

*The work of the*

# PLANNING

*Sub-Committee*

Report by

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First of all I am deeply sorry that I have to prepare this report as Jack continues to have a health problem and I am sure all members wish him a speedy recovery and return to the Dover Society fold.

Since the last edition of the Newsletter the Planning Committee has been active. We have made detailed comments in respect to five planning applications, the Planning dept at Dover District Council have taken into account our comments with two refusals (back-garden infill) and one application imposing restrictions.

The Whitfield Urban Extension (1 and 1a) has taken much time in assessing the supporting documentation (possibly over 10,000 pages) but we have made comments with regard to this somewhat controversial development and the main ones are summarised below.

The development will go ahead as contained in the Councils Local Development Framework document. However, it must be recognised this development will raise issues outside the development area, in particular the issue of retail in Dover if, as proposed, a "District Retail Centre" is part of the development. This may

create more empty houses in Dover; there is a need to ensure an empty homes strategy runs parallel with the Whitfield development and exercise Section 215, which would bring back into use many derelict buildings that are currently eyesores, shows that it is actually cheaper to renovate a building than to build a new one.

The supporting pictorial design code documentation shows many examples from Poundbury in Dorset, which was the inspiration of HRH Prince Charles, being developed on Duchy of Cornwall land.

If the aspiration by DDC is for a similar "village" concept it is doubtful that the proposed density planned at Whitfield would deliver this type of quality development.

There will need to be job creation in Dover to justify the creation of so many new homes otherwise the homes become a dormitory for other towns or even worse a second home which has seen local communities, particularly in the West Country, suffer from the lack of local spend. Supporting infrastructure (Transport/Schools etc) must be in place before houses are occupied and correct phasing of the development is crucial. With very slow delivery of

Dover regeneration we are concerned that there will be greater "planning" time to the Whitfield development at the detriment to time being spent on delivering the Dover schemes, resulting in further delay to the regeneration that Dover so badly needs.

Since starting this report the disturbing announcement of 2,400

jobs being lost at Pfizers must question the need for such a build unless, we hope, that these jobs are saved.

The highly complex Localism Bill is continually being evaluated in respect to revised planning procedures and is reported on page fourteen by Alan Lee.

## The Dover Society Websites

[old] [www.doversociety.org](http://www.doversociety.org) &  
[new] [www.doversociety.org.uk](http://www.doversociety.org.uk)

In 2010 there were over 20,000 visits to our website, in 2002 it was only 110. The content has now grown to a level that requires a new more sophisticated ability to handle the data. It will take a year to achieve the switch over, meanwhile both sites will be accessible. The new website has a powerful search facility and the content will be more visible to the search engines.

### The Dover Festival [www.doverfestival.info](http://www.doverfestival.info)

This event, held every four years, leads to an increase in media attention that gives other local events a boost. Bigger and better events are planned for 2012 with the committee working hard to market Dover and enrich the lives of the community. The Queen's Jubilee and the London Olympics are the major events but Charles Dickens and his many connections with Dover could provide a theme.



### Popular Items on the Website

*The Daughters of Dover* by Lorraine Sencicle

Includes details of some of the 88 Dover's around the World.

*Dover History Scrapbook* by Kathleen Hollingsbee

Full of interesting local items from old newspapers and other records.

**Any comments/feedback on our websites  
e-mail [doversociety@hotmail.com](mailto:doversociety@hotmail.com)**