

**Planning Statement re application for installation of parking barriers at Woodford Green United Reformed Church, High Elms, Woodford Green, IG8 0UP**

**Application reference number: 200595**

The Church has for decades managed to function well enough without the need for any barriers across the entrance and exit to the parking areas within its curtilage. However, in the last two/three years it has suffered from increased parking by people – residents and one business in particular - who have nothing to do with the Church or activities within it. The main attraction seems to be the opportunity to get free parking and avoid the parking restrictions imposed on adjacent streets by the local authority in keeping with policies to encourage more sustainable modes of travel. Whilst time and money has been spent on trying to identify those responsible for this persistent unauthorised parking the situation has not improved and the problem can only be satisfactorily dealt with by physical barriers.

Regular users of the premises during the week are frequently frustrated when no spaces are available and there is concern that some of the users will be forced to cease using the premises. This is particularly critical for the local blind club which brings in people by mini bus and needs to park next to the premises. As a site visit will demonstrate, the Church has limited parking for its congregation and hall users with lettings during week days and Saturdays. The size of the car park is not large enough to warrant employing a commercial parking company to police its occupation.

Also, access for emergency vehicles to Village Heights, a block of flats behind the Church building, is required on the right hand side of the site where there is also a pedestrian right of way to and from the flats and some parking for the residents. Existing arrangements for Village Heights would be maintained by a key/fob arrangement.

The Church is very mindful of the need to come up with a solution which minimises the impact on the appearance of the Church and the local area. Hence the proposal which is the subject of this application. Given the explanation and justification in the preceding paragraphs I hope that the Council will be able to consider the application favourably and enable the Church to continue being a valued community facility and parking provision maintained for users of the premises.

The proposed barriers would resemble



The following were taken by a hall hirer earlier in the year.



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