

# Churchill

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## Retirement Living

For immediate release

26 September 2013

### **DEVELOPER SLAMS EPPING FOREST PLANNING COMMITTEE AS "IRRESPONSIBLE AND COMPLETELY BONKERS!"**

An opportunity to provide much needed new homes for the elderly and affordable homes for the people of Waltham Abbey has been thwarted by the Epping Forest Planning Committee on 25 September after they ignored the advice of the Chief Planning Officer. Sheltered Housing Developer Churchill Retirement Living had submitted a planning application at the former Greenman Public House, Waltham Abbey for 28 sheltered apartments for the elderly which was recommended for approval. Despite a positive recommendation, two expert reports on parking requirements and the support of the County Highways Officer, Councillors decided that the proposal did not provide sufficient parking.

"This planning application represented an opportunity to regenerate the site and bring forward a high quality designed development to provide new homes for the elderly and provide additional affordable housing within Epping Forest," commented Spencer McCarthy, Chairman and Group Managing Director of Churchill Retirement Living.

"I am appalled by the irresponsible behaviour of the Planning Committee and how out of touch with reality they are. In particular I would highlight Cllr Mrs Lee and Cllr Watts who had no evidence to take a contrary decision or support a different approach regarding parking provision."

The Government has asked all Councils in the country to ensure that new housing is brought forward quickly to support the economy and reduce planning delays. This is just the type of example the Government has highlighted and there is a clear failure in performance and the quality of decisions by Epping Forest Planning Committee.

Churchill Retirement Living will now have no option but to pursue an appeal to the Government and this will involve Epping Forest Council in the great expense of defending a case their officer's do not support. It should be noted that the Chair of the Planning Committee Cllr Mrs Knight stated that Councillors would have to defend the decision themselves as the planning officer supported approving the application. Epping Forest Tax Payers will have to pay thousands of pounds defending a planning appeal which is not supported by the Chief Planning Officer and Churchill Retirement Living has been advised that the Council would be liable to an award of costs at appeal. It will also mean that jobs for local construction workers will now not be provided and delay the developments' completion.

Mr McCarthy concluded, "It is time the Government brought in measures to personally surcharge Councillors for irresponsible behaviour. It is important that the Council Tax payers of Epping Forest know how their money is being wasted by the Planning Committee and I will be highlighting this case today with the Secretary of State Eric Pickles MP and the Planning Minister Nick Boles MP. It is time the Government imposed some discipline on this irresponsible Council"

**-ENDS-**

**For more information, please contact Andrew Burgess on 01425 462175 or 07876 776372**

### **Notes to Editors**

Churchill Retirement Living is a family run company that is dedicated to providing the best in attractive, purpose-built apartments for older people in locations that are chosen to provide a safe and secure environment.

The company is recognised as one of the UK's Top 100 Companies (by The Sunday Times) to work for and the Churchill Retirement Living team feel that they are involved in work which has a positive impact on society and local communities.

Qualities that are important to Churchill Retirement Living properties are:

- High standards of design, construction and finishes that are used
- Friendliness of the Lodge Managers, who provide 24/7 support to residents as required, and the sense of community that residents build up among themselves
- Excellent locations in which the properties are situated, within a short, level stroll of shops, local leisure facilities and access to public transport

An Independent lifestyle is achieved by:

- Each apartment being self contained with its own front door
- An owners lounge being provided
- Landscaped gardens providing a place to relax and enjoy
- A guest suite for the benefits of friends and family

ENDS-

