

The Old Rectory, Bell Lane, Lt Bardfield, Essex.  
Description and analysis of a timber-framed stables at the Old Rectory.  
Surveyed 24 01 2011.



The Stables is situated to the west of the Old Rectory between Great and Little Bardfield.

### Location

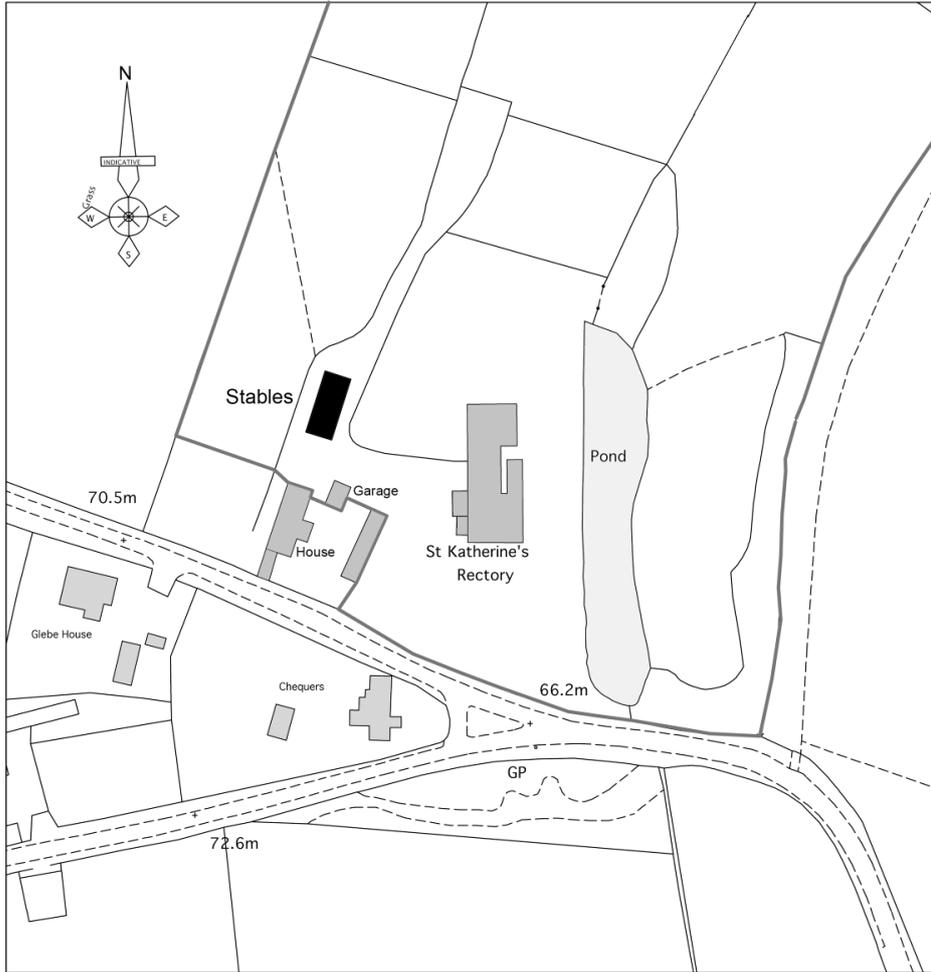
The Old Rectory is a magnificent Listed country house positioned north of a junction on Bell Lane, about 1.25km from Great Bardfield. TL665313. The Stables under survey are located about 200m west and was surrounded by trees, many of which have been felled and logged up recently.

The Stables is oriented SSW-NNE and is aligned with the complex of buildings to the south which are now in separate ownership. The Stables is centred on 31U 322802mE, 5759175mN (UTM).

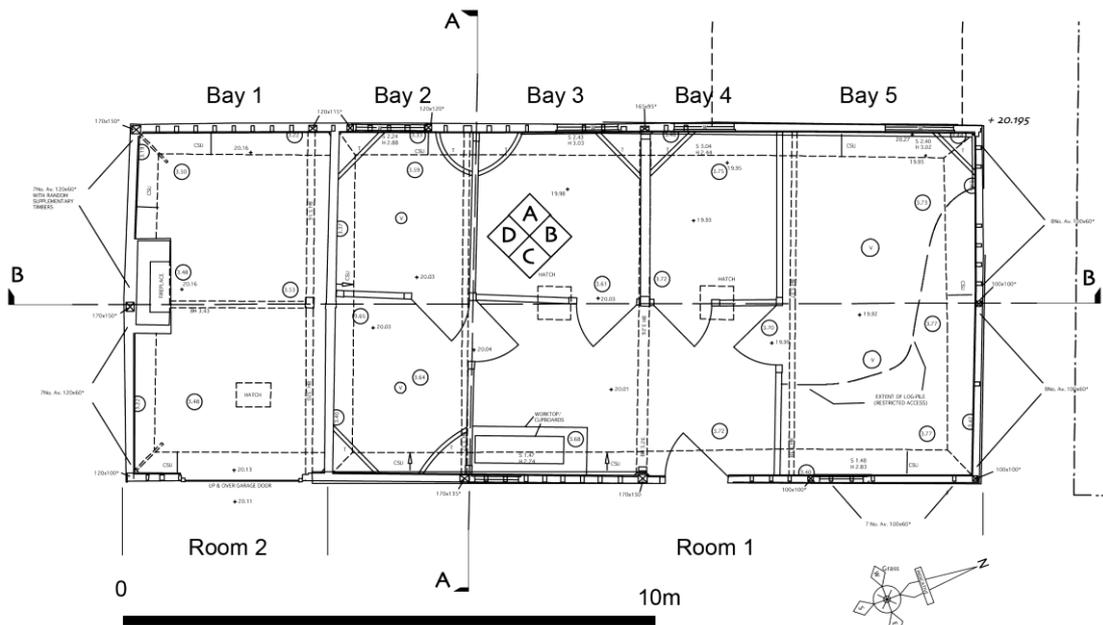
The Stables are Listed: TL 63 SE LITTLE BARDFIELD BELL LANE 2/3 Stables approx. 30 metres west of The Old Rectory GV II Stables. C18/C19. Timber framed and plastered. Hipped grey slate roof. Garage door to left. Right vertically boarded door with beaded edging, moulded surround, light over. To right and left of this door a small paned vertically sliding sash window in moulded surround. Original stalls and doors with vertically boarded lower and iron rod upper panels. Moulded cast iron gutters and pipes leaning against outer wall.



Barry Hillman-Crouch  
Design & Recording Services



Location of the Stables at the Old Rectory. Plan by Snell David Architects. TL665313.



Ground Plan produced by Snell David Architects. 2009. Larger version on page 6.



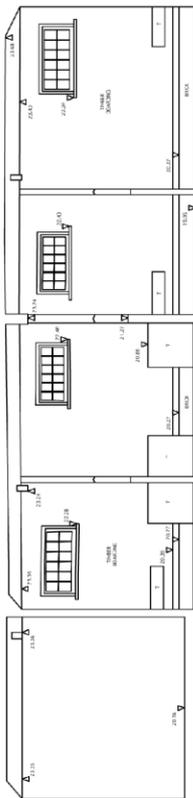
▽ DATUM 11.000m

**Internal Elevation B**



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**Internal Elevation D**



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**Internal Elevation A**



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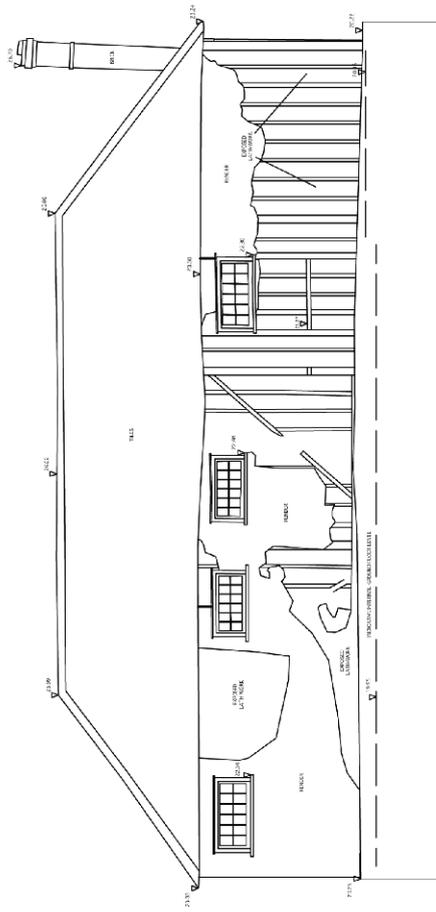
**Internal Elevation C**

10m

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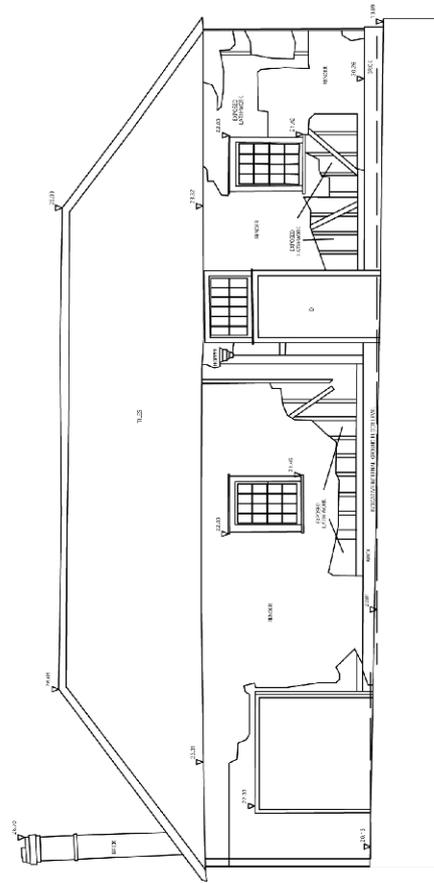


**Internal elevations by Snell David Architects. 2009.**



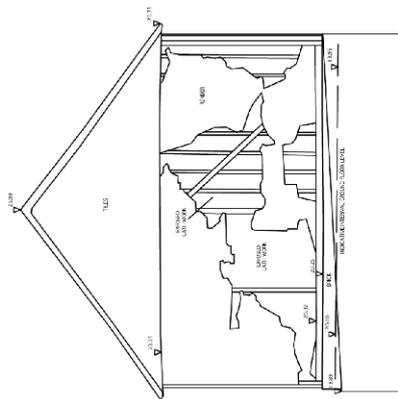
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Rear Elevation



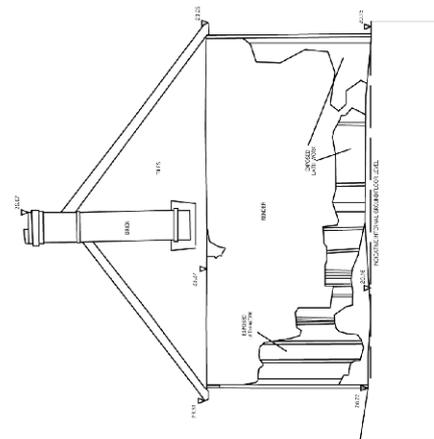
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Front Elevation



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External elevations by Snell David Architects. 2009.



The Stables looking SW. Jan 2011.

### General Description

The Stables is a timber-framed 5 bayed building divided into two rooms of one bay and four bays. The larger room (Room 1) is a stable divided internally into six horse stalls with well made timber and iron gridded partitions. The floor is laid with brick paviors and carefully profiled for drainage into central drains with cast iron grates.

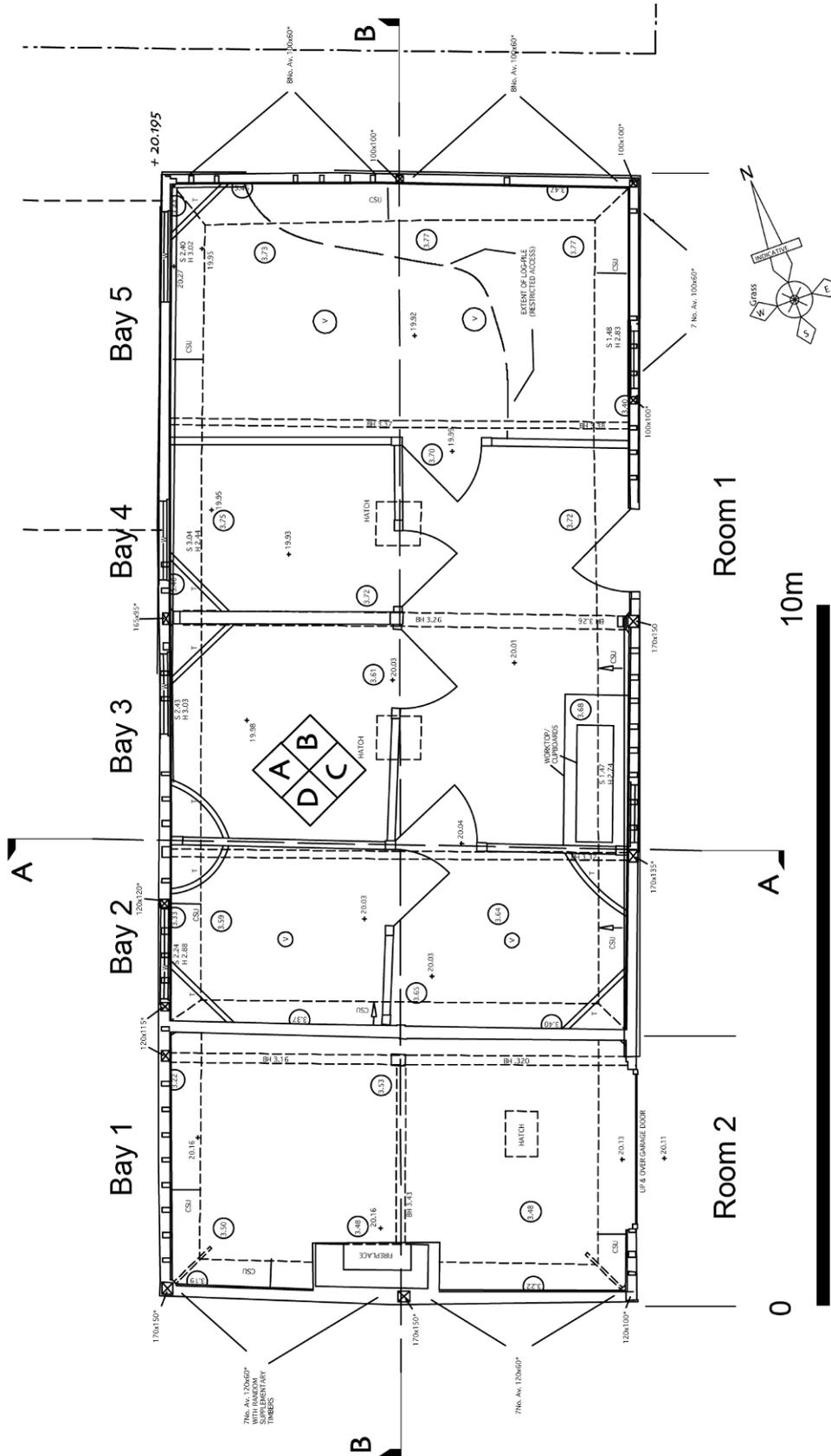
The smaller room (Room 2) is outfitted as a tack and preparation room with a central fireplace, shelves, harness trees and cupboards. Both rooms are boarded out from floor to ceiling with horizontal edge-moulded boards of various widths. The whole is painted in a pink colour scheme with red details and picked out in black lining.

The ceilings are lath and plaster limewashed white and have ventilation grilles over the stalls. The walls are lathed externally and rendered in several episodes. The interrupted timber studwork frame sits on a brick plinth which shows several rebuilds. The frame is numbered through on the eastern side.

An original stable door has been blocked in and rendered over and a LC20th garage door has been inserted into the east wall of Room 2.

The roof is clad in grey slate with formed lead ridges and there is a chimney stack to the south.

To the rear of the building is LC20th animal cage constructed out of waste timber and chicken wire which has no merit at all.



Ground Plan produced by Snell David Architects. 2009.

## Description- External Elevations



Southern elevation of the Stables.

### Southern Elevation

The southern elevation presents a plain rendered wall beneath the full hipped grey 12x24in slate roof. The exterior wall is in poor condition with much of the render fallen off exposing the riven laths fastened with wrought iron nails. The larger part of the render remaining is of hairless lime mortar. There is a patch of much later cementitious render that has also been pebble-dashed. Here the laths are machine sawn. This is the pattern for the rest of the walls.

Where the frame is visible it appears to be made from machine cut softwood with a single diagonal brace and interrupted studwork. The frame is also boarded on the inside and gains much of its strength from this. The frame stands on a brick plinth but it is buried on this elevation. Described in the eastern elevation section.

There is an internal firestack and chimney which vents through the roof above. This is slightly unusual as chimneys are often applied to the outside of the building to preserve the room-space. In this case it avoids truncating the frame.

The chimney is made of 65x110x225mm hard reds and overfired purples set in a beige sandy mortar. The brickwork has been repointed in grey cement with several blown bricks cemented over.



Western elevation is the rear elevation and shielded by trees. Looking NE.

### Western Elevation

The western elevation faces the field boundary and is the rear of the building. The render has fallen off most of the southern half of the wall and the central section has lost most of its laths. The timber frame is more clearly visible. There are only 3 diagonal braces and the vertical studs are machine sawn on a module of 2.5x5in. The principal posts are 5in deep but vary between 4 and 7in wide.



There are four identical rear windows. Note modern plaster and laths.

There are at least three episodes of rendering; lime mortar on original laths, cementitious mortar on sawn softwood lath and a modern unfinished scratch coat on the original laths.



Basculating window. Remains of guttering.

There are four identical timber windows lighting bays 2,3,4 and 5 and are positioned to be in the corners of each bay. The windows have 12 small panes set in two rows in basculating frames. The frame is pivoted in the centre and tips inwards at the top. The glass is very thin milled glass with long thin bubbles in the panes.

The roof is sunken in the middle near the eaves and there is the remnant of a cast iron rainwater gutter hanging from its bracket.



Lean-to shelter.

Attached to the NW flank is a makeshift shelter of reused machined timbers with a corrugated iron roof. It has been wired up the eaves with chicken wire in the manner of an aviary but it is more likely to be an abandoned rabbit run. There is a hatch into Bay 4 at ground level. The partition in Bay 4 has been similarly wired and there is a notice on the door to 'Beware of the Rabbits'.



Northern elevation is a reflection of the southern one.

### Northern Elevation

The timber-framed wall and roof structure is a reflection of the southern elevation with the exception of the lack of a chimney. Here it can be seen that there is a central principal post with diagonal braces of similar section and vertical interrupted studwork. Again the render is in several episodes with much of it being pebble dashed.



Western elevation - oblique view. This is the front of the building.



Main entrance into Bay 4 and blocked doorway into Bay 2.

### Western Elevation

The western elevation is the front of the building and originally had at entrance doors into Bays 2 and 4. That into Bay 4 is still in-situ while the other has been lath and plastered over and clad on the inside.

The fully framed doorway has machined mouldings and is set beneath a 12 pane basculating window of a similar pattern of those in the back wall. However the rectangular panes are of a different aspect ratio.

The blocked in doorway corresponds with the dimensions of the other and the render is beige sandy lime. The new render is well defined by the application of a fine gravel pebble dash. The brick plinth below has also been inserted and is laid in a Flemish bond without a soldier course.

The plinth has been constructed in several styles and of two types of bricks. To the north (Bay 5) the red brickwork is properly laid in Flemish style with closer bricks set in a beige sandy mortar. The bricks here are 60x105x215mm and the headers are mostly overfired to purple. This section looks remade.

The central section (Bays 3 and 4) have larger red bricks, 65x110x225mm laid in Flemish bond with a soldier course. They are set in a fine white mortar. The blocked door has similar bricks and there is a damp course of roofing slate inserted one brick below the sole plate. Elsewhere fragments of grey slate can be seen directly under the plate.



Sash window to Bay 3.



Sash window to Bay 5

There are a pair of double hung 8/8 pane unhorned sash windows giving light into Bays 3 and 5. Most of the glass is free from defects and is likely C20th replacements. The timber surrounds match that of the main doorway and there is small plain pentice board. There is a wrought iron lashing ring in the wall beside each window.



LC20th garage door inserted into Bay 1.

In Bay 1 a galvanised garage door has been inserted into the frame. It is labelled a 'Merlin' by Henderson. Merlin doors were invented in 1954 and quickly became the standard. [http://www.pchenderson.com/company\\_history.php](http://www.pchenderson.com/company_history.php) However the style and typography of the label indicates that this is a c.1970 or even later model. The door is nailed in the open position so the exact style is difficult to ascertain.

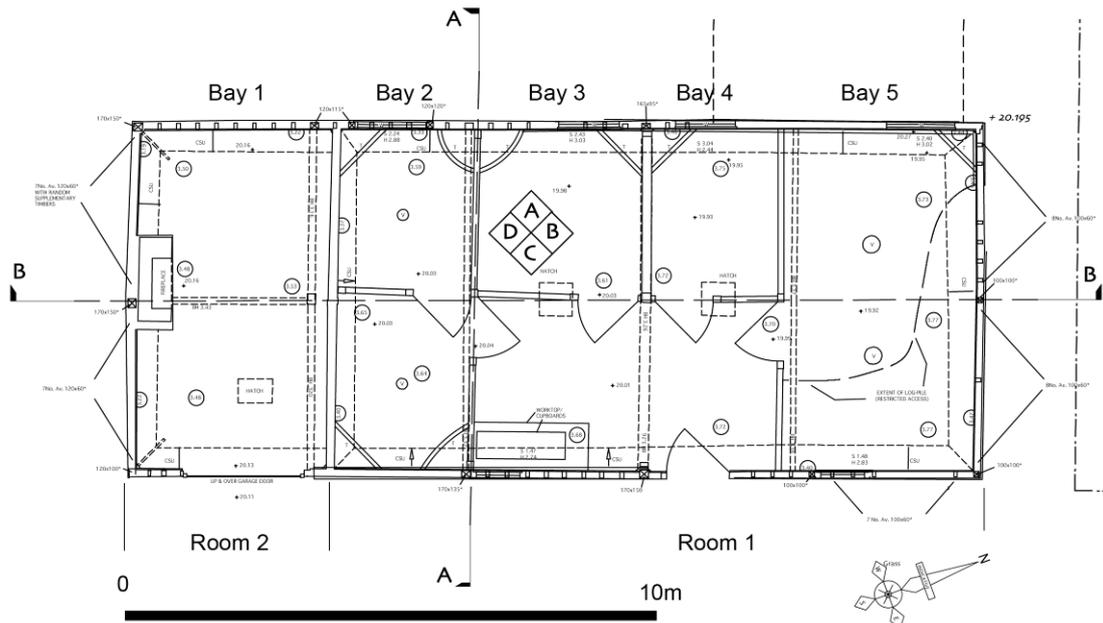
The insertion has been done very amateurishly and the section to the south of the door is clad with a membrane and EML. The scratch coat was applied and the job never finished. It has to be assumed there was a doorway and perhaps also a window into Room 2 as there are no indications of any others.

### **Description - Internal**

The building is divided by a partition wall boarded with horizontal edge-moulded boards of which most are 10in deep. A number of 7in boards have been put in to finish. The partition does not correspond with the principal truss but is set just north of it so that the underside of the truss can be seen in Room 2 which was outfitted as a tack and preparation room.

The ceilings are set at about 11ft 9in and are composed of riven lath and lime plaster. The lower parts of the rafters are lathed and the ceiling is thereafter flat. In Room 1 which is clearly a Stable there are decorative cast iron and timber vents in the roof to ventilate the space. There are none in Room 2 which contains a fireplace, shelving and battens for cupboards.

The rooms are described separately.



Ground plan by JAP architects of Clare showing the division of the building.

### Internal Description - Room 1

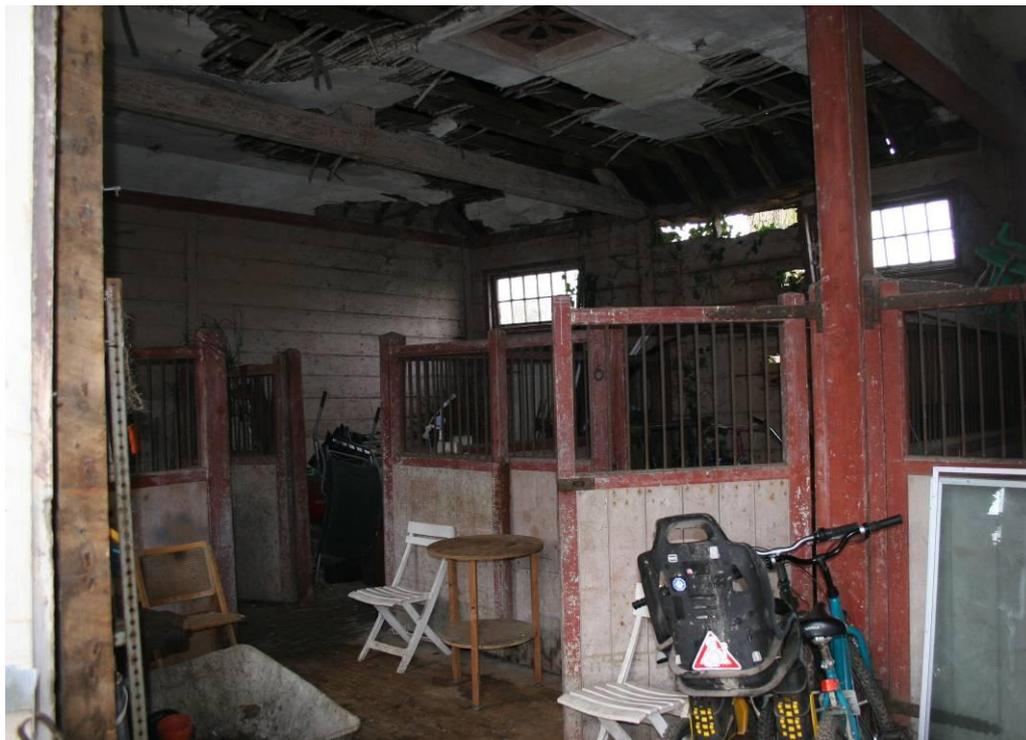


Front and rear of the main door into Bay 4.

Room 1 is entered through a single doorway into Bay 4. The door is a machine made, vertically boarded, edge-moulded, tongue and groove softwood door with flat gate and ledgers on the obverse side. They are of a slightly unusual design in that the gate battens have been let into the top and bottoms of the horizontal ledgers.

There is no gate bar at the top to allow for the huge mild steel T-strap hinge which is screwed to the frame. There is an elegant forged drop handle operating a wrought iron Suffolk latch which is both screwed and bolted in place. The latch is inscribed with the Saltire Cross - a revival of a superstition involving witchcraft.

There is a mild steel lock box but also a shadow for a much larger lock box. There is also a keyhole on the other side showing that the door has been reversed. The frame shows no sign of previous locks so the door is reused in its present position. The inside is painted pink to match the rest of the decor and the outside was once green.



The entrance lobby spans 3 bays and allows easy access to all the horse stalls.

The door gives onto an entrance lobby that spans the three central bays and allows free movement to all the partitioned horse stalls within. The floor is made of smooth yellow paviors 45x90x160mm set on edge.

The floors within the partitions are custom made for each stall each designed to drain to a centre point where there is a cast iron grate manufactured by 'G W Burgess - Patent'. These floors are constructed of larger paviors 45x??x215mm and the floors in Bay 5 have even larger bricks at 60x??x215mm. This hierarchy of sizes may indicate the size of the animal meant for the stall.

The partitions for the horse stalls are custom made from standard components. The lower part of each partition is made of a timber frame clad on both sides with vertical tongue and grooved boards. The upper section is barred with vertical rods which are mild steel in appearance. The woodwork is protected with nailed on mild steel strips to prevent chewing although the rails have been heavily licked removing the paint. The corner posts and door jambs are of heavy section and the doors are of the same construction detail as the partitions.



Ornate hinges and captive bolts on the stall doors.

Each door has two ornate mild steel strap hinges screwed into position and an elegant captive bolt which the horses cannot reach. The outfitting is good quality and it is a surprise that there are no brand names on the hardware.



Mangers from Bay 5 NE corner (left) and NW corner.

Each stall has been outfitted with timber mangers set into the corners. This has been done in two phases. There are a set of mangers that are designed like quarter barrels, nicely finished with metal rims and another set of more traditional triangular timber mangers nailed together. Where one has fallen apart, in the NW corner of Bay 5, it can be seen that the previous finish was of varnished wood. The central partition in Bay 5 has been removed and with it two mangers whose shadows in the paintwork show them to have been the barrel type.



Each stall has a ventilation grille above it to expel heat and smell.

In the ceilings above each stall there are ventilation grilles. There are two large timber and mesh grilles above the central stalls designed as florettes. The other stalls have smaller iron grilles which appear adjustable with a central keyhole for a rod.

The walls are boarded with edge-moulded horizontal boards fastened with wrought iron nails. Most of the walls have 10in deep boards. There are also 13in boards in the wall to Bays 2 and 3. Bays 4 and 5 have 8.5in boards. There seems no functional reason for this and all the boards are well fitted so it is likely that the available stock was used. All of the boards are horizontal except for a small section in Bay 2 above the manger which appears to be repairs to the damaged wall.

The blocked doorway in Bay 2 which is visible on the outside has been carefully boarded over with 8.5in boards and a lashing ring added.



Remains of a saddle hanger and harness hanger below. Very corroded.

### **Fixtures and Fittings.**

Being a working building that is little changed from when it was being used for its primary purpose there are still several of the original fittings. Each stall has lashing rings for the horses. They are very rusty and it is likely they are all mild steel. This is important for dating as mild steel was not invented until 1856 when Henry Bessemer perfected his 'Convertor' which he patented the year before.

There are a number of very corroded harness hangers, hooks and the remains of a saddle hanger (high up on the wall next to the entrance door). On the other side of the door there is a profiled wooden shelf to receive long objects like broom-handles and below there are battens for triangular shelves.



Broom hangers and shelving by the door. Concrete machine base in the floor.

A section of the yellow paved floor in Bay 3 has been removed and a large lump of cast concrete poured. There are circular sockets for tubes in each corner to support a machine or platform. The object has been removed and the concrete has been broken up. There is a LC20th improvised work bench with vice and some Dexion shelving



An improvised workbench and dexion shelving is LC20th.

## Internal Description - Room 2



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The NW corner of Room 2 with battens for removed cabinets. Modern wardrobe.

Room 2 has a poured concrete floor. The walls are boarded in the same manner as Room 1 with edge-moulded horizontal boards of various sizes. The partition wall has 10in deep boards. In the NW corner the boards have been sawn through but left in situ as a removable panel but the use is not obvious.

The western wall is battened out for shelves and the variation in the paint colours shows there was a large closed cabinet right across the back of the room. It also shows that the paint was originally much darker than the light pink it is today.

There are two large shelves held on pressed steel brackets along the eastern half of the partition wall but these are later additions as above there is a harness hanger and the screw holes to show where a row of them once were fixed.



Fireplace obscured by grass cutter too heavy to move. Door into firebreast (right).

On the southern wall is the chimney breast which is also clad in boards which are only 6.5 in deep in contrast to the 8in deep boards on the walls. Above the fire place is the shadow of a large square fixing, most likely a mirror where the boards beneath are varnished brown.

The fireplace itself is 38in wide by 36in high internally and is lined with steel sheets. There is a thick mild steel strap supporting the brickwork above the opening. The bricks are 65x110x225mm oranges with creased faces, sharp arrises, horizontal pressure lines and frogged. They are set in a white mortar. There are wrought iron fixings for a timber fire surround but it has been removed.

The chimney is quite unusual. The base and visible chimney are quite square but the section hidden in the firebreast is built in an S shape which may have been done to promote the draught. There is a hinged door in the west side of the fire breast to give access to the chimney and possibly there were shelves inside but presently there is a huge birds nest within.

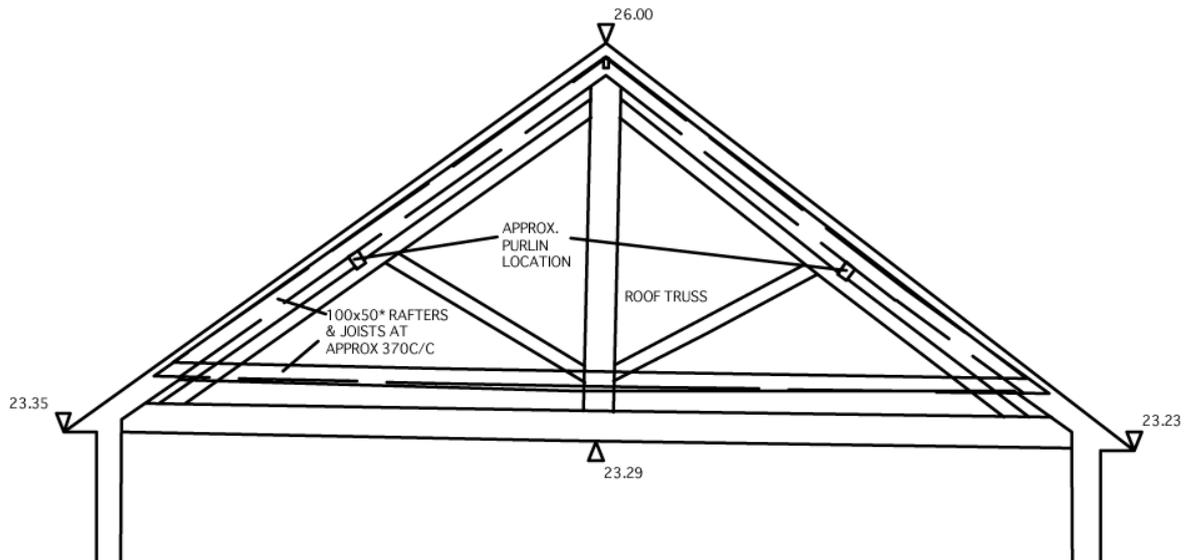
### Fixtures and Fittings



Collar hook and harness hanger.

Like Room 1 there are harness hangers on the walls and also heavy duty collar hangers put much lower down. There are screw holes to show where others have fallen out. The heavy duty hooks are still available to almost the same pattern.

## Roof Structure



**Architects section through the roof. Snell David Architects. 2009.**

The roof is fully hipped at both ends and clad in grey 12x24in slates. There are four principal softwood trusses each with a central king strut retained with a square headed iron bolt through the 4x8in deep tie-beam. Each strut then has two raking struts up to the principal rafters. The common rafters are made of 2x4in machined softwood at 15in centres.

There is a single longitudinal purlin on either side and there are also diagonal purlins from the head of the strut down to the top-plates which the common rafters are tenoned into. The tie-beam is held with wrought-iron L-ties and is visible about a foot below the finished ceiling.

The ceiling is supported on 2x4in and 3x4in machined softwood joists, lathed and hair plastered. The joists are nailed to the common rafters a few feet above eaves height and act as collars.

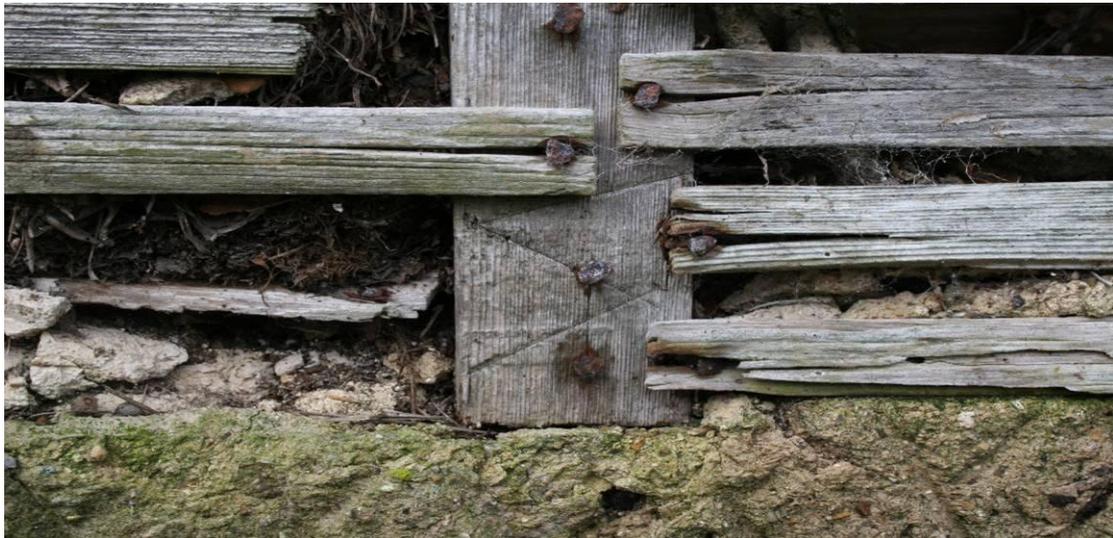
The central truss is supported on an inserted machined post next to the entrance door and examination of the frame shows the main post has rotted away.

## Carpentry and Timber Marks.



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There are a series of numbers marked on the bases of the studs visible in the eastern wall.



The marks are made in two styles with a chisel or a blade.

Two series of carpenter's marks are visible on the timber frame in the eastern wall and it is certain that the rest of the frame is numbered. The frame visible to Bay 5 is marked with a thin blade and is marked I to N (1 to 9).

The frame visible to Bays 2,3 and 4 was marked with a narrow chisel point from I to XVI (1 to 16) although the first few studs have rotted away losing the numerals. The diagonal brace is also marked across its joint with the principal post as IIII. Both series run N-S.

## Apotropaic Marks and Grafitti.

Apotropaic marks are those made in the height of witch fever to ward off the witches. They can include crosses, daisy wheels, circles, M and W and variations of the Chi-Rho symbol. Strangely enough the insane belief in witches was revived in the mid C19th and so these symbols are seen in buildings of the period. In the Stables is only one such mark and that is the letter W carved on the partition to the stall in Bay 2 next to the work bench.



Letter W carved on the partition (also an X scratched in the patina).

M and W are often called Marian marks after the Virgin Mary. M is more obvious but W represents V V or Virgin of Virgins. However it must be remembered that many men were called William and there are thousands of W's scored all over Essex without any reference to witches.



Long, complicated sums and multiplication written on the partitions.

On both sides of the partition to Bay 5 there are pencilled sets of sums in an old fashioned hand but the multiplication indicates this must be C20th. On the wall above the workbench is the calculation of a quadratic equation - hardly the pastime of a stable boy.

On the door to the stall in Bay 3 is written 'NOTICE. Please do not open this door for it contains Rabbits. Rabbits, BY ORDER. Ms D Mears, RG Mears'. This explains the netting and the makeshift run outside the building.

On the back of the main door is a tally for eggs on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of April but no year is given. The hand is old fashioned and C20th. Next to the door is written vertically 'THE DONKEY' and there is a hurried pencil sketch of a small building, a fence and a gate. There are also various obtuse notes and sums. These are all LC20th.

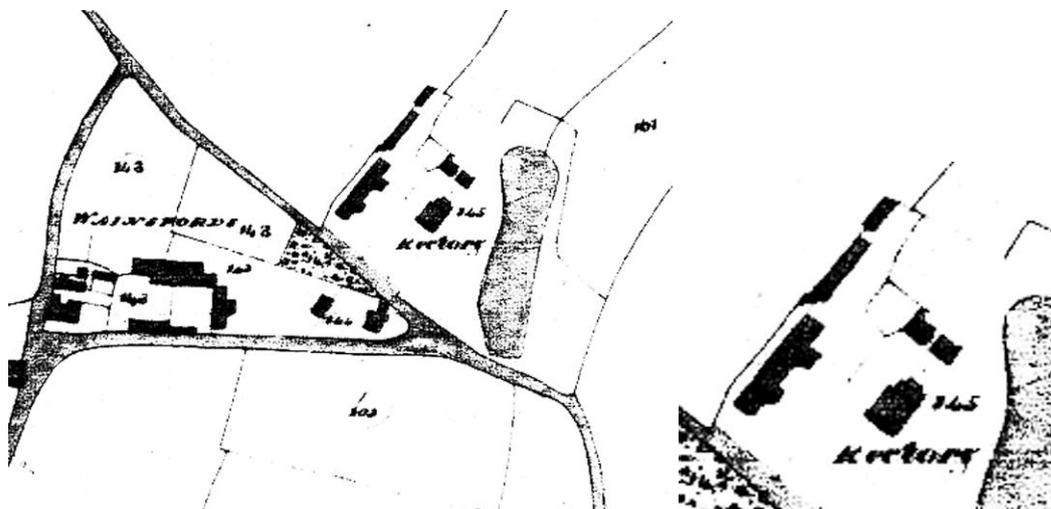
The door latch has a saltire cross incised into it but this is a C19th affectation.

## Topographical Survey from Maps



1777 Chapman & Andre's Map of Essex.

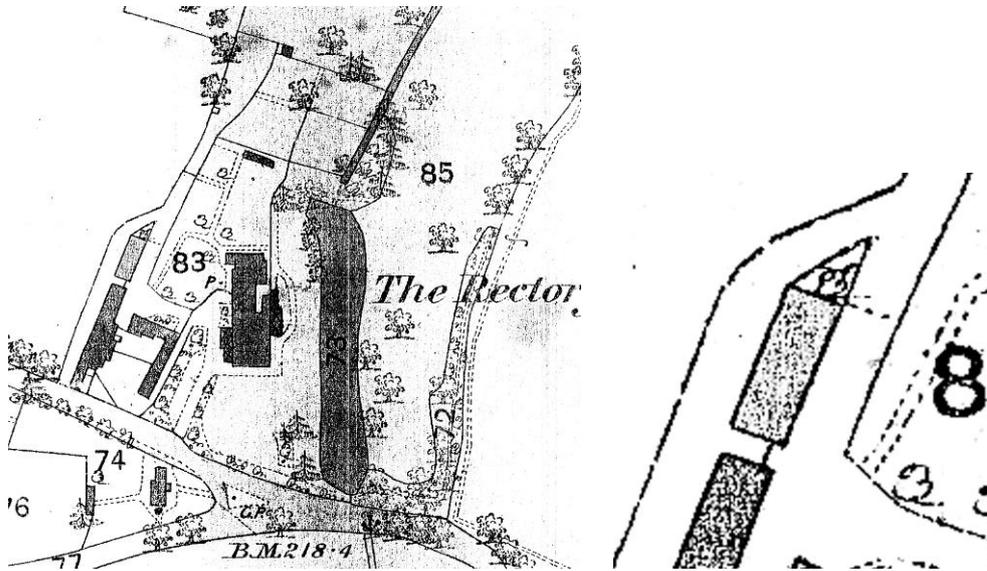
In 1777 the Old Rectory is known as the Parsonage and was just up the road from the windmill. The original main building is in place and three outbuildings are depicted. None of these correspond to the position of the Stable. A stream divides the garden from the field beyond.



1839 Tithe Award Map D/CT17 ERO.

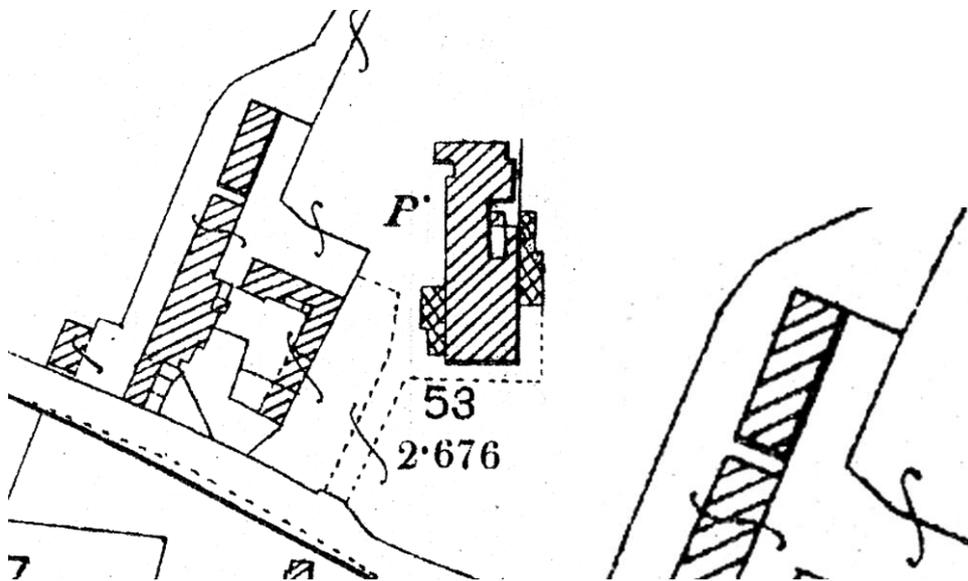
By 1839 the main house has had a modest extension to the rear and is now called the Rectory. There is now a range of buildings to the west. The southernmost one has the plan of a thrashing barn with two porches. The two on the boundary do not coincide with the position of the Stable but one may very well be its predecessor. There are also two detached buildings to the north of the main house and the stream on the boundary has become a lake.

The site is plot No 145 and is owned and occupied by the Revd Thomas Bernard Harrison. According to Whites Directory for Little Bardfield the Rev. Mordaunt Barnard M.A., rector and surrogate (and vicar of Great Amwell, Herts) lived at the Rectory in 1848 and was still there in 1863. He died in 1885. <http://www.johnbarnard.me.uk/index.html>



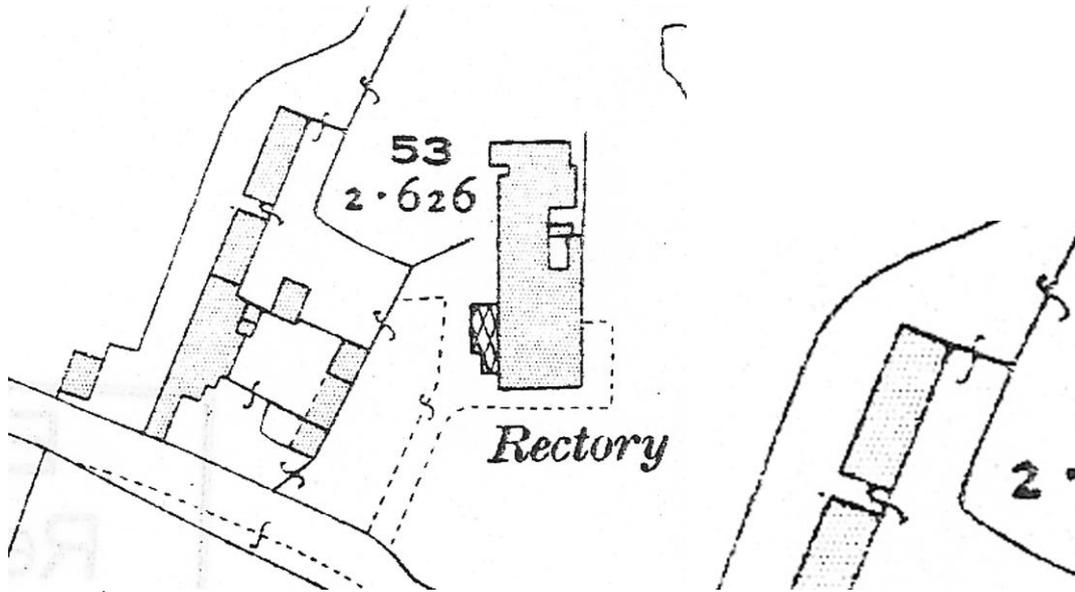
**1878 First Edition Ordnance Survey**

By 1878 a building of the same proportions has appeared in the position of the Stables. A lane runs from the road to the rear of the Stables and northwards to an enclosure. To the south a whole new complex has been developed and the Rectory has been massively extended. Rev. Richard Henry White, M.A., rector is listed in the Post Office Directory of Essex 1874 as living here.



**1898 Second Edition Ordnance Survey**

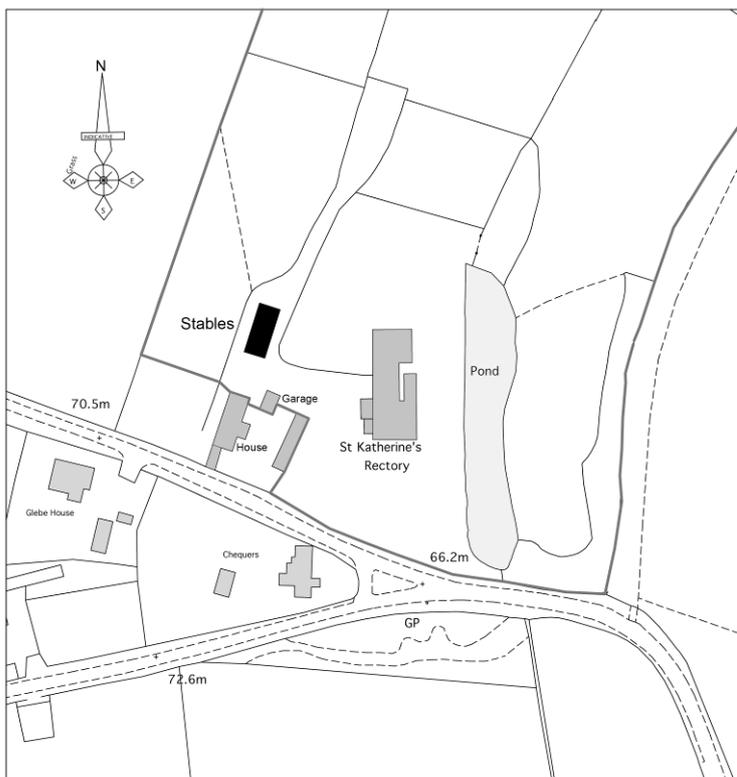
By 1898 there are some minor changes to the layout of the site in that a number of flowerbeds and fences have been removed. The 2nd Edition OS does not show trees except where they are densely placed as in orchards and woodlands so many may still remain.



**1921 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (New Series) Ordnance Survey.**

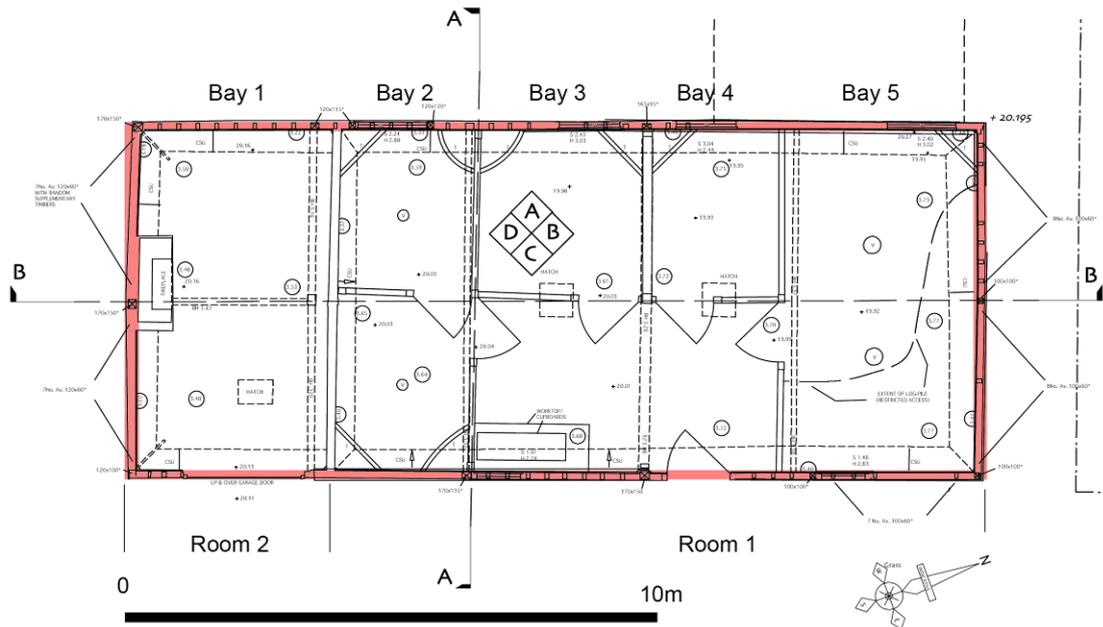
By 1921 there has been a significant amount of demolition elsewhere on the site. The buildings forming the northern side of the complex have been removed save for one which is a garage today.

A large glass house first shown in 1878 has been removed from the eastern flank of the Rectory.



**2009 JAP Architects survey for comparison.**

## Phasing.



### Phase 1. Mid C19th.

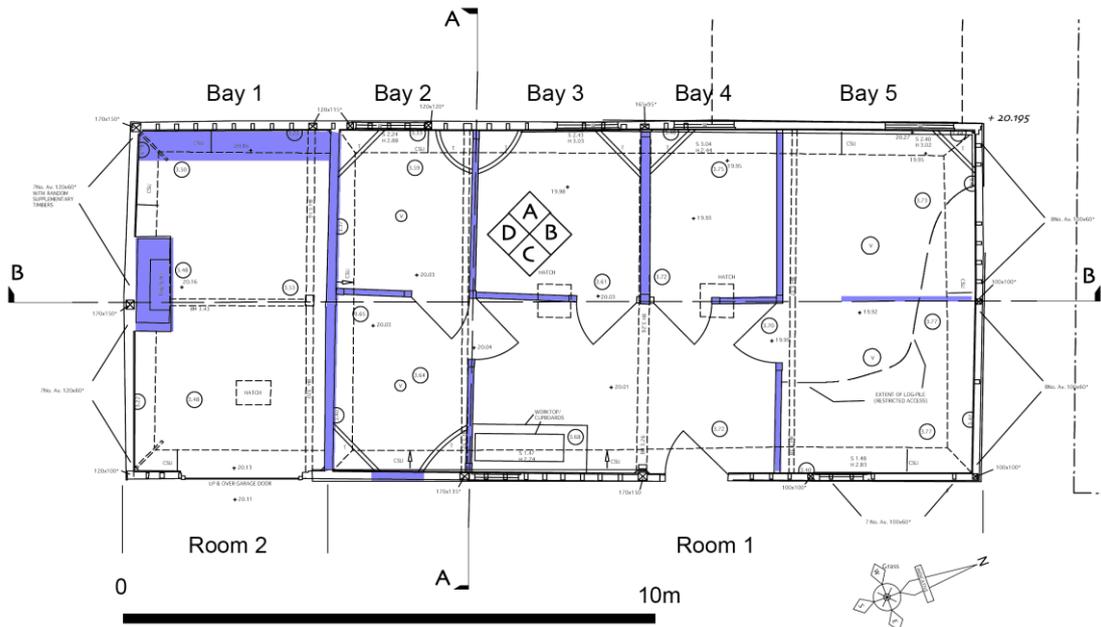
Map evidence suggests that the Stables appeared on the site between 1839 and 1878. The fabric of the building being composed of machined timbers and pre-fabricated trusses secured with threaded bolts supports a date much nearer 1878 when these materials were freely available. In 1839 most agricultural buildings were still being fabricated with pit sawn quarter-poles in the walls and rafters.

The building was boarded internally from the first and the original finish appears to be varnished wood. The internal layout was different as there were two entrance doors and it seems likely another sash window into Bay 1.

The 1878 OS map is colour coded to reflect the fabric of the buildings. Both the Rectory and the Stables are coloured red to symbolise brick or stone while the other buildings are coloured black to symbolise timber cladding. Therefore the Stables has always been rendered to look like stone and there is nothing in the fabric to suggest otherwise.

On the outside are two lashing rings and these are unique in that they are hand wrought iron where everything else is machined mild steel.

As the horses were kept here it is likely that the cart or chaise was kept in what today is the garage. While this is not part of this study, its position and design, with a high roof and wide, tall doors would make it the best choice. It still has lashing rings on its western wall. The horses could be brought to the cart, harnessed and be ready to move forward to the front of the house by simply sweeping to the east.



## Phase 2. Post 1856. LC19th.

It was decided to remodel the Stables and insert a well made modular system of partitions to create new horse stalls. This was no minor modification. The building was divided to form a snug, warm room in Bay 1 with a new chimney that was built within the timber-frame. The room was outfitted with large cupboards and new mild steel harness hooks and hangers.

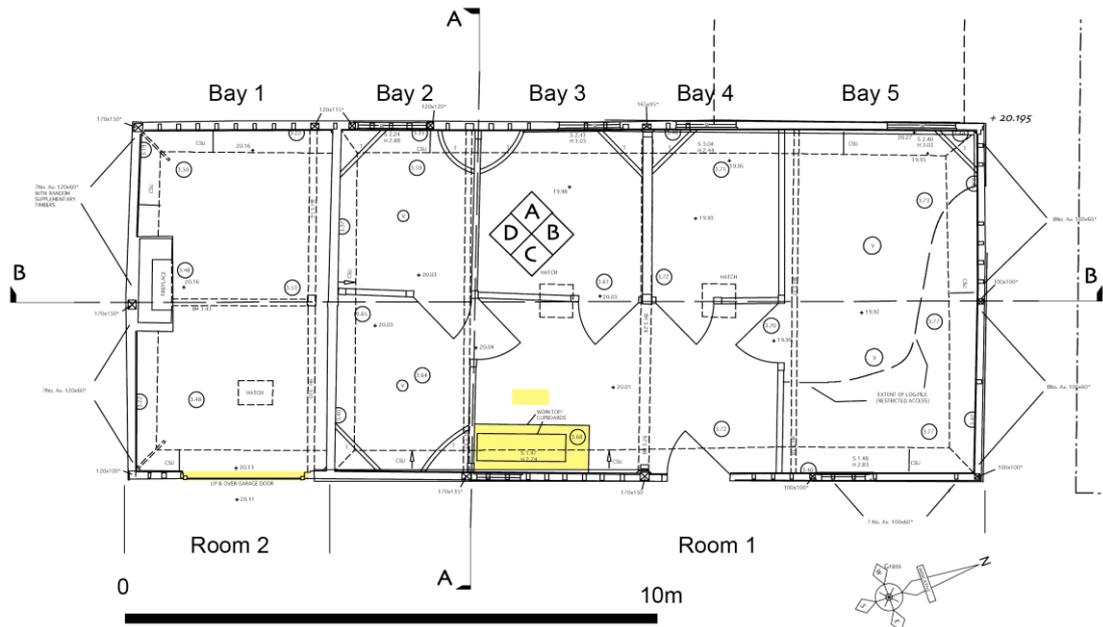
The southernmost doorway was lathed and boarded over and there must have been a door inserted where the garage door is now. The sash window was probably retained for light and ventilation as there are no other windows.

The floors in the new stalls were renewed with carefully designed drainage through patented drain covers and the ceilings remodelled with ventilation grilles. Each stall had elegantly made barrel style mangers put in the corners and a number of lashing rings on the walls. A saddle and harness hanger was put high on the wall and a timber broom rack put up behind the door.

Most of the fixtures and fittings are made of mild steel which wasn't discovered until 1855 and would have slowly superseded wrought iron as the metal of choice. Its main disadvantage is that it rusts very quickly if not protected or painted which would account for the failure of many of the hooks and hangers.

Later a second set of mangers were added in the opposing corners which meant that horses shared the stalls. This indicates that the type of horses changed. At Audley End for example, where there is a fine Victorian stable on public display it is forbidden to allow the heavy horses and hunters share stalls as they can and do injure each other.

The work was done before the present pink, red and black paint scheme was implemented as all the mangers are the same colour and where removed show the same varnished finish.



### Phase 3. The C20th.

As the C20th progressed the need for horses fell away. Carriages were replaced by motorcars and anyone who was anyone would have had one by the 1920's at the latest. By the 1940's the tractor began to supplant the horse as motive power in the field and although some traditionalists hung on into the 1950's horses became luxurious pets.

The Stables became a garage and a workshop. A 1970's style Henderson up and over garage door was put in to Bay 1 (Room 2) and the timber inexpertly repaired with EML and an unfinished scratch coat. A concrete floor was put in probably to replace an uneven one.

In Room 1 a poured concrete base for an indeterminate machine was put in and a makeshift workbench and Dexion shelving added. Later the machine was removed.

Bay 5 became the wood store and the central partition and mangers were removed leaving a large brown scar to show the original varnished finish.

The building became uncared for and was put on the Buildings at Risk Register in 1991 probably due to the loss of its external render allowing water ingress to destroy the frame. There are several episodes of modern repair, replacing the riven laths with sawn ones. The new render must have contained cement which creates a rigid impermeable layer which fails relatively quickly and feeds water into the frame.

The stall in Bay 4 was used to house rabbits and appropriate warnings were written by the Mears children in pencil on the door not to let them out. There is a connecting hatch to the lean-to built on the outside which is completely wired and is a run for the rabbits. The mass of wire defences suggests fox trouble.

## Discussion.

Having established a build date in the Mid C19th from the historic mapping and the fabric of the building the Stables can be viewed in the wider context of the site itself. It can be seen that the Stables has been aligned with the thrashing barn to the south and a complex developed that would have been recognised by the High Farmers.

At the Rectory is seen a fully developed farmyard system corralled for animal husbandry. As Mingay says 'To house valuable stock, preserve its manure and promote greater efficiency in the working of the greater complexities of the system, new buildings in new configurations were required. Implements of unprecedented complexity and dedication to single tasks became increasingly common and steam power invaded, first the barn and eventually the field.'

The Stables is positioned for optimum use. It has direct access to the fields, paddocks and the orchard to the north. It is in plain view of the house so that the valuable horses are also under surveillance. The cart house is positioned so that the horses can be walked to the hitches and then on to the drive outside the house.

The Stables is an elegant building, well proportioned under a grey slate roof, with sash windows and quality doors and a far cry from the normal vernacular. The Rectory has always had a wealthy occupant and this is reflected in the quality of the building.

Later it was outfitted to a high standard, but not the highest as there are no brand names except on the drain covers. The Victorians were immensely proud of their products and imprinted their names onto most quality items.

The addition of Room 2 indicates a change in the process of caring for the horses and also the level of comfort for those who cared for them. Room 2 has real fireplace rather than a stove for cooking the bran mash and there were large storage cupboards for private storage. It may have been that the stable boy lived here as was often the case.

Gradually, horses were phased out by machinery and the original purpose of the building was lost. Room 2 became a garage with a LC20th Henderson galvanised door and Room 1 became a workshop, wood store and general place to deposit useful things. The Mears children kept their rabbits in one of the stalls which was wire netted to protect them and a makeshift run was built on the outside of the buildings to allow them a glimpse of the outside world.

## Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Viscount Garmoyle, the owner of the site for engaging me to record the building. I also acknowledge Richard Havis of Essex County Council Heritage Environment Team for his involvement. The survey drawings were kindly provided by Trevor Lang of JAP Architects, Clare, Suffolk and produced by Snell David Architects.



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**ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD/ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY**

**SUMMARY SHEET**

Site name/Address: Old Rectory, Bell Lane, Lt Bardfield, Essex.	
Parish: Lt Bardfield	District: Uttlesford
NGR: TL665313	Site Code:
Type of Work: Historic Building Recording	Site Director/Team: Barry Hillman-Crouch
Date of Work: 24 01 2011	Size of Area Investigated: 20x20m
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: N/A	Funding source: Owner
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related EHER Nos:
Final Report: The Old Rectory, Bell Lane, Lt Bardfield, Essex. Description and analysis of a timber-framed stables at the Old Rectory. Surveyed 24 01 2011. Barry J Hillman-Crouch MStPA DipFA BSc HND.	
Periods Represented: MC19th - C20th	
<p><b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b></p> <p>A timber-framed five bay Stables with grey slate roof. Map evidence suggests that the Stables appeared on the site between 1839 and 1878. The fabric of the building being composed of machined timbers and pre-fabricated trusses secured with threaded bolts supports a date much nearer 1878 when these materials were freely available. Originally the main facade had two doors and three sash windows arranged symmetrically. The timber-frame is numbered at least on the main facade.</p> <p>The building was then later divided into a single bay room outfitted as a tack room with fitted cupboards and an inserted chimney with domestic fireplace. The other four bays were remodelled with high quality stable fittings to provide 6 horse stalls with mangers and lashing rings. The brick floors were carefully laid with central drains. One door was blocked to achieve the new layout.</p> <p>In the LC20th the tack room became a garage with an inserted Henderson galvanised door and concrete floor and the stables became a workshop, wood store and general place to deposit useful things</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports:	
Author of Summary: Barry J Hillman-Crouch MStPA DipFA BSc HND.	Date of Summary: 11 01 2011.