

THE PRIORY

Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **I**

List Entry Number: **1102499**

Date first listed: **27-May-1968**

Date of most recent amendment: **28-May-1987**

List Entry Name: **THE PRIORY**

Statutory Address 1: **THE PRIORY, PRIORY LANE**

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

[Understanding list entries](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/) (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/>)

[Corrections and minor amendments](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/) (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/>)

Location

Statutory Address: **THE PRIORY, PRIORY LANE**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: **Hertfordshire**

District: **North Hertfordshire (District Authority)**

Parish: **Wymondley**

National Grid Reference: **TL 21863 27974**

Details

WYMONDLEY PRIORY LANE TL 2127 (East side) Little Wymondley

11/150 The Priory 27.5.68 (formerly listed as Wymondley Priory)

GV I

Priory church, now a dwelling house. Founded 1205-7 by Richard de Argentien first as a hospital and soon after as a priory of Augustinian Canons, dedicated to St. Mary. Dissolved and granted to James Nedham c.1536 (see brass in church) who adapted the priory buildings to a mansion. Inherited and much improved by George Nedham 1688. Part of the cloister may have remained c.1700, E parts said to have been destroyed by fire in C18, fragmentary stone walls recorded by Oldfield c.1800. Building stripped to shell and renovated 1973-4. The surviving building consists of the W part of the unaisled nave of the priory church with C16 and later extensions and alterations. Flint rubble C13 walls with uncoursed knapped flint facing, limestone ashlar facing to E end of S wall, the W gable top and buttress at the W end. Limestone dressings. C16 narrow red brick in English-bond walling to SW block and similar brickwork in N block. All now roughcast externally. Steep old red tile roofs. A large 2-storeys and attics house, on a moated site, facing N. Higher central part running E-W is the former priory church's nave. Small 2-storeys C16 parallel block at SW lines with W end of nave. 2-storeys N-block is roofed by 3 parallel pitched roofs producing 3 gables on the N. Its W end is set back a little from the W end of the nave. N-front designed to look symmetrical with 3 4-light transomed windows to 1st floor and central entrance door with narrow single-light window to each side of it. Similar 4-light windows to ground floor on each side of centre. Studded old door. 2 internal chimneys in middle part with one and two diagonal red brick shafts. The plan (VCH (1912)189) indicates a possible arrangement of domestic accommodation from N to S of pantry, entrance passage, hall (in the nave), and parlour (in the SW block). Hall and parlour have chimneys on the E, and there is a passage behind the hall fireplace separating it from the chimney serving the kitchen in the E part of the nave. Work in 1973 exposed N and S walls of nave. In S wall at 1st floor level 2 C13 tall lancet windows with rebated outer opening and wide internal splays with corner shafts, moulded caps and bases and 2-centred moulded arch with three moulded elements. These were protected by the SW block. The cloister was evidently to N and a fine processional door is exposed in the W part of the N wall with superb moulded arch of multiple rolls and hollows and dog-tooth decoration. Where S walk of cloister should have been was found part of a late medieval traceried recess and part of a C16 wallpainting of running warriors in classical armour. The roof structure of the nave is the most complete surviving feature. It is single framed consisting of individual rafter couples each with a collar, straight braces below collar, ashlar pieces near feet of rafter descending vertically to sole-pieces over twin wallplates, the whole describing a 7-sided figure. Heavy floor structures inserted in nave to form 1st floor and attics. 4-centred 1st floor stone moulded fireplace under depressed 3-centred relieving arch. Clock mechanism on platform at W end of roofspace of SW block. Claspered-purlin roofs with curved wind braces in C16 parts. For 2 centuries the house was the seat of the Nedham family, lords of the manor. In the later C18 it was the home of Thomas Browne, Garter King of Arms and an eminent land surveyor. (RCHM (1911)149: VCH (1912)188-9: Kelly (1914)296: *Medieval Archaeology* 18 (1974)191: Pevsner (1977)243: Roy Midmer *English Medieval Monasteries (1066-1540)* London (1979)339: RCHM Typescript: inf Mr. Farris).

Listing NGR: TL2186327974

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **162762**

Legacy System: **LBS**

Sources

Books and journals

Doubleday, A, The Victoria History of the County of Hertford, (1912), 188-9

Midmer, R, English Medieval Monasteries 1066-1540, (1979), 339

Pevsner, N, Cherry, B, The Buildings of England: Hertfordshire, (1977), 243

'Kellys Directory' in Hertfordshire, (1914), 296

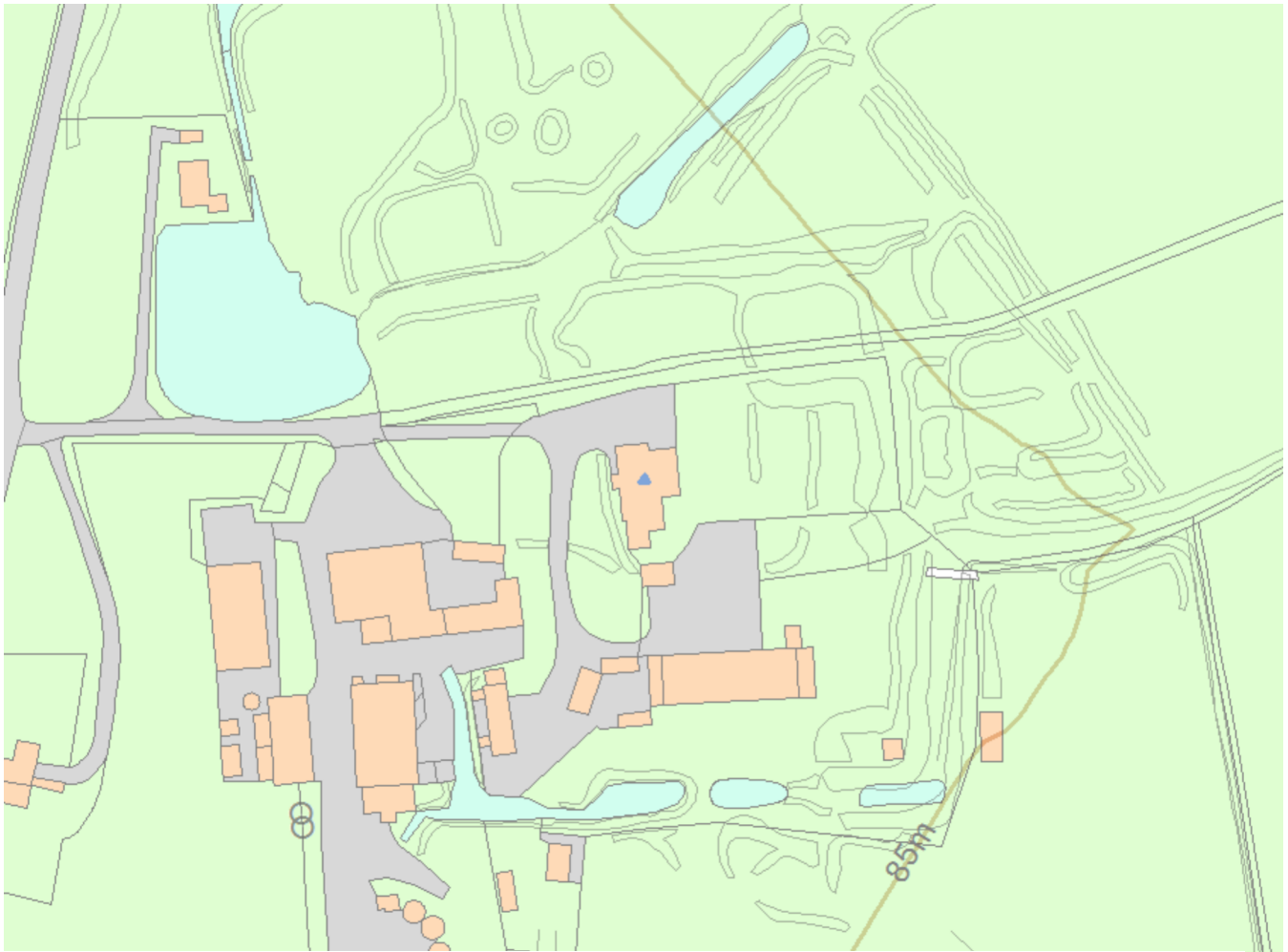
'Medieval Archaeology' in Medieval Archaeology, (1974), 191

Other

Inventory of the Historical Monuments of Hertfordshire, (1910)

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. This copy shows the entry on 30-Jun-2023 at 17:54:03.

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End of official list entry



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