



Northwood Residents' Association

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Reply Email: planning@northwoodresidents.co.uk

To:
Christos Chrysanthou – Planning Officer
Planning Dept
LB Hillingdon

Date: 9th August 2024

Dear Christos,

NORTHWOOD POLICE STATION, 2 MURRAY ROAD, NORTHWOOD

Two Planning Applications: Planning Ref: [46639/APP/2024/2058](#) and [46639/APP/2024/2059](#)

for:

Proposed Change of Use to a Children's Nursery and Listed Building Consent for Alterations

We at the NRA object to the proposed change of use primarily on the grounds of increased traffic and air pollution given that the building is located at one of the busiest junctions in Northwood, and we object to the proposed extension and alterations given it is a Grade II Listed Building.

The grounds are very similar to the objections raised for the previous similar applications.

Proposed Change of Use to Pre-School Age Nursery:

Those who live in Northwood already experience significant traffic stress within the Northwood town centre, particularly at school drop-off and pick-up times, but also at other unforeseen times during the day.

Given the limited on-site car parking, the applicant has stated in the Design & Access Statement dated July 2024 Page 22 that parents will be given effectively a 10 minute slot in the on-site 10 car, car park. However, given the existing traffic stress, it will be very difficult indeed for a parent to arrive at exactly the right time, and will more than likely arrive early, and then cruise around the local already busy streets, looking for a car parking space. This will be likely to involve blocking driveways and pavement parking. This is something that the area already struggles with and given the number of children and teachers who it is proposed will be attending the nursery, there is again significant concern about this becoming even worse.

This was highlighted in the Planning Officer's Report for the previous application, and the reduced numbers of children and staff will cause a very similar adverse situation for the local residents.



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The numbers who will attend the nursery stated in the application are now 98 nursery-aged children, reduced from 114 (although the Design & Access Statement July 2024 still states 114 children on Page 22), and 24 teachers, reduced from 28. It is also stated in the application papers that there will be 236 traffic movements every weekday.

The applicant already accepts that many of those travelling will come by car. However, urging parents to use public transport or walk will be relatively meaningless. This is also shown by the existing traffic stress and pollution in particular during existing school drop-off and pick-up times in Northwood. Good intent will not change what will actually happen based on years of experience within Northwood, and this building is right in the centre of Northwood at one of its busiest junctions. Waitrose is located close to the corner with access and egress to their customer car park, and separately, almost opposite the subject building, access and egress to their service yard.

The statement within the application that staff will not drive to work will be unenforceable. Equally, stating that parents will be encouraged to walk their children to the nursery or use public transport will also be unenforceable. This has been the view taken by the Planning Committee in connection with other applications for other properties in Northwood and elsewhere in the Borough. Just look at the existing traffic stress and air pollution from the traffic from the other schools very close-by to the subject property.

Within the application, there is the suggestion that parents will be able to use the Green Lane car park whilst they drop-off and pick-up the nursery-aged children. However, it has been stated multiple times in other applications around the Borough that applicants cannot rely upon car parks outside their site, because they will be reliant on what is in effect a third-party parking provision. This is due to the fact that spaces outside the control of the applicant cannot be guaranteed in perpetuity.

Should staff drive, knowing that they cannot park on site, it is likely that they would try to park some distance away and use parking within the local road network where parking is permitted all day where there is no parking management scheme. Those spaces tend to be taken up by commuters already and there is also no certainty that those spaces will remain outside the parking management scheme, because one can be applied for at any time. Therefore, once again, it cannot be assumed that the spaces will be available in perpetuity.

As well as the increased traffic caused by the proposed use which will go at low speed both because of the amount of traffic there will be, and already is, and because parents will be cruising at low speeds around the area looking for a parking space, it will significantly increase air pollution.

The Traffic Statement 2024 para 5.2.6 sets out the reasoning by the Highways Officer, which make complete sense, yet, the applicant is again stating the parking management scheme will work. The applicant states in para 5.2.7 'Whilst external factors could indeed effect the ability of a parent to stick to a specified time window in which to drop off or pick up a child, such occurrences will be minimal.' We disagree they will be minimal given the traffic already experienced. We agree with the Highways Officer.

Para 5.2.8 refers to ten car spaces on-site and a 7.5 minute window for every parent, so 80 cars entering and 80 cars leaving per hour. Of course, everyone knows that when it doesn't work, it is all of the neighbouring area that will suffer.

Para 5.3.6 states that a 98 Child Day Nursery could generate some 71 two-way vehicular movements in the AM peak period, 48 two-way movements in the PM peak period and a total of some 236 movements on a daily basis.

It must not be forgotten that this is all in addition to the existing traffic stress experienced in the centre of Northwood.



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Using this location for a use that will generate so much extra traffic at what is already one of the busiest junctions in Northwood, clearly adversely impacts the local community so far as traffic and air pollution is concerned, and the harm outweighs any proposed gain.

Also within the applicants revised papers, (Transport Statement July 2024 Para 4.1.2) they again state that up to 40 police officers and civilian staff were working at the Former Police Station in addition to movements associated with patrolling officers and visiting members of the public. This was raised before, and it is clearly known that for many years that almost all of the time there were only very few police officers and volunteers who worked within the Former Police Station. The statement made in the application again needs to be corrected to state at almost all times there were just a few people working at the Former Police Station.

By way of comparison:

I would refer to **21 Maxwell Road Northwood:**

Application number 33030/APP/2019/2247 for the change of use of a shop unit from A1 Retail to D1 Pre-school nursery, with **reasons for refusal** being that use as a day nursery does not provide adequate on-site car parking, on-site pick up and drop off facilities, to the detriment of child safety, and fails to have regard to existing highway and pedestrian safety concerns. The proposed use will result in an increase in parking stress on the highway network and surrounding area which is already subject to considerable pressure and would create an environment that would present considerable hazard to pedestrians and will be disruptive to residents of neighbouring dwellings.

In addition, the potential rise in traffic and in parking in and around the site would be detrimental to the public and highway safety.

A second application relating to **16 Murray Road Northwood:**

Application Number: 4626/APP/2019/629 Northwood which included amongst other things the conversion of ground and first floor from part Class C3 and part Class D1 to Class D1 (Nursery) was refused. This part of the **application was refused** on the basis that as a day nursery the premises do not provide adequate on-site car parking, on-site pick-up and drop-off facilities, to the detriment of child safety and fails to have regard to existing high and pedestrian safety concerns. The proposed use would result in an increase in stress on the local highway network and surrounding area which is already subject to considerable pressure and would create an environment that would present considerable hazard to pedestrians and will be disruptive to residents of neighbouring dwellings.

It will be seen that both applications relate to properties very close by to the subject property, and with similar reasons for refusal to those being put forward here against the proposed change of use of the Former Police Station to a day-nursery..

Application for Listed Building Consent:

Secondly, there is the application for Listed Building Consent to make external alterations to the building.

The building is Grade II listed and there should be no alterations carried out to the exterior, and we urge the council to protect the building in this way.

There is reference in the application documents to the building being in disrepair. Those items covered by the Listing should be repaired, but not altered. Equally, disrepair is not a planning reason, and is fully within the ability as owners to carry out those repairs. And, indeed, as a Listed Building, they have an obligation to keep it in repair. They knew



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the condition of the property when purchasing the property last year, and will have taken that into account when assessing the price they paid.

The Listing also requires the Call Box and Lamp to be located in its original position outside the property. That is where it should be now, so that the Listing is respected. The current papers state they will now reinstate them in the correct positions, but, if so, why haven't they done so already? It is a current requirement of the owners.

The proposed extension is out of character with the remainder of the building, particularly relating to materials, but also because as a Listed Building it should be respected as such and protected as such. (See Page 16 of the Design & Access Statement)

Whilst altering the fence to provide in and out access, it still doesn't overcome the significant increase in traffic and air pollution that the change of use would entail.

Conclusion:

Both applications are very similar to the previous applications that were refused, still generating significant amounts of additional traffic at one of the busiest junctions in Northwood with a similar adverse impact to the previous applications.

On the basis of the above reasons the NRA requests that both applications are refused.

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