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KING ALFRED REDEVELOPMENT

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The King Alfred, Hove

The Regency Society of Brighton and Hove strongly objects to the Frank Gehry scheme for a sports centre and flats on the King Alfred site, Kingsway, Hove. If built, it will condemn local residents to an environment blighted by serious overdevelopment and very extensive loss of daylight and sunlight.

The Society did persuade the new Brighton and Hove City Council to look again at the decision made by the previous administration as its final act before losing control in the May local elections. But, after receiving advice in secret session, the new Council reconfirmed the previous decision and granted planning permission.

The Society took legal advice from a planning barrister and an eminent planning solicitor about the way planning consent was granted for redevelopment of the Council's own land. Based on that advice a Pre-Action Protocol Letter was sent by the Society to the Council in preparation for a Judicial Review of the planning consent.

In the light of the City Council's response, the Society felt it had a reasonable case that the decision of the City Council was flawed and that the decision should be quashed. This was in part because in reconsidering the application the members of the Planning Committee had asked for and been given advice on non-planning matters relating to the Council's land owning and financial interests.

However, if the permission was quashed the City Council would have to consider the application afresh and here was the rub. The Society considered it had no confidence that the Council would make the proper decision and refuse the application. Without such certainty, it was decided that the Society could not put tens of thousands of pounds of its assets at risk. It, therefore, decided with great reluctance not to proceed with an application for Judicial Review.

Nonetheless, the path is still open for local residents to frustrate the development by taking private legal actions for their loss of daylight.

The full story of the proposals and their assessment can be found on the Society's web site:
www.regencysociety.co.uk

Note to News Editors.

The Regency Society of Brighton and Hove was founded in 1945 as a response to the threat to the Regency heritage of Brighton and Hove. Today it campaigns for the protection of the city's historic environment and its outstanding setting whilst also supporting sensitive and imaginative new developments on suitable sites. It organises an annual series of lectures of high quality and publishes occasional publications on the city's history and architecture. The Society also owns the James Gray Photographic Archive which contains some 9,000 images of the city beginning in the 1850s. Its website can be found on www.regencysociety.org