Hungerford Town Council -objections to 26/00555/REG3

HTC - Objection. Based on the following:

1. It conflicts with the Hungerford Neighbourhood Development Plans housing priorities on housing mix and tenure and with the HNPs objectives on respecting and enhancing the character of the neighbourhood and the way it functions. A high - density hostel for temporary accommodation catering for a transient population of predominantly younger single people, conflicts with the established residential nature of Chestnut Walk. It is a concern how effective this proposed scheme would be in assisting community cohesion.
2. The occupants of this scheme are most likely to be from around West Berkshire as a whole, not just Hungerford. How the occupancy is envisaged after local government reorganisation occurs has not been addressed.
3. The proposed scheme does not represent good quality of design. The scheme appears to have been designed inside out to accommodate a high density institutional model that maximises the numbers of bedspaces and therefore occupants, rather than considering the site from the outside in as a design opportunity to create a building of high quality that would sit well in the local context, contributing to visual amenity.
4. The layout of the so -called flexible family units is particularly lacking both in design terms and in management terms. No details about the treatment of these units, how they are made flexible from construction point of view; the quality, the security of movable walls, the protection from fire and from vandalism and other risks. The design, security and privacy of these flexible units in occupation.
5. From a management plan perspective, no evidence has been provided as to how these units are flexibly adopted for families to use and under what circumstances this should happen. This raises concerns about the safeguarding policy in the potential mix of children with vulnerable single non -related adults.
6. The design and relationship of the scheme to the existing neighbouring premises, the potential for overlooking and reduction in privacy to the houses and gardens needs to be addressed.
7. The proposed treatment of the alleyway running behind the site and bordering the gardens on Priory Avenue is unclear. The gardens are fenced and one has an access gate to the garage area. The alleyway as is, represents a vulnerable access point; it has been subject to incidents of fly tipping and remains a security risk, with the introduction of the proposed scheme this location has potential to become an area of informal congregation that may lead to antisocial behaviour.
8. Insufficient detail has been provided about the intended external amenity provision for occupants of the Temporary Accommodation, its location and use. Concerns about the impact on the neighbouring properties from external space including increased noise, the effects of smoking and vaping odours which will detract from the quiet enjoyment of neighbouring gardens and rooms opening onto them.
9. The information about security on the site is not detailed or satisfactory, particularly considering the 24 - hour operation of the proposed temporary accommodation. The provision of some kind of security presence out of hours is not defined, nor costed.
10. No supporting plans have been provided on mitigating the risk of crime, nor designing out crime, which is a major local concern; clarification is needed as to how

the management of this scheme will provide security to neighbours, safeguard the scheme residents and prevent the ingress of criminals intending to entrap residents of the temporary scheme into criminality themselves.
11. Noise. Increased use of laundry and kitchen facilities audible noise impacting the neighbouring properties especially in the current configuration of doors and windows within the proposed scheme. No evidence has been provided about the levels of noise and its mitigation if required arising from the heat pump proposed for the scheme.
12. The energy efficiency measures are disappointing. While we welcome the intent to introduce these, the opportunity has not been taken to consider an improved range of products. In any future proposal we want to see a proper environmental management plan that involves the increased use of solar panels and other measures to bear down on costs in the longer term.
13. Car parking. There is not sufficient evidence of staffing plans and resident profile to assess the true demand for vehicle parking, nor the likely increase of traffic movements e.g. deliveries, resulting from catering for the scheme, to justify no change from the current provision of three spaces.
14. The staffing and management plan is lacking in detail; three part-time staff is a very low provision for a 24-hour scheme; the plan for security cover by an external party is unclear as to hours, duties and presence on site; similarly it is uncosted and it is unclear how this provision will contribute to the financial savings that the Council are seeking from this scheme.