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Shining the Way - Multi Million Pound Dover Beacon Project Takes Exciting Next Step



Artist's impression supplied by Lee Evans Partnership

Multi million pound plans for a landmark development in Bench Street as part of the transformational Dover Beacon project have been given the go ahead by planners.

The application for a four-storey building, known as The Bench, for uses including education, business start-up space, studio gallery/creative space and a café was given the go ahead, with conditions, by DDC's Planning Committee at a meeting last night.

The Dover Beacon project is set to deliver over £90m of economic benefit, bringing investment to boost skills and access across the area.

A further education campus is set to enable local young people to access education, training and skills in creative and digital industries, and a business centre is to provide facilities to support start-ups and help small to medium sized businesses to grow. A creative centre is to facilitate contemporary film making, digital creativity and immersive art.

The project follows a whole range of consultation and public engagement on design proposals, including a [drop-in event](#) at EKC Dover College in November last year.

Building work is set to start this September and to finish in spring 2026, when the building is set to be handed to tenant businesses/organisations for fitting out works.

Cllr Kevin Mills, Leader of Dover District Council said: "This is fantastic news for the town, district and area. This will provide an incredible boost to Dover, supporting regeneration, providing business and creative spaces, and creating exciting new jobs and access to education, training and skills opportunities for young people."

For more information on the background to the planning decision, please see the report to [DDC Planning Committee](#). For more information on regeneration in the area, please see the DDC website at www.dover.gov.uk/regeneration

Notes:

The Dover Beacon project is funded by two key funding streams, combined to deliver creative solutions for the future of the town, and includes:

- » A creative centre and underpass improvements with £3.2m of funding from the Future High Street Fund, together with a £1.7m commitment from DDC
- » An education campus, business start-up centre, improved public realm and an expansion of a Dover cycle hire scheme with £18.1m funding awarded from the Levelling Up Fund, together with £1.8m from DDC.

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