

KLP DESIGN SOLUTIONS

KIT POWELL · UX & BEHAVIOURAL PSYCHOLOGY CONSULTANT

DOCUMENT 2 OF 2 · LEADERSHIP

Executive Summary

A visual design, consistency and accessibility review of the Harbourly booking application, prepared for the leadership team.

CLIENT

Harbourly Ltd

PROJECT

Harbourly Mobile & Web Redesign

DISCIPLINES COVERED

UI

DATE OF ISSUE

14 August 2026

PREPARED BY

Kit Powell

VERSION

1.0 — Final

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This document is designed to be read on its own. Full detail sits in the UI Audit Report.

Sample report. "Harbourly" is a fictional product created to illustrate the format, structure and depth of a KLP Design Solutions audit. All findings are invented and client screenshots are omitted.

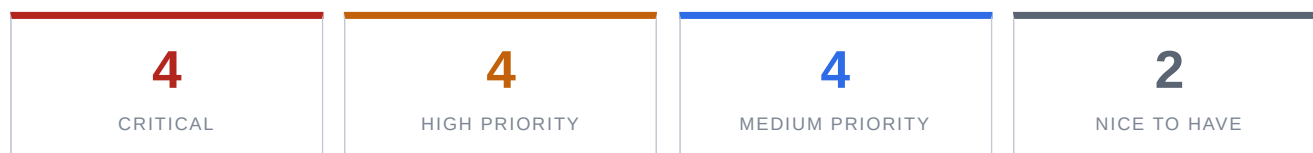
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The position in one page

Harbourly looks like a considered product, and where the design system is followed it is a good one. The visual direction is confident and current, photography does real work, and the layout holds up across screen sizes. The difficulty is that the direction has drifted away from the system that was meant to hold it together.

Three separate button styles, two type scales, five corner radii and nine greys where the system defines four all point to the same underlying cause: values are written directly into components rather than referencing shared tokens. Drift of this kind is structural rather than a matter of discipline, and it will continue at the current rate until that changes.

Alongside that sit five accessibility failures that place the product outside WCAG 2.1 Level AA — text contrast, focus indicators, touch target size, colour-only information, and an unextendable timer. None is structurally difficult; four are token or CSS-level changes deliverable inside a single sprint. Of the fourteen findings in this report, most of the highest-priority items are hours of work rather than days.



WHAT THIS REVIEW COVERED

This engagement was a user interface audit: visual language, layout, consistency, interaction states and accessibility. Usability, information architecture, user flows and the psychological mechanics of the product were not assessed, and nothing in this document should be read as a judgement on them.

Design system health check

A high-level measure of how consistently the interface is built, before the detailed findings. Each row counts the distinct variants actually in use against the number the design system defines.

ATTRIBUTE	IN USE	SHOULD BE	HEALTH	NOTE
Corner radius	5	2	● POOR	Cards, buttons, inputs, sheets and images all differ.
Primary button style	3	1	● POOR	Two appear together on two screens.
Grey values	9	4	● POOR	Three differ from a documented grey by under 3% luminance.
Loading indicator	3	1	● POOR	Spinner, skeleton and progress bar used interchangeably.
Interaction states defined	18/30	30/30	● POOR	Focus states absent entirely; several pressed and loading states missing.
Type scale	2	1	● DRIFTING	Marketing scale on onboarding, product scale in booking.
Shadow	4	3	● DRIFTING	Two differ by 1px blur.
Icon stroke weight	2	1	● DRIFTING	Custom glyphs read heavier in the tab bar.
Spacing scale adherence	~65%	100%	● DRIFTING	Arbitrary 6, 10, 14 and 18pt values in circulation.
Grid and edge margins	2	1	● DRIFTING	Booking flow uses 16pt where the rest uses 20pt.

WHAT THIS SAYS

The visual craft is high wherever the design system is followed — this is not a taste problem, it is a governance one. Values are hard-coded inside components rather than referencing tokens, so drift is structural rather than a matter of discipline, and it will continue at the current rate until that changes. Fixing it first makes every other item in this report substantially cheaper to deliver.

Accessibility compliance summary

A WCAG 2.1 Level AA snapshot, drawn from the UI Audit Report. Relevant to procurement, regulated sectors and international scaling.

REF	CRITERION	STATUS	CONSEQUENCE
1.4.1	Use of colour	Fail	Colour-blind guests cannot tell available dates from unavailable ones.
1.4.3	Contrast (minimum)	Fail	Secondary text unreadable in bright light and for many older guests.
1.4.11	Non-text contrast	Fail	Form field boundaries are hard to see.
2.4.7	Focus visible	Fail	Keyboard and switch users cannot tell where they are.
2.2.1	Timing adjustable	Fail	Checkout timer cannot be extended.
1.1.1	Non-text content	Partial	Icon buttons unnamed to screen readers.
1.3.1	Info and relationships	Partial	Headings not exposed semantically on three screens.
2.1.1	Keyboard	Partial	Date picker requires a pointer.
1.4.10	Reflow	Pass	Works at small viewport widths.
3.3.1	Error identification	Pass	Errors are described in text.

COMPLIANCE POSITION

The product does not currently meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA. Five criteria fail outright. None is structurally difficult — four of the five are token or CSS-level changes deliverable inside a single sprint. The exposure is real but the remedy is small, which is an unusually good position to be in. Relevant contexts: UK public sector procurement requires AA conformance, the European Accessibility Act applies to consumer booking services, and enterprise buyers increasingly request an accessibility statement during due diligence.

03

What works well

Strengths of the current interface. These are assets to protect during any redesign.

✓ **Visual craft is high where the design system is followed**

Where components come from the shared library, the product looks considered and current. The problem is drift, not taste.

✓ **Reduced-motion preferences are respected**

A detail most products miss, and a sign that accessibility has been considered somewhere in the process.

✓ **The core visual direction is confident and current**

Photography, colour and layout add up to a product that looks like it belongs in its category. The issues in this report are about discipline in applying that direction, not about the direction itself.

✓ **Dark mode exists at all**

A great many products in this category still do not offer one. The theme needs designing properly, but the commitment has been made and the infrastructure is in place.

✓ **Section spacing follows the system consistently**

The 32pt section rhythm holds across every screen reviewed. Where the scale is applied, it is applied well.

✓ **Layout reflows correctly at small widths**

No horizontal scrolling at 320px, and the grid holds up to 150% text size. The responsive foundations are sound.

✓ **Errors are described in words, not just colour**

A basic accessibility requirement that a surprising number of products fail. This one gets it right.

04

Biggest visual design opportunities

The most consequential findings from the UI Audit Report.

ID	OPPORTUNITY AND CONSEQUENCE	PRIORITY
UI-01	Secondary text fails contrast requirements everywhere. A single token change resolves the most widespread accessibility failure in the product and improves legibility on every screen — including outdoors, which is where a booking app is used.	● CRITICAL
UI-05	Calendar dates are too small to tap reliably. 32pt targets against a 44pt guideline, on the one screen every customer must pass through. Mis-taps here produce wrong-date bookings, support contacts and refunds.	● CRITICAL
UI-09	Availability is shown by colour alone. Around 8% of men cannot distinguish available from unavailable dates, and will conclude the app is broken.	● CRITICAL
UI-03	Dark mode is an inversion rather than a designed theme. Roughly a third of mobile users run dark mode permanently, and evening browsing is when a booking app is most used.	● CRITICAL
UI-08	Design tokens are not the source of truth. The root cause of most visual drift. Fixing it makes every other UI fix roughly an order of magnitude cheaper, so it pays for itself twice.	● HIGH PRIORITY

05

Highest impact changes before launch

Drawn from all three documents and ordered by impact for effort. This is the list to work from.

01

Fix the five accessibility failures — UI-01, UI-05, UI-06, UI-09
Four are token or CSS changes. Clears the AA position, removes procurement friction, and improves the product for every guest, not only disabled ones.

Low-medium effort
Critical

02

Design dark mode properly rather than inverting it — UI-03
A five-step elevation ramp and desaturated brand colours for the dark theme. Token-level work with no layout change, affecting roughly a third of mobile users on the theme they use every evening.

Medium effort
Critical

03

Consolidate the design tokens — UI-08
Replace hard-coded values with token references and add a lint rule rejecting literals. Enabling work: it makes every other fix in this report substantially cheaper.

High effort
High

04

Standardise on one primary button treatment — UI-07
Retire the gradient and shadow variants and enforce one primary per screen in the component library. Restores the product's most valuable piece of visual vocabulary.

Medium effort
High

05

Reduce corner radii, shadows and loading indicators to one set each — UI-10, UI-13, UI-14
Immediately visible as an overall lift in polish, with no functional risk attached.

Low effort
Medium

06

Make cancellation visible and state the refund — BP-02
One link on the confirmation screen and in the email, plus the exact refund figure before the confirm step. Removes the asymmetry between how easy it is to commit and how hard it is to leave.

Low effort
Critical

07

Rewrite payment failure messages — BP-08
State the money position first — "no payment has been taken" — then the cause, then the next step. Copy only, and it resolves the most trust-destructive screen in the product.

Low effort
High

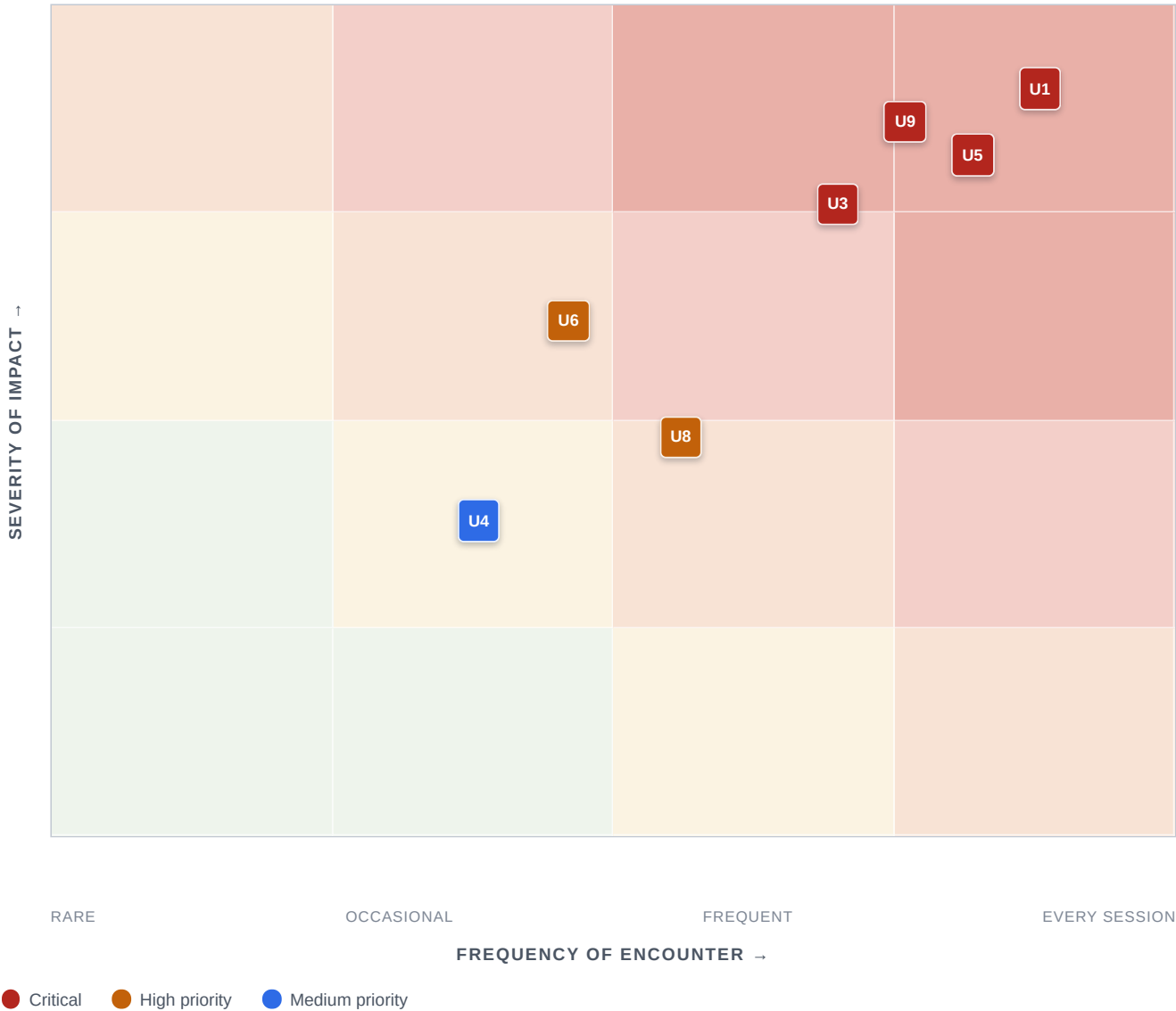
-
- | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| 08 | Show the all-in price before the point of commitment — BP-07 | Medium effort
High |
| <p>Removes the late loss that forces guests to re-make the entire decision under a countdown, and defuses the highest-abandonment-risk moment in the journey.</p> | | |
| <hr/> | | |
| 09 | Add reassurance at the point of payment — BP-09 | Low effort
Medium |
| <p>A security statement, card scheme marks and a one-line restatement of the cancellation policy above the pay button. Their absence is itself a signal, and guests read it.</p> | | |
| <hr/> | | |
| 10 | Neutralise the notification prompt and untick marketing consent — BP-03, BP-10 | Low effort
Medium |
| <p>Equal-weight buttons, a concrete reason to accept, and consent unticked by default. Removes a reactance cost and a GDPR exposure in the same change.</p> | | |
-

WHAT THIS COSTS

The accessibility fixes and the consistency clean-up together total roughly one week of combined design and engineering effort and clear three of the four Critical findings. Dark mode needs a proper design pass rather than a patch. The design token consolidation (UI-08) should be scheduled first regardless of its own priority, because it turns every remaining finding here from a component-by-component edit into a single-line change.

NASA criticality matrix

The most critical interface findings, plotted by frequency of encounter against severity of impact.



PLOT KEY

- U1** UI-01 · Text contrast fails AA

U3 UI-03 · Dark mode not designed

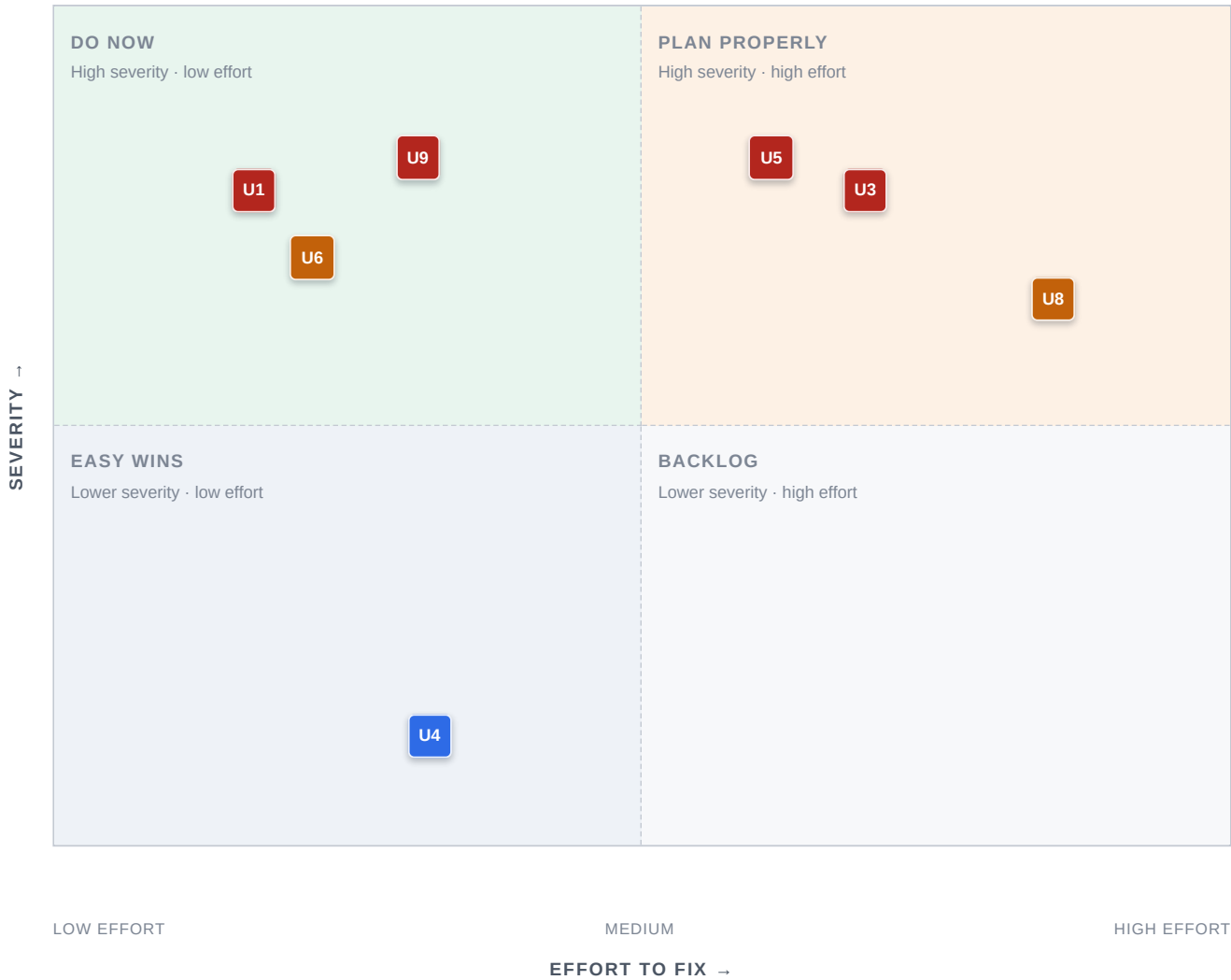
U5 UI-05 · Calendar targets too small
- U6** UI-06 · No focus indicator

U8 UI-08 · Tokens not authoritative

U9 UI-09 · Colour-only availability

Severity vs effort matrix

Highest impact for lowest effort across the interface findings. This is the prioritisation picture for the delivery team.



THE COMMERCIAL READ

Three of the four Critical findings sit in the low-effort half of the matrix. A single focused sprint clears most of the accessibility exposure. The design token work sits in "plan properly" but should be scheduled first regardless, because it reduces the cost of everything to its left.

08

Recommended next steps

A clear sequence for the leadership team, with what each stage delivers and what it depends on.

1

SPRINT 1 · ~1 WEEK

Clear the "do now" quadrant

The five accessibility fixes, the payment and validation error rewrite, visible cancellation with a stated refund, the four-field sign-up form, and the removal of fabricated urgency. Roughly one week of combined design and engineering; clears the majority of the Critical findings.

2

SPRINT 1, IN PARALLEL

Consolidate the design tokens

Enabling work rather than a visible improvement. Replace hard-coded values with token references and add a lint rule preventing literals. Every subsequent visual fix becomes a single-line change rather than a component-by-component edit.

3

POST-DELIVERY

Validate with real users

This engagement was expert review, not user testing. Five moderated sessions on the new checkout would confirm the predictions here and are likely to surface two or three things no heuristic review can. Worth doing before the changes are considered finished.

4

ONGOING

Prevent the drift from returning

Most findings in the UI audit are symptoms of an unenforced design system rather than individual mistakes. A component library treated as the source of truth, plus contrast and target-size checks in the build pipeline, stops this audit needing to be repeated in eighteen months.

WHAT I WOULD DO FIRST, IF ONLY ONE THING WERE POSSIBLE

Darken the secondary text token. It is one variable, it resolves the most widespread accessibility failure in the product, and it improves legibility on every screen — including outdoors, which is where this product is actually used.

Prepared by Kit Powell · KLP Design Solutions · kitpowell.com

Full detail in the companion documents: UI Audit Report, UX Audit Report, Behavioural Psychology Audit Report.