

ENGLISH HERITAGE



Mr J Redwood
Chief Planning Officer
Lewes District Council
Hauves House
32 High Street
Lewes BN7 2LX

Direct dial: 0171-973-3217

6 June 1995

Dear Mr Redwood

REGISTER OF HISTORIC BATTLEFIELDS

Further to my letter of 2 September last year, I am writing to confirm that the battlefield of Lewes has been included in a Register of Historic Battlefields to be published by English Heritage on 7 June 1995. The publication of the Register follows extensive consultation since September 1994 and subsequent widespread support. The enclosed map shows the extent of the Registered area.

The Battlefields Register will not have any direct legal effect, nor will inclusion of any land on the Register carry with it any legal obligations. The Register will, however, allow the significance of the battlefields to be appreciated by those in whose stewardship they lie and those considering development proposals within and around them. The Register will also serve to highlight the educational and recreational potential of battlefields.

The status of battlefields as a material consideration was confirmed in the recent PPG15. I would also draw attention to the reference to new roads in relation to battlefields in PPG13. In addition, PPG16 may be relevant where archaeological remains are concerned. If I can be of assistance in the interpretation or implementation of the Register, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Dr A.G. Brown
~~Inspector of Ancient Monuments~~

Encl. Battlefields Register extract
Guidance note



ENGLISH HERITAGE
BATTLEFIELDS
REGISTER

LEWES

1264



REGISTERED BATTLEFIELDS

Maldon (Essex) 991	Newburn Ford (Tyne and Wear) 1640
Stamford Bridge (North Yorks) 1066	Edgehill (Warwickshire) 1642
Hastings (East Sussex) 1066	Braddock Down (Cornwall) 1643
Northallerton (North Yorks) 1138	Hopton Heath (Staffs) 1643
Lewes (East Sussex) 1264	Stratton (Cornwall) 1643
Evesham (Hereford and Worcs) 1265	Chalgrove (Oxon) 1643
Myton (North Yorks) 1319	Adwalton Moor (West Yorks) 1643
Boroughbridge (North Yorks) 1322	Lansdown Hill (Avon) 1643
Halidon Hill (Northumberland) 1333	Roundway Down (Wilts) 1643
Neville's Cross (Co Durham) 1346	Newbury I (Berks) 1643
Otterburn (Northumberland) 1388	Winceby (Lincs) 1643
Homildon Hill (Northumberland) 1402	Nantwich (Cheshire) 1644
Shrewsbury (Shrops) 1403	Cheriton (Hants) 1644
Blore Heath (Staffs) 1459	Cropredy Bridge (Oxon) 1644
Northampton (Northants) 1460	Marston Moor (North Yorks) 1644
Towton (North Yorks) 1461	Naseby (Northants) 1645
Barnet (Greater London/Herts) 1471	Langport (Somerset) 1645
Tewkesbury (Gloucs) 1471	Rowton Heath (S) (Cheshire) 1645
Bosworth (Leics) 1485	Stow-on-the-Wold (Gloucs) 1646
Stoke Field (Notts) 1487	Worcester (Worcs) 1651
Flodden (Northumberland) 1513	with Powick Bridge 1642
Solway Moss (Cumbria) 1542	Sedgemoor (Somerset) 1685

*For more information, write to English Heritage (Battlefields Register)
at 23 Savile Row, London W1X 1AB*

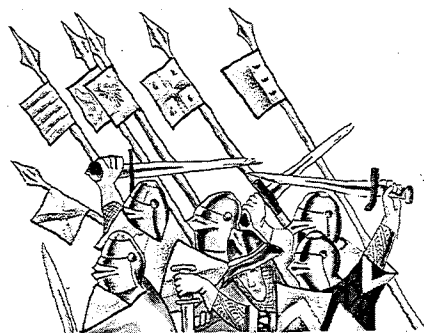


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23 SAVILE ROW, LONDON, W1X 1AB
Telephone 0171-973 3000 Fax 0171-973 3001

BATTLE OF LEWES

1264



County: East Sussex
District: Lewes
Parishes: Hamsey, Lewes
NGR: TQ 397110

King Henry III, in his efforts to subdue the reforms springing from the Provisions of Oxford of 1258, provoked a baronial faction led by Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, to the extent that civil war was only a matter of time.

Simon de Montfort and the baronial army marched on the King at Lewes and positioned themselves on the crest of the Downs to the north-west of the town. The King's foot soldiers followed the cavalry under Prince Edward up the long hill, but were pushed right back against the Castle and Priory in the town. The royal army suffered significant casualties, several leading supporters of the King had fled, and much of the town was ablaze.

The battle gave way to negotiation which gave Simon and the Barons increased power. But progress towards reform was constantly hampered by the need to guard against the return of the King's supporters. The deciding factor in the struggle between reform and absolute monarchy had to wait until the Battle of Evesham in August of 1265.

Apart from the expansion of Lewes towards Offham Hill, the landscape of the battlefield is essentially unchanged from the open grassland of 1264. In Lewes itself, the Castle dominated the crowded, largely timber-built rows of houses.

AMENITY FEATURES

The battlefield is criss-crossed with public rights of way which make access excellent to the baronial positions near Offham Hill. The Castle and Priory, both vital features in the battle, are also publicly accessible.

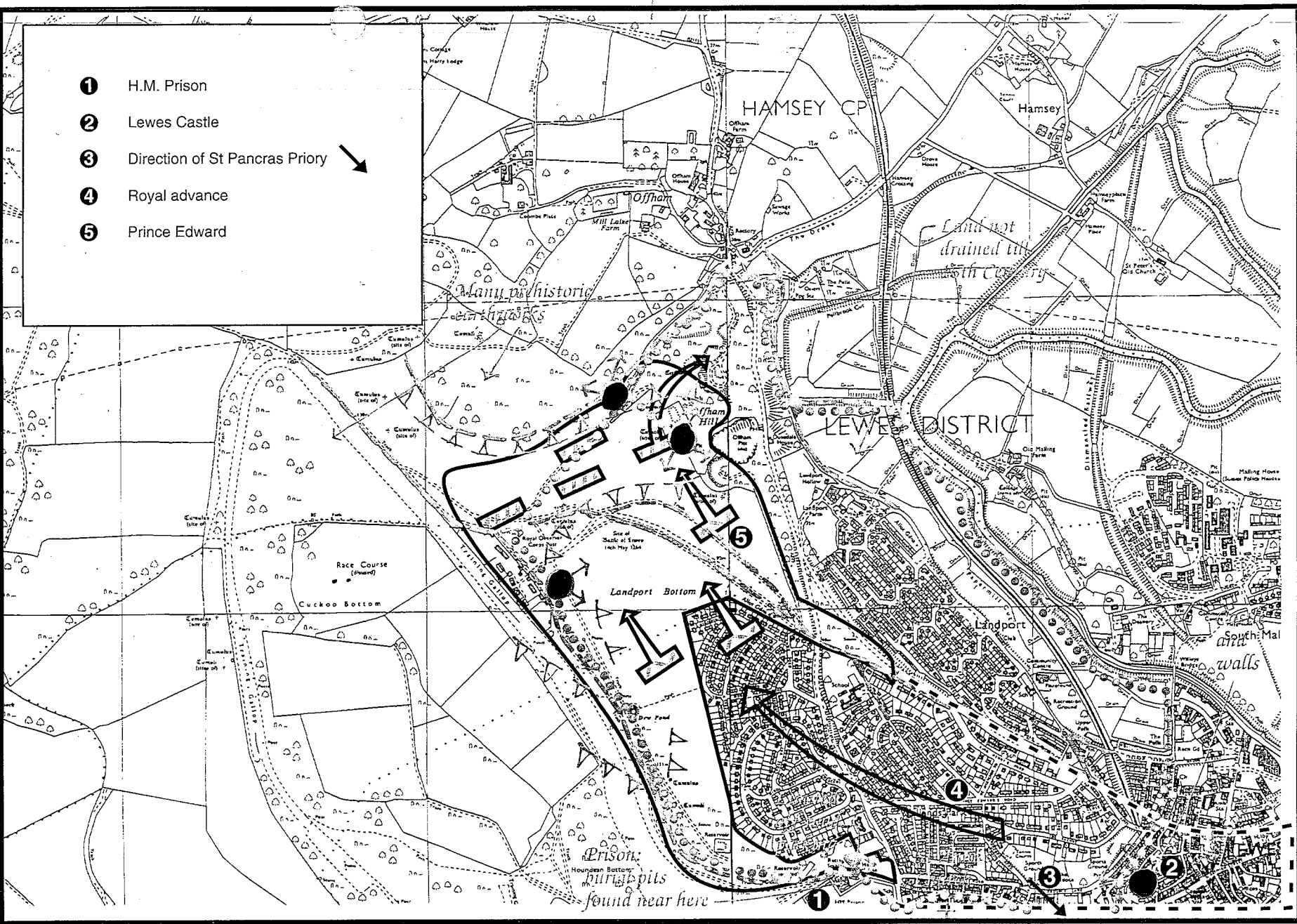
OTHER DESIGNATIONS

All of the battlefield outside the town is on the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Offham Marshes and part of the Clayton to Offham escarpment are sites of Special Scientific Interest. In addition, Offham Hill Quarry and Lewes Racecourse are sites of nature conservation interest.

KEY SOURCES

English Heritage, 1995 *Battlefield Report: Lewes 1264*
Halliwell, J O (ed), 1840 *Chronicle of William de Rishanger of the Barons' Wars*

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MAP GRID = 1 SQUARE KILOMETRE

KEY:

- Public Footpath
- Interpretive Viewpoint
- Slope
- Potential Trail Route

BATTLEFIELD MAP KEY

- ROYAL ARMY
- BARONIAL ARMY
- BATTLEFIELD AREA