

Rother District Council

Town Hall,
Bexhill-on-Sea,
East Sussex, TN39 3JX
Telephone (01424) 787000 Fax (014240 787710)



From Councillor Doug Oliver

11 June 2019

Mr R Konyn
Chairman - Bexhill Heritage
c/o St Barnabas Church
Bexhill-on-Sea
East Sussex
TN40 1JG

Dear Raymond

Destination Leisure – Drill Hall Retention

I refer to your letters of 7 February, 25 March 2019 addressed to the previous Leader and your most recent correspondence of 1 June 2019 on which I can advise on the actions Rother District Council has undertaken:

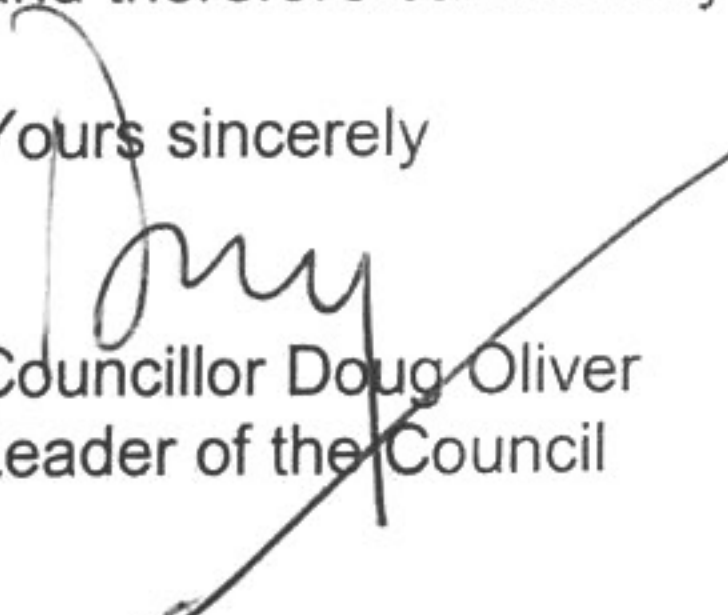
Rother have had interest in the site from two national hotel developers. One having undertaken some preliminary work has now declined to pursue the development; they gave no reason but our understanding is that the uncertainty of delivery at this site has led them to turn to other priorities and easier locations. The other provider has not replied to our recent communications but when we met and discussed the site they were emphasising the need for a cleared site, to make it viable.

With regard to relocation of the culvert we have received communication from the Environment Agency who has advised that the cost would be around £10k per metre. This excludes all professional fees and costs and they allude this may not even get approval due to the magnitude of the disruption. On our financial appraisal these costs and risks take it beyond being feasible to relocate the culvert.

The current position is the application is proceeding through planning and if the drill hall, or its façade were to be listed, then that will determine the future progress of the site and the Council would have to rethink its strategy. Furthermore, while the MoD are seeking to vacate this building due to high overheads, they have yet to find suitable alternative premises. While acknowledging what Bexhill Heritage are saying, the feedback from the public consultation event on the leisure centre pre planning application was that there was a modest interest in the retention of the drill hall but there are more questions about the suitable relocation of the cadets elsewhere. Overall there was strong support for the pre planning consultation.

I would, however emphasis that I need to declare an interest as I am a member of Bexhill Heritage and therefore cannot fully enter the debate.

Yours sincerely


Councillor Doug Oliver
Leader of the Council