

PLANNING REF : 250543
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 40 Royals Avenue
: Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG40 4RG
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Israr Sieyal
DATE SUBMITTED : 27/03/2025

COMMENTS:

I am writing as a law-abiding UK resident who has lived in Finchampstead for nearly two years. I fully support the proposed change of use for Unit 4, Winnersh Fields into an Islamic education, worship, and community centre. This facility will provide essential services for the growing Muslim community while fostering inclusivity and cohesion. Additionally, it will create opportunities for educational and social engagement, promoting shared values of respect and understanding across the wider Wokingham community.

Based on the census data The Muslim population in Wokingham has nearly doubled from around 3000 in 2011 to 8,600 in 2022, yet infrastructure has not kept pace. Many local Muslims, including myself, must travel long distances, such as from Finchampstead to Reading, adding to congestion in existing mosque areas. A local centre will alleviate these pressures, better distributing worshippers and easing traffic concerns.

Traffic and parking concerns have been carefully considered. Measures such as staggered prayer times, carpooling, and agreements with neighbouring facilities for shared parking will be implemented. The centre is within walking distance of Winnersh train station, providing a sustainable travel option. Local bus routes also serve the area, reducing reliance on cars, and there is potential for shuttle services from larger parking areas like Park & Ride or commercial spaces, further mitigating congestion.

This facility will foster interfaith dialogue, educational visits, and community events that encourage cultural exchange and understanding. Like other places of worship, it will operate responsibly, ensuring minimal noise impact and working closely with neighbours to address any concerns.

By decentralizing places of worship, we can reduce congestion in overburdened areas while promoting integration and shared social values across Wokingham. This centre will be a valuable addition to the entire Wokingham community, addressing a growing need while implementing measures to minimize any concerns. I urge the planning committee to recognize its positive impact and support this application in the interest of community cohesion and sustainable urban development.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your positive response.