

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**HISTORIC BUILDINGS ASSESSMENT**

**OF**

**THE OUTBUILDING TO THE REAR OF  
76 HIGH STREET, LONG CRENDON,  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**SP 69677 08918**

*On behalf of*

*Ms. Wiles*

**February 2008**

**REPORT FOR** Ms. Wiles  
76a High Street  
Long Crendon  
Buckinghamshire  
HP18 9AL

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**FIELDWORK** 14<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> February 2008

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## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Planning Background**

Permission (07/2445) has been granted by Aylesbury Vale District Council for conversion of the outbuilding, behind 76a High Street, Long Crendon (NGR SP 69677 08918).

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and PPG 15 (1994) provide specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.

## **2 Aims of the Investigation**

To produce a Level 3 survey of the building. Identifying and recording any significant structural features. Investigating the chronology, construction and development of the building.

Specific objectives included:

- Attempting to identify the building's function
- Can any fixtures or fittings be identified that are associated with the needle making industry?
- What is the relationship between the building and its immediate environs (the yard and house), are there traces of any earlier related structures?

## **3 Strategy**

- 3.1 A study of all available historic maps and plans, together with a documentary search was undertaken at the Public Records Office in Aylesbury.
- 3.2 An on-site investigation was carried out to examine the standing building fabric in order to assess the development of the building over time.
- 3.3 A photographic record was made of all significant elements exposed during the works.
- 3.4 A drawn record was made in order to record any significant details, including a section drawing showing the fireplace.
- 3.5 The building was also examined after removal of the existing floors.
- 3.6 All recording conformed to the English Heritage (2006) guidelines and was carried out to RCHM(E) Level 3 standard (1996). The work also conformed to IFA (2001) standards.



Figure 1. 1st Edition OS Map of 1885 (surveyed 1878) with building highlighted.

## 4 Survey

### 4.1 The Exterior

The property is single storey and rectangular in plan (plate 1). It is built of red brick and has two large windows in the southern wall. It is roofed with sheets of corrugated asbestos. The building has two doorways at either end of the building, east and west. It is in a state of disrepair and the rear, northern, wall is overgrown with ivy (plate 2).

The northern wall of the building is extended and forms the boundary between 76a High Street and the adjacent property. The wall that is not part of the building but forms part of this boundary is clearly later in date than the building; the red brick is abutted to the fabric of the building.

### 4.2 The Interior

The interior is at present divided into three rooms. The western door leads into the first room which in turn leads into the second. The third room is reached via the eastern door (figure 2).

Within the first room a stone built footing for the northern wall can clearly be seen. It is approximately equivalent to 6 courses of bricks high (plate 3). The stone footing of the north wall continues into the second and third rooms. Built from this is the main fabric of the northern wall. It is all of red brick, with no discernible pattern to the bonding with a mixture of stretchers and headers. The majority of the western wall appears to be abutted to the northern wall and is not in the same phase of construction, it also displays some signs of later repair. Towards the north-western corner the lower three courses of the wall are original and bonded into the northern wall.

The floor was modern concrete. When it was removed it was seen to be resting on a make up layer that included red ceramic roof tiles. These tiles displayed peg holes and were presumably from the original roof of the building. Under this layer was a beaten earth floor that had a deposit of coal dust, ash and charcoal over and trampled into it. Fixed into the beaten earth floor were four iron fixings (plate 11), presumably footing for machinery.

An internal wall divides the first room from the second. This is clearly bonded into the fabric of the northern wall. It displays a thickening to accommodate the back of a fireplace.

The upper four courses of bricks on all three of these walls are recent additions with the three courses below these showing signs of being relayed and repaired.

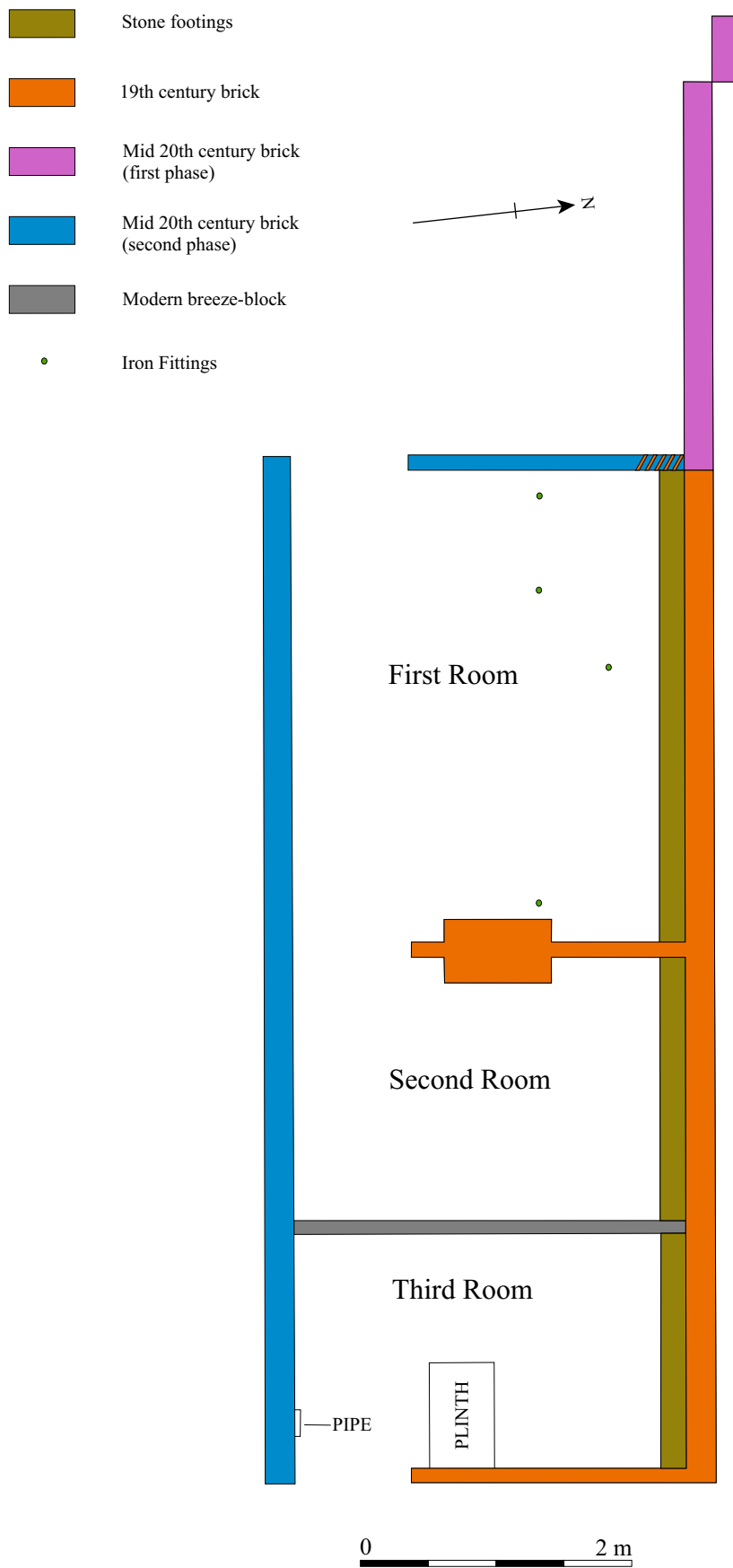


Figure 2. Annotated Plan of Building

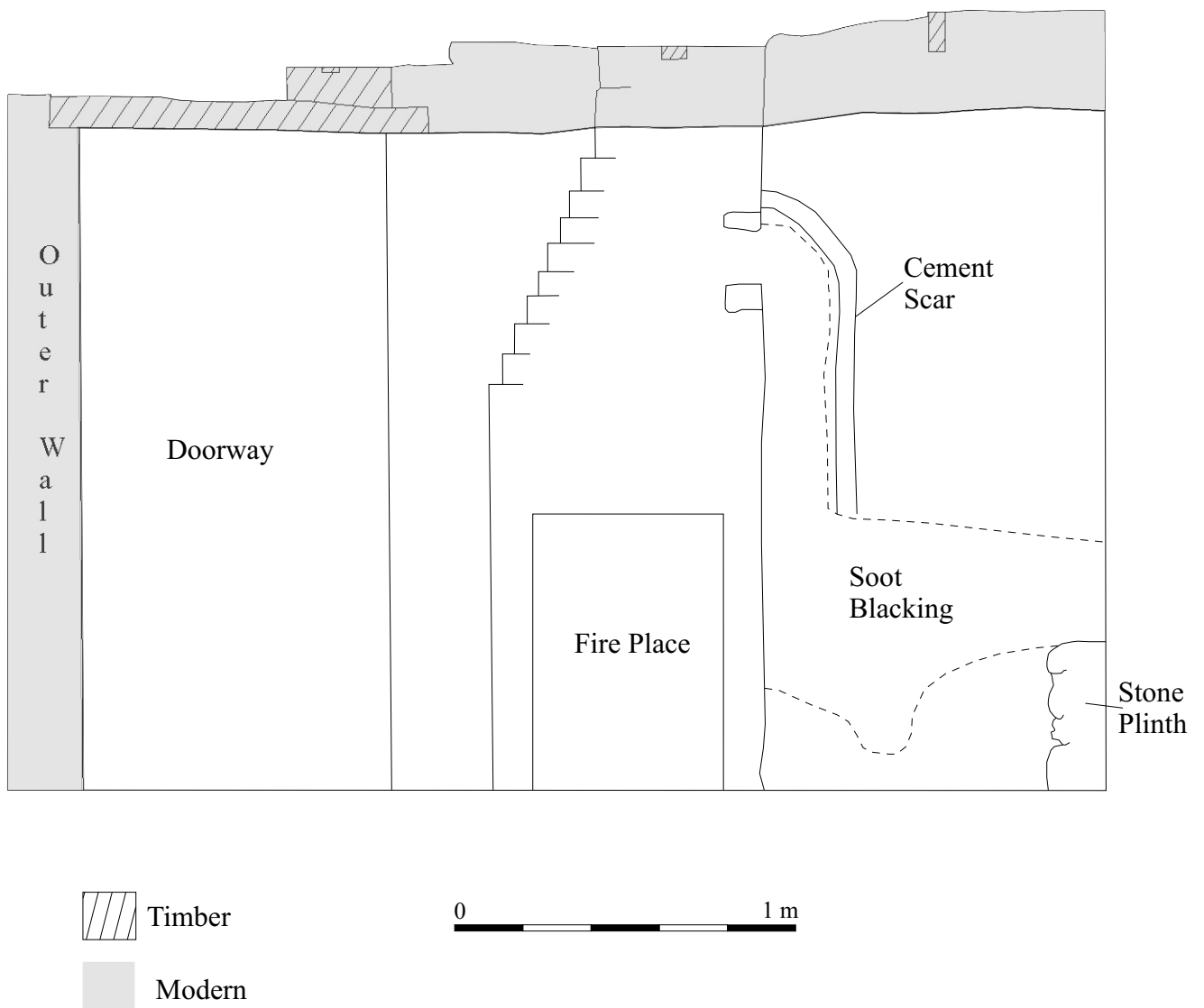


Figure 3. Elevation of the fireplace within the second room



The main feature of the second room is the fireplace (plate 4), built in brick and contemporary with the interior wall. To the north of the fireplace the wall shows a distinct scar of plaster where a covering or structure has been attached to it (plate 5). Below this scar is considerable discolouration of the wall surface by soot or burning. An opening on the side of the chimney stack at a level just below the top of the scar would indicate that a second flue had been accommodated (figure 3).

Part of the original flooring is evident in this room. A brick floor laid onto a loose bedding of soil and building debris. This floor also forms the base of the hearth of the fireplace. The bricks have been removed from the southern portion of the room and replaced by early 20<sup>th</sup> century square tiles.

Apparently associated with the area of scorching on the wall is an area of the floor devoid of brick flooring. This area appears to have what could be footing for a structure just below floor level (plate 6).

The second room would have originally been larger. It has been recently divided by a breeze-block wall. The foundation cut for this wall removing part of the brick flooring which is repaired with concrete.

Within the third room is a continuation of the brick flooring seen in the second room. This appeared to have been repaired in several places. Built into this is a one brick high plinth measuring 0.44m by 0.69m, it is situated next to the doorway (plate 7). Approximately 1m above this plinth is a 0.11m diameter metal pipe in the eastern wall (plate 8).

When the floor in this room was removed a ceramic pipe was seen to exit through the stone footings of the eastern wall (plate 12). The pipe was directly under the brick plinth. A second ceramic pipe was seen under the southern wall, which also had stone footings in places. It seems likely that the stone footings of the southern wall are original and the new build of the wall was taken off of these foundations already in place.

The external eastern wall is at least partially contemporary with the northern wall, being bonded into the fabric at least at lower levels. It shows some signs of repair, with upper courses being replaced at some later date.

The entirety of the southern and western walls is of fairly recent rebuild, although they have reused a number of old bricks as part of the construction. The rebuild was carried out to allow a sloping roof to be fitted. The slope was down from north to south.

## **5 Discussion**

The first impressions of the building are that of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century brick build outbuilding of poor construction and little historic value. On closer investigation this impression proved inaccurate.

Outbuildings are marked in the area behind 76 and 78 High Street on the 1827 Inclosure map of Long Crendon. The building is also depicted on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map of 1885 (figure 1).

Donald (1971) records that in 1848 Emanuel Shrimpton and his son, Andrew, installed a steam powered scouring mill at 76 High Street, “where it was installed in the brick shed at the back of the house.” The Shrimptons’ had been a needle making family since 1739 and Emanuel is so recorded on the census of 1841.

Prior to 1845 all scouring was done at Long Crendon by Richard Shrimpton, with a Horse Mill kept in a barn behind “Dodwell’s Store” (Donald 1971). In 1845 John Harris of Thame set up a steam engine at Harroel. A second was installed by Edward Shrimpton and his son Jonah at their factory at Arnott’s Yard.

Although the industry was modernised at this time it was still in overall decline in the area. Matthew Shrimpton was the last manufacturer of Needles, specifically darning needles and bodkins, in Long Crendon from his workshop at 76 High Street (Donald 1971). However, the census of 1891 places him living at Backway not High Street. Donald (1973) contradicts herself placing Matthew Shrimpton at 78 High Street during this time. This is likely to be a typing error as she mentions his neighbour Mr. Lovell “who made needles in his spare time in the shed at the rear of 78 High Street.”

The 1901 census records Jonah Lovell and his wife Louisa living at 78 High Street. He was aged 55 and an agricultural labourer. The couple had lived here since 1871. At this time Walter B. Crook a farmer and his wife Annie were living at 76 High Street.

The building displays unusual features for a simple garden shed. The fireplace would seem out of place in such a structure. It could mark the building as a hovel dwelling, if it were not for the presence of the scorching, the scars of the second flue and the footings in the floor. These are indicative of some form of cottage industry. The brick plinth and chimney pipe would also appear to be associated with this industry.

Contemporary pictures of steam powered scouring engines show that they were not large in size (Shrimpton 1897) and could have easily been accommodated in a building of these dimensions. It would seem likely that given the coal dust and fixtures within the first room that it housed the steam engine.

The stone footings of the northern wall could represent an earlier building that the standing one was built off. No return for this stone was seen along the eastern wall, but stone footing were seen near the centre of the wall. The wording (Donald 1971) of Emanuel Shrimpton’s installation of 1848 would imply that the brick building was already standing, although it may have been built specially to accommodate the new engine.

## 6 Conclusions

It would appear from the documentary evidence that the building is in fact the “brick shed” described in 1848 as housing the steam powered scouring engine. This brick shed is also likely to be the same one that Mr. Lovell would use in his spare time to make needles.

The building certainly shows signs of an industrial past. The fireplace and installation next to it may be associated with either the hardening process of the needles or have provided heat for the steam scouring mill. The pipes in the third room represent another part of the industrial process, possibly to do with waste water from the quenching of the hot needles during manufacture. The brick plinth and chimney pipe may also be associated with this mill, or perhaps are part of the later manufacture under Mr. Lovell.

It is difficult to assess any relationship between the building and its immediate environs, the yard and house. All buildings in the immediate area appear to have had later extensions added to them, or at least superficial surface work that has obscured any details.

One impact of the conversion is the removal of the original brick floor, although this has already been heavily damaged in recent years.

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Plate 2. Rear of building (north side)



Plate 4. Fireplace



Plate 1. Front of building



Plate 3. Stone footings





Plate 5. Plaster scar and soot blackening



Plate 6. Footings in floor of second room



Plate 7. Brick plinth



Plate 8. Chimney pipe





Plate 9. Rear of fireplace in the first room



Plate 12. Pipe under flooring in third room



Plate 10. Brick floor of the second room



Plate 11. Fixing in the floor of first room