

**Planning Committee:** 03 July 2012

**Item Number: 12**

**Application No:** W 12 / 0420

**Town/Parish Council:** Leamington Spa  
**Case Officer:** Jo Hogarth

**Registration Date:** 27/04/12  
**Expiry Date:** 22/06/12

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**Sikh Community Centre, Queensway Trading Estate, Queensway,  
Leamington Spa**

Change of use of 17A Queensway to Sikh Religious Facility ancillary to the Sikh Temple (incorporating renewal of existing planning permission W10/0864 for use as sikh recreation facility, 17B Queensway) for temporary period of 3 years FOR Leamington and Warwick Gurdwara

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This application is being presented to Committee due to the number of objections received.

**SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS**

**Royal Leamington Spa Town Council** - No objection.

**Warwick Town Council:** No objection.

**WCC Highways:** No objection subject to conditions on temporary period of no more than 3 years and limited activities of Building 'A'. A further 3 years will enable the comprehensive scheme for the site to be finally developed and brought forward for the redevelopment of these buildings.

**Environmental Health:** No comments to make.

**Warwickshire Police:** No objection.

**Severn Trent:** No objection subject to a condition requiring drainage plans for disposal of surface water and foul sewage.

**Cllr Jane Knight:** Supports the application.

**Public response(s):**

**Support:** A petition of 1619 signatures and 2 separate letters have been received stating that the same people who attend weddings will be using the reception building and therefore no increase in traffic. Furthermore without this facility of the community centre there will be an adverse impact on the people who use it, e.g. Elderly Asian Men's and Women's groups.

**Objection:** A petition of 439 signatures together with 255 letters of objection have been received on grounds of increase in parking pressure, no consultation taking place and the congregation does not agree with this proposal.

## **RELEVANT POLICIES**

- DP1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP2 - Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP8 - Parking (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- SC2 - Protecting Employment Land and Buildings (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP11 - Drainage (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- Vehicle Parking Standards (Supplementary Planning Document)

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

The outline planning permission for the new temple included the demolition of the marriage hall to allow for the siting of the new temple. This was carried out. The two buildings fronting Queensway were shown as "future use as new community centre". The description for the outline permission (ref: W02/0010) was "erection of a new Sikh Temple and community centre and works for the conversion of an existing building to sports hall."

The two buildings fronting Queensway have temporary planning permission for use as a Sikh community hall & use until August 2012 (ref: W/10/0864) when they should revert back to their former use (as they weren't demolished as part of the 2002 permission for the new Temple) which is employment, Class B1. The justification for a temporary planning permission was to allow for a comprehensive scheme for the whole of the site to be submitted.

## **KEY ISSUES**

### **The Site and its Location**

The site relates to two former industrial buildings located to the east of the main Gurdwara Sikh Temple which fronts onto Tachbrook Park Drive. The site is outside the Conservation Area and this part of Queensway is a 'no through road'. There is vehicular access from Queensway into the car parking area serving the Temple. Building 'B' is currently used as Sikh Social and recreational facilities whereas Building 'A' is currently vacant.

### **Details of the Development**

The proposal seeks to change the use of Buildings 'A' for ancillary use to the Sikh Temple and retain the use of Building 'B' for social recreational facilities. The use of both buildings would be for a temporary period of three years to allow for a comprehensive scheme for the redevelopment of the site to be brought forward.

### **Assessment**

It is considered that the key issues relating to this proposal to be:

- Principle of the use
- Parking
- Renewables

### Principle of use

The industrial use of both buildings have not been in place for a period in excess of 10 years and the temporary permissions granted for their use in connection with the main Temple were to allow for a scheme for the whole of the site to be submitted. Whilst their former use as industrial buildings should be reinstated following the expiry of their permission in August 2012, it is considered that the wider benefit to the area to have a comprehensive scheme for the site in its entirety would outweigh the requirement to revert back to their former use. For several years this site has been used in connection with the Sikh community and on this basis it is considered that for an extended period of three years it would be acceptable.

### Parking

The use of Building 'B' would remain unaltered and would continue as a community centre. The proposed use of Building 'A' would be in connection with the wedding ceremonies which take place in the Temple. It is proposed that the wedding party arrive at Building 'A' for the tea reception prior to walking to the main Temple for the religious ceremony. At present the tea party takes place within the basement of the Temple which the applicant has argued can cause congestion at the entrance when other functions are taking place. It is argued that the displacement of the guests from the foyer of the main Temple to Building 'A', would allow for the 'meeting and greeting' of the wedding party to take place without causing congestion. When it is time for the religious ceremony to take place, guests will filter into the Temple and move to the first floor. Following the ceremony guests would walk back to Queensway where their coach would be parked.

The public objections on grounds of the likely increase in pressure for parking are acknowledged. However, additional parking spaces are proposed in front of Building 'A' and De Luca House (22 in total). The proposed use of Building 'A' would not increase vehicle or people numbers as it is proposed that this building would only be used on a Saturday for the wedding related activities which currently take place in the Temple. The County Council as Highways Authority do not raise objection; however they have stated that they would not be prepared to support a further application for a temporary use or permanent use without the submission of a Transport Assessment which is considered to be reasonable. It is therefore considered that there would be adequate parking provision to accommodate the development. This can be adequately controlled by condition.

### Renewables

As the proposal is for a temporary period of three years it is considered that it would be unreasonable at this stage to require the use of renewables to provide 10% of the predicted energy requirement. It is considered that when a comprehensive scheme is submitted this requirement will be reviewed.

### other matters:

The public objections received on grounds that they were not consulted and that the congregation do not support the proposal are noted. The legal requirements for public consultations stipulate that the Local Planning Authority should write to those properties which share a boundary with the application site or that a site notice should be displayed. In this case both of these measures were taken and therefore the Local Planning Authority has discharged its duty to consult. Clearly, the number of letters which have been submitted, both in support and to object, demonstrate that public awareness of the proposed development has been adequate. In terms of the congregations view on the proposal, there is

clearly a difference in opinion amongst them as there have been a significant number of petition signatures and letters received both in support and to object to the proposal. Nevertheless, the application has been assessed on its planning merits.

### **CONCLUSION/SUMMARY OF DECISION:**

In the opinion of the District Planning Authority, having particular regard to the planning history of this and adjacent land, a temporary planning permission is considered acceptable whilst comprehensive proposals are formulated for this group of buildings. Furthermore it is considered that the development does not adversely impact on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the policies listed.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

GRANT, subject to the conditions listed below.

### **CONDITIONS**

- 1 This permission shall be limited to a period of time expiring on 3 July 2015. At or before the expiration of the period specified in this permission, the land and buildings shall be restored to their former condition and use. **REASON** : The buildings the subject of this application form part of a larger group of buildings. In the opinion of the District Council the granting of a permanent permission for the proposed reuse of the these two buildings comprised within this application site edged red would be inappropriate in the absence of a comprehensive scheme for the proposed future development of the whole group of buildings and indeed may prejudice the preparation and delivery of such a comprehensive scheme. The granting of a temporary planning permission for the continued use of the application site for the community use established following the grant of planning permission W/10/0864 is therefore considered appropriate to enable the preparation of a comprehensive scheme for the site would accord with the policies DP1, DP2, DP8 and SC2 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.
- 2 The premises known as Building 'B' shall be used as a Community Centre and for no other purpose including any other purpose in Class D1 contained in the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, as amended, (or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification. **REASON** : Other uses within this Use Class may not be appropriate in these premises by reason of the location of this site and its relationship to adjacent buildings and uses, and to satisfy Policies DP1, DP2 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.
- 3 The development hereby permitted shall not commence until drainage plans for the disposal of surface water and foul sewage have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is first brought into use. **REASON:** To ensure that the

development is provided with satisfactory means of drainage as well as to reduce the risk of creating or exacerbating a flooding problem and to minimise the risk of pollution in accordance with policy DP11 in the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.

4 The proposed additional car parking area for the development hereby permitted shall be constructed, surfaced, laid out and available for use prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, in full accordance with the approved plan and shall be kept available and free from obstruction for this purpose at all times. **REASON:** To ensure that adequate parking facilities are available, in accordance with the requirements of Policy DP8 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.

5 The use of Building 'A' shall be for the following activities only:

- Receptions associated with Sunday weddings which will be ancillary to the Sikh Temple.
- Limited recreational use of Building 'B' as set out in Appendix A submitted on 27 April 2012

**REASON:** Any additional uses of the building would be likely to result in an increase in pressure for parking and would thereby be contrary to Policy DP8 in the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2012.

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