

## **BRIGHTON GASWORKS REDEVELOPMENT**

### **Regency Society Response to Second Public Consultation: Design and Landscape**

**The Current Masterplan** fails to address the fundamental flaws in the previous proposals: over-development and excessive height, although it shows some improvements.

There is no reduction in the excessive 350 units per hectare. The cost of decontamination should have been factored into the premium paid for the site, and not be recovered through overdevelopment.

The reductions in height from last summer's proposals of some buildings are at most a couple of storeys; no building is reduced from tall to mid-rise. Building D has actually been increased by four storeys to 12, elevating it from a mid-rise to a tall building.

The floor-scape is just the space between the buildings, with the soft landscaping as an afterthought. The landscaped public realm space may occupy a substantial proportion of the development area, but it is so fragmented as to greatly reduce its value. Any children's play area will be in undue proximity to the buildings.

The existing access from Marina Way serving the operational gas equipment is the only vehicular access shown on the masterplan. No provision is shown for service and emergency traffic or for access to the private parking which is presumably under the podium gardens and some of their adjoining buildings.

The amount of onsite parking may still be the subject of negotiation with the council, but there is no indication of the level proposed. The extent of parking under the podium gardens could be excessive and some of the space better used to provide meaningful green open space.

**Application Boundary:** It is essential that the development area includes the additional area to the south, removing a use which has no place on the seafront. It is desirable to include the area in the northeast corner to optimise the position of the north entrance to the Green Link. However, as much of both areas would be built over this would not, as claimed make a significant increase in the landscaped area, nor in the proportion of open space.

**1. The square:** The artist's impression in of the tallest, 13 storey Building F is highly deceptive, with the viewpoint chosen to make it appear to be a slender tower, not a clumsy slab. This and the next tallest, 12 storey Building D would cut out much of the sunlight to the Square.

**2.a The Green Link – north entrance:** Repositioning to the corner of the site and away from the vehicular entrance is a welcome improvement on the previous scheme.

**2.b The Green Link - main route** would be a windswept and largely sunless canyon.

**2.c The Green Link - south entrance:** The low viewpoint of the artist's impression gives a false perception of the true height of Buildings E, H and I.

**3. Boundary Road:** The revised proposal is a significant improvement on the previous scheme and is welcomed.

**Seafront Architecture:** What purports to be a view of the development in its seafront context gives a grossly false impression; it is inaccurate both vertically and horizontally. The frontage of the Gasworks is double that of the French Convalescent Home, not just one third more, and effectively the same as Marine Gate, not one third less. The height of Building E should be no more than the parapet level of Courcels. The height of Buildings H and I, and indeed the rest of the buildings on the site, should be no more than the 8 storeys of Marine Gate, leaving it standing proud on the cliff as the bookend to the eastern seafront.

Recognition that the seafront buildings require special architectural treatment is welcomed. The Gasworks is distanced from Arundel Terrace by the French Convalescent Home and Courcels and set back from the seafront in line with the neighbouring Marine Gate. It is disruptive rather than unifying for Building E to have a different architectural treatment than H and I, other than being lower,

The attempt to make Building E more in keeping with the Kemptown seafront is in any case incongruous. It is ill-proportioned compared with Arundel Terrace, with two tall penthouse storeys above the main parapet level, rather than a single low attic storey above the entablature cornice.

The Regency Society of Brighton and Hove is a registered charity, no 210194

[regencysociety.org](http://regencysociety.org)