



Report of the Chief Planning Officer

PLANS PANEL EAST

Date: 27 August 2009

Subject: APPLICATION 09/02943/FU – Full application for erection of a mosque and community centre to existing depot site with new vehicular and pedestrian access and basement car park at Land at junction of Catherine Grove and Lodge Lane, Beeston, Leeds

APPLICANT

Abu Huraira Islamic Centre -
Mr M Raouf

DATE VALID

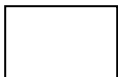
6th July 2009

TARGET DATE

31st August 2009

Electoral Wards Affected:

City & Hunslet



Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

RECOMMENDATION:

DEFER and DELEGATE approval to the Chief Planning officer subject to the conditions specified (and any others which he might consider appropriate)and the completion of a legal agreement within 3 months from the date of resolution unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Chief Planning Officer, to include the following obligations;

- **Restriction of use of the existing mosque to education facility only**
- **£2500 payment to cover monitoring of the Travel Plan**

1. Time Limit (3 years)
2. Sample of wall and roof materials to be submitted
3. Development shall not commence until details of the glazing, materials and treatment/colour of all windows and doors have been submitted to and approved in

writing by the Local Planning Authority. Once approved, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

4. Details of boundary treatments.
5. Details of hard and soft landscaping
6. Implementation of landscaping scheme
7. The Mosque shall not be used other than for the following purposes, unless otherwise first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority:
 - a. Daily prayer, Eid prayer and funeral prayers.
 - b. Women's groups.
 - c. Elderly groups.
 - d. Missionary work.
 - e. Religious, moral and cultural education of children up to the age of 16.
 - f. Ancillary administration of mosque function.
 - g. Welfare and advice sessions with emergency services, local authority agencies and others as appropriate.
 - h. Meetings of community representatives and mosque committee.
8. The mosque shall not be used for the purposes of weddings, funerals (except funeral prayers) or other such functions.
9. No tannoy system shall be operated on the site.
10. No development shall take place until details of any extract ventilation system, (including details of a filter to remove odour, and the methods of treatment of the emissions), flue pipes or air conditioning systems have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied until the works approved in accordance with this condition have been completed. Such works shall thereafter be retained.
11. Scheme of sound insulation
12. Lighting restrictions
13. No development shall take place until details of the proposed means of disposal of foul and surface water drainage including details of any balancing works and off site works, have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. No piped discharged of surface water shall take place from the application site until the works thereby approved have been completed unless otherwise approved in writing.
14. No building or obstruction shall be located over or within 3 metres either side of the centre line of the sewers that cross the site.
15. Provision of dropped kerbs.
16. Implementation and monitoring of travel plan.
17. Provision of disabled parking spaces.

Reasons for approval:

The application is considered to comply with policies GP5, T2, T24, N12, N13, BD5 of the UDP Review, as well as guidance contained within PPS1 and PPG13 and, having regard to all other material considerations is considered acceptable.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 This application was presented to Members at the July 30th Panel meeting as a position statement. The application proposes a new mosque to serve the Muslim community of Beeston. The applicants, the Kashmir Muslim Welfare Association (KMWA) currently occupy premises at Hardy Street and the proposed building is to replace these premises and provide better facilities.

- 1.2 Since the position statement was brought to the previous Plans Panel meeting the applicant has submitted a Transport Statement and Travel Plan which have now been considered by Highways.
- 1.3 Amendments to the scheme will also be submitted to remove the 6 lower ground floor parking spaces due to the resultant change in levels which conflict with providing level access into the entrances and amended plans will be presented to Plans Panel.
- 1.4 At the Plans Panel meeting of 30 July Members were supportive of the application. Members raised queries regarding the uses of the different halls within the building, the community uses currently taking place and what will happen to the existing mosque, as well as queries regarding different Muslim groups in the area and also the purpose of the minarets as well as commenting that highway matters should be fully assessed. These queries and issues are addressed in the report at paragraphs 10.22 to 10.26.

2.0 PROPOSAL:

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a 4 storey (including lower ground level) building as a replacement facility for the KMWA. The proposal originally included 6 parking spaces together with cycle parking at the lower ground level accessed via an internal access ramp from the corner of Lodge Lane and Catherine Grove. The applicant is revising the proposal to delete the lower ground level parking which will therefore remove the vehicular entrance, lower the height of the building and provide level access to the entrances.
- 2.2 Two further off street parking spaces are proposed at the corner of Stratford Street and Back Tempest Road (the precise design and siting of these spaces is to be controlled by condition 17). The main pedestrian entrance to the building is from Catherine Grove.
- 2.3 The Design and Access Statement advises that the proposal is to serve the needs of the existing users at the Hardy Street mosque/ community centre and to provide improved and additional facilities for women and the growing local Muslim population. The applicants advise that the existing mosque at Hardy Street is cramped and overcrowded with no off street parking.
- 2.4 The proposed mosque and community centre would be used as a mosque and prayer facility, community facility and other recreational activities and for educational use.
- 2.5 The proposed plans identify the different uses on each of the floors, with a community hall at the lower ground level (115 sq.m) an everyday hall at ground floor level (208 sq.m) the main prayer hall is at first floor level (371 sq.m) and a ladies prayer hall at second floor (230 sq.m). This may be subject to some change/reconfiguration as a result of the deletion of the parking area at lower ground floor. Members will be updated on this aspect at Panel.
- 2.6 The design of the proposed mosque is of traditional Islamic architecture. The Design and Access Statement describes the proposed building as having long arched windows and fenestration complete with a roof dome over the main halls and minarets. The building is proposed to be constructed of brickwork and artstone.

- 2.7 The proposed layout occupies almost a square block, however the proposed building is orientated away from the surrounding properties. Although the main pedestrian entrance to the building is the north west elevation at the corner of Catherine Grove and Back Tempest Road, the south east elevation facing the corner of Stratford Street and Lodge Lane has been treated in design terms with similar importance due to its prominent position in the streetscene.
- 2.8 The footprint and internal layout is also influenced by religious constraints with the orientation set to point to Mekka in Saudi Arabia. The layout can be seen as a long rectangular block with two wings either side. The dome is located centrally within the roof of the main block with two minarets at the corner of each of the wings near to Lodge Lane and Stratford Street.
- 2.9 The overall height of the building to the main roof is almost 12 metres. The overall height of the proposed dome is some 17.25 metres and the height of the top of the proposed minarets is approximately 23.5m.
- 2.10 A Transport Statement and Travel Plan is submitted in support of the application.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS:

- 3.1 The application site was previously occupied by housing and it is understood that these properties were demolished in approximately 2002. The site now comprises a City Council works compound. The site is bound by 2m high palisade fencing.
- 3.2 The site is surrounded by terraced residential properties to the north, east and west on Catherine Grove, Lodge Lane and Back Tempest Road respectively. To the south of the site on Stratford Street is the Church of the Holy Spirit which is a Grade II listed building.

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

- 4.1 There is no relevant planning history to the site.

5.0 HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS:

- 5.1 Prior to the submission of the application, extensive pre-application discussions have been ongoing with the applicants and ward members (Councillors Iqbal and Nash) for the past 6 months. During this time the scale of the building has been reduced and the detailed architectural treatment of the building has been revised to address concerns raised by officers.

6.0 PUBLIC/LOCAL RESPONSE:

- 6.1 The application has been publicised by means of site notices, posted 17th July 2009, an advert in Leeds Weekly News and neighbour notification letters sent on the 13th July 2009.
- 6.2 Ward members are supportive of the proposal.
- 6.3 A letter of support has been received from Councillor Kabeer Hussain which states that the proposed development will have a positive impact on both the local area

and on community sustainability and will not have any detrimental impact on residential amenity and will add to the further regeneration of the local area. Councillor Hussain states that the development is supported by the local community who have been consulted prior to the application being submitted and the plans of the development fit in with the character of the area and it will not affect the street scene in anyway.

- 6.4 In relation to parking Councillor Hussain points out that the Panel may have concerns, but this proposed facility is a facility for the local community and most of the users will be walking to and from the building and therefore this will not cause any parking or highway issues. People will not need to use their cars when they come to this facility as a majority of residents live within walking distance therefore highways and parking should not be of concern.
- 6.5 8 letters of support have been received making the following comments;
- The adjacent church have no objections and have enjoyed close links with the KMWA over the last 7 years and with the new mosque hope to work together even more closely than at present. The KMWA is a community minded faith group which has made a valuable contribution to community cohesion in the area
 - The proposal will enhance the local area and regeneration of the area
 - It is right that the muslim community in Beeston Hill is recognised through a new place of worship
 - It is difficult to find space for prayer at particular times of Friday congregation or Eid prayers at the current location on Hardy Street
 - Very pleased at this step to provide a bigger, more updated space
 - Support for the fantastic building being erected which will benefit worshippers and bring a unique new look to the area
 - The proposal will add a landmark building and significantly improve the site
- 6.6 In addition to the comments of support, specific queries raised in the representations are as follows;
- No details of boundary treatment are provided, high quality boundary is required
 - *This matter is proposed to be dealt with by condition, however the applicant has indicated that they intend to provide railing boundary treatment to the site.*
 - A landscaping scheme should be secured through condition as there has been a loss of mature gardens and trees in the surrounding area.
 - *A condition is proposed regarding landscaping details to be agreed and implemented.*
 - Relocation of the vehicular access is questioned away from dwelling houses on Lodge Lane as the gradient and sweep of the driveway could impact on the residents of Lodge Lane from engine noise and glare of headlights when exiting the site.
 - *This matter is considered below in the report*
 - General amenity conditions applied to other similar permissions, including the submission and approval of a noise insulation scheme, hours restrictions to use of tannoy systems and control over external security lighting and ambient zone lighting should be used.
 - *Conditions relating to these matters are set out at the start of this report.*

- 6.7 1 letter of objection has been received from a resident of Catherine Grove who states that although the users of the mosque are encouraged to walk it has been proved by their own research that it does not happen, showing the traffic increase from single figures on normal days to over 20 on the main day of prayer and this does not include parking for other activities carried out within the mosque. Expected figures of 700 people plus will lead to no change for residents to park. The resident compares parking situations in the streets surrounding Elland Road on match days. The street at present is quite with very little traffic, despite the working compound. The resident suggests as an alternative to the loss of parking created by the mosque, the applicants could create off street parking for those residents that wished it or permit only parking for residents.

The matter of the suggested creation of off street parking and parking permits is assessed in the report in relation to highway matters.

- 6.8 The objection is also on the grounds of loss of natural light due to the extra height of the mosque above Catherine Grove properties.
The matter of loss of natural light is considered in the report in relation to residential amenity matters.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES:

Statutory:

Highways

- 7.1 The visibility at the new access proposed is acceptable in this location (*to be deleted from the scheme*). The proposed disabled parking spaces off Stratford Street are substandard in size. Cycle parking proposed should be accessible and is blocked by parking spaces at present.
- 7.2 The applicant's Transport Consultant has advised that on a typical Friday around 270 people usually attend the main prayer service. The Consultants transport survey shows that during the 2pm main prayer time on a Friday 114 additional cars were parked within the vicinity of the existing mosque.
- 7.3 The Transport Statement also provides modal splits based on a survey conducted on members attending the Friday main prayer, the results of the survey have been queried in light of the on street parking surveys which show based on 271 people attending the Friday prayer and 114 additional cars being parked within the vicinity of the site, 43% of people are arriving by car. The applicant's transport consultant has agreed to 43% as worst case scenario base line. If the number of people who traveled as a passenger, which the consultants survey showed was 8%, then the percentage of people attending the Friday prayer by car would be 51%.
- 7.4 The Traffic section have advised that parking is a main issue in the area and that they do receive a number of complaints. The area consists of predominantly terraced streets where parking is already at a premium and when services/events are being held at places such as the Hardy Street Mosque and other community sites in the area it can become heavily parked up. This leads to road safety concerns and conflict with residential parking.
- 7.5 The proposed site is only 200m south of the existing site however, the nature of this area is different to the Hardy Street area. The proposed site is immediately adjacent to the Holy Spirit Church, which has a children's nursery attached and a Hamara Healthy Living Centre. The on street parking currently associated with the existing Hardy Street Mosque will inevitably be displaced to this area.

- 7.6 Statistics show that, for the Leeds district, on-street parking was cited as the main factor in accidents caused by pedestrians being masked by parked or stationary vehicle, which accounted for 17% of pedestrian accidents in 2008. The level of on-street parking generated by the proposed use would be detrimental to road safety. Measures proposed in the Travel Plan will need to be strictly followed to ensure that car borne trips to the site and parking demand is kept to an absolute minimum.
- 7.7 The existing use generates a large number of vehicles during a main Friday prayer. The parking surveys undertaken by TPI show an additional 114 cars are parked within the vicinity of the existing Hardy Street Mosque. This level of on-street parking at this time will be transferred approximately 200m south and will be in the vicinity of a Nursery, a Hamara Healthy living Centre and a church.
- 7.8 Highway Officers whilst not making a formal objection do express serious concerns that this level of on-street parking in the vicinity of a large number of community uses would be to the detriment of highway safety and the Mosque must undertake every endeavour to minimise the on street parking. Measures proposed in the Travel Plan will need to be strictly followed to ensure that car borne trips to the site and parking demand is kept to an absolute minimum
- 7.9 In relation to the existing use, it is understood that the KWMA wish to continue using this building for supplementary teaching purposes. Highways have no objections to this use continuing on the site, however there would be objections to the site having permission to continue to be used as a place of worship. Having potentially two mosques in such close proximity to one another would be detrimental to road safety, due to the level of on-street parking which would occur as part of the Friday prayer. Therefore, the applicant should enter into a planning agreement where the use of the site is limited to supplementary teaching purposes.

Non-statutory:

- 7.10 Design- some concern about the overall heights and heights of minarets. The site boundary treatment and site landscape needs to be strong to counter the angled building in relation to the urban grain. In relation to the facade treatment this has both linear and vertical emphasis, vertical emphasis may benefit the scheme, however the proportions of this and the windows are reasonable.
- 7.11 Access - Objections are raised as a community facility such as this should be accessible. The site is level however due to the proposed lower ground floor level access is not provided. The application proposes a platform lift to overcome the change in levels, this is not acceptable as this should be used as a last resort mitigation, usually reserved for difficult existing buildings. Mechanical failure can instantly render the building inaccessible. The advice of the access officer is that the current design for a new building would be difficult to defend under the Disability Discrimination Act and that there are indications that it would not follow Part M of the Building Regulations.
- 7.12 Yorkshire Water – The statutory sewer map shows combined sewers recorded to cross the site. A stand off distance of 3m is required at each side of the sewer centreline. Yorkshire Water are contacting the applicant about this matter. It may be possible to formally close or divert the sewer traversing the site, the developer would need to make a written application to Yorkshire Water.

8.0 PLANNING POLICIES:

Development Plan

- 8.1 The development plan comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026 (RSS) and the adopted Leeds Unitary Development Plan (Review 2006). The RSS was issued in May 2008 and includes a broad development strategy for the region, setting out regional priorities in terms of location and scale of development.
- 8.2 The site is within a primarily residential area and is also within a community priority area. The closest local centre to the site is Dewsbury Road which is some 500m to the east along Rowland Road. The following UDP policies are relevant to the consideration of the application:

GP5 – General planning considerations;
N12 – Urban design principles;
N13 – Design of new buildings;
T2 – New development and highway safety;
T2B – Requirement for transport assessment;
T2C – Requirement for travel plan;
T2D – Public Transport contributions;
T5 – Access for pedestrians and cyclists;
T6 – Provision for disabled people;
BD3 – Access to public buildings for disabled people;
BD5 – New buildings, design and amenity;
LD1 – Landscaping proposals.

- 8.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents
Public Transport Improvements and Developer Contributions SPD.
Draft Street Design Guide SPD.
Travel Plans SPD.

- 8.3 National Planning Policy and Guidance
PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
PPG13 – Transport
PPG15 – Planning and the historic environment

9.0 MAIN ISSUES

1. Principle of development.
2. Scale, design and impact on character of area.
3. Setting of Listed Building
4. Highways.
5. Impact on nearby residential properties.
6. Queries raised by Members at Panel meeting on 30.07.09

10.0 APPRAISAL

Principle of development

- 10.1 The site is previously developed land and was formerly occupied by residential properties. Development of this site is therefore considered appropriate.

Scale, design and impact on the character of the area

- 10.2 The position statement brought to the previous Panel meeting advised that pre application negotiations had largely focussed on the scale and design of the proposed development and sought members views concerning the scale of the proposed development within the context of the surrounding area taking account of the large church building close by to the south of Stratford Street.
- 10.3 Following negotiations with the applicant on the scale and design of the proposed building, officers consider that although the building will have an impact on the surrounding area in terms of the streetscene, the scale of the building and the design is acceptable in visual amenity terms.
- 10.4 The minarets which are proposed will be some 23.5 metres. The Design & Access statement submitted makes a comparison of ridge heights of surrounding buildings and states that the average ridge level of surrounding residential properties is comparable with the parapet level of the two wings of the building. The Design and Access Statement also states that the ridge height of the church to the south (Church of the Holy Spirit) is comparable with the highest parapet level of the proposed mosque. The Design and Access statement recognises that the mosque dome and minarets, as well as the church spire to the south are higher than any of the adjacent residential property's roof lines. The agent has advised that the minarets are the same height as the church spire to the south of the site on Trentham Street at the former Trinity Methodist Church (now in use as flats). At the previous Panel meeting, members indicated that the height of the minarets proposed is acceptable.

Impact to setting of listed building

- 10.5 The Church of the Holy Spirit is located to the south of the site. The Church is a Grade II listed building and therefore regard must be had to the impact to the setting of the listed building. Given the orientation of the proposed building and the separation provided by Stratford Street, officers are satisfied that the proposal will not detract from the setting of the listed building.

Highways

- 10.6 The Transport Statement accompanying the application advises that the site is within easy walking distance of public transport routes and the development offers multi modal accessibility choices for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and private car users and the development will act as a catalyst in reducing the need to travel in this location.
- 10.7 The Design and Access statement advises that the surrounding areas are well served by other mosques in the vicinity and as a result the traffic generation will be very much limited to the immediate locality served by the proposed replacement mosque and that the congregation will be drawn from the immediate vicinity who all live within a short walking distance of the site.
- 10.8 The busiest time for the proposed mosque will be Friday lunch times which is the main prayer session at 2pm in the summer months and 1pm in the winter months. The proposal as originally submitted provides 8 parking spaces at the site. The applicant recognises that the proposal will not be able to cater for peak parking demand on Friday lunch times and measures will be taken to reduce the impact such as encouraging the use of public transport and walking, together with car sharing as set out in the Travel Plan. The catchment area of the proposed mosque is considered to remain the same as the existing mosque.

- 10.9 The applicant has carried out parking surveys adjacent to both the current site and the proposed site on a neutral day and during the Friday Prayer period and has surveyed people arriving at Friday Prayers.
- 10.10 The applicant's Transport Consultant has advised that on a typical Friday around 270 people usually attend the main prayer service. The Consultants transport survey shows that during the 2pm main prayer time on a Friday 114 additional cars were parked within the vicinity of the existing mosque. From the results of the parking surveys and the number of people attending the Friday main prayer service, Highways Officers estimate that 43% of people are arriving by car.
- 10.12 Highway Officers have considered the existing parking situation on Fridays at the main prayer time and the availability of on street parking in light of the other traffic generating uses in the vicinity (church, nursery and healthy living centre) as well as the measures proposed in the travel plan.
- 10.13 Highway Officers whilst not making a formal objection do express serious concerns that this level of on-street parking in the vicinity of a large number of community uses would be to the detriment of highway safety and the Mosque must undertake every endeavour to minimise the on street parking. Measures proposed in the Travel Plan will need to be strictly followed to ensure that car borne trips to the site and parking demand is kept to an absolute minimum.
- 10.14 The vehicular access proposed is acceptable in terms of visibility however concerns have been raised by a local resident concerning the disturbance from vehicle engines at this access and potential for lights from vehicles to disturb nearby residents. The removal of the lower ground floor parking should serve to overcome this objection. The two disabled parking spaces proposed do not meet the required standards as they should have a 1.2m hatched area to the side and back of the bays and the space available cannot accommodate this therefore Highways advise that these spaces should be redesigned (see condition 17).
- 10.15 Access Officers have raised concerns regarding level access not being provided in a new community building. It is considered that on balance, the provision of 6 parking spaces within the lower ground floor of the building is unnecessary and does not significantly alleviate on street parking issues on Fridays at main prayer times. Highway Officers have advised that the omission of the 8 parking spaces currently proposed (2 substandard external spaces and 6 lower ground spaces) will not increase the strength of highway concerns regarding on street parking at peak times. As such, the applicant has been asked to amend the scheme to remove the lower ground parking and provide level access. This in turn should also improve the overall height of the building and relationship to surrounding properties. Revised plans are being prepared and will be presented to Panel at the meeting.
- 10.16 A letter of objection from a local residents also includes a suggestion of the creation of off street parking spaces for residents and/ or residents only parking permits. Highways Officers have considered these options, it is not possible to create off street parking spaces for residents which would be easily accessible and it is not considered that parking permits and a scheme to restrict parking would resolve matters due to the extent of streets that the parking restrictions would need cover to avoid displacing the on street parking. The impact to local residents therefore has to be considered in relation to the short period of time which the main period of on street parking problems are likely to occur. Conditions are recommended to control the uses within the mosque and restrict functions from taking place which would generate parking demands.

- 10.17 In relation to the existing use, it is understood that the KWMA wish to continue using this building at Hardy Street for supplementary teaching purposes. Highways have no objections to this use continuing on the site, however there would be objections to the site having permission to continue to be used as a place of worship. Having potentially two mosques in such close proximity to one another would be detrimental to road safety, due to the level of on-street parking which would occur as part of the Friday prayer. Therefore, the applicant is requested to enter into a s106 planning agreement where the use of the site at Hardy Street is limited to supplementary teaching purposes.
- 10.18 The scheme would fall within the threshold for a Public Transport Contribution under the requirements of the SPD. In light of the transport statement submitted, it is considered that the public transport use associated with the Mosque would be very low. Users are likely to live and work relatively close and those further away are likely to use cars for the relatively short visits. Given the negligible impact of the development on public transport which would involve numbers significantly below the thresholds listed within the SPD, the reliance on walking, and an acceptable Travel Plan being approved, it is considered that no public transport contribution would be required for the application.

Impact on nearby residential properties

- 10.19 Residential properties surround the site on three sides. The closest properties are those on Back Tempest Road. The south west elevation is some 15m from No. 79 and 13.5m from No. 83. The orientation of the building however is proposed in a way that the main side elevations of the building do not directly face any of the surrounding residential properties. This therefore avoids any loss of privacy and also assists in reducing the impact from the scale of the building and how it relates to these residential properties. SPG13 Neighbourhoods for living relates to residential properties and sets out traditional minimum guide distances. Whilst these relate to residential development it is considered that they are useful in considering the proposal for the mosque. A recommended distance from a main window to a side elevation is 12 metres. Given the orientation of the proposed building and the closest distance to residential properties of 13.5 metres officers consider that this relationship is acceptable.
- 10.20 The proposed building would be some 17.5 metres at the closest points from properties on Catherine Grove and Lodge Lane, again this relationship is considered acceptable given the separation distance and orientation. A letter of objection has been received in relation to loss of light to Catherine Grove. There has previously been development on this site, and it is considered that redevelopment is acceptable. Therefore some loss of light is inevitable. Although it is recognised that the height of the proposed mosque is higher than the eaves level of the adjacent terraces, it is considered that the orientation away from directly facing these properties helps to offset the additional height in terms of the relationship with the existing properties. This issue also has to be balanced against the wider community benefit of the proposal.
- 10.21 The proposed use will have an impact on residential amenity in terms of parking demand and footfall. It is recognised that the peak time for this will be Friday lunch times during the main prayer session. It is considered that this is unavoidable and therefore this issue has to be balanced against the impact to residential amenity. 1 letter has been received which raises objections to the proposal. It is considered that the impact to residential amenity at peak prayer times has to be offset against the benefit of this community facility and that on balance the proposal will not cause an undue loss of residential amenity.

Queries raised by members at 30th July 2009 Panel meeting

- 10.22 Members queried the amount of floorspace within the proposed Mosque and whether this is the minimum required for the scheme. The agent has advised that this is the minimum required.
- 10.23 Members raised queries regarding the differences between the every day hall and the community hall. The everyday prayer hall caters for worshippers attending the mosque on a daily basis between Saturday and Thursday as the number is around 20 to 30 people. The community hall is open for use by all the local residents and community irrespective of faith.
- 10.24 In relation to community uses which take place within the existing mosque the agent has advised that regular activities include pre school nursery, after school activities, religious and language classes and community events take place in the Mosque such as fundraising events, community forums, interfaith, women and youth groups as well as daily prayers. The agent also advises that the KMWA has built up a good relationship with other religious organisations meeting regularly with the leaders of Gurdwara (Sikh place of worship) and local churches and a religious walk has taken place to highlight how the local community work together and was featured on local news programme.
- 10.25 Members asked for an understanding of the different Muslim groups. There are at least 2 or 3 other Mosques in Beeston and whilst the congregation are all Muslims, there are different sects and factions within Islam. Due to the different factions and due to the geographical spread of the local community within Beeston, the agent advises that it is not possible or practical to provide one large mosque and a centralised service would increase the need to travel by car.
- 10.26 With regard to the minarets, Members queried whether these are decorative only. Whilst the agent advises that the minarets will not be used to call people to prayer, they do serve as one of four essential elements of a Mosque which are; the dome, the minarets, Bab Al-Sadir (front entrance) and the Mihrab (the prayer niche within the prayer hall).

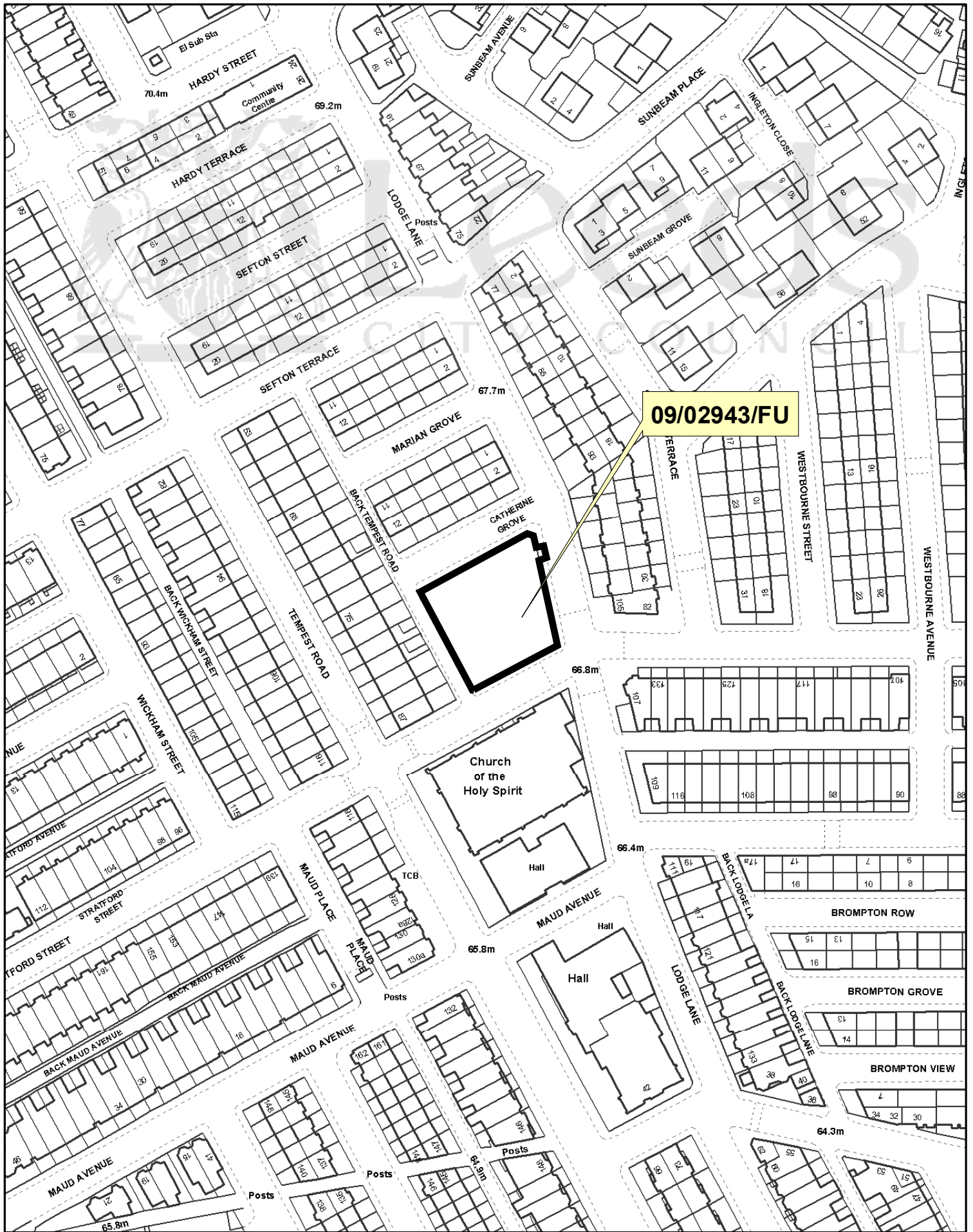
11.0 CONCLUSION

- 11.1 The application proposal is for a modern building that will be of significant benefit to the local community. The design and massing of the building has been subject to lengthy negotiation. The scheme now before Members is for a building that is suitable for its purpose and will uplift the character and visual amenities of the area. These benefits have to be balanced against the concerns of the Highways Officers as set out in this report and any harm to residential amenity. The application is recommended for permission. If, on balance, Members consider that the proposal is acceptable, then Members are requested to defer and delegate approval to the Chief Planning Officer subject to the conditions set out in this report and subject to the completion of a legal agreement within 3 months.

Background Papers:

Application file.

Certificate B, notice served on Leeds City Council



EAST PLANS PANEL



Scale 1/ 1250

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