



Brighton & Hove Liberal Democrats

c/o 3 Albany Villas, Hove, BN3 2RS

Please reply by email

From The Chair: Michael Wilbur

michael.wilbur@liberalbrighton.org

28 January 2016

Councillor Warren Morgan
King's House
Grand Avenue
Hove
BN3 2LS

Open Letter Regarding King Alfred Development

Dear Councillor Morgan

We are writing to express the Liberal Democrats' profound disagreement with the way the Council has handled the decision-making process over this important redevelopment opportunity for the City.

It is completely unacceptable that councillors from the Labour, Conservative and Green parties have agreed to exclude local residents from looking at and evaluating the two short-listed options. This should not happen with major schemes and shows that our councillors have chosen to deprioritise basic principles of democracy in exchange for an easy life.

Local residents should have a real say and the chance to examine the impact different proposals have on providing truly affordable housing and much-needed community resources in central Hove. As it stands, the £8 million public investment is being made with residents only allowed input on the minor details of the plans of the sole bidder, chosen behind closed doors.

The Council has decided on a particular way of procuring the redevelopment of the site, where the Council owns the freehold, but that is no reason why Hove residents cannot have the opportunity to look at the competing schemes and air their views. It is wrong that the Council is hiding behind the very remote risk of legal action from a losing bidder and using this to defend its deeply undemocratic stance. The Council should instead show leadership and develop trust with potential partners and structure the process accordingly.

We therefore formally ask you:

- to approach the two rival bid groups led by Bouygues Development and Crest Nicholson Regeneration and ask them to agree to making the details of the bids public through the media
- stage local consultation about the plans (which may well lead to improvements)
- undertake that the Council will not pursue this type of approach with future major redevelopments

We are keen to see redevelopment at King Alfred but it is vital that we make the right long term decision.

We look forward to the Council adopting a more inclusive approach at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Wilbur
Chair, Brighton & Hove Party