

Design, Access & Planning Statement.

Creation of bilingual day nursery and preschool facility (Class E (f)) and parking, land associated with Twycross Zoo, Burton Road, Atherstone, CV9 3PX.

April 2026

Introduction

This statement is submitted in support of the creation of a bilingual day nursery and preschool facility (Class E (f)) and parking, land associated with Twycross Zoo, Burton Road, Atherstone, CV9 3P.

This Statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) and the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) Order 2010 and Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Amendment) Order 2015.

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), the level of detail presented in this statement is proportionate to the scale and complexity of the application. References were made to the relevant planning policies. These are predominantly the adopted and saved Local Plan policies as they take primacy in the determination of such an application where they are NPPF & NPPG compliant.

Relevant Planning Policy

National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010

Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (2016)

Policy DM1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Policy DM10: Development and Design
Policy DM17: Highways and Transportation
Policy DM18: Vehicle Parking Standards

Local List Requirements

Due to the scale and nature of the proposal, the level of detail submitted with the application is considered proportionate. Schedule 4 of the DMPO details the statutory consultations required before the grant of permission. If during the determination period the statutory consultees request additional information and this is not provided by the applicant, the LPA could refuse the application for this reason. On this basis this section forms a notice under Article 12(1) (DMPO Amended July 2015) as the applicant considers the submitted information meets the requirements set out in article 34(6)(c) and any other information contained in the adopted Local List should be waived allowing the immediate validation of the application.

Principle and other material planning considerations

The NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development giving rise for the planning system to perform the roles below:

an economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

The Framework (NPPF) sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and states that development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless other material considerations indicate otherwise, where paragraph 100 states:

“It is important that a sufficient choice of early years, school and post-16 places are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

“a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter early years, schools and post-16 facilities through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and

b) work with early years, school and post-16 promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.”

On this basis pre-application discussions took place with both the zoo management and senior officers at HBBC who are supportive of the scheme. The *only* Bilingual Day Nursery in the Midlands was opened by a trio of sisters in January 2018 and has gone on to become one of the most popular award-winning nurseries in the area.

The new Twycross day nursery site aims expand upon this success and to broaden the progressive and holistic early childhood education philosophy to a wider local audience, naturally aligned on symbiotic basis with the zoo where their work is also guided by education, research and collaboration.

Amount, Layout & Parking.

The nursery will utilise and take advantage of an existing naturally screened and enclosed area of the zoo grounds to effectively create an independent facility directly adjacent to the existing visitor parking area, where clients will benefit from an ANPR

parking exemption when dropping off and pick up their children between the hours of 7.30 am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday.

During school term time the zoo is generally open between the hours of 10am and 17.00pm therefore overlapping peak time visits will be minimal on this basis. The nursery will cater for a maximum 42 child places with a maximum staff number of 12, however this will be relatively infrequent and will only occur at occasional peak times.

Access & Parking

As noted above, there will be no changes to the access or parking arrangements therefore the residual cumulative impacts of the development are not considered to be severe within the local context and existing use of the site.

Biodiversity Impact Assessment

A full suite of BNG and ecology documents are submitted in support of the proposal where the Biodiversity Impact Assessment Statement concludes:

“The proposed development has been designed to retain and incorporate the most valuable existing vegetated features where practicable, including the retained ornamental hedge, the retained line of trees and retained trees shown on the enhancement scheme. The Tree Retention Plan further confirms the retention of these boundary features and associated root protection areas as part of the final layout. This approach ensures that the principal vegetated framework to the site is maintained and integrated within the development proposals.

Post-development, the scheme will replace areas of low-value baseline habitat with a more diverse and structured landscape mosaic comprising retained amenity grassland, flower-rich grassland, mixed native shrub planting, new native hedge planting, retained ornamental hedge, retained line of trees, retained trees and new trees, together with integrated ecological features including bird boxes, a bat box and a hedgehog hibernation box. The proposals will therefore introduce a broader range of habitats and greater structural diversity than exists at baseline.”

The proposal was planned and will be carefully implemented in full accordance with the overall BNG strategy of the zoo that is conservation charity of world standing

Drainage and Flood Risk

The site is situated within Flood Zone 1, an area at lowest risk from fluvial flooding and is not identified as an area of risk of surface water flooding as defined by the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning. As such, the proposal is unlikely to result in an increase in flooding on the site or elsewhere or have significant impact on flood risk or drainage in terms of LP policy.

Conclusion & Justification

Discussions led to a formal agreement with the zoo prior to the submission of the current application and on this basis, the Framework directs that all planning applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The proposed use is complimentary to the existing educational status of the zoo and will provide a valuable resource within the existing and expanding catchment area. Given the modest nature of the overall development, views into the site will be maintained and the local setting will be relatively unchanged and parking can be accommodated within the site to the required standards.

With the proposal capable of reflecting the existing grain of development the scheme would not detrimentally affect the amenities of neighbouring properties or compromise highway safety. By contributing to the community facilities of the growing catchment area the scheme represents an integrated and sustainable development that is appropriate within the local context and can be supported on this basis.