



***Building Recording Report***

***The Barn, Betwyns Garage,  
Station Road, Goring on Thames***

***National Grid Reference: 459910/180644***



*Station Road, Goring on Thames, c. 1900*

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**The Barn, Betwyns Garage,  
Station Road, Goring-on-Thames, Oxfordshire**

***Introduction***

This report concerns the timber-framed barn that formed part of the workshop of Betwyns Garage, Station Road, Goring-on-Thames, NGR 459910/180644. The barn was demolished as part of the redevelopment of the site in October 2005.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2005 Dr Peter Wardle, a local resident, noticed what appeared to a timber framed barn that had been revealed during demolition work that had not been previously recognised as such. Therefore no planning conditions had been placed on the barn, hence its demolition without formal recording.

The building was visited by the SODC conservation officer and Dr Wardle the same day and some photographic recording was undertaken. Arrangements were made to visit the building the following day for more complete recording to take place however the barn was demolished overnight.

The recording of the barn and this report was paid for by Dr Peter Wardle.

It is noted that the funding arrangements of this project mean that English Heritage Standards for the recording of buildings were not followed.

The building itself has been subject to a great deal of reuse and adaptation in the years between its construction and demolition, although a proportion of its timber frame remained for the entire life of the building.

Prior to demolition, the building was in use as a car repair garage. The barn itself was used as a workshop and was fitted with a lift for working on the undersides of cars.

***Prior Use of Garage***

Station Road was the primary route way through Goring on Thames where the Ridgeway and Icknield Way cross the river Thames – Station Road itself being on the Icknield Way.

A number of buildings in Station Rd and High street had small barns associated with them of a similar size and type such as the Catherine Wheel public house.

This arrangement is shown on historic maps.



## ***Description of the building***

### **Exterior**



***Figure 3: The barn prior to demolition, NW elevation***

As can be seen in figure 3, the barn had a half-hipped roof, more recently covered in corrugated metal sheet, whereas the north wall was covered in cement-bonded asbestos up until it joined the brick building to the left of the picture. The barn is likely to have been thatched when originally built. The west wall featured a brick extension, although this had been demolished prior to the site visit. The west wall was timber clad in a similar style to that of the main building to the south. It is thought that this cladding is not original, and that the earlier timber facing was replaced contemporary to the cladding of the main building.



**Figure 4: West elevation of barn**



**Figure 5: West elevation of barn and main workshop**

The southern side of the barn was amalgamated into the main workshop building. The wall of the barn had been removed to allow vehicle access between the structures.



**Figure 6: East elevation of barn**

As can be seen from figure 6, the eastern end of the barn had a small extension again with a corrugated roof. This extension was more apparent inside. The extension also formed the property boundary.

## Interior



*Figure 7: Interior, northern elevation*

The northern wall of the barn had incurred several modifications in its existence. To the left of figure 7, the stepped-in western extension can be seen, and to the right of the image, the black wall is present where the brick building shown in figure 3 has been built onto the barn at some point in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The middle portion appears to be the original wall of the barn, now clad with cement bonded asbestos sheet to the exterior and timber battens supporting hardboard on the interior face.



*Figure 8: North wall detail, showing original timbers*

Figure 8 illustrates some of the original timbers visible through holes in the interior cladding created by vandals. Either side of the hole through which daylight can be seen, a post can be seen, with beams horizontally above. In the top left corner, an angle brace is visible leading from a post off to the right. Angle braces are common from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

In addition to the timbers, the absent hardboard and the piece of corrugated material in the foreground indicates that prior to the application of hardboard, the barn may well have been used as a paint spray-shop, owing to the appearance of paint sprayed on the inside of the exterior wall – a common procedure to test the spray-gun before applying paint to the subject.



**Figure 9: North wall following demolition**

The north wall was examined following partial demolition. It is clear from figure 9 that at one stage windows were inserted into the wall. These were still glazed, although some panes have been broken. Also visible was a timber sill to which the structural posts were fixed.



**Figure 10: Timber sill beneath the north wall**





*Figure 11: The north wall following demolition, part of the sill clearly visible*

## East Wall



*Figure 12: The eastern wall of the barn*

The eastern wall of the barn was similarly clad with hardboard although a section was cut away in the southern corner for access to what is thought to have been a boiler. The east wall, like the north, was also fixed to a timber sill, visible below the hardboard wall.



**Figure 13: Timber sill beneath eastern wall**



**Left: Figure 14: Boiler recess, east wall**

Examining the boiler recess in the east wall (figure 13), it is apparent that the majority of the eastern extension is not used.

Figure 14 illustrates the reason for the shape of the cut-out in the east wall into the boiler recess. The cut follows the line of a diagonal strut in the original timber frame. Looking above this strut, it is possible that some of the original shuttering remained, in this case, whitewashed.



**Figure 15: Cut-out in east wall showing timbers and possible original cladding**

### South Wall



**Figure 16: South of the barn, the main workshop**

It is clear that on the construction of the main garage, the south wall of the barn was removed in order to join the structures. Wooden posts were installed to support the tie beams and the wall plates were cut off (see figure 16).



*Figure 17: Wall plate truncated when new garage constructed*



*Figure 18: South elevation following demolition of barn*

### **West Wall**

The majority of the western wall had been demolished before recording could commence.



**Figure 19: West elevation of barn**

It is thought that the majority of the west wall had been destroyed in the construction of the extension, and that nothing historically significant remained.

### **Roof**

The roof consisted of straight queen posts from tie beam to purlin (straight queen post truss). The external appearance of the roof was half-hipped. Inside, the roof was panelled at purlin level, using comparatively modern timber and hardboard. It is likely that this occurred contemporarily to the panelling of the walls.



**Figure 20: Central truss partially visible showing panelling either side of queen post**

The roof had a single central truss that was also panelled between timbers, which were generally painted in a considerably darker tone than the white panelling throughout the roof.



**Figure 21: Roof panelling removed showing original timbers above**

From photographic evidence, the roof appeared to be in good condition.



**Figure 22: Timbers following demolition**



*Figure 23: Terminal ends of long timbers following demolition*

### **Conclusions**

Due to the difficulty and hurried nature in recording the barn, it is impossible to assess the building fully. With the inability to remove wall coverings, it was unfeasible to assess the surviving structure of the building, or its condition. Examination of timbers following demolition suggests that c. 80% of the original structure remained and the vast majority of this was still in good sound condition.