

PLANNING REF : 243125
PROPERTY ADDRESS : 27 Perpetual House
: Station Road, Henley-On-Thames, Oxfordshire
: RG9 1AF
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Ian Carlton
DATE SUBMITTED : 15/10/2025

COMMENTS:

Objection to Amended Planning Application - Thamesfield Retirement Village, Henley-on-Thames 243125

As a long-term Henley resident (over ten years), I continue to object to the proposed redevelopment of Thamesfield Retirement Village.

Although I do not live immediately adjacent to the site, I know the area well and, like many residents and visitors, regularly enjoy walking along the river enjoying the views such as the fine building that is now Thamesfield Retirement Village. I remain deeply concerned about the proposal's impact on Henley's character, its riverside views, the openness of the Green Belt, and the added pressure it would place on local and visitor traffic - particularly the Wargrave Road which is a local traffic hazard at busy times as it is.

Having reviewed the amended plans, I do not believe they meaningfully address the key concerns raised previously by myself, Remenham Parish Council, or other local residents. My principal objections are as follows:

Design and size are inappropriate

The revised design remains far too large, bulky, and out of keeping with its sensitive riverside and Green Belt location. Despite minor cosmetic tweaks, the building is still more than six times the size of the original and would dominate this stretch of riverbank.

This directly conflicts with Core Strategy Policies CP3 and CP11, which require new development to respect local character and prevent inappropriate expansion in the countryside. The existing Thamesfield building is a recognised and attractive landmark its elegant proportions and riverside facade are part of Henley's charm. The proposed "block-like" addition would destroy that character and harm views from across the river.

Claims that the height has been reduced to "two and a half storeys" are disingenuous. The ridge height, massing, and visual impact are effectively unchanged. The scheme still reads as a full three-storey structure, with the same harmful effects on outlook, light, and amenity.

Damages the Green Belt

The site lies within the designated Green Belt, where the NPPF allows only limited and proportionate extensions. This proposal is neither. Its bulk and footprint represent a substantial and inappropriate enlargement that would erode openness and encroach upon the countryside, contrary to the purposes of Green Belt policy namely, to prevent urban sprawl and protect the landscape's rural setting.

Cross-Boundary Impact

Given its riverside position, the development would clearly affect views and landscape character as seen from the South Oxfordshire side of the Thames. SODC should therefore be formally consulted, to ensure a coordinated approach that protects Henley's visual and environmental setting. It should not be exclusively the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.

Cumulative and Community Impact

Beyond planning policy, this proposal threatens the semi-rural, low-density character that makes this part of Henley so special. The open riverside environment is a defining feature of our town. Allowing such large-scale redevelopment would set a damaging precedent and permanently alter Henley's landscape and identity.

Conclusion

In summary, the amended application remains inappropriate in scale, form, and location. It continues to breach key design and Green Belt policies and would cause lasting harm to the character and openness of the area.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Council to refuse this application.