



Birchington 1848

The Queen's Head

Tradition has it that the building was originally known as the 'Acorn', but sadly, the documentary evidence for this has now been lost by Dover, our licensing authority from earliest times. On the map of Upper Gore End Farm of 1679, a house on this site is shown with an unreadable inn sign, but by the time the Tithe Map was drawn up in 1840 this large old property, which we see above, had been divided into three dwellings. There is no sign of it functioning as a pub in the 1851 census, but by 1861 William Hayward is listed as its landlord.

By the time the first photos were taken of the south side of the Square in 1900, the building looked as it does below and as we see it today. It would appear that the medieval building was pulled down when the three-storey public house was developed. The cellars show evidence of being much older and very probably date to the old building, at least in part. The ground plan covered by the present building exactly matches that covered by the old Wealden house that preceded it. The form of flint that now covers the rear of the building is very similar to that used on the restoration of All Saints Church just across the Square in 1863, i.e. mainly unknapped and therefore much cheaper and quicker to work.

The plan to convert the present pub into three private dwellings in 2005 is following what must have occurred sometime between 1679 and 1840. The

recent sensitive alterations are keeping the same façade at both the front and rear of the building, which is so reassuring to the old time residents of Birchington. The barn at the back probably dates back to the Wealden house period, and would have housed the visitors' horses below and the ostlers on the upper floor.

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