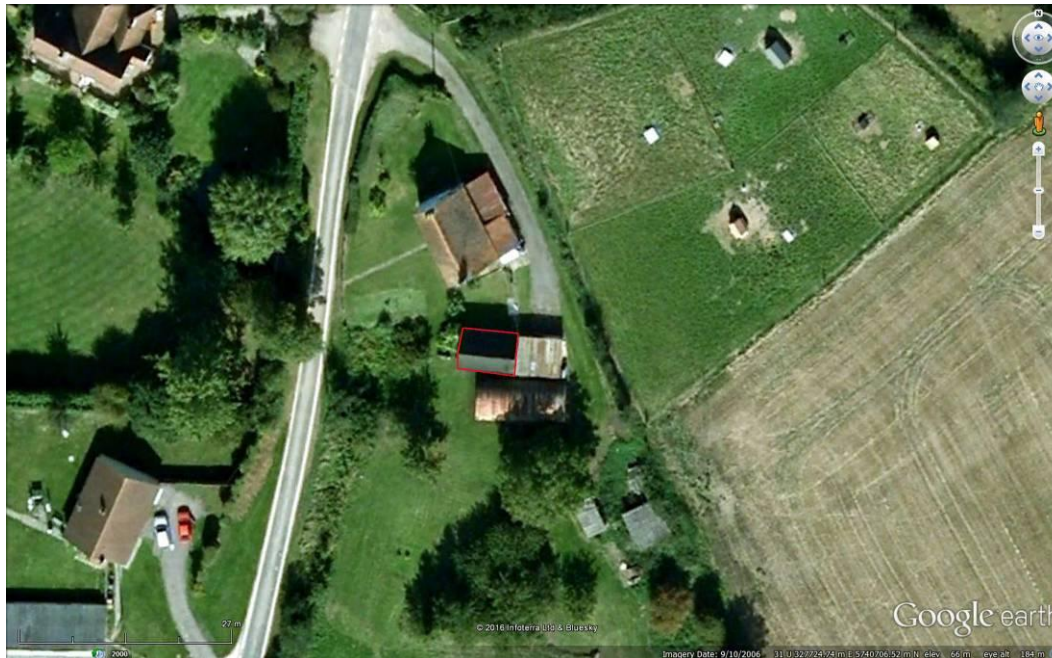


Wilderness, Drakes Lane, Little Waltham, Essex CM3 3NA.  
Description and analysis of an outbuilding. Surveyed 31 10 2016.



2006 Google earth. Location of the former hospital



2006 Google earth. Detail of the site showing the building under study.

### Location

Wilderness, Drakes Lane, Little Waltham, Essex CM3 3NA. The house is situated to the east of Drakes Lane which runs north from Leighs Road, off Wheelers Hill. The outbuilding is centred on NGR. TL 72646 13180.



**ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD  
ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY  
SUMMARY SHEET**

Site name/Address: Wilderness, Drakes Lane, Little Waltham, Essex CM3 3NA	
Parish: Little Waltham	District: Chelmsford
NGR: TL 72646 13180.	Site Code: N/A
Type of Work: Historic Building Recording	Site Director/Team: Barry Hillman-Crouch
Date of Work: 31 10 2016.	Size of Area Investigated: 20x10m
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: N/A	Funding source: Owner
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related EHER Nos:
Final Report: Wilderness, Drakes Lane, Little Waltham, Essex CM3 3NA. Description and analysis of an outbuilding. Surveyed 31 10 2016. Barry J Hillman-Crouch MStPA DipFA BSc HND.	
Periods Represented: C19th - C20th	
<p><b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b></p> <p>The timber-frame of the Outbuilding is of very poor quality – cobbled together from reused timbers as well as scantling cut from the fields. The frame is primary braced with nailed interrupted studwork in no particular pattern, the end walls have curved braces from the central storey posts, while the other braces are straight and of differing sections. The northern wall has a girt rail near the ground where most of the studs are rebated and nailed or skew nailed in. The other walls are disrupted with door and window openings.</p> <p>The Outbuilding may be c. 1800 or even later, constructed in the economic crisis that occurred after the end of the Napoleonic War, put together by low skilled workers using reused timbers and non-standard fabrication. Externally it had the appearance of a Victorian High Farming era building with rendered panels over weather-boards with extensive use of lath and daub – a fashion revived in the EC19th and used in new builds at least until the end of the 1830's. It was most likely built as a stable, coach house and store for the House.</p> <p>The historic mapping implies the building was twice as long as it is today and the internal outfitting shows it was converted into a modest dwelling, with fireplace, chimney and a staircase up to at least two rooms. The style of the fireplace and the fabric of the staircase would suggest this was done in the middle of the C19th when machined timbers were available for construction work.</p> <p>Between 1921 and 1957 the building was reduced in length and the small brick pig sty added to the western end. In the later C20th a double garage was added to the eastern end.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports:	
Author of Summary: Barry J Hillman-Crouch MStPA DipFA BSc HND.	Date of Summary: 14 11 2016

## Listing

**The house known as Wilderness is Listed. The outbuilding is not.**



© Mr Peter J Wade

IoE Number: 112841/ Location: WILDERNESS, LEIGHS ROAD, LITTLE WALTHAM, CHELMSFORD, ESSEX

Photographer: Mr Peter J Wade. Date Photographed: 28 August 2001.

Date listed: 19 June 1975. Date of last amendment: 19 June 1975

Grade II

1. LITTLE WALTHAM LEIGHS ROAD. 5213. Wilderness. TL 71 SW 5/76l. Grade II
- 2.

An early C19 timber-framed and plastered house. 2 storeys. 3 window range, double-hung sashes with single vertical glazing bars. A central doorway has an architrave and cornice. Roof tiled.

Listing NGR: TL7264413181

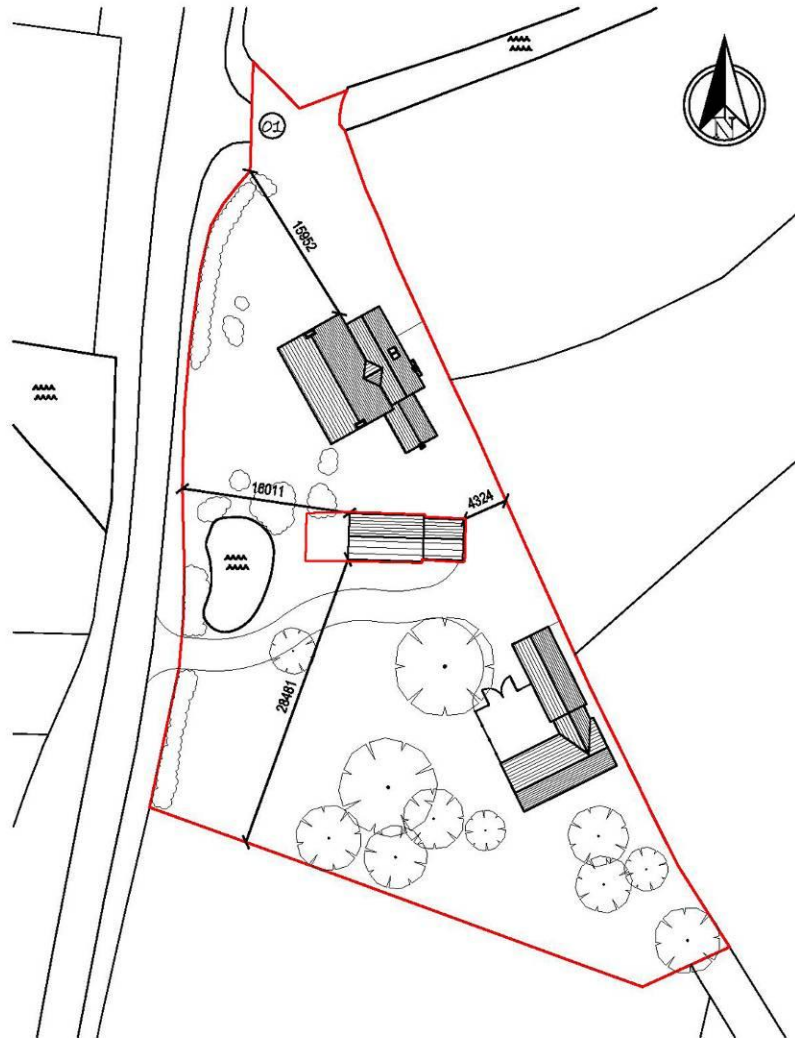
## Planning Background

A planning application 16/01020/LBC was submitted to Chelmsford City Council in June 2014 for internal and external works to facilitate restoration of the existing outbuilding. Given the impact of these works on the historic integrity of the buildings and the archaeological interest of the site, it was recommended that an archaeological condition should be attached to any future planning permission.

## Scope of this Report

This report describes and analyses the outbuilding at the Wilderness prior to its repair and restoration.

The report adheres to Historic England Level 3 as outlined in Historic England. Understanding Historic Buildings – A guide to good recording practice. 2016. Page 22.



*Andrew Stevenson Associates*  
 ARCHITECTURAL & BUILDING SURVEYING SERVICES

CLIENT		
Mr & Mrs Townrow		
PROJECT TITLE		
Proposed Renovation of Annex @ The Wilderness,		
Leighs Road, Little Waltham, Essex		
DRAWING TITLE		
Proposed Block Plan		
PROJECT No	DRAWING No	REVISION
4839	02	A
SCALE	DATE	DRAWN
1:500 @ A4	APR '05	SPH

21A HIGH STREET, GREAT DUNMOW, ESSEX, CM8 1AB. TEL:01271 874807  
 FAX: 01271 874805 Email: andy@essex.co.uk

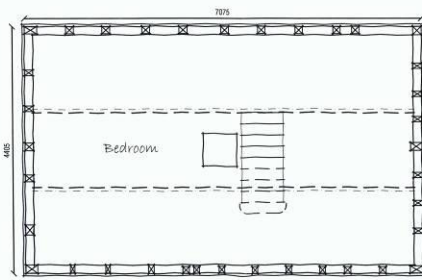
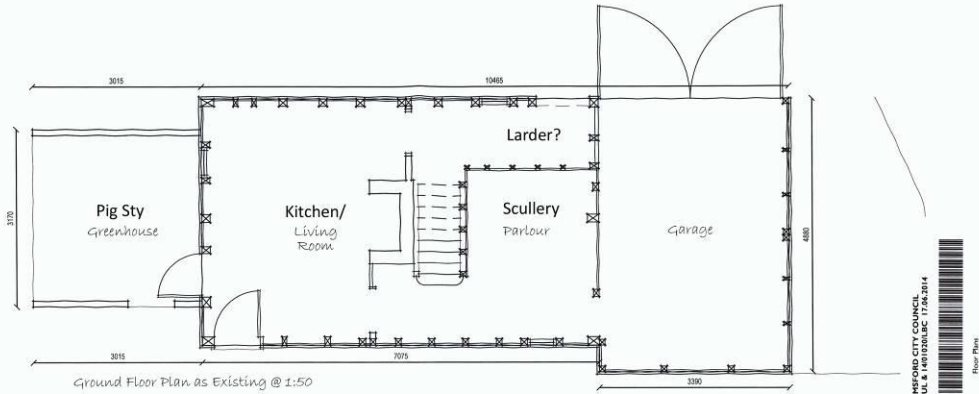


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**2016. Block plan of the Wilderness outlining the Outbuilding. Andrew Stevenson Associates.**



Barry Hillman-Crouch  
Design & Recording Services



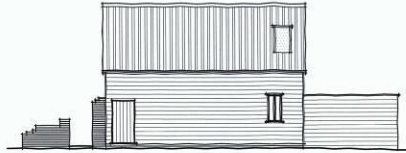
Andrew Stevenson Associates  
ARCHITECTURAL & BUILDING SURVEYING SERVICES

CLIENT: Mr & Mrs Towrow  
PROJECT TITLE: Proposed Renovation of Annex @ The Wilderness,  
Leighs Road, Little Waltham, Essex  
DRAWING TITLE: Existing Floorplans  
PROJECT No: 4636 DRAWING No: 01 REVISION  
SCALE: 1:50 @ A3 DATE: May '13 DRAWN: SPH

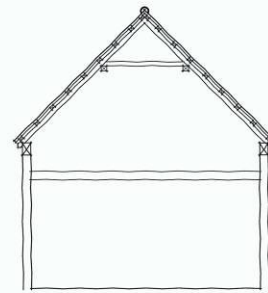
214 HIGH STREET, GREAT DUNMOW, ESSEX, CB8 1AB TEL: 01707 818877  
FAX: 01707 874658 Email: andy@asauks.co.uk



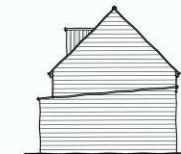
Existing Side Elevation @ 1:100



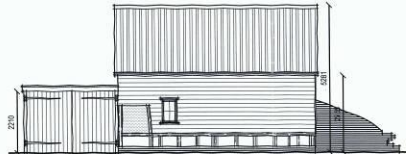
Existing Front Elevation @ 1:100



Existing Section @ 1:50



Existing Side Elevation @ 1:100



Existing Rear Elevation @ 1:100

Andrew Stevenson Associates  
ARCHITECTURAL & BUILDING SURVEYING SERVICES

CLIENT: Mr & Mrs Towrow  
PROJECT TITLE: Proposed Renovation of Annex @ The Wilderness,  
Leighs Road, Little Waltham, Essex  
DRAWING TITLE: Existing Elevations and Section  
PROJECT No: 4636 DRAWING No: 02 REVISION  
SCALE: As Shown @ A3 DATE: May '13 DRAWN: SPH

214 HIGH STREET, GREAT DUNMOW, ESSEX, CB8 1AB TEL: 01707 818877  
FAX: 01707 874658 Email: andy@asauks.co.uk



2016. Plan and elevations of the Outbuilding. Andrew Stevenson Associates.

## Description – External



Looking NW at the outbuilding in context with the house Wilderness.



The southern elevation.

### Southern Elevation

The southern elevation presents a single storey chalet building with a small dormer in the LC20th/C21st corrugated bitumen based roof product known as Onduline - *Onduline is an extremely tough, lightweight, corrugated roofing and wall cladding material manufactured utilising a base board produced from recycled cellulose fibres which is saturated with bitumen under intense pressure and heat.* The interrupted studwork frame is clad with LC20th weatherboards fixed with French nails, some EML and lath and daub panels.



Detail of the doorway and boarded over window.



Detail of the lath and daub panel.

The laths are of two types, riven chestnut and spilt rods, probably hazel, nailed with wrought iron tacks. The daub varies in consistency but contains clay, straw, stones, chalk nodules and dark brown animal hair. The surface has been combed in swirls and painted red in places. The original finish appears to be rendered panels above weather-boards to door height. The small front door is vertically boarded with horizontal ledgers and hung on wrought iron pintle straps. An adjacent window has been boarded over. The building has been wrapped in roofing felt in the past which has fallen off leaving ragged patches here and there.



The western elevation.



The ground floor section of the western elevation.

### **Western Elevation**

The gable of the western elevation has been clad with marine ply leaving a window opening. The ground floor has a C20th door with glass light and a four pane casement that has been boarded over. The rest is clad with C20th sheets and weatherboards. A pig sty has been built against the end of the building reusing old red frogged bricks set in hard grey cement.





The northern elevation.



Detail of the exposed frame and lath and daub finish.

### **Northern Elevation**

The northern elevation retains large sections of MC19th lath and daub finished with black bituminous paint. The exposed frame displays a reused rail to which the lower, short studs are lapped and nailed or skew nailed. A few are pegged. The lower section was weather-boarded but is now shut off with old panels and wardrobe doors on the inside.



The eastern elevation.



The end wall of the outbuilding in the garage.

### **Eastern Elevation**

The eastern elevation of the outbuilding is preserved within the makeshift garage which is constructed of machined timbers, marine ply and OSB (Oriented Strand Board) print dated to 2007. The present owners removed an adjacent similar shelter in 2010. The outbuilding retains a run of lath and daub above a section of 9in deep EC19th weather boards fixed with wrought iron nails. There is an opening into the outbuilding but this is not an original doorway. The upper section has been clad in marine ply as part of the reroofing of the building.

## Description – Internal



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Looking W into the outbuilding. Note the many props to support the falling floor.



The structure of the first floor. The door frame indicates the amount of sag. Looking W.

## Ground Floor

The Outbuilding is a two celled building that has been divided with lath and daubed walls into three rooms with a central staircase to the first floor.



Looking E in the Scullery.

### Scullery

The building has been outfitted as a small dwelling with a scullery, living room and a larder. Upstairs are two rooms, probably bedrooms, but the internal divisions have been removed to replace the roof. To the east of the staircase is a crude, whitewashed room most likely used as a scullery. The timber frame visible in the eastern wall has two curved scantling braces rising from half way up the storey post to meet the tie-beam visible above the floor level.

The studs are of variable sizes but 3in thick and nailed in position. They are clad only on the outside and whitewashed inside. However there are nail holes to indicate the frame was weather boarded on the inside – otherwise it would have been unbearably cold when a dwelling. The present boards have been lathed and daubed on the inside.



The lath and plastered ceiling.



White floor bricks.

The ceiling has exposed narrow joists, many with pitsaw marks, and wide pine and oak boards varying in 7,8 and 9in widths and these have been lath and plastered to insulate the rooms. The style of the lathing is MC19th. The floor is laid with white bricks.



Lobby besides the firestack. Note the collapse of the frame.



The eastern side of the firestack.

There is a small lobby that gives access to the staircase and then the Living Room. The fall of the frame is very noticeable in this area. The frame has little remaining top plate. Instead ledgers or clamps are nailed in sections all the way round to support the joists. The scantling nailed interrupted stud frame has fallen out and the joists are hanging in the air supported only by the floorboard nails in places. The rest is supported on wooden props and very rusty Acroprops. The joists above the lobby are also supported by a nailed on C20th bed leg.



Looking W in the Living Room.



The timber fire surround in the Living Room.

### Living Room

The Living Room is equipped with a fireplace with a Victorian style plain timber fire surround with small mantel shelf. The opening is 39x43in high and the bricks are 65x110x225mm reds set in lime mortar and the chimney is built as one unit. The firebreast has been lath and plastered and extended to the south with a lath and daub screen which has been clawed on both sides by an animal. The walls have been limewashed with a red tint.



The north wall in the Living Room.



Detail of the ceiling looking NW.

The walls are framed using reused timbers of different sizes and apparently random primary braces. The north wall is lath and daubed on the outside in large panels. Again the ceiling joist rests on nailed on clamps and so is clearly inserted. The main axial joist is correctly morticed for the narrow 4in common joists which are waney in places. The 8x10in deep chamfered axial joist is not lodged in the brickwork of the fireplace but rested precariously on a ledge, while the other end has descended and is supported by props.



The disrupted floor of the Living Room.



Brick samples from the Living Room.



The worn floor in the Pantry.

The Living Room is laid throughout with white bricks varying in thicknesses of 40, 50 and 65mm (1.5, 2.0, 2.5in). They are all 110x225mm in plan, the standard size. The floor has been broken up by rabbit burrows but it can be seen that there is little wear on the bricks and therefore they are a late addition. In the Pantry the floors are broken and worn and pass under the daubed partition.

It is evident the room stayed in use in the C20th as a workshop and store as there are homemade shelves and benches, hooks and numerous nails for hanging things on. The front door has been kept in use by shimming the pintles with blades from an agricultural flail (used for hedge cutting).





Looking E in the Pantry.



The underside of the staircase.

### **Pantry**

The Pantry is an L-shaped room making use of the space under the stairs which can be seen to be MC19th is design and fabric with machine cut treads, risers and strings and nailed on hand hewn supports. The small room is boarded in the inside to waist level using modern bandsawn boards and doors to protect the friable walls.



Detail of shelf supports and slot cut for other shelves. Note the tethering ring up high.



Detail of the lath and daub panel in the partition wall.

The Pantry is equipped for shelves and there are two wooden supports for a single shelf and there is a slot cut right around the room for a continuous shelf at chest height. There is a small tethering ring high up which is most likely to hang a lantern on. The partition wall is made of thick riven rods nailed to scantling poles and daubed on both sides and then whitewashed to improve the light given by the small four pane window. A large hole has been cut through the wall so junk can be put in from the garden side.



Looking E at the gable end in the upper rooms.



The tie-beam is fixed with an iron tie.

### Upper Rooms

The Upper Rooms are too dangerous to enter but can be photographed from the top of the collapsing staircase with care.



Looking W in the Upper Rooms.

### Upper Rooms

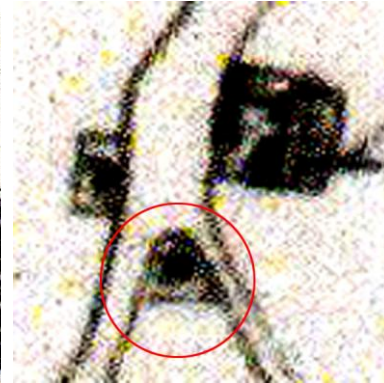
Marks on the brickwork of the chimney stack show there were two upper rooms before the roof was replaced. It is very likely there was a small landing and two partition walls. The eastern gable is still in place and shows the framing and lath and daub construction. The waney tie-beam is not jointed to the top-plate but is secured with a very rusty iron tie. The tie beam at the other end of the building is a large reused timber correctly dovetailed in.



Details of the roof structure.

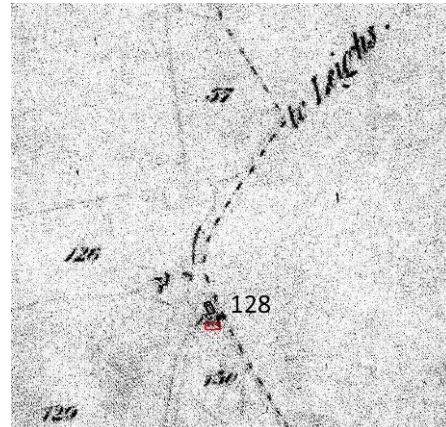
The roof is entirely modern and less than 20 years old. However it may be a replica of the original roof as it has paired rafters, no ridgepiece and side lapped collars with the side purlins beneath. There are also straight windbraces. The rafters are widely spaced for economy to support the lightweight Onduline roof.

**Topographical Survey from Maps**



**1777 Chapman and Andre's Map of Essex.**

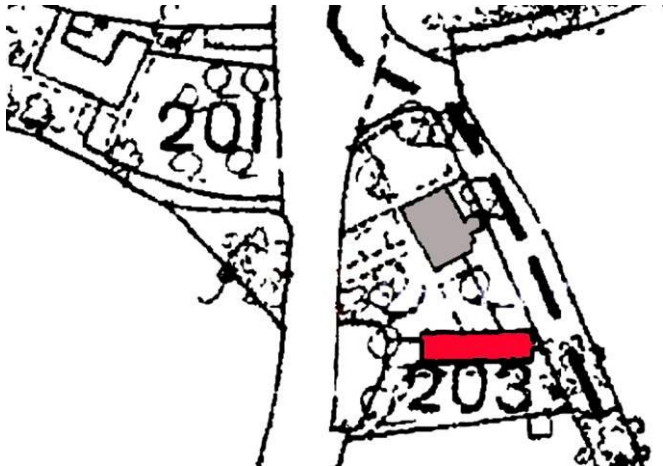
The 1777 map appears to show a building in the position of the house. It does not show another on the plot.



**1838 Tithe Award Great Leighs. ERO. D/CT218A    1838 Tithe Award Little Waltham.**

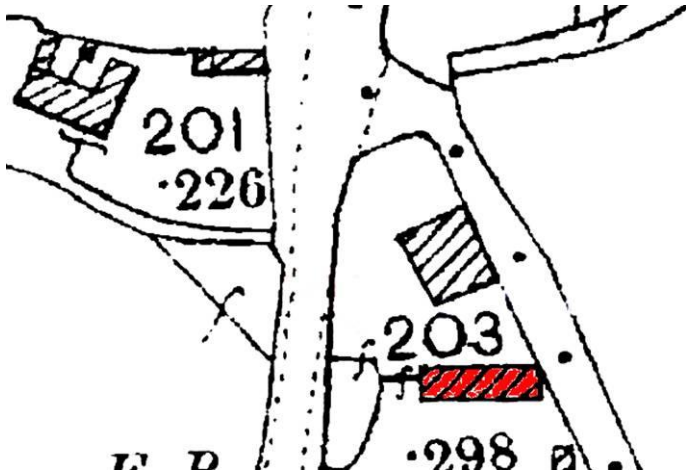
Wilderness lies in Plot 128 of the 1838 Tithe Award for Little Waltham ERO D/CT 380A right on the border with the Great Leighs parish south of Alsteads (Alstuds) Farm by which it can be located. Plot 128 Cottage and Garden belonged to Robert Lewin and was occupied by Joseph Emberson. The quality of the copy is poor but both the House and the Outbuilding are depicted in their current positions. Alstuds Farm, Plot 635 Homestead was occupied by Robert Lewin but owned by Eleanor Kerwayne.

White's Directory of Essex for 1848 has Robert Lewin, Farmer at Allsteads in the Little Waltham entry and Robert Lewin Sen in the Great Leighs entry. By the time of the 1863 edition Allsteads was occupied by George Joseph Quilter who is also in the 1874 Post Office Directory as a farmer.

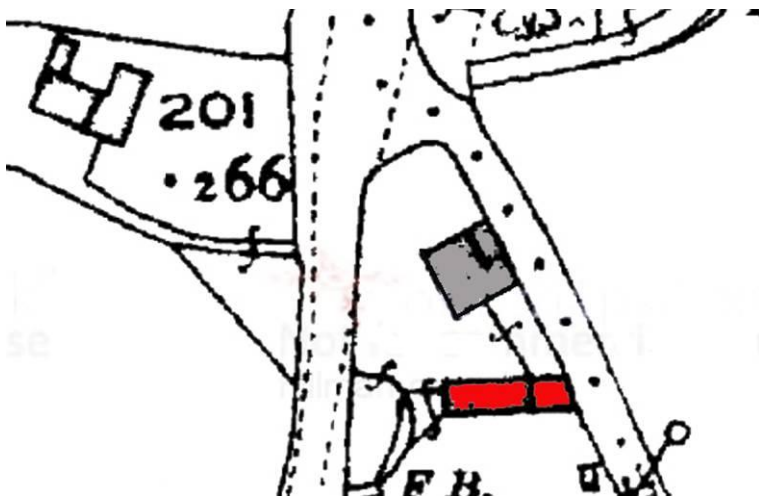


1875 First Edition Ordnance Survey.

The 1875 OS shows a single building twice the length of the current Outbuilding.

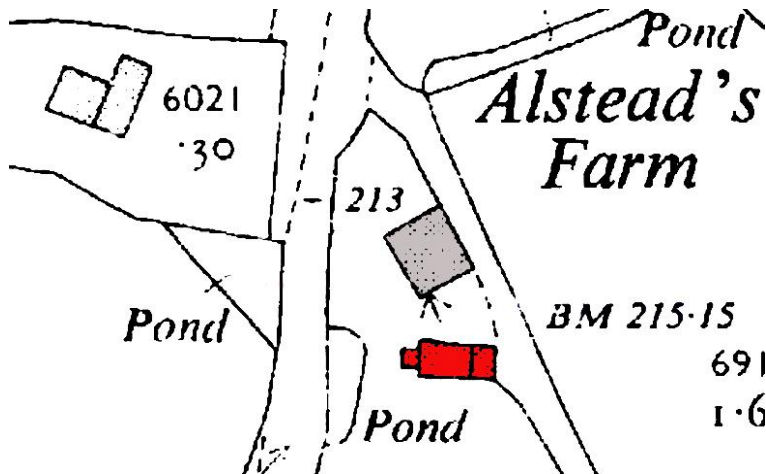


1897 Ordnance Survey.



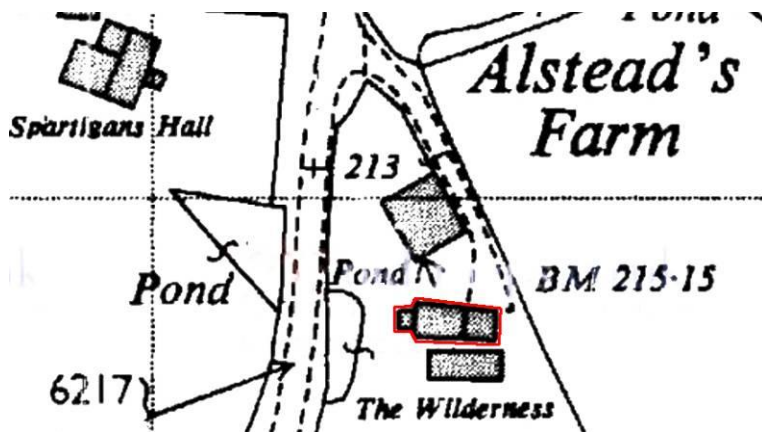
1921 Ordnance Survey.

Between 1897 and 1921 the Outbuilding was divided into two units.



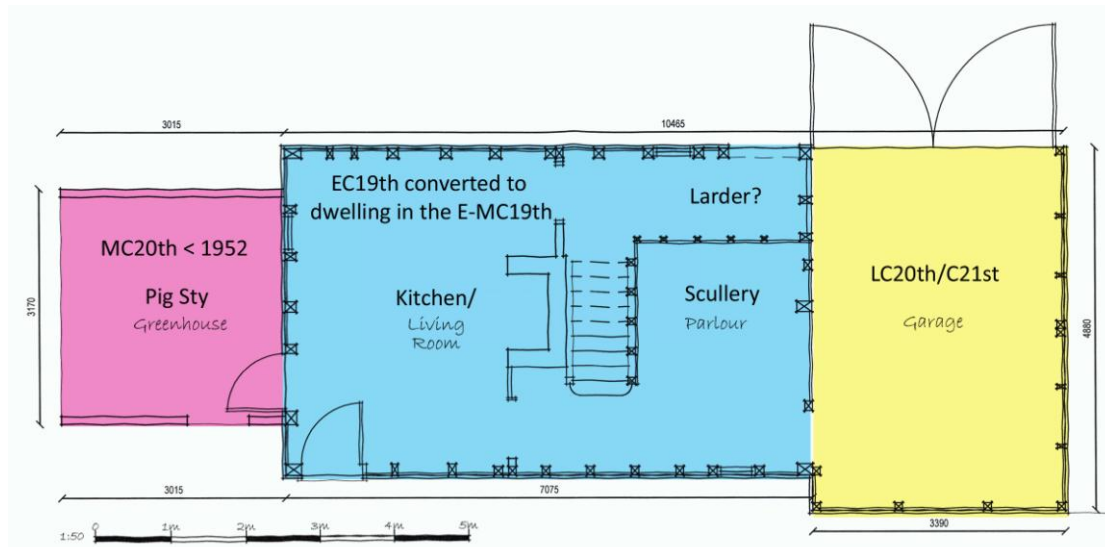
1952 Ordnance Survey.

By 1952 the Outbuilding appears to have lost one bay to be replaced by the present brick pig sty.



1978 Ordnance Survey.

## Phasing and Discussion



### General phase plan of the Outbuilding.

#### Phase 1 –c.1800 – 1840.

The timber-frame of the Outbuilding is of very poor quality – cobbled together from reused timbers as well as scantling cut from the fields. Of the remaining tie-beams, the westernmost is from a C16th or C17th building, well finished with an axe, cambered and dovetailed into the top-plate. The easternmost one is wany and secured with ironwork apparently without a dovetail.

The frame is primary braced with nailed interrupted studwork in no particular pattern, the end walls have curved braces from the central storey posts, while the other braces are straight and of differing sections. The northern wall has a girt rail near the ground where most of the studs are rebated and nailed or skew nailed in. The other walls are disrupted with door and window openings.

The Outbuilding is not shown on the 1777 map of Essex by Chapman and Andre while a building corresponding with the House is. However, the House, although not part of this study, was examined and in particular the visible timber frame, staircase and door frames would indicate a building of c.1800. The Outbuilding may be later, constructed in the economic crisis that occurred after the end of the Napoleonic War, put together by low skilled workers using reused timbers and non-standard fabrication.

Externally it had the appearance of a Victorian High Farming era building with rendered panels over weather-boards with extensive use of lath and daub – a fashion revived in the EC19th and used in new builds at least until the end of the 1830's.

It was most likely built as a stable, coach house and store for the House.



## **Phase 2 – Conversion to dwelling. MC19th.**

The historic mapping implies the building was twice as long as it is today and the internal outfitting shows it was converted into a modest dwelling, with fireplace, chimney and a staircase up to at least two rooms. The style of the fireplace and the fabric of the staircase would suggest this was done in the middle of the C19th when machined timbers were available for construction work.

The walls have lath and daub panels and the internal partition for the Scullery is built over the brick floor. Lath and daub was being used, even in new builds, into the 1840's in the countryside. It is more than likely that part of the walls were boarded on the inside and that the present form is a C20th interpretation of the original decor.

The upper floor is supported on nailed on plates, leading to spread and failure in later years. The floorboards are of varying widths and materials.

## **Phase 3. C20th alterations.**

Between 1921 and 1957 the building was reduced in length and the small brick pig sty added to the western end using reclaimed red bricks set in grey cement. Anecdotal evidence given to the present owner implies that the building was lived in by up to 12 people in the EC20th but as the building does not appear to have a separate address no documentation was found to elaborate on this.

The building has been incrementally patched up, with a relaid white brick floor, various nailed on repairs and several shelves and hooks for implements. A double garage was added to the eastern end made of machined timbers and sheets of ply.

The building is now in a parlous state. The walls are falling outwards and the joists are failing from rot. Much of the weight is being taken on timber and steel props which have been in place many years. The upper floor is fragile and the boards rotted. The chimney has been reduced in height before the current was roof was added in the last 20 years or so. None of the doors or windows function, the frames have warped and the fabric is failing throughout. It is one of those buildings where only the woodworm holding hands is keeping it together.

## **Significance**

The Outbuilding may represent the living conditions of farm labourers in the MC19th into the C20th. The building is of poor quality, badly made using inferior materials reflecting the agricultural poverty of the MC19th onwards.

## **Acknowledgements**

I am indebted to the present owners Mr and Mrs Townrow for engaging me to record the building and to Andy Stevenson for recommending me and providing the architect's plans.



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