

REVISION -  
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# BRL design

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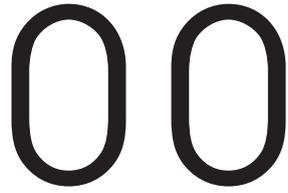
## JUSTIFICATION OF DEVELOPMENT

9015  
QUBA MASJID

# BRL | CONTENTS

## Contents:

Executive Summary	00
Introduction	01
Existing Operation	02
Operational Constraints	03
Purpose of the Extension	04
Attendance and Intensity of Use	05
Management	06
Conclusion	07



This statement has been prepared on behalf of the Trustees of Quba Masjid and Education Centre in response to the Local Planning Authority's request for clarification on the justification for the proposed extension and its implications for site capacity and operation.

The proposed development does not seek to increase the capacity, attendance or intensity of use of the Centre. The maximum number of users is defined by the existing prayer spaces, which are not being enlarged or reconfigured as part of the proposal. There is no proposal to extend opening hours, introduce new attractor uses, or intensify the pattern of activity on the site.

The extension is required to address identified operational constraints within the existing building. At present, secondary activities such as youth provision, education and community use compete for limited internal space, leading to congestion, inefficient circulation and occasional displacement of users into circulation areas or external spaces during busy periods. These issues arise from spatial limitations rather than excessive attendance.

The additional floorspace enables existing activities to be redistributed and better managed within the building, improving internal organisation, safeguarding and supervision. It allows activities to operate in parallel rather than sequentially, reduces internal pressure during peak periods and mitigates external impacts, without increasing footfall.

The Centre will continue to operate under the same management framework and hours of use. A Site Supervision and Management Plan has been submitted alongside the application to formalise existing practices and demonstrate how the additional floorspace will be used to improve control and operation rather than intensify use.

In planning terms, the proposal represents a qualitative improvement to the functioning of an established community facility rather than a quantitative expansion of its capacity. The extension allows the Centre to operate more efficiently and responsibly at its existing capacity and provides a clear and justified basis for the Local Planning Authority to support the application.

# 01

## BRL | INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared on behalf of the Trustees of Quba Masjid and Education Centre in direct response to recent correspondence with the Local Planning Authority. Its purpose is to provide focused clarification on the rationale for the proposed extension to the Centre and, critically, to confirm that the development does not seek to increase the operational capacity or intensity of use of the site.

The document is intentionally narrow in scope. It is not a general Planning Statement, nor does it seek to revisit matters of principle, design quality, sustainability, accessibility, or broader policy compliance, all of which are addressed comprehensively within the submitted Design and Access Statement and supporting technical documentation. Those matters are understood to be acceptable in planning terms.

Instead, this statement concentrates on a single, specific issue, namely:

- Why additional floorspace is required to support the existing community function of the Centre.
- How the proposed extension enables improved internal organisation, safeguarding, and management of activities.
- Why the provision of additional space does not result in an increase in attendance, peak capacity, or overall intensity of use.

The Trustees' intention is not to expand the role of the Centre or to attract a greater number of users. Rather, the proposal is driven by the need to address well evidenced operational constraints within the existing building, which currently result in congestion, inefficient circulation, and the externalisation of secondary activities during peak periods. The extension is therefore best understood as a qualitative improvement to the functioning of the Centre, rather than a quantitative expansion of its capacity.

This statement should be read alongside all other submitted documents, and is intended to assist the Local Planning Authority in finalising its assessment of the application with particular regard to capacity, operation, and impact.

# 02

Quba Masjid and Education Centre is an established and long-standing community facility serving the local Islamic community in Hayes. The Centre currently accommodates a range of activities including daily prayers, religious education, after-school learning, youth engagement and community gatherings, all of which operate within a well-understood and consistent pattern of use.

Importantly, the operational capacity of the Centre is fundamentally defined by its principal prayer spaces, which determine attendance during peak periods such as Friday prayers and religious festivals. These spaces, their size, and their function are unchanged by the proposed development. The proposal does not enlarge prayer halls, introduce additional prayer facilities, or alter the established rhythm of worship that governs peak attendance levels.

The Centre's busiest periods are therefore already established and finite. Outside of these peak times, attendance levels are materially lower and activities are staggered throughout the day and evening. The Trustees actively manage programming to ensure that different user groups do not overlap in a manner that would increase intensity or cause conflict, particularly between worship, education and youth activities.

While overall attendance numbers have remained broadly consistent, the internal distribution of users within the building is currently constrained by the limitations of the existing layout and available ancillary space. As a result, secondary activities often compete for space, leading to internal congestion and, at times, the displacement of users into circulation areas or external spaces during busy periods. This issue relates to the functioning and management of the building, not to an absence of controls on capacity.

This baseline is critical to understanding the proposal. The Centre already operates at a known and managed capacity. The challenges it faces arise not from excessive numbers of users, but from the lack of appropriately sized and segregated internal spaces to accommodate different activities safely and efficiently within that existing capacity.

The following sections explain how the proposed extension directly addresses these operational shortcomings without increasing attendance, peak capacity or intensity of use.

# 03

The existing Quba Masjid and Education Centre has evolved incrementally in response to the needs of a growing and diverse community. While the building has successfully accommodated its core religious function, it is increasingly constrained in its ability to support the full range of educational, youth and community activities now taking place alongside worship.

The principal limitation of the current building is not its overall attendance, but the lack of adequate internal space to separate and manage different user groups and activities. Secondary functions such as after-school education, youth activities and informal community use are currently required to operate within spaces that were not designed to run concurrently with peak prayer activity. This results in competition for rooms, pressure on circulation areas, and reduced flexibility in how activities are scheduled and supervised.

During busy periods, these constraints can lead to congregation within circulation spaces and, on occasion, outside the building envelope. This is not a consequence of excessive numbers attending the Centre, but rather a symptom of an inefficient internal layout that does not provide sufficient ancillary and decant space to support existing patterns of use. In practical terms, the building is required to work harder than it was originally designed to, without the spatial tools necessary to do so effectively.

There are also safeguarding and management implications associated with this arrangement. The current configuration limits the Centre's ability to clearly separate age groups and activities, particularly where youth and educational uses overlap with general circulation or prayer-related movement. While these issues are actively managed by the Trustees, the physical constraints of the building reduce the effectiveness of those measures.

These operational shortcomings are well understood by the Trustees and form the primary driver for the proposed extension. The development is therefore not prompted by a desire to intensify use or expand the Centre's role, but by the need to resolve identifiable functional issues within the existing building so that it can continue to operate safely, efficiently and responsibly at its established capacity.

# 04

The proposed extension has been specifically designed to address the operational constraints identified within the existing building, rather than to facilitate an increase in attendance or expand the overall role of the Centre. The additional floorspace is required to improve how existing activities are accommodated, managed and supervised within the building envelope.

Currently, a range of secondary activities, including youth provision, evening education, and informal community use, must be accommodated within limited and often shared spaces. This results in sequential use of rooms, compressed timetabling, and congestion during periods when different activities overlap. The extension allows these functions to be decoupled from the primary prayer spaces, enabling them to operate in parallel rather than competing for the same areas.

The provision of additional, purpose-designed rooms allows activities to be distributed more evenly across the building and throughout the day. This reduces pressure on circulation spaces, minimises internal conflict between user groups, and significantly improves safeguarding and supervision. Importantly, it also reduces the need for users to wait or congregate outside the building during busy periods, thereby mitigating external impacts.

The extension does not introduce new uses or additional attractor activities. All functions accommodated within the proposed floorspace already take place within the Centre in some form. The role of the extension is to provide appropriate internal capacity for these existing activities so that they can be delivered safely, efficiently and in a managed manner.

In planning terms, the proposal represents an operational rebalancing of the building rather than an expansion of its capacity. Additional floorspace is used to resolve inefficiencies, not to accommodate additional users. This distinction is fundamental to understanding the proposal and underpins the Trustees' approach to both design and management of the extended Centre.

# 05

## BRL | CAPACITY & ATTENDANCE

For the avoidance of doubt, the proposed extension to Quba Masjid and Education Centre does not increase the operational capacity of the site, either in terms of peak attendance or overall intensity of use.

The maximum number of people attending the Centre at any one time is determined by the size and configuration of the principal prayer spaces. These spaces define capacity during the busiest periods, including Friday prayers and religious festivals. The proposal does not enlarge these areas, reconfigure them, or introduce additional prayer facilities. As such, the development does not alter the established upper limit on attendance.

Similarly, there is no proposal to extend opening hours, intensify the frequency of events, or introduce new uses that would draw additional visitors to the site. The Centre will continue to operate within its existing hours and under the same management framework that currently governs its activities.

The additional floorspace is not intended to accommodate more people, but to allow existing users to be distributed more effectively within the building. This enables:

- Reduced internal congestion.
- Improved segregation of activities and age groups.
- Longer dwell times for existing users without increasing footfall.
- Better supervision and safeguarding.

In practical terms, the extension allows the Centre to function more efficiently at its current capacity, rather than operate under spatial pressure. The proposal therefore results in no material change to the level of activity experienced at the site from a planning perspective.

This position is reflected in the Trustees' operational intentions and will be reinforced through ongoing management of the Centre. Where appropriate, the Trustees are content for this approach to be secured through suitably worded planning conditions to provide certainty to the Local Planning Authority.

# 06

The Quba Masjid and Education Centre is operated under the direct stewardship of its Trustees, who are responsible for the day-to-day management, programming and supervision of all activities within the building. These arrangements are well established and have successfully governed the Centre's operation for a number of years.

Activities within the Centre are carefully timetabled to avoid conflict between different user groups and to ensure that the building operates within its established capacity. Educational, youth and community activities are programmed around core prayer times, and staff and volunteers are present during busy periods to manage circulation, supervise access and ensure appropriate use of spaces.

The proposed extension strengthens these existing management arrangements by providing clearly defined, purpose-designed spaces that allow activities to be contained internally rather than spilling into circulation areas or external spaces. This improves the Trustees' ability to supervise and control use of the building and reduces the risk of unmanaged congregation during peak periods.

To further support this approach, a Site Supervision and Management Plan has been prepared and is submitted alongside the planning application. This document sets out in detail the operational framework under which the Centre will continue to function, including:

- Oversight and supervision during peak periods.
- Management of visitor movement within and around the site.
- Programming and scheduling of activities.
- Control of access to ancillary areas, including youth spaces and the roof terrace.
- Procedures to ensure safeguarding and minimise impact on neighbouring uses.

The Site Supervision and Management Plan formalises existing practices and demonstrates how the additional floorspace will be used to improve control and organisation rather than increase intensity of use. It provides further reassurance that the Centre will continue to operate responsibly and within its established capacity.

The Trustees are fully aware of their obligations to neighbouring occupiers and the wider area and are committed to maintaining compliance with existing planning conditions. Where considered appropriate by the Local Planning Authority, the Trustees are content for elements of the operational approach to be secured through suitably worded planning conditions.

# 07

## BRL | CONCLUSION

The proposed extension to Quba Masjid and Education Centre must be assessed in the context of its established and lawful community use and the operational challenges currently experienced within the existing building. The development does not seek to expand the role of the Centre, intensify its use, or increase attendance or peak capacity. Instead, it provides the internal space necessary to allow existing activities to function more effectively, safely and responsibly.

Any increase in floorspace is therefore qualitative rather than quantitative in planning terms. The proposal enables improved internal organisation, better safeguarding, reduced congestion and a reduction in unmanaged congregation during busy periods. These outcomes directly address issues that arise from the current spatial constraints and result in a more controlled and contained form of operation.

When weighed in the planning balance, the proposal delivers clear and demonstrable benefits, including improved management, reduced external impacts and enhanced community provision, without giving rise to material harm in terms of capacity, amenity or intensity of use. These benefits are reinforced through the submitted Site Supervision and Management Plan and the Trustees' willingness to accept appropriate planning conditions where necessary.

Taken as a whole, the development represents a proportionate and justified response to an identified operational need. It allows the Centre to continue serving its existing community effectively and sustainably, and provides a sound basis for the Local Planning Authority to finalise its assessment and recommend the application for approval.