

could suggest that commercial pressure was most intense at the eastern end of the market.

### 4.5 The town c.1500-1800

#### 4.5.1 Buildings

Lewes has 239 surviving buildings and monuments that date from between 1500 and 1800: 42 from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, 32 from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and 164 from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>340</sup> The latter includes 13 substantial flint and brick property boundary walls that have been dated to the 18<sup>th</sup> century (but which may prove otherwise), and 19 tombs, and also is likely to include several buildings that were simply re-fronted at this date.

All except three of the 42 surviving 16<sup>th</sup>-century buildings in Lewes are timber framed. Many of these buildings have continuous jetties, and mark the demise of open halls. Nos. 49, 50 and 51 Southover High Street are good examples of the type, with exposed timber framing of close-studding on the first floor, although the ground floor in each has been underbuilt in masonry.



Fig. 31. 49, 50 and 51 Southover High Street.

With the demolitions of the Lord's Place (adapted from the prior's lodging) soon after 1668<sup>341</sup> and, in 1846, the mansion created on the site of the Grey Friars,<sup>342</sup> Lewes lost its 16<sup>th</sup>-century adaptations of dissolved monastic houses. However, stone from the priory appears to have been used at surviving Southover Grange, built of Caen stone in 1572. Certainly the walls then built up around its substantial garden include Quarr stone, almost never used outside the immediate vicinity of the Isle of Wight and Hampshire after the early 12<sup>th</sup> century and, thus, likely to originate from the priory, where it was employed extensively.



Fig. 32. 18<sup>th</sup>-century 15-16 (The Caprons) Keere Street, with Southover Grange, Southover High Street (1572) beyond.

Of the 32 17<sup>th</sup>-century buildings, at least 20 have timber frames. One example, Brack Mound House, represents an early survival of re-use of the castle site. Almost all these timber-framed buildings were clad or re-fronted in the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Amongst the clad buildings, is the timber-framed gentry lodging house of 1640-80 called The Great House, and now represented by 4-8 Cliffe High Street (although no. 7 is a modern replacement for part of the structure).<sup>343</sup>

Nine timber-framed buildings of the 18<sup>th</sup> century have been identified to-date. Systematic study of the townhouses of Lewes may produce more timber frames of this period or evidence that many of the apparently 18<sup>th</sup>-century buildings hide earlier timber framing. While 39 of the 134 18<sup>th</sup>-century buildings have stuccoed, or partly stuccoed, façades, 22 have the more unusual mathematical tiles simulating brickwork on both flat elevations and bow windows.



Fig. 33. 199 and 200 High Street (School Hill): late 18<sup>th</sup>-century mathematical tiles and wooden quoins.

18<sup>th</sup>-century townhouses are especially numerous on School Hill and on St Anne's Hill. On a more modest scale, the row of cottages at 7-17 Fisher Street, or the row of houses at 9-11 Market Street (here with successive bands of brick, black mathematical tiles, and tile-hanging), anticipate 19<sup>th</sup>-century terrace housing.

To the surviving 18<sup>th</sup>-century houses can be added numerous instances where new façades were added to earlier timber-framed buildings: Lewes is unusual in that few such earlier buildings escaped this type of treatment in the 18<sup>th</sup> century or in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Such re-fronting ranges from impressive wholly new façades of brick or mathematical tile (such as the early-mid 18<sup>th</sup>-century façade of no. 33, School Hill House, School Hill) to the more modest use of stucco or tile-hanging.



Fig. 34. Georgian grandeur in School Hill: nos. 211 (early 18<sup>th</sup> century), 212 (mid 18<sup>th</sup> century), and 213 (early 18<sup>th</sup>-century façade to 16<sup>th</sup> century house).

The 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>-century conversion of the castle from ruinous defence to recreational and commercial use has left some permanent remains despite 19<sup>th</sup>-century restoration. The rusticated doorway to the west tower of the keep survives as a record of Thomas Friend's pleasure of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. The bowling green pavilion is a rare such survival from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and also of this date are the maltings (now East Sussex Record Office) and

the large residences within Castleward (Castle Lodge, Castlegate House and Castle Precincts).



Fig. 35. Late 18<sup>th</sup>-century former store of Beard's brewery, Castle Ditch Lane.

Industrial buildings survive from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. 16 Station Street hides an early to mid 18<sup>th</sup>-century timber-framed maltings behind a late 19<sup>th</sup>-century façade. This was replaced by a late 18<sup>th</sup>-century flint and brick maltings (see above), in Castle Precincts, nearer to Beard's brewery, of which the brick and cobble late 18<sup>th</sup>-century store in Castle Ditch Lane, and the brick, stone, and flint brewery in Fisher Street, also survive.

The architectural changes to the parish churches of Lewes during the period 1500-1800 were generally modest, with the most significant – and still visible – comprising the rebuilding in brick of the west tower at St John the Baptist in 1714-38, and the rebuilding of much of the nave of St Michael's church in 1748.<sup>344</sup>

Other church and nonconformist buildings survive from this period. The Westgate Chapel is the most remarkable of these, being converted into a Unitarian chapel in 1698 from a timber-framed house of 1583.<sup>345</sup> The flint and brick General Baptist Chapel, Eastport Lane, dates from 1741, but is now a house. The Friends' Meeting House and adjoining cottage, Friars Walk, is dated 1784, faced with mathematical tiles, and remains in use by Quakers.

Several secular institutional buildings survive from the period: the Old Poor House, Castle Banks (for the parish of St John-sub-Castle) dates from 1633; the workhouse, or almshouse, for All Saints (now 31 High Street) dates from 1730; and the Market House dates from 1792.

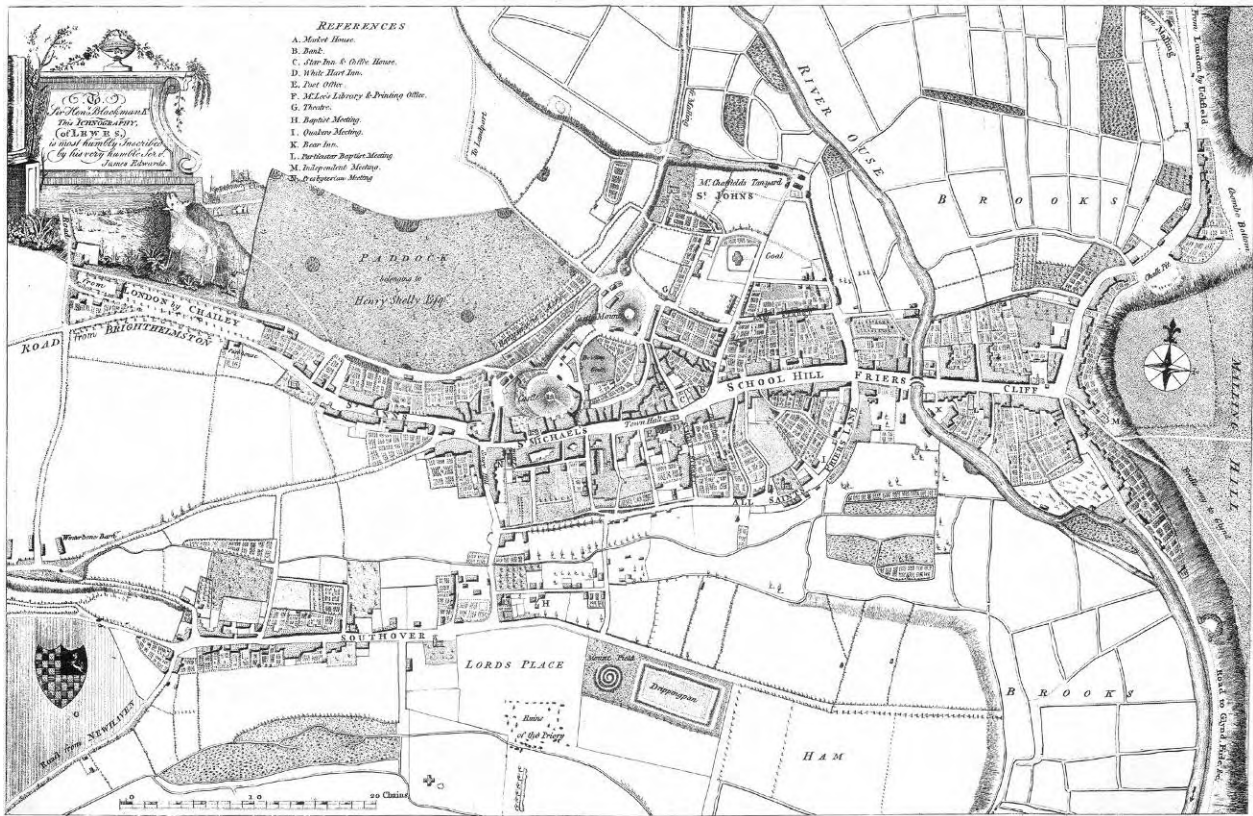


Fig. 36. James Edwards' map of Lewes, 1799.

#### 4.5.2 Excavations (Map 5)

The excavations in Lewes have less value for this period, as a result of focus on earlier periods, and disturbance of later layers. The most informative have been those on the northern side of the town (at **Edward Street**,<sup>346</sup> **St John Street**,<sup>347</sup> **Brook Street**,<sup>348</sup> **Lancaster Street**,<sup>349</sup> and **North Street**<sup>350</sup>) which suggest that much of the area between Brack Mount and the church of St John-sub-Castro (abandoned by the 14<sup>th</sup> century) remained open until c.1800.

#### 4.5.3 Topography (Maps 11-13)

There was little large-scale re-organization of Lewes between 1500 and 1800 to upset the medieval topography. Growth was largely confined to rebuilding or reoccupation of tenements abandoned to gardens and yards in the late medieval period, including ribbon development along the historic routes into the town (e.g. on St Anne's Hill, Southover High Street, and Malling Street and South Street at Cliffe).

Finer topographic detail is possible to determine between 1500 and 180 than for earlier periods with the survival of several maps of the town, from that of 1620 by George Randoll to the detailed maps by William Figg<sup>351</sup> and James

Edwards, both 1799. Such detail includes the location of key lost institutions such as the old sessions house and town hall (1565, rebuilt 1761, demolished 1810<sup>352</sup>), located in the High Street in front of White Hart; the Market House (1564, rebuilt 1649, and demolished 1791), built at the High Street entrance to Castlegate; and the house of correction built at Cliffe in 1610 (to the rear of 50-1 Cliffe High Street), replaced by the new building in North Street in 1793.

Post-Dissolution depopulation of Southover saw considerable change in this area as it became a focus for the development of the brewing and tanning industries, with ready water supply ensured by the Winterbourne. Although the substantial Southover mansion of the Lord's Place no longer survives, the motte-like mound known as The Mount and the adjacent sunken Dripping Pan are likely to have originated as features of its garden in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century: certainly 'Mount garden' existed by 1604.<sup>353</sup> On the edge of the town, the most substantial change was modification of the routes leading to the town, most dramatically in the form of the new Brighton Road (1770 – see section 3.3.1).

Cliffe was distinguished in this period by five open sewers that crossed the High Street. On the basis of historic buildings that respect the sewers, it appears that they were in existence by

the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, and were covered over in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. That they were effective in keep the water table low in this area of reclaimed land is evident by the existence of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>-century cellars at 4 and 12 Cliffe High Street.<sup>354</sup>

## 4.6 Expansion: c.1800-2005 (Maps 1, 3 and 4)

### 4.6.1 Buildings and topography



Fig. 37. Waterloo Place: early 19<sup>th</sup>-century terrace with brick façade to flint-rubble walling.

The majority of the buildings in Lewes date from this period, not so much as a result of loss of earlier buildings, but through expansion of the town. This growth was significant in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and, again, after 1945, although the arrival of the railway in 1846 did not have the impact seen elsewhere.

There are 213 buildings, or groups of buildings, dating from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and this is varied and scattered infill similar to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century houses, with an important exception: after late medieval abandonment the area between Brack Mount and the church of St John-sub-Castro was developed between c.1800 and 1825. The surviving cottages of Sun Street are almost all of this period and are in sharp contrast to the more uniform terracing that began to appear in significant numbers at this time. Surviving early 19<sup>th</sup>-century examples include 8-

12 Little East Street (grey brick with red brick quoins); 1-11 New Road (modest cottages with red and grey brick in chequer pattern); 5-9 and 10-14 Mount Pleasant (red and grey brick, nos. 5-9 with more decorative treatment); Priory Crescent (stucco and stock brick); and 1-9 and Penrhoa, Waterloo Place. The façade of the latter is red and grey brick with cement bands between the three storeys across the whole terrace, but the visible flint rubble of the back of the terrace confirms that local materials still played a key role in the pre-railway housing in Lewes. Similar use of flint is found in the side and rear walls of the more sophisticated terrace at 2-10 Albion Street, with its stucco façade replete with rusticated ground floor and continuous iron balcony.

Building of more substantial townhouses continued in the areas previously built up, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Grand examples are the street-front range of Lewes House, 32 High Street (School Hill), and Amon Wild's 63-7 High Street, both of c.1810. Other early 19<sup>th</sup>-century townhouses include 13 and 83 High Street. Both these employ mathematical tiles, evidently as popular as in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century for it is found at 30 of the other buildings dating from 1800 to 1840.



Fig. 38. 34 High Street (School Hill): early 19<sup>th</sup>-century stucco refacing of 16<sup>th</sup>-century timber-framed townhouse.

Re-fronting of earlier townhouses continued apace, with mathematical tile (as applied to the 17<sup>th</sup>-century timber frame at 159 and 160 High Street), but with more frequent use of stucco and

tile-hanging, either wholly disguising the underlying timber-framed construction (as at 16<sup>th</sup>-century 34 High Street) or simply covering the timber studs (as at 53-4 High Street, where jetties remain plainly visible).



Fig. 39. Cliffe High Street: south side as rebuilt after 1828.

More radical rebuilding and re-fronting was occasioned as a result of the Cliffe Improvement Act 1828, which, though seemingly only partly implemented, had a considerable effect on the south side of Cliffe High Street, with demolitions to allow widening, and most of the buildings here date from this period.<sup>355</sup> The Act also led to covering over of the open sewers. With its proximity to the river and its associated warehouses and industrial buildings, the commercial success of Cliffe High Street was inevitable in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The survival of shops along the entire street in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, is in sharp contrast to Southover, where the commercial and industrial character (still evident in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most notably in the tannery and breweries) has been entirely lost.

Although delayed and restrained, new housing ushered in by the railway developed along newly created roads and with use of non-local materials and styles. Later 19<sup>th</sup>-century examples include large terraced housing on Grange Road with two-storied bay windows and attics with cement faux timber framing. Some half-hearted attempts at adopting local, or regional, features appear to be in evidence just before 1900, however, as at the tile-hung first floors of the terrace housing in Dorset Road, though still very subordinate to more general Late Victorian suburban design.

Large-scale, often detached, villas were a feature of late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Lewes, as seen at Rotten Row. However, they are more frequently found outside the EUS study area, as in the newly set-out streets at Wallands Park (e.g. Prince Edward's Road and King Henry's Road). Likewise, the extensive 20<sup>th</sup>-century suburbs, with their increased provision of semi-detached housing but also including flats (as at Landport), fall almost entirely outside the EUS study area.

Industrial buildings survive in considerable numbers from this period. Early 19<sup>th</sup>-century examples include Harveys brewery (heavily remodelled c.1881), and the former malthouse and Harper and Eade warehouse (now flats) in Foundry Lane. The former Stricklands Warehouse (now converted to residential use) on Railway Lane dates from the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, and has a cast-iron frame and, like many 19<sup>th</sup>-century buildings in the town, is faced with slate-hanging. North of Stricklands, the right bank of the River Ouse is lined warehouses (and a school building) of the later 19<sup>th</sup>-century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, culminating in the mid 19<sup>th</sup>-century Riverside Centre, also of cast-iron construction. These buildings record the functional nature of the river frontage at this time.



Fig. 40. Warehouses on the west side of the River Ouse, south of Lewes Bridge, from Riverside (foreground) to Stricklands Warehouse.



Fig. 41. Former Methodist church, Station Street (1867).

The parish churches of Lewes saw significant change with religious revivalism (and a newly expanded population) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: most radically, St John-sub-Castro was demolished and a new brick church was built on a north-south axis nearby in the churchyard (1839); only the medieval west tower survived the rebuilding of All Saints, with the brick nave dating from 1806, and its east end from 1883; St John the Baptist, Southover, saw addition of the a south chapel to house the newly found relics of William de Warenne and Gundrada (1847), and the rebuilding of the chancel in 1885; and St Anne's saw substantial restoration (e.g. exterior of chancel) in 1889.<sup>356</sup>

Numerous other surviving church and nonconformist buildings date from after 1800. Of particular interest is the massive Jireh Strict Baptist (i.e. Calvinistic Independent) chapel, Mallist Street, built (and clad with mathematical tiles and slat-hanging) in 1805 and subsequently expanded with its adjacent Sunday school. Equally ambitious was the Baptist church at Eastgate Street was built in 1843, in Romanesque style in flint and stone. Smaller Providence Baptist chapels at Lancaster Street (c.1860) and Little East Street (1906; built as a mission hall) have been converted, respectively to a theatre and residential use. The brick-built Methodist church in Station Street (1867) has likewise been converted, in this case to commercial use. The Roman Catholic church of

The Sacred Heart and St Pancras, High Street, was rebuilt c.1939 in red brick and flint.<sup>357</sup>

Secular institutional buildings are well represented from this period. The wide-fronted County Hall, High Street, (now the Law Courts) was built of Portland stone and Coade stone in 1808-12 to replace the 1761 sessions house and town hall; the police house, Lancaster Street (1842); the polychrome brick and stone Gothic Revival former library, Fitzroy House, High Street (1862); the red brick Town Hall, High Street (1893); and, in castellated style and flint, brick, and stone, Lewes Prison (1850-5).

Schools surviving from the 19<sup>th</sup> century include: the flint, brick and stone Old Grammar School, High Street (1851); the flint and brick National School at the corner of St Mary's Lane (now Station Street) and Southover Road (1840); the National School at St James Street, off Southover High Street (1871), now a hall; the National School at De Montfort Road (1872), now part of the tertiary college; and The Pells Primary School, Pelham Terrace (1897). The Gothic Revival art school in Albion Street (1868) survives as the public library.



Fig. 42. The former National School, Southover Road (1840).