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**An Historic Building Survey at
Town End House, 12 Chapel Lane,
Croxton Kerrial, Leicestershire**

Jon Coward



ULAS Report No
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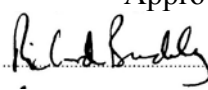
**An Historic Building Survey at
Town End House, 12 Chapel Lane,
Croxton Kerrial, Leicestershire**

Planning app: 06/01247/FUL

NGR: SK8335 2937

Jon Coward

For: The Belvoir Estate

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ULAS Report Number 2009-093

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1. Summary

An Historic Building survey was carried out by ULAS in July 2009 for The Belvoir Estate of parts of Town End House, 12 Chapel Lane, Croxton Kerrial, Leicestershire SK 8335 2 937. The aim of the survey was to elucidate an Historic Building assessment previously carried out on the building (CgMs 2006), and covered parts of the structure which were inaccessible to the original assessment. The survey showed some radical restructuring to have taken place, and showed evidence of previous heating arrangements in the property. It broadly concurred with the conclusions of the original assessment. The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council under accession code X.A144.2009.

2. Introduction

In response to planning application 06/01247/FUL for the erection of a new dwelling, formation of new access and extension to 12, Chapel Lane, etc., the Senior Planning Archaeologist advised that works were likely to affect underlying archaeological remains and the standing historic buildings. As a result it was recommended that a historic building assessment was undertaken to clarify the impact upon the proposal and advise upon the need for and scope of any subsequent mitigation of the development impact. The assessment by CgMs (2006) recommended the need for further work to be undertaken as part of an approved scheme comprising further inspection to areas that were otherwise inaccessible, including the area between the house and the chapel, the east wall of the dining room, the attics, and the east wall of the living room.

The survey followed the requirements of Leicestershire County Council as advisors to the planning authority as detailed in their *Brief for a Historic Building Survey and Archaeological Attendance at Town End House, 12, Chapel Lane, Croxton Kerrial, Leicestershire* of 05.05.2009 and follows the guidelines as laid out in the *Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Standing Buildings or Structures*. (IfA S&G revised 2008).



Figure 1 Location of Croxton Kerrial (shaded).
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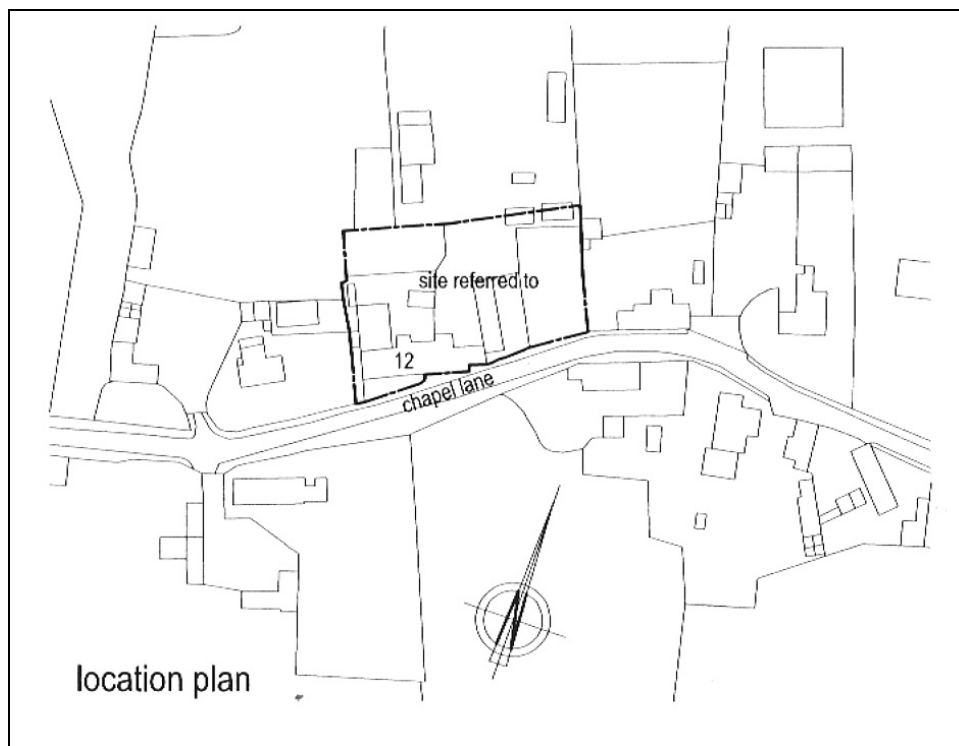


Figure 2 Location of site. Based on plans supplied by the client, not to scale

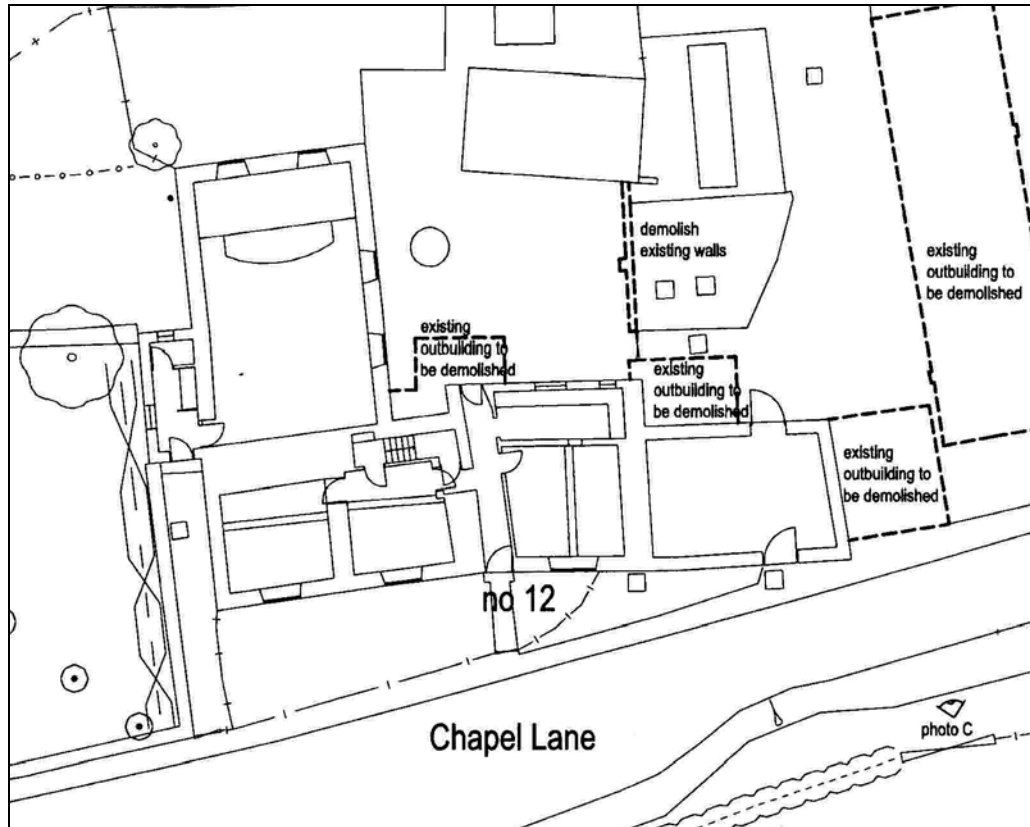


Figure 3 Plan of site. Based on plans supplied by the client, not to scale

3. Background

This document should be read in conjunction with the original assessment (CgMs 2006). In summary, the assessment indicated that the standing buildings are of at least local importance. The earliest part of the house dates to the mid-18th century; Wesleyan Methodism came to the village during 1776-1800 and preaching took place in the house's kitchen. In 1834 a Methodist revival took place and in 1835 the Duke of Rutland paid for the land to build a Wesleyan Preaching House, as an extension to the house.

The aim of the building recording was to complete an appropriate level of historic building recording of the affected structures and their setting, specifically in the areas not accessible to the original assessment



Figure 4 Frontage, west and east units. Looking north.



Figure 5 Frontage, barn to foreground. Looking north-west. An outbuilding to the east (RHS) has been demolished since the date of the original assessment.



Figure 6 Looking west. Rear of barn, east unit, side of chapel. An outbuilding attached to the wall scar on the extreme left hand side has been demolished since the date of the assessment.

4. Methodology

The brief specified several areas of the building for further survey. These comprised the area between the house and the chapel, the east wall of the dining room, the east wall of the living room, and the attics. In arrangement with the developer, the modern cladding over the walls of the living and dining room were removed, and a sealed space between the chapel and store room was opened up. The areas of interest were photographed using a Pentax ME Super SLR 35mm film camera shooting monochrome, and a Pentax K10 dSLR shooting 10 megapixel RAW images, post-processed to TIFF for archive. In addition, in the case of the blocked passage room, a scaled plan and section were drawn.

5. Results

5.1 The east wall of the dining room (figs 7,8)

The removal of modern panelling revealed a fireplace and side cupboards. The upper brickwork appeared to be of 19th century date, probably contemporary with the side cupboards. The chimney breast for the fireplace had undergone some structural slippage, perhaps with failure of a lintel spanning the fireplace, and the brick arch seen beneath was probably inserted to address this, with a mid-20th century fireplace inserted. More recently a further fire and full width surround was built in front, the rest being panelled over (compare plate 21 of the assessment report).



Figure 7 Dining Room looking east.



Figure 8 Dining room looking east

5.2 The east wall of the living room (figs 9,10)

The fabric of the wall separating the living room and the barn shows a complex sequence of multi-phase alteration which is not readily comprehensible. There is a blocked window to the right hand side, which corresponds to the blocking observed in the other side of the wall in the barn; this appears to have originally been a doorway which was first converted to a window. As noted in the assessment report, the eastern building (which this room is now in) may not have been in existence at the stage of the original reduction of door to window. At the far right hand side a single column of brickwork adjacent to the wall return has a small flue behind, the loose brick visible in the photograph to the left of the top of the brush handle exhibits sooting on its inside face. This presumably served a stove set into the corner and this arrangement would presumably be contemporaneous with, or post-date, the blocking of the door.

The vertical channel to the left hand side of the main fireplace is problematic in that it contains water pipes (presumably to a hot tank above) heated by a range or backburner, and thus should be relatively late in the sequence; nevertheless part of the channel is formed by stone quoins on one side with modern brickwork over older brickwork on the other. The lower left hand side of the fireplace must be relatively recent as the pipework runs into and behind it. The central fireplace and chimney breast has been reduced from a tall rectangular opening (defined by the brick arch) to a smaller aperture for a fire/range.

As it seems likely that original stone and brickwork was re-used in the various restructuring episodes, the sequence is ambiguous. The corner stove could have been a copper, and is not likely to have co-existed with the adjacent door, but might have co-existed with the reduced window aperture. The copper could have co-existed with the larger open (wood-burning?) fireplace as they would be performing different functions. Fireplaces were usually reduced in size over time, with a switch to coal and improvements in design, and this appears to have occurred here, ending with a range or stove, with a back burner providing hot water. At this stage the copper would become redundant. Similarities in the brickwork of the window blocking and the fabric above the arch for the larger fireplace aperture hint that the provision of the larger fireplace, the blocking of the window, and the installation of the corner copper and flue may have taken place at the same time.



Figure 9 Living room looking east



Figure 10 Blocking seen from inside the barn. Looking south-west.



Figure 11 Passage, looking west. Note modern wall blocking opening to rear left hand side; overhead beam and brick panelling to right hand side; stone exterior wall to rear with modern vents.

5.3 *The blocked area between the storeroom and chapel (figs 11-19)*

The north wall of the store was broken through: this revealed a narrow wedge-shaped passage of peculiar and complex form. Reference should be made to the figures and scaled drawing. The majority of the north wall of the store was of stretcher bond brick, and appeared to be 19th century in date albeit with the re-use of some earlier brick. The inner face to the passage was plastered, with the exception of the westernmost one metre (up to the outer side stone wall of the building). This was very recent brickwork, probably constructed within the last 30 yrs, blocking an access into the passage from the storeroom. Along the northern side of the passage, where the south wall of the chapel should be joining, was a large panel of earlier brickwork under a substantial chamfered beam which was set into the exterior stone wall at its west end.

The west exterior wall showed disturbance from the insertion of ventilator grills top and base. The floor of the passage was quarry tiled, and there were several low brick plinths with cut-outs up against the north wall of the passage. The brick panel had incorporated bracket apertures, and a line of extant brackets had been sawn off. The beam ran at head height along most of the length of the passage. Beneath the junction of the west exterior wall and the beam, beneath the brick panel, was a short stretch of dressed stone return wall at ground level. The early brick panel ran east under the beam to an upright post; east of this post was a small rectangular area of dressed stone at the base of the wall. This was on a slightly different alignment than the modern brick over.



Figure 12 Note chamfered beam running over post, modern brick to the right hand side with stone under; earlier brick panelling to left hand side with aperture, and sawn-off shelf bracket against post.

The beam carried on through at head height, but under it, very recent brickwork made up the rest of the wall which ran east up to the end of the passage, returning south. Just before the return, this modern wall had truncated an *in-situ* painted wood doorframe; only the south framepost and southern part of the lintel were visible, the north side either cut off, or lying within/ behind the modern wall fabric. The large chamfered beam, reduced by this point, terminated just before the doorframe. The east wall of the storeroom formed the south side of the door aperture; there are several beams above this spanning across the passage.



Figure 13 Looking east. Note recent brick wall to rear left hand side and rear; doorframe lintel to rear; stone (plastered) east wall forming door opening to rear right hand side. Broken brickwork visible behind inspection lamp is where the wall to the right hand side was broken through for access.

A number of issues arise in the interpretation of the surviving fabric. The west exterior stone wall must be original, and the assumption is that the return of this stone wall seen at low level in the north-west corner of the passage is also original and defines the inside of the north wall of the original build. Taken in conjunction with the position of the outer corner of this return (visible above the exterior chapel porch), it gives a similar width compared to the front wall of the building.

As the wall is now brick under a large beam, it must have been rebuilt. The obvious opportunity for this might be when the chapel was added to the rear, but there are

problems with this in that the chapel is built of good quality dressed blocks. It could be argued that the quality work was for the exterior only. The beam itself appears very large; it shows no sign of pegging or joints along its length, not even at the junction with the post; were there a large vertical tenon from the post into the beam one might expect to see a peg, and moreover the post seems of insufficient size to have acted as much support for the beam independent of the brick wall. The post continues down behind the brick plinth.



Figure 14 Looking east. Doorframe to right hand side and above; beams over

The post could be the same build as the brick, wedged under the beam, functioning as the west side of a door opening, the other side having been lost in the modern work to the east. At first sight the area of stonework east of its base would seem to be a re-appearance of the stone wall in the north-west corner and would have blocked any putative opening, but this may be misleading, as it fits its present position very neatly and may be a subsequent re-use, rather than a survival of the original wall.

Were the line of the east wall of the store room projected all the way across the passage, the beam would terminate within it, forming a unit. The internal east wall of the store room/west wall of the dining room is more massive than the exterior front wall of the store and dining room, and the west exterior wall, and consideration should be given to the possibility that the 'western unit' was originally two separate single unit builds. On the frontage there is a suggestion of a junction below the alarm, and the coursing appears to subtly differ in the area below this, with the eastern side being slightly more irregular than the west.



Figure 15 Looking north. Post, plinth, stonework and modern brickwork over.



Figure 16 Looking north-west. Stonework at base of wall



Figure 17 Frontage of the western unit



Figure 18 Looking west. Plinths

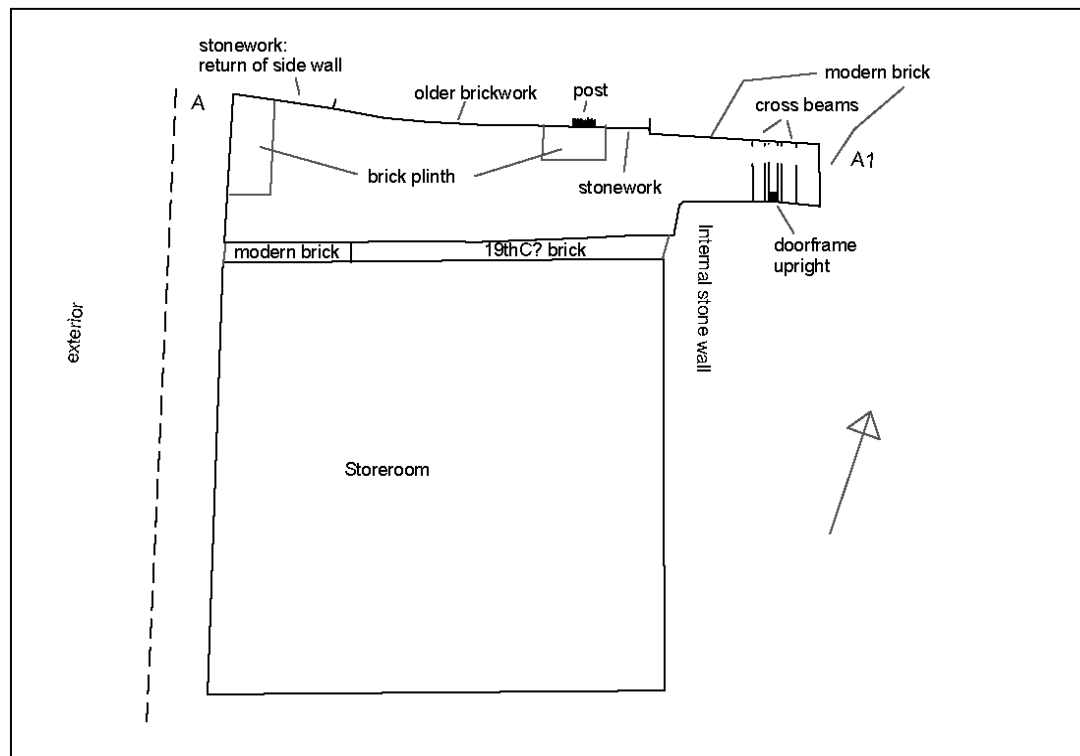
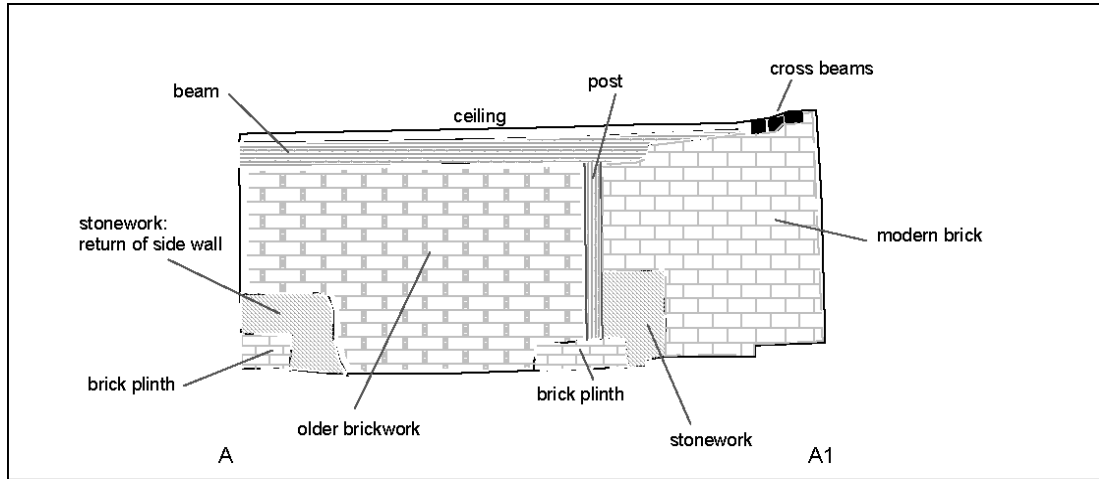


Figure 19 Section, and plan of storeroom/blocked passage room. Fabrics are schematic.

Moreover this would explain the change in floor level between the rooms. The store room unit could have started as a single storey affair, with the beam acting as the rear wall plate (it is at the same height as the front window lintel in the store) and then another storey built on, the stone rear wall replaced with brick. The two units were then combined under a new roof structure (the brick in the rear passage wall is similar to the brick in the west gable apex, so perhaps the replacement occurred at this point). This is speculation, and the extensive alterations since have probably destroyed any supporting evidence.

As to the later function of the 'passage': it was rough plastered, shows evidence for low plinths and shelving, plus it is on the north side of the building; the simplest

explanation is that at some time in the 19th century the opportunity was taken to create a small pantry off the store.

5.4 The attics

Although there is access into the attics of the west unit via a trapdoor in a cupboard above the stairs, close inspection is not possible as the attics have been heavily insulated with mineral wool to the extent that the position of the joists is not visible, thus movement around the attic is not feasible. However, as noted in the assessment, the structure is relatively recent. Fresh felting underlies the modern tiles, and part of an internal gable to the chapel can be seen which is made out of breeze blocks. Although there is the slight possibility that some further evidence of the structural history of the building has survived all this refurbishment, it would involve the use of crawling boards and the removal of the insulation.

The attic of the east unit, although retaining original rafters and purlins, has been rebuilt with modern work fixed to the old. There are two original rafters of heavier scantling forming principals mid way along the roof, but no tiebeam in evidence; a light modern steel tiebeam truss has been bolted onto these principals.

6. Discussion

Whereas the removal of the modern coverings of both the dining and living room walls have been successful in clarifying the description and interpretation presented in the assessment report, the opening of the passage room has led to as many questions as answers. A lot of structural alteration has been carried out on the north wall of the west unit, and it is not easily attributable to a single re-structuring associated with a chapel being 'bolted on' to the rear of an extant house. Even when a rough date can be assigned to the different fabrics utilised, it is clear that much fabric was being re-used at a later date. The recent brickwork on the eastern side of the passage room has obscured, or more likely removed, much evidence. Given that at least part of the internal gable of the chapel above is breeze block, there is the possibility that the modern brick is a complete re-build of the junction between the house and chapel, at least on the east side; as the internal chapel wall is plastered no further evidence for this speculation is forthcoming. As the work appears to have been carried out in recent decades, there may be some documentary evidence in the archives of the local planning system.

7. Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to thank David Todd of David Todd Architects and Alan Freeman of Aster Construction Services for their assistance with this project. Also thanks go to Alan Short and his site team who carried out the necessary revealing and opening up work. Project management was by Patrick Clay of ULAS.

8. `

The archive consists of

- 15 monochrome negative with contact prints
- 27 digital images with contact sheets
- one sheet of scaled drawings
- one plan showing the position of all photographs taken in the archive.

It will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services under accession code X.A144.2009 in due course.

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