



Map showing the existing conservation areas - Rochester Church Fields and Victoria Street as well as the proposed extension to the Rochester Conservation Area

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Map showing proposed extent of Rochester Conservation Area for adoption by Cabinet September 7th 2010

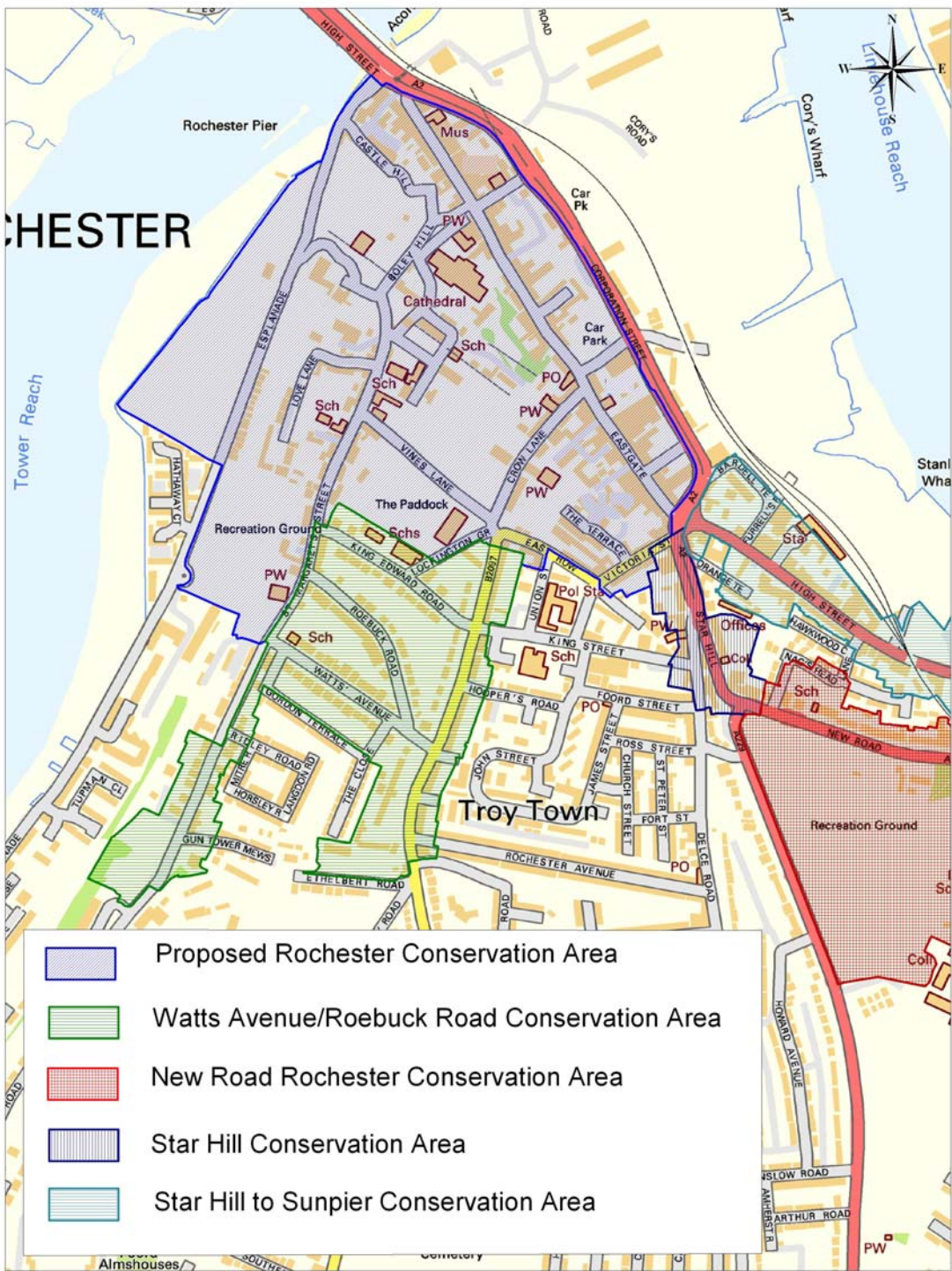
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Map showing proposed Rochester Conservation Area & surrounding conservation areas



Scale: 1:7500 29/07/10
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Rochester Conservation Area Appraisal

Adopted September 2010



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INTRODUCTION



Rochester Cathedral and Castle Walls

Rochester is, with Canterbury, one of two walled towns in what the Romans called Cantium, or Kent. From 604 AD its links with Canterbury also extend to being one of Kent's two Cathedral cities. The Romans named it *Durobrivae*, which translates as "fortification by the bridge," probably because they were the first to erect a bridge at the same point as the present one.

Despite many centuries of change and development, the military and religious significance of the city is strongly felt in the city today, dominated as it is by the ruined Castle, dating from 1089, on its commanding mound, and the vast Cathedral. The active military role

has been consigned to history, while the Cathedral continues its religious role as well as being a major tourism attraction.

However, the City's architectural and historic wealth derives from much more than these two splendid buildings. Laid out before them is the many layered, multi-styled, multi-cultural, intimately scaled, trading, residential, educational and literary city, of international importance in its own right. All this tangible and intangible heritage is what combines to give the city's conservation areas their unique character. Legislation and guidance places a duty on local authorities to prepare and implement measures for an area's preservation and enhancement. These measures, protecting tangible and useful assets, are crucial to the survival of intangible ones, which appeal to all our senses - sights, sounds, touch, smells and memory; enriching our lives and those of future generations.

This Appraisal, the first since 1976, applies the general approach

recommended in the English Heritage publications Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals in order to understand and conserve the special interest of Rochester. A Management Plan accompanies the Appraisal which contains an analysis of key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to character and sets out a strategy for preservation and enhancement.

POLICY CONTEXT

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A conservation area is defined as "an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. National policy guidance is provided by *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5). Guidance on the appraisal and management of conservation areas in England is published by English Heritage.

PURPOSE

Rochester City was designated a conservation area in 1972. It was extended in 1976 to include the west end of the High Street. Churchfields and Victoria Street conservation areas, which immediately abut Rochester City Centre Conservation Area to the southwest and southeast, respectively, were designated in 1994. The Council has a statutory duty to designate areas of special interest as conservation areas, develop measures to preserve or enhance their character or appearance and review them from time to time.

This appraisal is the first covering all three conservation areas since designation. The main reasons are to provide a firm, up to date, defensible basis for assessing and determining development proposals within the conservation area, and identify opportunities and measures for preservation and enhancement. These require amongst other things, defining and evaluating those features that contribute to or detract from the special character. Whilst historic Rochester is bound to focus on preservation rather than change, measures which give practical effect to preservation will always be needed. Where there is capacity or benefit to change, this appraisal should be the key reference point.

Appraisals are intended as a general guide to character, identifying topics or issues which require greater detail. Omission of specific

buildings, structures, spaces, or any other feature or space does not imply they are of less cultural significance.

The appraisal forms the basis of the Management Plan, which sets out policy and strategy for addressing the issues and problems identified. These will take the form of:

- mid to long term strategy
- measures for addressing identified issues
- recommendations for action projects
- further study and measures required for implementation.

PLANNING AND REGENERATION CONTEXT

This appraisal should be read in conjunction with the relevant local plan policies, emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) policies and the national planning policy guidance and planning policy statements, in particular PPS5. As recommended in PPS5, the general presumption should be in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets. The more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour should be. The layout and content follows current English Heritage guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals.

Other relevant background information includes the Heritage Masterplan for Rochester (2007), Rochester Cathedral Conservation Plan (2004), Rochester Castle Conservation Plan (2009), Eastgate House Conservation Statement (2004), and Corporation Street Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (2008).



Summary of Local Plan Conservation Policies (2003)	
POLICY BNE12: CONSERVATION AREAS	The council will pay special attention to the preservation and enhancement of the special character of all its Conservation Areas, and will carry out an appraisal of each area and prepare proposals to secure that objective. The policies aimed at achieving that end will also apply to proposed Conservation Areas.
POLICY BNE13: DEMOLITION IN CONSERVATION AREAS	Where it is proposed to demolish non-Listed Buildings in a Conservation Area, the council will not grant consent unless there are detailed plans for redevelopment which demonstrate that the proposals would fit into the area in an acceptable manner.
POLICY BNE14: DEVELOPMENT IN CONSERVATION AREAS	The council will seek to ensure that development does not take place which is detrimental to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
POLICY BNE15: ADVERTISEMENTS WITHIN CONSERVATION AREAS	Within Conservation Areas advertisements will not be permitted if their design, materials, size, colour or siting detract from the special character of the Conservation Area.
POLICY BNE16: DEMOLITION OF LISTED BUILDINGS	The demolition of Listed Buildings will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there are exceptional and overriding reasons and that all possible methods of preserving the building have been investigated.
POLICY BNE17: ALTERATIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS	Alterations, extensions, conversions or changes of use affecting a Listed Building will not be permitted if they are detrimental or unsympathetic to the architectural or historic character of the building
POLICY BNE18: SETTING OF LISTED BUILDINGS	Development which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building will not be permitted.
POLICY BNE19: ADVERTISEMENTS ON LISTED BUILDINGS	Advertisements will not be permitted if they would adversely affect the character, appearance or setting of Listed Buildings
POLICY BNE20 SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS	Development affecting Scheduled Ancient Monuments or other nationally important sites will not be permitted if it would damage or destroy such sites; or be detrimental to their setting.
POLICY BNE21 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES	Development affecting potentially important archaeological sites will not be permitted, unless it would not lead to the damage or destruction of important archaeological remains.

CONSULTATION

In accordance with English Heritage advice, the Council's brief included the requirement to involve key stakeholders in the appraisal process. The initial means were by questionnaires and a stakeholder walkabout, which informed the content of this appraisal.

On 18 January 2010 a consultation draft of this appraisal and accompanying maps was posted on the Council's website and deposited at the Council Offices, Gun Wharf, for public consultation, and a public exhibition was held for 5 weeks at Eastgate House. A consultation summary leaflet and questionnaire was sent to all addresses within the conservation area and key stakeholders.

At the close of consultation on 22 February 2010, responses were analysed and are reported on at Appendix 4.





Location Plan showing Rochester's location in Medway

APPRAISAL

LOCATION AND SETTING

Rochester lies on what was, before the continuation of the M2 motorway, the London to Dover trunk road route (A2), on the east bank of the river Medway, c.20km inland from its confluence with the river Thames and west of Chatham. It is 11km north of Maidstone, 10 km south-east of Gravesend, and 17.5km west of Sittingbourne. Rochester is within the administrative area of the Unitary Authority of Medway, Kent.

Star Hill, Star Hill to Sun Pier, Watts Avenue/Roebuck and New Road Rochester Conservation Areas lie to the south, as shown on the context map. Industrial land flanks the area to the east, west and north across the Medway.

[Context: Plan 1]

TOPOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

The natural topography of Rochester is central to its development and character. The town centre of Rochester lies at a major bend in the River Medway at its lowest crossing point. The presence of a large area of relatively flat ground at the lowest possible bridging point on the Medway, next to deep water and the tidal reach was crucial to the original decision to found a settlement here, and to fortify it on account of its strategic importance.

There is a good view of a similar plain across the river before the land rises almost imperceptibly to the north. The more prominent natural rise to the south, west and east of Rochester make it highly visible from much of the surrounding area.

The conservation areas have an undulating topography, directly influencing the distribution and orientation of roads and buildings. Most notable is a downward incline from St Margaret's Church to the Cathedral with a change in ground level of approximately 27 metres. The length of St Margaret's Church to the Castle also slopes downwards to the Medway, forming a scarp, whose gradient gradually lessens towards the Castle and High Street due to the southwest to northeast slope.



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Street Plan - Rochester

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT

Archaeological evidence suggests an Iron Age settlement of some importance, however the morphology of present day Rochester can be divided into four main periods: Romano-British (AD 43-450), Saxon (AD 541-1065), Medieval (1066-1540), and post-Medieval (post-dating 1540). In 2004, Kent County Council and English Heritage produced an archaeological assessment as part

of Kent Historical Towns' Survey. Chapter 5 of the Rochester-Kent Archaeological Assessment provides a summary of the principal urban features from the four main periods.

Roman and Earliest History:

In Roman times, Rochester was known as *Durobrivae*. Its strategic location at the lowest bridging point on the Medway to bridge Watling Street, the main road from London to Canterbury and Dover, is significant to Rochester's development and function up to and including the arrival of the railway and commercial shipping.

Through traces of its walls, which are still to be found, the city was defined approximately by the River Medway, the Common, Free School Lane, and the south side of the Castle, enclosing some

23 and a half acres. The form of the Roman city was simply the long High Street crossed at right angles by a smaller street, the line of which Northgate and College Yard approximately follow. George Lane and Bull Lane in the north-west corner of the city may also have Roman origins.

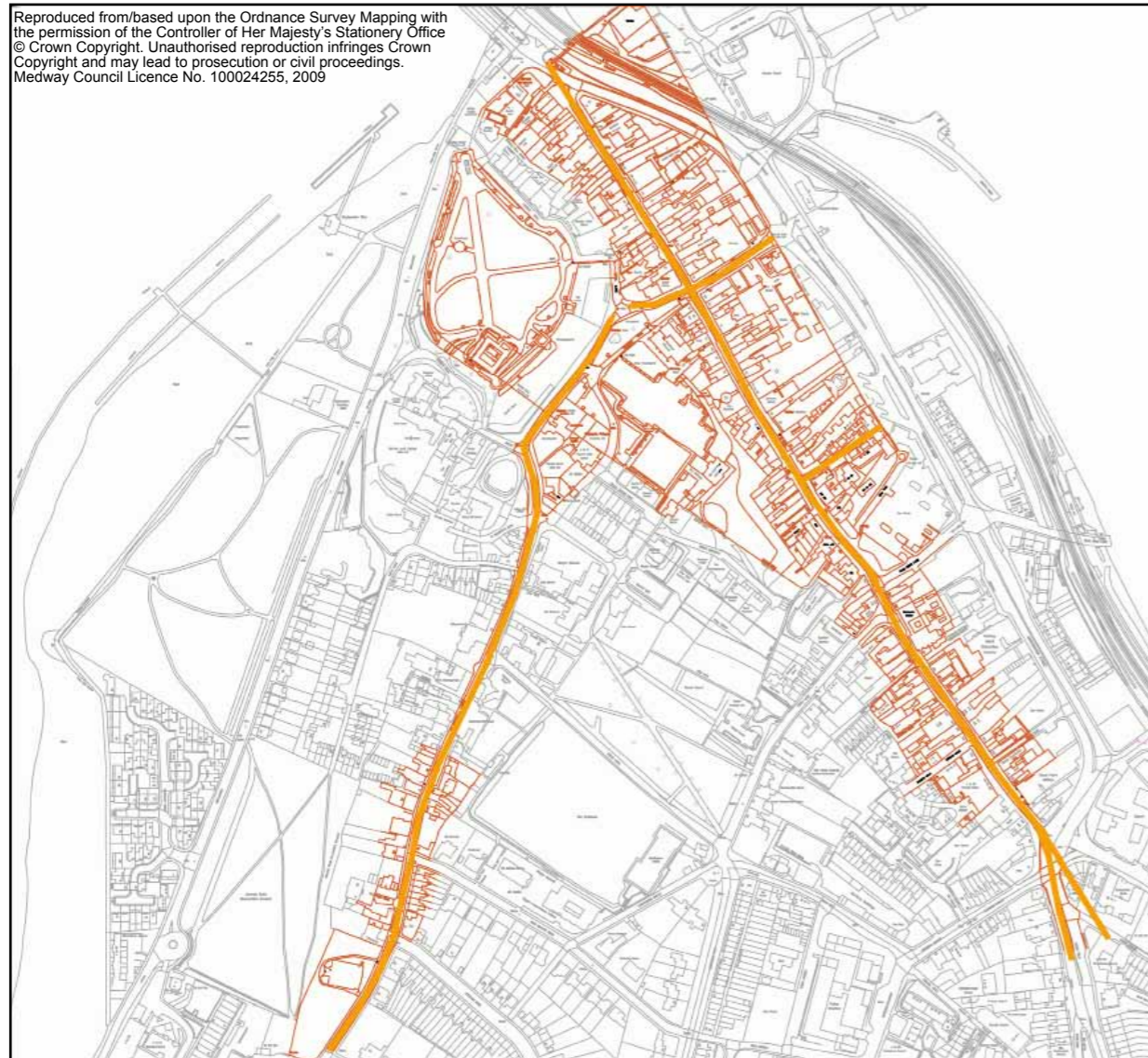
The general plan of Roman Rochester and provision of walls follows that of many large Roman towns, comprising two principal streets crossing at right angles to each other and exiting through gates on the four main sides of the city's defensive circuit. The River Medway curtailed northward expansion, which may have influenced the city's east-west linear development.

Much evidence of the Romano-British occupation remains as

undisturbed archaeological deposits. The Rochester-Kent Archaeological Assessment (2004) reports that on average archaeological deposits will survive and extend to anything between 1.5 and 4 metres in depth below the present ground surface. The survival value of the town is therefore high. As such, archaeology is of considerable importance to Rochester.

Saxon History:

The site's position at the bridgehead of Watling Street, the fortifications,



Influence of Roman Plan on present settlement



Influence of Saxon Plan

and presence of several early Saxon cemeteries just outside the city walls all suggest that the Saxon town developed within the remains of the earlier town. Although much of that town plan is conjecture, the founding of the cathedral, and to an extent the churches of St Mary the Virgin, St Margaret's and St Clement seem to have influenced the area's secular development that grew up around these principal buildings. St Mary the Virgin and St Clement have since been demolished.

In AD 597 St Augustine, seeking to bring Christianity to the Anglo-Saxons, established himself in Canterbury. Justus, the first Bishop of Rochester, built the first cathedral, dedicated to St Andrew of which nothing now remains above ground. As with the Romano-British period, elements of Saxon Rochester lie in the present ground plan of the town and in archaeological deposits.

Medieval History:

Bishop Gundulf rebuilt an earlier earth and timber castle in stone between 1077 and 1108, and the main defences also in stone between 1087 and 1089.

The limits of the ancient city were extended to the south-west in

1225 when a new wall was erected, and again in 1344 (Edward III) on the south-west side of the Deanery garden, northwest of The Vines, the back of the Cathedral Grammar School to St. Margaret's Street and north towards Southgate. These extensions provided additional land for the Cathedral Church of St Andrew and its associated Benedictine priory. The cathedral and priory landholdings extended southwards beyond the city walls to The Vines.

The basic Roman form could still be detected in the High Street, the spine of Rochester. St Margaret's Street, one of the oldest of the city's thoroughfares, runs roughly parallel with the Medway towards Aylesford and an area of suburban tenement plots began to grow up along it.

These factors strongly affected the morphology of Rochester during 1066-1540.

While the boundaries of the city were set out in some detail, the suburbs went far beyond the city walls, stretching southwards to Nashenden valley and extending westwards to take in the then built-up part of Strood. A stone bridge linked Rochester to Strood, built at the expense of Sir Robert Knolles and Sir John de Cobham from 1387. This Medieval bridge was built upstream of the modern bridges.

Post Medieval History:

From the 16th to 19th century, the plan of Rochester gradually changed from that of the medieval period to its current form.

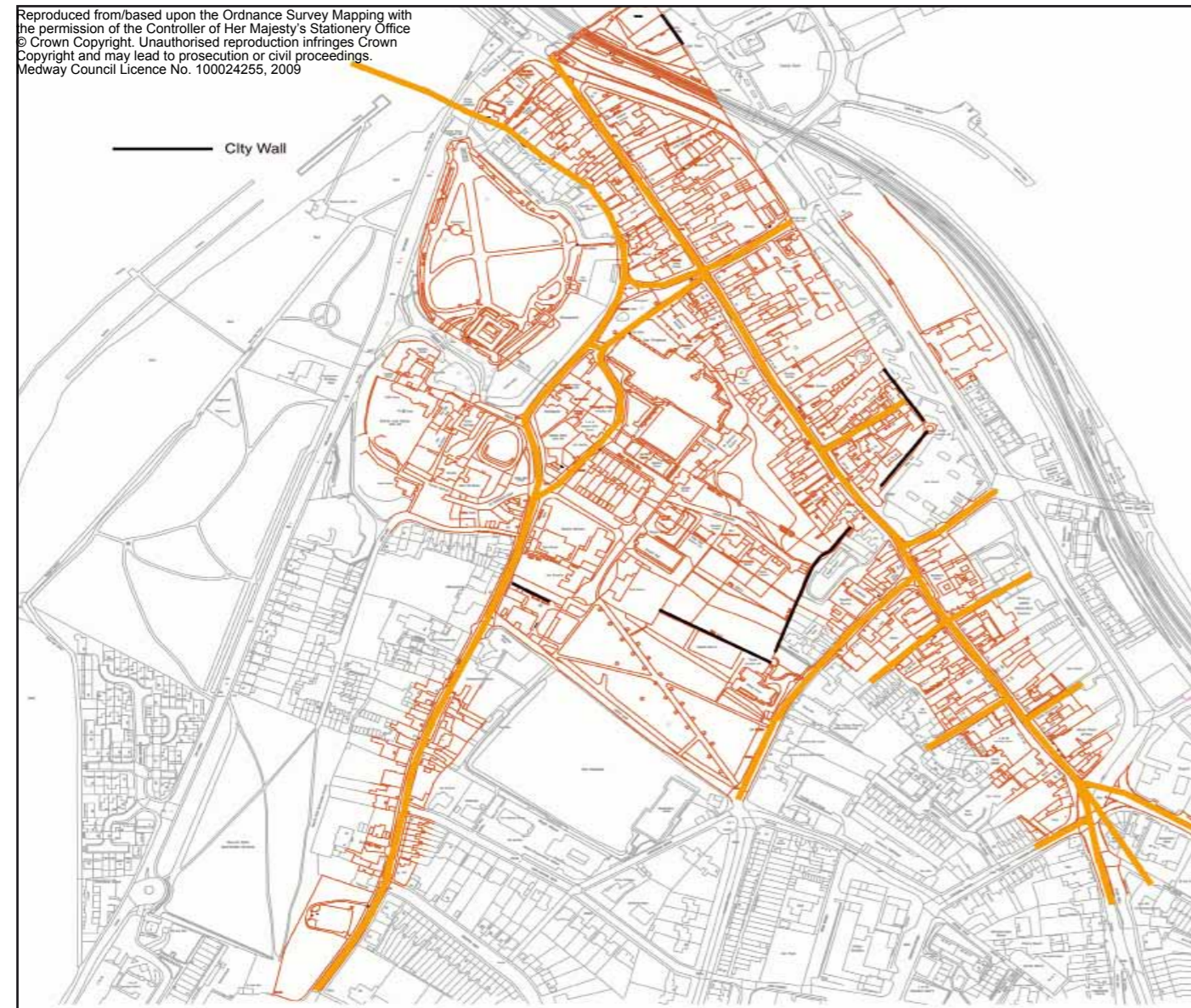
The castle fell into ruin, along with much of the city wall. The Cathedral retained its landholdings after the Dissolution in 1536, but both St Clement and St Mary the Virgin disappeared. However, the founding of the dockyard at Chatham (1547) and into the 17th century provided a stimulus to Rochester. There is also evidence from Rochester Riverside that the marshes were undergoing reclamation with creek access to water fronts and tidal mills, which indicates a harbour.

Rochester retained its local dominance as the place where people of quality lived and this is reflected in the quality of its town houses and suburbs, which is unusual outside of London.

The High Street developed into a shopping centre with a well preserved mixture of architectural periods. Every city or town had a Guildhall for official and social meetings, and from the earliest times Rochester had such a building. The present Guildhall on the High Street was built in 1687. The architecture, incorporating Tuscan columns, hipped roof on a cornice of fecundly carved brackets,

and a shallow centre projection crowned with a segmental pediment, reflected Rochester's wealthy status. The fine English baroque Corn Exchange was built in 1706.

New tenement plots were laid down inside and outside the city. New buildings replaced earlier ones and filled gaps while the suburbs expanded as war with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France from 1793 to 1815 inflated military spending.



Influence of Medieval Plan



Medieval Bridge



Rochester Bridge

The military were employed to demolish the Medieval bridge in 1857 due to increasing maintenance costs. The resultant debris was used to create the Esplanade. The Victorian bridge, constructed downstream from its predecessor was substantially reconstructed from 1910.

Another example of the Victorian municipal confidence is the Old Corn

Exchange (the Queen's Hall) which was built in 1870-71 to the design of Flockton and Abbott architects.

Originally very narrow (it still is in parts), St. Margaret's Street has been widened at various points. The late 19th and early 20th century saw rows of substantial villas or semi-detached houses spring up in this part of the city, many occupied by naval officers and their families.

A crucial influence on the post-medieval morphology of Rochester however, was the introduction of the railway from 1858 with the first railway bridge across the Medway at Rochester. In 1891 the South Eastern Railway's bridge was opened conveying its branch line to Chatham. This railway and the parallel-running Corporation Street redefined this part of the city and 'The Marshes' (1816 map description) that lay beyond to the north, in effect splitting the city in two. Towards the bridge, the railway was driven through the Roman, Medieval and Tudor city fabric. Although corporate property on the High Street was spared, domestic properties were sacrificed further back towards the north, creating the harsh and clear cut distinction between the back of the properties on the High Street, Corporation Street and adjacent raised railway.

The 'north east corner' has since been significantly redeveloped and there is no justification in terms of special interest consistent with the characteristics of the existing conservation area. The railway and Corporation Street physically and visually separates this area from the main body of Rochester Conservation Area. Given these factors the 'north east corner' is excluded from the conservation area.

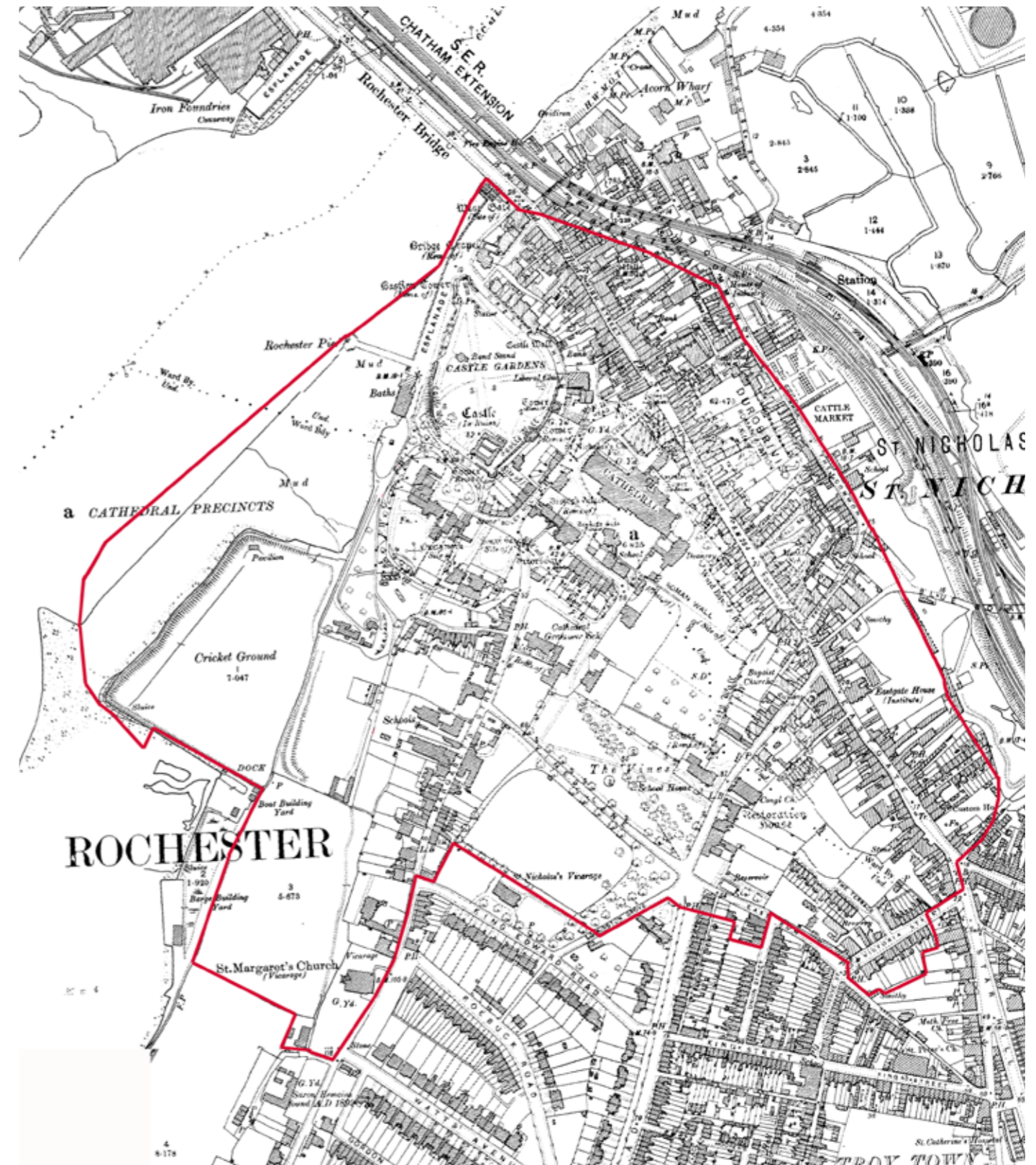
Early 20th century Rochester saw considerable redevelopment, domestic expansion and infilling. During the interwar years Rochester Council's expanding housing programme delivered 836 houses. Examples of these can be seen on Corporation Street opposite the city centre conservation area (i.e. Nos. 10-24; 26-40; 48-62; and 64-86). Much private building also took place during those years. In 1901 there were 6,518 inhabited houses; by 1939 it had increased to 11,330.

Within the old walled city, increasing traffic of horse-drawn omnibuses, trams, the new motor car and motor omnibus necessitated the widening of such roads as Pump Lane (Northgate) and Corporation Street. At the junction with the High Street, the house to the west of College Gate was pulled down to make a new access outside the medieval gateway.

Despite the loss of historic features over the course of the 20th century, Rochester City Centre easily qualified as a Conservation Area when designated in 1972, and extended in 1976.

Key Characteristics to Preserve and Enhance - Historical Background, Origins and Development

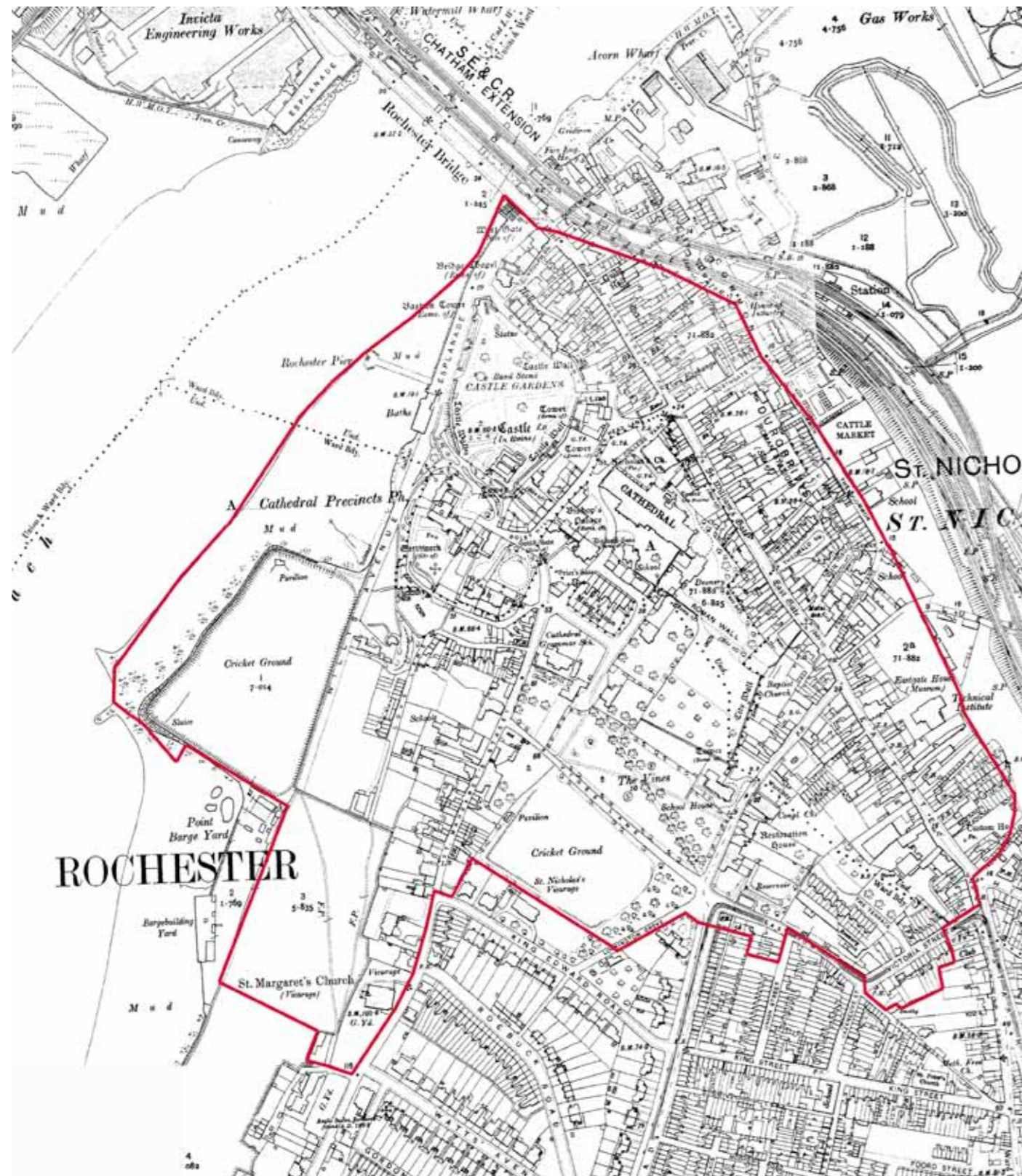
- The historic street pattern which is a product of topography, the Roman plan form, city defences, the Castle and Cathedral
- The survival of the little altered high street pattern, including narrow side streets leading off the spine
- The survival of St Margaret's Church and St Margaret's Street
- The importance of varied building types reflecting the multiple layering of built heritage.
- Remains of the City Walls.
- Remains of undisturbed archaeological deposits from Rochester's long history



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Historic Map 1896 - 1898





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Historic Map 1908 - 1922

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS

Rochester is associated with a number of historic figures and events, which forms part of its social history and consequently part of its identity.

The Castle played an important part in the war between King John and several of his leading nobles when it was seized by rebel forces in September 1215, in order to block the King's approach to London. King John launched a siege in October 1215, and the rebels surrendered in November. During the siege a mine was set under the south-east tower of the keep, and the carcasses of forty of the fattest pigs were said to have been used to fire the timber props underneath the tower in order to bring it down. The siege of the Castle was the most ambitious operation of its kind in England up to that point, and left a mark not only on the fabric of the Castle but also shaped the nation's history and political institutions.

"No one alive can remember a siege so fiercely pressed and so manfully resisted" - the anonymous Barnwell chronicler

Satis House derives its name from Elizabeth I who is said to have expressed her approval at the hospitality she experienced at Satis House with the word 'Satis' meaning 'enough'. Restoration House is thought to have gained its name when Charles II stayed there on the night of 28 May 1660 on his way to his Restoration. Abdication House bears its name in commemoration of King James II who stayed in the house while escaping from the revolution which saw him supplanted by King William III and Queen Mary II.

The most well-known literary connection is Charles Dickens who resided in Chatham as a child, returning to Rochester in his later years. Drawing inspiration from his surroundings, many of Dickens novels include references to Rochester and individual buildings such as 150-154 High Street, Eastgate House, Restoration House, Minor Canon Row, The Royal Victoria and Bull Hotel, Chertsey Gate, The Six Poor Travellers' House, the Guildhall and the Old Corn Exchange.

Eastgate House was built by the Buck family about 1590, Sir Peter Buck being a high ranking official of the Royal Navy and Mayor of Rochester. The west wing of the house was added in 1923 by Thomas Hellyar Foord, the head of a noted local shipbuilding family. The clock house at the Old Corn Exchange was constructed in 1706 by Admiral St Cloudesley Shovel, a member of Parliament for Rochester between 1695 and 1707

when he lost his life in a shipwreck off the Isles of Scilly. No. 42 High Street, Cloudsley House, is named after the family. Leonard Cottages, are named after Leonard's department store in the High Street that closed in 1967. The Vines was once the site of the Monk's vineyard, hence its name.

Although intangible, these associations amongst many others provide a historic record of Rochester and form an important part of the character and interest of the area. A number are commemorated on numerous plaques around the city.



Commemorative Plaques

ANALYSIS AND ESSENTIAL CHARACTER

ARCHAEOLOGY AND SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS

The principal legislation affecting scheduled monuments in England is the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, as amended by the National Heritage Act 1983. To help implement *PPG16: Archaeology and Planning*, which has been replaced by PPS5, a comprehensive desk based assessment of archaeological interest was produced as part of the Kent Historic Town Survey. This forms a basis for informing decision-making in the planning process where archaeological deposits may be affected by development proposals.

The Rochester-Kent Archaeological Assessment (2004) reports that Rochester's origins extend back to the Romano-British era, possibly Iron Age, and significant archaeological remains survive beneath and within the Castle, Cathedral and walled city. As such, Rochester is of national importance and has a high potential for increasing knowledge of its late Iron Age, Romano-British, Saxon and medieval antecedents. However, due to the above ground urban environment, a high number of surviving historic buildings and ancient monuments within the conservation area, archaeological activity will realistically be limited to small-scale excavations. Where development is proposed, PPS5 requires that due consideration is given to archaeology, including desktop assessments or field evaluation and an assessment of the impact of the proposal, where appropriate.

The following sites are Scheduled Ancient Monuments:

City Wall

Rochester was once a walled town. Originally rectangular, the town walls have also followed a number of different alignments, particularly the extensions to accommodate the growth of the Cathedral precinct. The story of the walls has become lost as the walls have disappeared or become increasingly less accessible. For further information, the Rochester-Kent Archaeological Assessment (2004) reports on underlying remains where they have been discovered.



Rochester City Wall, eastern section incorporating the Edward III bastion

Only a small portion of the city walls and associated ditches remain visible. A section of Rochester's Roman defensive wall can be seen behind the Eagle public house and the Esplanade. In addition to the sections behind the Eagle public house and Esplanade, there is an eastern end section (incorporating the Edward III bastion at the northern end), the base of the East Gate, and a western section off St Margaret's Street. Outside the conservation area lies a short length along the railway viaduct, which indicates that the city centre once extended further east than its present form. All surviving elements of the town walls are of considerable historic significance.

The Castle

Rochester Castle is a pre-eminent building of historical and architectural importance within the conservation area. The 34 metre high keep sited on its bailey towers dramatically over Rochester and is an iconic symbol of the town.

Bridge Chapel

The Bridge Chapel is a medieval chantry standing at the east end of the bridge, dating back to the end of the 14th century and restored in 1937. It originally provided a quiet place for travellers and pilgrims to pray for a safe journey until the Reformation, after which it served as a storeroom, a house, a pub and even a sweet shop before serving as the present offices of the Bridge Wardens.

Open Areas

Areas protected as Scheduled Ancient Monuments include: the Castle grounds, the graveyard between Boley Hill and College Yard, land at Southgate, the cloisters, The Precinct and the War Memorial Garden. Their designation reflects the potential extent of nationally important archaeological remains, although the extent is unknown and may be greater than that suggested by current designations.

[Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Plan 7]

LANDMARKS, VIEWS AND VISTAS

The Castle and Cathedral spire are important landmarks and dominate the Rochester skyline, not just from within Rochester, but also in many more distant views and approaches to the city.

The views and vistas within, into and from the conservation areas are important to their visual character and unique setting.

[Viewpoints: Plan 2].

Views Into the Conservation Areas

The view from the Strood Esplanade of the river with a backdrop of the historical skyline is iconic, showing the whole length of Rochester City and Churchfields Conservation Area from the north to south, half a mile in extent with St Margaret's Church tower at one end and the Castle and Cathedral at the other. This famous view from Strood has been painted and illustrated numerous times. Downstream from the Strood Esplanade, there is a comparable view from Temple Marsh and upstream from Strood Pier.

Due to the natural topography, Rochester is visible from many vantage points on high ground within the wider surrounding area. The historical skyline can be viewed from Frindsbury to the north, Strood to the northwest, the M2 motorway to the southwest and Chatham from the east. The dramatic view that opens out crossing the valley, dominated by the river, the castle and cathedral, and

the green ridgeline of the Esplanade, from the Medway Bridge-M2 is impressive. Fort Pitt, Jackson's Way and Fort Amherst to the west are areas of popular open space on high ground. Looking northwards towards the conservation areas, they afford views of the dramatic sweep of the river, the Castle and Cathedral and the important backdrop of green ridges. Similar views can be seen from the lower ground at Chatham Waterfront, but development on Medway City Estate detracts from the view of the important landmark grouping of the Castle and Cathedral. The Great Lines is an important elevated open space, offering panoramic views of Rochester, but is marred by Mountbatten House which dominates the scene and partly obstructs views to the river and the historical skyline. This illustrates the importance of careful assessment of any development that impinges upon key views. Medway Council has produced a supplementary planning document, *A Building Height Policy for Medway (2006)*, which provides advice.

Approaching the city by Rochester Bridge or the train, which runs parallel to the bridge, there is an impressive view of the Cathedral Tower, Castle Walls and Keep seen through the geometry of the bridge structure.

Views Out of the Conservation Areas

In spite of the close proximity of the river and its influence on the history and development of Rochester, people are rarely conscious of this amenity due to the high ground on the west side of Rochester City conservation area and due to the severance from the surrounding area caused by Corporation Street and the North Kent railway line.

There is a fine view down to the river from the west end of the High Street; however, the most impressive views of the Medway are from the elevated heights of St Margaret's churchyard and the top of St Margaret's tower and the Castle and Castle grounds. Poor quality industrial riverfront development, across the river at Strood, has damaged the views to an extent and again illustrates the importance of careful assessment of any development. Looking beyond, the parish church of All Saints, Frindsbury sits upon chalk cliffs. Wide

views include much of the Medway towns and on a clear day, the river as far down as the Isle of Sheppey and the Thames Estuary.

Views Within the Conservation Areas

Views within the conservation area are restricted by the close proximity of the structures and buildings within the site; however, there are fine views down the High Street. At points, the narrow nature of the road and building enclosure limits views to those immediately up and down the street, with individual characterful buildings and their immediate neighbours being viewed up close.

The Castle and Cathedral can be seen from many vantage points across Rochester, particularly quirky glimpses between buildings which add character to the conservation area.

Landmarks

In addition to the Castle and Cathedral, there are a number of significant buildings that stand out from the general background of the conservation area, acting as landmark buildings to local views. These include Eastgate House, the Old Corn Exchange, the Guildhall and its annex, the 'Six Poor Travellers' House, La Providence, The Royal Victoria and Bull hotel, the Bridge Chapel and Offices, The Chalet, 17 High Street, 44 High Street, 150-154 High Street and Restoration House, amongst others.

Edward III bastion, Priors Gate, Chertsey Gate, and Rochester Bridge are also important local landmarks.



View of the Rochester skyline from Jackson's Way



View east from St Margaret's Churchyard towards Strood and Rochester Bridge



View west from the Castle

Key Characteristics to Preserve and Enhance – Landmarks, Views and Vistas

- Panoramic views into the conservation areas from surrounding high ground of skyline and Rochester's landmarks - the Cathedral spire, Castle Keep and St Margaret's Church tower.
- Views of the Medway, All Saints Church, Frindsbury and Chalk Cliffs from elevated vantage points within the conservation area
- Narrow, sloping streets and structures terminating views, providing enclosure and a sense of place
- Quirky glimpses between buildings from various points of the conservation area

GATEWAYS

A number of gateways leading into the conservation area can be identified. Gateways are important as they create the first impression of the conservation area to both regular users and visitors to the area.

Rochester Bridge

One of the principal gateways of the conservation area is where Rochester Bridge meets the junction of the Esplanade, the High Street and Corporation Street. This gateway is the main access from Strood, and the act of crossing the bridge accentuates a sense of transition of arrival and departure. As visitors approach the conservation area, a glance to the west will provide a view of the Esplanade with the steep contours of Castle Hill above, emphasising the Castle's commanding defensive position on the river. At the bridge, there is an end-on glimpse of Corporation Street and the High Street, which deviate to the left and right, respectively. The node is defined by attractive buildings.

In general, this approach provides a memorable gateway, but it suffers from poor public realm design (guard rails, floorscape, clutter of signs, lights and other objects). It is also heavily dominated by traffic, due to the meeting of the Esplanade, the High Street, Corporation Street and Rochester Bridge, making the pedestrian routes difficult to negotiate.

Star Hill

This is a significant entry point to the conservation area for visitors travelling from Chatham, particularly from the existing train station. This gateway brings visitors immediately into the commercial core of the conservation area with an end-on glimpse of

Victoria Street and the High Street, both of which stretch away in a long line. However, heavy traffic from the High Street and Star Hill into Corporation Street, together with poor quality buildings and public realm design give visitors a poor impression of the conservation area.

Maidstone Road

The junction Lockington Grove, Crow Lane, and East Row forms a gateway with Maidstone Road to the south. This gateway varies considerably in character with the openness of The Vines contrasting with the grand houses on the eastern side of Crow Lane and the neat terraces along East Row. However, the broad pedestrian walk from Maidstone Road is punctuated by a row of bollards at the junction. This emphasises the entry point to the conservation area.



Rochester Bridge Gateway



Star Hill Gateway



Maidstone Road Gateway





CHARACTER AREAS

“Ah! fine place... glorious pile - frowning walls - tottering arches - dark nooks - crumbling staircases - Old cathedral too - earthy smell - pilgrim’s feet worn away the old steps - little Saxon doors....” – Mr Jingle, The Pickwick Papers

The conservation areas comprise 4 distinct areas each of which have differing historic significance and character. These are:

1. The High Street/Victoria Street/East Row/Crow Lane – The settlement pattern defined by the original ribbon development, with densely packed houses situated on narrow plots fronting directly onto the road. This results in a tightly packed and varied streetscape.
2. The Castle and Cathedral precinct – The Castle and Cathedral are wholly different in character from the rest of the area, strongly linked to its historic use.
3. The Paddock/Vines Lane/The Vines/St Margaret’s Street/Churchfield – The majority of Kings School Estate with school buildings largely dating from the Georgian or Victorian period and the expanding middle-class suburbs beyond The Vines.
4. The Esplanade - Forms the foreground setting to the view of the city and connects the riparian history of Rochester with its historic identity



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[Character Areas: Plan 3]

Character Area 1 - Street Map



CHARACTER AREA 1 - HIGH STREET / VICTORIA STREET / EAST ROW / CROW LANE

Streets and Spaces

The plan of the High Street has retained much of its ancient pattern and distinctive character. Its environment of enclosed streets, snug spaces and highly individual building design combine to create an intricately varied and distinctive spatial structure and visual quality. The compactness and fine grained pattern allows both physical form and varied function to co-exist in close proximity. The many side lanes make the High Street highly permeable, giving pedestrian priority through frequent access and choice of route, whilst retaining a sense of intimacy and potential for surprise.

Most building façades conform to a consistent building line at the back edge of footways, making any setbacks all the more eventful. Prominent setbacks occur at nos. 8, 25-33, 39, 47-49, 96, 109 High Street and the former Post Office. These buildings seemingly date from the late 18th century to the 20th century, breaking up the continuity of the original frontage. There is some desirability of conforming to the original building line should these sites be redeveloped. There are no front gardens and very few small forecourts, an exception being the “Enigma” club (186 High Street), set behind a railed courtyard and flanked by pavilions which step out to the building line.

The largely continuous High Street frontage remains almost intact with only 4 notable gaps at Blue Boar Car Park, the War Memorial Garden, between 48 and 56 High Street, and



Side lanes and roads leading off the High Street

La Providence. The Blue Boar Car Park was a result of the demolition of a row of buildings that regrettably could not be saved. The War Memorial Garden is a small open space containing the city’s war memorial and providing an unexpected view of the east end of the cathedral. The Memorial Garden originally had railings above the existing wall. The reinstatement of the railings would help provide a consistent building line. Whilst there will be a reinforced sense of separation from the street, there will still be good visibility between the High Street, War Memorial Garden and Cathedral that would encourage users and avoid a dead frontage. The site was once occupied by 4 houses, demolished in 1887. The gap site between 48 and 56 High Street is currently used as a disabled car park.

Generally, large openings in the High Street where buildings once stood appear out of character with the High Street’s pattern, which evolved over some 400 years of presenting an almost continuous building frontage on both sides. Although there has been some improvement to its appearance through hard and soft landscaping, the discontinuity it creates is alien to



Example of a break in the building line at no. 109 High Street

the established character of the High Street. By contrast, the gap at the entrance to La Providence has been consciously designed to create interest of its own.

Any proposals to reinstate the frontage across 48 and 56 High Street and the Blue Boar Car Park needs to be fully considered against planning policy, but in principle it would be desirable to enhance the character of the High Street.

Historic plots and boundaries have largely been retained on the southwest side of the High Street so that the grain of the ancient core has not been adversely affected by out-of-scale modern development. Even the ostensibly incongruous layout of the “backland” Bishop’s Walk development harmonises to an extent through form and design with the density, character and cohesive groupings of the High Street.

The buildings to the north on Crow Lane are located on small terrace plots to the west side and slightly larger suburban plots to the east. They abut the pavement and form a continuous frontage.



Blue Boar car park



War Memorial Garden



Car park between 48 and 56 High Street



La Providence



Similar to the buildings that make up the High Street, they conform to the prevalent character of the High Street and Victoria Street. The buildings to the south, north of its junction with East Row, change in character. Sited on wider plots the buildings are grand in design and scale. However, similar to their more modest neighbours, the buildings abut the footway with the exception of Restoration House and no. 13 Crow Lane, both of which have front gardens. The buildings are also sited very close together, and although they are detached they give a visual impression of a terrace.

The development of the railway and Corporation Street has changed the tight layout on the northeast side, to a more ragged, open edge, with few well-considered building frontages along a wide, dull and intimidating thoroughfare, which acts as a barrier to pedestrian movement as well as a poor setting to the historic core. Prior to the development of the railway and Corporation Street, Blue Boar Lane and Northgate connected the historical core to Rochester Riverside. The frontage and roadway of Corporation Street presents probably the most important enhancement opportunity for the area. A strategy for how this might be brought about is set out in the Management Plan section.



Corporation Street

Open Spaces and Trees

Neither the High Street nor Victoria Street exhibit much greenery because their spatial patterns simply do not allow for it. A recent planting scheme has however been undertaken at the junction of the High Street, Corporation Street, Esplanade and Rochester Bridge. This paved, informal open space is of limited leisure use, but contains seating and trees which help soften the otherwise hard surfaces of the junction.

Trees have more presence in the side streets, where glimpses of larger trees in the gardens of properties on the High Street can be seen from the public viewpoints. The wide scale of Corporation Street allows for larger street trees and planting, with potential for reinforcement as a green screen between the busy road and the historic core. There are some mature trees towards the Blue Boar Car Park. The hard edge of Corporation Street should soften further as more recent planting matures.

The primary open space in this character area lies behind Eastgate House, where Charles Dickens' Swiss Chalet now stands. Planting is minimal directly behind Eastgate House and around the Chalet, with paving dominating this space, but there is a grassed garden to the northeast. It is not visible from the street, but is one of the many quirky surprises and discoveries that characterise this conservation area.

The walled garden at Eagle Court is also hidden from the High Street, located behind the Eagle public house. Sited at a lower level than its surroundings and bounded by remnants of the City Wall and 2-3 storey buildings on the High Street and Crow Lane, the sense of enclosure is reinforced by a rather incongruous and unexceptional timber office building at the centre.

The Memorial Garden is another significant green space that is highly visible from the High Street and presents a clear view of the imposing triangular tower of the Cathedral. As such, although a small space, it appears to be the most utilised space by visitors. It is also used as a throughway to the Cathedral from the High Street and for events and festivals.

Generally, all spaces appear underused. Whilst present, open space and greenery is not prominent in this area, which is very urban in character.

Trees and groups of trees, and open spaces which make a particular contribution to the conservation area are identified on **Green Space: Plan 4.**



Garden at Eastgate House



Eagle Court

Uses

Rochester's strategic river location is responsible for its establishment as a fortified and ecclesiastical centre. Supporting secular commercial and residential development gradually built up, with the trading town developing along the High Street. Retail, food and drink and small offices now characterise the High Street throughout its length, but coexist with civic uses such as the former Conservancy Office and the Guildhall, which are

occupied by the Guildhall Museum, and the old Corn Exchange which is occupied by Medway's registry office and as a functions space. The Medway Education Centre, which is located on Eastgate is another important local facility.

In the past 20 years, the commercial nature of the High Street has changed with the demise of the Royal Naval base and manufacturing in the 1980s, and the district centres of Strood and Chatham now cater for most of the day-to-day needs of the local population. The High Street has responded to these changes by catering more to tourists and diversifying with specialised shops and uses.

Eastgate House, which appeared as Westgate Seminary for Young Ladies in The Pickwick Papers and as Miss Twinkerton's school for young ladies in The Mystery of Edwin Drood, is now a venue for weddings and other ceremonies.

Restoration House was the inspiration for 'Satis House', the home of Miss Havisham. It is residential, but following an extensive programme of repair and renovation by the present owners, both the house and garden are open to the public at certain times during the year.

In 1979, The Six Poor Travellers' House was also ably restored and is open to the public. Dickens wrote about the House in one of his Christmas Stories, The Seven Poor Travellers.

The Swiss Chalet located in the garden behind Eastgate house, was used by the author as a study at his home at Gad's Hill before being relocated, first to London, then Cobham Hall in Kent, and finally its present site in 1961.

The Bull and Royal Victoria Hotel, once a coaching inn where Dickens himself stayed, features in the Pickwick Papers.

The excellent Visitor Centre at 95 High Street is a key indicator of the importance of tourism to the city.

The diversification of the retail sector into specialist and tourist related shops is an essential contribution to the High Street and conservation area's vitality and character, and these uses can be accommodated in the small scale buildings of architectural and historical interest. There are limited retail opportunities meeting primary local needs, mainly concentrated towards Eastgate and Victoria Street.

There is a high turnover of owners/lease holders or vacancies. Signs of these frequent changes of stewardship and vacancy can be seen in the gradual erosion of fabric and detail. There is some anti-social behaviour including some damage to properties. Action to avoid long term damage should be a key component of the Management Plan.



Examples of deterioration

Currently there appears to be a significant under-use of the upper floors above the shops, which can be a problem that warrants positive action in order to encourage the return of such buildings to full beneficial, sustainable use. The use of upper floors, particularly for residential, will also help to provide more security to commercial owners on the ground floor and sustain activity out of normal working hours. A careful analysis of the current problems and causes of the under-use and fabric decay is essential in evolving a strategy in order to preserve and enhance the area.

The tourism industry has also resulted in a high concentration of food and drink establishments, resulting in a lively night time economy. However, there is a perceived conflict with other uses due to anti-social behaviour, including damage to buildings and noise pollution.

Some of the premises on the High Street have residential flats above them. La Providence is a square of early Victorian houses, restored and then converted to 39 flats to provide retirement homes for elderly people of Huguenot descent. Otherwise, residential uses are more prevalent to the south on Crow Lane, Victoria Street, The Terrace and modern backland development at Bishop's Walk and Davy Court.

Good planning for this area should include policies and effective measures which will support and maintain an optimum balance between the interests of residents, businesses and visitors. Maintaining a vibrant mix of uses is essential to the character and attraction of Rochester High Street. Short term interests should not preclude long-term sustainability of the historic assets.

The large car park at Blue Boar Lane off the High Street is one of several choices for visitors and shoppers. Although there are perceived parking shortages by local businesses, demand does not appear to exceed capacity, particularly if the large parking site on the opposite (east) side of Corporation Street is included. Whilst the close grained core does limit the amount of on and off street parking in close proximity, this is not unusual where preserving the character of an area requires that parking areas are set at slightly greater distances.

Despite the historic significance of the river to Rochester, few activities are today directly associated with it at the city's core. Rather, its role is more that of providing an attractive, open setting, moorings for pleasure craft and visual interest.

Architectural Character

The High Street area has a rich and varied architectural heritage with numerous buildings of outstanding architectural and historic importance. This is reflected in the large number of buildings included in the statutory list of buildings and structures of architectural and historic interest, nearly 100 in all, of which 18 are Grade I or II*.

[Listed Buildings: Plan 5]

However, it would be wrong to conclude that the remaining unlisted buildings contribute relatively little to the area's character, or to infer that they could be redeveloped. The character is formed by the entire ensemble of buildings and spaces and, as PPS5 makes clear, there is a presumption in favour of preserving unlisted buildings that positively contribute to an area's character. Therefore, only buildings or elements specifically identified as having a negative impact would be considered as possible candidates for redevelopment, subject always to the actual proposal meeting the key test of enhancement.

[Building Analysis: Plan 6]

Most of the buildings along the principal streets were built as houses with 'front room shops'. They are therefore of a domestic scale, usually two or sometimes three storeys high, but varied in form, materials and architectural detailing. Interspersed between them are several important and larger civic and commercial buildings including the former Guildhall, Conservancy Office, Corn Exchange, Eastgate House and 150-154 High Street. These provide both interesting breaks in the small scale domestic character, act as local landmarks and generally have become attractions in their own right.

The earliest surviving buildings, at nos. 12-14, 46 and 60 High Street, pre-date 1500. These are timber-framed and clad in weatherboarding or render infill, with a jettied first floor, steeply pitched tiled roofs, and steeply pitched or gabled roof forms. These are followed by several timber-framed buildings of the 16th and 17th centuries, of similar style, most notably at nos. 10, 30, 44, 86, 98, 150-154 High Street and 'The Six Poor Travellers' House.' The latter unusually presents a striking, beautifully crafted stone gabled façade, which dates from 1771. The early 15th century Chertsey's Gate was converted into a dwelling in the 18th century by the addition of a timber house over the top.

The predominant style from the 17th century onwards is typical

Georgian with a simple 2-3 storey box form, symmetrical façade, and low pitch roof running parallel with the street behind parapets, or of the mansard type. Any deviation from this pattern suggests that the building is older and has been refronted to appear Georgian.

The neat, geometric Georgian frontages were ideal for 'dressing up' with classical details such as: impressive doorcases, fanlights, sash windows, moulded cornices and string courses. In the early 19th century, minimal decoration was more typical, as exhibited by Victoria Street.

Classical influence extended into the 20th century with several neo-classic buildings in the High Street, The Post Office, Visitor Centre extension to Eastgate House and the Oxfam building at 29 High Street are examples of this. Even more recently, the extension to the Library building, just off the High Street, is an excellent scholarly reworking of late 18th century domestic architecture.

Two recently completed developments, Bishops Walk to the rear of the High Street, and Davey Court off The Terrace, display differing approaches to the problem of fitting new domestic architecture into the historic context. The former contrives to vary forms, heights and facing materials so as to break down the scale and seek some affinity with traditional building typology. The latter adopts rather illiterate Georgian expression in a single facing brick. Both approaches employ a large measure of low cost, standard components, avoiding a more challenging modern contextualist approach, yet failing to achieve the sense of authenticity expected of good period revival, e.g. the library

extension described above.

Barclays Bank at the junction of High Street with Star Hill makes a negative contribution to the conservation area. Its scale, form and materials are discordant with the character of the High Street and emphasised by its prominent location.

Numerous fine shop fronts adorn the High Street. The majority, whether original to the building or a later alteration, date from the 19th century and several are of great interest in their own right. Set within relatively small historic buildings, they are modestly scaled and detailed in almost infinite variation of timber craftsmanship. Painted softwood predominates, with traditional details often including columns and corbels supporting moulded cornices and fascias, above shop windows. Most glazing is subdivided with transoms and vertical bars, whilst some successful modern interpretations adopt full height plate glass. Stall risers, which protect the glass from the pavement, are also prevalent, and these are often divided into panels with mouldings or are tiled. An exceptionally fine and distinctive Edwardian shop front with curved glass panels, still unlisted, survives at 72 High Street. Most of the better quality shopfronts are located in listed buildings where they are protected, but where small shops struggle to survive, poor maintenance and deterioration are noticeable.

Commercial advertising and signage is generally well controlled on the High Street with hand-painted fascias and hanging signs, mainly due to the listed status of most buildings. However, there appears to be an increasing number of inappropriate signs as well as several ad hoc signs such as

banners fixed to façades or railings, and A-boards which detract from and cheapen both the building and street character.

Although much of the architectural character of the conservation area is varied, Crow Lane probably exhibits the widest and dramatic variety. The most prominent building on the road is Restoration House which is Grade I listed. The plan is U-shaped, possibly due to the amalgamation of two medieval buildings which were combined in the late 16th or early 17th century to create the mansion house, the wings are not built in one with the centre, or at least do not appear to be. In the mid-17th century the house was refaced with continuous moulded cornices and an engaging display of cut and moulded brickwork. The most striking feature is the parapet broken by a tall attic with elaborately shaped gable.



Restoration House, Crow Lane

Its neighbouring property, Vine House, is notable for its upper stories which are clad in timber. This is a typical Kentish detail and a further example can be seen at no.6 and 2. Crow Lane. Another Kentish detail is present at Vines Croft, which has tiles of various pattern cladding on the first floor.

Opposite Restoration House, the School House is an imposing late 19th century, 3 storey building of Gothic appearance, designed to accommodate the main boarding house of King's School by John Travnor Perry.

On the whole, the buildings are well maintained and apart from normal redecoration and some maintenance of details they are in good condition. The building analysis shows buildings which make a positive contribution to the conservation area, and where there should be a presumption of retention

[Building Analysis: Plan 6].



Nos. 12 and 46 High Street, timber-framed buildings, pre-dating 1500



Nos. 59-61 High Street, a typical Georgian building, and no.170, an older building refronted to appear Georgian



Chertsey Gate and 18th dwelling over the top



The Post Office, neo-classical design



Example of good scholarly detailing at the Library extension, and an example of illiterate Georgian expression at Davy Court



No. 72 High Street, a fine, distinctive Edwardian shopfront



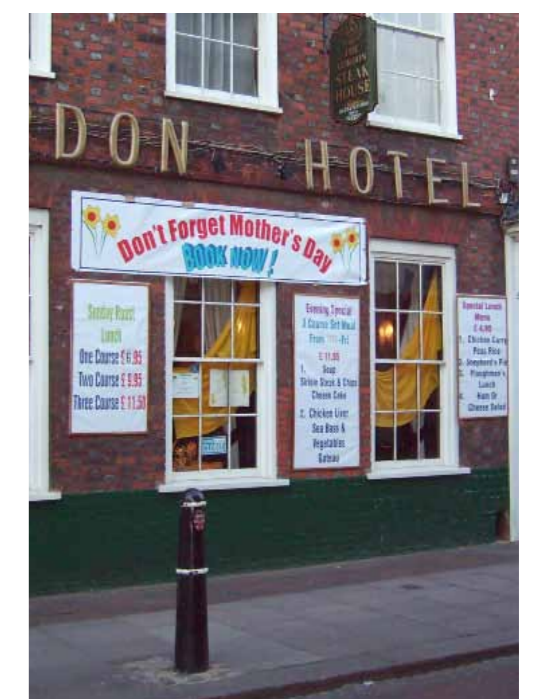
No. 175 High Street, removed stall-risers, UPVc fascia sign and metallic surround.



Barclays Bank, 8 Star Hill, a negative contribution to the conservation area through discordant scale, design and materials



Proliferation of A-boards, resulting in clutter



Example of banners fixed to the listed facade

Building Materials

Walls: In and around the High Street, the earliest surviving buildings are timber framed, some having been refronted in brick, as described above. In places, the frame may lie beneath traditional (i.e. lime based) render, which assists preservation. Thus it is not always easy to identify these buildings. Frames were usually infilled in wattle and daub, much of which may over time have been replaced or overlain in a variety of other materials. A few timber framed buildings, such as Nos. 32 and 44 High Street have been weatherboard clad. Exceptionally fine, Eastgate House, a much altered and added to building, visibly combines timber framing and masonry, the bricks of this period (up to about 1650) being of smaller dimensions compared with later, mainly Georgian brickwork. The heads of many 18th century windows are formed of gauged brick arches.

The majority of walling is solid brick masonry, the facework usually in English or Flemish bond, the latter prevalent from the late 17th century, when brick was becoming cheaper and heavy timber more scarce and expensive. Exceptionally, Chertseys Gate is faced in alternating layers of stone and flint. Although there are few stone faced buildings, stone was increasingly used in doorcases, dressings to openings, mouldings and ornaments as the 18th and 19th centuries progress.

Roofs: roof forms as well as materials are vitally important to the character of the area, especially as they are visible from higher surrounding ground. Nearly all roofs of traditional buildings are covered in handmade plain clay tiles or natural slate, the latter being used on pitches below 45 degrees,

often behind brick parapets, or mansard roofs. Occasionally roofs, e.g. the Visitor Centre, are covered in curved clay tiles. In this context, the few modern, flat roofed forms appear wholly alien.

Windows in earlier buildings are timber or metal framed casements, the latter typically with small diamond or rectangular cut leaded lights. The majority of Georgian period windows are painted softwood 6 over 6 pattern double hung sashes. After the early 19th century, window glass sizes become larger, most commonly with single panes in each sash. A variety of variations in window forms and glazing patterns takes place after about 1875, though painted softwood remains predominant. Modern, large scale fenestration, such as used at Eastgate Dental Practice, appears by comparison alien in both scale and craftsmanship.

Metalwork: rare in the High Street, mainly used for hanging signs, occasionally for railings and gates. Most feature metalwork dates from the 18th and 19th centuries. The railings to the south and northeast of Eastgate House are fine examples and are Grade II listed. Gutters and downpipes on most eaves type roofs are generally cast iron. Rainwater is taken from complex roofs such as Eastgate House via cast or lead hoppers and downpipes.



Vines Croft, pattern cladding, another typical Kentish detail



Vine House, timber cladding, a typical Kentish detail

Public Realm: Street Furniture, Floorscape and Lighting

A family of 'heritage' style street furniture has been selected for the High Street. Street name plates have the Rochester coat of arms with white letters on a black background. Benches have wooden seating with cast aluminium legs and arms, with the exception of the Memorial Garden. Bollards are painted black with the Medway coat of arms and gold trim. Litter bins are painted black aluminium with the Medway coat of arms and gold lettering. Although consistency of furnishings helps to unify the High Street, some stakeholders perceive that much of it is of low-quality and poorly maintained.

Spacing and location of furniture along the High Street appears appropriate, but railings, benches, signage and other features introduced at the more open and prominent areas at each end of the High Street appear somewhat cluttered and ill-maintained.

The High Street is lit by period type luminaires mounted on posts or walls as seen at no., 20, 41, 55, 80, 76, 85-89, 115, 120, 158, 163, 162, 170, 177 Chertseys Gate, Eastgate House and the Crown Public House. Most are black, with some patinated copper surfaces showing. A few CCTV post-top cameras might have been better combined with lamp posts. The use of standard traffic signage and awkwardly sited utility cabinets also detracts from the street quality.

Red K6 Telephone Kiosks, listed for their design and symbolic quality, add interest to the public realm. Their appearance complements that of nearby buildings thereby making a significant contribution to the architectural and historic character of the conservation area.

Paving materials on footways vary through York stone flags, setts, tarmac and concrete slabs. Large areas of concrete slabs are in poor condition. Crossings and borders have been laid out in setts, but poor maintenance and tarmac patching following highway excavations has degraded the intended enhancement. The course of the city wall, helpfully picked out in a contrasting paving, is somewhat let down by the inferior, patchy surrounding floorscape and lack of interpretation.

Much of the High Street vehicle roadway has been repaved in flat red concrete paviors. As there is no historic evidence or other basis for them, these areas lack a sense of authenticity. Offering to some extent the look and feel of traffic-free zones, they obscure the vehicle-pedestrian conflict in which pedestrians are at a disadvantage. York stone, the material of choice for historic area footways, is present in limited quantity.

Obviously, measures which recognise and integrate the floorscape of Corporation Street with the character of the conservation area need to be considered as part of any scheme for that route.



Wall mounted luminary



CCTV post-top camera



Red K6 Telephone Kiosk

Key Characteristics to Preserve and Enhance - Character Area 1 - High Street / Victoria Street / East Row / Crow Lane

- The survival of the little altered 'herringbone' High Street
- The surviving historic plots, mainly on the western side of the High Street
- Domestic scale, but varied building types, particularly the grand buildings at the southern end of Crow Lane
- Key buildings providing focus and purpose
- Continuous frontage and consistent building line, enclosing the High Street and Victoria Street
- Retail, food and drink and small office uses geared towards the tourism and cultural markets
- Uniformity of 'heritage style' street furniture



Varied paving materials on the High Street and side roads

CHARACTER AREA 2 – THE CASTLE AND CATHEDRAL PRECINCT



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Character Area 2 - Street Map

Streets and Spaces

Three distinct but historically interrelated areas, Boley Hill, the Castle, and the Cathedral Precinct, are interlinked by meandering roads and pathways. Although Boley Hill to St Margaret's Street is a main thoroughfare, side roads often end in cul-de-sacs or morph into pedestrian paths. The resulting constraints on vehicle movement have a calming influence, promoting a welcome sense of seclusion.

The fundamental spatial character is a product of the historic layout of distinct, separate entities: the Castle and its grounds on the motte, bounded by its defences; Boley Hill, a former Castle enclosure raised on extensive earthworks, and the 14th century Cathedral precinct, historically surrounded by a wall with several gates. Much of the wall was lost following the Dissolution, but Cemetery Gate, Deanery Gate and Prior's Gate survive. The removal of the wall enabled the commercial area to be extended along the High Street to the north. The west wall probably followed the line of King's Head Lane and Boley Hill. Therefore, the setting of the Cathedral has always been one of enclosure by walls or buildings, the only relatively open view being from the direction of the Castle. Historically, the Castle was linked with the town via the Cathedral precinct and College Gate, and retains a good connection between the Castle/Boley Hill and the Cathedral, although the areas stand apart.

The distinctive present spatial pattern around the Castle is a product of its historic development. Within its walls, the Keep is located at the southeast corner. Extensive open grounds lie to the northwest, the probable site of medieval bailey buildings. Although the evidence is still incomplete, the Rochester Castle Conservation Plan, 2009, explores the subject, with recommendations for further study. The main entrance would have been at the northeast corner, connected to the High Street by Two Post Alley. Epaul Lane is likely to stand on the line of the original entrance road from the south, while a section of the bridge leading up to the north-east gate, which lies under Epaul Lane, was briefly exposed in 1888.

The Plan also explores the link between the Castle and Boley Hill. Visually, the Castle and Boley Hill are linked by the grassed areas on either side of Baker's Walk, but understanding is incomplete. However, following its military decommission and transfer to private owners, the area developed from a group of tenements into a single grand residence at the site of Satis House. The buildings known as the 'Old Hall' and the 'Old Vicarage' were originally constructed in the early 16th century as a hall range for this house. Satis House, which replaced the grand residence

in the 18th century, is now part of the Kings School Estate. The 'Old Hall' and the 'Old Vicarage' are now individual houses. With more recent buildings on Boley Hill, Bakers Walk and St Margaret's Mews, they create an informal and irregular urban pattern with varying plot sizes and shapes and building forms. Satis House emerges as the grandest of these on account of land contours and the requirement for careful design and siting.

While the Castle has retained its historic plot, the Cathedral land has gradually been subdivided with some parts developed for residential or educational uses. The setting however still retains a sense of relatively quiet open spaces containing individual buildings or groups in spacious plots dotted throughout the Precinct, College Green and along College Yard. Latterly a more uniform layout in smaller plots along Minor Canon Row and King's Orchard has been added. The uniform terrace on Minor Canon Row provides a clear, well defined edge to the street in contrast to its more varied neighbours on College Green and the staggered building line on King's Orchard, which presents a more amorphous edge. On King's Orchard, the road is wide with The Precinct's open space to the north and generous distances between buildings to the south, reinforcing the estate's spacious setting. Higher density to the south has been influenced by the constraints of the Cathedral, St Nicholas' Church and the High Street.

College Yard is a minor access road to the northwest of the Cathedral. At the eastern end is Chertsey Gate, which has largely lost its gateway function by the demolition of the buildings on its north-west flank and the use of this gap by traffic along Boley Hill.

Chertsey Gate and College Yard are predominately used by pedestrians. It buffers the Cathedral from the main flow of traffic along Boley Hill, and acts as a transition zone from the busier urban landscape of the High Street. It also provides a useful space to view the spectacular west elevation of the Cathedral.

Black Boy Alley runs off to the northeast of the Cathedral, leading to the High Street. It marks the site of St William's Gate through which pilgrims passed on their way to the shrine of St William of Perth in the Cathedral from mid 13th to the 15th century. The enclosed, darkened alleyway results in a claustrophobic quality, but walking from the High Street there is a view of the south buttress of St Nicholas's Church which juts out across the path. The east window of St Nicholas's is seen in forced perspective, and at the corner to the south is Deanery Gate while to the north the irregular line of the Castle Wall can be seen through the trees in College Yard. The focused views form an integral part of its character.

Directly opposite the Cathedral, 18th century houses and St Nicholas' burial ground were levelled in the 1960s to partially reinstate the Castle ditch. The resulting open space between the Castle and Boley Hill helps recreate its medieval setting, but its barrenness and the presence of vehicular traffic on Boley Hill reduce its attractiveness.

Open Spaces and Trees

There are three major open spaces; the Castle grounds, the Castle ditch, and the Cathedral Precinct

The Castle Gardens, dominated by the Castle Keep, displays a plain,

municipal appearance. The walls of varying height are not offset by vegetation. Landscape is grass broken only by single species, low-growing shrubs and wide tarmac paths dating from the late 19th century layout. A few mature trees, the remains of a bandstand and a modern refreshment kiosk are the only features. Old maps and images suggest an unfavourable comparison with the 19th century setting, and a need to fully consider the contribution of this landscape to understanding and enhancing the asset's significance.

The relatively open landscape may be more historically appropriate, as it appears that this was the dominant form of the bailey during the 14th and 15th centuries. There is also a requirement to keep the space clear for amenity use, including large scale public events. However, it would be desirable to have in place a co-ordinated long term strategy for this area. The present refreshment kiosk, bandstand remains and tarmac paths are clearly incongruous.



Black Boy Alley



College Yard and the distinctive, ancient Catalpa Tree



The Castle Ditch - vast open space



The Castle Gardens - municipal appearance

The Castle Ditch is a shallow, broad grassed area separating the Castle and Cathedral. Its size and starkly dramatic form evokes the conflict-readiness of its original function and setting. The defensive element is its primary quality, though alienating component of the ensemble.

The wide open, spacious and appropriately treeless Ditch contrasts strongly with College Yard, which lies to the immediate northeast. The tree filled saddle between Boley Hill and College Yard not only provides interest in the streetscene but also softens the appearance of Boley Hill and lessens the impact of traffic to College Yard. Amongst these trees, a rare and ancient Catalpa (American-Indian bean tree) is a striking feature.

The Ditch also contrasts with the environs of the Boley Hill area, directly northwest. The mature street trees and planting in front and back gardens contributes to its verdant, semi-aristocratic character, and together with two grassed areas straddling Bakers Walk they soften the appearance of the parking forecourt to the front of Satis House.

Other substantial trees can be found within the Cathedral Precinct to the north of King's Orchard. This open space is private, historically and presently inaccessible, but contributes significantly in the spatial and green character of the area due to its size and richness of planting, and to the setting of the Cathedral and Precinct buildings. It is also of historic interest with the course of the Roman wall running through the space, and a section of the City Ditch and City Wall to the rear of the Deanery Lodge, the Archdeaconry, Prebendal House and East Canonry.

The priory buildings have long fallen into decay and today little is left. However, in the Cloister - where the monastery was originally attached to the south chancel of the Cathedral rather than the usual configuration to the nave - two sections of ruined wall are found. On the south side, the entrance arch to the monk's refectory survives. The Cloister is laid out as a garden, with a Garden of Remembrance in the west corner. It is a peaceful space, despite being highly visible from public vantage points, which contributes to the historic and verdant character of the Cathedral and its precinct.

Trees and groups of trees, and open spaces which make a particular contribution to the conservation area are identified on **Green Space: Plan 4**.

Use

Medway Council are wholly responsible for the Castle Grounds, while the Castle is managed by Medway Council on behalf of English Heritage. The Castle is a tourist attraction, and tourism is important to its sustainability and the economy of the Castle and Rochester. Although there are few permanent supporting facilities, the Castle Gardens are used for events, such as concerts, fairs and re-enactments, which attract additional visitors and help maintain its cultural role. The Rochester Castle Conservation Plan explores options on developing tourist facilities. As ever, the balance between exploitation, development (such as roofing over) and potential impact on significance requires careful balance.

The highly visible, unattractive car park in the Ditch has a strongly negative

impact on the setting of the Castle. It encourages traffic to use Castle Hill and the Castle's foreground. The number of parking spaces is small. Alternative sites close by include Northgate Street and the Esplanade. The opportunity for enhancement is worth consideration.

The Cathedral has been a place of worship for over 1400 years, and this remains its primary function. It has a secondary tourism use. There is some scope for review of facilities and awareness raising. Tourism is important to the Cathedral's preservation and vice versa.

The Kings School Estate occupies Satis House, the Old Bursary, Mackean House, St Andrew's Centre and the College. With the exception of a few properties on College Yard, which acts as an overspill of the High Street, the remaining buildings are residential.

Architectural Character

The Cathedral and Castle are the pre-eminent historic buildings of the Conservation Area.

The Castle: The Castle's Grade I/Scheduled Ancient Monument designation reflects its importance, although there have been considerable rebuilding and repairs throughout. Gundulph, Bishop of Rochester, began the construction of the present Castle 1077 and 1108, making use of what remained of the original Roman city walls. A section of Gundulph's curtain wall survives to the west, incorporating remains of the Roman city wall, strengthened in the 13th century. Gundulph's Curtain is among the earliest surviving masonry in the country. The original wall would have continued to rejoin the drum tower to the southeast. The Rochester Castle Conservation Plan suggests through similar stonework this tower and the adjoining stretches to the south are a result of substantial rebuilding after the siege of 1215. The arrow slits of both the drum tower and the curtain wall indicate that these works were designed to provide systematic archery cover. The east curtain wall was completely rebuilt in the 14th century, however, a section of the c.1223 wall has been preserved as part of the rear of the 14th century tower. The north perimeter wall of the current castle is 20th century with palings, but there are fragments of the north section of the 13th century curtain wall incorporated into the garden walls to the rear of High Street properties. To the northwest, the bastion has been altered and breached in 1872 by the Royal Engineers to create the current northwest entrance featuring a prominent Norman revival round headed arch. Designed for function, the curtain walls have considerable architectural value.

The imposing Norman keep, towering dramatically over the town, has become Rochester's iconic architectural symbol. Uncompromisingly rectangular with the exception of the rebuilt southeast angle, the roofless Keep is 21 meters square, rising to a height of 34 metres with four turrets rising a further 3.7 metres. Keeps were highly decorated, but in the present day we only see the stripped back masonry with ashlar dressings and quoins, half-columns, capitals and chevroned arches to the original top stage openings. Except for those at first floor level, which are square headed, all other openings are round-headed. A report on the condition of the keep by GB Geotechnics (2006) highlights serious defects, including voids in the walls and deterioration of exterior and decorative stonework. It recommends extensive works to ensure its ongoing structural stability and preservation.

The Cathedral: The continually altered and extended Cathedral was heavily restored in the 19th Century, but the West front and the nave are outstanding examples of 12th century Romanesque architecture. The general Romanesque style is an elaboration of the early Christian basilica plan (longitudinal with side aisles and an apse, or semicircular projection of the eastern, or sanctuary, end of the centre aisle), a raised nave (centre aisle) with windows piercing the upper walls (clerestory), a tripartite interior articulation of the nave into a lower arcade (separating the nave from side aisles), a triforium arcade (separating the upper nave from galleries above the side aisles), the transepts (forming a transverse aisle crossing the nave in front of the sanctuary), and a western facade completed by two towers. The East front dating from the 13th century was also built in the Romanesque style with rounded arches and typical Norman details. The



Northwest entrance, 1872



The Imposing Norman Keep



Section of Gundulph's curtain wall, the earliest surviving masonry



Castle Keep, built around the same time, has the same shaped arch and style of decoration. The Cathedral's great window on its west elevation in the Perpendicular (late Gothic) style was inserted in the 15th century. The present pyramid-shaped spire was added in 1904.

St Nicholas: The Parish Church of St Nicholas, which now houses the diocesan offices, was founded in the 15th century, but the current building is the result of much rebuilding after a fire in the 17th century and significant restoration and re-fenestration work in 1860-1962. Dominated by the Cathedral, St Nicholas is discrete in appearance with minor decorations. Its most prominent features are its 19th century light decorated arched windows framed by buttresses with set-offs.

Most of the other buildings within the area are on a more domestic scale, usually two to four storeys high. Although these buildings have individual qualities, the predominant form is Georgian, with fine examples at nos. 1-7 Minor Canon Row, an 18th century Grade I terrace that presents a symmetrical, uniform frontage. Satis House is another good example of Georgian architecture with good quality Georgian details including a projecting Greek Doric antae porch on plinth. The 'Old Hall' still retains something of its Tudor appearance with its timber-frame and steeply pitched tiled roofs, and front facing gable. Mackean House is a 19th century building, but satisfactorily replicates the Tudor domestic style with a front facing gable and impressive polygonal brick stacks with stone caps. Conversely, Garth House and Cloister House incorporate medieval remains but remodelled with a late 19th century



Rochester Cathedral, early Christian basilica plan



Rochester Cathedral, an example of Romanesque architecture



Nos. 1-7 Minor Canon Row, uniform Georgian architecture



Satis House, another fine example of Georgian architecture

Gothic Revival style. Of note from the 20th century are The Archdeaconry, Prebendal House, East Canonry and Deanery Lodge, which are mainly products of relatively unsophisticated developers or building companies and not of exceptional merit. Given its attractive setting and proximity to Mackean House, Eastergarth, and the College, these buildings represent an enhancement opportunity.

In common with the High Street, the area has a rich architectural heritage with a high number of listed buildings in the vicinity. However, any omission in the statutory list or this conservation area appraisal does not mean it is of no importance. Where they make a positive contribution to the Conservation area, there should be a presumption in favour of retention

[Building Analysis: Plan 6].

Building Materials

Kentish ragstone, with tufa and chalk rubble is used to construct the Castle and curtain walls. Kentish rag is a hard, coarse grained bluish grey limestone. Quarried locally, its use forms part of the Castle's unique, local identity.

Dating from a similar period, the Cathedral's walls are also formed mainly of Kentish rag, with some flint galleting. 12th century facing work used Caen stone, with Purbeck marble used extensively for decorative elements. Some Bath stone, Chilmark stone and Weldon stone has been used for later restoration work. Prior's Gates and Deanery Gates are mainly constructed from a mix of random rubble ragstone and Kentish ragstone.

The colour and texture of materials



used for the Castle and Cathedral contrast with the brown or red clay brick used for most domestic building within the area. This highlights their prestigious status and reinforces their separate and distinct characters. The warm-coloured material of the brown or red clay bricks, laid in Flemish bond, is present throughout the domestic area on walls and parapets, which links the areas and provides a cohesive townscape. Garth House and Cloister House are unusual in that the exterior has a sandstone dressing.

Windows vary in shape, size and style according to the age of the building. Most commonly Georgian windows are invariably double hung painted softwood box sashes.

The Cathedral roof is covered in slate, emphasising its high status, but the majority of buildings up to at least the mid-late 19th century buildings employ handmade red Kent clay tiles. As on the High Street/Victoria Street character area, the surrounding natural topography is such that the colour and texture of roofs is a dominant and vitally important feature in both distant and intimate views into and around the area.

Public Realm: Street Furniture, Floorscape and Lighting

Street furniture generally conforms to the descriptions noted in the High Street/Victoria Street character area. The design does not detract from the historic environment and the consistency provides a sense of unity.

As a hub for tourism, there are surprisingly few directional signs. The Castle and Cathedral can be seen from many vantage points across

Rochester, helpfully avoiding sign clutter. However, the route to the castle entrance is not particularly well defined and one arrives by accident rather than purpose. Signage for lesser known attractions and facilities would also assist legibility.

There is a small area of rag-stone pitching to the front and side of Priors Gate House. Rag-stone pitching would have been the prevailing material for paving before the introduction of York Stone and subsequently other materials, and therefore these fragments are historically significant.

Overall, paving materials vary from setts, tarmac, stone or concrete slabs. Some effort has been made with resurfacing after highway repairs, so there are fewer conspicuous patches compared to the High Street. Reasons underlying the many changes in surfaces are often not self-evident. A floorscape strategy would be desirable.

The Castle, the Cathedral, St Nicholas' and Chertsey's Gate are floodlit. The lighting skilfully highlights features and the apparatus is reasonably discreet. Lighting can stimulate a greater interest in the character of the city at night, but its concept and detailed design would require both careful consideration to avoid undue glare and considerable funds.



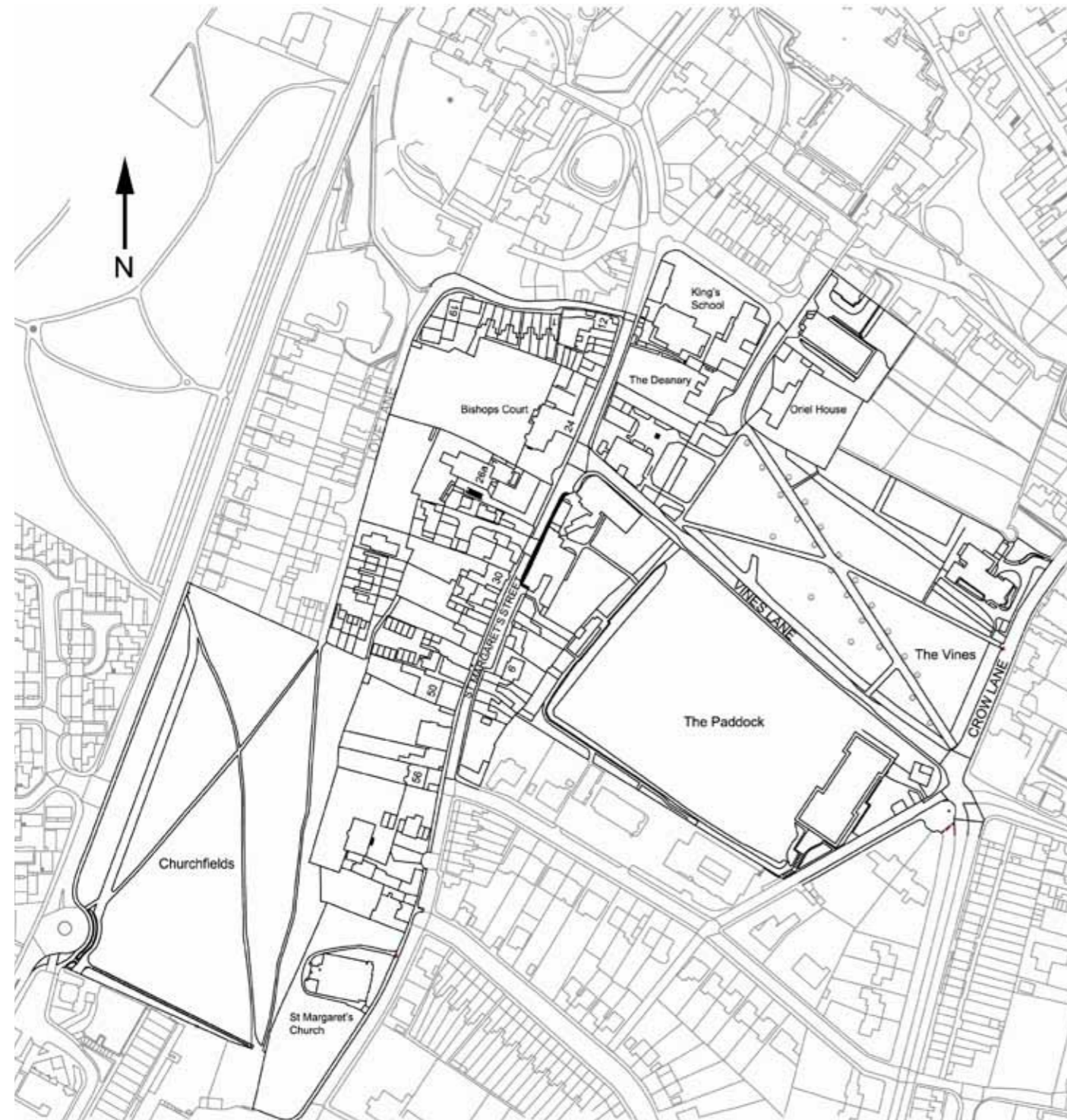
Fragments of rag-stone pitching to the front of Priors Gate

Key Characteristics to Preserve and Enhance - Character Area 2 – The Castle and Cathedral Precinct

- Three distinct, separate areas, interlinked by history and meandering roads and pathways.
- The architectural, cultural and historic contribution of the Castle and Cathedral
- The informal, irregular pattern of plots and building forms on Boley Hill
- The rich visual experience, spatially as well as architecturally of Black Boy Alley
- The individual buildings or groups in spacious plots throughout the Cathedral Precinct.
- The rare plan form, in that the Cloister is in an unusual position in relation to the Cathedral. A clear visual relationship between the Cloister and the Cathedral remains, which has group value and historic interest of the Precinct.
- The Castle Ditch, evoking the conflict-readiness of its original function and castle setting.
- The relatively open landscape of the castle gardens
- The trees at Boley Hill and College Yard
- Uniformity of 'heritage style' street furniture



CHARACTER AREA 3 – THE PADDOCK / VINES LANE / THE VINES / ST MARGARET’S STREET / CHURCHFIELDS



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Character Area 3 - The Paddock, Vines Lane, The Vines, St Margaret's Street and Churchfields

Streets and Spaces

The spatial structure is overwhelmingly characterised by the division of the area between the open space of The Vines and The Paddock, the grand and varied buildings at the southern end of Crow Lane and the ancient, winding route of St Margaret's Street.

The Vines and the Paddock jointly form the largest area of recreational open space in the City. Broken up by Vines Lane, the former is public and the latter private. The Vines is bordered almost exclusively by the Kings School Estate; The Paddock to the south, Davies Court and the main school buildings to the west, Oriel house and School House to the north with the Cathedral Precinct beyond, and the King's School gymnasium to the east. As such, The Vines form a much-used pedestrian route linking these places with diagonal pedestrian paths between its four corners.

The character of Crow Lane contrasts strongly with the open space of The Vines. As with Vines Lane, this results in a one sided emphasis, which is a distinctive feature. Vine Lane is comprised of a brick wall on the southern side, with the open edge of The Vines to the north. This one sided emphasis is an essential character of the road, while the wall rising from the back edge of the pavement is typical of the character area. Vines Lane links Crow Lane with St Margaret's Street, one of the oldest of the city's thoroughfares that runs roughly parallel with the River Medway. St Margaret's Street derives its character from its varying widths, winding course and descending levels, which restricts views along the street. It is also a walled street, intercepted with buildings. Generally the buildings, like the walls, are built up to the pavement. Demolition of the walls or gaps to create recent vehicular accesses to the street have been resisted, which has helped retain its characteristic unity. This streetscape is intimate, particularly the stretch between the junction with Vines Lane and its junction with King Edward Road.

St Margaret's Church at the southern most edge of the conservation area acts as a stop end. Together with Churchfields recreation ground and sweeping views across the Medway, which lies to the west of the Church, its graveyard contributes to an impressive setting with a strong sense of spaciousness.

Open Spaces and Trees

The Vines is the principal public space in the area. It was formally the site of the Monk's vineyard, hence its name.

Its main feature is its avenue of mature plane trees along the northwest-southwest diagonal, complementing the rectangular plan form, emphasised by trees, flowerbeds and boundary walls flanking the edge on the north, south and west side. In this way, it is the trees which dominate the scene. The trees, planting and boundary wall also contribute to an ambience of seclusion, sometimes eliciting allegations of anti-social behaviour. Nevertheless, the self-containment is a fundamental part of its character. The approach to the Vines through the small gap in the wall opposite the old Archdeaconry is a surprising and quirky element, one of many that characterise Rochester.

In contrast, due to its nature as playing fields, The Paddock is almost devoid of trees and planting. The Paddock lies to the south of The Vines, but the space is only visible from the gaps between buildings on King Edward Road, which is outside the conservation area. Within the conservation area, the Paddock is screened from the public vantage point by the brick wall along Vines Lane, the tight urban grain on St Margaret's Street, and the mass and bulk of Chadlington House. Nonetheless, The Paddock makes a key contribution to the green and spacious character of the vicinity.

The junction of Vines Lane and St Margaret's Street is appropriately emphasised by a large copper beech in the grounds of no.24 and a chestnut tree on the opposite corner. Further north, as the road bends towards the Castle, there is a pleasant view of tree foliage with the long roof of the Cathedral nave, tower and spire as a backdrop. A tree emphasises this bend in the road and the inside of the curve is heavily planted giving it a soft

and textured edge, linking it with the verdant character of Boley Hill.

Another important space in the character area is Churchfields, an open recreation ground on the side of the hill leading up to St Margaret's Church from the Medway, which was presented to the town in 1906 by Charles Willis, J.P., a local councillor. Similar to the Vines' boundaries, Churchfields is bordered by a line of trees along the western and eastern edge with a wall to the north, but due to the slope and expansive views across the Medway the space does not feel enclosed. Also similar to the Vines, diagonal pedestrian paths crisscross the park. However, while the landscaping of the Vines is formal, Churchfields is less ornamental with no flowerbeds or public art within the space. Churchfields is significant not only for its contribution to local amenity but also the greening of the conservation area from distant views.



A mature tree lined path at The Vines



The Vines, rectangular form emphasised by flowerbeds along the boundary



Copper Beech at no.24 St Margaret's Street



Churchfields, expansive views and sense of space

Use

A school has existed at Kings School since AD604 on the Cathedral's Foundation, and forms an important part of Rochester's character. After the dissolution of the priory the school was refounded in 1542 by Royal Charter, hence its current name. Alongside the main Kings School, The Paddock makes up a considerable amount of the Kings School Estate. The school also occupies a number of other buildings within the character area, namely:

- The properties at Davies Court
- School Hall
- Oriel House
- The Old Archdeaconry
- School House
- Vines Hall
- Chadlington House
- Old St Margaret's
- Swimming Pool, St Margaret's Street
- St Margaret's House

Owing to its wide, cul-de-sac character and the lack of parking restrictions, parked cars and school minibuses are conspicuous around the Kings School, School Hall and the Old Archdeaconry. This results in a detrimental impression of an informal car park and presents an obvious area for enhancement. With this exception, however, operational parking for the school is not unduly conspicuous from a public vantage point.

St Margaret's Parish Church is in active religious use. The remaining properties on St Margaret's Street are mainly residential as the late 19th century and 20th century saw rows of substantial villas or semi-detached houses spring up on St Margaret's Street to house naval and

military personnel. With the demise of the naval base, the houses have remained, forming the predominant character of St Margaret's Street.

The Vines is a popular public park, but it also makes a cultural contribution to the city as it hosts activities associated with the popular annual Dickens Festival

Architectural Character

The nave and chancel of St Margaret's Parish Church dates from the 19th century, but still retains its medieval west-end tower. The tower is a distinctive landmark in distant views from outside the conservation area. The Church wall is typical of many in the street and is composite in character.

As a walled street, many of the buildings are only glimpsed behind impressive boundaries, which is an essential architectural feature. In recognition of their importance, many of the boundary walls are listed.

The majority of residential buildings on this stretch of St Margaret's Street face the street and form a pleasing group of 18th century and early 19th century houses. They vary particularly in height. South of St Margaret's church is no. 60, which appears to be a lively example of a polite early 18th century brick vicarage with full height polychromatic bay window that makes no attempt to blend in with a 1720s house, but nevertheless works in a peculiar way. Its neighbouring property, the Gleanings, also merits particular mention. It has a two styled exterior, geometrically neo-classical towards the road, castellated towards the river. Its split personality in term of

architecture is one of the most distinctive and important domestic pieces of architecture of the early 19th century at Rochester, although recently marred by inappropriate classical forecourt balustrade.

As a result of it's widening at various points, 19th century and 20th century houses have taken the place of its earlier wooden clapboard cottages along St Margaret's Street, although no.34 is a fine surviving example nestled in between buildings of grander design and scale.

In between these domestic buildings are the more prestigious and much larger Kings School Estate building at St Margaret's House, the Swimming Pool, Old St Margaret and Kings School. Along with 23-25 St Margaret's Street, St Margaret's House is



Examples of intact walls along St Margaret's Street



No. 58 St Margaret's Street, neo-classical frontage



No. 36 a typical house on St Margaret's Street and its neighbour No.34, a surviving clapboard cottage



Old St Margaret, breaking the domestic scale

the only statutorily listed building on the east side of the street within the conservation area. The long white painted façade contrasts strongly with the narrower frontage widths opposite. The Swimming Pool is set back from the road, but continuity is maintained by the frontage walling, approximately 6 metres in height. Old St Margaret are former almshouses. These buildings provide a break in the smaller scale, domestic character of the principal streets and act as prominent landmarks. North of the junction with Vine Lane, although Kings School makes a positive contribution to the conservation area, Davies Court incorporates modern buildings that are utilitarian in design. Consequently they are not of any particular architectural or historic interest and as a group can be classified as neutral buildings.



Modern building at Davies Court



Building Materials

The oldest element, the west-end tower of Margaret’s parish church is composed of random rubble ragstone with some flint dressings. The nave and chancel is constructed of brick, stuccoed throughout. The roof is welsh slate.

Brick is the predominant material in this character area. The high boundary walls, which extend for a considerable proportion of the frontages on both sides of the street, are built in mellow brick with admixtures of knapped flints and Kentish Ragstone.

Most of the 18th century and early 19th century houses are also made from brick, reflecting the point in history where bricks became more fashionable and affordable. The bricks are variety of colours, but brown, and red and blue mix are the most usual.

Public Realm: Street Furniture, Floorscape and Lighting

There is a notable surfeit of telephone wires hanging across the street, which extend from several heavily loaded telegraph poles. These are unsightly and detract from the streetscape. The relocation of these poles and wires should be considered.

The pavements and roads are mainly asphalt. The material is not obtrusively unpleasant, but it is not particularly appropriate for the historic area and some improvements are desirable. Of interest, a line of granite sets in the road between Oriel House and The Old Archdeaconry marks the position of the city wall after it was re-sited in 1380.

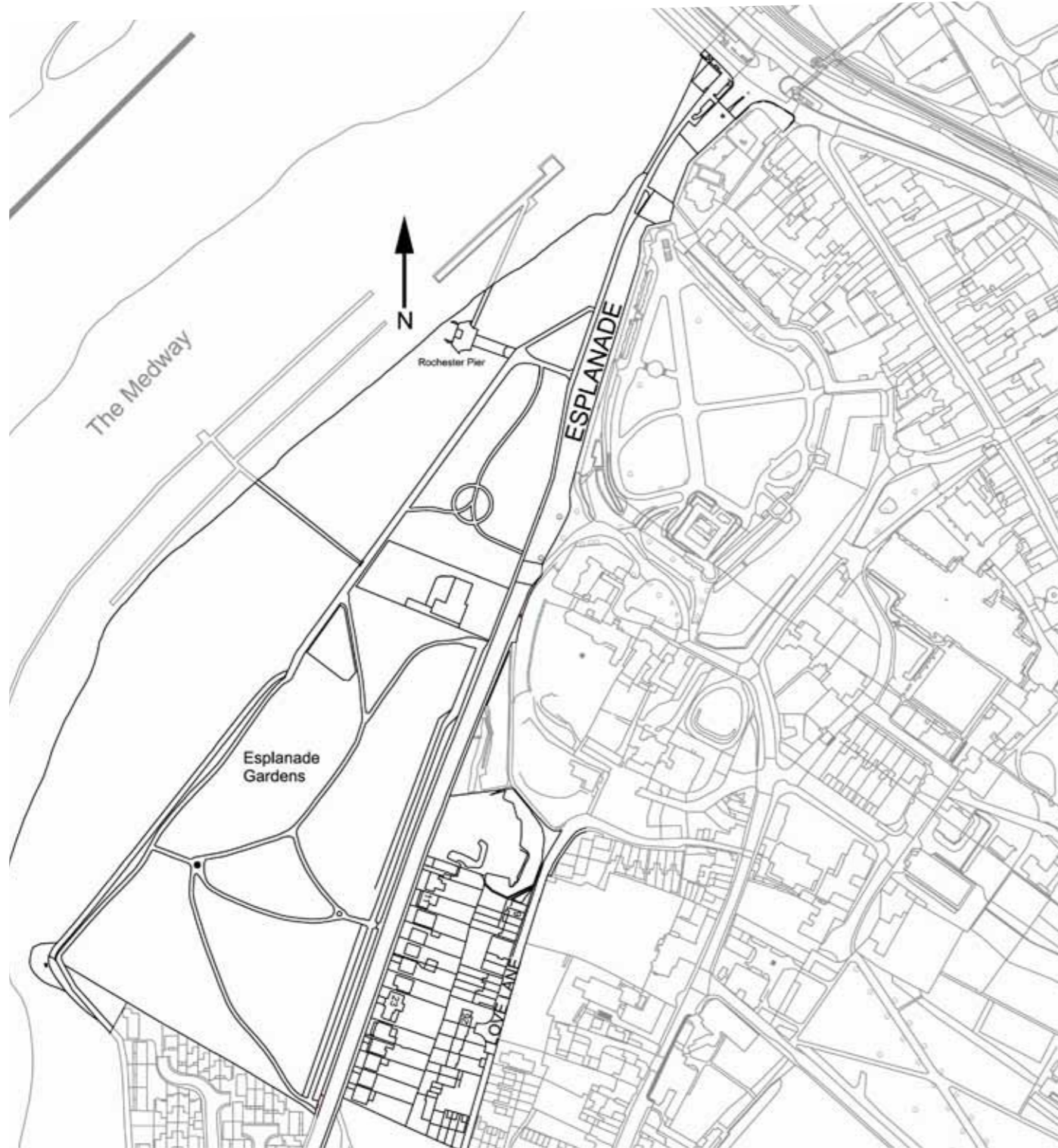


Surfeit of telephone wires

Key Characteristics to Preserve and Enhance - Character Area 3 – The Paddock / Vines Lane / The Vines / St Margaret’s Street / Churchfield

- The open space of The Vines, The Paddock and Churchfields
- The historic and cultural contribution of the Kings School Estate
- The walled streets or continuous frontages
- The ancient winding route of St Margaret’s Street, descending towards the High Street
- The pleasing group of 18th century and early 19th century houses on St Margsret’s Street
- Sweeping views across the Medway from St Margaret’s Church and Churchfields





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Character Area 4 - The Esplanade

CHARACTER AREA 4 – The Esplanade

The flat river plain, which forms the foreground setting to the view of the city seen from the opposite bank of the Medway is a fundamental topographical feature. It connects the riparian history of Rochester with its historic identity.

The Esplanade Gardens section of the river plain is an attractive space used for recreation and discreet car parking, particularly for visitors to the Castle and Cathedral. The gardens were constructed using materials from the medieval bridge, blown up by the Royal Engineers in 1857. The parapets of the old stone bridge can still be seen adorning the Esplanade between the bridge and the pier forming an elegant balustrade (Grade II) The balustrade adds a unifying element to the varied forms and types of buildings opposite and hides the car park from public view.

Above the Esplanade to the east, the steep contours of Castle Hill and its revetments echo the solid Castle walls and Keep. This view bears witness to the Castle's commanding defensive position on the river.

Inclusion of this space of historic interest in the conservation area completes an important element of both the Castle's and City's setting.

The relatively recent domestic development along Love Lane can be classified as neutral in terms of its contribution to the character of the conservation area.



APPENDIX 1: Listed Buildings in Rochester City Centre and Victoria Street Conservation Area

Address	Grade	Description
Rochester Castle, Curtain wall and Mural Tower	Grade I	Bailey walls built 1087-9, incorporates remains of Roman City wall, some alterations and rebuild
Rochester Castle, Keep and Fore Building	Grade I	Keep 1127 incorporates Roman remains, considerable rebuilding throughout
Boley Hill House , Boley Hill	Grade II	Early C19 house (Nursing Home)
Diocesan or Whitefriars House, Boley Hill	Grade II	Early C19 house
The Friars, Boley Hill	Grade II	Early C18 house altered in early C19
Longley House, Boley Hill	Grade II	Early C19 house
Milton Cottage, Boley Hill	Grade II*	C16 and early C17 house
Old Hall, Boley Hill	Grade II*	Late C13 vaulted undercroft; early C16 hall range, early C17 to C18 additions to house
Old Vicarage, Boley Hill	Grade II*	Late C13 vaulted undercroft; early C16 hall range, early C17 to C18 additions to house
Satis House, Boley Hill	Grade II	Former private house, now administrative and library block to the King's School. MidC18 to early C19
Trevine, Boley Hill	Grade II	Late C18 and early to mid C19 house
Stretch of Precinct Wall, Boley Hill	Grade II	Precinct walling along east side of Boley Hill from a point immediately south-west of the Diocesan Registry
Pair of Gatepiers, east of Satis House, Boley Hill	Grade II	Early C19. Stucco on brick
1, 2, 3 College Yard	Grade II	3 houses. C18 front
St Nicolas Church, College Yard	Grade I	Former parish church now the diocesan offices. 1421-3 (dedicated 1423)
Funerary Monument, College Yard	Grade II	Funerary monument. Early C19
Medway Adult Education Centre, Corporation Street	Grade II	Formerly the Rochester Technical Institute. 1905-6 by S B Russell and Edwin Cooper
2 Crow Lane	Grade II	C18 house
4 Crow Lane	Grade II	C18 house
6 Crow Lane	Grade II	C18 house
11 Crow Lane	Grade II	1824 house
13 Crow Lane with Gardens Walls and Gate	Grade II	C18 house with early C20 range attached
The Vines, 21 Crow Lane	Grade II*	Early C18 house
Vines Croft, 23 Crow Lane	Grade II	Probably C17 house, much renewed in C19
Restoration House, Crow Lane	Grade I	c.1588-1600 house of possibly late medieval in origin. C17 facade and interior
Summer House In Garden 25m East Of Restoration House	Grade II	Covered seat incorporating remains of C17 gazebo or summer house
Four Bollards, East Entrance To The Vines, Crow Lane	Grade II	Group of 4 bollards. c.1840. Cast iron
Two Bollards, South East Entrance To The Vines, Crow Lane	Grade II	Pair of bollards. c. 1840. Cast iron
Troy House, East Row	Grade II	c.1790 house
Flint and diapered brick wall at rear 1 and 3 East Row	Grade II	Early to mid-C16 Garden wall
Salisbury Villa, Epaul Lane	Grade II	Early C19 house

Address	Grade	Description
1 Esplanade	Grade II	1859-61 house, now shops and offices.
Castle Club, 3 The Esplanade	Grade II	Early C19 building. Formerly a house but now a club
Bridge Chapel, 5 Esplanade	Grade II	Chapel with offices of the Rochester Bridge Fund. Chapel built in 1386-7, restored in 1937.
Balustrade Between Rochester Bridge And Rochester Pier	Grade II	Erected 1914 re- using parts of Lewis Cubitt's bridge of 1856 which was demolished
Gundulf House, Gandulph Square	Grade II	House, some time point a pair of cottages. Probably early C18 with later alterations
10 High Street	Grade II	Some of the structure may date from the early C16, but it was largely rebuilt in the C17
12-14 High Street	Grade II*	Formerly a pair of houses, C1500 with later additions
17 High Street	Grade II	Offices, formerly headquarters of the Medway Conservatory Board. 1909; designed by G E Bond
Royal Victoria and Bull Hotel, 16-18 High Street	Grade II	Late 18C, although site of an Inn from 1500 1500
19 High Street	Grade II	1769 house with shop
20 High Street	Grade II	Early C19 former house, now shop with accommodation above.
21-23 High Street	Grade II	House with shops below. Late C18.
22 High Street	Grade II	Early C19 house with shop
24 High Street	Grade II	House with shop. Early C19 front, evidence of earlier work (perhaps early C18).
26 High Street	Grade II	Early to mid C18 former house, now shop
28 High Street	Grade II	Late C18 former house, now shop
30 High Street	Grade II	Early C16 shop with C17 alterations, formerly a pair of houses with shops
32 High Street	Grade II	Former house, now a shop. C18 remodelling of an earlier building.
34-36 High Street	Grade II	Former house, now a shop. Mid C18 remodelling of an earlier building.
35 High Street	Grade II*	Public house. Late C18 and C19, built over early C14 (c.1320-5) vaulted undercroft
37 High Street	Grade II	House with shop. Late C18 facade
39 High Street	Grade II	C1900 former bank
40 High Street	Grade II	Late C19 bank. The extension of the bank to the right (No 38) is not included
41-43 High Street	Grade II	Pair of houses with shops. Late C18 with later alterations
42 High Street	Grade II*	Late C19 house, formerly bank
44 High Street	Grade II	Late C16 house with shop, re-modelled in the late C17
45 High Street	Grade II	Early C19 house and offices
46 High Street	Grade II	Late C15 house with shop, re-modelled in the late C17
48 High Street	Grade II	Early C19 house and shop with later alterations. Lower range to the rear possibly incorporates earlier work
51 High Street	Grade II	House with restaurant. Mainly mid C17 with early C18 facade.
53 High Street	Grade II	Late C18 house with shop.
Kings Head Hotel, 58 High Street	Grade II	C17 rear wing; C18 front range altered and re-faced in later C19; C19 rear ranges along Boley Hill
59-63 High Street	Grade II	Two shops with living accommodation above. Mid C19
60 High Street	Grade II*	House with restaurant below. Multi-phase building of C15, C16 and C17 with later alterations
64, 66, 68 High Street	Grade II	Originally a large early 18C town house.
65 and 65A High Street	Grade II	House and shop. Late C18 facade
67 and 67A High Street	Grade II	House with shop. Late C18 facade
69-71 High Street	Grade II	Former town house. C17, with mid C18 front, reorganised when converted to a bank in C20
73 High Street	Grade II	Possibly C16 house with shop, re-modelled in the late C17 with C18 front recently rebuilt
75 High Street	Grade II	House with shop. Possibly C16, with mid C18 front.
77 High Street	Grade II	Early to mid C18 house with shop.



Address	Grade	Description
78-80 High Street	Grade II	Late C18 houses, now with shops.
79 High Street	Grade II	Mid C18 house with shop, rebuilt in late C20.
81 High Street	Grade II	Early C18 house with shop
82 and 82A High Street	Grade II*	House, now with shop (No 82) with large house to rear (No 82A). Late C18 front range incorporating early C16 and C17 work
83 High Street	Grade II*	Late C17 former house.
84 High Street	Grade II	Former house, now a shop. C18, but probably incorporating C16 and C17 work
85-87 High Street	Grade II	2 houses with shops. c.1700, the front largely rebuilt in late C20
86 High Street	Grade II	Former house and shop. Early C17 with C18 fenestration.
88 High Street	Grade II	Former house, now shop. C17 with C18 front.
89 High Street	Grade II	Mid to late C16 house with shop
90, 92 High Street	Grade II	Early C18 former large town house.
Gordon Hotel, 91 High Street	Grade II*	Hotel, formerly a large town house. Late C17 with mid C18 front and C19 alterations.
93 High Street	Grade II	C19 house with shop.
Poor Travellers House, 97 High Street	Grade I	Charity hostel for poor way-farers, now a museum. Founded in 1586
98 High Street	Grade II	Former house, now a shop. Early C17, possibly incorporating earlier work.
99-101 High Street	Grade II	Early C19 pair of houses.
100-102 High Street	Grade II	Formerly a pair of houses, now two shops. Possibly late C17 with later alterations and extensions.
103 High Street	Grade II	One of a pair of mid C19 houses that flanks the approach to La Providence (formerly Theobald Square)
104 High Street	Grade II	C1800 former house, now a shop. Possibly incorporating earlier work
105 High Street (& 41 La Providence)	Grade II	One (and the better preserved) of a pair of houses that flanks the approach to La Providence (formerly Theobald Square).
106 High Street	Grade II	Late C19 former house with shop
107-109 High Street	Grade II	Former house (No 107) with annexe (No 109). Late C18 and c.1800 respectively
111-113 High Street	Grade II	Mid C18 former (probably 2) houses
115 High Street	Grade II	Early C18 house
Eagle Tavern, 124 High Street	Grade II	Public house. Early C19 re-fronting of an earlier (possibly C17) house.
126 High Street	Grade II	Shop. Possibly late C17, considerably altered
127 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	House with shop. Early-C19 front to early-C18 building
130 High Street	Grade II	C1800 former house, heightened in the early or mid C19
142 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Mid C18 former town house
143, 143A, 145 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Shop frontage uniting 2 former houses. Frontage c.1880, rear of Nos 143 and 143A C17 and late C18; rear of No 145 mid C18
144 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Early C18 former town house
146-148 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Mid C18 former pair of houses
147 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Early to mid C18 former house
149 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Mid C18 former house
151 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Early C18 former house
150, 152, 154 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade I	Formerly a large town house. Mid C17, restored in 1864.
153, 155, 157 and High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	3 mid C18 former houses, considerably altered
156 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II*	A C18 Former town house. Re-fronting and internal re-modelling of a C17 building.

Address	Grade	Description
158, 160 and 162 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Three shops. Early C19
163, 165 (formerly listed as 163A) High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Circa 1800 former house
164 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Mid to late C18 former house
166 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	C1700 former house, now shop, much altered
168 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II*	House now shop. Early C19 façade, C18 rebuilding with mid C17 rear refaced. C17-C18 wings beyond
170 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Former house, now shop. Mid C17 with late C18 front.
171 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Circa 1800 former house
173 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Late C18 former house
175, 177 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II	Pair of late C18 former houses
186-188 High Street (Eastgate)	Grade II*	Early C19 former house with later alterations
Chertyseys Gate, High Street	Grade I	Gateway giving access to Cathedral outer Precinct and lay cemetery from High Street. Probably mid C14
City Wall off High Street	Grade I	City walls. Mainly C13 and C14, incorporating Roman remains. Scheduled Ancient Monument
Citizens' Advice Bureau (Formerly listed as Right Wing to Guildhall)	Grade II	Late C18 former house
The Corn Exchange, High Street	Grade I	Former Corn Exchange. High Street facade built in 1706. Range behind rebuilt C19. Replacement Exchange erected to rear facing Northgate in 1870
Dickens Chalet, Rear of Eastgate House, High Street	Grade I	C19 wooden chalet.
Eastgate House, High Street	Grade I	Formerly a large private town house, now a museum. Substantially built 1590-1, extended and refurbished in the C17. Possible that the house incorporates some earlier work
Gates And Railings To South and North East of Eastgate House	Grade II	Early C19 wrought-iron railings
Pump 10m East Of Eastgate House	Grade II	Pump. Dated 1765
The Guildhall Museum, High Street	Grade I	Formerly the Guildhall and Court, now the County Museum. The original building 1695-7
K6 Guildhall Telephone, High Street	Grade II	Type K6 Telephone kiosk,
K6 Telephone Kiosks Outside Head Post Office	Grade II	2 type K6 Telephone kiosks
Rochester Head Post Office	Grade II	Head post office. 1908
Royal Crown Hotel	Grade II	Public House C1859-61
1-20, 21-31 and 33-40 La Providence	Grade II	Almshouses; founded 1718 f. The present buildings are mid C19, substantially renovated in 1957-9
The Coopers Arms, 10 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Public house. C17 (or earlier), with C18, C19 and C20 alterations
12, 14, 16, 18, 20 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Terrace of 5 houses. Late C18, no 20 substantially rebuilt in 1982
22 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Late C18 house
23, 25 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Late C18/early C19 pair of houses.
24 St Margaret's Street, Bishop's Court with Bishop's Court flat and rear flat	Grade II*	House, now Bishop's Palace. Builds of C15, C1600, C1678, early and later C18, 1845 (dated), 1920s and 1961
Wall To South Entrance And South West Garden Of Bishop's Court, St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Walls enclosing the front court and garden of Bishop's Court. Various dates, possibly incorporating C16 and C17 work
26 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Early to mid C18 detached house.
30 St Margaret's Street including Railings To Basement Area and Gazebo at foot of garden	Grade II	C18 house with later extensions, but incorporating part of a C17 building to rear. C18 gazebo.
32 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Early to mid C18 house
34 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	A house originally. Late C17 much altered in C18 and C19
36, 38 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Early C18 pair of houses











Address	Grade	Description
Wellesley House, 40 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Mid C19 house
42, 42A St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Early to mid C18
48A, 48B St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Early C19 house with shop
Building To Rear Of 48A, 48B St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Early C19 house
50 St Margaret's Street With Front Garden Walls And Gatepiers	Grade II	Early C19 house (possibly incorporating some late C17 work)
The Limes, 52 St Margaret's Street with Gazebo and Garden Wall to North	Grade II*	Late C17 former house with mid. C19 range to rear. Mid. C19 Gazebo.
Grayling House, 54 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	C18 house
Wingham Lodge, 56 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Late C18 house
58 St Margaret's Street With Railings To Rear	Grade II*	c.1830 house
Wall Extending 15m North East From The Front of No 58	Grade II	Garden wall. Probably circa 1800
The Gleanings, 2,3 And 4 at 58 St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Former coach house, stables, servants' accommodation to 58, St Margaret's Street, now 4 dwellings. C.1800
The Vicarage And Stable Adjoining, St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Formerly the Rectory to St Margaret's. 1781 (possibly incorporating earlier work) with alterations of 1870
Old St Margaret's, St Margaret's Street (King's School)	Grade II*	Former almshouses, now school rooms. Dated 1724
Forecourt Wall To Old St Margaret's, St Margaret's Street (King's School)	Grade II	Early C18 forecourt wall.
St Margaret's Church, St Margaret's Street	Grade II*	Parish Church. W tower c.1458-65; nave and chancel with N and S aisles 1823-4; sanctuary with side vestries 1839-40; 'Decorated' style E window inserted 1872
Wall With Gates Enclosing Churchyard Of St Margaret's With Headstones Attached, St Margaret's Street	Grade II	East, south and west wall of various dates, mainly early and mid. C19. The Lychgate appears to date from c.1920.
Tomb Chest 15m North West Of St Margaret's Church, St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Tomb chest. Early C19 to members of the Nightingale family
Two Tomb Chests 8m North Of Nave Of St Margaret's Church, St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Two tomb chests. (1) to Robert Douglas, died 1783; (2) to Robert and Anne George, 1832
Tomb Chest North Of Nave Of St Margaret's Church, St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Tomb chest. To Francis Patten, 1819
Group Of Four Tomb Chests Immediately East Of St Margaret's Church, St Margaret's Street	Grade II	Four tomb chests. Early and mid. C19
St Margaret's House And Building Adjacent To North East	Grade II	Late C18 former private house, now part of the King's School.
Rochester City Walls Off St Margaret's Street	Grade I	City walls. Mainly C13 and C14, incorporating Roman remains. Scheduled Ancient Monument
Walls Enclosing Archdeaconry Gardens	Grade II	C17, C18 and C19 wall
Friends Meeting House, Northgate	Grade II	1814 Chapel (Quaker) with house attached.
Ivy House, Pleasant Row	Grade II	Detached house. Late c.18 (Pleasant Row was laid out in 1786).
Rochester Cathedral, The Precincts	Grade I	Founded C7, earliest fabric C11 but largely C12 with a series of additions and restorations, notably 19C
Cloister Gate	Grade I	Gateway into cloister from Precinct. C12 and C15
Cathedral Cloister Buildings (Formerly listed as College Green), The Precincts	Grade I	Ruins of claustral buildings of the cathedral priory of Christ and the BVM. Mostly C12, but with early C13 modifications
Cloister House, The Precincts	Grade II	Late C19 houses (belonging to Cathedral).
Deanery Gate And Gatehouse, The Precincts	Grade I	Mid C14 gateway (originally leading into the precinct of the former priory of St Andrews) with house attached. The house, largely C18 and C19, incorporates medieval work.
Diocesan Registry, The Precincts	Grade II	Mid C18, with various C19 additions. Former offices of Chapter Clerk, now Diocesan Registry





Address	Grade	Description
The Deanery, The Precincts	Grade II	C18 house, a re-modelling of an earlier building with later alterations.
Garth House, The Precincts	Grade II	Former choir school, now cathedral offices. Circa 1870s
Mackean House with walls attached, The Precincts	Grade II	Former Canon's house, now part of King's School. 1841, enlarged in 1911
Former Stable 15m North of Oriel House, The Precincts	Grade II	Former stable. Probably early C18
Oriel House, The Precincts	Grade II	Mid-C18 house
1, 2, 3 Priors Gate with Garden Wall The Precincts	Grade II	Former house, now 3 dwellings. C18 main range with early C19 rear and entrance wings
Priors Gate	Grade I	South gate into the cathedral and priory precincts. Probably 1344
Southgate, College Green and Garden Wall to front, The Precincts	Grade II*	Two houses, formerly the hall range of the palace of the medieval bishops of Rochester. Late medieval, re-ordered C18 and C19.
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 Minor Canon Row, The Precincts	Grade I	Row of houses built for the minor canons of Rochester Cathedral. 1736
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 The Terrace	Grade II	Terrace of 6 houses. This and the adjacent terrace built for naval officers and their families. 1848
7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 The Terrace	Grade II	Terrace of 10 houses. This and the adjacent terrace built for naval officers and their families. 1848
2, 4 6 Union Street	Grade II	Row of 3 houses (attached to Troy House to right). Late C18, probably c.1790
11, 13, 15 & 17 Victoria Street	Grade II	Early C19 terrace of 4 houses, with shops.
Victoria House, 19 Victoria Street	Grade II	Early C19 house
21 Victoria Street	Grade II	Early C19 house, former service wing
23 Victoria Street	Grade II	Early C19 house with shop
25 Victoria Street	Grade II	Early C19 house with shop with some later alterations.





APPENDIX 2: Local Landmarks in Rochester City Centre and Victoria Street Conservation Area



In addition to the following, there are a number of significant buildings that stand out from the general background and used as local landmarks.

Local Landmark	Description	Photograph
Bridge Chapel, 5 Esplanade	Chapel with offices of the Rochester Bridge Trust. Chapel built in 1386-7, restored in 1937	
Eastgate House, High Street	Formerly a large private town house. Substantially built 1590-1, extended and refurbished in the C17. Possible that the house incorporates some earlier work	
Rochester Cathedral, The Precincts	Founded C7, earliest fabric C11 but largely C12 with a series of additions and restorations, notably 19C	
Rochester Castle	Keep 1127 and incorporates Roman remains, considerable rebuilding throughout	




Local Landmark	Description	Photograph
Dickens Chalet, Rear of Eastgate House, High Street	C19 wooden chalet	
The Guildhall Museum and its annex, High Street	Formerly the Guildhall and Court, now the Guildhall Museum. The original building was constructed 1695-7	
Old Corn Exchange, High Street	Former Corn Exchange. High Street facade built in 1706. Range behind rebuilt C19. Replacement Exchange erected to rear facing Northgate in 1870	
1-20, 21-31 and 33-40 La Providence	Almshouses; founded 1718 The present buildings are mid C19, substantially renovated in 1957-9	




Local Landmark	Description	Photograph
Restoration House, Crow Lane	C.1588-1600 house of possibly late medieval origin. C17 facade and interior	
The Royal Victoria and Bull Hotel, High Street	Late 18C, although site of an Inn since 1500	
The 'Six Poor Travellers' House	Charity hostel for poor wayfarers, now a museum. Founded in 1586, although the age of the present house is uncertain. The facade dates from 1771.	
17 High Street	Offices, formerly headquarters of the Medway Conservatory Board. 1909; designed by G E Bond	




Local Landmark	Description	Photograph
44 High Street	Late C16 house with shop, remodelled in the late C17	
150-154 High Street	Formerly a large town house. Mid C17, restored in 1864.	
Chertsey Gate	Gateway giving access to Cathedral outer Precinct and lay cemetery from High Street. Probably mid C14	
Edward III bastion	City walls. Mainly C13 and C14, incorporating Roman remains. Scheduled Ancient Monument	

Local Landmark	Description	Photograph
Priors Gate	South gate into the cathedral and priory precincts. Probably 1344	
Rochester Bridge	Built in 1914	


APPENDIX 3: Local Listed Buildings in Rochester City Centre Conservation Area


Address	Photograph	Description
Travine Cottage, Boley Hill		19th century, 2 storey, red/blue brick house. Integral part of the group of houses on Boley Hill.
3 Castle Hill		19th century, 3 1/2 storey building, subdivided into flats. External brick walls, pilasters and moulded cornices painted white. Recessed front door, arched porch. Part of a group with 4 and 5 Castle Hill.
4 Castle Hill		19th century, 3 1/2 storey building, subdivided into flats. External brick walls, pilasters and moulded cornices painted white. Recessed front door, arched porch. Part of a group with 3 and 5 Castle Hill.




Address	Photograph	Description
5 Castle Hill		<p>19th century, 3 1/2 storey building, subdivided into flats. External brick walls, pilasters and moulded cornices painted white. Recessed front door, arched porch. Part of a group with 3 and 4 Castle Hill.</p>
The Moat House, Castle Hill		<p>19th century building, subdivided into flats. Roof behind parapet with ornate central pediment and arched window. Ground and 1st floor bay windows. Fanlight and decorative moulding over front door.</p>
12-14 Crow Lane		<p>Early 19th century building. 2 1/2 storeys with central pediment over. Modern replacement windows. Recessed front doors with decorative brick arch over. Symmetry largely intact.</p>




Address	Photograph	Description
16 Crow Lane		<p>Early 19th century, 2 storey house. Part of terrace. External brick walls, ground floor painted. Central front, pitch roof dormer. A pedimented entablature with columns used to frame ground floor window and front door.</p>
18 Crow Lane		<p>19th century, 2 storey house. Part of terrace. Central front dormer. Yellow brick, with decorative red brick. Modern windows. Recessed front door with porch. Date stone on front elevation 'Grace Cottage, 1895'.</p>
Kings School House, Crow Lane		<p>Late 1870s building. Elaborate style of Gothic architecture. The main boarding house of the King's School and design for such purposes by John Tavenor Perry.</p>




Address	Photograph	Description
1 Eastgate Terrace		<p>Part of a group of 10 terrace houses. 19th century. Front elevation, red brick walls, modern UPVc windows and door with decorative brick surround. Decorative arch over ground floor windows, painted white. Rectangular fanlight above door.</p>
2 Eastgate Terrace		<p>Part of a group of 10 terrace houses. 19th century. Front elevation, red brick walls, sash windows and painted brickwork. Decorative arch over ground floor windows, painted white. Rectangular fanlight above door.</p>
3 Eastgate Terrace		<p>Part of a group of 10 terrace houses. 19th century. Front elevation, red brick walls, modern UPVc windows with decorative brick surround. Decorative arch over ground floor windows, painted white. Rectangular fanlight above door.</p>




Address	Photograph	Description
4 Eastgate Terrace		<p>Part of a group of 10 terrace houses. 19th century. Front elevation, yellow brick walls, modern windows with decorative brick surround. Decorative arch over ground floor windows, painted white. Rectangular fanlight above door.</p>
5 Eastgate Terrace		<p>Part of a group of 10 terrace houses. 19th century. Front elevation, red brick walls, modern UPVc windows with decorative brick surround. Decorative arch over ground floor windows, painted white. Rectangular fanlight above door.</p>
6 Eastgate Terrace		<p>Part of a group of 10 terrace houses. 19th century. Front elevation, red brick walls, modern UPVc windows with decorative brick surround. Decorative arch over ground floor windows, painted white. Rectangular fanlight above door.</p>




Address	Photograph	Description
8 Eastgate Terrace		<p>Part of a group of 10 terrace houses. 19th century. Front elevation, red brick walls, modern UPVc windows with decorative brick surround. Decorative arch over ground floor windows, painted white. Rectangular fanlight above door.</p>
9 Eastgate Terrace		<p>Part of a group of 10 terrace houses. 19th century. Front elevation, red brick walls, modern UPVc windows with decorative brick surround. Decorative arch over ground floor windows, painted white. Rectangular fanlight above door.</p>
Century Buildings, East Row		<p>19th century commercial building.</p>




Address	Photograph	Description
15 High Street		2 storey, 5 bay building. Currently occupied by 'Great Expectations' Public House. External red brick walls with quoins. First floor sash windows.
55 High Street		3 storey, red brick, corner building. Roof behind parapet and pediment. Modern windows. Fanlights over ground floor doors and windows.
70 High Street		3 story building. Decorative stonework. Arched central window with radiating transoms. Moulded cornice above 2nd floor. 3rd floor balcony. Recessed double door




Address	Photograph	Description
72 High Street		3 storey, red brick building. Roof behind parapet with moulded cornice. Symmetrical facade with pilasters. Edwardian curved glass shopfront. 2nd floor arched windows. Part of a group with 74 and 76 High Street.
74 High Street		3 storey, building. Roof behind parapet with moulded cornice. Red brick facade with pilasters. 2nd floor arched window.
76 High Street		3 storey, building. Roof behind parapet with moulded cornice. Red brick facade with pilasters. 2nd floor arched central window.




Address	Photograph	Description
128 High Street		2 storey building with timber cladding, a typical Kentish detail
135 High Street		3 storey, red brick building, c.1896. Quoins Roof behind parapet and central pediment. 1st floor bay windows. 2nd floor sash windows. Decorative moulding.
137 High Street		3 storey, 2 bay building. Central pediment. Red brick facade. Arched, recessed, timber windows at 2nd floor. 3rd floor sash windows.

Address	Photograph	Description
139-141 High Street		3 storey, grey brick building. Subdivided into 2 shops. Central pediment with 2 box-dormers on either side. Central, 1st floor bay window.
161 High Street		2 storey building. Stone and painted brick facade with decorative pilaster. Roof behind parapet and moulded pediment. 2 steps leading up to recessed front door.
178-184 High Street		3 storey building, subdivided into 4 properties. Redbrick facade with quoins. Recessed 2nd and 3rd floor windows with decorative surround.

Address	Photograph	Description
1 Love Lane		2 storey, 2 bay end terrace house, part of a group of 8. Arched sash windows with decorative brick surround. Recessed front door with rectangular fanlight.
2 Love Lane		Late 19th / early 20th century, 2 storey, 2 bay house. Sash windows, recessed front door with rectangular fanlight.
3 Love Lane		2 storey, 2 bay terrace house, part of a group of 8. Arched sash windows with decorative brick surround. Recessed front door with rectangular fanlight.

Address	Photograph	Description
5 Love Lane		<p>2 storey, 2 bay terrace house, part of a group of 8. Arched sash windows with decorative brick surround. Recessed front door with rectangular fanlight.</p>
7 Love Lane		<p>2 storey, 2 bay terrace house, part of a group of 8. Arched sash windows with decorative brick surround. Recessed front door with rectangular fanlight.</p>
9 Love Lane		<p>2 storey, 2 bay terrace house, part of a group of 8. Arched sash windows with decorative brick surround. Recessed front door with rectangular fanlight.</p>

Address	Photograph	Description
11 Love Lane		2 storey, 2 bay terrace house, part of a group of 8. Arched sash windows with decorative brick surround. Recessed front door with rectangular fanlight.
13 Love Lane		2 storey, 2 bay terrace house, part of a group of 8. Arched sash windows with decorative brick surround. Recessed front door with rectangular fanlight.
15 Love Lane		2 storey, 2 bay, end terrace house, part of a group of 8. Arched sash windows with decorative brick surround. Recessed front door with rectangular fanlight.

Address	Photograph	Description
3 St Margaret's Street		2 storey house. Red brick facade. Sash windows with decorative surround. Recessed front door. Arched porch. Paired with 5 St Margaret's Street.
4 St Margaret's Street		2 Storey House with former shop on ground floor. Painted brickwork. Central 2nd floor window.
5 St Margaret's Street		2 storey house. Red brick facade. Sash windows with decorative surround. Recessed front door. Arched porch. Paired with 3 St Margaret's Street.

Address	Photograph	Description
6 St Margaret's Street		2 storey, red brick, end terrace house. Sash windows. Fanlight over front door.
27 St Margaret's Street		Late 19th century house. Painted brickwork on first floor. 2nd floor bay window. Pitched roof dormer. Recessed front door with rectangular fanlight and arched porch over. Central date stone. Paired with 27A St Margaret's Street.
27A St Margaret's Street		Late 19th century house. Painted brickwork on first floor. 2nd floor bay window. Pitched roof dormer. Recessed front door with rectangular fanlight and arched porch over. Central date stone. Paired with 27 St Margaret's Street.

Address	Photograph	Description
Kings School, The Precinct		1 1/2 storey, red brick building with decorative stonework. Arched windows.
The Old Bursary, The Precinct		2 storey building. Stone, rubble walls. Modern UPVc windows.

APPENDIX 4: Report on Consultation Responses

Public consultation of the Rochester City, Victoria Street and Churchfield Draft Appraisal opened on 18 January 2010 and closed on the 22 February 2010. A consultation summary leaflet and questionnaire was sent to all addresses within the conservation area and key stakeholders. Copies were available to view on the Council’s website and the Gun Wharf Council Offices, and a public exhibition was held at Eastgate House.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

Archaeological Officer, Kent County Council

Comments	CAP Response
<p><i>Roman and Earliest History</i> There is some evidence for an Iron Age settlement here. Evidence for a possible mint dating to 10 AD which suggests a settlement of some importance.</p> <p>The general plan of Roman Rochester would be better described as following that of many Roman towns, comprising two principal streets crossing at right angles to each other and exiting through gates on the four main sides of the city’s defensive circuit.</p> <p>It is worth noting that a number of other lanes to the north-west corner of the city (such as George Lane and Bull Lane) are also suggested to have Roman origins.</p>	<p>Amended for accuracy.</p> <p>Amended for accuracy.</p> <p>Amended for accuracy.</p>
<p><i>Medieval History</i> It would be useful to make it clear in the text that the Medieval bridge was built upstream of the modern bridges closer to the castle.</p>	<p>Amended for clarification.</p>
<p><i>Post Medieval History</i> The new bridge (built 1850-1856) was constructed due to the increasing cost of maintaining the earlier bridge. Whilst the military were employed to demolish the old bridge this was not done for military reasons. The Victorian bridge was substantially reconstructed and remodelled from 1910.</p>	<p>Amended for clarification.</p>
<p>It is worth noting that in view of the archaeological sensitivity of this area, archaeology may be a constraint on development. It would be preferable if any new development proposal considered the archaeological issues at an early stage and all ground disturbances be kept to the absolute minimum.</p> <p>It would be desirable to include an additional <i>Principals and Action</i> which seeks ways to improve the interpretation of buried archaeological remains for the benefit of residents and visitors to Rochester.</p> <p>Improvements are recommended as part of an integrated public domain strategy. It is possible that some of the buried archaeology in Rochester lies very close to the surface and even repaving works or new vegetation beds may disturb archaeological remains. Likewise any proposals to remove unwanted wiring and cables and to place these underground could be damaging to buried archaeological remains. It would be preferable to route cabling along the line of existing services to minimise disturbance and wherever possible to group cables together to avoid any duplication of ground disturbance.</p>	<p>Any proposal to develop the land would be subject to assessment in line with national and local planning policy. Principles and Actions amended in accordance with PPS 5, which requires developers to submit appropriate desktop assessments or field evaluation and an assessment of the impact of the proposal at the application stage, where appropriate.</p> <p>Amended to include Principle and Action to encourage interpretation of buried archaeology.</p> <p>The recommended public realm strategy should have due regard to archaeology and would be subject to consultation. This notwithstanding, care is required when carrying out highway or other environmental works. The local planning authority and Design and Conservation team should work with all sectors and stakeholders to ensure due consideration is given to archaeology with highway and other environmental works.</p>



City of Rochester Society

Comments	CAP Response
<p>It is important that the conservation area should be extended to include the Esplanade. It has been pointed out that the views and vistas within, into and from the conservation area are important to its character and setting and the Esplanade is part of that setting. Inappropriate alterations, or neglect, could significantly damage the character of this area.</p> <p>It would be useful to have a plan indicating the adjacent conservation areas.</p> <p>It is important that sites of archaeological importance receive adequate protection. Such areas should be clearly identified to any prospective developer who is planning to build in that area.</p> <p>The key factor, which cannot be overstressed, is the essential importance of maintenance. If sufficient emphasis is placed and if sufficient funding were set aside to help achieve this, then many of our present conservation problems would subside.</p> <p>The proposals for the development at Rochester Riverside, when it eventually gets underway, will provide an ideal opportunity to address the balance between old and new - to emphasise and encompass the beauty and character of historic Rochester with the provision of facilities and requirements essential to a modern, forward-thinking community.</p> <p>There is evidence in Rochester that such controls are not applied as forcefully as they should be. A lack of resources appears to be a major factor. The management plan should provide an excellent resource. It should be carefully implemented and adequately funded to ensure success.</p> <p>Additional controls should be brought in if the existing controls are found to be inadequate. Are present controls being applied as rigorously as they could be? It is suggested an Article 4 Direction could be invoked.</p> <p>Rochester High Street is an area of mixed development and whilst there should be a balance between the number of shops, restaurants and bars, the important factor here is the requirement to maintain excellent standards.</p> <p>High Street traders require vehicular access to their premises for deliveries and collections during working hours. The length of parking times might be more carefully regulated - perhaps more frequent supervision would assist. Residents and visitors should have unrestricted access to their homes - the sheltered housing at La Providence requires vehicular access at all times.</p> <p>Is it intended to make appraisals of the areas adjacent to the current appraisal area, particularly to the south of Rochester and of the High Street towards Chatham? It would appear to be logical to look at the whole district - it would certainly offer a more integrated view.</p>	<p>Justification for extension to include the Esplanade, appraisal pg.33</p> <p><i>Plan 1: Context</i> shows adjacent Conservation Areas</p> <p>The importance of archaeology is acknowledged. Principles and Action to protect archaeology can be found in the management plan, pg. 4, 5, 10 and 11. Historic Environment Records available.</p> <p>Neglect and damage to buildings identified as a weakness. The importance of a high quality streetscape is acknowledged. Principles and Actions to preserve and enhance architectural interest can be found in the management plan on pg. 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9, and the streetscape at pg. 3, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10.</p> <p>Acknowledges that any proposals for Corporation Street as part of the approved Rochester Riverside Masterplan and Corporation Street Development Brief should enhance the setting of the conservation area. Principles and Actions in the management plan recommends that the Conservation Team should provide relevant advice to all parties to ensure a successful connection with the conservation area, pg. 9 and 10.</p> <p>Acknowledges that it is essential that the local authority commits adequate resources to enable it to exercise powers and achieve its responsibilities, pg. 13.</p> <p>Further control through Article 4 directions and section 7 of Control of Advertising Regulations 2007 are applied primarily where the character of an area of acknowledged importance would be threatened under existing controls.</p> <p>Acknowledges that higher earning uses such as bars and takeaways may also drive out small retailers, reducing quality and choice. Principles and Actions in the management plan recommends a co-ordinate retail and tourism strategies which reinforce distinctiveness and independent retailers, pg. 9.</p> <p>The necessity/ability for restrictions for vehicles on the High street requires further study.</p> <p>Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 71 of the same Act requires local planning authorities to formulate and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement. A conservation area appraisal for the adjacent Star Hill Sun Pier area is in the process of being written by the Design and Conservation Team.</p>



English Heritage

Comments	CAP Response
<p>The ruined castle dates from 1089, not 1066. There was an earthen castle built in the immediate post conquest period but Gundulf's work in stone started in 1089.</p>	<p>Amended for clarification.</p>
<p>In quoting relevant background information, the Conservation Plan for the cathedral is a significant omission. The Heritage Masterplan is referenced, but not appropriately quoted in the subsequent report, including for interpretation of the historic environment.</p>	<p>Included for comprehensiveness. Appraisal refers readers to Rochester Heritage Masterplan.</p>
<p>There is inconsistency in how the Rochester report of the Kent CC Historical Towns Survey is referenced. A single title should be adopted and used consistently.</p>	<p>Checked for inconsistencies</p>
<p>The location at the lowest possible bridging point on the Medway to carry Watling Street as the main road from London to Canterbury and Dover over the water should be referenced as this was fundamental to the role of Rochester up to and including the arrival of the railways and commercial shipping.</p>	<p>Amended for comprehensiveness</p>
<p>Confirmed evidence of a Roman Army Camp is low, so it might be best to refer to a probably army camp.</p>	<p>Amended in accordance with comments from Kent County Council</p>
<p>The Roman town was provided with walls in the 3rd century in common with most large Roman settlements and this wall circuit informed the first medieval examples and represented in the street layout of gates.</p>	<p>Amended in accordance with comments from Kent County Council</p>
<p>A reference to a harbour is probably inaccurate at this period. We do not know what the Saxon commercial shipping was like but may have required no more than the tidal shoreline.</p>	<p>Harbour reference deleted for accuracy</p>
<p>It is inferred that occupation was continuous between the Roman and Saxon periods but this is open to challenge.</p>	<p>No statement that occupation was continuous.</p>
<p>St Augustine's mission to the English is in 597 AD not 497.</p>	<p>Amended for accuracy</p>
<p>The first castle is most probably not a motte and bailey, the first stone castle was not royal and earthwork on Boley Hill is not yet dated.</p>	<p>Amended in accordance with Rochester Castle Cathedral Conservation Plan for accuracy.</p>
<p>The history of this great church and its role alongside the castle in shaping medieval Rochester could be better reflected through reference to the cathedral conservation plan.</p>	<p>Appraisal provides summary of key aspects. Refers readers Rochester Cathedral Conservation Plan as a background document for further information.</p>
<p>The two extensions of the city walls on the south side could be better described for their impact on the layout of the place. The role of the medieval bridge to replace the Roman predecessor could be better explained with reference to the Bridge Wardens Trust. A reference to the hospital at Strood on the opposite end of the bridge might help.</p>	<p>Appraisal provides summary of key aspects. Refers readers to background reading for more detailed information.</p>
<p>There is no new road to Chatham at this period and the long High Street follows the line of the Roman road.</p>	<p>New road to Chatham deleted for accuracy. Acknowledges the basic Roman form of the High Street in the appraisal, pg. 9.</p>
<p>The George Vaults give a good indication of the potential quality of non religious masonry structures in the centre of the settlement.</p>	<p>Refers readers to Chapter 5 of Rochester-Kent Archaeological Assessment for an account of principal urban features from the four main periods.</p>



Comments	CAP Response
<p>Suburbs (settlement areas outside of the walled area) start in the medieval period not just at St Margarets but also in the early phases of such major sites as Restoration House.</p> <p>The immediate post medieval period Rochester retains its local dominance as the place where people of quality lived and this is reflected in town houses (some in the suburbs) of a quality that is unusual outside of London.</p> <p>The founding of the dockyard at Chatham (1547) and into the 17th century provided a further stimulus to Rochester. Evidence from Rochester Riverside shows that the marshes on the bend in the river downstream of the bridge were undergoing reclamation and use with creek access to water fronts and tidal mills etc. At this period there is a proper “harbour”.</p> <p>Should the creation of Chatham Intra as a long suburb linking Rochester to Chatham be referenced here?</p> <p>The New Road as an 18th century toll road is probably worth mentioning for its role in creating Star Hill.</p> <p>Military spending during the 18th and early 19th century wars with France had a much greater transformational impact upon Chatham.</p> <p>The old bridge was obstructing increased river traffic and causing problems with the tides and deposition of mud. Once a new bridge was built the old one had to be removed.</p> <p>The railway and its resulting severance was through the corner of the walled area and this dates back to the Roman period and not just the medieval.</p> <p>The 1979 Act is the principal legislation affecting <u>scheduled</u> monuments.</p> <p>Evaluation has a particularly meaning for archaeologists and normally implies field investigation (boreholes, trenches etc) The KCC work is best referred to as a comprehensive desk based assessment.</p> <p>Where PPG 16 is mentioned the main message should be that the presumption is in favour of preservation in situ of nationally important archaeological remains. The text only refers to the early stages of archaeological mitigation (desk based assessment or field evaluation). Preservation in situ or archaeological excavation are the two main responses to such early work.</p> <p>Under Open Areas the fact that these are sometimes scheduled as ancient monuments is misleading and reflects administrative ease and not the known extent of nationally important archaeological remains. This is demonstrated by the proposed revisions of the designations covering the cathedral precincts. The document must not suggest that the existing scheduled areas reflect the reality of below ground archaeology.</p> <p>Under views out of the CA is the view from Rochester Riverside that has been made so much easier to obtain by the major regeneration works worth referencing. The view to Chatham is now opened up – see debate re WHS buffer zone.</p>	<p>Suburbs in Saxon times and Medieval times acknowledged and described in the appraisal in Historical Background and Development.</p> <p>Architectural quality acknowledged as part of character analysis. Statement included for comprehensiveness.</p> <p>Amended for comprehensiveness.</p> <p>Focus of the appraisal is on Rochester City centre, Churchfields and Victoria Street.</p> <p>Focus of the appraisal is on Rochester City centre, Churchfields and Victoria Street.</p> <p>Focus of the appraisal is on Rochester City centre, Churchfields and Victoria Street.</p> <p>Amended in accordance with comments made by Kent County Council.</p> <p>Amended to include Roman fabric for comprehensiveness.</p> <p>Amended to include the word ‘scheduled’ for clarification.</p> <p>Amended description to ‘desk based assessment’ of archaeological interest for clarification.</p> <p>Appraisal and management plan amended to reflect PPS5.</p> <p>For clarity, amended to include ‘Their designation reflects the potential extent of nationally important arch archaeological remains, although the extent is unknown and may be greater than that suggested by current designations.’</p> <p>Rochester Riverside lies outside the CA boundary. Open views from Chatham into CA are identified.</p>

Comments	CAP Response
<p>Are you content to lump the min built up part of Rochester as one character area when in historic terms it is clearly the result of successive phases of development away from the walled core. The southern suburbs have a different history and perhaps therefore character to the older walled area.</p> <p>The retail offer of the High Street is an important contributor to its character. The lack of chain stores has helped prevent the shopping from suffering from the clone town effect.</p> <p>There is a significant issue for Boley Hill and the conflict between traffic and pedestrians – see castle conservation pan.</p> <p>Precinct is the wrong term to use with reference to Boley Hill it is better described as a bailey. Precinct usually implies a religious purpose.</p> <p>Ornament of the castle was not minimal. As work on the great tower at Dover has shown these keeps were palaces and highly decorated. We see them today as stripped back masonry minus wall paintings carved wood furniture hangings etc. Even so the degree of Romanesque stone carving at Rochester in the keep is noteworthy.</p> <p>Somewhere in the document it should be explicitly explained why the CA boundary does not follow the known extent of the medieval walled city i.e. why the severance created by the railway and Corporation Street leaves the NE corner cut off. Proposed change here is designed to reduce this severance and there are historic features to interpret. It may be the case that historic character is not strong enough to justify inclusion in a CA but this needs to be considered and a reason for not including it stated.</p> <p>The section on city walls is fine but should include improved interpretation, there are at least two places where the Roman and medieval walls are marked out in the street surfaces (East gate and South gate) but with no means of telling people why this is so.</p> <p>The section on archaeology and PPG 16 needs amendment as per the comments above as desk based assessment and evaluation is only part of the archaeological mitigation process (see also page 38).</p> <p>Plan 2 – typo on Frindsbury.</p> <p>Plan 5 the mapping of designations does not include scheduled monuments.</p>	<p>Overall justification for character areas in appraisal, pg. 15, and explored in character area analysis.</p> <p>Recommends a co-ordinated retail and tourism strategies which reinforce distinctiveness and independent retailers in the management plan, Principles and Actions, pg. 9.</p> <p>Conflict between traffic and pedestrian not identified as an existing significant harm/intrusion to the character of the conservation area.</p> <p>Amended for clarity.</p> <p>Amended for accuracy.</p> <p>Justification for exclusion included in appraisal, pg. 9.</p> <p>Acknowledges course of the city wall marked by contrasting paving and identifies the lack of interpretation as a weakness, pg. 21. Recommends site interpretation in line with proposals recommended by Rochester Heritage Interpretation Partnership: Heritage Masterplan for Rochester to build a Rochester Heritage Brand, management plan, pg. 5.</p> <p>Appraisal and management plan amended to reflect principles and wording in PPS5.</p> <p>Amended.</p> <p>Scheduled Ancient Monuments maps produced, <i>Plan 6: Scheduled Ancient Monuments</i>.</p>



Medway Access Group

Comments	CAP Response
<p>There should be no loss of parking on the High Street</p> <p>To increase the safety of users, road and pavement surfaces need to be improved and fully maintained in terms of the type of material used and in keeping with a ‘cobbled’ finish to eliminate the discomfort associated with uneven terrain.</p> <p>All buildings that are accessible to the public (i.e. entrances and movement through buildings) should also be fully accessible to disabled people. To use best practice in meeting this aim and not to use the excuse of ‘it can’t be done because it’s an historic building’. This point apply equally to disabled people and elderly people and therefore the numbers of users for the area is immense.</p>	<p>No recommendation for loss of parking on High Street. Recommends measures to reduce parking demand within the core together with measures to improve pedestrian access from Corporation Street car parking to the core.</p> <p>The management plan recommends a coherent public realm strategy including appropriate floorscape materials. The proposed public realm strategy should incorporate the views/needs of local people and should be subject to public consultation and best practice.</p> <p>Any proposal for development would be subject to assessment against national and local planning policy. In considering the impact of a proposal of any heritage asset, local planning authorities should take into account the significance of the heritage asset and the value it holds.</p>

Rochester Bridge Trust

Comments	CAP Response
<p>Supports the inclusion of the Esplanade together with land to the south as it will provide a greater degree of protection and possible enhancement to the Grade II listed Bridge Chapel and Chamber together with their surrounding land, Bridges and Balustrade.</p> <p>Whilst keen to see enhancement to the visual appearance to the Castle, the Trust would not support the removal of parking provision on the Esplanade.</p> <p>In order to boost the High Street, there is a need for investment and support to engage anchor tenants who will attract visitors to the centre of Rochester and revitalise the High Street. Preserving the High Street in aspic will not allow the much needed growth which is required. The management plan should set policies which aim to improve the environment whilst also accommodating the needs of traders to operate successfully</p> <p>The installation of security measures such as shutters and screens improve shop security, but have been prevented mainly due to lack of clarity and guidance over what would be aesthetically acceptable in the conservation area.</p> <p>The Trust supports proposals to improve the sense of arrival into Rochester from the west over Rochester Bridge. Subject to full consultation with regard to such measures.</p> <p>The Trust accepts that there should be a uniform approach to street furniture, but the street bollards within their land ownership include the Coat of Arms of the Rochester Bridge Trust and the Trust would not wish for these to be removed without prior consultation and agreement. The management plan should take account of the differing owners of the public realm.</p>	<p>Justification for the inclusion of the Esplanade, appraisal, pg. 33.</p> <p>No recommendation for loss of parking on The Esplanade.</p> <p>The management plan recommends a co-ordinated retail and tourism strategies which reinforce distinctiveness and independent retailers, Principles and Actions, pg. 9. Any proposal for development would be subject to assessment against national and local planning policy. In considering the impact of a proposal of any heritage asset, local planning authorities should take into account the significance of the heritage asset and the value it holds</p> <p>The management plan recommends a shopfront guide which includes appropriate security measures in the conservation area to address this, pg. 9 and 12.</p> <p>The gateway at Rochester Bridge and the High Street has been identified as a weakness in the appraisal (pg. 13) Principles and Actions are outlined in the management plan, pg. 6. An improvements scheme is currently being developed for the western gateway to historic Rochester, which should incorporate the views/needs of local people and should be subject to public consultation and best practice.</p> <p>The proposed public realm strategy should incorporate the views/needs of local people and should be subject to public consultation and best practice.</p>



Rochester Cathedral

Comments	CAP Response
<p>It will need positive and proactive policies to result in a viable and vibrant end result, crucially the conservation area will only be protected for the future if it can be part of a financially viable plan. It would be irresponsible to present a robust conservation plan without the Council making a corresponding commitment to provide the funding necessary to achieve it. With that caveat I offer the following detailed comments.</p> <p>The Cathedral Conservation Plan is not mentioned here, which is a glaring omission due to the relevance and cross-referencing of many policies between the Appraisal and the Cathedral CP. The Rochester Heritage Interpretation Partnership: Heritage Masterplan for Rochester also gets a cursory mention – the lack of interpretative elements within the appraisal is a weakness that needs to be addressed.</p> <p>P8 – AD 497 should be 597.</p> <p>The view of Rochester from the railway should be mentioned here. There is potential to strengthen the section on ‘views’ as it is felt that this section is weak.</p> <p>The potential closure of the gap site between 48-56 High Street is part of the Castle Conservation Plan, but opinion on whether this is a desirable aspiration is mixed.</p> <p>In relation to re-installing the railings on the Street frontage of the War Memorial Garden, the wall is sufficient emphasis given that the garden itself is raised above the road/pavement level.</p> <p>Disagree with the suggestion of tree planting on this site both on archaeological grounds and also because trees would impinge on the excellent views of the Cathedral.</p> <p>Strongly support the action plan to reinstate the proper use of upper floors above shops, particularly as good residential accommodation but must be accompanied by a resource commitment.</p> <p>The Appraisal should be more robust about the problems created by the night time economy. It is a growing problem and there is an opportunity to put down a marker.</p> <p>There is little reference to the river, which is acknowledged to be of historic significance.</p> <p>Disputes the statement that visitor numbers are the lowest of all English Cathedrals.</p>	<p>The management plan sets out a strategy based on the findings of the appraisals and sets out Principles and Actions to fulfil this duty. It acknowledges that it is essential that the local authority commits adequate resources to enable it to exercise powers and achieve its responsibilities, pg. 13.</p> <p>Amended to include the Cathedral Conservation Plan in relevant background material for comprehensiveness. The majority of proposals in The Rochester Heritage Interpretation Partnership: Heritage Masterplan are site specific or outside the scope of local planning authority, therefore refers readers for further reading for more detailed information. Lack of interpretative elements has been identified as a weakness. The management plan makes a recommendation to improve interpretation in line with proposals recommended by Rochester Heritage Interpretation Partnership: Heritage Masterplan for Rochester to build a Rochester Heritage Brand, to address this weakness, pg. 4 and 5.</p> <p>Amended for accuracy.</p> <p>Amended for comprehensiveness.</p> <p>Appraisal recommends that in principle it would be desirable based on historical character, but any proposal would need to be fully considered against national and local planning policy.</p> <p>Proposal deleted from appraisal.</p> <p>Tree planting should be subject to appropriate desktop assessments or field evaluation and an assessment of the impact where appropriate.</p> <p>Vacant upper floors have been identified in the appraisal, pg. 18 and identified as an opportunity in the management plan, pg. 11.</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour and perceived conflicts identified in the appraisal, pg. 18.</p> <p>The appraisal acknowledges the historic significance of the river and close proximity to Rochester, however, due to topography and severance caused by Corporation Street and the North Kent railway line there is little awareness from within the CA and few activities directly associated with the city core. The management plan had identified better links and the waterfront as an opportunity, pg. 11 and recommends Principles and Action on pg. 9.</p> <p>Amended.</p>



Comments	CAP Response
<p>There needs to be more discussion before the final draft re: King's Orchard as an enhancement opportunity and the proposal to retain all public and private open space.</p>	<p>The appraisal identifies the open space at King's Orchard as a significant contribution of character to the area. The management plan recommends a presumption in favour of preserving public and private open spaces that have great character and significance. Here, the establishment of the acceptability of the principle of development should be determined, in the first instance, by a full assessment of the significance of the open space, followed by an agreement with Medway Council and English Heritage on development principles prior to any planning application coming forward. Subsequently, any proposal to develop the land would be subject to assessment against national and local planning policy.</p>
<p>Kings School and the Cathedral are two of the major occupiers of the area, and both need to be allowed to development to remain as viable and useful contributors to the Medway towns.</p>	<p>The appraisal aims to provide a better understanding of the character to help secure appropriate development within the scope/application of adopted policy.</p>
<p>Agree with most of the principles and actions except the extension to restrictions on service vehicles on the High Street which could be detrimental to trade.</p>	<p>The necessity/ability for restrictions for vehicles on the High street requires further study.</p>
<p>The section about the High Street needs proper consultation with traders as some of the actions could further exacerbate under-occupancy.</p>	<p>A consultation summary leaflet and questionnaire was sent to all addresses within the conservation area. Maintenance of the character of the area is an important part of its economy. It is therefore necessary to apply controls on change.</p>
<p>What are the implications of any internal development of a building on a local list, if they are too stringent, request 70 High Street to be omitted. Why isn't the Visitor's centre included on the local list?</p>	<p>Explanation of the local list and criteria for inclusion on the local list is found within the management plan, pg 13. There are no restrictions on internal development.</p>
<p>Reference to PPG15 and PPG16 should also refer to the emerging PPS15.</p>	<p>Appraisal and management plan amended to reflect PPS5.</p>
<p>Rochester's Iron Age needs to be mentioned on page 7 for consistency as it is referred to elsewhere.</p>	<p>Amended in accordance with comments from Kent County Council.</p>



Individual Responses

73 responses were received.

Question	Response	CAP Response
Do you agree with the appraisal's assessment of the area's special qualities?	Yes: 59 No 1: No comment: 13	Overall justification for character areas, pg. 15, and explored in character area appraisals.
Are there any special qualities, distinctive features or areas which you consider should be included in the appraisal.	River Frontage/Piers/ Esplanade King Edwards School	Justification for inclusion of the Esplanade, appraisal, pg. 33. Addressed in appraisal, Character Area 3.
Do you agree with the three character areas? High Street/Victoria Street Castle and Cathedral Precinct Paddocks/St Margaret's Street	Yes: 59 No: 2 No Comment: 12 Yes: 60 No: 1 No Comment: 12 Yes: 59 No: 2 No Comment: 12	Overall justification for character areas given (pg. 15), and explored in character area appraisals. Overall justification for character areas given (pg. 15), and explored in character area appraisals. Overall justification for character areas given (pg. 15), and explored in character area appraisals.
Do you agree with the proposal to extend the Conservation Area boundaries to include the Esplanade?	Yes: 54 No: 8 No Comment: 11	Justification for inclusion of the Esplanade, appraisal pg. 33.



Question	Response	CAP Response
<p>Are there any other changes that should be made to the conservation area boundary?</p>	<p>Inclusion of the Esplanade (to preserve the view from the Castle to the River).</p> <p>Exclusion of the Esplanade as it is of poor quality and will be blighted by views of the new large scale industrial estate across the river.</p> <p>Inclusion of Aveling a Porter building abutting the bridge for its social and architectural interest.</p> <p>Star Hill should be included in the City Centre conservation area as it is an important road leading into the heart of Rochester, to deal historically with the views into Rochester High Street and for its Victorian, Edwardian terraces.</p> <p>Inclusion of The Common north east of Corporation Street and the railway line to protect the remains of the city wall both above and below ground when new development takes place.</p> <p>Rochester Railway Station and Nags Head Area as this is a part of Rochester tourists see when they arrive by train.</p> <p>St Margaret's Row opposite the railway station.</p> <p>Roebuck Road, Watts Avenue and King Edward Road, Maidstone Road, The Close, Gordon Terrace.</p> <p>The High Street would be better if linked with Chatham section of the High Street, therefore propose an extension to include this section.</p> <p>The Military terrace which runs under Cunningham House.</p> <p>Amend existing boundary to pass west of Bishop's court at the end of love lane.</p>	<p>Justification for inclusion of the Esplanade, appraisal, pg. 33.</p> <p>Justification for inclusion of the Esplanade, appraisal, pg. 33.</p> <p>The Medway physically and visually separates this area from the main body of Rochester Conservation Area, which justifies exclusion from this conservation area.</p> <p>Designated as 'Star Hill Conservation Area'</p> <p>Any proposal to develop the land would be subject to national and local planning policy, including PPS5 requirements.</p> <p>Designated as 'Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area'</p> <p>Designated as 'Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area'</p> <p>Designated as 'Watts Avenue / Roebuck Conservation Area'</p> <p>Designated as 'Star Hill to Sun Pier Conservation Area'</p> <p>Outside of Rochester City Conservation Area. Would recommend consideration for inclusion in Watts Avenue / Roebuck Conservation Area.</p> <p>Justification for inclusion in the appraisal, pg. 33.</p>

Question	Response	CAP Response
How important is it to preserve the character and appearance of the area?	1 response said it was 'relatively important' 45 people responded that it was 'very Important' 12 respondents said it was 'vital' or 'essential'. No comment: 15	Importance explained in appraisal introduction, pg. 3.
Are you aware of the planning controls governing changes to the buildings within the area?	Yes: 38 No: 12 No comment: 23 Out of those who say yes: Too strict: 3 Just about right: 14 Should be stricter: 18 No comment: 3	Planning tools available to the local authority explained in management plan, pg. 12 and 13.
Should additional controls be brought in to control shop front signage and advertising and shop front security?	Yes: 47 No: 10 No comment: 16	Acknowledges that inappropriate shop fronts, advertising and security are a weakness to the conservation area. Together with effective use of current controls and enforcement, recommends consideration to making High Street an Area of Special Control under section 7 of Control of Advertising Regulations 2007 bringing the following under planning control: Class 1: Advertisements by Public Bodies Class 4: Illuminated advertisements on business premises Class 5: Other advertisements on business premises
Comments?	<p>Inappropriate modern colours and materials should be more tightly controlled as it harms visual amenity and is contrary to the historic character of the High Street. There should be stricter enforcement and applying existing policies.</p> <p>Pavements are cluttered with too many A-frame signs. They seem totally unrestricted. Suggest limiting to just one each.</p> <p>Shutters are ugly, but preferable to vandalism. Any grills/shutters should be made from wood.</p>	<p>Identified as a weakness in the appraisal, pg .19, and addressed in the management plan, Principles and Actions, pg. 8.</p> <p>Recommends consideration to making High Street an Area of Special Control under section 7 of Control of Advertising Regulations 2007 in the management plan, pg. 8.</p> <p>Management plan recommends the production of a shopfront guide which includes appropriate security measures in the conservation area, pg. 9 and 12.</p>



Question	Response	CAP Response
<p>Do you think that Medway Council applies its planning rules consistently and fairly?</p> <p>Will the management plan help this?</p>	<p>Yes: 20 No: 28 No comment: 24</p> <p>Yes: 36 No: 9 No comment: 26</p>	<p>The management plan sets out a strategy based on the findings of the appraisals and sets out Principles and Actions to fulfil this duty.</p>
<p>Should bar and restaurant numbers along the High Street be restricted?</p>	<p>Yes: 45 No: 14 No comment: 13</p>	<p>The management plan recommends the consideration of a policy limiting concentration and overall percentage of A3 (restaurant and cafes), A4 (drinking establishments) and A5 (hot food takeaways) uses on the High Street, pg. 9.</p>
<p>Do you support the current policy of unrestricting vehicle access to High Street during the week?</p> <p>Should the council consider any changes to this?</p>	<p>Yes: 32 No: 26 No comment: 14</p> <p>Yes: 34 No: 17 No comment: 24</p>	<p>The necessity/ability for restrictions for vehicles on the High street requires further study.</p> <p>The necessity/ability for restrictions for vehicles on the High street requires further study.</p>

Question	Response	CAP Response
<p>Further comments</p>	<p>A major challenge in preserving and enhancing the character of the area will be the integration of the new development and any alterations to the A2 due to take place on Corporation Street and Rochester Riverside.</p> <p>Tourism is vital for the local economy, therefore an attractive environment is essential</p> <p>Should restrict vehicle access on High Street on Saturdays, Sunday and public holidays as a traffic free street would create a better ambiance and it would be better for the environmentally</p> <p>Vehicles should be restricted between 10 and 4 everyday to encourage use by pedestrians as a traffic free street would create a better ambiance and it would be better for the environmentally</p> <p>Restricting vehicle access would make it difficult for shops on the high street to survive exacerbating under-occupancy and a neglect of buildings.</p> <p>The High Street between Chertsey’s Gate and the Bridge is used as a rat run and t the crossroads of Boley Hill and the High Street is an accident hotpot. Suggest traffic calming measures such as speed humps.</p> <p>There should be strict speed limits along the High Street</p> <p>Should enable cyclists to go both ways on the high street with proper cycles routes</p> <p>Consider the use of CCTV to enforce against those ignoring traffic directions.</p> <p>Upper stories need to be put to better use along the High Street.</p> <p>The High Street would concentrate on attracting niche and specialised businesses to prevent it from becoming another generic High Street with chains.</p>	<p>The management plan acknowledges that any proposals for Corporation Street as part of the approved Rochester Riverside Masterplan and Corporation Street Development Brief should enhance the setting of the conservation area. Principles and Actions recommends that the local planning authority, including the Conservation Team, should co-ordinate and review strategy and implementation, and provide relevant advice to all parties pg. 10.</p> <p>Importance of tourism acknowledged in the appraisal, pg 17 and 18.</p> <p>The necessity/ability for restrictions for vehicles on the High Street requires further study.</p> <p>The necessity/ability for restrictions for vehicles on the High Street requires further study.</p> <p>The necessity/ability for restrictions for vehicles on the High Street requires further study.</p> <p>The necessity/ability for restrictions for vehicles on the High Street and Boley Hill requires further study.</p> <p>The necessity/ability for restrictions for vehicles on the High Street requires further study.</p> <p>The necessity/ability for restrictions for vehicles on the High Street requires further study.</p> <p>The necessity/ability for restrictions for vehicles on the High Street requires further study.</p> <p>Vacant upper floors have been identified in the appraisal, pg. 18 and identified as an opportunity in the management plan, pg. 11.</p> <p>Acknowledges that higher earning uses may also drive out small retailers, reducing quality and choice. Principles and Actions in the management plan recommend a co-ordinate retail and tourism strategies which reinforce distinctiveness and independent retailers, pg. 9.</p>



Question	Response	CAP Response
<p>Further comments</p>	<p>The council seem to have dropped previous wording about chain shops entering the High Street, which was a good policy. There could be scope for chain stores at Rochester Riverside instead.</p> <p>Replace catalpa tree with a mature oak</p> <p>There should be additional tree planning where possible in the High Street area, Blue Boar car park, Crow Lane, junction of Star Hill and the High Street, and at the junction of Rochester Bridge and the High Street</p> <p>There is a strong need to link the High Street across the dual carriage way to the other side and increase access points to the river front. There is poor access to the river from the Conservation Area, which discourages riverside walks/ water activities. Explore using the river side more for tourism</p> <p>Views out from the Esplanade is degraded by the demolition of the Aveling and Porter building.</p> <p>Star Hill entry point is spoilt by Barclays Bank building and should be replaced by something more in keeping with the rest of the high street at any opportunity.</p> <p>Some buildings such as Barclays are of their time and should not be redeveloped.</p> <p>Noise and loutish behaviour discourages tourists and is unpleasant for those living nearby.</p> <p>There are too many bars on the High Street, causing anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>There is too much building neglect, which can lead to long term deterioration. Owners must be persuaded to fulfil their responsibilities, currently there is no incentives.</p>	<p>Acknowledges that higher earning uses may also drive out small retailers, reducing quality and choice. Principles and Actions in the management plan recommend a co-ordinated retail and tourism strategies which reinforce distinctiveness and independent retailers, pg. 9.</p> <p>Importance of Catalpa tree acknowledged in appraisal, pg. 24.</p> <p>Trees acknowledged as a major part of the character of Rochester Conservation Area, and valuable public amenity in the management plan, pg. 5. Appropriate additional tree planting should be considered as part of a public realm strategy, recommended in the management plan, pg. 5 and 6.</p> <p>The gateway at Star Hill / High Street and Rochester Bridge / High Street have been identified as weaknesses in the appraisal, pg. 13. Principles and Actions for improvement are outlined in the management plan, pg. 6. Improved access to Rochester Riverside and access to the river by the Esplanade identified as an opportunity in management plan, pg 11.</p> <p>The Council has formed a view on this development based on national and local policy.</p> <p>The gateway at Star Hill and the High Street has been identified as a weakness in the appraisal, pg. 13. Principles and Actions for improvement are outlined in the management plan, pg. 6.</p> <p>Justification of Barclays building as a negative building given in the appraisal, pg. 19 and identified as an opportunity site in the management plan, pg. 7 and 11.</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour and perceived conflicts identified in the appraisal, pg. 18. Good planning for this area should include policies and effective measures which will support and maintain an optimum balance between the interests of residents, business and visitors.</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour and perceived conflicts identified in the appraisal, pg. 18. Consideration of policy limiting concentration and overall percentage of drinking establishment uses on the High Street recommended in management plan, pg. 9.</p> <p>Information on funding and resources, and outline of enforcement tools can be found in the management plan, 13 .</p>

Question	Response	CAP Response
<p>Further comments</p>	<p>More attention should be paid to details such as removal of old signage, painting of yellow lines and road repairs</p> <p>There should be a council-led pro active strategy that builds on the history and architecture of historic Rochester. There should be more cultural and historical events based on Rochester's connections and history, involving the local community and local businesses.</p> <p>Omission of Six Poor Travellers Inn from list of buildings associated with Dickens. There is also a contradiction between it's description on page 17 and its listed building description.</p> <p>Disagreement with the statement that large openings in the High Street where buildings once stood appear out of character as the gaps in the building façade offer welcome opportunities to see out and see in, and views of the wall.</p> <p>Gaps in the High Street are established features and perform an invaluable role in the life of the High Street as meeting spaces, areas for seating, and as spatial connection to the adjacent character areas. Some are underused, but have great potential as public spaces.</p> <p>Railings on the street frontage at the Memorial Garden would sever it from the High Street, compromising its qualities.</p> <p>Suggest that the primary outcome of the Appraisal should be a co-ordinated strategy for the High Street and adjacent areas. A co-ordinated strategy should incorporate environmental improvements as part of a broader aim for a social and economically sustainable environment.</p> <p>The management plan lacks a structured approach of how the actions and aspirations will be fulfilled. There should be more specific actions even if limited in ambitions.</p> <p>If the appraisal is to be more than just a written document, there must be the appropriate staffing and budget to carry it out.</p> <p>The local list splits up the core content of the management tools and might be moved to an appendix.</p>	<p>The management plan recommends development of a public realm strategy to ensure appropriate street furniture, street lighting, planting and floorscape, pg 5 and 6.</p> <p>The management plan recommends development of a tourism strategy, in line with proposals recommended by Rochester Heritage Interpretation Partnership: Heritage Masterplan for Rochester to build a Rochester Heritage Brand, pg. 4, 3.11 and 13.</p> <p>Amended to include Six Poor Travellers House in list of buildings associated with Dickens and Uses in Character Area 1. List description amended for clarification.</p> <p>Justification of Character is given in the appraisal, pg 16. Appraisal recommends that in principle it would be desirable based on historical character, but any proposal would need to be fully considered against planning policy.</p> <p>Appraisal recommends that in principle it would be desirable based on historical character, but any proposal would need to be fully considered against planning policy, pg. 16.</p> <p>Proposal deleted from appraisal.</p> <p>The management plan recommends a strategic co-ordinated plan that requires all Council staff concerned with the built environment to develop, advance and implement programme to improve the conservation area, pg. 13.</p> <p>The management plan sets out a strategy based on the findings of the appraisals and sets out Principles and Actions to fulfil this duty.</p> <p>The management plan acknowledges that it is essential that the local authority commits adequate resources to enable it to exercise powers and achieve its responsibilities, pg. 13.</p> <p>Amended. Local list attached at appendix 3.</p>



Rochester Conservation Area Management Plan

Adopted September 2010



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MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter develops the Conservation Area Appraisal by setting out policies, strategies, and proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the area.

The first section contains an outline of the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities for Rochester Conservation Area. Referring to specific issues, the management plan considers how the character and appearance of the conservation area can be preserved or enhanced. The second section considers how the plan could be implemented.

The Council strongly supports the role of cultural heritage in enriching people’s lives. In terms of maintaining sustainable environments, heritage is at the forefront. Heritage led regeneration is a vital and hugely popular part of the local and national economy.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

STRENGTHS - Key Characteristics to Preserve or Enhance

The strengths can be summarised below.

Spatial Pattern

- The little altered ‘herringbone’ pattern of lanes connecting with the High Street and St Margaret’s Street should be

retained their in present form as indispensable. These streets and lanes express a way of life when any wheeled traffic was at best primitive and are therefore essential to the character of the area.

- The meandering roads and pathways that interlink Rochester Castle, Cathedral and Boley Hill create interest and provide a high degree of pedestrian legibility and permeability.
- The rich visual experience, spatially as well as architecturally of Black Boy Alley.
- The distinctive plan form of the Cathedral precinct, including the highly unusual siting of its Cloister and relationship of the complex to the surrounding area. A clear visual relationship between the Cloister remains and the Cathedral which has group value and historic interest of the Precinct.
- The informal pattern of plots and building forms on Boley Hill and Cathedral Precinct, of itself and in contrast with the regular, continuous terraces on the High Street, Victoria Street, the Terrace and Minor Canon Row. Both the “open” and “closed” succession of views generated by these patterns adds interest.
- Continuous frontages and highly consistent building line, enclosing the High Street, Victoria Street, and St Margaret’s Street

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- The interrelationship of spaces contributes visually to the character of the area, and to a sense of place.
- The footprint of any new building should fit into the urban context of the area and where possible relate to the existing ‘grain’. Any undue set back of the building line may seriously prejudice the continuity of the street scene. New development should respect the ‘grain’ of the area by reflecting, in it’s design, the linear pattern of traditional plots. Alleyways and passages should be retained.
- There should be a presumption against developing large houses and their grounds to intensify the use of such sites or to assemble back gardens for backland development as such development erodes the spatial character and setting of historic buildings.

Strategic Views

- Long or wide views into the conservation areas from surrounding places, of the skyline, roofscape and layout of the town punctuated by the Cathedral spire, Castle Keep and St Margaret’s Church tower.
- View of the River Medway, All Saints, Frindsbury and Chalk Cliffs from elevated vantage points within the conservation area.
- Narrow, sloping streets and structures terminating views, providing enclosure and intimate experience of place.
- Quirky glimpses between buildings from various points of the conservation area.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- The views and vistas within, into and from the conservation areas are important to their visual character and unique setting.
- New buildings, street furniture, and other developments should have regard to their impact on key views in accordance with national planning guidance and local policy.
- *Seeing the History in the View: a method of assessing heritage significance within views* by English Heritage should form the basis of assessment.
- Special attention should be paid to the roofscape of new development to the roofscape of new development to maintain variety and interest.



Associations

- Cultural and Historic Associations. Although intangible, these associations amongst many others provide a historic record of Rochester and form an important part of the character and interest of the area.

Architecture

- The wide variation of building types, reflecting the multi-layered built heritage, in particular on the High Street whose listing is at least partly founded on their artistic design and craftsmanship. Grand civic and commercial buildings including the former Guildhall, Conservancy Office, Corn Exchange, and Eastgate House reflected Rochester’s prestigious and wealthy status

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Encourage local partners to develop a tourism strategy build on existing town trails and site interpretation in line with proposals recommended by Rochester Heritage Interpretation Partnership: Heritage Masterplan for Rochester.
- All buildings should contribute to maintaining a sense of historical continuity and authenticity.
- Emphasise importance of grand civic and commercial buildings in wayfinding, signposting and, where possible access.
- Maintain and prevent erosion of architectural detail in all buildings.

City Walls

- Remains of ancient City Walls that link present day Rochester with its origins as a walled town, are essential to the city’s identity.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Walls contribute to Rochester’s ancient associations.
- Maintain and where possible enhance setting and access to extant walls.
- Ensure preservation of buried wall remains.



Former Guildhall



Eastgate House



Old Corn Exchange



Archaeological

- Remains of undisturbed archaeological deposits from Rochester’s long history

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Rochester is of national importance and has a high potential for increasing knowledge of its late Iron Age, Romano-British, Saxon and medieval antecedents.
- In accordance with PPS5, where an application site includes archaeological interest, due consideration should be given to archaeology, including desktop assessments and/or field evaluation and an assessment of the impact of the proposal.
- The local planning authority / Design and Conservation team should work with all sectors and stakeholders to ensure due consideration is given to archaeology with highway and other environmental works.
- Encourage site interpretation of archaeological remains in line with proposals recommended by Rochester Heritage Interpretation Partnership: Heritage Masterplan for Rochester.

Trees and Open Spaces

- As well as being historically significant in their own right, the landscape quality, including existing trees of the castle gardens and ditch, Kings Orchard, the Vines, and Churchfields provide attractive green areas within the conservation area and enhance the setting of nearby buildings.
- The trees at Boley Hill, College Yard and the Vines provide interest in the streetscene and softening of hard-landscaping.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Trees and open spaces are a major part of the character of Rochester Conservation Area, and are a valuable public amenity.
- Presumption in favour of preserving trees, as well as public and private open spaces that have great character and significance. Inappropriate development erodes character and harms the setting of historic buildings. The acceptability of the principle of any development on open space should be determined in the first instance, by a full assessment of the significance of the open space, followed by full discussions with Medway Council and English Heritage.

Public Realm

- Desirability of consistent historically appropriate street furniture, lighting and floorscape.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Appropriate and well designed street furniture with consistency of design and materials provide a sense of unity and authenticity in the conservation area.
- The provision of any replacement benches, rubbish bins and other essential items of street furniture should form part of an integrated public realm strategy in which the design, such as form, colour and materials, is co-ordinated with the street lighting and floorscape.



Consistent design of Street Furniture

WEAKNESSES – Loss, Intrusion, Negative Factors

The area has many problems associated with lack of adequate or correct maintenance and poor inward investment. This inevitably results in the physical and visual degradation of buildings, shop fronts and the streetscape:

Gateways

- The entry from Star Hill gives visitors the erroneous impression of a rather depressed town, characterised by difficult access due to heavy traffic, poor quality buildings (Barclay’s bank), poor shop fronts and ill-considered public realm design (guard rails, floorscape, clutter of signs, lights and other objects). Although defined by the attractive buildings to the northwest, it lacks a sense of enclosure to the northeast and pedestrian routes are confusing and difficult to negotiate. Overall, this primary arrival gateway to the town lacks coherent visual impact and fails to generate a memorable sense of arrival.
- The approach from Rochester Bridge provides a memorable gateway, but suffers from poor public realm design (guard rails, floorscape, clutter of signs, lights and other objects) and is heavily dominated by traffic making the pedestrian routes difficult to negotiate.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Gateways into the conservation area are important as they create the first impression of the conservation area.
- The Local Planning Authority should where possible and practicable promote the enhancement/ redevelopment of buildings that make a negative contribution to the quality of the conservation area in accordance with national planning guidance and local policy. See map 6.
- Rationalise and reduce street clutter. Bollards, highway railings, lighting columns, litterbins, benches, information panels, service cabinets and other street furniture should be kept to an absolute minimum. An integrated public realm strategy should include co-ordinated form, colour, location and need for all objects.
- Pedestrians have the advantage of a compact urban centre and good permeability. At present only service vehicle access to the High Street is permitted during the week, which causes some visual clutter. Consideration should be given to reduced access periods for service vehicles - perhaps restricting access to mornings and evenings.
- Place further restrictions on vehicle access to the High Street on Sunday’s. Consultation shows that Traders welcome extending pedestrianisation of the High Street to include Sunday’s.
- Including a cycle lane in any replanning scheme for Corporation Street would encourage more cycle use and remove conflicts on the High Street. The introduction of a high quality public transport system along Corporation Street and the possible relocation of the station may reduce traffic and parking demand within the core conservation area.
- Measures to reduce or eliminate trader and worker parking demand within the core, in favour of Corporation Street should be examined, together with measures to improve pedestrian access from Corporation Street car parking to the core.



Gateway from Star Hill, which fails to generate a memorable sense of arrival



Gateway from Rochester Bridge with poor public realm design and dominated by traffic

Negative Buildings

- Barclay's bank is sited in a prominent location and is inappropriate in scale, design and materials.
- 7-9 Crow Lane. The architectural character of the building has little merit, and does not reflect the character of Crow Lane through architectural details, materials, or building line.
- 47-49 High Street. A new building would offer the opportunity to respond to the scale and massing of its neighbours and restore the characteristic building line.
- 25-31 Corporation Street, and former petrol station. These buildings have little architectural merit, and their current location disconnects the buildings and their uses from the High street. The strategic use of this site has been considered in conjunction with the Corporation Street Development Framework. An extant permission for a hotel with restaurant has not yet been implemented.



Barclay's Bank, a negative contribution to the conservation area



25-31 Corporation Street, buildings of little architectural merit



7-9 Crow Lane, incongruous in the streetscene



Vacant, former Petrol Station, Corporation Street

Gap Sites

- The gap sites at Blue Boar Lane and between 48 and 56 High Street are alien to the established character of the High Street. There is historic precedent for a building on these sites, and its development could have a potentially positive impact on the character of the High Street, subject to ensuring no overall loss of accessibility to High Street trading premises.



47-49 High Street, an opportunity site,

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Negative buildings and gap sites present opportunities for enhancement through good development, subject to ensuring a high level of accessibility.
- A presumption against alterations to buildings which adversely affect the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Have regard to *Building in Context: new development in historic areas* by English Heritage and CABE.



Architecture

- Erosion of detail and poor maintenance, especially to unlisted High Street buildings, appears largely due to ownership/tenure turnover and/or vacancy.
- Painting of brick and stone masonry should be actively discouraged and where possible reversed.
- Ad-hoc accumulations of cables across some buildings should be rationalised and where possible hidden.
- Recognise the importance of controlling advertising and illumination, seeking removal of discordant, bizarre, multiple or ad hoc signs, banners, A-boards etc. which detract from and cheapen both building and street character.



The Bull C.1890



The Bull C.1910, alterations including removal of detail and painted brick



Ad-hoc accumulation of wires



The Bull 2008, further alterations and advertisements

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Celebrate Rochester’s multi-layered built heritage, reflected in its diverse architecture, especially listed buildings. Fully utilise potential of Eastgate House. The existing proposals for Eastgate House may offer an opportunity to do this.
- Encourage best practice in repair, reinstatement of features and compatible alternations. Consider preparing a special conservation manual.
- Discourage neglect which causes decay and increases repair costs. Work closely with building owners to ensure security and good repair wherever possible. Invoke powers to assess harm and issue urgent works notices where necessary.
- Undertake periodic condition surveys with particular attention to architectural detail. Clarify and disseminate strong policy in favour of preserving and where necessary enforcing against removal of detail.
- Seek to encourage repair and avoid unnecessary replacement. Ensure that any replacement precisely matches original work in all respects. Require physical and/or documentary evidence where appropriate.
- Resist loss of historic features in all building, including unlisted ones. Give consideration to introducing Article 4 Directions to bring “permitted development” for single family houses under planning control where they are at risk of harmful change to their external appearance.
- Within the conservation area, funding should be sought or allocated for a programme of rationalisation to remove unwanted wires. Where possible telephone and electronic wires should be placed underground, or be discreetly re-routed. This should be organised by the local authority with local partners.
- Consider introducing additional advertisement controls. This could be achieved by removing ‘deemed consent’ under Section 7 of the Control of Advertisement Regulations 2007 or by introducing An Area of Special Control of advertisements under Section 20 of the Control of Advertisement Regulations
- Continue to closely control adverts. Resist inappropriate or unauthorised appearances. Seek removal, reduction or replacement of discordant signs as appropriate.
- Provide detailed guidance on advertising in the conservation area through a Supplementary Planning Document.
- Promote as appropriate enhancement/redevelopment of buildings that do not make a positive contribution to the quality of the conservation area.



Negative Features

- Corporation Street marks the eastern edge of the conservation area. Its negative impact on the setting of the area requires a major, yet sensitive mitigation project as outlined in the Corporation Brief. The west side consists largely of car parks and unintentionally exposed backs of buildings. A derelict petrol station presents an opportunity for enhancement. Corporation Street is a physical and visual barrier between the ancient core and its historic riverside setting, now a regeneration area. Heavy traffic, utilitarian lighting, furniture and hard surfaces dominate the scene. By discouraging visitors to stop in the city it has a depressing effect on the economy.



Birdcage Walk, a tree lined avenue. Example for Corporation Street that would enhance the existing negative edge

THREATS AND PRESSURES

High Street

- Changeable economic activity, leading to vacancy, high ownership/tenure turnover. This discourages confidence and lack of pride, which can impede maintenance, degrade shop fronts, and encourage inappropriate alterations and uses.
- The diversification of the retail sector into specialist and tourist related shops is an essential contribution to the High Street and conservation area's vitality and character. Accommodation, leisure facilities, good shops and restaurants in or within walking distance of the core should cater for all types of visitors and budgets. A high concentration of food and drink establishments, assists night-time vitality, but can increase anti-social behaviour. Higher earning uses may also drive out small retailers, reducing quality and choice.
- Increased security demands such as solid roller shutters deaden streets, create hostile night time environments and may conceal criminal acts inside buildings from view.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Regenerating Corporation Street by way of transformation as a tree-lined avenue with well designed active frontage developments would remove the foremost negative edge of the conservation area. It would reduce the severance with Rochester Riverside and enhance the conservation area's connection with its surrounding area.
- The local planning authority should work with all sectors and stakeholders to progress and implement the Development Brief for Corporation Street and inform the wider development at Rochester Riverside to ensure a successful connection with the conservation area.
- Include measures to improve pedestrian crossings and identify gateways into the city.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Further study of current problems and causes of vacancies, under-use and fabric decay.
- Consider policy limiting concentration and overall percentage of A3 (restaurant and cafes), A4 (drinking establishments) and A5 (hot food takeaways) uses on the High Street.
- Security measures should exclude solid shutters which produce an inactive frontage in line with PPS 5 Historic Planning Practice Guide
- Alarm boxes, security lighting, CCTV cameras should be as unobtrusive as possible.
- Consider a shopfront security guide which includes appropriate security measures in the conservation area.

Blue Boar and Epaul Lane Car Parks

- Large town centre car parks diminish character and exacerbate conflict. Review of options in conjunction

with Master Plan measures could offer mitigation and enhancement.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Co-ordinate replanning of Blue Boar car park with Corporation Street Development Brief, with a view to reinstating appropriately scaled and designed frontage buildings, and forming a civic space or market square.

Corporation Street

- Any proposals for Corporation Street as part of the approved Rochester Riverside Masterplan and Corporation Street Development Brief should enhance the setting of the conservation area. Requirements should include careful analysis, sensitive layout, high quality historically compatible materials and large scale planting.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- The local planning authority, including the Design and Conservation Team, should co-ordinate and review strategy and implementation, and provide relevant advice to all parties.

Archaeology

- The Rochester-Kent Archaeological Assessment (2004) states that on the basis of the present evidence it is not possible to pinpoint concentrations of activities, functions or status within late iron age Romano-British and Saxon settlements at Rochester. Limited information and awareness threatens artefactual remains.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- In accordance with PPS5, where an application site includes archaeological interest, due consideration should be given to archaeology, including desktop assessments and/or field evaluation and an assessment of the impact of the proposal.

Open Spaces

- Open spaces at Love Lane, The Paddock and Kings Orchard may be viewed as having development

potential. The appraisal concludes that these open spaces are significant to the historic character of the conservation area and setting of listed buildings.

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS

- Presumption in favour of preserving public and private open spaces that have great character and significance. The acceptability of the principle of development should be determined, in the first instance, by a full assessment of the significance of the open space, followed by discussions with Medway Council and English Heritage on development
- Proposed developments surrounding or visible from open spaces to take account of their impact on the character of the spaces(s) concerned.
- *Building in Context: new development in historic areas* by English Heritage and CABE should be a particular guide for a high quality, consistent, practical approach.



Kings Orchard, the line of the Roman Wall



Kings Orchard, a green setting of The College and Rochester Cathedral

OPPORTUNITIES

Places change incrementally. In time the cumulative impact can be positive or negative. Every development should be designed with appropriate attention to detail in mind for its contribution to future vitality and quality.

Potential for New Development

- The building analysis has identified negative and neutral buildings. Any proposal to develop should be expected to enhance the character of the area.
- Encouragement of hotels and leisure development close to the conservation area would fulfil an acknowledged need for these facilities, catering for visitors and local residents.

Star Hill entry to High Street

- Barclays Bank facelift incentive; pedestrian priority at road junction; public realm design project.

High Street

- Shop front improvements; reuse of vacant upper floors above shops for sustainable use and an increase in natural surveillance and vitality; sensitive development in gap sites; reinstatement of lost architectural detail.

Memorial Garden

- The Memorial Garden enjoys a central location. Stronger definition of space with tree planting to provide shade as well as seating to encourage use as a meeting place.

Victoria Street

- Shop front improvements, reuse of vacant shops and upper floors for sustainable use and an increase in natural surveillance and vitality.

The Castle

- The Castle is one of the main attractions for visitors. Progress and implementation of its Conservation Plan including further research into historical interpretation, preservation and improved visitor facilities.

Castle Gardens

- Conservation Plan to include a long term, co-ordinated strategy to facilitate cultural events to enhance the Castle's setting.
- Planting should use local and regional species where appropriate.

St Margaret's Street

- Appropriate repair and maintenance of walls.

City walls

- Further research, consolidation, setting improvements, proactive presentation.

Path from Love Lane to Esplanade

- Improve link to form a more pleasant route; improve access to waterfront.

The Esplanade

- The river is hidden from large parts of the City. The inclusion of the Esplanade enhances the link between Rochester Conservation Area and the river, and has considerable potential to contribute to the economic as well as cultural and historical regeneration of the City. There is also a good opportunity to provide external interpretation of the bridge and river in line with proposals recommended by Rochester Heritage Interpretation Partnership: Heritage Masterplan. The park can also be used to view an estuarine habitat.

Corporation Street

- Potential to form a key gateway, linking both High Street and Rochester Riverside by tackling current dereliction and mending the torn edge of the ancient core. Sensitive development of vacant sites through Corporation Street Development Brief.

- As part of the public realm under the Council's direct control, consideration should be given to commissioning the preparation of a scheme for redesigning this road as a civic-quality thoroughfare with appropriate traffic calming, traditional floorscape materials, footways and careful edge planting and active frontages. It should be strongly linked to both the core and the regeneration area, facilitating pedestrian permeability at several places.
- The Development Brief for Corporation Street will provide opportunities for development along the entire length of the street.

Strategic Views

- Identify and raise awareness of the importance of strategic views. Consider the inclusion of these views within the Local Development Framework and policies to protect these views. Consider specific policies targeting building height, form, materials, etc within defined strategic views. Identify and progress specific enhancement opportunities.

General

- Create a coherent public realm strategy for the High Street which includes the rationalisation of traffic signs and street furniture, consistent and historically appropriate floorscape materials and street furniture and recommendations for car park improvements.
- Consideration should be given to the value of skilful floodlighting of certain buildings, features and spaces in the conservation area to highlight historic or architectural features. A lighting strategy should be developed by the local authority and local partners. Where possible, the fittings should be designed to avoid damage to the historical building and clutter.
- Many buildings in Rochester feature in Charles Dickens' literature. This could be built upon in conjunction with proposals recommended by Rochester Heritage Interpretation Partnership: Heritage Masterplan for Rochester.



MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Conservation Areas

Conservation Area Consent is needed for the total or substantial demolition to non-listed buildings within the conservation area. Planning permission is needed for all material changes to the external appearance of any non-single family building.

Additional controls in conservation areas require planning permission for certain householder developments including cladding; dormer windows; certain volumes of extensions, high satellite dishes and antennae. In addition, the Council should consider the use of Article 4 directions. This means that planning permission will be required for all specified changes to the external details or appearance of houses within the conservation area.

Technical and Urban Design Guidance

Design guides are desirable to inform building owners of best practice with regard to maintenance, repair and reinstatement, as well as what the Council is likely to consider acceptable by way of alteration and extension of property.

Following the appraisal, issues that have emerged and which may benefit from further guidance include:

- shopfronts,
- security
- advertising, signage and lighting
- repair and maintenance of historic buildings
- public realm design guidance
- the appraisal's observations present

a strong case in favour of preparing a guidance document for future highways and other public realm works. The objective would be to ensure that design, including layouts, furniture and materials are fully co-ordinated and appropriate to the character of the conservation area.

In the interim, the IHBC/SPAB guide, *A Stitch in Time*, downloadable from the IHBC website, is recommended for publicising and distribution.

The Decision Making Process

All Council departments involved in decisions affecting change within the Rochester Conservation Area should understand the significance of conservation area designation and its special interest.

Assessing Development Proposals – A Matrix

Although making judgments about buildings can never be a perfect science, the primary characteristics which define Rochester can form a basis for measuring a building's relative value, i.e. whether its preservation is essential, highly desirable, tradable for a greater benefit or negative. Any listed building is by definition considered essential. The next three categories can be set within the English Heritage conservation area guidance as positive, neutral and negative.

The criteria set out below are derived from the predominant characteristics of positive buildings in Rochester. Assessment of any existing building or development can be measured against them. A score of 9 or more is a positive score; 5-9 is neutral, below 5 is negative. Condition should generally be disregarded, but loss of original features (including poor alteration) can be scored under ornament. Most buildings in Rochester will have a positive score. Some buildings may display more than one characteristic, depending on the elevation being assessed, for example rear elevations not intended to be prominent may have been opened up to view over time. It is, therefore, only a guide and must be applied with careful judgement and with caution, particularly where it may be difficult to exclude received values.

Criteria

Grain/scale

Does its plot size relate to the surrounding pattern?
Is the scale of its elements easy to relate to human scale?
Is the general height to eaves or parapet between 2 and 3 storeys?
Is it a good neighbour to listed or acknowledged important buildings?

Use

Is the use or mix appropriate for its location?

Verticality and expression

Is the façade well articulated?

Does it express a hierarchy of internal heights or volumes?

Facing materials

Are the primary facing materials of stucco, brick or stone and do they harmonise with or complement their neighbours?

Roof form

Is the roof pitched, behind a brick parapet or mansard roofs? Is the angle of pitch appropriate?

Roof materials

Are roof coverings hand made clay tile, natural slate or other historically appropriate material?

Windows and doors

Are they historically authentic hardwood, painted softwood or metal? Do they present or retain appropriate glazing proportions, bars or leaded lights?

Front boundary/ground floor

Does the building/group retain its original front boundary treatment, period shop frame or ground floor elevation?

Architectural quality

Is the building the work of a particular architect of regional or local note?

Does it suit the period of the building?

Is the building appropriately detailed, carefully crafted, and visually interesting?

Is it recognisably of good and durable quality?

Does this quality alone outweigh any inappropriate elements?

Can it be described as fine architecture whether or not it contrasts with its neighbours?

Ornamentation

Does the building have any ornamentation? Does it suit the period of the building?

Is it of good quality?

Significance

Does the building have any special cultural, social or historic associations with which local people can identify?

Colour

Does the facing material or applied decoration harmonise with or compliment its neighbours?

Identity

Is the building type legible? Does it look like what it is?



Local List

Due to their historical associations, siting, architectural style and visual interest, there are many buildings that are of significance to the history and character of the environment. However, they may possess insufficient interest to warrant statutory listing. Local Authorities have the power to include buildings on a local list and develop policies to protect these buildings from inappropriate change or development. Although there is no statutory designation, their inclusion on a local list can be a material consideration when determining a planning application.

Application of the Matrix criteria could facilitate the compilation of a schedule of buildings worth of inclusion on a local list.

Following the appraisal, potential inclusions are listed in **Appendix 3**.

Unlisted Buildings

In accordance with Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment, there should be a presumption in favour of retaining unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Building Analysis: Plan 6

Any proposals that include the demolition of such buildings should be assessed against the same criteria as proposals affecting a listed building. The quality of the replacement building should also be taken into consideration.

Enforcement

Where the necessary consents are not sought or historic buildings are allowed to deteriorate into disrepair the Local Authority can pursue a

programme of appropriate legal action using powers available under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 where this may be deemed necessary. The powers available include:

- Taking enforcement action against unauthorised development – planning contravention notices / breach of condition notices / enforcement notices / stop notices / and injunctions; and
- Serving Section 215 notices that set out the steps that need to be taken to remedy the situation, and the time within which they must be carried out.

Buildings At Risk

The majority of buildings within the conservation area are maintained to a good standard. Due to signs of structural movement, Priors Gate is listed on the Buildings at Risk register.

Where buildings degenerate, The Local Authority has or can acquire powers under Sections 48 and 54 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 where it may be deemed necessary to serve repairs or urgent works notices for the preservation of listed and unlisted buildings in conservation areas. The Council can undertake such works itself and recover the costs from owners who fail to comply with statutory notices, or may seek to compulsorily acquire the building or site.

Strategic Co-ordination

Implementing the Management Plan requires that all Council staff concerned with the built environment should be encouraged to take an active role in developing, advancing and implementing the management strategy and the following project programme for the conservation area:

-
- Implementation of the existing Medway Retail Strategy
- Continued refinement of the Medway Tourism Strategy
- Development of a public realm strategy to ensure appropriate street furniture, street lighting, planting and floorscape
- Development of a lighting strategy to highlight features of architectural and historic interest at night
- Implementation of the Corporation Street Development Brief
- Implementation of Rochester Castle Conservation Plan and the Rochester Cathedral Conservation Plan

Monitoring

Changes in the appearance of conservation areas resulting from both the implementation of approved schemes and permitted or unauthorised alterations, as well as the condition of the area's physical fabric, should be monitored regularly. The effects should be reviewed and policies modified or specific action proposed where necessary to deal with current issues. Monitoring should also include following up and publishing information from time to time on the local authority's progress on implementing the proposals included in the management strategy for the area. It is important that the Management Strategy is reviewed within five years of its adoption. The review process should be accompanied by public consultation.

Funding and Resources

The preservation and enhancement is a shared responsibility involving Kent County Council, Medway Council, local groups, residents and businesses. The principle burden, however, falls on the local planning authority, and it is essential that the authority commits adequate resources to enable it to exercise the aforementioned powers and responsibilities.

Other possible sources of funding could include:

- Developer funding through Section 106 agreements.
- Charitable trusts and government agencies
- Through the application of Section 215 Untidy Site notices

CONCLUSION

The assessment of positive and negative indicators concludes that the majority of buildings in the area make a positive contribution to the conservation area. They have retained most of the original form and good quality architectural features and details.

Adoption of the Management Strategy will:

- assist the Council in taking a more proactive role in preserving and enhancing the character of the conservation area and,
- convey the Council's commitment and intentions to stakeholders.



