

APPENDIX 6 19/105/FPC

Transcripts as detailed in the minutes

Dacorum Borough Councillor Jan Maddern – Speech to Nash Mills Parish Council

I am speaking in objection to the new application for the Methodist Church site in Barnacres Road. I wrote in my Nash Mills newsletter about this last week and so will quite rightly be excluded from parish council discussions tonight. However, I do have a right to put my objection to the parish council as the borough councillor and member of the public.

Last December Hertfordshire Highways recommended refusal of the planning application for a mosque to be built adjacent to The Denes shops in Nash Mills. Their report listed 12 pages of concerns about road safety and parking issues in the area.

This, along with several other reasons identified by the planning department here at DBC, formed the basis of a refusal on the application.

The applicant had 6 months to appeal the decision if they felt that the decision was incorrect but desisted in doing so. Now, however, the land owner has submitted a supposedly new application on this site, exercising their 'free go' to submit an application within 12 months and without paying a further fee.

So what is different? As soon as the new application was validated, I arranged to meet the planning officer, to establish what the material differences were between the old and new applications – in order to be validated by the council the application MUST be different from the original. After much searching, we discovered that the interior floor space in the 'new' application was just 100sqm smaller than the original... this is a 5% reduction in INTERIOR floor space, but as far as I can see there is no reduction on the size, bulk or capacity for the building.

There is also absolutely NO change in the number of parking spaces, and there is still a dwelling in the building, that breaches the covenant on the land and will take up 2-3 of the parking spaces anyway..

Having considered all these points, I will be strongly objecting to the new application once again as I don't see that the concerns I had have changed in the slightest.

I am not opposed to development of this site, in fact I would encourage **appropriate development** as currently the building is an eyesore and dangerous, but... ANY development MUST be appropriate to the size of land and have adequate parking to contain any activity that would take place there.

Jan Maddern

Speaking as the Dacorum Borough Councillor for Nash Mills and as a member of the community.

Resident Fairway

We are now all aware that this is a MAJOR DEVELOPMENT and as such needs to be taken very seriously indeed as it affects people's lives. Whilst the application is ongoing, and with the potential impact thereafter, it can cause major stress and worry to residents. The councillors and planners are

entrusted with the power and authority to ensure that these matters are taken seriously and so should the applicant. In our view it is totally irresponsible to submit a new application knowing that it has not addressed the fundamental reasons for the previous refusal. We therefore ask that this Committee tonight, and the Planners at the earliest opportunity, reject this new application and with a caveat that if another is submitted without addressing the major parking issues it will not pass the starting line.

This is the third time, if you include the pre planning application years ago, and the 4th if you include that the last time the applicant submitted 2 transport plans knowing the first would have failed, that it will have been rejected on parking. Four times rejected on parking.

The alleged covenant is being mentioned again. Covenants can be changed. Many former Christian churches have been converted to residential units. The covenant does NOT say that there has to be a 3-storey building on the site and it does NOT say that the neighbours and local residents have to tolerate unreasonable impact.

The applicant says that those living near the development bought their properties knowing it was a church and should be used to noise on a Sunday, at Easter and Xmas. The capacity was 120. Now it is proposed to be 520 with daily prayer, some at unsocial hours, like 4.00 in the morning, education classes and other activities.

The applicant also says that should any residual harm to residential amenity remain after this, that such harm would only attract a small amount of weight to be considered as part of the planning balance meaning we carry less weight than the applicant in planning terms. I am mindful of a comment made publicly on a document on the planning website in relation to the application for fencing which said that we, Fairway Court, are nothing but a mere hindrance to everything they do!

Finally, I have a quote from an eminent politician in Dacorum, which we fully concur with, which says " I would have thought it unwise to submit a new application on the same site that has not addressed the concerns raised during the previous application. If this new application is very similar to the previous one, I would expect the same response from the Planners." Wise words and I rest my case. This new application must be rejected.