

LAST-DITCH BID TO SAVE PUBLIC POOL

TORY councillors are hoping for a last-minute reprieve on the demolition of Seaton swimming pool.

The South West Regional Development Agency is demolishing the pool at the Plymouth International Business Park this month, but Conservative councillors are hoping it can be halted.

They say it must be stopped because the Government has issued new proposals which mean sports buildings will require planning permission before they can be demolished.

Planning Minister Baroness Andrews said: "Sports buildings play a vital role in ensuring our communities are active, healthy and enjoyable places to live.

by **HELEN PEARSE**

Herald Reporter

That is why local authorities should have the power to prevent their demolition in certain cases to conserve these important assets".

Tories today said the effect of the guidance is to propose a change to the 'general permitted development order' so that demolition of sports facilities requires planning permission.

Plymouth City Council Conservative group leader and shadow council leader Cllr Vivien Pengelly said: "Seaton must not be demolished for the convenience of the South West Regional Development Agency when Plymouth is currently in chaos over its plans for public

swimming. I am calling on the Sports Council to make representations immediately."

Seaton campaigner and Conservative councillor Dr David Salter, shadow Cabinet member for health, said: "Even though David Cameron himself supported Plymouth's Life Centre bid, sadly we didn't get the funding.

"Now Plymouth is in danger of sleepwalking into losing even the few public swimming facilities we still have. We must stop Seaton being demolished until an adequate replacement is both planned and funded."

A spokeswoman for the city council said a consultation into the proposals was underway, and if approved the changes would not come into force until April 2007 at the earliest.