

CP2 – Urban Design



Supporting Documents:

Urban Characterisation Study -2007
Historic Character Assessment report for Brighton & Hove - 2007
Tall Buildings Study -2003
Tall Buildings SPG - 2004
London Road and Lewes Road (LR2) Regeneration Strategy - 2007
PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development - 2005
PPS3 Housing - 2006
PPS6 Planning for Town Centres - 2005
Draft South East Plan - 2006
Design Coding in Practice – an Evaluation - 2006
CABE and English Heritage joint guidance on Tall Buildings - 2007
Accessible Housing and Lifetime Homes PAN - 2008

Introduction

3.10 Brighton & Hove is a compact city of distinct urban and suburban neighbourhoods where streets are human in scale and buildings are generally low-to-medium rise. It has an extensive historic core but a poor legacy of later 20th century development and little derelict or vacant land. The topography of the city, its built form and its location between the sea and the South Downs all contribute to its local distinctiveness, which is readily apparent and enjoyed from key views along the coast and the sea and from hill tops and ridgelines within and beyond the built up area.

Preferred Option - CP2 Urban Design

A city-wide Urban Design Framework will identify and set out areas of the city which should generally be preserved; areas of the city suitable for local incremental enhancement; and areas of the city where positive measures are required to secure area-wide enhancement. Where appropriate, density will be raised through predominantly low-to-medium rise development but making most effective use of those identified areas which have the potential for taller developments (defined as at least 6 storeys or 18 metres in height). The areas with such potential are:

- Brighton Marina
- Brighton Station / New England area
- Central Seafront
- Eastern Road / Edward Street
- Hove Station area
- Lewes Road corridor
- London Road / Preston Road corridor

- Western Seafront / Kingsway
- Shoreham Harbour

All new development will be expected to:

1. Raise the standard of architecture and design in the city;
2. Respect the diverse character and urban grain of the city's identified neighbourhoods;
3. Preserve or enhance the city's built and archaeological heritage;
4. Protect or enhance key strategic views into, out of and within the city;
5. Provide a legible distinction between public and private realm;
6. Incorporate design features which deter crime and the fear of crime; and
7. Be inclusive, adaptable and accessible;

Supporting Text

3.11 The council's Urban Characterisation Study (2007) for the city provides an overview of the visual character, historic development, scale and density, movement patterns and socio-economic make up of Brighton & Hove. It has identified four distinct landscape character types within the city and, within those, 32 distinct neighbourhoods, in addition to the central conservation areas. Each of the 32 neighbourhoods are studied in detail and this will assist in judging which areas are best able to accommodate, or might merit, positive changes in density and/or built form. The central conservation areas are covered by the Historic Character Assessment report for Brighton & Hove (2007) carried out as part of the Sussex Extensive Urban Survey. Both documents will inform the proposed Urban Design Framework.

3.12 The Tall Buildings Study commissioned by the council defines broad areas of the city that may be suitable for tall buildings, in the form of either nodes or corridors. It also identifies areas of exclusion for tall buildings. The council's subsequent Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on Tall Buildings defines them as being at least 6 storeys or 18 metres in height and it refined the potential areas to nine in total. These areas are broadly defined and the SPG recognises that more detailed appraisal will be required, in each case, before the prospects of each area for taller development can be concluded. The SPG also sets out detailed criteria that the council will apply when considering tall building proposals.

3.13 The purpose of this preferred option is to provide a statutory basis for the proposed Urban Design Framework and to enable as much certainty and clarity as possible about where and how the city will most significantly accommodate change, including the broad location of any taller development. The preferred option also aims to set out the general strategic design criteria expected of new development and to require the highest standards of design. Innovative contemporary architecture and mixed use schemes which add distinctiveness to local neighbourhoods and add to the reputation of the city will be encouraged. An important part of achieving an inclusive society is removing physical barriers and exclusions imposed on people by poor design of buildings and other environment. It is also important that the design and layout of all proposals should incorporate design features which deter crime and reduce the fear of crime. This preferred option requires that all new development should comply with Lifetime Homes Standards and ensure that they are accessible to wheelchair users. Further guidance is set out in the council's Accessible Housing and Lifetime Homes Planning Advice Note 2008.

3.14 The Urban Characterisation Study provides a comprehensive understanding of the diversity, quality and sensitivity of the city's urban character to change and the development trends and pressures within the city. The study will be used to guide consideration of backland or infill developments and more detailed policies will be set out in the Development Policies and Site Allocations DPD. The council will aim to ensure that high quality is maintained through the rigorous enforcement of planning permission and by taking swift and appropriate action on unauthorised developments. Effective and speedy enforcement will be given greater emphasis.

3.15 The Urban Design Framework will set out priorities for preparing comprehensive design guidance, masterplans and supplementary planning documents for development areas and other areas requiring positive enhancement. Detailed measures for development areas will include the identification of the key strategic views into, out of and within the city. Key local views will be identified in individual area-based documents, such as those for Development Areas.

Implementation

3.16 The Urban Design Framework will take the form of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), to be adopted by 2011. It will provide detailed city-wide design criteria, identify key city-wide views, place areas within categories and set out priorities for further area-based policy tools where appropriate. Depending on the nature, size and land ownership of an area, such tools may include SPDs, Area Action Plans, non-statutory comprehensive design guides, masterplans, conservation area appraisals and Design Codes. Each of these will have a timescale to enable future monitoring.

3.17 The existing Tall Buildings SPG is an up-to-date document and will be saved until 2013. More detailed design policies will also be included in the Development Policies and Site Allocations DPD. Until this document is prepared relevant policies in the adopted Brighton & Hove Local Plan will be saved (QD1-QD5).

3.18 This Preferred Option complements the Spatial Strategy and core policy CP13 on Housing Density. It relates to proposed core policy CP3 on Public Streets and Spaces.