

**Tally Ho Public House, Fleet Hill, Eversley, Hook, RG27 0RR**  
**Brunning & Price**

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**PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT**  
**PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE FROM VACANT FIELD**  
**TO WILDLIFE EDUCATIONAL GARDEN**

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# 1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Planning Support Statement has been prepared to accompany an application for planning permission for the formation of a wildlife educational garden on grounds within the ownership of the Tally Ho Public House, Fleet Hill, Eversley, Hook, RG27 0RR.

1.2 The Statement is set out in six sections and comprises:

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Site Description & Surrounding Area

3.0 Proposals & Planning History

4.0 Relevant Planning Policies

5.0 Assessment of Planning Issues

6.0 Summary

## 2.0 Site Description & Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The application site comprises part of the grounds of a public house, located on the edge of the village of Eversley. The public house trades under the name of the Tally Ho. The public house benefits from extensive grounds, some of which are used as pub garden and customer parking areas. In addition, there are two large fields to the east, bounded by mature trees.
- 2.2 The application site lies within the designated countryside. Part of the site lies within Flood Zone 3 and part of the site lies within Flood Zone 2. Part of the site is also designated as a Local Wildlife Site. The application site also lies within the designated Archaeological Site 51.
- 2.3 The local area is characterised by a mixture of residential properties, some businesses and open countryside.

## 3.0 Proposals & Planning History

- 3.1 This planning application proposes the formation of a wildlife educational garden on grounds within the ownership of the Tally Ho Public House. The area of the public house grounds affected comprise the two large fields to the east, bounded by mature trees.
- 3.2 Ecological enhancements and additional landscaping are proposed within the wildlife educational garden area, building upon the existing ecology and landscaping of this area. The wildlife educational garden is intended to be used by customers of the public house as an area to explore and be educated on local wildlife, flora and fauna.
- 3.3 Additional planting is proposed to create a mixed orchard, a wildflower meadow and native shrub beds, including food producing native shrubs. In addition to the new planting attracting birdlife and invertebrates, round log poles, bird and bat boxes and public ecological information boards are proposed to be installed, to both enhance the biodiversity and ecological value of these grounds and also to provide ecological information and education to customers and visitors to these grounds.
- 3.4 The wildlife educational garden would provide an additional customer offer at this public house site, and customers would be offered the option of availing of picnic hampers and picnic blankets/folding chairs by the public house staff, to enhance their enjoyment and stay within the wildlife educational garden area. The application proposals are detailed in the accompanying application drawings and details.
- 3.5 The application site has been the subject of several past planning applications for extensions, alterations and signage. The most recent past application was for the same development as currently proposed, submitted in April 2025 and withdrawn in May 2025 following delays in production of requisite technical statements (LPA Ref: 260863).

## 4.0 Relevant Planning Policy

### December 2024 Framework

- 4.1 The December 2024 Framework reiterates the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11) which requires development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan to be approved without delay. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless in conflict with the December 2024 Framework. The December 2024 Framework also requires LPAs to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and to work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible (all paragraph 39).
- 4.2 The December 2024 Framework requires planning policies and decisions to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development (paragraph 85).
- 4.3 The December 2024 Framework requires planning policies and decisions to promote social interaction and opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other (paragraph 96). The December 2024 Framework adds that in order to provide the social and recreational facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces and meeting places, such as public houses (paragraph 98).
- 4.4 The December 2024 Framework states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, amongst others, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and minimising impacts on, and providing net gains for, biodiversity (paragraph 187). To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity (paragraph 192).
- 4.5 The December 2024 Framework adds that when determining planning applications, LPAs should apply 4 principles. The fourth of these states:

*development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate (paragraph 193).*

#### **Development Plan Policies**

- 4.6 The Development Plan for the application site comprises the Wokingham Borough Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document of January 2010 and the Wokingham Borough Development Plan Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan of February 2014.
- 4.7 Core Strategy Policy CP1 addresses sustainable development. This states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment.
- 4.8 Core Strategy Policy CP3 concerns the general principles for development. This states that planning permission will be granted for proposals that: are of an appropriate scale of activity without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users and their quality of life; have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape or geological features; maintain or enhance the ability of the site to support fauna and flora, including protected species; and use the full potential of the site and contribute to the support for suitable complementary facilities and uses.
- 4.9 Core Strategy Policy CP7 covers biodiversity. This states that sites designated as of importance for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted. Development which may harm county designated sites, including Local Wildlife Sites, whether directly or indirectly, or which may harm habitats or species of principle importance for nature conservation, veteran trees or features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna, whether directly or indirectly, or that compromises the implementation of the national, regional, county and local biodiversity action plans will only be permitted if it has been clearly demonstrated that the need for the proposal outweighs the need to safeguard the nature conservation importance.
- 4.10 Core Strategy Policy CP11 addresses proposals outside of development limits (including the countryside). This states that, in order to protect the separate identity of settlements and maintain the quality of the environment, proposals outside of development limits will not normally be permitted, except where, amongst others, it contributes to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough or it contributes and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside.
- 4.11 Managing Development Delivery Policy CC01 reiterates the Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development.

- 4.12 Managing Development Delivery Policy CC03 addresses green infrastructure, trees and landscaping. This policy requires development proposals to: provide new or protect and enhance the Borough's green infrastructure networks; protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features; and incorporate high quality, ideally, native planting and landscaping as an integral part of the scheme, amongst others. Development proposals within river valley areas should improve or contribute towards the establishment of a Loddon/Blackwater riverside footpath and bridleway and use opportunities for improvements to green infrastructure to help minimise flood risk.
- 4.13 Managing Development Delivery Policy CC09 covers development and flood risk (from all sources). This policy states that all sources of flood risk, including historic flooding, must be taken into account at all stages and to an appropriate degree at all levels in the planning application process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding. Development proposals in Flood Zones 2 or 3 must take into account the vulnerability of proposed development. Where required, suitable and appropriately detailed flood risk information will need to accompany a planning application. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required for all proposals in areas of known historic flooding from all sources and where there is evidence of a risk from all sources of flooding identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
- 4.14 Managing Development Delivery Policy TB18 concerns garden centres and other small rural units outside development limits. This states that planning permission for proposals for the establishment or expansion of retail development outside development limits may be permitted where they demonstrate that the proposal is connected to or adjacent to the primary holding, the proposal is economically related to the primary holding and is ancillary to the primary existing use and there would be no adverse impact on the vitality or viability of retail centres, neighbourhood or village shops within the locality.
- 4.15 Managing Development Delivery Policy TB21 covers landscape character. This policy states that proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment, including the landscape quality; landscape strategy; landscape sensitivity and key issues, and proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.
- 4.16 Managing Development Delivery Policy TB23 addresses biodiversity and development. This policy states that planning permission for development proposals will only be granted where they comply with policy CP7 – Biodiversity of the Core Strategy and also demonstrate how they: provide opportunities, including through design, layout and landscaping to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing; provide appropriate buffer zones between development proposals and designated sites as well as habitats and species of principle importance for nature conservation; and ensure that all existing and new developments are ecologically permeable through the protection of existing and the provision of new continuous wildlife corridors, which shall be integrated and linked to the wider green infrastructure network.

- 4.17 Managing Development Delivery Policy TB25 concerns archaeology. This states that areas of high archaeological potential are shown on the Policies Map and in such areas of high archaeological potential, applicants will need to provide a detailed assessment of the impact on archaeological remains. Where development is likely to affect an area of high archaeological potential or an area which is likely to contain archaeological remains, the presumption is that appropriate measures shall be taken to protect remains by preservation *in situ*. Where this is not practical, applicants shall provide for excavation, recording and archiving of the remains.

## 5.0 Assessment of Planning Issues

- 5.1 At present, these parts of the grounds of this public house, proposed for the formation of a wildlife educational garden, are unused and not accessible to the public. Their true ecological value is considered to be limited, with species diversity, in both flora and fauna, also limited. In effect, the area of land concerned simply comprises two large, grassed fields, bounded by mature trees. It is considered that the ecological value of these grounds would be enhanced by the proposed works contained within this planning application.
- 5.2 Ecological enhancements and additional landscaping are proposed within the wildlife educational garden area, building upon the existing ecology and landscaping of this area. Additional planting is proposed to create a mixed orchard, a wildflower meadow and native shrub beds, including food producing native shrubs. In addition to the new planting attracting birdlife and invertebrates, round log poles, bird and bat boxes and public ecological information boards are proposed to be installed, to both enhance the biodiversity and ecological value of these grounds and also to provide ecological information and education to customers and visitors to these grounds.
- 5.3 The wildlife educational garden is intended to be used by customers of the public house as an area to explore and be educated on local wildlife, flora and fauna. The wildlife educational garden would provide an additional customer offer at this public house site, and customers would be offered the option of availing of picnic hampers and picnic blankets/folding chairs by the public house staff, to enhance their enjoyment and stay within the wildlife educational garden area.
- 5.4 There are therefore considered to be two principal benefits arising from the application proposals. Firstly, the ecological value and public accessibility of these grounds would be enhanced. Secondly, the proposals would provide some modest additional support and increased customer attraction for the established rural enterprise of the public house itself, building upon its excellent reputation for food.
- 5.5 The application proposals are considered to directly be supported by the aspirations of the December 2024 Framework and the relevant Development Plan policies that seek to protect and enhance local wildlife, biodiversity, landscape and ecology. The enhancement of the local and natural environment, together with the provision for net gains to biodiversity, are encouraged by paragraph 187 of the December 2024 Framework. Paragraph 192 of the December 2024 Framework specifically promotes the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species, together with opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. Paragraph 193 of the December 2024 Framework directly supports the conserving or enhancement of biodiversity. These key, relevant, requirements of the December 2024 Framework are specifically supported by the application proposals and the ecological enhancements that would result.

- 5.6 In terms of local policy, Core Strategy Policy CP1 supports development proposals that maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment. Core Strategy Policy CP3 supports proposals that maintain or enhance the ability of a site to support fauna and flora, including protected species.
- 5.7 Core Strategy Policy CP7 specifically resists proposals that cause harm to biodiversity and, by default, therefore supports proposals which, instead, enhance biodiversity.
- 5.8 Managing Development Delivery Policy CC03 requires development proposals to provide new or protect and enhance the Borough's green infrastructure networks; protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features; and incorporate high quality, ideally, native planting and landscaping as an integral part of the scheme.
- 5.9 Furthermore, Policy CC03 states that development proposals within river valley areas should use opportunities for improvements to green infrastructure to help minimise flood risk.
- 5.10 Managing Development Delivery Policy TB21 requires proposals to retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.
- 5.11 Managing Development Delivery Policy TB23 requires proposals to provide opportunities, including through landscaping, to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing; and ensure that all existing and new developments are ecologically permeable through the protection of existing and the provision of new continuous wildlife corridors, which shall be integrated and linked to the wider green infrastructure network. These key, relevant, requirements of the Development Plan policies are also specifically supported by the application proposals and the ecological enhancements that would result.
- 5.12 Since the applicant took over the site, this public house has become a valued and important local community facility. The public house is an important local, rural, community facility that attracts visitors to the area, supports the local economy and is a significant employer. It is reiterated that the proposals would provide some modest additional support and increased customer attraction for the established rural enterprise of the public house itself, building upon its excellent reputation for food. The proposed wildlife educational garden facility would provide an additional customer offer and attraction for this rural public house. Support for such social and community enterprises is explicit within the December 2024 Framework.
- 5.13 Paragraph 96 of the December 2024 Framework promotes social interaction and opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other. Paragraph 98 of the December 2024 Framework adds that in order to provide the social and recreational facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces and meeting places, such as public houses.

- 5.14 These key, relevant, requirements of the December 2024 Framework are specifically supported by the application proposals and the enhanced viability and attraction of this established and valued rural social and community facility that would result.
- 5.15 In terms of local policy, Core Strategy Policy CP3 encourages the use of the full potential of a site and supports proposals which contribute to the support for suitable complementary facilities and uses.
- 5.16 Core Strategy Policy CP11 supports proposals that contribute to diverse and sustainable rural enterprises within the borough or contribute to and/or promotes recreation in, and enjoyment of, the countryside.
- 5.17 Managing Development Delivery Policy TB18 addresses small rural businesses, such as garden centres and other small rural units. The aspirations of this policy are considered to be of relevance to the continued viable operation of this rural public house.
- 5.18 Policy TB18 states that proposals for the establishment or expansion of retail development outside development limits may be permitted where they demonstrate that the proposal is connected to or adjacent to the primary holding, the proposal is economically related to the primary holding and is ancillary to the primary existing use and there would be no adverse impact on the vitality or viability of retail centres, neighbourhood or village shops within the locality. These key, relevant, requirements of the Development Plan policies are also specifically supported by the application proposals and the enhanced viability and attraction of this established and valued rural social and community facility that would result.
- 5.19 In terms of potential local amenity implications, the proposed wildlife educational garden is considered to be a modest proposal, which is of an appropriate scale and complementary in nature to the established public house use of this site.
- 5.20 Core Strategy Policy CP3 supports proposals of an appropriate scale of activity which do not result in a detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users and their quality of life and have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape or geological features.
- 5.21 The requirements of Policy CP3 are considered to be met by the application proposals, given their appropriate nature and scale. No harm to local amenities is therefore considered to result.
- 5.22 In terms of the flood risk nature of the site, none of the proposed works will reduce the contribution of this part of the site to the local flood plain. The application proposals include no built development nor impervious surfacing. In addition, the proposed planting and ecological enhancements would help better manage and minimise flood risk, through helping to slow the flow of flood waters over the site and increase the water percolation and evapotranspiration abilities of this site.

- 5.23 In the event of a flood warning being issued, customer and visitor use of the wildlife educational garden would cease, and staff would prevent access to this part of the site. Consequently, there would be no increase in the numbers of those put at risk of flooding and no implications for any increase in the risk of flooding elsewhere. Indeed, the application proposals may help modestly reduce this flood risk.
- 5.24 Managing Development Delivery Policy CC03 specifically states that development proposals within river valley areas should use opportunities for improvements to green infrastructure to help minimise flood risk. The application proposals would directly assist this policy aspiration at this site.
- 5.25 Furthermore, it is also considered that the reasonable requirements of Managing Development Delivery Policy CC09 are met by the application proposals, given that the proposed wildlife educational garden will be managed to take into account the flooding vulnerability of the site. A flood risk assessment accompanies the planning application.
- 5.26 In terms of the archaeological value of the site, the application proposals include no built development nor below ground excavations. It is therefore considered that the archaeological potential of the site would be preserved, unaffected, by the application proposals. Consequently, there is considered to be no conflict with the requirements of Managing Development Delivery Policy TB25.
- 5.27 In conclusion, it is therefore considered that the proposed formation of this wildlife educational garden is directly supported by the December 2024 Framework (including, specifically, paragraphs 96, 98, 187, 192 and 193); Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3 and CP11; and Managing Development Delivery Policies CC03, TB18, TB21 and TB23.
- 5.28 Furthermore, it is considered that the proposed wildlife educational garden does not conflict with the requirements of Core Strategy Policies CP3, CP7 and CP11; and Managing Development Delivery Policies CC03, CC09 and TB25. In accordance with the December 2024 Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development, reiterated by Managing Development Delivery Policy CC01, this application should be approved without delay.

## 6.0 Summary

- 6.1 At present, these parts of the grounds of this public house, proposed for the formation of a wildlife educational garden, are unused and not accessible to the public. Their true ecological value is considered to be limited, with species diversity, in both flora and fauna, also limited.
- 6.2 Ecological enhancements and additional landscaping are proposed within the wildlife educational garden area, building upon the existing ecology and landscaping of this area.
- 6.3 The wildlife educational garden is intended to be used by customers of the public house as an area to explore and be educated on local wildlife, flora and fauna. The wildlife educational garden would provide an additional customer offer at this public house site, and customers would be offered the option of availing of picnic hampers and picnic blankets by the public house staff, to enhance their enjoyment and stay within the wildlife educational garden area.
- 6.4 There are considered to be two principal benefits arising from the application proposals. Firstly, the ecological value and public accessibility of these grounds would be enhanced. Secondly, the proposals would provide some modest additional support and increased customer attraction for the established rural enterprise of the public house itself, building upon its excellent reputation for food.
- 6.5 Since the applicant took over the site, this public house has become a valued and important local community facility. This public house is an important local, rural, community facility that attracts visitors to the area, supports the local economy and is a significant employer. It is reiterated that the proposals would provide some modest additional support and increased customer attraction for the established rural enterprise of the public house itself, building upon its excellent reputation for food. The proposed wildlife educational garden facility would provide an additional customer offer and attraction for this rural public house.
- 6.6 The proposed formation of this wildlife educational garden is directly supported by the December 2024 Framework (including, specifically, paragraphs 96, 98, 187, 192 and 193); Core Strategy Policies CP1, CP3 and CP11; and Managing Development Delivery Policies CC03, TB18, TB21 and TB23.
- 6.7 In terms of potential local amenity implications, the proposed wildlife educational garden is considered to be a modest proposal, which is of an appropriate scale and complementary in nature to the established public house use of this site.
- 6.8 In terms of the flood risk nature of the site, none of the proposed works will reduce the contribution of this part of the site to the local flood plain. The application proposals include no built development nor impervious surfacing.

- 6.9 In addition, the proposed planting and ecological enhancements would help better manage and minimise flood risk, through helping to slow the flow of flood waters over the site and increase the water percolation and evapotranspiration abilities of this site. In the event of a flood warning being issued, customer and visitor use of the wildlife educational garden would cease, and staff would prevent access to this part of the site. Consequently, there would be no increase in the numbers of those put at risk of flooding and no implications for any increase in the risk of flooding elsewhere. Indeed, the application proposals may help modestly reduce this flood risk.
- 6.10 In terms of the archaeological value of the site, the application proposals include no built development nor below ground excavations. It is therefore considered that the archaeological potential of the site would be preserved, unaffected, by the application proposals.
- 6.11 The proposed wildlife educational garden does not conflict with the requirements of Core Strategy Policies CP3, CP7 and CP11; and Managing Development Delivery Policies CC03, CC09 and TB25.
- 6.12 In accordance with the December 2024 Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development, reiterated by Managing Development Delivery Policy CC01, this application should be approved without delay.

