

# Planning Committee

**Patrick Sherratt**

**Chairman Planning Committee - As at 20th January 2019**

**M**y belated good wishes to all for 2019. For me 2018 has been a difficult one health-wise and I have been grateful to all members of the Planning Committee for their continued support. I expect at some future date to end my tenure as chair of planning and in this context Graham Margery has stepped up as my deputy in order for us to ensure continuity, I greatly thank him for his support.

We continue to submit comments in respect of planning applications, as well as comments on transport infrastructure. The latest in respect to the Third Thames Crossing, our comments being respected and supported by our Member of Parliament and the Dover Harbour Board. Also the need to improve the A2 access from Lydden to Eastern Docks as, detailed in my report in the November Newsletter.

## **Dover Western Docks Revival (DWDR)**

The work continues with the latest being the installation of the bascule bridge and lock gates. The bridge giving access across the "cut" that links the new marina with the Wellington Dock. Once operational this should enable DHB to progress to stage three of the development, constructing the "perishables" delivery centre. In order to achieve this the Granville Dock and tidal harbour will be infilled. Interesting is that currently there are 400 marina berths (Granville Dock 133, Tidal Harbour, 107 and Wellington Dock 160). On the assumption there will still be the same number of berths in the Wellington Dock, with the 250 berths at the new marina gives a similar total number of berths at 410. Previous plans show

a link road from near Lord Warden House (Southern House) to the clock tower that will greatly improve connection from the cruise terminals to the seafront and town centre.

With the eastern breakwater (new pier) and the marina curve completed with public access, we have suggested a pedestrian bridge to link the two. This could be raised, as required, by the new marina control centre. At present this not being considered but we shall continue to press for its inclusion in order to provide a "circular" walk, similar bridges are incorporated within the Sovereign Harbour complex at Eastbourne.

## **DTIZ (St James Development)**

Car parking charges now apply. Interesting to see how many vacant spaces there now are as workers instead use nearby on-street parking. We have approached DDC to conduct an on-street survey as residents are deprived of parking spaces.



*New Single Leaf Bascule Bridge © Alan Sencicle*

Latest indications are that there are four retail units and four catering units still to rent out although one of each is shown as “under offer”.

### **Castle Street/Biggin Street**

Planning applications continue to be submitted, in particular Castle Street as properties change from commercial use to residential. We support change of use rather than properties remaining empty and becoming an eyesore. However, where applications for conversion fail to meet ‘Conversion to Flats’ guidelines we do not and, as per November newsletter, are seeking DDC to adopt this 2006 guideline, as without it more town centre properties are being converted with sub-standard living area.

### **Conservation Areas**

Between the Refurbishment Committee and Planning Committee we continue to ensure the objectives of Conservation Areas are observed by DDC. Reported separately by Derek is the work being carried out in respect to the Dour Street Conservation Area Appraisal. Well done to all involved.

### **Section 215 of Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Enforcement**

Several members have asked me to explain how Section 215 works. As this is a lengthy subject I have prepared an article elsewhere within this newsletter.

### **Farthingloe and Western Heights**

Still awaiting a revised Planning Application.

### **Connaught Barracks Developments**

Detailed plans have now been published for the “Officers” site in respect of 64 dwellings. This is ill conceived with allocated car parking spaces often 200 yards away, making it likely that any grass landscaping area nearer would in practice be used, creating a very poor visual effect across the entire development. In 2015 a public consultation

indicated a quality development; however, the proposed design and layout fail to deliver what was projected and makes a mockery of community engagement.

Over the weekend of 19th/20th January a public consultation at the Discovery Centre was exhibited for the remainder of the barracks site. This is for a total of 286 “units”; 100 in flats and 186 in 2/3/4 bed houses. Whilst the design of properties is far better than the officers’ mess site, the opportunity to deliver high quality (executive) homes on this site that commands Castle and channel views, has not been considered. It does beg the question if it complies with DDC core strategy, CP10 iii that states housing development should be “Upper Mid-Market range”.

### **Former St Mary’s Residential Home**

Following public concern as to the need for a 40 plus bedroomed B&B the applicant has withdrawn the planning application. I have no doubt a revised scheme, possibly flats, will be submitted.

### **Former Magistrates Court, Pencester**

An interesting application with roof extensions to create 3rd and 4th floors in order to deliver 46 flats (11 x 1 bed, 33 x 2 bed, 2 x 3 bed); the room sizes comply with minimum standards. The properties are “market” housing and with no affordable units; we have suggested a CIL/Section 106 contribution should be made by the developer and be used to enhance/improve Pencester Gardens.

As “market” housing means they will be sold, and with many Dover young families seeking to get on the property ladder, these units would be ideal. However, being “market” housing the applicant could dispose of them to private rental buyers and that, we feel, would be disappointing for our local young people.