

PLANNING REF : 250543
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 29 Duffet Drive
: Winnersh, Wokingham, Bekshire
: RG415RZ
SUBMITTED BY : Mrs Mariya Rizwan
DATE SUBMITTED : 02/04/2025

COMMENTS:

I wholeheartedly support the proposal to repurpose the existing building in Winnersh into a mosque and community center. This initiative represents not only a place of worship but also a crucial resource for fostering exclusivity, cultural understanding, and social cohesion within our town.

The growing Muslim population in Wokingham, which has more than doubled from approximately 4,000 in 2011 to 8,600 today, underscores the necessity for a dedicated space to accommodate the community's spiritual and social needs. Many local Muslims currently travel considerable distances to attend prayers and community gatherings, leading to congestion at existing facilities and inconvenience for worshippers. The establishment of a mosque in Winnersh would significantly alleviate these issues, ensuring that residents have reasonable access to a place of worship.

Beyond its religious function, this proposed mosque will serve as a community hub, fostering engagement through educational programs, charity initiatives, and interfaith dialogue. The local Muslim community is an integral part of Wokingham, contributing significantly to various sectors such as healthcare (NHS workers), education, technology, and finance. Having a dedicated space will enhance the ability of Muslims to continue these contributions while also offering opportunities for cross-community collaboration and shared social values.

Some concerns have been raised regarding potential traffic, noise, and integration. However, the new mosque is designed with these considerations in mind. By providing a local prayer space, it will actually reduce travel congestion to other areas, thereby easing overall traffic burdens. Furthermore, the mosque will operate in a way that is respectful of its surroundings, with appropriate measures in place to manage parking and noise. The Muslim community has always sought to be responsible, engaged, and collaborative neighbors, and we remain open to constructive dialogue to address any issues.

This mosque will not only serve the needs of the Muslim community but will also enrich the wider Winnersh area, promoting exclusivity, mutual respect, and cultural diversity. I urge the council and fellow residents to support this proposal, recognizing the positive contributions it will bring to the community as a whole.