

PLANNING REF : 252498  
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 5 Lincoln Close  
: Winnersh, Wokingham, Berks  
: RG41 5SZ  
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Andrew Westwood  
DATE SUBMITTED : 06/01/2026

COMMENTS:

I understand that Mr Nathan Hunt (pastor of Shinfield Baptist Church), with others, has submitted a proposal to include a church in the plans for the Loddon Garden Village development. I would like to support their proposal for the following reasons, and ask Wokingham Borough Council to provide a site and funding, at least in part, for such a church:

In a community the size of this development, there are, statistically, likely to be around 1200 regular church attenders. If there is no local church, people are likely to travel to a church in one of the surrounding areas, leading to increased car use and carbon footprint, quite apart from which many local churches which people may wish to attend are already over-subscribed or heading in that direction.

A church will provide spiritual, social, and mental health benefits to all regular attenders, as well as others who may be served by the church in the context of the community. Churches see themselves as servants to the whole community, and offer benefit as they can to those around. My own church offers emergency food supplies, help with benefit claims and other legal issues encountered by people who may be ill equipped to handle such things themselves, space to have meetings and enjoy sports, a place for parents and toddlers to meet rather than be in isolation, youth work, seniors' meetings, help and counselling on an individual basis; and bed for the night, a service in the winter months to provide shelter overnight for people who have no accommodation. In this way a church will foster social cohesion and a sense of community in such a development as Loddon Garden Village.

In England and Wales 56.4% of people consider themselves "religious", and 46.2% consider themselves Christians (derived from ONS census 2021). In a development the size of LGV, this is too big a slice of the population to ignore. Moreover, in England and Wales the church has grown at a rate of 56% in the last 6 years (Bible Society, "The Quiet Revival" study), so current trends indicate that the need for a local church seems more likely to increase than decrease.