

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application Number:	252943
Site Address:	Mizuno House, 612 Reading Road, Winnersh, Wokingham, RG41 5HE
Expiry Date:	30 January 2026
Site Visit Date:	8 December 2025
Proposal: Application for advertisement consent for the proposed erection of a flagpole mast within front courtyard with insignia.	

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS/STATUS

- Not within a Conservation Area or near a listed building.

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)
MDD Local Plan (MDD)	TB19 – Outdoor advertising
Other	Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document – Section 7

PLANNING HISTORY

Application No.	Description	Decision & Date
251473	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.	Approved 22/10/2025
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

WBC Conservation (if applicable)	NA
WBC Highways	No objection.

Winnersh Parish Council

No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

No public consultation is undertaken for advertisement consent applications.

APPRAISAL

Introduction:

Pursuant to the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007, the display of outdoor advertisements can only be controlled in the interests of 'amenity' and 'public safety'.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at paragraph 132 states that poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment.

Policy TB19 of the adopted MDD states that the Council will only permit outdoor advertisement where there is no adverse impact on highway safety, no harmful impact on the amenity of adjoining land uses and no harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area. In this instance, Policy TB19 of the MDD would be treated as a material consideration.

Site Description:

The site comprises a former office building known as Mizuno House with associated access and parking and forms part of the Winnersh Retail Park. 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 consent for the erection of one flagpole for the display of the Sikh faith ensign at the Sikh Gurdwara and Community Centre. The flagpole would measure approximately 14.65m in height and would be located to the front of the building.

The proposal complies in terms of:

Impact on amenity: (including impact on heritage assets, where applicable)



Impact on public safety:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Relevant policies:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Impact on Amenity and Character: Policy TB19 of the adopted MDD states the following: <i>‘The Council will only permit outdoor advertisements where they demonstrate:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) There is no adverse impact upon highway safety</i> <i>b) There is no harmful impact on the amenity of the adjoining land uses</i> <i>c) There is no harmful impact on the character or appearance of the area.’</i> <p>The proposed flagpole would be located on land to the front of the host building adjacent to the road. The site was granted permission (231077) on 01/08/2023 for a change of use of the building from an office building to a Place of Worship and community centre. The ground floor provides space for a community kitchen and community uses and the first-floor space for worship and prayer services.</p> <p>The Planning Practice Guidance for advertisements states <i>“in assessing amenity, the local planning authority would always consider the local characteristics of the neighbourhood: for example, if the locality where the advertisement is to be displayed has important scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features, the local planning authority would consider whether it is in scale and in keeping with these features”</i>.</p> <p>The area surrounding the site comprises a mix of commercial and retail uses; To the west lies Winnersh Retail Park comprising Pets at Home, Halfords and Wickes. To the south and east of the site is an MOT centre and tool plant hire business. The northern side of Reading Road consists of mainly residential properties.</p> <p>The flagpole would not be out of character within the established retail park environment. The surrounding area is characterised by large-scale commercial and retail development, extensive areas of hardstanding supplemented with trees and shrubs, and a variety of free-standing advertisement signs, totem pole style boards, lighting columns and retail branding. As such, the visual context is one of moderate to high visual activity, with built form and signage designed to be legible from the adjacent Reading Road.</p> <p>The proposed flagpole, while tall, would be read in the context of the existing vertical elements and would not appear incongruous or overly dominant within the street scene. Its siting to the front of the building reflects its functional and cultural role and ensures it is visually associated with the place of worship rather than appearing as a standalone feature.</p> <p>In addition, the flagpole would be viewed against the backdrop of mature trees along the site frontage, which would soften its appearance and reduce its prominence in longer-distance views. The slender form of the pole further limits its visual mass when compared with nearby signage structures.</p>	

The flagpole would be set back from the front boundary by approximately 7m and approximately 10.5m from Reading Road. There would be no adverse highway safety concerns generated by the proposal. WBC Highways were consulted and raised no objection to the proposal and commented:

“It is understood that the proposal will not generate additional traffic or parking demand and has no impact on highway use. The flag and mast are unlikely to cause an intensification of use of the site.

The location of the mast/flag does not interference with vehicle or pedestrian access or parking. The mast location does not obstruct traffic signs or create hazards. There are no implications for other transport modes.

It is assumed that the mast will predominantly be upright and therefore will not affect parking or the footway. It is noted that the mast will be erected/lowered within the site boundary.

When the mast is lowered, it encroaches on the footway and obstructs the parking area. The applicant confirms that the ceremonial mast lowering will only be a maximum of 2-3 annual events. Highways would expect these events to happen only during flag changing and maintenance. This is acceptable given the low frequency of the events. The mast shall be restored to its upright position without delay following the completion of the flag changing / maintenance.

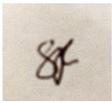
WBC Highways consider the proposed works acceptable”.

Overall, it is considered that the flagpole would integrate satisfactorily within the wider retail park setting and would not result in unacceptable harm to the appearance of the area. It would respect the prevailing character of the area, would not generate any adverse impact upon highway safety. The proposal is therefore considered compliant with MDD Local Plan Policy TB19 and Section 7 of the BDG.

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, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief. 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	
Recommendation:	Approve
Date:	23 January 2026
Earliest date for decision:	28 December 2025

Recommendation agreed by: (Authorised Officer)	
Date:	26.1.26