

# VALLEY GARDENS CONSERVATION AREA STUDY AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN

Approved by Committee  
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**Brighton & Hove  
City Council**

DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

## **FOREWORD**

This document is the major contribution to a Study and Enhancement Plan for the Valley Gardens Conservation Area and is the latest in a series of studies intended to cover all of the conservation areas in Brighton, It has been produced following full consultation with local residents and amenity societies, as well as national amenity societies, and the comments received have been taken into account. Where the need for further advice or guidance has been identified in the Study this will take the form of future appendices to this document. The Study is adopted as Council policy and will guide all its activities in the conservation area. It is also adopted as a material consideration for the purposes of development control and, where appropriate, its policies will be incorporated into the Borough Plan at the next review,

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Valley Gardens is the central spine of historic Brighton and is a junction for the three major traffic routes into the town. It includes some of the earliest buildings from Brighton's fashionable Regency development phase as well as many of the town's most important listed buildings and open spaces, and extends out to the sea via the Palace Pier. Its status as a conservation area lies in the historic interest behind its development as well as the architectural interest of its buildings.

1.2 However, this central, historic spine is under pressure - from traffic, from redevelopment proposals, from commercial use requirements, from incremental alterations - and at the same time suffering some neglect, to the gardens, to the fabric of its buildings and streets and in the form of blighted redevelopment sites. To preserve its character and appearance therefore requires firm measures. Moreover, the full value of the conservation area, as a focus of historic Brighton to be appreciated by residents and visitors alike, cannot be realised without some considerable enhancement proposals.

1.3 This Study sets out to clearly define the appearance and character of the conservation area in order that the Council will have a firm basis for ensuring that any future development within the area preserves or enhances its appearance and character. This applies to extensions and alterations to existing buildings as well as to the development of vacant sites and works on public spaces. This assessment of the area is preceded by a brief summary of its historical development since it is considered that its character and appearance are direct consequences of, and inseparable from, this history.

1.4 The Study will also consider whether the present boundary of the conservation area is appropriate or whether it should be altered or extended.

1.5 The following features will be identified and discussed

- (i) Buildings of Local Interest (not included in the statutory list)
- (ii) Buildings which detract from the conservation area.
- (iii) Sites which could be developed to enhance the conservation area.
- (iv) Future possibilities for the central gardens.
- (v) Transport proposals which would affect the conservation area.
- (vi) Problems or issues affecting the conservation area.
- (vii) Future action.
- (viii) Enhancement proposals (general and site specific).

1.6 Interim conservation area design guidelines have been included as an appendix pending the production of more specific guidance for Valley Gardens as identified in the section on future action, which will be available as a later appendix. Leaflets on relevant particular subjects for which a need has been identified will also be available to accompany the Study as and when they are published.

## **2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 GENERAL**

2.1.1 The built form of Valley Gardens was not developed to any kind of planned layout, nor within a planned time scale nor in a common architectural style. Rather the conservation area is made up of different terraces or groups of buildings as well as several larger individual buildings. What links and unifies these disparate elements is the 23 acres of (mainly) public gardens which run the length of the conservation area from Park Crescent to the sea, forming a green valley, and which largely dictated the area's historical development.

2.1.2 Valley Gardens lies immediately to the east of the Old Town which, until the mid 18th century, represented the extent of Brighton's built development. This flat area remained undeveloped not for aesthetic or social reasons but probably simply because the land here was originally too swampy to build on. For centuries an intermittent stream known as the Wellesbourne ran, after prolonged rainfall, from the Downs beyond Patcham all the way to Pool Valley, where it discharged into the sea. In 1792-3 this stream was culverted by the laying of a wooden sewer under the Steine and the bricking over of Pool Valley; a further sewer was constructed in 1827-8 all the way up to Preston Circus. By this time, though, the pattern of buildings fronting onto the central open space was well established and the building of the Prince Regent's Royal Pavilion had confirmed the fashionable status of the area. The Old Steine had become popular as a promenade and the North Steine Enclosures (now Victoria Gardens) were private gardens for wealthy subscribers. By the end of the 19th century all the gardens, with the exception of those to Park Crescent, were dedicated to public use.

2.1.3 Generally speaking, the oldest buildings in Valley Gardens are at the southern end and particularly to the east and west sides of the Old Steine. Many date from the late 18th century but most were refronted in the 19th century. The oldest remaining building is Marlborough House, which was built about 1765 but remodelled to the designs of Robert Adam in 1786. By the early 1780s development of the east side of the Steine was well underway. Some of the new building facing onto Valley Gardens was designed by the Wilds and most was intended as housing, lodgings and resort facilities (such as meeting rooms and libraries) for the wealthy, with modest housing for the artisans and workers in the streets behind. Examples of the latter survive at Richmond Gardens, Queen's Place and Hanover Street and Terrace.

Amon and Amon Henry Wilds, father and son, together with Charles Augustin Busby were the leading architects of Regency Brighton and Hove. The Wilds moved to Brighton from Lewes in about 1815 and soon proceeded to build much of the town's most prestigious new development, with the son, Amon Henry, doing most of the architectural design work whilst his father was principally a builder. Richmond Terrace and Hanover Crescent are typical examples of their work where their punning trademark of an ammonite plaster capital can be seen on the pilasters. In 1823 Amon Henry Wilds entered into a fruitful partnership with Busby, an architect newly arrived from London. Their partnership lasted only until 1825 but during this time they collaborated on many schemes in Brighton and Hove, from whole new estates to the alteration of existing buildings. Their office was in the North Lodge at Hanover Crescent.

## **2.2 OLD STEINE / SEAFRONT**

2.2.1 The Steine, which originally extended as far as the sea, was for centuries used by the fishermen for drying nets and storing their boats in bad weather. It became known as the Old Steine after New Steine was built to the east in the 1790s. In 1788 it was enclosed by a painted wooden fence and then in 1823 by iron railings, to the protests of the fishermen, and the following year the roadway at its southern end was constructed. The nature of the Old Steine changed as the area became fashionable, not just as a residential address and location for resort facilities but also as an area for the 'brass plate' professions - doctors, dentists, solicitors and surveyors.

2.2.2 In 1834 the Old Steine was bisected by a new road linking Castle Square with St James's Street. The tree planting and formal layout of the gardens date from 1846, when the Victoria Fountain was erected. By the middle of the 19th century, too, the large public buildings which occupy the southern end had been built (originally all as hotels) and the general form of the area had taken shape as we see it today, though the Castle Square entrance remained much narrower until the demolition and rebuilding on the north corner in the 1930s. Castle Square itself had been the commercial hub of the town since the early 18th century.

2.2.3 Behind the Old Steine to the east lies St James's Place which, unusually for its backland location, consists of six grand houses dating from about 1800, facing out over the open gardens of the Old Steine houses. Again unusually, although the facades are grand, they are fronted with cobbles and the houses themselves are very shallow. It has been suggested that they were built for the 'household' at the Royal Pavilion but there is no evidence to support this. Nevertheless, the date, grandness and use of cobbles link St James's Place with Valley Gardens rather than the later adjacent housing in East Cliff.

2.2.4 At the seafront, Grand Junction Road was built out over the beach and opened in 1829, forming a road where there had only been a cliff edge and providing a continuous east-west route so that horse-drawn traffic no longer had to divert via Pool Valley, Old Steine and North Street. In 1899 the seafront end of what is now the conservation area was completed when the Palace Pier opened. In general, though, Brighton's seafront development belongs to other conservation areas; in Valley Gardens even the buildings at the sea end were built facing inwards onto the gardens.

## **2.3 ROYAL PAVILION / NEW ROAD**

2.3.1 This part of the conservation area is largely 19th century in origin, when Brighton was at the height of its fashionability, and includes Brighton's singularly most important and influential building - the Royal Pavilion, which, together with its estate, was bought by the local authority in 1850. The site on which it stands was originally leased by the Prince of Wales in 1787 when the first 'Marine Pavilion' was built. The history of subsequent alterations and development is well documented elsewhere, but the Pavilion as we know it today was built to the designs of John Nash between 1815-21. Subsequently the Pavilion grounds were also laid out, as far as is known to Nash's original design of 1825 (or something very similar). The eastern lawns were altered in the 1920s by the opening up of the boundary edge and the creation of the low, rendered balustrade and ornamental pools which can be seen today.

2.3.2 The Dome and Corn Exchange were built between 1803-08 as the Pavilion's stables and riding school respectively. The Dome was converted into a concert hall in 1867; the

Corn Exchange acquired the use by which it is now known in 1868 but eventually became an exhibition / function room after the First World War. The Church Street entrance dates from 1934. A further part of the original servants' quarters, coach houses and stables were remodelled as the Museum, Art Gallery and Library in 1873 and the existing Indian style exterior, which dominates the lower end of Church Street, dates from 1902.

2.3.3 In 1803 the Town Commissioners had allowed the Prince to close off Great East Street, which ran past the Pavilion, subject to its replacement further west by what became known as New Road, laid out in 1805. This wide road was developed over the next decade and several of the early buildings still survive at either end. The colonnade outside numbers 6-12 dates from 1806/7 and originally extended around the corner into North Street. New Road also contains significant individual buildings of architectural and historic interest, notably the classical Unitarian Church of 1820 by A H Wilds and the Theatre Royal, which has occupied the site since 1806 but which was rebuilt to its present form in 1894.

## **2.4 VICTORIA GARDENS**

2.4.1 The central part of the conservation area is formed by Victoria Gardens and the buildings which directly front onto the gardens. These gardens were enclosed by railings in 1810 and were then reserved for the exclusive use of wealthy subscribers. Perimeter shrubbery with central 'clumps' was planted in 1840. The northern of the two enclosures was not opened to the public until 1883 and the southern one followed in 1896. They had encircling paths enclosed by tall cast iron railings. The gardens acquired their present name on Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897. In the 1920s the tall iron railings were replaced by dwarf rails and the pavements set externally, so creating ornamental rather than recreational gardens, with complex horticultural bedding systems which were meant to be admired from passing cars and trams. This was part of the plan of Brighton's Superintendent of Parks and Gardens, Captain Maclaren, to create open 'valley vistas' throughout the town. Even then, though, the gardens were planted more densely with trees and the areas of bedding were much larger than now.

2.4.2 Further north are the grounds of St Peter's churchyard which have been open for public use since 1899 and which were further opened up as part of Maclaren's 'valley vistas' scheme in the 1920s, in conjunction with road widening. The church itself dominates this part of the conservation area. It was built in 1824-28 to the designs of Charles Barry (but with the chancel added in 1896-1902 by Somers Clarke) and is an early example of the Gothic revival in church building in Britain.

2.4.3 The terraces fronting Victoria Gardens developed gradually northwards from the 1770s until the 1820s, starting with Marlborough Place (known as North Row until 1819) on the west side, but progress was comparatively slow as the land further north was too far from the sea and the fashionable hub of North Street/Castle Square to make it attractive enough to developers. Grand Parade on the east side followed Marlborough Place and progress continued north as far as St Peter's Place by the 1820s. However, this progression and the original uniformity of the terraces are no longer so evident, due firstly to the Victorian practice of refronting buildings with cant bays and, subsequently, to road widening and 20th century redevelopment. Nevertheless, many of the older houses survive on Grand Parade, the majority with cobbled or mathematical-tiled elevations, whilst St George's Place and St Peter's Place remain largely intact as unified terrace developments. At Marlborough Place the only buildings remaining from the early phase of development are numbers 31-36



behind the TSB offices though the 1930s redesign of the King and Queen pub hides a building which probably dates from before 1770. York Place, further north, has retained its original terraced form but has suffered from the addition of poor quality modern shopfronts and some unsympathetic alterations to the elevations above.

## **2.5 THE LEVEL / PARK CRESCENT / HANOVER**

2.5.1 The northern part of Valley Gardens centres on The Level, the principle public open space and traditionally a popular venue for circuses, fairs, rallies, celebrations and other events. Cricket was also played there from at least the mid-18th century until 1822, and the northern part was from 1791 laid out as a formal ground. At this time The Level included the area of land which is now Park Crescent gardens, but in 1822 Union Road was constructed and the area to the north sold off separately. At the same time The Level itself was formally laid out by A H Wilds and the local botanist and landscape gardener Henry Phillips. In 1844 the avenues of elm trees along the outer pathway were planted, but many were lost in the great storm of 1987 (though 300 replacement trees were subsequently planted, of different ages and species to avoid a repeat of such wholesale loss). The level was enclosed by railings and planted with shrubs in 1877 but the railings were removed in the 1920s as part of Maclaren's 'valley vistas' scheme. The general layout, though, has remained fairly unchanged, with the northern part still a level grassed area for events and the southern part occupied by the enclosed children's' playground created in 1927.

2.5.2 The area of land north of Union Road opened as a cricket ground and pleasure gardens, known as Royal Gardens, in 1823 and Sussex County Cricket Club played their earliest matches there. From 1849, though, the houses of Park Crescent were built to the design of A H Wilds and part of the land became the development's private gardens. The former boundary wall of the pleasure gardens still remains on Union Road with its entrance pillars topped by the recently restored lion and lioness which originally advertised its zoological exhibits.

2.5.3 On the western side of The Level, Ditchling Road was developed with fairly uniformly small-scale terraces in the 1810s and the houses at the southern end remain more or less as original. Backing onto these are the much more modest cobble-fronted properties of Queen's Place, built at around the same time.

2.5.4 The eastern side of The Level was developed in the 1810s and 1820s with grander terraced compositions by the Wilds. Of these, Waterloo Place was regrettably almost all demolished to make way for the late 1960s development of Wellesley House and part of Richmond Terrace made way for the Technical College of 1895-96, which although dominant in scale is architecturally interesting in its own right. The remaining houses in Richmond Terrace display a rich variety of detail which is testament to the creativity of the Wilds.

2.5.5 The grandest composition on this side, though, is A H Wilds's Hanover Crescent of 1822 with its linked groups of three houses, classical lodges at either end and private communal garden. On the hill behind the Crescent, Hanover Street was developed with modest terraced housing at the same time and similar housing followed a decade later in Hanover Terrace. This demonstrates how in Regency Brighton housing for the different social classes was not segregated into different parts of the town but was constructed in

mixed developments. The line of separation was that the grander houses were constructed facing onto the gardens (or, in the case of other conservation areas, facing the sea or grouped around private gardens or squares) whilst the workers' housing occupied the narrower streets behind. Hanover Street and Terrace were housing for artisans and white collar workers and the lower end of Southover Street was originally in more mixed commercial/residential usage.

2.5.6 Just to the north of Hanover Crescent are the Percy and Wagner almshouses, the only remaining former almshouses in Brighton. Built in 1795 in a very early but modest Gothic revival style, the original six houses were extended by a further three at either end in 1859. They are very different in scale and style to the other houses on this side of The Level and would originally have been rather isolated until the 1820s.

### **3. ANALYSIS OF APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

3.1.1 As demonstrated in the historical background, Valley Gardens is not an homogenous area in terms of its historical development; nor is it so in terms of its appearance and character. To provide a proper analysis of the townscape and an assessment of the area's character it is therefore necessary to divide the conservation area into four separate sub-areas along the lines identified in the previous section, and to consider each of these individually. The divisions into sub-areas are based on the criteria of historical development, physical and architectural characteristics and the social mix and nature of land use predominant in each part.

3.1.2 The map at Appendix 3 indicates the divisions between the sub-areas but these should not be thought of as hard and fast boundaries since there are some aspects of appearance and character which are generally present throughout Valley Gardens (see below). In particular, when considering proposals for a site or property which lies near one of the sub-divisions, the character and appearance of more than one of the sub-areas will need to be taken into consideration.

3.1.3 As far as possible, appearance and character have been considered separately, but it must be recognised that often a quality referred to under one heading will also be a contributory factor to the other. The descriptions are in some places repetitious; this is deliberate in order that each description can, where necessary, be used outside the context of the Study as a whole (e.g. for planning application reports, appeal statements and enforcement reports).

#### **3.2 GENERAL APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER**

3.2.1 The linear shape of Valley Gardens directly correlates to the old path of the Wellesbourne River, starting at The Level where two separate streams from the Downs merged. The townscape of this area (and indeed well beyond) is dominated by the public gardens and open spaces which run its length and the historic pattern of development which has buildings fronting onto these gardens. Within the open spaces the trees which line them are essential to the appearance of the conservation area for their role in softening the townscape, defining the vistas and providing shelter, shade and movement (as well as their ecological role).



3.2.2 The typical building form is the terrace, generally of three or four storeys but often with an additional attic storey. The roofline is not uniform but is characterised by pitched or mansarded slate roofs, often behind parapets, with prominent chimney stacks forming a rhythmic skyline. The architecture generally shares a common Regency/early Victorian style based upon classical architecture and the elevations are most commonly stucco render, punctuated by sash windows graduated in size to reflect the primary importance of the ground and first floors. The windows provide the visual rhythm. Interspersed amongst these terraces, particularly in the southern half of the conservation area, are several much larger, grander public or institutional buildings for which the open spaces provide a strong setting. The important visual relationship between the buildings and central gardens in the conservation area has, though, been partly diluted as a result of the heavy increase in traffic using the roads. Physically, too, the gardens have become less accessible (though this was partly a deliberate aspect of the 1920s redesign).

3.2.3 The character of Valley Gardens as a whole stems from its wide mix of uses: commercial, residential, retail, cultural, educational, and recreational. This mix of uses is a characteristic of the area's development since the late 18th century. Above all, though, its character lies in its role as a 'green corridor' of open space in the urban centre. When the former agricultural fields, or laines, either side of the valley became developed in the 19th century, Valley Gardens remained an important transition space between the different characters of the areas on the eastern and western sides, but this has become less evident with the greatly increased traffic. Whilst the Steine has been the hub of north - south traffic since the early 19th century, this role has grown to the detriment of the area's other characteristics.

3.2.4 The grandness of the original terraced frontages and public buildings is also an element of the area's character. It evokes how this was a highly fashionable area in the 19th century and a popular place to live or stay for many wealthy people. At the same time, the streets of modest housing (e.g. Hanover Street, Hanover Terrace, Queen's Place, Richmond Gardens) show how housing for the artisans and working people was confined to the narrow streets behind the grand frontages.

### **3.3 OLD STEINE / SEAFRONT**

#### **Appearance**

3.3.1 At this southern point of Valley Gardens the land on either side is only gently sloping and from within the centre of the Old Steine gardens the only buildings which are visible above the roof line of the frontage buildings are some intrusive modern blocks on the East Cliff. Otherwise (and certainly originally) the only visible evidence of development beyond to the east or west comes from glimpses along narrow side streets: The Avenue, Steine Lane, Steine Street and the Pool Valley entrances. Looking south, the built form opens up more to reveal the Palace Pier extending the linear shape of the conservation area out into the sea. Looking north, the open space of the Pavilion's eastern lawns leads the eye into the next part of the conservation area, but the appearance of the Old Steine as a distinct space has been diminished by the demolition of numbers 1 and 2, together with numbers 12-14 Pavilion Parade, for road widening in 1928 and the demolition and widening at Castle Square in the 1930s.

3.3.2 The plot widths fronting Old Steine are very irregular and there is no uniform roofline. Several buildings here were built individually rather than as terraced developments. The unifying features are the materials - especially stucco render - and architectural features such as balconies, bays, sash windows and Regency classical details. On the eastern side the buildings mostly date from around the same period (although several were refronted later in the 19th century) and here there is a consistent terraced building line, set back slightly from the pavement to accommodate basements, with iron railings forming a consistent front boundary. The plot widths vary but there is a strong vertical emphasis throughout. This verticality is spoilt only by the 20th century Job Centre building on the corner of St James's Street. The roofline on this side is more consistent, with roofs behind parapets, but roof level additions have disrupted this. Some buildings still have their Regency segmental (curved) bays; others have been altered to Victorian cant bays. Originally all the buildings would have had balconies and canopies.

3.3.3 The west side consists of a series of linked individual buildings of different ages rather than a terrace. Here the buildings are mostly set back, to different degrees, from the pavement line but with some form of hard boundary treatment. The scale and height of each building varies and there is no strong vertical emphasis overall. However, the use of slate roofs behind bold parapets is a unifying feature, as is the use of stucco rendering and the formal rhythm of the mainly sash windows.

3.3.4 The south west corner unfortunately currently detracts from this part of the conservation area. The group of buildings here, comprising the rear elevations of 61-68 East Street as well as 48 and 49 Old Steine, is marred by various incremental alterations and additions at ground and first floor level, excessive forecourt parking, the loss of front boundary walls and excessive, garish advertising signs, particularly at high level. The mid-1980s office block in this corner known as Kensall house (48a Old Steine) also detracts from the appearance of the area. Although linked at the rear to 67 East Street, it appears from the gardens as an isolated, detached building at odds with its terraced neighbours. Its gabled bays, lack of parapet, narrow windows, sunken entrance, projecting gabled 'porch' and lack of any front boundary treatment are all features alien to this part of the conservation area (and indeed to Valley Gardens as a whole). Moreover, the facing materials used - dark brown brick with contrasting bands of red brick - have no relationship with the traditional materials of the area and the darkness of the brickwork against the predominantly pale stuccoed elevations around it further accentuates the inappropriate form of the building.

3.3.5 The southern side of Old Steine is dominated by the large scale buildings of the Royal Albion Hotel and Royal York Buildings, which form a fitting backdrop and termination to the central gardens when approached from the north. This grand scale is appropriate here where the gardens are at their widest. The gardens themselves retain much of their formal 19th century layout though the current low boundary treatment and quartile flower beds around the fountain date from the 'valley vistas' scheme of the 1920s. The Brighton Buses building at the south east corner is an inappropriate intrusion into the symmetry and boundary line and interrupts important views from the south.

3.3.6 Castle Square is in effect a gateway to the Old Steine, though this visual role was diminished by its widening in the 1930s. The southern side remains a more or less complete, but quite varied, terrace of early/mid 19th century buildings, spoilt only by poor modern shopfronts and advertising. This range of buildings acts as a transition stage

between the Old Steine and the much more commercial character of Castle Square/North Street.

## **Character**

3.3.7 The close relationship between the gardens and the buildings which front onto them, and the sense of enclosure provided by the buildings, are very important to the character of the area but have been considerably weakened. The chief reason for this is the large volume of fast moving traffic which now encircles and bisects the Old Steine, and which has cut off the accessibility of the gardens and therefore diluted their 19th century role as a 'promenade'. The formal, symmetrical layout of the gardens relates to this historical role, as does the fact that the large hotels on the southern side have their main entrances facing onto the gardens rather than onto the sea as the later Victorian hotels did.

3.3.8 The sense of enclosure originally apparent from within the gardens has suffered with the demolition of numbers 1 and 2 Old Steine which has left the northern side much more open, and this has been accentuated by the constant flow of traffic entering and leaving the area.

3.3.9 The current social mix and land use of the Old Steine sub-area is quite varied but largely consists of small scale commercial office or 'brass plate' profession uses, with some hotel use and a small number of residential units. Originally the dominant use was residential with some 'brass plate' professions, but the existing small-scale offices do not harm the historic character of the area since they generally fit within the existing fabric of historic buildings, do not require significant advertising but do generate pedestrian movement. Nevertheless, it would be desirable to encourage further residential usage on the eastern side so as to achieve a more balanced mix of uses, especially outside office hours.

3.3.10 Castle Square was the site of some of Brighton's first banks and from the late 18th century was, with East Street, the commercial hub of the town. This particular commercial character remains today.

3.3.11 This area currently has a fairly high level of pedestrian movement during the day, since it provides a crossing point between the east and west sides of the town as well as access to public transport and the seafront. However, pedestrian flow is very much subservient to traffic flow and the gardens themselves generally play only a peripheral role in pedestrian routes.

## **3.4 ROYAL PAVILION / NEW ROAD**

3.4.1 This sub-area is the most distinct one within Valley Gardens, particularly in terms of its character. It is centred on the Royal Pavilion gardens and which provide a historic, open setting for views of the Pavilion itself and the Dome.

## **Appearance**

3.4.2 The Royal Pavilion dominates as a landmark, facing onto both Valley Gardens and the Pavilion gardens, though regrettably views of it from New Road have been marred by the tower blocks and American Express building on the East Cliff, which visually compete with

the spires and minarets. From within this sub-area, buildings on the other three sides form a backdrop to the gardens and complement but do not compete with the Pavilion, though the Dome forms a strong secondary landmark.

3.4.3 New Road forms the western backdrop; original 3 and 4 storey terraced buildings of regular plot width framed the Theatre Royal as a centrepiece whose grand scale is appropriate here. Unfortunately, though, this composition has been spoilt by the modern office block at numbers 16-19. This building, which at 5 storeys competes with the Theatre Royal, is arranged as a single block-like mass with an inappropriate horizontal emphasis (despite the token attempt to group the windows in three separate divisions). The mean proportions of the windows, the plain dark brown brickwork and the lack of relief or modelling to the facade all emphasise its incongruity. Regrettably the adjoining new office building (number 20) has followed the height of this block rather than that of the original terrace to the north. Its bulky roofline to hide roof level plant is also far too prominent in views looking south and disrupts the setting of the Unitarian Church.

3.4.4 On the southern side of the gardens are the rear or side elevations of the North Street and Prince's Place buildings. These modest but well articulated brick facades enclose the space and provide some visual interest without drawing attention away from the Pavilion. The North Street frontage itself is very different in appearance from the rest of Valley Gardens, with generally large scale individual buildings of mixed ages and styles, but consistent with its history as the main commercial road. The prominent corner buildings here clearly highlight the entrances to the conservation area through Pavilion Buildings and Prince's Place and so lead the eye to important views of the Pavilion and Dome. The appearance of Pavilion Buildings has recently been greatly enhanced by its pedestrianisation; the removal of parked cars greatly improves views through the South Gate and the colour of the new York Stone paving complements the facades of the historic buildings.

3.4.5 The Church Street frontage is grand in scale with the facades of the Museum/Library and Corn Exchange being particularly imposing, the onion domes dominating the skyline and echoing the Pavilion. This frontage, together with the Tudor-Gothic Old Courthouse and the Music Library building opposite, 'announces' entry into Valley Gardens when approaching from the much more modest townscape of North Laine. It also provides an important vista from Victoria Gardens.

3.4.6 Pavilion Parade is included in this sub-area since this terrace is important to the setting of the Royal Pavilion in views from within the gardens as well as along the valley. This terrace is contemporary with the building of the original Pavilion and deliberately faces onto the eastern lawns. Regrettably, though, the loss of numbers 12-14 (together with 1 and 2 Old Steine) has resulted in a break in the building line and an arbitrary strip of open land now partly used for car parking.

## **Character**

3.4.7 There is a clear sense of enclosure from within the gardens, which provide a comparatively tranquil area away from the traffic that largely dominates elsewhere in Valley Gardens, as well as an historic setting for the Pavilion and Dome. Culture, arts and tourism uses are dominant, supported by restaurant/cafe/pub uses. These uses, together with the recreational value of the gardens themselves, away from the traffic, create a lively

pedestrian environment in the daylight hours which contributes positively to this sub-area's character. The North and South Gates to the Pavilion retain their historical roles as gateways to this part of the conservation area.

3.4.8 The historical layout of this area from the early 19th century is intact, particularly since the recent restoration of the Pavilion Gardens in accordance with the original design of John Nash (with the addition of a north/south pathway). The character of the gardens is further enhanced by the presence of historical details such as the William IV light columns. The width and linearity of New Road reflects the way in which it was very deliberately laid out and developed as a new, grand north/south route linked to the extension of the Pavilion estate.

3.4.9 The character of North Street, like its appearance, is very different and is linked to that of Castle Square. It retains its historic role as a busy east-west thoroughfare and a centre of large commercial uses.

### **3.5 VICTORIA GARDENS**

#### **Appearance**

3.5.1 Again the gardens are the dominant feature of this sub-area, especially in summer, but St Peter's Church forms the main landmark in all views northwards. It remains in its 'green island' setting and is lent an important sense of enclosure by the continuous terraces either side. Looking north, the tall chimney gable wall of the Hobgoblin public house in York Place visually terminates the view and leads the eye around to the terrace of St Peter's Place as the end point of this sub-area.

3.5.2 The original consistency of 3 and 4 storey terraces of similar plot width has been unfortunately eroded, particularly on Gloucester Place and Richmond Place, but generally the historic pattern of development remains. There is a consistent building line more or less all the way along Victoria Gardens which is a very important element in uniting the development of different periods and in maintaining a visual rhythm. Where the terraces themselves are set back a little (as at St Peter's Place and Richmond Place), hard boundary treatments maintain an edge to the pavement.

3.5.3 The terraces on the east side are not uniform compositions but are generally a series of buildings sharing similar plot widths. Most have steeply sloping attic roofs behind parapets, bays, sash windows and cast iron front railings. Originally they all had balconies and canopies but only some remain; the loss of these has disrupted the rhythm of the terraces. The predominant material is stucco render but brick, flint pebbles and mathematical tiles can also be seen, reflecting changes in the period of the buildings and changes in architectural fashion. The stucco facades are generally a consequence of later Victorian refronting works to make the buildings 'fashionable', along with cant bays and sash windows with large panes of glass.

3.5.4 The west side has the grand terrace of St George's Place with its repeated rhythm of bow fronts but regrettably some of the yellow brick facades have been painted, thus detracting from the uniformity of the composition. Again, too, these buildings have lost their original balconies and canopies. Number 16/17, on the corner with Trafalgar Street, is a post-war 2 storey addition which ignores the prevailing building form, proportions and materials and detracts from this sub-area. Elsewhere the west side is now much more



mixed in terms of roofline and architectural style, but contains a number of fine individual buildings, such as the King and Queen pub and the Allied Irish Bank, which although different in style sit comfortably in the general Regency and Victorian context by virtue of their sympathetic scale, massing and proportions.

3.5.5 The Victorian terrace at the southern end of Marlborough Place, on the other hand, forms a strong uniform composition which boldly turns the corner into Church Street. Here it links with the grand individual buildings of the Music Library and old Courthouse. The scale and architectural detail of this group clearly marks it out from the earlier, plainer domestic scale properties immediately to the west (in North Lane).

3.5.6 York Place remains consistently 3 storeys plus attic but has been spoilt by inappropriate modern shopfronts which in some cases extend to first floor level. The roofline rises slightly and gradually at the northern end, culminating in the Hobgoblin public house; this gradual rise is very important in emphasising the end of the conservation area at this point and in turning the right angle to the taller, grander terrace of St Peter's Place. The prominent Sainsbury supermarket on the opposite side, though, detracts from this corner by virtue of its horizontal massing, unbroken roofline, window proportions and materials (though it lies just outside the conservation area boundary).

3.5.7 Of the modern buildings, the worst additions here are those which do not respect the vertical emphasis of the original terraces, such as 1-6 Grand Parade, the University of Brighton Art, Design and Humanities building on Grand Parade or Lombard House on Gloucester Place. The University building cleverly does respect the bay widths but is let down by its continuous roof extension and glazed ground floor elevation. The TSB building on Gloucester Place is also an inappropriate addition to the historic townscape due especially to its sheer scale, its broad massing and flat unbroken roofline. As a result it unduly dominates Victoria Gardens, and beyond, and overwhelms the small scale terrace of Marlborough Place behind it. In this case, however, the building replaced a 1930s office block of very similar footprint and massing but which was two storeys higher. So, whilst the TSB building is out of context with the original 19th century terraces, it can be seen as an improvement over the intervening situation. The surviving 1930s building, the former Astoria cinema now converted to a bingo hall, is much more appropriate in scale and respects the traditional vertical plot emphasis in its elevational treatment. It also retains several original 1930s shopfronts of intrinsic architectural value.

3.5.8 The simple but bold appearance of the gardens themselves is enhanced by the line of mature trees which encircle them, while the statue of Queen Victoria and the Mazda Fountain provide focal points of interest within the otherwise fairly plain layout of the gardens. The gardens, though, have become much more open in appearance and nature as a result of a gradual loss of trees, shrubs and bedding plants together with the deliberate removal of the high railings and the external relocation of the pavements. The listed obelisk drinking fountain south of St Peter's Church provides a further focal point now that it is no longer marooned between a car park and traffic lanes.

## **Character**

3.5.9 Here the sense of enclosure is much stronger than at Old Steine or The Level as the built up valley sides narrow. With the exception of a couple of tower blocks to the east no buildings are visible over the frontage terraces, and only the narrow side streets leading



east or west reveal the valley sides sloping upwards. Unfortunately, the side roads to the east have been widened, thus diminishing this effect and detracting from the historic street pattern.

3.5.10 As with the Old Steine sub-area, the visual character of Victoria Gardens originally stemmed from the close relationship between the linear, central gardens and the buildings fronting onto them. Once again, though, the constant flow of heavy traffic has physically severed the two and the gardens now function as little more than large traffic islands, albeit visually attractive ones. The needs of traffic management have also resulted in numerous small traffic islands which detract from the simplicity of the gardens. The lengths of pedestrian guard railing and the numerous traffic signs and signals all add to the visual confusion.

3.5.11 The land use in this sub-area is again mixed but in this case mainly commercial, and particularly small-scale office use, generally without detriment to the original residential character of the area. Some cultural - educational and leisure uses as well, as residential, also contribute positively to the vitality of the area.

3.5.12 York Place forms a retail parade more in character with the London Road shopping area to the north and has become dominated by fast food / take-away outlets, with the resulting brash illuminated advertisements as well as problems with litter and parked cars. In this respect, therefore, York Place is currently somewhat out of character with the rest of the conservation area.

### **3.6 THE LEVEL / PARK CRESCENT / HANOVER**

3.6.1 This sub-area is clearly distinct from Victoria Gardens but in itself is quite disparate in both character and appearance, although the large open space of The Level draws these disparate elements together.

#### **Appearance**

3.6.2 The open space of The Level, with its mature trees, is the dominant physical and visual element here, and Park Crescent Gardens provide a visual extension of it. Looking north from The Level the roofline of Park Crescent is prominent and very important, with its rhythmic repetition of pedimented attic 'towers' above the main ridge line, although when the trees are in leaf the roofline is largely obscured. The heavy massing of the Salvation Army building which rises above Park Crescent to the west is an intrusive element which disrupts the silhouette and rhythm of this roofline, although this building is architecturally interesting in itself and provides a very appropriate boundary of cast iron railings on Park Crescent Terrace. The large scale and grandness of Park Crescent, and the repetitive symmetry of its facades, are very important as a contrast with the modest, mixed housing immediately to the north of it.

3.6.3 On the eastern side the grand Regency facades of Richmond Terrace vary a little in height but have a consistency of building line, style and materials with pitched or mansarded roofs behind parapets. The grand Regency style and stucco façades are continued in the elegant curve of Hanover Crescent but here the roof form is hipped with overhanging eaves, except for the pedimented central block. The rhythm of the roofscape here, though, is partly spoilt by over-sized attic additions. The continuous brick and flint cobble wall to Hanover Crescent maintains the hard boundary to the pavement (as does the Park Crescent wall to

the north). However, the front boundaries of the Hanover Crescent buildings themselves have generally lost their original walls and railings and the boundary treatments are now minimal.

3.6.4 Behind the Crescent, the contemporary Hanover Street and Terrace are, by contrast, narrow streets of small scale, two storey terraced housing on a uniform building line set back behind small front gardens or light wells, with a regular eaves line, stucco elevations, cant bays and simplicity of detail. A traditional tarmac path with its original red brick paving and steps links the two streets mid-way. At their southern end these streets are linked to the central gardens by Southover Street where the small scale houses have a more varied roofline and open directly onto the street. On its north side is a short terrace of earlier, modest cobble-fronted houses, though these have unfortunately been much altered. The original end house (number 5) has been lost and a blank wall now screens the row of garages behind. The reinstatement of this house with its original flat cobble-fronted elevation would greatly enhance this sub-area. Opposite this terrace, two new houses built in the 1980's (numbers 120/121) are very prominent from in views from Richmond Terrace and regrettably detract from this sub-area as a result of their bulk, parapeted roofline, integral garages, poorly-proportioned casement windows and dark brickwork.

3.6.5 Two large individual buildings are prominent on the eastern side; the Technical College with its bold roofline, vertical emphasis, warm red brick and terracotta and richness of detail makes the most of its wide open setting when viewed from The Level and Ditchling Road; Wellesley House with its unbroken flat roof, slab-like horizontal emphasis, sunken base and lack of modelling or detailing detracts very much not only from this sub-area but from Valley Gardens as a whole.

3.6.6 The western side of The Level contrasts with the grand buildings opposite but the two sides are not visually read together due to the distance, and the trees, between them. This side comprises modest two and three storey bayed houses with a mixed roofline but mostly steep single pitched roofs, generally without parapets. Most have been converted to shops at ground floor level. Although these buildings generally date from the early 19th century some were refronted later in the century and others altered more recently. Whilst not at all uniform in appearance therefore, this side has a general consistency of scale, proportion and materials which is only spoilt by the modern shop unit at 27-31 Ditchling Road (lying just outside the boundary but part of the frontage). Here the flat roof, grid-like flat facade (with large picture windows at first floor level) and use of dark facing bricks combine to produce a building which detracts from the appearance of this sub-area. Further north, the entrance to the Open Market is an unfortunate break in the terraced form and building line and has a temporary appearance which detracts from the area. Further back on this side, St Bartholomew's Church rises boldly and dramatically in the background and is an important landmark here.

### **Character**

3.6.7 There is no sense of enclosure here due to the width of the open space and the visibility of development rising up the valley sides. The Level forms the hub of this sub-area and is different in character to the other open spaces in Valley Gardens. As well as providing a well used pedestrian cross route it is also a place for informal recreation and a venue for various events, whilst the enclosed southern part forms an important sheltered, tranquil

area away from the traffic. In this sense The Level has retained its historical roles as well as its historical layout.

3.6.8 The buildings surrounding The Level have a much less formal relationship with the open space than elsewhere in the conservation area; indeed the houses of Park Crescent and Hanover Crescent address their own private gardens. The buildings are mainly in residential use, with some small scale commercial and retail use on the western side. The combination of The Level's recreational role and the presence of the Open Market and shops on the western side mean that this part of the conservation area has a lively character and high pedestrian presence during the day. Greater residential use above shops on this side would nevertheless benefit this sub-area.

3.6.9 Away from The Level, Park Crescent and the Hanover section have a much quieter, residential character, although the Hanover section originally had a more commercial character at the southern end of Southover Street. It is the historic connection between the development of Hanover Crescent and Hanover Street and Terrace behind which bind the latter two to the conservation area.

#### **4. THE CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY**

4.1 The boundary of the conservation area is generally drawn to include only the buildings which front onto the central gardens, with the exception of St James's Place and Hanover Street and Terrace. On the western side the boundary is partly contiguous with the boundaries of the Old Town and North Laine conservation areas; on the east side it is partly contiguous with the boundary of the East Cliff conservation area. There is, therefore, little scope for extension of the area but some boundary alterations have already been agreed and one small extension is now proposed.

4.2 In conjunction with the completed boundary review in the North Laine Conservation Area Study, the following transfers from Valley Gardens to North Laine have been approved and implemented:

- (i) 2 and 109-114 (inc.) Church Street  
This group of small domestic scale buildings more properly relates to the western part of Church Street and North Laine and it has therefore been agreed that they should be transferred to the North Laine Conservation Area.
- (ii) 4-8 Blenheim Place  
These small houses are not part of the Valley Gardens grand frontage and in their scale and historic character relate far more closely to North Laine. Their transfer to the North Laine Conservation Area has therefore been agreed.
- (iii) 39 and 40 Cheltenham Place  
This site again does not form part of the Valley Gardens frontage and the buildings formerly on the site related in scale and character much more to North Laine. Number 40 was an old malthouse which subsequently had a variety of industrial and warehouse uses before it was demolished. Such uses are consistent with the history and development of North Laine but not of Valley Gardens. This site has since been redeveloped in a manner which takes into account the prevailing appearance and

character of North Laine. The transfer of this site to the North Laine Conservation Area has therefore been agreed.

#### 4.3 The following addition to the conservation area is proposed:

##### 1-3 and 4 - 6 Albion Street

This group of buildings forms part of the corner of Richmond Place and Richmond Street and is very visible from Grand Parade as part of the 'return' to the frontage. The building numbered 1-3 is a single storey 20th century building which is inappropriate by virtue of its scale, proportions, roof form, ground floor recess and materials. Numbers 4,5 and 6 are identical early 19th century three storey houses whose gable end roof profile is prominent above 1-3. (It is also clear that this terrace originally extended to numbers 1-3). They are rare surviving examples on the eastern side of the typical 19th century modest workers housing which immediately backed onto the grand frontages, characterised by narrow plot width, shallow depth and very plain brick facades. This group should be included in the conservation area for this historical link and because it forms a very visible 'return' to the frontage. The building numbered 1-3 should in future ideally be redeveloped with a three storey building which respects the plot width, proportions, and roof form of numbers 4,5 and 6.

4.4 The Council also has a duty to consider whether there are any parts of Valley Gardens which are no longer of sufficient architectural or historic interest to warrant their continued inclusion in the conservation area. At present there are no proposals to delete any parts but the Council is concerned about the loss of architectural and historic character in Hanover Street and Hanover Terrace. This has resulted largely from permitted development rights allowing the removal or replacement of original features such as roof coverings, windows and doors as well as the loss of front boundary walls and railings.

4.5 A survey has been carried out of these roads to record how many properties retain largely as original the following features: roof covering; windows; doors; front boundary walls/railings; and brick or tile steps and paths. The results of this survey show that, of a total of 182 original houses, none retain all five of the above features intact, only about 24% still have 3 or more and approximately 15% retain none at all. The worst loss is of the original roof coverings (slate or clay tile). The figures for remaining individual features are as follows:

- (i) Original Roof Covering - 6%
- (ii) Original Windows - 41 %
- (iii) Original Door - 19%
- (iv) Original Wall / Railings - 56%
- (v) Original Steps / Path - 22%.

4.6 It is therefore proposed that Hanover Street and Hanover Terrace be monitored, and surveyed again in five years time. If there has been any further significant erosion of architectural or historic character during that period then it is proposed that these streets be deleted from the conservation area (subject to the approval at that time of the appropriate Council committee).

4.7 However, during this time the Council will take positive measures to arrest the decline in the character of these streets by producing and distributing guidance leaflets to residents

outlining the importance of conserving the historic features and by proposing the introduction of controls on permitted development through Article IV Directions (see section 7). Subject to the availability of funding and the agreement of English Heritage, the Council will also consider these streets to be priorities for grant aid to restore lost features under any future Conservation Area Partnership Scheme in this area.

## **5. QUALITY OF TOWNSCAPE AND CONTRIBUTION OF BUILDINGS**

### **Listed Buildings**

5.1 A large number of buildings in the conservation area are included in the statutory list of buildings of architectural or historic interest. The Council's policies on listed buildings are set out in the Environment chapter of the Borough Plan. As well as having an intrinsic value, all these buildings are considered to make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

### **Buildings of Local Interest**

5.2 In addition, there are several individual buildings which are considered to be of local interest where there will be a strong presumption against demolition. Policy ENV. 46 of the Borough Plan will apply to their alteration. These buildings are as follows:

Music Library, Church Street\*  
Baptist Church, Gloucester Place\*  
Former Astoria cinema (now social club), Gloucester Place\*  
9 Marlborough Place  
14-16 Marlborough Place (King & Queen public house)\*  
20-22 Marlborough Place (Allied Irish Bank)\*  
163 North Street (Halifax Building Society)\*  
2-3 Pavilion Buildings (Royal Insurance)\*  
1 Phoenix Place (Brewery Offices)\*  
25/26 Phoenix Place (Free Butt public house)\*  
Technical College, Richmond Terrace\*  
4-5 York Place  
8-10 York Place  
Hobgoblin public house, York Place\*

\* These buildings have been identified as part of this Study.

### **Buildings which make a positive contribution to the conservation area**

5.3 In addition to the listed buildings and the buildings of local interest, all historic buildings within the conservation area which form part of a terrace or row are considered to make a positive contribution to the area, and there will again be a general presumption against their demolition. Policy ENV. 29 of the Borough Plan will apply to alterations.

### **Buildings which detract from the conservation area**

5.4 Several buildings within or just outside the conservation area are considered to make a negative contribution to the appearance and character of the sub-area within which they lie and, in some cases, to the conservation area as a whole. Where possible, the future

redevelopment of these buildings in a more sympathetic manner, including if necessary for a more appropriate use, will be encouraged.

5.5 It must, though, be recognised that planning permission was properly granted for these buildings based upon the national planning guidance and local development plan policies which were current at those times. The decisions also took into account other considerations which were then relevant, including commercial development pressures and demand for new office space, as well as any constraints arising from previous uses of the sites or earlier planning decisions. Gradually, though, national government advice and local policies have changed and now place much greater emphasis on conservation of the existing historic built environment wherever possible.

5.6 These buildings are as follows:

- (i) 1-3 Albion-Street
- (i) 27-31 Ditchling Road (Buxtons furniture shop)
- (ii) 1-9 Gloucester Place (TSB offices)
- (iii) 20 Gloucester Place (Lombard House)
- (iv) 1-6 Grand Parade
- (v) 16-19 New Road
- (vi) 48a Old Steine (Kensall House)
- (vii) 16-17 St George's Place
- (viii) 120/121 Southover Street
- (x) Wellesley House, Waterloo Place.
- (xi) Sainsbury Supermarket, London Road

5.7 There are also various 20th century buildings further outside the conservation area boundary on both sides which, by virtue of their height and/or bulk have an adverse impact on the appearance and character of Valley Gardens, especially in longer views.

## **6. VACANT SITES**

6.1 There are a number of vacant sites which currently blight the conservation area and which could be developed in a manner which would enhance the area. These are:

### **23 - 25 Gloucester Place**

6.2 The original consent for this site involved the retention of the facades of numbers 24 and 25 and the erection of modern offices behind, but this was not implemented and consent has now been granted for the demolition of the facades. Whilst the retention of the facades was originally thought to be the most appropriate solution, the Council now takes the view that facadism is an unsatisfactory approach to conservation. Moreover, the originally approved scheme involved full width open plan offices which would have looked very discordant behind traditional facades, especially when lit up after dark. This site also falls within the North Laine Conservation Area at the rear, and the rear elevation as proposed was highly inappropriate to the small-scale, modest buildings of Gloucester Road. It was therefore considered that the demolition of the facades is acceptable in this case provided that a new scheme which is much more sympathetic to both conservation areas can be achieved, preferably for residential use. A reproduction of the 19th century facades would be acceptable in the absence of an appropriate new design but would not



be a requirement for this site in view of the mixed appearance of Gloucester Place. Most importantly, any new development must not be over-dominant in the townscape and must respect and acknowledge the scale, plot widths, height, roof form, proportions and materials of the original buildings on Victoria Gardens (and particularly the building immediately to the north) and at the rear must be smaller in scale and more modest in design to respect the very different appearance and character of North Laine. It is proposed that a brief be prepared for this site setting out the design principles for an acceptable scheme and that any planning permission must accord with this brief. Such a brief will be subject to full public consultation.

### **80 - 90 Grand Parade (inc. 1-4 Edward Street)**

6.3 This is an-extremely sensitive site opposite the Royal Pavilion. It is allocated in the Borough Plan for office (B1) use and planning permission was granted for a 5 storey building with combined office / church use in 1990, but this permission has now expired. The approved scheme generally took the correct approach by reinstating the terraced form facing Grand Parade, by following the building line, by respecting the 'grandness' of the site and by respecting traditional proportions and roofline. It turned the corner with a traditional dome feature which would do justice to the importance of the site in long views but which would be rather too dominant opposite the Pavilion. A future scheme should generally follow the same approach but should not exceed 4 storeys, including any mansard, where it faces Grand Parade and should take care not to compete with the Pavilion. A pale rendered or Portland stone finish to the front elevation, with timber sash windows and slate roof are considered essential here. The use of at least part of the site for housing would also be welcome, but any use should avoid creating large open-plan internal spaces fronting Valley Gardens which would look out of place adjoining the traditional terrace buildings, particularly after dark.

### **12 - 14 Pavilion Parade /1 - 2 Old Steine**

6.4 As mentioned in section 3, the demolition of these properties in 1928 has resulted in a gap in the terraced form which is detrimental to the area. It has exposed the plain flank wall of 3 Old Steine and resulted in a small, unattractive area of car parking in a prominent position. Photographic evidence exists of the buildings which previously occupied the site on Pavilion Parade and in this case a closely matched rebuilding of these would be the appropriate solution (but taking into account the modern road layout). This site is part of the wider Parochial Offices/Princes Street site which is allocated for office (B1) use in the Borough Plan but for which alternative uses would now be welcomed, including residential.

### **Phoenix Brewery Site**

6.5 This site lies partly within the conservation area and its development will have a significant impact upon Valley Gardens. Outline planning permission was granted in 1994 for a mixed use development comprising an extension to the Technical College, offices, housing, student accommodation, open space and the retention of the Free Butt pub and brewery offices as a pub/restaurant. Wellesley House would be demolished and the listed buildings on Richmond Terrace restored. This scheme is based upon a long and complex history of previous applications and an appeal decision, and is very much constrained by these. The existing site includes various large, 20th century utilitarian buildings which detract from the area and the redevelopment of this site is very welcome. Whilst past

negotiations have achieved a much more appropriate mixed-use development with greatly reduced car parking, the outline scheme nevertheless remained far from ideal in its impact on Valley Gardens. In particular, it would largely destroy the original street pattern of Phoenix Place, misses the opportunity to reinstate a terraced building form in Southover Street, fails to respect the traditional building line in places, and fails to recognise that the frontage buildings should be grander than those behind. However, it is no longer proposed that development will directly follow the outline plan and the site is now likely to be split and developed in three separate schemes; an opportunity therefore exists to negotiate each part separately so that the layout and building forms are more sympathetic to the conservation area. Planning permission has already been granted for five blocks of student housing on the Southover Street/Newhaven Street corner of the site which provide a more appropriate building form facing Southover Street. A further application is likely to be submitted shortly for terraced social housing on the south east part of the site, the layout of which is expected to be much closer to the traditional street pattern of this area. The final phase of the site's development would involve office development on the remainder of the site, including the retained Richmond Terrace buildings, plus the conversion of the brewery offices and the Free Butt to a pub/ restaurant. Here it will be important to ensure that the building replacing Wellesley House respects the scale, form, building line and proportions of numbers 1-3 Richmond Terrace, does not overwhelm numbers 1-2 Waterloo Place and has a pale rendered finish with traditional detailing. Negotiations on this part of the development, and on the social housing element, must also ensure that the original street paving materials in Phoenix Place are retained and restored; if possible they should also be extended further into the site.

### **Co-op Dairy Site, Hanover Place**

6.6 Planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of this site by the demolition of the former dairy buildings and the erection of 21 two storey houses. Of these, 17 will form a new terraced street frontage behind Hanover Place and the other 4 will infill the terrace on Hanover Street, replacing existing garages. The demolition of the large dairy building and the reinstatement of a domestic scale terrace form along the original street pattern will enhance this part of the conservation area, especially in longer views. The infill housing on Hanover Street, in particular, will be a positive contribution to the townscape. Work is currently in progress on this site.

## **7. CONTROL OF DEVELOPMENT**

### **Land Use**

7.1 Uses which would generate significantly increased traffic within the conservation area should be resisted, and the provision of significant numbers of off-street car parking spaces in new development schemes should be avoided, for the reasons noted earlier. On larger sites mixed use schemes will normally be most appropriate throughout the conservation area.

7.2 New uses should respect the existing character of each sub-area but in general further residential use within Valley Gardens should be encouraged, particularly on vacant sites (in mixed use schemes where appropriate) and of vacant or under-used upper floors of the frontage buildings. This would maintain the original residential

character of the area's development, would help to ensure that historic buildings are kept in good repair and would help to sustain activity in all parts of the conservation area after working hours. Car parking requirements, as set out in the Borough plan, will need to be applied flexibly so that residential use can be encouraged.

7.3 In and around the Royal Pavilion / New Road sub-area, uses which enhance or support the prevailing tourism/arts/culture character should normally be welcomed.

### **Protection of views**

7.4 Because of the topography of the conservation area and the presence of important individual buildings and groups of buildings, the protection of longer views is especially crucial. In particular, views of the following must be protected when new development is proposed either within or outside Valley Gardens: the Royal Pavilion; the Dome; the Museum/Library; St Peter's Church; St Bartholomew's Church; and the Park Crescent roofline.

7.5 In addition, it is essential to ensure that any new development immediately behind the frontage buildings does not intrude above the roofline of the frontage buildings when seen from within Valley Gardens. This is to respect the historical primacy of the frontage buildings and to protect the sense of enclosure. Indeed, because of the topography of the land even buildings well outside the conservation area boundary can intrude upon it and therefore the valley sides as far as the visible ridge lines should be considered as 'Areas of Townscape Sensitivity' for new development. Buildings of more than 4 storeys in height should not normally be allowed unless it can be demonstrated that there would be no adverse impact upon the appearance or character of that part of the conservation area or on views of important buildings.

### **Alterations and Extensions**

7.6 Many of the buildings within Valley Gardens are listed and therefore any alterations or extensions to these will require consent. Of the unlisted buildings, the majority are in some form of commercial or part-commercial use and most external alterations will require planning permission. In general, therefore, the Council is in a position to control the appearance of the area's built form and the Council's Borough Plan policies on listed buildings and conservation areas will apply.

7.7 In addition, the Council's interim design guidelines for historic areas and buildings are attached as an appendix to this Study. Subsequently, it is proposed to modify and adapt these general guidelines so that they relate specifically to Valley Gardens. This will be to ensure that any future development and alterations respect the appearance and character of the area as defined in this Study.

### **Article IV Directions**

7.8 The only part of Valley Gardens where there are unlisted single dwelling houses which enjoy permitted development rights is at Hanover Street and Terrace. As demonstrated in section 4 of this Study I these permitted development rights have resulted in the loss of many original features and the erosion of much historic character. To help ensure that there is no such further loss, it is intended that the residents of these streets will be formally

consulted on the proposal to introduce Article IV Directions which would remove permitted development rights to the following works: replacement of roof coverings; replacement of windows; replacement of front doors; construction of porches; formation of front hardstandings; and demolition of boundary walls.

7.9 It is further intended that the residents of Richmond Terrace will be formally consulted on the proposal to introduce an Article IV Direction to control external painting to front and side elevations (where publicly visible), with the intention of ensuring a common or limited colour scheme.

7.10 Hanover Crescent and Park Crescent are each already covered by Article IV Directions to-control the external colour schemes (see appendix 2).

### **Shopfronts**

7.11 Good traditional shopfronts, either wholly or partly surviving, have been identified as existing at Castle Square, Ditchling Road, Gloucester Place, Grand Parade, Islingword Road, New Road, Pavilion Buildings and York Place. The guidance on shopfronts in the interim design guidelines will apply in these cases (see appendix 1). More specific guidance will be produced as part of the adapted design guidelines for Valley Gardens.

### **Advertising**

7.12 The policies in the Borough plan relating to advertisements and hoardings (ENV.16, ENV.17, ENV.18, and ENV.19) will be applied to ensure that advertising in Valley Gardens does not detract from the conservation area. Where adverts are displayed with the benefit of deemed consent but are considered to be contrary to these policies discontinuance action will be taken. Action will concentrate first on the south-west corner of the Old Steine and then on York Place, Castle Square and Ditchling Road in that order of priority.

7.13 The following hoardings have been identified as requiring enforcement or discontinuance action:

- (i) Rear of Cannon Cinema, Pool Valley.
- (ii) Phoenix Brewery site, 116-120 Southover Street.
- (iii) 137 Islingword Road, facing Hanover Street.
- (iv) 145 Islingword Road, west flank elevation.

## **8. THE GARDENS AND PUBLIC SPACE**

### **The Gardens**

8.1 The future use, management and enhancement of the various central gardens will be considered as part of the Council's proposed Open Spaces Strategy. This Strategy will need to consider such issues as the accessibility of the gardens in comparison with their ornamental role, the degree and nature of any increased accessibility, the demand for recreational or other facilities and the need for and location of any increased planting. It should take into account the integral importance of these gardens to the conservation area and their close relationship with the area's built development. The history of the gardens can broadly be divided into three phases: pre-19th century when they were largely bare open

space; 1800 to 1920s when they were planted and laid out for promenading and to complement the new buildings; and post-1920s when they were redesigned to have an ornamental character, but one which has gradually been neglected. In terms of their importance to the conservation area, it is the characteristics of the middle phase which should generally be considered appropriate, subject to the practicalities of modern times.

8.2 At the Old Steine, the main issue is the lack of easy accessibility to the gardens from the other sides of the encircling road and this is an issue which should be considered both by the Open Spaces Strategy and as part of future transport proposals (see section 9). The loss of the original high cast iron railings and perimeter shrubbery is not considered too unfortunate here since this large space suits a more open appearance and character and provides important long views up to St Peter's Church. However, the reinstatement of much of the earlier herbaceous planting to the centre would be beneficial to the gardens and the conservation area in general.

8.3 Victoria Gardens similarly suffers from poor accessibility from the opposite pavements but additionally has no accessibility to within the gardens. The Open Spaces Strategy should consider the overall desirability and demand for greater accessibility to the gardens but in terms of the character of this particular part of the conservation area, greater accessibility to Victoria Gardens is considered desirable. In the 19th century internal pathways ran around the edge of the gardens which, in conjunction with the high railings and greater planting, provided a pleasant place for casual recreation and sitting. This arrangement could be recreated but an alternative now would be to have a central pathway to act more as a pleasant pedestrian through-route, away from the traffic, and leaving the outer pavements free for the cycle route. Such a path could be fairly straight or more serpentine, but would need to take into account the locations of existing mature trees and established shrubbery. The reinstatement of high cast iron railings to the original design would be appropriate here, together with greater planting. It is therefore proposed that design options will be drawn up for a pedestrian pathway and associated soft landscaping in Victoria Gardens and that these options will be displayed and publicised to seek the views of the public before any scheme is implemented.

8.4 St Peter's Church grounds would, more than any of the gardens, benefit from the reinstatement of the 19th century cast iron railings to the perimeter, subject to adaptations to take into account the current layout.

8.5 The Level, again, suffers from difficulty of access from the opposite pavements as well as its physical closeness to traffic and car parking (not having an outer pavement). This is the main recreational space for a large surrounding residential area and its future role and accessibility should form an important part of the Open Spaces Strategy. The reinstatement of railings around the perimeter is not considered generally appropriate here, due to the size and fragmented character of this space, but shrub planting around the edges should be considered as a means of providing a greater sense of shelter from the traffic. The area around the southern entrance currently detracts from the appearance of the conservation area and the amenity value of the Level and a number of measures need to be taken to overcome this. The formal southern entrance itself, including the steps, walls and ironwork, should be restored and cast iron railings erected either side of it to re-establish its prominence and sense of grandeur. The area immediately outside it should be repaved in natural stone and existing inappropriate street furniture clutter removed. On the east side, the former public toilet building should be demolished if no suitable, alternative use for it



proves to be viable and a screened area by the path to house the recycling bins would overcome the negative visual impact of this important facility. The Open Spaces Strategy will need to consider further issues such as the demand for, location of and type of recreational facilities. However, it is considered that the 1920s neo-classical structures in the children's playground should be retained and restored as part of any future improvements to the southern part.

## **Trees**

8.6 The mature trees throughout the conservation area are essential to its character and appearance, particularly where they form the 'boulevard' perimeter line, and must be retained as part of any traffic management or other schemes, unless diseased or damaged. In such cases at least one semi-mature replacement of a native broad-leaved species (or an historically and arboriculturally suitable equivalent) must be planted. Where the avenues of trees which encircle the gardens and the Level are concerned, these should be a species of Elm. If the removal of one unhealthy tree would result in a significant break in the tree line, then the situation should be reviewed to ensure that new planting is both sufficient and correctly sited to ensure that the appearance of a continuous tree line and continuous cover are maintained.

8.7 On the buildings side, if poorly sited trees are proposed for removal for highway safety reasons, it should first be considered whether localised pavement widening could overcome the problem. Failing that, a replacement tree elsewhere in the area will be required.

8.8 At the present time new tree planting in the gardens is wholly responsive to the availability of individual trees (from donations for example) and is not subject to any form of overall strategy. Therefore, a co-ordinated programme of new planting should be undertaken to replace those trees which have been lost in the past, particularly where this has resulted in gaps in the 'boulevard' perimeter tree line. Old photographs show how much more densely planted the gardens once were. No new planting, though, should be carried out in the centre of Victoria Gardens or in the south gardens of St Peter's Church, in order to protect long views of the church.

## **Street Surfaces**

8.9 Street paving within Valley Gardens is generally poor and very uncoordinated. There is a wide mixture of modern materials, many of them inappropriate in scale and texture to the setting of the buildings. In some cases, such as at Grand Parade, the paving changes randomly from one material to another over a comparatively short length. A uniform approach throughout the conservation area is necessary, but one which distinguishes between the pavements to the grand frontages and those to the modest rear streets.

8.10 There are very few areas of remaining original street surfaces. Those that do remain are away from the grand frontages; red and blue clay pavers at St James's Place and Richmond Gardens; a few small, square clay blocks in Palace Place; and granite setts to the carriageway with some clay pavers at Phoenix Place. Along the grand frontages only the old granite kerbs remain, though there is occasional evidence of old York Stone paving slabs.



This Council will be pressing the County Council, as highway authority, to ensure that all original surfaces are retained, and where necessary extended.

8.11 A full survey of all existing paving surfaces in Valley Gardens has been carried out, together with a list of the preferred surface in each case. The Council regards all the grand frontage pavements as 'sensitive streets' where the highway authority should use appropriate paving rather than blacktop when repairs are needed. Although York Stone slabs would be the correct material for all the frontage pavements, it is recognised that the cost of reinstating this would be prohibitive and instead it is proposed that large, grey, rectangular concrete slabs are used throughout. Infilling spaces with concrete block pavers should be strictly avoided and instead the large slabs should be cut to fit, as was traditionally done.

8.12 It is, though, proposed that York Stone be reinstated to the private road at Hanover Crescent as part of a general enhancement scheme, and it would also be the most appropriate material for New Road as part of any pedestrian priority scheme. The existing York Stone laid as part of the Pavilion Buildings pedestrianisation scheme should be maintained. The clay pavers on the west side of Old Steine, which form part of the Old Town pedestrianisation, should also be maintained. Away from the grand frontages, standard small grey concrete slabs will normally be acceptable but Queen's Place would benefit from the reinstatement of clay pavers in front of the listed houses.

### **Street Lighting**

8.13 Street lighting throughout Valley Gardens is of similarly poor and inappropriate design and consists largely of modern plain steel columns erected in the late 1960s. Only a few old cast iron columns remain - at Park Crescent, Prince's Place, St James's Place and Rose Hill - though traditional lighting has been reinstated at Pavilion Buildings, New Road and Steine Lane. The amenity lighting to the various central gardens has old cast iron columns but with modern lanterns. Those at Old Steine and Pavilion Parade have recently been replaced by Windsor lanterns, with funding from the Hove and Brighton Urban Conservation Board, and it may prove possible to extend this replacement scheme northwards.

8.14 Most damaging to the conservation area, though, are the tall modern columns which light the main roads through the whole length of the area. Some are now reaching the end of their life. Old photographs clearly show the three variations of elegant, ornate columns and lanterns which preceded them, and detailed drawings of these designs exist in the Council's records. One design is the same as that already reinstated on Marine Parade. When the existing modern columns in Valley Gardens are due for replacement, the reinstatement of replica traditional columns and lanterns should be considered a very high priority.

### **Street Furniture**

8.15 Valley Gardens in general suffers from a significant amount of street clutter and the street furniture is uncoordinated and too often of poor quality. An early priority arising from this Study should be a survey of street furniture in the conservation area to identify where inappropriately designed or located items exist and action should then be taken to seek the removal, replacement or relocation of such items. A co-ordinated strategy must also be put into place so that the installation of all future street furniture, including that provided by statutory undertakers, is guided by the same principles on siting, design and colour. Such a

strategy should preclude the siting of new street furniture on the outer pavements of the central gardens except where absolutely necessary; bus shelters and telephone kiosks are especially inappropriate in these locations. The Level, though, should be an exception to this principle due to its different layout and character and allowance must also be made for the continued need for bus shelters outside St Peter's Church, subject to them being a suitably unobtrusive design. The strategy should also seek to ensure that new statutory highway signage meets no more than the minimum requirements in terms of size and number and that wherever possible different signs are combined on one post, thus minimising clutter.

8.16 Brighton Council has already taken steps to ensure a co-ordinated approach to its own street furniture in the conservation area. Within the Royal Pavilion grounds a common approach has been adopted in terms of designs and colour scheme (using a special green) and this will apply only here. Elsewhere in Valley Gardens any new or replacement bollards which are necessary will conform to a specific adopted design that is already in existence in the area, painted black. A uniform approach to pedestrian guard-railing using an enhanced design painted dark green, rather than a standard safety rail, has been introduced in co-operation with the County Council for both completed phases of the bus and cycle lanes scheme and should be similarly used in any further traffic schemes in the area. Through its current signage strategy Brighton Council will also be ensuring that all its signage conforms to a uniform style and is sensitively located.

## **9. TRANSPORT**

9.1 As stated in the character assessment, traffic is a major problem in the conservation area. Valley Gardens forms the central part of the A23/A27/A259 Major Distributor Network, as set out in the Transport chapter of the Borough Plan (Proposal TRP 4), and will continue to take the main traffic flows. Nevertheless, traffic management can ameliorate this situation through a combination of Park & Ride and public transport priority measures to reduce the amount of unnecessary private vehicular traffic and improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.

### **Bus and Cycle Lanes**

9.2 The first two phases of a bus and cycle lanes scheme in the area have recently been completed. These schemes have increased the number of pedestrian crossing links with the central gardens, thereby slowing traffic and increasing the accessibility of the gardens. The second phase also included the extension of, and environmental improvements to, the south grounds of St Peter's Church, which enhance the setting of the church and the listed obelisk fountain. However, the scheme has unfortunately resulted in a fragmentation of traffic islands in some places and an increase in street signage, railings and clutter, though this has been ameliorated by the use of an enhanced railing design as referred to above. When the next phase is carried out to the south and west of the Level (as part of the London Road traffic scheme) greater efforts must be made to overcome this problem and prevent it recurring.

### **London Road Traffic Management Proposals**

9.3 At the north end of the conservation area traffic management proposals for London Road will have an impact on Valley Gardens. Three options were proposed in public

consultation and following the results of this the Council's Environment and Planning Committee agreed in principle to support the implementation of Stage 2b, which will involve the re-routing of southbound traffic along Viaduct Road and Ditchling Road (which lies within Valley Gardens), subject to further analysis of traffic flows in these roads. A further scheme, known as Stage 3, is also proposed which would involve the demolition of the Hobgoblin public house and three adjoining historic properties in York Place for road widening at the junction with Cheapside. Whilst there are benefits for traffic management and for the way London Road will be able to be used as a shopping street, these buildings (and the street pattern which they define) make a very significant contribution to the conservation area and to the setting of St Peter's Church (as detailed in section 3 of this Study). Therefore there will be a further period of public consultation over the proposed demolition before implementation of this stage proceeds.

### **Pedestrian Priority**

9.4 The Borough Plan proposes that, subject to detailed study, the existing Old Town pedestrian priority area will be extended to the west side of the Old Steine to unite the Old Town with the central gardens (Proposal TRP. 18). This proposal should, in principle, enhance Valley Gardens by reducing traffic on this side of Old Steine and improving accessibility to the gardens. A new pedestrian crossing should be included at this point. However, any scheme must involve the retention of existing kerb-lines, particularly to the gardens side, and must not result in a requirement for new guard-railing on the gardens side. The main road surface should remain black asphalt; small element concrete block paving would not be appropriate in this spacious, grand setting. No new type of paving material should be introduced.

9.5 Prior to the above, a new 'gateway' treatment to the entrance to Castle Square will be carried out by the County Council, including a short length of bus lane at the Old Steine, to discourage cars from turning left into Castle Square/North Street. Again, any guard-railing should follow the design and colour of that used for the bus and cycle lanes scheme and any necessary signage be kept to a minimum and fixed to existing uprights where possible. New paved areas should match the existing materials.

9.6 New Road is also proposed for pedestrian priority measures in the Borough Plan (Proposal TRP. 21), in conjunction with roads in North Laine, but it is not included in the County Council's current programme. Due to the width and nature of New Road, pedestrian priority with limited access for vehicles is considered appropriate here rather than total pedestrianisation. Any physical works in connection with this must respect the existing kerb lines and the deliberate linearity and grandness of the road.

### **Pool Valley Coach Station**

9.7 The Borough Plan refers to the need to review the continued use of Pool Valley as the express coach station and to seek an alternative site (Proposal TRP. 28). The facilities and general environment are very poor for this use and there is minimal scope for a better facility here due to physical constraints. The land at Pool Valley could be better used to secure an enhanced environment for the adjoining buildings. However, such a change is dependent upon a number of other related factors and proposals and is only likely to come about in the longer term. The County Council, in co-operation with Brighton Council, are currently

exploring the possibility of some improvements to the existing facility in the shorter term, including alterations to the layout of the coach bays and environmental enhancement works.

### **Cross Traffic**

9.8 The other aspect of traffic flow which needs to be considered is the amount of west - east traffic across the Old Steine from Castle Square to St James's Street. This should form part of a detailed study into possible traffic management and environmental improvements to be carried out by the County Council for St James's Street/Old Steine in 1996/97. One option that should be considered is the reversal in direction of the one way traffic flow in St James's Street. As well as benefiting St James's Street as a shopping area it would also benefit Valley Gardens by allowing only buses, taxis and cycles to have east-west access across Old Steine, thereby reducing the sense of severance between the north and south parts of the Old Steine gardens.

## **10. SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS AND FUTURE ACTION**

### **10.1 The current situation and past action**

As highlighted in the Study above, there are a variety of problems currently affecting the conservation area. In some cases, as with traffic issues, measures are already underway which should help towards alleviating these problems. The problems of the poor condition of buildings and the loss of historic features have partly been addressed in the past through historic building grant aid; many of the frontage buildings have been included in the Townscheme, operated jointly with English Heritage, for many years and considerable improvements to Park Crescent, Hanover Crescent and the Old Steine have resulted from this. However some of the frontage terraces, notably Grand Parade, have remained in poor repair and there has been similarly little take-up of grant aid for the reinstatement of balconies and canopies. It is therefore felt that a more targeted approach, in conjunction with higher rates of grant, is needed to deal with these and other problems in future, probably through a Conservation Area Partnership Scheme with English Heritage.

### **10.2 Identified Problems**

1. TRAFFIC - the volume and speed of traffic through the area and around the gardens as outlined in sections 3 and 9.
2. POOR CONDITION OF BUILDINGS - especially in Grand Parade. These are some of the older buildings in Brighton and are generally of bungaroosh construction and therefore inherently unstable. Several are faced with flint cobbles or mathematical tiles which require specialist, expensive repair and restoration. Many are owned by absentee landlords who let them as rented accommodation or small offices and there is often a lack of regular maintenance.
3. LOSS OF BALCONIES AND CANOPIES - mainly in Grand Parade, St George's Place and St Peter's Place. Old photographs show how almost all the grand frontage houses once had balconies and canopies; the continuing existence of full length windows at first floor level is a reminder of this. Other features such as mouldings, correct sash windows, panelled front doors, front boundary railings and tiling to front

entrance steps have also been lost, or spoiled by unsympathetic alterations, in some cases

4. VACANT SITES - the blight caused by these is referred to in section 6

5. ISOLATION / UNDER USE OF CENTRAL GARDENS - Victoria Gardens and Old Steine Gardens have the potential to be a pleasant linear pedestrian route (in character with their 19th century role as a fashionable promenade), but are under-used due to traffic inhibiting their accessibility and because in recent decades they have lost a lot of trees and shrubs and since the 1920s have been treated much more as ornamental gardens.

6. STREET CLUTTER - too much, badly sited and uncoordinated street furniture signage, as referred to in section 8.

7. UNSYMPATHETIC STREET LIGHTING - as referred to in section 8

8. UNCO-ORDINATED AND POOR QUALITY STREET SURFACES - as referred to in section 8.

9. LOSS OF ORIGINAL FEATURES IN HANOVER STREET AND TERRACE - as referred to in sections 4 and 7.

10. UNSYMPATHETIC PAINT COLOURS - not a widespread problem but one poor choice can spoil the appearance of a whole terrace. Very dark or very bright modern colours are inappropriate to Regency and Victorian stucco facades. Examples of this exist in Grand Parade and St George's Place.

11. POOR QUALITY SHOPFRONTS AND EXCESSIVE, GARISH ADVERTS - mainly in York Place, but also Ditchling Road and Castle Square.

12. PARKING ON FORECOURTS - and loss of front boundaries, at Old Steine (south west corner), Richmond Place, St Peter's Place and Hanover Place. This is detrimental to the setting of historic buildings.

13. LOSS OF STREET TREES - and the lack of a co-ordinated planting programme for the gardens, as referred to in section 8.

### **10.3 Future Action**

The following necessary future action has been identified in general order of priority but will be subject to available resources:

1. DESIGN GUIDANCE - specific guidance to cover the principles of new development and alterations and extensions to existing buildings in Valley Gardens, based upon the existing general guidelines (appendix 1).

2. ADVICE LEAFLETS - a general leaflet on conservation area policies as well as leaflets covering specific topics including doors, windows, roofing materials, shopfronts and paint colours with the aim of illustrating to owners / occupiers of properties in the conservation area how they can contribute to its preservation and enhancement.

3. USE OF REPAIRS NOTICES - to secure the repair and/or redecoration of properties in poor condition which are considered to adversely affect the amenity of the area or which involve a threat to the future of a listed building. Particular attention will be paid to Grand Parade.

4. 'SENSITIVE STREETS' AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNTY COUNCIL - to ensure that existing areas of original paving materials are retained and that future street paving is carried out in appropriate, co-ordinated materials.

5. CONSERVATION AREA PARTNERSHIP SCHEME- Valley Gardens should be a one of the main priority areas for a future Council bid for a CAP Scheme with English Heritage. Within Valley Gardens priority should be given first to the following:

- (i) Structural repairs and restoration works in Grand Parade, to be preceded by a survey of the condition of buildings here.
- (ii) Reinstatement of Balconies and Canopies at Grand Parade, Old Steine (east side), St George's Place and St Peter's Place.
- (iii) Reinstatement of cast iron railings to the frontage area of Royal York Buildings, Old Steine
- (iv) Hanover Crescent - restoration of road way and boundary walls with York Stone pavement, high granite kerbs, cobble rumble strips, rearrangement of parking and flint cobble walls with cast iron railings.

and then to:

- (v) Hanover Street and Terrace - reinstatement of lost features (roof coverings, windows, doors, boundaries)
- (vi) Pool Valley - environmental improvements.
- (vii) York Place - reinstatement of traditional shopfronts.
- (viii) St Peter's Place - reinstatement of front boundary railings etc.
- (ix) Park Crescent - a limited scheme for the reinstatement of traditional tiling to entrance steps.

6. DEVELOPMENT BRIEFS FOR VACANT SITES - specifically 23-25 Gloucester Place but also 80-90 Grand Parade if no new scheme is forthcoming based upon the previous approval (but subject to the comments in section 6). The production of such briefs is to involve full public consultation.

7. ARTICLE IV DIRECTIONS - in Hanover Street, Hanover Terrace and Richmond Terrace, subject to consultation with the residents of these streets (see section 7).

8. SURVEY OF STREET FURNITURE - to identify where street clutter and inappropriate street furniture exists, to seek to remove or relocate it and to propose a more co-ordinated future approach. (The rationalisation of Brighton Council's own signage is already in progress through the current Signage Strategy programme).

9. SURVEY OF UNAUTHORISED AND INAPPROPRIATE ADVERTS - at Old Steine (south west corner), York Place, Ditchling Road, Castle Square and St George's Place (in that order of priority). Followed by enforcement or discontinuance action.



10. SURVEY OF TREE PLANTING NEEDS - and a co-ordinated programme of future planting, to emerge from the Open Spaces Strategy.

11. SURVEY OF FORECOURT CAR PARKING - and enforcement action against unauthorised parking and/or measures to prevent future parking, where practical.

## **11. OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENTS**

11.1 A number of possible enhancements to the conservation area have been identified. All of these will be dependent upon available resources; some may only be possible to implement in the longer term; and some will require the co-operation of private owners. They have been categorised by priority and are summarised as follows:

### **11.2 High Priority**

1. REINSTATEMENT OF BALCONIES AND CANOPIES - through the use of grant aid negotiations on planning applications and statutory enforcement action where appropriate.

2. POOL VALLEY - environmental improvements, including new paving, railings, seating, shelter etc. together with the restoration of buildings and removal of adverts/hoardings. Investigation of possible relocation of express coach facilities away from Pool Valley and introduction of pedestrian priority scheme.

3. ROYAL YORK BUILDINGS - the frontage to this building is spoilt by the continuous string of poster boards. These should be removed and the original cast iron railings reinstated. Enforcement action and grant aid.

4. VICTORIA GARDENS - A new pedestrian pathway should be created through the gardens, with its layout to be subject to public consultation. In the longer term the original cast iron railings should be reinstated to the perimeter. To make further use of the gardens, they could also be the venue for temporary outdoor sculpture exhibitions, though the height and size of individual sculptures would need to be subject to an agreed limit to protect important views. This use would accord well with the character of this part of the conservation area and could be linked to both the Museum/Art Gallery and Brighton University through its nearby Art, Design and Humanities faculty.

5. OLD STEINE GARDENS - the Brighton Buses office is an unattractive feature which should be removed and alternative accommodation found for the company's needs. The space occupied by the building should then be incorporated into the gardens.

### **11.3 Medium Priority**

1. THE AVENUE / REAR OF 61-68 EAST STREET- this area is spoilt by parking on forecourts, loss of boundary treatments, inappropriate and poor quality paving surfaces and an excess of advertising signs. Needs enforcement action and environmental improvements.

2. PERCY AND WAGNER ALMSHOUSES - the public area in front of these listed buildings needs environmental improvements to the walls and planting and the Police building should be removed or relocated, as it currently obscures views of this listed terrace. Whilst this proposal is generally considered to be a longer term priority

If the removal of the Police building should be pursued as a higher priority and the Council will discuss this with the Police.

3. THE LEVEL - restore the formal southern entrance (steps, walls and ironwork) and erect new cast iron railings to flank it; repave the southern approach in more appropriate materials; provide a screened area for the recycling containers. Carry out new high shrub planting around the entire outer edge to screen The Level from car parking and traffic.

4. STREET LIGHTING - reinstatement of replica traditional columns to the main roads the whole length of Valley Gardens.

#### **11.4 Low Priority**

1. ST PETER'S PLACE FRONTAGE AREA - this area is spoilt by the forecourt parking and some uncoordinated and inappropriate front boundary treatments. Removal or screening of the parking and reinstatement of cast iron railings would be desirable, subject to consultation with the owners/occupiers. Further research into the original appearance of this terrace and subsequent alterations is needed.

2. ST PETER'S CHURCH GROUNDS - Reinstatement of the original cast iron perimeter railings should be considered in the longer term.

3. NEW ROAD - the Colonnade could be extended south, as original, following the implementation of a pedestrian priority scheme (including possible repaving in York stone).

4. DITCHLING ROAD - build a much more appropriate and permanent entrance and boundary to the Open Market.

5. PARK CRESCENT EAST ENTRANCE - the forecourt area south of the Race Hill public house is just outside the boundary of the conservation area, but this piece of land has a clear impact on the area and on the setting of Park Crescent in particular. It is a bare paved area which is currently often used for illegal parking. Whilst in the immediate term this is a matter for Police enforcement, in the longer term the forecourt would benefit from bollards at the edge to prevent encroachment and tree planting in the centre. At the same time a rumble strip of granite setts should be placed across the entrance to Park Crescent Terrace to slow vehicles turning off the main road.

### **12. BIBLIOGRAPHY / REFERENCES**

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## APPENDIX 1

### EXISTING ARTICLE IV DIRECTIONS WITHIN THE VALLEY GARDENS CONSERVATION AREA

#### HANOVER CRESCENT

(a) That an Article 4 Direction under the General Development Order 1977 be made on Nos. 1 to 24 and North and South Lodges, Hanover Crescent, Brighton, removing from the category of permitted development any painting works of external redecoration to the external elevations which are or would be visible from the Crescent.

(b) That the colour scheme as follows be approved:

	<b>British Standard Colour Code</b>	<b>Finish</b>
All external wall surfaces, including pediments, pipework, guttering, downpipes, etc, and including all rendering and boundary walls.	BS 10 B 17 (Pale Grey/ Cream)	Flat
All exterior woodwork, window frames, sashes, and/or casements.	White	Gloss
All architectural ironwork including balconies and railings	Black	Gloss
Dormers, dormer windows and other additions above eaves level excluding pediments	BS 18 B 25 (Dark Grey)	Gloss/Smooth Masonry Paint
Front and basement doors	Colour Optional	Gloss

Where the recommended colour scheme is not used the Council will seek to require the property to be repainted in the correct colours.

#### PARK CRESCENT

(a) That an Article 4 Direction under the General Development Order 1977 be made upon the premises known as Nos. 1 to 48 Park Crescent, removing from the category of permitted development any painting or works of external redecoration to the external elevations of these premises which are or would be visible from Park

Crescent Terrace, Union Road and the Crescent Gardens. Also any works to change the roof materials.

(b) That a colour scheme as follows be approved:

	<b>British Standard Colour Code BS 4800</b>	<b>Finish</b>
All external wall surfaces including pediments and pipework where on pale grey background, walls and pillars to boundaries, canopies and posts thereto.	BS 10 A 3 (Pale Grey)	Gloss/Smooth Masonry Paint
Dormers and other additions above eaves level excluding pediment and pipework where on dark grey background, chimney stacks.	BS 18 B 25 (Dark Grey)	Gloss/Smooth Masonry Paint
Window and door surrounds, window frames and sashes and pipework background, eaves brackets, medallions and quoins	White	Gloss
Architectural metal work, railings and gates but excluding posts to canopies	Black	Gloss
Front and rear entrance doors	Colour optional	Gloss

Where the recommended colour scheme is not used the Council will seek to require the property to be repainted in the correct colours.