

I am Andy Ash-Vie, Chairman of Lymington and Pennington Town Council's planning committee and I am here today to represent them.

I am working on the assumption everyone has already read the town council's written submission. Is that correct?

I would like to comment further on that submission. We have 3 fundamental objections based on sustainable development objectives.

Social

There has been a lot of discussion prior to this hearing about the ability to demonstrate a 5 year land supply. The NFDC council officers have decided not to contest this point however as you can see from paragraphs 10 -20 the town council can show that Lymington has double the capacity required. Do we really need more than that?

Anyone with an ounce of common sense can see that Lymington is already out of balance with a very high average age. The BBC reports the oldest city in England is Blackpool with an average age of 43.2, Lymington's average is 45.2, is obviously considerably older. See [Where are the UK's youngest and oldest city populations? - BBC News](#)

A balanced society doesn't mean an old age ghetto. Nye Bevan in the 1940's said "*I hope that old people will not be asked to live in colonies of their own. They do not want to look down out of their windows on an endless procession of the funerals of their friends. They also want to look down on processions of perambulators.*" As a 62 year old, I'm on the edge of being in that category myself but like so many of the older residents, we know the folly of having a community that is out of balance. We need a balanced community for the health and vitality of the town.

Just looking at Rightmove on Monday afternoon, I counted over 50 retirement properties on the market with Knights Lodge still having 20 left unsold since they started marketing them in 2018. That is not taking into account the new Stamford Hill development which will have a further 44 apartments. No doubt other properties are available too on other sales outlets.

How many more of these properties do we need when we can already illustrate a glut that has a negative impact on our community?

Environmental

The scale and massing – isn't it such a brutal building designed to squeeze every last penny of profit out of it? It has the over-bearing appearance of an institution with a real lack of articulation on the skyline. It will have such a negative impact on the street scene just as you approach the conservation area. It simply doesn't fit in.

It isn't kind to any prospective residents with minimal amenity space inside and out.

As pointed out in the tree officer's report, the trees (kindly donated by Lymington society) are likely to be damaged and certainly will not thrive. I thought we were trying to grow more trees, not kill them.

Then we come to the matter of the car parking. There are no disabled spots available, I understand 3 will be needed which will take up 5 conventional spaces, reducing the balance to just 10 spaces, possibly less.

I suppose when the developers assume the elderly residents won't need to have any health care or any other help. And likewise, they won't have any friends or family come visit because there are no visitor spots either. And where will the staff park?

The submitted tracking diagram shows access for an ambulance and a light van. I do hope they all can drive so perfectly because by Churchill's own submission, it is extremely tight, no room for error there then! Oh what the heck, you can always run over the kerbs and the shrubbery.

And whilst it is great that an extremely precisely driven ambulance can carefully make its way down there, how about a 7 ½ tonner, a community bus, a coach, or perhaps even a fire engine?

The number of spaces is right at the minimum ratio of other Churchill developments like Knight's Lodge which you need to note has large public car park nearby. How do you think the residents of Queen Elizabeth Avenue will feel about their road being used as an overflow?

Economic

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I grant you that 3 full time equivalent jobs could be created, but that is an extremely modest contribution in an area of virtually full employment. As an ex-business man, I can vouch for the fact that virtually all of our staff had to commute in from outside the area as recruitment in Lymington is extremely limited.

And going back to the demographics, an old town does nothing to attract businesses from coming here. So overall, there is very limited, sustainable economic advantage to this project.

In conclusion, the need in this district is simply not so great that such a poor scheme, which doesn't achieve sustainable development, should be permitted.