

**OTFORD PALACE
OTFORD, KENT
CONSERVATION STATEMENT**



Drury McPherson Partnership
Historic environment policy and practice

FINAL DRAFT: FEBRUARY 2018

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Commission and purpose of this statement

1.1.1. In January 2017, the Drury McPherson Partnership (DMP) was commissioned by Sevenoaks Borough Council, as part of a team led by Thomas Ford and Partners, to produce a Conservation Statement as part of an options appraisal to inform decisions about the future of the remains of Otford Palace, Otford, Kent.

1.1.2. The four main objectives of this statement are:

- *Understanding* the place
- *Assessing* its significance
- *Defining* the issues affecting the place and its vulnerability to harm or loss
- *Developing* an overall vision for the palace and setting out recommendations for its future management and development.

1.1.3. This statement has been largely prepared by Paul Drury FSA of Drury McPherson Partnership, supported particularly on buried archaeology and plotting the extent and location of the palace by Canterbury Archaeological Trust. Their report was prepared as a separate document and is referenced here as 'CAT 2017'.

1.1.4. The statement is at a rather more strategic level than a Conservation Plan, but we hope sufficiently comprehensive to provide a reliable basis for strategic decisions. Thereafter, it is envisaged as a working document in which the understanding of the place, in particular, can be developed and corrected both in depth and detail, if and when a project moves towards implementation.

1.2. The structure of the statement

1.2.1. The conservation statement is structured in two main parts:

- *Understanding and Significance*: comprising an account of the history of the palace in its landscape setting, with an analysis of the buildings and site and their evolution; and an assessment of the cultural heritage values attached to the place, culminating in an overall statement of significance.
- *Issues and recommendations*: comprising a discussion of the issues affecting the building and site, and strategic recommendations to address them in the context of future management and potential development.

1.2.2. The evolution of the palace in its landscape context is summarised in six principal periods, as follows:

Period 1	The prehistoric and Roman landscape
Period 2	The Anglo-Saxon and Norman estate
Period 3	The medieval palace

Period 4	Archbishop Warham's transformation
Period 5	Royal ownership, 1537-1601
Period 6	Decline into a farmstead
Period 7	The 20th century

1.3. Sources

1.3.1. The form and evolution of the standing structures has been analysed principally through close inspection of its fabric, informed by earlier accounts and largely published documentary sources. For the historical background of Otford, we have generally referred to Clarke and Stoyel's 1975 *History*. The mapping of the lost outer court ranges and the formerly moated core of the palace is based on site inspection and geo-location of visible structures, Brian Philp's excavation report, geophysical survey by West Kent Archaeological Society, historic topographical sources, and structures recorded by earlier writers, particularly A D Stoyel in his 1984 paper in *Archaeologia Cantiana*. Interpretation of the fragmentary records, particularly of the moated core, has developed over time with increasing knowledge. We have avoided speculative reconstruction of the plan beyond elements that can be located with reasonable certainty. Much more could be done to improve both the accuracy of mapping and the understanding of the palace, which we address as a Recommendation in Section 4.6.

1.3.2. Site visits were made in December 2016 and between January and August 2017.

1.4. Acknowledgements

1.4.1. We are particularly grateful to Kevin Fromings, West Kent Archaeological Society, for providing a copy of the results of geophysical surveys undertaken around the site of Otford Palace, and for information about the villa site currently under excavation as part of the Discovering Roman Otford Project; Don Scales, for access to his garden overlying the palace in Bubblestone Road; Canterbury Archaeological Trust, for the archaeological baseline assessment and especially for their persistence in producing a 'best fit' of the known elements of the palace core to the modern topography; Otford Heritage Centre, particularly for access to the palace model by Rod Shelton; Cliff Ward, author of *A guided walk around Otford Palace*, for a copy of his book and a helpful conversation; the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings for access to their archives, on which our account of the 20th century history of the place is largely based; Alden Gregory, for sharing his transcripts of the 1548 and 1573 surveys (TNA E 101/497/4) and a copy of the c1537 survey in Sevenoaks Library; and Sir John Soane's Museum, Kent History and Library Centre, Maidstone; and a copy of the c1537 survey in Sevenoaks Library, and the Society of Antiquaries of London for permission to reproduce Figures 5, 9 and 19 respectively.

2. UNDERSTANDING

2.1. Introduction

Location, geology, topography

- 2.1.1. Otford lies at the point where the Darent valley, which cuts through the chalk of the North Downs, is crossed by an ancient route which follows the base of the North Downs escarpment, reflecting the probably even more ancient ridgeway on the top of the escarpment. The two routes merge to cross the Darent valley on a line now followed by the west-east street through Otford (Fig 1).
- 2.1.2. To either side of the Darent Valley, the exposure of the gault clay formation (here mudstone) below the chalk of the Downs to the north and above the lower greensand to the south defines the Vale of Holmesdale. This landscape feature is continuous across Kent, between one and six kilometres wide. Otford village and palace stand on the east side of the Darent, on rising ground just below the edge of the lower chalk, on the underlying clay, with overlying superficial deposits in the valley itself.¹ Springs appear at the foot of the chalk, where it meets the almost impermeable gault clay, and have been utilised as feeders for an extensive system of water management associated with the palace.

Objective

- 2.1.3. The objective of this section is to provide a narrative 'model' for the evolution of the place in its landscape and social contexts, drawing on a wide range of sources from landform and geology to historic documents. The model is intended to be the best fit with the range of evidence available to us, and should be developed and corrected as further information becomes available and research is undertaken.

2.2. Period 1: The prehistoric and Roman landscape

- 2.2.1. The long distance prehistoric route along the North Downs escarpment extends from the coast near Folkestone westwards into Wessex. A ridgeway follows the top of the escarpment, while a terraceway follows a sinuous course along the foot of the steep scarp, at the boundary between the upper and lower chalk, in Kent following the natural causeway of the Vale of Holmesdale. The terraceway is now known as the Pilgrims' Way from Winchester to Canterbury, which it doubtless was, but its origin is much older, without doubt prehistoric. At Otford, the ridgeway descends along a chalk spur to cross the Darent valley, following a more or less direct route which corresponds to Otford High Street (Fig 1). The terraceway joins it at the foot of the scarp, and also appears to continue north-westwards down the edge of the Darent valley. This continuation has certainly been part of the main north-south route through the valley since the establishment of the Dartford and Sevenoaks Turnpike in 1766. The other routeway which seems likely to be of very early origin is that down the east side of the Darent valley, just above the floodplain.

¹ Lawson & Killingray 2010, 1-5

It is still the main north-south route almost as far north as the present High Street;² footpaths and boundaries recorded on maps from 1844 onwards suggest that it once continued north of the High Street, through the medieval *Northfield*.³

2.2.2. Recorded archaeological finds (CAT 2017) suggest, unsurprisingly, that this location, where a long distance east-west routeway crosses the Darent, has been a favoured location for people to settle since the hunter-gatherers of the Mesolithic period and the first farmers of the Neolithic. It provides a wide range of natural resources – marsh and pasture along the valley, good arable land at the foot of the scarp, springs providing ample water, and wooded chalk uplands. A possible round barrow, Otford Mount, sited near the top of the chalk spur (off the map), suggests that it was intended to be visible in crossing the valley from the west.

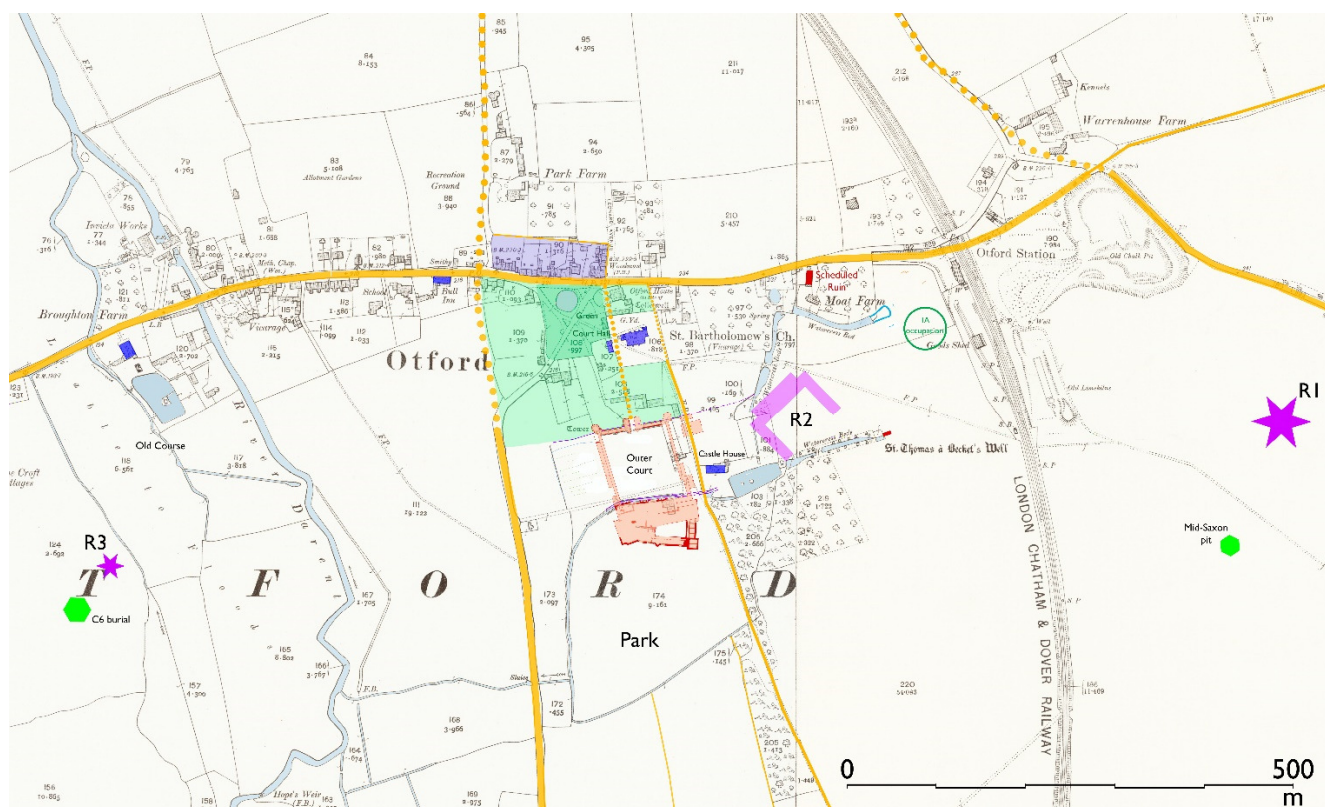


Fig 1 Map of Otford showing the principal features of the historic landscape, superimposed on the second edition 25" Ordnance Survey map, 1907. The outline of the villa (R2) is partly schematic, but allows its approximate scale to be compared with the medieval palace

2.2.1. While the nature of earlier prehistoric settlement remains unclear in the absence of large-scale excavation, it seems likely that by the mid-late iron age there was a high-status community at Otford, which after the Roman conquest in AD43 was reinvented with Romanised masonry buildings superseding timber round houses. The likely outlines of these houses have been identified in geophysical surveys of one of the masonry buildings (Fig 1, R1) that succeeded them (although probably with an intermediate phase) along with middle and late iron age pottery, and two late iron age coins (of Cunobelin, minted at Camulodunum).

² This and the section of the turnpike down the east side of the Darent valley, linked by a short section of Otford High Street, remain the principal north-south route through the area, as the A225

³ The principal demesne field of the manor in the 13th century: Hewlett 1973, 104-5

2.2.2. Traces of an Iron Age occupation site have been found near Otford Station (Fig 1).⁴ This is also close to the second of two large Romano-British buildings located about 500m apart, east of the Darent and south of the 'Pilgrim's Way' (Fig 1, R1, R2). Current understanding is that the eastern one⁵ was occupied primarily in the later first to second centuries, succeeding the iron age settlement, while the western one belongs to the third and fourth centuries. This implies that one succeeded the other as the main house ('villa') at the centre of an extensive agricultural estate, although some estate activity probably continued at the earlier site.⁶ West of the Darent, agricultural buildings (but still in part of masonry) may be part of another working estate centre (Fig 1, R3). The Darent valley is notable for its distribution of villas, including Lullingstone, about 6km north, and Darenth, about 12km north.⁷

2.3. Period 2 The Anglo-Saxon and Norman manor

2.3.1. The western, later, villa building did not follow the usual trajectory of abandonment to ruin in or by the early 5th century, as Roman rule ceased, but instead seems to have been deliberately demolished for its materials late in the 4th century. A Saxon burial from the west side of the Darent in Otford belongs to the second phase of Saxon migration into Kent, beyond the coastal strip and into the Vale of Holmsdale c525-600 (Fig 1). Otford re-emerged as the centre of an early Anglo-Saxon royal estate, but from its church being historically a chapelry of Shoreham⁸ it seems that the ecclesiastical centre of the estate, the minster church, was in what is now the parish to the north. The extent to which proximity represents continuity rather than geographical advantage is unclear; but the only middle Saxon occupation evidence to date⁹ was found close to the eastern Roman villa building.

2.3.2. Within the pre-Norman conquest organisation of Kent, Otford was in the Lathe of Sutton-at Hone and the Hundred of Codsheath. The earliest record of the place-name occurs in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* s.a.773. Its origin is uncertain, but Wallenberg came down in favour of derivation from a continental personal name *Ot(t)a*.¹⁰

2.3.3. King Offa of Mercia defeated Aldric King of Kent at Otford, and in 791 Offa gave the royal manor of Otford to the [Cathedral] church of Canterbury. It largely remained in their hands until Archbishop Lanfranc in 1070 divided the church's lands between the cathedral convent and the archbishopric, reserving Otford for himself and his successors. The manor by 1086 was large (159 households) and valuable (£60 per year).¹¹

⁴ Rayner in Sadarangani 2005, 44-45 – the small amount of pottery recovered seems to span the period

⁵ The 'Progress' villa; see *Kent Archaeological Review* 25 (1971) and references cited.

⁶ *Ex Inf* Kevin Fromings, who is leading excavations for the West Kent Archaeological Society

⁷ Andrews in Lawson & Killingley 2010, 20; Philp 1984 for Darenth

⁸ Lambard 1576, 267

⁹ Aceramic, dated by radiocarbon; see CAT 2017

¹⁰ Wallenberg 1934, 58-9

¹¹ Clarke & Stoyel 1975, 43-6

- 2.3.4. While the logic of locating the manorial centre above (east of) the flood plain, in the angle between two significant early routeways, is obvious, there is little to suggest why the precise site was chosen. A natural spring-fed stream from the east, later St Thomas' Well, and another from the north-east, could well have been influential. Archbishop Warham's great entrance façade and gateway to his palace make clear that the principal approach to the house in the early 16th century was from the north, and that was probably true from the outset.
- 2.3.5. The church has a pre-conquest masonry phase, incorporating recycled Roman material, and so was established on its present site by the early 11th century. The manor house was certainly on its medieval and subsequent site by the late 11th – 12th century. Domestic rubbish of that date was found tipped on the south-east corner of the 'island' within the earliest moat, suggesting that the kitchen was nearby.¹² Some tile, *opus signinum* and a few potsherds from the moated area suggest use of material robbed from the nearby Roman sites, but no substantial Roman activity. A recycled early 12th century capital suggests the date of the earliest masonry building on the palace site, and later 12th century use is indicated by six papal bullae of 1181-7 found in a masonry drain backfilled in the early 13th century,¹³ and probably associated with a water management system that is addressed at section 2.6.
- 2.3.6. There is nothing but legend to associate Thomas Becket (archbishop 1162-70) with major work to the manor, although there was evidently a comfortable, if by later standards modestly-sized, house at Otford in his time. His attachment to the place is evident from largely apocryphal stories from later generations, but there seems no reason to doubt the underlying truth of the association.

2.4. Period 3: The Medieval House

Origins and development of the moated house

- 2.4.1. Documentary sources show that Archbishop Boniface (1249-70) made some additions and built a new hall. In the late 13th century repairs are documented to the hall, lord's chamber, and outbuildings (the latter not necessarily within the same enclosure, but probably adjacent to the east, where later there were certainly service buildings): stables, the great granary and an oxhouse.
- 2.4.2. The earliest feature located in the 1974 excavation at the south-east corner of the moated area was a shallow wet ditch, 5.75m wide, in sequence the earliest of three moat cuts (Fig 2). Its primary fill contained 13th century pottery and it was open until around the middle of the 14th century. Whether it was dug around a pre-existing building group or is a primary feature of this site is unclear.
- 2.4.3. In the mid-14th century the island was enlarged; a new ditch was dug beyond the original one, which was filled. A building, c16.7m long, was built adjacent to the

¹² Philp 1984, 140

¹³ Chewley, G, *Kent Archaeological Review*, 1970, 3; Found 1969, HER TQ55 NW49; Ward 2017, 37-8

edge of the new moat, with massive foundations about 2.9m x 2.5m at each corner and a pair of garderobe chutes in the centre, all in distinctive yellowish mortar. There was no connecting foundation so the superstructures between them were probably timber-framed. The plan suggests a pair of lodgings each probably (given the width) comprising an outer and inner chamber, with garderobes to the inner chambers,¹⁴ the building two storeys high with newel stairs at the corners. Edward III spent Christmas at Otford in 1348, the see being vacant, which might provide a context for this work.



Fig 2 Elements of the earlier medieval house, in relation to modern development and (in red tone) known elements of the early 16th century palace. A, earliest moat; B, mid-14th century lodging range; and C, its associated moat, superseded by Warham's new south-eastern extension to the moated island

2.4.4. Otford seems to have been damaged in the Peasant's Revolt, extensive repairs being undertaken in 1382-3 by Archbishop Courtenay, who again rebuilt the great hall.¹⁵ However, Philp's excavation report on the south-eastern quadrant makes clear that here at least there was no curtain wall within the moat.

2.4.5. Otherwise little is known of the plan prior to the 16th century reconstruction. Two building alignments which do not conform to the 16th century extension at the south-east corner, however, probably originated in the medieval alignments of the hall (rebuilt yet again by Bishop Bouchier in 1482-3) and the chapel, both of which were retained, at least in part, in the 16th century work. The hall lay east of the centre (with its low end to the east, at least in the 16th century) and the chapel towards the south-west corner (Fig 2).¹⁶

¹⁴ The pits are wide enough to have had divisions carried on arches at higher level

¹⁵ Philp 1984 note 198, LPL MS 835

¹⁶ Stoyel 1984; and see below, Section 2.5

Context of the moated house

- 2.4.6. Warham's outer court entrance front suggests an axial approach to the gateway from the north, passing between the Court Hall and the church tower, and closely related to several surviving property boundaries (Fig 13). The Court Hall, built c1330-50 (west of the church) over a covered ground floor open space, is a building type most commonly associated with market places. There is no record of a market at Otford, but a probable context for the hall is a long-established fair held at Otford on the anniversary of St Bartholomew (24 August),¹⁷ to whom the church is dedicated.
- 2.4.7. Although latterly a house within a garden curtilage, the obvious context for the Court Hall is fronting a once more extensive green on which the fair was held (Fig 13). The later development of the area north of the moated site suggests that it originated as a large green or common in the angle of the roads, with the church standing within it, and the moated manor house fronting its south side. The present small green, recorded as manorial 'waste' in 1844,¹⁸ seems to be the last remnant of this common, reduced by successive encroachments, probably including Warham's own outer court. The block of tenements (blue on Figs 1, 13) is likely to be early.
- 2.4.8. The medieval manor house lay at the centre of a large estate, which eventually contained two parks, the Great Park stretching to the south towards Sevenoaks and the Little Park to the south-west.¹⁹ In the 15th century there were multiple entrances to the moat island, as well as the northern entrance which the later development of the site suggests. A new bridge was built on the south in 1410-11, an east gate is mentioned in 1431-2, and a new entry to the west of the Lord's Chamber in 1439-40.²⁰ A west entry would have been direct from the Sevenoaks road, the east entry is explained by the service areas being on that side; a gate on the south probably served the park.

2.5. Period 4: Archbishop Warham's transformation

The context and chronology of Warham's work

- 2.5.1. William Warham (b1450? – d1532) came comparatively late to high ecclesiastical office, becoming Bishop of London in 1501 before his translation to Canterbury in 1503, by which time he was already over 50 years old. Secular high office followed, as Keeper of the Great Seal (1502) and then Lord Chancellor (1504), only to resign, not entirely of his own volition, in favour of Wolsey in 1515. Of modest origins in London, he was well educated (Winchester and New College, Oxford) and well-travelled in Europe, especially France and the Low Countries, in royal service.
- 2.5.2. Before he took up the archbishopric he is not known to have been a patron of building, and only began remodelling Otford on a princely scale when he was

¹⁷ Noted by Lambard 1576, 50, 375, Hasted 1778; but not mentioned in Samantha Letters, *Online Gazetteer of Markets and Fairs in England and Wales to 1516* <<http://www.history.ac.uk/cmh/gaz/gazweb2.html>>

¹⁸ Tithes award and map, Kent Archives CTR/279A, B

¹⁹ Noted in Lambard 1576, 48

²⁰ Philp 1984 notes 199-201, from LPL MS 835, 846, 860, 865

around 60 years old.²¹ This followed his start on works at Knole in 1504, a house purchased by Archbishop Bouchier in 1456, initially for himself but presented to the see of Canterbury in 1480.²² Otford became a house for show and the entertainment of noble guests, on a main road from London to Canterbury; but Knole, for Warham as well as Bouchier, provided a secluded retreat from public office. It is therefore not surprising that Warham carried on major work at the two houses in parallel, along with modifications to other archiepiscopal houses, including Maidstone.²³ Common details suggest the same, shared team of craftsmen was involved. In his will, Warham stated that he had spent £30,000 on new buildings, building works, repairs and refurbishments of the manors and houses of the archbishopric. It is a widely-accepted assumption that much of this was applied to Otford.

- 2.5.3. A reference in Warham's correspondence with Erasmus in 1514, to 'spending money every day to have stones brought to my buildings' may well include work at Otford, but there is little to support the commonly-accepted view that it marks the start of major work. It is more plausible, given that Warham stated (in 1526) that Otford was 'ruinous by neglect' when he inherited it, that he began work earlier, perhaps spurred by the accession of Henry VIII in 1508. It probably began with the major extension in the south-east corner, providing lodging ranges flanking a three-story lodging tower. The garderobes of the modest lodging range that they replaced (or which had possibly long gone) appear to have silted by the early 15th century.²⁴
- 2.5.4. Henry stayed at Otford on 24 September 1514, and quite possibly the extension was complete by then, although he could of course have taken over the archbishop's chambers.²⁵ But Warham's choice of Otford over other possible houses to entertain the papal ambassador, Cardinal Campeggio, and his large retinue for two days in 1518 certainly suggests that the remodelling of the original core of the house appeared complete by then, incorporating the relatively new hall (1482-3) and the chapel, which had probably become associated with Becket, with whom Warham personally identified.²⁶
- 2.5.5. Erasmus, writing in 1523, and a frequent guest in preceding years, implies that the house within the moat was complete by then:
- Nor should I have found it very attractive before William Warham, the present archbishop of Canterbury and primate of all England, [...] had built there on such a scale that he seemed not so much to have restored an old house as to have raised a new one from the ground, so little did he leave of the old palace beyond the walls of some hall or other and of the church* ²⁷
- 2.5.6. While major sections of the south (park) and north (entrance) fronts seem to have been bought to some degree of coherence, the irregular outline of the moated area

²¹ Scarisbrick 2004; Gregory 2010, 97; see Gregory 2015 for his character and motivation

²² Gregory 2010, 23

²³ Gregory 2010, 110

²⁴ Philp 1984, 144

²⁵ Gregory 2010, 115; Mynors & Thomson 2, 276-77

²⁶ Their retention is confirmed by Lambarde (1576, 375)

²⁷ Erasmus Ep. 1400 see Mynors & Thomson, 10, 122

and multiple alignments of inherited building blocks indicate that elsewhere there was limited coherence, confirming Erasmus's implication that apart from the south-east extension, the rest was the result of piecemeal adaptation and rebuilding.

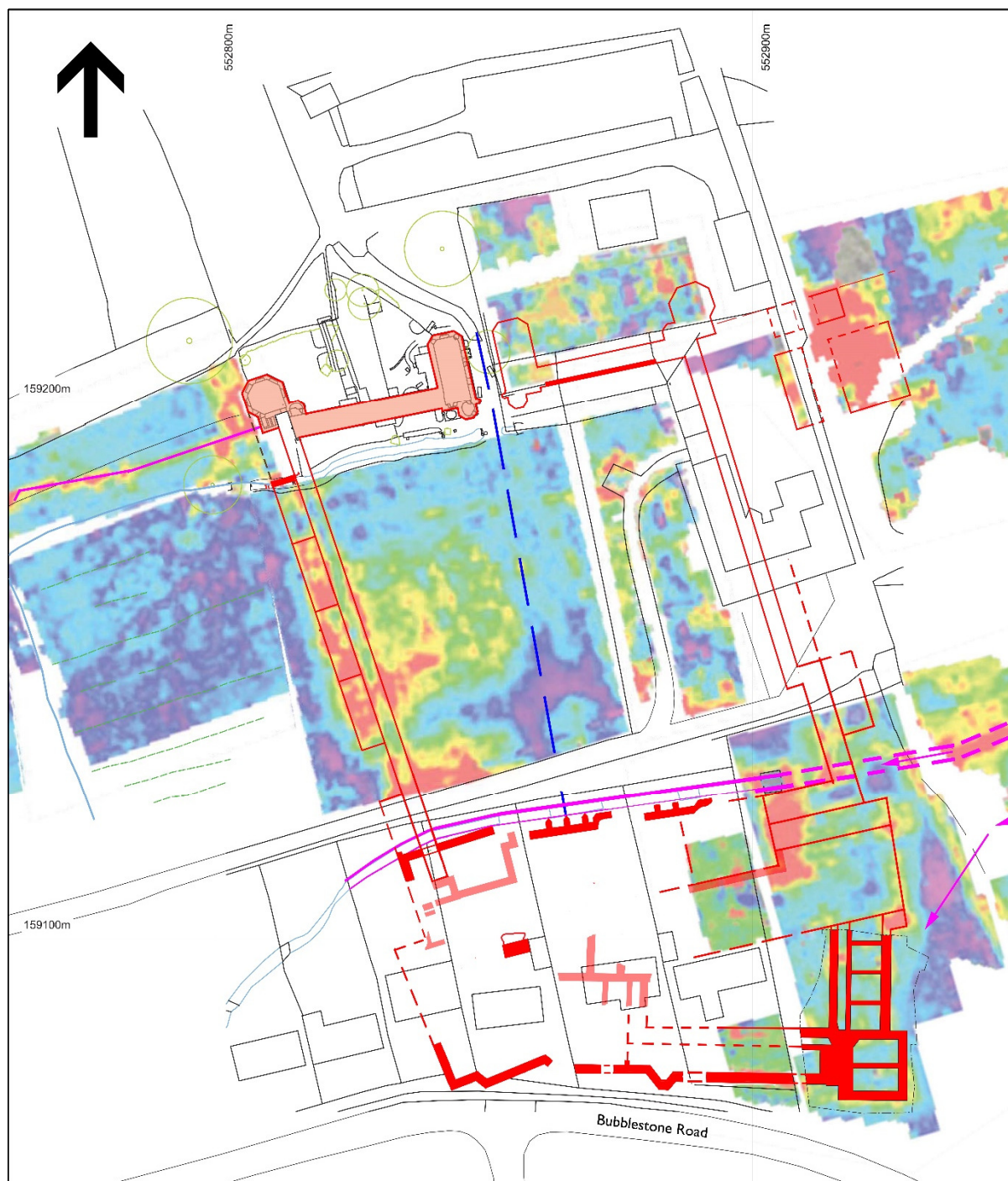


Fig 3 Overall plan of the Tudor palace against a background of geophysical survey (West Kent Archaeological Group; overlay Canterbury Archaeological Trust; with additions and interpretation) which provides useful evidence for the western outer court range and the eastern parts of the moated core not excavated by Philp; 100 m grid superimposed. The dashed blue line joins the entrance gatehouse to the moat bridge

2.5.7. The awkward planning of the outer court, skewed to reconcile the grand axial approach with the irregular plan of the moated core, suggests that the latter was conceived after the plan of the moated inner core was largely settled. This is especially clear from the location of the entrance bridge across the moat (indicated

by piers continuing the simple chamfered orders of the arches), well to the west of centre of the pile of building on the moat island, resulting in a diagonal approach across the courtyard (Fig 3). Conceptually and to a large extent chronologically, the outer court must represent a second phase, complete by 1526 when Warham stated that formerly the *'buildings were ruinous by neglect, but now sufficiently repaired and enlarged and a great house has been built with galleries and towers, and various new gardens have also been created'*.²⁸

- 2.5.8. Erasmus may have been writing from memory in 1523 so work on the outer court could have started earlier. Soon after Henry VIII and Catharine of Aragon stayed on 21 May 1520, on their way to the Field of the Cloth of Gold, masons are known to have been present at Otford. The only specific reference to work at Otford in the (incomplete) surviving Receiver's accounts is in 1524-5, to £80.10.7 for unspecified building works.²⁹ This is a substantial sum which, on this interpretation, would fall around the completion of the outer court with its *galleries and towers* by 1526.
- 2.5.9. The evidence therefore points to two principal building periods, the first relating to the extension and rebuilding of the inherited house enclosed within the moat, of which the major extension at the south-east corner should fall early within a programme of incremental work. The whole was complete by 1523, probably by 1518-20, with the lodging ranges extension to the moated core early in the process, perhaps after 1508; work was certainly in progress in 1514. The outer court was probably added in a second phase, c1520-25, certainly complete by 1526, although adjustments to the inner court would likely have continued in parallel with its addition.

Key documentary descriptions

- 2.5.10. The earliest (but undated) survey of the manor is recorded in a transcription made in 1927 from an original then in private ownership.³⁰ It refers (p10) to a knight's fee held by 'the Pryor of St Mary Overy by Lunden', which places it before the latter's dissolution in 1539. It also refers to the moat, which the archaeology shows was filled in the 16th century, an intervention for which the only plausible context is the works in 1541-6 following Henry VIII's acquisition of Otford (Section 2.7 below). Its context seems to be Henry's contemplation of acquiring Otford during 1537, since unlike a normal manorial survey it extols the virtues of manor, particularly for deer coursing, hawking and hunting, and notes *'Also there be personable and able men within the said Towne of Otford to doo the king's service 40'*.³¹ The house described in the document is therefore as it stood before Henry's interventions, c1537.
- 2.5.11. Later surveys, essentially concerned with the deteriorating condition of the palace in the decades following Henry's death, inevitably reflect how Henry had used, or intended to use, his new palace. Of those surviving and legible, the earliest was made

²⁸ Gregory 2010, 117; Canterbury, Ch. Ch. Cant. Reg. T. (f.272); Translation from Gregory 2015, 33; see also Hesketh 1915, 5

²⁹ Gregory 2010, 113-4

³⁰ The typescript, now in Sevenoaks Library, was copied by Major C Hesketh, aided by a transcription by Gordon Ward, MD; both were active local historians. Stoyel (1984, 260) dated it to 'c1541' without stating his reasons

³¹ With 50 more in Sevenoaks and 30 in Shorham, both parts of this large manor

in 1548,³² and the next in 1573,³³ both itemising necessary repairs; the last in 1596³⁴ is an inquisition which summarises (without detail) estimated repair costs (£2,300.7s) and assesses the salvage value of the materials of which the house was built (£1,837.13.4d).

The main house within the moat

2.5.12. The 1537 survey describes the spring-fed moat, with buildings within it, enclosing the moated Inner Court. Within it was the hall, '*invirowed aboute with Galeries and Towers and Turrette of Stone and the Chappell embatiled and parte covered with leade*' with other '*houses of office bilded of stone with leade and tyle wherein be lxxxi chambers with chimneyes whereof xviii selide with waycott and fower above with knotte gilt*'.³⁵ The Inner Court was entered from the north by a timber bridge over which '*is the forebay or forefront of the Galerye well edified and bilded of free stone with large oute caste of baywindows after an uniforme plan by all the Northe Part of the said mote, verye pleasunte to the prospecte and view of the said sighte*'.

2.5.13. The names of the rooms in the 1548 survey reflect the use of the building as a Henrician palace, listing a '*Gallerye at the upper end of the same halle besyde the Seller*'; the '*greate chamber of presence*' and the '*kynges pryve chambre*'; the '*Quenes pryve chambre*' and an adjoining lodging; '*my ladye maryes chamber*'³⁶ and '*my ladye of Southffolkes lodgyng*'; and '*the pages chambres*'; '*the Newe Gallery*'; and '*one little Gallerye there bytwene the greate Gallerye and the Ketchyn*'. All of these lay on the upper floor, directly below leaded roofs, much of the lead being missing or decayed. The '*dyverse & severall gutters*' between the great and privy kitchens were also much in decay.

2.5.14. Although long post-dating alterations to structure or room use made by Henry VIII for royal use, the 1573 survey best illustrates the general layout of the main house, the surveyor arriving via the east outer court gallery and generally working anti-clockwise around the parts that needed repair. The sequence, which can be followed on the outline plan of the inner court, reconstructed from the surviving and recorded walls³⁷ (Fig 4), runs as follows:

- A gallery leading from the east outer court gallery to the east end of the hall; the leads between it and the Green Gallery; under that is the buttery, privy kitchen, surveying place, scullery and larder
- The hall
- Leads over the great chamber, with leads south and north over sundry lodgings and three towers adjoining with lead roofs
- Leads over the presence chamber and privy chamber with two turrets and sundry lodgings under them
- Leads of the Green Gallery, leads adjoining the hall on the west end, lodgings under them

³² TNA E 10-1/497/4, 15 July, 2 Edward VI, taken by William Hyde, largely printed in Hesketh 1915, Appendix 1

³³ TNA E178/1100, 28-29 April, 15 Elizabeth I, largely printed in Hesketh 1915, Appendix 2

³⁴ BL MS Lansdowne Vol 82, ff117-122, 13 December, 39 Elizabeth I

³⁵ Presumably 18 chambers panelled in oak wainscot, four of which had ceilings with gilded knot patterns

³⁶ Princess (later to become Queen) Mary was assigned her own lodging at Otford in 1543: Thurley 2017, 255

³⁷ By excavation and through geophysical survey

- Schoolhouse butting upon Great Chamber (proposed to be taken down)
- Lodgings at the east end of the hall over the scullery, pantry and surveying place
- The chapel, with the wardrobe under
- Flat roof with a turret on the south side of the chapel and the lodging under it
- *'uppon the south parte of the hall a courte wheryn ys sundrye lodgings with open galleries and a towre of thre storyes highe'*
- Great Kitchen; pastry, two wet larders, three dry larders with chambers over them.

2.5.15. Apart from the small courtyard, the 71 chambers must have made for a very tightly-built island with light wells. From the surveys it is evident that most of the buildings were of two storeys, with lodgings and service rooms at ground floor level, under the high-status rooms above, the latter mostly directly under flat leaded roofs. The principal apartments were west of the hall, no doubt beginning with the great chamber accessed by a principal stair from the dais end. They were probably connected by the Great Gallery (probably synonymous with Green Gallery) behind the north front. This front seems, despite the off-centre bridge, to have had a central section with bay windows, uniform at least above the entrance level, flanked by plainer blocks, on the west at least set slightly forward, suggesting a resemblance to towers clasping the main range. The c1537 survey is relevant here, describing the outer court galleries as *'enclosing the said Courte east and west leading from the said Courte to certain towers bylded within the mote on the southe.....whereof the one galerye is a Pryvie Galerye, all those above and beneath leading by the garden to the Great Chambers...'*

2.5.16. There is little clue as to how these arrangements were adapted after 1537 to provide the adjacent King's and Queen's lodgings evident in the 1548 survey. The Great Chamber may have functioned as the Guard or Watching Chamber, from which opened two apartments contrived in parallel, ending in privy lodgings which probably came together to link to the west outer court gallery, which was called the privy gallery from as early as c1537.

2.5.17. The lodging ranges around the south-eastern courtyard were united at the corner by a square tower breaking forward on both elevations. The 1573 survey notes that the tower was of three storeys; the flanking lodging ranges were presumably of two.³⁸ The architectural language, as well as the building materials, was probably similar to that still extant in the outer court, and the stonework to its plinth is identical, but from the c1537 survey, the superstructure was also of stone rather than brick. This was a coherent, orthogonal new building, cutting diagonally across the underlying medieval structures and moat. Northwards, from geophysical evidence, the east range made a very awkward junction with another block on a quite different alignment, apparently that of the retained medieval hall to the west, and it, too, extended eastwards across the pre-16th century moat (Fig 2). This block housed the great kitchen, to the east of the hall, flanked on the south by the pastry and five larders all with chambers over them, and on the north by the privy kitchen, with the buttery, surveying place, scullery and larder adjoining, all necessarily being below the screens passage of the hall.

³⁸ TNA E 178/1100; Stoyel 1984, 274

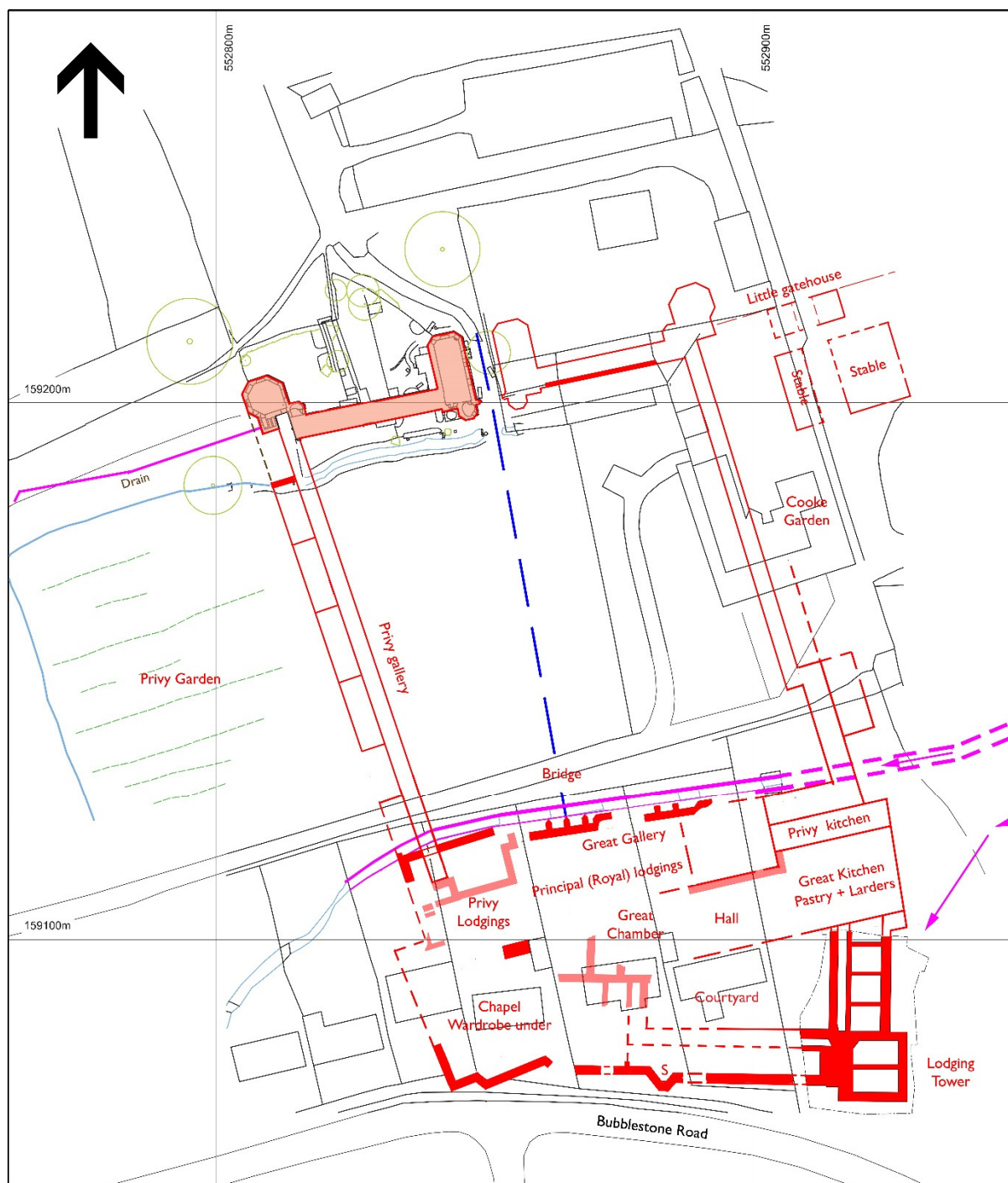


Fig 4 Overall plan of the Tudor palace against a background of modern topography; 100 m grid superimposed. Standing buildings shaded orange; excavated or standing walls shown solid red; walls suggested by geophysical survey by thin red lines; recorded but unverified walls shown in red tone; culverts in purple. The dashed blue line joins the entrance gatehouse to the moat bridge

2.5.18. The south lodging range seems to have extended westwards from the tower as far as the surviving base of a stair turret.³⁹ Walls which still stood as ruins to be recorded on ordnance survey plans down to 1938 suggest that the gallery/ cloister returned along the west side of the courtyard to meet a block beyond hall range. Westwards beyond the stair turret the frontage wall continues in the same construction and alignment, but not quite the same line, as far as the section at the corner that seems to reflect the alignment of the chapel, although the chapel itself had a flat-roofed

³⁹ A south entrance may have been incorporated given that one was recorded on this side in 1410-11 (2.4.8)

lodging flanking it on the south. The chapel unusually was at first floor level, separated by a timber floor from the wardrobe below.

The outer court

2.5.19. The western half of the north range of the outer court survives up to first floor level, and the north-west tower approximately to roof level. Much of the plinth of the south wall of the answering range to the east survives, along with the lower storey of the west side of the central gatehouse. A sketch plan (Fig 5) of its first floor (with some dimensions) by John Thorpe survives from the beginning of the 17th century, and this range centred on the Great or Principal Gatehouse is easily identifiable in the surviving (written) surveys. It is also the principal object of this *Statement*, since substantial intervention is contemplated. It also provides evidence about the form of Warham's building that is qualitatively much more informative than the scant and little-explored remains of the main house, and therefore warrants more detailed consideration.

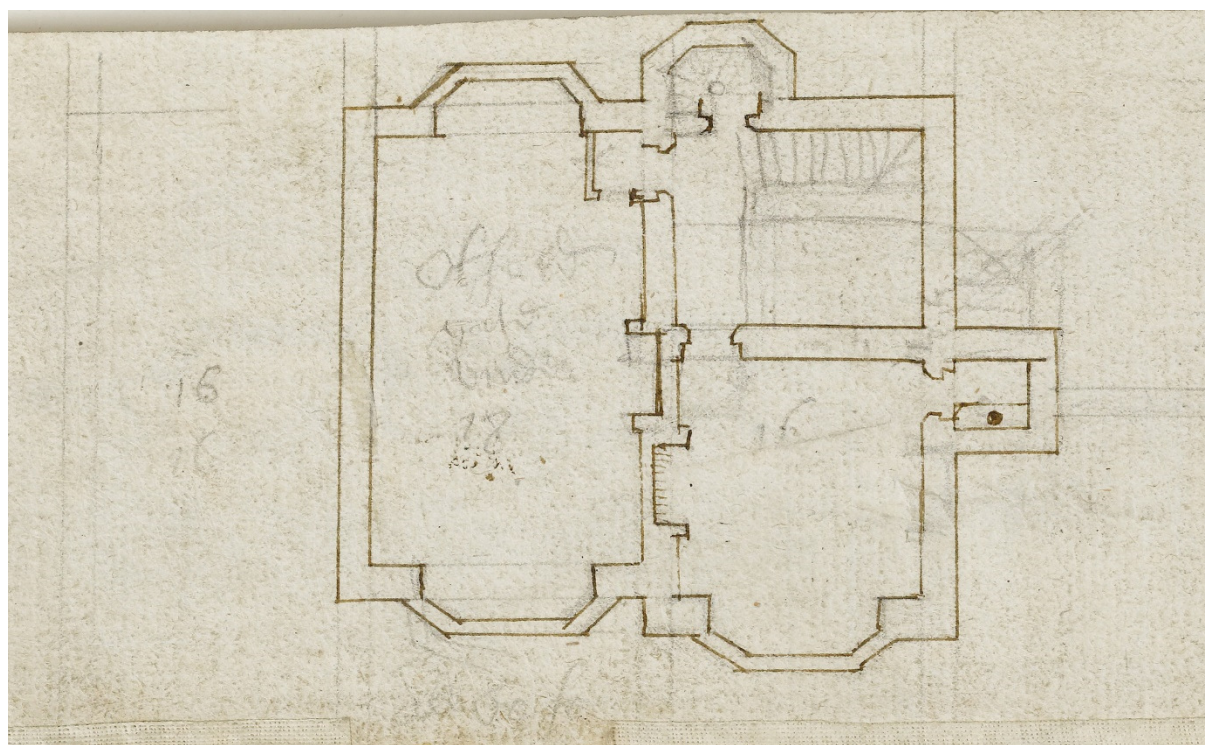


Fig 5 Sketch plan of the western part of the gatehouse at first floor level by John Thorpe, soon after 1605-6; north is at the bottom and the east block is shown only in pencil outline (© Sir John Soane's Museum, vol 181/182)

2.5.20. The outer court was trapezoidal in plan (Fig 4). The north range was symmetrical around the central 'great gatehouse',⁴⁰ of which the west block survives to just above first floor level. The approximate width of the gate passage is given by dimensions on John Thorpe's partial plan of the gatehouse from the early 17th century (Fig 6). The walls are thicker than those of the north-west tower, probably because of the need to accommodate fireplaces in the main walls. The towers were placed forward of the north range and the gatehouse projected yet further, to create an impressive entrance façade to what was a courtyard defined essentially by narrow galleries.

⁴⁰ Insofar as the trapezoidal plan allowed; the towers follow the alignment of the east and west ranges, and the lengths of the north gallery ranges were equal on their long axis, around which the block must have been set out

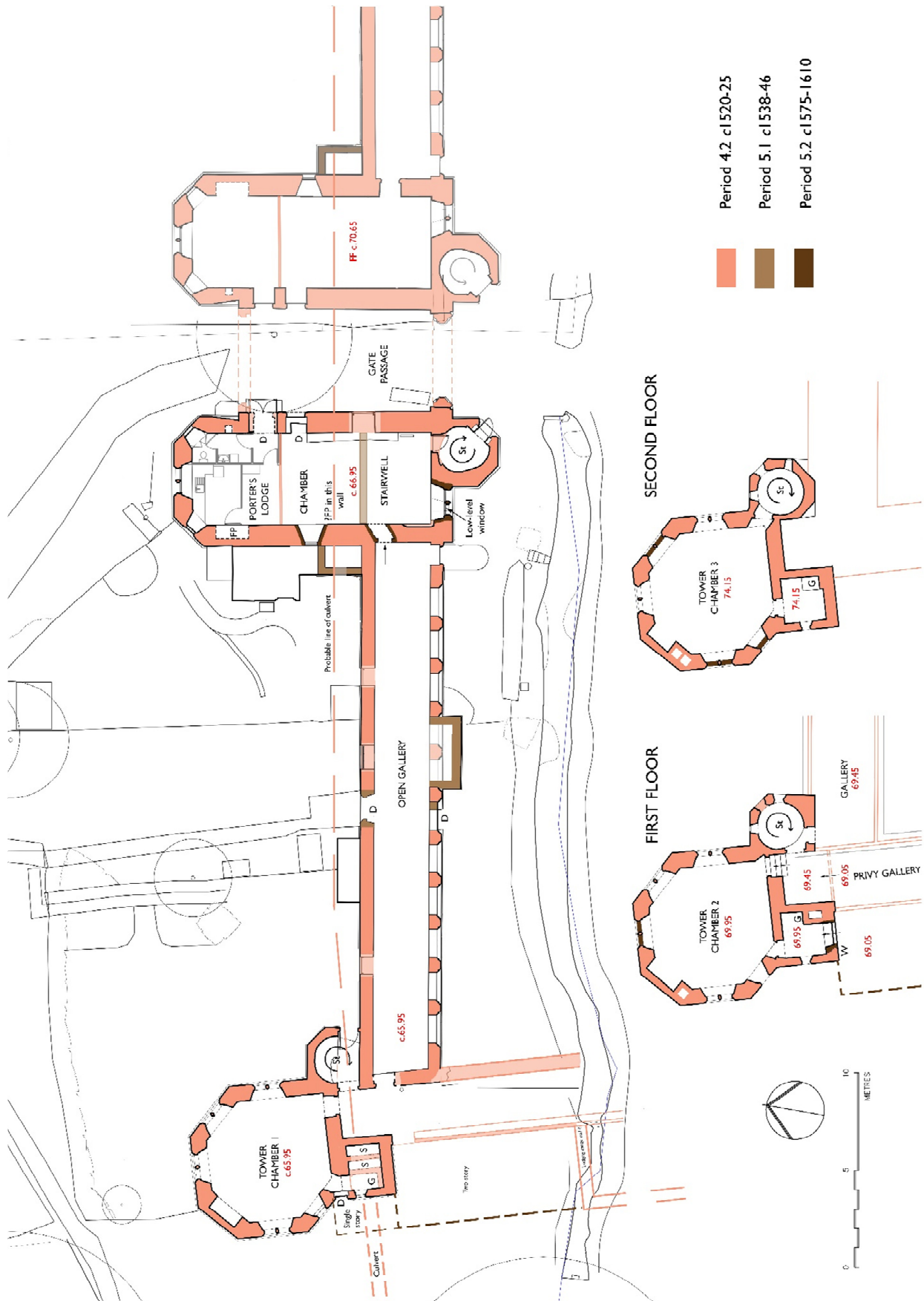


Fig 6 Phased and partly reconstructed ground plan of the surviving elements of the north outer courtyard range (base plan: TFP). Figures in red are historic floor levels in metres above Ordnance Datum Newlyn



Fig 7 The north-west range of the outer court c1775, as illustrated in Hasted's History of Kent (1778)



Fig 8: The north-west range of the outer court as it currently exists

2.5.21. The surviving primary fabric is of a single build, the plinth of Kentish ragstone rubble, brought to courses and galleted, the walls above (unlike the main house) being of red brick laid English bond with ragstone dressings. The brickwork has cross motifs picked out in dark headers, and some areas of diaper patterning. It is clear from the narrow scar on the garderobe tower that the west wall of the west, gallery, range was timber framed, probably above a continuation of the stone plinth,

whose substantial rubble foundations survive in the stream to the south.⁴¹ The survival of the brickwork of the north range walls to a consistent level and the lack of scars above that level in early views points to them also being timber-framed, confirmed by the c1537 description of these galleries being of '*Stone and Tymber*'. Indeed, it seems that the entire structure of the linking ranges between the towers and the gatehouse, and to the east and west ranges, was timber-framed above first floor level, and the outer walls of those ranges were timber-framed down to plinth level.

2.5.22. Only the northern stubs of the west courtyard range walls survive above ground, but geophysical survey revealed most of the length of the west gallery range (Fig 3), recorded c1537 as 304ft (92.6m) long, placing its termination at a tower inside the moat, which it presumably crossed on a bridge.⁴² By c1537 there was a narrow block of lodgings set against the west wall of the gallery, with substantial foundations again clearly revealed in outline by the geophysical survey.⁴³ The survey also suggests a major structural division into four units, from which one would normally infer that with fireplaces on brick cross walls, there would be eight lodgings per floor, 16 in total. The 21 recorded in c1537 suggests that the remainder were either at the southern end in a separate block, the edge of which is suggested by the geophysical survey or within a garret storey. The lodgings were tiled (c1537), so definitely had pitched roofs, in contrast to the galleries which were leaded (1548). These lodgings interposed between gallery and garden may be a second thought.

2.5.23. A long narrow building apparently reflecting the footprint of much of the east range survived to be mapped in 1844 (Fig 9) and 1869 (1st Ed OS 25'' plan), and a wall incorporating much re-used material survives on part of this line. However, the 1869 plan shows that this building lay to the west of the Tudor gallery. It probably originated as a lean-to erected against the gallery, itself subsequently demolished, so that on the 1844 map it is the recess in the east side of the building that probably represents the footprint of the former gallery. There were nine windows in the east wall, facing the kitchen garden. This gallery was recorded c1537 as 228ft (69.5m) long, at the southern end the passage being continued (on the evidence of the geophysical survey) by another, slightly offset, along the west side of a building, presumably the gallery noted in 1573 as leading from the east courtyard gallery '*to the estend of the hall*'.

⁴¹ There is no obvious scar on the tower wall plinth but quoining of the angle above demonstrates that there was a door to the garden here, within the framing. These foundations, contra Austin (2016, 3) on the basis of a small shallow cut, are probably typical of the structure as a whole.

⁴² Stoyel 1984, 267; quoting c1537 survey from which subsequent documentary references in this section are also taken

⁴³ At one point the top of the west wall slightly protrudes through the grass

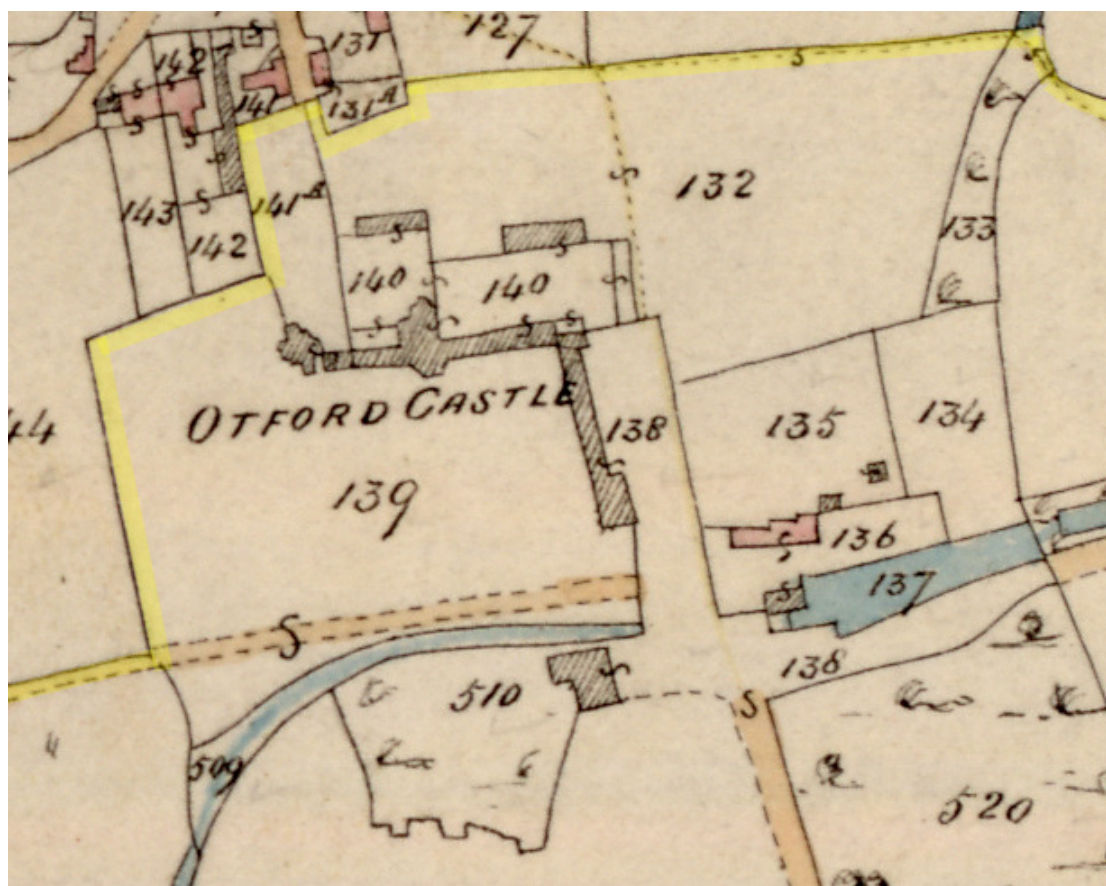


Fig 9 Detail of the palace from the Otford Tithe Map, 1844 (Courtesy of Kent History & Library Centre, Maidstone, CTR 279B). Lord Amburst's land outlined in yellow. 132, Little Mead (pasture); 133, Shaw; 134, Garden; 135, Orchard; 136, House and garden; 137, Pond; 138, Yard, road and buildings; 139, Palace Meadow; 140, Yard and buildings; 510, Ruins



Fig 10 Gatehouse: Blocked doorway and remains of a second doorway, much altered and enlarged, alongside; floor level was originally lower

2.5.24. The gatehouse had canted bays projecting to the north, flanking the gateway of which only a rebuilt scar survives on the existing structure (Fig 6). Immediately within what was the gate passage, the rere-arch of a doorway survives, later widened and the exterior destroyed; a very awkward position if, as one must assume, the outer arch of the passage was fitted with gates, one of which would open over the doorway. Adjacent to this is another doorway, the rere-arch identical, blocked but intact, with a three-centred head (Fig 10). Outside the gate the flanking walls are splayed inwards from just above plinth level, as if better to display the gateway but primarily connected with accommodating an oriel over it.⁴⁴ The moulded base of the south, inner arch of the passage survives *in situ*; its plan, with a rebate formed between the stone and brick jambs of the archway, indicates former gates,⁴⁵ as does the remains of plaster on the west wall of the gate passage, redolent of an internal space. On the courtyard side the passage was flanked by stair turrets, of engaged octagon plan, the survivor entered from the south-east. Internally it is much damaged, but it rose directly to the upper floors,⁴⁶ with the stair probably built solid to door head height, with stone treads above, like that serving the tower.

2.5.25. The pair of adjacent doors in the side of the gate passage indicate an internal partition between them; there are suggestive shadows of a timber-framed one on the walls. The north chamber is likely to be a porter's lodge, generously lit through three windows in the north wall.⁴⁷ Surviving primary plaster and a refaced zone place the first-floor structure directly above the higher (side) primary window lintels, with first floor level being about 3.7m above estimated original ground floor level (3.5m above existing).⁴⁸ There was a fireplace on the west wall, indicated by part of its relieving arch, and a lamp recess or cupboard, now blocked, adjacent to the door.

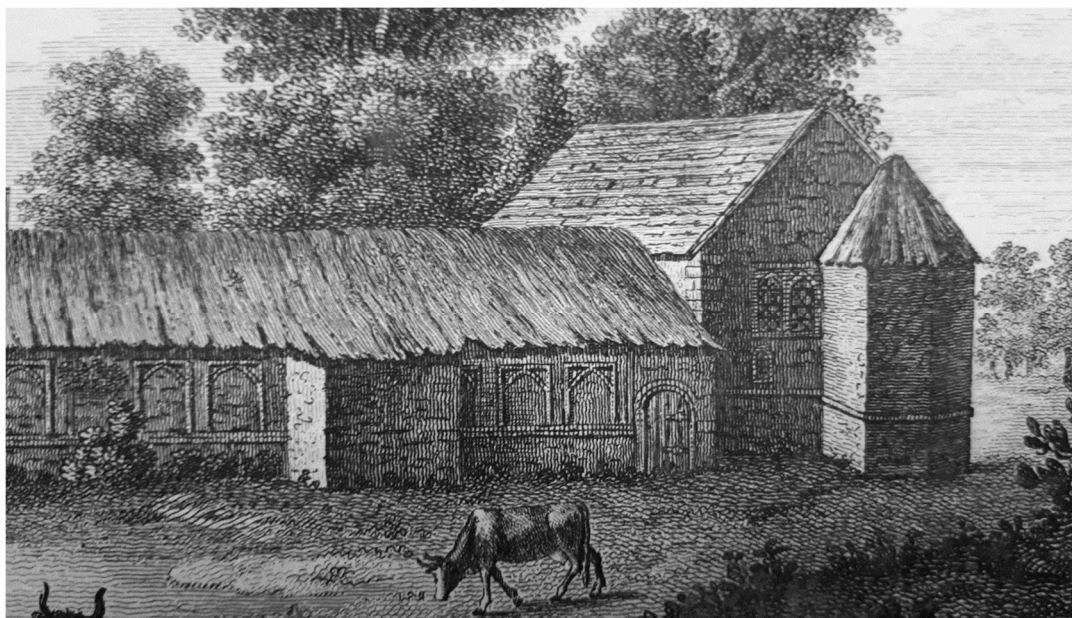


Fig 11 Enlarged extract of Fig 7, c1775, showing detail of east end of gallery and gatehouse

⁴⁴ Diaper patterning of the face shows that this is not due to post-1520s alteration; Thorpe's plan confirms an oriel window over

⁴⁵ Gatehouses with doors at both ends of the passage are more common in medieval castles

⁴⁶ The door to the chamber is a later cut

⁴⁷ The small window at high level in the centre is a late re-siting

⁴⁸ Evident at the original doorways; the floor levels were 66.95m and 70.65m above ODN respectively

2.5.26. The southern, larger, chamber (sub-divided later: 2.7.14) was originally entered only from the gate passage (Fig 12), separately from the putative porter's lodge. There is no clear evidence of a fireplace, but the west wall face is much patched. It was probably lit only from a two-light window one in the south wall, set lower than it now is.

2.5.27. Thorpe's plan at first floor level (Fig 5) shows a single large chamber over the gate passage, with an oriel window at either end, accessed by an internal porch from the southern of two compartments in the west block. The north compartment had a fireplace and (secondary) garderobe. His sketch plan shows a masonry wall between the two compartments, but the evidence from the fabric at ground floor level suggests that the divisions were of timber and not necessarily corresponding on each floor.⁴⁹



Fig 12: Gatehouse: Blocked doors from gate passage (left; for outside see fig 10) and west cloister (which appears to be secondary)

2.5.28. The ceiling of the large room over the gate passage is likely to have been high, for the 1573 survey⁵⁰ refers to three roofs over the gatehouse, suggesting that the centre block was of a different height from the flanking ones, most likely one tall storey over the gateway being flanked by three-storey towers, a smaller scale version of Wolsey's Great Gate at Hampton Court of 1522.⁵¹ From the 1537 survey, the roofs were leaded flats, surrounded by a crenelated parapet, the stair turrets presumably continuing upwards to access the tower roofs.

⁴⁹ Unless a brick partition wall was inserted in the later works and has left no trace above ground

⁵⁰ Hesketh 1915, 18

⁵¹ Thurley 2003, 19. The 1537 survey records 15 chambers with chimneys in the north range. There were 3 in each of the towers (assuming symmetry); in the gatehouse the plan (Fig 6) suggests 4 at ground floor level, the Thorpe plan (Fig 5) 3 at first floor level, leaving two at second floor level (one in each of the towers flanking the passage).

- 2.5.29. The gallery range, extending west from the gatehouse, was only about 2.8m wide internally.⁵² The ground floor formed a cloister open to the courtyard, with 11 bays of four-centred arched openings within square frames with sunk spandrels (Figs 8, 11). In contrast to all the other architectural details, these are formed wholly in moulded brick, with weathered brick cills set directly on the stone plinth. At the east end is a doorway, wholly renewed but present in all the early views (Fig 11) and anticipated in the layout of the cloister bays. Access into the cloister from the west was via a partly extant doorway in the west wall (see Fig 7), from the west cloister.
- 2.5.30. Over the cloister, the evidence points to an enclosed gallery, entered by a surviving doorway from the stair turret in the angle of the north-west tower and north range. Access from the first floor of the gatehouse tower might seem logical, but there is no sign of it on the Thorpe plan (Fig 5) or in the surviving base of the wall, and the floor levels of the cloister range were very different (see levels on Fig 6).
- 2.5.31. Less is known of the west cloister range other than it was narrower even than the north range; but since the wall defining the north-west corner of the courtyard returns in the same form, it is likely that the inner elevation was similarly treated, as an open brick cloister at ground floor level and an enclosed timber gallery over. A rebate which suggests the use of plank joists (and thus a flat ceiling) over the cloister is visible on the east wall of the garderobe projection of the tower.
- 2.5.32. At the north end at ground floor level, doors opened into the ground floor lodging of the north-west tower, the north-west cloister and, between them, the stair in the angle between tower and north range which gave access at first floor level to both galleries and upwards to the second-floor chamber. That the stair continued upwards, in a turret, to serve a flat roof enclosed by an 'embatiled' (crenelated) parapet over the tower is clear from sockets for the treads continuing the full surviving height of the shaft, to roof level. The plan becomes almost a full octagon part way up the second storey, as the south-west angle is weathered off.
- 2.5.33. At ground level opposed doors provide a passage through the stair turret to the exterior, the stair rising through 180° as solid masonry to the head of the east passage door, the (lost) stone treads alone continuing upwards. As well as conventional single light windows, the stair is lit by three quatrefoil ventilators in the north and east facets of the turret, in Caen stone, one of which was utilised broken from a larger unit, so all presumably recycled from an earlier building along with embellishments to the string course which defines second floor level.⁵³ The sloping site and disparate scales of the tower chambers and galleries complicated circulation from the stair at first floor level. Adjacent doorways gave access from the stair to the two galleries, demonstrating that must have been separated by a solid partition. Entry into the west or privy gallery was via a lobby, whose floor was built up above the structural floor. It was separated from the privy gallery proper by a partition, through or beyond which steps must have led down to the gallery. The

⁵²Based on assumptions about wall thicknesses. The c1537 survey states 12ft (3.7m: Stoyel 1984, 264) but this presumably relates to the upper timber-framed storey

⁵³ Austin 2016, 4, pls 9, 35

abutment of the partition – or conceivably archway - is clearly marked by the absence of plaster from a strip at the corner of the garderobe tower. From this lobby steps in the thickness of the wall also led up to the first-floor tower chamber, its doorway being set on the inner face of the wall to accommodate them.

2.5.34. Each of the three tower lodgings is essentially similar, an irregular heptagon, with a window in each of the five external facets and a fireplace (smaller to the top floor) in the sixth, opposite the door. The floor to floor height was c 4m (4.2m to the middle storey). At the south-west corner, a projecting block contained garderobes. On the top floor this had a substantial closet with the shaft, once fitted with a seat, opening in the floor at the south-east corner; in the middle floor the shaft opened alongside the brick shaft from above. All had a window on the west and the first floor another in the south wall, all but the relieving arch removed by a later door (see 2.7.15). Both shafts had narrow ventilation flues in the south wall, which probably terminated in shafts like chimneys.⁵⁴ On the ground floor the garderobe took the form of a conventional narrow compartment, placed on the west side against the shafts descending from above. A narrow doorway gave access to a lobby direct from the exterior/ garden, but the partly surviving west jamb, dressed with stone, shows that the lobby always connected with the chamber.⁵⁵

2.5.35. Internal walls were generally finished with the usual thin lime plaster, much of which is still visible, but the (higher status) first and second floor tower chambers instead have regular bond timbers set in the inner face of the brickwork and sockets for oak dowels around the openings, both intended for fixing panelling. The first-floor room alone has evidence for internal window shutters;⁵⁶ all the windows had a single opening casement set outside the ferramenta. The upper floors were framed with 9” (230mm) deep plank joists (like the west cloister) either side of a diagonal bridging beam, which produces a flat ceiling.⁵⁷ The ground floor was laid with green glazed tiles on a thin mortar bed.⁵⁸

The environs of the courtyard buildings

2.5.36. The courtyard was regraded from east to west, leaving it gently falling both to the west and the south, most likely by building up the west side with imported material.⁵⁹ There is a sharply-defined terrace marking the western edge of the west range, but no clear sign of paths or other features.

2.5.37. In c1537 the west gallery was called the privy gallery, implying a direct connection with the privy lodgings – the archbishop's or king's inner sanctum. The lodgings attached to the range overlooked the Privy Garden, which the c1537 survey describes it as having '*four square alleys sett with all manner of quicksett on both side with dyvers knottes of herbes and in the same be trees of dyvers fruits and in the garden be three hylte houses of pleasure with seats...*' There is now no obvious physical evidence of a formal

⁵⁴ Austin 2016, 7

⁵⁵ But widened on the east, hence said to be cut through. The garderobe was separated from the lobby by a timber frame, the shadow of which remains

⁵⁶ Austin 2016, 5

⁵⁷ This is more likely with plank joists than downstanding bridging beams (contra Austin 2016, 4)

⁵⁸ Found by the Oxford and District Historical Society in excavation in 1983: Austin 2016, 4

⁵⁹ Since there is no corresponding terrace cut on the east

garden layout of this kind; lidar shows parallel shallow negative features aligned east-west, perhaps connected with drainage, and quite likely post-dating the garden (Fig 4). The western boundary may approximate to the present stream, since the ground is built up against its east side, while the north side is likely to have been in the vicinity of the buried culvert, an approximate westward continuation of the entrance front of the house. The 1573 survey refers to the 'pale aboute the prey walkes', confirming the absence of evidence for enclosing walls. More puzzling is that the c1537 survey goes on to describe 'pondes wherein fysh may be preserved and kepte and sene running within the view', not evident on the ground, by lidar or by geophysical survey; is this a confusion with the fishponds to the east of the outer court, associated with the kitchen garden?

2.5.38. The east gallery in c1537 overlooked the kitchen (Cooke) garden, 'wherein be four square alleys sett about with quicksett [...] in the eastward side of the said garden a pair of Butts'.⁶⁰ Further south is the likely location of the woodyard, also fenced, associated in 1573 with a 'colehouse' and 'powltrye' [house]. Outbuildings here may be the origin of Castle House.

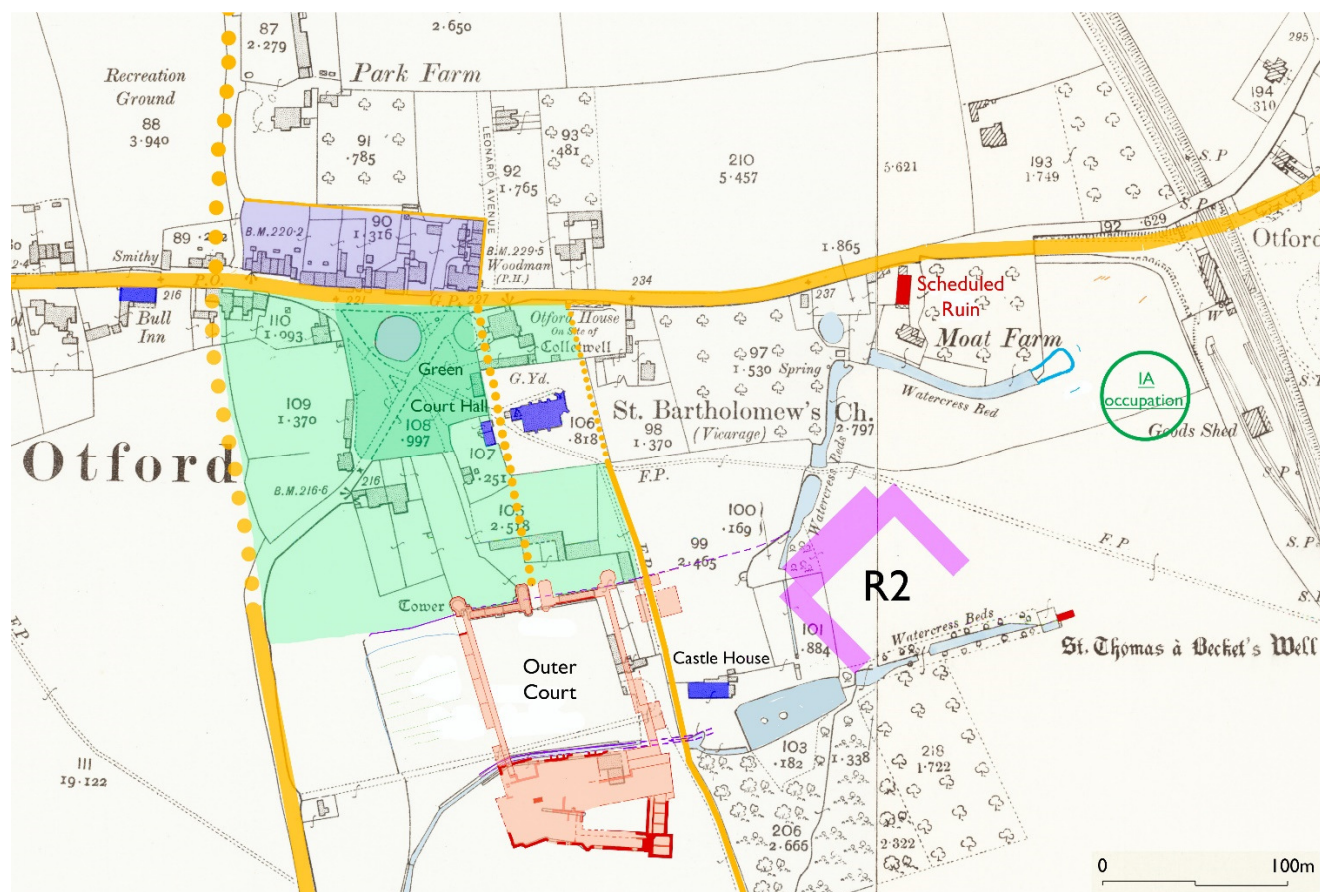


Fig 13 The palace in context, showing historic features including water management (enlarged extract from Fig 1). Existing green tinted mid-green; putative earlier green tinted light green; probable early tenement plots tinted dark blue; 3rd-4th century Roman villa R2 shown schematically in purple

2.5.39. To the east of the north range of the outer court, geophysical survey suggests a substantial building group. The 1548 survey, immediately following the description of the outer court gatehouse range and the gallery ranges, lists 'one little gate house

⁶⁰ For archery

there' 46ft by 28ft (14m x 8.5m), and '*at the east end of the same gatehouse'* a stable 48ft by 40ft (24.4m x 12.2m). The 1573 survey adds a stable on the west side of the gatehouse. By then, '*very little remaynith butt the fowndacion'* of the eastern stable, and both texts make clear that all three buildings were timber-framed on brick foundations. Impliedly nearby was a timber-framed barn, 80 ft (1548) or 104ft (1573) by 40 ft, from the description (and width) aisled and probably lacking brick foundations. The gatehouse no doubt provided service access to the east side of the palace, along a route still reflected in the current footpath (Fig 13).

Architectural context and parallels

2.5.40. Of the inner courts within the moated island, we know little in detail of the layout or the architecture except for the south-east corner, which was a completely new element, reshaping this part of the moated island on an orthogonal plan. This suggests that it may have been intended as the start of a coherent reconstruction of the whole, save perhaps for the hall and chapel. That did not happen; the rest of the moated area remained irregular, with the main entrance notably off-centre on the north side of the house. The known walls follow at least two other alignments dictated seemingly by retained earlier structures, and probably the piecemeal nature of the later reconstruction work.⁶¹ Nonetheless, the projecting square corner tower, which rose from the water of a wide moat, suggests that externally the building was intended to evoke something of the air of a castle.

2.5.41. The outer court, by contrast, was laid out on largely open ground, the great gatehouse centred on an axial approach to the house. Beyond it, the east and west ranges were necessarily twisted eastwards to frame the front of the house, making the outer court trapezoidal. The entrance courts of other archepiscopal and secular great houses of this period generally had lodgings arranged around corridors, like the south-east block Warham added to the moat island at Otford, (probably Archbishop Bouchier's) lost great court at Croydon Palace,⁶² and the outer court at Hampton Court (Thomas Wolsey, 1514-22).⁶³ Warham's south-east lodging block was, however, unusual in having, at least at ground floor level, an open cloister rather than an internal partitioned corridor.

2.5.42. The entrance court at Otford, however, was highly unusual in having, for the most part, the corridors without the lodgings; corridor galleries, of brick open to the courtyard on the lower level, and timber framed, enclosed, to the upper levels. Structures like this began to be constructed to take exercise and enjoy the views over gardens and the surrounding landscape from the beginning of the century. The one at Richmond Palace, first built for Henry VII c1497-1501 and rebuilt in 1506, in its final form had a timber-framed superstructure set over and against a brick garden wall; another opened from the privy apartments at Thornbury Castle (1511-31).⁶⁴ At Hampton Court, Wolsey's work of 1514-22 included a double-storied

⁶¹ To which later work by Henry VIII may have contributed

⁶² Faulkner 1970, 136-8

⁶³ Thurley 2003, 17-19

⁶⁴ For a discussion of these, including Otford, see Coope 1986, 45-8

gallery, open at the lower level, and extending about 60m eastwards through the gardens, sited on the opposite side of the house to the entrance court.⁶⁵

2.5.43. Warham's outer court at Otford can therefore be seen as a singular combination of this fashion for two-storied garden galleries with the established and conventional practice of entering a great house through a magnificent gatehouse, leading to a courtyard surrounded by lodgings. Here the outer court was surrounded by galleries primarily for exercise and pleasure, serving very few lodgings. The upper galleries would have provided a grandstand for activities in the courtyard itself, as would the great and other galleries which ran across the front of the main house. Was this, indeed, a typical hard entrance court, or part of the gardens? The main role of the corridor galleries would, however, typically be to provide views over the gardens – on the east the productive garden, on the west the privy garden – whose location suggests that they were parts of the same concept. Yet the undeniable evidence for a lodging range against the west side of the west range – it is both documented c1537 and located on the ground – is curious in that for most of its length it would deny the usual purpose of this kind of gallery, to provide a view over what should have been the most important garden. A key research question should be to determine whether it, and particularly its internal divisions, are of one build with the gallery itself. It is narrow for a lodging range, and if primary, it may have had other uses in Warham's time than the lodgings described c1537.

2.6. Water management

2.6.1. The management system channelled water through the manor house site from springs to the north-east, ultimately to discharge via drains into the Darent. On the way it supplied fish ponds, fresh water to the house, and fed a moat into which garderobes discharged. The latter are first evident in the mid-14th century lodging range constructed on the south-east side of a realigned moat but was a feature of the site before c1200 (see 2.3.5) and the course of an existing spring-fed stream may have been a determining factor in selecting the site. The management system probably reached its zenith in the Tudor period, and so is addressed here.

The southern system

2.6.2. The southern feed originates at what is now St Thomas a Becket's well and given its proximity to the house it is probably the earlier of the two to be utilised. Excavations in 1951-54 revealed a building sequence in which the earliest feature was the flint floor of an underground chamber or tank quite possibly of similar size to the extant one, but whose walls were founded at a lower level. The layer of silt over this floor contained no finds 'datable later than Roman', but this probably means that they were derived wholly from the Roman site immediately to the north.

2.6.3. Nonetheless an early medieval origin for the well is consistent with its traditional association with archbishop Becket, and the legend that *'finding the house wanted a fit*

⁶⁵ Thurley 2003, 17-22

*spring to water it, struck his staff into the dry ground, and water immediately appeared where this well is.*⁶⁶

2.6.4. The earliest surviving stone reservoir walls, and its floor of chalk blocks set in a layer of gault clay, probably date from the 14th century primarily on the evidence of the earliest finds from the site generally.⁶⁷ The reservoir was *c* 10.7m long, and originally 5.8m wide, with two pointed-arch inlets in the base of the east wall, connected to springheads at least 6.1m distant by chalk-lined conduits. The northern was, probably secondarily, connected to a lead pipe⁶⁸ presumably for drinking water, while the other fed the cistern from which a channel, controlled by a sluice, flowed westwards. Since the internal dimensions essentially agree, this should be the base of *'the conduyte house or well conteyning in length xxxvi foote and in breadth xix fote to be taken downe and newe sett upp'*, estimated to cost £30 in the 1573 survey.⁶⁹

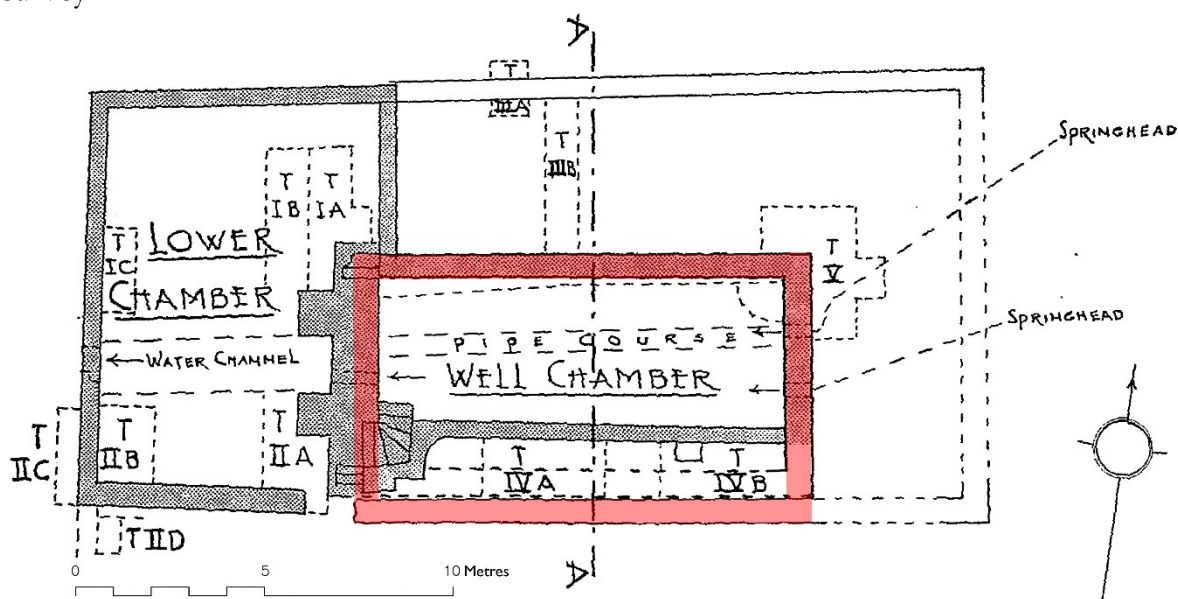


Fig 14 *St Thomas a Becket's well*, from *Archaeologia Cantiana* 70 (1956), 173; approximate scale added. The earliest surviving chamber is outlined in red

2.6.5. The lower chamber seems, from the brick used its construction, to have been added in Warham's time, and an enclosure wall constructed around the primary chamber. The whole structure was maintained, with piecemeal rebuilding, into the 19th century, with the south wall of the well chamber being rebuilt further north around the end of the 18th century.

2.6.6. Westwards from here the channel terminates in a pond retained by a dam on the west, presumably in origin a fish pond and the third of a series,⁷⁰ then flows in an underground culvert, in part Tudor. Originally this presumably fed the moat, and this would have remained true in Warham's enlargement of the moat. However, the enlarged moat was soon filled in, mostly with clay, probably following the

⁶⁶ Hasted 1778

⁶⁷ A stone structure existed by 1440-41 – Otford Minister's Accounts, cited Pateman 1956, 175

⁶⁸ By 1440-41, as above; the 1573 survey mentions *'the pypes conveying the water from thence to the offices and small sestrens'*: Hesketh 1915, 21

⁶⁹ Hesketh 1915, 21

⁷⁰ See Tithe Map, Kent Archives CTR/279B; Fig 9

acquisition of Otford by Henry VIII in 1537. This necessitated the contemporaneous construction of a network of aqueducts and drains within the fill to flush through the garderobes and take away the roof water.⁷¹ The current outlet channel along the north side of the moat wall is the base of a similar culvert, well-constructed and so similar to the excavated south sewer.

- 2.6.7. Adjacent to the dam of the lowest pond is Castle House, much altered and extended in an arts and crafts style after 1933⁷² but incorporating something of earlier buildings which by the 19th century served as the house of P[a]lace Farm, covering the northern part of the park. As noted, it may well have originated as a palace outbuilding; if not it utilised salvaged material.

The northern system

- 2.6.8. The northern system now begins with a deep spring-fed reservoir (perhaps also serving as a fish pond) almost following the contour at Moat Farm, north-east of the palace. It originally extended further east, where the terminal of the deep cut has been located (Fig 13);⁷³ above it the banks were cut back to a gentler slope, as can still be seen (Fig 15) towards the east end of the surviving section. Although the bottom was not reached in excavation it presumably cuts through the edge of the chalk, into the gault clay beneath. The east end cut through two successive shallow ditches on a similar alignment, the fill of the earliest of which contained a single sherd of late 11th/early 12th century pottery;⁷⁴ the later contained only residual Roman and earlier material. In its ultimate form, at least, the reservoir is thus likely to be of later medieval origin.



Fig 15 The reservoir of the northern system of water management, looking east, from the dam

⁷¹ Philp 1984. The photographs and sections, unlike the plan, make quite clear that the culverts and drains in the latest moat were either built prior to the clay filling over the primary silt (eg fig 53, S drain) or cut through it (fig 50, aqueduct)

⁷² By Eric McDowell, sometime Borough Engineer of Westminster: Ward 2017, 35

⁷³ Sadarangani 2005, esp fig 7; it must be the terminal rather than the turn of a moat northwards, given the increasing rise of the ground to the north

⁷⁴ Sadaraangani 2005, 17

- 2.6.9. To its north are the remains of a rectangular building. Until turnpike improvements it had its north end (gable?) onto the ‘Pilgrim Road’.⁷⁵ The lower parts of the walls are of coursed ragstone rubble, galleted, the upper parts continuing unbroken in sharp-arrised thin brick laid Flemish garden wall bond. The brickwork incorporates a probable keeping place in one wall, the only architectural feature. Its original purpose is unclear but it does not look domestic; its location suggests a connection with the reservoir. Its stonework is undateable, the brickwork looks c1700, and both may be contemporary, but it is included in the palace scheduling.
- 2.6.10. From here the water is channelled south, the flow controlled by a penstock, through narrow ponds, and feeds via a channel into the lower pond of the south system. A branch was probably taken off this to serve the stables, and then to flush the garderobes of the towers of the north outer court range through a culvert along its north wall (as suggested on Fig 13). This would be a plausible origin for the comparatively recent⁷⁶ open stream that now flows across the south side of the north-west range continuing westwards before turning south. There is certainly a buried culvert running west from the north-west tower garderobe pit,⁷⁷ its end turning south as if to meet the stream running southwards, and eventually connecting with the moat overflow system.

2.7. Period 5: Royal ownership, 1537-1601

Transfer and royal works

- 2.7.1. Archbishop Cranmer reluctantly transferred both Otford and Knole to Henry VIII in 1537. Henry had stayed at Otford as Archbishop Warham’s guest, and so was aware of the drawbacks of its low damp situation. He reputedly insisted on having both houses so that he could lie at the ‘*sound, parfaite, bolsome grounde*’ of Knole, while most of his household lay at Otford.⁷⁸ Nonetheless he eventually came to stay at Otford rather than Knole.
- 2.7.2. Initial repairs were undertaken in 1538. More extensive works were undertaken between June 1541 and June 1546, at a cost of more than £2,200. About half of this was definitely at Otford, and the rest split between Otford, Knole and a park at Panhurst. A payment of £152 in August 1541 direct to the king’s chief carpenter John Russell suggests that he was at that time the principal craftsman on site. This and the scale of expenditure suggest significant works rather than simply repair, but no documentary evidence has yet been found as to their nature.⁷⁹ The clear archaeological evidence for infilling the inner court moat, necessitating the construction of culverts and drains within it to flush the garderobes and drain the roofs, probably accounted for much of this sum (see 2.6.6 above). It was also

⁷⁵ The Dartford and Sevenoaks Turnpike from 1766; see Tithe Map (Kent Archives, CTR/279B), parcel 120, ‘old road etc’ immediately to the east

⁷⁶ It is absent from the 25” Ordnance survey map surveyed in 1907 but present by the time of the 1936 survey

⁷⁷ Visible on the geophysical survey following a gently curving course, from the outlet of the pit located in excavation

⁷⁸ Colvin *et al* 1982, 217, from an account by Ralph Morice, present at the transfer: Hesketh 1915, 8

⁷⁹ Colvin *et al* 1982, 218

probably necessary to adapt the principal apartments of the main house to provide the royal lodgings noted in the 1548 survey (see 2.5 above).

- 2.7.3. Crown ownership was interrupted by Edward VI granting Otford to John Dudley in 1551, but he returned it in exchange for lands in Somerset the following year. Queen Elizabeth (r.1558-1603) made little use of the place. Maintenance was neglected; by 1548 many rooms were said to be *'greatly yn decaye'* because of defective roofs and gutters, but repairs were estimated at the relatively low sum of £106, and in 1559 Queen Elizabeth visited Otford on progress.⁸⁰

The Sidney family as hereditary keepers

- 2.7.4. The Sidney family were hereditary keepers of the palace, with a lease on the Little Park for 18 years from 1560; and had long hoped to acquire the estate. In April 1573 the survey by three local gentlemen, accompanied by the queen's surveyor of works and the surveyor of the royal estates in Kent, found dilapidations estimated to cost £1,868 to put right, including rebuilding the east wall of the hall. However, the context is interesting, for following the survey, Sir Henry Sidney (who already had a life interest in parts of the estate worth nearly £40 pa) offered to take the estate in fee-farm, with an undertaking to repair the house and *'mayntayne [it] for ever at his own charges for hir Majesties accesse'*, along with a park stocked with deer for her *'disporte and pleasure'* and a supply of venison for her larder. The queen visited briefly on 24 July, on her way between Orpington and Knole, where she stayed a week, presumably to see the state of Otford for herself.⁸¹ But the offer was rejected, and repairs to gutters and leads were undertaken in 1576 at a cost of £14.5s.4d.⁸²
- 2.7.5. In 1596 commissioners found the buildings *'greatlie in decay'*, advising that even if repaired the place *'woylde not be fytt for her majestie to lye in for that yt standeth in a verie wett soyle upon springs and vantes of water continually ronninge under yt.'* Nothing was done, and Sir Robert's pleadings, now including an offer via Lord Burghley that *'if I may have a good estate in the Park, I will build a pretty house at my own charge, and keep it in repair so that she may dine there as she passes by'* came to nothing. Eventually, in November 1601, the Queen, needing funds to feed her troops in Ireland, sold to Sir Robert Sidney the house and the great park, extending to 700 acres in Otford, Seal, and Kemsing.
- 2.7.6. As hereditary keepers of the palace and park, the Sidneys would have had permanent lodgings in the house. At Audley End, Essex after its purchase as a royal palace in 1666, the Howards became hereditary keepers and as such retained a house in miniature in the three-storey north-west pavilion of the outer court, which had previously housed their private apartments. It is tempting to see the Sidneys having the central and western blocks of the outer gatehouse,⁸³ the north-west tower, and the galleries between them as their hereditary lodging, which would help explain its initial survival when the rest of the buildings were so thoroughly demolished in the following century. In support of this, Sir Henry's offer in 1573 included in his terms

⁸⁰ Staying 23 – 28 July: Cole 1999, 81, 180

⁸¹ Cole 1999, 81, 186

⁸² Most of the references here are taken from Colvin *et al* 1982, 217-9

⁸³ As suggested by Thorpe drawing in full only those blocks, with no connection eastwards

a licence to take down the east and west galleries, ‘and in place thereof to make ij faire brick walles or stone walls’. The effect would have been to separate the north range, putatively as a separate house, and a similar idea may lie behind the 1596 offer of a ‘pretty house’.

Early interventions in the outer north-west range

2.7.7. The extant building retains evidence of several pre-1600, if small-scale, interventions. A small rectangular block, truncated by a modern roof, was built in the angle of the gallery and gatehouse. The stonework of the lower part of this structure extends several courses above the plinth line, above which is dark red brickwork in English bond, similar to the primary brickwork, but whose courses do not bond or align with those of the gallery wall. A small high-level window seems to have acted as the corbel for a splayed junction with the gallery at high level and would have appeared near the ceiling of the ground floor gallery (Fig 16).

2.7.8. This structure might be thought a late intervention, but in fact its presence and purpose are shown on Thorpe’s first floor gatehouse plan, as containing a garderobe serving the first floor of the gatehouse. The drawings in Thorpe’s *Book* include surveys, designs, and adaptive or inventive developments of plans of buildings seen or illustrated in printed books; the Otford plan might therefore include some ‘improvement’ of what actually existed. But by 1600 garderobes had been superseded in polite society by stool closets, so this was not a proposal or invention by Thorpe but a record of something already existing. It probably stood over and connected to a pre-existing culvert serving the tower garderobes (2.6.10).



Fig 16 The remains of the added garderobe tower – the doorway is a 20th century insertion

- 2.7.9. The projection on the south side of the cloister (Figs 6, 8), was also done with some care and placed neatly to encompass two of the cloister bays. It is similar in construction to the garderobe projection, sharing the distinctive feature of stonework continuing above the main plinth; which suggests that they are broadly contemporary. The plinth adjacent to the west has been raised in brick, and a doorway cut through the central arcade opening, with a chamfered brick jamb, both coursing with but not bonded to the main wall. The rough filling above the doorway is late and suggests that it replaced a timber window (Fig 17), and thus that this short cloister had been glazed in at or by at the time of the intervention. The projection appears to be a substantial hearth,⁸⁴ suggesting the likelihood that another served the enclosed gallery above.
- 2.7.10. At ground floor level the creation of a second doorway from the courtyard suggests that the interior was divided. In the centre of the north wall of the gallery a doorway gives access from the exterior, but it is set into a panel of brickwork projecting slightly forward, and fills (unbonded) a roughly door-shaped, but larger, aperture to which the plinth returns on either side. The projecting brickwork seems best explained as the face of the wall formed within a projecting porch, now lost, after the hole had been inserted to make the doorway. It is clearly an early insertion and looks suspiciously like the front door to the Sidney lodging.



Fig 17 The projection on the south side of the north-west range; note the section of the plinth raised in brick, and the chamfered jamb of a doorway formed through one of the arched openings of the cloister. The rough infill above it is of uncertain date, the infill of the doorway around 1800

⁸⁴ Stoyel (report 7.9.78 on the SPAB file) suggests that it was for the farm smithy, with the adjacent doorway formed to give access to it; it may have served this purpose later, but is too elaborate to have started life as part of a farm smithy. A post-1914 (construction of present cottages) photo shows small chimney rising through the roof. The author has not seen the structure internally.

2.7.11. At least one intervention (the garderobe) and by association probably the other changes noted so far pre-date the Thorpe plan, and seem more likely to have been initiated by the Sidneys than the Royal Works. The great galleries and gatehouse were in poor repair at the time of the 1548 and 1573 surveys,⁸⁵ suggesting therefore that these changes belong either to works by Henry VIII, or much more likely, after 1573 when the Sidney interest in acquisition became evident.

A second phase of intervention

2.7.12. A first-floor plan (Fig 5) of the north gatehouse was made by John Thorpe (c1565-1651), an eminent surveyor of land and designer of buildings around the turn of the century. The sketch in his MS *Book of Architecture* is on the back of a drawing of Holdenby, Northants, datable to c1605-6, and likely belongs slightly later but still in the same decade.⁸⁶ It suggests that having finally acquired the estate in 1601 Sir Robert Sidney was still considering developing a house based on his north range lodging.

2.7.13. The intervention with which Thorpe was likely concerned was the insertion of a [timber] stair of two largely straight flights into the southern compartment of the gatehouse, which would have provided a fashionable (and internal) alternative to the newel stair to access the principal chamber, over the gate passage. That it was executed, presumably before 1618/19 when Sidney sold the estate, is clear from changes to the fenestration of the south wall. The two-light window, much damaged and rebuilt but originally similar to that in the north chamber, is set much higher, across the first-floor line; and below it is a small single light window (Figs 7, 10). Both are, on close examination, inserted. The upper window lit the well of the new stair, the small window lit the space below the stair. A small (apparently re-cycled) window was inserted high in the west wall of the remaining part of the original southern chamber, which would have been deprived of natural light by the creation of the stairwell.

2.7.14. The partially-surviving arch and opening apparently cut through the east wall of the lower gallery into the gatehouse (where it is visible) must from its location run skew through the wall (Fig 7). Its position and this contrivance suggest that it was associated with the insertion of the stair, and it too must have been approached by a short flight within the gallery itself, conveniently close to the south door.

2.7.15. Evidence survives in the structure of the north-west corner tower for quite extensive and early adaptation and extension, again most likely in the early 17th century. At first floor level the garderobe was abandoned and a doorway with a splayed internal west reveal cut through the south wall. Its subsequent blocking remains clear externally, extending down to the floor level of the privy gallery, necessitating a short stair within the former garderobe to reach the level of the tower chamber. It would have connected with a structure formed against the south wall, the creasing line for whose flashing is clearly visible cut into the brickwork, returning around the east side of the garderobe tower across the site of the gallery, whose end

⁸⁵ Hesketh 1915, 17-18

⁸⁶ Summerson 1966, 93 & plate 84; for Thorpe's biography, 1-13

it presumably incorporated. The geophysical survey indicates that it infilled the gap between the garderobe tower and the north end of the west gallery lodging range, against which a brick chimney stack is likely to have been built. Otherwise from the light trace in the geophysical survey and absence of visible engagement with the tower walls, it was probably timber-framed.

2.7.16. A lean-to single storey addition on the west of the garderobe tower, whose scar remains (Fig 18) was certainly timber framed and probably part of this scheme. Selective blocking of tower windows, well finished in plaster on both sides, is also likely to be part of this phase. Austin notes⁸⁷ evidence for lime plaster succeeding the primary panelling, and a doorway cut from the ground floor passage through the stair turret into the north range.



Fig 18 The south side of the garderobe tower showing blocked sockets for rafters, and probably rails of timber-framed wall, and internal plaster on the formerly external wall

2.8. Period 6: Decline into a farmstead

Later owners

2.8.1. In 1618/19, Sidney, now Viscount Lisle, having disparked the great park, conveyed the property to Sir Thomas Smith, second son of Customer Smith. During the 17th century, probably after the purchase by Sir Thomas, the palace was gradually demolished, except for parts of the north (and possibly east) ranges of the entrance courtyard. This clearly survived because it had a continuing use. Whatever Robert Sidney's intentions for the north range, it was eventually adapted as a farmstead, with the north-west tower probably remaining as a house, and the north range, eventually reduced to a single storey including the western half of the gatehouse, used for agricultural purposes and perhaps (as later) workers' dwellings. Partial

⁸⁷ 2016, 6, 7

survival down to the 19th century suggests that part of the east side of the outer courtyard was also adapted (Fig 8). The formerly moated site was reduced to an enclosed farmyard, retaining parts of the perimeter and some other walls of the palace; hence the survival of the parts that today front Bubblestone Road.

- 2.8.2. Otford continued to be held by Smith's descendants down to Sir Sidney Stafford Smythe, Knt., Lord Chief Baron of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer, who inherited on his coming of age in 1726,⁸⁸ was appointed Chief Baron in 1772 and died in 1778. His widow Lady Sarah Smythe died in 1790, leaving the estate, consisting of the ruins of the palace, and three farms (the Place, Great Lodge and Greatness containing about 860 acres) in trust, to be sold for the benefit of her nephews and nieces. The estate was sold by auction in the following year to Robert Parker of Maidstone, save for Greatness Farm which went to a separate purchaser.⁸⁹ *'The ruins of the ancient castle and palace of Otford'* were expressly included in Place Farm.
- 2.8.3. In 1844 Castle Farm (then called) was purchased by the Rt Hon William Pitt, 1st Earl Amherst (1773-1857), from the heirs of Robert Parker, who died in 1837.⁹⁰ Amhurst's great uncle Sir Jeffrey Amherst, K.B. (1717-97), from whom he inherited, had acquired a third share in the manor,⁹¹ and by 1844 William was in possession of the whole lordship.⁹² The estate then descended through his son William Pitt Amherst, 2nd Earl (1805-1886), his son William Archer Amherst, 3rd Earl (1836-1910) then his brother Hugh Amherst, 4th Earl (1856-1927), of Montreal Park, Sevenoaks.

The abandonment of the house in the 18th century

- 2.8.4. By the time of the first surviving illustration in Hasted's *History of Kent* (1778 Fig 7),⁹³ the north-west tower was roofless, its parapet largely decayed and mostly lost. The north range was in agricultural use, under a thatched roof over the brick lower storey, as was the surviving ground floor of the western part of the gatehouse. Hasted noted that *'There are now only a wall and two towers, part of the outer court remaining of it. These towers some years ago were two stories high[er],⁹⁴ but the largest of them, which was covered in lead, falling in, the Chief Baron took down the upper story of each.*
- 2.8.5. Hasted's account is evidently confused, since the north-west tower has lost only a turret and parapet, as his plate shows, and from its limited decay probably retained a leaded roof well into the 18th century; whereas the gatehouse has lost two storeys from the two tall blocks that would have flanked the passage. This confusion suggests that the event was not recent when Hasted was writing in the mid-1770s. A date in the middle of the 18th century seems likely.

⁸⁸ His father Henry Smithe of Great Bounds, Kent, died in 1707: TNA, PROB 11/494/213

⁸⁹ For more detail see Hesketh 1914, 13-14, drawing on the Amhurst muniments.

⁹⁰ Kent History and Library Centre, U1350/E11, 'Letters regarding the purchase of Otford Castle (now Otford Palace) Farm', 1841-44

⁹¹ Hasted 1778, 324

⁹² Tithe Award 1844 (Kent Archives CTR 279A) shows him as possessing the village green as manorial 'waste'

⁹³ Hasted 1778, facing p 325

⁹⁴ An obvious correction made in the 1797 edition: [British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-kent/vol3/pp19-31> [accessed 12 July 2017].

- 2.8.6. The first photo c1885 shows two chimneys rising through the roof of the eastern part of the gallery range, and a reference in 1892⁹⁵ to ‘the cloistered portion now turned into cottages’ confirms that this change of use had occurred since 1844.⁹⁶
- 2.8.7. Antiquarian views always show the extant north-west range but in settings idealised (c1775) or notional. This suggests that the north-east and east ranges shown on the tithe map of 1844 (Fig 9) retained little recognisable historic structure despite occupying the footprint of the north-east and reflecting that of the east ranges of the outer court. By this date Castle House was the only house on the extensive farm (308 ac in Otford parish) occupied by James Selby. The farm buildings remained clustered around the north and east ranges of the outer court of the palace. The site of the inner courts, still largely defined by a curtain, with a farm building at its north-east corner, was identified as ‘Ruins’, use ‘pasture and rough’, held in hand by the then owner Lord Amherst, separately from the surrounding farm. Hasted noted that *‘There is nothing left of the mansion itself, but vast heaps of rubbish and foundations, which cover near an acre of ground’*.

2.9. Period 7: The 20th century

- 2.9.1. From the 1880s the plight of the north-west range ruins became a matter of antiquarian concern.⁹⁷ Miss Emily Parr wrote to Thackeray Turner, secretary of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)⁹⁸ on 13 July 1892, that *‘during the last 20 or 30 years it has fallen very much into decay and no care seems to be taken in its preservation...parts of it are used as farm buildings.’* The secretary duly wrote (without much hope of success) a letter drafted by Philip Norman to the 3rd Earl Amherst, expressing concern about the tower being overgrown with ivy, and the need for repointing of the rest. In his covering letter Norman observed that *‘Lord Amhurst is the reverse of a popular man; he is said to be selfish and ill-tempered, in which case he will probably resent our appeal.’* There is no record of a reply.
- 2.9.2. At the request of Rev Wm Lutyens,⁹⁹ A R Powys, the then secretary of the SPAB, visited and brought the matter to the SPAB Committee in May 1913. Powys wrote to the local historian of Otford, Captain C Hesketh, suggesting that he approach the owner (the 4th Earl had inherited in 1910) with a view to the building being placed in the guardianship of the Office of Works. Shortly afterwards¹⁰⁰ the thatched roofs of the gallery and gatehouse were destroyed by fire. In rebuilding, an upper storey was added to the former gallery range, which was divided into three small cottages (now known as 1-3 Castle Cottages), with some of the original openings glazed with new timber windows. A new tiled roof was constructed over the remains of the gatehouse, which remained a barn. A dovecot was formed in the top of the truncated remains of the gatehouse stair turret. All this was done to a

⁹⁵ SPAB Secretary to the Earl Amhurst, 18 August 1892, copy in SPAB file, see below;

⁹⁶ The Tithe Award (Kent Archives, CTR/279A) shows all the buildings hatched grey; dwellings were washed red

⁹⁷ For photographs of the buildings at the end of the 19th century see Ward 2017,

⁹⁸ Unless otherwise noted the following section is based on the voluminous file held by the SPAB

⁹⁹ Vicar of Otford 1907-14: Clarke & Stoyel 1975, 237

¹⁰⁰ Hesketh writing in July 1924 says ‘about 10 years ago’

good standard, with care and sensitivity to the historic building, and remains little changed today.

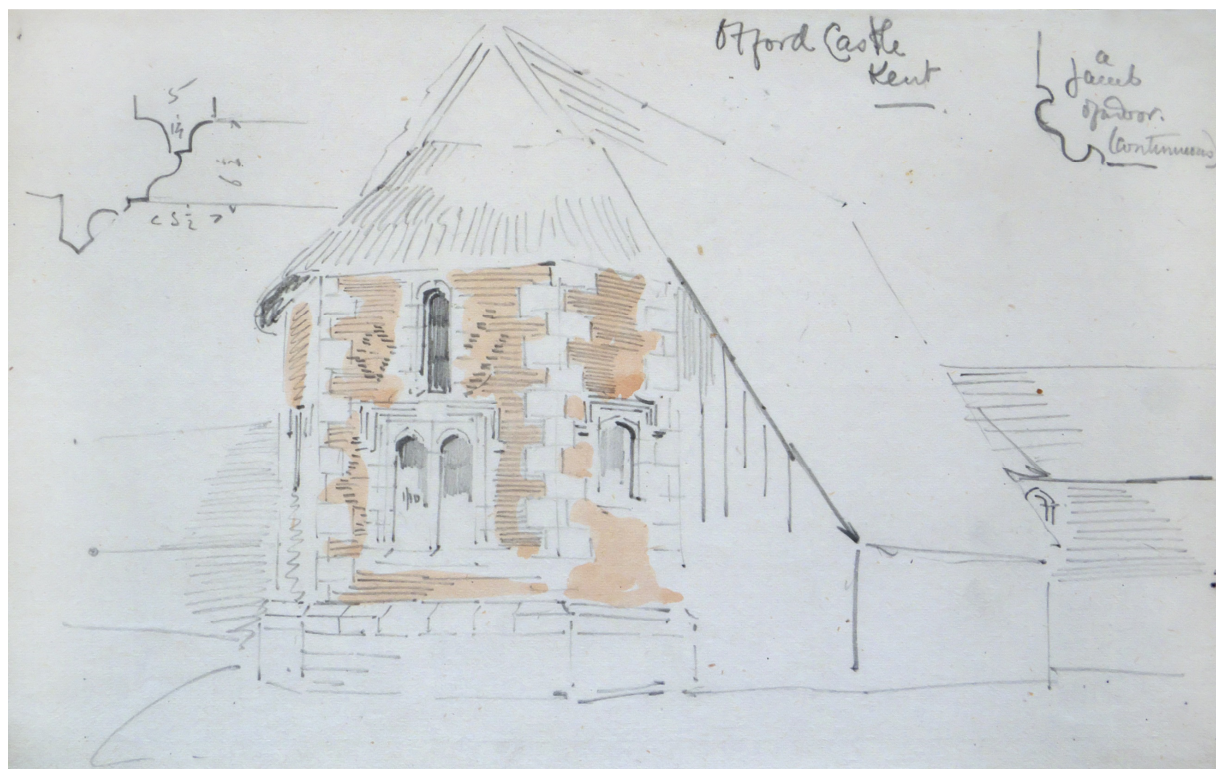


Fig 19: The gatehouse from the north-west before the 1914 fire: Pencil and wash drawing, © Society of Antiquaries of London Roland Paul Collection (Box 6)

- 2.9.3. The Otford holdings were sold in 1924. After some hesitation on the part of the Ancient Monuments Board the structure was scheduled in 1928, but to little effect: by 1929 the tower was again reported as decaying, the adjacent occupied cottages being dangerous due to falling masonry. But *'unfortunately to the owner the ruin is a nuisance & she will not spend a penny on it'*.¹⁰¹ Sir Charles Peers wrote a report for the Community Council of Kent in July 1933, suggesting local action through repair and a Town Planning Scheme to provide an appropriate setting in public open space, including removal of the still-existing farm buildings. William Weir's report in December makes clear that the tower was the matter of concern, estimating the cost of repairs at £200.
- 2.9.4. This part of Kent came under considerable development pressure in the 1930s. In December 1933 the executors of Mr Ansell sold the freehold of the palace site to a local builder, William B Collier of Pilgrims Road, Otford. He was prepared to sell the north range to the Rural District Council if the town planning scheme to develop what is now Bubblestone Road were approved, including the purchase of the north range and about 4ac of adjacent land by Sevenoaks RDC as open space. Under the auspices of the Community Council a Castle Repair Fund had been set up and William Weir instructed as architect, but Collier wrote to Powys on 19 November 1934 that it would be *'against my interest to allow you to proceed with repair work at the above as the matter now stands'*, lest the scheme and sale to the Council not

¹⁰¹ Hesketh to Powys, 24 May 1929

proceed. Agreement was eventually reached; the north range and land to its west and south were purchased by the RDC in 1935,¹⁰² in November pledges to the repair fund were called-in, and the tower was repaired under Weir's direction in July 1936.

- 2.9.5. The site of the Inner Court did not fare well, primarily because it was not included in the 1928 scheduling, despite its upstanding ruins. In December 1934 the Office of Works declined to schedule for fear of a preservation order and a claim for compensation, nor was the Council inclined to buy it as further open space, despite the high profile of the whole case in the national press.¹⁰³ It was therefore laid out as part of the housing estate, the first three houses being built by 1936;¹⁰⁴ building was interrupted by World War II but resumed c1947. Hence suburban houses have the base of the south curtain wall of the inner courts as their front boundary wall, and the moat wall as their rear boundary.
- 2.9.6. The condition of the tower masonry became a periodic matter of concern. Repairs to wall tops including removal of trees were carried out by Sevenoaks RDC in 1955. A repair scheme proposed in 1979 was costed at £40,000; because of capital expenditure restrictions this was reduced in scope to 'essential' works at a cost of £22,760, begun in January 1982. Concerns about the use of hard cement mortar were answered by the response that it was as specified by the Ancient Monuments Inspectorate.
- 2.9.7. The underlying problem was that a roofless ruin of comparatively thin brickwork was becoming progressively become more fragile, and maintenance was not adequate to sustain it. David Pearce, as secretary of the SPAB, in 1981 contacted John Smith of the Landmark Trust about the possibility of roofing it for holiday letting, but the Trust, having looked at it in the past, felt unable to take it on. This was perhaps not surprising given the adjacent cottages. An inquiry from a potential private purchaser, 1991, is on the SPAB file. In his reply the secretary, Slocombe, noted that '*any proposal to partially reconstruct and occupy the palace would be controversial*', but his general tone was encouraging. In a further phase of repair a new lightweight roof was installed (in succession to one from the earlier works) in 2015.
- 2.9.8. After purchase by SRDC in 1935, the three cottages became *de facto* council houses. They were eventually sold, and each is now in the hands of a separate owner. Proposals in 1978 for internal modernisation included provision for re-opening back (south) doors, two original¹⁰⁵ and the one inserted in the south front adjacent to the projecting hearth. This proved extremely controversial, and the doors, at any rate, were dropped. Subsequently the primary doorway at the east end of the south wall was unblocked, and in the process the entire doorcase renewed.¹⁰⁶ Each plot extends beyond the building south to a stream; the two western plots, being inaccessible, are overgrown while the eastern one takes the form of a suburban

¹⁰² For £1,350: Collier to Powys, 26 November 1934

¹⁰³ The hope was still expressed in *The Times*, 20 July 1936, reporting the completion of the first phase of work

¹⁰⁴ Nos 1, 3, 5 Bubblestone Road are shown on the 1938 edition of the 25" OS map, sheet Kent XXIX.9

¹⁰⁵ One in the west wall of the western cottage, the other at the east end of the south range

¹⁰⁶ As 1978 objectors predicted would be necessary

garden and patio. The surviving section of the gatehouse, lightly fitted out with a kitchen and WC, remains, like the tower, in the ownership of Sevenoaks District Council and let to the Otford Girl Guides.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

3.1. Introduction: Significance and values

3.1.1. In accordance with *Conservation Principles, Policies, and Guidance* (English Heritage 2008), the significance of Oxford Palace is articulated as the sum of the identified heritage values of the site. These can be considered under four headings:

Evidential values: the potential of the palace to yield primary evidence about past human activity;

Historical values: the ways in which past people, events, and aspects of life can be connected, through the palace, to the present, both by illustrating aspects of architectural and social history, and through its association with notable people and events;

Aesthetic values: the ways in which people derive sensory and intellectual stimulation from the palace; and

Communal values: the meanings of the palace for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

3.2. Grading significance

3.2.1. The following grading system has been adopted to enable the relative weight of the values contributing to the significance of the palace and its setting to be compared:

A: Exceptional significance

Elements whose values are both unique to Oxford Palace and are relevant to our perception and understanding of it in a national and international context. These are the qualities that, for buildings, warrant listing in grade I or II*.

B: Considerable significance

Elements whose values contribute to the palace's status as a nationally important place. These are the qualities that justify statutory protection at national level.

C: Moderate significance

Elements whose values make a positive contribution to the way the palace is understood and perceived, primarily in a local context.

D: Little significance

Elements whose values contribute to the way the palace is perceived in a very limited, but positive, way.

N: Neutral significance

Elements which neither add to, nor detract from, the significance of the palace.

INT: Intrusive

Elements of no historic interest or aesthetic or architectural merit that detract from the appearance of the palace, or mask the understanding of significant elements.

3.3. Statutory designations

Heritage designations

3.3.1. The site of the palace with extensive precinct areas to the east and west, the water management features associated with St Thomas á Becket's Well and the reservoir at Moat House, and the ruins of a building said to be a lodge adjacent to it, comprise an extensive scheduled monument (SM) (Fig 20).¹⁰⁷ The well is scheduled separately. Occupied dwelling houses in the scheduled area, but not the soil on which they stand, are excluded. Scheduled monuments (SMs) are monuments and sites included on a Schedule compiled by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (the Secretary of State) under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Inclusion on the Schedule recognises the national importance of such monuments and gives them statutory protection. They must satisfy all eight of the Secretary of State's scheduling criteria in the strongest way: Period, Rarity, Documentation, Group Value Survival/Condition, Fragility/ Vulnerability, Diversity and Potential.

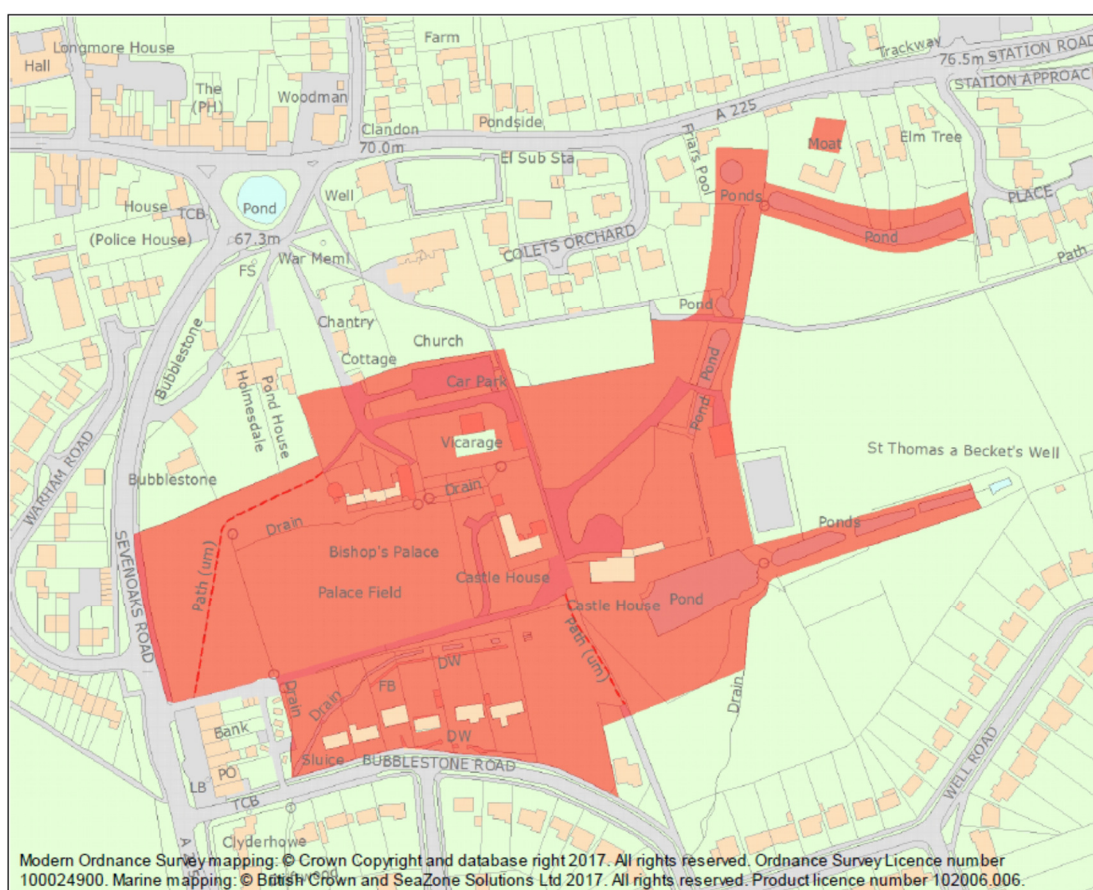


Fig 20 The extent of the scheduled area; dwellings excluded; St Thomas a Becket's well scheduled separately (Historic England)

3.3.2. The heritage significance of the palace is further recognised by the listing of Castle Cottages and the surviving part of the former gatehouse at their east end in grade

¹⁰⁷ List entry Number: 1005197.

II* (the gatehouse also being included in the schedule despite being roofed). Grade I and II* buildings together comprise about 8% of all listed buildings. These designations signify that the palace is considered to be of *exceptional significance* in the national context. Castle House and the visible remains of the buildings of the inner court of the palace, around its former south and north sides are also listed in grade II.

- 3.3.3. The palace site (but not the full extent of the scheduled area) lies within the Otford Conservation Area, which includes the whole of the historic core of the village, including both courtyards of the palace.

Planning and other environmental designations

- 3.3.4. There are no statutory or non-statutory designated nature conservation sites within the Palace site.

- 3.3.5. Otford as far south as the southern side of the outer court of the palace is part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The built-up area of Otford forms an ‘island’ in the Metropolitan Green Belt.

3.4. The values of Otford Palace in its setting

- 3.4.1. The cultural significance of Otford Palace derives from a wide range of factors, but primarily the evidence it provides of the unusual layout and expansive scale of Bishop Warham’s rebuilding and extension of what until the early 16th century had been a comparatively modest moated manor house. The adaptive re-use of its north outer court range, by the Sidney family as keepers (and from 1601 owners) of the palace, and subsequently as agricultural buildings, has preserved enough of Warham’s building to begin to visualise his concept and the architecture of arguably his last major phase of work at Otford, the entrance court.

Evidential/ Archaeological values

- 3.4.2. Otford Palace is of *exceptional significance* for the picture it gives, even in our current limited state of knowledge, of one of the outstanding buildings of its generation. The significance of the site includes the archaeological potential, in combination with documentary evidence, more fully to understand the layout and form of its buildings, especially those of the inner courts; as well as the evolution of the manor house that preceded it, and indeed how that was influenced by the exceptional Roman landscape that preceded it. All the surviving upstanding structure and buried archaeological deposits prior to the early 17th century are therefore of *exceptional* evidential value.

- 3.4.3. Specifically in relation to the surviving structure of the outer court north range, evidential values lie in the surviving structure and plan form, the evidence for early adaptation and change in the later 16th and early 17th centuries, architectural elements including windows, doors and fireplaces, and the evidence in the structure for missing elements, principally glazing, floor and roof frames, stair treads, and internal wall finishes, despite some of these being to a greater or lesser extent compromised by successive phases of alteration and repair.

- 3.4.4. The evidential value of later, agricultural changes to the surviving parts of the north range is at best of *some* value in helping to understand the decline of the palace and the pattern of survival.

Architectural/ Aesthetic values

- 3.4.5. The *exceptional* architectural values of Oxford Palace are carried primarily by the surviving 16th century elements of the outer court range, demonstrating the architectural style and detailed form and quality of Warham's outer court. Although variously repaired following stone decay, all the windows and doors in the standing structure survive and some of the windows retain their ferramenta. The only missing element is the parapet and the stair turret which gave access to the roof.
- 3.4.6. The only other phase substantially represented today is the 1914 reinstatement of an upper floor to the gallery range and re-roofing of the fragment of the gatehouse, both well-mannered interventions which do not detract from the significance of the Tudor work, but in themselves are of *little significance*.
- 3.4.7. The ensemble has *considerable* fortuitous aesthetic value, enhanced by the pre-war planning scheme which has placed the remains of the north range in a sequence of public open spaces from the Green to Bubblestone Road. The streams which originated in the medieval water management system add to its charm. The domestic gardens on the north side do not detract from this quality, rather they convey some of the incidental charm beloved of 19th century illustrators, of countrymen living among the wreckage of past greatness (or over-weening ambition). However, it, and the ability to appreciate their formal architectural quality, is seriously compromised by the suburbanisation (one) and total abandonment (two) of the cottage gardens south of the building.
- 3.4.8. The situation of the upstanding remains of the perimeter walls of the former moated island, bounding gardens of pre- and post-war 'cottage-style' detached houses, the front wall pierced by driveways, is bizarre. The presence of the houses and garden features is *intrusive* both visually and archaeologically (though this is the result of historical accident; no blame attaches to the current owners).

Historic Values

- 3.4.9. The historic interest of Oxford derives above all from its ability to illustrate the form and layout of a late medieval episcopal palace of the first rank, comparable with Wolsey's Hampton Court and although fragmentary, not overlain by later buildings of yet greater scale. Alongside the documents, it sheds light on the character and ambition of Archbishop Warham, arguably in competition with Cardinal Wolsey at Hampton Court. This is of *considerable significance*.
- 3.4.10. The antiquarian concern for the fate of the place, the actions taken (and not taken) both locally and nationally in a range of difficult circumstances, and the physical outcomes in the form of 20th century interventions to the site and its setting, provide a particularly interesting illustration, in conjunction with the archive

material (especially in the SPAB files), of the struggle for the conservation of historic places through the twentieth century. This is certainly of *some significance*.

Communal Values

3.4.11. When Oxford Palace was built it was not only the dominant building in the area but also the most important in social and economic terms, as the centre of the manor and estate. While no longer occupying that role, it nonetheless ranks highly in the identity of Oxford and its community today, witnessed by the Oxford Heritage Centre, the palace model, and the range of publications on offer. This is of *some to considerable* significance.

3.5. Summary statement of significance of Oxford Palace

3.5.1. Oxford Palace is of *exceptional significance* for

- The evidence which it provides for the form and architectural character of what was one of the outstanding buildings of early 16th century England
- Its archaeological potential to yield much more information about that building, particularly on the moat island, and its medieval predecessors

3.5.2. Oxford palace is of *considerable significance* for

- The evidential value of the adaptation of the north-west range by the Sidney family
- Its ability to illustrate the form and scale of a late medieval archiepiscopal palace, despite its fragmentary survival
- The aesthetic qualities, designed and fortuitous, of the north range building in its open space setting
- The contribution it makes to the character and appearance of Oxford Conservation Area
- The insight it provides into the character and ambition of Archbishop Warham

3.5.3. Oxford palace is of *some* significance for

- As an illustration, especially with the archive material, of the struggle for the conservation of historic places during the 20th century
- Its contribution to the identity of Oxford and its community today

3.5.4. The 1914 conversion into 1-3 Castle Cottages is of itself of *little significance*

3.5.5. The following elements are *neutral*:

- Domestic gardens on the north side of 1-3 Castle Cottages

3.5.6. The following elements are *intrusive*:

- The interior fit-out of the former gatehouse
- Domestic gardens on the south side of 1-3 Castle Cottages
- The houses in Bubblestone Road built on the site of the moat island.

4. ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Introduction

- 4.1.1. This section of the *Statement* is intended to inform the long-term future management of the site of Oxford Palace. It considers, principally, ways in which the significance of its remains, identified in the preceding section, might be sustained through conserving its fabric. It identifies opportunities to better reveal and recover significance, and seeks to identify, at strategic level, the heritage constraints and opportunities on its development and ongoing management.
- 4.1.2. The most pressing conservation issue at Oxford is to find a long term sustainable future for the north-west tower, which we suggest, is best done by bringing it back into sympathetic use. Other issues of management and interpretation focus essentially on trying to mitigate the effects of fragmentation of ownership and management that began with the break-up of the Amhurst Estate in 1924 and grew in consequence of each of the cottages now being in separate private ownership.

Recommendation 01 The assessments of significance set out in this conservation statement should be used to inform decisions about the future management of Oxford Palace.

4.2. Applicable heritage protection regimes

Scheduled Monument Consent

- 4.2.1. The purpose of scheduling under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 is the preservation of the fabric of monuments of national importance. Most works affecting that fabric (standing or buried) therefore require scheduled monument consent (SMC)¹⁰⁸ from the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), unless the subject of deemed ('Class') consent.¹⁰⁹ The most relevant of these, particularly in relation to the open spaces, is the continuation of most agricultural works undertaken within the preceding six years (Class 1). Historic England advises the Secretary of State (DCMS) on the management of scheduled monuments and applications for consent to undertake works, and is responsible for inspecting them and reporting on their physical condition.
- 4.2.2. Scheduled monument consent is separate from planning control. Where works or changes of use constituting development (other than 'permitted development') are proposed, planning permission must be sought in parallel with scheduled monument consent (or alone for works outside the scheduled area).

Listed Building Consent

- 4.2.3. The purpose of including a building in the statutory list made under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is to preserve their character as buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Listed building consent

¹⁰⁸ Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, s2(ii)

¹⁰⁹ Under the Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) Order 1994

(LBC) is required for works affecting that character, both internal and external, whether or not a particular feature affected is specifically mentioned in the list description.¹¹⁰ Where structures are both scheduled and listed, the scheduled monument regime takes precedence, but dwelling houses are legally excluded from that regime unless incidental, housing a caretaker. At Oxford, 1-3 Castle Cottages and (to the east of the palace) Castle House are subject to listed building control, but other structures (other than modern dwelling houses) and sub-surface deposits within the scheduled area (Fig 20) are subject to scheduled monument control, under which consent is required for virtually all works, rather than those which are considered to affect their historic character or significance.

Recommendation 02 Scheduled monument consent should be sought for any works affecting the fabric of the scheduled areas not covered by Class Consent.

Recommendation 03 Listed building consent should be sought for any works that affect the character of the listed buildings not subject to the need for scheduled monument consent.

Recommendation 04 Planning permission should be sought for any works constituting development.

4.3. Nature conservation policy and guidance

4.3.1. The *National Planning Policy Framework* sets out in Section 11 policy related to planning applications and biodiversity including protected sites, habitats and species. In addition to planning permission, any works affecting protected or notable species or habitats are likely to require further ecological survey work and/or applications for mitigation licences from Natural England prior to commencement.

4.3.2. Oxford Palace has the potential for use by bats. They are listed as ‘European protected species’ and protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the EC Habitats Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna (Council Directive 92/43/EEC). It is therefore an offence deliberately to disturb bats in a way that would significantly affect their local distribution or abundance, or ability to survive, breed or rear young, to damage or destroy a roost or intentionally to disturb a bat at a roost.

Recommendation 05 Protected species (including bats) should be safeguarded; specialist advice should be sought in advance of any works to buildings, landscape or trees and appropriate surveys, licences and mitigation measures provided where necessary.

¹¹⁰ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990, s.7ff.

Recommendation 06 Where protected or notable species (including bats) are found during building, landscape or tree works, the works should halt immediately and advice from Natural England should be sought.

4.4. Towards a strategy for the conservation of the outer court

National planning policy for heritage assets

- 4.4.1. National planning policy, for plan-making and decision-making affecting designated heritage assets and their settings (as well as undesignated heritage assets), is set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF),¹¹¹ published in March 2012, supported by the *Planning Practice Guidance* published (online) in March 2014.¹¹²
- 4.4.2. The over-arching aim of the NPPF is that there should be ‘*a presumption in favour of sustainable development*’ (para. 14). One of the three dimensions of sustainable development is environmental, and this includes ‘*protecting and enhancing the ... the built and historic environment*’ (para.7). Included in its core planning principles is the statement that planning should ‘*conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations*’ (para. 17).
- 4.4.3. The palace and its grounds are ‘designated heritage assets’ by virtue of their scheduling, the statutory listing of the upstanding structures and conservation area designation. Designated heritage assets are subject to the provisions of Section 12 of the NPPF, which sets out relevant national planning policy for them and their settings.
- 4.4.4. Section 12 of the NPPF, *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, adopts a ‘significance-based’ approach. Its policies relate to all ‘heritage assets’, elements of the historic environment defined as having ‘*a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions*’. ‘Significance’ is defined as ‘*The value of the heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.*’¹¹³ Heritage assets include, but are not limited to, formally designated assets, including conservation areas and registered parks and gardens, as well as scheduled monuments and listed buildings.
- 4.4.5. The NPPF advises local planning authorities that: ‘*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. 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 designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably ... grade I and II* listed buildings ... should be wholly exceptional*’ (para 132).

¹¹¹ *National Planning Policy Planning Framework*, Department of Communities & Local Government, 2012

¹¹² <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

¹¹³ NPPF Annex 2: Glossary

- 4.4.6. The significance of the settings of heritage assets and the impact of development in them is recognised at para. 128 of the NPPF. It defines ‘setting’ (at p56) as ‘*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral.*’ This is relevant to the palace because, in addition to the heritage significance of the standing fabric, its setting contributes to its significance because of its place in the planned and natural landscapes that surround it, and because of the archaeological significance of the site and its surroundings.
- 4.4.7. In relation to ‘enabling development’, para 140 of the NPPF states that: ‘*Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.*’
- 4.4.8. While the protection of the setting of a scheduled monument is a matter of planning policy rather than law, it is relevant that because the upstanding 16th century palace structures are also listed (apart from the north-west tower), planning decisions affecting their settings are also subject to the legal duty under s66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that ‘*the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting.*’

Local planning policy for heritage assets

- 4.4.9. Local planning policy is currently set out in Sevenoaks District Council’s adopted Core Strategy (February 2011, in course of review). Policy SP 1, ‘Design of New Development and Conservation’ includes ‘*The District’s heritage assets and their settings, including listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains, ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, historic buildings, landscapes and outstanding views will be protected and enhanced.*’
- 4.4.10. The Council’s *Allocations and Development Management Plan* (February 2015) Policy EN4, Heritage Assets, provides more detail:

Proposals that affect a Heritage Asset, or its setting, will be permitted where the development conserves or enhances the character, appearance and setting of the asset.

Applications will be assessed with reference to the following:

- a) the historic and/or architectural significance of the asset;*
- b) the prominence of its location and setting; and*
- c) the historic and/or architectural significance of any elements to be lost or replaced.*

Where the application is located within, or would affect, an area or suspected area of archaeological importance an archaeological assessment must be provided to ensure that provision is made for the preservation of important archaeological remains/findings. Preference will be given to preservation in situ unless it can be shown that recording of remains, assessment, analysis report and deposition of archive is more appropriate.

4.4.11. The *Oxford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan* was adopted as informal planning guidance in November 2010. It includes guidelines for development, emphasising the need for contextual design: '*All development in the conservation area, must respond to its immediate environment and context, in terms of scale, density, form, materials and detailing.*'

The north-west tower

4.4.12. The most pressing conservation issue at Oxford Palace, to find a long term sustainable future for the north-west tower, we suggest, in line with the *Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*¹¹⁴ (p11), would best be achieved by bringing it back into sympathetic use. The extant elements of the north range have survived because they continued to be used after the majority of the palace was abandoned and dismantled. They were not the only elements to be re-purposed, since as late as 1869 there were buildings which mirrored the footprint of the eastern part of the north range and much of the east range of the outer court. However, the earliest antiquarian accounts suggest that these retained little of visible antiquity by the end of the 18th century, probably through rebuilding and the survival (on the east side) of later attached structures rather than the original range. Only the plinth of one wall is today clearly of the 16th century. So far as the surviving north-west range is concerned, Hasted notes what must have been the demolition of the upper parts of the gatehouse and abandonment of the tower following the failure of its roof around the middle of the 18th century. It is a reasonable assumption that their utility value did not justify their full repair, only a thatched roof over the most easily utilised parts. Had it not been for the cultural value increasingly attributed to historic structures from the late 18th century onwards, the same approach would have continued. It would be interesting to know more about the reasoning of the landowner in 1914, but the decision to repair and adapt the single storey ranges but leave the decaying tower seems to have been similarly motivated, albeit tempered with a degree of architectural sensibility.

4.4.13. The key point is that these structures survived the otherwise complete demolition of the palace through adaptive re-use, and that use ceased, for the tower, once repair was no longer considered worth the cost. Neither the abandonment of most of the palace nor the abandonment of this tower a century and a half later are the results of historically-significant events, but rather functional redundancy. Moreover, it has become clear over the course of the past century that while its cultural heritage values have been recognised as high, indeed exceptional, they have not been exceptional enough financially to justify the intensive and sustained maintenance that a roofless ruin – particularly a brick one with much fine detail in a stone particularly susceptible to decay – needs if its significance is to be sustained. It was rejected by the Office of Works for Guardianship in the 1930s and there is no more realistic prospect of it being taken into the English Heritage 'national collection' in the future. The local authority has owned the building in the public interest since 1935, but historically it has struggled to meet the cost, delaying repair until public pressure or public danger have made intervention essential. Now that the structure has been substantially repaired and at least temporarily roofed, an alternative

¹¹⁴ At p 11, under a picture of the tower before the recent repairs, '*uses for this historic structure should be sought*'

approach to its long-term future is desirable. That means giving it utility value sufficient to justify its maintenance, provided this can be achieved without material harm to its significance.

- 4.4.14. Given the completeness of the survival of the shell, the significance of the tower need not be harmed by replacing its first and second floors; indeed the scale and space of its chambers could once again be appreciated. The arrangement of the framing has already been worked out in detail from wall sockets for the second floor.¹¹⁵ In reinstating these, whether the bridging beam were oak or a modern paraphrase in steel, the common joists would logically follow the same size and layout, utilising the original sockets, and in any event all of this structure was designed to be concealed. The line of the string course at structural wall head level is complete on the c1775 engraving and clear in the 1934 photo, particularly on the garderobe tower. The roof framing would be expected to follow that of the floors below and the roof is known to have been leaded. The sockets for the stone stair treads remain clearly defined. Doors and windows can be repaired from the evidence still present, even as to which lights had opening iron casements and internal timber shutters. Windows blocked early – one of the few obvious traces of the later 16th/ 17th century use – could remain so. Thus far is authentic restoration possible without resorting to speculation.
- 4.4.15. Externally the only details for which detailed evidence is lacking are the form of the parapets, the turret covering the head of the stair (beyond the octagonal plan of the latter) and the form of the chimneys and garderobe vent shafts (which would normally appear like a second stack of chimneys). Rebuilding above the string would therefore best appear as modern construction, clearly different from but sympathetic to the original; functional requirements as well as inference from what is below would necessarily include a parapet of safe height, a turret to access the roof, and (if the use were residential) a stack of chimneys, and possibly of vents from bathrooms or similar in the garderobes.
- 4.4.16. Residential was the original use and is the most obvious new use, but any use which fits the historic spaces and generates value sufficient to maintain the building would be appropriate. Modest extension on the line of the former west range and early 17th century extensions could both protect the vulnerable, once-internal areas and help indicate the original context of the tower in the corner of a courtyard.
- 4.4.17. This approach would be consistent with national and local planning policy outlined above. It could secure the heritage asset for future generations by giving it, though use, a utility value that would justify its maintenance, with minimal harm to its archaeological significance (mitigated through prior investigation and recording, and the gain in detailed understanding that would bring), while sustaining and better revealing its architectural significance. So long as its surroundings are not suburbanised in the process, the effect on the picturesque (fortuitous aesthetic) quality of the north range as a whole in the context of the conservation area would be minimal.

¹¹⁵ Austin 2016, Dwg 3

Recommendation 07: The long-term future of the north-west tower should be secured by replacing its floors and roof and bringing it into a use of sufficient value to sustain its future maintenance.

Recommendation 08: Lost or decayed structural elements and external details of the north-west tower should be reinstated up to roof level, where full and detailed evidence for them exists; above roof level, where only the elements of the structure, rather than their detail, is known, new work should be undertaken in different but sympathetic idiom. Sympathetic extension on the footprint of the north end of the west range and former 17th century extensions could be acceptable.

The remains of the gatehouse

4.4.18. The gatehouse fragment is in reasonably good condition under a sound 1914 roof, but a roof which fails to suggest the original form or scale of the structure. Internally the building is partly divided by lightweight modern partitions. It has survived in low key uses, most recently by the Girl Guides, and in conservation terms there is no particular reason why it should not continue in this form and similar use.

4.4.19. Given the disparity in significance between its exceptional Tudor structure, the 1914 roof (neutral) and the modern partitions (neutral/ intrusive), it can nonetheless be seen as having potential for other uses and indeed for extension, upwards rather than outwards since its plan is defined wholly by Tudor perimeter walls. At its simplest this might entail extension into the roof void (bearing in mind that the original ceiling height of the rooms was about 3m, rather less than the current height); or more ambitiously extending the footprint upwards, bearing in mind that the early 17th century principal stair was at the south end of the building, lit by the extant south window.

4.4.20. This approach, like bringing the north-west tower back into use, could also be consistent with national and local planning policy outlined above. It could similarly secure the heritage asset for future generations by giving it utility value sufficient to justify its maintenance, with minimal harm to its archaeological significance (mitigated through prior investigation and recording, and the gain in detailed understanding that would bring), while sustaining its architectural significance.

Recommendation 09: The potential for new uses of the gatehouse could be explored, including extension into the roof, or a new roof at higher level, provided that any extension does not detract from understanding the original form of the building, and preferably enhances it.

1-3 Castle Cottages

4.4.21. Each of the three cottages is in separate ownership, residential use and fair to good repair. The enclosed gardens on the north side might be thought to diminish visitors' appreciation of the range as a whole –in the 1930s it was hoped that it might be seen in the sequence of public open space created from the Green into the Palace. Equally, however, the inhabitation of this ancient fragment lends a charm and interest to the scene, and helps explain why it survives. So long as it remains

traditional and relatively informal, on balance the setting of the block is appropriate. But it is vulnerable to a change in gardening taste; an influx of modern materials in garish colours, of the kind to be found in any garden centre, could seriously harm the setting of the building and the character of the conservation area.

4.4.22. The problems on the south are greater, where the range is seen both at close quarters (across the stream) and distantly across Old Palace Field (Fig 21). The long view is the best, indeed the only, one of the group as a whole. The Castle Cottages have curtilages defined southwards by a stream whose centre meanders from 5.5m to 8m from the front elevations. The eastern cottage cultivates this space and has created a terrace in front of the gatehouse block, facilitated by an historic doorway being renewed and opened. The others lack direct access, and the spaces are overgrown and unsightly. Proposals to create access doors by re-opening blocked doors caused an outcry in 1978 (before the sale of the cottages) and were dropped.



Fig 21 The north-west range seen from the south-west across Old Palace Field; note terrace marking site of former west range of outer court

4.4.23. The present situation is both unsatisfactory for the occupiers of 1-3 Castle Cottages, two of which are denied access to south-facing gardens, and for the public's ability to appreciate the palace range from the setting of the former courtyard. Some separation of the public from the domestic windows of the cottages is essential and the stream does this unobtrusively, like a ha-ha. The best solution would be the co-operative management by the owners and tenants of this private space, with an awareness of the public as well as private interest in its appearance. The present unresolved situation makes the public face of the cottages particularly vulnerable to further suburbanisation, even though the ground is scheduled.

Recommendation 10: Efforts should be made to secure by agreement with all concerned management of the curtilage of Castle Cottages that takes account of their contribution to the setting of the north-west range as a whole.

Ownership, management, and presentation of the outer court and surrounding land

4.4.24. The divided ownership of the range, between the Council with the end sections and separate owners of 1-3 Castle Cottages, is a major barrier to presenting the buildings in a unified landscape and avoiding further erosion of such unity as currently exists, as discussed in the foregoing section. It is vital that its ownership and management do not become more fragmented as a consequence of developing the elements in the Council's ownership. This makes the choice of vehicle to develop and ultimately own the properties critical to the long-term need to secure the future of the site in the public interest. If either of the Council's elements becomes residential, then the potential of right to buy should rule out the local authority itself, or a housing association, as long-term owner. A charitable trust holding the property would need to avoid granting a lease of more than 21 years in order to prevent the risk of enfranchisement.

4.4.25. If such a trust were set up, it should seek to work with the owners and occupiers of Castle Cottages to agree a common management strategy for the exterior spaces around the buildings. In the medium to long term it might reasonably aspire to acquiring the cottages as investments as and when they come on the market. That is, ultimately, the only way to ensure unified management in the public interest.

4.4.26. If the tower becomes a roofed building in use, then logically it would be added to the statutory list. If that use is residential, listing, presumably in grade II* like the remainder of the block, would become essential, for the scheduling regime cannot apply to a dwelling house. However, it would be usual for the process of conversion to be controlled under scheduled monument consent, and management thereafter to fall under the listing regime.



Fig 22 Castle Cottages and the north-west tower from the north; recently-planted trees in the foreground, with trunk protection still in place

4.4.27. The public open space around the buildings is generally well-managed as such and there are information boards explaining the form of the lost palace and context of

the standing buildings. However, there are clear opportunities to manage the spaces in ways that more clearly relate the historic layout to people's current experience of the grounds. The approach through the outer courtyard from the outer gate towards the inner gate, for example, could be close-mown, and the site of the west range subtly demarcated by planting (not trees or woody shrubs), to help place the surviving elements in context and demonstrate the scale of the palace. Differential mowing could also help emphasise the former garden to the west, below the west range.

- 4.4.28. The Tudor Palace was designed to be seen and approached from the 'Pilgrim Road', across a green in which the church stood but that has apparently been reduced by subsequent enclosure. The connection, both visual and in terms of public ownership, was restored in the 1930s by the purchase of the land directly to the north of Castle Cottages. While in winter much of the range can be seen, at least at relatively close quarters, through leafless trees (Fig 22), in summer little is visible. This view should be managed to maintain, not obscure, views of the palace range at least from the viewpoint of Fig 22; recent tree planting here, thickening the tree belt, suggests that the current objective is to 'plant out' (ie obscure) views of the palace.

Recommendation 11: The vehicle for any scheme which brings the Council's parts of the north-west range into new uses should hold the buildings in the public interest for the long term, and seek through co-operation with other interests (and potentially acquisitions) to extend unified management of elements of the palace site in the public interest.

Recommendation 12: The land around the surviving palace buildings in public or charitable control should be managed to help visitors better understand their historic context, particularly through improving visibility on the approach from the Green, and subtly suggesting the framework of the outer court and gardens in the management of Castle Meadow.

4.5. Condition and repair needs of the fabric

The north-west range of the outer courtyard

- 4.5.1. The condition of the north-west tower was a matter of recurring concern for over a century. After adaptation as a dwelling it was abandoned when the roof failed in the middle of the 18th century (2.8.5 above). The earliest engraving (Fig 7) shows it with part of the parapet still intact (on the west), the rest reduced evenly to roof level (below which the wall was much thicker), and some vegetation growing out of the wall tops. After more than a century of weathering, it was covered from the top almost to ground level with ivy, suggesting that this was well rooted in the wall heads. By 1934, when the ivy had been cleared, the extent of loss at high level, particularly on that same west front, was evident, with collapse reaching down below window head level (Fig 23). Internal timber window lintels, particularly, must have been failing, contributing to the fragility of the structure.



Fig 23 The north-west tower in 1934, after the removal of ivy (SPAB archive)



Fig 24 The north-west stair tower at second floor level in 1934 and 2017 showing (A) weathering course returning but now cut off; (B) gallery roof joist sockets now lost; (C – 1934 only) socket for bead of timber frame of west wall of the west gallery. Note extensive survival of internal plasterwork below joists 'B' in 1934; barely a fragment now remains

4.5.2. Major repairs were undertaken on several occasions, although from the SPAB archive these interventions were generally not followed by routine maintenance. Recent comprehensive structural repair works, including a ‘temporary’ felt roof, have essentially stabilised the structure. However, a good deal of architectural detail has been lost over the past century, as well as detailed evidence for the original form of the structure. Removing the ivy was beneficial at high level but a great deal that it sheltered lower down was exposed. Plaster was lost, and the infilling of sockets of decayed timbers with brickwork, followed by repairs of repairs, have in places

resulted not only in loss of evidence but also the inadvertent introduction of misleading details. Fig 24 shows an example, with the stone weathering course stopped at the corner. Regardless of whether the tower is brought into use, as discussed above, regular routine maintenance, rather than major repairs following periods of neglect, is necessary to minimise future losses.

- 4.5.3. The condition of the remainder of the range – the north-west gallery with its 1914 upper storey and the remaining part of the gatehouse, which have remained more or less continuously roofed and in use, is reasonably good. Recent repairs to the gatehouse have addressed its relatively modest external repair needs.

Recommendation 13: Following recent repairs, a programme of regular inspection and planned maintenance to the tower and former gatehouse should be devised and carried out, to protect the considerable investment already made in sustaining the significance of the buildings.

The area within the former moat excavated in 1974

- 4.5.4. Most of the surviving structure of the inner court buildings is buried. In the area excavated in 1974 and subsequently acquired by the Council, the wall tops are just below the ground surface.¹¹⁶ They are known to extend further north (see Figs 3-4) Continued burial is by far the best means of ensuring their preservation, and it fortunate that any temptation to leave the area excavated in 1974 exposed was resisted. The key management need is to fell the trees that have self-seeded in the excavated area to avoid harm to the underlying structures and remaining archaeological deposits. The area would probably best be managed as rough grassland.

Recommendation 14: The area within the former moat excavated in 1974 should be managed in ways conducive to the preservation of buried structures and deposits, including felling of self-seeded trees whose roots threaten the integrity of buried masonry.

The developed parts of the formerly moated area

- 4.5.5. The scheduled area of the inner courts is, rather unusually, occupied by a row of valuable detached houses (5-11 (odd) Bubblestone Road) in substantial gardens, each of which represents a north-south slice from the remains of the south curtain on the road frontage to the drain defining the southern edge of the former moat at the rear. Archaeologically (in terms of buried remains), this area is by far the most significant part of the palace remains, and apart from the upstanding walls it is obvious that cover over the remains of others is very limited indeed, with medieval masonry breaking the surface. As the Historic England website states, *'In practice [scheduling] is a very strict regime under which very little, if any, disturbance of the monument is possible without [scheduled monument] consent. Carrying out an activity without consent where it was needed is a criminal offence.'*¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ As plates 19-29 in Philp 1984 show

¹¹⁷ <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/consent/smc/>

4.5.6. While the protection through scheduling is undoubtedly justified, by vulnerability as well as significance, it is hardly surprising that owners find this regime irksome, despite the continuation of established domestic gardening [‘horticultural’] activity (but not the planting or uprooting of trees and shrubs) being permitted under Class 1 of the Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) Order 1994. In one particular respect, however, it works against the preservation of the monument, since to undertake any repair of the upstanding walls, however minor, would require scheduled monument consent. The works proposed would require specification by a conservation professional, and to be undertaken by a specialist contractor. Individually, the effort and cost are not worth the trouble, and since there is no obligation on the owner of a monument actively to take steps for its preservation, the walls continue to decay.



Fig 25 The remains of the south curtain of the palace site, on the north frontage of Bubblestone Road, looking west

4.5.7. This is important because a considerable length of the south curtain stands about 1-1.5m high as the front boundary wall of nos 5-11 Bubblestone Road, interrupted by cuts for drives to the houses (Fig 25). It includes the cill of a substantial window and the decayed brick reveals of another, with sundry patches and blockings mostly modern. Generally, it is in poor condition, the top courses in particular disintegrating and colonised by plants. Much of it is in urgent need of consolidation, with particular care needed to identify, understand and maintain the remaining architectural features.

4.5.8. The rear gardens of these houses similarly include sections of the north curtain, surviving generally no higher than ground level but exposed as the retaining wall of the watercourse on the line of the moat. This has understandably attracted the

attention of gardeners over some 70 years, usually by accretions to the Tudor structure, and is mostly in fair condition. The watercourse itself is defined northwards by a brick wall, the north side of a culvert, mostly robbed in antiquity, but some of the exposed sections are fragile and in need of consolidation.

- 4.5.9. The solution to achieving the repair of these structures without disproportionate trouble and expense may lie in a Management Agreement between the owners and Historic England, under Class 8 of the Class Consents Order, under which specified works of maintenance could be carried out to the visible walls to a common specification. The use of a single contractor in first instance would be the most economical approach for all concerned. Negotiation of such an agreement would be greatly encouraged by the offer of a small grant by Historic England, if only to cover professional fees; in which case consent for the approved works would be automatic under Class 9. Such an incentive, however small, could be an effective recognition of the public interest in the management of the heritage values of this site by its several owners.

Recommendation 15: Historic England and the owners of the properties concerned should be encouraged to negotiate a management agreement under which repair of the exposed masonry structures of the palace could be communally achieved at reasonable cost.

Other structures



Fig 26 The remains of the north gable of the scheduled structure by the reservoir

- 4.5.10. The scheduled brick building in the grounds of Moat House, by the reservoir, at some point probably in the mid-20th century was reduced to a garden enclosure about 1.5m high, the walls now extremely fragile and disintegrating, with no evident recent repair (Fig 26). They are in need of consolidation, including repointing and re-bedding the top courses with a suitable capping to shed water.

4.5.11. The ruin at Moat House might be brought into the form of an agreement proposed for the Bubblestone Road walls, for the issues are the same. But even on a rapid assessment this structure seems substantially to post-date the 16th century (2.6.9 above). More research is needed to understand the form and date of this structure, but its significance may not be such as to warrant its continued scheduling; management as a listed building may be more appropriate. In either case its repair is both urgent and desirable.

Recommendation 16: Research should be undertaken to better understand the form, age and significance of the ruined building at Moat Farm, and in the light of the results Historic England invited to consider whether its current designation is appropriate. The owners should be encouraged to undertake repair appropriate to its significance.

4.5.12. St Thomas à Becket's Well has been reported in the past (1955)¹¹⁸ to be in poor condition, and in 2017 was completely overgrown with vegetation (Fig 27).



Fig 27: St Thomas à Becket's Well from the north, August 2017

Recommendation 17: The condition of the scheduled monument of St Thomas à Becket's Well should be assessed, and efforts made to encourage the owners to agree with Historic England a suitable management regime for it.

4.6. Research priorities

4.6.1. A great deal of research has been undertaken on Otford Palace, indeed Otford generally, over the past century, and continues particularly under the auspices of the West Kent Archaeological Society, the Otford Archaeological Society and others. Inevitably it has tended to focus on the palace at its zenith under Archbishop

¹¹⁸ In the excavation report

Warham. In trying to summarise and review this work we have attempted to look both forwards and backwards from that brief flowering, not least to consider the circumstances that led to the survival of what exists today. In so doing we have hardly scratched the surface of the documentary and archaeological resources available.

Towards a research strategy

- 4.6.2. One of the problems in understanding the palace in detail is that there is no modern, large scale survey of the site onto which all the visible elements are located with precision, and onto which past records and surveys can be plotted confident that the relationships between the visible elements and modern topographic features are correct. The team has undertaken some GPS survey of the walls along Bubblestone Road and the north-west courtyard range, and reconciled these with large scale OS data, but the precise location and alignment of visible parts of the north side of the formerly-moated area is uncertain, being taken largely from secondary sources which do not agree with one another. Developing an accurate survey, and plotting on it records of past archaeological interventions, especially small-scale work undertaken in conjunction with extension and alteration of the houses in Bubblestone Road, as well as geophysical survey data and information from historic maps and other documents, should be the first step. In parallel, the data from past interventions should be collated and, where this has not already been done, the results entered in the Kent Historic Environment Record. Doing this would rely on the active support and engagement of the landowners, and the Otford Historical Society and others who have done so much to champion the value of the Palace over recent decades, perhaps in partnership with an organisation like Canterbury Archaeological Trust who have worked on this project and on the standing tower.
- 4.6.3. An equally thorough approach needs to be taken to the archival sources, which has not been possible in the course of this project. The Receiver's Accounts for the Otford Bailiwick, from which Alden Gregory has been able to elucidate the parallel building history of Knole, might shed more light on Otford.¹¹⁹ Split mostly between Lambeth Palace Library and the National Archives, a substantial proportion of them survive for the years between 1442-3 and 1538-9, occasionally with associated vouchers.¹²⁰ These might be important because they relate to the period when Otford was in the hands of the archbishops, and in particular the period when Warham was rebuilding it; and as Stoyel pointed out, yet earlier records of the see are also essential to building a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of the place.¹²¹
- 4.6.4. Alden Gregory has kindly shared with us his transcripts of the principal surveys and a copy of the c1537 survey in Sevenoaks Library, and we have used these particularly to give an outline account of the inner court buildings. But a more detailed analysis of these key documents would yield much more, and a comprehensive search for

¹¹⁹ Although Gregory noticed only one reference to Otford

¹²⁰ Gregory 2010, for example at pp 90-92; the accounts and their present locations are listed in Appendix 1, pp225-228

¹²¹ Stoyel 1984, 260

other relevant documentation in both the royal and archepiscopal archives is needed.

- 4.6.5. A comprehensive search for relevant documentation relating to later owners is also desirable, not least to try to find references to the works by the Sidney family to their lodgings and the involvement of John Thorpe. For this *Statement* we have only studied in detail one primary source, the archives of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, to clarify the 20th century history of the place.
- 4.6.6. Only if a substantial evidence base were collated from both archaeological and documentary sources would it be possible to formulate a research strategy for the site involving archaeological intervention. Since the site is scheduled, consent for intrusive archaeological research is unlikely to be granted without such an evidence-based research strategy to justify it. On a practical level, the moat island is covered by private gardens and opportunities are likely to be limited.
- 4.6.7. Without prejudice to the need for a better evidence base to underpin a research strategy, however, the priorities are likely to including defining the extent and character of the archaeological remains, to improve their interpretation and management. This (which would require scheduled monument consent) could involve:
- Targeted excavation to verify the lines and junctions of the principal walls defining and within the moated core (some of which poke through the garden surface) and to 'ground truth' the geophysical survey results in the open land north of Philp's excavation, to achieve at least an outline ground plan of the principal structures in the 16th century.
 - Similar targeted investigation to understand the form and age of the geophysical anomaly here interpreted as the potential site of the little gatehouse and the stables.
 - Investigation of the nature and significance of the building by the north reservoir (2.6.10 above), to clarify its significance (or otherwise).
- 4.6.8. From collating existing knowledge and clarifying the layout of the palace, a research agenda should emerge. One specific question that has arisen in the area about which our understanding is more developed than most relates to the outer court: Are the lodgings against the west outer court range of the gallery contemporary with it or an addition before 1537?

Recommendation 18: A research strategy for Otford Palace in its contexts should be developed, following collation and assessment of the available evidence, topographic, archaeological and documentary, and based on modern, accurate site survey

If the vacant north range structures are to be brought back into use

4.6.9. Recording during the repair of the north-west tower,¹²² and subsequent metric survey of the tower and gatehouse in detail (and the block between in outline) has already clarified both the detailed form of these parts of the north-west range and revealed a much more complex 16th and 17th century building history than had previously been realised. However, the whole standing structure has much more to reveal, and areas of further investigation can be outlined:

- If the owners and tenants are agreeable, a systematic internal and external inspection of the three cottages, especially to record any historic features surviving internally
- If the tower and gatehouse buildings are to be adapted to new uses:
 - detailed investigation and recording of the standing fabric before and during the works, to inform detailed design and to amplify and correct the model of their evolution, using the survey drawings and rectified photographs now available as a base;
 - Excavation within the buildings (and probably the former gate passage) to clarify historic levels and construction, and the uses of the areas prior to their construction (especially whether there is any clear evidence of an approach from the north prior to the building of the gatehouse);
 - If extension of the north-west tower is envisaged, prior area excavation of the space between the tower and the (modern) stream, fully to understand the probably early 17th century extension in this area (and which would probably answer the academic question about the western lodgings, posed above);
 - Prior excavation/ watching brief on any associated service trenches or other ground disturbance associated with the works.

Recommendation 19: If the vacant north-west range buildings are to be brought into new or different uses, further detailed investigation of the fabric and the archaeological deposits that would be affected should be undertaken, both to inform the design and to maximise the information revealed and recorded during the project. The results should be published.

¹²² Austin 2016

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