



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological building and desk-based
assessment of the Courthouse, Long Crendon,
Buckinghamshire



Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE
t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822
e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk
w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk



Northamptonshire
County Council

Joe Prentice and
Charlotte Walker
Report 11/101
April 2011



**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY
MAY 2011**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING AND DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT
OF THE COURTHOUSE, LONG CRENDON,
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
APRIL 2011**

STAFF

Project Manager: Iain Soden BA, MfA
Text: Joe Prentice
Desk-based assessment: Charlotte Walker BSc, AlfA
Fieldwork: Joe Prentice and Angela Warner BSc Hons
Illustrations: Amir Bassir BSc

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		
Verified by	Iain Soden		
Approved by	Steve Parry		

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Building and desk-based assessment at the Courthouse, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire	
Short description	A building and desk-based assessment recorded a timber framed, stone and brick building of fifteenth-century date.	
Project type	Building and desk-based assessment	
Site status	Structure listed Grade II*	
Previous work	Ground and first floor plans made during 1960's renovation	
Current Land use	Ground floor private rented domestic residence, upper floor open to the public	
Future work	Renovation of ground floor rooms	
Monument type/ period	Post-medieval	
Significant finds	No	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Buckinghamshire	
Site address	Courthouse, 116 High Street, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire	
Study area	The Courthouse	
OS Easting & Northing	SP 69785 09080	
Height OD	c100m above Ordnance Datum	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)	
Project brief originator	Verbal brief from Gary Marshall, The National Trust	
Project Design originator	Iain Soden (NA)	
Director/Supervisor	Joe Prentice (NA)	
Project Manager	Iain Soden (NA)	
Sponsor or funding body	The National Trust	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	April 2011	
End date	April 2011	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		None
Paper		
Digital		
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)		
Title	Building and desk-based assessment at the Courthouse, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire	
Serial title & volume	11/101	
Author(s)	J Prentice	
Page numbers	21 text, 6 Figs, 21 Plates	
Date	21 April 2011	

Contents

1	INTRODUCTION
2	OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY
3	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DOCUMENTARY RESOURCE
4	BUILDING ASSESSMENT
5	CONCLUSIONS
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
	BIBLIOGRAPHY
	GLOSSARY
	APPENDIX 1. List of drawings held by the National Trust

Cover photo: Long Crendon Courthouse

Figures

Fig 1:	Site location, 1:5,000
Fig 2:	The courthouse prior to restoration at the beginning of the twentieth century
Fig 3:	Ground and first floor plans of the courthouse, 1:75
Fig 4:	Section through the queen post and braced trusses, 1:50
Fig 5:	1593 Extract of the All Souls College Estate map
Fig 6:	1827 Inclosure map

Plates

Plate 1:	Long Crendon Courthouse, looking north-east
Plate 2:	The jetty with principal transverse beams and joists, looking east
Plate 3:	The front door, looking north
Plate 4:	The bread oven, looking north-west
Plate 5:	The east gable, looking west
Plate 6:	The north elevation, looking south-west
Plate 7:	The west elevation, looking east
Plate 8:	Room 1, looking east
Plate 9:	Room 2, looking north with shelves to the left of the photograph

- Plate 10: Room 3, the bathroom, looking north-west
- Plate 11: Room 4, the hall, looking east
- Plate 12: Room 5, the kitchen, looking east
- Plate 13: Brick floor of Room 5 extending beneath the south wall
- Plate 14: Room 6, looking north, showing the reduced then blocked fireplaces
- Plate 15: Room 7 the inglenook and bread oven, looking south-east
- Plate 16: Inglenook, looking south, showing the brick springing supporting the fireplace above
- Plate 17: Stairs to the first floor, looking north
- Plate 18: Room 9, the chimney flues and fireplace, looking east
- Plate 19: Room 10, looking west
- Plate 20: Queen post truss, looking east
- Plate 21: Braced truss, looking west

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING AND DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT
OF THE COURTHOUSE, LONG CRENDON,
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
APRIL 2011**

Abstract

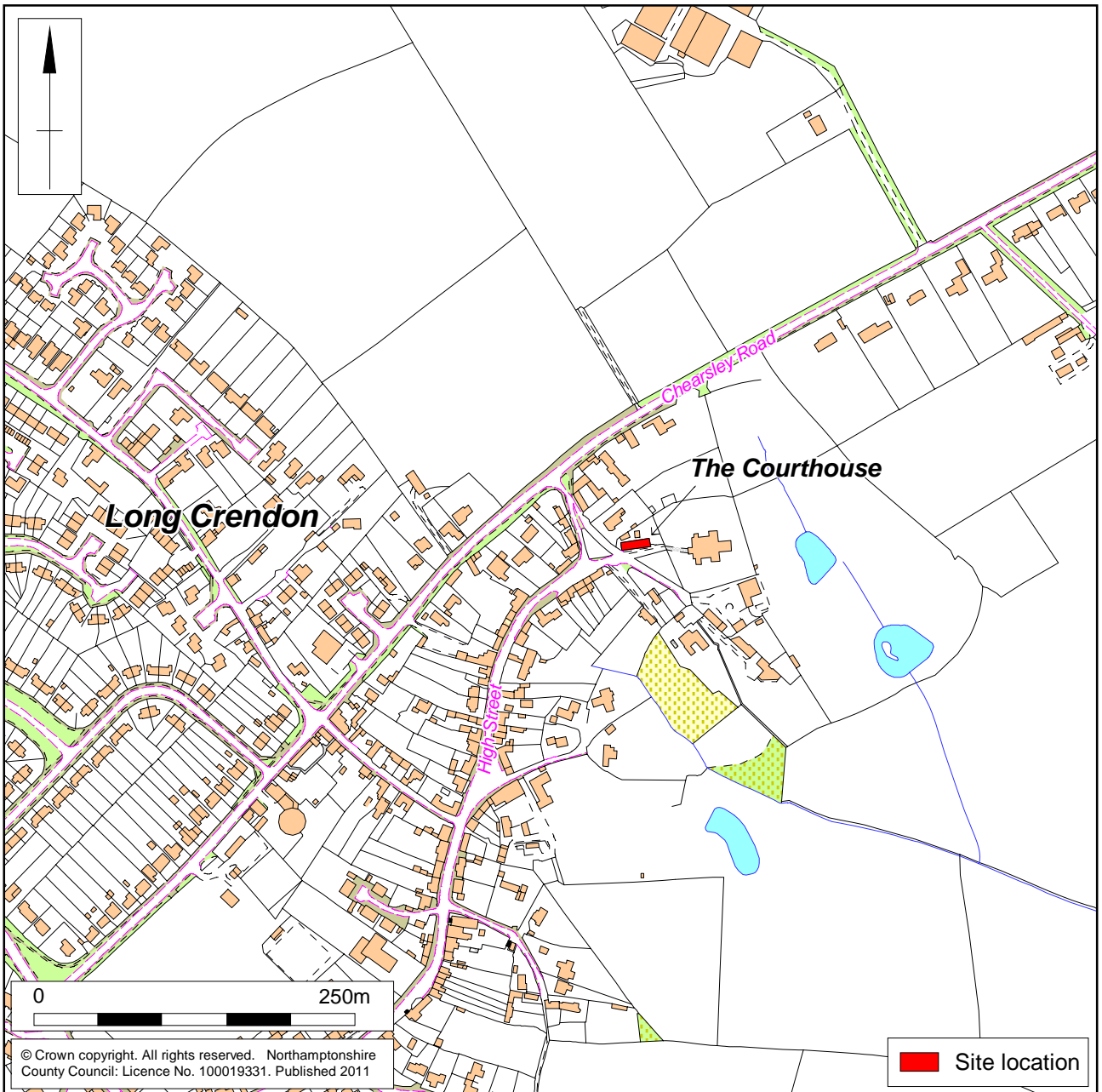
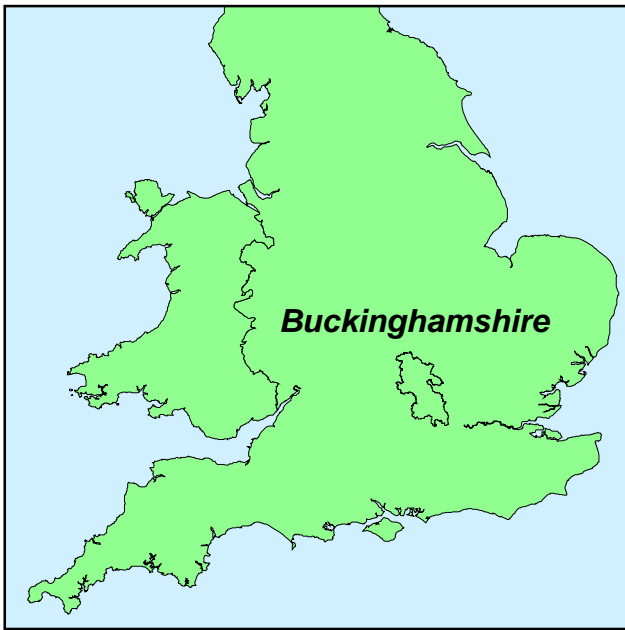
A building and desk-based assessment recorded a timber framed, stone and brick building of fifteenth-century date. The building recording identified historic and modern features within the building, many added since the building was purchased by the National Trust in 1900.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The village of Long Crendon lies approximately 10.5 miles (17 kilometres) south-west of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 69785 09080; Fig 1). The Courthouse lies on the north side of the High Street immediately to the west of the village church and comprises a timber framed long, low, building of two storeys with stone, brick and plaster infilled panels beneath a tiled roof. It has been dated by dendrochronology to the late fifteenth-century and was bought by the National Trust in 1900 to prevent demolition. Immediately after, in 1901, a campaign of repairs was undertaken with a further, perhaps more comprehensive, phase carried out during the mid 1980s (see Appendix 1). The lower floor has been tenanted for the last thirty years and has recently become vacant. The Trust wish to undertake a phase of modernisation and up-grading before re-letting the ground floor and have commissioned this report by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) to provide a greater understanding of the historic resource.
- 1.2 The bedrock geology of the area is of Portland sand formation, limestone and calcareous sandstone (British Geological Survey website).
- 1.3 A site visit was made on 5 April 2011 to assess and record the structure of the building before any alterations were undertaken to determine, if possible, the phasing of the building and to record any evidence of former fixtures and fittings. The record conforms broadly to that of Level II of the English Heritage guidelines (EH 2006).

2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The general objectives of the recording were:
- To establish an accurate archaeological record of the building to English Heritage Level II (EH 2006, section 5), by means of annotated phase plans and sections illustrating vertical relationships through the building. Drawings were made at an appropriate scale, of 1:50.
 - To undertake a comprehensive photographic survey of the building in its present condition using digital colour and black and white negative film.



Scale 1:5000

Site location Fig 1

- To undertake detailed recording of significant structural features, including any architectural detailing and decoration, timber framing, graffiti, ritual marks or carpenter marks.
- 2.2 The drawn record was based upon the architect's plans held by the National Trust (Appendix 1). The accuracy of the plans was checked and they were annotated and amended to produce an accurate record of the building in its current state.
- 2.3 All works were conducted in accordance with the English Heritage procedural document, *The Management of Research Projects on the Historic Environment* (EH 2006b, revised 2009) and the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (IfA revised 2008).

A desk-based assessment was requested, and a search has been undertaken at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (CBS), Buckinghamshire HER and the National Monuments Record, Swindon.

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DOCUMENTARY RESOURCE by Charlotte Walker

At Domesday in 1086 the settlement was known as *Credendone*. Prior to Domesday the estate was held by Seric, son of Aelfeva, but was given to Walter Giffard, later the first Earl of Buckingham, in 1086. In the 11th century the Giffards had their principal residence at Long Crendon. Although the existence of a castle has traditionally been supposed, the lack of any definitive primary evidence makes it more likely that their residence was a manor house. In 1162, with the foundation of Notley Abbey within their deer park, it is thought likely that they moved their principal residence to another estate (EH 2009). In 1231, Richard Marshal inherited the estate, but all his houses and property were destroyed by the king in 1233, following his support for the baron's rebellion against the crown (EH 2009). A weekly market was allowed from 1218, but does not appear to have thrived and did not survive partition of the manor in 1275.

The lordship of the manor was divided into three from 1275 between the co-heirs of Eva de Braose. One third descended through various families including the Dormers (in the 16th to 18th centuries), the Grenvilles and in the 19th century the Duke of Buckingham. The Dormer family has been credited with the construction of the Courthouse (Lee 1890), although dendrochronology dating suggested a felling date of 1483-87 for first floor joists; too early for the Dormer's to have had any involvement.

Another third was held by the Hastings family until 1467 when it was in the possession of the Crown. Edward IV granted it to the Dean and Canons of St George's Chapel Windsor in 1480 who held it until 1867, except for a temporary alienation in 1649 (VCH 1927). It subsequently passed to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The final third was initially held by Humphrey de Bohun and descended through the Bohun family until 1419, when it formed part of the dowry of Queen Katherine. Both the Bohun family and Queen Katherine are also variously accredited with the construction of the Courthouse. In 1449 the land was granted to the Warden and College of All Souls, Oxford. The manor of the college was located to the north of the Courthouse until the late 19th century when it was replaced by College Farm.

The Victoria County History (VCH) states that there was a house for holding courts belonging to the Bohun Manor in 1420, although the more recent dendrochronology date makes it unlikely to be the Courthouse. In her short book about the village, Joyce Donald (1973a) states that the Courthouse was built in around 1500 *by the churchwardens as a*

'church house'. They paid each of the lords a 1d a year in ground rent. The upper room was used for the court, which from 1500 onwards was usually held on the Thursday in Whit week. The day ended with a large dinner cooked in the downstairs kitchen. A whole calf used to be roasted over the fire. The building was also used for the many 'church ales' which in this period were forbidden to be held in the church...[providing] money for the parish. The pewter vessel, forms..would have been kept in the downstairs room. The original function of the building has also been thought of as a wool store, since it has also been known as the Staple Hall.

In 1601 a Poor Law Act was passed which fixed the maintenance of the poor on the parish and there may be evidence that the ground floor of the Courthouse was housing the poor as early as 1603. In his History of Crendon in 1705 John Burnham notes the Church House is *made use of for the poor who have no dwelling, it contains below stairs 5 rooms and a kitchen, there is one long chamber where the lord of the manor keeps his court annually on Thursday in Whitsun week this House is repaired at the Parish Charge (D/X410)*. By 1841, the state of the ground floor was described as *scarcely fit for pigs to abide* and the vicar called for the doors and windows to be walled up (Sewell 2005).

By the late 19th century the Courthouse was in serious disrepair and a letter of 1899 from the Rev Frederick Ogden to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners attempts to make the case that it should be repaired rather than demolished. He states that *it is of the highest services to us, there we hold our Sunday Schools, the meetings of our Societies, in it there is a room where the Relieving Officer pays the poor, and a store house for the things belonging to the church (CBs: DX78/Box 1)*. The reply from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners sets out their case for its demolition, which also involved the two other manors besides the one belonging to them. He stated that it had recently been reported to them that the building *did not appear to possess any special architectural or antiquarian attractions, was in a very dangerous condition and indeed liable to fall if not soon repaired*. At sometime between 1880 and 1898 a two storey thatched cottage attached to the eastern end had already been pulled down (Ordnance Survey maps, not illustrated). The cottage may have been the original priest's house from when the parish was served by a canon from Notley (Donald 1973a).

The National Trust had been founded in 1895 by three philanthropists-Octavia Hill, Sir Robert Hunter and Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley-concerned about uncontrolled development, the loss of historic buildings and the impact of industrialisation. The National Trust purchased the Courthouse on 5 July 1900, one of the first properties to be acquired in this way (the first being Alfriston Clergy House in Sussex bought for £10 in 1896). A fund was set up to purchase the Courthouse and raised £200 nine shillings and sixpence although a further £350 was needed for the urgent repairs (NT display boards). The lower floor was let to Lord and Lady Gomme, whose son Austin Gomme, supervised the 1900 renovation of the Courthouse. The Gommes reported a poltergeist having moved china during the night. In 1904 Mr and Mrs Moore who were artists, moved in, although the length of their tenancy is unknown (Benot 1998). The last court held in Long Crendon was in 1939, although it is not clear if this was held in the Courthouse. There appears to have been a Royal Commission report on the building in 1912 and a National Trust guide for 1961 is referenced (Benot 1998).

During World War II Mrs Barbara Berthon former owner of 'Madges' [a local establishment?] was forced to sleep in the Courthouse on one occasion as she was responsible for a charity exhibition of Chinese art and had to spend the night in the building to comply with the requirements of the insurance policy. 'The floor', she recalled, 'was obviously suspect, even then. I caught the most frightful cold from the awful draught which blew into the gaps'. In his book 'On Trust for the Nation' by Clough Williams-Ellis (1947) it is recorded that the Courthouse was rented by The Nursing Association, providing a flat for the District Nurse with the upper room used as an Infant Welfare Centre although the length of this usage is not noted (Benot 1998). A similar

use was made of the building when from 1965 Bucks County Council Health and Welfare Dept used the building as a Child Welfare centre on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month, commencing in March of that year. In July 1966 the small room (presumably the first floor room at the eastern end) was used for ante-natal classes on Wednesdays at 2.30 and 4.30. The ground floor was tenanted by Mr Ian King until 1980, followed by Mrs Maisie King until 1983 when Mr McAvoy (formerly living at Bradenham manor) took over as tenant, his widow living there until 2011.

Caroe and Partners, Architects, undertook a major programme of repairs during the 1980's (see below) with files referring to further work during 1994 and 1997 though these files have not been seen (Benot 1998).

3.1 Documentary resource

The archives and repositories canvassed for their holdings on the Courthouse were:

- Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record, Aylesbury
- Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, Aylesbury
- National Monuments Record, Swindon

There is little documentary evidence regarding the Courthouse in the above repositories, other than that which has already been published.

Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record

The Historic Environment Record's number for the building is MBC526. The record for the building states:

Dimensions - Length 0022 m Width 0007

Plan Form - rectangular

Timber framed; brick filling, probably not original. Date uncertain; no detail earlier than 15th century (b1). Once known as old Staple Hall. A courthouse belonged to Bohun manor 1420 (b2). Built as church house; upper room used as court from 1500 (b3). 15th century wool staple warehouse restored 1900 (B5). Ground floor used in 18th century to house village paupers. National Trust Survey (B6). Dendro-dating of joists supporting ceiling of ground floor indicated felling dates of 1483-1487 (B7, B9). Buildings report held at NMR (B10).

Bibliography

- (1) *RCHM BUCKS 1 P239*
- (2) *VCH BUCKS 4 P37*
- (3) *Donald, J, 1971, Long Crendon, A Short History, p6.*
- (4) *Verbal communication: Andrew Pike. 1977. PIKE A R (BCM), 30 SEPT 1977, FIELD VISIT*
- (5) *DOE 1981 LIST OF BUILDINGS OF SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST; BUCKS 1/105*
- (6) *Unpublished document: W L Matthews. 1989. THE NATIONAL TRUST ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY: AYLESBURY, THE KING'S HEAD etc*
- (7) *Verbal communication: Julia Wise (BCC). 2005. Information from National Trust display panels*
- (8) *Bibliographic reference: National Trust, 1994, An Introduction to The Courthouse, Long Crendon*

- (9) *Digital archive: Vernacular Architecture Group, 2000 onwards. Vernacular Architecture Group: Dendrochronology Database, VA vol 29, p112*
- (10) *Unpublished document: English Heritage, 2006, NMR Buildings Reports, BF096308*
- (11) *Article in serial: Eland, G, 1899, Long Crendon Court House.*

Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies

The Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (CBS) is the repository for historical archives relating to Buckinghamshire. There were few records directly relating to the Courthouse, most concerned the administration of the manorial estate.

- 1593 map of All Souls College Estate, MaR/1/8-11 (Photocopy of original map still held in All Souls College Archive)
- 1827 Inclosure map of Long Crendon, IR/95Q
- D78/Box 1
- 1705 Account of the Manor of Crendon, D/X410

The archives also hold over 20,000 photos; they have been scanned and are available online. There are twenty-three photos of the Courthouse in the collection, the name Courthouse *or* Court House is transcribed as found:

Courthouse and church, phLong Crendon3

Old Courthouse, front elevation c 1912, phLong Crendon 5

Old Courthouse, front elevation, before restoration, phLong Crendon6

Old Courthouse, front elevation, after restoration, phLong Crendon7

Old Courthouse, front elevation after restoration, 1953, phLong Crendon8

Old Courthouse, plaque on wall re restoration in 1900, 1953, phLong Crendon9

Old Courthouse, front elevation and church, Autumn 1973, phLong Crendon10

Old Courthouse, front elevation, after restoration, phLong Crendon11

Long Crendon Courthouse, front elevation, autumn 1973, phLong Crendon63

Court House, tiled and half-timbered meeting house, c1920 phLong Crendon145

Postcard, showing composite views of the village including the Courthouse, phLong Crendon208

Court House, five named lacemakers at their pillows, phLong Crendon 249

Court House, first floor room, phLong Crendon256

Old Courthouse, phLong Crendon503

View past the Court House to the parish church, phLong Crendon520

View past the Court House to the parish church, phLong Crendon 521

View past the Court House to the parish church, phLong Crendon522

View past the Court House to the parish church, phLong Crendon523

View past the Court House to the parish church, phLong Crendon525

People in the road, near the parish church and the old courthouse, phLong Crendon 566

The old Courthouse, viewed through the parish church gates, phLong Crendon570

The old Courthouse, phLong Crendon 574

The Old Courthouse, viewed from the parish church gates, phLong Crendon577

The National Monuments Record (NMR), Swindon

A full search of the archives and databases was undertaken at the NMR. The following information is held:

- Photographs:

Interior view in attic room showing roof timbers, 1890-1910, AL0404/120/01

Exterior view, Court House, Long Crendon, 1890-1910, AL0404/120/03

The exterior of the long hall, with an upper overhang and tiled roof, taken from the road. The hall was used as a school at this time. Now a National Trust property, it is known as the Court House, 1860-1922, CC74/00247

The interior of the hall, showing the queen strut roof and wooden benches and chairs. The hall was used as a school at this time, 1860-1922, CC74/00248

View of St Mary's Church with The Court House and 98 High Street in the foreground, 1966, AA081391

View of St Mary's Church with The Court House and 98 High Street in the foreground, 1966, AA081392

- Other documents:

The Court House, Long Crendon. One file including report and photograph, BF096308. The report is not available online, but is, according the HER reference, an NMR building report conducted in 2006.

Document MD93/00316 is a measured plan of an unidentified building in Long Crendon.

Other repositories and sources

A complete catalogue of the available manorial documents of Long Crendon is available online as part of the manorial documents register on The National Archives website (nationalarchives.gov.uk/mdr/). While many of the court rolls and other documents relating to the administration of the manors are held by the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, many other documents are held by other repositories. Many of the documents relating to the manor belonging to All Souls College, Oxford are held by the Bodleian Library, Oxford within their Western Manuscripts archive, although the college still holds many of the maps. Some of the documents relating to the manor held by St George's Chapel Windsor are located at the St George's Chapel Archives and Chapter Library. The National Archives also hold a very few documents. While many of these will not be relevant to the study of the Courthouse, it is possible that further research will yield further information as to its history.

An historic assessment of Long Crendon has been undertaken by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Services and funded by English Heritage (EH 2009). The report summarises the history and development of the town and presents proposals for the management of the heritage assets there. Included within the report is a list of records relating to the town and their location.

Twentieth-century records held by the National Trust comprise mostly plans and elevations of the building which show the location of repairs and details of fittings within the kitchen and bathroom (see Appendix 1).

4 BUILDING ASSESSMENT by Joe Prentice and Angela Warner

4.1 Overview. The building is a rectangular structure of five bays (numbered 1-5 from west to east in this report), the long axis aligned almost east-west, and contains two storeys. The lower floor comprises domestic accommodation which has been tenanted and is not accessible to the public. The first floor is accessed via a separate door containing a small first floor landing, a single space main room comprising over two thirds of the upper level and a small room at the eastern end. The stairs, landing and main room are open to the public, the small room at the eastern end is used for storage and not open to the public. There is a small cellar at the west end below the domestic accommodation.

The whole building is constructed of an oak timber frame with the panels infilled by brick or wattle and daub with repairs carried out by Caroe and Partners in 1985, and then a further stage of repair when woodwool panels to the upper floor were substituted for the brickwork in 1987 (NT display panel, first floor of Courthouse). These appear to be restricted to the south side of the upper floor where they are present above the jetty and were introduced to reduce weight. It is possible that some of the other plastered panels may retain original, or at least historic, wattle and daub. The whole frame rests on a raised plinth of mainly stone, though with some brick repairs. The exterior is painted with a white lime wash on the west, south and eastern elevations, the north elevation is not painted and the various infills can be clearly seen. The roof is covered with red clay peg tiles, an early twentieth-century replacement (undated Country Life article). Internally all of the ground floor wall surfaces comprise either plaster infill or stud and matchboard panelling, all painted.

There are modern kitchen and bathroom fittings and electric storage heaters throughout. Apart from the hall and a small part of the kitchen where a brick floor can be seen the floor surfaces are covered by fitted carpet or vinyl. The first floor is of oak or pine boards. The underside of the roof is also plastered and painted. All windows are modern replacements, indeed, all early photographs show no windows at all on the ground floor (south side).

Since the assessment was carried out before the current phase of repairs and alterations it has not been possible to comment with absolute certainty on the structural elements of those sections of the building which are plastered or covered by other surface finishes, since only the final, painted finish could be observed and there was not the opportunity to remove any such coverings. Therefore it must be that the attribution of some structural detail remains un-corroborated and may be contradicted if or when the decorative finishes are removed.

Whilst the entire building was observed, emphasis was placed on the ground floor room interiors since it is understood that it is this area which will be the focus of the forthcoming alterations.

4.2 **The exterior.**

The south elevation. The building presents a long, low facade. The structure is of five bays, most easily seen at first floor level where the fenestration is regular with one window per bay (Bays 1-4) and, at the eastern end, a recessed bay which unlike the rest of the first floor, is not jettied (Plate 1). The eaves in this eastern bay (Bay 5) are supported on curving braces and overhang the recess which is in fact simply an un-

jettied bay, the wall plane of this bay being flush with the wall plane of the remainder of the south front. The timber framing which delineates each bay is not currently obvious since the whole facade has been painted bright white, thus disguising the framework, though on closer inspection the oak of the framing can be made out. The timberwork of each bay can most clearly be seen where the beams which support the jetty project above the wall plane of the ground floor, large transverse beams representing the division of each bay, and the joist ends lying between (Plate 2). Both transverse beams and joists have curved ends in the manner of corbels. Each principal beam is supported by small curved brackets which are set into the undersides of the beams and the south side of the principal posts. These in turn are set into a sole plate set above a plinth of rough stonework with many repairs. At the south-west corner the outer face of the dragon beam is supported on a shaped bracket set into the corner post above a weathered band of raised, carved decoration. The roof of red clay tiles overhangs the first floor wall plane with the lower ends of the rafters visible, but there is no gutter.

At ground floor level there are three doors and eight windows, all irregularly spaced along the facade. None of the windows appears to be original, not being present on photographs of the late nineteenth- or early twentieth-centuries and certainly all of the window frames are modern. Given the long history of the building, and the variety of uses to which it has been put, it is difficult to determine which, if any, may be in original positions. This attempt at interpretation is made more difficult by the thick modern paint and obvious modern repairs. The westernmost door allows access to the lower floor, the middle door formerly did the same, though is currently not used, and the eastern door opens onto the stairs to the upper floor. All of the doors are set within timber frames, themselves set within the oak framing of the structure (one in Bay 2 and two in Bay 4). All are vertically planked and are ledged, but not braced. Each is hung on simple strap hinges and fitted with rim locks of either metal or wood (see interior descriptions, below). All of the doors are probably modern, i.e. added at the earliest during the 1901 restoration. The main front door is fitted with a modern Yale and rim lock, a letterbox and doorknocker (Plate 3). The windows are all timber casements, and all appear to have been added in a single phase since they are of exactly the same style and configuration; a fixed and opening casement to each window, each leaf comprising eight panes per leaf. Certainly, the timberwork of many of the sills (i.e. structural framework), judging from the sharpness of the edges and flatness of the exposed surface, appears to be modern replacement timber, suggesting that during the early restorations the windows were rationalised and added in a single phase.

The upper floor, as has previously been stated, has a regular arrangement with one window per bay, all at the same level just beneath the wall plate; these window openings, although now fitted with modern replacements, do appear to have been present previously. It appears that much, if not all, of the visible external timber frame at the first floor level above the jetty may be modern repair. The western four of the windows are of a similar size as those on the ground floor but although they each have eight lights per leaf, here they comprise horizontal sashes. The window in the recessed bay at the eastern end, although comprising two halves each of eight panes, comprises a casement with both halves opening. It is also slightly larger than the other four at this level.

There is a (probably) lead plaque fixed to the wall just above the jetty which reads

“This COURT-HOUSE was purchased by the NATIONAL TRUST A.D. 1900 the expenses being defrayed by public subscription”

The inscription is of raised lettering set within a simple raised border with cinquefoil roses in each corner set within a quadrant.

The easternmost bay which does not have a jettied upper floor has a single wall plane with the first floor flush with the ground floor wall. There is a single window per floor and the eaves are supported on two curved braces which spring from a post set in each principal beam at either side of the bay at first floor level. The reason for the different configuration of this last, eastern, bay is uncertain and the evidence equivocal. Some suggest that the whole bay may have been open and provided a covered wagon-way through to the land at the rear. Others have suggested it may originally have been jettied like the other four bays and have been altered at some stage but since the entire floor internally is of modern pine it is not clear from surviving evidence whether alterations were made. There must certainly have been some changes when the brick chimney stack which serves the inglenook was added and the change in this bay might simply reflect changes made at that time.

At the very eastern end of the wall at ground floor level is a semi-circular projection which is the external manifestation of a bread oven set within the inglenook fireplace of the eastern room (see below, section 4.13). The external surface is rendered so it is not certain if it is made of stone or brick; it is capped by red clay roof tiles (Plate 4).

One photograph appears to show an attached building with a chimney stack at the eastern end (Fig 2), though by 1898 this had gone, being present on the 1880 Ordnance Survey map but not indicated on the 1898 Edition.



The Courthouse, undated, probably late 19th century. Fig 2

A number of empty peg holes and mortices are present on the south facade. On the right hand side and lintel of the pair of windows are shallow, empty, mortices which might represent the location of former vertical bars and a horizontal rail, although nothing can be seen on the sill which is a modern replacement. This could either represent a panel filled above and below with wattle and daub or brick or could represent a form of window. A similar pair of empty mortices is present on either side of the window to the west of the front door in bay 2. Empty peg holes, where present, are less easy to ascribe former functions to as they may simply represent the location of now missing attached horizontal or vertical timbers or equally could have been for more localised surface attachments and merely indicate the position of a protruding peg used to hang items on.

At the eastern end within the un-jettied bay (Bay 5) there are a number of indications of former timbers, though again, it is not clear what form these may have taken. There is a

possibility that there was a previous brace matching that on the south-west corner, and if this is the case this might indicate that this bay was originally jettied like the rest of the south side (see above). However, the combination of jettied and recessed bays is a common form, known broadly as Wealden, and numerous examples survive, for example at Upper Spon Street in Coventry. The large amount of later repair and alteration makes it difficult to interpret, especially as only the outer face of each timber is visible and such interpretative analysis is best undertaken during repairs when all sides of each timber can be seen. Reference to the drawings made during the 1980's suggests that some evidence of earlier fenestration/bracing/pegging was recorded at that time and which can no longer be seen, but also that some empty mortices which are visible now were not recorded then.

- 4.3 The east elevation. The east gable end comprises an entirely stone lower part with no timber framing (Plate 5). A principal beam lies above this stone wall, set back slightly from the stone wall plane, the top of which is capped by lead to throw rainwater off. Above this the remainder of the gable end is timber framed infilled by either brick, wattle and daub or perhaps modern woodwool replacement, though where rendered it cannot be determined. The whole of the timber framed upper section is painted white but it is clear that much of the timber frame has been replaced, the new wood having flat surfaces and sharp edges. A double brick chimney stack rises above this gable, but is set inside the wall plane since it is a later insertion and is essentially free-standing, set away (to the west) from the timber frame of the gable. The whole of the stack above the ridge appears to have been re-built, or at least, heavily repaired.

There are no obvious scars to indicate how the former addition (see Fig 2) was connected to this elevation although occasional scars and empty dowel holes in the timberwork indicate evidence of previous attachments.

- 4.4 The north elevation. The north elevation is unpainted along its entire length and therefore the different phases of intervention and structural detail are easier to identify (Plate 6). Whilst constructed in essentially the same way as the south facade, there appear to be more alterations and changes in this elevation, particularly at ground floor elevation where there are different panels of infill and the line of the plinth beneath the sole plate is less consistent. Only the eastern end was photographed clearly due to the proximity of outbuildings and shrubbery at the western end, though the whole was observed on site.

The ground floor. Bay 1 is built above a stone plinth with brick infilled panels to both floors and a later, partly stone and partly brick, chimney stack built into the eastern part of that bay. There are no windows in this bay at either floor level, although there surely must have been a window in this elevation since none is present on the early photographs in the south elevation and it cannot be that the room at this end of the building had no natural light at all. It is possible there was a previous window in the west wall (Fig 3). In Bay 2 there is a window, which now lights the room converted into a bathroom, the infilling within the frame comprising a mixture of modern and historic brickwork laid conventionally and in herringbone fashion as well as stone of varying quality. It is not certain if any is original. In Bay 3 there is a door and a window, again the infilling is a mish-mash of brick and stone, modern and historic of varying quality and styles. Bays 4 and 5 continue the pattern of multi-phase infilling with conventional bricklaying and herringbone panels above a sole plate set on top of a wider stone and brick plinth, the brickwork below the sole plate apparently modern, indicating a degree of underpinning. Bay 4 has no window; there is a single window in Bay 5, again a modern replacement, as is all of the brick infilling within this bay to the east of the window. There are two large cross-shaped iron tie bar ends which have been added to prevent lateral

spread of the framework on either side of the window. It is not known to what these tie bars are attached as there are no corresponding tie plates visible on the south elevation.

The First floor. This level is slightly more consistent, in as much as the panels are all brickwork, although the spacing of the windows is irregular as is the bonding of the brick panels. In Bay 1 the upper part of the chimney stack is of brick at first floor level, and also brick above the roof line. There is no window in this bay. Bay 2 contains a window and has both herringbone and conventional brickwork. The flat external ends of the joists extend almost to the horizontal beam at first floor level and have been covered by sloping pieces of timber to throw off the rain. The same pattern is present in Bay 3, Bays 4 and 5 have no windows and there are no joists visible in Bay 5. All of the windows are fixed leaded lights.

4.5 The west elevation. This elevation could only be photographed from the adjacent triangular green to the west since a narrow passageway precluded photographs being taken except at an extremely oblique angle (Plate 7). The elevation is jettied above the ground floor and the whole elevation is painted white. There are no windows at ground floor level, although it is thought that there may have been one at some stage as there is a roughly square panel in the centre of the wall which could have held a frame. The whole of the ground floor infilling is plastered so it has not been possible to comment on the nature of the structure. The first floor and gable is much the same. It can be seen that there has been replacement of some of the oak frame due to the sharpness of the timber, but all of the panels are plastered so it is assumed that the infilling must be either wattle and daub, brick or woodwool. The first floor has a centrally placed horizontal sliding sash window.

4.6 **The Interior.**

The ground floor rooms have been given numbers, since although most rooms can be distinguished by their recent, modern usage, the historic layout is less certain, the earliest but undated plan is that reproduced in a Country Life article which appears to date from the early years of the twentieth-century. At the time of the assessment all of the ground floor rooms contained furniture which had been left by the previous tenant, and though this had the appearance of making some of the rooms look a little untidy, it did not prevent any features being investigated. The floors were not examined where covered by fitted carpet as no attempt was made to remove the covering and no intrusive investigation was made to any wall, timber or ceiling surfaces. Each room is described in the same way starting with the north, then east, south and west walls, floor and ceiling along with other fixtures and fittings.

4.7 Room 1, sitting room. This room occupies all of Bay 1 and the south-west quarter of Bay 2 which lies at a lower level, the two parts of this L-shaped room linked by two steps rising from east to west (Fig 3, Plate 8). The reason for these two steps is presumably to allow for the cellar beneath, which if not raised in this way would not allow sufficient headroom. The north wall contains a fireplace set at an angle to the walls, though not completely across the corner at 45 degrees; it is not original. The chimney breast and exposed west side are plastered and painted, the fireplace opening was exposed which showed a mixture of limestone and brick to the jambs and back, the hearth was covered in modern clay tiles (22 cms square). The fire opening contained a modern coal effect gas fire in a vaguely Victorian style. There was a black painted (oak?) lintel with a simple mantle shelf comprising an un-moulded plank set horizontally on two simple brackets. The remainder of the north wall was plastered and painted white, a vertical post and a short part of the sole plate could be seen, both of which were painted black.

The east side of the L-shaped room was all of timber with both west facing sections comprising vertically placed matchboard over studwork, whilst the south facing section

has the matchboard on the other (north) side with the studwork exposed within the room. Why two lengths of this wall should be boarded on one side, and another section on the other is unclear. All of the timber, probably pine, is covered in white gloss paint and appears by its crispness and general style to be either a partition erected shortly prior to the building being purchased by the Trust, or more likely, post-dating their acquisition of the building and relating to sub-division which would have made the building a more easily used space for occupation.

The south wall occupies the whole of Bay 1 and the western half of Bay 2 (Fig 3). There are two windows in Bay 1 and one in Bay 2, all of the same style and size, each comprising one fixed and one opening casement of eight panes within a painted timber frame, most likely pine. The fixings are simple cockspur metal catches with plain pierced catch stays which fit over a pin set in the sill. All of the windows have modern secondary double glazing fitted internally. There are no exposed structural timbers in this elevation.

The west elevation contains a main structural post which supports the east-west aligned beam which supports the floor joists above. From the south-west corner a dragon beam connects into this axial beam (the dragon beam projects beyond the wall plane and can be seen at the external south-west corner of the building where it supports the jettied first floor). Either side of the main post in the west wall are secondary timbers, to the south is a single vertical stud, to the north a stud with a horizontal half way up the wall which might indicate the location of a former window in this elevation. In the north-west corner of the room is a door which leads to a basement which occupies a space of slightly less than half the size of Bay 1 (Fig 3). A steep flight of steps leads down to the room which is unlit apart from incidental light through small ventilation bricks and modern artificial light. The basement was presumably used originally for storage and is rather small given the size of the building. The walls are limewashed and appear to be of roughly laid stone. A fitted timber boarded box allows headroom when passing in and out of the cellar, this presents the appearance of a fixed box against the west wall. The boarding is all vertically fixed matchboard and is probably of early twentieth-century date. There is no indication of how any early covering was configured.

The floor is carpeted but is clearly timber in Bay 1, and was thought to be solid in Bay 2 but was not seen. The ceiling comprises exposed beams, all painted or stained dark brown or black, there is a principal axial beam aligned east-west with the dragon beam fixed into it from the south-west corner, on the north of the axial beam the joists are aligned north-south, on the south of the beam they are both north-south and east-west where they fit into the dragon beam. In between the ceiling is plastered and painted white.

- 4.8 Room 2, lobby. This small room occupies the south-east quarter of Bay 2, here called a lobby (Fig 3). Entered through the main front door into the building, the room is roughly square and has stud and matchboard west, north and east walls with only the south (external) wall being timber framed and infilled. The stud and matchboard work is identical to, and is indeed on the west of the lobby the other side of, that described for Room 1. It is also painted with white gloss paint. A door in the north wall leads into the bathroom, there is a built-in cupboard in the north-east corner which is later and fitted book shelves on the west wall (Plate 9). A door in the east wall leads into the Hall (Fig 3, room 4). The floor is carpeted but is identified on the Trust drawing No 16-82 as timber. The ceiling is composed of the joists painted black with plaster between. Apart from modern light sockets, switches and plugs there are no other fittings. The front door is vertically boarded, ledged but not braced with a modern barrel lock and rim lock, simple modern draw bolts, a letter box and simple iron strap hinges. There is a portiere pole fixed to the top of the door. To the west of the door is a window of the same configuration and date as those described in Room 1.

4.9 Room 3, bathroom. Now used as a bathroom, this occupies most of the northern half of Bay 2 and was formerly a bedroom accessed via the kitchen (Fig 3). The north wall is the external wall and is timber framed with brick infill over a stone plinth although none of this can be seen internally due to being almost entirely covered in modern white tiles, and a window in the east half of the wall is of the same configuration as those previously described, fitted with internal secondary double glazing. The east wall is stud and matchboard as is the south wall and southern part of the west wall. The north half of the west wall comprises the eastern face of the chimney breast of Room 1, also now covered in white tiles (Plate 10). A modern bathroom suite comprising bath, toilet and sink which must have been fitted as part of the 1985 renovations is present within the room along with mirror and other modern electrical fittings. The door into the room is a vertically planked modern door fitted with a simple drop latch, ledged but not braced. A built-in cupboard occupies the south-west corner and the floor is carpeted over a solid base. The ceiling comprises the joists painted black with white painted plaster between.

4.10 Room 4, hall. Accessed via the entrance lobby, this room is described here as a hall (Fig 3). The north wall is a flat surfaced inserted division, painted and plastered but its structural make-up is unknown; it appears to be too thin to be a single thickness brick wall as it is only 9 cms thick, and most bricks are 10cms wide, and given that both surfaces are plastered it would therefore be thicker than this (although it is possible that it is of brick laid on edge). It does not ring hollow when tapped and therefore does not appear to stud and plaster, so perhaps it is brick laid on edge and then plastered, or some other, thin, modern material has been used. There is a door towards the west end leading into the kitchen (see below, Room 5) and small window roughly half way along the remaining section of the wall to the east which allows borrowed light from the hall (south facing) into the kitchen.

The east wall of the room appears to be an original division, a single thick post is present immediately to the north of the doorway into Room 6. The lower edge rests on and is presumably tenoned into the sole plate which is also partly visible (Plate 11). The panel to the north is plastered and may be wattle and daub; it is painted white.

The south wall is the external wall of the building, the lower part of which is irregular and comprises the upper part of the plinth. This is presumably of stone as it is externally. The timber sole plate can be seen and is painted black, there are two windows either side of a central post located midway between the main posts of the bay timbers. The windows are exactly the same as all the others described thus far.

The west wall is a matchboard wall of the same configuration as those previously described.

The floor is of red bricks laid flat, 110mm x 230mm in size, the thickness is not known as none were visible to measure. The ceiling comprises the joists painted black with white painted plaster between.

4.11 Room 5, kitchen. Now a kitchen, this room occupies the northern half of Bay 3 with integral cupboards which extend westwards into Bay 2 (Fig 3). Apart from the west wall which divides the cupboard interiors from the main kitchen room, all of the wall surfaces are covered either by modern fitted units, wall cupboards, tiling or plastered finishes, and where the latter, obviously flattened to make flat vertical surfaces (Plate 12). There is a door leading outside towards the west end of the north wall and to the east a window like all the others in the building. The door is ledged, but not braced, and has a square glazed panel in the upper half; it is hung on simple strap hinges and has two draw bolts, a rim lock and drop latch, all modern. The kitchen units are all modern 'off the peg'

fitted units of mid 1980s design and were clearly fitted during the last renovation, the sink is positioned beneath the window.

The south wall is that shared with Room 4, and the same description applies; it is not known of what it is constructed, but it clearly post dates the red brick floor which continues unbroken beneath it. Most of the floor is covered by a vinyl sheet flooring with an imitation tile pattern, but in one place where a now removed appliance was formerly located, the brick floor can be seen and matches exactly with the pattern on the south side indicating it is continuous and laid at one time (Plate 13). This indicates that the dividing wall between Rooms 4 and 5 is a later addition, and was probably added at the earliest during the early years of the twentieth century, but may have been added as late as 1985 when the kitchen was fitted.

The undated, but clearly post 1900, article in *Country Life* includes plans of the ground and first floors (Fig 3). It shows that what are here called Rooms 4 and 5 were at that time a single room, and it is described on the plan as a kitchen. Though there is no reason to disbelieve this, it seems an odd choice for such a room since there is not, and appears never to have been, a fireplace in this room even though this would be essential for a kitchen at this date (gas and electric stoves would not have been used in such rural areas at this date).

The two cupboards behind the west wall are built of the stud and matchboard seen previously and are clearly contemporary with it. They were most recently used as a pantry (the southernmost) and store cupboard (northernmost) with hot and cold water tanks. Both had the same vinyl flooring as the main kitchen.

- 4.12 Room 6, bedroom 1. Apparently used most recently as a bedroom, this room occupies the whole of Bay 4 (Fig 3). The north wall contains a now obsolete chimney breast of brick painted white. There is evidence that the fireplace opening had been narrowed and lowered twice before being completely blocked (Plate 14). To the immediate east of this is a built-in cupboard fitted with sliding doors probably of 1980s date. The plinth of the north external wall is plastered as is the inside of the (thinner) external north wall above it at the rear of this cupboard. A water pipe fitted with a tap suggests that previously this recess may have been fitted with a sink, and was perhaps a previous kitchen or scullery.

The east wall of the room comprises a low plinth capped by a sole plate fitted with posts, painted black and white. The two panels of infill to the north of the door into the room to the east are infilled by painted bricks, those to the south of the door are plastered which may also cover brick or perhaps wattle and daub. The door leading to the room to the east, unusually for an internal domestic interior, is fitted with a two leaf 'stable' door, each leaf ledged but not braced and closed by simple draw bolts.

The south part of the east wall is cut across by the underside of the stairs which lead from the external door in the south wall to the first floor, this angled under stair slope makes this corner of the room effectively unusable. The south wall of the room contains a window (like the others) and immediately adjacent a door, now fixed shut, but clearly once used. It is ledged but not braced and fitted with a draw bolt and rim lock, it is hung on simple strap hinges. The west wall is the other side of that described above (east wall of Room 4).

The floor is carpeted over a solid floor indicated as being a quarry tile floor on the Trust drawing No 16-81 and the ceiling comprises the underside of a flat, white, painted plaster surface with no joists visible. This is the only room where the ceiling is treated in this way.

- 4.13 Room 7, bedroom 2. The easternmost room fills all of Bay 5 and contains in the north wall a thick plinth in the lower part of the wall with a sole plate just below the level of the window (Fig 3). This is of the same configuration as all of the others in the building, the only difference is that the catch is a monkey tail pattern rather than a plain, modern catch. The sole plate here is unpainted and of oak.

On the east side of the room is a large inglenook fireplace which extends the full width of the building, the chimney breast being supported on a deep oak beam with a deeply moulded west face (Plate 15). It is understood that this fireplace is of sixteenth-century date and therefore a later insertion into the building. The beam is painted black and has suffered structural failure at some stage with an iron plate being fixed to the back (east) face to support the split in the beam. It is supported at the north end by a brick buttress built, presumably, against the wall. The south end is supported by a thickened south wall which also incorporates the inner face of a bread oven which extends beyond the south side of this wall manifesting itself externally as a semi-circular projection capped by a conical tile roof. The whole of the fireplace and chimney breast comprises painted brickwork, the back wall retains an iron bar supported on three iron pins set into the wall which presumably was used to support cooking equipment. The bread oven is fitted with a hinged cast iron door with a drop latch decorated with wrought iron scrolls above and below the latch. It was not possible to open the door (perhaps it was rusted shut) so the interior was not inspected. The fire within this inglenook was clearly located at the northern end of the opening since the flue only occupies the northern half of the fireplace, the southern part supports a quarter vault in brick springing from the bressumer which supports the fireplace in the room above (Plate 16).

The south wall of the room is slightly thicker at the base where the plinth is visible internally but the sole plate is not visible; the whole wall is plastered and painted white, there is a window which conforms to the pattern seen elsewhere.

The west wall has a thickened plinth base with unpainted oak posts and a single diagonal brace, the only one observed internally within the building. Both posts and brace are set into a sole plate set on top of the plinth. The ceiling comprises brown/black joists many of which appear to be modern replacements with the underside of the floorboards of the room above painted white which were seen from above to be of modern pine. This is the only room where this configuration of ceiling was seen.

The carpeted floor is indicated as being of timber on the Trust drawing 16-81 apart from that section which lies within the inglenook fireplace where it is described as being of brick.

- 4.14 The first floor rooms are described here briefly since it is understood that there are at present no plans to make any alterations or repairs to this level.

Room 8, landing. This is accessed via a flight of oak stairs approached through an external doorway in the south wall in the east side of Bay 4 (Plate 17). The door to the staircase is vertically planked, ledged but not braced, and fitted with a rim lock and hung on strap hinges. The stairs comprise simple oak planks forming the treads and risers and there is no moulding to the leading edge of the treads. At the top of the stairs is a small landing with doors on both the east and west sides which lead into the two rooms on this floor (Fig 3). The landing is currently used to display information panels about the courthouse; it contains no windows. The studwork to the external walls is plastered, that on the north side over brick (as seen from the outside), that to the south probably over woodwool. The east and west side walls are treated differently, though the oak studs are exposed on both sides; on the west they are covered on their western side by

horizontal timber boards painted white as are the studs; on the east side the studs are un-painted and the panels infilled by plaster over either brick, or more likely at this level, wattle and daub which would put less weight stress on the floor beneath. The underside of the roof is exposed, though little of it can be seen here (see below, Room 10 for full description).

4.15 Room 9, store room. A small room occupying the whole of the upper floor of Bay 5, this room is slightly narrower on the north-south axis since it is not jettied and therefore only the same width as the floor beneath (Fig 3). Almost none of the north wall could be seen since a large pile of roof insulation was stored against it. The east wall has built against it two magnificent free-standing tapering brick flues painted a cream colour, one of which serves the fireplace of the inglenook in the room below (the northern), whilst the other serves a fireplace in this room, again partly concealed by stored items (Plate 18). The fireplace surround is probably relatively modern and made of red brick; no grate could be seen. The south wall of the room contains a casement window of the same configuration as those on the ground floor, here fitted with a monkey tail catch. Parts of the oak frame of the wall can be seen, un-painted and the infill beneath the window is of brick, apparently a modern repair since it comprises both painted and un-painted red brick, obviously re-used and laid in a creamy coloured lime mortar and is neither plastered nor painted. The panels to either side of the window are plastered so it is not known what they conceal, but may be woodwool. The upper part of the wall slopes outwards from a wall plate where the eaves are accommodated within the recessed exterior of this bay. The west wall comprises a tie beam at eaves level aligned north-south with vertical studs above and below; the panels are plastered and painted. The door is ledged but not braced, fitted with three locks, all modern. The door is hung on simple strap hinges and the outside (west side) has narrow battens applied to the surface covering the joints between the vertical planks, presumably to reduce draughts to the room which was obviously intended for use since it contains the fireplace. The underside of the roof is not fully exposed but has a flat ceiling at approximately collar level. The floor is of modern pine boards.

4.16 Room 10, main hall. The principal, and largest, room in the building this single space occupies the entire upper floor to the west of the staircase, an area of three and a half bays (Fig 3, Plate 19). Slightly wider than the ground floor since it is jettied on the south and west sides, the large room is unencumbered by any divisions and is well lit by windows in the north, south and west walls. There is no ceiling, the whole roof and its alternating queen post and braced trusses being exposed, adding to the feeling of space (Fig 4, Plates 20 and 21). The trusses comprise roughly squared timbers of oak, all joints being originally pegged and each braced truss now additionally supported by iron tie rods. Nearly all of the framework of the walls and ceiling are visible, the panels in between plastered and painted.

It is known that the north wall comprises a single thickness of brick (as seen from the exterior) the entire south side is thought to have been replaced during the 1980s by woodwool panels due to structural problems, the former brick being too heavy for the jetty to support any longer (National Trust display panels).

The windows along the south side are equally spaced, one to each bay and comprise horizontal sashes of two panels each of twelve panes, modern replacements, the same is present in the west gable whilst in the north wall are just two windows of fixed leaded lights in two panels of twelve panes each.

The floor is of wide oak boards, some apparently original, others modern replacements. There is a single fireplace towards the west end above that in Room 1 on the north wall; it has a simple opening with brick jambs and back and three iron bars forming the grate.

There is a simple mantle shelf above of painted wood supported on three timber brackets. There is a flue, but with no indication that it had a fireplace, towards the eastern end of the room which is located above the now blocked fireplace in Room 6. This chimney stack has been reduced and is now not visible externally above the roof line.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Long Crendon Courthouse, one of the first properties bought by the National Trust, has been dated by dendrochronology to the late fifteenth-century with felling dates of 1483-1487 being recovered. By the late nineteenth-century the building had fallen into a parlous state and demolition was considered, however, after being purchased a programme of restoration was carried out which preserved the building until further renovation was necessary during the 1980s. It had been tenanted since that time, and now the ground floor has become vacant the Trust is taking the opportunity to modernise the domestic arrangements so that it can be re-let. This renovation may involve the removal and replacement of some modern kitchen and bathroom fixtures and fittings, and possibly the removal of a single wall between Rooms 4 and 5.

5.2 Whilst it has been possible to describe some elements of the structure in detail, others have been less easy to observe, ironically due to the high standards of renovation and maintenance of the building, which means that where walls are decorated only the final wall surface can be observed. The understanding and interpretation of historic buildings is best carried out when they are either in decrepit condition, or during restoration when structural elements are exposed, and this has not been possible. However, it has been possible to determine with a large degree of confidence which internal walls and other structures are in original or historic locations, and which are more recent insertions. What it is not possible to determine is the original function of the building in relation to its design since the original function is uncertain. The open, upper, room does appear to have been used as a meeting place from an early date, and the location of the stairs might suggest that either the easternmost bay (Bay 5) was originally, as some have suggested, an open bay leading through to the space behind, or was in fact jettied and may have served as a small, but separate room for storage or smaller meetings. Once constructed, the nature of the meetings may have served many different village functions, rather than just one.

The fact that this bay has had a large, later fireplace inserted has further complicated the interpretation and it is currently floored with modern pine boards indicating recent repair. The ground floor has been the focus of even more alteration and now includes three fireplaces, none of which appear to be original. How this floor was originally used is unclear, but it does appear to have been sub-divided with what seem to be either original, or at least early, stud walls remaining (see below, section 5.5). It is possible that each bay comprised a single, separate, unit, though the lack of empty mortices in the undersides of some transverse beams, where visible, suggests that this may not have been the case. However, since no original, or indeed pre twentieth-century fixtures and fittings survive, it is now impossible to ascribe function to those spaces. The same can be said of door and windows, all of which are modern replacements, and are probably all in slightly or completely different locations to the originals. Whilst it is possible that the ground floor did provide living accommodation it could also have been used for storage, the cellar at the western end suggesting that cool storage was intended from the outset.

5.3 The basic structure of the building is simple; a stone plinth (with some later alterations/repairs in brick) carries above the ground level, and therefore out of the

damp, a sole plate into which the posts which form the oak frame of the building itself are fitted. The plinth is made of undressed limestone and may not originally have been mortar bonded, it is now pointed with lime mortar but retains no carved or decorated elements and is essentially a simple anti-damp measure. The oak frame is relatively simple and comprises squared timbers of relatively regular sizes for each main element of the building, thus the main frame is comprised of large timbers, the infilling and joists of smaller timbers. Very few junctions could be clearly seen, but those that could were pegged, the standard method of construction which forms strong but flexible joints, essential when using timber which moves according to weather and humidity. Individual joints were not recorded. The panels created by the construction of the frame were then infilled using either brick or wattle and daub, and here it is less clear how the building was originally finished since so many panels have been repaired or replaced, and the issue is further confused by the plastering and painting of both internal and external surfaces so that the infilling is not always visible. Even if they could be seen, it would be dangerous to attempt dating since the materials used (or re-used) often do not change over long periods of time. However, this is largely irrelevant since if there were a need to replace entire, or even, partial panels, when exposed they could be observed and recorded at that stage.

The jettied upper storey is a common feature of buildings of this period which provided additional space above head height where a property lay close to a narrow lane, in this case the road to the church.

- 5.4 It is clear that the fireplaces and chimney stacks are all later, with the large inglenook at the eastern end being probably the earliest. The fireplace in Room 1 is probably later, though of unknown date since it retains no fittings which would aid closer dating. The blocked fireplace in Room 6 may be contemporary with it, but equally has no dateable features and the internal surface is heavily overpainted. The chimney stack to this structure has been removed above roof level.
- 5.5 Of the internal dividing walls there appear to be only those between Rooms 6 and 7, and on the west side of Room 6 on the ground floor which are either original, or in original locations. They comprise oak studs set in oak sole plates with either brick or wattle and daub infilled panels. Towards the west end of the building all other wall divisions are probably of early twentieth-century date and comprise (almost certainly) softwood machine-sawn studs with matchboard coverings on one side only, now gloss painted. Stylistically they fit well into this period and suggest that there were either no existing walls present or that those that did exist were removed to make the space more convenient to live in. The principal transverse beams do not display empty mortices on their under-surfaces which suggest the former presence of internal studwork.
- 5.6 The most recent wall appears to that between the hall and kitchen (Rooms 4 and 5) and, although its structure was not seen, might even relate to alterations carried out in the mid 1980's, although there is no indication on the plans made at that period that this is the case. It clearly sits on top of a brick floor of nineteenth- or early twentieth-century date and was definitely not present when recorded in the Country Life article thought to date to the first decade of the twentieth century. It is therefore clearly a wall added during the ownership of the National Trust. Removal of a small section of the plaster covering would establish of what material the structural element comprises, and its removal would re-establish a former full bay layout. What is not clear, however, is why the room designated as a kitchen on the Country Life plan is one of only two rooms on the ground floor without a fireplace, since the most essential feature of any kitchen at this date is a cooking facility.

- 5.7 There are almost no fixtures or fittings which pre-date the early twentieth-century restoration, the exception being the iron bar at the back of the inglenook fireplace and the door to the bread oven. All windows, and probably all doors, are modern. There are only two decorated timbers; the post at the south-west corner supporting the dragon beam which retains a badly weathered raised band and the moulded bressumer over the inglenook at the east end of the building.
- 5.8 The lack of decorated or 'high status' elements does not detract from the building's interest or importance and is it an unusually complete example of a late fifteenth-century structure. In many ways all the various phases of change make the building a more interesting and enjoyable resource for those who maintain and visit it.
- 5.9 Removal of the 1980's fitted kitchen and bathroom may reveal elements of structural detail but this is probably unlikely, similarly replacement of the present fitted carpets would do no more than reveal surfaces which were recorded on the 1980's plans. Any intrusive structural work, which is not thought to be likely, might benefit from further recording though the level of such recording would be determined by the Local Authority after any application for Listed Building Consent. Localised intrusive works, such as the installation of new gas pipes through the plinth is unlikely to require further recording since the intervention would be too small to result in meaningful information.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are extended to Phillip Warner for meeting on site and arranging full access to the building and for the use of the National Trust plans and elevations as a basis for the plans used in this report.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Benot, L, 1998 *The Old Courthouse or The Stapple [sic] Hall*
- Country Life, undated *A Lesser Country House of the XIVth century. The Old Courthouse, Long Crendon, the property of the National Trust*
- Donald, J, 1973a *Long Crendon: A Short History, Part 1*
- Donald, J, 1973b *Long Crendon: A Short History, Part 2*
- E H 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practise*
- EH 2006b, revised 2009 *The Management of Research Projects on the Historic Environment*
- EH 2009 *Long Crendon Historic Town Assessment Report, Consultation Report*
- IfA revised 2008 *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*
- Lee, F, 1890 St Mary's Church, Long Crendon, *Records of Buckinghamshire*, **6:4**, 272-295
- Sewell, E, 2005 *Long Crendon: A historical miscellany*
- VCH 1927 *A history of the County of Buckinghamshire*, **4**

GLOSSARY

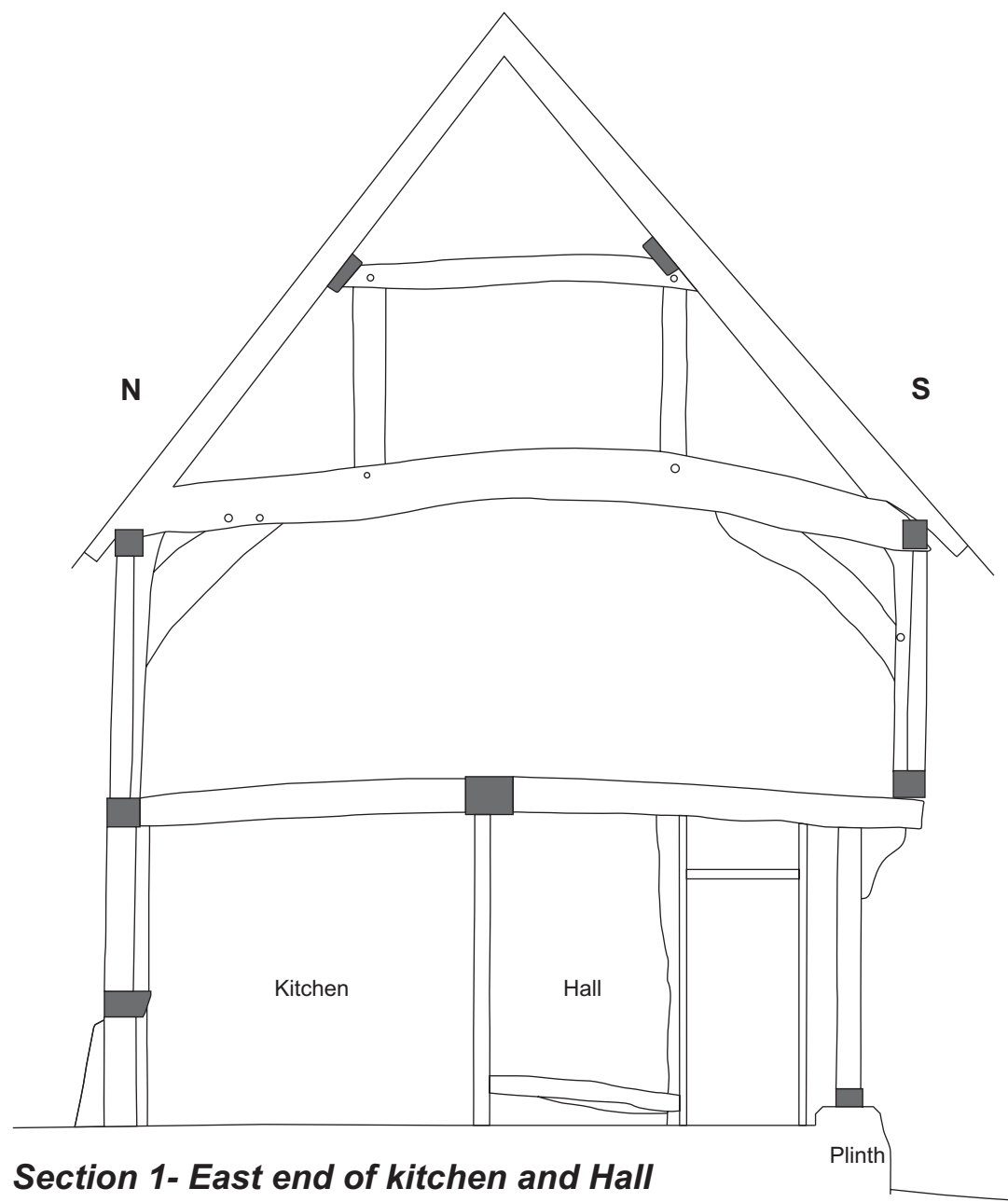
Bressumer	Horizontal beam over a fireplace opening or set forward from the lower part of a building to support a jetty
Collar	A horizontal transverse timber between a pair of rafters at a height between the eaves and the ridge
Dragon beam	Beam running diagonally across the ceiling of a room to support jetties on two adjacent sides of an upper floor
Eaves	Overhanging lower edge of a roof
Jamb	Straight (vertical) side of a door, window or arch
Jetty	Cantilevered overhang of one storey or a gable
Ledged and braced	Strengthening timbers on the inside of a door; the ledges comprising horizontal timbers, the braces diagonal timbers
Lintel	Horizontal beam or stone bridging an opening
Purlin	Roof timber aligned horizontally, usually laid on top of principal rafters and beneath common rafters
Rafter	Roof timber aligned vertically from the eaves to the ridge.
Reveal	The side within the opening of a window, door or recess
Sole plate	Horizontal timber at the base of a wall (usually on top of a plinth) in which vertical timbers are set
Wall plate	A timber laid horizontally on the top of a wall to receive the lower ends of the rafters
Wattle and daub	The <u>wattle</u> comprises an interwoven arrangement of staves and rods infilling a panel, the <u>daub</u> a mixture of clay, manure and straw or lime plaster which covers it to form a wall surface

APPENDIX 1.

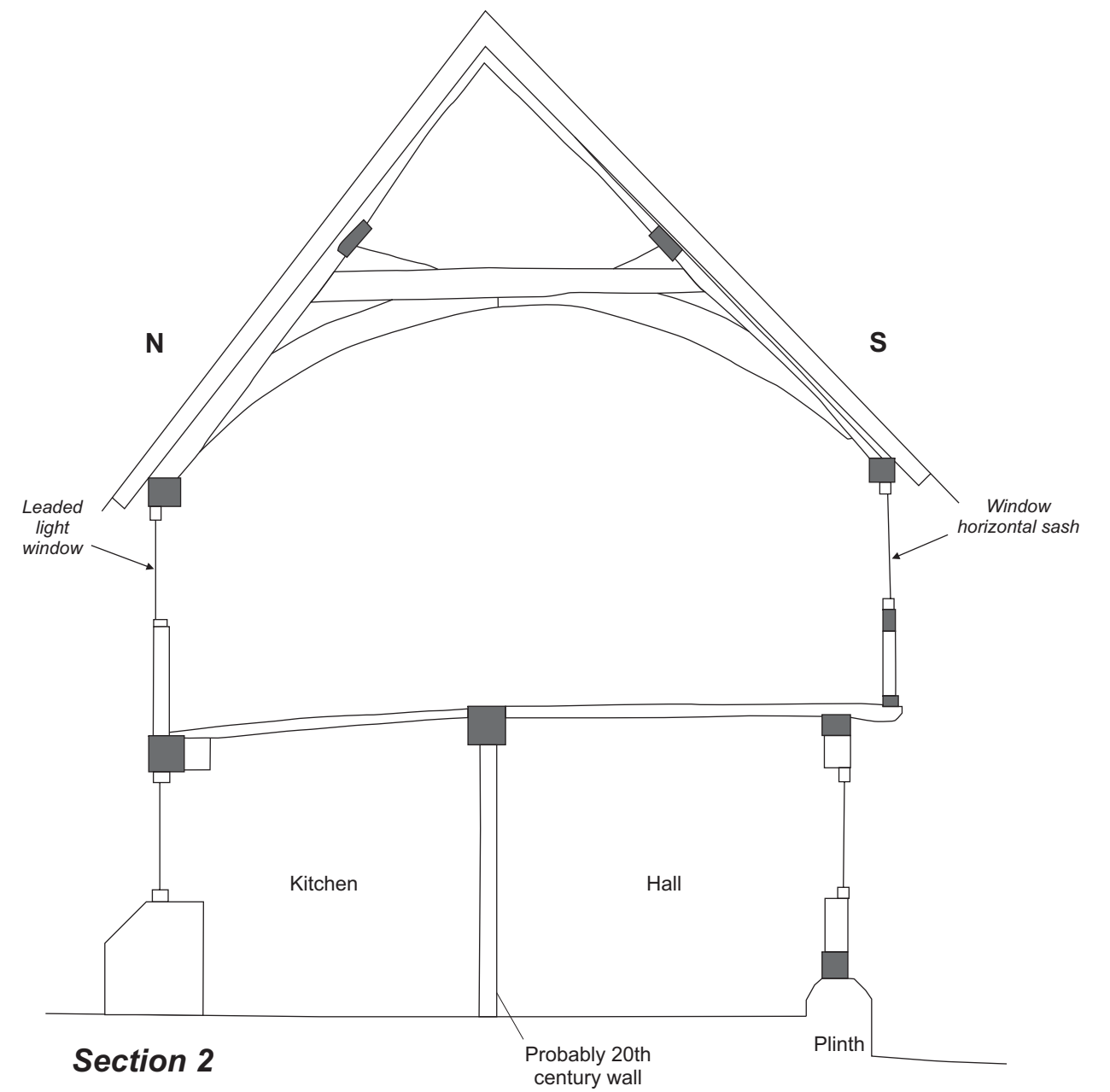
List of Drawings held by the National Trust

Date	Details		Number
01 February 1980	End elevations pre repairs in '85	Copy	28
01 April 1981	East and West elevations	Copy	12-81
01 April 1981	East and West elevations	Original	12-81
Apr 81/Jun 85	Cross sections	Copy	14
01 May 1981	North elevation	Original	14-81
01 May 1981	South elevation	Copy	15-81
01 May 1981	South elevation	Original	15-81
01 May 1981	Floor plans	Original	16-81
01 June 1981	North elevation	Copy	6
01 June 1981	North elevation with annotations of proposed repairs	Copy	6a
01 July 1981	East and West gable with annotations of proposed repairs	Copy	7
01 July 1981	East and West gable with sketches of proposed repairs	Copy	7a
01 July 1981	South elevation with annotations of proposed repairs	Copy	8
01 July 1981	South elevation with sketches of proposed repairs	Copy	8a
01 September 1981	Section including cellar	Original	22-81
01 June 1985	South elevation survey	Copy	12
01 June 1985	North elevation survey	Copy	12
01 July 1985	West gable new window	Copy	17
01 January 1986	Repairs to south jetty	Copy	24
01 February 1986	South elevation Pre repairs in '85	Copy	15-81 or 27
01 February 1986	North elevation pre repairs in '85	Copy	14-81 or 26
01 June 1989	"Proposed Door" Actually side gate	Original	89/12B
01 July 1993	Floor plans	Original	93/26
01 February 1994	Ground and First floor plan - Fire alarm and security	Copy	B2LF/E1
01 February 1994	Ground and First floor plan - Power and heating	Copy	B2LF/E2
01 February 1994	Ground and First floor plan - Lighting	Copy	B2LF/E3
undated	Fire exit routes, detecting equipment and extinguishing	Original	LCC:09/00



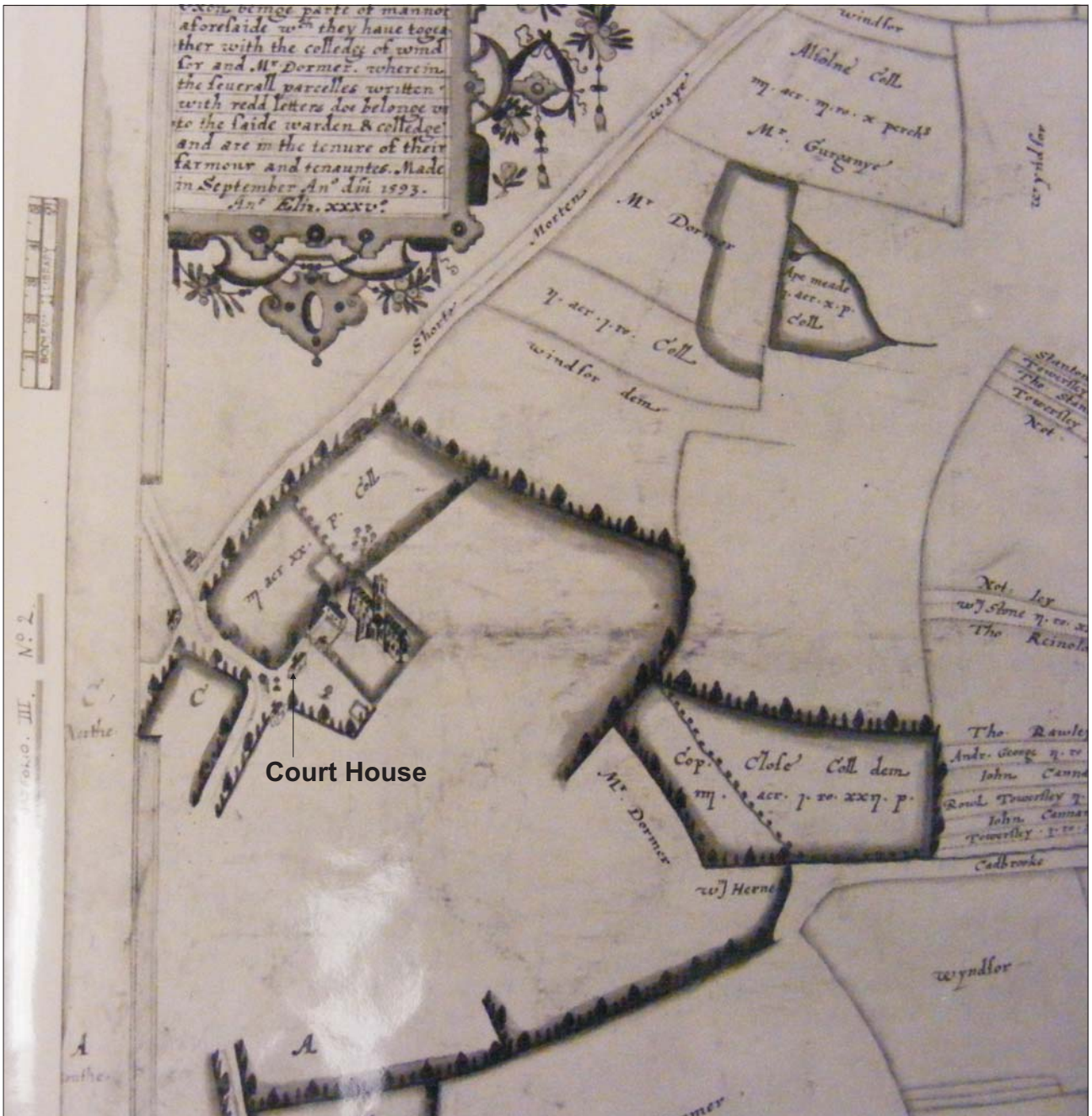


■ Section through timber

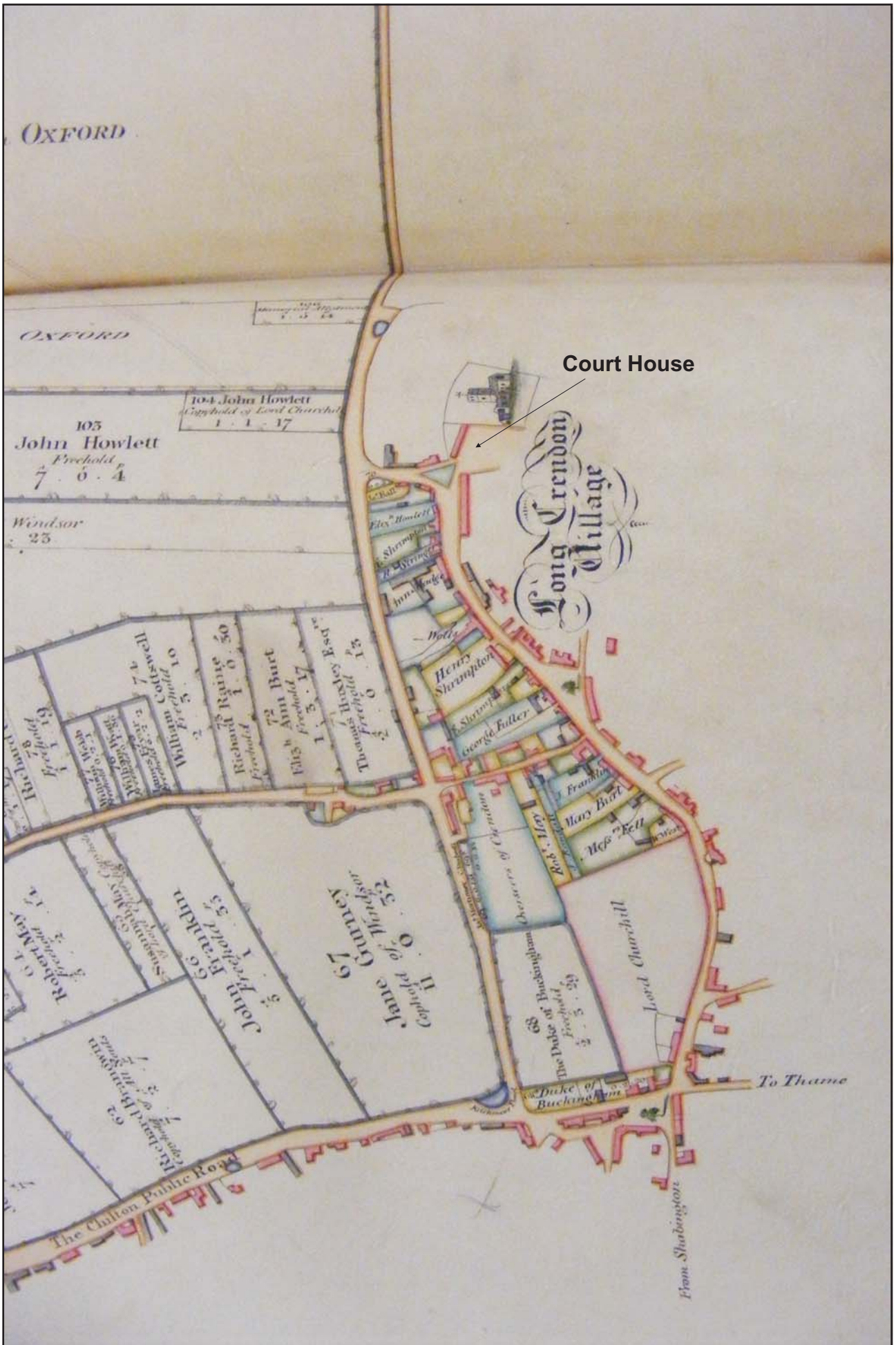


■ Section through timber





1593 Extract of the All Souls College Estate map Fig 5



Court House

1827 Inclosure map Fig 6



Long Crendon Courthouse, looking north-east Plate 1



The jetty with principal transverse beams and joists, looking east Plate 2



The front door, looking north Plate 3



The bread oven, looking north-west Plate 4



The East gable, looking west Plate 5



The north elevation, looking south-west Plate 6



The west elevation, looking east Plate 7



Room 1, looking east Plate 8



Room 2, looking north with shelves to the left of the photograph Plate 9



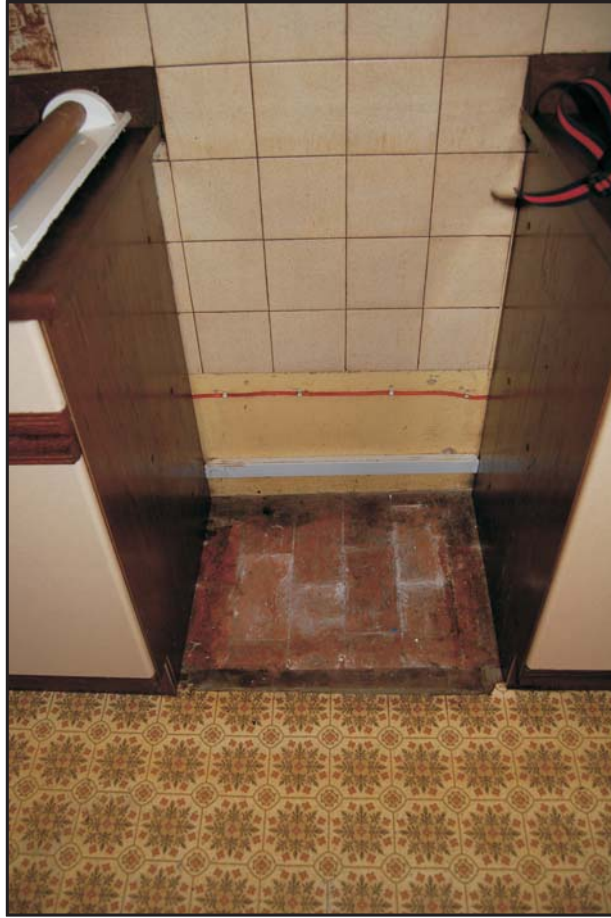
Room 3, the bathroom, looking north-west Plate 10



Room 4, the hall, looking east Plate 11



Room 5, the kitchen, looking east Plate 12



Brick floor of Room 5 extending beneath the south wall Plate 13



Room 6, looking north, showing the reduced, then blocked fireplaces Plate 14



Room 7, the inglenook and bread oven, looking south east Plate 15



Inglenook, looking south, showing the brick springing supporting the fireplace above Plate 16



Stairs to the first floor, looking north Plate 17



Room 9, the chimney flues and fireplace, looking east Plate 18



Room 10, looking west Plate 19



Queen post truss, looking east Plate 20



Braced truss, looking west Plate 21



Northamptonshire County Council

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE

t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822

e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk

w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk

