

No. 35 SILVER STREET
LB ENFIELD

*Short Report on Range of Timber-Framed Buildings
Affected by Demolition Proposals*

by

A. R. Wittrick

Historical Analysis & Research Team
Reports and Papers (First Series, 28)
(1997)



ENGLISH HERITAGE

**35, SILVER STREET
LB Enfield
Greater London.**

I visited this site recently and met the current tenant/occupant of the ground floor accommodation, following a request from CON:L&SE team to assess the importance and value of the extant surviving fabric in advance of an application to the LB Enfield, by the current owners for demolition. The building is currently used as a hairdressing salon on the ground floor (with basement storage) with separate accommodation on the upper floor and rear addition.

The building frontage runs along Silver Street with the rear of the property bounding the old course of the New River. It is located within the Enfield Town Conservation Area but currently unlisted.

35, Silver Street is a two storey, 3-bay timber-framed structure with a shallow 'M'-shaped roof spanning the main range. An integrated, two-storey range projects at the rear of the building. A contemporary cellar of brick occupies the area under the current shop. The plan form has been considerably altered with the removal of the northern bay on the ground floor to create vehicular access to the rear.

FABRIC ASSESSMENT

Although the basic form of the roof structure remains, little, if any, of the former framing survives with much sign of repair and replacement and with at least one major reconstruction. No trusses survive and the whole assembly appears to have been re-built, using a slender ridge-piece, possibly during the 19thC. Recent works have replaced the former roof covering of slate with concrete tiles on all but the main elevation to Silver Street. At the south, uniform machined timbers form a redundant hipped end, which may have survived until the construction of the 19thC building adjacent. The shared northern wall has been largely reconstructed above roof line and within the loft space exhibits at least three different phases of brick construction, all of which appear to be associated with alteration to the chimney flues and the adjoining property.

No access was provided to the roof of the rear addition, but it appears to have been truncated at its eastern end, possibly during the construction of the extant modern two-storey extension. The 1860s series OS map indicates a continuation of this range and a substantial north-south range bounding the New River, now lost. The extant hip to the west probably forms part of the surviving 18thC roof construction of this shortened range.

The most interesting and significant exposed external fabric to have survived is the timber weatherboarding, which covers braced timber-framing and brick-nogging to the rear of the building and north elevation of the rear range. Although of a crude type it is relatively complete and a rare survival on buildings of this status. Little disturbance appears to have occurred here with the exception of the replacement of some joinery. The extant sash windows which survive are mainly of a late form with 2-pane sashes, one lacking 'horns' and thick-framed, positioned within earlier openings.

A simple face-halved scarf joint with a single peg has been used to assemble the northern girding beam which supports the upper floor construction. Slender braced timber framing is exposed throughout the ground floor, with brick nogging and all characteristic of 18thC construction.

Internally, the ground floor construction over the cellar area has largely survived, although now propped and strengthened by additional timber framing. The shopfront retains 19thC elements although is now mainly modern.

The 1867 map indicates that the current rear access through the northern bay had already been created by this date presumably to gain access to the large range to the rear of the property now lost.

SIGNIFICANCE

The extant structure appears to be of two main builds, early eighteenth century and nineteenth century. Without further fabric investigation and analysis it is difficult to obtain a more precise date for this building. Nevertheless, it is possible that the main range fronting Silver Street may have late 17thC origins. Close examination of the surviving wall-framing to the upper wall assembly may reveal framing of an earlier date.

It would appear to be the only surviving structure from a mixture of development fronting Silver Street, although No.27 may retain fabric of a similar date. Comparatively few timber-framed buildings survive within this area of London, especially of this later period. However, it is far from complete and has undergone numerous alterations with the loss of former ranges.

RECOMMENDATION

The current knowledge of this building can be judged to lack sufficient architectural interest to merit inclusion on the Secretary of State's statutory list; it ought however, to be included in any local list. This judgement might be revised when the structure can be examined in greater detail and more of its historic fabric exposed for detailed analysis and interpretation, which should be undertaken before any decision is taken to grant the current application for demolition.

Andy Wittrick
CON:HART
June/July 1997.



Fig. 1
Main elevation to Silver Street 1970



Fig.2

Main elevation to Silver Street, showing relationship of adjoining buildings 1970



Fig. 3
Silver Street, streetscape 1970



Fig.4
Rear elevation of site 1970



Fig.5

Rear elevation showing original weatherboarding and pan-tile roof 1970