

EAST CLIFF CONSERVATION AREA STUDY AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN



Director Of Environment
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Brighton & Hove

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 East Cliff was designated as a conservation area in February 1973 in recognition of it being an area of special architectural and historic interest, due to its clear association with the growth of Brighton as a Regency and Victorian seaside resort. The conservation area was confirmed as “outstanding” by the Secretary of State for the Environment in January 1974. It was then extended to the north in January 1977, June 1989 and June 1991. East Cliff covers an area of approximately 60 hectares and contains 589 statutory listed buildings plus 86 buildings on the local list.

1.2 This document contains an appraisal of the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area, which is based upon a summary of the history and development of the area. It then goes on to recommend extensions to the boundary of the conservation area, under the terms of Section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Part five of the Study identifies buildings of local interest and buildings and sites which detract from the area. The Enhancement Plan aspect of this document has been prepared under Section 71 of the above-mentioned Act and sets out action that should be taken in order to preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the area.

1.3 No estimate exists of the population of East Cliff as it covers parts of two separate wards and neighbourhoods. However, it has been estimated by the council that there are in the region of 10,500 households in the conservation area. The area is characterised by multiple occupation housing and smaller household sizes; the proportion of one room households is nearly double the Brighton average and over five times the national average. *(It should be noted that these estimates were based upon the 1991 census and may need updating following publication and analysis of the 2001 census results).*

1.4 The development of the East Cliff area arose directly as a result of the rapid growth Brighton after 1750 and its architecture, particularly on the seafront, is very typical of the Regency style. The area as a whole is unified by this style of building and by the survival of the historic street pattern, as well as by the historic relationship with sea. However, within East Cliff there are three sub-areas where appearance and character are noticeably distinct and these differences are inextricably linked with the historic development of the area (see map 1). The appraisal of the conservation area therefore considers each sub-area separately as well as East Cliff as a whole.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 GENERAL

2.1.1 East Cliff was largely developed between the 1780s and the 1880s on the former arable farmlands ('laines') to the east of the original fishing town that is now Old Town. In general the oldest streets and buildings are at the western end (particularly south of St James's Street) as the area was developed in a west to east direction in a series of spurts which related to variations in the demand for property. The boom period for building was between about 1810 and 1850 as Brighton became the leading fashionable seaside resort in the south, especially following its patronage by the Prince Regent and improved road links from London.

2.1.2 By the 1760s the Old Town was nearing capacity and the eastern side was established as the area where resort development would be concentrated, mainly due to its proximity to East Street (where most resort facilities were clustered) and the Steine as well as to the sea. From the 1780s sustained building began on Little Laine to the immediate east of the Steine. Each laine was subdivided into furlongs separated from one another by access paths called leakways, which became the important east-west streets. Little Laine, which stretched as far as what is now Bedford Street, was divided into Cliff Furlong and Upper Furlong with a leakway which became St James's Street dividing the two. The leakway to the south became Marine Parade and that to the north became Edward Street. Each furlong was in turn divided into strips of land called paulpieces. As a result of the restrictions which this imposed on the buying and development of land, most developers assembled long rectangular blocks of land which stretched the length of a furlong. This resulted in the series of parallel straight streets, built on in terraced form for reasons of economy, which remain evident in East Cliff today.

2.1.3 The new developments at this time were mostly resort housing; lodgings for the wealthy visitors who came to Brighton for the winter season in particular. Shops, workshops and housing for the artisans came a little later.

2.1.4 Cliff Furlong was developed first as this was the part closest to the sea. The most expensive land lay along the cliff top and this is where the grandest houses were built. In the mid 1780s Steine Street, Manchester Street, Charles Street, Broad Street, German Place (now Madeira Place) and New Steine were the earliest developments, although it often took ten to twenty years for a whole street to be completed as individual purchasers of plots waited until they could afford to build. The seafront houses, as well as those in the wider streets such as German Place and New Steine which afforded a better view of the sea, commanded higher rents.

2.1.5 There was a lull in the speed of development in the 1790s as developers used up land elsewhere which was closer to Old Town. Royal Crescent was a notable exception to this. Built between 1799-1809, its crescent form is unusual to East Cliff as it is built across paulpieces, to face the sea. At first it was isolated from the rest of East Cliff, as it was not until about 1814 that the land between Rock Gardens and Royal Crescent began to be built upon.



The East Cliff area in 1808

2.1.6 After Little Laine, development moved eastwards to East Laine, where building mainly took place after 1820. Again the street pattern largely followed the old field system, with Bristol Road/St George's Road/Chesham Road following the leakway, but as development went further and further east it reached the edge of this system and greater flexibility of purchase and layout was open to developers. The seafront buildings in East Laine are larger as by this time there was a demand for permanent housing rather than lodgings to rent. After about 1840 development took place largely through infilling.

2.2 THE SEAFRONT

2.2.1 Marine Parade itself was not much more than a track until it was widened and the promenade constructed between 1827-38, at the same time as the sea wall was built below. By the time works started half its length was already developed, up to Portland Place, and building continued for the next thirty years or so, with Clarendon Terrace of 1854-55 being the last of the major seafront groups to be built. Many of the Marine Parade houses were built or re-fronted by A.H. Wilds and Busby in the 1820s, and they were probably also responsible for Marine Square. Some of the later developments of larger house further east were built by the London builder Thomas Cubitt, including Belgrave Place and Eaton Place.

2.2.2 The grand Regency facade was quite shallow; behind it lay the services which were necessary to support the houses. Mews were located immediately behind most of the seafront houses, either privately owned or offering general stabling services. Mews still survive behind Royal Crescent, Eastern Terrace and between Portland

Place and Marine Square, whilst Wentworth Street was originally a service road for New Steine and Marine Gardens a service road for Charlotte Street.

2.2.3 Beneath the sea wall is the two-tier, arched cast iron colonnade of Madeira Terrace, approximately 865 metres long with the Madeira Lift towards its eastern end. The terrace was built between 1890-97 to the designs of the Borough Surveyor, Philip Lockwood. Below that still are Madeira Drive and the Volks Railway of 1883, the earliest public electric railway in Britain. All these features are remarkable examples of 19th century engineering skill and reflect the late Victorian heyday of the seafront, when the coming of the railway had opened it up to a much wider public.

2.3 THE ST JAMES'S STREET AREA

2.3.1 Land in Upper Furlong (between St James's Street and Edward Street) was developed at a slower rate due to its greater distance from the sea. Originally high class resort housing was intended here too but little was actually built; Dorset Gardens is an exception to this from the 1790s and the gardens themselves were a private amenity space for the houses until 1884. Instead this area was used after 1800 to meet the rapidly growing demand for artisan housing and workplaces. In these streets there was a much wider mix of building uses and a greater spread of housing value. George Street was typical of this. The development of St James's Street as the shopping street for the fashionable houses on Cliff Furlong then stimulated further building on Upper Furlong where the shopkeepers and craftsmen built their houses.

2.3.2 Edward Street was originally very narrow and lined with shops until its widening in the early 1960s. Part of the oldest area between Edward Street and St James's Street was comprehensively redeveloped from the 1960s and is excluded from the conservation area. The area between Prince's Street and George Street is much altered but is within the conservation area.

2.4 THE VICTORIAN RESIDENTIAL STREETS

2.4.1 The area north of Bristol Road/St George's Road/Chesham Road, on East Laine, was largely developed as permanent artisan housing between the 1830s and 1880s and the former field system is less evident in the street pattern here. St George's Road itself was named after the earlier church, built by Wilds and Busby (1824-25). Even in the 1840s a post mill still stood on the south side of St George's Road, opposite the bottom end of what became Sudeley Place; it gave its name to Millfield Cottages.

3. APPRAISAL OF APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 East Cliff is a comparatively large conservation area and, as demonstrated in the historical background, a fairly homogenous one in term of its development. This is reflected in its appearance and, to a lesser degree, its character. There are, however, three distinct sub-areas and to provide a proper appraisal of the conservation area it is also necessary to consider the appearance and character of these sub-areas separately.

3.1.2 Map number 1 indicates the proposed divisions between the sub-areas but these should not be thought of as hard and fast boundaries. In particular, when considering proposals for a site or property which lies close to a division, the character and appearance of both sub-areas may 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

Appearance

3.2.1 The historical street pattern remains and consists predominantly of long, straight terraces from north to south and, less often, east to west, varying between two and five storeys in height but generally fairly uniform in each street. Height is related to the grandness of the development and the proximity of the properties to the sea. Topography is an important factor as the land rises from both west to east and from south to north, which is reflected in the characteristic stepping up of parapets or eaves at roof level in those streets where this change in level is visibly most evident. The architecture is predominantly Regency in style, though not always strictly Regency in period, and most often the buildings are faced in smooth stucco render, painted in shades of cream to reflect stucco's original objective of imitating stone. The length and straightness of the terraces is countered by the vertical emphasis of the buildings themselves. This vertical emphasis is reinforced by the presence of chimney stacks and fire walls at roof level and by the sash window proportions of the facades. The various small green spaces contribute greatly to the setting of the building groups.

Character

3.2.2 The historic street pattern with its series of Regency terraces and small green spaces, as described above, also forms an integral part of the area's character. The relationship of the built environment to the sea is still an essential element of the area's character and public views of the sea are very important. The land uses still relate strongly to the original uses of the area; the predominant use remains residential and is of high density. Hotel / guest house uses are also common and this

too refers back to the original early 19th century use of houses as temporary lodgings for rent. A significant element of the area's population is transient and a wide range of social groups are concentrated in the area. It is also an area which attracts many tourists, due to the seafront, and therefore East Cliff in general has a lively atmosphere, particularly during the summer months.

3.3 THE SEAFRONT

Appearance

3.3.1 The seafront is the grand face of East Cliff; it rises along the chalk cliffs (now hidden by the sea wall) to a height of about 25 metres above the sea at Eaton Place and is approximately a mile in length here. The seafront buildings, set back behind a wide roadway and seafront promenade, are generally four or five storeys plus basement in height and are formally arranged in a series of squares, terraces and crescents facing onto the sea. They become grander in scale as they progress eastwards. The building line varies, relating to the development of specific formal groups of buildings and these groups often have private or communal garden areas separating them from the public footway. The rooflines are very prominent due to the width of the seafront road, even where they would normally be hidden behind a parapet, and the typical grey slate covering and tall chimney stacks with pots are important visual features.

3.3.2 The buildings have a unified Regency/early Victorian style, typified by pale-painted stucco facades relieved by stucco mouldings and often enlivened by open balconies and canopies. The vertical proportioning of the buildings themselves is emphasised by the proportions of the sash windows which provide a regular pattern of solid to void. The timber sash windows, set in reveals, have a formal hierarchy which reflects the primary historic importance of the ground and first floor rooms but they also serve to provide relief to the facades. The front garden areas were originally all enclosed, usually by cast iron railings but in some cases by rendered walls and bottle balustrades are typical features of the latter. Where these railings or walls have been lost this has been detrimental to the settings of the formal groups of buildings. Only at the western end has 20th century building interrupted the harmony of the line of continuous stucco Regency frontages. Some of the modern development, such as the recent Van Alen building, is more contextual in its height, proportions and materials whereas the tall brick-faced block known as The Albermarle strikes a very discordant note, due to its height, block-like massing, horizontal emphasis and materials.

3.3.3 Behind some of these grand formal groups lie the small scale mews which once served them. Here the modest buildings are two storeys only, often faced with flint cobbles and with simple slate roofs. From within the mews they can be seen in the context of the rear elevations of the grand properties which they once served and which they remain visually subservient to. Surviving mews are behind Royal Crescent, Eastern Terrace, 79-89 Marine Parade (Marine Terrace Mews and St John's Mews), and between Portland Place and Marine Square (Portland Mews). All have been converted to residential use but some have retained the original mews appearance better than others. Royal Crescent Mews, for example, has lost much of its original appearance

3.3.4 The southern side of Marine Parade remains a broad promenade overlooking the Madeira Terrace, Madeira Drive and the wide shingle beaches with the only significant built development being the Aquarium Terraces at the far western end. It is generally uncluttered by modern street furniture etc. but the grade II listed 1890s lamp columns on the pavement edge and the late 19th century seafront shelters and early 20th century wooden benches add to its traditional seaside appearance. The expanse of open beaches is an integral element of the setting of the buildings and the seafront amusements at Peter Pan's Playground partly detract from it. This clutter of structures is also a discordant element when viewed from above but the Volks Railway line at least provides a logical, and historic, southern boundary.

3.3.5 Aside from the seafront and beaches, public open space is limited. New Steine gardens are an important exception to this, the simplicity of this green space complimenting the subtle variety of detail of the buildings. This open space has recently been greatly enhanced by the reinstatement of the cast iron railings to the original design together with a new perimeter path and landscaping works, whilst brick paviers have been reinstated to the footways. Other green spaces along Marine Parade are similarly visually important to the settings of formal groups of buildings but are not open to public use.

Character

3.3.6 The character of this sub-area clearly stems from its historical relationship with the sea. The layout of the formal groups of buildings and their pale coloured, south facing facades capture and reflect the sun. The seafront shelters, Madeira Terrace and Covered Walkway, the Shelter Hall and Lift and below that the wide, straight southern pavement of Madeira Drive all evoke traditional seafront promenading. The continuous line of wide, uncluttered beaches contribute significantly to this character.

3.3.7 The seafront buildings are largely in residential use, but are high density as the original large houses have been divided into flats. Most are owner occupied but some are used for shorter term rented occupation. The exception is the short length west of Camelford Street, where there are a variety of tourism-related commercial uses at ground floor level. This part of the seafront relates more to the brasher seafront pleasures of the Palace Pier, and includes the Aquarium Terraces and Colonnade and the beaches immediately east of the Pier. Any further intensification of this commercial brashness would, however, be detrimental to the special character of the seafront. It should be noted too that the seafront as a whole has a different character in summer to that of the winter. The influx of summer visitors gives this sub-area a lively character, which contrasts with a more sedate atmosphere during the winter months. The variation in the quality of light from winter to summer also has an impact on the perception of the seafront's character.

3.4 THE ST JAMES'S STREET AREA

Appearance

3.4.1 St James's Street itself remains the principal shopping street of eastern Brighton and, unusually for Brighton, has not suffered from road widening. It is built on a fairly steeply rising slope and is characterised by regular junctions with the narrow streets running north and south. It largely retains its early 19th century buildings and these are generally three storeys plus attic in height, but with some

four storey plus attic buildings, particularly in the eastern half. The buildings are hard onto the pavement and step up in height as they climb the hill, but step up at intervals not at each building. There is no uniform roofline; some buildings have a pitched roof with eaves while others have a pitched or mansard roof behind a parapet. Due to the topography, the roofs are generally visible and are mostly slate or red clay tiles. Tall chimney stacks with clay pots are a very prominent feature.

3.4.2 Whilst there is no uniformity in St James's Street, the buildings are mostly of similar narrow plot width (with the exception of some later buildings) and vertical emphasis and are mostly pale painted stucco with bays. Some have retained their original segmental (curved) bays whilst others have later Victorian canted bays. Within the street there are some groups of buildings that are uniform groups, notably numbers 1-4 on the north side; numbers 95-98 and numbers 107-111 on the south side.

3.4.3 Some good late 19th century shop fronts remain in whole or part, but despite recent grant schemes there are regrettably still some standard modern shop fronts with large fascias which do not respect the proportions and materials of the parent buildings. Some modern buildings on the northern side fail to respect the scale, proportions and materials of the street as a whole, notably numbers 25-27 and 41-43 (though the latter is currently under partial reconstruction to add an additional storey and re-model the elevations, which should go some way to overcoming this).

3.4.4 A series of generally narrow streets lead off St James's Street to the north and south. The earlier streets at the western end are small in scale; buildings are two or three storeys plus attic, with narrow frontages. They are built hard onto the pavement. There is a variety of facing materials within these streets; flint cobbles, mathematical tiles, red/brown brick and stucco render. Some have curved (segmental) bays whilst some have Victorian canted bays and the most modest houses have no bay at all. Ornamentation is minimal. Rooflines also vary but a simple pitched roof with eaves, in clay tile or slate, is typical. This reflects the way in which different parts of these streets were built by separate developers and how they were often re-fronted in the late part of the 19th century. Typical of these streets are Camelford Street and Charles Street. Former service streets such as Wentworth Street and Marine Gardens have similar variety. The southern end of George Street has shop fronts at ground floor level, some of good simple late 19th century style, which make an important contribution to the appearance of the wider sub-area.

3.4.5 Further east the streets comprise taller, larger scale stuccoed houses more typically Regency in style. Many have basements with a well in front and tall iron railings forming the consistent hard boundary line. Roofs are generally behind parapets with full height bays, often first floor balconies and decorative ironwork and stucco mouldings. Most still display a degree of variety in design but some, such as Atlingworth Street, are quite uniform.

3.4.6 A few streets are exceptions. Princes Street has a very mixed appearance in terms of building scale, height, style and materials and this mixture and slightly 'ad hoc' nature is part of its historic character. It originally had a mix of uses too but is now largely residential. Visually it is dominated by the listed late Victorian red brick building which was formerly the Parochial Offices. Even here, though, there is a

respect for vertical proportioning, with the wide Parochial Offices facade broken down vertically by the window groupings and proportions. The small car parking space immediately in front of it detracts from its setting though. In Dorset Gardens the houses are quite grand for this end of the area, and face what were originally their own private gardens, but have a variety of facades and facing materials reflecting their early date and subsequent 'Victorianisation'. The public open space of the gardens is important to the setting of the buildings and the long flint wall is an attractive feature typical of the early date of this part of East Cliff.

3.4.7 Upper Rock Gardens is much wider and has a variety of ages, scale and styles. The west side has small, modest houses to the bottom end and grander Regency houses further up. Its east side has later large Victorian houses of a wider plot width than is typical in this part of East Cliff. Lower Rock Gardens is similarly wide but with a much greater architectural unity. This road, though, has rather an air of neglect both to the buildings and the public realm and suffers from being a major traffic route. The buildings are unusual in having spacious front garden areas behind boundary walls or railings but these front areas are especially neglected. St James's Avenue has very late Victorian red brick houses which are quite different to other housing in East Cliff, but share the common 19th century architectural features and make a positive contribution to the area's appearance. The most dominant individual building is (as originally) the red brick St Mary's Church (listed grade II*) on the prominent corner of St James's Street/Upper Rock Gardens.

3.4.8 In Upper St James's Street the modern flats of Hampshire Court on the north side are outside the conservation area boundary but have a detrimental impact on the conservation area by virtue of their massing, proportions, materials and failure to respect the historic building line hard onto the pavement. Further tree planting and a more sympathetic boundary treatment could soften the impact of these blocks. The south side of the street consists of an attractive group of mixed scale mid 19th century properties with many good traditional shop fronts. The mixed scale of Bedford Street marks the eastern edge of this sub area.

Character

3.4.9 This sub-area has a much livelier, mixed character than the other two identified. Although the major use is residential there are significant other uses, particularly retail, cafe/restaurant and small hotel/guest house uses plus some small offices and workshops. The residential use is again high density and is divided between single owner-occupied dwellings (in the smaller houses) and flats in the larger houses. The flats are often in use as shorter term rented accommodation and the density of occupation does cause some detrimental impact on the historic character in some streets, though St James's Street itself would benefit from further residential conversion of under-used upper floors. This contemporary mix of uses very much reflects the original 19th century mix and St James's Street itself retains its historic role as the shopping street for the eastern town as well as a principal east-west access route and is very lively during the day. Currently, though, vehicular traffic is over-dominant and this is detrimental to the area's character. The wide social mix of East Cliff is most evident around St James's Street. Most of the larger residential properties are divided into flats or bedsits and the population is characterised by the younger and older age groups.

3.4.10 The historic street pattern is at its most evident in this sub-area and the series of straight parallel roads at right angles to St James's Street is an integral part of the character as well as appearance here, with glimpsed views of the sea being available at regular intervals. North of St James's Street, Dorset Gardens provides a welcome public green space and is a historical reminder of the pattern and nature of the early development here.

3.5 KEMP TOWN VILLAGE & THE VICTORIAN RESIDENTIAL STREETS

Appearance

3.5.1 This sub-area is markedly different in appearance from the other two. It is typified by the series of straight residential streets, mostly running east-west, which lie between Montague Place and Sudeley Place. They predominantly consist of fairly uniform terraces of two storey Victorian houses, stuccoed with cant bays and sash windows and minimal mouldings. The rooflines have consistent ridge and eaves or parapet lines, though many houses have lost the original slate covering which, by virtue of its natural colour and texture, complemented the smooth rendered elevations. The houses are mostly set back behind shallow front areas/gardens with low walls/railings forming a hard boundary to the pavement. Mature street trees are a feature of this sub-area, softening the townscape.

3.5.2 St George's Road, as the former leakway, forms the heart of this sub-area and is very mixed in appearance, having been developed over a period of time. It is dominated by the 1820s St George's church in Greek Revival style, in a tree-lined setting. Pearson House is also a prominent building but has suffered from modernisation which has stripped it of much original detail and given it a large additional wing in Abbey Road which does not respect the massing, proportions or materials of surrounding buildings but does present a striking contrast. The prevailing built form of St George's Road though is generally two or three storey Victorian stuccoed buildings, mainly with shops at ground floor level. Most retain traditional timber shop fronts. Within this mixed length there are some uniform groups, notably 39-54 and 73-83 (which are listed). The Hanbury Arms public house (formerly the Sassoon Mausoleum) on the corner of Paston Place is an important landmark at this end of the road due to its tented copper roof and crenellated Moorish parapet. To the west, the imposing scale, distinctive roofline and decorative detail of St Anne's Institute combine to form another corner landmark building.

3.5.3 The junction of St George's Road with Bristol Road is very mixed and is dominated by the listed 1873 red brick former Methodist church. This prominent junction has been enhanced by the creation of a public paved 'square'. Bristol Road itself is dominated by church of St John the Baptist, with its classical Greek portico, and the buildings of St Joseph's convent, which form an important group of listed buildings. Numbers 19-26 on the south side are a prominent, uniform terrace of four storey Victorian properties with some surviving or part surviving 19th century shop fronts. Number 26 includes an archway through to Eastern Terrace Mews. They are considered to be of local interest as a group but their condition is rather neglected despite some grant-aided restoration works.

3.5.4 East of Sudeley Place is more mixed; some groups of large Regency style houses continue up from the seafront, whilst Rock Street also has larger scale

buildings but with ground floor shops, mostly retaining good traditional timber shop fronts. Sussex Mews remains as a group of former mews buildings approached via an archway from Eastern Road, but the buildings themselves have been very much domesticated and have lost their original mews appearance. St Mary's Square is a modern housing development on a former school playing field and has little architectural merit in terms of enhancing the area's appearance, though it retains the high flint boundary wall on Eastern Road. High flint walls are a particularly important and attractive feature of Eastern Road.

Character

3.5.5 This area is very largely residential in use and character. The residential use is lower density than the other two sub-areas as many of the houses are small scale and have remained in single dwelling use. This part of East Cliff is comparatively unaffected by the seasonal influx of tourists which occurs elsewhere and it is generally much quieter. The street pattern is generally different here, with many residential streets running east-west rather than north-south. This reflects the greater freedom that later developers had as they reached the outer edges of the old arable field system. The relationship of East Cliff to the sea is much less in evidence here.

3.5.6 The heart of this sub-area though is St George's Road. Its lively and varied retail/commercial core is supported by community uses which taken together have the essential functions and character akin to a village high street. It maintains this important historic service relationship to the surrounding residential development. Rock Street is also part commercial but serves small scale local needs.

4. BOUNDARY CHANGES

All the proposed boundary changes referred to below are shown on map number 2.

North Side of St James's Street

4.1 Part of the north side of St James's Street is currently excluded from the conservation area. Whilst some of the excluded properties have been altered from their historical appearance or are modern buildings, this section of the street nevertheless retains its 19th century street pattern and footprint and several of the buildings make a positive contribution to the appearance of the area and deserve to be retained. It is also the case that any development in this part of St James's Street would have a direct impact on the conservation area.

4.2 It is therefore proposed that numbers 29 – 46 (consecutive) St James's Street, numbers 1 and 2 Cavendish Street and numbers 72 and 73 High Street be included in the conservation area.

Upper Bedford Street

4.3 Two buildings here lie immediately outside the conservation area boundary. The former Pelham Institute (now Montague Court), on the corner of Upper Bedford Street, Montague Street and St George's Terrace, has been listed grade II since the boundary was originally drawn. It is a Victorian building which, although different in style and material to the majority in East Cliff, is clearly part of the area's special historical interest and should be included within the boundary. To the south of it, the Fitzherbert Centre is a large corner building which dominates views within the

conservation area from the west. It was built early in the 20th century as a Roman Catholic school and has since been extended. Although not a particularly attractive building, it has some local historic interest and a significant impact on the appearance of the conservation area due to its prominent location. Its height and massing are complementary to the area but its condition is currently poor.

4.4 It is therefore proposed that Montague Court, Upper Bedford Street and number 1 Bristol Road (The Fitzherbert Centre) be included in the conservation area.

Edward Street

4.5 Part of the south side of Edward Street is also currently excluded from the conservation area. The excluded length contains some good 19th century buildings, in rows, typical of the appearance and character of East Cliff, and there appears no reason to exclude these. At the adjoining north end of High Street, numbers 23-30, which were built in 1910 as council housing, have recently been listed. Although they are architecturally different to typical East Cliff buildings, they respect the original street pattern and urban design form and have historic interest. It is considered that they should be included within the conservation area boundary.

4.6 It is therefore proposed that numbers 142 – 147 (consecutive) and 152 - 153 Edward Street, and numbers 23 – 35 (consecutive) High Street be included in the conservation area.

5. QUALITY OF TOWNSCAPE AND CONTRIBUTION OF BUILDINGS

5.1 All listed buildings within the conservation area will be considered to make a positive contribution to the appearance and character of the area and all unlisted buildings will be considered to make either a positive or a neutral contribution to the area, unless specifically identified to the contrary.

Local List

5.2 It is considered that the following buildings are distinctive 'one-off' buildings or coherent historic groups which should be added to the list of buildings of local interest:

19-26 Bristol Road
39 Chesham Road (former NTC hall)
Eastern Terrace Mews (all)
Marine Terrace Mews (all)
St Anne's Institute, 110 St George's Road
Sussex Mews (all)

Buildings which detract from the area

5.3 It is considered that the following buildings, by virtue of their height, scale, massing, design and/or materials, detract from the appearance of the conservation area:

Sweda Court, corner of Chesham Road/Chesham Street
The Albermarle, Marine Parade
27/28 St James's Street
41/45 St James's Street (*but subject to review, as being extended/remodelled*)

5.4 Where the opportunity arises, the council would welcome the demolition or part demolition of these buildings and their replacement with buildings of greater architectural quality which respect the special historic appearance and character of the area. However, any such proposals should not conflict with local plan policy to retain numbers of residential units.

6. VACANT SITES

Manchester Street / Charles Street car park

6.1 This is the only remaining significant vacant site in East Cliff. It has been vacant since bomb damage in the Second World War and has been in authorised use as a private car park since 1951. It has been allocated as a suitable site for 24 housing units in the second deposit draft of the Brighton and Hove local plan. However, the parking use may be sufficiently profitable to preclude the opportunity of redevelopment in the near future. Any future development here should respect the small scale of Charles Street in terms of building height and massing but could be taller facing Manchester Street. The existing plot widths, building line, roof line and elevational proportions in these streets should be respected. In the absence of any development proposals, some enhancement of the area could be achieved by replacing the existing wire fence and concrete posts with a boundary wall. This would not only serve to screen the parked cars but would reinstate a hard building line. The wall should preferably be faced in flint cobbles, with red/brown brick pillars and dressings.

7. PROPOSALS FOR PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT

7.1 ARTICLE IV DIRECTIONS

7.1.1 Article IV Directions are can be used to control permitted development rights in conservation areas where it is considered that such permitted development could harm the appearance and character of the area. Such permitted development rights largely apply to single dwellinghouses and the only area of East Cliff where there is a concentration of unlisted single dwellinghouses is the area to the north of St George's Road, the Victorian residential streets.

7.1.2 In this part of East Cliff, the historic appearance of the area is threatened by alterations such as: replacement windows and front doors in non-traditional materials and styles; the removal of chimney stacks; replacement roof coverings and the insertion of rooflights on visible front roof slopes; the erection of front porches; and the alteration of front boundary walls and railings.

7.1.3 It is therefore proposed that public consultation be undertaken with local residents with regard to the possibility of introducing an Article IV Direction in the area bounded by St George's Road, Eastern Road, Montague Place and Sudeley Place.

7.1.4 Article IV Directions already exist in some places in East Cliff, to control the painting of formal, uniform groups of listed buildings, restricting them to a particular colour scheme on the street elevations. Public consultation has revealed support for extending this control to other formal groups of listed buildings in the area, either for a single approved colour or for a limited range of approved colours:

7.1.5 It is therefore proposed that consultation be undertaken with local residents and businesses with regard to the possibility of introducing Article IV Directions to control external painting in the following streets:

Bloomsbury Place

Eastern Terrace

New Steine

Portland Place

7.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

St George's Road

7.2.1 The junction with Eaton Place at the eastern end of the road would benefit from improved hard and soft landscaping to the two triangles of land. The area along the flank wall of Chesham Mansions would particularly benefit from a rationalisation of street furniture and a more attractive and robust railing design.

7.3 GRANT AID

Conservation Area Partnership Scheme (CAPS)

7.3.1 Over 50 properties benefited from historic building grants for repair or reinstatement works under the East Cliff CAPS, which ran for three years between 1996 and 1999, including several listed buildings which were considered to be 'at risk'. The scheme was particularly successful in Dorset Gardens, Marine Parade, Portland Place, St James's Street and Upper Rock Gardens.

Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS)

7.3.2 The council, in partnership with English Heritage again, has been running a Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme in the St James's Street and St George's Road area. The HERS, which ends in September 2002, focuses on the regeneration of commercial/shopping areas by offering grant aid for the restoration of commercial or part commercial buildings, the improvement of shop fronts and the encouragement of 'living over the shop' residential units. To date it has been particularly successful in restoring and reinstating traditional timber shop fronts in the two main shopping cores as well as repairing and restoring key buildings in prominent locations.

European URBAN Funds

7.3.3 The recently completed traffic scheme and street improvements in St James's Street were carried out with URBAN funding and were a community-led response to the need to revitalise and regenerate this key thoroughfare and retail centre. Signposting of the shopping areas here and at St George's Road, together with marketing and publicity work, has also been carried out with URBAN funding.

The Future

7.3.4 After the end of the HERS the council will assess the need for further grant aid in East Cliff, having regard to priorities in other areas and the existence of possible matching funding from other sources, such as English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the European Community. Within East Cliff it is considered that Lower Rock Gardens and Upper St James's Street/Bristol Road would be priorities for future action in this area. However, it is currently considered that any future council funding that may be available would be directed to areas that have not benefited from funding in recent years and where the condition of the built fabric is causing most concern.

7.4 THE SEAFRONT

The Madeira Terrace and Covered Walk

7.4.1 The council sets aside funding each year from its buildings maintenance budget for the repair and ongoing maintenance of the grade II listed Madeira Terrace and Covered Walkway. However, in order to fully restore this 850 metre long structure to its Victorian splendour, a significant one-off injection of funding is needed. This would extend the recent restoration and enhancement works carried out to the contiguous 1920s Colonnade immediately to the west (also listed). The council submitted an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for this work in 1997 but was unsuccessful. Subject to resources and priorities, the council will investigate the possibility of another application to the Heritage Lottery Fund in the future, or to explore alternative sources of matching funding.

Madeira Drive

7.4.2 In addition to the issue of the Madeira Terrace referred to above, it is felt that Madeira Drive as a whole would benefit from a strategic approach to its enhancement. The council has set up a working group to look at issues of public safety in Madeira Drive arising from its innate attractiveness to speeding drivers, and short term temporary measures are being implemented to progress this and test their effectiveness. In the slightly longer term it is proposed that permanent features would be introduced which curb the problems without destroying the special historic character of Madeira Drive as a straight wide road and promenade. Well designed gates should be installed at the roundabout end and at Dukes Mound to prevent car cruising events. The one at the roundabout end would also function as a 'gateway' to Madeira Drive. Additional lighting will be installed to the east of Peter Pan's playground and the car parking layout altered to assist in slowing traffic. Beyond that, thought will be given to the pedestrianisation or part-pedestrianisation of the western end of Madeira Drive (between the roundabout and the Colonnade) using high quality materials, provided that the issues of service access, coach parking and event management can be successfully dealt with.

7.4.3 Peter Pan's playground currently detracts from the appearance of the conservation area due to its random collection of ramshackle buildings and other structures and the poor quality of its immediate environment. The council will seek to use its powers to achieve a better quality children's play area, with buildings and structures clustered together in a visually co-ordinated manner, and high quality hard and soft landscaping appropriate to the seafront location. Replacement buildings of a high standard of design will be encouraged, which respect the appearance of the conservation area not only in views along Madeira Drive and from the beach, but also from Marine Parade above. No expansion of the boundary of the playground will be acceptable. Single storey buildings only will be appropriate, with careful attention paid to the design and material of the roofs, and no amusement or ride should exceed the pavement height of Marine Parade, including when in use.

7.5 RAILINGS ON AND ADJOINING MARINE PARADE

7.5.1 Historically, many of the front boundaries of properties and open spaces along Marine Parade were formed by cast iron railings. Often these have been lost or fallen into disrepair. In recent years the council has carried out the reinstatement or restoration of various railings, funded in partnership with others, notably at New Steine, the crescent at the south end of Bloomsbury Place and at Royal Crescent. The council will encourage, and wherever possible support, the reinstatement of traditional cast iron railings at other key locations along Marine Parade and in key streets leading off it, notably Lower Rock Gardens.

7.6 STREET TREES

7.6.1 Local public consultation revealed a wish for more street trees in the conservation area generally, and particularly in the Upper St James's Street area. One street tree was planted as part of the road improvement scheme in St James's Street and another one was planted as part of the landscaping of the St George's Road / Bristol Road junction. The council will seek to plant further street trees in appropriate locations in East Cliff (where below ground conditions permit), and considers that the north side of Upper St James Street would be particularly appropriate, as it would soften the appearance of the modern housing blocks.