The following key points seem to have been raised in many of the objections.

Firstly disturbance to neighbours, more specifically 'being woken up' or 'sleep being disturbed'.  This application reduces the number of hours and time during which the centre will be in operation to those times for which consent has already been granted for its use.  This will remove any previous problems with late night or early morning use.  It seems that those objecting are either not aware of this or have forgotten to take it into account.  The impact of the proposed use will therefore be markedly reduced and the only complaints received by the council during the unauthorised use related to activities during those extended hours.

Secondly, there seems to be a misconception that the centre will change to a mosque. This is not so, as current activities (which have planning consent) will continue. There are suggestions that the centre be made into a youth club or similar. The centre currently offers activities for youth, as well as elderly people and adults and children both male and female. There is also the point that the proposal is not for empty, unused units; there is an existing use that is valued and beneficial, so there is no opportunity for considering ceasing those activities and creating solely a youth centre – which would effectively then deprive the existing users of their facilities. Those suggestions are therefore not pertinent to this application. It seems that those objecting are not clear on this.

Thirdly, no complaints have, we believe, been made concerning parking by users, over all the years that the centre has been there, including during the time of unlawful use and extended hours. It is clear that users have not caused a problem in this regard and it is very easy for objectors to make a general (unsubstantiated) statement. It is self-evident to anyone in the parade that there are a shoppers and suppliers coming and going which relate to parking. We have also offered to supply registration numbers of users of the centre if necessary and any cars being inconsiderately parked or causing other road traffic offences or problems, can be checked against users' details to establish whether there is any link between those problems and our visitors; rather than it being completely unrelated to our activities.

Finally, many people will object to the proposed use in isolation (i.e. just the mosque aspect) for personal reasons, rather than on planning grounds, then submit planning related comments knowing that their views would otherwise be rejected. We are not of course suggesting that all of the objections are such. The point we are making is that during the unlawful use – which occurred over several years - most of the reasons for objecting to this application were not raised, only evening/night and early morning disturbances. The objections which were not subject to former complaints about the centre's use may be considered questionable; especially as the proposed use removes the most sensitive times of use, and we believe, removes the cause of the historic objections to the centre's activities.

Kind regards,

Management