

Proposed development: Full Planning Application for the change of use from dwelling to local prayer facility (Class D1) and self-contained flat (Class C3) with associated alterations to form doors, creation of car parking provision and an additional access

Site address: 55 Beardwood Brow, BLACKBURN, BB2 7AT

Applicant: Beardwood Muslim Worship Group

Ward: Beardwood with Lammack

Councillor Michael Lee	
Councillor Julie Daley	
Councillor Imtiaz Ali	



1.0 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

TEMPORARY APPROVAL – subject to conditions

2.0 KEY ISSUES/SUMMARY OF PLANNING BALANCE

- 2.1.1 The proposal is to provide an Islamic prayer facility with self-contained flat, within an existing detached bungalow to meet the needs of the local community, who reside in the surrounding residential neighbourhood.
- 2.1.2 The proposal also seeks to create a new vehicular and pedestrian access on to Beardwood and for the change of use of the residential curtilage to a car park and a garden area for the proposed self-contained flat.
- 2.1.3 The key issues to be addressed are as follows:
- Principle of development;
 - Impact on the area
 - Effect of the development upon neighbouring residential properties; and,
 - Parking provision and impact of the development on the surrounding highway network.
- 2.1.4 The proposal lies within the urban boundary of Blackburn, in an area characterised by residential uses. Accordingly, beyond consideration towards the principle of the use, careful consideration has been applied towards the impact of the use against residential amenity, due to the potential for noise disturbance arising from attendees arriving and leaving the facility and internal noise from the prayer activity. Assessment in this regard is based on the submission of a supporting 'Environmental Noise Assessment' which has taken into account associated noise levels and the need or otherwise for the introduction of mitigation measures. Impact on the surrounding highway network has also been afforded due consideration, aided by the submission of a supporting highway's statement which addresses parking, access and servicing.
- 2.15 The harm identified to the amenity of the area and highway safety is not demonstrable to outweigh the principle of the NPPF in terms of sustainable development and in deed the Highway Authority do not raise objections to the proposed use.
- 2.16 With the proposed highway requirements, restrictions in hours of use, the Juma, Friday prayer, and external calls for prayer, it is considered by Officers that the proposal would be a small low key facility for the local community. The required parking standards have been met and there is considered to be sufficient on-street parking provision within the immediate locality.

- 2.17 The neared properties at Park Lodge Flats and 53 Beardwood Brow would be protected to a large degree by Acoustic Fencing along the respective boundaries, and whilst this will not abate all noise emanating from the site, combined with restricted opening times, removal of use of part of the car park in the evenings and internal sound proofing of the property, would result in satisfactory conditions for these nearest residents.
- 2.18 The concern that is unresolved is the concern regarding the effect of the development on properties within the locality of the site due to the restricted size of the car park meaning all thirty (30) worshipers would not be able to park within the proposed car park at the same time. Whilst the applicants state that all worshipers would not be there at the same time, there is no evidence to justify this, and thus on-street car parking is likely to occur. It is this effect that Officers recommend be monitored over a two-year period so the true impact of the proposals can be judged, together with the imposition of a Green Travel Plan subject to a suitably worded condition.
- 2.19 Whilst the Highway Authority have withdrawn all previous concerns, they too are not adverse to a temporary consent being granted as this will ensure that local residents can be satisfied that the highway and parking issues raised have been being satisfactorily addressed.
- 2.20 Subject to the suggested conditions, which are considered to be reasonable and necessary, the proposal is recommended favourably.

3.0 RATIONALE

3.1 Site and Surroundings

- 3.1.1 The application site relates to a detached two story dwelling which sits within a generous sized, well-screened plot and is located at the junction of Beardwood with Beardwood Brow. Access to the existing dwelling is via Beardwood Brow.
- 3.1.2 The corner plot is bound by a coniferous hedge to Beardwood with concrete panel fencing to Beardwood Brow. Two deciduous trees located on Beardwood Brow overhang the site. These trees are part of a group of trees located on the north and south of Beardwood Brow.
- 3.1.3 Surrounding properties are mainly detached, sat within generous sized, well defined plots and enclosed by mature hedges, trees and other boundary treatments.

3.2 Proposed Development

- 3.2.1 This application seeks consent for the use of 55 Beardwood Brow as a localised prayer facility (Use Class D1) with self-contained flat (Use Class C3).

- 3.2.2 The prayer element would comprise of two prayer rooms (for male and female users respectively). The proposed prayer use would utilise the existing entrance on the principal elevation of the property and is separate from that of the self-contained flat which is to be served by the new separate entrance on the rear elevation.
- 3.2.3 One room of approximately 30sqm would be used as a prayer room for men and would be used for the daily (5 times daily) prayers. The second room also of approximately 30sqm would be used as a ladies gathering space where ladies can come together for group study or to pray separately. The proposals will also provide 10sqm of wash room and toilet facilities and 12sqm of access foyer. The total floor area of the prayer facility will be 82sqm.
- 3.2.4 The number of users on site is determined by capacity (82m²), which is up to around 30 persons although the regular number of attendees are asserted to be lower. This is based upon the use of the prayer room as the 'ladies room' (to be used as an occasional meeting space / individual prayer rather than congregational prayer at fixed times) is expected to be used infrequently. Religious protocols between men and women adhered to in religious institutions means it is improbable that both rooms will be used at the same time.
- 3.2.5 The proposed self-contained flat would occupy the first floor and part of the ground floor and it is envisaged that it would be occupied by the Imam (Prayer Leader).
- 3.2.6 A new 3m wide vehicular access and pedestrian gate is also proposed from the existing rear garden area of the property on to Beardwood. Part of the existing rear garden area would be retained and would be accessed by the flat occupant only.
- 3.2.7 The remainder of the existing side and rear garden would be changed to a car parking area with eleven car parking spaces proposed - one has been removed in the interests of pedestrian safety. The existing garage would be utilised by the flat occupant.
- 3.2.8 There are minimal external alterations proposed to the property other than a new doorway being inserted in the rear elevation leading from the garden area serving the proposed flat and the alteration of a window on the side of the front gable projection to form double doors to serve the women's prayer room.
- 3.2.9 The submitted application emphasises that the prayer facility would cater for a small number of local residents, a maximum of 30, to allow for prayers in the afternoon and evenings during winter months and also the early mornings during summer months. The numbers are based upon the use of the prayer room as the 'ladies room' (to be used as an occasional meeting space/

individual prayer rather than congregational prayer at fixed times) is only expected to be used infrequently.

- 3.2.10 Religious protocols between men and women adhered to in religious institutions means it is improbable that both rooms will be used at the same time.
- 3.2.11 The operating hours sought are Mon-Sun 05.00 – 24.00 to enable the facility to be used for the five daily prayers of Islam for most of the year including The Juma (Friday lunchtime prayer) is proposed. A Madrassa (Education) is not proposed and the applicants state will be no ceremonial events held at the property nor is there be any amplified broadcast of call to prayer.
- 3.2.12 The number of users on site is determined by capacity (82m²), which is up to around 30 persons although the regular number of attendees are asserted to be lower, around 12 in number with an internal layout drawing illustrating that a prayer room could accommodate 25 worshippers at one time.
- 3.2.13 The rationale is to provide an appropriate yet small scale facility to serve the local community, within an 800m catchment area, ensuring they do not have to travel further afield.

3.3 Development Plan

3.3.1 The Development Plan comprises the Core Strategy (January 2011) and the adopted Local Plan, Part 2 (Site allocations and Development Management Policies – December 2015). The following Core Strategy and Local Plan policies are of relevance to this application:

3.3.2 Core Strategy

- CS1 - A Targeted Growth Strategy
- CS11 – Facilities and Services
- CS17 – Built and Cultural Heritage

Local Plan Part 2.

- Policy 1 – The Urban Boundary
- Policy 7 – Sustainable Development
- Policy 8 – Development and People
- Policy 10 – Accessibility and Transport

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

- Community and other Uses with Residential Areas SPG

3.4 Other Material Planning Considerations

- 3.4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

3.5 Assessment

Principle of Development

- 3.5.1 NPPF (para 70) emphasises the need to plan positively for the provision of community facilities; including cultural buildings and places of worship, to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments and to ensure an integrated approach.
- 3.5.2 The promotion of sustainable transport is also a key focus of NPPF which emphasises the aim of achieving a balance of land uses within an area, so as to encourage people to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities (para 37).
- 3.5.3 Core Strategy Policy CS11 supports the expansion and enhancement of the range and quality of public services in ‘accessible locations’ and supports the creation of ‘community hubs’ to provide a range of services in one place.
- 3.5.4 The application site is located within the defined urban boundary of Blackburn, in residential area which is located in an accessible location, close to Preston New Road and a bus stop providing regular services to Preston City and Blackburn Town Centres in close proximity. The proposed use accords with Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy due to it being in an accessible location and the NPPF’s presumption in favour of development to be located in accessible locations.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity

- 3.5.5 Local Plan Part 2 Policy 8, amongst other criteria, requires development to contribute positively to the overall physical, social, environmental and economic character of the area and secure satisfactory levels of amenity for surrounding uses, with reference to noise and privacy.
- 3.5.6 The use is described as a ‘prayer facility’ to serve the localised Islamic community however it cannot be distinguished from a Mosque due to the proposed hours of use, the inclusion of Friday lunchtime prayer (Juma), recognised as the busiest and most important prayer of the weekly calendar, and the presence of an employed religious leader (Imam) at the site although there are to be no ceremonial events, however, this said it is understood that all Prayer Centres are led by an Iman.

- 3.5.7 The hours of use are to allow five daily prayers during both the summer and winter months, in accordance with sunrise and sunset. Prayers during the summer months, approximately 3 months of the year, will consequently be early in the morning from 05:00 and later in the evening up to 24:00.
- 3.5.8 As a facility to serve the local community (within 800 metres of the application site), it is suggested by the applicants that the proposal will cater mainly for late morning, afternoon and evening prayers. Morning use is acknowledged during the winter months, beginning around 07.00-07.15 but can be as early as 05:00. Numbers will be limited to a maximum of 30 users, dictated by the 82m² floor space available and will be confined to the ground floor.
- 3.5.9 Estimated number of users at any one time is approximated at 12, though assessment of this application has been based on the maximum of 30 attendees. It has also been acknowledged within the assessment that the early morning and late evening prayers are likely to have fewer worshipers than those during the main core of the day.
- 3.5.10 The property is in a residential area with residential properties surrounding the site with occupants of Park Lodge Flats located at their closest approximately 11m to the north-west of the site, approximately 30m to the north-east of the site is a dwelling known as 'The Bungalow'. Adjacent to the southern boundary of the site is a dwelling called 'Balmoral', no. 53 Beardwood Brow. This property within 4.5m to the shared boundary. A property called 'Newlands' bounds the south-western boundary of the site which is located approximately 22m from the property.
- 3.5.11 Primary concern towards the impact on amenity relates to the prevailing residential character of the location and degree of disturbance created by attendees of the use, in terms of numbers and means of transportation. To this end, a pre-determinative acoustic assessment was submitted, which concluded no nuisance arising from internal noise but the likelihood of some disturbance from attendees arriving and leaving the premises, though this noise was recognised within that report as insignificant.
- 3.5.12 The Council's Public Protection team have reviewed the assessment and raised concern with the impact of the proposed use on the nearest neighbours due to the nature of the proposed use, the early morning and late evening opening hours, and the effect on other nearby residents by users of the proposed facility parking on the highway.
- 3.5.13 In Environmental Protection terms, late hours are considered to be between 23:00 and 07:00 hours. The arrival and departure of a number of vehicles, including the humming of engines, noise of radios, headlights, and doors both on cars and the property closing and shutting, and people talking whilst entering and leaving the building, at these times of day would all result in disturbance/ nuisance to nearby residents and would harm the amenity of nearby residents, particularly the effect of cars being parked directly alongside the shared boundary with Balmoral and the residents of Park Lodge Flats to the north of the site. Occupants of both The Bungalow to the North and Newlands to the South-West are located in excess of 21 metres

from the property and should not be significantly disturbed by the proposed use.

- 3.5.14 To protect the amenity of the occupiers to the north of the site, the harm could be mitigated by the installation of an acoustic fence; similarly, an acoustic fence could also be erected along the shared boundary of the site with Balmoral, 53 Beardwood Brow. This would minimise the impact of the proposals on existing and future occupiers of this dwelling from noise generated.
- 3.5.15 Due to Balmoral being positioned only 4.5m from the site, as well as acoustic fencing, it is also considered that cars parking within the area closest to the shared boundary should be restricted during the hours of 22:00 and 07:00 and to this end and the applicants have agreed that they would not use the parking spaces closest to Balmoral during these hours. This would be subject to a suitably worded condition.
- 3.5.16 An acoustic fence will not stop all noise, therefore, to reduce the impact of the proposed use further, it is considered that the hours of use should be restricted to between 07:00 and 22:00 hours, no main Friday lunchtime prayer (Juma) should take place and that no externally audible 'Calls to Prayer' from the building or within the application site should take place at any time. These would ensure the amenity of the nearest residents is protected and that the building would be used as a prayer centre and not a mosque as feared by some local residents. These can all be secured by condition and are thus recommended. This is consistent with a similar prayer facility recently granted planning permission by the Committee at the meeting in April 2017 for the premises at the first floor flat at No.7 Whinney Lane, Blackburn, which is within the catchment area of the application site (ref: 10/16/1320).
- 3.5.17 In addition to the above, there is also concern about the effect of the proposal on other nearby residents given the likelihood of the need to park on-street outside other dwellings given the prayer rooms can hold up to 30 people at one time, potentially more when women attend the prayer rooms. This would lead to worshipers parking on the highways surrounding the property particularly at peak times of the week/year i.e. Friday Jummah prayers together with the festival of Eid which is celebrated twice a year and Ramadan. These peak times are likely to generate both a greater demand in terms of traffic generation and overspill parking depending on the actual numbers attending early morning and evening prayers and greater disturbance to those residents in close proximity to the site.
- 3.5.18 Due to being unable to secure noise mitigation measures outside of the application site along the boundaries of properties where people may park, and given off-site parking is likely to occur on a daily basis due to six of the ten parking spaces (those located within the southern end of the car park) not being available for use during night time hours, and also during peak times, the Environmental Protection team have recommended a temporary two-year consent so that the effect of the use on the amenity of local

residents can be monitored and assessed over this period. This is considered to be reasonable.

3.5.19 Overall, it is considered that the effect on local residents could be minimised subject to the imposition of appropriate control measures through application of the following conditions:

- Controlled hours of use between 07:00 hours to 22:00 hours
- No Juma (Friday lunchtime prayer).
- No amplified broadcast of call to prayer.
- Requirement for acoustic barriers to the north and south boundaries of the site
- Restriction of the use of the southern part of the car park during the night time period
- Temporary Consent to assess the impact of the proposed use on the amenity of residents on Beardwood and Beardwood Brow.

3.5.20 Subject to the above conditions, it is considered that the development would not excessively erode pre-existing levels of residential amenity; in compliance with Local Plan Part 2 Policy 8.

Parking provision and Impact of the Development on the Highway

3.5.21 Local Plan Part 2 Policy 10 requires that road safety and the safe and efficient and convenient movement of all highway users is not prejudiced and that appropriate provision is made for vehicular access, off-street servicing and parking.

3.5.22 The proposals seek to:

- Re-locate an existing lighting column and bus stop. This bus stop is currently not in use due to the cut in services; and,
- Create a new vehicular and pedestrian access on to Beardwood to enable access to the site from the existing Beardwood Brow entrance with the egress to be on to Beardwood.

3.5.23 The extensive comments of the Highway Authority are noted, as too are the public representations received. Before considering the existing highway conditions and how the proposed development will impact upon this, it is important to consider how the development complies with the Council's adopted parking standards. This particular proposal falls within a mixed D1 (Prayer Centre) use class. Planning policy for a residential property defines a parking provision of 2 car parking spaces for the proposed three bedroom flat. The prayer rooms would have a total area of 82sqm requiring 8 spaces, a total requirement of 10 car parking spaces. The latest revision provides eleven spaces, one of which is within the existing garage. The parking provision provided therefore accords with the adopted standards.

3.5.24 However, it is considered that the facility would attract a greater number of cars, particularly at peak times. The principle time that parking generates a

problem would be Friday lunchtimes (Juma Prayer) and during feasts such as Ramadan and Eid. Whilst there is on-street parking in the surrounding area along Beardwood, and a layby on Beardwood Brow which may be used, it is in front and to the side of private dwellings, hence the concerns raised regarding the disturbance this may cause to affected occupiers.

- 3.5.25 There has recently been an instance of cars parking on both sides of Beardwood at another property which affected the free flow of traffic on the approach to and from Preston New Road and this has heightened the concern of local residents, principally by these cars harming the free flow of traffic close to the junction of Preston New Road, and also by a minority of drivers who park inconsiderately. It is understood that the double parking was due to a local funeral and importantly could occur with any private party/get together at any address on a residential street. The fact that this happened is not sufficient reason to justify a recommendation of refusal of the application on this basis.
- 3.5.26 There will always be a minority of motorists who will go to extreme lengths to park as close to their destination as possible and the planning system cannot legislate for them. The requirement for a Green Travel Plan to be submitted and implemented will assist in minimising the effect on users of the highway.
- 3.5.27 In respect of the new proposed access; this would occur at the point of an existing lighting column and bus stop. Although a bus service does not currently utilise this stop it is important that it is retained in the locality for future use. The bus stop should therefore be relocated at the applicants' expense. The same applied to the lamppost. Both of these aspects will be secured through the use of planning conditions.
- 3.5.28 Beardwood Brow is, as residents correctly state is for Access Only. This includes the application property in question which has an access presently two-way into and out of Beardwood Brow. The removal of two-way movements at this current access and the introduction of a one-way system would lessen the impact of two way movement on Beardwood Brow by segregating entry and exit between the two access points so that entry to the Prayer Centre would be in from Beardwood Brow, with the exist out onto Beardwood.
- 3.5.29 As initially submitted the Highways Authority raised concerns with the layout of the proposed car park, the two-way movement of cars through the site, the lack of clear direction through to the new access and the manoeuvring space to the rear of the spaces. The layout plan has been amended to secure:
- 3.5.30 A pedestrian access has been introduced from Beardwood into the site, that is separate from the vehicle entrance and away from Beardwood Brow;
- The vehicular access is now one way in from Beardwood Brow and egress onto Beardwood. This has mitigated safety concerns with multiple vehicle movements;

- The internal car parking layout has been amended, at the loss of one space. All bays have the correct manoeuvrability into and out of the spaces, and are deemed functional;
- Acceptance of double yellow lines to be extended along western kerb into Beardwood Brow, The Highway Authority request these are marked on both side of the carriageway from when they currently finish. To secure these and enhancements such as dropped kerbs and tactile surfacing to pedestrian crossover points, a traffic management scheme is attached as a condition. These costs associated with the necessary works and costs for changes would be at the applicants' expense;
- The bus stop is to be relocated at the developers expense and can be secured by condition; and,
- The lighting column is to be relocated at the developers expense.

3.5.31 The proposed car park demonstrates 11 parking bays, with 1 space being within the existing attached garage, and associated manoeuvring space. Access is through an existing gated entrance on Beardwood Brow with egress to be via a new access on to Beardwood Brow.

3.5.32 The Local Highways Authority acknowledge the access and egress arrangements as adequate, but requires an alteration to the pedestrian access sightlines, this can be secured by condition.

3.5.33 Notwithstanding the reduction in the number of spaces, the Highways Authority are satisfied with the proposal and offer no objection, subject to application of the following conditions:

- Requirement for the continuation of double yellow lines to the western edge of the Beardwood Brow junction with Beardwood;
- Requirement for the re-location of the existing bus stop;
- Requirement for vehicular and pedestrian access sightlines;
- Parallel bays should be 6m in length when marked out on site
- Provision of covered cycle and PTW spaces;
- Receipt of revised pedestrian access which is shown incorrectly on the submitted visibility splays drawing. It should be 2.4m (from back of footway) x 3.3m with nothing greater than 600mm from road level;
- The requirement for cycle and two wheeled motorised vehicles parking to be provided to ensure a mix of transport options are available.

- 3.5.34 The final layout of the traffic management solution with parking restrictions is to be agreed but an indication of commitment from the developer has been accepted. The Highway Authority considers these are achievable and can thus be secured by appropriate conditions.
- 3.5.35 Subject to the above conditions, it is considered that the development provides sufficient off street parking and would not demonstrably prejudice highway users; in compliance with Local Plan Part 2 Policy 10.
- 3.5.36 Effect on the locality
- 3.5.37 The area in which the site is located is solely residential with wide roads, highway trees, and domestic planting all bordering the main arterial route in to the wider Beardwood estate. As such it appears to be very peaceful in the evenings with little illumination present, other than street lamps.
- 3.5.38 A large number of concerns have been expressed that the prayer room use is considered to be inappropriate in this location given its suburban nature. It is acknowledged that there are no other uses in the locality other than residential and the change to a prayer centre will result in a change of character to this property by the increase in the number of people attending the premises both on foot and by car. However, it is considered the conditions proposed restricting the opening hours, preventing the Juma, Friday prayer, preventing external calls for prayer, requiring acoustic barriers, and ensuring the boundary hedge is retained would ensure that this prayer centre operates as a low key facility for the local community thereby ensuring that there would not be demonstrable harm to residential nature of the area and accordingly the requirements of local plan policy.

Effect on trees

- 3.5.39 Local Plan Part 2 Policy 9 requires that development and planting schemes must be designed so as to avoid the potential for future conflict between buildings and trees. If the removal of one or more trees is permitted as part of a development, a condition will require that an equivalent number or more new trees are planted either on or near the site, unless a clear justification is provided for not doing so.
- 3.5.40 Two trees exist along the eastern boundary with Beardwood Brow a Sycamore is positioned centrally along the eastern boundary which are seen as part of a larger group of trees located on the corner of Beardwood Brow on its north and south side. These trees make a positive contribution to the street scene.
- 3.5.41 Whilst the trees are on the outside of the boundary fencing, they are the trees belonging to the property and are not highway trees. Both trees are category 'C' trees. The Council's Tree Officer agrees with the conclusions of the report that both these trees are not considered to have any potential for long term retention due to them both have multi stemmed leaders from the base of the tree that have weakened unions. Both trees are also located

directly on the boundary line of the fencing that prevents a clean straight fence to be constructed. T2 is also in close proximity to the street light that restricts light reaching the footpath. As such they are considered to be unworthy of influencing any layout.

- 3.5.42 The proposal to construct an access road and parking to the eastern side of the dwelling would impact on T1, a Sycamore positioned centrally along the length of the plot, if it was to be retained and due to the land gradient the Council's Tree Officer shares the opinion the removal of the tree and replacement planting positioned to the western side of the site is the better option for visual amenity and are included within the submission.
- 3.5.43 All the significant boundary tree cover located on the eastern boundary on the opposite side of the road will remain intact.
- 3.5.44 There is considered to be sufficient space within the site for new planting and a comprehensive new landscape scheme with heavy standard sized tree planting is included as part of the proposal. The establishment of these new trees would enhance the contribution of this site to local amenity and more than compensate for the loss of the two trees.
- 3.5.45 The construction activity and proposed changes may adversely affect further trees within the boundary of property to the north, 'The Bungalow' if appropriate protective measures are not taken. However, if adequate precautions to protect the retained trees, and these are specified and implemented through the Arboricultural Method Statement included in the report, the development proposal will have no adverse impact on the contribution of trees to local amenity or character. Indeed, the new sustainable planting proposals will increase the potential of the site to contribute to local amenity well beyond the short term.
- 3.5.46 Overall, therefore the proposal accords with the requirements of Local Plan Part 2, Policy 9.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

4.1.1 APPROVE subject to the following conditions:

- Temporary consent of two years to allow the monitoring of the proposal on both the impact on local residents and the character of the area, but would also serve to illustrate the reasons the Highway Authority withdrew their initial objections.
- Restrict to the uses applied for (Use Classes D1: Prayer Centre and C3: Dwellinghouse) and for no other use within Use Class D1.
- Hours of use to be restricted to between the hours of 07:00 – 22:00.
- No Juma (Friday lunchtime prayer).
- No external call to prayer.
- Restrict the use of the facility to no more than 30 worshippers at any one time
- No permitted use for education (Madressa) or religious/ social functions.

- Layout out of the car park and one way system in accordance with the approved plan
- Details of covered cycle and PTW spaces to be submitted for approval.
- Details of revised pedestrian visibility splay to be submitted for approval.
- Restrict the use of the southern end of the car park adjacent to No.53 to not be used between the hours of 22:00pm and 07:00am the following day
- Requirement to enter in to a S278 agreement with the Highways Authority to secure the relocation of the bus stop and double yellow lines up to the western edge of Beardwood Brow.
- Prior to commencement of the development hereby approved, a Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall provide details of the objectives, targets and measures to promote and facilitate public transport use, walking, cycling and practices/facilities to reduce the need to travel and to reduce car use. It shall provide details of its management, monitoring and review mechanisms, travel plan coordination and the provision of travel information and marketing. The initiatives contained within the approved travel plan shall be implemented thereafter together with any additional measures that, after review, are found to be necessary to deliver the travel plan objectives.
 - Retention of the boundary hedge and trees
 - Details of the necessary acoustic fence.
 - Replacement planting in accordance with the details within the Arboricultural Report.

5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

5.1.1 None relevant to the use proposed and relate to minor extensions and alterations.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1.1 Public Protection – Concerns raised towards impact on residential amenity, in terms of hours of use and associated noise. Considers the installation of acoustic barriers to the north and south boundaries and the restriction in using part of the car park in evening hours would limit the harm to the nearest neighbours. Also promotes a temporary consent subject to the application of aforementioned conditions, so that the effect on other nearby residents can be assessed through a two year monitoring period.

6.1.2 Highway's Authority – initially raised concerns in respect of parking layout; the manoeuvrability with and through the site; and on-street parking being located outside the site nearer to the junction with Preston New Road and another access serving the residential property known as 'Newlands'. No objections are offered to the revised proposal, subject to the application of aforementioned conditions.

6.1.3 Tree Officer Comment

- No objections, subject to the replacement planting shown being implemented.
- Conditions will be required if existing boundary treatments are to be replaced.

Public Consultation

6.1.3 270 local properties were consulted by letter and Site Notices were displayed on the corner of Beardwood with Beardwood Brow. 170 letters of objection have been received and 56 letters of support received at the time of writing this report.

6.1.4 The material planning considerations referred to in the letters of objection are summarised as follows:

- Inappropriate use for the area
- Questioning whether the building is to be used as a Prayer Centre or Mosque due to the times proposed 05:00 – 24:00 hours
- Detrimental to residential character of the area
- Harmful to residential amenity due to cars arriving and departing at all times of the day and night
- The existing access is two way and would be dangerous
- Increase in traffic and inadequate parking provision
- Overspill parking on Beardwood; prevention of the free flow of traffic and the danger this poses close to both residents and users of Beardwood Brow and the junction with Preston New Road
- Increase in use of Beardwood Brow, an Access Only road, where the Traffic Regulation Order is already flouted.
- One way running through the site is unenforcable
- Loss of the bus stop
- Lack of safe cross-over point on Beardwood

6.1.5 The issues of there being ‘too many mosques’ in the area, and future intensification in the future uses of the building for prayer centre purposes are not material planning considerations with each application having to be assessed on its own merits.

6.1.6 Beardwood Residents (Planning) Association have employed both Planning and Transport Consultants who raise objections on their behalf. These objections are recorded below in full. They have been considered by all the relevant Officers and the Highways Sections when making their assessments.

6.1.7 The letters of support in the main are from residents in the locality who support the prospect of having a local prayer centre to use. There are some

letters of support from further afield. The following list is a summary of their representations.

- Needed by local population due to a higher number of Muslims living in the locality
- A Prayer Centre of Mosque is a “necessary need”
- It would be within walking distance of people’s homes preventing the need to travel by car
- Good for the environment due to being able to leave cars at home

6.1.8 Section 9 of the report contains a selection of the individual letters of objection and support received.

7.0 CONTACT OFFICER: Claire Booth, Senior Planner

8.0 DATE PREPARED: 5th March 2018

9.0 SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Objection Maria Grant, 324 Preston New Road, Blackburn

Dear Sir / Madam

Planning application 10/17/1173

I did not comment on the original planning application last October as it seemed from a brief reading of the documents, that the change to a Prayer Room would not have much impact on the local area. However, I recently went out to walk my dog around the Beardwood and Beardwood Brow area on a day when there were more than 30 cars parked along those roads. Given such a high level of extra traffic, mostly appearing to come from the Beardwood estate given the direction the cars were parked, I decided to look into this more.

I have now read all the documents relating to this application and have comments and questions as follows:-

The application has been submitted on behalf of **Beardwood Muslim Worship Group** but I cannot find an organisation of this name online therefore I am wondering if it actually exists or if this application is actually being made by another organisation especially since the amended site drawing produced by Compass says "Client name change" at the bottom.

Since the application is for a Prayer Room, why is approval being sought for between the hours of 5 am and midnight?

According to <https://islamqa.info/en/170800> "A prayer room or prayer place (musalla) is a place that is used for prayer *occasionally*, such as the 'Eid prayers, funeral (janaazah) prayers and so on, and it is not set aside as a waqf for the five daily prayers." whereas "A masjid or mosque is a place which is prepared for the purpose of offering the five daily prayers on a permanent basis and is devoted for that purpose." (my italics).

Is there the intention to change it to a Mosque once permission for a Prayer Room has been granted?

There has been much comparison with the Prayer Room at Flat 7 Whinney Lane. This facility was given retrospective planning permission on the basis that it is for local people and only operates between 0700 and 2200.

Why then does the proposed Beardwood Prayer Room need to be open from 0500 to midnight?

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Why then does the proposed Beardwood Prayer Room need to be open from 0500 to midnight?

Details have been given about how there will probably only be 5 cars attending for short periods throughout this time, rather than 10 but I doubt people will want to walk to the facility late at night or early morning, especially when it is dark in winter. Similarly, if the weather is very cold or it is raining, snowing etc. people will drive there. Since the application states each prayer room can accommodate 30 people, this would amount to a lot more than 5 cars.

With cars arriving and departing 5 times daily there will be noise, especially at night from car engines, doors being closed, people chatting outside the building. I note that the amended noise

If only bays 1 – 5 are used late at night / early morning, how will this be enforced?

I cannot see anything in the application regarding additional light – whether for security or for people arriving and departing when it is dark. Bright lights coming on very late at night could disrupt neighbour's sleep.

The application makes great play of reducing the journeys by car if this facility is approved since people would not need to go to Granville Road or St Silas etc. I believe the reduction in impact has been over estimated. This suggests that people only ever go from home to the mosque or prayer room and back home again. It may well be that people go on their way to or from somewhere else so the environmental impact would not be particularly reduced.

The Beardwood application is for 2 prayer rooms totalling 82 square metres as compared with 120 square metres at the Whinney Lane site. The survey data from the Whinney Lane planning application showed an average of just 8 people per day and only 1 car yet it is a much larger facility.

Why cannot Beardwood residents attend the Whinney Lane prayer room?

I would appreciate it if my comments and questions could be included in the discussion regarding this application.

Objection Helen Longworth, Thorneylea, Beardwood Brow, Blackburn – 30th October 2017

I am writing to oppose the amended propositions recently added to the original planning application on the following grounds :-

1. The entrance and exit for all road users of Beardwood Brow is for one vehicle at a time (due to the narrow width of Beardwood Brow at the junction with Beardwood). The application, if granted, will greatly increase the access by vehicles on a dangerous corner where there is no surfaced footpath causing increased danger to pedestrians and other road users. Even though the applicants suggest that all would be solved by an exit from number 55 opposite the block of flats, this does nothing to alleviate the problems I am highlighting. Exiting onto Beardwood is a dangerous idea where the traffic is fast moving at all times.

2. The noise report suggests that tests have been carried out on the noise of car engines but this does not address the problem of car doors banging and car owners' voices talking loudly at unsocial hours causing disruption and disturbance to the neighbours.

In all respects I strongly object to the application including the amendments and reiterate the comments made in my objection of 28 October 2017 and consider that the application should be refused.

On 28 October 2017 at 16:46, Helen Longworth wrote:

Dear Mr Prescott

I wish to strongly object to the above application and make the following points :-

1. I live in Beardwood Brow approximately 25 yards from the subject property and I moved here 36 years ago to this wholly designated residential area, knowing it was designated as such, and I see no reason for changing such designation – one which is acknowledged in the applicant's statement. This designation was also acknowledged by Jack Straw when he was an MP as stated in his letter dated 24 January 2013 to Andrew Lightfoot at the Council, a copy of which he sent to Ms Kate Hollern and to one of our neighbours. The letter was sent in reference to the previous proposal for a prayer centre on Beardwood but the points made are equally relevant now, The full text of the letter is available but I quote in full the penultimate paragraph "I am well aware of the background to this proposed prayer room. As well as the residents who oppose it, I have met those who have been seeking to establish this facility. I have great respect for them, but I remain of the view that this is the wrong place for a prayer room, in the middle of a residential area. Over the years I have

supported the development of places of religious worship and education for the Muslim community on many sites around town where I have thought this appropriate. My own Blackburn home is opposite a large Mosque and madrassa; and there are two other religious establishments up the street. All three generate a great deal of traffic – far more than was ever anticipated. This is not a problem because the area is largely business, and the number of residents few. But the opposite is the case on Beardwood.”

2. I frequently walk about in this area and have noted the daily flouting of the “no entry except for access” sign at the entry to Beardwood Brow. This road has become a dangerous rat run on a road listed as an ancient highway and never intended to be used by a large number of vehicles. This intention is accepted by the highways department as shown by the “no entry except for access” sign and the speed bumps. At the entrance to the Brow there are continual hold ups where drivers are trying to enter from Beardwood and, if from the Preston New Road direction, then they are trying to make a right turn into the Brow at a narrow point and where cars are often parked on both sides of Beardwood near the apartments at Park Lodge. Pedestrians are very much at risk as there is no made up footpath on Beardwood Brow. This is especially significant as many school children walk up the Brow to school and children in prams are at risk as there is not enough room for a pram and a car to pass. In winter in the case of ice and/or snow cars try and use the Brow but slide back down as it becomes impassable. The application will increase all these dangers tremendously as users of the Prayer Centre access the Centre from the top or bottom of Beardwood Brow.

3. If the application were to be granted it would undoubtedly lead to additional parking on nearby roads as there are only 12 very “tight” car parking spaces available at the subject property. Nearby there may be 3 spaces outside my property (often already used by neighbours, workmen etc) and the rest will park outside the apartments at Park Lodge and along Beardwood causing additional dangers for all road users. Beardwood Fold is a private road and therefore not to be used by anyone other than the residents who have access to it. There are bus stops on either side of Beardwood near to the application site which add further dangers should this application be passed.

4. The noise emanating from the subject property ie car doors, conversations etc will cause unacceptable levels of annoyance and nuisance to the detriment of our amenity and enjoyment of our property, particularly bearing in mind the proposed hours of use from 5 am until midnight, 7 days per week. These proposed hours show a total and flagrant disregard for the welfare of near neighbours and are contrary to the promised hours of 7 am until 11 pm as suggested by the applicants at a meeting they called on 7 July this year.

5. The applicants cannot show a need for this prayer centre as I understand there are 47 mosques in the Borough and there are facilities at the former Dog Inn on Revidge Road (0.3 miles), on Granville Road (0.6 miles), a large facility on Leamington Road (0.6 miles) and at 7 Whinney Lane (1.1 miles).

For all the above reasons I strongly and unreservedly oppose this application and I ask that these points and those sent by other residents, together with the wise words of Jack Straw, be taken into account in refusing this application. If the application were to be granted then, at a stroke the residential designation of this (and other potential areas) would be altered to accommodate a minority to the detriment of the majority of residents

Objection Helen Longworth, Thornleylea, Beardwood Brow, Blackburn - 5th March

The latest amendment to the application re 55 Beardwood Brow relating to noise prevention would be of little use in containing any noise at the premises and surrounding parking areas - it is well known that noise rises and is disseminated into the surrounding space.

The gates of this property would be left open for the continual use of the premises so no acoustic screening would be effective on the gates.

Sadly these are more red herrings and a pretence at answering the valid noise issues and would be totally ineffective.

Once again I object strongly to this application on the following grounds :-

1. Increased noise and nuisance.
2. Increased traffic movements on a road that is inadequate for the present traffic let alone a further increase on a narrow corner.
3. The neighbourhood is wholly residential and this application should be refused as it fails to comply with the designated residential area plan.
4. There is likely to be overspill parking onto roads near the site with additional nuisance to other road users and pedestrians.

Objection Ian Longworth, Thorneylea, Beardwood Brow, Blackburn – 2nd March 2018

Dear Sir

I am responding to your latest letter of 21 February 2018 and therefore to the latest amendment to application 10/17/1173.

The only amendment appears to be a very vague suggestion about acoustic screening without proposed details as to specification, height etc.

Once more this proposal will make little difference to the noise levels as, necessarily, the double gates onto Beardwood Brow will be open at all times and any acoustic screening on the gates themselves will be meaningless and the noise will still be intrusive.

I reiterate the main thrust of my previous objections and feel this application is getting bogged down in details which do nothing to address the main concerns of local residents. These are the exclusively residential nature of this neighbourhood as to which the proposed use would be most intrusive, the danger to pedestrians and other users from increased traffic flows, the nuisance caused by vehicles parking outside the site and the noise emanating from the site.

In short this amendment and the earlier ones are tinkering at the edges of an application which is fatally flawed.

Objection Ian Longworth, Thorneylea, Beardwood Brow, Blackburn – 30th January 2018

Dear Sir

Following your letter of 24 January 2018 I am responding to the revised application as to which very little has changed. I therefore reiterate all the grounds for objection set out in my mail of 26 October 2017.

With regard to the supplemental noise report recently submitted on behalf of the applicants they seek to say there is little difference from a noise perspective in cars using the site compared to normal traffic. The key difference is that normal traffic will be going up or down Beardwood Brow relatively slowly because of the speed bumps whereas those using the site will be parking and there will be talking and doors banging at extremely unsocial hours. There is bound to be simultaneous use of the parking facilities on site as the applicants concede there will be set times for prayers.

Furthermore the thought of restricting the use of the car parking spaces nearest to Balmoral so as to not use them late at night or early in the morning would be totally unenforceable and any planning condition to this effect would be meaningless.

I note that the applicants are prepared to accept that the opening from Beardwood Brow could be used only as an entrance with the new exit on to Beardwood being used for all vehicles. Again this will be impossible to enforce without a "one way" type ramp and the new exit on to Beardwood will be in a dangerous position in any event. Double yellow lines on Beardwood might help but the temptation will be to park on both sides of Beardwood Brow and Beardwood Fold even though the latter is a private road. This is exactly what happened recently when there was total traffic chaos as people came to pay their respects to the family of the owner of the premises who unfortunately had died.

In summary this is the wrong application, at the wrong time and in the wrong place and should be refused.

Objection Ian Longworth, Thorneylea, Beardwood Brow, Blackburn – 26th October 2017

Dear Sir

I wish to object most strongly to the above application on the following grounds :-

Loss of Amenity

The use of this property as a prayer centre is inconsistent with the exclusively residential nature of the Beardwood Area. This is not in any way an anti muslim protest – I would be equally opposed to the property being used as a Christian prayer centre, a community centre or for any commercial use. There are no similar uses in detached houses nearby yet there are many mosques and prayer centres which are quite close and which the applicants could use. I do not in any way accept the applicants' assertion that this use will be for a small number of people who will probably walk to the premises. Each meeting room can accommodate about 30 people and so far as males are concerned this would be for prayers 5 times a day. It is hardly credible to think that the applicants may be paying up to £550,000 to purchase, alter and landscape the property pay for professional fees and to employ a resident Imam, all for a handful of people as they suggest. Nor do I accept that people using the prayer centre will come from a very restricted catchment area and that most of them will walk. If the weather is inclement and particularly in winter when there is only 8 hours of daylight it is clear that the worshippers will come by car and from a greater catchment area than suggested.

I understand that, assuming the section of the Council's Local Plan – "Community and other uses within Residential areas – Places of Worship" – is still relevant then such section states

"the convenience of a location close to the community has to be balanced against the adverse impacts on a neighbourhood which inevitably arise from a use involving a large number of people". This is particularly relevant as I am sure the number using the prayer centre will be many times more than the applicants suggest.

Another part of such section states

"in the case of conversions and changes of use, the premises should be located so that no undue loss of amenity to neighbouring dwellings result" and also

"A site which draws traffic into minor residential streets is unlikely to be acceptable"

On the basis of all 3 of the above statements this application should be refused.

Traffic

The proposed use involves traffic proposals which are extremely dangerous to pedestrians, cyclists and other road users. Beardwood Brow is "no entry except for access" but this is constantly flouted and it is a rat run, particularly at school times. Furthermore the police have informed one of my neighbours that they do not have the resources to enforce this restriction. Beardwood Brow as it borders this property is very narrow (single vehicle width), without a surfaced usable footpath and frequently vehicles are backed up and blocking Beardwood. The proposed use will greatly exacerbate the dangers as there will be an

enormous increase in traffic movements into and out of the premises. The danger is compounded by the proposed new exit onto Beardwood which is to be situated between the very busy junction of Preston New Road and Beardwood Brow, in a place where there is a bus stop at present and other street furniture.

Parking

The application appears to fulfil the Council's guidelines on parking spaces but the plan of such spaces seems very "tight" and, as the existing opening to Beardwood Brow is still to be used as an entrance and an exit, it will be very difficult if not impossible to turn a vehicle round within the curtilage of the property. This fact, combined with the large numbers of worshippers which I expect to use the premises means that there will be overspill parking. In this respect there is very limited parking available on Beardwood Brow (about 3 spaces near our house which are often in use by others) and Beardwood Fold is a private road. Beardwood itself is very busy and there are bus stops on each side of the road near the property. In addition there is presently dangerous parking on Beardwood (presumably by people resident at or visiting the apartments opposite) and an increase in parking on Beardwood can only add to the dangers.

Noise

The noise of traffic movements, conversations and car doors banging from 5 am to midnight will be unacceptably intrusive to neighbouring properties including our own.

In Summary

If planning consent was granted this would be an inappropriate use in a residential area, would radically increase the danger to other road users, particularly pedestrians and school children, and I ask the Planning Committee to refuse the application.

It would be totally unacceptable for the Committee to grant this application subject to conditions as there is no way any such conditions could be enforced. A good example of this is the planning consent for 7 Whinney Lane (to which the applicants refer) and in particular condition 6. This states that a car parking scheme should be submitted for approval within 28 days of 27 April 2017 and implemented within 2 months of approval. At present the proposed car park is not used as such and largely appears to be used for refuse disposal.

Finally, if this application is successful, it will set a precedent to the effect that any detached house in the Borough could easily become a prayer centre, something which would be equally unacceptable.

I understand that, assuming the section of the Council's Local Plan – "Community and other uses within Residential areas – Places of Worship" – is still relevant then such section states

"the convenience of a location close to the community has to be balanced against the adverse impacts on a neighbourhood which inevitably arise from a use involving a large number of people". This is particularly relevant as I am sure the number using the prayer centre will be many times more than the applicants suggest.

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"A site which draws traffic into minor residential streets is unlikely to be acceptable"

Continued overleaf

Objection Mrs S.M. Packer, 2 Park Lodge, Beardwood, Blackburn

Dear Claire Booth,

I met up with you
on Thursday 19/10/17. I am writing
to you to make an objection about a
Planning Application reference 10/17/1173
Re a Beardwood Muslim worship group
for the dwelling to be a local prayer
facility (class D1) + self catering flat (C3)

with associated alterations to form
doors, Car Parking + access at 55
Beardwood Brow, Blackburn BB2 7AT.

Continued overleaf

I visited the plans for the mentioned changes and my complaint is the EXIT onto Beardwood.

Currently the junction is a very busy and near accidents occur frequently. As a pedestrian who regularly uses the pavements and needs to cross the road - it is worrying enough without another Exit.

Objection Brian Weatherburn, 7 Park Lodge, Beardwood, Blackburn

Sent from my huddersfield Dear Sir, As Owners Occupiers of 7 Park Lodge, Beardwood. Blackburn.BB2 7FN,
We wish to object to the planning application above.

The grounds of our objection are as follows:

The above property is a private dwelling house and as such should always remain so, no change of use should be considered.

We feel this application if successful would be very detrimental to the area and would create massive problems particularly with traffic.

As no doubt you will be aware the road is very busy with traffic entering the Beardwood area. The noise created by cars parking on the roadsides near 2 bus stops and the proposed exit from the site is in our opinion too close to the major Preston New Road. Only some 20 to 30 yards before the double yellow lines and a cycle track joining Preston New Road. This will be an accident waiting to happen.

Traffic entering the site on Beardwood Brow have only approx. 12 ft carriageway (single track). Over a speed bump and about 25 yards before the entrance to Number 55.

The Noise created by the traffic will be very detrimental to the people living close by as the building will be open 5.00a.m. till midnight 365 days a year.

We trust that common sense will prevail and the application will be refused.

Continued overleaf

Dear Claire, Further to our previous e mails and in reply to your letter of 21st February. We wish to reiterate our previous objections to this application. It is mainly based on our concerns re the traffic problems already outlined to you and the noise and inconvenience caused by the numbers of potential visitors. As you know we have experienced this problem already at the end of January when we called the Lancs Police regarding the horrendous traffic problems at the unofficial opening day !!!

Objection AB & W Egerton. 15 Park Lodge, Beardwood, Blackburn

We are writing to you to advise you of our objection to the recently submitted planning application Reference 10/17/1173 – the change of use from a dwelling to local prayer facility (class D) and self – contained flat (class C3) with associated alterations to form doors, car parking and access.

Our objections are based on the grounds of 1) the inevitable increase in traffic movement in the localised area of 55 Beardwood Brow and the proposed new access point on Beardwood very close to the junction with Preston New Road. The entrance and exit to Park Lodge, which is opposite 55 Beardwood Brow is on a blind left hand corner from Preston New Road and any additional traffic will make it hazardous for residents negotiating in and out of Park Lodge.

2) The additional extra noise created by cars stopping and starting and doors opening and banging shut plus the raised voices of people coming and going at five different times of day would not be acceptable in a quiet residential area.

3) The proposed site is a residential site and always has been and any change would adversely effect the privacy of amenity to the adjoining properties.

continued overleaf

Objection M Patel, Kylemore, Beardwood Brow, Blackburn

Application Reference: [10/17/1173](#)

I, as a resident of Kylemore Beardwood Brow, strongly oppose planning application for the conversion of 55 Beardwood Brow as a dwelling to local prayer facility (Class D1) and self-contained flat (Class C3) with associated alterations to form doors, car parking and access.

My concerns are:

- 1) potential congestion of vehicles owing to the existing road having the inability accommodate vehicles in opposite directions at the same time while also potentially endangering the safety of pedestrians
- 2) Non-existent of pedestrian pathways
- 3) Blind spots at the junction connecting Beardwood Fold, Beardwood Brow and Beardwood route, in particular the junction connecting Beardwood route and Beardwood Brow
- 4) Prayer times constantly changing with morning prayers sitting around peak hours in Autumn / Winter which will further and unnecessarily add to existing traffic numbers - this is also an issue with evening prayers also sitting around peak hours
- 5) Below existing nearby facilities for daily prayers can be easily accessed from Beardwood and Lammack areas:

Whinney Lane Prayer Room

Shah Jalal Mosque at the junction of Lynwood Road and Revidge Road which is less than a minute walk from Beardwood Brow

Masjd-e-Raza, [29 Goodshaw Avenue, Pleckgate, BB1 8PF](#)

I want to reiterate again the importance of vehicle and pedestrian safety in the vicinity due to its existing infrastructure not capable of coping increased traffic numbers.

In conclusion, it is impractical to make use of 55 Beardwood Brow as a local prayer facility (Class D1) and self-contained flat (Class C3) with associated alterations to form doors, car parking and access.

Continued overleaf

Objection Nicola Ward, Wesley, 47 Beardwood Brow, Blackburn

Re. Application Reference: 10/17/1173
Change of use from dwelling to local prayer facility
55 Beardwood Brow, Blackburn, BB2 7AT

I am writing to register my strong objection to the above application.

I understand that I can only object on issues against planning regulations. I do however feel strongly that the decision makers have a professional and moral responsibility to take on board the wider implications of the proposed development.

If this application is approved, it is setting a precedent that any detached dwelling in the Borough could be made subject to the same change of use. 55 Beardwood Brow is for sale on the open market as a dwelling. We are not considering here re-use of a dilapidated building or disused site.

My two main areas of objection are road safety and detrimental impact on the residential character of the area.

Road safety/traffic issues

The building stands on the corner of Beardwood and Beardwood Brow and is just 100 metres from the busy junction with Preston New Road. Access to the building is via Beardwood Brow. Beardwood Brow is a single track **access only** road with no pavements. As such, it is a minor residential street. According to Blackburn with Darwen's document "Community and other uses in residential areas", the section on places of worship states "**a site which draws traffic into minor residential streets is unlikely to be acceptable**".

I note that the plan provides for 12 parking spaces. It would take considerable tight manouvering for 12 cars to park up. Cars will naturally be displaced on to the road, particularly those arriving at the last minute.

Beardwood itself is the main access from Preston New Road on to the Beardwood and Lammack estates and is busy at all times. Beardwood Brow is used as a rat run for people from the estates taking their children to school and as a resident, there are times of the day when it is

Continued overleaf

almost impossible as a resident to reverse off the drive. Since moving on to the Brow in December 2016, my husband and I have contacted both the Council and the police about the deliberate flouting of the access only designation, only to be informed there are no resources to police it. Similarly, Tyrers coaches use Beardwood and The Coppice to execute 3 point turns after dropping children off at Westholme.

The right turn into Beardwood Brow approaching from Preston New Road/Beardwood is tight and has to be taken slowly in case there is already a car coming down the Brow. One has to wait at the bottom of the Brow until the other car has passed. To potentially add further vehicles to this is madness. For pedestrians, there is no pavement and they will be in jeopardy. Any cars parked on Beardwood on either side make this right turn even more hazardous as one has to move across the carriageway to execute the turn with restricted view of what may be coming the other way along Beardwood towards Preston New Road.

According to the "Local Plan Part 2 Section 2.22": **As well as overall accessibility, the effect of development on transport considerations also needs to be managed at local level. The overriding aim is to ensure that development is capable of being accessed and serviced safely.**

The applicant has submitted a "Travel Plan". This is no more than a box-ticking exercise based on knowledge of some of the reasons for failure of previous applications. It is hard to accept the details as credible and I am certain nobody will monitor and control what actually happens if the application succeeds.

Detrimental impact on character and amenity

The property in question is a residence in a residential area. There is no other development in close proximity. We are in a high Council Tax band because we supposedly live on a quiet, leafy, access only, residential lane.

To quote again from the "Local Plan Part 2 Section 2.15": **A key factor in people's quality of life is the character of the area they live in. Many people make a deliberate choice to live in a particular area because of the types of houses there or the area's physical appearance** etc.

I chose to live where I do, attracted by access only, residential properties only, no facilities whatsoever. If I wanted a shop, community centre, church, takeaway or prayer room, I would have moved near one.

I assume the applicant and his 30 (???) chosen few also chose to live here knowing there was no Islamic prayer facility on the doorstep. Their plans would be detrimental to the character of the area. There is no regard for neighbours and their right to enjoy a quiet residential area. This endeavour is not for the good of the wider community and is utterly divisive rather than promoting cohesion.

There are 45 mosques in Blackburn with Darwen, some of which are no more than a few minutes away.

The applicant stated in a public meeting that the hours of opening would be between 7.00am and 11.00pm. The application is for 5.00am to midnight. This is underhand. No doubt if the application is approved, the hours will be restricted to 7.00am to 11.00pm in a bid to fleece the residents that we've had a small "win".

There absolutely *will* be noise and disturbance – car engines, car doors, and voices at times when residents not attending the prayers are trying to sleep. It is unacceptable.

Having described the two main areas of valid objection, I now wish to discuss the:

Credibility of the application

The applicant has been trying to gain approval for a prayer facility in this immediate area for some 10 years, previously on the site of the old Beardwood Garden Centre car park. It started out big – a 3 storey community centre with prayer room, library, rooms for meetings and functions etc. Then it was pared down for the second application. This was all under the banner of "Beardwood and Lammack Muslim Society". Now we see this application, under the banner of "Beardwood Muslim Worship Group" and for just 30 people living in a catchment area of 800m. How credible is this? I believe that securing change of use is the tip of the iceberg for further applications for expansion. The applicant uses in his application the fact that there are 1869 residents of the Muslim faith on Beardwood and Lammack. How is this application providing for the community? It isn't. It is providing for a select few (for now at least, leading to the conclusion that there will be future expansion).

The whole enterprise will cost in excess of £500,000 and will create two part-time jobs. For 30 people?

The travel plan produced is nothing short of bluff and bluster, trying to tick boxes to make the application fit. I won't even try to pick it apart as that would be a whole essay in itself. It is spurious. The one point I do wish to highlight is 2.4.4, claiming "there is a significant amount of kerb-side parking along the property frontage and along significant sections of Beardwood Brow and Beardwood" – this is UNTRUE

Let us now look at the examples of other facilities given to support the application. This information is freely available on the internet, based on the 2011 census.

Pringle Street – predominantly terraced housing. Of 239 residents, 210 are Muslim
Leamington Road – predominantly terraced housing. Of 449 residents, 346 are Muslim
Granville Road – predominantly terraced housing. Of 540 residents, 440 are Muslim
Logwood Street – predominantly terraced housing. Of 458 residents, 407 are Muslim

There is no precedent for anywhere like Beardwood.

The "Zazz" takeaway is located a mile away from 55 Beardwood Brow. When the Lammack estate was built, there was a small row of shops built to serve the estate. Zazz now occupies one of them. People choose whether or not to buy a house near a takeaway.

The Whinney Lane Prayer Room

The approval of this facility and its' usage has been heavily quoted by the applicant for 55 Beardwood Brow. Any figures quoted in the current submission with regard to times of attendance at Whinney Lane, numbers attending, mode of travel, direction of travel etc. are complete red herrings and do nothing whatsoever to support this application.

Approved in April 2017, retrospectively, the Whinney Lane location fits with Core Strategy that services will be co-located forming community hubs. The room itself is above a convenience store and pharmacy. Within its' immediate vicinity are a public house, a Methodist church, a sports centre, a primary school and the Old Blacks club and function room.

In fact, having seen this approval granted, the applicant for 55 Beardwood Brow has jumped on the back of it to "strike while the iron's hot" and has employed: Inspire Planning Solutions for the Planning and Design and Access Statement; AB acoustics for the Environmental Noise Assessment; azh Consultancy for Transport Statement. Surprise surprise, these are the same three consultants used by the Whinney Lane applicant. The current submissions are merely a cut and paste exercise, using the Whinney Lane scenario and tweaking it here and there to try and make it fit.

IT DOES NOT FIT in this case. It is not serving the community in its' literal sense (ie a body of people with something in common), it is not contributing to an existing community hub of

services, it is not improving community cohesion or providing a "much needed" facility – AND the location is in no way comparable.

To conclude, this attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of the planners/planning committee is transparently littered with inaccuracies, untruths, irrelevant comparisons etc. and does not fool residents set to be seriously affected by it.

Please acknowledge receipt of this objection and keep me informed of any public meetings.

Objection Andrew Ward. Wesley, 47 Beardwood Brow, Blackburn

RE:Planning application ref: 10/17/1173 proposed development of 55 Beardwood Brow, BB2 7AT.

Having received a letter from Gavin Prescott dated 09/10/2017 in which comments are invited.

I oppose the proposed development and change of use based on the following.

1. Beardwood Brow was designed as a residential area (circa 1960) before the development of broader housing on the Beardwood estate (circa 1980) with other facilities carefully planned and developed into the overall neighbourhood development over the years. These include a Garden Centre (which since its origin had residential property built on the site, strengthening the residential emphasis and with full council backing) Shops and a Golf Course along with Allotments. These facilities are sited to cause least disruption to residential, amenity and traffic considerations. The overall plan was to encourage people to invest in the residential area of Beardwood with Lammack. Personally I moved Towns to come and work in Public Service and live in Blackburn. The current level of development is at saturation and there may be some capacity for change of use where existing commercial development exists and changes are common. Indeed a prayer room now exists over the shop on Whinney Lane and seems unobtrusive because of appropriate location.
2. The site for change is situated at a confluence next to a busy junction between a busy arterial road and the only sensible access to adjacent residential property in Beardwood, and access to Beardwood Brow on access only designation. Increased traffic, vehicular or pedestrian will increase the risk of accident and or disruption. This site is inappropriate for its proposed use.
3. There is no appetite for other facilities in the immediate neighbourhood around number 55, and most owners of property (especially Beardwood Brow) bought property on the attraction of Residential property only. A straw poll of my neighbours and local resident group has confirmed this. Over 40 people attended a recent Beardwood with Lammack Residents meeting raised in opposition to any change of use.
4. There are adequate local facilities of this nature already in existence. Namely a Mosque at top end of Beardwood Brow/Revidge Road and a prayer room over the shop on Whinney Lane. The applicant and supporters bought property in the neighbourhood knowing there was no prayer room at number 55.

Continued overleaf

5. The proposed change of use will promote increased traffic and a move from 2-4 parking spaces within the property to 12 is self evident. Some people will also be "ferried" to and from in line with other road use patterns at local facilities including schools. This does not make sense on and around an already congested arterial route into and out of Blackburn or within a residential area. The property 55 Beardwood is in both these categories and sits on an access only road designation on Beardwood Brow.

6. The application for a prayer room is the first step of further and larger development, and the eventual aim will be a mosque. Why else would the applicants and supporters spend in excess of £500,000 to acquire and develop the site. It is not for the use of 30 or less praying people with a "live in" Imam, but for a larger strategy with more far reaching pressures within the neighbourhood. Perhaps there is remote sponsorship it is unlikely from my experience that other faiths could afford to spend such amounts for 30 people.

7. Use of any changed facilities cannot be "policed" officially in line with what is claimed or approved by the Planning Committee. Particularly with numbers of users and traffic conditions. This is self evident with both the Local Council and Police abdicating responsibility for designated access only roads due to they claim resourcing issues. It is dangerous at times to try and walk along Beardwood Brow. Yet the Council can afford gated back streets in certain areas. The existing residents pay a premium for living in the quiet residential area and yet the designation of access only on Beardwood Brow is not enforced. So what exactly do residents get in services, amenities or anything else that are different from lower Council Tax payers and that justify inflated rates?

8. " Self" regulation and self policing of traffic (as mentioned in a meeting by the applicant) is causing problems to the wider community at sites like Pleasington Cemetery (a Council Facility) any one attending or close to the site at one of the larger burials or religious celebrations here will have experience of this disruption. Blackburn Rovers are compelled to pay for police presence for traffic and security reasons. But it seems other organisations are exempt at large gatherings.

Continued overleaf

9. The applicants claim over 1800 local muslims and yet only 30 will attend and walk to the facility. Why and how will they discriminate? It does not make any sense to quote 1800 and then say it justifies just 30 users? Where will the other 1770 people go to pray? At the applicants own consultation meeting where local people were invited to hear the plan it was stated that each Prayer Room, Mosque, Madrasa, were like separate religions and that's why locals did not want to use existing prayer facilities. Maybe Asda or Tesco should use this "tribal" strategy when seeking planning permission? It does not promote cohesion. Personally I don't need another prayer room at the end of the street. We have one already at the Revidge Road end.
10. Transport claims are spurious, at a local meeting one of the applicants claimed his wife drove up Beardwood Brow to take children to the Mosque at the junction of Beardwood Brow and Revidge Road despite the restriction of access only and the close proximity of the Mosque. No walking involved on their own admission and no respect for the law.

Continued overleaf

11. The claims made in this and previous supporting information for approval are not accurate, are misleading, contradictory and are not substantiated or are unbelievable. As an example are people really going to walk in Blackburns high levels of inclement weather to attend this facility? They drive everywhere else. The local school is as good example of this. Why have attendance figures and usage been scaled down from previous applications? Also residents attending recently at a local meeting organised by the applicant were told usage would be between 7.00 a.m. And 10.00 p.m. This in the application translated to 5.00 a.m. To 12.00 p.m. There is evidence of deceit in this approach.
12. Adverse traffic conditions and behaviours are already being experienced along Preston New Road at the Revidge/Buncer Lane Junction and close to the new pedestrian crossing. Some drivers using these facilities drive dangerously because they want to cut across traffic, jumping queues with right of way, and without reference to the highway code and law. This is well known to people using the roads here daily. There has been a school in this vicinity for over 50 years and yet the problems stated are recent in my experience. So why would a new "focused" facility be any different and what is the cause of these new behaviours? The Council claim the priority is safety for such pedestrian crossings and yet the facility users act in a dangerous and irresponsible way.
13. Adverse traffic conditions and behaviours are already being experienced along Beardwood Brow. This non pedestrian (no footpaths) access only road is used as a "rat run" particularly at school opening and closing times and other "rush hour" periods by people wishing to avoid the dangers and deadlocks caused along Preston New Road. They risk being fined for selfish ends. Personally I don't use Beardwood Brow as a thoroughfare even living here. I use the same access route in and out via Beardwood even if going to Revidge.
14. Adverse traffic conditions prevail along Preston New Road in the morning "rush hour" with traffic tailing back as far as Yew Tree Drive Drive on some occasions. Traffic lights should be installed at the Beardwood Road, Preston New Road Junction to help traffic flow for all users. Especially those wanting to turn right and use ring roads rather than "rat runs"
15. Adverse traffic conditions are experienced as Beardwood is used as a traffic thoroughfare and turning point for local coach operators. I regularly see coaches blocking the road as they reverse into The Coppice.

Continued overleaf

16. Previous planning applications have failed for a variety of reasons over at least a 10 year period. So there has never been a supportable need for such development in the residential parts of this neighbourhood. The land adjacent to the historic garden centre has been designated amenity land and so strengthens the residential emphasis and design of the area. The people living in Beardwood with Lammack chose to live in a residential area without "doorstep" or end of every street facilities. This includes the applicant and supporters.
17. The last planning application approval for this facility indicates that the planning committee do not trust and know better than the town's officers and experts in planning. By disregarding planning officer advice the decision to approve development can only be politically motivated and was not a planning decision on planning matters. It would appear Blackburn's idea of multiculturalism is for existing

culture to step aside for another in all circumstances and seemingly at the behest of one politician with power. This is a corruption of process surely! The old saying "Power corrupts....." springs to mind. It certainly brings a poor reputation and image to Blackburn that some of us don't deserve.

18. The Council will not be promoting Community Cohesion if this application is granted. It has designed and designated the site in question as Residential and has more recently increased this emphasis with development of housing and amenity on a once commercial site within a few metres of number 55 Beardwood Brow. This has served the neighbourhood well for over 50 years and people have made large investments in property on the residential basis. It will be divisive and discriminatory. I will support an application in the main applicants street if they so wish! But they don't want the disruption. That's for someone else to suffer! It is a completely selfish submission to benefit a handful of "selected" residents and the applicants, if the figures quoted are to be believed! It is not a Community or Neighbourhood beneficial Development at all. More self serving and tribal in nature with sinister political undertones.

I would be grateful for a receipt for this letter if at all possible, a return e-mail saying received would do. But only if our local MP approves of course!

Objection Grant Magowan, Beardwood Old Hall, Beardwood Fold, Blackburn

Dear Planners,

My name is Grant Magowan I live at Beardwood Old Hall, Beardwood Fold, BLACKBURN, Lancs BB2 7AS. My garage which i use daily is accessed via Beardwood Fold and I own Beardwood Fold Road. Beardwood Fold is a cul de Sac which wasn't always the case, there used to be two entrances to it however this was changed maybe 25 or more years ago, this may not be apparent to you as maps have not been updated. The entrance to Beardwood Fold is directly opposite 55 Beardwood Brow therefore I consider myself as a near neighbour to this proposal. There are 11 houses on Beardwood Fold that have it as their sole access by vehicle, these along with myself must be considered by you as near neighbours to the proposal.

I object to this proposal as I believe it will have a devastating impact on the quality of life to myself and the other people living on Beardwood Fold. Put simply due to the increase in traffic in and out of the proposed Prayer Room and the additional cars parked on Beardwood Fold and nearby roads occasionally we will not be able to access or leave our property, occasionally the bins will not be emptied, currently to collect the bins the bin lorry reverses down Beardwood fold, they may not be able to do this manoeuvre due to the additional cars parked and traffic congestion, the odd delivery will be missed, due this road being a cul de sac delivery vans often have to reverse up and down it and perhaps the odd emergency vehicle will not be able to reach its destination on Beardwood Fold. For a while maybe once twice or more a day Beardwood fold will be blocked. For me I think this amounts to a huge loss of amenity caused solely should this change of use application be allowed therefore I object to it.

I also object to it as its use will be out of character to the area. It will attract far more car traffic than any other house in the area, as such it will increase the noise levels at times of day which are now fairly quiet such as early mornings and late evenings. This I think will be very detrimental to the quality of life to me and its other neighbours.

I also object to it being passed due to restrictions being applied with the notion they will curb its use and traffic generated. I believe in time the users will flout restrictions that they will disappear into obscurity and the site will evolve into a daily routine of traffic chaos and noise rendering the area a bit of a nightmare to live in, at least compared to how it is now.

Objection Ron & Phyllis Banks, Elston House, Beardwood Brow, Blackburn

Re : 55 Beardwood Brow Blackburn BB2 7AT

We are writing to object to the granting of planning permission for a prayer centre at 55 Beardwood Brow which is just a few doors from our house.

We have enjoyed living in this quiet residential area for well over 30 years and fear that our last few years will be spoiled by this development.

This is a wholly residential area of mainly nice detached houses and a prayer centre is not consistent with such an area.

Beardwood Brow is already a very busy narrow road as to which access is meant to be restricted and the increase in numbers of vehicles using the site will only aggravate the congestion and danger. The new exit onto Beardwood will also represent an increased danger.

The hours of proposed use from 5 am until midnight are completely excessive and particularly early in the morning and late at night will be very intrusive.

We fear that additional cars will be parked in dangerous places.

All in all we ask that this application be refused.

Objection Eric Crook, Beardwood Lodge, Beardwood Fold, Blackburn

I wish to register my objection to the above Planning Application on the grounds that the proposed plan is not suitable for the site. I wish to make it plain at the outset that I am not objecting to the fact that the proposed change of use is to an Islamic prayer centre. I should object just as strongly to any similar application on behalf of any other religion or business.

This area is a long established residential area and the introduction of this scheme is bound to impact adversely upon the surrounding residents both from the proposed hours of opening and the inevitable increase in the already severe traffic problems of the area.

The traffic problems are acute at rush hour in the mornings and evenings, especially during school terms. Beardwood is used as a rat run by vehicles from the Lammack area trying to avoid the long traffic queues towards the Revidge traffic lights. Also vehicles from the Preston side turn into Beardwood for the same reason. Even away from the rush hours, Beardwood is used by a large number of drivers as a race track with no consideration for any other users trying to get onto Beardwood from their houses or flats. The overhanging bushes on the side of the road opposite Fir Trees also reduce the sight line.

At the same time, drivers are attempting to enter or leave Beardwood Brow which is a single width road for most of its length. It is supposed to be access only for residents, but again it is used as part of the rat run. Inconsiderate drivers turn into Beardwood Brow from Beardwood from both directions without making sure that there are no cars coming the other way. Very few drivers are willing to back up to sort out the mess. When it is considered that there are usually up to 6 vehicles parked outside the flats thus reducing the road width on Beardwood, the jams have to be seen to be believed. We live almost directly opposite to the bottom of Beardwood Brow and see all the above happening on a daily basis. The whole area from the junction with Preston New Road to the junction with Beardwood Brow is an accident waiting to happen.

The proposed times of opening between 5am and midnight are completely unacceptable with the slamming of car doors and the revving of engines when local residents are in bed.

I do not understand why the applicants are spending so much money on the proposed development for so few worshippers, particularly when they spent a great deal of money on an abortive similar application some 3 or 4 years ago. I feel that the projected number of worshippers is probably considerably understated, and therefore the likely excess number of cars will simply spill over and

park on Beardwood to add to the potential traffic problems. I do not think that we can expect many worshippers to ~~turn up or~~ walk to the meetings, especially in bad weather.

I do not feel that the new exit directly on to the sharp bend on Beardwood will help in any way, since, in addition to the previously stated problems, there are bus stops on either side of the road, and 2 telephone junction boxes on or close to the corner which appear to require attention from Open Reach fairly frequently.

To sum up, I cannot think of a worse position in Blackburn to operate a Prayer Meeting House.

Objection Beardwood Residents (Planning) Association

Dear Ms Booth

I am Chair of the Beardwood Residents (Planning) Association which body comprises and represents many of the property owners in the Beardwood area and a good number of which are situated close to the above property.

Most owners will be submitting their own objections to the above application but our Association has engaged the services of Avalon Chartered Town Planners of Burnley to report on the specifics of planning policy relating to this application.

Accordingly I am attaching the report from Avalon which highlights many reasons why this application should be refused.

I would also mention that we have also commissioned a Transport report from Mr Alan Davies of Development Transport Planning Consultancy (DTPC) and I expect to submit this report to you by Wednesday 1 November at the latest.

Given that consultation letters were not posted until the 10th October, posted 2nd class and not received until the 12th October, please confirm that the anticipated report from DTPC will receive due consideration. Please also acknowledge receipt of this email and the attachment.

Grant Magowan

Chair

Beardwood Residents (Planning) Association

.....in the matter of

Report of Objection to submitted planning application to Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council that relates to: -

.....Change of use from dwelling to local prayer facility (Class D1) and self contained flat (class C3) with associated alterations to form doors, car parking and access.

.....site at:

55 Beardwood Brow, BLACKBURN. BB2 7AT.

.....reference for the Local planning Authority : -

10/17/1173.

Representations submitted on behalf of the Beardwood Residents (Planning) Association

.....as at : **24 October 2017**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Avalon Town Planning Limited is instructed by the Beardwood Residents (Planning) Association (the '*association*') to lodge an objection on their behalf to the duly made planning application at 55 Beardwood Brow, Blackburn BB2 7AT submitted to Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (the '*Council*'). The planning application is made in respect of the '*change of use from dwelling to local prayer centre (Class D1) and self-contained flat (class C3)*', (the '*application*').

The association's objection is in response to neighbour consultation on the application by letter sent by the Council dated 9 October 2017. The date given in that letter for comments on the application is '*within 21 days of the date of this letter*', giving a final date of 29 October 2017. The association points out however that those neighbour consultation letters were sent by post 2nd class, taking three days to arrive. Therefore, whilst every effort is made by the association to meet this stated deadline, the Council should allow this submission as being duly made even if that deadline is missed. This is common with standard consultation practice of planning applications that the period stated on the consultation letters for comments to be made is not a 'cut off' point for the submission of comments.

The association is made up of residents living locally to the planning application site. Any further details of the association can be obtained from, Mr Ian Longworth of Thornlea, Beardwood Brow, Blackburn. BB2 7AT, who is a leading member of the association.

The comments made in this report are based on the application submission plans and accompanying documents and information lodged with the Council and as made publically available on the Council's website. The comments are made independently to the association with the express intention that they form the association's planning objections to the application. It is not intended for any other purposes and therefore no responsibility can be accepted to any third party for its use of a part of the whole of its content. No part of this statement should be reproduced or used in any other document or circular without the prior approval of its authors as to the form and content in which it may occur, as the planning references used may not be appropriate for other purposes.

An inspection of the site was carried out from the surrounding public highway with Mr Longworth of the association on 19 October 2017. The application site was not inspected internally.

2. KEY POINTS SUMMARY

Planning Policy – the adopted Core Strategy does not contain policies that specifically mention prayer facilities. Those facilities do however fall within class D1. Such uses are defined as non residential institutions that include a range of uses from schools to health centres. Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy sets out that such uses which provide facilities and services will be co-located where possible by creating community hubs so that such services are located close to one another with the first preference for their location being close to other facilities. The application proposals are the exact opposite of that generic policy approach in conflict with policy CS11.

- the adopted Local Plan part 2 contains the detailed policies for the area. Policy 1 relates to design. It asks new development to *'make a positive contribution to the local area'* and that new development must *'enhance and reinforce the established character of the locality.'* This area is an established higher market and executive housing area, such as is encouraged and envisaged by policy CS7 of the Core Strategy. The proposed use is a non residential use in direct conflict with that established character. The application is also therefore contrary to this adopted policy of the development plan.

The application should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This report identifies conflict with the development plan and therefore the application should be refused.

Material considerations can indicate a decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. In this case the application appears to promote serving people in the 'local area' as such a reason. However that approach to service provision is not sustainable, as pointed out by policy CS11 of the Core Strategy. No other reasons appear to be put forward in the application to make a decision other than in accordance with the development plan.

Character/amenity/nuisance/disturbance. - the application is presented in its supporting material as being low key and therefore compatible with the existing adjacent residential properties. However, a simple analysis of the comings and goings give a different picture. As an existing four bedroom residential property, there will be 3 cars, arriving and leaving four times a day i.e. 12 movements. The application has 11 parking spaces for the prayer room and one for the flat. The prayers are five times a day, that equates to 110 car movements per day for the prayer hall, 4 movements per day for the flat. That is 114 car movements (arrivals and departures) per day. This compares to the existing

12 movements per day. That is almost a 10 fold increase in car movements in a wholly residential area. The comings and goings with associated noise of car doors, engines people arriving and leaving is intrusive in this particularly quiet area, exacerbated by the early morning and midnight operation times every day of the week. This amount of potential activity is not appropriate in a wholly residential area and the application should be refused on amenity and disturbance grounds, especially as persons using the facility arrive and leave at the same time.

Sustainability – the application puts it that few people will arrive by car because most will walk. However there is no evidence to support such a stance. The car parking ratio is in place because of empirical surveys applied to all uses and it cannot be otherwise assumed than that if the car parking spaces are provided, then they will be used, especially in inclement weather and for convenience. The prayer room use is sessional i.e. at fixed times five times a day. It is reasonable to assume that persons using the facility five times a day will not walk all five times. The sustainability claims of the application are not therefore substantiated. It is more sustainable to co-locate such uses so that facilities and transport can be shared. That is not the case here and so the proposed use does not achieve sustainability objectives.

Conditions of Limitation – the application is presented in restrictive terms by a limitation of use as it proposes no Madressa or provision for ceremonies or events. However, should any permission granted impose conditions limiting such uses, the question to be addressed is not whether such a condition can be imposed, but what happens if subsequently an application is made to vary it or remove it or if there is a breach of its terms? These matters could not be reasonably enforced or controlled by planning condition, as they would unreasonably restrict the operation of the use, contrary to the applied tests for conditions. The application should not therefore be approved with such conditions and should be refused. The application recognises that without such restrictions the use is inappropriate in a residential area such as this.

3. THE PLANNING POLICY POSITION

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise¹ In the case of Blackburn with Darwen Council, there is an up to date Core Strategy, adopted in 2011 and local plan Part 2, also adopted in 2011. The application does not make any claim that the development plan is out of date or is in conflict with the guidance to be taken into account in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The relevant policies of the adopted Core Strategy are :

Policy CS 11. This relates to the provision of facilities and services. The policy does not mention prayer uses specifically, but as a class D1 (assembly and leisure) use, the policy applies. The thrust of policy CS11 is to co-locate facilities and services where possible so as to create 'community hubs'.

Policy 11 of the Local plan Part 2 expects all development to be of a high standard of design requiring it to demonstrate a good understanding of the wider context and make a positive contribution to the local area. In regard to these points the policy has regard to: character, townscape, the public realm, movement, sustainability, diversity and colour.

The application is isolated from any other facility or service and would be, in effect, a standalone facility in a high quality residential area. Its provision would not promote co-location as required by policy CS11 of the adopted Core Strategy. The reason for co-location is one of achieving sustainability objectives. Supporting paragraph 9.6 of the Core Strategy makes it clear that '*where providers are seeking to develop a new facility, our first preference for their location will be close to other facilities.*' The application submission does not explain whether this process to site selection has taken place. Rather the application states that the use will be close to existing users at Beardwood. This is not quantified by numbers or locations and so is impossible to verify. However, even if it were the case, the source of users and their locations cannot be controlled or regulated. That is why policy CS11 exists, to ensure shared accessible and sustainable locations. The application therefore fails to meet with or to comply with this adopted development plan policy.

The key character feature of this locality is its high quality residential environment. Policy 11 of the adopted Local Plan Part 2 requires new development to '*make a positive contribution to the local*

area and that new development must *'enhance and reinforce the established character of the locality.'* This application achieves neither of these things as it is a non domestic use out of keeping with that established residential character. The amount of car parking required is not residential in nature, the comings and goings five times a day for seven days a week are not residential in character. There is no positive contribution to the character of the area proposed. Therefore the terms of policy 11 of Local Plan part 2 are not met.

The application refers to the adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance *Community & Other Uses Within Residential Areas (SPG)*. This however predates the development plan. It is also in conflict with the approach of the Core Strategy that now seeks to co-locate such uses as this. Therefore little weight can be applied to the SPG in the determination of the application as planning law requires determinations to be made in accordance with the development plan. Notwithstanding this however, the SPG recognises that such uses have *'...large number of cars in the vicinity at times of attendance are commonplace'*. It also states that *'the convenience of a location close to a community has to be balanced against the adverse impacts on a neighbourhood that inevitably arise from large numbers of people.'* In this locality, given the high quality residential location, those impacts are more pronounced than they would be in a mixed use area.

4 THE POINTS OF OBJECTION

CHARACTER AND AMENITY OF THE AREA

This is a well established high quality residential environment with no non residential uses within the environs of this application site. The application is presented as a low key use by making provision for a *'a small number of residents of Muslim faith who reside in the surrounding residential street.'* and that whilst the maximum number of users on site is 30 persons capacity, *'the regular number of attendees will be lower, around 12 in number'*. The comparison of the potential activity of the proposed use is not a comparison with a mosque or any other use but with the existing use on the application site, which is a four bedroom detached house. The existing house requires three car parking spaces. That is 12 movements per day, coming and going. The proposed use has 11 spaces for the prayer rooms. There are five prayer times a day. That is 110 movements per day, comings and goings. The provision of the spaces implies that they will be used and cannot be assumed that, as the application suggests, people will walk to the site. The

comparison of potential movements of the proposed use to the existing use is itself an indicator that the intended use is not in keeping with the established residential character of this location by reason of the amount of potential activity.

In terms of amenity, this refers to the residential amenity of existing adjacent residential properties. Because the locality has only residential properties within it, it presently has a very low ambient noise level with little activity, especially during the evenings and at weekends and Bank Holidays. The establishing of a car park in this environment brings with it potential for significant disturbance, compounded by the early morning, late evening and a seven day week the application proposes with coming and goings five times a day. Noise and disturbance is inevitably caused by congregating people with car doors, engine noises and general activity from people arriving and leaving.

SUSTAINABILITY

The application portends that it will serve people within the local area from those residing on the Beardwood estate and that because of this proximity people will mostly walk, thereby reducing the need to travel by car to attend daily prayers at other locations. The application makes reference to paragraph 70 of National Planning Policy Framework (the *framework*) in support. However paragraph 70 of the framework is aimed at enhancing the sustainability of communities and residential environments. It therefore promotes the use of shared space of existing facilities. This is reflected in the co-location approach of policy CS11 of the Core Strategy. This is a new use and should paragraph 70 of the framework be applied, the application should first show whether the shared use of any existing facilities can be achieved. No such test has been applied in the application. It cannot therefore be claimed to be a sustainable form of development. In terms of car trips, there is no reason to assume that all 11 spaces on the site will be used five times a day. These are not shared trips as this site is not an existing destination point or locality. The aims of sustainability and a reduction in car usage therefore cannot be shown and the application cannot be claimed to be sustainable.

CONDITIONS OF LIMITATION


The application is submitted in limited terms which are that: regular attendees will only be around

12; people will walk as there is a restricted catchment area; the opening hours are not excessive; the use is small scale; the use is not noisy; there is no madressa and there is no amplified call to prayer. It is therefore to be differentiated from a typical mosque. The application therefore recognises that if it were not so limited in its use, it would not be acceptable at this location. However where people come from to use this facility cannot be controlled or regulated. Once established there is no reason to assume that users will not come from further afield, especially if it is easier to drive to and park. As the application points out, parking is available in the surrounding streets. In terms of a limitation of the use by planning conditions, the question to be answered is not whether a condition can be imposed, but what happens when an application is made to vary it or there is a breach of it? If established, it would then become a facility that should be shared according to policy DS11 and paragraph 70 of the framework. Thus it is highly unlikely that the limited use offered will or can be maintained if further use is proposed. It is therefore not appropriate to impose limiting conditions and without such conditions, the impact of the use on the character and amenity of the area is not acceptable.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Planning law requires decisions on planning applications to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, planning policy requires uses such as this to be co-located with other similar uses. The framework seeks to apply shared use of existing facilities such that they can accommodate community facilities in shared space. This application achieves neither of those things and it is therefore contrary to the adopted development plan and Government guidance and should therefore be refused. Locally, this is a high quality residential area and the impacts of the application on the existing adjoining residents is thereby marked by way of the number of cars arriving and leaving the site and the noise nuisance from those comings and goings five times a day at unsocial hours seven days a week. It is our conclusion that the application should not be granted planning permission and that the applicants should look to follow Government guidance and adopted development plan policy and look first to share existing social, recreation or other facility.

Objection Beardwood Residents Group – Transport Note

TECHNICAL NOTE			
from:	ALAN DAVIES	date:	2/11/2017
subject:	PROPOSED Change of use from dwelling to local prayer facility (Class D1) and self contained flat (class C3) with associated car parking and access	file ref:	J898-TN

INTRODUCTION

DTPC have been engaged to review the documents submitted in support of a planning application for the change of use to a Mosque with car parking and revised access.

This Technical Note sets out the response to the information provided from a Highway and Transportation point of view to support and objection from the Beardwood Residents (Planning) Association.

REVIEW OF THE SUBMITTED HIGHWAY REPORT

The report areas reviewed are in italics and responses shown in bold, for any report to be relied on the information should be based on factual information and then an interpretation/view taken.

Preston New Road which provides access to the principal and strategic road network is approximately 100m from the site access. From Preston New Road, access into the site is via Beardwood and then Beardwood Brow. Beardwood can be described as a local distributor road and Beardwood Brow as an access road of residential character. Beardwood Brow benefits from traffic calming measures.

The 100m gives the impression the dwelling is some distance from the A677 which runs from Blackburn Centre to the A59 corridor and then to the M6, it is a key connection. In reality the site is less than 50m away and the proposed new access/exit some 40m away.

The junction with Beardwood is via a right turn ghost island indicating significant turning movements take place to require a safe turn area to be provided.



The area has parked cars around the flats opposite the site, the following image shows this during the half term where movements are acknowledged to be much reduced.



Similarly the peak flows in the half term were 40 two way on the Brow and these increase when schools are in. These are to the south of the site and thus increases the movements passing the site during school activity times.

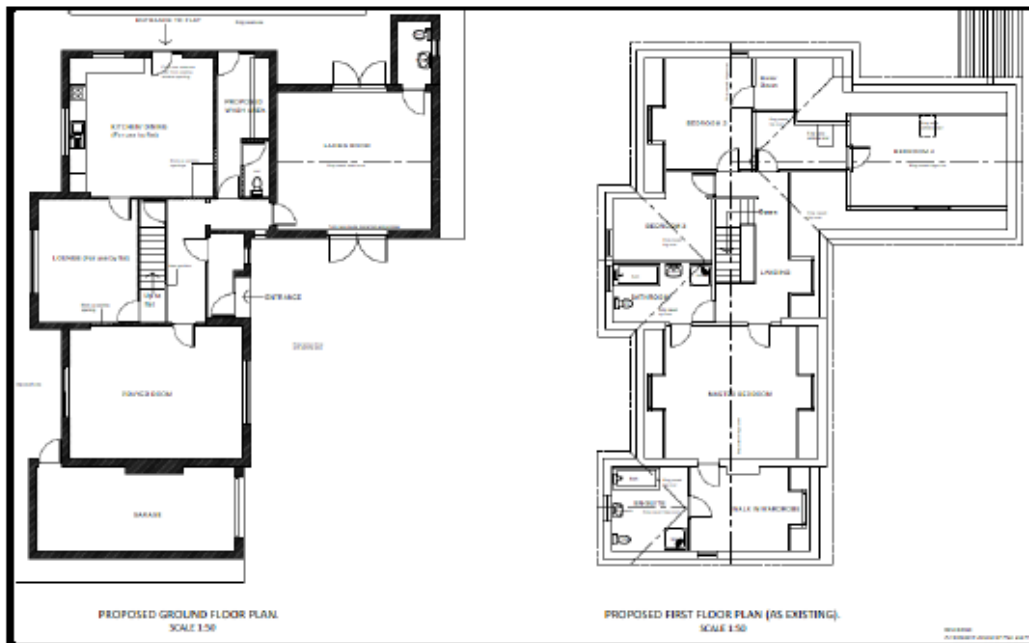


Beardwood Brow is described as a traffic calmed access road of a residential character.

The road is a narrow route of some 460m with intermittent footpath provision, sections where two way flow for cars takes place with a give and take from drivers and long sections where a hgv/car cannot pass each other. This forms the main access to the site.

The site is therefore located on a constrained access, in an area where significant through movements take place and on street parking associated with other uses in the area.

Para 2.2.1 The proposals are to retain the first floor for residential use as well as the kitchen and the dining room on the ground floor. The remainder of the ground floor will be utilised for the prayer facility



The description simply says use of some rooms and the rest would be the flat for the Imam, a 4 bed flat upstairs as such the need for a lounge on the ground floor is unclear and could easily be used by prayers and would be hard to control/enforce. Similarly the garage could be converted with no recourse to planning.

The scale could therefore be higher than set out. It also suggests that only one room at a time would be used for male prayers and ladies would be attending at the same time.

This may be the case for some of the smaller prayers times where attendance is not compulsory but suggested, however Friday prayers are a must attend for the males and thus the likelihood is both rooms will be used.

The rationale for a cap of 30 users is not provided but support by DTPC to other Mosques indicates a 1.2 sqm space per attendee thus for 82 sqm the number is more like 58 people.

This is a noticeable difference in scale and the use of other spaces would increase it further.

Teaching will not take place however how this is to be controlled is hard to understand , teaching is a fundamental part of a Mosque as a community use.

Para 2.3.1 The catchment area of the prayer room will be no more than 800m

This is an arbitrary figure, no evidence basis provided and appears to be used to show a need based on the location of other Mosques locally.

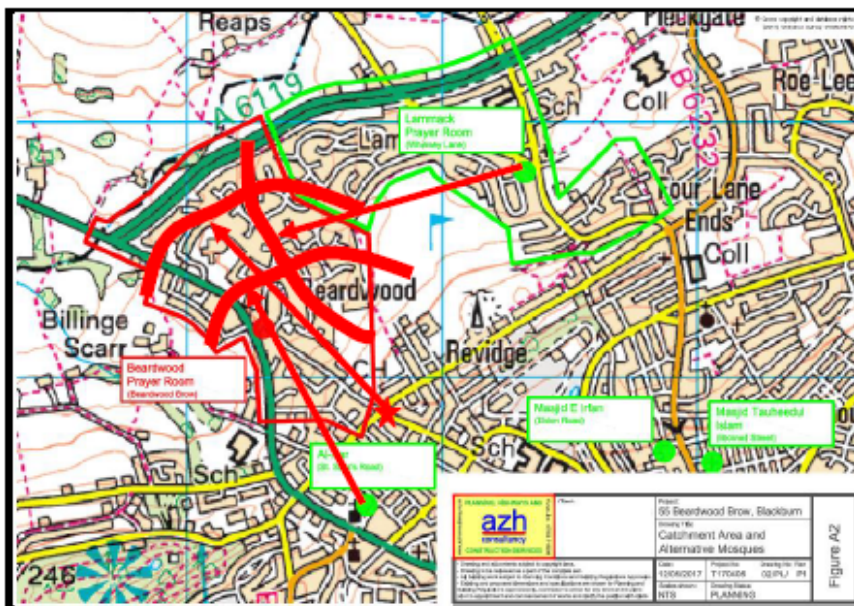
The residential design guide “Manual for Streets” (MfS) advises that “walkable neighbourhoods are typically characterised by having a range of facilities within ten minutes (up to about 800m) walking distance of residential areas...” (ref para 4.4.1). However, this is not regarded as an upper limit in MfS and reference is also made to walking offering “the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2km”. The acceptability of walking trips up to 2km (an approximate 25 minute walk time) is also supported in the IHT document “Providing for Journeys on Foot”

The CIHT provides about journeys on foot. It does not provide a definitive view on distances, but does suggest a preferred maximum. Accepted guidance states that walking is the most important mode of travel at the local level supporting the above statement.

ACCEPTABLE WALKING DISTANCES [INSTITUTE OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION]			
Walking Distance	Local Facilities *	District Facilities**	Other
Desirable	200m	500m	400m
Acceptable	400m	1000m	800m
Preferred Maximum	800m	2000m	1200m

* Includes food shops, public transport, primary schools, crèches, local play areas
 ** Includes employment, secondary schools, health facilities, community / recreation facilities

The Mosque would fall into the community facilities and thus greater distances are acceptable. Using the 1km distance the other local mosque catchments are shown.

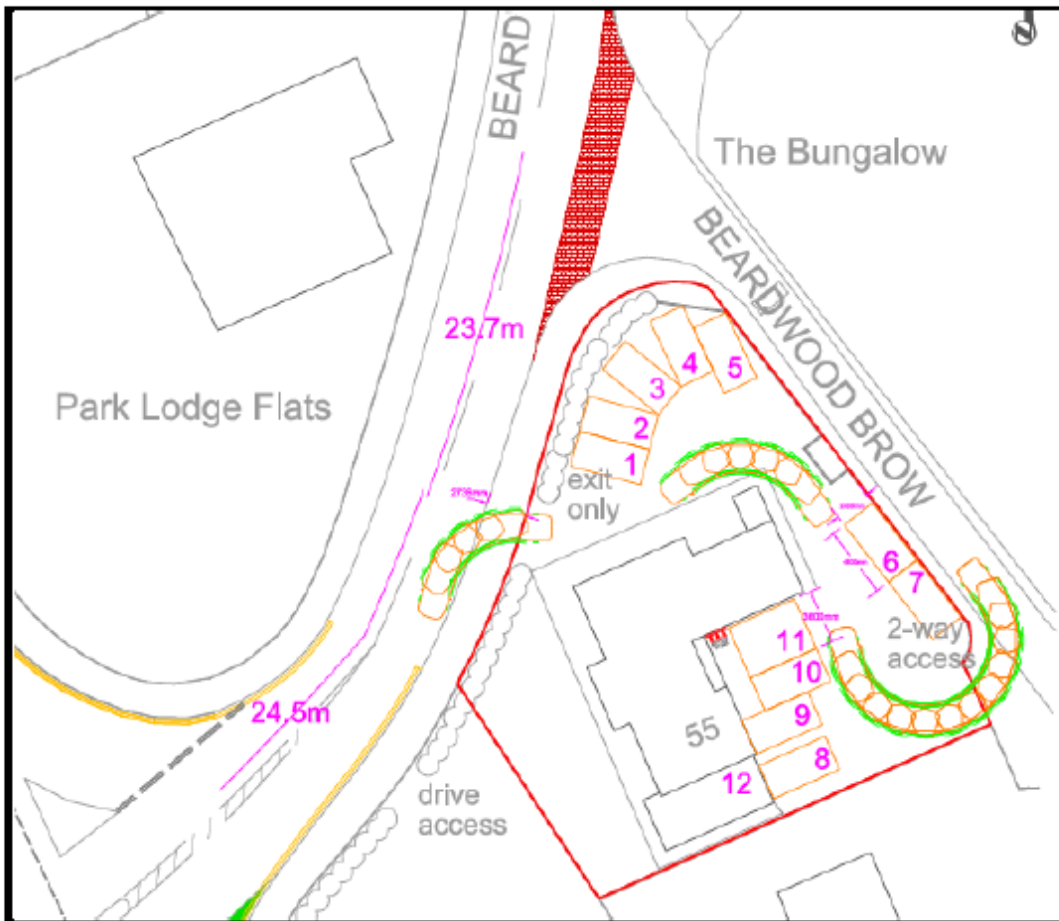


The Shah Jalal Mosque appears to be missing and added for completeness as shown as red star. Clearly the majority of the proposed Mosque catchment is covered by others and a slight increase of walk will take on board the full area.

Para 2.4.1 The primary pedestrian access into the building for the prayer facility will be via the existing entrance located at the front (primary face) of the property.

The plan below shows the existing access and shows the access to have increased two way vehicular flows but with no separate pedestrian access/safe route.

It also ignores the fact the adjacent house uses the same access point i.e. they are side by side.



In addition the pedestrian route is along the Brow, the following image shows a narrow path that is not fully surfaced i.e. not a full path provision.



Para 2.4.2 Existing two-way vehicular access to the property is off Beardwood Brow. It is proposed to retain this vehicular access and introduce an exit only onto Beardwood

The exit also has no pedestrian provision and no sight lines shown for the existing walkers along the path to safely interact. In addition the exit point impacts on the road signage and local bus stop but no evaluation has taken place on how this will be dealt with, the access has not been shown to be safe or deliverable.



Para 2.4.3 The proposals include the provision of 11 car parking spaces (including a disabled bay) as well as a further bay within the existing garage

The use of garage as a parking bay would from modern standards rely on the internal size to accommodate a car etc and not be used for storage, unless permitted rights were removed the garage use cannot be guaranteed.

The layout is also constrained internally and has narrow reversing spaces, the site plan is to scale but no print size indicated to allow it to be assessed fully. The swept paths indicated on the layout are diagrammatic and not created by an autotrack type software and thus not representative of the actual car movements, cannot be relied on.

Para 2.4.4 There is a significant level of kerb-side parking available along the property frontage and along significant sections of Beardwood Brow and Beardwood. However, kerb-side parking outside the development will be less convenient than the provision that will be made within the site. All attendees of the facility will be discouraged from parking on the street.

There is uncontrolled parking on Beardswood however on the site side this would affect the bus stop, on the opposite side the access to the flats. The Brow is noted as narrow and parking along it is very limited and any increase would have a direct effect on its operational use. How parking on street is to be controlled is not set out as such little reliance can be placed on the statement.

Para 3.2.1 The planning system requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that would justify deviating from this position. Although the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) is guidance for local planning authorities when developing the Local Plan, it 'is a material consideration in planning decisions' (Para 196). 'At the heart of the National Planning Framework is the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both the plan-making (Local Plan) and decision-taking'.

The NPPF is the key policy setting for any development as local policies must comply with the policies set out. A key omission from the policy review is the refusal on highway grounds must only be supported when the residual impacts are considered severe, from inquiry experience this relates to safety of all road users.

The intensification of the access, the section of the Brow to Beardswood, narrow footpath for a noticeable and planned increase use by pedestrians in combination with an increase of car movements at 5 times per day, interaction with the bus stop for vehicle access all give rise to areas where safety could be compromised on a regular basis throughout the day and the impacts deemed severe in nature. An objection on these grounds can be supported.

In addition no information has been provided as to the use of the Mosque for Eid/festivals all of which increase demand across a greater part of the day.

Para 3.3.6 The guidance also requires the provision of off-street car parking giving an adopted standard of 1 car space per 10 square metres of gross floor area and 1 cycle space per 50 square metres of gross floor area. 10% of car parking spaces should be of a mobility standard (3.6m wide).

Based on the 82 sqm the parking offer of 11 spaces is more than suggested as a need however as shown the gross floor area is greater than the two room sizes set out. The potential for drop off/drive through has not been considered.

Section 4.1 A survey was undertaken at a similar existing development at 7 Whinney Lane, Blackburn between 6th and 13th November 2016. Those attending the facility for prayers were surveyed over a period of 7 days, with each of the 35 weekly prayers being surveyed once. The facility at Whinney Lane has a floor area of 120sqm, 50% greater than that proposed at this development.

The survey is a little misleading given Friday prayers are not provided at the site referred to as such the demand is much reduced and the findings reliability also reduced.

Para 4.2.1 and 2 sets out the national walk guidance of 800-1200m and then arbitrarily reduces to 800m. The report also says those over 800m from the Mosque are more likely to use a car. The use of 800m is therefore suggested to try to reduce the potential for car use, something that cannot be controlled prevented.

Para 4.3.6 Beardwood Brow is a residential access road. However, typically only one vehicle per prayer session is expected to arrive from this direction.

Direction	Arrival Route	Percentage Arrivals from this direction.	Total number of trips per prayer session	
			Car	Foot
North East	Beardwood	60	2	16
South East	Beardwood Brow	15	1	4
South West	Preston New Road south	10	1	3
North West	Preston New Road north	15	1	4
Totals			5	27

Table 4.2 – Distribution and Mode Split of worshipers

The distribution is not based on evidenced data, it also suggests no real demand from the south as other Mosques are already in place, not sure why such an assumption can be made. Also the numbers are stated as 30 and that is likely to be increased as set out to around 60 thus a doubling of the figures at the very least.

The 5 then becomes 10 and all will use the Brow 5 times a day, the movements are not across a peak hour as normally assessed as the arrivals are often just before prayers i.e. in a 15 minute period thus more noticeable on site. Along this section they will be combined with the pedestrians again 23 doubled to 46 combined with an increase of 10 vehicles and the base line use of the Brow.

Para 4.4.5 As referred to in Section 3 of this report the Council has published an SPD on 'Community and other Uses with Residential Areas' which states a parking provision of 1 parking space per 10 square meters of which 10% should be of a mobility standard. Planning policy for a residential property would define a 'bench mark' parking provision of 2 car parking spaces for the proposed three bedroom flat. The prayer rooms would have a total area of 82sqm requiring 8 spaces, policy requiring a further 2 for the residential element, defining a total policy requirement of 10 car parking spaces.

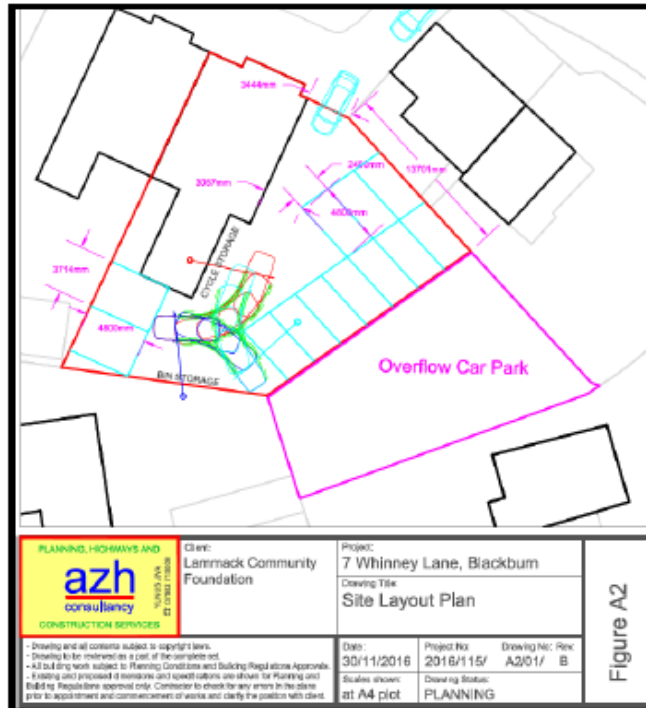
The review shows that the garage cannot be taken as meeting guidance and cannot be counted. It also assumes all the spaces can be used.

Para 4.4.7 Only bays 1 to 5 will be used before 8am or after 10pm in order to reduce any possible noise impact (see Environmental Noise Assessment by AB Acoustics) on the adjacent property at 53 Beardwood Brow.

If the parking is required then it has to be assumed that at peak prayers they will be fully used and the times of the day largely irrelevant to the amenity of the house next door.

Other matters

Reference has been made to the Whinney Lane site, the layout is shown below and clearly the spaces cannot be used as shown with very limited reversing space and a diagrammatic turn, supporting the view the layout as set out for Beardswood cannot be relied on.



No assessment has been undertaken of the interaction of vehicles with the base line situation and this also includes a safety review.

The planning documentation by Avalon as a supporting objection sets out:

Paragraph 70 of the framework is aimed at enhancing the sustainability of communities and residential environments. It therefore promotes the use of shared space of existing facilities. This is reflected in the co-location approach of policy CS11 of the Core Strategy. This is a new use and should paragraph 70 of the framework be applied, the application should first show whether the shared use of any existing facilities can be achieved. No such test has been applied in the application. It cannot therefore be claimed to be a sustainable form of development. In terms of car trips, there is no reason to assume that all 11 spaces on the site will be used five times a day. These are not shared trips as this site is not an existing destination point or locality. The aims of sustainability and a reduction in car usage therefore cannot be shown and the application cannot be claimed to be sustainable.

The planning review supports the view that the spaces are likely to be fully used 5 times per day.

This is a well established high quality residential environment with no non residential uses within the environs of this application site. The application is presented as a low key use by making provision for a ' a small number of residents of Muslim faith who reside in the surrounding

residential street.' and that whilst the maximum number of users on site is 30 persons capacity, 'the regular number of attendees will be lower, around 12 in number'. The comparison of the potential activity of the proposed use is not a comparison with a mosque or any other use but with the existing use on the application site, which is a four bedroom detached house. The existing house requires three car parking spaces. That is 12 movements per day, coming and going. The proposed use has 11 spaces for the prayer rooms. There are five prayer times a day. That is 110 movements per day, comings and goings. The provision of the spaces implies that they will be used and cannot be assumed that, as the application suggests, people will walk to the site. The comparison of potential movements of the proposed use to the existing use is itself an indicator that the intended use is not in keeping with the established residential character of this location by reason of the amount of potential activity.

The 12 movements from the residential use is different from that taken by TRICS where a 5 to 7 level per unit is the usual limit per day. Also the movements from the Mosque have been shown to be likely to be much higher i.e. over 200 trips per day, totally out of context with a residential area.

The application is submitted in limited terms which are that : regular attendees will only be around 12; people will walk as there is a restricted catchment area; the opening hours are not excessive; the use is small scale; the use is not noisy ;there is no madressa and there is no amplified call to prayer. It is therefore to be differentiated from a typical mosque. The application therefore recognises that if it were not so limited in its use, it would not be acceptable at this location. However where people come from to use this facility cannot be controlled or regulated. Once established there is no reason to assume that users will not come from further afield, especially if it is easier to drive to and park. As the application points out, parking is available in the surrounding streets. In terms of a limitation of the use by planning conditions, the question to be answered is not whether a condition can be imposed, but what happens when an application is made to vary it or there is a breach of it? If established, it would then become a facility that should be shared according to policy DS11 and paragraph 70 of the framework. Thus it is highly unlikely that the limited use offered will or can be maintained if further use is proposed. It is therefore not appropriate to impose limiting conditions and without such conditions, the impact of the use on the character and amenity of the area is not acceptable.

The premise of the report is the 800m catchment and that only this area will be served, clearly uncontrollable.

SUMMARY

The review shows the assessment is at best limited in nature but in reality can be considered flawed and cannot be relied onto show the real impacts of the scheme from a highway point of view.

The demand is understated, safe access has not been shown as deliverable for all modes and no mitigation put forward for its impact on the adjacent area i.e. the bus stop, walk facilities and crossing point needs.

The location adjacent to a junction combined with its potential impact on the strategic road network junction gives rise to safety concerns with the new exit and increase pedestrian flows such that a residual impact that is severe is considered the appropriate level of impact. Thus the site should be refused in highway grounds.

Support M.S. Alam, 8 The Pastures, Beardwood, Blackburn

This letter is in response to the above planning application. I think it's a great idea as you know there is considerably higher number of muslim community living in the surrounding area and it is one of their necessary needs.

I fully back this plan and think that council should support this application. It will be much easier for me and similiary many of my brothers and their families to come for prayers as it would be on walking distance and their would be no use of cars. I think it is important for any society to have necessary community facilities including worship places which this area clearly lacks.

I am hopeful that this application would be successfull.

Support Dr Muhammad Zeeshan, 11 Park Lodge, Beardwood. Blackburn

In response to the letter which I received regarding this new Muslim prayer facility near my house, I feel delightful to write you in favor of this. Since I moved to Beardwood Blackburn in February 2017, I felt the need of such facility on walking distance. I think it is a wonderful idea and a daily necessity of Muslim Community living in this area.

This prayer room will be at a walking distance to my house and it will be very easy for me and my family to walk for prayers, as well as the rest of the Beardwood Muslim community. It will not only provide us a good walk but also will be beneficial for the environment as our cars will remain in our garages.

On the other hand, I also believe that neighborhood should be taken into confidence and their concerns should be dealt with efficient planning.

My best wishes are with this application and I hope that it will be successful.

Support - Mohsin Patel, Beardwood Fold Barn, Beardwood Fold, Blackburn

I am writing this letter to offer my support for the above proposal. Being a resident who will definitely benefit from the Prayer facility I can only pray that that the application is successful. I truly believe that a facility like this will have a positive impact on the surrounding area.

However, I would like to highlight that, although I will be walking to the facility I hope other users show consideration when travelling to the facility and be mindful of the immediate neighbours.

All in all I can only see positives in the above proposal for me and my family. The opportunity for me to offer my prayers in congregation will have a spiritual impact on me and more importantly on my children too in the years to come.

Ayesha Musa, Wyfordby Avenue, Blackburn - 30th October 2017

Dear Mr Prescott

Re: Planning application – 55 Beardwood Brow, Blackburn BB2 7AT - Ref No: 10/17/1173

I write this letter in support of the above application. I have no objection to people of any faith being allowed to practice their faith in a peaceful manner.

I believe the change of use on the above property will not affect (us) the residents or the general area as it is not a full planning application. The building and structure will remain unchanged therefore not affecting amenities or adjoining properties as there is no new development.

The main concerns of the residents opposing the application would be of traffic. This ordinarily would be a legitimate concern but in this case can be alleviated as the users of this facility are all in close proximity and within walking distance of the facility, therefore the traffic situation should remain unchanged.

It is noted that this has been the main source of objection in the past on most locations where such an application has been made, it is that residents fear the intrusion the most.

This application provides for parking, however the facility is being created for local residents most of whom will be on foot.

It is evident that the application has given consideration to the immediate residents of the property and neighbourhood and that the application aims to have the least impact in terms of traffic and general disturbance.

Moreover The facility will not attract the general concerns of litter, disturbance, noise and traffic as would be the case for a restaurant/takeaway or pub.

I hope that council will consider the wider benefits that this amenity will bring to all the beardwood community, compared to the perceived harms and pre-emptive fears that are being put forward and have been presented in the past. This facility in the longer term can be used to provide community and social cohesion to the benefit all residents.

Mr & Mrs Patel, 3 The Warren, Beardwood, Blackburn - 30th October 2017

Dear Mr Prescott

Re: Planning application – 55 Beardwood Brow, Blackburn BB2 7AT Planning Ref No: 10/17/1173

I write this letter in support of the above application. I do not have any objection to people of any faith being allowed to practice their faith & religion in a peaceful way.

I believe this will not affect the area as it is only a change of use application and not a full planning application, therefore building structure will remain unchanged and it will not affect amenities or adjoining properties as there is no new development.

I hope the council will look at the many benefits that this amenity will bring compared to the perceived harms and pre-emptive fears. This will be a source of good community and social cohesion.

Dr Muhammad Zeeshan Tenant of 11 Park Lodge Beardwood – 30th October 2017

Dear Gavin

In response to the letter which I received regarding this new Muslim prayer facility near my house, I feel delightful to write you in favor of this. Since I moved to Beardwood Blackburn in February 2017, I felt the need of such facility on walking distance. I think it is a wonderful idea and a daily necessity of Muslim Community living in this area.

This prayer room will be at a walking distance to my house and it will be very easy for me and my family to walk for prayers, as well as the rest of the Beardwood Muslim community. It will not only provide us a good walk but also will be beneficial for the environment as our cars will remain in our garages.

On the other hand, I also believe that neighborhood should be taken into confidence and their concerns should be dealt with efficient planning.

My best wishes are with this application and I hope that it will be successful.