

PLANNING REF : 250266
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 29
: Duffet Drive Winnersh, Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG41 5RZ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Rizwan Dastgir
DATE SUBMITTED : 02/04/2025

COMMENTS:

Response to the Objections for the Proposed Mosque (250543)

1. Adherence to Planning Policy & Legal Standards

The proposal has undergone a thorough review and complies with all relevant planning standards, addressing issues such as traffic, noise, and design. It meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Equality Act 2010, both of which uphold the right to establish places of worship as long as the necessary technical standards are met which is being taken care of in this instance.

2. Clarifying Misconceptions

Some critiques misinterpret the project's scale and intent. This facility is not a "megamosque" but rather a modest place of worship for the local Muslim community, with appropriate measures in place to manage parking and traffic, as detailed in the submitted reports. Fears of overdevelopment are misplaced; the design complements the character and diversity of the area. Importantly, this hub will enhance community cohesion by providing a dedicated space for Muslims, countering divisive sentiments reflected in some of the comments.

3. Enhancing Community Benefits & Social Integration

The mosque is envisioned as a center for prayer, education, and interfaith dialogue, which will further enrich Wokingham's cultural diversity. At present, many local Muslims must travel outside the area for worship, but this facility will ease congestion and promote inclusivity. To deny this application would contradict the council's commitment to fostering social cohesion.

4. Effective Traffic & Noise Management

Independent studies indicate that peak usage, such as during midday prayers, does not coincide with rush hour, and there are sufficient on-site parking provisions. Comparisons to larger mosques are not applicable here; this proposal offers a proportionate solution for local needs, with measures in place to minimize disruptions. Moreover, having a local hub is expected to reduce the overall carbon footprint in Wokingham by encouraging walking and car-sharing.

5. Commitment to Ethical and Fair Planning

Planning decisions should be based on substantive factors rather than prejudice. Wokingham has a reputation as an inclusive community, and approving this application would affirm those values. The social, spiritual, and practical benefits of the mosque significantly outweigh the unsubstantiated objections raised.

6. Reference to Similar Application

I would like to highlight that a similar planning application (231077) have recently been approved at the nearby location which give strong message of inclusiveness. I therefore strongly urge

Wokingham council to use the same grounds to get this application approved as well. Establishing a local hub is vital not only for the Muslim community but also for promoting a unified, diverse, and supportive environment values that are shared across all ethnic groups in the area