

Working for you

Mr. N. Grandison,  
Save Our Spa Group,  
9 Park Street,  
Ripon,  
North Yorkshire.  
HG4 2AX

Our Ref      CE/JMW  
Your Ref  
Date          8th May, 2008

Dear Mr. Grandison,

### **Ripon Spa Baths - Demolition and conversion to housing**

I refer to your letter of 19th April.

There has been no change in policy. The Council was always willing to explore other options for the site. The issue, as has been frequently explained, is that there has to be sufficient value in the Spa Baths site for it to fund the redevelopment of the new pool. It is quite simply the case that if there is not sufficient value in the land, then the development of a new pool will not take place.

That will clearly involve the demolition of the Ripon Spa Baths, but since it is listed, that demolition will have to take into account the special heritage status of the building, and it has always been our view that the most important features would need to be retained.

The planning position will need to be determined by the possibility of residential use in order to establish the value, but we are discussing the possibility of a disposal to the Health Care Trust and the Primary Care Trust for their purposes. Indeed, they raised the issue directly with me as early as the 10th March. If there is sufficient value in the land for such a disposal, we would be quite keen to press on. At this stage, the indications are that a prospective partnership with the two Health bodies could realise sufficient value in the land.

We also consulted Ripon City Council and their views on community use were identified as soon as the 7th January. Their support was clearly stated and is based on extra swimming provision and no loss of the playing field, which is relocated, and the fact that the current pool will cease to be functional very soon.

I have to say that we do not believe that combined heritage and sport use would bring anything like sufficient funding to develop this site. We have already established from the

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2

**Mr. N. Grandison**

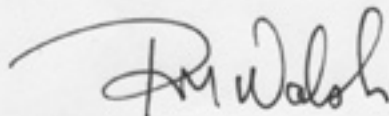
8th May, 2008

Amateur Swimming Association that no funding is available from them. Our position has always been clear, that there has to be sufficient value in the land, which is unlikely to be achieved except by a housing or a commercial permission, and indeed even this option is only viable because it enables us to build a new pool on Camp Close on land **we already own** and do not have to acquire. Hugh Ripley Hall was examined previously but was affected by restrictive covenants.

If you could demonstrate that a combined heritage and sports approach would produce the equivalent of residential value and avoid adverse revenue consequences, then of course we would be happy to reconsider, but I have to say that all the indications are that that is highly unlikely.

The situation in which we find ourselves, is that we need to resolve the problem of the Spa Baths, which is going to have to be closed if we cannot act quickly. The most effective mechanism, we believe, is the one we have put forward. It is our clear view that it is based on proper research and we do not believe that what you are suggesting has any serious likelihood of succeeding.

Yours sincerely,



**P. M. Walsh**

**Chief Executive**

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