

**ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD/ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY
AND HISTORY**

SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: Whitley House, Four Ash Hill, Baythorne End, Birdbrook, Halstead, Essex.	
Parish: Birdbrook	District: Braintree
NGR: TL 72142 41472	Site Code: BKWH10
Type of Work: Analysis of Building	Site Director/Team: E Watkin
Date of Work: November 2010	Size of Area Investigated: 89sq. metres
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: N/A	Funding source: Owner
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related EHER No.s: HER 29446
Final Report: Yes	
Periods Represented: C18 - C19	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>This coach house is the one surviving item from what must have been a moated residence with many acres of garden and landscaped grounds. The house and all trace of the gardens and landscaping were lost in the nineteenth century. What remains is a brick coach house in classical style.</p> <p>The building has a central pedimented opening with brick pilasters to either side. Evenly balanced to either side is a doorway flanked by semi-circular Diocletian windows on the ground floor with circular windows on the upper floor above each door opening. Much use was made of rubbed and moulded brick to show off these details. The facing bricks are laid in Flemish bond, the roof covered in glazed pantiles with crested ridge tiles. The main doors are now lower than the original because of the addition of a floor to the central carriage area. This area, now much changed was open to the roof. Soon after building a hoist system was installed by building in a heavy timber frame above the tiebeams. With the insertion of a floor and a staircase at the rear this item became redundant. Later the whole area was plastered to under collar level. To the left and right of the central bay there appears to have been a division wall possibly an afterthought by the method of attachment but now all lost. The stable areas have only plaster shadows to show the stall layout and the mucking out holes have been filled as well as a small access door on one end. The first floor is difficult to assess but to the left of centre was definitely always floored and most likely the main hay store. To the right of the opening it is now plastered and sealed out as a granary but it could be suggested that the floor went in later at this end as the timber and joists are very different to those at the other end. Various questions remain un-answered. Why was the hoist installed and was the awkwardly placed rear 'pitching' door for ropes from the hoist. Why was the stairway built to such a high standard if only to access the loft area. Was this all due to changes in the estate in the nineteenth century when the house disappeared leaving just farm buildings so that the coach house was brought into farmyard use by yard divisions and the addition of shelter sheds.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: None	
Author of Summary: E Watkin	Date of Summary: 24th November 2010