

20 - 22 TALBOT STREET, CHIPPING, LANCASHIRE:

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF FIRST FLOOR STRUCTURE: FINAL REPORT

(CONDITION 6 OF LISTED BUILDING CONSENT 3/2020/0763)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Listed building consent "*to undertake structural and damp repair works to the building, insertion of replacement windows (like for like), replacement of roof coverings and the erection of new rainwater goods*" at 20 - 22 Talbot Street was granted by Ribble Valley Borough Council on 16 April 2021.
- 1.2 Condition 6 of the consent requires that "*A record of the first floor structure shall be made by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional contractor via a programme of photographic recording (as set out in "Understanding Historic Buildings" (Historic England 2016). The first recording shall be undertaken prior to works commencing on site. This recording shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority within 30 days of the recording and shall include a timetable for further recordings during the works hereby approved. The development thereafter shall be carried out in accordance with the approved timetable of recording.*"
- 1.3 This document provides details of the resulting targeted recording, undertaken prior to and during works on site, for the Brabin's Trust. An archive for the recording will be deposited in due course with Lancashire Archives.

2 The listed building

- 2.1 The property at 20 - 22 Talbot Street is grade II* listed as "*Post Office and John Brabin's House*"¹ and is dated to 1668 by an inscription on the door lintel, which also bears Brabin's initials. It stands on the south-east side of one of the main thoroughfares within the village of Chipping, at NGR: SD 62314 43325 (figure 1).

3 Repairs proposed

- 3.1 The listed building consent included provision for repairs to the first floor structure, which comprises three main beams spanning the building from front to back (see figure 2, at end of report, below photographs). In addition, three other beams are visible in the underside of the first floor, although these do not form part of the main structure and are not proposed for any works.

¹National Heritage List entry 1362244



Figure 1: Location map (1:10,000)

- 3.2 In total, 34 photographs showing the underside of the first floor were taken between 29 April 2021 (prior to works commencing), and 9 November 2021, following the partial removal of plaster from beneath the ceiling. The photographs are presented at the end of this report, and their locations shown on figure 2 (at end). In the text, numbers in bold refer to the photographs.

4 Notes on the floor structure

- 4.1 **Beam 1** is located close to the stone fireplace and adjacent oven, which are both of an eighteenth century rather than seventeenth form, so raising the possibility that this timber served as a bressumer to a firehood. The house is dated to 1668, and firehoods are known to have been installed in smaller houses of that relatively late period, in the county².
- 4.2 The beam is oak (as are all those recorded), measures approximately 150mm high by 100mm wide in section, lacks chamfers, and rests on the king mullion of a window in the south-east wall, and at the other end in the north-west wall, to one side of a window. A partition or heck encloses the fireplace area from an entrance vestibule from the adjacent shop (**1-4**).
- 4.3 Just visible along the top of beam 1 in a few places are the feet of riven studs, part of a wattle and daub structure. This now belongs to the vertical partition on the first floor enclosing a bathroom, but perhaps originated as the front of a firehood, although no soot or blackening was observed.

²Pearson, S 1985 *Rural Houses of the Lancashire Pennines 1560 – 1760*, p128-130

- 4.4 The joists which rest on the beam between it and the end wall are laid perpendicular to it for the most part, with packing used beneath them (**5-8**). These joists are laid “flat”: they measure about 100mm wide and 50mm deep in section, are at approximately 400mm centres, and are overlain by broad oak boards (typically 180-250 mm wide). The joists differ from those on the other side of beam 1, which are more typically 50mm wide and 100mm (ie laid “upright”, and lie directly on it, rather than being packed out. The latter therefore appear to have been originally associated with beam 1, in contrast to those around the fireplace.
- 4.5 Within this bay, over the south corner of the room, for a distance of about 1.1m from the south-east wall, is an area of flooring where the joists instead run parallel to beam 1, and the floorboards perpendicular to it (**9,10**). This difference might indicate that the firehood did not extend as far as the south-east wall.
- 4.6 **Beam 2** runs parallel to beam 1 about 1.5m from it, and is of a more substantial scantling, measuring some 240mm deep and 180mm wide (**11-16**), so that its top edge is about 90mm higher. Its bottom arrises are chamfered to both sides. The joists to either side of beam 2 are set within sockets cut into the top of the beam, so that their top edges are almost flush with it (**17-22**).
- 4.7 **Beam 3** is on the line of the partition between living room and the two smaller rooms to the north-east, now known as study and dining room, but perhaps parlour and service room historically. Very little of it was exposed during the works (**23-26**).
- 4.8 Beam 4 runs close to and parallel to beam 3, within the dining room only (**27-30**). It is not clear what function it was intended to serve, and has failed historically, with three horizontal timber pegs having been inserted in beam 3, to support its middle part.
- 4.9 Beam 5 runs perpendicular to beams 1 to 4, and is on the line of the partition between the two service rooms (**30-33**). It has clear evidence for re-use, in the form of redundant joists and peg holes.
- 4.10 Beam 6 is set next to the south-east wall of the dining room, where it rests on stone corbels at either end (**34**). It was evidently intended to support the joists over this room, which were not exposed during the present works.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The targeted recording provides only very localised information regarding the building fabric. The first floor structure is in general typical for a mid-seventeenth century, single-depth, two-unit vernacular house in the region, in that it comprises parallel oak beams arranged cross-wise, with joists between, and the undersides of the floorboards were originally exposed. The most notable observation made during the recording is the likelihood that the present stone fireplace and chimney in the living room replaced an earlier firehood arrangement, of which parts seem to survive on the first floor, concealed within the partition which encloses the bathroom. It is recommended that any works in that part of the first floor or in the roof space above be monitored in similar fashion, in case further evidence of the firehood are revealed.

Stephen Haigh, MA
Buildings Archaeologist
17 December 2021



Photo 1: Beam 1 (firehood bressumer?), adjacent to fireplace in lounge/living room (before work). Looking south.



Photo 2: Beam 1 (firehood bressumer?), adjacent to fireplace in lounge/living room (before work). Looking south-west.



Photo 3: Beam 1 (firehood bressumer?), adjacent to fireplace in lounge/living room (before work). Looking south-west.



Photo 4: Beam 1 (firehood bressumer?), boxed in over doorway from shop (before work). Looking north-east.



Photo 5: Beam 1 (firehood bressumer?), adjacent to fireplace in lounge/living room (exposed for repairs). Looking south.



Photo 6: Beam 1 (firehood bressumer?), adjacent to fireplace in lounge/living room (exposed for repairs). Looking west.



Photo 7: Detail of beam 1, looking east. Note oak joists resting on packing, suggesting that they are secondary, and foot of riven stud to first floor partition, with daub infill – perhaps part of firehood (exposed for repairs)



Photo 8: Underside of joists and boards between Beam 1 and fireplace (exposed for repairs). Paint and limewash indicate ceiling was not always underdrawn. This may be infill within former firehood. Looking north-west.



Photo 9: Short cross-beam, spanning between Beam 1 and end wall, by fireplace (before work). Looking south-east.



Photo 10: Underside of short cross-beam and floor in south corner of living room (exposed for repairs). Note different orientation of joists, perhaps indicating this part of the first floor lay outside the firehood. Looking north-west.



Photo 11: Beams 1 (right) and 2 (left), in lounge/living room (before work). Looking south-east.



Photo 12: Beam 2, middle of lounge/living room (before work). Looking east.



Photo 13: Beam 2, middle of lounge/living room (before work). Looking west.



Photo 14: Beam 2, middle of lounge/living room (before work). Looking north-east.



Photo 15: Beam 2, middle of lounge/living room (before work). Looking south-west.



Photo 16: Beam 2, middle of lounge/living room (before work). Looking south-east.



Photo 17: Underside of joists and boards between Beams 1 & 2 (exposed for repairs). Looking south-west.



Photo 18: Underside of joists and boards between beams 1 & 2 (exposed for repairs). Looking north-west.



Photo 19: Underside of joists and boards between Beams 1 & 2 (exposed for repairs). Looking south-west.



Photo 20: Underside of joists and boards either side of beam 2 (exposed for repairs). Looking south-east.



Photo 21: Underside of joists and boards to either side of beam 2 (exposed for repairs). Looking north.



Photo 22: Detail of beam 2 and joists on south-west side (exposed for repairs). Looking north.



Photo 23: Beam 3 over partition between lounge/living room and study/dining room. Looking north.



Photo 24: Underside of joists and boards, next to beam 3 (exposed for repairs). Looking north-east.



Photo 25: Underside of joists and boards, between beams 2 and 3 (exposed for repairs). Looking north-west.



Photo 26: Underside of joists and boards, between beams 2 and 3 (exposed for repairs). Looking south-east.



Photo 27: Beams 3 & 4, dining room (before work). Looking south-west.



Photo 28: Beams 3 & 4, dining room (before work) . Looking south.



Photo 29: Beams 3 & 4, dining room (before work). Looking south-west.



Photo 30: Beams 3 & 4, in dining room corner (before work). Looking west.



Photo 31: Beam 5, over partition between dining room and study (before work). Looking north.



Photo 32: Beam 5 over partition between dining room and study (before work). Looking south.



Photo 33: Beam 5, over partition between dining room and study (before work) South-west end.



Photo 34: Beam 6, by outer wall of dining room (before work). Looking south-east.

TALBOT STREET



↗ 1: photograph direction and number

20-22 TALBOT STREET
 CHIPPING
 LANCASHIRE
 (NGR: SD 62314 43325):
 RECORD OF FIRST FLOOR STRUCTURE

FIGURE 2:
 GROUND FLOOR PLAN WITH
 PHOTOGRAPH LOCATIONS

SCALE: 1:50 (at A4)

DATE OF SURVEY: APRIL - NOVEMBER 2021

STEPHEN HAIGH
 Buildings Archaeologist



5m