

Planning Committee

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Since my last report in the March Newsletter, written in January, much press activity has focused on the DTIZ scheme. As I write this report in May minor planning alterations to the Hotel have been applied for and granted. The Dover Society expressed concern that the alterations in essence was moving the 'bin store' area from the rear of the building to the front (Woolcomber Street), in doing so one of the few landscaped areas was being removed. The controversial tower with large advertising screen is still part of the scheme although the latest comments with the application indicates that the tower may not be needed for re-location of communication masts currently located on Burlington House. So in effect the tower will only be used for advertising which is what we indicated at the time of the original planning application.

The Developer announced that the restaurant chain Frankie & Benny's had signed agreements and will be within the units of the multi cinema complex. The area of land on the former MFI site has already had plans approved for a residential property. Indeed the Society was complimentary on the design of the building that fits in with the architectural importance of the Castle Street Conservation Area, It is understood that work on the residential area will commence in the late summer of this year.

Part of the design concept of the current DTIZ plan was to deliver a layout based on original streets. As one of Dover's oldest streets (Dolphin Lane) is retained we have sought, through the Regeneration Officer at DDC, that the street surface retains

original cobbles. With such a large expanse of asphalt for car parking this will give some "character" to the site.

As reported in the last Newsletter Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO's) have now been served. I know we all look forward to seeing the Burlington House eye-sore being demolished and hope the CPO process is concluded as soon as possible.

Recent announcements in respect of the port have already resulted in revised plans for the Western Docks being prepared by DHB. Instead of ferry berths and waterfront/marina the area will be for cargo traffic and waterfront/marina, thereby releasing space at Eastern Docks. The cargo area will increase warehousing for distribution and the entire project is envisaged to create 600 new jobs. Whilst recognizing the importance of the commercial activities of the port we have already indicated at DHB workshops that the quality of build should be high, in particular the waterfront area. In this context we have drawn attention to the excellent waterfront design at Port Sovereign (Eastbourne). As the warehousing will be highly visible from the Western Heights we are seeking some improved design/landscaping. Whilst there is mention of 600 jobs we are seeking assurance of job sustainability.

The Buckland Hospital is well on its way and expected to be open early in 2015. I have spent considerable time at various "Health" meetings stressing the need for Intermediate Care facilities. As the new hospital will not provide such facilities our

efforts have been on protecting surplus land adjacent to the new hospital that is held by East Kent Health Authority (EKUHA) who had intended disposing of any surplus land. Our Chairman was at a meeting recently where Dr Cocker (Chair of Clinical Commissioning Group) made reference to the hard work of Dover Society in ensuring that this area of land will be retained for future "Health/Social Care". I would take this opportunity of thanking Lorraine Sencicle in providing me with a wealth of facts that greatly assisted me.

It was hoped that plans for the car parking facilities at Dover Priory would have been submitted. It is understood there is a small area of land currently owned by HMRC that requires change of ownership. A recent report with regard to High Speed 2 made reference to the fact that HS1 had not delivered the expected regeneration in East Kent. We have therefore written to the Minister of Transport drawing attention to the failure of providing adequate parking at Dover Priory that has itself restricted any anticipated growth of commuter rail passengers. As it seems Government Depts. are holding up the project we seek the Minister to resolve the transfer of land

to Railtrack.

With a mild winter several properties with Section 215 warnings have completed work and there is much scaffolding going up as more properties respond. The property Best Kebab (13/13A Cannon Street) pleaded guilty in court to failure to comply and has advised DDC of a date when the remedial work will commence. The former ABC Cinema in Castle Street has just been sold by Wetherspoon and we look with interest at the intentions of the new owner for this building in the future. It is worth noting that the Section 215 legal notice served to Wetherspoon will also apply to the new owners.

We continue to seek DDC to landscape the area between the River Dour and York Street. This area is used by many tourist visitors as well as being on the main route to/from the docks. It will also be next to the DTIZ development and we feel that any development of this site will realistically be some years away. The use of "living walls" and 3D dimensional wall screens known as "Textile Façades", that are extensively used in some cities when major construction work is underway, would create a cared for environment.



Living Green Wall London



Textile Facade in Oslo © Mike Weston