

## **Aquarena Planning Meeting-Worthing Society Update.**

Dear Members and Worthing Residents,

As you will know by now the Aquarena Planning Application received approval on 19 January. I would like to thank again all our members and local residents for their support. It means a great deal to the Committee who worked very hard in the Campaign to resist a tower block on this unsuitable site. The Worthing Society has received some unfair and inaccurate criticism both at the planning meeting and from various sources in the wider media. The implication was that we object for the sake of objecting and have always opposed Roffey's plans. This is inaccurate and we have supported both Warnes and the Eardley, both developed by Roffey Homes. I will be contacting Roffey Homes in due course.

The Worthing Society is very keen to see regeneration but consider that new design should sit well with the important heritage environment. At this point I thought it may be helpful to recap on our reasons for opposing the Aquarena plans. We acknowledged the improvements in the redesign :the garden area and cafe but remained opposed for the following three reasons:

1. The tower does not fit in with the surrounding area and in our view is bulky and overpowering, which is contrary to local planning policy. The traditional seaside character of Worthing will be affected
2. It was acknowledged at the meeting that the development will harm the "setting" of Grade II\* Beach House, and the Farncombe Road Conservation Area.
3. The Worthing Society were standing up for local residents, particularly those in New Parade, who it was acknowledged at the hearing will be adversely affected by the beachside tower block.

We consider a lower development of good design could still achieve a landmark building on this important site, and give a good return. Importantly it would not harm the traditional character of Worthing. I understand that Sir Peter Bottomley, MP, supported by Tom Loughton MP, is pursuing a request for the Minister to "Call in" the decision for review. We wish him well in his endeavours.

I do hope this clarifies our position for you and will be helpful for future reference. The Worthing Society is working hard to protect the town's heritage and ensure that new design and development is suitable for the surrounding location.

Susan Belton,

Chairman.

30 January 2017.

## AQUARENA CALL-IN BID REJECTED

Dear Members,

I am sorry to advise you that we have received official confirmation that the bid supported by the MP Sir Peter Bottomley to have the Aquarena Planning Decision "Called-in" by the Secretary of State has been refused. This will give Roffey Home the "green light" to proceed with the development. The Worthing Society Committee are dismayed by this decision and remain firmly of the opinion that the 15 storey, bulky tower block is entirely the wrong building for this sensitive coastal site.

I want to reassure you the Committee did everything possible to campaign against this development and we are very grateful for the support of our valued members. On a positive note our objections to the previous two designs have at least resulted in a reduction in the height of the tower. In addition, the Campaign did highlight the important work of the Worthing Society. We hope that as a result more local residents will join us. This decision shows that we all have to be ever more vigilant in protecting Worthing's heritage and the Committee will carry on this work with renewed determination.

Kind regards

Susan Belton

Chairman.

,