

Consultation Response from KC, Highways Development Management
2020/90784 260-262, Wakefield Road, Earlsheaton, Dewsbury, WF12 8AN
Alterations to convert part of existing newsagent into prayer facility
Date Responded: 21/04/20 Responding Officer: J Turner Responding Ref: K15-6NE/13

This application seeks approval for alterations to convert part of an existing newsagent into a prayer facility at Wakefield Road, Earlsheaton.

The proposal is to convert part of an existing newsagent into a Muslim prayer building. The facility is intended to serve a small Muslim community. The Design and Access Statement produced by ISR suggest a strict membership programme will be introduced with a maximum membership of 25 persons, each to be within easy walking distance of the site.

The Statement also instructs that no teaching programmes within the new facility (i.e. a 'Madressah' system) will be introduced. There will be no Friday prayers at the facility, with prayer times during weekdays limited to evenings only.

Although it is suggested that members would be within walking distance of the site, Highways DM would still raise concerns regarding the lack of off-street parking; there remains a likelihood that some attendees would elect to drive, and that this scheme would intensify use of the highway. At this point, Wakefield Road is protected by a "no waiting at any time" restriction, with a formal pedestrian crossing in close proximity. This could cause two additional issues, firstly that any parking associated with the proposal would migrate onto residential streets off Wakefield Road where parking demand can often outweigh provision; and secondly that picking-up and dropping-off can still legally take place on the double-yellow lines, but vehicles doing so may mask the crossing in this particular location.

Highways DM would also raise concern about a change of use should the site change hands or if the time of use, membership numbers, or local membership policy be altered in the future. Conditioning the number of members and attendees would be extremely difficult to enforce, and there is no way of ensuring people arrive on foot.

Given the above, Highways DM do not feel this is a suitable location for such a facility and would raise objection to the scheme.