

Date: 12 March 2025
Application: 250543



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

WBC Highways

Development Management &
Compliance

P.O. Box 157

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Berkshire, RG40 1BN

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Dear WBC Highways,

Full Planning Approval Consultation

Application Number: 250543

Applicant: Muslim Community Connect Wokingham

Site Address: Unit 4, Winnersh Fields, Gazelle Close, Winnersh, Wokingham, RG41 5QS

Parish: Winnersh

Grid Reference: Easting - 477042, Northing - 171128

Type of Development: Other Change of Use

Proposal: Full application for the proposed change of use of the building to an Islamic education, worship and community centre (Use Class F1 and F2).

Case Officer: Connie Davis

Development Management has received the above application and we require your comments on the proposal using the recommended memorandum below. The documents associated with this are available to view in NEC DM using the application number 250543. Alternatively, public documents are available to view on the Council's planning application search page: [Wokingham Borough Council Online Planning](#).

Please index your response into NEC DM against the application. If you are recommending conditions, you should give a reason with reference to relevant policies. A list of standard conditions can be found on the Z Drive at: [Z:\Standard Planning Conditions](#).

Your observations are required in respect of this application within **10 working days** of the above date or **15 working days** if the development type is classed as a major development.

Yours sincerely,
Development Management & Compliance

MEMORANDUM

From:	JP		
Service	WBC Highways	App No:	250543
Address:	Unit 4, Winnersh Fields, Gazelle Close, Winnersh, Wokingham, RG41 5QS.		
Proposal:	Full application for the proposed change of use of the building to an Islamic education, worship and community centre (Use Class F1 and F2).		
Type of Development:	Other Change of Use		
Site Visit Made:	Yes/No		

Summary Of Recommendations

- ☐ No comment
- ☐ No objection
- ☐ No objection subject to conditions (and reasons) **stated below**
- ☒ Request further information before determination as **stated below**
- ☐ Objection due to the reason(s) **stated below**

Comments On Proposal

General

The applicant proposes to change the uses of existing office building (Use Class E) to a place of place of worship (Use class F1) and community centre (Use Class F2). The applicant proposes to utilise the existing floorspace of 398m², access and 14 no. of parking.

A Transport Scoping Note (TSN) is submitted in support of this proposal, which is welcome. However, in view of the nature of a full planning application, the Highways expect to review a Transport Statement which shall include an assessment on traffic impacts and Parking Management Plan.

Sustainability

Sustainability assessment has been provided within the TSN, which is welcomed. As the site has good access to well-lit and paved pedestrian and cyclist network, and is benefitted from the regular bus services circa 400m walking distance and regular train services within 600m throughout the week, the site is acceptable in terms of access to sustainable modes of travel.

Traffic Impacts

The event details of proposed site are provided, which are welcome. However, those details have only been considered for parking demand, without assessing the traffic impacts induced from the proposal.

The application form has stated that the site will open from 7am to 11pm daily. The applicant shall provide details on staff numbers and shift patterns, and clarify the details of general operations other than the scheduled events.

In section 3.2 of the TSN, the applicant suggests that the proposal will be the service relocation from Winnersh Community Centre, which is circa 3km from the proposed site. If the site intends to serve the same community, it is unreasonable to consider majority of trips as part of a local linked trip of current traffic needs and can be carried out through walking.

Access

The Highways have no objection to the retainment of existing access of the site.

Parking

The applicant proposes to utilise the 14 no. of existing allocated parking. The TSN has assessed the parking accumulation based on TRICS. As the site is a relocation of existing service, the applicant shall refer to the parking demand of current community services and adjust the parking demand after considering the traffic impacts as commented in the previous section.

Meanwhile, Ramadan prayer can end late at 9pm in winter and 11pm in summer, whereas the Sundays' bus services have ended before the events. The applicant shall assess the parking demand of the proposal with reference to the current operations at Winnersh Community Centre.

The applicant also suggests that many attendees opt for online classes, which reduces the numbers of attendees on-site. Unless justification can be provided, the proposal shall be assessed based on the business lifespan and assess the maximum demand of parking based on the maximum design capacity of attendees.

With some of the spaces to be occupied by staff, the estimation of less than 20% site users will drive appear to be very optimistic and impractical.

As there are regular events for up to 70 attendees, the Highways concern about the potential displacement of parking onto public highways, Gazelle Close in particular, due to shortage of on-site parking.

The applicant is required to submit a Parking Management Plan, to ensure no disturbance to the neighbouring business units and public highways. Whenever applicable, mitigation measures such as funding of TRO shall be proposed.

If the applicant might intend to utilise any unallocated parking spaces at the wider site, parking survey data shall be provided to verify the existing parking utilisation.

Cycle Provisions

According to the WBC Parking Standards, one short-term cycle parking allocation will be required per 15 per period visitors and one long-term allocation will be required per 5 staff. This has to be indicated on the site plan.

Refuse Collection Strategy

The applicant proposes to retain the existing refuse collection arrangement, which is acceptable.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Date:	13/3/2025	Signed:	JP
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