

Sir Tom Hunter,  
West Coast Capital Co. Ltd.  
Marathon House,  
Olympic Business Park,  
Drybridge Road,  
Dondonald,  
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4, Nutshell Lane,  
Upper Hale.  
Farnham,  
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1st. March 2008

Dear Sir Tom Hunter,

### **THE REDGRAVE THEATRE, FARNHAM**

The Redgrave Theatre, closed in 1998, was highly regarded both by the theatre profession and by audiences for the special qualities of its internal design, but is now subject to demolition as part of Crest Nicholson Sainsbury's plans for the regeneration of East Street, Farnham.

A previous director at the Redgrave, Patrick Sandford (now at the Nuffield Theatre, Southampton) said in 2002, "*This is an auditorium as far as I know unique in the country... There is no other theatre with an auditorium of such real intimacy... the 'liveness' is palpable... To destroy a well-nigh perfect auditorium in a high density population area would be an act of woefully narrow vision and a betrayal of future audiences, and of future inhabitants of Farnham.*"

The people of Farnham raised half of the money for the construction of the Redgrave and feelings are running high at the prospect of losing this valuable community asset. The theatre could provide much needed facilities for drama, music, entertainment, business and educational uses. The Farnham Theatre Association has produced a Theatre Report and Business Study from a leading theatre consultant, Michael Holden, to show that a Farnham theatre could run successfully even without local authority funding. FTA are confident that a replacement theatre in the town centre would be acceptable to the community, if it were to be funded by the developers. However, restoring the Redgrave would be cheaper than a new building and if it were combined with a small cinema, sharing box office and other facilities, would help maximise returns for both and would benefit the daytime and evening economy for the whole regeneration development.

Waverley Borough Council, the owner of the theatre, has received many thousands of objections to previous planning applications, half of which were made on the issue of the demolition of the theatre alone. The Council and the developers have now produced a smaller scheme to placate public opinion but it still does not contain a theatre. There is now concern in Waverley Council that the objections over the theatre will continue with the new plans.

Crest Nicholson say they want a community driven scheme for East Street and we hope that with your encouragement they will be able to achieve this objective with the full support of the public. If you can help in any way, FTA and the attached signatories will be immensely grateful. [Letters enclosed].

Yours sincerely,

Anne Cooper  
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