

# West Hill Conservation Area Character Statement



Designated: 1977, extended 1988 & 1995

Area: 22.83 hectares/56.41 acres

Article 4 Direction controlling permitted development made 19 October 2001

Character Statement adopted  
20 October 2005

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## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to describe the history and character of this conservation area in order to provide a context for policies contained in the Development Plan, which will guide future development and enhancements in the area. Policies and design guidance are given in other documents, a list of which is included at the end of this statement.

## General Description

The West Hill Conservation Area is situated on an east-facing slope of the Downs in a mainly residential area between Brighton Station and Seven Dials. The area is bounded by Dyke Road to the west, the curve of the railway line and the station to the north and east, and by modern development along Queen's Road (with the North Laine area beyond) to the south-east. To the south, and within the adjoining Clifton Hill Conservation Area, lies St. Nicholas' Church and churchyard with the commercial centre of Brighton along Western Road, beyond. The conservation area consists of mainly late 19th century housing, of several different types - more prestigious, semi-detached villas to the west, and smaller, artisan terraced houses closer to the station to the east. The most important building is undoubtedly Brighton Station, grade II\* listed.

## Historical Development of the Area

Before 1840 the West Hill Conservation Area was mainly market gardens and paddocks. The eastern part formed part of the North Laine, one of the large open field systems around Brighton dating back to early medieval times. This was divided into east-west blocks known as furlongs, with trackways between them known as leakways. These were called, Home or First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Crooked, Rottingdean Hedge and Church Lanes. The western part, north of St. Nicholas Church was a field known as Church Hill and a smaller one at the north end known as Leads. These were further subdivided into narrow north-south strips, known as "Paul-pieces". These were leased out to numerous tenants. This pattern of laines, furlongs, and Paul-pieces greatly influenced the development of the town in the late 18th and 19th centuries as land was usually sold and developed in blocks of Paul-pieces. Thus a very regular pattern of streets was established in the laines to the east and west of the central valley (Encyclopaedia of Brighton). This is strongly evident in the eastern part of West Hill, whilst the western part is based on the old Church Hill field and has a very different pattern of development.

The early road pattern predating the development of West Hill, comprised Dyke Road, which led from the fishing village over the Downs via Devil's Dyke to London, Church Street and the paths or leakways between the furlongs. Church Street was originally a medieval track at the rear of the crofts and gardens stretching northwards behind North Street and led to St, Nicholas Church. It was formerly known as North Back Side and was later renamed Spring Walk and did not acquire its present name until 1792.

Streets such as North Road, Gloucester Road / Upper Gloucester Road and Trafalgar Street / Guildford Street were later laid out along these leakways.

In 1830 the settlement of Brighton was largely confined to the area around the Old Town and The Steyne and along the seafront. New Dorset Street, Mount Zion Place, Crown Gardens and North Gardens had been laid out. Crown Gardens was largely developed, but there were only a few buildings in North Gardens and Dorset Street. Just to the north a workhouse stood on the east side of Dyke Road. Montpelier Road extended as a lane via what became the Seven Dials junction, Chatham Place, and New England Road to what was to become Preston Circus.

A few buildings remain within the current conservation area which indicate that there was some limited development prior to the coming of the railway, firstly, a rather grand building now called St. Anne's House which was built in Buckingham Place in the 1820s. This was originally known as Compton House and was clearly intended to be a substantial villa within its own grounds although it has now been much extended and converted into flats. The second, no. 27 North Gardens, is a double-fronted house of c.1830 which is now attached to a later terrace. These are the only two obviously pre-railway buildings within the West Hill Conservation Area.

The construction of the first station buildings in 1841, when David Mocatta designed the first buildings for the new line to London, brought the inevitable pressure for development, with new houses being built in the small streets off Terminus Road in the early 1840s and new terraces in Buckingham Place and Buckingham Road in the mid-1840s. The original access to the station was via London Road and Trafalgar Street. However, in 1845 a new access, Queen's Road, was laid out that provided a more direct route from the western side of the Old Town. This severed the western side of the North Laine.

In the early 1840s, an infirmary stood in open ground in Church Hill to the north of the workhouse, with a cattle market and a windmill, Hudson's Mill, further north on the east side of Dyke Road. A cemetery extension for St Nicholas's Church existed at the bottom end of Church Hill.

In 1852-3 the existing station buildings were extended and platforms provided, and this coincided with a surge of new development including the area around West Hill Street, which was built in the mid-1850s. During the 1860s and 1870s the area was almost totally built over, although development was clearly piecemeal with a wide variety of house types being provided. However the area never achieved the more up-market "set pieces" associated with Clifton Hill or with parts of the Brighton and Hove seafront. The 1876 First Edition Ordnance Survey map therefore shows the area fully developed apart from empty sites in Buckingham Road and Alexandra Villas, although stylistically they must have been built upon soon afterwards apart from nos.17 and 19 Alexandra Villas, an odd pair of houses of the 1930s. Of note is the large nursery shown on the 1876 map which used to be between St. Nicholas Road and Centurion Road (now nos. 43-69 Centurion Road), the two slaughterhouses in New Dorset Street, and the eight public houses just outside the station. Today the area remains much as built by the end of the 19th century, although the construction of St. Paul's Primary School in the 1970s required wholesale demolition of rows of terraced houses in Centurion Road and a modern block of flats, Buckingham Lodge, has replaced All Saints Church on the corner of Compton Avenue. The only chapel, in West Hill Road, has now been converted into a house.

### **Definition of the Special Character of the Area**

The West Hill Conservation Area is predominantly a residential district, with some commercial properties (offices, shops and public houses) outside Brighton Station and along Queens Road. Additionally, there is a cluster of smaller shops along Dyke Road between Seven Dials and Compton Avenue and a few scattered shops along Upper Gloucester Road.

Most of the larger residential houses have been converted to flats although in the streets where development was limited to two storeys, such as in St. Nicholas Road and Clifton Street, there are continuous terraces of houses still in single family occupation.

Vehicular activity concentrates around the periphery of the conservation area, particularly around Brighton Station with its constant stream of buses and taxis. Queens Road, Terminus Road, Buckingham Place and Dyke Road are important routes across Brighton town centre and crossing these roads is not always easy for pedestrians. However, parts of the conservation area are relatively peaceful including the small twittens (Camden Terrace and Clifton Street Passage), the cul-de-sacs leading off Terminus Road (Terminus Place, Railway Street and Terminus Street), and the West Hill Road and West Hill Street area.

Pedestrian activity is therefore very focused in the Brighton Station area and along Queens Road, with shoppers and visitors arriving at the station and then walking down into the town centre. The twittens are much used by mothers with small children, as a safer route between the residential areas and the shops in Western Road, and St. Paul's School itself generates the inevitable sounds of children playing. The former graveyard, at the end of St. Nicholas Road, lies just outside the West Hill Conservation Area but is a favoured playground for children after school.

### **Spaces and Vistas**

The West Hill Conservation Area contains no public open spaces and is fairly constrained by its location on an east-facing slope although there are some good views along Upper Gloucester Road to the east side of Brighton across the valley and also down Dyke Road, past St. Nicholas Church. The urban form does vary however with the more easterly section of the conservation area being characterised by narrow streets with tightly-packed terraces, with the more open aspect of Buckingham Road, with its many street trees, above. Around Albert Road, Alexandra Villas, Alfred Road and the south end of Buckingham Road the well spaced semi-detached villas on generous garden plots give a more sylvan character although regretfully many of the gardens are somewhat neglected.

### **Materials**

Virtually all of the buildings in the West Hill Conservation Area are rendered which reflects the mid-late 19th century date when most of them were built. Most of these are painted with pastel colours, with some examples of natural-coloured render (a light brown) remaining. However there are some brick buildings including a terrace of red brick houses in Buckingham Road, and in Upper Gloucester Road no. 27 is built from grey brick with red brick headers. Boundary walls are also largely rendered, with some notable examples of original cast iron railings remaining. Roofs were originally Welsh slate but many of the buildings have been reroofed using concrete tiles. Windows tend to be vertical sliding sashes although many have been unfortunately replaced with uPVC or stained hardwood.

### **Description of the Buildings**

The West Hill Conservation Area contains a variety of mid and late-19th century houses some of which have been converted into ground floor shops. The most important building is Brighton Railway Station, grade II\* listed, but the only church was demolished to make way for flats in the 1980s and there are no chapels or other municipal buildings. There are three notable listed terraces in Terminus Road, Buckingham Road and in Buckingham Place, but otherwise the only listed buildings are a group of houses in Buckingham Place close to the junction with Buckingham Road, a single listed building in Terminus Road and another (already mentioned) in North Gardens, and a few in Queens Road. The street pattern on the western side, in what was formerly the Church Hill field is informal but is closely related to the contours of the hillside. There are pleasant contrasts between the artisan cottages in the area closest to the railway station, the narrow twittens which lead north - south, and the much grander terraces and semi-detached house slightly higher up the hillside. The street pattern on the eastern side is a formal, north-south linear grid based on the Paul-pieces of the North Laine.

The conservation area divides into six areas according to building type and character:

- (i) The semi-detached villas of the Alexandra Villas area, including Buckingham Road (c. 1855 and later), Leopold Road, Albert Road and Dyke Road;
- (ii) The two storey terraced housing of the West Hill Road and West Hill Street area.
- (iii) The slightly grander three storey terraced housing around Compton Avenue and Buckingham Place;
- (iv) The closely-packed artisan housing next to the station (e.g. Terminus Road, Terminus Place, Railway Street and Terminus Street);
- (v) The north-south terraced housing between North Gardens - Surrey Street and St. Nicholas Road - Clifton Street based on the medieval Paul-pieces;
- (vi) The commercial area around Brighton Station and along Queens Road.

### **(1) Alexandra Villas, Leopold Road, Albert Road, Dyke Road and Buckingham Road**

This area is characterised by terraced houses with very small front gardens or paved areas at the north end of Buckingham Road and semi-detached villas, set in well planted gardens, in the other four roads further west. Buckingham Road runs centrally through the conservation area, curving uphill towards the junction with Dyke Road and creating a pleasant, tree-lined link. Views up and down from Buckingham Road into the West Hill Road and West Hill Street area to the west, and down towards the Station to the east, are important.

At the north end of Buckingham Road are continuous terraces of three storey houses with half-basements of which nos. 45-58 are the most important. These are grade II listed and date to c.1855 with stucco fronts and attractive square bays to the ground and first floors, decorated with cast iron friezes and railings. To the south of these are other unlisted houses which continue the same building height and general form, although they have less ornamentation and are slightly later in date. Towards the junction with Guildford Road is a more discordant terrace of different heights which contains some small shops (nos. 66-67b), some of which are empty. On the west side of Buckingham Road, nos. 40-44 are a fine three storey terrace built unusually from red brick with blue brick headers, with an attractive flint boundary wall. Slightly to the west of these is another three storey terrace with painted rendered fronts and canted bays of which no. 31 is the most important, being grade II listed because it is the birthplace of the artist Aubrey Beardsley.

Of note are **Guildford Road** and **Upper Gloucester Road** which both drop steeply from Buckingham Road down the hill towards the station, with views across the station roofs towards the North Laine Conservation Area, Kemp Town and Brighton racecourse, and the modern high-rise housing in the vicinity of Edward Street. At the corner of Guildford Road and Buckingham Road nos. 12-18 Guildford Road are a three storey block of terraced houses of the 1870s, again with canted bays to the front and shops to the ground floor. This small group of commercial properties gives the residential area a degree of liveliness although the rather harsh yellow of the paintwork to no. 16 appears somewhat garish amidst the more muted pastel shades of the other buildings in the area. Of note is the Victorian shopfront to no. 18, cantilevered over a basement window and supported on an original cast iron grill. Close by, no. 20 Guildford Road has been painted a deep red ochre which appears somewhat discordant within the area. At the corner with Upper Gloucester Road is a large modern building built of light-coloured concrete block which replaced a building marked as "Brighton Grammar School" on the 1876 map. This building appears to merge in with the streetscape along Buckingham Road (although the slate hanging to the upper floors is perhaps a little heavy) but is very discordant, due to its bulk and siting, when viewed from Upper Gloucester Road.

Beyond the new building is a long terrace, again of the 1870s, which curves along the line of Buckingham Road towards Dyke Road. Between the end of the terrace and Dyke Road are three pairs of semi-detached houses, matched by similar properties on the other side of the street, before a modern block of flats which regrettably dominates the junction with Dyke Road.

However, overall Buckingham Road contains some excellent examples of continuous terraced housing balanced by the more spacious semi-detached villas on the opposite side of the road. Of note are the balustraded front boundaries, attractive cast iron railings, many large street trees, and consistently well detailed, mid to late-19th century houses which all give Buckingham Road a special character.

Similar in form and date to Buckingham Road, a continuous terrace along the north side of **Albert Road** continues the theme of channelled stucco to the ground floor, canted bays with slightly over-sized brackets supporting the cornices, and bracketed eaves under a sloping slated roof. However, between the south side of Albert Road and Leopold Road is the more spacious development of semi-detached houses of the 1870s and 1880s which are also three storeys high, rendered and painted, with canted bays to the ground and first floors and channelled stucco to the ground floor. These substantially sized houses have nearly all been converted to flats but they largely retain their original sash windows and heavily panelled front doors although many of the slate roofs have been replaced with concrete tiles.

## **(2) West Hill Road, West Hill Street and West Hill Place**

These streets create their own slightly cut-off character because they curve up and away from Buckingham Road, concealing the houses from view. Additionally the single exit onto Dyke Road is quite narrow and contained by houses along Dyke Road which also contribute to the slight feeling of remoteness from the busier streets surrounding the area. The terraced houses of c.1855 are modestly sized, two storeys high, with painted rendered fronts and canted bays to both floors. The roofs are concealed behind parapets with heavy string cornices, and the bays below them create an attractive variation to the streetscape. Some of the houses have small front gardens containing shrubs and planting which soften the impact of the continuous form of development, although because of the tight urban form, there are no trees within the public realm.

The former Providence Chapel in West Hill Road has now been converted into residential accommodation. On the 1876 OS map this building is shown as the "Nathanael Chapel" and opposite it was a more open site, marked with the remains of a windmill, which has now been built over with a modern block of houses called Mill Row.

Regrettable features include the overhead telephone wires and the loss of the original sliding sash windows and front doors and their replacement with modern examples.

## **(3) Compton Avenue, Buckingham Place, Dyke Road, Chatham Place and Bath Street**

This is an area with a variety of uses particularly the commercial properties around Seven Dials. Traffic is busy between Buckingham Place and Brighton Station, and around Seven Dials and the one-way system which operates along the western end of Bath Street. Because most of the houses are substantial, three storey buildings many of them have been converted into flats although in Compton Avenue there are two groups of houses which still remain in single family occupancy. The downward curve of Buckingham Place, and the wall which signifies the edge of the railway, are important features. Most of the buildings date to before 1876 when the Ordnance Survey map showed this area as being largely developed. Today there are only two obvious replacement buildings, Buckingham Lodge, a block of flats which was built on the corner of Compton Avenue in the 1960s on the site of All Saints Church, and Buckingham Close, a neo-Tudor block of the 1920s in Bath Street.

Architecturally, the most important buildings are the listed houses in Buckingham Place although the most impressive streetscape in the whole conservation area is probably **Compton Avenue** where two continuous terraces of the 1850s face each other across a wide, tree-lined street. Those on the south-east side are two storeys high although there is just one small group of three storied buildings in the middle of the terrace (nos. 26-30). They all have small front gardens, some of which have regrettably been converted into car parking, (e.g. nos. 48 and 52) with steps continued by cast iron railings leading up to the doors. The front elevations are rendered and painted in white or shades of cream although unusually no. 36 has been left its natural render colour.

There are attractive canted bays to the basements and ground floors with very large sliding sash windows and some of the houses have highly decorative cast iron balustrading to create balconies overlooking the front gardens. The roofs are sloping with bracketed eaves and some have had their original slate replaced with concrete tiles, although fortunately this is not immediately visible from below. On the north side of Compton Avenue, nos. 1-43 are terraced, three storeys plus a half basement tall, and have rendered fronts with some very elaborate detailing to some of the curved or triangular pediments over the sash windows. The buildings vary slightly but present a fairly unified appearance due to their similar colour. Of note are the cast iron railings to the first floor balconies with their very interesting patterns of circles and stars. At the far eastern end of Compton Avenue, a flat-roofed three storey block of flats of the 1960s has replaced the church shown on the 1876 map. This red brick building, with its strong horizontal emphasis, seems completely out-of-character with the verticality of the 19th century houses, although the flint wall which surrounds it (which presumably once surrounded the church) is important. Buckingham Lodge provides the one exception to the almost continuous range of 19th century buildings which lie on either side of Compton Avenue and Buckingham Place.

Looking along **Buckingham Place** towards Seven Dials, the road curves up from the station and from Clifton Street onwards there are mainly three storey, rendered buildings on either side, with the most notable being nos. 30 and 32, a pair of two storey semi-detached villas set back from the road behind a high flint wall with a large garden containing several important trees. Just before this, on the corner with Buckingham Road, and in the front garden of no. 34, is an evergreen tree which contributes very positively to the street scene. On the opposite side of the road, the Belle Vue Public House is an important local landmark and beyond this are further rendered houses of two or three storeys with square bays and small front gardens, concealed behind high rendered walls. St. Anne's House, built in the 1820s but unfortunately rebuilt after a recent fire, has lost most of its architectural details. Next to this, no. 47 dates from c.1845 and has an attractive canted bay with a curved lead-covered canopy. Towards Seven Dials are further two storey terraced houses, one of which, no. 33 has been reroofed using a completely inappropriate textured finish. The concrete tiles and unsympathetic dormers which have been installed in the roofs of this group are unfortunately clearly visible. The listed buildings, nos. 5-19 (odd) are probably the most important although they have over the years suffered from unsympathetic alterations and the loss of architectural details, particularly to the roofs many of which have been covered in concrete tiles. They date to c.1845 and have Regency-style curved roofs to their ground floor verandahs. At the northern end of Buckingham Place, next to Seven Dials, is a large 1930s neo-Georgian block built from brown brick which is now a restaurant. This turns the corner convincingly but the colour of its bricks seem inappropriate.

The eastern end of Bath Street is mainly residential with very mixed houses, mainly late 19th century. The western section is mainly commercial with small businesses operating from simple, two storey buildings. Of note is the large tree outside nos. 1-4. Turning into **Dyke Road**, there is a good group of original late 19th shopfronts in the premises which line the main road which although somewhat altered (particularly at fascia level) contribute to the liveliness of the street. Above these shopfronts many of the buildings have lost their decorated cornicing and original sliding sash windows.

Further along Dyke Road to the south, a terrace of houses (nos. 54-60) have the same bracketed eaves detail with medallions motif found on the houses in Compton Avenue. Around Seven Dials, the ground floor windows on the 19th century three storey corner building, now a supermarket, have unfortunately been blocked up although above this the bays, windows and bracketed eaves remain.

Along **Chatham Place** is a long terrace of two storey houses with bracketed eaves detailing, ground floor bay windows and shallow front gardens, which turn the corner into Howard Place by the Shakespeare Public House. Views down to the trees and the railway cutting from this street are important. In **Howard Place**, which sits above the railway lines, is a terrace of two storey houses of c.1870 which have been altered including one (no. 7) which has been covered in stone cladding for which there is no precedent in the area. Of note however is the short section of substantial flint wall which sits in front of a modern block of flats (nos. 1-8 Newstead) and the large trees in its garden.

Another three storey block has been recently built in the garden of St. Anne's House. The backs of the gardens to the properties in Buckingham Place, the mixture of modern and older buildings, and the many "left-over" spaces, results in a lack of visual cohesiveness to the streetscape in this part of Howard Place, accentuated by its rather run-down and neglected appearance.

#### **(4) Terminus Street, Railway Street, and Terminus Place, and Terminus Road**

The most important features of this area are the steep downward curve of **Terminus Road**, the terraced houses which drop down the hills towards the station, and the station itself. On the west side of Terminus Road is a continuous terrace of 19th century two or three storey buildings of which nos. 12 and nos. 20-23 (consec.) are listed. They date from c.1845 and are built in red brick, with shallow segmental bays to the front with a first floor cast iron balcony. On the other side of the road is the west wing of Brighton Station, in cream brick with brown brick banding and probably built by H E Wallis in 1882.

Off Terminus Road are three short roads which are also connected by Clifton Street Passage. **Terminus Place, Railway Street, and Terminus Street** all contain continuous terraces of two storey artisan houses of the 1850s, some of which have shallow segmental bays like the listed buildings in Terminus Road. Nos. 1-6 Terminus Place are particularly good examples and are locally listed.

Their development is closely linked to the construction of the railway and station and they are said to have been railway workers' housing.

#### **(5) St. Nicholas Road, Centurion Road, New Dorset Street, Camden Terrace, North Gardens, Buckingham Street, Guildford Street, Surrey Street, Guildford Road, Clifton Street**

The street pattern in this area reflects the north-south grain of the Paul-pieces of the North Laine, The south ends of St Nicholas Rd, Centurion Rd, New Dorset St and Mount Zion Place kink diagonally to the west, following the layout of the Church Furlong.

This area once contained complete rows of 19th century terraced houses (shown on the 1876 map) until the building of St. Paul's School led to the demolition of a large swath of buildings close to St. Nicholas' Church. As a result, the streetscape is extremely fragmented with the most notable terrace being on the west side of North Gardens. These cottages are c.1850 and have long front gardens, many of which have regrettable car parking spaces. On the east side of **North Gardens** are two storey cottages and mews-style houses which are also 19th century. There are modern blocks of flats at the southern end of the road, and gap sites and garaging in adjacent New Dorset Street. Centurion Road does contain some intact 19th century terraces with more modern development, again close to the school.

The Cemetery Extension, the north side of Church Road, No.1 St Nicholas Road, the southern stub ends of **Centurion Road**, New Dorset Street and Mount Zion Place, and the houses in Crown Gardens are situated in the Clifton Hill Conservation Area. Along the west side of **St. Nicholas Road** is a very long continuous terrace of c.1860s with notable views over the roofs of the school towards the sea and across Brighton. The large car park on the east side of this road is a regrettable feature. There is one listed building, no. 27 North Gardens, dating to the early 19th century. This is a double-fronted, two storey house built unusually of grey brick with red brick dressings.

The school itself is a series of 1970s buildings of no merit spread out over a large site. Negative features include the off-street car parking and the subsequent loss of private gardens, the many views of the backs of houses exposed by demolition, the modern housing and the subsequent interruptions to the original street layout, and the visual impact of the modern school buildings.

**Clifton Street, Buckingham Street and Guildford Street** all contain terraced houses of the 1850s and 1860s, running north-south along the contour. The Clifton Street properties are two storeys high on the east side and three on the west with small front gardens. Guildford Street houses are all two storeys and Buckingham Street three storeys with much more ornamentation than the other two roads including full-height canted bays. Practically all of these buildings are rendered and painted white or a pale pastel colour.

**Guildford Road** and **Upper Gloucester Road** connect the commercial area around the station with the residential areas around West Hill and Clifton. Both streets contain a mixture of mid and late-19th century houses, on two or three floors, with some public houses and small shops. The Duke of Wellington Public House, on the corner of Upper Gloucester Road and Guildford Street, is double fronted and creates an important focal point in views up the hill towards Buckingham Road.

**Camden Terrace**, between Guildford Street and Surrey Street, is a narrow twitten as is Clifton Street Passage which contains some attractive 19th century cottages accessed from the path.

To the east of the Terminus Road area, is a row of new terraced houses built by the Council which fit into the existing streetscape, terminating in a late 19th century house which marks the end of **Clifton Street Passage**. This twitten runs parallel to Clifton Street and **Camden Terrace** runs behind Guildford Street towards the sea and is well-used by pedestrians seeking a quieter route to the shops in Western Road.

On either side of **Surrey Street** are continuous terraces of two storey houses with bow fronts and roofs hidden behind parapets, accentuated by moulded cornices which give the terrace a strong architectural character. The street was laid out in 1836 - 41 and these unlisted properties could well date to the 1840s although they have been much altered and many have had ground floor shopfronts installed, with several buildings being currently vacant and awaiting restoration.

## **(6) Brighton Station, Queens Road and the south end of Terminus Road**

This area is different in form and function from the other five areas. It contains a range of commercial properties. **Queens Road** is one of the busiest streets in Brighton with a constant stream of pedestrians walking between the station and the town centre. Outside the station in **Junction Road** is a bus terminus and taxi rank which also generate large amounts of vehicular traffic, with much traffic also passing through the area on the way to and from Seven Dials.

The most important building is Brighton Station which faces Queens Road and whose canopy dominates views up the street from the south. Brighton Station was originally built in 1841 in an Italianate style to the designs of David Mocatta, an architect to the London and Brighton Railway Company who also designed many other stations along the route from London. Only part of this building remains, largely obscured by later work. In 1852 the station was enlarged and the platforms extended, and in 1882 H E Wallis extended the buildings further, adding the train sheds and a canopy on the south elevation facing down Queen's Road. The building was restored and redecorated in 2003/04

In the south end of **Terminus Road** around the station are three storey shops and public houses which date to the 1850's and later. An important feature is the copper dome over the Nightingale Public House on the corner of Guildford Road which is later, around 1890.

**Queens Road** has almost been totally rebuilt along its east side and so these frontages have been excluded from the Conservation Area. However the west side, which is mostly included within this conservation area, contains an impressive number of large, commercial properties almost all of which have ground floor shops. Between the station and Upper Gloucester Road, most of the buildings on the west side are three storeys high, rendered and painted, with canted bays to the first two floors and parapets hiding the roofs. No. 61 is a slightly later (c.1890) building, taller than its neighbours and typically Edwardian with a red brick front, enlivened by stone dressings, and small cupolas on each corner at the front of the roof.

Between Upper Gloucester Road and North Road on the west side is a further continuous terrace of three storey late 19th century buildings also with ground floor shops and dominant bay windows. Of note is no. 52, grade II listed, and dating to c.1840. This is rendered with a parapet obscuring the roof and above the modern shop front is a segmental bay with tripartite windows which appear to be original. Beyond this building to the south are similar buildings but the segmental bays have been replaced with canted bays of a slightly later date. Lynden House, nos. 44-46, is an office building of the 1980s with strong square bays to the front providing a satisfactory vertical emphasis although the mansard roof is not in character with the historic buildings elsewhere in Queens Road. Next to this is Imperial House, another modern office building but designed in a 19th century style.



Between North Road and Church Street on the west side are several buildings of note, including no. 27, a three storey double fronted grade II listed house of c.1830. This is stuccoed with the ground floor decorated with banded rustication and cast iron railings. It used to be the Dental Hospital. Slightly further along Queens Road is a much larger building, The Sussex Masonic Club (no. 25) which is also grade II listed and which dates to c.1830. This may have been designed by Amon Wilds and Charles Augustin Busby. In front of all of these buildings is a raised promenade with listed railings.

Turning into **Church Street**, which leads up to St. Nicholas's Church are smaller, more domestic buildings, Nos 61 - 64 (consecutive). Of note is the entrance to Crown Gardens, a narrow twitten which contains modern cottages which lie within the adjoining Clifton Hill Conservation Area.

On the east side of **Queens Road**, and just included within the West Hill Conservation Area, are a small terrace, nos. 120 to 124, used as shops and offices. Rebuilt in the 1980s they are three storeys high, rendered, with canted bay windows to the ground and upper floors and ground floor shop fronts. The roof has sash windows in dormers and a mansard. The modillion cornice at first floor level, which links the five buildings together, is an important feature.

Of note are the modern street lights with curved braces whose design is reminiscent of the original lighting to the street. These are positioned on the buildings or on tall posts along Queens Road. These provide a strong vertical emphasis to the streetscape and contribute very positively to the character of the conservation area.

Negative features in this part of the conservation area include the very busy traffic, the plethora of street signs, the modern shopfronts in many of the 19th century buildings, the loss of architectural details such as sliding sash windows and cornicing, and the lack of any street trees or gardens.

#### **Article 4 Direction**

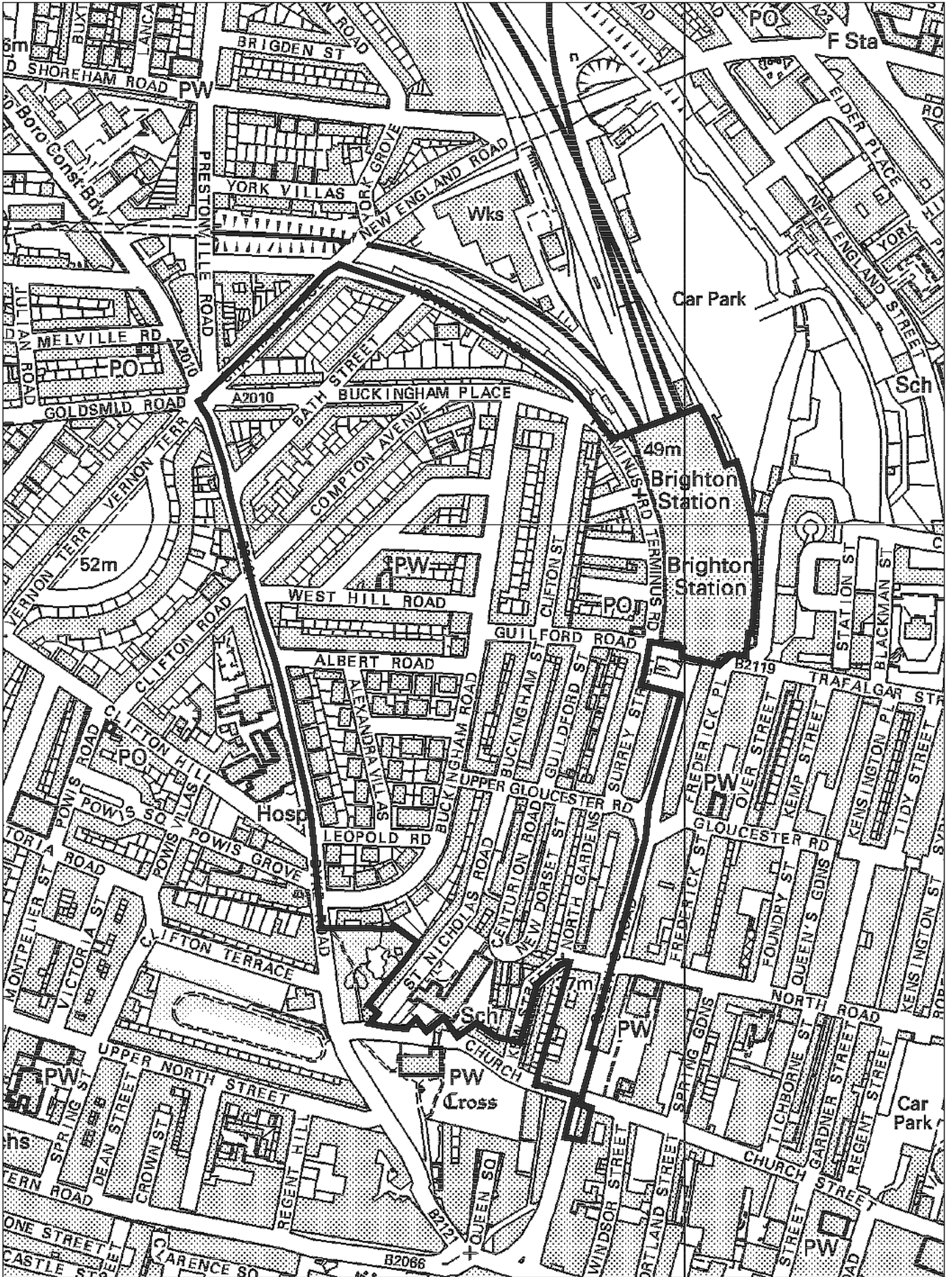
In order to halt the erosion of features such as sliding sash windows and traditional materials that was threatening to harm the special character of this conservation area, an additional planning control known as an Article 4 Direction was brought in. This requires owners to apply for planning permission to carry out works that were previously 'permitted development'. This means that the alteration or replacement of all windows, doors, or roofs fronting a highway or open space, changes to front boundaries and the demolition or alteration of chimneys all need planning permission.

#### **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

The following conservation related documents may be relevant and should be consulted during the preparation of plans for development in this area:

- SPGBH1 Roof alterations and extensions
- SPGBH2 External paint finishes and colours
- SPGBH7 Satellite dishes
- SPGBH11 Listed building interiors
- SPGBH13 Listed buildings - general advice
- SPGBH19 Fire precaution works to historic building
- Conservation Areas in Brighton & Hove - A Resident's Guide

# West Hill



**Brighton & Hove  
City Council**

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