opt in trails for progression
- Modular building for cycling hub ancillary provision

## Learn to Ride Area

### **Target age range: 2yrs to 10/11yr olds**

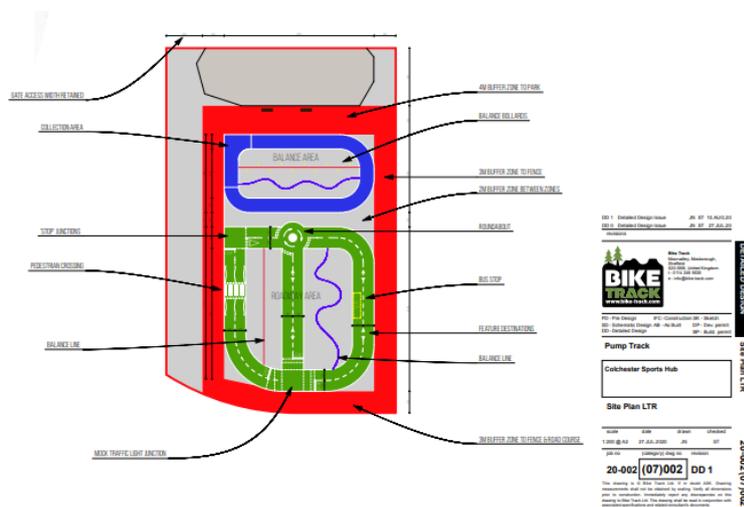
Given the nature of the site and the primary function being for recreational cycling we have established two possible options:

#### **Option 1 – Approximate area 40m x 40m**

The learn to ride area will incorporate a flat area housing line marking features such as roadways and give way locations as well as some basic undulations features such as roller lines and low berms. These low features will give younger riders a taster of what skills are required to control a bike.

All this area will be finished in fine asphalt to allow access for all wheel sizes throughout.

This has been placed alongside the hub building to allow easy access for young families to make use of the facilities adjacent.



## Perimeter trail for all abilities with some blue opt in trails for progression

### **Target age Range: 7/8yrs to all user types.**

As was outlined in the feedback call the project team now wish to focus on the family recreational trails aspect. Therefore we would remove the majority of the technical trails and downhill opportunity. The project team propose to increase the blue grade opt-in features from 250m to around 1km in total.

These will be placed alongside the perimeter trail to aid skill development through group and family riding.

These can be designed and installed to be used in mini loops acting as skills areas to advance staged progression. These will gain difficulty as the trail continues riders will be required to master one section of option before moving onto the a next. This would be similar to a skills area; over a longer distance though. Once riders are suitably skilled they will just opt into each section as they ride around the trail.

These opt in sections can also be designed to be accessible and inclusive for all; therefore including disability cycles as well as standard bikes with features alongside. The project team have already engaged with Cycling Projects (Ian Tierney) to discuss whether this approach would be acceptable for those user types and the project team will continue to engage with Cycling Projects as the scheme progresses to ensure it is 'inclusive for all'. When connecting this facility to other surrounding facilities within the Sherwood Forest area such as the RSPB centre; accessibility for all will be at the heart of any links that are put in place ensuring that all user types can freely access the surrounding areas.

This facility will almost feel like a 'trim trail for bikes'.

The recreation target audience still remains the same from the original application:

- Families
- Recreational cyclists and cycling groups
- Women and Girls
- Disability Groups
- Low socio-economic groups
- Children and young people

With less focus on the technical/competition aspect the project has therefore felt that talent is possibly not an option for this project in this phase of works.

### **Modular Building for Ancillary provision**

The original proposal was to provide a cycling hub/café housed within the old Workshop building. Given the costs associated with the refurbishment of a building of this nature the project team have therefore taken the opportunity to look at a modular construction solution. This will help lower the overall costs of the project but will not detract from the overall outcomes the project aspires to deliver; albeit on a slightly smaller scale. Proximity of the modular building will still be located next to the cycling facilities.

Blossom Homes is a locally based relatively new start-up company who currently occupy the workshop building on the Thoresby Vale site, in which they manufacture pre-fabricated modular homes, using a highly sustainable timber frame panel system. This system can easily be adapted to provide a bespoke, single storey cycle hub which has excellent sustainability credentials, minimising running costs moving forward.

The project team have approached Blossom Homes who are already currently delivering some eco-friendly residential accommodation on site and the team feels that this would be a suitable alternative to the original proposal. We also believe that modular solutions have been explored in the past for sport and we feel that this would provide some alternative thinking for sports projects in the future.

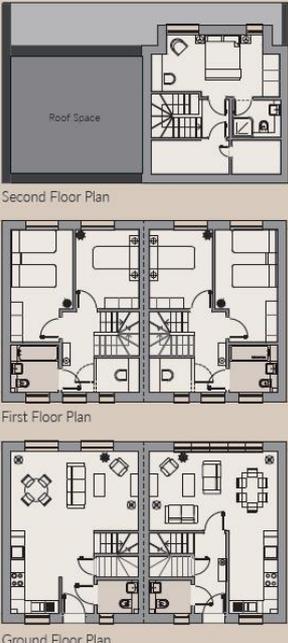
Blossom Homes are currently installing a pair of prototype semi-detached homes on the Thoresby Vale site, to demonstrate the design and build quality and sustainability credentials. One of the prototypes will accommodate the 5G Innovation Hub as part of the "5G connected Forest" initiative led by Nottinghamshire County Council.



Blossom Homes: The Thoresby Prototype

### The Thoresby Vale Prototype

2 Bed Area: 81 sqm | 3 Bed Area: 110 sqm



Roof Space

Second Floor Plan

First Floor Plan

Ground Floor Plan

A pair of semi-detached units to be erected on the upcoming Thoresby Vale development in North Nottinghamshire.

The three bed prototype semi-detached unit will be fitted out as a show home. The other will serve as a SG Innovation Hub with office space on the upper level and open plan function space on the ground floor with accompanying outdoor garden amenity.

## **COVID-19/ Operating Model**

NSDC and Harworth are acutely aware that following COVID-19 there is a need to understand fully the implications of the pandemic and the long term plans that may need to be in place regarding social distancing etc. This will inevitably need to be considered in the business case as the project evolves.

Recently, NSDC has successfully implemented new policies and procedures for the safe reopening and operation of its leisure centres, including The Dukeries in nearby Ollerton & Boughton. The project as it progresses would look to regularly review, implement new procedures to ensure it is sustainable for the long term given the learnings from the pandemic.

The project team has visited and met with the operators at Leeds Urban Bike Park. It is expected that following further research and consultation this cycling facility may be run by a community interest company or social enterprise style operator who will have specific experience of running a cycling facility of this nature. Harworth Group will be fully supporting Newark and Sherwood District Council through this process and whilst the above appears to be the current direction of travel the project remains fairly fluid at present therefore the project team are happy to consider alternative options.

It may be that at an appropriate time the project team engage with the consultant (Pete Maguire of Sporting Assets) that carried out the consultation and wrote the business plan for Leeds Urban Bike Park to understand the challenges faced by that facility.

## Costs

Please see draft XL document.