

10 FEB 2014

Objections submitted by ^{ACTION} Save The Russell Campaign Group

4th February 2014
Planning Application – AW/ 336/ 13
The Russell Hotel – Change of use

Further comments submitted by Save The Russell Hotel Campaign Group on documents posted on Arun Council's planning website

Action for the Blind News Release 2013

This document implies that the sale is a "Done deal". No mention of any change of use application.

The hotel attracts other guests with disabilities such as The Polio Society, although it is designed primarily to provide purpose built accommodation and facilities for the blind and partially sighted and their guide dogs. Many of those guests have been visiting the hotel for years and are devastated by the prospect of its closure. Where in the Bognor Regis area are there alternative hotels providing the same standard of accommodation?

Questions and Answers 11th June 2013

(A9) We are not convinced about this answer. Is Action for the Blind in the process of carrying out a strategic review of all four hotels, of which only The Russell was purpose built?

(A15) In view of this answer we feel that Action for the Blind should be committed to running The Russell Hotel as a hotel. There must be a viable market.

Bruton Knowles Viability Study October 2013

2.11: No mention of facilities for guide dogs

2.12: Has anyone from Bruton Knowles visited the hotel?

2.13: There is free parking in roads close to the hotel

2.21: There are shops, bars and restaurants in the immediate vicinity

2.31: We have already given our opinion on this

Guest Feedback

The hotel does need some TLC and has been allowed to run down in the bar area, as regular visitors to the hotel, we have had to point out some issues, but it is modern, warm, with friendly helpful staff and good wholesome food. Feedbacks are cited out of how many positive ones?

3.11: Where are the hotels in the town centre?

3.1.2: The Beach Hotel closed many years ago

3.2.2: The Premier Inn is at least one and a half miles from the sea front

3.2.3: The Russell Hotel could provide conference facilities – one was held there last year for Guide Dogs for the Blind

3.2.5: The hotels in Butlins are inside the holiday park facilities

3.3.2: The Best Western Hotel only has five less bedrooms than the Russell Hotel

Has the open market been tested?

3.4.2: The former Beach Hotel in its present format cannot be compared to the Russell Hotel
None of these properties are hotels

3.5.1:(3) These proposed improvements would surely enhance the Russell's viability

(4) When is it anticipated that the new water sports centre will be built and would locals and non-residents of Butlins be able to use it?
Would it be used forever and not go the way of the Winter Social Club

3.5.2: We do not agree with this view. The huge investment by Bourne Leisure is primarily for Bourne Leisure. Butlins is a town within a town. Its guests may come into the town to shop and for coffee and lunches, but the main cost of the holiday is spent in the complex. Non-residents have to pay to enter and be out by 6pm. They cannot pop into the hotels for a drink. It is like getting into Fort Knox
Is Bourne Leisure going to invest in the Regis Centre Car Park Scheme?
Is it going to invest in the West End regeneration?

4.1: The Russell IS a modern budget hotel

4.3: We do not accept this statement. Despite the new hotels, there is still a holiday camp atmosphere which is not attractive to a large number of holiday makers
What is the yearly occupancy rates of these hotels?

4.6: We do not agree – see our comments to 2.1.3 and 2.2.1

4.7: We hope that the hotel will not be de-branded. It just needs a bit of a face-lift

4.9: How would anyone know that for sure if the market has not been tested?

Objections to AW/336/13

Robinson Escott Planning LLP

Proposed Development of The Russell Hotel December 2013

As we have no knowledge of planning policy we do not understand most of this statement but comment on the following points:-

- 2.2: The open space encompasses a putting green, a well cared for garden and seating, including a sensory garden planted for the blind and partially sighted. We understand that the toilet block maybe replaced by a café in the future
The shops and other amenities are very close to the hotel
- 4.6: If Livability is granted Change of Use and purchase the hotel, can there be a condition that it provides potential additional services, including the swimming pool?
- 4.7: We hope that the Russell will remain as a hotel and be part of the regeneration of the West Bognor Regis area and to provide equality for the whole seafront as a tourist attracton

If the policy of Arun District Council is now not to allow a change of use of Public Houses, how does that equate to the change of use of a hotel?

SAVE THE RUSSELL HOTEL CAMPAIGN GROUP