

A CONSERVATION REVIEW OF CLIFTONVILLE

Report by the Conservation Advisory Group
for
Brighton and Hove City Council

February 2013.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background: In October 2012, CAG requested a review of possible future development sites in the area which covers part of the east of Old Hove Conservation Area (CA), St Aubyns, Cliftonville CA, Denmark Villas CA, and Hove Station CA.. This constitutes the area east of Hove Manor built as Cliftonville in the 1850's and 60's before the Stanford Estate land was released in the mid 1870's.

The review was prompted by development applications in Seafield Road. With full knowledge of all the present Article 4 Directions that exist, the review has been carried out in such a way that it could serve as a template for further reviews of other areas in the city.

1.2 Results of review: The Cliftonville area is remarkably homogenous and generally in good condition. However the review shows that there are a number of development and enhancement opportunities and they are as follows:

- Several open spaces and landscaped areas, which deserve unequivocal preservation, were highlighted. In addition one area of tarmac, which should be reverted to green space, has been identified.
- A number of opportunities for careful and sympathetically designed development have been highlighted, which would require a traditional design to match the prevailing street scene and others that require modern imagery. Such potential developments would in the main replace unsightly garage areas. The overall effect of the proposals would be to round off and improve the existing street scenes.
- The review identifies one larger area, mainly made up of extensive hard surfacing, garages and parking spaces with a substantial potential for development, and proposes limits for another area of potential back garden development.
- There are several issues with regard to the highway domain that need to be dealt with ranging from street lighting to a more sympathetic approach to yellow lines.
- There are also opportunities for street tree planting in the area and replacement planting undertaken in accordance with Victorian tradition.
- Finally the review has identified a potential extension to the Cliftonville conservation area to include St Aubyns Mansions along Hove Esplanade.

1.3 Overall conclusion and Recommendations: Cliftonville represents a major virtually unspoilt architectural asset in the city, and contributes to Brighton and Hove being an attractive area in which to live, visit and to do business. However this area could be enhanced in a major way by the steps proposed in

this report, which taken together would substantially refresh this built environment. It is recommended:

1. That the detailed proposals set out in this report are approved to form the basis of guidance to council officers and advice to potential developers that seek to develop the sites identified.
2. That the enhancement proposals are implemented in parts via S106 agreements arising from developments proposed within the area.
3. That the Conservation Area Character Statements relating to the area are updated given more detail, and that an area enhancement scheme is produced.
4. That Cliftonville Conservation Area is extended along Hove Esplanade westwards to include St Aubyns Mansions as shown on the map in section 5.

2. Public open space.

2.1. St Aubyns, south end of the highway:

CAG recommends that these two tarmacadamed areas of highway now triangular paved areas could be enhanced with grass and landscaping.



2.2 Medina Terrace Lawn: This open space is the key to the entrance to the centre of Cliftonville; it creates a vista from Hove seafront back into the heart of Cliftonville. There is a danger that the Kingsway frontage could be earmarked for some form of future development.

CAG recommends that this area should never be built on as it creates immense amenity value.

3. Private or Institutional Sites.

3.1. Courtenay Terrace: The south facing gardens of Courtenay Terrace, which form an unusual view of houses with gardens to Hove Promenade, are a major contributor to the conservation area.

CAG recommends there should not be developed.

3.2 Flag Court: This 1970's block has areas of land put to lawn around its perimeter.

CAG recommends there is no case for further development on this site even at a low level.

3.3. Victoria Terrace (rear): The central area seems to be unattractive and under utilised. Replacement of the garages and outbuildings with further one or two storey housing would upgrade this dull spot.

CAG recommend that there is a clear case for further development of this area with a sensitively designed scheme.

3.4. **Namrick Mews.** Access to Possible Major Site: This is the only potential access to the rears of the buildings to Vallance Gardens and St Aubyns west side.



This area which could be accessed by Namrick Mews would release a large area for housing.

CAG recommend that this area should be specifically zoned for one style of development and it would cautiously welcome a sensitive scheme for this under utilised brownfield site.



3.5. **Seafield Road (west side):** CAG would encourage the further if not total development of this stretch of very unattractive garages and car parking areas. The most recently completed scheme at the south end (pictured), which CAG recommended for approval, should be used as an example of good design for any further development, the height being the same. However the site at the extreme south end which includes the E.sub station should be in the same style but with added height in

order to mask the rears of the rather drab taller St Aubyns properties. The east side of Seafield Road is broadly uniform and what should be planned and built on the west side should be able to reflect that massing and uniform height opposite. Infilling of street trees on the west side should be recommended and if necessary TPO's considered for those that are remaining. Historically these trees lined the eastern side of the original archery ground that existed on this site prior to Cliftonville being developed.

CAG recommends consideration of the above points.

3.6. **Hove Place:** The garages at the rear of the Kingsway properties occupy a small site but disfigure the view in this interesting little street. If housing is imaginatively planned a design and height similar to that at the top of Medina Villas east side this would be acceptable, and would enhance the area. CAG recommends the above.

3.7. **Osborne Villas,** garages north east side: Development should be encouraged for housing in a similar height and design to those at the top north east side of Medina Villas (see picture in 3.8 below). CAG recommends.



3.8. **Medina Villas** (north east side): There are only two possible sites for housing left in this street, either side of the three recently completed houses (example pictured). The modern designed units complement this part of the street well being so close to Church Road where there are varied styles. Similar designs should be welcomed for these two other sites, with a possible increase in height on the site to the south, complementing the four storied house on the adjacent plot. An

infill to the rear of the Church Road shop site should be encouraged on the west side of Medina Villas in a design similar to the building to the immediate south. CAG recommends.



3.9. Albany Villas: A scheme of housing should be welcomed on the narrow site on the west side, although the style of the neighbouring properties should be copied as all other buildings in the street are of the 1850's and 60's Italianate (examples pictured). CAG would also welcome an infill to the rear of the retail property on Church Road, at the top west side of the street, in a design in keeping with the property to its immediate south.



3.10. Hova Villas (south west): The site at the south west end of the street should be for housing with one or two villas copying those existing facades in the street. The street consists of identical pairs of stuccoed bay fronted two storied Italianate villas at its south end. A delight in the conservation area making it one of the more attractive 1860's housing schemes. CAG recommends.

3.11. Holy Trinity Church: CAG would continue to welcome a scheme which retains this building with its very rare outside pulpit in some form, together with the vicarage and the historic perimeter flint walls.

4. Highways Domain.

4.1 The Highways domain includes:

- Off street parking and vehicle crossovers
- Pavements and gutters
- Road surfacing
- Street signage
- Street Trees
- Lighting
- Pedestrian and road safety
- Yellow lines
- Telecommunications boxes etc

These four conservation areas, making up Cliftonville, have their highway domain in generally good condition, and the look and appearance should be maintained in the same style where possible. CAG makes these following observations,

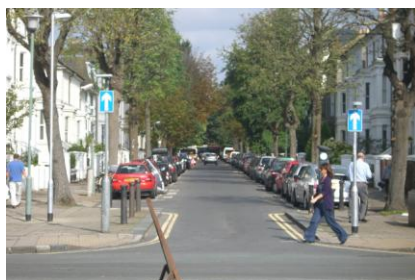
4.2 Off Street Parking and Vehicle Crossovers: CAG recommend that any future proposed off street parking with the subsequent removal and repositioning of forecourt walls and piers and loss of front gardens is discouraged and opposed. CAG believes this action will continue to erode the character of the conservation area.

4.3. Pavements and Gutters: Where pavements are maintained and well ordered grey paving slabs should continue to be used, with care in keeping the coal hole covers which are part of the property curtilage. Granite sets in gutters too often are removed by the highways dept., normally in rows of two they should be kept or replaced like for like where possible, special care being taken at pedestrian crossovers. Where pavers and granite curbs stones are evident these should be kept when statutory undertakings are contracted, as seen with the york paving in Hove Place. CAG does understand that pavements are not part of the listing process, however the highways dept. and statutory undertakings should have respect for the nature of a conservation area.

4.4. Road surfacing: This is in good order throughout with the exception of the west side of Seafield Road which also does not have any pavement.



4.5. Street Signage: In line with the government's wish to cut down signage clutter, the Highways Department should seek to reduce clutter in Church Road. There are still in use very few of the attractive original street signs, such as the China lettered and iron framed street signs erected by the West Hove Commissioners in the 1860's (see picture), and whenever styled signs are due for replacement the original style signage should be the replacement.



4.6. Street Trees: Each street should be reviewed for street trees and where items are missing as in Demark Villas residents should be encouraged to replant under the BHCC street tree planting scheme presently led by local conservation societies. Ventnor Villas is a good example of a tree lined street (pictured).

4.7. Lighting: This area once lit until the 1950's by gas has very attractive "beehive" standards. Where replacements are needed original items could be taken from elsewhere in Hove which are not conservation areas, such as Hangleton and parts of Portslade. Care should be taken that the electrification extension to the standards are the swan necks, " BLEECO" style, with a Sugg Rochester decorative pendant luminary light fitting. For electrified copies of gas lanterns of the 1880's CAG would suggest the attractive Sugg Camberwell and to a lesser extent the Windsor which were used in Cliftonville, though now with a straight cast extension to the standard to meet current lighting requirements. Good examples of these extensions can be seen in the Hove Park area. Examples of lamps available are shown below, with more details in Appendix 1.



Camberwell



Rochester



Upright Rochester

4.8. **Pedestrian and Road Safety:** Where possible traffic calming schemes and pedestrian crossings should be positioned to respect this historic built environment. Denmark Villas for example has some very badly positioned crossings which seem to have no regard for entries to properties or parking. See Nos. 55 and 57.

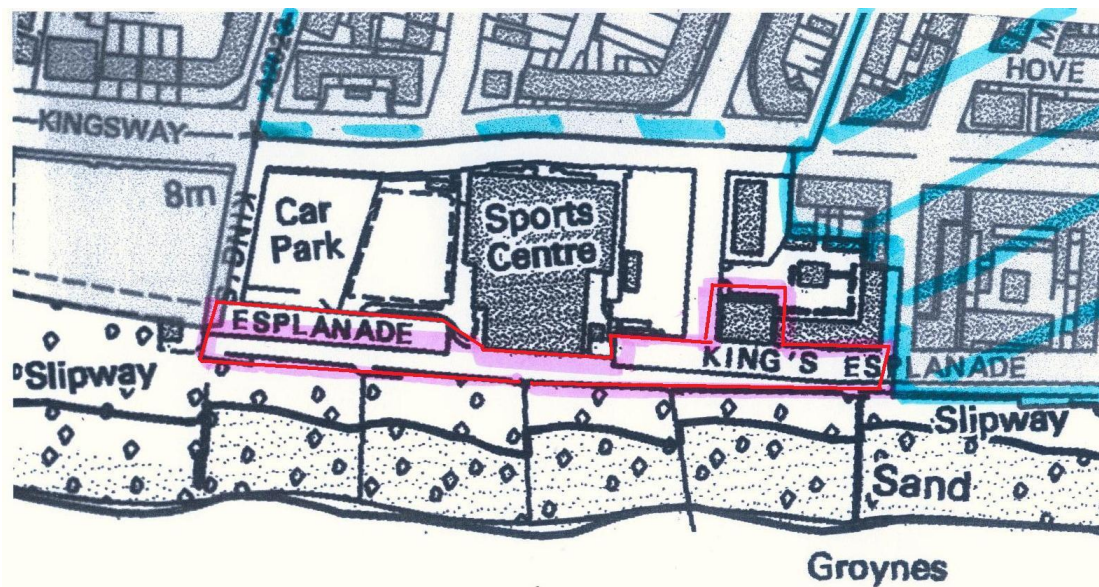
4.9. **Double and Single Yellow Lines:** CAG would like to see the use of conservation primrose double and single yellow lines in these conservation areas. The removal of the standard yellow lines should be recommended when relining is undertaken.

4.10. **Telecommunications Boxes etc.:** CAG does not recommend the overpainting of any of these and like structures with organised graffiti, and would ask to be consulted on any scheme that might be proposed.

5. Proposed Extension to Cliftonville Conservation Area

Since the last conservation area extension in 1985 St Aubyns Mansions then due for demolition has been completely refurbished into eight flats, retaining its neo Dutch façade, fine staircase and corner cupola. Built in the 1880's it now has two blue plaques at its first floor level and is an important contributor to the historic architectural character of Hove seafront.

The Hove Esplanade, a continuation of King's Esplanade with its cast iron lamp standards, Victorian seawall guardrails and wind shelters stretches from Courtnay Terrace to Hove Street south. Only the east section is in the Cliftonville conservation area. This esplanade makes a visual statement along the whole of this part of Hove seafront and all of it ought to be included in a conservation area. As the Old Hove conservation area boundary on its south side ends north of Kingsway it is recommended that the proposed extension should be added to the Cliftonville conservation area. The plan below shows the proposed extension marked in red.



Compiled by a sub-group of the Brighton and Hove Conservation Advisory Group:
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Appendix 1: Cliftonville Review : The ideal lighting

1.Camberwell

As used by the West Hove Commissioners in 1860's; to be used with cradle and inverted frog. Recommended for use for example in Denmark Villas CA, Albany Villas, Hove Station CA, Osborne Villas, Medina Villas, St Aubyns, George Street.



The Camberwell is a traditional copper lantern widely used in the late 1800's. The traditional unit was IP54 and has clear lower and opal upper glazing which provides a degree of upward light to softly illuminate building fascias. The IP65 version has a copper top and a one piece glazing and the Hinton St George project won the European Dark Skies Ward for Village lighting in 2005. The lantern is hand crafted from copper; its decorative finial and tower set make it unique to Sugg Lighting. The Camberwell is available in a variety of combinations and can be supplied with a door or a hinged lid for re-lamping. The lantern is frog mounted as standard designed to fit a 76mm spigot. All gear is class I wired and a full range of discharge gear can be accommodated integrally within the lantern. The Sugg twin beam optic can be fitted offering a superior lighting performance; this lantern will also take a glass refractor. Single and two part electronic photocells are available as standard and should be factory fitted to maintain IP integrity

For details see

http://www.sugglighting.co.uk/pages/historical_lighting/camberwell.php

2. Rochester, with simulated 'BLEECO' Swanneck



The Rochester range of decorative pendant luminaires, recreate the traditional look of railway lanterns of the past. Manufactured from a combination of aluminium spinning's with an aluminium cast top section the fittings are suitable for both traditional and contemporary applications. The luminaire has an IP rating of IP65. The Rochester large is fitted with a Sugg road optic and has clear polycarbonate glazing as standard. The Rochester medium is fitted with either the twin beam optic or cycle optic; all sizes are ideally scaled for 5 to 8m column applications, for decorative and amenity lighting. This fitting is widely used and, with a variety of pendant brackets, can offer a performance solution as the

unobstructed glazing improves the units light output performance and lighting distribution. The Rochester luminaire has an easy fit pendant fitting. The lantern is supplied as standard as a pendant luminaire in three sizes and will cover a variety of mounting heights and lamp wattages. The gear is housed in the main luminaire body with the exception of electronic gear, which can be accommodated in the top void away from the lamp, as the temperature in the top section of the luminaire is well below the required temperatures of electronic gear packages. All gear is class I wired and a full range of discharge gear can be incorporated within the luminaires. Photocells are fitted into the top casting; single and two-piece cells are available as standard.

For details see

http://www.sugglighting.co.uk/pages/historical_lighting/rochester.php

3. Upright Rochester

Recommended replacement for lamp standards on King's and Hove Esplanade



The Upright Rochester range of post top luminaires recreates the traditional look of railway lanterns of the past. Manufactured from a combination of aluminium spinning's with an aluminium cast top section the fittings are suitable for traditional applications. The luminaire has an IP65 rating. The Upright Rochester large is fitted with a Sugg Road optic and has clear polycarbonate glazing as standard. The Rochester medium is fitted with the twin beam optic; all sizes are ideally scaled for 5m to 6m column applications, for decorative and amenity lighting. This fitting is widely used within the theatre districts in London and as far away as Hong Kong. The clear unobstructed glazing profiles offer a solution as the output performance and lighting distributions can be varied by the choice of optic. The glazing is held by three stainless steel retaining couplings, that when released lower the brim and optic tray down for re-lamping.

For details see:

http://www.sugglighting.co.uk/pages/historical_lighting/upright_rochester.php