Design Access and Heritage Statement
EDWS Architects

52-53 Old Stein
Brighton
BN1 1NH

Contents

ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

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Executive Summary

ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

This heritage report outlines the historic and architectural interest of the elegant Georgian town-houses with modern office extensions at 52-53 The Old Steine, in the oldest parts of Brighton, East Sussex. We offer a glimpse of its story, based on the historic map evidence and site survey. Further, this report explores its building form, looking at modern 20thC interventions, and looking back to its original residential use. While it has been altered on all floors especially over the 20thC. for office use, the front reception rooms have generally retained their basic plan-form, along with some joinery and architectural details, such as fire-place surrounds.

With sufficient care, there may be potential to offer a renewed life to this extensive property by returning it to some form of a multiple residential occupation, today. Since residential use has a long-standing provenance, we can trace its evolution in The Steine from the late Georgian era of Brighton into the mid-Victorian period, and how it evolved into the form we see today. We offer a brief understanding of its past life, so that this historic building can be sensitively adapted, in order to breathe new life into it, allowing further residential use in this part of Brighton, and better future maintenance. This study is based upon the accepted value that an original use will most often be the best use for a historic building.

Lidar Scan survey of Property

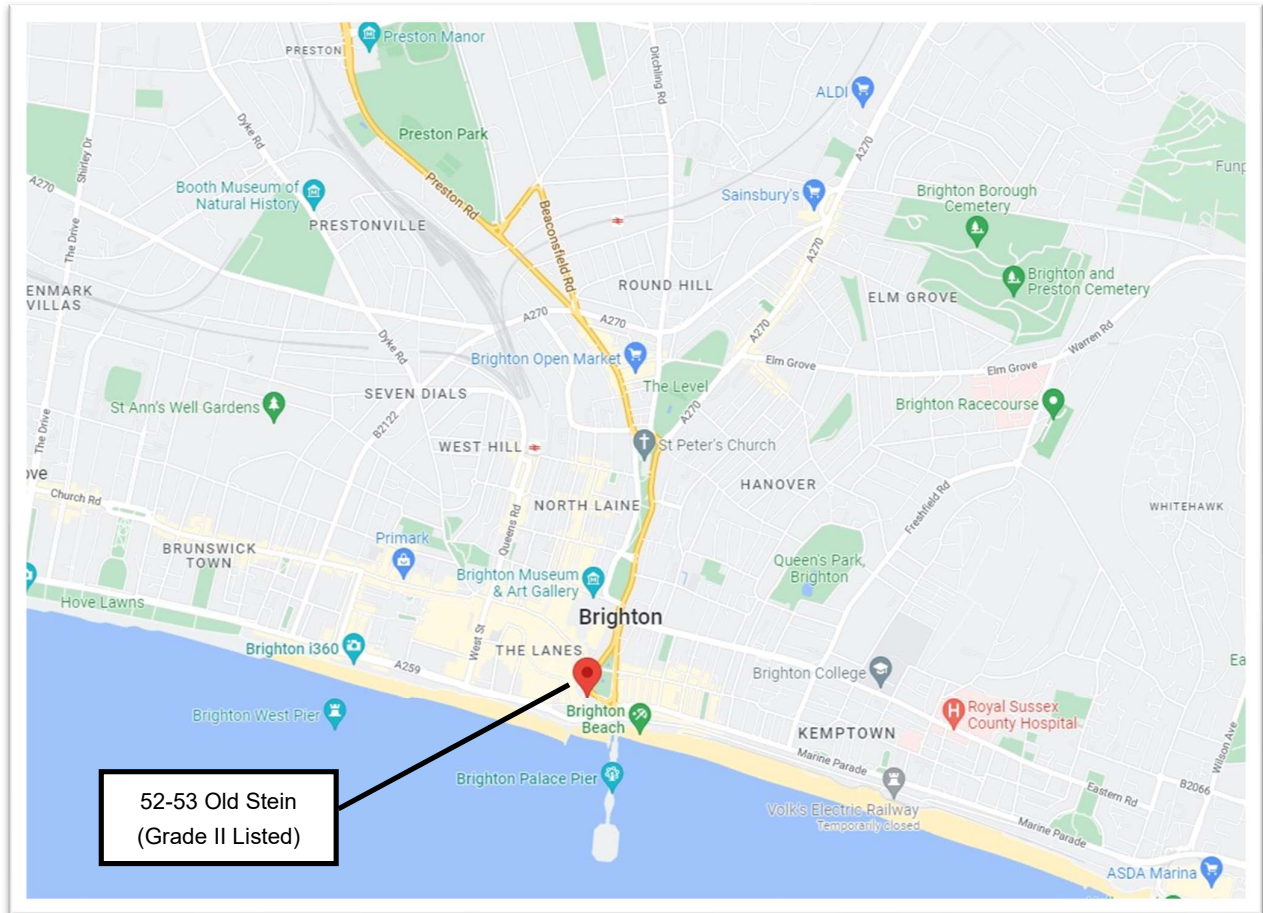Anna Marie Pagano - MA IHBC / Ewan Stoddart -Ba Hons Dip Arch - RIBA Chartered Architect

BACKGROUND: SITE, LOCATION AND SETTING

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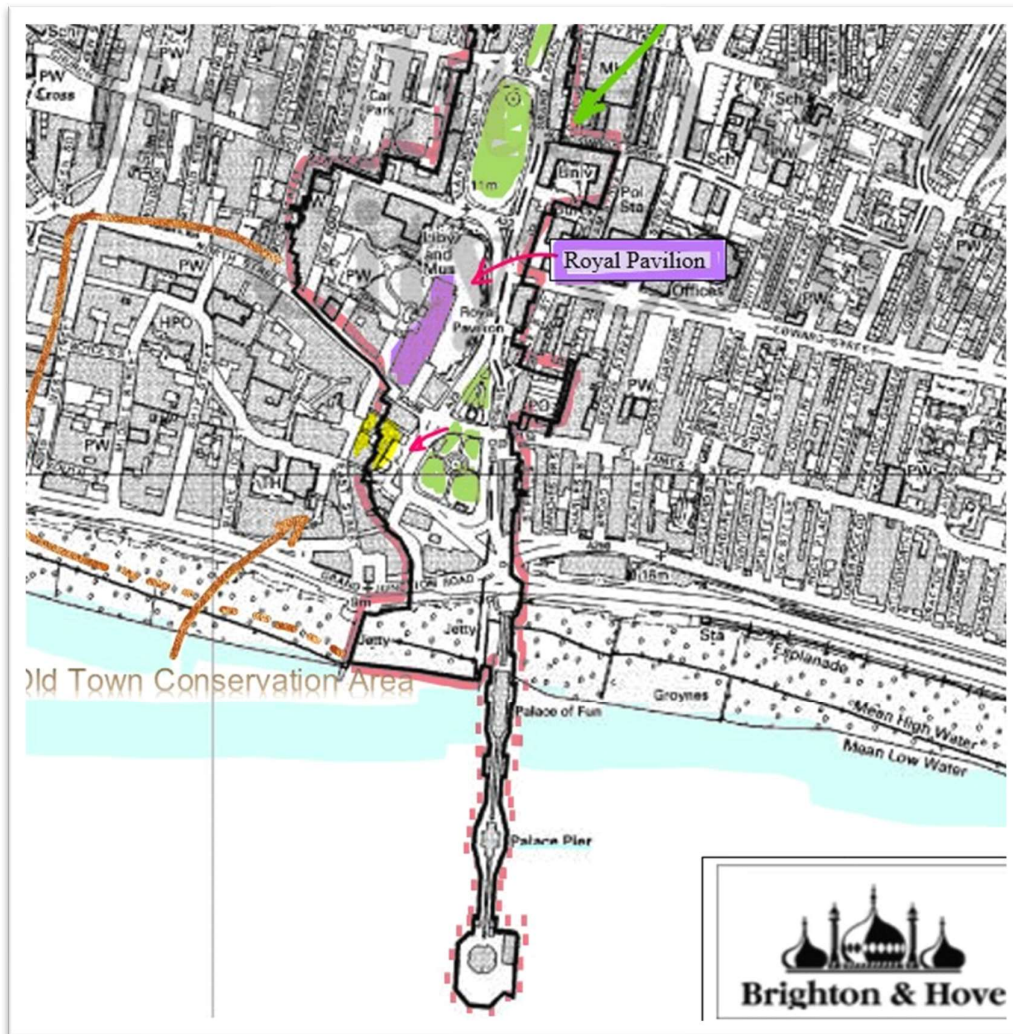

52-53 Old Stein
(Grade II Listed)

1.1 Location: Modern Overview of The Old Steine and Brighton Palace Pier.

The modern A-Z East Sussex here shows Old Steine just east of St. James Street and north of marine Parade on the seafront. This oldest part of Brighton lies on the southern edge of town, however, set back from the main Madeira Drive along the coast. The Palace Pier can just be seen in this map above jutting out in the sea south of Old Steine. Brighton grew out of a fishing village that was more modest than Lewes to the north, then developed in the late 18thC. as a fashionable holiday resort. At this time, it became more densely built-up with housing, hotels for tourists, guesthouses and, as the resort blossomed, a focus for theatre and open-air promenading and entertainment.

# ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

1.2 Setting of Old Steine: The Valley Gardens Conservation Area [east] and The Old Town Conservation Area. [west].

Nos. 52- 53 The Old Steine occupies an unusual position in that the frontage 18thC. oldest buildings comprising this property lie in the Valley Gardens Conservation Area, while the rear most parts lie in the Old Town Conservation Area. The most intact and therefore most significant, late Georgian town-houses front The Steine on the east half, in Valley Gardens today. When they were extended in the later 20thC., a large office extension was sandwiched in between these Georgian houses and the mid-Victorian houses which lie on East Street to the west.   [See also Sect.2.2 following.]

ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH
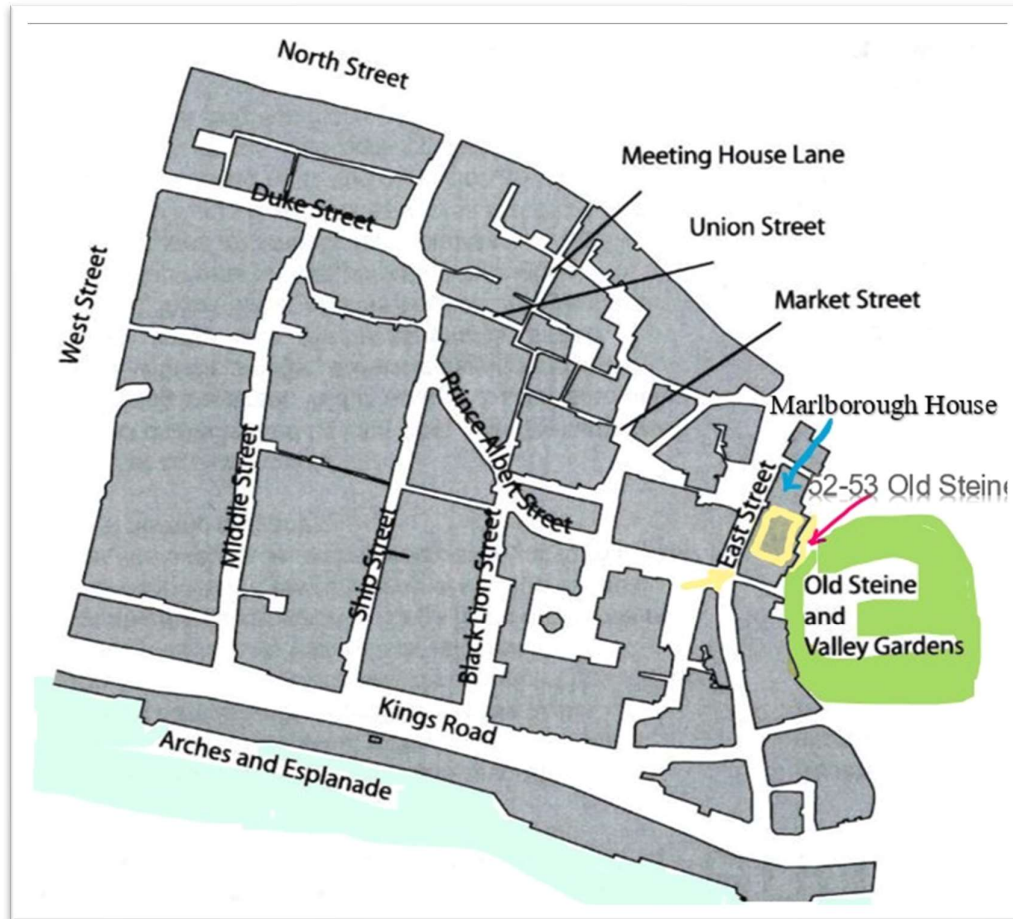
1.3   The Brighton & Hove Council Conservation Area Statement explains:

The Old Town Conservation Area lies at the heart of Brighton. It is defined by West Street, North Street and East Street and, to the south, by King's Road and the beach down to the low water mark. The boundary follows the medieval extent of Brighton, then known as Brighthelmstone." 2.0 *"The existing conservation area boundary encompasses the medieval town within the defining East Street, North Street and West Street.* This is a very robust area distinctly different from the planned development of Brighton from the Regency period onwards*. The area is also further defined by the designation of adjacent conservation areas to the east and north."* [Credit: Map, see Sect. 2.3 page 8, Brighton & Hove Character Statement.]

As we will see in Section 2.0 below, the buildings that lie along East Street corresponding to 52-53 Old Steine were comprehensively altered and gutted in the 1970's, so that the most historic element surviving are the front elevations and fenestration, unfortunately. On the positive side, this could offer greater potential and scope to reintroduce residential use, once again, breathing new life into this historic core of Brighton.

1.4 Historical Setting: Valley Gardens and the Old Town.

Marlborough House

1.5 The site of 52-53 Old Steine occupies a prestigious area, being one of the oldest in Brighton. Valley Gardens grew up around a group of terraces and public gardens running from Park Gardens to the sea. The houses front onto Old Town, which was as far as Brighton extended, until the mid 18thC. The open green space of the valley was left likely because it was too marshy to develop. The oldest buildings in town are situated here, to the south, and to the east and west sides of Old Steine. Nos.52 &53 abut Marlborough House, the oldest remaining villa which was built c.1765 for Samuel Shergold, the proprietor of the Castle Inn, to let to rich visitors. (Pevsner, pg. 208). Later, Robert Adam remodelled it in 1786. The Steine originally extended down to the sea. For centuries, fishermen dried their nets and stored boats there in bad weather. It became known as the Old Steine after New Steine was built to the east in the 1790s. By the early 1780s, the east side of the Steine began.
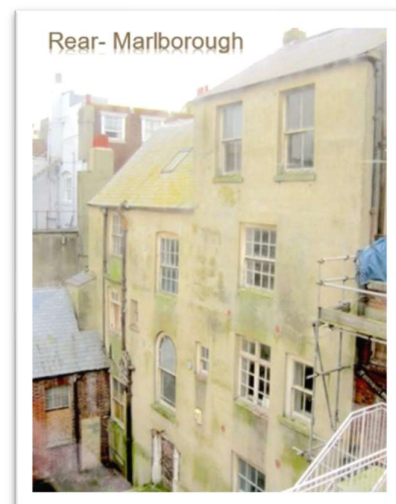
Rear- Marlborough

ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

1.7 The properties defined by the street address of 52- 53 Old Steine also encompass the 55-58 East Street blocks belonging to the modern infill office block that was built between these two streets in the late 20thC [c.1970's]. This will become clear in later Section that covers the "Levels of Significance" and the floor-plans. For present, it should be noted that there is a wide variety in the architectural and historic interest of the various periods and parts across this site.

HISTORY OF SITE / HISTORICAL MAPS
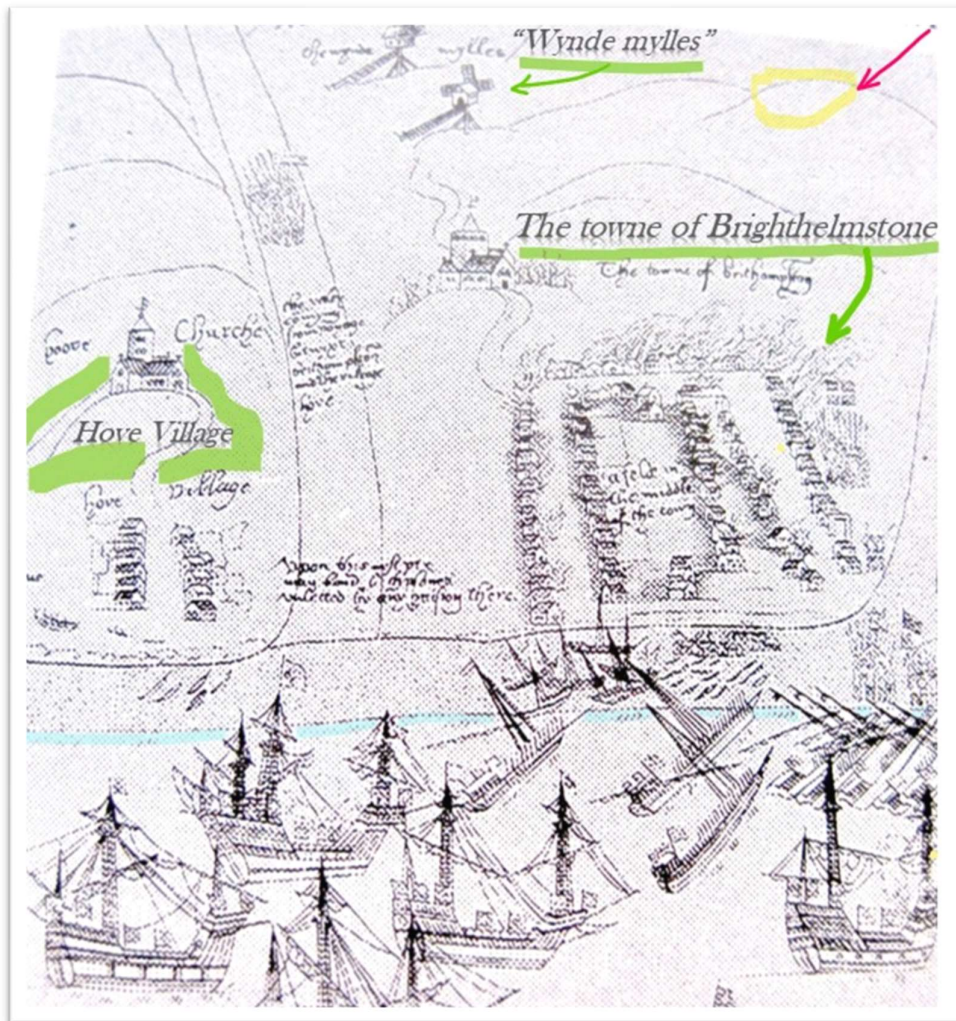
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52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

2.0 HISTORY OF THE SITE & HISTORIC MAPS.

The 1556 Britannia map (top) does not even note Brighton. The main cities shown are: "London; Reding; Basingstok; Shoram; Arondel; Portsmouih; Cantuarby". Closer to Brighton are: "Battel,

2.1 The 16th-Century Map of Brighthelmstone, Sussex.

The earliest known map of Brighton is likely the 16th-C. depiction, seen above. The 1545 map shows the French attack on the lower town in 1515. The form of the Old Town is already established and the Hempshares is noted as '*a filde in the middle of ye town."*

The RIBA book "*A Guide to the Buildings of Brighton"* notes: "Little is known about the early history of Brighton before the beginning of the 16th century. The scant surviving evidence suggests that it was a small agricultural and fishing community called Brighthelmstone, more important than neighbouring villages... but totally eclipsed by the town of Lewes 11 miles away to the north-east. At the beginning of the 16th century the upper town was located on a low cliff to the west of the Steine and consisted of three principal streets arranged around the three sides of the Hempshares, a rectangular open space facing the sea." [N.B. Colour is author's emphasis.]

2.2. The RIBA guide continues:

"A market-place stood at the cliff's edge and nearby a group of buildings formed the beginnings of Ship Street and Black Lion Street, both of them named after inns. Paths led down the cliffs to the broad beach which was a unique feature on this stretch of the coast. Here stood a collection of cottages surrounded by narrow wooden net houses, herring houses and large capstans which were used to haul the boats out of the English Channel and onto the beach." "The town was surrounded by its own farmlands, which occupied the rest of the parish. ...Between 1550 and 1640 the town's population increased from about 1,000 to 4,100. ...During this period the grid of streets which today forms the old town became firmly established within the square contained by North Street, West Street, East Street and the cliff front. These streets enclosed an area of about 25 hectares and

defined the limits of urban development until the end of the 18th century."

2.3 The early 17thC. map of Brighthelmstone- the 1610 John Norden Map, seen here.

The town's fishing trade rapidly declined in the 17thC, so that during the 1680's, only 30 boats remained. Brighton had the biggest trading cargo fleet on the south coast by the end of the century. However, competition from the east coast saw the industry decline, and coastal erosion forced the market-place to move to a site in Black Lion Street. By 1700, the fortunes of the town were at a low ebb and didn't recover until the Mid-18thC. (Brighton can just be seen top right, above the swirling sea monsters, east of the galleons.)
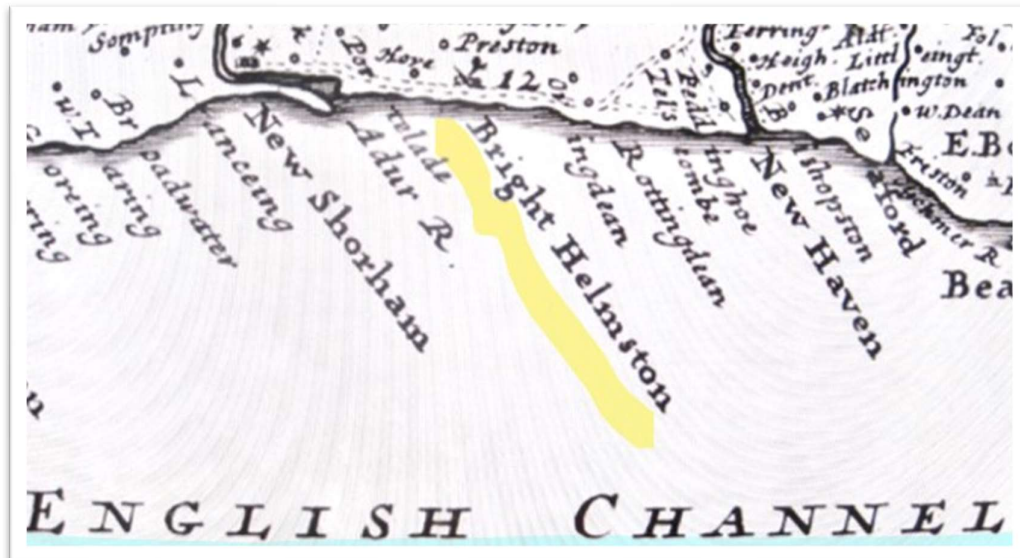
ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

2.4 The 1724 Herman Moll Map of Brighton.

During the Georgian era, sea-bathing caught on as a fashionable past-time. Brighton first evolved into a resort in the 1730's just after this 1724 Moll map. Like Margate, Hastings, and Weymouth, Brighton was able to develop as a health and holiday resort and overtook the inland spas such as Bath, adapting it to the sea-side. However, Brighton was much cheaper than Tunbridge Wells nearby. It benefited from being the nearest sea-side town *en route* to London the Continent, making it popular. From 1750- 80, bathing houses, lodging houses and libraries sprung up in the old town. After 1780, new arrivals and development spread out to farmland to the east and north side, so the old town became the business and resort centre for Brighton.

2.5 The 1740 Overton Map.

The 1740 Overton Map clearly shows that Brighton had not developed east of *The Steyne.* North Street is a frontage with fields behind, and the rural aspect of the land to the east is apparent. However, within the confines of North Street and the seafront, the city was becoming densely infilled with housing and retail, as Brighton became popular as a seaside resort and bathing attraction, spurred by the residency of Royalty. Interestingly, we see Marlborough House here facing The Steyne; however, it would appear that 52-53 The Steyne (in red) already had a rear block fronting on East St. (yellow).
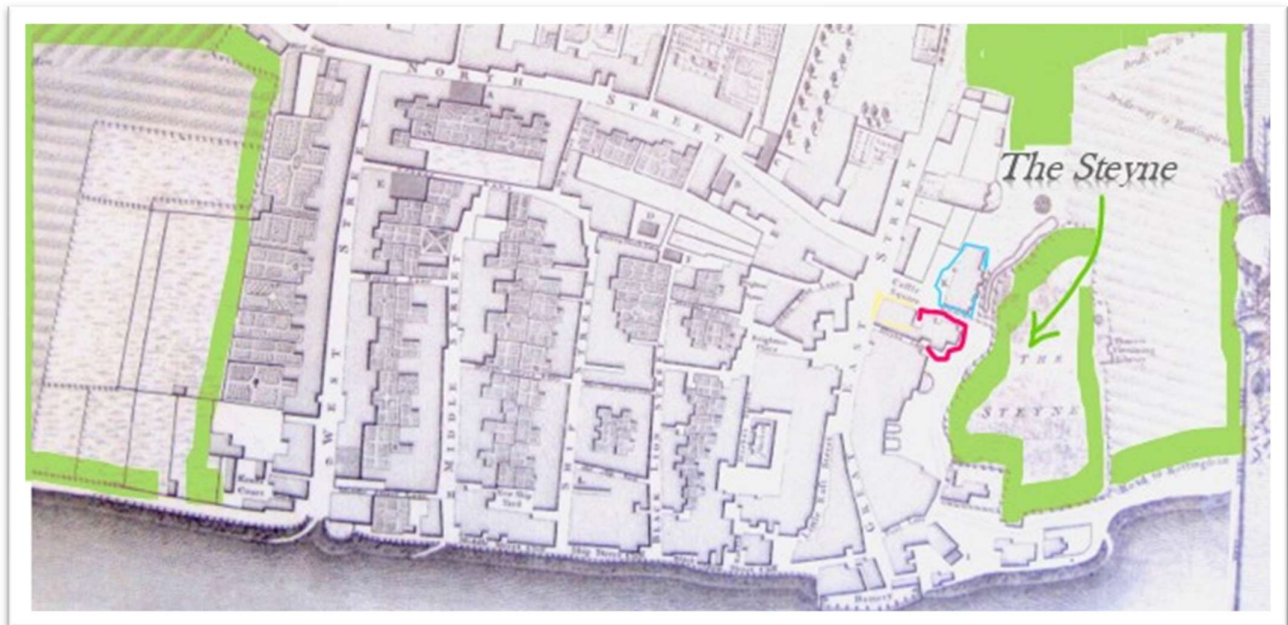
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**52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH**
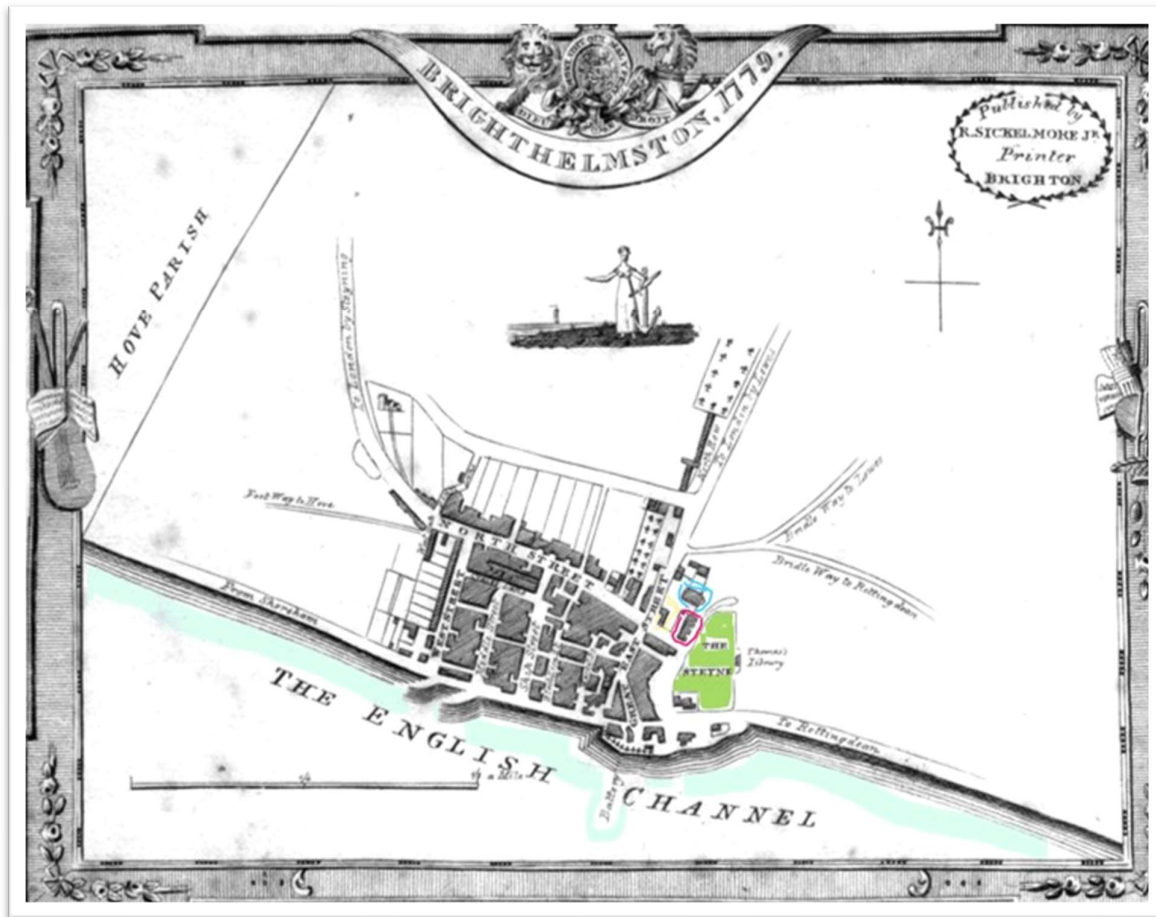
2.6 Nick _Antram in "The Buildings of England: Sussex: East"_ explains: _The Steine as a place of residence grew only when the beginnings of Brighton as a resort, when its level ground and sheltered aspect from the sea made it ideal for promenades. So, it was here rather than on the seafront that the rich and fashionable, including the Prince Regent, took lodgings."_ The RIBA's **"_Guide to the Buildings of Brighton_"** written and published by the Brighton School of Architecture and Design (published by McMillan Martin Ltd.) further says:

"In 1740, there were 450 houses in the town. Most of these were built along the north south streets, and generous areas of land remained behind them to serve as garden allotments and open ground for drying nets. Transverse pathways served to give access to gardens, and to neighbouring streets." "The growing popularity of Brighton after 1750 led to development outside of the old town, but much redevelopment also took place within it. New houses and workshops came to be built in the back-land areas along the transverse pathways and these developed into the narrow alleyways which are now referred to as the twittens.

"One consequence of the developments which accompanied Brighton's transformation from a fishing village to a fashionable resort is that a large proportion of the buildings that stand today date from the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries... Starting in the 1770's, terraces fronting Victoria Gardens were developed moving gradually north until the 1820s. On the west side, North Row is shown on the 1810 Map (or North Steyne as it was until 1819, then re-named Marlborough Place)." TOP: 1779 Sickelmore Jr. map of Brighton shows how compact it was then. Marlborough House (in blue) and 52-53 (in red).

n in 1779 (based on Yeakell and Gardner)
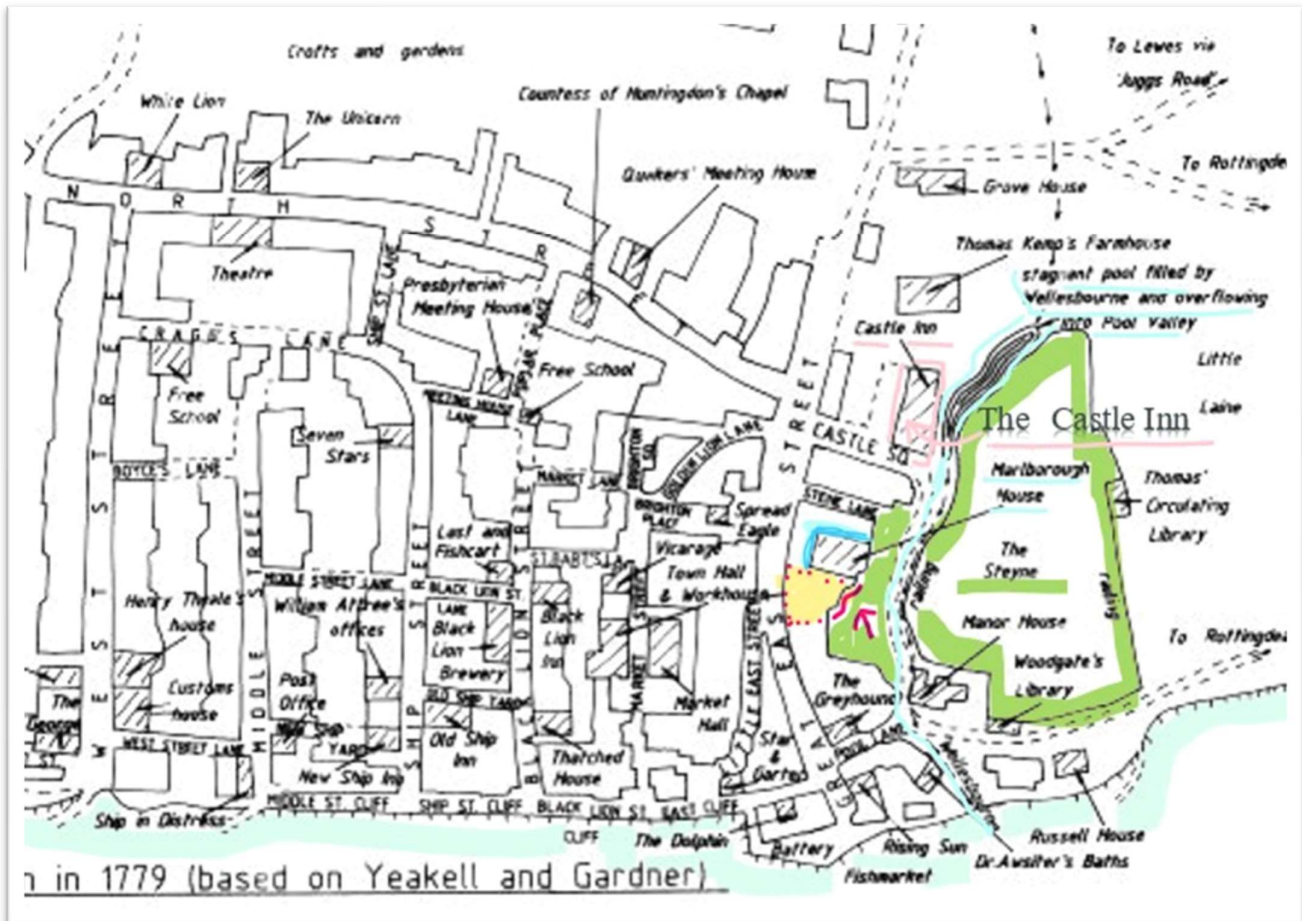
2.7 This plan based on Yeakell & Gardner's map of Brighton shows that The Steyne and Marlborough House had already been constructed as the block plans show. Nick Antram explains:

"The growth of Brighton beyond its medieval confines began after c.1740 and by 1820 had reached almost to the site of St. Peter's church. Subsequent expansion owes much to the coming of the railway in 1841. [Buildings of England: East Sussex", loc. cit, page 270].

"The Steine. The Steine as a place of residence grew only with the beginnings of Brighton as a resort, when its level ground and sheltered aspect from the sea made it ideal for promenades. So, it was here rather than on the seafront that the rich and fashionable, including the Prince Regent, took lodgings. It had been common land but by 1778 the S[outh] end was turfed and enclosed. More sustained development began in the 1780s, given impetus by the enclosure ...of the entire length from the seafront to The Level by 1787 and drainage and culverting of the Wellesbourne stream in 1793. By 1824, when the new church of St. Peter was built on the north end of the Steine, development ran virtually unbroken on both sides of the central gardens, with the showpiece of The Pavilion on the W[est] side

ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

2.8 By the late Georgian era, the 1810 Marchant map shows the Prince Regent's Pavilion on North Steyne, near Marlborough House, not far from 52-53 Old Steyne. While the centre was more densely developed, there were still fields surrounding the town and a few windmills to the north. [N.B.- Colour is the author's emphasis and key to buildings.]

ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

2.9 From Georgian Resort to Regency Development.

The 1810 map of "Brighthelmstone" by J. Marchant [Section 4.9 above] shows how developed the city had become by the late Georgian period. At this time, it was mainly confined to the coastal fringe and the area around North Street and The Steyne, although, we first see Grand Parade take shape. [Note: colour is author's emphasis.] Sir Nikolaus Pevsner* notes that in Brighton:

"The seaside story starts towards the mid C18 with sea bathing recorded as early as 1736. From the 1740s Brighton sea water was prescribed by doctors... " Visitors first began to appear as early as 1753 after Doctor Russell published '_Dissertation Concerning the Use of Sea Water in Diseases of the Glands.'_   "Dr Russell also discovered a chalybeate spring in St. Ann's Well Gardens, Hove was discovered around the same time." Visitors began to appear and there must have been quite a number and of a genteel kind ...if The Castle Inn built a ballroom in 1766, and The Ship Inn its Assembly Room in 1767. Then, the Duke of Gloucester came in 1765, the Duke of Cumberland in 1771, 1772 & 1779; the Prince of Wales in 1783, 1785, and 1786. "In 1785 the prince married Mrs. Fitzherbert [a Catholic]. Henry Holland built him the Marine Pavilion from 1786, safely away from the cruel sea. ...She took a house at Brighton, and he, in 1786, leased from Thomas Read Kemp Senior, a farmhouse facing the Steine. ...in 1786-7 he had [this] converted and enlarged into a Marine Pavilion by _Henry Holland_, the most refined of architects in London ...in 1802 already he had converted Holland's chaste and elegant interiors into thorough-going _chinoiserie..."_ ." *(_The Buildings of England: East Sussex_," Brighton: pages 148-217. Yale University Press, rev.2012, edited and updated 2012 by Nicholas Antram. [See page 149]).
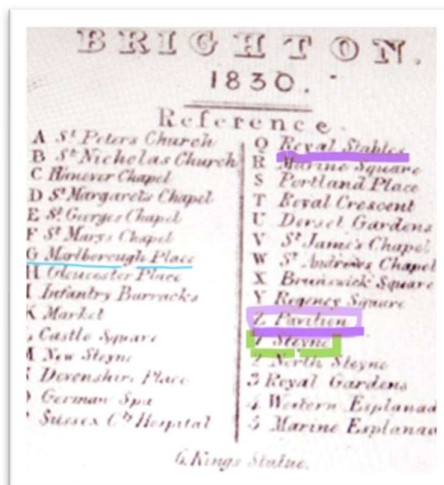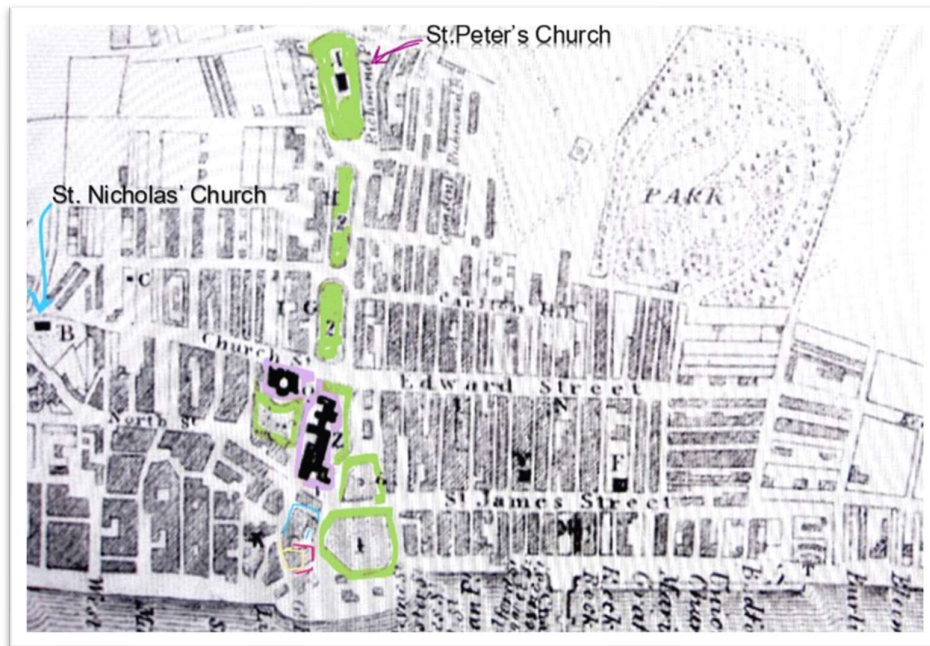
ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

**2.10** The 1830 Sicelmore Map.

By the Regency era, infill housing was making Brighton town centre very compact. Below, a detail clearly shows Brighton Pavilion [Z], the Royal Stables [Q], and the Royal Garden, to the north of Marlborough Place [G]. The Steyne is marked as Number 1 and the Royal Gardens No.3. Nos. 52-53 The Steyne (in red) had already been shown as houses on the earlier Georgian maps; however, at this time, it is likely that these fashionable town-houses fronting The Steyne were further improved or altered. These are the Listed Buildings dating from c.1800- 1830 with some surviving period features we see today. However, the houses facing East Street have been comprehensively altered, except for the front elevations, now

2.11 The Early Victorian Era: 1840 Siclemore Map of Brighton
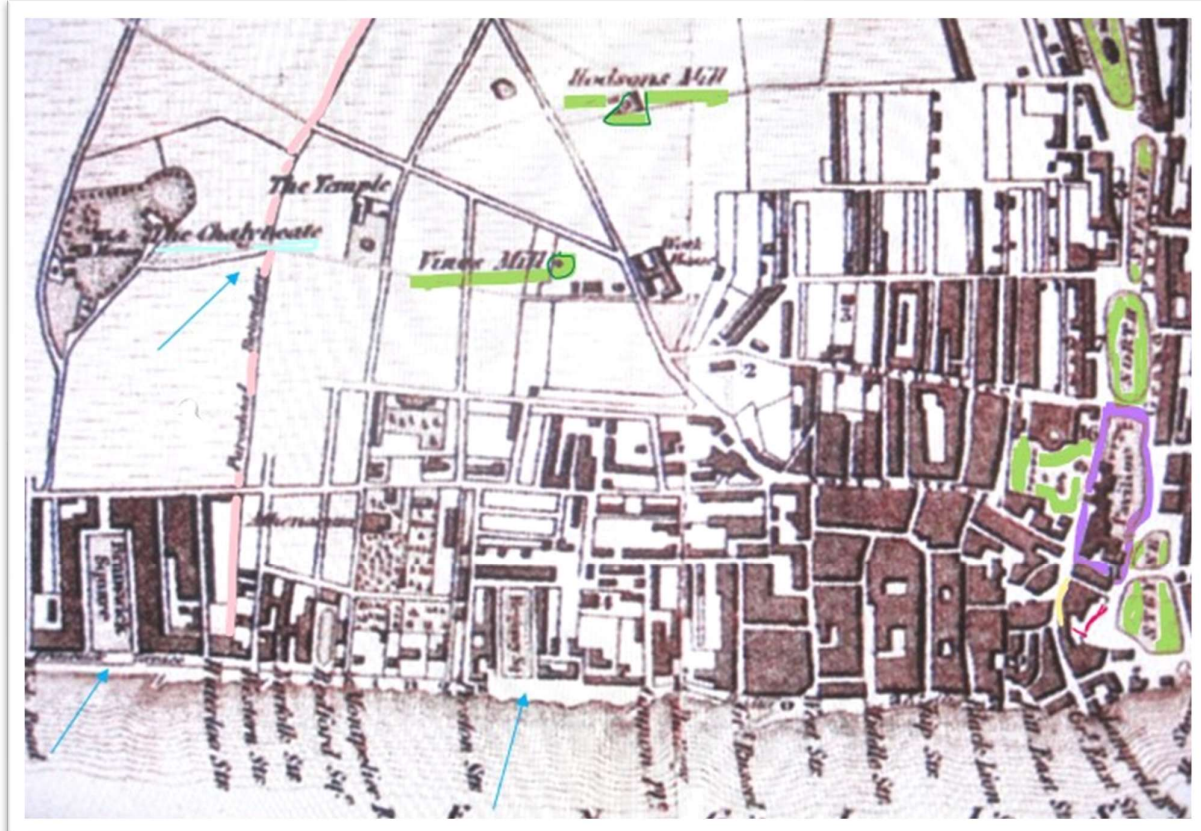
2.12 The 1840 Siclemore Map only a decade on shows how densely developed the city had become in a few years. However, the rural signs of life such as Hodson's Mill and Vines' Mill were still in operation in the early Victorian era. The Parish boundary is clearly marked denoting Hove as separate from Brighton at this time; however, the seafront development was infilling the area west of the city including Regency Square and Brunswick Square (far left). The block developments in Brighton itself do not show any detail at this point; but the Royal Pavilion is clearly marked north of The Steyne. [52-53 is indicated in red outline.]

2.13 *"In 1740, there were 450 houses in the town. Most of these were built along the north south streets, and generous areas of land remained behind them to serve as garden allotments and open ground for drying nets. Transverse pathways served to give access to gardens, and to neighbouring streets." "The growing popularity of Brighton after 1750 led to development outside of the old town, but much redevelopment also took place within it. New houses and workshops came to be built in the backland areas along the transverse pathways and these developed into the narrow alleyways which are now referred to as the twittens."*

Starting in the 1770's, terraces fronting Victoria Gardens were developed moving gradually north until the 1820s. On the west side, North Row is shown on the 1810 Map (or *North Steyne* as it was called until 1819 when it was re-named Marlborough Place. However, the Valley Gardens Conservation Area statement explains: *"progress was comparatively slow as the land further north was too far from the sea and the fashionable hub of North Street/Castle Square to make it attractive enough to developers. Grand Parade on the east side followed Marlborough Place and progress continued north as far as St Peter's Place by the 1820s."* Today...**many of the older houses survive...***"*

Marine Parade and Brighton Chair Pier (Constable C:1790)

ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

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2.14 The 1851 Victorian Colour Map of Brighton.

The Victorian period brought tremendous change in Brighton with the coming of the railway. Nikolaus Pevsner explains [Loc, cit, pages 150- 217]: "In the second decade of the C18 Brighton was the fastest-growing town in Britain. Between 1801 and 1831 the population had increased 550 per cent to 40,634. Indeed, the Brighton one thinks of is the creation of the 1820s and 1830s, when the seafront developments of Kemp Town and Brunswick Town were carried out... In 1822, Kings Road was opened along the West Cliff and the seafront promenade replaced the Steine the focus of fashionable life. From the 1840's any remaining gaps in the seafront were filled and the Hove seafront was extended W to Adelaide Crescent (begun in 1830 but not completed until 1850). ...By 1851, the population of Brighton & Hove was 69,673... Victorian and Edwardian Brighton & Hove is no less rewarding architecturally than the Late Georgian town... " While few details are shown on this colour map, The Steyne and the Royal Pavilion are shown. The most significant change was the arrival of the Railway and the tremendous change this would bring.

**2.15** The Mid to late Victorian Era 1873 to 1876 OS Survey Maps
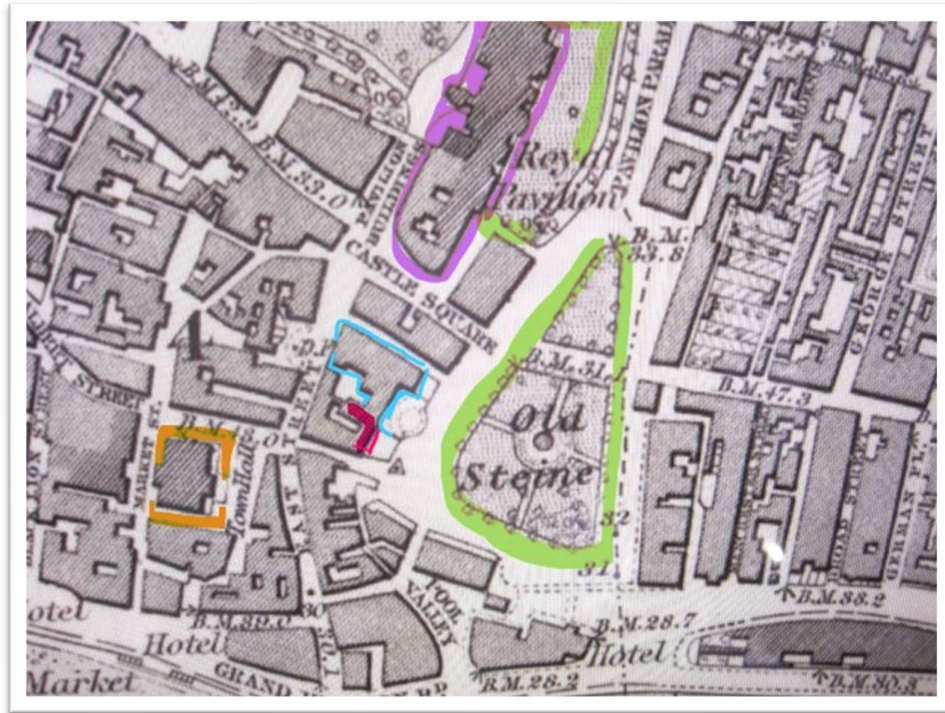
2.16 More intense development began in Brighton after the coming of the railways in the 1840's. The 1873 OS Map [top] shows the Town Hall, a major civic building. The 1876 map [below] shows the footprint of 52-53 Old Steine as separate houses in greater detail. The East Street houses once individual, are linked up now.
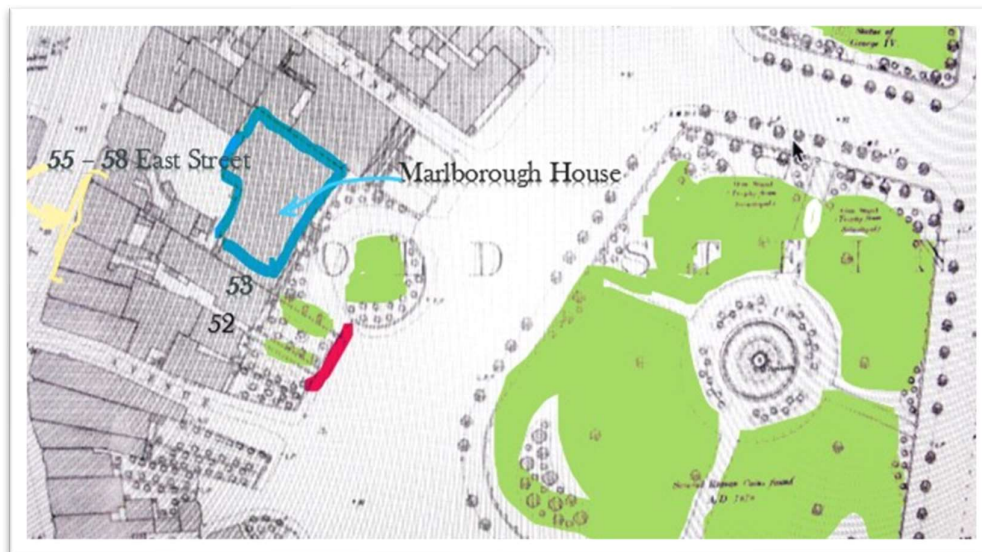
ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

2.17 The 1880-'s to 1909 Ordnance Survey Maps of Brighton.
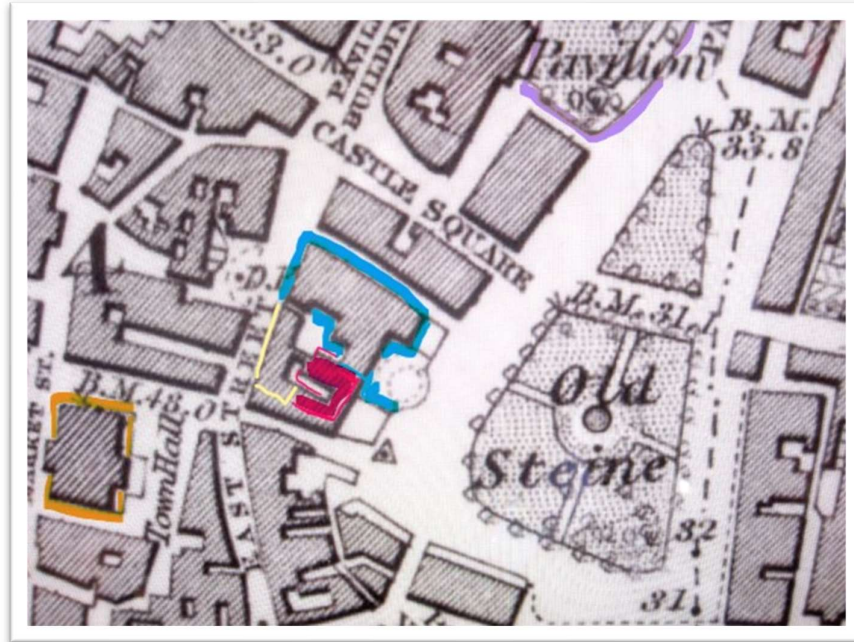
2.18 Both the 1990 Brighton OS Map [top] and the 1909 OS Map [left], after the turn of the 20thC. show the buildings only in schematic blocks. We see individual houses shown later in the 1911 OS Map. It was not until the mid -20thC. that Nos.52-53 were extended as they are today. Both these maps show the stability of the Old Town Character Area. Brighton Council's Conservation Statement explains this stable street-plan originated in north-south lanes leading to the seafront in the old, Medieval fishing village.

2.19 The 20th Century Ordnance Survey Maps of Brighton.
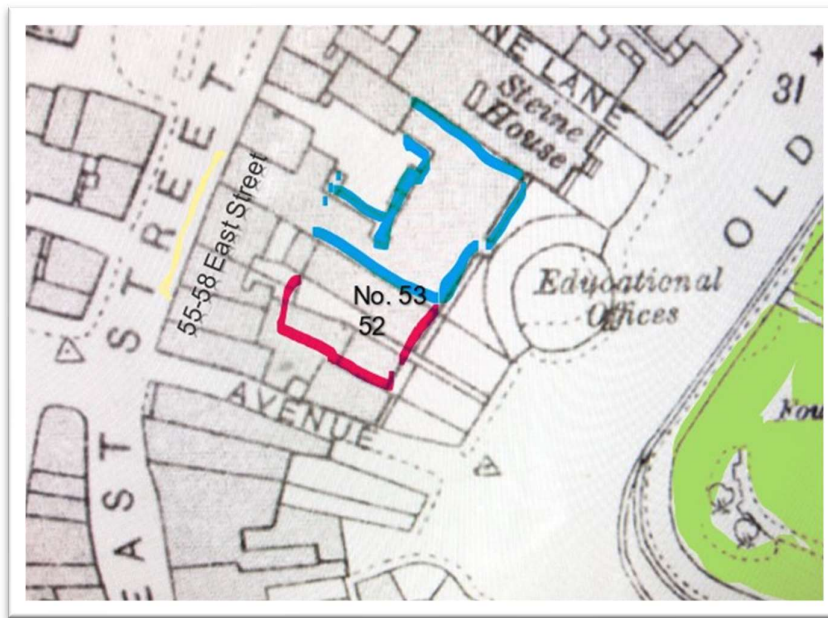
2.15 Top: The 1909 OS Map is a schematic block plan, but the 1911 OS Map still shows No.52 as being separate to No.53, as well as the houses fronting East Street, to the rear. Marlborough House has become Council *"Educational Offices".* The street patterns are remarkably stable. In the 1909 Map public buildings now are marked more clearly, in black. On the coast, most of the large old houses now appear as *Hotels;* however, the seafront still has a *Fish Market*.

ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

2.20 The 1947 Post-War Ordnance Survey Map of Brighton.
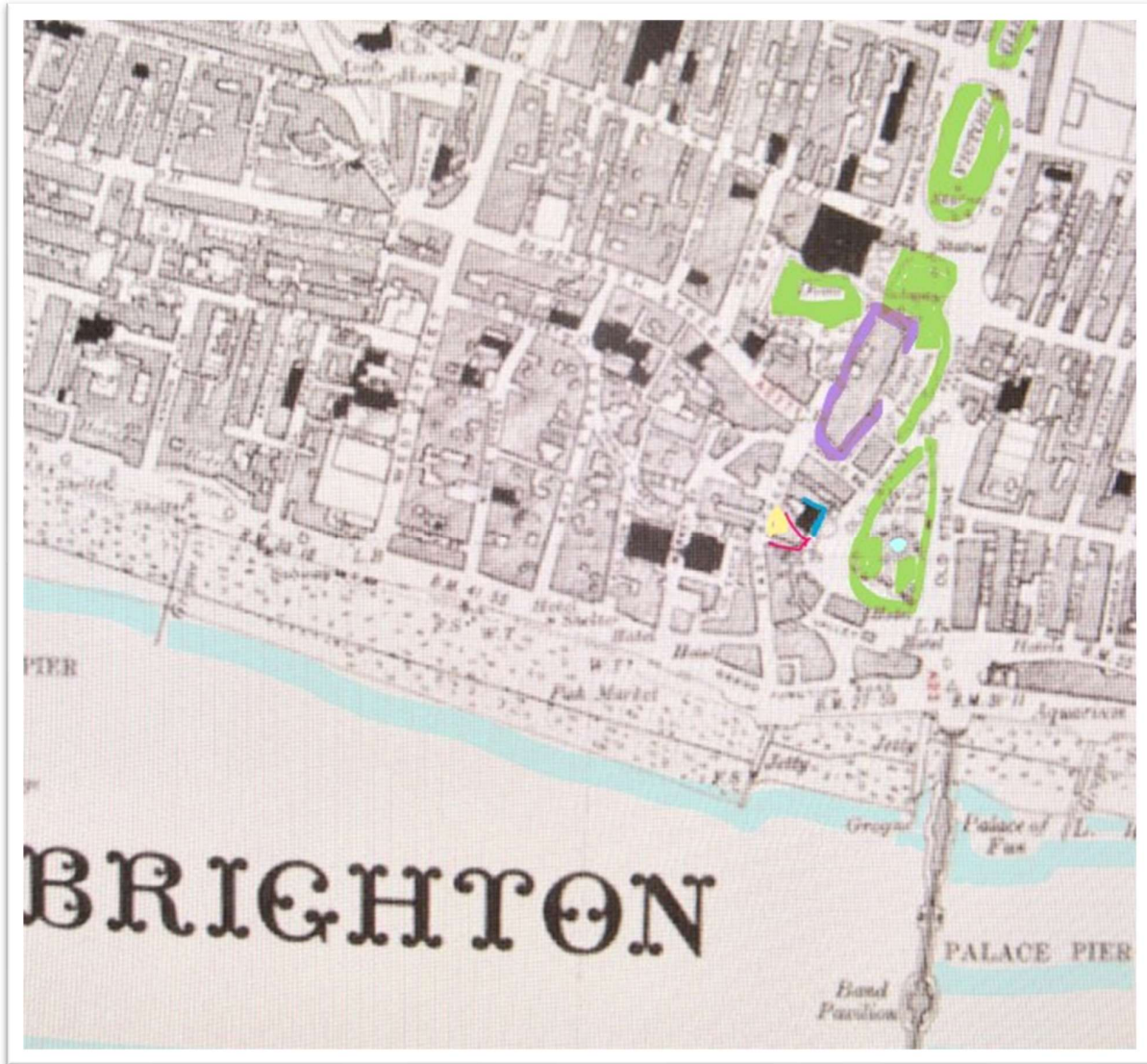
2.21   The 1947 Post-War O.S. Map of Brighton indicates the main public buildings (in black) and shows again the stability of the Medieval street pattern in The Lanes and the Old Town Conservation Area. The Old Steine is remarkably intact although the buildings are shown only as blocks, giving little clue to the uses at that time. Further towards the Railway Station, we see North Steine continued to be called Victoria Gardens, since the Victorian era. Brighton still had the Palace Pier south of Old Steine, and the West Pier, just out of view on the left side of this portion of the map. The War Memorial now has a pride of place in the central open space of the Old Stein garden, north of the pier.

ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

2.22 The 1966 Street Map of Brighton.
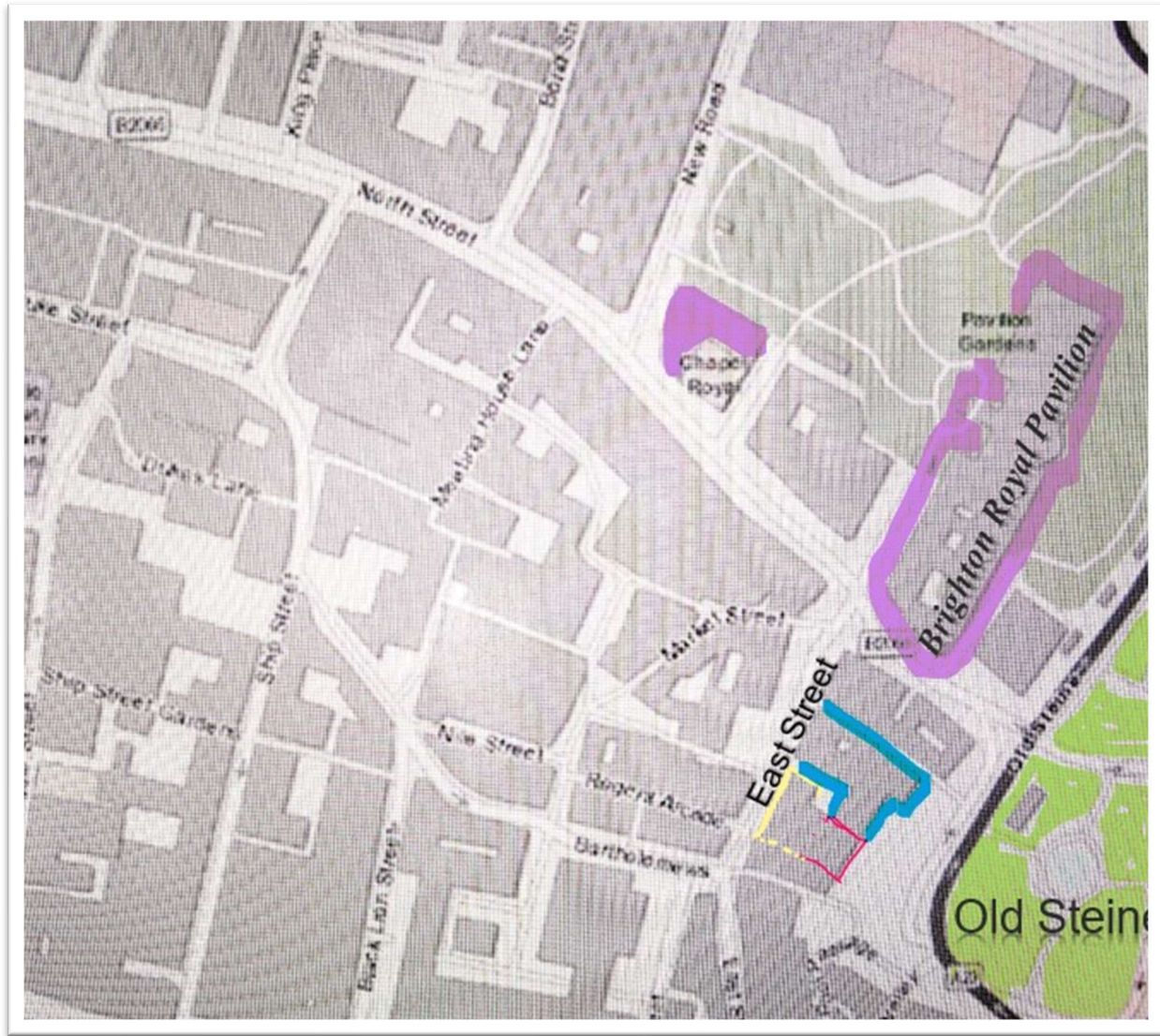
2.23 While this city map of Brighton from 1966 shows the stable, historic street pattern, no clues are shown as to whether Nos. 52-53 Old Steine was already extended to include the houses fronting East Street, it is likely that this transformation to offices was realised by the 1970's.

[CHECK- addresses of East St. & Planning history, also.] The sinuous Medieval streets lead into The Lanes in the Old Town Conservation Area. The sea-faring provenance is recorded in names such as "Ship Street and Ship Street Gardens.

SETTING – 52-53 OLD STEIN IN CONTEXT – THE GEORGIAN HOUSE

4.0 Setting 52-53 Old Steine in Historic Context: Life in the Georgian House.

4.1 The typical layout of a Georgian town-house in London was repeated in Brighton all over the city. Architectural historians Dan Cruickshank and Neil Burton explain how uses were disposed in: *"Life in the Georgian City"* (Viking Press, 1990, pg. 58): <mark>*"The room descriptions are important, for they reveal where different activities were located.*"</mark>
<u>Above:</u> the RIBA Drawings collection has a sketch by George Dance (the younger) *"catches a late eighteenth-century architect in the act of designing a modest house."* Note: the plan is only one room front and back with the staircase parallel to the party wall. This is the same, characteristic Georgian terraced house plan-form we see in The Old Stein. Bottom left: a 6/6 sash window. However, none of the original sash windows at Nos. 52-53 The Old Steine have survived today.

4.2 Elegant Beginnings: Georgian plan-forms.
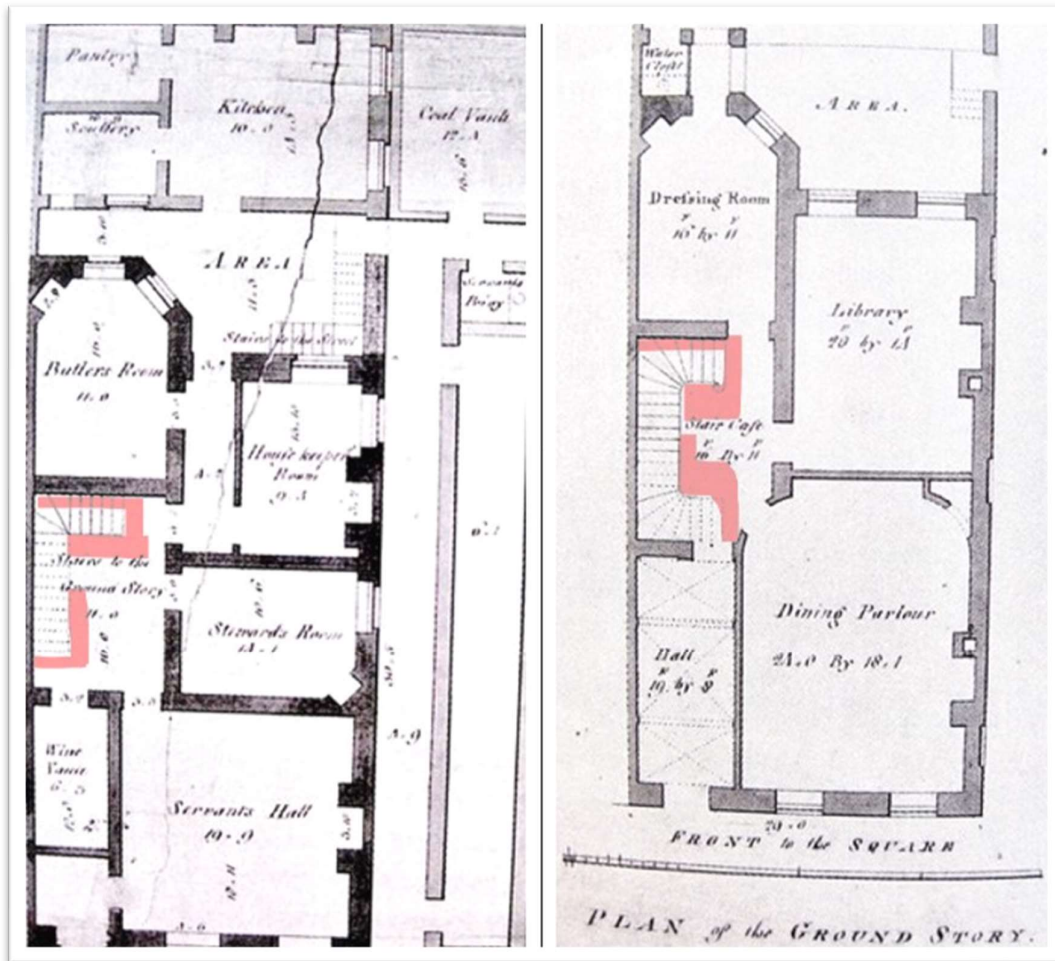
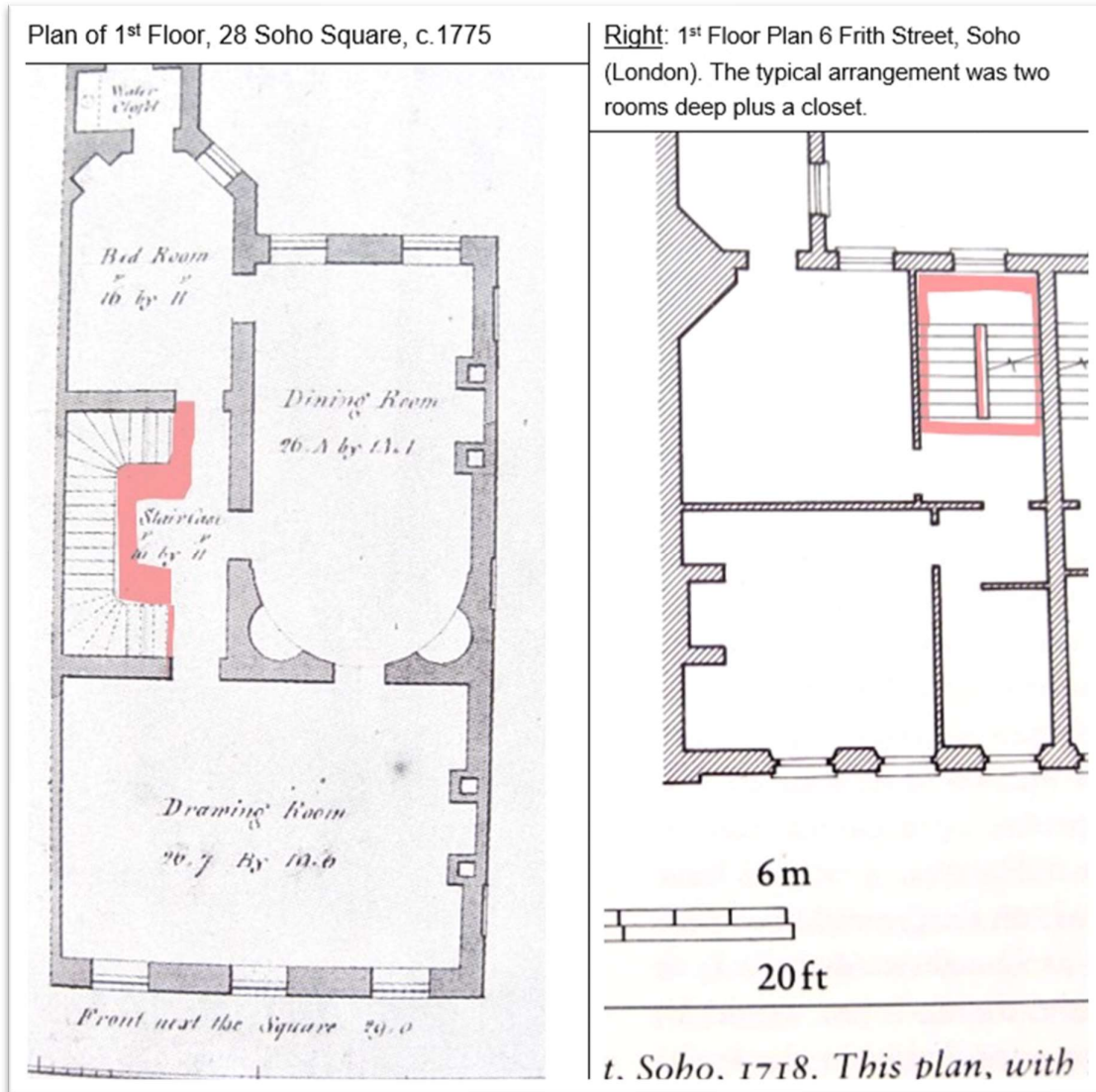**4.3** Dan Cruikshank & Neil Burton explain: A French gentleman visitor named Simond in London noted: *"the narrow houses... with two rooms to each storey"* were *"three or four storeys high"* with floors used *"one for eating, one for sleeping a third for company, a fourth underground for the kitchen, [and on top] for the servants."* Isaac Ware, when describing the common house in 1756 wrote in his text *"A Complete Body of Architecture"* that it was: *"the general custom to make two rooms and a light closet on each floor."* In terms of hierarchy, the lower ground floor was the least significant part of a Georgian house, with the Ground and First Floors being the principal rooms on the principal floors, or the most significant ones, as was true in Brighton. The Basement. *"According to Sophie von la Roch- 'the basement* [of London houses] *contains not only the cellar but also the kitchen, bake house, and servants' quarters."*   The Ground Floor: in the 18th-C is explained by John Crunden in his historic book of 1770- *"Convenient and Ornamental Architecture"* a dining room, a drawing room, and a breakfast parlour. This parlour *"informal, day-to-day family life was lived was on the ground floor."*   Above: The Basement (left) and the Ground Floor Plan (right) taken from Isaac Ware's18thC. book: *"Complete Body of Architecture.*

4.4 The Piano Nobile and Upper Floors of a Georgian Town-House

Plan of 1ˢᵗ Floor, 28 Soho Square, c.1775

Right: 1ˢᵗ Floor Plan 6 Frith Street, Soho (London). The typical arrangement was two rooms deep plus a closet.

4.5 <u>The First Floor</u>: would consist of: *"a large front room, a slightly smaller back room and a small closet...* [namely a]: *"sitting room/drawing room, bedroom, and cabinet/closet."* Another French visitor-*"La Rochefoucauld went so far as to say:* <mark>*'It is a general custom in England...to have the dining-room below and the drawing-room above;*</mark> *people find this more convenient for the servants and make no trouble of going up a staircase of twenty steps or so.* Georgian author Isaac Ware also wrote: *"The two rooms on the second floor are for bedrooms, and the closets being carried up thus far, a third bedroom there. Over these, are the garrets, which may be divided in a larger number than the floors below, for the reception of beds for the servants."* [Burton and Cruickshank, Ibid.]

4.6 The Second and Third Floors in a Georgian Town-House.

<u>Right</u>: A comic view of Regency life, in Dan Cruickshank & Neil Burton's book- "*Life in the Georgian City.*" showing *"Two early-nineteenth-century 'exquisites' taking tea in a London garret. The regular recurrence of this image- overdressed youths presenting an affluent appearance and indulging in a few fashionable luxuries while living in pathetic squalor - suggests that it may, in reality, have been a fairly common condition. Note the turned-up bed* [left-hand side] *and the ingenious disposition of domestic necessities.*" [Whiskey flask]. The chap on the left says: *"My dear Lollend, this is a charming tea, where did you buy it?"* <u>His friend</u> *"I am exceedingly happy my dear Mr. Tim that you like it, I always buy my tea at Kinakan & Smyth's, Carlisle Buildings."* [Page 59, Ibid.]

HERITAGE VALUES – THE LIST DESCRIPTION

ADDRESS

52-53 Old Stein – Brighton BN1 1NH

Official list entry: Location. 52, OLD STEINE:

Listed Building Grade II. Listed: 13-Oct-1952/ Updated: 26-Aug-1999.　　　　District: The City of Brighton and Hove
(Unitary Authority)
Parish: Non-Civil Parish

National Grid Reference: TQ 31200 04015

Details: BRIGHTON.

No.52 OLD STEINE 577-1/64/633 (West side) 13/10/52. TQ3104SW.

(Formerly Listed as: OLD STEINE No.52 Regency Lodge)

Terraced house. Early C19. 3 storeys and attic over basement. 2-window range. Up steps to flat-arched entrance with over-light, set under prostyle porch consisting of a pair of Tuscan columns with pilaster responds. To the left a full- height segmental bay with tripartite windows. All windows are flat arched. Storey band between second floor and attic. First-floor veranda with cast-iron stanchions and railings in heart and anthemion pattern. Single window in entrance range on each floor, that to the second is blocked. Entablature with cornice across entire elevation at top. INTERIOR: not inspected. Nos 52 and 53 (qv) form a group with Marlborough House (qv).