

Nash Mills Parish Council – Object.

Site

Site is located on Barnacres Road Nash Mills, Hemel Hempstead. This road has a current load of 300 vehicles /hour and is a bus route. The applicant's supporting information states the traffic travelling downhill from Bennett's End indicates the 30mph speed limit is often exceeded. Any vehicle travelling south on Barnacres Road will create a traffic hazard when turning right to enter the site. Consideration should be given to prevent right turns into the site, facilitating vehicles entering the site via a left turn. The applicant's comment that there have been no accidents caused by accessing the site during the past five years is not surprising as the site has been unused during this period.

Pollution & Traffic Generation

When occupied at full capacity of 520, the extra cars on the road will create pollution and traffic congestion for the area. There is no guarantee that people will walk, cycle or use public transport as this cannot be enforced; indeed the smaller mosque in St Albans Hill causes local roads (in particular Lime Walk) to become very congested.

Inadequacy of Entrance/Exit

There is one entry and exit and this will be restricted by gates and for permit holders only. This is not sufficient for a car park of 30 cars. It will create a backlog of cars on Barnacres Road with users trying to exit and enter, the gates will add to this delay as access will take time.

There will be cars trying to exit the Denes shops, pedestrians trying to cross at the crossing and people using the mini roundabout, all of which are extremely close to this entrance. This will add to the congestion and danger spots.

Cars that do not have a turning point in the grounds will be forced to reverse onto Barnacres Road causing a safety issue for pedestrians on the crossing, road users and people that are trying to gain entry to the parking spaces. The entrance road to the site is 4.4m wide; this is narrow for vehicles to pass when exiting/entering the site at the same time as making right/left turns. A more appropriate width would be 6 m.

Parking

The car park is inadequate for the size of the building and according to the travel plan can only be used for permit holders and is gated so is not fit for purpose. Although predicted attendance is at its peak on a Friday, weddings, funerals and Ramadan must also be accounted for which will increase the times that the Mosque is at its capacity.

4.28: states all other visitors to the mosque who travel by car will have to park elsewhere. Where? Nash Mills does not have the space for another potentially 500 cars to park.

4.29 & 6.17: Introduction of a voluntary no parking Zone: This cannot physically be monitored or enforced, as this is a public highway. The roads surrounding the proposed Mosque are already suffering from major parking problems due to the new estates on the John Dickinson's site and Apsley Lock, that do not offer ample parking to the residents, they

are therefore parking on any other surrounding road that they can causing residents great distress. This is the most complained about issue at the Parish Council. With the potential of another 500 cars or even half that number Nash Mills will not be able to withstand the strain. As stated, this is a VOLUNTARY no parking Zone therefore cannot be enforced and will not deter people from parking in this area.

4.30: Marshals to direct traffic away from streets and to the appropriate off street car parks. Firstly, this statement admits that there is going to be substantial traffic and people driving. Where is this off street parking they are talking about? There is limited off street parking in Nash Mills that will not withstand the numbers suggested.

Again, these are public highways and their marshals cannot enforce where people park, we will find that all roads in and out of Nash Mills will be gridlocked with traffic and people parking where they please.

Surrounding roads and residents will be compromised. Nash Mills is currently suffering from absolutely dreadful parking issues at present and the problems are already affecting people's quality of life. This is the single biggest issue in the parish and attracts people to parish council meetings every month to vent their frustration. We are currently looking at measures to relieve this, but parking for such a busy place of worship will exacerbate the problems massively. At the St Albans Hill mosque there is availability to park in the Snow Centre opposite and at Jarman Park (via the pedestrian gate just a short walk further up the hill), but still people park in Lime Walk, blocking both sides of the pavement and recently stopped an ambulance getting through. Human nature dictates that people park as closely to their destination as they possibly can. The Denes residents are already going to be displaced by the new parking restrictions that are planned for The Denes car park. With added pressure from the mosque they will not be able to park.

The Faith Travel plans and Transport Assessment reports are in large parts identical. The Consultant 'EAS Transport Planning' comments are comprehensive but contain assumptions which cannot be proven re likely numbers of persons visiting and how they would travel to the site for example; driving, walking and cycling. These are key issues eg: the assumption that only 10% will drive to site. Parking control by way of a parking restriction area off site which clearly cannot be controlled or implemented. Re-direction to other off site car parks, where are these located? A comprehensive study of how these issues currently function with the existing Hemel Hempstead Mosque would divulge more realistic data than what has been used in the EAS proposals which are heavy on text but contain little supportable data for which EAS have used to conclude the current proposal is viable.

Local Amenities

The Denes Shopping parade, which is situated next door and offers minimal parking, will be compromised if this development goes ahead. If people cannot drive freely through Nash Mills or park at the Denes shops, we will see a decline in people using these much needed neighbourhood amenities and shops will be forced to close if they are not receiving the foot fall. These shops are for everyone that lives in Nash Mills and surrounding areas and the parade is the heart of the community; just like a village centre.

Please can you clarify how the proposed mosque will service the community to hold meetings, for groups to hold meetings etc?

Highway Safety

The entrance sits next to a pedestrian crossing, The Denes shopping centre exit and a small roundabout at the bottom of Georgewood road and if this area is congested it would put the public in danger. Pedestrians accessing the site will need to share the road with vehicles as currently there appear to be no footpaths provided on site. This issue is hazardous and needs reviewing.

Would the police allow marshals to direct traffic on a public highway? Surely this is a safety issue. The site is located adjacent to The Denes shops. There are parking difficulties already for the shops and cars regularly queue from Pinecroft (at the entrance to the car park) onto Barnacres Road. This causes Pinecroft residents a great deal of difficulty accessing their properties. Often they can't even drive out of Pinecroft due to cars parking at the road's entrance and people queueing on the wrong side of the road for the shops. This will all be made very, very much worse.

Infrastructure

Re: Services report - Thames Water is okay with the water supply but there is no comment re: adequacy of Foul drainage capacity. A substantial ventilation system is mentioned. Extract position of vent ducts need to be located to eliminate nuisance noise to nearby residents. Marshall Structures report recommends a Radon report and a Contamination report .these should be obtained. The Chalk mining report is currently a blank page

Noise and disturbance resulting from use to local residents

Prayer times throughout the day and night (for example 03:05am and 23:10) – This will again increase cars and people arriving/leaving/parking in the road will lead to noise and disturbance of the local residents. There will be late night and early morning prayer meetings and this will cause a noise disturbance in a residential area. Car engines, opening and closing car doors and chatting in the street late at night will cause a disturbance to people trying to sleep.

Attendance

Although predicted attendance is at its peak on a Friday, Weddings, funerals and Ramadan need to also be accounted for which will increase the times that the Mosque is at its capacity. For the number of people expected to attend (and this may be underestimated greatly) there are only 35 parking spaces, of which 5 are disabled spaces. This is ridiculously under the number of spaces needed.

Street Scene

Trees that will take up to 10 years to mature will not protect the surrounding street scene and it will therefore be compromised. Mature stock should be specified not 'whips' with an ongoing maintenance contract to ensure trees become well established. The application does not include any cross section drawings of the building. The documents should be provided to allow a review of the building height, which as proposed is dominant. A height

reduction could possibly be achieved without compromising the intended use, which would provide the Applicant with a considerable cost saving. The size of proposed development has more impact and not in keeping with the street scene. The footprint has increased.

Impact of other local proposed developments

There is planning application in (4/02450/17/FUL) for 9 properties (23 bedrooms) that will have access from Pineroft, making the current situation even worse. Vehicles from this development will park in Pineroft next to the Denes shops. This will again increase traffic and must be considered when looking at the proposed mosque application, which will increase traffic and parking issues.

Accommodation within proposed Mosque

There is a manse next door that was used to house individuals previously with the former Methodist Church but this application requires sleeping arrangements *within* the Mosque itself. Is this included in the covenant that specifies that the site is to be used for religious worship, and the local plan that has always earmarked this site for community use only?

Conclusion

Object.

The foregoing points lead to a conclusion that location of the Barnacres Road site is inappropriate for the current proposal. Approval of the scheme as proposed would create constant and ongoing disturbance to too many residents in the vicinity of the site.