

Comments for Planning Application 143445/FO/2025

Application Summary

Application Number: 143445/FO/2025

Address: British Muslim Heritage Centre College Road Manchester M16 8BP

Proposal: Extension of time for further three years for a temporary marquee

Case Officer: Sue Wills

Customer Details

Name: Not Available

Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The writer supports the BMHC and its aims in connection with supporting the local community and providing a place of worship for the local community. However, the writer does not believe a residential area, in a conservation area is the appropriate location for a major event venue, and accordingly, I am objecting to the application for an extension to the temporary marquee on the following basis:

(i) Conservation Area/Listed Building

The BMHC event space is located in a Conservation Area and adjacent to a Listed building. It is the writer's contention that the marquee is not in keeping with a conservation area and it threatens the heritage value of the area.

(ii) Impact on traffic and transportation

a. During events at the BMHC, there is heavy congestion on both College Road and Clarendon Road, with antisocial driving and parking. Both roads become impassable, with horns beeping and cars revving, creating an air quality issue for residents in the area. Parking is also anti-social and dangerous, with cars mounting kerbs and parked close to junctions impacting visibility. Videos can be provided showing the disruption.

b. Whilst College Road is not under an AQMA boundary, College Road is established as a school street, with hours restricted during school pick up and drop off times.

c. Mode transport has produced a travel management plan which calculates the modal split of transport methods based on 2011 census data and "3.5.2 assumes that the BMHC primarily serves the local population". The calculation methodology is flawed for the following reasons:

i. The census data used is over 14 years old. The population of Manchester has increased 9.7% since 2011. The number of residents in Whalley Range has increased from circa 15,000 in 2011 to 16,500 in 2021. It is unclear why the 2021 census data was not used.

ii. A distinction should be drawn between regular worship, where one would expect transport to be in line with the modalities in MSOA Manchester 024, 028, 029, 030 and 033, and events, such as weddings, Ramadan and Eid where transportation would be in line with broader modalities. The BMHC marquee is utilised for major events such as weddings and Ramadan. This often sees people attend from outside the local area. People attending events may be travelling with young children, persons with mobility issues and/or in footwear unsuitable for travel by foot. It is the writer's contention that persons travelling for events travel from a wider MSOA area and by transport modalities outside the average set out in the 2011 census.

d. Section 6 of the Transport Management Plan sets out the results of a travel survey plan for visitors to Friday prayers, showing 56% of attendees travel by car (304 surveyed). A further survey was commissioned for Ramadan, but with significantly fewer responses than for Friday prayers (125 surveyed). This data set does not correlate with the increased number of attendees for Ramadan and other events which residents observe, and it is the writer's view that the survey provides an inaccurate statement of true travel modalities for major events, as a result. The writer disputes Mode's assertion at 6.4.4 that the percentage of car drivers does not increase as this is at complete odds with what is witnessed by residents of College Road and Clarendon Road on major event days. Video footage can be provided by the writer showing road traffic during Ramadan as against road traffic during Friday prayers. During Eid al-Fitr 2025, College Road was in gridlock, with beeping horns, idling engines and anti-social parking for up to 3 hours.

e. It is the writer's contention that Manchester City Council planning office should commission an independent travel survey to measure traffic and emissions during both Friday prayers and Ramadan to verify the traffic data reported.

(iii) Impact on noise levels and pollution

a. During weddings at the marquee, there have been multiple incidences of:

- i. cars revving loudly causing noise disruption to residents; and
- ii. Fireworks are let off late into the night, as late as midnight.

b. Page 6 of the BMHC Management Strategy and Planning Application review states that it has a new security team who 'prevent such incidents'. Whilst a security team may have been engaged, they have not prevented convoys and fireworks. It is residents' experience that these have continued.

c. Cars for bridal parties frequently idle along College Road, creating air pollution.

d. It is the writer's contention that air quality should be independently monitored by Manchester City Council during event periods.

The marquee space was erected on a temporary 3 year basis, subject to acceptable travel plans and appropriate noise control measures. Despite the BMHC's best attempts to mitigate noise and traffic disruption, such travel and noise disruption has persisted, demonstrating it is wholly unsuitable to have a major event venue in the middle of and in such close proximity to a residential area.