

PLANNING REF : 250543
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 9 Robin Hood Lane
: Winnersh, Wokingham
: RG41 5LU
SUBMITTED BY : Doctor Imran Siddiqui
DATE SUBMITTED : 23/03/2025

COMMENTS:

I am writing to strongly support this proposal for a Muslim community centre in Wokingham. This facility is essential to serving the local Muslim community, particularly by providing access to much-needed education, worship and community-based services for both children and adults.

Currently, working families must travel across Reading, often facing heavy traffic, or even as far as Surrey to access quality educational or faith-based facilities. These centres are frequently oversubscribed, with long waiting lists, demonstrating the urgent demand for a local alternative.

At present, our community has no single dedicated space, leading us to rent multiple venues to accommodate our needs. Despite this, we have always been highly considerate of local neighbours and other facility users. A permanent centre would provide much-needed stability for our educational and religious activities while ensuring minimal disruption to the wider community.

The proposed location is ideal due to its excellent public transport links, including dedicated walking paths, traffic-light crossings, direct bus routes, park-and-ride facilities, and a nearby train station. While parking is often a concern, I have personally volunteered as part of a dedicated team to ensure responsible parking management that remains within local restrictions and prioritises consideration for neighbouring facilities and residents.

This proposal is in keeping with the multicultural character of Wokingham, particularly given the recent approval of a Sikh Gurdwara at 612 Reading Road. A Muslim community centre would further enrich the diversity of the area and provide a vital hub where our community can access essential resources.

Beyond religious and educational services, MCCW actively contributes to the wider local area through voluntary initiatives. MCCW has hosted events such as the Community Connect gathering, which welcomed organisations like the Wokingham Carers Partnership and featured educational talks on parenting children with additional needs. They also collaborate with various charities across Berkshire, supporting outreach efforts within our local community. Community events are open to all, fostering inclusivity and mutual understanding, with many non-Muslim families regularly participating.

A dedicated space would provide much-needed accessible facilities for our local community. I urge the council to approve this proposal, recognising its importance in meeting a vital local need.