

# Vanners, Bucklebury

**Historic Building Recording** 

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# Vanners, Bucklebury, Berkshire

Historic Building Recording

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#### Vanners, Bucklebury, Berkshire

Historic Building Recording

#### Summary

Vanners is a recently-designated Grade II listed building constructed in the 16th or 17th century, and extended in 1974.

Much alteration of the building has occurred during its history: originally constructed as a single dwelling, it was divided into three separate cottages in, probably, the 19th century. Around the same period the timber frame of the front, eastern, elevation was clad in brick and the outshot to the rear was extended.

The cottages were sold by the Bucklebury estate in 1922 and the lean-to to the southern elevation constructed. In the mid-20th century, the cottages were recombined to a single dwelling and in 1974 a large brick-built extension was constructed at the north of the house and the first floor of the north bay of the earlier building altered to provide a corridor to the new bedrooms. The ground floor was less-altered internally, with a doorway cut through the external wall to provide access to the new drawing room. Many of the windows of the ground floor and rear elevation were also replaced, although some of the 19th-century windows survive. Throughout the remainder of the 20th century, minor additions and improvements were undertaken, most noticeably the construction of an entrance porch and, finally, a conservatory.

The imminent planning application which has necessitated the historic building recording is for work which aims to create a home for the extended family of the current owners, the same family which restored the cottages to one dwelling in the 1960s.

## 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Udo Heinrich of Ptolemy Dean Architects Ltd on behalf of Mrs Tara Saglio to carry out historic building recording to accompany a planning application for work to extend, repair and reconfigure the existing building in order to accommodate the extended family in whose ownership the house has been since the 1960s.

## 1.2 Aims and objectives

- 1.2.1 The principal aims of this report are:
  - to meet the anticipated requirements of conditions of planning permission and Listed Building Consent which are likely to be imposed upon the proposed works, guided by advice received during pre-application discussions;
  - to investigate, record and interpret for posterity the areas of the building impacted by the proposed works;
  - to enhance understanding of the nature of the structure;
  - to make the record publicly accessible through a report (a public document) and a project archive deposited with a public institution.

## 1.3 Methodology

- 1.3.1 A Level 3 survey was requested by the client based upon on the pre-application advice received from the Archaeological Officer for West Berkshire Council. This level is described by Historic England in *Understanding Historic Buildings: a Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2016) as: '... an analytical record, and will comprise an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the building's origins, development and use. The record will include an account of the evidence on which the analysis has been based, allowing the validity of the record to be re-examined in detail. It will also include all drawn and photographic records that may be required to illustrate the building's appearance and structure and to support an historical analysis.'
- 1.3.2 The work comprised three principal elements: a photographic, a drawn and a written record.

The *photographic record* is intended to act as a general record of the building prior to alteration and includes photographs of the exterior and interior, and architectural detail and fixtures. Monochrome film was used to provide the primary archive-stable photographic record and was supplemented by digital photographs, in jpeg format, using a camera with up to 20 megapixel capabilty.

For the *drawn survey*, architect's drawings were made available to OA. These drawings were used as a basis for the archaeological recording; locations of features being verified and the addition of further annotations for the purpose of phasing.

The written survey consists of notes and annotations that complement the photographic and drawn surveys and add further analytical and descriptive detail.

- 1.3.3 The survey was carried out on Tuesday 21 March 2017.
- 1.3.4 The building is aligned approximately NNW to SSE, but for ease of reading the convention of referring to the NNW facing elevation as 'the north elevation', the SSE facing elevation as 'the south elevation' and so on has been adopted throughout this report.

1.3.5 Suitable access to the roof space of the earlier range of the building was not available and so the roof structures could not be described other than where viewed though hatches. It was apparent that fairly recent re-covering of the earlier roofs had occurred as the modern sarking materials were visible in places. Should the roofs be stripped again during the planned works, it would be both more practical and effective to record them once the tiles are removed. It was not deemed necessary to examine the roof structure of the 1970s extension.

## 2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

## 2.1 Bucklebury

- 2.1.1 The village of Bucklebury is situated in West Berkshire, approximately five and a half miles (c8.8km) north-east of Newbury and within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 2.1.2 The property itself is sited upon the boundary of two bedrock formations of London Clay: clay, silt and sand to the immediate west and sand to the immediate east with a superficial deposit of the sand and gravel of the Bucklebury Common Gravel Member to the immediate east. Between the property and the centre of the village lies a strip of the clay, silt and sand of the Lambeth formation. The lack of locally available building stone, but abundance of clay, accounts for the earlier vernacular buildings in the vicinity being of timber-framed construction with later brick infill panels or noggings, and brick with clay tile roofs a little later, with the church constructed of flint from the chalk of the Seaford Chalk Formation which underlies the main settlement.
- 2.1.3 The Church of St Mary the Virgin is approximately two thirds of a mile (c1km) to the NNE of Vanners. As noted, it is constructed of flint and the listing building description states it dates mainly to the 12th- and 15th-century with a 19th-century chancel.
- 2.1.4 The Historic Environment Record (HER) entry for Bucklebury summarises the early history of the village as: "...a small settlement on the River Pang, lying within a large parish. Astill considers Bucklebury as a 'potential late Saxon urban settlement' because it was the centre of a Domesday hundred, a royal manor and has the place name 'Burghild's fortified place'... Recent research conjectured that Bucklebury might have been an early monastic site, partly suggested by the place name suffix 'bury' being attached to a female personal name. In 1086 the church is recorded as holding half a hide, and it may perhaps have been a minster church."
- 2.1.5 The Victoria County History (VCH) describes how the Manor of Bucklebury was granted to John Winchcombe in 1540, the son of the clothier Jack of Newbury, and, in brief, passed through the same line until the present.

#### 2.2 Vanners

2.2.1 Vanners is situated south of the village of Bucklebury on an un-named road (Pl. 1) which runs north to south, accessed only from Broad Lane to the south, and running parallel to Pease Hill roadway to the east (Fig. 1). The house is Grade II listed and lies well outside the Bucklebury Conservation Area, but within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

#### 2.3 Archive and map evidence

2.3.1 The surviving primary and secondary sources of information at the Berkshire Record Office were examined, however, the collection of family and estate records of the Winchcombe, Packer and Hartley families were previously withdrawn by the family, leaving very few primary sources of information about the Bucklebury Estate. The

- remote and vernacular nature of Vanners also results in the property not appearing in the secondary sources examined.
- 2.3.2 The early Ordnance Survey Drawings, in this area, produced in 1808, includes and names Vanners, however, at 2 inches to the mile no details of the layout of the building are visible. Extracts of the later maps are shown in Figure 2.
- 2.3.3 The Tithe Map and Award of 1842 lists George Tegg as the occupier of the 'house and garden' shown on the map as plot 245. Interestingly the property is referred to in the singular in the award, but the number 245 is shown on the map in three gardens. Unfortunately, the map is of the second class and shows only a basic rectangular building and the boundaries of the three elements of the plot, few of which reasonably align with the measured Ordnance Survey map of 1875. The landowner is listed as Winchcombe Henry Howard Hartley and was therefore part of the Bucklebury Estate.
- 2.3.4 The 25 inch to one mile First Edition Ordnance Survey map, surveyed in 1875 and published in 1880, shows the building as being divided into three properties, each with their own plot of land. Two small extensions are shown at the eastern ends of the north and south elevations. Two footpaths to the road are shown which are still in those positions (Pls. 2 & 3). Another footpath is shown which leads to a small building at the western end of the garden which, taking into account the less accurate nature of the tithe map, may be the same outbuilding as that shown in 1842. Four other outbuildings at the eastern edge of the boundaries are shown which do not appear in any of the other maps.
- 2.3.5 Subsequent editions of the OS maps are less detailed and do not include footpaths, garden details or trees; the edition of 1899 does not show any outbuildings, although it is the first of the maps to include the well. The footprint and internal division of the house is the same as the previous edition.
- 2.3.6 By the edition of 1912, a small parcel of land has been added to the property and outbuildings are again shown, although only the building at the west end of the garden has appeared before. The boundary within the garden towards the west of the property has been removed. The footprint and internal division of the building is the same as the two previous editions.
- 2.3.7 The edition of 1933 was revised a decade after the sale of the property and still shows the three divided cottages. The property boundary has reverted to the size of the first two editions and has no internal divisions. It retains the building at the west end of the garden, and the outbuilding on the verge outside the north east corner has been extended. The small extension at the east end of the north elevation is still shown, and a long extension has been added at the west end of that elevation. The extension at the east end of the south elevation has been extended to cover the whole of the south elevation.
- 2.3.8 There are no other maps available at this level of detail until after the property was extended. The current property is incorrectly shown on most online mapping systems as being divided internally within the earlier part of the house and with a projection to the north elevation.

## 3 Description

The room-naming convention in this report is shown on each floor plan provided in Figures 3 and 4, and the elevations and selected sections of the building are shown in the extracts from the CAD drawings provided by the architects in Figures 5 and 6.

#### 3.1 Exterior

- 3.1.1 The house is aligned approximately north to south. The front of the property, the east elevation (Pl. 4), overlooks the gardens between the house and the lane, with the view of the agricultural land beyond obscured by hedges. A late 20th-century timber shed is north of the driveway. The well, which appears on the maps since the end of the 19th century, is in front of the entrance porch, since capped and turned into a garden feature. An unmapped well is close to the south-east corner of the house. The rear, the west of the house (Pl. 5), overlooks sloping gardens and agricultural land beyond (Pl. 6). A sewage treatment plant is to the west and is visible from the first floor.
- 3.1.2 The roof is tiled; the steep pitch may indicate that it was originally thatched, although no access was available to the roof structure and so the timbers could not be examined for any additional surviving evidence of this. From the areas of the roof space which are visible, it is apparent that the sarking felt was renewed in the late 20th century, necessitating the removal of the clay tiles (Pl. 7). The tiles then being mixed and re-hung (presumably on new battens) has created the illusion of conformity across the various phases of the roofs and erased the evidence of additions and alterations.
  - Some elements of the roof structure are visible within the rooms of the first floor. Several rooms have exposed purlins, and windbraces are exposed at the north end of bathroom 2 and bedroom 4, and the south end of bedroom 6 and the adjacent landing.
- 3.1.3 The metal-framed windows and French doors in the 1974 extension and those matching replacement window frames in the earlier building are of a style very similar to those supplied by Crittall from at least the late 1920s, however, no manufacturer's name was visible on the surface of the frames and all opening doors and casements had been sealed shut and so could not be examined for a name. 'Crittall' is often used as a generic name for metal-framed windows of this type, however, it has not been possible to verify if this is the true brand. These windows all have projecting hinges, enabling the windows to be cleaned from the inside.
- 3.1.4 The front elevation is the east-facing elevation and consists of, ostensibly, four bays with the entrance doorway with a 20th-century porch in the second bay from the north, which is the north bay of the original house (Pl. 8). The northernmost 'bay' of the current form consists of the extension constructed in 1974, which in this elevation was constructed to the same lines as the original building. The two chimneys within the roof mark the junction of the south and central bays and the original north bay and the extension. The junction between the central and original north bay is approximately mid-way between the first floor windows.

To the southern end of the elevation is the early 20th-century timber-clad lean-to (Pl. 9). The eastern end of this serves as a shed or store, but was not accessible at the time of the survey.

The 19th-century brick façade replaced the timber frame of the east wall in two phases, although both fairly close in date. The brickwork fronting the central and southern bays is continuous; the brickwork of the northernmost bay of the original building is very

similar, but marked by a vertical join and a staggering of the courses, mostly obscured by foliage at the time of survey, but visible under the eaves (Pls. 10 & 11).

There are three alterations to the openings visible in this elevation: the side windows to the entrance door were added at around the time of the extension and two doorways have been partially blocked to form window openings. These partially blocked doorways now serve as the window to the pantry and the northernmost window in sitting room 2 (Pl. 12). The window in sitting room 2 and the brickwork blocking the opening below is contemporary with the extension, therefore this entrance doorway was not blocked until 1974. The pantry window may have been reused from elsewhere in the building as it is a little earlier than the brickwork blocking the remainder of the opening which dates to the early 20th century.

The remainder of the windows in this elevation are contemporary with the re-facing of the elevation in brick in the 19th century.

3.1.5 The rear elevation of the house, facing west, contains little indication of the original building (Pl. 13). The wing to the north of the elevation is the east-west return of the 1974 extension (Pl. 14) and the north-south range is dominated by the catslide roof of the outshot which is of at least two phases, the most recent of which is the 19th century, evident from the brickwork of the ground floor.

The re-covering of the roof is apparent in this elevation as there is no distinction between phases in the tiling. As discussed, this is due to the new sarking felt fitted most likely at the time of the extension and the original and new tiles mixed and re-hung.

Most of the windows in this elevation are contemporary with the extension windows. The windows of the south-west landing and the study are also late 20th-century, although in a different style. To the first floor, the dressing room window is set in a dormer with the three remaining windows set in recesses. None of the structures of these could be inspected at the time of survey, although the visible external materials are all mid to late 20th-century. To the south end of the elevation is the timber-clad lean-to containing the lobby to the ground floor bathroom; the window of this is contemporary with the lean-to.

Two doors are in this elevation: the door from the kitchen to the patio is 20th-century with iron strap hinges, pull handle and key plate in an early style to appear contemporary with the original building. The metal-framed French door to the drawing room is contemporary with the extension.

- 3.1.6 The north elevation of the property is entirely made up of the 1974 extension with none of the original building visible. The gable end of the part of the extension which continues the line of the original building and the wing to the west is of brickwork laid in stretcher bond. The chimney is external and located centrally in the elevation, extending through the western edge of the gable. The elevation is largely obscured by the hedges which screen the swimming pool from the house (Pls. 15 & 16). The metal-framed windows are the only feature of the north elevation; the large window of the drawing room is the only opening to the ground floor, and to the first floor are the low-set window of bedroom 1 and the north-facing window of bedroom 2. The wall plates and purlins project beyond the brickwork and support the barge boards. The downpipes which serve the gutters of the east and north elevations are cast iron. Small storage cupboards abut the wall to the immediate east of the chimney. No alterations are visible.
- 3.1.7 *The south elevation* includes the only externally visible remnants of the timber frame in the gable above the 20th-century timber-clad lean-to (Pls. 17 & 18). The panels were infilled with brick nogging at the time of the construction of the external chimney in the

18th century. There is no visible surviving evidence of how the panels were infilled prior to the brick nogging.

The lower portion of the elevation is dominated by the modern uPVC conservatory which abuts the early 20th-century timber-clad lean-to with tiled roof. The first three editions of the OS maps show a small extension at the east end of this elevation; by the edition of 1933, the extension is shown as being the same width as the house. It is likely that the whole extension was rebuilt to the footprint which exists now between the survey dates of 1910 and 1932, although no information could be gained from the visible areas whether the whole structure was rebuilt, or the earlier part extended. The outside has obviously been re-boarded since and the roof tiles across the whole building have been re-laid, as discussed. The inside of the visible areas of the roof structure are boarded and so the roof structure or structures cannot offer any further information regarding phasing.

#### 3.2 Interior

Ground Floor

#### 3.2.1 The Front Porch

The front porch is a modern addition to the house and dates to the late-20th century. It consists of a simple glazed timber frame set onto a half-brick-thick dwarf wall which abuts the brick wall of the east elevation of the north bay.

#### 3.2.2 The Entrance Hall

The entrance hall is accessed via the front porch and in turn provides access to the drawing room to the north, the dining room to the west and one of the sitting rooms to the south. The entrance door and metal-framed windows to either side are contemporary with the northern extension, each opening light having a different style of gunmetal handle, but both of which are seen elsewhere in the building. Secondary glazing is fitted inside the windows (Pl. 19).

The brick fireplace is 19th-century and probably dates to the division of the original house into cottages (Pl. 20).

The staircase in the south-east corner was added in the mid-20th century, necessitating the cutting of the axial beam and end joist and propping of the beam with a modern post (Pls. 21 & 22). The axial beam is chamfered, with lamb's tongue stops to the surviving end at the chimney breast (Pl. 23). The pit- or frame- sawn joists are not chamfered or stopped and the staining patterns to the beam and joists show that the ceiling was previously lath and plastered, the joists being exposed and the ceiling installed at a higher level at an unknown date. The joists are not continuous to each side of the beam and those to the east of the beam are narrower and more uniform than those to the west (Pl. 24). There is no indication of alteration or reuse, other than to a joist to the west of the beam, adjacent to the chimney breast, which has several redundant mortices and what may be a very damaged chamfer and stop.

The timber frame is visible in the west and south walls; that in the south wall is heavily plastered and only the central stud is fully visible, with the post and stud to either end of the wall partially obscured by the north-south walls. The frame in the west wall is also plastered over to all but the studs, although the ogee braces at the head of the blocked doorway to the southern end of the room are visible (Pls. 25 & 26).

#### 3.2.3 The Drawing Room

The ground floor of the 1974 extension has metal-framed French doors at the west end which lead onto the patio area (Pls. 27 & 28). A large window is in the east wall (Pls. 29

& 30), a small window in the south wall (Pl. 31) and a large window is in the north wall to the west of the fireplace (Pl. 32). All windows are metal-framed although they have a variety of fittings which may not all be accountable to gradual repair and replacement. The east window has gunmetal handles (Pl. 33) and peg stays (Pl. 34) to the side-hung opening lights at either end of the window and night-ventilator stays to the small top-hung lights in the two central lights (Pl. 35). The north window has white metal handles to the side-hung opening lights and a peg stay to the central small top-hung light. The south window is a single side-hung opening light with a different style of gunmetal handle to the east window (Pl. 36) and a gunmetal sliding stay (Pl. 37). The French door has a steel handle. Secondary glazing has been fitted to the interior of the French doors and the two larger windows.

A fireplace is in the centre of the north wall, served by the external chimney, with a marbled Regency-style surround (Pl. 38). The hardwood parquet floor is laid in straight rows running east-west. The joinery is plain, as is the plaster coving and the room is otherwise unadorned. There are no light fittings in the ceiling or walls and some round-pin sockets are still present. At the east end of the south wall a plain flush door with plastic handle leads to the entrance hall.

No features of the original building are visible.

## 3.2.4 The Dining Room

This room is set partially in the rear of the northern bay of the earlier house and partially within the outshot. It is accessed from the entrance hall via a flush door with a plastic handle which does not match with others in the building.

The timber frame is visible in the north, south and east walls (Pls. 39-41). In the north wall, a door jamb set upon a pad, presumably part of the brick plinth since obscured by plaster, and the lintel of a blocked doorway have been left exposed in the plaster. This doorway may have lead to the long extension at the north of this point which appears on the 1933 OS map.

Although marked by the beam and a return in the north wall, the removal of the original rear wall is best illustrated with the remnants of the cut-off sill beam at the base of the post in the south wall (Pl. 42). No redundant mortice for a rail is present which may indicate that a doorway was located here, opposite to the blocked doorway visible to both sides of the east wall, although any means of confirmation has been obscured by the boxing-in of the beam above. Another possible blocked opening is at the east end of the south wall, adjacent to the former opening with ogee braces, although, again, any evidence has been plastered over.

The window is as those of the 1974 alterations and of the same configuration and with the same fittings as the east window of the drawing room. Secondary glazing has been installed in the opening (Pl. 43).

The floor is of brick, laid bed-up. The electrical fittings are mid to late 20th-century. A sunflower mural has been painted between the post and stud of the frame in the southern wall and painted green stripes survive on the timbers in the north wall.

The 19th-century ledged plank door with a latch and strap hinges in the south wall leads to the kitchen (Pl. 44).

#### 3.2.5 The Kitchen

This room occupies the rear outshot of the central bay (Pls. 45 & 46). The previously-described 20th-century external door to the rear elevation is adjacent to the door from the

dining room. The external door has been covered with a plain board to this face and the fittings are modern. The kitchen units and worktops date to the latter years of the 20th century with the electrical fittings dating to around the same period.

The window is of the same type as fitted during the time of the 1974 extension, with two opening lights with gunmetal handles and peg stays to either end and small top hung opening lights with gunmetal night ventilator stays in the two central lights. A smaller, earlier window is to the south of this.

The timber frame is visible in all walls, although in the west wall only as the lintel above the external door and in the south wall only a single stud is visible above the wall units. The purlin, with a seemingly unsupported gap in the centre, is visible in the ceiling to the majority of the room other than to the south of the post where the ceiling is lower. The frame of the outshot is visible in the north wall, as per that described in the dining room.

The timber frame of the original rear wall of the building is partially obscured by plaster and the kitchen units. The unusual configuration which is visible may be the result of the plaster exposing only selected timbers as the east face of this frame is visible in sitting room 1, where other members are partially exposed. When viewed from the west face, a window appears to be in the frame to the north of the opening to the lobby, however, when viewed from the east, this appears to be part of the infill of a blocked doorway.

A post is to the south of the current opening to the lobby, supported on a square plinth which is likely to be the remnants of the plinth visible in sitting room 1 (Pl. 47). Redundant mortices in this and the stud at the north of the opening, and stave holes in the beam above indicate that the wall was previously uninterrupted at this point and infilled with wattle and daub (Pls. 48 & 49). The western face of the post appears weathered, although the extant stud is less-so. The post also contains a filled redundant mortice to the west face which indicates a possible original division of the outshot prior to the division of the house into cottages, which would have been aligned with the former partition between this post and the chimney breast of the central bay.

An access hatch to the roof space is located above, and effectively blocked by, the wall unit on the east wall, and so the roof structure was not seen. The floor is tiled with quarry tiles which extend up the wall to create a skirting.

Brick steps lead up from the kitchen to a lobby.

## 3.2.6 Lobby 1

The lobby between the kitchen, pantry and sitting rooms was probably created in its present form in the in the early 20th century, although the space was formed when the partition between the central and southern bays was relocated during the 19th century. The transverse beam between the previously described post in the kitchen and the chimney to the east contains redundant mortices and stave holes, indicating the location of the original partition which was moved to the south when the house was divided into cottages in order to create an entrance to the central bay where the pantry and blocked doorway are now located.

A larder with metal ventilation grille, which now houses a water heater, is to the south west corner of the space (Pl. 50).

The floor is brick laid bed-up and running north to south at the north of the space and east to west at the south, in line with the pantry (Pl. 51). The bricks around the steps, and the brick steps themselves, are a later replacement or addition.

## 3.2.7 Sitting Room 1

The principal room of the central bay is accessed from the entrance hall to its north via a 19th-century panelled door, boarded to give a flush appearance to the sitting room face, with an ornate handle and plain keyplate and cover of the same date (Pls. 52 & 53). It is also accessed from lobby number 1 via a 20th-century moulded plank door designed to imitate a 17th-century door with a wooden latch and pull handle and strap hinges (Pl. 54).

The metal-framed window is the same configuration as the kitchen and the eastern window of the dining room and has secondary double glazing installed inside the window opening (Pl. 55).

The brick fireplace has been extensively rebuilt, although the inglenook is the original layout (Pl. 56). The substantial bresummer displays some incised graffiti: an 'R' shape to the western end, 'IV' close to the centre and several 'K's to the eastern end (Pls. 57 & 58). These are in the usual location for apotropaic marks, but are not the conventional geometric 'daisy wheel' or religious 'VV' (virgin of virgins) types, and so are likely to be simply graffiti.

None of the timber frame, if it survives amongst the brickwork, is visible in the east wall other than the lintel above the window which may be a remnant of the original frame. As discussed, the south partition is later. The timber frame in the north and west walls is partially obscured by plaster. In the north wall, only the studs are visible, with the stud to the east of the door standing proud of the plaster, level with the transverse beam, rather than set-back as the others are. The listing details suggest this wall has been rebuilt, which is also supported by the plaster being markedly smoother and more level than the wall to the west of the door.

In the west wall (Pl. 59), the frame is also partially obscured and, as previously discussed, is exposed in different places to that exposed to the face in the kitchen. A blocked doorway is to the south of the frame, which may have been partially kept open in the form of a window, as seen in the kitchen. The timbers used to block the doorway are keyed to take plaster and so it is evident that the timber was not intended to be seen. The sill beam and plinth are visible in the remainder of the wall, although only two studs and a rail are partially exposed above this. Pegs for the studs are extant in the beam above.

The beam and joists are all chamfered and stopped, indicating this room is originally the higher status room, although nail marks to the underside of the joists and the line of the former ceiling just visible in the sides of the beam beneath the thick woodstain indicates that the ceiling was lath and plastered at some point. The oak joists, which are not symmetrical to either side of the beam, are evenly sized and finished with no saw marks visible beneath the thick woodstain. The lamb's tongue stops are to both ends of each joist, i.e. to the ends joining the walls and the beam; the same style of stops are to both ends of the beam (Pls. 60 & 61). Three pegs are visible joining the two beams in the north wall.

#### 3.2.8 The Pantry

The pantry was created by the blocking of the entrance door to the central bay in the early-20th century (Pl. 62). The infilling brickwork is visible to the outside with a wooden-framed window with 'monkey tail' cockspur catch and peg stay.

The north wall is the rear of the central bay's chimney, in two staggered levels, plastered over and gloss painted. The south wall is of heavily gloss painted stretcher bond brickwork, constructed in the 19th century when the house was divided into cottages,

replacing the original wall which would have been located between the chimney breast and the post between the lobby and kitchen.

The timber lintel, possibly a remnant of the original timber frame to the front elevation, is visible above the window, and the chamfered and stopped end of the axial beam of the adjacent sitting room 2 is above the door to the lobby (Pl. 63).

The floor is brick and continues into the lobby.

## 3.2.9 Sitting Room 2

The principal room in the southern bay is accessed via the glazed panelled door in the lobby to its north. The glass is modern, although the door furniture is contemporary with the 19th-century door.

The room was reduced in size in the 19th century when the house was divided into cottages. The original north wall would have spanned between the rear of the central bay's chimney breast with a timber frame running to the large post between the lobby and kitchen. The relocation of the partition created an entranceway into the central cottage, discussed in the description of the pantry.

Two windows are in the east wall (Pl. 64). The northernmost window is metal-framed as per the 1974 alterations, although the handle and stay are steel (Pl. 65). This window was installed in the opening of the former doorway of the southern cottage, which suggests it may have remained open after the cottages were re-combined until the time of the extension. The southernmost window is the wooden-framed window contemporary with the rebuilding or refacing of the east elevation in the 19th century (Pl. 66). Both windows have secondary double glazing fitted to the inside.

The brick fireplace has been rebuilt with no indication of the original appearance. The bresummer may be original (Pl. 67).

All walls are plastered, the only timber frame visible is to the west of the fireplace (Pl. 68), also visible in the ground floor bathroom, and the northern end of the west wall, also visible in the utility room (Pl. 69). That frame visible to the west of the chimney breast consists of a stud, mid-rail, sill beam and the girding beam above which is visible in the stairwell adjacent. In the west wall, the sill and girding beams are visible with a stud and the later door jambs. The sill beam and plinth are also visible in the under stairs cupboard

The beam is chamfered, the run-out stop at the north end is now within the pantry and the stop at the southern end would have been removed when the beam was shortened to accommodate the chimney constructed in the 18th century (Pl. 70).

The winder staircase in the south west corner of the room is accessed via a ledged plank door with strap hinges and latch of the late 17th- to early 18th-century (Pls. 71-74). Redundant pintles are also in the adjacent timber frame, close to the chimney breast, and the staircase itself dates to the 19th-century although the former arrangement is not apparent (Pl. 75).

#### 3.2.10 The Utility Room

The utility room is at the southern end of the outshot, accessed via the door from the sitting room in the southern bay of the house (Pl. 76). A door at the southern end of the room leads to the lobby in the later extension to the southern elevation (Pl. 77).

A short length of the roof space above the utility room is visible from the adjacent lobby 2 which shows fairly modern machine-sawn softwood rafters and softwood boarding from the northern side of the post, however, there is no access to the remainder of the

roof space and so the structure of the remainder of the roof cannot be ascertained, although the purlin is visible at the change of angles in the ceiling.

The timber frame of the rear of the southern bay is visible (Pl. 78). The sill beam is supported on a brick plinth, which was probably re-built when the brick nogging was added to the panels. The girding beam, which is the same as that visible in the kitchen, is cut into to accommodate the later doorway to the adjacent sitting room in the original south bay. The rail ends at the adjacent post, but continues after the door jamb, although it is not visible in the kitchen. The structural frame is well-weathered and so may have spent several decades as the external wall prior to any outshot being constructed, whereas the later door frame does not display signs of having been external.

The frame of the outshot is exposed on both end walls; the southern wall shows only the horizontal member at wall plate height, although the section adjoining the original building is believed to be the earlier phase and the timber is slightly higher than that to the outer edge. The rest of the timber in that wall has been obscured by plaster and has been clad in brick on the face in the lobby. The beam at wall plate height and the staggered posts are visible in the north wall, however, the beam is full width across the wall which indicates the partition is later, having been moved southwards when the houses were divided into cottages and the division of the central and south bays moved to create an entrance into the central bay (Pl. 79).

The door to the sitting room is early 20th-century with a modern window cut into it in fairly recent years. The door to the lobby is described in that section. The metal-framed window is as per those in the 1974 extension, but with sliding casement stays, rather than peg stays (Pl. 80).

## 3.2.11 Lobby 2

The lobby at the south west corner of the building is the westernmost room of the extension to the south elevation which first appears along the full width of the building on the 1933 edition of the 25 inch OS map.

Accessed from the utility room in the earlier outshot, the timber-framed dividing wall has been clad with brick to the lobby-face of the partition (Pl. 81). This is likely to have been carried out at the same time as the extension to the outshot in the 19th century, although the brick is heavily obscured by paint which prevents close examination.

Access doors to the roof spaces of the outshot and the lean-to are in this room as the ceiling is open to the sarking boards. The electricity supply and consumer units are beneath the hatch in the north wall (Pl. 82).

The ledged plank door and door furniture date to the construction of the southern extension; the panelled door, now leading to the conservatory, and the metal door furniture are in a different style, but appear to be contemporary (Pl. 83).

The floor has the same black and white vinyl tiles which are throughout the utility room through to the adjacent bathroom.

#### 3.2.12 Bathroom 1

As previously discussed, the lean-to at the western end of the southern extension first appears on the 1933 edition of the OS maps, revised the year before. The style of some of the sanitary ware dates to within a decade or so of the construction (Pls. 84 & 85). The ledged door, and the door furniture, from the adjacent lobby and the window are likely to date to the construction of the extension, although the peg stays of the window have been replaced in a different style to the handles in the late 20th century (Pls. 86 & 87).

The modern black and white vinyl tile flooring has been carried through from the utility room and adjacent lobby 2. The ceiling and walls are plastered and the area above the bath is tiled with plain white tiles. The electrical fittings, heated towel rail and many of the fittings are fairly recent and the fitted cupboard is late 20th-century.

The timber frame of the original building, with later brick nogging, is visible at the west end of the north wall of the bathroom and inside the fitted cupboard (Pl. 88). Green paint from a previous internal decorative scheme survives. The timber frame shows fairly substantial signs of weathering, confirming that this elevation was not covered until the construction of the extension. The remainder of the north wall is the plastered external chimney stack.

#### 3.2.13 The Store

The store is only accessible via the plank door in the east elevation, but no access could be gained at the time of the survey. The store is in the approximate location of the small extension to the east end of the south elevation shown on the first three 25 inch editions of the OS maps and which was shown as extending along the whole elevation on the edition of 1933. It is not apparent whether the original structure survives concealed by the weatherboarding and roof tiles.

#### 3.2.14 The Conservatory

The conservatory is a modern uPVC structure on a half-brick-thick dwarf wall. The door frames abut the weather-boarded lean-to against the south elevation.

First floor

#### 3.2.15 Bedroom 1

The master bedroom is located at the eastern end of the 1974 extension, accessed via the corridor created through the north bay of the original building. The room contains no elements of the earlier building. The ceiling is sloped to the north and south of the room located within the wing to the west, the remainder of the room is within the extension built along the line of the earlier range (Pls. 89 & 90).

The window frames are contemporary with the extension, as described in the ground floor of this phase. Two windows, each with a large and a small opening light, are in the west wall (Pls. 91 & 92), a two-light window is to the west end of the south wall (Pl. 93) with a three-light window with two opening lights opposite to this (Pl. 94). Unlike the gunmetal fittings to the drawing room windows, the handles and peg stays are matching steel fittings, other than the northernmost window of the west wall which has a different style of steel handle. A safe has been cut into the southern end of the west wall at a later date. The doors to the corridor and the dressing room are plain flush doors, the door to the corridor has an aluminium handle and the door to the dressing room has a plastic handle.

#### 3.2.16 Dressing Room

The dressing room is accessed from bedroom 1 and is formed from the narrow space left at the west of the northern bay following the partitioning of the corridor, the roof space of the catslide roof and a dormer window (Pls. 95 & 96).

The window is metal-framed with three lights, two of which are opening lights with aluminium peg stays only (Pl. 97).

The floorboards of the part of the room contained within the original building are probably 19th- or early 20th-century and those in the eaves are earlier wide boards, clearly reclaimed from elsewhere in the building. The skirting board is modern.

The tie beam, post, brace and stud of the frame between the north and central bays are visible at the southern end of the room with a horizontal member which appears to be too far into the building to be the purlin above. The wall plate and two studs are exposed at the west of the room, although these are replacement timbers, indicated by the fairly crude lap joint at its southern end and the lack of stave holes or redundant mortices to the underside. The timbers are keyed to take plaster at the eastern end of the wall.

#### 3.2.17 Bedroom 2

Bedroom 2 is the smaller of the bedrooms in the 1974 extension and, like bedroom 1, it contains no features of the earlier building. The ceiling slopes to the east, following the underside of the rafters (Pls. 98 & 99). A floorboard has been lifted which confirms the modern construction method and materials. The room is accessed by a flush door with aluminium handle as per the door and furniture to bedroom 1.

The metal-framed window in the north wall consists of three lights with the lights at either end opening with a handle and peg stay; these fittings are gunmetal and the same style as the majority of those in the drawing room. The low-set eaves level window in the east wall has four lights with those at either end opening with steel handles in the same style as those in bedroom 1.

#### 3.2.18 Corridor 1

The corridor which provides access to the two modern bedrooms was created by erecting partitions across the approximate centre of the northern bay and a short way into the 1974 extension, which also contains an access hatch to the modern attic space (Pl. 100). All of the materials are modern other than the floorboards which are the same early, wide boards of bedroom 3 to the east.

At the southern end of the corridor is the late 20th-century staircase from the entrance hall and the tie beam, studs and girding beam of the frame between the north and central bays also visible in the dressing room (Pls. 101 & 102). A redundant mortice and stave hole is in the underside of the exposed beam in the doorway, where it has also been chamfered, confirming that the original opening has been moved (Pl. 103). The beam is keyed to take plaster and a narrow lighter-coloured strip is above the eastern door jamb which is just visible in the plaster of the wall and ceiling above, indicating part of the former layout of the space.

#### 3.2.19 Bedroom 3

Accessed from the northern end of the corridor created in 1974 via a re-used 19th-century ledged and braced door with a later white plastic door knob on an original lock (Pls. 104 & 105). The south and west walls are part of the 1974 corridor addition.

A cupboard in the south east corner of the room extends above the stair well and dates to the 1974 remodelling work. At the back of the cupboard, the brace, post and tie beam of the frame visible in the dressing room and above the stairs is visible (Pl. 106). The ledge of the wall plate of the later brick façade is also visible in the cupboard and along the east wall, with a short return in the north wall which stops short of the chimney breast.

The timber-framed window overlooks the front porch and is contemporary with the 19th-century brick façade. Of the three lights, the centre light opens and has the same 'monkey tail' catch and peg stay as the pantry below (Pl. 107).

The brick fireplace is 19th-century, contemporary with that in the entrance hall below, and has since been blocked and an electric heater installed on the hearth (Pl. 108). The wide floorboards are probably original to the building.

#### 3.2.20 Bathroom 2

In the north west corner of the central bay, the door leads from corridor 2 through the partition which probably dates to the 19th century (Pl. 109). The ledged door is a similar style to that to the south of sitting room 2, with a wooden handle and latch (Pl. 110).

The walls are mostly obscured with tiles, although the wall plate is visible in the west wall, the post and tie beam marking the division of the bays seen in the corridors is exposed in the north wall and a rafter, the collar, purlin and wind brace are also visible (Pls. 111 & 112).

The metal-framed window overlooks the northernmost recess in the catslide roof; two lights are to this side of the partition to the south, the remaining lights are in bedroom 5. To this side, one light opens with only a gunmetal peg stay.

The sanitary ware is mid to late 20th-century. The floor is covered in rush matting and so the floorboards were not visible.

Above the door are is a hatch to the space over the corridor containing the cold water storage tank. Failed plaster exposes the laths above.

#### 3.2.21 Corridor 2

The short corridor in the central bay continues, albeit in a staggered alignment, from the corridor in the north bay to bedroom 5, and provides access to the bathroom and bedroom 4 (Pl. 113). The ceiling is lower than the surrounding rooms as the cold water tank is located above.

The floorboards are as bedroom 4 to the east and probably original to the building, although the boards in the corridor have undergone some repair and alteration.

#### 3.2.22 Bedroom 4

Accessed via a ledged door with a brass knob at the north end of corridor 2, the room is in the north east corner of the central bay (Pl. 114). The west wall probably dates to the 19th century. The wall plate of the brick façade and the purlin above are visible to the east with a wind brace to the northern end. In the north wall, the tie beam, collar, jowled post and two studs of the frame between the central and north bays is visible (Pl. 115). The diagonal saw marks from pit sawing are more pronounced to this side of the frame, while the more exposed of the studs has been hewn (Pl. 116).

The wooden-framed window with leaded panes is different to others in the building and probably dates to the early 20th century, with handle and sliding stay similar to those of the later metal-framed windows. Secondary double glazing has been fitted to the inside.

A fireplace in the south wall has been blocked and painted and is in use as a shelf unit, although the chamfered surround and tapering flue are visible (Pls. 117 & 118). The wide floorboards, up to 30cm wide, are original to the room.

#### 3.2.23 Bedroom 5

This through-room is accessed from the corridor to the north and from the study to the south. The room is in two distinct parts: the ceiling is lower in the southern part of the room, marked with a fairly insubstantial beam with redundant mortices and stave holes to the underside (Pls. 119 & 120). A redundant mortice for a rail is in the westernmost stud, but not on the east, coinciding with a gap in the stave holes, indicating the location of a

doorway. The floorboards are also of different types to either side of this former partition (Pl. 121). It would be logical that this is the location of the staircase during the phase as a separate cottage; the narrow, later, floorboards used to reinstate the floor would be consistent with this theory. The floorboards to the remainder of the room are up to 32cm wide and original to the house.

An access door is above the door to the corridor and the space contains a further cold water storage cistern which also serves the bathroom in addition to that accessed from the bathroom (Pl. 122). Failed plaster inside the cupboard exposes the laths above. The lower ceiling in the southern part of the room is due to the boxing-in of the area above the beam. A blocked hatchway is visible in the north face of this enclosure (Pl. 123) and the structure of this can be seen via the access hatch in the adjacent study. There is no current access to this space which was presumably for cold water storage tanks, as in the adjacent bathroom and corridor, and blocked, rather than removed, when the houses were combined and a third water tank was not required.

The purlin is visible in the full-height part of the room and in the south wall the tie beam, jowled post, rail and the door jambs are visible (Pl. 124). Two pegs above the approximate centre of the rail indicate the location of the brace visible to the other side of the frame in the study.

The ledged door to the study is early to mid 20th-century with a white plastic knob and fitted when the cottages were converted back to one dwelling.

The door from the corridor has been re-hung on modern strap hinges and its original location is unknown, however, it is contemporary with the building (Pls. 125 & 126). The original strap hinges are not extant, but their shape is shown to the northern face of the door in the decoration. Also visible to this side are the square-headed nails and the diagonal saw marks of a frame saw across the wide boards, which are also visible to the other side, but heavily obscured by gloss paint (Pl. 127). The wooden latch has been refitted at least twice with modern screws and this and the pull handle may not be original as they display little wear (Pl. 128). It is probably the model for the previously described doors to sitting room 1 and bathroom 2.

The three lights of the window are part of the same unit as the bathroom window which looks out to the recess in the catslide roof.

#### 3.2.24 Study

This is the only room which provides an uninterrupted view of the timber frame between bays on the first floor (Pls. 129 & 130). The study is accessed from the short landing of the stairwell at the south west of the southern bay and from bedroom 5 to the north. Both doors into the room are early to mid 20th-century ledged plank doors with white plastic door knobs, which match the door to bedroom 6 (Pl. 131).

The south wall dates to the 19th century and is fully shelved. No features other than the window are visible in the east wall (Pl. 132), the wall plate is visible in the west wall and has been cut into to accommodate the window frame (Pl. 133).

The window in the east wall is a wooden-framed 19th-century window with 'monkey tail' catch and peg stay, similar to, but not identical to, those in bedroom 3 and the pantry. The window in the west wall is the same type as that to the adjacent landing, metal-framed, but not in the same style as those contemporary with the 1974 extension. This window has three lights, the two at either end have small top-hung lights with aluminium peg stays. Secondary double glazing has been fitted inside both windows.

An access hatch to the loft space is above the door to bedroom 5, just above the tie beam. The structure of the cupboard for the water tank above bedroom 5 and the western side of the chimney of the central bay are visible, as is the apex of the roof structure (Pl. 134). Another access hatch is in the ceiling to the south of the vertical hatch.

The purlins are exposed to either side of the ceiling.

The north wall is plastered above the tie beam up to the ceiling which spans between the purlins. The tie beam is exposed across the entire frame, slightly curved upwards in the centre. Two studs form the door jambs; although the shelf above the door partially obscures the joints, they appear to be original to the frame and so blocked and re-opened with the conversion of the building to cottages and vice versa. The posts and braces are visible to each end of the frame and carpenter's marks – the only ones observed in the house – are visible at both joints between the brace and post. The crescent-shaped marks are stamped with a gouge: one each side of the joint at the west end and two each side of the joint at the east end (Pl. 135). The timbers exhibit the same diagonal pit or frame saw marks as the majority of the timbers in the frame (Pl. 136).

Towards the western end of the north wall, modern plasterboard has been removed to reveal part of the original wattle and daub infill panel beneath the rail (Pl. 137). The staves are cleft oak, the wattles are hazel woven around the staves. The surviving original daub consists of a silty clay mixed with chopped straw. The nibs of later lime plaster to the north side of the wattles are also visible.

The floorboards are 20th-century replacements.

## 3.2.25 Bedroom 6 and the small landing.

The bedroom at the south end of the building is divided from the small landing at the top of the stairs in the south west corner of the house by a partition extending upwards from the ground floor. A small modern window has been inserted next to the door to the bedroom, overlooking the landing and facing the window (Pl. 138). The door is the same style of ledged plank door with white plastic handle as the adjacent door to the study.

The landing window is of the same type as the study, with two lights with one small tophung opening light with an aluminium peg stay (Pl. 139). The window in the bedroom, in the east wall, is the same wooden-framed window as the study, although one of the peg stays has been replaced with a steel 20th-century stay and one of the handles has been replaced with a plain iron catch, similar to those in the earlier window in sitting room 2 (Pl. 140).

The floorboards of the bedroom are the same as those of the study, whereas those on the landing are wider boards and probably recycled from elsewhere in the house as they have little wear from the expected heavy foot-traffic.

The frame of the south wall, partially visible to the south elevation, is also partially visible in the bedroom and landing. The jowled posts to each end of the frame are the only vertical members visible (Pls. 141 & 142). The substantial girding beam, 24cm deep, can be seen in the stairwell between floor levels, the girding beam of the west wall is also visible, but less substantial. The tie beam is supported on the aforementioned posts and is visible through both rooms and, although fairly square to the underside, appears very uneven to the upper surface, although this could be emphasised by the plaster which covers all other elements of the timber frame in the south wall of the bedroom (Pl. 143). The midrail is exposed in the stairwell, but is plastered-over in the bedroom, marked only by the peg in the post to the east end of the wall. To the east wall of the bedroom and the west wall of the landing, the wall plates, purlins and windbraces are visible.

#### Roof Space

3.2.26 As previously discussed, no safe means of access to the roof space of the earlier range of the building was available at the time of the survey and live rodents were audible in the space; it was not deemed necessary to examine the modern roof structure of the extension.

The rafters of the earlier range can be seen via the access hatches in the study: with no ridge board, the pairs of common rafters are pegged with a lap or bridle joint at the apex. Some reinforcement with additional timbers to the side of rafters has taken place. From the areas visible, no irregular or waney edged timbers appear to be in the roof and the sarking felt was replaced around the time of the extension.

Windbraces, collars, purlins and tie beams are visible from the first floor rooms. The steep pitch of the roof raises the question of whether the roof was thatched prior to the tiled covering, the tiles themselves having been relaid when the sarking felt was fitted.

#### 4 Conclusion

- 4.1.1 The original timber-framed building was constructed in the 16th or 17th century as a one and a half storey, three-cell plan dwelling. The central bay was the higher status room with a brick-built inglenook fireplace, and chamfers and stops to the beam and joists. It is not clear where the original staircase to the upper storey was located, however, the north-south partition in the northern bay does not correspond with other partitions in the building and so further investigation of this area of the building may be beneficial.
- 4.1.2 In the 18th century, a single-storey outshot was constructed along the rear of the building and a brick fireplace and external chimney added to the south end wall. The timber frame to this elevation was infilled with brick nogging, although further work to the other elevations obscures the infill to those locations. The wall to the east of the chimney breast was probably rebuilt, or substantially reinforced, in brick at this time.
- 4.1.3 The house was divided into three cottages during the 19th century, possibly before 1842. The northern cottage was accessed via the entrance door which is still extant and the southern cottage accessed through a doorway in the centre of the bay's original elevation. In order to create an entrance for the central cottage, however, the partition between the central and southern bays, spanning between the chimney breast and the post to its west, was removed and a brick partition built approximately a metre to the south to create a passageway behind the inglenook fireplace. The partition between the two bays to the first floor was not altered, resulting in the first floor of the southern cottage 'overhanging' the ground floor of the central cottage.

The outshot was also doubled in width around this date and a new partition between the outshot of the central and south bays constructed approximately in line with the new partition between the cottages.

As part of this conversion, fireplaces were added to the north wall of the northern cottage and the first floor rooms of at least the south and central cottages were divided into bedrooms. Additional staircases were installed, of which only the staircase in the southern bay survives, although the floorboards and later beam in bedroom 5 indicate the likely location of the former staircase in the central cottage. Following this pattern, it is possible that the staircase of the northern cottage, potentially the original staircase, opened into the now-dressing room.

It was around this date that the east elevation was clad in brick, possibly to bring order to the façade of the building following the alteration of the doorways and the introduction of additional windows. This action does indicate that the building, although no longer needed as a large single dwelling, was not deemed particularly low-status once it was converted into three individual cottages.

The Ordnance Survey maps of the late-19th and early-20th centuries show large individual gardens and various phases of outbuildings and lean-tos and a well to the front of the building.

4.1.4 In 1922, the Bucklebury Estate sold various properties, including Vanners. By the next revision of the OS map a decade later, the lean-to at the south of the building had been extended to the full width of the building and a long extension had been built to the north alongside the existing lean-to. During this phase, the entrance doorway into the central cottage appears to have been blocked and the passage used as a pantry. The adjacent lobby was also altered and it appears that the staircase was removed and the larder constructed. The stylistic evidence of these alterations contradicts the understanding that the house was not restored to a single dwelling until the 1960s when relatives of the

- current owners purchased the property, however, this may be accounted for by the possibility of the re-use of some materials, namely an earlier window in the pantry and similarly dated door between the lobby and sitting room 2.
- 4.1.5 Although it appears that few major alterations were carried out during the return of the cottages to one dwelling in the 1960s, in 1974 a large two-storey brick-built extension was constructed to the north of the building, necessitating the rearrangement of the first floor of the northern bay to accommodate a corridor and the additional staircase installed to the south of the current entrance door. The entrance door was altered to include two windows and the porch was constructed, the door to the southern bay was partially blocked to form a window and many of the ground floor window frames were replaced. It is also likely that the dormer and recessed windows in the catslide roof to the west elevation were constructed, or at least rebuilt, and the roof re-felted at this time.
- 4.1.6 The decades to either side of the turn of this century are represented only by the uPVC conservatory to the south of the lean-to and some alteration to the fixtures and fittings.
- 4.1.7 The property has been unoccupied since 2015 and plans to more than double the size of the building drew interest to this historic property which was subsequently listed at Grade II.
- 4.1.8 More sympathetic plans to extend and convert the property to a large family home have necessitated this historic building recording ahead of the submission of the formal planning application.

## APPENDIX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ARCHIVE SOURCES

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## Appendix B. Summary of Listed Building Description

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: VANNERS, BUCKLEBURY COMMON

List entry Number: 1434994

**Location:** Bucklebury, Reading, RG7 6RU **National Grid Reference:** SU55090 69781

Grade: II

Date first listed: 15-Aug-2016

## **List Entry**

#### **Summary of Building**

A timber-framed dwelling of the C16 or C17, with alterations of the C18, C19 and C20.

## **Reasons for Designation**

Vanners, a vernacular dwelling of the C16/C17 with alterations and additions of the C18, C19 and C20, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons: \* Architectural interest: the remaining timber frame constitutes a significant proportion of historic fabric. It is constructed with good quality timber and well-crafted; \* Intactness: although the front elevation was replaced with brick in the C19, and the rear elevation encased, the main components of the building's timber frame survive, including the rear wall frame, most cross frames, the floor frames and the roof. The plan-form remains largely intact and legible; \* Interior: the survival of the original floorboards to the first floor, and decorative treatment to the bridging beams and joists on the ground floor, and doorways to the first floor, adds to the interest of the building; \* Historic interest: the building campaigns of the C18 and C19 illustrate the evolution of the building from one of middling status in the early postmedieval period, through to sub-division into smaller, humbler cottages of the C19 and early C20, demonstrating social and economic change over a number of centuries.

#### **History**

Vanners is a timber-framed building, probably dating to the C16 or C17, with later alterations and additions. The surviving historic fabric suggests that it was built as a single dwelling, probably with a two or three room plan, with the principal fireplace located in the central room. The third room at the south (left-hand) end is perhaps a later addition, or given the simplicity of the mouldings to the transverse bridging beam, was probably the service end of the original dwelling. The bricks of the south gable end and the external stack are a deeper red colour, laid in a different bond, and probably C18 in origin. The scantling of the timber frame of the rear outshot suggests that it was added at a similar time. Rocque's map of 1761 shows a schematic view of a building in a yard in approximately the same position; there are documentary references to Vanners or "Fanners Piece" noted from 1739. The dwelling was historically subdivided into three cottages, probably in the C19, when the timber frame at the ground floor of the principal east elevation was replaced with brick and the framing to the first floor, and the rear elevation, were encased with brick. An external chimney stack was added to the north gable end at this time, now obscured by the 1974 addition. In 1922, Bucklebury Estate

sold the property as three freehold cottages, describing them as "brick built and tiled.....having large gardens and possessing magnificent views of the surrounding country. Two of the cottages contain living room, back kitchen, two bedrooms....the other has one bedroom only." It is understood that siblings lived in the cottages during the first half of the C20, adding the single storey, weatherboarded extension at the south end; each cottage had a winder stair at the rear, but only that in the southern cottage remains.

In the mid-C20, the cottage was turned back into one dwelling. Externally, the entrance to the southern cottage was blocked and that to the central cottage partially so, the upper part of the opening used as a window; other window openings have been enlarged to allow replacement fenestration. Three recessed "velux" windows have been inserted into the rear pitch, and one dormer window has been added towards the north end. In 1974 a large, two-storey extension was built to the north replacing an early C20 shed. Internally, a main stair was inserted in the right-hand room of the historic building. Partitions were replaced on the ground floor and inserted at the first floor to create an access corridor leading to a number of rooms. The outshot, which was previously sub-divided, has been opened up to form kitchen space.

#### **Details**

Vanners is a vernacular dwelling of the C16 or C17, with alterations and additions of the C18, C19 and C20.

MATERIALS: timber-framed, with brick elevations and tiled roofs.

PLAN: historically a two or three room plan, with a C18 rear outshot, subdivided and extended in the C19 and C20 and subsequently remodelled as a single dwelling in the mid C20.

EXTERIOR: a two-storey, three bay building constructed of red-orange brick, generally laid in Flemish bond, with some differential brick patching where openings have been altered. The gable roof has clay tiles and two brick ridge stacks without pots; the stack to the right (north) was probably external until the construction of the late-C20 extension. An external stack is attached at the south gable end (see below). All of the windows are C20 casements.

The east-facing façade has a mid-C20 partly glazed, brick porch with a gable roof at the north end of the historic building; the C20 panelled entrance door is flanked by C20 windows. To the right (north) of the porch is the 1974 two-storey extension; ground floor window openings to the left (south) of the porch have inconsistent segmental heads, or C20 straight heads. The former doorways to the middle and the south cottage are wholly or partly blocked. The first floor C20 windows, close to the eaves, have straight heads.

The south gable end and the external, shouldered, C18 stack are constructed from narrow, red bricks laid in stretcher bond. The stack protrudes above the tiled, pent roof of the C20, single-storey weatherboarded addition. A relict queen-post truss and the ends of side purlins are exposed in the gable end. The rear (west) elevation has a catslide roof extending over the outshot. The external wall of C19 brick has near continuous bands of C20 fenestration to the centre, with a C20 plank door at the north end. In the rear pitch are three recessed "velux" windows, and a dormer window has been added at the north end. The two-storey, 'T'-shaped north addition of 1974 is of standard brick construction for the time and is excluded from the listing.

INTERIOR: a pegged and jointed timber frame of large scantling, dating to the C16 or C17, is exposed internally; at the ground floor the frame is replaced with brick at the front (east) elevation and was remodelled during the late-C20 conversion into a single dwelling. At the ground floor, in the

right-hand (north) bay, the historic north gable end is dominated by the C19 fireplace, to the east of which is access into the 1974 extension. A mid-C20 stair has been inserted against the partition with the central bay, necessitating the partial removal of the bridging beam here, but the chamfered, axial bridging beam extends from the stair opening to the north wall. Both it and the floor joists have lambs tongue stops. The partition with the central bay has been partially rebuilt, but retains a central post at the ground floor and is near complete at the first. At the rear of the north bay are two studs in a partition wall, to the left of which is a blocked doorway with ogee braces to the head. A modern opening leads into the outshot where the original rear wall has been partly removed, but its position is marked by a wall post, to the left of which is another blocked doorway. The outshot retains a corner post and a partition wall comprising a sole plate on a brick plinth, a midrail and studs. A doorway leads into the outshot at the rear of the central bay; the lower purlin to the catslide roof is encased.

The stopped and chamfered bridging beam continues into the central bay and beyond to the rear of the remodelled former entrance halls to the central and south cottages where the stopped end abuts the simply moulded bridging beam to the south bay. In the central bay the studs, midrails, and wall posts are apparent on the partition cross frame with the north bay, and at the rear where some of the timber frame has been embedded in plaster. A blocked door is apparent at the rear south-west corner of this bay. The partition cross wall to the south is dominated by the inglenook fireplace, much rebuilt with a bresummer. Between the central and southern bay are the former entrance halls of the central and southern cottages; the entrance hall to the central cottage has been enclosed, but the hall to the south cottage has a pamment floor which leads to the back of the building, through the rear wall of the earliest phase and into the outshot where the sole plate, some studs and the lower purlin to the roof are exposed. Although the wall studs were removed when the entrance halls were formed, a midrail with empty mortices and posts marks the position of the earliest partition cross frame. A rebuilt brick partition wall defines the southern bay, where, apart from the bridging beam, there is no timber frame exposed. An inserted doorway at the rear leads to the back of the bathroom extension where the pegged box frame of the southern gable end is enclosed by a modern cupboard.

At the south-west corner of the southern bay is a winder stair leading to the first floor where the wall plates, corner posts (some jowled), midrails and tie beams are exposed throughout. Modern partitions are inserted in the north bay to create corridors and bathrooms, but the earliest partition cross frames throughout the first floor are in situ and have substantial arched braces. The position of the doorways in the cross frames is original; those at the north end of the building having chamfered heads. In the central and northern bays, wide floorboards remain. The roof structure comprises a simple 'A' frame, pegged at the apex, with exposed side purlins and windbraces. The outshot has a timber frame of lighter scantling, with an exposed wall plate, posts and tie beams.

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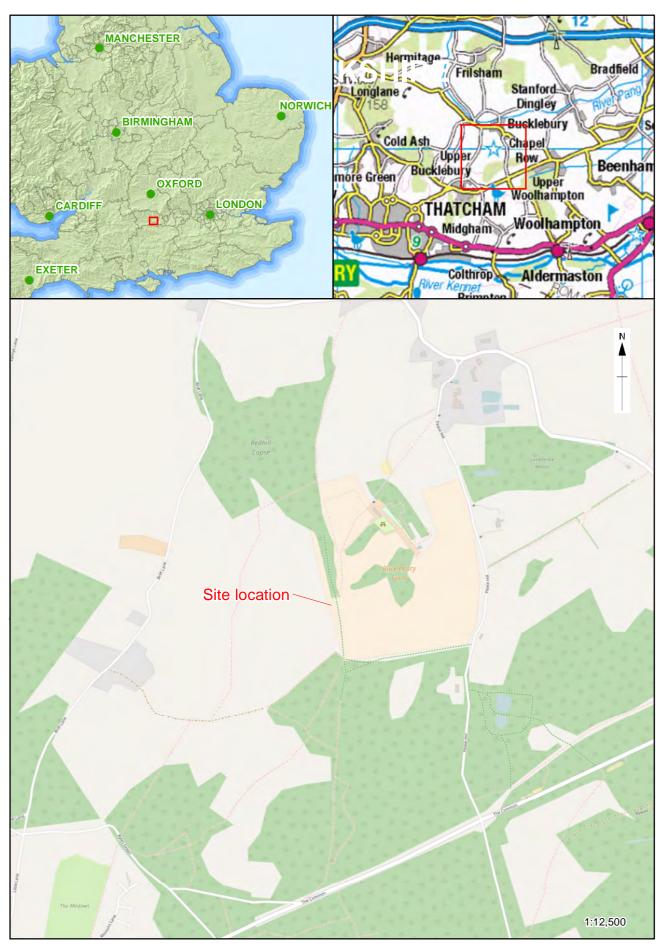
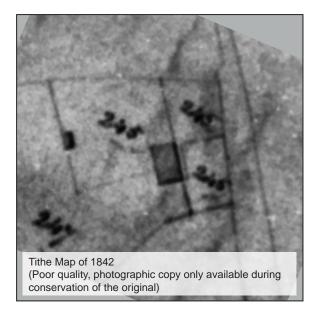
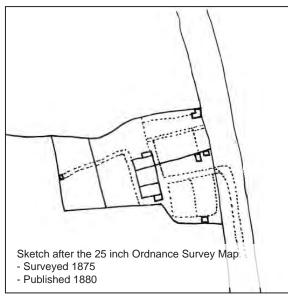
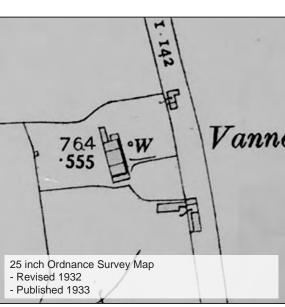


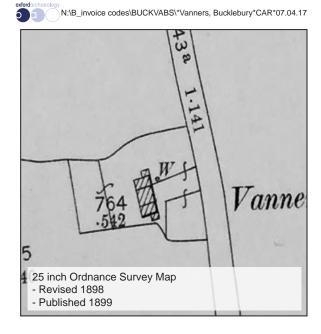


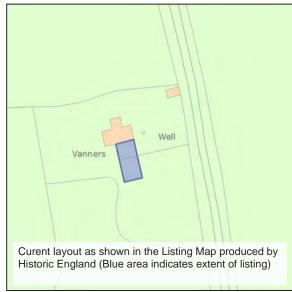
Figure 1: Site location













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Figure 2: Map regression - Not to scale



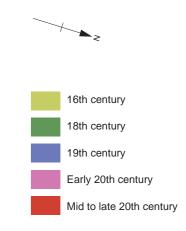


Figure 3: Ground floor plan showing phases of alteration. Please note that some alterations possibly occured at different times within the same period. Not to scale. Based upon CAD drawing by Greenhatch Group



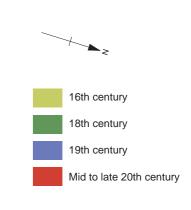


Figure 4: First floor plan showing phases of alteration. Please note that some alterations possibly occured at different times within the same period. Not to scale. Based upon CAD drawing by Greenhatch Group

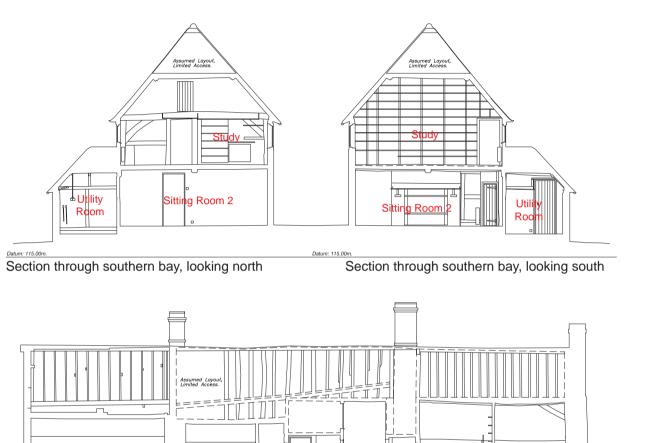
East elevation



Figure 5: Elevations taken from CAD drawings by Greenhatch Group. Not to scale

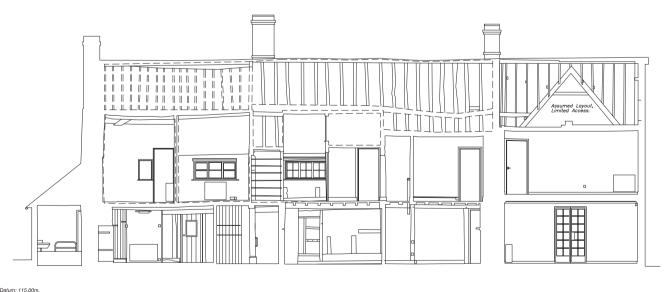
South elevation







Section through centre of building, looking east



Section through centre of building, looking west



Plate 1: The un-named road from which Vanners is accessed

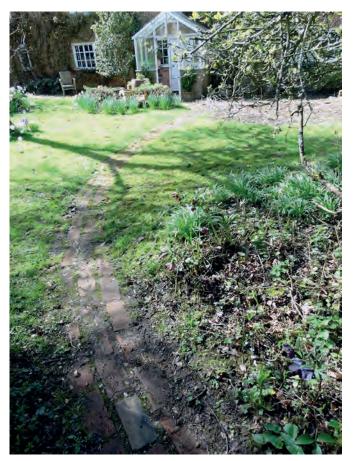


Plate 2: Footpath to the north bay



Plate 3: Footpath to the central and southern bays



Plate 4: Front, east-facing, elevation



Plate 5: Rear, west-facing elevation



Plate 6: The land overlooked to the west of Vanners



Plate 7: The modern sarking felt to the roof above the Study



Plate 8: The 1974 extension and the northernmost bay of the original building



Plate 9: The timber-clad lean-to to the south elevation



Plate 10: The north and central bays of the original building



Plate 11: The join in the brick façades of the central and north bays



Plate 12: The two partially blocked openings in the east elevation



Plate 13: The south and west elevations



Plate 14: The west elevation of the 1974 extension



Plate 15: The north elevation



Plate 16: The north and west elevations of the 1974 extension



Plate 17: The south elevation



Plate 18: The timber frame visible in the south elevation



Plate 19: The entrance door in the east wall of the entrance hall



Plate 20: The fireplace in the entrance hall



Plate 21: The modern staircase in the entrance hall



Plate 22: The beam cut to allow installation of the staircase



Plate 23: The chamfered and stopped beam above the fireplace



Plate 24: The arrangement of the joists in the entrance hall



Plate 25: The timber frame visible in the west wall of the entrance hall



Plate 26: The blocked doorway in the west wall of the entrance hall



Plate 27: The west wall of the drawing room



Plate 28: The French door in the west wall of the drawing room



Plate 29: The east wall of the drawing room



Plate 30: The window in the east wall of the drawing room



Plate 31: The window in the south wall of the drawing room



Plate 32: The window in the north wall of the drawing room



Plate 33: An example of one style of gun metal handle



Plate 34: An example of a gun metal peg stay



Plate 35: An example of a gun metal night ventilator stay



Plate 36: An example of one style of gun metal handle



Plate 37: An example of a gun metal sliding stay



Plate 38: The fireplace in the drawing room



Plate 39: The north wall in the dining room



Plate 40: The south wall in the dining room



Plate 41: The east wall in the dining room



Plate 42: The cut timbers in the south wall

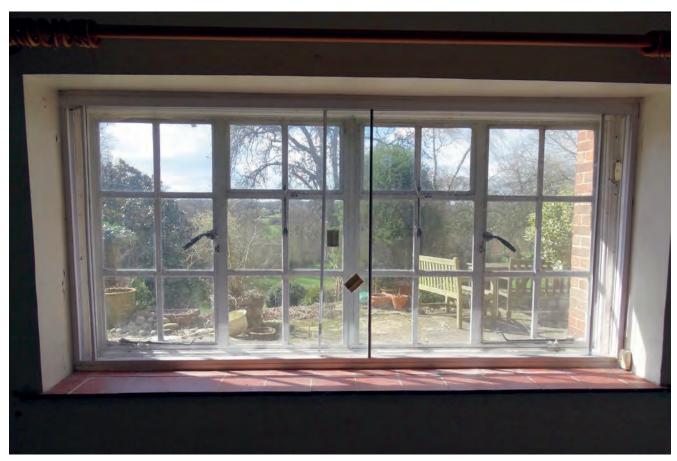


Plate 43: The window in the dining room



Plate 44: The door between the dining room and kitchen



Plate 45: The kitchen, looking north



Plate 46: The kitchen, looking south



Plate 47: The original post and later steps between the kitchen and lobby



Plate 48: The redundant mortice in the post



Plate 49: The stave holes above the doorway between the kitchen lobby 1



Plate 50: The larder in lobby 1



Plate 51: The doorways from lobby 1 to the pantry and sitting room 2



Plate 52: The door between sitting room 1 and the entrance hall



Plate 53: The door furniture to the entrance hall side of the door to sitting room 1

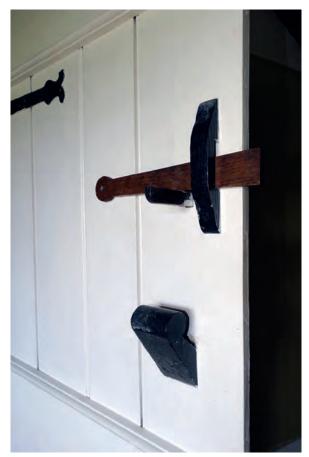


Plate 54: The door furniture to the sitting room 1 side of the door to lobby 1



Plate 55: The east wall of sitting room 1



Plate 56: The fireplace in sitting room 1



Plate 57: Graffiti to the bresummer in sitting room 1



Plate 58: Graffiti to the bresummer in sitting room 1



Plate 59: The west wall in sitting room 1



Plate 60: The chamfered and stopped beam in sitting room 1



Plate 61: An example of a chamfered and stopped joist in sitting room 1



Plate 62: The pantry, looking east



Plate 63: The chamfered and stopped beam in the pantry



Plate 64: The east wall of sitting room 2



Plate 65: The handle of the metal-framed window in sitting room 2



Plate 66: The handle of the timber-framed window in sitting room 2



Plate 67: The south wall of sitting room 2



Plate 68: The timber frame visible in the south wall



Plate 69: The west wall of sitting room 2



Plate 70: The chamfered beam in sitting room 2, the stop being in the later pantry



Plate 71: The door between sitting room 2 and the southernmost staircase



Plate 73: The door between sitting room 2 and the southernmost staircase



Plate 72: The latch to the door between sitting room 2 and the southernmost staircase



Plate 74: The strap hinge to the door between sitting room 2 and the southernmost staircase



Plate 75: The structure of the southernmost staircase



Plate 76: The door between sitting room 2 and the utility room



Plate 77: The south wall of the utility room



Plate 78: The east wall of the utility room

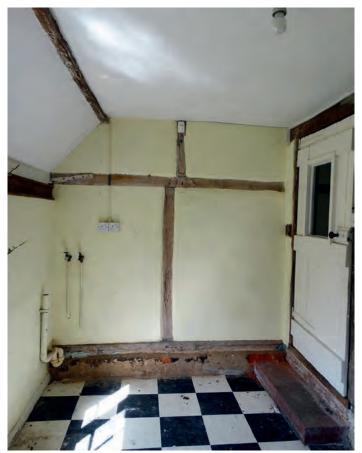


Plate 79: The north wall of the utility room



Plate 80: The west wall of the utility room



Plate 81: The north wall of lobby 2



Plate 82: The access hatches in lobby 2



Plate 83: The south wall of lobby 2



Plate 84: The west wall of bathroom 1

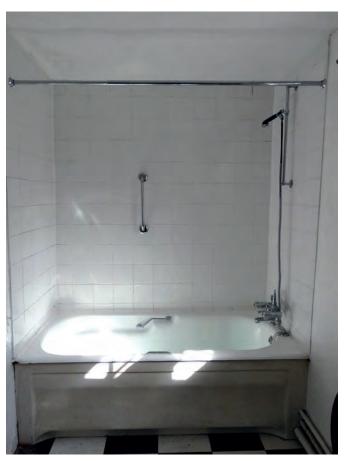


Plate 85: The south wall of bathroom 1



Plate 86: The door knob of bathroom 1



Plate 87: The window in bathroom 1



Plate 88: The visible frame in the east wall of bathroom 1



Plate 89: The west wall of bedroom 1



Plate 90: The east wall of bedroom 1



Plate 91: The southernmost window in the west wall of bedroom 1



Plate 92: The northernmost window in the west wall of bedroom 1



Plate 93: The window in the south wall of bedroom 1



Plate 94: The window in the north wall of bedroom 1

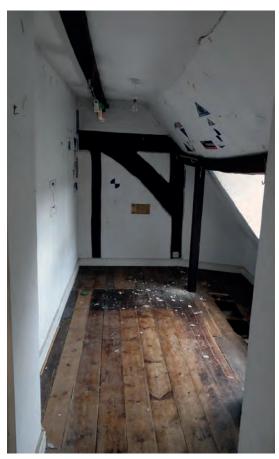


Plate 95: The dressing room, looking south



Plate 96: The dressing room, looking north



Plate 97: The window in the dressing room



Plate 98: The north wall of bedroom 2



Plate 99: The south wall of bedroom 2



Plate 100: Corridor 1, looking north



Plate 101: The timber frame above the modern staircase



Plate 102: The timber frame above the modern staircase



Plate 103: The redundant mortice and stave hole in the doorway between corridors 1 and

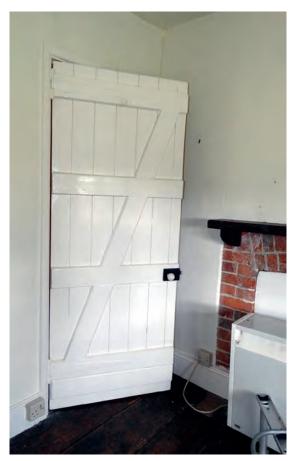


Plate 104: The door in bedroom 3



Plate 105: The door knob in bedroom 3



Plate 106: The south wall of bedroom 3



Plate 107: The east wall in bedroom 3



Plate 108: The fireplace in bedroom 3

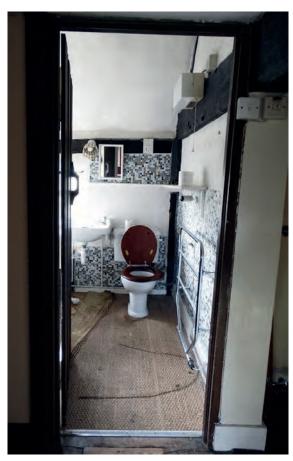


Plate 109: The doorway to bathroom 2



Plate 110: The door furniture in bathroom 2



Plate 111: The tie beam between the north and central bays



Plate 112: The water tank cupboard and visible timbers in bathroom 2

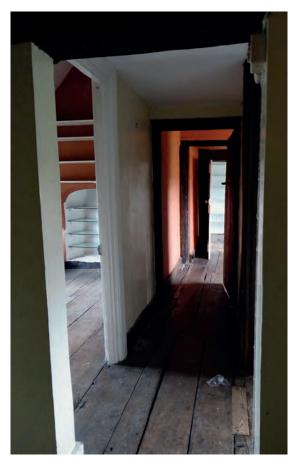


Plate 113: Corridor 2, looking south

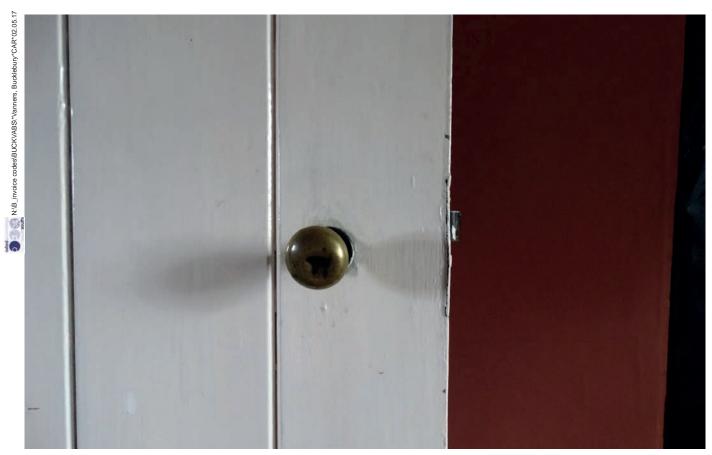


Plate 114: The door knob in bedroom 4



Plate 115: The north wall of bedroom 4



Plate 116: The sawn and hewn timbers



Plate 117: The south wall of bedroom 4



Plate 118: The chamfer of the fireplace in bedroom 4

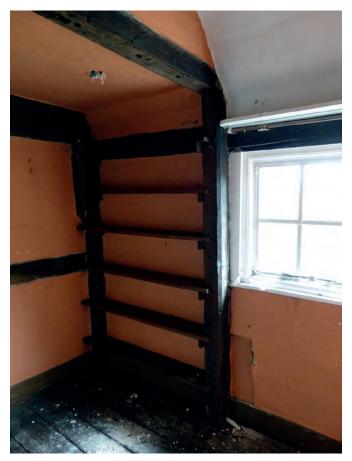


Plate 119: The west wall of bedroom 5



Plate 120: The redundant mortice and staves





Plate 121: The floorboards in bedroom 5



Plate 122: The water tank cupboards to either side of bedroom 5



Plate 123: The blocked up water tank cupboard in bedroom 5

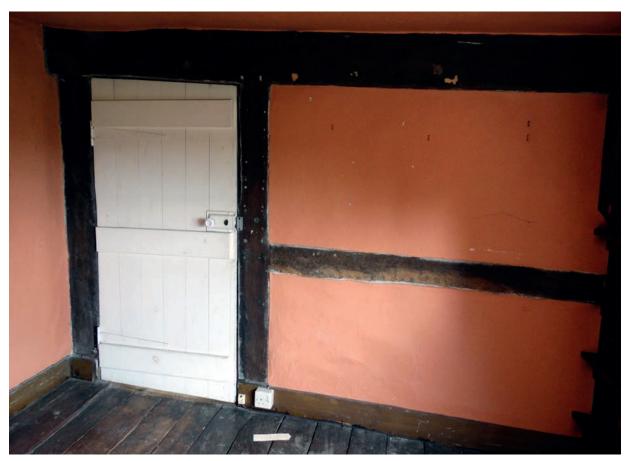


Plate 124: The south wall of bedroom 5



Plate 125: The early door between corridor 2 and bedroom 5



Plate 127: The early door between corridor 2 and bedroom 5



Plate 126: The scar of the early strap hinge



Plate 128: The door furniture



Plate 129: The western end of the north wall of the study



Plate 130: The eastern end of the north wall of the study



Plate 131: The door between the rear staircase landing and the study



Plate 132: The east wall of the study



Plate 133: The west wall of the study



Plate 134: The view through the hatch in the north wall of the study



Plate 135: The carpenter's marks between the post and brace at the east end of the frame



Plate 136: The saw marks



Plate 137: The wattle and daub panel behind modern plaster board



Plate 138: The west wall of bedroom 6



Plate 139: The window of the southern landing



Plate 140: The east wall of bedroom 6



Plate 141: The post and tie beam at the east end of the south wall in bedroom 6



Plate 142: The frame visible in the southern wall of the rear stairwell



Plate 143: The substantial, but irregularly shaped, southernmost tie beam





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