



Hollingdean

Whilst there are many accounts in existence about the Kemp Town Railway, few give any real insight into the one key place where this fascinating branch line separates from the railway towards Lewes.

So.... in all its glory, I would like to present to you..... HOLLINGDEAN.
But what and where is this place?

Nestled snugly between Lewes Road and Ditchling Road in Brighton, Hollingdean is bordered by Hollingbury, Withdean and Preston to the west and Moulsecomb to the east. While it appears to be nothing more than another 1930's addition brought about by the expansion and modernisation of Brighton, Hollingdean was a pivotal point in Brighton's railway heritage.

The Kemptown Railway, completed in August 1869, branched off from the Lewes Line just after London Road Station as has been seen in previous chapters. This gave rise to a small station at Lewes Road, which is well documented as one of 3 stations on the line, but it also gave rise to a large coal yard, an abattoir, gas works and a large council depot, which are not so well documented. These are all in the area I wish to concentrate on in this chapter.

Looking at this area on a map, it sits awkwardly on a hillside with spiky zigzag boundaries caused by the odd elbows of road junctions on the south side, but on the north side the boundary is dead straight where it is hemmed in by Hollingdean Road.



ABOVE: This picture shows London Road Station, looking back over the London Road Viaduct towards Brighton Station. Just left of this photo, the track enters the Ditchling Road Tunnel, beyond which the junction to Kempdown would have been.



ABOVE:: This picture shows the view in the opposite direction, looking towards the Ditchling Road Tunnel (which can be seen just off centre of the picture). Note that the footbridge is not the original, that was replaced early in 2003.



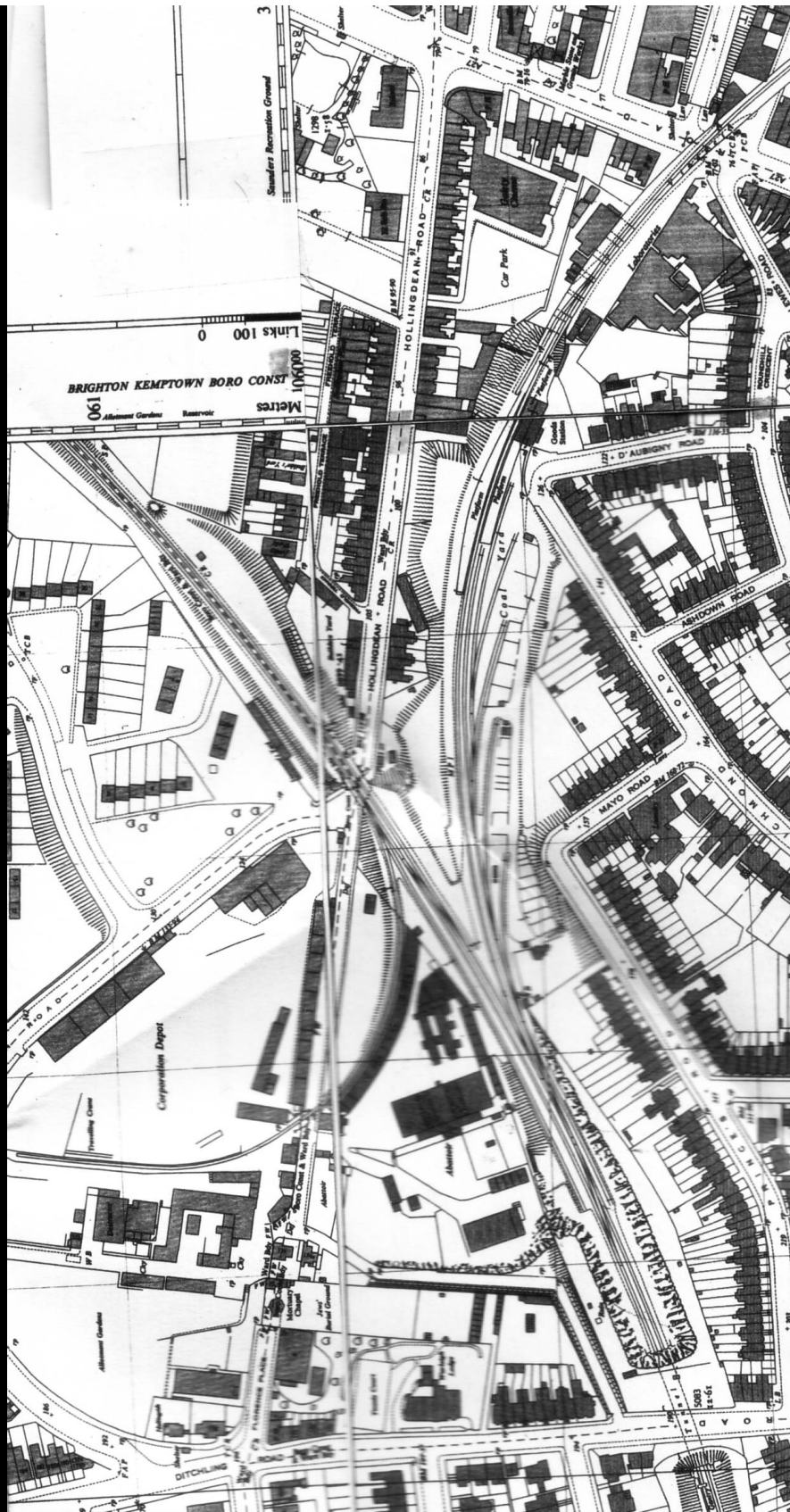
ABOVE: This view shows London Road Station again, this time taken from the footbridge. This gives a better idea of the overall location, topographically. The green roof canopy immediately above the tunnel portal is the BP Garage on Ditchling Road, whilst the terraced houses of Springfield Road can be seen to the left behind the trees. Ditchling Rise would be on the right hand side of this photograph.

BELOW: This picture shows Lewes Road Station in 1952. Towards the end of its life the station building was a pickle factory and later on a builder's store. The chimney of the Council Waste Destructor can be seen extreme right. One of the houses in Richmond Road can be seen on the far left behind the main station building. Surprisingly, the redevelopment of the station and railway site has encroached very little on Richmond Road; apart from the area which was adjoining the forecourt, both the road

and surrounding houses remain unchanged. R.C.Riley



The line to Lewes bursts out of the Ditchling Road Tunnel into a cutting. Originally there would have been an Abattoir on the left hand side of the track, served by its own curved siding which was only accessible coming in from Lewes. Next to this on the north side, bordering Hollingdean Road, is the council depot, which although somewhat altered is still in use in the present day. On the left hand or south side of the track there was originally a large coal yard at the foot of Princes Road / Mayo Road junction, then Lewes Road Station at the junction of Richmond Road and D'Aubigny Road. Beyond this the viaduct would have curved south-east towards Hartington Halt and Kemptown Station.



ABOVE: This map shows the area focused upon in this chapter as it would have appeared in around 1930. Hollingdean Road and Hollingdean Lane cross the map almost vertically from top to bottom just off centre. The Ditchling Road tunnel and the cutting can be clearly seen in the bottom right hand corner with Ditchling Road running left to right across the bottom of the picture. Lewes Road, the Viaduct and the Station can all be seen top right quarter with Lewes Road crossing diagonally in the extreme top right corner.

Note the zigzag boundary on the right hand side of the map caused by the sharp elbows of the junctions where the 2 sets of roads meet. These are Princes/Mayo Roads and Richmond/D'Aubigny Roads respectively. In the middle to bottom half of the picture, the Abattoir buildings and council depot can be clearly seen, along with the sweeping curve of the siding leading to the Cattle Docks and the Council waste Destructor. The Coal Yard dominates the centre of the map with a mass of sidings branching off to the right of the picture at the foot of Mayo & Richmond Road junction. The Lewes Road Station stood at the junction of Richmond and D'Aubigny Road, just above and to the right of the centre of the map.

The site is totally unrecognisable in the present day, although little of the site boundaries have changed. As with many areas of this nature, it is now dominated by 2 large industrial estates, one at (what in the future beyond this map will be) Hughes Road and the other at Hollingdean Lane.

The modern day map BELOW shows the same area in 2005, just a few years before the site was redeveloped.

Key features to note are the Abattoir Buildings (just up from the fold mark on the left) along with the ancillary buildings from when this area was an industrial estate. There was a Double Glazing manufacturer, also Easylink and Southern Transit, both small local bus companies. Maggie Recycling used to occupy the Abattoir Buildings, but moved to new premises on the junction of Hollingdean Road and Lewes Road when the site was developed.

The Council Depot dominates the right hand side of the map, within the curve of Upper Hollingdean Road and hasn't changed much with redevelopment. The large "L" shaped block just below it is the Municipal Meat Market. This had a few changes with the redevelopment of the site, which are covered in detail in the appropriate chapter, elsewhere on this website.

Just under the crease of the fold is the curve of the old railway line which lead to the Council Waste Destructor, Abattoir and Cattle Pens. Up until 2006 there were tracks embedded in the road surface of Hollingdean Lane, but these sadly disappeared with redevelopment. The building inside the radius of the curve is the Council Cleansing Block, which was demolished prior to redevelopment: again, this features elsewhere on the website in detail. Next to this is the bulk of the Centenary Industrial Estate, the Railway Bridge and Hughes Road, where Lewes Road Station once stood. The Lewes Railway Line cuts diagonally across the bottom of the map.

The curved road at the bottom left of the map is Davey Drive, the main thoroughfare to Hollingdean.

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BELOW: This map shows the junction of Hollingdean Road and Hughes Road in more detail. This provides a "missing link" between the map above and the map of Sainsburys and the Vogue Gyratory below. Note that No.s 57 to 95 Hollingdean Road were demolished when the petrol station was built and that this range of numbers may have included some of the railway installations around Lewes Road Station.

The road at the extreme bottom centre of the map is the access ramp to the loading area at the rear of Sainsburys, the curve of which is seen on the next map on.



ABOVE: This photo shows the view looking across what was then called the Ash yard and Corporation Stone Works to the extensive Hollingdean Allotments in about 1902. This site is now occupied by the large, oval Materials Recovery Building as part of the VOELIA Waste Transfer Facility that now stands on the site. The area immediately in the foreground is occupied in the present day by Dudeney and Nettleton Lodge Tower blocks. The Hollingbury pub can just about be seen in the top left hand corner, with the terraced houses of Payne Terrace just to the right of it.

Photo owned by The Regency Society's James Gray Collection.

In the present day, the sites of the abattoir (in all its various incarnations) and the coal yard have changed beyond all recognition and there is nothing at all that points to the existence of any of the landmarks I have just mentioned in the last paragraph. The Lewes Road Viaduct and Lewes Road Station were demolished in stages between 1971 and 1985 when the horrid Vogue Gyrotory road junction and a Sainsbury's superstore were built.

Hughes Road and the Centenary Industrial Estate stand on the site of the coal yard which was redeveloped around the same time as Sainsbury's was built in the 1980's (This area is covered in depth in the chapter called "Lewes Road Area", elsewhere within the Kemp Town Railway website).

The Abattoir building was occupied for the late 1990's and up to 2007 by Magpie Recycling, an independent company dealing with the recycling of household waste such as bottles, cans, paper, card and some textiles. They are still in operation at the present time and are now situated in Saunders Park on Lewes Road, just opposite the Bus Garage.

The various modern outbuildings and factory units which cropped up behind the Abattoir Building were occupied mostly by small businesses, most notably a double glazing firm and 2 small coach and bus operators, one called (as far as I can remember) Southern Transit. This company is still in operation but I am unsure as to where they operate from. The double glazing manufacturers appear to have moved firstly to premises in Lewes Road (which has recently been redeveloped into a fast food pizza shop!) and latterly into one of the units on the nearby Centenary Industrial Estate.

In January 2008, the Abattoir was demolished and a Waste Recycling Centre was built on the site and this redevelopment has its own page. In the present day, the Transfer Site is seen as an established part of Hollingdean, along with the council depot on the opposite side of Hollingdean Lane. There is little apart from the apex roof of the Dust Destructor Building in the Council Depot that gives any hint of the area's significance in the context of The Kemp Town Railway.

BELOW: The proposals for the Waste Transfer Buildings caused considerable upset to the local community when they landed in 2007, mostly due to their very close proximity to a local primary school. They are now seen as a fairly integral feature of the area in the present day and do not really appear to have caused any significant impact on the local area in terms of increased traffic or any kind of health impact. The only real impact that it HAS had is in terms of the nostril-curdling pong which issues fourth from the are in summer!



BELOW: The two maps seen here show the overall area concentrated on in this chapter. The first of the two (upper) shows the site as it would have been seen in 2007 prior to the redevelopment and construction of the waste transfer site. It shows the area which has been redeveloped into the Waste Transfer Centre, which is seen superimposed onto the same map in the second (lower) map. The Railway crosses the map just under the proposed site, in the bottom right hand corner.

The Centenary Industrial Estate is in the bottom right hand corner, the original Abattoir site is bottom middle to left, next to Hollingdean Lane (diagonal left to right in the centre of the photo) and the Council Depot is in the middle at the top of the photo. The areas which were redeveloped are the whole of the Abattoir site between the railway and Hollingdean Lane & also part of the Wholesale Meat Market between Hollingdean Lane and Upper Hollingdean Road (which can be seen branching out left from the centre of the picture). The Waste Destructor is in the top right hand corner. Although the bulk of the Abattoir complex is still in situ on the upper map, quite a lot of it has been removed and a large space in front of the Abattoir buildings is derelict land.

Note the curve on the map next to Hollingdean Lane, just down from the centre of the map: this was the path of the spur off to the cattle pens and the Waste Destructor. On this map and at this time, the cattle pens have been demolished but the platform edge was still in place and could be clearly seen as recently as 2006. However, all features of the railway were removed during the construction of the Waste Transfer buildings, as the area was extensively remodelled right up to the site boundaries.

Photo and both maps extracted from "Dump the Dump" website / www.nostuff.co.uk



Materials Recovery Facility
and Waste Transfer Station

City Clean Depot

Meat Market

The proposed
site

