

# Quality places and new homes

How to solve the housing crisis in Brighton & Hove and enhance the city's beauty

January 2025

Studio  
for Place  
Creation



# Executive summary

## Vision

This vision unites exemplary design, sustainable development, and meaningful community engagement to address Brighton & Hove's housing crisis and transform areas of deprivation. It proposes creating comfortable, adaptable homes that enhance wellbeing, nestled within thriving, inclusive neighbourhoods thoughtfully designed at optimal densities. By prioritising vibrant, sustainable communities, it embraces livability, connection, and a profound sense of place. With a focus on joyous architecture, inviting public spaces, and environmental sustainability, this initiative honours Brighton's unique character – creating places where people can live, connect, and thrive. This bold endeavour aspires to demonstrate a new standard, inspiring other towns and cities to follow our lead.

## Strategic benefits

- Provide homes for 45,000 additional residents by achieving target population densities of 20,000 per km<sup>2</sup> in regeneration areas.
- Economic growth through structured finance and uplift potential to boost Brighton & Hove's long-term financial health.
- Improve socio-economic outcomes through inclusive neighbourhoods, increased housing supply, and access to better amenities and opportunities.
- Environmental gains by integrating nature into urban areas and encouraging active travel for healthier lifestyles.



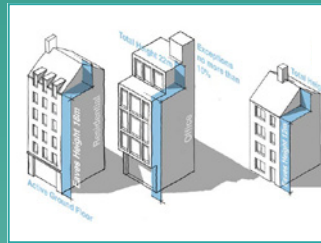
## REGENERATION

Focus regeneration in deprived areas with substandard housing and low population densities of 6,000 per km<sup>2</sup> through public-private partnerships and structured finance. Create value in the real economy, strengthening the city's long-term financial health while enhancing urban life.



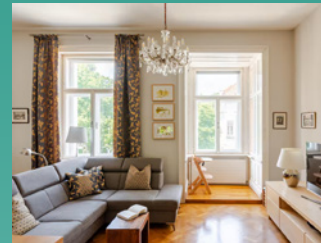
## GENTLE DENSITY

Develop elegant three- to six-story gentle-density housing to enhance socio-economic outcomes and achieve target population densities of 20,000 per km<sup>2</sup>, creating livable, walkable neighbourhoods with vibrant public spaces and amenities.



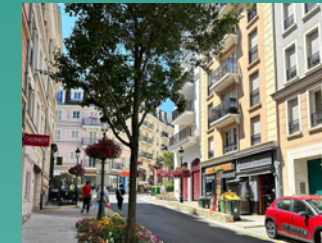
## DESIGN CODES

Establish comprehensive design codes guided by public consultation and expert input, setting clear rules for high-quality development. Derisk the planning process, reduce public opposition and litigation with structured, transparent processes.



## FAMILY HOMES

Build family homes inspired by Vienna's *Gründerzeit* apartments, with spacious, high-ceilinged rooms, tall windows for light and ventilation, and proximity to walkable family amenities, ensuring adaptable, sustainable living.



## NEW URBANISM

Reimagine Kemptown's northern fringe with architectural designs rooted in local vernacular, following *new urbanism* principles exemplified by le Plessis-Robinson, to revitalise poor-quality areas with charming streets.



## BOULEVARDS

Create Parisian-style, tree-lined boulevards along Eastern Road, Lewis Road (north of Natal Road) and the Avenue, with exceptionally designed mixed-use mansion blocks with ground floor commercial space and apartments above.



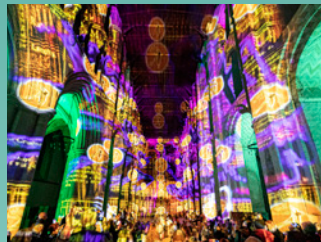
## COLOUR PALETTE

Ensure a light, bright colour palette for new developments, with a dominance of white, cream, teal and pastels to create elegant, feel-good and attractive facades that reflect Brighton's character.



## CREATIVE INDUSTRY

Transform New England Street into a hub of creative industry by integrating street art and decorated facades inspired by North Laine. Learn from Miami's Wynwood Walls to establish vibrant urban spaces that promote cultural identity.



## LIGHTING LANDMARKS

Brighton Marina, visible from the beach, should feature harmonious architecture and night-time illumination. Thoughtful lighting design across the city elevates landmarks and makes public spaces safer at night.



## PAVING + TREES

Make pedestrian routes and spaces more inviting on the seafront and elsewhere with better paving, more trees and nature. Improve walkable areas and expand pedestrian-priority streets to encourage active travel.



## STREETSCAPE

Introduce and enforce a new streetscape code to deliver a consistent, high-quality public realm. Focus on decluttering streets, and improving surfaces, street furniture and road markings.



## ROADS

Reclaim public spaces and improve traffic by rationalising road lane widths. Redesign problematic signage to improve driver compliance and reduce congestion, creating safer, more efficient streets.

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# How to solve the housing crisis and enhance the city's beauty

INTER UNDAS ET COLLES FLOREMUS

Motto of Brighton & Hove

## BETWEEN THE HILLS AND THE SEA WE FLOURISH

### Addressing Brighton & Hove's housing crisis

This document outlines a vision to transform poor-quality, low-density housing into vibrant, well-designed neighbourhoods. By embracing gentle-density development, inspired by Brighton's architectural heritage and models like Vienna's *Gründerzeit* apartments and the transformation of Le Plessis-Robinson, the city can create livable, cohesive communities. Regeneration at scale would provide thousands of new homes, alleviate the housing crisis, and deliver socio-economic and environmental benefits.

### Gentle density with local character

Brighton's acute housing shortage, constrained by the South Downs and the English Channel, contrasts with its celebrated Regency and Victorian architecture. Some areas of inter- and post-war sprawl suffer from low density, poor quality, and deprivation. These neighbourhoods present an opportunity for high-quality regeneration with mid-rise buildings of up to six stories, complemented by thoughtful placemaking. Guided by design codes, new developments will respect Brighton's unique character while addressing modern housing and sustainability needs.

### Inspired by new urbanism

New developments should take cues from *new urbanism*, prioritising walkability, mixed uses, and human-scaled design. White, cream, and pastel facades, reflecting Brighton's seaside charm, will ensure new buildings harmonise with the city's aesthetic while creating elegant, timeless streetscapes. Introducing tree-lined streets, landscaped pedestrian spaces, and rain gardens will improve biodiversity, air quality, and quality of life, while encouraging active travel and reducing car dependency.

### Mixed-tenure communities

Large-scale, mixed-tenure development – combining social, affordable, and private housing – creates sustainable, thriving neighbourhoods. Open market sales fund affordable homes, ensuring financial viability. A balanced mix prevents concentrations of poverty or exclusivity, while blind-tenure integration ensures social diversity. This approach supports vibrant economies and inclusive communities with better long-term outcomes.

### Value creation and financing

Brighton ranks fourth in the UK's 50 largest towns and cities for uplift potential (see table), highlighting both the acute shortage of housing and the viability of building high-quality homes. Partnering with private developers and banks through structured finance can leverage future revenues, enabling investment in new housing. Beyond addressing the housing crisis, this approach creates value in the real economy, driving economic growth and ensuring the city's sustainability for future generations.

### Enhancing the public realm

High-quality public spaces are essential for vibrant, sustainable neighbourhoods. Better paving, tree-lined streets, rain gardens, and elegant street furniture will promote active travel, improve biodiversity, and create a welcoming atmosphere. A streetscape design code will ensure consistency, declutter public spaces, and standardise materials and colours, delivering a cohesive urban environment that reflects Brighton's character and advances its sustainability goals.

### Britain's ten cities or towns with the largest housing shortages

Urban area	Median house price 2023	Average house price per m <sup>2</sup>	Estimated construction cost	Uplift potential
1 London	£535,000	£6,369	£249,732	£285,268
2 Cambridge	£492,750	£4,928	£257,100	£235,650
3 Oxford	£450,000	£4,412	£273,156	£176,844
<b>4 Brighton &amp; Hove</b>	<b>£439,750</b>	<b>£4,311</b>	<b>£273,156</b>	<b>£166,594</b>
5 Watford	£420,000	£4,200	£257,100	£162,900
6 Slough	£371,000	£3,637	£273,156	£97,844
7 Bristol	£347,999	£3,446	£257,752	£90,247
8 Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole	£343,000	£3,396	£257,752	£85,248
9 Southend-on-Sea	£340,000	£3,400	£257,100	£82,900
10 York	£300,000	£3,371	£220,453	£79,547

Estimated construction cost is the average regional property size multiplied by average regional cost per m<sup>2</sup>

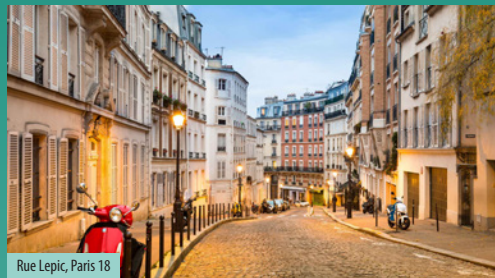
Source: Create Streets, New Towns Report, December 2024



# Gentle density designed well



Carrer del Consell de Cent, Barcelona



Rue Lepic, Paris 18



Benuplatz, Vienna 8



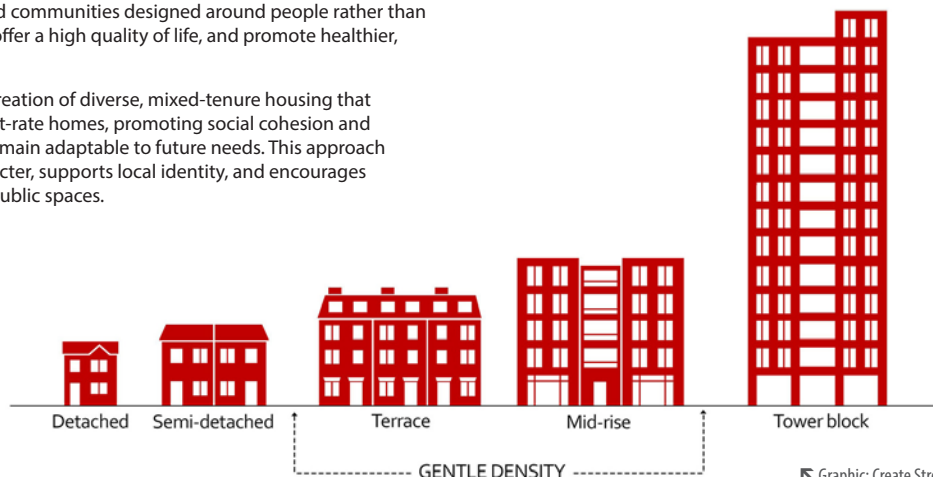
Argentinierstraße, Vienna 4

## The Goldilocks density

Mid-rise, human-scaled development can boost housing supply without the drawbacks of high-rises or sprawling suburban estates. Typically three to six stories, gentle density balances increased capacity with livability, creating compact, walkable neighbourhoods that integrate homes, shops, and green spaces. It supports a vibrant mix of uses whilst respecting the surrounding urban fabric, ensuring new development enhances rather than overwhelms.

Many of Europe's most popular and sustainable cities, such as Barcelona, Paris, and Vienna, exemplify gentle density. These cities thrive on accessible amenities, efficient public transport, and communities designed around people rather than cars. Their neighbourhoods offer a high quality of life, and promote healthier, more active lifestyles.

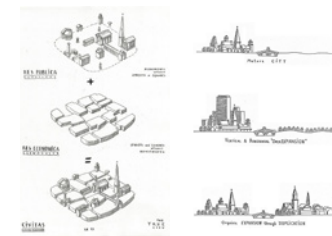
Gentle density enables the creation of diverse, mixed-tenure housing that blends affordable and market-rate homes, promoting social cohesion and ensuring neighbourhoods remain adaptable to future needs. This approach preserves architectural character, supports local identity, and encourages interaction through shared public spaces.



Graphic: Create Streets

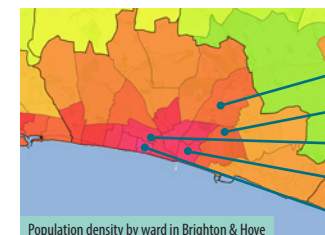
## Community allotments.

➔ Léon Krier advocates for human-scale streets and squares, enriched by public monuments, promoting urban growth by replicating traditional forms rather than over-expanding horizontally or vertically.



➔ Homes for 45,000 additional people could be created by increasing the population density to 20,000 per square kilometre in the Moulsecoomb & Bevendean ward's three square kilometres of built-up area.

Population densities of selected European city districts	
Eixample, Barcelona	36,000 per km <sup>2</sup>
Butte-Montmartre, 18th district of Paris	31,355 per km <sup>2</sup>
Josefstadt, 8th district of Vienna	23,000 per km <sup>2</sup>
Wieden, 4th district of Vienna	18,000 per km <sup>2</sup>



Population densities of selected Brighton & Hove wards	
Moulsecoomb & Bevendean (effectively*)	5,790 per km <sup>2</sup>
East Brighton (effectively*)	6,954 per km <sup>2</sup>
Goldsmid	11,202 per km <sup>2</sup>
Queen's Park	12,448 per km <sup>2</sup>
Brunswick & Adelaide	18,380 per km <sup>2</sup>

\*Gross land area reduced by 50% for both wards to exclude non-built-up areas. True gross density is 50% of values shown above.



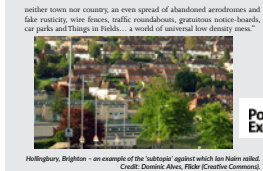
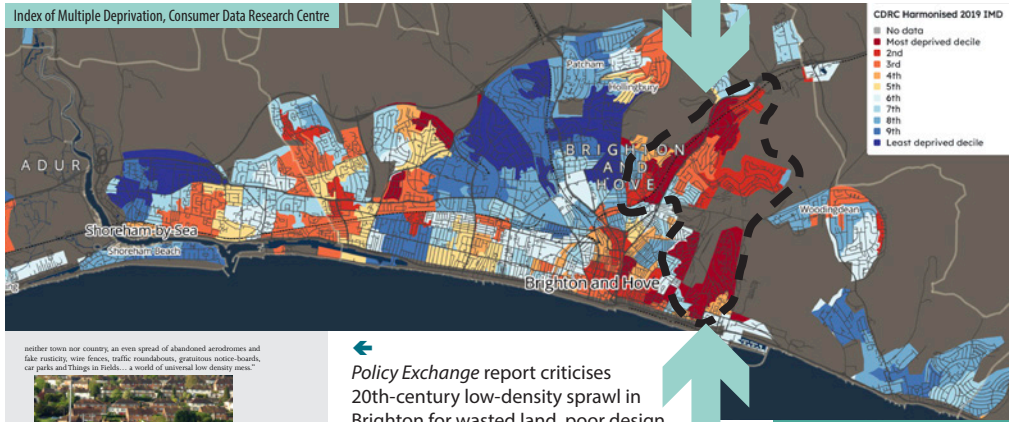
➔ **Sprawl of poor quality mini-houses** leads to inefficient land use, creating low-density neighbourhoods that increase car dependency. Many suburban housing developments of recent decades consist of cramped, unattractive homes with small rooms, poor natural light and minimal landscaping. Despite their low density, they lack the benefits of nature and countryside, offering little appeal or character. They often lack walkable amenities and public transport options. The spread of single-use housing estates can drive up infrastructure costs and eat up land.



➔ **Lonely at the top, and all the way down**, the residential use of high-rises should be carefully restricted, often unpopular, they can weaken community connections. Tall buildings can result in social isolation, with shared lobbies and corridors lacking the sense of connection found in lower-density housing. High-rises can contribute to *social stratification*, serving either luxury buyers or lower-income tenants, with some social housing blocks linked to higher crime rates. Tall buildings typically have greater energy demands, making them less sustainable.



# Regenerate Brighton's most deprived areas



Policy Exchange report criticises 20th-century low-density sprawl in Brighton and Hove spurs on design and car-dependent suburbs that fail to offer urban vibrancy or rural beauty. Building Beautiful 2019



## GENTLE DENSITY HILLS

### Montmartre comes to Moulsecomb: homes for 45,000 more people

The largest expanse of deprivation in Brighton & Hove spans Moulsecomb, Bevendean, and Whitehawk. It consists of some of the most low-density housing in the city, often of poor quality, and fragmented public spaces.

Except from on and near Lewes Road, these challenges are compounded by poor connectivity because of steep terrain, also resulting in underused land, leaving existing communities isolated and underserved. However, this area also holds immense potential for transformation into thriving neighbourhoods that address housing needs while improving quality of life for current residents.

Strategic regeneration should improve connectivity and deliver new, high-quality homes that meet the needs of the existing community while providing additional housing. Thoughtful design should replace existing housing stock, with a target population density of around 20,000 per square kilometre and integrate better with the landscape. Drawing on examples of the steep yet beautiful streets of Montmartre in Paris, and hillside villas in Los Angeles, the terrain can be turned into an asset rather than a barrier.

Placemaking should prioritise the existing community, by including essential amenities, preserving access to nature and enhancing the environment with pleasant and safe public spaces. Building new homes must be accompanied with creating places where people of all incomes can thrive, with opportunities for work, education, and social connection.

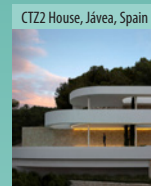
The Moulsecomb & Bevendean ward has a population of 16,887 in a built-up area of about three square kilometres, redeveloping to only two thirds the density of Montmartre could provide homes for four times this number. This regeneration offers a chance to reverse decades of underinvestment, delivering vibrant, inclusive neighbourhoods that help the city meet its housing goals while creating a brighter future for all.



Montmartre, Paris



Avenue de Villaine, Beausoleil, France, near Monaco border



Steep terrain is no barrier to beautiful gentle density that makes walkable amenities more viable. Trees and plants alongside harmonious pale-coloured facades make the streets feel welcoming.

Hillside homes.





# Homes and lifestyles for families



Perth, Western Australia

Citywide population densities	
Vienna	5,097 per km <sup>2</sup>
Brighton & Hove	3,349 per km <sup>2</sup>
Perth	360 per km <sup>2</sup>

## Brighton is not in Western Australia

Perth, in the vastness of Western Australia, benefits from virtually limitless land, allowing families to live in detached single-story houses spread across sprawling suburbs. With 92% of residential properties being houses, of which half have four or more bedrooms, this model offers the ideal of a house and private garden for everyone. Stretching over 100km of coastline, Perth continues to expand outward.

However, this lifestyle comes with costs: long commutes, traffic congestion, and the high expense of maintaining infrastructure like roads and utilities over vast areas. The low population density limits the viability of walkable amenities and public transport, increasing reliance on cars, with an endless cycle of more traffic and road widening driving up environmental impacts.

Families may desire this lifestyle, but Brighton's limited land makes it impossible to replicate for everyone. Instead, Brighton must play to its strengths and offer something else. It should look to European models of gentle density to create family-friendly mid-rise housing with shared green spaces, local shops, restaurants, play centres and youth clubs on safe, walkable streets. This approach provides a sense of community, easy access to amenities, a healthier, more sustainable urban environment, and all of it near shark-free waters.

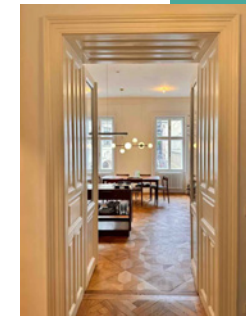
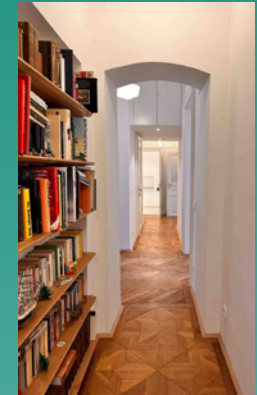
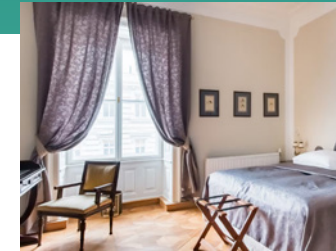
## Look to Austria, not Australia

In Vienna, many families live comfortably in spacious, well-designed apartments that cater to their needs and bring a high quality of life. The large supply of *Gründerzeit* apartments offers families high ceilings and large room sizes, creating a sense of openness and flexibility. Tall windows provide ample natural light and ventilation, making interiors bright and healthy. Family-friendly features include laundry rooms within or adjacent to bathrooms, open-plan kitchen-dining, and big living areas that allow families to spend time together while providing separate bedrooms for privacy. Additionally, many buildings incorporate or are close to shared amenities such as courtyards, play areas, and community spaces, further enhancing the suitability for family life.

Exterior facades have similarities to Brighton's Regency townhouses, yet interior layouts are designed to be adaptable, ensuring sustainability over time. Large, flexible floor areas can be easily reconfigured to accommodate changing needs, such as combining or dividing rooms or repurposing spaces for home offices. Some apartments are converted to office space or commercial consulting rooms and back again. This adaptability means the apartments can continue to meet the needs of different residents across generations. Vienna's approach demonstrates how well-thought-out design can create urban housing that supports families while remaining efficient, sustainable, and versatile.

## HOME SWEET GENTLE DENSITY HOME

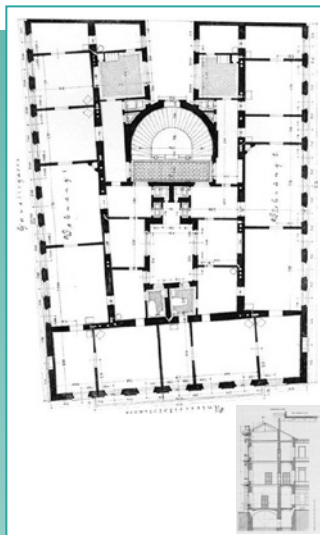
Space for children to run and play.



Vienna, Austria



Fish Island, London E3



↑ Designed for families, these duplexes mimic terrace houses. Front doors at regularly spaced intervals open directly onto the street to create active frontage and a sense of connection to the neighbourhood. The apartments above are thoughtfully set back allowing for small roof terraces. A light colour render would improve its appearance.

← Vienna's *Gründerzeit* apartment buildings feature adaptable layouts. Principal rooms are arranged around the outer side with large regularly spaced windows. Non-load-bearing partition walls allow for easy reconfiguration. A functional core includes utility spaces like bathrooms and laundry rooms, as well as commonways and staircases.

→ Families can enjoy a good quality of life in apartments with large, tall windows that provide plenty of natural light and ventilation. Large rooms are interconnected with double doors and high ceilings that often exceed 3.5m. High performance double or triple glazing combined with shutters is perfect for the city's hot summers and cold winters.





# Place making with design codes and masterplanning

## Code for consensus, community and character

Three UK development areas, while unique in approach and context, share a commitment to high-quality master planning. Each integrates thoughtful urban design with architecture, public spaces, and infrastructure, creating cohesive, livable environments. All prioritise an exceptional public realm, creating a sense of community through mixed-use developments, pedestrian-friendly streets, and attractive buildings that respect and enhance the local character, ensuring vibrant and sustainable neighbourhoods.

By setting clear *must*, *should*, and *could* rules for development, this approach ensures clarity and consistency, limiting public backlash, avoiding controversy, and reducing costly litigation.



→ Design experts, guided by extensive public consultation, created a detailed design code to shape development in Lichfield.



## Space and light standards

London standards ensure new homes are spacious, well-lit, and comfortable. These standards mandate minimum room sizes that prevent cramped living, with one-bedroom apartments requiring at least 50m<sup>2</sup>. Ceilings must reach at least 2.6m on upper floors and even higher on the ground floor, enhancing the sense of space and allowing more natural light to penetrate deeper into rooms. Large windows and effective ventilation ensure bright, airy interiors that promote well-being. By prioritising generous layouts and light-filled spaces, London's approach delivers homes that feel more livable, healthier, and future-proof. Brighton & Hove should adopt these high standards.

## ↓ Elephant & Castle, London SE17

Quality high-density with greenery. Contemporary mansion blocks and townhouses.



↔ High quality contemporary townhouses.

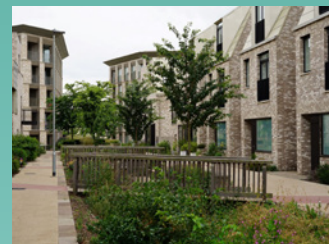
## ↓ Eddington, Cambridge CB3

Contemporary high quality development focusing on environmental sustainability.



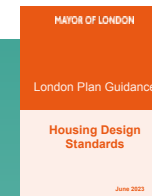
## ↓ Nansledan, Cornwall TR8

Traditional Cornish vernacular using locally sourced slate and other materials and craftsmanship.

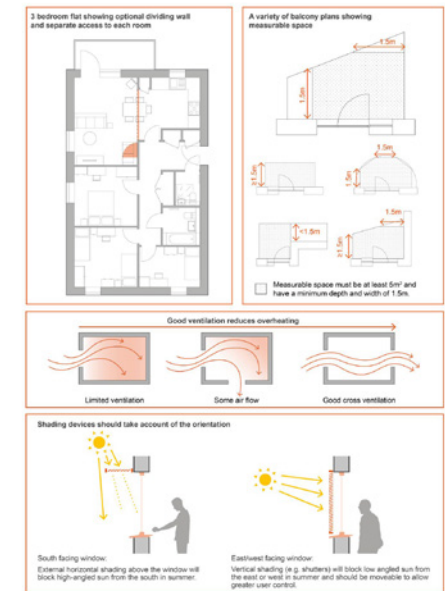


↑ Sustainable drainage and nature is integrated with homes to create a welcoming pedestrian space.

↗ Rendered buildings in white, cream and pastel shades creates a beautiful and harmonious atmosphere that reflects Cornwall's coastal heritage.

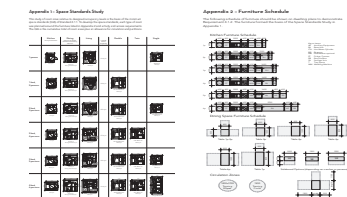


## Housing Design Standards LPG



1. Three-bedroom apartment with options to separate or combine living areas (C2.2, C2.4, C3.1, C4.2)
2. Private outside space should be at least 1.5m deep and wide (C10.1, C10.3)
3. Natural ventilation approach to mitigate overheating (C4.1, C6.1)
4. Orientation of windows with shading devices (C6.1)

## London Housing Design Guide





# DA3: The Avenue

## Valley Gardens 2

The Avenue and Lewes Road (north of Natal Road) represents a unique opportunity for transformative regeneration, replacing low-density, architecturally modest housing and expansive rear gardens with elegant six-story mansion blocks. This bold redevelopment could triple the height and depth, creating nine times the floor space and delivering over a thousand additional homes, revitalising the area while addressing Brighton's acute housing shortage.

The Avenue's central grass area could become a linear park, inspired by Valley Gardens, featuring enhanced landscaping, trees, play areas, and community amenities. Ground floors would offer active frontages with cafés, shops, and local services, while apartments above meet exceptional standards for space, natural light, ventilation, and ceiling heights. Drawing on the principles of *Gründerzeit* apartments, the homes would be attractive, adaptable, and designed to accommodate diverse household types, ensuring lasting appeal and functionality.

Connectivity improvements are essential, with upgrades to Moulsecomb train station to the west and a new vehicle, cycle, and pedestrian link connecting to Warren Road near Wilson Avenue in the east. These changes would create a vibrant boulevard that balances density with public spaces, offering views of and access to the surrounding nature reserve.

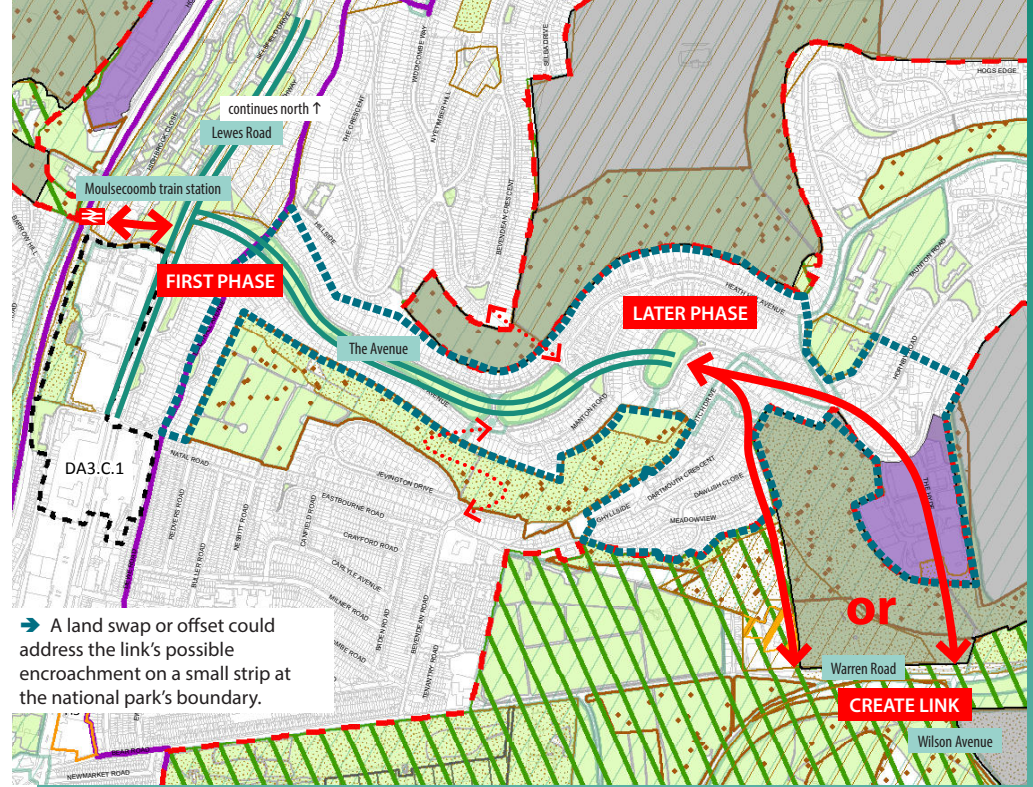
Challenges, particularly opposition from existing homeowners, must be addressed with fair compensation, relocation support, and transparent engagement. Many former council houses are now privately owned, complicating redevelopment, but these hurdles are surmountable. In the context of Brighton's housing crisis, this proposal offers a sustainable, community-focused solution that aligns with the city's need for additional housing while enhancing livability, connectivity, and urban character.



The Avenue

↑ The Avenue today, a typical house with 90m<sup>2</sup> of habitable space over two stories and extensive rear garden is valued at around £400k.

↓ Huge transformational potential to create value and much needed homes with three times the height and depth.



→ A land swap or offset could address the link's possible encroachment on a small strip at the national park's boundary.



Hillfort House

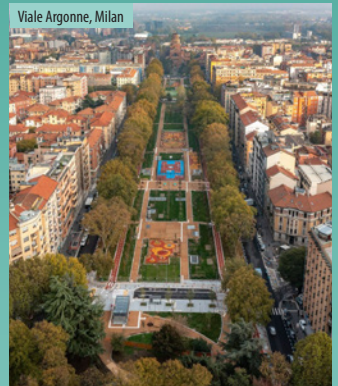


Hawkridge Court

**GENTLE DENSITY LINEAR PARK**

Current population density Moulsecomb & Bevendean (gross built-up area only) 5,790 per km<sup>2</sup>

← Recently completed mid-rises.



Viale Argonne, Milan



Berkeley Square, London W1



La Rambla de Santa Cruz, Tenerife



Esplanade Charles-de-Gaulle, Montpellier





# Mansion blocks and mixed-use buildings

## Revive the grandeur of mid-rise living

Grand, mid-rise residential buildings originated during the Victorian and Edwardian periods, characterised by elegant facades, high ceilings, and spacious apartments. While many were built as solely residential mansion blocks, some incorporated ground-floor shops or services. These buildings are experiencing a resurgence, with modern versions often incorporating mixed-use spaces, blending residential, commercial, and community functions that align with gentle density principles making them desirable in regeneration projects.

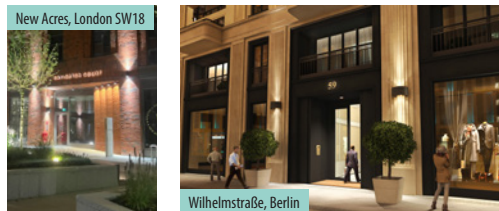


Blackfriars Circus, London SE1

### ↑ Base

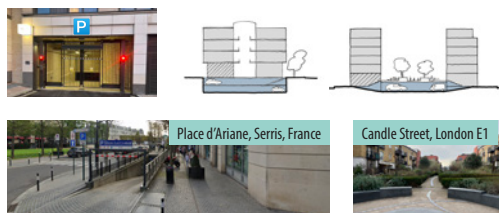
Space for commercial shops, cafés, gyms, community facilities and other amenities. Regular pillars should define openings in a grid aligned to windows above, high floor-to-ceiling heights allow units to be adaptable.

In fully residential buildings, regularly spaced front doors open directly onto the street, reinforcing human scale and street-level engagement. Undercroft parking should be discreetly integrated, ideally accessed from side streets.



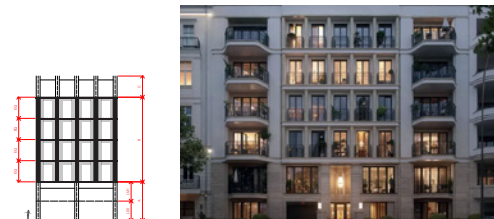
Wilhelmstraße, Berlin

↑↓ Prioritise pedestrians with grand entrances. Parking should be in basement or undercroft garages with buildings, courtyards or gardens created above.



Place d'Ariane, Serris, France

Candle Street, London E1



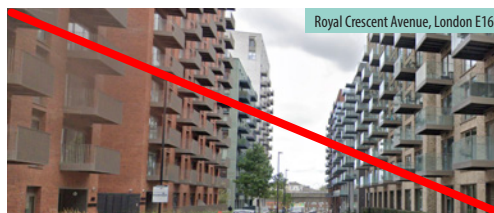
### ↑ Body

Tall portrait windows recessed to create shadow and depth and arranged in a consistent grid for rhythm with subtle variation in detailing to add visual interest. Cornices, sills and band courses add both beauty and weather durability to the facade.

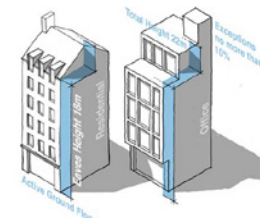
Use London space standards for generous room sizes, good natural light, and 2.6m finished floor-to-ceiling heights. Balconies setback or integrated into the facade.



↓ Excessive repetition of cantilever balconies creates a monotonous, uninspired uniformity. The street feels impersonal and bland, rather than interesting and inviting.



Royal Crescent Avenue, London E16

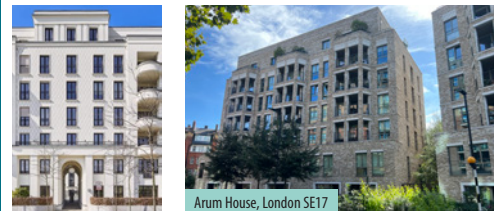


Seabird rooftop restaurant, London SE1

### ↑ Crown

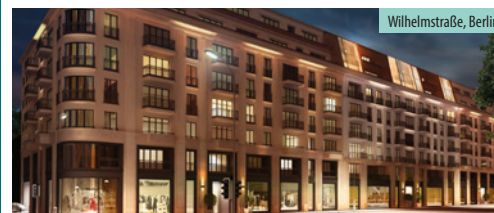
Premium penthouse apartments or rooftop commercial spaces, such as restaurants or gyms enhance project viability and enable the inclusion of affordable housing in other parts of the development.

Setbacks let taller buildings bring more natural light to street level, feeling less imposing, and creates space for outdoor roof terraces. Distinctive cornices add character to the roofline.



Arum House, London SE17

↑↓ Whether solely residential or mixed use, mansion blocks should have a clear base, body and crown. Active ground floor with openings defined by the facade.



Wilhelmstraße, Berlin



Brook Street, London W1

→ Historic mansion block with decorated facade.



Albert Hall Mansions, London SW7

Grand Rue, Le Plessis-Robinson, France



8 Rue Bapst, Asnières-sur-Seine, France

↑ Recently completed mansion blocks in traditional Parisian style with similarities to Regency Brighton. One with shops below, the other with undercroft parking and a courtyard. The rendered facades include ashlar lines, band courses and tall architraved windows. This intricate detailing at human scale enhances comfort and pride, contributes to wellbeing and improves durability.

↓ Cost-driven bland architecture, dominated by surface car parking. Exclusively council tenancies and shared ownership with no walkable amenities, such disconnection on the city's periphery is a recipe for social problems.



Bluebell Heights, Coldean



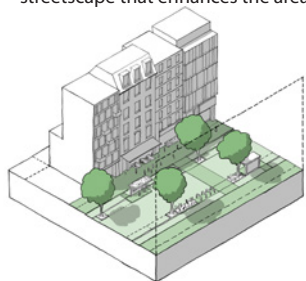
# DA5: Edward Street and Eastern Road

## From piecemeal to Parisian

Edward Street and Eastern Road suffer from unattractive public spaces and fragmented, low-density housing. This road should be reimagined as a beautiful, tree-lined boulevard inspired by Vienna and Paris.

Gentle-density mixed-use mansion blocks at an appropriate enclosure ratio (building height to street width) of about six stories should echo Kemptown's Regency style with majority cream and white rendered facades. They would replace the current patchwork of buildings, creating hundreds of high-quality homes. Ground-floors hosting shops, cafés, gyms and community spaces with any parking in basement garages.

A strategic approach to the transformation would deliver a cohesive, elegant streetscape that enhances the area's character and boosts housing supply.



## GENTLE DENSITY BOULEVARD



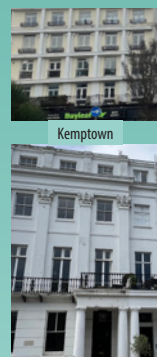
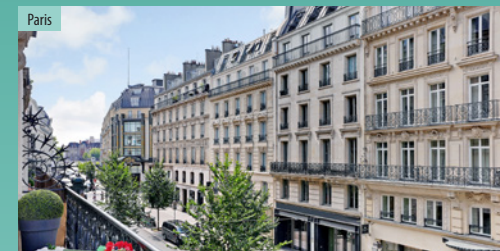
➔ Building frontages can be strategically realigned, this constriction can be set back whilst wider parts brought forward.



➔ New blocks with shops at the front and delivery and parking at the rear could allow businesses to relocate and free up more land for housing.



➔ New buildings should be relatively uniform in height at an appropriate enclosure ratio to the street. Their appearance should be inspired by Kemptown with white or cream facades, encouraging traditional styles with consideration for some contemporary reinterpretations.





# DA5: Kempton fringe

## And here's to you, le Plessis-Robinson

DA5 should adopt a design code reflecting Kempton's distinctive Regency character. Following the approach of le Plessis-Robinson, an outer suburb of Paris, this area can replace poor-quality, low-density housing with elegant, human-scale development in white and cream stucco.

Hundreds of new homes could be created, integrating blind tenure key worker, social, and market housing with integrated amenities and community spaces. High quality public realm with tree-lined streets, courtyards, and mini parks with sea views will give the opportunity to *look around with sympathetic eyes, stroll the grounds and feel at home.\**

Achieving this vision requires ambitious and strategic masterplanning and design codes to ensure vibrant, sustainable neighbourhoods.

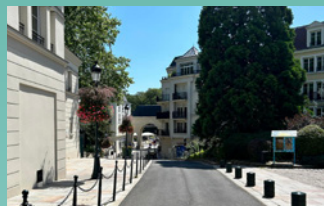
Population density  
Le Plessis-Robinson  
(redeveloped area only)  
17,000 per km<sup>2</sup>



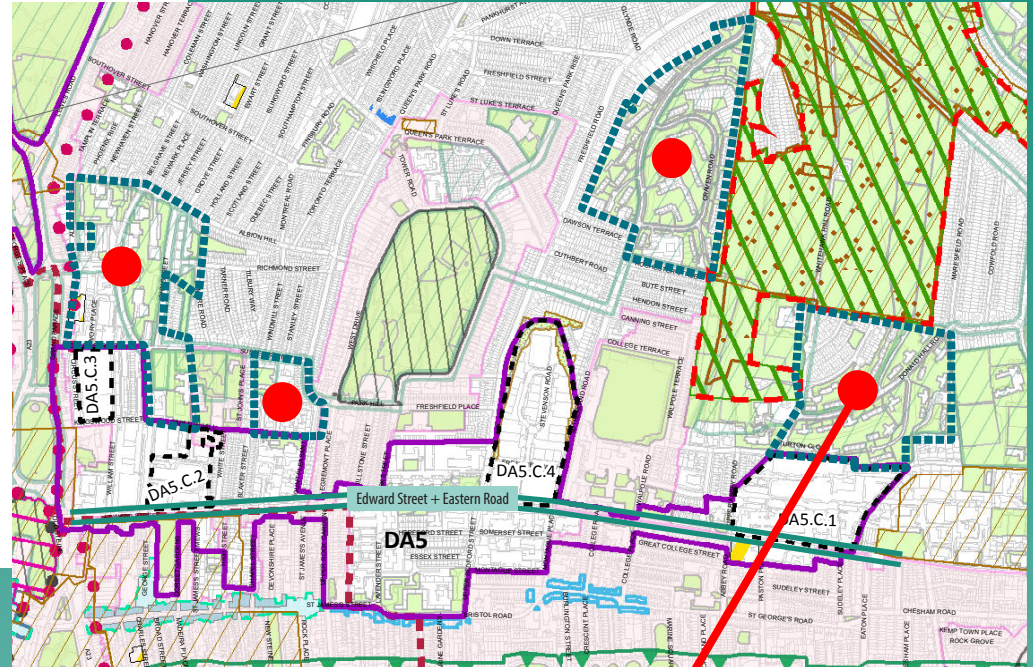
The Aesthetic City  
"This town did the impossible"  
Watch on YouTube:  
[youtu.be/Xfonh1M6I7w](https://youtu.be/Xfonh1M6I7w)

↖ Before  
↘ After

## LE PLESSIS-ROBINSON



Le Plessis-Robinson, Paris



The Bristol Estate and Donald Hall Road area suffers from substandard housing, uninspired green spaces, and steep grass verges that lack biodiversity or functionality. Despite some taller blocks, their small footprints and excessive setbacks result in inefficient density. This area should be incorporated into DA5, along with nearby sites like Queensway and Aston Rise.



Bristol Estate



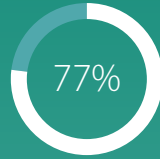


# New urbanism

## Timeless local identity at a human scale

*New urbanism* is a design movement that emphasises walkable neighbourhoods, mixed-use developments, and architecture inspired by local character, vernacular and history. Many schemes enjoy popular support and lead to good socio-economic outcomes.

It prioritises community-focused planning, with accessible public spaces, diverse housing, and amenities that reduce car dependency and encourage social interaction. By integrating high-quality, human-scale architecture that reflects Brighton's distinctive identity, this approach creates a strong sense of place that is popular, vibrant and sustainable.



↑ *YouGov* found over three-quarters of people prefer traditional architecture. Other surveys consistently show strong preference for historical styles offering timeless elegance, human scale, and connection to place.

## ALL BUILT IN THE 21ST CENTURY

← Two recent **Brighton** developments in the Lanes and in Rottingdean are built in the traditional style of their respective neighbourhoods with high-quality pedestrian spaces. In both places, facades are predominantly pale render with occasional Sussex bungarooth.

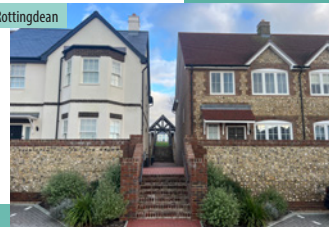
➤ Ultra-traditional Cornish-vernacular new town with white, cream and pastel facades. **Nansledan** blends sustainability with community-focused planning and celebrates local heritage.

➔ White classical facades, arcades, and vibrant plazas in **Cayalá** prioritise safety and community interaction.

➔ Citizens of **Dresden** successfully campaigned to rebuild their historic centre with classical architecture, maintaining the city's cultural identity with vibrant, livable spaces.

➤ A building boom in Val d'Europe, le Plessis-Robinson, Place des Champs-Philippe and other **outer Paris suburbs** are inspired by the city's much-loved architecture.

➤ Recent examples of **new traditional-style mansion blocks** with similarity to Regency Kemptown.





# Our rich vernacular

## Unique

Brighton boasts a unique architectural identity, defined by the exotic grandeur of the Royal Pavilion and the elegant sophistication of Regency Kempdown. The pavilion's domes, minarets, and intricate detailing reflect bold innovation, while Kempdown's graceful terraces, tall sash windows, and cream facades embody timeless elegance.

New development should take inspiration from these subtle forms and details, such as rhythmic facades, harmonious proportions, and refined materials, to craft contemporary buildings that complement Brighton's character. However, it must avoid pastiche, focusing instead on modern interpretations that blend creativity with heritage. This approach ensures new architecture respects Brighton's past while contributing to its future.

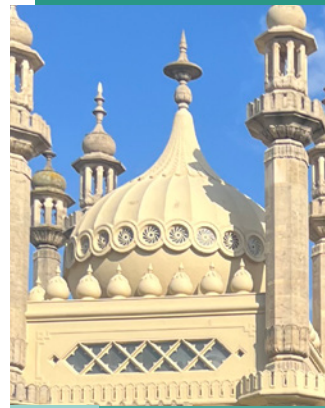


Chesham Street, Kempdown



Palmeira Mansions

→ Intricate details invite people to pause, reflect and connect turning ordinary streets into moments of quiet beauty and inspiration.



Royal Pavilion



Sassoon Mausoleum, Kempdown



Harbour Hotel



Harvester, Marina

← Distinctive Indo-Saracenic domes are a recognisable around Brighton.

→ A mews house facade by architect Zaha Hadid has a form reminiscent of Brighton's domes.



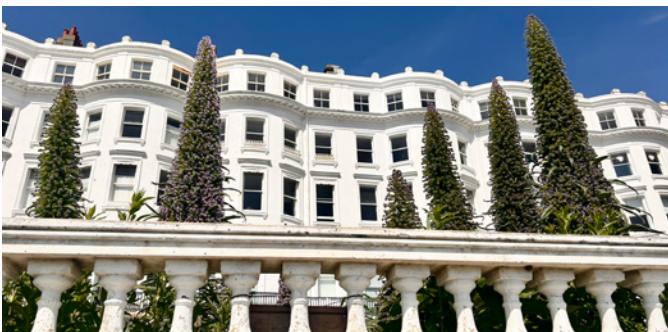
Belgravia, London



Grafton Street, Kempdown



Montpelier Place



Medina House, Hove



LADBROKE GROVE

Project Finish

100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000

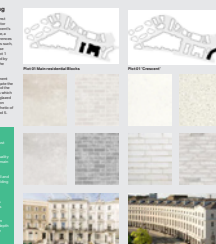
Design Code

September 2022

### 3.2.1 Materials and Detailing

Materials and detailing are key to the success of a building. The design code provides a framework for the selection of materials and detailing that are appropriate to the building's context and character. The code is based on the following principles:

- Materials should be of high quality and durable.
- Materials should be chosen to complement the building's context and character.
- Materials should be used in a way that respects the building's heritage.
- Materials should be used in a way that is sustainable.
- Materials should be used in a way that is aesthetically pleasing.



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↓ Ladbroke Grove has Regency buildings like Brighton. Its design code shows how classical details can guide contemporary development with sympathetic materials and detailing, ensuring harmony with historic urban character.

↓ New proposals include round arch repetition, grid-arranged portrait windows with deep reveals, cream facade and reference to tall pilasters.



Ladbroke Grove, London W10



# Colour palette

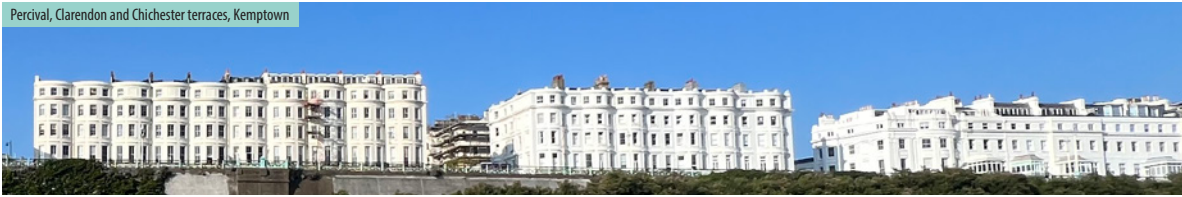
## WHITE

## CREAM

## TEAL + PALE PASTELS

## OTHER

Percival, Clarendon and Chichester terraces, Kemptown



Castle Square at Old Steine

↓ A dominance of dark brown, grey and red is not in harmony with Brighton's most loved areas. More reminiscent of industrial cities, these recent buildings clash with their surroundings. Paler colours would make them more sympathetic.

### Light and Brighton

The colour palette of Brighton's buildings plays a vital role in maintaining the city's unique architectural charm. Predominantly white and cream facades, accented by pastel shades, create a light, inviting and feelgood aesthetic that reflects Brighton's seaside character. These tones of buildings enhance the city's connection to its Regency heritage, ensuring new developments harmonise with historic streetscapes.

Any dominance of darker brown, grey, or red, can appear heavy and industrial, clashing with Brighton's vibrant identity, diminishing its cohesive charm. A thoughtful palette preserves Brighton's distinctiveness while encouraging designs that complement its cultural and environmental context, enhancing both heritage and modern appeal.

↓ Very occasional contrasts can create playful and striking effects.



New Steine



Tidy Street



Chesham Street, Kemptown



Marine Parade at Marine Square, Kemptown



Saltdean Lido



The Cape, Rottingdean



Hove Central



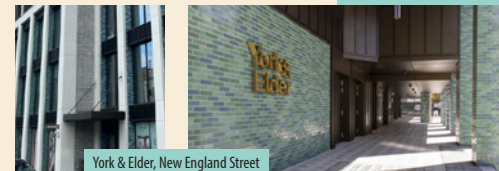
Old Steine



Rox, Gloucester Place



Lewisham Gateway, London SE13



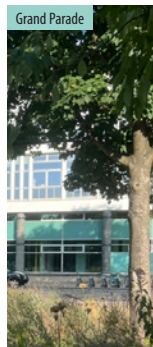
York & Elder, New England Street



London Road



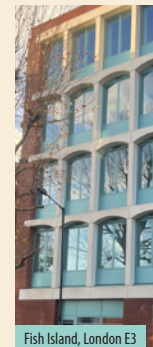
Circus Street at Kingswood Street



Grand Parade



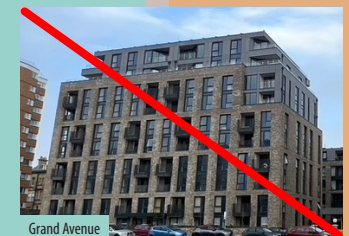
Mithras Halls, Moulsecoomb



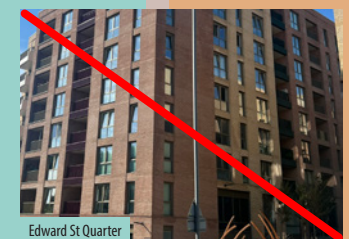
Fish Island, London E3



Outfall Building, Bundocks Walk, London E3



Grand Avenue



Edward St Quarter



# DA4: New England Street

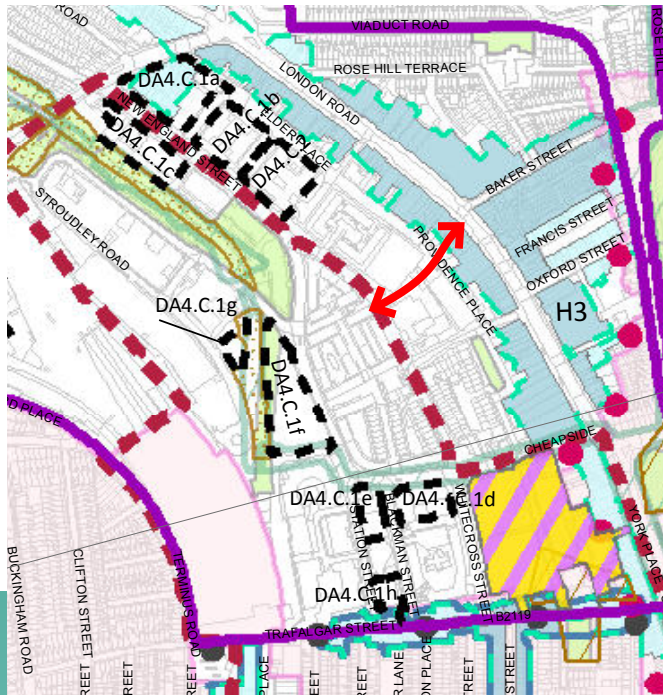
## Miami nice

The redevelopment of sites around New England Street offers a significant opportunity to establish a distinctive skyline that reflects Brighton's vibrant character. Well-designed taller buildings will create a lasting visual identity, reinforcing the city's reputation as a hub of creativity, culture, and innovation.

The recent York & Elder building demonstrates the success of a light-toned *new London vernacular* facade with artistic accents, blending contemporary design with Brighton's character. Future developments should expand on this by incorporating pastel shades inspired by North Laine, much like Miami's historic district, combining elegance with bold decorative elements. Additionally, lessons from Miami's Wynwood Walls, which transformed into a hub for creative industries, highlight the potential for art-driven regeneration.

To enhance connectivity, a new pedestrian footpath across Providence Place, linking London Road near Baker Street to New England Street near Sinclair Walk, would improve access. A focus on landscaped public spaces, seating, active frontages, and vibrant streetscapes will ensure developments feel welcoming and engaging.

A design code will guide this vision, balancing striking architecture, respect for historic context, and a vibrant public realm to redefine the area as a sustainable, inclusive urban hub.



New England Street



Sinclair Walk



Fenchurch Walk at Kingscote Way



Fleet Street

↓  
A new pedestrian link would improve access as part of a redevelopment of Providence Place.

↑  
Lack of active frontage feels barren in the New England Quarter development from the early 2000s.



London Road



Providence Place



Foundry Street, North Laine

←  
Pastel terrace cottages.

↓  
New tall buildings could use pastel shades inspired by North Laine.

## PASTELS + PATTERNS

↓  
New tall building is elegant with layered facades and curved corners.

↓  
White buildings decorated with pastel detailing in Miami.



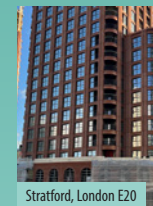
St Bartholomew's Church, Brighton



York & Elder, New England Street



Saint-Urbain, Strasbourg, France



Stratford, London E20



Miami, Florida





# Creative flare

## Brighton is but a canvas, and you are the masterpiece

Brighton's renowned street art enhances its cultural identity, local pride and attracts tourists and creative industries. By embracing street art in thoughtful, integrated ways, new developments can reflect the city's creativity, making streets visually dynamic and inspiring.



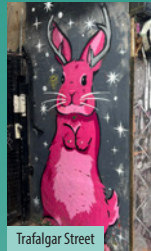
Elder Place



Upper Sudeley Street, Kempton



Western Road



Trafalgar Street



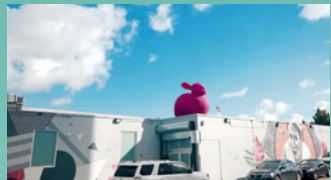
Elder Place



Church Street

➤ Colourful street art is popular across Brighton.

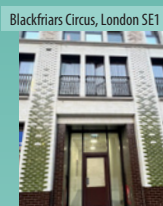
➤ Street art and murals commissioned from renowned and emerging artists creating a dynamic outdoor gallery at Wynwood Walls, Miami, attracting locals and tourists alike. It's become a catalyst for creative industries, with art studios, galleries, cafés, and shops and other businesses flourishing around it.



Wynwood Walls, Miami



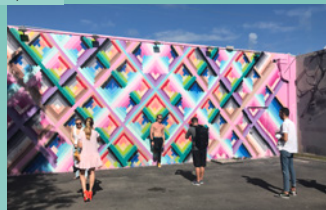
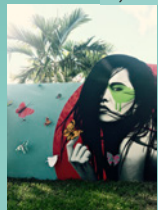
Majolica House, Vienna



Blackfriars Circus, London SE1



Aumbrey Apartments, London E9



Pontoise, France

➤ Artistic features include a cat statue, mural and brick diapering.



Lace House, Old Steine



York & Elder, New England Street

## Let there be light

Thoughtful lighting design transforms Brighton at night, enhancing landmarks like the Royal Pavilion and crafting an iconic skyline with the illuminated Palace Pier. Warm, energy-efficient LEDs in small public areas and gardens improve safety while timers and careful arrangement minimise light pollution.

Events like Brighton Lights and LIFE by Luxmuralis at St Peter's church showcase how creative lighting inspires vibrant urban areas. Including imaginative lighting in new developments helps create safe, attractive spaces for a welcoming night-time experience.

Illuminate the Patcham Pylon ➤



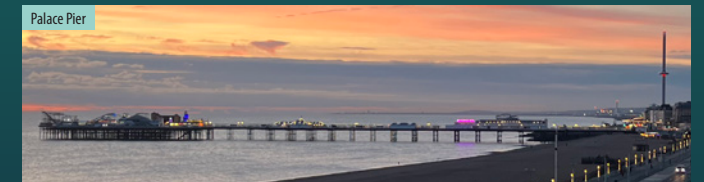
A23



BRIGHTON LIGHTS



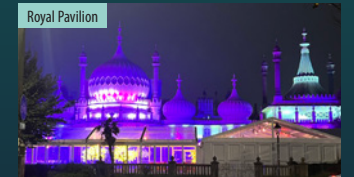
Light show at St Peter's Brighton



Palace Pier



Mazda fountain

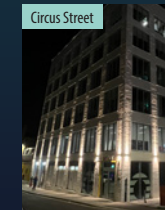


Royal Pavilion

➤ Illuminated landmarks celebrate local identity

➤ Well-lit gardens and public places feel safe at night

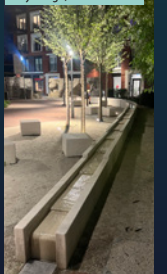
Keybridge, London SW8



Circus Street



New Acres Wandsworth, London SW18





# DA2: Marina

## Anchoring elegance: Brighton Marina's next wave

Brighton Marina viewed from the beach is a significant landmark. It bookends Kempdown along with the Palace Pier. New development must recognise its prominent position and create an exemplary design as viewed from the beach, both by day and through night-time illumination.

It should form an iconic silhouette reaching gracefully out to sea and the buildings should be in harmony with the Regency facades of Kempdown.

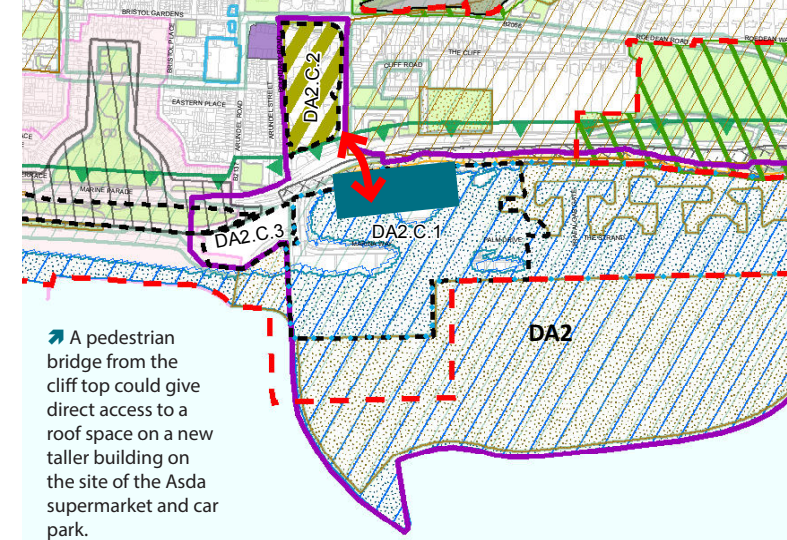
Given its position, it should draw inspiration from elegant nautical design, this could be with fluid curves, flowing lines, and forms that mimic yachts or waves emphasising its connection to water. Its massing should flow out in visual proportion to the building heights of Kempdown and echo the pale cream palette, perhaps culminating in a proportionate landmark tower.



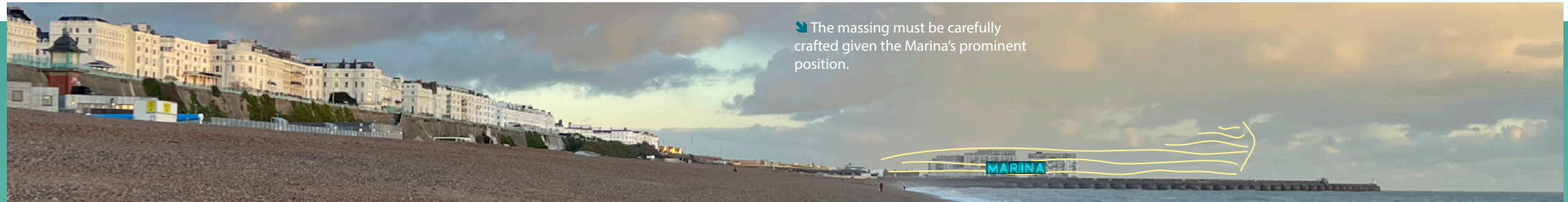
↑ Proposal from the early 2000s has poor aesthetic consideration and lacks harmony with its surroundings.



↑ A later rejected proposal featured better wave-like styling, but a disjointed silhouette and awkwardly proportioned, isolated tower.



➔ A pedestrian bridge from the cliff top could give direct access to a roof space on a new taller building on the site of the Asda supermarket and car park.

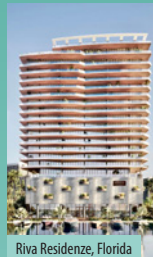


➔ The massing must be carefully crafted given the Marina's prominent position.

## IN HARMONY WITH KEMPTOWN AND THE SEA



Shoreline, Folkestone



Riva Residenze, Florida



CityLife, Milan



Yacht Kid, Bucharest



Riverwalk, London SW1



One Blackfriars, London SE1



W Hotel, Barcelona



Percival Terrace, Kempdown

➔ Curved facades on a new seafront building share characteristics with bow windows in Kempdown.

➔ The cream facade with teal balconies viewed from the east feels more considered and harmonious than the sombre greys from the west.



Brighton Marina



Sea Containers, London SE1

➔ Lighting creates a striking riverside landmark. The colour changes depending on water quality to raise awareness of the local marine environment, and can also mark cultural events.



# Better pedestrian space



New Road, Brighton



Passeig de Gràcia, Barcelona



Bromley North Village, London BR1



Venn Street, London SW4



## Vogue Gyratory

A simplified road layout inspired by Aldgate Square could unlock space for a vibrant public realm prioritising pedestrians and cyclists. The Sainsbury's site could be reimagined as a mixed-use development with housing, amenities, and a reconfigured supermarket opening onto a new pedestrian Vogue Square with parking access designed to minimise conflicts with pedestrians.



Vogue Gyratory

## Walk this way

Good pedestrian spaces are the foundation of vibrant, livable cities, offering places to socialise and explore. Streets like New Road in Brighton, Venn Street in Clapham, and Barcelona's Carrer del Consell de Cent and Passeig de Gràcia showcase the benefits of pedestrian priority, high-quality paving, greenery, and well-planned layouts. These features create inviting environments that boost local economies, enhance air quality, and encourage active travel, making urban areas more attractive and sustainable.

Some pedestrian-focused spaces, such as New Road, have faced challenges with anti-social behaviour, highlighting the need for careful planning and management. Strategies like increased natural surveillance, appropriate lighting, and thoughtful design can help mitigate these issues, ensuring public spaces remain welcoming and safe for all users.

St James's Street, St George's Road, and Madeira Drive could benefit from expanded pedestrian areas, greenery, and improved layouts. Preston Street, with its many restaurants, is another candidate for wider footpaths, alfresco seating, and reduced vehicle dominance. By embracing well-considered pedestrian-focused urban design, Brighton can transform its streets, creating spaces that support both community wellbeing and the city's economic vitality.

## Transport for London, "Better Streets Delivered 2" report:

**Bromley North Village:** "The project has created a thriving hub, increased footfall and trade for businesses. The town centre has already seen positive signs; more new businesses are opening up and some traders are already reporting increases in sales and customer numbers."

**Venn Street, Clapham:** "The scheme has provided an economic boost for local businesses, as well as reduced council costs through a bespoke maintenance agreement... "The bars and restaurants rent footway space, and this money is invested in street cleaning and maintenance costs. Feedback from local residents and businesses has been positive."

## ↓ Pedestrian priority with quality paving and plants



Carrer del Consell de Cent, Barcelona



Aldgate Square, London EC3N

↑ Now a square, the former Aldgate Gyratory was once unpleasant for pedestrians.

→ A large Sainsbury's with rooftop parking opens onto a village square with quality pedestrian space.



Dorridge, Warwickshire B93



# Better paving and more plants

## Paving the way to greener streets

High-quality paving, combined with tree planting and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), can elevate streetscapes into attractive and resilient spaces. Durable, well-designed materials create streets that are inviting, long-lasting, and enhance neighbourhood character. Thoughtful greenery adds shade, improves air quality, and supports biodiversity, while SuDS manage rainwater effectively, reducing flood risks. These enhancements encourage walking and cycling, enrich public spaces, and promote vibrant, sustainable communities where people and businesses thrive.

## Bring plants closer to people

Green spaces near homes and streets promote wellbeing by offering areas for relaxation, exercise, and social interaction. Accessible greenery reduces stress and strengthens community connections while enhancing biodiversity and environmental quality. Low-maintenance, layered planting with seasonal interest reduces upkeep and brings year-round visual appeal.



→ Pride of Madeira flowers in spring.

← Tough low-maintenance plants bring exotic greenery and bright flowers.

→ Meadow flowers and trees in spring.

Clarendon Terrace, Kemptown



Valley Gardens



↓ Bus stop installation was poorly executed



↓ Heritage paving should be protected, maintained and restored where necessary.



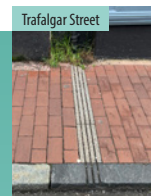
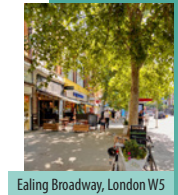
← Poor condition of surfaces is detrimental to the city.



## NATURE'S PATH

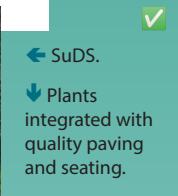
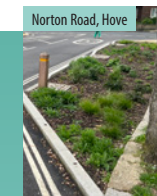
← Some parts of the city are nature deserts.

→ Trees transform places for the better.



← New replica red bricks match with historic paving. This coverage should be extended across more of the Lanes and North Laine where many streets currently have poor surfaces.

→ Buff colour paving and resin-bound aggregate with granite edging.



← SuDS.  
↓ Plants integrated with quality paving and seating.



← The elegant design of this Dutch transition kerb features a smooth, gradual slope, ensuring accessibility and safety, while also offering aesthetic appeal, easy installation, and long-lasting durability.

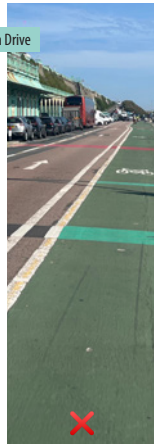


Elephant & Castle, London SE17





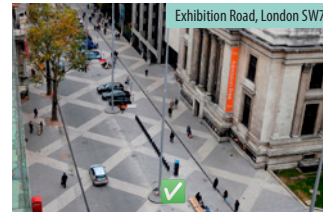
# Transform Madeira Drive



↳ A tatty patchwork of tarmac in various clashing colours dominates the space. Pedestrian routes are obstructed.



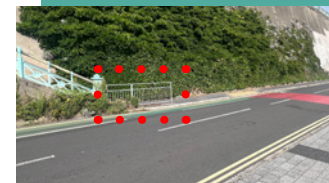
↳ Better pedestrian spaces with improved paving and appropriately positioned plants and seating. Vehicle lanes narrowed to a consistent width with minimal road markings and signage.



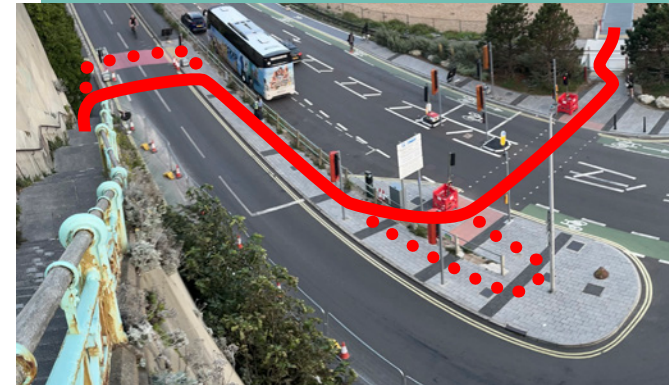
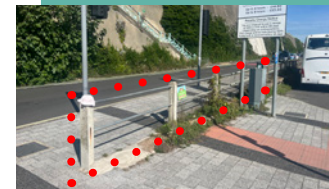
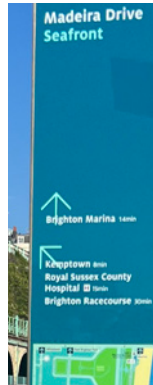
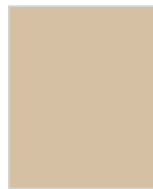
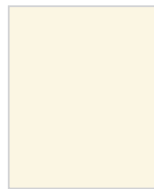
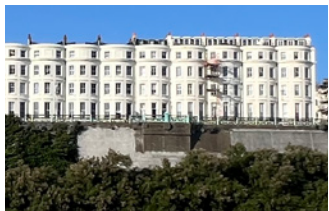
## Aesthetic cohesion

Madeira Drive is an iconic part of Brighton's seafront, yet it suffers from neglect that impacts the city's appeal. Beyond restoring the Madeira Terraces, improving paving, more planting, using a harmonious colour palette, and prioritising pedestrians and cyclists would transform it into a more welcoming space.

↳ Use a simplified colour palette of white, creams and teal to harmonise with the surrounding nature and historic buildings. Cold industrial grey is out-of-place and should be avoided.



↳ Improve pedestrian route by removing crossing and installing steps. Dukes Mount traffic light stop line could move to before pedestrian crossing.





# Clear and clutter-free

## The coast is not yet clear

An attractive, safe, and functional public realm begins with simplicity and cohesion, removing unnecessary visual and physical clutter. Overuse of guardrails, bollards, and inconsistent street furniture creates an unpleasant environment that discourages walking and cycling.

## Streetscape design code

A tailored streetscape design code, inspired by cities like London, Oxford and Bath, will ensure consistent, high-quality public spaces. By establishing clear standards and following them, Brighton can reduce clutter, enhance character, and support active travel and urban pride.

## Rethinking railings

Guardrails, often intended as safety measures, paradoxically increase risk. Pedestrians avoid them, and drivers feel emboldened, leading to higher speeds. A Transport for London study proved their ineffectiveness in many cases. Where necessary, bollards can provide a safer alternative, or painted, decorative guardrails can combine practicality with style.

Transport for London: "The results showed that following the removal of railings at the 70 sites there was a statistically significant fall of 56% (43 to 19) in the number of collisions involving pedestrians who were killed or seriously injured." – <https://content.tfl.gov.uk/pedestrian-railings-removal-report.pdf>

## All metalwork painted the same colour

Achieving visual cohesion requires consistent attention to materials and colours. Traffic poles, signposts, and railings should match in colour, black is a popular choice for its elegance and high contrast for visually-impaired people. Teal provides a distinctive identity along the seafront.

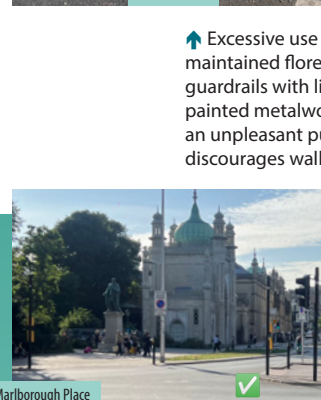
## Minimise clutter

- ✓ Use bollards and guardrails only where essential.
- ✓ Paint all metalwork the same colour, typically black.
- ✓ Maintain design consistency by selecting uniform models for bollards, railings, and other street elements.



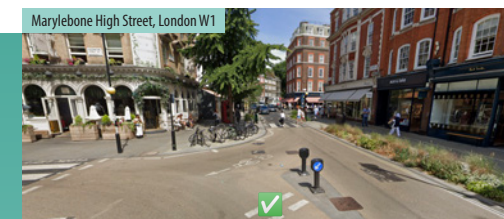
← Marine-grade 316 stainless steel painted black or other suitable non-corrosive material should be used for poles on the seafront to reduce the risk of property damage or injury and save costs with less frequent replacement.

→ This sign pole should be black for a consistent and elegant appearance.



↑ Excessive use and poorly maintained fluorescent bollards and guardrails with little consistency in painted metalwork or design creates an unpleasant public space that discourages walking and cycling.

↓ Junctions are free from guardrails and fluorescent bollards. Metalwork is consistently painted black, with minimal road markings, wide granite kerbstones and smooth surfaces, resulting in a quality public realm.



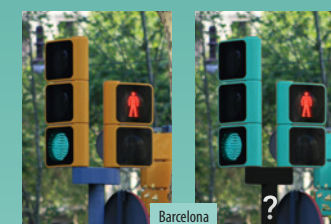
## SAFETY IN SIMPLICITY

→ The same elegant black keep-left bollard is used consistently as default across areas of central London. Fluorescent yellow is only used sparingly where such high-visibility is justified.

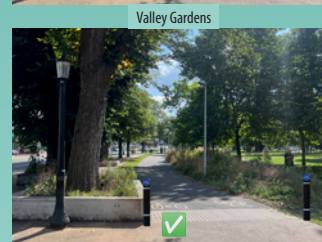
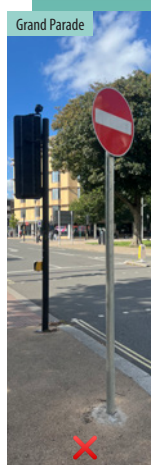


← Black decorative bollards may be more suitable than guardrails.

← Signs in the right place: the current sign (above) is easily missed, spoils the decorative lantern and inaccurately states the footpath abuts the cycle lane. A smaller cycle lane sign placed more directly in the field of view (below), would also be more harmonious.



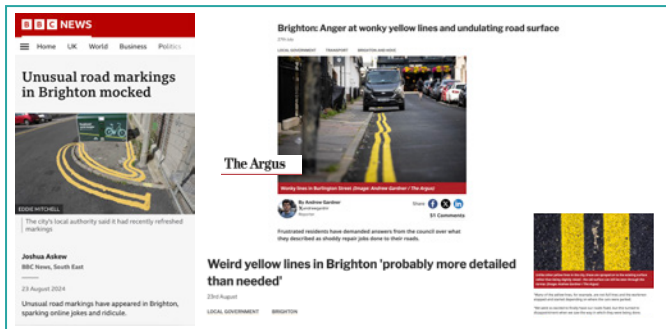
← New design of traffic lights is minimal and clear. Modular light boxes could be black or reimagined with Brighton teal on the seafront.



← Not currently legal outside RPZs, no parking signs would remove the need for extensive line markings for a cleaner street appearance.



# Road markings



## Mellow yellow

Excessive road markings, especially inconsistent double yellow lines, detract from the public realm. Despite local guidelines for thin and pale lines, poor compliance has led to varying widths, shades, and messy application, undermining streetscape quality and cohesion.

Brighton & Hove Streetscape Design Guidelines: "Where required and appropriate, yellow waiting restriction lines should be installed in a narrow (50mm wide) format in primrose yellow. The narrow, primrose yellow standard will apply citywide starting with any new development or re-designed areas and gradually replace the current 75mm wide lines as whole carriageways are renewed. Where small areas need to be patched or existing lines are extended, the replacement lines will remain at the existing width."

## Functionality with aesthetic integrity

- ✓ All yellow paint should be 'deep cream', the palest of the four legal shades.
- ✓ All single and double yellow or red lines should be 50mm, the thinnest of the three legal widths, which also maximises space for cyclists.
- ✓ Other markings as minimal as possible, avoiding overlapping elements, and using a stencil for the cycle symbol.

## UK legal options

BS 381c colour

353 deep cream	← Palest	50mm	← Thinnest
310 primrose	×	75mm	×
355 lemon	×	100mm	×
309 canary	×		

Oxford<sup>[1][2]</sup>, Bath<sup>[3]</sup>, West Sussex<sup>[4]</sup> and parts of London<sup>[5][6]</sup> use only deep cream and 50mm.

[1] Oxfordshire "Yellow road markings are to be colour No.353 Deep Cream" <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/roads-and-transport-policies-and-plans/TechnicalInfoSheet.pdf> [2] City of Oxford "The minimum enforceable size, layout and variant should always be used for all road markings and signage" <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1176/street-scene-manual>. [3] Bath & North East Somerset "lines will be 50mm wide and deep cream in colour" [https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/SPDs/streetscape\\_manual\\_adopted.pdf](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Planning-and-Building-Control/Planning-Policy/SPDs/streetscape_manual_adopted.pdf). [4] "50mm deep cream in roads with a speed limit of 40mph or less." <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/3709/west-sussex-parking-policy.pdf>. [5] City of London "deep cream" "50mm" <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/assets/Services-Environment/public-realm-technical-manual-2016.pdf>. [6] London Borough of Richmond upon Thames "lines will be 50mm wide and deep cream in colour" [https://www.richmond.gov.uk/media/11652/spg\\_psdg\\_chpt6.pdf](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/media/11652/spg_psdg_chpt6.pdf).

# A BRUSH WITH DISORDER

↓ Lines painted too bright and thick are detrimental to the conservation area.



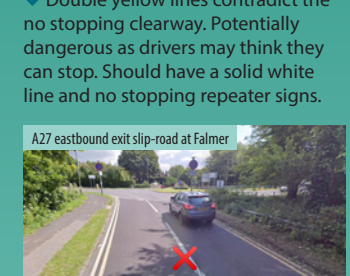
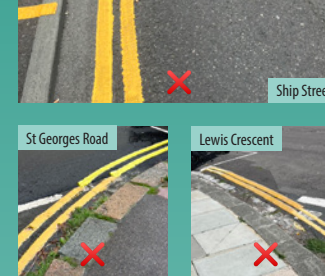
↓ Different yellow shades poorly applied spoil the charm of the Lanes and Kempdown.



↓ Superfluous lines spoil heritage cobbles, parking is already prohibited on raised tables.



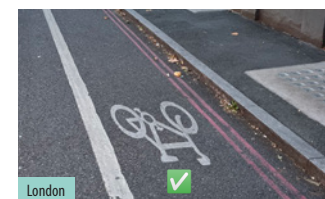
→ Overlapping, excessive and garish markings.



↓ Thin, pale, tidy and minimal



↓ 50mm lines give cyclists more space



↓ A restricted parking zone (RTZ) on the western side of Valley Gardens removes the need for road markings. It makes the street more attractive and saves cost of repainting, whilst still allowing for some parking bays. This should be extended across the central area including the Lanes and North Laine.



↑ No overlapping elements

↑ Deep cream box junction is calmer



# Case study: Preston Road cycle lane and public realm

HIGH QUALITY EXAMPLES



POOR QUALITY PRESTON ROAD



## BEAUTY IS IN THE DETAIL

### Road markings

Minimise and avoid unnecessary or overlapping markings, use pale 'primrose' yellow paint and thin 50mm yellow and red lines for less detrimental visual impact and to encroach less on the path of cyclists.

### Consistent metalwork

Paint traffic light poles, signposts, railings and metalwork in a uniform colour, typically black, for visual cohesion.

### Surface materials

Use high-quality paving for footways, cobbles to define borders with cycle lanes and wide stone kerbs instead of black tarmac and thin concrete kerbs. Consistent design and application of a harmonious colour palette.

### Drainage

Include rain gardens (SuDS) for effective and attractive drainage.

### Street furniture

Avoid excessive guardrails, garish colours, and fluorescent bollards to maintain a calm, elegant environment.

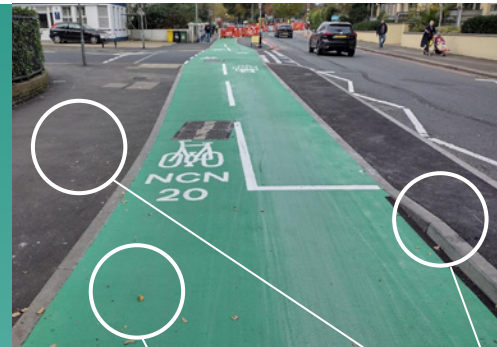
### Aesthetic cohesion

Simplify elements for a clean, harmonious look, reducing visual clutter and creating a welcoming public realm that enhances the experience for all users.

→ Green is limited to the conflict area and used on the crossing as stripes between the *elephant-footprint markings*. The cycle lane is separated from the paved footway with quality cobbled paving and a subtle yet clear difference in surface.



↓ Marlborough Place is clean, harmonious and uncluttered.



Excessive and garish road markings.

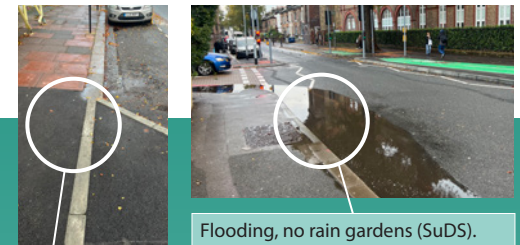
Double yellow lines painted too strong and thick instead of 50mm primrose shade and unnecessarily across raised table.



↑ Elegant period houses and viaduct is spoilt by poor public realm.



Preston Road at Dyke Road Drive



Flooding, no rain gardens (SuDS).



Inferior thin concrete kerbs and expanse of footway black tarmac instead of matching existing wide kerb stones and gutter and paved footway.

Traffic light poles, sign poles and other metalwork not a consistent colour, such as black.



Overlapping elements create a messy effect. White hash markings are unnecessary clutter, green lane paint should begin further from kerb to avoid red line overlapping.

← Poor compliance as garish colours fail to remedy unintuitive design.



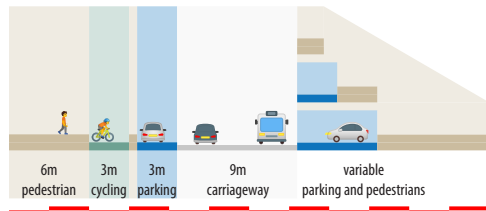
# Road diet

## Be rational

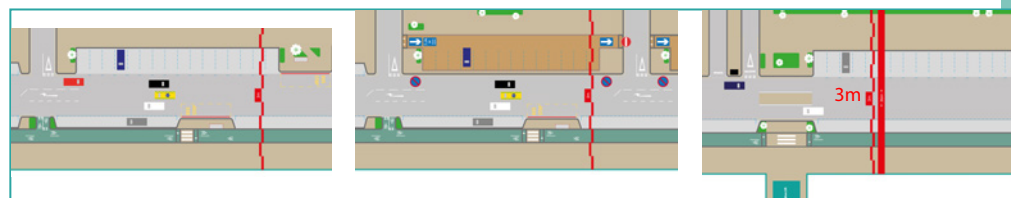
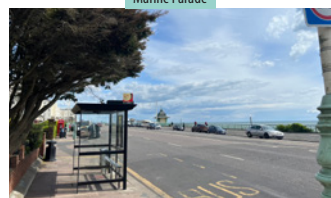
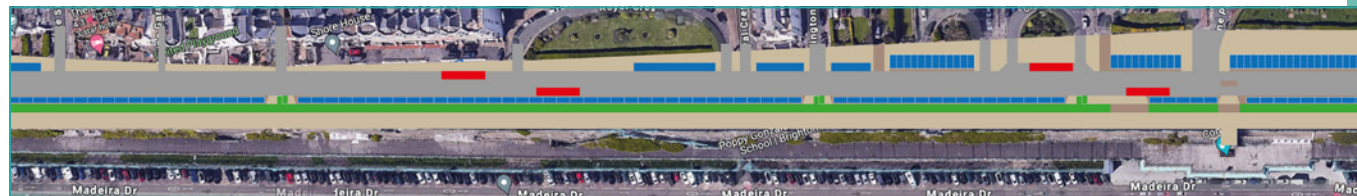
Some of Brighton's main urban roads suffer from excessive widths that prioritise vehicle traffic while neglecting pedestrians, cyclists, and public realm quality. These include Marine Parade, London Road through Preston Village, and the southbound A23 route along Stanford Avenue, Beaconsfield Road, Viaduct Road and Ditchling Road. Narrow footways and inconsistent vehicle lane widths not only create congestion but also compromise safety and discourage sustainable transport modes.

A road diet would rationalise lanes to uniform widths, improving traffic flow by eliminating bottlenecks and merging issues. This would free up space for wider footpaths and segregated cycle lanes, encouraging active travel. Introducing rain gardens, trees, and green infrastructure along the road would enhance biodiversity and improve air quality.

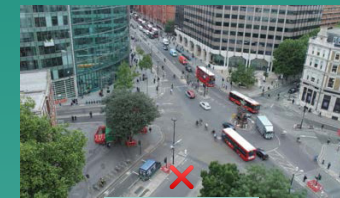
Moreover, a redesigned public realm with expanded pedestrian areas and greener streetscapes would create a safer, more attractive environment for residents and visitors. This transformation aligns with Brighton's sustainability goals, making the city more walkable, connected, and vibrant while reducing car dependency and supporting healthier lifestyles.



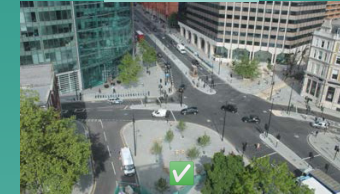
↓ Rationalising road width on Marine Parade to nine metres would retain space for emergency vehicles and turning traffic in the centre. This would create space for a segregated cycle lane on the south side and reorganised parking and better pedestrian space on the north side.



North Hanover Street, Glasgow G4



Holborn Circus, London EC1



← Rationalising lane widths to create better pedestrian spaces.

## RATIONALISE ROADS



↗ Large amounts of space can be reclaimed for pedestrians and nature whilst potentially improving traffic flow.



# Driver-friendly congestion reduction

## Steer clear

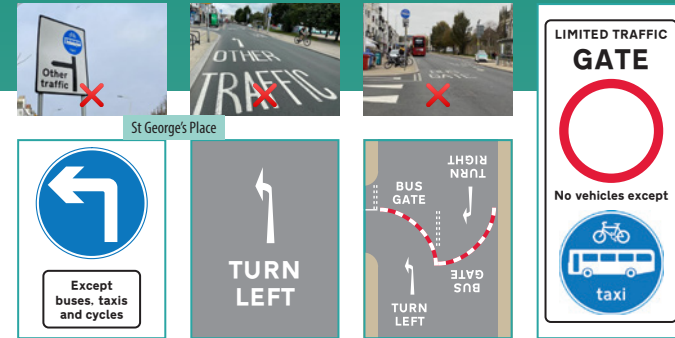
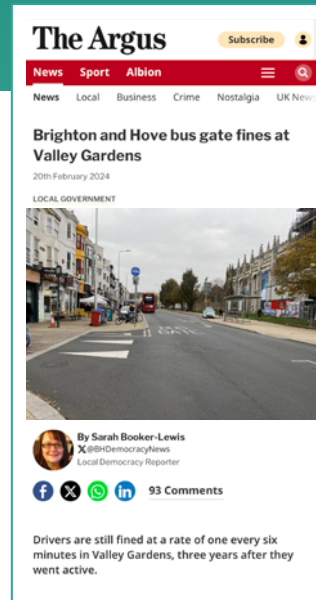
Support drivers with smarter design, intuitive road layouts and clear signage to reduce confusion and increase compliance. By balancing practical traffic solutions with clean public realm ambitions, the city can keep traffic flowing, and reduce congestion.

Punitive measures, such as those from bus gate contraventions, may generate short-term revenue but risks damaging Brighton's reputation and discourages visitors. Thousands of fines indicate a design issue, not driver error. Addressing this with improved design will create a welcoming, sustainable city for everyone.

## Digital displays for part-time pedestrian zones

In Italy, limited traffic zones (ZTLs) use digital displays at entrances to inform drivers of restrictions in real-time. These systems provide instant clarity, replacing confusing static signs with complex timing rules. In Hove, similar technology could enhance driver awareness on George Street's part-time pedestrian zone.

This scheme could be used on streets like St James's Street, Preston Street or parts of the city centre to allow better pedestrian spaces at certain times of day.



↑ Huge numbers of fines signal a design flaw. Signs must provide clear, simple instructions for unfamiliar drivers, such as "turn left" or "turn right". Phrases like "other traffic" require time-consuming deciphering, leading to confusion and errors.

↑↓ An application for special authorisation from the Department for Transport, citing exceptional circumstances to improve compliance, would be required if clear signage does not meet the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) standards.

Permit or pay with maximum stays of 2, 4 or 11 hours

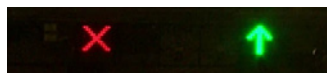
Permit only

Electric charging



↑ Drivers instantly understand digital real-time signs at the entrance to limited traffic zones.

↑ Here, drivers must carefully check the times.



↑ Five different parking bay restrictions only a few metres apart with text-heavy signs confuse drivers. Giving prominence to their key differences would improve clarity.



↑ Green markings, used in place of white, can effectively differentiate electric charging bays without overwhelming the visual design.

← Subtle yet clear, coloured bay markings help drivers distinguish between different types.



# Recommendations

## Strategic regeneration

### 1 Expand development areas

Extend development areas to cover Moulsecoomb, Bevendean, and additional parts of Kemptown's northern fringe. These areas are characterised by high levels of deprivation, substandard housing stock, and low population densities of around 6,000 per km<sup>2</sup>. Regeneration should focus on delivering increased housing supply with improved infrastructure and community amenities.

### 2 Focus on high-quality gentle density

Build three- to six-storey mid-rise developments with target population densities of 20,000 per km<sup>2</sup> in regeneration areas. This approach integrates homes, green spaces, and community facilities to create walkable, vibrant neighbourhoods that enhance livability, wellbeing, and opportunities for residents.

## Design codes

### 3 Introduce design codes

Establish comprehensive design codes informed by public consultation and expert input. These codes should ensure high-quality, context-sensitive architecture and cohesive urban design, creating comfortable homes whilst derisking the planning process to reduce opposition and litigation.

### 4 New urbanism principles

Adopt new urbanism principles with architecture rooted in local character, walkable streets, and engaging public spaces. Blending traditional aesthetics with modern needs is especially suitable for regenerating Kemptown's northern fringe.

### 5 Raise standards for space and light

Establish requirements for minimum room sizes, ceiling heights, natural light, and ventilation to ensure homes are comfortable, adaptable and promote wellbeing.

### 6 Family homes inspired by *Gründerzeit* apartments

Build spacious, adaptable and light-filled family homes inspired by Vienna's *Gründerzeit* apartments with flexible layouts that suit changing household needs.

### 7 Standards for mansion blocks

Set clear design principles for mansion blocks, including distinct base, body, and crown elements, proportionate window grids, layered facades, and recessed balconies, ensuring both interior functionality and architectural beauty.

### 8 Adopt a cohesive colour palette

Promote a palette of white, cream, teal and pastel tones for the facades of new developments to reflect Brighton's seaside charm. This consistency reinforces architectural harmony whilst preserving the city's distinctive identity.

### 9 All parking to be integrated

Require parking to be discreetly integrated into undercroft or basement garages where viable, minimising its visual and spatial impact whilst maximising land use for buildings and public spaces.

## Areas for supply

### 10 Moulsecoomb

Focus on increasing housing supply in Moulsecoomb and Bevendean, capitalising on good transport links with the train station and Lewes Road. Strengthen connectivity with a new eastern link from the Avenue to Wilson Avenue.

### 11 Boulevards

Transform streets like Edward Street, Eastern Road, Lewes Road (north of Natal Road) and the Avenue into Parisian-style, tree-lined boulevards. Mixed-use developments with ground-floor commercial and community spaces with apartments above will create thousands of homes with vibrant, connected streetscapes.

### 12 Marina

Future developments at Brighton Marina should enhance its iconic skyline and embrace exemplary architecture to harmonise with Kemptown and the sea. Explore improved pedestrian access, such as a bridge connecting the cliff top to the rooftops of new buildings.

### 13 Hillside homes

Develop innovative solutions for hillside areas in Moulsecoomb and Bevendean. Embrace stepped layouts, integrated greenery, and improved connections to create more homes on steep terrain.

## Creative identity

### 14 Creative industry hub

Support cultural identity and attract creative talent by transforming New England Street into a creative hub with artistic facades and public art inspired by North Laine and Miami's Wynwood Walls.

### 15 Lighting design

Enhance Brighton's landmarks and public spaces with thoughtful night-time illumination, improving safety and highlighting the city's architectural heritage.

## Public realm and sustainability

### 16 Introduce a streetscape design code

Implement a streetscape code with clear standards for decluttering streets, standardising furniture, materials and road markings. This will ensure cohesive, safe and attractive streetscapes that are inviting and encourage active travel.

### 17 Better paving with more plants and trees

Prioritise high-quality paving with ground-level planting beds, trees and rain gardens to bring nature closer to people, creating inviting, walkable spaces that boost biodiversity and improve wellbeing.

### 18 Reclaim streets for pedestrians

Identify streets like St James's Street, St George's Road, Preston Street, and the Vogue Gyrotory for pedestrian-friendly improvements. Rationalise lane widths on major routes like Marine Parade and the A23 (Preston Village southbound to St Peter's Church) to improve the public realm and create safer, greener environments.

### 19 Resolve problematic signage

Redesign poorly performing signage to improve driver compliance ensuring clarity and intuitive understanding. Introduce real-time displays for part-time pedestrian zones and extend their application where appropriate.



# Further reading



## Create Streets

Create Streets champions gentle density and beautiful, human-scale urban design. They advocate for walkable, mixed-use neighbourhoods that reflect local character, community wellbeing and sustainability through policy, research, and design consultancy.



## Architectural Uprising

Architectural Uprising is a grassroots movement advocating traditional, context-sensitive architecture. Resisting bland modernism, they promote beauty, local identity, and vibrant, lasting urban spaces that reflect cultural heritage, showcased through their online mapping tool.



## Urban Movement

Urban Movement specialises in street and public space design, promoting walkability, cycling, and sustainable transport. Their work in Brighton includes projects to enhance active travel, public spaces, and accessibility, contributing to a more livable, connected city.

## Quality places and new homes

How to solve the housing crisis in Brighton & Hove and enhance the city's beauty

Report for **Brighton & Hove City Council**  
by Studio for Place Creation

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