

LOCAL ISSUES UPDATE

LYDDEN CIRCUIT – THE TAG/MACLAREN PROPOSALS

From Adrian Galley, Chairman of the Planning Committee

Most members will be aware that the Tag/Maclaren proposals have moved a significant stride nearer implementation, with the decision of the Secretary of State for the Environment not to 'call in' the planning application for a public enquiry.

After careful consideration of the concerns of the neighbouring communities, the view of the Society was that a public enquiry would be of little material benefit. The developer's consultants had done all that could be done to minimise the environmental impact and the whole project could be jeopardised as a result of the delays inevitable if a public enquiry took place. It was felt that the whole project was far too important, strategically, for the entire district, to be lost due to bureaucratic backlog!

Despite the close detail of the proposals, this was only, in fact, an 'outline' application. The Society, and doubtless many others, will be awaiting the opportunity to comment on the finer points of the scheme.

THE NEGLECT OF LISTED BUILDINGS

We have recently formalised the concerns, that many people have been expressing for some time, about the deteriorating condition of a number of important listed buildings in the town. The two most noticeable examples are the old Victoria Hospital, High Street, and Castle Hill House, Castle Hill (formerly the Conservative Party Headquarters). These two buildings seem to be visibly crumbling and appear to need urgent attention. It is felt to be important that owners of property, especially listed property, need to be reminded of their obligations to attend to the upkeep of their buildings. With this in mind, we are in touch with Dover District Council, who are to inspect these two buildings again and determine what action is appropriate to ensure that this neglect is not allowed to continue.

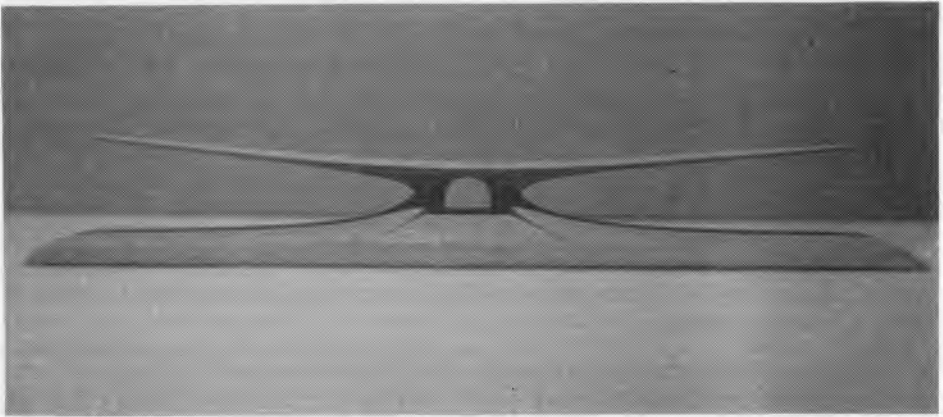
EMPTY SHOPS IN CANNON STREET

At last there is some news of the much-discussed empty shops in Cannon Street. A developer has bought, and is obtaining planning permission for, shops in the Metropole building. He has also applied for permission to re-furbish the flats above the shops and, subject to the Fire Officer's recommendations, should receive this permission within the near future. In the meantime we are doing our best to persuade the developers to at least mount window displays, should the commencement of the work be further delayed.

BATTLE OF BRITAIN MEMORIAL, CAPEL-LE-FERNE

Concern has been expressed about both the principle and the detail of this scheme. The Society has supported both the siting of the memorial (which will be an additional visitor attraction in White Cliffs Country) and the proposed accompanying visitor facilities and exhibition space. However, we wished to seek assurance that the monument itself would be sympathetic to both its location and its purpose.

The following is an extract from the reply received from Wing Commander Page, the



project initiator and chairman. "The wing shape depicts that of a fighter aircraft of the 1940 period, and the archway in the centre will have two sculptured birds depicted in full flight." The name of "these birds, which are indigenous to these Isles, was also the name of the engine which powered both the Hurricane and the Spitfire, namely, the Merlin."

WORK ON THE A20 EXTENSION

From Phyllis Dobbins.

An excellent exhibition mounted by the Department of Transport at the Town Hall gave full details of the A20 extension from Court Wood to the Eastern Docks. Officials from the department, the contractors and landscapers were present to answer questions.

The plans are very close to those put forward at the 1987 public enquiry. The principal change being that instead of a roundabout at the foot of Woolcomber Street there will be traffic lights, regaining about 2 metres of land from the side of the Leisure Centre. Facilities for pedestrian access to harbour and coast include an underpass at Aycliffe and at the foot of Bench Street and a pedestrian crossing near Marine Court.

To provide sufficient space for the dual carriage-way at East Cliff a new sea wall will be built. This means considerable noise for the residents, but monitors are being installed to check noise levels. The work here includes piling and concrete facing for Castle Jetty, which Dover District Council hopes will be taken over by the Ministry of Transport.

Here, and elsewhere along the route, trees and shrubs will be planted. There will be plant boxes to separate the new promenade from the road. It is hoped these will be in keeping with the character of the area.

Any complaints arising from the construction work may be referred to the Complaints Commissioner, Sir Donald Murray (who is already responsible for complains about the Channel Tunnel!)

CHANNEL TUNNEL – SHAKESPEARE CLIFF RECLAMATION AREA

From John Gerrard, Vice-Chairman.

Eurotunnel has recently produced a consultative document concerning the future use of the Shakespeare Reclamation Site and a meeting of interested parties was held at the Dover District Council Offices on 17th July 1991.

Dr Kate Kershaw of E.T. gave a comprehensive description of the detailed work that has been going on behind the scenes to ensure that in ecological terms the best possible planting and landscaping solutions are found. It was most interesting to hear just how much trial planting has already been successfully carried out, and the results of this will be useful for later work.

E.T. indicated that a subsidiary company will be responsible for the management and development of the site and, whilst the east end which contains the cooling plant will for obvious reasons be restricted from public access, it was intended to give wide access to the public in the remaining areas. There was, however, some discussion regarding the question of short term restrictions to some areas whilst the new plants establish themselves.

The original proposal to restrict private vehicular access from the site and provide busing has now been abandoned and the present proposals allow for a limited sized car park of about 150 vehicle capacity. In addition to the car park it is likely that there will be a small pavilion and café in the central section of the area.

Perhaps not surprisingly there was a strong contingent of anglers present at the meeting and they indicated that in their view this site would provide one of the finest angling venues in the U.K. They would like to explore the possibilities for holding National and International angling competitions there, suggesting possible turnouts of 800 or more anglers at a time. This news obviously failed to thrill some of the environmentalists present and it would appear that E.T. will have its work cut out to achieve a sensible balance between interested parties in this regard. Based upon our experience in Dover Harbour, I took the opportunity of giving E.T. advance warning of the problems of litter and fishing hooks!!

An aspect that gave particular pleasure was the confirmation that the low-level coastal walk will be re-opened at the end of the construction period. A wide promenade with protective seawall will run along the entire length of the site, and access steps will be provided at each end.

E.T. also indicated that they will be making special arrangements to provide access for the disabled.

All in all, a very interesting presentation and one that confirmed that Eurotunnel is taking most seriously its responsibilities for managing this important site in a manner that adequately reflects its environmental importance and its amenity value to this area.

For this they are to be congratulated.

WESTERN DOCKS

From John Gerrard

Messrs L & R Leisure P.L.C. have now been appointed as consultants to carry out a market analysis of development options for the Western Docks. Following completion of early studies, a master plan will be developed.

It is hoped that construction work on the first phase development of the Wellington Dock will commence towards the end of 1992.

At present the critical eastern end of the site is occupied by the Board's Maintenance Department and they will be re-located in their new headquarters (currently being constructed at the Eastern Docks) early next year.

The Board has recently invested in a further 67 yacht berths in the Wellington Dock, bringing the total to 104. In addition, it has provided a greatly improved service to visiting yachts and, as a consequence, we are seeing a most encouraging increase in yachting activity in the port.

Plans are now well advanced to utilise the old train ferry dock for the importation of ballast fill.



Dover Harbour Board has recently installed 67 new pontoons in the Wellington dock. This brings the total number available to 104. Each berth is equipped with running water and a 13 amp electricity supply. The pontoons were designed, constructed and installed by Simmonds Marine (Projects) Ltd.

On the following page: Dover Cargo Terminal's record single cargo – 4,400 tonnes of New Zealand apples – arrived on the Seatrade vessel Schoener in May 1991

EASTERN DOCKS

The two new wave-piercing catamarans have now arrived and are operating from their new berth, which, contrary to some press releases given out by Hoverspeed, was finished on time. Initial reaction to the modified craft is favourable but we shall have to await the winter storms to see how good they really are.. Meanwhile Hoverspeed has announced that it intends to close the Western Docks Hoverport down during the winter months. Members may have noticed an interesting maritime operation going on recently, when a huge floating crane was lifting the bridges and portal structure for No. 6 berth back into position. These were temporarily removed in order to facilitate the widening of the berth to take the new generation of bigger and wider ferries that have started to arrive. SUKL/Stenna has already introduced two new ferries within the last few weeks and P & O will be bringing four large new freight ships on stream during the next few months. In addition R.T.M. will be introducing a large new multi-purpose ferry on the Ostende route later this autumn.

As a result of the introduction of these new ships, the Board is having to build yet another large berth at a cost of about £13.5 million. Construction of the berth will commence this autumn and is scheduled for completion at the end of next year.



In my earlier article on the demolition of the pens (*Newsletter No. 8*), I referred to the subsequent provision of new storage sheds for general cargo on that site and our hopes for the development of that trade. I am delighted to be able to report that our investment is indeed paying off and we are now seeing a significant increase in this type of traffic – so much so that we are already planning the provision of extra shed space adjacent to the quay, in order to provide cool storage facilities for the fruit trade.

Although we are going to have to reduce our numbers somewhat in the run-up to the tunnel, we are determined to improve our performance and the quality of service that we provide and to extend the scope of our activities. In doing so we intend to provide the Port of Dover and those who work in it with an assured future.

Watch this column!