Heathfield

Historic Character Assessment Report

May 2008



Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) *Roland B Harris*

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in association with Wealden District Council









The Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (Sussex EUS) is a study of 41 towns undertaken between 2004 and 2009 by an independent consultant (Dr Roland B Harris, BA DPhil FSA MIFA), supported from January 2008 by a Research Assistant (Elizabeth Ruffell BSc MSc), for East Sussex County Council (ESCC), West Sussex County Council (WSCC), and Brighton and Hove City Council; and was funded by English Heritage.

Guidance and web-sites derived from the historic town studies will be, or have been, developed by the local authorities.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the project

This report is an archaeological, historical, and historic urban character assessment of Heathfield. It is part of the Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (henceforth Sussex EUS) that examines 41 towns across the ancient county.

The Sussex EUS forms part of a national programme of such surveys initiated by English Heritage in 1992. The national programme is already well underway, with roughly half the English counties having been completed or currently undergoing study.

As the surveys have progressed, the approach has developed. In line with recent surveys, the Sussex EUS includes more modern towns, such as Heathfield, the main significance of which stems from the 19th and 20th centuries. Another recent innovation is the introduction of the characterization concept, comparable with the map-based techniques adopted by historic landscape characterization. This approach was developed in Lancashire (2000-4), and is further refined in Sussex.

The Sussex EUS has been funded by English Heritage, and supported in kind by the commissioning authorities: East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council, and Brighton and Hove City Council. A wide range of stakeholders (including district and borough councils, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) has supported the project.

In West Sussex the Sussex EUS forms part of the *Character of West Sussex Partnership Programme*,² aiming to provide guidance and advice on the protection and enhancement of all aspects of character in the county. Other historic environment projects come under this umbrella:

- Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) of Sussex
- Intensive Urban Survey of Chichester and Fishbourne
- Local Distinctiveness Study of West Sussex.

1.2 Aims and objectives

1.2.1 Aims

The aim of the Sussex EUS is to deliver a unique and flexible tool to aid the understanding, exploration and management of the historic qualities of 41 of the most significant towns in

Sussex with a view to:

- archaeological and historic environment research and management.
- · informing strategic and local policy.
- underpinning urban historic land and buildings management and interpretation.
- encouraging the integration of urban historic characterization into the wider process of protecting and enhancing urban character.

1.2.2 Objectives

Key objectives of the project include the:

- synthesis of previous archaeological and historical work.
- creation of a Geographic Information System (GIS) that maps and allows the analysis of archaeological events, monuments and urban plan components using information obtained from a variety of sources.
- analysis of the origins and development of each town by establishing and examining its principal plan components and existing standing structures.
- identification of county-wide Historic Character Types and attribution of the types to different areas within each town.
- preparation of a Statement of Historic Urban Character for each town, to include assessment of archaeological potential and Historic Environment Value.
- identification of gaps in the understanding of the past occupation and historical development of character of each town through the development of a Research Framework.
- advice to local authorities on the development of guidance derived from the town studies.

1.3 Outputs

The principal outputs of the project comprise:

- Historic character assessment reports.

 Documents (of which this is one) that, separately for each town, summarize the setting and preurban activity; synthesize current archaeological and historical research; describe the development from origins to the present day; assess the surviving historic character and historic environment value; and set out a framework for future research on the historic environment of the towns.
- Geographical Information System (GIS) for the historic environment of each town. The GIS

underpins the analysis and mapping of the town reports, and is available to local authorities as a unique tool to support their decision making. The EUS-generated GIS data includes historic buildings and archaeological data, and mapping of areas for which Historic Character Type, historic land use, and Historic Urban Character Areas have been defined. The GIS data will be maintained and updated by the West Sussex County Council Sites & Monuments Record (SMR) and the East Sussex County Council Historic Environment Record (HER).

- Informing historic environment management guidance specific to each local planning authority, for the 41 EUS towns and Winchelsea, produced under the new Local Development Frameworks, and subject to formal consultation procedures.
- Background papers for the Sussex EUS project. Documents that include the project design, a summary of the methodology and an overall bibliography.

1.4 The structure of this report

1.4.1 The Setting

This introductory section describes the topography, geology, communications, and preurban archaeology of the town.

1.4.2 History

The history of Heathfield in this report can be a brief summary only. It aims to synthesize published research, and to provide a chronological overview of the development of the town as seen from documentary sources. The focus is placed on those matters — such as origins, economy, trade and institutions — that are most closely related to the urban historic environment today. Aspects of the history of the parish — such as the manorial history — are largely outside the remit of this study.

1.4.3 Archaeology

The archaeology section of this report draws on published and unpublished reports of excavations, archaeological assessments, and records of finds. This section also includes analysis of historic buildings (listed and nonlisted) and the topography, the latter drawing on maps of the town from 1841 onwards. Again, this section follows a chronological structure, and focuses on aspects of the material evidence of the town's past that relate most closely to the historic environment today.

1.4.4 Statement of Historic Urban Character

Whereas sections on history and archaeology (above) explore the development of Heathfield over time, this part of the report considers and defines the physical evidence of the past in today's townscape. It does this by means of a character-based approach, operating at three different scales: areas of common Historic Character Type; larger and topographically familiar Historic Urban Character Areas; and the whole town. Assessment is made of the Historic Environment Value of each of the Historic Urban Character Areas, taking account of the archaeological potential.

1.5 Principal sources

Heathfield has been the subject of little archaeological and historical interest. The principal sources drawn on during the writing of this report are listed below. Many other sources have been used too, and full references have been given by use of endnotes.

1.5.1 History

Heathfield lacks an authoritative historical study, such as the *Victoria County History*, but its 19th-century origins mean that local histories, with their focus on more recent periods, are largely adequate. Most relevant to this study has been the research by **Elizabeth Doff** and **Roy Pryce**.³ **Brian Short** has studied the chicken cramming industry in the Weald, which is of particular importance to the origins of Heathfield.⁴

1.5.2 Archaeology

There have been no archaeological excavations in Heathfield, but the **East Sussex Historic Environment Record** (HER) database has been invaluable for providing the pre-urban archaeological context as evidenced by archaeological finds.

1.5.3 Historic buildings

Heathfield's few pre-town historic buildings and its post-railway architecture have not been the subject of study. English Heritage's statutory list of historic buildings is of use, though many of the descriptions date from the 1950s and were necessarily produced without internal inspection. Very limited fieldwork only was possible during this assessment and focused on correcting dating derived from such sources, identifying hitherto ignored buildings of historic interest.

1.5.4 Geology and topography

The contextual discussion of the solid and drift geology has principally derived from 1:50,000 British Geological Survey digital data. Ordnance Survey Historic 25" maps for Epochs 1-4 (1875 onwards) have proved invaluable, especially as these have been used in digital form, allowing overlaying with each other and with other data. The 1841 Tithe Map (*East Sussex Record Office*) captures the site of later Heathfield at a large scale prior to the opening of the railway. All these maps have been digitized and rectified to fit the National Grid to allow comparison with other maps and data. Vertical air photo coverage

of 2000 provides a useful snapshot in time. All analysis and maps utilize the most recent large-scale Ordnance Survey mapping (digital MasterMap data).

1.6 Area covered by the report

The Sussex EUS assessment of Heathfield covers the extent of the town *c*.1910.

Heathfield is one of nine towns in Wealden District that have assessments such as this. The others are Alfriston, Crowborough, Hailsham, Mayfield, Pevensey, Rotherfield, Uckfield and Wadhurst.

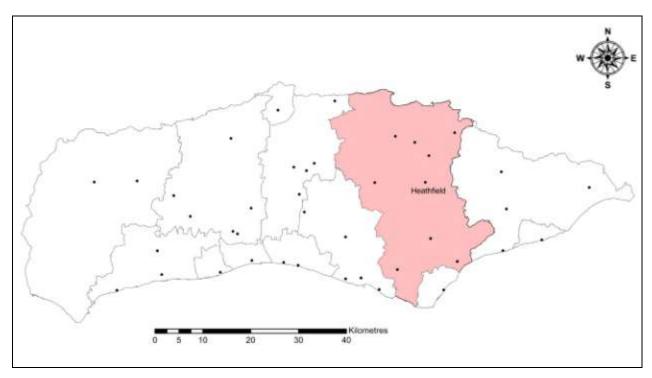


Fig. 1. Location of Heathfield within Sussex. Wealden District is highlighted and points locate the 41 Sussex EUS towns.

2 THE SETTING



Fig. 2. View southwards over the High Weald towards the South Downs from Station Road.

2.1 Topography (Map 2)

Heathfield is situated within the High Weald, towards the western end of the Battle Ridge (a secondary ridge of the High Weald, which extends south-eastwards from Hadlow Down to meet the sea with dramatic cliffs of sands and clays at Fairlight). The land slopes away on the south-west side of the town towards Waldron Gill, one of the tributaries of the Cuckmere which flows to the sea at Cuckmere Haven 24km the south-west.

The highest part of the town is at its eastern edge, around the five-ways junction of Mutton Hall Hill, Mutton Hall Lane, Tower Street, Marklye Lane and Burwash Road, at *c.*182m OD. Mutton Hall Hill and its continuation as High Street descend westwards to *c.*151m OD at Tilsmore Corner. Tower Street and its continuation as Hailsham Road descends from the five-ways junction to *c.*129m OD at the Sandy Cross on the southern edge of the town. The lowest point in the town is nearby where

Ghyll Road crosses Waldron Gill at c.102m OD.

The principal street of the town is the generally east-west High Street., together with the northern end of adjoining Station Road. Suburbs extend in all directions from this retail centre, but are considerably more extensive to the south and west: Heathfield Park, Markly Wood and Tilsmore Wood have constrained development on the north and east sides of the town.

The town lies on the junction of the historic parishes of Heathfield and Waldron, and at the centre of modern Heathfield and Waldron Civil Parish.

2.2 Geology (Map 2)

2.2.1 Solid geology

Along with the whole of Sussex, the rocks of the Heathfield area are sedimentary. Descending the higher land of the High Weald towards the Low Weald, the rocks get more recent.

All of Heathfield lies on a succession of sandstones, siltstones and mudstones (commonly clays) of the Ashdown Formation, which is part of the Hastings Beds (Lower Cretaceous).

Clay ironstone, or siderite mudstone, provided ore for the Wealden iron industry, and post-medieval forges and blast furnaces lie near the EUS study area. Typically these are located on fault lines marking the edge of the Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation, the Ashdown Formation and the Wadhurst Clay, north and south of Heathfield.

2.2.2 Drift Geology

There is no drift geology within the town of Heathfield, although there is alluvium along the tributaries of the Cuckmere and the River Rother to the north and south of the town.

2.3 Communications

2.3.1 Water

Heathfield is poorly sited with regard to the navigable parts of the Cuckmere (rarely used above Milton Lock, near Alfriston, 19km to the south-west) and the River Rother (where Bodiam, c.19km to the east, frequently marked the limit of even modest barges on this river, with trans-shipping occurring at Rye⁵). Moreover, the origins of Heathfield post-date the arrival of the turnpike road and, especially, the railway (see below), and, thus, water-borne communications

have not been relevant in the life of the town.

2.3.2 Road

Heathfield lies on the A265 Cross-in-Hand to Hurst Green road. This joined at Heathfield by the B2096 from Battle and the B2203 from Horam (at Horam this joins the A267/A22 to Hailsham and Eastbourne). The A265 route, which passes along the High Street, was turnpiked in 1765, and the Battle to Heathfield road in 1813. ⁶

2.3.3 Railway

The London Brighton and South Coast Railway (LBSCR) extended the Polegate to Hailsham branch line (opened 1849) to the Lewes-Uckfield-Tunbridge Wells (thence London) line in 1880, building a station 2km north-west of the existing settlement (now style Old Heathfield). The railway, which was never electrified, closed to passengers in 1965 and to goods in 1968: from the site of the Heathfield railway station and southwards, the former track bed has been reused for the footpath and cycle route known as the Cuckoo Trail.

2.4 Evidence for pre-urban activity

2.4.1 Prehistoric

Prehistoric features and finds in or near the EUS study area comprise:

- The Rye-Uckfield ridgeway [HER reference: LINEAR129] is a probable Prehistoric or Roman Trackway (500,000 BC to 409 AD). It runs on a west-east alignment, and though it is not recorded within the EUS area itself, its course suggests that it runs through the town of Heathfield. The nearest recorded portions of the trackway to the east of Heathfield are by the leisure centre [HER references: 6483 MES4994 and 6489 MES 4994], and the nearest to the west are approaching 3 km away, just to the west of the junction of Warren Lane with the B2102 [HER references: 6491 MES4994 and 6492 MES4994].
- Hurst Green–Etchingham–Heathfield ridgeway [HER reference: LINEAR 131] is also a trackway of probable Prehistoric or Roman date. It runs in an east-north-east direction, with a portion of the trackway recorded in the EUS area at the crossroads of the A265 (High Street/Mutton Hall Hill) with Firwood Rise and Marshlands Lane [HER reference 6517 MES4360].
- The Oldham-Cross-in-Hand trackway [HER

reference LINEAR 134] is probably of Prehistoric date (500,000 BC to 42 AD). It runs in a northerly direction, the nearest recorded portion being 2km to the west of the Heathfield EUS area [HER reference: 6594 – MES4876].

- Palaeolithic (500,000 BC to 10,001 BC) "pear-shaped" Acheulian implement(s) have been found at Heathfield, to the west of the EUS area but within the modern town of Heathfield at Waldron Thorns [HER reference: TQ 52 SE11 MES4303].
- A ditched enclosure which may be of Iron Age (800 BC to 42 AD) is east of the Heathfield EUS area, just to the north-east of the leisure centre [HER reference: TQ 62SW – MES6968].

2.4.2 Romano-British

Although no Romano-British finds or features have been found through controlled excavation in the town, there have been numerous discoveries of Roman ironworkings in the area. There are eight known bloomery sites of this period within 5km of Heathfield, Outside the EUS study area there has been one local Roman-British find:

 West of Heathfield town, at the northern end of New Pond Hill, a Roman (43 AD to 409 AD) coin of Maximian was found in about 1924 when drainage pipes were being laid [HER reference: TQ 52 SE10 – MES4302].

2.4.3 Anglo-Saxon

No 11th-century or earlier medieval finds or features have been found through controlled excavation in the town, and there have been no chance findspots of this period.

2.4.4 Implications of pre-urban archaeology

The paucity of known pre-urban archaeology at Heathfield is likely to reflect the lack of controlled excavations rather than an actual absence. Certainly, prehistoric finds should be anticipated in any excavation in the area. Usage of this area of the Weald between the Late Iron Age and the Norman Conquest means that finds and features from these periods may also occur in future excavations within Heathfield.

3 HISTORY

3.1 Origins and development of Old Heathfield: 1100-1800

3.1.1 Introduction

Heathfield has been included in the Sussex EUS primarily due to the present town of that name, which grew up after and near to the railway station of that name. However, the earlier settlement of that name (since the mid-1930s known as Old Heathfield, 10 comprising a small village separated from the new town by Heathfield Park) was one of the small centres of trade that typified the later medieval Weald. For this reason – and to provide background to the origins of the 19th and 20th-century new town – this report includes a brief summary of the history of the earlier settlement.

3.1.2 Place-name

The name *Heathfield* is likely to relate to the area and to predate any nucleated settlement. . Evidently pre-Conquest in origin, the name is first recorded in the 12th century. 11

In the Weald, the *field* (Old English *feld*) element is strongly associated with ridges and, more specifically, areas of later medieval 'downland' or common. The 'open country' sense of *feld* suggests that woodland was thinner than elsewhere in the Weald or had been cleared and kept so by grazing. The descriptive qualifier *heath* confirms that the *field* element does not – as in much later use of the word – refer to arable land, but rather uncultivated land. The topography, geology, vegetation and history of the Heathfield area are completely consistent with this.

3.1.3 Origins of the church

The earliest documented allusion to a church at Heathfield is in a rental of 1253-62, where there is a reference to a shop being adjacent to the churchyard and to tenants (in the same part of the rental) with the names *Adam de Ecclesia* and *Robert the Vicar*.¹³ The list of vicars in the church itself, however, begins with Dogo, installed 1236. Although unreferenced, this is certainly consistent with the implication of the 1253-62 rental: i.e. that the church and churchyard were well established prior to the shop. A prebend of Heathfield was founded at Chichester cathedral by 1291.¹⁴ On architectural grounds, the church of All Saints was in existence by the late 13th century.



Fig. 3. All Saints' church, Old Heathfield.

3.1.4 Medieval urbanization

No manor or settlement at Heathfield is recorded in Domesday Book, which of itself is inconclusive. It is likely that a proportion of the 39 tenants (with 30 ploughs) of the Bishop of Chichester's manor of Bishopstone lived at Heathfield. The Heathfield population in 1086 is likely to have been dispersed in typical Wealden manner and does not imply a nucleated settlement such as a village or hamlet.

Urban function is suggested by the earliest rental (1253-62), which records four shops. The surnames in the rental – at this date unlikely to be inherited and, thus, a reflection of livelihood include Chaloner, Weaver, and Mercer, suggesting that Heathfield was based on textile manufacture and merchant trade. Two of the shops were built on former farmland, consistent with a nascent settlement. 16 As with other Wealden settlements (such as Mayfield, Wadhurst and Ticehurst), the origins of Heathfield appear to lie in the mid to late 13th century. Also in common with these other Wealden settlements is the fact that Heathfield was evidently not planned, but emerged - as a permissive settlement - on the confined space adjacent to the church and market place. Unlike these other places of trade, however, Heathfield does not lay on a major route and there is no

clear evidence that the open area of the market pre-dates the church: at Heathfield, its good location for textile working (as seen by the concentration of fulling mills in the area) seems to have provided the stimulus for the settlement.¹⁷

In 1316 Heathfield was granted a weekly (Thursday) market and an annual fair on the eve. day and morrow of Richard the Confessor (of Chichester). With other contemporary or earlier market centres to the north and east (Burwash and Mayfield) approximately 7-8km distant, and to the south and west (Hailsham and Uckfield) approximately 11-12km distant, Heathfield evidently had a significant hinterland. Given this hinterland, the earlier growth of Heathfield, and the fact that political expediency by Edward II had much to do with the flurry of market grants at this time, it is likely that the grant simply formalized customary usage, dating from the mid-13th century. ¹⁸ The Victoria County History has assumed that the date of the fair refers to the Translation of St Richard (16th June). Certainly, there was a fair on the equivalent date of 27th June in 1792 (i.e. allowing for the 11-day calendar change in 1752). A second fair was in existence by the 19th century, possibly even by the late 17th century, on April 14th: by the pre-1752 Old Style calendar, this was equivalent to the other feast of St Richard (commemorating his Deposition) on April 3rd. This latter fair survives and is known as the Cuckoo Fair and, evidently, may be that granted in 1316 or a later introduction.19

The manor of Saperton (first recorded in 1273) had a park in 1387, which appears to have formed the core of Baily Park, 20 since the 1780s known as Heathfield Park. 21

The western part of the parish of Heathfield was in the township of Isenhurst, Hundred of Dill and the Rape of Pevensey, while the eastern part (including Old Heathfield itself) was in the township of Tottingworth, Hundred of Hawsborough and the Rape of Hastings.²² Accordingly, the lay subsidy rolls do not allow for easy disaggregation of taxpayers in Heathfield. However, the 1296 lay subsidy suggests a population for the township of Tottingworth (i.e. containing the nucleated settlement of Heathfield) of around 85, the 1327 subsidy suggests a population of around 105, and the 1332 subsidy suggests a population of around 95.²³ The figures are consistent with the modest nature of the nascent town or village. In 1524, the population had risen to around 200 for the township of Tottingworth.24







Fig. 4. Heathfield Park: the cricket pitch.

3.1.5 Post-medieval economic history

The settlement at Heathfield remained off the main Wealden routes in the post-medieval period. In the survey of inns and alehouses of 1686, it had modest provision, with fewer than 10 stablings and guest beds. This placed Heathfield below minor Wealden towns such as Mayfield, Rotherfield and Uckfield, and it was even less significant than neighbouring Cross-in-Hand and Cade Street.²⁵ These last two benefited from the improvement by turnpike trusts of the Hailsham to Cross-in-Hand road in 1754, the Lewes to Burwash road in 1765, and the Battle to Heathfield road in 1813.²⁶

Wealden iron production had a significant impact on the economy of the parish, with the beginning of the period coinciding with the development of the blast furnace, expanding markets, and rapid growth in the industry. The first English blast furnace had been established 17km north-west of Heathfield, at Newbridge on Ashdown Forest, in 1496. The industry expanded rapidly in the 16th century, thereafter declining to the point of extinction by the end of the 18th century. There were 29 ironworks of this period within 10km of Heathfield.²⁷ While there were furnaces and

forges in Heathfield parish in the 16th and early 17th centuries, the most significant development was Heathfield furnace, built by the Fullers in 1693. Heathfield furnace became the centre of the Fuller family ordnance production. In 1717 the furnace was producing 200 tons a year, falling to 100 tons in 1787. At this point it was one of only three surviving furnaces in the Weald, and closed *c*.1790. The last furnace in the Weald (Ashburnham) ceased production in 1813.²⁸ Given the variable production of Heathfield furnace it is perhaps unlikely that it provided 'constant employment for half the population of the parish', ²⁹ but the impact on local employment was doubtless considerable.

There is little indication of other trades in this period, although gloving is recorded *c*.1600, ³⁰ and is a typical example of Wealden leatherworking (Mayfield and Wadhurst being nearby centres of the industry³¹).

By 1750 the defunct market centre at Heathfield – along with other examples such as Alfriston and Hailsham – had probably been replaced by the expansion of the hinterland of the market at Lewes. The June fair, however, continued and was still being held in 1792.

The parish had an almshouse in 1663,³⁴ but payments for the rents of 12 paupers in the overseers' accounts for 1690-1 show that the poor were more typically housed elsewhere until the parish gained its own workhouse in 1757.³⁵

The parish population rose to around 524 by 1676, then fell slightly to around 450 in 1724. Thereafter population continued to grow significantly, reaching 1,226 by 1801. The predominance of parish, rather than town or village, statistics and the diverse source of these figures, mean that they should be taken as indicative of general trends only.

3.1.6 Post-medieval church and religion

This period began with the drama of Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries. Whilst the parish church was institutionally robust, it felt the impact of Protestant Reformation and reaction. In 1555-7, Protestant recalcitrants were burnt at the stake, and, in mother and son Margery and James Morris, Heathfield provided two of the 17 victims of Marian martyrdom at Lewes, killed as a stark warning to the perceived radicalism of eastern Sussex. In 1561 a forced exchange saw the diocese lose eight of its ancient Episcopal manors, including Heathfield. The resignation at this time of the incumbent was one of 43 in the county between 1558 and 1564.

A church charity school is recorded in this

period, possibly dating from as early as the late 16th century: certainly there was a licensed schoolmaster in Heathfield in 1588, with his successors recorded in 1592 and 1612. This early school apparently used the south aisle of the church, but by 1684 was described, perhaps not implying a change, as 'adjoining to the church'. There are further references to the existence of the school in 1710 and in the late 18th century.⁴⁰

Bishop Compton's census of 1676 recorded no Roman Catholic recusants in Heathfield parish, but there were ten adult protestant nonconformists. ⁴¹ In 1724 there were six or seven Baptist and four or five Presbyterian families. ⁴² By 1770 nonconformism was served by an Independent chapel (with its own graveyard) just west of Punnett's Town. ⁴³



Fig. 5. The former National School in Old Heathfield, now All Saints' and St Richard's Church of England Primary School.

3.2 The emerging new town 1800-1914

3.2.1 Economic history

A new and distinctive industry developed in the Heathfield area in the 19th century, in the form of artificial fattening of poultry by force feeding, or cramming. Although new, cramming depended heavily on the inherited landscape and economy:



Fig. 6. Corn mill, Station Road (disused).

medieval dispersed settlement and increased conversion of the remaining marginal uplands in the 18th century saw diverse landownership (over 142 landowners in 1842); poor agricultural land; a typically diverse craft-based economy that included leatherworking, spinning and weaving, hemp and flax spinning, rope-making, brickmaking and coppicing, with craftsmen often being smallholders; and a growing population, with consequent unemployment and poverty (population rose from 1,226 in 1801 to 1,801 in 1831). The industry began to establish itself on a significant scale in the early 1830s and was substantial by the 1860s. With no railway, carriers transported the dead fatted chickens to London (principally to Leadenhall, but also to Smithfield); in 1864 over 163 tons of chickens were sent to London by one carrier alone, and ten years later this had risen to around 224 tons. Although pre-dating the arrival of the railway in Heathfield in 1880 or the agricultural depression of the late 19th century (most severe during the period 1887-96⁴⁴), both these events stimulated the cramming industry: the railway improved access to markets, while the agricultural depression brought down feed prices and, with the poor prospects for arable and stock farming, poultry was one of the few profitable farm

products. In 1885 £60,000 worth of chickens left Heathfield station; £140,000 worth in 1895; and £150,000 worth *c*.1900: the pre-war chicken cramming industry was the most significant in the area. Foultry farming also stimulated the trades supplying it: corn and seed merchants, corn mills (see Fig. 6), dairies (milk was used to bind the feed), butchers (supplied tallow), carpenters, coop and pen makers.

The population of Heathfield parish had reached 2,208 in 1851 and then stayed relatively stable a little below this: in 1881, a year after the railway had arrived, there was a population of 1,995. Thereafter the population rose steadily, to 2,300 in 1891, 2,745 in 1901 and 3,150 in 1911. These figures indicate the trend, but under represent the growth of the new town since - until 1990 the western part of the present High Street (from around Firlands Rise westwards) and the station lay in Waldron parish. Significantly, while Waldron village itself did not grow during this period, the parish population did and, although some of this was in expanding Cross-in-Hand, much was in the new town of Heathfield. The population of the parish of Waldron in 1881 was 1,342, thereafter rising to 1,431 in 1891, 1,698 in 1901 and 2,178 in 1911. Thus, although it is not possible to disaggregate the population figures for the new town of Heathfield without exhaustive analysis of the census returns, it is clear that there was none of the initial lag that followed construction of the railway station at, for example, Wadhurst, where the station was almost an identical distance from the old town and where new settlement (at Durgates and Sparrow's Green) also emerged. At Heathfield several factors seem to have played a role in the relatively rapid development: the existing village had very little to offer as a centre for trade or industry: the recently enclosed waste of Heathfield Down, adjacent to the station, was more readily available for development; and the parish - and wider area - had, in the form of chicken cramming, a thriving and expanding industry for which quick, reliable and cheap transport was in demand.

Signs of the prosperity beyond the growing population include the building of hotels. The Heathfield Hotel was built opposite the station in the mid-1890s, and the smaller Temperance Hotel was built opposite in around 1900-5. ⁴⁷ The service industry which attached to these hotels applied even more to the burgeoning housing. Domestic service in particular was symptomatic of a key element in the economy of the emerging town: the development of the area was increasingly reliant on commuters, or those of independent means, living in detached and



Fig. 7. The railway station (now a shop).

semi-detached villas. Despite the successful chicken cramming industry, a key function of the emerging town was as a residential suburban area. A similar purpose lay behind development of other new or expanding Wealden towns such as Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill (the latter with a booming brick and tile industry, comparable to the poultry industry at Heathfield), and the same tradesmen were often involved in early investment. For example, after raising mortgages on two properties in Haywards Heath. in 1910 William Toye then raised a mortgage on a house and shop in Heathfield: all these enterprises were successful and he followed up with further investments in Uckfield and elsewhere.48

While the June fair had lapsed by 1888, ⁴⁹ the annual fair (the Cuckoo Fair) on April 14th continued to be held at Cade Street (near the site of what is now Heathfield Community College).⁵⁰

3.2.2 Railway

The South Eastern Railway (SER) built the new double-tracked main line to connect Tunbridge Wells (itself connected to London since 1845) and Hastings (the section from Robertsbridge to St Leonards not opening until 1852): this provided Heathfield with a station 9km to the north-west (now called Stonegate station). Given the topography of the High Weald, access to this station was via a tortuous route, and as late as 1870 (when the chicken cramming

industry was well established) only a thriceweekly carrier service operated between Heathfield and the station.⁵²

The London Brighton and South Coast Railway (LBSCR) brought a single-track railway to Heathfield parish itself in 1880, with a station 2km north-west of the medieval settlement. This continued the branch line that had been built from Polegate to Hailsham (1849) to Eridge. where it joined the Lewes-Uckfield-Tunbridge Wells (thence London) line (completed 1868).⁵³ Plans for the line were promoted by the Duke of Devonshire to improve rail service to growing Eastbourne, in which he had so much invested, although, in the event, it developed as a rural branch line.54 The line became known as the Cuckoo Line, referring to the fair at Heathfield. Warehouses were built by the goods yard of the new railway station by corn and seed merchants supplying the chicken cramming industry.55

The sinking of a borehole in the yard of the Station Hotel in 1896 (to provide water for locomotives) led to the accidental discovery of natural gas. This was used to light the station, but more ambitious attempts at exploitation failed: the Natural Gas Fields of England Company was founded for this purpose in 1902, but lasted only two years. Other attempts had ceased by 1917, although parts of the town were lit by natural gas until 1930. ⁵⁶

3.2.3 Church and religion

The parish was already equipped with the



Fig. 8. Union Church, Station Road.

medieval church in Old Heathfield, although this needed to expand its graveyard in the late 19th century. The 1912-15 the new town was of sufficient scale to merit its own Anglican church – St Richard's, Upper Station Road – built as a chapel of ease. Not surprisingly Protestant nonconformists were quicker to recognize the potential offered by the new town, with a Gilbert memorial chapel (i.e. Independent) founded in Alexandra Road as early as 1886. This was followed by the Union Church (Congregational and Baptist) on the corner of Station Road and High Street, in 1899-1901. The Union Church gained a lecture hall in 1909, and St Richard's a church hall in 1929. A corrugated iron mission hall was built at the north end of Tilsmore Road in 1899 (this had gone by the 1930s when a house – Homelands – was built on the site).

3.2.4 Urban institutions

During the late 19th century Heathfield saw the development of a wide range of social and public functions that did not exist previously. The detail of these is beyond the scope of this brief account, but the salient institutions are included.

Following the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, Heathfield became part of Hailsham Poor Law Union.⁶⁴ The opening of a new Hailsham Union workhouse at Upper Horsebridge (at that time in Hellingly parish) in 1835 meant that the parish workhouse at Heathfield became redundant:⁶⁵ it was sold off in 1836.⁶⁶

A National School was built in Old Heathfield in 1819,⁶⁷ and this continued to serve the growing town throughout this period.

Sporting, cultural and entertainment facilities were a feature of the burgeoning new town, and only a sample can be mentioned here. The Drill Hall in Station Road was built in 1897. The Recreation Hall (later called the State Hall) in Station Road was built in 1909 for indoor sports and entertainment, and was equipped with a dance-floor and stage.⁶⁸ The Agricultural Hall, Cherwell Road, was also used for a wide range of recreational uses, at this time.⁶⁹ it appears to have originated as the showroom for Natural Gas Fields of England Company (in liquidation in 1904: see above section 3.2.2).⁷⁰ Cricket appears to have come late to Heathfield parish, but was played form the early 1800s.7 Heathfield Park Cricket Club was formed in 1878, although cricket was played in the park prior to this. 72 This established the present ground on the east side of the park, adjacent to Old Heathfield.



Fig. 9. The State Hall, Station Road.

3.3 The town *c*.1914-2008

3.3.1 Economic history



Fig. 10. High Street shops of the inter-war period.

The period after 1914 was marked by the demise of the chicken cramming industry in Heathfield and its hinterland. The lack of cheap imported feed during the First World War saw chicken cramming go into decline. Revival after the war saw a more evenly distributed Wealden poultry industry with the centre shifting slightly east of Heathfield. Large-scale battery farming came into play (such as that introduced at Heydown Poultry Farm, Heathfield, in 1931), and egg production represented diversification in poultry farming. In 1938 a new packing station was opened at Heathfield. Transport changed rapidly, so that by 1926 almost all chickens from Heathfield were taken to London by lorry: the Southern Railway responded with a cheaper and better service, but the trend was never reversed. The outbreak of war in 1939 saw poultry feed supplies decline, and the flocks were cut by twothirds by 1943. Heathfield lost its former dominance in the post-war revival of the industry: the original locational factors that favoured the area were irrelevant where chicken farming was unrelated to the local environment (natural or economic) and where road transport was predominant. By 1950 the Heathfield poultry industry was all but dead.73

Other employment developed as chicken cramming decline. In the First World War, the Weald's woodland provided pit props, with as many as 30-40 trucks a week transported from Heathfield station. Charcoal was also produced locally for munitions. After the war, economic development is evident as three new banks opened in the High Street in the 1920s; In the early 1920s a (Southdown) bus depot was built at the corner of the High Street and Tilsmore Road, and nearby Charlie Ryder built a garage and Heathfield's first purpose-built cinema.

In the inter-war years, housing expanded, further developing the role of Heathfield as a residential suburban area with a significant commuting population. Central infill included Mutton Hall Hill and Collingwood Rise, built on the site of Park Nurseries. A council estate (Waldron Thorns) was built south of the railway station in 1949-50. Despite the rising population (see below) and large-scale increase in housing, small shops declined in the later 20th century and larger supermarkets appeared: Budgens on the site of Heathfield Hotel (demolished 1983), and, in the 1990s, the Co-Op over the (former) railway tunnel on the north side of the High Street.

The annual April fair (the Cuckoo Fair) came to an end shortly after the end of the Second World War. The railway, which was never electrified, ceased carrying passengers in 1965, and closed for goods in 1968. A small industrial estate has since been built on the site of the station platforms and goods shed.

Heathfield Wildlife Park and Gibraltar Tower Garden opened in 1973, but the tourist attraction failed and closed in 1979. Heathfield Park has since returned to function as a private house and park.

The combined population for the parishes of Heathfield and Waldron continued to grow, initially modestly from 5,328 in 1911 to 6,381 in 1931. An apparent drop in the population in 1951 to 5,757 simply reflects the fact that parts of the two parishes were used to create the new parish of Horam earlier that year. Population stayed almost static in 1961 (at 5,878), but by 1971 had risen sharply to 7,515. The two parishes were combined in 1990, to make Heathfield and Waldron, ⁸³ and the population rose to 11,406 in 2001.

3.3.2 Church and religion

Protestant nonconformism experienced mixed, though generally good, fortune in the 20th century. The Baptist church in Church Road was replaced by a new church in Station Road in



Fig. 11. St Catherine's church (RC), Mutton Hall Hill.

1965; the Methodist church in Gloucester Road was expanded by the building of a new brick church adjacent in 1957; and the Congregational church in Leylands Road was let to a Pentecostal congregation in 1978, before becoming the Mid-Sussex Christian Centre. In contrast, the Providence Strict Baptist Chapel, Park Road, was converted to flats in 1999. 84 The St Alban's Mission Room, Fairfield Road, has become a day centre.

The Roman Catholic community had grown sufficiently by the late 20th century for St Catherine, Mutton Hall Hill to be built.

3.3.3 Urban institutions

Despite the fact that Heathfield has been significant since the early 20th century, it has failed to become an administrative or judicial centre.

With the increase in population in the 20th century and increasing leaving age, educational provision increased. Most significantly, a new county secondary modern school opened in 1950 near Cade Street and Old Heathfield (now styled Heathfield Community College). 85 With the provision of secondary education, the 19thcentury former National School in Old Heathfield became All Saints' and St Richard's Church of England Primary School. Continuing expansion of the town in the late 20th century saw the opening of Parkside Community Primary School, Beechwood Lane (i.e. on the south side of Heathfield), in 1990;86 and Cross-in-Hand Church of England Primary School, Sheepsetting Lane (i.e. on the west side of

Heathfield: this replaced a school in Cross-in-Hand, opposite St Bartholomew's church of 1905, itself a replacement of the first school of 1876), in 1969.⁸⁷

In 1921 a building on the road to Punnett's Town (adjacent to the later community college) was given over to be the Heathfield Village Institute.⁸⁸

The Picture House (later The Plaza), was built in the High Street *c*.1923 and closed in the early 1960s. ⁸⁹ The State Hall (see above, section 3.2.4) continued to thrive – especially during the early 1950s – for music and dances, but closed in 1962, becoming a clothing factory. ⁹⁰

A combined health and community centre was opened in 1990 in Sheepsetting Lane (and has playing fields adjacent). An informal public park, the Millennium Green, was created in 2000 on a site at the northern end of the old railway tunnel. 2000

An annual agricultural show (the Heathfield Show) began at Cross-in-Hand in 1946, has been held since 1960 just to the east of Heathfield at Little Tottingworth Farm, Broad Oak.⁹³

The old railway line between Heathfield and Hailsham was re-opened as a path for walkers and cyclists, and as a bridleway, in 1992. Known as the Cuckoo Trail it was later extended to Polegate.⁹⁴

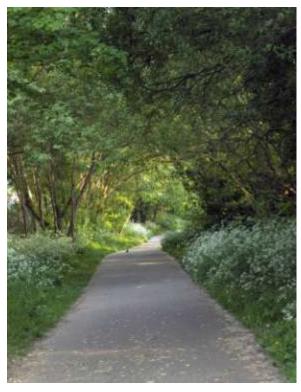


Fig. 12. The former railway line, now the Cuckoo Trail.

4 ARCHAEOLOGY

4.1 Origins: 1100-1800

4.1.1 Architectural evidence



Fig. 13. The Glade, Hailsham Road.

There are few pre-19th-century buildings within the boundaries of the new town of Heathfield. As described above (section 3.1), the medieval settlement was at Old Heathfield, which remains a distinct village separated from the new town by Heathfield Park: it is outside the EUS study area.

Half Moon Place, Burwash Road, was built as a cottage on the Down, and gained its name from its later use as an ale house. ⁹⁵ The earliest part of the timber-framed house dates from the late 17th or early 18th century, but contains much reused medieval material, including two crownposts. ⁹⁶ North Down, Newick Lane, and The Glade, Hailsham Road, are both tile-hung houses of probable 18th-century date. Although it appears to be wholly rebuilt, the Crown Inn was established by the early 19th century, possibly in the 18th century.

4.1.2 Topography

The main structure of the street pattern of the new town of Heathfield was inherited from the pre-railway routes leading to and across the open commons. In 1800, the principal route through the area was what later became the High Street/Mutton Hall Hill; and the Hailsham Road, Ghyll Road, Tilsmore Road and Marklye Lane had been established.

4.2 The emerging town 1800-1914 (Maps 3, 5 and 6)

4.2.1 Buildings and topography

Although the population of the parish began to rise in the early 19th century and the new industry of chicken cramming began to establish itself (especially during the 1830s) only the occasional new building was erected in the area of the later new town. Surviving examples include brick-built High Timbers and Vine Cottage, both on Mutton Hall Hill.

By 1840, the division of remaining open common, or Downland, into fields added to the earlier main routes to create the structure into which the later town would be built: many of these field boundaries survive as major divisions in the modern townscape, with individual fields often defining the extent of individual developments. The dividing up of the former open land of Heathfield Down also mean that more roads were established, or formalized, so that by 1840, for example, Tower Street, Mutton Hall Lane and Marshlands Lane had been created to provide access to scattered properties formerly surrounded by open land.



Fig. 14. Redwood, Burwash Road.



Fig. 15. Tower House and adjacent terraced housing, Tower Street.

The first significant new development fitted into this framework of roads, and was concentrated towards the crossroads on top of the Down. Tower House and an adjacent row of terraced houses were built on Tower Street by c.1875. Nearby on Mutton Hall Hill, one or two villas, such as Whitethorne, were built, alongside the new sawmill.

With the arrival of the railway in 1880, building of the new town began in earnest. Although the railway line closed in 1968, buildings and structures survive: the tunnel mouth and road bridge next to the station remain and, although the platforms, goods shed and footbridge have gone, the station buildings survive (now a shop). To the south, the late 19th-century corn mill stands next to the former railway (at this point the head of the Cuckoo Trail, which reuses the trackbed), as one of the key architectural monuments to the chicken cramming past (Fig. 00). Two pairs of semi-detached railway cottages next to the station also survive, but are Edwardian rather than part of the initial building (Fig. 2). With the loss of the Heathfield Hotel and adjacent buildings, nothing survives of the small cluster of commercial buildings north of the station.

Substantial detached villas, intermixed with the corn mills of the cramming industry, began to appear in the period 1880-1900. On the north side of the High Street these had spacious grounds incorporating conifers from the prerailway examples. Although the grounds and most of the villas have been swept away, Albion

House and Pine Cottage, Mutton Hall Hill, are surviving, but comparatively modest, examples. The last two decades of the 19th century also saw new development begin south-east of the station, in the Hailsham Road and Alexandra Road area. Here the housing was mixed, including detached villas, more numerous semidetached villas, and short terraces (typically of four or five houses). With no commercial centre to the town at this date, this area established its own shops, post office, pub, and chapels.



Fig. 16. Late 19th-century Derby House, Hailsham Road.

In the period from 1900-14, the High Street emerged as a commercial centre to the scattered town. Villas were built on the north side of the street, but more densely packed street frontage buildings appeared on this side of the road in the area between the modern fire station and New Parade. The southern parts of Cherwell Road (this with the new agricultural hall: now demolished) and Streatfield Road were set out. The commercial nature of the new building is evident in surviving examples, such as the purpose-built bank at 46 High Street (now Barclay's Bank). The south side of the High Street remained largely undeveloped, with the Union Church (Congregational and Baptist: 1899-1901) being a notable exception: just off the south side of the High Street, in 1909 the Recreation Hall was built next to the Heathfield Hotel. The eastwards continuation of the High Street, Mutton Hall Hill, saw more infill at its upper end, with a new corn mill (since demolished) and housing (such as the detached villas, Cabinda, Appledore and Stanstead). During this period, the cluster of development on the Hailsham Road remained detached from the High Street/Mutton Hall Hill area and continued to see more building, mostly within the existing extent. Despite attracting new non-residential buildings, such as the Drill Hall on Station Road, it failed to develop its commercial function to the degree of the newly named High Street.



Fig. 17. Barclays Bank, 46 High Street (Edwardian).



Fig. 18. National Westminster Bank, 19 High Street (1930s).

4.3 The town 1914-2008 (Map 1)

4.3.1 Buildings and topography

The inter-war period saw the southern side of the High Street developed. In addition to shops, there were specialized buildings such as the purpose-built bank at 19 High Street (now the National Westminster Bank), the post office (25 High Street), and a cinema (now part of the rear of the car showrooms at 89 High Street). To the east, the 1920s and 1930s saw new housing (in some cases now commercialized, in others still residential) filling in gaps on plots between the dense High Street frontages and the earlier development towards the top of Mutton Hall Hill. This saw subdivision of most of the remaining large coniferous grounds on the north side of the main street. To the north of these plots. development on Firwood Rise saw the remaining parts of the common divided up for detached houses. More significantly, the inter-war years saw development east of the station on Marshland Farm, utilizing existing streets of Marshlands Lane and Hailsham Road, but also introducing new roads. Combining small detached houses and semi-detached houses, this went a large way to infilling the gap between the two foci of Hailsham Road and High Street/Mutton Hall Hill. At the same time as the core of the new town was consolidating. Heathfield expanded outwards beyond its pre-First World War boundaries (and outside the

EUS study area), with significant ribbon development along the Hailsham Road at Sandy Cross and closer to the town centre at Tilsmore and at Waldron Thorns.

Post-1945 development has focused on housing estates on the south and west of the town. Tilsmore Wood and Markly Wood have prevented major expansion on the north side and Heathfield Park on the east side. Near the town centre, housing has largely completed the Marshlands Farm area infill, which, together with development south of the former railway station (including the semi-detached and terraced housing of Waldron Thorns council estate of 1949-50), has removed the last vestiges of the bifocal plan of the earlier town. Within the EUS study area (largely defined by the c.1900 extent of the town) post-1945 development has been in part infilling of remaining open plots of land and by demolition of earlier large villas and subdivision of their ground, most notably north of the High Street.

As the town has expanded since 1914 the

mixture of housing, retail and industrial properties that marked the scattered development of the earlier years was succeeded by more obvious economic zoning. Although the Hailsham Road area has retained a cluster of shops, the High Street retail area has been much more successful. Construction of New Parade over the street frontage of the one surviving large villa (Risingholme) has been followed by the building of supermarkets with adjacent car parks on the site of the Heathfield Hotel (demolished 1983) and at the west end of the High Street. With chicken farming failing to revive in Heathfield after the Second World War, the scattered industrial buildings of corn mills and supporting trades (such as saw mills) didn't so much relocate as simply disappear. Although no new industry has replaced chicken cramming, modest industrial units have been concentrated in one area, on the site of the former railway station (closed 1968) and on vacant land on the opposite side of Station Road.



Fig. 19. New Parade, High Street.

5 STATEMENT OF HISTORIC URBAN CHARACTER

5.1 Town summary

5.1.1 Historic environment overview

Although the historic interest of Heathfield lies almost solely in its origins as a new town of the railway age, surprisingly little survives from the two decades after the arrival of the railway (1880): although the railway station survives, there is little evidence of the chicken cramming industry. However, some late 19th-century housing and, especially, considerable numbers of early 20th-century buildings do survive, so that the two foci for the early town (High Street/Mutton Hall Hill and the Hailsham Road area) remain discernible in the standing buildings. Pre-urban houses formerly scattered around the common have survived the coming of the town, although there are very few of these within the EUS study area. With such late origins it is of little surprise that there has been no archaeological investigation.

5.1.2 Historic environment designations (Map 4)

There are four listed buildings in the EUS study area, all of which are Grade II. Of these, one is 17th century; two are 18th century; and one is early 19th century.⁹⁷

Heathfield does not have a Conservation Area.
There are no Scheduled Monuments in the town.

5.1.3 Historic building materials

With the late origins of the town there is little in the way of vernacular architecture. The early part of Half Moon Place, of c.1700, is timber framed, with brick thereafter predominating: with numerous local brickfields in the 18th to 20th centuries it is important to recognize that many of the pre and post-railway brick buildings utilize this local material.⁹⁸

5.2 Historic Character Types

5.2.1 Historic Character Types and chronology (Maps 5-7)

Historic Character Types (HCTs) for Sussex EUS		
Lane/road [includes all historic routes]		
Major road scheme [modern ring roads, motorways etc.]		
Bridge/causeway		

Regular burgage plots			
Irregular historic plots [i.e. pre-1800]			
Proto-urban			
Vacant [reverted from built-up to fields etc.]			
Market place			
Church/churchyard [i.e. parish]			
Cemetery			
Religious house [abbey, priory, convent etc.]			
Great house			
Castle			
Town defences			
Other fortification			
Barracks			
School/college			
Public			
Farmstead/barn			
Mill			
Suburb [estates and individual houses]			
Retail and commercial [i.e. post-1800]			
Extractive industry [e.g. sand pit, brickfield]			
Heavy industry [e.g. steel or automotive industry]			
Light industry [e.g. industrial estates]			
Utility			
Quay/wharf [inc. boatyards]			
Harbour/marina/dock			
Station, sidings and track			
Inland water			
Orchard			
Market garden [inc. nursery]			
Allotments			
Race course			
Sports field [inc. stadia, courts, centres etc.]			
Park			
Informal parkland [e.g. small civic areas, large grounds]			
Seafront [piers, promenades etc.]			
Beach/cliffs			
-			

Table 1. Sussex EUS Historic Character Types.

Historic Character Types have been developed in the Sussex EUS to describe areas of common character by reference to generic types found across all 41 towns. Historic function is often the key determinant of character type, hence the term 'Historic Character Types' and the timedepth implicit in many of the types in Table 1 (e.g. regular burgage plots). The types also reflect the character of these towns, and, thus, they are different from those that would be applied nationally or to another county.

The Historic Character Types have been mapped to areas within the towns (polygons in the Geographical Information System that underpins the Sussex EUS). Whilst character type can prove consistent throughout a large area (for example, across a late 20th-century

housing estate), different historic use of part of that area has been used as a basis for subdivision. This is to allow the application of the types in Table 1 to the mapped polygons throughout the 15 periods of the **EUS chronology** (Table 2). This means that for any area within the town, or mapped polygon on the Geographical Information System, both the present Historic Character Type and the past land use(s) are defined.

Period	Date		
Period 1	500,000BC-AD42		
Period 2	43-409		
Period 3	410-949		
Period 4	950-1065		
Period 5	1066-1149		
Period 6	1150-1349		
Period 7	1350-1499		
Period 8	1500-1599		
Period 9	1600-1699		
Period 10	1700-1799		
Period 11	1800-1840		
Period 12	1841-1880		
Period 13	1881-1913		
Period 14	1914-1945		
Period 15	1946-present		

Table 2. Sussex EUS chronology.

This approach gives time-depth to the mapbased character component of the Sussex EUS, and is structured to take account of both upstanding and buried physical evidence of the past. It enables the generation of maps (e.g. Maps 5-7) showing the changing land use of the urban area throughout the history of each town, and, through use of the Geographical Information System developed as part of this assessment, for simple interrogation of any area in the town to show all its known past land uses.

5.2.2 Historic Character Types in Heathfield (Maps 5-7)

Although Historic Character Types represent county-wide types, modern Heathfield is characterized by its particular concentration of some types and the comparative rarity, or absence, of others. For example, the identification of large areas of *suburbs* reflects the late and largely residential nature of the town.

5.3 Historic Urban Character Areas (Maps 9 and 10)

5.3.1 Defining Historic Urban Character

Areas (HUCAs)

Whereas Historic Character Types have been applied to areas of the Sussex towns with consistent visible character and historical development – and are mapped across the whole history for each town – **Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs)** represent meaningful areas of the modern town. Although similar areas are found in many towns, HUCAs are unique, can include components of different history and antiquity, and usually represent amalgamation of several Historic Character Types.

Thus, HUCA 3 in Heathfield combines three Historic Character Types that represent *irregular historic plots* dating from Period 10 (1700-1799), *suburb* from Period 11 (1800-40) onwards, and *utility* from Period 13 (1881-1913). Combining this variety into a single HUCA called *Mutton Hall Hill* reflects the largely coherent character of the area today. This coherence renders HUCAs suitable spatial units for describing the historic environment of the EUS towns, for assessing their archaeological potential, Historic Environment Value and for linking to research questions.

Some components of the towns are not included as HUCAs: roads (other than those that were built as part of a particular development) and waterways are kept separate as they frequently antedate surviving buildings or the known urban activity.

5.3.2 Archaeological potential

Whilst the nature and extent of areas to which Historic Character Types have been applied is closely related to the survival of buried archaeology, this assessment considers the archaeological potential at the larger scale of the HUCAs. The reasons are twofold: first, the typically smaller scale of areas of common Historic Character Type could misleadingly imply that high, or even low, archaeological potential is precisely confined, or that archaeological value is exactly coterminous with the edge of specific features (standing or buried); and, second, most Sussex towns have had insufficient archaeological investigation to support this precision. For this reason, too, there is no grading or ranking of archaeological potential. Rather, the summary of archaeological potential is used to inform the overall (graded) assessment of Historic Environment Value of each HUCA (see below).

When considering the archaeological potential of the towns, it is important to recognize that

archaeology often survives 19th and 20th-century development and that it is misleading to assume complete destruction. Also, whilst pre-urban archaeology (such as prehistoric and Romano-British features and finds located in the Heathfield area) tells us little about the towns themselves, it contributes to wider archaeological research.

In assessing the likelihood of buried archaeology within areas in the towns there has been consideration of the potential for archaeology 'buried', or hidden, within later buildings and structures, as well as that for below-ground features.

5.3.3 Historic Environment Value (Map 10)

The Historic Environment Value (HEV) of each HUCA is assessed here, and expressed as a value from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Such values are iniquitous to some and always subjective, but here provide a necessary means of consistently and intelligently differentiating (for the purposes of conservation) the upstanding fabric, boundaries and archaeology that form the historic urban environment. The Historic Environment Value (HEV) of each HUCA is based on assessment of:

- Townscape rarity
- · Time-depth or antiquity
- · Completeness.

Lesser additional considerations in the assessment comprise:

- Visibility
- · Historic association.

The full methodology for assessing Historic Environment Value forms part of the annexe to the historic environment management guidance for Wealden District.

5.3.4 Vulnerability

The vulnerability of each HUCA is also considered, although many future threats cannot be anticipated. These brief analyses mean that this Statement of Historic Urban Character can be used to focus conservation guidance.

5.3.5 Research questions

Where relevant, reference is made to questions in the **Research Framework** for Heathfield (below, section 6). Where possible, this referencing links these key questions to specific HUCAs, helping ensure that any investigation of

the historic environment (such as that as a condition of development, under PPG15 or PPG16) is properly focused.

5.3.6 Heathfield's Historic Urban Character Areas (Maps 9 and 10)

HUCA 1 High Street (HEV 1)

HUCA 1 is one of the early commercial nuclei of the town: the area combines the High Street itself and, leading off this, the northern end of Station Road together with the northern side of Station Approach. Today the area is largely commercial, combining retail outlets, banks, estate agents and restaurants mostly located on densely built-up street frontages. Although there are no listed buildings, the area does preserve some of the earlier urban architecture of Heathfield in the form of very late Victorian and, especially, Edwardian buildings on the north side of the High Street. Two non-commercial buildings also survive from this period: the brickbuilt Union Church (Congregational and Baptist) on the corner of Station Road and High Street (1899-1901); and the State Hall (formerly the Recreation Hall: built 1909) in Station Road.

The absence of any known non-urban archaeology and the high density of 19th and 20th-century development (and redevelopment) suggests low **archaeological potential**.

The quality of the late 19th and predominant 20th-century architecture, the absence of many historic buildings and boundaries, and the low archaeological potential combine to give this HUCA a **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 1

The Historic Environment Value of the area means that its **vulnerability** is low, with the main threat being the loss of this group of unlisted 19th and early 20th-century commercial buildings through redevelopment.

Broad, or Heathfield-wide, **research questions** only apply to this area.

HUCA 2 Station (HEV 2)

HUCA 2 is centred on the site of the former railway station (closed 1968), together with the area formerly occupied by sidings and the goods shed. Today the area houses an industrial estate on the site of the station platforms and sidings, with the track bed to the south now re-used as the Cuckoo Trail and an associated car park. The tile-hung and brick station building (now a shop) itself is a key survival of the railway, which arrived in 1880. To the north, the entrance to the

tunnel survives and, adjacent to the station, the road bridge over the former track. Two pairs of semi-detached railway cottages (1-4 Station Cottages, Station Approach) also survive, but are Edwardian rather than part of the initial building. To the south of modern industrial estate a disused corrugated-iron clad building represents the most important monument to the Heathfield's chicken cramming past: it is a late 19th-century corn mill, located immediately adjacent to the railway line. There are no listed buildings.

The absence of any known non-urban archaeology, and the density of 19th and 20th-century development (and redevelopment) suggests low **archaeological potential**.

The quality of the late 19th and 20th-century architecture (with key survivals in the form of the railway station and the corn mill) and the low archaeological potential combine to give this HUCA a **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 2.

The Historic Environment Value of the area means that its **vulnerability** is low, with the main threat being the further loss of unlisted 19th-century buildings and structures (especially those related to the railway and, especially vulnerable as now disused, the former corn mill).

Broad, or Heathfield-wide, **research questions** only apply to this area.

HUCA 3 Mutton Hall Hill (HEV 1)

HUCA 3 lies east of the retail centre of the modern town, and comprises the main east-west road of Mutton Hall Hill and roads leading off it (such as Tower Street). Despite some scattered building before 1840, and early, largely terraced, housing on Tower Street by c.1875, like the rest of the town it essentially developed after the railway arrived in 1880, with a mixture of corn mills (for the chicken cramming industry), a saw mill and housing. With the demise of the chicken cramming industry, the area has become almost entirely residential, although there are a few businesses (mainly on the Mutton Hall Hill frontage). The Roman Catholic church of St Catherine was built in the late 20th century. Although the corn mills have been demolished, some of the late 19th-century villas survive, although the substantial grounds have been subdivided and redeveloped with 20th-century detached houses, bungalows and blocks of flats. There is one listed building: Mill View and Vine Cottage, Mutton Hall Hill, which is a brick-built house of the early 19th-century (Grade II).

The absence of any known non-urban

archaeology and the high density of 19th and, especially, 20th-century development (and redevelopment) suggest low **archaeological potential**.

The quality of the late 19th and predominant 20th-century architecture, the absence of many historic buildings and boundaries, and the low archaeological potential combine to give this HUCA a **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 1.

The Historic Environment Value of the area means that its **vulnerability** is low, with the main threat being the loss of the surviving unlisted 19th and early 20th-century villas.

Broad, or Heathfield-wide, **research questions** only apply to this area.

HUCA 4 Hailsham Road (HEV 1)

HUCA 4 lies south-east of the retail centre of the modern town and is centred on the Hailsham Road around and south of its junction with Station Road. Development began here in the last two decades of the 19th century, with detached villas, more numerous semi-detached villas, and short terraces (typically of four or five houses). With no commercial centre to the town in the High Street area at this date, this HUCA established its own shops, post office, pub, and chapels: the latter comprise a Gilbert memorial chapel (i.e. Independent) founded in Alexandra Road in 1886 (remodelled in 1909 and subsequently), and an Anglican chapel of ease (now St Richard's church) in 1912-15. There is one listed building: The Glade, Hailsham Road, a brick building with tile-hanging, probably dating from the 18th century (Grade II).

The absence of any known non-urban archaeology, and the density of 19th and 20th-century development (and redevelopment) suggests low **archaeological potential**.

The quality of the late 19th and predominant 20th-century architecture, the absence of many historic buildings and boundaries, and the low archaeological potential combine to give this HUCA a **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 1.

The Historic Environment Value of the area means that its **vulnerability** is low, with the main threat being the loss of the surviving unlisted 19th and early 20th-century villas, shops and chapels.

Broad, or Heathfield-wide, **research questions** only apply to this area.

HUCA 5 Burwash Road (HEV 2)

HUCA 5 is on the eastern edge of the modern town and is largely of a non-urban character. It developed as an area of scattered pre-1840 and, mostly, pre-1800 development on the top of Heathfield Down adjacent to the principal route (Burwash Road). Today the area has retained something of its pre-railway town scattered form, with buildings in extensive grounds which include some fields. At the eastern extremity, next to the Crown Inn, lies the modern market, with adjacent timber yard and council depot. There are two listed buildings, both Grade II. Half Moon Place, Burwash Road, was built as a cottage on the Down, and gained its name from its later use as an ale house or inn. The earliest part of the timber-framed house dates from c.1700, but contains much re-used medieval material, including two crown-posts. North Down, Newick Lane, is a tile-hung house of probable 18th-century date. Redwood and High Timbers, Burwash Road, is an early 19th-century brickbuilt house, apparently now de-listed (formerly Grade II). Although it appears to have been wholly rebuilt in the mid-20th century, the Crown Inn was established by the early 19th century, possibly in the 18th century.

The absence of any known non-urban archaeology, and pockets of and 20th-century development suggest limited **archaeological potential**.

The quality of the late architecture, ranging from

c.1700 to the 20th century, the absence of many historic boundaries, and the limited archaeological potential combine to give this HUCA a **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 2.

The **vulnerability** of this HUCA is medium, with the main threats being the loss or alteration of the unlisted historic buildings, and infill of the open spaces that currently retain something of the character of the scattered development that preceded the building of the railway-age town.

Broad, or Heathfield-wide, **research questions** only apply to this area.

5.3.7 Summary table of Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) for Heathfield

Table 3 summarizes the assessments made in the individual Historic Urban Character Area descriptions (above). It provides a simplified comparison of the assessments across different parts of the town, and helps to draw out key points. As such it supports the preparation of guidance for the town (see section 1.3).

The table shows how Historic Character Types combine into more recognizable Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs). It summarizes the archaeological potential that, along with historic buildings and boundaries, contributes towards the assessment of the Historic Environment Value of each HUCA. The assessment of vulnerability of each HUCA is important for developing guidance.

Summary of assessment of Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) for Heathfield							
Historic Character Types (HCTs)	Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA)	Archaeological potential	Historic Environment Value (HEV)	Vulnerability			
Retail and commercial Suburb	1. High Street	Low	1	Low			
Station, sidings and track Suburb Light industry	2. Station	Low	2	Low			
Irregular historic plots Suburb Utility	3. Mutton Hall Hill	Low	1	Low			
Suburb	4. Hailsham Road	Low	1	Low			
Irregular historic plots	5. Burwash Road	Limited	2	Medium			

Table 3. Summary of assessment of Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) for Heathfield.

6 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

6.1 Pre-urban activity

Development pressure and opportunities for developer funding mean that archaeological excavations in the town, or prior to expansion of the town, are more likely to occur than in the surrounding area. Thus, archaeological excavations in Heathfield should address:

RQ1: What was the nature of the palaeoenvironment (ancient environment), and the prehistoric, Roman, and medieval human activity in the area?

6.2 Origins and development

There has been little analysis of the historic environment of the town. Key questions include:

RQ2: What was the socio-economic make-up of the early occupants of the town, how did this change over time, and is this reflected in the architecture of the town?

RQ3: What was nature of the economy of the area immediately before the railway arrived, how did this influence the development of the town, and how did this change as a result of the success of the town?

RQ4: What were the factors that determined the scattered or polyfocal plan of the town?

RQ5: What has been the influence of the preurban houses and farms (and their owners and occupants), and the pre-railway chicken cramming industry on the development of the town?

RQ6: What determined – and limited – the socioeconomic change of different areas of the town in the late 19th and 20th centuries?

RQ7: To what degree has the development of Heathfield been influenced by urban and distinctly non-urban (or suburban) aspirations?

7 Notes

¹ The 41 towns of the Sussex EUS are: Alfriston, Arundel, Battle, Bexhill, Bognor Regis, Bramber, Brighton, Burgess Hill, Crawley, Crowborough, Cuckfield, Ditchling, Eastbourne, East Grinstead, Hailsham, Hastings, Haywards Heath, Heathfield, Henfield, Horsham, Hove, Lewes, Lindfield, Littlehampton, Mayfield, Midhurst, Newhaven, Peacehaven, Petworth, Pevensey, Pulborough, Robertsbridge, Rotherfield, Rye, Seaford, Shoreham, Steyning, Storrington, Uckfield, Wadhurst and Worthing. Chichester and Winchelsea are omitted as they are the subjects of more intensive studies.

² The Character of West Sussex Partnership Programme is led by West Sussex County Council in conjunction with the borough and district councils, AONB agencies and stakeholders. The main aims of the partnership are to produce a range of interlocking characterization studies; to produce planning and land management guidance; and to raise public and community awareness of character as a vital and attractive ingredient of the environment of the county. The full range of characterization studies comprise:

Landscape Character Assessments and Landscape Strategy for West Sussex (2005).

Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) of Sussex (2003-8)

Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) (2004-8).

Intensive Urban Survey of Chichester/Fishbourne (2005-6) (Chichester District Council).

Local Distinctiveness Study of West Sussex (2004-6).

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- ⁴ Short, B., "The Art and Craft of Chicken Cramming": Poultry in the Weald of Sussex 1850-1950', *The Agricultural History Review* 30 (1982), 17-30.
- ⁵ For example, the Rother at Roberstbridge was unsuited to navigation in 1542-74 as iron from Robertsbridge forge was carted to Bodiam before being loaded on to barges: Cleere, H., and Crossley, D., *The Iron Industry of the Weald* (2nd edtn., 1995), 159.
- ⁶ Johnston, G. D., *Abstract of Turnpike Acts relating to Sussex* (transcript at SAS, *c*.1948), 4, 8 and 18.
- ⁷ Farrant, J., 'Growth of Communications 1840-1914', in Leslie, K. and Short, B. (eds.) *An Historical Atlas of Sussex* (1999), 80-1; Griffiths, I. L., 'Road and rail in Sussex', in Geography Editorial Committee (eds.), *Sussex: Environment, Landscape and Society* (1983), 238-9.
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- ¹¹ Mawer, A, & Stenton, F.M., *The Place-names of Sussex* (1929-30; reprinted 2001), 463-4.
- 12 Gardiner, M. F., Medieval Settlement and Society in the

Eastern Sussex Weald (unpubl. Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1995), 80-3; Gelling, M. & Cole, A., *The Landscape of Place-names* (2000), 262-79.

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- ¹⁴ Salzman, L. F., Victoria County History 9 (1937). 203.
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- ¹⁹ Letters, S., Gazetteer of Markets and Fairs in England and Wales to 1516 (Centre for Metropolitan History, 1998-2007: on-line at http://www.history.ac.uk/cmh/gaz/gazweb2.html); Pryce R. Heathfield Park, A private estate and a Wealden town (1996), 16-17
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- ²³ Hudson, W. H. (ed.), 'The three earliest subsidies for the County of Sussex in the years 1296, 1327, 1332', *SRS* 10, 10, 218-19, 315.
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- ⁴¹ Cooper, J. H., 'A Religious Census of Sussex in 1676', SAC 45 (1902), 145.
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⁷⁹ Ibid., 30, 32.

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⁸⁷ Pers. comm.. Sue Hilton.

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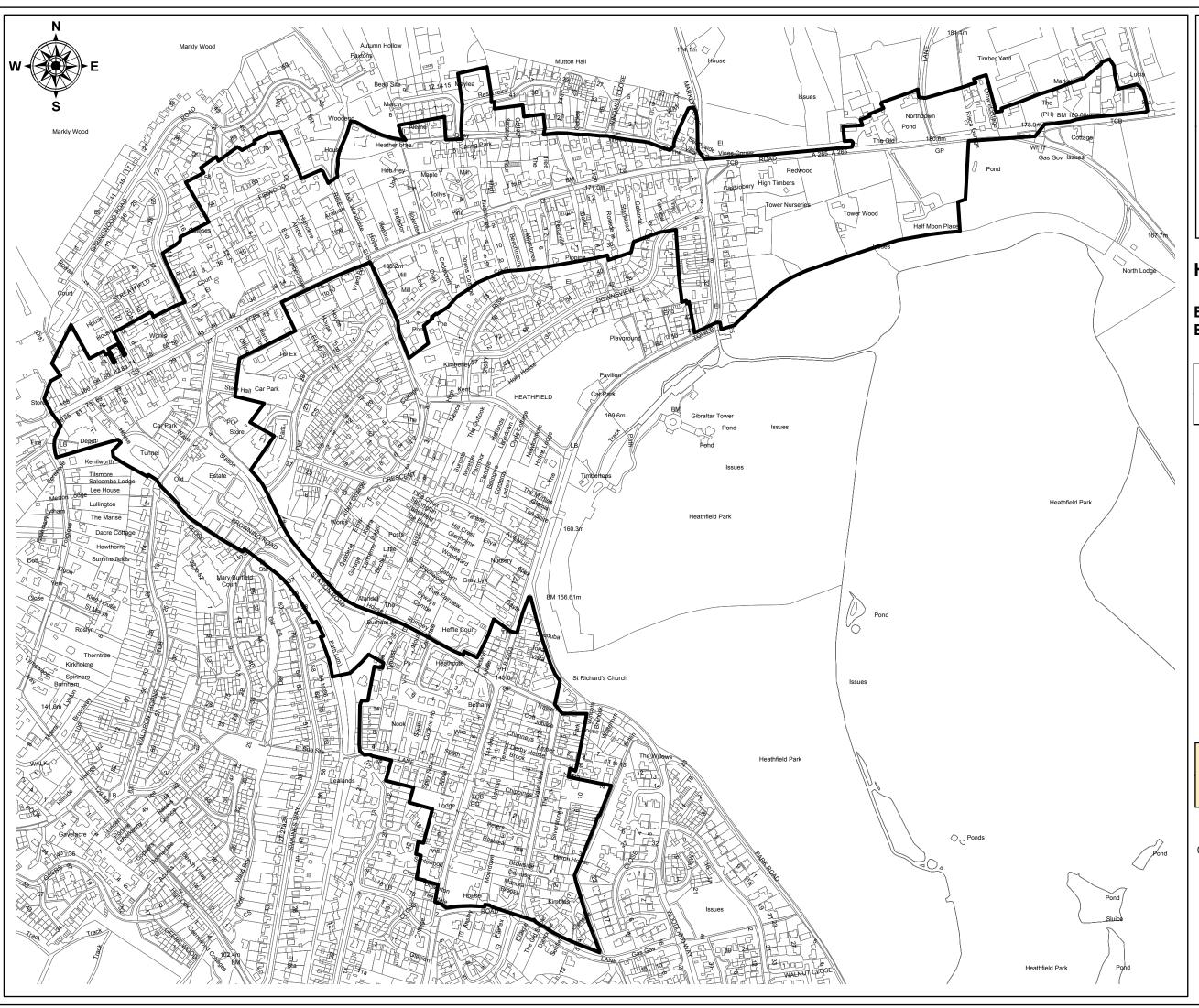
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⁹⁷ Listed building data is drawn from the statutory lists produced by English Heritage, but has been amended – especially in regard to the dating – during the Sussex EUS. The GIS data prepared during the Sussex EUS contains the full references to the sources for revised dates: in several cases these come from archaeological surveys undertaken by Barbara and David Martin, and the documentary tenement analysis undertaken by Christopher Whittick.

⁹⁸ Beswick, M., *Brickmaking in Sussex: A History and Gazetteer* (2nd edtn. 2001), 143-4.











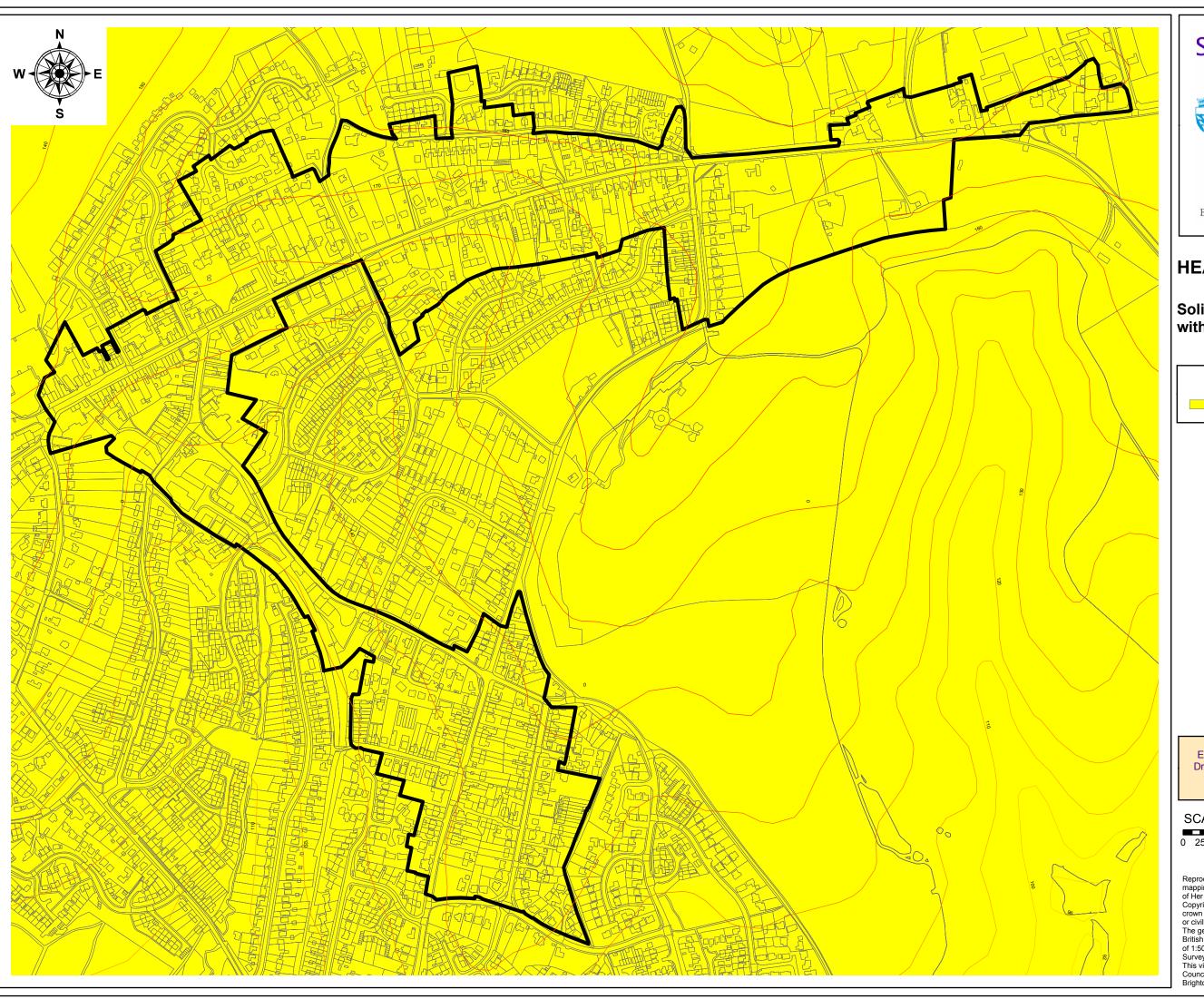
Extent of Heathfield EUS study area

KEY■EUS boundary

EUS research and mapping: Dr Roland B Harris FSA MIFA May 2008

SCALE 1:5,000

0 20 40 80 120 160



Sussex EUS





ENGLISH HERITAGE

HEATHFIELD MAP 2

Solid geology with 10m contours

KEY

ASHDOWN FORMATION

EUS research and mapping: Dr Roland B Harris FSA MIFA May 2008

SCALE 1:5,000

0 25 50 100 150 200



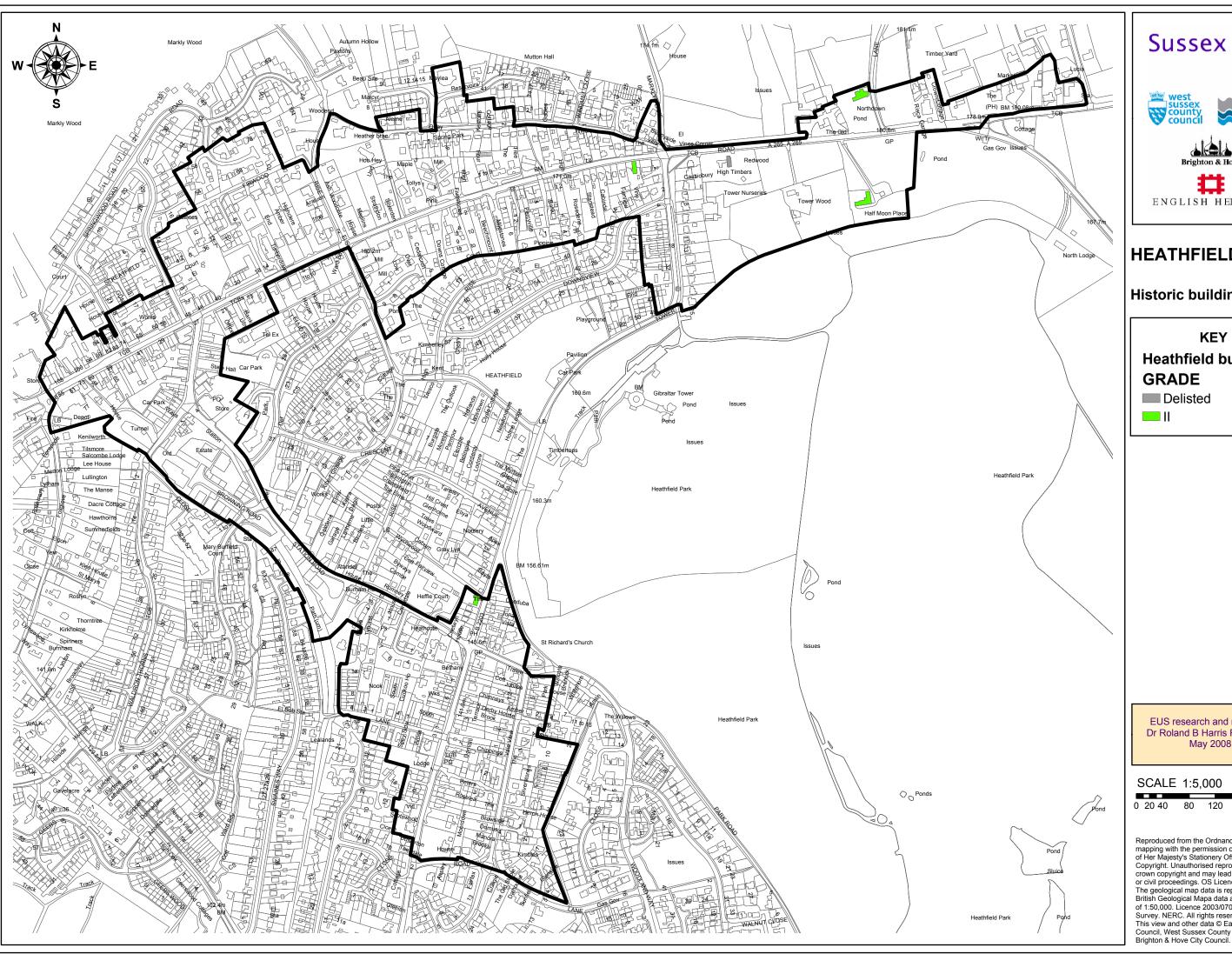


OS 1st series 25" (1875)

EUS research and mapping: Dr Roland B Harris FSA MIFA May 2008

SCALE 1:5,000

0 20 40 80 120 160









ENGLISH HERITAGE

HEATHFIELD MAP 4

Historic buildings

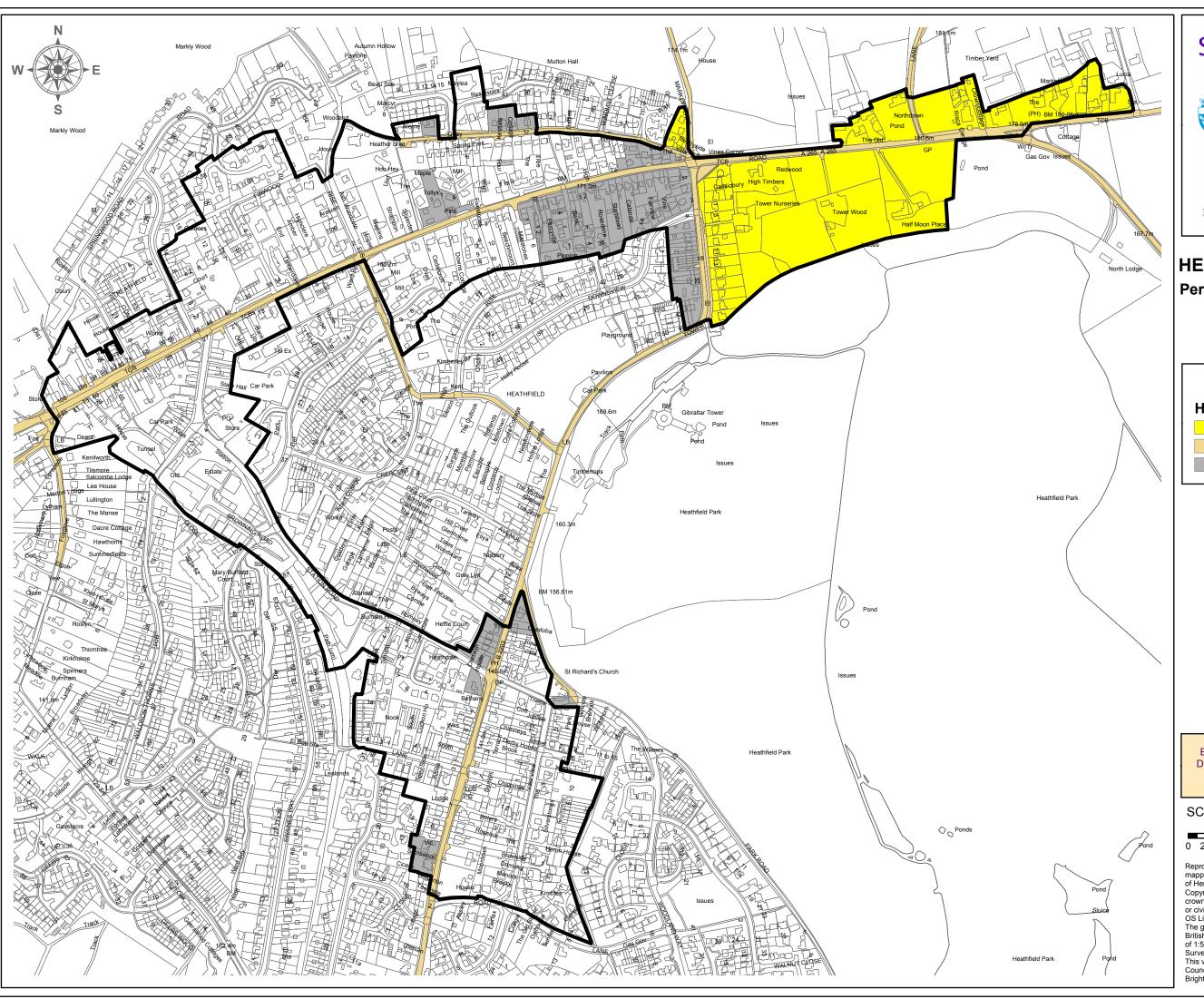
KEY Heathfield buildings **GRADE**

Delisted

EUS research and mapping: Dr Roland B Harris FSA MIFA May 2008

SCALE 1:5,000

0 20 40 80 120 160











HEATHFIELD MAP 5 Period 12 (1841-1880)

KEY

HCT

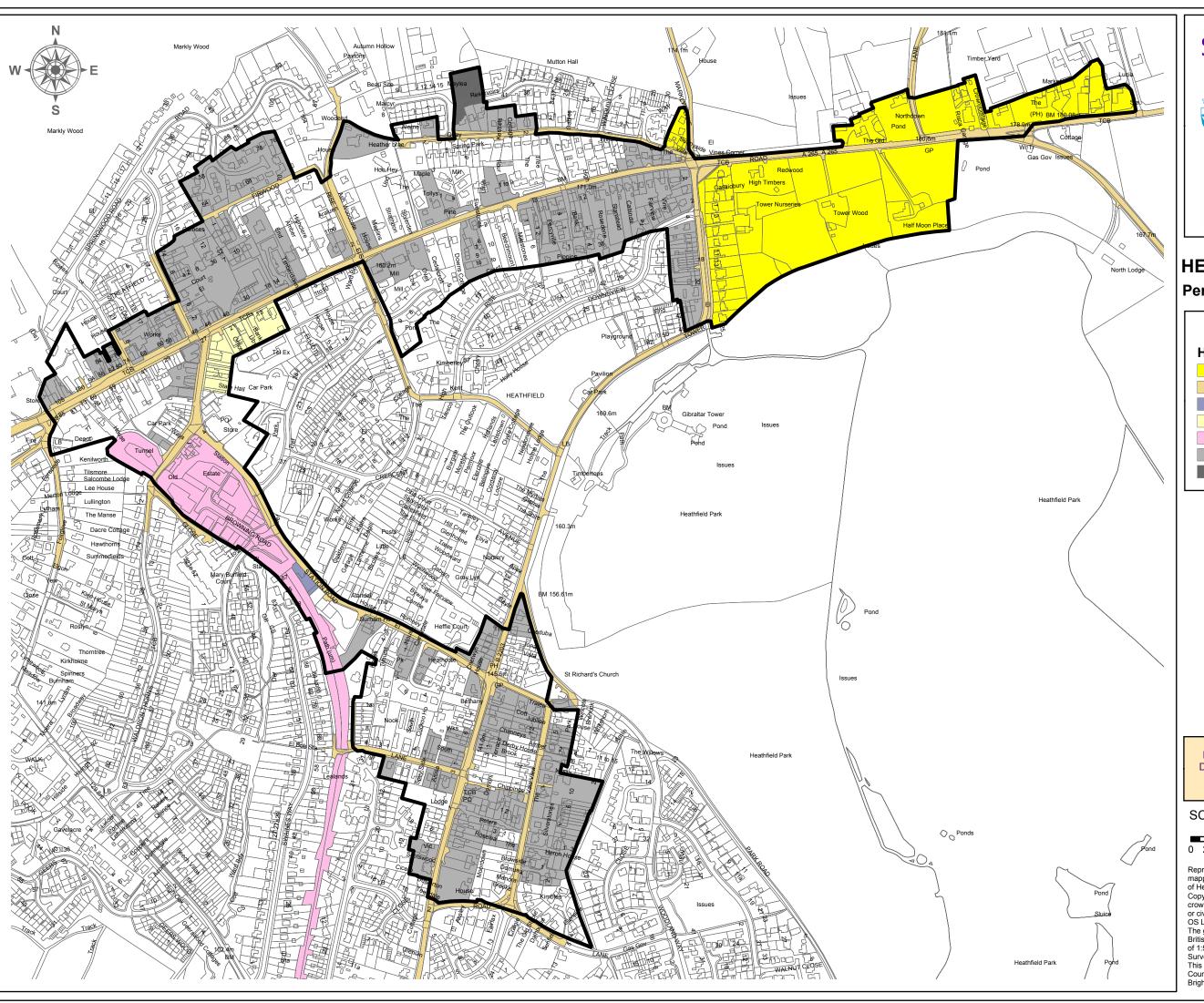
Irregular historic plots Lane/road

Suburb

EUS research and mapping: Dr Roland B Harris FSA MIFA May 2008

SCALE 1:5,000

0 25 50 100









ENGLISH HERITAGE

HEATHFIELD MAP 6 Period 13 (1881-1914)

KEY

HCT

Irregular historic plots

Lane/road

Light industry

Retail and commercial

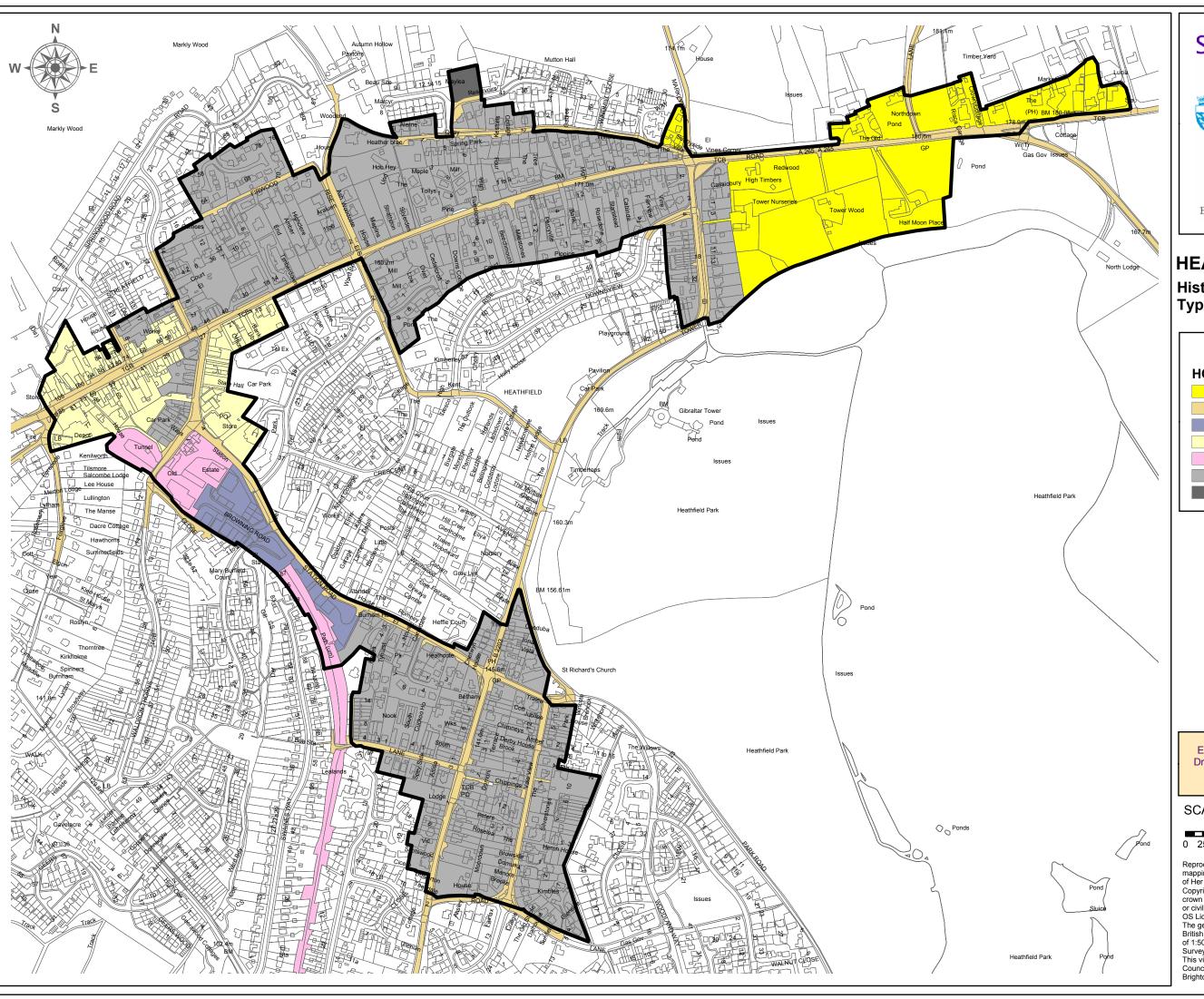
Station, sidings and track

Suburb Utility

EUS research and mapping: Dr Roland B Harris FSA MIFA May 2008

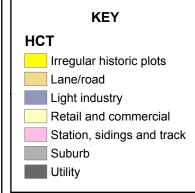
SCALE 1:5,000

0 25 50 100



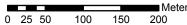


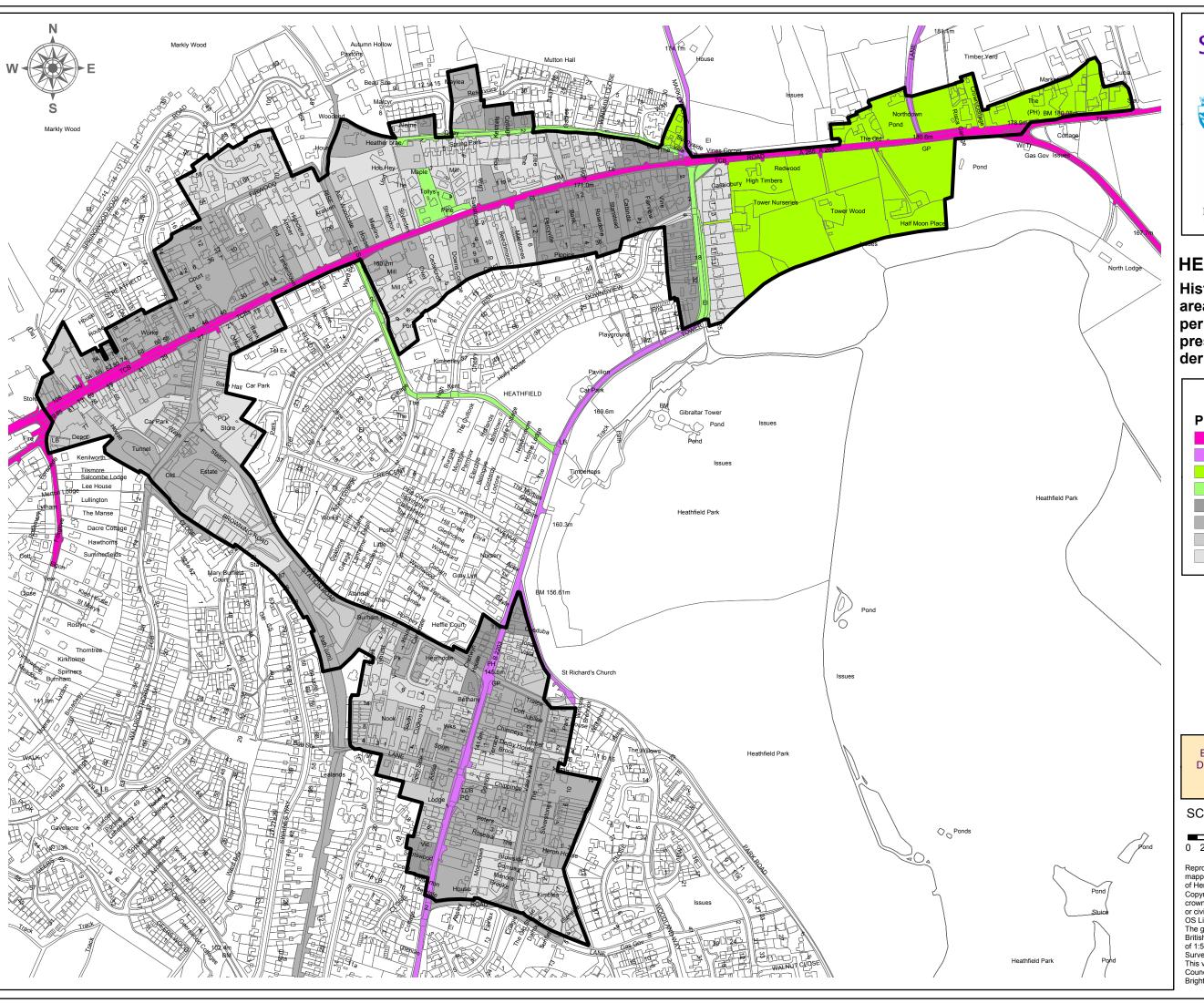
Historic Character Types (2008)



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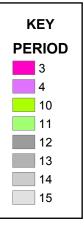
SCALE 1:5,000





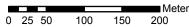


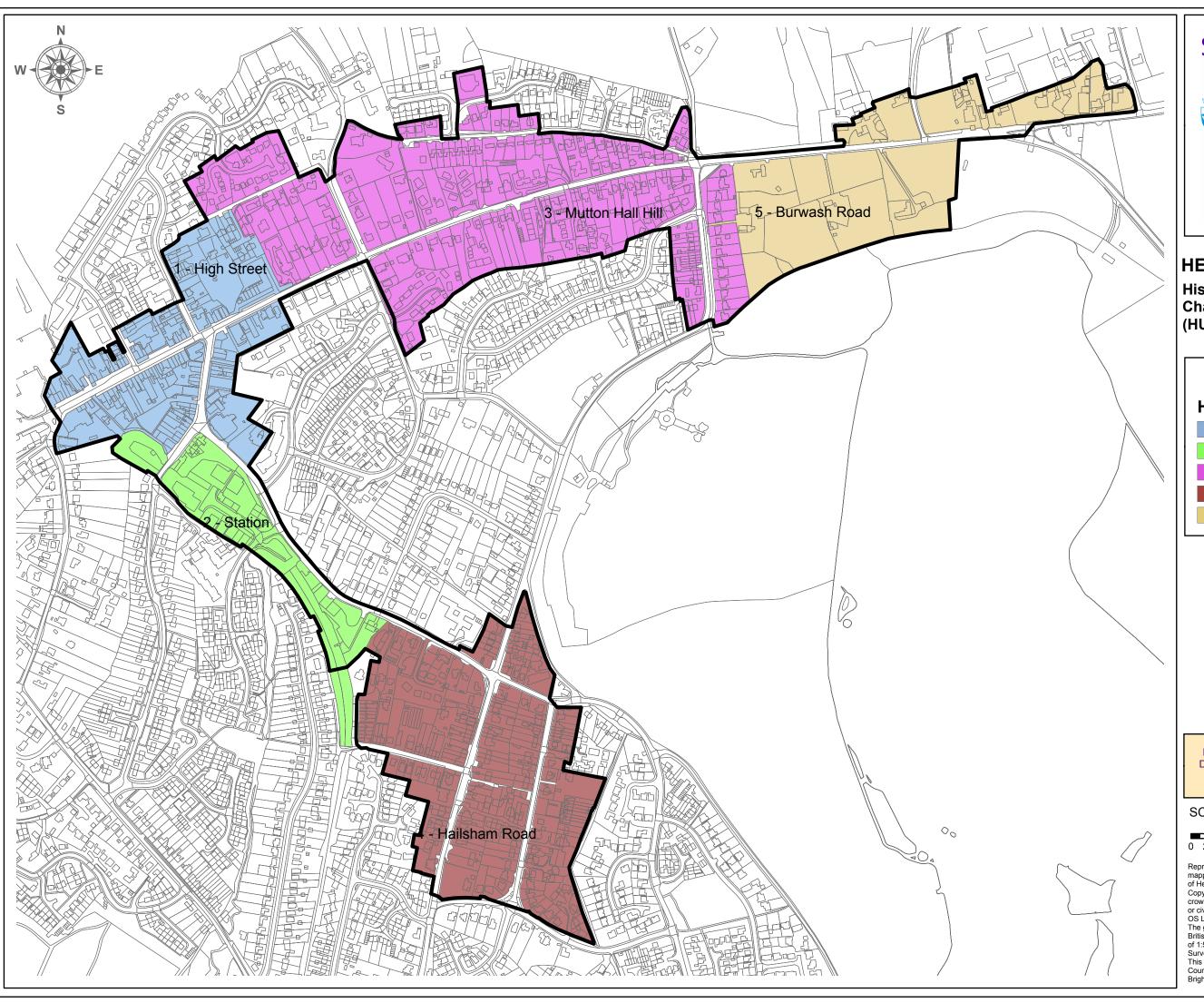
Historic Character Type areas showing principal period from which present character is derived



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SCALE 1:5,000















Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs)

KEY

HUCA

1 - High Street

2 - Station

3 - Mutton Hall Hill

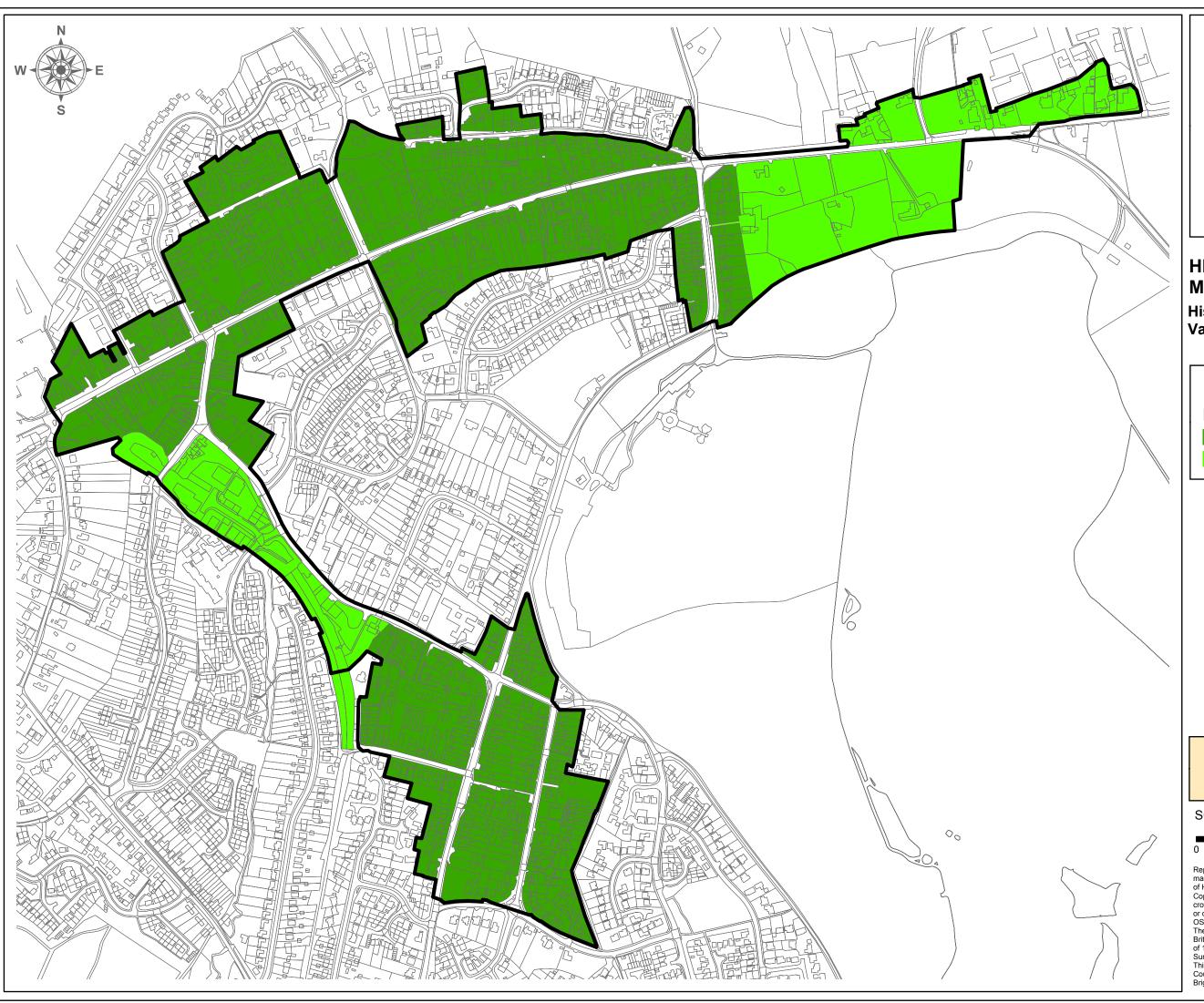
4 - Hailsham Road

5 - Burwash Road

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SCALE 1:5,000

0 25 50 150 100



Sussex EUS







HEATHFIELD MAP 10

Historic Environment Value (HEV)



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SCALE 1:5,000

