



Mote Park Adventure Zone, Maidstone, Kent

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Issue 1
August 2015



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DOCUMENT ISSUE

Issue 1 (August 2015) - Maidstone Borough Council



BK/CRo/01.236298

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[Mote] park... is richly ornamented with the foliage of spreading oaks, of a large size, and commanding a most pleasing view of the neighbouring county

(Edward Hasted, The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent: Volume 4, 1798)

Mote Park is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden owned by Maidstone Borough Council and situated approximately 1km to the south-east of the Maidstone Town Centre. The municipal park covers approximately 180 hectares of rolling parkland that straddles the River Len, a tributary of the River Medway, which runs south-east to north-west across the park.

The history of the park has been traced back to medieval times when it is thought to have been a deer park. The present landscaped parkland evolved mainly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Today, Mote House (Grade II* Listed) is the principal building in the grounds, constructed between 1793 and 1801 having replacing an earlier house.

The park was bought by Maidstone Borough Council in 1929 and during the twentieth century residential developments has encroached upon the west and south of the park. The park is now almost entirely surrounded by the urban development. Despite this, its size, topography and extensive planting give Mote Park a country park character. Its pleasant walks, views, trees, lake and facilities make it a very popular destination for the people of Maidstone and for people outside of the area.

Visitor numbers to the park have seen a steady rise over the past few years resulting in an increase in pressure on the park's facilities and maintenance budgets. Maidstone Borough Council is therefore considering various options to secure a sustainable future for Mote Park. One option is for the construction of a new Adventure Zone facility consisting of high rope walks and climbing walls to be situated close to the existing park facilities. There is also the possibility that café facilities will be improved to increase revenue.

This report has been prepared by Purcell for Maidstone Borough Council to assess the character and significance of Mote Park and assess the suitability and archaeological potential of the proposed site. Preliminary observations have concluded that siting the new Adventure Zone within the 'Café and Playgrounds' character area ensures containment of the park facilities in a single location, leaving the historic parkland character areas unaffected and uncompromised by new development. The key to the success of the project will be through a well-considered design, incorporating a pallet of appropriate materials and thoughtful landscaping, minimising the impact on the surrounding historic environment. It is intended that this report will evolve into an assessment of the impact of the proposed new Adventure Zone facilities upon the receiving historic environment once the location and design has been fixed.



I INTRODUCTION

I.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report has been prepared for Maidstone Borough Council to inform evolving proposals for the construction of a new activity attraction known as the 'Adventure Zone' within Mote Park, Maidstone in Kent.

This report provides a full understanding of the heritage significance of the site proposed for development which is within the Registered Park and Garden of Mote Park, a historic designed landscape which has its roots in the medieval period. A formally laid out park was in existence by the seventeenth century and the grounds were extended and redesigned as informal parkland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The Grade II* Listed Mote House and a number of other Listed Buildings are set within the park and environs. As such, it is important to understand the historic context of the site and its relationship (if any) to surrounding heritage assets. Further, the report analyses the varied character and nature of the park in order to assess the suitability in heritage terms of the proposed location of the Adventure Zone.

The report culminates in a list of design parameters set out to mitigate any potential harm to the historic environment as a result of the proposed scheme. These parameters can be used to inform the emerging scheme. As the scheme develops, this report will evolve to include an assessment of the impact of proposals on surrounding heritage assets. The report considers a number of locations for the siting of the adventure zone before focusing on the best option in terms of its heritage impact.

This report has been prepared by Bev Kerr (BA (Hons), MA, MSt) Heritage Consultant, Purcell.

I.2 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

It is essential to have a full understanding of the history and development of Mote Park to inform sensitive change. As such, this report has been prepared in line with requirements set out by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which requires those putting forward proposals to understand the significance of the heritage assets in question in advance of development. The content of this report is based on the latest guidance provided by English Heritage (Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, 2008 and The Setting of Heritage Assets, 2011, updated 2014). National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines conservation as the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

The report contains eight sections as follows:

I INTRODUCTION

This section sets out the basic information regarding the background to the report, such as the scope of the study, existing information and methodology.

2 CONTEXT AND CONSTRAINTS

This section provides an understanding of Mote Park by setting out the known constraints of the site. This includes a summary of the statutory designations and legislative frameworks that relate to the site.

3 DESCRIPTION

This section provides an illustrated description of the park, outlining the broad character areas before looking in more detail at the area now under consideration for development. It will also consider views of the proposal site from within the park and concludes with a consideration of potential alternative sites for the development.

4 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

This section provides an illustrated timeline of the history of the park and will include an analysis of historic maps and the inclusion of plans which show the historic development of the site.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

This section will analyse the Historic Environment Record and will provide an archaeological overview of the evolution of Mote Park to inform the below ground heritage potential of the site and the impact of the proposed development on the heritage resource.

6 SIGNIFICANCE

This section sets out what is significant about the site and surrounding park in line with Historic England guidance. Four main designations of heritage value are used – communal; evidential; historical and aesthetic.

7 NEXT STEPS

The report will be completed with a set of design guidance to steer the proposals. These guidelines can be used to help evolve feasibility options for future development.

8 APPENDICES

The Appendices comprise further information which is relevant to the Heritage Assessment but not necessary for inclusion in the main text. This includes a bibliography of published and unpublished sources which have been consulted in the preparation of this document, Listed Building Descriptions and Historic Environment Record (HER) data.

I.3 EXISTING INFORMATION AND GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE

A site visit was made on 13 May 2015 at which times the site and surrounding park were visually assessed and photographed.

A desk-based study was undertaken to provide baseline information for this report. This involved consulting documentary resources and online databases, which are referenced throughout this document. A Conservation Plan for the park was prepared by a consultancy team in 2008 in advance of a successful Heritage Lottery Fund bid for Maidstone Borough Council¹. The document sets out a detailed history and development of the park which has informed the history and archaeology sections of this report.

No major gaps in knowledge were identified during research.

A full list of sources consulted for this study can be found in appendix B.

¹ Mote Park Conservation Plan, 2008 Maidstone Borough Council

2 CONTEXT AND CONSTRAINTS

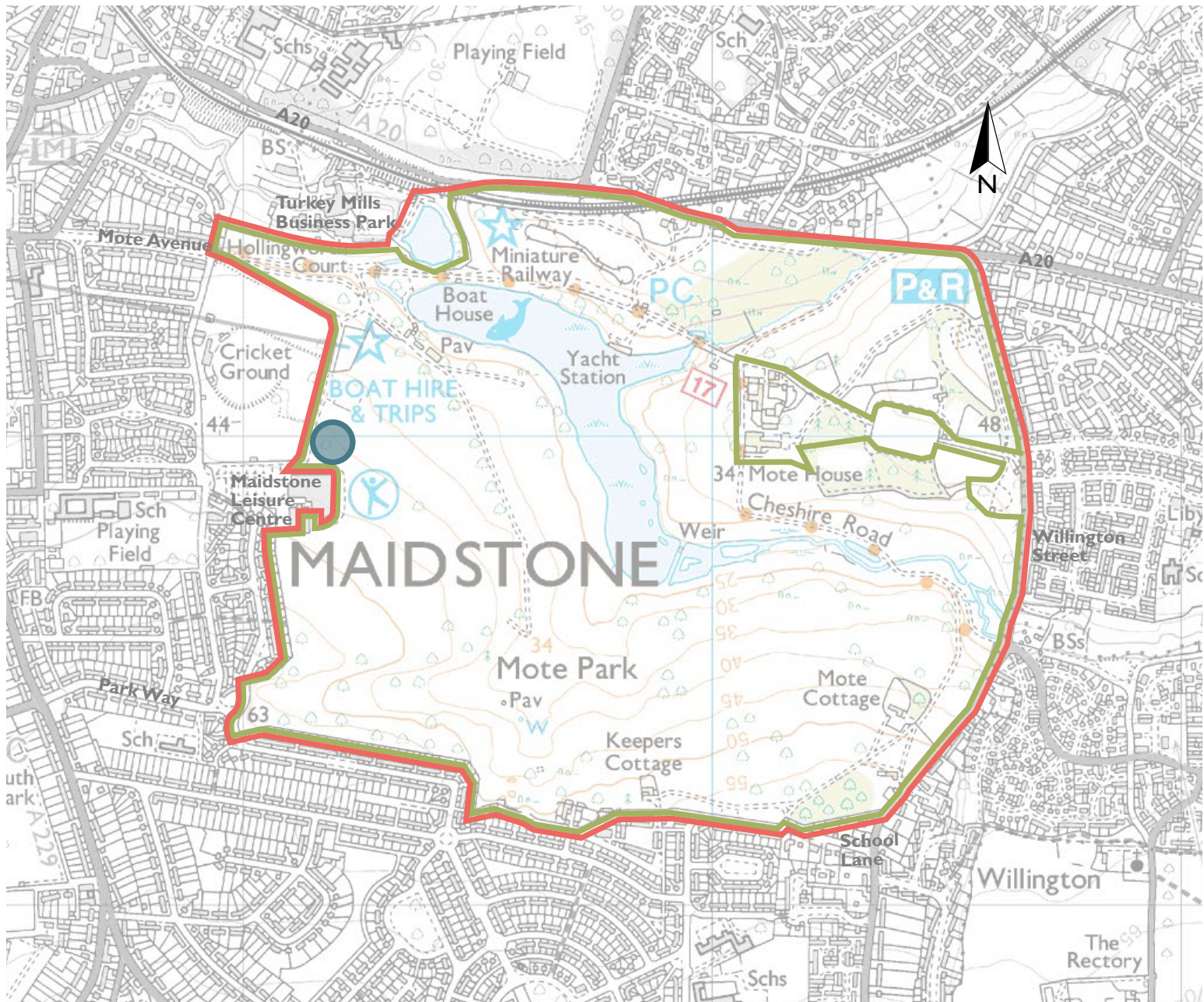


2.1 LOCATION

Mote Park is the largest of Maidstone's Municipal Parks. Lying within the town, the main public entrance of Mote Park is situated on Mote Avenue which lies approximately 1km south-east of the town centre.

The park is bounded to the north by the Turkey Mills Business Park and the A20 Ashford Road. The eastern boundary runs along Willington Street as far as School Lane. The southern boundary runs to the rear of twentieth century residential housing on School Lane, and continues to the south-western corner of the park at Park Way. The western boundary runs to the rear of residential housing and skirts around Maidstone Leisure Centre and Maidstone Cricket Ground until it meets the main entrance on Mote Avenue.

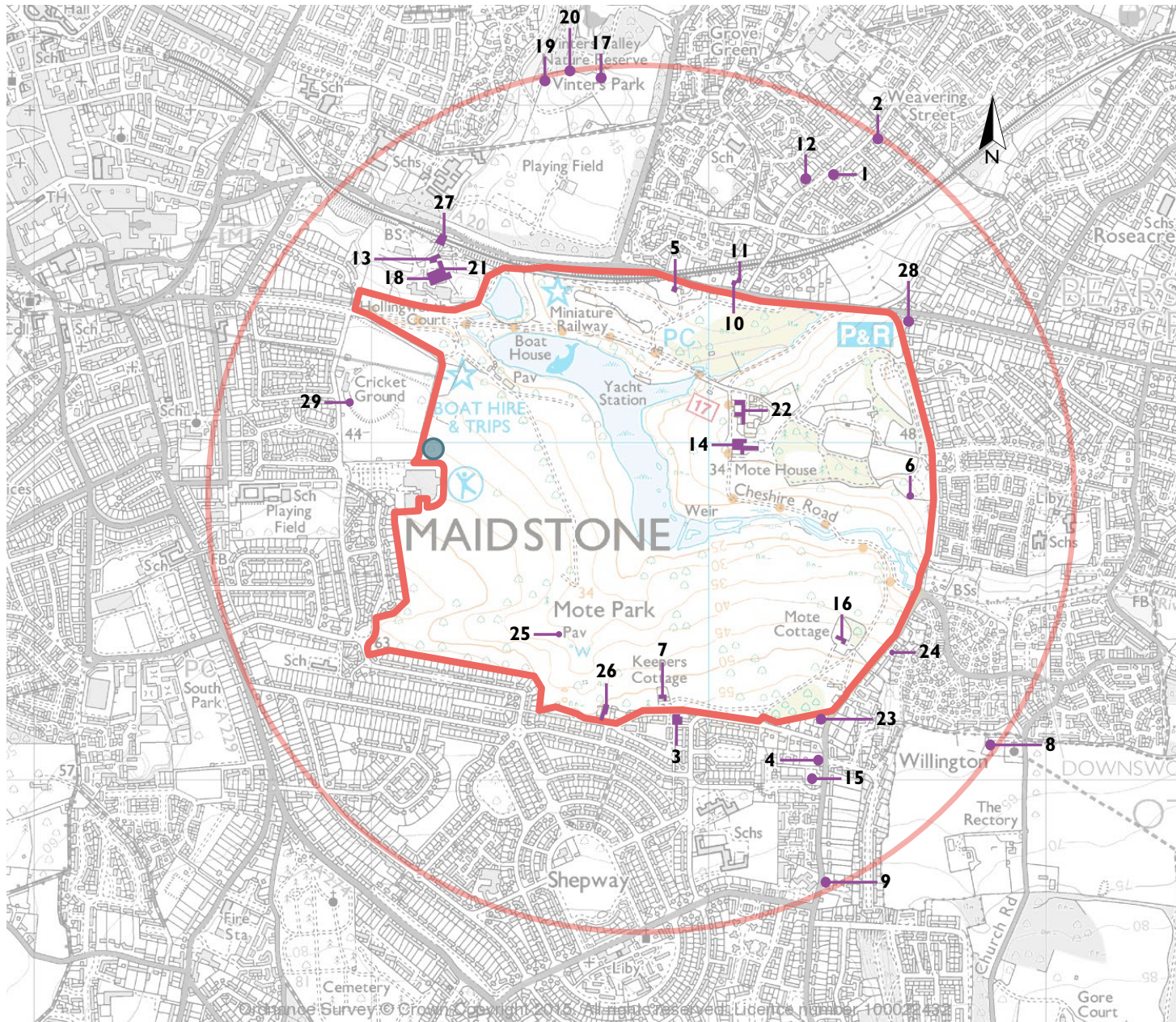
The site which Maidstone Borough Council have identified as the potential location for the new activity zone lies to the south of the main car park and children's playground, north of the Maidstone Leisure Centre and east of the boundary with the cricket club.



- REGISTERED PARK BOUNDARY
- MOTE PARK BOUNDARY
- THE SITE

2 CONTEXT AND CONSTRAINTS

2.2 HERITAGE CONTEXT



- REGISTERED PARK BOUNDARY
- THE SITE
- LISTED STRUCTURES

Listed Buildings within Mote Park:

5. Raigersfeld, Ashford Road, Maidstone, Grade II
6. The Old Brewhouse or Old Bothy, Mote Park, Grade II
7. Keeper's Cottage, Mote Park, Grade II
14. Mote House, Mote Park, Grade II*
16. Mote Cottage, Mote Park, Grade II
22. Stable, Mote House, Mote Park, Grade II
25. Stone Pavilion (Volunteer's Pavilion), Mote Park, Grade II
26. The Forge Lodges, Mote Park, Grade II

Listed Buildings outside of Mote Park:

1. Weaving Manor, Boxley, Grade II*
2. Yew Tree House, Weaving Street, Grade II
3. Farm Cottages, Old School Lane, Grade II*
4. Willington Place, Willington Street, Grade II*
8. Church House, Otham, Grade II
9. The Old Farmhouse, Willington Street, Grade II
10. 2, Boxley Cottage, Ashford Road, Maidstone, Grade II
11. 1, Boxley Cottage, Ashford Road, Maidstone, Grade II
12. Walnut Tree Farmhouse, Weaving Street, Grade II
13. Turkey Court (formerly Turkey Mill House), Ashford Road, Maidstone, Grade II*
15. Willington Place Farmhouse, Willington Street, Grade II
17. Ha ha in grounds of Vintners, Grade II
18. Industrial building, Turkey Mills, Ashford Road, Maidstone, Grade II
19. Ha ha in grounds of Vintners, Grade II
20. Ha ha in grounds of Vintners, Grade II
21. Former drying lofts at Turkey Mills, Ashford Road, Maidstone, Grade II
23. Woodside, 2 Willington Street, Grade II
24. Willington House, Willington Street, Grade II
27. Railway Bridge no 618, Ashford Road, Grade II
28. Willington Court, Willington Street, Grade II
29. The Pavilion, Maidstone Cricket Club, Grade II

Listed Buildings within 1200m study area

Mote Park is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden. The boundary of the park is shown on the plan opposite. Within the boundary of the registered Park are Mote House and its associated buildings and Turkey Mill Pond, both of which are outside of the boundary of the municipal park.

There are no Conservation Areas within the surrounding area but there are a number of Listed Buildings within the park and surrounding area which accordingly are afforded statutory protection under policies in the NPPF and the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. Buildings are listed because of their special architectural and historic interest which through designation is considered to be important in national terms. National and local planning policy recognises that changes to buildings or sites within the vicinity of a Listed Building can affect the special interest of the Listed Building.

Listed Buildings within a 1200m radius of the centre of the park are shown on the plan opposite. Mapped as part of the archaeological assessment of the area, the plan shows the location of 29 structures which are listed here and in appendix B. The majority of these structures are not, however, within the setting of the park and unlikely to be affected by the proposed development.

However, the site visit showed that due to undulating nature of the site, the extent of tree cover and vegetation, only Mote House is visible from the site proposed for development. Key views of the site will be assessed later within this report.



- 1 Mote House
- 2 The Volunteer's Pavilion
- 3 The Old Bothy
- 4 Keeper's Cottages
- 5 Mote House southern and eastern elevations, looking west



2 CONTEXT AND CONSTRAINTS

2.3 PLANNING, LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

2.3.1 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) (published March 2012) is the overarching planning policy document for England and provides guidance about how to implement the legislation which covers the historic environment, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Within Section 12 of the NPPF - Conservation and enhancing the historic environment - are the government's policies for the protection of heritage.

The policies advise a holistic approach to planning and development, where all significant elements that make up the historic environment are termed heritage assets. These consist of designated assets, such as listed buildings or conservation areas, non-designated assets, such as locally listed buildings, or other structures or features which are of heritage value. The policies within the document emphasise the need for assessing the significance of heritage assets and their setting in order to fully understand the historic environment and inform suitable design proposals for change to significant buildings.

Conservation is defined in the NPPF as the 'process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains, and where appropriate, enhances its significance'. Consequently, a key aim of the NPPF is to encourage the identification of the significance of heritage assets in advance of proposed development works (Paragraphs 128-139). The NPPF also emphasises the importance of sustainable development and the need for continued viability. By focusing on what matters about a heritage asset – its significance – it frees up opportunities to keep these assets in use and manage sustainable change.

Mote Park is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden, therefore any proposals for works to it should take into consideration the National Planning Policy Framework and especially the following paragraphs:

61. Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

64. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

65. Local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design (unless the concern relates to a designated heritage asset and the impact would cause material harm to the asset or its setting which is not outweighed by the proposal's economic, social and environmental benefits).

128. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. ... Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

130. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of or damage to a heritage asset the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

131. In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

132. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

133. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

134. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

135. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

137. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

2.3.2 LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

The Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan was adopted in 2000. At present the new Local Plan to replace it is still being developed. A number of policies have been adopted as part of the Local Plan and should be read in conjunction with the saved policies of the Borough Wide Local Plan 2000. Maidstone has also adopted a number of supplementary planning documents (SPD) and endorsed supplementary guidance documents (SG). These provide supplementary guidance to local, regional and national planning policies.

Although not yet approved, the policies in the Local Plan Policies which was issued March 2013 are of note and although these may alter following public consultation, they provide a useful guide. Within the Development Management Policies, paragraphs 11.34 to 11.35 specifically discuss policies regarding the historic environment: 11.33 Maidstone has been shaped and influenced by a long past history, the legacy of which is a strong and rich cultural heritage. The Archbishop's Palace and Leeds Castle are two high profile heritage assets but the borough also abounds with many other historical buildings. These heritage assets contribute to the strong sense of place which exists across the borough. However, this rich historical resource is very vulnerable to damage and loss. The local plan allows some flexibility for the re-use and conversion of historic assets but care must be taken to ensure this does not lead to unacceptable adverse impacts. Small scale changes over time, especially the standardisation of building materials and practices can erode the special character and appearance of places, and the setting of historic features such as listed buildings and scheduled monuments, which can be crucial in maintaining historic integrity.

11.34 The local plan will ensure the qualities and local distinctiveness of the historic environment are recognised and protected. This will be achieved in part through the protection of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas from inappropriate development. The local plan will seek to encourage a greater understanding of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their values through partnership working with communities, developers and asset managers. The council will encourage mutually beneficial and sustainable proposals to conserve and enhance heritage assets for future generations whilst acknowledging the social and economic challenges faced by land owners and managers.

11.35 All development proposals will be expected to be accompanied by an initial survey to establish what on-site assets there are. Sufficient information to assess the direct and indirect effects of development on past or present heritage assets together with any proposed prevention, mitigation or compensation measures will also be required. Without this there will be a presumption against granting permission.

Policy DM10 combines policy for both the historic and natural environment:

2 CONTEXT AND CONSTRAINTS

DM10 – Historic and Natural Environment

Historic and natural environment

1. To enable Maidstone borough to retain a high quality of living and to be able to respond to the effects of climate change, developers will ensure that new development protects and enhances the historic and natural environment, where appropriate, by incorporating measures to:

i. Protect positive historic and landscape character; heritage assets and their settings, areas of Ancient Woodland, veteran trees, trees with significant amenity value, important hedgerows, features of biological or geological interest, and the existing public rights of way network from inappropriate development and ensure that these assets do not suffer any adverse impacts as a result of development;

ii. Avoid damage to and inappropriate development within or adjacent to:

a. Cultural heritage assets protected by international, national or local designation and other non-designated heritage assets recognised for their archaeological, architectural or historic significance, or their settings;

b. Internationally, nationally and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; and

c. Local Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats.

iii. Control pollution to protect ground and surface waters where necessary and mitigate against the deterioration of water bodies and adverse impacts on Groundwater Source Protection Zones, and/or incorporate measures to improve the ecological status of water bodies as appropriate;

iv. Enhance, extend and connect designated sites of importance for biodiversity, priority habitats and fragmented Ancient Woodland; support opportunities for the creation of new Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats; create, enhance, restore and connect other habitats, including links to habitats outside Maidstone Borough, where opportunities arise;

v. Provide for the long term maintenance and management of all heritage and natural assets, including landscape character; associated with the development;

vi. Mitigate for and adapt to the effects of climate change; and

vii. Positively contribute to the improvement of accessibility of natural green space within walking distance of housing, employment, health and education facilities and to the creation of a wider network of new links between green and blue spaces including links to the Public Rights of Way network.

2. The character, distinctiveness, diversity and quality of Maidstone's landscape and townscape will be protected and enhanced by the careful, sensitive management and design of development.

3. Where appropriate, development proposals will be expected to appraise the value of the borough's historic and natural environment through the provision of the following:

i. An ecological evaluation of development sites and any additional land put forward for mitigation purposes to take full account of the biodiversity present; and

ii. Heritage and arboricultural assessments to take full account of any past or present heritage and natural assets connected with the development and associated sites.

iii. A landscape and visual impact assessment to take full account of the significance of, and potential effects of change on, the landscape as an environmental resource together with views and visual amenity.

4. Publicly accessible open space should be designed as part of the overall green and blue infrastructure and layout of a site, taking advantage of the potential for multiple benefits including enhanced play, wildlife, sustainable urban drainage, tree planting and landscape provision. The form and function of green infrastructure will reflect a site's characteristics, nature, location and existing or future deficits.

5. Development proposals will not be permitted where they lead to adverse impacts on natural and heritage assets for which mitigation measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the impacts cannot be achieved.

Account should be taken of the Landscape Character Guidelines supplementary planning document and the Green and Blue Infrastructure SPD.

2.3.3 GUIDANCE ENGLISH HERITAGE CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES (2008)

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, published by English Heritage, provides a comprehensive framework for the sustainable management of the historic environment, wherein 'Conservation' is defined as the process of managing change to a significant place and its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations.

The guidance describes a set of four heritage values, which are used to assess the significance of a heritage asset: evidential value, historical value, aesthetic value and communal value.

Conservation Principles also differentiates between works that are repairs, restoration and new works or alterations. The following paragraphs indicate the level of justification required for different types of work.

117. Repair necessary to sustain the heritage values of a significant place is normally desirable if:

- i) there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposals on the significance of the place; and
- ii) the long term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future; and
- iii) the proposals are designed to avoid or minimise harm, if actions necessary to sustain particular heritage values tend to conflict.

126. Restoration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:

- i) the heritage values of the elements that would be restored decisively outweigh the values of those that would be lost;
- ii) the work proposed is justified by compelling evidence of the evolution of the place, and is executed in accordance with that evidence;
- iii) the form in which the place currently exists is not the result of an historically-significant event;
- iv) the work proposed respects previous forms of the place;
- v) the maintenance implications of the proposed restoration are considered to be sustainable.

138. New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:

- i) there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;
- ii) the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;
- iii) the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;

- iv) the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.

2.3.4 THE SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT GOOD PRACTICE ADVICE IN PLANNING: 3, HISTORIC ENGLAND, MARCH 2015

This document provides guidance on how changes within the setting of a listed building, conservation area, scheduled monument, etc. can affect the significance of an asset itself.

It sets out how the significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence and historic fabric but also from its setting – the surroundings in which it is experienced. The careful management of change within the surroundings of heritage assets therefore makes an important contribution to the quality of the places in which we live.

- Change, including development, can sustain, enhance or better reveal the significance of an asset as well as detract from it or leave it unaltered. For the purposes of spatial planning, any development or change capable of affecting the significance of a heritage asset or people's experience of it can be considered as falling within its setting.
- Understanding the significance of a heritage asset will enable the contribution made by its setting to be understood.

- The design of a development affecting the setting of a heritage asset may play an important part in determining its impact. The contribution of setting to the historic significance of an asset can be sustained or enhanced if new buildings are carefully designed to respect their setting by virtue of their scale, proportion, height, massing, alignment and use of materials. This does not mean that new buildings have to copy their older neighbours in detail, but rather that they should together form a harmonious group.
- A proper assessment of the impact on setting will take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

2.3.5 SEEING THE HISTORY IN THE VIEW (2011) (WITH REVISION NOTE JUNE 2012)

Seeing the History in the View presents a method for understanding and assessing historic significance within views. The guide follows English Heritage's approach to conservation, which is to understand the heritage significance of a place or asset (baseline assessment), and then to manage that place or asset so as to preserve and enhance its significance (assessment of effects and mitigation).

3 DESCRIPTION

3.1 MOTE PARK



Mote Park Visitors Guide (courtesy of Maidstone Borough Council)

Mote Park covers approximately 180 hectares of rolling parkland that straddles the River Len, a tributary of the River Medway, which runs south-east to north-west across the park. A lake has been formed within the park following the damming of this water course.

Once a country estate outside of Maidstone, the park has been surrounded and encroached upon by residential development through the 20th century giving it an urban setting. However, the size of the park and the large areas of planting which define many of the boundaries enclose the park visually separating it from its urban context. There are excellent long distance views northwards towards the South Downs from the south of the park, whilst other areas of the park have a pleasant rural feel.

The park still retains many of its eighteenth and nineteenth century parkland features including a man-made lake which covers approximately 11 hectares, large numbers of mature trees and the principle park building, Mote House (Listed Grade II*), which has been recently restored. Formal paths circulate visitors around the park, some of which follow historic roads and carriage rides. There are many informal paths which entice the visitor to explore quieter areas of the park.

Visitor facilities are concentrated close to the Main Entrance in the north-west of the site and include a café and playground and 18 hole pitch and putt golf course. The lake can be accessed from the north bank where there are various water activities. North of this, and on higher ground, is a miniature railway. There are further access points to the park located around the park boundary, and additional car parking in the north-east and south-east of the park.

Less obvious to visitors are the features of the earlier landscape. These include the former roads (now paths), and a variety of earthworks including former field boundaries and the earthworks of a deserted village. Several late medieval buildings within the park, such as Ye Old Bothy and Raigersfeld are also evidence of the pre-park landscape.

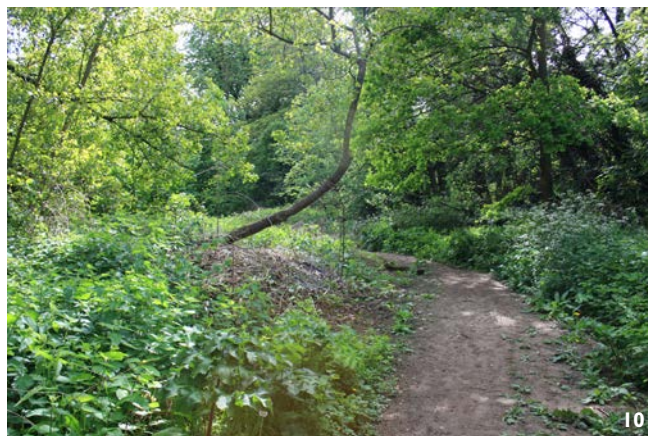


- 1 Mote House seen from near the Volunteers Pavilion, looking north-east
- 2 Open landscape in the south of the park, looking east
- 3 Former location of The Cascade and long views towards the Downs
- 4 North bank
- 5 The north bank and lake looking east towards Mote House

3 DESCRIPTION



- 1 The wetlands and east park, looking west
- 2 Looking south-east towards Lower Bridge
- 3 Folly façade of the café which faces the lake
- 4 Woodland and historic spillway north-west of Mote Park
- 5 Formal paths on the north bank
- 6 The lake looking west



- 7 The lake, looking south-west
- 8 The miniature railway, looking east
- 9 The park looking east from below Mote House
- 10 Woodland in the north-west of the park
- 11 Burning ground car park

3 DESCRIPTION

3.2 CHARACTER AREAS

Within the 2008 Conservation Plan, the park has been subdivided into 17 character areas. These are as follows:

1	Park Entrance
2	Café and Playground
3	Playing Fields
4	Lake
5	North Lake Margin
6	North Edge
7	North-east Woodland
8	Jenner's Bank
9	House and Service Buildings
10	North-east Slopes
11	Len Wetlands
12	Pleasure Grounds and Gardens
13	South-east Edge
14	South-east Slopes
15	Cottages and Ragstone Mounds
16	Old House Landscape
17	West Bank



Google earth

Character Areas identified within the 2008 Conservation Plan

- MOTE PARK BOUNDARY
- THE PROPOSED SITE

This report does not intend to reproduce the Conservation Plan 2008, but it is important to understand the key characteristics of the park in order to assess the suitability of the preferred location of the new Adventure Zone against alternative sites. For the benefit of this report, a number of these character areas have been consolidated and their key characteristics assessed and summarised in the following section. This section will end by focussing in more detail upon the area identified as the potential location for the new Adventure Zone.

The numbers referred to within the section titles relate to the character areas shown on the plan above.

3.2.1 PARK ENTRANCE (I)

The main access point of the park is from Mote Avenue and the closest entrance to the centre of Maidstone which lies to the west. A lodge stands to the north of the park entrance at the narrowest point of a funnel shaped strip of land. The roadway heads south- eastwards from the lodge through a sunken tree-lined avenue. The road continues towards Mote House but cars are instead directed into the main car park to the north of the study site. A second road leads back to the main entrance along the boundary with the Maidstone Cricket Club.

The area contains an expanse of open grassland which is currently used as an overflow car park. To the north, and beyond the park stone wall is Turkey Mill Business Park which is mainly screened from view.

Key Characteristics:

- Funnel shape
- Central grassed area well sheltered by trees
- Meandering path
- Busy park access roads



- 1 Park entrance looking north-east towards Mote Avenue
- 2 Entrance to the park facing east
- 3 The view north towards Turkey Mill Business Park and the park boundary wall.
- 4 The southern boundary with Maidstone cricket club
- 5 The southern boundary with Maidstone cricket club
- 6 The sunken drive – looking east
- 7 The sunken drive – looking west
- 8 Grassed area used for overflow parking

3 DESCRIPTION

3.2.2 CAFÉ AND PLAYGROUND (2)

The conservation plan describes this area as 'defined by its intensive use and appearance of an urban park in contrast to most of the rest of the site'. Indeed, this area provides toilet and café facilities and the large children's playground as well as a skate park all within a short distance of the main entrance and car park. The area is very popular with visitors.

The skate park and children's play area are aligned along the boundary with Maidstone Cricket Ground. There are a number of mature and young trees in this area but its close proximity to the playing fields gives it an open feel.

The café and toilets are on the top of a steep bank above the lake edge. The café has been designed to imitate a picturesque stone folly, when viewed from across the lake. However, from within the character area it is of banded yellow and red brick with a flat roof. Along with the toilets, it is tired and uninviting. These buildings along with the park volunteer's hut obscure views of the lake from this character area.

Key Characteristics:

- Car park
- Busy park facilities in the form of playgrounds, cafe and toilets
- Open views across the park



- 1 Approaching the car park – looking south-west
- 2 Looking towards the café and further parking
- 3 Views of the lake through tree and scrub from near the cafe
- 4 Children's playground looking south
- 5 Café
- 6 Toilets
- 7 Skate park and playground looking north
- 8 Long distance view of character area looking north

3.2.3 THE PLAYING FIELDS AND WEST BANK (3 AND 17)

South of the 'Café and Playground' character area is a large area of playing fields. This triangular shaped area of open grassland is largely uniform in character. It is, however, set on two levels, with the ground sloping from the south-west to the north-east. The boundary of the earlier park, in the form of a bank and line of trees, cuts across the area. The openness of this area enables long distance views northwards towards the South Downs. Earthworks in the form of banks can also be found on the southern and south-eastern boundary of the character area and are remnants of an earlier park landscape.

To the east of the playing fields is the character area of the 'West Bank', which is a strip of land bordering the lake. This area is mainly used for pitch and putt golf.

Key Characteristics:

- Wide vistas with long distance views
- Even, but gently sloping ground laid to grass



- 1 Looking east across the playing fields
- 2 Boundary of the seventeenth century park divides the playing fields
- 3 The upper playing fields looking east
- 4 The southern terrace of playing fields, looking south-west
- 5 Looking south
- 6 Looking north towards the Leisure centre
- 7 Long distance views northwards towards the Downs
- 8 Looking east towards the pitch and putt in the West Bank character area

3 DESCRIPTION

3.2.4 LAKE AND LAKESIDE (4 AND 5)

The lake dominates the central area of the park. It is an irregular shape with a number of small islands. It is an important element within key park views, and as such, development along or close to its banks should be resisted. The path following the northern edge of the lake is a former carriage drive to Mote House.

Key characteristics:

- Large, irregular shaped, expanse of water
- Ragged vegetation along lake edges
- Important long distance views between the north-west lake edge and Mote House
- Small islands
- Hard lakeside surfaces and buildings to the northern end and along north-west bank.



1 Mote house across the lake



2 Northern lake edge and former carriage drive

3.2.5 NORTHERN SLOPES (6, 7 AND 8)

The northern slopes rise from the lake towards the A20 which provides a northern boundary to the park. The north-west of this area contains the miniature railway and generously spaced trees. A portion of this area was raised by the spreading of spoil from the construction of the lake. The Grade II Listed Raigersfeld, and an unlisted nineteenth century park lodge are situated on the northern park boundary. Further to the south-east of this area is a substantial area of woodland through which the line of Old Weaving Street formerly ran. To the east of this is an area of less dense woodland containing ornamental trees.

Key characteristics:

- Areas of established woodland
- Historic buildings and historic trackways
- Miniature railway



1 Lodge

2 Specimin trees



3 DESCRIPTION

3.2.6 MOTE HOUSE, ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS AND GARDENS (9, 10 AND 12)

The Grade II* Listed Mote House provides the visual focus of this character area. Although the house, associated buildings and gardens are not within the council owned park, it cannot be separated from its surroundings when considering the character of the park as a whole. The house and service buildings have been recently refurbished and a new development is taking place to the north and east of the house. The house itself rises above the surrounding landscape. The landscape to the south and south-east is relatively open and slopes gently away to the west and south, facilitating short and long distance views of the house. Behind, and to the east, of Mote House is an area of dense woodland, which provides a back drop to the house, and surrounds the walled garden which has also undergone residential development. These areas would historically have contained formal gardens, orchards and kitchen gardens providing produce for the house. The late medieval Grade II Listed Ye Old Bothy (Old Brewhouse) is situated on the east edge of this character area.

Key characteristics:

- Historic country house
- Open aspect to the west and south
- Former gardens and orchards of Mote House now mainly woodland



1 Mote house



2 Gentle slopes below Mote House

3.2.7 THE WETLANDS AND SOUTH EAST SLOPES (11, 13 AND 14)

This area to the south- east of the park is characterised by secluded wetlands, open grassland areas with long distance views and stands of trees. Historically, however, this area would probably have been the location of settlement focussed upon Old Willington Street and Shepway Street which may have existed from at least the medieval period. Extensive earthworks relating to the settlements have been noted within the Mote Park Conservation Plan. The Grade II Listed buildings of Mote Cottage and Keepers Cottage are located in these areas.

Key characteristics:

- Secluded wetlands
- Areas of open grassland
- Historic routeways and earthworks



1 Wetlands



2 View within the south-east slopes

3 DESCRIPTION

3.2.8 OLD HOUSE LANDSCAPE (I5 AND I6)

This area includes Long Valley and the banks and earthworks of the former park landscape. Historic sources record its existence in the seventeenth century but it is thought to be medieval in origin. Old Mote House is known to have been located in this area. Views from the listed Grade II Volunteer's Pavilion towards Mote House and views along Long Valley are key views identified within the Mote Park Conservation Plan. Keeper's Cottage is listed Grade II and on the southern edge of this area.

Key characteristics:

- Historic park landscape
- Open vistas
- Views between Pavilion and Mote House
- Extant earthwork



1 Bank within the old park landscape



2 Long Valley and the volunteers pavilion near to the site of Old Mote House

3.2.9 SITE PROPOSED FOR THE ADVENTURE ZONE

The site chosen as the potential location of the new Adventure Zone is located to the south of the 'Café and Playgrounds' character area and to the west of the 'Playing Fields' character area.

The site identified is grassed, containing a number of specimen trees of varying ages. To the north of the site are the skate park, children's playground and main car park. To the south is the Maidstone Leisure Centre, which is a large modern structure partially screened from the park by an earth bank and trees.

To the west is the boundary of the Maidstone Cricket Club. This boundary is a modern metal fence but the cricket ground is heavily screened by trees and mature hedging. Within the park a track providing vehicle access runs along the boundary fence. The Cricket Club pavilion is Grade II Listed and lies approximately 300 metres north-west of the site. It was not visible during the May site visit but it was unclear to what extent this lack of inter-visibility would be affected by seasonal changes and a reduction in leaf cover.

The site is bounded on the west by playing fields which enable long distance views of the surrounding parkland. The roof and second floor windows of Mote House are visible above trees approximately 900 metres to the east of the site.

Key Characteristics:

- Grassed
- Dispersed mature trees on the edge of municipal playing fields
- Mature boundary hedging



- 1 Looking west
- 2 Looking east
- 3 Looking south towards the leisure centre
- 4 Looking west
- 5 Looking north west
- 6 Looking south-west
- 7 Looking north
- 8 Mote House seen across the playing fields

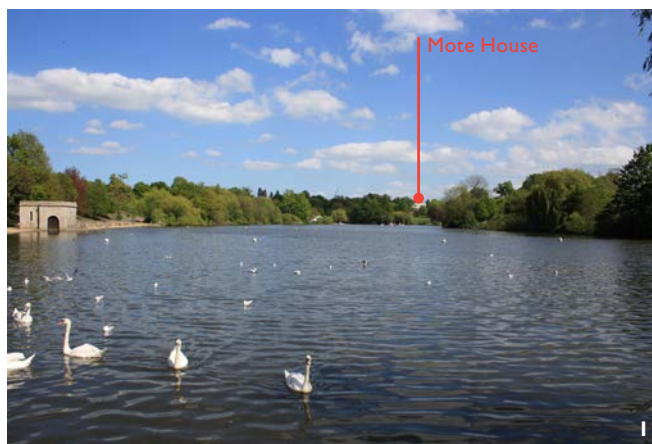
3 DESCRIPTION

3.3 VIEWS

3.3.1 MOTE PARK

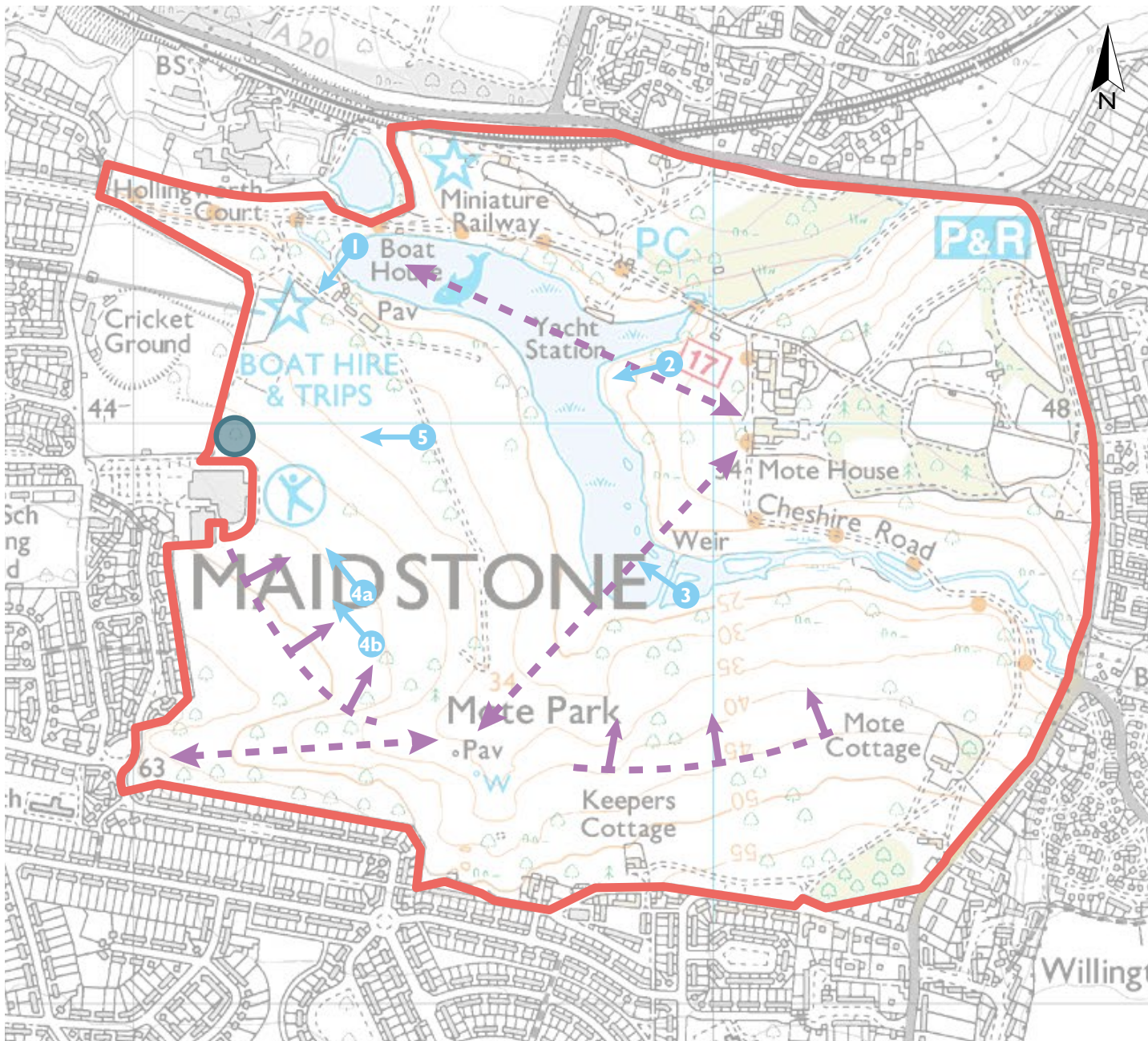
The Conservation Plan identifies a number of key views and prospects within the park¹. These views were reassessed during a site survey as part of the current study. Principal prospects are the long views to and from Mote House along the axis to the lake, and between Mote House and the Volunteer's Pavilion. Secondary views were identified as those along Long Valley and from the east and west carriage routes. Important long distance views of the South Downs can be obtained from the south-west of the park. The major detractors, it identifies, are the occasional views from the north-east of the Leisure Centre and the adjacent skyline of poplars which form the boundary of the 1930's housing estate.

There is no visibility of the Grade II Listed Volunteer's Pavilion from the proposed site. Views to the Grade II Listed Keeper's Cottage, Mote Cottage, Forge Lodges, the Old Bothy and Raigersfeld are also interrupted by the topography and planting. As discussed below, the Grade II Listed Maidstone Cricket Club pavilion west of the study site could not be seen through mature hedging and trees.



- 1 A key view in Mote Park: the view east along the lake of Mote House
- 2 A key view from below Mote House towards the western end of the lake
- 3 A key view in Mote Park: Long Valley
- 4 Detractors include views of the Leisure Centre (centre left). Also in this image is the volunteers hut (below the Leisure Centre) and the folly café (right). Looking south from the north lake shore.

¹ Mote Park, Maidstone. *Conservation Management Plan*, 2008. p.60



- REGISTERED PARK BOUNDARY
- THE SITE
- - - KEY PARK-WIDE VIEWS
- ← ① VIEWS IDENTIFIED IN 3.3.2

Key views of the site

3 DESCRIPTION

3.3.2 THE SITE

In order to better understand the setting and context of the site, the following section assesses key views within Mote Park towards the site. This will help an assessment of the impact of the proposed development. The views discussed below are shown on the map on page 31.

1 VIEW SOUTH ACROSS CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND

This view shows the site from close to the café and disabled car park. The site is beyond the children's playground and to the right of the Maidstone Leisure Centre. From this direction the proposed adventure zone would be partially visible and will integrate with other park facilities already clustered in this area of the park.



2 VIEW FROM BELOW MOTE HOUSE

This image illustrates how views of the study site from the public domain adjacent to the Grade II* Listed Mote Park and Grade II Listed stable are curtailed by historic and municipal planting. This view was taken from below the house and is a rare glimpse of the western bank of the lake which restricts views of the proposed development site beyond.



3 VIEW ACROSS THE LAKE TOWARDS THE SITE

This is a glimpse of a long distance view towards the site from the eastern side of the lake below Mote House and adjacent to the new bridge. Whilst tree cover along the lake edge normally restricts views into the site, views open when the bridge is reached. Park trees distributed along the western bank and within the area of pitch and putt golf course, however, continue to significantly restrict views of the site.



4 VIEW FROM THE SOUTHERN PLAYING FIELDS

From the south and within the 'Playing Fields' character area, the site can be seen to the right of the Maidstone Leisure Centre. The band of relatively young trees which mark the boundary of the old Mote park estate run from left to right across the image. The site is behind trees which have been planted to obscure the Leisure Centre.

As the observer moves further south, local topography obscures the site.



5 VIEW FROM THE WEST

This is view of the study site from the west and close to the public footpath which follows the western carriage drive. The Leisure Centre, partially obscured by trees, is to the left of the site, and the skate park is to the right. The backdrop is formed by the band of thick hedging of the Maidstone Cricket Club boundary. This view demonstrates the municipalisation of the area.



3 DESCRIPTION

3.4 ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS FOR THE ADVENTURE ZONE

This report focuses on assessing the impact of the construction of the adventure zone at the preferred location on the heritage value of the park. To help inform the suitability of the preferred site, the report has also considered a number of alternative sites within the park as a test of suitability and demonstrate that the proposed location has least heritage impact. The heritage criteria for selection of these alternative sites included:

- A location which would not interrupt important views.
- A location which would have no impact on surrounding listed buildings.
- A location outside of potentially archaeologically sensitive areas.
- A location which would respect its context within the registered park.

Additionally the site needs to be suitable for access for visitors, staff and maintenance and construction vehicles. Two sites were identified and assessed during the site visit.

The first alternative site is within character zone 3, 'Playing Fields' (1). The area is on the edge of the playing fields and south of the Leisure Centre, close to the western boundary of the park and adjacent to 1930s housing. Whilst it was felt that the character of the area was of a municipal park, it was felt that limited access, its elevated position with visibility from other areas of the park and its location within the seventeenth century park, made it an unsuitable alternative site in heritage terms.

A second site was also considered to the north of the park within character area 6 'North Edge'. This is the location of the park's miniature railway, original constructed in the 1950s, and in an area of mature and more recently established trees. The railway is set on a flat, raised area, apparently built up from the upcast from the construction of the lake.



- 1 Boundary of the park on the upper playing fields is with 1930s housing. This area was considered a possible alternative location for the adventure zone. Looking south-west
- 2 View south from the miniature railway

To the south, the northern bank of the lake allows public access to the lakeside and lake activities. To the north of this area is the boundary of the park and the mainline railway beyond. There are a number of paths giving public access to the miniature railway. The Grade II Listed Raigersfeld, a timber framed building which dates from the late medieval period, is located to the east of this area.

The site has reduced archaeological potential assuming the site is located on made ground; however the extent and depths are not known. The location close to the Grade II Listed house known as Raigersfeld was thought to be problematic, but this was felt to be less of an issue due to the ample natural screening of the listed building. Although relatively sheltered from trees, the raised location could potentially be visible from short and long distance views. Further issues include the relative distance from current park facilities and the effect on the character of the area which is relatively quiet and secluded.

Due to the significant heritage constraints associated with the eastern half of the park, no appropriate locations for the development have been identified.

In conclusion, it was felt that siting the new Adventure Zone within the 'Café and Playgrounds' character area and to the west of the 'Playing Fields' character area is the most appropriate in heritage terms as it ensured the containment of the municipal park facilities in a single area. This leaves the majority of the historic parkland character areas unaffected and uncompromised by new development.



Google earth

Alternative Sites

- MOTE PARK BOUNDARY
- ALTERNATIVE SITES



4 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1 TIMELINE

Pre-Sixteenth Century

The name Mote Park is derived from the Old English term for a place of assembly – ‘moot’ or ‘mote’. The site is located close to Penenden Heath, which was the site of large shire moots during the Middle Ages.

The first written record of the locality and its land use can be found in the Domesday Book, in which 88 households are recorded as living on the Maidstone Estate. Thirty-one of these are termed *bordarii*, a type of tenant who lived in a ‘bord’ or cottage with a small parcel of land allowed to them on condition that they supply the lord of the manor with some provisions.

It is difficult to obtain a clear picture of Mote Park’s pre-sixteenth century land use from documentary sources, but research indicates that a number of probable medieval routes crossed the modern park. Two of these (Mote Lane) were situated to the north and south of the current cricket ground – running east-west and eventually converging into one route. Buildings associated with this route were constructed along its length, including Mote Cottage and Ye Old Bothy, and earthworks associated with lost buildings can be seen in the south-east of the park.

The former manor house was described as being located close to the old stream¹. The manor is thought to have been set in emparked grounds, indicating it may have been the one of the earliest deer parks in Kent. In Edward Hasted’s 1798 *History of the County of Kent* the manor house is described as ‘formerly castellated’² but it is not known how Hasted knew this. It could be that he had seen a licence to crenellate which has since been lost. These licences were issued by the crown and gave permission for the construction of fortifications. However, current thinking suggests that many fortifications were merely symbolic marks of status and that their architecture offered little practical protection³. It has also been suggested that the house may have been a moated site.⁴

The following history is presented in timeline format and is summarised to concentrate on the development of the preferred site at the western edge of Mote Park to the north of the current leisure centre. The development of the wider park is discussed, but only in relation to the evolution of the site. A more detailed history is presented in Maidstone Borough Council’s 2008 *Conservation Management Plan*.

1 Mote Park, Maidstone. Conservation Management Plan, 2008. p.30

2 Hasted, E., *History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, Vol. 4 (1898), p.290

3 Coulson, C., ‘Hierarchism in conventional crenellation; an essay in the sociology and metaphysics of medieval fortification’, *Medieval Archaeology* 26 (1982)

4 Mote Park, Maidstone. Conservation Management Plan, 2008. p.30

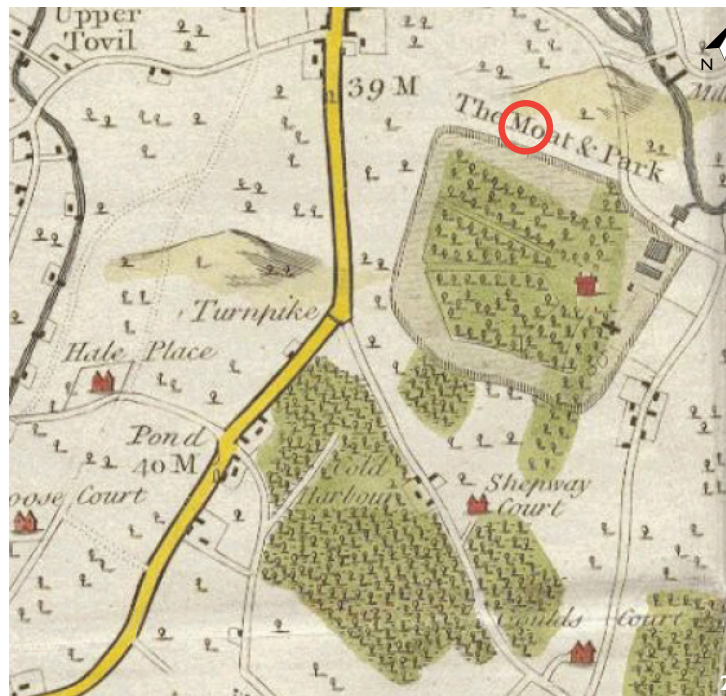
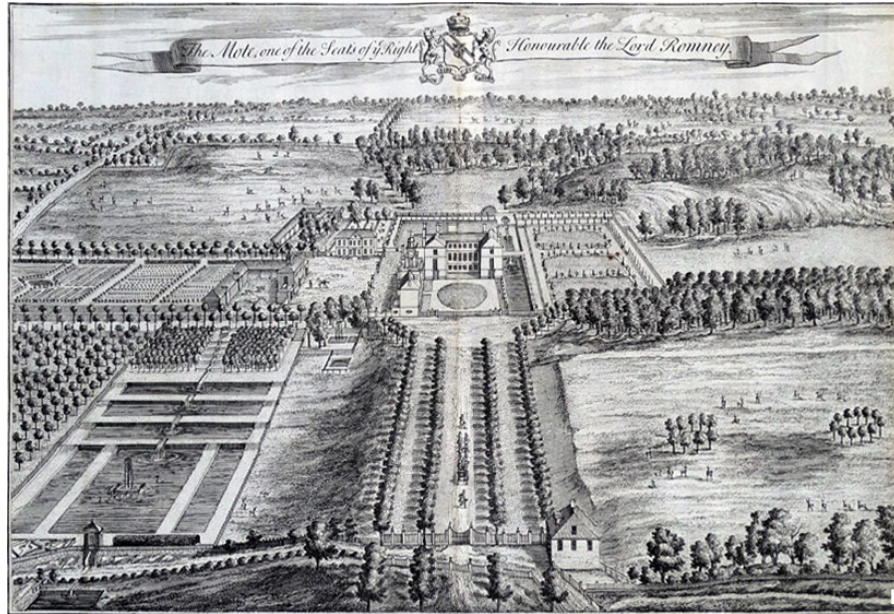
Seventeenth Century

By the first half of the sixteenth century the manor had become part of the extensive land holdings of the Wyatt family, and would go on to pass through several more hands before being purchased by Sir Henry Tufton in 1641⁵. Upon Sir Henry's death he left the lands to his niece Tustan Wray, who then sold it to Sir John Marsham in 1680.

The Marsham family would go on to hold the estate until the late nineteenth century and were responsible for Mote Park in its current form. They probably relocated the manor house to a new site in the late seventeenth century. It was situated towards the central south-western portion of the park and took advantage of the tree-lined south-western vista down Long Valley, the view south to the park boundary and north to the present Mote House. This arrangement of radiating vistas, or *patte d'oie*, was typical of the period.

The house itself was of typical, restrained late-seventeenth century style. An image published in 1718 but probably drawn in the latter years of the seventeenth century shows the house sitting within its formal gardens, although the foreground is exaggerated and the angle of certain features may not be entirely accurate. Despite this, many of these features are also represented in historic maps of the park, and some can still be traced in the landscape today. One of the most obvious of these is the cascade shown in the foreground – the site of which is now probably the site of the Basin.

The seventeenth century house and its landscaped gardens lay within a small deer park, the western boundary of which can be seen in earthworks which are truncated by the current leisure centre mound. The site lies just to the north of this park boundary in an area which was at this point open land and devoid of buildings. Little else is known about the landscape of Mote Park during the seventeenth century, in part because of the later destruction of documents relating to it.



- 1 Kip and Kniff's Engraving, 1718 – possibly drawn up earlier.
- 2 Edward Hasted's Map of the Hundred of Maidstone, c. 1794. The approximate location of the study site is marked.

⁵ Mote Park, Maidstone. Conservation Management Plan, 2008. p.32

4 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Eighteenth Century

The estate was still in the hands of the Marsham family at this time and illustrations dating to the latter years of the century indicate that a substantial south wing had by now been added to the house. It has been suggested that a more informal, picturesque landscape was created on areas of the park during the eighteenth century.⁶ This is not immediately apparent on the Ordnance Survey drawing of 1797, when the cascade and formal gardens are shown to the east of the house (reproduced on page 39). This map is the most accurate produced up to this date and the location of the study site is more easily identifiable. The site is situated to the north and outside of the park. This area appears to be open farmland – no buildings or obvious landscape features can be seen.



View of Mote Park shortly before demolition. Thomas Hearne F.S.A. (1744-1817)

6 Mote Park, Maidstone. Conservation Management Plan, 2008. p.35

The accuracy of this map also allows us to pinpoint the location of a painting showing an area very close to the site – ‘a View of Vinters at Boxley, Kent’ by Paul Sandby RA (1731-1809). This watercolour, painted in 1794, gives us an impression of the landscape surrounding Mote Park during this period. The position of the artist and his direction of view is marked on the aerial image below – the study site would have been just out of frame approximately 200 metres to the painter’s south-east.



- 1 Ordnance Surveyor's Drawing of Maidstone, Kent. 1797. The approximate location of the study site is marked.
- 2 Paul Sandby, *A View of Vinters at Boxley, Kent, with Mr. Whatman's Turkey Paper Mills*. Image courtesy of the British Library.
- 3 Aerial view of Mote Park – location of Paul Sandby's view marked, along with the study preferred site.

4 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Early to Mid-Nineteenth Century

During the late eighteenth century and into the first half of the nineteenth, the landscape of Mote Park transformed from a large house set within formal gardens and a small associated park to the more informal landscape seen today. The Marsham family continued to hold the estate and by the late eighteenth century they had decided to rebuild the old mansion. The new building, begun in 1793 and finished by 1801, was designed by Daniel Asher Alexander – an architect more known for his work on prisons and industrial buildings.

Greenwood's map of 1821 shows that by this time, the new Mote House had been constructed on the northern side of the River Len and the lake is clearly shown. The study site remains outside of the park boundary and within agricultural land.



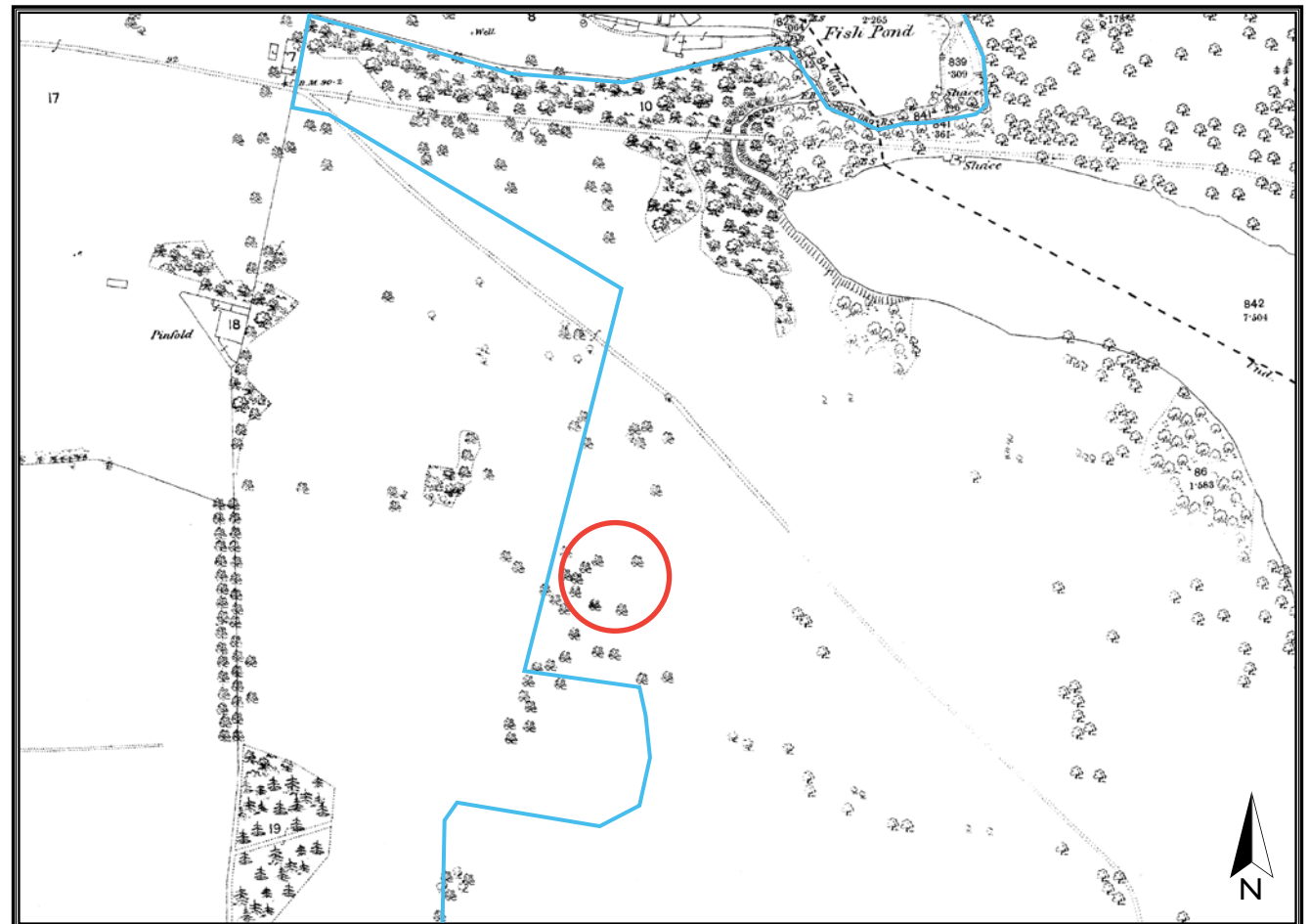
Mote Park, c.1825. From Views of the Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Second Series. Image courtesy of the British Library.

Greenwood's Map 1821. The approximate location of the study site is marked.

The new mansion was constructed on a different site to the north-east of old Mote House, and as part of this development the Marsham family set about acquiring further lands – almost all of that within the viewshed of the new house. This expansion began in the latter years of the eighteenth century and continued into the nineteenth, although by 1820 considerable debts had accumulated, Crisis was averted with the selling-off of parts of the estate along with a wider improvement in the family's business affairs - work was underway once more by the 1830s.

By the middle of the nineteenth century a number of changes had occurred to the park – buildings and landscape features associated with the new Mote House had been constructed, and public roads which crossed the parkland had been closed off. The lake was also enlarged during this period and by the middle of the century had been expanded to its current extent.⁷

The land acquisitions which occurred throughout the early years of the nineteenth century meant that the preferred site now formed part of the Mote Park itself. In terms of development, the site remained relatively quiet throughout the nineteenth century – Ordnance Survey maps indicate that the immediate area remained open parkland and there is no evidence of new structures or other major change taking place.



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OS Copy Desk: ED01 1:2500 1868-1884

First ed. Ordnance Survey, 1868-84. Approximate location of the study site highlighted.

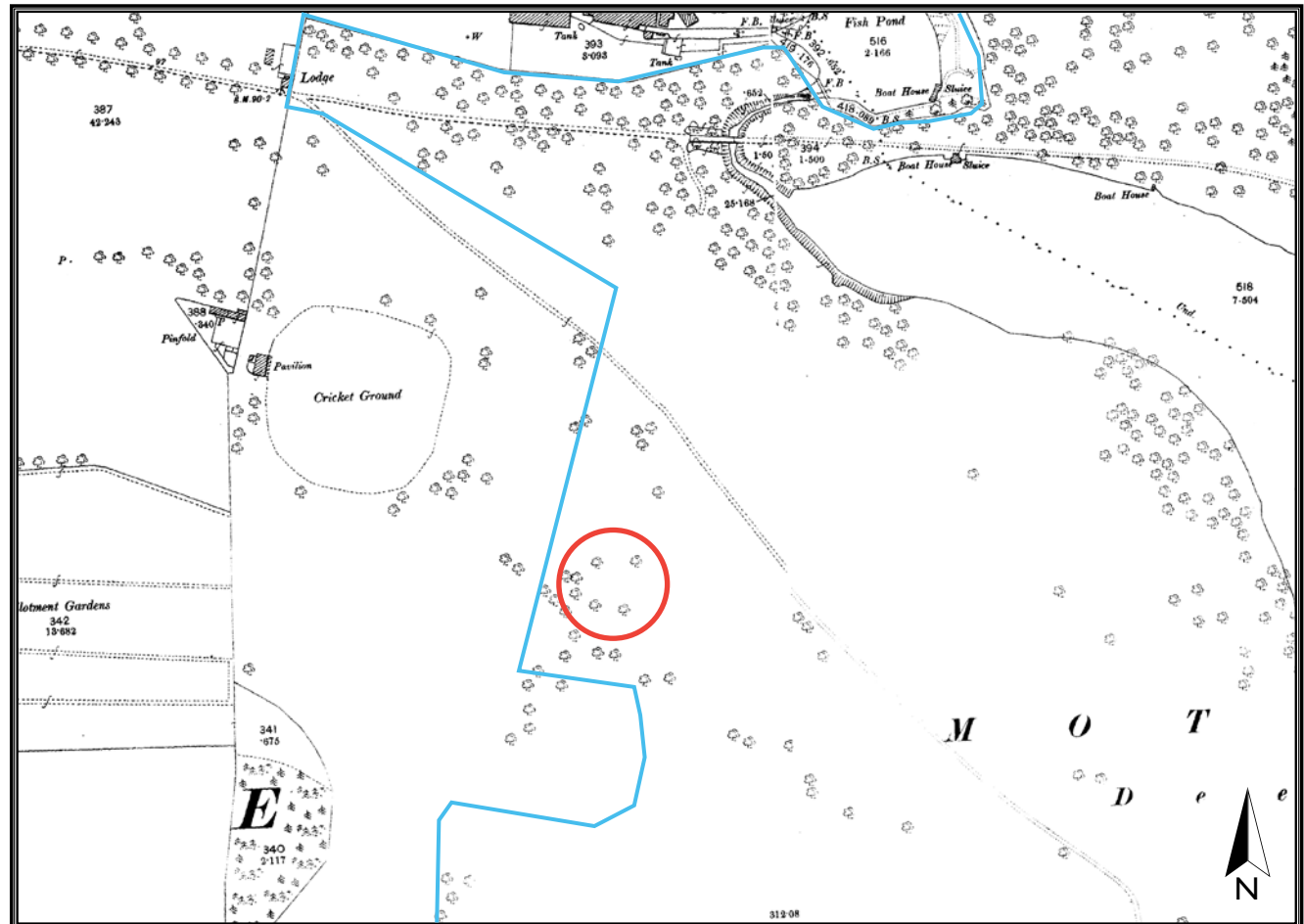
 Mote Park Boundary

7 Mote Park, Maidstone. Conservation Management Plan, 2008. p.41

4 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Late Nineteenth Century

The fourth Earl Romney died in 1894, at which point the property and its parkland were leased to the dowager Lady Howard de Walden who would occupy the house until its sale to Sir Marcus Samuel in 1895. Little change occurred in the park during this period, although the 1897 Ordnance Survey indicates that the cricket ground to the west of our site had recently been laid out.



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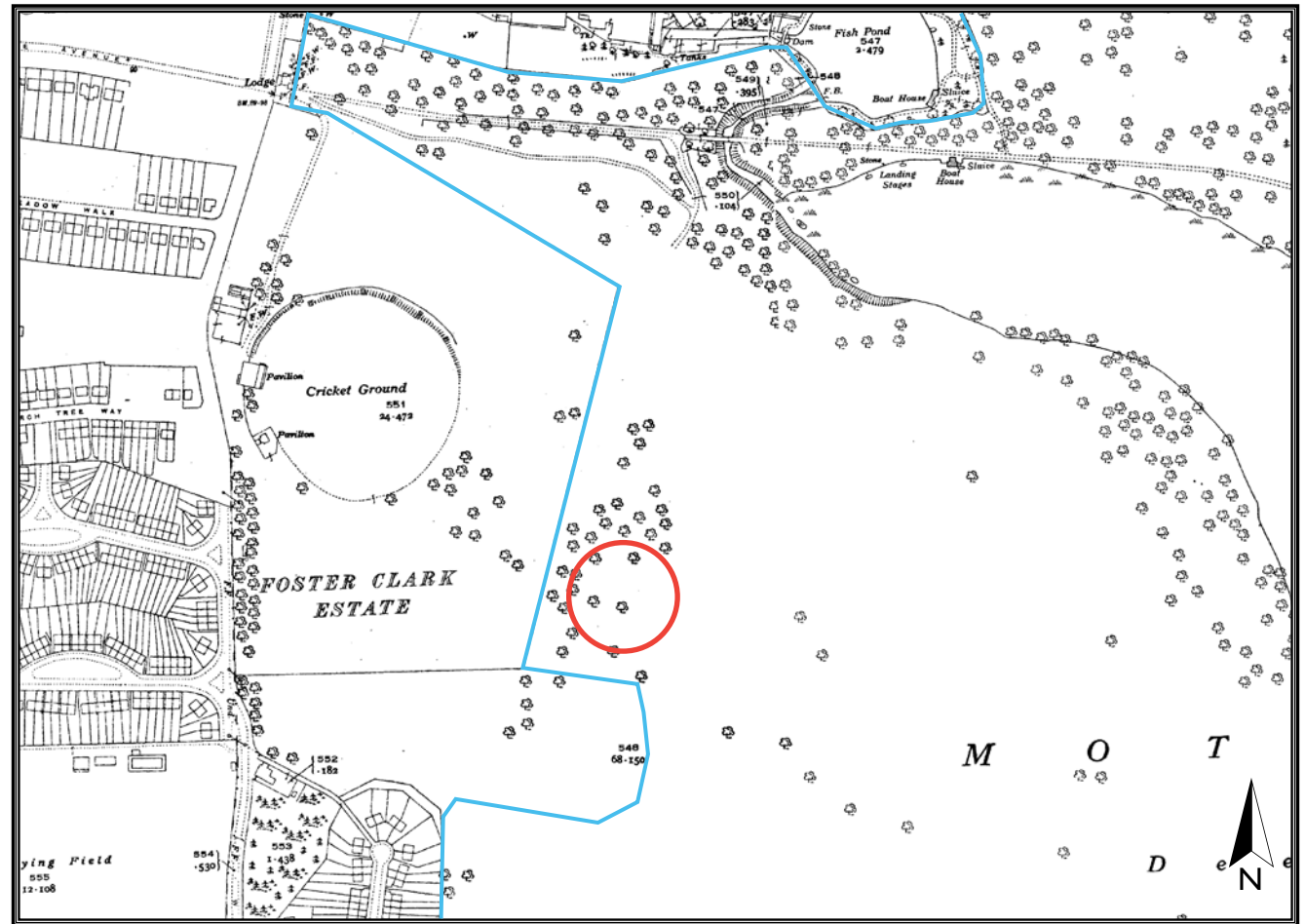
OS County Series: EDIT 1:500 1897

Second ed. Ordnance Survey, 1897. Approximate location of the study site highlighted.

 Mote Park Boundary

Early-Twentieth Century

Mote Park would finally come into public hands in 1929 and was officially opened on July 27th. The management of the park changed little in the period leading up to the Second World War and the park operated largely as a country estate. A herd of deer were managed although these were gradually reduced and sheep and cattle continued to be grazed on the park. Material change was minor – some outbuildings were demolished and pedestrian gateways were inserted through the park wall in a number of places.⁸ Development on land surrounding the park were far greater – housing was built to the west of the park close to the study preferred site during the 1930s, which can be seen on the 1937 Ordnance Survey map shown here.



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OS County Series: EDIT 1:250 000

Ordnance Survey, 1937. Approximate location of the study site highlighted.

Mote Park Boundary

4 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The park would play an important role during the Second World War and as early as 1939 was already in use as a military training ground.⁹ Mote House was requisitioned for use as an officers' mess and Nissen huts appeared on numerous sites throughout the park, although these were primarily located on the south, east and central portions of the park. After the war families would move into these Nissen huts while they waited to be rehomed in the new estates, while many other estate buildings became empty.

Once again, few changes can be seen to the study site throughout this period. The only notable change came with the planting of an avenue of golden elms to celebrate the coronation of George VI in 1937.

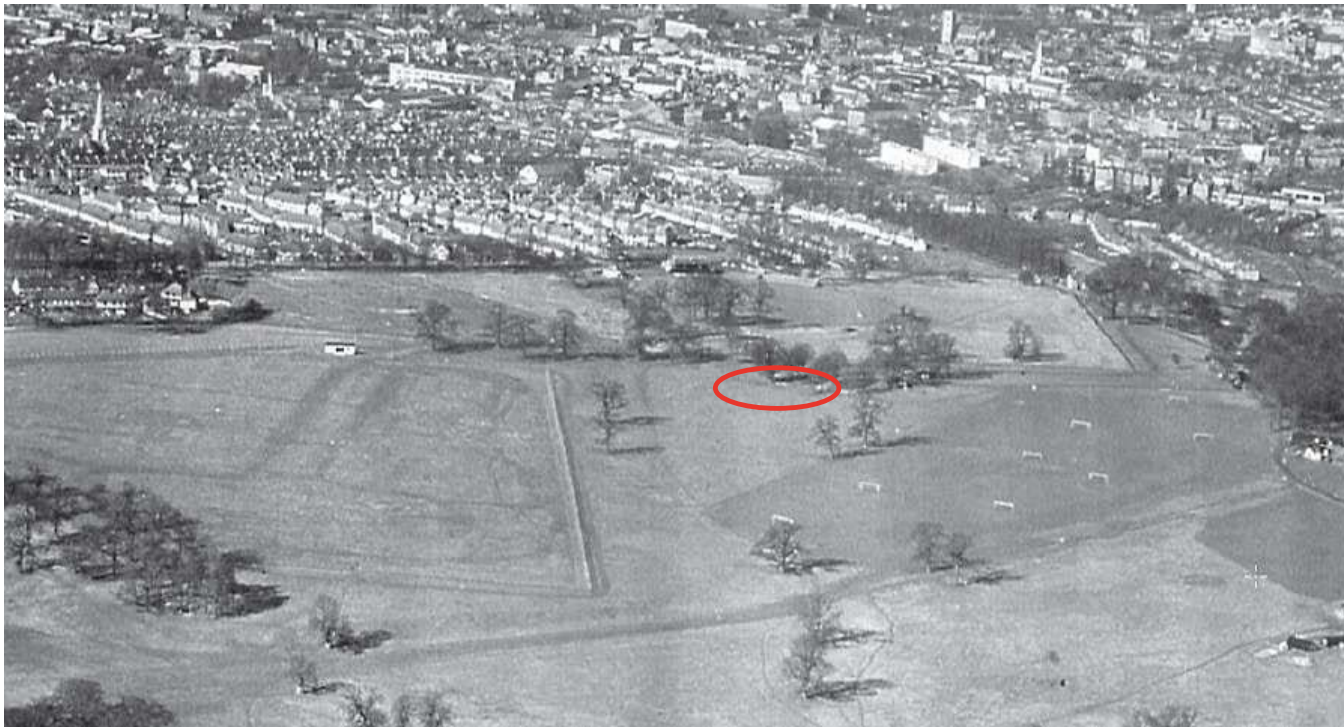
After the Second World War the park was returned to municipal use. A photograph from 1949 (see below) shows the study site amidst a number of established trees and on the periphery of the playing fields. A pavilion (now demolished) serves the playing fields to the left, with football pitches to the right. The Maidstone Cricket Club lies behind the area of the study site.

Later Twentieth Century to Today

By the late 1950s the character of the park was beginning to change. The land ceased to be used for grazing and Mote House was under threat. Neither the Ministry of Agriculture nor the council had any use for the building and tenders were sought for its demolition. At the last minute Cheshire Homes stepped in and took up the lease in 1960.¹⁰

A swimming pool was constructed on the site of the present Leisure Centre to the south of the site in 1960. Park facilities also increased in the vicinity of the site, including the construction of a children's playground, skate park, toilets and café facilities.

9 *ibid.* p.48



Mote Park in 1949, looking west. The approximate location of the site is indicated.

10 *ibid.* p.51

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The follow section gives an archaeological and historical overview of the evolution of Mote Park to inform the below ground heritage potential of the site and the impact of development on the heritage resource. The discussion is largely based on data from the Kent Historic Environment Record (HER). The site is centred at National Grid Reference TQ77760 54846).

Identified heritage assets (receptors) are assessed in terms of heritage potential and impact of future redevelopment. The assessment takes a holistic approach to the historic environment, assessing buried archaeology, the historic built environment and historic landscape setting collectively. Heritage assets include archaeological monuments (sites, events, archaeological investigations, and find spots). They are discussed within a chronological framework pieced together from primary and secondary research.

In order to allow for a meaningful interpretation and characterisation of the surrounding archaeology a study area of 1200m was chosen, and specifically referenced monuments, events and findspots within the study area are identified on the Heritage Asset plans within the text. A synthesised version of the HER records within the study area is included in Appendix C.

A plan of Listed Buildings are shown on page 10 and a synthesised version of the HER records within the study area is included in Appendix B.

The site lies within a Registered Park and Garden. There are no Scheduled Monuments or Conservation Areas within the site or study area.

5.2 CHRONOLOGY

Where mentioned in the text, the main archaeological periods are broadly defined by the following date ranges:

- Modern: AD 1900 to present
- Nineteenth century: AD 1800 to 1900
- Post-medieval: AD 1500 to 1799
- Medieval: AD 1066 to 1499
- Saxon: AD 410 to 1066
- Romano-British: AD 43 to 410
- Iron Age: 700 BC to AD 43
- Bronze Age: 2,400 to 700 BC
- Neolithic: 4,000 to 2,400 BC
- Mesolithic: 8,500 to 4,000 BC
- Early Post-glacial: 10,000 to 8,500 BC
- Upper Palaeolithic: 30,000 to 10,000 BC
- Middle Palaeolithic: 150,000 to 30,000 BC
- Lower Palaeolithic: 500,000 to 150,000 BC

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

5.3 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

Mote Park straddles the lower Len Valley, a tributary of the River Medway. The land to the north and south of the river, which has now been dammed to form a large ornamental lake, slopes gently down to the present lakeside. The study site is located at just below 40m OD, close to the north-west park boundary. The land slopes gently away to the north-east to the lake edge 400m distant at just below 20m OD.

The British Geological Survey records the underlying geology as Hythe Beds (sandy limestone and calcareous sand) with Kent Ragstone. This sedimentary bedrock was formed approximately 112 to 125 million years ago during the Cretaceous Period.

5.4 PALAEOLITHIC TO IRON AGE

Deposits containing Palaeolithic tools tend to be deeply buried and are generally only exposed during major construction projects or quarrying. Middle Palaeolithic sites such as Johnson's Pit (Larkfield) and Clubb's Ballast Pit are both in the Maidstone area. There are few sites in Kent with Upper Palaeolithic finds which are associated with the first modern humans.

Fertile soils of the river valleys of the Medway and Len, and the presence of natural resources within the surrounding area are likely to have been attractive to early settlers. Mesolithic and Neolithic activities are known along the Len valley and there is a major group of Neolithic monuments within the Medway valley downstream of Maidstone. Despite this, there are no finds from the Mesolithic (8,500 to 4,000 BC) and Neolithic (4,000 to 2,400 BC) periods within the study area and within the site boundary.

Bronze Age (2,400 to 700 BC) field systems have been traced east of Maidstone and although there is no evidence of cultivation within the study site and within the wider study area, it is possible that cultivation of the land was underway by then.¹ There is no recorded archaeology for the site, but there are two finds from the Bronze Age within the study area, both of which are east of the site. A Bronze Age barbed and tanged arrowhead was found in a garden in 1963 on the Ashford Road (1), approximately 600 m from the edge of Mote Park and 2000m east of the proposed site. A further find of a Bronze Age socketed axe head was made, also in the 1960s (2). The exact location is not known, but simply was recorded in the HER as 'from Bearsted'.

There is no Iron Age (700 BC to AD 43) activity recorded in the study area although Iron Age activity is has been recorded in the Maidstone area.²

5.5 ROMANO-BRITISH

It is believed that the Maidstone area was the focus of activity within the Romano-British period (AD 43 – 410).³ Maidstone is situated on the east bank of the river Medway and its tributary the river Len, at a point where the Romano-British road Stone Street, from Rochester to Hastings, crossed the Len. The discovery of several villa sites, burial grounds and numerous find spots within Maidstone supports this theory.

Stone Street (A229) passes 750m west of the site and the boundary of Mote Park. Further evidence of Roman activity within the study area is concentrated to the west and to the north of Mote Park and the study site. A Roman villa, thought to be of the courtyard type, was uncovered in Barton Road in 1870 (5). The villa was again seen when the Boys Grammar School was constructed in 1929. Recent excavations have found no trace of the villa, apart from during a watching brief in 2008, when Canterbury Archaeological Trust found fragments of tegulae.^{4 5}

Approximately 720m to the east-north-east of the study site lies a potential Roman cemetery (4) discovered c.1733 in Vinter's Park. However the references for this are vague. Discovered in a disused sandpit it is said to have contained urns and coins.

Two findspots have been recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme which are dated from this period; a bronze brooch c AD 65-80 was found in a garden approximately 400m west-south-west of the site (7) and a hoard of 6 coins dating between AD 324 -392 was discovered in a garden in Meadow walk approximately 500m north-west of the site (8).

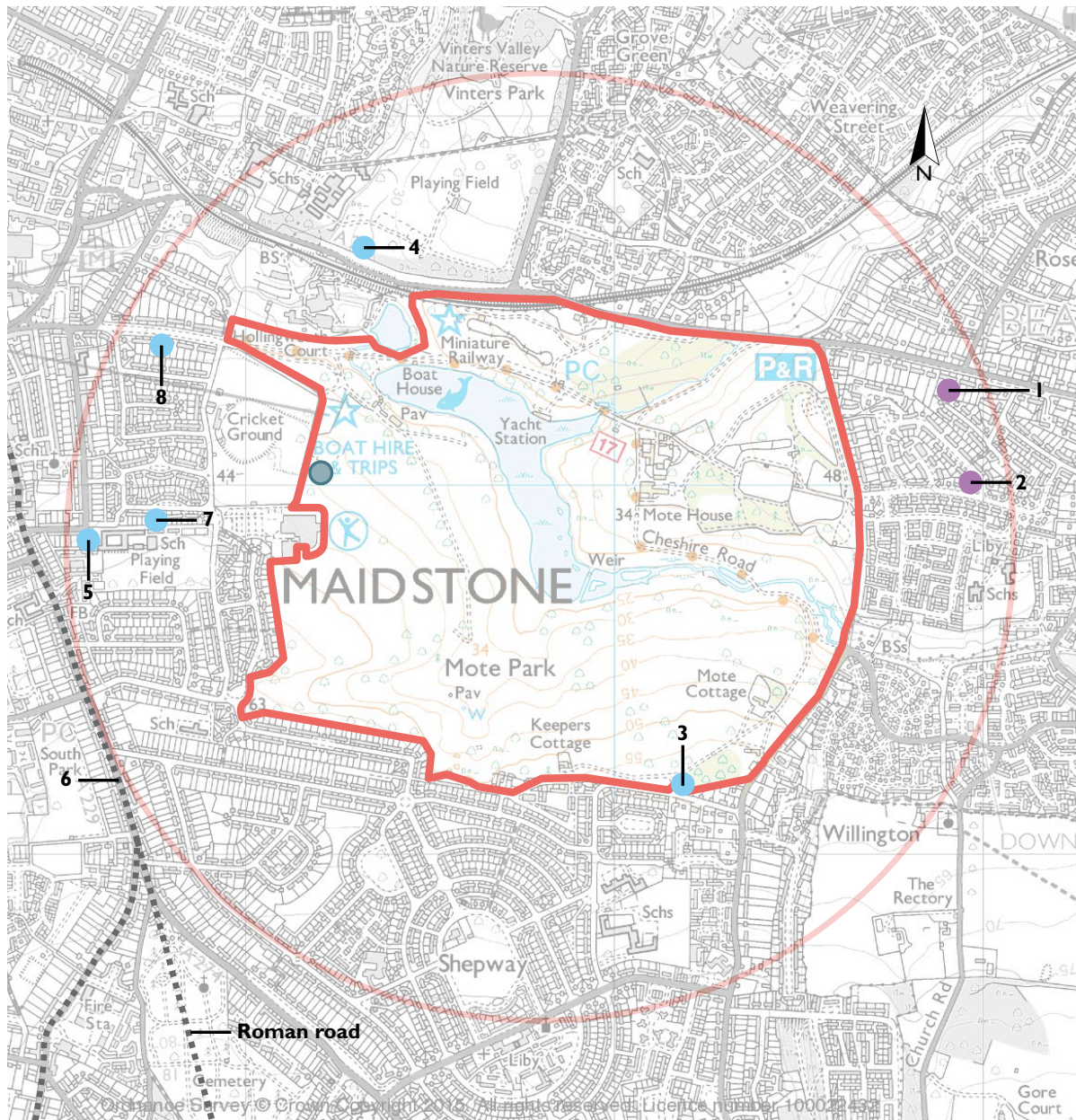
1 Mote Park Conservation Plan, 2008, p27

2 ibid

3 Kent County Council, *Kent Historic Towns' Survey, Maidstone, Kent: Archaeological Assessment Document*, 2004, p.7

4 EKE5463 CAT 1998, negative watching brief; EKE8851 Archaeology South East, 2004, negative watching brief; EKE10615 AOC Archaeology, 2005, negative watching brief.

5 Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 2009, Maidstone Grammar School, Barton Road, Maidstone Watching Brief Report, unpublished report archive no. 2639.



- REGISTERED PARK BOUNDARY
- THE SITE
- PREHISTORIC
- ROMAN

Prehistoric and Roman finds spots and monuments recorded within the study area.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

5.6 SAXON AND MEDIEVAL

The nucleus of the Saxon settlement that became Maidstone appears to have formed around an intersection of Stone Street, where it crossed the River Len (to the east of the River Medway), and the establishment of a later east–west route that crosses the River Medway. This route probably dates to the Anglo-Saxon period (AD 410 – 1066) and is now known as the A20 which runs along the northern boundary of Mote Park approximately 700m north of the study site.

There is a paucity of archaeological information from the Anglo-Saxon period but an Anglo-Scandinavian stirrup terminal with a zoomorphic head was found by a metal detectorist near Valley Park School, 800m west-north-west of the site (9).

Although there are no recorded archaeological remains dating from medieval period (AD 1066 – 1499) within the site and its immediate vicinity, there are a number of records of lost structures as well as extant buildings which testify to medieval activity and to the expansion of Maidstone's urban centre along the route of the A20. These include the lost site of Poll Mill (10) within Mote Park, formerly located 500m north-east of the site before the present lake was formed. Other Mill sites within the Park including that of Mote, Otham and Turkey Mill may all have been established before the end of the medieval period, although this has yet to be substantiated.

Other buildings in the study area which appear to have been built during the late medieval period are the Grade II Listed Raigersfeld (see plan on page 10) (5), Mote Cottage (16), Keeper's Cottage (7), and Ye Old Bothy (6).

Mote Park itself is thought to have developed from a medieval deer park and a number of medieval routeways formerly crossed the Park. Two of these were situated to the north and east of the study site – running east-west and eventually converging into one route and joining Shepway Street. Shepway Street is also thought to have been a medieval route which leaves the park at the southern boundary by Keeper's Cottages. A further track, 1500m to the south-east of the study site exists as a holloway and is known as Shofford Street and another known as Willington Street east of this. Historic and landscape evidence has indicated the existence of a settlement along these three routes which have been cleared away as the park has expanded. The settlements may have been medieval in origin.⁶ Earthworks in the form of house platforms have been recorded on the ground.⁷

Historic records put the location of the medieval manor house of Mote Place (11) as being close to the old stream⁸. In Edward Hasted's 1798 *History of the County of Kent* the manor house is described as 'formerly castellated'⁹

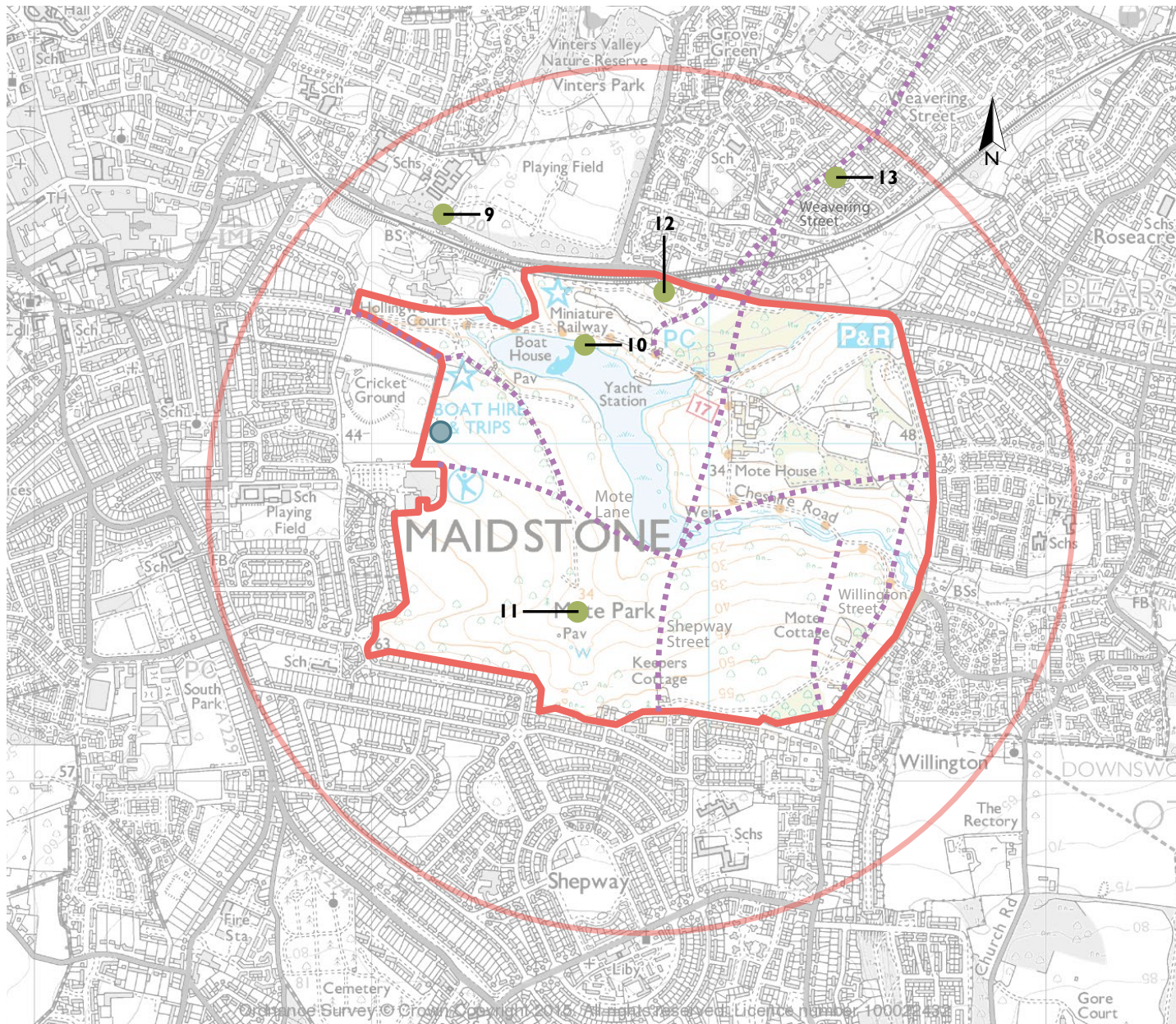
6 Mote Park Conservation Plan, 2008, page 29

7 Ibid. See figure 3 and gazetteer entries 173, 174, 175

8 Mote Park, Conservation Plan, 2008. p.30

9 Hasted, E., *History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, Vol. 4 (1898), p.290

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT



- REGISTERED PARK BOUNDARY
- THE SITE
- - - POSSIBLE MEDIEVAL ROUTEWAYS
- MEDIEVAL FIND SPOTS AND MONUMENTS

Anglo-Saxon and Medieval find spots and monuments within the study area.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

5.7 POST-MEDIEVAL TO PRESENT

The most important developments during this period to affect the study area and the study site were the growth of Mote Park and the expansion of Maidstone.

During the seventeenth century the site was located outside of the northern boundary of the early Park (21). Old Mote House (22) was located approximately 750m south-east of the study site to the south of Mote Park and in the area of current Grade II Listed Volunteers Pavilion (see page 10), (25). The expansion of the park in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century saw the study site eventually incorporated into the new park boundary (37).

An illustration of 1794 (see illustration on page 37) indicates that the area around the study site remained rural in nature. The Kent Farmstead and Landscapes project records a number of farms within the environs of Mote Park including Walnut Tree Farm (15) and Willington Place Farm (17), providing further evidence of the nature of the surrounding landscape.

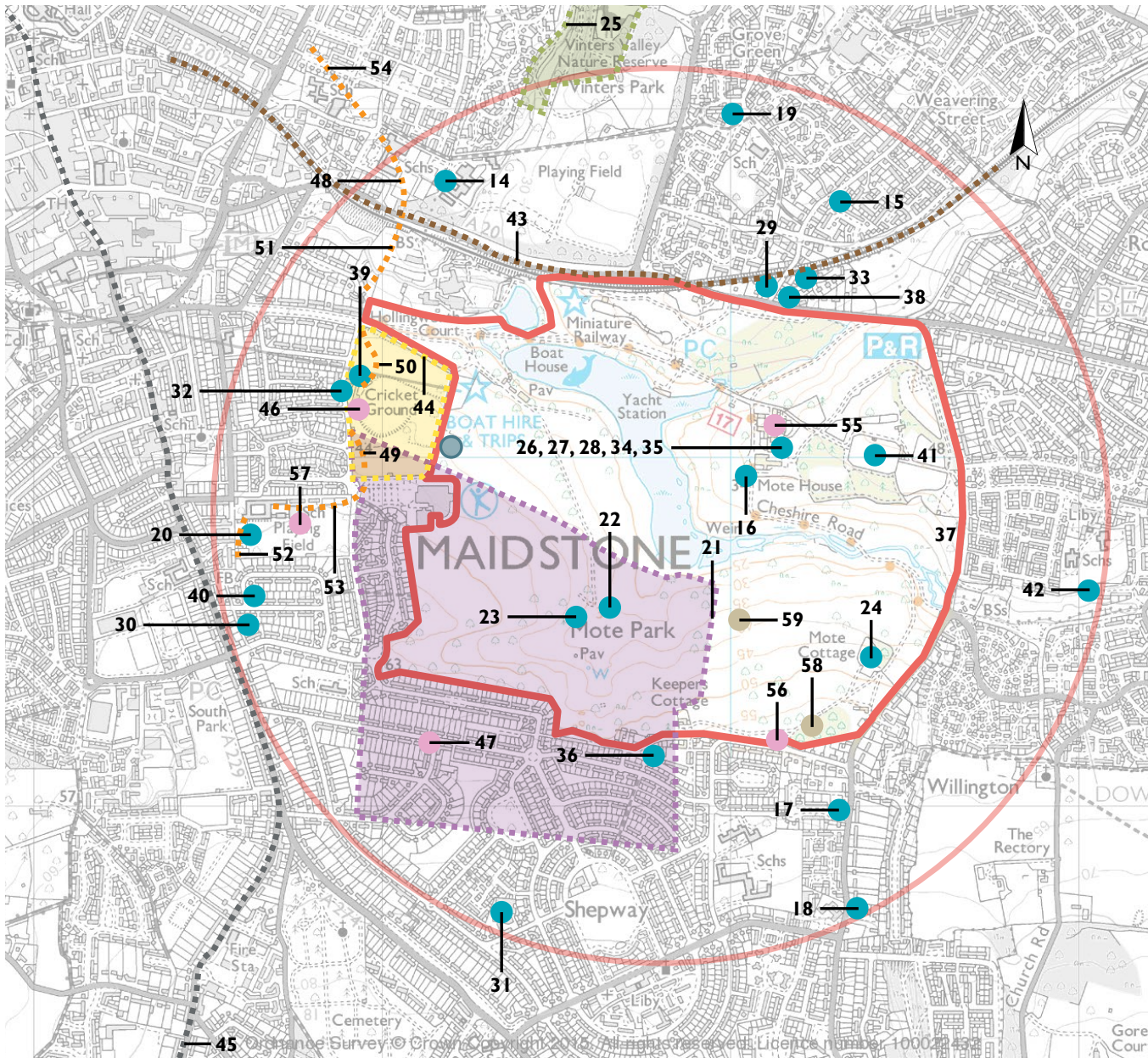
Map evidence shows that in the eighteenth century the study site was within agricultural land. The Ordnance Surveyor's Map of 1797 shows the situation to be unchanged (reproduced on page 39).

The first changes are seen on the Ordnance Survey map of 1868-84 which indicates that the study site is now within the park boundary (see page 41). Apart from the construction of the cricket ground in the late nineteenth century, the site remains free from development.

Mote Park was sold to Maidstone Borough Council in 1929 and during this period urban expansion of Maidstone continued and encroached upon the south and west of the park. During the Second World War Mote Park was used extensively as a military training ground. Mote House was requisitioned for use as an officers' mess and Nissen huts were constructed in the south, east and central portions of the park. Tank traps were dug to the west of Mote Park (48-54). The ditch is known to run from the River Medway in the south-west, along the western boundary of the Maidstone Cricket Ground, extending northwards across the Maidstone/ Ashford railway line into east Maidstone. Two of these trenches were identified in evaluation trenches at Turkey Mills by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust in 2010.¹⁰

Overall the archaeological potential of the study site for these periods can be defined as low. Evidence for land division and agricultural activity may however be represented from earlier periods, but the study site is believed to have formed part of the north-western extent of the Mote Park when the park was expanded in the nineteenth century and appears to have remained untouched by surrounding development in the twentieth century.

¹⁰ A Gollop, *Land adjacent to Tolhurst Court, Turkey Mill, Maidstone, Kent, Archaeological Evaluation Report*, Canterbury Archaeological Trust, 2010



Post-medieval to modern find spots and monuments within the study area.

5.8 PREVIOUS IMPACTS

Knowledge of the recorded historic environment resource can assist in the prediction of buried archaeological remains that may also be present, but as yet undiscovered. However, the potential for the survival of such remains depends partly on the impacts that previous land use may have had on any present remains.

Given its former agricultural use, the site may have been subject to historic ground intrusion in the form of ditch cutting, post hole cutting for boundary fencing, ploughing and levelling for example.

The site was enclosed in parkland in the nineteenth century where it remains today. Recent landscaping activities on the site have included tree planting and it is possible that ground remodelling could have affected the site when the area became playing fields or when areas of the park were levelled to facilitate grass mowing.¹¹ In the twentieth century, the development of facilities within the municipal park required services such as sewage and water to be laid. A water pipeline is known to run to the east of the site, outside the line of trees, whilst sewage pipes are known to run north-south along the western boundary fence, and east-west to the south of the study site.¹² Such ground intrusive activity may have impacted upon any pre-dating *in situ* archaeological deposits within the site.

5.9 POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS

Construction of the proposed Adventure Zone will involve modest ground intrusion as a result of ground remodelling and excavation associated with structural foundations required for the new structure. The following outlines general construction activities that are likely to be undertaken as part of these works, which may impact on buried archaeological remains within the site boundary.

- Groundworks associated with any ground levelling works (build up and reduction, removal of existing surfaces and foundations and excavation to facilitate the foundations of the new structure or surfaces.
- Groundworks associated with the construction of any additional services (drainage, electric supply etc.), if required.
- Temporary land take during construction phase including, stockpiling, storage and temporary site access

These activities could lead to the following effects on the archaeological resource:

- Permanent complete or partial loss of an archaeological feature or deposit as a result of ground excavation.
- Permanent or temporary loss of the physical and/or visual integrity of a feature, monument, or group of monuments.
- Damage to resources as a result of ground excavation.
- Damage to resources due to compaction, desiccation or water-logging.
- Damage to resources as a result of ground vibration caused by construction.
- Loss of undesigned unburied heritage assets within the site boundary.

The extent of any impact on buried archaeology will depend on the **presence, nature and depth** of any archaeological remains, in association with the depth of the proposed groundworks. Details of excavation depths associated with possible re-development were not known at the time of writing. All ground intrusive activity proposed at the site beyond made ground will pose threats to any surviving archaeological deposits or features that survive *in situ*.

5.10 SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

The site is located on the gentle slopes of the River Len and within the boundary of historic landscape of Mote Park. Fertile soils and access to natural resources would have made the area attractive to early settlers. However, there is a lack of HER data from the prehistoric period with the wider study boundary. This may be a reflection of the lack of significant archaeological research within Maidstone and the wider area rather than a lack of archaeological interest.¹³ However, the potential for the site to yield pre-historic evidence is considered to be **low**.

Maidstone is believed to have been the focus of activity within the Romano-British period. There is focus of activity recorded in the HER to the west and north of the study area, but not within the study site. The potential for the site to yield evidence from the Roman period is considered to be **low**.

During the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods, the study area is likely to have comprised of agricultural land and overall the archaeological potential of the study site for these periods can be defined as **low**, though evidence for land division and agricultural activity could be represented.

¹¹ Mote Park Conservation Plan, p.50

¹² *Ibid*, figure 29

¹³ Kent County Council, *Kent Historic Towns' Survey, Maidstone, Kent: Archaeological Assessment Document*, 2004, p. 1

During the post-medieval period the site was situated outside of the seventeenth century and eighteenth century park landscape within what appears to have been agricultural land. In the nineteenth century the study site was incorporated in the informal park landscape of Mote Park but was situated on the periphery. The site appears to have been unaffected by surrounding park development in the twentieth century but may have been subject to landscaping or levelling activities during the past century and a half.

Whilst the surrounding Mote Park is considered to have some areas of localised archaeological potential, the study site is of **low** overall potential.



6 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

6.1 ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE

Significance can be defined as the sum of the cultural values which make a building or site important to society. As well as the physical fabric, age and aesthetic value and more intangible qualities such as communal value, association with historic people and events and former uses are all important in defining the significance of a place.

Cultural significance is unique to each place. The following assessment considers the values outlined in English Heritage's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008) which recommends making assessments under the following categories: Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal Value. These characteristics have been considered when providing the assessments of significance in this section.

The significance of the study area is assessed using a number of significance ratings: High, Medium, Low, Neutral and Intrusive. The definitions of these ratings are provided below. Also provided is a significance plan, which gives a broad understanding of the overall significance for each part of the building.

- **High Significance** is attributable to a theme, feature, building or space which is has a high cultural value and forms an essential part of understanding the historic value of the site, while greatly contributing towards its character and appearance. Large scale alteration, removal or demolition should be strongly resisted.
- **Medium Significance** is attributable to a theme, feature, building or space which has some cultural importance and helps define the character and appearance of the site. Efforts should be made to retain features of this level if possible, though a greater degree of flexibility in terms of alteration would be possible.
- **Low Significance** is attributable to themes, features, buildings or spaces which have minor cultural importance and which might contribute to the character or appearance of the site. A greater degree of alteration or removal would be possible than for items of high or medium significance, though a low value does not necessarily mean a feature is expendable.
- **Neutral Significance** relates to themes, spaces, buildings or features which have little or no cultural value and neither contributes to nor detracts from the character or appearance of the site. Considerable alteration or change is likely to be possible.
- **Intrusive Significance** relates to themes, features or spaces which actually detract from the values of the site and its character and appearance. Efforts should be made to remove these features.

The statement of significance considers the significance of the park as a whole and then as a separate exercise the significance of the 'Cafe and Car Park Character Area' in which the site of the Adventure Zone is proposed.

6.2 EVIDENTIAL VALUE

“The potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.”

Mote Park – High Evidential Value

The Kent HER records no archaeological finds or monuments within the boundary of Mote Park. There is a paucity of information from the pre-historic period within the surrounding area which perhaps reflects the lack of significant archaeological research within Maidstone rather than a lack of archaeological interest. The Mote Park Conservation Plan 2008 identified a palimpsest of over a hundred landscape features within Mote Park including banks, holloways, platforms, mounds and ditches. These provide evidence of human activity within Mote Park from the medieval period to the present day. Some evidence former garden and water features relating to the seventeenth century landscape, whilst others possibly represent house platforms, enclosures and the former roadways associated with settlements which pre-date the park landscape. However, the form of the medieval landscape is still relatively unknown and there is a good potential that further research will add to our understanding of its form and development. Mote Park is undoubtedly of **high** evidential value.

The Café and Car Park character area and the Site – Low Evidential Value

An archaeological assessment of the site and immediate environs has concluded that the area remained outside of the boundary of Mote Park and within agricultural land until the nineteenth century. A potential medieval routeway (known as Mote Lane) crossed the area from north-west to south-east. No significant earthwork features were identified within the Conservation Plan 2008 within this area and the archaeological potential for the site and surrounding character area is considered to be **low**.

6.3 HISTORIC VALUE

“The ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.”

Mote Park – High Historic Value

Mote Park derives historic value from its associations with a number of historical figures. It was acquired by Sir John Marsham in 1680. His family continued ownership of the estate until 1895 and were effectively responsible for the park in its present form. At this time Sir John was a Baronet, but the family became Barons in 1716 and then the Earls of Romney in 1801. Their wealth was derived from a number of sources including property in this country and sugar plantations in the West Indies.

Mote Park is an excellent example of an early nineteenth century model estate centred upon a house of national architectural significance. Designed in the austere neoclassical style it is the only example of a country house by the architect Daniel Asher Alexander. The severe style of the house is complimented by the simplicity of the design of the park in which it is set.

Mote Park also illustrates the evolution of the landed estate from the medieval period through the creation of formal gardens in the late seventeenth century, and the move to a more open pastoral landscape in the nineteenth century. It also illustrates the decline of the landed estate in the twentieth century.

The significance of the park is enhanced by the survival of a set of park buildings within the designed landscape. These include the lodges, boat house and park walls, all built to simple designs in Kent Ragstone.

The Site and the Café and Car Park character area – Low Historic Value

The Café and Car Park character area is on the periphery. Prior to the nineteenth century expansion of the modern park, this area appears to have been fields. It is however crossed by a historic road which is now a public path. This area has partly lost integrity from the encroachment of the Maidstone Cricket Club in the late nineteenth century. The sites significance derives mainly from its association with the wider Mote Park.

6 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

6.4 AESTHETIC VALUE

“The ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.”

Mote Park – High Aesthetic Value

Mote Park is clearly of high aesthetic value. The park is the setting of the late eighteenth century house which provides a focus for designed and accidental views within the park landscape. The house has a west-south axis which provides views westwards along the lake, and southwards towards the Pavilion. Despite more recent planting and the regeneration of trees, these key views are still extant.

Although it has lost some features, the park is recognisable as a late eighteenth – early nineteenth century informally designed landscape, whose simplistic design was at odds with the contemporary trend. However, the pastoral landscape which straddles the Len valley was, and still is, the perfect backdrop to the austere and restrained neo-Classical Mote House.

The park contains a large number of parkland trees of exceptional value including Tulip Trees, Black Walnuts and Field Maples. A large part of the park has also been considered as a designated Site of Nature Conservation Interest principally for its wetland areas and large number of mature trees.

The Café and Car Park character area – Low Aesthetic Value (with elements of intrusive value)

The café and car park area has the typical character of a twentieth century municipal park. The multi-coloured children's play area contributes towards this character, whilst the grey solidity of the skate park is at odds with its natural backdrop. The landscaping around the car park which aims to screen the area has been partially successful. The over flow car park to the north-west is a grassed area; its use by vehicles has resulted in the large areas of erosion. However, the views from the character area over the park are extremely pleasant. Key detractors are the toilet block and volunteers hut, which along with the uninviting café, block views of the lake from within the character area. Also of note is the visual impact of the adjacent Leisure Centre which dominates views of the area. The area has low aesthetic value with a great deal of potential for improvement.

The Site – Medium Aesthetic Value

The site lies on the edge of open ground and is a pleasant untouched area of grass and trees. The boundary of the park provides a leafy backdrop and there are pleasant views across the open playing fields towards Mote House. However, its location between the skate park and the Leisure Centre limits the site's aesthetic value of the site.

6.5 COMMUNAL VALUE

“The meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.”

Mote Park – High Communal Value

Mote Park is a remarkable surviving historic landscape within an expanding urban setting. It became a public park nearly 100 years ago and is considered to be the 'jewel in the crown' of Maidstone's parks; visitor numbers have continued to rise in recent years.¹ The Park has been awarded the Green Flag in national recognition for its excellence. The park has a Friends organisation and volunteers regularly meet to assist in the maintenance of the park. This indicates a strong local sense of ownership of Mote Park.

The park is an important location for sports, with ample playing fields, and has cycle and walking routes which traverse and circumvent the park. Other popular activities take place on the lake. In the past the park has been the venue for events such as local fayres, sponsored walks and runs, live radio shows, a circus and music festivals. Mote Park has been voted the Second Best Park in the UK in the people's choice of favourite parks.²

The park today remains a superb asset to Maidstone, and one which every effort should be made to preserve and enhanced through carefully considered and well informed management. The park is undoubtedly of **high** communal value.

1 Maidstone Borough Council, *A sustainable Future for Mote Park*, October 2014, p.4

2 <http://www.greenflagaward.org/park-summary/?ParkID=2213> [last accessed 10th June 2015]

The Site and Café and Car Park character area – High Communal Value

The Café and Car Park area is the main hub of facilities within the park. Easily accessible from the town centre, for many people the car park and playground area are the first impression they have of the park. The area has proved increasingly popular for both the old and young. Sadly, as the use of the park increases, so the facilities are proving to be inadequate. While the existing municipal park buildings are detractors to the overall heritage value of the site, they do act as a magnet for communal activity. This area of the park therefore holds a high communal significance with significant potential for enhancement.



7 NEXT STEPS

Following consideration of the heritage significance of the whole park and the rigorous assessment of the two potential alternative sites, the findings of this report show that the siting of the new Adventure Zone at the preferred location would have the least impact on the heritage significance of the park.

Siting the Adventure Zone at the preferred location would allow for the clustering of public park amenities within a concentrated area of the park away from key historic views and sight-lines.

Once the location of the new Adventure Zone is approved, the scale, massing and materiality of the structure will need to be carefully considered to ensure subordinate to the historic landscape.

The Conservation Plan has identified a number of key detractors within the park. These include the views from the north-east of the park towards the Leisure Centre and the adjacent skyline of poplars which form the boundary of the 1930's housing estate. It will therefore be important to ensure that any new development does not add to these detractors. With this in mind, key to the success of the scheme will be the careful design of the proposed new activity facility and associated new landscaping in order to minimise the impact on views of the site from within the Registered Park and Garden.

The following design parameters have been evolved to help inform design development.

- Carefully consider the choice of colour for the proposed structure. Consider the use of natural shades which will blend with the natural setting and context of the site.
- Carefully consider appropriate materials, including natural materials where possible.
- Consider materials which have permeability and avoid the use of solid structures within the overall design.
- Where these may be necessary, consider positioning climbing walls in line with important lines of sight, particularly across the open playing fields and Mote House.
- Consider integrating the structure within the tree belt, working with the natural setting to break up views of the site.
- Consider additional landscaping and planting to screen the site.
- Avoid creating a visual line of park activities / facilities along the western park boundary, north of the Leisure Centre, by considerate spacing with other facilities and creative landscaping treatment.
- The proposed development should, if possible, be integrated with any plans for the future refurbishment and/or improvements to the overall Playground and Car Park Character Area.



APPENDICES

Appendix A: Bibliography

Appendix B: Listed Buildings within 1200m of the Study Area

Appendix C: Monument and Findspots within 1200m of the Study Area

APPENDIX A: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORDS

Kent Historic Environment Record

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APPENDIX B: LISTED BUILDINGS WITHIN
1200M OF THE STUDY AREA

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OBJECTID	MonUID	PrefRef	RecordType	Name	MonType	xgCreated	xgEdited	xgLockedBy	DateRange	PeriodRang	MinFrom	MaxTo
1	21100	MKE28880	TQ 75 NE 449	LB	WEAVING MANOR, Boxley	HOUSE, SITE, WEALDEN HOUSE, TIMBER FRAMED HOUSE			1066 AD to 1632 AD	Medieval to Post Medieval	1066	1632
2	38956	MKE28569	TQ 75 NE 720	LB	YEW TREE HOUSE, Weaving Street	HOUSE, SITE, WEALDEN HOUSE		2009:08:24:13:39:21.36 hervol01	1066 AD to 1539 AD	Medieval	1066	1539
3	21066	MKE29293	TQ 75 SE 277	LB	FARM COTTAGES	HOUSE, SITE, WEALDEN HOUSE			1066 AD to 1539 AD	Medieval	1066	1539
4	40332	MKE29286	TQ 75 SE 335	LB	WILLINGTON PLACE	HOUSE, SITE, JETTIED HOUSE	2010:10:27:16:48:20.52 Herval01	2010:10:27:16:48:20.51 Herval01	1066 AD to 1539 AD	Medieval	1066	1539
5	32132	MKE28935	TQ 75 NE 444	LB	RAIGERSFELD	SITE, WEALDEN HOUSE, WEALDEN HOUSE			1400 AD to 1749 AD	Medieval to Post Medieval	1400	1749
6	31472	MKE29422	TQ 75 SE 255	LB	THE OLD BREWHOUSE	SITE, WEALDEN HOUSE			1400 AD to 1599 AD	Medieval to Post Medieval	1400	1599
7	24485	MKE28669	TQ 75 SE 286	LB	Keeper's Cottage	HOUSE, SITE, JETTIED HOUSE		2009:09:03:13:08:22.58 hervol01	1400 AD to 1510 AD	Medieval	1400	1510
8	31779	MKE29151	TQ 75 SE 230	LB	CHURCH HOUSE, Otham	SITE, JETTIED HOUSE, HOUSE			1450 AD to 1999 AD	Medieval to Modern	1450	1999
9	40341	MKE29283	TQ 75 SE 325	LB	THE OLD FARMHOUSE	SITE, TIMBER FRAMED HOUSE, FARMHOUSE	2010:11:01:12:00:59.79 CroxfB01	2010:11:01:12:00:59.76 CroxfB01	1500 AD to 1599 AD	Medieval to Post Medieval	1500	1599
10	31984	MKE28744	TQ 75 NE 490	LB	BOXLEY COTTAGES 2	SITE, TIMBER FRAMED HOUSE			1540 AD to 2050 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1540	2050
11	31470	MKE29420	TQ 75 NE 537	LB	BOXLEY COTTAGES	SITE, TIMBER FRAMED HOUSE			1540 AD to 2050 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1540	2050
12	32363	MKE28570	TQ 75 NE 719	LB	WALNUT TREE FARMHOUSE	HOUSE, SITE, CONTINUOUS JETTY HOUSE, JETTIED HOUSE, HOUSE		2009:08:24:13:47:22.64 hervol01	1540 AD to 1900 AD	Post Medieval	1540	1900
13	32144	MKE1962	TQ 75 NE 87	LB	Turkey Court, (formerly Turkey Mill House) Maidstone	HOUSE, SITE, HOUSE, HOUSE, HOUSE, MANAGERS HOUSE, MILL HOUSE, STEPS, RAILINGS		2009:09:03:12:03:18.38 hervol01	1540 AD to 1900 AD	Post Medieval	1540	1900
14	24496	MKE28667	TQ 75 SE 288	LB	MOTE HOUSE	HOUSE, SITE, COUNTRY HOUSE, BOUNDARY WALL	2010:02:19:08:56:41.08 hervol01	2010:02:19:08:56:49.11 hervol01	1540 AD to 1900 AD	Post Medieval	1540	1900
15	31638	MKE28996	TQ 75 SE 310	LB	WILLINGTON PLACE FARMHOUSE	SITE, TIMBER FRAMED HOUSE, FARMHOUSE			1540 AD to 2050 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1540	2050
16	31616	MKE28973	TQ 75 SE 284	LB	MOTE COTTAGE	SITE, HOUSE, HOUSE			1699 AD to 1799 AD	Post Medieval	1699	1799
17	31506	MKE29466	TQ 75 NE 472	LB	HA HA IN GROUNDS OF VINTERS CIRCA 100 YARDS NORTH. NORTH WEST OF GROVE LODGE	SITE, HA HA, WALL, GATE PIER			1700 AD to 1799 AD	Post Medieval	1700	1799
18	31986	MKE28746	TQ 75 NE 488	LB	INDUSTRIAL BUILDING ADJOINING FORMER DRYING LOFT AT TURKEY MILL TO THE WEST	SITE, INDUSTRIAL BUILDING			1700 AD to 1799 AD	Post Medieval	1700	1799
19	32076	MKE28866	TQ 75 NE 514	LB	HA HA IN GROUNDS OF VINTERS CIRCA 2 1/2 YARDS WEST OF STRETCH CIRCA 100 YARDS NORTH NORTH WEST OF GROVE LODGE	SITE, HA HA			1700 AD to 1799 AD	Post Medieval	1700	1799
20	31394	MKE29340	TQ 75 NE 599	LB	HA HA IN GROUNDS OF VINTERS CIRCA 120 YARDS NORTH OF GROVE LODGE	SITE, HA HA, WALL			1700 AD to 1799 AD	Post Medieval	1700	1799
21	31471	MKE29421	TQ 75 NE 593	LB	FORMER DRYING LOFT AT TURKEY MILLS	SITE, PAPER MILL, DRYING HOUSE, INDUSTRIAL BUILDING, INDUSTRIAL BUILDING			1739 AD to 1950 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1739	1950
22	31615	MKE28972	TQ 75 NE 532	LB	STABLES TO MOTE HOUSE	SITE, STABLE, COACH HOUSE, WEATHER VANE			1800 AD to 1832 AD	Post Medieval	1800	1832
23	31639	MKE28997	TQ 75 SE 321	LB	WOODSIDE	SITE, HOUSE			1800 AD to 1899 AD	Post Medieval	1800	1899
24	40340	MKE29285	TQ 75 SE 327	LB	WILLINGTON HOUSE	SITE, HOUSE	2010:11:01:11:55:38.05 CroxfB01	2010:11:01:11:55:38.04 CroxfB01	1800 AD to 1832 AD	Post Medieval	1800	1832
25	31914	MKE28668	TQ 75 SE 287	LB	STONE PAVILION IN MOTE PARK	SITE, PAVILION, DATE STONE, COMMEMORATIVE MONUMENT			1801 AD	Post Medieval	1801	1801
26	72016	MKE91350	MKE91350	LB	The Forge Lodges	LODGE	2014:07:30:16:33:23 cuminp01	2014:07:30:16:33:34 cuminp01	1835 AD	Post Medieval to Unknown	1835	UNK
27	31816	MKE29206	TQ 75 NE 566	LB	RAILWAY BRIDGE NO 618	SITE, RAILWAY VIADUCT, CURTAIN WALL			1860 AD to 1900 AD	Post Medieval	1860	1900
28	31642	MKE29000	TQ 75 NE 569	LB	WILLINGTON COURT	SITE, HOUSE, CONSERVATORY			1896 AD to 1932 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1896	1932
29	71522	MKE91114	TQ 75 NE 974	LB	The Tabernacle, the Mote Cricket Club	CRICKET PAVILION	2013:12:02:11:22:15 croxfb01	2013:12:02:11:22:15 croxfb01	1908 AD to 2050 AD	Modern	1908	2050



APPENDIX C: MONUMENT AND FINDSPOTS
WITHIN 1200M OF THE STUDY AREA

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Purcell ID	OBJECTID	MonUID	PrefRef	Record Type	Name	MonType	DateRange	PeriodRang	MinFrom	MaxTo
1	9218	MKE1942	TQ 75 NE 67	FS	Bronze Age barbed-and-tanged arrowhead, 48 Ashford Road, Bearsted	FINDSPOT	2350 BC to 701 BC	Bronze Age	-2350	-701
2	9212	MKE1938	TQ 75 NE 63	FS	late Bronze Age looped and socketed axe, Bearsted	FINDSPOT	1000 BC to 701 BC	Late Bronze Age	-1000	-701
3	10135	MKE2171	TQ 75 SE 54	FS	Sestertius' of Lucilla found north of School Lane, 1975	FINDSPOT	43 AD to 409 AD	Roman	43	409
4	9201	MKE1927	TQ 75 NE 52	MON	Romano-British cemetery	CEMETERY, CINERARY URN	43 AD to 409 AD	Roman	43	409
5	10113	MKE2137	TQ 75 SE 18	MON	Roman Villa (Site of), Barton Road, Maidstone	VILLA	43 AD to 409 AD	Roman	43	409
6	99	MKE44113	TQ 74 SE 36	MON	Roman road; Rochester- Maidstone- Hastings	ROAD	43 AD to 409 AD	Roman	43	409
7	10122	MKE2152	TQ 75 SE 33	FS	Bronze Roman brooch c. AD 65-80, found in garden	FINDSPOT	65 AD to 80 AD	Roman	65	80
8				FS	Roman copper alloy coins x6 found in garden Meadow Walk. MKE70037-8, MKE70257-60	FINDSPOT	324 AD to 392 AD	Roman	324	392
9	51243	MKE70960	MKE70960	FS	Early Medieval copper alloy stirrup	FINDSPOT	1000 AD to 1100 AD	Early Medieval or Anglo-Saxon to Medieval	1000	1100
10	39367	MKE43374	TQ 75 NE 342	MON	Poll Mill (lost site)	MILL	1200 AD to 1838 AD	Medieval to Post Medieval	1200	1838
11	39298	MKE43286	TQ 75 SE 337	MON	Site of the Medieval Predecessor to Mote House, 'Mote Place' Maidstone	MANOR HOUSE	1300 AD to 1700 AD	Medieval to Post Medieval	1300	1700
12	64295	MKE84768	MKE84768	FRM	Raigersfield	FARMSTEAD	1400 AD to 1700 AD	Medieval to Post Medieval	1400	1540
13	64333	MKE84806	MKE84806	FRM	Weaving Manor (Vintners Farm)	FARMSTEAD	1400 AD to 1700 AD	Medieval to Post Medieval	1400	1540
14	51244	MKE70961	MKE70961	FS	Post Medieval copper alloy spur	FINDSPOT	1540 AD to 1700 AD	Post Medieval	1540	1700
15	64334	MKE84807	MKE84807	FRM	Walnut Tree Farm	FARMSTEAD	1540 AD	Post Medieval	1540	1540
16	64337	MKE84810	MKE84810	FRM	Mote House (The Mote)	FARMSTEAD	1540 AD	Post Medieval	1540	1540
17	64342	MKE84815	MKE84815	FRM	Wilmington Place Farm	FARMSTEAD	1540 AD	Post Medieval	1540	1540
18	64343	MKE84816	MKE84816	FRM	The Old Farmhouse	FARMSTEAD	1540 AD	Post Medieval	1540	1540
19	51156	MKE70574	MKE70574	FS	Post Medieval copper alloy medallion	FINDSPOT	1540 AD to 1900 AD	Post Medieval	1540	1900
20	20352	MKE39818	TQ 75 SE 140	MON	Post medieval pits, ditches and features with associated small finds at Maidstone Grammar School, Barton, Road, Maidstone	PIT, FEATURE	1540 AD to 1900 AD	Post Medieval	1540	1900
21	1884	MKE43343	TQ 75 SE 338	LND	Mote Park 17th and 18th century landscape	LANDSCAPE PARK, CASCADE	1680 AD to 1800 AD	Post Medieval	1680	1800
22	39297	MKE43311	TQ 75 SE 339	MON	Site of Old Mote House, Maidstone	COUNTRY HOUSE	1680 AD to 1800 AD	Post Medieval	1680	1800
23	39359	MKE43360	TQ 75 SE 340	MON	Site of house and stables contemporary with old Mote House built c.1680	BUILDING	1681 AD to 1800 AD	Post Medieval	1680	1800
24	64340	MKE84813	MKE84813	FRM	Mote Cottage	FARMSTEAD	1700 AD	Post Medieval	1700	1700
25	94	MKE56644	TQ 75 NE 875	LND	Vinters Valley Nature Reserve	NATURE RESERVE, ICEHOUSE	1801 AD to 2050 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1700	2050

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26	24369	MKE43262	TQ 75 NE 810	BLD	Kitchen Block	KITCHEN, BAKEHOUSE, ICEHOUSE, PAVILION, CELLAR	1793 AD to 1900 AD	Post Medieval	1793	1900
27	39273	MKE43266	TQ 75 NE 811	BLD	The Offices at Mote House, Mote Park, Maidstone	BREWHOUSE, ESTATE LAUNDRY	1793 AD to 1900 AD	Post Medieval	1793	1900
28	39283	MKE43275	TQ 75 NE 812	MON	The Farm Court at Mote House, Mote Park, Maidstone	ENCLOSURE	1793 AD to 1900 AD	Post Medieval	1793	1900
29	69194	MKE89510	TQ 75 NE 935	BLD	Oast NE of Boxley Cottage	OASTHOUSE	1797 AD to 2050 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1797	2050
30	64269	MKE84742	MKE84742	FRM	Cherry Garden	FARMSTEAD	1800 AD	Post Medieval	1800	1800
31	64293	MKE84766	MKE84766	FRM	Shepway Court	FARMSTEAD	1800 AD	Post Medieval	1800	1800
32	64294	MKE84767	MKE84767	FRM	Pinfold	FARMSTEAD	1800 AD	Post Medieval	1800	1800
33	64336	MKE84809	MKE84809	FRM	Outfarm east of Boxley Cottages	FARMSTEAD	1800 AD	Post Medieval	1800	1800
34	39253	MKE43251	TQ 75 NE 806	MON	Post-Medieval agricultural activity from the 18th-19th century at Mote House,	PIGSTY, ANIMAL BURIAL	1800 AD to 1900 AD	Post Medieval	1800	1900
35	39284	MKE43276	TQ 75 NE 813	BLD	The'Slaughterhouse', Mote Park	BUILDING	1840 AD	Post Medieval	1840	1840
36	40542	MKE44533	TQ 75 SE 347	BLD	1-2 Stone Cottages	HOUSE	1800 AD to 2050 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1800	2050
37	415	MKE43366	TQ 75 SE 341	LND	Mote Park, 18th-19th Century landscape	LANDSCAPE PARK	1800 AD to 2010 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1800	2010
38	40500	MKE44490	TQ 75 NE 821	BLD	1-8 Weaving Cottages	TERRACE	1830 AD to 2050 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1830	2050
39	71524	MKE91117	TQ 75 NE 976	BLD	Shepherd's Cottage, The Mote Cricket Club	HOUSE	1840 AD to 2050 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1840	2050
40	69169	MKE89485	TQ 75 SE 371	MON	Former site of oasthouse northeast of Cherry Garden	OASTHOUSE	1843 AD to 1947 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1843	1947
41	19864	MKE21046	TQ 75 NE 405	MON	Mote House Walled Garden	WALLED GARDEN	1850 AD to 2050 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1850	2050
42	40376	MKE44372	TQ 75 SE 344	MON	Site of a paper mill, Bearsted	PAPER MILL?	1862 AD to 1952 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1862	1952
43	26	MKE44172	TQ 75 NE 816	MON	Sevenoaks, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells branch railway	RAILWAY	1862 AD to 2050 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1862	2050
44	5172	MKE91118	TQ 75 NE 977	LND	The Mote Cricket Club, Maidstone	CRICKET GROUND	1897 AD to 2050 AD	Post Medieval to Modern	1897	2050
45	2406	MKE91024	TQ 75 SW 296	MON	Maidstone Corporation Tramway	TRAMWAY	1904 AD to 1930 AD	Modern	1904	1930
46	71523	MKE91115	TQ 75 NE 975	BLD	The Mote Cricket Pavilion	CRICKET PAVILION	1910 AD to 2050 AD	Modern	1910	2050
47	58296	MKE77856	TQ 75 SE 365	BLD	George V pillar box, Plains Avenue, Shepway	PILLAR BOX	1911 AD to 1936 AD	Modern	1911	1936
48	9359	MKE1999	TQ 75 NE 149	MON	Second World War anti-tank ditch, Huntsman Lane, Maidstone	TANK TRAP	1939 AD to 1945 AD	Modern	1939	1945
49	37621	MKE2002	TQ 75 NE 152	MON	Second World War anti-tank ditch near Rugby Ground Pavilion, Mote Park, Maidstone	TANK TRAP	1939 AD to 1945 AD	Modern	1939	1945
50	37620	MKE2003	TQ 75 NE 153	MON	Second World War anti-tank ditch, Mote Park, Maidstone	TANK TRAP	1939 AD to 1945 AD	Modern	1939	1945
51	9360	MKE2004	TQ 75 NE 154	MON	Second World War anti-tank ditch north of Mote Park, Maidstone	TANK TRAP	1939 AD to 1945 AD	Modern	1939	1945
52	10140	MKE2174	TQ 75 SE 57	MON	World War II anti-tank ditch	TANK TRAP	1940 AD to 1945 AD	Modern	1939	1945
53	10139	MKE2175	TQ 75 SE 58	MON	Second World War anti-tank ditch	TANK TRAP	1941 AD to 1945 AD	Modern	1939	1945

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54	31780	MKE41628	TQ 75 NE 317	MON	Modern linear feature, probable Second World War anti-tank ditch at Invicata Grammar School for Girls, Maidstone	ANTI TANK DITCH?	1939 AD to 1945 AD	Modern	1939	1945
55	39259	MKE43257	TQ 75 NE 807	MON	Concrete bases of World War II prefabricated buildings	PREFABRICATED BUILDING	1939 AD to 2050 AD	Modern	1939	2050
56	37455	MKE40091	TQ 75 SE 145	MON	Loopholed wall at entrance to former army camp	LOOPHOLED WALL	1940 AD to 1945 AD	Modern	1940	1945
57	40567	MKE44552	TQ 75 SE 352	MON	Air raid shelter under Maidstone Grammar School	AIR RAID SHELTER	1941 AD to 1945 AD	Modern	1940	1945
58	10134	MKE2170	TQ 75 SE 53	FS	Medium tranchet axe/adze, Tovil	FINDSPOT	Unknown date	Possibly Prehistoric	UNK	UNK
59	1209	MKE13603	TQ 75 SE 137	MON	Underground stone quarry in Mote Park	LIMESTONE QUARRY	Unknown date	Possibly Post med/modern	UNK	UNK



PURCELL

Mote Park Adventure Zone ; Heritage Statement; July 2015