

Rye

Historic Character Assessment Report

September 2009



Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (EUS)

Roland B Harris

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in association with Rother 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 Rye. It is part of the Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (henceforth Sussex EUS) that examines 41 towns across the ancient county.¹

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, 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 pre-urban 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 respective West Sussex County Council and 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 pre-urban archaeology of the town.

1.4.2 History

The history of Rye 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.

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 non-listed) and the topography, the latter drawing on large-scale maps of Rye from 1666/7 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 Rye 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

Rye has been the subject of considerable historical interest and historic buildings study, but only limited subsurface archaeological investigation. 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

Rye has been the subject of several local histories, but there is no single authoritative and scholarly work that explores the history of the town from its origins to the present day. Particularly relevant works for this report include the *Victoria County History*, published in 1937;³ the study of the fishing industry by **A J F Dulley**;⁴ **Graham Mayhew**'s research into Tudor Rye;⁵ and **Stephen Hipkin**'s studies of the 17th-century town.⁶

1.5.2 Archaeology

Although of little archaeological interest until recently, Rye has become the subject of increasingly frequent investigation. Much of The Strand quayside development predates this, and most of the recent archaeological investigations have been modest in scale. Publication has been limited to:

1-3 Tower Street – 1979⁷

The as yet unpublished sites relating to the EUS study area comprise:

Austin Friary – 1991⁸

Central Garage, Cinque Ports Street – 1993⁹

Market Road – 1994¹⁰

Gun Garden – 1997¹¹

Winter's Dairy, Cinque Ports Street – 1998¹²

Old Market Dairy, Cinque Ports Street – 1999¹³

Rye Lodge Hotel, East Cliff – 1999¹⁴

Market Road – 1999¹⁵

Ypres Tower/Rye Museum – 2000¹⁶

59 & 59a, Cinque Ports Street – 2001¹⁷

Blackman's Yard, Wish Street – 2002¹⁸

Central Garage, Cinque Ports Street – 2003¹⁹

Ypres Tower – 2007²⁰

Tower House, Turkey Cock Lane – 2008²¹

12 Church Square – 2008²²

The **East Sussex Historic Environment Record** (HER) database has been invaluable for providing the pre-urban archaeological context of the area.

1.5.3 Historic buildings

The evident medieval origins of Rye and the good survival of historic buildings have prompted studies of the town's architecture. Most significant have been the numerous surveys of numerous individual buildings (with a focus on the timber-framed examples) by **David and Barbara Martin** recently brought together to underpin their largely **architectural study of the town between 1350 and 1600**.²³ Detailed recording and study has been made of lengths of the **town wall** at Central Garage, Cinque Ports Street in 2003²⁴ and at 59 Cinque Ports Street in 2005.²⁵

English Heritage's statutory list of historic buildings is also of use, though many of the

descriptions date from the 1951-72 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, and re-evaluating the dating and function of key buildings and monuments.

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 (1872 onwards) have proved invaluable, especially as these have been used in digital form, allowing overlaying with each other and with other data. The Tithe Map for Rye (1840: *East Sussex Record Office*) and earlier maps (most importantly the town plan of 1666/7) have been digitized and rectified to fit the National Grid to allow comparison with other maps and data. Vertical air photo coverage of 2006 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 Rye covers the historic core of the town as defined by its extent in 1872.

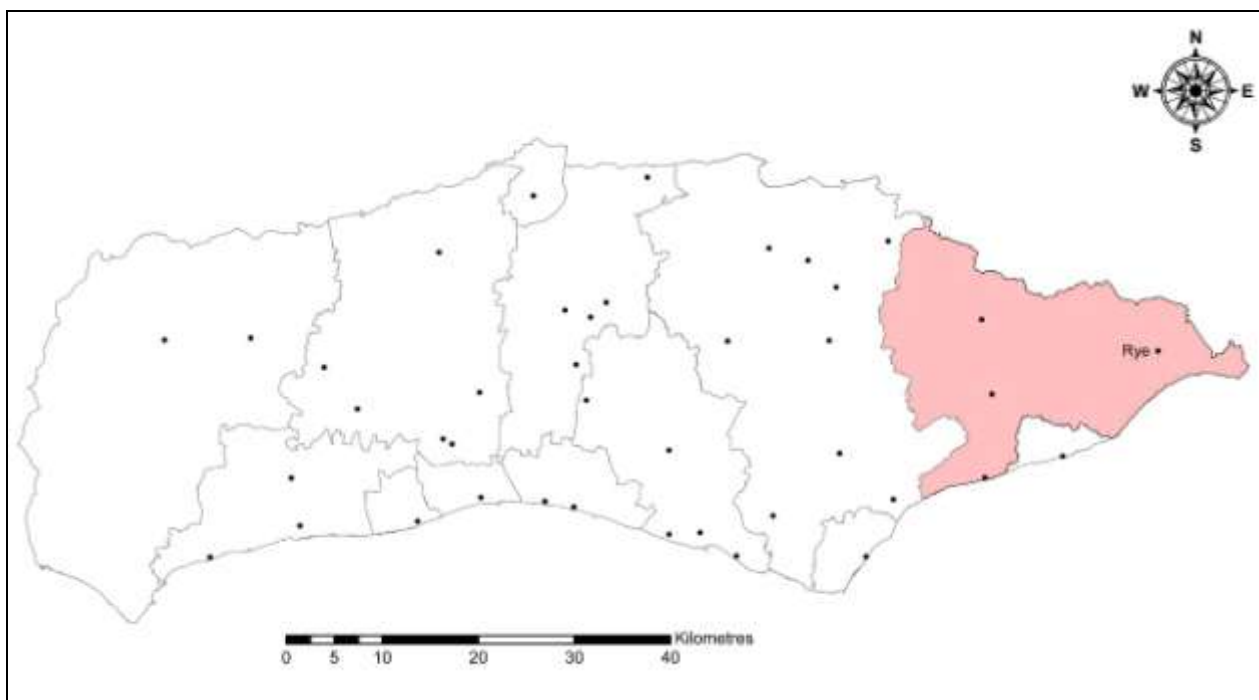


Fig. 1. Location of Rye within Sussex. Rother District is highlighted and points locate the 41 Sussex EUS towns.

2 THE SETTING



Fig. 2. View east-south-east from the church tower, showing the lower reaches of the River Rother.

2.1 Topography (Map 2)

Rye is situated at the junction of the High Weald, and Walland and Romney marshes. The historic town sits on a low hill, which rises above the surrounding reclaimed marshland, or levels. The hill rises on all sides to c.22.5m OD near the parish church. On the south and east sides of the town, the riverside land is at c.4.5m OD; on the north side of the town the land falls to 5.6m OD at the junction of Landgate and Fishmarket Road; and on the west side of Rye the land falls to c.4.2m OD near the junction of Ferry Road and the railway line. The town is at the junction of the River Brede (which approaches from the south), the River Tillingham (which flows from the west), and the River Rother (which flows from the north, and which flows south-eastwards from Rye to reach the sea at Rye Bay, 3.5km distant).

The principal street of the town is the south-west to north-east High Street, although the adjacent streets (especially The Mint, East Cliff and Cinque Ports Street) also have numerous shops and businesses. The principal river frontage,

which still has a residual function as a quay, is at the Strand.

There are modest suburbs mainly to the west (separated from the historic town by the River Tillingham) and the north. A minor road leads south-east of the town to the separate settlement of Rye Harbour, 2km distant.

The town is in the northern half of Rye Civil Parish, with the outer fringes of its northern suburbs extending into Rye Foreign Civil Parish and Playden Civil Parish. The historic parish of Rye was more extensive, and covered what is now Rye Foreign and part of Udimore.

2.2 Geology (Map 2)

2.2.1 Solid geology

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

All of the historic core and most of the modern suburbs of Rye lie on a succession of sandstones, siltstones and mudstones (commonly clays) of the Hastings Beds (Lower Cretaceous). Much of the EUS study area (and certainly the walled area of the historic town) lies on the mudstones of the Wadhurst Clay, while the suburbs extend on to the surrounding sandstones and siltstones of the Ashdown Sandstone Formation.

2.2.2 Drift Geology

The hill on which historic Rye lies is surrounded by tidal flat deposits of clay, silt and sand, which mark the reclaimed marshland and the three river channels.

Changes in the form of Rye Bay have had major consequences for the town and port, and an understanding of the post-Roman palaeogeography of the area is essential to the study of the town. Around 300-400 AD Rye Bay was defined on a similar although slightly seaward line from the present coastline, comprising a shingle barrier curving eastwards to the emerging Dungeness Foreland, with the barrier continuing eastwards to an inlet at Hythe. Jill Eddison advanced a detailed model for the period in which Rye emerges, suggesting that the barrier was still complete in the Rye Bay area in the early 11th century with some percolation. She suggested that there were temporary breaches by c.1086, and a permanent breach by c.1180, with Old Winchelsea developing on the east side of the breach,

protected by a shingle spit projecting from the west side of the breach (being a product of longshore drift). This was followed by catastrophic failure in 1287-8, resulting in the loss of Old Winchelsea and the creation of the wide estuary in Rye Bay.²⁶ More recent study concludes that the breach in the barrier occurred at Rye Bay from c.700 AD. Around this date the Hythe inlet was closing and the Romney inlet opening (the latter perhaps earlier): it may have been joined to the Rye inlet at this time. The effect of the 13th-century storms, then, was to enlarge a pre-existing tidal inlet at Rye. Land reclamation after these storms and accumulation of gravel on both sides of the breach in the period 1400-1600 saw the inlet reduced, eventually becoming no more than a narrow channel, as survives today.²⁷

2.3 Communications

2.3.1 Water

The tidal limits of the Brede and Tillingham rivers is on the south side of Rye itself, while the River Rother is tidal as far as Scots Float Sluice c.1.5km north-east of the town. The river valleys are below mean high water spring tides (+3.66m OD) far inland.²⁸

Historically the River Rother was the most significant of the three rivers, and was navigable as far as Robertsbridge.²⁹ This had ceased to be the case by the 16th century when the river was navigable as far as Udiam, c.3.2km east of Robertsbridge.³⁰ Even at this date, however, Bodiam appears to have been the more usual limit. For example, in 1542-74 iron from Robertsbridge Abbey forge was carted to Bodiam bridge (i.e. past Udiam) before being loaded on to barges, with trans-shipping occurring at Rye.³¹ Bodiam bridge remained the limit of navigation in 1723 and 1840.³²

The Royal Military Canal (1804-6) links Hythe Bay to Cliff End (at Pett Level). It used the existing rivers in the Rye area, joining the River Rother at Iden Lock, 3.5km north-east of Rye, and the River Brede at Winchelsea, 2.6km south-west of Rye. Primarily a defensive structure it provided for some commercial traffic, which reduced after the opening of the railway, and finally ceased in 1909.

Although the fortunes of Rye as a sea port from its foundation in the 11th century have been varied – most notably there being late 14th/15th-century and late 16th/17th-century declines – seaborne trade appears unbroken. The commercial wharves of modern Rye harbour, however, are now located south-east of the

town, near the mouth of the River Rother, with quays and moorings on the edge of the town used for pleasure boats.

2.3.2 Road

Although there is no bypass, through traffic avoids the historic (walled) core of the town, passing along Cinque Ports Street and South Undercliff/Fishmarket Road. Key routes from Rye comprise the A268 (towards London, via the A21, which it meets at Flimwell); the A259 (eastwards to Hythe and Folkestone, and, via the A2070, to Ashford; and westwards to Winchelsea and Hastings).

2.3.3 Railway

The South Eastern Railway (SER) opened the Ashford to Hastings branch line (known as the Marshlink Line), via Rye, in 1851. The line has not been electrified, and was reduced to a single track (with passing loop at Rye) in 1979:³³ it remains in use today. A single-track branch to Rye Harbour was added in 1854 (closed 1963).³⁴

2.4 Evidence for pre-urban activity

2.4.1 Prehistoric

Excavations within the EUS study area have produced limited evidence of prehistoric archaeology:

- 59 & 59a, Cinque Ports Street – excavation in 2001 revealed two medieval pits (see section 4.2.2), which were cut into an earlier deposit that represented either hill-wash or deliberate levelling: in turn, this sealed a ditch containing fire-cracked flint and a possible hammerstone, suggesting a prehistoric date.³⁵

- Winter's Dairy, Cinque Ports Street – excavation in 1998 produced eight undated pieces of worked flint, which could be the result of prehistoric activity in the area.³⁶

Elsewhere in or near the EUS study area, there have been prehistoric find spots, which include:

- Rye (unspecified location) – Lower Palaeolithic to Roman (500000 BC to 409 AD) flint sickle blade found before 1972 [HER reference: MES2185].

2.4.2 Romano-British

Archaeological investigations within or near the EUS study area have produced evidence of Romano-British archaeology:

- Austin Friary – salvage archaeological investigation of spoil removed from below the floor of the surviving chapel in 1991 included 17 small sherds of Romano-British ware and two fragments of Roman tile.³⁷
- Fairfield, Rye Hill – evaluation in 2001 recovered a small quantity of East Sussex Ware, of Romano-British date.³⁸

2.4.3 Early to Mid Anglo-Saxon

There have been no discoveries of Early or Mid Anglo-Saxon finds or features in or near the EUS study area.

2.4.4 Implications of pre-urban archaeology

The implication from the pre-urban finds is clear: although the numerous excavations have been limited in scale within the EUS study area, together with findspots these show that there was human activity in the area from the prehistoric period onwards and the possibility of pre-urban finds and features should be anticipated in any archaeological excavations in Rye.

3 HISTORY

3.1 Origins: Saxon and Norman



Fig. 3. Ypres Tower: medieval defences.

3.1.1 Place-name

The name *Rye* derives from Old English *ĕg*, meaning 'island' (with the 'R' stemming from the definite article), characteristically for a settlement-name describing high land (i.e. that occupied by the medieval town) surrounded by wetlands (i.e. in the Late Saxon period, later succeeded by a tidal estuary and salt marshes: see section 2.2.2).³⁹

3.1.2 Saxon settlement

Discussion of Saxon settlement at Rye has focused on speculation that the town has its origins in the Late Saxon fort of *Eorpeburnan*. This was one of the *burhs* forming part of the system of 31 fortresses built by King Alfred (871-99), recorded in the Burghal Hidage. The construction of the entire system was probably undertaken between May 878 and August 879 as a crucial part of Alfred's successful military strategy to drive the Vikings from Mercia and London to protect against further Viking incursion.⁴⁰ Nicholas Brooks suggested that

unidentified *Eorpeburnan*, which from the order in the list evidently lay east of Hastings, was the same site as the incomplete fort attacked by Vikings in 892, on the river Limen (i.e. Rother), four miles from the mouth of the estuary, and at the junction of marsh and wood (i.e. of the Weald).⁴¹ Brian Davison subsequently identified Castle Toll at Newenden, which he excavated in 1965 and 1971, as the location of the fort, reviving a tradition recorded in 1659 that this was the site of the 892 attack.⁴² The suggestion that Rye was *Eorpeburnan*, and the fort attacked in 892, was made by Frank Kitchen, principally on the grounds that Castle Toll would not have been four miles from the mouth of the estuary, is on the Kent side of the county boundary (forts in Kent being otherwise absent from the Burghal Hidage), and on the grounds that Rye's defences from Land Gate to the Strand Gate would have been of the correct length to match the value of the recorded hidage of *Eorpeburnan*.⁴³ Jeremy Haslam also rejects the Castle Toll identification, although he proposes that it was the fort attacked in 892. He hypothesises that *Eorpeburnan* was Rye, or more probably, 'an unknown fort of which Rye was the 'urban' successor.'⁴⁴ Haslam initially dated the proposed replacement of isolated *burhs* to the early 10th century,⁴⁵ but has since suggested that the more probable context would have been the reduced Viking threat after 879 (i.e. almost immediately after the original system was established).⁴⁶

While the identification of Castle Toll as the Alfredian *burh* is far from certain, the suggestion that Rye was the *burh* is problematic. Arguments based on length of defences should be dismissed as a strict relationship between hides, manpower, and wall length demonstrably does not apply throughout the system of Alfredian fortresses. Thus, the 324 hides allocated to *Eorpeburnan* do not imply defences of 1,337 ft (407m).⁴⁷ The distance from the sea compared to that of the 892 fort favours neither identification: Rye is too close to a mouth in Rye Bay, and too far from a mouth at New Romney: Castle Toll is too far from both. The discussion of the significance of Castle Toll being in Kent has probably been overplayed: the site today is only 800m from the county boundary, in the midst of the River Rother floodplain (and south of the Hexden Channel). In short, there is no clear documentary (or, indeed, archaeological: see section 4.1.2) evidence for the identification of Rye as *Eorpeburnan*, or a late 9th-century successor, and it is doubtless this fact that has seen Castle Toll remain the preferred candidate – however uncertain this identification is too – of most authorities.⁴⁸

Neil Rushton has suggested that the origins of Rye church lie in a Saxon minster (a mother church serving an extensive *parochia* from which developed several later parishes), but there is insufficient evidence for this.⁴⁹

3.1.3 Saxo-Norman town

Rye is likely to have been the unnamed port and town identified in the 11th century in the extensive manor of *Rameslie*. A charter of Æthelred II (1005), relating to Eynsham Abbey, refers to *Rameslie* and its port or hythe,⁵⁰ which has been identified as Rye.⁵¹ *Rameslie* and its port are again referred to in a charter of 1017-32 (probably dating from soon after 1017), which granted the estate to Fécamp Abbey. The charter separately grants two-thirds of the toll of nearby Winchelsea, which would be consistent with the identification of Rye as the unnamed port, although this falls within an expanded preamble that may be a later forgery.⁵² In Domesday Book (1086), the extensive entry for *Rameslie* refers to a new borough, with 64 burgesses, which has been identified as probably being Rye.⁵³ The other Domesday boroughs of Sussex comprised Arundel, Chichester, Steyning, Lewes, and Pevensey, and probably included Hastings.⁵⁴ Underpinning the emergence of Rye, and similar ports, in the 11th century was commerce (which included trade with the continent) and the fishing industry.⁵⁵ Tim Hudson has also suggested that the rivalry between Fécamp Abbey (who had been granted – but might not have received – the manor of Steyning by Edward the Confessor, but had its gift confirmed by William I and held it for the next two centuries) and William de Braose (who had been granted the lordship of the Rape of Bramber) might have played a role in the development of Rye and Winchelsea.⁵⁶ This rivalry certainly appears to have driven William de Braose, or his son Philip, to found New Shoreham on an unchallenged site in preference to further development of Bramber, but the decline of the port at Steyning as early as c.1100 seems to have been of little direct significance to the development of Rye and Winchelsea, which instead appear to reflect a more general interest of Fécamp Abbey in developing ports that could allow shipping to the north French coast.⁵⁷

The revised chronology of the breaching of the barrier in Rye Bay from c.1180 to c.700 AD (see above, section 2.2.2) is of great significance as it shows that the closely linked ports of (Old) Winchelsea and Rye developed on the same inlet:⁵⁸ Eddison's earlier model suggested that Winchelsea developed on an intact beach



Fig. 4. Church of St Mary.

barrier, and implied that Rye emerged inland of this, with access to the sea through Romney.⁵⁹

It is not until the 12th century that there is unambiguous evidence that Rye was a borough. The town had a mint in the reign of Stephen (1135-54),⁶⁰ probably in production in 1142. A charter of c.1150 from Fécamp Abbey provides good evidence of developing self-governance by setting out commutation of dues and corporate responsibility for rents, and, through arrangements for the abbot's share of the profits, by revealing a common organization to the fishing industry Rye. Under a lost charter of Henry II (1154-89) both Rye and Winchelsea became Cinque Ports (a confederation with privileges – which included the right to land and sell fish at Yarmouth⁶¹ – nominally in exchange for ship-service to the king, but also reflecting their strategic location for control of movement across the Channel to Flanders and Calais⁶²), as limbs under the head port of Hastings. The new Cinque Port status was confirmed in a charter of 1191, which records the privileges and the requirement of the two towns to provide two ships for the king's service, out of the total of 20 required from Hastings. The earlier treatment of the two adjacent towns together, as well as their significance, is evident from their joint payments to the exchequer, recorded in the Pipe Rolls of 1131 and 1164-5.⁶³

There can be little doubt that there was a market in the 11th century, although this is not recorded until later (see below, section 3.2.1).

3.1.4 Norman church and hospital

Little is known of the early history of the parish church of St Mary, but it is likely that one of the five churches of *Rameslie* in Domesday Book was at Rye.⁶⁴ There is no explicit documentary reference to St Mary's prior to the earliest architectural evidence, which comprises the mid-12th century transepts: construction of these would have followed completion of the eastern arm (see section 4.1.1).

Although in the parish of Playden, the hospital of St Bartholomew was usually described as 'outside Rye'.⁶⁵ Established by c.1189-1219, when the abbey of Fécamp made it self-governing, it may have been founded as early as the first half of the 12th century. Leopold Vidler's essentially documentary attempt to locate the hospital (he suggested the rear of what is now the Top O' The Hill pub, near the junction of Fair Meadow and Rye Hill/A268⁶⁶) has been shown to be suspect, and the location remains unknown.⁶⁷

3.2 The later medieval town

3.2.1 Economic history

The relative wealth of the Sussex ports is indicated in 1203-4, when merchants were taxed at a fifteenth: Rye rendered £10 13s 5½d, Pevensey paid £1 1s 11½d, Seaford £12 12s 2d, Shoreham £20 4s 9d, Chichester £23 6s 7d, and Winchelsea £62 2s and 4½d.⁶⁸ There are difficulties with the 1203-4 assessment, however, as it focuses mainly on wool and hide exports, and it is possible that Hastings, which is omitted from the list, forms part of the total for Winchelsea.⁶⁹ The secondary role of Rye by the early 13th century is evident, nonetheless, and is further illustrated by its requirement to provide five ships (out of the quota of 57 for the Cinque Ports combined, established in 1229), compared to 10 for Winchelsea.⁷⁰ Exposed on its shingle barrier, Winchelsea was to bear the brunt of storms that hit the coast from 1236 onwards (to the extent that it was bolstering sea defences from the 1240s, lost a quay and part of the adjacent church in 1271, and was mostly submerged in 1280). The intervention of Edward I in 1280, however, saw a new site selected in 1283 and the foundation of a replacement in 1288-92.⁷¹ The new *bastide* and port ensured the continued pre-eminence of Winchelsea. That Rye as well as Winchelsea had outstripped the



Fig. 5. The Strand: successor to the medieval quay.

head port of Hastings by the early 13th century is evident, and the two nominal limbs were finally given special status as Ancient Towns (quasi-head ports) in the 14th century.⁷² The town was important enough to send representatives, usually two, to parliament from 1264 onwards.⁷³

There were both Wednesday and Friday markets when, in 1404, the latter was moved to Saturday. A fair of St Bartholomew (24th August), held by the hospital, is recorded in the early 13th century. In 1290 an annual fair was granted to the 'barons', or men, of Rye, on the vigil, day and morrow of the feast of the Nativity of Mary (September 8th): in 1305, this was moved to the vigil, day and morrow of the feast of the Assumption of Mary (August 15th).⁷⁴

The fishing industry continued to be of great importance to the economy of Rye in the 13th century. Herring fishing continued to dominate, but by the 1280s the fishermen of Rye were also landing other fish. In 1281-88 accounts record herring shares as 55% of the total paid, followed by plaice (29%), mackerel (10%), and sprats (6%). The Yarmouth voyage continued to be significant. For example, when uniquely itemized in 1272-3 it accounted for a third of the total revenue. At this date Rye sent around half of Winchelsea's fleet of 15 ships to Yarmouth.⁷⁵

The voyage was evidently of more importance to Rye, which in 1272-3 produced in total only a fifth of Winchelsea's fishing shares.⁷⁶

Although never approaching the role of neighbouring Winchelsea in regard to the trade, imports of wine were significant at Rye. The losses of the wine-merchants of La Rochelle during the short-lived capture of the town by Prince Louis of France in 1216 were substantial,⁷⁷ and, contrary to recent suggestion,⁷⁸ indicative of more than trade for local domestic consumption only. In 1364 vintners from Rye were licensed to go to Spain to purchase wine, and the French sacking of the town in 1377 saw 42 casks (a rather unspecific measure) taken.⁷⁹ Merchants of Rye were also involved in the wine trade more generally, such as Geoffrey, son of Michael of Rye, whose ship was at Winchelsea in July 1212 with 120 tuns of wine belonging to the merchants of Ypres and Ghent.⁸⁰

In the early 13th century Rye was a royal dockyard and shipyard. In 1243 Rye was made a naval base for royal galleys.⁸¹ In 1243 Henry II ordered the galley-house, or covered slip, at Rye to be extended to house seven ships and their equipment.⁸² In 1259-61 two royal galleys were built at Rye.⁸³ Orders at that date to cover the galleys at Rye could indicate that the galley-houses were no longer usable.⁸⁴

In 1336, Winchelsea and Rye provided around half of the ships and mariners of the Cinque Ports, with Rye's contribution including the largest in the confederation – the 240-ton *la Michel* and the 170-ton *la Edmund*.⁸⁵ The following year, Rye provided four ships when Edward III summoned his fleet in response to Philip VI's invasion of English-held Aquitaine. Although this was a small part of the 169-strong fleet, of which a considerable 55 were from the Cinque Ports, it was more significant than the contributions of Seaford and Pevensey (one ship each), Romney and Hythe (two ships each), and Shoreham and Dover (three ships each), and was only exceeded by Hastings (10 ships) and Winchelsea (25 ships).⁸⁶

The advent of the Hundred Years' War (1337), which had given rise to this more pressing naval service, accelerated French raids on the south coast. Rye was attacked in 1339, with loss of 52 houses and a mill. In 1377 Rye was one of the towns attacked in a sustained raid along the south coast, from Folkestone to Dartmouth, led by Jean de Vienne, supported by ships from Castile, Genoa, Monaco and Portugal.⁸⁷ In the midst of this, inundation by the sea had led to loss of 18 houses on the low-lying land on the



Fig. 6. The Land Gate: 14th century.

east side of the town.⁸⁸ The Black Death doubtless also had a considerable effect on Rye in the late 1340s.

Moreover, a decline in the fortunes of Rye, and Winchelsea, was inevitable from the mid-14th century as the interests of the king and English merchants shifted westwards, away from the Cinque Ports. This was compounded by other economic factors, such as the decline of the Great Yarmouth herring fisheries (to which the Cinque Ports had such privileged access) and the Scarborough cod industries in the second half of the 14th century.⁸⁹ Between 1304 and 1342 fishing at Rye had expanded, and in 1343 it had 56 fishermen paying shares. The number fell away, but kept above 20 until c.1360. Thereafter records of the fishing industry at Rye are poor until 1448, by which point the industry was recovering. In 1492, there were 25 boats working from Rye, which suggests a crew of c.175, which would have been over half the working population (with a total population of perhaps c.900-1,100).⁹⁰

The recovery of Rye's fishing industry in the late 15th century, was echoed by, and doubtless influenced, the wider economic recovery of the town. Borough accounts survive from 1448, showing a rise in revenue from c.£34 in 1450 to c.£55 in 1480.⁹¹ A new quay was built at the

Strand in 1480, and a new jetty near the Landgate in 1486.⁹²

3.2.2 Defences

With the loss of Normandy in 1204 Rye was more exposed than before and, with French invasion anticipated, King John appointed officers for the defence of Rye and Winchelsea in 1215. This was to prove ineffective during the invasion of England by Prince Louis of France in May 1216, as both towns were captured and held briefly.⁹³ From 1204, the foreign lordship of Rye and Winchelsea was increasingly a bar to effective defence, but was not finally resolved until 1247, when an exchange of land saw the towns pass from Fécamp Abbey to the king. At this point the built-up area of Rye was removed from the rest of the parish, which remained a possession of the abbey and was thereafter called Rye Foreign).⁹⁴

Despite reference to the king's desire for a castle at Rye in 1226, and, in 1249, to provision for Peter of Savoy to undertake works on a castle at Rye (significantly, subject to completion of works at Hastings castle), there is no certainty that any works on a castle at Rye took place in the 13th century.⁹⁵ Ypres Tower (which gains its name from being granted to John de Ypres in 1431⁹⁶) has been identified with the putative c.1249 works, but hardly constitutes a castle in its own right and, moreover, may be 14th-century in origin (see below, section 4.2.1).

A requirement for repairs of the town walls at Rye and Winchelsea in 1246 probably refers to earth defences. Grants of murage were obtained from 1329, and the defences appear to have been in a poor state when a grant was made in 1348. Salzman suggested that stone walls and gates were first built in the mid-14th century.⁹⁷ However, it has been proposed more recently that the first Land Gate was in existence by c.1300, and, by contrast, that the first stone town wall dates to the early 1380s (a charter being granted in 1381 for construction of a stone wall). In both case, the evidence is in the form of references in rentals and deeds locating adjacent properties: in c.1317 properties are described as 'outside the gate', and in 1378 the grant of land to the Austin friars referred to the defences by the Land Gate as a fosse and reserved a space for building of the town wall.⁹⁸ The later date for the stone walls may be correct, although it would perhaps be surprising if Rye had not made provision earlier in the Hundred Years' War, not least given its earlier experience of French raids (see above, section 3.2.1).



Fig. 7. Church of St Mary: 15th-century remodelling of the eastern arm.

3.2.3 Church

The parish church ceased to be a possession of Fécamp Abbey in 1247. A chantry, dedicated to St Nicholas, was founded in 1281 (within the north aisle of the chancel). A brotherhood was evidently established by c.1500.⁹⁹

The Friars Penitential, or Friars of the Sack (Sack friars), were established in Rye by, or in, 1263.¹⁰⁰ In 1274, such lesser orders of friars were banned from admitting new postulants, largely in reaction to the spectacular growth of the mendicant orders in the 13th century, and their demise was inevitable.¹⁰¹ The Sack friars in Rye appear to have continued until the friary was dissolved in 1307,¹⁰² although it must be suspected that its numbers had dwindled away by then. The friary has been associated with remains of a stone house at 40 Church Square, albeit on less than convincing grounds (see section 4.2.1). Although the convents of the Sack friars often passed to other mendicant orders, this was not the case in Rye: the eventual successor to the Sack friars were the Augustinian, or Austin, friars, who are first recorded at Rye in 1363-4, when granted land east of the town. In 1368 one of the friars was granted to permission to celebrate daily at the altar of St Nicholas in the parish church, and in 1378 the friars were granted a new site at 'le



Fig. 8. Austin friary: chapel from Conduit Hill.

Haltone', on the corner of Conduit Hill and High Street, where the former chapel survives (see Fig. 8 and section 4.2.1). The Austin friary saw its roof rebuilt in 1524, but was suppressed in 1538.¹⁰³

The hospital of St Bartholomew was visited by the bishop in 1442, at which point it was found to have been without its master for six or seven years, without paupers, and with ruinous buildings. It was granted to Syon Abbey in 1461, and then to Westminster Abbey in 1502. At this point the chapel alone appears to have survived: almost certainly this passed out of use shortly afterwards.¹⁰⁴

3.2.4 Urban institutions

Jurats of Rye are first recorded in 1235. After the revocation of the gift of the towns, port and churches of Rye and Winchelsea to Fécamp Abbey, in 1247, the towns were put under the charge of a Crown bailiff until 1249, when they were farmed by the 'barons', or men, of the towns for the next three years, and probably again from the late 1260s. The first mayor of Rye is recorded in an undated deed of 1289 or later, and it is likely that this office was established in 1292, when New Winchelsea was founded (and where a mayor is first recorded that year). Many

of the procedures of borough governance are set out in a Custumal of the mid-14th century.¹⁰⁵

A borough court is implied by Richard I's charter of 1191. This was held by the abbot of Fécamp until 1247, and thereafter by the king's bailiff. In the late 13th and early 14th centuries this was held fortnightly, but by 1342 was more irregular and in 1364 only four were held. This appears to reflect the increase in importance of the newer mayor's court.¹⁰⁶

A place called the 'Courton' was the subject of a grant to the parson in 1348, at which point it was described as the place where pleas were held, and in which a plot of 200ft x 43ft (61m x 13m) was reserved for the building of a court hall and town, or market, hall. From the description of it being adjoining the churchyard, evidently this was the site of the present town hall.¹⁰⁷ The court hall was rebuilt in 1514-15.¹⁰⁸ Prior to its sale by the corporation in 1430, Ypres tower was probably used as the town gaol and criminal court. Certainly, this usage was established, or revived, by 1507: it is likely that both functions were transferred to the court hall for some or all the period that Ypres tower was in private hands.¹⁰⁹

3.3 The town c.1500-1840

3.3.1 Economic history

The late 15th-century economic recovery of Rye (see above, section 3.2.1) continued, with the town seeing its peak period of prosperity in the 16th century. The rise of Rye was in stark contrast with, and closely related to, the demise of the neighbouring port of Winchelsea, which went into rapid and terminal decline between 1490 and 1530, largely as a result of losing its harbour to silting.¹¹⁰ In 1490/1 the customs revenues of Winchelsea were £88 16s 7½d (65% of the total of all the ports covered by the customs officials of the Port of Chichester – i.e. from Folkestone to Chichester), with those of Rye a modest £12 8s 1¾d. By 1513/4 Winchelsea's revenues had almost halved, and Rye's more than tripled, so that the revenue of the two ports almost matched. Thereafter, Rye quickly overtook its neighbour and in 1549/50, paid £96 14s 6d, compared to Winchelsea's £1 4s 9d, and well above the other most prosperous ports of the Port of Chichester (Hythe had customs revenues of £23 0s 5d, Pevensey £16 5s 3½d, and New Shoreham £9 2s 7½d). When compared with English towns, as early as 1523 arguably Rye was ranked in the top 20.¹¹¹

In addition to transferral of trade from Winchelsea, Rye's growth in the early 16th

century was stimulated by its burgeoning fishing industry and supply to the English outpost of Calais. The late 15th-century recovery of the fishing industry (see above, section 3.2.1) continued into the 16th century, prospering until the 1520s, when the market suffered a set-back and a sharp increase in prices, followed by recovery by c.1540 and the peak of the industry in the 1560s. In 1565 fishermen formed almost half the population of the town,¹¹² which may have numbered c.4,000.¹¹³ The expansion of the Rye fishing industry, and the town's population, was itself driven by the demand of London's rapidly expanding population.¹¹⁴ The trade with Calais, and to a much lesser extent with Boulogne (captured 1544), accounted for three quarters of Rye's exports in the early 16th century, chiefly comprising supply of Wealden billet wood (for fuel) and timber.¹¹⁵

At the time of the loss of Calais (1558) the domination of Rye amongst the south-eastern ports was even clearer, with customs revenues at £499 11s 6¾d, which was nearly 14 times greater than those of the next port (Chichester itself, at £36 0s 6d). Rye was easily the lead Cinque Port and in national terms, in 1571/2, the total tonnage of merchant vessels ranked Rye at 11th, almost exactly level with Bristol. Average shipments for the years 1580/1 to 1584/5 show the relative importance of the various imports and exports: grain accounted for 34.6% of the shipments imported, followed by coal (4.9%), and wine (4.4%); while billets accounted for the chief export (34.7% of shipments), followed by cloth (15.0%), timber (6.7%) and iron (5.1%).¹¹⁶

The Tudor boom of Rye ended suddenly, as the port slipped into a severe decline in the later 1580s, thereafter ceasing to be of national importance. Between the early 1580s and the late 1590s annual shipments of imports fell from 159 to 74, and shipments of exports more sharply still from 199 to 70. Cloth exports over this period fell to 8.7% of their previous level, and this was a significant factor in the decline of the port. Rye's cloth exports had developed in the 16th century as a transit trade controlled from London, probably reflecting the shift away from trade with the Netherlands to other centres (most importantly Rouen) and the strategic advantages of Rye for crossing the channel in a period of increased privateering: the collapse of the trade at Rye in the 1590s appears to have resulted from restoration of trade with the Netherlands, reduced privateering (itself a product of the end of war), and increasing French opposition to imports of English cloth. Other factors in the decline of the port include the fall-off in exports of billets in the 1590s, to around 20% of levels in



Fig. 9. 6 Mermaid Street: built c.1525 with a one-storey hall set back from the frontage behind a shop, or shops.

the 1580s; the loss of trade to Boulogne and Calais (which ceased to be English possessions in 1550 and 1558 respectively); the deterioration of roads leading into Rye; silting of the harbour, largely as a product of inning the marshes (although the direct impact of this may have been overestimated); the decline of the town's fishing industry (which reduced by about one third between 1585 and 1600, in part a result of the silting harbour and decayed roads, but also due to increased competition); and the crippling expense – set against a shrinking economy – of unsuccessful harbour works in the late 16th century designed to counteract silting. Moreover, it appears that the underlying decline in Rye's economy was masked by the substantial influx of French Protestant exiles during the French Wars of Religion (1562-98): this brought many skilled tradesmen and merchants to the town and stimulated local demand (as well as outbursts of Francophobic protectionism¹¹⁷). In 1569 the alien population (which included Walloons and Flemings) probably numbered around 300. In 1571 this had fallen to 77, but rose again the following year and in the 1570s (when the total population was perhaps c.5,000¹¹⁸) and 1580s the number of exiles was substantial: Samuel Jeake recorded 1,534 French refugees in Rye in 1582 (when the total population was perhaps

c.4,000), but the numbers reduced quickly in the 1590s as the exiles returned home.¹¹⁹

The decayed state of Rye, and the permanent shift of mercantile operations from the port to London, meant that the town saw little of the burgeoning trade with France that followed the Treaty of London in 1604 (which ended the 19-year Anglo-Spanish war) and the Anglo-French trade treaty of 1606. The population continued to decline, falling below 2,000 by the late 1620s. There was a short-lived revival, however, of maritime trade in the 1630s, led by the import of Italian textiles (through Lyons and the ports of Normandy) and stimulated by neutrality of its ships during the Franco-Spanish War, which began in 1635.¹²⁰

The fishing industry at Rye continued to decline in the early 17th century, with costs rising, and competition increasing from English fishing fleets using trawling techniques (opposed to Rye and Hythe's trammel fishing), and from aggressive French fishing fleets. In the 1610s the mean number of Rye boats sailing to the Yarmouth herring fair had fallen to 16.6 (it had been 25.2 in the 1580s), 9 in the 1630s, and to 3.5 in the 1650s. A tax of 1660 recorded 16 fishermen only.¹²¹

The decline of the fishing industry was doubtless a significant factor in the fall in the overall population of Rye, which in 1660 can be estimated at c.1,300.¹²² A further fall in the population is likely, with estimated totals of c.800 in 1676 and c.900 in 1724 perhaps showing the bottoming out of the population before it rose in the 18th century to reach 2,187 in 1801.¹²³ It has been suggested that little, if any, of this growth occurred before 1771,¹²⁴ and certainly the early 19th century decennial census returns record rapid population increases and house building at that time. From 1801-11 an additional 96 houses were built,¹²⁵ with the population total rising by 23% to 2,681. Doubtless, the significant military presence in the Rye area during French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815) in the area stimulated growth (see below, section 3.3.3). This expansion accelerated in the following decade, to 3,599 in 1821, before growth slowed, so that the population was 3,715 in 1831 and 4,031 in 1841.

With the substantial increase in shipping to the Sussex ports in the 18th century it is unsurprising that renewed efforts were made to improve the harbour at Rye. Three acts of Parliament between 1720 and 1723 led to the creation of a harbour board in 1724, and the beginning of works on a new harbour channel (the outfall of which was at modern Winchelsea Beach). The



Fig. 10. Mermaid Inn, Mermaid Street, purpose-built as an inn c.1525.

new harbour was not completed until 1787 (at which point it was opened up to Scots Float sluice, 2km north-east of Rye on the River Rother, itself built in 1736), however, and was abandoned within three months. Efforts returned to the old harbour, where the mouth was recut in 1799-1808, and protected by a pier and wharfs on its eastern side.¹²⁶ Following the giving way of the Scots Float sluice gates during a spring tide in 1812, the harbour was suddenly improved by the renewed scour, and navigation of the upper reaches of the river much improved. There followed a period of sharp conflict between the maritime and landowning interests, which culminated in the Rother Levels Act 1830, the Rye Harbour Act 1830, and the Rye Harbour Act 1833. In 1835 a stone-built jetty was built on the eastern side of the harbour mouth to counteract shingle blocking (which was affecting both navigational access and up-river drainage).¹²⁷

Exports in the 18th century from Rye included wool, mainly to London and Exeter (an average of 108 tons in 1714-19, and 397 tons in 1735-43); cured herrings (59 barrels of 1,000 fish per annum on average in 1664-1714); and iron (an average of 210 tons a year in 1702-13). Imports were dominated by coal, use of which increased greatly during the 18th century: in 1830 121

cargoes were shipped into Rye (compared to 116 at nearby Hastings). Coasting trade with London in 1790 saw three boats trading to Rye (compared to three to Hastings and two each to Newhaven and Shoreham), rising to eight in 1839.¹²⁸ In the early 19th century the average tonnage of ships using Rye was only 66 tons, which matched that of the beach-based trade at Hastings.¹²⁹ Smuggling was an increasing element of the trade that operated through Rye in the 18th century, although, by its nature, the scale is hard to quantify and is most visible through anecdotes and records of skirmishes with revenue officers. For example, in 1720, the Rye revenue sloop, *Amelia*, was insufficient to confront three heavily manned Calais sloops, laden with brandy, lying off the harbour; the infamous Hawkhurst Gang are recorded as frequenting Rye unmolested, until finally broken up in 1749. The illicit trade declined in the early 19th century, with more effective government-led measures to eradicate it (see section 3.3.4).¹³⁰

Rye had numerous inns in the 16th century, which, for example, provided 94 guest beds in 1574. In 1520 the Crown, on the corner of West Street and High Street, appears to have been the principal inn, but later in the century it was the Mermaid that the corporation used to accommodate visiting dignitaries, and which was frequented by the wealthier visitors. Other important inns in the late 16th century included the Red Lion (Lion Street: now forming part of the George) and the Three Kings, Middle Street.¹³¹ On architectural grounds, 24-5 High Street (part of which today is the White Vine) was evidently a substantial purpose-built inn in the late 16th century. In the 17th century the George (on the corner of High Street and Lion Street) and the Queen's Arms (on the corner of West Street and Church Street) were also substantial inns.¹³² Despite decline from its 16th-century zenith, Rye offered significant inn accommodation in the 17th century, with provision for guest beds (c.30) and stablings (c.35) recorded in a survey of 1686 placing the town on a par with Steyning, New Shoreham, Brighton and Arundel.¹³³ This reflected the increase in coach travel during the 17th century – and the port's significant role as a centre of communications – which led to road improvements in the 18th century: the road from Rye through Newenden and Hawkhurst to the London-Hastings road at Flimwell (now the A268) was turnpiked under an act of 1762, followed in 1771 by the road (now the B2089) through Udimore to the London-Hastings road at Vinehall.¹³⁴



Fig. 11. Former Independent-Congregational chapel in Watchbell Street (1817).

3.3.2 Church and religion

This period began with Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries. The impact on Rye was felt most keenly at the Austin friary: evidently still in existence in the early 16th century (its roof being rebuilt in 1524), it was suppressed in 1538.¹³⁵ The chantry of St Nicholas, in the parish church, was suppressed in 1547, as was the brotherhood.¹³⁶ In the late 1550s the former chantry was used as a munitions store.¹³⁷ Prior to these suppressions, however, Rye had already seen considerable and early growth of Protestantism, reflecting influence of its contact with the nearby cloth-making towns of Cranbrook, Tenterden, Benenden and Rolvenden (centres of Lollardy since the early 15th century), and the Netherlands, especially Antwerp, (where continental Protestantism was significant and where English Protestants, such as Tyndale, were based from the 1520s). The Protestant fervour in Rye is reflected in the seizure of heretical books in 1533, in the reformist changes to wills of inhabitants during the 1530s, and by the election of a Protestant mayor and a significant number of jurats in 1538. Counter-Reformation saw Rye become a victim of Marian deprivation (the incumbent was married) in 1554, and the reinstallation of the

high altar (1554) and the rood-screen (1557) in the parish church.¹³⁸ More drastically, one Rye Protestant, Thomas Ravendale, was one of four martyrs burnt at Mayfield in 1556.¹³⁹ The large French Protestant community that settled in Rye during the French Wars of Religion (see above, section 3.3.1) saw establishment of its own church, using its ministers for separate services in the parish church.¹⁴⁰

A century later the national religious census of 1676 records no papists, but out of a total of 600 adults 300 were Nonconformists.¹⁴¹ This reflects the strength of Puritanism in the town that flourished during the Civil War and the Commonwealth. Although meetings in houses are probable, there is no evidence of early Nonconformist chapels, and strong Puritan voices at the parish church (notably that of John Allin, minister from 1653) appear to have rendered complete Separatism unnecessary. However, the Restoration saw the Act of Uniformity passed in 1662, and Allin was ejected. In 1669, the Rye conventicle, or field-assembly, had a congregation of 100.¹⁴² Bishop Bowers' diocesan survey of 1724 records an absence of Roman Catholics, but out of about 200 families, it is perhaps surprising that only two were Quakers and 10 were other Protestant dissenters.¹⁴³

A Baptist congregation was established in Rye in 1750, by 1754 using a chapel in Mermaid Street apparently built c.1700 by the Quakers.¹⁴⁴ The Bethel Strict Baptist chapel, Military Road, was built c.1835.¹⁴⁵ Thomas Mitchell, one of John Wesley's assistants, preached in Rye in 1756 and established a society there. Wesley himself followed on his first visit to Sussex in 1758 (making 12 visits to the town in total), and Rye became the centre of the Sussex Circuit.¹⁴⁶ A Methodist church was built by the Gun Garden c.1814, followed by an Independent-Congregational chapel in Watchbell Street in 1817.¹⁴⁷

The old (i.e. redundant) churchyard next to Ypres Tower that is recorded on Jeake's plan of 1666/7 and referred to in documents of the period appears to have been an extension to the burial ground created during the population boom in the 16th century.¹⁴⁸

3.3.3 Defences

The Tudor boom of Rye coincided with wars with France and Spain, resulting in expansion of its defences. In the 1490s Rye had three or four guns, which included a 'great gun' from Calais. Two more were added in 1513 and another two the following year. At the end of the war in 1515,



Fig. 12. The Gun Garden by Ypres Tower.

Rye acquired another 'gret gonne'. At the outbreak of war again in 1521 the guns were split between an enclosure on the cliff top and a bulwark on the Strand. Works on the defences themselves between c.1490 and the early 1520s included repairs to the existing circuit of walls and to the Strand bulwark; and building of groynes outside the Land Gate and Strand Gate, and on the Strand. There were more significant works in 1544-5, which, in addition to repair of existing defences, included the Gun Garden next to Ypres Tower, a 'lower fortress' (i.e. the Lower Gun Garden below Ypres Tower), a stone and timber bulwark extending from the bottom of Playden Hill to a point beneath the shops at the Strand). More ordnance was acquired for the Gun Garden and the Strand bulwark. In 1569 Rye had 29 pieces of ordnance, which included substantial cannon and culverins.¹⁴⁹ A Survey of the Sussex coast in 1587, in obvious response to the greater Spanish threat, described Rye as 'furnished with greate ordinance', which included 13 brass pieces and 10 iron pieces.¹⁵⁰ By this date Rye had a permanent gunner and a dedicated gunhouse.¹⁵¹ In addition to its own defences, Tudor Rye benefited from nearby Camber Castle (1.5km south of the town), which began as a blockhouse in 1512-14 to defend the Camber (i.e. the vast natural harbour at the mouths of the Brede, Tillingham and Rother

rivers, used, with Dover, as the main embarkation for troops in 1513, 1543 and 1562, and as late as 1589 the gathering point of the ships of London, Dover and Portsmouth taking English troops to the aid of Henry IV of France).¹⁵² This was hugely expanded into a castle in 1539-40 by Stephen von Haschenperg as part of Henry VIII's 'Device', or network of coastal defences established to counter possible invasion following the break from Rome. The castle was modified in 1542-3 (gaining four outer bastions) and, both stranded inland by coastal changes and outmoded, it was decommissioned in 1637.¹⁵³ The defences were evidently considered unimportant by the 18th century, with the Strand bulwark replaced by a warehouse in the late 17th century, and several lengths of the wall and the Strand Gate were partly demolished c.1760.¹⁵⁴

Seven new brick batteries were proposed in Sussex in 1759, in response to the Seven Years' War (1756-63), including one at Rye:¹⁵⁵ although a battery, of assumedly 18th-century date is recorded at the mouth of the new harbour, the new battery has been identified as that built in the Gun Garden in 1762 and demolished in 1935 (see below, section 4.3.2).¹⁵⁶

The advent of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815) saw conversion of the Great Warehouse on the Strand into a barracks in 1794. In July that year the temporary barracks accommodated 110 infantry, more than doubling to 280 in 1798. In 1802 the lease on the Great Warehouse was given up, and there was no barrack accommodation in the town in June the following year. By October an artillery park was established at Rye, and in 1806 there were temporary barracks at Rye and Playden for 168 cavalry and 934 infantry.¹⁵⁷

The French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars also saw the creation in 1805-8 of a chain of Martello towers along the south and east coasts of England – a decision apparently made following robust defence of a stone tower at Mortella Point, Corsica, against a Royal Navy attack in 1793-4.¹⁵⁸ There were three Martello towers near Rye: one just south of the town on the Winchelsea Road (No. 30); one by the harbour mouth (No. 29: abandoned due to erosion as early as 1809, and collapsing by 1822); and one at Rye Harbour (No. 28).¹⁵⁹ At the end of the war the Martello tower system ceased to be maintained. More impressive still from this period was the Royal Military Canal, begun in 1804 and, remarkably, completed in 1806. This extends from Hythe Bay, to the River Rother at Rye, and continues to Cliff End (at Pett Level), and was designed to cut-off any enemy



Fig. 13. Town hall (1742).

beachhead established on Romney Marsh from the higher land further inland, shortening the line of defence here to just over half its length.¹⁶⁰

3.3.4 Urban institutions

The Great Warehouse that was converted to barracks in 1794 (see above, section 3.3.3) was the town storehouse built by the corporation on the Strand in 1555. Other civic expenditure in the 16th-century boom included that for the repair of the town's water supply (a cistern was built in 1520 and another, in the churchyard, in 1548: the present cistern in the churchyard dates from 1735); erection of an almshouse outside the Land Gate in 1552; and the acquisition in 1580 of a separate almshouse for children.¹⁶¹ In the parliamentary survey of 1776-7 the parish workhouse is recorded as having 60 places.¹⁶² This was located in the Gun Garden, and was extended in 1809.¹⁶³ Following the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, Rye was combined with the neighbouring parishes to form Rye Poor Law Union, with the existing workhouse at Rye initially continuing in use and extended in 1837.¹⁶⁴



Fig. 14. The Old Grammar School, High Street.

A house of correction was proposed jointly with neighbouring parishes in 1598,¹⁶⁵ and evidently must have been built since it was subsequently dismantled and material sold off in 1654.¹⁶⁶ This was different from the town gaol, which continued to be located in Ypres Tower during this period. This gained a full-time gaoler in 1796, and in 1837-8 was updated with a new exercise yard, four new cells, and a separate block for female prisoners.¹⁶⁷ There was an additional small lock-up on the Strand called The Cage by 1587, with a ducking stool and a 'collar' nearby. By this date the stocks had also been moved to a site nearby from its earlier location in the market square.¹⁶⁸ A borough police force was established c.1835, with the first full-time constable employed in 1838.¹⁶⁹ The first police station was a cottage adjacent to Ypres Tower.¹⁷⁰

The medieval court-house and market house (see section 3.2.4), or its successor, was known as the Court Hall in 1666-7,¹⁷¹ and was replaced by the present town hall in 1742.¹⁷²

A Customs House is recorded on the Strand in the 1570s, but had moved elsewhere by 1602 when the building was sold by the corporation.¹⁷³ Three Customs and Excise officers were employed in Rye from at least 1753.¹⁷⁴ Presumably they gained support against

smuggling in 1809 with the introduction of the Royal Navy's inshore Preventive Water Guard,¹⁷⁵ and at the end of 1818 a new force – the Coast Blockade – took over at the end of 1818. In 1831 the Coastguard replaced the naval forces of the Coast Blockade.¹⁷⁶

A schoolmaster was employed, initially for three years, by the corporation in 1564, and there were two schoolmasters in the town in 1576.¹⁷⁷ In his will of 1638, Thomas Peacock left a building in High Street (now known as the Old Grammar School), built two years previously, and an endowment to fund a free school. He died between 1638 and 1644, with the school building and endowments conveyed to the corporation in 1644. Another free school was founded c.1720, endowed by James Saunders (d. 1709). In 1791 the headmaster of the Saunders' school was appointed head of Peacock's, and the schools both utilized the premises of the latter. The two schools were separated, and different masters appointed, in 1828.¹⁷⁸

Early sporting activities at Rye included cricket, first recorded in 1747.¹⁷⁹ A theatre was in use at the Horse and Groom Inn, at the junction of modern Station Approach and Cinque Ports Street, by 1803.¹⁸⁰

3.4 The town: c.1840-2008

3.4.1 Economic history

The beginning of this period is marked by the arrival of the railway at Rye in 1851, with a station built just beyond the north-western edge of the town. The South Eastern Railway (SER) built the new line to connect Ashford to Hastings, and added a single-track branch to Rye Harbour in 1854 (the latter closed in 1963).¹⁸¹

A cattle market was built immediately adjacent to Rye station by the Rye Cattle Market Company Ltd., incorporated in 1859. A central market hall was built at that date and an agricultural hall was added in 1873 (sold 1912). General markets were held fortnightly on Wednesdays and there were additional markets for sheep and lambs, an annual ram sale, and a Christmas fat stock sale.¹⁸² The company still runs a general weekly Thursday market on the site.¹⁸³

Compensation paid by the railway company to the Harbour Commissioners for building the swing bridge on the Ashford-Hastings line at Rye was to be spent on harbour works approved by the Admiralty, and this included extending the eastern pier c.1850 to counteract the blocking effects of longshore drift. The commissioners

also acquired a steam tug for towing and dredging in 1853. At this point Rye's shipbuilding interest flourished becoming the town's main industry, with Hessel & Holmes launching a 318-ton barque in 1852 and the first steamer (the 130-ton SS Wellington) to be built in the port in 1857; and Hoad Bros. launching a 326-ton barque in 1853 (one of 14 vessels over 150 tons launched by the company in 1852-5). In the late 19th century the total tonnage of vessels entering Rye remained in the range of c. 15-23,000 tons per annum, with fluctuations reflecting the conditions of the harbour mouth.¹⁸⁴ In 1910 the aggregate tonnage was comparable at c. 17,000 tons, but well below the principal ports of Sussex at Shoreham (c. 104,000 tons) and Newhaven (c. 858,000 tons). As at Littlehampton (which handled shipping of c. 22,000 tons in 1910) the broader effect of the railway network – reducing coastal trade and concentrating foreign trade at major ports – began to take its toll on Rye.¹⁸⁵

Despite the arrival of the railway and the burgeoning of the shipbuilding industry in the mid-19th century, the population growth of the late 18th and early 19th-centuries (see section 3.3.1) was not matched. Rather, there was slight growth from 4,031 in 1841 to 4,677 in 1881. Thereafter the population fell slightly to 4,354 in 1891. Although lacking the considerable growth of coastal towns elsewhere in Sussex, the modest growth in Rye contrasted with the rural depopulation that marked most of the surrounding parishes,¹⁸⁶ and suggests that the railway and port were significant factors.

The harbour suffered badly during the First World War, with traffic falling away and almost no use being made of it for military purposes. Consequent neglect saw the harbour become increasingly unnavigable, a situation compounded after the war by gales in 1921 and 1922, and, despite improvement works in 1927-9, the port failed to recover to its pre-war levels. The fishing fleet also failed to revive (having still had a pre-war fleet of c. 50 boats¹⁸⁷), c. 1930 comprising two steam trawlers, one sailing trawler and three small motorboats. Likewise, the 1930s saw the final days of a much-dwindled barge trade up the Rother and Brede rivers. As commercial activity has decreased, so has pleasure use expanded: recreational boating saw the founding of the Rye Bay Sailing Club in 1925, which by 1937 had a fleet of 19 open boats. That year, the harbour was visited by 70 yachts.¹⁸⁸

More significant involvement of the harbour in the Second World War, saw efforts to improve navigability begin in late 1941, and built up towards D-Day (6th June 1944). The fishing fleet



Fig. 15. Railway station, 1851.

operating from Rye during the latter half of the war benefited from the improvements, and the growth of fish stocks from an absence of fishing earlier in the war, but quickly decline in peace time so that only one boat remained in business in 1955. Recreational use of the harbour increased, however, and in 1967-8 a new commercial wharf was built for timber imports: harbour dues rose 24-fold between 1966 and 1975.¹⁸⁹ Today the harbour continues to combine commercial use with recreation. In 2007/8 the shipping tonnage was 70,000 tons; and cargoes accounted for 15% of the harbour income; fishing 7% (the revived, but still modest, fleet using Fish Market Quay on the eastern side of the town); pleasure boating 15%; pilotage 9%; and rents 51%.¹⁹⁰

The period c. 1900-40 saw an unusual concentration of writers in the town, including Henry James (who lived at Lamb House intermittently from 1896 until his death in 1916); and E. F. Benson (who also lived at Lamb House, from 1919 until his death in 1940).¹⁹¹ The extensive literary circles that surrounded such writers were a prelude to a wider range of visitors that have been attracted to the town, and since 1945 there has been an increasing focus



Fig. 16. St Anthony of Padua, Watchbell Street (1927).

on tourism in the form of souvenir and antique shops, cafés, restaurants, and hotels.

The first half of the 20th century saw little growth in the population of the town, with the total, (following a boundary change in 1894 to create Rye Foreign) little changed between 3,900 in 1901 and 3,947 in 1930. Similarly the post-war population has remained stable, despite significant house building, with a total of 4,009 in 2001.

Rye lost one of its two seats in parliament in the first electoral Reform Act 1832 (which also reformed the borough government), and was finally disenfranchised under the Franchise Act (1884) when it became part of the Eastern, or Rye, Division.¹⁹²

3.4.2 Church and religion

The parish church has remained in use throughout this period. The graveyard closed in 1854, with the exception of several private vaults, with burials thereafter at the new cemetery at Rye Hill, which was equipped with Nonconformist and Anglican mortuary chapels.¹⁹³ An additional Anglican church dedicated to the Holy Spirit was provided for the growing population at Rye Harbour in 1849.¹⁹⁴ It

was provided with a modest graveyard from the outset.

Nonconformism continued to develop, with the establishment of a Baptist chapel at Landgate in 1844 (succeeded by the church in Cinque Ports Street in 1909, which also led to the closure of the Baptist chapel in Mermaid Street – see section 3.3.2 – in 1910); and a Congregational church in Conduit Hill in 1882 (converted to Rye Community Centre in 1973). The Methodist church at Gun Garden was bombed in the Second World War, and now occupies the nearby former Sunday school of c.1900. A Roman Catholic church dedicated to St Walburger was built in Watchbell Street in 1900, replaced by the present church of St Anthony of Padua in 1927.¹⁹⁵

3.4.3 Urban institutions

During the 19th and 20th centuries Rye has seen the development of a 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 principal institutions are included.

During the 19th century the corporation took on increased responsibilities, including health (after the Public Health Act 1848) and sanitation.¹⁹⁶

The town hall continued to house the corporation, which, under the Public Health Act 1872, became an urban sanitary authority. The municipal borough ceased with the re-structuring of local government in 1974 (which saw Rye become part of newly-created Rother District), following the Local Government Act 1972.¹⁹⁷ The town hall remains in use by Rye Town Council.

The borough police force became part of the East Sussex Constabulary in 1889, with a police station built at 18 Church Square.¹⁹⁸ This closed in 1966 and was replaced by the present building in Cinque Ports Street.¹⁹⁹

The Saunders' and Peacock's schools were amalgamated in 1884, becoming Rye Grammar School,²⁰⁰ and moving to new purpose-built premises in The Grove in 1907. A boys' National School was built in Mermaid Street in 1867. Following the Education Act 1870, Rye School Board was established in 1871. This assumed control of the boys' school, established a girls' and infants' school in Lion Street in 1872, and, in 1885, made use of the Methodist school building at the Gun Garden. With increased county responsibility for education in the Education Act 1902, in 1903 the board schools in Rye came under control of East Sussex County Council (with the Lion Street school extended in 1906-7),



Fig. 17. Former National School, Mermaid Street (1867).

and the grammar school followed in 1913. The Council Senior School at Rye was built in 1932. By this time additional space was required for primary age children, and a site was acquired at Poll Marsh Ferry Road: the opening of Rye County Primary School was delayed until after the war. In 1967 Rye Grammar School and Rye Secondary School merged to form a comprehensive school later known as the Thomas Peacocke Community College and now styled Rye College. The primary school was

renamed Freda Gardham County Primary School in 1970, and Tilling Green County Infants' school was opened.²⁰¹ The two primary schools were replaced by Rye Primary, which opened in September 2008 on a site next to the secondary school.

The new Rye Poor Law Union (1835) saw construction of a purpose-built union workhouse just to the north of the town, at Rye Hill, in 1843-5. This provided accommodation for 436 inmates. This became a public assistance institution and, after military use in the Second World War, became part of the new National Health Service as a hospital for the mentally and physically handicapped (Hill House Hospital). This closed in 1974, and has been converted to housing.²⁰² The adjacent Rye, Winchelsea and District Memorial Hospital (now the Memorial Care Centre) was opened in 1921.²⁰³

Two lifeboat stations were opened near Rye in 1852,²⁰⁴ one 1.4km east of the harbour mouth and the other 1.8km to the west.

The theatre at the Horse and Groom Inn (see section 3.3.4) was demolished in 1846. A second theatre was in existence at the Cinque Ports Hotel, in Cinque Ports Street, in 1843. This was succeeded by an Assembly Room at the hotel, used for plays and, in due course, films: initially called the Bijou, this became the Regent cinema in 1931 and was demolished in 1981.²⁰⁵

By 1897 the Town Salts and the Middle Salts, on the east side of the town, were established as a recreation ground and cricket pitch respectively.²⁰⁶ Rye Golf Club was founded in 1894, with its course, c.2.3km south-east of the town, accessible by the narrow-gauge Rye & Camber Tramway, which opened in 1895.²⁰⁷

4 ARCHAEOLOGY

4.1 Saxo-Norman settlement (Maps 7-8)



Fig. 18. Church of St Mary: south transept.

4.1.1 Buildings (Map 5)

The parish church of St Mary is the only pre-1200 building to survive in Rye. Although one of the five churches of *Rameslie* in Domesday Book was very probably at Rye (see section 3.1.4), the present church dates from the 12th century and its relationship to any earlier church is unknown. With the eastern arm, which doubtless comprised the earliest part of the Norman church, replaced in the 15th century (although the 13th-century aisle-chapels survive), the oldest surviving fabric comprises the transepts and crossing. The sculptural detail, which includes waterleaf and similar leaf-based designs on the capitals, dates the work here to c.1150-80, and the western clerestory windows, with jamb shafts projecting below the sill level,

have been compared to those of the nave of Fécamp Abbey's church at Steyning (1160-80).²⁰⁸ Unlike those at Steyning, however, the windows at Rye incorporate a wall passage. The nave is slightly later than the transepts and crossing, combining slightly pointed arches to the arcades with dogtooth, rolls, hollows and chamfers, and probably dates from c.1200. The piers are cylindrical apart from one pair of octagonal form.

4.1.2 Excavations (Map 6)

The putative Late Saxon *burh* at Rye has been hypothesised largely on historical grounds, together with some equally insubstantial topographic reasoning (see section 3.1.2), and has not been demonstrated by archaeological excavation. Indeed, as yet, and despite numerous small-scale subsurface investigations, there is no archaeological evidence of Saxon occupation at Rye.

Although Norman settlement is not in dispute, the excavated evidence for this period is also lacking, and has been limited to early pottery types, either found in residual contexts with later sherds, or not closely datable. For example, at **Winter's Dairy, Cinque Ports Street**, a trenched evaluation in 1998 revealed remains of undated medieval stone and timber buildings, and deposits and a rubbish pit broadly dated to the 11th to 13th centuries.²⁰⁹ Subsequent shallow excavation on the site, in 1999, for 450mm-deep ground-beam trenches did not encounter significant archaeology.²¹⁰ A trenched evaluation to the rear of buildings fronting the south-west side of **Market Road** (i.e. what is now called Jarrett's Close) in 1994 produced sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery, although in contexts where it was mixed with later sherds, such as Rye ware.²¹¹ A single 12th-century flint-tempered sherd was found in a 13th to 14th-century context at the **Central Garage, Cinque Ports Street** in 2003.²¹²

4.1.3 Topographic analysis (Maps 7-8)

In the absence of significant pre-1200 archaeological evidence, and the survival of only one building of this period, it is difficult to establish what elements of the present town plan, and lost features, derive from Norman, or indeed earlier, Rye. The church itself is the only certain feature of the Norman town, and it would seem implausible if the churchyard and the roads on its east, south and west sides (i.e. Pump Street and Church Square) had not been established by the time of the 12th-century building, or rebuilding, of the church. To the

north of the churchyard, the open area of the Courton, where the pleas were held, was evidently ancient in 1348 (see section 3.2.4) and at that point was reduced by creation of the vicarage plot at its western end. By 1374 the market was located immediately north of the Courton, and almost certainly this represents its earlier position. Although modern Market Street stops at Lion Street, it appears that the earlier market extended westwards, almost to the western line of the churchyard, and further north: indeed, Market Street itself may lie east of the early medieval market. Later medieval and post-medieval colonization of the market place (see section 4.2.3) would account for the loss of at least part of the oft assumed medieval connection between Mermaid Street (formerly Middle Street) and Market Street. David and Barbara Martin have suggested an alternative model in which there was no connection, with the area between the market and West Street occupied by a seigneurial mansion, established in the 11th or 12th century by Fécamp Abbey.²¹³ There is no evidence for this, however, and, given that a lane roughly on the line of Mermaid Street survived in the 17th century between West Street and the western side of the suggested early market place, the original connection of Market Street and Mermaid Street is more likely.

A key element of the Norman town would have been the quay, but even here the matter is complicated by the fact that in addition to the surviving quay in the Strand area, there was by the 13th century a quay, or strand, on the eastern side of the town too. This was lost to erosion during the 14th century, but may have been equally important to the Norman town.²¹⁴

Between the two quays, or strands, and the market place, Courton and church, the present town comprises a roughly gridded network of streets. In its current form, this street layout appears to be missing an important element: although the scale of high medieval erosion on the east side of the town may have been exaggerated in the past, it is likely that landslip in this area accounts for loss of a cliff-top street continuing the line of East Cliff and linking to the eastern ends of the assumed Mermaid Street-Market Street spinal road and Watchbell Street-Church Square.²¹⁵ That the churchyard, market place and Courton fit within the gridded street plan suggests that its origins are early, and arguably of the 11th century. What is less plausible, however, is that the gridded layout within the later medieval town wall was established in its entirety at such an early date, or that the early Norman town was as extensive as that of the late 13th or early 14th century. The



Fig. 19. Standing section of the town wall, by the Strand Conduit.

plots, as surviving and recorded by historic mapping, do not suggest any particular sequence of development and, thus, a detailed understanding of the 11th and 12th-century street pattern and zoning of the town is reliant on future archaeological excavation.

4.2 Later medieval town (Maps 8-9)

4.2.1 Buildings

Rye preserves significant parts of its medieval defences, comprising parts of the town wall, together with one gate, and a small tower. Given the uncertainty as to whether the intention to build a castle at Rye in 1249 was ever fulfilled (see section 3.2.2), David and Barbara Martin have queried whether the modest sized Ypres Tower (Fig. 3) should be seen as part of these works, and have suggested that it may date from the 14th century, perhaps as late as the 1380s.²¹⁶ Certainly the machicolations, if primary, imply a date from c.1300 onwards, while the general form of the admittedly rather undiagnostic windows, fireplaces, and overall design suggest that Ypres Tower was built at the very end of the 13th century or in the early 14th century. The

building comprises a small square tower with cylindrical corner turrets. It has three storeys comprising a basement, a raised entrance floor and first floor. The tower projected from a detached length of the town wall (which survives on the north-east side only), and the disposition of the turret windows suggests that the wall and tower were built together.

The Land Gate (Fig. 6) is the only surviving gate at Rye, and dates to the early-mid 14th century, with a clearly added upper storey that is likely to be the result of recorded works of c.1380-5.²¹⁷ It has two round towers flanking a central gateway above which, on the north face, corbelled machicolations survive.

With the exception of the short detached section near Ypres Tower, the mid or late 14th-century town wall at Rye (see section 3.2.2 for a discussion of the dating) comprised a continuous length fortifying the vulnerable section of the town from the east cliff (i.e. just north-east of the Land Gate) to the west cliff (i.e. just to the south-east of the demolished Strand Gate). Of this around two-thirds survives, albeit little to a significant height or easily visible. The section from the Land Gate to Conduit Hill (where there was a postern gate, finally removed c.1819) survives along Turkey Cock Lane as a short retaining wall, and its narrowness suggests that it was low on its internal side and without a wall walk (Turkey Cock Lane itself providing defensive access to the battlements). To the south-west the town wall is more visible as it forms the rear wall of Cinque Ports Street car park, again retaining the higher land inside the defences. Within the car park section, an 18th-century gazebo is located on the remains of a square projecting interval tower. 4m to the south-west a vertical break in the town wall appears to mark a planned but not executed change in alignment of the wall. South-west of the car park the wall survives at 59 Cinque Ports Street, where a survey in 2005 showed that much of it has been rebuilt between the 16th and 18th centuries.²¹⁸ To the south-west of this (and Market Road) a section of town wall survives, again very much rebuilt, as a property boundary most easily visible from modern Jarrett's Close. Another section survives around Needles Passage, next to which a semi-circular bastion survived until c.1850: this has yet to be located precisely, and may have been a 16th-century addition. The wall, by now returning to head south and then south-eastwards towards the former Strand Gate, forms the boundary between properties in The Mint and Wish Ward: it stands to over 6m (near to its full height) by the Strand Conduit in Wish Ward (Fig. 19), at



Fig. 20. 40 Church Square.

the rear of 54 The Mint; and in the cellar of 55 The Mint, there are remains of a small interval tower and an arcaded section of the town wall recorded in more detail in the 18th century. The Strand Gate was demolished in 1815, and was located immediately east of the bottom end of Mermaid Street, facing The Mint: the stone plaque is built into the remains of the town wall to the south-east (i.e. now forming part of the Old Borough Arms Hotel). To the east of this the wall merges into the natural defences of the west cliff.²¹⁹

40 Church Square has been identified as one of the buildings occupied by the Sack friars, although no documentary grounds have been advanced for this.²²⁰ The building is of stone, with the north facing gable to Church Square having a small square-headed window and a large central window (largely rebuilt in the 19th-century, possibly faithfully copying a Decorated-style original). Evidently the north-south aligned building was not a chapel, but a domestic building. Given the limited dating evidence (which suggests a very late 13th or early 14th-century date) it is unlikely that it formed part of the friary: with the order banned from admitting new postulants in 1274, and presumably



Fig. 21. Flushing Inn, 4-5 Market Street: undercroft.²²¹

dwindling sharply before the Rye friary was dissolved in 1307 (see section 3.2.3) it is unlikely that it would have been undertaking major new building projects c.1300.

Although the first, short-lived accommodation of Austin friars (recorded in Rye by 1363-4) does not survive, the chapel of their friary on the corner of Conduit Hill and High Street, established in 1378, remains standing (Fig. 8). The interior is largely devoid of medieval detail, with a floor inserted (probably in the 16th century) and the roof replaced in 1905.²²² The east, south and west windows of the late 14th-century chapel remain, however, albeit blocked. There seem no doubts as to the identification of the surviving building as a chapel, although the survival of windows in the end walls confirms that the Austin friary church at Rye did not conform to the usual mendicant plan of preaching nave separated from the chancel (in effect the private chapel of the friars) by a walking place (i.e. a passage through the building, linking to the conventual buildings. Possible evidence of what would appear to be part of the foundations (measuring c.4m x 10m) of the eastern range of the latter was noted in 1847, running northwards from the north-east corner of the chapel.²²³

In addition to what appears to be a secular example at 40 Church Square (see above), there

is other evidence of early townhouses at Rye. Within the later houses at 8-9 West Street and 62 Church Square are remains of a stone wall lying parallel to the street frontage, and returning rearwards. The wall parallel to the street has a two-centred doorway opening towards the street (i.e. as if into a building between it and the street), which suggests the presence of timber-framed shops between the street and the stone-built domestic parts of a substantial parallel hall, perhaps of c.1300.²²⁴ Less fragmentary are the six stone-vaulted undercrofts in Rye that date from the late 13th or early 14th centuries, at 24 High Street (The White Vine); 4-5 Market Street (The Flushing Inn); 8 Market Street; The Mermaid, Mermaid Street (where the doorway and associated spur walls are an addition, probably of the late 14th or early 15th century); 32 Mermaid Street; and 1 Landgate.²²⁵ These formed the lower, semi-subterranean, part of what were probably townhouses operating commercially on two levels (known as split-level townhouses): the raised 'ground' floor, of which no evidence survives in these Rye examples, typically functioned as shops, with solars over and domestic parts to the rear. The commercial function of the Rye undercrofts is confirmed by the street frontage location, and the provision of the principal, and in some case only, access directly from the street, and, as in the numerous



Fig. 22. 22-4 Church Square: much-modified late 15th-century Wealden house.

examples from other English towns, probably involved both the stocking of valuable, if bulky, goods, and the serving of customers.²²⁶ The vaulted undercroft at the Flushing Inn opened into a now inaccessible timber-ceiled undercroft with loop windows to Pump Street, and similar two-part undercrofts elsewhere (most notably, The Vine, 8 Great Minster Street, Winchester) have been associated with use as taverns: the cellaring and drinking functions of wine taverns appear to have been both at undercroft level at this period, and two-part undercrofts provided some useful separation. At 24 High Street, the undercroft is also of two parts, although the small scale of the front part here and the lack of direct access suggest a different function.²²⁷ In addition to these datable vaulted undercrofts, there are several timber-ceiled examples at Rye, some of which are evidently medieval in date and some of which may predate the sacking of the town in 1377: examples include 1-2 Market Street, 20 Watchbell Street, and 29-30 High Street.²²⁸

Houses from c.1350-1500 are more numerous, with surveys by David and Barbara Martin showing that at least 37 of the present day properties preserve fabric from this period.²²⁹

These buildings are distributed relatively evenly within the walled area, (with an extra-mural example at 5-6 Landgate Square). The only notable exception is the absence of medieval survivals along the north side of the High Street to the east of Market Road, although this probably simply reflects the extent of post-medieval rebuilding that occurred here. The houses are characteristically urban in that they are built up to the street frontage. Unlike the majority of the earlier undercrofts, however, these post-1377 medieval timber-framed houses are almost all oriented parallel to the street and have relatively wide frontages: two thirds of the houses exceed 9.15m in width, with the widest example of an open hall house (99-100 High Street) measuring 17.10m. The width of the buildings has allowed adoption of the Wealden house type within Rye. There are ten firmly identified examples and a possible further two, dating from the late 14th century (16 East Street) onwards. The survival of a 14th-century Wealden house at 35 High Street, Winchester has demonstrated that such wide 'parallel hall' houses (which in Rye include numerous non-Wealden types too) were compatible with even the most intensely commercial of locations.²³⁰ Direct evidence of commercial function, however, is difficult to identify. Late medieval vaulted undercrofts at 58-60 Church Square and 16 Watchbell Street are similar to their earlier counterparts and almost certainly had a commercial function: other examples at 11 High Street and 46 Church Square are set back from the street and lack direct access from it, and, thus, appear to have a different use. At ground level evidence of the expected shops has almost entirely vanished, largely reflecting the lack of intact medieval façades. The most suggestive evidence is that of the timber-framed front range at 8-9 West Street and 62 Church Square. Here there are remains of five small units, each with a solar above, dating from c.1490. These appear to have replaced a similar arrangement, possibly of c.1300 (see above), in which shop units fronted a stone-built house: as at 48-52 Bridge Street and 38-42 Watergate Street, Chester,²³¹ one of the shops (or possibly the stair to the room above) interconnected with the house to the rear, but the remaining units are likely to have been rented out. Although not preserving evidence of shops, the fragmentary remains of a three storey house of c.1500, set over the earlier undercroft (see above), at 8 Market Street/23 and 23a Lion Street, show that it had jetties at both upper levels to both street fronts, providing a rare example of a more specifically urban form. Given its location on the edge of the market

place, a commercial function for the late medieval ground floor is almost certain.

4.2.2 Excavations

Several archaeological investigations have found subsurface remains of the medieval town wall. Excavation at **1-3 Tower Street** in 1979 discovered a post-medieval ditch against the external face of the wall (see section 4.3.2), but suggested that there was no earlier ditch.²³² A smaller trench dug in 1993 at the **Central Garage, Cinque Ports Street** revealed remains of the town wall on its projected line.²³³ Further work at this site in 2003 showed that the wall was 1.80m wide at this point, with an offset on the south (i.e. internal) side giving a foundation width of 2.20m. The northern part of the 17m long section of wall exposed here was different from that south of a slight dogleg, and the excavator suggested that the northern part was 14th century and the southern perhaps of 15th or even 16th-century date. A trench was dug extending c.5.7m from the outer face of the northern section of the wall to investigate any ditch, but none was found although the natural ground fell c.550mm. More significantly, the continuation of this trench inside the defensive wall showed that the ground level when it was built was roughly the same on either side of the wall.²³⁴ A trenched evaluation to the rear of buildings fronting the south-west side of **Market Road** (i.e. what is now called Jarrett's Close) in 1994 encountered considerable disturbance by Second World War air-raid shelters, but did identify two medieval pits, two other possible examples, and what appeared to be the footings of the town wall. The latter comprised four courses of irregular sandstone blocks.²³⁵ Two test pits were excavated at the northern end of the site in 1999, one of which was against the south face of the town wall, which was described as being of roughly coursed sandstone blocks. No foundation offset was identified. The excavator suggested that the wall was rebuilt in the 16th or 17th century.²³⁶ Six test pits were excavated at **Old Market Dairy, Cinque Ports Street** in 1999. Two of these were located against the northern face of subsurface remains of the town wall. A foundation offset was discovered and the wall itself was of apparently uncoursed rubble. The foundation offset was overlain by a bank, which appeared to slope steeply downwards into a ditch: the excavator suggested that this was a 14th-century feature that was maintained until the 18th century, in which case it contrasts with the findings at 1-3 Tower Street (see above).²³⁷ At **59 & 59a, Cinque Ports Street** one of four test trenches

excavated in 2001 was located against the northern face of the town wall, and was designed to investigate the ditch: the trench extended 2m from the wall, but no evidence of a ditch was found. The wall itself was investigated in another trench: it was unclear whether this was part of the upstanding wall or its foundation. A third trench south of the wall revealed two medieval rubbish pits that contained 14th and 15th-century material (including bung-hole pitcher).²³⁸

A watching brief carried out during reopening of the original doorway and addition of a ramp to **Ypres Tower** in 2007, showed that the doorway was built at least 1.20m above the ground level.²³⁹

Archaeological investigations during construction of a swimming pool at **Rye Lodge Hotel, East Cliff**, in 1999 identified 19th-century deposits only, but with residual pottery of 13th-14th-century date.²⁴⁰ An archaeological evaluation at **Tower House, Turkey Cock Lane**, in 2008, produced some medieval pottery sherds towards the bottom of the trenches, but no features of this period: any significant medieval archaeology probably lies at a depth of over 2m.²⁴¹

Despite its obvious importance and protected status as a Scheduled Monument, subsurface works within the surviving chapel of the **Austin Friary** (see section 3.2.3) were carried out in 1991 without archaeological excavation, although a salvage investigation was made. This involved recovery of material – including human skeletal remains – from spoil that had been removed from the site to Winchelsea Beach caravan park. As a consequence all stratigraphic relationships were lost and key finds, such as the pottery, may not form representative samples. The recovered bone was both animal and human. The 861 domestic animal bones were dominated by beef cattle (42%) and sheep (32.5%), together with small assemblages of bones from rabbit, goose or fowls. The animals bones and oyster shells probably derived from pre-friary (i.e. pre-1378) rubbish pits on the site. The 529 disarticulated human bones showed an equal division between men and women, and included children, clearly indicating that the burials were partly or wholly of the laity. Violent death (by possible sword-blow to the head of a woman) was only found in one case, but the young age of death in general could suggest an epidemic. The pottery assemblage included Rye, Winchelsea and Scarborough wares, with most dating from the 13th and 14th centuries: like the animal bone, this is likely to have derived from pre-friary rubbish pits.²⁴²

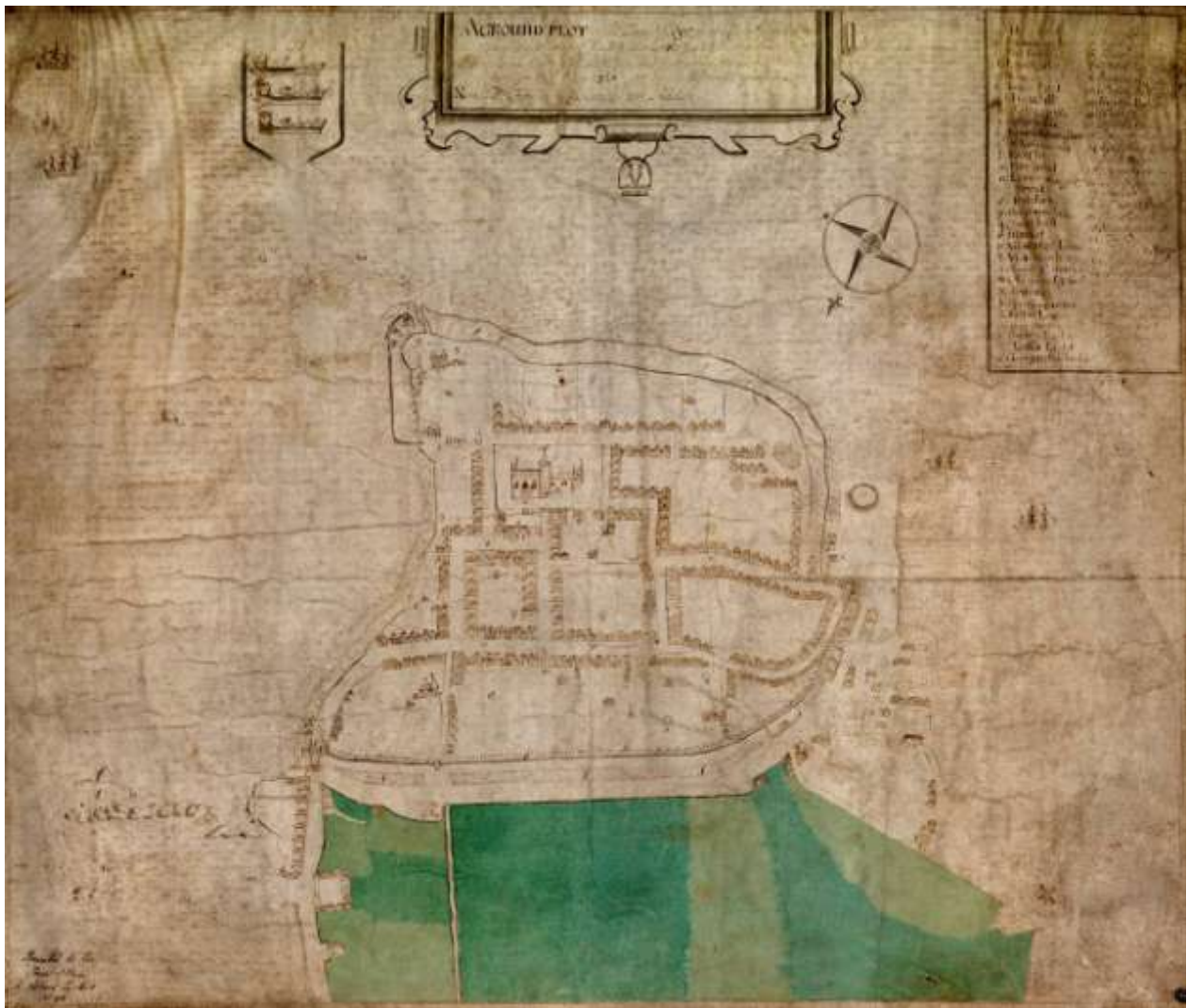


Fig. 23. 1728 copy of original plan by Samuel Jeake 1666/7 (ESRO 132/15).

Although outside the EUS study area at Rye Hill, Vidler's archaeological excavations that were intended to locate the hospital of St Bartholomew are noteworthy not for the failure to locate the hospital (see section 3.1.4 for his revised suggested location, since refuted), but for the fact that he discovered **tile and pottery kilns** dated to c.1250-1350.²⁴³

4.2.3 Topography

Although we have seen that it is probable that key elements of the town – the church, the market place, the Courton and the strands – and at least part of the gridded street plan were established by c.1200 (see above, section 4.1.3), the topography of Rye developed considerably in the period 1200-1500.

The defensive circuit of Rye has its origins in the 13th century, although the stone walls themselves were probably first erected in the 14th century (see sections 3.2.2 and 4.2.1). In the

absence of archaeological evidence to the contrary (see section 4.2.2), it is likely that the 13th-century defences were simply replaced by those in stone, although this has yet to be demonstrated. The degree to which the wall placed a constraint on the physical expansion of the town in the late medieval period is uncertain, as most evidence for plot and building sizes derives from the period after the sacking of 1377, when property values (reflecting pressure on space) in English towns had generally fallen well below their late 13th and early 14th-century levels. The limited evidence of the pre-1350 undercrofts – which are almost all at right-angles to the street frontage, and which include an extra mural example at Landgate – suggests that the town by c.1300 was densely occupied and the street pattern fully developed, and included the suburb at Landgate at least (the origins of the larger suburb at The Wishe are more obscure).

There were significant changes within the walled town. The earlier and more extensive market

place (see section 4.1.3) began to be infilled by the late 14th century. The degree to which any such encroachment – which ultimately appears to have led to the severance of the spinal street into modern Mermaid Street and Market Street – occurred before this late medieval documentary and architectural evidence is unclear, but, on analogy with other English towns, its origins at least may date back to the late 13th century. Between the market place and the churchyard, the Courton, where the pleas were held, was reduced in 1348 by creation of the vicarage plot at its western end. East of this, late 15th-century 1-2 Lion Street is jettied on three sides and appears to have been built on an island site surrounded by narrow lanes. Erosion on the eastern side of the town in the 14th century led to the loss of the eastern quay, or strand and the loss of the putative cliff-top street (see section 4.1.3). It is possible that as a result of the loss of the eastern strand, the western strand saw considerable late medieval expansion. Certainly, by the late 15th century the area of the strand included the fishmarket and extended towards modern Wish Street, and included numerous shops, or workshops.²⁴⁴ New elements within the town included the Austin friary of 1378, on its constrained site at 'le Haltone' on the corner of Conduit Hill and High Street (see above section 3.2.3). It is unclear whether the friary represented the first densely built-up usage of this part of the town.

4.3 The town c.1500-1840

4.3.1 Buildings

Rye's 16th-century boom, during which the number of households more than doubled, has left a considerable architectural legacy, with surveys by David and Barbara Martin showing that at least 65 surviving buildings originate from this period.²⁴⁵ All of these houses are timber framed: the apparent exception of an isolated cellar below 20th-century 30 High Street (formerly Woolworths) previously had a timber-framed superstructure. Many of the buildings have continuous jetties, and mark the late medieval demise of open halls. St Anthony's, 48 Church Square is a good early example with exposed timber framing from the late 15th or, possibly, the early 16th century, here forming an L-shaped complex with a contemporary Wealden open hall house at 1-2 Watchbell Street. 45-6 The Mint is another substantial and visible example, from c.1500. 34-36 Church Square is an early 16th-century house, with exposed close-studding at No. 34. At 6 Mermaid Street (of c.1525), the one-storey hall is set back from the street front



Fig. 24. 34-6 Church Square.

behind what appears to be a shop, or shops. More substantial than these examples is the Mermaid Inn, Mermaid Street, purpose-built as an inn c.1525 (Figs. 10 and 25). Here the continuous-jettied front range includes a covered wagon way, the service bay preserves a serving hatch, and the cross passage extends along the side of a rear range. The building was extended c.1570 to provide a new kitchen range (again, with a close-studded continuous jetty) and to expand the accommodation from the original five chambers. Further expansion followed c.1580, with a new eastern range creating further accommodation and a small enclosed courtyard.²⁴⁶ In addition to new buildings, the medieval housing stock of Rye saw widespread modification during the 16th century, most obviously with the insertion of upper floors in previously open halls.

With the town's decline it is unsurprising that there are relatively few surviving 17th-century buildings. Of the 12 identified examples, over half are timber framed. None of the examples has exposed framing on the street elevations, although internal survey has shown use of squared framing in timbers of comparatively small scantlings. 31 The Mint is a good example, dating from c.1600 and set gable-on to the



Fig. 25. Mermaid Inn, Mermaid Street: rear view of wagon way.

street.²⁴⁷ Jeake's House, Mermaid Street, is a substantial house (originally a storehouse) built of rubble stone with ashlar and brick quoins, dated to 1689. More substantial still, however, is the Old Grammar School, High Street (Fig. 14). The will of the founder Thomas Peacock refers to the building as a house (built in 1636), which on his death was to be converted to a school, which he endowed. This happened, with the building being conveyed to the corporation in 1644 (see section 3.3.4). The building is remarkable for its cut brickwork façade with giant Tuscan pilasters, and for its early use of gauged brickwork in the arches. With one large room on the ground and first floors, however, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that, the apparent implication of the will notwithstanding, it was purpose-built as a school house.

The population of Rye more than doubled in the 18th century and this is reflected in the 68 surviving buildings of this period. By far the majority of the 18th-century houses are of brick. Substantial and well-preserved examples include 50-2 Church Square; and the Quaker's House, Mermaid Street. Chequer, East Street is a four-bay three-storied townhouse, with brick pilasters at ends of the elevation and stone surrounds to the windows. Lamb House, West Street is an early 18th-century example built for James Lamb, of four bays and two storeys, again with brick

pilasters at the ends of the façade, and moulded brick architraves. This was extended northwards in the late 18th century, and the extension abuts a three-storied house at 1 Mermaid Street, built for Thomas Lamb in 1789. More unusual is the four-storied 18th-century brick-built turret-like gazebo in the garden of Tower House, West Street. Yellow stock bricks began to be used in the late 18th century at Rye, with examples at 1-3 High Street (2 High Street having stone pilasters at first and second-floor levels). 18th-century houses built using mathematical tiles include 86 High Street, 5 Landgate. In some cases brick is combined with tile-hanging and weatherboarding: both are used for the upper storey at modest sized Ockman Cottage, Ockmans Lane. Entirely weather-boarded buildings of this period include 1-5 Church Square. Numerous earlier timber-framed houses were re-fronted in the 18th century. Brick examples include 8-10 Church Square; The George, High Street; 11 High Street; 85 High Street; and 1-2 Watchbell Street. At 54-60 Church Square the 18th-century re-fronting is in mathematical tile.

The town hall, by Andrew Jelfe, was built in 1742 in red brick, with Portland stone dressings, and is the most substantial public building in Rye



Fig. 26. The George, High Street: 18th-century façade.



Fig. 27. 18th-century houses at the junction of Mermaid Street and West Street.

(Fig. 13). The ground floor of the façade includes an arcade of five bays, matched by the windows above, which light the first-floor council chamber. Although much smaller the water tower in the north-east corner of the churchyard is another example of civic enterprise. Dating from 1733-5, it is oval in plan and sits on a lower domed cistern.

The late 18th-century acceleration of population growth was followed by still faster expansion in the early 19th century. This ushered in new building types, such as the modest terrace housing seen at 2-16 The Ropewalk, in which each of the two storeys has a single window. At Spring Place, 1-11 Military Road the houses are similarly scaled but entirely of brick, while those nearby at 37-67 Military Road are slightly more ambitious in that they have dormer windows to attics and the whole terrace forms a slight crescent (Fig. 29). More varied terraced housing of c.1800 also survives at 1-13 Tower Street. Pairs of small cottages include red-brick 4 and 5 East Street, and 50 and 51 The Mint. Individual houses from the early 19th-century include 11 Watchbell Street, which has a stuccoed façade with a three-storey bay (upper storeys are bow fronted and the ground-floor bay is canted); and substantial red-brick 24 Watchbell Street.

Commercial buildings of the early 19th century include the assembly rooms at the George Inn, which date from 1818, and are reflected externally by two first-floor bow windows overlooking the High Street. More substantial are the warehouses of this period on the Strand, which include an example with a datestone of 1823.

Although Quaker House was apparently built c.1700 as a Friends' Meeting House, and later used by the Baptists (see section 3.3.2), it is only after c.1800 that more readily recognizably purpose-built chapels were built. With the loss of the Methodist church by the Gun Garden to bombing in the Second World War,²⁴⁸ the earliest surviving chapel is the former Independent-Congregational chapel in Watchbell Street, built in 1817: now a private house (The Studio Chambers), it has a red-brick façade with wide round-arched windows. The Bethel Strict Baptist chapel, 13 Military Road, is a stuccoed building of c.1835, with a Neo-Classical porch: it remains in use.

Most of the defences erected in the Rye area during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars lie outside the town (see section 3.3.3). However, one of the three Martello towers built near Rye in 1805-8 lies within the EUS study area (tower no. 30). This neglected building is



Fig. 28. Water tower in the churchyard.



Fig. 29. 37-67 Military Road.

located just south of the town on the Winchelsea Road, and is circular with thick cement rendered brick walls, three storeys (the lower originally the magazine), and an earth rampart.

4.3.2 Excavations

At **1-3 Tower Street** excavation in 1979 followed demolition of two 19th-century houses, and revealed a shallow and wide post-medieval ditch, which was infilled c.1750.²⁴⁹

An oblong brick building excavated within the **Gun Garden** in 1997 has been identified as the magazine of a gun battery established here in 1762. Although the brick foundations survived well, it was unclear to the excavator whether the building itself dated to 1762 or possible later rebuilding (suggested as occurring in 1859). The building was demolished in 1935.²⁵⁰

4.3.3 Topography (Maps 10-12)

Jeake's map of 1666/7 shows that the intramural plan of the town by then was essentially identical to that today (Fig. 23).

Outside the walls, there has been greater change. Following expansion during the 16th century, the suburb of Wishe was largely vacated as the population declined from c.1600, not recovering until the 19th century. Likewise,

the Strand, which had already gained a new quay in 1480, saw further development during the 16th-century boom, with new jetties built in 1551 and 1569, and a new 27.4m-long stone quay in 1571. Although the Strand expanded westwards between 1666/7 and 1771 approximately to the present river line, this saw the loss of the inner harbour (i.e. outside the main river channel) and loss of rows of shops and workshops in the fishmarket area on its northern side. The widened southern part of the Strand, however, saw new building in the 18th and early 19th centuries in the form of substantial warehouses.²⁵¹

Although the extra mural road on the northern side of the town (now Cinque Ports Street and Tower Street) appears early in origins, and is shown on Jeake's map of 1666/7, the southern and eastern equivalents (South Undercliff and Fishmarket Road), comprise early 19th-century development, albeit roughly following informal paths or trackways along the bottom of the cliffs in evidence from the 18th century. The formal setting out of the road here presumably dates from the building of the Royal Military Canal and its accompanying road, built from Hythe Bay to Pett Level in 1804-6 (see section 3.3.3), and is shown on the tithe map of 1840. In addition to the cliff bottom road, a river edge road – now called Rock Channel – was also set out by 1840, giving land access to a scatter of warehouses or shipbuilding yards. On the south side of the river, limited commercial development had also occurred by 1840, although housing on the landward side of Winchelsea Road (between the town and Martello tower) was more significant. On the opposite side of the town, new suburbs – largely of modest-sized workers' houses – were established in the early 19th century on the northern side of Cinque Ports Street and, further from the historic core, along Military Road.

4.4 Expansion: c.1840-2009 (Maps 3, 4, 13 and 14)

4.4.1 Buildings and topography

The majority of the buildings in Rye date from this period, partly as a result of loss of earlier buildings, but mainly through expansion in the form of 19th and 20th-century suburbs. Although the arrival of the railway at Rye in 1851 had a significant impact on the topography, the very modest rise in population to 1881 followed by a slight fall means that the mid/late 19th and early 20th-century suburbs are limited in extent.



Fig. 30. Warehouse on The Strand, dated 1859.

The earliest development was concentrated around the station itself, combining the market (incorporated in 1859), gas works, iron foundry, and houses in Ferry Road (all by 1872). To the north of the town, house building continued to extend the early 19th-century suburb along Military Road. By 1897 terraced housing was built at the western end of South Undercliff, and extended further along the road by 1914. By 1897 housing had slightly expanded on the northern side of the town, with terraced and semi-detached houses either side of the railway line in Ropewalk, and expansion of the terraced housing in Ferry Road area (which included Sydney Villas, Tillingham Avenue): both areas saw further terraced housing in the Edwardian period. In addition to the workhouse (1843-5) and the cemetery (1854), the higher land at Rye Hill began to attract a scattering of spacious villas, mostly built in the period 1897-1909. The inter-war years saw typical ribbon development, predominantly of semi-detached houses, on the west and east sides of Rye, (Udimore Road and Guildeford Road respectively). Nearer the town centre, this period saw small areas of dense terraced housing at Cadborough View (i.e. by the Tillingham Sluice), and 119-139 South Undercliff. Although the overall population has remained largely static since 1945, post-war reduction in density of occupation has seen much extensive building of suburbs. This includes ribbon development (e.g. along New

Winchelsea Road), and, especially, estates largely detached from the historic town: King's Avenue, on the eastern side of Rye; North Salts, on the north (1950s-60s); Fair Meadow, Hilltop Drive and Mill Road, at Rye Hill; Love Lane, adjacent to the secondary school (1970s); Cadborough Cliff, off the Udimore Road; and, most extensively, at Tilling Green (1950s-60s).

Within the EUS study area, notable buildings of the mid-19th century include the Italianate brick and stucco railway station of 1851, by William Tress (Fig. 15). The nearby contemporary Gatekeeper's Cottage, The Grove, was also built for the railway in Italianate style. At 9 and 11 Ferry Road a weatherboarded building of the 1840s was built as a carpenter's workshop and cottage. Of public buildings of this period, the boys' National School, Mermaid Street, of 1867 (now a boys' club), and the larger Board school, Lion Street of 1872-3 (now an adult education centre) are both good examples of Gothic designs using brick with restrained polychrome. Houses of this period include 42-3 The Mint, which are modest brick-built cottages dated to 1876.

Late Victorian and Edwardian buildings include a substantial red-brick and stone Neo-Georgian villa at Point Hill designed c.1890 by Sir Reginald Blomfield (now subdivided). A more modest example of late 19th-century Neo-Georgian architecture survives within the town centre in the form of 21 Lion Street, which has three bays separated by pilaster strips, all in red brick and with a contemporary shopfront. A substantial commercial building of the period comprises the four-storey brick-built repository and stores at 17 Tower Street, designed by Philip Henry Tree for the carriers Wright & Pankhurst (1907).

Within the EUS study area, post-1918 building has been modest. 30 High Street (formerly Woolworths) is a good example of mid-1930s architecture, although, ironically, the most obvious building in the town of this period is not self-evidently of this date: the present weatherboarded Rye windmill was built in 1932 following the destruction of its predecessor in a fire of 1930. The brick and stucco Roman Catholic church of St Anthony of Padua, Watchbell Street was built in 1927 in a Spanish-Romanesque style by John Bernard Mendham. Post-1945 building in the historic core has seen building of the Budgen's supermarket off Station Approach, blocks of flats (Strand Court) replacing commercial buildings on the Strand, and industrial buildings on either side of the river channel on the southern edge of the town.

5 STATEMENT OF HISTORIC URBAN CHARACTER

5.1 Town summary

5.1.1 Historic environment overview

The varied fortunes of the medieval port of Rye, which saw recoveries in the 16th century and c.1800, are reflected in its historic fabric, with preservation helped by the fact that late 19th and 20th-century development has tended to add to rather than destroy the earlier town. The area within the medieval wall (which in some parts is visible above ground) constitutes one of the best survivals of medieval and post-medieval Sussex: key buildings include the church, Ypres Tower, the Land Gate, the Austin Friary and numerous townhouses. Less visible is the archaeological evidence of the earlier town, and the potential of this archaeology has begun to be realized through a series of excavations.

5.1.2 Historic environment designations (Map 5)

There are 287 listed buildings, or groups of buildings, or structures in the EUS study area (four Grade I, 10 Grade II*, and 273 Grade II). Of these, 53 predate 1500; 63 are 16th century; 12 are 17th century; 68 are 18th century; 51 are early 19th century (this includes groups of terraced houses); 11 are from 1841-1880; seven are from 1881-1913; and four are from 1914-45. There are several undated listed 'buildings', principally comprising cobbled streets.²⁵²

Rye has a Conservation Area (with a discrete section north of the railway, at the southern end of Military Road). There are six Scheduled Monuments in the EUS study area, comprising Ypres Tower, the Land Gate, a section of the town walls, the Austin friars' chapel, the water tower in the churchyard, and the Martello tower on Winchelsea Road (all of which are also listed buildings). Just outside the EUS study area, the site of Rye Hill medieval pottery and tilery is also a Scheduled Monument.

5.1.3 Historic building materials

The buildings, or parts of buildings, that predate the French sacking of Rye in 1377 are of stone, very probably representing the impact of fire on timber-framed buildings in the town. This comprises local sandstone, Caen stone, and flint rubble. Late medieval houses are predominantly

timber framed, as are those of the 16th-century revival. The modest amount of building in the 17th century included the remarkable brick-built Old Grammar School of 1636. With the late 18th-century growth of the town, brick became dominant, albeit frequently used in conjunction with sandstone, weatherboarding, and tile-hanging. Clay tiles are used for roofs, tile-hanging, and mathematical tiles (of which there are only two identified examples, both late 18th century).

5.2 Historic Character Types

5.2.1 Historic Character Types and chronology (Maps 7-14)

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 time-depth 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.

This approach gives time-depth to the map-based 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 7-12) 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.

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.

5.2.2 Historic Character Types in Rye (Maps 13 and 14)

Although Historic Character Types represent county-wide types, modern Rye 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 *regular burgage plots* reflects the fact that Rye was a new borough (albeit with less than fully understood pre-Conquest origins) that emerged in the late 11th century.

5.3 Historic Urban Character Areas (Map 15)

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 5 in Rye combines three Historic Character Types that represent *regular burbage plots* dating from Period 5 (1066-1149) and Period 6 (1150-1349), *irregular historic plots* that date from Period 10 (18th century), and a *suburb* that dates from Period 15 (1946-present). Combining this complexity into a single HUCA called *High Street* 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 or which constitute market places) 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 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 16)

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 Rother 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 Rye (below, section 6). 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 Rye's Historic Urban Character Areas (Map 15)

The following assessments of the Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) of Rye commence with those that make up the historic core. Inevitably, these assessments are more extensive than those that relate to more recent developments in the town.

HUCA 1 Church (HEV 5)

HUCA 1 consists of the historic churchyard, within which is the parish church of St Mary. Little is known of the early history of the parish church, but it is likely that one of the five churches of *Rameslie* in Domesday Book (1086) was at Rye, and almost certainly on this site.

There are two listed buildings. The church of St Mary (Grade I) is the only pre-1200 building to survive in Rye. With the eastern arm, which doubtless comprised the earliest part of the Norman church, replaced in the 15th century (although the 13th-century aisle-chapels survive), the oldest surviving fabric comprises the transepts and crossing, which date from c.1150-80. The nave is slightly later, combining slightly pointed arches to the arcades with dogtooth, rolls, hollows and chamfers, and probably dates from c.1200. To the north-east of the church, and on a site quite obviously carved out of the churchyard, there is a brick-built water tower (Grade II* and a Scheduled Monument). Dating

from 1733-5, it is oval in plan and sits on a lower domed cistern.

Although there have been no excavations within this HUCA, the presence of the Norman church and churchyard (probably a successor to a pre-Conquest church) means that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is high.

The surviving medieval and post-medieval buildings combine with the archaeological potential and the visibility of the historic fabric to give this HUCA the very highest **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 5.

HUCA 1 has seen little change in the 20th and 21st centuries. Although the Historic Environment Value is very high, the protected nature of the water tower, church and churchyard means that **vulnerability** is low.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the origins and development of the church (RQ2, RQ8, RQ9).

HUCA 2 Ypres Tower (HEV 5)

HUCA 2 comprises the extent of the small town castle (Ypres Tower), with the adjacent gun gardens. Despite a reference to proposed works to a castle at Rye in 1249, there is no certainty that there was such a building until the 14th century. The adjacent area (which includes the cliff) may have been used for defences from this time, and certainly was so in the Tudor period: a cliff-top gun enclosure is recorded in 1521, and works in 1544-5 included the Upper Gun Garden (next to Ypres Tower) and the Lower Gun Garden (below Ypres Tower). The courtyard and Women's Tower (i.e. prison) to the east of Ypres Tower dates from 1837. Today Ypres Tower stands (used as a museum), while the Upper Gun Garden is a small civic garden and view point (still furnished with cannon), the Lower Gun Garden is a pub garden, and the cliff is grassed area, too steep for use.

Ypres Tower is the only listed building (Grade I and a Scheduled Monument). The stone-rubble building comprises a small square tower with cylindrical corner turrets. It has three storeys comprising a basement, a raised entrance floor and first floor. The tower projected from a detached length of the town wall (which survives on the north-east side only). It has been suggested that it may date from the 14th century, perhaps as late as the 1380s: the machicolations, if primary, imply a date from c.1300 onwards, while the general form of the rather undiagnostic windows, fireplaces, and overall design suggest that Ypres Tower was

built at the very end of the 13th century or in the early 14th century.

Recent archaeological investigations in this HUCA (both in the Upper Gun Garden and at Ypres Tower) have shown that the **archaeological potential** for both medieval and post-medieval defences is high.

The importance of the surviving medieval tower; the visibility of much of the historic fabric; and the archaeological potential give this HUCA the very highest **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 5.

Ypres Tower itself has seen modest changes in the 20th and 21st centuries, principally relating to improved access and repair (e.g. the re-roofing). The adjacent gun gardens and Women's Tower have seen little change either, but the lack of protection afforded to these through listing or scheduling, suggests that the **vulnerability** is medium. Perhaps the greatest threats are to the potentially rich archaeology through soft or hard landscaping.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the town defences (RQ17, RQ22).

HUCA 3 Market place (HEV 5)

HUCA 3 lies north of the church, and comprises an area at the junction of the Lion Street and Market Street, which historically formed part of the originally more open public spaces of the Courton and the market. The function of the Courton – where pleas were held before 1348 – is perpetuated by the 18th-century town hall, while the once open market place (which is likely to have been crossed by street linking Mermaid Street and Market Street) has been lost to late medieval and post-medieval colonization. Today the area comprises shops, houses, the former Board school (an adult education centre), and the town hall.

There are eight listed buildings, or structures, (one Grade II* and seven Grade II) of which two are Period 8 (16th century), three are Period 10 (18th century), one is Period 11 (1800-40), one is Period 12 (1841-80), and one, a cobbled road leading off Lion Street, is not closely datable. Of these, the town hall (Grade II*) is especially noteworthy: by Andrew Jelfe, this was built in 1742 in red brick, with Portland stone dressings. The ground floor of the façade includes an arcade of five bays, matched by the windows above, which light the first-floor council chamber. The coat of arms of Rye is set into the parapet, and the roof is surmounted by a cupola. 1-2 Lion Street (Fletcher's House) is also of particular

significance: the 16th-century timber-framed house has continuous jetties on three sides and overlooked the street on the east and former market lanes on the south and north (possibly the west too). Almost certainly, the building had a commercial function from the outset. The former Board school, Lion Street, dates from 1872-3 and is a good example of a Gothic polychrome brick building.

Although there have been no archaeological investigations in the HUCA, the known medieval use of this area, and the survival of buildings from the 16th-century onwards suggests that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is high.

The combination of post-medieval buildings, and the significant archaeological potential gives this HUCA the very highest **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 5.

HUCA 3 has seen little change since the building of the school in the 19th century. Although there is little scope for further infill development and the buildings are all listed, the high Historic Environment Value of the area and its location near the commercial centre of the modern town mean that its **vulnerability** is low/medium. The greatest threat is to subsurface archaeology adjacent to the former school.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the origins and development of different zones in the medieval town (RQ7, RQ13).

HUCA 4 Mermaid and Watchbell Streets (HEV 5)

HUCA 4 comprises much of the intra mural town, extending west-east from The Mint (i.e. the western continuation of the High Street) to the eastern side of Church Square. In the absence of detailed medieval documentation, excavation or clear topographic or architectural evidence, the likely progressive development of this area is uncertain: it is likely that elements of the roughly gridded layout of the HUCA were established and occupied in the early Norman period, and, equally, it is probable that this was extended and more densely realized during the 13th and early 14th centuries. Today, the HUCA includes some commerce (mainly shops, pubs and hotels), but is largely residential in character.

There are 103 listed buildings, or groups of buildings, and structures (seven Grade II*, and 96 Grade II) of which seven are Period 6 (1150-1349), 16 are Period 7 (1350-1499), 36 are Period 8 (16th century), four are Period 9 (17th century), 21 are Period 10 (18th century), 12 are Period 11 (1800-40), one is Period 12 (1841-80),

and two are Period 13 (1881-1913). Two buildings were inaccessible (and have not been otherwise dated) and two listed 'buildings' comprised cobbled roads and are not closely datable. HUCA 4 contains several notably early examples of surviving townhouses. 40 Church Square has been identified as one of the buildings occupied by the Sack friars, although no documentary grounds have been advanced for this: the importance of the building is that it is a late 13th or early 14th-century stone-built townhouse. Evidence of other early townhouses survives, although less visibly. Within the later houses at 8-9 West Street and 62 Church Square are remains of a stone wall lying parallel to the street frontage, and returning rearwards, probably originally separating shop units from a domestic hall perhaps of c.1300. Stone-vaulted undercrofts from the late 13th or early 14th centuries survive at 4-5 Market Street (The Flushing Inn: Grade II*); The Mermaid, Mermaid Street (where the doorway and associated spur walls are an addition, probably of the late 14th or early 15th century: Grade II*); and 32 Mermaid Street. There are late medieval vaulted undercrofts at 46 Church Square (set back from the street frontage), 58-60 Church Square and 16 Watchbell Street. St Anthony's, 48 Church Square (Grade II*) is a good early example of exposed timber framing from the late 15th or, possibly, the early 16th century, here forming an L-shaped complex with a contemporary Wealden open hall house at 1-2 Watchbell Street. 16th-century buildings include the substantial Mermaid Inn, Mermaid Street, purpose-built (albeit over the earlier stone undercroft – see above) as an inn c.1525, and including a covered wagon way (Grade II*). The 18th century saw widespread adoption of brick, with good examples at Lamb House, West Street (early 18th century: Grade II*), and the unusual four-storied brick-built turret-like gazebo in the garden of Tower House, West Street. 19th-century buildings of note include the former Independent-Congregational chapel in Watchbell Street of 1817 (now The Studio Chambers).

Burgage plots are reasonably well preserved, especially on Mermaid Street, Watchbell Street and the south side of Church Square.

Although the only subsurface archaeological investigation in this HUCA (12 Church Square, 2008) was unproductive, the evident early occupation, and the extremely good survival of medieval and early post-medieval buildings (itself reflecting a lack of redevelopment), means that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is high.

The surviving historic buildings, the completeness of the historic street-fronts and the survival of early plot boundaries, combine with the archaeological potential to give this HUCA the highest **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 5.

There has been little development in HUCA 4 since 1945, with the garages to the rear of 15-16 Watchbell Street being something of an exception. The considerable Historic Environment Value of the area, however, means that **vulnerability** is medium, with the main threats being to redevelopment of unlisted 19th and 20th-century buildings, and to subsurface interventions through extensions and garden features.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the extent of the Norman town, origins of the street plan and the development of burgage plots (RQ6, RQ12).

HUCA 5 High Street (HEV 4)

HUCA 5 comprises much of the northern part of the intra mural town, extending south-west to north-east from The Mint (i.e. the western continuation of the High Street) to East Cliff. It is unclear as to what degree this area was occupied in the early Norman period (or, indeed, before that), but it is likely that the High Street was established by 1200, and certainly that the area was densely occupied – and formed part of the commercial heart of the town – by the late 13th and early 14th centuries. Today the High Street forms the principal shopping street of Rye.

There are 84 listed buildings, or groups of buildings, (one Grade I; one Grade II*; and 82 Grade II) of which two are Period 6 (1150-1349), 18 are Period 7 (1350-1499), 18 are Period 8 (16th century), seven are Period 9 (17th century), 21 are Period 10 (18th century), 15 are Period 11 (1800-40), two are Period 12 (1841-80), and one is Period 13 (1881-1913). The earliest buildings comprise two stone-vaulted undercrofts dating from the late 13th or early 14th centuries, at 24 High Street (The White Vine), and 8 Market Street. At 99-100 High Street the timber framing of a house of c.1420 survives, which had a substantial open hall 9.2m in length. It is typical in that its later re-facing hides the medieval framing: the substantial ostensibly 18th-century The George, High Street, is another example. The most significant building in the HUCA, however, is one of Rye's few 17th-century buildings: the Old Grammar School (Grade I). Built in 1636 (very probably as a school, rather than converted to this use later), this building is remarkable for its cut brickwork façade with giant

Tuscan pilasters, and for its early use of gauged brickwork in the arches. Two unlisted buildings of importance have been identified at 28b and 30 High Street (both 16th century).

Burgage plots are reasonably well preserved, although they have been lost either side of Market Road (i.e. at Jarrett's Close and Meryon Court).

Recent archaeological investigations at the rear of High Street plots in the Market Road area (including an evaluation at Jarrett's Close in 1994, which produced – admittedly residual – sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery), and the good survival of medieval and post-medieval buildings suggest that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is high.

The survival of numerous medieval and post-medieval buildings, partial survival of historic plots, and the archaeological potential give this HUCA a high **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 4.

HUCA 5 has seen significant change since 1900, with some street frontage commercial redevelopment (e.g. 30 High Street – formerly Woolworths – which is a good example of mid-1930s architecture, with a cellar of probable 16th-century date below) and, especially, rear of plot redevelopment (most notably Jarrett's Close and Meryon Court). Given the scope for further infill development, evident commercial pressure, and the presence of a scatter of unlisted buildings (susceptible to replacement), and the high Historic Environment Value, the **vulnerability** is medium.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the extent of the Norman town, origins of the street plan and the development of burgage plots (RQ6, RQ12).

HUCA 6 Friary (HEV 4)

HUCA 6 comprises an intra mural area between East Cliff and Conduit Hill known in the medieval period as 'le Haltone', and which, in 1378, was granted to the Augustinian, or Austin, friars (first recorded at Rye in 1363-4). Although the friary was suppressed in 1524, the chapel survives (in 2009, unused), although the conventual buildings have been long lost and replaced by a hotel and community centre.

The rubble and ashlar Austin friars' chapel is the only listed building (Grade 2 and a Scheduled Monument). The interior is largely devoid of medieval detail, with a floor inserted (probably in the 16th century) and the roof replaced in 1905. The east, south and west windows of the late

14th-century chapel remain, however, albeit blocked. There seem no doubts as to the identification of the surviving building as a chapel, although the survival of windows in the end walls confirms that the Austin friary church at Rye did not conform to the usual mendicant plan of preaching nave separated from the chancel (in effect the private chapel of the friars) by a walking place (i.e. a passage through the building, linking to the conventual buildings).

Recent archaeological investigations (comprising salvage during works in 1991, and a more conventional evaluation underway at the time of writing in 2009) have shown that the **archaeological potential** is high.

The importance of the surviving chapel; the visibility of much of the historic fabric; and the archaeological potential give this HUCA a high **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 4.

The HUCA has seen considerable change during the 20th century, with redevelopment of the northern and eastern parts and, remarkably, archaeological destructive works within the Scheduled Monument in 1991, without provision for proper archaeological record. Given this history, the current redundancy of the chapel, and the high Historic Environment Value, the **vulnerability** is high.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the origins and development of the religious house (RQ13).

HUCA 7 Cinque Ports Street (HEV 3)

HUCA 7 lies to the north and north-west of the medieval town, and comprises an extra mural suburb (built against the medieval town wall and over the assumed town ditch), which saw some development in the 16th and 18th centuries, but which was more substantially developed in the 19th century. Today the HUCA comprises a mix of commercial and residential properties, between the town centre and the railway station/market.

There are 17 listed buildings, or groups of buildings, and walls (all Grade II) of which three are Period 6 (1150-1349), one is Period 8 (16th century), seven are Period 10 (18th century), five are Period 11 (1800-40), and one is Period 13 (1881-1913). The Period 6 remains comprise different sections of the town wall, which appear to be 14th-century in origin, replacing 13th-century earth defences. The section from the Land Gate to Conduit Hill (where there was a postern gate, finally removed c.1819) survives along Turkey Cock Lane as a short retaining wall. To the south-west the town wall is more visible as it

forms the rear wall of Cinque Ports Street car park, again retaining the higher land inside the defences (here an 18th-century gazebo is located on the remains of a square projecting interval tower). South-west of the car park the wall survives at 59 Cinque Ports Street (much here has been rebuilt between the 16th and 18th centuries). To the south-west of this (and Market Road) a section of town wall survives, again very much rebuilt, as a property boundary most easily visible from modern Jarrett's Close. Another section survives around Needles Passage. The oldest building in the HUCA is the timber-framed Crown Inn, Ferry Road, dating from c.1565. Of more recent buildings (and reflecting the commercial function of much of the suburb), 17 Tower Street is distinctive: it is a substantial four-storey brick-built repository of 1907, designed by Philip Henry Tree for the carriers Wright & Pankhurst.

Recent archaeological investigations in the vicinity of the town wall and the likely presence of a medieval town ditch suggest that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is moderate, and locally high.

The survival of sections of the medieval town wall (above and below ground) and buildings from the 16th century onwards, combine with the archaeological potential to give this HUCA an **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 3.

HUCA 7 has seen considerable change since 1945, with redevelopment along the Cinque Ports Street frontage and to the rear of plots on the northern side. The number of unlisted late 19th and 20th-century buildings and the scope for further development or conversion means that **vulnerability** is medium, with perhaps the main threat being to the subsurface remains of the medieval defences.

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

HUCA 8 Wishe (HEV 2)

HUCA 8 lies on the western edge of the medieval town, comprising a late medieval extra mural suburb largely abandoned after c.1600 and not significantly re-occupied until the 19th century. Today it is a largely residential suburb located between the historic town and the more substantial 20th-century suburbs to the west.

There are four listed buildings (all Grade II), of which two are Period 10 (18th century), one is Period 11 (1800-40) and one is Period 14 (1914-45). The most distinctive building is the weatherboarded Rye windmill, although this was

rebuilt in 1932 following the destruction of its predecessor in a fire of 1930.

The location of the HUCA outside the medieval defences and the apparent absence of suburbs prior to c.1500 (or any earlier known occupation) in this area suggests that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is limited: this is supported by the lack of archaeological evidence found during an evaluation at Blackman's Yard, Wish Street, in 2002.

The small number of later post-medieval buildings and the archaeological potential give this HUCA an **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 2.

HUCA 8 has seen modest change since 1945, mainly comprising loss of the gas works (now a car park). With little scope for infill and the modest Historic Environment Value of the area, this means that **vulnerability** is low. The main threat is loss of unlisted 19th-century terraced housing.

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

HUCA 9 Station (HEV 2)

HUCA 9 is centred on the railway station (opened 1851) and the adjacent and contemporary market. Both these functions are retained (although the market is now general rather than for cattle), with the commercial function extended by location here of a supermarket.

There are three listed buildings, all Grade II and all of Period 12 (1841-80). The earliest probably predates the railway, and comprises a weatherboarded carpenter's workshop and adjoining cottage at 9-11 Ferry Road. The Italianate brick and stucco railway station of 1851 is by William Tress. The nearby contemporary Gatekeeper's Cottage, The Grove, was also built for the railway in an Italianate style.

The location of the HUCA outside the extent of the pre-1840 town suggests that the **archaeological potential** is limited.

The survival of several 19th-century buildings, and the archaeological potential give this HUCA an **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 2.

HUCA 9 has seen considerable redevelopment in the 20th century, especially with redevelopment of the market and former railway goods yard areas. There is considerable scope for further infill, but the modest Historic Environment Value suggests that the

vulnerability of the HUCA is low. Perhaps the greatest threat is to the unusual continuity of function represented by the surviving market.

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

HUCA 10 Land Gate (HEV 4)

HUCA 10 lies on the northern edge of medieval Rye, adjacent to the principal inland-facing defensive gate (Land Gate), partly inside the walled town, but largely outside. In origins it comprises a medieval extra mural suburb. Today the HUCA is a mix of commercial and residential properties.

There are 23 listed buildings, or groups of buildings, (one Grade I; 21 Grade II; and one listed as having no grade) of which two are Period 6 (1150-1349), one is Period 7 (1350-1499), six are Period 8 (16th century), six are Period 10 (18th century), five are Period 11 (1800-40), two are Period 12 (1841-80), and one is Period 13 (1881-1913). The rubble and ashlar Land Gate (Grade I and a Scheduled Monument) is the most significant building. It is the only surviving gate at Rye, and dates to the early-mid 14th century, with a clearly added upper storey that is likely to be the result of recorded works of c.1380-5. It has two round towers flanking a central gateway above which, on the north face, corbelled machicolations survive. A stone-vaulted undercroft of the late 13th or early 14th centuries at 1 Land Gate demonstrates the at least partly commercial nature of the early suburb. A 15th-century timber-framed house at 5-6 Landgate Square shows that the suburb extended towards the later railway.

Although there have been no recent archaeological investigations in the area, the survival of medieval buildings, including the Land Gate itself, and post-medieval buildings suggest that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is high.

The survival of buildings from the late 13th- early 14th centuries onwards, and the archaeological potential give this HUCA an **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 4.

HUCA 10 has seen little change since 1945. Although there is little scope for infill, the number of unlisted 19th-century buildings (susceptible to redevelopment) means that **vulnerability** is low to medium.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the town defences, and medieval suburbs (RQ13, RQ17).

HUCA 11 Military Road (HEV 2)

HUCA 11 lies north of the medieval and modern town, forming a residential suburb largely strung out along Military Road. Today the eastern side of the road is densely built-up, while the steeply contoured western side (an eroded cliff line) is less densely occupied.

There are 11 listed buildings, or groups of buildings, (all Grade II), of which four are Period 10 (18th century), four are Period 11 (1800-40), one is Period 12 (1841-80), one is Period 13 (1881-1913), and one is Period 14 (1914-45).

The most distinctive buildings are the small early 19th-century brick-built terraced houses at Spring Place, 1-11 Military Road (with the adjoining unlisted Bethel Street Baptist chapel, of c.1835), and at 37-67 Military Road (where the terrace forms a slight crescent). By contrast there is substantial red-brick and stone Neo-Georgian villa at Point Hill designed c.1890 by Sir Reginald Blomfield (now subdivided).

The location of the HUCA outside the medieval town suggests that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is limited.

The small number of later post-medieval buildings and the archaeological potential give this HUCA an **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 2.

HUCA 11 has seen some changes since 1945, most notably with the loss of houses of 1840-80 (including Wellington Terrace and the adjacent almshouses) to the North Salts estate. With little scope for infill and the modest Historic Environment Value of the area, this means that **vulnerability** is low. The main threat is further subdivision of the large villas and their grounds (most notably Mountsfield).

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

HUCA 12 Town Salts (HEV 2)

HUCA 12 lies on the eastern edge of the historic and modern town, comprising the eastern cliff and former salt marshes adjacent to the River Rother. Although earlier estimates of the medieval erosion on the eastern side of Rye appear to be exaggerated, there is evidence that the present cliff line is a product of erosion in the 14th century: the earlier town would have expanded further into this HUCA, with an eastern strand or quay below the more easterly cliff line. Today, the area comprises housing against the cliff line, with the low-lying land of Town Salts itself given over to recreational use and car parking. The river frontage is occupied

by the Fish Market Quay, provided with sheds for the working fishermen.

There are two listed buildings, both Grade II and both from c.1800. 40 Fishmarket Road is a brick and weatherboarded warehouse, and Ferry Cottage, Rock Channel, is a one-storey cottage with tarred weatherboarding.

Although this HUCA may have been partly within the medieval town, erosion of the hill top in the 14th century and subsequent salt marsh until re-colonization from c.1800 means that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is limited.

The small number of late post-medieval buildings and the archaeological potential give this HUCA an **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 2.

HUCA 12 has seen modest change since 1945, most notably with the loss of the 19th-century terraced houses of Lucknow Place (now a car park). The modest Historic Environment Value of the area means that **vulnerability** is low. The main threats are potential redevelopment of unlisted 19th-century houses on Fishmarket Road, and infill development on the Town Salts.

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

HUCA 13 South Undercliff (HEV 1)

HUCA 13 lies on the southern edge of the historic and modern town, comprising the southern cliff and former salt marshes adjacent to the River Brede (Rock Channel) and River Tillingham. Much of the area was evidently salt marsh in 1771, and appears to have been reclaimed from c.1800, in part for maritime industries and in part for housing. There are no listed buildings, with the main historic buildings comprising late 19th and early 20th-century terraced housing on the south side of South Undercliff itself. To the south of this there are late 20th-century works and warehouses, allotments, and river-front housing.

The absence of known use of this area prior to reclamation from salt marsh from c.1800 means that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is limited.

The absence of historic buildings earlier than the 19th century, the extent of modern redevelopment, and the archaeological potential give this HUCA an **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 1.

HUCA 13 has seen considerable change since 1945, most notably with replacement of earlier

works, and through residential riverside development, but the modest Historic Environment Value of the area means that **vulnerability** is low. The main threats are potential infill of the allotments, established by the late 19th century, and redevelopment of unlisted late 19th and early 20th-century housing.

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

HUCA 14 Strand (HEV 3)

HUCA 14 lies on the south-western edge of the historic town, outside the (no longer standing) medieval Stand Gate, originating as one of the town's two medieval strands, or quays. Since the 14th century it has been the town's principal quay, although the maritime function of the Strand has largely ceased since 1945. Today the area combines housing with commerce (mainly shops – especially antiques).

There are 10 listed buildings, or groups of buildings, and walls (all Grade II) of which one is Period 6 (1150-1349), one is Period 9 (17th century), two are Period 10 (18th century), five are Period 11 (1800-40), and one is Period 12 (1841-80). The Period 6 remains comprise a section of the town wall, which appears to be 14th-century in origin, replacing 13th-century earth defences. The wall forms the boundary between properties in The Mint and Wish Ward: it stands to over 6m (near to its full height) by the Strand Conduit (early 19th century) in Wish Ward, at the rear of 54 The Mint; and in the cellar of 55 The Mint, there are remains of a small interval tower and an arcaded section of the town wall recorded in more detail in the 18th century. The Strand Gate was demolished in 1815, and was located immediately east of the bottom end of Mermaid Street, facing The Mint: the stone plaque is built into the remains of the town wall to the south-east (i.e. now forming part of the Old Borough Arms Hotel – an 18th-century brick and weatherboarded building). To the east of this the town wall merges into the natural defences of the west cliff. The group of former warehouses on the Strand is an important survival, dating from the 19th century (and possibly the late 18th century), and built in brick, sandstone, and tarred weatherboarding.

There has been no archaeological investigation in the HUCA, but the considerable redevelopment of the Strand in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries suggests that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is moderate. Particularly significant would be evidence of the historic quays and the Strand Gate.

The survival of sections of the medieval town wall (above and below ground) and other historic buildings, combine with the archaeological potential to give this HUCA an **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 3.

HUCA 14 has seen considerable change since 1945, with loss of much of the maritime function of the Strand, residential redevelopment (most notably Strand Court – a block of flats), and the creation of a relief road parallel with the river frontage. The lack of scope for further infill or loss of maritime function suggests that the **vulnerability** is low, with perhaps the main threat being to internal alteration to the historic warehouses.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the town defences, and the medieval and post medieval quays (RQ10, RQ16, RQ17).

HUCA 15 Winchelsea Road (HEV 2)

HUCA 15 lies south of the medieval and modern town, forming a suburb largely strung out along Winchelsea Road and the parallel River Tillingham. Until the late 18th century the area was largely salt marsh, and was mainly developed during the 19th century. Today the area combines housing and commerce.

There are two listed buildings, both Grade II. Western House is a sandstone, brick and tile-hung house of c.1800. More significant, however, is Martello tower No. 30, built in 1805-8 as one of a chain of such towers along the south and east coasts of England during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. The building has a circular plan with thick cement rendered brick walls, three storeys (the lower originally the magazine), and an earth rampart.

The location of the HUCA outside the medieval town suggests that the **archaeological potential** of this HUCA is limited.

The small number of later post-medieval buildings and the archaeological potential give this HUCA an **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 2.

HUCA 15 has seen significant changes since 1945, with redevelopment of 19th and early 20th-century houses and works buildings. Most unfortunately, the north-eastern quarter of the Martello tower has been built over by housing and, despite being a Scheduled Monument, has been badly neglected. The modest Historic Environment Value suggests that **vulnerability** is low, although in the case of the Martello tower evidently it is locally high.

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

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

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 to 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 Rye				
<i>Historic Character Types (HCTs)</i>	<i>Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA)</i>	<i>Archaeological potential</i>	<i>Historic Environment Value (HEV)</i>	<i>Vulnerability</i>
Church/churchyard Utility	1. Church	High	5	Low
Castle Town defences Regular burgage plots Irregular historic plots Beach/cliffs	2. Ypres Tower	High	5	Medium
Irregular historic plots Public	3. Market place	High	5	Low/medium
Regular burgage plots Irregular historic plots School/college	4. Mermaid and Watchbell Streets	High	5	Medium
Regular burgage plots Irregular historic plots Suburb	5. High Street	High	4	Medium
Religious house Irregular historic plots Suburb	6. Friary	High	4	High
Irregular historic plots Town defences Suburb	7. Cinque Ports Street	Moderate (locally high)	3	Medium
Irregular historic plots Mill Public Suburb Utility	8. Wishe	Limited	2	Low
Station, sidings and track Market place Retail and commercial Suburb Vacant	9. Station	Limited	2	Low
Regular burgage plots Irregular historic plots Town defences Suburb	10. Land Gate	High	4	Low/medium
Irregular historic plots Informal parkland Suburb	11. Military Road	Limited	2	Low
Irregular historic plots	12. Town Salts	Limited	2	Low

Summary of assessment of Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs) for Rye				
<i>Historic Character Types (HCTs)</i>	<i>Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA)</i>	<i>Archaeological potential</i>	<i>Historic Environment Value (HEV)</i>	<i>Vulnerability</i>
Informal parkland Sports field Quay/wharf Beach/cliffs Public Suburb				
Informal parkland Suburb Allotments Light industry Public	13. South Undercliff	Limited	1	Low
Quay/wharf Town defences Irregular historic plots Beach/cliffs Suburb	14. Strand	Moderate	3	Low
Irregular historic plots Light industry Other fortification Station, sidings and track Suburb Vacant	15. Winchelsea Road	Limited	2	Low (locally high)

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

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 Rye should address:

RQ1: What was the nature of the palaeo-environment (ancient environment), and the prehistoric, Roman, and early to mid-Anglo-Saxon human activity in the area?

6.2 Origins

Archaeological and historical analysis has provided insufficient understanding of the origins of the settlement at Rye. Key questions include:

RQ2: What was the date, location, form and construction detail (e.g. sculpture) of any Anglo-Saxon church?

RQ3: What evidence is there for Anglo-Saxon settlement (including the putative *burh*), and what was its extent, form and economy?

RQ4: What was the road layout, how did this evolve, and how did it relate to major routes and river crossings?

6.3 Norman town

Questions that need addressing include:

RQ5: What evidence is there for continuity between features in the Saxon settlement and the Norman town?

RQ6: What was the extent of the town in the 11th and 12th centuries, to what degree was the late medieval street plan established in this period?

RQ7: What different zones were there during this period, and how did they change?

RQ8: What was the form of the church prior to its rebuilding in the 12th century?

RQ9: What was the form and detail of the church as rebuilt by c.1200?

RQ10: What were the location and forms of the quays (or strands), and what was the nature of the seaborne trade?

RQ11: What evidence is there for the economy of the town, especially with regard to its Wealden hinterland and Old Winchelsea?

6.5 Later medieval town

RQ12: How have tenements/burgage plots developed from the first built-up street frontages to the plots that survive today? Have the latter been subdivided as a result of commercial pressure between 1250 and 1350?

RQ13: What different zones (e.g. social differentiation, or types of activity: especially consider industry, the market, the Courton, the extent of the built-up area within and without the walls, the development of the religious houses, and the suburbs) were there during this period, and how did they change?

RQ14: What documentary and archaeological evidence is there for late medieval decline?

RQ15: What evidence can the standing buildings provide for their function and date (i.e. through dendrochronology), especially those on the main streets?

RQ16: What was the location and form of the quays (or strands), and what was the nature of the seaborne trade?

RQ17: What were the location, form and date of the town defences and gates? (Consider especially the evidence for earthworks and a town ditch).

RQ18: What evidence is there for loss of part of the town to the sea?

RQ19: What evidence is there for extensive damage to the town from French attack in the 14th century?

6.5 Post-medieval town

RQ20: What different zones (e.g. social differentiation, or types of activity: especially consider industries), were there during this period, and how did they change?

RQ21: How were the medieval buildings adapted for new functions and changing status (e.g. creation of carriageways, or subdivision of hall houses)?

RQ22: How were the town defences modified in the 16th and 17th centuries, and how and when did they decline?

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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⁵ Mayhew, G. J., 'Rye and the Defence of the Narrow Seas: a 16th-century Town at War', SAC (1984), 107-26; Mayhew, G., *Tudor Rye* (1987); Mayhew, G., 'Order, Disorder and Popular Protest in Early Modern Rye', SAC 127 (1989), 167-87.

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⁸ Clements, J., *Rescue Research at the Old Monastery, Rye* (unpublished Hastings Area Archaeological Research Group report, 1991).

⁹ Greatorex, C., *An Archaeological Assessment at Central Garage, Cinque Ports Street, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished South Eastern Archaeological Services report, 1993/60, 1993).

¹⁰ Greatorex, C., *An Archaeological Evaluation of Land Adjacent [to] Market Road, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished South Eastern Archaeological Services report, 1994/64, 1994).

¹¹ James, R., *An Archaeological Investigation at the Gun Garden, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project no. 658, 1997).

¹² Johnson, C., *An Archaeological Evaluation at the former Winter's Dairy Site, Cinque Ports Street, Rye, East Sussex*

(unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project no. 416, 1998).

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¹⁴ Siburn, L., *Archaeological Recording at the Rye Lodge Hotel, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project no. 1128, 1999).

¹⁵ Johnson, C., *An Archaeological Evaluation at Market Road, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project no. 1079, 1999).

¹⁶ Priestley-Bell, G., *An Archaeological Investigation at Rye Museum, Rye, Sussex* (unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project no. 1232, 2000). NB no discoveries of archaeological significance were made during this investigation.

¹⁷ Stevens, S., *An Archaeological Evaluation at 59 and 59a Cinque Ports Street, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project no. 1364, 2001).

¹⁸ James, R., *An Archaeological Evaluation Blackman's Yard, Wish Street, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project no. 1522, 2002). NB no discoveries of archaeological significance were made during this investigation.

¹⁹ Knight, S., *An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Former Central Garage, Cinque Ports Street, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project no. 1697, 2004).

²⁰ Martin, D., and Martin, B., *An Archaeological Interpretative Survey of Ypres Tower, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project refs. 466 and 2296, 1997, revised 2007), appendix D.

²¹ Butler, C., *Interim Summary on the Evaluation Excavation at Tower House, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished Chris Butler Archaeological Services report, 2009).

²² Austin, M. W., *Watching Brief at 12 Church Square, Rye* (unpublished Hastings Area Archaeological Research Group report, 2008). NB no discoveries of archaeological significance were made during this investigation, other than some unstratified pieces of clay pipe, possibly dating from as early as the late 17th century.

²³ Martin, D., and Martin, B., *Rye Rebuilt: The growth and decline of a Sussex Port Town, 1350-1600* (forthcoming, 2009).

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²⁵ Griffin, N., *An Archaeological Recording Brief at 59 Cinque Ports Street, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project no. 2005, 2005).

²⁶ Eddison, J., 'Catastrophic Changes: A Multidisciplinary Study of the Evolution of the Barrier Beaches of Rye Bay', in Eddison, J., Gardiner, M., and Long, A., (eds.), *Romney Marsh: Environmental Change and Human Occupation in a Coastal Lowland* (1998), 65-87.

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- ⁹⁰ Dulley, A. J. F., 'The Early History of the Rye Fishing Industry', SAC 107 (1969), 41-4, 55-6, 63. NB Dulley suggests a total population of 1,150-1,350 in 1491/2, whereas the estimate used here derives from an estimated total number of households at this time of 200-40 (for which, see Martin, D., and Martin, B., *Rye Rebuilt: The growth and decline of a Sussex Port Town, 1350-1600* (forthcoming, 2009), 75) to which the author's multiplier of 450% has been applied: the total is necessarily indicative.
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- ¹¹¹ Mayhew, G., *Tudor Rye* (1987), 14-17, 233-44.
- ¹¹² Dulley, A. J. F., 'The Early History of the Rye Fishing Industry', SAC 107 (1969), 41-4, 55-6.
- ¹¹³ Mayhew, G., *Tudor Rye* (1987), 20.
- ¹¹⁴ Hipkin, S., 'Buying time: fiscal policy at Rye 1600-1640', SAC 133 (1995), 241-54, at 241
- ¹¹⁵ Hipkin, S., 'Buying time: fiscal policy at Rye 1600-1640', SAC 133 (1995), 242; Mayhew, G., *Tudor Rye* (1987), 252-3.
- ¹¹⁶ Mayhew, G., *Tudor Rye* (1987), 233-44.

¹¹⁷ Mayhew, G., 'Order, Disorder and Popular Protest in Early Modern Rye', SAC 127 (1989), 167-87.

¹¹⁸ The total population estimates here are derived from Mayhew, G., *Tudor Rye* (1987), 23. It has been suggested that they are too generous and that the mid-1570s total, for example, may have numbered more than c.3,500: Hipkin, S., 'Buying time: fiscal policy at Rye 1600-1640', SAC 133 (1995), 241.

¹¹⁹ Mayhew, G., *Tudor Rye* (1987), 79-90, 244-69; Hipkin, S., 'Buying time: fiscal policy at Rye 1600-1640', SAC 133 (1995), 241-3; Hipkin, S., 'The maritime economy of Rye, 1560-1640', *Southern History* 20/21 (1998/9), 108-42.

¹²⁰ Hipkin, S., 'Buying time: fiscal policy at Rye 1600-1640', SAC 133 (1995), 242, 253.

¹²¹ Hipkin, S., 'Buying time: fiscal policy at Rye 1600-1640', SAC 133 (1995), 244-5.

¹²² This figure is the author's and is calculated, using a multiplier of 450%, from the 290 households in 1660: Martin, D., and Martin, B., *Rye Rebuilt: The growth and decline of a Sussex Port Town, 1350-1600* (forthcoming, 2009), 85). Dulley suggests a population in 1660 of c.1100: Dulley, A. J. F., 'The Early History of the Rye Fishing Industry', SAC 107 (1969), 63.

¹²³ Cooper, J. H., 'A Religious Census of Sussex in 1676', SAC 45 (1902), 145; Ford, W. K. (ed.), 'Chichester Diocesan Surveys 1686 and 1724', SRS 78, 101. The calculations for total populations are the author's and are necessarily indicative, with the following multipliers used: 131% for surveys of adults (1676), and 450% for families (1724). The totals in both surveys (600 adults in 1676 and 200 families in 1724) are perhaps suspiciously round.

¹²⁴ Martin, D., and Martin, B., *Rye Rebuilt: The growth and decline of a Sussex Port Town, 1350-1600* (forthcoming, 2009), 86-8.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Collard, J. A., *A Maritime History of Rye* (2nd edtn. 1985), 37-41; Farrant, J. H., 'The Seaborne Trade of Sussex, 1720-1845', SAC 114 (1976), 97-120, at 98; Salzman, L. F. (ed.), *Victoria County History* 9 (1937), 55; Clark, K., *Rye: A Short History* (1999), 44-5.

¹²⁷ Collard, J. A., *A Maritime History of Rye* (2nd edtn. 1985), 53-61.

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¹²⁹ Ibid., 101.

¹³⁰ Clark, K., *Rye: A Short History* (1999), 46-7.

¹³¹ Mayhew, G., *Tudor Rye* (1987), 36.

¹³² Martin, D., and Martin, B., *Rye Rebuilt: The growth and decline of a Sussex Port Town, 1350-1600* (forthcoming, 2009), 146-7.

¹³³ Pennington, J., 'Inns and Alehouses in 1686', in Leslie, K. and Short, B. (eds.) *An Historical Atlas of Sussex* (1999), 68-9.

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¹³⁵ Salzman, L. F. (ed.), *Victoria County History* 9 (1937), 40, 42; Page, W., (ed.) *Victoria County History* 2 (1973), 96-7.

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Kilns found at Rye. Final Report', SAC 77 (1936), 106-18; Gardiner, M., 'The Site of St Bartholomew's Hospital, Rye', SAC 128 (1990), 251-2. See also, Johnson, C., *An Archaeological Evaluation at Fairfield, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project no. 1370, 2001).

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²⁴⁵ Martin, D., and Martin, B., *Rye Rebuilt: The growth and decline of a Sussex Port Town, 1350-1600* (forthcoming, 2009). NB the number here reflects those listed (plus two unlisted) buildings that date from this period: some of these buildings do not coincide with the extents of the 16th-century buildings, and thus the number differs slightly from those presented by the Martins.

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²⁴⁷ Ibid., 180-1.

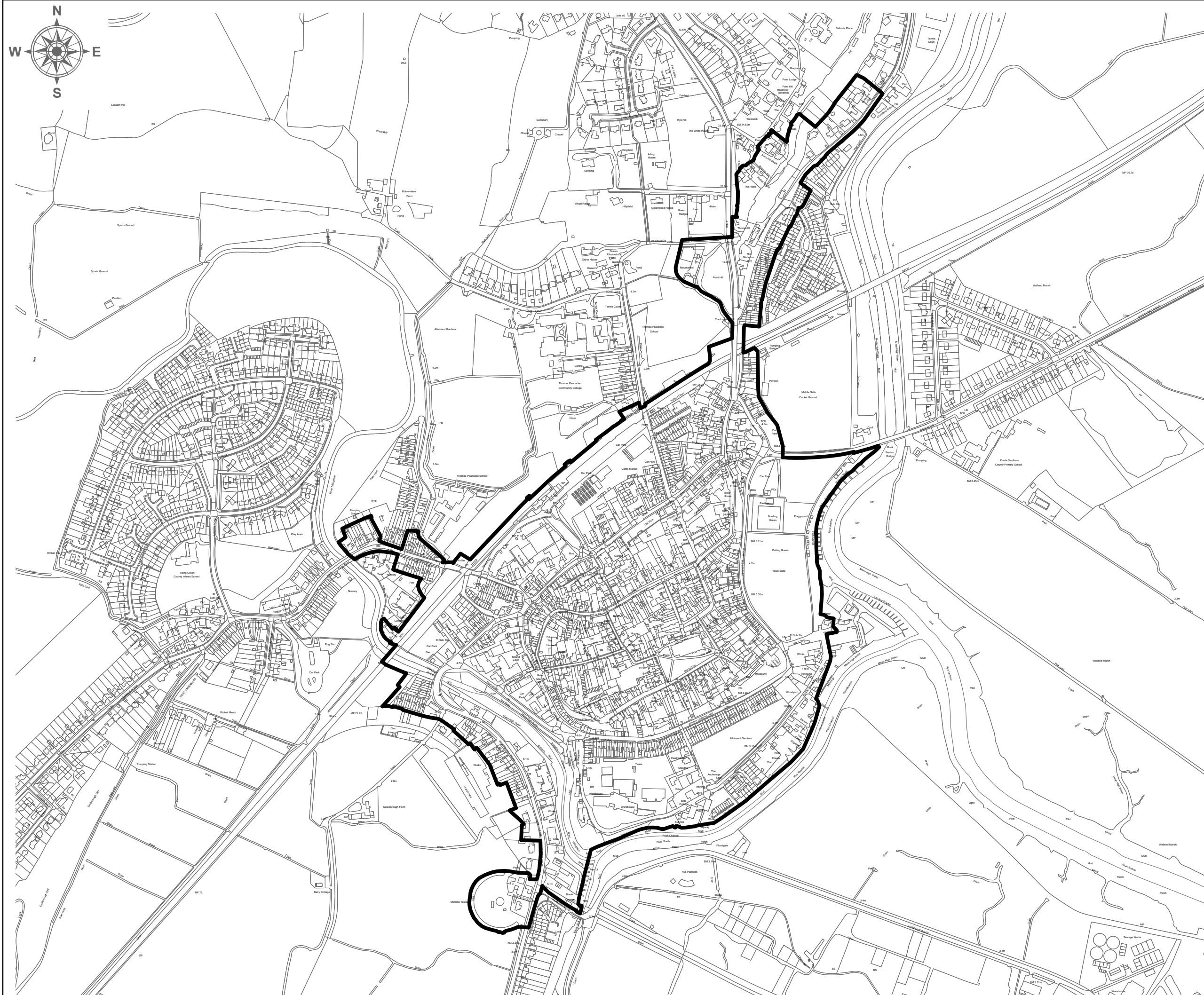
²⁴⁸ Elleray, D. R., *Sussex Places of Worship: A Gazetteer of Buildings erected between c. 1760 and c. 1960* (2004), 48.

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²⁵⁰ James, R., *An Archaeological Investigation at the Gun Garden, Rye, East Sussex* (unpublished Archaeology South-East report, project no. 658, 1997).

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²⁵² 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 many cases these come from fieldwork undertaken by the author.



Sussex EUS



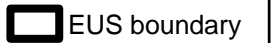
ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 1

Extent of Rye

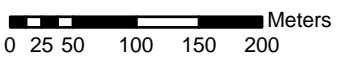
EUS study area

KEY

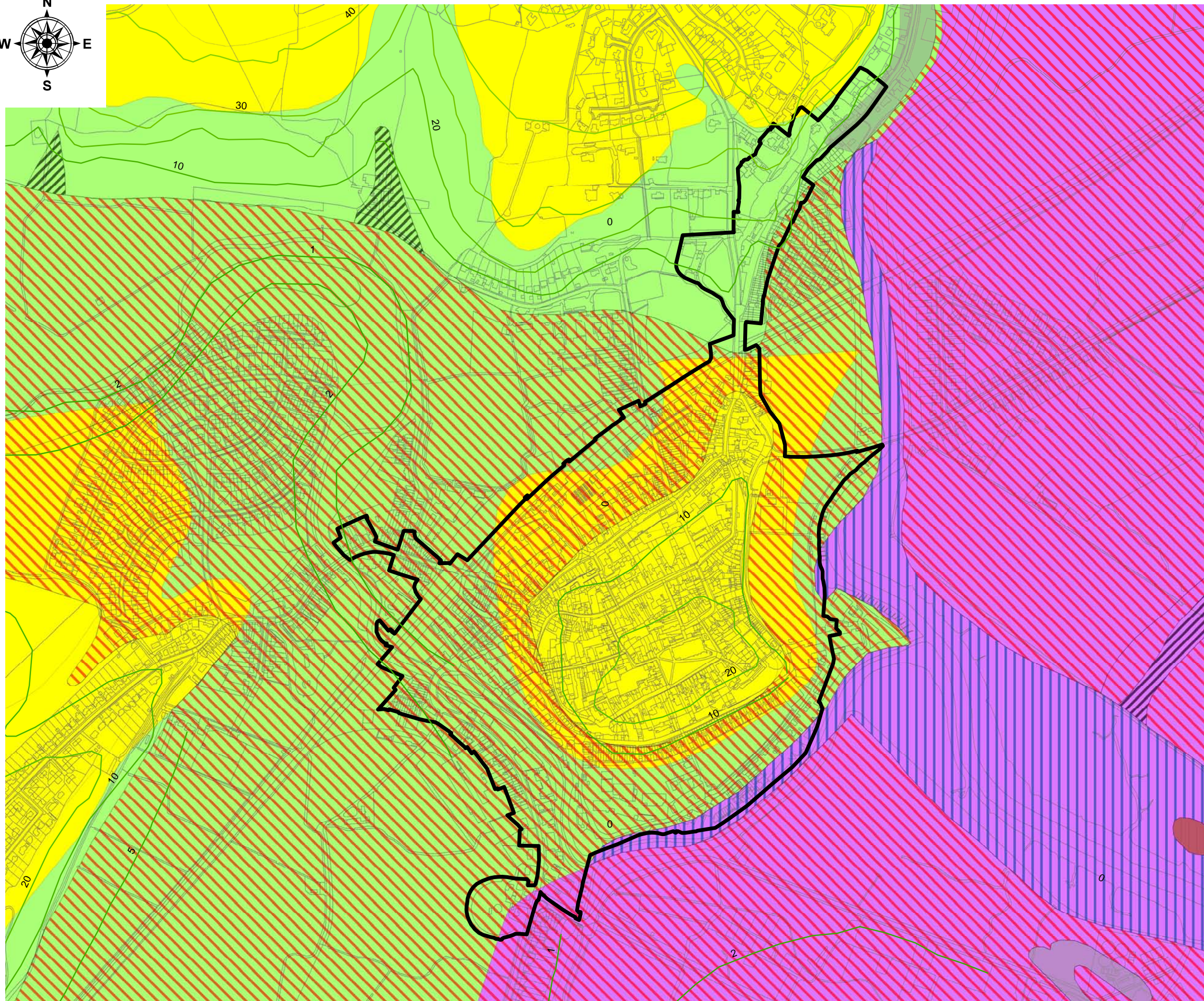
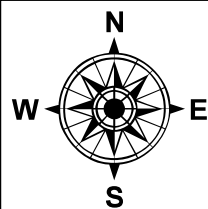


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Sussex EUS



ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 2

Solid and drift geology with 10m contours

KEY	
SOLID GEOLOGY	
	ASHDOWN FORMATION
	HASTINGS BEDS (SUBGROUP)
	TUNBRIDGE WELLS SAND FORMATION
	WADHURST CLAY FORMATION
DRIFT GEOLOGY	
	ALLUVIUM
	BEACH AND TIDAL FLAT DEPOSITS
	BLOWN SAND
	STORM BEACH DEPOSITS
	TIDAL FLAT DEPOSITS

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0 25 50 100 150 200 Meters

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RYE MAP 3

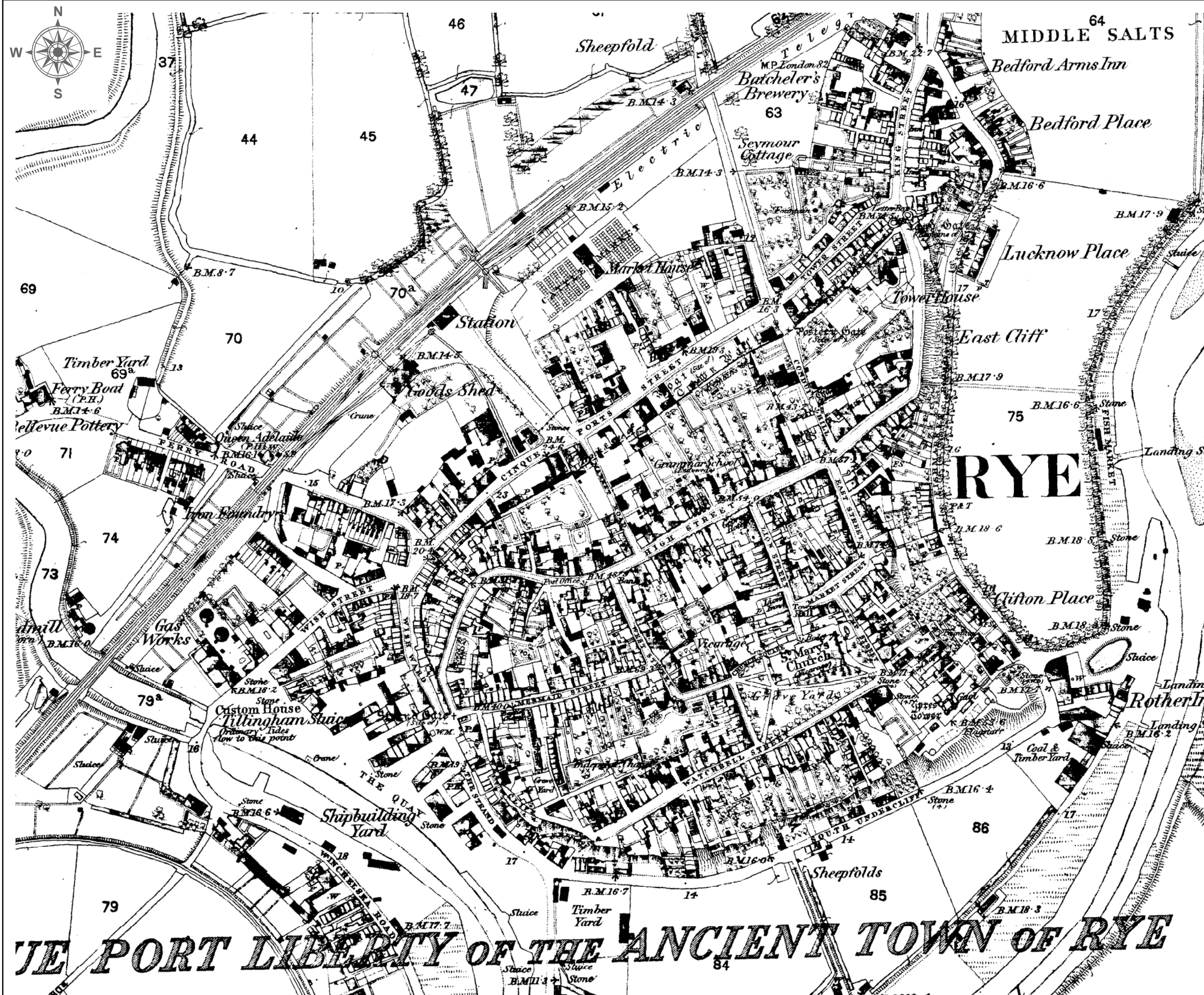
Ordnance Survey
1st Series 25" (1872)

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0 25 50 100 150 200 Meters

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RYE MAP 4

Detail of
Ordnance Survey
1st Series 25" (1872)

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0 10 20 40 60 80 Meters

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RYE MAP 5

Historic buildings and Scheduled Monuments

KEY

Scheduled Monument

Rye buildings

Listing grade

1

2

2*

None

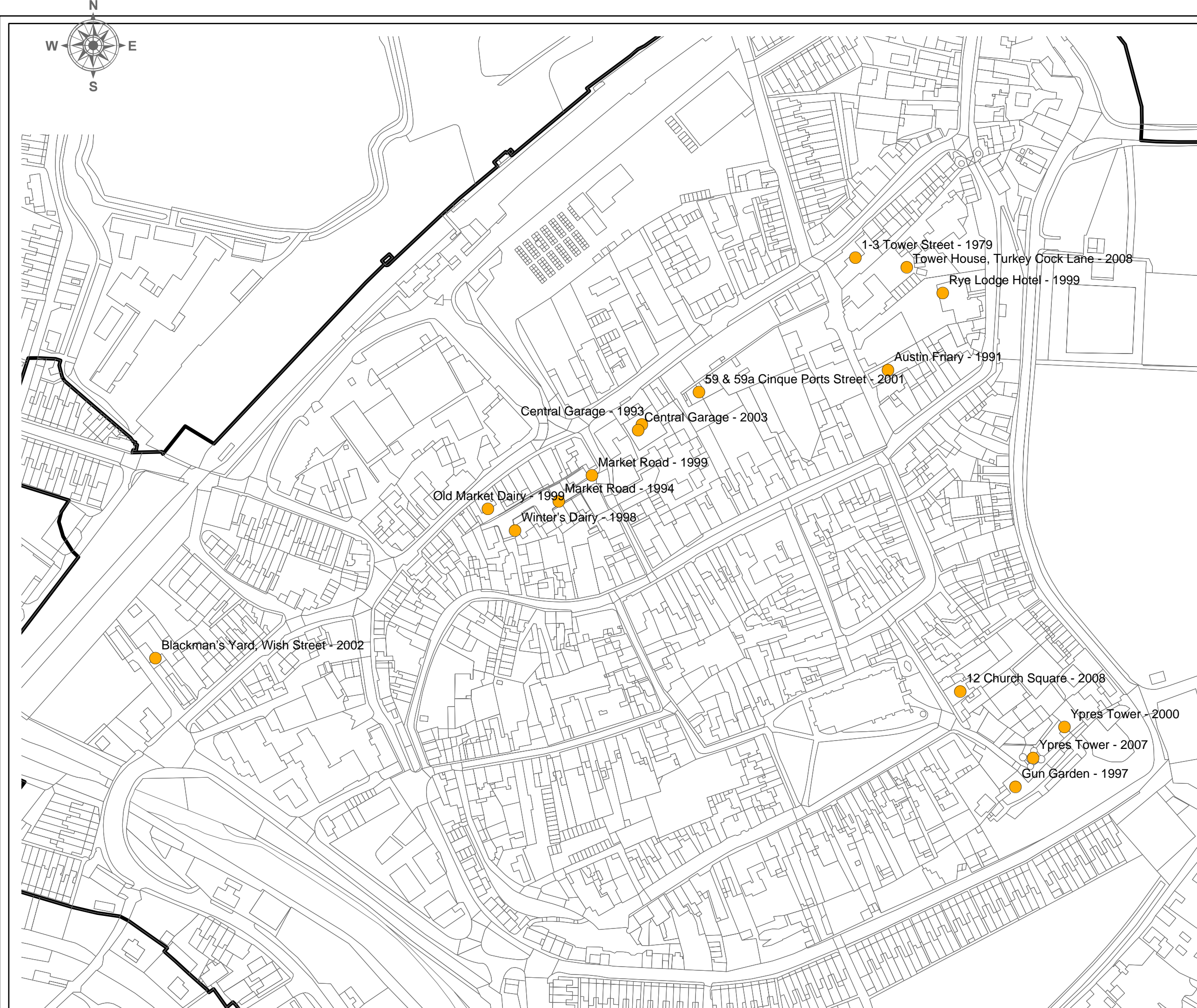
No grade

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SCALE 1:6,000

Meters
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Brighton & Hove


ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 6

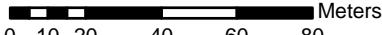
Archaeological investigations within the EUS study area from 1979

KEY

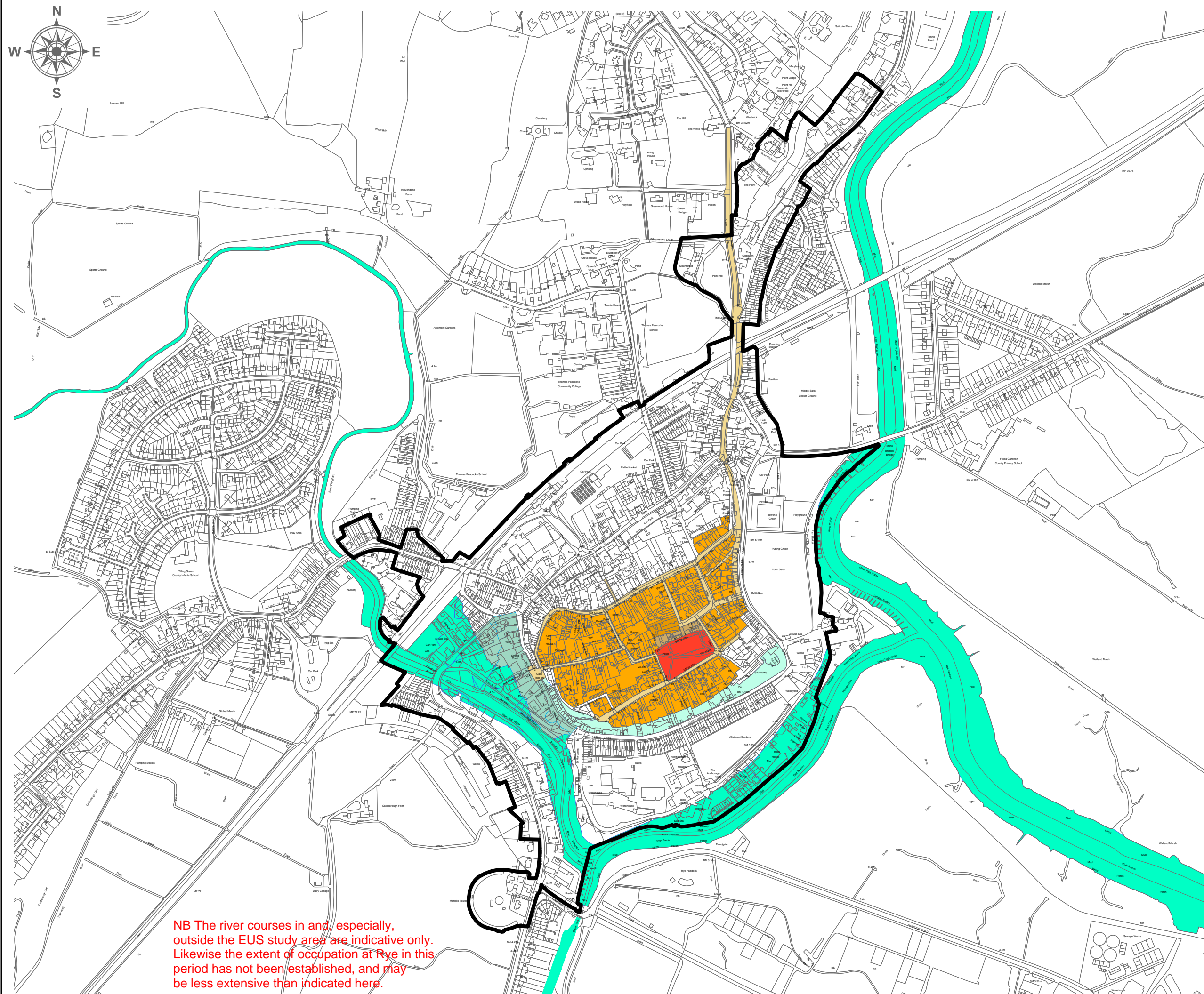
 Rye excavations

EUS research and mapping:
Dr Roland B Harris FSA MIFA
September 2009

SCALE 1:2,000


0 10 20 40 60 80 Meters

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NB The river courses in and, especially, outside the EUS study area are indicative only. Likewise the extent of occupation at Rye in this period has not been established, and may be less extensive than indicated here.

Sussex EUS



ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 7

Period 5 (1066-1149)

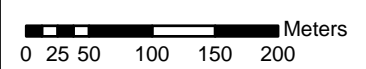
KEY

Rye EUS
HCT

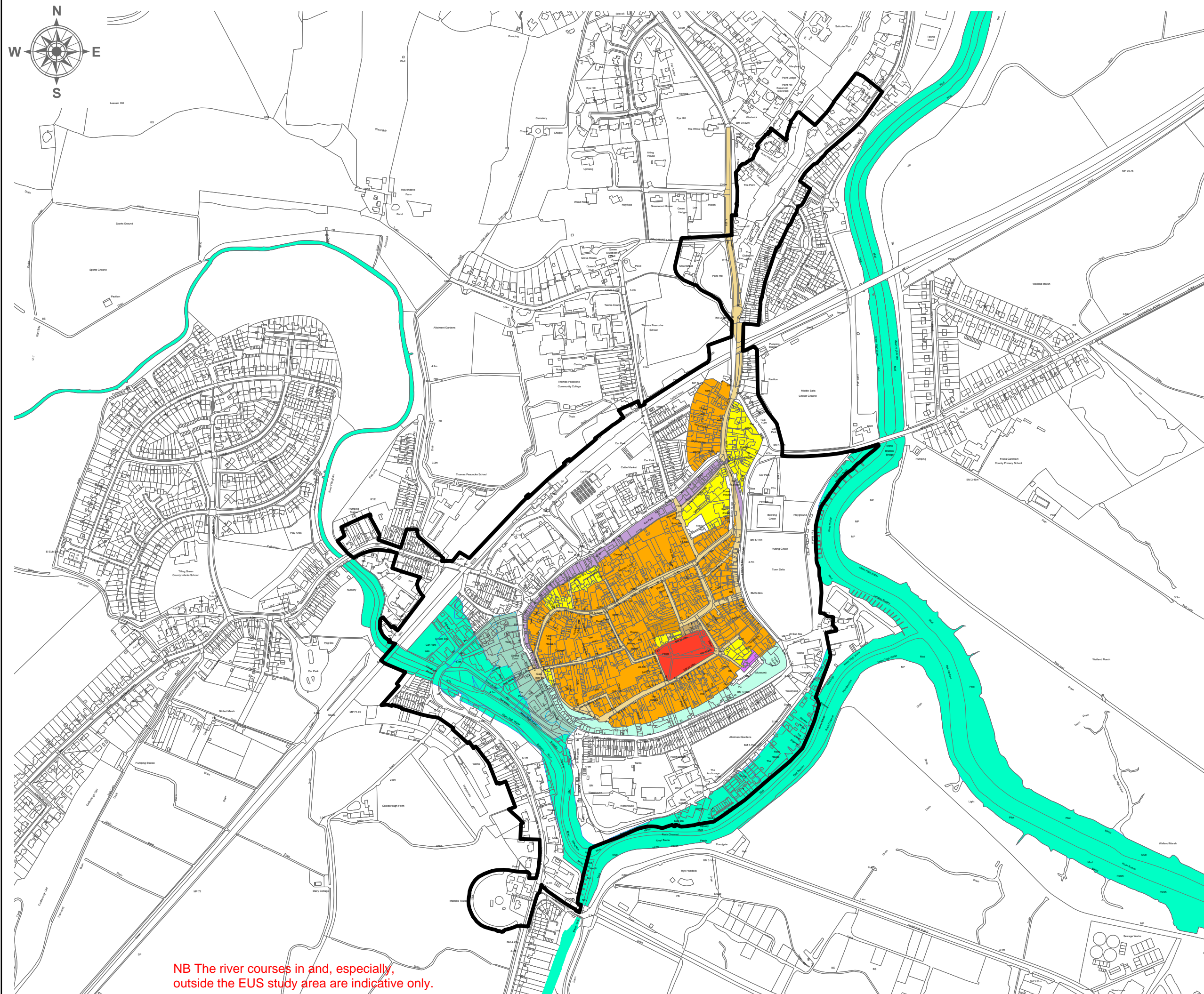
- Beach/cliffs
- Church/churchyard
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Market place
- Public
- Quay/wharf
- Regular burgage plots

EUS research and mapping:
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September 2009

SCALE 1:6,000



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NB The river courses in and, especially, outside the EUS study area are indicative only.

Sussex EUS



ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 8

Period 6 (1150-1349)

KEY

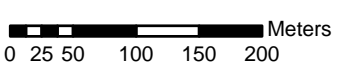
Rye EUS

HCT

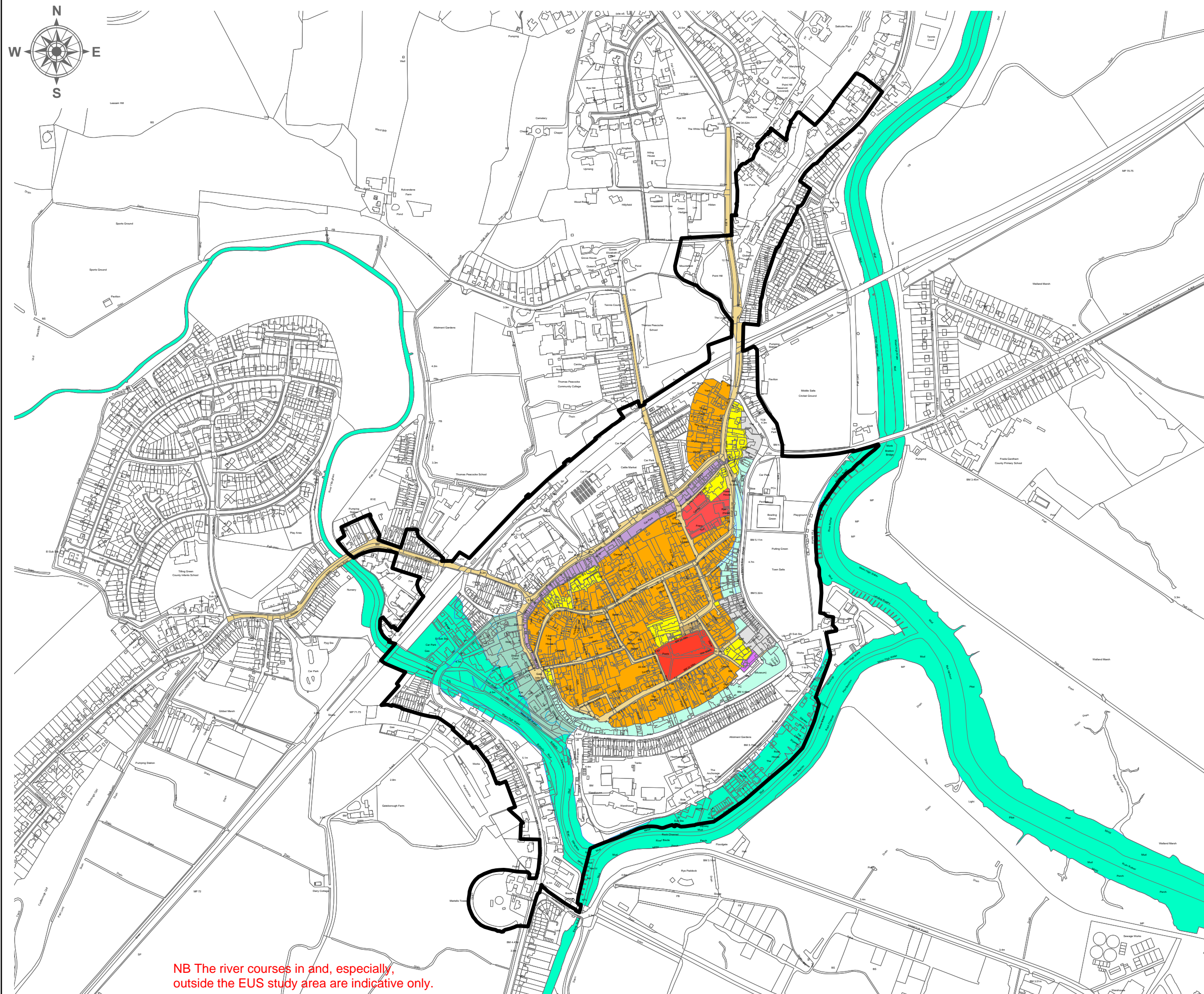
- Beach/cliffs
- Castle
- Church/churchyard
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Market place
- Public
- Quay/wharf
- Race course
- Regular burgage plots
- Town defences

EUS research and mapping:
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NB The river courses in and, especially, outside the EUS study area are indicative only.

Sussex EUS



ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 9

Period 7 (1350-1499)

KEY

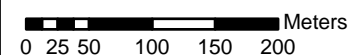
Rye EUS

HCT

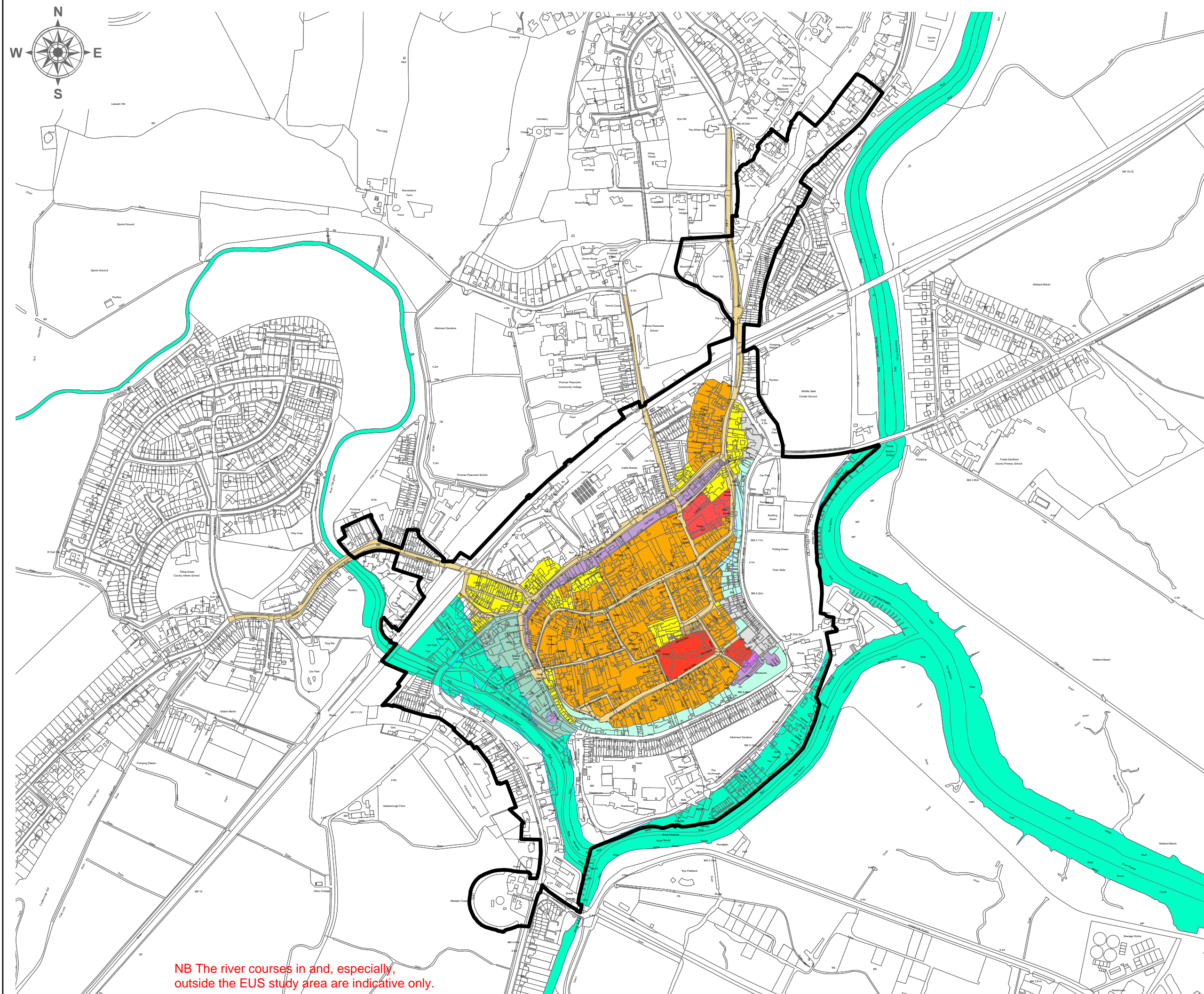
- Beach/cliffs
- Castle
- Church/churchyard
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Public
- Quay/wharf
- Regular burgage plots
- Religious house
- Town defences
- Vacant

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NB The river courses in and, especially, outside the EUS study area are indicative only.

Sussex EUS



ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 10

Period 8 (1500-1599)

KEY

Rye EUS

HCT

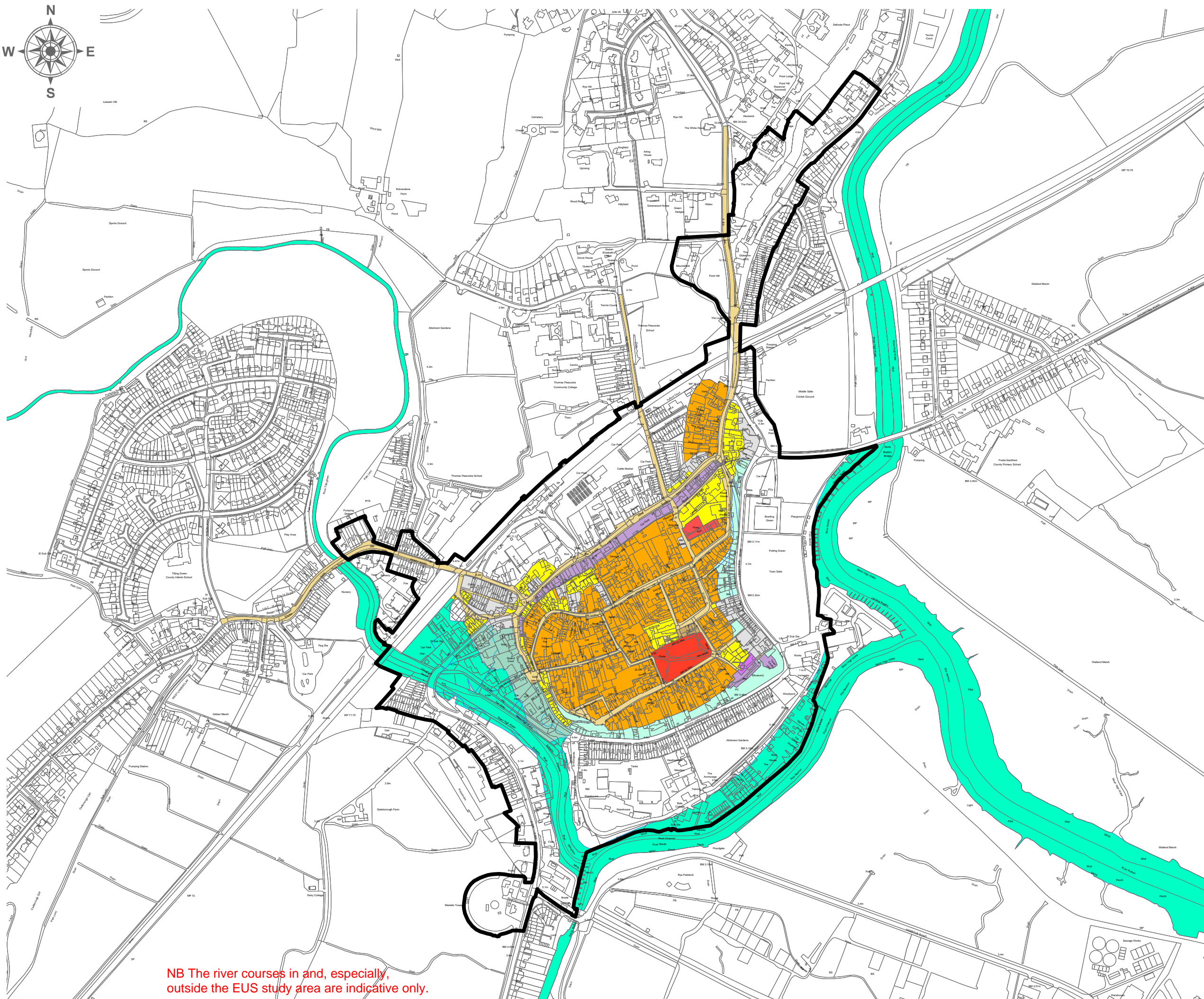
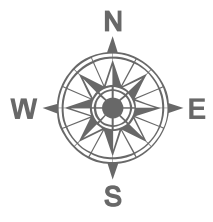
- Beach/cliffs
- Castle
- Church/churchyard
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Public
- Quay/wharf
- Regular burgage plots
- Religious house
- Town defences
- Vacant

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SCALE 1:6,000

0 25 50 100 150 200 Meters

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NB The river courses in and, especially, outside the EUS study area are indicative only.

Sussex EUS



ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 11

Period 9 (1600-1699)

KEY

Rye EUS

HCT

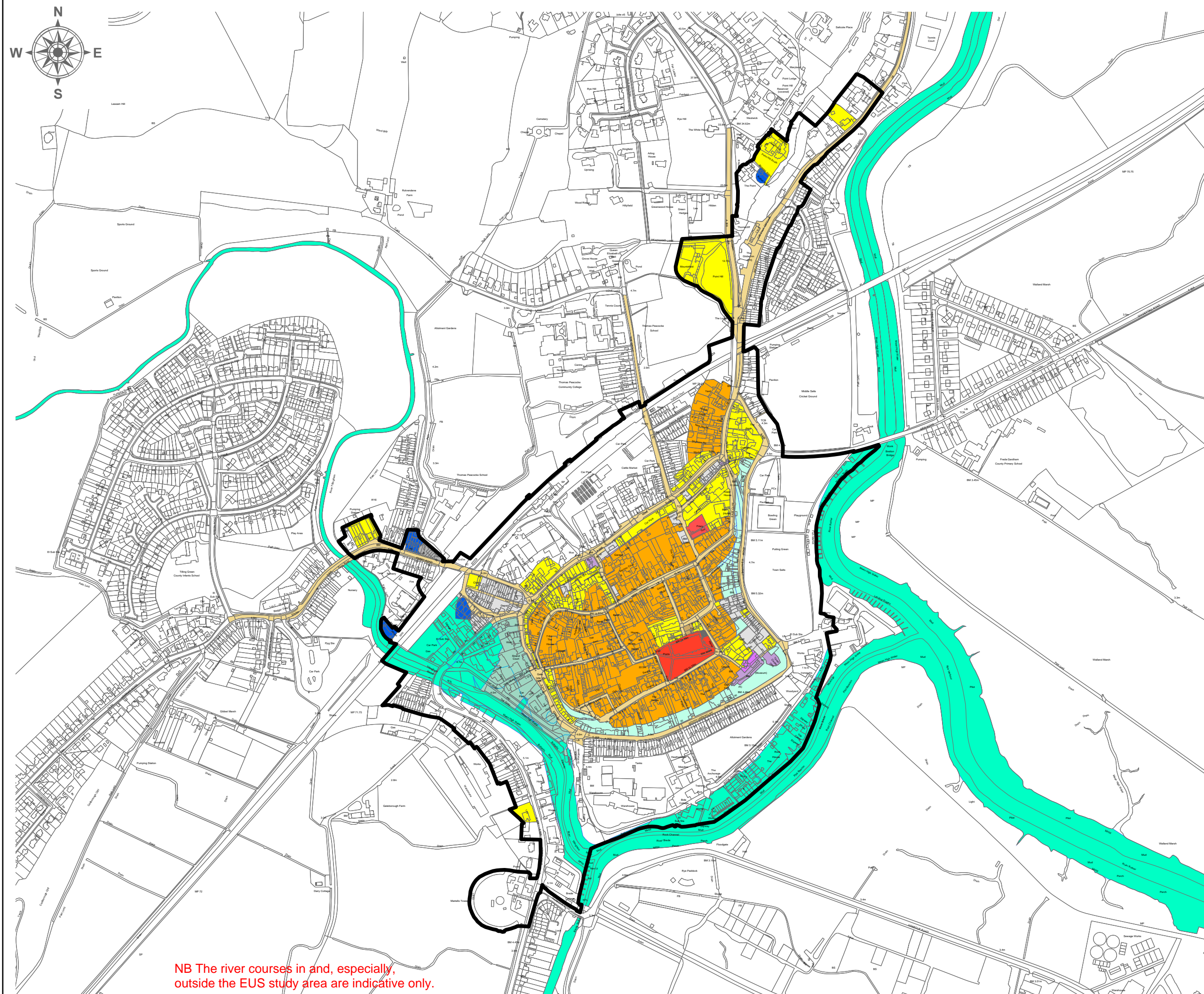
- Beach/cliffs
- Castle
- Church/churchyard
- Informal parkland
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Public
- Quay/wharf
- Regular burgage plots
- Religious house
- Town defences
- Vacant

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SCALE 1:6,000

0 25 50 100 150 200 Meters

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NB The river courses in and, especially, outside the EUS study area are indicative only.

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Rye MAP 12

Period 10 (1700-1799)

KEY

Rye EUS

HCT

Beach/cliffs

Castle

Church/churchyard

Inland water

Irregular historic plots

Lane/road

Mill

Public

Quay/wharf

Regular burgage plots

Religious house

Suburb

Town defences

Utility

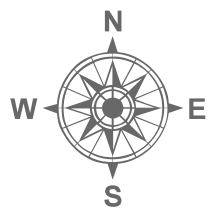
Vacant

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0 25 50 100 150 200 Meters

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 13

Historic Character Types (2009)

KEY

Rye EUS

HCT

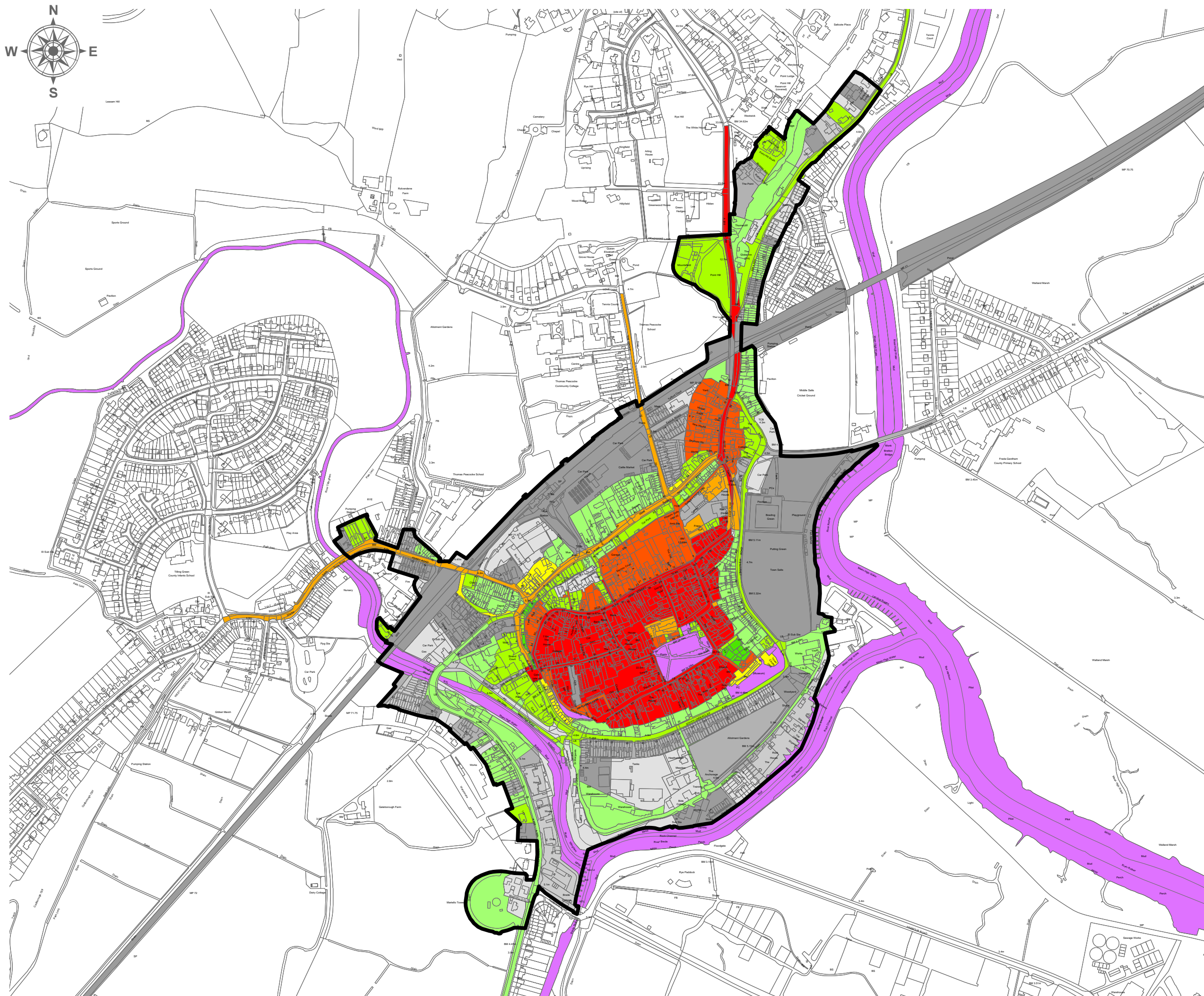
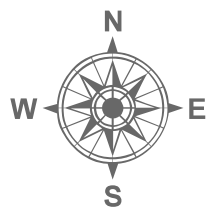
- Allotments
- Beach/cliffs
- Bridge/causeway
- Castle
- Church/churchyard
- Informal parkland
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Light industry
- Market place
- Mill
- Other fortification
- Public
- Quay/wharf
- Regular burgage plots
- Religious house
- Retail and commercial
- School/college
- Sports field
- Station, sidings and track
- Suburb
- Town defences
- Utility
- Vacant

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0 25 50 100 150 200 Meters

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 14

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

KEY

Rye EUS PERIOD

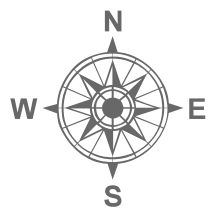
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15

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0 25 50 100 150 200 Meters

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 15

Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs)

KEY

Rye EUS HUCA

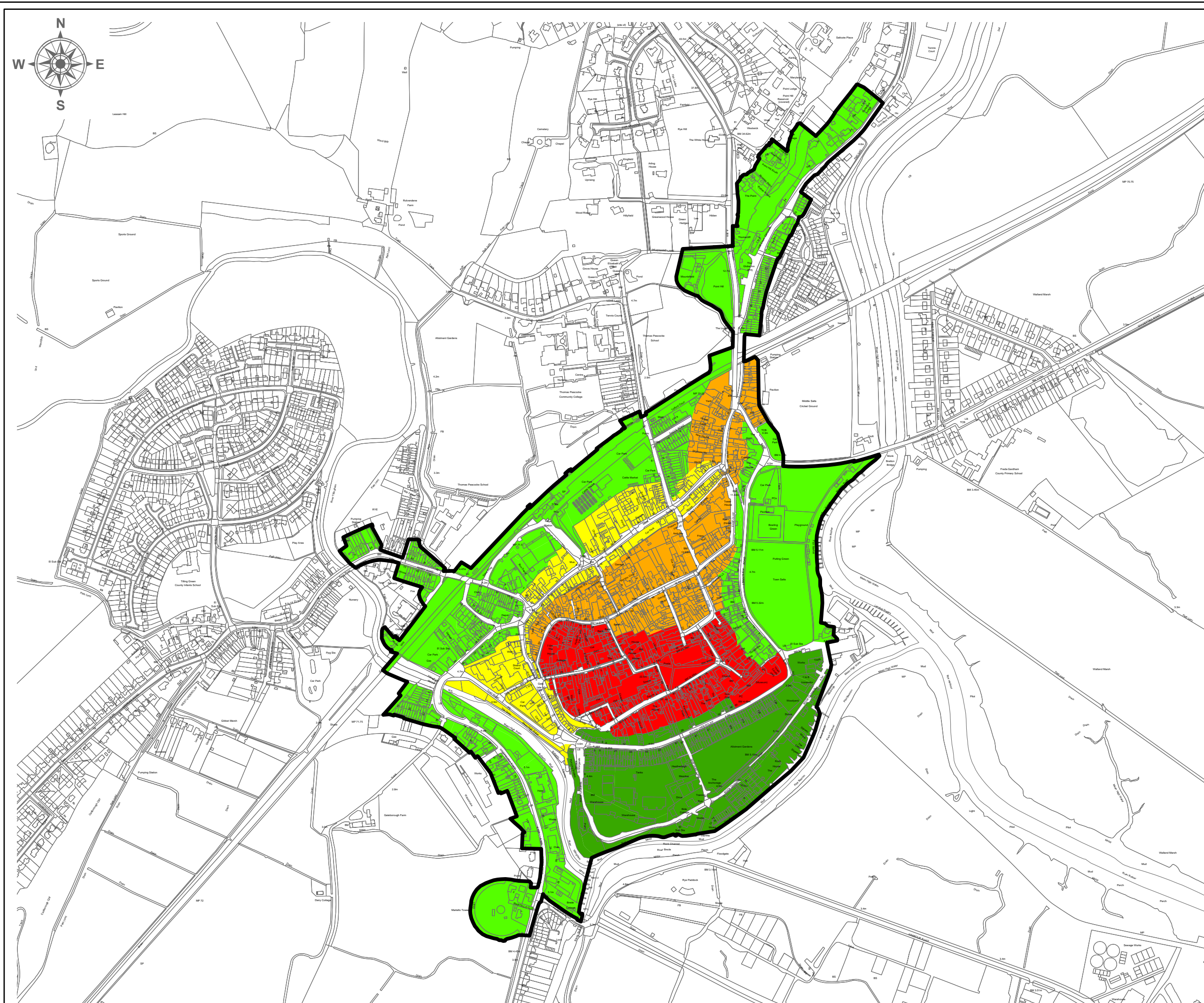
- 01 - Church
- 02 - Ypres Tower
- 03 - Market place
- 04 - Mermaid & Watchbell Streets
- 05 - High Street
- 06 - Friary
- 07 - Cinque Ports Street
- 08 - Wishe
- 09 - Station
- 10 - Land Gate
- 11 - Military Road
- 12 - Town Salts
- 13 - South Undercliff
- 14 - Strand
- 15 - Winchelsea Road

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0 25 50 100 150 200 Meters

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

RYE MAP 16

Historic Environment Value (HEV)

KEY

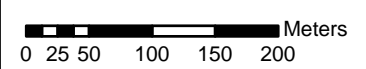
Rye EUS

HEV

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

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