



CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

LEWES

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY – DRAFT PUBLIC CONSULTATION - MAY 2023



Brilliana Harley/ Tom Goodwin/ Katharine Barber

On behalf of Purcell ®

15 Bermondsey Square, Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 3UN

www.purcelluk.com

This work has been commissioned by the South Downs National Park Authority as a reference tool for anyone considering/making planning applications or developing other projects in Lewes.

All rights in this work are reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means (including without limitation by photocopying or placing on a website) unless it is to be in the development of planning applications or other projects in the Lewes area. All quotations or excerpts used must include a clear copyright © Purcell UK in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. You may not reproduce third party material used in this report without the permission of the original copyright holder.

Undertaking any unauthorised act in relation to this work may result in a civil claim for damages and/or criminal prosecution. Any materials used in this work which are subject to third party copyright have been reproduced under licence from the copyright owner except in the case of works of unknown authorship as defined by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Any person wishing to assert rights in relation to works which have been reproduced as works of unknown authorship should contact Purcell at info@purcelluk.com.

Purcell asserts its moral rights to be identified as the author of this work under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Purcell® is the trading name of Purcell Architecture Ltd.

© Purcell 2023

© Crown copyright and database rights 2019 Ordnance Survey 100050083

Issue 01

February 2023

South Downs National Park

Issue 02

April 2023

South Downs National Park

Cover images (left to right): View east down the School Hill section of Lewes High Street; the early 14th century Barbican of Lewes Castle, and Harvey's Brewer in Cliffe

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT	04	04 CHARACTER ASSESSMENT	28	06 MANGING CHANGE	105
01 INTRODUCTION	05	Introduction	29	General Management of Conservation Areas (Legislation and Control Measures)	107
What is a Conservation Area?	06	Location, Topography and Geology	29	Action Plan for Managing Change in Lewes	108
What Does Conservation Area Designation Mean?	06	Archaeology	32	Theme 1: Maintenance, Repair and Alteration of Buildings	109
Lewes Conservation Area	06	Building Types and Uses	33	Theme 2: Detracting Buildings and Areas	117
Purpose and Scope of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan	07	Materials and Architectural Features	34	Theme 3: Shopfronts and Advertising	119
Consultation and Engagement	07	Street Pattern	39	Theme 4: Open Spaces, Public Realm and Interpretation	123
		Scale and Massing	39	Theme 5: Sustainable Development and Climate Change	126
		Trees and Open Space	39	Theme 6: Traffic, Parking and Connectivity	129
		Public Realm and Street Furniture	41	Theme 7: New Development	131
02 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST	08	Important Views	44		
		Landmark Buildings	48	07 BOUNDARY REVIEW	135
03 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT	11	Setting of the Conservation Area	55	Area 1	137
Summary Historic Development Timeline	12			Area 2	138
Early History (Pre-History – Mid 11th Century)	13	05 CHARACTER AREAS	59		
Medieval Lewes (Mid-11th Century–15th Century)	14	Character Area 01: Cliffe	61	FURTHER INFORMATION AND SOURCES	139
Lewes and the Reformation (15th and 16th Centuries)	16	Character Area 02: Lower High Street	67	Bibliography	140
Lewes and the Reformation (15th and 16th Centuries)	17	Character Area 03: Lewes Castle and Middle High Street	73	Legislation, Policy and Guidance	141
Early Modern Lewes (17th and 18th Centuries)	19	Character Area 04: Upper High Street and Western Road	80	Contact Details	143
The Lewes Bonfire Night Celebrations	22	Character Area 05: The Pells and West Street	86		
Modern Lewes (19th and Early 20th Centuries)	27	Character Area 06: The Wallands	93		
Post-War and Present-Day Lewes (Late 20th – 21st Centuries)		Character Area 07: Southover	99		

For ease of use this document has been produced to be read on-screen as a PDF. It contains a series of features that make it easier to use and navigate between the different sections.

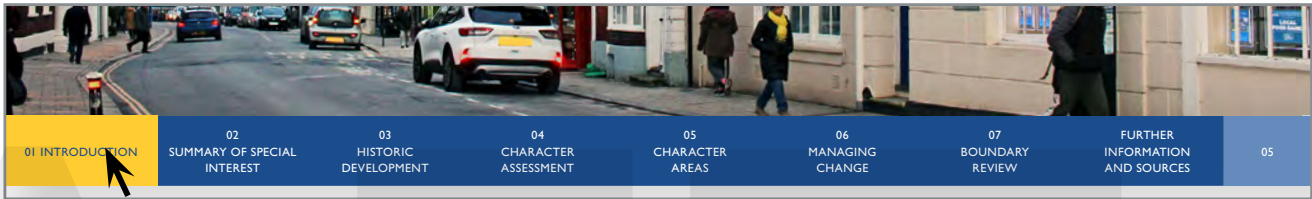
CONTENTS

The contents page allows users to navigate directly to the required section by clicking on the section heading.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT	04	04 CHARACTER ASSESSMENT
		Introduction
01 INTRODUCTION	05	Location, Topography and Geology
What is a Conservation Area?	06	Archaeology
What Does Conservation Area Designation Mean?	06	Building Types and Uses
Lewes Conservation Area	06	Materials and Architectural Features
Purpose and Scope of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan	07	Street Pattern
Consultation and Engagement	07	Scale and Massing
		Trees and Open Space
02 SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST	08	Public Realm and Street Furniture
		Important Views
03 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT	11	Landmark Buildings
Summary Historic Development Timeline	12	Setting of the Conservation Area
Early History (Pre-History – Mid 11th Century)	13	
Medieval Lewes (Mid-11th Century–15th Century)	14	05 CHARACTER AREAS
Lewes and the Reformation (15th and 16th Centuries)	16	Character Area 01: Cliffe
Early Modern Lewes (17th and 18th Centuries)	17	Character Area 02: Lower High Street
The Lewes Bonfire Night Celebrations	19	Character Area 03: Lewes Castle and Middle High Street
Modern Lewes (19th and Early 20th Centuries)	22	Character Area 04: Upper High Street and Western Road
Post-War and Present-Day Lewes (Late 20th – 21st Centuries)	27	Character Area 05: The Pells and West Street
		Character Area 06: The Wallands
		Character Area 07: Southover

NAVIGATION

In addition to the contents pages, you can navigate between sections by clicking on the headings in the bottom bar. Once you've clicked on a section, it will highlight which section you are in.



You can also use the buttons in the top right hand corner to jump to the contents or back to the page you were previously on.



01 INTRODUCTION

What is a Conservation Area?

What does Conservation Area Designation Mean?

Lewes Conservation Area

Purpose and Scope of the Conservation Area Appraisal

Consultation and Engagement



I.1 This section provides information about what Conservation Area designation means and its implications for development. It also gives an overview of the Lewes Conservation Area, sets out the purpose of the Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and outlines the consultation process that has been undertaken to prepare it.

WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

- I.2 A Conservation Area is defined as an “area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”⁰¹
- I.3 Designation of a Conservation Area recognises the unique quality of the heritage of that area as a whole. This quality comes not only from individual buildings but also other features, including (but not limited to) topography, materials, thoroughfares, street furniture, open spaces and landscaping. These all contribute to the historic character and appearance of an area, resulting in a distinctive local identity and sense of place.
- I.4 The extent to which a building, or group of buildings or structures, positively shape the character of a Conservation Area is derived from their exteriors, principally those elevations which are street-facing but also side and rear elevations, the integrity of their historic fabric, overall scale and massing, detailing and materials. Open spaces can be public or private, green or hard-landscaped and still contribute to the special interest of an area. Furthermore, the spaces between buildings, such as twittens, alleys, streets and paths all contribute to appearance and character.

WHAT DOES CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION MEAN?

- I.5 Conservation Area designation aims to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of an area which is of special architectural or historic interest. Therefore, changes to the external appearance of buildings in the Conservation Area may require planning permission from the Local Planning Authority as certain permitted development rights are curtailed. For example, demolition or substantial demolition of a building will require planning permission and planned work to a tree must be notified to the Local Planning Authority six weeks in advance. There are often further restrictions in place in Conservation Areas through Article 4 directions, which remove certain permitted development rights.
- I.6 Under the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) Conservation Areas are designated heritage assets and their conservation is to be given great weight when determining planning applications. Further details can be found in [Section 7](#).

LEWES CONSERVATION AREA

- I.7 Lewes was first designated as a Conservation Area by East Sussex County Council in 1970, following a campaign orchestrated by the local amenity society, The Friends of Lewes. The Conservation Area was extended in 2012 to include the site of the East Sussex County Council offices, the adjacent cemetery and part of Rotten Row.
- I.8 The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) are the Local Planning Authority for Lewes with Lewes District Council having delegated powers. Further information is provided in [Section 6](#).

I.9 Lewes is the attractive and historic county town of East Sussex, set on the southern face of the South Downs, where the valley of the River Ouse cuts through the Downs. The town’s origins can be traced with certainty as far back as the early 10th century, but settlement in Lewes may predate this. The Conservation Area covers much of the town, stretching from the Pells and the bank of the River Ouse in the north, to the side of the A27 near the ruins of Lewes Priory in the south. At the centre of the Conservation Area is the historic settlement of Lewes, focused on the High Street and the grid of twittens and streets that have grown off and around it since the Anglo-Saxon period. From here, the Conservation Area extends into Wallands Park to the north-west and to the west along Rotten Row and Western Road. To the south, the Conservation Area includes much of Southover, a settlement which emerged historically following the creation of Lewes Priory in the 1070s. To the east, on the far side of the River Ouse, the Conservation Area covers the vast majority of Cliffe, developed from the 12th century by the Archbishops of Canterbury.

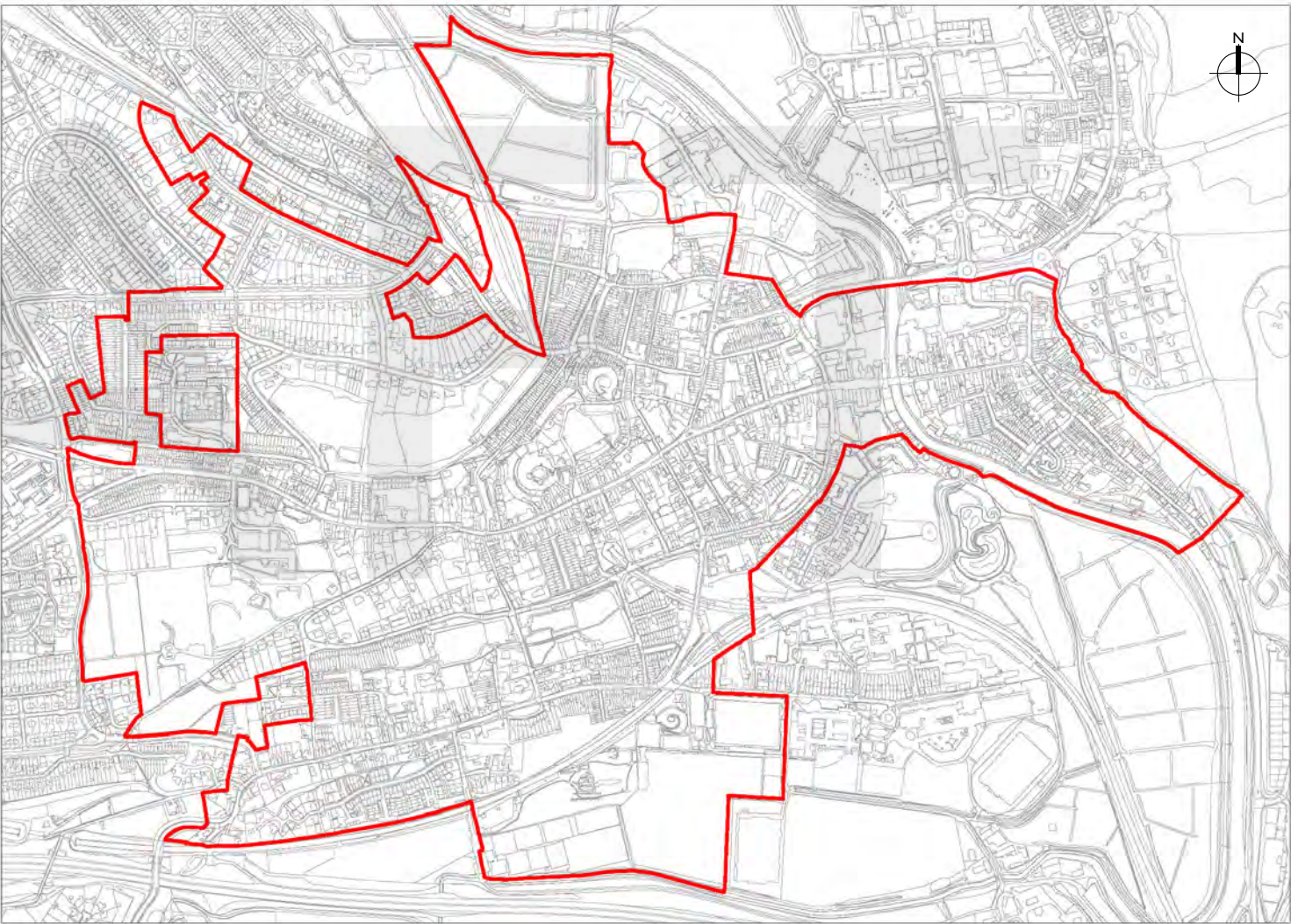


Figure 01: Lewes Conservation Area

01 Section 69 (1), *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

- I.10 Understanding the character and significance of Conservation Areas is essential for managing change within them. It is therefore a requirement under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* that all Local Planning Authorities “formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement” of conservations areas within their jurisdiction, and Conservation Areas are periodically reviewed.
- I.11 The proposals are normally presented in the form of a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP), which defines and records the special interest of a Conservation Area, (see [Section 2.0](#)), analyses the characteristics that make it special (see [Sections 4.0](#) and [5.0](#)), as well as setting out a plan for managing change to ensure its ongoing protection and enhancement (see [Section 7.0](#)).
- I.12 This CAAMP has been prepared in line with current best practice guidance published by Historic England, the government’s heritage advisor and the public body which manages the care and protection of the historic environment.
- I.13 The document is intended to be comprehensive, but the omission of any building, structure, feature or space does not imply that the element is not significant or does not positively contribute to the character and special interest of the Conservation Area. The protocols and guidance provided in [Section 7.0](#) are applicable in every instance.
- I.14 The assessments which provide the baseline information for this CAAMP have been carried out using publicly available resources and thorough on-site analysis from the publicly accessible parts of the Conservation Area.

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

- I.15 It is a statutory requirement under Section 71 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990* for Conservation Area guidance produced by or on behalf of the Local Planning Authority to be subject to public consultation and for the local authority to have regard of the views expressed by consultees.
- I.16 During the drafting of this CAAMP, engagement with the local community will be undertaken through a drop-in public consultation at Lewes Library on Thursday 15 June 2023, whilst an exhibition relating to the proposals shall be accessible for the duration of the six-week consultation period in Lewes Library (from 30 May to 11 July 2023). The CAAMP will also be available on the South Downs National Park Authority website and highlighted on the Authority’s social media. This engagement will seek to raise awareness of the Conservation Area review, utilise local knowledge of the area’s special interest and gather feedback on the opportunities for enhancing this special interest and changes proposed to the Conservation Area boundary. The results of this consultation will inform the adopted CAAMP.

DRAFT



- 2.1

This section provides a summary of Lewes’ special interest, justifying why it merits designation as a Conservation Area.
- 2.2

Lewes draws substantial interest from its early origins and long history, established as an Anglo-Saxon defended settlement, or burh, around 900 AD. It became affluent as a Saxon trading centre within the South Downs thanks to its position at a gap in the Downs at a ford across the River Ouse.
- 2.3

Significant buildings associated with the Norman period survive, including the late 11th century Castle and Priory. The latter was the first Cluniac priory in Britain.
- 2.4

Medieval buildings, ranging from flint churches such as St Michael’s and St Anne’s, to timber-framed houses like the Anne of Cleves House also survive. They illustrate the town’s long history and evolution.
- 2.5

Many Georgian and Victorian townhouses, villas and terraces survive. A wide range of architectural treatments have been applied to these buildings, with intricate door cases and fanlights, historic ironwork, fine sash windows set in oriels or bows, and shopfronts surviving and contributing greatly to the interest of the area.
- 2.6

There is characterful eclecticism in the materials used throughout the Conservation Area, ranging from stucco and flint to Portland Stone and brick, the latter often laid in distinctive polychromatic arrangements.
- 2.7

The variety in materials, architectural styles and roof forms means the High Street, Cliffe High Street and Southover High Street are all interesting and distinctive streets, each with their own character, whilst being surrounded by streets that are more homogenous.
- 2.8

Much of the Conservation Area is comprised of 19th century terraces which have a uniform form and roofscape, as well as continuity in their materials, largely being built from grey and red brick.
- 2.9

Well preserved Victorian and Edwardian suburbs, where semi-detached houses and villas predominate, are extant to the Wallands in the north of the Conservation Area and along Rotten Row. These houses were often built in a picturesque Queen Anne style, with sham timberwork and a mix of tile hanging, roughcast render and brickwork.
- 2.10

The special interest of the Conservation Area is underscored by its topography and setting within the South Downs, with views into and out of the Conservation Area emphasising its location within a National Park.
- 2.11

The undulating topography within the town creates dynamic and interesting streetscapes and striking views.
- 2.12

Lewes has significant community spirit thanks to an active and engaged group of residents and the strong tradition of the Lewes Bonfire Night celebrations.



Figure 02: View of Lewes from Chapel Hill



Figure 03: View along North and Market Streets



Figure 04: Lewes Priory ruins



Figure 05: Classical doorcase on the High Street



Figure 06: Villas on King Henry's Road



Figure 07: Lewes Castle



Figure 08: Semi-detached villas on Southover High Street

03 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

- Summary Historic Development Timeline
- Early History (Pre-History – Mid-11th Century)
- Medieval Lewes (Mid-11th Century – 15th Century)
- Lewes and the Reformation (15th and 16th Centuries)

- Early Modern Lewes (17th and 18th Centuries)
- The Lewes Bonfire Night Celebrations
- Modern Lewes (19th and early 20th Centuries)
- Post-War and Present-Day Lewes (Late 20th–21st Centuries)

ESBHRO, AMS 5890/2/2



SUMMARY HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

c.900 AD

Lewes made a fortified *burh*.

961

First written reference to Lewes, then known as Læwe.

Late 11th Century

William de Warenne erects Lewes Castle and founds Lewes Priory.

1159

First record of a bridge over the Ouse between Lewes and Cliffe.

1264

Battle of Lewes fought between Simon de Montfort and Henry III to the west of Lewes.

1347

Lewes passes from the de Warenne's to the Fitzalan Earls of Arundel.

1381

Unrest in Lewes during the Peasants' Revolt.

1537-38

Lewes Priory and the Franciscan Friary dissolved.

1555-57

Seventeen Protestants burned at the stake in Lewes during the reign of Mary I.

1564-65

First town and market halls built.

1679

Seemingly first record of the burning of Catholic images on Bonfire Night.

1715

Lewes said to be home to c.670 Non-Conformist Christians.

1727

Stone bridge built over the Ouse connecting Cliffe and Lewes.

1792

Plans made for new market and town halls.

1835

Phoenix Foundry opens on the River Ouse.

1840

Area to the north of the Castle largely developed.

1846

Railway line arrives in Lewes.

1862

Fitzroy Memorial Library designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott.

Late 19th Century

Significant number of terraces laid out across the town.

1890s

Detached and semi-detached villas at The Wallands built.

1928

Reginald Blomfield extends the 19th century former County Offices, now the Crown Court.

1952

Friends of Lewes established.

1960s

Phoenix Causeway opens.

1968

East Sussex County Council Offices by St Anne's Church opened.

1970

Lewes Conservation Area designated.

2006

Lewes Library completed.

2011

Lewes incorporated in the newly designated South Downs National Park.

2012

Lewes Conservation Area extended.



Figure 09: Tower of St Thomas à Becket, Cliffe

EARLY HISTORY (PRE-HISTORY – MID-11TH CENTURY)

- 3.1 As the writer E.V. Lucas wrote in 1903, ‘Lewes is the museum of Sussex; for she has managed to compress into small compass more objects of antiquarian interest than any town I know.’⁰¹ Lewes has a long history, first appearing in the documentary record in the ‘Burghal Hidage’. This set of c.918 AD documents listed the fortified *burhs*, or settlements, which were organised by Alfred, King of Wessex in the late 870s, to provide defence from Viking attack.⁰²
- 3.2 Archaeological evidence gathered in the 19th and early 20th centuries suggests that Lewes was perhaps settled prior, as there was a series of barrows or mounds of an uncertain date (perhaps Anglo-Saxon, Roman, or earlier) clustered in the area between Brack Mound and St John-sub-Castro Church. All but two of these – Brack Mound and Castle Mound – were levelled by the mid-19th century.⁰³ The discovery of Pagan Saxon cemeteries at Malling to the north of the town centre and Juggs Road in Southover, suggests that even if Lewes itself was not settled then there must have been settlement in a close proximity prior to the establishment of the *burh* in c.900 AD.⁰⁴ Mount Caburn to the south-east of the Conservation Area boundary retains evidence of settlement from the 6th century BC to the mid-1st century AD.
- 3.3 The town’s present name seemingly derives from Old English. Its exact derivation has been the subject of much debate. The 16th century scholar Laurence Nowell suggested *hlæw*, meaning a hill or barrow, as the root and this attribution has largely stuck. Meanwhile, the philologist Rune Forsberg proposed an alternative derivation, the word *læw*, meaning a wound or injury. Forsberg thought the term was used topographically to refer to Lewes’ site at the end of a key pass through the South Downs, whilst Richard Coates alternatively suggested *lexowia* from the Celtic word for a slope.⁰⁵
- 3.4 The church of St John-sub-Castro, in the north of the Conservation Area, was perhaps established as a minster church as early as the 9th century, although only an 11th century former doorway has survived subsequent 17th and 19th century rebuilding campaigns. The church likely predated the establishment of the *burh*, as archaeological evidence suggests it sat beyond the boundaries of the original Anglo-Saxon defences, concentrated to the south of this area. The original defended settlement was concentrated between Keere and Westgate Streets to the west, with the original east gate likely sited at the top of School Hill. The Ouse protected the settlement to the east, whilst a steep ridge and the Winterbourne Stream complicated the approach to Lewes from the north and south respectively. The 10th century settlement of Lewes extended as far as Brack Mound, whilst the southern boundary was midway between Southover Road and the High Street, the nucleus of the existing street network evident by this point in time, with closely spaced twittens or passageways running perpendicular to the High Street.⁰⁶ Archaeological investigations on the Baxter’s Printworks site completed in 2008 discovered the remains of the Saxon defensive ditch in the land to the east of St Nicholas’s Lane for the first time.⁰⁷

- 3.5 During the reign of King Alfred’s grandson, Æthelstan, Lewes rapidly rose to a position of prominence within Sussex. The settlement flourished due to its strategic importance and role as a commercial centre, signalled by Æthelstan allowing two moneyers in Lewes (by the names of Wilebald and Eadric) to mint new coins in the *burh* in the 930s. In contrast, Hastings and Chichester were allowed only one apiece. Lewes was, therefore, a major commercial centre within Sussex, a conclusion further supported by the fact that the coins minted in Lewes during Æthelstan’s reign referred to it as ‘LAE URB’, making it one of four mint towns to have urban status conferred on it.⁰⁸ By 1065 Lewes was estimated to be worth £26, twice as much as Chichester, ownership split between Edward the Confessor and Harold Godwinson, Earl of Wessex. Their holdings passed to King William I and William de Warenne respectively after the Norman Conquest of 1066.⁰⁹



Figure 10: An engraving of 1776 showing St John-sub-Castro (Abinger Place) prior to its Victorian rebuilding, the 11th Century doorway visible to the left. (East Sussex Brighton and Hove Record Office (ESBHRO), PDA/L 33 b)

01 Quoted in Helen Poole, *Lewes Past* (2000), p. 1

02 Colin Brent, *Pre-Georgian Lewes* (2001), p. 17

03 John Bleach, ‘A Romano-British (?) barrow cemetery and the origins of Lewes’, *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol. 135 (1997), pp. 131-4

04 David Rudling, ‘Archaeological Survey of Lewes’, *Aspects of Archaeology in the Lewes Area* (1987), p. 3

05 For a concise summary see John Insley, ‘Review – Rune Forsberg, “The Place-Name Lewes. A Study of its Early Spellings and Etymology”’, *Studia Neophilologica*, 71:1 (1999), pp. 118-121

06 Roland Harris, *Lewes Historic Character Assessment Report* (2005), pp. 16-7

07 Simon Stevens, ‘Baxter’s Printworks Site’, *Sussex Past and Present* (2008), p. 5

08 Colin Brent, *Pre-Georgian Lewes* (2001), p. 21

09 Malcolm Lyne and Freda Anderson, ‘Introduction’, *Lewes Priory: Excavations by Richard Lewis 1969-82* (1997), p.1

MEDIEVAL LEWES (MID-11TH CENTURY – 15TH CENTURY)

3.6 William de Warenne, Lord of Varennes, a small town in north-eastern France, was given a swathe of land in Sussex by William the Conqueror. This subdivision of the county of Sussex was known as the rape of Lewes and stretched from Newhaven in the south to the border with Surrey in the north. He was created Earl of Surrey in the late 1080s, by which time he had already brought about dramatic change in Lewes, established as the administrative centre of his holdings in Sussex. De Warrene made the decision to build a castle there and host his court in the town every three weeks. Although the precise date and sequencing of the castle's construction is poorly documented, it seems probable that the extant masonry remains of the Castle date to c.1100 and represent a rebuilding of defensive timber palisades. The Castle consisted of two flint shell keeps, one constructed to the top of Castle Mound, the other to the top of Brack Mound, with only the former surviving to the present day. This makes Lewes Castle one of only two Anglo-Norman castles constructed across two mottes, the other being Lincoln Castle. An ovoid bailey connected the two mottes, whilst walls and ditches defended it to all but the north side.¹⁰



Figure 11: 1785 engraving of Lewes Castle by Samuel Hieronymus Grimm (Wikimedia, British Library)

¹⁰ N. Pevsner and I. Nairn, *The Buildings of England: Sussex* (2003), pp. 554-5

- 3.7 An unsuccessful trip to Rome, made by William de Warenne and Gundreda, his wife, in the mid-1070s also left its mark on Lewes. The outbreak of war between Emperor Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII meant that the husband and wife could not continue on to Rome, instead visiting the great Benedictine monastery at Cluny. Whilst there, William and Gundreda persuaded the abbot, Hugh, to allow them to found a priory at Lewes, with Cluny as its mother house.¹¹ This meant Lewes was home to the first and most significant Cluniac religious house in medieval England. The historian William of Malmesbury proclaimed that ‘no other monastery can outdo it in either the piety of its monks or its hospitality to guests or its charity towards all men.’¹² The Priory was built to the south of the *burh*, the settlement of Southover developing to the north of its precinct. Meanwhile, a hospital dedicated to St Nicholas was founded on the westward road from Lewes, perhaps as a leper house, by William de Warenne in 1088, whilst the Priory controlled another hospital in Southover. This was initially dedicated to St John in the 12th century before its rebuilding and rededication to St James in the 13th or 14th century. The hospital’s chapel still stands just off Southover High Street.¹³ A Franciscan Friary was established in the town in 1241, the mendicants taking up residence on the western bank of the Ouse, off Friars’ Walk.
- 3.8 By 1121 Lewes had ten parish churches, excluding the Saxon church of St Pancras which had been rebuilt as the priory church. There was a degree of extramural settlement in the 11th century, signalled by the construction of parish churches outside of the Saxon *burh*, such as St Pancras at Southover and St Anne’s (formerly known as St Mary Westout, due to its location outside the town’s Westgate). Urban settlement was also extended to the east around this time, the system of long thin burgage plots established in the Anglo-Saxon *burh* replicated as far as Eastgate Street. As a result, Lewes extended down School Hill towards the banks of the River Ouse. This growth was driven by the town’s continued commercial and administrative importance, with the minting of coins still allowed into the late 12th century, whilst a daily market every day bar Sunday from the late 11th century drew farmers and artisans from the surrounding area into the town to sell their goods.¹⁴ By 1086 there were at the very least 900 people living in Lewes.¹⁵
- 3.9 A minster church was re-established at Malling to the north of Lewes in 1190 by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Malling is separately designated as a Conservation Area. Another chapel associated with the Archbishop was built at a similar time at Cliffe to the east of Lewes. Both Malling and Cliffe sat within the Manor of Stoneham, owned by the Archbishops for many centuries. The bridge which connected Lewes and Cliffe first appears in the documentary record in 1159, although it must predate this as it was being repaired at the time.¹⁶ The growth and character of different areas in Lewes has, to some extent, resulted from the division of the area into three distinct parcels of ownership, de Warenne and his successors owning the borough, the Archbishops of Canterbury holding Cliffe and Malling, and the Cluniacs at Lewes Priory dominating Southover. The tripartite division of Cliffe, Southover and Lewes into three distinct legal entities with their own administrations was only overcome when all three were incorporated into a single borough in 1881.

¹¹ Brian Golding, ‘The Coming of the Cluniacs’, in *Anglo-Norman Studies III* (1981), p. 65

¹² William of Malmesbury, *The Deeds of the Bishops of England*, D. Preest (trans.) (2002), p. 138

¹³ Roland Harris, *Lewes Historic Character Assessment Report* (2005), p. 21

¹⁴ L. F. Salzman (ed.), *Victoria County History: A History of the County of Sussex, Vol. 7, The Rape of Lewes* (1940) (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/sussex/vol7>)

¹⁵ Roland Harris, *Lewes Historic Character Assessment Report* (2005), p. 17

¹⁶ Roland Harris, *Lewes Historic Character Assessment Report* (2005), p. 19

- 3.10 In 1264 the Battle of Lewes was fought between Simon de Montfort, 6th Earl of Leicester and the forces of King Henry III, assisted by his sons, Prince Edward (later Edward I) and Richard, Earl of Cornwall. The battle was waged to the west of Lewes, with the Earl of Leicester's forces coming from the Downs to meet their Royalist opponents beyond the Westgate to the town. The battle was a defeat for the Royalists, who were scattered by de Montfort's army. Whilst Lewes Castle held out in the face of the latter's attack, Henry III and Prince Edward surrendered to de Montfort from their refuge in Lewes Priory. Much of the town was said to be damaged by fire following the attack on the Castle, whilst the priory church was partially burnt.¹⁷ The victory at Lewes, and the terms imposed on the Crown by a treaty called the 'Mise of Lewes', saw the composition of Parliament extended in 1265. The regular cast of barons and bishops were joined for the first time by two knights for each shire and two burgesses from each borough, meaning Lewes itself also received direct representation for the first time in the proto-House of Commons.¹⁸ The names of the key figures involved in the Battle of Lewes are commemorated in street names to the north-west of the Conservation Area, including King Henry's Road, Prince Edward's Road and de Montfort Road.
- 3.11 Following the Battle of Lewes, the town's walls were repaired, with funding for the works extending until 1269. The threat of French raids during the Hundred Years War likely explains multiple further phases of work carried out to extend and reinforce the walls in the early 14th century.
- 3.12 The unrest of the 14th century saw the prosperity of Lewes decline. As with many other parts of the country, a coalescence of bad weather and pestilence saw an agrarian collapse; crop yields fell due to climatic instability; whilst labour costs rose thanks to the widescale loss of life caused by the Black Death, the plague affecting the town particularly badly in 1349. This diminished prosperity was reflected in Lewes' built environment, with tenements constructed to the south of the High Street, the gardens to the rear of the historic burgage plots abandoned and amalgamated due to the economic pressures brought by the crises.
- 3.13 In conjunction with this, Lewes lost a degree of its administrative importance in East Sussex in the mid-14th century following the death of John de Warenne, 7th Earl of Surrey. As he had no direct heir, on his death in 1347, de Warenne's lands passed to his nephew, Richard Fitzalan, 3rd Earl of Arundel. As Fitzalan already had extensive holdings in West Sussex and held the great castle at Arundel, he was an absentee in Lewes. The town's prominence decreased as a result of the infrequency of lordly occupation in the town. This had dramatic consequences in 1381 when the Fitzalan's largely abandoned castle was ransacked by the local population during the Peasants' Revolt, with a number of buildings, gates, windows and documents destroyed by the townspeople. This came only four years after the town had been imperilled by a group of French raiders who had sailed up the Ouse to the town. It was only the extensive casualties they sustained in their skirmish with forces led by the Prior of Lewes, John of Charlieu, that stopped them from ransacking the town.¹⁹ The Castle's residential usage diminished with time, until it was seemingly abandoned for such use entirely in the early 15th century, when it became increasingly dominated by its function as a gaol.



Figure 12: Remains of the town walls to Westgate Street, dating to the 13th or 14th centuries, with potential pre-Conquest foundations

¹⁷ D. Carpenter and C. Whittick, 'The Battle of Lewes', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 152 (2014), pp. 39-65
¹⁸ Barbara Fleming, *Lewes: Two Thousand Years of History* (1994), p. 32
¹⁹ W. Page (ed.), *The Victoria History of the County of Sussex, Vol. I* (1905), pp. 510-1

LEWES AND THE REFORMATION (15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES)

- 3.14 After the lean years of the 14th century, the town recovered rapidly, despite the Castle's lack of residential use by the Earls of Arundel. Lewes' increasing prosperity is reflected in its demography – according to one estimate its population in 1379 was less than 300 people, yet it had dramatically increased over the course of the next century, reaching 1,330 people by 1525. Lewes was, therefore, one of the biggest towns in Sussex, alongside Chichester and Rye.²⁰ Half the time the court sat at Lewes, half the time at Chichester, which in turn drew lawyers, merchants and the gentry to the town. In line with its judicial function, Lewes was also the location where 17 Protestant Martyrs were executed for resisting the Catholic Counter-Reformation of the 1550s.
- 3.15 In 1537 the great Cluniac Priory in Southover was surrendered and entered the possession of Thomas Cromwell, who was then orchestrating the Dissolution of the Monasteries. He, in turn, handed it over to his son, Gregory, who razed much of the Priory and converted part into a manor house called Lord's Place. The manor reverted to the crown on Thomas Cromwell's execution in 1540 and was given to Anne of Cleves as part of her divorce settlement with Henry VIII. It eventually ended up in the hands of the Sackville family (created earls of Dorset in 1604) whose landscaping works created the so-called Mount and Dripping Plan, south of Mountfield Road. The house was destroyed by fire by the end of the 17th century.

- 3.16 Three parish churches were closed following the Reformation: St Mary-in-Foro; St Peter Westout; and St Andrew's Churches; which were all seemingly located on Lewes High Street. The Franciscan friary was dissolved in 1538. John Kyme converted part of it into a large house and stable, which was one of a number of impressive houses erected in the town around this time, including the White Hart Hotel on the High Street, and the Anne of Cleves House and Southover Grange, both in Southover. The latter was built in 1572 with material salvaged from the Priory, whilst the White Hart Hotel was initially built as a mansion for the Pelham family, before they purchased Pelham House on St Andrew's Lane in the late 16th century. This was a particularly active time for building in Lewes, more buildings surviving in the town from the 16th century than the 17th century. The vast majority were constructed using timber framing.²¹ In the space of two years, 1564 and 1565, Lewes gained both a Market Hall and a combined Sessions House and Town Hall, the former building constructed on the High Street by the White Hart, the latter located by the gateway to the Castle. A gaol was built in Cliffe, which was little changed from its medieval form as a linear settlement stretching along Cliffe High Street.



Figure 13: Historic photograph of the Anne of Cleve's house in Southover (ESBHRO, AMS 5890/2/2)



Figure 14: White Hart Hotel, a 16th century building refronted in a classical style in the 19th century



Figure 15: Southover Grange, built in the late 16th century with dressed Caen stone salvaged from the Priory (The Antiquary, Wikimedia (CC BY-SA 4.0))

²⁰ M. E. Mate, *Daughters, Wives, and Widows After the Black Death: Women in Sussex, 1350-1535* (1998), p. 42

²¹ Roland Harris, *Lewes Historic Character Assessment Report* (2005), p. 42

EARLY MODERN LEWES (17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES)

- 3.17 The 17th century was more tumultuous for Lewes than the prosperous 16th century. The town's population halved following the return of the Bubonic Plague, before slowly rebounding to over 2,000 people by the 1720s. After this point the speed of population growth rapidly accelerated, more than doubling by 1801 when it was recorded at 5,200 people. This increase was partly due to the creation of a large garrison off Brighton Road, erected in response to the threat of French invasion during the Napoleonic Wars. This site, which lies just to the west of the Conservation Area boundary, is now occupied by HMP Lewes.
- 3.18 The economic vitality of Lewes was flourishing at the turn of the 17th century as a result of its role in the trade of ironmongery and ordnance being produced in the Weald. One local ironmonger, Benjamin Court, was wealthy enough to buy Newcastle House, a genteel house on the High Street later rebuilt by Reginald Blomfield in 1928, from Thomas Pelham, 1st Baron Pelham. The Pelhams, who held the manor of Southover, were incredibly wealthy and prominent, both of Thomas Pelham's sons serving as Prime Minister.
- 3.19 At the same time industrial premises were emerging in Lewes and its surroundings. Tanneries were established in the early 17th century to the north-east of the town near St John-sub-Castro, whilst maltings, brewers and tanners were all located in Southover by 1654. This went some way to redress the depopulation of Southover which had resulted from the closure of the Priory during the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The author of the expanded 1769 edition of Daniel Defoe's *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain*, still saw fit to claim that Lewes had 'no Manufactory, though it stands very convenient for Trade' via the River Ouse.²² By 1784, a foundry had been established on the side of Ouse in Cliffe by Nathaniel Polhill.
- 3.20 Lewes became increasingly important as a transport hub in the 17th and 18th centuries, with a number of inns and stables built, making it one of the towns best provided with guest accommodation in and around the Weald, only surpassed by Horsham and East Grinstead in this respect.²³ The rise in carriage-based transit also saw Cliffe Bridge rebuilt in 1727. This job was entrusted to the stone mason Arthur Morris and the French born architect and engineer, Nicholas Dubois, also responsible for the design of the house at Stanmer Park, near Brighton.²⁴



Figure 16: View towards Cliffe Bridge with the rear of Harvey's Brewery visible to the left

²² Daniel Defoe et al., *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1769), p. 199

²³ Roland Harris, *Lewes Historic Character Assessment Report* (2005), p. 22

²⁴ Colin Brent, *Pre-Georgian Lewes* (2004), pp. 396-7

- 3.21 Road improvements paid for by tolls, a practice known as turnpiking, helped further establish the town's importance in trade and overland travel. The two routes northwards, which connected with the road to London at Wych Cross, were turnpiked and improved in 1752, whilst works to the Brighton road were carried out from 1770 to present.²⁵ In the 1790s the River Ouse was made navigable further inland, all the way to Lindfield in the north, whilst canalisation works were undertaken along the stretch of the Ouse between Lewes and the coastal port of Newhaven, where a harbour was established and improved from the 17th century. The connections to Lewes overland and by river supported its commercial development, drawing people to the town to live and trade.²⁶
- 3.22 Lewes retained a significant role within the local economy, representing the most important market for the produce of the farmers and artisans in the South Downs and Weald. The presence of a number of powerful aristocratic estates in the vicinity (such as the Pelhams at Stanmer Park and the Gages at Firle Place) was also said to fuel trade.²⁷ In 1792 plans were made for the rebuilding and relocation of both the Sessions House and market. A new site was chosen to host markets every day except Sunday, and a building subsequently constructed in the form of a tower. A livestock market was also established in 1792, which was to be held every other week. The market had become increasingly splintered since the Middle Ages, a fish market established in the 16th century (likely held on Fisher Street), and a separate corn market set up by 1630.²⁸ The 1790s also saw the local gaol relocated from Cliffe to the vicinity of St John-sub-Castro.



Figure 17: Market Tower, built in 1792

²⁵ Roland Harris, *Lewes Historic Character Assessment Report* (2005), p. 22
²⁶ Helen Poole, *Lewes Past* (2000), p. 34
²⁷ Daniel Defoe et al., *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1769), p. 199
²⁸ Roland Harris, *Lewes Historic Character Assessment Report* (2005), p. 22

THE LEWES BONFIRE NIGHT CELEBRATIONS²⁹

- 3.23
- The famed Lewes Bonfire Night celebrations can be traced back to the thanksgiving bonfires lit in celebration of the thwarting of the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, in which Catholic conspirators led by Robert Catesby sought to blow up the House of Lords in an attempt on the life of James I. The first record of celebrations taking place in Lewes dates to only 1679, when religious tensions were inflamed by fresh (albeit false) reports of another Catholic plot against the English State. The townspeople of Lewes were said to have processed through the town bearing weapons and pictures of a Jesuit priest, Guy Fawkes and the Pope, before tossing the three images into a bonfire.
- 3.24
- The practice of lighting bonfires and setting off explosive squibs continued into the 18th and 19th centuries, with the first blazing tar barrels rolled through the town centre in 1832. Antagonism between the 'Bonfire Boys' and the local constabulary and concerned citizens broke out at a number of points, with the assault of Mr Blackman, a local magistrate, in 1846 leading to attempts to wholly suppress the practice. These were unsuccessful, with the celebrations taking on a form very similar to the present-day by 1853, when two of the present-day Bonfire Societies formed (the Town (now Lewes) Bonfire Society and the Cliffe Bonfire Society). The Commercial Square and Southover Bonfire Societies followed in 1857 and 1886 respectively. The assignment of mock military ranks and uniforms to the members of the societies gave the whole affair a further injection of pomp, whilst satirical speeches delivered by invented Catholic prelates and the burning of tableaux provided a means to communicate anti-Catholic feeling. The celebrations were increasingly secularised from the 1920s onward and continue to draw people to the town every year to watch the spectacle.

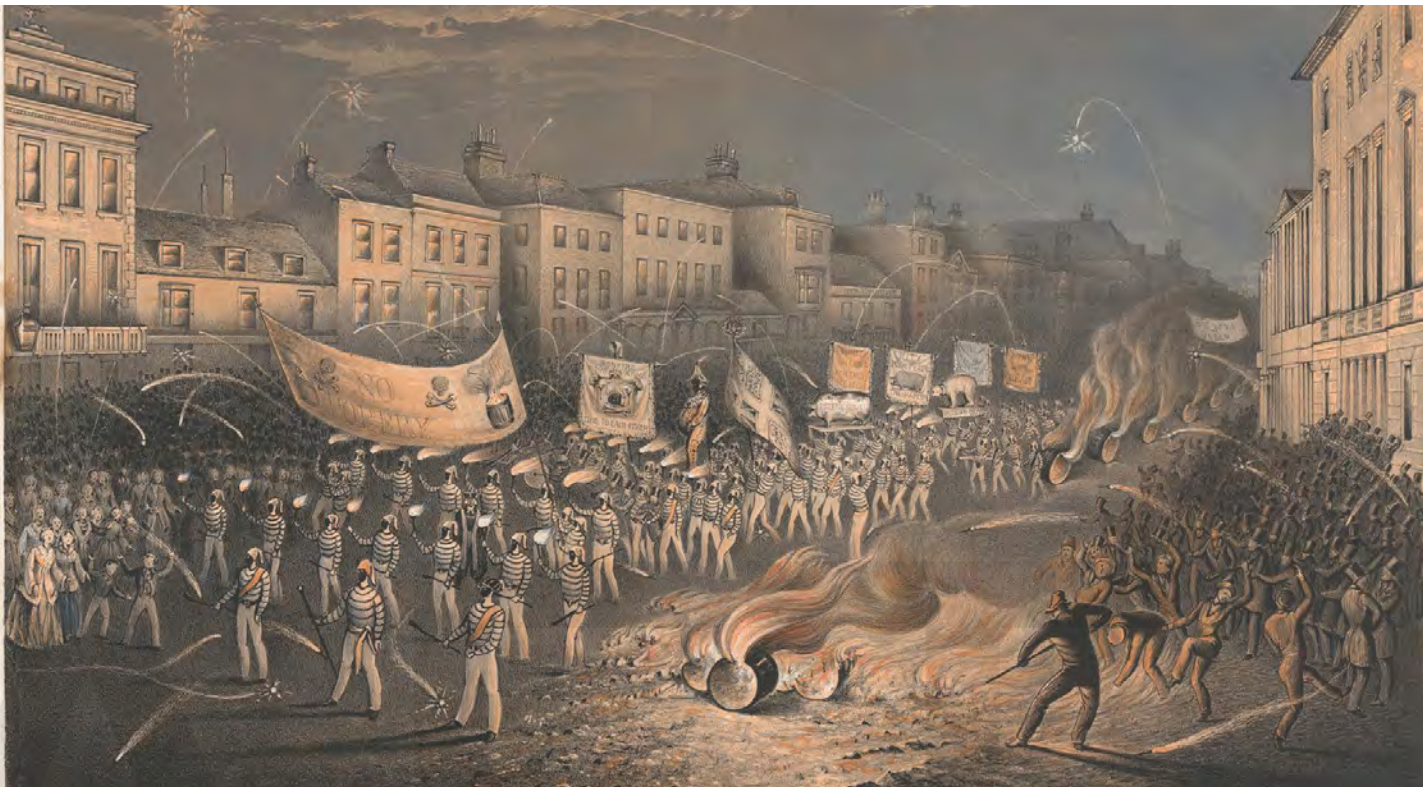


Figure 18: 1852 Thomas Henwood Engraving of 'The Procession of the Lewes Bonfire Boys' (Wikimedia, Yale Centre for British Art)



Figure 19: Present-day bonfire night celebrations at Lewes

²⁹ Jim Etherington, *Lewes Bonfire Night: A Short History of the Guy Fawkes Celebrations* (1993)

- 3.25 In the 17th and 18th centuries, the occupants of Lewes were keenly aware of architectural fashions, remodelling and rebuilding a town dominated by then unfashionable timber-framed buildings. As such many houses were refronted with mathematical tiles being attached to the façades to give them the appearance that they were constructed of brick, as was the case at Pelham House off St Martin's Lane and Bartholomew House to the south of the Castle. Mathematical tiles usually imitate brickwork laid in header bond and buildings clad in this way often lack any articulation or lintel above window or door openings. The corners of such buildings are often covered with timber strips or quoins to disguise the discontinuities between front and side elevation treatments.
- 3.26 Many other houses were constructed anew, School Hill and St Anne's Hill particularly intensively rebuilt with typical Georgian townhouses in this period. In the late 17th century terraces were also built along the streets around the Castle, whilst Malling and South Streets in Cliffe and the area around Cliffe Bridge were all developed.



Figure 20: Bartholomew House's vitrified mathematical tiles

- 3.27 In the 18th century, developments were undertaken along Western and De Montfort Roads to the west of the town centre and along Castle Ditch Lane and Market Street, just off the High Street. By this point in time the Castle, abandoned many years prior, was partially rehabilitated by its then owner, John Kemp, who supposedly made some habitable rooms within it. Meanwhile, the medieval town walls were not actively cared for and left to largely collapse.
- 3.28 By 1715 Lewes was said to be home to as many as 670 Presbyterians, Baptists and Independents, the high number a testament to the strength of the Non-Conformist tradition in the town.³⁰ This brought with it the creation of a number of new places of worship. Although a Quaker Meeting had been established in Lewes since 1655, when the founder of Quakerism George Fox had preached at Lewes, the first purpose-built meeting house was constructed in 1784 on Friars' Walk. The Unitarian Chapel on the High Street and Westgate Independent Chapel were both built c.1700.³¹ The British-American revolutionary and political theorist Thomas Paine called Lewes home for six years (from 1768 to 1774), leaving the town after he lost his job as an excise officer when agitating for higher wages.³²
- 3.29 Lewes also became somewhat of a cultural centre, a theatre opening in 1789, whilst races were hosted near the town as early as 1714 and a bowling green was established in the bailey of the Norman castle in the 17th century.³³



Figure 21: School Hill photographed in the early 20th century looking west, (ESBHRO, AMS 5890/2/2)



Figure 22: Friends' Meeting House on Friars Walk (Public domain)



Figure 23: School Hill in 2023, which retains the massing and historic character evident in the historic photograph

³⁰ Colin Brent, *Pre-Georgian Lewes* (2004), p. 396

³¹ Ian Nairn and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Sussex* (2001), p. 554

³² Barbara Fleming, *Lewes: Two Thousand Years of History* (1994), p. 74

³³ Roland Harris, *Lewes Historic Character Assessment Report* (2005), p. 24

MODERN LEWES (19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES)

- 3.30
- In 1806 a Town Improvement Commission was created and empowered to repave the streets and introduce new public lighting, as well as widen and clean the roadways. The surviving clay brick pavements across Lewes and cobbles found on Keere Street are a result of their activities, as are the curved frontages to a number of buildings, such as the Lewes Arms at the corner of Mount Place and the Castle Precinct, which resulted from road widening schemes. Two decades later Cliffe had its own commission, the open sewers that ran along the High Street were covered over and the road was widened, whilst road and lighting improvements were carried out in Southover around the same time.
- 3.31
- The agrarian depression of 1815–1830 led to a downturn in the town’s economic fortunes, given that much of its wealth derived from the sale of agricultural produce grown and livestock reared in the surrounding area. In 1811, as the balance swung in the favour of the British in the Napoleonic Wars, the barracks at Lewes were demolished. Yet, neither the economic difficulties nor departure of the soldiers saw the growth of the town slow, in fact the population nearly doubled in 30 years, rising from 5,200 people at the start of the century to 8,900 by 1831.



Figure 24: Historic clay brick paving to St Andrew’s Lane

- 3.32
- More foundries and ironworks were created at Lewes in the 19th century. Nathaniel Polihill’s foundry in Cliffe was taken over and expanded by Ebenezer Morris. A former employee of Morris’s, John Every, established the Phoenix Foundry in North Street to the west of the Ouse in 1835, the works thriving and growing under the aegis of Every’s son and grandson. The Etna Foundry of Charles Wells also rapidly expanded, the warehouse and foundry located on opposite sides of the Ouse, linked by a high-level footbridge. The Phoenix Foundry was particularly significant, with various items of Victorian street furniture surviving, such as drain and coal hole covers, bearing its name.



Figure 25: 1874 Lewes Town Plan showing the Phoenix Iron Works site located near the present-day North Street (National Library of Scotland)

- 3.33 Breweries were also an important light industrial employer in Lewes, the four main breweries dispersed across the town, Verrall's in Southover, Beard's on Fisher Street, near the Castle, and both Harvey's and the South Down Breweries located in Cliffe, next to the Ouse. They had numerous wharves and warehouses for company along the banks of the Ouse, as well as a shipwright, who in 1839, launched its first sea faring vessel, the *Lewes Castle*, to much fanfare. In the 1880s a new cattle market was opened in Southover, replacing the tannery that had previously occupied the site.
- 3.34 Brick was the ubiquitous construction material from the 17th century onwards, with masonry walling displacing timber framing as the most common constructional approach. So intensive was the rebuilding and expansion in Lewes in the late 18th century that one contemporary complained that the builders of the town's new market tower at the southern end of Market Street could not find enough bricks to build it, as *'so great is the rage for building in this town and neighbourhood, that among all the brick kilns within two miles round there cannot be got a quantity of bricks sufficient for the job'*.³⁴ Plentiful supplies of lime-rich chalk, long dug from Malling Hill and Cliffe, could be used to make mortar with more intensive production in place at Offham, to the west.
- 3.35 Among the most striking brick buildings in the town are the Fitzroy Memorial Library, designed by the prolific office of Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1862 and Samuel Denman's Town Hall of 1893. Many other buildings in the town were constructed using other materials, such as the Portland Stone prominently used for the Law Courts (the eastern section designed as the town hall by John Johnson from 1808–1812, the western portion by Sir Reginald Blomfield in 1928).³⁵



Figure 26: Fitzroy Memorial Library, Sir George Gilbert Scott, 1862



Figure 27: Lewes Town Hall, Samuel Denham, 1893



Figure 28: Lewes Crown Court, John Johnson, 1808-1812, and Sir Reginald Blomfield, 1928

³⁴ Quoted in C.T. Phillips, 'Lewes A Hundred Years Ago', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol. 40 (1896), p. 259

³⁵ Marcus Taylor, *The Building Materials of Lewes* (February 2021) (<https://thefriendsoflewes.files.wordpress.com/2021/04/building-materials-of-lewes-by-marcus-taylor.pdf>)

3.36 In the 1840s the railway came to Lewes, connecting the town to Brighton, with London, Eastbourne, Hastings and Tunbridge Wells following shortly thereafter as direct destinations. During the construction of the railway in 1846 a cutting was made across the site of Lewes Priory, which meant the ruins of its chapter house were uncovered, along with the remains of the founders of the Priory, William and Gundreda de Warenne. They were removed to a new chapel added to St John’s church in Southover, designed by the local mason John Latter Parsons. As an upshot of the discovery, interested local antiquarians decided to found Sussex Archaeological Society, their concern with preserving the remains of the area’s medieval past extending to Lewes Castle, which they began to lease from its private owners from 1850, taking ownership eventually in 1922.³⁶

3.37 Ten years after it was first built the station was relocated further westwards to its current location, the old terminus demolished in the 1960s after many years use as a goods yard. The coming of the station was seen by some to undercut Lewes’ economic position, providing easier access to the larger markets at Brighton and reducing trade along the Ouse, yet the merchants that dominated wealth in the town at this time welcomed and funded the railway’s construction, retaining their economic importance despite the supposed disruption.³⁷



Figure 29: Lewes Station

36 C. Leeson Prince, ‘The Remains of William de Warenne’, *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol. 40 (1896), pp. 170-2 ; <https://sussexpast.co.uk/a-short-history-of-lewes-castle/>

37 Colin Brent and William Rector, ‘Commerce’, in *Victorian Lewes* (1980), unpaginated



Figure 30: William Figg's 1824 Town Map of Lewes (ESBHRO, AMS 4789/170)

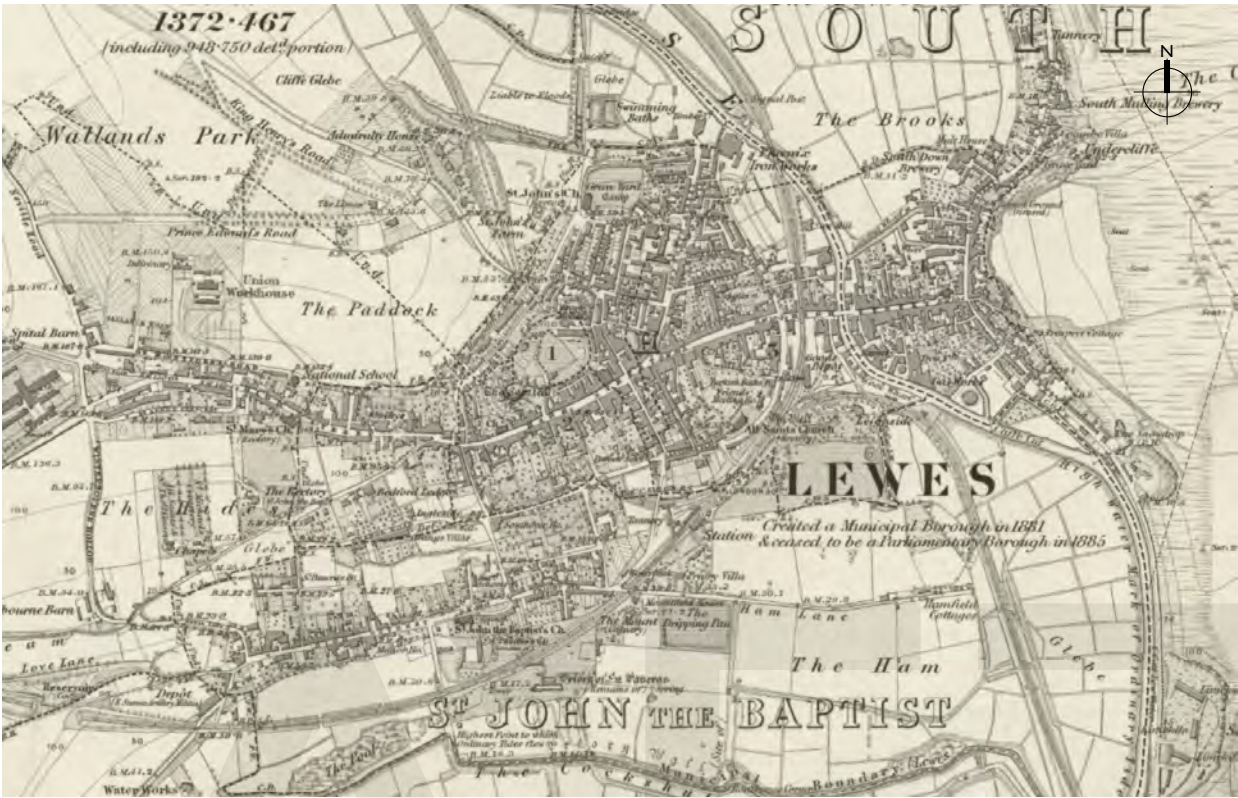


Figure 31: First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1878 (National Library of Scotland)



Figure 32: Second Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1899 (National Library of Scotland)

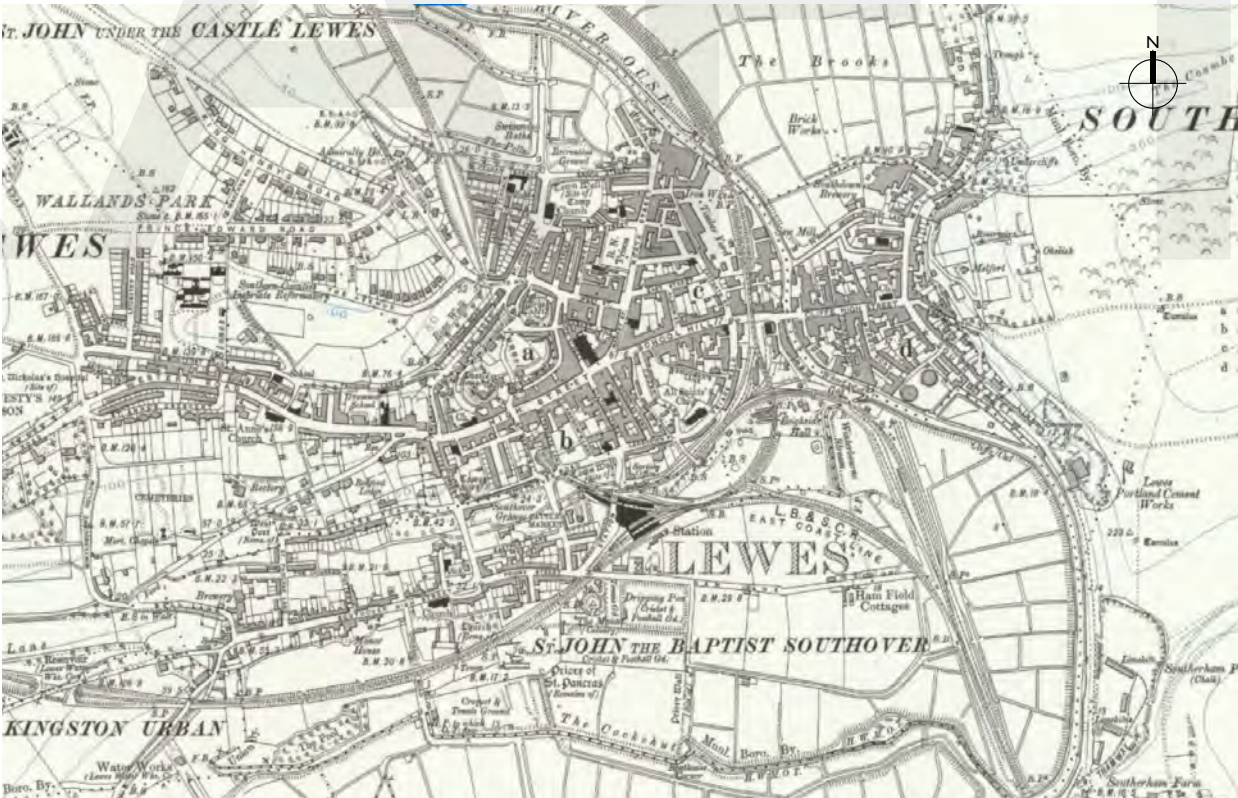


Figure 33: Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1911 (National Library of Scotland)

3.38 In the 19th century Lewes was awash with new residential development. To the north-east of the Castle the Pells were being developed with streets of terraced housing. Sun Street was developed by the time Figg's map of 1824 ([see previous page](#)) was produced, whilst Abinger Place to the west of it was developed by the 1840s. The development of this area continued throughout the century, with Toronto Terrace and St John's Hill laid out with Italianate terraced houses between 1880 and 1900. The early 19th century was also a time of growth for Southover, which was extended to the east with the development of Priory Crescent and Priory Street and north by Grange Road. The terraced housing in both these areas was erected between 1824, when Figg's map was produced, and the publication of the First Edition of the Ordnance Survey in 1878. The Wallands, to the north, represented the largest suburban extension to the historic town of Lewes within the late 19th century, the roads that made up the Wallands Park Estate were laid out but not developed by 1878, with grand Arts and Crafts villas gradually built in the following decades.

3.39 Relatively little inter-war housing was built in central Lewes and when it was built it was largely as infill. In Cliffe, terraces were laid out along Morris Road, but significantly more energy and money was expended on the development of the extensive Landport Estate to the north of the town, beyond the Wallands Park area. Work began here in the 1930s, financed by Lewes Borough Council, whilst the Glyndebourne Estate had begun to develop the Neville Estate to the west of this in the previous decade.



Figure 34: Terraced villas to Toronto Terrace



Figure 35: Detached house in the Queen Anne style at Wallands Park

POST-WAR AND PRESENT-DAY LEWES (LATE 20TH – 21ST CENTURIES)

3.40 Post-war the major developments in the town were largely associated with transport routes, the Uckfield line from the station closed in the 1960s, whilst a new road across the Ouse, called the Phoenix Causeway, was built to the north of Cliffe Bridge. This allowed traffic to avoid the narrow 18th century bridge, but precipitated the demolition of the Phoenix Foundry and its replacement with a business park, now proposed for redevelopment. The creation of the Phoenix Causeway halted plans to build an inner relief road across the Paddocks to the north of the Castle. In the mid-1970s a bypass was constructed to draw the traffic from the A27, a major east–west route, away from the town centre, leading to the Cuilfail tunnel’s construction to the east of Cliffe, connecting with the Phoenix Causeway to north-east of the town.



Figure 36: View of the Phoenix Causeway crossing the River Ouse

- 3.41 In 1968 the new offices of East Sussex County Council were opened by the Duchess of Kent. The office complex was built on a greenfield site to the south of St Anne’s Church to the designs of county architect Jack Catchpole. The sculptor William Mitchell designed a large relief mural for the exterior of the main atrium.
- 3.42 In more recent history, Lewes Library was completed in 2006 to the designs of McMorran and Gatehouse Architects just off Friar’s Walk, whilst the Baxter’s Printworks site off St Nicholas’s Lane saw nearly 50 new residential units completed in 2010. Part of the Harvey’s Brewery site near the station was redeveloped in 2017, the old sorting office repurposed as a community cinema. The next chapter in Lewes’ development will likely focus on the business park on North Street.



Figure 37: East Sussex County Council Offices, with William Mitchell’s mural above the main entrance

04 CHARACTER ASSESSMENT



Introduction	Materials and Architectural Features	Public Realm and Street Furniture
Location, Topography and Geology	Street Pattern	Important Views
Archaeology	Scale and Massing	Landmark Buildings
Building Types and Uses	Trees and Open Spaces	Setting of the Conservation Area



INTRODUCTION

4.1 This section examines and evaluates the key elements which contribute to the character and appearance of the Lewes Conservation Area as a whole, including spatial analysis, building function, architectural features and public realm. This section provides a high-level description of the whole Conservation Area, and is complemented by the more focused character area descriptions in [Section 5.0](#).

LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

4.2 Lewes is approximately 9 kilometres or 5.5 miles inland from the English Channel and is 12 kilometres or 7 miles north-west of the closest city, Brighton. It is located in the eastern part of the South Downs National Park, an area which covers a series of long chalk ridges, hills and valleys extending from Winchester to Beachy Head. The town is located at the point where the River Ouse, running south to the sea at Newhaven, cuts through the South Downs.

DR



Figure 38: Aerial map of Lewes showing the location of Lewes within its surrounding context in particular Brighton, Newhaven and the Channel. © GoogleEarth 2023

4.3 A significant aspect of the town's character arises from its topography and setting. Large chalk hills encircle the town, with Mount Caburn and Malling Hill to the east and Black Cap and Mount Harry to the north-west. The historic borough of Lewes was established on a spur of elevated chalk which extended down from the latter hills, stretching towards the Ouse in the east. With the exception of the area to the north-west – Wallands Park – much of the Conservation Area is lower lying than the historic town centre. The suburban settlement of Cliffe to the east of the Ouse is concentrated on a narrow plain next to the river at the base of Mount Caburn and Malling Hill. Additionally, Southover to the south of Lewes High Street, is also on considerably lower lying land than central Lewes, the ground falling away towards the watercourse of the Cockshut. In addition, the presence of lower-lying land to the north of the historic centre, around the Pells, Paddock Field and Baxter's Field, further highlights the prominent position enjoyed by the centre of the town.



Figure 39: Aerial map of Lewes showing local placenames and landmarks

- 4.4 The town's strategic position on an area of readily defended land with good access to the South Downs and the River Ouse was central to its fortification in both the Anglo-Saxon and Norman periods. The navigability of the river and agricultural productivity of the surrounding downland allowed the town to take on an importance in local trade from the medieval period, encouraging development.
- 4.5 Owing to Lewes' location in the South Downs, the Conservation Area is underlain by sedimentary rocks, specifically, white chalk limestones which predominantly date to the Upper Cretaceous Period. Along the banks of the Ouse and in the lower lying parts of the Conservation Area, such as Southover and in the area around the Pells, there are superficial sedimentary deposits overlaying the chalk bedrock, with a mix of alluvium and head deposits evident.

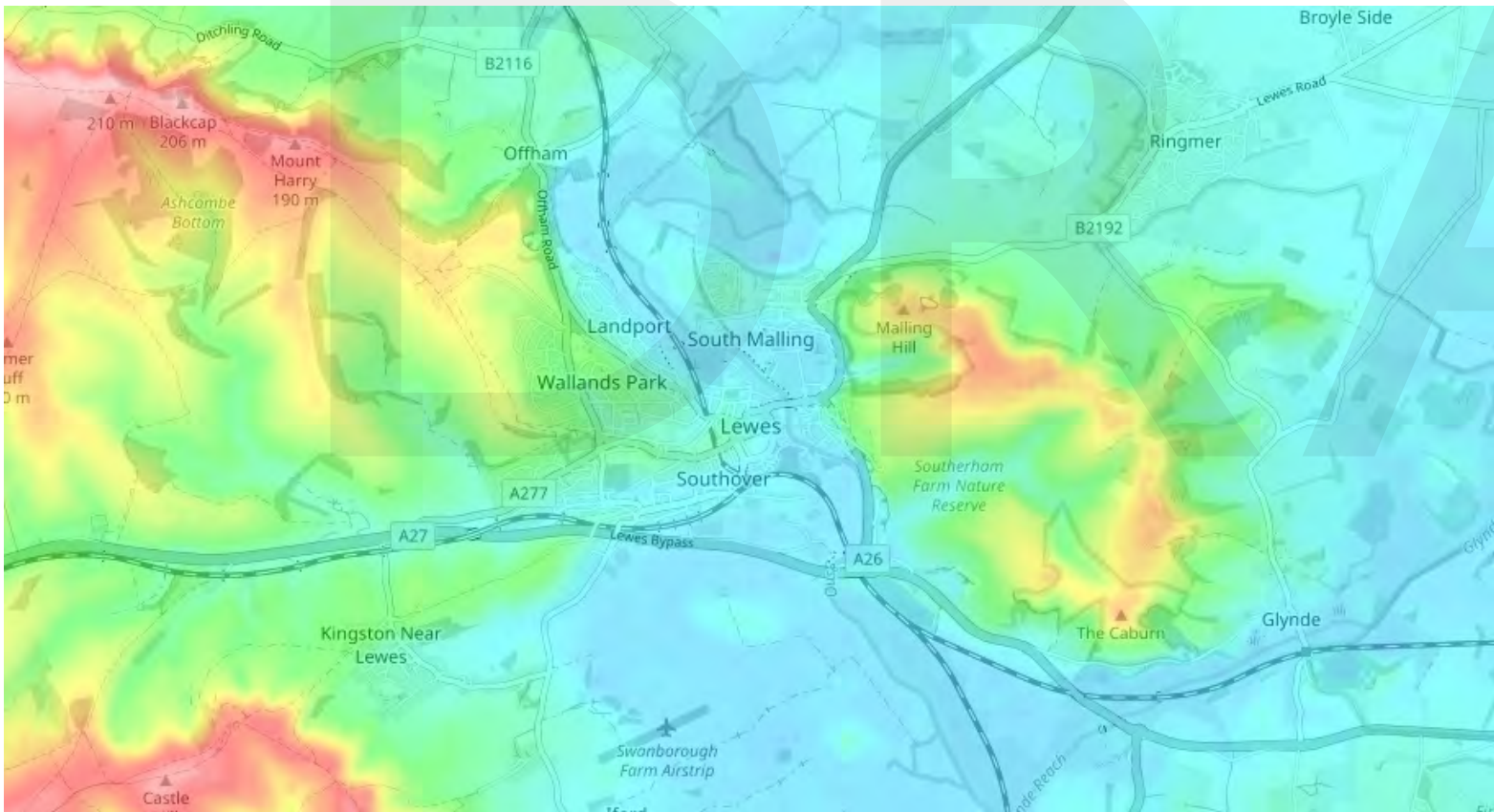


Figure 40: Topographical map of Lewes and its surrounding context, showing the higher ground to the north-west and south-east of the town



Figure 41: View from Lewes Castle looking north (Paul Farmer, 2012, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0)

ARCHAEOLOGY

- 4.6
- Although not always a visible part of the Conservation Area, archaeological remains can contribute considerably to our understanding of how the area has developed and, where visible, add to the character and appearance of the area.
- 4.7
- Due to Lewes' long history, which potentially stretches back to the Romano-British period, and the rich evidence of its historic settlement and evolution gathered by prior archaeological investigation, there remains significant potential for further discoveries. Additional archaeological finds may provide further knowledge relating to the town's evolution and development. This would contribute positively to the special interest of the Conservation Area.
- 4.8
- Lewes Conservation Area includes four Archaeological Notification Areas (ANAs), with much of the area covered by the *Southover : historic suburb and medieval priory* and the *Lewes: historic town* ANAs. The other two ANAs – *Wallands Park* and *Spital Road, Lewes : medieval hospital and cemetery* – are much smaller. ANAs are areas where it is considered highly likely that archaeological remains will be found. Planning applications that fall within the ANAs will trigger consultation with the East Sussex County Council Archaeology Team, who will advise on how to further investigate the potential impact on the archaeological record. The Scheduled Monuments and ANAs in Lewes are mapped on the adjacent plan.
- 4.9
- There are six Scheduled Monuments within the Conservation Area. These are: Lewes Castle; the Priory of St Pancras (Lewes Priory); The Calvary (or Mount); Saxonbury Anglo-Saxon cemetery; the Chapel of St James' Hospital; and the Green Wall section of the Lewes Town Wall. They are considered designated heritage assets of the highest significance, and the impact that a proposed development may have on a Scheduled Monument and its setting is a material consideration in the planning process. Works physically affecting a Scheduled Monument require Scheduled Monument Consent from the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport via Historic England.
- 4.10
- Whilst there are no Registered Battlefields within the Conservation Area, the Battlefield of the Battle of Lewes 1264 lies immediately to the west and north-west of its boundary. Any impact that a proposed development may have on a Battlefield is a material consideration in the planning process. Historic England must be consulted.
- 4.11
- Ground-intrusive investigation or development in areas of archaeological potential has the potential to disturb or destroy archaeological remains. As specified in local planning policy, development which would involve ground disturbance in areas of

known archaeological potential should be sensitively designed and located. A desk-based archaeological assessment, and in certain circumstances a field evaluation, will be required. Where appropriate, archaeological remains should be preserved *in situ* with development being sensitively designed and located to allow their retention or to minimise harm to them. Where this is not possible or feasible

the local authority will require a programme of archaeological investigation, excavation and recording prior to commencement.

- 4.12
- Further information about known archaeological remains within the town can be found by consulting the East Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER).

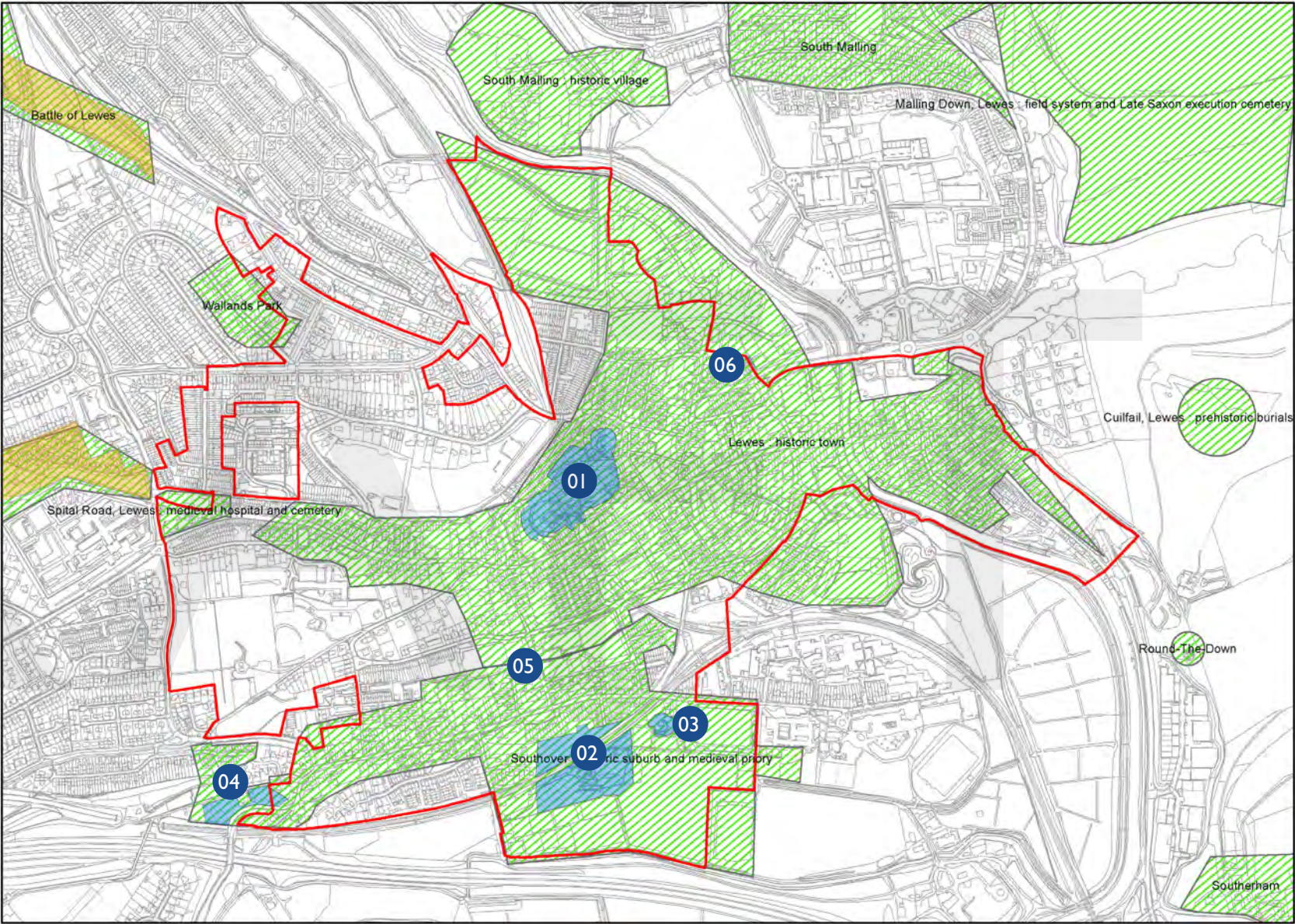


Figure 42: Scheduled Monuments (blue) and Archaeological Notification Areas (green), within Lewes Conservation Area. Registered Battlefields beyond the Conservation Area boundary are shown in yellow.

SCHEDULED MONUMENTS IN LEWES

- 01
- Lewes Castle
- 02
- Lewes Priory
- 03
- The Calvary
- 04
- Saxonbury Anglo-Saxon Cemetery
- 05
- Chapel of St James's Hospital
- 06
- The Green Wall

This plan is not to scale

BUILDING TYPES AND USES

- 4.13 The range of different building types and uses is representative of the development and character of the Conservation Area, contributing to the understanding of the place. The centre of the town is largely in mixed use; retail and commercial units predominate, comprising banks, cafés, restaurants, local business and retail units. Residential premises are interspersed amongst these buildings and occupy the upper floors along the High Street. Throughout the wider Conservation Area there is considerably more homogeneity of building uses with single dwelling residential use dominating.
- 4.14 There are also many buildings presently in use by various different local authorities, including Lewes Town Council, Lewes and Eastbourne District Council and East Sussex County Council. The latter has a post-war purpose-built office building off St Anne's Terrace, but also occupies the 16th century Southover Grange, now a Registry Office, whilst Lewes and Eastbourne District Council currently occupy the 18th century townhouse Lewes House and a purpose built inter-war office, Southover House on Southover Road. The largely late Victorian Town Hall continues to house Lewes Town Council. Other office buildings within the Conservation Area include those associated with the NHS and police, on Friars Walk and North Street respectively. A number of professional chambers, often connected to Lewes's status as a court town, and estate agencies are located in premises on the High Street.
- 4.15 Schools and nurseries are dispersed across the Conservation Area, with a primary school located in Southover, off St Pancras Road, and Lewes Old Grammar School occupying a number of buildings on the High Street for older students.
- 4.16 Harvey's Brewery in Cliffe is the most prominent survival of the town's industrial heritage and retains its original use. Many of the other historic industrial buildings or wharves associated with manufacture or the river trade along the Ouse, have either been converted to housing or demolished.
- 4.17 Lewes is home to a significant number of places of worship, with a range of different denominations represented within the Conservation Area. These include: the Friends' Meeting House on Friars Walk; Lewes Free Presbyterian Jireh Chapel in Cliffe; and the Anglican Church of St Michael and Roman Catholic Church of St Pancras, both of which are on the High Street.



Figure 43: Houses along St Martin's Lane



Figure 44: Southover House, currently offices of Lewes and Eastbourne District Council



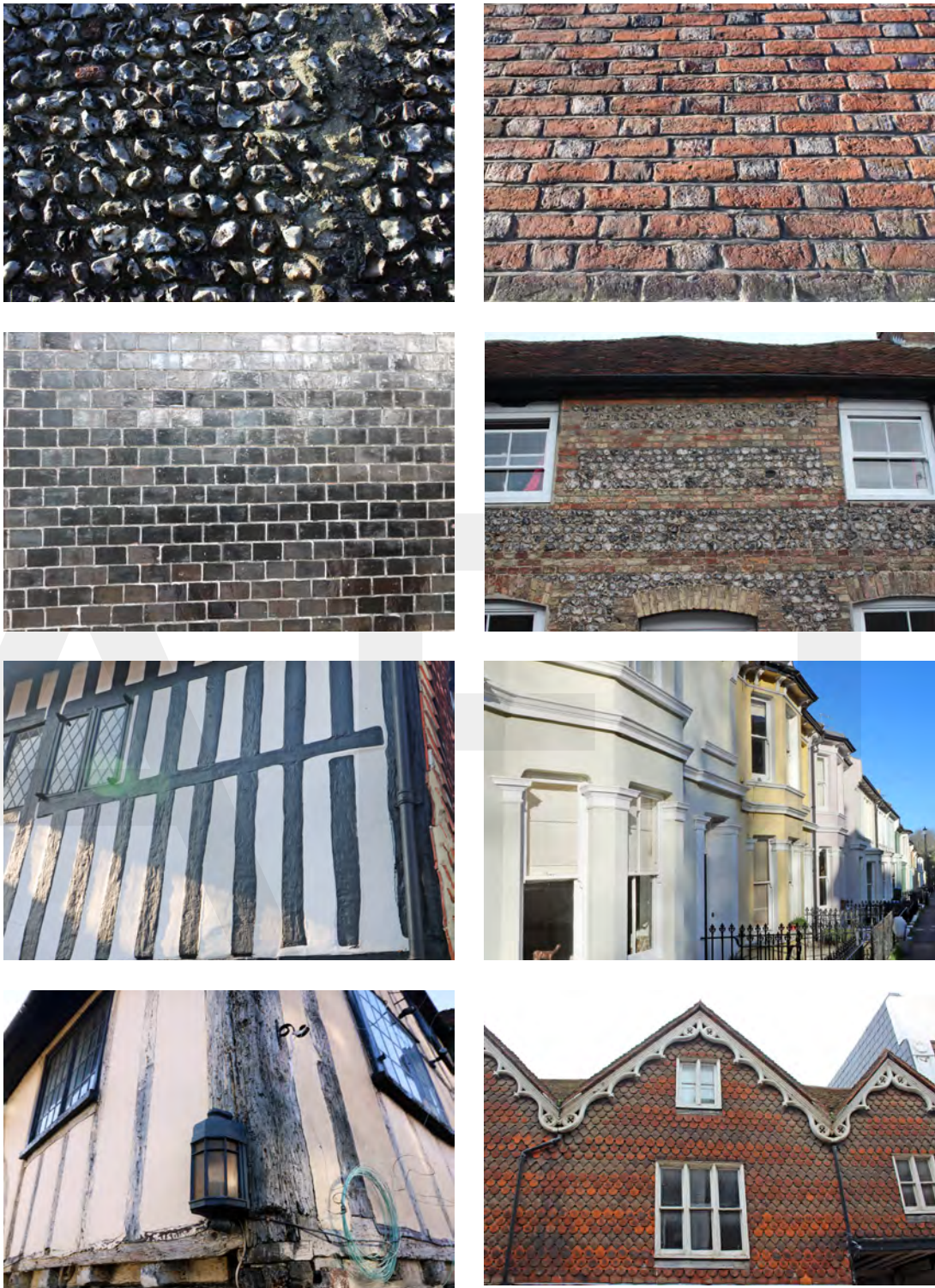
Figure 45: Restaurant on Cliffe High Street

MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

MATERIALS

- 4.18 Brick is the most common material within the Conservation Area. Red and grey bricks dominate, with contrasting, coloured bricks frequently used to add patterning and polychromy for details such as window dressings, door surrounds, quoins and diaperwork. The bricks are largely laid in traditional bonds, predominantly Flemish bond (alternating headers and stretchers in the same course) and English bond (alternating courses of headers and stretchers). There are a number of buildings using buff or vitrified bricks. Whilst, for many buildings the brick is left untreated, in some cases it has been painted over, largely in white or off-white, or the buildings have been stuccoed or rendered upon completion.
- 4.19 Flint is another characteristic material, found in abundance in the chalk of the surrounding Downs. It is commonplace in boundary walls, interspersed with courses of brickwork. Flint is also common in historic houses in Lewes, with brick used for lintels over openings and corner pillars. Used in a number of forms, flint is largely found in the Conservation Area either as field stones or when roughly knapped. No.23 Sun Street uses flint beach cobbles and St Michael's Church and several other buildings are constructed from precisely squared knapped flints. A number of significant buildings in Lewes use flint including Lewes Castle, as well as the Westgate Chapel and the majority of other religious buildings in the town. The Depot Cinema by the railway station demonstrates successful contemporary use of flint.
- 4.20 Timber-frame construction is also evident externally in a number of locations within the Conservation Area, such buildings being characterful reminders of the town's medieval history. Examples include the Anne of Cleeve's House on Southover High Street and the Fifteenth Century Bookshop at 99-100 High Street. Many other timber-frame buildings survive behind later refronting work. This is usually executed in brick, but mathematical tiles are a characterful feature in the Conservation Area.
- 4.21 Stone is not commonly used within the Conservation Area. As an expensive building material, the use of stone denotes a building's significant status as is evident with the Caen Stone-constructed Southover Grange (salvaged from the Priory) and the Portland Stone-clad Crown Court. These buildings add grandeur and interest to the streetscape, as do examples of stone detailing to brick buildings, including the Town Hall. Taken together, they emphasise Lewes's historic prosperity and importance within the South Downs.
- 4.22 For roofs, the oldest and most traditional buildings are clad in handmade clay tiles, whilst other buildings feature Welsh slates, which became more common once transportation methods became more economical. The roofscape of the town is very important to its character, the varied topography and significant range of building heights in areas subject to piecemeal development, all giving an especial prominence to buildings' roofs.
- 4.23 Tile hanging is a characteristic late 19th and early 20th century building material, with the scalloped or shaped edges to the tiles adding visual interest to buildings executed in an Arts and Crafts style. The tiles are often mixed with brick or roughcast render to create a sense of variety in surface treatments. Slate hanging is common to the side and rear returns of properties.

Palette of typical materials found across the Conservation Area



ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

- 4.24 The Conservation Area is characterised by a range of architectural styles, demonstrating a vivid sense of the historic and piecemeal development of Lewes. The range of architectural features present contributes to the character of the place by articulating façades, energising rooflines and enlivening terraces, whilst the varying levels of detail indicate buildings' different construction dates, functions and status.
- 4.25 There is a significant quantity of Georgian and Victorian terraced housing, including on New Road and Leicester Road. These are defined by their limited architectural detailing, with plain brickwork sash windows and the occasional doorcase. Other modest buildings feature simple brick polychromy to demarcate stringcourses and window and door ornament.



Figure 46: Architecturally restrained terraces on Leicester Road



Figure 47: Polychromatic terrace to Priory Street

4.26 Grander dwellings of the same period are characterised by a more ornate decorative treatment, with stuccoed channelling, bow or bay windows, ironwork balconies, ornamental fanlights and doorcases or porches with Doric columns and pediments. Some of these are terraced, as at 57–59 Southover High Street or 2–10 Albion Street, but such detailing is also evident to larger, higher status townhouses, including the characterful cluster of Regency houses at the junction of the High Street and Rotten Row.



Figure 48: Regency terrace on Albion Street featuring decorative ironwork balconies



Figure 49: 18th and 19th century frontages on the High Street, near its junction with Rotten Row



Figure 50: Regency door surround and fanlight in Southover



Figure 51: Westgate House on the High Street with its classical dentilled portico

4.27 There are few examples of grandiose classicism employed in residential properties within the Conservation Area. The most elaborate classical buildings are municipal offices or banks, such as the Town Hall, Crown Court and HSBC, all found on the High Street. These buildings feature classical porticos, dentilled eaves, ground floor rustication and sculptural reliefs.



Figure 52: Classical detailing to the Crown Court façade



Figure 53: Classical façade to the White Hart Hotel

4.28 There is good survival of historic shopfronts in the Conservation Area, which are valuable contributors to its character and appearance. A number of these survive largely intact, retaining panelled or tiled stallrisers (a plinth under the window), fascia boards, carved pilasters and decorative consoles, canopy boxes and associated ironwork, timber mullions dividing shopfronts and recessed, sometimes decoratively tiled, entrances. There are a handful of examples where historic stained glass overlights have survived.



Figure 54: Marston Barrett's particularly well preserved shopfront with a tiled stall-riser and retained stained glass, pilasters, consoles and fascia



Figure 55: Edward Reeves's shopfront retaining stall-riser, recessed entrance, fascia and canopy ironwork

4.29 Late Victorian and early 20th century buildings, which are most highly concentrated to the north of the Conservation Area, are ornamented by decorative ridge tiles and finials, gable ends, large canopies or porches over doors, and varied wall treatments, with tile-hanging, roughcast render, brick and sham timber often all deployed together.



Figure 56: Late 19th century houses to Dorset Road



Figure 57: Houses to Prince Edward's Road

STREET PATTERN

- 4.30
- The street pattern at the centre of the Conservation Area dates back to the Saxon foundation of Lewes as a *burh*, with the High Street established as the main thoroughfare, and a series of narrow twittens leading off the street to provide access to the side and rear of the narrow burgage plots. The lines of the historic city walls to the north and south of the *burh* are perpetuated by Westgate Street, Eastgate Street, Friar’s Walk and Southover Road. The High Street continues across the Ouse into Cliffe in the east where it turns south along the accordingly named South Street. Western Road continues the High Street to the west, whilst Rotten Row diverges to the the south-west.
- 4.31
- The street pattern north of the High Street is heavily influenced by the shape of Lewes Castle’s precinct, with the streets in the area such as Castle Ditch Lane and Castle Banks tracing the line of the walls. Elsewhere the town is more often broken up by streets largely aligned north–south and east–west, bisecting one another at right angles. The medieval street network has been overlain and new routes between streets created as a result of historic speculative housing developments, with new streets laid out in particularly high concentrations to the Wallands and Pells in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

SCALE AND MASSING

- 4.32
- A range of building heights are present within the Conservation Area, ranging between one and seven-storeys, although the majority are two to four-storeys tall, with the tallest buildings, excepting church spires and the East Sussex County Council Offices, largely located along the High Street.
- 4.33
- There is a relatively fine urban grain throughout the Conservation Area, although there are a number of large historic buildings that break with this, such as Lewes Castle and the numerous parish churches. Such buildings provide a pleasing contrast with their narrower and smaller neighbours. Modern buildings are typically characterised by a larger scale than historic buildings, including the post-war developments to the pedestrianised High Street and office buildings to the north end of Friars Walk.
- 4.34
- Along Rotten Row and in the Wallands the residential buildings are considerably larger in scale than those prevalent elsewhere, with large detached villas commonplace compared to the more modestly scaled terraces extant elsewhere within the Conservation Area, reflecting their suburban location with space at less of a premium.

TREES AND OPEN SPACE

- 4.35
- Although the town centre and surrounding streets are intensely developed, there are a number of open green spaces within the Conservation Area, beyond the town’s historic core. There are six main areas of open space within the Conservation Area:
- The Pells to the north-east
 - Lewes Priory Gardens to the south
 - Southover Grange Gardens
 - The cemetery and park to Bell Lane
 - The Paddock and Baxter’s Field due north of the Castle
 - The bowling green within the Castle precincts.
- 4.36
- Within these green spaces there is a significant number of high-quality mature trees, largely to their boundaries. There are relatively few street trees within the Conservation Area, with tree-lined roads like Prince Edward’s Road largely confined to the Wallands. Trees in front gardens and back gardens make significant contributions to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The River Ouse also provides an important and characterful open space within the Conservation Area, with long views along and across the river appreciated from crossing points and the river banks.



Figure 58: The Pells



Figure 59: Lewes Priory Gardens



Figure 60: Southover Grange Gardens



Figure 61: Lewes Cemetery



Figure 62: The Paddock



Figure 63: Baxter's Field



Figure 64: The bowling green within the Castle precincts

PUBLIC REALM AND STREET FURNITURE

4.37 The street surfaces around Lewes are varied, with significant areas of the Conservation Area featuring unsympathetic modern materials, including poorly maintained tarmac roads, concrete kerbs and concrete setts. In some locations more sympathetic historic street surfaces survive. Pavements with historic brick pavers are relatively common, whilst cobbled streets are extant in two locations within the Conservation Area – Keere Street and Foundry Lane. Historic and modern granite kerbs are present in a number of locations, which add character to the streetscene. Attempts have been made to revive the historic streetscape by laying clay pavers to the pedestrianised eastern section of the High Street.



Figure 65: Modern sympathetic surface finishes to the High Street



Figure 66: Cobbles and clay brick pavers to Keere Street

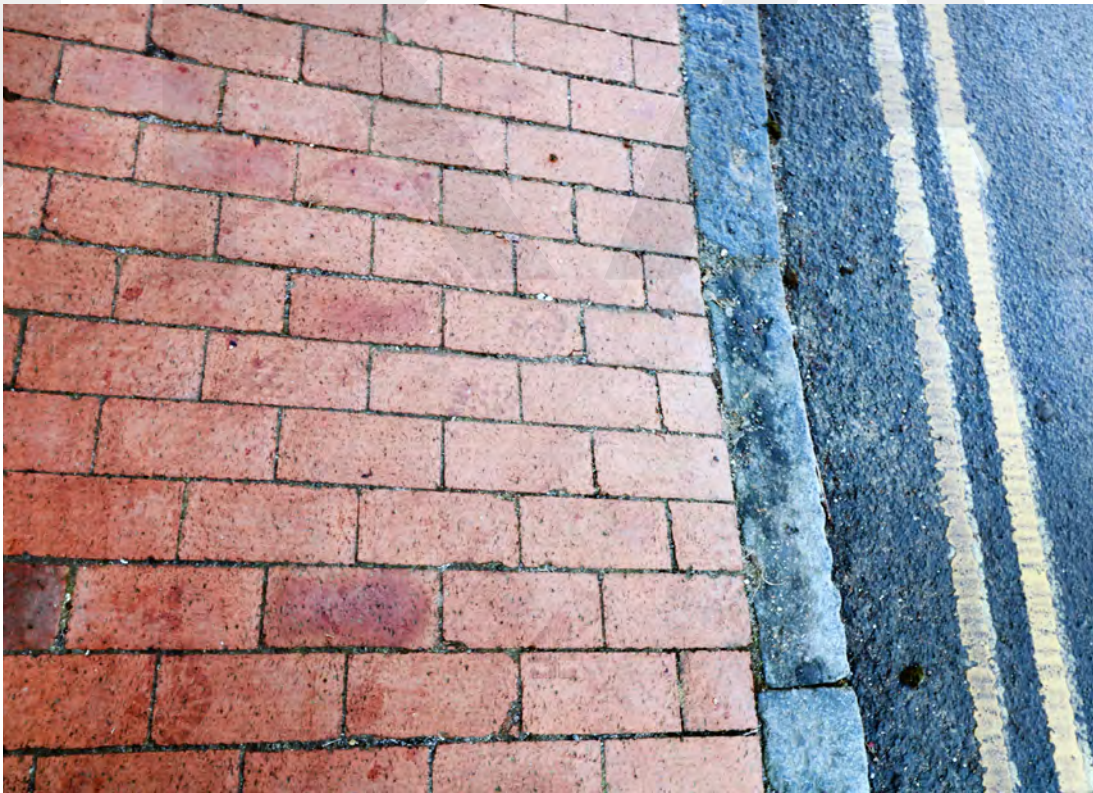


Figure 67: Brick pavements and granite kerbs to the High Street



Figure 68: Unsympathetic tarmac pavements and concrete kerbs

4.38 Items of street furniture are also characterful and contribute to the variety and special interest of the Conservation Area. These include historic bollards, boot scrapers, drain covers, and coal holes, the latter especially prevalent and still extant in many locations. Much of the historic cast iron street furniture was produced by Lewes-based foundries, with surviving examples from John Every's Phoenix Ironworks found across the Conservation Area. Other historic street furniture include a number of public or livestock drinking fountains, such as the cattle trough to the south end of Watergate Lane and the elaborate Gothic fountain to Friars Walk. Various styles of benches can be found across the Conservation Area, although these are lacking in some areas. The bins across the Conservation Area are relatively uniform, adopting a traditional style and painted black. Those in the Priory Gardens are plastic and of a lower quality.



Figure 69: Victorian water fountain to Friars Walk



Figure 70: Coal hole cover from John Every's Phoenix Ironworks in Lewes



Figure 71: Former cattle trough to the south end of Watergate Lane

4.39 There is a significant variation in streetlighting throughout the Conservation Area. Aside from a handful of historic refitted gas lamps the majority of the lighting is modern. In prominent streets the modern lighting takes the form of traditional-style lampposts, designed to replicate the form of historic gas lamps, but a number of key streets feature more utilitarian modern lamps. In narrow streets, streetlights are often fixed to building elevations to economise on space and avoid visual clutter.



Figure 72: Traditional-style modern streetlight



Figure 73: Utilitarian modern streetlight on South Street in Cliffe

IMPORTANT VIEWS

- 4.40 As Lewes is a town rooted in over a thousand years of history, its views have developed organically over the centuries. The Conservation Area is experienced through incidental, kinetic and transitional views, constantly changing as one moves along the street and through the town. These include views along historic streets which often take in Lewes Castle and other landmark buildings, as well as the Downs and surrounding farmland.
- 4.41 All views which take in heritage assets, whether designated or not, are important and contribute to the understanding and experience of the Conservation Area. As a consequence, the views considered in this section are only an indicative selection of the important views across the Conservation Area and not intended to be a comprehensive set. Local views are identified on the character area maps in [Section 5.0](#). When proposals for change are being considered, a detailed study of the views important for any given site and the contribution they make to the Conservation Area will be required.



Figure 74: Glimpsed view of the landmark Harvey's Brewery in Cliffe



Figure 75: View looking east from Lewes Castle (Arild Vågen, Wikimedia, (CC BY-SA 4.0))

STREET VIEWS

- 4.42 Street views, whether kinetic (experienced whilst moving) or designed, provide the best means of experiencing the Conservation Area, showcasing the iterative development of the place, the range of architectural styles present and areas of different character and use.
- 4.43 Good examples of characterful street views include:
- The medieval timber-framed buildings to Lewes and Southover High Streets, some of which have been refronted, which sit amongst later Georgian or Victorian buildings.
 - The fine-grained terraced streets evident throughout the Conservation Area, such as South Street, Sun Street, Leicester Road, and Priory Street.
 - The buildings associated with industry and trade located on the banks of the River Ouse.
 - Large Italianate and Arts and Craft villas set in large plots.



Figure 76: View up Potter's Lane towards Southover High Street, the timber frame of No.51 contrasting with the Italianate styling Southover Manor House



Figure 77: View along the tree-lined Prince Edward's Road, showing large Arts and Crafts villas on either side



Figure 78: View along South Street showing the fine-grained terraces along the street and the chalk cliff rearing behind the Cliffe character area

VIEWS OF THE DOWNS

4.44 The varied topography of Lewes and the surrounding area means that the rural setting of the town within the South Downs is apparent from numerous locations within the Conservation Area. The east–west orientation of many streets permits open views towards the Lewes Downs in the east, such views evident from the High Street and open spaces like the Pells and the Station Road bridge. Meanwhile, the low lying Lewes Brooks and Ouse Valley to the south are visible from a number of locations around Western Road, such as Lewes Cemetery, and in distant views along Keere Street and a number of other streets. High points including the Mount and Castle Mound provide panoramic views of the town's rural setting.



Figure 79: Chalk cliff to the east of the Conservation Area



Figure 80: View to the south of Lewes from the Mount

VIEWS OF THE CASTLE

4.45 Lewes Castle is one of the most important and visible buildings in the Conservation Area. It sits at the centre of the Conservation Area on an artificial mound, giving it prominence within many designed and incidental views within the historic centre, as well as from the wider setting of the Conservation Area. The Castle's battlements form a particularly distinctive silhouette, and are visible from all directions. Its visual prominence in the streetscene is reinforced by the Castle's historic importance. It illustrates the long and rich history of the town, the medieval masonry of the keep providing a pleasing contrast with the Georgian and Victorian architecture that characterises much of Lewes.

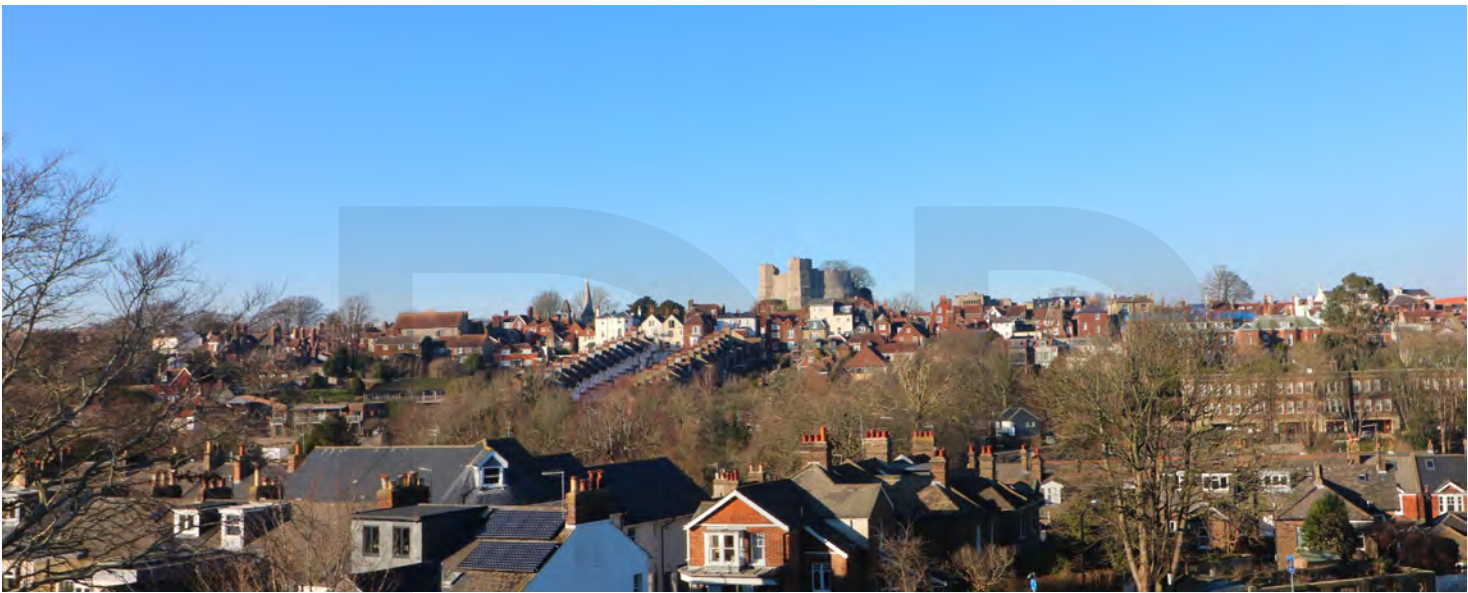


Figure 81: View of the Castle from the Mount in Southover



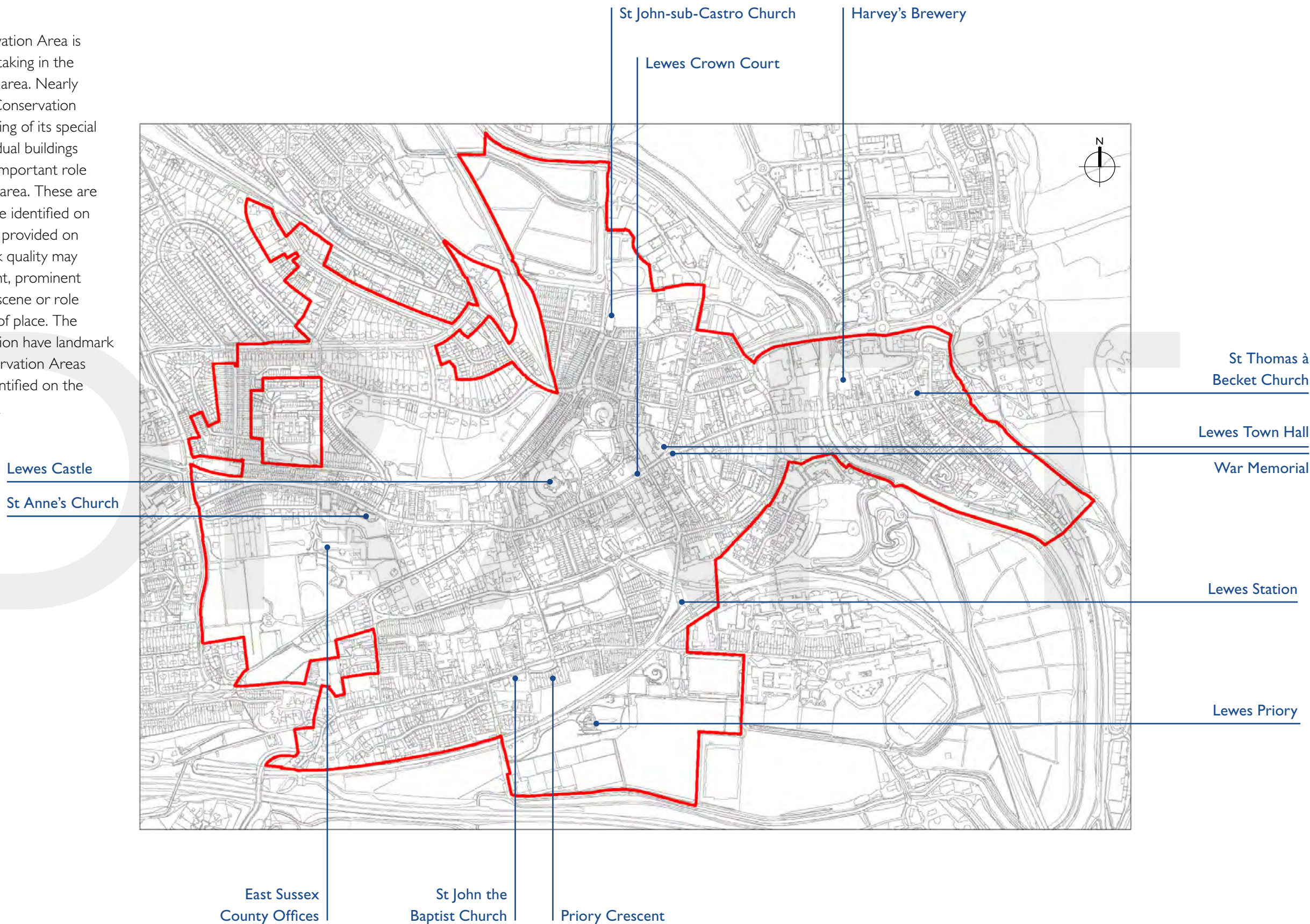
Figure 82: View of the Castle from The Avenue



Figure 83: Lewes Castle from the west (The Antiquary, Wikimedia (CC BY-SA 4.0))

LANDMARK BUILDINGS

4.46 The special interest of the Conservation Area is often best experienced visually by taking in the historic buildings and spaces of the area. Nearly all the buildings and spaces in the Conservation Area contribute to the understanding of its special interest. However, there are individual buildings and structures which play a more important role in establishing the character of the area. These are considered to be landmarks and are identified on the adjacent plan with descriptions provided on the following pages. Their landmark quality may be derived from their relative height, prominent features, position within the streetscene or role in wayfinding and creating a sense of place. The buildings and structures in this section have landmark quality in the context of the Conservation Areas as a whole, local landmarks are identified on the character area maps in [Section 5.0](#).



LEWES CASTLE

4.47 Lewes Castle is the most prominent historic building in Lewes. It is visible from many locations within the Conservation Area and from the wider area. The Castle's position at the highest point in the historic town core, alongside its significant role within the history of Lewes, gives the building its landmark status.



LEWES WAR MEMORIAL, HIGH STREET

4.48 Lewes War Memorial, first unveiled in 1922, is very prominently sited at the top of School Hill at the intersection of the High Street and Market Street, where the street widens, making it a terminating feature in views. The structure has considerable communal value commemorating those who died in both World Wars and contributing to wayfinding within the town.



LEWES CROWN COURT, HIGH STREET

4.49 Lewes Crown Court is a grand two-phase classical building of the early 19th and 20th centuries, its prominent position on the High Street, architectural grandeur, stone facing and large scale all distinguish it as a landmark building.



LEWES TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET

4.50 The Town Hall is a distinctive civic building with a long history of evolution and alteration from the 14th century onwards. The building occupies an important location within the streetscape at the top of School Hill at the east end of the High Street and just to the west of the intersection of the High Street and Market Street, where the street widens. The building is clearly distinguishable owing to its significant scale and massing, red brick materiality and eclectic detailing, and crowning pediment.



ST JOHN-SUB-CASTRO, LANCASTER STREET

4.51 The largely Victorian church occupies a prominent position to the north-east of the character area, its flint walls and tall tower contrasting with the terraces in its vicinity, creating a sense of place within the area. The tower is visible over the roofs of the considerably smaller two or three-storey houses, whilst the building also has a high level of communal value as a place of worship.



LEWES STATION, STATION ROAD

4.52 Lewes Station's position on the low and open ground between Southover and the historic centre of Lewes affords it landmark status, being visible in long views from all directions due to the surrounding topography. The booking hall on the southern end of the Station Road bridge is especially prominent, thanks to its rich Renaissance detailing and the tall, glazed lantern above the main hall.



ST THOMAS À BECKET, CLIFFE HIGH STREET

4.53 Although the church is largely screened in Conservation Area wide views, owing to its relatively discrete location set back from Cliffe High Street, the building's prominent corner position and squat tower make it visible in many views within the Cliffe character area.



HARVEY'S BREWERY, CLIFFE HIGH STREET

4.54 Harvey's Brewery is a particularly large and intact 19th century complex of industrial buildings, one of only a handful of industrial buildings remaining near the town centre. The building therefore makes a particular contribution to understanding the evolution of the town and creating its sense of place, heightened further by its continued use as a brewery. Its tall chimneys, turret and distinctive lettering, as well as its relatively open position of the east bank of the River Ouse make it visible from many parts of the Conservation Area and contribute to its landmark status.



ST ANNE’S CHURCH, WESTERN ROAD

4.55 St Anne's Church is a large medieval church set within a graveyard elevated above street level. Its raised position, combined with the church's tall spire and flint construction, contrasts with the surrounding streetscape, the spire especially playing an important role within the streetscene.



EAST SUSSEX COUNTY OFFICES, ST ANNE’S CRESCENT

4.56 The post-war County Offices are relatively utilitarian concrete panelled buildings, their significant height and massing makes them visible across the Conservation Area and from beyond its boundary. The scale and massing of the Offices result in the buildings towering above other historic landmarks, detracting from their prominence and detrimentally impacting the special interest of the Conservation Area.



PRIORY CRESCENT, SOUTHOVER HIGH STREET

4.57 The unified, curving Regency terrace occupies a position of prominence within the streetscape due to its scale and architectural treatment, despite being set back from Southover High Street. The Crescent is also visible in glimpsed views from higher ground to the north within the Conservation Area.



ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, SOUTHOVER HIGH STREET

4.58 The church, parts of which date back to c.1100, is located prominently on a kink in Southover High Street. The tower of the church, terminated by a small cupola, extends higher than the surrounding domestic scaled development and contributes especially positively to the streetscape as a landmark structure. Its status as a landmark local building is further reinforced by its key role within the community as a religious building.



LEWES PRIORY

4.59 The ruins of the Priory are particularly visible to the south of Lewes within the open spaces in this part of the Conservation Area, having a strong historic association with Southover to the north, which was first developed following the Priory's foundation in the 11th century.



SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA
INTRODUCTION

- 4.60 The setting of a Conservation Area often makes a contribution to the special interest of the area. Setting is the surroundings in which the Conservation Area is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area. It is important to note that while contributing to the appreciation of the Conservation Area, its setting and views into the Conservation Area do not form part of the statutory designation.
- 4.61 Views are often used to define the extent and importance of setting. However, whilst views of the area's surroundings play an important role in the way the setting of the Conservation Area is experienced, there are other factors which contribute. These include but are not limited to, the pattern and appearance of the surrounding townscape and landscape, the noise, ambience and use of the surrounding area and the historic relationships between the Conservation Area and its surroundings.
- 4.62 The following analysis of the setting of Lewes Conservation Area is not exhaustive, but highlights some of the important components of the area's setting which assist in the understanding, legibility and appreciation of what is special about the Conservation Area. When proposals are being developed within the setting of the Conservation Area, specific analysis should be undertaken to understand the contribution a specific site or building makes to the special interest of the Conservation Area and how the proposals may impact upon this contribution and the special interest of the Conservation Area as a whole.

RURAL SETTING

4.63 As noted in [paragraph 4.3](#), a significant element of Lewes' special interest arises from its picturesque rural setting. Lewes' position on the south-western slope of the Downs means that the rural surroundings of the town are most apparent in views to the east of the town along east–west orientated routes. Many of these vistas are terminated by the rolling grassland slopes of Mount Caburn and the Lewes Downs. The flat open agricultural land to the south of the town, largely included in the Lewes Brooks Site of Scientific Interest, further emphasises the town's rural setting. Locations around the Lewes Brooks and on the Downs also allow an appreciation of this setting. These distant views of the town showcase the characterful setting of the place within its local topography and allow views of landmark buildings such as Lewes Castle, elevated on its motte.



Figure 84: View towards Malling Hill in the east from the Pells

4.64 The historic settlement pattern around Lewes is also of significance, with small, dispersed villages within relatively close proximity to the town. This serves to illustrate that Lewes developed due to its advantageous position on the River Ouse, acting as both a trading and market town, serving the agricultural settlements in the vicinity. As such, Lewes' rural setting provides an understanding how and why the town grew and prospered, which can be appreciated from a significant number of locations within the Conservation Area.



Figure 85: View looking west from The Mount, showing the distant downland beyond the Conservation Area boundary

RIVERSIDE SETTING

4.65 The River Ouse is a highly important feature, contributing greatly to the significance of the settlement. The historic wharves and former industrial buildings constructed along it illustrate the establishment and evolution of the town. The river is relatively broad at Lewes, marking the historic boundary between Cliffe and the borough of Lewes, with the best views of the river being gained from Cliffe Bridge and the Phoenix Causeway. Beyond the boundary of the Conservation Area, the open space along the banks of the Ouse provides a location for longer views back towards the town and an appreciation of both its topography and landmark buildings.



Figure 86: View along the Ouse looking north towards Harvey's Brewery and the Phoenix Causeway

SUBURBAN SETTING

4.66 Whilst the vast majority of Georgian and Victorian Lewes is included within the Conservation Area, the town was extended beyond its core particularly within the 20th century, with modern suburbs established to the north-east, north-west and west. These suburbs are often less compact and less densely gridded than the development within the Conservation Area owing to lower pressure on space. The suburbs demonstrate the continued growth of the town and represent another stage in its development.



Figure 87: View south from Cliffe bridge, showing the characterful riverside buildings



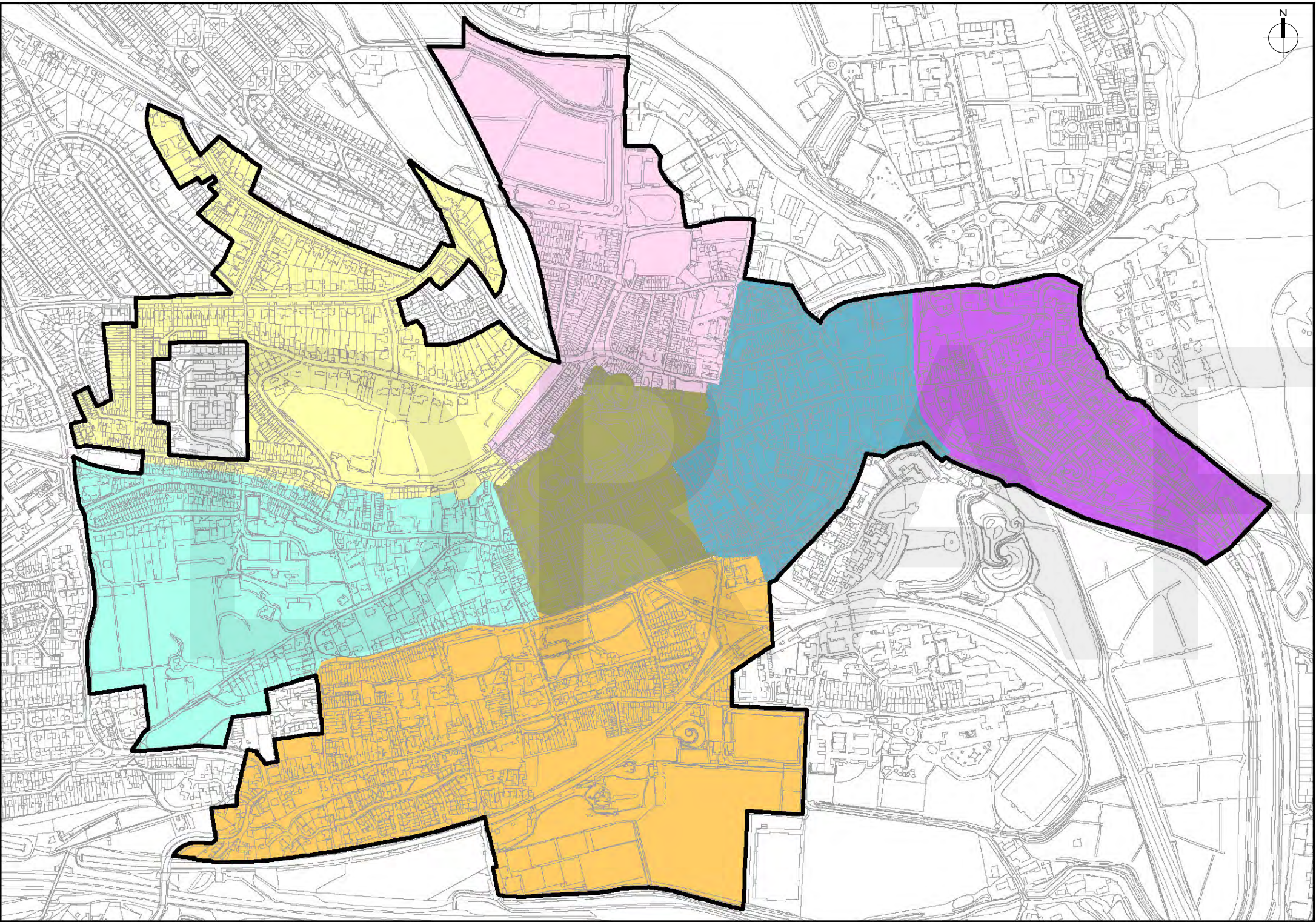
Figure 88: View of Lewes from the north-west, showing its suburban setting

05 CHARACTER AREAS

- Character Area 01: Cliffe
- Character Area 02: Lower High Street
- Character Area 03: Lewes Castle and Middle High Street
- Character Area 04: Upper High Street and Western Road

- Character Area 05: The Pells and West Street
- Character Area 06: The Wallands
- Character Area 07: Southover



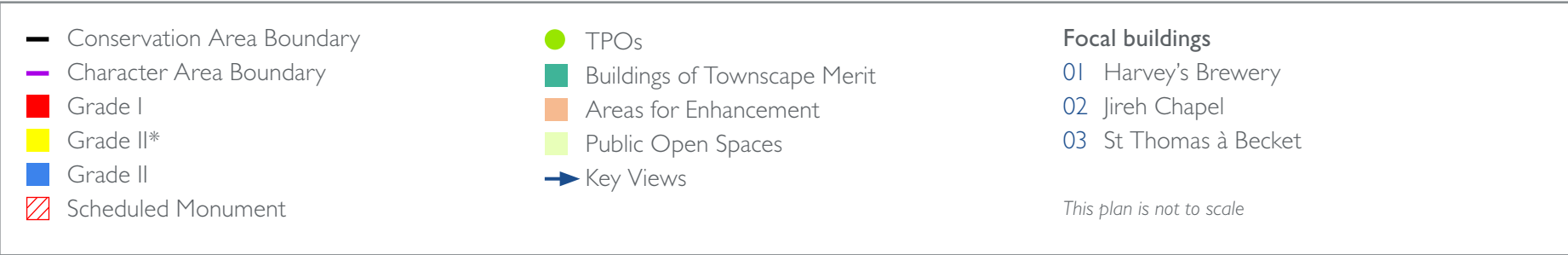
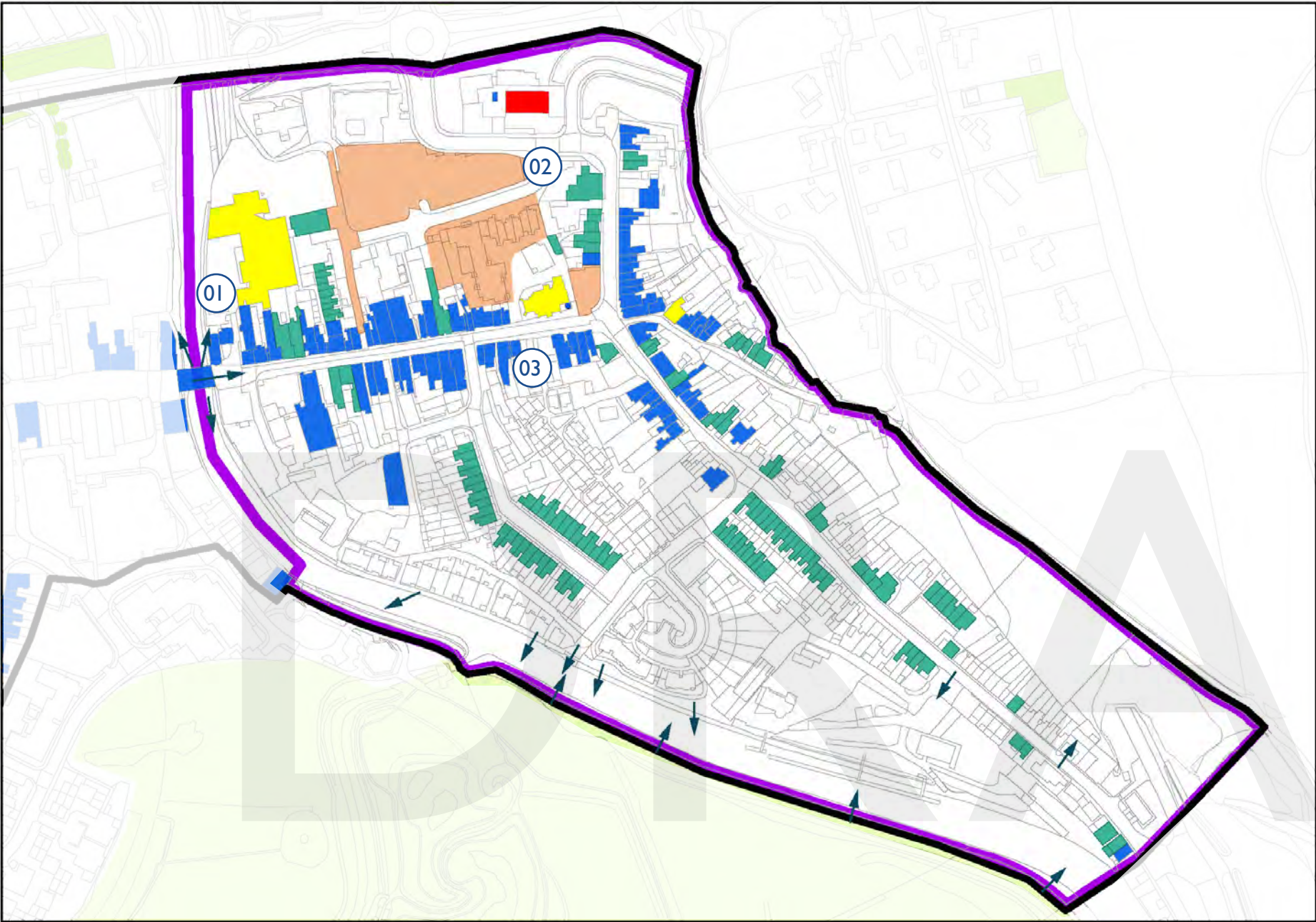


CHARACTER AREAS

- Conservation Area Boundary
- Character Area 01: Cliffe
- Character Area 02: Lower High Street
- Character Area 03: Lewes Castle and Middle High Street
- Character Area 04: Upper High Street and Western Road
- Character Area 05: The Pells and West Street
- Character Area 06: The Wallands
- Character Area 07: Southover

This plan is not to scale

Figure 89: Map showing the seven character areas in Lewes



SUMMARY HISTORY OF CLIFFE

- 5.1 The River Ouse has likely been forded at Cliffe since the Roman period, with Cliffe Bridge built by 1159.
- 5.2 The Church of St Thomas à Becket was built in the late 12th century by the Archbishop of Canterbury.
- 5.3 Cliffe High Street was developed as a medieval linear settlement, continuing the line of Lewes High Street, with Malling and South Streets developed to the east from the 16th century.
- 5.4 Markets were held on Cliffe High Street in the medieval period, with the earliest charter for the market dating to 1331. Sewers were dug across the area to drain it of water.
- 5.5 Important role in early modern and 19th century trade along the River Ouse, with two cuttings providing moorings for boats in Cliffe. A number of wharves and industrial buildings were built on the river's east bank, including the now demolished Morris and Etna foundries and surviving Harvey's Brewery.
- 5.6 Cliffe High Street was widened and paved from 1829, meaning many buildings were refronted.
- 5.7 The industrial sites along the river have been gradually redeveloped, with the site of the Morris Foundry redeveloped as the terraced Morris Road in the late 19th century. This process has continued into the 21st century with the Chandler's Wharf development.
- 5.8 The Phoenix Causeway to the north of the character area was opened in the 1960s, diverting traffic from Cliffe High Street, which was partially pedestrianised in 2010.
- 5.9 Cliffe was badly flooded in 2000, with new flood defences erected in 2009.

STREET AND PLOT PATTERN

- 5.10 Cliffe is situated on the flat former water meadows to the east of the River Ouse, overlooked to the north by the modern Phoenix Causeway.
- 5.11 Three principal streets converge to form a 'T'; the historic Cliffe High Street from Cliffe Bridge, met to the east by Malling Street and South Street, with narrow side streets and passages to the north and south. These are limited to the north of Cliffe High Street by an expanse of car parking (Phoenix Causeway Car Park).
- 5.12 The piecemeal 18th and 19th century development has created terraced plots of varying widths along all principal streets, with stretches of narrower, uniform terraced plots to the character area's south along South Street and Morris Road.
- 5.13 The plot pattern is fine grained with closely-knit development, relieved by side streets and the openness of the river to the south-west. Narrow gaps where the former sewers ran can be seen in several places, most apparent between Nos.38 and 39 on Cliffe High Street.

- 5.14 The plot pattern becomes looser towards the river, with modern developments occupying more spacious plots including the crescent of buildings at Hillman Close.
- 5.15 Buildings are predominantly positioned close to the road with little set back. They have yards of varying sizes to the rear. These long back plots are curtailed by modern infill to the north side of Farncombe Road and to the south side of Harvey's Way.
- 5.16 Beyond the High Street, a couple of buildings or terraces are set back behind the principal building line behind leafy gardens including Willie Cottages on South Street and 21 Malling Street.



Figure 90: View of Cliffe High Street, looking east



Figure 91: View of buildings along South Street, with a view to the Downs

BUILDING TYPES AND USES

- 5.17 The character area is predominantly residential, with the notable exception of the commercial Cliffe High Street, which retains its primary retail function, with some residential flats above shops.
- 5.18 A few exceptions include Harvey’s Brewery, a reminder of the area’s industrial past, on Cliffe High Street, St Thomas à Becket Church and the former coaching Inn, Pastoral Antiques, on Mallong Street and The Dorset Public House also on Mallong Street. There is also a rowing club and associated outbuildings situated to the south of the character area, adjacent to the River Ouse.
- 5.19 There are three large car parks: the largest set behind buildings to the north of Cliffe High Street (Phoenix Causeway Car Park); another at the junction of Cliffe High Street and Mallong Street (Cliffe High Street Car Park); and the third on South Street (South Street (North) Car Park).

BUILDING SCALE AND MASSING

- 5.20 The buildings in this character area are typically two to three-storeys, with a greater proportion of three-storied buildings along Cliffe High Street and Mallong Street. The more diminutive, two-storied buildings are found on South Street, Chapel Hill and Morris Road.
- 5.21 The church tower to St Thomas à Becket Church is relatively squat but taller than the other buildings within the character area, making it a prominent feature.
- 5.22 There are several 20th and 21st century infill developments behind the main historic core including the modern developments at Hillman Close and Timberyard Lane, which adopt a larger scale and massing than the historic terraces.



Figure 92: Thomas à Becket Church on Cliffe High Street



Figure 93: View of South Street showing the dominant two storey building height

BUILDING MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

- 5.23 There is a variety of materials used across the historic buildings, including timber-framing and weatherboarding, sandstone, hung tiles of slate and clay.
- 5.24 Brick, both painted and unpainted is common, often being laid in polychromatic arrangements, whilst flint is also a characterful material. A number of buildings have been rendered.
- 5.25 Where visible, the rear of dwellings is simpler in detailing with further modern amendments, of tiles, slate and brick.
- 5.26 Roofs are predominantly ridge tiled, with handmade clay tiles, natural slate or modern equivalents.
- 5.27 Cliffe High Street retains a high proportion of historic shopfrontages, with 16th century street-facing gables at Nos.9-11 and a stretch of 19th century uniform frontages with parapeted roofs along the south side of the street (due to road widening in 1829).

- 5.28 South Street features a greater proportion of rendered 18th century buildings with Georgian detailing, and several groups of late 19th century buildings. Some of these feature Gothic detailing and colourful polychromatic brickwork.
- 5.29 Malling Street buildings includes a mixture of terraced late 18th and early 19th century houses, and the restored 18th century former coaching inn, Pastoral Antiques.
- 5.30 Modern buildings typically employ a more limited and less characterful palette of materials including the buildings at Hillman Close.



Figure 94: High quality surviving shopfronts at Harvey's



Figure 95: Characterful houses to South Street with brick polychromy reflecting pointed Gothic arches

BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

- 5.31 Most buildings sit with no setback from the street and therefore lack boundary treatments.
- 5.32 Where boundaries exist, brick is the most common boundary material often mixed with unknapped flint.
- 5.33 There are low brick walls with piers to Morris Road, with no retained historic ironwork.
- 5.34 Nos.21 and 23 Malling Street showcase notable historic iron railings.

PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACES AND TREES

- 5.35 Open, public realm spaces are limited. The River Ouse at the character area’s boundary features a riverside walk, with key activities linked to the river found along its banks, including the rowing club.

- 5.36 There is a corner of public realm at the junction of Cliffe High Street and Malling Street featuring a single street tree, although the street furniture is tired and the surface treatments in poor condition.
- 5.37 There is isolated historic brick and stone paving on Chapel Hill, English Passage and Foundry Lane, otherwise concrete paving predominates, often with traditional granite kerbs.
- 5.38 Street furniture is limited to a few benches on the corner of Cliffe High Street and a playground for children at Hillman Close.
- 5.39 Traditional style streetlamps are fixed to building elevations on Cliffe High Street, to minimise street clutter. The other streets generally feature utilitarian modern streetlights including South Street.
- 5.40 Pedestrian movement dominates on Cliffe High Street, with limited car movement into town along this road.
- 5.41 A number of cast iron bollards line pedestrian areas, including at Harvey’s Brewery and on Chapel Hill.



Figure 96: Overhead wires to Morris Road



Figure 97: Traditional style lamppost on Chapel Hill

KEY VIEWS

- 5.42 There are dominant views towards the open spaces of the South Downs to the south, the eponymous Chalk cliff that resulted from extensive quarrying especially prominent in that respect.
- 5.43 Views along the River Ouse and across it to the wharf buildings to the far side are characterful.
- 5.44 Kinetic views along Cliffe High Street and to and from Cliffe Bridge, which distinguish Cliffe from the rest of the Conservation Area.
- 5.45 Views of Thomas à Becket Church, which occupies a corner site on Cliffe High Street and Malling Street.

AUDIT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

- 5.46 There are 45 Listed Buildings in the character area. This includes: the Grade II listed Cliffe Bridge; the Grade II* listed St Thomas à Becket Church; the Grade II* listed Harvey’s Brewery; and the Grade I listed Jireh Chapel.
- 5.47 There are a series of buildings of local townscape merit set along both principal streets, such as South Street and side streets including Morris Road, many of which are uniform terraced houses.
- 5.48 A plaque on 45 Cliffe High Street records the street widening of 1829.



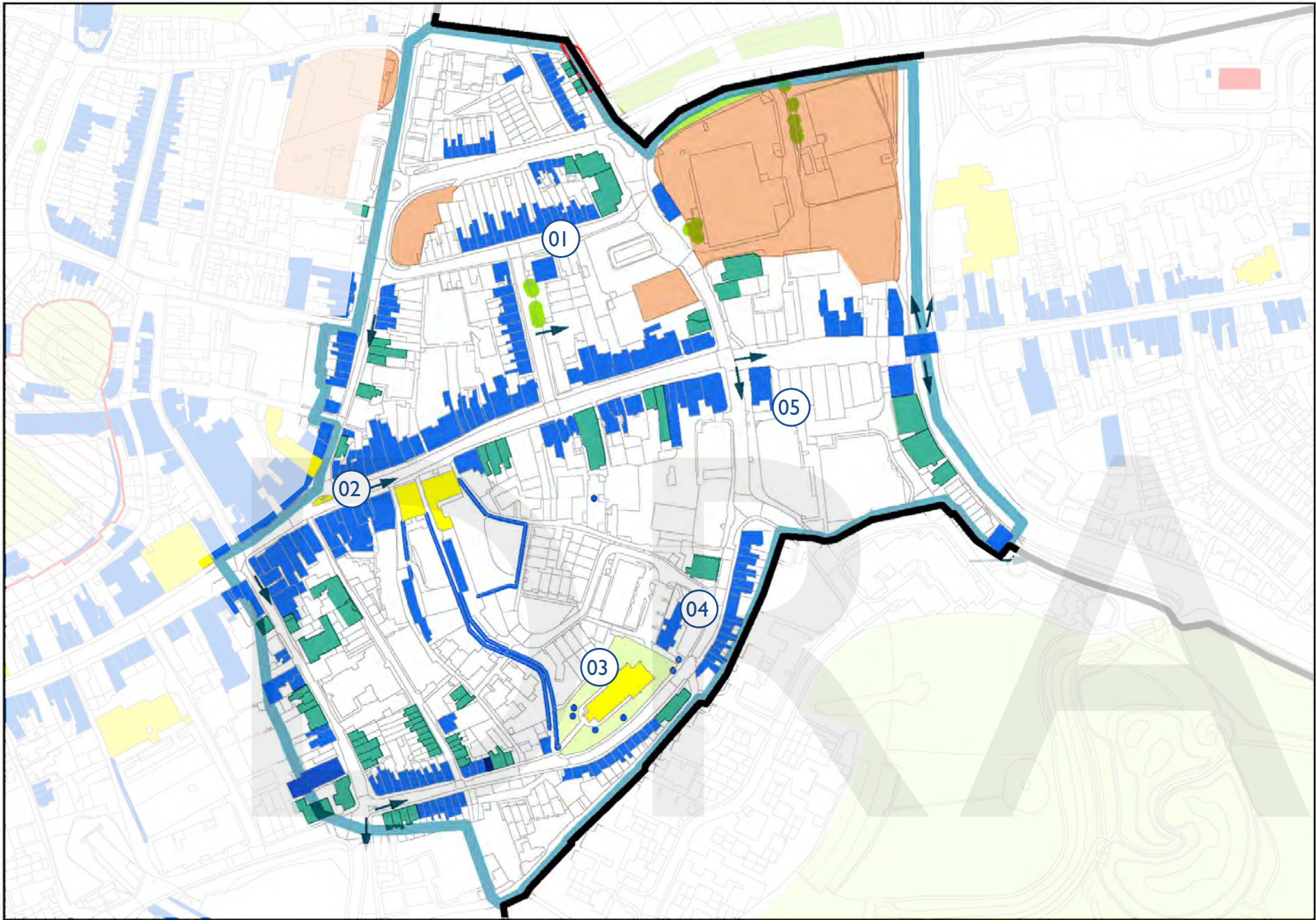
Figure 98: View looking north along the Ouse

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.49 Loss of the historic urban grain due to out of scale modern developments to the north of the character area.
- 5.50 Loss of architectural details to some unlisted properties.
- 5.51 The large Phoenix Causeway Car Park and oversized St Thomas’ Court development to the north of the church detract from the townscape of the area and dilute the historic urban grain.
- 5.52 The two car parks near the junction of Cliffe High Street and South Street (Cliffe High Street Car Park and South Street (North) Car Park) are similarly detrimental.
- 5.53 Opportunity to reduce street clutter and A-boards, particularly at the High Street junction.
- 5.54 Pigeon spikes are limited, but where these are present removal would be beneficial.
- 5.55 There is visible, localised disrepair in the form of algae, vegetative growth and blocked gutters.
- 5.56 Whilst the area is relatively pedestrian friendly there are opportunities to reduce traffic flow further, particularly on Chapel Hill.
- 5.57 Opportunity to replace modern lampposts on South Street and Malling Street with traditional style lampposts used on Cliffe High Street.
- 5.58 If opportunities arise, cables could be relocated below ground where they clutter the streetscene, for example on Morris Road.



Figure 99: The Phoenix Causeway Car Park to the north of St Thomas’ Court



- Conservation Area Boundary
- Character Area Boundary
- Grade I
- Grade II*
- Grade II
- ▨ Scheduled Monument

- TPOs
- Buildings of Townscape Merit
- Areas for Enhancement
- Public Open Spaces
- ➔ Key Views

- Focal buildings**
- 01 Former Lewes Public Library
 - 02 War Memorial
 - 03 All Saints' Centre
 - 04 Quaker Meeting House
 - 05 Fitzroy Memorial Library

This plan is not to scale

SUMMARY HISTORY OF THE LOWER HIGH STREET

- 5.59 The Lower High Street sits to the east of the centre of the historic Saxon settlement of Lewes.
- 5.60 As Lewes grew in the late Saxon period, the Lower High Street was increasingly developed and the town walls were extended outwards, aligned with the present day Eastgate Street and Friars' Walk.
- 5.61 Following the Norman Conquest of 1066, a church was built on the site of the All Saints Centre on Friars' Walk. A Franciscan Friary, to the eastern side of Friars' Walk and beyond the confines of the town walls, was established in the 13th century.
- 5.62 Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s, the Friary was converted into a grand townhouse for John Kyme. The High Street was rebuilt with a series of high status townhouses throughout the medieval and early modern periods, such as Trinity House at No.213, which is a refronted 16th century building.
- 5.63 Fisher Street was likely the site of a medieval fish market, whilst the bank of the River Ouse to the east of the street was lined with wharves and industrial buildings. These survive in greatest concentration on Railway Lane.
- 5.64 A significant proportion of regular, brick terraced housing was laid out to the north and south of the High Street in the early 19th century. Such housing can be seen on Lansdown Place and East Street.
- 5.65 Lewes Station opened in the 1840s, its terminus located just to the east of Friar's Walk before a new station was opened at its present location a decade later. The former station served as a goods yard until it was redeveloped and replaced by a magistrates courts in the 1980s, which has itself been replaced by a commercial unit.
- 5.66 The eastern part of the High Street was pedestrianised in the late 20th century and is dominated by post-war retail units.

STREET AND PLOT PATTERN

- 5.67 The street pattern in this area is significantly informed by the planned settlement of Lewes as a medieval *burh*. Friar's Walk and Eastgate Street perpetuate the line of medieval walls, whilst the east end of the High Street follows the line of the historic main street, its former pre-eminence reflected by its broadness.
- 5.68 A number of surviving narrow passageways or twittens, such as Brooman's Lane and Church Twitten, probably date to the medieval period. These twittens run between the long, thin burgage plots created when the medieval town was laid out.
- 5.69 The historic burgage plot pattern is not extant throughout the character area, with areas removed from the High Street laid out in terraces which have shorter and narrower plots. Modern developments, such as the Waitrose store, and car parking, namely the Lewes Eastgate and Friars Walk Car Parks, have also served to obfuscate this historic street pattern to the rear of the High Street plots.



Figure 100: Church Twitten enclosed by characterful flint and brick walls



Figure 101: Terrace to Friars Walk

BUILDING TYPES AND USES

- 5.70 The predominant building type throughout the character area is the terraced residential house.
- 5.71 Large 18th and 19th century Listed Buildings are concentrated along the High Street, many taking the form of grand townhouses, such as the Waterstones at 220-221 High Street and Sussex House at No.208.
- 5.72 Along the west bank of the River Ouse there are a number of historic wharf and light industrial buildings.
- 5.73 The School Hill part of the High Street, at the west end of the character area, and the pedestrianised section to the east are lined with shops, with some professional chambers and offices to the former, including the Town Hall, Lewes House and Albion House.
- 5.74 Whilst residential uses dominate to the south of the High Street, there are a number of non-residential properties to the eastern end of Friars Walk, including: the All Saints Centre; Friends' Meeting House; the recent Lewes Library; and a large NHS office building, as well as a number of areas of car parking.
- 5.75 There is a mix of retail and residential uses to Station Street and Lansdown Place.



Figure 102: All Saint's Centre on Friars Walk

BUILDING SCALE AND MASSING

- 5.76 A fine urban grain predominates within the character area with narrow terraced houses evident along East Street, Market Street, Albion Street, Lansdown Place, Friars Walk, Station Street, and the southern end of St Nicholas Lane.
- 5.77 There are a number of larger scale modern buildings to the eastern end of the character area, departing from the fine urban grain evident in the surrounding historic buildings.
- 5.78 This departure is especially prominent on the pedestrianised part of the High Street, where multi-unit retail developments were realised in the late 20th century including 215-218 High Street and 14 Eastgate Street, and the office developments at the east end of Friar's Walk. The Waitrose building on the fringes of the Conservation Area is relatively low in height but of considerable scale and massing.
- 5.79 The scale of the buildings along the River Ouse to the north and south of the High Street is larger as a result of its historic relationship with light industrial production and trade, with a number of characterful wharves and warehouses surviving to Railway Lane. Certain new developments have been designed to loosely draw on this industrial style.
- 5.80 Along the High Street scale and massing varies in a characterful manner, highlighting the area's piecemeal development. Although the majority of buildings are three or four-storeys, the topography of the street resulting from the incline of School Hill and the variety in building heights means the roofscape plays a very significant role within the character of the area.



Figure 103: Pedestrianised east end of the High Street by Lewes Bridge.

BUILDING MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

- 5.81 There are a number of timber-framed buildings on the High Street and School Hill, although many of these have been refronted. Among the most prominent examples are Trinity House (213 High Street) which is hung in mathematical tiles and 34 High Street, the side return of which to Walver's Lane reveals a close studded timber-frame.
- 5.82 There are a number of prominent classical buildings within the character area, with decorative detailing to the doorways, doorcases and window surrounds, with 17 High Street and the Town Hall being particularly grand examples.
- 5.83 There are prominent Gothic Revival buildings, including the Eastgate Baptist Church, former Wesleyan Station Street Chapel, former town library on Albion Street and former Fitzroy Memorial Library on the High Street, featuring pointed gables and windows, and brick polychromy. The Fitzroy Memorial Library features a distinctive and visually prominent Gothic-style cupola.
- 5.84 Brick is the most common building material within the character area with grey, red, or yellow brick used, largely deployed in a polychromatic manner. Many buildings feature grey brick contrasted with red brick surrounds to door and window openings, including: on North Street; Waterloo Place; Lansdown Place; Friars Walk; and Little East Street.
- 5.85 Modern buildings tend to use red brick, laid in a plain stretcher bond, with less or no polychromy. Certain modern buildings reference their context within the Conservation Area through the use of flint or hung tiles including the development at Baxter's Printworks.
- 5.86 On the north side of East Street there is a series of red brick terraces with classical doorcases and wide tripartite sash windows beneath first floor canted oriel windows.
- 5.87 Clustered closely on Market and North Streets there are a number of buildings faced in vitrified brick.
- 5.88 On the west side of Albion Street there is a characterful row of Regency stuccoed terraces with simple radial fanlights and channelling to the ground floor.
- 5.89 Intricate ironwork balconies are extant in a number of places within the character area, most notably Albion Street. There is a single example of a balcony on the High Street at No.35.
- 5.90 Historic signage and surface painting are all characterful details that contribute to the interest of the character area, as demonstrated by the signs and painting related to W.E. Baxter's evident on 34 and 35 High Street.
- 5.91 Historic shopfronts are commonplace throughout the character area, particularly on the High Street, and provide a significant degree of interest, a number retaining decorative stained glass glazing within leaded lights.



Figure 104: Stained glass overlight to 207 High Street



Figure 105: Trefoil windows to the Fitzroy Memorial Library

BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

- 5.92 The majority of buildings within the character area lack front boundary treatments, reflecting the urban character of the area.
- 5.93 Most of the buildings along the High Street are positioned hard up against the pavement. Where iron railings exist, these are largely concentrated outside prominent largely 18th and 19th century townhouses, which have minimal setbacks from the street. Lewes House (32 High Street) forms the only exception, featuring a generous set back from the predominant building line, over a raised forecourt.
- 5.94 The Regency terrace to the west side of Albion Street features uniform iron railings around basement lightwells, giving the buildings some breathing space from the public realm.
- 5.95 There are tall brick and flint retaining walls to the All Saints Centre and Friends' Meeting House, the same materials also evident in the long walls that stretch along the historic twittens to the south of the High Street: Walwers Lane; Broomans Lane; and Church Twitten.



Figure 106: Historic flint cobble boundary wall

PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACES AND TREES

- 5.96 Owing to its location at the heart of Lewes' historic centre, there is limited open space in this character area, although the pedestrianisation of the High Street to the east of Eastgate Street has provided a more generous area of public realm with street furniture including bollards, benches and bins.
- 5.97 The River Ouse offers breathing space to the east of the character area. Whilst there are occasional views of the river from the character area, this waterway is more appreciable from Cliffe Bridge.
- 5.98 Due to its central location and the high density of development there are relatively few street trees, except along the north-eastern boundary of the Conservation Area and those planted on the pedestrianised stretch of the High Street. There are also mature trees to the All Saints Centre churchyard, Friends' Meeting House and area between Broomans Lane and Church Twitten.
- 5.99 There is an elaborate Gothic Revival water fountain to Friars Walk, a rare example of historic street furniture within the character area.
- 5.100 Throughout the character area there are a number of areas of clay brick paving, including: Waterloo Place; Lansdown Place; Friars Walk; Market Street; and the pedestrianised part of the High Street, although the latter two have been resurfaced using modern bricks without the same characterful variety which is evident in the historic examples. There is a good proportion of traditional granite kerbs.
- 5.101 The character area also features plenty of less sensitive tarmac road surfacing and concrete pavers.



Figure 107: Modern concrete pavers to the High Street with traditional granite kerbs

KEY VIEWS

- 5.102 Kinetic views along the High Street are significant, particularly those to the east looking down School Hill towards Cliffe and the Downs below. The War Memorial terminates views to the west.
- 5.103 Cliffe Bridge provides a vantage point from which open views along the River Ouse and towards Harvey's Brewery can be enjoyed, with its steaming chimneys and the smell of hops adding to the character of the area.
- 5.104 There are characterful kinetic views along Friars Walk and Lansdown Place, the Meeting House and former All Saints Church combining with the long uniform terraces and curve of the road to create views of interest.



Figure 108: View from the Phoenix Causeway

AUDIT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

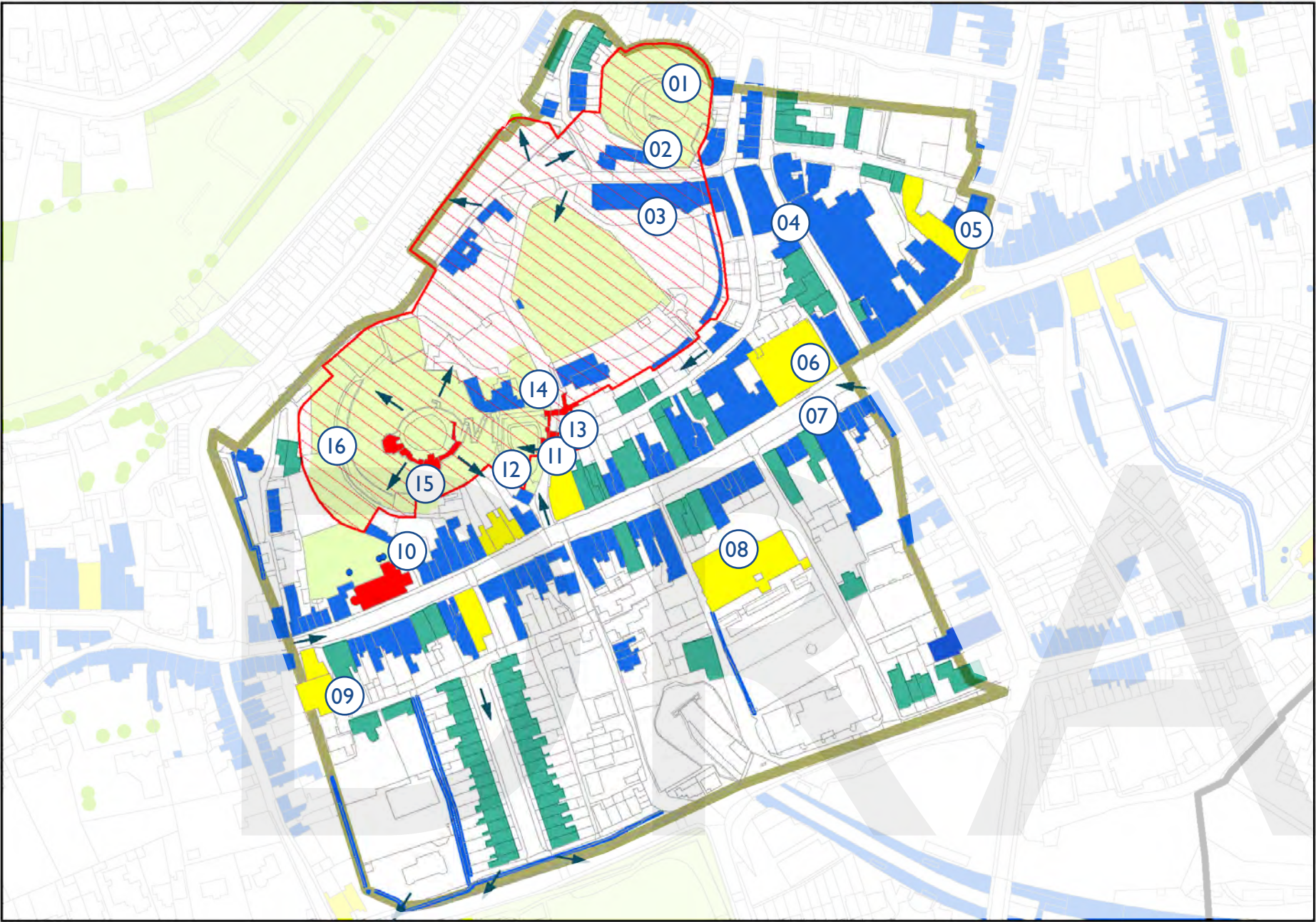
- 5.105 There are a significant number of designated heritage assets within the character area, with 138 Grade II Listed Buildings and four Grade II* Listed Buildings extant.
- 5.106 Thanks to the high proportion of designated heritage assets there are only a few undesigned buildings of townscape merit, such as the Eastgate Baptist Church and short run of terraces to the south of St Nicholas Lane.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.107 There has been relatively low incidence of traditional timber sash and casement window replacement with unsympathetic uPVC units. However, the character area would be enhanced by the reinstatement of traditional style sash windows where these have been lost.
- 5.108 There is an opportunity to reinstate consistent, high quality, traditional surface treatments throughout much of the character area.
- 5.109 There are substantial areas of car parking within this character area, which at present have a detrimental impact on its character and appearance. A degree of mitigation could be achieved by resurfacing works and the introduction of screening boundary treatments.
- 5.110 Pigeon spikes are limited, but where they exist removal would be beneficial.
- 5.111 Modern infill development in certain areas obscures the historic urban grain.



Figure 109: NCP car park and rear of the post-war shopping precinct



SUMMARY HISTORY OF LEWES CASTLE AND MIDDLE HIGH STREET

- 5.112 This area was at the centre of the historic town of Lewes from its foundation in the 9th century as a defended Saxon settlement (*burh*). The area was broken up into long thin burgage plots which ran perpendicular to the High Street, narrow alleys, or twittens, running between these plots.
- 5.113 Lewes Castle was built across two mottes, or artificial mounds, following the Norman Conquest. The extant masonry keep on Castle Mound was constructed c.1100 by William de Warenne, 1st Earl of Surrey, who established Lewes as the most important settlement within his extensive holdings in East Sussex.
- 5.114 Lewes's administrative prominence was reinforced by its position as a leading market town in the medieval period, with the broad High Street serving as the site of daily markets.
- 5.115 St Michael's Church on the High Street was first built in the 13th century and merged with the lost church of St Andrew's (for which St Andrew's Lane is named) following the Reformation.
- 5.116 Some medieval timber-framed buildings survive, such as 74 High Street. Timber-framed buildings of both the medieval and early modern period have largely been refronted with brick or mathematical tile throughout the character area. This was commonly carried out to high status townhouses, such as the 16th century Pelham House, off Watergate Lane, refronted three centuries later.
- 5.117 The area has historically been the site of important institutional buildings, with the Victorian town hall and its Georgian predecessors, now Lewes Crown Court, both located on the High Street.

— Conservation Area Boundary	➔ Key Views	09 Westgate Chapel
— Character Area Boundary	Focal buildings	10 St Michael's Church
■ Grade I	01 Brack Mound	11 Barbican House
■ Grade II*	02 Brack Mound House	12 Bartholomew House
■ Grade II	03 The Maltings	13 Barbican
▨ Scheduled Monument	04 Beard's Brewery	14 Inner Gatehouse
● TPOs	05 Market Tower	15 South Tower of Lewes Castle
■ Buildings of Townscape Merit	06 Crown Court	16 West Tower of Lewes Castle
■ Areas for Enhancement	07 White Hart Hotel	
■ Public Open Spaces	08 Pelham House	

This plan is not to scale

STREET AND PLOT PATTERN

- 5.118 The broad central section of the High Street, which runs east–west through the centre of the character area, is the principal route through the area.
- 5.119 Narrow streets and twittens run perpendicular to the south side of the High Street, as survivals of the planned medieval settlement of Lewes. These routes leading off the street provide welcome punctuations in what is otherwise continuous development, as well as offering glimpsed views of the Castle to the north and of Lewes' landscape setting down the hill to the south.
- 5.120 The plot pattern is relatively irregular, comprising plots of varying size and depth, demonstrating organic growth over the centuries, with the exception of the more formal, single phase St Swithin's Terrace.
- 5.121 The curved line of Castle Ditch Lane relates to the early 12th century layout of the Castle and its bailey. The steepness of Brack and Castle Mounds restricts the depth of plots to the base of each, evidenced along Castle Banks and Castle Ditch Lane respectively.
- 5.122 The western end of this section of the High Street features a relatively fine urban grain, whilst the narrow frontages of the central and eastern portions of the street are interspersed with larger commercial or institutional buildings including the Law Courts and the White Hart Hotel.
- 5.123 The buildings to the north of the High Street around the Castle occupy more generous plots surrounded by open space. The tight plot pattern of the High Street becomes looser in the streets to the south; these streets feature a number of sizable buildings within larger plots, both historic and modern, including Pelham House and Caburn Court.



Figure 110: View looking west along the High Street

BUILDING TYPES AND USES

- 5.124 Along the High Street, the buildings are predominantly in retail or commercial use featuring shop units, banks, restaurants, cafés, public houses, and estate agents. The upper floors often have a residential function, with some office use at this level.
- 5.125 A number of grandly-proportioned properties within the character area were originally designed for residential use but have been reused for different purposes subsequently – Pelham House is now a bar and wedding venue, whilst the Museum of Sussex Archaeology occupies Barbican House.
- 5.126 Residential use is typical elsewhere, especially in the area to the north of the Castle Ditch Lane and to the south of the High Street where there is a high proportion of solely residential properties, in contrast to the mixed, retail or commercial uses to the High Street.
- 5.127 St Swithun's Terrace is a planned early 20th century residential development.
- 5.128 Institutional or administrative uses are also evident, with Lewes District Council's inter-war office building located on Southover Road and the Law Courts on a prominent High Street site.
- 5.129 The former Beard's Brewery now hosts an arts centre, whilst the neighbouring maltings is now a costumer's and outfitter's studio.
- 5.130 The High Street features religious buildings including St Michael's Church and Westgate Chapel.



Figure 111: Former maltings, now an outfitter's studio

BUILDING SCALE AND MASSING

- 5.131 The buildings along the High Street are of a larger scale and massing than elsewhere in the character area, being overwhelmingly three or four-storeys tall, yet their scale and massing is diverse, which contributes to the character of the area. The buildings' varied roof types, comprising a mix of parapets, pitched roofs and gables, also adds to the eclectic character of the streetscene.
- 5.132 There are a few particularly grand frontages facing the High Street, including the Law Courts.
- 5.133 The buildings beyond the High Street to the south are of a smaller scale.
- 5.134 The castle buildings are characterised by a large bulky massing and their prominence is further accentuated by positioning on an artificial mound.



Figure 112: Lewes Castle appearing behind buildings fronting the High Street

BUILDING MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

- 5.135 Flint was the main building material used to construct Lewes Castle and Barbican, the latter also incorporating sandstone detailing.
- 5.136 Timber-framing is evident to the exterior of buildings within the character area, such as 67 High Street and the St Martin's Lane return of No.74. Many others were constructed with timber-frames but have been overclad with mathematical tiles, such as Bartholomew House at Castle Gate, or refronted with brick, like the neighbouring Barbican House and Pelham House to St Andrew's Lane.
- 5.137 Both stone dressings and stone facings are considerably more common within this character area, particularly on the High Street, reflecting its historic prosperity. There are also buildings that are stuccoed, historically intended to create the impression of stone but at lower cost, and more economical red and grey brick construction. Historic header and Flemish bond brickwork is common.
- 5.138 A number of buildings within the area were designed in a classical style, such as the Laws Courts, the HSBC building (No.63) and its neighbour, 64 High Street, which exhibit combinations of the following features: rustication; sculptural relief; porticos; dentilled eaves; round arched windows; and balustrades.
- 5.139 Classical detailing is also evident in a number of Georgian townhouses, most commonly in doorcases and fanlights, for example 61 High Street.



Figure 113: Bow windows to the High Street

- 5.140 There is good survival of historic shopfronts on the High Street, which retain tiled or panelled stallrisers, dividing mullions, fascias, pilasters and consoles. There are examples of surviving historic tiles to entrances and some ironwork associated with former canopies remains.
- 5.141 Georgian buildings typically feature shallow bow windows, pedimented doorcases and quoining. Pelham House (an 18th century remodelling of an Elizabethan house), on St Andrew's Lane, is the largest of a number of impressive Georgian buildings in the character area.
- 5.142 The character area features Arts and Crafts style buildings with scalloping to hung tiles and bargeboards, jetties, bay windows, sham timbers, roughcast render and ornate ridge tiles, all characteristic of this approach.
- 5.143 Historic signage and surface painting add characterful details that contribute to the interest of the character area.



Figure 114: Jettied timber frame buildings to the north end of St Martin's Lane

BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

- 5.144 The buildings on the High Street are positioned hard up against the pavement leaving no room for boundary treatments. There are relatively few boundaries elsewhere. Those found on Castle Mound and enclosing the bowling green and base of Brack Mound are executed in flint and brick.
- 5.145 Low brick walls with gate piers survive well to St Swithun's Terrace.
- 5.146 The high boundary walls of flint or brick located along the routes between the High Street and Southover Road, such as St Andrew's and St Martin's Lanes, are characterful and funnel views down the hill over Lewes' landscape setting to the south. The similar flint and brick boundary walls framing the narrower twittens, such as Paines Twitten and Green Lane, create an enclosed, intimate quality and are particularly characterful.
- 5.147 Sections of the medieval town wall survive around the base of the Castle Mound to the north, east and west.



Figure 115: Flint boundary walls to the Castle Precinct

PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACES AND TREES

- 5.148 The only concentrations of street furniture, namely bike racks, bins and benches, are found to the east end of the High Street and to the north of the bowling green.
- 5.149 There are very few trees within the character area, those that are visible from the street are largely located in gardens to the south of the High Street, around the railway tunnel or within the footprint of the Castle.
- 5.150 The former cattle trough at the southern end of Watergate Lane forms an interesting, decorative feature in the streetscene.
- 5.151 The streetlighting is typically of a traditional-style, sympathetic to the character of the area. Where space is restricted, lamps are fixed to the elevations of buildings. Traditional style finger post signage can be found on the High Street.



Figure 116: Traditional style finger post signage on the High Street

KEY VIEWS

- 5.152 Designed, kinetic and open views to and from Lewes Castle are the most important views within the Lewes Conservation Area. There are important glimpsed views of the Barbican from the High Street and Castle Mound.
- 5.153 Open views from the Castle Precincts and Castle Lane across the Paddock look towards the Wallands and toward Brack Mound in the east.
- 5.154 Kinetic views along the High Street both east and west, capture the varied quality of the street, those to the west imbued with additional interest by the towers to St Michael's Tower and Church Hall, those to the east by the distant downs. St Michael's Church's round, flint tower is particularly distinctive, as it is only one of three in East Sussex.
- 5.155 Funneled views looking south down the streets, lanes and twittens to the south of the High Street take in the stepped rooflines of buildings on the hill and the landscape setting beyond Lewes.

AUDIT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

- 5.156 There are 79 Grade II Listed Buildings within the character area, a further eight Grade II* Listed Buildings, including Barbican House and the Westgate Chapel, and four Grade I Listed Buildings. These are Lewes Castle Keep, the Barbican and south Castle walls, the remains of the inner gatehouse and its adjacent east and west walls, and the Church of St Michael.
- 5.157 The Lewes Castle site, which includes Lewes Castle Mount, the Castle Precincts and Brack Mound is a Scheduled Monument.
- 5.158 Many of the unListed Buildings on the High Street are buildings of townscape merit. Similarly, runs of buildings to St Swithun's Terrace and Market Lane are recognised as buildings of townscape merit.



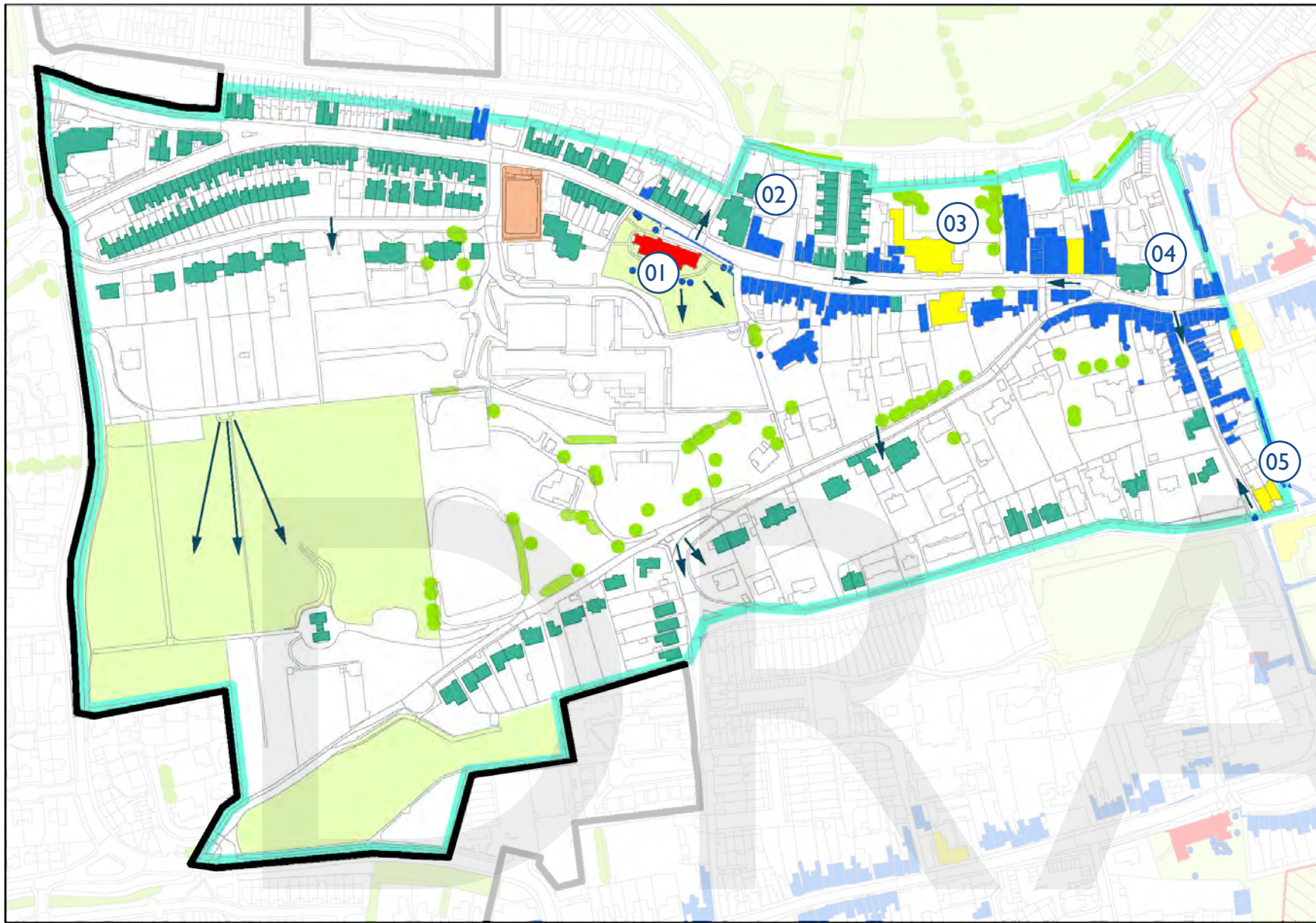
Figure 117: Striking view of the prominent towers to St Michael's Church and Church Hall

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.159 There is a significant opportunity to improve the tired public realm and landscaping to the north of the bowling green where there are benches and a plaque providing information about the Battle of Lewes.
- 5.160 At present a cluster of poorly sited broadband cabinets occupy an important space within the character area at the junction of Station Street and the High Street; their relocation to a more discreet position would enhance the character and appearance of this part of the character area.
- 5.161 The reinstatement of more traditional surface treatments would enhance the character area, as less sympathetic tarmac and concrete pavers currently predominate.
- 5.162 The use of uPVC units instead of traditional timber sash and casement windows has a negative impact on the character area due to their unsympathetic materiality and profiles. As such the further installation of uPVC units should be opposed and the reinstatement of timber windows supported.
- 5.163 There are a number of vacant units that would be better preserved and their significance enhanced by reinstating their original retail use.
- 5.164 There is localised disrepair within the character area; any opportunity should be taken to inform local shop and business owners of the importance of appropriate building maintenance and repair.
- 5.165 Pigeon spikes are limited, but where they exist they are detrimental and their removal would be beneficial.
- 5.166 The High Street and Fisher Street suffer traffic congestion particularly during rush hour.



Figure 118: Non-original timber windows in disrepair



— Conservation Area Boundary

— Character Area Boundary

■ Grade I

■ Grade II*

■ Grade II

▨ Scheduled Monument

● TPOs

■ Buildings of Townscape Merit

■ Areas for Enhancement

■ Public Open Spaces

➡ Key Views

Focal buildings

01 St Anne's Church

02 St Pancras's Church

03 The Shelleys

04 143 High Street

05 The Capron

This plan is not to scale

SUMMARY HISTORY OF THE UPPER HIGH STREET AND WESTERN ROAD

- 5.167 Rotten Row likely follows a historic Roman route.
- 5.168 St Anne's Church and St Peter's Church (which was demolished after the Reformation) were built by 1121. The early date of their construction indicates that there was a substantial western suburb beyond the walls of Lewes by this point in time.
- 5.169 A leper house dedicated to St Nicholas was established off Spital Road in the late 11th century.
- 5.170 A number of medieval, 16th and 17th century buildings survive within the character area, although the Fifteenth Century Bookshop at 99–100 High Street is the only building to feature a timber-frame visible externally. Other buildings of a similar date, like The Shelley's Hotel, were refronted in the 18th century.
- 5.171 Lewes Cemetery was formed in the 1850s to the north of Rotten Row, with burial plots provided for the parishes of St Michael's and All Saints in Lewes, and St Thomas à Becket, Cliffe.
- 5.172 Terraces were laid out along Western Road in the 19th century, with the speed of development intensifying after Lewes Prison opened in 1853.
- 5.173 Villas were built along St Anne's Crescent and Rotten Row from the mid-19th century, with semis and terraces predominating on the Crescent, and detached houses common along Rotten Row.
- 5.174 East Sussex County Council Offices opened in 1968, off St Anne's Crescent.

STREET AND PLOT PATTERN

- 5.175 The street pattern within the character area is largely defined by the diverging historic routes of Rotten Row and the High Street (which becomes Western Road to the west of the area). The High Street follows a gently curving east–west course, whilst Rotten Row extends south-west.
- 5.176 The main side streets in the character area: Keere Street; St Anne’s Crescent; St Peter’s Place; and Irelands Lane; connect to the High Street rather than Rotten Row, which is significantly less developed.
- 5.177 There is a relatively fine urban grain to the High Street, Western Road, Keere Street and St Peter’s Place where terraced houses with narrow frontages predominate.
- 5.178 The fine urban grain along the High Street and Western Road is regularly interrupted by larger buildings with more generous plots, such as the historic high status dwellings which predominate to the east of the High Street, including 110 and 111 High Street, and The Shelley’s Hotel opposite. The churches of St Anne and St Pancras, also on the High Street, occupy larger plots, particularly St Anne’s.
- 5.179 At St Anne’s Crescent a generous bank of planting in front, breaks with the character established along the High Street, with much broader plots to the south side of the street.
- 5.180 The development along Rotten Row is much less densely developed, featuring detached villas sitting well back from the road within spacious, irregular plots.
- 5.181 The plot pattern in the land between the High Street/Western Road and Rotten Row is much looser, featuring plots of varying scales interspersed with open spaces, such as the cemetery. The modern East Sussex County Council Offices occupies a particularly large plot.



Figure 119: View looking east along the curving High Street

BUILDING TYPES AND USES

- 5.182 The predominant building types within the character area are terraced houses and detached and semi-detached villas, which largely remain in residential use.
- 5.183 There are some retail or commercial buildings scattered along the High Street and Western Road including: public houses; a hotel; grocers; and pharmacies.
- 5.184 There are a number of office buildings within the area, the largest and most visually prominent being the post-war East Sussex County Council Offices.
- 5.185 The former St Anne's School is off Rotten Row, whilst Lewes Old Grammar School occupies several buildings on the north side of the High Street near the junction with Rotten Row.
- 5.186 Within the character area there are several places of worship such as the churches of St Anne's and St Pancras and the chapel in Lewes Cemetery.



Figure 120: The modern East Sussex County Council Offices which towers above the historic buildings within the character area

BUILDING SCALE AND MASSING

- 5.187 Buildings are overwhelmingly two or three-storeys throughout the character area, the third-storey often expressed externally by a dormer window or attic storey.
- 5.188 The tower of St Anne's Church, which features a pyramidal roof and spire, rises higher than the domestic buildings within its setting, making it a prominent feature in the character area.
- 5.189 Different roof types, including gables, pitched roofs and parapets, as well as prominent chimneys, add interest and character to the roofline of the High Street, Western Road and Keere Street.
- 5.190 There is a great degree of uniformity in massing along St Anne's Crescent, where there are smaller three-storey terraces and semis to the north side and larger scale semi-detached villas to the south side, as well as the more imposing Southdown House at the east end.
- 5.191 The buildings comprising the East Sussex County Council Offices, are the largest in the character area both in scale and massing, towering over many of the historic buildings in the character area and wider Conservation Area.



Figure 121: A more domestic scale at St Anne's Terrace

BUILDING MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

- 5.192 Brick is the predominant building material within this character area. Red and grey bricks are most common, both often used together, with the resulting polychromy adding interest to the area. Header and Flemish bond brickwork is commonplace.
- 5.193 Intricate bricklaying is common within the character area, with diaper patterns, brick modillions and well detailed window surrounds enhancing the appearance of the area.
- 5.194 Many of the terraced houses which predominate throughout the character area are painted or stuccoed.
- 5.195 Flint is used on a number of important buildings within the area, such as St Anne's Church and St Michael's Court, Keere Street. A particularly striking use of the material is evident in the near continuous run of buildings from Mead House of Lewes Old Grammar School to 141 High Street.
- 5.196 A characterful heterogeneity arises from the use of different materials, such as weatherboarding, vitrified brick and tile hanging. The visible jettied timber frame of 99-100 High Street is particularly significant in this respect; the building contrasts in materials and appearance to its surrounding stuccoed 18th and 19th century buildings and frontages, which are contrastingly governed by symmetry and regularity.
- 5.197 The character area features good survival of historic timber sash windows. Bay windows and dormer windows are prevalent on St Anne's Crescent.
- 5.198 Roofs are either clad in clay tiles or slate.



Figure 122: Significant variety to the streetscape along the High Street showing the timber-framing of 99-100 High Street next to late 18th and 19th century stuccoed frontages

BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

- 5.199 The long brick and flint wall to the north side of Rotten Row and St Anne's churchyard, as well as the walls of Lewes Cemetery are all historic boundary treatments which survive on a large scale and contribute significantly to the character area's interest.
- 5.200 The remains of the medieval town wall visible to Westgate Street are an important feature at the eastern edge of the Conservation Area.
- 5.201 A lack of set backs to the High Street, Western Road and the streets to the north of both means that there are relatively few boundary treatments. Where there are set backs they are often shallow, with cast iron railings used, among the most interesting found on St Anne's Terrace, which are capped with fleur-de-lis finials. Low brick boundary walls are also used.
- 5.202 There are some high brick walls to yards along the High Street, but they are most prevalent along Rotten Row where their scale and decorative treatment emphasises the elevated status of the villas along the road.
- 5.203 Although some boundary treatments have been lost on St Anne's Crescent, the retention of piers and iron railings to the street contributes to the character of the area.



Figure 123: Tall flint wall to Keere Street

PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACES AND TREES

- 5.204 The character area is well-served by green space, including Lewes Cemetery, St Anne's Churchyard, and the park and children's playground by the Winterbourne Stream. These spaces are shown on the character area map.
- 5.205 To the south of the High Street and St Anne's Crescent there is a substantial quantity of open space presently in use for surface car parking, largely associated with the East Sussex County Council Offices.
- 5.206 There are relatively few street trees to the High Street and Western Road, although the remainder of the character area has a green and leafy character due to the well-established planting in front gardens and the provision of open green spaces.
- 5.207 The character area features a good proportion of granite kerbs and some traditional brick pavers but otherwise the surface treatments comprise modern pavers or tarmac finishes. Keere Street features characterful cobbles.



Figure 124: View to the south of Lewes from the cemetery

KEY VIEWS

- 5.208 Key long-distance views toward the surrounding countryside to the south are commonplace, whether glimpsed through gaps between buildings on St Anne's Crescent, or enjoyed from open spaces like Lewes Cemetery or the Churchyard of St Anne's.
- 5.209 The view down Keere Street with its characterful early 19th century terraces, distant views of the countryside to the south as well as glimpses of Priory Crescent and the roofscape of Southover, is a key view within the eastern part of the character area.
- 5.210 The termination of views into the character area from the east by the snub-nosed Old Toll House is of interest.
- 5.211 Important views along the High Street from St Anne's Church and the Pelham Arms are terminated by the curvature of the road and the Lewes Downs in the distance to the east.
- 5.212 There are pleasing kinetic views of the green space at Baxter's Field along Irelands Lane.

AUDIT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

- 5.213 There are many Listed Buildings within the Upper High Street and Western Road Character Area. Sixty-eight of these are Grade II listed, whilst four, including the Caprons and Shelleys, are Grade II* listed, St Anne's Church is the only Grade I Listed Building. The Listed Buildings largely date to the 18th and early 19th centuries and are of a domestic character, along with more grand buildings now largely converted to institutional uses.
- 5.214 There are many buildings deemed of townscape merit, representing a large number of characterful villas and terraced house along Western Road, St Anne's Crescent, Rotten Row and St Peters Place.



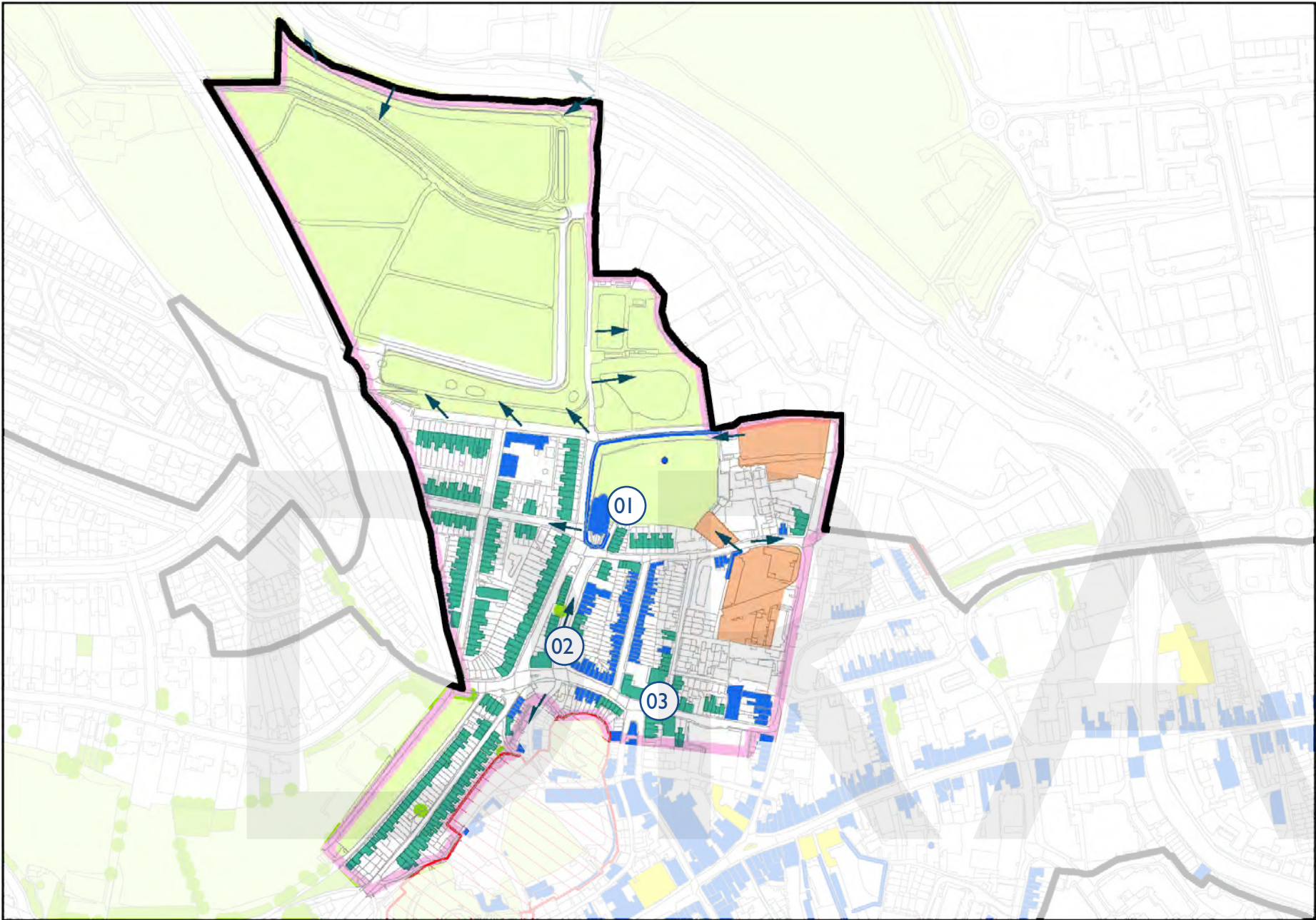
Figure 125: Characterful brick paving to the High Street with poor quality concrete kerbs

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.215 There is an opportunity to retain a greater of degree uniformity in the roofscape of the buildings by ensuring that dormer windows are not overbearing and do not disrupt established roof patterns. This is especially important along streets lined with terraces, which predominate in this area.
- 5.216 Bulky modern skylights disrupting historic rooflines are not appropriate to the historic character of the area. Conservation rooflights would be more sensitive.
- 5.217 Where uPVC units have been installed, they detract from the character of the area owing to their unsympathetic materiality and profiles. As such the further installation of uPVC units should be opposed and the reinstatement of timber windows supported.
- 5.218 The walled-off and covered over Southern Water reservoir at the intersection of the High Street and St Anne's Crescent, sits incongruously within the established streetscape. Measures should be taken to improve and soften its screening.
- 5.219 Heavy traffic detracts from the interest of the eastern portion of the character area. Significant congestion is connected to the traffic lights installed to manage traffic flow through the narrow portion of the High Street by Westgate and Keere Streets.
- 5.220 There is an opportunity to introduce more consistent, sympathetic surfacing treatments.



Figure 126: Covered reservoir to Western Road which features insufficient screening



- Conservation Area Boundary
- Character Area Boundary
- Grade I
- Grade II*
- Grade II
- ▨ Scheduled Monument

- TPOs
- Buildings of Townscape Merit
- Areas for Enhancement
- Public Open Spaces
- ➡ Key Views

- Focal buildings**
- 01 St John-sub-Castro
 - 02 Elephant and Castle
 - 03 The Old Police Station

This plan is not to scale

SUMMARY HISTORY OF THE PELLIS AND WEST STREET

- 5.221 Although this character area sits to the north of the historic Saxon settlement, St John-sub-Castro was perhaps the site of an Anglo-Saxon minster church. The church of St John-sub-Castro was seemingly rebuilt and extended from the 11th century, before being completely rebuilt in the 1830s.
- 5.222 The character area was largely open land until the early 19th century, when streets were laid out for the development of terraced housing to the south of the character area, around Sun Street, Abinger Place and West Street.
- 5.223 The town stocks and gallows were historically located on Abinger Place.
- 5.224 A prison was opened on North Street in 1793, before being used as a naval prison from the 1850s. Redeveloped post-war, it is now the site of car parking and an ambulance station.
- 5.225 The Pellis Pool was opened in 1861, making it the oldest public, freshwater swimming pool in the country. Funds for the pool's construction were drawn from a public subscription campaign. The surrounding Pellis parkland was established as a pleasure ground in the 19th century. A walled recreation area was established to the south of the pool in 1891.
- 5.226 The former police station, now flats, on West Street, was opened in 1884 on the site of Lewes Mechanics Institute.
- 5.227 A number of buildings were erected in the late 19th and early 20th century, taking inspiration from the Arts and Crafts movement, such as Lewes New School and Pelham Terrace. Italianate housing of a similar date was built on Talbot Terrace and St John's Hill.
- 5.228 North Street was subject to intensive redevelopment post-war. A Telephone Exchange of 1959 was built in a Scandanvian Modernist style, with a post-war NHS office to the north. Between the two is a police station, which opened in 2011.

STREET AND PLOT PATTERN

- 5.229 The character area was laid out in a series of terraced developments from the 18th to late 19th centuries and is characterised by a regular street and plot pattern.
- 5.230 The streets adopt an approximate gridiron structure, which overlays the more historic routes through the area including Abinger Place and Lancaster Street.
- 5.231 There is a fine grain of development with narrow frontages and gardens of varying depths (Abinger Place and St John's Terrace feature small yards, Sun Street and Pelham Terrace have generous gardens).
- 5.232 The grain of development becomes looser and more fragmented to the east of the character area between St John Street and North Street where there are large modern buildings in spacious plots and areas of surface car parking.
- 5.233 Certain larger, institutional buildings break the fine grain, including the former East Sussex Police Station on West Street and the former prison site on North Street (now parking for the modern Police and Ambulance Stations). The Church of St John-sub-Castro sits within a large churchyard.
- 5.234 The streets are generally narrow and intimate but feature wider spaces at the intersection of streets including Commercial Square and the junction of Abinger Place, St John's Terrace, St John's Hill and Lancaster Street.
- 5.235 The tight-knit grain of the southern part of the character area gives way to a more open northern area, with few building plots and plenty of green space.



Figure 127: View along Abinger Place towards St John-sub-Castro

BUILDING TYPES AND USES

- 5.236 Buildings in this character area were developed in the 19th century as a series of speculative terrace developments. The residential function remains and the properties are predominantly in single occupancy.
- 5.237 Along North and West Streets, the residential character is less apparent with two auctioneers, an ambulance station, two police stations (the historic station to West Street is now flats), the telephone exchange, and a handful of shops breaking with the residential character elsewhere in the character area.
- 5.238 Other non-residential buildings include the theatre on Lancaster Street, St John's Church and Church Hall, the lido buildings on the Pells, and the Elephant and Castle Pub on White Hill.
- 5.239 The northern portion of the character area covers a large area of open green space, The Pells, with the only buildings in this area associated with the public lido.



Figure 128: The Pells Pool

BUILDING SCALE AND MASSING

- 5.240 The residential buildings which dominate this area are typically of a diminutive scale of two to three-storeys high, although owing to the topography to the west end of St John's Terrace, buildings which appear two-storeys to the front extend down four-storeys to the rear.
- 5.241 The modern buildings at the north end of St John Street are of a large, bulky scale and massing, which is at odds with the two-storey terraces at the south end of the street.
- 5.242 Many buildings were originally constructed with rooms to the roof structure lit by dormers; more recent loft conversions using skylights and dormers have eroded heritage values due to poor materiality or overly prominent massing.
- 5.243 There is a strong sense of homogeneity throughout the character area as a whole due to the domestic scale and massing of the vast majority of buildings within the Conservation Area.
- 5.244 Buildings with a larger scale and massing, such as St John-sub-Castro and the historic police station on West Street, contrast pleasingly with the smaller terraced houses and stand out as landmarks.
- 5.245 Large 20th century buildings to North Street similarly contrast with the surrounding townscape, but in a considerably less picturesque manner due to their less sympathetic materiality and massing.

BUILDING MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

- 5.246 The building materials evident in the area are varied. Many of the buildings are rendered or stuccoed. This surface treatment is often coupled with Italianate decorative touches like keystone, impostes and decorative cornices. Such buildings are evident on Pelham and Talbot Terraces, St John's Hill and St John's Terrace.
- 5.247 There are also a number of brick terraces, which are less ornate than their Italianate stucco analogues, but still have characterful decorative treatments. Openings are articulated by simple gauged brick arches, whilst polychromy is very common, with red bricks often paired with buff or grey bricks to provide further articulation to front and side elevations.
- 5.248 Some of these brick terraces reflect an Arts and Crafts style, with tile hung bay windows, porches or gables, areas of roughcast render, and sham timberwork, evident on Lancaster Street and the western portion of Toronto Terrace.
- 5.249 Sun Street reflects a characterful range of cladding materials, including some houses using red and grey brick, mixed with others clad in timber weatherboarding, walled in field flint, built from glossy, vitrified black brick, or decorated with sham timbers.



Figure 129: A variety of materials deployed on Sun Street



Figure 130: Historic boot scraper

BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

- 5.250 Historic boundary treatments survive well in this character area. Often low front boundary walls have been erected in brick, flint (laid both knapped and as field stones) or a mixture of the two.
- 5.251 There is some variety in boundary treatments, with historic iron railings to the front of the buildings on St John's Terrace, whilst Toronto Terrace has low stone walls to demarcate front boundaries.
- 5.252 The long flint wall which surrounds St John-sub-Castro on Brook Street, St John's Hill, Lancaster Street and Church Row is particularly characterful for both its sheer scale and materiality, whilst the smaller flint walls to Abinger Place and Paddock Road are also of significance.
- 5.253 Rear and side boundaries are less visible throughout the Conservation Area, but where they are prominently located they have often survived relatively well, although the addition of modern timber panelled fences does detract from the streetscape somewhat.



Figure 131: Historic railings to St John's Terrace

PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACES AND TREES

- 5.254 The extensive publicly accessible open space within this character area brings considerable special interest. These spaces are shown on the character area map.
- 5.255 Much of this open space is found in the Pells to the north of the area, where there is a Lido first established in 1860, a walled recreation area established in 1891, and a large area of floodplain drained by the Pellbrook Cut and Pells Stream. Public Realm in this area includes a children's play park and a number of benches.
- 5.256 The Churchyard of St John-sub-Castro is an open green space of considerable size, as well as an important amenity space within the dense residential development to the south of the character area.
- 5.257 Although there are relatively few street trees, the mature trees to the Pells, Churchyard of St John-sub-Castro and those which demarcate the western boundary of the Conservation Area next to the trainline, all contribute to the green character of the area.
- 5.258 Planted front and rear gardens add further greenery to the character area.
- 5.259 Aside from the Pells in the north of the character area, the remaining open spaces are covered in hardstanding and are used for car parking.
- 5.260 Sympathetic streetlighting predominates across the character area, with the exception of West Street and Mount Pleasant, where more utilitarian lighting is present.
- 5.261 Overhead cables are a prominent feature within the streetscape in a number of areas.
- 5.262 The character area features a mix of traditional granite kerbs, alongside concrete and tarmac pavers/ finishes.



Figure 132: Park to the south of the Pells Lido

KEY VIEWS

- 5.263 Key kinetic views towards the Church of St John-Sub-Castro along Toronto Terrace and Abinger Place and glimpsed views from a range of more distant locations.
- 5.264 Kinetic views into, around and across the Pells.
- 5.265 Views both along and across the River Ouse.
- 5.266 Views from the Pells to Malling Down in the east.
- 5.267 Kinetic views along Mount Pleasant towards the Elephant and Castle public house.

AUDIT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

- 5.268 There are 43 Listed buildings within the character area and all of these are Grade II Listed.
- 5.269 At present the Conservation Area boundary bisects one Scheduled Monument, the remains of the town wall, otherwise known as 'The Green Wall'.
- 5.270 There are a number of buildings judged to be of townscape merit, many of which are characterful terraced houses of the 19th and early 20th centuries, with examples including the Elephant and Castle Public House and the former Police Station on White Hill and West Street respectively.



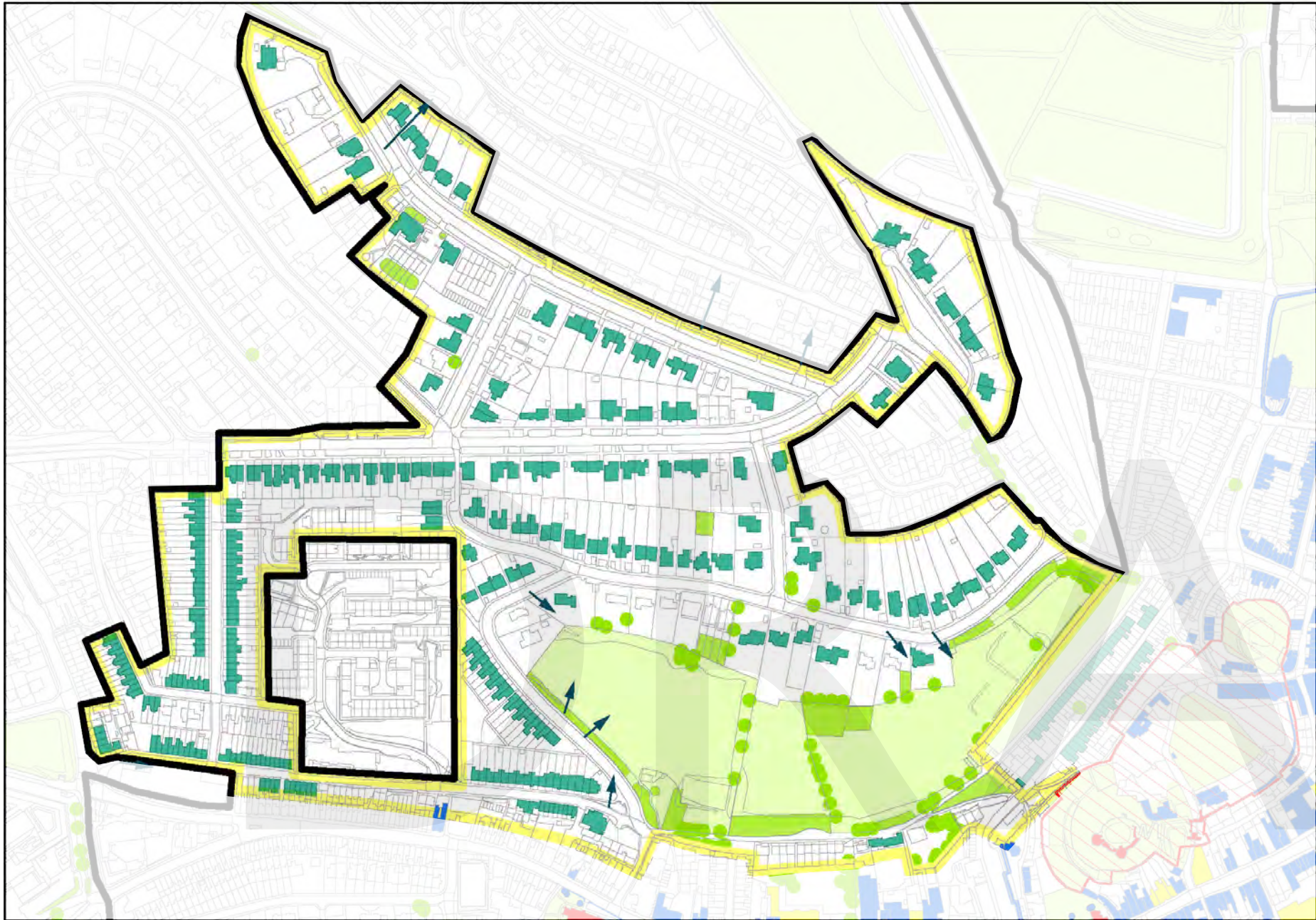
Figure 133: Silhouette of St John-sub-Castro behind Lewes New School

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.271 There is an opportunity to reinstate consistent, high quality, traditional surface treatments throughout the character area.
- 5.272 There is an opportunity for the cluttered modern accretions to the front elevations of buildings, such as satellite dishes and antennae, to be reduced by locating more discretely on rear roof pitches.
- 5.273 Although timber windows are evident across the character area, where they have been replaced with uPVC units there is an opportunity to enhance the character area through the reinstatement of timber casements or sashes.
- 5.274 Certain loft extensions and associated, unsympathetic dormer windows detract from the unity of the streetscene. Any extension should consider the character and appearance of the character area and should employ conservation rooflights over bulkier non-conservation models.
- 5.275 There is an opportunity to enhance the character area through the redevelopment or alteration of several gap sites of varying sizes. The two large car parks and modern buildings to North Street are especially detrimental at present and in need of enhancement and sensitive screening.
- 5.276 There is the potential for a considered, cohesive public realm strategy and the introduction of more pockets of green space into the southern portion of the character area.
- 5.277 Reducing the prominence of overhead wiring would serve to enhance the character of the area; if opportunities arise, cables could be buried below ground.
- 5.278 Repainting peeling windows and walls, repairing decayed timberwork, removing vegetation from building fabric, and clearing downpipes would all help to enhance the condition of buildings and appearance of the character area.
- 5.279 Potential to enhance the character of the south side of White Hill, where there is unsympathetic advertising hoarding and detracting telecommunications and energy infrastructure.
- 5.280 There is development pressure in the setting of this part of the Conservation Area, focused on the industrial estate along North Street, which has the potential to disrupt views out from the Pellis towards the Downs



Figure 134: Large area of car parking to the north-east corner of the character area



- Conservation Area Boundary
- Character Area Boundary
- Grade I
- Grade II*
- Grade II
- ▨ Scheduled Monument
- TPOs

- Buildings of Townscape Merit
- Areas for Enhancement
- Public Open Spaces
- ➔ Key Views

This plan is not to scale

SUMMARY HISTORY OF THE WALLANDS

- 5.281 The Wallands was undeveloped farmland until the early 18th century.
- 5.282 One of the earliest developments in the area was the Union Warehouse, subsequently redeveloped as a housing estate, which is not included in the Conservation Area.
- 5.283 A series of grand villas were developed along Wallands Crescent in the mid-18th century.
- 5.284 Plans to extensively develop the area to the north of the Paddock were in place by the 1870s, with Prince Edward's Road, De Warrenne Road, and King Henry's Road all laid out by the time the first edition Ordnance Survey map was surveyed in 1875. The large detached and semi-detached houses along these roads were built piecemeal over the following three decades.
- 5.285 Terraces were built along Valence Road in the 1870s and 1880s, with those to Leicester Road following at the turn of the century.
- 5.286 The Avenue was laid out to the south of Prince Edward's Road and developed with detached houses in the first decade of the 20th century.

STREET AND PLOT PATTERN

- 5.287 The character area is dominated by The Paddock and Baxter’s Field, significant green spaces to the area’s south.
- 5.288 The largely 19th century residential development comprises a fine grain of narrow-fronted, terraced buildings to the west of the Paddock, including Leicester Road and the west end of Prince Edward’s Road. Broader plots featuring detached or semi-detached villas to the north and north-west, include The Avenue and De Warenne Road. The properties have front and back gardens of varying sizes, reflecting the suburban character of the area.



Figure 135: Terraces to Leicester Road



Figure 136: Villa to Park Road

BUILDING TYPES AND USES

- 5.289 The buildings in this area are predominantly residential, with few exceptions beyond the St Pancras Catholic Primary School on De Montfort Road, Morley House nursery school on King Henry's Road, and an art studio on Paddock Lane.
- 5.290 A series of more substantial detached villas have been converted into residential care homes, such as Claydon House off Wallands Crescent and North Corner on Prince Edward's Road.

BUILDING SCALE AND MASSING

- 5.291 Densely packed terraced houses to the character area's south are modest in scale, narrow-fronted and two-storeys with occasional attic use. These include terraced cottages on Leicester Road and on sections of De Montfort Road and Valence Road.
- 5.292 Substantial semi-detached residential properties with broad frontages are found to the north of the area, along The Avenue, Prince Edward's Road, De Warrenne Road and King Henry's Road.



Figure 137: Semi-detached villas to Prince Edward's Road



Figure 138: Large semi-detached villa to King Henry's Road

BUILDING MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

- 5.293 There are various cladding materials used across the character area, including red brick with paler brick detailing, render and hung tiles. Brick is often laid in stretcher or Flemish bond.
- 5.294 Terraced buildings along New, Paddock, Valence and Leicester Roads are characterised by a restrained architectural style with simple brick detailing, sash windows, pitched slate roof and panelled doors.
- 5.295 Larger dwellings and villas to the northern parts of the character area are characterised by a vibrant mix of double-height canted or square bay windows, gables with hung tiles or timber motifs, timber or tile-clad verandas and porches. These decorative features reflect an eclectic Queen Anne style and contribute positively to the appearance of the character area.
- 5.296 Roofs are clad in slate and clay tile.



Figure 139: Verandah with intricate joinery

BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

- 5.297 The Paddock's boundary is predominantly marked by mature trees.
- 5.298 As a suburban character area where most dwellings feature front gardens, there is a high proportion of boundary treatments both historic and modern.
- 5.299 Historic brick and unknapped flint boundary walls dominate on Prince Edward's Road, King Henry's Road and Leicester Road, with brick walls along to De Montfort Road.
- 5.300 The original brick and flint boundaries to The Avenue remain, but have been eroded in places and feature lower quality timber fences or sections of modern brick walling.



Figure 140: Typical brick and flint front boundary treatment

PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACES AND TREES

- 5.301 The generous open area and tree-planting in The Paddock and Baxters' Field forms a significant green space, predominantly bounded by mature trees. The amenity space, which is shown on the character area map, is the result of a long history of community-supported protection.
- 5.302 Well-tended allotments to the south-east of the Paddock add to the communal value of the open space.
- 5.303 There is a high number of street trees and well planted gardens, creating a particularly leafy and tranquil character area, which together with its broad streets and generous plot sizes, marks a contrast to other character areas.



Figure 141: View of Baxter's Field from the south

KEY VIEWS

- 5.304 Open views across The Paddock are a significant contributor to the quality of the character area, particularly those from Bradford Road and between developments along The Avenue, as are the long views along uniform terraced residential roads like Leicester Road.
- 5.305 There are also key views to the north-east towards the Downs and the River Ouse, and good glimpsed views of the Castle.

AUDIT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

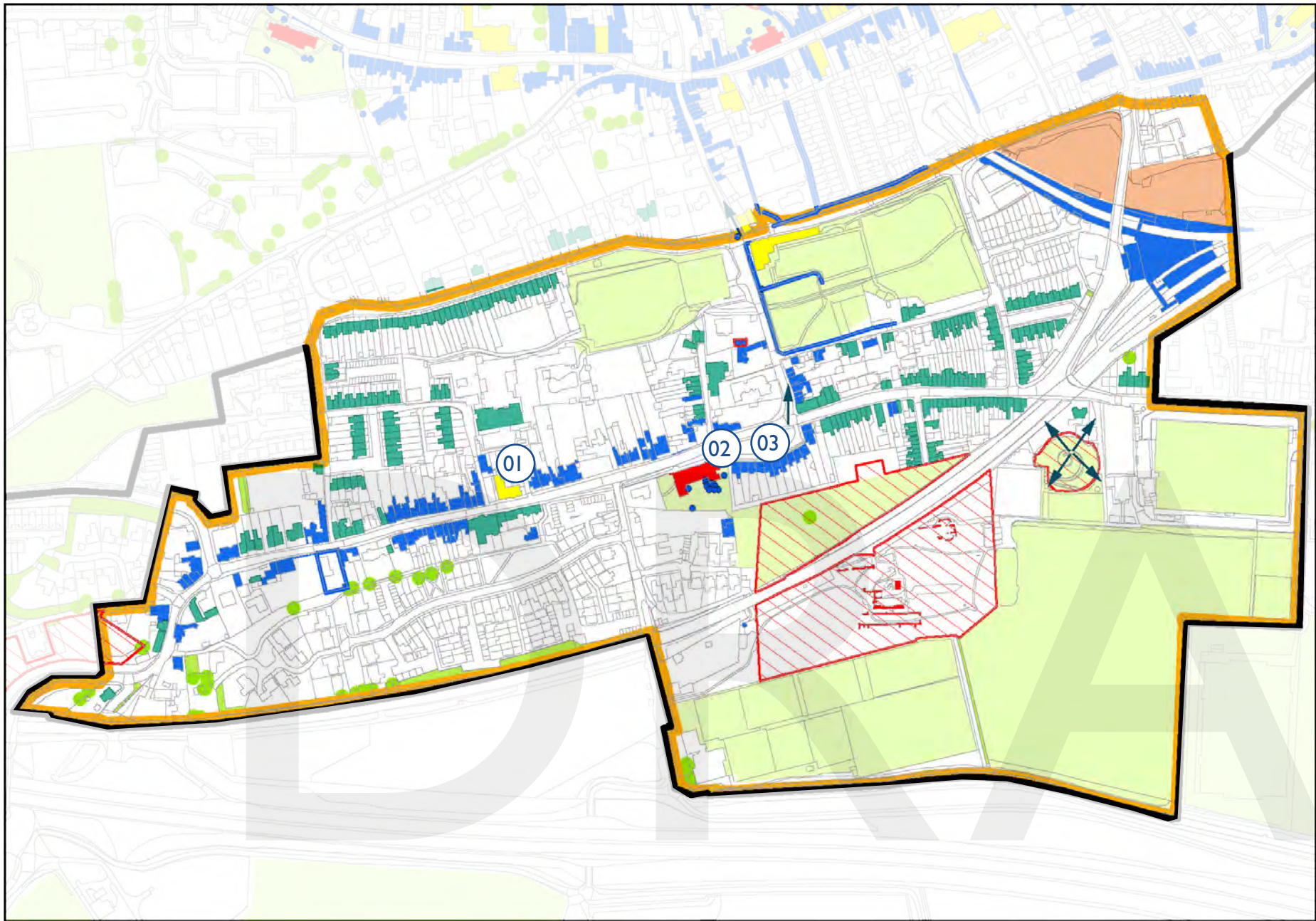
- 5.306 There are no Listed Buildings in the character area.
- 5.307 There is a significant number of buildings of townscape merit within the Wallands Character Area.
- 5.308 There are two notable stone plaques in a flint wall by 20 Bradford Road, recording 'The Paddock Syndicate, 1913' and in the wall of the allotments recording 'Hangman's Acre'.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.309 Some large 20th century developments are poorly integrated into the streetscape, such as the modern housing at 20 King Henry's Road. These sites may offer future opportunity areas for sensitive redevelopment, drawing on the historic context of the character area.
- 5.310 There has been some replacement of historic sash windows and chimney pots with low quality plastic or uPVC versions.
- 5.311 There is an opportunity for the prevalence of modern accretions to the front elevations of buildings such as satellite dishes and antennae to be reduced or removed to more discreet locations such as rear roof pitches.
- 5.312 As a suburban residential area, there has been some loss of historic front gardens for car parking.
- 5.313 Bulky modern rooflights disrupt historic rooflines and are not appropriate to the historic character of the area. Conservation rooflights, which are more discreet sitting flush with the level of the roof cladding material, would be more sensitive.
- 5.314 Overhead wiring and prominent antennae cause visual clutter on certain streets including Leicester Road.



Figure 142: Visually intrusive, non-conservation skylights



- Conservation Area Boundary
- Character Area Boundary
- Grade I
- Grade II*
- Grade II
- ▨ Scheduled Monument

- TPOs
- Buildings of Townscape Merit
- Areas for Enhancement
- Public Open Spaces
- ➡ Key Views

- Focal buildings**
- 01 Anne of Cleves House
 - 02 St John the Baptist
 - 03 Priory Crescent

This plan is not to scale

SUMMARY HISTORY OF SOUTHOVER

- 5.315 At the western end of Southover High Street there is evidence of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery.
- 5.316 Southover first developed as a settlement thanks to the foundation of the Cluniac Lewes Priory in the 11th century.
- 5.317 St John the Baptist, Southover was initially established in the 13th century as the chapel of a *hospitium* associated with the Priory. The *hospitium* provided accomodation for pilgrims and visitors to the Cluniacs. It became a parish church in the 14th century.
- 5.318 St James' Hospital, the chapel of which survives opposite Southover Grange, was supposedly founded in the 11th century.
- 5.319 A number of grand timber-frame buildings, such as the Anne of Cleves House and Priory Lodge on Southover High Street, highlight the area's long history of settlement.
- 5.320 Lewes Priory was turned into a manor house after the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The house was demolished by 1700. Caen stone from the Priory was used to build the grand Southover Grange for William Newton in 1572.
- 5.321 Southover extended eastwards with the development of Priory Crescent and Priory Street in the first half of the 19th century.
- 5.322 Italianate and Arts and Crafts-inspired terraces were laid out along Grange Road in the second half of the 19th century.

STREET AND PLOT PATTERN

- 5.323 The L-shaped Southover High Street forms the principal street in the character area, largely running on an east–west alignment. Grange Road runs parallel to the north, with a number of streets running north–south linking the two.
- 5.324 The railway line forms the character area’s southern boundary with the modern Cluny Street sitting between it and Southover High Street.
- 5.325 The plot pattern within the character area is varied and comprises a mix of buildings and open spaces.
- 5.326 Southover High Street features plots of different sizes and frontages of different breadths reflecting its piecemeal development. There are sections of fine-grained terraces with houses positioned hard-up against the line of the pavement, next to villas with front gardens, as well as larger buildings in spacious plots including St John the Baptist’s Church. There is some modern infill merging historic plots and sitting well back from the historic building line, Priory Flats for example.
- 5.327 Detached houses set back from the street in large plots are dominant to the north of Grange Road, whilst the terraces to the south side sit within long, narrow plots with narrow front gardens.
- 5.328 There are a number of short residential streets comprising fine-grained development, with terraced buildings occupying narrow plots including: Garden Street; Dorset Road; the Course; Cleve Terrace; Priory Terrace; and Priory Street.
- 5.329 The modern Cluny Street has a more organic, curving alignment and features larger detached houses or rows of houses within broad, squat plots.



Figure 143: West end of Southover High Street

BUILDING TYPES AND USES

- 5.330 The character area is largely residential, with very few other uses. Terraced houses are the most common building type within the character area, although there are also many semi-detached and detached houses of varied sizes, largely located on Southover High Street and Eastport Lane.
- 5.331 Although Southover High Street historically had retail uses along it, these are no longer evident, with retailers instead focused along Station Road, opposite the station booking hall.
- 5.332 Other uses within the character area include a church (St John the Baptist Trinity Church, Southover), Southover Church of England Primary School and the Southdown Sports Club.
- 5.333 Anne of Cleves House is run as a museum by the Sussex Archaeological Society.
- 5.334 Two pubs, The Swan Inn and The King’s Head, are located at either end of Southover High Street.



Figure 144: Terraces to Dorset Road

BUILDING SCALE AND MASSING

- 5.335 The buildings throughout the character area are largely two to three-storeys tall.
- 5.336 There are few large buildings within the character area, aside from Lewes Station, which is relatively low in height but broad in footprint, and Southover Church of England Primary School, which is characterised by a sprawling footprint on Potter’s Lane. The church is another larger building with a church tower, which is visible from different points in the character area.
- 5.337 The predominance of modest terraced housing in the character area contrasts with the unified treatment given to the Regency mansion block of Priory Crescent, which features a scale and massing considerably larger than that of surrounding buildings.



Figure 145: Priory Crescent

BUILDING MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

- 5.338 There are good examples of historic timber framing along Southover High Street, including: the rebuilt Priory Lodge; the Anne of Cleeves House; and the adjacent 49-50 Southover High Street.
- 5.339 Further timber-framed buildings survive, although many have been refronted or otherwise altered to obscure the frames, such as 17-19 Southover High Street.
- 5.340 A number of the late 19th and early 20th century buildings incorporate timber framing due to their Arts and Crafts influence, with timber-frame gable ends and front door canopies. This is often coupled with enriched ridge tiles, roughcast render and areas of scalloped tile hanging.
- 5.341 A range of other materials are used, including flint or polychromatic red and grey brick, and many buildings feature stuccoed or rendered finishes, or painted brick.
- 5.342 Intricate Italianate and classical detailing is commonplace within the character area. Priory Crescent on Southover High Street being a particularly good example, with its giant stuccoed pilasters and channelled stuccoed ground floor. The stuccoed villas on Grange Road also combine classical features including channelling, quoining, vermiculation and doorcases reflecting classical porticos. Southover High Street has some classical doorcases and ground floor channelling.
- 5.343 Simpler brick terraces with more pared back detailing are also of interest, such as the uniform grey or buff brick terraces enlivened by red brick detailing to door and window surrounds on Priory Street and Eastport Lane.



Figure 146: Finely carved door surround at the Anne of Cleeves House, bearing the date 1599



Figure 147: Detailed door surround to Southover High Street

BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

- 5.344 Boundary treatments vary throughout the character area.
- 5.345 Decorative iron railings and piers are commonplace along Southover High Street, the south side of Grange Road and to Priory Terrace and Priory Crescent.
- 5.346 High flint walls make a strong contribution to the streetscape along Southover High Street, with low flint front boundary walls found on this street and on Eastport Lane.
- 5.347 Southover Grange Gardens is surrounded by a range of boundary treatments from modern iron railings, to stone, flint and brick.
- 5.348 The terraces on the north side of Dorset Road feature intricate iron railings in front of basement areas, whilst the south side has simple retaining brick walls and piers.



Figure 148: Iron railings to Grange Road

PUBLIC REALM, OPEN SPACES AND TREES

- 5.349 This character area has a significant proportion of open green space, the southern part covered by the site of the long-ruined Lewes Priory, as well as the sports fields associated with Southdown Sports Club, and the Mount, (both of which are Scheduled Monuments).
- 5.350 The Southover Grange Gardens to the north of the character area provide another important amenity space, which contrasts with the southern open spaces due to its formal planting. These spaces are shown on the character area map.
- 5.351 Both the Priory Gardens and Southover Grange Gardens are well served with street furniture, including bins and benches, with public art also evident in both, such as the helmet sculpture in the Priory Gardens to commemorate 700 years since the Battle of Lewes.
- 5.352 There are relatively few street trees throughout the character area, with the exception of a cluster outside St John the Baptist Trinity Church and a generous bank of grass lawn and shrubbery in front of Priory Crescent. The trees and greenery associated with the open spaces and visible gardens, to the front and side, bring a verdant, leafy character and peaceful suburban quality to this character area.
- 5.353 Surface treatments are varied across the character area including a range of traditional granite kerbs and brick pavers, as well as less appropriate tarmac and concrete finishes.
- 5.354 The surface treatments along Southover High Street are largely sympathetic, with clay brick pavers and granite kerbs to the pavement. There are also sections of cobbling and modern traffic calming measures in the form of areas of granite pavers along the largely tarmacked road.



Figure 149: Lewes Priory Gardens looking east

KEY VIEWS

- 5.355 The Calvary/ Mount to the south of Priory Street provides panoramic views which take in Lewes and its rural setting.
- 5.356 Views into and across the Southover Grange Gardens are characterful and contribute to the verdant nature of the Conservation Area.
- 5.357 Open views across Lewes Priory Gardens highlight the generous open space in the character area and the rural setting of the Conservation Area, the large open space allowing distant views to the Downs to the east.
- 5.358 Kinetic views experienced when moving along Southover High Street are of interest, given the characterful townscape including: Priory Crescent; Anne of Cleeves House; and St John the Baptist Trinity Church which are all key landmarks.



Figure 150: Anne of Cleeves House

AUDIT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

- 5.359 The Chapel of St James' Hospital, Saxonbury Anglo-Saxon Cemetery, The Calvary/Mount and Lewes Priory are the four Scheduled Monuments within the character area.
- 5.360 There are 79 Grade II Listed Buildings within Southover, with a further two Grade II* Listed Buildings, Southover Grange and the Anne of Cleeves House. The two Grade I Listed Buildings are the remains of Lewes Priory and the Church of St John the Baptist.
- 5.361 There are many buildings of townscape merit within Southover, which are predominantly characterful terraced houses.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.362 Bulky non-conservation skylights and poorly proportioned new dormers disrupt the historic roofscape within the character area in certain locations.
- 5.363 Although historic timber windows have largely been retained, where unsympathetic modern windows have been installed they detract from the streetscape and reinstatement works are desirable.
- 5.364 Excess overhead wiring and prominent antennae interrupt the streetscape, especially along side streets.
- 5.365 Ensuring that buildings are kept in good repair would help to enhance the character area, with windows and walls repainted if they are peeling, decayed timberwork replaced, vegetation removed from building fabric and downpipes frequently cleared.
- 5.366 There is an opportunity to introduce more cohesive and sympathetic surface treatments.
- 5.367 There has been some loss of historic railings on Grange Road, where the opportunity arises, these should be reinstated.
- 5.368 Relatively heavy traffic along Southover High Street.
- 5.369 There is an opportunity to improve access to Southover Grange Gardens and Lewes Priory Gardens.



Figure 151: Detracting modern windows to Priory Street

06 MANAGING CHANGE



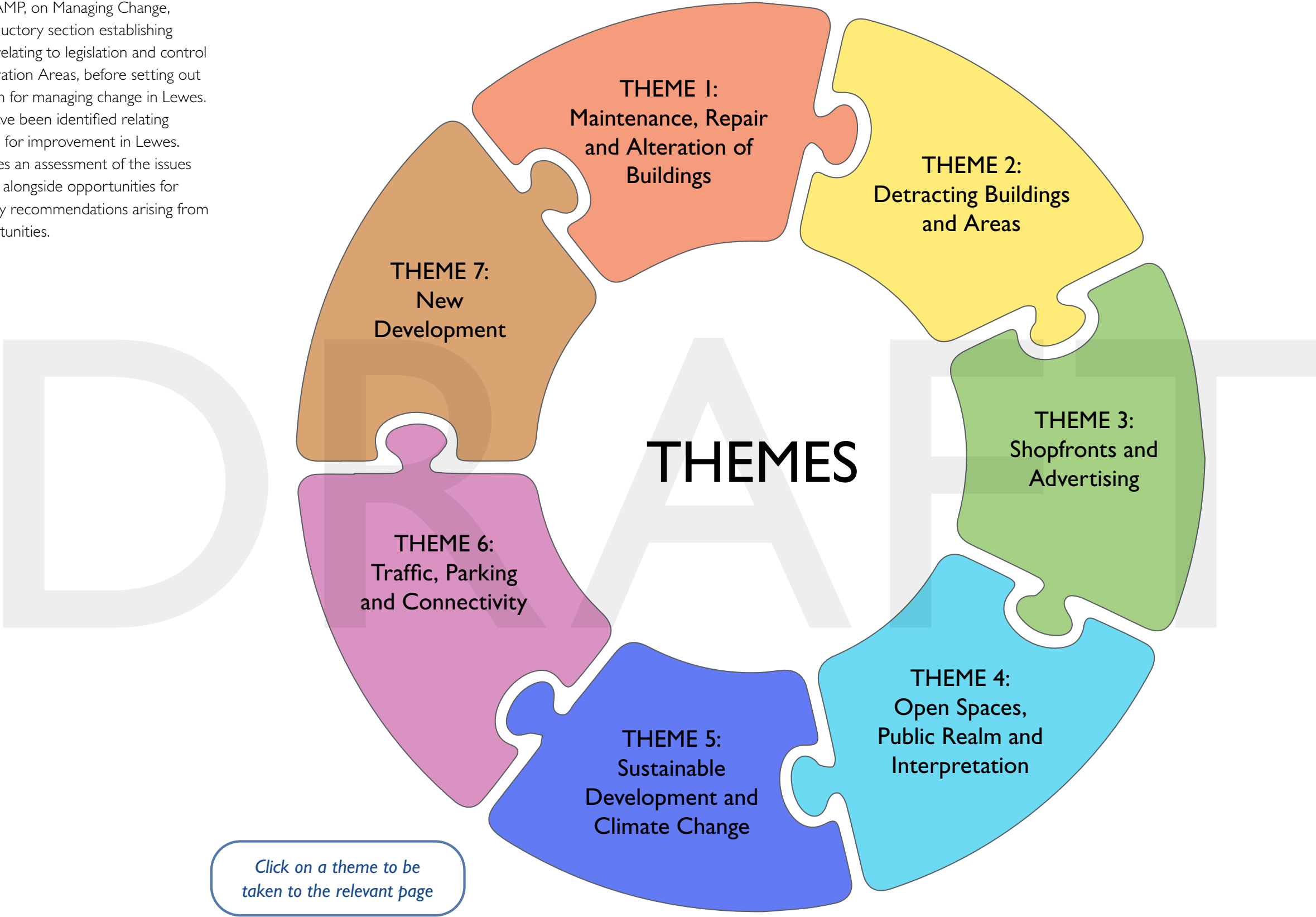
General Management of Conservation Areas (Legislation and Control Measures)
Action Plan for Managing Change in Lewes

- Theme 1: Maintenance, Repair and Alteration of Buildings
- Theme 2: Detracting Buildings and Areas
- Theme 3: Shopfronts and Advertising
- Theme 4: Open Spaces, Public Realm and Interpretation

- Theme 5: Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- Theme 6: Traffic, Parking and Connectivity
- Theme 7: New Development



6.1 This part of the CAAMP, on Managing Change, begins with an introductory section establishing general information relating to legislation and control measures in Conservation Areas, before setting out a bespoke action plan for managing change in Lewes. Seven key themes have been identified relating to the principal areas for improvement in Lewes. Each theme comprises an assessment of the issues and challenges faced, alongside opportunities for enhancement and key recommendations arising from the issues and opportunities.



GENERAL MANAGEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS (LEGISLATION AND CONTROL MEASURES)

Planning Legislation, Policy and Guidance

- 6.2
- The planning authority for Lewes is the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) who are responsible for preparing and adopting the planning policies for the park. The majority of day-to-day applications are decided by officers from Lewes District Council under powers delegated to them by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Larger or more complex cases are dealt with by the SDNPA. The Lewes Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the Development Plan of the SDNPA LPA.
- 6.3
- Planning legislation, policy and guidance is utilised when considering development or other changes within the Conservation Area. This is to ensure that proposals seek to preserve or enhance the areas special interest including the contribution made by its setting. The primary legislation governing Conservation Areas is *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. This is the key tool for the LPA to fulfil its duty to manage its Conservation Areas and ensuring that proposals for change preserve and enhance their special interest. Below this national-level legislation lies national and local planning policy which support this legislation in the protection and enhancement of Conservation Areas. See the local planning authorities website for details of current national and local South Downs National Park planning policy.
- 6.4
- In addition to legislative and policy requirements there is a wealth of best practice guidance and advice available from Historic England and other heritage organisations. When changes are being considered to buildings in the Conservation Area, or perhaps where new development is proposed, it is often helpful to use the LPA's Pre-Application Advice service to gain early guidance on proposals and highlight any constraints or opportunities; details can be found on the LPA's website.
- 6.5
- Links and details of all the relevant policy, guidance and advice can be found in [Further Information and Sources](#).

Control Measures Brought About By Conservation Area Designation

Restrictions On Permitted Development

- 6.6
- In order to protect and enhance Lewes Conservation Area, any changes that take place must conserve, respect or contribute to the character and appearance which makes the Conservation Area of special interest. Permitted Development Rights, as defined by *The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015*, are works which can be undertaken without the need to gain planning permission. Some Permitted Development Rights are constrained in Conservation Areas meaning that planning permission is needed for certain works which materially affect the external appearance of buildings.

- 6.7
- This includes, but is not restricted to:
- the total or substantial demolition of buildings or structures (including walls of over 1m in height, gate piers and chimneys);
 - other partial demolition including new openings in external elevations;
 - works to trees with a diameter of 75mm or greater, measured at 1.5m from soil level;
 - changes to the external finish of a building (including rendering, pebble dash or other cladding);
 - changes to the roof shape including installation of new dormer windows and chimneys;
 - any extension other than a single-storey rear extension of 4m or less (3m or less if the house is detached or semi-detached);
 - extensions to the side of buildings;
 - any two-storey extensions;
 - erection of an outbuilding to the side of a property;
 - aerials and satellite dishes on chimneys or elevations visible from the street;
 - putting up advertisements and other commercial signage (Advertising Consent may also be required);
 - changing the use of a building (e.g. from residential to commercial); and
 - installing solar panels that are wall-mounted on a wall or roof facing the highway.
- 6.8
- For further information and advice about when planning permission is required within a Conservation Area, see the guidance on the Government's Planning Portal <https://www.gov.uk/planning-permission-england-wales> or contact the LPA's Planning Department.

Article 4 Directions

- 6.9
- The LPA can develop bespoke controls to ensure that specific elements of a Conservation Area are protected from harmful change. This is done through the application of an Article 4 Direction. These provide additional control by specifically revoking certain permitted development rights meaning that Planning Permission needs to be sought before work can be undertaken.
- 6.10
- The current Article 4 Direction covers the whole of the Conservation Area, except the 2012 extension. The Article 4, which dates to 1996, is currently being revised and updated and the new Article 4 will be consulted upon at the same time as this CAAMP.

ACTION PLAN FOR MANAGING CHANGE IN LEWES

- 6.11
- This part of the document opens with overarching management recommendations for Lewes Conservation Area and then provides detailed analysis of the current issues and challenges faced within the Conservation Area, alongside opportunities for enhancement. Each section concludes with the relevant overarching management recommendations for that theme, alongside any additional recommendations.
- 6.12
- The overarching ambition for the Conservation Area is to preserve and enhance what is special and it is the statutory duty of the LPA to ensure this happens. Preserving and enhancing the special interest of the Conservation Area is achieved by ensuring that change and development take place in a considered and sympathetic way and raising awareness and promoting shared responsibility for looking after the Conservation Area.
- 6.13
- The long-term objectives are to phase out ill-considered change and additions and ensure new development is of high quality and responds to the special character of the Conservation Area. This applies from very small changes such as reinstating lost historic features to proposals for new buildings both within the Conservation Area and within its setting. In addition, regular maintenance of buildings is a vital part of ensuring the special interest is preserved as well as the physical fabric of individual buildings. Repairs can often be necessary, ensuring that these are done in the most sensitive and least impactful ways possible is an important part of looking after historic buildings and the Conservation Area as a whole.

Management Recommendations for Lewes Conservation Area

- 6.14
- The following principles have been developed in response to the issues and opportunities identified and the guidance on managing change provided over the previous pages. They are intended to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the special interest of Lewes Conservation Area.
- 01
- The historic environment of Lewes, in particular that which contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, should be maintained to ensure the town remains a desirable place to live, work and visit.
- 02
- Proposals for extension, alteration and new development should preserve or enhance the special interest of the Conservation Area, or where the public benefits would outweigh any harm.
- 03
- The design, construction and materials of any new development, extension, alteration or repair should be of the highest quality and respect their local context.
- 04
- Development within the setting of the Conservation Area should be sympathetic to its special interest in terms of its scale, massing, proportions, materials and detailing.
- 05
- Development within the setting of the Conservation Area should ensure the green and rural nature of the setting, which contributes to its special interest, is maintained.
- 06
- Trees and open spaces which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area should be retained and opportunities for new tree planting and green landscaping should be taken.
- 07
- Changes to buildings in response to climate change are encouraged but should take into consideration the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 08
- Removal of inappropriate and unsympathetic additions to buildings and the streetscene is encouraged.
- 09
- Reinstatement of lost historic features, such as timber sash windows or corbels on traditional shopfronts, is encouraged.
- 10
- The replacement of inappropriate modern alterations to shopfronts with suitably designed traditional or sympathetically designed alternatives is encouraged.

THEME 1: Maintenance, Repair and Alteration of Buildings

THEME 1: MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND ALTERATION OF BUILDINGS

6.15 Although the majority of buildings within the Conservation Area are in good repair, there is localised evidence of limited maintenance and disrepair which distracts from the special interest of the Conservation Area. The most common problems in this respect are: the growth of foliage and shrubbery on building frontages or roofs; slipped tiles; guano build-up; blocked drainage goods; the discolouration of render and stonework; peeling paintwork; and rotting timberwork.

- 6.16 Timber doors and windows are particularly prone to disrepair in the Conservation Area, with evidence of rotting timber and peeling paintwork. The poor condition of historic timber doors and windows often leads to their replacement with modern unsympathetic units. This has a negative impact on both the appearance and aesthetic value of the individual buildings and the wider Conservation Area, as well as involving the loss of historic fabric. The use of plastic windows and doors also reduces the breathability of traditionally constructed buildings, by preventing moisture from egressing the building and will cause on-going degradation and problems to the fabric of traditional buildings.
- 6.17 There are also a number of modern accretions visible throughout the Conservation Area which are alien in a historic streetscene; these add visual clutter and detract from the appearance of the Conservation Area. These include: satellite dishes and television aerials; electricity, gas and broadband boxes; security alarm boxes and security cameras; exposed wiring; and pigeon spikes and netting.
- 6.18 Dormer windows or skylights have been installed in the front elevations and front roof slopes of many residential buildings in the Conservation Area. They detract from the historic appearance and character of the buildings and streets in which they are present, often appearing bulky and visually intrusive. New openings including dormers and skylights require planning permission and those without permission may be subject to enforcement action.
- 6.19 Whilst not a wholesale problem across the Conservation Area, there are incidents of the loss of boundary treatments within the more suburban character areas in favour of off-street parking. This removes greenery in front gardens and dilutes the sense of enclosure around buildings, altering the character of the streetscene.



Figure 155: Cluttered drainage goods and TV antennae



Figure 152: Cluttered roofscape to the rear of buildings along Church Row



Figure 154: Vegetation growing in a blocked gutter on Cliffe High Street



Figure 156: Bulky roof lights to Valence Road



Figure 153: Unsympathetic uPVC windows to St John Street

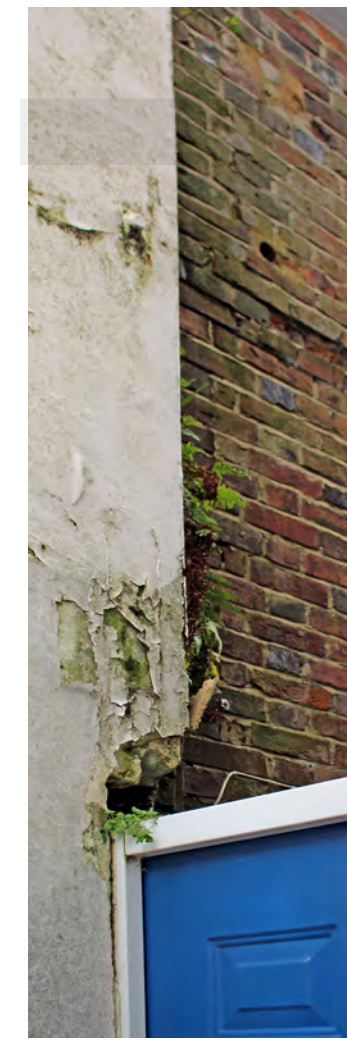


Figure 157: Building fabric in poor repair showing damp and algae due to continued water exposure



Figure 158: Pigeon spikes to the cill of a timber window in poor repair

General Advice on Maintenance and Repair of Buildings

- 6.20 All buildings require maintenance and repair regardless of their age, designation (or lack thereof) or significance. In Conservation Areas, it is important that such works are carried out sensitively to protect the historic fabric of buildings and respect and preserve the established character of the wider area. The following sections provide a summary of best practice advice on maintenance and repair. Historic England, and other heritage bodies such as the Society for the Protection of Ancient Building (SPAB), provide a wide range of advice and guidance on how to care for and protect historic places, including advice on the maintenance and repair. See [Further Information and Sources](#) for details.
- 6.21 Appropriate and regular building maintenance would improve the general appearance of the Conservation Area and the condition of individual buildings, ensuring that they function effectively and will survive for future generations to enjoy.
- 6.22 Regular painting and maintenance are needed to ensure windows remain in good condition. This will also encourage against their replacement in favour of modern unsympathetic uPVC or aluminium windows. See Historic England's advice on [Traditional Windows: Their Care, Repair and Upgrading](#) for more information.
- 6.23 There are opportunities to improve the appearance and condition of the built fabric of the Conservation Area by returning uPVC windows and doors back to traditional timber units. Future change of traditional timber windows to uPVC should be resisted.
- 6.24 Removal of modern accretions such as satellite dishes and tv aerials would enhance the character of the streetscene, especially where such fittings are redundant. Otherwise, more discreet or concealed siting for future installations would be appropriate, as would more sensitively designed equipment so as to be less visually intrusive.
- 6.25 New roof windows could be acceptable on rear roof pitches where not visible from the public realm. However, the topography of Lewes does mean that rear pitches can often be seen and modern rear roof alterations are therefore highly visible. As such it is recommended the LPA should be contacted for clarification at early stages.
- 6.26 There is an opportunity to update the existing Article 4 Direction to give the LPA more power to influence decisions in a way that maintains or enhances the special architectural or historic interest of the Conservation Area.

Maintenance

- 6.27 Maintenance is defined as routine work necessary to keep the fabric of a place in good order. It differs from repair in that it is a pre-planned, regular activity intended to reduce the instances where remedial or unforeseen work is needed. Regular maintenance ensures that small problems do not escalate into larger issues, lessening the need for repairs and is therefore cost effective in the long-term. In general, maintenance work does not require consent from the LPA, although some maintenance works may require consent.
- 6.28 Regular inspection of building fabric and services will help identify specific maintained tasks relevant to each building. These could include but are not limited to:
 - regularly clearing gutters and drain grilles of debris, particularly leaves;
 - clearing any blockages in downpipes;
 - sweeping of chimneys;
 - removal of vegetation growth on or abutting a building; and
 - repainting or treating timber windows and other external timberwork.



Figure 159: Neighbouring poorly-maintained and well-maintained houses, showing the impact of a lack of regular painting and maintenance on timberwork

Repair

- 6.29 Repair is defined as work that is beyond the scope of maintenance, to remedy defects caused by decay, damage or use, including minor adaptation to achieve a sustainable outcome, but not involving alteration or restoration. Identification of repairs may arise during regular inspection of buildings or following extreme weather events and could include repairing damage to roof coverings, repointing of brickwork or repairs to windows. It is important to understand the cause of the damage or defect both to ensure that the repair is successful and to limit the work that is required. It is also important to understand the significance of the built fabric affected in order to minimise harm when enacting a repair. As with maintenance, consent may be required for some types of repair work, it is advisable to discuss with the LPA before any work is undertaken.
- 6.30 If buildings are being neglected by owners, the LPA can get involved with their repair. If works are considered urgently necessary to the preservation of a Listed Building, the LPA can carry out works as part of an Urgent Works Notice under Section 54 of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. The LPA can also serve a Repairs Notice to the owner of a Listed Building, specifying those works it considers reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of the building, under Section 48 of the same Act. Finally, the LPA can serve a Section 215 notice if they judge the condition of land or buildings to be harmful to the area, under Section 215 of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*.
- 6.31 Under Section 76 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Secretary of State, following consultation with Historic England, can have works carried out on unlisted buildings that are important for maintaining the character or appearance of a Conservation Area thanks to Urgent Works Notices.
- 6.32 The following should be considered when planning repair works:
- Repairs should always be considered on a case-by-case basis. A method of repair which is suitable for one building may not be suitable for another.
 - Use materials and construction techniques to match the existing to maintain the appearance and character of the building. The exception to this is when existing materials or techniques are detrimental to the built fabric, e.g. cement pointing on a historic brick building.
 - Repair is always preferable over the wholesale replacement of a historic feature.
 - If replacement of a historic feature is required, as it has degraded beyond repair; the replacement should be carried out on a like-for-like basis using the same materials and construction techniques. The replaced element should be the same as the original in terms of material, dimensions, method of construction and finish (condition notwithstanding) in order to be classed as like-for-like.

- Like-for-like replacement should not be applied in cases where a historic feature has previously been repaired using inappropriate materials or techniques. Where seeking to improve failing modern features or past unsuitable repairs, a traditionally-designed alternative using appropriate materials is preferable such as breathable, lime-based renders and paints. In such cases planning permission and, if a Listed Building, Listed Building Consent, may be required.
- Only undertaking the minimum intervention required for any given repair.
- Repairs, should, where possible, be reversible as better alternatives may become available in the future.
- Repointing should always be carried out using a lime-based mortar. Within historic and traditionally constructed buildings, cement-based pointing is damaging to brickwork and stonework as it is an impermeable material. Periodic renewal of pointing will extend the lifetime of building fabric.



Figure 160: House in the Wallands during repair works, including the sympathetic reroofing of the corner turret

General Advice on Making Changes to Buildings and New Development

Alterations, Extension and Demolition

- 6.33 The appropriateness of demolition, alteration or extension will be considered on a case-by-case basis, as what is appropriate in one location will not necessarily be acceptable in another. In all cases it is vital to consider the impact of the proposed change on the special interest of the Conservation Area ensuring that this is preserved or enhanced.
- 6.34 Demolition of buildings that detract from the Conservation Area may be beneficial. However, gap sites can also detract from the character of the Conservation Area and therefore demolition of whole buildings will only be permitted where rebuilding is guaranteed, or the site was historically open and this remains appropriate.

- 6.35 Alterations should preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area. This means that changes should be respectful of the prevailing architectural and visual character of the Conservation Area and the specific character area in which it is located. Alterations may comprise of the removal of detracting features, such as uPVC windows, and, where appropriate their replacement with more historically appropriate versions. Alterations must therefore use appropriate materials for their context, often those that are typically found within the Conservation Area. This may include timber for windows and doors and brickwork for structural elements. New materials may be appropriate as long as they are complementary to the appearance of the area.
- 6.36 Extensions should be subordinate to the existing buildings in their scale, massing and design. Extension to the side and front of buildings is unlikely to be appropriate as this would change the visual appearance of the streetscape, whereas extension to the rear is likely to be more acceptable. All extensions should be of high-quality design and construction. Whilst the design may use materials and finishes which are characteristic to the Conservation Area, including local brick, there may be scope for use of a wider, less traditional material palette where these are part of a high quality, sensitively-designed extension that complements or enhances the appearance of the original building.



Figure 161: Car park in Cliffe, the redevelopment of which could contribute positively to the character of the area



Figure 162: Sympathetic extension to a characterful post-war house in the Wallands

Boundary Treatments

6.37 Although within the historic core of the town centre, many buildings are hard against the pavement edge, elsewhere many are set back behind front gardens or areas. This is prevalent in suburban areas such as The Wallands but also in more central areas such as Upper High Street and Western Road. Loss, alteration and replacement of historic boundary treatments, in particular those demarcating front gardens, has been identified in certain areas and this has caused harm to the appearance and character of the Conservation Area.



Figure 163: Garage eroding the historic plot pattern on The Avenue

6.38 Where historic boundary treatments have been lost or altered, their reintroduction will be encouraged where the proposed materials and design are appropriate to the character of the Conservation Area. Historically front boundaries would have comprised brick boundary walls or metal railings on low plinths depending on the period of the property. These would typically have featured brick gate piers, sometimes stuccoed, and pedestrian gates. In more suburban areas, these hard boundaries are sometimes accompanied by hedges or other soft landscaping. Timber fencing is not considered an appropriate boundary treatment and will be discouraged, such existing boundary treatments should be replaced when opportunities arise. Further detrimental alteration and loss of historic and traditional boundary treatments will be discouraged.



Figure 164: Unsympathetic timber fencing



Figure 165: Retained boundary wall, contributing positively to the streetscape and interest of the house behind

Unsympathetic modern additions

6.39 Addition of modern features to buildings should be carefully considered to ensure they are both necessary and appropriate to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Removal of unsympathetic features such as pigeon deterrents and redundant wiring, satellite dishes and television aerials should be undertaken proactively as this will enhance the Conservation Area. The installation of new television aerials and satellite dishes on a wall, chimney or roof slope that faces onto, and is visible from, the public realm (principally front and side elevations) of the Conservation Area requires planning permission and is discouraged. The visibility of such features harms the appearance of the Conservation Area and therefore care should be taken to locate these items discreetly, ideally to the rear of buildings.



Figure 166: Visually prominent antennae located to the front pitch of roofs on tall poles



Figure 167: Pigeon spikes detracting from a characterful ogee door surround

Windows, Doors and Drainage Goods

- 6.40
- Whilst many buildings in the Conservation Area contain traditional timber sash or casement windows, there have been instances of replacement with uPVC units. Occasionally uPVC doors and plastic gutters and drainpipes also appear within historic buildings in the Conservation Area. Plastic features within historic buildings are not in-keeping with their historic appearance and detract from the special interest of the Conservation Area. Therefore, replacement of historic or traditional windows, doors and drainage goods is strongly discouraged unless they are damaged beyond repair. Where such replacement is necessary this should be in traditional and appropriate materials and styles. Where inappropriate replacement has already been undertaken, returning these features back to their traditional appearance is encouraged. The proportions and type of window will be dependant on the age and style of individual buildings.
- 6.41
- Timber doors and windows should be painted in appropriate colours. Changes in colour beyond a shade lighter or darker of the existing colours is likely to need consent with decisions based on the surrounding context and appropriate historic precedent. Drainage goods would have historically been painted cast iron or lead; however other metals may be appropriate subject to their detailed design.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01
- The historic environment of Lewes, in particular that which contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, should be maintained to ensure the town remains a desirable place to live, work and visit.
- 03
- The design, construction and materials of any new development, extension, alteration or repair should be of the highest quality and respect their local context.
- 08
- Removal of inappropriate and unsympathetic additions to buildings and the streetscene is encouraged.
- 09
- Reinstatement of lost historic features, such as timber sash windows or corbels on traditional shopfronts, is encouraged.

Additional recommendation: The existing, outdated Article 4 Direction should be replaced with the revised Direction as soon as possible.



Figure 168: Bulky uPVC windows



Figure 169: Finely detailed and proportioned historic doorway and windows



Figure 170: Historic door on St Swithun's Terrace with stained glass panels and modern replacement fanlight

THEME 2:
Detracting Buildings
and Areas

THEME 2: DETRACTING BUILDINGS AND AREAS

Issues and Challenges

- 6.42 Detracting buildings and areas offer great potential for enhancement of the Conservation Area. This can be achieved through their refurbishment, upgrading, demolition or replacement as part of future proposals with a carefully considered, sensitive design. Such buildings or areas have been identified within the individual character areas.
- 6.43 Car parks represent the most frequent detracting areas within the Conservation Area, with large areas of poorly landscaped hardstanding, which do not integrate into the Conservation Area's characterful historic streetscape.
- 6.44 Monolithic, later twentieth century buildings, such as the NHS offices at 36-38 Friars Walk and St Thomas' Court in Cliffe, break with the smaller scale of historic development within the Conservation Area.



Figure 171: St Thomas' Court and the surrounding car park



Figure 172: Car parking and a vacant former NHS building at 8 North Street



Figure 173: Eastgate Car Park and Eastgate Wharf

Opportunities

- Whilst it is recognised that car parking is necessary, improvements could be made to enhance such areas, for example by appropriate vegetative screening or, if the opportunity arises, sensitive redevelopment.
- If plans are proposed for the redevelopment of detracting sites, proposals should exhibit high-quality design and use appropriate materials. These should also respect the historic street network, urban grain and building typologies within the Conservation Area. Sensitive redevelopments of detracting sites will enhance the special significance of the Conservation Area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01
- The historic environment of Lewes, in particular that which contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, should be maintained to ensure the town remains a desirable place to live, work and visit.
- 08
- Removal of inappropriate and unsympathetic additions to buildings and the streetscene is encouraged.

DRAFT

THEME 3:
Shopfronts and
Advertising

THEME 3: SHOPFRONTS AND
ADVERTISING
Issues and Challenges

- 6.45 Lewes' character and appearance is closely tied to retail, due to its historic role as a market town and present importance as a local retail centre. Whilst there are a considerable number of historic shopfronts surviving, some have been unsympathetically altered or replaced over the years.
- 6.46 Whilst Lewes has fortunately not been significantly impacted by insensitive internally lit signage and many of its historic shopfronts remain intact, the main issue in Lewes is associated with the design and materiality of modern fascia boards. Oversized, poorly positioned fascia signs are inappropriate.
- 6.47 Where plastic or metal are used, instead of timber, and garish colours are selected, such fascia boards do not respect the character of either the building in which they are located or the character of the historic streetscene as a whole.
- 6.48 In places, shopfronts have also had their traditional glazing and stall riser arrangements replaced with larger windows which have no subdivision or traditional stallrisers removed or downsized.



Figure 174: Unsympathetic modern shopfront and fascia signage to the High Street



Figure 175: Shopfronts on North Street retained despite being converted to residential use



Figure 176: Poorly proportioned low-quality plastic signage



Figure 177: Well detailed shopfront on the High Street with historic canopy ironwork

Opportunities

- Whenever opportunities arise, shopfronts and shop signage should be returned to a more traditional appearance, employing features or patterns that are in keeping with historic shopfront design and materiality.
- SDNPA's *Design Guide*, C5.5 Shopfronts should be referred to for further information on understanding good shopfront design, alongside Lewes District Council's Planning Advice Note *Shopfronts and Advertisements in Lewes* although the latter has not been adopted by SDNPA and is in need of updating.

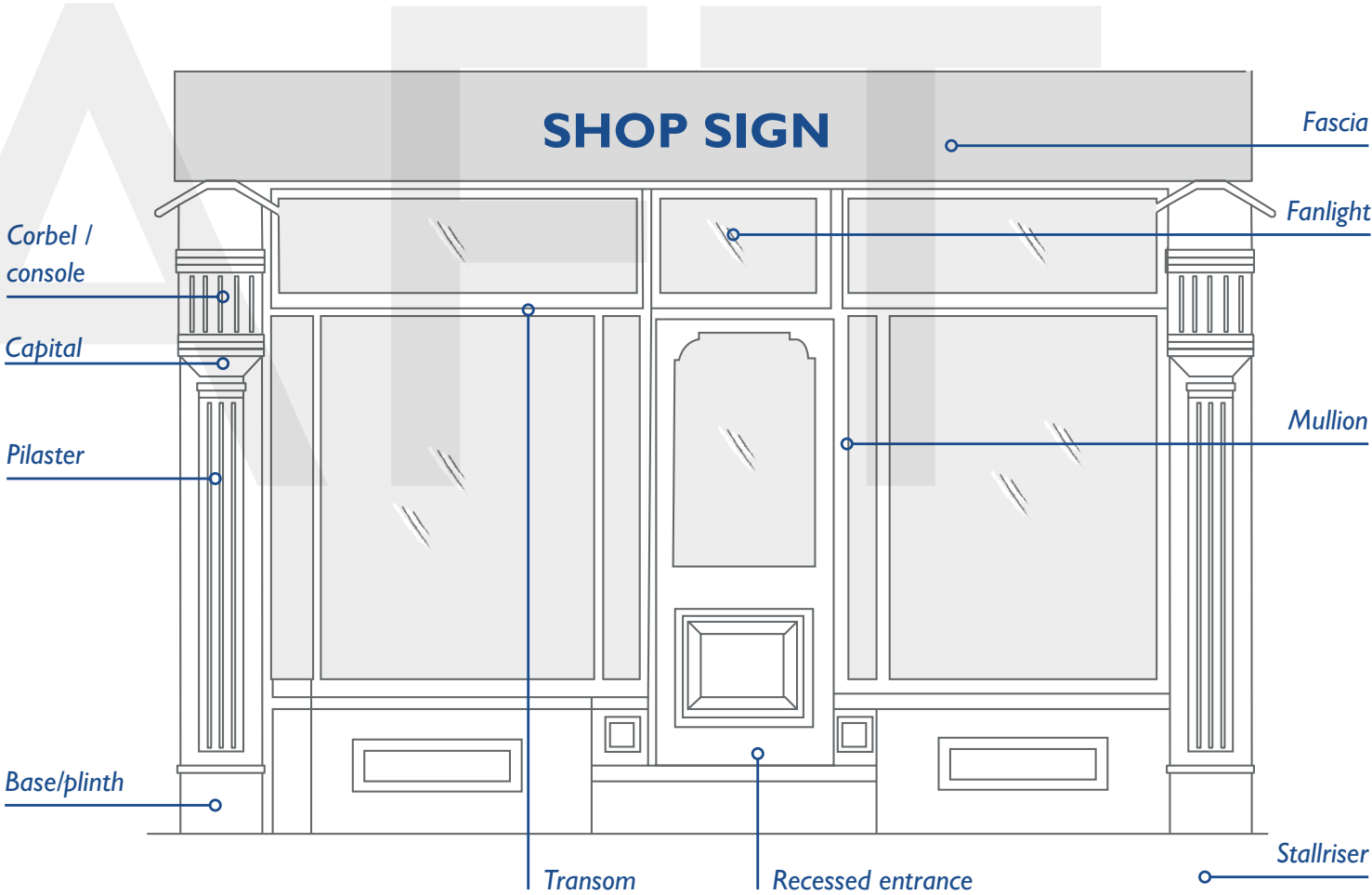
General Guidance on Shopfronts and Signage

- 6.49 Retail is an important part of the Conservation Area, particularly in the historic core of the town centre focusing on the High Street as well as at Cliffe High Street. The design and appearance of shopfronts is therefore important to preserving and enhancing the appearance of the Conservation Area. Whilst many historic shopfronts survive, some have been unsympathetically replaced or altered.
- 6.50 Changes to shopfronts will require planning permission, and, if part of a Listed Building, Listed Building Consent.
- 6.51 Changes to signage and advertising will require Advertisement Consent.
- 6.52 A shopfront is part of a building as a whole, rather than being a separate entity. The design of shopfronts therefore needs to reflect the style, proportions, vertical or horizontal emphasis and detailing of the rest of the building, particularly the principal elevation. A shopfront needs to sit within the original building framework set by structural and decorative features within the elevation; columns for example should be carried down to the ground level. This is the case for both buildings which historically contained retail at ground floor and where a shopfront has been inserted in a building designed for residential use.



Figure 178: Historic shopfront on the High Street featuring paired bow windows

- 6.53 Where historic shopfronts survive or existing shopfronts contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, these should be retained and enhanced where possible. Any historic shopfront features which survive should be retained, repaired as necessary, and incorporated into new schemes, rather than being replaced. It would be desirable to reinstate historic features, such as corbels and pilasters where these have been lost and the placement of them, or vestiges of their original design, remain.
- 6.54 Where it is appropriate to replace all or parts of a shopfront, traditional styles (or designs that retain the same proportions and materiality) are likely to be most appropriate in historic buildings, but non-traditional, sympathetically designed shopfronts would be appropriate in modern and new buildings. The replacement of inappropriate modern alterations to shopfronts with suitably-designed traditional alternatives is encouraged.
- 6.55 Traditional and characteristic materials, specifically painted timber and glazing, best enhance the historic character of the buildings. It is expected that proposals to alter signage and shopfrontages will use these materials. The use of plastic and metal is not considered to be appropriate in historic contexts. A number of tiled stallrisers remain in the High Street, which should be retained.



- 6.56
- Pilasters, corbels, cornices, fascias and stallrisers are all important elements in traditional shopfronts, creating the visual proportions of the shopfront. Fascias are of notable importance and should be in proportion to the rest of the shopfront and not overly large. Fascias should not extend above cornice level (or, where there is no such feature, should be well below the cill of the window above), or beyond the corbels on either side. Full height glazing is a modern feature and does not reflect the character of historic buildings. Smaller windows with stallrisers, transoms and mullions are typical traditional features and more appropriate in historic contexts.
- 6.57
- The design and detailing of advertising and signage content, both on fascias, hanging signs and any freestanding signage, are also important in the Conservation Area. The signage should complement the design of the shopfront and building, conveying a sense of permanence and quality. Colour palettes, lettering style and illumination need to be considered in the design of a complementary shopfront. Internally lit signage is not prevalent in Lewes, however, it should continue to be avoided as it is not appropriate within a Conservation Area. Where nighttime uses require lighting, subtle external lighting is more impactful and more appropriate. Careful consideration needs to be given to the appropriateness of freestanding signage such as A-boards as these can cause visual clutter and physical impediment to pedestrian movement. Fortunately this is not a big issue in Lewes at present. To display an A-board, advertising consent must be sought.



Figure 179: Historic ironwork intended to support a canopy on Cliffe High Street

- 6.58
- Historic photos show some of the shopfront properties on the High Street featured fabric canopies. Onsite analysis also reveals the remains of associated canopy ironwork mechanisms. These have been lost over time and such features can add interest to the streetscene if of an appropriate design suitable for use in the Conservation Area. Canopies should avoid obscuring historic features, should be retractable and made of canvas. Dutch-style canopies, which are visible when retracted are not appropriate. Canopies would have traditionally been positioned above fascia signage and this is therefore the most appropriate position for replacement or new canopies; projecting hanging signage will allow the shop name and advertising to remain visible when the canopy is down. Installation of canopies will require planning permission from the LPA.



Figure 180: Historic ironwork canopy mechanism on Lewes High Street

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01
- The historic environment of Lewes, in particular that which contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, should be maintained to ensure the town remains a desirable place to live, work and visit.
- 09
- Reinstatement of lost historic features, such as timber sash windows or corbels on traditional shopfronts, is encouraged.
- 10
- The replacement of inappropriate modern alterations to shopfronts with suitably designed traditional or sympathetically designed alternatives is encouraged.

Additional recommendation: *Shopfronts and Advertisements in Lewes*, adopted in 1992 by Lewes District Council should be readopted by the SDNPA. This was given the preservation of shopfronts more weight for the purposes of development management when considering applications for existing and new shopfronts, with the intention to replace this document with a revised and updated version.

DRAFT

THEME 4:
Open Spaces,
Public Realm and
Interpretation

THEME 4: OPEN SPACES, PUBLIC REALM AND
INTERPRETATION

Issues and Challenges

- 6.59 The public realm, namely publicly accessible streets and open spaces, is the area from which the majority of people will experience the Conservation Area, preserving and enhancing its character and appearance is therefore of considerable importance for maintaining the special interest of the area. The public realm consists not only of the surfaces but the street furniture, street signs and interpretation.
- 6.60 Whilst there is good provision of open space and tree planting in Lewes, there is relatively little public access to the riverside within the Conservation Area.
- 6.61 Overhead wires are highly visible in some streets, particularly residential streets such as Morris Road and Dorset Road. These modern accretions distract from views of the historic streetscene.
- 6.62 The town features a good proportion of traditional-style lampposts. However, there remain modern utilitarian streetlights on certain streets, including South Street in Cliffe, The Avenue in Wallands and Southover High Street, which are not appropriate to the historic character of the Conservation Area. Where streets are narrow, streetlights fixed to building elevations are particularly successful in reducing visual clutter, for example on Chapel Hill.
- 6.63 Whilst benches are well provided in some character areas, in certain areas they are lacking and where they exist they are often inconsistent in materiality and design. Bins are typically of a sensitive, traditional style, although the poor quality and often graffitied plastic bins in the Priory Gardens in Southover would benefit from replacement. The same applies for bollards, which are present in a range of forms. Whilst traditional finger posts are present on the High Street, they are lacking in other parts of the Conservation Area or, where they feature, adopt a more modern, utilitarian form. The public realm to the north of the Castle Precinct, overlooking The Paddock, is in particular need of enhancement owing to eroded landscaping and low-quality benches.
- 6.64 In addition to street furniture, road signage, freestanding shop-signage, broadband cabinets and items such as inappropriately located café seating, can collectively cause excessive clutter within the public realm and detract physically and visually from the pedestrian experience of the Conservation Area. Applications associated with features within the public realm will be carefully considered to ensure that the public streets remain pleasant and attractive places to be whilst ensuring that commercial activities can continue successfully.
- 6.65 Installation of e-charging points are likely to become a feature of the streetscene in the coming years. Although these are relatively unobtrusive, they are likely to increase visual street clutter to a degree and should therefore be considered alongside other reductions in street furniture.



Figure 181: Tired public realm north of the Castle Precincts



Figure 182: Late Victorian plaque commemorating Thomas Paine on the Bull Inn



Figure 183: Sign to Pipe Passage discussing the eponymous pipe kiln

- 6.66 Whilst certain historic pavers and cobbles survive, and there is a good proportion of traditional granite kerbs, the surface treatments within the Conservation Area are varied with plenty of modern, tarmac or concrete finishes. There are areas where surface finishes are in a poor condition and others which could benefit from replacement with more sympathetic and durable surface treatments.
- 6.67 It is recognised that there is already a good proportion of interpretative signage within the Conservation Area which is largely well designed and much of which has a shared design identity. Such signage raises awareness about the history of Lewes and the special interest of the Conservation Area. There are small metal plaques affixed to a number of buildings highlighting their associations with significant historical figures, like the political theorist Thomas Paine and archaeologist Gideon Mantell and commemorating significant events, whilst larger interpretation boards relate to the Battle of Lewes to the north of the Castle Precinct and Lewes Priory to the south of the Conservation Area.



Figure 184: Public art in Southover Grange Gardens



Figure 185: One of a number of good quality interpretation boards relating to the remains of Lewes Priory



Figure 186: Modern streetlight

Opportunities

- A sensitive and holistic approach needs to be taken to changes and improvements to the public realm within an overarching, cohesive strategy. Any additions or amendments to the public realm will also need to take account of highways and other relevant regulations.
- Where historic items of street furniture and surface finishes do survive, these should be retained and repaired in situ.
- Care should be taken to ensure future public realm works are considered for the long-term and materials both for the street furniture and surface treatments are durable and high quality.
- If opportunities arise to relocate cables below ground, where this would not be harmful to historic surface treatments, this would be beneficial to the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- Broadband cabinets should be better positioned to avoid cluttering the public realm, obstructing pedestrian movement, and visually impacting the streetscene.
- Further use of streetlights fixed to building elevations in narrow streets should be encouraged, where the necessary wayleaves can be sought from building owners.
- The provision of more footpaths along the riverside would be a particularly desirable goal for improving the amenity of the local residents. This would enhance the Conservation Area’s historic interest by drawing on the historic close connection between town and river.
- There is an opportunity for further consistency to be sought for interpretation boards going forward and to supplement the existing offering with additional interpretation to enhance the legibility of the history and special interest of the place.



Figure 187: Visual clutter caused by power cables



Figure 188: High-quality public realm in Southover Grange Gardens

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01
- The historic environment of Lewes, in particular that which contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, should be maintained to ensure the town remains a desirable place to live, work and visit.
- 06
- Trees and open spaces which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area should be retained and opportunities for new tree planting and green landscaping should be taken.

THEME 5:
Sustainable
Development and
Climate Change

THEME 5: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND
CLIMATE CHANGE
Issues and Challenges

6.70 Historic and traditionally constructed buildings were designed to be breathable, allowing moisture to naturally exit building fabric. Care needs to be taken to make sure historic buildings remain breathable, rather than air-tight, through choosing appropriate materials that avoid water retention. Care also needs to be taken if external changes are proposed to ensure these are sensitive to their historic context. This could include the addition of solar photovoltaic or solar thermal panels on south or east–west facing roofs as additional energy sources for heating. However, these must not detract from the historic character of the building and are likely to be only acceptable when positioned on rear roof slopes and not visible from the public realm. Well-integrated solar slates or tiles may in some circumstances be more visually acceptable, where solar panels are not appropriate.



Figure 189: Pedestrianised section of the lower High Street



Figure 190: The often congested Fisher Street



Figure 191: Keyhole bike racks on the High Street, alongside cluttered broadband cabinets

- 6.71 Physical changes to buildings in this context need to be carefully considered so as to mitigate against harm to the significance of both individual buildings and the Conservation Area. This might include improvements to thermal efficiency and changing sources of heating.
- 6.72 Reducing petrol and diesel car use is critical to reducing carbon emissions and there is government commitment to phasing out their sale over the next decade. Petrol and diesel car use will be replaced by a combination of electric (or other carbon free) vehicles and non-motorised travel modes. Both will require infrastructure changes that will need to be considered in the context of the Conservation Area designation to ensure they are implemented appropriately.
- 6.73 Electric vehicles require e-charging points which can be installed within existing car parks and adjacent to street parking bays. Although these are relatively unobtrusive, they are likely to increase visual street clutter to a degree. Charging electric vehicles in resident parking areas, on the street outside of dwellings, presents a greater challenge with the current technology as personal charging points are expensive and could add considerable additional clutter to the Conservation Area. However, lamppost charging points and wireless charging may become viable in the future and are likely to be more compatible with a Conservation Area environment. Planning permission may be required on changes to boundary treatments associated with private charging points.
- 6.74 Other, non-motorised methods of travel should be encouraged. There is relatively little provision for bikes and cyclists in the Conservation Area although there are some keyhole racks on the High Street. Sheffield hoops are more appropriate in character.

Opportunities

- There are many opportunities to improve the energy efficiency and reduce the carbon footprint of historic buildings which will have no impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area including improving the thermal performance of the building stock through insulating lofts and suspended ground floors, draught exclusion and the considered introduction of secondary glazing.
- Physical changes to buildings should be guided by Historic England's extensive advice regarding energy efficiency and historic buildings, such as [Advice Note 14 Energy Efficiency and Traditional Homes](#).
- Where e-charging points are proposed for installation, these should be incorporated with existing street furniture where possible or considered alongside other reductions in street furniture.
- Measures should be taken to reduce or calm vehicle movement in the Conservation Area to improve air quality and make active travel more pleasant and safer.
- Non-motorised travel, cycling, walking and the use of e-scooters, should all be encouraged in order to reduce carbon emissions.
- There is an opportunity to create more road infrastructure to encourage walking and cycling such as cycle routes, as well as signposting for cycling and walking routes. These measures should take care not to add to visual clutter. This would help to reduce carbon emissions and enhance visitor experience to the area.
- New cycle stands should be simple Sheffield hoops as these are most sympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area.
- All proposals relating to alterations associated with climate change should accord with relevant policies in the South Downs's *Local Plan* including Policy SD14: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation of Historic Buildings and SD48: Climate Change and Sustainable Use of Resources. Proposals should also be informed by SDNPA's Supplementary Planning Documents including *The Design Guide*, including C.14.4 Environmentally Sustainable Design, and Sustainable Construction



Figure 192: Fisher Street – a busy road at rush hour – where the pavement is narrow and disappears to one side, making it an unpleasant pedestrian route

General Guidance on Alterations in Response to Climate Change

- 6.75 General guidance on alterations in response to climate change.
- 6.76 There are many opportunities to make changes to historic buildings in the Conservation Area which will assist in tackling climate change. For Unlisted Buildings, internal works will not require planning permission, however for any works which affect the exterior of a building it will be required. Any works to Listed Buildings, both internal and external, will require Listed Building Consent, and those to the exterior will also require planning permission.
- 6.77 Internally, adding insulation to lofts and below suspended ground floors will improve thermal efficiency and draft exclusion around windows, doors and vents will also be beneficial. Installing secondary glazing, thick curtains and internal shutters (if appropriate to the period of the property) will also improve thermal performance. Care should be taken to ensure that traditionally constructed buildings remain sufficiently breathable so as to not cause harm to the fabric of the building.
- 6.78 Externally, solar panels to front roof slopes should be avoided; solar panels could be installed on rear roof slopes which are not visible from the public realm. Where solar panels are proposed to be installed to Listed Buildings, even on rear roof slopes, Listed Building Consent will be required. Other renewable energy sources could be considered, such as ground, air or water sourced heat pumps as long as they are not installed on a wall or roof which fronts a highway and do not detract from the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.79 Installation of e-charging points are likely to become a feature of the streetscene in the coming years. Although these are relatively unobtrusive, they are likely to increase visual street clutter to a degree and should therefore be considered alongside other reductions in street furniture.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01 The historic environment of Lewes, in particular that which contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, should be maintained to ensure the town remains a desirable place to live, work and visit.
- 07 Changes to buildings in response to climate change are encouraged but should take into consideration the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

DRAFT

THEME 6:
Traffic, Parking
and Connectivity

THEME 6: TRAFFIC, PARKING AND CONNECTIVITY
Issues and Challenges

- 6.80 Closely associated with the climate emergency issue is the amount and flow of parked and moving traffic in Lewes. The traffic and congestion in Lewes causes a negative impact on the experience of the Conservation Area. There are limited pedestrianised areas within the Conservation Area, namely the section of High Street at the foot of School Hill, whilst Cliffe High Street to the east is partially pedestrianised. Priority is given to vehicles throughout the Conservation Area with few established pedestrian crossing points, something which is particularly noticeable on the High Street and Fisher Street, the latter especially problematic due to a lack of pavement to part of the west side of the street.
- 6.81 In some areas, such as the Avenue and Rotten Row, boundary treatments have been unsympathetically altered to create garages and areas of hardstanding for car parking, which has a negative impact on the character of the Conservation Area.
- 6.82 There are many car parks within the Conservation Area which detract from its appearance and special interest owing to their prominence within the streetscene as gap sites. Brook Street Car Park on North Street and Cliffe High Street Car Park are particularly intrusive owing to their lack of boundary screening, poor surface treatments and in the case of the latter its prominent corner location. Other large car parks, such as the Friars Walk, Station, Phoenix Causeway and NCP Eastgate car parks represent large and unsympathetic expanses of hardstanding that detract from the character of the Conservation Area. Street parking can also detract from the appearance of a historic area, especially when it occurs on both sides of a narrow street, as seen in both residential areas and in the town centre.



Figure 193: High concentration of on-street parking along the High Street



Figure 194: Prominent parking and poor quality road surfacing to Westgate Street



Figure 195: Garage eroding the historic plot pattern on The Avenue

Opportunities

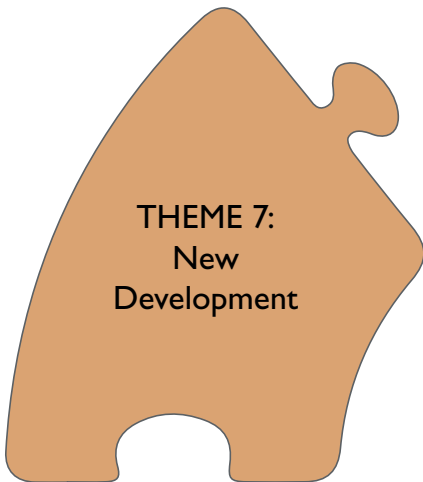
- Improving general movement to reduce congestion and enhancing the pedestrian experience would be beneficial as this would improve the experience of the Conservation Area’s special interest.
- Traffic calming measures, such as new surface treatments to slow traffic, could be considered and would have the benefit of allowing traditional surfaces, including stone setts or cobbles, to be reintroduced.
- Encouraging non-motorised travel has some potential to reduce the pressure on car parking. However it is unlikely to be eliminated as many cars will be replaced by electric vehicles.
- Improving cycle routes by providing space for segregated cycle lanes could help alleviate congestion.
- There are opportunities to introduce a park and ride facility and ensure that public transport options are adequate to assist in resolving this issue.
- There is an opportunity to introduce more pedestrian crossings, particularly on the High Street.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01 The historic environment of Lewes, in particular that which contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, should be maintained to ensure the town remains a desirable place to live, work and visit.
- 07 Changes to buildings in response to climate change are encouraged but should take into consideration the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



Figure 196: The popular, pedestrianised section of Cliffe High Street



THEME 7: NEW DEVELOPMENT

Issues and Challenges

- 6.84

The dense character of the Conservation Area means there are few vacant sites and therefore limited development opportunity. However, there are a handful of remaining opportunities for infill and back-land development. Such developments should only occur where historic burgage plot and street patterns can be protected, to allow the town's historic urban form and special interest to remain legible. Such developments should also make use of the historic building typologies and orientations within their immediate surroundings.
- 6.83

As Lewes is an attractive market town set within a National Park, there is an inevitable desire for new development in the town, both within the Conservation Area and within its setting. In addition, there is a nationwide housing shortage with local authorities under pressure to permit new residential developments. New development can present a challenge in historic towns like Lewes and should be closely considered and well designed. Whilst Lewes is not a static settlement and its architecture should not stagnate, emerging proposals should first and foremost engage with the high-quality historic environment characterising the place.
- 6.85

The setting of the Conservation Area contributes considerably to its special interest. The rural setting to the south to Lewes Brooks and Ouse Valley and to the east towards the Lewes Downs is particularly important in interpreting its special interest and historic character.
- 6.86

The green landscape setting of the Conservation Area makes a significant contribution to understanding and appreciation of the special interest of Lewes and therefore any development within its setting should respect this characterful quality. This is also true of a number of potential and sizeable development sites within, abutting or adjacent to the Conservation Area, such as the industrial estate and bus station along North Street and Eastgate Wharf, any redevelopment of these sites needing to recognise and respond to the special interest of the Conservation Area and represent designs of the highest quality. Sensitive new developments should be informed by and protect key views set out in this document.
- 6.87

Astley House, which sits between Spital Road and De Montford Road, occupies a narrow site which is almost entirely encircled by the Conservation Area. The high degree of intervisibility between the site and surrounding Conservation Area means that any proposals for its redevelopment need to preserve and enhance the special interest of the surrounding Conservation Area and recognise the site's prominent role in the streetscape of De Montford Road and Spital/ Western Roads.



Figure 197: Warehouses on North Street in the immediate setting of the Conservation Area



Figure 198: NHS building to Friars Walk



Figure 199: A refurbished wharf building with recent housing developments over the Ouse in Cliffe in the background

Opportunities

- There are relatively few opportunities for new development within the Conservation Area. There are very few empty sites, but there are certain detracting buildings, the sensitive replacement or redevelopment of which would enhance the Conservation Area. Any new and replacement development needs to take account of, and be sensitive to, the following:
 - the significance of any building proposed to be removed;
 - the significance of any relationship between any building to be removed and any adjacent structures and spaces;
 - the potential to draw inspiration from the historic use and character of a site;
 - the significance or contribution of any gap site (i.e. is it a historic gap within the street frontage or does it detract);
 - the potential impact of the new design on the setting of any neighbouring Listed Buildings;
 - the materials and architectural detailing characteristic of the area, which should be a key point of reference to inform the choice of materials and detailing of the new design;
 - the scale and grain of the surrounding area, including historic plot boundaries;
 - its height in relation to its neighbours and surrounding context;
 - the potential impact on local views and prominence of landmark buildings; and
 - the potential impact of the new design on known or potential archaeological remains.



Figure 200: Surface car park by St Thomas à Becket, Cliffe, which disrupts and detracts from the historic streetscape

- New development within the setting of the Conservation Area should take account of and be sensitive to:
 - Its location within the setting of the designated heritage asset and enhance rather than harm its special interest.
 - Be of the highest quality design and execution, regardless of scale, in order to preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area and, where relevant, help phase out ill-considered and unsympathetic interventions from the past.
- Design should be informed by the principles and advice set out in the SDNPA's *Design Guide C.3 Development in Conservation Areas*, which requires development proposals to:
 - a preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area;
 - b avoid massing or building height which is overly dominating for the site and its context;
 - c relate or respond positively to the built heritage predominating in the Conservation Area, so that the new development can properly be seen as preserving or enhancing the character and appearance which led to the area's designation;
 - d respond to key views into, through and out of the Conservation Area;
 - e reference the building traditions of the settlement and, where appropriate, fit sympathetically into the existing streetscape;
 - f avoid the use of uPVC windows, fascia cladding or other assertively synthetic materials, even if attempts are made to emulate traditional details;
 - g if traditional materials are proposed, observe local craft traditions and avoid short cuts, such as flint-block construction;
 - h where possible, remove buildings or structures whose aesthetic appearance are harmful to the overall character and appearance for whose protection the area was designated; and
 - i minimise the negative impacts on heritage assets, including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, historic parks or gardens or Scheduled Monuments and their setting.
- Architects, developers or anyone intending to develop projects in the Conservation Area, should prepare a detailed heritage statement to allow an informed assessment of the proposed development on the Conservation Area. Applicants should also engage in pre-application discussion with the LPA before starting any detailed design work.



Figure 201: The Depot Cinema, which successfully engages with the Conservation Area's building traditions and materials, and integrates well into the streetscape, owing to its considered scale and massing

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 01 The historic environment of Lewes, in particular that which contributes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, should be maintained to ensure the town remains a desirable place to live, work and visit.
- 02 Proposals for extension, alteration and new development should preserve or enhance the special interest of the Conservation Area, or where the public benefits would outweigh any harm.
- 03 The design, construction and materials of any new development, extension, alteration or repair should be of the highest quality and respect their local context.
- 04 Development within the setting of the Conservation Area should be sympathetic to its special interest in terms of its scale, massing, proportions, materials and detailing.
- 05 Development within the setting of the Conservation Area should ensure the green and rural nature of the setting, which contributes to its special interest, is maintained.

Additional Recommendations: Anyone seeking to develop projects in Lewes Conservation Area should undertake a detailed heritage analysis of their site and its wider context and share that with the LPA as part of the pre-application process before starting any detailed design work.
New designs should accord with the basic principles set out in Section C3 of the SDNPA's *Design Guide*.

DRAFT



- 7.1 This part of the document provides details of the review of the boundary of the Lewes Conservation Area and identifies the proposed alterations.
- 7.2 Consideration has been given to the boundaries of the Conservation Area to ensure that the areas included contribute to the special interest of the area. Consideration has also been given to the inclusion of additional areas if these contribute to the historic character and special interest.
- 7.3 At present no areas are being proposed for addition to the Conservation Area. Two areas have been identified as potential removals. The proposed amendments to the boundary are listed over the following pages, along with justification, and shown on the adjacent plan.

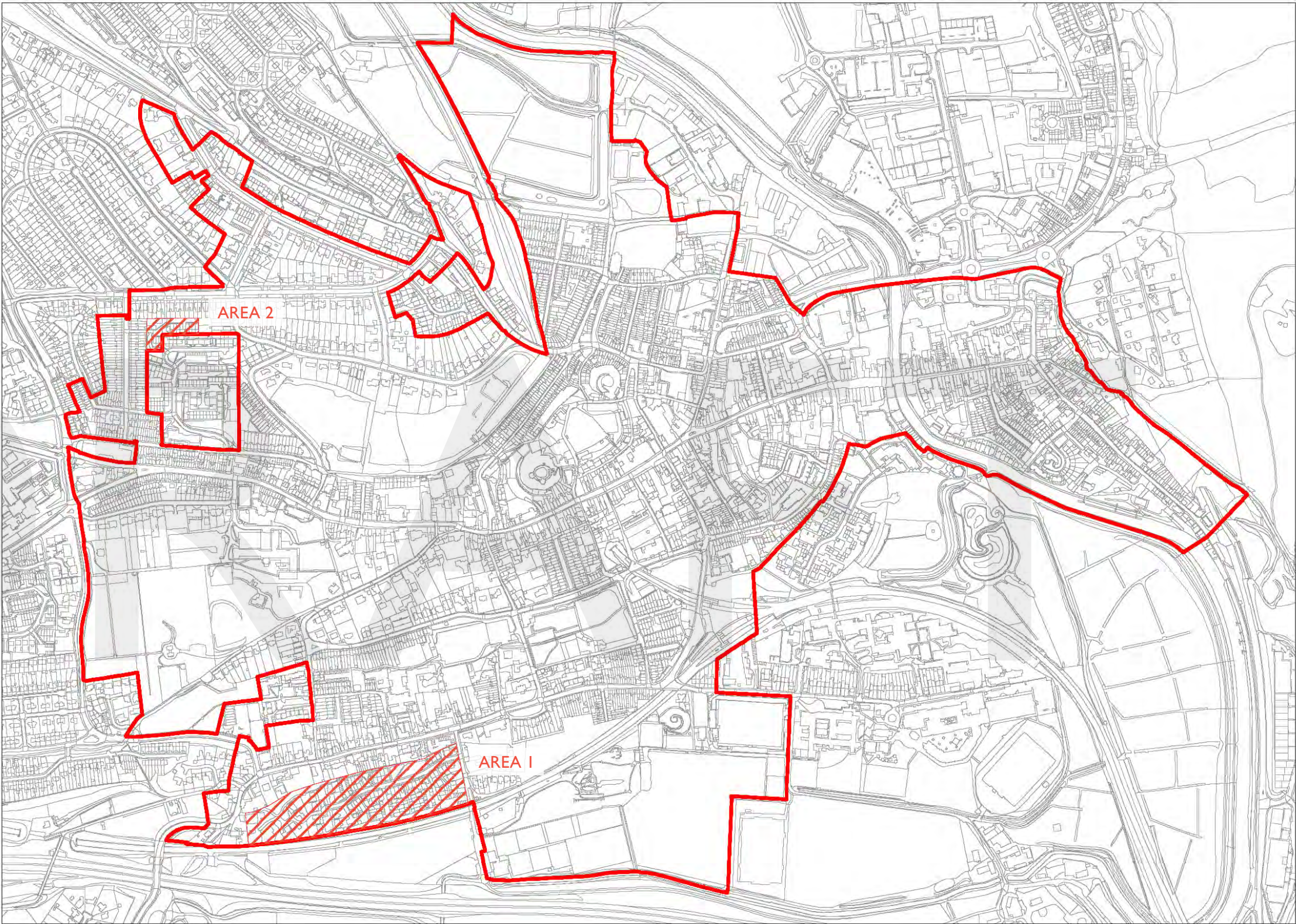


Figure 202: Plan showing the two areas proposed for removal hatched red

AREA I

Removal of Cluny Street, Monk’s Lane, Verrall’s Walk, Anne’s Path and Morley Close

- 7.4 Late-20th century housing exclusively characterises this part of the Conservation Area, which was undeveloped open land until the construction of the present housing estates began in the 1980/90s. Prior to such development the area would have made a contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area, emphasising the linear nature of development along Southover High Street and the green and open character of the southern edge of the Conservation Area, as is still evident in and around Lewes Priory Gardens.
- 7.5 This has been obscured by both the new housing as well as the late-20th century road pattern, which does not perpetuate any historic routes. The housing within this area has been largely designed in a contextual manner, drawing on both the materiality, scale and form established within the historic town, although it is not of significant architectural or historic interest. As such, this area is proposed for removal from the Conservation Area as it is no longer considered to contribute to the area’s special interest.



Figure 203: Modern terrace on Cluny Street



Figure 204: Modern semi-detached houses on Cluny Street

AREA 2
Removal of Wallands Park Rise

- 7.6 Wallands Park Rise is an early 21st century infill development, which has a discrete location within the Conservation Area, accessed by a narrow gap between terraces on Leicester Road. As a result, much of the area is screened from the east, whilst large semi-detached villas on the south side of Prince Edward's Road mean views towards the houses on Wallands Park Rise are greatly limited.
- 7.7 The materiality of the buildings does not align with that of the surrounding streets within the Conservation Area, which are simple yet characterful red brick terraces to Leicester Road or more finely detailed Arts and Crafts influenced villas to Prince Edward's Road, which are largely brick and elaborated with tile-hung gables and crested ridge tiles. In contrast the houses to Wallands Park Rise have brick side returns and front elevations that are rendered at ground floor level and timber clad above. The scale and massing of the buildings references that established by the historic terraces commonplace within the Conservation Area. As the buildings and street pattern are entirely modern and of neither historic nor architectural merit it is proposed that the area is removed from the Conservation Area, as a result of its failure to contribute to the special interest of the Conservation Area.

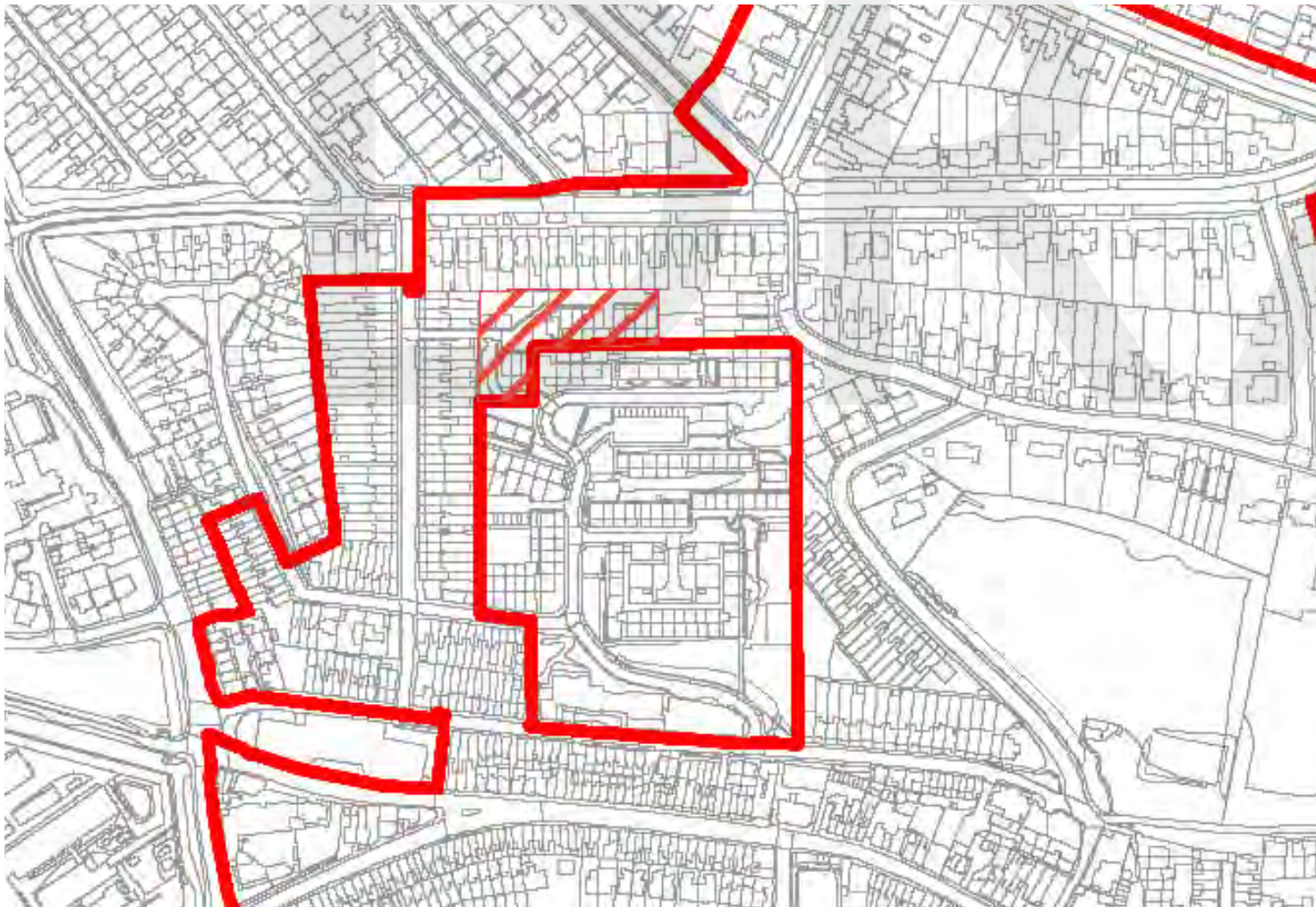


Figure 205: Wallands Park Rise

FURTHER INFORMATION AND SOURCES



- Bibliography
- Legislation, Policy and Guidance
- Contact Details



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Barbara Fleming, *Lewes: Two Thousand Years of History* (1994)

Brian Golding, 'The Coming of the Cluniacs', in *Anglo-Norman Studies III* (1981)

C. Leeson Prince, 'The Remains of William de Warenne', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol. 40 (1896)

C.T. Phillips, 'Lewes A Hundred Years Ago', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol. 40 (1896)

Colin Brent and William Rector, *Victorian Lewes* (1980)

Colin Brent, *Pre-Georgian Lewes* (2004)

David Carpenter and Christopher Whittick, 'The Battle of Lewes', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, vol. 152 (2014)

Daniel Defoe et al., *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1769)

David Rudling, 'Archaeological Survey of Lewes', *Aspects of Archaeology in the Lewes Area* (1987)

Helen Poole, *Lewes Past* (2000)

Ian Nairn and Niklaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Sussex* (2001)

Jim Etherington, *Lewes Bonfire Night: A Short History of the Guy Fawkes Celebrations* (1993)

John Bleach, 'A Romano-British (?) barrow cemetery and the origins of Lewes', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol. 135 (1997)

John Insley, 'Review – Rune Forsberg, "The Place-Name Lewes. A Study of its Early Spellings and Etymology"', *Studia Neophilologica*, 71:1 (1999)

L. F. Salzmänn (ed.), *Victoria County History: A History of the County of Sussex, Vol. 7, The Rape of Lewes* (1940) (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/sussex/vol7>)

M. E. Mate, *Daughters, Wives, and Widows After the Black Death: Women in Sussex, 1350-1535* (1998)

Malcolm Lyne and Freda Anderson, 'Introduction', *Lewes Priory: Excavations by Richard Lewis 1969-82* (1997)

Marcus Taylor, *The Building Materials of Lewes* (February 2021) (<https://thefriendsoflewes.files.wordpress.com/2021/04/building-materials-of-lewes-by-marcus-taylor.pdf>)

Roland Harris, *Lewes Historic Character Assessment Report* (2005)

Simon Stevens, 'Baxter's Printworks Site', *Sussex Past and Present* (2008)

W. Page (ed.), *The Victoria History of the County of Sussex, Vol. I* (1905)

DRAFT

LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Legislation, Planning Policy and Best Practice Guidance

The following legislation, policy documents and guidance have been utilised in undertaking the review and preparing this report.

- *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, *National Planning Policy Framework (2021)* (specifically *Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*)
- South Downs National Park, *South Downs Local Plan* (adopted July 2019)
- South Downs National Park, *Adopted Design Guide*, Supplementary Planning Document (July 2022)
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, *Planning Practice Guidance*
- Historic England, *Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management: Advice Note 1* (Second Edition, 2019)
- Historic England, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (2008)
- Historic England, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Second Edition, 2017)

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Listed buildings and Conservation Areas are designated under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* for their special architectural or historic interest. Designation gives Conservation Areas protection as alterations, additions or demolitions are controlled by the need for Planning Permission, which is required by local planning authorities when change is proposed. Section 69 of the Act details the protection of Conservation Areas and is reproduced below, of specific reference is section (1):

“Section 69 Designation of Conservation Areas

(1) Every local planning authority:

- (a) shall from time to time determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and
- (b) shall designate those areas as Conservation Areas.

(2) It shall be the duty of a local planning authority from time to time to review the past exercise of functions under this section and to determine whether any parts or any further parts of their area should be designated as Conservation Areas; and, if they so determine, they shall designate those parts accordingly.

(3) The Secretary of State may from time to time determine that any part of a local planning authority’s area which is not for the time being designated as a Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance; and, if he so determines, he may designate that part as a Conservation Area.

(4) The designation of any area as a Conservation Area shall be a local land charge.”

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) sets out the government’s planning policies for new development within England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the NPPF ‘is a presumption in favour of sustainable development’. The most recent version of the NPPF was published in 2021 and of relevance to the current review is Section 16 – ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’, in particular paragraph 191:

“When considering the designation of Conservation Areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.”

Also of relevance are paragraphs 206 and 207:

“Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 201 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 202, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.”

Planning Practice Guidance

In 2014 the government launched the Planning Practice Guidance website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>). The guidance is a live document intended to provide further detailed information with regard to the implementation of the NPPF. It includes the section ‘Historic environment’, which advises on enhancing and conserving the historic environment.

Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition)

This Historic England advice note, published in 2019, supports the management of change in a way that conserves and enhances the character and appearance of historic areas through Conservation Area appraisal, designation and management. Of great relevance to the review of Lewes Conservation Area is the following paragraphs:

“10 Conservation area designation is undertaken to recognise the historic character of an area and/or in answer to the impact of development, neglect and other threats, on areas which are considered to have special architectural or historic interest. The appraisal is the vehicle for understanding both the significance of an area and the effect of those impacts bearing negatively on its significance. It will form part of the local planning authority’s Historic Environment Record and will be part of the evidence base for the local plan and a material consideration in planning decisions.”

“77 Under section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local planning authorities have a statutory duty to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas in their districts from time to time. Regularly reviewed appraisals, or shorter condition surveys, identifying threats and opportunities can be developed into a management plan that is specific to the area’s needs. In turn, this can channel development to conserve the Conservation Area’s special qualities. Both areas in relative economic decline and those under pressure for development can benefit from management proposals that promote positive change.”

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance

Conservation Principles was published by English Heritage (now Historic England) in 2008. It provides a comprehensive framework for the sustainable management of the historic environment, wherein ‘Conservation is defined as the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations’. The guidance also provides a set of four heritage values, which are used to assess significance. The values are evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice In Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition)

The significance of a heritage asset is not only derived from its physical presence but also from its setting and the surroundings in which it is experienced. *The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd Edition)* published in 2017 by Historic England provides guidance on managing change within the setting of a heritage asset. It recommends a staged approach to assessment of proposals during design evolution, of relevance to the current review are the is step 2, understanding the setting of the study area.

Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected.

Step 2: the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated

Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it

Step 4: explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm

Step 5: make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

CONTACT DETAILS

South Downs National Park Authority

South Downs Centre
North Street
Midhurst
West Sussex
GU29 9DH

Telephone: 01730 814810
Email: info@southdowns.gov.uk
historicbuildings@southdowns.gov.uk

Historic England London and South-East Office

4th Floor, Cannon Bridge House
25 Dowgate Hill
London
EC4R 2YA

Telephone: 0207 973 3700
Email: londonseast@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Lewes District Council

[https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/contact-us/visit-our-offices/.](https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/contact-us/visit-our-offices/)

DRAFT