



NEWSLETTER 167 September 2001

The West Pier

Most people are keen to see the West Pier restored. But what do you think about the new buildings proposed to go alongside it?

We have known for some time of the need for an "enabling development" in order to generate enough income to maintain the pier in the future and provide a return on the private capital to be invested in it.

The likely provider of that capital is a company called St Modwen plc. They have now produced their initial plans showing the buildings they want to put on the lower promenade either side of the pier.

Your Committee's View

We had a meeting with Nick Doyle, a director of St Modwen, and his architect. They explained the plans and showed us artist's impressions.

Our initial reaction is that the proposed buildings are far too large and will ruin the seafront. They will occupy a space roughly equal to the old paddling pool and the pétanque area. The main problem is that they will be on two floors. As a result they will rise above the upper promenade by about 15 feet.

A wall between us and the sea!

This is roughly the same height as the Al Fresco restaurant. So the development will effectively fill in the space between the restaurant and the pier, and extend at least as far again on the other side.

This will ruin the sea front in our area. It will also create a dangerous precedent for other parts of it, particularly bearing in mind that the Noble Organisation, which owns the other pier, has also wanted to put a large building at its shore end.

Committee member Clive Buxton, a civil engineer by training, has produced drawings showing the likely impact of these buildings. One of his drawings is shown overleaf.

We believe the scheme, if it went ahead, would effectively wall off the promenade from the sea.

Everyone must have their say

Obviously, St Modwen do not share this view. They believe the buildings, which will be made largely of glass, will enhance the sea front. The West Pier Trust say that without a development of this scale the pier will never be restored.

We have decided to organise a meeting at which all these alternative views can be expressed. It will be at 8pm on Thursday 13 September at the Beach Hotel in Regency Square (replacing the social evening originally planned for that date).

We have invited representatives from the various organisations involved and from other amenity societies.

Society Contacts

Chairman and Acting Treasurer: Roger Hinton
☎ 321794 email hinton@clara.net
Secretary: Andrew Walker ☎ 700340

Be There!

This must surely be one of the most important development plans that our Society will ever have to consider.

Please come to the meeting. There will be an opportunity for everyone to have their say. St Modwen's drawings and those prepared for the Society by Clive Buxton will be on display.

Members' Meeting to discuss Plans for the West Pier

8 pm, Thursday 13 September 2001
The Beach Hotel
3 Regency Square, Brighton

Other News in Brief

Second time lucky: on a beautifully sunny Saturday evening at the end of August, nine members of the Society enjoyed a sea trip from the Marina along to Adelaide Crescent and back, giving a completely different view of Brighton seafront.

Railings at last: work in Clarence and Russell Squares has been painfully slow, but at last railing are being erected; new planting is planned for October.

...and in Regency Square: work will start on the top green towards the end of September. The missing railings from the south side are in store at Stanmer and will be re-instated, with new "No Dogs" signs.

Social evening only postponed: plans are being made for a social evening, probably in December, to replace the one originally planned for 13 September.

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To Roger Hinton. Acting Treasurer, Regency Square Area Society, 39 Regency Square, Brighton BN1 2FJ

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