

PLANNING ACCESS & DESIGN STATEMENT

FOR

**TRUSTEES OF
SIRI GURU SINGH SABHA READING**

ON

**PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY GROUND FLOOR
EXTENSION FOR EQUIPMENT STORAGE**

AT

**612 READING ROAD WINNERSH RG41 5HE
BERKSHIRE**

JUNE 2025

AMENDMENT (A) 26th AUGUST 2025



Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Site and Surroundings	3
3.	The Proposed Development	4
4.	Planning Policy Context	5
5.	Planning Assessment	7
6.	Summary and Conclusions	9

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Planning Statement is submitted to Wokingham Borough Council ('WBC') in support of a full application for a proposed single storey equipment storage extension at the former Mizuno House, 612 Reading Road, Winnersh, Wokingham ('The Site') which is currently undergoing change of use works from an office building (Use Class E) to a Gurudwara (Use Class F1(f)) and community centre (Use Class F2(b))
- 1.2. Planning Permission for the change of use was granted under reference 231077 by WBC on 1st August 2023 to Siri Guru Singh Sabha Trustees (the 'Applicant').
- 1.3. The description of proposed development is: "Full application for a 36.5 Sqm. gross (29 Sqm. net) area single storey extension for equipment storage ancillary to the community centre (Use Class F2(b)) and Place of Worship uses (Use Class F1(f))

Background

- 1.4. The proposal has evolved from the currently underway conversion works for the new Sikh Gurudwara & Community Centre and an established specific need.
- 1.5. Consideration of the proposed community activities has shown a considerable volume of equipment requirement for each identified activity. This includes specific items such as yoga / gym mats, tables, chairs, uniforms, AV kit and the like.
- 1.6. All these items shall need clearing away to safe and secure storage except that required for the activity happening at any one time. Hence the need for the proposed development. The presented design of the facility and its location, within the site, is considered to be the most appropriate to meet the identified need.

Application Documentation

- 1.7. Alongside this Planning Statement, the application is supported by the following plans and documents:
 - Application Form
 - Application Fee
 - Application Plans (inc. site location plan)
 - Community Infrastructure Levy Form

Structure of this Statement

- 1.8 The remainder of this statement is structured as follows:
 - Section 2: Describes the Site and its surroundings;
 - Section 3: Describes the Proposed Development;
 - Section 4: Sets out relevant planning policy context of the adopted Development Plan & NPPF
 - Section 5: Provides a planning assessment of the proposal through the pertinent considerations;
and
 - Section 6: Provides a summary and conclusions.

2. Site and Surroundings

The Site:

- 2.1. The whole Site boundary encapsulates approx. 0.35ha and is located to the west of Winnersh, along the Reading Road. It comprises a former office building known as 'Mizuno House' with associated access and parking. The building is currently undergoing conversion works to a community centre as per Planning Approval No. 231077.

- 2.2. The Site is bound to the north by Reading Road, to the east and south by an MOT and plant hire yard, and to the west by a retail and auto parts centre. Residential dwellings border the north side of Reading Road.
- 2.3. The Site is located within the settlement of Winnersh at approximately four miles south east of Reading Town Centre and about three miles to the north west of Wokingham.
- 2.4. The Government's flood mapping tool identifies the Site as wholly located within Flood Zone 2. A robust, high level, flood risk assessment was submitted in support of application 231077 some two years back. That report remains extant to date. Nevertheless an updated report No. 23-084, has been issued on 12th August 2025. This is submitted as part of the application with pertinent highlights.
- 2.5. The Site is outside any conservation area. No inclusion for it could be found in the Heritage England's Map listing heritage assets. So, it seems to be free of historical constraints that might preclude the proposed extension. Similarly, it is unconstrained from any ecological or landscape designations prohibiting such extension – sandwiched between the building east wall and the site boundary. This part of the Site is currently a dormant paved area, except for a staircase routing an emergency escape.

Surrounding Area

- 2.6 The immediate surrounding area comprises a mixture of commercial, retail and residential uses. To the west of the Site lies Winnersh Retail Park comprising 'Wickes', 'Halfords' & 'Pets at Home'. To the east is an MOT centre & a tool plant hire business. Residential properties line Reading Road on the north
- 2.7 The Site enjoys strong connections with Reading and Wokingham Centres. There are bus stops directly outside on the north, in both directions on Reading Road, for direct access into Central Reading & Bracknell respectively.
- 2.8 Winnersh Triangle railway station is located some 0.2 miles east of the Site, - a short 3 minutes' walk. This train-line provides links directly to Reading, Wokingham and London Waterloo.

Planning History

- 2.9 Checks at Wokingham Borough Council reveal the following planning history for the site:
- 2.10 Application No. 34046, for demolition of existing buildings and erection of new (B1) building of 1950 sqm. plus plant room and provision of 78 parking spaces, approved on 19 April 1990
- 2.11 Application No. 40073 for change colour of metal elements around main entrance to match white windows, approved on 22 Jan 1993.
- 2.6. Application No. 231077 for change of use of premises to community & place of worship use, approved on 1st August 2023.

3. The Proposed Development

3.1 This Statement Section summarises the proposed development for which planning permission is sought.

Description of Development

3.2 Full planning permission is sought for the following description of development:

"Full application for a 36.5 Sqm. gross, single storey extension for equipment storage ancillary to (Use Class E) a Place of Worship (Use Class F1(f)) and community centre (Use Class F2 (b))"

Overview

3.3 The place of worship & integrated social inclusion community centre uses at the site were approved under, Application No. 231077, by Wokingham Borough Council in August 2023, and internal conversion works for these are currently progressing on site. The extension proposal is totally subservient to these uses and do not seek to intensify them in any way. Changes to elevations on the

east zone shall be the minimum necessary & largely screened from the street scene by vegetation and / or fencing. No changes will incur to the existing parking.

The community activities within the main premises will be as fully described in Planning No. 231077 documents.

Design

3.4 The proposal seeks only to be ancillary to the previously approved lawful change of use of the building and with the minimal impact on the external appearance or scale or massing. In whole, it is limited to a single storey height from ground level on the backdrop of the existing double storey building.

Access and Parking

3.5 As the proposal is de-minimis in scale and totally ancillary and subservient to the main building function it is not expected to have any material impact on the existing / approved parking or access arrangements.

4. Planning Policy Context

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2001 (as amended) ('The Act') provides: "... the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan unless materials considerations indicate otherwise."

4.2 This Statement section identifies, as backdrop, the relevant national & local planning policies or guidance to consider the proposal for the set statutory test. Wokingham Borough Council are the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for The Site. Their relevant Development Plan documents in this case consist of the Core Strategy (January 2010) and the Managing Development Delivery Plan (February 2014).

4.3 Other material considerations include the following:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG); and
- Relevant adopted Supplementary Planning Documents.
- Core Strategy (2010)
- The Managing Development Delivery Plan (MDD) (2014)

4.4 Core Strategy (2010)

The Council adopted their Core Strategy in 2010 & relevant policies from that are set out below:

CP1: Sustainable Development

CP2 – Inclusive Communities

CP3 – General Principles for Development

CP7 – Biodiversity

CP9 – Scale and Location of Development Proposals

4.5 Managing Development Delivery Plan (MDD) (2014)

The Council adopted the MDD Plan in February 2014; policies considered relevant from it are set out below:

CC01 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC02 – Development Limits

CC03 – Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping

CC04 – Sustainable Design and Construction

CC06 – Noise

CC07 – Parking

CC09 – Development and Flood Risk

CC10 – Sustainable Drainage
TB23 – Biodiversity and Development
DM1 - Sustainable Development
DM2 - Climate Change – Mitigation and Adaptation
DM3 - Protection of Habitats and Species
DM7 - Conserving the Historic Environment
DM9 - Protecting Health, Safety and Amenity
DM10 - Flood Risk
DM15 - Site History
Other National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document
Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document

4.6 Community Infrastructure Levy

The Council introduced their Community Infrastructure Levy in February 2015. As the proposed development relates to a place of worship, there is a nil charge incurred.

4.7 Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) ('the Framework'):

4.8 The latest Framework update was published in Feb. 2025 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and their expected application. Although the NPPF is a high level strategic policy document there is clear & pertinent support to be found in various texts there-in for the proposal - particularly within:

Section 2 "Achieving sustainable development" Para. 8b

Section 3 "Plan-making" Para. 15

Section 4 "Decision Making" Paras. 39 & 48

Section 8 "Promoting healthy and safe communities" Paras. 96a, c; & 98 a, b

Section 12 "Achieving well-designed places" Paras. 131, 135 & 139

Section 15 "Conserving and enhancing the natural Environment" Paras. 187 d, e; 188; 192a, b; & 193d.

4.9 NPPF Para. 93 states that "planning decisions should plan positively for community facilities such as places of worship and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments."

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

4.10 The DCLG first published the Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG'), the web-based resource to reflect and support the NPPF on 6th March 2014; the advice there-in is updated on-line on a "category" basis. From the current information it appears the latest update was in April 2025 and only to the Planning Fee Rates. Otherwise the following categories of the NPPG are considered relevant to this proposal:

- Appropriate assessment
- Biodiversity net gain
- Community Infrastructure Levy
- Consultation and pre-decision matters
- Determining a planning application
- Effective use of land
- Healthy and safe communities

Supplementary Planning Documents

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (May 2010)

4.11 The Council adopted their Sustainable Design and Construction SPD on 28th May 2010. It provides an up to date and comprehensive approach to considering sustainable design & construction of new development.

4.12 It further states “The Council will encourage all developments to be built to higher standards than required at a regional or national level. The Council will encourage developers to set new standards of excellence. It is also important that the sustainable design aspects of applications be balanced with other LPA design guidance.”

Emerging Development Plan:

4.13 The Local Plan Update (LPU), the plan which will supersede the adopted Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery (MDD) local plans, is still at a consultative stage of preparation. It is considered therefore, at the time of writing, the LPU has limited weight in the decision-making process for this application.

5. Planning Assessment

5.1 This section of the Planning Statement assesses the proposed development against the adopted Development Plan and other material considerations as outlined in Section 4 of this Statement.

Principle of Development

5.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has an underlying presumption in favour of sustainable development which is carried through to the local Development Plan. Policy CC01 of the MDD Local Plan 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.

5.3 The development site is located in a major development area within the settlement boundary and as such, it should be acceptable providing that it complies with the policies of Wokingham Borough Council’s development plan.

5.4 Policy CP2 seeks that new development should “contribute 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 on the Borough (as well as ageing population, children, young people and families) which the Gurudwara supports.

Location

5.5 The Site is wholly located within the development limits of Winnersh (as identified by Policy CC02) which is also identified as a ‘Major Development Location’ within Core Strategy Policy CP9 that advises that development proposals will be acceptable in principle.

5.6 Notwithstanding this, the location of the extension to provide a small storage space is in response to the identified need in conjunction with the main usage of the premises but without intensification.

5.7 On the above basis, it is considered that proposal complies with the requirements of Policy CC02, CP9 and CP1 and the location of the site is considered to be appropriate and acceptable in principle.

Support for Community Facilities

5.8 The Core Strategy (CS), seeks to ensure that development addresses the needs of all community sectors via ‘the growth of ethnic / cultural mix within the population. The CS Vision reflects this: “all will have improved access to high quality services such as ...community facilities ...social wellbeing, health & quality of life’.

5.9 Criterion D of Policy CP2 sets out to grant planning permission for proposals that address the requirements of: ‘The specific identified needs of minority groups in the borough, includingminority ethnic groups.’

- 5.10 Criterion D (i and ii) provide the policy criteria that need to be addressed to demonstrate the acceptability of the proposals. The policy stated Circumstances for acceptable proposals are:
 (i) The site is located either within or close to development limits of a settlement in policy CP9
 (ii) The proposed site is not disproportionate to the scale of the existing settlement
- 5.11 The Site is located within the identified existing development limits as shown on the adopted policies. It is therefore considered to fully satisfy criterion (i) as stated above.
- 5.12 In regard to criterion (ii) of Policy CP2, the proposal is considered to comply as it seeks to facilitate the main building usage within the terms of scale, mass or height of current building.

Compliance with Policy CP3

- 5.13 On the basis of the above assessment and evidence of all supporting documentation, it is considered that the proposal complies with relevant development plan policies, and therefore acceptable in principle.

Technical Considerations, Design

- 5.14 This application seeks permission for a nominal 36 Sqm. extension within the context of existing building façade, scale, height, and massing.

Highway Access and Parking Provision:

- 5.15 These matters have been amply assessed, including via a full TRICS report by MODE, for the main site usage in Planning Application No. 231077. As noted before in this statement the proposal purely relates to the innately static storage of indoor equipment like furniture, gym mats and the like, when not in use. It is subservient & ancillary to the main building usage without activity intensification. Thus, apart from the initial purchase delivery, no added daily vehicle movements shall ensue directly from the extension.

Flooding and Drainage

- 5.16 Policy CC09 requires development proposals in Flood Zone 2 to take into account the vulnerability of the proposed development. Policy CC10 of the MDD states that all development proposals must ensure surface water arising from the proposed development including taking into account climate change is managed in a sustainable manner, and this must be demonstrated through a Surface Water Drainage Strategy.
- 5.17 A resilient flood analysis for the whole site was included in the FRA by Odyssey in spring 2023, for determination of the change of use application No 231077. Not only has that resilience been robustly re-examined for their updated report No. 23-084, issued on 12th August 2025, but it has also been shown that the proposal will comply with EA and WDC (MDD) requirements for flood water handling with a small nominal compensation volume. Odyssey's latest report is submitted as part of the application with the pertinent highlights.
- 5.18 Odyssey's findings are: that a part of the site, localized to the western boundary, is in Flood Zone 3. The non-residential institution' i.e. Gurudwara use is a 'less vulnerable use' for the purposes of Flood Risk. The proposed extension is at the east end of the site, in the shallower flood zone.
- 5.19 The total footprint of the proposed extension is circa 36 sqm; 18.8m², of which are *within the floodplain* is and the depth of existing flooding in that area is between 0.0m and 0.1m (as demonstrated in their Figure 5.6), therefore the maximum volume of compensation required is 2m³. This flood compensation volume can be provided in the area of soft landscaping situated between the northeast face of the building, and Reading Road, which is outside the current flood extents, and near to the proposed extension. This will ensure no increase to flood risk elsewhere as a consequence of the development. It is considered the proposal thus complies with the requirements of Policy CC09 and CC10

Character of the Area:

5.20 Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale, mass, layout, built form, height and character of the area and must be of high-quality design. Only the minimal essential alterations are proposed to the building elevations and all external materials shall match the existing... . The application is for a small single storey extension of 36 Sqm.

Neighbouring Amenity:

5.21 The extension building shall be only single storey height and be positioned approximately 27 metres from the neighbouring site at 580 Reading Road and over 64 metres from the site at 612 Reading Road (both are existing commercial sites). It will be almost totally obscured from no. 612. Officer's previous report for Application No. 231077 has considered these separation distances as satisfactory to ensure there are no overlooking, overbearing or loss of light impacts to the neighbouring sites.

Noise/Odours:

5.22 Policy CC06 of the MDD Local Plan states proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed noise impacts to protect noise sensitive receptors. The proposal purely relates to the innately silent and odourless storage function of indoor equipment like furniture, yoga mats and the like, when not in use. It is totally subservient and ancillary to the main building usage without intensification and so is in keeping with CC06

Landscape and Trees:

5.23 The site is located on a Green Route, The proposal does not affect any vegetation, which is all being retained. Indeed, the proposed extension shall be predominantly obscured by the vegetation from Reading Road street view.

Ecology & Bio-diversity Net Gain matters:

5.24 The development is for a 36 sqm. extension whose entire footprint shall be over a dormant pre-paved hard-standing area. No disturbance or changes shall occur to any soft ground, existing landscaping or vegetation areas. Therefore, it is considered the proposal is unlikely to impact on any protected species or biodiversity regime and falls under the *de-minimis* category – exempt from the *BNG* obligations all as per Statute. Indeed, as per Sikh faith teachings on the natural environment, a non-obligatory enhancement opportunity presents itself here for taking e.g. by providing a potted plant flat-roof garden, subject to suitable structural & weathering designs.

Other Matters:

5.25 There is an overhead HV cable on the neighbouring land at 580 Reading Road with an eleven meter (11 m.) calculated clearance at the nearest point of the extension building. The minimum electricity transmission regulation specified clearance for the highest power, 400kV, cables is 7.3 m. This presents a safety factor of nearly 1.6 over the minimum for the proposal which is therefore considered compliant for approval.

6. Summary and Conclusions

6.1 This Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of Siri Guru Singh Sabha Gurudwara, in support of a full planning application for the a single storey storage building.

6.2 The description of development is as follows: "Full application for a 36.5 Sqm gross (29 Sqm net) area single storey extension for equipment storage ancillary to the community centre use (Use Class F2(b)) and to the Place of Worship use (Use Class F1(f))"

6.3 The application is submitted in order to address an identified community need for this particular extension in this location. The site is situated in a sustainable and practical location

- 6.4 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is clear in requiring that planning applications should only be approved where they accord with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Council's development plan recognises the need for facilitation of community support projects / proposals, and evidence, overall, suggests the proposal would be compliant with the Core Strategy and MDD local plans.
- 6.6 The proposed extension is considered acceptable in principle and details. It would facilitate the practical and efficiently compliant use of the main building area for approved activities for natural social and economic benefits. A minimal front elevation change at eastern flank end shall be largely obscured by the existing large/dense tree vegetation which is all retained thus conserving the visible street scene intact. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the Development Plan
- 6.7 There are several requirements for due regard under the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010). Among the protected equalities are race, religion & belief. The application is submitted on behalf of the Board of Trustees from Siri Guru Singh Sabha Gurudwara Reading who are a religious organisation - Sikhism is a monotheistic religion. The application supports the Sikh community. Persons with protected characteristics as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular proposal. There shall be no significant adverse impacts from the proposal. Indeed positive equality impacts may arise there-of.