

7 January Planning Speaker Statements

#6 - 25/04141/S73 – Councillor Naomi Bennett

I stand by my original objection and particularly my concerns that staff would need to arrive before the restaurant opens and leave after it closes so that the disruption will be for a greater part of the day than the official opening hours. I assert that the quiet window in which residents may wish to sleep is already too short and that any further extension of operating hours will make it intolerable.

I also wish to comment on the noise management report submitted by the applicant which was added to the planning portal after my objection was made.

I need to be very clear that this report contains statements that are at odds with the comments made by residents, the experience of ward councillors and even the comments made by McDonalds management.

If I may start with 2.11 of the report, this states that there have been no complaints regarding plant noise or any other noise source from the current operation of the restaurant. I can confirm that there have been frequent resident complaints about noise, particularly but not exclusively from Nursery Close residents. Noise is not the top complaint category but the noise complaints exist.

2.11 then goes on to state that the store has had no problem with anti-social behaviour , but in practice ward councillors are aware of some very long running problems. We cannot understand how such a statement can be made.

The main issues that I am aware of are:

1. Late night motor bike meetings in the car park. Community police have discouraged this quite effectively but have been clear that this is a recurrent problem and highly likely to recur.

2. A group of under age teenagers behaving in ways likely to intimidate customers and staff. My information about this is unfortunately second hand as my source for this information was the previous management and my only involvement was to ensure that the community police team were aware of this.
3. Littering -this is persistent and to be fair to the applicant, they employ a litter roundsman
4. Anti-social driving by customers and delivery services including rat running from Ditton Lane and Ditton Fields
5. Anti-social parking in Wadloes Road blocking residents vehicles and garage access and EV charging points.

In fairness to the managers, they operate a very busy fast food outlet and it is hardly surprising that they don't have full details of the anti social driving. However, it undermines the credibility of the report to make these assertions.

However, I would agree that most of the noise complaints that ward councillors are copied in relate to staff and customer voices at the driver through delivery screens (see 5.5). The problem is that we have children's bedrooms very close to the screens in Nursery Close.

As regards, door slams (see 7.3.1), I would expect at least some drive thru customers to want to use the toilets and would need to get out of the car to do so. I would also expect some vehicle exits from customers meeting fellow contractors and colleagues for onward journeys to construction sites and other customer appointments.

I should also add that some of the vehicle noise complaints are about the music played by the vehicles in the McDonalds traffic queue. Of course not every driver playing loud music is a McDonalds customer,, but the longer and slower the queue gets, the more likely it is that residents along Barnwell Road, Newmarket Road and the Stepneys will be affected.

I now turn to Appendix A and particularly the noises between 7.15am and 7.28 am which "add to the vibrancy of the soundscape". Vibrancy is

not the issue. The issue is the impact on sleeping children. Presumably this noise would be an hour earlier if opening hours were changed.

I welcome some of the noise mitigation proposals in the report. But it is very clear from the resident comments that noise is only part of the problem.

Residents are much more likely to raise:

- Odours and smells associated with the fast food facility. Residents in Nursery Close and Wadloes Road are most likely to complain about this and are particularly likely to complain if they have to keep bedroom windows closed in hot weather to keep the smell out or they can't sit out in their garden because of smells.
- Concerns over increased emissions from stop start traffic in the McDonalds queue . The queue zone is quite large so these complaints come from residents in quite a wide area.
- Concerns over proximity of the site to the Galfrid School and the new nursery site on the opposite corner of the roundabout. These complaints usually come from parents and again there is quite a wide distribution of these complaints. The existing opening hours already cover the walk to school period but extending the opening hours would also have an impact on longer home to school journeys . Bottisham Village College pupils would be the most obvious one.
- Impact on congestion and road safety, as well as reliability of school buses.

So to sum up, there is already an adverse impact on the neighbourhood from the existence of the fast food restaurant and the proposed extension of opening hours will only exacerbate it. While we welcome the proposals for noise mitigation, we think that our comments and those of our residents make it very clear that noise is far from the only issue and do not even begin to address the significant harms presented by this proposal.

I welcome the officer's recommendation for refusal and fully support it.

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#7 - 25/02888/FUL – Local Resident

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to give further representation in support of the Planning Application 25/02888/FUL in respect of the Jewish Synagogue at 3 Thompsons Lane for demolition of existing Synagogue and Jewish Community facility and erection of a new Synagogue and Jewish Community facility including parking spaces, new cycle storage, landscaping and associated infrastructure works.

I have now had opportunity to look around the existing building externally and internally and assess the need as follows:

- Structural and environmental issues are in need of major overhaul and renovation. These would necessitate evacuation of the property in order for these to be undertaken. However, the students and community have far outgrown the space of the building. The kitchen is tiny and students cook and host events for up to 200 participants each week. Students use the facilities on a daily basis. The Sukkah space (necessary for important Autumn Holy Festival) does not cater to even half of the community.
- The current building was originally built to be temporary and is well past being fit for purpose in this Jewish community. It would not be prudent or economically sound to make such major improvements to the existing structure.
- It is important therefore that the Council give the students the opportunity to build something permanent and suitable for them and the community to thrive in.