

**The Old Maltings
Barton Mills,
Suffolk
BTM 049**

Supplementary Historic Building Record

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The Old Maltings, The Street, Barton Mills, Suffolk

(TM 725 738)

Supplementary Historic Building Record To be read in conjunction with the Heritage Asset Assessment of January 2011

This report provides a written and photographic analysis and record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a redundant maltings during partial demolition and conversion. It has been prepared to a specification written by Edward Martin of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (ref. SpecHBR&Mon(EM)_OldMaltings_BartonMills_0730_10, dated 26th April 2011) and is intended to supplement and to be read in conjunction with a Heritage Asset Assessment of January 2011 prepared before the commencement of building work.

Introduction

The report is accompanied by a CD containing a photographic record in the form of 40 digital images of 21 megapixels (Appendix 1), but also includes 10 printed photographs of key features to illustrate the text (Appendix 2). Each image is described in a separate schedule and wherever possible includes a scale rod with half-metre divisions in red and white. The site was inspected on 14th November 2011, at which time demolition had already begun.

Supplementary Analysis

When first inspected on 12th January 2011 the internal walls of the maltings' lower storey were concealed by 20th century dry-lining. The removal of this lining in November 2011 revealed a number of historic features that served to confirm and enhance the analysis of the earlier Heritage Asset Assessment.

Ceiling and Wall Fabric

The walls were whitewashed with a skirt of black paint immediately above the floor, and contained clear evidence that the original binding joists of the ceiling had been raised by approximately 35 cm (14 ins): five courses of 20th century brickwork lay beneath each timber. A layer of beaten clunch in the excavated floor at the southern end of the range appeared to represent the original floor level, indicating that the lower storey was a low, undivided space with headroom of only 1.75 m (5 ft 8 ins) to the soffits of the binding joists. This is consistent with the evidence of two blocked windows and a blocked doorway at the northern end of the eastern elevation, all of which rose to the same height (i.e. approximately 0.3 m or 12 ins above the sills of the present Crittall windows). This level coincides with four courses of red brick in the gault brick eastern external elevation which formed a decorative band dividing the upper and lower storeys. The existing common joists are of tall-sectioned softwood and suggest, in conjunction with the Crittall windows and the Fletton brickwork of the upper walls, that the building was raised in height and extensively refurbished in the middle decades of the 20th century (i.e. 1930s-1950s). The internal walls also preserved the scars of earlier lateral partitions, but none of these were either integral to the brickwork or interrupted all layers of whitewash – suggesting the original building was entirely undivided. There was no evidence of additional external doors and windows and the ground floor was probably very poorly lit, with (presumably) roof dormers serving the malting floor above. Such an arrangement is consistent with early maltings elsewhere.

Possible Granary Adjoining Northern Gable

The northern gable was of particular interest, with two original lamp niches to right and left and other secondary apertures of uncertain purpose. One of the latter, located slightly to the east of the gable's centre, contained a metal-lined chute descending from the exterior to the interior. This may have been designed to load grain from a demolished adjoining granary into a steeping pit or directly onto a growing floor. This interpretation is supported by the configuration of the gable which was integral with a previously demolished western wall that continued northwards towards and formed a chamber with a suspended floor indicated by a projecting course of clunch 1.25 m above the present internal floor. Suspended floors of this kind are more consistent with granaries than kilns, and the location of the original kiln remains uncertain: if grain entered the malting process from the river it may have adjoined the road at the opposite end of the range. The demolished building appears to have extended further to the east, where the remains of a wall projecting at right-angles from the surviving eastern elevation was visible in January 2011 (but had been demolished along with the upper section of the northern gable prior to the most recent inspection). The western end of the present gable did not extend further to the south, but formed a corner respected by closers (returning to the east and north) and now adjoins 20th century Fletton brickwork. The northern end of the present western elevation was presumably formed by another structure or may have opened into a studwork lean-to of some kind; any firm evidence of its arrangement was destroyed by the existing Fletton wall in the mid-20th century.

Conclusions

The newly exposed internal wall fabric suggests that the ground floor of the original maltings formed a poorly-lit, undivided space with very low headroom, and was consistent with other maltings of the period which used their lower storeys as growing floors. The unusual configuration of the northern gable raises questions about the nature of the previously demolished integral structure on what is now open ground to the north. The gable contains evidence of a low suspended floor that is more consistent with a barley store than a kiln, particularly given the absence of any evidence of heat, and suggests the kiln and office adjoined the road at the southern end of the range. It would be useful in this light to establish archaeologically the level and nature of the lower floor in the demolished structure, and to locate any evidence of water circulation to the steeping pit that would be expected either directly beneath or (more probably) in the northern end of the remaining building. The precise height and nature of the original floor of the main range also remains open to question and might be determined by the same means.

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Descriptions of Photographs in Appendix 1

Photograph no.

1. Exterior of northern gable showing evidence of raised floor in previously demolished structure in foreground.
2. Northern external gable showing projecting line of clunch relating to raised floor of demolished structure in foreground.
3. Detail of projecting course of clunch in northern external gable
4. Western corner of northern gable showing integral brickwork of gable and demolished wall in foreground.
5. Northern gable from west showing closers defining original corner into which later Fletton wall to right was inserted.
6. Northern gable from east showing ostensibly integral contemporary brickwork to left.
7. Upper storey of northern gable from east showing Fletton brickwork wall lift & integral 18th century brickwork beneath.
8. Exterior from south-west showing new extension to left adjoining section of Fletton brickwork of malting to right.
9. Exterior from west showing wall lift in Fletton brickwork and section of Flettons adjoining new extension to left.
10. Detail of western exterior showing original brickwork to lower storey with 20th century Fletton lift above.
11. Eastern exterior from north showing original band of red brick and blocked low original window between existing windows.
12. Door to north of eastern exterior showing lintel & closers defining southern edge of blocked original low door to left.
13. Eastern exterior showing lintel and closers defining left-hand edge of blocked low original window to left of existing.
14. Eastern exterior showing lintel and closers defining right-hand edge of blocked low original window to right.
15. Southern end of eastern exterior showing band of red brick dividing original upper and lower storeys.
16. Interior from south showing 20th century softwood ceiling joists with northern gable in rear.
17. Interior of northern gable showing original recesses to left and right.

18. Interior of northern gable showing original niche to left.
19. Detail of original niche in brickwork to left of northern internal gable respected by closer (quarter brick) to left.
20. Interior of northern gable showing original niche to right with secondary apertures and central chute to left.
21. Northern end of eastern interior showing scar of original door to right of existing and patch beneath raised joist.
22. Detail of northern end of eastern interior showing brick infill beneath raised binding joist with blocked original door.
23. Northern end of eastern interior showing vertical groove beneath raised binding joist of ceiling.
24. Detail of northern end of eastern interior showing secondary brick infill beneath raised binding joist.
25. Interior of northern section looking south to central section showing softwood common joists of ceiling.
26. Northern end of western interior showing Fletton brickwork adjoining new extension.
27. Southern end of northern section showing new block-work partition to central section.
28. Eastern interior of central section showing brick infill beneath each raised binding joist.
29. Detail of eastern interior of central section showing brick infill beneath raised binding joist.
30. Western interior of central section showing whitewashed brickwork with black skirt.
31. Detail of binding joist showing grey pigment beneath whitewash.
32. Removed section of original binding joist showing Roman numeral to upper surface.
33. Detail of incised Roman numeral XXII to removed section of binding joist.
34. Eastern interior of southern section showing lowered floor and position of 20th century compartment 1d to right.
35. Eastern interior of southern section showing whitewash and black painted skirt beneath 20th century cladding.
36. Western interior of southern section showing new block-work partition to central section to right.

37. Western interior of southern section showing later brick infill beneath raised binding joist of ceiling.
38. Detail of later brick infill beneath raised binding joist in western interior of southern section.
39. Southern section from south showing new block-work partition to central section.
40. Southern section from north showing partition of 20th century compartment 1c & original clunch floor in section beneath.

Photographic Appendix follows on pp. 6-10

Appendix 2 (pp. 6-10): Selected Printed Photographs



Illus. 1. The exterior of the partly demolished northern gable showing evidence of a raised floor in the previously demolished structure which occupied the foreground.



Illus. 2. The northern external gable showing a projecting course of masonry 1.25 m above the internal floor. This appears to relate to a raised floor in the previously demolished structure in the foreground.



Illus. 3. The north-western corner of the building showing the recent extension to the right. The 20th century Fletton brickwork in the centre has been intruded into the corner of a previously demolished structure which extended further to the north (left) and contained a raised floor as indicated by the projecting course of clunch in its partly demolished gable.



Illus. 4. The eastern exterior showing the lintel and closers (quarter-bricks) defining right-hand edge of a blocked low original window to the right (visible to the left of the scale). The courses of red brick at the same height as the lintel formed a decorative band dividing the original upper and lower storeys.



Illus. 5. The interior of the northern gable showing original square niches to left and right together with the 20th century softwood common joists of the ceiling.



Illus. 6. The eastern half of the northern internal gable showing an original square niche to the right with a secondary metal-lined chute to the left and two additional secondary apertures.



Illus. 7. The northern end of the eastern interior showing the partly demolished northern gable to the left. The scar of a blocked original door is visible to the right of the existing door (with later infill between the two) and patches of secondary brickwork beneath both original binding joists show the extent to which they have been raised. A vertical groove beneath the right-hand joist terminates at the original ceiling height.



Illus. 8. The eastern interior of the southernmost of the three sections into which the maltings has been divided by block-work partitions, showing the whitewash and painted black skirt beneath the 20th century cladding which still survives to the right (with the vertical scar of the former office partition, 1d).



Illus. 9. A detail of the later brick infill beneath the raised binding joist in the western interior of the southern section. The vertical scar to the left relates to a secondary partition which pre-dates the most recent dry-lining.



Illus. 10. The southern section of the maltings from the north showing the partition of the surviving 20th century office compartment (1c) and a horizontal layer of beaten clunch in the section of excavated floor beneath. This layer appears to represent the original floor and suggests headroom of no more than 1.75 m to the binding joists before they were raised in the 20th century.

