

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	251473
Site Address:	Mizuno House, 612 Reading Road, Winnersh, Wokingham, RG41 5HE
Expiry Date:	22 October 2025
Site Visit Date:	4 September 2025
Proposal: Full application for the proposed erection of a single storey extension with external staircase and first floor walkway ancillary to the Community Centre and Place of Worship following removal of existing external staircase plus changes to fenestration.	

PLANNING POLICY	
National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Core Strategy (CS)	CP1 – Sustainable Development CP2 – Inclusive Communities CP3 – General Principles for Development CP7 – Biodiversity CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development CC02 – Development Limits CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction CC07 – Parking CC09 – Development and Flood Risk CC10 – Sustainable Drainage TB21 – Landscape Character TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (JMWP)	DM1 - Sustainable Development DM3 - Protection of Habitats and Species DM9 - Protecting Health, Safety and Amenity DM10 - Flood Risk DM11 - Water Resources DM14 - Ancillary development DM15 - Site History
Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update (LPU)	C4 – Green and blue infrastructure and public rights of way C5 – Parking and electric vehicle charging ER6 – Town, district and local centres and shopping parades DH2 – Safeguarding amenity HC9 – Contaminated land and water
Other	<i>Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document</i>

	<i>CIL Guidance + 123 List</i> <i>Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document</i>
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PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
242663	Prior approval submission for the proposed installation of 260 no. PV Solar Panels measuring 114kW.	Prior Approval Not Required 26/11/2024
231077	Full application for the proposed change of use of existing office building to a Place of Worship and community centre.	Approved 01/08/2023

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Internal

WBC Environmental Health - No objection, subject to conditions.
WBC Drainage – No comments received.
WBC Landscape and Trees – No objection.
WBC Ecology – No comments received.

External

None.

REPRESENTATIONS

Parish/Town Council	No objection (comments also referenced the requirement for any future change of use to comply with relevant policy and gain appropriate approval).
Ward Member(s)	No comments received.
Neighbours	One letter noting the potential use of CCTV to deter fly-tippers and rodents.

APPRAISAL

Site Description:

Mizuno House is a two-storey office building with private car park to the rear. It is bound by Reading Road to the north with the vehicular access via Gazelle Close to the northwest. Reading Road is a designated Green Route Enhancement Area.

Permission 231077 approved the change of use of the building from offices to a Place of Worship and Community Centre. Works are currently being undertaken to implement the permission. The permission granted a change of use to a Sikh Gurdwara and community centre. The Gurdwara is more than a place of worship and provides a central hub to serve the whole community and is run on a voluntary basis.

The building is located approximately 0.3 miles east of the River Loddon and within Flood Zone 2.

Proposal:

This application seeks approval for the erection of a single-storey side extension and the relocation of the existing external staircase with access platform. The stairs and platform would provide a fire escape route from the first-floor. The proposed extension is required to provide a storage area for the community activities that will take place in the building. These include equipment such as gym/yoga mats, tables, chairs uniforms etc.

Principle of Development:

The National Planning Policy Framework has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. The Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policy CC01 states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site is located within settlement limits and as such the development should be acceptable providing that it complies with the principles stated in the Core Strategy. Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers.

Policy CP2 ensures that new development contributes to the provision of sustainable and inclusive communities (including the provision of community facilities) to meet long term needs. It states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that address the requirements of specific minority groups such as the Sikh community in the Borough (as well as ageing population, children, young people and families) which the Gurdwara supports.

The application site is located within settlement limits and would create space for the storage of equipment required for the activities run in the community centre and is therefore, acceptable in principle.

Character of the Area:

Mizuno House comprises a large two-storey building which is currently undergoing works under permission 231077. The site is bound by a mixture of other commercial and retail uses. To the southeast of the site is a plant hire business, to the rear is the carparking area for Halfords with the Halfords building directly northwest. CP3 of the Core Strategy states that proposals should be of an appropriate scale of mass, built form and character. The Council's Borough Design Guide (BDG) SPD gives advice on residential developments.

The proposed single-storey extension would be located along the southeastern flank wall of the building and would represent a subservient addition due to its single storey nature and set back position from the principal building line. The size of the extension would be proportionate to the main building and would measure approximately 36.5sqm. As existing, the northeastern corner of the site benefits from mature trees and hedging. An email from the planning agent (dated 28/08/2025) confirms that no trees will be affected by the proposal. Therefore, the existing soft landscaping would largely screen the development from public viewpoints on Reading Road and would

maintain the green features that contribute to the semi-verdant character of the local area.

The proposed materials for the extension include facing brickwork, uPVC fenestration to match the existing building and a GRP flat roof. The proposed materials would respond positively to the original building and would result in a seamless continuation of built form.

The proposal would also include relocating the existing external staircase approximately 2.8m to the rear of the rear wall of the proposed extension. The staircase would lead to a raised platform to provide access to the existing first-floor side door. The access would be used as a fire escape route. This would be a relatively minor change to the façade of the building and would not be obtrusive within the street scene by virtue of the existing soft landscaping along the front northeastern corner of the plot and its location to the rear of the main building.

In summary, the proposed extension would provide a storage area ancillary to the community centre with access stairs and ramp. The changes would not be out of character with the other commercial buildings and structures that surround the host building. The changes are considered to have a neutral impact on the street scene and would cause no detrimental impact to the character of the host building or local area.

Neighbouring Amenity:

Overlooking, Loss of Light & Overbearing:

Due to the location of the proposed development and significant separation distances from the nearest residential properties, there are no detrimental impacts of this nature that would arise from the proposal.

Flooding and Drainage:

The application site is in flood zone 2 according to Environment Agency mapping and defined as less vulnerable development. The proposed side extension would align with the floor level of the existing building and would be sited on land which is already laid with hardstanding. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) was submitted to support the application (Odyssey Developing Journeys, July 2025). Paragraph 5.2.8 of the FRA states:

“The proposed storage area extension is located within an area of fluvial floodplain, on the southeast face of the building, near the east corner of the site. As a result of this, it is proposed to introduce a compensatory storage area, located in the space in front of the building, which is located outside of the 1 in 100 year plus 20% climate change event flood extents, to mitigate the loss of flood storage”.

The FRA also includes an evacuation route that would ensure safe egress from the building to an area of higher ground. It is therefore reasonable and necessary to condition the flood mitigation measures outlined in the FRA.

Environmental Health:

The council's Environmental Health (EH) officer was consulted and raised no objection to the proposed development. They commented:

“The proposal relates to a modest single-storey extension and external alterations ancillary to the existing community and place of worship use.

The scale and nature of the development are limited, and no intensification of use or significant change in activity pattern is identified within the submitted documentation.

There is no record of historic land contamination affecting the site that would preclude the proposed works.

The proposed changes are unlikely to introduce any new significant noise sources or emissions, and construction-related impacts can be adequately managed through standard good practice measures.

Accordingly, there are no Environmental Health objections to this proposal.

However, the following advisory notes and standard conditions are recommended to ensure that potential short-term construction impacts are minimised and that the development does not adversely affect neighbouring amenity”.

In this instance, the EH officer has recommended conditions relating to construction hours, dust and noise, lighting and unexpected contamination. The conditions are reasonable and necessary in the interests of neighbouring amenity. However, as no lighting is proposed as part of the application, the lighting condition is not relevant to the development and as such, will not be applied.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

As the proposal is for a replacement external staircase and storage area, the proposed changes would not impact the function of the main building and is not expected to have any material impact on the approved parking or access arrangements. For permission 231077.

Landscape and Trees:

There are no protected trees on site and no trees that would be impacted by the proposed development. The council's Landscape and Trees officer was consulted and raised no objection to the proposal.

Ecology:

The application site is in an area suitable for bat roosts. The proposal does not propose any changes to the main roof; however, it will be necessary to include a bat informative to any grant of approval in the unlikely event that bats are encountered during the construction of the development.

Conclusion:

For the reasons set out above, and subject to conditions, the proposed development is acceptable as it accords with local plan policy and guidance.

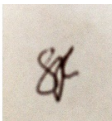
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): When planning permission is granted for a development that is CIL liable, the Council will issue a liability notice as soon as practicable after the day on which the planning permission first permits development.

Completing the assumption of liability notice is a statutory requirement to be completed for all CIL liable applications.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010): In determining this application the Council is required to have due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application and there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditions agreed:	Not required
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	
Earliest date for decision:	18 September 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	22.10.25

Planning Constraints:

Contaminated Land Consultation.

Green Routes and Riverside Path.

Bat Roost Suitability.

Major Development Location.

Great Crested Newts Consultation.

Flood Zone 2.
Historic Flooding Points.