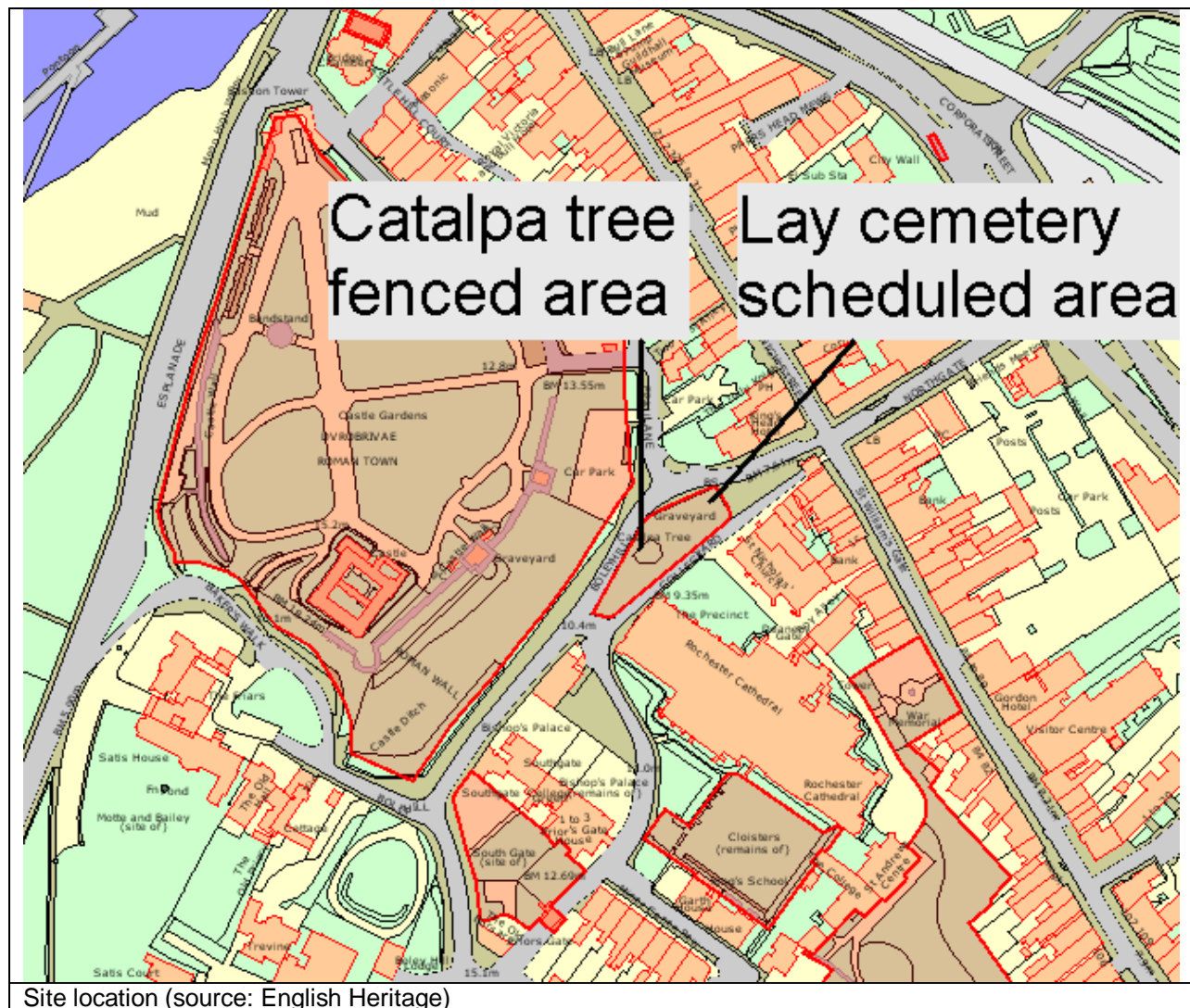


## ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL

### CONDITION OF GRAVESTONES IN THE LAY CEMETERY AREA OUTSIDE THE WEST FRONT

#### List of contents

1	Introduction .....	2
2	Description .....	3
3	Condition issues and potential mitigation .....	4
4	Recommendations .....	6
	Appendix 1: Catalogue of digital photographs taken 22.9.2009 .....	8
	Appendix 2: Catalogue of gravestones .....	10
	Appendix 3: Extract from Rochester Cathedral Conservation Plan .....	13



## Rochester Cathedral: condition of gravestones in the lay cemetery area outside the West Front

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Medway Council maintains the area of lawn outside the West Front of Rochester Cathedral on behalf of its owners, the Dean and Chapter of Rochester. This small area of public realm was part of the cathedral's (and therefore the city's) lay cemetery. This was originally far more extensive, running from the north transept along the north side of the nave and thence over most of the area between the West Front and the castle (the section in the castle ditch was a 19<sup>th</sup>-century extension). The cemetery was heavily used throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods but was taken out of use in the mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Early photographs show gravestones still standing on the area in front of the West End, with a high boundary wall between this and Boley Hill. The gravestones were re-laid flat on the grass during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (exact date unknown).



The lay cemetery in the middle decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (source: English Heritage)

The area of the lay cemetery outside the West Front is now dominated by a Catalpa tree. This is in poor condition, with several branches having to be supported by timber

props. A fence was also erected around it some years ago for public safety. The tree requires some pruning because several branches have grown at potentially dangerous heights (roughly head/eye-level) and angles. This work is being addressed as a matter of urgency by Medway Council. Further measures to ensure public safety may also be needed, in particular extension of the fenced-off area to cover more (perhaps the whole of) the current extent of the tree canopy.

The survey reported on here was carried out in September-October 2009. Its purpose was to assess the current layout and condition of the gravestones, paying particular attention to areas and stones that are in poor condition. This is a matter of concern both with regard to the gravestones themselves (as they are a valuable historic resource) and for public safety where stones are cracked, broken or slumped. The survey was based on work carried out in 1990 by a team of volunteers under the direction of Alan Ward (who also drew up the survey), when the whole of the lay cemetery was manually surveyed at a scale of 1:100.<sup>1</sup> The gravestones were accurately mapped, numbered and catalogued in their state at that time, with the inscriptions being transcribed onto a card index system (this has not been re-examined during the current work). Most of the stones outside the West Front seem to have been fully visible for recording in 1990, which shows most of the stones as complete shapes. Most of them are now overgrown to some degree or other. A few stones had been omitted during the 1990 survey, and these were measured in as part of the current work.

During the 2009 re-survey the 1990 plan was used to check the location, condition and degree of visibility of the gravestones, but they were not re-drawn. Digital photographs were taken instead to record the gravestones' current condition and visibility either individually or in groups. The photographs are catalogued in Appendix 1. Written notes were also made describing the condition of each stone and whether inscriptions remained visible. These notes are transcribed in Appendix 2.

The Catalpa tree lies within part of Scheduled Monument ME 332. Any proposals to extend the fenced area would require Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) if new foundation pits are needed. Equally it is likely that importation of soil to fill in voids or level up areas of ground locally would also require SMC. As of 1 October 2009, applications form SMC were due to be made to the relevant regional office of English Heritage rather than to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. It is understood, however, that this revised process has not yet been implemented.

## **2 DESCRIPTION**

The cemetery generally consists of an area of ground raised c 0.3m above the surrounding pavements and roadways. The edges are defined by low retaining walls with stone coping. The area is broadly trapezoidal in plan, and is laid to lawn except for the recumbent gravestones. Historic photographs show the area with standing

---

<sup>1</sup> The 1990 survey included the parts of the cemetery to the north of the nave and in the castle ditch, neither of which is relevant to the present survey.

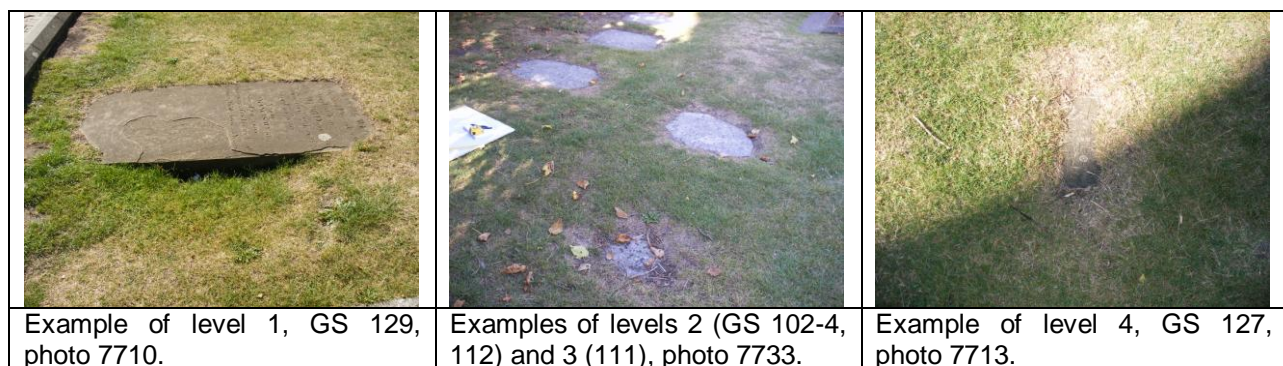
gravestones (see above), so it is evident that the cemetery has been landscaped at some point, probably during the mid-late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Despite this the current positions of the gravestones may still reflect their former/original ones. The stones could therefore still mark their original graves. Several voids are visible under gravestones, while others have collapsed into voids. Both phenomena suggest that burials are present under at least some of the gravestones irrespective of how close they are to their original places. The gravestones are distributed fairly evenly across the whole of the grassed area, in fairly consistent but not wholly regular rows.

Some 82 gravestones or monuments have been recorded. One of these is a standing monument (this is Listed at Grade II - see Appendix 3) and another is in the shape of a cross. The rest all appear to have been former headstones, though many have little or no inscription left on them. A few also retain traces of iconography such as skulls and foliage. The catalogue of gravestones in Appendix 2 describes their condition now, and any specific concerns relating to them. In general, condition issues can be defined in several distinct but inter-related areas. These are described in the following sub-sections.

### 3 CONDITION ISSUES AND POTENTIAL MITIGATION

#### 3.1 OVERGROWTH OF GRASS

The grass is kept mown to a short sward throughout the year, but it is not feasible to remove all of the mown arisings. The residue tends to accumulate on and over the gravestones, forming a thin matted layer. This in turn is gradually forming a thin turf layer. In some cases this is limited to the edges and corners of the stone, but in extreme cases most or even all of the stone is now covered.



Five degrees of overgrowth were defined during the 2009 survey.

1. completely clear of overgrowth or virtually so (this includes the cross-shaped gravestone and the standing monument).
2. Little overgrowth, mostly confined to edges but sometimes with more encroachment at the corners.

3. More overgrowth, around 50% compared to 1990 survey.
4. Very extensive overgrowth, may be as little as 15cm square left visible.
5. Fully overgrown by loose semi-matted mowings, developing into a turf mat.

The following table summarises the condition data. The numbers are fairly evenly spread between those which remain mostly visible (1-2) and those that are more heavily overgrown (3-5). The balance will gradually tip further towards levels 3-5 if the current management regime is maintained.

Condition level	Number	% of total (rounded up and down as necessary)
1	4	5%
2	36	44%
3	33	40%
4	7	9%
5	2	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	

Examples in levels 1 and 2 should largely be maintained in their current state of visibility and indeed would benefit from (mostly minor) work to clear the edges of stones.

### 3.2 DAMAGED STONES

Many of the stones are cracked and broken. In most cases the damage seems to be long-standing, as grass has grown into the cracks (often vigorously). Gravestone 126 is the main exception; the minimal invasion of grass here suggests that the damage has occurred more recently. Many of the cracked/broken stones have also slumped inwards, creating uneven ground and possible trip hazards. Gravestone 95 at the north-east corner of the area is a variant on this. A tree root has grown under the stone, cracking it along the middle and lifting the south half. This is therefore a severe trip hazard. The slumped stones should either be repaired and re-bedded flat, or covered with earth to level up the ground.

		
Cracked and slumped GS 151, photo 7724.	Root damage under south half of GS 95, photo 7741.	Break in cross memorial GS 100, photo 7734.

All affected stones in this category will require some action. This could involve repair, re-bedding, or in some cases re-burial if that is agreed by all parties to be the best option. Further details are provided in section 4.

The damage to cross-shaped memorial (100) is of a different kind in that the shaft has a hairline crack along most of its length, but the bottom of it is badly broken and detached. This requires mending as a matter of urgency.

### 3.3 VOIDS APPEARING UNDER STONES.

There are a few examples where subsidence has opened up a void under or adjacent to a stone. This has happened before on some gravestones, and soil has been used to fill up such voids. This appears to have been a successful approach, and should continue to be used as necessary. The situation requires regular monitoring, however, especially if any repetitive subsidence becomes evident. Gravestone 129 may be a case of this, as soil was used to fill a void just to the south of it in 2006.

### 3.4 ERODING/SPALLING STONE FACES

Many gravestones display considerable erosion of the exposed faces. This is particularly problematic where inscriptions remain visible. Unfortunately in many instances there is little or nothing left to read. These cases can therefore be left in a state of benign neglect as far as management and maintenance are concerned. Equally there is little that can be achieved with examples of faint and/or heavily worn script, where the text is losing or has lost definition and legibility. Alan Ward's 1990 catalogue will be used to check the state of all inscriptions today compared to their condition 19 years ago. The card index will be transcribed onto a database or spreadsheet, and will be updated accordingly. In some cases it may be appropriate to bury sensitive/at risk gravestones if this seems to offer the best means of preservation in the longer term. As with any/all other proposals affecting the Scheduled Monument, this will require consultation with English Heritage and Scheduled Monument Consent as necessary.

## 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

In general terms it would be preferable to retain the visibility of the gravestones, as they provide a powerful reminder of the original function of the open spaces in front and to the north of the cathedral nave. The gazetteer entry for the lay cemetery in the Conservation Plan (see Appendix 3) specifically referred to this issue, stating that

This historic use of this area as the cathedral and town lay cemetery is crucial to its understanding and interpretation, and it is therefore important that the space should not appear as a blank lawn.

This remains true today. Complete visibility of all gravestones is not critical, however, and some might well benefit from the protection that being covered may provide,

whether through deliberate burial under soil or through gradual coverage with grass clippings and a developing turf mat.

The following table provides more detailed/specific recommendations for individual gravestones or groups of them, arranged according to condition level.

Level	Gravestone	Recommendation/comment
1	96	Maintain stone and railings of this grade II Listed standing memorial. If possible consolidate/conservate inscription, and check that the 1990 catalogue has a full record of it.
	100	Repair broken bottom section of shaft as a matter of urgency. Maintain full visibility of slab base by trimming back grass periodically.
	129	Maintain full visibility of slab base by trimming back grass periodically. Fill slumped area on north side with soil (note potential SMC requirement), monitor this for any further subsidence.
	165	Maintain full visibility of slab base by trimming back grass periodically. Relocate prop on south side further away, and preferably not on a gravestone. Note that insertion of a new prop base would probably require SMC.
2	95	Broken and lifted section caused by root damage requires urgent attention. Decide whether to remove completely, or lift and re-bed at higher level on same location or at same level close by (SMC required).
	151	Decide whether to lift and re-bed badly cracked and slumped stone (care will be needed as there may be a void underneath), or bury with imported soil. SMC needed for either option.
	All other level 2 stones	Monitor for condition, where necessary clean edges and then keep clear. Remove grass from cracked examples and repair/re-bed where necessary (SMC may be needed). Clean examples within the fenced area as required (annually may be sufficient).
3	93	Remove grass from cracks, repair and re-bed. Decide whether to re-expose the buried quarter of the stone or leave it buried. SMC required for all actions.
	110, 168	Remove grass from cracks, repair and if necessary re-bed stones (SMC probably would be required for the latter).
	161	Establish whether prop is on gravestone, and re-locate if so. Note that insertion of a new prop base would probably require SMC.
	162	It will be difficult to repair and re-bed this gravestone without damaging the branch that rests directly on it. Seek specialist arboricultural advice on feasible actions, if any. Note that insertion of a new prop base would probably

Level	Gravestone	Recommendation/comment
		require SMC.
	All other level 3 stones	Monitor condition, especially of those with remaining script of fair or better legibility. Good examples may merit work to clear and reveal them, but only if they are then maintained in cleared condition. Otherwise gradual grass coverage may be allowed to continue as this is unlikely to cause long-term damage to the stones. Those within the fenced area, however, should be cleaned as with level 2 stones.
4	1000	Void between two (cracked?) stones needs to be filled in with earth (SMC may be required). Monitor for any future subsidence.
4 and 5	All other level 4 and 5 stones	May be allowed to become fully covered, and for the thin turf mat to become more established.
All	All	Continue to monitor for damage, vandalism (including removal of lettering), subsidence, delamination and loss of script.

Graham Keevill  
 Archaeological Consultant to the Dean and Chapter of Rochester  
 14 October 2009

#### APPENDIX 1: CATALOGUE OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN 22.9.2009

DSCF	Direction	Gravestone	Comments
7705	SW	130, 131	Note carved skull on 131
7706	W	131, 132	
7707	W	139	Almost completely covered over
7708	W	1000	Void between two parts of a formerly buried gravestone
7709	S	1000	
7710	S	129	Note areas of delamination, fortunately not in areas of script. Also slumped area to front (N) of stone.
7711	W	134-6, 141-3	
7712	N	Misc	General view along E side of cemetery, GS 136 to centre left, 127 just right of centre (see 7713)
7713	W	127	Almost completely covered but script still visible
7714	SW	128	
7715	W	145	Actually three separate stones.
7716	S	126	Cracked
7717	N	Misc	Central group on E side of cemetery, GS



DSCF	Direction	Gravestone	Comments
			125 in foreground
7718	E	146	Seen through fence around Catalpa
7719	E/above	146	Seen from top of fence
7720	N	147, 148	
7721	S	147, 148	
7722	S	147	Detail showing good condition of script and overgrowth at margins
7723	NE	149-151, 158	General view, badly damaged 151 at upper left, 158 in top right background
7724	NE	151	Detail showing damage, grass growing in cracks
7725	E	161, 163	Heavily overgrown 160 in foreground, note branch prop to right of this
7726	S	160	Branch prop appears to rest on GS 160
7727	NW	161	GS still visible but with thin cover of leaf and grass debris
7728	W	162	Note shaped head of GS
7729	NW	163	Note damage from branch, still resting on GS
7730	W	113	Elaborate GS but script now faint
7731	SW	114-6	
7732	W	Misc	Group to N of railed area, GS 165 and GS 166 at left of centre and centre
7733	NW	102-104, 111-112	111 and 112 in foreground, note 112 almost completely overgrown
7734	N	96-101	Group, centred on cross-memorial 100 (note broken base of shaft) & standing monument 96 in right background
7735	N	93, 94	Note old damage to 93 (planned in this way by AW in 1990)
7736	NW	96	Standing memorial with railings
7737	W	98, 99	Detail, good condition of script on 98 (Vidion family) but also area cut out from the script
7738	W	97	Note small rectangular area, perhaps where a brass plaque has been removed?
7739	W	107	Now very overgrown but still traces of script left
7740	N	1001	Very overgrown
7741	E	95	Badly broken and N side heaved up by root
7742	NW	108, 1002	Two GS in NW corner of cemetery area
7743	S	109, 110, 155-6	General view along line of larger GS
7744	S	105, 155-6, 165-8	General view along line of GS, 165 with prop next to it in background
7745	W	154	Script in reasonably good condition
7746	SW	153	GS 152 is just beyond 153 but completely overgrown – note bare patch, possibly an unrecorded GS, in front and to right of 153
7747	S	155	Note variable condition of script, some still

DSCF	Direction	Gravestone	Comments
			crisp but some less so
7748	S	156	Script generally in fair condition but note area where letters have been cut out
7749	S	165-8, 1003	View along line of GS with propped branch in background
7750	W	167	Carved skull just visible in upper panel of GS
7751	W	166	Cracked GS, triangular head with foliage in top left panel
7752	W	166	Detail of foliage in top left panel
7753	W	165	Probably the best preserved script and least overgrown GS in this cemetery
7754	W	165	Detail of script, not also closeness of prop to the edge of the GS

Note: all directions are approximate only, and refer to liturgical compass, ie taking an assumed E-W orientation for the cathedral.

## APPENDIX 2: CATALOGUE OF GRAVESTONES

**CA (condition assessment) categories** (nb this refers to extent of cover over stone, not condition of it - see comments column for details of this)

CA 1 = completely clear of overgrowth or virtually so (this includes the cross-shaped GS and standing monument).

CA 2 = little overgrowth, mostly confined to edges but sometimes with more encroachment at corners.

CA 3 = more overgrowth, can be around 50% compared to 1990 survey.

CA 4 = very extensive overgrowth, may be as little as 15cm square left visible.

CA 5 = fully overgrown, though often with a covering of loose semi-matted mowings rather than turf mat.

### GS CA Description/comments

93	3	Cracked and broken, grass invading the cracks, top left quarter buried (shown like this in Alan Ward's 1990 survey). Script now quite faint.
94	3	Slight traces of script.
95	2	Broken, right-hand (north) side lifting badly due to major root growth under it. Trip hazard. Some faint script.
96	1	Standing monument within railed enclosure. Fair condition and script surviving on all four faces, but suffering progressive erosion and delamination.
97	2	Script in reasonable condition but becoming eroded.
98	2	Script is still mostly crisp except where delamination of surface has removed it. One word has been carefully cut out of the inscription, seemingly recently.
99	3	

<b>GS</b>	<b>CA</b>	<b>Description/comments</b>
100	1	Cross-shaped raised memorial. Crack all along centre shaft, the bottom of which is broken and partly detached. Some script, still quite crisp.
101	2	Some faint script visible.
102	2	Some faint script visible.
103	2	Some faint script visible.
104	2	Some faint script visible.
105	3	Faint traces of script.
106	3	Some script left.
107	3	Some traces of script left.
108	2	Very faint script.
109	3	Virtually no script left due to erosion/delamination of surface.
110	3	Bottom cracked/broken, grass invading. Script still quite crisp.
111	3	Some faint script visible.
112	2	Will soon be fully overgrown if mown grass is left to accumulate.
113	2	An elaborate stone with central circular panel defined by raised bead moulding. Retains some script but quite faint.
114	2	
115	2	
116	2	
117	2	Triangular top, with decoration (possibly foliage?) in the panel at top left above this.
118	2	Some script remains visible, but quite faint. Cracked down middle, grass invading.
119	2	Retains good, quite crisp script.
120	2	Retains good, quite crisp script.
121	3	Retains some visible script in near-copperplate style, but surface delamination means rest is lost.
122	3	
123	3	
124	3	
125	2	Traces of faint script.
126	3	Most edges are in fact not overgrown, but bottom right-hand side (NE) is completely covered. Also cracked, probably quite recently as minimal grass invasion. The surface seems wholly delaminated, but faint traces of script still visible.
127	4	Small amount of reasonably clear script still visible.
128	2	
129	1	Largely clear and with quite crisp inscription. Area of slumped soil on N side with a slight void now visible under the stone.
130	3	Much detail eroded or lost.
131	3	Much detail eroded or lost, but retains a good carved skull in top panel.
132	3	Much detail eroded or lost.
133	4	
134	3	

<b>GS</b>	<b>CA</b>	<b>Description/comments</b>
135	3	Some script remains visible, but quite faint.
136	2	Reasonably crisp script still visible.
137	2	
138	2	Some script remains visible, but quite faint.
139	4	
140	5	Completely covered, but only by a thin covering in centre.
141	3	
142	3	
143	3	Retains much visible script, reasonably crisp.
144	3	Will soon be fully overgrown if mown grass is left to accumulate.
145	2	This is actually three separate ledgers, becoming slightly overgrown at edges. Central stone is cracked, grass invading cracks. All three stones have script visible, mostly quite faint.
146	2	Now in fenced area. Not much overgrown but leaf, grass and other debris cannot be cleared except from within fence. Will become overgrown if not kept clear.
147	2	End in fenced area. Retains quite crisp script.
148	2	End in fenced area. Retains quite crisp script but much has been lost through delamination of surface.
149	4	
150	2	Some script remains visible, but quite faint.
151	2	Broken, central section in particular has collapsed. Grass is invading the crack but the edges are not much overgrown.
152	5	Stone can be felt through slightly loose grass.
153	4	Faint traces of script.
154	2	Overgrowth mainly around edges but will become more extensive. Script still quite crisp.
155	2	Script still fairly crisp but showing signs of erosion.
156	2	Script still fairly crisp but showing signs of erosion. The letters AR and the bar of D have been carefully cut out of the name EDWARD in same way noted on GS 98.
157	2	Stone is tipping down to N - roots under? Very faint traces of script.
158	3	Overgrowth mainly around edges but will become more extensive. Script still quite crisp.
159	3	Within fenced area, becoming covered through lack of clearance. Condition of script difficult to assess.
160	3	Within fenced area, becoming covered through lack of clearance. Condition of script difficult to assess.
161	3	Within fenced area, becoming covered through lack of clearance. Condition of script difficult to assess. Tree prop appears to rest on this stone.
162	3	Within fenced area, becoming covered through lack of clearance. Condition of script difficult to assess. Badly cracked and damaged by tree branch.

<b>GS</b>	<b>CA</b>	<b>Description/comments</b>
163	3	Within fenced area, becoming covered through lack of clearance. Condition of script difficult to assess.
164	2	Surface dirty, possibly hiding some script.
165	1	Only very minor overgrowth at edges. Script probably in best condition of all. Some soil slump on N side, a slight void starting to open up under stone here. Prop for Catalpa branch on S side, only just off the stone.
166	2	Cracked down middle and across lower half, grass invading. Some faint script. Triangular top with foliage in the rounded corner panel above left of this.
167	2	Script still visible, good carved skull in top panel.
168	3	Cracked across lower half, minor growth of grass in the crack. Faint traces of script.
169	3	Within fenced area, becoming covered through lack of clearance. Condition of script difficult to assess.
1000	4	A void has opened up between two buried stones, not visible in 1990.
1001	3	
1002	2	Quite crisp script, members of the Wicken family, mostly early-mid 19th-century from what was read
1003	3	No script visible
1004	4	Small area of a GS visible, almost fully overgrown

## **APPENDIX 3: EXTRACT FROM ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL CONSERVATION PLAN**

### **2.13 LAY CEMETERY (GREEN CHURCH HAW) AND WALLS**

#### STATUTORY DESIGNATION

The portion to the west of College Yard is part of the precinct Scheduled Monument (ME 332); the tomb monument of Joseph Tuthill and a pair of gate piers with their gates between College Yard and the cathedral cemetery<sup>2</sup> are Grade II Listed buildings; the whole of the lay cemetery is within the Rochester City Centre Conservation Area.

#### CURRENT OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND USE

Ownership: Dean and Chapter of Rochester.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> These gates would appear to have been removed since Listing, unless this refers to the sign location at the north-west corner of the cemetery to the north of the nave.

<sup>3</sup> The narrow roadway known as College Yard running north-east from the west front of the cathedral to College Gate is still owned by the Dean and Chapter, unlike the public highways through the precinct to the south.

**Management:** The area immediately to the north of the nave (Green Church Haw) is managed by the Dean and Chapter. The strip to the west of College Yard is managed by Medway Council.

**Use:** Public open space.

## DESCRIPTION

A group of enclosed, and now disused, burial grounds lies to the north-west of the nave. A 19<sup>th</sup>-century western extension to these crossed into the old castle ditch on the other side of King's Head Lane, and it was here that Charles Dickens wanted to be buried). The Church of St Nicholas overlies the north side of the cemetery's original medieval extent. Indeed the burial ground on the north side of the cathedral may go back to the early 7<sup>th</sup> century, when the first cathedral was built. There was a documented cemetery associated with the cathedral in the later Saxon period. The earliest archaeological evidence for it, however, comes from a group of fragmentary late Anglo-Saxon gravestones, found reused in the Norman west front and elsewhere. A few later medieval burials were excavated in 1990, when the north wall of the chair store was underpinned. By the later medieval period the cemetery had become much-used by many of the lay people of Rochester, and the area was popularly known as Green Church Haw. A lane ran across from the cemetery (College) gate, past St Nicholas' church to the west front of the cathedral. Only in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century were walls built around the different areas of the cemetery. This was no doubt because the continued frequent use of the churchyards for burial after the Dissolution had caused the ground level to be considerably raised up. The churchyards are now all closed, but remain consecrated ground (including presumably the ground beneath the paved private roadways around St Nicholas' church), and very large numbers of human skeletons will exist in the area.



## ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The cemetery is of **considerable significance**

- as the last resting place of numerous Rochester citizens, many of whom are individually identifiable from their tombstones;

- for the archaeological potential inherent in the skeletons within the cemetery from the medieval period onwards, and also the potential for pre-cemetery archaeology (though this will have been affected negatively by the very act of grave-digging);
- for the architectural and monumental character of the tombstones; and
- for the graveyard's contribution to the townscape character of the precinct, providing invaluable green space around the west end and north side of the cathedral.

## CONSERVATION ISSUES AND POLICIES

- Refer to generic policy on the Dean and Chapter's need to establish a cyclical maintenance schedule for its whole estate. Maintenance of the open spaces is of variable quality. The small area immediately to the north of the nave is well looked after, while the section of the cemetery to the west of College Yard is kept closely mown. The cuttings are not removed from the latter area, however, and the turf is actively covering many of the recumbent tombstones. Many of them will eventually disappear under grass.
- Other tombstones are suffering from considerable surface erosion/smoothing, largely from people walking across them. In some cases the surface inscriptions have become largely or completely illegible.
- The tombstones have been surveyed and recorded in their current positions by Alan Ward. This survey should be further annotated to record the current condition of the tombs, including the legibility of inscriptions. The survey should recommend which tombstones are so badly eroded that coverage with turf may be allowed or even encouraged, as this will at least afford a degree of protection to what is left. It should also suggest which stones should be partially or fully re-exposed by trimming back the grass. This historic use of this area as the cathedral and town lay cemetery is crucial to its understanding and interpretation, and it is therefore important that the space should not appear as a blank lawn.
- Refer to generic policy on archaeological sensitivity and protection; also to archaeological research potential – the cemetery obviously has considerable potential in this respect, not only for skeletal remains but also for pre-cemetery evidence.