

SA2 Central Brighton



Supporting Documents:

Tourism Strategy - 2008
 Retail Study - 2006
 Creative Industries Workspace Study - 2008
 Sustainable Community Strategy - 2006
 Refreshed Local Area Agreement - 2007
 Local Transport Plan - 2006
 Hotel Futures Study - 2007
 Conservation Strategy - 2003
 Public Space Public Life Study - 2007
 PPS6 Planning for Town Centres -2005
 Good Practice Guide for Tourism -2006
 Air Quality Detailed Assessment - 2007
 Air Quality Action Plan - 2007

Context

2.115 Central Brighton is a dense and complex area of quality urban townscape that stretches south from Brighton station in the north down to the seafront in the south, with North Laine, the Royal Pavilion Estate and Old Steine to the east and the major seafront hotels and conference centres, Churchill Square shopping centre and major high street retailers along Western Road to the west. Its historic form is fundamental part of its distinctive character and resulting sense of place. The area contains a unique independent retail sector, restaurants and cafes, a diverse evening economy (clubs, theatres, cinema and mixed arts entertainment venues) a commercial core and hub for media and creative industries as well as some of the city's key cultural and heritage assets.

Preferred Option – SA2 Central Brighton

To reinforce central Brighton's role as the city's vibrant, thriving regional centre for shopping, tourism, cultural and commercial facilities.

1. The Council will support the viability and long term success of the 'cultural quarter', the area centred on Church Street, Jubilee Square, Pavilion and theatres through ongoing improvements to the attractiveness of the physical environment and public realm, ensuring the historic buildings are maintained and enhanced and ensure new development supports and maintains the vibrant mix of cultural activities, business, retail, leisure and tourism uses;
2. Brighton Regional Centre will be the focus for significant new retail development. New retail development should respect the different but interconnecting shopping identities of the following areas:
 - Churchill Square/ Western Road – see DA1
 - Western Road

- Queens Road/West Street
- Old Town including the Lanes/ Duke Street/ East Street
- The North Laine
- North Street

The council will support proposals to improve and refurbish existing retail units and shop frontages in order to maintain the Regional Centre's attractiveness.

3. To accord with licensing, policing and public safety strategies, the Council will promote a balanced range of complementary evening and night-time economy uses which appeal to a wide range of age and social groups, avoid a spread of large bars/pubs and night clubs and address public safety concerns.
4. Mixed use developments will be promoted which retain active ground floor uses and accord with the range of appropriate city centre uses set out in national policy statement 'Planning For Town Centres- PPS6'
5. Employment sites and premises will be safeguarded to accord with CP16 and CP17.
6. Ensure that workshops, office space, studios, storage and other premises remain affordable, appropriate and available for use particularly in the North Laine area to maintain and strengthen the significant creative industries business cluster;
7. The council will secure urban realm improvements to reduce congestion, improve air quality and encourage improved pedestrian and cycling movements within the city centre (See CP3 Public Streets and Places);

Preferred Option CP19 Hotel/ Guest Accommodation applies to Central Brighton area.

Supporting Text

2.116 Within central Brighton, there is a concentration of a range of nationally and internationally significant cultural businesses, buildings and collections: including the Royal Pavilion and Gardens, Brighton Museum and Art Gallery, the Brighton Dome, Brighton Festival and the Theatre Royal Brighton, the new Jubilee Library and Komedia all clustered tightly together. At the heart of the area is the iconic and internationally famous Royal Pavilion without which, little of the cultural and historic development of the city centre would have occurred. The wider area is described as the city's cultural quarter. Cultural and creative industries and the retail, tourism and hospitality sectors continue to innovate, strengthen and grow within this area and it is important to ensure that the cultural role of the area is promoted and supported.

2.117 As an integral part of the attraction of Brighton as a tourist destination, and in order to provide residents with the highest quality shopping provision, Brighton Regional Centre should continue to be the focus for the most significant new retail development. The Retail Study 2006 identified a high demand for new retail space by significant retail operators, but limited opportunities to meet this demand. The study also indicated that it is important to enhance and consolidate its retail role to maintain its market share. Capacity exists for new convenience and comparison goods floorspace in the regional shopping centre and this is outlined in CP15.

2.118 The different but interconnecting shopping areas within the centre are identified and described in the Retail Study and there is active support for the protection of existing and provision of new small unit retail space, largely catering for local independent traders, located within The Lanes and North Laine. The balance and mix of uses in these areas will be carefully monitored and maintained, see CP15.

2.119 Equally, the need for large format retail units is recognised to retain existing, and attract new, major multiple retailers. New retail development has come forward in recent years such as the Air Street/North Street Quadrant redevelopment, and as part of the Jubilee Street redevelopment. The need to attract further high quality department store representation in order to retain Brighton's competitive position in the South East Region is recognised. Whilst there are limited opportunities to find new sites within or on the edge of the Regional Centre, the opportunity to provide new large format floorspace, possibly incorporating a new department store, as part of the Central Seafront development area should be investigated (see DA1). Another potential opportunity site is identified at the former Post Office buildings on Ship Street (this site is currently allocated in the Local Plan) and this will be considered in the Development Policies and Site Allocations DPD.

2.120 Environmental improvements and proposals to improve and refurbish existing retail units and shop frontages in order to maintain the Regional Centre's attraction to new retailers and shoppers will be supported. Improved connectivity and integration, particularly in terms of clear and improved pedestrian linkages, improved pedestrian circulation and 'signposting' between the different shopping 'quarters' within the regional centre is a key priority over the plan.

2.121 As well as new retail opportunities, mixed use developments such as the Jubilee Street site and Argus Lofts within the North Laine area and the Air Street/ North Street Quadrant have also included important employment floorspace from new high quality office accommodation to new creative industries work space. The Creative Industries Workspace Study 2008 identified the attractiveness of central Brighton to creative businesses and evidence of a vibrant cluster in the North Laine and Old Steine area. However creative industries clusters are vulnerable to redevelopment pressure and the importance of the cluster needs to be reinforced and protected. New development should strengthen the mix of uses in central Brighton and retain active ground floor uses. In particular within the North Laine area the valuable contribution of small premises and workshops in supporting creative arts, IT and media related businesses should be safeguarded, as they support small scale industry and encourage new enterprises to set up and add vitality to the cultural quarter.

2.122 New developments have also contributed towards additional housing in the central Brighton area. Residential uses as part of mixed use developments or above shops subject to other planning considerations can also contribute to enhancing the vitality of central Brighton and improving safety during the daytime and evening. Brighton & Hove's Empty Property Strategy encourages bringing flats above shops back into use.

2.123 The Community Safety, Crime and Drugs Audit 2004, identifies that central Brighton and particularly the West Street area, continues to be a violent crime hotspot. Through effective coordination of relevant strategies and policy areas (e.g. licensing, policing and public safety) the council will seek to improve safety; through encouraging a more balanced range of complementary evening and night-time economy uses which appeal to a wide range of age and social groups, and managing existing late night uses within certain parts of central Brighton. Local work to reduce violent crime is coordinated

through the Local Public Service Agreement/Violent Crime Action Plan. Recent work has included: late night dispersal of revellers (through joint work with Police, Council, taxi drivers and local bus companies); Policy Community Support Officers monitoring taxi range area and the introduction of a city-wide Designated Public Place Order which prohibits the drinking of alcohol on the streets. More recently a Cumulative Impact Zone within central Brighton has been adopted by the council's Licensing Committee in order to provide greater powers to control the number of licensed premises in the city centre.

2.124 The Air Quality Detailed Assessment 2007 has identified that West Street, North Street, Queens Road and Western Road exceed the government's Air Quality Objectives for Nitrogen Dioxides, the area is therefore included within the declared 2008 Air Quality Management Area. The Full Local Transport Plan 2006/7-2010/11 has identified a programme of Urban Realm Improvements to be undertaken between 2006/7 and 2010/11 at Brighton Rail Station (Trafalgar Street); Ship Street/ Old Town area and improvements to Pool Valley Coach Station, and this programme is likely to be continued beyond 2011. These schemes will be developed as part of a consistent vision and based on the findings of the Public Space Public Life Study (2007), will link to the existing Air Quality Action Plan and will help to improve local air quality.

Implementation

2.125 Opportunities to identify retail and mixed use development sites will be considered in the Development Policies and Site Allocations DPD.

- Local work to reduce violent crime will be coordinated through the Local Public Service Agreement/Violent Crime Action Plan.
- Urban realm and public safety improvements in central Brighton will primarily be the responsibility of the council. These works would be funded through the Local Transport Plan and developer contributions.
- The council will work in partnership with local business and traders groups, the Arts Commission, Arts Council, English Heritage, Museums, Libraries and Archives South East, The Dome and Festival Co., and the Theatre Royal Brighton to ensure the quarter's continuing success for residents and businesses.