

Design & Access, and Planning Statement



**Site Address: The Two Poplars, 118 Finchampstead Road,
Wokingham, RG41 2NU.**

Proposal: Demolition of the existing conservatory and replacement with an open-sided timber pergola, incorporating a sheet metal roof, external heaters, and lighting to enhance the external trade area.

DATE: 15.10.2024

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1. Introduction

This Design and Access, and Planning Statement has been prepared in support of the planning application to demolish the existing conservatory at The Two Poplars public house, and replace it with a high-quality timber pergola structure. The existing conservatory is an old, unattractive, and poorly designed structure that detracts from the overall aesthetic of the property. It no longer serves its purpose effectively and is inconsistent with the overall character of the public house.

The proposed replacement will consist of a visually appealing, open-sided timber pergola with a sheet metal roof, designed to complement the main building while providing a functional and inviting outdoor space for customers. The new structure will incorporate external lighting and electric heaters, allowing for year-round use of the outdoor trade area. This statement outlines the design and access principles of the development and demonstrates its compliance with both national and local planning policies, particularly those set by Wokingham Borough Council.

This document demonstrates why the proposal is appropriate and should be supported by the local planning authority.

2. Site Description and Surrounding Context

- **Site Location:**

The Two Poplars is a well-established public house located on Finchampstead Road, Wokingham, within a predominantly residential area. The pub benefits from a large garden area at the rear, which provides significant outdoor space for patrons. The property is surrounded by a mix of detached and semi-detached housing and is a prominent community focal point in the area.

- **Existing Structure:**

The current conservatory is situated to the rear of the building and was originally intended to serve as an extension of the internal dining space. However, it has become outdated, is poorly insulated, and is no longer fit for purpose. The design of the conservatory is incongruous with the traditional architecture of the public house and contributes little to the overall function or appearance of the premises.

- **Character of the Area:**

The surrounding area is defined by its residential nature, but The Two Poplars plays an important social and economic role in the local community. It serves as a gathering place for residents and visitors alike, offering both indoor and outdoor seating areas. Enhancing the outdoor space will contribute to the long-term success and viability of the business, while offering an improved environment for local patrons.



Photos above show the existing conservatory to be replaced.

3. Proposal

The application seeks permission to demolish the existing conservatory and replace it with a new, open-sided timber pergola. Key elements of the proposal include:

- **Timber Pergola Structure:**
The proposed structure is designed to be open-sided, creating a more spacious and inviting atmosphere. The natural timber material will offer a warm, welcoming aesthetic that complements the character of the public house and is in keeping with the surrounding area. The timber used will be durable, weather-resistant, and sourced sustainably where possible.
- **Sheet Metal Roof:**
The pergola will feature a neat, durable sheet metal roof, providing protection from the elements and ensuring the outdoor space is usable in all weather conditions. The metal roof will be lightweight and simple in design, but visually appealing, offering a sleek, modern contrast to the timber frame without overpowering the overall character of the building.
- **External Lighting and Heating:**
The proposed structure will incorporate carefully positioned external lighting and electric heaters. The lighting will be designed to be subtle and unobtrusive, providing adequate illumination for the outdoor space without causing light pollution or disturbing neighbouring

properties. Electric heaters will allow the space to be comfortably used during cooler months, thereby extending the usability of the outdoor seating area.

- **Landscaping and Access:**

The existing landscaping around the rear of the property will be maintained, and no changes to the ground level or access routes are proposed. The pergola will sit within the current footprint of the conservatory, ensuring minimal disruption to the surrounding environment.

Design Intent:



4. Design Justification

- **Enhancement of Visual Appearance:**

The current conservatory is not sympathetic to the architectural style of the main building. It is dated, poorly maintained, and detracts from the overall aesthetic of the property. The proposed timber pergola is designed to be a more visually appealing addition to the public house, complementing the traditional rendered façade and blending in with the surrounding green spaces. Timber was chosen as the primary material for its natural, warm appearance and sustainability, ensuring the pergola integrates well into both the built and natural environment.

- **Improved Functionality:**

The open-sided design of the pergola will create a more flexible and welcoming outdoor space for customers. The covered roof will offer protection from the elements, allowing the area to be used more consistently throughout the year. The addition of external heaters and lighting will further enhance the functionality of the space, encouraging greater use of the outdoor area in the evening and during colder months. This will support the business in attracting more customers and help to sustain it as a viable local enterprise.

- **Sustainable Materials and Construction:**

The use of timber as the primary material is in line with current sustainability best practices. Timber is a renewable resource, and when sourced from certified suppliers, it has a lower environmental impact than many other building materials. The structure will be designed for durability and longevity, reducing the need for future replacements or repairs, and thereby minimizing the long-term environmental footprint of the development.

- **Conservation of Neighbouring Amenity:**

The design of the pergola has been carefully considered to ensure there is no adverse impact on neighbouring properties. The structure will be located to the rear of the public house, away from residential properties, and will not result in any overlooking or loss of privacy. The external lighting will be designed to minimize light spillage, ensuring it does not cause nuisance to nearby homes.

5. Planning Policy Compliance

The proposal complies with relevant national and local planning policies, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Wokingham Borough Council's Local Plan.

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):**

- **Achieving Sustainable Development (Section 2):**

The proposal promotes sustainable development by enhancing the existing business, contributing to the local economy, and improving the use of outdoor space. The use of sustainable materials such as timber aligns with the objectives of environmental sustainability.

- **Building a Strong, Competitive Economy (Section 6):**

The proposal supports the use of the public house, which is a key local business. Improving the external trade area will help sustain the business, supporting local employment and economic activity.

- **Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities (Section 8):**

The development will create an improved outdoor space for social interaction, supporting the well-being of local residents. It encourages the use of outdoor areas for dining and socializing, promoting healthy lifestyles in line with NPPF guidelines.

- **Achieving Well-Designed Places (Section 12):**

The new pergola represents a well-considered design that enhances the appearance of the site while improving its functionality. The proposed materials and form respect the character of the local area, contributing positively to the public realm.

- **Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan:**

- **Core Strategy Policy CP1 (Sustainable Development):**

The proposal supports the sustainable development of the site by improving the functionality of the outdoor area, ensuring the business remains viable, and using sustainable materials.

- **Core Strategy Policy CP3 (General Principles for Development):**

The development respects the character of the area and the existing building,

providing a high-quality addition to the site without adversely affecting neighbouring properties.

- **Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (Policy CC03):**
The proposal supports sustainable construction practices by using timber and ensures the building is resilient to weather changes, promoting long-term sustainability.
 - **Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (Policy TB21):**
The proposal supports the continued operation of a local business, which serves as a valued community facility. Improving the outdoor space will help maintain its role in the community and encourage greater use.
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6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed demolition of the existing conservatory and replacement with a timber pergola at The Two Poplars is a well-considered development that will enhance the appearance and functionality of the public house. The use of sustainable materials, coupled with a design that is sympathetic to the character of the building and surrounding area, ensures that the proposal is both environmentally responsible and visually appealing. The inclusion of external heaters and lighting will allow for greater use of the outdoor space throughout the year, supporting the continued success of the business.

The proposal aligns with both national and local planning policies, particularly in terms of sustainable development, promoting local businesses, and improving community spaces. As such, it is respectfully requested that Wokingham Borough Council grants planning permission for this development.