

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

**BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**ITEM NO. 13**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 25 April 2018**

**Ward:** Tilehurst

**App No.:** 180094

**App Type:** Full

**Address:** Equity House, 4-6 School Road, Reading

**Proposal:** Change of use from B1 (offices) to D1 (non-residential institution) for use as a community facility offering space for worship, training, education and meetings with associated works. Part retrospective.

**Applicant:** Zainabiya Reading Centre

**Date valid:** 22/1/2018

**Minor Application:** 8 week target decision date: 19/3/2018 - extension to 30 April 2018 agreed.

**Planning Guarantee 26 week date:**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Grant part retrospective planning permission.

Conditions to include:

Plans

To be carried out and retained in accordance with approved plans.

Hours of use

The premises as hereby approved shall not be used by members of the public outside the hours of 8am to 10:30pm on Mondays to Saturdays and 10am to 10:00pm on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

No amplified music

No amplified music shall be played at the premises at any time.

Air condition units

Within 4 weeks of the date of this permission the extract/ventilation systems shall have been installed in accordance with the approved plans and specifications and thereafter the extract/ventilation systems shall be permanently retained and maintained in accordance with the approved specifications.

Restriction on use - specified use

Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, the premises shall be used as a community facility offering space for a combination of worship, training, education and meetings activities for a maximum of 50 people only and for no other purpose (including a Mosque or any other purpose in the same Use Class of the Schedule to the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification.

Vehicle parking - plans to be approved

Within 4 weeks of the date of this planning permission:

The parking layout and boundary treatment as shown on the approved drawing, and signage to make clear that the parking spaces are for permit holders only, shall be provided and ready for use. Thereafter the parking bays and turning areas shall be kept free of obstruction and available for use at all times by car park permit holders only.

#### Car park management plan

The approved car park management plan, which includes a mechanism for issuing 6 parking permits only (1 spare for guests, deliveries, etc), and details of how visitors will be directed to make use of nearby public car parks, public transport and other forms of transport and which shall be easily available for view on the organisation's website and in their published literature shall be adhered to at all times while the approved use is in operation.

#### Bicycle parking - plans to be approved

Within 4 weeks of the date of this planning permission:

- (a) The bicycle parking shall be provided as shown on the approved plan.
- (b) Thereafter the bicycle parking facility shall be kept free of obstruction and available for the approved use at all times.

#### Bin storage

Within 4 weeks of the date of this planning permission the approved bin storage facilities shall be provided and the bin storage facility shall be retained thereafter for use by occupiers of the building at all times.

#### Travel Plan

Within 4 weeks of the date of this planning permission a Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The plan shall include a full analysis of the existing / proposed modal split for congregation/community members, reasons for the modal choice and detailed proposals for future transport provision with the aim of securing a reduction in car trips generated to and from the site and a consequent reduction of pressure on limited car parking spaces.

#### Obscure glazing at first floor

All windows at first floor level shall always be retained as *non-opening and with obscure glass* on parts below 1.7m as a minimum when measured from the floor level of the first floor.

#### CMS

Construction method statement required within 2 weeks of the date of this planning permission to manage the construction phase of the extension and works to the car park and boundary.

#### INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE

1. Positive and Proactive working
2. Adherence to conditions

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is a 178 sq.m two storey office building. A car parking area for about 10 vehicles lies to the front and side of the building.
- 1.2 As can be seen from the plan below it lies behind 8-10 School Road which is a building with 2 shops on the ground floor (newsagent and post office) and 4 flats above, converted recently following a change from office to residential prior approval application. Private parking for customers of the shops lies in the front forecourt while parking spaces for the residents lie at the rear of this building.
- 1.3 Members were advised to visit the site (unaccompanied but with a briefing note) so that they could see the site and local area before considering this report.



Site Plan (not to scale)

## 2.0 PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The application seeks retrospective planning permission to change the use of the existing building to provide community offices, meeting areas and prayer rooms. A small addition (1 sq.m) to provide an alcove on the ground floor is also proposed. The description of the proposed development has been amended to more accurately reflect the proposed use.
- 2.2 The supporting information explains that the applicants are Zainabiya Welfare Foundation, which is a registered charity since 2013. The Zainabiya Welfare Foundation is the only organization that represents the Shia sect of the Muslim community in the Reading Borough and surroundings. The aim of the foundation is to use the building for worship, social, educational and welfare uses. They have now confirmed that their main times of use would be:
- Thursday- 7.30pm -1030pm
  - Friday- 12noon -2pm
  - Sunday- 10.30am - 1pm
- Additional opening times will be added on main Islamic festive dates which will also be between the hours of 7-30pm - 10-30pm outside of office hours. There will be an average of 50 attendees & on Friday lunchtime an average of 15 attendees.
- 2.3 The intended use of the ground floor of the premises includes education and training for employment purposes. A leaflet produced by the applicant also describes bi-monthly careers training, a monthly GP walk in surgery and a weekly foodbank. It is expected that 3 volunteer admin staff will be employed.
- 2.4 The group had been meeting at premises on Bennet Road. However that use was unauthorised and as it was in a core employment area they were advised that they would not be granted planning permission to stay there.

## 3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

87/TP/45 & 87/TP/1190 - 2 Storey office block and parking. Allowed on appeal 1988.  
130853 Office Prior Approval to convert offices to 4no 2 bed flats. Approved Aug 2013

## 4.0 CONSULTATIONS

### (i) Statutory Consultation

None.

## (ii) Non Statutory Consultation

### **RBC Transport - updated following revised site plan:**

This application is for a change of use of 4-6 School Road from Use Class B1 use to D1 place of worship. The site is located to the rear of the School Road Post Office and newsagent in the centre of Tilehurst. The Recreation Road public car park is within a short walk of the site which provides 96 pay and display car parking spaces (charges payable between Monday to Saturday, 10:00 - 15:00).

The applicant, Zainabiya Welfare Foundation, has confirmed that the proposed community services are every Thursday 7:30-10:30 PM, Friday 12-2 PM and Sunday 10:30 AM- 1 PM. Additional opening times will be added on main Islamic festive dates which will also be between the hours of 7:30- 10:30 PM outside of office hours. Aside from Friday lunchtime (12-2 PM), the Centre is normally closed for community use during the day time with some occasional office work on an ad hoc basis. The planning statement states that the evening and weekend services have an average of 50 attendees and the Friday lunchtime period has an average of 15 attendees.

In accordance with the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the proposed D1 use (Places of Worship) require a parking provision of 1 space per 8 fixed seats and/or 1 space per 16sqm of open hall. Based on the size of the building, the development would require a total parking provision of 11 parking spaces to meet the Council's adopted Parking Standards.

Vehicular access to the site is shared with the Post Office and newsagent which front onto School Road. The parking spaces associated with the Post Office are heavily used which results in vehicles parking on the access road and congestion occurring at the point of entry during busy times.

The application as amended includes the provision of 7 car parking spaces; following the reduction in parking the layout is now improved with all spaces to standard. However as previously requested a tracking diagram must be submitted to accompany this revised layout to ensure vehicles can enter and exit in forward gear. A revised drawing is therefore required. *Officer note - this is being provided and will be included in an update report.*

It is evident from the congregation size that the demand for parking will outstrip the availability of on-site parking. The applicant has stated that a parking marshall will be available, however, the planning statement does not provide enough information to address how the parking spaces will be managed. I am concerned that cars will initially try and park within one of the on-site parking spaces and then be turned away once all the spaces are full. This is likely to result in increased levels of congestion and conflicting turning movement close to the access. Given that the C402 School Road is a classified road and a main bus route through Tilehurst, the safety and efficiency of the classified road network must not be compromised. It should also be noted that School Road forms part of the Red Route 'no stopping' corridor which will be implemented along the bus route number 17. Therefore, a car park management plan must be submitted to ensure appropriate measures are put in place to prevent vehicles travelling directly to the site without a secured parking space. Appropriate measures may include a permit system to ensure that only permit holders/ disabled drivers access the site. A further statement has been provided on the car park arrangements, which mentions a permit scheme but this is not in sufficient detail and therefore a full Car Park Management Plan is still required. I would however be happy for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.

The applicant has advised that all community members are requested to park their vehicles in the public car park located at Recreation Road (directions are provided on the

applicant's website). It should be noted that the majority of services (aside from the Friday lunchtime service) will be outside of typical weekday office hours, therefore, the evening and weekend services will not coincide with the peak opening hours of the local shops in the area when there is the highest demand for public car parking spaces. In the absence of any parking surveys, site visits have been undertaken on 16 March 2018 between 12-2pm to establish the current take up of spaces within the public car park and the limited waiting bays on Armour Road. During the site visit, the Recreation Road public car park had a minimum of 54 spaces available at all times and Armour Road had a minimum of 11 spaces available at all times. Therefore, there is ample capacity within the public car park to accommodate an increased demand for parking. It should be noted that a maximum of 8 vehicles were observed parked within the site during the observation period.

The place of worship is required to produce a Travel Plan to initiate modal shift away from the private car and towards more sustainable modes. A Travel Plan has been submitted which highlights details of all travel modes and how these will be distributed to visitors of the proposed building. This does not however include an assessment of how people currently travel to the site, does not include measures to promote alternative modes including car sharing amongst its congregation and does not provide incentives to encourage visitors to travel by foot, cycle and public transport where it is reasonable and practicable to do so. I am therefore happy for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.

In line with promotion of sustainable modes, the development must make provision for secure cycle parking within site. In accordance within the adopted Parking Standards, 1 space per 50sqm should be provided with a covered shelter or store. This would require the provision of 4 spaces with the applicant proposing a provision of 6, this provision would not be able to be accommodated within the store but the required provision of 4 spaces would be. I am therefore happy that the cycle store is acceptable in principle. This would however require an amended plan which details what type of cycle storage is proposed and how access would be gained to the store. I would be happy for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.

Bin storage has been illustrated and deemed acceptable.

Please ask the applicants agent to submit suitable amended plans / information to address the above before determining the application.

**RBC Environmental Health:**  
No objection.

**(iii) Public/local consultation and comments received**

Letters were sent to:

School Road: flats and post office at 8-10; shop at 10a; 1-8 Appleshaw Court & Orchard Court, ASDA garage; Car Contacts; 17, 19 & 21.

Armour Road: 1-9 (odds);

Victoria Road: 3 & 3a

There has been well organised opposition to the proposal. A leaflet with "information" about an "Application for a mosque" has been widely distributed inviting residents to complete with their comments to send in to the Planning Section and a copy is appended to this report. There have been 291 individual comments submitted and a petition with 451 names has been received. With so many comments received (altogether there are about 740 objections including the petition) it is not possible in this report to record them individually. Members should note that there were multiple objections from some objectors. Also some objections received were very brief raising no issues other than saying "no" and some objectors provided insufficient contact details so these are not valid

representations. The following is a summary of the comments received, which mainly relate to five main themes:

#### Character of the area

- Tilehurst village is not the appropriate location for the proposed use and it would harm the village character of the area.
- Too big for Tilehurst Village Character of the closely built area will be harmed due to parking, noise and disruption

#### Congestion and parking

- parking along this road is already an issue
- Parking is impossible for the post office during the day time
- The area proposed is right on a traffic junction and could cause big traffic problems.
- Traffic in the village is horrendous at different times. There is already a Methodist church, a post office, nursery in Recreation Road, busy garage and pub nearby. Not a suitable place for a mosque too.
- There is not enough parking.
- This is a busy part of School Road with the post office at the front and access to site lying opposite a bus stop. With traffic entering and leaving the site combined with existing traffic congestion will get worse. There are not enough parking spaces on site.
- Just no room for all those cars and traffic

#### Disturbance to local people

- through late night use, noise and activity.
- Impact on local businesses and possible loss of shops and post office.
- Noise and disturbance for residents will be distressing and compromise their lives.

#### Not needed

- The area does not need more mosques.
- There is already a large mosque on Oxford Road. (*Officer - Many made this point*)
- The applicant comes from Lower Earley so they should find somewhere closer to them than Tilehurst.
- We don't need it, we don't want it.

#### Lack of integrity

- The use has started without getting the proper permission
- How can we be sure that conditions will be complied with
- They are already on site without planning permission so I feel that they do not respect the system.

There have been 3 communications in support welcoming the community facility:

- The majority of objections have been either ill-informed or racist
- Adequate parking arrangements have been made
- The Oxford Road mosque caters for a different branch of Islam so this is not a duplication
- The organisation behind it are very community minded providing a needed food-bank
- It is a reasonable use of an underused building
- RBC has a policy of inclusion and this should be applied here

Also a further three have raised concerns about how the comments have been submitted but not providing any view on the planning proposal itself.

## 5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
- 5.2 The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy Guidance  
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy Document, 2008.  
Policy CS11 (Use of Employment Land for Alternative Uses)  
Policy CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking)  
Policy CS31 (Additional and Existing Community Facilities)

Reading Borough Local Development Framework: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012)  
Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)  
Policy DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents  
'Revised Parking Standards and Design' (2011)

## 6.0 APPRAISAL

### Main considerations

#### (i) Principle of development

- 6.1 This part retrospective planning application is seeking approval to convert the existing office building to a community facility to serve the needs of a religious group. The use apparently began before the application was submitted but the proposed physical change to the building and external layout has not been carried out. Policy CS11 defends employment land in core employment areas but accepts elsewhere that the need for housing or community facilities might outweigh retaining employment uses in some cases. Policy CS31 encourages new community facilities and expects them to be located where there is a choice of means of travel (including walking and cycling), and in existing centres where possible. Policy DM4 recognises that in a closely built up area like Reading there will be tensions between different types of development and seeks ways to manage these to protect local living environments.
- 6.2 Officers consider that there is no evidence of need for the office use in this location and the case that has been made to use it for a community facility complies with the requirements of Policy CS11. The principle of the proposed change of use is therefore acceptable. The rest of this report considers if the proposal complies with the other policies relating to new community facilities, parking and traffic and protecting residential amenity. In so doing it responds to the main grounds of objection from the public.

#### (ii) New Community Use

- 6.3 The application site lies in the identified district centre of Tilehurst Triangle. As noted by many objectors, the site is close to public transport routes. The stop for





(iii) Character of the area

- 6.9 Many of the objectors referred to the character of Tilehurst being a small village where a mosque or an Islamic centre would be out of keeping or would introduce a use that would undermine the existing character of the area. Officers have no doubt that these concerns are sincerely expressed and it is clear that many commenting see Tilehurst as a village. However, in making the observation that as this is a busy part of the village with many facilities close by the new use will make it even busier they also inadvertently make the case that this is precisely where a community use should go - where other public and community facilities are. Concerns about the character of the area would be more valid were the proposed site in a wholly residential area.
- 6.10 Officers consider that the proposed change of use as described by the applicant and the minor physical alterations to the building will not have a physical impact on the character of the area. However, as other uses that would fall within a D1 use could have different impacts on the area officers advise that it would be reasonable and necessary to impose a restriction to prevent the building being used for anything other than that proposed.

(iv) Congestion and Parking

- 6.11 The transport officer comments are shown above. Following advice on the accessibility of the existing spaces an amended plan showing 7 spaces, plus cycle and bin storage has been provided with information on how the car park would be managed, by using permits allocated to those working at the site or with mobility problems. The principle of what is being proposed is accepted but more detail on how this would work in practice is needed to avoid visitors from attempting to park on site if they do not have a permit to do so. The applicant has responded to confirm that parking permits would be allocated with only 6 issued (one reserved for special guests, delivery, catering etc).
- 6.12 The transport officers confirm that School Road is a classified road and a main bus route through Tilehurst and that the safety and efficiency of the classified road network must not be compromised. It is acknowledged that this part of School Road can become very congested when a combination of factors occur (bus stop occupied, vehicles trying to access or leave the post office car park, vehicles trying to access or leave the petrol station, traffic queuing back from the traffic lights) but this is an existing situation and the existing office use when fully occupied would generate traffic and car parking needs. There are also other occasions at off peak times when there are no obstructions on the street. Given the indicated main times of use for the new community facility Officers consider that with an acceptable Car Park Management Plan and conditions to control the future use of the centre the parking and congestion concerns can be managed in accordance with Policy DM12.

(v) Disturbance to local people

- 6.13 The building lies about 26 metres west of the nearest residential properties above 8-10 School Road and in neighbouring Appleshaw Court. Properties in Victoria Road lie about 40 metres to the west and properties in Armour Road lie about 30 metres away to the north. The first floor windows of the application property are already fitted with obscure glazing (a conditional requirement when the office building was

allowed on appeal) and an air conditioning unit has been installed on the south elevation of the building where it faces the car dealership next door.

- 6.14 The proposed use has led to some public concern about noise and other disturbance for local residents. While the proposed use is claimed to be low key by the applicant there may be times, such as on "festive days", when more activity may take place at the site. However, the applicant has confirmed that there will be no amplified music or singing and is content to have a condition to enforce that this is adhered to.
- 6.15 The applicant has confirmed that the recommended condition to limit the hours of use to 8am to 10:30pm on Mondays to Saturdays and 10am to 10:00pm on Sundays or Bank Holidays would be acceptable to them as this would cover their core activity times. Officers advise that these proposed hours are reasonable for this location and can be enforced with a planning condition.
- 6.16 Nearby residents will notice additional activity at the property associated with the new use but this needs to be seen in the context of the already busy area and the existing office, which might be expected to accommodate 17 people on a current typical ratio of 1 employee to 10 sq.m. Officers consider that with the measures proposed to limit parking on site to visitors with parking permits only and the proposed hours of use the disturbance caused to neighbours would be minimal. Therefore the proposal is in accordance with Policy DM4 of the SDPD.

(vi) Need for the facility & Equalities Act 2010

- 6.17 It is relevant at this point to refer to the Equalities Act 2010. The Public sector equality duty came in to force in April 2011 (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010) and public authorities are now required, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The key equalities protected characteristics identified by the Act include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

- 6.18 In opposing the proposal a large proportion have claimed (perhaps based on the opinions expressed in the prepared objection leaflet) that there are mosques elsewhere in Reading, especially the one on Oxford Road, and therefore there is no need for a new one in Tilehurst. This argument however is similar to expecting members of the Baptist, Methodist, CofE and Roman Catholic congregations to all share one church building.
- 6.19 Section 149, in respect of religion or belief, requires that decisions acknowledge the religious needs and freedoms of users of a facility. In this case the proposed use is to provide a meeting space for the community of Shia Muslims living in the

Reading area. The applicant has made a case for wanting their own facility and why the existing building meets their needs. The applicant has sought to engage with the local community through holding a public meeting and has confirmed that the building will be open for use by all members of the community seeking help or advice or to use the food-bank.

- 6.20 Officers advise that the applicant has submitted a valid planning application and its acceptability in planning terms depends on how the proposed use complies with relevant development plan policies rather than whether there is a need for it or not. The requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 offers support to the case that the proposal will allow the requirements of a religious group to be met.

(vii) Process

- 6.21 The applicant submitted the planning application on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018. The applicant has been asked to respond to criticism that they started using the building without consideration of the planning process. Their response is:

*We have been using the centre since 14th December. As you may remember we had closed our Bennet Road centre from 15th October as agreed with council. To help with planning going forward we had also hired a planning agent Chris Keen from Keen Partnership as we are not very experienced with this and don't understand that full planning process.*

*Any building we had potential to look at we had run past council planning department and this process has been going for the last 12 months. There were not enough options for us that would meet our requirements and councils requirements.*

*The initial feedback from council planning (via Chris Keen) for School Road building had been positive and hence we made an offer for this.*

*We were among the two potential buyers for the building, the sale completion date was not set at the outset and while we were engaged in fund collection for the purchase of the building we were advised that for our sale to go ahead we had to purchase it within a very short period, which meant that we couldn't plan our whole completion properly and had to rush into it. You may remember that we had sent a few urgent requests for existing use etc to you which you kindly helped with.*

*We had subsequently asked our planning agent to submit planning and he advised that he will do it as soon as possible and he can draw the plan etc. Due to Christmas and new year holidays I understand that full planning was submitted on 17/01.*

*We had kept our planning agent informed at all stages of our progress in all matters including use of centre. From our other meeting and in hindsight I realise that we should have insisted on getting the planning in place before use of centre for which we regret but was more so because of lack of understanding of process.*

*As all our activities had ceased since 15 Oct when we closed the Bennett Road centre, we were really losing out, our significant dates had been missed, Friday prayers were not being held and it was coming to feel like it would have been difficult for us to survive as an organisation. This combined with initial positive appetite from council around change of use and with planning agent not advising*

*otherwise, we had started to use the centre with the request to agent to submit the plan as soon as possible.*

*I hope it briefly explains our situation and as mentioned above we sincerely regret this which was mainly due to our lack of understanding of the full process and any advice received to the contrary. Since our meeting we had cancelled non Thursday programs and at the moment are making less use of the centre.*

*We want to work with council, neighbours and local residents and will take all advice and feedback, wherever and whenever we have been advices of anything incorrect we have resolved it straight away and will continue to do so.*

Officer note: the feedback provided from officers related to confirming the relevant policies and that there was not the same restriction on losing the employment use as in their previous site.

- 6.22 It is unfortunate that the use applied for commenced before the application was submitted and a decision reached. Officers were made aware that the use had commenced late in January. As at that time a planning application was being consulted on and processed it was not considered expedient to take enforcement action to require that the use ceased. The applicant was however advised to reduce how often the building was being used pending the outcome of the application. Officers understand that this advice has generally been followed.

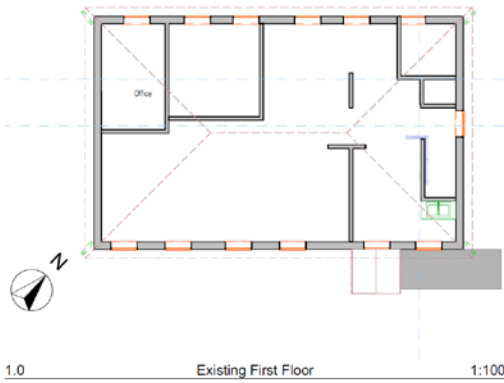
## 7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Subject to the imposition of conditions to control how the building is used, the hours of use and how the parking area is managed, the proposed use of the building as a community facility for the applicant is considered acceptable. The location is in a sustainable position in the district centre of Tilehurst close to a frequent bus route and public car parking. There are no significant changes to the building design and appearance so no harm caused to the visual character of the area. The proposal is in accordance with Policy CS11, CS24 and CS31 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM4 and DM12 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document. The proposal does not raise any other policy concerns.

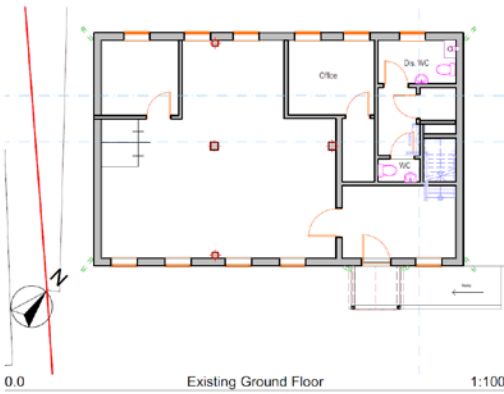
Case Officer: Julie Williams

Plans:

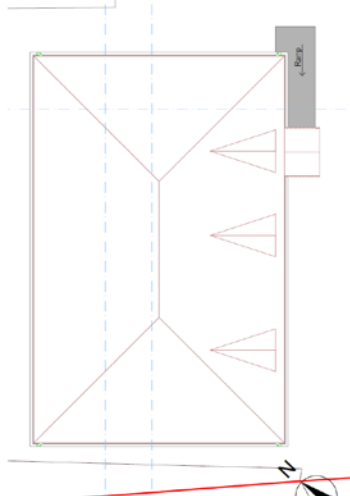
Existing block plan PL02  
Proposed site layout PL03 B  
Existing plans PL04  
Existing elevations PL05  
Proposed plans PL06 B  
Proposed elevations PL07 B



1.0 Existing First Floor 1:100



0.0 Existing Ground Floor 1:100



2.0 Existing Roof 1:100

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 All dimensions to be checked on site and any discrepancies to be reported before work commences.

**Notes:** Site Area: 747.526 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Existing  
 Gross Internal Ground Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Gross Internal First Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>

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**cabe**  
 chartered association  
 of building engineers

**RICS**  
 Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

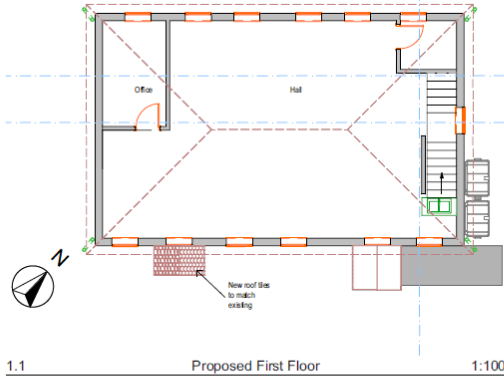
Client:  
**ZAINABIYA READING CENTRE**

Job Title:  
**Change of Use from B1 to D1 place of worship  
 4 - 6 School Road Reading RG31 5AL**

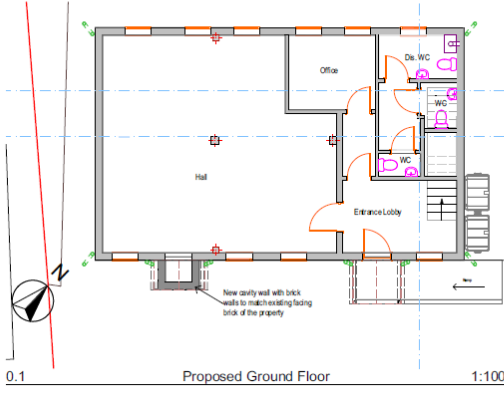
Drawing Title:  
**Existing Floor Plans**

Drawing Date: <b>02-01-2018</b>	Status: <b>Change of Use</b>
Issue Date: <b>02/02/2018</b>	Drawn By: <b>CP</b>
Job No: <b>8762-18</b>	Scale: <b>1:100@A3</b>
Drawing No: <b>PL-04</b>	Rev: 

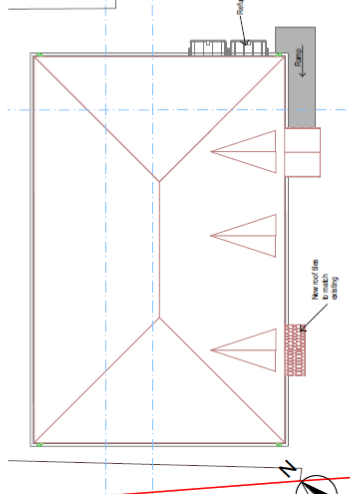
Existing Plans



1.1 Proposed First Floor 1:100



0.1 Proposed Ground Floor 1:100



2.1 Proposed Roof 1:100

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 Existing  
 Gross Internal Ground Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Gross Internal First Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Proposed  
 Gross Internal Ground Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Gross Additional Ground Floor: 1 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Gross Total Ground Floor: 89.947 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Gross Internal First Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>

Revision	Description	Issued	Checked	By
A	Education amendments for 4 cycle strategy	CP		02-02-2018
B	#Hall, Parking #Entrance	CP		09/04/2018

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**cabe**  
 chartered association  
 of building engineers

**RICS**  
 Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

Client:  
**ZAINABIYA READING CENTRE**

Job Title:  
**Change of Use from B1 to D1 place of worship  
 4 - 6 School Road Reading RG31 5AL**

Drawing Title:  
**Proposed Floor Plans**

Drawing Date: <b>02-01-2018</b>	Status: <b>Change of Use</b>
Issue Date: <b>09/04/2018</b>	Drawn By: <b>CP</b>
Job No: <b>8762-18</b>	Scale: <b>1:100@A3</b>
Drawing No: <b>PL-06</b>	Rev: <b>B</b>

Proposed Plans

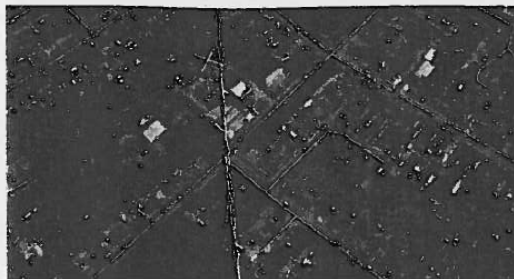


Proposed elevations



Proposed site layout

## Does School Road Need this Mosque?



**Application for a mosque at:**

**Equity House, 4-6 School Road,  
Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5AL**

**Application Ref: 180094**

**Write to Reading Council by post, email or online:**

**Post:** Planning Department, Reading Council, Civic  
Offices, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LU

**Email:** [plgadmin@reading.gov.uk](mailto:plgadmin@reading.gov.uk)

An application has been made to create a mosque at 4-6 School Road. This busy and congested road contains shops, schools, a bank, a post office, many businesses, and parking restrictions on both sides. Parking is already a severe problem, particularly at the post office in front of the mosque site. They propose only 10 spaces for a 2,000 square foot mosque! It backs onto back gardens, and is surrounded by densely built residential streets. The application would pave the way for an even bigger mosque later, dominating the area. Their website says they are "Now Fully Open" even before planning permission has been granted! So can they be relied on to keep to planning conditions?

**Please write to the Council to object. You can tear off the postcard below.  
Don't just copy this document – these are points to put in your own words:**

**1. Character of the Area**

The mosque will harm the character of this closely built, busy area. The size at 2,000 sq feet, the numbers, and the level of activity, will dominate the area. Parking, noise, and disruption to local commerce will irreversibly change the character of the area. There are numerous other mosques nearby, including at 330 Oxford Rd, 18a Waylen St, 46 Alexandra Rd, and at London Rd.

**2. Congestion and Parking**

There will be only 10 parking spaces for the many cars that will visit the mosque. Visitors will drive from across Reading, e.g. Earley, where the Applicant lives. Congestion is already very difficult along School Road, an arterial route and a feeder to the A329 Road out of Reading. It would soon become impossible. Congestion is evident around the mosque at Oxford Road, and the effects of such problems will be worse at this vulnerable location on School Road.

**3. Disturbance**

The noise, disruption, and visitors will create unacceptable disturbance for local people. Car doors, traffic jams, and blocked emergency vehicles will create noise and public safety problems, as well as traffic and pedestrian conflicts. The Applicants' website says "New Centre Now Fully Open", even before they have planning permission. So can the Council rely on them to observe planning control, such as opening hours and other conditions, e.g. during the busy and energetic Ramadan activities?

Copy of leaflet distributed and used by some to comment on the application.