

Cordwainers, (Cordwinders), 89 High Street, Lavenham, Suffolk.
EH Level 1 description and analysis of the house. Surveyed 03 09 2012. Revised.
Also - Impact analysis of the proposed scheme of alterations.



Page | 1

Lavenham as pictured on Google earth in 2007.



The location of Cordwainers on the High Street.

Location

The present address of Cordwainers is 89 High Street, Lavenham, Suffolk CO10 9PT. It is situated on the High Street on the corner of Market Lane. OS Grid Reference: TL9153549292. The building is Listed as Cordwinders.

Listing



© Mr Bob Cottrell ARPS AFIAP DPAGB

IoE Number:276730

Location:CORDWINDERS, 89 HIGH STREET (east side),LAVENHAM, BABERGH, SUFFOLK

Photographer:Mr Bob Cottrell ARPS AFIAP DPAGB. Date Photographed:29 July 2001

Date listed:23 January 1958. Date of last amendment:23 January 1958

Gradell

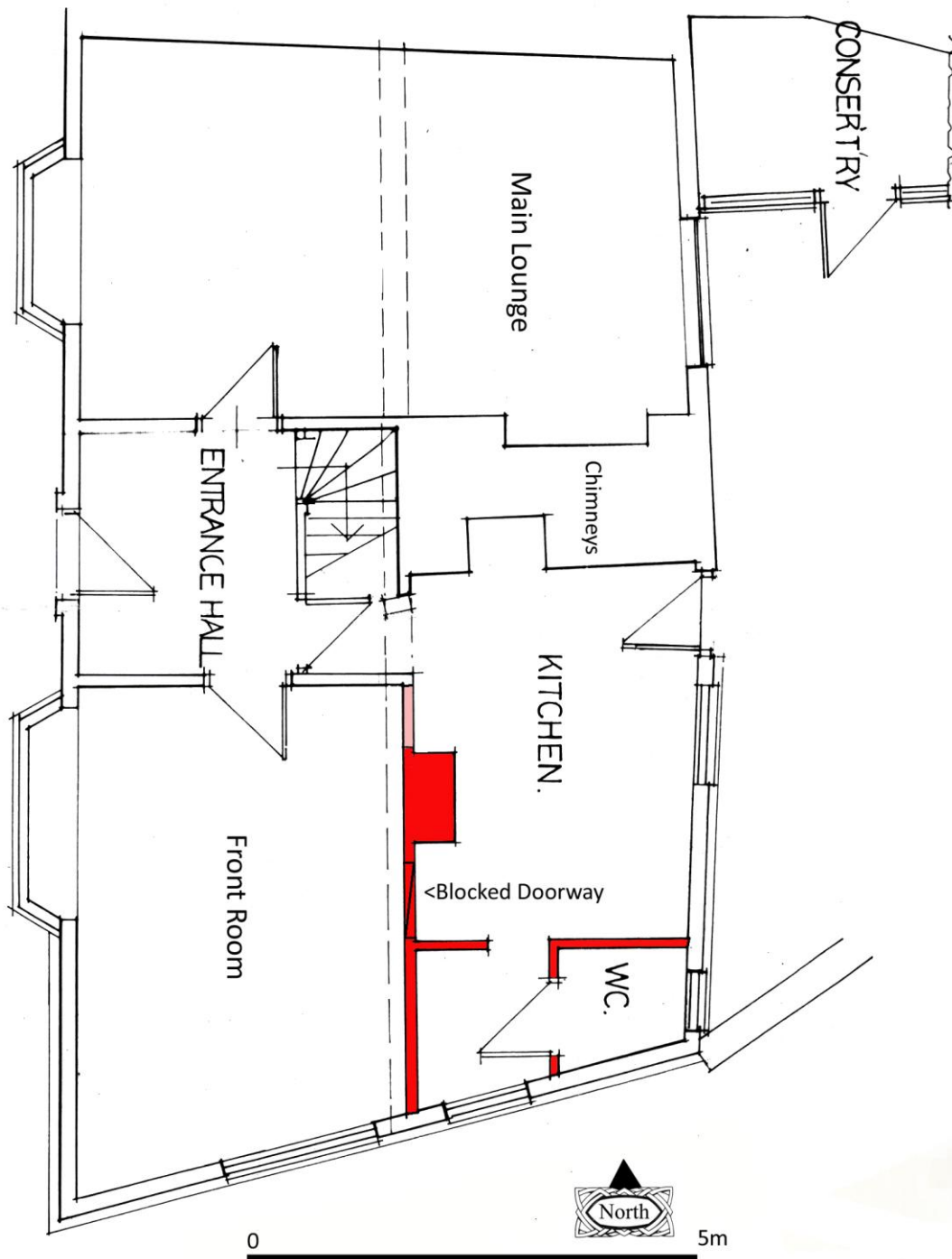
TL 9149 50/581 23.1.58. II GV

A C15 timber-framed and plastered building at one time the One Bell Inn. It stands at the corner of Market Lane and High Street, with the walls leaning outward conspicuously. Roof tiled. Renovated, with most of the timber-framing exposed. Two storeys. Three window range of double-hung sashes with single vertical glazing bars. The ground storey has 2 splayed bays with slate roofs and there is an original blocked window on the upper storey. A central doorway has pilasters and cornice. On the south end there are some restored windows and one double-hung sash with glazing bars (2-light). Listing NGR: TL9153549292.

Scope of this Report.

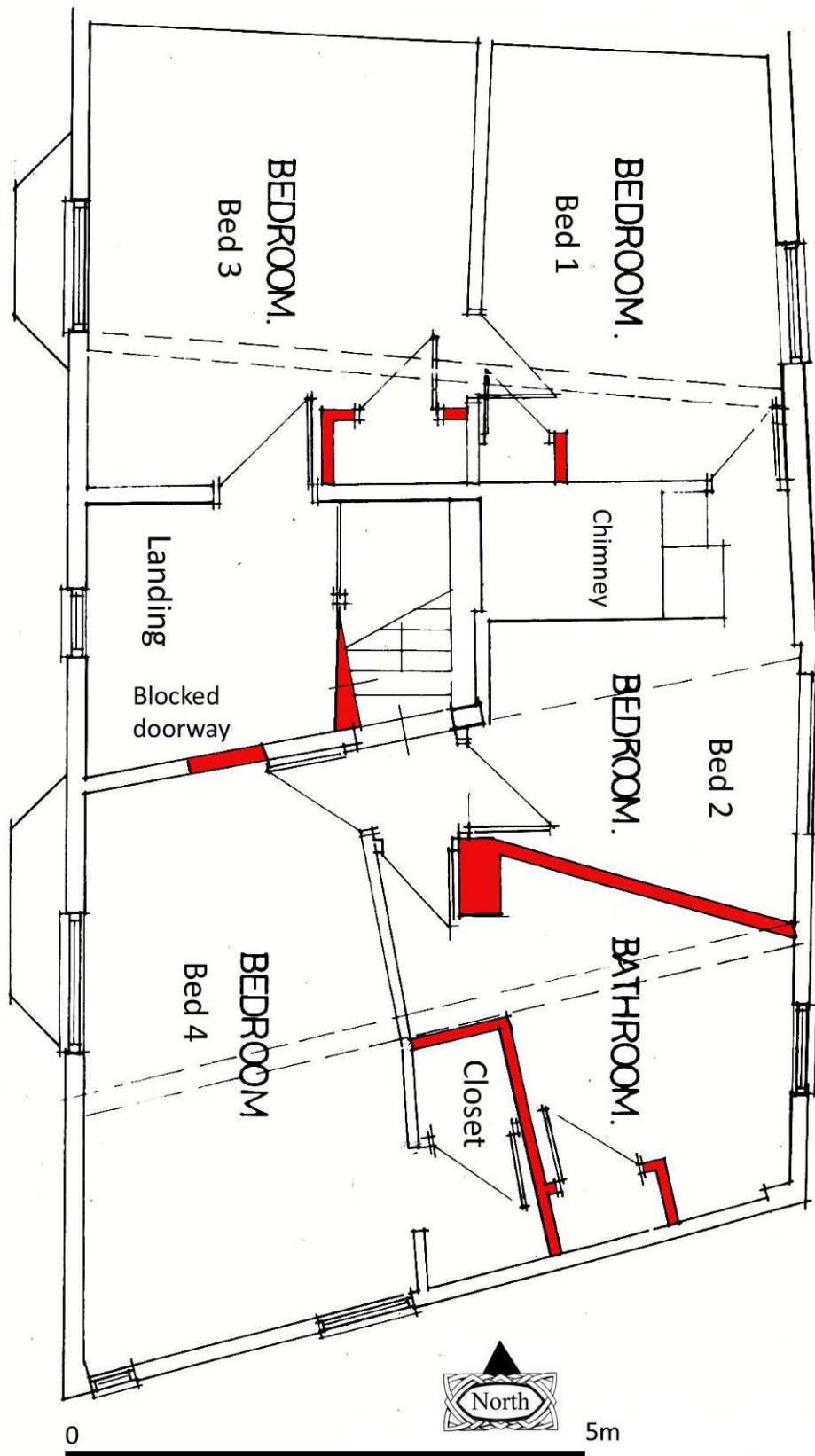
This report seeks to describe and analyse the building to English Heritage Level 1 in order to inform some proposed interior alterations by the new owners. At the time of the survey the previous owner, Mrs Cynthia Jane Bean was able to point out the few changes made to the house since she moved there in 1971. It is known from her that the house was completely renovated in the 1930's.

An impact analysis is also appended discussing the proposed works.



Ground floor plan labelling the rooms and outlining proposed changes. Dec 2012.

Note these are revised measured drawings.



First floor plan labelling the rooms and outlining proposed changes. Dec 2012.

Description– External



Page | 5

The western elevation of Cordwainers facing the High Street.

Western Elevation.

The western elevation has an exposed timber-frame. The upper section, above the bressummer reveals the structure of the early house with 6in close studding decorated with curving display bracing. The current C20th windows are all inserted into earlier openings clumsily cut into the frame in the C18th or EC19th when the frame would have been rendered over in lime plaster and the frame hidden.

There is framing for two large 4ft wide windows, that to the north retaining all its mullions. The other has been much cut about and there is evidence for a contemporary ceiling light and later windows.

The front of the building was originally jettied along its length and there is evidence in the front room to clearly show this. A Tudor arch headed timber doorframe has been exposed in the otherwise plastered lower wall which must represent a Georgian intervention, probably using an original frame.

There are two canted bay windows which are Victorian in style but C20th in execution. The central doorcase has plain jambs (not really pilasters as stated in the Listing) and a modest hooded cornice with lead finishing. Again these are C20th. The four panelled door appears to be an original late Georgian one.

The plain clay tiled roof has a majestic sweep implying there is no ridge piece. There is a slightly off-centre chimney rebuilt from reused bricks. The rainwater goods are of white painted metal with cast iron downpipes.



The southern elevation. The building leans at a characterful angle. Looking NE.

Southern Elevation

The original frame has been exposed and the 6in close studding is decorated with display bracing trenched across the timbers. The central, full height storey post is bracketed to the frame perhaps to provide rigidity around a large window opening. The western part of the lower wall is plastered and shows where the jetty has been underbuilt. The frame is on a plinth of red bricks set in beige sandy mortar. The building looks more racked than it really is because of its trapezoidal plan.



The southern wall looking W.

There are three correctly framed opening for windows with facsimile leaded light mullioned windows. There is also an indication of another upper floor window cut into the frame and then later blocked off. The very large pair of 6/6 double hung sashes are display windows. The fact that they are set vertical in an otherwise off-plumb wall would indicate they too are renovated.



The eastern elevation.

Eastern Elevation

The eastern elevation is completely rendered in lime mortar. The windows are EC20th and all different in style. The upper central 9 light window is a Crittall style rolled steel casement and there is another to match it lighting the main lounge. From here it can be seen the chimney has two shafts both of EC20th Flettons with red brick banding.



The rear of the building from the garden. Looking NW.

Description – Internal



Page | 9

Looking down the winder stair. Note the redundant mortices filled with lime mortar.

The Entrance Hall.

The building has been converted into a lobby entry house with doors off to the Front Room, Main Lounge and Kitchen (to the rear). There is a winder stair opposite the front door.



The machined structure of the C20th staircase. Some older panels remain.

The staircase is EC20th made from machined softwood, nailed with flooring brads and marked up in pencil. There is a small section of earlier boarding with many layers of wallpaper to show there was a previous structure that has been removed.

Several joists have been sawn through and the empty mortices in the axial joist filled with rough lime mortar.



The Main lounge looking E. All fixtures are modern.



The Main Lounge looking W.

The Main Lounge

The main lounge is remarkable only for the bracket on the transverse ceiling joist. There are a number of these in the house and it is likely they are reused from the underbuilt jetty. The frame is hidden. There is a replica Essex cupboard in the NE corner and the timber fire surround was put in by Mrs Bean. The brick firestack is not visible.



The Front Room looking NE. The wall beside the piano is disrupted for a modern chimney.



The Front Room looking S. The blank wall beside the piano is modern brickwork.

The Front Room.

The Front Room displays the frame in the ceiling with 8x4in joist at 16in centres. The shadow of the removed lower top-plate can be clearly seen along with large mortices for timber brackets to support the bressummer. In the SE corner there is just such a bracket.



Ceiling showing the line of the removed top-plate and mortices for brackets. Looking NW.



Bracket used in the SE corner. The beam has a new chamfer to fit it.

The eastern wall has been rebuilt to install a C20th Fletton brick chimney in the Kitchen and a brick built partition wall. It is this wall that the present owners would like to remove. It can be assumed the chimney had a fireplace on both sides and there a large patch of disturbance in the plaster where it should be in the Front Room. The ceiling joist has no pegs to indicate and original partition indicating the ground floor was open here.



The fireplace was revealed in December 2012. Note also the blocked doorway.



The fire place has been blocked with bricks taken from its partial dismantling.

There is a 1920's or 30's style 'catalogue' brick fireplace made from narrow 6x2in bricks set in white cementitious mortar that was uncovered in December 2012. The fireplace is 28in wide with an aperture of 16x24in high. The chimney breast has been continued in C20th Flettons. The aperture has been bricked in with the same bricks as the original fireplace and it seems they have been robbed out of where the Flettons now are. (Also see Page 32).



C20th lath and plaster on older poor quality studwork to the left of the fireplace.



Modern repairs to the right of the fireplace. Note the galvanised EML.

The section of wall to the left of the fireplace is clad with swan softwood laths fastened with wire French nails and rendered with cementitious mortar and is clearly a C20th repair. In the Kitchen, a small inspection hole revealed wattle and daub (see Kitchen). To the right of the fireplace there is a blocked up doorway and a sequence of C20th finishes. The earliest is of riven laths again fastened with wire nails and then over clad with EML and roof tiles. All the plaster is cementitious.



The Kitchen looking SW. The chimney stack can be seen in the roof void.



The Kitchen looking N. Note the huge slant in the ceiling.

The Kitchen.

The Kitchen has crystallised in the 1930's although many of the current units are direct copies of their predecessors made for Mrs Bean. There are two chimney flues. That to the west (common with the Front Room) has been bricked up while the other in the north wall serves the boiler. The timber surround is modern. The ceiling has a pronounced slant that is not visible upstairs indicating a new level floor has been put in the bedrooms above. The scullery contains a modern WC unit commissioned by Mrs Bean in the LC20th.



Opening up in December revealed the chimney stack and wattle and daub in the wall.



Wattle and daub revealed in the kitchen wall.

Opening up in December revealed the bricks in the chimney stack to be an older larger type than the Flettons elsewhere. However, the mortar used is identical and therefore they are reused. A small inspection hole in the Kitchen wall revealed a hazel rod wattle and daub panel beneath. However, this is not an old panel. The straw is very fresh and there is too much of it, there is very little binding soil and too much mortar. It is probably EC20th.



The frame visible in the Kitchen looking west into the Hall.

There is an exposed section of frame in the Kitchen beside the stairs that contains a storey post bracketed to two axial main joists that allows the common joists to span the room. This is braced with another large bracket. The underside of the bracket has been hacked back to insert a door frame and another doorway is present on the other side of the post. This retains its lintel which has been repeatedly scored with a thin bladed knife. These are apotropaic marks put there to ward off evil and bless anyone who walks through the now blocked doorway.



Fine scratches put in to bless the doorway.



Straight bracing in the north wall of Bedroom 1. Looking N.

Bedrooms 1 (NE Bedroom) and 3 (NW Bedroom).

Bedrooms 1 and 3 share a common wall with the neighbouring property and this is significant because the framing of this wall is different to the rest of the house. The 6in studs are wide apart at 29in centres whereas most of the rest of the house is set at 16in centres. The eastern wall of this room is set at 22in centres and may represent an economy of timber on the back of the house. The common wall has a straight, trenched brace while all the others are curved.



The frame is very contorted. The C20th closet is vertical. Looking S at the tie-beam.



The ceiling in Bedroom 3 showing the tie-beam.

The frame in Bedrooms 1 and 3 has been heavily contorted because the braces have been cut off and the effect redressed in the Georgian era. Rather than try to straighten the frame the builder has inserted a plate that he has bolted onto the underside of the original tie-beam. The plate has then been morticed through and the ceiling joists levelled by cutting the tenons in different positions to suit the level. The ceiling is thus Georgian and the scantling joists are only 3in wide set on edge.



Georgian era bolt securing the repair plate to the underside of the tie-beam.

The bolt has an unusual head and is likely to be a forelock bolt rather than a threaded one and so early in the period rather than closer to 1800.



The north wall in Bedroom 3 has a closet door into the next property.

In Bedroom 3 there is a two plank door hung on pintles that forms a closet door. The closet is effectively inside the adjoining property and may indicate that once the upper rooms at least were communal.



The original window is now divided by a modern wall. Looking NW from the stairs.

In Bedroom 3 there is an original window opening that has now been truncated by stud wall to form a large landing big enough to be another bedroom. The frame here has several 1.25in fixture holes at eye level.



The firestack in Bedroom 2. Looking N.

Bedroom 2.

Bedroom 2 is now little more than a corridor that contains a very considerable firestack that coincides with the fireplace in the Main Lounge. It has been completely plastered over but the upper section is visible in the roofspace where it is composed of Georgian style bricks set in a bright white mortar. There is also a secondary flue that has been completely plastered over.



Georgian ceiling joists in Bedroom 2.

Like Bedrooms 1 and 3 the ceiling is composed of narrow ceiling joists as part of a Georgian refurbishment. There are also at least two modern 2x4in machined joists with noggins added in.



Looking SW in Bedroom 4. The openings are all correctly framed.



Looking NE in Bedroom 4. Blocked doorway is indicated by lack of pegholes and new skirting.

Bedroom 4.

The frame in the south and west wall concurs with that seen on the outside and it can be seen that there has been a succession of original and inserted windows. The north wall is of interest because it is pegged for a central doorway which has been blocked up in the C20th and is marked by a poorly matched skirting board and a shadow in the wall.



Bedroom 4 has a small en-suite wash room and closet.



Inside the closet which is made of hardboard.

There is a C20th closet made from square battens and hardboard with a lino floor which would have been put in during the 1930's. The door to the closet is the only one of its type in the house and is a Georgian two panel servant's door.

There are a number of other closets in the house from the same Art Deco 1930's period, all made in the same way. That in Bedroom 1 has a period four panel door (See picture on Page 14). The new owners wish to remove these homemade fittings in order to update the interiors.

The en-suite closet is built into the neighbouring room which houses the bathroom and the airing cupboard. The tie-beam passes right through the wall and indicates the room partition is not original to the frame.



The bathroom looking E. Note the tie-beam coming from Bedroom 4.



The bathroom retains some of its 1930's fixtures. Chimney is made of Flettons.

The Bathroom is unremarkable and contains some fittings from the 1930's including the airing cupboard. Opening up revealed the chimney stack serving the fireplace in the Front Room is made of Flettons. These are visible in the marked roofspace as LBC Phorpres bricks.

Roof Structure



Page | 25

Looking SE into the roof space. The roof was re-tiled in 1973.



Looking N into the roof space.

The roof was re-tiled in 1973 and there is a black asphalt membrane under the battens. The scantling rafters are set on edge and are now paired onto a ridgepiece. The roof is a clasped side purlin roof with side lapped and nailed collars. The purlins and collars are of the 1973 rebuild.



Looking south in the roofspace. The yoke is for a chimney flue.

The rafters are the original 6x3in flat rafters turned on their edges and reused. There are lines of nail holes to show where the previous battens were fixed.



Earlier waney collars reused in the roof.

Looking north there is a pair of earlier waney collars but these have been French nailed to the replaced rafters.

The roof space is unsafe as it is covered in insulation and many of the ceilings are simply hardboard. It was possible to see the top of the Kitchen chimney stack where it had been dismantled and see that it was made of LBC Phorpres bricks. Above is a yoke presumably for a steel chimney flue since removed.

Carpentry and Timber Marks, Apotropaic Marks and Grafitti



The head of the storey post in Bedroom 1.

There are remarkably few carpenter's marks visible in the house. The racked storey post in Bedroom 1 is marked II tag with a race knife. Some of the joists in Bedroom 3 are numbered with a thin knife blade but not in order.



Apotropaic marks over an old doorway into the Kitchen.

The only apotropaic marks found were over the blocked doorway beside the stair in the Kitchen. There were many frenetic marks but it is possible to delineate the heavier more deliberate marks. This shows an M for Mary and an X for Christ. These marks are the most common found in old buildings and can date from the C16th or C17th but also from the MC19th when they were revived.

Page | 28

As the timber was likely to have been hidden under plaster in the Victorian period they are more likely to be C17th when the persecution of witches met its peak during the Civil War largely due to the activities of the Witchfinder General.

Fixtures and Fittings



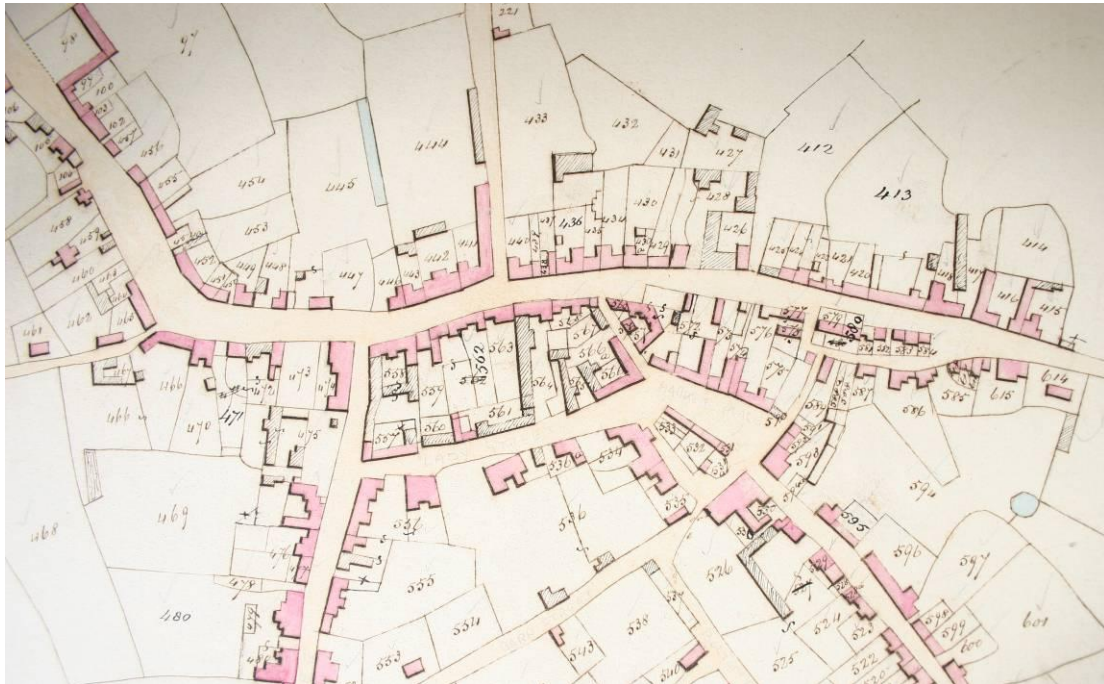
Many taper burn marks are visible at the top of the stairs.

There are a large number of taper burn marks throughout the building. The most impressive are those at the top of the stairs burnt into the storey post. These are caused by placing naked flames next to the timber and allowing the flame to burn a candle shaped scar into the wood. Often they show where the previous occupants sat and read and wrote at night time in the bedrooms.

There are no original fittings left in the building. There is a row of 1.25in diameter fixture holes at eye level on the Landing which is a traditional place to set a loom against the wall.

Topographical Survey from Maps

Page | 29



Photograph of the Tithe Award Map for Lavenham of 1842. Drawn up W-E.



Detail of Cordwainers (Plot 569). Map oriented to north.

Cordwainers is shown on the 1842 Tithe Award as Plot 569 Cottage and Gardens owned and occupied by John Mills. It is listed under 'exonerated cottages' which assumes a reduced rate for the poor cottagers.



1885 First Edition Ordnance Survey

In 1885 the house is shown divided into three properties each with a small porch or steps up.



1904 Second Edition Ordnance Survey.

Again in 1904 the house is shown as three units.

In the research it was found that Cordwainers (Cordwinders) is a modern name for the house mentioned first in the Listing made in 1958. In all other mentions it is simply 89 High Street. No link was found with this profession during the research but Mrs Bean believes there was a shoe maker in the house.

Historic photographs of Cordwainers.



Page | 31

1926? Cordwainers described only as 89 High Street in Lingard's Lavenham.

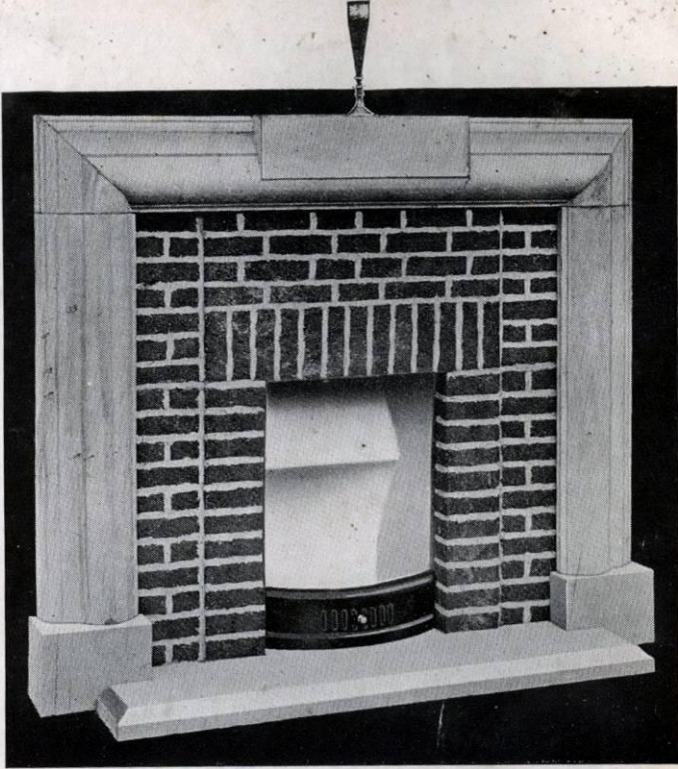
Despite an extensive trawl of the library in the Bury St Edmunds Record Office only one historic photograph of Cordwainers was discovered. This photograph from Lingard's Lavenham: A Photographic Tour of Lavenham's Past and probably taken in 1926, shows the side of the building stripped off and being related. The side wall panels are brick nogged or filled with wattle and daub. The front of the building is shown as plastered and there is a doorway where the Tudor door-head is now.

Mid 1930's Petroma Catalogue image.

"PETROMA."

C 1

**RED BRICK INTERIOR, POINTED IN THREE SECTIONS,
WHITE PORTLAND STONE MANTEL SURROUND.**



RED INTERIOR.—38" × 38" × 1½" thick. Jamb 11". Fire
16" × 24" high.
Brick course around opening projecting 1".

STONE MANTEL.—Jamb 7". Overall projection from wall, 4½".
The red interior can be obtained without the stone surround
if required and used in an oak mantel.

HEARTH.—White Portland Stone.

For Coal, Gas or Electric Fires.

Prices on Application.

Page | 32

Petroma catalogue of the early 1930's showing the same fireplace as in the Front Room.

In December 2012, the fabric of the wall in the Front Wall was exposed to reveal a bricked up fireplace of the same dimensions and appearance as that pictured above. It was subsequently partly dismantled and bricked up using the original bricks and the chimney repaired with Flettons.

Discussion and Significance

Cordwainers is an interesting building as well as being a landmark on the High Street. Originally built as long walled jetty house with a trapezoidal plan it may well have been a live-work unit with retail rooms and workshops on the ground floor and accommodation above.

Page | 33

Long-walled (or continuous) jettied buildings are widespread in the C16th and C17th. The Listing offers a date in the C15th but this is more likely to apply to the party wall with the adjacent house which has a much wider spaced timber-frame.

The building was heavily remodelled in the Georgian era, removing the original lower front wall and building it out flush with the upper wall. The building was then fitted with sash windows and the old mullions filled in and the whole exterior rendered over with lath and plaster.

Interior works show the build was badly racked when the house was refurbished and rather than try to straighten the frame it was simple trussed with ironwork and large timber plates.

The Tithe Award states that in 1842 one John Mills owned and occupied the house. This does not mean he was alone as the Tithe only records the head of the family. It does however show that no other families lived there. Other records make note of tenants by referring to them as '&others'.

By the time of the First Edition OS in 1885 the house has been divided into three units each with its own porch or (more likely) steps.

A photograph probably taken in 1926 shows the house being related on the south wall. This was presumably before the vogue to expose the frames really took off and Lingard's Lavenham is full of buildings being stripped back or even completely dismantled to be moved, sometimes as far America.

The most recent occupant, Mrs Cynthia Jane Bean, remembers that the previous owners moved in during the 1930's when most of the works were done to give it its present appearance. Apart from having the roof fixed in 1973 she made no other changes externally.

Internally she added a downstairs WC, a new fire surround in the Main Lounge and some replacement kitchen units. Otherwise the interior is as it was set up in the 1930's with a number of hardboard partitions, closets and an airing cupboard.

The current owners wish to remove the 1930's additions including a wall made of LBC Phorpres bricks which has closed off the Scullery from the Front Room. Here the lack of pegs in the ceiling joist indicates that once this space was open plan, probably as a retail or work space.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Mrs Simonetta Bastick for engaging me to record the building. I also thank Derek Mason of Mason Developments for recommending me for the task. I also acknowledge the friendly staff of the Bury St Edmunds Record Office for the production of the Tithe Award Map.

Page | 34

Bibliography.

Andrews, DD and Stenning DF. Regional variation in timber-framed building in England and Wales down to 1550. Essex County Council 1994.

Alcock et al. Recording Timber-framed buildings: an illustrated glossary. CBA Reprint 2008.

Hall, Linda. Period House Fixtures and Fittings 1300-1900. Countryside Books. 2005.

Harris, Richard. Discovering Timber -framed Buildings. Shire Publications. 1978.

Hewett, Cecil. English Historic Carpentry. Phillimore. 1980.

Hillman-Crouch, B J. Historic Ironwork Repairs in Timber-framed Buildings. 2003. Published on the internet in 2006. <http://www.dowsingarchaeology.org.uk/Ironwork/iron-index.htm>.

Ranson, Francis Lingard. Lingard's Lavenham: A Photographic Tour of Lavenham's Past. 1990.

Petroma. An Exposition of Fireside Warmth and Comfort – Neville Red Brick Fires. Catalogue. E1930's.

Impact Analysis on the Historic Fabric by the Proposed Scheme of Works.



Page | 35

Eastern (rear) elevation of Cordwainers.



Crittall windows on the rear elevation. Looking NW.

1. It is proposed to replace the Crittall windows with timber windows.

The Crittall windows are a C20th insertion popular in the mid 1920-60's. These particular casements have landscape panes of glass – a form adopted by the International Moderne style. The casements were made in Silver End, Essex where there are countless examples of this type of window. Close examination shows these are a later, more refined model, probably from the 1950's or 60's.

Page | 36

However these windows are not compatible with timber-framed buildings for the following reasons:

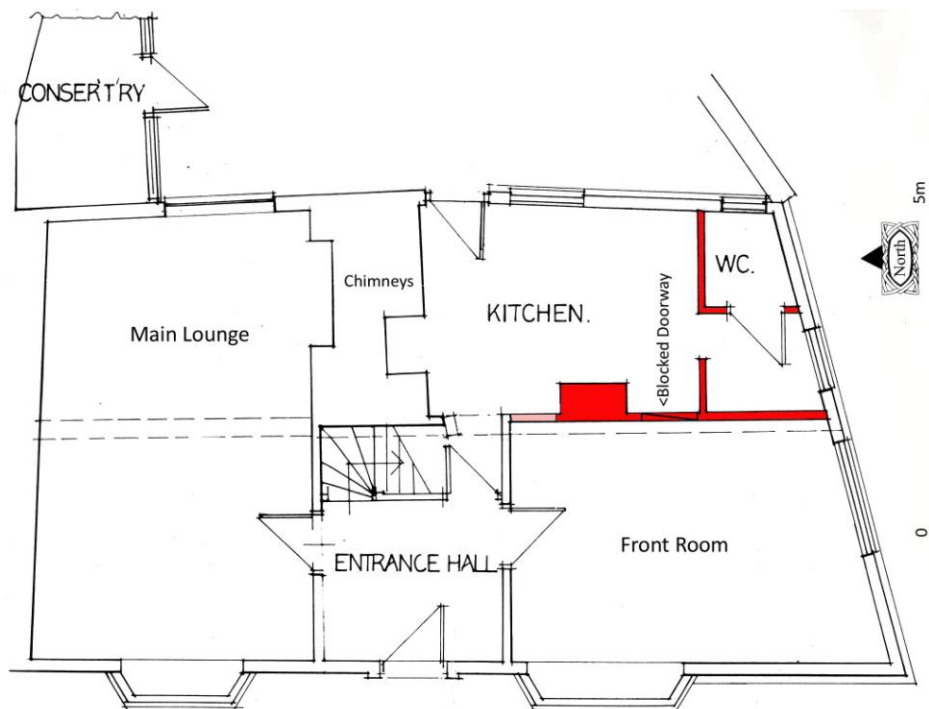
1a. They are very rigid being made from strip rolled steel and do not flex with the building leading to cracking of the render and stress of the frames.

1b. They are highly prone to condensation which makes its way into the timber frame leaving it open to beetle attack and damp.

1c. The landscape frames are not in keeping with the portrait panes of the sash and other windows and create an aesthetic clash as well as lacking authenticity in a timber-framed building.

It is noted that the adjacent buildings in the lane, Market Street, nearly all have replacement timber windows, most of them recent. One or two retain Crittall frames but these are small units in brick facades.

It would be to the long term benefit of the building to replace the steel casements with timber ones. The visual impact on the building would be negligible as only the upper window is visible from the street. As there is no cohesiveness in the window types on the rear elevation, changing two of them will not create an unbalance in the facade.



Proposed changes to the ground floor.

2. It is proposed to remove the dividing wall between the Living Room and the Kitchen.



Page | 37

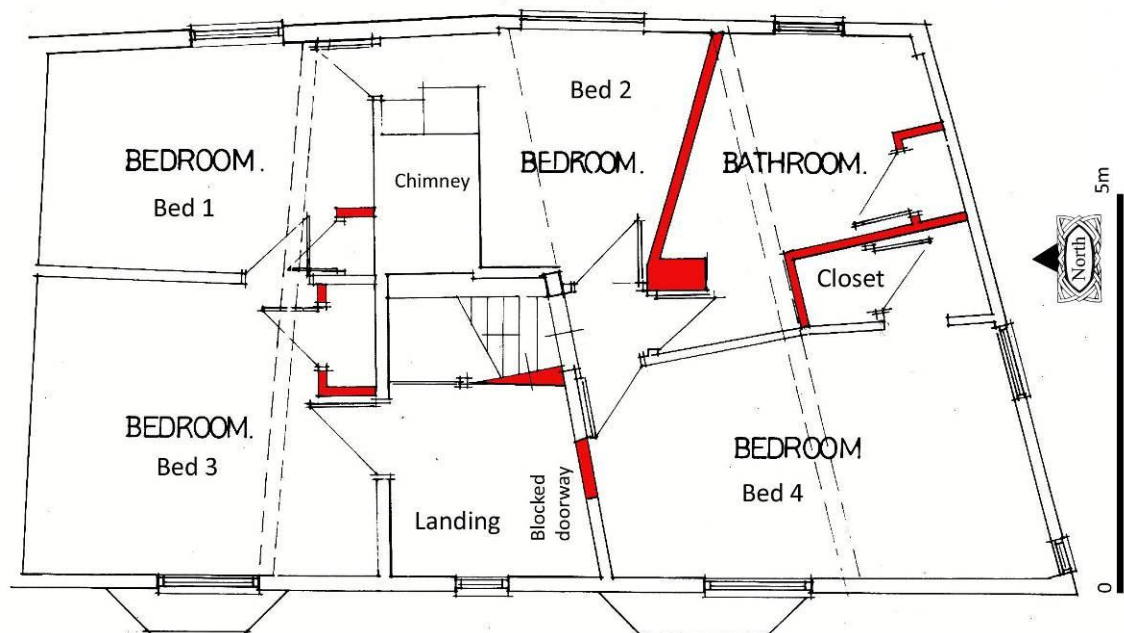
The dividing wall as revealed in December 2012.

2a. Examination of the timber-frame shows that originally there was no partition wall in this position. The present wall houses a circa 1930 'catalogue' fireplace and a chimney made from Flettons which has been subsequently blocked. To the LHS (north) is a section of scantling studwork which has EC20th lath and plaster and wattle and daub. The properties of the wattle and daub are not authentic but an uniformed recipe with too much mortar and too much fresh straw. It is proposed to remove the plaster which is failing to reveal the structure of this section. If it proves to be older than the C20th then it will be retained.

To the south of the fireplace is a blocked doorway and then the rest of the wall is made up with C20th brickwork. The fireplace and chimney is C20th and can be seen to be made of LBC Phorpres bricks. The upper part of the chimney had a steel flue supported in a timber cradle in the roof space but this has been long ago removed. The chimney has been out of commission since at least 1971.

Removing the partition will revert the building to its original open plan design. It is most likely the building was originally a shop with display windows on to the main road and the lane. The partition is made of poor quality materials and has been highly altered in the C20th. It is more than likely that it was originally put in as part of the renovations shown in the historic photograph of 1926.

2b. It is also proposed to remove the WC cubicle in the corner of the Kitchen. This was put in by the previous owner Mrs Bean around the year AD2000 solely to cater for her more elderly guests who could not negotiate the stairs. It has no historic value.



ge | 38

3. It is proposed to remove the C20th partitions and door blocking on the first floor.

The first floor contains several C20th partitions and closets inserted as part of the buildings reversion to one house. The awkward trapezoidal plan of the building has been exacerbated by more awkward internal partitions.

3a. It is proposed to remove the hardboard closets and partitions to make better use of the space and remove the somewhat tired and fire hazardous materials. These have no historic value and are temporary screens rather than proper walls.

3b. It is proposed to remove the studwork wall between the Bathroom and the Bedroom. This is a C20 partition made from machined studwork and lath and plaster. It has no connection with the original form of the house. It proposed replacement will follow the line of the bridging joist to create two more equal rooms. The small chimney stack is made of LBC Phorpres bricks and is therefore C20th. It is a redundant structure that can be removed.

3c. It is proposed to open up a former doorway between Bed 4 and the Landing. This is simply a reversal of C20th blocking and reinstates part of the original design of the house. At the same time it is proposed to remove the peculiar top step of the staircase which is LC20th insertion to allow direct access to the Landing which is no longer required.

FIN. Revisions made 19 12 2012. BJHC.