

**VERNACULAR BUILDINGS RESEARCH  
HENLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL GROUP**

**Parish/County:** formerly Rotherfield Greys, now Henley- on-Thames, Oxon

**Street and House name:**  
'The Anchor Inn', 58 Friday Street

**Owners:** Brakspear & Sons Ltd

Recorder: Ruth Gibson

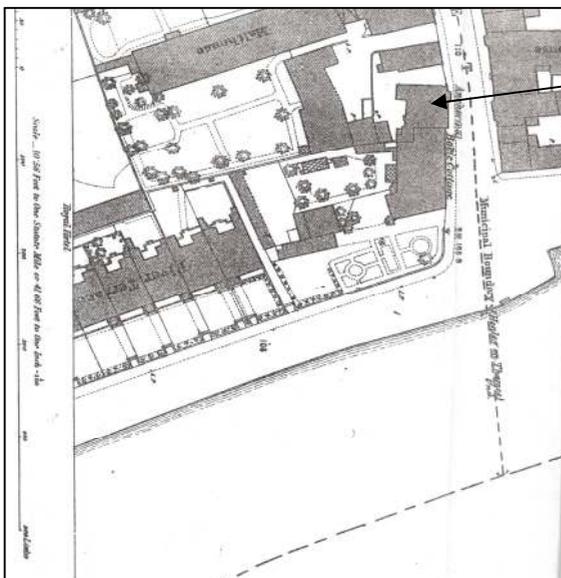
**Date:** Nov. 2012

**Listing grade and entry text:** Gd II

*C19th stucco façade to earlier, prob. timber framed house. Half hipped roof with central chimney. 2 storeys.... Two doors with engraved glass panels and C19<sup>th</sup> casements.*

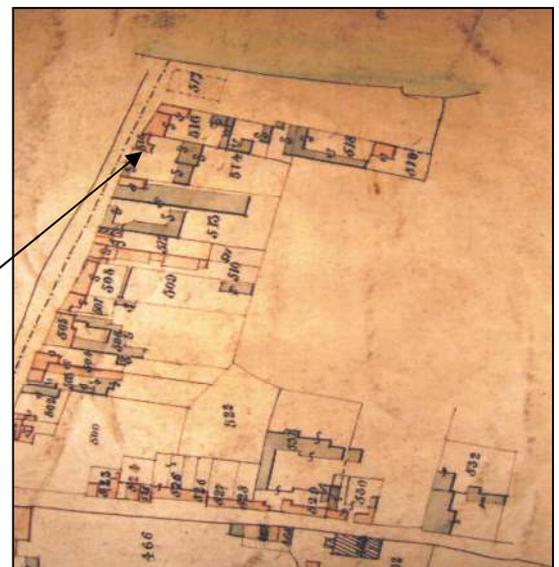


**Maps:** The **1878 OS Map** of Henley shows the building very much as it is today with its deep rear extensions and the street front bay windows. The map also still shows buildings of the former Greys Brewery to the west and south of the PH with a large malt house clearly marked. The house is located at the back of pavement, just within the parish of Rotherfield Greys. The boundary between this and Henley is marked as a centre line on the 1878 OS map, below left.



1878 OS Map. The Anchor Inn on the south side of Friday St.

1844 Tithe Map of Rotherfield Greys; No 515 is now the Anchor Inn, but was then a dwelling house for two separate occupants.



The **1844 Tithe Map**, above right, and Tithe Returns of Rotherfield Greys show the building in an L-shaped form with large outbuildings in the back yard. It was owned by the Rev. Deacon Morrell and apparently subdivided into two dwellings at that time. The tenants were ‘William Woodley & others’.

**Known History:** It was first known as the ‘Brewery Tap, a reference to the adjoining Greys Brewery. In the detailed research carried out by Ann Cottingham for ‘The Hostelries of Henley’, Pages 30 – 33, the earliest mention of the Anchor is in the Street Directory of 1847.

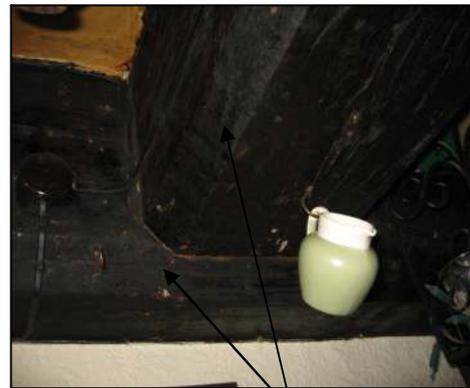
**Plan form/position in street:** Its plan form is that of a two and a half bays lobby entry house, i.e. a building with a central entrance into a lobby. This lobby is located in front of the stack and gives access to a room on each side. The staircase is located behind the stack, as is usual in this type of building, using the stack’s masonry to attach the stair. However, here the original stairs have been removed, allowing a through-way at the back between the two rooms ( now the bar counter is located there) and a dog-leg staircase was built behind a partition wall.

**Description of the building:** The exterior of the building is described in the Listing Entry above and shows a late Victorian façade with two-storey bay window on the west side and two entrance doors, side by side, with frosted glass, originally giving separate access to the lounge and public bars on either side of the central fire place. The 2 ½ bays are 8 m long by c. 5 m depth.

Heavy ceiling joists and transverse beams and some surviving timber posts show that this is a refronted timber framed house. The central spine beams measure 28 cm by 28 cm, the joists measure 16 cm by 16 cm and are laid 20 cm apart. All ceiling beams have deep chamfers; some with simple stops.



Ceiling joists in east bar, all with chamfers



Heavy scantling chamfered ceiling beams



Left: weathered post and mid rail exposed in the kitchen, possibly a former outside wall.

Right: Western bar, transverse beam and chamfered spine beam, supported by a later post when the original stud wall was removed to enlarge the bar area with a single story side extension .





The upper floors are reached by a 19<sup>th</sup> C stair case from the rear lobby. Although modernized, extended and altered the main body of the stairs still occupies its original space to the rear of the stack. The wind braces of the attic roof, under which it rises, are visible on its south side (photograph on the left)

The first floor has the same lay-out as the g.f.; the central stack, 1.50 m wide with lobbies front and back; the rear lobby allows access between the two rooms from the stairs. In the front lobby some of the original framing is exposed such as a wall post with chamfered sides. The spine beam and chamfered joists are also exposed. These measure 12 cm by 8 cm and are laid at 18 cm centres.



A later extension at the back of the west room provides an additional bedroom. The original back wall was demolished and a new wall inserted leaving the original ceiling intact. These were then extended and added to for the ceiling of the new rear room (see photograph below) to be accommodated. This created the L-shaped plan seen on the 1844 map above.

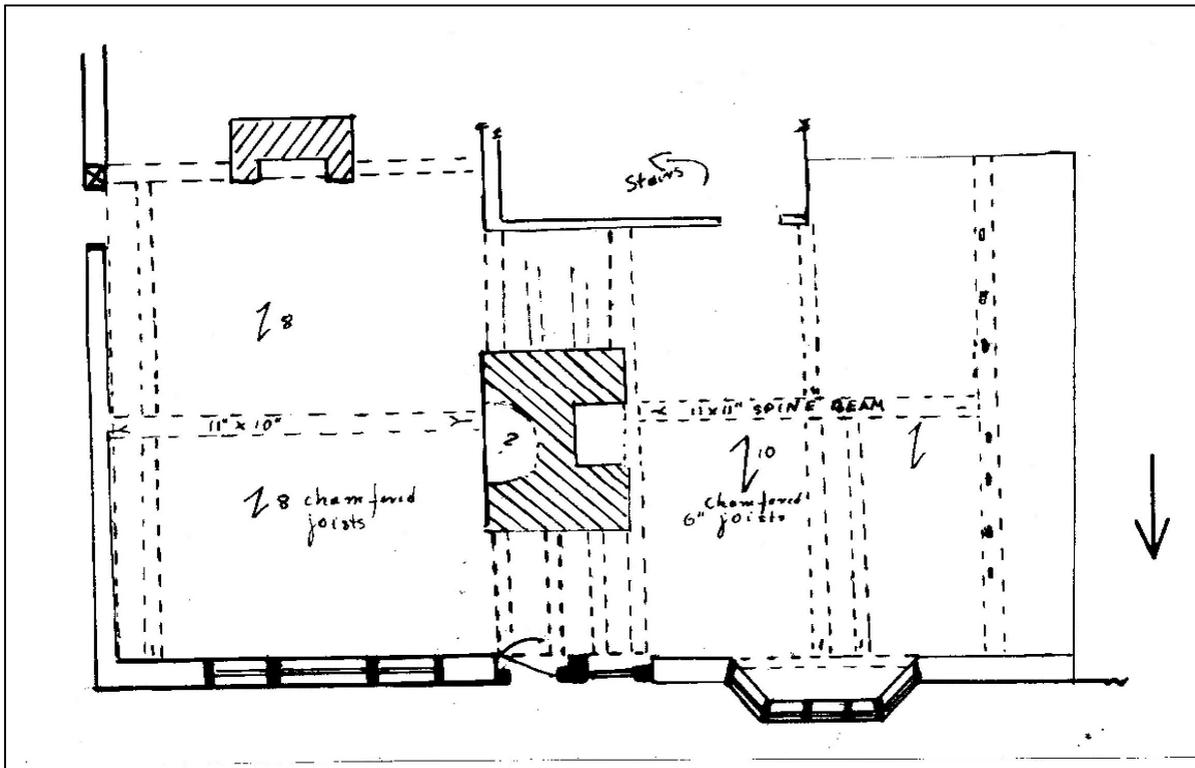


### Attic and roof structure:

The roof trusses are not visible in the attic, but substantial (22cm- 24cm wide) curved wind braces between purlins and principal rafters (not visible here) exist in the front and rear roof slopes, see the two photographs on the left and centre below.



View of the rafters from the attic lobby behind the central brick stack. The rafters are apex pegged



Sketch map of ground floor plan, approximate scale 1:50

## Conclusion

This is a building type which is first seen in the second half of the C 16<sup>th</sup> and becomes more and more common during the C 17<sup>th</sup>. The location of a central stack around which the timber frame of the house was built together with a staircase at the back brought a great improvement to the living standard of its inhabitants as well as providing greater stability for the frame. Fireplaces could now also be installed in first floor chambers as the central stack easily accommodated 4 flues. The lobbies in front and behind the stack allowed access to the rooms on either side, giving privacy to their occupants as it was no longer necessary to walk through rooms to gain access. Newel stairs, securely attached to the masonry of the stack replaced ladder type companion stairs and were a great improvement.

The Anchor thus represented a very up-to-date building type at the time of its construction either side of 1600, a great step forward from the 1438 smoke-filled two-bay open hall at Baltic Cottage. However, it may even be a little earlier and not much later than the directly adjoining chambered cross wing of Baltic Cottage, which was built from oaks felled in 1537/8 (both building phases dendro dated by Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory.)