

## **Golden Ball/Touch of Spice site – Further Information**

Today's virtual planning meeting supports the contention that the City Councillors are not interested in the views of their fellow councillors representing the rural areas or the people who live there.

They have passed by a majority of one the revised plans for the two three story blocks on the 0.4 hectare site.

Block 1 onto the Garstang Road is a three-story block with a pitched roof and windows in the roof with a "three story tower" on the corner which is higher than the lift shaft on the pizza building opposite. The line of site at the crossroads, which is already an accident hotspot, would reduce considerably as it is now back to being a square edge. The houses on Woodplumpton Lane will be overshadowed by this three story building opposite.

Block 2 onto Woodplumpton lane and Downing Court has is of the same design with 3<sup>rd</sup> floor apartments are now in the roof-space which would not allow for people with disabilities to move around freely within these rooms. The corner with Downing Court is reduced to two story but rises again to three story along the road.

The site is 0.4 of a hectare. The development has minimal open spaces for the resident to sit outside. The small "garden/patio" area is beside the entry road, opposite the car park and lacks privacy. There is little replanting for the 12 mature trees and bushes already removed from the site.

This was an opportunity for a signature building that meets an identified need for apartments for older persons. There are a number of sympathetic developments in rural village across the country as well as several partnerships between local authorities, housing associations and parish councils to develop affordable housing managed by Rural Enabling Officers, none are 3 stories. The parish Council contacted the city council to progress this idea but have had no reply....we do not appear to have a "rural enabling officer".

Various publications by planning professionals specifically for over 55's apartments agree with this viewpoint. These recommend that the "skyline should not exceed the level of the chimney pots of the neighbourhood properties" and that the "density should allow for open spaces and pleasant outlooks". Skills for Care & the Rowntree Trust point out that older people "to maintain a good mental health and sense of wellbeing older people need are more likely to remain in their property all day and need pleasant aspects and open spaces to look at".

We hope that the designated use for both blocks which is to be as an "extra care facility" for "older people" under class C2 would be a condition of any accepted application. This is not the case so how do we know if in a years' time Gateway will not change the type of occupants.

The proposed buildings are not in keeping with the surroundings. The adjacent property is an 18<sup>th</sup> century corn mill, with a 19<sup>th</sup> century warehouse and industrial heritage beam lift, the street scene is 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century 2 story cottages with a 17<sup>th</sup> century coaching in opposite all of which are on the adopted PCC local Heritage Assets Register. All these buildings will be dwarfed by the new three-story building with balconies who will overlook private gardens and reduce their natural daylight.

Overall, this plan is yet another example of the lack of understanding, transparency & foresight of the Council and its Officers.