

# 'Towering' flats come under fire

by **Karen Wilson**

DEVELOPERS wanting to build high-rise flats near a primary school in Stowmarket have come under fire this week from councillors and residents.

At a meeting on Wednesday, Stowmarket town councillors said they were appalled and saddened by Crest Nicholson's plans for a 'village centre' on the Cedars Park housing estate.

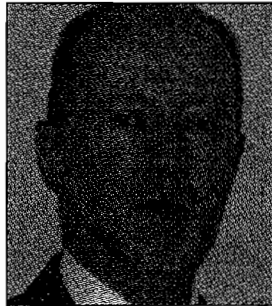
Cllr Frank Whittle said: "I'm appalled. The density is higher than those on the outskirts of London. It was four storeys originally but now the developers are asking for five."

Under the plans, Crest Nicholson wants to build 83 one and two-bedroom flats and car parking spaces.

There would also be a doctor's surgery, shops, community hall, public plaza and a gateway feature at Cedars Park Primary School entrance.

But more than 150 residents have already sent letters to Mid Suffolk District Council opposing the plans.

Speaking at the meeting, Fred Hillyar, co-ordinator for Cedars



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- Cllr Duncan Macpherson

Park Residents' Association, said: "This project is completely out of context with Stowmarket. A five-storey development is totally out of proportion to the surroundings. Why is it placed so near a school? It will lead to issues of congestion, pollution and child safety."

Town Mayor Poppy Robinson agreed the flats were too near the planned amenities and would tower over Stowmarket.

While Cllr Marilyn Finbow said: "It is very sad that the developers have named this a 'village centre'. This takes away what we have been trying to stop - keeping Cedars apart from the town.

"The developers have put this all in one application because they know there are things in it

we want and think this will make us approve it."

But councillors unanimously refused the application because of the height and density of the flats.

Cllr Duncan Macpherson said: "There are issues that perhaps should be revisited. The developers need to have more respect for the residents. Some of these residents haven't been given the real picture of what would happen on Cedars when they moved to the area. It is time the council stood up to them. The flats are simply too high and so should be opposed."

Councillors also agreed to invite the developers to give a presentation on details of any future plans.

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