

**BRIGHTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**THE NORTH LAINE CONSERVATION AREA STUDY**

**Third Revision**

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**Amended Following Consultations and Approved**



**Brighton & Hove**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

- I.1 Brighton is renowned for the Royal Pavilion, the seafront and its grand Regency terraces, crescents and squares. But behind these grand frontages another more intimate, humbler heritage hides, awaiting to be discovered by the visitor. There are neighbourhoods which are perhaps richer in detail, colour and variety, albeit on a smaller scale: the Old Town, and the North Laine. The North Laine although less well known, is unique in Brighton. It combines residential streets and a large residential community with busy shops, workshops, cafes, pubs and restaurants in a lively blend. There are few outstanding historic buildings. Yet its streets and buildings, seen as a whole, form an area of townscape which is interesting and attractive and fully justifies its status as a Conservation Area and the protection this gives it.
- I.2 Brighton's economy is heavily dependent on tourism, the conference trade, and leisure shopping. Its architectural heritage and the lively ambience of its historic areas, with their plethora of small shops, restaurants, cafes and pubs, are a major draw. Not only should Brighton's heritage be protected for its own sake, for posterity and the enjoyment of residents and workers, but it must be carefully nurtured as a major economic resource. Moreover, increasingly, a high quality and distinctive local environment is an important factor for successfully attracting new investment to an area.
- I.3 But this heritage has its problems. The Study includes a frank audit of the current condition of the area's townscape. The variety of competing uses sometimes results in conflicts. Its narrow streets, which are an important aspect of its character, suffer from traffic congestion and parking problems. These call for traffic restraint measures rather than road widening. There are strong commercial pressures for large scale redevelopments gnawing away around its edges, threatening the small scale fine grained texture of its fabric. There are numerous vacant sites. Its street scenes are rapidly being marred by a multitude of small scale alterations, most of which do not require an application for planning permission, since they enjoy "Permitted Development" rights. Many alterations are unauthorised. Cumulatively over time, these small scale alterations can completely destroy the character and quality of the townscape of an area. These issues require urgent attention.
- I.4 The Conservation Area does not cover all of the area of the medieval open field that gives it its name, or the 19th century urban neighbourhood of the North Laine. Many groups of buildings of townscape value and historical importance lie outside of it. Some parts of the Conservation Area are reaching the point where it may no longer be possible to justify keeping them in. The boundary is in need of review. This study proposes a number of rationalisations of the boundaries, including additions and transfers. Some buildings or sites where redevelopment would be acceptable are included where they occupy a critical location in the wider street scene, to ensure a higher quality of design and prevent premature demolition and subsequent blighting of the area. Other streets are proposed for monitoring and review.
- I.5 The study also sets out a detailed policy framework and design guidelines for new development and alterations and extensions. Those policies which are of a general nature and which would apply to all or most other conservation areas as well, are placed in an appendix and will form the basis for the development of Borough Urban Design and Conservation Guidelines.
- I.6 The Study also sets out the policy framework and objectives for traffic management and street enhancements in the area. It proposes action to enhance the conservation area.
- I.7 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.

## 2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

### The Problems

2.1 The principal problems affecting the North Laine Area are:-

- An incoherent conservation area boundary which leaves out important groups of buildings and key sites
- Vacant sites and development blight.
- Pressures of large scale redevelopments pushing deeper into the Conservation Area
- The scale, form and mix of uses of development proposals conflicting with the existing texture and grain of the area
- Heavy through-traffic, including large lorries, congestion and unauthorised parking
- Inappropriate and/or poorly designed alterations and extensions to residential buildings, including windows, porches, re-roofing, etc
- Inappropriate and/or poorly designed alterations to shopfronts, including over-large fascia signs, Dutch blinds, etc
- The proliferation of advertisement hoardings
- The loss of mixed-use character, comprising small workshops, shops and housing through large single-use redevelopments
- A rash of unauthorised works and insufficient planning controls over development
- Vacant accommodation above shops
- Lack of detailed design guidance.

### The Statutory Basis of the Study

2.2 The statutory basis for this study is contained in The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 71, which says that:-

- 1) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas.**
- 2) Proposals under this section shall be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the area to which they relate.**
- 3) The local planning authority shall have regard to any views concerning the proposals by persons attending the meeting.**

2.3 Department of the Environment/Department of National Heritage Planning Policy Guidance Note PPG15 on Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas, advises that: "It is important that designation is not seen as an end in itself: policies will almost always need to be developed which clearly identify what it is about the character or appearance of the area which should be preserved or enhanced, and set out the means by which that objective is to be pursued. Clear assessment and definition of an area's special interest and the action needed to protect it will help to generate awareness and encourage local property owners to take the right sort of action for

themselves." It goes on to say that: "It is important that conservation policies are fully integrated with other policies for the area, e.g. for shopping and traffic management. Account should also be taken of wider policies, (e.g. for house renovation grants) which may affect the area's character or appearance" (Paras. 4.9 & 4.10). The Brighton Borough Plan does contain many such policies and this Study seeks to build on these and to develop them in more detail.

### **The Relationship to the Borough Plan**

2.4 In furtherance of its statutory responsibilities, the Council included the following commitment in Paragraph 3.31 of the Borough Plan:-

**"The Council intends to prepare plans for each Conservation Area in consultation with local people, indicating opportunities for preservation and enhancement".**

2.5 The Borough Plan provides the policy framework within which the Study and proposed Enhancement Programme must operate. In addition, there are other policy documents, such as Council design guidelines for shutters on shopfronts which should be referred to. The Government's advice set out in PPG15 must also be taken into account.

2.6 Paragraph 3.36 of the Borough Plan explains that:-

**"The rationale for the conservation of an area is that it has a recognisable character requiring protection. If the appropriate aspects do not remain readily apparent, the essence of the area's character will be lost. In preparing the Borough Plan some conservation area boundaries have been reviewed and extensions made. The opportunity to review the boundaries further will be taken when detailed plans for each conservation area are produced. The following paragraphs describe each conservation area in turn and these statements of character form the conservation rationale within which development and enhancement can take place and upon which more detailed policies can be based as detailed plans are produced for each area."**

2.7 Policy ENV.27 of the Borough Plan says:-

**"Proposals for development and enhancement in a Conservation Area will be required to take into account the following characteristics of the area"**

vii) **North Laine - The gradual development of this area in the early nineteenth century, previously a series of arable fields, created an irregular grid iron street pattern which is still very much part of its character. The development of largely Victorian housing, but including a wide variety of small industries, workshops and other commercial premises, was accelerated by the coming of the railway and the construction of Brighton Station adjacent to the Northwest. This lively mixture of land use still exists and although there are few buildings of individual architectural merit, it has in good measure what is described as 'the rich texture of metropolitan life' with several streets of modest Victorian terraced houses whose attraction lies in their simple, repeated facades."**

2.8 The Plan contains a number of policies and proposals which are directly relevant to the North Laine neighbourhood and to the Conservation Area and these are referred to in the Study.

- 2.9 However, there are other broader policies which relate to developments generally and the full text of the Borough Plan should be referred to as well as various Policy Guidance Leaflets giving further clarification of these.
- 2.10 The Council has carried out this study of the North Laine Conservation Area and its surroundings, so as to identify the aspects which make up the special character of the North Laine area, the threats to that character, the constraints on development and any opportunities for development, and to propose policies and enhancement projects which will both "preserve and enhance" the character of the Conservation Area and ensure that developments adjacent to the Conservation Area do not impinge upon it.

### **Scope of Study**

- 2.11 The Conservation Area does not cover the whole of the North Laine area. As a distinct geographical neighbourhood, North Laine can be defined as the block within North Street, Queens Road, Cheapside, Marlborough Place, Gloucester Place and Pavilion Gardens, but excluding the frontages of those roads, other than Cheapside. Part of this area is covered by the Valley Gardens Conservation Area and a small section by the West Hill Conservation Area.
- 2.12 Many of the problems and issues are the same outside the North Laine Conservation Area as in it. The Conservation Area, in terms of urban geography, is somewhat arbitrary. What happens outside the Conservation Area but adjoining it can have a major impact on its quality and character. This is especially the case with traffic management schemes and large redevelopment sites.
- 2.13 Consequently, the Study Area boundary has been drawn to cover the whole North Laine neighbourhood. Rather than looking at the area as a collection of individual buildings or taking only a narrow conservation approach, a broader urban design view has been adopted within which the "preservation and enhancement" of the Conservation Area are centred. Because the character of the North Laine Conservation Area is strongly dependent on the variety of activities taking place there, and there are so many vacant sites in and around it, the Study takes into account land use activities and policies, and their relationship to conservation of the built environment.

### **Consultation**

- 2.14 In accordance with the Council's policy of ensuring full consultation, the preliminary views of the local community association, as well as other local and national societies were sought. Their comments and suggestions were taken into account in preparing the consultation draft study. The study was approved as interim policy pending consultations on 21st June 1994. Two public meetings were held. The Conservation Areas Advisory Committee, the Town Centre Forum, local conservation societies, English Heritage and the local traders' association were consulted on the Draft. Their views have been taken into account and the final version of the Study amended where considered appropriate.

### **3. AN APPRAISAL OF THE PHYSICAL CHARACTER OF THE NORTH LAINE**

#### **HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTH LAINE AREA**

- 3.1 Brighton was probably founded in the early Saxon period and its name is believed to derive from Brithelm's Tun. By the time of the Domesday book, it was well established as a fishing village of some 400 people. Archaeological finds in the Old Town include prehistoric features, a Bronze Age Beaker burial, Roman coins, Medieval and Post-Medieval artefacts and building foundations. A Roman presence in the valley bottom along the London to Brighton Road to the east is evidenced by the discovery of a Roman Villa at Springfield Road and Roman Coins at St. Peters Church. At the top end of Church Street a series of previously unknown catacombs and many unrecorded burials were discovered during redevelopment.
- 3.2 As the eastern side of the area is in a valley bottom, it is conceivable that archaeological features may have been covered by hill-wash deposits. However, most of the area has been built over in the last 100 - 200 years and if there were any traces of earlier settlement, they may not have survived, particularly where buildings have or had deep basements and foundations.
- 3.3 The Laines were the name given to the arable open fields land which surrounded the old fishing town of Brighthelmston. There were five laines, West, North, East, Hilly and Little Laine. The boundaries of the North Laine were Church Street on the south, New England and Viaduct Roads on the North, St Nicholas, Buckingham and Clifton Streets on the West and Victoria Gardens and Ditchling Road on the east sides. London Road cuts through the original North Laine.
- 3.4 Each laine was subdivided into furlongs separated by access paths called leakways. The furlongs were then further subdivided into strips for cultivation known as paul-pieces. These ran along the hillside to reduce erosion by soil slip. By the 1780s, the paul-pieces were owned in units called yardlands. As the area was gradually developed, each builder tended to arrange streets and buildings along paul-pieces, the whole width of the furlong. The east-west roads, Church Street, North Road, Gloucester Road, Trafalgar Street, Cheapside and Ann Street, follow the routes of the leakways, whilst the north-south streets mark out the paul-pieces. Thus the pattern of land-ownership at that time is preserved in the present grid street layout. Consequently, the street pattern of the area is of considerable historic interest and is an important element of the area's distinctive character.
- 3.5 Between 1750 and 1780 most of the development that transformed Brighthelmston into the fashionable seaside resort of Brighton was concentrated within the Old Town. Attempts to build suburbs on the farmland around the town during the 1770s were unsuccessful. North Row was the first urban development within the laines. It was started in 1772, with cottages and a stable where the King and Queen public house now stands in Marlborough Place. However, maps show that of the laines adjacent to the Old Town, the rate of building was slowest in the North Laine. It was not until the 1780s that continuous outward expansion gained momentum. From 1780 most of the fashionable residential development took place along the cliff tops and subsequently along the edge of what is now the Steine and up the Lewes and London Roads. North Laine lacked the advantages of a seaside frontage favoured by fashionable residential development. This and the north-south orientation of its paul-pieces prevented the development of houses with a sea view. Moreover, the small plot divisions and ownership patterns made it unsuitable for development into grand squares and crescents by the big estates.
- 3.6 The Old Town of Brighton had many walled orchards and market gardens within it behind the frontage buildings. However, as the town grew, these were forced out into the surrounding laines, particularly the North Laine, and this is reflected in the street names of the area, many of which are called "Gardens", such as Kensington Gardens and Queen's Gardens. The North Laine was

only built on when land became scarce in the town centre. Until this time the area was still largely open farmland.

- 3.7 Further development within the Old Town meant that small industries and workshops were also forced out of this area into North Laine where land was still relatively cheap and the North Street shops were easily accessible. Early development was stimulated by its location on the north side of North Street, where the town's first coaching inns were located and which was Brighton's most fashionable street from the 1770s to 1820. Small workshops and mews were built in the North Laine to serve the inns and shops of fashionable Brighton. However, this process occurred quite slowly. The south side of North Street had been lined with farms with deep plots of land known as crofts at the back, stretching to what is now called Church Street. By the early 1780s the crofts, some of which were used as market and fruit gardens, were being built on to create Bond, King, and Portland Streets, with their pubs, stables, workshops, smithies and small houses.
- 3.9 Church Street is the oldest street in the area and predates its urban development. It was originally a medieval rural track at the rear of the crofts and gardens stretching northwards from North Street and led to St Nicholas Church. It was called North Backside, but was later renamed Spring Walk and did not acquire its present name until 1792. Several old side streets and small courtyards leading off it have since been demolished in slum clearance programmes. The road was extended through to Grand Parade in about 1816 when a road to the north of the Royal Pavilion was closed.
- 3.10 A group of farm buildings stood on the south - east part of what is now the Jubilee Street site, behind where the Waggon and Horses now stands, and a lane led to it from Church Street along the line of where Jubilee Mews was later laid out. About 1800, building started on the north side of Church Street.
- 3.11 New Road was laid out at the command of the Prince Regent in 1805 along the line of Furner's Gardens. The buildings developed along it over the next ten years. The Town Commissioners required him to do this in return for granting permission in 1803 for the stopping up of Great East Street that ran behind his Marine Pavilion, to form the gardens.
- 3.12 Contemporary maps show that by 1830, Gloucester Street, North Road and Trafalgar Street were in existence, but only the block of land between Church Street and North Road was fully developed. Other parts of North Laine were still predominantly orchards and gardens. The area west of Gardner Street was described in the 1840s as the site of some of the worst slums in Brighton.
- 3.13 The growth of North Laine was not a product of fashion, but of utility. Its purpose was to serve the rest of fashionable Brighton with its small industries - foundries, blacksmiths, and other crafts, and provide homes for the workforce of the growing town. The large elegant houses along the Steine and the Cliffs needed armies of staff and servants to maintain them. The tight compact terraces in North Laine housed these people, together with those working in the area's workshops.
- 3.14 The building of the railway station in 1840 confirmed North Laine as Brighton's major artisan and service area. Small industries and workshops were established such as printers, warehouses and foundries, using the coal and metal brought in by the railway. This in turn encouraged house building in the area for those working on the railway and its allied industries. Queen's Road was constructed in 1845 better to link the new station to the Old Town, bridging over Trafalgar Street, which until then was the link, via what is now London Road.
- 3.15 Many streets within the area had a tight, varied pattern of land use with workshops and warehouses on one side and artisans' cottages on the other. This pattern of development is still visible in the variety of buildings and land uses to be found in North Laine today.

- 3.16 The sequence in which the streets were developed is approximately as follows:- 1745-1779, Bond St (south), King St, Marlborough Place and Prince's Place; 1780-9: Bond St (north), Jew St, Portland St and Windsor St; 1789-99: Church St (east of Spring Gardens), King St, Spring Gardens; 1800-8: Gloucester Place; 1809-22: Bread St, Gardner St, Jubilee St, Regent St, Frederick Place, Kensington Gardens, New Road, North Road (south side), Orange Row, Pimlico St (no longer exists), Cavendish Place North (no longer exists), Belmont St, York Place, London Road (south of Baker St); 1822-30: Church St (west of Spring Gardens), Gloucester St, Kensington St, Upper Gardner St, Vine St, Frederick Gardens, Frederick St, Kensington Place (west side), North Road (north side), St George's Place, Pelham St (south), Trafalgar St (north side), Elder Place, London Rd (north of Baker St); 1836-41: Robert St, Tidy St, Kensington Place, (east side), Trafalgar Terrace, Blackman St, Redcross St, Whitecross St; 1842-47: Blenheim Place, Cheltenham Place, Foundry St, Kemp St, Trafalgar St (south side), Gloucester Rd, Queen's Rd, Pelham Square (west side), Queen's Gardens, Ann St, Pelham St (north), St Peter's St, Station St, Trafalgar St (south side), Cheapside, Providence Place; 1848-53: Over St, Sydney St.; 1859-64: Pelham Square (south and east sides), New England St, Elder St (no longer in existence), London St (no longer in existence); 1870-4: North Place, New England Road; 1875-9: Tichbourne St.
- 3.17 At the end of the 18th century, infantry barracks were built at the south end of Church street and the rear of the King and Queen Inn in Marlborough Place. These later became the headquarters of the 1st Sussex Rifles and the 1st Sussex Artillery Volunteers. The barracks closed in 1870 when the Volunteers moved to new barracks in Church St and Gloucester Road (currently the Royal Mail and "Surridge Dawson" buildings, respectively). The site was acquired by the Corporation for the erection of the North Road Public Baths and a new County Courthouse. The roadway is now called Barrack Yard and a mosaic which originally adorned the interior of one of the barracks buildings still survives in the roadway.
- 3.18 In 1829 one of Brighton's first schools was erected in Church Street, on the corner of Regent Street. The Central National School was designed by Stroud and Mew. It was a three storey building in the Regency gothic style with oriel windows and pinnacles. The school later became the Central Church of England School and eventually the Central Voluntary Primary School and closed in 1971. It was demolished in 1971. Next to it on the corner of Jubilee Street, opposite the end of New Road, stood a smaller Tudor Gothic style building, Nos. 107 - 108, designed to compliment the school. It had two shops on the ground floor and the schoolmaster's residence on the second. This building was also demolished in 1971. The Courthouse was built in 1869 in the Tudor Gothic Revival style, in red brick with a slate hipped roof.
- 3.19 The Waggon and Horses Public House, No. 109 Church Street was built in 1848 by Frederick Mahomed as a gymnasium and became a public house in 1852. No. 115/116, now the Music Library, was constructed in about 1925 as an office and showroom for the Brighton and Hove General Gas Company on the site of the Pavilion Baptist Chapel, built in 1825.
- 3.20 North Road was originally a very narrow road known as North Lane. It was first developed in the 1810s on the south side and in the 1820s on the north side. It was doubled in width in 1870. This road was once a much more important shopping street than today and had ten pubs along its length. Brighton's first swimming pool, the North Road Public Baths were built on the site of the old barracks and opened in 1895. It was closed in 1979 and the new Prince Regent Swimming Pool was built on the site. The old Slipper Baths building, however, still stands nearby in Barrack Yard, which is reached through an archway from North Road, above which is still inscribed "Public Baths". The Slipper Baths only closed in 1976 and is now a nursery. North Place was constructed in the 1870s.
- 3.21 The Jubilee Street area, before it was cleared, was a mixture of small houses, workshops, stables and shops. The southern end of the street narrowed to a single lane and an archway at the rear of

the Waggon and Horses led into a mews - Jubilee Mews. There was also a public house called The Grown Shades.

Sources: "The Development of the North Laine" by Dr. Sue Berry, published by the Lewes Cohen Urban Studies Centre, University of Brighton; The Encyclopaedia of Brighton by Timothy Carder, published by East Sussex County Council Library Service, 1990.

## **THE TOWNSCAPE OF THE NORTH LAINE**

- 3.22 Conservation areas are designated for their special architectural or historic interest. It is the quality and interest of areas, rather than that of individual buildings, which is the prime consideration in identifying conservation areas. The townscape and character of an area is determined by a number of elements including its geography and topography, its street pattern, open spaces, the layout of buildings and their texture and grain, its density and general heights and massing, the architectural styles of its buildings and the materials used.

### **Topography**

- 3.23 The ground in this part of Brighton slopes generally down from west to east towards Valley Gardens and also, on its western edge from north to south towards the sea. Buildings on the western and northern parts tend to be visible in long views, not only within the Conservation Area but also from the adjoining Valley Gardens Conservation Area. The ground slope is particularly noticeable on the east-west cross streets, where the buildings step down the hill like staircases. Their parapet or eaves and roof ridges are staggered. The ground level between the frontages of the Queens Road buildings and their site levels at the rear facing into the North Laine, e.g. in Frederick Place drops quite dramatically and the land is shored up under the pavements with a vaulted brick retaining wall. Therefore, the building heights show a sharp drop down between the edge of the neighbourhood along Queen's Road and the buildings behind.

### **The Street Pattern and Layout of the Buildings**

- 3.24 The dominant characteristic of the North Laine is its irregular linear grid street pattern, running north-south, which was based on the original pattern of arable fields. Whilst this street pattern has been disrupted in recent times by several large developments, it nevertheless largely survives. There is only one example of a square - Pelham Square, with its central garden containing many large trees, which departs from this pattern. The only other large green open space is the Burial Ground of the Presbyterian Church, now a public park.
- 3.25 The original buildings were gradually laid out in the 19th Century to relatively high site coverages on narrow plots. The houses have very small rear gardens. In the main the building line is hard up against the pavement edge or in some cases behind very small front gardens or basement light wells, such as in Kensington Gardens.
- 3.26 Because the North Laine was developed piecemeal after the main frontages such as the fashionable Old Steine and Valley Gardens frontages, there are places where the plot boundaries layout interlocks like a jigsaw with those of the grander frontages in an interesting way.

### **Important Views**

- 3.27 The topography and layout of the area, with its long streets, affords a large number of long views through the Conservation Area, as well as into and out of it. In some cases, important landmark buildings can be seen in these. Those views worthy of special mention include:- Trafalgar St, Gloucester Rd, North Rd, and Church St, which have views right across the North Laine to Valley Gardens and the hillside beyond. The view eastwards along North Road is terminated by the group of trees in and around the Turner Recreation Ground in Sussex St. Bond St, Gardner St and several other streets have vistas of the Listed St Bartholomew's Church, a bold brick building

which dominates the skyline. Some of the north-south streets afford glimpses of the green top of Hollingbury Hill Fort, e.g. Bond St. Trafalgar St has glimpses of the tower of St Peter's Church in Valley Gardens. Queen's Road Quadrant has two large trees which are visible up Gloucester Rd, and the Quadrant provides a window into the North Laine from Queen's Rd which reveals the Chapel and the adjacent interesting modern building. Church St has a view into Valley Gardens and of the Dome and Corn Exchange Buildings which are major landmarks. Because of these vistas, tall buildings outside the Conservation Area and even some distance away, can have a major impact on skylines and street scenes which is not always positive (see below).

### **Its Building Forms**

- 3.28 The dominant building form is rows of houses or terraces. Some streets, such as Bond Street and Church Street, have a variety of building types and styles while others, such as the east side of Kensington Place, are architecturally uniform formal terraces.
- 3.29 The traditional building heights vary between 2-3 storeys and are much lower than those generally found elsewhere in the historic areas of Brighton. The main roads surrounding the area to the east, south and west have taller buildings in general.

### **Architectural Styles and Materials**

- 3.30 Most of the buildings date from the 19th Century, but there is a scattering of 18th Century buildings, particularly around the edges. The earlier buildings frequently have corniced parapeted facades and round segmental bay windows with sashes sub-divided by glazing bars. These bow windows are tripartite, having a large central sash and a narrow sash on either side. Many windows retain their original handmade glass, which have a sparkle and movement that dead flat modern glass lacks. Ordinary sash windows are generally three panes in width and four panes high.
- 3.31 The later Victorian buildings frequently have overhanging bracketed eaves and canted window bays. Later 19th Century buildings often have sash windows with fewer sub-divisions and larger panes. Sadly, many of the buildings have lost their original glazing bars or have had their windows completely altered in an unsympathetic manner. Most doors were originally simple 4-panelled doors with bolection mouldings around the recessed panels, or sometimes plainer ogee mouldings inset. Occasionally, on the older buildings, there were six panelled doors. Another variation was the more solid 4-panelled door with flush panels with beaded or reeded edges.
- 3.32 The dominant materials in the North Laine (as in most parts of historic Brighton) are painted stucco (render) walls and slate roofs. Some stucco buildings have simple lining out to imitate stone jointing, whilst others have more bold and ornate ashlar with "vee" or square joints. Originally most were left unpainted, although some were given a colour wash. It is now a long established tradition to paint rendered buildings white or pale pastel colours. There are also a good number of brick and clay tiled buildings and a few pebble fronted buildings and one or two rare mathematical tiled buildings. Brick types were brownish - yellow stocks - often used with red rubbers for dressings, and occasionally soft reds. Gaults or yellow stocks were not used.
- 3.33 Many buildings which are rendered or have brick front facades have rear and party walls of field flints with brick string courses and dressings around windows, doors and on corners. Others are of "bungaroosh," the characteristic Sussex Coast mixture of field flints and "tumbled" or diagonal end-on bricks, in lime mortar.
- 3.34 Sadly, many early pebble and brick buildings have been lost and so it is important to preserve the few surviving examples. Moreover, in recent years many of the hand made plain clay tiled and slate roofs have been re-covered with inappropriate and ugly concrete interlocking tiles or certain

types of unconvincing artificial fibre-cement "slates" or resin-bonded reconstituted slates which are smooth, metallic looking and have very sharp straight edges.

### **Roof Lines**

- 3.35 The roof-lines are another important element of the townscape. The structural forms of roofs in the area are varied. The earliest buildings in the North Laine have simple ridged roofs sloping to the front and rear, or gambrelled roofs - a sort of steeply sloping mansard. Mostly they are plain clay tiled. Their shapes, cladding materials, details such as eaves, parapets, party wall up-stands, chimney stacks and pots all add a richness to the sky-line which is important to maintain.
- 3.36 The Georgian/Regency style buildings generally tend to have front parapet walls, often with cornices, and concealed or partly concealed roofs behind. Most of these are "butterfly" valley-roofs, but mansards and even one or two hipped roofs behind parapets can be found. They are generally slate clad, but many Regency buildings have plain clay tiles. The Victorian period buildings and terraces, which predominate, generally have ridged roofs with decorative bracketed eaves and were generally slate covered originally.

### **THE BUILDINGS' QUALITY AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA**

- 3.37 There are few architecturally outstanding individual buildings in the North Laine, and few Listed Buildings. Nevertheless, taken as a whole, the Conservation Area comprises a district of attractive townscape with a distinctive ambience worthy of preservation. Conservation Areas are designated for their special character and it is not necessary for all or even most of the buildings to be of Listable quality or of the highest architectural or historic interest. It is the quality and character of the townscape as a whole which is important. Nevertheless, this townscape is composed of groups of buildings and the spaces between them, and it is not acceptable to allow the progressive wholesale demolition and redevelopment of the area, as ultimately this would result in the complete transformation of the area and subsequent loss of character, unless the original buildings were replaced with exact replicas. The latter would be of dubious value, being little more than a theme park or a stage set, lacking in historical authenticity. Where buildings comprise the essential character of the Conservation Area, they should be refurbished and retained, and only demolished when they are structurally beyond repair. This does not mean that replica rebuilds are always inappropriate, and often this is often the only or best way to preserve the character of the Conservation Area, especially where continuous terraces are involved.
- 3.38 Within and immediately surrounding the Conservation Area, individual buildings may be classified broadly into the following groups:-
- i) Listed Buildings
  - ii) Buildings considered worthy of submission for listing, including former Grade III buildings on the non-statutory local list.
  - iii) Buildings of Local Interest ( the "Local List" including former Grade III buildings), which should be retained for their own sake.
  - iv) Buildings which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area which should be retained.
  - v) Buildings which make no special contribution to the character of the Conservation Area which it may be acceptable to redevelop, provided the replacement building is of a high quality and "preserves and enhances "the character of the Conservation Area.
- 3.39 In addition, there are buildings and land which are:-

- (a) Buildings which detract from the character of the Conservation Area where the Council would encourage redevelopment with a higher quality scheme which would enhance the character of the Conservation Area.
- (b) Open spaces which provide an amenity to residents and visitors or are an important townscape feature.
- (c) Vacant sites where the Council will encourage development as soon as possible, with a good design which "preserves and enhances" the character of the Conservation Area. There may be scope to incorporate new public amenity space in schemes.

### **Listed Buildings**

3.40 There are presently relatively few Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area, or in the North Laine neighbourhood generally. The largest groups are in Church Street, the southern end of Bond Street and around Pelham Square. Listed Buildings are important in their own right either individually or for their group value, as well as contributing to the area's character.

### **Review of List of Buildings of Architectural and Historic Interest**

3.41 The Department of the Environment advised by English Heritage, is carrying out a review of the list for Brighton. They have invited suggestions for inclusion, upgrading or deletion from the Council, local amenity societies and the general public.

3.42 ENV.30 states that:-

**"The Council will when necessary consider whether buildings are worthy of inclusion on the statutory list and make an appropriate submission to the Secretary of State and will serve Building Preservation Notices to protect such buildings under threat."**

3.43 The Council has collated suggestions for listing from various sources, in the Borough. As part of the North Laine Study, a street survey was carried out to identify further potential candidates. Suggestions from the North Laine Community Association were invited. The proposals were submitted to the DoE. These must remain confidential for the time being, as must the Department of National Heritage's deliberations, until the final list is published.

### **Buildings of Local Interest**

3.44 There are a number of buildings in Brighton on the List of Buildings of Local Interest. Many of these are in the North Laine. Borough Plan Policy ENV.40 commits the Council to continuing to identify buildings of Local Interest. They do not enjoy any statutory protection in the way that Listed Buildings do. However, where these fall within a conservation area, they enjoy protection against demolition without consent. They also contribute to the Conservation Area's character.

### **Proposal**

**As part of the implementation of the study, the area will be systematically reviewed for additions to the Local List.**

### **Buildings Contributing to the Character of the Conservation Area**

3.45 In addition to Listed Buildings, and Buildings of Local Interest, there are many more buildings, indeed the bulk of the stock in the Conservation Area, which make an important contribution to its character. Indeed they constitute its basic fabric.

## **Buildings Which Detract from the Character of the Area**

- 3.46 here are many redevelopments in and around the Conservation Area which do not respect its character, either by obliterating the historic street pattern, or because they are too tall, or do not respect the building line, local materials or building forms. Even buildings some distance away can, because of the hilly topography of Brighton, have a significant effect on the North Laine Conservation Area. These buildings have a major harmful impact on the townscape, skylines and long views in not only the North Laine, but also in many cases, the Valley Gardens Conservation Area.
- 3.47 It must, though, be recognised that planning permission was granted for these buildings on the basis of the national planning guidance and local development plan policies which were current in those times. The decisions also took account of other considerations which were then relevant, including commercial development pressures and the demands 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. These now place much greater emphasis on the conservation of the existing historic built fabric wherever possible. These buildings therefore cannot be taken as precedents for what would be acceptable in future.
- 3.48 The following buildings have been identified as particularly detracting from the character of the area. In some cases they also affect the Valley Gardens Conservation Area. The list is not necessarily all inclusive.
- Gresham House and the multi-storey car park on North Road and the rear part only of the Post Office/Sorting Office
  - The Argus Printworks, Kensington Street, (excluding the ornate Edwardian red brick middle building)
  - The Jubilee Shopping Mall, 44-47 Gardner Street
  - Industrial Units in Windsor Street
  - 47 Trafalgar Street
  - Multi-storey car park, Kings Street/King Place
  - 1, Regent Street (corner of Church Street)
  - 16-20 Frederick Street
  - 1-5 Queen's Road Quadrant (including sites of 25-34 Frederick Street)
  - Sovereign House, Church Street
  - Pelham House, Pelham Street
  - Theobald House, Blackman Street
  - 96, Church Street
  - The Sorting Office and Telephone Exchange Building, North Road
  - 40-43 North Road
  - 84, Queen's Road
  - Trafalgar Place, Trafalgar Street

- Amex Building, Edward St
- The electricity substation and depot, Church Street/Spring Gardens

### **Areas of Townscape Sensitivity**

- 3.49 Developments within those parts of the North Laine which are outside of the Conservation Area can still have a major impact on it. It is important that development in a buffer zone around it is also controlled carefully so as to ensure that long views and skylines within the Conservation Area, and views of it and its setting are not harmed.

### **New Policy**

**Those parts of the North Laine neighbourhood bounded by the backs of buildings in Valley Gardens, Queen's Road, North Street and Cheapside, which are not within a conservation area are designated as Areas of Townscape Sensitivity, within which special policies to protect the Conservation Area will apply.**

## **4. THE CONTRIBUTION OF LAND USE ACTIVITIES TO THE AREA'S CHARACTER**

### **The Conservation Area's Character and Land Uses**

- 4.1 Often in the past, there has been a tendency of planners to disregard the effects of land uses and changes in them on character of the Conservation Areas. Street patterns and building layouts and types, which are the essential elements of an area's character, are the product of a variety of factors, including land ownership, social, political, military and ecclesiastical influences, technology and economic activities. These change over time. As a result, our townscapes have acquired many historical layers. Today's townscapes are the product of yesterday's economic and social patterns. It is neither desirable nor feasible to prevent all such changes in land uses, but they need to be managed if the richness and diversity of many of our historic townscapes is to be maintained.
- 4.2 Moreover, the activities in a neighbourhood contribute to its particular ambience, without which they would be empty stage sets. Certain activities are particularly suited to particular types of buildings, townscapes and urban layouts and alternative land uses may require harmful changes to them.
- 4.3 Where particular activities play an important part in the character of a conservation area, they should be retained as far as possible. Where change is unavoidable, for example, due to obsolescence of particular economic or social activities, alternative uses should be found which do not conflict with the character of the area and its constituent buildings. In considering applications for change of use or redevelopment, the effects of any associated physical changes on the appearance of the buildings and the street scene and the character of the area generally, should be considered. The Borough Plan contains the Council's general planning policies towards land use activities. Many of these policies generally protect the land uses in the North Laine which are an essential part of its character. There are, however, one or two policy gaps which need filling.

### **The Diversity of Activities in the North Laine Area**

- 4.4 The North Laine area has a lively mix of land-uses which contribute greatly to the character of the area. There are very many small businesses which take advantage of the area's stock of smaller premises.
- 4.5 Some streets, such as Kensington Place and Kemp Street, are wholly residential in character and are generally quiet and sedate, whilst others have an industrial and warehouse function. Yet others, in particular Bond Street, Gardner Street, Kensington Gardens, Church Street, North Street, Gloucester Road and Trafalgar Street, are busy shopping streets.
- 4.6 Unlike the Old Town, the character of shopping is more varied, with local shops mixing with services and specialist shopping including cafes, chic boutiques and antique shops. The area is popular with local residents, office workers, students and tourists. The impact of tourism has not overwhelmed the "art school" and local community aspects of its character.
- 4.7 It is important that enhancements of the area do not lead to "gentrification" and/or "touristisation" which would upset the balance and destroy the unique character of the area. Tourism is an important part of Brighton's economy. But all too often, enhancement schemes and over-commercialisation of the "heritage industry" produce artificiality, drive up rents and push out local shops and small industries. This can result in a sterile, almost "theme park" atmosphere. Care should be taken to avoid this.
- 4.8 The most appropriate use for a building is usually that for which it was originally designed. Some new uses are easier to accommodate in an old building than others. Generally, it is easier to convert redundant industrial and warehouse buildings to other commercial uses such as studio,

office or even dance studio uses. Redundant shops are easier to convert to restaurants, offices and studios than, for example, residential use. All too often, a change of use of a building results in the loss of important architectural features and the insertion of new windows, doors and other features of a type and style which has nothing to do with the original design.

## Shopping

- 4.9 The Borough Plan defines Church Street (south side between New Road and Queen's Road,) Bond Street, New Road (west side), Gardner Street, Kensington Gardens and Sydney Street as prime shopping frontages and contains policies (S.1 & S.5) to protect them. Bond Street, Church Street, (south side) and New Road fall within the defined Sub-Regional Shopping Centre. Furthermore, Policy S2 recognises and gives protection to the special distinctive small scale local character of the North Laine shopping area.
- 4.10 Some shopping streets have had their retail character eroded at the fringes, through non-retail redevelopments and vacancies. Where redevelopment is permitted, it is important that small retail/service units are replaced to maintain their retail character, even in streets which are not prime frontages. It may, however, be necessary to allow more non-retail service uses such as cafes and restaurants, as well as small solicitor's offices, doctor's surgeries and design studios in the marginal fringe frontages.
- 4.11 Proposals SP6 and SP7 require the replacement of retail provision as part of the Jubilee Street redevelopment area between Church Street and North Road and also in any redevelopment of the Portland Street/Windsor Street sites on the Church Street frontage.
- 4.12 Whilst the north-south streets have been designated as Prime Shopping Frontages, the east-west cross-streets also have an important secondary role, in linking up each section of the staggered north-south prime shopping frontages and also in drawing in to the North Laine area people from the main streets to the east and west. In recent years there have been a number of new developments which have not reinstated or included shopping frontages.
- 4.13 There are many good shopfronts in the North Laine Area. Some shopping streets and scattered small groups of shops have suffered a decline and there are pressures to convert to alternative uses. Residential use generally involves inappropriate alterations to or the complete loss of the shopfront. Often the result is a curious hybrid.
- 4.14 Where a group of shops are redeveloped with residential uses, on the ground floor, these could interrupt a continuous row of shopfronts which are an important part of the street scene. This is accentuated by the different floor to ceiling heights of modern domestic buildings which are much lower than most historic houses and shops. This results in the new building failing to follow through the general lines of fascias, window cills and heads, eaves, parapets and roof ridge lines, disrupting the rhythm and pattern of the street's facades.

## New Policies

- 1. In order to maintain and strengthen the east-west cross streets' (Church Street, North Road, Gloucester Road and Trafalgar Street) role in drawing people into the prime shopping streets, shops and service units including cafes and service offices, should be retained or reinstated in new developments, where these are acceptable. Changes of use involving the loss of existing units will be resisted.**
- 2. Where shopfronts form an important part of the street scene, in situations where redevelopment is acceptable, the reinstatement of shop frontages will be required.**

## **Small Workshops**

- 4.15 Another particularly important element of the North Laine's character which is vulnerable to change are industrial, warehouse and showroom buildings. Many of these are purpose built and are good examples of industrial architecture which illustrate the area's economic history.
- 4.16 Traditionally, the area had a large number of small industries and workshops serving the town, (hence the street name Foundry Street). There are still many small workshops in the area, engaged in antiques restoration and furniture making etc. As well as providing needed manual employment and servicing specialist shops, they too contribute to the character of the area and should be maintained. The Borough Plan has policies (E.4) which seek to prevent the loss of industrial floorspace. ENV.27 seeks to resist the loss of commercial mews. Exceptions may be made where there is a clear balance of advantage where its continued existence would seriously detract from the character, environment or amenity of the area, *or where it is the only way of preserving a building of architectural or historic interest.*
- 4.17 There are strong pressures to change these to office or residential use. Often this can be done satisfactorily whilst retaining the buildings' artisan character, but sometimes, this would involve unsuitable alterations of a domestic character.

## **Warehousing, Showrooms and Storage**

- 4.18 There are many buildings in these uses in the North Laine, particularly associated with the antique and furniture trade. Some of the buildings are of particular interest, having wide timber boarded doors with wrought iron strap hinges at ground floor level, metal goods hoists, loading doors and flaps on their upper storeys and cast iron window frames. Whilst there are Borough Plan policies to protect residential, retail and industrial uses, there are no policies to protect warehousing, storage and showroom uses. There is a tendency for these to be converted to residential use and there have been schemes which have resulted in a loss of the buildings' character. The loss of these uses also changes the mixed use character of the area.

## **New Policy**

### **Warehouse and Storage Buildings**

**Proposals including those involving a change of use that would result in a loss of existing warehouse, storage and showroom uses will normally be resisted except where one or more of the following circumstances exist:-**

- i) where the effect of such uses on the surrounding environment would be so adverse in terms of noise, fumes, dirt, vibration or traffic generation that the continued existence of such a use would seriously detract from the character, environment or amenity of the area in which it is located.
- ii) where the loss of a minor proportion of the existing or potential warehouse, storage or showroom floorspace on a site would lead to the refurbishment or redevelopment and thereby the continuation of the remaining or resulting warehouse, storage and showroom floorspace on the greater part of the site.
- iii) where a change of use is, in the opinion of the local planning authority, the only practical way of preserving a building of architectural or historic interest.

## **Tourism**

- 4.19 "Brighton is a unique architectural masterpiece comprising some of the most important examples of formal town planning in Western Europe. It is this heritage which attracts many visitors upon whom the prosperity of the town as a resort and sub-regional centre depends." (Borough Plan Par. 3.27) If Brighton is to sustain its role as a pre-eminent tourist resort, conference venue and centre for the arts and culture, it is essential that the quality of its townscape is maintained. The fine architecture and distinctive character of its historic areas must be preserved and enhanced not only for its own sake, but as a tourist attraction. Borough Plan Policy T10 encourages the provision of tourist attractions provided that they do not detract from the environment or character of an area or a significant building.
- 4.20 The North Laine is not the principal area for tourists in Brighton. It lies outside of the Hotel Policy Core Area. Nevertheless, many tourists are attracted by its authentic local colour, its antique shops, boutiques, cafes and the market-like atmosphere of Kensington Gardens. An excess of tourist related activities and associated developments could undermine this heritage, by detracting from its residential, shopping and working aspects, which are the essence of the character of the North Laine. A careful balance needs to be maintained.

### **Housing**

- 4.21 The North Laine area also has a large residential population. The interests and needs of the local community must be taken into account when framing a strategy for enhancing the Conservation Area. Residential use is an important part of the varied character of North Laine and is protected and promoted by Borough Plan Policies. The character of the residential accommodation in the North Laine is mainly small terraced houses, which gives the streets a repetitive rhythm of alternating doors and windows, which define the separate plot divisions. Many of the shops have flats above them. Some of the larger terraced houses have recently been converted to flats and in recent years several new blocks of flats have been built.. Blocks of flats do not maintain the character of the street scenes, as they tend not to reflect the texture and grain of the area.
- 4.22 Policy H7 resists the change of use of residential buildings except in special circumstances, *including where it is the only practicable way of preserving a building of architectural or historic interest.* Paragraphs 4.28 to 4.30 and Policy H13 aim to bring back into use vacant housing, including accommodation above shops. The Plan (Proposal HP3) identified a number of sites for housing developments in the North Laine area, both inside the conservation areas and outside them.
- 4.23 In the former category, sites include:

**Gloucester Street/St. George's Mews, 76-84 Trafalgar St. (work commenced but ceased unfinished), 3-6 North Road (part of the Jubilee St development) and 40, Cheltenham Place (under construction).**

Outside of conservation areas but close or adjacent to them are:

**42-44, Portland Street, the Jubilee Street Site, including 13-21 (incl.) North Road, and Student Housing (Proposal HP4) on the Avon/Comet Site, Station Street.**

### **New Policy**

**New Residential development should normally be in the form of terraced houses and maisonettes with gardens, or flats above shops, except where the site is physically unsuitable.**

### **Residential Conversions**

- 4.24 There are also policies (H.7 to H.12) relating to the conversion of properties to flats and for houses in multiple occupation. Where a building is Listed, it is important to ensure that the internal structural compartmentalisation and spaces are preserved, especially principle rooms, staircases compartments and entrance halls, as well as their architectural features, and that all new work is matched in.
- 4.25 Policy ENV.32 states that Planning Permission will not normally be granted for a change of use of a Listed Building if it would threaten the architectural character or historic interest of the building and Policy ENV.31 prevents extensions or alterations which adversely affect their character and appearance.

### **Small Scale Mixed Use Developments**

- 4.26 Over the last 50 years or so, and particularly in the last 10 years, a number of large scale redevelopments have encroached on the neighbourhood, and into the conservation area. Often these schemes have involved large single user buildings, such as offices and multi-storey car parks, and are alien to the small scale multi-user buildings which constitute the essential fabric of the area. These have a heavy impact on the townscape, not only because of their height and bulk, but also because they result in un-subdivided, continuous frontages and often blank facades. They also displace the multitude of small shops, workshops, houses and flats, which make the North Laine so special and interesting. Mixed developments help to preserve and enhance the character of the North Laine and are more likely to result in buildings in harmony with its townscape.

### **New Policy**

**New developments should normally be of a small scale and mixed use character. Where redevelopment is acceptable, existing small workshops, shops and housing should be replaced in the new scheme.**

## 5. CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY REVIEW

5.1 The boundaries of the Conservation Area were originally drawn to encompass what was regarded at the time as the best, architecturally, of the older fabric of the area, but sites where there were long established redevelopment proposals were excluded. A limited review was carried out a few years ago and the North Laine Conservation Area was extended to cover North Place and Nos. 1-12 inclusive North Road. The Valley Gardens Conservation Area has been extended to add Nos. 115 to 118 (inclusive) Church Street.

5.2 Paragraph 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:-

### 1. Every local planning authority -

a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and

b) shall designate those areas as conservation areas.

### 2. It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas; and if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.

5.3 Paragraph 3.30 of the Borough Plan states that:-

**Consideration will be given to the inclusion of additional areas within existing conservation areas or the designation of new conservation areas as and when appropriate.**

Paragraph 3.36 goes on to say that:-

**"The opportunity to review the boundaries further will be taken when detailed plans for each conservation area are produced."**

5.4 Preliminary representations were made by the Georgian Group, the Victorian Society, Brighton Society and the North Laine Community Association and a strong case made that the Conservation should be extended to include a number of properties. In addition, a review of the existing boundaries of the West Hill and Valley Gardens Conservation Areas indicates a number of anomalies, where they include parts of North Laine neighbourhood proper. It has been concluded that these parts ought to be transferred to the North Laine Conservation Area where, together with the proposed extensions they would create a more logical and coherent boundary to it. Moreover, some parts of the North Laine Conservation Area have been redeveloped with poorly designed and inappropriate buildings which have little or no special townscape, architectural or historical merit. Whilst it is the quality and interest of areas, rather than that of individual buildings, which should be the prime consideration in designating conservation areas, nevertheless, around the edges, decisions have to be taken on whether to include individual buildings. In such cases, the quality of the buildings, as well as the coherence of the area as a whole has to be taken into account. Another important consideration is the historic interest of the street pattern itself. Where vacant sites or buildings occupy a critical location in the street scene, but which would be acceptable to redevelop, they have been recommended for inclusion within the Conservation Area. This will enable the council to ensure that the development is of a high standard of design and "preserves and enhances" the character of the area. It will also control premature demolition and subsequent blight, of which there are already a large number of examples in the North Laine. The following amendments are recommended, following formal consultations:

## **Proposed Transfers**

### **Church Street**

- 5.5 Church St is the oldest street in the North Laine and has a rich diversity of interesting buildings, although it has lost a number of good buildings of character in recent years which were outside the Conservation Area. It is divided between three conservation areas and important sections are not in a conservation area at all.

### **Nos. 2 and 109-114, (incl.) Church Street**

- 5.6 This group of small domestic scaled buildings is presently within the Valley Gardens Conservation Area. They more properly relates to the westward part of Church Street and the North Laine area. However, the large buildings to the east of them, No. 115-116, the former gas showrooms, now the Music Library, and No. 118 the Listed old Courthouse, relate in their scale and character to the cluster of large public buildings around the Royal Pavilion, including the Pavilion Museum and Library, the Dome and the Corn Exchange. Historically, the development of that part of the town is closely connected with the development of the Royal Pavilion. It is considered that they should remain in the Valley Gardens Conservation Area.

### **Nos. 32-36, (incl.) and 66-70, (incl.) Church Street**

- 5.7 If the properties in Church Street, Portland Street, Windsor Street and King Street referred to above were included in the North Laine Conservation Area, it would make sense to transfer Nos. 32-36 (incl.), 66-70 (incl.) Church Street, the Burial Ground and Listed Presbyterian Church, now the Brighthelm Centre, from the West Hill to the North Laine Conservation Area, as they are properly part of the North Laine, and to add No. 71.

### **4-8, Blenheim Place**

- 5.8 These are currently in Valley Gardens Conservation Area. But they are not in any way part of the frontage of Valley Gardens and in their domestic scale and character relate more to the North Laine.

### **39-40, Cheltenham Place**

- 5.9 These are currently in the Valley Gardens Conservation Area. But they do not in any way form part of the frontage of Valley Gardens and in their domestic scale and character relate more to North Laine. 40 Cheltenham Place was an old malthouse with a large pyramidal roof structure on the Cheltenham Place frontage which has recently been demolished. It ceased to be used as a malthouse shortly after it was built and was used for a variety of industrial and warehouse purposes, before falling vacant. It did not prove possible to find a viable scheme to refurbish and re-use that building, so very reluctantly, consent for demolition and planning permission for a residential development was granted. The replacement buildings under construction are traditional in style, using stucco and artificial slate. They are of sufficient quality to justify remaining within a Conservation Area.

**The following Transfers into the North Laine Conservation Area are recommended:-**

**Nos. 2, and 109-114 (incl.) Church St - from the Valley Gardens Conservation Area,**

**Nos. 32-36 (incl.), 66-70 Church St, the Burial Ground and Presbyterian Church -from the West Hill Conservation Area),**

**4-8, Blenheim Place,**

**39-40 Cheltenham Place**

### **Proposed Extensions**

#### **Jubilee Street Main Site, including site of Nos. 105-108 Church St and Nos. 13 to 21 (incl.) North Road**

- 5.10 The Brighton Society, the Victorian Society and the North Laine Community Association argue that the whole redevelopment site should be included in the conservation area, because of its locational importance close to the Dome and New Road. They suggest that nos. 13-21 North Road, which are currently vacant should be retained and refurbished.
- 5.11 The proposals for an ice rink on the site have been abandoned and a new development brief has been prepared by the Council and has been the subject of a public consultation exercise. The new brief proposes a much more contextual development in keeping with the surrounding area and the retention and refurbishment of Nos. 13-21 North Road, or, if this proves not to be practicable, their reconstruction in replica. No. 18 was completely gutted by fire and became a dangerous structure and has been demolished.
- 5.12 These three-storey stucco fronted Victorian shops comprise a continuous part of the North Road frontage and are equal in character and historic interest to the remainder of North Road. They are part of the basic 19th Century fabric of the North Laine area. Their retention would maintain an important townscape link between the eastern end of North Road and its central section and would form a visual buffer between the main part of the Conservation Area and the proposed new large buildings in the centre of the Jubilee Street site.
- 5.13 The Church Street frontage of the site lies at the end of the vista along New Road. It is also an important link in the street frontage of Church Street. Because of this and its close proximity to the Dome and Corn Exchange the design of the frontage buildings needs to be of a high quality and carefully related to the massing and scale of the adjacent buildings in Church Street. The inclusion of the Church Street frontage would create a more coherent boundary for the North Laine Conservation Area and signal the townscape importance of the site. The Regent Street frontage in parts faces onto good traditional buildings on the west side of the street which area also proposed for inclusion. The whole site's inclusion would reinforce the brief's requirement of a development which reinstates the street pattern, respects the character, scale and materials of the area and has a high standard of design.

#### **104 Church St and 1-27, (incl.) Regent Street**

- 5.14 No. 104 Church St and nos. 5-6 Regent St occupy a pivotal position on the corner of Church street and the bottom of Regent Street. The corner building, No 104 Church St and 1-2 Regent St is a 20th Century building which is rather unattractive front facade and the remodelling of its facade redevelopment would be most welcome. Nos. 5-6 is an interesting red brick commercial building, strongly characteristic of the area. It is in a poor condition but should either be restored or reconstructed in replica. Nos. 26-27 are an interesting and attractive pair of former workshop/warehouse buildings retaining its upper loading doors, near the corner with North Road. Nos. 2-4 have recently been demolished, whilst nos. 7-25 is a site cleared some years ago and is used as parking. They are covered by the Jubilee St Planning Brief, which envisages their early development. It is essential that replacement buildings are of a high quality and of an appropriate domestic scale.

## **10 - 26 (incl.) Church Street**

- 5.15 This group is a continuation of the Conservation Area frontage of Church Street and is a mix of interesting older buildings of equal quality and interest to those elsewhere in Church Street. This excludes the new retail/residential building in front of the Church Street car park, but includes the street space. Nos. 10-11 are an early example of social housing, being 19th Century "model workmen's dwellings" built by a charity in 1852 to replace slums.

## **27- 31 Church Street**

- 5.16 This frontage has recently been demolished, so inclusion within the Conservation Area is too late to save the buildings which were an interesting and varied little group. There is Planning Permission for a large redevelopment proposal for the site, together with 42-51, Portland Street (see below). This proposal, because of its bulk, form and design does not reflect the texture and grain of Church Street, or the architectural style and plot widths of its buildings. Being a single large building with through-floors, it does not step down the hillside progressively as the older buildings in the street do. There have been recent discussions with the owner's agents about the possibility of a different scheme for this site, The inclusion of the whole of this site would not only produce a more coherent boundary for the Church Street part of the Conservation Area, together with other proposed transfers and additions, but could also assist in securing a scheme which reflects more the scale, building forms and character of the North Laine and preserves and enhances the character and appearance of Church Street as a whole.

## **The Old Drill Hall, 71, Church Street**

- 5.17 The frontage building of the Royal Mail Sorting Office is of local architectural and historic interest. It was originally the drill hall of the Royal Sussex Regiment and was built in 1889- 90. The architect was Edmund Scott. It forms a group with Nos. 66-70. The lower building at the rear adjoins the Burial Ground and forms part of the setting of the Church. Its inclusion would assist in achieving a high quality replacement with a frontage onto the former Burial Ground and reinstating the building line in Spring Gardens.

## **Portland Street**

- 5.18 Originally, the east side of Portland St (42-51 inclusive) consisted of a complete terrace of early 19th C cobble-fronted terraced cottages. They had ground, first and attic floors, small dormers, and originally, Georgian style sash windows and six panel doors with arched heads. Regrettably, most of these have now been demolished and only Nos. 3, 10 and 11 survive. No. 11 has been stuccoed over and now has a full height third floor. The others have been redeveloped with new housing of similar scale, also with attic dormers, but set back from the original building line. Some of them are in a dark grey-brown stock brick with red brick dressings and artificial slate roofs with dormer windows which related well to the original cobbled houses. Others are in a yellow brick which is not appropriate to the North Laine. Nos. 3-11, form a coherent group of buildings of interest, together with Nos. 20-31 Church St and 26-27 King Street, which are recommended for inclusion in the Conservation Area. The inclusion of the new infill developments of Nos. 4-9 and 11-19, which have been redeveloped, is justified since they are of sufficient architectural quality and respect the scale and modest terraced domestic character of the area, notwithstanding their not respecting the original building line.
- 5.19 The west side of the street was largely a group of 19th century workshop and warehouse buildings, with various flint and weatherboarded outbuildings, of great character and interest. These included No. 42, a Regency stuccoed house, latterly used as offices, but currently vacant. It has a corniced parapet front wall concealing its valley roof, Georgian style sash windows and a panelled front door. No. 44, formerly Patching and Son, a builder's yard, currently vacant, and No. 45, Blaber's Portland Foundry, has now been demolished. If the current planning permissions for

office and residential use were not to be implemented, the opportunity might arise to encourage a scheme which was more in keeping with the size and scale of the buildings opposite and perhaps even retain and refurbish the surviving buildings. (see also 27-31 Church St above).

### **Jew Street.**

- 5.20 This has a group of large 19th century industrial/warehouse buildings varying from three to four storeys in height. They are important representatives of the industrial history of the North Laine. They are constructed of brownish-yellow stock bricks with soft red brick dressings, some with arched window heads. They have loading doors on their upper floors. One has pivoted cast-iron windows whilst another has typical workroom windows divided by long vertical panes. The east side of the street is already in the Conservation Area.

### **26-27, King Street**

- 5.21 King Street originally ran through to North Street, but it has been severed and built over with a multi-storey car park. At its northern end, two original buildings survive and form a charming and coherent group with Nos. 20-26 Church Street which are also recommended for inclusion. Their ground floors are shops with good traditional shopfronts. No. 26 is a three storeyed stucco-fronted 19th C building and No. 27 has two storeys plus an attic with a gabled dormer and is cobble-fronted.

### **43-46, (incl.) Windsor Street**

- 5.22 Once both sides of the northern half of Windsor Street, if not all of it, was lined with an elegant row of Regency terraced houses. Now only a small group of these (Nos. 43-45) survive largely intact next to the north-east corner with Church St, with several other scattered and much mutilated individuals. They are three-storeys in height, and have yellow-brown stock brick facades with dressings in red rubbers. No. 45 has been painted. Their sash windows have gauged brick flat arches and the doors have round arched heads. Their windows were originally subdivided by glazing bars into small panes in the Georgian manner, but two now have a Victorian glazing pattern. No. 46, a public house on the corner of Church St. is of a different style. These buildings form a group, together with Nos. 32-36 (incl.) and 67-70 Church St, which are recommended to be transferred from the West Hill Conservation Area, and the Royal Mail sorting office building (formerly the old Drill Hall) which is also recommended for inclusion.

### **North Road**

#### **The Brighthelm Centre, Gresham House and Car Park and No. 57A, North Road**

- 5.23 With the transfer of the Presbyterian Church and Burial Ground from the West Hill to the North Laine Conservation Areas, the consideration needs to be given to the adjacent buildings. The Brighthelme Centre is an interesting and innovative modern building, which whilst being a landmark public building, respects the general heights and building lines of the area and its inclusion would be appropriate. The adjacent Gresham house, on the other hand is a very tall building, which, with the car park, detracts from the character of the area and the setting of the Listed church. Nevertheless, its inclusion would result in a more coherent boundary and would assist efforts to achieve its redevelopment with a lower, more sympathetic building and the reinstatement of the original building lines in North Road and Spring Gardens. No. 57A is an attractive stucco classically detailed 19th century building which forms part of a group of buildings on the corner of Frederick St and North Road and its inclusion would complete the frontage.
- 5.24 No. 40, North Road is a recently constructed large hostel building. Its pale yellow brick is out of character with the North Laine and its front facade has been set back behind the building line of the street, disrupting the street scene. Its building form and design does not relate to the

adjoining buildings or reflect their plot width divisions. It contributes little to the character of the Conservation Area and its retention can only be justified in terms of retaining a coherent boundary to the Conservation Area.

### **Orange Row**

- 5.25 Historically, Orange row is one of the oldest streets in the North Laine. In 1865 Kelly's Directory described it as having small tenements and workshops. Most of it is now a row of 19th Century stables, now used as garages and lockup stores. Whilst these have little architectural merit, they, and the street pattern itself are of historical interest. At the northern end is a group of three -storey workshop and storage buildings which are of interest. They have grey header brickwork with soft red rubber dressings around windows and doors. Some of their original Georgian fenestration survives. Two of them are already within the Conservation Area, but the third (No. 16) is not. They are three storeys in height and built in grey header bond with red brick dressings. They have sash windows with Georgian style glazing bar sub-divisions.

### **Pimms Gardens**

- 5.26 Pimms Gardens is a narrow court or alley at the rear of Orange Row and Tichbourne Street. It has been closed off at its northern end. Its inclusion would achieve a rational boundary with 1-10 Tichbourne St.

### **Tichbourne Street**

- 5.27 Nos. 1-10 are an attractive early to-mid-Victorian terrace of houses with basement, ground and two upper storeys. Their stuccoed front facade have bracketed eaves and splayed bay windows, with sash windows divided into paired panes. Originally, all the roofs would have had slate roofs, but now nearly all have concrete interlocking roof tiles. One has been pebble-dashed and has lost its original windows (No. 10). Two have had their bays entirely removed. One of these has had fake (and completely erroneously detailed and proportioned) bow windows with casements inserted, whilst the other has had wide flat fronted casements with small fake "Georgian" panes inserted. One or two have lost their original doors. Nevertheless, this degree of alteration is typical of what has occurred elsewhere within the Conservation Area. Despite the alterations this group is largely intact and is typical of the residential parts of the North Laine Conservation Area and of equal quality. Their restoration would be encouraged.
- 5.28 No. 18 is a stylish good quality red brick Edwardian building with interesting fenestration, now used as workshops/warehousing. Nos. 16 and 17 are uninteresting 1930's and 1950's commercial buildings of poor design, but appropriate scale. No. 19 is a vacant site. No. 20, William Sutton House, is a relatively new dark red brick four-storey block of flats with a mansard roof. Whilst its scale is right, its unremarkable and design is not in keeping with the North Laine.
- 5.29 On the west side of the street opposite is Sovereign House, a large modern yellow brick office block. It is completely out of scale with its surroundings, especially with its huge bulky obtrusive boxy plant room on top. Its materials and wide corner splay with the entrance flanked by massive grey steel columns is also out of character and it strikes a discordant note in both Tichbourne Street and Church Street. North of this, Belbourne Court is a modern pale cream brick built block of flats. It is an attractive and interesting modern design. But the choice of materials and articulation of the street facade with its projecting balconies does not relate to the buildings opposite or the character of the area generally. Its inclusion in the Conservation Area cannot be justified.

### **47-48, Trafalgar Street.**

- 5.30 No. 48, the Prince Albert Public House, is a grade II Listed Building and is very much part of Trafalgar Street. Whilst No. 47 is an unattractive building and is of no merit of itself, it too should be included so as to link No. 48 to the North Laine Conservation Area. Moreover, its inclusion within the Conservation Area would impose a more stringent standard of design for any replacement building (which would be welcome) and help achieve a better setting for the Listed Building.

### **Trafalgar St/Pelham Street Site**

- 5.31 This site forms the north side of Pelham Square. It is identified as a development site in the Borough Plan. Its development will have a major effect on the square and will require great care. Its inclusion will assist in securing a sensitive scheme.

### **42, 29 and 30, Frederick Place**

- 5.32 Most of Frederick Place has been redeveloped. No. 42 is a recently built modern brick built office block. It is a good example of its era and its massing on its Gloucester Road frontage is well articulated, and related to the scale of the adjoining chapel. Whilst the choice of bricks is not an exact match with those which have historically been used in the North Laine, their overall tone is broadly in the same range and does not jar. A recent application to add an additional storey onto the building was dismissed on appeal, due to its impact on the skyline and long views of the Conservation Area and its effect on adjoining residential buildings. Its inclusion in the North Laine Conservation Area would complete the frontage of Gloucester Road up to Frederick Place, resulting in a more coherent boundary.
- 5.33 Nos. 29 and 30 are a pair of two storey early Victorian houses, with parapeted and corniced stucco front elevations. No. 29 retains all its features, including its original sash windows and four-panelled door, whilst No. 30 has lost its original door. They are situated adjacent to the Listed Prince Albert Public House on the corner with Trafalgar Street and form part of its setting. Their inclusion, together with the Prince Albert PH, within the Conservation is considered appropriate.
- 5.34 No. 37 Frederick Street is a modern yellow brick office block which received a Brighton Borough Council Design Award in 1987. However, its style, massing and scale is related more to the tall commercial and office buildings, many of which are modern developments, on the west side of Frederick Place and in Queen's Road rather than to the townscape of the of the North Laine Conservation Area. It is therefore considered inappropriate to include the remainder of Frederick Place in the Conservation Area.

**It is recommended that the following streets and buildings be added to the North Laine Conservation Area:-**

**The Old Drill Hall, No. 71 Church St (Royal Mail Sorting Office building),**

**The whole of the Jubilee St Site, including 13-21 North Rd,**

**104, Church St and the whole of the west side of Regent St,**

**Nos. 10 and 11 and 20-26 (incl.) Church St,**

**The whole of the Church St/Portland St Site, including Nos. 27- 31 (incl.)  
Church St and Nos. 42-51 Portland St,**

**Nos. 3-19 Portland St,**

**The west side of Jew St,**

**Nos. 26 and 27 King St,**

**Nos. 43-46 Windsor St,**

**The Brighthelm Centre, Gresham House and multi-storey car park and 57A North Rd**

**The whole of Orange Row,**

**Pimm's Gardens,**

**Nos. 1-10 (incl.) Tichbourne St,**

**Nos. 47-48 Trafalgar St,**

**The Pelham St/Trafalgar St Site,**

**Nos. 42, 29 and 30 Frederick Place.**

### **Streets Needing Monitoring and Review**

- 5.35 The condition of all streets in the Conservation Area needs to be monitored periodically. If its character continues to be eroded it will undermine the credibility and justification of conservation area status. It is hoped that with Article 4 Directions and the policies and detailed design guidelines set out in this study, this erosion can be halted and reversed. This of course depends on the effectiveness of the Council's development control and enforcement functions in ensuring that where new developments, alterations and extensions are permitted, they are of the highest quality and preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The production of further specific detailed design guidance (e.g. on windows and doors) will assist this. A Co-ordinated and pro-active enforcement programme according to defined priorities is required, rather than simply responding to random complaints from the general public. The enthusiasm and active co-operation of local people is also necessary. Fortunately, the Council can count on this from the majority of local residents and the North Laine Community Association. If and when resources become available, a grants scheme covering repairs and the reinstatement of lost architectural features would greatly assist. In particular, the following streets are greatly at risk.

### **Frederick Street**

- 5.36 This has largely been redeveloped, fragmenting its original townscape. On its east side, the new buildings, Nos. 37 to 61 inclusive, are two-storey residential terraced maisonettes, constructed of brown brick and white painted brick, tile hanging for the walls and pantiled roofs. They have first floor oriel windows, some with roof gables above. Their overall height, mass and form respects the texture and grain of the area. However, they do not follow the original building line of the surviving buildings. Their materials and style do not reflect the character of the Conservation Area and their design is unexceptional. On the west side of the street, large sections have been redeveloped as bulky extensions to the office buildings on Queen's Road. One of these is a three-storey flat roofed concrete structure. The five-storey red brick building on Queen's Road Quadrant scales down to four storeys on the corner of Frederick Street and then to two brick storeys with a third slate clad false mansard storey. These buildings could not be said to "preserve and enhance" the character of the Conservation Area, in terms of height, mass, form, building line, style or materials.

- 5.37 The southern end of the street has a group of rather interesting and exuberant late Victorian/Edwardian Queen Ann style houses with bays and ornate parapets. The middle part of the street now has only short sections of the original Victorian terraced houses, (Nos. 13-15 and 21-24 inclusive). These were apparently refronted in the 1920s, with red clay tiled roofs and gabled bays. These contrast sharply with the remainder of the Conservation Area, which is largely composed of early Victorian stuccoed terraces. A vacant site (of Nos. 7-11) exists and it is worth retaining this in the Conservation Area in order to ensure a high standard of development to complement Nos. 5-6. Whilst the redevelopment of the more recent buildings is very unlikely in the short to medium term, the 1960's concrete office building, which is presently largely vacant, may be nearing the end of its useful life. There may be a possibility of redevelopment with a more sympathetic building in the next few years.
- 5.38 The street still retain some buildings of interest which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area and the street pattern itself is of historic interest. Efforts are required to enhance the street's character.

### **Upper Gardner Street**

- 5.39 Upper Gardner Street requires special mention. This street is also one which has had large parts redeveloped and has some vacant sites. As a result, the original frontages have been greatly fragmented and its townscape character severely eroded. Virtually all of the remaining original houses at its northern end have been much altered and have now lost their original character and charm. Some of these poor alterations are reversible. The new housing (Nos. 27-31, 18-22, 37-38, 13-14) is of a suitable scale and respects the building line, eaves and ridge lines and general form and rhythm of plot widths. But the choice of brick is not of a type which is found in the North Laine and is out of place in what was once a wholly stuccoed street. Their style is a crude pastiche of a traditional terrace. Whilst they have Victorian style sash windows and panelled timber doors, they are crudely and incorrectly detailed and proportioned. Some have imitation arched "Fanlight" style windows in the tops of their doors and they have straight soldier coursed brick lintels, instead of true gauged brick arches, and boxed eaves. Their retention within the Conservation Area is difficult to justify other than to maintain a neat boundary and to retain tighter control to prevent further unsuitable alterations, thus maintaining the setting of adjacent buildings. Residents should be encouraged to restore their properties. Whilst an Article 4 Direction might be thought to be shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted, it would give controls to ensure that any further alterations are in the direction of restoration.
- 5.40 The southern end of Upper Gardner Street has some interesting buildings which still retain their original character and appearance. Most of these are traditional, industrial and warehouse buildings with wide timber doors at ground level and loading doors at first floor level. Some have small paned 19th Century cast iron windows. The old Central Infants School is of local historical and architectural interest and remains unspoilt. It is now used as a youth club. A vacant site exists (Nos. 6-12) which it is important to ensure is redeveloped soon with a high quality scheme in keeping with its context.

### **Tidy Street**

- 5.41 This residential stucco-fronted street is typical of the North Laine and is very much part of its basic fabric. It has suffered from inappropriate alterations as much as any other in the Conservation Area, but, so far, not to the extent that its status as part of the Conservation Area is called into question. The Council proposed to make an Article 4 Direction on this street to bring harmful alterations under control. However, this was the only street where there was not strong support for this move, and indeed there was strong opposition. Without an Article 4, its character and appearance is likely to continue to deteriorate. It needs to be monitored and owners encouraged to voluntarily preserve the character of their properties.

**It is recommended that the following streets and groups of buildings be monitored over a 5 year period, and the reinstatement of the surviving original houses to their original appearance encouraged. If there is no significant improvement in their appearance over a 5-year period, then consideration should be given to their deletion from the Conservation Area.**

**The middle section of Frederick Street on both the east (Nos. 39 to 61, inclusive) and west sides (Nos. 10 to 34, inclusive),**

**The northern part of Upper Gardner Street, together with the modern brick houses at Nos. 13-14, 18-22, 27-31 and 37-38,**

**Tidy Street.**

## **Further Reviews**

### **Brighton Station, Queen's Road, The Clock Tower**

- 5.42 The need to review the Queen's Road part of the West Hill Conservation Area becomes more pressing with the transfer of Nos. 32-36 and 66-70 Church Street, the Church and Burial Ground from the West Hill to the North Laine Conservation Area. There are many buildings in Queen's Road and around the Clock Tower which form an area of townscape of architectural and historic interest, which is not in any conservation area. Queen's Road itself was only laid out in 1845 as a link between the original railway station which was opened in May 1840, and the Old Town. It was originally part of the North Laine, but today Queen's Road comprises a unified element of the urban geography of the town with its own character which is very different to that of the North Laine. There is a case for a separate new conservation area encompassing the Station, Queen's Road and the Clock Tower area, including North Street Quadrant and Air Street and the Imperial Arcade, Western Road. Queen's Square, however, would probably be more appropriate for inclusion in the West Hill Conservation Area.

### **Nos. 1-5 Queens Road Quadrant**

- 5.43 This site, which included some of the plots in Frederick Street at the rear, has been redeveloped with a large dark red brick office building. Its design, building form and scale do not relate well to either the North Laine Conservation Area or the West Hill Conservation Area and in the opinion of the Council its architectural merits do not justify conservation area status. The triangular urban space defined by the frontages of Queen's Road Quadrant and the top end of Gloucester Road, with its large tree and the interesting robust cast-iron railings and stanchions on the south side, relates more to Queen's Road and is an important visual window out of it and into the North Laine, which is dramatised by the steep fall in the ground level down Gloucester Road. This space, would more appropriate as part of the West Hill Conservation Area or a new separate conservation area for Queen's Road, the Clock Tower and Brighton Station.

### **North Street**

- 5.44 At present, Nos. 151-154, 155-156 and 157 to 161A (incl.) North Street are located in the North Laine Conservation Area. Nos. 161-173 (incl.) are located in the Valley Gardens Conservation Area. The whole of the south side of North Street lies within the Old Town Conservation Area. North Street has historically always been part of the Old Town and the conservation area boundaries are clearly anomalous and a result of past administrative expediency. There are sections of the street frontage which are of architectural and historic interest which are not in any conservation area. This also applies to the west side of West Street.

**It is recommended that separate reviews are carried out of:-**

**the West Hill Conservation Area boundary in Queen's Road and consideration be given to creating a separate Station-Queen's Road-Clock Tower Conservation Area.**

**Nos. 1-5, Queen's Road Quadrant, and consideration given to its deletion from the North Laine Conservation Area and possible inclusion in the above potential new conservation area**

**the Old Town Conservation Area be to rationalise its boundaries in North Street and West Street, including the transfer of parts from the North Laine and Valley Gardens Conservation Areas.**

## 6. NEW DEVELOPMENT

### CONSTRAINTS

6.1 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, states that:-

- 1) **"In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.**
- 2) **The provisions referred to in subsection (1) above are the planning Acts and Part I of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953."**

6.2 The Planning Policy Guidance Note PPG15 - Planning and the Historic Environment, gives government guidance on how this should be done.

6.3 The Borough Plan lays down in Chapter 3 - Environment, the Council's general policies towards new development within Conservation Areas. As paragraph 3.31 explains:-

**"Not all of buildings in conservation areas are listed or of architectural value, but they may nonetheless be essential to the character of the conservation area and therefore permission is required to demolish buildings and parts of buildings. There will be a presumption against the grant of permission unless the building does not contribute to the character of the area. A proposal for a replacement building will be required at the same time as an application for demolition."**

6.4 Policy ENV.22(ii) states that in Conservation Areas:-

**"Conservation Area Consent will not normally be given for the demolition of buildings which contribute to the character of the area. Neither will consent be given for demolition before permission has been granted in respect of appropriate proposals for redevelopment or re-use of major sites and contracts for the work exchanged.**

- ii) **The Council will approve and encourage the redevelopment or improvement of buildings which detract from the character or appearance of the area.**
- iii) **The Council will normally only permit redevelopment or improvement where the design is of high quality respecting and complimenting the character of the area."**

6.5 Many design issues and policies are common to all conservation areas in Brighton and its surrounding villages and indeed there are also matters of good urban design which are important for all parts of the Borough. These policies will be attached in the appendices and need not be repeated here. It can be seen from the above, and the preceding section, that the scope for new development is virtually confined to vacant sites and buildings which detract from the character of the area.

### **Buildings Contributing to the Character of the Conservation Area**

6.6 There is a presumption against demolition of buildings which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. The bulk of the Conservation Area falls within this category. Even small piecemeal redevelopment, if allowed to go unchecked, would eventually lead to the loss of large

swathes of the Conservation Area and a radical change in its townscape. This has already happened on the north side of Trafalgar Street, Church Street, Upper Gardner Street and Frederick Street. The Council now applies its policies more rigorously and will continue to strongly resist any further unnecessary demolitions of such buildings, unless they are structurally unsound and cannot be repaired.

- 6.7 Where there is no alternative to redevelopment the new buildings will be required to be of the same height, plot widths and depths, building forms, roof, ridge and parapet or eaves heights and floor to ceiling heights as the originals. In streets where there is a strong architectural uniformity or continuity, scholarly replica rebuilds will be required. Crudely detailed and proportioned pastiches will not be acceptable.
- 6.8 Environmental Policy ENV.3 requires new development to be of a high standard of design in terms of its scale, form, height, mass, density, materials and landscaping and that it takes account of its surroundings, including its effect on the setting of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas and its impact on the skyline. Policy ENV.3 also states that development involving buildings exceeding 12m in height (or 15m in the central area) will normally be refused.

### **Developments Affecting Listed Buildings**

- 6.9 Borough Plan policies protect Listed Buildings against demolition, or extensions and alterations (both external and internal) (ENV.31), or inappropriate changes of use, which would adversely affect their character (ENV.32) and against developments which adversely affect their setting (ENV.33). The setting of a Listed Building encompasses not only its curtilage, but may often include land some distance from it. In crowded urban streets, such as in the North Laine, the setting can encompass a number of surrounding properties. It also comprises the spaces between buildings, including streets and gardens like Pelham Square. A proposed high or bulky building could also affect the setting of a Listed Building some distance away, or alter views of an historic skyline. This has occurred with the Listed St Bartholomew's Church, which is a prominent landmark at the end of long views down many streets in the North Laine. In some cases, these vistas have been seriously marred by Theobald House and Pelham House. Further policy guidance is given in Department of the Environment / Department of National Heritage Planning Policy Guidance Note PPG 15 Planning and the Historic Environment, and in particular Annexe C - Guidance on alterations to Listed Buildings. The Council must have regard to this document.

### **Buildings of Local Interest**

- 6.9 There is a presumption against the demolition of these buildings. Policy ENV.40 requires that alterations to these buildings must be sympathetic to their character.

### **New Development**

- 6.10 In addition to the schemes specifically mentioned in this study, there are a number of other proposals not shown on the Borough Proposals Map. Some of the schemes currently proposed for these sites are less than satisfactory in design terms and do not come up to the standards now expected in conservation areas. Nor do some conform to current Borough Plan design policies, such as those relating to the heights of buildings. In some cases, Consent has been given for demolition of buildings which are basically sound and are an important part of the street scene. Wherever possible, the opportunity should be taken to retain buildings which make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area and to achieve a scheme more in keeping with the conservation area.
- 6.11 Interim Design Guidelines for development in all Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape Sensitivity are contained in the Appendix. The following policies are specific to the North Laine:-

## **New Policies Towards Development in the North Laine Area**

### **The North Laine Area Generally**

- 1. Within the North Laine Conservation Area and adjacent Areas of Townscape Sensitivity, the maximum height of new buildings will not normally be greater than 12 metres. This maximum is subject to the development being satisfactory in terms of its effects on daylight, sunlight, privacy and general amenity of adjoining buildings, as well as townscape considerations. It will not always be possible to achieve this maximum on a particular site. No new buildings should be substantially taller than its neighbours.**

### **Developments Within the North Laine Conservation Area**

- 1. In the North Laine, new development, where it is acceptable, should retain and work within its historic linear grid street pattern and maintain the original building lines. Where the original street pattern and building lines have been disrupted, they should be reinstated wherever possible. The domestic small scale 2-3 storey character, with its narrow plot widths which are often expressed at roof level by party wall upstands and chimneys, should be maintained and respected. The general eaves, parapet and roof ridge lines of historic roof forms should also be followed.**
- 2. Materials should be those which were historically used in each particular part of the Conservation Area, which include stucco, coursed field flint or beach pebble, bungaroosh, yellowy - brown stock, soft reds, grey header brickwork and, occasionally, mathematical tiles for walls, and slate, plain red clay tiles for roofs.**

### **Developments Within the Adjacent Areas of Townscape Sensitivity:-**

- 1. Future proposals will be expected to respect the character of small scale development of the North Laine Conservation Area.**
- 2. It is important that traffic and development proposals are designed in such a way as to create live, usable frontages which suitably define the edges of developments.**
- 3. Long distance views of local landmarks such as the station and St. Bartholomew's Church should be respected.**
- 4. New development should not exceed four storeys (three in the case of housing) and development should graduate down the slope from the station to London Road/Valley Gardens taking advantage of existing contours.**
- 5. Severance caused by heavy traffic flows in the area should be reduced, if possible, and new severance avoided. Pedestrian access throughout the area should be improved to provide safe and attractive north-south and east-west routes, including particularly a route via Pelham Street and St. Peter's Street to link London Road with the North Laine area.**
- 8. New areas of surface car parking should be restricted in size, and spaces integrated within new development proposals.**

9. **New developments should make a positive contribution towards recreating a coherent urban form and townscape in the area and redressing the piecemeal and incoherence which it suffers from at present by reintegrating the sites back into the surrounding area.**
10. **New buildings should respect the skylines and long views as seen from the North Laine (and Valley Gardens) Conservation Areas.**

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT**

### **Large Redevelopment Sites**

- 6.12 There are a number of large redevelopment sites within the Study Area, both within the North Laine Conservation Area and on its edge or nearby. Development on those sites could have a major impact on the conservation areas and on the neighbourhood as a whole, in terms of the mix of uses which contribute to the vitality and colour of the area, the character and quality of the street scene, their effect on long views and on traffic generation. Their early redevelopment would do much to enhance the Conservation Area, provided it was with suitable contextual and well designed schemes.
- 6.13 Some of these sites have a long history of previous planning permissions. Some approved schemes would not be acceptable under current Borough Plan Policies, the proposals in this Study and today's greater awareness and concern for conservation and environmental issues. In some cases, the principle of demolition would not now be considered acceptable. Some schemes are already under reconsideration, particularly in view of the current state of the property market, and the opportunity may exist to review the nature of the development, with a view to achieving some of the goals set out in the new Borough Plan Policies and in this Study.
- 6.14 The principal large development sites are:-
  - 1) Jubilee Street
  - 2) Trafalgar Street/Station Street (under construction)
  - 3) 76-84 Trafalgar Street
  - 4) Portland Street/Church Street
  - 5) The Argus site, North Road/Gloucester Road
  - 7) Blackman Street/Station Street
  - 6) Pelham Street/Redcross Street

### **The Jubilee Street Site Planning Brief Area**

- 6.15 The Borough Plan allocated this site for sports facilities, and in particular an ice-rink and small hall (Policy TP.12 (ii)), Housing (12 units) - (Policy HP.4), Offices (Class B1) (Policy EP.5), Shops to replace those demolished (nil retail again) (Policy SP.6) and off-street public car parking (Policy TRP.12). In addition the Plan requires a road-widening line on the North Road frontage (Policy TRP.4) and a new pedestrian route via North Place linking the shopping centre at North Street with the London Road District Shopping Centre. Previous Planning Permissions are no longer relevant.
- 6.16 However, these proposals are not now considered acceptable or appropriate for the site and a new Planning Brief has been produced (dated August 1994) It was produced concurrently with this study and is closely integrated with it. It proposes a more contextual development in keeping with the North Laine. It would include a new public library, housing, shops, workshops and studios and some offices, as well as arts and community facilities. . The historic street pattern

would be restored by reinstating Jubilee Street and retaining the existing building line on North Road. A new square is proposed, in front of the swimming pool.

- 6.17 The site fell outside of the Conservation Area, but is now proposed for inclusion. It has lain vacant for many years and it is important to encourage its early development. Because of its location at the end of New Road the overall height, mass and design must be carefully controlled to safeguard long views along New Road and Church Street, as well as its effect on the North Laine Conservation Area generally.
- 6.18 The continuity of the street frontage onto Church Street should be maintained and set backs avoided. It would be beneficial to maintain and reinforce the shopping frontage, if possible. The new buildings should be of a high standard of design and employ materials typical to this part of the street.
- 6.19 At the North of the site, on the North Road frontage stands a row of vacant 19th century shops with residential flats above. They are of equal quality to other properties in the street. The new brief seeks to retain and restore them. Whether redeveloped or refurbished, the retail frontage should be retained, to maintain the street's visual interest and character.
- 6.20 It is also intended to reinstate the Regent Street frontage with 2-3 storey buildings, thus enhancing the townscape and screening the ugly rear blank wall of the "Jubilee Market."

#### **Portland Street/Church Street**

- 6.21 This site has been identified in the Borough Plan (Proposals SP7, EP6 and HP3 and the Proposals Map) as a site for office development (Class B1) on "land at Portland Street/Church Street, as part of a mixed retail/ommercial/residential scheme to secure the extension of the Essoldo Bingo Hall for conversion to a Lyric Theatre for Brighton."
- 6.22 Proposal SP.7 of the Plan states that:-

**"As part of any redevelopment of the area on the west side of Portland Street between Church Street and the rear of the properties in North Street and Windsor Street, small scale shopping provision is proposed fronting Church Street (nil retail gain)."**
- 6.23 There have been several planning permissions granted on this site, including for offices, with retail units, fronting onto Church Street, and basement car parking on the north end and studio/work shops and town houses with basement parking on the south end. The site of No 42 Portland Street is reserved for the extension to Essoldo at a later date and an Application is anticipated in due course.
- 6.24 Most of the buildings on the west side of Portland Street, and 27-31 Church Street have been demolished recently. Some of the original 18th and 19th Century 2 storey buildings still survive. These include Nos. 42, 42A, and Patching and Sons, a Builders Merchants at No 44. The present proposals involve the demolition of all of these. It would have set backs on its Church Street and Portland Street frontages, a wide corner splay and be substantially taller than the buildings opposite in Portland Street. Its massing and style is too grandiose for North Laine. Any development of the site should respect the historic street pattern and original building lines and small scale, domestic height, mass and plot widths of the street. Set backs and corner splays should be avoided for townscape reasons. The buildings on the opposite side of Portland Street comprise ground, first and attic floors with roof dormers, and this pattern should be repeated on the western side street frontage. The Church Street frontage should be no greater than ground, first and second attic floors in height.

- 6.25 It is proposed that this site and the north end of Portland Street opposite, be included in the North Laine Conservation Area, because of its relationship to other historically and architecturally important parts of Church Street. In view of the current state of the property market, particularly the over-supply of offices in central Brighton, the opportunity might arise to negotiate a more contextual scheme which better relates to the small domestic scale of the North Laine and the retention of the surviving buildings on the site.
- 6.26 If this proposal were taken up, it would necessitate a radical re-design of the current proposals. Nevertheless, it appears feasible that a similar amount of floor space might be achieved.

### **The Argus Site, North Road/Gloucester Road**

- 6.27 These buildings, which formerly were occupied by the editorial and administrative offices and printing presses of the Argus Newspaper, are currently vacant. They are three storeys in height. The front part, on North Road, is set back from the other buildings. It presents an ugly blank wall in part and a modern panel clad 1960's facade. Any scheme for the site should rebuild or re-clad this part of the building with a more appropriate stucco facade, and extend it forward to the original building line, to integrate with the buildings opposite and either side. The ground floor should have shops or cafes to mend the break in the shopping frontage (shopping is proposed to be reinstated on the North Road frontage of the Jubilee Site opposite). The middle building is an attractive decorative red brick late Victorian/Edwardian commercial building. This building is an important part of the area's industrial and architectural heritage and should be retained. The northern building is a 20th Century gaunt brick industrial building of little architectural merit and its redevelopment would be most welcome. At present, the Gloucester Road frontage is an open yard and the opportunity should be taken to put a building back on it and reinstate the original building line. New buildings on this site should not be any taller than those existing and the opportunity should be taken to improve the amenities of the adjacent buildings by reducing building heights in Robert Street and Kensington Street or mansarding the top storey to improve daylight and reduce the buildings' domineering impact. A mixed use for this site, retaining some light industrial use, with shops/cafes, housing and studios/offices would be appropriate for the character of the streets surrounding this site.

### **The Brighton Station Area Land /Transport Brief**

- 6.28 The land to the north of Trafalgar Street is affected by this Brief and in particular the following sites are relevant to the North Laine Study:-
- Site C Brighton College of Technology at Pelham Street**
  - Site D Avon Site, Station Street/Blackman Street**
  - Site E Trafalgar Street**
- 6.29 These sites are either wholly or partly within the North Laine Conservation Area, or adjoin it or are close to it and would be visible from it. The Station Area Brief states that "the area on the western slope of the London Road valley suffers from a poor environment and a fragmentation of low grade uses, reflecting a history of incremental development accommodating a variety of uses (Par. 5.3) This piecemeal development has resulted in an incoherent townscape which adversely affects the setting of St. Bartholomew's Church, a Grade I Listed Church in the Gothic style. The immense height of this Church provides a significant landmark in long distance views of the Area". (Par. 5.4).
- 6.30 The urban fabric has been allowed to degenerate into incoherence, with buildings of differing materials, forms and heights unrelated to each other or the street pattern. There are a number of vacant sites. Future development should avoid repeating these mistakes and should re-establish a strong, coherent townscape and re-weave the various sites back into the surrounding urban fabric. The Trafalgar Place development has its own strong coherence and by its size is able to

generate its own urban pattern. However, its scale and choice of materials has been criticised. The frontage buildings onto Trafalgar Street are more related to the scale of other buildings in that street, and the ground floor shop units reflect its land use pattern. Its yellow brick, however, is a discordant element in the street, which is almost entirely stuccoed. In long views along north-south streets in the North Laine Conservation Area to the south, the main office buildings loom up above the buildings in Trafalgar Street, breaking the skyline, and are obtrusive and alien elements. Developments on this hillside should progressively scale down from west to east and from north to south, effecting a transition from the grand scale of Trafalgar Place and the Technical College to the more domestic scale of the North Laine. Development should not only follow the fall in ground level, but also reduce in storey heights. The roofs of Trafalgar Place and the Station as well as a portion of their upper storeys walls, should be visible above the buildings in front in long views so as to break up the roofscapes as seen from Valley Gardens.

- 6.31 Trafalgar Street is one of the oldest streets in the North Laine and the buildings there comprise some Regency but mainly early to mid-Victorian buildings with shops on the ground floor and generally two and sometimes three storeys of residential accommodation above. There are several public houses, including within the Station Area Brief's boundary, the Great Eastern.
- 6.32 The Brief's Townscape & Design Section contains townscape and design guidelines for the area which are relevant to this study. These have been incorporated into the preceding section.
- 6.33 In addition, the following policy should be observed:-

#### **New Policy**

**The character of Trafalgar Street should be preserved by retaining the existing older buildings on the Trafalgar Street frontage, together with those residential, commercial and shopping activities which are an important part of its mixed use character. Any further demolitions should be avoided.**

#### **SITE C: BRIGHTON TECHNICAL COLLEGE, PELHAM STREET/TRAFALGAR ST**

- 6.34 The Borough Plan identifies a large tract of land in Pelham St, Trafalgar St, Redcross St and Whitecross St for the expansion and consolidation of the College (Proposal PSP.3) and for the development of "high technology" facilities (Class BI - innovation centres, science parks, commercial research and production laboratories) linked to the town's higher education research base. Much of the site identified on the Borough Plan Proposals Map is vacant and is presently used as car parks. A small part of the site identified lies within the Conservation Area - Nos. 100 and 101/102 Trafalgar St and the Gloucester Building, a small interesting college building which has a frontage onto Trafalgar Court. It is not known whether the first two buildings, which are shops with accommodation above, are within the ownership of the college or whether their inclusion is a cartographic error. All three of these buildings make an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area and should be retained. Nos. 100 and 101/102 also occupy a key position in the shopping frontage and should continue in shopping use. The remainder of the Trafalgar St frontage of the site is proposed for inclusion in the Conservation Area.

#### **Proposal**

**Nos. 100 and 101/102 Trafalgar Street will be deleted from Proposal Site EP.3/PSP.3 in the Borough Plan Proposal Map at the earliest opportunity.**

- 6.35 The Trafalgar St frontage of the site, opposite Pelham Square is particularly sensitive as it occupies a key position on the north side of Pelham Square, in which virtually all the buildings are Listed. In any development of the college site, the original street pattern should be retained and reinstated where lost (Redcross St). They should follow the original building lines and should be

carefully related to the heights and materials of surrounding buildings, especially those in the Conservation Area. New buildings should complete the north side of the square and should be no more than three storeys in height. on this frontage. The corner with Pelham street will need to be sensitively handled and turned in a manner consistent with the character of the Conservation Area. The Trafalgar Street frontage should be predominantly in stucco and slate, to blend in with the dominant materials of the street. The ground floor frontage onto Trafalgar street should relate to the shopping frontage in terms of the ground floor's floor to ceiling heights, sizes of windows and activities and not present a "dead frontage to the shopping street. Preferably a shopping or cafe/restuarant use should be accommodated on the ground floor frontage. Development of this corner site should also respect and enhance the setting of the Gloucester Building and retain a view of it, perhaps through an archway from Pelham Street.

#### **SITE D: STATION / BLACKMAN ST**

- 6.36 This vacant site is allocated for Student Housing (HP.4) or alternatively commercial office development (EP.5) in the Borough Plan. A recent planning permission exists for student housing and a subsequent permission was granted for offices on the southern part of the site. An earlier office permission covering the whole site has expired unimplemented. Previous schemes on this site have involved very tall buildings which would not now be acceptable in terms of Borough Plan policies and the Station Area Brief, which both reflect increased awareness and concern over the need to protect long views and skylines of the historic centre of Brighton. The Council has sought substantial reductions in the heights of subsequent proposals and has succeeded in securing some reductions in later schemes, but has been constrained by earlier outstanding permissions. In the event of the current permissions not being implemented , the Council will seek further reductions in the bulk of any further new proposals. New buildings on the site should not use yellow bricks similar to those of the Trafalgar Place development, but should use local materials which are to be found on the older buildings in the area.

#### **SITE E: 76-84 TRAFALGAR ST**

- 6.37 The Borough Plan allocates this vacant site for private housing (HP.3), commercial offices (EP.5) and shopping (SP.9). Conservation Area Consent was granted for the demolition of the buildings and Planning Permission granted to build a four and five-storey building with shops, 14 flats and 280 sq. m. of offices. Work commenced but then ceased and the site remains vacant and continues to blight the area. The scheme would not now be considered acceptable due to its bulk and design and because it does not relate well to the changes of ground level in this street or the way the other buildings staircase down the hill. Should the opportunity arise, an improved scheme should be negotiated, of reduced bulk, with the reinstatement of Wood Street. The height of the building should only be three storeys (a maximum of 12 metres including the roof structure).

#### **Proposal**

**Now that the statutory 3-year period from commencement of works has expired, the Council will serve a completion notice on the development.**

- 6.38 If the redevelopment of the multi-storey car park around the base of Theobald House were to become a possibility, (and this should be encouraged), a scheme could be promoted which provides building frontages onto Whitecross St and Blackman St with a mix of uses. It could have a landscaped private courtyard behind the frontage buildings, around the base of the tower, possibly on a raised deck with a replacement car park underneath, or alternatively and preferably at ground level above an underground car park. At present the ground floor frontages of these streets present an unattractive, hostile and potentially dangerous environment to pedestrians. Theobald house stands in the midst of a concrete wasteland and the site affords unattractive

views from the Conservation Area. At present there are no proposals for this site in the Borough Plan or the Station Area Brief.

### **Small Vacant Sites and Smaller Development Sites**

- 6.39 In addition to the large development sites, there are a large number of small vacant sites and parking lots scattered throughout the area, both within and outside the Conservation Area. These can have a particularly damaging effect on the quality and character of the townscape and give the area a run-down appearance. It is important to stimulate development of these sites to enhance the area generally.
- 6.40 Where sites have been used to provide parking for adjoining buildings, it may be possible to design schemes which retain ground-floor parking whilst completing the street frontage. Where parking provision is in excess of current standards, the parking could be eliminated. The Council's policy is to restrain car commuting into the central area. The development of these small sites should reflect the particular character of each individual street in terms of uses, height, mass, materials, building lines, roof and parapet lines and plot widths.
- 6.41 The following small vacant sites have been identified, only a few of which have development proposals:-
- 4-7 (inclusive) Kensington Street
  - 9-10A Kensington Street
  - 15-20 Kensington Street
  - 3-4 Regent Street
  - Regent Street (part of Jubilee Site - see above)
  - Land in front of Evening Argus Printworks, North Road (part of Argus site - see above)
  - Land rear of Argus Printworks, Gloucester Road (part of Argus site - see above)
  - Land on corner of Trafalgar Street and Whitecross Street.
  - Sites of 6-12 (incl.) Upper Gardner Street
  - Site of 17 Tichbourne Street
  - Sites of 8 & 10 Windsor Street
  - Land in Trafalgar Lane
  - Land adjacent to 124 Gloucester Road
  - Land in Gloucester Street/Gloucester Mews
  - Land in Gloucester Mews
  - Land adjacent to 3 Jolly Butchers Public House in North Road
  - 7-9 Frederick St
  - 10-11 Frederick St

### **Buildings Which Detract from the Character of the Conservation Area**

6.42 The buildings which have been identified in the Character Appraisal as detracting from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area are potential candidates for redevelopment, which would be most welcome. Some of these are relatively old and past their useful life whilst others which are relatively new and redevelopment is unlikely in the short term. In recent years, a trend has been growing in the country of redevelopment of 1960's modern buildings. We are seeing this in Brighton too and there have been approaches by developers on some buildings. Where proposals come forward for redevelopment, it will be expected that an attempt will be made to reduce overall heights of very tall buildings and redistribute the massing of the building in such a way as to minimise their impact on the sky line, long views and on the street scene. The new buildings should be designed to be more sympathetic to its historical context, and reinstatement the historic street pattern and building lines. In other cases, where the massing and form of the building is acceptable, recladding may be a realistic option.

### **New Policy**

**In accordance with Borough Plan Policy ENV.22 (iii), the Council will encourage the early redevelopment of those buildings in and close to the Conservation Area which have been identified in this study as buildings which detract from the Character of the Conservation Area.**

## 7. ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS

### Reinstatement of Lost Features

- 7.1 Whilst these are often of a minor scale, they can radically change the appearance of individual buildings and, in aggregate, change the whole character of the area after a period of time. Many alterations and extensions enjoy "Permitted Development" rights and do not require an application for planning permission.
- 7.2 Within the North Laine, as indeed in all the Borough's Conservation Areas, there have been widespread alterations and extensions of poor designs, inappropriate materials and out of keeping with either the architecture of the buildings or the character of the area. This has reached a scale where it has seriously eroded the character of the area. In some streets it is reaching the point where it will negate the justification for conservation area designation, including Upper Gardner Street and to a lesser extent, Frederick Gardens, Cheltenham Place and Tidy Street.
- 7.3 To combat this problem, the Council has decided to designate Article 4 Directions in certain streets, subject to there being majority support from local residents. This study proposes additional streets. In addition, detailed design guidance is being prepared. The Council will encourage owners to reinstate buildings which have been badly or inappropriately altered or extended as part of the enhancement scheme. In future it may be possible under the new Conservation Areas Partnership Schemes to offer grants for the reinstatement of lost architectural features and removal of inappropriate alterations, subject to the availability of resources.
- 7.4 The situation will need to be monitored and kept under review.

### New Policy

1. **The Council will monitor the condition of the townscape of the North Laine by carrying out periodic surveys. Detailed design guidance will be prepared for alterations and extensions.**
  2. **Owners will be encouraged voluntarily to reinstate lost original architectural features and remove or reverse inappropriate alterations and extensions which detract from the character and appearance of the building. In refurbishment and conversion schemes, the reinstatement of lost features will be required. As and when the availability of resources permits, grants will be offered to assist in this.**
- 7.5 Borough Plan Policy ENV.5 states that extensions and alterations to existing buildings including the formation of rooms in the roof, will only be granted if the proposed development is well designed, sited and detailed in relation to the building and the surrounding area. ENV.22 (iv) says that in Conservation Areas alterations and extensions to unlisted buildings will normally only be permitted which respect the character of the Conservation Area.
- 7.6 The Council (either itself, or through the Hove and Brighton Joint Urban Conservation Board, or in partnership with Hove Borough Council) is in the process of producing a series of supplementary design guides on various subjects. Those published so far include:-
- A Guide to Alterations, Conversions and Improvements.
  - Shop security : Grilles and Alarms

- Designing for Security.
- Security Lighting
- Green Building
- Conservation Areas in Hove and Brighton - A Residents' Guide.

7.7 Future publications will include:-

- Doors
- Windows
- Shopfronts
- Alarm Boxes

7.8 Alterations and extensions should be in accordance with the Policy Guidance set out in these documents. Further Interim Design Guidelines will be produced and will be included in the Appendices in due course. Most design guidance relating to alterations and extensions would apply equally to all the other Conservation Areas as to the North Laine. However, consideration should also be given to any special characteristics of the North Laine.

### **Extensions**

7.9 Because of the dense terraced character of the North Laine, street scenes in the area have not been seriously affected by extensions, other than a few loft conversions. Where extensions have occurred, they have largely been at the rear of the property. Whilst the front facades and parts of buildings which can be seen from the street are the most important, rear elevations should not be completely discounted. Conservation Areas are more than flat stage sets. Rear walls of houses are generally overlooked by neighbouring houses. Often where front facades have been much altered according to the fashion fads of the moment, the original architectural details survive at the rear and provide important historical evidence of the buildings' original appearance. Whilst there is greater flexibility in allowing alterations and extensions at the rear, care should still be taken to match them in with the original building. One type of extension which has had a major detrimental impact on a few streets (such as Frederick Gardens and Cheltenham Place), are front porches. In the North Laine these can seldom, if ever, be added to the building without spoiling its appearance and character and that of the street as a whole. The effect is particularly bad where a uniform terrace or row with a strong common identity has a variety of shapes and sizes of porches added. New porches will therefore generally not be acceptable in the North Laine.

### **Roof Extensions**

7.10 Roof lines are particularly sensitive to change and it is important that the architectural unity of terraces is maintained. Roof extensions to these sorts of buildings in the North Laine will generally not be acceptable. In some cases, where they are acceptable, it is important that the design is appropriate to the existing building and materials used which match the original. This is especially the case with older buildings where traditional designs and materials should be used. The general roof ridge heights, roof pitches, eaves and parapet lines of streets should be respected where alterations or redevelopment is acceptable. Details such as chimney stacks, pots and party wall upstands are an essential element of traditional sky-lines and should be retained or reinstated.

- 7.11 Apart from a few streets, roof extensions have not caused a major problem in the North Laine. This is because generally, the roof ridges are too low and loft conversions would require raising the roof height over which there is already effective planning control.

### **Dormers**

- 7.12 Where roof lines remain largely unaltered, dormer windows should not normally be located on the front elevation of the building, where they were not a feature of the original design of a building or terrace. However, where a pattern has already been set, they may be acceptable. Dormers should be small in scale, and align with the windows below and be of a design appropriate to the building. Velux or other modern patent skylight windows should not be located on the front roof slopes and should be installed so that their top surface is flush with the roof slope. They are not acceptable at all on Listed Buildings. Traditionally designed and constructed skylights may be acceptable on Listed Buildings in certain cases and are preferable on other Conservation Area buildings.

### **Roof Materials**

- 7.13 Changes in roof coverings can have a dramatic effect on the appearance of a building, especially when it is part of a group or terrace. Most of the buildings in the North Laine originally had slate roofs, or less frequently, plain clay tiles. The introduction of modern roofing materials has had a serious impact on the townscape. Everywhere in the North Laine, as elsewhere in Brighton, traditional roofing materials have been widely replaced with inappropriate modern materials, particularly concrete interlocking tiles. As well as being less pleasing aesthetically and out of keeping with the area, these could also cause structural problems, if the roof timbers are not strong enough to support their extra weight, and the roof structure has not be strengthened. The Council's Building Control Officers can advise on this.
- 7.14 Whereas the changing of roof cladding, e.g. from natural slate to artificial slates or concrete tiles on Listed Buildings requires Listed Building Consent, and on unlisted flats, Planning Permission, there is presently no control over single-family dwelling houses in the Conservation Area. The Council intends to seek planning control over changes of roof covering materials and roof lights by way of an Article 4 Directions. Where buildings have their original slate or clay tiles these will be required to be retained or replaced to match and the Council will encourage the reinstatement of the original materials. Under a future Conservation Area Partnership Scheme, grants may be available for re-roofing and it will be a normal requirement that natural slate or hand made clay tiles be used as appropriate. Grants made under the Housing Acts will only be made for acceptable roof materials. Where not funded by Conservation Grants, artificial "slates" can be used on unlisted buildings, provided these are a close match to natural slate. Currently there are five brands which satisfy this criterion - Cromleigh, Britslate, Technicraft, Weatherwell and Spanish Slate Quarries. As the specifications for these may change from time to time and may become unsuitable, they should be checked with planning staff.

### **Windows and doors**

- 7.15 There has been a widespread and substantial loss of original windows and doors and the insertion of various ill-assorted and inappropriate new ones, throughout the Conservation Area. In one or two streets, virtually not a single house has its original front doors, in some others almost no house has its original windows.
- 7.16 This is not irreversible, and the original windows and doors could be reinstated, with Council encouragement and, if resources permit, a grant. Original doors and windows should be retained and where replacement is necessary they should be in replica. Whilst these alterations are presently permitted development on single-family houses, planning permission is required where flats, shops and commercial buildings are involved. There are, however, hundreds of unauthorised

unsuitable doors and windows in the area. Article 4 Directions will control changes to these. A detailed photographic survey will be carried out.

### **Painting, Pebbledash and Render**

- 7.17 There are fortunately, only a small number of buildings painted in inappropriate colours, or which have been pebble-dashed or re-rendered badly. But there are enough to give cause for concern and to justify seeking Article 4 Directions to control those alterations. Pebble-dashing with hard cements or painting with cement based textured paints can be harmful to the structure of older buildings, because it can trap damp in and prevent them from breathing. Often, attractive original architectural detailing, such as ashlar, capitals of columns and cornices etc. can be obscured. Where a rendered building has to be re-rendered, care should be taken to avoid using a mortar mix which is too strong in cement and lacking in lime. All the architectural detailing should be carefully measured and recorded and reproduced in render work. Where this occurs in the middle of a uniform terrace or group of buildings with a strong sense of architectural unity which all have painted render, then the new render should also be painted. If a new or re-rendered building is not to be painted, care should be taken over the render's colour.
- 7.18 Fair-faced brickwork and flint facing which were meant to be seen should never be rendered or painted over. Where they have been, the Council will encourage its careful removal by special techniques which do not harm the original fabric. The exceptions are beach pebble-faced buildings which were traditionally painted black with cream painted brick detailing. Painting schemes should not be strident or discordant and generally in keeping with the neighbourhood. Architecturally uniform terraces should be painted a single colour throughout, whilst streets where there are a variety of individual buildings should have varied colour schemes. The imposition of a uniform corporate colour scheme on a group of different buildings should be avoided, but their individuality should be expressed in a varied painting scheme. Paintwork should be microporous or breathable, so as not to trap damp. The Council has produced a Conservation Fact Sheet on Renders and Paintwork, which also includes a range of appropriate colours for buildings in Conservation Areas and for Listed Buildings. It is also in the process of making Article 4 Directions in certain residential streets in the North Laine to control painting, pebble-dashing, etc. However, it is clear that this problem is not confined to residential streets alone, and it is considered necessary to extend Article 4 Directions to all streets in the North Laine to control these works. Listed Building Consent is required to paint a building where this would affect its character as a Listed Building.

### **Fences, Walls, Gates, Railings and Hard Standings**

- 7.19 The densely built-up terraced nature of the North Laine, with many streets having no front gardens, means that these structures are less of an issue than in other Conservation Areas, and are confined to only a few streets, including Robert Street (east side), Kensington Place, Frederick Street, Frederick Gardens, Pelham Square (south and east sides), Cheltenham Place (west side), Blenheim Place and a part of Gloucester Street. Most of these have front garden areas which are too small, or have basement areas, where hard standings for cars are not an issue. Some of these streets have cast-iron railings, whilst others have low rendered walls, sometimes surmounted with railings. They are an important part of the street scene and should be retained or reinstated where lost. Many rear garden walls are of coursed flint or bungaroosh, sometimes rendered. New or replacement walls should either match the originals or be of a type appropriate to the character of the area. Unfortunately, in some cases, mainly in Kensington Place (west side) the original front walls or railings have been lost. It is the intention of the Council to introduce Article 4 Directions to control new walls and fences etc. Limited controls over their demolition (where all or part are over 1 metre in height) presently exist in Conservation Areas.

### **Burglar Alarms, Satellite Dishes, Hanging Baskets, Shutters, Meter Boxes etc.**

7.20 The above are typical of a number of smaller alterations, which in aggregate, can harm the character and appearance of the street, if allowed to proliferate in a haphazard way. In certain streets, this has already happened to a degree. Some of these are presently permitted development and will be brought under control in streets where Article 4 Directions are proposed. Others would be regarded as "de-minimus" and therefore not require planning permission. They would, however, require Listed Building Consent, where the building is Listed. Fake shutters fixed to walls are unacceptable. Hanging baskets are acceptable on most buildings, provided they are sensitively located on the building and there are not so many that the building looks cluttered. Meter boxes are not acceptable on front elevations. Burglar Alarms and other essential equipment should be carefully positioned. The Council has produced design guidelines for these. Generally in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings they are unacceptable on front elevations of buildings or in prominent locations visible from the street. Article 4 Directions will bring most of the above items under control in certain streets.

### **Shopfronts, Signs, Blinds and Security Shutters and Grilles**

- 7.21 Because shopping streets are an important part of North Laine's townscape, shopfronts must be given special consideration. The Council's current policies towards these are set out in Policies ENV.9, ENV.10, ENV.11 and ENV.12 of the Borough Plan. In addition, the Council has, in association with Hove, produced a Design Guide Leaflet on Security Grilles. Additional policies and detailed design guidance is given in the Interim Guideline in the Appendix. A leaflet will also be published soon on shopfronts.
- 7.22 There are many excellent examples of 19th Century traditional shopfronts, and a very few late 18th Century ones too, in the North Laine. There are probably more there than in any other Conservation Area in the Borough. Sadly, the number of unauthorised roller shutters and blinds erected which spoil the appearance of good shopfronts is reaching epidemic proportions. (This is not unique to the North Laine Conservation Area and afflicts most others). To a lesser extent there are cases of unauthorised shopfront alterations and signs of an unacceptable type. Whilst the security and advertising needs of traders are recognised, roller shutters, signs and blinds should be carefully related to the existing building and its shopfront so that they sit happily on the building and do not obscure its architectural features. Blinds should be of the traditional retractable fabric apron-type in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings. They are only acceptable on buildings with shopfronts and not on those with domestic-type facades, including traditional public houses. Nor are they acceptable on upper floor windows. The proliferation of free-standing "A" - board signs on pavements and forecourts, is also a problem. They can also obstruct the pavements for pedestrians, especially those with pushchairs and wheelchair users, and cause problems for blind persons. Many of these are located on the highway and are unlicensed and an enforcement programme is needed to remove these. A more acceptable alternative is the use of traditional painted timber hanging signs on decorative metal brackets.
- 7.23 The cumulative effect of inappropriate modern plastic and Dutch blinds, internally illuminated plastic signs, "A" boards, solid external roller shutters with external boxes, and poorly designed modern shopfronts can have a highly damaging effect on the character of a traditional shopping street. The end result looks cluttered and tawdry and can affect the street's commercial vitality. This is crucial when many shopping streets are dependent on their historic character to attract and retain leisure shoppers, who might go elsewhere to rival centres.

## **New Policy**

**A survey of good traditional shopfronts will be carried out and a list prepared of those which should be retained.**

### **Hoardings and Posters**

7.25 Borough Plan Policies ENV.13, ENV.14, ENV.15 and ENV.16 generally rule out posters and hoardings in Conservation Areas and say that action will be taken to remove these from buildings and inappropriate locations where they are detrimental to the townscape. This can be done by serving Discontinuance Notices, or where the posters and hoardings are unauthorised, by enforcement action. There are a number of large and small poster boards around vacant sites and on buildings within the North Laine. They give the area a tawdry air and contribute to making the area seem run-down, as well as detracting from the character and appearance of the street scene.

7.26 These include:-

- Side of 45 Trafalgar Street
- Side of 46 Trafalgar Street
- Side of 75 Trafalgar Street
- Site of 76-84 Trafalgar Street
- Site of 85 Trafalgar Street
- Side of 91 Trafalgar Street
- Site of Nos. 105-108 Church Street
- Rear of No. 109 Church Street
- Side of 17 North Road
- Side of 21 North Road
- Side of 30 North Road
- Side of 34 North Road
- Side of 94 North Road
- Front of 26 Gloucester Road
- Side of 83 Gloucester Road.

7.27 In some cases these are in particularly important long vistas. The income derived from them (often with open site car parking) may act as a disincentive to early refurbishment of vacant buildings or development of vacant sites.

### **Proposal**

**A comprehensive survey of the North Laine Conservation Area (existing and proposed) will be carried out and discontinuance action will be taken to remove the above posters and any others identified which detract from the street scene. The Council will lead by example by removing posters and hoardings from its own properties in the area.**

## 8. SPECIAL CONTROLS

### Article 4 Directions to Control Inappropriate Small Scale Alterations and Extensions

- 8.1 Within the Conservation Area, a large number of inappropriate alterations and extensions to houses have been carried out over the last ten years or so, which individually detract from the architectural quality of the buildings and in aggregate threaten to undermine the special character and visual quality of the conservation area as a whole. These have been largely carried out under "permitted development" rights under the General Development Order, although some may be unauthorised. A few may have been granted planning permission under earlier less conservation conscious planning policies and practices.
- 8.2 If these inappropriate minor developments continue unabated, they could completely destroy the character of the conservation area and negate the reason for its declaration. It is conceivable that a conservation area could even be cancelled and lose its special status if its character were degraded too far to be worthy of preservation.
- 8.3 If the quality and character of buildings within the conservation area deteriorate generally, then it is likely to prove more difficult to resist proposals for redevelopment, as it could be argued that the character is not sufficiently good enough to justify "preservation".
- 8.4 It was proposed to extend the Council's Town Scheme Grants programme for restoration and repair of buildings which are listed or are in conservation areas, into the North Laine. But English Heritage, which jointly funded the Town Scheme, would not give their consent to this unless the Council made "Article 4" Directions to bring under control minor developments. The reason for this is to ensure that work in repairing and restoring buildings is not undone by inappropriate subsequent alterations.
- 8.5 Article 4 Directions remove "permitted development" rights. This means that owners wishing to make external alterations and extensions covered by the Direction will have to apply for planning permission. The Council will therefore be able to exercise better quality control over design and protect important architectural features of the buildings.
- 8.6 Borough Plan Policy ENV.8 says that the Council will seek to apply Article 4 Directions to residential properties to help protect conservation areas where appropriate. They have to have the consent of the Secretary of State for the Environment who normally requires a broad measure of support for the measure from local residents. The government proposes to change the law soon to make it easier for local authorities to make Article 4 Directions in Conservation Areas which will no longer require Secretary of State's approval.
- 8.7 The Council proposed, subject to public consultation, to make Article 4 Directions covering the following streets in the North Laine:-
- Over Street, Kemp Street, Kensington Place, Tidy Street, Foundry Street, Queens Gardens, Robert Street (east side) and Cheltenham Place.
- 8.8 The categories of minor development over which planning control is sought are:-
- re-cladding of roofs
  - alterations and enlargements of windows
  - painting of elevations of houses visible from street.
  - altering or replacing front doors
  - erection of porches

- installation of window shutters
- formation of car parking hard stands
- installation of satellite dishes.

- 8.9 The exact categories of development covered varies from street to street according to local circumstances. With painting, a range of acceptable colours were proposed. The Council undertook a public consultation exercise on this proposal in 1990. The results of this were a clear majority in favour, except in Tidy Street. The Council approved designation of Article 4 Directions for Foundry Street, Cheltenham Place, Kensington Place, Kemp Street and Queens Gardens on 30th April 1991. Over Street and Robert Street were due to follow. It was decided not to proceed with Tidy Street for the time being. However, the opportunity for Tidy Street residents to reconsider will be provided, once the Article 4 Directions are in place elsewhere, and they will be reconsulted.
- 8.10 Due to staff reductions because of budgetary restraints, this work was not completed and the Article 4 Directions were not made. It is hoped that on completion of this current study, work can recommence. Whilst it entails a small curtailment of residents' present planning rights, it also brings them many benefits.
- 8.11 Firstly, it will maintain the architectural quality and special character of the area, thus ensuring a more attractive living environment. Secondly, it could enable grant money to be made available under the Partnership scheme to help with repairs. Thirdly, a higher quality environment and townscape helps to maintain property values. Fourthly, a properly enhanced conservation area will be more easy to defend against proposals for demolition and redevelopment.
- 8.12 The situation needs to be kept under review and, if considered appropriate, the Article 4 Directions already agreed extended to cover additional categories, and further streets covered. In addition to various alterations to and painting of residential buildings, serious consideration needs to be given to controlling the painting of buildings in commercial streets, where there are similar examples of inappropriate painting schemes. The following additional proposals are made:-

**Proposal**

**In addition, where relevant, the Council will also consider including under the Article 4 Direction controls over front fences, gates, railings and walls, hanging baskets, meter boxes alarm, roof lights, alterations to chimneys and fire walls.**

**Consideration will also be given to extending the proposed Article 4 Directions to cover residential alterations in the following streets:-**

- **Gloucester Street**
- **Upper Gardner Street**
- **Frederick Gardens**
- **Frederick Street**
- **Trafalgar Terrace**
- **Vine Street**
- **Blenheim Place**
- **North Place**
- **Over Street**

- **Tichbourne Street (those parts proposed for inclusion in the Conservation Area)**

and the residential parts of:-

- **Gloucester Road**
- **Trafalgar Street**
- **North Road**
- **Church Street**
- **Windsor Street and Portland Street (those parts proposed for inclusion in the Conservation Area)**

**Consideration will be given to the making of Article 4 Directions to control the painting of buildings in commercial streets in the North Laine Conservation Area.**

### **Areas of Special Advertisement Control**

8.13 Whilst most illuminated signs require Advertisement Consent, many non-illuminated signs do not. The rules governing this are detailed and complex, but allow considerable scope for advertising material. Whereas attractively designed and carefully positioned signs add colour and interest to shopping streets, the proliferation of poorly designed advertising results merely in visual clutter and a poor street scene. This is beginning to be a problem in certain streets in the North Laine, especially Gardner Street and Sydney Street. If Dutch or plastic blinds have lettering and logos on them they are classified as advertisements and are currently beyond Council control, even though contrary to policy. Powers exist to designate Areas of Special Advertisement Control which restricts the amount and sizes of advertisements which can be displayed without advertisement control.

#### **Proposal**

**The Council will seek the Designation of Areas of Special Advertisement Control in the following streets within the existing and proposed Conservation Area:- Bond Street, Church Street, Gardner Street, Upper Gardner Street, North Road, Gloucester Road, Sydney Street, Trafalgar Street and King Street.**

## 9. ENHANCEMENT PROPOSALS

9.1 The scope for carrying out enhancement schemes depends on the availability of resources. Specific projects could include:-

- i) Temporary environmental improvements of vacant sites, including enforcement action against unauthorised uses, such as car parking. Notices could be served on owners to clear rubbish from sites. The sites could be laid out as temporary pocket parks, for example. Some projects could be undertaken by local community volunteers.
- ii) Street enhancements and traffic-calming and pedestrian-priority measures, like the Bond Street scheme, for Gardner, Sydney and Trafalgar Streets;
- iii) More limited schemes to rationalise and improve street furniture and reduce visual clutter;
- iv) Repaving schemes, e.g. the pedestrianised "plug" in Gloucester Road, restoration of the brick on edge paving of the carriageway in Gloucester Mews and remodelling and repaving of Queen's Road Quadrant, and the widening of the pavements and planting of trees in Spring Gardens;
- v) Reinstatement of cast iron railings around Pelham Square, and restoration of the railings in Queen's Road Quadrant;
- vi) Tree planting and other landscaping measures to soften and screen the view of Church St multi-storey car park in King St.
- vii) Tree planting in North Place down the centre of road (subject to location of underground services and extent of cellars);
- viii) Improvement of the steps and inclusion of a ramp at the south end of North Place, including an architectural feature to terminate the vista and soften the harsh red brick side wall of the Swimming Pool at the end of the street. This is proposed as part of the new planning brief for Jubilee Street and could be implemented as part of that development;
- ix) Additional tree planting in appropriate streets, where they are wide enough and subject to the location of underground services. Given its narrow streets, there is limited scope for this in the North Laine.
- x) Targeted Conservation Grant schemes aimed at the repainting of buildings which have inappropriate colour schemes, the removal of paint from buildings which should not be painted (e.g. good quality brickwork), repairs and the restoration of lost architectural features (e.g. reinstatement of timber sashes);
- xi) Co-ordinated programmes of enforcement action to secure the removal of unauthorised inappropriate signs, including "A" - boards on the highway, blinds roller shutters etc. and the reinstatement of buildings altered without permission in an unacceptable manner;
- xii) A targeted shopfront improvement grant scheme to restore good original traditional shopfronts in need of repair and the replacement of poorly designed modern shopfronts, where they especially detract from the street scene, as well as grants to repair, restore and repaint front facades of commercial buildings;
- xiii) programmes to place underground assorted electricity and telephone cables;
- xiv) Action to encourage the bringing back into use of vacant buildings, including the use of short-life projects, in association with "sweat equity" and self-build housing co-operatives and housing associations;
- xv) Grants under the "Living Over the Shop" campaign supported by English Heritage and Brighton's "Filling the Empties" strategy to bring back into use empty upper floors over shops and the restoration of the buildings;

xvi) A co-ordinated programme of serving Notices to secure the repair and redecoration of buildings whose condition is detracting from the amenity of the area;

- 9.2 Some of these proposals, particularly those which are revenue funded could be carried out within existing resources, as and when they can be added to officers' current work programmes. Others will depend on the availability of capital resources and grants from English Heritage. Some could be funded via the Hove and Brighton Joint Urban Conservation Board as special projects. The newly announced Single Regeneration Budget allocation for Brighton is another potential source of funding for some of the above projects and the SRB programme will have to be closely integrated with the Conservation Area Enhancement programme.

### **Proposal**

**A three-year rolling programme of action to enhance the Conservation Area will be drawn up and updated annually in consultation with local residents, traders and amenity societies.**

### **Action to Improve the Street Scene and Buildings**

- 9.3 There are a number of things that the Council can do to improve the appearance of streets in the area, in order to "preserve and enhance" the character of the Conservation Area, and improve the quality of the environment for shopping and residents. It can exercise its powers of planning control more carefully in dealing with planning applications for new developments, alterations and extensions and signs, blinds, shopfronts etc. Where there are existing buildings, shopfronts, signs, blinds etc., it can encourage the voluntary improvement of their appearance or removal through design advice leaflets. Grants could be made available through the Partnership scheme to repair and restore buildings. Where unacceptable alterations, signs, blinds, etc. are unauthorised, Enforcement Action or Prosecution can be initiated to remove the offending item and reinstate the building or land. In addition, the Council can through its own activity, do much to enhance the street scene, with repaving, tree planting and improved street furniture, traffic management and pedestrianisation. If all of these things are combined in a co-ordinated programme of action, a dramatic improvement in the quality of the streets appearance can be achieved. Each of these areas of activity are looked at in detail elsewhere. The Council intends to carry out such a programme within the Study Area. It will have to be phased on a street by street basis according to agreed priorities, as and when financial and staff resources are available.
- 9.4 The Council has a programmed commitment to enhancing and pedestrian-prioritisation of Bond Street. A scheme has been prepared and will commence on site in spring 1995. The rest of North Laine's pedestrian priority streets would follow afterwards as and when resources become available. Residential streets would be dealt with differently from commercial/shopping streets. The County Council has started work shortly on an environmental traffic management scheme for the North Laine Area, which will go to public consultation in 1995.
- 9.5 In addition, the Highway Authority has a programme of repair work. Enhancements could occur as part of this. The streets where enhanced paving and street furniture are proposed are shown in order of proposed priority:-

#### **Category 1**

**Bond Street, Gardner Street, Kensington Gardens, Sydney Street, and the crossing points over the east-west roads.**

**In association with repairing and pedestrianisation-priority/schemes.**

#### **Category 2**

**Church Street, North Road, Gloucester Road, Trafalgar Street.**

**In association with traffic calming schemes.**

### **Category 3**

**Over Street, Frederick Gardens, Queens Gardens, Kensington Place (west side), Kensington Gardens, Robert Street, Pelham Square (1-24).**

**In association with routine repair work and enhancement schemes.**

- 9.6 Other streets would follow as and when the opportunity arose. Subject to the availability of funds, a small budget could be set aside to top up routine repairs and street furniture renewed to upgrade surfaces and street furniture.

### **Action to Improve Shopfronts**

- 9.7 English Heritage has indicated in the past that they would consider grant aiding improvements to shopfronts under an agreed programme of Section 10 grants. A grant scheme for shopfronts is being operated in St. James's Street under the Hove and Brighton Joint Urban Conservation Board. It is proposed to extend this to Bond Street in the first instance. If a new Partnership Scheme is approved for North Laine, it would include a shopfront scheme.

### **Grants Programmes and the Conservation Areas Partnership Scheme**

- 9.8 The Town Scheme was the major historic grant fund in Brighton. Grants were available under the Town Scheme for repairs to both Listed and unlisted buildings in those streets included in the Town Scheme. The grants covered 40% of the cost of works, with an upper limit of £30,000 on the total cost.
- 9.9 The following streets within the North Laine Conservation Area were proposed to be included in the Townscheme:-

**Over Street, Kemp Street, Frederick Gardens, Queens Gardens, Kensington Place, Kensington Gardens, Robert Street, Pelham Square (1-24).**

- 9.10 English Heritage provided half the money for Town Scheme grants. Normally, Town Schemes were based around important groups of Listed Buildings, or buildings of listable quality. However, English Heritage were also prepared to fund Town Schemes in areas of uniform architecture of lesser merit, such as the North Laine Conservation Area, provided the permitted development rights are restricted in these areas. They had indicated that they were prepared to consider its inclusion, subject to Article 4 Directions being made.
- 9.11 Whilst a number of buildings in the North Laine area are worthy of consideration for listing, the bulk of them are likely to remain unlisted. The issues of proposals for listing and Article 4 Directions controlling permitted development rights were therefore of great importance for the Town Scheme to be expanded into North Laine.
- 9.12 The new Conservation Area Partnership Scheme being introduced by English Heritage will take the place of the old Town Scheme and s.77 Grant Schemes which Brighton has been operating until now. Bids for these will require a demonstration of a clear commitment to conservation by both the local authority and local residents. The bids would need to show a co-ordinated strategy and work programme covering design guidance and similar publications, enforcement programmes, Article 4 Directions to control minor alterations and extensions, grants for repairs and improvements, environmental proposals to improve streets etc. An enhancement study is

considered an appropriate vehicle to develop this submission and the Council will also cite English Heritage's former offer of a Town Scheme in support of its CAPS bid.

## **10. TRAFFIC AND PARKING POLICY**

### **The Council's Transport Strategy**

- 10.1 Central Brighton already suffers from traffic congestion. The ability of the existing road network to cater for the increasing traffic flows is limited. It is not considered that property demolition or loss of garden areas and street trees associated with road widening or new roads is an environmentally acceptable method of solving the problem. This is especially the case in the historic central area of Brighton, much of which has Conservation Area status. Here, the importance of maintaining historic street scenes imposes an additional constraint on development. Moreover, recent research demonstrates that road widening only generates more traffic. The Borough Plan therefore places greater reliance on traffic management, restraining the demand for road space and encouraging more use of public transport. As part of this strategy the Council discourages commuters car parking.
- 10.2 Traffic congestion and intensive on-street car parking detracts from the character and visual amenities of Conservation Areas, most of which were not designed to accommodate motor vehicles. The fumes from heavy traffic cover buildings with grime and are a major contributor to acid rain which attacks decorative stonework and stucco ornamentation. Vibrations from heavy vehicles can also weaken the foundations of fragile old buildings. There have been cases where heavy vehicles involved in accidents have run into and damaged buildings. Parked cars lining the streets spoil their appearance and detract from the setting of Listed Buildings. Heavy traffic also reduces the residential amenity of buildings and can blight their marketability and price. A downward spiral of under-investment and neglect can follow. Heavy traffic also reduces the attractiveness of shopping streets within the Conservation Area, with similar results.

### **Building Line Setbacks**

- 10.3 Wholesale road widening is no longer regarded as an appropriate solution to traffic problems and the affected properties can be blighted and suffer from lack of refurbishment. The only improvement lines and schemes included in the Borough Plan were those capable of implementation in the plan period (Policy TRP.4). Set back lines and road-widening schemes are not acceptable in Conservation Areas since they disrupt the traditional street frontages and building lines and can result in the loss of buildings which make an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.
- 10.4 Within the North Laine there is only one widening line identified in the Borough Plan (TRP.4), Nos. 13-21 North Road and the east side of Regent Street. This, however, was never formally confirmed by the County Highway Authority under the Highways Act. The new brief for the Jubilee Street site proposes its abandonment and that it be deleted from the Borough Plan at the next review.
- 10.5 Elsewhere, where redevelopment is acceptable, the existing building lines should normally be maintained, and the buildings not set back. Set backs frequently result in part of the blank flank wall of adjoining building being exposed, and produces an ugly ragged appearance to the street frontage. It is essential to maintain the original building lines of historically important street frontages.
- 10.6 Where a pavement is considered so narrow that it is causing a problem, the alternative solution of widening it by reducing the vehicular carriageway width as part of a street enhancement, traffic calming or pedestrian priority scheme should be explored. Trees can enhance the amenities of streets but are not always appropriate to the character of a street. Where streets and pavements are very narrow new street trees could cause problems for the disabled and parents with pushchairs and damage to the foundations of buildings and drainage.

## Proposal

**The road widening line in North Road/Regent Street (TRP.6) will be deleted from the Borough Plan at the next review.**

### Parking

- 10.7 Parking in the North Laine is a contentious issue. On the one hand, residents complain about people working in the area taking residents' parking spaces, particularly the Post Office's night workers. Negotiations are in hand to resolve this by the provision of overnight places in the nearby multi-storey car park. On the other hand, many local small traders wishing to travel into work by car complain about the lack of cheap parking provision. There are frequent complaints about unauthorised parking on yellow lines, in residents' parking spaces and overstaying at voucher paying spaces.
- 10.8 There are also difficulties with unauthorised delivery van parking. For example, vans are frequently parked for long periods on double yellow lines in the cul-de-sac formed by the traffic management barrier in the middle of Gloucester Road. Some traders, such as the furniture workshops and antique dealers require operational parking for their vans and this may not be possible on site. Consideration should be given to the provision of designated long stay delivery-van parking spaces on street, or in multi-storey car parks nearby.
- 10.9 There are two multi-storey car parks in the North Laine, both outside the present Conservation Areas, but close to them: Church Street and North Road. In addition, there is open parking on vacant sites. The largest of those is Jubilee Street - with 80 public spaces and 125 private spaces (public on Saturday). A multi-storey car park is proposed in the Borough Plan for the site with 200 spaces plus 80 on Saturday. However, the new brief for Jubilee Street does not include a public car park. The tariff structure adopted by the Council for all off-street car parking is intended to deter commuters and follows the policy of regulating the use of the private car in the town centre and giving priority to the short stay parker.
- 10.10 Borough Plan Policy TR.20 states:-

**"Within the Central Area off-street parks, priority will be given to the residents and to the short stay parker and the conference and holiday visitor."**

### Residents' Parking Scheme

- 10.11 In the controlled parking zone of Brighton's Central Area, it is necessary to provide "residents bays" to allow residents to park relatively near their homes, without a time limit during the control hours, as many homes do not have off-street spaces. In the North Laine, this is particularly the case with almost all houses.
- 10.12 TR.22 of the Plan seeks to address this :-
- "In areas around the town centre, priority will be given to the requirements of the residents for the available parking spaces."**
- 10.13 Local residents and their Association have called for the present Residents-Only Parking Restrictions in certain streets, which currently operate from 9 am to 6 p.m. Monday to Saturday, to be extended to a 24-hour restriction. However, there would be difficulties in enforcing this, as the County Police Force's team of Traffic Wardens is overstretched and only operates in the daytime. The County Highway Authority's policy is that Residents' Parking schemes should be self-financing. If the scheme were extended, its cost is likely to increase to the region of £100 per annum per permit. It is not certain that sufficient residents would be prepared to pay this price to

justify it. Nevertheless, the proposal will be given further consideration and the residents consulted to see how many would be prepared to pay the extra cost.

### **Public On-Street Parking**

- 10.14 It is the intention of the Council to eliminate some public on-street spaces as a result of environmental schemes and where possible discourage unnecessary vehicular traffic (Par. 6.50 and Policy TR.3, TR.4 and TRP.1 of the Borough Plan).

#### **Proposal**

**It is recommended that a substantial number of parking spaces be removed from the pedestrian priority streets and parking be limited to loading/unloading half hour periods, residential parking, disabled persons parking spaces and perhaps some designated long stay operational service vehicle spaces.**

- 10.15 Whilst some concerns have been expressed that a reduction of on-street parking spaces might affect trade in the shops, it is also argued that more people are likely to shop in a traffic free environment, particularly with the types of shops prevalent in the North Laine area. The majority traders in Bond Street have expressed a preference for a better street scene rather than on-street parking.

### **Traffic Management, Traffic Calming and Pedestrianisation**

- 10.16 The problems of heavy east-west traffic through North Laine, rat-runs, traffic and parking congestion in narrow streets, heavy goods vehicle through traffic, unauthorised parking, and parking on the pavements have a deleterious effect on the character of the North Laine Conservation Area, as well as on residential amenity and the shopping environment.
- 10.17 The Borough Plan provides that the road network will generally conform to the hierarchy defined by the County Highway Authority. To the east, along Valley Gardens and Old Steine the road is defined as part of Brighton's Distributor Network. To the north of the Study Area, The London Road/Station Land Study and Planning Brief proposes a traffic scheme to relieve traffic in the London Road shopping street and enhance it. The proposed Preston Relief Road has been abandoned.
- 10.18 The Borough Plan proposes to identify Environmental Areas where traffic management schemes will be devised to limit the use of residential streets by through-traffic. It is also intended to produce environmental traffic management measures to deter through traffic around the Central Area, commencing with the North Laine, amongst others (Policies TR.4 and TRP1). East Sussex County Council, which is the Highway Authority, has commenced work on the North Laine Traffic Management Study and these two studies will need to be closely co-ordinated. These traffic management measures should be closely integrated with proposals for enhancements of the Conservation Area and of shopping streets. There is fast heavy one-way traffic along Church Street, despite it being closed off at its western end. The traffic uses Spring Gardens as a cut-through to Queens Road, via North Road. This needs to be traffic calmed. This traffic acts as a barrier and hazard to pedestrian movement northwards into the heart of the North Laine shopping area and conservation area. North Road and Trafalgar Street are also heavily used by east-west traffic. Gloucester Road is spared this by being closed off in the middle and by contrast, is a haven of tranquility. The ideal solution would be to prevent through traffic within the whole of the North Laine neighbourhood inside the block bounded by Trafalgar Street, Queen's Road, North Street and Marlborough Place/St George's Place/York Place. The opportunity should be taken, in traffic calming Spring Gardens, to reduce its carriageways and widen the pavements to allow for tree planting and eventual reinstatement of the historic building line on the west side.

10.19 Local residents and traders express strong dissatisfaction with through-traffic in Trafalgar Street which is a narrow shopping street which also has considerable residential accommodation on the upper floors. This has recently been made one-way along most of its length but needs to be monitored and reviewed. Brighton Council's Environment and Planning Committee hopes that the County Council's traffic management study will address the problems caused by the operation of the one-way system, particularly in relation to the exit from the British Rail and Blackman St/Whitcross St car parks to the north.

10.20 It is difficult to envisage stopping all through traffic in the North Laine although the completion of the A27 Brighton By-Pass makes it more of a possibility. The long term possibility of this should not be ruled out. In the meantime, the reduction or exclusion of through traffic south of Trafalgar Street should be considered, particularly in North Road and Church Street. However, easy access to the North Laine for residents, shoppers and visitors should be maintained. Cars and delivery vehicles should be able to enter and leave by the shortest practicable routes, so as to reduce traffic generation. The car parks should be easily accessible from both the east and west and from the north.

### **Heavy Goods Vehicles**

10.21 Borough Plan Policy TR.37 states that where feasible, lorry bans will be introduced in the streets and areas where the presence of lorries clearly creates an unreasonable nuisance for residents or seriously detracts from the quality of the environment. The prohibition of heavy goods vehicles is recommended in the North Laine, including Trafalgar Street, except for service and delivery access.

### **Proposals**

- 1. A ban on heavy goods lorry through-traffic, except for deliveries, will be sought for the North Laine neighbourhood.**
- 2. The Council will also explore the possibility of a limitation on the size of vehicles permitted to deliver goods. This could be carried out either as part of a complete Environmental/Traffic Management Scheme, or independently as a separate measure.**

10.22 The Plan also seeks to introduce traffic calming and comprehensive pedestrian priority schemes to form a network linking business shopping and leisure activity areas in the central area (TR.28). Traffic calming is also proposed in residential areas (Policies TR.3 and TR.4). As part of this, restrictions may be imposed on the times when loading/unloading may be carried out (Policy TR.35).

### **Pedestrian Priority Routes Through the North Laine**

10.23 As part of this strategy two new pedestrian priority routes are proposed (TRP.20) in the North Laine:- Bond Street - Gardner Street - Kensington Gardens - Sydney Street. (Kensington Gardens is already pedestrianised).

**New Road - Jubilee Street Site - North Place. (A new square is proposed in front of the swimming pool.)**

10.24 These are intended to link the sub-regional shopping centre at North Street, via the North Laine shopping area and the Jubilee Street Development with the new public library to the London Road District Shopping Centre.

10.25 The full pedestrianisation of these streets is not feasible, because they do not have rear servicing. Nor is it necessarily desirable. Light local traffic has a beneficial effect in providing "informal

surveillance", making for safer streets. Pedestrians feel safer, particularly at night, in walking along a road with passing traffic rather than down a deserted pedestrian street. Fully pedestrian areas have in many parts of the country experienced increased vandalism. They also reduce the ability of Police cars to patrol. Alternatives are traffic calming, restrictions on traffic, except for service vehicles, during the day time only and limiting service vehicle access to certain time of the day only, and widening pavements. Representatives of the North Laine Community Association have suggested that as an interim experimental measure, Sydney Street could be closed off with lock-in removable bollards on Saturdays, as is presently done with Gardner Street. Shopping Policy S.15 provides for the enhancement of the environment and pedestrian conditions, including access for the disabled, in shopping centres. Policy SP.11(iii) proposes additional pedestrianisation/pedestrian priority from North Street through North Laine to the London Road district shopping centre. Such enhancements could include repaving, dropped kerbs at crossing points, new street lamps and street furniture, refurbishment of historic street furniture and tree planting.

### **Proposal**

**It is recommended that in addition to the two new Pedestrian Priority Routes, traffic calming measures and street enhancements be carried out in the following shopping streets:-**

**Church Street, North Road, Gloucester Road and Trafalgar Street.**

### **Paving**

- 10.26 The appearance of pavements and roads is an important aspect of the character of a conservation area. Originally pavements of the more important streets of North Laine, in common with many in 18th Century and 19th Century Brighton were probably first paved in York stone slabs for the pavements and stone sets for the carriageway. Most streets in the North Laine were red with some random black brick paved. A few were black brick paved. Many streets and carriageways in Brighton were later re-paved with wood blocks to reduce the noise of horses and carts with their iron shoes and wheel-runs. Another common type of paving, particularly for entrance ramps, back alleys etc. was brick on edge, or limestone setts alternating with bands of brick on edge. A few examples of this survive - e.g. some cross-overs in Regent Street. Later, the York stone was replaced with concrete slabs with stone chippings and the sets with asphalt.
- 10.27 It is essential that any remaining areas of historic paving are preserved and where pavements have been replaced over the years by cheaper and visually less appropriate materials, these should be replaced to reflect the character of the Conservation Area. Ideally, it would be preferable to reinstate the original York stone slabs, granite or other stone kerbs and stone sets. But the high cost of these materials rules out their general use throughout Conservation Areas. Bond Street's pavements are to be resurfaced in smooth red with some random black clay pavers.
- 10.28 The approach to replacement should generally follow the principle that grey slabs reflect and fit best the more formal streetscapes of Regency and Victorian Terraces and Squares, with asphalt dress with mid-grey chippings, are acceptable for the carriageways, kerbs in granite or reconstituted granite should be used in conservation areas.
- 10.29 In selected streets it may be possible, subject to the availability of funds, to repave in better quality materials as part of a street enhancement and pedestrian-priority/traffic management scheme.
- 10.30 Policy ENV.24 of the Borough Plan states that the Borough Council will continue to seek the co-operation of the County Council as Highway Authority, and as a contractor for the Highway Authority, will itself aim to ensure a high standard of pavement maintenance and the use of materials that are appropriate in particular in the Conservation Areas.

- 10.31 The County Council is the Highway Authority responsible for these matters and the Borough Council acts as their contractors. The present policy of the County Council, as Highway Authority, is that almost all resurfacing of roads and pavements shall be in black tarmac, even in conservation areas. Presently the additional cost of paving slabs, bricks and setts has to be found by the Borough Council.
- 10.32 Because of limitations on finance the criteria adopted by the Council for funding the additional cost of retaining paved slabs is that in addition to streets being in a conservation area, they should contain significant groups of Listed Buildings. The Borough Council's views on the County Council's policy as Highway Authority is that it is most regrettable and undesirable that additional funds are not set aside for footway maintenance in Conservation Areas, to enable concrete slabs to be retained.
- 10.33 Interim Design Guidelines for street enhancements and paving schemes in conservation areas generally are set out in the appendix. Design guidelines specific to the North Laine are:-
- A grey coloured large sized paving slab type closely resembling York Stone in colour and texture or smooth dark red and random black clay pavers (not drag-faced or bevel-edged), depending on the character of the street, should be used for the paving.
  - New kerb stones should be in Purbeck Limestone or granite.
- 10.34 Following representations from local residents, the Council agreed to set aside not more than £1,600 towards retaining concrete slabs in Kensington Place, charged to the Improvements to the street scene budget allocation. This was provided that the local residents were prepared to make a substantial contribution towards the extra costs.
- 10.35 The Jubilee Street site is to be redeveloped and a new pedestrian route through the site and a new square created. The developers will be required to pay not only for the cost of surfacing this but also reconstructing the steps up into North Place and the additional cost of repaving the foot-paths adjoining the site in an appropriate material.

### **Street Furniture**

- 10.36 Over time, there is a tendency for street furniture, such as traffic signs, bus shelters, CCTV columns and brackets, lamp posts etc. to accumulate in a piecemeal fashion, resulting in visual clutter. Great care is needed in locating new street furniture. The location of CCTV columns and camera brackets on buildings needs special care, given their height and bulk. Where a proposed location is proposed to provide wide visual cover, which is harmful to the street scene or the setting of Listed Buildings, additional cameras in less obtrusive positions should be deployed instead. As part of the Enhancement Programme, a survey of all street furniture will be carried out, and a programme of rationalisation implemented, such as using one column to support several items, or substituting smaller signs. As and when resources permit, more attractive and suitable street furniture will be substituted. The streets proposed for pedestrian priority schemes will be prioritised. New street furniture should not add to visual clutter. However, part of the special character of the North Laine area is its bustling work-a-day atmosphere, of local shops, workshops and houses. Artificiality, and "tweeness" should be avoided. Historic street furniture, where this survives, should be preserved, and good examples will be put forward for listing. Items include ornate cast-iron bollards, such as those in Kensington Gardens and in Queen's Road Quadrant, classic red telephone kiosks, such as in Kensington Gardens, and in Pelham Square, early street lamps and Victorian and Edwardian red letter-boxes.

Revision 3, amended on 5.1.95, following public consultations. Corrections 17.1.95. Approved by Environment and Planning Committee 24th January 1995. Borough Plan refs updated 11.8.99.

## APPENDIX

### INTERIM SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING POLICIES AND DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR CONSERVATION AREAS, BUILDINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST AND LISTED BUILDINGS

In addition to the policies in the Borough Plan, the following interim supplementary guidelines will apply to ALL conservation areas. They will be developed and added to and published as a separate document in due course.

#### **Developments Both Within Conservation Areas and in Surrounding Areas Likely to Have an Impact on them - Areas of Townscape Sensitivity.**

1. The Council will identify those areas adjacent to conservation areas where developments need to be carefully controlled as Areas of Townscape Sensitivity.
2. When the opportunity presents itself, development proposals in the Conservation Area or which are adjacent or close to it and would be visible from it, will be reviewed. Where the development no longer accords with current planning policies, or would result in the loss of buildings which make an important contribution to the Conservation Area or would have an adverse effect on its character and appearance, Planning Permission and Conservation Area consent to demolish will not be renewed and the opportunity will be taken to negotiate an improved revised scheme which conforms to current policies.
3. Where a development has commenced, but work has ceased and remains uncompleted, the Council will serve completion notices in respect of the development.
4. Where Planning Permission and/or Conservation Area Consent for demolition has been granted for a scheme which would now be contrary to current Borough Plan policies, the policies in the studies and other supplementary planning and design guidelines, a renewal of permission will not normally be granted. The opportunity will be taken to review the proposals for the site and to seek an improved scheme more in keeping with the character of the area and current policies and/or the retention of buildings considered to make an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.
5. The impact of redevelopments on their character, not only inside but also outside the Conservation Area, especially in the Areas of Townscape Sensitivity, must be considered in respect of sites adjacent to or visible from the Conservation Area. Their effect on long views and the skyline from within the Conservation Areas, as well as *views of them* from outside the areas should be considered. Historic sky-lines and views should be preserved and enhanced. New buildings should respect their context, not only on sites within the Conservation Area but also on sites adjoining or visible from the Conservation Area.
6. The historic street pattern and building lines shall be retained. Where lost, their reinstatement will normally be required on redevelopment, where possible. New streets and squares should relate to and be carefully integrated into the historic street pattern.
7. Proposals should protect and improve the setting of listed buildings in the area.
8. The siting and orientation of new buildings should be related to the historic street pattern and respect the area's historic building lines. Where a modern building has been set back, on redevelopment the original building line should be reinstated.
9. New buildings should be of a scale compatible with their surroundings.

10. Locally traditional materials should be used, of the type used on the older buildings in the surrounding area, so as to reflect and reinforce the area's sense of place and local distinctiveness.

### **Areas of Townscape Sensitivity**

Those areas around conservation areas where development is particularly likely to have an impact on the conservation area and which form its setting, will be designated as Areas of Townscape Sensitivity.

### **Development Within Conservation Areas**

1. The new buildings should reflect the general ground levels and slopes and "staircase" down hills. This is particularly important where floor levels, shopfront fascias, cill and window heads, cornices, parapet, eaves and roof lines step down the hillsides on existing buildings and new buildings should maintain this pattern.
2. The visual axes and long views of the area should be studied carefully from important view-points in the conservation area and the surrounding area, as well as along important visual corridors. New developments should be carefully related to these.
3. Where it is necessary to rebuild a uniform terraced property, which has structural problems which cannot be repaired, or there is a gap in a terrace caused by a vacant site, a correctly detailed and proportioned replica will be required.
4. In streets which have a very strong homogeneous character, the design of new buildings should be highly contextual and relate to the dominant architectural style and materials.
5. However, where a street has a variety of styles, a high quality modern building is preferable. But it should relate to existing buildings in height, proportions, massing, form and the relationship of solid to void in its facades and use materials typical to the street. A good modern building is preferable to a crude pastiche.
6. There will also be a presumption against rebuilding behind the facades of buildings which contribute to the character of the conservation area, unless the existing structure of the building is a steel frame structure or the existing fabric of the building is so unsound and beyond remedial repair that rebuilding is the only alternative. In these cases, the original floor levels should be maintained as their relationship to window heights is crucial in terms of views into the building. Unsightly bulkheads across window openings should be avoided.
7. Plot widths which are often expressed at roof level by party wall upstands and chimneys, should be maintained and respected. The general eaves, parapet and roof ridge lines of historic roof forms should also be followed.

### **Alterations and Extensions to Listed Buildings**

The Council adopts the Guidelines on Alterations to Listed Buildings, set out in Annexe C of PPG15 as its interim design guidelines for listed buildings.

### **Buildings of Local Interest**

There will be a presumption against the demolition of Buildings of Local Interest.

### **Rendering and Painting of Listed Building, Buildings of Local Interest and Buildings in Conservation Areas**

1. Painting and renderwork should be appropriate to the character of the area. Buildings of brick and flint etc. which were designed to be seen and left unpainted should not be rendered over or

painted. The Council will encourage the removal of paint and render from such buildings, by sensitive, non-damaging techniques. Where buildings have to be re-rendered, the original architectural features should be reinstated exactly and the render work either repainted in an appropriate colour, or where unpainted renderwork is not out of keeping, it should be of a suitable colour appropriate to the character of the building and the street.

2. Conversely, buildings which were originally designed to be rendered, should not have their render removed to expose the stone or brick underneath and the Council will require its rerendering as per original.

### **Changes of Use in Conservation Areas**

1. Within conservation areas changes of use of buildings will be carefully controlled and planning permission will not be granted for changes of use which detract from the character of the conservation area, or which would result in inappropriate alterations detrimental to its character and appearance. The most appropriate use for a building is usually that for which it was designed.

### **Industrial, Warehouse and Storage Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest**

2. Where an industrial, commercial or shopping use is genuinely redundant, change of use will normally only be permitted to another commercial use which would best protect the character and appearance of the building and of the conservation area generally
3. Changes of use of industrial and warehouse buildings of architectural or historic interest will only be permitted where the associated alterations preserve or enhance their character.

### **Shopfronts, Blinds, Security Grilles and Shutters and Signs**

1. In the last 20 or 30 years, rapid commercial development has had an enormous impact on traditional shopping areas. New shopfronts have, in many instances, been erected without much consideration of what is existing above or adjacent. Most of the properties in the North Laine have a strong vertical emphasis, with a relatively narrow frontage. In contrast to this, modern trends have meant the introduction of larger retail units instead of small individual shop fronts and standardised, mass produced building materials and fittings and bold and garish advertisements.
2. Intrusive and unsympathetic developments usually occur when the commercial activity disregards the qualities of an individual building, the character of the street scene or the town as a whole. This can arise simply from a slavish adherence to a 'corporate' image', although this is largely not the case in the North Laine area as in other parts of the town, the properties being largely individual specialist shops or locally owned independent stores. Alternatively, this can occur simply through the owner or manager not giving sufficient thought to the visual impact of his decisions. In the case of the North Laine Conservation Area much will depend on the individual. If a sensitive, selective approach is adopted, avoiding change for its own sake, an immense contribution to the local street scene can be made.
3. The function of the shopfront is to provide an attractive showcase for the goods or services being sold. The shopping streets within North Laine Conservation Area are, on the whole, domestic in scale and character with buildings of two and sometimes three storeys. If new or replacement shopfronts do not respect the character of the building above, a jarring visual break at fascia level is produced. Thus, the building can appear to have two entirely different characters above and below the fascia.
4. The design of the traditional shopfronts evolved from the late 18th Century through the 19th Century reaching a sophisticated and almost universal form. Generally, they are fairly simple in design, although there are a few particularly unusual ones.

5. Good traditional shopfronts on Listed Buildings and within the Conservation Area should be retained and any alterations to them should be in matching materials and correctly detailed and well integrated into the original design. Where it is not possible to alter a traditional shopfront without seriously damaging its appearance, permission will not be granted.
6. New shopfronts should normally be related in style and materials to the architectural style of the building as a whole. Generally, the design of shopfronts, signs, blinds and security shutters should be considered together. They should be integrated into the structure of the shopfront as far as possible. Often, however, they are not - and inappropriate and ill-fitting blinds, signs or shutters are stuck onto otherwise attractive shopfronts, spoiling their appearance. The Council has produced a design guide leaflet on security grilles and shutters and its advice should be followed. Leaflets will also be produced on shopfronts, signs and blinds.

### **The Guidelines**

1. **Where shopfronts are an important element in the street scene, they should be retained as shopfronts. Where they are not, their removal will only be acceptable if a correctly proportioned and detailed domestic facade can be reinstated properly.**
2. **Surviving good traditional shopfronts will be retained whether they are in conservation areas or on Listed Buildings or not. Wherever possible they should be repaired rather than replaced and missing features reinstated where necessary. Where this is no longer possible, careful replica replacements will be required.**
3. **The design of new shopfronts should be carefully related to the character of the building. The Council will encourage the replacement of poorly designed modern shopfronts with new ones of more suitable designs. Careful attention should be paid to details, such as cill, mullion, transom, door frame, door, cornice, pilaster, stall-riser and other mouldings and large scale sectional detailed drawings will be required.**
4. **In Conservation Areas, and on Listed Buildings, internally illuminated neon tube signs or individual box-lettering will only be permitted on more modern buildings, except where it is suspended behind the glazing of the shopfront.**
5. **High level signs will only be permitted on buildings where they were part of the original design, such as with theatres and cinemas, or where they would not detract from the character and appearance of the building or the street scene. Traditional hanging signs may be allowed above fascia level, but should normally be fixed below first floor window cill level.**

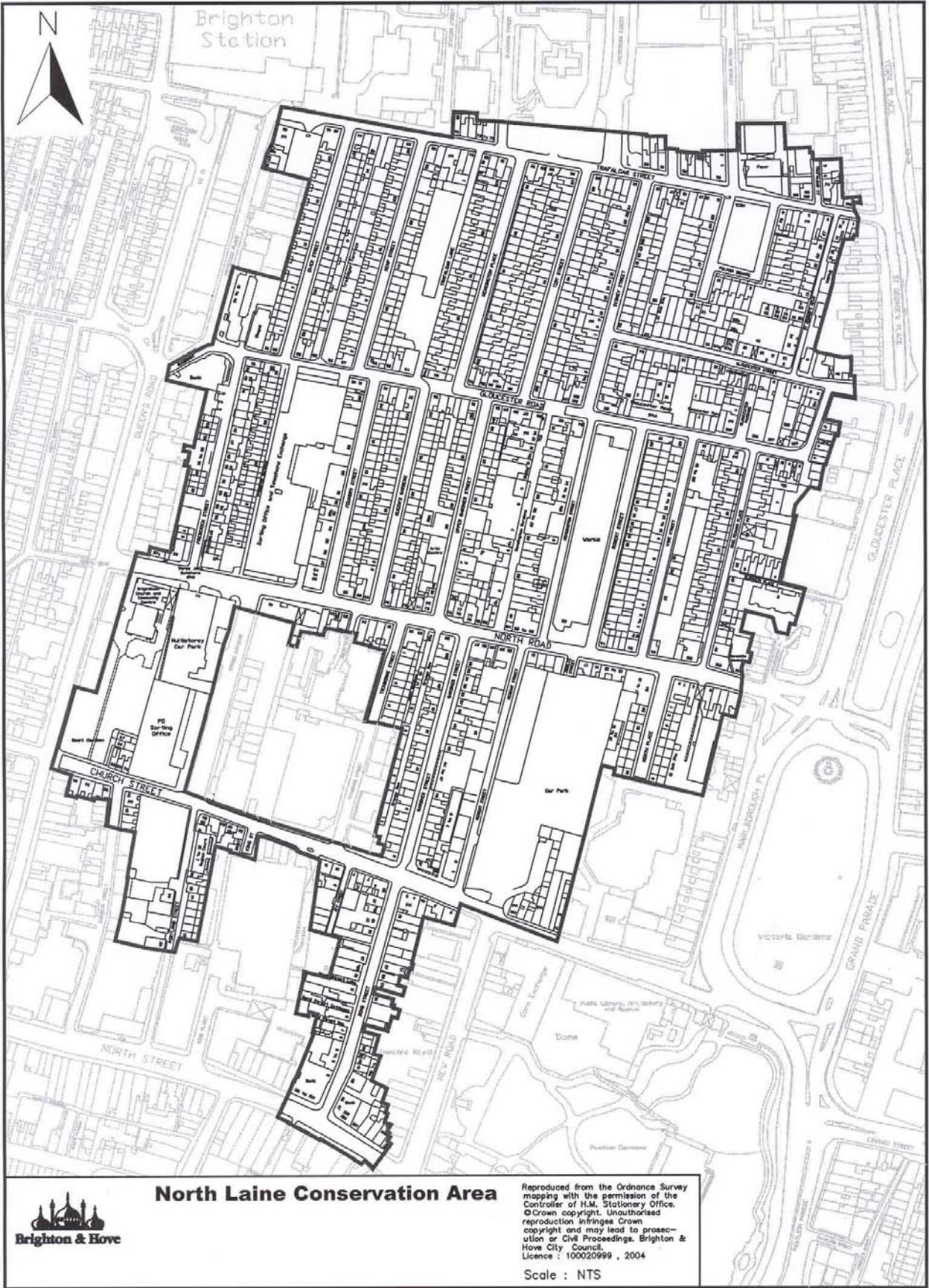
### **Street Enhancements, Road Schemes and Traffic Management Schemes**

1. New road and traffic management schemes and street enhancements should preserve and enhance the character of conservation areas and the settings of Listed Buildings. Consent for demolition of buildings within conservation areas which contribute to the character of the area or of Listed Buildings will not normally be granted.
2. The original street pattern and building lines should be retained and the design of schemes should respect and relate to these in their layout.
3. Traditional local materials appropriate to the area and to the street should be used. Good original materials where they survive should be retained and made good.

4. The opportunity should be taken to rationalise and reduce existing street furniture to minimise visual clutter. Good original historic street furniture should be retained. New street furniture should be of a high quality and appropriate to the character of the street.
5. The felling of mature trees to make way for traffic management schemes will not normally be acceptable. Where it is appropriate to the character of the street, and the position of underground services permit it, new street trees should be planted. Where the pavements are not wide enough to accommodate street trees, the widening of the pavements to accommodate them may be permitted, provided that this does not harm the traditional layout and pattern of paving of the street. New street trees should not be positioned so as to cause problems to wheelchair and pushchair users, nor to existing buildings and drainage.
6. Traffic management and road schemes should not result in increased traffic within conservation areas or adjacent to important groups of Listed Buildings or major landmark buildings such as the Royal Pavilion.
7. Wherever possible, traffic management schemes should be implemented to reduce traffic congestion in conservation areas and other sensitive locations where it is a problem.
8. The design of street improvement and traffic management schemes should follow the guidance set out in the publications - Street Improvements in Historic Areas by English Heritage, Traffic Measures in Historic Towns: An Introduction to Good Practice and Traffic In Townscape: Ideas from Europe, by the English Historic Towns Forum and the Civic Trust.

In particular, the following design guidelines should be followed:-

- Surviving good quality traditional paving materials should be retained and relaid.
- The track of the original central carriageway should be defined using kerb-stones and contrasting materials.
- Infilling of small spaces between paving stones and along edges should not be done with blockwork.
- The pavement clay pavers or slabs should be laid in "stagger bond" pattern and the use of small coloured concrete blocks to infill small patches or form patterns should be avoided.
- All surviving cast-iron coal-hole covers, which come in varied decorative designs, should be retained.
- The central carriageway should be paved with granite setts, mid-grey asphalt or concrete blocks closely resembling stone sets in colour and texture.
- Traffic calming road-humps may be incorporated in the central carriageway. Their colour and texture should match that of the rest of the roadway.
- Raised kerbs should be retained to maintain the historic character of the street and discourage parking on the pavements by service vehicles.
- Parking restriction yellow lines should be of the smaller 50 mm width, in accordance with Policy ENV.23 of the Borough Plan and if possible be marked out with yellow paving blocks.
- Dropped ramps in the kerb at all junctions and at regular intervals should be incorporated to allow for easier access for the disabled and people with pushchairs etc.



**North Laine Conservation Area**

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