



Historic England

Sir/Madam Planning - Wokingham
Wokingham Borough Council
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 1BN

Direct Dial: 0207 973 3700

Our ref: P01587348

4 February 2025

Dear Sir/Madam Planning - Wokingham

**T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990**

**THAMESFIELD RETIREMENT VILLAGE, REMENHAM, RG9 2LX
Application No. 243125**

Thank you for your letter of 15 January 2025 regarding the above application for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Historic England Advice

The application site sits within the Remenham Henley Bridge Conservation Area, notably characterised by the riverside setting and large, open, green banks dotted with larger building set back from the banks (including the 19th century Leander Club and Thamesfield site). The conservation area also includes more modest cottages, houses and a pub that front onto roads. Importantly, the site also sits within the setting of the Henley Conservation Area contributing positively to one's experience of it by providing a largely green riverbank backdrop, with gentile buildings including the 19th century former villa of Thamesfield, to those promenading along the Thames path and visiting the historical riverside resort.

Historic England is concerned that the proposed extension to Thamesfield would cause harm to the experience of being in Henley Conservation Area because, owing to the unsympathetic size and architectural form, it would appear incongruous with the existing building. The architectural style of the proposed building relates poorly to the historical character of the original building (which matters in a conservation area, the historical character and appearance of which the Council is tasked with conserving) but of greatest concern is the size and bulk of the third floor. It is this part of the proposals especially which causes the greatest harm.

The NPPF sets out that Council should seek to avoid or minimise conflict between



4TH FLOOR, CANNON BRIDGE HOUSE, 25 DOWGATE HILL, LONDON EC4R 2YA

Telephone 020 7973 3700
HistoricEngland.org.uk

Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.



conservation and any aspects of the proposals (paragraph 208), that great weight should be given to conservation of heritage assets (paragraph 212), that any harm to or loss of significance (including development within the setting of an asset) should require clear and convincing justification (paragraph 213) and that where proposals would result in less than substantial harm they should be weighed up against public benefits (paragraph 215).

We recommend that, to avoid or minimise harm in this case the designs of the proposals should be modified to reduce the height of the proposals to 2 storeys. Beyond this, it may still be necessary to improve southern and northern elevations where seen across the Thames but this is unknown at this stage. The Council should seek amendments and we would welcome the opportunity to review and comment on any amendments made to the scheme.

Recommendation

Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds.

We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the application to meet the requirements of the NPPF.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Fletcher

Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas

E-mail: Rachel.Fletcher@HistoricEngland.org.uk

cc: Keith Frost, Conservation Officer, Wokingham Borough Council
Emily Tucker, Heritage Officer, South and Vale District Council



4TH FLOOR, CANNON BRIDGE HOUSE, 25 DOWGATE HILL, LONDON EC4R 2YA

Telephone 020 7973 3700
HistoricEngland.org.uk