

PLANNING REF : 250543
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Mill Lane
:
: RG41 5DF
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Alp Oz
DATE SUBMITTED : 21/03/2025

COMMENTS:

I am writing to express my support for the proposed mosque in Winnersh, as it will serve as an essential community hub for many Muslim families in the area. This project aligns with the values of inclusivity, religious freedom, and community well-being, which should be upheld in planning decisions.

1. Meeting the Needs of the Community

The Muslim community in Winnersh and surrounding areas is growing, and there is a significant need for a dedicated place of worship and Islamic education. A mosque is not just a religious site; it serves as a center for community gatherings, educational programs, charitable activities, and social support. Currently, many families must travel long distances to access these essential services. The presence of a local mosque will enhance community cohesion and provide a safe and structured environment for children to learn and grow.

2. Addressing Noise Concerns

Concerns regarding noise pollution are often raised when places of worship are proposed. However, modern mosque designs incorporate soundproofing measures to ensure that prayers and gatherings do not disturb nearby residents. Additionally, calls to prayer (adhan) can be adjusted in volume or even broadcast internally to respect local noise regulations. In practice, many mosques successfully coexist within residential areas without causing significant disturbances.

3. Parking and Traffic Management

Parking concerns are legitimate, but they can be effectively managed through proper planning:

On-site Parking: The mosque can include dedicated parking spaces to accommodate worshippers.

Traffic Scheduling: Major prayer times, such as Friday prayers, can be coordinated to avoid peak traffic hours.

Carpool and Public Transport: Many attendees will carpool or use public transport, reducing the number of vehicles.

Community Coordination: Mosques often work closely with local councils to implement traffic management strategies, including marshals and designated parking zones.

4. Addressing Stereotypes and Discriminatory Comments

It is deeply concerning that objections to the mosque proposal include references to "grooming" and other negative stereotypes associated with Muslims. These statements are not only inaccurate but also harmful and discriminatory. Associating criminal behavior with an entire religious community is a clear form of prejudice and should have no place in public discourse. The planning committee must ensure that all objections are based on legitimate planning concerns and not on stereotypes or discriminatory viewpoints.

5. Promoting Diversity and Inclusion

The UK is a multicultural society where religious freedom is a fundamental right. Just as churches and synagogues exist to serve their communities, a mosque will enrich the cultural and religious diversity of Winnersh. Many towns and cities across the UK have successfully integrated mosques into their communities, leading to greater understanding and harmony among residents of different backgrounds.

Conclusion

The proposed mosque is a valuable addition to the community, offering religious, educational, and social benefits. Concerns about noise and parking can be mitigated through effective planning, and discriminatory objections should not be considered in the decision-making process. The council has an opportunity to uphold principles of inclusivity and fairness by approving this application.