

Members of the Sudbury Society attended the town hall exhibition of the Churchill Homes retirement homes scheme on Friday 15 October and had detailed exchanges with representatives of the client's Planning and Architectural consultants.

On Belle Vue House itself, we accept that the removal of the east wing and the addition of a west wing as presented will result in a satisfactory residential scheme.



On the retirement home block itself, the Society was immediately convinced that it is too large and too intrusive for the site to accommodate. When combined with the equally high Crown Buildings apartments opposite, the scheme will create a "canyon" of buildings on the main approach to town from the south east, the A134. *(photo 1)*

The most intrusive part of the scheme, the four-storey wing overlooking the roundabout, adds another negative view to from the Conservation Area in a part of the town already disfigured by the lamentable Borehamgate. *(photos 2/3)*

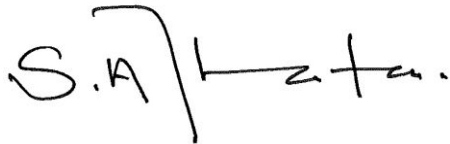


We understand that Churchill Homes' minimum number of units for a viable scheme of this kind is around 35. The scheme presented contains 42. The Society believes that a reduction from four to three floors of this intrusive wing, eliminating six units, would still leave the developer with a viable project.

We are extremely concerned about the parking provision on the site. Compared with the provision of parking spaces on the site opposite where there are 19 apartments and 33 parking spaces the present plan is clearly an inadequate provision for this proposal. There is no adequate public transport provision for travel between Sudbury and local villages and we believe many residents of the scheme would want to retain use of a car to maintain some sense of independence. The parking provision has to cope with residents as well as Visitors and doctors and carers visiting residents

On finishes and details, we were greatly surprised to learn that that the architects had no knowledge of Sudbury's heritage in both red and white brickmaking. We encouraged them to explore local examples of high quality brickwork and invite them to introduce more white brick detailing into the very large areas of red brick elevations.

We were also dismayed to learn that access to Belle Vue park is to be *denied* to the residents of the scheme, all retired and likely to be in great need of outdoor recreation close to their homes. Given the limited amount of outdoor space on the development site itself, this is an absurd limitation. We speculate that this choice has been imposed on the developer by functionaries of the Parks Dept, and it should be rescinded and replaced by secure access via fob or keypad entry.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S.A. Thornton". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font. The "S" and "A" are connected, and the "Thornton" part is written in a more fluid, cursive style.

Sam Thornton,

Chairman of The Sudbury Society

18<sup>th</sup> October 2021