

PLANNING REF : 261121
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Waterloo Rd
: Wokingham
: RG40 3BY
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Owen Hayward
DATE SUBMITTED : 24/06/2026

COMMENTS:

As a representative of a group of around 120 people who use the centre on a weekly basis, I would like to strongly oppose this planning application.

The stated aim of the works is to "support long-term community use of the site". However, in my view, the proposals will achieve the opposite. No consideration appears to have been given to, nor consultation undertaken regarding, the impact on what is certainly one of the largest regular community uses of the site.

The plans submitted are not representative of the full extent of the works being undertaken, nor do they acknowledge that approximately one-third of the building will no longer be available for community use.

A substantial portion of the right-hand side of the building is being converted into a "Care Leavers Support Hub", with exclusive access granted to that area. As a result, this space will be removed from community use altogether. In my view, the council has a sufficient portfolio of vacant properties within the town that they could have accommodated this new support hub elsewhere, thereby avoiding the costly and disruptive reconfiguration of the Youth Centre.

The proposed works will displace a growing church community of approximately 120 people, including a significant number of children and young people. With few, if any, other suitable lettable spaces available in the town, this redevelopment threatens the continued viability of an established and growing faith community.

Furthermore, the Community Involvement Statement accompanying the application states: "Given the minor scale of the works and their operational nature, formal public consultation has not been undertaken; however, the proposals are considered to deliver clear community benefits with no adverse impacts on neighbouring properties or users."

This statement is simply untrue. The works are not minor in scale, and they will have a significant adverse impact on existing users of the centre.

The proposed works will cause ongoing disruption to centre users for at least four months and, in some cases, will result in users losing access to the centre entirely.