

The Henley Society

Protecting our heritage and environment in Henley-on-Thames

By email only

The Planning Department
Wokingham Borough Council

12 February 2025

Dear Sir,

Ref: 243125 at Thamesfield Retirement Village, Remenham, RG9 2LX

We write to object to this application because The Henley Society objective is to support development where it blends into Henley on Thames, its surroundings and is a necessary addition.

This application fails on both counts. The applicant states that the proposed development would have no unacceptable adverse impact subject to the recommended mitigation measures being put into place. We strongly disagree.

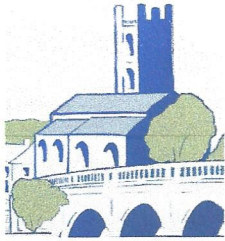
Appearance:

It would appear that the applicant has made no attempt to blend in with the local environment either of their existing facilities and certainly not with their neighbours.

The proposed development is a modern brick and cladding design purportedly to blend in with Remenham Row. This design fails on its scale, height, density and massing and is quite different especially the cladding. Not only does it not blend in with its environment but will also be an eyesore from the opposite side of the river from which it will be very clear both in summer and winter in spite of the best attempts of the artists impressions to prove otherwise. This is exacerbated by the existing white brick round building being replaced by the red brick and grey cladding where it adjoins the original white building.

There is an attempt in the photographs to show planting between the proposed development and the boundary wall. 2.4m is insufficient space and light for such planting to be successful. In the unlikely event that it was to be successful, any tree roots would likely damage the existing wall if not the new building. Retirement Villages Group have admitted that this is the case immediately opposite numbers 3, 4 and 5 Remenham Row.

The appearance is especially important as it is in a conservation area.



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Amenity

The design does not comply with either the council's Design Guide nor the pre-app advice which highlighted the amendments required to be in compliance. The result is a 3 storey block much closer to the boundary wall than permitted by the design guide as to impose upon the neighbours, ie the properties in Remenham Row such that there is a blatant invasion of privacy. The windows of the top two floors of the proposed development will look directly into Remenham Row residents living rooms, bedrooms and bathrooms.

The proposed building is due south of the existing residences of Remenham Row. It is not surprising that the Daylight and Sunlight Report acknowledges that some of the residences will not receive the daylight and sunlight values recommended by the BRE guidance. This will also mean that the garden area between the existing residences and the proposed development will be unable to sustain a basic level of horticulture.

Justification

The applicant suggests that the need for such accommodation is a material consideration. We disagree. Henley has three significant such developments since 2018 and/or currently in development, one of which is being developed by the applicant.

Retirement Villages Group, RG9 4BG - 65 units of apartments and cottages recently completed and now being offered for sale. Approved October 14, 2019

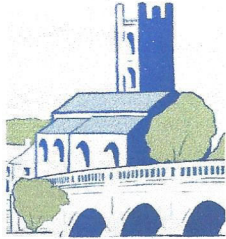
<https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationDetails&REF=P16/S0720/FUL>

The Smith Centre in The Fairmile, RG9 6AB - 108 1, 2 & 3 bed apartments. Approved August 27, 2024

<https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationDetails&REF=P22/S3033/FUL#exactline>

McCarthy & Stone, Reading Road, RG9 4HE – 53 1 & 2 bed apartments, approved December 14, 2016. Not yet fully sold or let.

<https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationDetails&REF=P16/S0720/FUL>



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Precedence, applications refused.

Premier Inn, appearance

[Reference: APP/Q3115/W/22/3313757](#)

This application was refused at appeal on the harm that would arise from the scheme's design and effects on the street scene and character and appearance of the surrounding area, Paragraph 39 refers, ie appearance as addressed above.

The Hub, Juliette balconies

<https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationDetails&REF=P24/S2840/FUL#exactline>

Paragraph 2 of the decision notice refers. These were a key reason for the refusal of a planning application in South Oxfordshire. The Juliette balconies overlooking Newgate Court which were much further away than the Juliette balconies overlooking Remenham Row, were considered to make the application unacceptable.

We request that Wokingham Borough Council refuse this application as it stands.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

Julian Brookes
Vice Chair

[Redacted contact information]