

# Sustainability Statement

## AL-MAJID CENTRE



**Proposed Change of Use from Library (Class D1) to Community Centre (Class F2(b)) and Place of Worship (Class F1), with two car parking bays and associated access.**

**Address:** 215 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, RG2 7PX

**Applicant:** Al-Majid Welfare Trust

### Introduction

This Sustainability Statement supports a planning application for changing the use of an existing library building to a faith building. The proposal retains the current structure, ensuring minimal intervention in the built fabric. Enhancements focus on accessibility, parking, and energy efficiency to meet current sustainability standards and support the local community.

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### Key Sustainability Considerations

#### 1. Retention of the Existing Building

- The proposal maintains the existing building structure, aligning with **Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction**, which encourages the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings, to minimize environmental impact.

*(Reference: Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019)*

#### 2. Energy Efficiency Improvements

- Sustainable heating systems will be installed to enhance energy efficiency, reducing operational energy consumption.
- These systems align with **Policy CC2**, which requires developments to use energy efficiently and incorporate measures to reduce carbon emissions.

*(Reference: Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019)*

#### 3. Transportation and Access

- Two additional parking bays will be provided to accommodate users, ensuring efficient use of space without excessive land coverage.
- An upgraded access route will promote inclusivity and ease of movement for people with reduced mobility, supporting social sustainability.
- The site's location encourages alternative modes of transport, such as walking, cycling, and public transit, thereby reducing car dependency, in line with **Policy TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters**.

*(Reference: Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019)*

#### 4. Environmental Impact Mitigation

- The site remains unaltered in terms of layout and scale, preserving local environmental characteristics.
- By keeping the building's external appearance and footprint unchanged, the visual impact on the surrounding area is minimized, supporting **Policy EN1:**

### **Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment.**

*(Reference: Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019)*

#### **5. Community and Social Benefits**

- The change of use to a faith building addresses community needs, enhancing local social cohesion.
- The proposed use ensures the building remains a vibrant and active part of the community, preventing potential dereliction and associated environmental degradation, aligning with **Policy OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities.**

*(Reference: Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019)*

#### **6. Water and Resource Management**

- Existing water systems will be retained, with provisions for future upgrades to incorporate water-saving measures where feasible, supporting **Policy CC2's emphasis on efficient use of water resources.**

*(Reference: Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019)*

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### **Conclusion**

This proposal demonstrates a commitment to sustainability through the retention and adaptive reuse of the building, integration of energy-efficient systems, and minimal environmental impact. By addressing local needs and promoting accessibility, the project aligns with Reading Borough Council's sustainability goals and planning policies, contributing positively to the community and environment.

### **References:**

- Reading Borough Local Plan (2019): Available at: Reading Borough Council
- Reading Borough Council Core Strategy and Supplementary Planning Documents
- National Planning Policy Framework (2021): Sustainability Guidelines

**We respectfully request approval of this application**

Kind regards

Walid Omeir

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