

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

RETENTION OF TIMBER FRAMED LEAN-TO ENCLOSURE (SHELTER)

AT 1-3 AMITY ROAD, READING RG1 3LN

The application site is located on Amity road, which junctions with London Road and within a close proximity to Reading cemetery junction. The site is located within the densely populated residential area with different communities and different faiths and backgrounds. The previous use of the building was a light weight industrial commercial and currently is been used as an Islamic centre approved planning consent granted in the year of 2007.

The present use of building offering a praying facility to the local Muslim community along with a Quran learning classes to Muslim children and providing a platform for the local Muslim community to use the premises for their social and religious needs as and when required. The use of the premises remains as defined within the approved application reference 07/01029/FUL CONDITION 2 of the planning consent.

There are quite a few planning applications which have been submitted to the local planning authority since 2005 relating to the subject site. The summary of the applications can be found on the local planning authority website.

The change of use to Islamic centre was granted 20th September 2007 under planning application reference 07/01029/FUL with conditions. Since then the need for the local Muslim community has increased which involves more Qur'anic lesson for children and the Friday prayer, Therefore, a timber structure with open front and a clear polycarbonate sheets on lean to roof has been built which provides shelter from the rain and sun to ensure the safety of the small age group children attendees for Qur'anic lesson. The lean-to enclosure also provides a sheltered area to the attendees to offer their Friday prayer respectfully only once a week during a Friday afternoon for half an hour, which protects them from extreme weather i.e; rain & hot weather. Friday prayer or Jumu'ah is a congregational prayer Muslims hold every Friday afternoon where the number of the attendees increased than the normal prayer times (five times a day).

The lean-to enclosure constructed with the timber frame structure providing a shallow angle for the dispersal of rain water. The height (at lower end) of the enclosure is just above the boundary wall and abuts (at higher end) with the existing single storey side extension. Therefore, the height and size of the enclosure along with the materials used appear not to be an intrusive or bulky and remain subservient to the building and neighbouring properties.

The application site is an elongated "L" shaped two storey and single storey building with an open area of hardstanding to the side. Lean-to enclosure does not detract from the appearance of the site and is well set in from the street to have no impact. The materials used in the development are timber frame stud walls and polycarbonate sheeting over.

The subject development will have no impact on neighbouring properties and in fact will increase their level of privacy. Therefore, for the above reason the retention of the lean-to enclosure is considered important for the safety of the children, protection from weather along with the privacy, security and the impact on the street and neighbouring properties, full planning permission should be granted.