



Planning Statement

Ref: DA26029 - 69 -71 Windsor Road

Site address: 69–71 Windsor Road, Prestwich, Manchester, M25 0DB

Date: 11th May 2026

Proposal: Retrospective Change of Use of Ground Floor Premises to Synagogue / Place of Worship

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement supports a retrospective planning application for the change of use of the ground floor premises at 69-71 Windsor Road from commercial office use (Class E) to a synagogue and place of worship (Class F1(f)). The synagogue operates under the name Kehillas Prestwich. The first floor of the building remains in commercial office use and does not form part of this application.

The synagogue use commenced in February 2022. This application regularises the existing use. Bury Metropolitan Borough Council has not taken enforcement action. The Council advised the applicant that a planning application was required, and this application is submitted accordingly.

This statement assesses the proposal against the development plan, national planning policy, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, and all other relevant material planning considerations.

2. Site Location and Surrounding Context

The property is a two-storey mid-terrace building forming part of an established local neighbourhood parade on the west side of Windsor Road. The ground floor previously comprised two commercial office units — Millers (accountants and tax advisors) and Bright Books (bookkeepers) — which have been brought into combined use as the synagogue. The first floor continues in separate commercial office use and is unaffected by this application.

Windsor Road serves a busy, mixed-use local neighbourhood parade providing a range of commercial, retail, food and drink, professional services and community-facing uses for the surrounding residential area.

The wider surrounding area is predominantly residential, with housing to the north, south, east and west of the parade. The synagogue serves local residents living within the surrounding neighbourhood. The site is within walking distance of those residents — a fact that is directly and materially relevant to the nature of this use, and which is developed in the assessment below.

To the front of the parade there is a shared informal car parking area used by visitors to the commercial units. The site is not within a conservation area and the building is not listed.

3. Planning History and Background

No recent relevant planning history has been identified for the application property.



Prior to the current synagogue use, the ground floor premises were in commercial office use within Use Class E. The synagogue use commenced in February 2022 and has operated continuously since that date.

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council has not taken enforcement action in respect of the use. The Council advised the applicant that the change of use requires a planning application, which is submitted accordingly. There is no enforcement history and no outstanding compliance issue.

4. Description of the Development

Kehillas Prestwich serves the local Jewish community in Prestwich. The primary use of the premises is as a synagogue/place of worship, with associated ancillary religious and community activity typical of a small local synagogue.

The internal arrangement of the ground floor comprises an entrance lobby, WCs, a tea preparation area and the main prayer room, as shown on the submitted floor plans.

No external alterations have been made to the building and no external signage has been installed. The premises retain a neutral frontage consistent with the commercial character of the surrounding parade. The use operates within the existing building envelope.

The key operational details are:

- principal use on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, consistent with Shabbat observance, with additional services on Jewish High Holy Days, known as Yom Tov;
- the premises provide seating as shown on the submitted floor plans;
- attendance at or close to full seating capacity is generally associated with Shabbat and Yom Tov services;
- weekday services generally take place between 7:00am and 8:00am, and between 7:00pm and 9:00pm;
- typical weekday attendance is materially lower than full capacity and is generally between approximately 20 and 30 people;
- no amplified music or external loudspeakers are used;
- attendance is principally on foot from the surrounding residential area, particularly at the busiest periods of use;
- refuse storage is to the rear of the premises, using the same arrangements as the previous commercial use.

5. Planning Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The relevant development plan comprises the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document, adopted in March 2024, together with saved policies of the Bury Unitary Development Plan where those policies have not been superseded.

Bury Unitary Development Plan



The most directly relevant local policies are contained within the Community Facilities chapter of the Bury UDP. The UDP recognises that community facilities include places of worship and that such facilities are important to the quality of life of local residents.

Saved UDP Policy CF1 provides the local policy starting point. It confirms that proposals for new and improved community facilities will generally be looked on favourably, provided that they do not conflict with residential amenity or the local environment.

Saved UDP Policy CF1/1 addresses the location of new community facilities. The relevant considerations include:

- impact on residential amenity and the local environment;
- traffic generation and car parking;
- scale and size of the development;
- access to shops and services;
- suitability of the chosen location in relation to the community served;
- accessibility by public and private transport;
- the needs and requirements of disabled users.

This application performs well against those local policy tests. The use is modest in scale, located within an established local parade, close to the residential community it serves, and accessible on foot from the surrounding streets. It has operated since February 2022 without known amenity, highway or parking harm. It is therefore consistent with the purpose and criteria of Policies CF1 and CF1/1.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework is a material consideration. Paragraph 8 identifies the social objective of sustainable development, including supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities and ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes and facilities are provided to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Chapter 8 of the NPPF deals with promoting healthy and safe communities. Paragraph 96 requires planning policies and decisions to aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places. Paragraph 98 requires planning policies and decisions to plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities and other local services, expressly including places of worship, in order to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

The NPPF therefore supports accessible local community facilities where they serve local needs and do not result in unacceptable planning harm.

Places for Everyone

Places for Everyone forms part of the statutory development plan for Bury and provides the strategic framework for sustainable growth across Greater Manchester. It is relevant to the overall planning context. However, for this application the most specific policies are the saved Bury UDP community facility policies referred to above.

Biodiversity Net Gain



Biodiversity Net Gain is not applicable to this application. The application is submitted retrospectively to regularise an existing change of use and no external works, operational development, habitat loss or physical changes to the site are proposed. The proposal therefore does not give rise to any biodiversity impact requiring mitigation or enhancement through the planning application.

Policy Conclusion

The policy position is supportive. National and local planning policy recognise the importance of community facilities, including places of worship, in appropriate and accessible locations. The key planning question is whether the use gives rise to unacceptable harm in relation to amenity, highways, parking, character, accessibility or the local environment.

6. Human Rights, Equalities and Community Considerations

The application also engages legal and equality considerations relevant to the planning balance.

Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights, incorporated into domestic law by the Human Rights Act 1998, protects the right to manifest religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance. Religion or belief is also a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, and the Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty when exercising its planning functions.

These considerations do not displace the ordinary planning assessment. However, they do mean that the religious and community importance of the use should be given proper weight. For observant Jewish residents, proximity to a synagogue is particularly important because Shabbat and Yom Tov observance requires attendance on foot. The location of Kehillas Prestwich within the residential neighbourhood it serves is therefore a material planning benefit.

7. Planning Assessment

7.1 Principle of Development

A place of worship falls within Use Class F1(f). The previous ground floor use fell within Class E. Planning permission is required for the change of use, which this application seeks to regularise.

Windsor Road is a busy mixed-use local parade serving the surrounding residential community. It accommodates a range of commercial, retail, food and drink, office and service uses. A local synagogue is compatible with this context and sits naturally within the community-serving role of the parade.

The previous ground floor use was commercial office accommodation — not active retail. The proposal does not result in the loss of a primary retail unit, a protected retail function, or any use that the development plan requires to be maintained. It replaces a commercial office use with a local community facility that directly serves residents in the surrounding neighbourhood. That is entirely consistent with the purpose of a local neighbourhood parade.

7.2 The Fallback Position

The fallback position is a material consideration.



The previous lawful use of the ground floor fell within Class E, a broad commercial, business and service use class. Subject to any site-specific restrictions and other regulatory requirements, the premises could revert to a range of Class E uses without a further planning application.

That is relevant because many Class E uses could generate greater levels of footfall, customer activity, servicing, deliveries, vehicle movements, parking demand and general commercial activity than the current synagogue use.

The synagogue use is modest, locally attended and primarily pedestrian in nature. It uses no amplified sound or external loudspeakers and has no significant servicing requirement. Its busiest periods are associated with Shabbat and Yom Tov, when attendance is on foot in accordance with religious observance.

The fallback position therefore reinforces the planning case. The synagogue should not be assessed against an unrealistic assumption that the premises would otherwise remain quiet or inactive. It should be considered against the real planning context, which includes the ability of the ground floor to return to lawful Class E commercial use.

7.3 Community Need and Local Benefit

Kehillas Prestwich provides a clear, specific and established community benefit.

Prestwich has one of the most established Jewish communities outside London. The synagogue serves the day-to-day religious needs of local residents who live within walking distance. For observant Jewish households this is not a matter of preference — it is a practical necessity. Jewish law prohibits the use of vehicles on Shabbat and Yom Tov. Without a synagogue within walking distance, observant Jewish residents cannot fulfil their religious obligations on the most important days of the Jewish calendar.

The synagogue is a community anchor. Its value is both spiritual and social — it supports community cohesion, local participation and the ability of an established religious community to live fully in the neighbourhood they call home.

The community benefit is not speculative. Kehillas Prestwich has been serving the local area since February 2022. It is established, valued and supported by the surrounding community.

7.4 Established Use and Real-World Evidence

The synagogue has operated continuously from these premises since February 2022. This is one of the most important material considerations in the application.

Over more than three years of operation, no complaints are known to have been received, no enforcement action has been taken and no planning harm has been identified. There is no evidence that the use has harmed neighbouring amenity, highway safety, parking conditions, the character of the parade or the operation of neighbouring businesses.

This real-world evidence is more reliable than speculative concern about possible impacts. The Council can assess this application by reference to how the use has actually functioned over an extended period in this specific location.

The evidence weighs strongly in favour of granting permission.



7.5 Neighbouring Amenity

The use has operated compatibly with neighbouring occupiers and the surrounding parade.

The site sits within a busy mixed-use local parade where commercial activity, customer movement and a degree of background activity are already part of the established character. Against that baseline, the synagogue is a quiet and orderly use centred on prayer, religious observance and associated ancillary activity typical of a small local synagogue.

No amplified music or external loudspeakers are used. Arrivals and departures are limited in scale and are principally on foot, particularly at the busiest periods of use.

The timing of services is also compatible with the surrounding commercial context. The weekday morning service generally runs from 7:00am to 8:00am, before normal commercial activity on the parade begins. The weekday evening service generally runs from 7:00pm to 9:00pm, after the majority of daytime commercial uses have closed. The primary Shabbat and Yom Tov services take place on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, when many neighbouring businesses are either closed or operating at reduced capacity.

No complaints are known to have been received from any neighbouring occupier or local resident in more than three years of operation. That is the clearest practical evidence that the use is compatible with its surroundings.

7.6 Highways, Parking and Access

The synagogue generates no material highway impact or parking pressure.

The congregation is drawn from the surrounding residential area and attendance is principally on foot. This is especially significant in relation to Shabbat and Yom Tov, which are the primary and most well-attended periods of use. During those periods, attendees walk to the synagogue in accordance with religious observance. There is therefore no material vehicular trip generation or parking demand associated with the peak use of the premises.

Weekday services are modest in scale when compared with the full seating capacity of the premises. Typical weekday attendance is generally between approximately 20 and 30 people. The morning service generally concludes at 8:00am, before normal commercial activity on the parade begins. The evening service generally runs from 7:00pm to 9:00pm, after the majority of daytime commercial uses have closed. These timings do not materially conflict with the parking or highway demand of surrounding businesses.

The previous commercial office use would itself have generated staff, visitor and business-related vehicle movements throughout the working week. By comparison, the synagogue use is local, modest and primarily pedestrian in nature.

The synagogue is not a regional facility and does not draw car-based trips from a wide catchment. There is no evidence from over three years of operation that the use has caused highway safety or parking harm.

7.7 Character and Appearance



No external alterations have been made to the building and no external signage has been installed. The use operates entirely within the existing building envelope. The ground floor frontage presents a neutral appearance consistent with the commercial character of the surrounding parade. The proposal has no adverse effect on the character or appearance of the street scene.

7.8 Impact on the Local Parade

The synagogue supports the function and vitality of the Windsor Road parade.

The parade serves the surrounding residential community through a diverse mix of uses. The proposal keeps the ground floor in active occupation — preferable to vacancy — and introduces a community-facing use that directly serves local residents. The synagogue brings people to Windsor Road at times when many other businesses are closed: early mornings, evenings, and on Shabbat. The first floor remains in commercial office use and the building as a whole continues in productive mixed use.

The development plan does not require the ground floor to be maintained in commercial office use. No retail function and no protected use is lost.

7.9 Waste, Servicing and Management

The use generates very limited waste and has no servicing requirement. There are no deliveries, loading vehicles or regular servicing movements. Refuse storage is located to the rear of the premises using the same arrangements that were in place during the previous commercial use — a practical and established arrangement with no impact on the street scene or neighbouring occupiers.

8. Neighbour and Community Support

Letters of support have been provided by a number of neighbouring and nearby occupiers within the Windsor Road parade, including:

- BASS Accountants, 67 Windsor Road;
- Cityview Estates, 77 Windsor Road;
- Bakers Heaven;
- Tuvya The Sofer, Windsor Crescent.

Each letter confirms support for the regularisation of the synagogue use. The letters also provide practical evidence from nearby occupiers that the use has operated without causing disturbance, nuisance or harm to their businesses. Copies are appended as supporting evidence.

The support received from nearby occupiers, together with the absence of known complaints during the period of operation, provides direct evidence that the use has functioned compatibly with its surroundings. This should be given weight in the planning balance.

9. Planning Balance and Case for Permission

The planning balance clearly favours granting permission.



Kehillas Prestwich provides a valued local synagogue for an established Jewish community in Prestwich. It meets a specific religious and social need and is located within walking distance of the local community it serves. For observant Jewish residents, that local accessibility is particularly important because Shabbat and Yom Tov observance requires attendance on foot.

The site is appropriate for the use. It forms part of a busy mixed-use local parade, surrounded by the residential community it serves. The proposal keeps the ground floor premises in active use and supports the community-facing role of the parade.

The operational evidence is highly material. The synagogue has operated continuously since February 2022. No complaints are known to have been received, no enforcement action has been taken and no planning harm has been identified. The Council is therefore able to assess the use by reference to actual evidence, rather than speculation.

The operational impacts are limited and acceptable. The use is quiet, local and primarily pedestrian in nature. No amplified music or external loudspeakers are used. The busiest periods of use are associated with Shabbat and Yom Tov, when attendance is on foot. Seating is as shown on the submitted floor plans, with full-capacity attendance generally associated with Shabbat and Yom Tov services. There is no evidence of amenity, highway, parking, character, servicing or waste harm.

The proposal is supported by national and local planning policy, particularly saved Bury UDP Policies CF1 and CF1/1 and the NPPF policy support for community facilities and places of worship. The Human Rights Act 1998 and the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 also require the religious and community importance of the use to be given proper weight in the planning balance.

The fallback position reinforces the case. The ground floor previously fell within Class E and could, subject to relevant restrictions and other regulatory requirements, return to a range of commercial, business or service uses. Many such uses could be more intensive in terms of customer activity, servicing, vehicle movements and parking demand. The current synagogue use is modest, local and has already demonstrated its compatibility with the site.

In the absence of identified planning harm, and having regard to the clear community benefit, established operation and support from nearby occupiers, there are strong reasons to grant planning permission.

10. Conclusion

This Planning Statement supports a retrospective application for the change of use of the ground floor of 69–71 Windsor Road, Prestwich from commercial office use, Class E, to a synagogue/place of worship, Class F1(f).

Kehillas Prestwich has operated from these premises since February 2022. It serves an established local Jewish community in Prestwich, is located within walking distance of the local community it serves, and meets a specific religious need for a local place of worship.

The proposal is consistent with national planning policy and saved Bury UDP Policies CF1 and CF1/1, which support the provision of accessible local community facilities in appropriate locations, subject to normal planning considerations relating to amenity, traffic, parking, accessibility and local environmental impact.

The use has operated for more than three years without known complaint, enforcement action or identified planning harm. It has not given rise to any unacceptable impact on residential or commercial amenity, highway safety or parking, the character and appearance of the area, waste or servicing arrangements, or the function and vitality of the parade.

The benefits of the use are clear, established and locally supported. Any impacts are limited, acceptable and compatible with the surrounding mixed-use context.

It is respectfully submitted that planning permission should be granted.