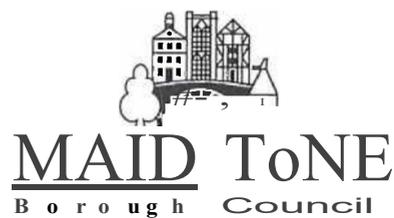


All Saints Conservation Area Appraisal

An assessment of the character and appearance of the area



Directorate of Development Services

ADOPTED DOCUMENT (2003)

Forward

This report is one of two documents produced by the All Saints Conservation Area Working Party . The group was convened by the Director of Development Services, Trevor Gasson, in June 2000 with the task of preparing a conservation area enhancement scheme for the All Saints Conservation Area. The brief for the group was:

To prepare a conservation area enhancement scheme for the All Saints Conservation Area to guide proposals for the improvement of the area as whole, enhancement of the All Saints Church Yard, and to provide a context for possible enhancement and grant aiding of the restoration of the individual buildings and structures within the area. The scheme should take into account the current status of the Maidstone Millennium River park proposals, the potential construction of the All Saints Link Road and the possibility of the Carriage .Museum being relocated to Mote Park.

The Working Party was drawn mainly from staff in Maidstone Borough Council, but also included help from English Heritage. The members of the team were:

Nick Antram	English Heritage
Mark Collins	Property Services, MBC
Deanne Cunningham	Environmental Services, MBC
Michael Kiely (chair)	Development Control Planner, MBC
Mike Parkinson	Conservation Officer, MBC
Richard Powell	Tourism Development, MBC
Mark Praed	Landscape Officer, MBC
Geoff Russell	Highway Manager, MBC
Anthony Tomlin	Architect, MBC
Bruce Waldock	Policy Planner , MBC

The group has produced two reports: an Appraisal and a Study of the Conservation Area. The appraisal is concerned with analysing the character and appearance of the area, whereas the study develops proposals for its preservation and enhancement. It is hoped that these two documents will provide an informed framework within which to consider any future proposals for this important area and act as a catalyst to bring about some of these changes.

FRONT PICTURE: View of the conservation area taken circa 1880

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Conservation Areas were first introduced under the provisions of the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 [now superseded by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990]. Section 69 of the 1990 Act requires local planning authorities to designate as conservation areas any "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".
- 1.2 Such designation brings control over the demolition of unlisted buildings and works to trees as well as some additional control over minor developments to single dwelling houses. The 1990 Act also places duties on local authorities:
1. to review the extent of designation from time to time;
 2. to designate further areas if appropriate;
 3. to formulate proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas (with public consultation); and
 4. to pay special attention to the character and appearance of conservation areas when exercising their planning powers.
- 1.3 The relevant development plan needs to include firm conservation area policies. These need to be based on a clear definition of the special architectural or historic interest of conservation area in order to provide an effective tool for planning decisions. The relevant development plans at the time of writing this report are the Kent Structure Plan 1996 and the approved Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000.
- 1.4 There are over 40 conservation areas in the Borough, and given that they are all of varying character, it would be unwieldy to include specific policies for individual conservation areas within the bodies of the development plans. Central Government advice in Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 15 (PPG15) urges local planning authorities to assess the special interest, character and appearance of all conservation areas in their districts in the form of written appraisals which will provide a sound basis for the more general policies included in development plans, will inform development control decisions and provide additional assistance at planning appeals. They can also act as the first step towards a subsequent Conservation Area Study which would contain specific policies and proposals for the preservation or enhancement of the area which can be treated as supplementary planning guidance to the Local Plan.
- 1.5 This document seeks to address the appraisal of the special interest, character and appearance of this Conservation Area. It will look at the origins and historical development of the area. A detailed analysis of all the buildings is included as well as an appraisal of the character of the streets and spaces within the area. The document will not put forward any specific proposals for the area although it may identify problems and opportunities. Specific proposals, in any case, will to some extent depend on whether road schemes are implemented or not, and it is intended that a separate Conservation Area Study will be produced which will be subject to public consultation. This will set out proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the area.

2 Location and Development of the All Saints Conservation Area

- 2.1 The All Saints Conservation Area lies to the south of the present-day town centre of Maidstone, but represents, as far as can be deduced, the original early-Medieval nucleus of settlement. The Conservation Area is focused around the magnificent group of medieval buildings comprising the Archbishops Palace and Stables, All Saints Church and the College of All Saints.
- 2.2 The Conservation Area was first designated on November 14th 1969 by Kent County Council. Extensions to the original Conservation Area were designated on 25th January 1974, again by Kent County Council, to include All Saints Primary School and the eastern range of the Monckton Drill Hall.
- 2.3 The boundary of the Conservation Area to the west is formed by the River Medway. The river has a major effect on the character of the area. To the north the boundary is formed by the modern line of Bishops' Way and to the north-east the boundary does not follow any topographical feature but is artificially drawn to follow the line of the long-proposed "Southern Approach Road"; it then returns westwards along Knightrider Street before turning south along Priory Road which forms the eastern boundary to the conservation area. The southern boundary coincides to some extent with the original precinct boundary of the College of All Saints except that modern buildings in College Avenue are omitted.
- 2.4 No supporting statements or character assessment survive from the time of the original designation of the Conservation Area, but its raison d'etre is obviously the concentration of listed buildings, the national importance of a number of which is reflected in their high gradings. Since designation the Conservation Area has not been subject to substantial pressures for development or redevelopment largely because of the nature of the buildings and uses and the significant land holdings of the Borough Council. The only significant new development post-designation is Carriage House, an office block on the site of late 19th/early 20th century workshop buildings, which themselves detracted from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

3 Historical Development

General Background

- 3.1 The All Saints Conservation Area is the site of the ecclesiastical complex which was the core of the original medieval town. The site is on higher ground bounded by the Medway to the west and the boggy ground of the Len valley to the north. The Roman road, Stone Street, crosses the Len just to the east. Knightrider Street, the old road to Ashford, crosses the Medway to the south of the Palace. The site is therefore defensible, had good communications by road and water and a supply of fresh water. The development of the area is therefore inseparable from the development of Maidstone as a whole.

The Origins and Development of Maidstone as a Town

- 3.2 The origins of settlement in Maidstone are not fully understood and there has been little systematic archaeological investigation carried out in the town. The area was obviously attractive to early settlers as evidenced by the surviving Neolithic ritual monument, such as Kites Coty House, collectively known as the Medway Megaliths, and the recent discovery during the Channel Tunnel Rail Link works of a Neolithic house at Bluebell Hill. A late Neolithic /Bronze Age beaker was found at Tovil not too far away from the Conservation Area, and post holes discovered during archaeological investigations on the Palace site have tentatively been ascribed to the Bronze Age.
- 3.3 Late Iron Age activity in the general area is evidenced by large cremation cemeteries at Aylesford and Allington, and cremation urns, coins and pottery of similar date have been discovered as chance finds in numerous locations in central Maidstone. In the years immediately preceding the Roman Invasion the oppidum (or proto-town) at Quantox Wood, Boughton Monchelsea, was established, and it is possible that some settlement focus may have occurred within its territory at the future site of Maidstone.
- 3.4 The Maidstone area is rich in remains of the Roman period, but there is no concrete evidence of there having been a town here. There are two known Roman villas in the immediate vicinity of the town centre - one at The Mount less than 1 kilometre north of the Conservation Area, just beyond the Maidstone East railway line, and another to the south-east on the far side of Upper Stone Street, and many others are known along this stretch of the Medway Valley. Two large cremation cemeteries of Roman date were discovered during building operations during the 18th and 19th centuries, one in the area of Pudding Lane/Earl Street and the other across the river from the Conservation Area near Maidstone West Station. Their existence suggests some form of reasonably substantial settlement - if such a settlement did exist, the cemeteries, in accordance with Roman law, would have been outside it.

- 3.5 Week Street/Gabriels Hill/Stone Street mark the line of the known Roman road linking Rochester with the iron-rich Weald and the coast near Hastings (and by another road diverging from it at Chart Sutton to the Roman port at Lympne (Portus Lemanis). It has been suggested that the name of Week Street is derived from the Latin word "vicus", a term often applied to small Roman towns. It has also been put forward that the "stone" element in various Kentish place names (i.e. the "stone" in Maidstone) - such as, for example, Folkestone, Lullingstone, Cuxton, Keston, and Teston - is often indicative of Roman building in the vicinity, although as in many of these examples this may relate to substantial villas rather than towns or villages. In another example, however, at Stone-by Faversham, there is conclusive archaeological evidence of a Roman religious building being incorporated into a Christian Church by the 8th century. The possibility of such a building influencing the siting of the parish church of Maidstone is not to be discounted - a Roman coin was found in the churchyard in 1844, and Beale Post, writing in 1847, reports that some fragments of a tessellated pavement were exhibited in Maidstone "a few years before 1845" and said to have been found on the College site, but he was unable to authenticate the claim. Just outside the Conservation Area, on the site of Rootes Garage in Mill Street, a 2nd century pot was discovered in 1937.
- 3.6 If a small town did exist at Maidstone in Roman times there are two possible reasons for its existence. The ragstone deposits in the area are known to have been exploited in Roman times and the product was used extensively in London to which it could have been easily shipped from Maidstone via the Medway and Thames. It is possible that one or both the villas in the vicinity were associated with the quarrying industry rather than agriculture, and the villa off Stone Street is not that far away from the later Coombe Quarry. A small town could well have grown up to house workers and provide services for them, and also to act as a port for shipping the stone, perhaps based around the confluence of the River Len with the Medway (which would have been tidal at the time).
- 3.7 The other possible impetus for the development of a small town may have been to do with facilities provided for the benefit of the cursus publicus or Imperial Post - the official Imperial messenger service. These included inns for overnight accommodation ("mansiones") and posting stations where horses could be changed ("mutationes") and known examples of both types of establishment have given rise to town development elsewhere. Written evidence from the Roman period exists to show that the development of an inn was considered to be a profitable sideline for a villa estate lying near a main road, so it is possible that one of the Maidstone villas may have been tempted to set one up. Perhaps, however, a posting-station is more likely, given the proximity of the major town at Rochester which is more than likely to have possessed at least one inn. Research on Stane Street, the London-Chichester Roman road has found that posting stations were spaced approximately 11 - 13 miles apart - a spacing which tallies quite well with the distance between Rochester and Maidstone.
- 3.8 Evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity in the area is rather more sparse, but this is likely to be the result of the more fugitive nature of any archaeological remains. An Anglo-Saxon cemetery was located in the area around the junction of Wheeler Street and Brewer Street on the far side of the later medieval town from the Conservation Area in the 19th century, but there have been no finds of this period within the vicinity of All Saints Church.

The Development of All Saints Church

- 3.9 It is likely that the Anglo-Saxon period is the period during which development occurred within the Conservation Area which first established the character which is still reflected today. It all revolves around the founding of the original minster church of St. Mary, which occupied the same site as All Saints Church.
- 3.10 The date of this foundation is not known, but the existence of the pre-Conquest minster is certain. In the Domesday Monachorum (which is roughly contemporary with Domesday Book but reflects pre-Conquest arrangements) Maidstone St. Mary's is recorded as being "mother church" to 17 "daughter churches" - interestingly enough, the plotting of these reveals, with minor exceptions, a remarkably similar "territory" to the present Maidstone Borough. Of the 15 recorded pre-Conquest minsters in Kent all were associated with ancient royal estates or estates granted by the crown to the church at a very early period. From the time of St. Augustine onwards, the spread and promotion of Christianity relied heavily on initiatives from individual kings, who would provide land for religious communities to establish themselves - this is definitely attested, for example, at Reculver where St. Mary's Church was founded on royal land within the old Roman fort in AD633. St. Mary's at Maidstone may have been founded at a similar date as it has been noted that the original "mother churches" in Kent were often founded in the 7th century. The dedication to St. Mary may also provide a clue, being one of the three most popular dedications amongst early Saxon churches in Kent. Examples other than Reculver already noted include Folkestone, where a 7th century nunnery was founded, Lyminge founded as an abbey in AD633 and St. Mary in Castro at Dover. At Maidstone, too, the site was typical of an early monastic one - these have been noted to often be close to Roman roads but also to be attracted to semi-secluded sites like peninsulas on the coast or triangular areas of ground formed where rivers meet - the original confluence of the Len and the Medway had just this pattern.
- 3.11 Consideration of the dedication to St. Mary may even cast some light on previous religious practices at the site. Dedications to St. Mary often seem to be connected to holy wells, and one may have existed on the Maidstone site - another holy well is attested later in the Middle Ages at St. Ann's Well, where a chapel was built - this was situated near Springfield. Early 19th century maps show the lane leading south from the southern gateway of the College named as Gorewell Lane, which must relate to some form of spring. Holy wells were often appropriated to the church from pagan religious practices, often involving female watersprites.
- 3.12 Much debate has taken place over the meaning of the place name of Maidstone - the earliest written evidence is c. AD975 to "de maides stana". The most popular interpretation seems to be "the maiden's stone", and it has been postulated that this might relate to a megalith connected with just such a female watersprite. The Pope's early missionaries were certainly encouraged to convert pagan religious sites to Christian use.

- 3.13 If St. Mary's minster was set up during the 7th century it is likely to have been a reasonably substantial masonry building, perhaps utilising building materials cannibalised from nearby Roman buildings, and to have had a ground plan in the form of a rather short-armed cross in common with other Kentish churches of the era such as Reculver. No remains of it have been identified. Most probably it would have been enlarged or rebuilt after the Norman Conquest, and it must have remained an important and prosperous church - in the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* for the See of Canterbury in 1291 it is taxed at £106 13s 4d, more than any other church in the diocese except for Minster in Thanet and Reculver (both 7th century foundations on royal estates). It must also have been a fair size as in 1351 Archbishop Islip held a General Diocesan Synod there to which he summoned all the abbots, priors, heads of chapters, convents and colleges and the clergy of the various towns in the diocese. It also provided the setting for an informal Sunday market which survived until the 15th century.
- 3.14 The church in its present configuration can be accurately dated. On 2 August 1395, Richard II granted a licence to Archbishop Courtenay to establish a college of secular canons at Maidstone and to convert the parish church of St. Mary's to a collegiate church. Work on both seems to have started immediately, but Courtenay died in July 1396 at Maidstone Palace. Building work was completed under Archbishop Arundel. There is a possibility that designs for the church and college may have been produced by the great mason Henry Yeveley who designed the nave at Canterbury Cathedral for Archbishop Courtenay. The building as it exists today is very largely the result of this building campaign: the vestry and room above and the north porch are later additions; and the tower has lost its 172 ft spire, which was struck by lightning and burned down in November 1731.
- 3.15 The church is usually considered to be a complete rebuild from this time, but there has been speculation over the years as to whether any of the previous church was incorporated. Hasted, writing at the end of the 18th century, states that Courtenay rebuilt the chancel and refitted the rest, and points out that his arms are displayed in various places in the chancel but not elsewhere. There is certainly evidence that original plans had to be diluted, presumably for financial reasons, since the evidence in the building shows that the chancel was intended originally to have a stone vault and not a timber roof. Other commentators have noted that although all the windows (except one of earlier tracery pattern) are consistent with a late 14th century date and give an overall feel of uniformity, they do not always fit well into the spaces between buttresses - there is a possibility that Hasted may have been right, and that the nave and aisles of the previous church were retained but re-fenestrated, but only detailed archaeological investigation could resolve the issue.
- 3.16 The church was given a new roof in the 18th or early 19th century with a low pitch and overhanging eaves, but the parapets and original roof form were recreated in the late 19th century by the architect J. L. Pearson. The churchyard has been reduced in size on its north-eastern side since the early 19th century, the corner having been shaved off by the widening/re-alignment of Mill Street.

The Development of the Archbishop's Palace Complex

- 3.17 It is necessary to go back to the Saxon period to consider the history of the Palace. Domesday Book records that the manor of Maidstone was held by the Archbishop of Canterbury and was worth £35 10s (as opposed to £14 immediately pre-Conquest). There were 5 mills, 2 eel fisheries and a church. The Archbishops of Canterbury possessed a number of manors throughout Kent, Sussex and Surrey based about a day's ride apart, and many of which developed palaces (e.g. Charing, Otford, Mayfield and Croydon). Maidstone is one of a group of such manors whose date and circumstances of acquisition are without record, but which are generally considered to have been given to the church of Canterbury by the Kentish Kings prior to AD762 when Kent came under the rule of Mercia. It is likely that it formed part of the same land gift as the church site.
- 3.18 Apart from the fact that it would have acted as the administrative centre for the manor, little is known about the early development of the Palace site. The unroofed building between "The Dungeon" and All Saints Church may date from the late 11th century, but its function is unclear - it could have been part of the manor house, or perhaps a clergy house. The earliest documentary evidence of a palace is not until 1207/08, when it is recorded that William de Cornhill, rector of Maidstone since 1205, gave his mansion as a residence for the archbishops. Since the site is known to have been in the archbishop's ownership since before the Conquest this reference is rather puzzling. A clue may be the dispute at that time between King John and the monks of Canterbury Cathedral over who had the right to appoint the archbishop. From 1199 to 1205, Archbishop Hubert Walter had been chancellor and a close ally of King John. He died on 13th July 1205, and rival appointees to the vacant see were put forward by the King and the monks. Pope Innocent III suggested a third candidate, Stephen Langton, who was, immediately accepted by the monks. King John was incensed, however, and expelled the monks from Canterbury, refused entry to the country for Langton and, by writ issued on 11th July 1207, seized the estates of the see. Maybe the record of the grant of a mansion by William de Cornhill is actually a reference to its return to the archbishop, although Langton was not actually allowed into the country until 1213. It is also interesting to note that William de Cornhill is remembered as a loyal supporter of King John during these troubled years and was rewarded later with the bishopric of Lichfield. He may have been related to Reginald de Cornhill, Sheriff of Kent, a powerful merchant much involved in royal naval matters. The appointment to the nearby rectory of Maidstone may have been a political one.
- 3.19 The earliest extant building on the site today, other than the late 11th century min already referred to, is the solar where dendrochronological analysis of the timbers has given a date range of 1315 - 1344. The early Palace appears to have been in a dilapidated state by 1348 when Archbishop Ufford is reputed to have pulled down and started rebuilding on a larger scale, work being continued by Archbishop Islip. The "Dungeon" and the gatehouse probably date from this period. Archbishop Courtenay was extremely fond of the Maidstone Palace and is recorded as building substantially here between 1381 and 1397. Between the 14th and 16th centuries the archbishops often resided at the Palace for several weeks at a time, and royalty was also known to stay there (e.g. Henry VI in March 1438). The Palace may have been damaged in the Peasants Revolt of 1381, when rebels certainly entered Maidstone and killed animals in the archbishop's park which lay on the opposite side of the Medway.

- 3.20 Further works were carried out by Archbishop Morton, who is reputed to have "greatly augmented and beautified" it in the years 1486 - 1501. Timbers in the south wing roof have been dated to 1491. The magnificent stables building is also of this date. It has been suggested that this building may be the work of one of the greatest late Gothic masons, John Wastell, the designer of the Bell Harry Tower at Canterbury Cathedral for Morton in 1494-1497.
- 3.21 Further extensions, largely at the north end, were carried out by Archbishop Warham in the 1520's, but in 1537 Archbishop Cranmer gave the Palace to Henry VIII. The Palace was used as a house by Sir Thomas Wyatt (of Allington Castle), but following his execution returned to the crown in 1554. A subsequent grant by Queen Elizabeth I to Alexander Parker describes "all her old and ruinous house and capital mansion called the Old Palace in Maidstone, and all houses, edifices, buildings, barns, stables, dovehouses, orchards, apple yards, gardens, ponds, watercourses and river's banks; and also two pieces of land called Palace Mead, and a dovehouse, and Palace Pound and Palace Close".
- 3.22 In 1569 it reverted again to the Crown, but by 1581 was in the ownership of the Astley family being conveyed from Thomas Astley of Dartford (a Privy Councillor) to his brother John of Otterden, Master of the Queen's Jewels. At this time the stables building was described as being a malthouse. The Astleys were responsible for adding the Renaissance facade which still forms the main front of the Palace today, and the family remained in ownership until 1719. They were presumably responsible for the demolition of many parts of the Palace courtyard, and damage in the Civil War Battle of Maidstone in 1648 is possible given that the Parliamentary army held Royalist prisoners in the church and that Sir Jacob Astley, the then owner, had been a prominent Royalist soldier (although having been captured at Stow-on-the-Wold in 1646 he had been released on parole under the obligation of not bearing arms again against Parliament and therefore took no part in the 1648 Kentish insurrection).
- 3.23 The new owner in 1719 was Lord Romney of Mote Park, who it is recorded pulled down the Palace's private chapel circa 1730. The Romney family sold the Palace in 1829, and by 1887 it was in decay and proposed for demolition and replacement by warehouses and cottages. However, a public subscription raised money for its purchase as a memorial to Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee to be used for civic activities by the people of Maidstone - the ragstone arch entrance to the Palace Gardens from the riverside path dates from this acquisition - and in 1904 ownership passed to Maidstone Corporation. The Corporation subsequently bought the stables in 1913, which were then used as a small munitions factory during World War I. Its current use as a carriage museum dates from 1946. The main Palace buildings meanwhile were used for a succession of Council offices after substantial alterations were carried out, particularly to the river front, in 1912. Following major repairs in the early 1990's, part of the Palace building was briefly used as a Heritage Centre but this was unsuccessful. It is now used for meetings and functions and is home to the town's Register Office.
- 3.24 The Ground Floor was officially opened in 1946 by the Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Sir Leigh Ashton. The Upper Floor was opened in May, 1951, by Her Royal Highness Princess Marie Louise.

The Development of The College of All Saints

- 3.25 The College of All Saints was founded by Archbishop Courtenay under the licence granted by Richard II in 1395, but the buildings, although started immediately, were not completed until after Courtenay's death in 1396. In fact, building may have continued for the best part of 30 years, as records show that a mason called William Hille was paid £13 6s 8d for building a wall between the College and the Medway in 1424-25 - presumably the precinct boundary wall which still exists. Henry Yeveley has been linked with the design of the college, but it may have been the work of his partner Stephen Late.
- 3.26 The college was established for a Master and 24 chaplains, who were granted the revenues of the hospital at Newark (St. Peter's on the other side of the Medway) and the tithes of chapels at Linton, East Farleigh and Sutton-by-Dover. In effect the foundation of the college meant the closure of the Newark hospital, and the alms previously paid to the poor at the hospital were to be paid at the College. The rectory of Twyidstone was also appropriated to the College - the Master's House is in an earlier architectural style than the rest of the College, so was this the old rectory?.
- 3.27 The College was for secular canons who ministered to the outside world and lived under less strict rules than monks and friars. They held services daily in All Saints Church. The first Master was John Wootton, but the most famous incumbent was William Grocyn who became Master in 1506. He was a learned man who had travelled to Italy and was most proficient in Latin and Greek which he had taught at Oxford University "in a method unattempted before" (as quoted by Hasted). He was the tutor and friend of Erasmus.
- 3.28 The College was dissolved in 1546 and the lands passed to the Crown. In 1549 it was sold to Lord Cobham of Cobham Hall near Gravesend, and was described at the time as "The entire site of the late College of All Saints, in Maidstone, with all its rights and appurtenances; three barns and two orchards adjacent to the said site, consisting of 3 acres; and all the houses, structures, garden grounds, pools, fish-ponds, and c., with the precinct of the said College, and all the lead in and upon the roofs of the said buildings". The specific reference to lead in this sale agreement suggests that at least some of the buildings may have subsequently been unroofed and the lead sold for scrap, and this may account for the loss of buildings which might normally have been expected to exist in a College, such as a chapel, chapter house and library.
- 3.29 The Cobham family and its heirs remained in possession until 1697, although the College seems to have been much neglected from the mid 17th century. In 1697 it was purchased by Sir Robert Marsham (later Earl of Romney), and by the time Hasted was writing a century later it was described as being entirely used as a dwelling. Beale Post writing 50 years later describes the main range of buildings running west from the gatehouse as being in agricultural use, specifically for hop-drying. Kilns had been constructed within this range and a long lean-to stowage added to the rear. A drawing by George Shepherd published in 1829 shows this range with five oast cowls ranged along its roof. This was all cleared away by the Earl of Romney in the late 1840's and the buildings restored, a new link being built between the Master's House and the gatehouse range to replace a missing building. At the same time a large barn and a building to the east of the gatehouse were demolished.

- 3.30 In 1900 the main surviving buildings at the north end of the precinct were put up for sale and were bought by Mr. F. S. W. Cornwallis for £3,800 "for the sole purpose of preventing it being acquired for commercial use or threatened with destruction". Subsequently the buildings were used as the Church of England Middle Class School for Boys. The College Farm which occupied the southern end of the site survived until the 1920's, although parts of its site had been sold for the creation of the Cutbush Almshouses of 1905 and the Monckton Drill Hall of 1903.
- 3.31 The College buildings came on the market again in 1949 when they were bought by Sir Garrard Tyrwhitt-Drake (many times mayor of Maidstone) who presented them to the town and passed them into the ownership of the Borough Council. The Master's House was restored in 1957 and subsequently occupied by the Kent Music School, who have only recently vacated the building. The Gatehouse Range is occupied by the All Saints Parish Room.

The Development of Other Areas

- 3.32 The three buildings whose history has so far been outlined have been the major shapers of the development and character of the Conservation Area. It remains to consider the various streets and their evolution as well as other important features within the area.

Knightrider Street

- 3.33 This appears to be an east-west route of considerable antiquity, descending to a probable river crossing point by ford or ferry which predates the current bridge site. It is first documented in the early 17th century, but its name must refer to the retinues of the archbishops or their noble visitors, and therefore suggests that it was the main approach to the Palace - further argument in favour of its ancient importance as a major route. The site currently occupied by the Edwardian Baptist Church has previously been occupied by a house called Old Court which in the 15th century belonged to the See of Canterbury, by a Bluecoat School and workhouse in the 18th century, and a pub called The Globe demolished when the road junction was widened in the later 20th century.

Mill Street

- 3.34 This is not a proper street at all as it bisects the original courtyard of the Archbishop's Palace, linking it to the probably 12th century planned town centre developed by the archbishops which shifted the focus of the settlement. Despite widening which involved the loss of part of All Saints Churchyard it still follows an awkward route through the Conservation Area but carries all traffic entering the town from the south and south-east. Its name reflects the former presence of two mills where it crosses the River Len - these mills survived until 1903 when the road was widened and straightened to accommodate trams. The grounds of one of the mills were incorporated into a new extension to the Palace Gardens opened in July 1904 - this part of the garden was lost again in 1964 with the construction of Bishop's Way.

College Road

- 3.35 This road was not built until 1863 when it was cut through the precinct of the College of All Saints, whose boundary was originally formed by Priory Road (known as College Lane in 1848 and Stoney Lane before that). The Church of England School was built in 1870 on the land between the new road and Priory Road.

The New Burial Ground

- 3.36 The burial ground lying behind the Archbishops' Stables is described as 'new' on Brown's Map of Maidstone published in 1823 (surveyed 1821) and was presumably created as an overflow for the crowded All Saints Churchyard. Its current character as public open space dates from 1927 when the paths were laid out, although the 144 gravestones then existing were not moved to their current peripheral locations until a later date

Bridges

- 3.37 Other important features of the setting of the Conservation Area are the bridges. The main town bridge, rebuilt in 1877/79 to designs by Sir Joseph Bazalgette replaced the medieval bridge which was probably built in the mid 14th century (a silver coin of Edward III was found within the structure when it was demolished). This original bridge was probably built by the archbishop to facilitate access to the High street market area and to divert people from the previous crossing point by the church. A small bridge of similar date crossing the Len still exists in part beneath the modern structure carrying Bishops Way.
- 3.38 Access to the Conservation Area from the west has recently been improved by the construction of the award-winning pedestrian bridge to Lockmeadow - [the former parklands of the archbishops] which re-instates the original crossing point of the Medway.
- 3.39 The rivers have also been important defining points in the creation of the character and development of the Conservation Area. The main historical change regarding the Medway is that it ceased to be tidal after the construction of Allington Lock. The Len has been much altered by engineering works largely concerned with the watermills which it previously serviced, and the section of it dropping down a cascade and under the footpath through Palace Gardens is an entirely modern creation associated with the construction of Bishops Way.

4 The Buildings within the Conservation Area

- 4.1 The objective of this section is to describe and analyse the nature and function of the buildings. Where appropriate comments on the current condition of some buildings is included, with ideas for future uses. Requirements for a sustainable future and development is set out in a second report (All Saints Conservation Area Study).

Archbishops Palace

Description

- 4.2 This is the centrepiece of the area. The present Palace building represents the Archbishop's private accommodation within the much larger complex. The Mediaeval building is representative of a long period of remodelling and alteration. The timbers in the Palace Solar date from 1324 making it the earliest of the existing buildings. The Cranmer room was built in 1535 and is the last of the Palace buildings erected by the archbishops.
- 4.3 The evidence on the site suggests that the Astleys, over a period of time, totally remodelled the buildings to suit the lifestyle of the 16th/17th century secular gentry. The Palace, was transformed from a Mediaeval design with overhanging eaves and a lofty great Hall, to a symmetrical Renaissance stately home with stone parapets and a classically proportioned, ceilinged Hall. This largely established the present character of the elevations to the courtyard.
- 4.4 A second remodelling occurred in the early 18th century, when it was in the ownership of Lord Romney, to suit the Georgian taste. Sash windows were inserted and alterations made to the interiors. The walls were lined and dado panels and panelled doors put into the larger rooms.
- 4.5 The Palace was sold in 1869 and passed through several hands and became dilapidated, until 1887 when it was purchased for the town by the Trustees of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. A programme of repairs was started which reinstated some of the Mediaeval features such as stone framed casement windows and, went further, to invent details like the great oriel which is the most striking feature of the river frontage.
- 4.6 The cycles of decay and remodelling left the building without any structural integrity so that as the timbers rotted, progressive collapse had occurred. This continued until 1986 when the Engineers certifying the building's structure could no longer permit the use of the building. Shores and support scaffolds were inserted to stabilise the situation. Its restoration took 3 years with a contract value of just under £3 million. The project was supported by an English Heritage Grant of £445,200.00.
- 4.7 The Archbishops Palace was officially re-opened by Dr. Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the 9 October 1992.
- 4.8 The Building is listed as Grade I. The list description is set out in an Appendix.

Construction

- 4.9 The Palace is a mixture of ragstone and oak frame construction under a peg tile roof. Structurally the Palace has 8 separate buildings within the enclosing walls. The refurbishment has ensured that the building is now structurally sound, a structural steel and concrete skeleton was introduced and some 70 No. piles used to support the new and existing structure.

Present Usage

- 4.10 The building houses the Maidstone Register Office on the ground floor. The first floor is used for functions, and a cafe.

Archbishops Stables

Description

- 4.11 The building was built as stables with storage or lodgings over, in the late 15th century. It was never a Tythe Barn, it formed the eastern range of the outer courtyard of the Palace complex. In 1538 it was sold to Henry VIII, along with the rest of the complex. The stables became separated from the Palace and in different ownership. It was eventually acquired by the Council and after the Second World War repaired to house the Tyrwhitt-Drake Museum of Canaries.
- 4.12 The Building is listed as Grade I and is scheduled as an Ancient Monument. The list description and the monument description are set out in an Appendix.

Construction

- 4.13 The building is built of Kentish Rag and is a rectangular, two storied structure with a roof of eleven bays. On the west side - the sixth bay from the south - is a two-storied porch with an external stone staircase. This is probably later than the main building as it is not squarely placed against it. It contains a hoist with a wheel having wooden cogs. The remaining brickwork appears to have been inserted shortly before the First World War. The western face of the Stables has doorways with four-centred arches and stops at the base. These include the doorway on the first floor which now leads into the porch and is rebated for a door on the inner side.
- 4.14 The roof is crown-posted with later side purlins with braces. The span of the roof is wide and the crownposts are tall with right-angle braces, two to the collar purlin and two to the tiebeam. There are jig holes at the rafter bases, half and bridled scarf joints on the collar purlin and lapped dovetails with the collars. The connection between the wall plates carrying the common rafters and the tie beams has largely been lost and the roof is spreading as a result.
- 4.15 Externally, at the northern end of the building, there is the trace of a chimney stack. Internally and confirming this are the remains of two fireplaces, of Tudor type. There was an internal staircase in the north west corner. The porch still retains in the spandrels of its external doorway the remnants of a shield which possibly bore an archbishop's arms but which now has almost weathered away. The roof is of Kentish fired-clay peg-tiles and it was last comprehensively re-laid in the early 1960's. The elm guttering dates from 1964, and was overhauled in 1995, though there are references to earlier guttering fixings.

Condition of the Building

- 4.16 A structural survey by Evans and Langford was carried out in January, 1985. Following this internal shoring was introduced into the building to stop immediate danger of collapse. The main areas of concern are decay of the roof wall plate and truss beam ends causing movement in the roof and outward pressure on the walls. Secondly, decay in the porch timber frame is causing instability and the possibility of a brick panels falling out. A temporary holding operation was carried out in 1998 to hold the panels in with cleats.

Refurbishment

- 4.17 Ball-park budget estimates have been prepared for repair and refurbishment. These suggest that a full scheme would cost in the region of £1,000,000. No instruction has been given and the refurbishment has not been committed in any programme. This is because the time tabling of the refurbishment is dependent upon the re-housing of the can iages and finding a new use.

Present Situation

- 4.18 The building houses the Tyrvvhitt-Drake Museum of Carriages. It is considered to provide an adequate environment for storing the carriages if minor environmental improvements are carried out. However, the building does not meet the display requirements of a modern museum, nor does it provide the visitor services needed to promote and interpret the caffriages to the full. Because of this alternative locations for the museum are being considered.

Archbishops Palace Gatehouse (Tourist Information Centre)

Description

- 4.19 The Gatehouse is the remains of the two storey porters lodgings attached to a gate of the outer Courtyard of the Archbishops Palace. It has been dated to the mid 14th century which suggests that it was built by Archbishop !slip in 1355. The Gatehouse at Charing Archbishop's Palace may be a good indication of the original form of the building.
- 4.20 After the palace passed into secular hands the Gatehouse would have formed part of the outbuildings, possibly a cottage; no "Gatehouse" appears on later inventories . The evidence in the roof suggests the building was derelict for a period and was re-roofed in the mid to late 17th century, possibly after the civil war.
- 4.21 It came into Council ownership along with the palace and was used as the Weights and Measures office prior to the current use as a Tourist Information Centre. The building was refurbished for the TIC in 1996.
- 4.22 The Gatehouse is listed as Grade II and as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The list description and the monument description are set out in an Appendix.

Construction

- 4.23 The building is constructed in ragstone under a Kent peg tile roof. The walls rise direct from the level of the river Len and are battered towards the base suggesting that the river originally lapped against them. The roof structure is in two levels. The upper room is made-up from the reused timbers from two mediaeval Elm roofs built in an in-line purlin style, The timbers show signs of weathering so must have been exposed for some time before reuse. The lower roof is a Victorian King-post trussed roof. This suggests that the building has been adapted several times since the gated entrance to the Courtyard was demolished; it also has modern windows to the south and west elevations

Present Situation

- C //+ The building houses the Maidstone Tourist Information Centre.

Current Proposals

- 4.25 The Long Term Strategy Plan agreed by members was to move the TIC into the refurbished Stable building and to use the Gatehouse as a Heritage and Craft Shop serving the refurbished Palace Courtyard.

The Archbishops Palace Undercroft

Description

- 4.26 The building by its location would seem to have formed part of the service courtyard to the Palace, being part of a range of buildings between the Palace and the Church. There is no documentary evidence for the use of this building as a Prison or "Dungeon". An 1850's deed plan refers to it as "The Old Brew House", and a use is evident in the building.
- 4.27 The building appears to be the remains of the Undercroft of a two storey building aligned east west similar to the Church, not the Palace. The walls of the ruined section which adjoin the Church contain Caen stone and tufa features in the ragstone which is partially laid in herringbone fashion. These features suggest a date of circa 1100 AD which would make these walls the earliest known above-ground construction in Maidstone (see Rev. G. M. Livett, Arch.Cant. XXIV 91-95). These walls are the remains of an earlier two storeyed building but running north-south. The main walls and vaults of the undercroft are 14th century, similar to the earlier phases of the Palace. There is no evidence at present of when the roof and thickening of the north wall were constructed. However the roof is similar to the late 11th century Gatehouse roof.
- 4.28 The building was acquired for the council along with the Palace in 1887 and at present has walled gardens back and front. An interesting feature of the building is the carved stone above the doorway. This is most likely a corbel bracket salvaged from the original Medieval Hall.
- 4.29 The Building is listed as Grade II* and is on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk register. The list description is set out in an Appendix.

Construction

- 4.30 The Undercroft building has 2 bays of quadripartite ribbed vaults on thick ragstone walls, buttressed against the flow of the river. The independently spanning roof has 3 Queen post trusses made of reused (possibly Elm) timbers. The removal of the weight of the upper storey has allowed the walls to spread under the outward thrust of the vaults. This has caused the 'flattening' of the vaults making them unstable. The Western vault was noted as defective in the 1930's when steel ties were put in to support the western truss. It probably collapsed in the 1950's but it had certainly gone by the late 1970's when a survey was undertaken.

Current Situation

- 4.31 The building is in an advanced state of decay and collapse. One vault has fallen and has been lost. Tie rods were inserted in the 1930's to hold the roof, but the eastern vault is also propped with scaffold to stop it falling. The roof trusses show signs of decay which is to be expected in a building open to the elements.
- 4.32 The building is boarded up but needs constant inspection to check for vandalism. The building is not a comfortable refuge for vagrants but is in a vulnerable location. Also the items from the Palace refurbishment stored in the building do have a value.
- 4.33 A Listed Building application was approved on 2 May 1991 and renewed in September 1998 for the following works:
1. Repairs to the building fabric including supporting the remaining vault which is structurally unstable due to the spreading of the walls.
 2. Renewing the decayed and damaged joinery and glazing the windows.
 3. Modifying one window to form a door with a level threshold for wheelchair access.
 4. The introduction of services, lighting, heating and finishes.
- 4.34 The estimated cost of repairs is in the region of £450,000 to £600,000 dependant upon the level of facilities required.

The College Complex

- 4.35 This group of buildings is treated together because any longer term plans should relate to the group as a whole. The group comprises: The College Gateway, Parish Room, College Tower, Masters House and Masters Tower. The Southern Gate is treated separately only because of its location.

Description of the Complex

- 4.36 The College Complex of buildings is another homogeneous group of ragstone buildings. It is now difficult to determine the exact original form of the buildings from their present appearance.
- 4.37 Stuart Rigold described the College buildings as follows:

'There now remains the great north gatehouse, its facade and parapet unrelieved by any projections; a gatehouse-range, the parish room containing a hall and 'service', the hall having two tiers of windows, and evident once a gallery along the north (these would seem to have served some function from the dissolved hospital, rather than as the fellows' commons); a strong angle-tower and a wing returning towards the master's house, all in the same austere style, with provision for a pentice from the master's house to the gatehouse; the Master's House, a splendid late example of a first-floor hall, stylistically a shade earlier and less austere than the rest, possibly a legacy from Ipslip; it has a cross-wing with a projecting chapel, utterly plain, but very fine, trussed-rafter roofs, and ogee-lights to the Undercroft, but there is some post-dissolution work and most of the other openings have been altered; a little gatehouse, with stair-turret, to the master's enclosure; ruins of a south gatehouse, also on a grand scale, leading to an outer court and originally flanked by barns, etc. Most of the wide area between the gatehouses is occupied by recent buildings and car parks; it may be presumed that it once held a quadrangle of fellows' lodgings and a common hall commensurate with what remains.'

- 4.38 The whole of the complex was altered in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Master's House was repaired in 1957 and again in the early 1980's. The Gateway was repaired in the late 1960's and, again, in the early 1990's with works to the floors. None of these later works were a comprehensive refurbishment and the buildings remain in need of work.

Present Situation

- 4.39 All the buildings have been tenanted to a variety of organisations.

The College Gateway

Description

- 4.40 A three storey Gatehouse in ragstone with a vaulted carriageway and large Hall spanning the carriageway.
- 4.41 The Gateway is listed as Grade I. The list description is set out in an Appendix.

Construction

- 4.42 The carriageway vault is in stone with ragstone mouldings bearing on thick ragstone walls. The intermediate floors and pitched roof are in timber. The Building was repaired and re-decorated, in the early 1990's when the majority of the works were repairs to a collapsed floor and tying the vault to stop spreading. But the cyclical maintenance works were also included, i.e. roof leadwork, gutters, downpipes and stonework.

Present Situation

- 4.43 The West Side and the Upper Hall is occupied by the Freemasons. The occupancy by Douglas Lodge will continue. There would be considerable access problems to be overcome in finding a new use. The Eastern rooms currently used by the TIC have been suggested for use by the Church's Parish Office. This is currently in the school. The Vestibule into the Parish room on the ground floor east is in need of remodelling.

The Parish Room

Description

- 4.44 The present building is a flat ceilinged hall with ragstone walls and a crown-post roof. How much is mediaeval and how much 19th or 20th century restoration or alteration it is currently difficult to tell. A modern suspended ceiling was inserted in the late 1960's. It is now somewhat run down internally. Externally work is programmed to overcome the current window problems and ivy damage.
- 4.45 The Parish Room is listed as Grade I along with the College Tower. The list description is set out in an Appendix.

Present Situation

- 4.46 The current occupant is the All Saints Church who refer to the room as the College Room. It has been suggested that a first floor could be inserted and that access to the Tower be created, but listed building consent does not exist for this and any alterations should be dependant on an archaeological interpretation of the fabric.

College Tower

Description

- 4.47 The Tower itself and that part of the Parish Room building which has a first floor inserted may be considered together. The building is of ragstone construction with timber floors and crown post oak roof. It is in reasonable condition internally but needs some work to stonework externally, some work to the windows is programmed.
- 4.48 The College Tower is listed as Grade I along with the Parish Room. The list description is set out in an Appendix.

Present Situation

- 4.49 Formerly occupied by the Kent Music Centre but now vacant.

Master's House

- 4.50 This is also a ragstone building under a timber roof, but unlike the other buildings in the complex is not a single phase structure. It has been developed and evolved over a considerable time and like the other medieval buildings needs a detailed investigation to determine its history. An ongoing programme of monitoring is being carried out on a crack in the south wall. This may be indicative of structural problems in the south end of the building. The interior is rundown and in need of a full refurbishment programme to bring the building up to its full potential.
- 4.51 The Master's House is listed as Grade II* and is named as The College on the list. The list description is set out in an Appendix.

Present Situation

- 4.52 Formerly occupied by the Kent Music Centre but now vacant. Refurbishment is planned for the near future.

Master's Tower

Description

- 4.53 A small gatehouse which probably gave access to the Master's private courtyard and adjoining buildings which formerly were part of the College farm. The vault arches have been infilled. The building is considerably rundown internally and the entrance range appears to be in a poor structural condition although it has not been surveyed in detail. There is a modern flat-roofed sectional building between the Gateway and the river which detracts from the settings of the listed buildings and the character of the conservation area.
- 4.54 The Master's Tower is listed as Grade II. The list description is set out in an Appendix.

Present Situation

- 4.55 Occupied by the Sea Scouts. There are no current plans.

All Saints Church

Description

- 4.56 This is the largest and most prominent building in the Conservation Area. The Church was begun in 1395 by Archbishop Courtenay as a Collegiate church replacing the Saxon St. Mary's church. Built of Kentish ragstone ashlar with stone buttresses the church has a crenellated parapet and south-west tower. The spire was struck by lightning in 1730 and never rebuilt. 6 bay nave with clerestory and north and south aisles. Wooden roofs by Pearson, 1886. The south chapel was originally the Chapel of the Fraternity of Corpus Christi. This is considered to be the grandest perpendicular church in Kent.
- 4.57 The All Saints Church is listed as Grade A (Ecclesiastical listing - equivalent to Grade I). The list description is set out in an Appendix.

Current Situation

- 4.58 The size and importance of the building imposes a substantial and expensive maintenance responsibility on the congregation and some work is currently outstanding.

Maidstone Baptist Church

Description

- 4.59 The original part of the building is of ragstone with a low tower. It is an attractive design of Edwardian date in an Arts and Crafts Gothic style, and the tower is an important townscape feature. Recent church hall extensions in brick are unattractive and the conservation area would benefit from a redevelopment of these extensions.

All Saints C.E. Primary School

Description

- 4.60 Built circa 1870 of Kentish Ragstone in a Gothic style with lancet windows.
- 4.61 All Saints C E Primary School is listed as Grade II. The list description and the monument description are set out in an Appendix.

Cutbush Almshouses

Description

- 4.62 Early 20th century almshouses arranged in groups of 3 separate buildings on 3 sides of a Courtyard. Nos. 2-12 are of 2 storeys Kentish ragstone. Tiled roof with 5 clustered chimney stacks. 6 gables having fretted bargeboards and pseudo timber -framing and brick finials. Central stone gable with stone finial and initials and kneelers.
- 4.63 Windows are 4 light mullioned and transomed windows. Central stone archway with hood moulding above. 6 other mullioned and transomed windows with hood moulding and 2 doorcases set in the arches. Nos. 14-24 and Nos. 26-36 are similar but without the central stone archway.
- 4.64 The almshouses are listed as Grade II. The list description is set out in an Appendix.

Southern Gateway

Description

- 4.65 Originally the south gateway to the College Complex. 14th century, built of Kentish ragstone the details of string courses and cill are similar to the Parish room but not the College Gateway. It currently consists of a high pointed carriage arch and pedestrian arch to the west of it, with a wall on each side forming a letter H. Up to the late 19th century it had two barns either side which used the side walls as flank walls. The ruined gate between them gave access to the farmyard. When originally built the gateway was two storied but more similar to Charing Archbishop's Palace than the main College Gateway. The roof, upper story and vault have been lost but sufficient evidence remains to enable its original design to be projected.
- 4.66 The Gateway is listed as Grade II and is a scheduled ancient monument. The list description and the monument description are set out in an Appendix.

Present Situation

- 4.67 The Gateway and garden are to be incorporated into the Rose Trail. A structural monitoring programme is being undertaken to determine the stability of the structure pending a full regime of repairs for which grant aid is being sought. The repair of the building is currently being detailed awaiting the outcome of the grant application.

5 Statutory Listed Buildings and Ancient Monuments

- 5.1 The majority of buildings within the Conservation Area are protected by Listing, and some are also Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Full listing descriptions are given in an Appendix but the protected buildings and structures can be briefly described as follows:

Gateway and Wall to Palace Gardens (from Riverside Walk): a ragstone wall and round-arched gateway dated 1888. Listed Grade II.

Wall to north-west of Archbishop's Palace: a medieval ragstone wall with a niche. Listed Grade II.

The Archbishop's Palace: this is the main residential block of the medieval Palace. A large ragstone and timber-framed building of 14th-16th century date with later additions and early 20th century restorations. Listed Grade I.

Wall to the east of Archbishop's Palace: a medieval ragstone wall. Listed Grade II.

"The "Dungeons" at Archbishop's Palace: this building is more accurately described as an undercroft, and formerly constituted part of a service range to The Palace. The major part is of 14th century date, but an adjoining ruined part appears to be of early Norman date. Listed Grade II*.

The Gate House: this small ragstone building occupied by the Tourist Information Centre formed part of the Palace courtyard adjacent to the entrance from Mill Street. It is of 13th or 14th century date. Listed Grade II and Scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

The Len Bridge: this lies beneath the modern Bishops Way/Mill Street road bridge adjacent to the Gate House. It is a 14th century stone bridge of 2 pointed arches. Listed Grade II and Scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

The Archbishop's Stables: a large and impressive ragstone building of 15th century date, formerly part of the Palace Courtyard. Listed Grade I and Scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

Parish Church of All Saints: large and impressive collegiate church built 1395-1398, possibly to the design or with the assistance of the great master mason Henry Yevele. Listed Grade A (equivalent Grade I).

Wall to north and west of All Saints Church: medieval ragstone wall incorporating steps to riverside. Listed Grade II.

The College Gateway and the College Tower: This is the surviving NW range of the College, comprising the main gatehouse, refectory/dormitory and infirmary range, and the River Tower. An impressive ragstone building of 1395-1398, also possibly associated with Henry Yevele. Listed Grade I.

The College (Master's House): 14th century, probably earlier than the rest of the College buildings. Altered in 18th century and in modern times. Ragstone. Listed Grade II*.

The Master's Tower: also part of the College, built 1396-1398. A small gatehouse (now blocked) of ragstone). Listed Grade II.

The Cutbush Almshouses - Early 20th century almshouses. Listed Grade II.

Ruined Gateway: the remains of the southern gateway to The College, 1395-1398. Ragstone. Listed Grade II.

All Saints Church of England Primary School: a ragstone Victorian Gothic School built circa 1870. Listed Grade II.

- 5.2 In addition to the individual listed buildings remaining from The College, the whole of its site as far east as College Road is also Scheduled as an Ancient Monument.
- 5.3 All Listed Buildings are of course protected from demolition or alteration (external, internal) without the prior grant of Listed Building Consent from the Council. Schedule G Ancient Monuments are similarly protected under different legislation and the necessary Scheduled Monument Consent has to be obtained from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. In the case of any overlap between the two systems of protection, status as a Scheduled Monument takes precedence.
- 5.4 There are no "locally listed" buildings within the Conservation Area, although the Baptist Church in Knighttrider Street is considered to have group value and to be an important townscape feature.

6 Archaeological Significance

- 6.1 It is apparent from the preceding historical analysis that the whole Conservation Area is of the highest archaeological significance and potential.
- 6.2 The church would benefit from archaeological analysis of the standing structure as well as investigation around and beneath it. Russell, writing in the late 19th century, notes that the churchyard and adjoining land formerly contained many ancient foundations, particularly to the east of the church, and when the church was restored in the same period and new floors and heating installed, large pier bases were discovered on a slightly different alignment from the current church as well as medieval floor tiles of 13th and 14th century date.
- 6.3 Some archaeological work has been done on the Palace site but has not been fully published. The potential exists for the location and interpretation of the various lost ranges of the complex which will give a greater understanding of its development and influence on the morphology of the area. The lodgings range on the south of the courtyard was encountered in drain digging in 1805 and has been relocated in recent years.
- 6.4 At the College site there is potential for locating the lost ranges of buildings. Beale Post mentions traces of a building encountered in 1845 to the east of the gatehouse, and also evidence of a further range at the south end of the Master's House -- such an additional wing can actually be discerned on the Buck Brothers early 18th century panorama of Maidstone. Evidence of former farm buildings may also exist.
- 6.5 Throughout the Conservation Area potential may also exist for the archaeological survival of evidence of pre-Medieval features, particularly of the Roman period. Evidence of the Saxon development of the area may also exist, particularly on the church and palace sites.

7 Character of the Conservation Area

Introduction

- 7.1 Much of the medieval Archiepiscopal complex remains to this day and forms one of the best groups of medieval buildings within Kent. It is essentially this collection of buildings associated with the Palace, All Saints Church, and The College which gives the Conservation Area its character, and indeed its *raison d'être*, although late additions such as the Edwardian Cutbush Almshouses and All Saints Primary School (which lie within the original college precincts) also make a valuable contribution, as does the Arts and Crafts Gothic Baptist Church of 1907 in Knightrider Street.
- 7.2 The Conservation Area is unusual in the consistency of building materials exhibited. All of the above buildings together with various inter-linking walls, are of local silver y grey ragstone usually used in conjunction with red/orange clay plain tiles. The only elements which depart from these materials are the recent Carriage House in Mill Street (of pale creamy yellow brick) and the modern extensions to the Baptist Church in red and brown brick. There is also a small building used by the Sea Cadets to the rear of the Master's Tower which is a modern sectional building in unsympathetic materials, but this does not from a prominent feature within the Conservation Area.
- 7.3 The Conservation Area boundary has been largely drawn to coincide with the original precincts of the Palace and the College, although an area of modern development in College Avenue has been excluded and the boundary has been tailored to the north and east to follow the edge of the modern Bishops Way and its projected extension as the Southern Approach All Saint's Link Road. There is a case for reviewing this boundar- ' This will be explored in a second report (All Saints Conservation Area Study).

Townscape Analysis

Approaches

- 7.4 The Conservation Area can be approached from the north via the Undercliff (Riverside Walk) and along Mill Street, from the east by Palace Avenue and Knightrider Street, and from the South by College Road and the Riverside Walk. Although itself outside the Conservation Area, the river is of the greatest visual importance and contributes much to the character of the area. Views across the river from Lockmeadow are important, even more so now that the new footbridge gives pedestrian access into the heart of the Conservation Area.
- 7.5 Looking from Maidstone Bridge or the new footbridge the classic view of the Palace is revealed, with the main building rising sheer and cliff-like from the river with the tower of All Saints Church visible behind or to the side. Trees are important in these views, particularly those either side of the gateway into Palace Gardens which give foreground interest and frame the view and those which line the Riverside Walk below the College which , because of the bend of the river, effectively terminate the vista from the roadbridge, and are prominent in the foreground from the footbridge.

- 7.6 The other approach from the north via Mill street, only reveals glimpses of the major buildings, with the upper parts of the tower of All Saints Church forming a focal point when viewed from the junction with High Street. The small-scale gatehouse housing the Tourist Information Centre is visible but is only a relatively minor incident in the view because of its apparently low height. The roadside wall masks its true height. At closer range it is balanced by an end-on view of the magnificent Archbishop's Stables, but the view is now closed by the line of mature trees along the boundary between the Palace and All Saints Church, through which can be seen glimpses of part of the north elevation of the church itself. From the relatively confined nature of Mill Street there is an immediate contrast with the spaciousness of the layout of the Old Palace courtyard.
- 7.7 Palace Avenue, a modern road constructed in the early 20th century, forms perhaps the least attractive entrance to the Conservation Area. Trees in Palace Gardens form a minor focal point, but the view is dominated by traffic engineering paraphernalia at the busy junction with Mill Street and Bishops Way. The Archbishop's Stables are seen obliquely across a small car park which also houses temporary public lavatories, and at the junction itself The Gatehouse comes into view. To the north is the River Len forming a former mill pond which is largely hidden by the road engineering.
- 7.8 In contrast, the other approach from the east is one of the best. Knight rider Street is probably the oldest street in the Conservation Area, forming as it does the approach to the original river crossing point (by ford or ferry) between All Saints Church and The College. The tower of All Saints Church forms an effective focal point, revealed gradually because of the bend of Knight rider Street, and in the foreground the Baptist Church with its less prominent tower acts as an effective foil on the right hand (north) side of the road. To the left the space is effectively enclosed by the attractive tall ragstone wall which currently encloses a modern office building but which formerly formed the garden wall of a fine 13th century house, originally the vicarage, which was unfortunately demolished in the early 1960's. This important townscape feature is a listed structure but lies beyond the Conservation Area boundary.
- 7.9 College Road forms the main approach from the South. It is a relatively modern road, having been constructed in the mid 19th century - the earlier route in this direction was via Priory Road (known as College Lane in 1848) and College Walk. From College Road there is no strong focal point to close the view, but the Southern Gateway and garden and the Edwardian buildings of the Cutbush Almshouses and All Saints Primary School of the 1870's form flanking incidents. Street trees on the west side of the road are an important feature on this approach, giving something of the feel of an avenue, and could be reinforced by additional planting with advantage.
- 7.10 Probably the least frequented entry to the Conservation Area is via the Riverside Walk accessed from College Avenue. This is not signposted from either College Road or College Avenue, and is therefore probably not as well known as it might be. The entrance to the path from College Avenue is narrow and winds round substantial planting before suddenly revealing a wide view over a grassy slope falling to the river with the tower of All Saints Church rising in the middle distance. This element of surprise and contrast is the most valuable asset of this approach. This area has been modified by the construction of the amphitheatre forming part of the River Park proposals.

Streets and Spaces

- 7.11 Because of the area's special history it does not really possess a traditional streetscape such as exists in the rest of the town. Instead it is really an area of interlinked spaces upon which a road system has been largely imposed. A common theme within the Conservation Area is that of the courtyard, and the major spaces may be identified as follows:
1. The Archbishop's Palace Courtyard, defined by the Archbishop's Palace, The Gatehouse, The Archbishop's Stables, the north churchyard wall, the "Dungeon" and the Palace Gardens.
 2. All Saints Churchyard
 3. The College Courtyard
 4. The Cutbush Almshouses Courtyard
 5. The Southern Gateway and Garcien
 6. The Riverside
 7. The New Burial Ground behind the Stables
- 7.12 The riverside walk and Palace Gardens provide a north-south pedestrian link. Otherwise the spaces are linked in this direction by Mill Street/College Road, which have been superimposed on the previous pattern of development. At right angles to this route lies Knightrider Street, still a major traffic route to the east of College Road, but a dead end for vehicles lies to the west of it now that the original river crossing no longer exists. Knightrider Street is probably the only thoroughfare in the conservation area which is of great antiquity and predates the medieval buildings. The importance of its western arm as a pedestrian route has been enhanced by the opening of the new footbridge.

Analysis of Spaces

The Old Palace Courtyard

- 7.13 This is defined by the surviving buildings of the Archbishop's Palace itself, The Gatehouse, The Archbishop's Stables and The "Dungeon". Many other buildings which would originally have completed the courtyard have disappeared since the archbishops relinquished the Palace in the 16th century; although archaeological remains are likely to exist beneath ground. The surviving buildings delineate an extensive, irregular quadrangle typical of the "organic" development of an early medieval palace where separate buildings tended to be only loosely connected. This large courtyard measures about 100 metres (east-west) by 60 metres (north-south), but its true nature as a courtyard is obscured because of the missing buildings and because its eastern half is bisected diagonally by the busy Mill Street. This section of Mill Street has been superimposed on the previous pattern of development, as is evidenced by the awkward way it squeezes between the corner of the Archbishop's Stables and the Churchyard of All Saints. The immediate impression is one of spaciousness, which forms a contrast with the high density development in the town centre to the north. This contrast would have been all the greater until about 90 years ago, before the construction of Bishops Way or Palace Avenue, and before Mill Street beyond the River Len was widened (and when it dog-legged around a large water mill straddling the Len).

- 7.14 Apart from the spaciousness, it is the extremely high quality of the buildings which define this space which give it a particularly special character. The scale of The Palace, the Archbishop's Stables and especially All Saints Church is also a notable characteristic. Trees, particularly those along the boundary with the churchyard, are also an important part of the spaces character.
- 7.15 Between Mill Street and The Palace, soft landscaping predominates. This is separated from the hard surfacing of the road and footway by an attractive waist-high wall of ragstone, with galletted joints topped by red coping bricks which defines the present day grounds of The Palace. Between this and the modern concrete paving slab footway lies a strip of old pavement made up of ragstone setts. This forms an attractive feature and is an important survival (probably the only one with the town remaining) of a type of paving for which Maidstone was formerly renowned. It thus merits preservation.
- 7.16 6 The modern pavement diverges from the line of Mill Street to enter the churchyard. The triangle which this creates has been infilled by a large flowerbed bounded by a low wall of two courses of ragstone. Despite the undoubted attractiveness of the blooms displayed within it, this is perhaps rather a "suburban" type of feature which is not really in character. Other features which detract from the character of this space (apart from heavy traffic) are the unattractive modern standard highway railings used around Mill Street/Palace Avenue/Bishops Way junction and on the boundary of the Palace Avenue car park, and the new style British Telecom call box which is situated immediately outside The Gatehouse. The Gatehouse itself has suffered some unfortunately 20th century alterations on its south elevation, the chief of which is the insertion of a large window which is massively out of scale with the building.

All Saints Churchyard

- 7.17 All Saints Church is reputedly the largest parish church in Kent, and it is certainly the largest scaled building in the Conservation Area, dwarfing for example the adjacent Palace. It is some 52 metres in length and occupies about 50% of the total area of its churchyard. The churchyard itself is of similar area to the Old Palace Courtyard, but because of the size of the church, the dense population of grave stones and the numerous trees and shrubs within it there is a complete contrast in character. It is a much more intimate space, and this feeling is reinforced by the fact that the traffic on Mill Street is effectively screened by dense planting on this boundary of the churchyard. The church itself is of course the overwhelming presence, but the crowded tombstones and various trees are essential elements making a positive contribution to its setting.

- 7.18 The main pedestrian path along Mill street diverges from the road to pass through the churchyard, thus giving a very attractive segregated route. The first section of this route, as far as the north-east corner of the church, has some very attractive paving in a mixture of York stone and old gravestones which deserves to be preserved. The rest of the footpath has been resurfaced in concrete paving slabs. Other paths in the churchyard are an attractive mix of York stones, ragstone setts and old gravestones. The path which runs closely around the church is bounded on its inner edge by kerbstones which show evidence of former railings, and a small section of railings survive by the south-east corner of the church. At the south-eastern end of the main footpath (by the junction of Mill Street and Knightrider Street) there are some attractive Victorian cast-iron bollards which should be preserved. These three bollards will not currently allow a wheelchair or double buggy between them, but they could be re-positioned to overcome this. There are other bollards of the same design (formerly associated with a gate) at the entrance to the churchyard from Knightrider Street opposite the gateway to The College.
- 7.19 The churchyard itself is bounded by a low ragstone wall, although in the south-western corner where Knightrider Street drops to the river it becomes an impressive high retaining wall on its external face. This corner of the churchyard does in fact have a different character to the rest because of its high vantage point overlooking the River Medway.

The College Courtyard

- 7.20 Like the Palace, the College Courtyard is now incomplete. Only the north-western corner remains more or less intact, comprising the northern gatehouse and the adjoining refectory/kitchen/dormitory range linking in to the River Tower, together with the Master's House. Other fragments which survive are The Master's Tower (a small gatehouse on the west side of the courtyard possibly originally giving access to the riverside) and the ruins of the southern gatehouse beyond the interposed development of the Cutbush Almshouses. The scale of the original College precinct is huge, there being a distance of nearly 125 metres between the north and south gateways; in the absence of any visible remains of the eastern side of the courtyard it is difficult to establish the dimensions in this direction, but the internal width is likely to have been at least 50-60 metres assuming the north and south gatehouses to have been more or less centrally placed; although it is not known for certain whether the courtyard was completely contained by buildings.
- 7.21 As is the case with the old Palace Courtyard the true nature and scale of this courtyard is now masked by the loss of original buildings, the later inserted development of the Cutbush Almshouses and the construction of College Road through the original College grounds. It is however, perhaps more recognisable as a courtyard than is that of the Palace because one corner of it remains virtually intact complete with its impressive gatehouse. Also the later College Road at least follows the geometry of the original layout, rather than cutting across it. On the eastern side of College Road the Victorian ragstone building of All Saints Primary School fulfils to some extent the function of the missing range of the College by defining an edge to the "courtyard".
- 7.22 The general character of this area is one of spaciousness, and the majority of its surrounding buildings are of exceptionally fine quality. However, the setting of these superb buildings is severely compromised by the use of the majority of the space between them as a public car park. The school playground on the corner of College Road and Knightrider Street is bounded by an ugly high chain link fence which further detracts from the character of the area.

The Cutbush Almshouses Courtyard

- 7.23 This area is really a sub-area within the original College grounds but these Edwardian almshouses have sufficient character and identity in their own right to merit treatment on their own. Once again the courtyard theme is repeated, albeit on a much smaller scale. The two storey buildings are disposed around three sides of a courtyard (with the north side completed by a boundary wall). However, this is a private rather than public space, and the development presents a single linear block to the College Road frontage (access to the courtyard and other ranges around it being via a central archway through this frontage block). These almshouses with their well-tended rose gardens form an attractive feature of the conservation area.

The Southern Gateway and Garden

- 7.24 The Conservation Area extends slightly to the south of the almshouses to encompass the ruined southern gateway to the College, which has a rather overgrown and uncared-for appearance. It still functions as a vehicular access to a rather unattractive parking area sited between it and the almshouses and this entrance is controlled by an inappropriate modern pole barrier. Just behind the gateway and to the west is a low ragstone building with an archway through it which forms an effective boundary feature of the conservation area. Between the gateway and College Road is a small and under-utilised area of public open space consisting of a small rectangular lawn surrounded by shrubbery. It is proposed that this area become part of the Rose Trail.

The Riverside

- 7.25 The riverside location of the conservation area is a very important part of its character and particularly the dramatic juxtaposition of the Palace and All Saints Church with the wide expanse of water. The riverside path forms an important and highly attractive pedestrian-only route through the conservation area, and this is the only section of the riverside walk within the town on the east bank of the river where the pedestrians enjoyment is not compromised by the nearby presence of a heavily trafficked road.
- 7.26 Leaving Maidstone Bridge the path descends gently to reach river level at the wide apron in front of the arched entrance to Palace Gardens. This section of the path is of recent origin, being associated with the construction of Bishops Way in the 1960's - before this the riverside was occupied by warehouses and wharves, the remains of whose brick walls form the retaining wall of the ramp. The first section of the path is associated with the stepped and ramped arrangement giving access to the pedestrian subway beneath Bishops Way, which is typically unattractive and utilitarian in appearance, with spar-dashed concrete walls of a dirty pinkish tinge (which are in a dilapidated condition in places) and standard modern highway type railings (which are also used on the river side of the path).

- 7.27 Descending the ramp, the river is very much the dominant element, the Palace itself not being visible because of trees screening it. In the distance the river curves away to the right and the view is closed by the mature trees lining its bank, although the glimpse through them of the grassy slope behind the Cutbush Almshouses heightens the semi-rural impression. On the opposite side of the river the huge bulk of the Law Courts building is a major component of the view for the first section of the riverside walk. Although just outside the conservation area, the character of this part is greatly enhanced by the graceful lines of Maidstone Bridge, an excellent example of the work of the great Victorian engineer Sir Joseph Bazalgette which effectively closes the view to the north-west. A similar foil in the other direction is now formed by the new footbridge to Lockmeadow, a fine example of modern engineering design.
- 7.28 The path arrives at river level at the roughly triangular-shaped apron in front of the arched entrance to Palace Gardens. This is a potentially very attractive space which is somewhat spoiled by the unattractive red tarmac surfacing and the poorly designed refreshment kiosk which acts as a salient to the retaining wall of Bishop's Way. This retaining wall is unfortunately clad in grey brick, constituted stone rather than natural ragstone.
- 7.29 From here there is a choice of two routes - to the left through the Victorian ragstone archway to Palace Gardens and thence to Mill Street, or straight on along the riverbank. Taking the latter route first the path continues at first as a wide feature on two slightly different levels, the lower level being along the water's edge, giving the character of a landing place; which in effect it is. Surfacing is still in red tarmac. Soon the path is flanked to the north-east first by a tall ragstone retaining wall of medieval date which probably formed the base of the precinct wall of the Palace. It is battered to give it extra strength against the erosive power of the Medway. This soon gives way after a narrow flight of steps cutting through it to the towering walls of The Palace itself, rising sheer from the path which at this point narrows considerably to occupy a constricted space between the buildings and the river. On the river side the path is bounded by railings of reasonable design which are however poorly maintained and damaged in numerous locations. The tall ragstone walls continue beyond The Palace as retaining walls (incorporating the end gable wall of The "Dungeon") sheer in some places, battered and buttressed in others, until they return up Knightrider Street to form the boundary of the churchyard, to which a steep flight of integral steps ascends from the riverside path.
- 7.30 Where Knightrider Street descends to the Medway was the original crossing point of the river, either by way of ferry or ford. Here originally there was a small inlet which has largely disappeared except for a small embayment in the riverbank. This embayment has largely silted-up leaving an area of mud and weeds which look rather unkempt. It serves as an outfall and overflow from the main combined sewer in College road. This means that the area sometimes does not smell as sweet as it should. This together with the poorly designed modern railings which back it constitutes an unattractive feature unworthy of its magnificent setting.

- 7.31 The riverside walk now continues to the south through what were originally the private gardens of The College. This section of footpath is of modern date, having been created since 1957 when The Master's House was converted to the accommodation for the Kent Music School and the path has been facilitated by crudely knocking a gap in the tall Medieval ragstone boundary wall. This wall formerly returned along the river bank at a similar height, but it has been reduced to a dwarf wall to allow views of the river. On its outer (river) face a series of buttresses still remain. Mature trees line the path on both sides, and it is these trees which are prominent in the long distance views along the river from the bridge and form such an attractive backdrop to the Palace and All Saints Church. The first of these trees on the western side of the path is, however, very close to the fine medieval boundary wall, and is in fact beginning to penetrate it with its roots, resulting in some bulging at the corner of the wall. To the east, the boundary between the path and the gardens of the Master's House are now formed by an ugly high chain link fence supported on concrete posts. The path itself is now black tarmac.
- 7.32 The new footbridge to Lock Meadow, itself an extremely well-designed modern structure, crosses the river at this point.
- 7.33 Soon the path curves to the right and emerges through the southern boundary wall of the Master's House grounds to reveal a large open grassy slope rising to the south-east with the westernmost range of the Cutbush Almshouses beyond it. There is an immediate contrast in the feeling of spaciousness, although the area as a whole is rather featureless; it is, however, being remodelled to form the amphitheatre feature of the River Park. The riverside path is now separated from the water's edge by another low ragstone wall of relatively recent date which is unfortunately in a poor state of repair. At the end of this wall the path turns sharp left to climb past shrubbery away from the river and emerge into College Avenue.

The Palace Gardens

- 7.34 Returning to the refreshment kiosk by the boat landing, Palace Gardens can now be considered. They are entered through the round-headed ragstone arch bearing the date 1888; the date when the Gardens were opened to the public. The Gardens are a small triangular space which flows into the area of the Old Palace Courtyard already described - formerly larger before the construction of Bishops Way in the 1960's. They were the second ornamental park opened in the town, the first being Brenchley Gardens.
- 7.35 Immediately upon entry from the riverside, the River Len is crossed, the waters passing beneath the path in a culvert. The River Len, together with Bishop's Way, form the northern boundary of Palace Gardens. The Len is quite fast flowing and, particularly towards the eastern end of the Palace Gardens, deeply incised. Its natural course has been modified: perhaps originally by Medieval archbishops to form a moat feature; certainly in conjunction with the two water mills which used to stand in Mill Street; and as a result of the construction of Bishop's Way. The current fast flow of this section of river is largely due to the fall from the head of water impounded in the still extant mill pond alongside Palace Avenue, from which the water emerges by a number of complicated culverts.

- 7.36 Beyond the River Len the broad path of tannac with pea-shingle top-dressing rises gently to arrive shortly at the Palace forecourt. To its right steps give onto a raised terrace bounded by ragstone walls giving views of the Medway, and to its left two minor paths lead off. The westernmost descends slightly to re-cross the Len, on another bridge and give access to Bishops Way via a flight of steps. The other leads via a grandly scaled flight of steps only to a short terrace along the south bank of the Len, which is a dead-end. This rather dark and dank terrace is not a particularly attractive spot, but it is the only place from which the arches of the medieval bridge into the Palace (which is now buried beneath Bishops Way) can be seen. The scale of the steps down to this terrace is extremely confusing and inappropriate, as it looks to be a major route instead of a cul-de-sac.
- 7.37 The gardens in general, although small, are an attractive green area which contain a number of trees important to the character of the area. Features which detract from this are the modern standard highway-type railings used on the Len bridge, along the bank of the Len below The Gatehouse and along the sides of the flight of steps giving access to this terrace, and also the nondescript modern light standards and lanterns along the main path.

The New Burial Ground

- 7.38 This relatively quiet enclave of open space comprising grass, trees and shrubs is noted as the "new burying ground" on Brown and Sons map of Maidstone published in 1823. Because of the heavy traffic on Mill Street and the lack of a pavement access to this open space is not as easy as it could be.
- 7.39 The open space is still surrounded by its original old red brick boundary wall on three sides, the fourth side being formed by the ragstone rear wall of the Archbishops' Stables. At the entrance from Mill Street the original gate-piers survive, minus their gates. A later opening has been punched in the northern boundary wall to provide access to the car park in Palace Avenue. The current character of this small park seems to date from 1927 when the paths were laid out, but later alterations have included the removal of the gravestones to their current locations.
- 7.40 The appearance of this area is rather sterile and 'municipal' at present, with formally laid-out paths in unattractive concrete paving slabs and sombre, regimented evergreen trees. The tombstones have been removed to be arranged around the perimeter walls where they have become partially hidden by shrub planting. The reason for this was probably a desire to ease maintenance of the park, and the majority of the area of the burial ground now consists of mown grass. The space is not unattractive, and it does enable good public views of the rear of the Archbishops' Stables, but some redesigning of the landscaping would be beneficial. However, the new burial ground will be severely affected if the All Saints Link Road is built - part of it would be lost altogether and the rest would lose its current semi-seclusion. The land has archaeological potential both because of its proximity to the Palace complex and because of the burials within it.

Other Areas

- 7.41 The main spaces of the Conservation Area have now been described. However, there are two sections of street which have not been covered.

Knightrider Street

- 7.42 The first is the section of Knightrider Street between the river and the Mill Street/College Road junction. It runs between All Saints Church on the north side and the gatehouse/refectory range of the College on the south side, both Medieval buildings of the highest quality. From the Mill Street/College Road junction the street runs level as far as the College gatehouse, beyond which it falls sharply to the river in a canyon-like space confined between the high walls of the College and the churchyard retaining wall. This is one of the most dramatic spaces in the Conservation Area. It is a street of towers - starting from the riverbank the tower of All Saints looms high above to the left, balanced to the right by the River Tower of the College gateway, and as height is gained going up the street the tower of the Baptist Church becomes visible, closing the view. The juxtaposition of these towers is also an important feature of the views across the River Medway from Lock Meadow.
- 7.43 The exceptional townscape qualities of this section of Knightrider Street are let down by some of the fine detail. The surfacing of the first section as far as the College Gateway, is in poorly maintained tarmac, which may however be laid over granite setts, although the pavement on the north side over the same length is in attractive York stone paving slabs (except for a small area at the Mill Street junction which is in tarmac). Beyond the College Gateway the road is closed to vehicles by a highly inappropriate modern pole barrier of unsuitable design which severely detracts from the setting of the important listed buildings. Beyond the barrier the street drops down to the river and the carriageway has been grassed over. The resulting long narrow strip of grass is of little use as public open space, and since the opening of the new footbridge the lower end is being eroded by pedestrians following a "desire line" across it. The footpath on the north side continues to meet the riverside walk, now surfaced in tarmac.

Mill Street

- 7.44 The last small area to be examined is the southern section of Mill Street between the south end of the archbishops' stables and the junction with Knightrider Street. This is the least satisfactory part of the Conservation Area. It is dominated by heavy traffic on the one-way road which forms the major north-south and east-west route through the town which is tightly confined between the churchyard walls on the west and buildings on the east. Looking from the south the view along this section is effectively terminated by the end wall of the archbishops' stables, the corner of which the road touches as it bends. The other dominant building is the substantial modern office block, Carriage House, on the east side of the street. This is a weak neo-Georgian design executed in render and insipid yellow brick which does not really do justice to its important siting (it closes the view out of the Palace Courtyard space). However, the worst buildings in the Conservation Area are the extensions to the Baptist Church at the corner of Knightrider Street. Not only are these of poor modern design in brown and red brick with flat or felted roofs, not in keeping with the adjoining church, but they have also been set back on a splay when the corner of the road junction was eased to facilitate traffic flow in the 1960's. Buildings formerly occupying the site (originally The Globe Inn) made a much squarer corner. The current arrangement results in poor townscape at this important corner site.

Building Design and Styles

- 7.45 The Conservation Area is unusual (and extremely fortunate) in the consistency of building materials and building quality. It is perhaps even more unusual for a single style of building to be so dominant. All the major buildings, and the majority of smaller ones, have their roots in the Gothic style, whether it be mainly Perpendicular Gothic of the original 14th and 15th century buildings, the Victorian 'Early English' Gothic of All Saints Primary School, the Edwardian Tudor Gothic of the Cutbush Almshouses, or the Arts and Crafts Gothic of the Edwardian Baptist Church. The Palace is Gothic in its bones, although it presents an Elizabethan Renaissance frontage to Mill Street.

Relationship between Buildings and Spaces

- 7.46 As already stated, the area does not have a traditional streetscape but instead consists mainly of large free-standing buildings within substantial open spaces. It is this relationship and the scale of the buildings which give the Conservation Area much of its character.

Trees

- 7.47 The Conservation Area contains over 230 trees of at least 51 different species and varieties, covering a broad range of ornamental, native & near-native species. The main trees of note include *Cercis siliquastrum* (Judas Tree), *Catalpa bignonioides* (Indian Bean Tree), *Ailanthus altissima* (Tree of Heaven), *Cydonia oblonga* (Quince) and *Morus nigra* (Black Mulberry). The tallest trees in this area are some 19 to 21 metres high and include *Acer pseudoplatanus* (Sycamore), *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* (Common Lawson), *Platanus x hispanica* (London Plane), *Tilia cordata* (Small-Leaved Lime), *Aesculus hippocastanum* (Horse Chestnut) and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Ash). The Giant *Sequoias*, Cedars and Swamp Cypresses within the Archbishop's Palace grounds are very prominent when viewed from Bishop's Way and give this location a particular character. The All Saints Churchyard also has a specific character defined by the English and Irish Yews present on the site. The main tree groups within the conservation area are shown on Plan 6.
- 7.48 Trees are a very important element within the Conservation Area. A large number are able to exist because of the high proportion of open undeveloped areas, and this is in marked contrast to the situation in the more densely developed commercial heart of the town. The presence of such large number of trees therefore reinforces the special character of the Conservation Area and helps to mark it apart from surrounding development. Trees are important both in long distance views and also at short range in the character they contribute to the settings of individual buildings. Particularly important groups of trees are found within Palace Gardens (especially those along the northern and southern boundaries), along the riverbank behind the College and in All Saints Churchyard.
- 7.49 There are at present no trees within the Conservation Area which are specifically protected by Tree Preservation Order.

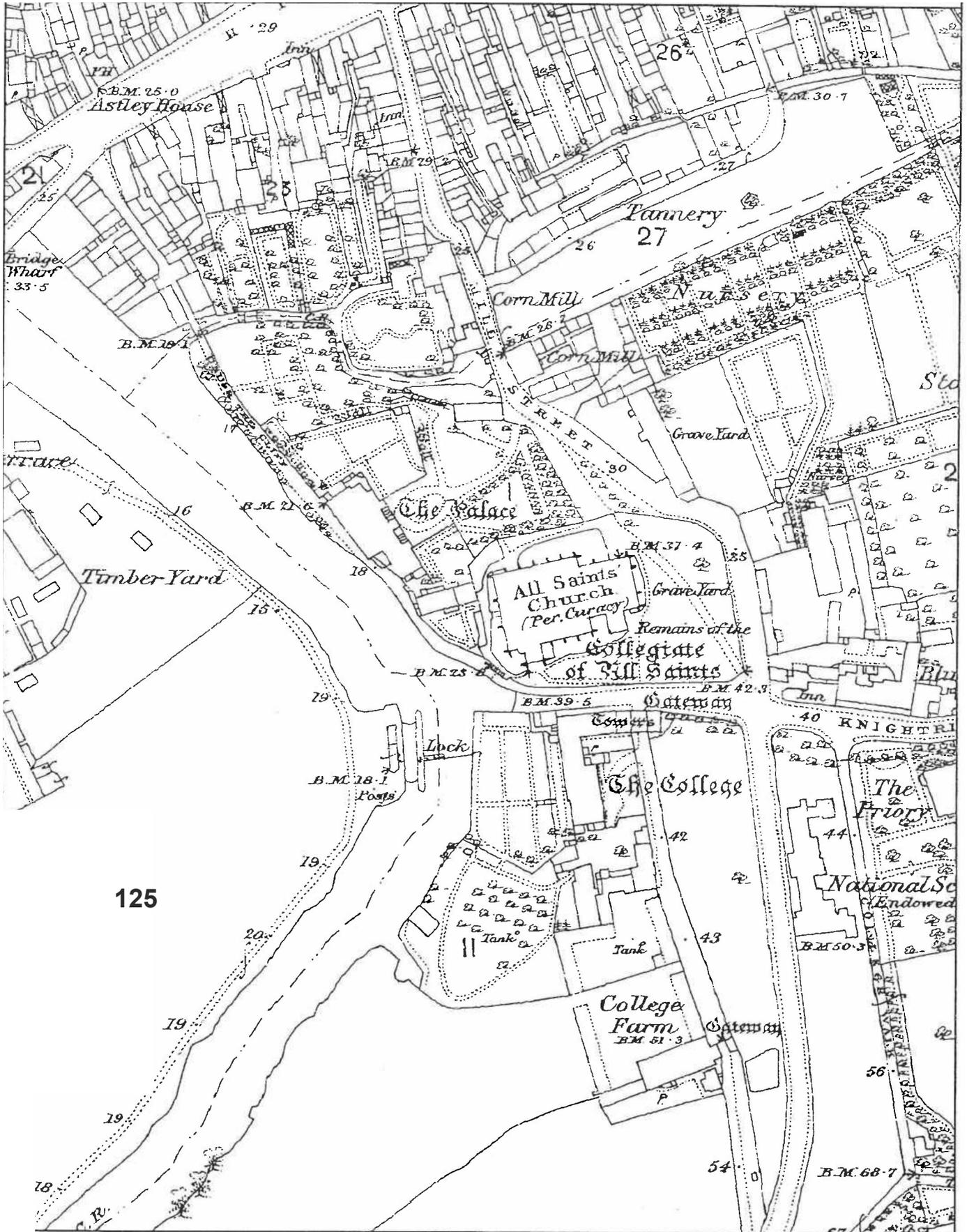
8 Conclusion

- 8.1 The historic environment is a physical survival of our past which must be valued and protected. The remarkable survival of buildings and remains within the All Saints Conservation Area represents a considerable asset to the town. It is central to the town's tourist and educational aims as well as giving Maidstone a sense of place and an identity. Most of the images of Maidstone contain one of the buildings in the conservation area. Maidstone was an ancient domain of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the prevalence of listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments within the All Saint's Conservation Area reflects its archaeological and historical importance. as one of only six palace complexes in Kent used by the Archbishop. The remarkable survival of buildings and remains within the All Saints Conservation Area, creates a precinct of national importance as well as a treasured local asset.
- 8.2 However, this physical heritage is extremely fragile and particuiar attention is needed to ensure that the very characteristics, which make the conservation area special in the first place, are afforded protection. The purpose of this appraisal document is to provide a context for assec;sing the future protection and enhancement of the All Saints Conservation Area. It provide s a sound basis, defensible on appeal, for the development plan polic ies and development control decisions affecting the conservation area. It also forms the groundwork for a Conservation Area Study, the purpose of which is to identify key aspects of practice and management that need to be considered and applied to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area. The Borough Council has produced such a study for the All Saints Conservation Area, which once adopted will foml supplementary planning guidance to the local plan for Maidstone.

List of Plans

- Plan 1 Brown 1821
- Plan 2 Ordnance Survey map 1876-95
- Plan 3 Ordnance Survey map 1908
- Plan 4 (Ordnance Survey map 1936-46
- Plan 5 Heritage Features in the Archbishopal Precinct - Plan and Gazetteer, 1999;
(Oxford Archaeological Unit)
- Plan 6 Main Tree Groups within the Conservation Area

Plan 2 - Ordnance Survey map 1876-95

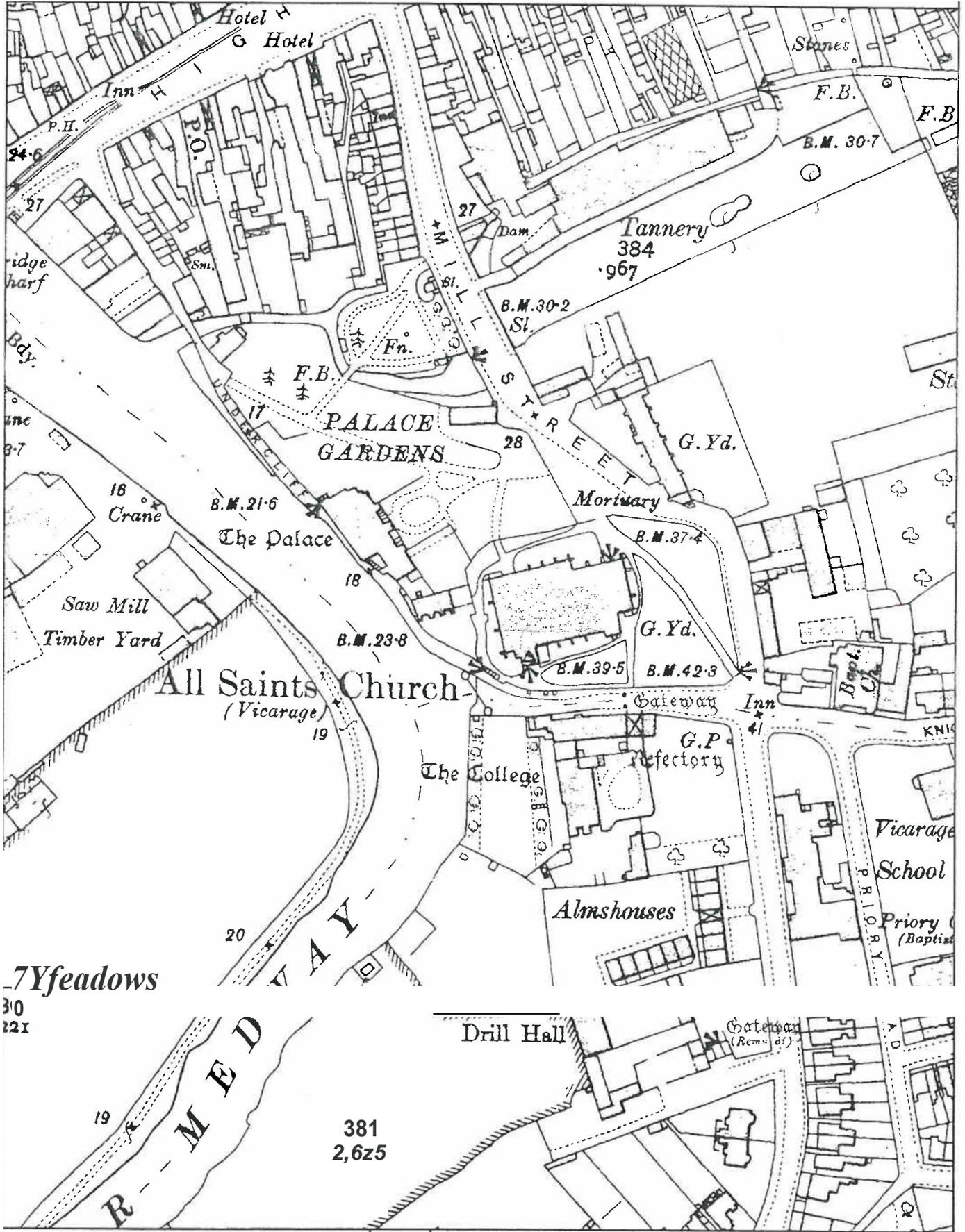


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Plan 3 - Ordnance Survey map 1908

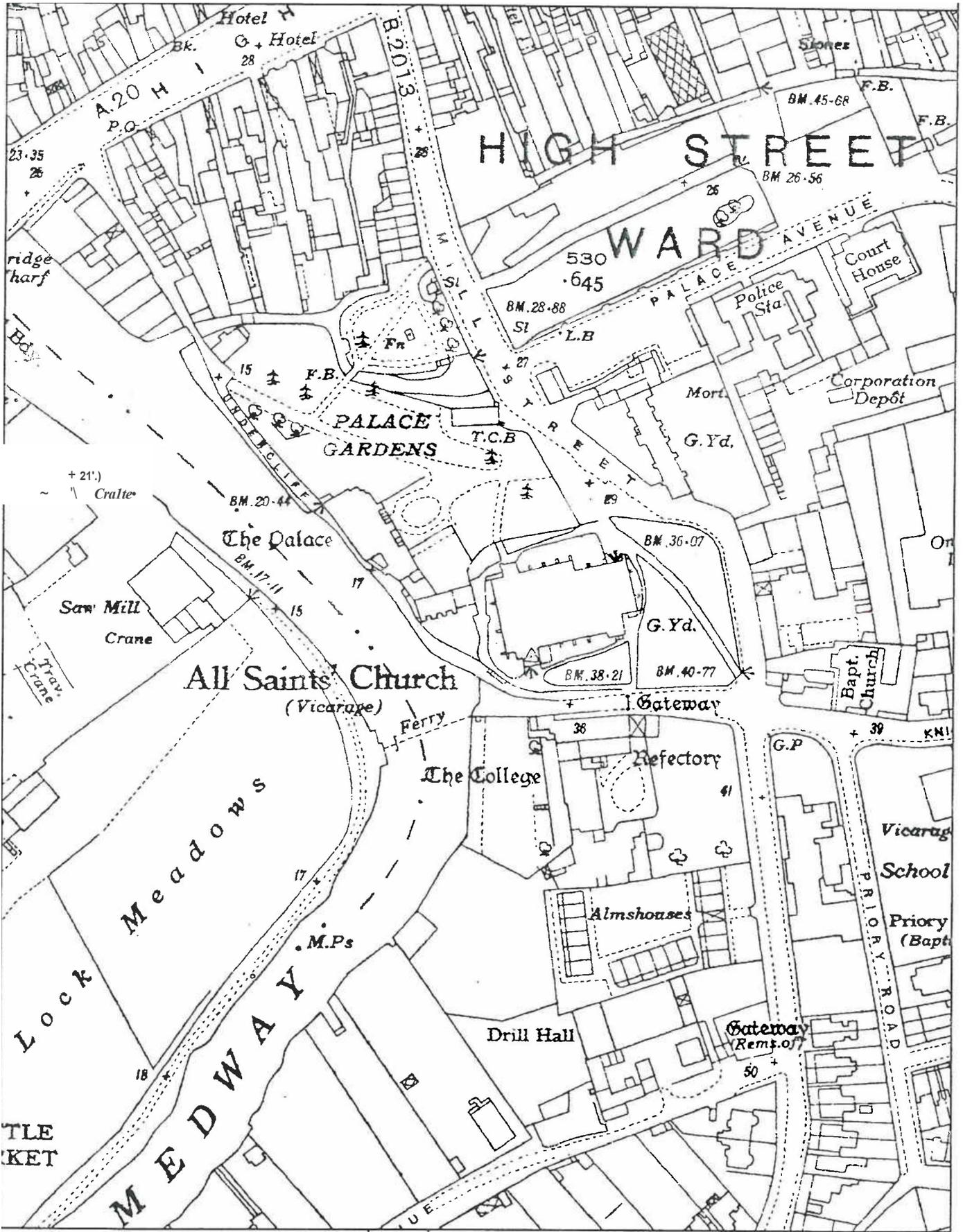


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Plan 4 - Ordnance Survey map 1936-46

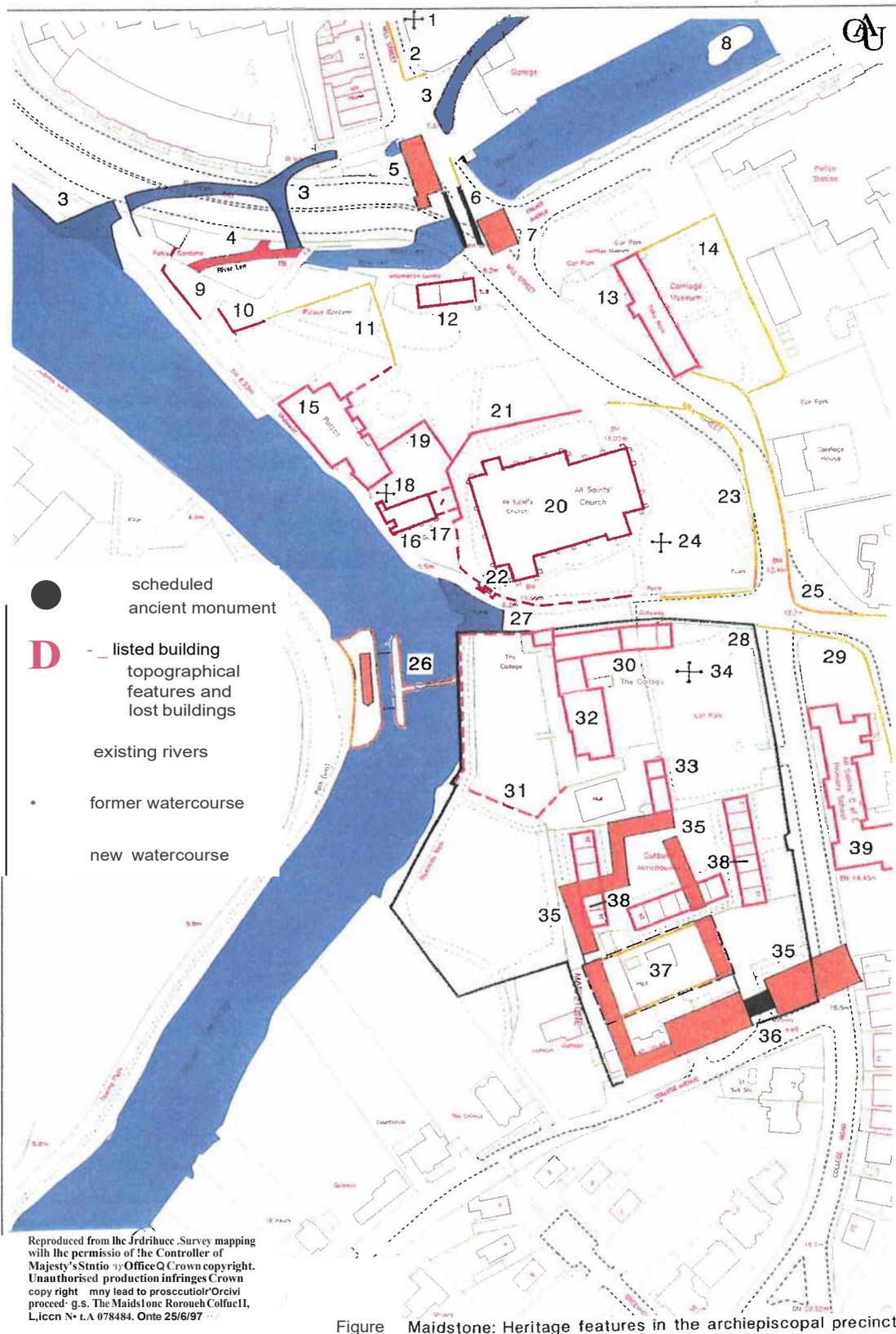


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Plan 5 - Heritage Features in the Archiepiscopal Precinct



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Heritage features in the archiepiscopal precinct Gazetteer, 1997 (Oxford Archaeological Unit)

no	Description	Status	SMRno
1	A 2nd-century grey Roman pot was found in 1937 while foundations were being dug for the new Rootes Garage.	SMR findspot	TQ 75 NE 42
2	Former frontage line of Mill Street, as shown on C19th OS map	Topographical feature	
3	Former course of River Len, as shown on C19th OS map	Topographical feature	
4	New course of River Len, made in C20	Topographical feature	
5	Site of former watermill, as shown on C19th OS map	Topographical feature	
6	Len Bridge, C14 stone structure beneath concrete road slab, west side visible and east side buried behind concrete retaining wall	SAM [KE 167] LB Grade II [883/1/68CJ]	TQ 5 NE 80
7	Site of former watermill, as shown on C19th OS map	Topographical feature	
8	Mill pond in River Len, serving the watermills, presumably medieval in date.	Topographical feature	
9	Wall to Palace Garden; ragstone wall, and gate dated 1888, at north end of garden. <i>The return wall and steps at the south end are modern, and presumably not listed.</i>	LB Grade II [883/6/323]	
10	Wall to Palace Garden (west of Palace): medieval wall of stone rubble, the truncated end of the garden wall at the 1101th end of the Palace (see next)	LB Grade II [883/6/324]	
11	Former line of wall to Palace Garden, as shown on C19th OS map	Topographical feature	
12	'Gate House' of Archbishop's Palace, probably a medieval chamber block adjacent to the lost gate to the precinct. Of two storeys, C13th and C14th, with garderobe. Used for Tourist Information Centre.	SAM [KE 168] LB Grade II [883/6/68B]	TQ 75 NE 81
13	Stables of Archbishop's Palace, late medieval block on east side of precinct, now housing the Carriage Museum, perhaps built or completed by Archbishop Morton. <i>Listed and scheduled, incorrectly, as 'Tithe Barn'</i>	SAM [KE 22] LB Grade I [883/2/69 & 883/7/691]	TQ 75 NE48
14	Former cemetery behind the museum, as shown on the C19th OS map	Topographical feature	
15	The Archbishop's Palace. Major medieval hall house with cross wings, substantially rebuilt in C14th and again in C16th.	LB Grade I [883/6/68]	TQ75 NE 35
16	'Prison' range of Archbishop's Palace, vaulted range in kitchen court. Associated with excavated remains found nearby (no. 18 below) <i>Listed as the 'The Dungeons', and presumably including within its curtilage the next item. This building was upgraded to Grade II* by the 11th amendment to the list, dated 18/10/1995.</i>	LB Grade II* [883/6/68A]	

no	Description	Status	SMRno
17	Walls of former building contiguous with 'Dungeons' now roofless, and containing masonry elements of Quarr Stone in its east wall. <i>Not shown as listed on the E.H. map, though the east wall features as part of the listed churchyard wall, No.21 below; it can however be regarded as ,within the curtilage of the Dwz?,eons.</i>	Part of LB Grade II* [883/6/68A]	
18	Archaeological observations by the Maidstone Area Archaeological Group discovered part of a 14 th century dam wall and ragstone cobble path, a wall footing of the same century and an undated door sill were found in test pits. In 1989, trenches dug by the dung :ment ranc e revealed footings of the south wall of th e No1man dungeon, an undated wall and an unid e7tified 19 th century brick structure. In 1990 a watching brief revealed the foundations of a Norman wall, layers or made ground with for.ge waste and Roman pottery.	SMR site	TQ 75 NE 35
19	Walls to east of Archbishop's Palace. Two contemporary rubble stone walls with plinths, flanking the front court of the Palace, and the return wall from the southern of these to the east side of the herb garden. <i>Listed as 'Wall to east of Archbishop's Place', and shown on E.H. map as only the southern of th e two walls, and its return; the northern wall is either included in this listing. or is within the curtila e of the Gradel Palace.</i>	LB Grade II [883/6/325)	
20	All Saint's Church, the parish church of Maidstone formerly St Mary's Church, rebuilt in 1395/8 as a collegiate church. Very substantial perpendicular church with tower (the spire struck by lightning in 1730 and never rebuilt)	LB Grade A [883/6/70 & 883/7/70]	TQ 75 NE 40
21	Churchyard wall (north and west of church) . Medieval rubble walling, including door towards the Palace, and merging into the wall at the east end of the 'Dungeons' (no 17 above). <i>The list entT)l, but not the title nor the E.H. map, appears to include the southern return of the wall (see next).</i>	LB Grade II [883/6/326 & 883/7/326)	
22	Churchyard wall (south and west of church). High buttressed wall to river front and alongside the roadway rising from the river, including steps descending to the riverside walk below the Palace. <i>The whole of the southern return of the wall is presumably included in the listing of no 21, since the steps are mentioned in the list description, but this section of wall is not shown on the E.H. map.</i>	LB Grade II - Part of last.	
23	Extent of former churchyard at east end, where its regular shape was lost to widening of Mill Street, as shown on CI9th OS plans.	Topographical feature	
24	In 1844 a '1 st brass of Commodus' was found four feet	SMR findspot	TQ 75 NE 76

no	Description	Status	SMRno
	down in All Saints' Churchyard.		
25	Former frontage line of Mill Street, as shown on C19th OS map	Topographical feature	
26	Lock in River Medway, as shown on C19th OS map; probably built after 1740 Navigation Act, and removed in the 1920s.	Topographical feature	
27	Former inlet in River Medway, as shown on C19th OS map; site of ford and ferry	Topographical feature	
28	Maidstone College, founded in 1395. The main area of the precinct is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and specifically includes the ruined gatehouse (No. 36 below).	SAM[24348]	TQ 75 NE 36
29	Part of the former precinct of Maidstone College outside the SAM boundary, and truncated by the formation of College Road in the C19th.	Topographical feature	TQ 75 NE 36
30	Gateway, Front Range and River Tower of Maidstone College, built by 1400. The main range contained a hall and service, with some rooms above, and had a pentice or cloister before it. <i>Listed as the College Gateway, (All Saints Parish Room), The College Tower</i>	LB Grade I [883/6/71 & 883/7/71]	TQ 75 NE 36
31	Precinct wall of Maidstone College: stone wall, partly of medieval date, extending from the River Tower down to the river (pierced by riverside walk), along riverside and back up towards the College buildings.	All within the SAM [24348], and part within the curtilage of listed buildings.	TQ 75 NE 36
32	The Master's House of Maidstone College; medieval L-shaped building with first-floor hall and a crossing for the chapel, with later infill on the west side. The northern end, linked to the other college building has largely been rebuilt, but also had a pentice or cloister in front of it. <i>Listed as 'The College'</i>	LB Grade II* [883/7171A]	TQ 75 NE 36
33	The Master's Tower, medieval gatehouse tower for former approach to the College from the river, with blocked gate arches on east and west walls. Continues to the south as stone building of uncertain age, probably part of lost farm buildings.	LB Grade II [883/7/71B]	TQ 75 NE 36
34	Lost buildings of College, reported by Beale Paste to lie on east of Gatehouse, Rigold supposed that the present open space "once held a quadrangle of fellows' lodgings and a common hall".	with SAM	TQ 75 NE 36
35	Former buildings of College Farm, including pair of barns flanking Gatehouse, and occupying site of Cutbush Almshouses and Monkton Drill Hall, as shown by Beale Paste and C19th OS maps.	with SAM	TQ 75 NE 36
36	South gatehouse of Maidstone College: medieval stone building in ruins, with part flanking walls of lost barns on interior. Described on schedule as part of SAM.	part of SAM 24348 LB Grade II [883/7172]	TQ 75 NE 36

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no	Description	Status	SIVIR no
37	Monkton Drill Hall: Stone gateway and other buildings of 1903, built on site of College Farm after 1900 sale of College	Unlisted Building within SAM	
38	Cutbush Almshouses: courtyard of three ranges dating from 1905, built on site of College Farm after 1900 sale of College	LB Grade II [883/7/327] within SAM	
39	All Saints Church of England School, Priory Road, stone gothic building of c.1870 (within former precinct of Maidstone College).	LB Grade II [883/7/331]	

Map 6 - Main Tree Groups within the Conservation Area



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Appendix: Schedule of Listed Buildings and Ancient Monuments

The grading and official descriptions of all the Listed Buildings within the Conservation Area are set out below:

i) Gateway and Wall to Palace Gardens, Mill Street. Grade II

The gateway is dated 1888 and is built of Kentish ragstone. Semi-circular arch with a keystone in the shape of a shell above. The date stone is above the arch and is flanked by swags. On the left hand side there is a wall of ragstone about 7ft. high

ii) Wall to north west of Archbishop's Palace, Mill Street. Grade II

Medieval wall of stone rubble. On the extreme right is a stone niche.

iii) The Archbishop's Palace, Mill Street. Grade I

Begun by Archbishop Ufford in 1348. Completed by Archbishop Islip between 1349 and 1366. Enlarged by Archbishop Morton in 1486. Exchanged by Archbishop Cranmer with Henry VII for other property. By Henry VIII it was granted to Sir Thomas Wyatt. On his son's rebellion it was forfeited to the Crown and subsequently granted to Sir John Astley, who built the greater part of the existing house in the second half of the 16th Century. The main portion of the building is of ashlar with timber-framed wings at the north and south ends. The main section is E-shaped. 2 storeys and attics. 5 windows and 2 doorways to the north-west front. Stringcourse. Parapet. Windows with stone mullions and transoms. 2 large doorways above the outer projecting east wings with kneelers, coping and finials over the apices and kneelers. Tiled roof. The centre projection is the porch with round-headed arch and room over. At the south end of the building is a timber-framed wing nearly flush with the southern projection of the main front. This has one large and one small gable with pendants. Casement windows. At the north end of the building is a wing with stone ground floor and timber-framed upper storey with diagonal braces and plaster infill, surmounted by a gable with pendant. On the ground floor there is one obtusely-pointed window and one square-headed window containing two cinquefoil-headed lights. One sash window above them with glazing bars intact. To the north of this again is a further recessed wing wholly faced with stone but with a portion projecting on the 1st floor apparently timber-framed but this is modern or a reconstruction. The south-west front of the Palace facing the Medway has a fine stone corbelled oriel window with 3 tiers of 6 lights, stone mullions and transoms and chamfered stone corbelling beneath. Also there are some double or triple lancets with hood moulding. The interior contains 16th Century panelling and some fine 16th Century wood or stone fireplaces.

iv) Wall to east of Archbishop's Palace, Mill Street. Grade II

A medieval wall between 6 and 8 feet high of stone rubble. No coping.

v) The Dungeons at the Archbishop's Palace, Mill Street. Grade II*

A medieval stone outbuilding adjoining the Palace to the south-east and called The Dungeons. 14th Century with an early Norman undercroft adjoining it. Small square windows of 3 lights with stone mullions.

vi) The Gate House at the Archbishop's Palace, Mill Street. Grade II

A small medieval stone building of 2 storeys, 13th and 14th Centuries. Built of stone rubble. Tiled roof. 3 trefoil-headed lancets and some modern windows. Gable with timbering on the east side. Garderobe projection on the north side. Also scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

vii) The Len Bridge, Mill Street. Grade II

This bridge is only visible from Palace Gardens on the west as a modern bridge over which Mill Street passes has been superimposed upon it and projects beyond it. It spans the Len, a stream which flows into the Medway. 14th Century bridge of 2 small pointed arches flanked by buttresses. Alcove edged with brick on left hand side. Also scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

viii) The Archbishop's Stables, Mill Street. Grade I

A large 14th Century tithe barn which was subsequently used as the stables of the Archbishop's Palace. It is now the Maidstone Corporation Carriage Museum. 2 storeys stone rubble. Hipped tiled roof, 6 bays with a buttress between each. The east front has 6 small narrow windows on each floor. The west front has 5 obtusely-pointed doorways (two of them larger than the others) and a 2-storeyed porch in the centre. The ground floor of the porch is of stone. Its 1st floor is timbered with modern brick infilling and projects on the protruding ends of the floor joists and brackets. It has a double loft door with a flight of stone steps leading up to it on the north side of the porch and a gable over. The west front also has 5 small windows on the 1st floor and one other doorway. Crown-post roof inside. Also scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

ix) Parish Church of All Saints, Mill Street. Grade A

Begun in 1395 by Archbishop Courtenay as a collegiate church and continued by Archbishop Arundel in 1396-1398. Perpendicular. Built of Kentish ragstone ashlar. Stone buttresses and crenellated parapet. South-west tower. The spire was struck by lightning in 1730 and never rebuilt. 6 bay nave with clerestory and north and south aisles. Wooden roofs by Pearson 1886. The south chapel was originally the Chapel of the Fraternity of Corpus Christi. Credence and sedilia of 4 seats incorporating the monument of the first master of the college. Stalls with medieval misericords. Early 15th Century font. Monuments to Archbishop Courtenay d.1396, John Wotton d.1417 with a medieval wall painting at the back of the tower, Sir John Astley d.1639 and John Davy d.1631. This is considered to be the grandest Perpendicular church in Kent.

x) Wall to north and west of All Saints Church, Mill Street. Grade II

A medieval wall about 8ft. high of stone rubble with a pointed archway on the extreme right hand side. This merges into the wall of The Dungeon where there is an archway with trefoil spandrels. On the south there is a flight of stone steps to the river side.

xi) The College Gateway/All Saints Parish Room/The College Tower, Mill Street. Grade I

Archbishop Courtenay was licensed to build a collegiate church in 1395. He died in 1396 and the building was continued by Archbishop Arundel in 1396-1398. The College was for a master and 24 chaplains. The main surviving building consists of the gatehouse and to the west of it the refectory, kitchen and scullery with the dormitory and infirmary above. It is of Kentish ragstone in Perpendicular style. The gatehouse is a 3-storeyed square building containing pointed stone canopies and pedestrian arches on the ground floor and castellated parapet above. Square-headed windows of 2 trefoil-headed lights each with dripstones over, those on the top floor having 2 tiers of such lights. Stone ribbed tierceron star vaulting beneath the arches. On the left of the entrance arch is a 2-storeyed room with oven probably used for baking bread to be distributed as alms at the gate. Joining this to the west is a 2-storeyed range with 6 square-headed windows containing pairs of cinquefoil-headed lights but no dripstones over. Tiled roof. Stringcourse. Stone chimneybreast in the centre of the north front with modern red brick stack above it. 3-storeyed tower at the west end of the building known as the River Tower with the Muniment Room on the top floor. Similar windows to the rest of the building and castellated parapet over.

xii) The College, Mill Street. Grade II*

This was originally the Master's House to the College. 14th Century with alterations in the 18th Century and the insertion of modern windows since. Built of Kentish ragstone. 2 storeys and attics. Tiled roof with 3 hipped dormers having casements with small square leaded panes. Moulded wooden eaves cornice and at the south end of the front a gable. On the ground floor there are two windows containing pairs of ogee-headed lights, two narrower single trefoil-headed lancets and one square-headed window containing two obtusely-pointed lights. Modern windows on the 1st floor. The interior contains a collar-braced roof, a 16th Century oak staircase, a moulded 16th Century ceiling and aurnbry cupboard. Some stone fireplaces with spandrels and an early 18th Century fireplace with ovolo moulding. Plaque to William Grocyn (1446-1519) Master Of All Saints College and Renaissance scholar.

xiii) The Master's Tower, Mill Street. Grade II

1396-1398. This was originally the main entrance gateway to the college from the river. 2 storeys Kentish ragstone. Pyramidal tiled roof. Pointed archway on the ground floor. Square-headed window on the 1st floor containing 2 cinquefoil-headed lights with stone mullion and transom. Small projection on the north side with splayed end, possibly containing the staircase. This front has a single window of one cinquefoil-headed light on the 1st floor and a gable fronted with weatherboarding, full of pigeon holes.

xiv) The Cutbush Almshouses, Mill Street. Grade II

Late 19th Century almshouses arranged in groups of three separate buildings on three sides of a courtyard. Nos 2-12 are of 2 storeys Kentish ragstone. Tiled roof with five clustered chimney stacks. 6 gables having fretted bargeboards and pseudo timber-framing and brick finials. Central stone gable with stone finial and initials and kneelers. Windows are 4-light mullioned and transomed windows. Central stone archway with hood moulding above. 6 other mullioned and transomed windows with hood moulding and two doorcases set in arches. Nos. 14-24 and Nos. 26-36 are similar but without the central stone archway.

xv) Ruined Gateway. Mill Street. Grade II

Originally the south gateway to the College. 14th Century built of Kentish ragstone. This consists of a high pointed carriage arch and pedestrian arch to the west of it, With a wall on each side forming a letter H. This was presented to the town in 1915.

xvi) All Saints Church of England School, Priory Road. Grade II

Circa 1870. One storey built of Kentish ragstone. Tiled roof. Centre and side projecting Wings with gables and half-hipped dormers. Stone long and short quoins, window Dressings and stringcourses. 12 windows in all. Double or triple lancets. Hipped porch To left of central gable. Rear elevation is of brick.

In addition to the above listed buildings within the Conservation Area, there are other listed buildings which lie immediately adjacent to it and which therefore contribute to its setting. Details of these are as follows:

i) North Boundary Wall formerly to Digons, Knightrider Street. Grade II

Boundary wall. Medieval masonry with 19th Century parapet. Wall of Kentish ragstone rubble about 8 feet in height with brick parapet and inner face of brick. To the left is an early 19th Century square stone gatepier with tooled band and curved cap. There is a medieval two-centred arched opening with the top restored in cement in the 19th Century and a 20th Century wooden door. This was the northern boundary wall to Digons, a house dating from the 13th Century which was demolished in 1964.

ii) East Boundary Wall formerly to Digons, Knightrider Street. Grade II

Boundary wall. Medieval masonry with 19th Century parapet. Wall of Kentish ragstone random rubble about 8 feet in height with brick parapet, incorporating a blocked medieval two-centred arch within a later cambered arch. The top of the rear of the wall is of red brick. This was part of the eastern boundary wall of Digons, a house dating from the 13th Century which was demolished in 1964.

iii) Knightrider House, 14 Knightrider Street. Grade II

15th Century. Originally the home of William Shipley, founder of the Royal Society of Arts. Now the offices of the Maidstone and District Bus Company. 3 storeys brown brick with red brick window dressings and quoins. Hipped tiled roof and wooden modillion eaves cornice. 5 sashes with glazing bars missing. The windows on the ground and first floors have architraves over. Later central pedimented porch supported on wooden brackets. Later 3-light bay on ground floor of right side elevation.

In addition to those Scheduled Ancient Monuments noted above (ie the Gate House at the Archbishop's Palace, Mill Street, the Len Bridge, Mill Street and the Archbishop's Stables. Mill Street) the College of All Saints is scheduled in its entirety, and the official description of the monument is as follows:

Description of Scheduled Ancient Monument

The site includes the upstanding and buried remains of the College of All Saints, Maidstone. The standing structures date mainly from the late 14th century, with some evidence for 16th and 18th century alterations. The monument lies on the eastern bank of the River Medway, to the south of the parish and collegiate church, which is also dedicated to All Saints, and the medieval archbishop's palace. The standing structures include the college gate tower and associated western range, a return wing running from the west end of this refectory range which joins a two-storeyed building known as the Master's House. To the south east of these buildings is a free-standing structure known as the Master's Tower, while at the south of the complex of medieval buildings is the ruined gateway. Of the standing buildings, only the ruined gateway is included in the scheduling.

On 25th June 1395, Archbishop William Courtenay received authorisation from Pope Boniface IX to make the parish church of Maidstone into a college of a master and 24 chaplains and clerks. On the 2nd August of that year, licence was granted by Richard II for the incorporation of the Hospital of St Peter, St Paul and St Thomas of Canterbury and all its possessions into the new college. The church was pulled down and rebuilt, while the college buildings were erected to the south of it. The construction of the college buildings was completed by Archbishop Arundel after Courtenay's death, and by the close of 1397, the work was probably finished. Patronage of the college and church continued to be part of the possessions of the Archbishops of Canterbury until Cranmer exchanged them with Henry VIII.

In the Valor of 1535 the income of the college was given as one hundred and fifty nine pounds seven shillings and ten pence, while by around 1545 this had increased to over two hundred and eight pounds. The college was dissolved by the act of Parliament passed for the suppression of all colleges, free chapels and chantries, anno 1 Edward VI (1546). Upon its suppression, the college was granted to George Brooke, Lord Cobham in fee on 10th May 1549. Nothing more is known of the fate of the college buildings. Some of them have survived, others associated with the complex are shown on maps of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, but are no longer visible as upstanding remains. They were probably outbuildings connected with the college which fell into disrepair or disuse and were replaced or demolished. A map of 1821 shows two ponds associated with the college, one to the south of the Master's Tower, and another directly to the south east of the southern gateway; both had been filled in by 1848 and are not included in the scheduling. The first edition OS map of Maidstone, made in the mid-late 19th century shows 'College Farm' on the south of the site, incorporating the buildings of the southern gateway, while the college gateway, Master's House and tower all survived much as they stand today. All the buildings associated with the farm have now disappeared, and have been replaced by the 19th century Cutbush Almshouses, and some 20th century houses.

The college gatehouse complex is Listed Grade I, the Master's House Grade II* and the Master's Tower and ruined gateway are both Listed Grade II.

The college gatehouse complex, the Master's House, the Master's Tower, all modern houses and walls, the surfaces of modern roads, paths and car parks, and all modern fittings such as gate posts, walls, lamp posts, benches and bins are excluded from the scheduling, although the ground beneath all these features is included. The ruined gateway is included in the scheduling as is the ground beneath it.

Assessment of importance of Scheduled Ancient Monument

The term college is used to describe a variety of different types of establishment whose communities of secular clergy shared a degree of common life less strictly controlled than that within a monastic order. Although some may date to as early as the tenth century, the majority of English colleges were founded in the 14th or 15th centuries. Most were subsequently closed down under the Chantries Act of 1547.

Colleges of the prebendal or portional type were set up as secular chapters, both as an alternative to the structure of contemporary monastic houses and to provide positions for clerics whose services the monastic establishment wished to reward. Some barons followed suit by setting up colleges within their castles, while others were founded by the Crown for the canons who served royal free chapels. Foundations of this type were generally staffed by prebends or portioners (priests taking their income from the tithes, or other income deriving from a village or manor). After 1300, chantry colleges became more common. These were establishments of priests, financed from a common fund, whose prime concern was to offer masses for the souls of the patron and the patron's family. They may also have housed bedesmen (deserving poor and elderly) and provided an educational facility which in some cases eventually came to dominate their other activities.

From historical sources it is known that approximately 300 separate colleges existed during the early medieval and medieval period; of these, 167 were in existence in 1509, made up of 71 prebendal or portional colleges, 64 chantry colleges and 32 whose function was primarily academic.

In view of the importance of colleges in contributing to our understanding of ecclesiastical history, and given the rarity of known surviving examples, all identified colleges which retain surviving archaeological remains are considered to be nationally important.

The construction of the college at Maidstone caused a number of important changes to the town - primarily through the elevation of the parish church to a collegiate church. The college itself is also closely associated with the bishop's palace complex in the south of the town. The history of the foundation and construction of the college is well documented, and illustrates the close links between the college and the Archbishops of Canterbury.

The college buildings which stand today are in an exceptionally good state of repair, except for the southern gateway which is not in use, and has been allowed to decay. All the other structures of the college complex which survive have remained in public and private use from the medieval period onwards. Buried archaeological remains will also survive, providing additional information about the structure and layout of the college, and the lives of its inhabitants.