

News Release

18 October 2012



Don't drop THE TROP

Campaigners discover council to decide the demolition of the Tropicana tonight without notice

Councillors at North Somerset Council have been given just 24hrs notice that an application to demolish the Tropicana is to be decided at tonight's South Area Planning committee. Campaigners, The Trop (WSM) only found out last night, after it was too late to register to speak against the application, that Councillors will vote on whether to allow the demolition to go ahead.

Only some Committee members were sent a report yesterday afternoon that the 'urgent' item is now listed for a decision to allow the Tropicana to be demolished without prior approval being required from them. A decision that is 'most questionable' says Derek Mead, spokesperson for The Trop (WSM). "You have to ask how they could spring this on the committee so quickly when they still have not registered our application to save the building after 9 days. "

Following the consent to demolish given by the Secretary of State in August the campaign successfully halted any demolition until an appeal into the Secretary of State's decision can be heard by the Courts. However, North Somerset Council submitted an application on the 8th of October for prior notification, hoping to avoid the need for the usual prior approval necessary for a scheme of this size and importance.

North Somerset Council Planners say that enough information has already been supplied so a full application is not required.

Planning Consultant for the campaign group, Amanda Sutherland, said "The evidence submitted with the application is contradictory and should be examined fully by Councillors rather than simply accepted. At present, the Conservation Area Consent is held in abeyance pending a High Court judgement so this application is premature and further wastes public money when nothing can be done until the decision of the Court is made."

The report submitted for tonight's decision states that the South Area Committee has previously approved demolition twice, but this is misleading and wrong as the committee were advised they had no power to do so by the legal officer at the meetings, the only decision to demolish being made by the Executive on the 13 December.

This approach excludes the Weston Community; the public are allowed to comment if prior approval is required but if the committee allow the matter to be determined tonight it would not only be contrary to usual practice but would exclude the public from comment. Even some Councillors who sit on the committee were not informed of the paper or cannot attend with this short notice.

The Trop (WsM) Ltd submitted an outline application proposal to reconstruct the pool and provide a quality Olympic size swimming pool along with leisure and entertainment facilities on 9th October allowing the Council, statutory consultees and the public to see they have a viable alternative to knocking the building down. As yet the council have yet to register the application or even acknowledge receipt, despite it being just one day after the council's own application was submitted and that is now in front of the committee.

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