

greywell**classic**homes



henley grange

overview

Henley Grange is the conversion of a severely neglected late Victorian building into six houses alongside six new apartments, located on the outskirts of the Warwickshire market town of Henley-in-Arden.

The tension between aesthetics/preservation of character buildings as against energy efficiency/building regulations required extensive attention to detail and value engineering. In converting from old into a modern standard we were told by energy assessors that it was “next to impossible” to obtain grade B Energy Performance Certificates: it was achieved in most units.

Greywell has not taken the easiest route at least cost in this development. Care has been taken to include details above the standard and time taken to design solutions to provide the best possible end result. The most obvious example is the spectacular stainless steel and glass link bridge between the apartments but there are many other smaller examples throughout the development that, taken together, add significantly to the whole.

The result is modern, generous, freehold houses but with a ‘country house’ feel and original features. Each house has private front and back doors, so there is no wasted communal space and owners have optimum access. The apartments, accessed via a lift to the upper floors, have no party walls and benefit from triple aspect views. We have installed imaginative lighting arrangements internally and externally throughout the development to enhance every possible aspect.

The result is modern, generous, freehold houses but with a ‘country house’ feel and original features.

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design criteria



The brief sought to provide a luxurious mix centred on the historic building fabric, sensitively restored to the most demanding requirements of modern living, whilst achieving outstanding energy efficiencies through the use of sustainable building materials and recycling original materials where possible.

The team was asked to retain the appealing architecture and stonework, to enable the installation of modern services, cables and pipes as unobtrusively as possible and to provide features to raise the scheme above the ordinary.

By sympathetically removing the less attractive extensions to the original buildings, such as the school kitchens and boiler houses, we were able to create a space to construct 6 new apartments forming an inward facing courtyard, with an essential design criterion that they should complement and enhance the setting of the historic buildings.

whilst achieving outstanding energy efficiencies through the use of sustainable building materials...

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project goals



The former school was a well-loved local landmark which had deteriorated over the 12 years that it was vacant to a state of serious disrepair: it had become an eye-sore and target for vandalism. A vital goal of the redevelopment was to preserve the building in an enhanced condition for future generations, elevating it above and beyond its former status in the community.

Sustainability was another goal, to transform the site for the future at least environmental cost and to allow residents to occupy with limited ecological impact.

Enhancement of the setting was also important. A generous and careful planting scheme was therefore needed, to supplement the substantial mature trees that, to a degree, defined the site and stood proud alongside the Victorian buildings.

It was also important to us that we created a self-contained residential environment for occupiers to make the distinct parts of the development a whole. This was to be achieved through the establishment of a courtyard micro-community.

challenges



Other developers had tried for many years but could not unlock the scheme's viability due to the numerous complications, which included:

Considerable physical deterioration to the building fabric over 12 years.

Lack of service easements to the site; extensive engagement required with neighbours and local authorities to obtain drainage and electricity rights.

An adjoining modern school that gave rise to the risk of overlooking and consequent child protection issues of significant concern to our neighbours, Warwickshire County Council.

Environmental issues including bats and tree preservation orders on 3 substantial trees mid-site.

Converting an old structure also provided many technical challenges that we needed to overcome.





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location

location

Why should buyers invest in this project?

This is a very rare opportunity. The building has been completely refurbished and offers history and character but with a high end specification, all modern efficiencies, low maintenance requirements and a mature setting. It is the best of old and new blended together.

No recent development of which we are aware locally has been a conversion of an historic building. The six freehold houses in the Victorian property are therefore unique in the wider Henley market.

The combination of freehold houses and single storey apartments (with lift) allows a broad and engaging mix of residents. The development is not designed to appeal to the family market; a benefit perhaps to some purchasers.

Henley-in-Arden is a small market town with a mix of historic architecture and a high level of local amenities and services that has proved consistently in high demand by purchasers from the affluent South Birmingham suburbs, Stratford-On-Avon (7 miles) and the well-heeled rural catchment of South Warwickshire.

A combination of these factors, together with excellent value for money, will provide buyers and investors alike with a safe haven within which their capital can appreciate.



surrounding points of interest



Henley is an appealing and perennially popular market town with many beautiful older buildings. It has a good mix of restaurants, shops, pubs and coffee shops, including Costa and the traditional Henley Ice Cream Parlour.

The development is a 5 minute walk to the town centre but is set back from the road in a mature landscaped setting and, as such, provides the best of town and country living. The views from the top floor are across rolling countryside outside the town.

Henley has good local amenities and transport links: a golf club, tennis club, train station and it is close to the M42 and M40. The population of Henley is approximately 3,000 and it has primary and secondary schools confirming its thriving local community.

For a wider offering of theatre, restaurants, shops and activities it is close to Stratford on Avon, Solihull, Warwick, Leamington Spa and Birmingham. Birmingham Airport is less than 15 miles away.

The thriving historic market town of Henley-in-Arden has recently been voted in The Times as one of Britain's best towns.



types of units and prices

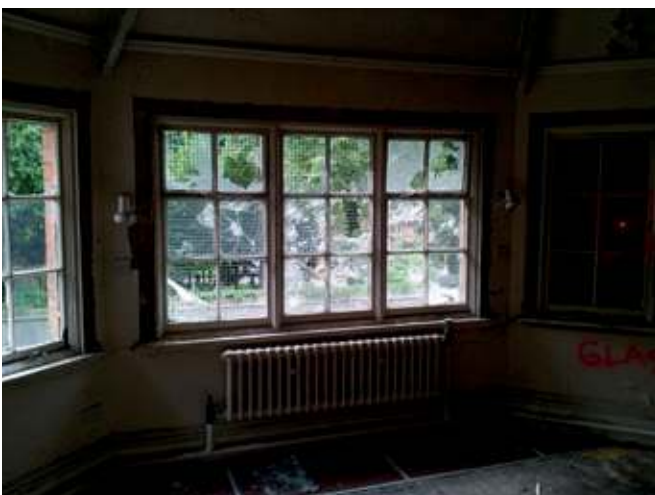


Plot 6	3 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom Conversion	£375,000
Plot 7	2 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom Conversion	£295,000
Plot 8	3 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom Conversion	£375,000
Plot 9	3 Bedroom, 3 Bathroom Conversion	£635,000
Plot 10	3/4 Bedroom, 3 Bathroom Conversion	£650,000
Plot 11	3 bedroom, 3 Bathroom Conversion	£635,000
Plot 12	Building Plot for 3000sqft dwelling	£500,000
Plot 14	2 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom Apartment	£435,000
Plot 15	2 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom Apartment	£415,000
Plot 16	2 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom Apartment	£425,000
Plot 17	2 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom Apartment	£420,000
Plot 18	2 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom Apartment	£395,000
Plot 19	2 Bedroom, 2 Bathroom Apartment	£415,000

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appearance
and finish

before and after



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before and after



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site story



Dr Samuel Hollingsworth Agar

Henley Grange, formerly known as River House School and Glendossil, was built in the late 19th Century by Dr. Samuel Hollingsworth Agar as an asylum for the upper classes. Prior to being redeveloped by Greywell Classic Homes it was used as a specialist boarding school for delinquent boys and subsequently left derelict for 12 years.

‘Glendossil’ – the house in the fields was built in 1882. It was designed by a Birmingham Architect – William Hawley – Lloyd based in offices in Colmore Row. He also designed Cooper’s bookbinders shop/workshop in Corporation St (1890) and also the grade 2 listed Almshouses – Berrow Cottages in Knowle (1885) as well as several Churches in the suburbs of Birmingham.



An article in the British Medical Journal, August 25, 1883 read as follows; “Glendossill” Henley in Arden, Warwickshire. Dr. S. H. Agar, who has for 15 years conducted an asylum for both sexes at Burman House, Henley in Arden has relinquished that establishment as being unsuited to the requirement of the Insane. At the present day Dr. Agar has purchased an ample site in a most salubrious and desirable situation outside Henley in Arden and has built “Glendossill” expressly for the reception of a limited number of Upper and Middle-Class insane persons of both sexes. No pains or expenses have been spared in designing and constructing both internally and externally. *“Glendossill for its purpose is in accordance with most modern and enlightened views of what is necessary for the comfort, safety and treatment of patients suffering from any form of insanity.”*

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Glendossil passed to Samuel Agar Jnr, who like his father was a doctor, on Dr Agar's death in 1905. In 1941 on the death of Dr Agar Jnr it passed to a nephew Willoughby Agar (also a county surgeon) who was at one time High Bailiff of Henley. It was sold to Warwickshire Local Education authority in 1951 and was established as River House School in 1953 as a residential boys' school.

The first headmaster of River House School was Mr W G Sharman. A former pupil recounts that in the mid-1950's the Headmaster was Mr Sharman who used to shout – "Drink up, boys; looks like tea, tastes like coffee, is actually cocoa!" Opposite is a photograph of Mr Sharman and some of his students.

In around 2000 it ceased use and was subsequently left derelict for 12 years. When Greywell first went into the building there were old school notice boards on the walls and the canteen fittings were still in place as if the boys had only recently left. Nonetheless, overall the fabric of the building had deteriorated into a terrible state after being neglected for so long and heavily vandalised in places.

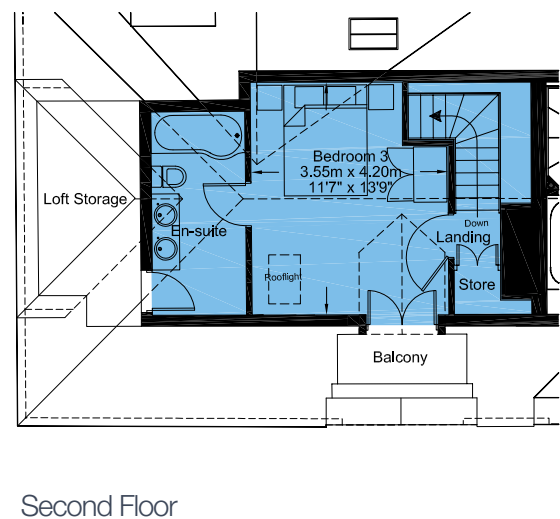
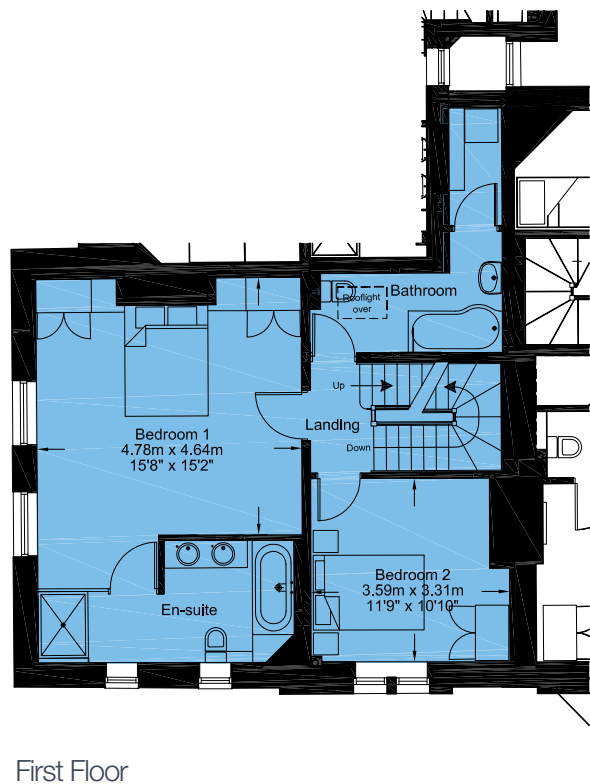
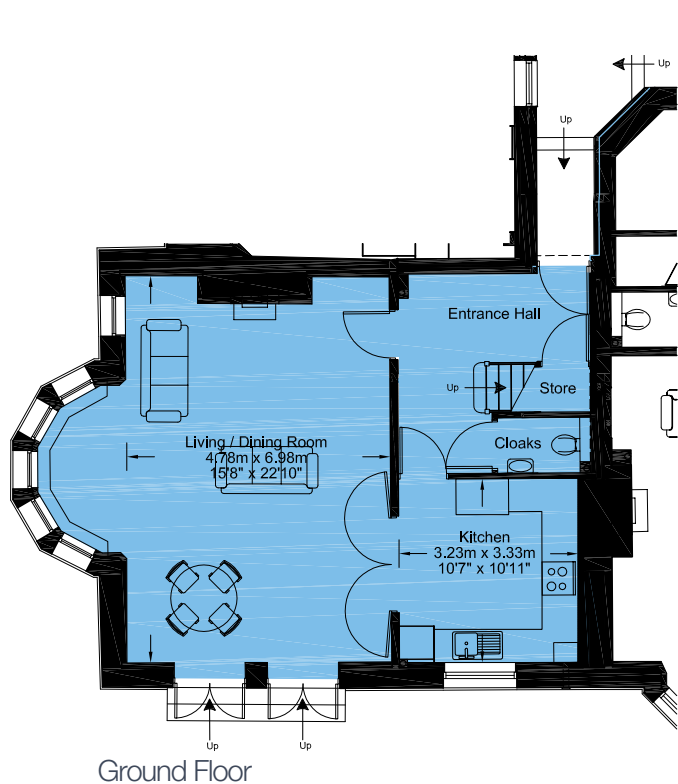
"Drink up, boys; looks like tea, tastes like coffee, is actually cocoa!"



interior design, specification, layout and finishes



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We have chosen Unit 9, a conversion house, by way of example to demonstrate the interior design and to explain the careful approach that we adopted in all areas.

The same specification also applies to the apartments. All finishes are standard and no additional charge is made. Conversion units were offered options on kitchen units, worktops and splash backs within a neutral range, fireplace surround and carpet.

The design of the conversions sought to retain as many original features as possible. In Unit 9 one of the main features was the large double aspect living area with high panelled ceiling. We believe this had been used as a class room.

We were determined to preserve the ceiling even though it was a relatively insubstantial single thickness timber framework. We were successful, although at an apparent price. When the wall insulation was installed, the walls became thicker and encroached on the mouldings around the perimeter of the ceiling. In order

to preserve the symmetry and overall effect of the historic feature we therefore needed to engage a specialist coving artisan to recreate mouldings to replace those that had apparently been lost. Thermal performance was essential but so was preservation of the original feature.

stairs & paint finishes

Some original Victorian skirting and stairs could be re-used (for example in Unit 11 the staircase has been preserved, as shown in photograph) but, where new was required as in unit 9, we selected a good match and installed extra deep skirting and wide architraves. Ceiling coving and roses were chosen to complement the high ceilings and existing detailing within the building. These were also used in the new apartments where high ceilings were specified to improve the feeling of space and light.

The natural wall colours are neutral to allow purchasers to use their own colours when they move in, but Greywell prefers not to use a plain white or overly pale palette that can seem cold. Eggshell finishes are also preferred to gloss paint on woodwork for a softer finish. Feature walls in a contrasting darker colour subtly provide interest.



kitchen



The kitchen is separated from the main living space by doors on parliament hinges to allow the space to be opened up fully or not. White gloss cupboards (soft close) are to enhance the feeling of space. The worktops are Silestone quartz composite in a natural shade and oak-effect Karndean flooring adds warmth. American style fridge freezers with crushed ice, induction hobs and Brita water filter taps are standard.

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Moving through the unit to the hall and stairwell, oak handrails and capping have been used to enhance interest within the natural scheme. Up and down lighting washes over the high stairwells creating interest and a warm feel.

In the unit 9 bedrooms, as with most other conversion units, the original wooden floors were treated and sanded rather than replaced wherever possible. This was not just a matter of environmental sustainability but also a design feature offering antique floorboards to those purchasers who want them but still enabling other floor coverings to be added later if preferred.



bathrooms

There is an oak shelf above the bath and the elongated rectangular mosaic tile flows through the whole room at the same height, in stone and subtly coloured glass.



Unit 9 has a spectacular en-suite on the first floor. A lit glass wall separates it from the bedroom to help maintain the feeling of the historic room proportions but with an ensuite bathroom and more windows / light. It contains a generous walk in shower with multi heads, WC, bath with mixer tap, twin basins on an oak counter, plus a heated towel rail. It is sufficiently spacious that it has two windows, both with lovely views (above the obscure glass).

The boxed oak storage shelves, with integrated down-lighting, were designed and made to our specification expressly for the bathrooms in this development. Two sizes have been used. They are hugely practical but also complement the oak washstands beautifully.

Additional features in the bathroom are under floor heating and PIRs that light the bathroom whenever someone walks in, alleviating the need to fumble for a light switch on nocturnal visits.

Beautifully detailed glass/stone mix mosaic tiling has been used extensively in all cloakrooms and bathrooms to demonstrate Greywell's commitment to quality. This can be seen in the other first floor bathroom which leads through to a large storage and laundry cupboard.

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On the second floor of Unit 9 the former loft has been transformed into a double bedroom with a Stainless steel and glass balcony, plus another generous en suite. The en suite has a large walk-in shower and twin basins on an oak counter. Again there is under floor heating and PIR operated low level lighting circuit. In the bedroom the original roof beams can be seen, left exposed to emphasise the age and character of the property. The balcony offers a totally private and quiet space with wonderful views.



storage



Storage has been given scrupulous thought and each unit provides a significant volume of built in storage. This deals with the possibility that 'downsizers' may be the purchaser. In Unit 9 there are built in wardrobes with in shelves beside in the bedrooms as well as the walk in large laundry cupboard.

Additional storage is provided under the stairs. Storage is also carefully planned in the apartments which each contains the equivalent of 6 extra-height cupboards as well as 2 large wardrobes in Bed 2 and a walk through wardrobe into the master en-suite.



log burners



Log burners are standard in all units, even the apartments, and log stores are provided for each unit. Log burners were chosen on environmental grounds but the building had chimneys throughout when we acquired it and the design needed to fit around them. Existing chimneys have been re-used in all conversions.

specification summary

Kitchen

- Welford contemporary gloss kitchen range
- Silestone worktops
- Oak-effect Karndean/Amtico/similar floors
- Sleek vertical feature radiators
- Brita titanium tap with water filter

All appliances selected for energy efficiency rating of A or higher, including:

- Bosch induction hob with touch controls
- 19 bottle wine cooler
- Whirlpool American fridge freezer with ice maker and cooled water
- Bosch double oven
- Bosch built-in microwave
- Bosch integrated dishwasher

Bathroom

- Double 'his and hers' basins on oak washstands
- Combination showers with large fixed and hand held spray heads
- Generous shower enclosures and shower-baths with curved glass screens
- Under floor heating to master en-suites
- Large chrome towel radiators

Finish

- Farrow and Ball paint colours throughout
- Oak doors with a natural Danish oil finish
- Traditional deep skirting boards
- Original wooden floors sanded and sealed to selected upper floors in conversions
- Ironmongery in brushed stainless with contemporary tubular door handles and flat switch plates
- Wall-mounted flat screen TV points

Heating

- Log burners to all living rooms
- High efficiency boiler: Alpha Flow Smart 40GS with thermal store, provides high instant hot water flow rate
- Solar panels on upper apartments for pre-heated hot water

External

- Original red brick sensitively cleaned with original features restored where possible
- Substantial 4-panel front doors with canopy porches
- Conversions re-roofed in reclaimed slate
- Ivory sliding sash maintenance-free double-glazed windows
- Outside space to all houses; gardens to ground floor apartments; additional communal gardens
- Patio areas
- Turf to gardens where specified
- Outside taps to all houses
- Individual timber bin stores screened where possible using beech hedging
- Log and cycle storage

Landscaping

- Individual outside spaces formed by beech hedges and reclaimed brick walls
- Bonded gravel finishes to roads, buff paving to private parking
- Landscape Architect designed planting and screening scheme
- Moveable picket fencing to 7 & 8 Henley Grange providing flexible external space
- Close boarded vertical timber screen fencing to perimeter where specified

10 year Premier Guarantee structural warranty on all properties

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As to the windows, this required extensive thought and research to achieve the balance between the right look but also thermal performance, at a price that could be used across the development. In Unit 9 there is a large bay window on the ground floor but also many different sizes of window on upper floors. Brand new double glazed sash windows needed to be measured and designed specially and they were created bespoke to ensure they matched as closely as possible the windows that had been installed in the original building. Window colour was carefully considered to blend with the existing building.

Finally, the external finishing with bonded gravel rather than black tarmac, and stone rather than pressed concrete, was essential to meet the project goal of enhancement rather than the bare minimum. These finishes should endure rather than fade as, for example, as black tarmac would to a dull grey.



henley grange

unique and innovative
structural and
engineering features

glazed link bridge

The most obvious unique feature is the glazed bridge between the apartment buildings. This imaginative link was installed at a cost of £30k, to ensure the mass of the new apartment building was broken up, visual interest and apartments were well separated. A specialist structural glass designer was employed to design the glass structure on this new bridge to ensure minimal visible steelwork to give a slender and optimum aesthetic.

It provides a feeling of openness for neighbours and residents but also gives views over the courtyard for apartment residents.

This was a very deliberate investment in architecture and design rather than the cheapest route for the developer, which would have been to build one large block.

Careful lighting enhances the feature at night providing a warm and inviting reception for homeowners and visitors alike.



dividing the building vertically

However, for all of the gleaming finishes or sparkly features that the customer sees, we know that the parts the customer does not see such as the structural integrity, the plumbing and other ‘beneath the floorboards’ work, are equally the mark of a quality development. Several difficult construction challenges presented themselves when converting the old building and we now explain those.

We decided to create freehold houses which we believe are more desirable for residents in terms of control, service charges and private access. They also minimise the space lost to ‘common parts’. This meant slicing through the building to divide it vertically into six houses.

This required a number of clever solutions, five examples of which follow.

We decided to create freehold houses which we believe are more desirable for residents in terms of control, service charges and private access.



1. To create a more dramatic and practical courtyard entrance for the front door to Unit 9, we wanted to widen the access. This meant removing the back of an existing fireplace and then supporting not only the chimney above, but also the rest of the 3 storey structure that rested on it by installing structural steel. As part of the design we also saw the opportunity to create a double height entrance lobby through what was part of the existing building: again this required structural steel to be installed. However, by increasing the access to double height that enabled two additional windows to be installed for Unit 8, improving that unit as a collateral benefit.

2. The existing roof structure impeded on the available space so it needed to be replaced if we were to utilise the roof space. However we did not want to compromise those spaces with unattractive and obstructive new steels. To achieve usable spaces that were not cluttered with supports we designed new metal supports which were bolted to the existing chimney breasts. This retained the integrity of the building and as much original structure as possible, whilst creating as big a roof space as possible. In some cases, such as Unit 9 this also allowed old structure to be left on show and we made structural modification to the main truss shown in the picture so we could create a bathroom wall out of it and install a door through the bottom structural cord of the truss.



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3. In Unit 8 we needed to remove internal walls between 4 rooms and the former main school corridor in order to create an open plan living space. Despite the removal of so much structure, the space was designed so that only one slender circular supporting column was required in their place, which was integrated unobtrusively into the kitchen.

4. In unit 10, major structural steel was nonetheless needed in the roof. Rather than have it 'on show' we designed the walk in wardrobes around it to integrate it and thereby hide it.

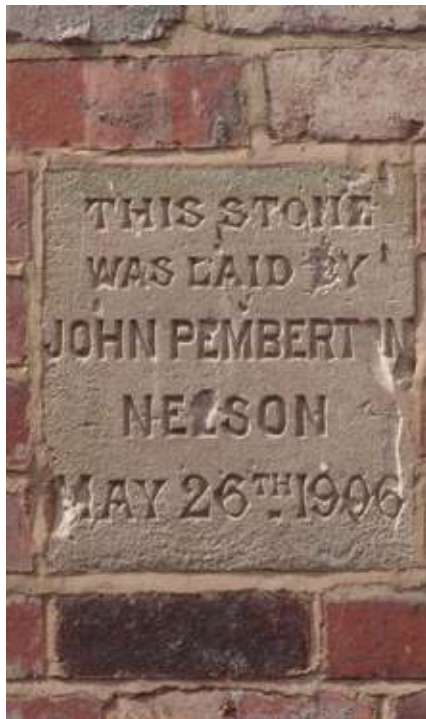
5. For the 2nd floor balconies in units 9, 10 and 11, stainless steel handrails were cleverly integrated as lateral structural supports for the existing gable parapets.



specialist demolition and 'new' skin

We wanted to remove the uninspiring modern additions to the Victorian building, allowing a courtyard to be created. However, the old building needed to be preserved and to do this careful specialist demolition was undertaken. The 3 storey single skin brickwork walls of the old parts were in a very poor state. They were in real danger of collapsing before their structural integrity was restored with a new (reclaimed brick) exterior skin.

Adding the skin also allowed us to replace the carved stone that marked the May 1906 extension. (photo re John Pemberton Nelson).



concealing the unappealing essentials where appropriate



Some features of modern living are not attractive to the eye when set against a soft historic brick or stone. Gas pipes and electrical cables needed to be installed but they could have jarred without careful thought. For units 7, 8, 9 and 10 we recessed the services into the brickwork to limit their ability to detract from the aesthetic.

A similar principle applied in Unit 8 where we concealed the consumer unit inside an old fireplace. The alternative was to stick it on a wall somewhere; not the optimum solution in our view.

henley grange

safety, security,
sustainability, innovation
and marketing

safety, security and accessibility

- 'Secured by Design' principles signed off by Warwickshire police
- Electric Gate system on entry to development, activated by mobile phone
- Burglar alarms as standard
- Generous illumination in all areas across the scheme
- Courtyard so that there are good sight-lines
- Gravel crunch – deters intruders
- Parking space adjacent to each conversion back door
- Bin store with disabled access
- Apartments conform to all the standards of Lifetime Homes
- Level thresholds and wide access to apartments
- Lift access to apartments
- Low level window handles in all apartments

Electric Gate system on entry to development, activated by mobile phone



well-being

- Courtyard for an inclusive community feel
- Generous border planting scheme in courtyard
- Preservation of several mature trees
- Private garden space for each conversion
- Landscaped area with benches for the enjoyment of all residents (especially for those apartments that do not have a private garden)
- Automatic low level bathroom lighting circuits particularly for late night use (no need to find switches in the dark)
- Walking distance to town centre with good bus and rail links to avoid the need for excessive car use
- Local managing agent with Henley office



innovative technology and methods



- Gas Saver boilers with thermal stores, pre-heating incoming cold water
- All floors (including existing suspended floors) insulated and screeded with a self-levelling flow screed to give a warm hard ground floor surface
- Solar panels to top floor apartments
- Twin zone room thermostats for maximum economy in programming with weather compensating external thermostat to enable residents to heat homes as economically as possible

energy efficiency and eco-friendly measures

Lighting

- LED lights used throughout scheme
- Light tubes to dark spaces to limit the need to use lights
- Automatic/PIR light switching in dark areas to prevent lights being left on unnecessarily internally and externally



Climate Control

- Twin zone room thermostats for maximum economy in programming, with weather-compensating external thermostat to enable residents to heat homes as economically as possible
- Apartments built to Code 3
- All properties include carbon-neutral log burners
- Log store per dwelling near bin stores
- Insulation installed at levels beyond building regulations
- Apartments air test score all below 5
- Greywell targeted B grade EPCs and designed the fabric with great care to minimise fossil fuel input for residents.

Recycling

- This development re-used brown field land
- As a conversion project it was re-using existing floor, wall and roof structure, bricks, roof tiles, floorboards, stone cills and lintels
- Bin stores for every dwelling to encourage recycling
- Internal recycling bins integrated in to kitchen units



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Conservation

- Provision of dedicated bat house to rehouse the bat population
- Low level bat friendly lights
- Owl Residence
- Careful preservation of existing trees including water irrigation measures to protect tree with bat house below.
- Timber kerbs and no dig paving techniques to protect trees/root systems
- Rain water piped into root protection zones to supply water in drought conditions

Additional eco-friendly measures

- Appliances all grade A and better
 - Induction hobs
 - Cycle store for each dwelling
- Local contractor, Beulah Construction, based in Stratford on Avon and local sub-contractors where possible. The main subcontractors all came from less than 23 miles away, for example:
- Bricklayers – Leamington Spa (12 miles)
 - Carpenters – Coventry (23 miles)

- Painters/decorators – Birmingham (16 miles)/Redditch (10 miles)
- Kitchen supply and fit – Solihull (12 miles)
- Electricians – Warwick (10 miles)/Coventry (23 miles)
- Plumbers – Redditch (10 miles)
- Landscapers – Kineton (18 miles)
- Fencers – Norton Lindsey (6 miles)
- Roofers – Birmingham (16 miles)
- Ground workers – Gaydon (18 miles)
- Tarmac/gravel bond – Leamington Spa (12 miles)



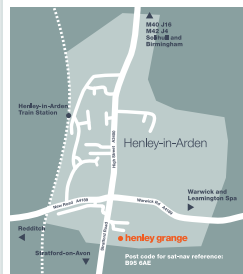
Provision of dedicated bat house to rehouse the bat population

henley grange

marketing



Henley Grange is a development of thirteen properties set within a gated community, surrounded by mature trees and just five minutes' walk from the historic town centre of Henley-in-Arden.



Recently named in The Times '30 Best Towns in Britain', Henley-in-Arden is a thriving historic market town. The High Street offers a variety of boutiques and shops, coffee houses, pubs and restaurants. The town also benefits from sports facilities such as golf courses, tennis courts and a number of other activities for all ages. Henley has great links with Stratford-on-Avon, Warwick and Royal Leamington Spa, which are all within easy reach, with London, Birmingham, Solihull and Redditch also commutable. The train station is a short walk from Henley Grange, where trains connect with Stratford and Birmingham. Schools are available for all ages within the town and there are grammar schools close by in Stratford-on-Avon and many other highly sought after schools in the locality.

Greywell has won multiple awards for design, fair and exceptional attention to quality. It was shortlisted for a Grand Designs award for a barn conversion scheme south of Stratford-on-Avon and also won a Build Quality award for that same development. New-build is also a specialty with a development of 5 houses in Salcombe, Devon, being named the best seaside scheme by The Daily Telegraph in August 2011.

Our experience of over 14 years purchasing and developing sites enables us to offer a thoroughly professional and reliable approach to every home we offer.

The thriving historic market town of Henley-in-Arden has recently been voted in The Times as one of **Britain's best towns.**



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award winning developers

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Greywell Property invite you to the launch of Henley Grange at Stratford Road, Henley-in-Arden Warwickshire B95 6AE

Friday 11th April 2014 between 12.00pm and 2.30pm
Drinks and canapés will be provided

RSVP Daniel Jackson 01926 858014
DJackson@GreywellProperty.com

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Early strategy

The project was marketed at an early stage, but at that point not directly for sales. In line with our stated goal to elevate the building above and beyond its former status in the community we held two open days during construction to allow the town to see for themselves what we were doing with their heritage asset. Our work was well received on both occasions with many local residents and councillors viewing the project.

The local interest in the building being saved for the future made three stories for the local press. The first, published early on, explained how one purchaser had been 'keeping an eye' on the building for her dream home over several years. The second, in February 2014, told how enthusiastic the first resident was and how the property was in the right hands. The third article, shortly before launch, related how a neighbour had been blighted by the derelict building and was delighted with progress towards rehabilitation.

Articles were published in The Stratford Herald, Birmingham Post, Leamington Spa Courier, Henley town web site (online local newspaper).

Brochure and hoarding

The brochure was designed at an early stage to accommodate the early viewings, which meant that no finished photographs were available.

The colour scheme was eye catching and tied in with the soft warm orange of the brickwork and modern trends.

We used the Henley Grange logo and colour scheme to create a metallic panoramic wrap around hoarding to show any potential purchaser or visitor to site what our vision for the scheme was. This was raised early on at the entrance to the site.

Locals give school conversion big tick

CHRISTINE FARN

A PROPERTY developer has not only transformed a derelict former school in Henley-in-Arden, a local resident has been converted, too.

Greywell Classic Homes has carefully turned the former River House School into a series of attractive two and three-storey homes, many of which are already occupied. The company has also built six apartments to fit in with the style of the converted school building.

The development is being geared up for a launch on Saturday, April 12, and a neighbouring resident has given the scheme his blessing.

Richard O'Grady lives just a few yards from the development and says the work Greywell has done at Henley Grange has been a massive relief to him and his wife.

He said: "We bought our bungalow 14 years ago and we were in a quiet little corner on our own, with just the local school for company.

"Then, about six or seven years

ago, a developer came along and built properties right next to us, which we felt were too high, but they went ahead anyway.

"Then, when the school building was vacated it was just left to go to ruin and, naturally, became a target for vandals.

"So we'd gone from our quiet little corner to suddenly having to deal with all of that.

"Then Greywell arrived and, to be honest, we first thought it would be just another developer that had no concern for the local residents - but they have been quite the opposite.

"Rupert Hopcraft, the managing director of Greywell, has been in touch with us regularly and has listened to our concerns."

Mr Hopcraft said: "Instead of working against local people, I've tried to work with residents such as Mr O'Grady because it's only right that their thoughts and concerns are taken into account as they will have to live with the end result."

The launch takes place on from 11am until 4pm. EHB New Homes is marketing the development for Greywell. For more information call 01926 881144 or visit www.greywellproperty.com



■ Nearby resident Richard O'Grady with Edward Bromwich, of selling agents EHB Residential, and Rupert Hopcraft, managing director of Greywell Classic Homes, outside River House School in Henley in Arden.

First Resident for Henley Grange



Solihull lady Karen Hughes had a good feeling about the former River House School in Henley-in-Arden - even when it lay derelict.

Karen was a regular visitor to the town and hoped that the Victorian school building would be returned to its former glory instead of become an eyesore. Now, after nearly a year of painstaking work by Greywell Classic Homes, she is the proud new owner of a stunning two-storey home within the converted property at Henley Grange. It features many of the character features - including the magnificent bay windows - but has also been completed to a high specification inside.

"Although I lived in Solihull, I used to visit Henley-in-Arden regularly to socialise," said Karen, who is a property landlord. "I used to admire River House School even when it was derelict and always had a very positive feeling about it. I knew in the right hands, it could be stunning. And, thankfully, it got into the right hands because Greywell have done a wonderful job. They've kept the historic, character features and when you are inside they have a really warm feel - they are just that bit different. I feel like it was just made for me and everyone who has been to visit loves it - they say it is just me. I was actively looking for somewhere to move to since the kids flew the nest and this ticked every single box. I am very proud to call this home."

Three of the six houses within the refurbished school have already sold and a further six newly-built apartments are available on the site.

An open day is being held on Saturday, February 8 between 11am and 4pm, and Rupert Hopcraft, managing director of Greywell Classic Homes, says all are welcome.

Later marketing strategy

Early sales off plan were secured before completion of the development but, given the level of interest and rising prices, the marketing strategy then became to hold back all sales until the development was complete in April 2014.


This enabled the ‘wow’ factor to be maximised since we were no longer reliant on plans and potential buyers’ imagination to reveal what the houses and apartments were to become. The customers could see it for themselves and have the more detailed aspects, such as the automatic lighting system, demonstrated to them. We thereby hoped full value would be obtained for our hard work bringing the building back to life. An open day was held to launch the completed development on 12 April 2014.

We also held an open day for trade on 11 April 2014. Warwickshire planners and agents attended to see the quality of the transformation in order that Greywell might be considered favourably when anyone is considering selling similar sites in the future.

We received several highly favourable and unsolicited customer letters and these have been published on the website. Customer satisfaction surveys were also returned with a 95% grade. All of these were added to the website.

henley grange


A superb development of six converted freehold houses and six large newly built apartments with a lift. Two, three and four bedroom accommodation. **4 SOLD.**



OPEN DAY – all welcome

Saturday 8th February, 11.00am to 4.00pm
Stratford Road, Henley-in-Arden B95 6AE

All enquiries to **ehB New Homes** 01926 881144



“Thank you for giving me a beautiful home to live in, one that I am very proud to say is my home. There is not one thing that I would alter. I sit and look and all I see is beauty, the windows, skirtings, kitchen etc etc. Your attention to detail and finish is obvious – you are a perfectionist. Thank you.”



conclusion

We set out to:

- Preserve
- Enhance
- Sustain
- Create community

Treading a viable path between preservation with enhancement and sustainability has not been easy. It has required hard work to find construction solutions, imagination and creativity in the design and extraordinary attention to detail in the implementation and finishing.

The creation of a community is yet to be seen as sales are not yet complete but the current occupiers are delighted even as the planting scheme is in early spring and we hope that the feeling of community will develop in not just the units we have converted and built but in the surrounding area as the eye-sore and vandalism are just bad memories.

The building and local community deserved all of these things.

We believe this long neglected local heritage asset has once again become a prominent building of which Henley-In-Arden residents and stakeholders can be proud.

But it is not necessarily our opinion that matters. In the words of another purchaser:

“[We] are so pleased with our property, it is a dream come true after watching the derelict site come to life after many years of neglect. Can vividly remember our first meeting with Rupert on a frosty January morning back in 2013 before work had started. The development is a credit – the careful blend of old and new, the restoration of the stonework and the incorporation of the ‘new’ windows’ as well as the retention of many of the original features.”

