

**Committee Report  
Planning Committee on 7 June, 2011**

**Item No. 16  
Case No. 11/0345**

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**RECEIVED:** 8 February, 2011

**WARD:** Wembley Central

**PLANNING AREA:** Wembley Consultative Forum

**LOCATION:** 3C Ranelagh Road, Wembley, HA0 4TW

**PROPOSAL:** Demolition of existing temple and the erection of a new temple including an ancillary two storey accommodation block and landscaping

**APPLICANT:** Sivayogam Trust

**CONTACT:** Darnton EGS Architects

**PLAN NO'S:**  
See condition 2

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**RECOMMENDATION**  
Grant planning permission

**EXISTING**

The existing site contains two single storey buildings and a large marquee. The site has been in use since 2006 as the Sivayogam Temple. The site fronts Ranelagh Road a largely residential street located off the High Road, Wembley. To the north and east of the site are the rear service areas of commercial properties fronting the High Road and Ealing Road. To the south is an end of terrace property currently in use as two flats.

The site is not located within a conservation area nor is it a listed building.

**PROPOSAL**

Demolition of the existing temple and the erection of a new temple, an ancillary two storey accommodation block and landscaping

**HISTORY**

- 25/07/2008 Planning permission granted for the retention of marquee (Ref: 08/1645).
- 18/06/2008 Permanent planning permission granted for the retention of the site as a place of worship (Ref: 08/1232).
- 29/06/2006 Temporary planning permission granted for the change of use of existing office to place of worship (use class D1) (Ref: 05/2387).

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Brent's Unitary Development Plan 2004**

**BE2** - Townscape: Local Context & Character

**BE3** - Urban Structure: Space & Movement

**BE4** - Access for Disabled People

**BE6** - Public Realm: Landscape Design

**BE7** - Public Realm: Streetscape

**BE9** - Architectural Quality

**BE12** - Sustainable Development Principles

**TRN3** - Environmental Impact of Traffic

**TRN4** - Measures to make transport impact acceptable

**TRN22** - Parking Standards - Non-residential Developments

**CF2** - Location of small scale community facilities

**CF4** - Community Facilities capable of holding functions

**CF14** - Places of Worship

### **Core Strategy 2010**

**CP23** - Protection of existing and provision of new community and cultural facilities

### **SPGs**

**SPG17** - Design Guide for New Development

### **CONSULTATION**

Standard three week consultation period carried out between 23 February 2011 and 16 March 2011 in which 115 properties and ward councillors were notified.

4 letters of objection have been received from neighbouring properties and one from Councillor Al-Elbadi who is a councillor for the Wembley Central ward. These objections raise the following concerns:

- Problems caused by people parking in Ranelagh Road obstructing traffic whilst praying.
- Residents' driveways blocked by worshippers. Parking is increasingly difficult since the temple was granted permission.
- Problems caused by a recent wedding with large number of people which would only be more frequent if a new building was approved.
- Problems of large groups of people congregating on Ranelagh Road shouting and littering driveways.
- Overdevelopment of the site.
- Increased pressure for parking within the area.
- Maximum number of worshippers incorrect, over 100 people have used the centre in one night.
- Large number of complaints within last 6 months received by ward councillors regarding places of worship within this area.

One letter of support has also been received from a neighbouring resident. 11 emails of support have been received from residents residing outside of the local area.

The applicants have also provided petitions in support of the application containing 71 signatures from the immediate neighbourhood and 200 signatures from devotees in and around the London Borough of Brent.

### **Internal Consultees**

**Transportation** - Raise no objection

**Urban Design** - Recommend link between frontage building and rear building is reviewed to create some separation and character of the rear block is reviewed (particularly the front elevation) in order to create a sense of identity.

**Environmental Health** - Raise no objection. No record of complaints regarding the existing use of the site.

## **REMARKS**

This application proposes the demolition of all existing structures on the site and redevelopment to provide a new, larger temple on the site frontage together with an ancillary rear block linked to the main temple. The rear block provides additional public space, offices, kitchens and toilets at ground floor and priest's accommodation at first floor.

The main considerations relevant to this application are the principle of the use, the impact on neighbouring residential amenity, the quality of accommodation provided for future occupants, the scale and design of the proposal and the impact on the character of the area and the transportation implications of the intensification of the site.

### *Principle of the Use*

The use of the site as a place of worship is already established through the granting of a permanent permission in 2008 following the monitoring of the use since temporary consent was granted in 2006. The aim of the application is to invest in a more attractive and fitting temple for its deities and provide a building which conforms to traditional Hindu design.

Whilst it is noted that this application proposes a larger temple than is existing, the applicants have advised that this is in order to provide better facilities for existing worshippers rather than to increase the number of devotees that can be accommodated. This has been supported by the resubmission of the existing management plan which does not indicate any increase in the intensity of the existing temple. However the temple will have a larger capacity than the existing facility and we have to assume that a brand new purpose built building may prove more attractive to potential devotees. However given the site's location adjacent to the High Road and Wembley Town Centre, the size and layout of the site and the existing approved management arrangements, officers are satisfied that such an increase can be accommodated without causing harm to local amenity. It should be noted that the temple has been operating from this site now for over 5 years without significant complaint.

The management plan notes that the temple provides 6 fixed worship times between 8am and 8pm where, in general, no more than 20 people would be expected to attend. It is noted however that Friday services at midday and 7.30pm would attract around 30-40 devotees.

Since the receipt of the application your officers have been monitoring the use of the temple particularly focusing on Fridays which is the main religious day highlighted by the applicants. The level of devotees utilising the site on a regular basis are in accordance with the numbers specified within the management plan and does not appear to be exceeding these levels at a regular frequency. Whilst the comments from the ward councillor and some local residents regarding attendance levels are noted, the level of activity they refer to does not appear to be such a regular occurrence as to warrant refusing the improvement of facilities at the site.

### *Impact on neighbouring residential amenity*

Residential neighbours surround the site on the upper floors of buildings which front the High Road and to the south of the site where properties front Ranelagh Road. Properties fronting the High Road are situated at a higher level than the site in question and are separated by at least 10m from the rear elevation of the rear block as such will not receive any significant detrimental impact from the proposal in terms of loss of light and outlook. The layout of the rear block has been designed to orientate windows into the site in order to preserve the privacy of neighbouring occupiers and of visiting priests using the proposed accommodation. Accordingly the proposal is considered to respect the amenities of these neighbouring properties.

It is noted that the applicants proposed two high level openings within the rear wall of the rear block which is situated on the boundary of the site. These openings will contain glass bricks and will be non-opening. The applicant has requested these be retained in order to provide light to the rear kitchen and provide outlook for the deity. As the openings do not open onto the neighbouring servicing road, they are considered acceptable in this instance however the applicant has been advised that any outlook cannot be safeguarded in the future as it is not considered appropriate to rely on light and outlook from neighbouring land. This position has been accepted by the applicant in writing.

The most sensitive relationship is the relationship with the residential units immediately to the south of the site within number 11 Ranelagh Road. This property has been subdivided into flats with habitable room windows looking onto the site. The proposal has been designed to respect the 45 degree line and the 30 degree line taken from the around this site and accordingly is not considered to raise any significant issues to this neighbour in terms of loss of light and outlook. The new temple building and ancillary buildings will be separated from this neighbouring site by landscaping areas which soften the impact of the development on this building. The path running through the site, close to this sensitive boundary is annotated on the plans as a private route for use by off-duty priests only and will not be accessed by the public who would be required to access the rear of the site via the main building. Accordingly, the use of this pathway is at a level which is not considered to give rise to excessive noise and disturbance to the occupants of either unit contained within 11 Ranelagh Road. Details of a satisfactory landscaping scheme are required to be submitted by condition to ensure a good outlook is achieved from habitable room windows within the flank wall of number 11 which looks onto the site. A condition is also recommended restricting the use of this external pathway for use by priests only to prevent excessive noise and disturbance.

It is noted that the rear block provides first floor accommodation for priests which could overlook the rear garden and rear windows of 11 Ranelagh Road. The two windows closest to the rear boundary which do not achieve a separation of 10m from the boundary have been angled towards the rear of the temple and away from 11 Ranelagh Road in order to ensure existing levels of privacy enjoyed by these residents are maintained. On this basis, the proposal is considered to have an acceptable relationship with neighbouring properties.

#### *Quality of Accommodation*

The proposal provides 5 single rooms annotated as Priest's rooms. These will have communal washroom facilities and a kitchen at ground floor level. Access is via a private gate to the side of the temple. The rooms, whilst small, are intended to house priests on a temporary basis (not exceeding 12 months) and accordingly it is not considered wholly relevant to apply council unit size standards in this instance. For this reason, it is also not considered relevant to apply the standard £3,000 per bedroom charge to these rooms as temporary accommodation should not result in increased pressure on local infrastructure. For these reasons however a condition restricting the use of these rooms is recommended to prevent them becoming permanent accommodation.

#### *Scale and Design of the Proposal and the Impact on the Character of the Area*

The main building occupying the front section of the site has been set back from the street sufficiently to provide opportunities for soft landscaping on the frontage together with minimal tarmac for parking. This provides a suitable setting for the new temple. The design of the main temple building is similar in terms of detailing to that already situated on the site but seeks to provide a larger facility and as such, does not raise significant issues in terms of its impact on the character of the area.

The rear portion of the building, being two storeys is subsidiary to the frontage building and is simpler in design. Whilst it is connected to the main temple building, the single storey link element

will not be easily visible from the street scene and as such the buildings will read as two separate buildings within the street scene. The fenestration within the front elevation of the rear block has been increased in order to provide a more conventional appearance within the street scene. This amendment is welcomed by officers. As the success of the redevelopment will however be heavily reliant on the quality of materials and detailing, a condition is recommended which secures details of materials including samples and key sectional drawings to show junctions between moulded detailing and the main building.

A condition requiring details of soft landscaping provision including the green roof is also recommended to ensure compliance with policy BE6 which seeks to ensure a good quality setting for any new development which positively contributes to the street scene.

### *Transportation Implications*

The existing site makes provision for one disabled parking space. Two spaces are proposed following the redevelopment of the site, one being a designated disabled space. Typically parking standards allow for a provision of 2 spaces per 5 visitors which would attract a maximum parking standard of 24 spaces.

Previously however a low level of parking has been agreed for the site. This is partly due to the good access to public transport (the site has a PTAL rating of 6) but is more due to the existing management plan which seeks to minimise disruption to Ranelagh Road through the use of stewards and advertising of local car parking facilities. A degree of protection is also afforded to residents through the existing CPZ which operates from 08:00-18:30 Monday to Saturday. From observational site visits, it is clear that residents parking bays remain largely unaffected at lunchtimes with the majority of worshippers arriving on foot. Whilst a greater number of cars arrive for evening acts of worship, no illegal parking across driveways has been observed and Ranelagh Road parking bays have not reached full capacity. Moreover, consultation with the police has confirmed that they have not received a significant number of complaints from local residents regarding illegal parking. Some illegal parking has been witnessed by officers however this seems to be limited to the northern end of Ranelagh Road where people park in order to utilise shopping facilities on the High Road. Moreover, it should be noted that residents could request the operating hours of the CPZ be extended to prevent worshippers from parking within Ranelagh Road through the evening.

It is noted that no stewards have been observed during officers site visits however the level of worshippers visiting the Temple at the time of officers' site visits would not require any such management as attendance has been sufficient low to not raise issues in relation to parking or people congregating outside of the use. On the basis of the high public transport accessibility of the site together with observations by officers during the course of assessing this application, the existing management plan is considered sufficient to deal with the future use of the site without having any significant detrimental impact on parking pressures within the immediate locality.

### *Other matters*

Objectors have also raised concerns regarding groups congregating within Ranelagh Road shouting and littering and generally disturbing local residents. Your officers have not observed any such activity arising from the use in question. It is noted that worshippers currently utilise the external marquee for storage of shoes whilst worshipping within the Temple and as a result, your officers have queried where such facilities will be situated within the new building to ensure no congregating outside of the Temple arises in the future. The applicants have highlighted a designated store to the north of the Temple within the building which will replace the existing marquee. This facility, together with the use of stewards during busy periods is considered sufficient to prevent excessive disturbance arising from the use.

Following receipt of the objection which raises concerns regarding the level of attendance and problems associated with a recent wedding, the applicants have advised that wedding blessings occur only 4-5 times per year and would typically involve only 10 people within normal service hours as detailed within the management plan. The recent wedding that has caused inconvenience to neighbours will not be repeated and the applicants have apologised for disturbance to neighbours. Future private events appear to be attended by a sufficiently low number of people that can easily be accommodated within the new building to avoid raising issues regarding noise and disturbance.

### *Summary*

The existing use of the site appears to be operating at an intensity which does not raise significant issues in terms of impact to neighbouring residential amenity or impact on existing parking pressures. As a result, it is considered appropriate to allow the redevelopment of the site to improve existing facilities for devotees. The proposed buildings have been designed to respect the amenities of residential neighbours and are appropriate in scale and design to respect the character of the area. Future management arrangements have also been provided in the form of a management plan ensuring compliance with transportation policies. For these reasons, the proposal is considered to satisfy the requirements of development plan policies and it is therefore recommended that planning permission be **granted, subject to conditions**.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Grant Consent

### **REASON FOR GRANTING**

- (1) The proposed development is in general accordance with policies contained in the:-

Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004

Relevant policies in the Adopted Unitary Development Plan are those in the following chapters:-

Built Environment: in terms of the protection and enhancement of the environment

Transport: in terms of sustainability, safety and servicing needs

Community Facilities: in terms of meeting the demand for community services

### **CONDITIONS/REASONS:**

- (1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning on the date of this permission.

Reason: To conform with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- (2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawing(s) and/or document(s):

7137-PP-0283 Rev B

7137-PP-081 Rev B

7137-PP7082 Rev A

7137-PP-080 Rev A

7137-PP-070

7137-PP-050

7137-PP-072

7137-PP-084

7137-PP-071

Management Plan - 7137-PP-085 dated 01/02/2011

Design & Access Statement - 7137-PP-086 dated 01/02/2011

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- (3) Activities within the designated building/site shall only be permitted between 0800 - 2100 hours on any day, with the premises cleared within 30 minutes after these times (unless the Local Planning Authority agrees other hours in writing).

Reason: To ensure that the proposed use does not prejudice the enjoyment of the neighbouring occupiers.

- (4) The premises shall be used only for the purpose of a Place of Worship within Use Class D1, as specified in the Schedule to the Town & Country Planning (Use Class) Order 1987, as amended, and not for any other purpose without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the residential amenities of the locality and to ensure that no other use commences without the prior permission of the Local Planning Authority and to enable other uses to be considered on their merits.

- (5) The use shall be conducted in full accordance with the submitted Management Plan (7137-PP-085 dated 01/02/2011) accompanying this application, and no other events, festivals or activities, except those listed, shall occur at the site without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the use is carried out as approved so as to avoid any detriment to the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring sites, the movement of traffic on neighbouring roads and on the visual amenity of the area, and allow for a safe and accessible use.

- (6) No music, public-address system or any other amplified sound shall be audible at any boundary either attached to or in the vicinity of the subject premises.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining occupiers.

- (7) The area(s) so designated within the site (including the green roof) shall be landscaped in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any works commence on site, the landscape work to be completed during the first available planting season following completion of the development hereby approved. Any planting that is part of the approved scheme that within a period of *five* years after planting is removed, dies or becomes seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season and all planting shall be replaced in the same positions with others of a similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority first gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance and setting for the development and to ensure that the proposed development enhances the visual amenity of the locality, in the interests of the amenities of the occupants of the development and to provide tree planting in pursuance of section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

- (8) The windows in the eastern wall of the rear block shall be glazed with obscure glass and non-opening and shall be so maintained unless the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority is obtained.

Reason: To minimise interference with the privacy of the adjoining occupiers and in the interests of good neighbourliness.

- (9) The external access route to the rear block situated on the southern part of the site shall be used solely by occupants of the priests accommodation at the rear and shall not be used as a public access route unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of neighbouring residential amenity.

- (10) The priest's accommodation hereby approved shall be used as temporary accommodation to house resident priests at the site and shall not be used independently of the Temple hereby approved or to provide general needs housing.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory standard of accommodation in the event that permanent housing were required.

- (11) Details of materials for all external work, including samples of windows, bricks and render, and sectional drawings showing junctions between moulded detailing and brickwork, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced. The work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory development which does not prejudice the amenity of the locality.

- (12) Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, further details of the proposed gated access (including the design and materials) to the rear block on the southern side of the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any work is commenced and the development shall be carried out and completed in all respects in accordance with the details so approved before the buildings are occupied.

Reason: To ensure there is secure, well-designed and managed access.

**INFORMATIVES:**

None Specified

**REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:**

Brent's Unitary Development Plan 2004  
Core Strategy 2010  
SPG17

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Sarah Ashton, The Planning Service, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6BZ, Tel. No. 020 8937 5234





## Planning Committee Map

Site address: 3C Ranelagh Road, Wembley, HA0 4TW

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