

About the application

Application number: 2020/90784	
What is the application for?:	Alterations to convert part of existing newsagent into prayer facility
Address of the site or building:	260-262, Wakefield Road, Earlsheaton, Dewsbury, WF12 8AN
Postcode:	WF12 8AN

User comments

Type of comment: An objection
There is not enough parking available in the local area to allow for visiting cars to park without blocking areas used by residents or home owners drives. Most homes in the area have one or two cars (some have three or four, and one family whose income is based on their gardening business has two vans with only one fitting on the drive alongside their family car) with not all having driveways - or land included with their property to be able to build a drive way if they could obtain permission and afford to do so - so have at least one of their vehicles on the road in front of their property. We also have a number of vulnerable people in the area with daily nurse visits, who again need a place to park. This is without visitors which, under normal circumstances, every house hold has from time to time who park in front of other people's houses, often in places used by people at work who then have no where to park when they return home. Using my own household as an example, we are a two car house, both needed, as the three adults here all work at different jobs in very different places and shift patterns meaning our departure and arrival times rarely coincide to allow contemplation of car sharing, and I use public transport to get to and from work because I haven't yet passed my driving test. We have one car on the drive and one on the road at the moment. So far we are not blocking any of our neighbours, though occasionally are double parked with across the road (again a two car, one driveway family) - both sides try to avoid this but there is not enough room on the road without some times. All in all the car numbers already make it difficult to safely drive along some of the local streets and bringing more cars into the area would make it outright dangerous. The closest open space is the local park, a rare green space which if used as a parking lot would be ruined, risking damage to the trees and garden areas as well as risking car fumes and and damage in areas frequented by children, it is one of the few places outdoor sports and activities can be done and is still a reasonable walk meaning the most desirable places to park would be local roads which are overcrowded. I don't know whether this next matter may be deemed offensive or not but it is not meant to be, merely an observation. My observation is that ethnic minorities are still a minority in our area, this means many of the people using this facility would be travelling to it not from the direct local area. As many large scale religions pray morning and evening this for much of the year (if

...many large scale religious pray morning and evening and for most of the year (standard times are not used in place of sun rise and sun set) coincides with the work and school rush hours. The local roads are already restrictive for access and very busy at this time. My current bus route to and from work takes over two hours each way, when I once did it in the clear middle of the day it took under one, the journey from Dewsbury alone is double at minimum at rush hour and it has taken twenty minutes on a busy day to cover the distance which is a five minute (or less) journey at other times of the day. Rush hour with people getting children to and from schools and going from home to work or back already causes a large amount of traffic flow on quite narrow roads - as these connect some motorways through the area long distance commuters already add to local traffic.

Another consideration for the dawn / dusk prayer time is that in summer most of the local working population do not need to wake up before sun rise, and those retired or unfit to work have the choice of when to wake up year round. Most ceremonies are accompanied by some noise (we can hear the church bells ringing from Dewsbury for weddings but that is often in the mid afternoon when few are trying to sleep and is far away enough to be blocked out by shutting the window), if a bell or gong is used to signal the start or end of prayers this will disturb many residents sleep patterns at least part of the year, and even if not the noise of numerous people entering and leaving the area by car would cause a great deal of noise no matter how considerate they tried to be - many little noises can drown out even a mighty roar if there's enough of them.

Reasons not to ignore this comment;

Road over crowding and affect on traffic flow - valid under "Impact on highway safety and traffic"

Risk of damage to the park - valid under "Effect on trees and landscape"

Dawn / dusk bells /gongs / cars - valid under "Noise, disturbance and odour"

Number of people drawn in to the area - "effect on character of area", "effect on neighbouring properties" (it is not just the building itself that can do damage to other properties, but also the traffic it draws in, more people in an area leads to more chance of damage - like in particle collision theory, the more particles moving round a confined space, the more likely collisions are to happen)

One further comment I have;

A Google maps search brings up 16 prayer facilities in the area around Dewsbury (between Ossett, Mirfield & Heckmondwike), a search for churches in the same area gives 18, for Hebrew Synagogues the area had to cover Leeds and Bradford to show 6, Sikh temples also had to cover Leeds Bradford and Huddersfield. Given Christian churches were built for the longest time in this country (of all the religions worshipped here they succeeded the native pagan beliefs and were the dominant faith until more recent times) their status as most numerous is unsurprising, one might expect twice as many as any other faith for the historic Catholic & Church of England conflicts, as well as the smaller 'side chains' which each require their own space. Given there's already so many holy sites in the local area, would it not be more efficient to renovate, restore and enlarge the existing sites rather than build a new one in an area with limited traffic access - both for builders and worshippers - and safe parking areas?