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THE PARISH OF ALLHALLOWS, HOO PENINSULA, KENT

HISTORIC AREA ASSESSMENT

Joanna Smith



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**THE PARISH OF ALLHALLOWS, HOO PENINSULA,
MEDWAY, KENT
HISTORIC AREA ASSESSMENT**

Joanna Smith

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SUMMARY

The parish of Allhallows lies at the north eastern end of the Hoo Peninsula. Partially bounded by the river Thames and Yantlet Creek, its landscape is a mixture of higher ground and low marshland. It retains a historic settlement, the village of Allhallows, and a more recent riverside outlier, Allhallows on Sea. Inland the character of the parish is predominantly agricultural while leisure and holiday facilities occupy much of the river frontage. Evidence of previous military occupation and a railway branch line also survive. However the impact of industrialisation along the Thames and Medway has been largely indirect, limited mainly to residential expansion. This Historic Area Assessment provides an overview of the historical development and architectural character of the parish. It forms a component of the larger Hoo Peninsula Historic Landscape Project.

CONTRIBUTORS

The report was written by Joanna Smith. The character area maps were produced by Philip Sinton. The modern ground photographs were taken by Jonathan Clarke, Joanna Smith and the modern aerial photographs were by Damian Grady.

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Frontispiece: Aerial view of Allhallows on Sea (NMR TQ 8378-13 24065-24)

*Allhallows lies both low and unhealthy, having marshes both in the north and east sides of it The village, with the church in it, stands about a quarter of a mile from the marshes, at the north-east point of the upland, having no thoroughfare through it, excepting towards the marshes, and is altogether a most unfrequented and dreary situation'*¹

*'Allhallows-on-Sea has the same health and climate aspect as Margate. There are fine golden sands, and the breezes blow fresh from the sea, so there is a marked absence of fog. A constant panorama of shipping passes before it up and down the Thames, craft ranging from ocean liners to the homely tug and fishing boat.'*²

PREFACE

The Hoo Peninsula Historic Landscape Project was undertaken by English Heritage between 2009 and 2012. The project aims were to inform landscape change at a strategic level by providing an enhanced evidence base and a better-informed understanding of the area's rich historic character. To ensure a truly integrated project a number of different research and recording techniques at the disposal of English Heritage were deployed. These included aerial survey, analytical earthwork and buildings survey, historic landscape, seascape and routeway characterisation, farmstead characterisation and historic area assessment. An integrated narrative report drawing on this full range of work was produced in 2013 (Carpenter et al, 2013).

Historic area assessment was developed by English Heritage as one of a number of approaches to understanding the historic environment at area scale. Each assessment aims to explain how the past is encapsulated in today's landscape, to describe its character and to distinguish its more significant elements. Because resources, timescales and the nature of areas can vary three levels of assessment have been defined (English Heritage, 2010). For the Hoo Peninsula Historic Landscape Project it was decided to undertake historic area assessments of individual parishes at outline level - that is less-intensive survey and research to enable coverage of a wider area. The Hoo Peninsula, east of the ridge of high land at Higham, was assessed by parish. For each parish the key elements of its historic development were identified, its architectural interest and significance was evaluated and its landscape was subdivided into character areas.

The Hoo Peninsula outline historic area assessments were carried out within English Heritage by members of the Assessment Team South, Heritage Protection Department. Fieldwork was undertaken during a number of visits to the peninsula between 2010 and 2011. This consisted of external ground photography and site notes. A limited amount of research was undertaken in the local archives. Extensive use was made of historic maps, principally the tithe maps and various Ordnance Survey editions, along with on-line resources such as census data and historic newspapers, to produce the assessments. These were written in draft by the team members between 2011 and 2013.

INTRODUCTION

The parish of Allhallows is located at the north-east extremity of the Hoo Peninsula, separated from the Isle of Grain by the Yantlet Creek and bounded to the north by the river Thames (Fig. 1). From higher ground in the centre and north of the parish, part of the gently undulating upland coastal plain that bisects the peninsula, the land drops away to extensive marshes on the east and a marshland fringe to the north west. The soil is clay with a subsoil of clay and heavy gravel.

Sparsely populated until the mid 20th century, the parish today is comprised of a number of dispersed farmsteads and two conjoined areas of settlement. The historic village of Allhallows is centrally situated on higher ground, with a riverside outlier known since the 1930s as Allhallows on Sea. Creeping late-20th century development has effectively joined the two to create a single extended village. Adjoining this to the north is an extensive riverside holiday park.

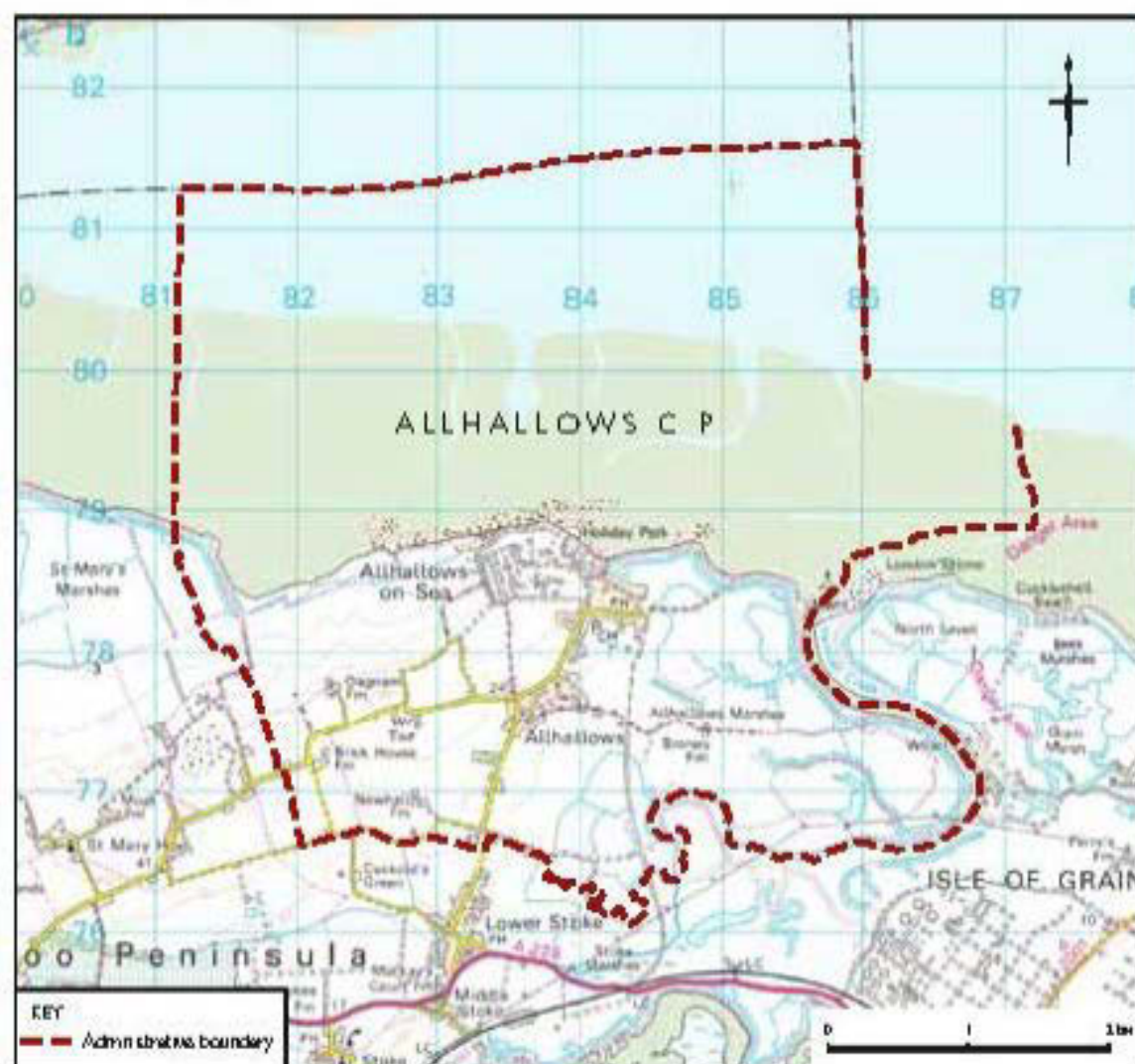


Figure 1 Location map showing Allhallows parish ©Crown copyright and database right 2103.

The village at Allhallows retains something of the isolated character remarked upon by commentators from at least the 18th century. Agriculture remains a significant activity, although not as a source of employment for the villagers. Historically this followed the usual pattern of peninsula, a combination of marshland grazing and arable farming with farmsteads situated both on the upland and in the marshes. Unlike other areas in Hoo the potential for any industrial activity other than farming and fishing seems never to have been explored.

Residential expansion began in the 1930s at Allhallows on Sea, the consequence of a commercial venture to establish a seaside resort which included the opening of branch railway line here in 1932. The holiday park also has its origins in the same enterprise, intended to exploit the sloping riverside ground and impressive views across the Thames. The park was revived and expanded in the post-war years, initially while under local authority ownership.

A significant increase in housing in the post-war years was prompted by industrial expansion on the Isle of Grain, which also led to an unsuccessful attempt to develop a new town at Allhallows in 1955-6. The scale and pace of development has decreased since the 1980s. Late-20th-century growth includes an estate of residential static caravans occupying the site of part of the former railway line, which closed in 1961.

Although the vast majority of the buildings in the parish are of modern construction, some older structures remain in the village and outlying farmsteads. There are also notable remnants of a past military presence, including a fort of the 1860s at Allhallows on Sea. Architectural interest exists, therefore, in these structures, as well as the remnants of the 1930s holiday resort. The story of Allhallows' development in the 20th century has often been one of unrealised, or partially achieved, ambitions, but conversely this has also allowed the village to remain relatively constrained and for a sense of its separateness to endure.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Settlement and topography

The early history of Allhallows has not been closely studied. As elsewhere on Hoo, the settlement pattern was one of the church acting as an ecclesiastical focus for 'a nexus of scattered farms and dispersed hamlets' (Fig. 2).³ The village was sometimes known as Hoo Allhallows – 'Hoo' indicated its upland location while 'Allhallows' was derived from the dedication of the parish church to All Saints (hallow being an alternative word for saint). The earliest fabric of the church has been dated to the 12th century but the building may have an older history.⁴ By the 13th a separate parish at Allhallows was in existence. There was a Manor of Windhill, which survives only as a placename, Windhill Green, to the west of the village, a farm at Avery (previously



Figure 2 Detail of the Allhallows Area from A Map of the Hundreds of Hoo and Chatham and Gillingham, 1798

Evere or Every now subsumed within Allhallows on Sea) to the north and a farm at Binney, to the east.⁵ A substantial house, known as Allhallows Place, stood to the north of the church by the 14th century, apparently surviving until the first quarter of the 19th century.⁶ A loose cluster of buildings grew up around a farm at Slough or Slow, to the west of Avery, owned or occupied by John Slow at the beginning of the 16th century.⁷ The village contained several farmsteads, of which little trace now survives, and a number of other outlying farms were scattered across the parish, including the surviving farm sites at Dagenham (sometimes spelt Dagnham), Brick House Farm, Nord Farm and New Hall Farm, the latter possibly on the site of a moated manor house.⁸

Once the northern and eastern marshes had been reclaimed, the land at Allhallows would have provided valuable fattening ground for sheep and cattle. The process of reclamation may have been started by the Romans or Saxons and was still continuing in the 18th century.⁹ From the late medieval period the proximity of London would have encouraged the farming of wheat, barley and peas on the upland. And from the 17th century the naval station at Chatham, and later that at Sheerness, would have required supplies. These growing markets may have contributed to a period of relative prosperity in the 18th century, as surviving Georgian farmhouses at Dagenham and Brick House Farm and elsewhere in the Hoo peninsula would seem to indicate. These farms usually encompassed arable land, meadow and marshland, often a mixture of reclaimed 'fresh' marsh as well as saltmarsh.¹⁰ Agricultural improvements in the mid-to-late 19th century, such as those introduced by Henry Pye at St Mary Hoo and Stoke, would have increased productivity. By the mid 20th century the farmland at Allhallows was rated as being of the highest agricultural value; 'two-crop land' in intensive cultivation.¹¹

By the early modern period a modest fishing industry existed at Avery.¹² At one time the Yantlet had been navigable, providing a convenient short cut between the Thames and the Medway, but by the early 19th century a causeway had been built across its southern end.¹³ The creek itself has proved to be a rather mutable boundary to the parish, as its mouth has shifted eastwards, indicated by a map of 1616 and the tithe map of 1839.¹⁴ The causeway across the Yantlet and movement in the channels across the mudflats may have been factors in the failure to exploit the deposits of brickearth and cement clay at Dagenham Farm and Binney Farm, advertised during the 19th century.¹⁵ The remoteness of Avery, and its proximity to the Thames and the Yantlet Creek, provided ideal conditions for smuggling. This led to the establishment of a coastguard station here, presumably occupying a moored hulk on the riverside. This was swept away in 1897 and the station was re-established in Avery, presumably in the building now known as Coastguard Cottage, to the north of Avery House, which also housed a port signal station (see below).¹⁶ Despite the presence of the coastguards Avery remained a rather lawless place, including a regular prize fighting pitch in 1860.¹⁷

When the parish of Allhallows was surveyed for the Tithe Commission in 1839 its population was around 268.¹⁸ The village comprised little more than a group of farmsteads, a public house, former poorhouse, vicarage and church (Fig. 3). It was connected by road to Stoke to the south, and St Mary Hoo to the west, the two roads meeting just to the north of the village at 'Ryefield Corner'. Small clusters of cottages, presumably occupied by farm workers, were scattered around the parish. Parker's Cottages, to the west of the village, and an extremely modest development of five cottages at Nord Corner, to the south, are likely to have built in the early 19th century



(the latter was subsequently provided with allotments).¹⁹ But if the village experienced little change in the latter part of the 19th century - a new Vicarage was built to the south and the former poorhouse began functioning as a post office - significant developments were occurring on the riverside land of the parish.²⁰

Figure 3 Allhallows village: OS map published 1896-8. © and database right Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2013) Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024

A military presence

In 1861 land at Slough was acquired for the construction of a fort as part of the major programme of new work initiated by the 1859 Royal Commission on the Defences of the United Kingdom. The fortification at Slough linked the Medway defences, including Grain Fort, with new Thames side forts, such as those at Cliffe, Shornemead and East Tilbury. Built on the higher ground above the Thames foreshore, with sweeping views across the

estuary, Slough Fort was completed in 1867. It contained seven gun casemates, reflecting a new emphasis on 'massive firepower and less on elaborate defence'.²¹ Innovations in warfare necessitated the construction of two new wing, or flanking, batteries between 1889 and 1891.²² These housed faster-firing, less-conspicuous guns behind low emplacements, able to 'pop-up' when fired, and were provided with underground magazines. A Battery Command Post was added to the fort in World War I, which remained in use until it was closed in 1920.²³

Another component of the defensive system at Slough was the Thames Port War Signal Station. This was housed by the early 20th century in a building know today as Coastguards Cottage (Figs 4 & 29). Its purpose was to communicate with shipping entering and leaving the Thames via a wireless telegraph and visual signalling. Developed by the Admiralty at the end of the 19th century and operated by coastguards (also then under Admiralty control), the station ensured that no hostile or suspect shipping could pass the guns at Slough Fort unchallenged.²⁴

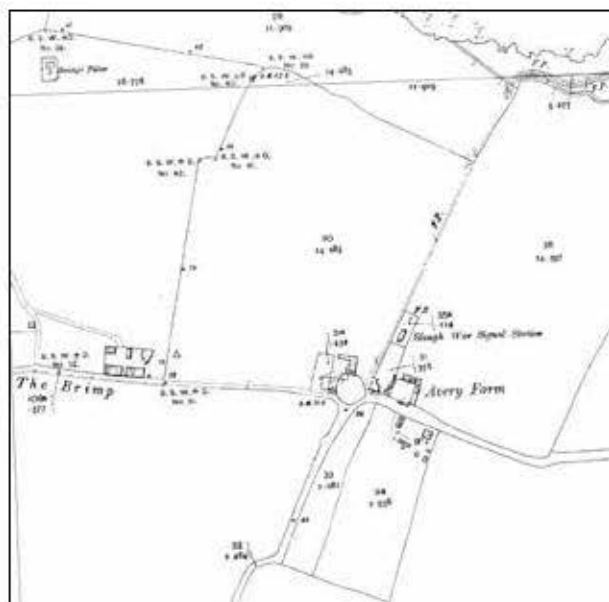


Figure 4 The settlement at Avery omitting Fort Slough: OS map published 1908. © and database right Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2013) Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024

Allhallows on Sea

Avery and Slough were also the focus of the next significant development to affect the parish, the attempt to establish a seaside resort and 'all-the-year round residential Town, similar to Westcliff' (a suburb of Southend on Sea) in the 1930s.²⁵ An informal, opportunistic resort had already started to emerge at Bell's Hard, or Lower Slough, where a sandy beach was attracting day trippers in the 1920s and some basic facilities were provided by a local farmer.²⁶ Around 1929 a new attraction opened, when liontamer Bill Cargill opened a zoo in Slough Fort.²⁷ The following year Kent Coast Development Co. acquired 1,600 acres of land and Thames foreshore and began planning a new development, which they christened Allhallows on Sea (Fig. 5). Money was spent providing services such as drainage and sewage and roads (principally Avery Way), as well as constructing groynes to encourage the accumulation of sand for beaches. The Southern Railway Company was approached to build a branch line from Stoke Junction, Kent Coast Development Co. provided the land and £20,000. This opened in 1932.²⁸ A public house and hotel, The British Pilot, was built opposite the station along with a nearby block of flats, Avery Court. A related company, Allhallows-on-Sea Estate

Ltd, promoted residential development, which included a cul-de-sac of semi-detached houses on Queensway, off Avery Way. The aspiration was for 'high-class houses' on the land to the west of the railway while that to east was for 'houses of a smaller degree'.²⁹ The riverside land, which included Slough Fort, was set aside for pleasure grounds. Gardens, tennis courts and swimming baths were proposed but only a modest amusement park with a miniature railway line was built.³⁰

The struggling resort was marketed in the post-war years as 'Allhallows-on-Sea. It's Bewitching, for leisure and pleasure by road or rail' before its acquisition in 1958 by Strood Rural District Council for £25,000.³¹ Their intention was to develop it as a recreation and holiday centre for the region.³² Considerable money was spent on improving the facilities, including construction of a swimming pool and restaurant, The Nore, which opened in 1965 (Fig. 6). A site was offered to Allhallows Yacht Club in 1964, on which they built a club house and a boat compound.³³ In the 1960s and 1970s crowds of 25,000 visited during summer weekends, and the entire venture was supported by the rents from 300 chalets and 850 caravan spaces.³⁴ In 1981 this unusual municipal venture ended when the holiday estate was sold to a private company, Bourne Leisure, despite considerable opposition.³⁵ Bourne Leisure have continued to enlarge the estate, now known as Allhallows Leisure Park, and have constructed a new clubhouse and swimming pool.



Figure 5 Southern Railway brochure from 1932.
(Reproduced courtesy of John Minnis)



Figure 6 The railway station, inter-war developments and post-war holiday camp at Allhallows on Sea: OS map of 1968. © and database right Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2013) Licence numbers DDD394 and TPD024

Post-war housing

Despite the resort initiative, residential development in Allhallows has predominantly been a post-war phenomenon, as a population of 369 in 1951 has grown to 1,649 in 2001.³⁶ The demand was initially driven by industrial expansion on the Isle of Grain and at Kingsnorth. By the 1950s some employees at the Kent Oil Refinery were having to travel considerable distances to work because of a housing shortage on the Hoo Peninsula, despite the construction of 300 houses by Strood Rural District Council.³⁷ In 1955 British Petroleum approached the Dolphin Development and Management Company Limited (a subsidiary of the building and civil engineering contractors, Richard Costain Limited) to prepare a housing scheme.³⁸ Dolphin engaged the services of W. Eric Adams (former managing director of Harlow New Town) and Frederick Gibberd (Master Planner of Harlow New Town) to develop a scheme for a new town at Allhallows intended to serve more than just the needs of the Grain employees.³⁹ They proposed three residential 'neighbourhoods' with a town centre containing shops, social and recreational facilities, for an intended population of 25,000 (Fig. 7).⁴⁰ This was opposed by Kent County Council, which objected to the loss of 900 acres of high quality agricultural land, while Strood Council wanted a smaller scheme for between 10,000 to 12,000.⁴¹ After Kent County Council refused consent a public enquiry was held in 1956 but the Minister of Housing and Local Government dismissed the appeal by Dolphin.⁴² One consequence of the failure of this 'private enterprise new town' was to spread the required residential expansion around the eastern villages of the Hoo Peninsula.

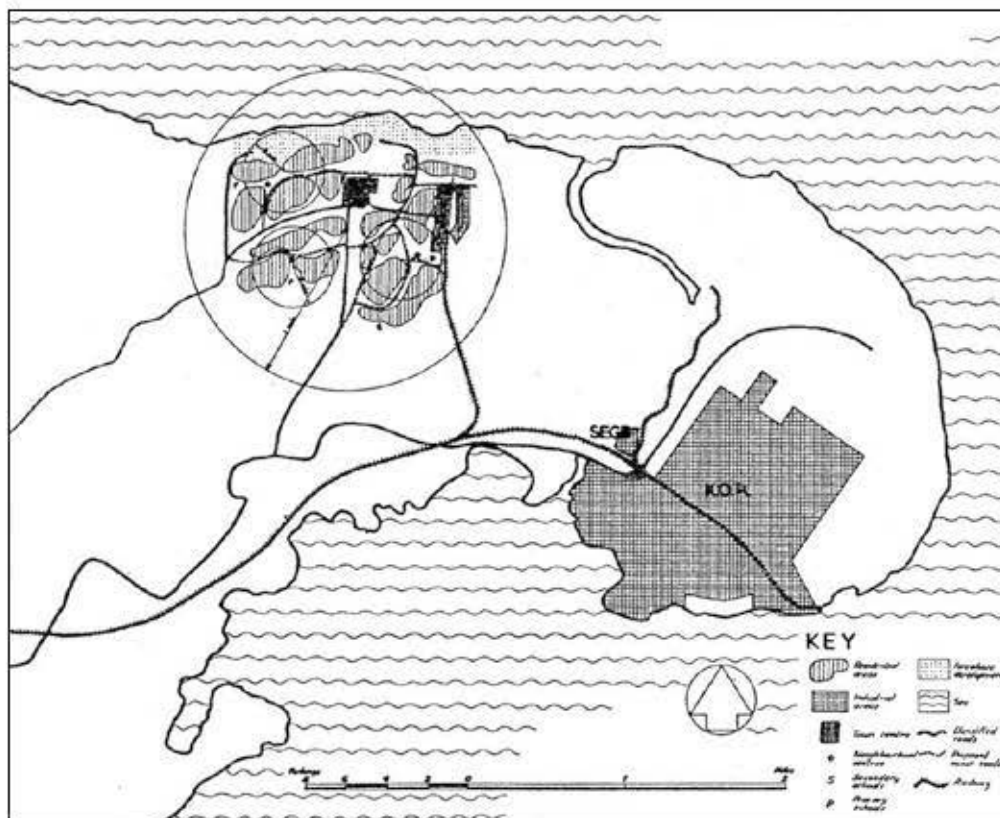


Figure 7 The proposed Allhallows New Town (and Kent Oil Refinery, Isle of Grain).
(Reproduced with permission from Adams, E. 1957 'A private enterprise New Town'
Town Planning Review 28, 3, fig 2, 185)

CHARACTER AREAS

Allhallows parish can be subdivided broadly into three areas of differing character. The majority of the parish remains farmland, along with a large area of marshland on its eastern side, retaining a number of scattered farmsteads and agricultural buildings. The 'extended' village of Allhallows and Allhallows on Sea forms one area while the holiday park and riverside area, which has its own distinct character, another.

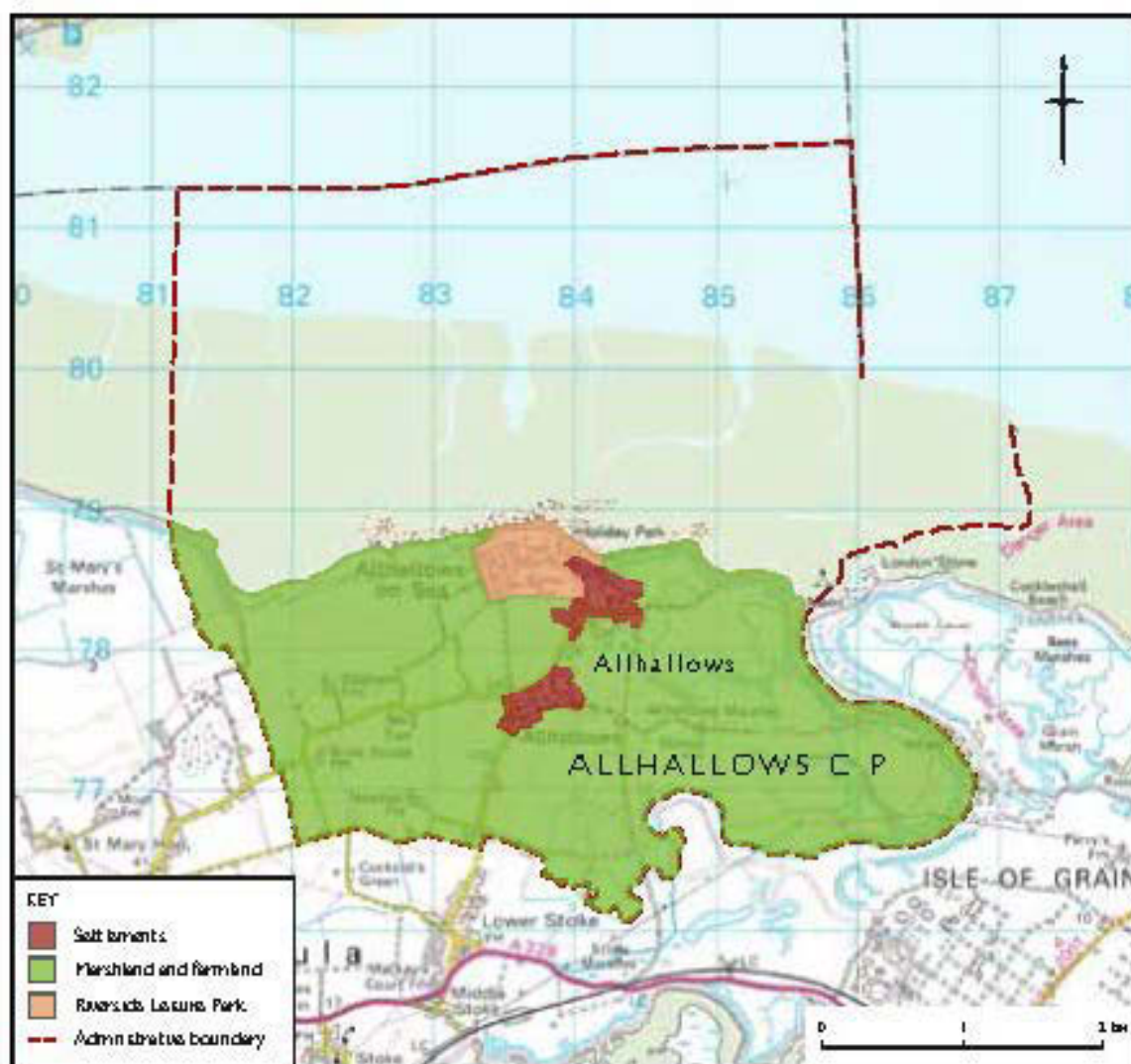


Figure 8 Character areas of the Isle of Grain. Background mapping ©Crown copyright and database right 2103. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 1000124900

Farmland and marshland

Much of land in Allhallows parish remains in agricultural use, scattered with mainly mid-to-late 20th century agricultural buildings. Evidence of the historical importance of farming in the parish remains in the form of scattered farmsteads, although not all remain in agricultural use. A number of historic farmhouses survive, including handsome 18th-century brick examples at Dagenham Farm and Brick House Farm (listed grade II) (Fig.

9). The latter also retains a barn of the late 17th or early 18th century (listed grade II). Nord Farm, in the south east of the parish, was in existence by the early 19th century, if not earlier, but survives only as a collection agricultural sheds. More generally the late-20th century trend towards amalgamation of farms in has resulted in the conversion, under use or clearance of farm buildings across the parish. Another loss has been the groups of farmworkers cottages that once existed at Avery, Lower and Upper Slough, and dotted along the roads to Stoke and St Mary Hoo, although a one pair of 1930s houses, Nord Farm Cottages, survive on Stoke Road. One group of out buildings on New Hall Farm Lane apparently includes an early 20th century portable military structure, presumably salvaged from one of the many military sites on the peninsula. The marshes that once formed valuable grazing lands now seem to be utilised mainly for leisure activities. An area of saltings remains on the north-west edge of the parish.



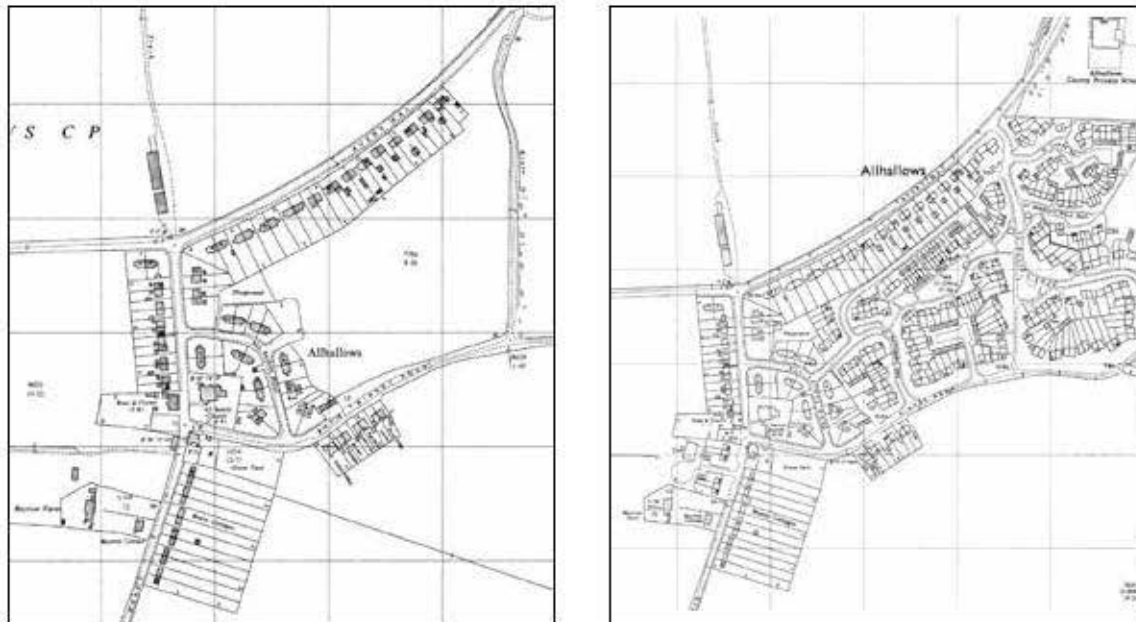
Figure 9 Dagenham Farm and Brickhouse Farm: OS map published 1908 © and database right Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2013) Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024

Settlement: the 'extended' village

An area of lower density development now extends from Allhallows on Sea along Avery Way to Allhallows village, with a detached cluster of housing along Stoke Road. Predominately residential, the buildings range from the prefabricated units of a caravan park to a three-storey block of flats but the majority of the housing stock is comprised of conventional two-storey houses, semi-detached or in short terraces, and detached bungalows. These date in the main from the mid-to-late 20th century. Several small housing developments have taken place in the last decade, filling in gap plots on Avery Way and Stoke Road and building over the playing fields of the school.

In the historic core of Allhallows village, a few older buildings remain. The most significant of these is the parish church of All Saints (grade I), which dates from the 12th to the 15th century, restored in 1886-91 by Ewan Christian (Fig. 12). Immediately to the west is the former Rose and Crown public house (grade II), an 18th century building that underwent a substantial restoration in 2009 (Fig. 13). These are now the best-preserved elements

of the pre-20th century village. The former post office and Bay Tree farmhouse, Stoke Road also survive but have been modernised, and exhibit little external evidence of their origins. Dairy Cottages, Binney Road, are a pair of brick houses dating from the 1910s or 1920s, now altered and extended.



Figures 10-11 The growth of Allhallows: OS maps from 1968 (left) and 1975 (right). © and database right Crown copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2013) Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024

The majority of houses in the village were built by the local authority over successive decades. These fall broadly into three phases that reflect changing fashions in municipal provision. The first to be built was a group of 12 semi-detached houses, Beatty Cottages, on Stoke Road, dating from the 1920s or 1930s (and built either by Hoo Rural District Council or Strood Rural District Council depending on their date of construction). They are rendered buildings of extreme plainness. The next generation of council houses and bungalows, construction of which seems to have begun in the 1930s and may have continued after the war, were brick built, with a minimal arts and crafts tile detailing (Fig. 14). These were laid out as small estate on Stoke Road and All Saints Road to the north and east of the church, following the Garden City principles of the 1918 Tudor Walters Report. Around 1970 this area of housing was extended eastwards by a new estate, whose streets are named after saints. The layout incorporates areas of Radburn-style planning (such as St Andrews Walk) (Fig. 15), named after an American suburb of the 1920s, which proved very influential on local authority planners and architects during the 1960s and 1970s. This places the parking at the rear of the houses and provides grassy areas with footpaths between the groups of houses, from which the front doors are accessed.



Figure 12 (top left) All Saints church in 2009 (P57330016); Figure 13 (top right) The former Rose and Crown public house undergoing residential conversion in 2009 (P57330017); Figure 14 (bottom left) Inter-war council houses on Stoke Road in 2009 (P57330018) & Figure 15 (bottom right) Post-war council houses on St Andrews Walk in 2009 (P57330019)

Around the holiday resort at Allhallows on Sea the buildings are more varied in character. The only remnant of the former hamlet is Avery House and its outbuildings, rebuilt after a fire had destroyed the entire farmstead in 1832 (Fig. 16).⁴³ There are some substantial survivals from the 1930s residential seaside development. The flats, Avery Court, and public house, the British Pilot, are on a different scale and of a higher quality than subsequent developments, redolent of the high hopes of the developers for the fledgling resort. Avery Court is a three-storey block built of red brick in a mild neo-Georgian style detailed with an ornamental ironwork balustrade (Fig. 17). Apparently built in 1939, it may have been designed by the architect Herbert John Sinclair Abrams who owned the freehold.⁴⁴ The building was perhaps intended to have ground floor shops and was apparently designed for enlargement, as its rendered east wall of the block has a temporary character. The seemingly little-altered pub and hotel, probably built for Charringtons, favours a Arts and Craft idiom, with red brick, render and tiles and cheeky port hole windows flanking a chimney on the south elevation (Fig. 18). The cul-de-sac of ten houses, mostly semi-detached, on Queensway are suburban in character, with pebbledash or roughcast render exteriors (Fig. 19).

Little evidence of the former railway branch line remains. At the time of closure in 1961 the site at Allhallows on Sea included station buildings, platforms, a goods shed, water tank, rails and a turntable. Since 1975 most of this has been cleared to provide additional plots for the residential caravan estate, Allhallows Park. However, the metal pillar tank has survived in this now rather incongruous setting (Fig. 20).⁴⁵ There is also a large residential development, mainly houses but including shops with flats above, at the eastern end of Avery Way that dates from the 1970s and may have been privately built.



Figure 16 (top left) Avery House and the entrance to Allhallows Leisure Park, 2009 (P57330020); Figure 17 (top right) Avery Court, Allhallows on Sea (P57330021); Figure 18 (bottom left) The British Pilot public house, Allhallows on Sea (P57330022) & Figure 19 (bottom right) Queensway, Allhallows on Sea (P57330023)

A number of community buildings are dispersed around the extended village. A low-key village hall, of concrete post-and-panel construction dating from c.1970, stands back from Stoke Road to the south west of the parish church. A primary school of a similar date adjoins Avery Way, located midway between the village and Allhallows on Sea. This was enlarged by the addition of a middle school in 1978.⁴⁶

A small stretch of residential ribbon development exists to the south of the village on Stoke Road. This began with the Vicarage, a mildly Gothic style building dating from the late 19th century, subsequently converted into a residential home for the elderly called The Chimneys, and much enlarged in the latter part of the 20th century (Fig. 21). To the north stands Allhallows Place, a 'moderate-sized country residence' built between 1908 and 1914 for the Drapers Company (Fig. 22).⁴⁷ A small number of modest houses, opportunistic developments of small plots of land, have been built during the 20th century.



Figure 20 (top left) A remnant of the railway branch line, a pillar water tank, surviving amidst the residential caravans of Allhallows Park. (P57330024); Figure 21 (top right) The Chimneys residential home, formerly the Vicarage, in 2009 (P57330025) & Figure 22 (bottom right) Allhallows Place in 2009 (P57330026)

The riverside leisure park

Allhallows Leisure Park occupies an extensive area of riverside land, some 110 acres when purchased by Strood Rural District Council in 1958.⁴⁸ The eastern section of Park contains uniform single-storey wooden-clad chalets, set within an undivided grassy parkland, in a layout that aimed at avoiding regimentation and providing a varied outlook.⁴⁹ First built in the 1960s, these structures are more characteristic of the municipal period of ownership (Fig. 23). The western part of the Park contains an expanse of static caravans of more recent construction, detailed in a variety of styles, many of which have been further personalised with decks and enclosed areas (Fig. 24). Between the two sections are communal facilities, a late-20th-century leisure centre and swimming pool and tennis, as well as a sales office and shop. Part of the riverside is occupied by Allhallows Yacht club, which has a modest 1960s clubhouse and two slipways. The frontage of sand and shingle is a piecemeal creation, begun in the 1920s at Lower Slough and extended eastward by the construction of groynes in the 1930s and 1960 and 1970s (along with a section of concrete sea wall) (Fig. 25).⁵⁰ Seemingly nothing survives of the inter-war amusement park and miniature railway or the post-war 'traditional seaside kiosk', bingo hall and amusement arcade but the former restaurant, a timber-clad structure with a monopitch roof, survives, although apparently no longer in use.

The leisure park also contains a number of former military sites. Slough Fort, located to the north of trackway known as The Brimp which historically linked Avery with Slough, is a two-storey D-shaped structure, built of Kentish ragstone and brick with granite dressings (listed grade II). Its external earthwork defences, wing batteries, well protecting wall and probable gun detachment shelter are a scheduled monument (Fig. 26). The relatively intact fort has had a chequered history since its closure in 1920, converted to a zoo in 1929 and a riding stables in the 1960s (which remains its present use).⁵¹ To the north of the park entrance is Coastguard Cottage. The single-storey white-painted brick structure resembles neither a typical coastguard station nor a port war signal station – its previous functions – but the treatment of the tall machicolated parapet on its west elevation has a military quality.⁵²



Figure 23 (top left) Wooden chalets of the 1960s, Althallows Leisure Park (P57330027); Figure 24 (top right) Static caravans, Althallows Leisure Park (P57330028); Figure 25 (bottom left) Groynes and sea wall, Althallows Leisure Park (P57330029) & Figure 26 (bottom right) Slough Fort in 2011

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST AND SIGNIFICANCE

Depictions of Allhallows village before World War II show a loosely grouped settlement, retaining traditional brick and tile houses and timber-clad farm buildings, similar in character to other Hoo villages such as Stoke and Grain. But this vernacular appearance disappeared as the village farmsteads were heavily modernised, or replaced with denser development in the second half of the 20th century. More generally across the parish there has been a considerable amount of piecemeal change, such extensions, new roofs and window replacement, to buildings of all periods. But evidence of the pre-20th century agricultural community still exists in a number of surviving buildings of architectural interest, such as the parish church, the former public house, the farmhouse at Dagenham and farmsteads at Avery and Brick House Farm (Fig. 27). The importance of some of these sites has been recognised through national designation. Other buildings, such as Dagenham Farmhouse, Avery House, Avery Court, and the British Pilot could be included on a local list.



Figure 27 Brickhouse Farm in 2009 (P57330030)

The military structures at Allhallows on Sea are a tangible reminder of the military importance of the Hoo Peninsula, and most particularly its late-19th-century system of coastal defences. Slough Fort and its associated features are in a relatively good state of preservation and have features of interest in their design and subsequent development, as was recognised by their designation in 2009. The former port signalling station and coastguard station is also an unusual survival (Fig. 28). Other structures or features may survive, such as the portable military building on New Hall Farm Lane.



Figure 28 Coastguard Cottage (formerly Slough Port Signalling Station) (P57330031)

The impact of the industrialisation of the Thames and Medway during the 19th and 20th centuries is perhaps less evident in Allhallows than elsewhere in the peninsula. This has largely been limited to the post-war residential expansion and distant views of Grain Power Station and container port. Instead it has been the development of leisure facilities in the Thames estuary that has had a greater impact (Fig. 29). The resort at Allhallows on Sea, which fell short of initial expectations, has nonetheless contributed a number of interesting buildings and a successful leisure park.



Figure 29 Allhallows Leisure Park, photographed in 2005 (NMR TQ 8478-16 24-75-34)

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- ² Promotional leaflet, 'Allhallows on Sea', 1932.
- ³ Everitt A 1986 *Continuities and Colonization The Evolution of Kentish Settlement* Leicester: Leicester University Press 183.
- ⁴ There would appear to be evidence of a Saxon presence in the parish, if not the village, as it has been suggested that land in the outlying hamlet of Avery was held by a Saxon Abbess called Heahburh. See Stenton, F M 1970 'Medeshamstede and its Colonies' in Stenton D M (ed) 1970 *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England Being the Collected Papers of Frank Merry Stenton* Oxford: OUP. 189-90 cited in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allhallows,_Kent accessed 30/07/2009.
- ⁵ The Manor of Windhill was created by Robert Bardoff, who then granted it to the Convent of Reading in 1204. Hammond, F J 1914 *The Hundred of Hoo and the Parish of Allhallows* 4.
- ⁶ It is mentioned by Hasted in 1798 but is not present on the tithe map of 1841.
- ⁷ Hammond, 7.
- ⁸ MacDougall, Philip 1980 *The Story of the Hoo Peninsula*: John Hallewell. 185.
- ⁹ Reeves, Anne & Williamson, Tom 'Marshes' in Thirsk, Joan 2000 *Rural England* Oxford: OUP. 153.
- ¹⁰ For example, farms advertised for sale in *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser* 5th August 1775; *Daily Advertiser* 2nd Sept 1796; *Morning Chronicle* 20th August 1801, 2nd October, 1820; *Times* 14th June 1883, 2.
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- ¹⁴ See insert map in Evans John H 1958 'The Rochester Bridge Lands in Grain' in *Archaeologia Cantiana* 68. 184-5.
- ¹⁵ *Morning Chronicle* 20th August 1801; *Times* 5th August 1882, 14; 25th June 1892, 21.
- ¹⁶ Hammond 7.
- ¹⁷ *The Morning Chronicle* 22nd September 1860.
- ¹⁸ MacDougall, appendix I.
- ¹⁹ See the 1839 tithe map and 1908 Ordnance Survey map.
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- ²³ Ibid.
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- ²⁷ *Chatham Standard* 10th May 1966.
- ²⁸ MacDougall 160.



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