

Valley Design Brief Note: May 2012

Introduction

The following note summarises feedback from the:

1. 16th May Design Team Meeting (Appendix 1)
2. Stakeholder (Appendix 2) and Officer (Appendix 3) scoping workshops
3. Public Scoping Consultation (Appendix 4)

The events summarised feed into the Design Brief for Valley Gardens. Alongside the Valley Gardens Public Realm Analysis, the issues identified in this note will comprise the Valley Gardens Design Brief.

Using the Note

Due to the amount of information gathered during the events and the scope for a variety of individual views to be offered during those events, only recurring or otherwise notable themes are summarised for consideration as part of the Design Brief. A wider summary of information from the events is attached as appendices to the note.

For ease, information is arranged in the following key headings:

Design (D) headings relate to physical aspects of the current or any new Valley Gardens design. Design headings are Ambience, Character, Connection, Ecology, Movement, Safety and Use. Process (P) headings relate to information that will inform the design process. These are Constraints, Context, Linked Projects, Practical and Precedents.

Design

D1: Ambience

- Introduce measures to reduce the impact of vehicle noise and pollution on users of the Gardens
- Can intimacy be introduced to the Gardens (to make the spaces feel more human in scale) without creating negative side effects (lack of passive surveillance etc)?
- Consider impact of the UK weather on use of the Gardens

D2: Character

- Improve visual and physical connections with key buildings / features, such as the Pavilion, Pier and St Peters.
- Minimise street clutter and overcomplicated landscape / traffic infrastructure.

- Investigate ways to give the Gardens a distinct character. A recurring theme from the consultation was a desire for a natural, peaceful environment, perhaps drawing on the lack of other green spaces within the city centre.

D3: Connection

- Opportunities should be sought to link Valley Gardens with the surrounding city along its full length. For example, can linking Victoria Gardens south with the western building façade improve links with North Laine, Pavilion, Leisure Centre etc?
- Improve pedestrian and cycle connections to and through the Gardens, perhaps creating a 'green boulevard' through the area.
- Remove barriers impeding east west movement across the Gardens between key destinations, such as St Peters Church and the Station.

D4: Ecology

- Consider opportunities to restore 'the Wellesbourne' – even if this is only a reference to 'a river that was never really a river'
- Can rainwater harvesting / swales be incorporated into the design?
- Plant choice / landscaping should be guided by consideration of future climate change
- Can links be made with wildflower and chalk grassland planting in adjacent areas?

D5: Movement

- A recurring theme throughout the scoping consultation was a desire for a 'green boulevard' running north to south through the Gardens within a simplified transport arrangement.
- Three transport options are considered as viable early options to investigate further:
 1. Balanced arrangements on each (east and west) side of the Gardens
 2. General traffic focussed on one side (with perhaps buses, cycles etc on the other)
 3. All traffic on one side of the Gardens
- A strategy should be developed alongside the design process to limit the amount of vehicles travelling through the area on 'unnecessary journeys'. This will include, but not necessarily be limited to:
 1. Rebranding local car-parks to make them more attractive to potential users
 2. Introducing Variable Message Signing to provide drivers with up to date journey information
 3. Using soft marketing to reduce the number of short local car journeys that can be made by other transport modes
 4. Improving conditions for alternative transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport to make them more viable choices

- Review changes made to traffic flow in and around London Road in the 1990's. Were the changes successful or did they create more problems than they solved? If the latter, should they be reversed?
- Can new, more legible taxi ranks be created through the Gardens, perhaps at the south west of the Steine?
- Consider ways in which to improve legibility of all routes through, and connections to destinations outside the Gardens.
- Review and as far as possible design out the issues contributing towards stop start vehicle journeys.
- Review whether the current bus stop arrangements are best suited to provide optimal connections to key city locations.
- Ensure bus stops are easy to get to and have high quality facilities
- Provide pleasant as well as direct pedestrian and cycle routes through the Gardens.
- As far as possible design out aspects that encourage conflict between different transport modes and other users.
- Ensure cycle facilities are consistent in terms of provision and quality.
- Consider taking traffic out of the south and west sides of the Old Steine to help simplify and so improve traffic flow.
- Traffic on both sides of the Gardens contributes to overly complex junction arrangements and so delays to traffic and barriers to other users. Can this be redressed?
- Improve the environment and entrances to Pool Valley, or consider opportunities to move the facility to somewhere more suitable.

D6: Safety

- The design & design process need to consider the impact of Street Drinkers and Anti Social Behaviour on the area. The project cannot be seen to 'design in' Anti Social Behaviour.
- Create an environment that is and feels safer from traffic
- Can lighting be used to enhance safety and character?

D7: Use

- Can vulnerable groups be included in the design and new environment?
- Can / should the Steine be re-invented as an event space?
- Create a place that "is the city" / is a place / a destination
- Investigate ways to incorporate nature into the future offer of the area.
- Provide seating and other basic amenities such as food and drink and toilets.
- Investigate opportunities for more interesting and inviting facilities in the Gardens and surrounding areas.
- Investigate opportunities for 'things to do' in the Gardens, such as Art Installations, Events, Picnic Areas and Play Facilities.
- Can the St Peters and Old Steine areas work as 'hang out' areas to relax from the North Laine and Lanes, linked by a green boulevard?

- The area outside the language school at the bottom of Church Street gets very busy but students rarely venture into the Gardens. Can this potential link be enhanced?
- Can more be made of Victoria Gardens North's potential as an event space (given its proximity to the 'cultural quarter') without upsetting surrounding residents?
- Can wi-fi be introduced to central spaces of Valley Gardens to encourage student and other users?
- Can St Peter's Church be developed as a community focus for the Gardens and surrounding city?
- Consider ways to ensure events within the Gardens include local residents as far as possible, and minimise any detrimental impacts (such as noise nuisance)
- Investigate opportunities to enhance the evening offer / use of the area

Process

P1: Constraints

- There is flexibility to re-arrange the general shape of green spaces within the Gardens (there is no conservation or heritage constraint protecting the current arrangement).
- The estimated age of the older elms in Valley Gardens is around 80-120 years. Elms in Preston Park that are 400+ years and still going strong, so the trees in Victoria Gardens still have a lot of life in them.
- The 'raised planters' around some Elms in Victoria Gardens are a later addition, and Elms are one of the few trees that can adapt to a raised surrounding bed. So it may well be that the raised planters are not a constraint – there may be flexibility to remove the raised planters or work with the new levels, so long as a dialogue is maintained with the council arboriculturalists.
- Although the Level is a separate project, the area around the Level (including the cycle arrangement) is the responsibility of the Valley Gardens project team.
- The Valley Gardens project includes the Aquarium Roundabout. The interim design suggestions produced by Mark Strong are in response to a Times Newspaper initiative and consider the Roundabout arrangement as it is today. Therefore they are distinct from the Valley Gardens objectives or brief.
- Park and Ride is unlikely to be part of the solution to traffic levels in Valley Gardens. The idea has always been difficult to deliver for a range of administrations, and would only have an impact on traffic levels if combined with measures to reduce city centre car park spaces. The majority of car parks in the city centre are not owned by the council.
- The current disjointed transport arrangement was a result of the existing layout developing as a series of budget compromised iterations rather than

as a consistent, quality overall scheme. Therefore, maintaining the existing arrangement should not be a key concern.

- The Royal Pavilion is heavily used/over-used causing various issues. Can the relationship with the surrounding Gardens be enhanced to alleviate, rather than add to some of this pressure?

P2: Context

- Investigate the history of walls/fences around the Pavilion to ascertain how much of a constraint they are on the project.
- St Peter's Church was built by Kemp as the termination of public realm in the city. Does this historical role have any influence over the future design of Valley Gardens?
- Investigate and strengthen any beneficial links between the Gardens and adjacent destinations such as the Pavilion and Station.

P3: Linked Projects

- The Ann Street LICI project is ongoing but temporary. It will not have a link to Valley Gardens.
- The design brief and process should demonstrate synergy between Valley Gardens and Biosphere objectives. The council is bidding for UNESCO Biosphere (reserve) status by 2014. This includes various complementary links to the Valley Gardens project, including 'economic and social links to nature' 'transportation of goods & people', 'sense of place' and 'growing knowledge'. Valley Gardens is within the 'transition zone' – people living and working in harmony with nature. The project could also incorporate links to the Downs hinterland and reefs.
- The project should help deliver the Council's Green Network vision.
- The Lewes Road project could help redistribute traffic, linked to Park and Ride and/or other options.
- The Circus Street Project will include a new library, new university accommodation and commercial/retail units on the site. Circus Street would also be narrow and improved as part of the project.
- Despite some opposition, the Ladyboys of Bangkok funds a lot of the Brighton Fringe.
- The Dome is bidding for money to open up onto Pavilion Gardens.

P4: Practical

- Develop a deliverable management plan to ensure the Gardens can be adequately maintained in future.
- Can we enforce enhancement of derelict / poorly maintained buildings?
- If relevant, develop an events strategy to help ensure the area fulfils its potential as an event destination in future. Consider drawing on support from Brighton Fringe.

- Ensure any risks associated with planning processes are identified and managed.

P5: Precedent

- Newington Green in Islington has recently been renovated, having suffered from similar issues to those experienced in Valley Gardens. Could it provide a precedent to learn lessons from?
- Winter Gardens, Bournemouth
- Green Bridge over Mile End Rd

Appendix 1

Valley Gardens Design Brief Notes: May 2012

From Project Team Meeting: 16th May 2012

Ben, Jim (BHCC), Chris, Oli, Ian, John (UI) and Fenella, Murray (UP)

D1: Connection:

- Can linking Victoria Gardens south with the western building façade improve links with North Laine, Pavilion, Leisure Centre etc?
- Create a comfortable and predictable environment with legible connections into the city

D2: Ecology:

- Consider links to the Wellesbourne – even if this is only a reference to ‘a river that was never really a river’
- Can rainwater harvesting / swales be incorporated into the design?
- Plant choice / landscaping should be guided by consideration of future climate change
- Can the Gardens’ landscaping plan reflect a ‘pick and mix’ of different local ecological conditions?

D3: Movement:

- Scoping consultation highlighted a recurring desire for a green boulevard through the Gardens, within a simplified transport arrangement.
- Three transport options were considered as viable early options to investigate further:
 4. Balanced arrangements on each (east and west) side of the Gardens
 5. General traffic focussed on one side (with perhaps buses, cycles etc on the other)
 6. All traffic on one side of the Gardens
- Consider rebranding car parks to make them more attractive options for earlier interception of southbound vehicles.
- Consider wider traffic management plans, including VMS / demand management and behaviour change to reduce need for unnecessary journeys into the Gardens
- Review changes made to traffic flow in and around London Road in the 1990’s. Were they successful or did they create more problems than they solved?
- Can new, more legible taxi ranks be created through the Gardens, perhaps at the south west of the Steine? Are there benefits in relocating Ship Street taxi ranks to Valley Gardens?

D4: Safety

- The design & design process need to consider the impact of Street Drinkers and Anti Social Behaviour on the area. The project cannot be seen to 'design in' Anti Social Behaviour.

D5: Use:

- Can vulnerable groups be included in the design and new environment?
- Can / should the Steine be re-invented as an event space?
- Create a place that "is the city" / is a place / a destination

P1: Constraints:

- There is flexibility to re-arrange the general shape of green spaces within the Gardens (there is no conservation or heritage constraint protecting the current arrangement).
- The estimated age of the older elms in Valley Gardens is around 80-120 years. Elms in Preston Park that are 400+ years and still going strong, so the trees in Victoria Gardens still have a lot of life in them.
- The 'raised planters' around some Elms in Victoria Gardens are a later addition, and Elms are one of the few trees that can adapt to a raised surrounding bed. So it may well be that the raised planters are not a constraint – there may be flexibility to remove the raised planters or work with the new levels, so long as a dialogue is maintained with the council arboriculturalists.
- Although the Level is a separate project, the area around the Level (including the cycle arrangement) is the responsibility of the Valley Gardens project team.
- The Valley Gardens project includes the Aquarium Roundabout. The interim design suggestions produced by Mark Strong are in response to a Times Newspaper initiative and consider the Roundabout arrangement as it is today. Therefore they are distinct from the Valley Gardens objectives or brief.
- Park and Ride is unlikely to be part of the solution to traffic levels in Valley Gardens. The idea has always been difficult to deliver for a range of administrations, and would only have an impact on traffic levels is combined with measures to reduce city centre car park spaces. The majority of car parks in the city centre are not owned by the council.

P2: Linked Projects:

- The Ann Street LICI project is ongoing but temporary. It will not have a link to Valley Gardens.
- The design brief and process should demonstrate synergy between Valley Gardens and Biosphere objectives. The council is bidding for UNESCO Biosphere (reserve) status by 2014. This includes various complementary links to the Valley Gardens project, including 'economic and social links to nature' 'transportation of goods & people', 'sense of place' and 'growing knowledge'. Valley Gardens is within the 'transition zone' – people living and

working in harmony with nature. The project could also incorporate links to the Downs hinterland and reefs.

- The project should help deliver the Council's Green Network vision.

Appendix 2

Valley Gardens Stakeholder Scoping Meeting 24th April 2012

1: Pre Event Comments

D1: Ambience: Aspirations

- I think it would be good if the green and flowerbed area were to be extended outwards, ie over what is currently pavement, and a footpath and cycle lane down the centre. That way, people will be furthest away from traffic and fumes, and the gardens will have much more of a function than they do at the moment.
- Continue with the excellent informal planting adopted in recent years, particularly around the Dolphin fountain, saving public money with less labour intensive digging up and replanting of formal seasonal schemes every few months.

D2: Character: Issues

- Lack of cohesion between current green spaces
- Level of quality does not reflect the prominent location in Brighton
- They are not made the best of! They often look shabby and uncared for.
- Choice of plants/flora not great either - lack of colour, imagination.

D3: Connection: Aspirations

- Removal of railings up and down the gardens and
- Better signage from St Peters Church to Brighton Station via Trafalgar Street for pedestrians and bus passengers
- Improved connectivity / permeability between the Valley Gardens (St. Peters Churchyard in particular) and the surrounding retail and residential areas in order to make the Church, churchyard and wider gardens a much more inviting and an easy to reach destination
- The railings need to be removed or modified to reduce the 'island' nature of the gardens and improve permeability.
- Create a link between East and West Brighton through careful design and landscaping of green spaces.

Connection: Issues

- Isolation of space due to current road network
- Permeability between the gardens / churchyard and the surrounding areas. The railings and traffic systems are particularly problematic.
- Pedestrian access to St. Peters Church. Pedestrian and cycleways around St Peters Churchyard ignore the Church as a destination and prominent townscape feature.
- Severance - railings and traffic make it difficult / awkward for pedestrians

D4: Movement: Aspirations

- Re-landscaping the Old Steine and the area from the War Memorial up to the junction of Church Street. I think the West side of this should become completely pedestrianised with traffic running in both directions on the East side of the gardens.
- Better access for buses westbound along Union Road to the junction with Ditchling Road and more space for buses stopping at the southbound bus stop in Ditchling Road (with a real time information sign)
- Real time information sign on the northbound stop on the east of St Peter's Church
- As few traffic hold ups as possible
- Easy access depending on what the designers want to replace the existing gardens with
- An improved traffic system which is pedestrian and cyclist friendly, and encourages 'promenading' through the gardens and Churchyard in the early tradition.
- Road infrastructure improvements around the Valley Garden area in response to the heavy traffic flow
- A central axial pedestrian approach (to St Peters) from the South would be greatly welcomed.
- That the whole green strip from St Peter's Church to the beach could be like the Winter Gardens in Bournemouth, ie uninterrupted gardens all the way down, with an underpass under the coast road.
- Where it is obvious a route across the grass is going to suffer heavy foot traffic eg from Brighton University to the bottom of Church Street, put down some form of protective porous surface eg perforated rubber or concrete panels which still allow the grass to grow through.

Movement: Issues

- Insufficient and poorly located parking for St. Peters Church, which has a primarily commuter congregation.
- Obstacles to the free flowing of buses (some of which are being attended to as part of the recently awarded Better Bus Areas funding – eg St Peters Place and Edward Street junctions)
- Congestion from Marina Parade on to the 'Palace Pier' roundabout
- Traffic problems as a result of the potentially restricted vehicle flow. The council needs to have a holistic, city-wide approach to the traffic issue here.
- Buses get held up at traffic lights when often little or no traffic from other directions - happens particularly at southern end of St Peters Church - poor design - so bus stops at bottom of North Road block bus lanes and hold up buses not stopping there and capacity of bus advance near Royal Pavillion is too small and in peak times buses are actually slowed down by this as cannot get more than 4 buses through at any one time - with bendy-buses this will only get worse.
- Cycling - indirect and long routes with poorly designed lanes creating conflict with pedestrians plus with awkward crossings

D5: Safety: Issues

- Safety concerns as pedestrians cross at the junction opposite Gloucester Street

D6: Use: Aspirations

- Programmed events scheduling for the area so that it becomes a hub of activity. Brighton Fringe could easily co-ordinate this on behalf of the council.
- Making the areas more inviting generally (perhaps benches and other landscaping features, even artworks, a band stand etc)
- Restoration of St. Peters Church as the key townscape feature and destination within the Valley Gardens, particularly in relation to southern views at ground plane level and main access routes. Increased car-parking capacity for St. Peters Church and in a more appropriate location (to the north rather than the south).
- The green spaces need to be given an identity which engages with the local community

Use: Issues

- No seating areas either - be good to see more
- Pool Valley is a disgrace and an embarrassing arrival point for visitors to our City! Either it should be spruced up with toilets, ticket office, cafe with both entrance and exit from the seafront, rather than squeezing between 2 historic buildings, or ideally, incorporate the coach station between the Brighton Centre and the Churchill Square complex. The latter is where most bus routes stop, making it easy to link-up transport, and visitors would arrive, via our lovely seafront, in the commercial heart of the City which should benefit business'.

P1: Practical: Issues

- Cost. This is clearly the most significant factor. But there is scope to raise funding via grants or even corporate sponsorship of certain areas, gardens etc.
- Planning issues if residents object to any of the proposals.
- Potential noise/damage to street furniture if not maintained.

P2: Precedents

- Winter Gardens, Bournemouth
- Green Bridge over Mile End Rd

2: Group 1

Claire Morgan (Level), David Steell (One Church), David Sewell (North Laine Traders), Julian Caddy (Fringe Festival), John Hickman (Pendragon Pictures)

D1: Connections

- Links between the gardens and the Station should be improved, including links between Gloucester Road and Trafalgar Street.
- The St Peters' area is particularly poor in terms of the negative impact of the fencing and illegible crossings.

D2: Movement:

- Can greater north-south cohesion be created between the different gardens?
- Can part of the 'New Road Vibe' be extended into the gardens, especially on the western side between the junctions of Trafalgar Street and the Pavilion? Improving this section would provide an alternative route through the North Laine area, and also increase footfall through Trafalgar Street.

D3: Use:

- Reference to (albeit temporary) benefits brought to the Gardens by the White Night festival.
- Electricity and Water facilities should be built into the Garden spaces.
- Visual exposure businesses gain from passing vehicles can be beneficial. Can this be maintained in a new scheme?
- Does the lack of alternative green spaces in the area give Valley Gardens a natural role as a destination for congregating?
- Is there a risk that removing the fencing around the edges of the gardens would eventually leave no green spaces? Victoria Gardens south was cited as an example of this issue.
- Facilities and attractions are required to attract people to the area.
- The group questioned why students don't make better use of the Gardens?
- The council need to be better at facilitating events if Valley Gardens is to emerge as a venue place. The high costs of using the space are a specific barrier to their use for events. (Even though not everybody likes the Ladyboys, it was recognized that the event raises a lot of rental money).

P1: Precedent - Newington Green, Islington:

- Newington Green in Islington has recently been renovated, having suffered from similar issues to those experienced in Valley Gardens. Could it provide a precedent to learn lessons from?

3: Group 2

Viv Caisey (Living Streets), Leah O'Brien (AAArchitects), John Oram (Streamline Taxis), Simon Brewer (St Peters), Richard (Triangle Residents Group), Chris Todd (Sustainability Partnership)

D1: Ambience

- The scheme needs a way to provide some kind of protection from the sensory impact of proximity to traffic if people are to want to spend time in the Gardens
- Can intimacy be introduced to the Gardens (to make the spaces feel more human in scale) without creating negative side effects (lack of passive surveillance etc)?
- Consider impact of the UK weather on use of the Gardens

D2: Movement

- Consider clear, visible pedestrian route N-S through the Gardens as a pleasant alternative to footways around the edge of the study area
- The current 'improvements' put barriers across many desire lines, such as the route past the northern St Peters façade and west towards the Station via Trafalgar Street. Look for ways to remove these barriers.
- Simplify junctions and get a better balance between modes and uses at points where east / west routes intersect the Gardens.
- Approach to vehicular movement needs to incorporate 4 angles:
 1. Recognise some traffic has to be in the area and make sure it is accommodated
 2. Ensure conditions for less unsustainable modes of movement (bus, taxi, foot, cycle) are enhanced to reduce physical barriers that may contribute towards unnecessary volumes of vehicles in the area
 3. Use management to reduce unnecessary volumes of vehicles in the area (ideas suggested include enhanced signing around the periphery of the city and park & ride).
 4. Soft measures aimed at influencing behaviour change
- Segregated Cycle / Pedestrian facilities on narrow footways encourage conflict. Introduce a consistent, fit for purpose approach in the future scheme.

D3: Safety

- Accident hotspots need tackling (Steine, Edward St junction, St Peters / Gloucester Street junction).
- Need to make the Steine area safer / easier to navigate due to volumes of foreign students amongst others in the area.
- Poorly considered pedestrian railings increase danger by encouraging people to jump over them. Reduce such barriers in the redesign.

D4: Use

- Can we influence the building uses around the Gardens?
- Can we enforce enhancement of derelict / poorly maintained buildings?
- Can the area around St Peters (including the surrounding buildings) take on a community 'hang out' type role for residents of the surrounding districts / city – building on the church's role as a community centre?
- Can more be made of Victoria Gardens North's potential as an event space (given its proximity to the 'cultural quarter') without upsetting surrounding residents?
- Will regeneration prompt regeneration?
- Unlock barriers to people spending time in the area
- How can we introduce an evening offer / use of the area?
- There was disagreement between Simon (the Church) and Chris Todd / Viv over whether more parking should be created at the north of the Church for church users. Simon felt it was required, Chris and Viv felt this was contrary to the ideal objectives of any improvements and that opportunities to use existing public car parks in the vicinity (such as Trafalgar Street / London Road) should be examined instead.

4: Group 3

Mike Best (Bus Company), Jan Cadge (Royal Pavilion), Mal Fryer (RG Architects)

D1: Connections

- Link up 3 main spaces through Valley Gardens (St Peters, Victoria Gardens North and South).

D2: Movement

- Bus lanes vital but very 'higgely-piggely' at present.
- Main bus routes London Road – North Street suggest main links along west of Valley Gardens.
- Station buses at west side of Old Steine.
- Park and Ride system to reduce car use.
- Single dedicated bus routes are less efficient use of road space.
- Bus/taxi lanes should be exclusively so.
- Alternative routes to carparks on front to avoid Valley Gardens.
- Clear double width route down east side of Valley Gardens appears direct/unambiguous.
- Protect/reinforce 'original' axis from Pavilion to Church.
- Reinstating 'pleasure walk' promenade from Pavilion to/around the Church.
- Untangle spaghetti of traffic towards Safety and Efficiency.
- Desire for through-route and green amenity reinforcing idea of Promenade.

D3: Use

- Royal Pavilion is heavily used/over-used causing various issues.
- Overspill of current outdoor uses into Valley Gardens could off-set pressure.
- Church very open to considering use of spaces around, including vehicular use and circulation.
- South Victoria Gardens over-dominated by long events excluding community.
- Big events happen in Preston Park (Chinese State Circus).
- Events like 'Son et Lumiere' have happened in Church Gardens.
- Valley Gardens scale suitable for markets perhaps benefitting from routes through (although many markets already throughout town).
- Real opportunities for Public Realm improvements around Church and Old Steine.

P1: Context

- History of walls/fences around Pavilion should be understood (original flint wall and railing taken down in 1850s, others since, current 1960s? railings around perimeter installed by BHCC to protect.
- Many trees were blown down in great storm.
- Church built by Kemp as termination of public realm.
- Benefit from adjacent relationships to key urban destinations like Pavilion and Station.

Appendix 3

Valley Gardens Officer Scoping Notes

Group 1

Linda Anglin, Alan Buck, Sean Power, Bo Furdas

D1: Movement

- The current disjointed transport arrangement was a result of the existing layout developing as a series of budget compromised iterations rather than as a consistent, quality overall scheme.
- Taking traffic out of the south and west sides of the Old Steine could help improve traffic flow.
- Traffic on both sides of the Gardens contributes to overly complex junction arrangements and so delays to traffic and barriers to other users.

D2: Use

- The Steine and St Peters lend themselves to being developed as places to 'hang out' – oases from the shopping areas of the Lanes and North Laine respectively. The area between the two Gardens could be joined up and redeveloped as a 'green boulevard'. This could be achieved by removing traffic on one side of the road – which currently contributes to the overly complex transport arrangement – and so congestion - identified above.

Group 2

Max Woodford, Ben Coleman, Charles Field, Matt Easteal, Murray Smith, Simon Bannister, Tracy Davison

D1: Character

- Valley Gardens should become a place as well as a route to move through.
- Can the Masda Fountain could become a positive feature?

D2: Connection

- Traffic islands effectively double the amount of east-west barriers through the Gardens and should be removed where possible.
- Green spaces should be linked together and operate as a continuous space.

D3: Ecology

- Wildflower planting on Edward Street (east) has been very popular.
- Ecology is being improved in Richmond Parade through introduction of chalk grasslands.

D4: Movement

- Advance warnings/traffic management should be introduced before vehicles reach the Gardens to divert unnecessary traffic.

D5: Safety

- Lighting should be utilised to increase safety/security.

D6: Use

- The area outside the language school at the bottom of Church Street gets very busy but students rarely venture into the Gardens. Can this potential link be enhanced?
- Can wi-fi be introduced to central spaces of Valley Gardens to encourage student and other users?

P1: Linked Projects

- The Lewes Road project could help redistribute traffic, linked to Park and Ride and/or other options.
- The Circus Street Project will include a new library, new university accommodation and commercial/retail units on the site. Circus Street would also be narrow and improved as part of the project.
- Despite some opposition, the Ladyboys of Bangkok funds a lot of the Brighton Fringe.
- The Dome is bidding for money to open up onto Pavilion Gardens.

Appendix 4

Valley Gardens Consultation Summary

Executive Summary

143 people responded to the April 2013 online Valley Gardens scoping consultation.

The questions tested opinion on consultation feedback received during the 2009 'Places from Spaces' temporary transformation of Victoria Gardens relating to **current use** of Valley Gardens, and assumptions of the project management team relating to **movement** through the area.

The questions also sought views on **perception** of and **aspirations** for the Gardens. A full summary of responses is available on request from Jim Mayor (jim.mayor@brighton-hove.gov.uk / 01273 294164)

Current Use

- 1.1 Respondees were asked what would make them spend more time in Valley Gardens. 1 person (1%) said they felt Valley Gardens was fine as it was. 4 people (3%) didn't think Valley Gardens should be a place for people to spend time in. This group tended to think that human activity would damage the aesthetic (3 people) or ecological (1 person) potential of the Gardens.

19 people (13%) did not think they would ever spend much time in the Gardens. The most common reasons given were 'too much traffic' (8), 'too many street drinkers / drug takers' (7), 'too noisy' (6), 'too polluted' (4) and 'little more than a traffic island' (3). The reasons suggested that at least some of these respondents may be potential users of the space if current barriers to use could be overcome by an enhanced design.

A majority of 83% (119 people) said they would like to spend time (or more time) in Valley Gardens if the facilities / environment were improved. A wide variety of potential improvements were identified, the most popular being more trees / landscaping / vegetation (82%), less traffic (73%), less vehicle noise (71%), easier pedestrian access to the Gardens (70%), a safer (from traffic) environment (66%), better air quality (58%) and better or more seating (56%).

Movement

- 1.2 57 respondents said they drove around Valley Gardens. Views on whether it was easy to navigate around the Gardens were mixed (41% agreed, 39% disagreed). 34% felt the road was well designed to keep traffic moving, 48%

disagreed. The most common suggestions for ways to improve driving conditions were simplification of the highway arrangement and reducing numbers of vehicles.

- 1.3 31 respondees said they used taxis to get around Valley Gardens. There was no strong feeling as to the quality of location or number of taxi ranks in Valley Gardens. However, when asked how taxi provision could be improved, comments reflected a lack of awareness of rank locations in the Gardens, suggesting potential for enhanced legibility of ranks in an improved design.
- 1.4 Of the 91 people who used buses to get around the Gardens, 55% disagreed that more bus lanes are needed in the area (17% felt more bus lanes were needed), implying the new scheme should focus on improving quality rather than quantity of bus lane provision. Feedback as to the quality and location of bus stops was more balanced. Suggestions for ways to improve the Gardens for bus users were too varied to pick out an over-riding theme, although several people suggested that an additional stop between St Peters and the Old Steine would be beneficial.
- 1.5 121 people said they got around Valley Gardens on foot. Over half disagreed with the statements that 'it is pleasant to walk in Valley Gardens' (53%), and 'it is easy to cross the road in Valley Gardens' (67%), but agreed that 'there is enough room (on pavements etc) to walk' (56%). Views on whether pedestrian crossings were in the right place were mixed. As with bus users, comments as to how to improve conditions for pedestrians were too varied to identify a single over-riding theme.
- 1.6 The 58 cycle users were the most dissatisfied of all movement groups. 65% disagreed that 'it is pleasant to cycle in Valley Gardens' and 68% disagreed that 'cycle facilities in Valley Gardens are of high quality'. The most common suggestion for improving conditions for cyclists focussed on redressing the current incomplete and inconsistent provision.

Perception

- 1.7 People were invited to submit 3 words or phrases that best reflected their current perception of Valley Gardens. The question was designed to enable respondees to give an unprompted response to the area, and track any links between perception and use (the more positive people feel about a space, the more likely they are to spend time in it). Of the 385 words provided, 46 (12%) were positive, of which around half related to the area's potential. 138 (36%) were recorded as neutral, although five of the six most repeated words (loud/noisy, traffic, traffic island, roads and street drinkers) amongst others could well have been intended as criticisms. Over half the words were explicitly negative, the most repeated relating to poor maintenance (17), blandness (16), pollution (15), underuse (14), dirtiness (13), unwelcoming (8),

neglect (8) and ugliness (8). This information gives insight into the areas that need to be improved to attract people into the Gardens.

Aspirations

- 1.8 Finally people were invited to submit 3 words or phrases that best reflected their aspiration for the future of Valley Gardens. 49% of responses referred to ambience, the most popular aspirations being for the Gardens to become a place of Tranquility (21), Beauty (19), Safety (14), Cleanliness (12) and Relaxation (12). 30% of responses related to the Gardens' potential future role, with nature filled (6) and gardens (5) being the most repeated responses. 10% of people had aspirations for enhanced movement within the Gardens, 9% mentioned general aspirations (such as trees), and 2% prioritised a well managed facility.

Full Responses

2 Current Use

2.1 What would make you want to spend more time in Valley Gardens?

- I don't think Valley Gardens should be a place for people to spend time in (4)
- I already spend time in Valley Gardens and think its fine as it is (1)
- I'd like to spend time (or more time) in Valley Gardens if facilities/ the environment were improved (119)
- I don't think I would ever spend much time in Valley Gardens (19)

2.1.1 Why (don't / wouldn't you use it)?

The following reasons were given for people who didn't think they would ever spend much time in Valley Gardens:

- Too much traffic (8)
- Too noisy (6)
- Too many street drinkers (5)
- Too polluted (4)
- Little more than a traffic island (3)
- Drug takers (2)
- Too urban / windy / unattractive / close to busy roads and junctions, traffic jams, buses stopping and starting.
- I'm too busy
- Poor pedestrian crossings
- I don't live in the City and I work on the other side of it in Hove.
- For me it is a corridor between home, north of Preston Park, and the city centre - when in Valley Gardens I am en route for a destination, not looking for somewhere to pause.

2.1.2 People who didn't think Valley Gardens should be a space to spend time in said:

- Victoria Gardens should have it's fencing re-instated, the lawns repaired and the gardens attractively planted. Ample seating should be provided around the perimeter for those who wish to dwell in the area. Occupiers, ladyboys and cyclists should be kept of the lawns.
- Give us back the flower beds with vibrant colours not the drab looking grasses etc. Make it into a showpiece for the town, not just another dogs toilet. Look back 1950's and 60's for ideas if need be, get the Mazda fountain working properly with the changing coloured lights and the grass looking like we care about it. Once nobody except the gardeners set foot on the grass, now look at it, Put up fences to keep people off it need be. If it's worth attempting to improve please let's do it properly and when it's done look after it long term, not like so many attempts we have at improvements.
- Because Brighton has hardly any space that is free from human habitation. Surely there should be some space saved for other species to enjoy? The planet does not belong to humanity alone!!!
- Nice, open spaces in the middle of towns do not stay nice once people are routinely allowed to trample over them. A shining example of this is Victoria Gardens, which has now evolved from a place of beautiful lawns and flower beds to a quagmire-strewn eyesore criss-crossed with paths scarred into the turf. (The decision to remove the railings bfrom these and other gardens for the Millennium was a bad one).

2.1.3 What would you like to see in Valley Gardens to make you spend more time?

More trees / landscaping / vegetation (98)	Better / more seating (67)	Clearer views of attractive features (41)
Less traffic (87)	Less clutter (55)	Better maintenance (38)
Less vehicle noise (84)	Less anti social behaviour (56)	Public Toilets (40)
Easier pedestrian access to the gardens (83)	A distinct character (49)	Protection from elements (27)
A safer (from traffic) environment (78)	Something to do (46)	Better lighting (30)
Better air quality (69)	More interesting surrounding facilities (44)	Other (9)

3 Movement: How do you get around Valley Gardens?

3.1 Vehicle (57)

It's easy to find my way around Valley Gardens

Strongly agree	2
Tend to agree	21
Neither agree nor disagree	11
Tend to disagree	16
Strongly disagree	6

The road layout is well designed to keep traffic moving

Strongly agree	1
Tend to agree	18
Neither agree nor disagree	10
Tend to disagree	16
Strongly disagree	11

How to make Valley Gardens a better place to drive?

General Arrangement Change / Improvement (15)
Simpler Arrangement (9)
Legibility Change / Improvement (12)
Reduce Traffic (7)
Other (3)

3.2 Cycle (58)

It is pleasant to cycle in Valley Gardens

Strongly agree	0
Tend to agree	6
Neither agree nor disagree	14
Tend to disagree	27
Strongly disagree	10

Cycle facilities in Valley Gardens are of high quality

Strongly agree	0
Tend to agree	5
Neither agree nor disagree	13
Tend to disagree	25
Strongly disagree	14

How to make Valley Gardens a better place to cycle?

- Improve consistency of provision (19)
- Improve ambience (9)
- Ideas for general (other) arrangements (8)
- Improve general quality of provision (7)
- Improve / change relationship with other modes (7)
- Improve legibility of provision (6)

3.3 Bus (91)

More bus lanes are needed in Valley Gardens

Strongly agree	5
Tend to agree	9
Neither agree nor disagree	23
Tend to disagree	33
Strongly disagree	12

Bus Stops in Valley Gardens are of high quality

Strongly agree	1
Tend to agree	16
Neither agree nor disagree	44
Tend to disagree	20
Strongly disagree	5

Bus Stops in Valley Gardens are in the right place

Strongly agree	3
Tend to agree	22
Neither agree nor disagree	32
Tend to disagree	25
Strongly disagree	5

How to make Valley Gardens a better place to take a bus?

- Improve / Change Bus Stop Location (18)
- Improve / Change Bus Stop Quality (13)
- Improve / Change Bus Lane Quality (13)
- General (6) Less Buses / Traffic (5)

3.4 Foot (121)

It is pleasant to walk in Valley Gardens

Strongly agree	2
Tend to agree	29
Neither agree nor disagree	24
Tend to disagree	47
Strongly disagree	15

There is enough room (on pavements etc) to walk in Valley Gardens

Strongly agree	10
Tend to agree	55
Neither agree nor disagree	17
Tend to disagree	26
Strongly disagree	7

Pedestrian Crossings in Valley Gardens are in the right place

Strongly agree	2
Tend to agree	29
Neither agree nor disagree	39
Tend to disagree	29
Strongly disagree	17

It is easy to cross the road in Valley Gardens

Strongly agree	3
Tend to agree	17
Neither agree nor disagree	20
Tend to disagree	43
Strongly disagree	35

How to make Valley Gardens a better place to walk?

Improved relationships with other modes (48)
Improved connection (36)
Improved ambience / experiential quality (21)
Improved Routes (13)
Improved Management (13)
Improved Quality (General) (14)
Everything else (2)

3-5 Taxi (31)

Taxi Ranks in Valley Gardens are in the right place

Strongly agree	0
Tend to agree	7
Neither agree nor disagree	14
Tend to disagree	4
Strongly disagree	3

There are enough Taxi Ranks in Valley Gardens

Strongly agree	1
Tend to agree	8
Neither agree nor disagree	11
Tend to disagree	4
Strongly disagree	4

How to make Valley Gardens a better place to catch a cab?

Legibility (5)

- Are there any taxi ranks?
- Where are the taxi ranks in Valley Gardens? I go through there most days & have never seen one.
- I never get a taxi from Valley Gardens and don't have a clue about the number of location of ranks in the area.
- Not sure I know where the taxi rank(s) are.
- Knowing where the cab rank is

Taxi Rank Number (3)

- Need another taxi rank there.
- Taxi ranks are okay but possibly could do with an additional one between the ones in St Peters and East Street.
- We need a taxi rank near the bottom of Church Road.

Infrastructure (3)

- Easier parking and flow of taxis rather than having to go to the Hanningtons rank
- Lay-bys like those used by buses into which cabs could pull if flagged down - it's difficult for them to stop at present.
- Making it a safer place to wait at night, if one needs to.

Everything Else (2)

- Nothing
- More

Q3 - Words to describe Valley Gardens today

Positive (46)	Neutral (138)	Negative (201)
<p>Role (6) A good entry to the city Asset Important Rare green space Unique Valuable</p> <p>Aesthetic (8) Beautiful (2) Nice planting / Pretty Flower Beds (2) Nice / Lovely trees (2) Attractive Pretty</p> <p>Ambience (8) Oasis (2) Peaceful / Restful (2) Welcoming (2) Natural & Relaxing Warm</p> <p>Potential (20) Potential / Could be Lovely / One of the City's Greatest Opportunities / Nice but could be improved upon (19) Important Town Centre Focus</p> <p>General (4) Essential Important Our wonderful elm trees Remarkable survival</p>	<p>Role (40) Traffic island / roundabout (8) Roads / Road system / Highway (5) Street Drinkers (5) Passing / Walk through (2) Open Space (2) Historic (2) A thoroughfare Decorative not used Dog walking Gateway to the sea front Giant herbaceous border Just a busy road Ladyboys Motorway No cafes No seating Old fashioned planting scheme Students drinking Summer use only Transport Corridor Urban Parkland Walk through</p> <p>Ambience (50) Loud / Noisy (30) Green (11) Busy (4) Windy (2) Fast Green versus traffic Verdant</p> <p>Movement (19) Traffic (13) Surrounded by traffic / busy road (2) Busy Traffic Cars Car focused Tarmac</p> <p>General (3) Ambivalent Location</p>	<p>Role (61) Boring / Bland / Drab / Dull / Uninspiring etc (16) Underused (14) Waste-ground / Wasted (7) Isolated (6) Under appreciated (2) Druggies / Smackhead (2) Forgotten (2) A blight A place where you are likely to be pestered by undesirables Dog mess Drunks / Vagrants Empty Invisible Poor facilities Poor grass Too many street drinkers Unbuilt Underdeveloped Too many street drinkers</p> <p>Aesthetic (40) Dilapidated / Poorly Maintained / tatty / run down etc (17) Grotty / Grubby / Tatty / Grimy / Dirty (13) Unattractive / Ugly (8) Bare Battered</p> <p>Ambience (54) Polluted / Fumes (15) Unwelcoming / Uninviting (8) Neglected (8) Unsafe (4) Anti-social (3) Unloved (2) Unpleasant Abandoned Abused Besieged Bleak Dark</p>

	<p>Prehistory</p> <p>Potential (1) Great challenge to corporate joint working</p> <p>Observational (25) Central (4) Trees (4) Space (3) Urban (2) Narrow / Thin (2) Grass (2) Flat (2) Benches need to be not too low for elderly people. City Fountain Fountains need to be working all the time It would be nice without so much traffic noise Large fountain used to have coloured lights and music - can this happen again?</p>	<p>Degenerate Exposed Exposed to traffic Hectic traffic Intimidating at night Oppressive traffic Stressful Sad</p> <p>Movement (22) Inaccessible (5) Car dominated / Motorbound (3) Too much traffic (3) Dangerous road layout (2) Difficult to cross the road (2) Convoluting routes Cut off by traffic Difficult to walk through Grid locked Strangled by cars Too many road works Traffic jams</p> <p>General (4) Disturbed Segregated Sold out Unimaginative planting</p> <p>Potential (6) Pointless (2) Could be better Disappointed Not exactly a strong civic asset Opportunities neglected</p> <p>Observational (14) Chopped up / Disconnected / Disjointed (5) Muddy (4) Obstructed One-dimensional Pedestrians are an after thought Physical barrier Pitiful</p>
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Q4: Words to describe Valley Gardens tomorrow

<p>Movement (39) Accessible (13) Traffic reduced / restricted (7) Traffic free (4) Cyclist & pedestrian friendly (2) Pedestrian priority A gently winding north-south route through the middle Better connected Coherent cycle lane layout Easy movement for buses Improves walking and cycling Not car dominated Pedestrianised Protection from traffic Traffic Traffic calmed Traffic jams reduced Trams</p>	<p>Role (116) Community / Communal (7) Open space for everyone (6) Nature / Nature filled (5) A place to escape the shops and to relax (4) Garden / Gardens (4) Green corridor / avenue / promenade (4) Cafes (3) Gateway / Welcome (3) Green space (3) Meeting place (3) A Garden / Gardens (2) A (unified) / true green heart (2) A destination (2) Events (2) Leisure space (2) Play (2) Proud / to be proud of (2) Somewhere to sit out (2) Used / Utilised (2) Useful (2) Valued / able (2) Place to meet friends A better advert for B&H A cup of tea A place for people A place to enjoy A place to spend time alone or with friends A space for play and leisure A space prioritised for living not traffic Amenities for community An enclosure An inspiration Barbeques! Better amenities Brighton used to be famous for flowers - flowers back again please Centre point for the arts Community events Cricket Defining ones mental mapping of the city Designed gardens</p>	<p>Ambience (157) Attractive / Beautiful / Beauty (23) Peace/ful / Quiet/er / Serene / Tranquil (21) Safe/r (inc at night) (15) Pleasant/pleasure (14) Relax/ing (9) Interesting (7) Social/able (6) Welcoming / Inviting (6) Busy / Lively (4) Fun (4) Haven (4) Oasis (3) Verdant / Lush (3) Calm/er (2) Enjoyment (2) Family / Child Friendly (2) Natural (2) No or much less traffic noise (2) Bucolic Happy Vibrant A delight Charming Colourful Comfortable Enjoy the sunshine Entertaining Escape Friendlier Good air quality Human scale Living Local Nice to wander through People friendly Playful Popular Shielded from traffic Slow Sylvan Tree shaded The smell of a green space Varied in atmosphere Visually interesting Wild</p>
<p>Management (21) Clean/er / Tidy (11) Well run / maintained (3) Neat / Tidy (2) By-laws enforced properly to dissuade Brighton's "anything goes" brigade Care for the architecture Community engagement Move on undesirables who use the gardens to crash out and drink in Preservation</p>		
<p>General (64) Green/er (28) Trees (3) Conjoined / Continuous (2) Floral / flowers (2) More trees / bushes (2) Moving (2) A tangible manifestation of sustainability and community Activity</p>		

Aspirational Better Biodiverse Breathing Brighten up the Old Steine Central Flowers around memorial Friends Growing Historic Innovative Land Long live the elms More park-like More space More than just a bit of trampled grass More water Purposeful Sound absorbtion Space Summer Sustainable Vibrant future	Ecological Educational Focal point of the city Food Good advert for the town Green lung Heart of the city Meadow with trees More attention to bio diversity More people using the space, thus making it safer Natural habitat for bees Nice to linger No groups of drinkers No illegal squatting/camps Not a traffic island but a central focus Not just for cars Parks People space Picnics Place to want to go not because I need to Pride of place Public square Public toilets Reflect prehistory and history Seasonal changing visual arts Shared Shared for different activities Showcase for Brighton Somewhere nice to sit and reflect The best route to town from the North Unique green space Valley to the sea Wildlife	Wonderful
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