

**BARN TO REAR OF 17-19 BRADFORD STREET
BOCKING, BRAINTREE
ESSEX**

LEVEL II HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit**

October 2010

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**BARN TO THE REAR OF 17-19 BRADFORD STREET
BOCKING, BRAINTREE
ESSEX**

LEVEL II HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY

Client: Mr Mark Brand (Bowergrange Estates)

FAU Project No.: 2214

Planning Application: 08/02070/FUL

NGR: TL 7597 2377

OASIS No.: 85097

Date of Fieldwork: 22nd March 2010

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A programme of historic building recording was undertaken by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) on a small barn-type structure prior to residential conversion. The work was commissioned by Mark Brand of Bowergrange Estates and carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation issued by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit, following advice from the Heritage Environment Management team of Essex County Council (ECC HEM), who also monitored the work.

Copies of the report will be supplied to ECC HEM and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) at County Hall, Chelmsford. The archive will be stored with Braintree Museum. An OASIS online record has been created at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/oasis/index.cfm>.

The barn appears to have been built as a stable and carhouse for Bradford House, in whose curtilage it stands, probably in the late 18th century. In recent years the western end has been converted to a garage, but the eastern side remains largely unaltered, and retains some interesting historic features. Historic outbuildings such as this in built-up areas face a high rate of loss through neglect, conversion and demolition and their importance has been highlighted in the regional research framework (Brown & Glazebrook 2000).

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Site location and description

The barn stands at the southern end of Bradford Street, on the western side, immediately to the rear of no. 19 Bradford Street, historically in the ownership of Bradford House, a grade II* listed 18th century structure (LBS 113648). Access is by a short trackway between nos.19 and 17, the Gospel Hall, which is a 20th century structure. On the east side of the barn is a small workshop, which is built into the boundary wall (fig. 1, plate 1) Adjoining it to the west is Ostler's Cottage, which is a modern house whose garage is in the converted side of the barn.

The following structures were recorded

- Barn 1 (stables/carhouse)
- Workshop 2

The barn is half-timbered and situated on the northern boundary of Bradford House (fig. 1). It served several functions; horses and carts were kept on the ground floor and feed and hay stores on the floor above. The original top floor survives in the western part above the garage, but this is not part of the survey. The building is not listed in its own right, but is curtilage listed with Bradford House.

2.2 Planning background

An application for change of use to single residential usage was submitted to Braintree District Council in 2008 (08/02070/FUL). In view of the impact of the proposed works upon the historic integrity of the existing building, its curtilage listing, Conservation Area status and the importance of such structures as a dwindling resource, ECC HEM advised Braintree District Council that a historic building record should be made before the conversion takes place (ECC HEM 2008).

2.3 Historical background

Bradford Street developed in the late medieval period, being first documented in 1384. By this date Bocking had become an important cloth town and Bradford Street developed because of its proximity to the market at Braintree.

The barn lies to the rear, and within the curtilage, of the Grade II * listed Bradford House, which dates from the 18th century. Late 18th-century mapping (1777, fig. 2) appears to show Bradford House but not the barn, though it is likely to have been constructed around this time. The 1841 tithe map (fig. 3) shows the barn (circled) as part of a linear range on the

north-east boundary of Bradford House and no. 19. All the other buildings have since been demolished.

Before the Gospel Hall was built, access to Bradford House was traditionally along the north side of the house, with the current trackway up to the barn being access to the rear of no.19 (fig. 4). Part of the brick boundary wall survives into which a later timber and weatherboarded structure (building 2) has been added, which post-dates the 1875 map (fig. 4). A modern shed stands adjacent to it, which is owned by no.19 and therefore outside the survey.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the historic building survey was to record the structure prior to conversion to RCHME Level 2 standard (RCHME 1996). This entailed an internal and external descriptive record addressing materials, architectural elements, historic fixtures and fittings and original internal layout, plus full photographic record.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF WORKS

Full access was provided around and inside the building. External and internal architectural descriptions were made and plans and elevations supplied by the client were annotated to show historic features and structural changes.

A series of photographs (digital and 35mm black & white print) were taken internally and externally. Specific shots were taken of any areas of important architectural detail, fixtures and fittings, of which many survived. A representative selection of photographs is reproduced at the back of the report as plates 1-20. The remainder can be found in the archive.

5.0 THE BARN (buildings 1 and 2)

The barn (plates 1 & 2) is half-timbered and constructed over four bays set on two levels beneath a half-hipped pegtiled roof. Orange-coloured bricks with varying dimensions consistent with 18th and early 19th-century forms (Ryan 1996) and laid in Flemish bond support a primary-braced wall frame, which is clad in weatherboard at the front and plastered (modern) at the back. Much of the fabric of the western end was removed for the garage

doors, but would have had the same half-timbered construction. The garage is included in plates 1 and 2.

The roof has been recently relaid as part of the current building works, and the hay loft is currently used to store wood, which covers the floor. In the neighbouring room are the old feed bins.

5.1 External description

The **south elevation** (plate 2) at the front of the building comprises a pair of carriage doors on the right-hand side and a horizontal sliding sash window set to the left, likely to be a 19th-century addition. The upper floor is reached by a first floor doorway stair set centrally to the structure, reached in the past by wooden steps. There is a sealed pitching hatch on the right for taking-in hay (plate 2), which may pre-date the doorway.

The carriage doors are ledged, boarded and braced and set on pintel hinges. Iron stays are attached to the brick wall for holding the doors back (plate 3). Door furniture (strap hinges and latches) are cast iron forms likely to be late 19th or early 20th century in origin and therefore replacements, perhaps contemporary with workshop 2, whose fixings are the same. The boundary wall is similar in build to the barn and likely to be contemporary, but heightened above the workshop door in later brick when the workshop was added (plate 2).

The rear **north elevation** is largely hidden by later features (plate 5) and access was limited, being within the garden of no. 19. The boarding on this side is now plastered and the brickwork below is supported by small buttresses. Towards the east end there are 18th-century air vents to the stables that have been plastered over.

The **west and east gables** are obscured by later structures (Ostlers Cottage and workshop 2). Both ends are boarded but the eastern side (hay loft) has ventilation slats below the hip (plate 6).

5.2 Internal description

The interior has been used for storage purposes in recent years and the upper part used to store materials while the roof was being worked on. The unconverted ground floor appears to have been used as stable/carhouse but the function of the converted side is unknown. Upstairs is a hay loft and feed store, with chutes down to the area below. It is possible the workshop held a smaller cart or 'buggy', or was as a tack room.

Ground floor

The ground floor (plates 7 & 8) is divided into two rooms, each of two bays, by the western wall, which divides the surviving part from the converted side. All walls on the ground floor have daubed panels, apart from the north wall, where it was removed and replaced with felt when the outer wall was re-plastered. All downstairs interiors are limewashed, a typical feature of animal buildings.

On the floor are the remains of a brick dwarf partition (plate 7) aligned with the bay that once supported a timber dividing wall, probably a stall for the horses (fig. 5). The floor is laid in 8 inch brick setts, raised in the area of the stall, with a gully that leads to the doorway (fig. 6, plate 8) terminating in a 'Doulton'-manufactured cast iron drain of 19th-century date.

Wall-framing is primary-braced and rests on slightly uneven sill beams, none of which appear to be pegged. Each bay comprises six 10cm-wide and slightly waney studs that reach onto the first floor.

Three beams span the ceiling and support the first floor, the central one of which defines the bay and is supported either side by bolted knee braces (plate 8). The ceiling is plastered like the walls, providing insulation for the horses inside.

There are several interesting fixtures and fittings on the ground floor. On two of the sides are wooden air vents that retain their wooden shutters that regulated the air flow (fig. 5). Those on the north wall are largely intact although the outer parts are covered with steel plastering mesh (plates 9 & 10). Those on the eastern wall have a different form of shutter that have been blocked (fig. 5, plate 11). There is evidence for an old hay rack against the north wall (plate 12) supplied by a 'hay drop' in the ceiling, lined on the wall side with boarding (fig. 5, plate 9). Another ceiling aperture survives on the eastern cart bay, perhaps for internal access to the loft (fig. 5). It is partially supported by a carved beam (plate 13).

Workshop 2 next door (plate 1) is a later and very narrow structure (only 2m-wide), which makes its original use difficult to determine. Its vertical pine panelled interior suggests a more 'genteel' function, perhaps a garage for a small buggy, or a tackroom. As there are no windows, the former explanation appears more likely. The cart doors have the same furnishings as those in the barn and it is possible the barn was refurbished when the workshop was constructed.

First floor

Access into the first floor storage areas was through the high door at the front, (plate 2) offering some degree of security. Despite later fixtures, the door itself is old and contains a wooden lock (plate 16). Judging by empty stud mortice holes on the wall plate soffit over the door, this feature is a later insertion, perhaps replacing the pitching hatch on the front elevation, which was sealed in the past. Through the door, a short flight of stairs leads into the hay loft (plate 15).

The tie beam that separates the two bays of the hay loft has been removed and the two ends are currently strapped (plate 17). Wall plates extend the length of the two bays and are attached by simple lapped and scarf joints over the western bay posts, but are largely hidden behind the boarded partition that separates the two stores (plate 18). Rising from the floor below are six studs per bay, primary-braced at the ends. The bay posts are double-pegged to the wall plates, but there is generally a lack of pegging, apart from in the roof.

10 Inch-wide floorboards are partially visible underneath the stored timber, which obscures the tops to the chute and floor hatch. The north wall of the eastern bay is plastered against the outer boarding, including the sealed former pitching hatch, (fig. 6, plate 19), and it is possible that the entire interior was originally treated in this way, which, combined with brick flashing under the eaves, would keep the upper floor draught-free.

Short wooden steps lead to the grain bins on the west side, over the garage, which is essentially unaltered (plate 20).

The roof has been recently re-felted and lined with plasterboard, but the basic components of frame and rafters survives intact. The roof is a double-pegged collar clasped purlin type with a pegged ridge and intermediate collars. Purlins are splay-scarfed and nailed.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The barn to the rear of 17-19 Bradford Street was built in the late 18th century as a stables/carhouse for the occupants of Bradford House. It is a well-built structure, retaining good historic interiors on both floors, apart from the western side ground floor that was converted to a garage when Ostler's Cottage was built. Although commonly referred to as a barn, the survey shows that it was essentially a stables and carhouse for Bradford House, with the upper floors used for storing animal feed and hay. The small structure built into the adjacent wall was probably added in the late 19th century either as garaging for a small buggy or as a tackroom.

The original layout remains largely unaltered. On the first floor is the hay loft and feed bins, both typical of good quality stable buildings. Other interesting elements exist on the ground floor, many of which have their own local vernacular charm and rarely survive and other historic features may still survive within the garage building. Of particular note are the hay chute and wall vents, particularly as the design of the wall vents is reminiscent of grain hatches recorded in a broadly contemporary malt store at Friars Lane, also on Bradford Street (Letch 2005).

The building to the rear of 17-19 Bradford Street is an interesting part of the post-medieval urban fabric and this low-level record demonstrates how little-known historic structures such as this can survive in good, largely unaltered condition in the back yards behind the street frontages of our towns.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Bowergrange Estates for funding and commissioning this survey and to Mark Brand for facilitating the works and providing drawings. Thanks also to the staff at the Essex Records Office. Fieldwork, recording and photography were undertaken by the author. Illustrations were prepared by the author and produced by Andrew Lewsey of ECC FAU. The project was managed by Adrian Scruby and monitored by Teresa O'Connor of ECC HEM, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.

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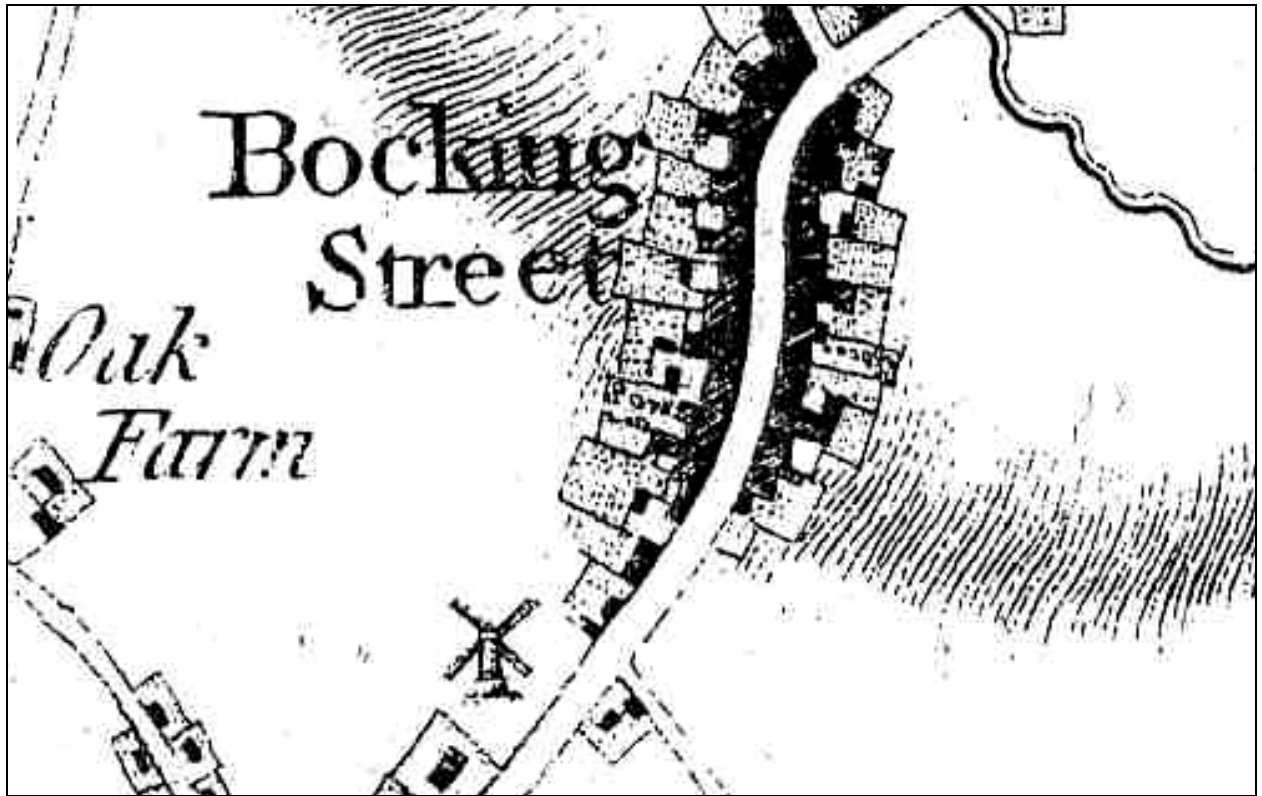


Fig. 2 Chapman and Andre's map of Essex, 1777(plate 8)



Fig. 3 Bocking tithe map, 1841 (D/CT 39B)

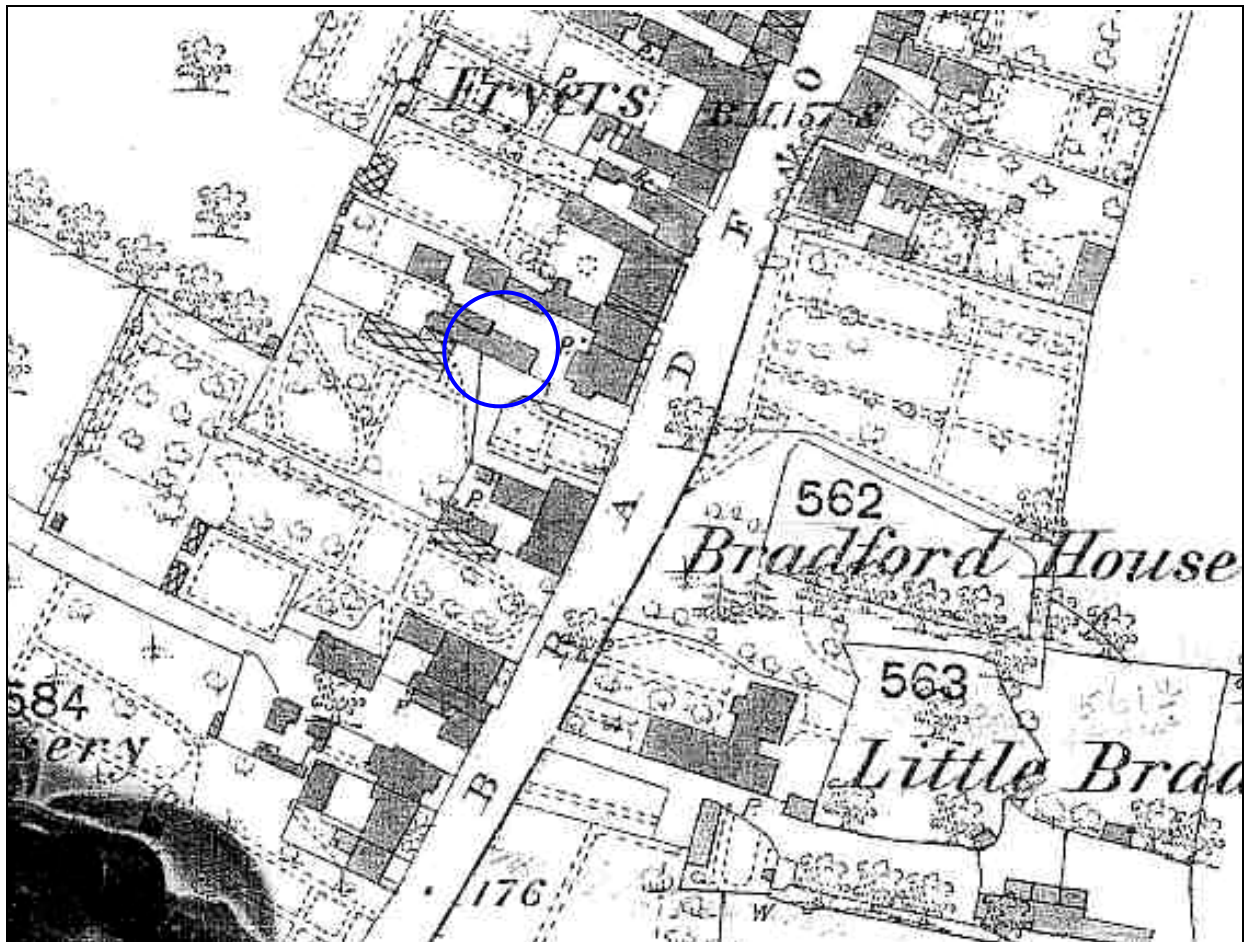


Fig. 4 First Edition 25" OS map, 1875 (sheet 25/10)

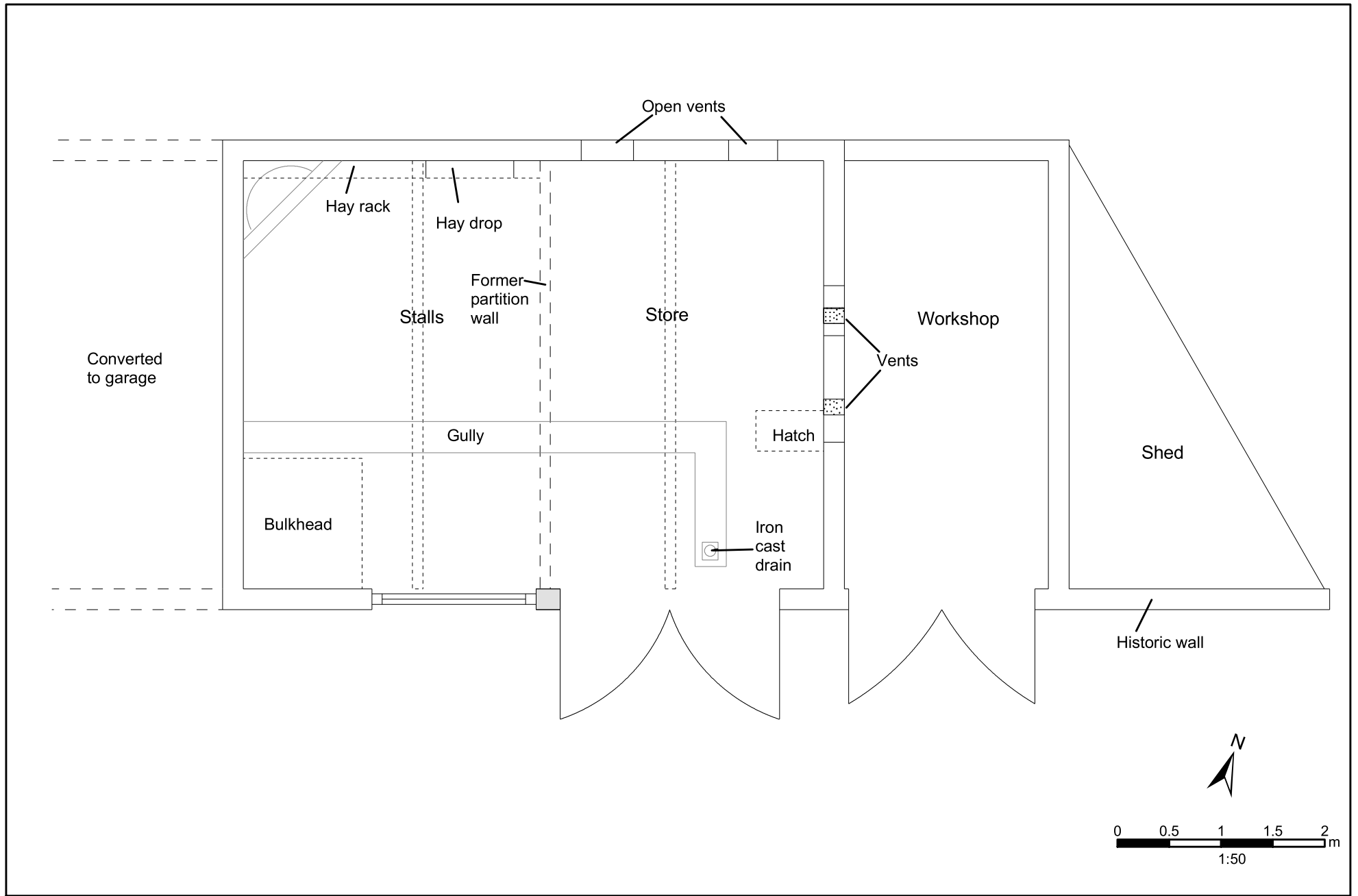


Fig.5. Ground floor plan

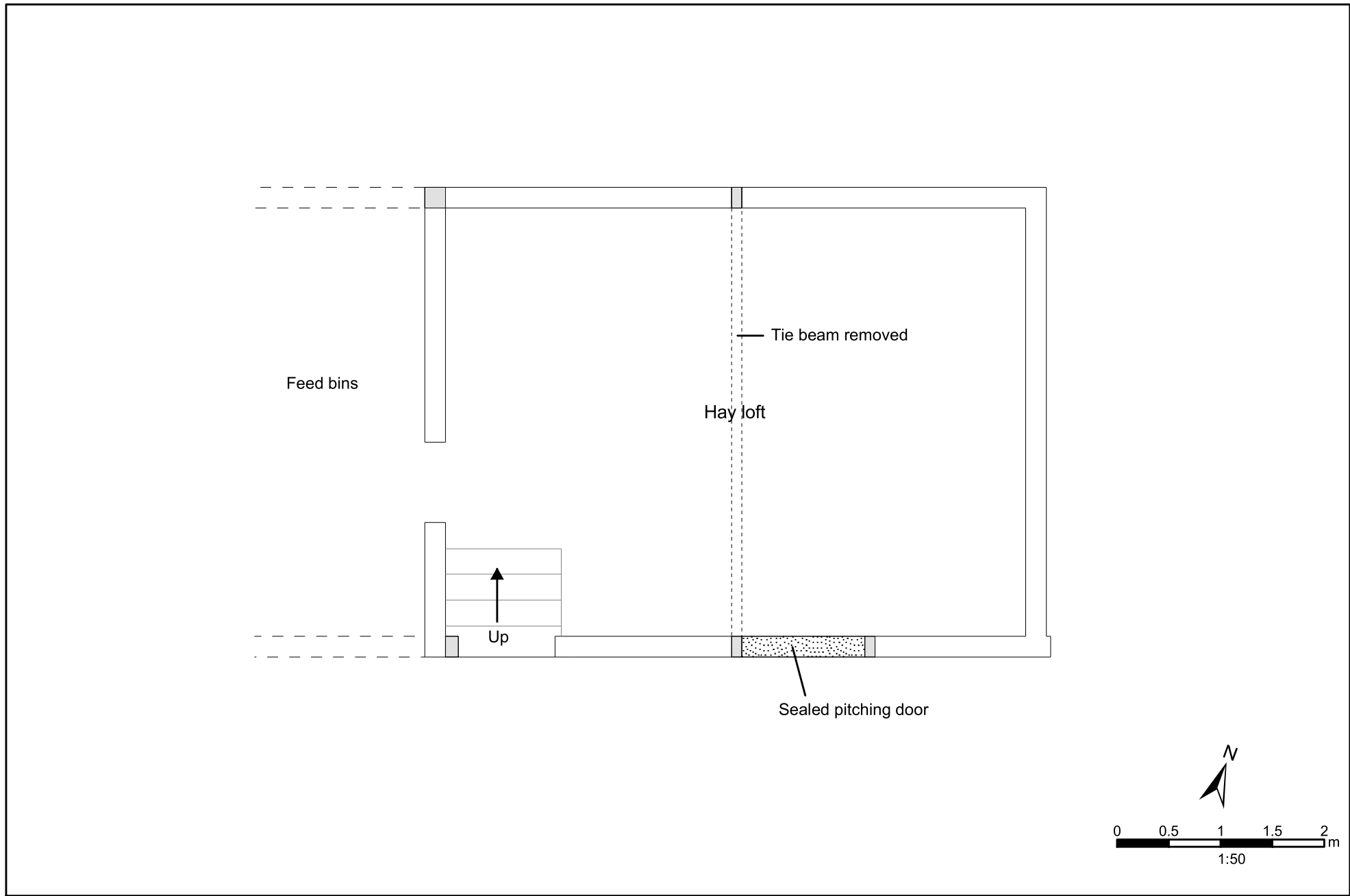


Fig.6. First floor plan



Plate 1 Front (south) elevation of barn



Plate 2 Workshop and barn viewed to north-west



Plate 3 Horizontal sash window and cart door stay-rod

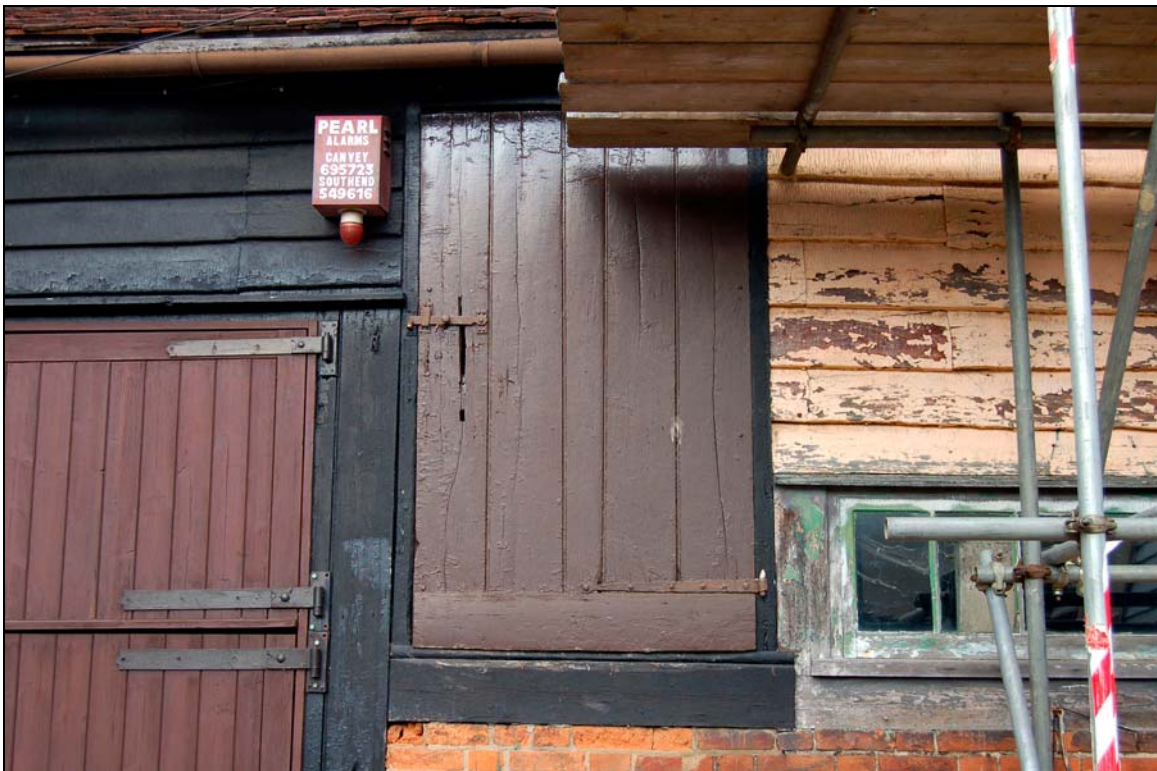


Plate 4 Entrance to hay loft and feed store



Plate 5 Rear (north) view of barn, with Ostler's Cottage



Plate 6 Eastern gable of barn and modern shed



Plate 7 Interior viewed to north-west (stall)



Plate 8 Interior viewed to south-east (cart doors)



Plate 9 North wall and former partition



Plate 10 Detail of wooden vent on north wall



Plate 11 Detail of wooden vent on east wall



Plate 12 Removed hay feeder and hay chute on north wall



Plate 13 Carved timber and ceiling hatch



Plate 14 Interior of workshop



Plate 15 Entrance to hay loft

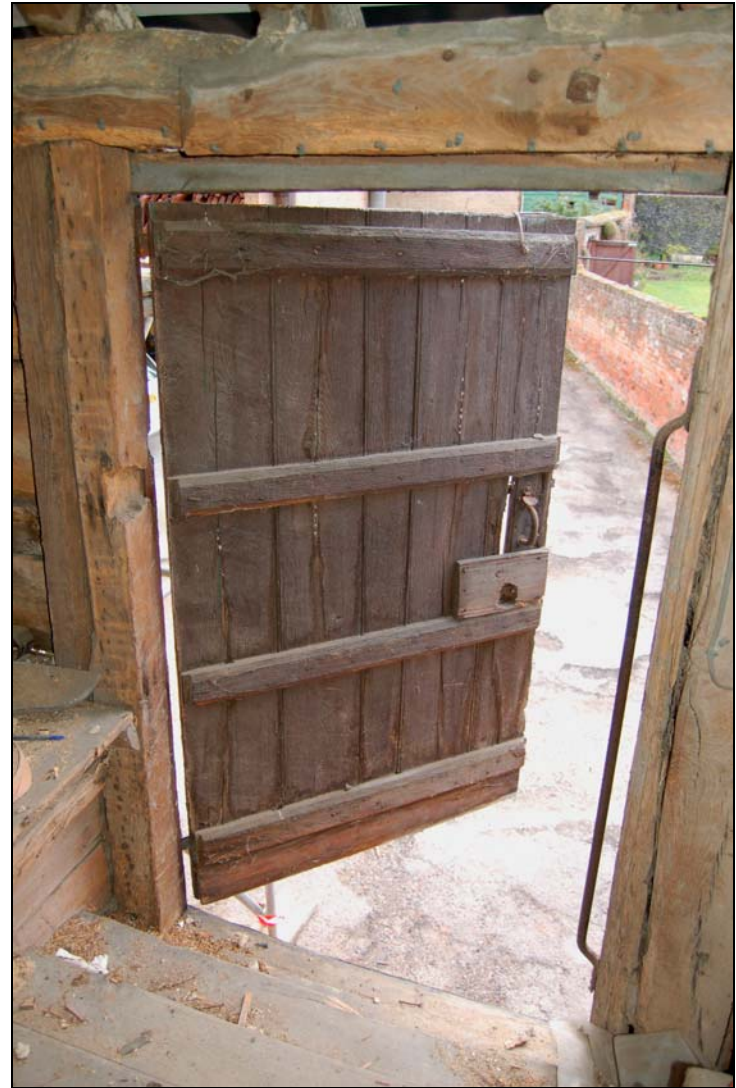


Plate 16 Detail of doorway into loft



Plate 17 Hay loft viewed to east



Plate 18 Partition wall between hay loft and feedstore



Plate 19 Infill panels and former pitching door on south wall



Plate 20 Feedbins above garage conversion

Appendix 1: Contents of Archive

Site name: Barn to rear of 17-19 Bradford Street, Bocking, Essex

Project no.: 2214

Index to the Archive:

Document wallet containing:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 FAU written scheme of investigation
- 1.2 Client/archive report
- 1.3 Unbound version of report
- 1.4 CD containing digital photographs, architect drawings & copy of report, pdf-formatted

2. Site Archive

- 2.1 Photographic record (digital prints)
- 2.2 Photographic register
- 2.3 Site notes and annotated architect drawings

Appendix 2: EHER Summary Sheet

Site Name/Address: Barn to the rear of 19-19 Bradford Street, Bocking	
Parish: Bocking	District: Braintree
NGR: TL 7597 2377	OASIS record No.: 85097
Type of Work: Building recording (level 2)	Site Director/Team: Andrew Letch ECC FAU
Date of Work: 22nd March 2010	Size of Area Investigated: N/A
Curating Museum: Braintree	Funding Source: Bowergrange Estates
Further Work Anticipated? No	Related HER Nos. none
Final Report: Summary in EAH	
Periods Represented: 18th-century	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS: <p>The barn to the rear of 17-19 Bradford Street was probably built in the 18th century as a stables/carhouse for the occupants of Bradford House, a grade 2 Listed 18th-century house and a prominent building on the street frontage. The building record was undertaken prior to residential conversion, though one half of the building, in different ownership, has already been converted to a garage.</p> <p>The original layout remains largely unaltered and many interesting fixtures and fittings remain. The ground floor was used as a stables and a coach house and a small structure was added in the late 19th century (or earlier 20th century) either for a small buggy or as a tackroom. The upper floors functioned as a feed store and a hay loft, entered from an external first floor doorway. Feed bins remain over the converted part, while on the ground floor are wooden wall vents and grain and hay chutes, which are interesting historic features.</p> <p>The structure behind 17-19 Bradford Street is an important part of the post-medieval urban fabric and this low-level record demonstrates how little-known historic structures such as this can survive in quite remarkable condition behind the street frontage.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: none	
Author of Summary: Andrew Letch	Date of Summary: 27th October 2010