

HOVE STATION NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM - AN EMERGING VISION FOR THE STATION AREA

CONSULTATION DRAFT

Introduction

During spring and summer this year members of the Hove Station Neighbourhood Forum’s Housing, Regeneration and Transport Working Group spent many evenings on site, in workshops and meetings bringing together and developing the range of ideas and suggestions that had evolved over the previous year to begin to formulate a vision for the future of the Hove Station area. This document presents the outcome of this work as agreed by the Management Committee of the Forum.

There clearly will need to be further discussions to develop the draft planning principles and development ideas into Neighbourhood Plan policies, but this paper demonstrates the progress in our thinking about how redevelopment could transform the area.

The Context

The Hove Station Neighbourhood Forum (HSNF) was formally designated by Brighton and Hove City Council at the end of 2014 as the body with the responsibility of preparing the Hove Station Neighbourhood Plan. This was after considerable discussions about the geographical area the Neighbourhood Plan should cover – see figure 1. A wide range of work has been carried out since then. This document relates exclusively to the future of the area North and South of the Railway line around Hove Station that is identified in the emerging City Plan, Part I, as Development Area 6. (DA6). DA6 only covers part of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area, but this is where the largest amount of change is expected within the plan period of the City plan and the emerging Neighbourhood Plan (up to 2030). Development outside of the DA6 area will be dealt with in a similar approach in cooperation with the newly formed Stoneham Neighbourhood Planning group.

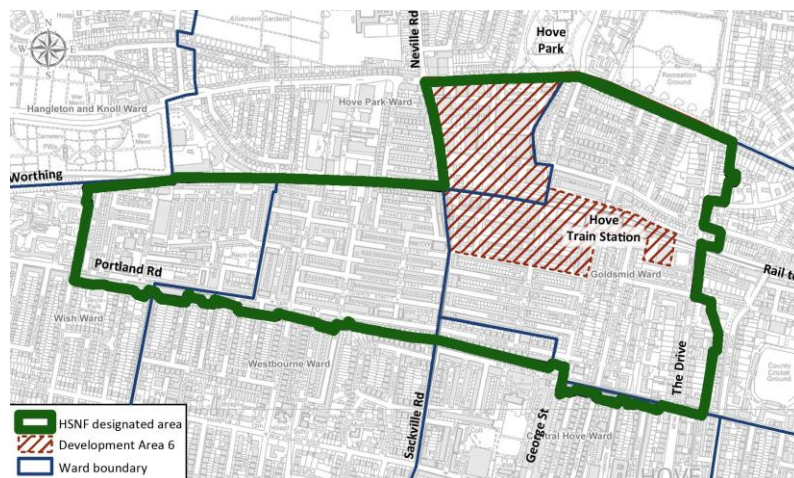


Fig 1 – Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area

DA6 Hove Station Area

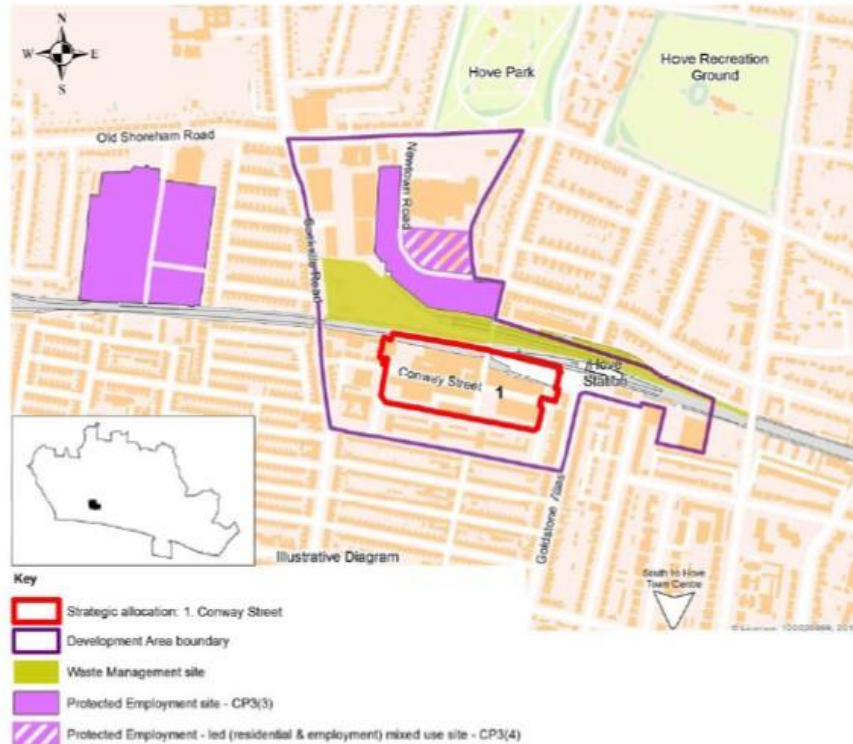


Fig 2 – Map showing Development Area 6

The Process so far and into the future

The draft neighbourhood planning principles outlined in this document will be further developed and applied across the whole of the Neighbourhood Area. The ideas and initial development proposals outlined below are our first attempt to apply these principles to the DA6 area where major redevelopment will transform this part of Hove.

These draft principles and proposals have evolved through our early community engagement work which has included three **Have Your Say** events in 2013 and 2014 attended by nearly 300 residents – with a fourth programmed for **November 21st** this year. They will be further developed in early 2016 with inputs from residents and local businesses via the Forum’s Working Groups and workshops. Draft Neighbourhood Plan policies will be the focus of a fifth Have Your Say event in Spring 2016.

A Draft Neighbourhood Plan will be submitted to BHCC which will check that that it conforms to the strategic policies of the City Plan. BHCC will then organise a formal consultation across the whole Neighbourhood Plan Area and an assessment of the Plan by an independent Planning Inspector. The final Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to a referendum in which everyone living and/or working in the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be entitled to vote. .

In developing the **ideas** for DA6, we have found that some of the specific policies in the City Plan are outdated and we believe that more can be achieved locally to assist the wider



policies of the City Plan both in terms of housing and employment. We have produced a policy analysis of all the City Plan policies that are of relevance to the Hove Station Area and this can be found on our website.

At the time of writing this we assume that the City Plan will now finally progress towards adoption so that a firm framework for development in the city becomes available.

A three dimensional vision

This written summary of our ideas to date is to be accompanied by a 3D model of the area which will give a better visual presentation of the potential transformation the Hove Station Area.

Vision Statement for the Hove Station Neighbourhood Area

To create a Neighbourhood Plan for the regeneration of the area which will realise its potential by creating a vibrant, coherent community which is a great place to live work and relax

- *Strong and diverse community*
- *Mixed but complementary land uses although predominantly residential*
- *Better connectivity and permeability through the area – especially across the railway divide*
- *Prioritising sustainable travel and unlocking existing transport bottlenecks*
- *Rich urban character drawing on historical design/architectural legacy*
- *"Urban" high density: mid-rise development as standard with landmark high rise developments as signature projects at key locations*
- *Housing with good space and sustainability standards based on national standards*
- *New and improved social facilities, schools, nurseries, as needed for the increased population*
- *Green, natural and attractive with spaces for communal activities*
- *Reduced carbon emissions through low carbon new buildings, improved energy efficiency of existing buildings, sustainable and local generation and use of renewable energy*

Neighbourhood planning principles for Development Area 6 (DA6)

The realisation of the overall vision for the designated Neighbourhood Area will substantially depend on the development and application of the following draft planning principles to guide the sustainable regeneration of DA6, as the core of a new **"HOVE STATION QUARTER"**.

- **An integrated spatial regeneration framework.** The Neighbourhood Plan can add value to the City Plan by making better use of the underused and 'brownfield' land and substantially improve the area for the benefit of both the local community and the city as a whole. The Neighbourhood Plan should develop and promote an integrated, rather than a piecemeal, approach to the regeneration of DA6. Thus it should establish an overall

spatial development framework which will ensure that each development project contributes in a distinctive and complementary way to the creation of a new **Hove Station Quarter**.

- **Regeneration as place-making.** The integrated framework should promote redevelopment which establishes a new sense of place – an **identity** for the **Hove Station Quarter**. This could be delivered in variety of ways, such as one or more ‘signature buildings’ in the area, imaginative new street lighting and signage, together with a suite of public realm investments in paving and green infrastructure which will include restoring the Victorian heritage of mature trees. The area around the station could become a “new centre” for Hove with its own identity which accommodates the creative enterprises that thrive in our city and weaves them into a stimulating and attractive mixed residential/commercial locality.
- **Housing capacity and density.** The DA6 area can and should accommodate substantially more new housing than the minimum 650 units proposed in the City Plan But increased housing must be accompanied by a proportionate increase in the provision of statutory services, particularly education, health and social services, within or close to the redevelopment area.
- **Housing tenure.** Within the increasing constraints of emerging government housing policy it is as yet unclear how the plan will be able to encourage the provision of a mix of tenures to support a diverse population. The bulk of new housing provision will be for sale or for market rent. However, if possible, the Plan should promote innovative public-private sector partnership mechanisms which deliver both improvements to existing social rented housing areas and additional social rented units.
- **Employment land.** The current proposals for employment uses and types need to be reviewed as it should now be possible to provide for a wide variety of employment uses, which more accurately reflect current and future needs of the city’s fast changing economy than those proposed in the City Plan. This may require amendments to the City plan designation as part of the preparation of Part II of the City Plan.
- **Transport and Movement.** The traffic and access arrangements to the DA6 area should aim to reduce *through-vehicular* traffic. Such traffic should be allowed to *percolate* through the area but the area needs to be as safe as possible. Thus the principles of traffic calming would be applied to the maximum possible extent. For example, through-vehicular traffic should be at very low speeds with roads preferably having shared surfaces with pedestrians and cyclists. In all respects new development in the area should reflect the very easy access to public transport, both rail and bus, and thus take advantage of major opportunities for car free or reduced car developments. The Neighbourhood Plan will identify and promote pedestrian and cycle networks which focus on the station as a **sustainable transport hub**.
- **Community infrastructure.** The Plan will establish the range and quantity of community facilities which will be needed arising from additional needs generated by the large-scale redevelopment, over and above those already provided for in the infrastructure section of the City Plan. Accordingly the plan will seek to establish priority needs for the investment of developer contributions in community infrastructure.
- **Green infrastructure.** The area needs a substantial environmental uplift. Thus the Neighbourhood Plan will clearly set out the environmental improvements needed and required from any development in the area. In terms of green infrastructure, these will include substantial street tree planting, vertical green walls and considerable investment in the public realm between buildings, including a substantial upgrade of the Hove Station



footbridge as a public right of way and the setting of the listed buildings of Hove Station and the surrounding Conservation Areas. The outcome should tie in closely with the ideas put forward in the 2007 Gehl report, 'public life, public space';

Low Carbon Neighbourhood Planning. The Neighbourhood Plan will implement the principles of low carbon neighbourhood planning as illustrated in the recently published *Low Carbon Neighbourhood Planning – a Guidebook*. Thus it will follow the principles laid down in the City Plan and encourage and promote the highest possible standards of energy and water efficiency in both new and existing buildings and support the implementation of District Heating as proposed in the Brighton and Hove Energy Study.

In summary the committee strongly believes that the Neighbourhood Plan can add value to the City Plan by making better use of land and substantially improving the area for the benefit of the local community as well as the city as a whole.

DA 6 North of the Railway

Structure of development: the components of a spatial development framework

The area currently is underused and could be transformed into a vibrant mixed residential and business area. The proposed Hyde residential / office development at the corner Goldstone Lane and Newtown Road gives an indication on how intensification could take place in the area. Heights of around 3-6 storeys, with development in blocks would be appropriate. The boundary north towards Old Shoreham Road could be designed with blocks rising south away from the Old Shoreham Road to minimise impacts on Hove Park. A vertical mixture of office / other employment and residential would be desirable. To achieve variety and architectural interest development sites should be 'parcelised' with different segments designed by different architects or architectural practices.

A master plan for the area should provide for a signature building in the centre to which would accommodate for community and other facilities of interest.

Development could follow either side of a spine road through the area (Newtown Road) and there should be a pedestrian / cycling connection between the North-Western corner (Junction Old Shoreham Road /Sackville Road) and the area south of the station.

The potential future of the bus station is the subject of substantial and ongoing discussion see below. One suggestion was to move the bus station north of the railway approximately to the old coal yard area. This could give better access for buses to the main road network, but would clearly have implications for any road layout in the area. A road traffic link between the two areas across the railway has been discounted but a second footbridge with a lift at each end to link DA6 North to Hove Station would be an important addition to give better access to the station. The existing Hove Station footbridge must be upgraded or replaced and made accessible as part of any major redevelopment in the area.

The Plan should advocate more traffic calming on the roads through the area, with shared surface sections within the development area and in adjoining roads including Newtown Road-Wilbury Avenue and Fonthill Road.

The area immediately north of the Station footbridge and the connection via Newtown Road to DA6 North merits a significant upgrade, including part pedestrianisation and creating a shared surface area outside the shops in Hove Park Villas.

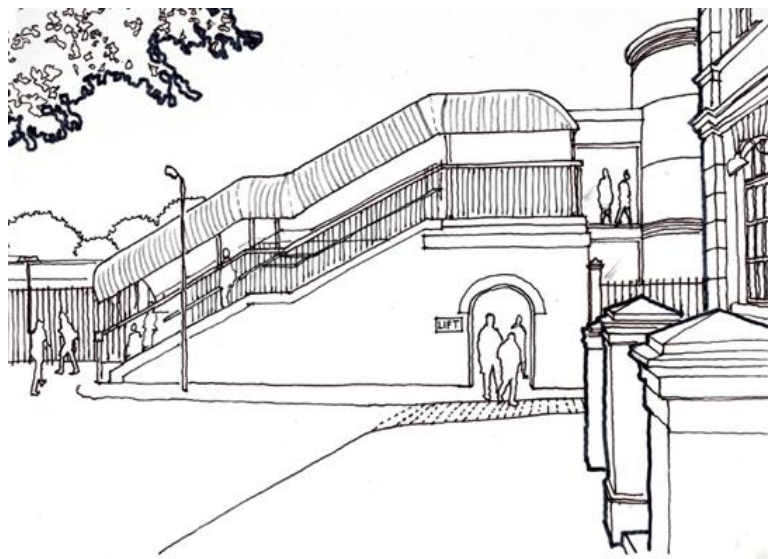
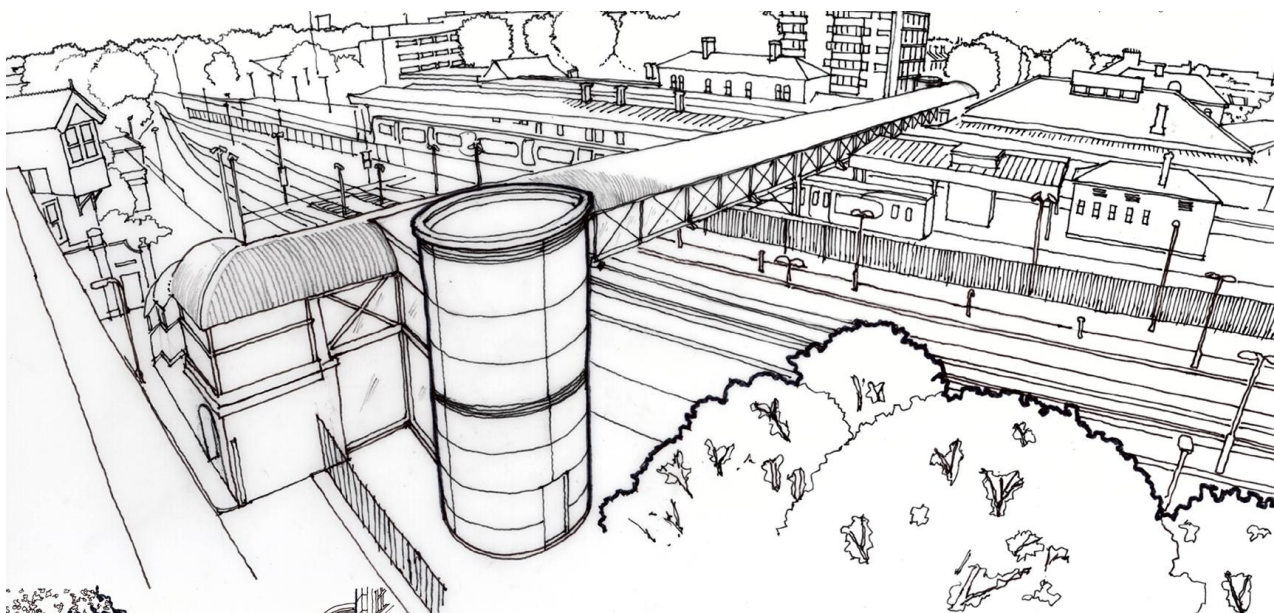


Fig 3 – An initial proposal for making Hove Station Footbridge more accessible



Picture: Shared surface road in Brighton: an essential component of traffic calming

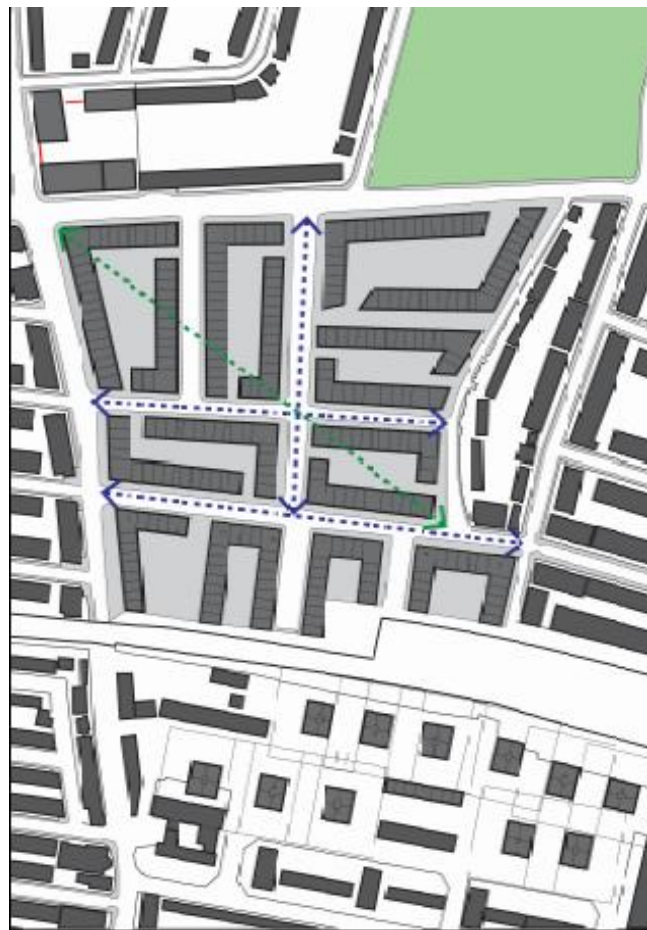
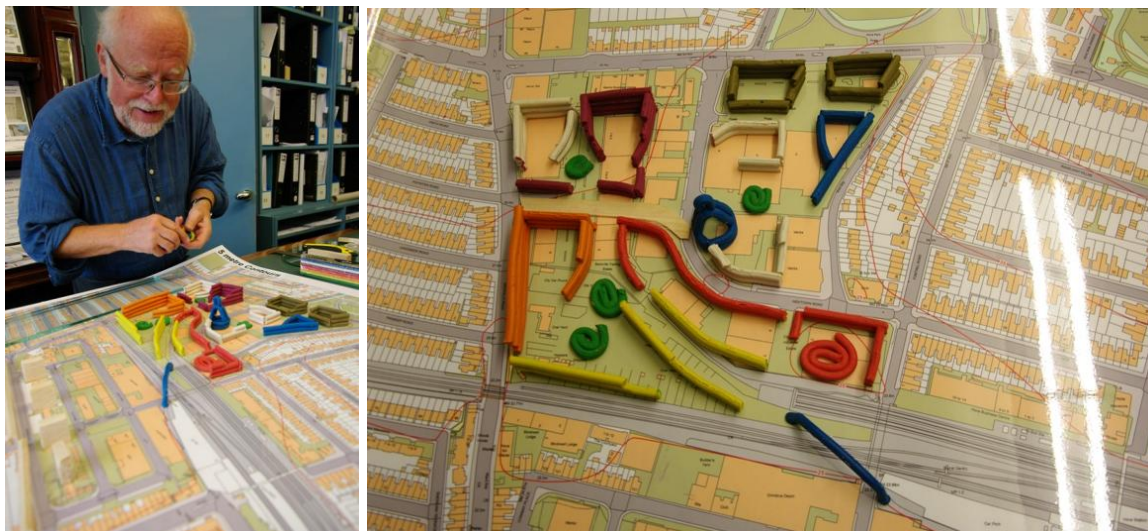


Figure 4: Very early modelling of the potential future of DA6 North of the Railway



Picture: Modelling workshop – a first attempt

DA 6 South of the Railway

This area offers a range of opportunities which should be realised through an integrated and comprehensive development programme established by the Neighbourhood Plan.

Opportunities east of Goldstone Villas:

The Royal Mail site (and possibly the Bowling Green) may be suitable for a variety of development options, including high density housing development, a school or possibly a re-located bus station although the latter might now be impracticable bearing in mind the recent residential development at the entrance to the site.

Given its prominent location in the Hove Station Conservation Area the residential corner building opposite the station, could be upgraded with additional floors, which could fund a complete facade treatment;

Hove Station Gateway - the station forecourt and surroundings

Hove Station Conservation Area comprises the entire length of Goldstone Villas and round the corner at the north end to the top end of Denmark Street and includes many of the designated Neighbourhood Area's Listed Buildings. The entire area, including the old station building and its surroundings needs an environmental makeover with uses which would be more appropriate for what should be an attractive part of the centre of the proposed Hove Station Quarter.

Resolving the issue of how the station forecourt area could be linked to the Conway Street area of DA6 South is a major challenge. The level difference is some 8-10 m. One solution, as part of redevelopment of the area south of the station and railway line could entail wide, sweeping, steps designed as a feature and bridging down to the lower level from the station forecourt area and behind the Station pub (former Cliftonville Hotel) with vertical planting as a softening feature.



The area to the west of Goldstone Villas

The area from Ethel street west to the Sackville Road boundary of DA6 should be planned as a phased, mixed use comprehensive regeneration area. The regeneration would include both redevelopment and refurbishment components.

Redevelopment between Conway Street south of the bus station and Clarendon Road should be block by block, and maintain the current road pattern, with the potential exception of extending Fonthill Road / Goldstone Street southwards along its original route, to improve circulation within the area.

This phased regeneration process could include the redevelopment of the sites between the 10 storey blocks which are currently occupied by 39 two storey flats and maisonettes, garages and parking spaces – significantly under-used sites which (like the high rise blocks) are owned by the BHCC Housing Department. This redevelopment could incorporate 3 to 5 storey blocks and would provide the opportunity of a significant increase in the number of new homes as well as the provision of amenity open space and wider environmental improvement which would benefit existing residents of the 10 storey blocks. Another option would be to seek to achieve a substantially larger area of open space at the cost of fewer additional dwellings.

Due to current heights of buildings and the lower level location in relation to the station and Goldstone Villas, the area can easily accommodate buildings higher than 6 storeys. Indeed there are opportunities here to sculpt roofscapes and create an interesting townscape.

Development should be mixed residential and employment uses with ground floors designed to facilitate an interesting street environment with wider pavements and less on-street parking.

Ultimately street frontages should invite people to go to explore the area and linger. Facilities such as a cinema, cafes, small scale independent retailers and other attractions would be welcome, but the area would not be suitable for any major shopping facilities.

The environment should be greened up as much as possible, with a high density of street trees and paving to define pedestrian networks.

On completion of redevelopment streets such as Ethel Street, Ellen Street and Conway Street should in the main be shared surface roads, with provision for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

The neighbourhood Plan should allocate a significant element of green open space in the area, perhaps north of the Agora, as an urban mini park. For this to happen, all surrounding developments will have to make a financial contribution and this will need to be anchored in the plan, as a priority for the local investment of developer contributions

Below are set out some ideas on how to accommodate parking and it may be necessary to establish a commuted car parking scheme for new developments in the area to allow a rational car parking arrangement to emerge.



The future of the bus garage site

Ideally the bus station should be relocated, possibly to the former coal yard site, or the Royal Mail site, or elsewhere in the city. The area now occupied by the bus garage provides opportunities but at present the bus station is a major current constraint.

This means that redevelopment on the south side of Conway Street must not compromise the potential redevelopment of the bus station site on the north side.

Assuming that the bus depot moves in the medium term, the area could be further developed along Conway Street, creating a new street frontage of 'parcelised' housing possibly 3-6 stories high - Conway Street North. This could mirror Conway Street South, which would have the type of development currently proposed by Matsim for the Furniture Village site

It is conceivable that the bus station move would be viable when land values in the area increase as the first phase of a planned comprehensive regeneration programme comes on line. A financial argument might be made for a move to the Coal Board site on the basis that development potential in the area south of the railway would increase the land values significantly in that area to make a move viable – this needs to be looked at further. Another option could be the Royal Mail site, which again would keep the bus station near the railway station.

IF the bus garage does not move but is redeveloped in situ then there might be opportunities to build residential or commercial development above the bus station. But the retention of the bus station would mean that bus traffic would pass through what will have become a mixed-use area with much more housing than is there now. Thus this is not an attractive option.

Roads, access and parking

The current road pattern should stay, with the possible extension of Fonthill Road /Goldstone Street southwards. The area will need traffic management to reduce speeds and we believe stretches with shared surface will help to substantially reduce speeds.

We have set out above an idea for linking the areas North and South of the railway.

Parking should be planned centrally for large parts of the area, in support of mainly car-free developments. One option is for that part of the area north of the railway bounded by Fonthill Road/Newtown Road/railway to be used for station parking / commuter parking. This could be 2 storeys hidden behind frontage development. This might also become parking available for the area as a whole including residents and visitors parking.

Such a move could free up the current station car park for substantial investment in either residential or commercial uses.

Other key issues:

Any residential units in the development should meet the proposed *National Space Standard*. The plan should also deal with issues such as tenure and housing affordability. The scope to influence these factors through planning are being restricted by emerging government policy. Thus the work to further develop the *Neighbourhood Plan* will have to include considering



innovative and community-supported development partnerships between the BHCC and the major private landowners/developers.

How to move forward -

We believe in the need to join the interests of various stakeholders in the area to arrive at more comprehensive and community-backed planning solutions that provide the balanced and improved neighbourhood we want to see. We are therefore working both with landowners and developers in the area, with Brighton and Hove City Council as well as with local residents and businesses to help create a future for the area from which all will benefit.

13 November 2015

The Hove Station Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee