



A NEW LOOK FOR BOGNOR REGIS IS UNVEILED

Around 2,200 local people attended a public exhibition last week, hosted by St Modwen, to view their initial concepts for the regeneration of the Regis Centre and Hothamton sites in Bognor Regis town centre.

The exhibition was held from Wednesday to Saturday at the Bognor Regis Methodist Church in the town centre, where local residents were able to view the initial proposals and speak to representatives of St Modwen, their architects and transport consultants about the concepts presented. The public were able to provide their feedback and comments direct to the development team and also complete a community questionnaire.

Many ideas were presented, including an enhanced and accessible promenade with a small lido pool, cafes and restaurants overlooking the sea, a film and live performance venue, outdoor performance space, a bowling alley, new retail (which may be a foodstore), offices, a relocated library and a new health centre.

Gary Morris, Senior Development Manager of St Modwen, comments:

“We were delighted, though not surprised, at the vast number of people who attended the exhibition. The large numbers clearly reflect just how important the regeneration of Bognor Regis is to the people who live and work there and we are grateful that so many people took the time to come and speak to us. This is a really exciting time for the town and it is vitally important that we consult the local community at this stage so that their ideas and input can help shape the form of proposals.

“Initial feedback was extremely positive and we were given some very good and sensible views of what the public thought would be exciting ideas for the two sites. Whilst much of what we presented was well received, we appreciate that there were a number of concerns, centred primarily on the closure of The Esplanade and the height of the tower on Hothamton site. Over the next few months, we will be working closely with the District and County Councils to find possible solutions to the highway related matters and also testing the implications of a tower in the location proposed.

Following analysis of feedback from the first January consultation, St Modwen will present more detailed designs on all aspects of the proposals at the next public exhibition in late spring/ early summer.

Concludes Gary Morris: "Our aim is to create a year round destination to enhance the day-to-day experiences of both residents and visitors. In providing a wide range of quality leisure, entertainment, residential and community facilities and attractive open spaces, we will create a vibrant destination in a spectacular setting which will re-establish Bognor Regis as a memorable experience for both residents and visitors alike."

A copy of the information displayed at the public exhibition and the feedback form are now available on the project website www.stmodwen-bognorregis.co.uk. Copies of the exhibition handout and questionnaire are also available at a number of central community venues.

- ENDS -

Notes to editor

Leisure

On the Regis Centre site, St Modwen proposes an Entertainment Centre with flexible space for live performance, film, music, art galleries and conference space, sitting alongside a new bowling alley, restaurants, cafes, and possibly a new expanded multi-use library (*Please note that relocating the library to the Hothamton site as an alternative is also being considered*). All of this is proposed to be set within a new seafront landscape with space for a whole range of outdoor activities - from pockets of quiet relaxing reading areas to space for volleyball, outdoor performance and any other uses which may well come out of this consultation exercise.

Residential

Responding to the Development Brief approved by Arun District Council, the scheme also includes residential. Both development sites were identified as 'mixed-use' by the Council in its adopted Development Brief, to ensure maximum regeneration benefits. It is a widely held view that including residential across both sites will provide a boost to the regeneration objectives, thereby supporting local businesses and leisure facilities and as importantly it will act as a catalyst to attract further new facilities and investment into the town. At this stage, it is too early to provide the exact number of units across the two sites. This will become clear once the final heights of the buildings have been established and the details of the other uses for the two sites have been confirmed.

Offices

On the Hothamton site, St Modwen will be providing 25,000 sq ft offices for the County Council which could bring around 250 workers into the area. St Modwen is also currently undertaking a study into office demand in the area to establish demand for further office development.

Retail

Through a proposed new foodstore, St Modwen is looking to bring a new high quality offer to the Town Centre, which is currently not provided. It is hoped this will prevent the exodus out of town for people to do their shopping which will not only prevent car journeys but will also keep spending in the town centre. Retailer studies have shown that the site is not desirable for comparison retailers who prefer to be situated in the main cluster of town centre shopping of London Road.

Background

The scheme represents a £100m regeneration of two key town centre sites in Bognor Regis, West Sussex.

After a competition between developers and extensive public consultation, St Modwen was chosen by Arun as its preferred developer in July 2006 on the strength of its proposals to deliver a comprehensive mixed-use scheme – to include an entertainment centre and bowling alley, plus a new health centre and library, along with shops, restaurants, cafés/bars, homes and extensive works to the promenade and the pedestrianisation of The Esplanade.

A key aspect of the proposals is the Entertainment Centre; a 'destination' film and performance venue, including a cinema and flexible performing arts space. St Modwen is currently marketing the opportunity to interested managing operators UK wide. The developer is also looking to build a unique 'building on the beach' as an architectural landmark, which could house a high profile restaurant.

St Modwen is hoping to start on site in late 2009 / early 2010 with completion in 2013/4.

The sites

The two sites, as identified in the masterplan adopted by Arun District Council in 2004, are the 'Leisure Heart' site, now referred to as the Regis Centre and the 'Healthy Living' site now referred to as the Hothamton site. The Regis Centre site is located between Clarence Road, Belmont Street and the seafront. The Hothamton site is located west of London Road and bounded by Queensway, West Street and Steyne Street.

The developer

St. Modwen Properties Plc (St Modwen) is the U.K.'s leading regeneration specialist operating in all sectors of the property industry, focusing on town centre regeneration, brownfield land renewal and heritage restoration.

St Modwen works extensively in partnership with private and public sector organisations, continually mindful of the impact of their developments on the communities in which they operate. More information can be found at www.stmodwen.co.uk

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