Pevensey

Historic Character Assessment Report

March 2008

Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (EUS)

Roland B Harris

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in association with Wealden District Council

west sussex county council

East Sussex County Council

Brighton & Hove

ENGLISH HERITAGE

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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Cover photo: View of the High Street from the east gate of the Roman fort at Pevensey.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the project

This report is an archaeological, historical, and historic urban character assessment of Pevensey. 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 West Sussex County Council *Sites & Monuments Record* (SMR) and the East Sussex County Council *Historic Environment Record* (HER).

• Informing historic environment management guidance specific to each local planning authority, for the 41 EUS towns and Winchelsea, produced under the new Local Development Frameworks, and subject to formal consultation procedures.

• Background papers for the Sussex EUS project. Documents that include the project design, a summary of the methodology and an overall bibliography.

1.4 The structure of this report

1.4.1 The Setting

This introductory section describes the topography, geology, communications, and pre-urban archaeology of the town.

1.4.2 History

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

1.4.3 Archaeology

The archaeology section of this report draws on published and unpublished reports of excavations, archaeological assessments, and records of finds. This section also includes analysis of historic buildings (listed and non-listed) and the topography, the latter drawing on maps of the town from 1595 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 Pevensey 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

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

1.5.1 History

Pevensey has been the subject of several published authoritative historical studies. These include those on Pevensey Levels and its port by **Louis Salzman** and **A J F Dulley**.[3] Salzman has also published a useful analysis of documents relating to the castle.[4] The medieval and post-medieval town itself, however, has not been the subject of a much-needed scholarly study.

1.5.2 Archaeology

Pevensey has had considerable archaeological attention, much of which has been focused on the castle. In chronological order the main excavations comprise:

Pevensey Castle – 1852[5]

Pevensey Castle – 1906-8[6]

Pevensey Castle – 1936-9[7]

Pevensey Castle – 1993-5[8]

Pevensey town (various minor sites) – 1962-6[9]

Old Farmhouse, High Street – 1994[10]

More minor unpublished archaeological assessments and evaluations comprise those at **Pevensey Castle** (1908-10,[11]1932,[12] 1964[13] and 1987[14]), **Church Farm** (2000),[15] and **Post Office Cottage, High Street** (2005).[16]

1.5.3 Historic buildings

The upstanding remains of the castle have seen studies by **Charles Peers**,[17] **Derek Renn**,[18] **John Goodall**[19] and **Anthony Chapman**.[20]

English Heritage's statutory list of historic buildings is also of use, although some of the descriptions date from the 1950s, and were necessarily produced without internal inspection. Very limited fieldwork only was possible during this assessment and focused on correcting dating derived from such sources, identifying hitherto ignored buildings of historic interest, 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 (1875 onwards) have proved invaluable, especially as these have been used in digital form, allowing overlaying with each other and with other data.

The 1843 Tithe Map (*East Sussex Record Office*) captures pre-railway Pevensey at a large scale and provides the earliest detailed map of the town. All these maps have been digitized and rectified to fit the National Grid to allow comparison with other maps and data. Vertical air photo coverage of 2000 provides a useful snapshot in time. All analysis and maps utilize the most recent large-scale Ordnance Survey mapping (digital MasterMap data).

1.6 Area covered by the report

The Sussex EUS assessment of Pevensey covers the likely maximum medieval extent of the town and, thus, includes vacant plots fringing the 19th-century extent of the town.

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

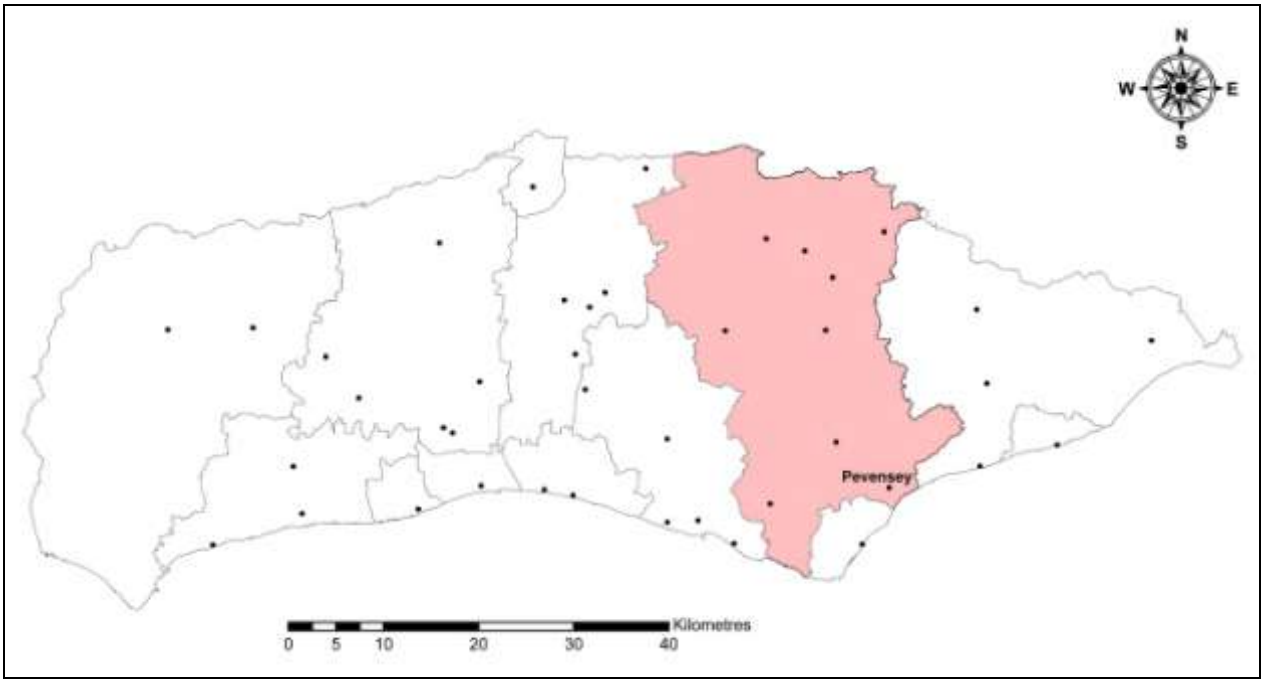

Fig. 1. Location of Pevensey within Sussex. Wealden District is highlighted and points locate the 41 Sussex EUS towns.

2 THE SETTING

Fig. 2. View of the town and Pevensey Bay from the castle.

2.1 Topography (Map 2)

Pevensey Castle is situated on a natural peninsular on the west side of an area of reclaimed marshland that previously represented a large embayment extending inwards from the present coastland of Pevensey Bay. The adjoining former town (it is only a small village today) is located on the lower slopes of this peninsular.

Today the principal street (the east-west High Street) extends from the bridge to an open area (formerly more extensive) near the east gate of the Roman fort and medieval castle. South of and parallel to the High Street is Church Lane, which now dog-legs to join north-south Wallsend Road: the west end of Church Lane also leads on to the open area by the castle. The town is approached from the west by a road that skirts the northern side of the Roman walls.

The town is in the south-west part of Pevensey Civil Parish.

2.2 Geology (Map 2)

2.2.1 Solid geology

Along with the whole of Sussex, the rocks of the Pevensey area are sedimentary. Descending the Downs and crossing the Low Weald, where Pevensey is located, the rocks get progressively older. The town itself lies over the sandstones, siltstones and mudstones (commonly clays) of the Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation (Lower Cretaceous), 400m south-east of the town this gives way to the younger Weald Clay Formation (Lower Cretaceous).

2.2.2 Drift Geology

The drift geology of the Pevensey area shows that the scoured and embanked drainage channels that cross Pevensey Levels are surrounded by reclaimed marshland. Alluvium marks the location of the former marshy lagoon, which contained multiple and changeable channels comprising tidal creeks and minor rivers draining the High Weald. The entrance to the former embayment extends from Langney to Cooden (8km) and, at Pevensey, was 4km wide. From the present coastline the embayment extended inland for 8km.The alluvium borders the northern, eastern and southern edges of Pevensey.

2.3 Communications

2.3.1 Water

Both the Roman fort, and the medieval town and castle of Pevensey were dependent on the coastal location. The location of the Roman harbour is not known, although ships may have been able to dock immediately adjacent to the fort. By the medieval period, the port was located at the east of the town on the channel that then runs south of the town (now, mostly part of Langney Sewer) and along the parish boundary.[21] This was one of two tidal channels which drained the levels: the other was at the minor port of Northeye.[22] The development of a shingle spit by longshore drift has repeatedly moved the outfall of Pevensey Haven, but since the 17th century it has debouched at Pevensey Bay, 1.5km south-east of Pevensey Bridge. A 500m length of the channel between the bridge and Pevensey Bay station was re-routed in the late 20th century.

2.3.2 Road

Since the 1980s Pevensey has been bypassed and now lies south of the A27(T). This joins the

A259 from Eastbourne (via Pevensey Bay) just north-east of the town, with the A27/A259 forming the main Lewes-Hastings road. The High Street now forms part of the B2191, which leads to Eastbourne via Westham and Langney.

2.3.3 Railway

The London Brighton and South Coast Railway (LBSCR) opened a line from Lewes to St Leonards in 1846, with a station 1km south-west of the town. Pevensey Bay halt, *c.*300m south-east of the town, was added in 1905.[23] The line remains in frequent use.

2.4 Evidence for pre-urban activity

2.4.1 Prehistoric

There has been one excavation within the EUS study area that has produced limited evidence of prehistoric activity:

• Old Farmhouse, High Street (1994) produced six Neolithic or Bonze Age waste flint flakes in residual contexts.[24]

2.4.2 Romano-British

Although the main sections of this report on history and archaeology (below, sections 3 and 4) cover the period from the building of the fort (i.e. late 3rd century AD) onwards, excavations within the fort in 1936 discovered pottery of the 1st and 2nd centuries, suggesting Roman settlement in the vicinity.[25]

2.4.3 Implications of pre-urban archaeology

The fact that evidence for prehistoric and pre-fort Roman activity in and near the EUS study area has been found means that it should be anticipated in archaeological excavations in Pevensey. Prehistoric and pre-fort Roman archaeological features and finds are likely to survive beyond the narrow peninsular on which the Roman fort and medieval town are located: certainly this is suggested by the important Shinewater Late Bronze Age platform and trackway discovered 3.6km south-west of Pevensey on the Willingdon Levels.[26]

3 HISTORY

3.1 Origins: 3rd– 11th centuries

3.1.1 Place-name

The name *Pevensey* postdates the fort (originally known by the Romano-British name *Anderitum*) often cited incorrectly as *Anderida* or *Anderita*[27]). The name derives from the Old English personal name *Pefen* and *ēa*, the latter meaning 'river'.[28] The name is documented from 788 (albeit in later copies).[29] The Norman settlement and castelry, or rape, also adopted the name.

Fig. 3. Roman walls and bastions north of the west gate.

3.1.2 Roman fort and Late Saxon settlement

Significant settlement at what later became Pevensey began with the Roman fort of *Anderitum* built in *c.*293-300. This is the only Sussex example of what are often referred to as 'Saxon Shore' forts, traditionally seen as a gradually developed defensive system extending along the east and south coasts from Brancaster to Portchester, designed to repel Saxon and pirate coastal raids. It is possible, however, that several of the forts – including Pevensey – formed part of a scheme begun by the usurper Carausius to defend Britain against the professional forces of the central authority;[30] Carausius had declared himself Emperor in Britain and part of Gaul in 286-7, was killed in 293 by his rebel successor, Allectus, himself killed in 296.

The Roman fort of Anderitum had an associated harbour, as evidenced by the importance of shipping to the fort that included its own fleet – the *Classis Anderetianorum*.[31]

The surviving Roman fort at Pevensey (referred to as *Andredescester*) was captured and sacked by Aelle – who became the first Saxon king of the South Saxons – in the late 5th century (dated by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle – itself only begun in the 9th century – to 491, but the date is probably inaccurate: an alternative of *c.*470 has been proposed[32]). The reference to slaying of all the inhabitants suggests that the fort remained occupied: indeed, if abandoned after the end of Roman rule *c.*410, it would hardly have been a target for Aelle. There is, however, no clear documentary (or archaeological: see section 4.2) evidence for continuity between this occupation in the 5th century and the medieval borough of Pevensey: given the lack of central places in Early Saxon Sussex and that the emergence of towns was a Late Saxon feature, this is hardly surprising.

Although it has been suggested that Pevensey was an Anglo-Saxon *burh* founded as part of the system of 31 fortresses built by King Alfred (871-99), this is based on an implausible proposition that *Haestingaceastre* is to be identified with Pevensey instead of Hastings:[33] this hypothesis has been roundly and rightly discounted.[34] Given its defences, the absence of Pevensey from the Burghal Hidage is consistent with the absence of significant settlement there at that time.[35]

The medieval borough of Pevensey originated as a Late Saxon settlement, probably largely or even entirely built within the Roman fort (see section 4.2).[36] Early references to a place called Pevensey do not establish whether this was actually a settlement. For example, Pevensey is referred to by name in a charter of 947, but the name is simply used to locate a saltworks on the other side of the *land fleot*, or river channel, without any reference to an actual settlement.[37] By the mid-11th century, however, Pevensey was established as a significant borough. In 1054, a saltern and 12 houses, very probably at Pevensey, formed part of a grant to the abbey of Fécamp.[38] More significantly, Domesday Book records that Pevensey was a pre-Conquest town with 52 burgesses, with (market) tolls to the value of 20s and port dues of 35s.

3.1.3 Late Saxon and Norman port

As in the Roman period, Late Saxon development of the site was doubtless influenced by the substantial coastal embayment of what later became the reclaimed land of Pevensey Levels. This natural harbour enabled Pevensey to develop as a port utilized for coastal and cross-channel shipping, and was one of many such coastal settlements developing and expanding in the late 10th and 11th centuries in Sussex.[39] Well-known examples of use of the port at Pevensey include Earl Godwine's arrival from Sandwich with a fleet of 42 ships in 1049 and again arriving with a fleet from Bruges in 1052.[40] The most famous use of the extensive landing place, however, was the arrival of the fleet of William Duke of Normandy on the morning of 28th September 1066 after an overnight crossing from St Valéry. When William returned to Normandy for the first time since his invasion, (March 1067), he did so from Pevensey.[41]

3.1.4 Norman castle and rape

Fig. 4. Medieval well and Norman keep from the east.

Uniquely amongst Norman defences, the origins of Pevensey castle can be dated almost to the day: immediately after landing at Pevensey on 28th September 1066, William the Conqueror set about making defences at Pevensey and Hastings, while he waited for King Harold's army to advance on him. The extent of these initial defensive works is unclear, but there can be little doubt that works in 1066-7 were within the Roman fort, and that, in addition to involving repairs to the Roman walls, they comprised timber and earth defences typical of the first, urgent wave of Norman castle building. Programmes of castle construction were begun in 1067 on William I's behalf by Odo, Bishop of Bayeux and his half-brother, and William fitz Osbern,[42] and, following the king's return from Normandy in December 1068, under his own supervision.[43]

More lasting re-use of the fort followed shortly after as, following its initial bridgehead function, Pevensey castle became the principal fortification and administrative centre of the Rape of Pevensey. Early Norman castles at Hastings, Lewes and Arundel had the same function in relation to their eponymous rapes. Bramber Rape and castle were added in a pre-Domesday modification of the initial arrangement. There has been much debate as to the origins of the Sussex rapes, and their relationship to Anglo-Saxon territorial divisions. It is clear, however, that the rapes as we know them are a Norman creation or reorganization, dating from the immediate aftermath of the Conquest.[44]

The first lord of the Rape of Pevensey and builder of the castle within the Roman walls was Robert, Count of Mortain, half-brother of William the Conqueror.[45] The castle was given an early test in 1088. A rebellion designed to replace William Rufus by his brother, Robert Curthose, was strongly supported by Odo, bishop of Bayeux and, almost inevitably, embroiled Odo's brother, Robert of Mortain. When Odo joined the count of Mortain at Pevensey castle, William Rufus laid siege: this failed to break down the defences and only ended after six weeks when food supplies ran low in the castle.[46] The strategic importance of Pevensey and its defensibility were apparent to Henry I too: when Robert Curthose threatened invasion in 1101 – this time a more organized campaign with the intention of deposing his youngest brother – the king spent the summer waiting at Pevensey castle, although, in the event the invasion fleet sailed past and landed at Portsmouth (followed by truce at Alton). William of Mortain had succeeded his father, Robert, by this point (becoming the second wealthiest landowner in England and Normandy) and, for his involvement in the Anglo-Norman civil war of succession, he was permanently deprived of all his English lands.[47] William may have been disseised when he left England in 1104 to join Robert in

Normandy, as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle states, but his departure may have been voluntary: certainly, he was deprived of Pevensey and all his lands in or by 1106, when he was captured at Tinchebrai.[48]

Fig. 5. St Nicolas's church: view form the north-east.

3.1.5 Churches

Little is known of the early history of the parish church of St Nicolas, but it certainly existed by 1100-6, when it formed part of the endowment for a new chapel at the castle (see below). Given the scale of pre-Conquest Pevensey it can hardly be expected to have excluded a church. Domesday Book makes no explicit reference to a church, but notes that three priests held 23 of the burgesses before 1066. Neil Rushton has suggested that the church was a pre-Conquest minster,[49] although Mark Gardiner has suggested that the later parish of Pevensey fell within the extensive *parochia* of the minster at Bexhill.[50]

A chapel was founded at the castle in 1100-6. This had no parochial function and, from the size of the endowment (which comprised the probable minster church and its land at Arlington; the church of St Nicolas, Pevensey; and a render of salt and gavel – i.e. a payment of money – from the burgesses of Pevensey), it appears that William of Mortain intended to create a collegiate church, as founded within Hastings castle and adjacent to the gatehouse at Bramber castle. With the seizure of Pevensey rape by the king by 1106, the chapel became instead a royal free chapel, before, in 1147-52, being given to the bishop of Chichester to create a prebend in the cathedral.[51]

3.1.6 Norman town

Domesday Book records that when Robert, Count of Mortain acquired Pevensey (possibly in the spring of 1067[52]), the 52 burgesses of the pre-Conquest town had been reduced to 27, but evidently this was temporary (and possibly the result of the immediate impact of the Norman invasion and use of Pevensey as a military base), as by 1086 the town had expanded to 110 burgesses, tolls had risen to £4, and there was a mint. The mint had been established in 1077 and ceased operation in the 1150s. It was one of only seven mints operating in the Norman period in Sussex (the others were at Arundel, Bramber, Chichester, Hastings, Lewes, Rye and Steyning).[53] This rapid growth evidently reflects the adoption of the Roman fort as the castle and administrative centre of the rape, and conscious promotion of the town by Robert of Mortain.

3.2 The later medieval town

3.2.1 Economic history

In 1207 Pevensey became one of the Cinque Ports (a confederation with privileges in exchange for ship-service to the king), under the head port of Hastings.[54] At the same time as acquiring Cinque Port status, the 'barons' (or men) of Pevensey were granted a charter permitting removal of the town to the beach between Pevensey and Langney (on the shingle at the mouth of the haven).[55] The charter may have been requested due to fears of the silting up of the haven. Although there is no evidence to show that the new town was ever founded,[56] any such fears would have been reasonable: in the first quarter of the 13th century Pevensey was still a significant port, ranking perhaps fourth in the county (behind Winchelsea, Shoreham and Rye), but in 1288 – perhaps as a direct effect of the great storm of 1287 – stone for the castle had to be offloaded on to small lighters at the mouth of the haven. Trade continued in a modest fashion in the 14th century, with exports almost entirely consisting of wood from the Weald.[57] In 1337 Pevensey was only able to provide one ship when Edward III summoned his fleet in response to Philip VI's invasion of

English-held Aquitaine. This was a small part of the 169-strong fleet, of which a considerable 55 were from the Cinque Ports. Pevensey's modest contribution put it in the same naval service league as Seaford and Faversham, and, of the Cinque Ports in Sussex, well below Rye (four ships), Hastings (10) and Winchelsea (25).[58] As well as the local factors of inning of the large lagoon and silting of the remaining channels (see below), Pevensey was affected by the severe decline in the late 14th century of the Yarmouth herring and the Scarborough cod industries, to which the Cinque Ports had long-enjoyed privileged access.[59] In the 15th century Pevensey was only involved in minimal coastal trade, with beach-based boats.[60]

The decline of the port was mirrored, albeit in a delayed form, by that of the castle (see below, section 3.2.2) and the town. A rental of 1292 lists 46 burgesses, holding 62 tenements, with another six lying empty. Even in the immediate aftermath of the arrival of the plague, there was little change in 1353, and only two vacant tenements. The continuing success of the town is indicated by a rise in rents in the first half of the 14th century.[61] Moreover, the burgesses at this date appeared to have purely urban interests and to be little involved with agriculture. However, in the mid-15th century tenants were hard to find for the burgages, and in the mid-16th century there were only around 20 houses in the town for which rents were still being paid.[62]

Nothing is known of the later medieval history of the market within the borough. The 1207 charter for the new town on the beach granted a weekly Sunday market there, but no market income is recorded and, thus, does not appear to have taken place. In contrast, the annual seven-day fair before, on and after the 29th August (feast of the nativity of St John the Baptist), which was granted at the same time, is recorded as being held in 1398-9, in the 15th century and in the 1540s.[63]

The most distinctive land use in the parish was salt-making. The charter of 947 (see above, section 3.1.2) provides the earliest reference, and over 100 salterns are recorded in Domesday Book in the Pevensey Levels area, where the sand-impregnated silt and access to wood fuel provided the raw materials for the industry. Salt-making went into decline largely as a result of the inning of the marshes, which progressively reduced the large lagoon (that had provided the extensive natural harbour). The reclamation, or inning, of marsh appears to have begun in earnest in the 12th century and (as in the Adur valley[64]) was especially active during the 13th century. By the time of the great storm of 1287, most of the current extent of Pevensey Levels had been reclaimed and the salt-making industry had ceased.[65] The significance of the industry to the town of Pevensey itself, however, had been considerable: as we have seen, a render of salt from the burgesses had been part of the endowment of the castle chapel in 1100-6 (see above, section 3.1.5).

The burgesses of Pevensey had a hospital (in the 16th century dedicated to St John the Baptist) outside the town, in the adjacent parish of Westham. The master of the hospital of St Cross is recorded in the 1292 rental for Pevensey, and this may refer to what later became the hospital of St John the Baptist: certainly the latter was in existence by 1354.[66]

3.2.2 Castle and prison

Pevensey castle continued to be of strategic importance in the 12th and early 13th centuries, although the loss of Normandy ultimately undermined its importance. Much of the seized property of the William of Mortain passed to the Laigle family, but not the castle itself. Having dispossessed Richer of Laigle, probably in 1141, King Stephen made the mistake of granting both castle and rape to Gilbert of Clare: Gilbert rebelled against Stephen in the winter of 1146-7, and the king laid siege against Pevensey castle.[67] Again the castle resisted the siege and had to be starved into surrender.[68] Essentially the castle then remained under royal control until granted, along with the rape, to Peter of Rivallis in 1232.[69] During the period of royal control, the castle was slighted by King John in 1216 to prevent it falling into enemy hands (a real possibility as newly restored Gilbert of Laigle had deserted the king) as he retreated from the advance of Prince Louis of France.[70]

In 1234 the castle and rape were granted to Gilbert Marshal and then, in 1246, to Peter of Savoy. Peter undertook works on the castle, which probably included the inner curtain wall and towers. In the conflict between Henry III and his barons in the mid-1260s, Peter of Savoy fled the country. In Peter's absence, and following the Battle of Lewes (May 1264), the royalist stronghold of Pevensey castle was laid siege in the winter of 1264.[71] The siege failed and was lifted in July 1265.[72] With the defeat at Lewes amended at the Battle of Evesham in 1265, Peter of Savoy was able to be restored and on his death in 1268 the castle and rape passed to Henry III's queen, Eleanor of Provence,[73] thereby remaining in Crown control until it passed to John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster in 1372.[74] Sir John Pelham, who was appointed

constable of the castle in 1393, appears to have followed John of Gaunt's son, Henry Bolingbroke, into exile in 1398, before regaining Pevensey castle by force in 1399. In this last act, Pelham created an important diversion by raising fear that Pevensey would be the bridgehead for Henry Bolingbroke's expected attack, allowing Henry to land with surprise in Yorkshire. John Pelham (not his – then still future – wife Joan, as so often mistakenly cited[75]) then successfully held the castle against siege by the levies of Surrey and Sussex.[76] After Bolingbroke was crowned Henry IV (1399), Pelham was rewarded with the constableship of Pevensey,[77] then in 1409 granted the castle for life: it reverted to the Duchy of Lancaster on his death in 1429.[78]

Although ceasing to have any strategic use, the grant to the Duchy of Lancaster, followed by the accession of Henry Bolingbroke, meant Pevensey castle became eligible for use as a royal prison and it was used to hold Edward, Duke of York (1405); James I of Scotland (1415); the Queen Mother, Joan of Navarre (1419-20); and Sir John Mortimer (1422 and 1423). Edmund Mortimer, fifth Earl of March, and his younger brother, Roger, may also have been held at Pevensey castle (1406).[79]

As at Arundel, Bramber and Lewes, the castle at Pevensey had also long functioned as a prison for common felons. From 1198 the common gaol of Sussex was at Chichester, but by 1248 had been succeeded by that at Guildford castle, in Surrey. A prison is recorded at Pevensey, however, in 1178-9, 1234 and 1259, and thereafter to 1423, delivering prisoners to Guildford. Pleas for a county gaol in Sussex as early as 1320 were finally met by Lewes prison in 1487, with a gaol in action by 1489 and Lewes deliveries regular by 1500.[80] The choice of Lewes for the Sussex gaol over other prisons such as Pevensey was no doubt dictated by it being the meeting place of the county court, a role that it had fulfilled frequently since the 13th century.[81]

More terminal provision for felons in Pevensey is evident from the reference in the medieval custumal to *Wahztrew* or *wargtrew*, a Middle English spelling of Old English *weargtrēow*: a 'felon-tree', or gallows. The Pevensey custumal in its surviving form dates from the 14th century but which Coates suggests derives from a prototype from no later than *c.*1250.[82]

3.2.3 Bridge

There is no evidence for an early bridge at Pevensey. For example, *c.*1230 'the water of Pevenesell' was seen as an obstacle to a man on horseback trying to travel from Pevensey to Bexhill.[83] It appears that a bridge in this location only became more pressing as the levels were increasingly drained. From around 1300 the burgesses of the town petitioned for a bridge and were evidently successful for it is explicitly referred to in 1326.[84] Dulley suggests that the bridge was built slightly earlier, *c.*1292, replacing a ferry.[85] To add to the confusion, Coates suggestion of a *c.*1250 or earlier prototype of the Pevensey custumal (above) is possibly significant as this makes reference to the bridge (*pount de la ville*) as a place for felons to be cast into the haven to drown.[86] It is possible, however, that *pount* here, like Latin *pons* at Bramber and Arundel, could refer to a causeway rather than a bridge as such.[87]

3.2.4 Church

The parish church of St Nicolas was almost entirely rebuilt in the early to mid-13th century (see below, section 4.5.1).

3.3 The town *c.*1500-1800

3.3.1 Economic history

Fig. 6. The Court House (now the museum).

From a borough total of around 90 in 1564, the population fell to around 70 for the whole parish by 1676 (possibly as a result of epidemics at this time), then rose to around 117 in 1724. Thereafter population continued to grow, reaching 191 by 1801.[88] The mix of borough and parish statistics and the diverse source of these figures, mean that they should be taken as indicative of general trends only, but the

decayed state of the former town throughout this period is abundantly clear.

Although a survey of 1564 records a haven at Pevensey, but no vessels, mariners or fisherman based at the port, there does seem to have been a minor revival thereafter. Dulley has ascribed this to a short-lived result of flooding in the late 16th century,[89] but the consistent use of Pevensey as a port for export of Wealden iron (mostly to London) during the whole period of the flourishing of this industry (i.e. from the late 16th century to *c.*1700) suggests that this may have been more significant. Certainly, a substantial London vessel of 65 tons was able to load iron at Pevensey in 1595.[90] As late as 1683 the port handled 24 cargoes and doubtless this was predominantly iron.[91] Nonetheless, other materials were also exported via Pevensey: in 1624 wool, leather and cloth was loaded on to a boat at Pevensey;[92] and in 1698 beech timber was stacked on Pevensey quay ready for shipment to London to make dray wheels.[93] At this time export of iron finally ceased, and an average of less than one cargo per annum is recorded until 1714, when the customs house closed.[94]

The location of the outfall of the channel varies in this period. In 1587 the main channel ran south of Pevensey (partly along the route of what is now Langney Sewer), then turned north-east before reaching the sea at Wallsend. Rapid development of a shingle spit in the late 16th and early 17th centuries saw the outfall move eastwards as far as Normans Bay. This caused problems for the drainage of the marshes, so by 1634 a new cut was made (essentially the present channel) from Fence Bridge (where a sluice was installed), on the edge of the town, to Wallsend. A sluice was built at the mouth of the haven in 1694.[95] With the sluice in place, the 1698 survey noted that vessels of only 14 tons struggled to get into the mouth of the haven.[96] To compensate for the loss of the navigation in 1694 the Commission of the Sewers constructed the present road from Pevensey to a landing place at Normans Bay (4km east of the town),[97] but this was insufficient to save the port.

With no port, a decayed castle and no significant urban industry, Pevensey saw little passing trade. It had minimal provision for guest beds and stablings at its inns recorded in a survey of 1686,[98] and its roads were ignored in the flurry of turnpike construction in the 18th and 19th centuries.[99]

Reduced to a small village on the edge of grazing land, Pevensey's interests became largely agricultural. This is seen as early as 1657 when Edward Hilder, identified as a burgess, was selling cattle at Smithfield.[100] At this time Pevensey was one of a series of Wealden fairs used for livestock dealing.[101]

Pevensey retained its borough status nonetheless, with the focus of administration being the 16th-century court house. Although documentary evidence is scant for this period, by the mid-18th century the court house was used for sessions of the peace, the hundred court, the court of record, and the assembly.[102]

After the Reformation, the medieval hospital of St John the Baptist (see above, section 3.2.1) became a charity, principally supporting almshouses.[103]

3.3.2 Castle

Fig. 7. 16th-century demi-culverin, now within the inner bailey.

Pevensey castle was redundant by *c.*1500, and in 1573 the castle was recorded as being badly decayed.[104] With the threat of the imminent Armada, a survey in 1587 recorded two demi-culverins at Pevensey castle.[105] In 1649 the castle was valued at only £40.[106]

3.3.3 Church and religion

Unusually for a parish church, Henry VIII's breach with Rome in 1543 had an immediate impact when Richard Boorde, vicar of Pevensey and Westham, fled abroad, unable to tolerate the change.[107] Similarly, Elizabeth's religious settlement also caused difficulty, with the resignation at this time of the incumbent of

Pevensey: this was one of 43 in the county between 1558 and 1564.[108]

Bishop Compton's census of 1676 recorded no Roman Catholic recusants, but there were three adult Protestant nonconformists.[109] Bishop Bower's survey of 1724 identified no Roman Catholics and no Protestant nonconformists.[110]

3.4 Revival: *c.*1800-2004

3.4.1 Economic history

Pevensey saw some modest but steady growth in the early 19th century, with the parish population rising from 191 in 1801 to 412 in 1851. Population then fell to 330 in 1871 before recovering to 437 in 1891. Population growth thereafter is difficult to analyse in relation to the ancient borough, since a new settlement in the parish began to emerge along the beach *c.*1900, initially called Wallsend, later Pevensey Bay. This new settlement has been chiefly responsible for the population increase to 793 in 1931, 1,686 in 1951, 2,724 in 1971 and 2,997 in 2001.

The London Brighton and South Coast Railway (LBSCR) brought the railway to the Pevensey area in 1846, with construction of the Lewes to St Leonards line (later known as the Brighton and Hastings branch).[111] Although initially named Pevensey, the station was *c.*1km south-west of the ancient borough, at Westham. Pevensey Bay halt, *c.*300m south-east of the town, was added in 1905.[112]

There was still an annual livestock fair in Pevensey in 1848, on the 5th July.[113] A cattle market was established east of the castle in the late 19th century on the site now occupied by the castle car park and, until *c.*1850, the site of the manor house.[114] This closed in 1951.[115]

Military use continued to have a sporadic impact on the town. The advent of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815) saw the creation 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.[116] Those across Pevensey Bay (Nos. 55-64) were built in 1805-8.[117] A signal post (for communication with Royal Navy ships) was built at Wallsend in 1811.[118] In June 1803 a barracks for 700 men was proposed at the castle, but this seems to have been abandoned in favour of a large barracks 'near harbour' under construction in August 1803. Another barracks for 2-3,000 men was built near Pevensey in 1804:[119] this may be that recorded on the Ordnance Survey surveyors' draft map, on the north side of Westham. The economic impact of vast numbers of soldiers in the area is likely to have been significant, and is consistent with the rise in population from *c.*1800 (see above).

With renewed fear of invasion, in the Second World War Pevensey castle was refortified as a command and observation post (1940), with pill boxes and an anti-tank gun blockhouse added later.[120] After initial identification as a safe zone suitable for evacuees, Pevensey and its hinterland saw considerable action from 1940, including bombs, incendiary devices and flying bombs falling in the parish and village.[121]

Fig. 8. Castle Cottage tea rooms.

The re-use of the castle for military purposes, however, was a temporary change in its new role as an attraction for visitors. This began in the 19th century, with access from Hastings and Eastbourne in particular improved by the building of the railway in 1846. Most significantly, in 1925 the castle was given to the state by the Duke of Devonshire, and thereafter restored and made more accessible, and is now managed by English Heritage.[122] The town benefited – and still does – from the popularity of the castle as a visitor attraction. Accommodation and tea rooms for visitors sprung up, the latter including the Ivy

Cottage Tea Rooms (especially popular in the 1920s and 1930s: demolished in the 1950s[123]) and the Old Castle Tea Rooms. Some attractions were bogus (such as the 'mint room' of the Mint House,[124] built long after the mint had ceased to exist) and others were of genuine interest (the Court House, or former town hall, now a museum and administered since 1890 by Pevensey Town Trust[125]). However, it is easy to over-emphasize the impact of the tourist trade, since new building was minimal during the 19th and early 20th century. It is only since the 1930s that Pevensey has seen significant building, mostly comprising housing built for commuters or for retirement. A bypass for the A27 was built in the 1980s.[126]

3.4.2 Church and religion

St Nicolas's church has remained intact as an institution throughout this period. The church building, however, had fallen into disrepair and substantial rebuilding was undertaken by George Gilbert Scott junior in 1875-1900. There is no record of nonconformity in Pevensey itself, reflecting the small scale of the former borough rather than an unusual level of anglicanism.

Fig. 9. Former National School (1876).

3.4.3 Urban institutions

For much of the 19th century the quarterly sessions of the liberty continued to be held in the townhall, and the town still had its corporation consisting of a bailiff, jurats and commonalty.[127] As an unreformed borough (although without its own members of parliament), Pevensey lost its borough status in 1886, following the Municipal Corporations Act 1883.[128]

To all intents and purposes, Pevensey has been a village throughout this period and has, thus, developed a typical range of social and public functions. This includes the building of a National School in 1876,[129] which succeeded an earlier parish school recorded in 1855 and 1867,[130] and which closed in 1958, with children transferred to Pevensey and Westham C of E Primary School, previously Westham County Primary, in the neighbouring parish.[131]

The almshouses that succeeded the medieval hospital of St John continued to make provision for the needy of the Liberty of Pevensey,[132] and there appears to have been no workhouse prior to the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, when the borough became part of Eastbourne Poor Law Union. The new Union workhouse was created from the former cavalry barracks at Eastbourne in 1835.[133]

A village hall was built in 1923 and then replaced by the present hall in 1967.[134]

4 ARCHAEOLOGY

4.1 Roman fort (Maps 1 and 3)

4.1.1 Architectural evidence

Pevensey castle is remarkable in that it preserves extensive upstanding remains of the Roman fort of *Anderitum*, built in *c.*293-300. The remains comprise a near circuit (unusually, not rectangular) of walls standing up to 9m high (in many parts almost their full height as built), together with D-shaped external bastions (for mounting artillery) and the remains of three gates: the substantial west gate (the principal entrance to the Roman fort, replaced in the medieval period), a more modest and much remodelled east gate, and a smaller postern gate on the north side (adjacent to the collapsed section of wall, and S-shaped in plan[135]). The wall itself has a flint-rubble core faced with Upper Greensand (possibly from the outcrop on the coast at Eastbourne), and Tunbridge Wells sandstone (probably from a local outcrop), with occasional bonding courses of brick (substituted with Horsham stone along part of the north wall).[136]

4.1.2 Excavations (Map 5)

The Roman fort has been the subject of numerous archaeological investigations. Although excavations were carried out at the west gate in 1852,[137] those undertaken in 1906-8 represent the first significant investigations, and, in particular, revealed the nature of the construction of the wall foundations (see above). The construction trench of the wall was cut into the edge of the natural hill or island on which the fort was built (and which determined it shape). The exposed marshy ground was stabilized with oak stakes, over which was laid a footing of clay and flints and a layer of concrete, the footing occasionally strengthened with lacing timbers.[138]

Another postern, on the south side, has been identified through excavation.[139]

Given the small size and early date of most of the various trenches excavated within the fort it is perhaps not surprising that evidence of internal buildings has been limited to fragmentary remains mostly of timber buildings, with plan form and function unclear.[140]

No archaeological evidence has been found of the Roman harbour, but it is most likely to have been immediately to the east or south east of the fort.[141]

4.2 Late Saxon town (Map 6)

4.2.1 Architectural evidence

There is no clear architectural evidence for the Late Saxon town documented in Domesday Book. Lyne has suggested that extensive repairs to the walls of the Roman fort (most notably herringbone flint-rubble visible in the upper parts of the bastions) date from as early as the Middle Saxon period and that the east gate was remodelled in the 10th or early 11th century, but these repairs could equally well, indeed would more plausibly, relate to the post-Conquest castle (see below, section 4.3.1).[142]

Fig. 10. Roman bastion north of the east gate showing repairs, probably of the late 11th century, in herringbone-coursed rubble.

4.2.2 Excavations

The ruinous state of the Roman fortifications in this period is supported by the fact that the collapse of the southern part of the circuit of Roman walls (as the result of land-slippage, on the side of the fort most vulnerable to coastal erosion) appears to have occurred before the Conquest. Indeed, Lyne suggests – somewhat undermining his arguments for Saxon repairs to other parts of the walls and the east gate – that this collapse had happened before the Late Saxon period and was not replaced until the Norman period, although he does suggest (again

largely on less than convincing architectural grounds) that the west gate was remodelled in the Late Saxon period.[143]

A semi-ruinous Roman fort by no means precludes Late Saxon occupation, and it has become generally accepted that this was the location of Pevensey at this period.[144] The results of excavations at Pevensey are consistent with this in that what evidence there is for Late Saxon (as, indeed, with scantier evidence for earlier post-Roman) occupation has come from within the Roman fort, although the excavations outside the fort have been concentrated on locations on the edge of the later medieval town and, thus, are far from conclusive (see below, section 4.4.2).

Fig. 11. Pevensey Castle: early 12th-century postern.

Within the Roman fort the excavations are predominantly early in date, with comparatively poor records and use of narrow trenches. These have shown limited evidence (with almost no evidence of any buildings) for Early and Middle Saxon occupation, with possible abandonment in the 6th century followed by occupation re-established by the mid-7th century: the evidence of finds of this period is insufficient to support the hypothesis that the Roman fort had become a major, possibly royal, Middle Saxon centre.[145] More significant evidence has been found for the Late Saxon period, although again buildings are conspicuously absent. The main source for this comprises excavations undertaken in 1936-9 by Cottrill and Pearce. These consisted of numerous and predominantly small trenches clustered around the edge of the fort: there was no large-scale excavation in the centre of the fort, nor has there been so since. The trenches by and west of the east gate were dug in 1936 to investigate the Roman road, but also revealed Saxo-Norman rubbish pits. These pits contained sherds of a shelly black fabric more recently identified as Late Saxon or 11th century.[146] Similar pottery was discovered in 1936-7 in a more substantial trench excavated against the north wall, immediately east of the collapsed section. This also contained what may have been a single beam slot, perhaps providing evidence of a Middle Saxon building located against the Roman wall.[147] Excavation outside the west gate in 1938 revealed rubbish pits of probable Late Saxon date, thus indicating that occupation was not confined to the area within the Roman walls.[148]

4.3 Norman castle (Map 6)

4.3.1 Architectural evidence

There is little in the way of upstanding evidence of the late 11th-century castle. As discussed (above, section 4.2.1) the herringbone flint-rubble repairs to the Roman bastions most probably date from this period: it may be significant that these repairs are concentrated on the bastions of the eastern part of the fort (i.e. the likely area of the inner bailey).

The keep has been variously dated and is problematic in that it lacks clearly datable features, only partially survives, and is of several phases. The most distinctive features are the multiple D-shaped tower-like projections. These are suggestive of the late 12th century and, indeed, echo the form of the surviving gatehouse (see below), although it has been suggested that they are additions to an earlier oblong *donjon* built against the Roman wall: this suggestion has not been supported by excavation (see below, section 4.3.2).[149]

The gatehouse to the present inner bailey pre-dates the adjoining walls and, with its two D-shaped towers, can be dated to *c.*1200: Chapman has suggested that the construction of the lower three storeys can be related to expenditure in 1195-6.[150]

In the south-east corner of the inner bailey a small postern gate dates to the early 12th century.[151] Rigold suggested that masonry to the

south-east of the postern was a quay built between postern and the collapsed Roman bastion to the south-west.[152] However, excavation in 1995 identified the supposed quay as a collapsed medieval wall, probably part of the postern itself.[153]

It is unclear whether the foundations of a chapel in the castle inner bailey are those of the early 12th century or a later rebuild: certainly, this chapel had been in existence for some time by the mid-13th century and was replaced by a timber chapel in 1302.[154] Excavation of the chapel in 1852 recovered a 12th-century font and piscina.[155] The exposed foundations are largely featureless, but show a simple two-cell church to which a north aisle was added.

4.3.2 Excavations (Map 5)

The Norman works included replacement of the collapsed southern part of the circuit of Roman walls (i.e. forming part of the perimeter of the Norman outer bailey). The line of a replacement wall was partly identified through excavations in 1932 and 1936. This began at the bastion at the south-western limit of the upstanding Roman wall and crossed the line of the collapsed southern wall. Its route nearer the Norman inner bailey has not been investigated, but evidently ran inside the line of the collapsed Roman wall. Nearby, excavations in 1936-8 showed that a ditch, or outwork, extending beyond the west gate was dug around the time of the Conquest, and was silted up by the late 12th century. An outer defensive ditch, possibly of the late 12th century, was discovered nearby in 1938.[156]

A north-south ditch *c.*40m west of the east gate could relate to the initial works at Conquest.[157] This lies to the east of another north-south ditch (visible today) running south from a bastion in the north wall towards the later gatehouse. It has been proposed that this western ditch marks the Norman inner bailey.[158] However, recent analysis of a section dug across this ditch in 1936-8 indicates that the ditch dates from after the mid-13th century,[159] although this does not rule out the (perhaps unlikely) possibility of the ditch being dug on the west side of a pre-existing palisade.

Excavations within and east of the keep in 1993-5 suggested that the tower-like projections were part of the primary, 12th-century, design, although the central eastern tower was added when the Roman wall was demolished in this area and the east side of the keep rebuilt in the early 14th century (possibly the subject of expenditure in 1318-22).[160]

4.4 Norman town (Maps 6 and 7)

4.4.1 Architectural evidence

The parish church of St Nicolas is the only building outside the fort and castle that has fabric of this period. Two arches in the chancel side walls date from the late 12th century. Evidently they opened into projections from the contemporary church and, thus, may well be additions: this possibility is supported by the evidence for the existence of the church by 1100-6 (see above, section 3.1.5).

4.4.2 Excavations and topography

Whilst discovery of Saxon material within the fort and immediately outside the west gate provides reasonable grounds for concluding that the Roman fort was occupied during this period, post-Conquest finds need not relate to anything other than re-use of the fort as a castle. Nor does the decline in occupational debris in the castle in the late 12th and early 13th centuries imply that this was when the town relocated to its present site, as Lyne suggests despite the fact that much of the evidence comes from parts of the Roman fort unambiguously in Norman military use (e.g. the concentration of trenches around and near the east gate – within the Norman inner bailey – and in and around the defences in the west gate area).[161] In short, nothing excavated within the castle has shown that civilian use continued after Conquest. Indeed, as we have seen (above, section 4.2.1), the evidence favours refortification of the whole Roman fort in the late 11th century, which appears more consistent with use of the whole site as a castle.

In this context, excavations outside the castle are more important for considering the extent and location of the Norman town. Excavations that were undertaken in 1962-6 on the eastern and southern fringe of the medieval town found no substantial evidence of occupation prior to *c.*1200 (see below, section 4.5.2), but more recent investigations have discovered earlier finds and features.

A trenched evaluation adjacent to the **Old Farmhouse, High Street** (i.e. on land now occupied by 1-3 Farm Cottages) in 1993 recovered pottery predominantly of mid to late 12th-century date.[162] The subsequent full excavation in 1994 revealed that occupation of the site began in the late 11th or 12th centuries. A post-hole constructed building on the street frontage belonged to the 12th century: the rear wall may have been constructed of flint, and

there were contemporary rubbish pits to the rear. Continental trade in the 12th century was evident through the presence of imported pottery, comprising North French painted wares and Normandy Gritty Wares.[163]

Excavation of a site west of **Post Office Cottage, High Street** in 2005 revealed six rubbish pits containing pottery from *c.*1150-1350. The small assemblage of pottery included two sherds of Normandy whiteware (mid-12th to late 13th centuries). Fishing and coastal trade was better represented by oyster, cockle and mussel shells, fish bones (cod, herring and conger eel), a fish hook, Cornish roofing slate and, possibly, West Country stone.[164]

At **Church Farm** (i.e. south-west of the parish church and east of the car park) ten trenches dug for an archaeological evaluation in 2000 discovered widespread evidence of buildings and floor surfaces of probable 12th to 13th-century date.[165]

Fig. 12. High Street, south side: view east.

The results of these excavations – and the negative evidence of those by Dulley – suggest that 12th-century Pevensey occupied much of the area of the surviving town, prior to 13th-century expansion of the town to the east. The presence of a street frontage building at Old Farm is consistent with the High Street already being densely built up.

The date of the foundation of the extra-mural town has been the subject of debate and, with the lack of large-scale centrally-located excavations, remains uncertain. Lyne argues for the shift of the town from the Roman fort to the present site in the reign of Henry II (1154-89).[166] This is implausible on many counts: first, there is no documented evidence of the wholesale re-location of the borough (indeed, the records of burgesses imply continuity from 1086 onwards); second, the Norman repairs and use of the Roman fort appears more compatible with military use of the whole site; third, much of the occupational debris in the castle (which declines in the late 12th to early 13th centuries) comes from areas of unambiguously military use (such as the Norman inner bailey); fourth, the excavation of Old Farm, High Street, indicates occupation from the late 11th or 12th century; fifth, the excavation of Church Farm (which appears peripheral and, thus, probably secondary, to the medieval town) has evidence of occupation from the 12th century; and sixth, the parish church of St Nicolas was already established by 1100-6.

The latter is particularly interesting, as the High Street appears to be the primary street in the town from the outset: although the bridge dates from *c.*1300 it replaced a ferry, and the High Street aligns to a road on the east bank. The church, thus, appears located to the rear of pre-existing High Street burgage plots. Certainly, the evidence available suggests that from the Norman Conquest, the borough of Pevensey was located on its present site. Indeed, the hiatus described in Domesday Book (in which the 52 pre-Conquest burgesses reduced to 27 in the immediate aftermath of the Conquest, before expanding to 110 burgesses) may reflect the relocation of the borough as a direct consequence of adoption of the Roman fort as a Norman castle, and the active promotion of Pevensey as a borough and port by Robert of Mortain. Development of the town in the late 11th century does not preclude the possibility that Late Saxon occupation also spread east of the fort (as indeed archaeological evidence suggests it did at the west gate).

4.5 Later medieval town (Maps 7 and 8)

4.5.1 Buildings

The castle saw significant change in the mid-13th century, with the creation of the surviving inner bailey. This involved replacement of the Norman

inner bailey defences and construction of curtain walls linking three new D-shaped towers to form a new inner bailey in the south-east corner of the Roman fort: the gatehouse of *c.*1200 was retained. The moat dates to this period. These works were probably undertaken by Peter of Savoy when granted the castle and rape in 1246 (see above, section 3.2.2). The internal face of the curtain wall shows scars (including fireplaces) of the domestic buildings from the 13th and 14th centuries that edged the inner bailey. Documented damage to the southern wall of the outer bailey during the siege of 1264-5 does not appear to have affected the Roman walls as Goodall supposes, but rather the less substantial Norman wall that replaced this earlier collapse (see above, section 4.3.2).[167]

The parish church is largely of the first half of the 13th century, with an off-axis northern tower located at the end of the north aisle of the nave.

There are no immediately obvious medieval domestic or commercial buildings surviving in Pevensey, partly as a result of the decline of the town, but possibly due to the absence of systematic survey: it is evident that several of the buildings are timber framed with later re-facing and on analysis some of these may prove to be medieval.

4.5.2 Excavations and topography

Excavations at the castle in 1993-5 re-exposed the lower parts of two D-shaped towers on the east side of the keep (i.e. external to the Roman fort). These were part of a rebuilding of the eastern side of the keep in the early 14th century.[168]

Excavations by Dulley in 1962-6 provide evidence of the south-eastern fringe of the medieval town. A trench in the north-east corner of **Memorial Hall field** revealed a quay built no earlier than the early 13th century over the natural shelving shoreline. Similar results came from two excavations on the east side of **Welsh Croft** (now Nicolas Close), although here the built-up stones appear to have been a sea wall rather than a quay. The *terminus post quem* of the earliest building excavated nearby was the late 12th century, and the latest building dates from the 14th century. In the **vicarage garden** south of the nave of the church, excavations examined the route of the former road parallel to the High Street. Medieval pits were found beneath the metalled road surface, and it was clear that it was not a significant medieval street, but on the fringe of the town, with a scatter of buildings adjacent. Excavation in the north-west corner of **Welsh Croft**, immediately south of the vicarage, was hampered by plough damage, with discoveries limited to truncated pits: the earliest of these was from the early 13th century. Dulley's excavations provided some evidence of fishing (in the form of fish hooks, numerous oyster and whelk shells, and some cockle and mussel shells), continental trade (pottery included types from Normandy, Flanders and Gascony) and coastal trade (pottery included Wessex and London area types, and coastal transport doubtless explains the presence of coal and Devon slates).[169]

Fig. 13. St Nicolas's church: view from nave into bell tower.

Although numerous rubbish pits excavated in 1993-4 on the site near the **Old Farmhouse, High Street** show late medieval occupation, by the late 13th century the streetfront building that existed in the 12th century appears to have been removed. Although the building was no longer in existence, signs of occupation (in terms of numbers of features and finds) do not show evidence of decline until the 15th and 16th centuries. There was limited evidence of fishing (one fish hook, numerous oyster shells, and fewer shells from mussel, cockle, whelk and winkle), but coastal trade was in evidence (pottery types include those from the east coast, building stone from the Dorset area, roofing slates from Devon and Cornwall, and ship ballast stones from the south-west) as was continental trade (pottery types included those from Normandy, replaced in the late 13th century by

Saintonge pottery, which can be associated with the wine trade with Gascony, followed by a decline in all imports after the mid-14th century).[170]

Excavation of rubbish pits on the site west of **Post Office Cottage, High Street** in 2005 revealed evidence for occupation up to 1350, but not thereafter (until the late 16th century). Evidence from this site for the maritime economy and coastal trade cannot be easily disaggregated into Norman pre and post-1200 periods and, thus, has been described above (section 4.4.2).[171]

At **Church Farm** the archaeological evaluation in 2000 showed that occupation only continued into the early 14th century and that there was an absence of finds and features from the 15th and 16th centuries. Evidence for the maritime and coastal economy comprised finds of West Country slate and oyster shells, neither in closely dated contexts.[172]

4.6 The town *c.*1500-1800 (Maps 9-11)

4.6.1 Buildings and topography

Pevensey has 12 surviving buildings (or groups of buildings) that date from between 1500 and 1800. This lack of older buildings, for a Domesday borough, reflects the later medieval decline of the borough and the abandonment of burgage plots, rather than the impact of more recent development. It is also possible that internal examination of several buildings of apparent 19th-century date will reveal evidence of earlier fabric.

Despite its spurious name the Mint House, High Street, is of interest as a substantial timber-framed house with a continuous jetty, probably dating from the early 16th century. The stone-built Court House appears to have been purpose built for the diminished town (but still with its civic functions) in the 16th century, and combines a court room on the first floor with a lock-up below. Banks Lodge and adjacent Penthouse Cottages have both been refaced with flint cobbles, but are of the 16th century and 17th century respectively (possibly earlier). The underlying timber framing of Penthouse Cottages is visible where it oversails the twitten leading through to Church Lane. Pevensey lacks substantial 18th-century houses, although brick-built Camden Cottage and Post Office Cottage, High Street, date from 1717.

Although not reliable in its exact location of individual houses, a map of 1595 shows the decayed town with thinly scattered houses, concentrated on the High Street (Fig. 16).[173]

Fig. 14. Entrance to twitten by Penthouse Cottages.

4.7 The town *c.*1800-2007

Fig. 15. Castle Terrace, High Street.

4.7.1 Buildings and topography

The majority of the buildings in Pevensey date from this period, not so much through loss of earlier buildings, but through largely piecemeal redevelopment of vacant plots. This was very small scale between 1840 and 1914, with the most significant developments being the creation of the cattle market on the site of the manor house (demolished *c.*1850[174]) and construction of Castle Terrace on the High Street east of the Mint House in the late 19th century. Also of the late 19th century are the vicarage (now Marsh Hall) and the National School (1876), both east of the church.

The inter-war years saw the first larger development with 17 houses (mostly semi-detached) built on vacant land on the north side of the High Street, between the New Inn (now the Smugglers' Inn) and the bridge. Only the western building (a terrace of three) survives, with those to the east demolished to make way for late 20th-century housing of Bridge End, built with its own access road parallel to the High Street. The late 20th century saw infill of remaining plots on the south side of the east end of the High Street and, most significantly, the infill of the still largely vacant south-east quarter of the village, including bungalow development at St Nicolas Close and housing on Wallsend Road. The latter had run along the river bank, until the river channel north and south of Pevensey bridge was modified in the late 20th century.

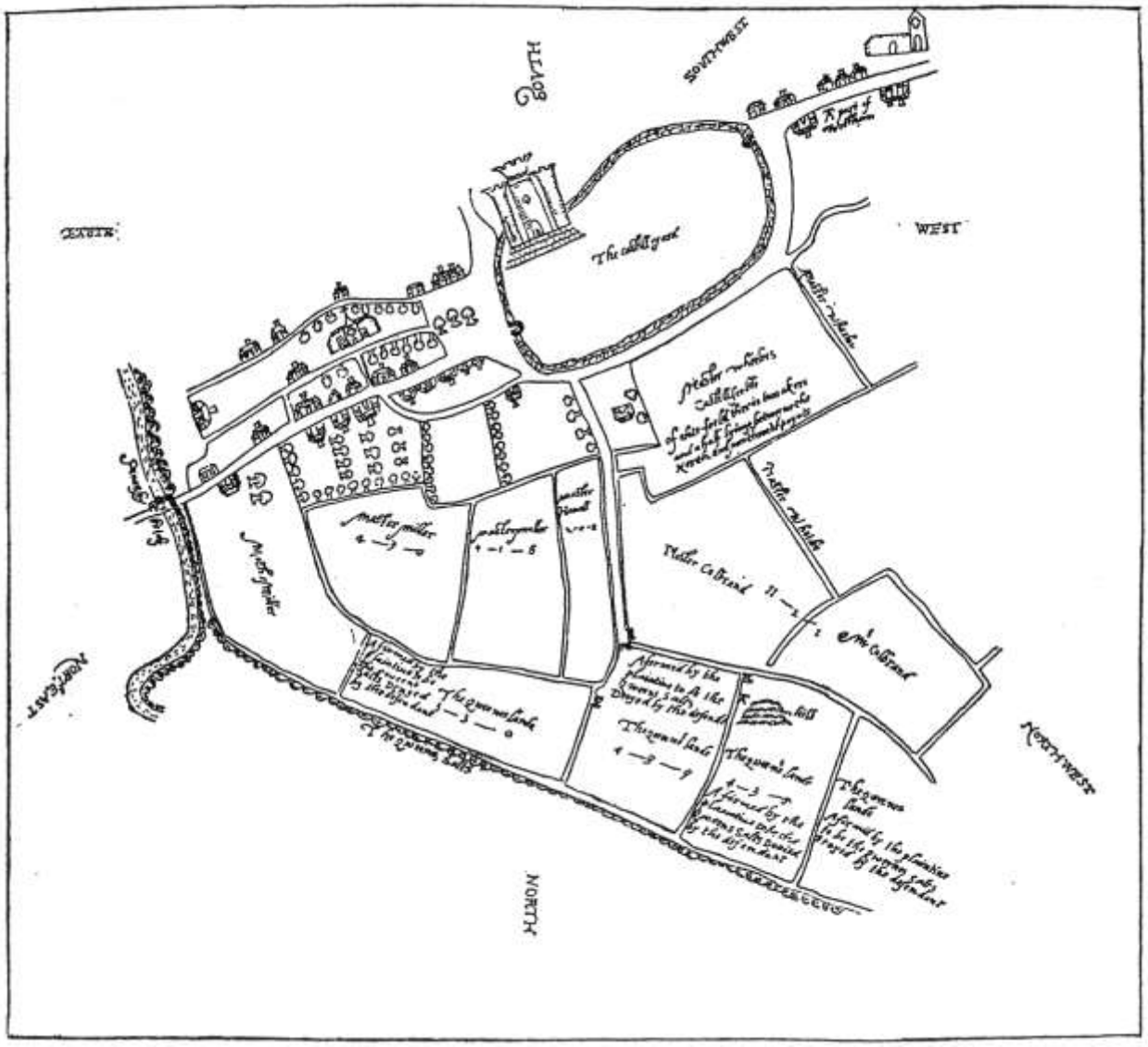

Fig. 16. Plan of the Queen's Salts and other lands at Pevensey, 1595, traced by Salzman from an original in the PRO (ref. Dy. Of Lanc., Dep., 38 Eliz., No. 43).[175]

Fig. 17. Pevensey tithe map (*East Sussex Record Office*), 1843 (rectified detail).

5 STATEMENT OF HISTORIC URBAN CHARACTER

5.1 Town summary

5.1.1 Historic environment overview

Pevensey is unusual in that today it is of similar scale to the town in its heyday of the late 11th to 13th centuries. The Roman fort was nearly 800 hundred years old by the time of the Norman Conquest and other features – such as the High Street and subsidiary Church Lane, and the church – were part of the topography of the Norman town. But this apparent continuity masks centuries of late-medieval and post-medieval decline, so that there are few pre-*c.*1800 buildings today. The abandonment of plots from the early 14th century has left a valuable archaeological resource, but this has been largely untapped and is disappearing under the renewed building that has typified the modern village (although some archaeological investigation has begun as a condition of development since the early 1990s). Building and relocation of the river channel either side of the bridge is also expanding the edge of the village so that the distinct and ancient edge of the medieval town – so long and so remarkably preserved intact – is eroding.

5.1.2 Historic environment designations (Map 4)

There are 16 listed buildings in the EUS study area (one Grade I and 15 Grade II). Of these, only the church demonstrably predates 1500.[176]

There is an additional important historic building (The Barn, High Street) recognized in this assessment that has not been listed: it probably dates from the 18th century.

Pevensey has a Conservation Area. The castle is a Scheduled Monument (No. 27013).

5.1.3 Historic building materials

Early stone buildings include the castle, parish church, and the Court House: stone types comprise flint rubble with a variety of ashlar types including Tunbridge Wells sandstone and greensand. In the town, however, it is timber framing that dominates the pre-1700 buildings, although often obscured behind later façades. Examples of timber framing include Penthouse Cottages, High Street: oak construction is visible externally where the building oversails the twitten to Church Lane. In the period 1700 to 1840 both flint or flint cobble and brick are in evidence: flint is evident, for example, in the 18th-century re-fronting of Penthouse Cottages. An example of 18th-century brickwork is provided by Camden Cottage/Post Office Cottage of 1717. Clay tiles are used for roofs and tile hanging. Brick is the dominant building material after 1840.

5.2 Historic Character Types

5.2.1 Historic Character Types and chronology (Maps 6-13)

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 6-13) 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 Pevensey (Map 12)

Although Historic Character Types represent county-wide types, modern Pevensey is characterized by its small size and, thus, the presence of only a few types. Aside from the dominant castle – Pevensey's principal raison d'être – the historic core of the modern village mostly comprises large areas of *regular burgage plots*, reflecting the early importance and planned nature of the town and its ensuing economic decline.

5.3 Historic Urban Character Areas (Maps 14-15)

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 2 in Pevensey combines five Historic Character Types that represent *regular burgage plots* and a *market place* dating from Period 5 (i.e. 1066-1149), a *vacant* area dating from Period 9 (i.e. the 17th century), *irregular historic plots* dating from Period 10 (i.e. the 18th century), and *suburbs* dating from Period 12 (i.e. 1841-80) and later. These different types result from the original setting out of the town along the principal streets, followed by decline, then re-development of plots that had long been vacant, and this complexity can be combined into a single HUCA called *High Street* to reflect the still largely coherent character of the area today. This coherence renders HUCAs suitable spatial units for describing the historic environment of the EUS towns, for assessing their **archaeological potential**, **Historic Environment Value** and for linking to **research questions**.

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

5.3.2 Archaeological potential

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

When considering the archaeological potential of the towns, it is important to recognize that archaeology often survives 19th and 20th-century development and that it is misleading to assume complete destruction. Also, whilst pre-urban archaeology 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 15)

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

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

Lesser additional considerations in the assessment comprise:

- Visibility
- Historic association.

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

5.3.4 Vulnerability

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

5.3.5 Research questions

Where relevant, reference is made to questions in the **Research Framework** for Pevensey (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 Pevensey's Historic Urban Character Areas (Map 14)

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

HUCA 1 Castle (HEV 5)

HUCA 1 is located on the west side of the late 11th-century and modern town.

Today the area comprises the ruinous remains of the Roman fort of *c.*293-300, within which there are the remains of the Norman and later medieval castle (which, in tune, includes defences of the Second World War). The fort/castle is a Scheduled Monument, with the scheduled area slightly more expansive than the circuit of walls, to encompass external defensive ditches (even where infilled).

Upstanding masonry at the Roman fort is extensive and, together with visible collapsed ruins, comprises approximately two-thirds of the

original circuit. The wall itself has a flint-rubble core faced with Upper Greensand (possibly from the outcrop on the coast at Eastbourne), and Tunbridge Wells sandstone (probably from a local outcrop), with occasional bonding courses of brick (substituted with Horsham stone along part of the north wall).

Upstanding remains of the medieval castle are largely located in the south-east corner of the Roman fort, although works of the earliest phase (i.e. the late 11th century) include repairs to the Roman defences, evident in the distinctive use of herringbone courses for the rubblework. The 12th-century Norman keep, postern and chapel partly survive, but the most notable elements of the castle comprise the gatehouse to the present inner bailey (with its two D-shaped towers, it dates from *c.*1200, possibly to works documented in 1195-6), and the adjoining curtain walls with its three D-shaped towers (*c.*1246). The moat also dates to this period.

Numerous excavations have taken place within the Roman fort and medieval castle, from those with little or no archaeological procedure and record (beginning in 1852) through to the most recent excavations in 1993-5. Many of these followed the gift of the castle to the state, in 1925. These numerous excavations have demonstrated the remaining high **archaeological potential** of the castle, and were themselves not sufficiently large-scale to seriously reduce the potential.

The survival and condition (i.e. though ruinous it has not been redeveloped, apart from the building of a house near the east gate and the addition of Second World War defences) of the Roman fort and the medieval castle; the visibility and accessibility of the historic fabric; and the archaeological potential combine to give this HUCA the very highest **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 5.

The castle has been well protected since the initial flurry of clearances and repairs in the 1920s and 1930s through its Scheduled Monument status and management (now by English Heritage) so that its **vulnerability** is low.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the castle (RQ2-8).

HUCA 2 High Street (HEV 4)

HUCA 2 is essentially the core of the medieval town, extending eastwards from the plots on the north side of the castle (on Castle Road) along much of the High Street. On the north side the HUCA is delimited by the boundary of the medieval town and the marshes to the north: this is clearly marked by narrow east-west streams along the rear of the burgage plots.

The early decline of the borough has meant little survives from the medieval period or, indeed, much before the 19th century. There are only 12 listed buildings (all Grade II), of which all appear to be post-medieval in date: this includes three from the 16th century, four from the 17th century, and three from the 18th century. Several of the earlier buildings have been re-faced or extended in the 18th and 19th centuries. Although not of exceptional architectural interest, the 16th-century Court House is noteworthy as a purpose-built civic building (court room on the first floor, with lock-up below) that provides the most tangible physical evidence of Pevensey's historic importance as a borough: fortunately, the building remains accessible as the town museum. The Mint House is a substantial timber-framed house with a continuous jetty, probably dating from the early 16th century. Other timber-framed buildings are less obvious, for example, with the 17th-century framing of Penthouse Cottages and the Old Farm House obscured by re-fronting in flint in, respectively, the 18th and 19th centuries. The Barn is a flint-built building probably of 18th-century date (although it lacks diagnostic dating features) that has not been listed, but which is of local importance.

Burgage plots are not well preserved, doubtless due to the combining of vacant plots as result of decline, and the length of time between decline and more recent growth. Despite the considerable rebuilding in Pevensey in the 19th and, especially, the 20th century, *c.*90% of the plot boundaries in this HUCA that survived in 1843 (tithe map) remain present today. The strong rear boundary definition provided by the east-west stream on the north side of the town has also been retained.

Although redevelopment of individual buildings and vacant plots has been major theme in the history of Pevensey for the last century, such archaeological investigations that there have been have indicated good preservation of medieval archaeology and this means that the **archaeological potential** of nearly all this HUCA is high.

The rarity of the survival and condition of the Norman town; the visible preservation of several plot boundaries; the surviving post-medieval buildings; and the archaeological potential, combine to give this HUCA a high **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 4.

Although lacking shops, the combination of commercial pressures from pubs and other business premises on the High Street and considerable Historic Environment Value mean that **vulnerability** is locally high. Internal and street-front refitting of business premises; minor and major structural additions; and rebuilding of non-listed buildings are all constant and continuing threats to buildings and archaeology. Additionally, the less protected boundaries are vulnerable to neglect and, especially, destruction by small housing developments as seen, for example, at 1-3 Farm Cottages. Above all, however, the greatest threat to the historic environment (especially the subsurface archaeology) is the potential for rear of plot development on the north side of the High Street.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the origins of the town (RQ9) and burgage plots (RQ11).

HUCA 3 Church (HEV 4)

HUCA 4 comprises the south-west quarter of the medieval town, extending southwards from the medieval market place (near the castle east gate) and Church Lane. On the south side the HUCA is delimited by the boundary of the medieval town and the marshes to the south: this is clearly marked by narrow east-west streams along the rear of the now vacant former burgage plots. The early decline of the borough has meant little survives from the medieval period. There is little later as this area neither sustained the level of post-medieval occupation seen in the burgage plots to the north (HUCA 2), nor saw re-colonization in the 19th and 20th centuries.

There are two listed buildings. The parish church of St Nicolas (Grade I) was in existence by 1100-6, but the earliest fabric dates from the very end of the 12th century, whilst the majority of the building is of the mid-13th. The adjacent former vicarage (now Marsh Hall: Grade II) appears to be a 19th-century complete rebuild of the earlier vicarage: it combines cement render with brick dressings. To the east of this the polychrome brick-built National School of 1876 is now a private house.

Burgage plots are not well preserved, doubtless due to the combining of vacant plots as result of decline from the 14th century onwards. Moreover, the lane on the south side of the church – still a right of way in the 19th century, though not visibly a road, and located through excavation – no longer survives. Archaeological excavations in this HUCA in the 1960s and in 2000 have confirmed that the long-vacant nature of much of this HUCA has resulted in good preservation of medieval archaeology, and this means that the **archaeological potential** of nearly all this HUCA is very high.

The rarity of the survival and condition of the Norman town; the surviving medieval church and post-medieval buildings; and the archaeological potential, combine to give this HUCA a high **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 4.

The vacant status of much of this HUCA combined with its high Historic Environment Value mean that **vulnerability** is high. The main threat is to the subsurface archaeology (and the ditch-marked southern boundary of the medieval borough) through residential development or, given the position of the church, any extension of its graveyard. The church and churchyard themselves are vulnerable to any extension of the church building.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the origins of the town (RQ9), the church (RQ13, RQ14), and burgage plots (RQ11).

HUCA 4 Riverside (HEV 2)

HUCA 4 comprises the eastern part of the town extending towards the river channel (Pevensey Haven/Salt Haven). On the north and south sides the HUCA is delimited by the boundaries of the medieval town and the adjacent marshes: this is clearly marked by narrow east-west streams along the rear of the burgage plots on the north, and by less regular streams on the south (suggesting that the south-east part of the HUCA represents a later extension to the town).

The early decline of the borough and, especially, its port has had a considerable effect on this area, with the majority falling vacant. Unlike HUCA 3, however, this has been compounded by development beginning in the late 19th century, which is most noticeable north of the High Street in the inter-war years and, south of the High Street, since 1945. As a result neither of the two buildings in existence in 1843 has survived. Burgage plots are not well preserved, largely due to the early end to occupation rather than the damage by modern development (which has retained most of the boundaries that survived in the 19th century).

Archaeological excavations within the southern part of this area date from 1962-6 and predate most of the development. However, they showed good preservation of evidence of medieval occupation and the port area of the town and, thus, it is likely that between the modern

foundation and infrastructure trenches of this HUCA there are extensive pockets of high **archaeological potential**.

The visible preservation of several plot boundaries and the archaeological potential combine to give this HUCA an **Historic Environment Value (HEV)** of 2.

Although having a modest Historic Environment Value, this HUCA has medium **vulnerability** due to the risk afforded to the remaining below-ground archaeology by demolition and redevelopment (seen on the large scale, for example, in the late 20th century at Bridge End), extensions and other intrusive works on the unlisted buildings that occupy this area.

Research questions especially relevant to this HUCA relate to the origins of the town (RQ9), the chronology of its development (RQ11), burgage plots (RQ11), and the port (RQ15).

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

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, contribute 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 Pevensey				
Historic Character Types (HCTs)	*Historic Urban Character Area (HUCA)*	*Archaeological potential*	*Historic Environment Value (HEV)*	*Vulnerability*
Castle	**1. Castle**	High	5	**Low**
Regular burgage plots Market place Irregular historic plots Suburb Vacant	**2. High Street**	High	4	**High**
Church/churchyard Market place Irregular historic plots Farmstead/barn Informal parkland Public Suburb	**3. Church**	High	4	**High**
Bridge/causeway Irregular historic plots Public Suburb Vacant	**4. Riverside**	High (in localized pockets)	2	**Medium**

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

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 Pevensey should address:

RQ1: What was the nature of the geomorphology and palaeo-environment (historic environment) of the Pevensey Haven area, and the prehistoric human activity in the vicinity?

6.2 Castle

Excavations have been numerous, and it is clear that future excavations are unlikely to be highly informative unless focused, in the manner of the 1993-5 work on the keep area, on clearly identified principal components of the castle/fort. Key questions include:

RQ2: What was the construction, chronology (of construction, use and abandonment) of the Roman fort and any structures therein?

RQ3: What provision was there for water access to the Roman fort?

RQ4: What was the nature and extent of Early, Middle and Late Saxon occupation within the Roman fort?

RQ5: What is the evidence for the coastal and maritime economy in the Early, Middle and Late Saxon periods?

RQ6: What evidence is there for the cessation of civil occupation of the castle?

RQ7: What evidence is there for early development of defences and use of the fort in the period 1066-1100?

RQ8: To what degree can the architectural form of the castle be determined from the upstanding and collapsed walls, and finds of architectural fragments (to include petrographic analysis)?

6.3 Medieval town

Archaeological investigations have been concentrated on small sites mostly on the edge of the medieval town: there is an urgent need for larger scale excavations within what (as a result of redevelopment) is a diminishing area of good archaeological potential. Questions that need addressing include:

RQ9: What is the evidence for the extent, nature and chronology of any Late Saxon settlement on the site of the present town?

RQ10: What different zones (e.g. social differentiation, or types of activity), were there between *c.*1070 and *c.*1300, and how did they change?

RQ11: Can 11th to 13th-century burgage plots be identified, and what is the chronological development and extent of this area?

RQ12: What is the material and documentary evidence for the decline of Pevensey?

RQ13: What was the form of the Norman church?

RQ14: What was the extent of the medieval churchyard?

RQ15: How extensive was the wharf/quay, does this equate with the documented port, and what is the evidence for seaborne trade?

RQ16: What evidence can the standing buildings provide for their function and date (e.g. through dendrochronology)?

RQ17: What is the chronology and changing nature of salt-working in the immediate proximity of the town?

RQ18: What was the development of Pevensey Haven and its tributaries and associated artificial channels, and what impact did these, and any flood events, have on the medieval town?

6.4 Post-medieval town

RQ19: What different zones (e.g. social differentiation, or types of activity) were there during this period, and how did they change?

RQ20: How were the medieval and early post-medieval buildings adapted for new functions and changing status?

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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[176] 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.

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

PEVENSEY MAP 1

Extent of Pevensey EUS study area

KEY

EUS boundary

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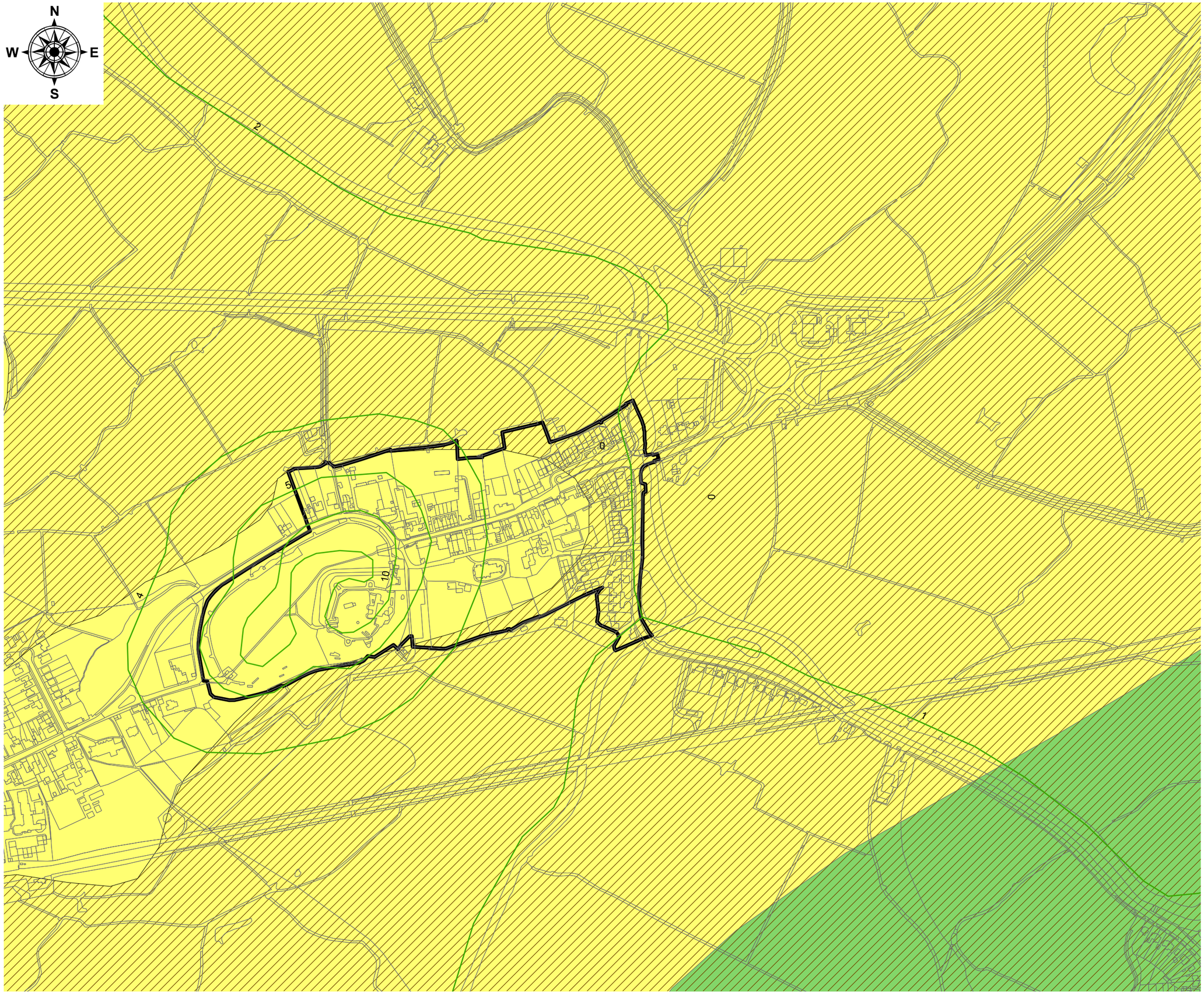

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

PEVENSEY MAP 2

Solid and drift geology with 10m contours

KEY

- TUNBRIDGE WELLS SAND FORMATION
- WEALD CLAY FORMATION
- ALLUVIUM

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0 20 40 80 120 160 Meters

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PEVENSEY MAP 3

OS 1st Series 25”
(1875-7)

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

PEVENSEY MAP 4

Historic buildings and Scheduled Monuments

KEY

Pevensey buildings

GRADE

- I
- II
- None
- Scheduled Monuments

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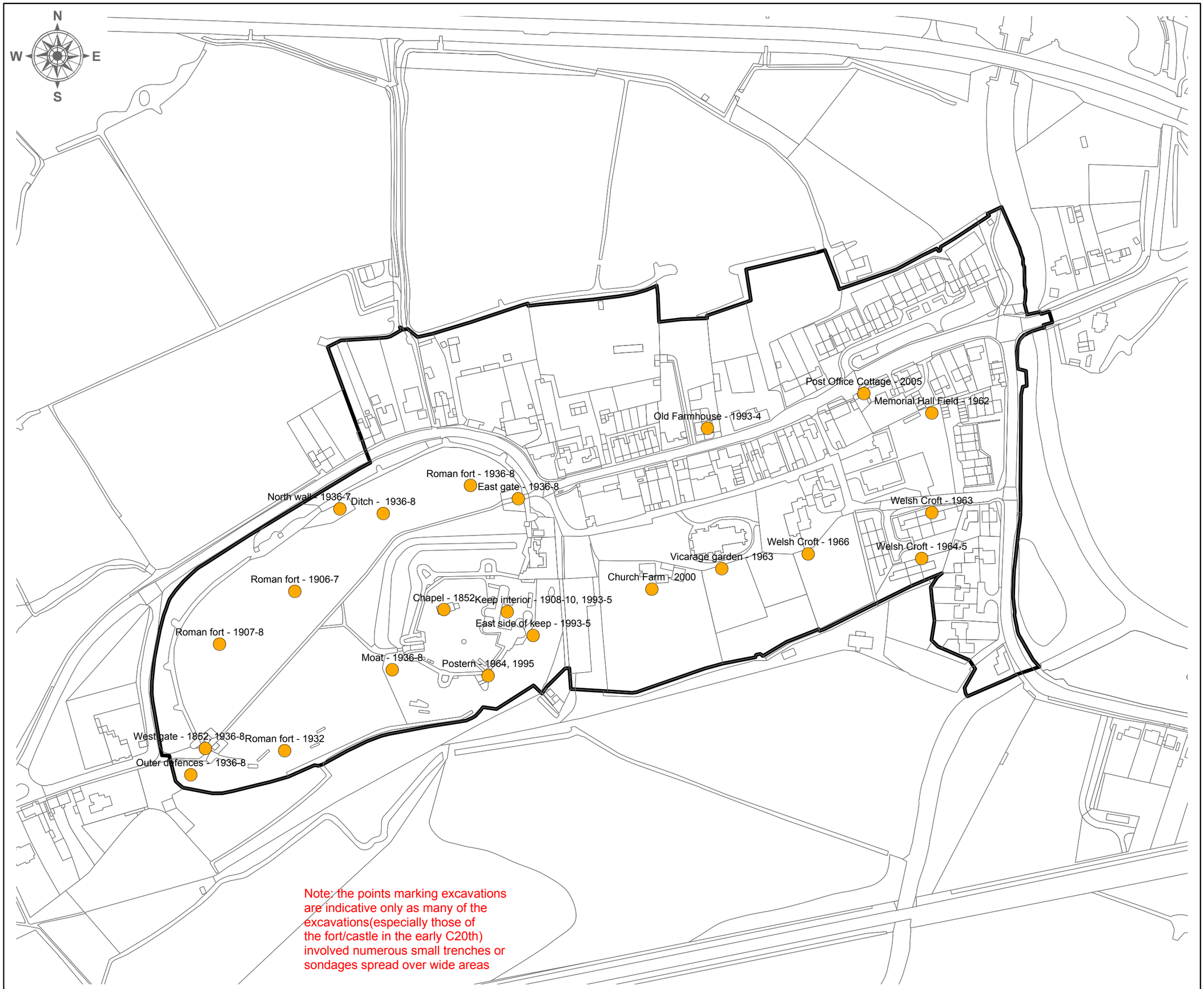

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PEVENSEY MAP 5

Archaeological excavations in the town 1852-2007

KEY

Pevensey excavations

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ENGLISH HERITAGE

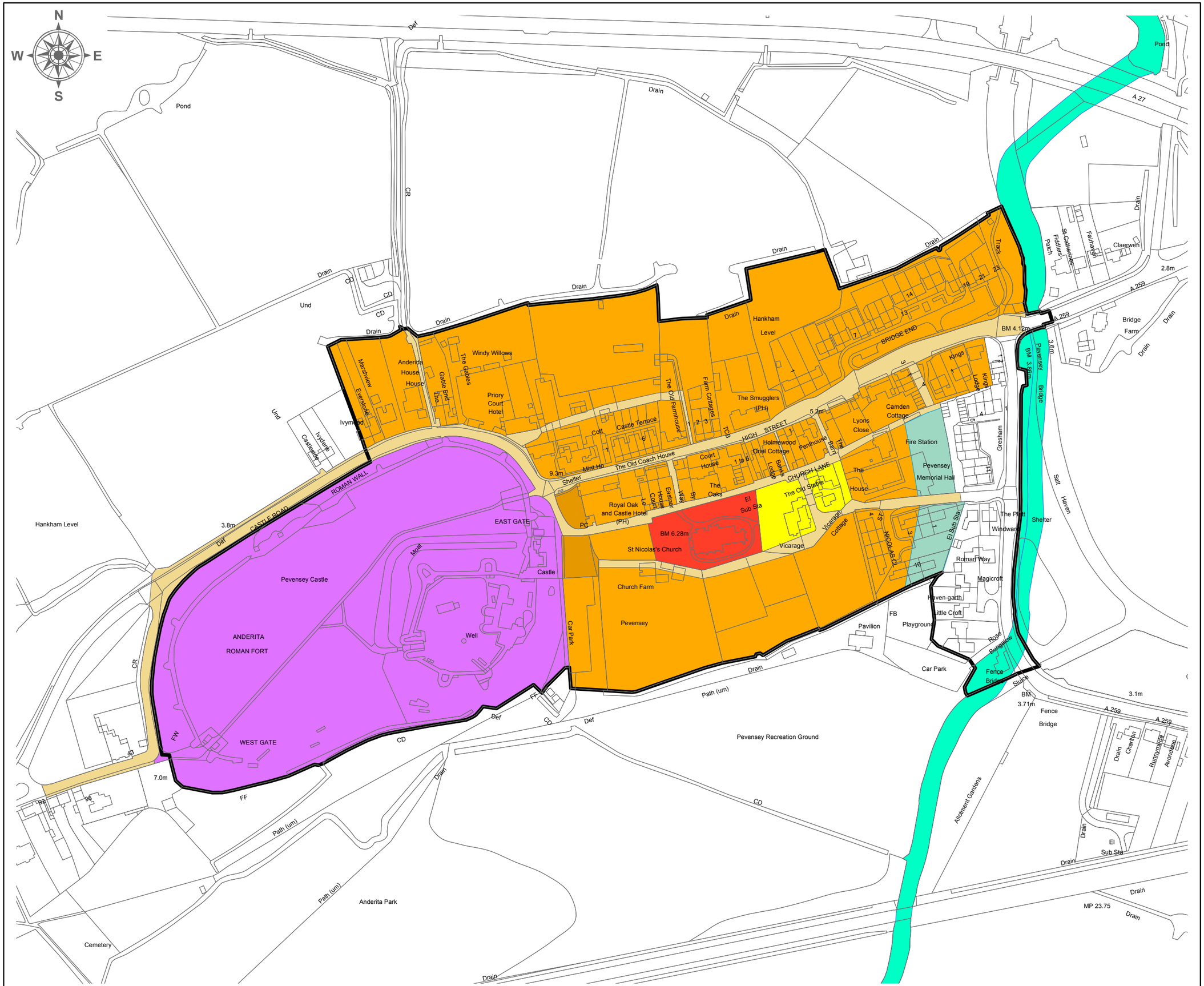
PEVENSEY MAP 6

Period 5 (1066-1149)

KEY

EUS Pevensey HCT

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



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PEVENSEY MAP 7

Period 6 (1150-1349)

KEY

EUS Pevensey HCT

- Bridge/causeway
- Castle
- Church/churchyard
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Market place
- Quay/wharf
- Regular burgage plots

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PEVENSEY MAP 8

Period 7 (1350-1499)

KEY

EUS Pevensey HCT

- Bridge/causeway
- Castle
- Church/churchyard
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Market place
- Quay/wharf
- Regular burgage plots
- Vacant

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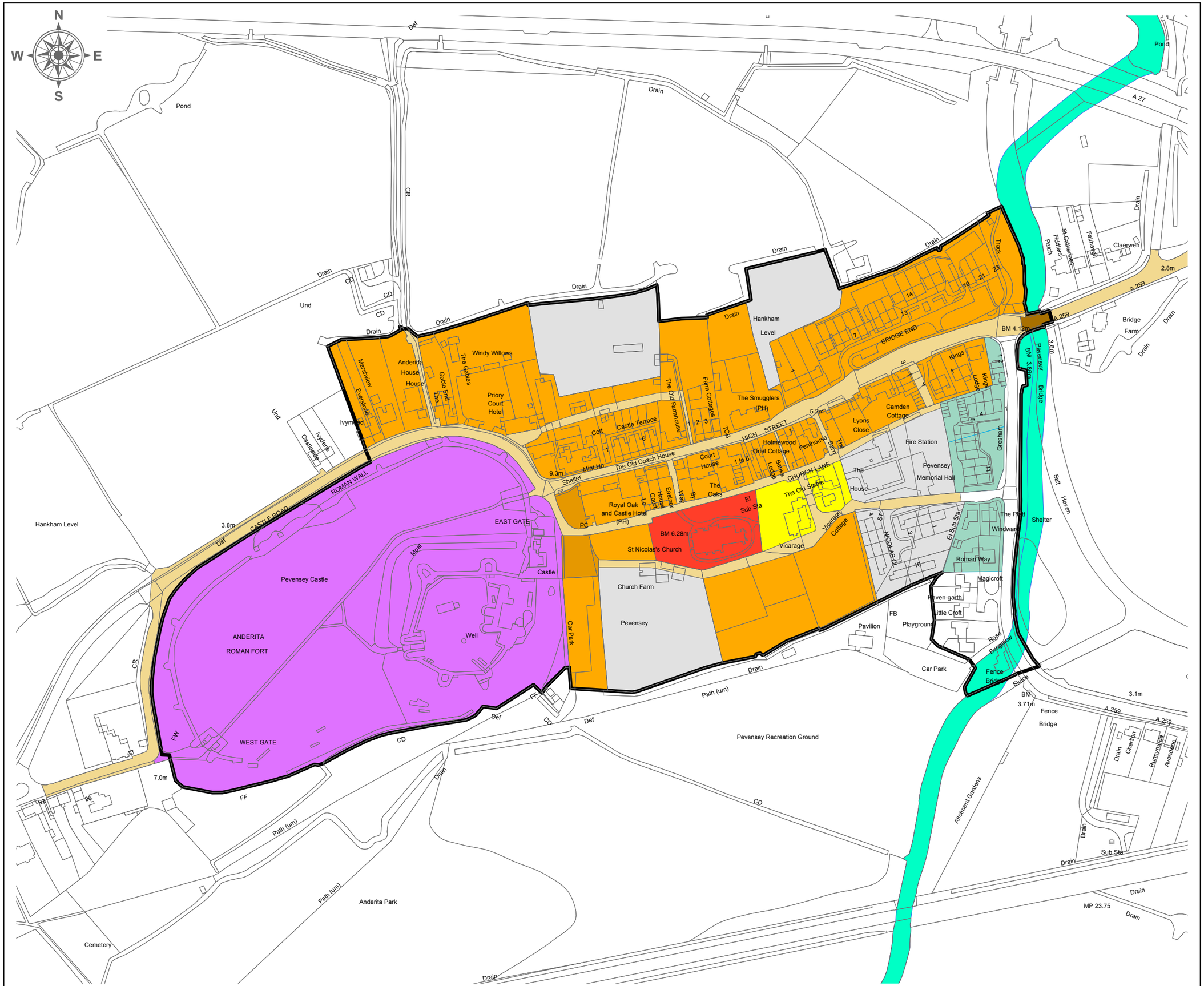

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PEVENSEY MAP 9

Period 8 (1500-1599)

KEY

EUS Pevensey HCT

- Bridge/causeway
- Castle
- Church/churchyard
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Market place
- Quay/wharf
- Regular burgage plots
- Vacant

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PEVENSEY MAP 10

Period 9 (1600-1699)

KEY

EUS Pevensey HCT

- Bridge/causeway
- Castle
- Church/churchyard
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Market place
- Quay/wharf
- Regular burgage plots
- Vacant

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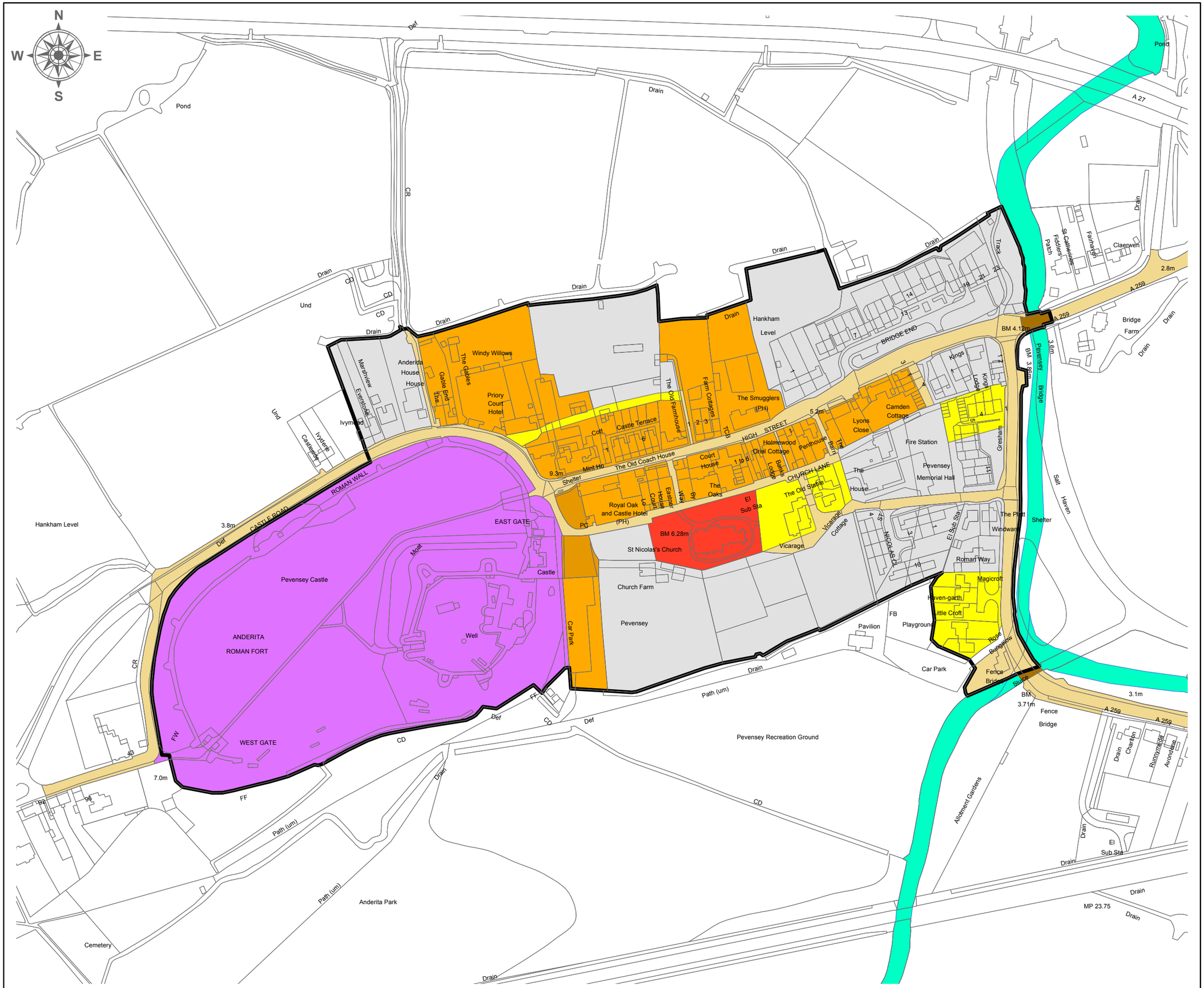

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PEVENSEY MAP 11

Period 10 (1700-1799)

KEY

EUS Pevensey HCT

- Bridge/causeway
- Castle
- Church/churchyard
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Market place
- Regular burgage plots
- Vacant

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PEVENSEY MAP 12

Historic Character Types (2007)

KEY

EUS Pevensey HCT

- Bridge/causeway
- Castle
- Church/churchyard
- Farmstead/barn
- Informal parkland
- Inland water
- Irregular historic plots
- Lane/road
- Market place
- Public
- Regular burgage plots
- Suburb
- Vacant

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PEVENSEY MAP 13

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

KEY

EUS Pevensey PERIOD

- 1
- 2
- 5
- 6
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15

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PEVENSEY MAP 14

Historic Urban Character Areas (HUCAs)

KEY

EUS Pevensey HUCA

- 1 - Castle
- 2 - High Street
- 3 - Church
- 4 - Riverside

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PEVENSEY MAP 15

Historic Environment Value (HEV)

KEY

EUS Pevensey HEV

- 2
- 4
- 5

1 - Castle

2 - High Street

3 - Church

4 - Riverside

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