

PLANNING REF : 250543
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Woodrow Drive
: Wokingham, Berkshire
: RG40 1RT
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Sohaib Shaheed
DATE SUBMITTED : 28/03/2025

COMMENTS:

I am writing to express my support for the proposed Islamic education and community centre at Unit 7, Winnersh Fields.

Having studied the application documents, I note that thorough assessments have been provided addressing concerns about transport, traffic, parking and flood risk. The proximity to the recently approved Gurdwara, rather than being a problem, presents an opportunity for positive community collaboration. The successful example of Aisha Masjid and the Gurdwara on London Road shows how thoughtful coordination can actually reduce overall traffic impact and enhance community cohesion.

While secure access within the business park may require additional work, I'm confident practical solutions can be implemented.

I ask the committee to consider this application not only on its immediate merits but also in the context of diversity, inclusion, and integration. The Muslim faith's requirement for five daily prayers (which are preferred in congregation) are met more appropriately by local, smaller facilities such as the one this application represents. This proposal for a modest facility is well-suited to meet this specific need for Winnersh and surroundings. The facility's size and location is quite practical from a carbon emissions point of view, reducing longer travel distances and time for those within a 2-3 mile radius. This will also reduce burden on larger nearby venues during the regular prayer times, and the local crowds will only need to head to those facilities during less frequent but more sizeable gatherings such as Eid and Ramadan night prayers.

This application represents an opportunity to demonstrate how careful planning and community collaboration can create successful, integrated community spaces that meet the diverse needs of our growing population.

I thank the planning committee for their consideration and the wider public for their comments, some of which clearly highlight areas where communities need to be considerate and careful.