

PLANNING STATEMENT

Site: The Sportsman Public House, Reading

Applicant: Greene King Ltd

Local Planning Authority: Reading Borough Council

Proposal: Erection of detached open-sided timber pergola with sheet metal roof (following removal of existing Jumbrella)

Date: 6th November 2025

1. Introduction and Background

This statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the erection of a detached, open-sided timber pergola with a simple sheet-metal roof, positioned over an existing patio area within the pub garden. The proposal replaces an existing large Jumbrella structure which has reached the end of its life.

The site operates as a public house with external seating areas already in use. The proposed pergola will provide a modest, weather-protected space for customers, supporting year-round use of the existing garden area. No increase in external covers or trading area is proposed.

2. Description of the Proposal

The development comprises:

- A detached open-sided timber pergola structure positioned on the existing patio area.
- A lightweight, sheet-metal roof to provide shelter from rain and sun.
- Removal of the existing Jumbrella structure.

The pergola is entirely open-sided and will not enclose or extend the existing floor area. The structure is designed to be in keeping with the character of the site and surrounding context, using natural materials and a simple form appropriate to a pub garden setting.

3. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023)

The proposal accords with the key objectives of the NPPF, particularly:

- **Paragraph 84 and 85** – Supporting a prosperous rural economy and the retention and growth of local businesses, including public houses that provide community and social value.
- **Paragraph 130** – Ensuring developments are visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, and create safe, inclusive, and accessible environments.
- **Paragraph 81** – Encouraging sustainable economic growth and productivity.

The proposal is a proportionate and low-impact improvement to existing facilities, ensuring the long-term viability of the pub.

Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

Relevant policies include:

- **Policy CC7 – Design and the Public Realm:**
The proposal represents good design through the use of simple, high-quality materials and a scale appropriate to its setting.
 - **Policy EN1 – Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment:**
(If relevant – delete if not applicable.) The development preserves the character and setting of any nearby heritage assets, using reversible, lightweight construction.
 - **Policy RL6 – Pubs:**
The policy supports improvements and investment in existing public houses where proposals enhance their viability and continued operation as community facilities.
 - **Policy CC8 – Safeguarding Amenity:**
The open-sided structure will not result in any increased noise, activity, or loss of privacy to nearby occupiers beyond that already associated with the established garden area.
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4. Assessment

The proposed pergola:

- Replaces an existing Jumbrella structure of similar scale and function.
 - Does **not** increase external seating capacity or site coverage.
 - Will visually improve the external area, providing a well-designed and durable structure.
 - Supports the sustainable operation and continued viability of the public house, consistent with both national and local policy objectives.
 - Has no adverse impact on residential amenity or the character of the area.
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5. Conclusion

The proposal represents a modest and proportionate enhancement to the existing pub garden facilities. It replaces an outdated Jumbrella structure with a well-designed timber pergola, improving the appearance and usability of the outdoor space without intensifying use or increasing covers.

The development accords with the aims of the NPPF and the policies of the Reading Borough Local Plan, supporting local business resilience, good design, and community vitality.

Accordingly, planning permission should be granted.