

## **REGENERATION PROPOSALS FOR BOGNOR REGIS**

### **Schools' Workshop – Meeting Notes 30 January 2008**

#### **1. Introduction**

The group was asked what they do most weekends to give an indication of how they currently use facilities in Bognor Regis and how they view the town generally. The following were some general responses:

Use of BMX bikes – but complaints that these could not be ridden on The Promenade and other areas

Cinema – Chichester Odeon rather than the Picturedrome (see note under 'leisure uses')

Meeting friends – not really anywhere to go or meet locally and therefore mostly go to Chichester

They like living near the sea but don't use it even in summer as much as they would like to as there is not much to do

They think the town is 'shabby', 'dull' and 'boring'

The town doesn't always feel safe – particularly mentioned was near/under the pier and the Regis Centre car park

St Modwen presented the current scheme proposals and a number of issues were raised by the students and discussed as follows.

#### **2. Seafront**

Support was expressed for the new look seafront and particularly welcomed was the 'something for everyone' approach with something new around every corner. The group was keen to see something for their age group and also for older people

Sand instead of shingle was requested. If not permanently because of sea defences or tidal shift, it was suggested that this could be in place over the summer holidays for local people and visitors

Suggested a diving board would make the seafront more fun to use

The state of the pier was raised – suggested that the current pier needs to be made more attractive with more to do. It was noted that this is out of St Modwen's hands

Question raised as to whether more could be done with the groins to make these more into mini piers with activities on them

The pool was welcomed but the question of long shore drift was raised as to how this pool could be maintained

Whilst the new seafront was welcomed, the group asked whether local businesses would be affected by the closure of The Esplanade. The group will want reassurances that any local businesses are supported rather than harmed by the road closure

### **3. Leisure uses**

Better spaces for bike riding (BMX and general riding) was requested as currently there are some restrictions as to where people can do this. A bike park on The Promenade was also mentioned

Theatre – A number of the students have been to the Regis Centre theatre with school but expressed the fact that the facility is ‘boring’, ‘dull’ and ‘ugly’. The idea of a modern, multipurpose Entertainment Centre was welcomed as it was hoped this would bring a greater variety of activities (music, dance and theatre) in a venue that they would much rather use than the current theatre

Outdoor performance space – The group would like to see performances (contemporary music/dance/theatre) in the summer which would provide a focal point of interest and somewhere to get together outdoors – for free

Cinema – Comments about the current Picturedrome were based around their preference for the Chichester Odeon. This is due to the slopes in the cinema not being steep enough so the screen cannot be seen clearly and the general ‘tatty’, ‘dirty’ state of the facility in Bognor Regis. Their preference was to pay £5 to go to the Chichester Odeon rather than £2.50 for the Picturedrome

Cinema – Preference for the new Entertainment Centre cinema provision to be a different offer to the Picturedrome e.g. the idea of an arts house or non-Hollywood blockbuster ‘Corner House’ cinema was welcomed

Library – The current facility is not used actively by the students. The idea of a new, modern facility with better IT facilities and more of a social gathering emphasis did not stimulate a great deal of excitement. The library/St Modwen will need to consult on what facilities will need to be included and how it should be designed to attract more young people

Bowling was something that the students would very much like to see with food/drink facilities that would not be too expensive

Ice skating was something the students strongly wanted to see – even more than the bowling. If not within the proposed indoor leisure provision, a temporary outdoor ice rink in winter (with real ice – important) would be very popular. This was emphasised strongly

Indoor football and a skate park (like South Sea) were other facilities some of the students would like to see. The current skate park is big but not very good

The students were keen that the crazy golf is retained – perhaps even enhanced/improved

Markets – the students were keen to have some kind of market in the town centre but see the current facilities as poor and would want a much better quality market with more variety

#### **4. Landscaping and public art**

Public art dotted around the two sites would make the whole area more attractive and interesting – it was suggested that involving local people or students in designing public art would be a good idea. Art should change regularly to ensure interest is maintained

Graffiti – there were concerns over current graffiti as vandalism and that this should be considered/addressed within the new scheme. However, it was also suggested that there could be a designated graffiti wall for urban graffiti artists to practise and showcase their work, or a mural designed by local people/students

Sunken Gardens – whilst there were no major objections about the removal of the current gardens, the idea of quality gardens somewhere on the two sites was welcomed. Bournemouth Gardens were referred to as a good example

The students were keen that cleaning and maintenance would be top of the agenda within the new scheme to avoid the deterioration of the new scheme to the current 'shabby' state of some areas of the town

Better and stricter security and policing overall was suggested as certain areas do not currently feel safe and there are anti-social problems in the town

#### **Retail and community uses**

Desire for more high street shops in the town – accepted that St Modwen could not deliver this on the Hothamton site as retailers want to be closer to the main High Street stretch

A new supermarket for the town centre was welcomed – Asda or Sainsburys were mentioned as favourites

The town needs a new health centre – the current one "looks like a bunker". It was suggested that the new facility should be welcoming and provide all suitable facilities such as sex education/family planning clinic

#### **Hothamton Tower**

The idea of a strong, architecturally impressive landmark tower was liked by the students who thought Fizzleet to be very ugly and a bad marker for the town – but this support would be dependent on building uses and design

Regarding design, the students asked if it would be like Spinnaker Tower or based on the design of any other towers around the world. The idea of a completely unique tower for Bognor Regis was welcomed

Building uses – if the tower is to be a strong landmark for the town, the students would like to see it used for something more than solely residential i.e. a sandwich of uses e.g. to include a hotel, a viewing platform, a restaurant at the top or other leisure uses

Impact of the tower – students were keen that the tower would not have a negative effect on surrounding properties/the town in terms of permanent shading/light reduction

### **Residential**

The question was raised as to the number of flats already in Bognor Regis and whether any more brought about by this scheme would be bought/rented. St Modwen outlined the contents of the Council's Development Brief for the two sites which included residential to bring an increased population, and more spend into the area.

The students asked whether the next properties would be owner occupied or council owned – the idea of a mix of tenure was welcomed as they felt people of all ages should live in the town

### **General**

Further questions asked by the students and answered by St Modwen and its team were as follows:

Would you have to pay for everything – would it be expensive?

How long will it take to build?

Will this actually happen? We were promised bowling at Mount Batten and just got flats.

The Schools' Workshop Group will meet again in Summer 2008 to coincide with St Modwen's second public consultation to get feedback on the more detailed proposals.