

PLANNING STATEMENT

Masjid E Bilal Islamic Centre

52 Bury Old Road

Prestwich

Manchester

M25 0ER

Proposal

Demolition of the Existing Mosque and Community Facility and the Erection of a Replacement Mosque and Community Facility (F1 (f)).

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of Masjid E Bilal Islamic Centre which occupies the site at 52 Bury Old Road, Prestwich, Manchester. The Islamic Centre has been operating from the site since circa 1999. The site is a popular community facility for both adults and children in the surrounding local area.
- 1.2 Masjid E Bilal Islamic Centre is run by local volunteers with funding by donations from the local community. The centre for the most part provides a prayer hall for the local Muslim community for their 5 obligatory daily prayers. During evenings and weekends, the centre also provides a facility for teaching Islamic studies, including Quran classes and Arabic studies mainly to children. The facility also provides services including dispute resolution, marriage counselling and support for local women.
- 1.3 The local populations around the proposal site include Muslims, Jews, and Christians. The Muslims originate from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The local Muslim community has been settled in this area of Manchester for the last 3 to 4 generations.
- 1.4 It should be noted that prior to the submission of this 'Full' application, there have been several previous permissions granted at the site. Consent was first sought for the siting of a portable classroom at the application site in 2006 (application ref no. 45759). In 2016, a three-year consent was again granted (LPA ref no. 60004) for the portable classroom. The most recent permission was approved in June 2022 for the 'Extension of temporary permission of 3 years for the retention of existing portacabin for use as a classroom with the addition of main entrance extension and toilet facility at rear including alterations to car park layout'. Although permission was granted for a further 3-year period, condition 5 of the approval also required for parking and access arrangements as indicated on the approved plan to be implemented within a 6-month period of the decision date.
- 1.5 However, as indicated to the Council and local Councillors in previous meetings, the Islamic Centre has long term plans in providing a more permanent building for the site. Funding has been sought from the local community and is almost complete for the

project. This proposal therefore seeks to supersede previous conditions and approvals at the site by the demolition of the current building, address current issues, and provide a new purpose-built Islamic Centre that would be both functional in terms of its use, and provide a durable layout of the site as a whole for the long term future.

- 1.6 Since the Mosques opening in 1999 it has been providing vital facilities and services to the Muslim communities of Prestwich, Whitefield and other neighbourhoods nearby. Over the last 20 years the Muslim population in the area has steadily increased and gradually become diversified. During this period the council has launched a number of equality strategies and more recently its inclusion strategy.
- 1.7 Whilst the Muslim population in south Bury has increased, Al-Bilal Mosque remains as the only place of worship in the area. The mosque also provides critical religious education for the younger population. These classes are normally held after school hours, numbers of which have also steadily increased.
- 1.8 The Mosque previously applied successfully to provide temporary buildings which allowed to cater for additional demand for children's educational services. Whilst this has provided temporary mitigation for the increasing demand, it also satisfied the immediate requirements of local communities.
- 1.9 The challenge however remains that these buildings are not a permanent solution, and neither are these facilities sufficient to satisfy the needs of this growing community. However, even as an interim the Mosque needs to ensure that these facilities are fit for purpose and safe for children to use.
- 1.10 In order to facilitate the longer-term needs of the Muslim community the plan is to demolish the existing buildings and construct a purpose build community centre. The building will consist of a library, class rooms, community space, body storage and washing, and local prayer facilities. These facilities will cater for Muslims of all ages and genders.

- 1.11 In planning for the new facility, the current traffic and parking issues are fully recognised. Whilst the new layout and plan addresses these concerns, it is important to understand that these issues are created due to the lack any other local facilities for the Muslim community in Bury. Ultimately amplifying the need for this location to be fit for future needs, which will provide much needed key community facilities for all gender Muslim residents. The new purpose built facility will also provide Bury council a substitute community facility to use for proactive engagement and activity.
- 1.12 In order to address the traffic movement concerns the Mosque has over flow parking arrangements with the Maccabi Sports Centre for Friday prayers.
- 1.13 This is an ambitious plan for the community of Prestwich, which ultimately is intended to provide facilities for local communities bringing them together, improving engagement leading to healthier physical and mental well being of the Bury residents.

2.0 PRE-APPLICATION

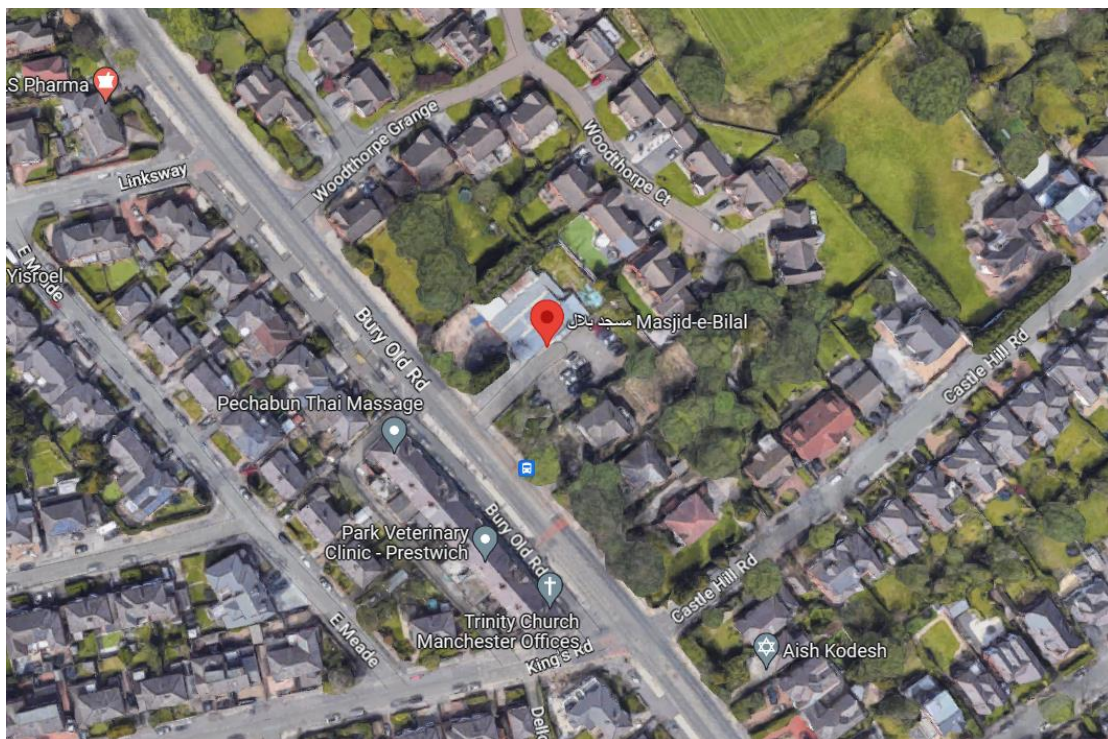
- 2.1 A pre-application enquiry for the proposed development was submitted to Bury Council in 2023 (planning reference 02891E) for the *“Demolition of existing mosque and Islamic Centre and proposal for the erection of replacement mosque/Islamic Centre (Class F1(f)).”*
- 2.2 Bury Council, reviewed the pre-application submission and provided a consultation response dated 4th December 2023. The issues raised by the Council include:
- Parking and Impact on the Highway – A separate ‘Transport Statement’ and ‘Travel Plan’ are submitted as part of this proposal which takes into consideration and justifies the level of parking capacity and how the site would operate. In addition, the layout of the site has changes to provide further on site parking. Please refer to the submitted documents and the Highways section of this report.
 - Scale – the pre-application response stated that the scale of the building to the front in its surrounding context was too high and it needed to be scaled down to two storey and setting the footprint back. The Councils advice has been taken into consideration and the proposed plans now show a two storey building along its front elevation whilst also being set back from the highway. The overall design is further discussed below and in the separate Design and Access Statement submitted as part of this application.

3.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 The proposal site is located in the Prestwich area of North Manchester. The site is a rectangular shaped plot, measuring approximately 1350 square metres. The existing building relates to a single storey property, which has been altered and extended in recent years and serves as a mosque and a teaching facility for the local Muslim community. The extensions to the building have been ad hoc, and over a long period of time, leading to a number of uncharacteristic additions to the original building which are considered not to relate well with the overall character of the area.
- 3.2 There is a small private car park serving the centre between the building and Bury Old Road, a separate public car park is immediately to the south-east, across the access. There are houses to the north on Woodthorpe Grange, and to the east on Woodthorpe Close. Across Bury Old Road is the designated Local Shopping Centre and semi-detached dwellinghouses. This section of Bury Old Road in front of the site has parking restrictions in the form of double yellow lines. A bus stop shelter is located to the South-East of the entrance.
- 3.3 The site is accessed from Bury Old Road. The Bury Old Road boundary comprises a wall 1.5m in height and mixed deciduous trees and shrubs, while along the northern boundary there is a timber fence and large coniferous trees. A wall and fence (approximately 3m high) runs along the rear boundary and the adjoining properties on Woodthorpe Court have mixed tree planting immediately behind the fence.
- 3.4 The site is located within the urban boundary as indicated on the adopted local plan proposals map within a largely residential area with some community uses in the vicinity including a primary school and a sports club. Access into the site is directly off Bury Old Road via a ramped access with parking provided for 17 cars in front of the building. There is currently an agreement with the nearby Maccabi Community and Sports Club, (170m to the north) to make available their 60-space car park on Friday afternoons as an 'overflow car park' for those attending 'Friday prayers'. Private 'parking wardens' also manage the parking arrangements on Friday afternoons which is the busiest period.



- 3.5 **Above:** Image taken from the UDP Proposals Map indicates the Islamic Centre adjacent to Bury Old Road with the Local Centre outlined in blue positioned on the other side of the road.



- 3.6 **Above:** Aerial Image above indicates the application site within a largely residential area, however there are commercial, and community uses in the vicinity of the application site as mentioned.



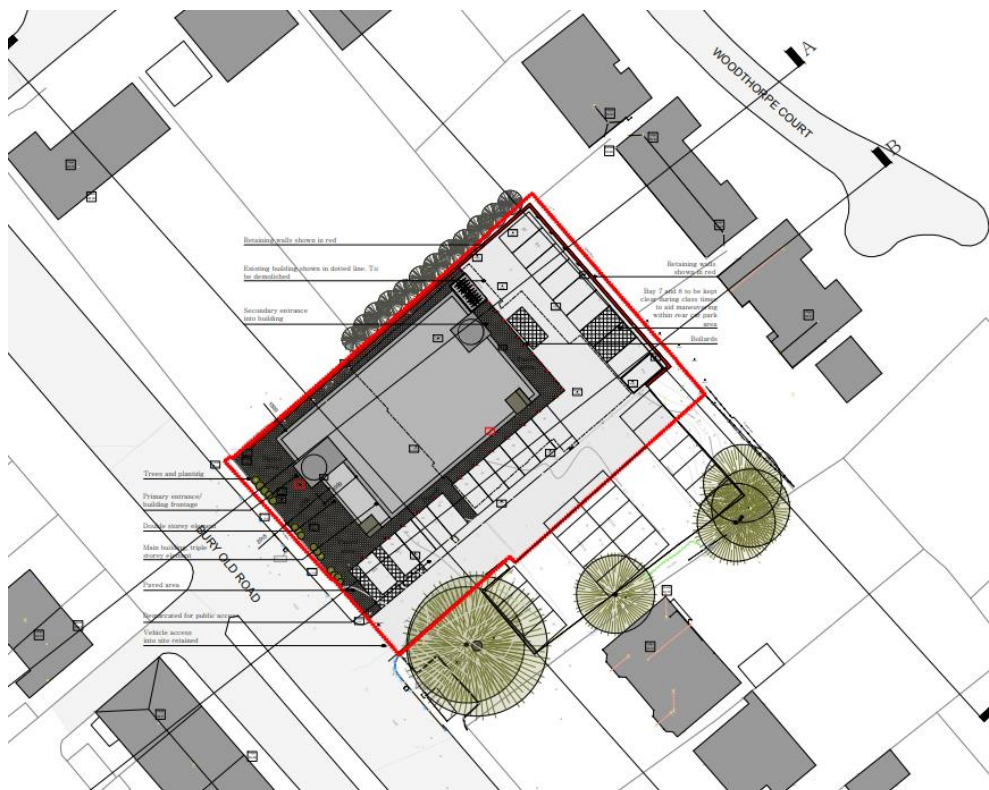
- 3.7 **Above:** Image shows a Bus Stop/shelter located outside the site with the existing access and mosque building in the background.



- 3.8 **Above:** A further image to the front of the site shows the ramped access with car parking facilities to the left and the public car park to the right. The site is positioned in a highly sustainable location.

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 Planning permission is sought in 'Full' to demolish the existing building in its entirety and to erect a new purpose-built facility at the site.
- 4.2 In terms of Layout, the proposed building would be located towards the front of the site in the position of the existing car parking area. A small landscape buffer and paved area of around 6.5m would be retained between the proposed building and the front boundary adjacent to the highway of Bury Old Road. Parking for 20 vehicles would be provided to the south eastern side and rear of the building. 18 bicycle stands would also be located to the rear of the building next to the building entrance.
- 4.3 In terms of access, the red line includes the existing joint access used by the public car park adjacent, and this would be retained and used to access the site, the exit would also be retained similar to existing. Bury Council have agreed to the joint access through the Pre-application process. Access to the rear car park has also been agreed in principle subject to a payment to Bury Council. As such, enough space for the turning and manoeuvring of vehicles would be provided within the site.



4.4 **Above:** Proposed Site Plan.

- 4.5 The existing use of the site as a place for public worship and teaching would be retained, whilst the proposed new facility would provide much needed space for offices, Youth recreation, library, a purpose use prayer hall, and improved classroom facilities for existing children to study, these would all be ancillary uses. This proposal does not include any further uses at the site to what is already provided by the Islamic Centre. Essentially, the existing prayer hall size is approximately 200m², whilst the new prayer hall size would also provide the same space 200m².
- 4.6 The purpose of the proposed building is to provide local residents and children who use the facility a better-quality experience and flow through the building. As such, the existing teaching spaces for children at ground floor would be replaced. In addition, these teaching areas in some cases conflict with adult prayer times (dependant on time of year) and are better placed in their entirety at first floor level for reasons of safeguarding.
- 4.7 As such, there would be no increase in the number of classrooms (5) from the existing situation, on the contrary, the classrooms would be reduced to 4. The better equipped classrooms would provide children larger space to learn and study the Quran and Islamic principles, in addition, local residents wish to educate their children on religions principles separate to the national curriculum. A maximum of 10-12 children would study in each class. It should be acknowledged that there would be no increase in the total number of children being taught by virtue of this proposal. The existing children would be divided into their relevant classes. In addition, separate lecture rooms would be allocated that would be used for adult education, as such dedicated bespoke segregated facilities would be provided for all users, this includes segregated toilet facilities.
- 4.8 In terms of the external appearance of the proposed building. This would be of bespoke design and would be vast improvement to the character and appearance of the area. The proposed building, given land levels through the site would retain a basement and would be two stories in height to the front above the existing ground level and set back

from the highway. Local materials would be used, whilst the amenity of local residents would not be detrimentally compromised.

- 4.9 Replacement planting and landscaping is considered including a 10% net gain in biodiversity, please refer to 'Ecology Report' and 'Proposed Site Plan' submitted as part of this proposal.
- 4.10 The Islamic Centre understands that learning is an important vehicle for social mobility and is beneficial both for individuals and for society as a whole. It is particularly important in the current context of rapid technological change, longer working lives and an ageing population.
- 4.11 Numerous studies have demonstrated that learning (including nonaccredited learning) brings many benefits such as better health and wellbeing, greater social engagement, increased employability and greater capacity for parents to help their children to learn.
- 4.12 Community learning provides accessible and inclusive learning opportunities for people from all backgrounds and abilities and is often delivered in a familiar environment (e.g. children's school or community centre) where people feel more confident to engage.
- 4.13 By providing learning and bringing people from different walks of life together in their local area, community learning plays an important part in supporting wider government policies on localism, social justice, stronger families, digital inclusion and social mobility.

5.0. INVOLVEMENT

5.1 Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states;

“Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community”.

5.2 This Planning Statement has been submitted as part of this planning proposal at the time of submission. There has been informal dialogue with the Council and local Councillors in relation to providing a new facility at the site for a number of years including the submission of a pre-application.

5.3 The issues of planning policy, Highways safety, amenity and layout of the development are taken into consideration in the assessment below.

6.0 HISTORY

6.1 A history check has been undertaken which has revealed the following relevant planning history for the site;

- 45759 - Temporary siting of portable classroom - Approve with Conditions 19/04/2006
- 53283 - Single storey extension (retrospective) - Refused 24/01/2011
- 56824 - Single storey extensions to form washroom facilities and kitchen (retrospective) - Approve with Conditions 21/01/2014
- 58744 - Siting of 1 no. portacabin for use as a classroom - Withdrawn - Invalid 23/07/2015
- 60004 - Temporary Siting (for 3 years) of 1 no. Portacabin for use as a Classroom and Alterations to Car Park Layout - Approved 27/07/2016
- 21/0384 - Breach of condition no.1 of temporary planning permission 60004 (Portacabin to be on site no more than 3 years) and addition of 1 no. portacabin - 18/03/2022.
- 68057 - Extension of temporary permission of 3 years for retention of existing portacabin for use as a classroom with the addition of main entrance extension and toilet facility at rear; Alterations to car park layout – Approved 23.06.2022.
- 69525 - Demolition of existing mosque and Outline proposal for the erection of replacement mosque/Islamic Centre (Class F1(f)) with details of access and layout (reserved matters for appearance, landscaping and scale) - Withdrawn 18.07.2023.

7.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- 7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.2 The Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is the key Development Plan Document and forms the policies that planning applications will be assessed against. The strategy to be pursued through the UDP was previously published in the document "Bury 2001 - The Strategy for the Plan" (July 1991). This Strategy is now set out as part of the UDP to provide essential background to the policies and proposals.
- 7.3 The nature and character of the Bury area and the way in which it has developed can be seen to be at the heart of many of the key issues affecting the Borough today. Any strategy for the area must, therefore, have its roots in the processes of change which have had an impact on the Borough's development.
- 7.4 The following **UDP policies** have relevance to the proposal:
- Policy EN1 - Built Environment – The Council will seek to protect, preserve and enhance the character, appearance and amenity of the Borough's built environment.
 - EN1/1 - Visual Amenity - Development will not be permitted where proposals would have a detrimental effect on public views or visual amenity.
 - EN1/2 - Townscape and Built Design - The Council will give favourable consideration to proposals, which do not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the particular character and townscape of the Borough's towns, villages and other settlements. Factors to be considered when assessing proposals will include the external appearance and design of the proposal in relation to its height, scale, density and layout; the relationship of the proposal to the surrounding area and the choice and use of materials.

- EN1/3 - Landscaping Provision - Development proposals will be required to make provision for incidental open space and landscaping to the Council's satisfaction.
- EN1/7 - Throughroutes and Gateways - The Council is concerned to improve the quality of development along throughroutes and at gateways and will require new proposals fronting major throughroutes and at the identified gateways to display a high standard of design and landscaping.
- EN5/1 - New Development and Flood Risk - The Council will not permit new development, including the raising of land and the intensification of development, where such development would be at risk from flooding, would be likely to increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, or would adversely affect river flood defences. When assessing proposals against this policy, the following criteria will apply:
- EN7/2 - Noise Pollution - In seeking to limit noise pollution the Council will not permit:
 - development which could lead to an unacceptable noise nuisance to nearby occupiers and/or amenity users;
 - development close to a permanent source of noise
- Policy CF1 - Proposals for New and Improved Community Facilities - Proposals for new and improved community facilities will generally be looked on favourably by the Council. The Council will, look favourably on 9 proposals for additional or improved community facilities, where these do not conflict with amenity or the local environment.
- Policy CF1/1 - Location of New Community Facilities - Proposals for new and improved community facilities will be considered with regard to the impact on residential amenity and the local environment; traffic generation and car parking provision and the scale and size of the development.

- HT2/4 - Car Parking and New Development - The Council will require all applications for development to make adequate provision for their car parking and servicing requirements in accordance with the Council's car parking standards.
- HT5/1 - Access for Those with Special Needs - The Council will encourage the provision of satisfactory access to public transport, car parks, pedestrian areas and public and private buildings for the mobility impaired and those with special needs.
- HT6/2 - Pedestrian/Vehicular Conflict - The Council will take action, as appropriate, to reduce pedestrian/vehicular conflict through measures which include:
 - Pavement widening/realignment;
 - pedestrianisation schemes;
 - improved pedestrian crossing facilities;
 - proposals designed to reduce traffic speed;
 - provision of clearly signed pedestrian routes.

Supplementary planning Document (SPD) 11 Parking Standards in Bury

Places for Everyone (PfE).

7.5 Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document has now been adopted and forms a part of the development plan for Bury. Therefore, the following policies will be applicable to the assessment and determination of the application.

- JP-P3 - Cultural Facilities - This policy seeks to protect existing cultural and community venues, facilities and uses and supports the development of new cultural venues in town centres and places with good public transport connectivity. The policy also seeks to promote new, or enhancing existing,

locally-distinct clusters of cultural facilities, especially where they can provide an anchor for local regeneration and town centre renewal.

- JP-C2 - Digital Connectivity - This policy requires development to have full fibre to premises connections unless infeasible or unviable, with multiple-ducting. The policy supports the provision of free, secure, high-speed public wi-fi connections, particularly in the most frequented areas.
- JP-C8 - Transport Requirements of New Development - This criterion seeks to ensure that car parking provision is well integrated and unobtrusive, so it supports the street scene; and where appropriate parking provision is flexible and can be adapted over time to reflect demand.
- JP-S2 - Carbon and Energy Statement requires new development to be net zero carbon in relation to the developments operational carbon emissions. Development proposals should set out how this has been achieved in a Carbon and Energy statement in accordance with the energy hierarchy.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

7.6 The NPPF clearly states ‘that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development’ (paragraph 7). Paragraph 11 confirms that ‘in assessing and determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development’. Paragraph 10 states that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. Paragraph 11 goes on to say that ‘for decision-taking this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and,
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of-date, granting planning permission unless:

- the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

7.7 Paragraph 97 of the NPPF states:

“To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
- ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services”.

7.8 The NPPF also attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, seeing design as a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Development should be high quality and inclusive. The NPPF requires planning authorities to take into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

7.9 The general perspective of the NPPF is that planning should proactively drive growth and support sustainable economic development. It also states that planning should make effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed and sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth.



National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- 7.10 The government published its NPPG on 6 March 2014. This is intended to complement the NPPF and to provide a single resource for planning guidance, whilst rationalising and streamlining the material. Almost all previous planning Circulars and advice notes have been cancelled. Specific reference will be made to the NPPG or other national advice in the Analysis section of the report, where appropriate.

8.0 ASSESSMENT

8.1 The purpose of this section of the Statement is to identify and assess the main planning considerations raised by the proposals in the context of relevant national and local planning policy and guidance. The key issues are set out as follows;

- the principle of the development, having regard to the provisions of the adopted Development Plan and other local planning policy documents;
- the impact of the proposed layout including buildings, routes and open spaces within the development and the way they are laid out in relation to buildings and spaces outside the development;
- the impact of the development on the highways and covers accessibility for all routes to and within the site, as well as the way they link up to other roads and pathways outside the site.

Principle

8.2 The proposed site is located within the urban boundary of Bury as designated within the Councils Unitary Development Plan. The site has no other land use designations. The 'Principle' use of the site has already been approved by the Council in the past and is established. This proposal considers a new bespoke facility for the same uses. The centre has operated from the site since 1999 and is a well-utilised and highly regarded facility serving the local community.

8.3 The NPPF promotes the retention and development of local services and community facilities in small towns and villages, such as local shops, meeting places, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship as part of planning for prosperity. For the Local Plan, community facilities and services are also considered.

8.4 Local planning policy encourages proposals for 'improvements to community facilities' (UDP Policy CF1) whilst the NPPF recognises community facilities including places of worship in having a key role in enhancing the sustainability of neighbourhoods and residential environments. It is within this context of an improved community facility

offering that the current proposal should be considered, as it has been considered previously by the Council who have found it to provide a valuable facility.

- 8.5 The site is well located in relation to the serving the close knit local community. The infrastructure in the immediate area is excellent where the site can easily be accessible by public transport, (bus route), walking and by cycling.
- 8.6 The proposal aim is to provide an outstanding facility for the community, enhance the character of the area by bringing the existing site up to high standards, it would consider the needs of the local community, protect the surrounding built environment and provide jobs and services, and improve access by being located close to amenities reducing the need travel.
- 8.7 Studies have shown that provision and ease of access to health and community facilities have positive impacts on wellbeing and healthcare. Such facilities need to be accessible to all sections of the community, including those without a car, the disabled or others with social, economic or physical characteristics limiting their mobility.
- 8.8 Given the details the proposed new building would use previously developed land, where the facility itself is in need of space to bring it to a suitable functional use and where it would not have a negative impact on the surrounding area. Furthermore, the proposed development would result in an enhanced and much improved accessible facility for local residents and be related to the catchment area it is intended to serve.
- 8.9 Therefore, the principle of development is considered acceptable in accordance with Policies within the Unitary Development Plan, Places for Everyone, and the NPPF.

Impact on Amenity

- 8.10 The site layout as part of this proposal has been considerably changed to the existing situation. This has been done due to some existing spaces around the site being inaccessible and underutilised. In addition, when the car parking area is full vehicles have limited manoeuvring space to exit the site. As such, the proposed layout would provide a better flow for vehicles entering and leaving the site.

- 8.11 Although condition 5 of approval '68057' showed that 19 off-street car parking spaces would be provided within the car park, some spaces are inaccessible whilst other are in awkward positions, the actual number of usable spaces would be lower. Current issues also arise from the narrow entrance which does not provide sufficient space for a car to exit and a car to enter the site simultaneously.
- 8.12 As part of this proposal, the number of car parking spaces has been increased to 20 spaces. However, all the spaces would be accessible and easy to manoeuvre into. The car parking spaces to the front of the site have been omitted, and car parking is proposed to be provided to the side and rear where it would be away from public vantage points, and where the new building would have a better relationship with the public realm.
- 8.13 The proposed parking system would lead to reduced congestion within the site and on Bury Old Road and lead to the free flow of traffic within the site. A dedicated drop off point has also been located to the back of the site for parents to use, this would be encouraged and would lead to fewer parents dropping children off on the main road which reduces the chances of poor parking, accidents and injury. Internal pathways around the building would ensure pedestrians and children using the site do not conflict with vehicles.
- 8.14 In addition, 18 cycle stands would be provided.
- 8.15 In terms of the positioning of the building. Whilst there are some properties bounding the north west boundary of the site (Woodthorpe Grange/Court), the proposal will not harm residential amenity given that trees run alongside a sizable boundary fence and wall which greatly limits views in to the site. In addition, a distance of approximately 37m metres would be retained to the backs of these dwellings from the side elevation of the proposed building. The dwellings on Woodthorpe Court are positioned on a substantially greater land level, furthermore, the proposed building would retain a distance of 27m to the backs of these properties.
- 8.16 Therefore, the positioning of the building within the site, and its indicated two storey height above existing ground levels would not represent an overbearing or dominant



feature, and would meet the interface distances between properties as set out by the Council. Given the level differences and boundary, there would not be overlooking or privacy issues. As such, permitting the proposal would have no impact on residential or visual amenity due to its layout.

- 8.17 The proposed development given the number of people using the facility may give rise to some noise pollution. However, it should be noted that the mosque and children's facility is already in use, so the resulting facility to a large degree already functions at the site. This proposal would only result in more space being created where the site can be run more effectively and efficiently with better flow internally.
- 8.18 Furthermore, consideration has to be given to the opening times of the building and its function which would mainly be during the day and late afternoon/early evenings, as such surrounding residents would enjoy long quieter periods once the classes have finished. It should also be noted that any children using the site would be accompanied by teachers throughout the classes maintaining a suitable environment and taking into consideration neighbouring residential uses. All activity is contained and limited to the building, whilst the pickup and drop off layout proposed would substantially improve flow and procedure through the site.
- 8.19 As such, given the detached nature of the site, proposed hours of operation and that the classes would always be accompanied by an adult, the proposal would not give rise to noise levels which would be considered detrimental to the amenity of any neighbouring occupiers to warrant refusal of the application.
- 8.20 The refuse storage would remain to be provided externally within the car parking area to the rear. The appropriate number and size of refuse receptors for the proposed development is already agreed with the Council's waste management officer. This existing arrangement would not change due to the proposed development.
- 8.21 Therefore, given the details, the proposed layout and its use are not considered to create significant air/odour pollution which would be detrimental to adjacent local residents. Furthermore, sufficient bin storage would be retained to the rear of the

building and managed, as such the proposal would not create harm within the local area.

- 8.22 To conclude, the design and siting of the proposal satisfies the requirements of UDP Policy EN1, which seeks to protect the character, appearance and amenity of Bury's built environment, by creating a development that relates well to the surrounding area. This also ensures that the proposal is compliant with Policy EN1/2, which supports applications which will not have an unacceptable impact on character and townscape, particularly in relation to the materials and relating to the surrounding area. There would also be no conflict with Policy CF1/1 of the UDP in relation to residential amenity.

Impact on Highway and Access

- 8.23 Policy HT2/4 – 'Car Parking and New Development' states that the Council will require all applications for development to make adequate provision for their car parking and servicing requirements in accordance with the Council's car parking standards.
- 8.24 The justification for Policy HT2/4 goes on to state that Car parking provision must also relate to the availability of public transport and should be set at a level which encourages the use of public transport, and that Local Authorities "should adopt reduced requirements for parking for locations which have good access to other means of travel than the private car". This relates particularly to the Borough's main bus and Metrolink corridors and to the town and district centres, which are well served by public transport.
- 8.25 Appendix 4 of the UDP provides Car Parking standards. However, the closest standard provided within the document to this proposed development specifically relates to Churches. The standard requires visitor provision of 1 space per 10 seats as a standard service requirement. However, it should be noted that a Church and the proposal, in the way that they both function on a day-to-day basis are very much different. Therefore, it is considered that this application and its requirements should be taken on its own merits.

- 8.26 Government's policy on parking is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:
- the accessibility of the development;
 - the type, mix and use of development
 - the availability of and opportunities for public transport;
 - local car ownership levels; and
 - the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.
- 8.27 Paragraph 115 of the NPPF makes clear that 'Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be **severe**'
- 8.28 It is noted that there are parking restrictions in the form of double yellow lines along Bury Old Road. The most recent planning officers report states that parking problems have in the past occurred around the site, particularly on Fridays when the Muslim community attend the centre for prayer and other functions, however these issues have lessened recently somewhat with parking management measures that have been implemented at the site - wardens to oversee traffic and overflow parking at the nearby Maccabi sports club (although no formal agreement to use their car park is in place). However, as part of this proposal the Islamic Centre is not relying on the overflow parking at the sports club and the merits and justification of this proposal on the impacts of parking and highway should stand on their own. A separate 'Parking Capacity Assessment' and 'Travel Plan' are submitted as part of this proposal.
- 8.29 The proposed parking arrangements on site would improve the existing facilities with better markings. The proposed parking arrangements would improve the flow through the site and manoeuvring for vehicles. As part of this proposal, the number of car parking spaces has been increased to 20 spaces with all the spaces being accessible. In addition, the entrance into and exit from the site will also be improved and allow cars to enter and exit the site at the same time, this would lead to reduced congestion on Bury Old Road and allow for the free flow of traffic within the site. A dedicated drop off



point has also been located to the back of the site within the car parking area for parents to use, this would be encouraged and would lead to fewer parents dropping children off on the main road which reduces the chances of poor parking, accidents and injury.

- 8.30 In addition to the above, 18 cycle stands would be provided to the rear of the building where alternative modes of transport to the site would be encouraged.
- 8.31 The overall car usage to the site is considered to be very low on a general day to day operation. The proposed development is not considered to result in any more on street car parking than the existing situation, as such there would be no severe impact on highways safety and congestion in the area by way of this proposal outside of Friday prayers which is further discussed in detail below. As stated above, the intention of this proposal is not to increase the number of classes or public using the site, but to provide a better service to locals.

Trips

- 8.32 It should be noted that the below should be read in connection with the 'Transport Assessment' and Travel Plan submitted with this proposal. The trips generated to the mosque are dictated by the prayer times, as the prayer times are based around the solar cycle, this means the times vary greatly between the winter months and the summer months. Noted below are the five daily prayers, and the time of day that this prayer must be performed in accordance with the solar cycle.

- Fajr (early morning) – This must be performed before sunrise.
- Zuhr (mid-day) – This is to be performed after noon.
- Asr (mid-afternoon) - This is to be performed around mid-afternoon.
- Magrib (sunset) – This is to be performed just after the sun has set.
- Isha (late evening) – This is performed around 1 hour after sunset.

- 8.33 The major congregational prayer is held on Friday mid-day (the Jumma prayer). This is the only time when the car park is likely to become full, once a week.

Bilal masjid building utilisation 16/04/24

Activity	Names	Time	No of attendees	Area of building used	Parking comments
Prayer	Fajar	Before sunrise 7am winter/5am summer	10-15 people	Main prayer hall – Middle floor	No parking issues
Prayer	Zuhur	Early noon – 1pm winter/1.45pm summer	10-15 people	Main prayer hall – Middle floor	No parking issues
Prayer	Asr	Late noon -3pm winter/6pm summer	10-15 people	Main prayer hall – Middle floor	No parking issues
Prayer	Maghrib	Sunset -4.30pm winter/ 9pm summer	15-20 people	Main prayer hall – Middle floor	No parking issues
Prayer	Isha	Evening 7.45pm winter / 11pm summer	20-25 people	Main prayer hall – Middle floor	No parking issues reported
Prayer	Friday	Two gatherings 12.30 and 1.30pm <u>winter time</u> / 1.30 pm and 2.30pm	100-150 people per gathering	Main prayer hall – Middle floor	Parking in local streets, with no local enforcement and sufficient capacity.
Education	Madrasa	Children education classes. Monday-Friday 5pm -7pm	50 children attending	Classrooms on top floor	Parents drop off and pickup children. Car park is <u>marshalled at all times</u> .
Education	Adult classes	Sat and Sunday 10-12pm ladies' classes	10-15 people	Ground floor	No parking issues
Education	Adult classes and recreation activity	Sat and Sunday 10-4pm	10-20 people	Top floor classrooms and lower ground floor recreation rooms	No parking issues

8.34 **Above:** Survey information showing typical utilisation of the mosque.

8.35 It is worth noting that the number of people attending early morning and late evening congregational prayers vary during the winter and summer months. During the summer months the very early start will inhibit people from attend the Morning Prayer, and the very late evening prayer will also do the same. During the winter months, although the times for the early morning and the late evening prayers are more suitable, the cold weather reduces the size of the congregational prayer. It must be noted that the mosque will not be operating at maximum congregational capacity during daily prayer times.

8.36 Also, children who attend the classes on evenings are from the local area where the mosque is within a short walking distance from their homes. The classes take place typically between 5pm - 7pm. As such, there would be limited occurrences where the class start, and finish times would coincide with prayer times.

8.37 Furthermore, staggered start time for the classes would be introduced to limit occurrences of children being dropped off at the same time causing intensification.

Currently only a small percentage of children attend classes by using a car, and this is not considered to change by way of this proposal.

- 8.38 Due to the nature of this facility being small and focused on a relatively small community, even when the mosque is used at full capacity, car use to the site is limited. Other sizeable mosques in the area generally lead to people visiting larger congregational prayers at those sites.

Travel Modes and Accessibility

- 8.39 The site is positioned in a highly accessible and sustainable location where such community facilities are to be located as dictated by local and national policies, within the heart of the community. Other travel modes besides the car such as a bus would also be suitable for patrons given the type of proposal, it is considered that promotion of these modes will be beneficial in order to manage arrivals and departures at the site, in particular in relation to staff who undertake regular journeys to/from the site and are likely to live in the local area in addition to guests with convenient access to public transport services serving stops in the vicinity of the site. There are also a number of bus stops along Bury Old Road close to the site which are quite frequent and lead to the site and other parts of Manchester.
- 8.40 As mentioned, the proposed site is in the heart of the community and is easily accessible by foot, the majority of local people who visit the centre live within a walking distance of the site, this distance can be covered in less than 5 minutes from these properties; and it is these households for which the proposed development is intended. Walking is the most important mode of travel at the local level and offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly under 2 kilometres. Walking also forms an often-forgotten part of all longer journeys by public transport and car.
- 8.41 In addition, cycle stands are being provided which would provide an alternative method of transport to the site other than the car. As such the local community would have less reliant on car parking at the site.

- 8.42 The sites sustainable position is further boosted by Bury Old Road being a main bus corridor, whilst the allocated local centre which has further public parking is located across the road from the site. Furthermore, a public car park with 22 spaces is also located directly adjacent to the application site. As such, given the sites sustainable location the Council should adopt a reduced parking requirement as stated in policy.
- 8.43 Therefore, based on a worst-case scenario with majority of trips to the site being undertaken via car, this is unlikely to cause any significant impact in traffic terms to the existing situation, in particular given that these trips will predominantly occur outside local highway peak periods with excellent infrastructure surrounding the site and the car parking spaces available on site.

Friday Prayer and Management Plan

- 8.44 The Friday Middyay 'Jummah' prayer is when there is the largest congregation at the site. This prayer takes approximately 20 min in total from an individual entering the mosque and then leaving. It should be noted that this congregation is the only prayer which attracts both locals living around the site and people who work in nearby businesses and offices. Therefore, given there will be no longer be a reliance on overflow parking (although Maccabi sports centre will still provide overflow parking and which will still be used by the Mosque similar to the existing situation) and that the actual number of car parking spaces required have not been by way of this proposal, the Islamic Centre is proposing a number of measures as part of a 'Management Plan' which would ensure no severe detrimental impacts are occurred on the highway.
- 8.45 These measures include;
- On Fridays, there shall be a 'car parking warden' organising the parking on the site of 52 Bury Old Road and, when full, requesting worshippers to park at nearby public car parks.
 - Two Friday prayers are to be introduced in order to split the number of patrons at the site at any one time. Typically, the first prayer will be at 12:30, and the second prayer will be at 13:30 (times may adjust depending on seasons, but

typically the prayers would be an hour apart providing ample time for worshippers to exit the premisses and car parks).

- Nearby workers would be encouraged to attend the 12:30 prayer, as most attend during their lunch breaks. The local elderly would be advised to visit the 13:30 prayer.
- The Islamic Centre committee members will announce and encourage patrons to use other modes of transport besides the car such as walking, using public transport (Bus), and cycling.
- Car sharing would be encouraged.
- Notices would be displayed within the mosque advising patrons to use healthy modes of transport.

Transport Summary

8.46 The NPPF states that local planning authorities should approach decision making in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development and requires them to look for solutions rather than problems and seek to approve applications for sustainable development wherever possible.

8.47 Overall, it is considered that the majority of people attending would be local and choose to do so by walking to the site. A survey has been undertaken and included in the submitted Travel Plan which shows modes of Transport people use to travel to the site. Given the details and subject to the delivery of the Management Plan, the proposed development as demonstrated would provide sufficient parking in this highly sustainable location and would be in accordance with Policy HT6/2 Pedestrian/Vehicular Conflict or HT2/4 Car Parking and New Development, Places for Everyone, and Paragraph 111 of the NPPF where the proposal would not have a **severe** cumulative impact to warrant refusal of the application.

Other considerations - Community Facilities

8.48 Community facilities play an important role in people's quality of life. For example, community mosques perform a number of different roles and are a central feature of

community life. Some community mosques are situated in old buildings that are in need of refurbishment to bring them up to modern standards. The Council should support such proposals provided that there is not a significant detrimental impact on local residents.

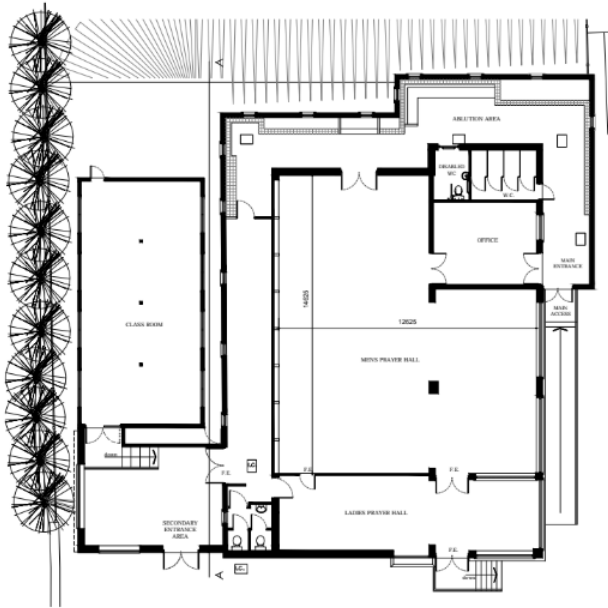
- 8.49 The proposed community facility is positioned in a location accessible to the local people and allows users to visit different facilities in the area in one visit. The facility would be providing a much-needed larger facility and would keep providing an excellent service for the growing surrounding area which is predominantly made up of Muslim families.
- 8.50 Furthermore, the size of the facility would limit the number of adults using their cars as transport to and from similar facilities further away. The impact on road safety and traffic flow is discussed in the Transport Assessment submitted.
- 8.51 Therefore, given the details, the proposal would provide a better and larger community facility in the locality and therefore reduce the need to travel, provide a focus for young adults and children and help further their education without the need to travel long distances. As a whole this would be of benefit to the individual and wider community and is supported by Councils Local Plan Policies.



9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 It has been demonstrated that the proposed development can be carried out in full compliance with the Council's policies in the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. The development would provide a much-improved facility for the local community that would bring a positive contribution and better services into the local area of Prestwich without creating a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of the local occupiers and residents, and highways safety.
- 9.2 Given the justification provided the application should therefore be approved without delay.

APPENDIX



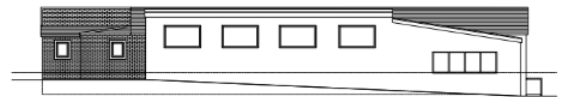
EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN
1:100

EXISTING FLOOR AREA

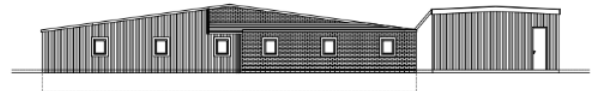
WHOLE BUILDING	466m ²
MENS PRAYER HALL	155m ²
WOMENS PRAYER HALL	45m ²
OFFICE	20m ²
CIRCULATION AREAS	71m ²
CLASSROOM	70m ²
ABLUTION AREA	72m ²



EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION (SW)
1:100



EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION (NW)
1:100

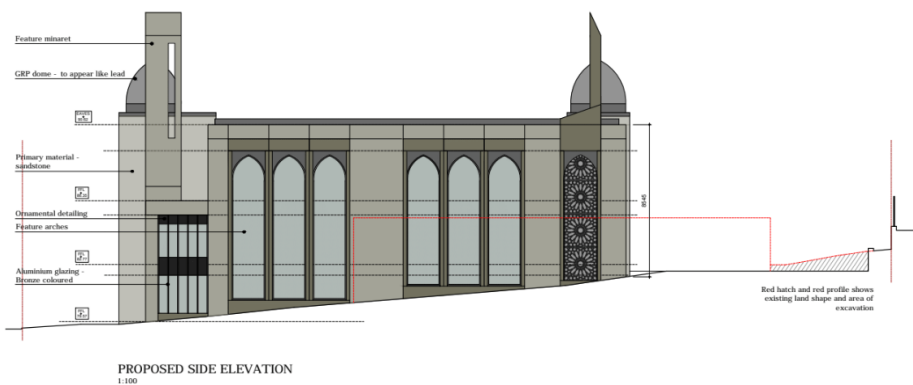


EXISTING REAR ELEVATION (NE)
1:100

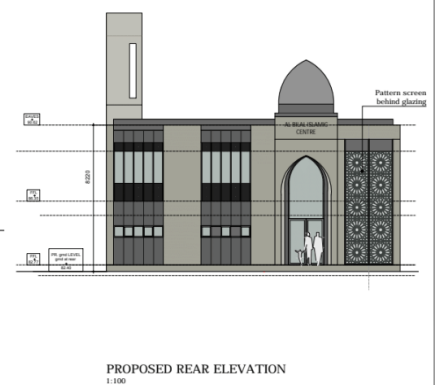


EXISTING SIDE ELEVATION (SE)
1:100

Above: Existing Mosque.

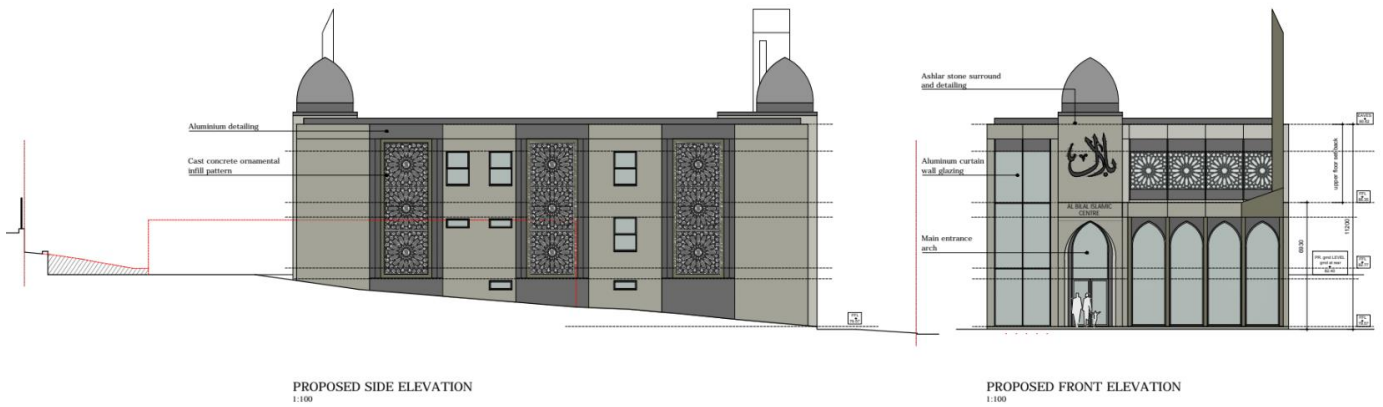


PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION
1:100



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION
1:100

Above: Proposed Elevations



Above: Proposed Elevations

WOMENS PRAYER HALL	45m ²
OFFICE	20m ²
CIRCULATION AREAS	71m ²
CLASSROOM	70m ²
ABLUTION AREA	72m ²

PLANNING SUBMISSION AND MAY BE
SUBJECT TO CHANGE

PROPOSED FLOOR AREAS	
WHOLE BUILDING	1205m ²
LOWER GROUND FLOOR LEVEL	410m ²
UPPER GROUND FLOOR LEVEL (Prayer hall area)	410m ²
FIRST FLOOR LEVEL	385m ²



Above: Proposed Floor Plans.