

**Agricultural Buildings at
Street Farm,
Redgrave, Suffolk
RGV 049**

Heritage Asset Assessment

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Leigh Alston MA (Oxon), Architectural Historian
on behalf of
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service

**The Archaeological Service
(Field Projects Team)
Suffolk County Council, Shire Hall
Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR
Tel. (01284) 352446**

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(TM 043 781)

Heritage Asset Assessment

This report provides a record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a redundant stable and shelter-shed in the curtilage of a grade II-listed building. It has been prepared to a specification written by Dr Jess Tipper of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (dated 27th September 2011) and is intended to inform and accompany a planning application for conversion.

Introduction

The report is accompanied by a CD containing a full photographic record in the form of 62 digital images of 21 megapixels (Appendix 1), but also includes 14 printed photographs of key features. Each image is described in a separate schedule and wherever possible includes a scale rod with half-metre divisions in red and white. The site was inspected on 7th Dec. 2011.

Summary

Street Farm lies on the northern side of Redgrave Street bordering open countryside to the rear. The farmhouse is a substantial grade II-listed timber-framed structure dated in the Schedule to the early or mid-17th century, and the site includes an ostensibly 19th century brick maltings which was labelled as such on the Ordnance Survey of 1886. At the time of the tithe survey in 1846 the farm was a large arable holding of 139 acres owned and occupied by William Henry Debenham, who was listed in White's Directory for 1844 as both a farmer and maltster. The single-storied timber-framed and weatherboarded shed adjoining the farm track to the west of the house is an early-19th century stable range which is of considerable historic interest despite the partial collapse of its southern end. The building is shown on the tithe map of 1846 and dates from *circa* 1820, with a butt-purlin pantiled roof and primary wall braces which are pegged and tenoned to jowled storey posts. The interior is divided into three compartments, with a central tack room flanked on the north by a stable and on the south by a loose box formed in part by a mid-19th century brick extension. The stable retains a central cross-entry and a hay loft with hay drops at both gables – although the racks and mangers were removed when the space was converted for cattle in the 1960s. The present owner recalls six horses of mixed breeds during the 1950s, when they were still used in conjunction with tractors for light jobs such as harrowing and rolling, with three stalled at each end of the stable. The ceiling preserves a rare section of original wattle-and-daub between the joists and loft boards to prevent the fall of dust from above, and some original cobble stones survive in the floor. Leather tack still hung from the harness hooks in the internally rendered tack room at the time of inspection, and the presence of an oak stall partition with a carved finial suggests it may have been designed as stable for riding or driving horses. The loose box accommodated mares and foals. Despite its historic interest as a rare and in some respects unusually well preserved vernacular stable the building probably fails to meet the strict English Heritage criteria for listing in its own right. The shelter-shed to the west of the adjoining yard is a Victorian brick structure which has lost its original arcade posts and is of historic significance only insofar as it complements the stable.

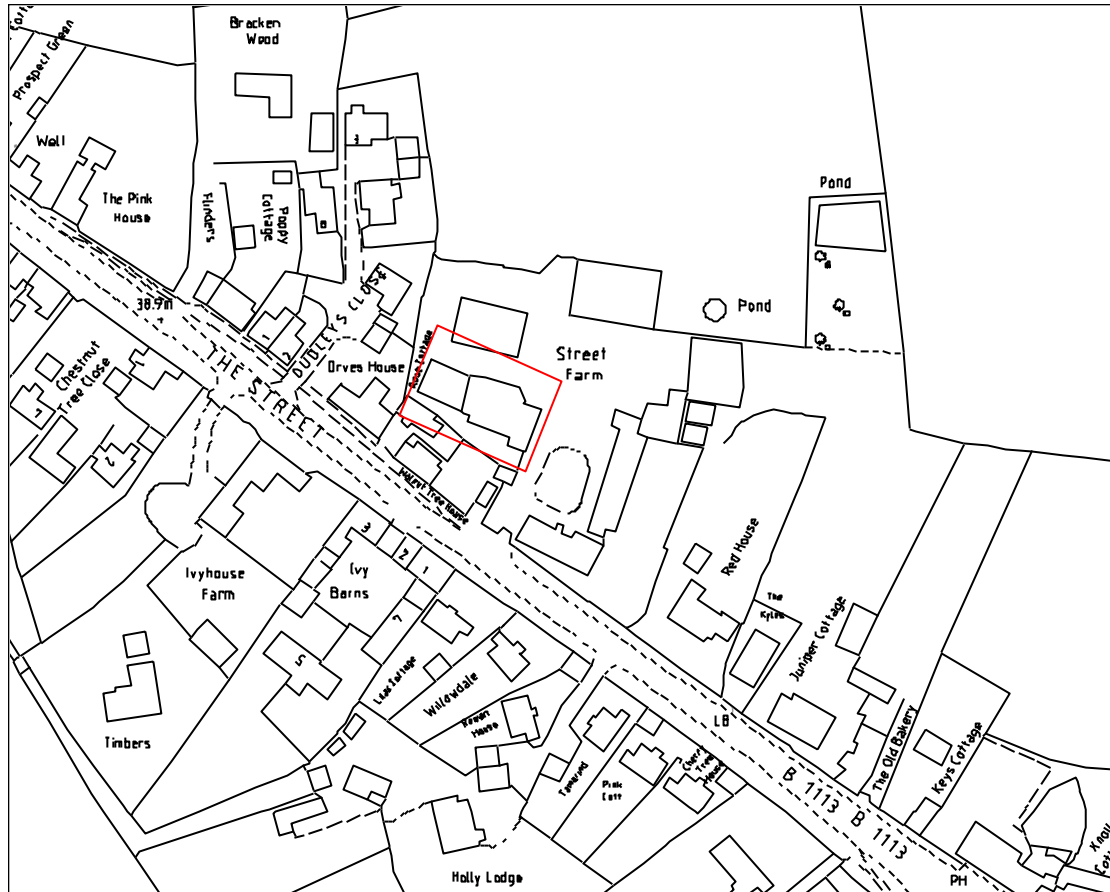


Figure 1
Modern Ordnance Survey
Enclosing the stable and shelter-shed in red and showing the maltings and grade II-listed farmhouse to the east and south-east respectively. The site adjoins The Street on the south. See figures 5 and 6 for more detail.

Documentary and Cartographic Evidence

Street Farm lies on the northern side of Redgrave Street bordering open countryside to the rear. The farmhouse is a substantial grade II-listed timber-framed and rendered structure with three gables which is dated in the Schedule to the early or mid-17th century but was not inspected for the purpose of this report. A derelict and partly collapsed brick and pantiled range to the rear is described as a malthouse on the Ordnance Survey of 1886 (figure 3) and at the time of the Redgrave tithe survey in 1846 the property was a relatively large owner-occupied arable holding of 139 acres belonging to William Henry Debenham – described as a farmer and maltster in Whites Suffolk Directory of 1844. By 1855 it had passed to Arthur Debenham, who was also recorded as a maltster, but the directory of 1874 contains neither Debenhams nor maltsters in the parish and the business may not have endured even until 1886. The 1904 Ordnance Survey makes no reference to the maltings, although the building is still known as such by its current owner.



Figure 2. Street Farm as depicted on the 1846 tithe map of Redgrave (SRO), showing the stable and a larger building on the site of the shelter-shed with a third to the south.

The tithe map shows the farmhouse in red and the outbuildings in grey. The malthouse had much the same outline as today, but the stable (building 1 in figure 6) appears to extend less far to the south and possessed a distinct indentation to its western elevation. A building was shown in the same position as the existing shelter-shed (building 2), but a third structure lay immediately to the south and the area (plot 365 on the map) was described in the apportionment – somewhat curiously – as a ‘cottage and yards’. The cottage was presumably the third structure to the south but domestic buildings were normally depicted in red rather than grey and the description may be an error or perhaps relate to an old dwelling that was no longer in use as such. This building had disappeared by 1886 (figure 3) but the stable retained its indentation – albeit now extended further to the south (i.e. the brick loose-box (1c) had been added). The open-sided eastern elevation of the shelter-shed is indicated by a broken line, and the adjoining yard to the east (plot 366) was described simply as a ‘yard’ while plot 369 to the north-east was ‘barn and yards’ and plot 370 ‘house and yards’. The stable is shown with its present rectangular outline on the 1904 Ordnance Survey and the earlier indentation was probably the result of narrow lean-to sheds which adjoined the western elevation on both sides of the main entrance but were demolished between 1886 and 1904. These may have served as tack rooms prior to the conversion of the existing tack room from a stable.

The present owner, Mr Gooderham, moved to Street Farm from nearby Wortham as a boy in the 1940s and recalls six working horses of mixed breeds in the stable (including at least one Shire). Three were fed at each of the hay racks and mangers to the north and south (corresponding with the surviving hay drops) but the fixtures and fittings were removed when the space was subsequently converted into a cow shed. The animals were used for harrowing

and rolling rather than ploughing in the 1950s (the latter already mechanised). The central section of the building was a tack room and the southernmost a loose-box for mares and foals.

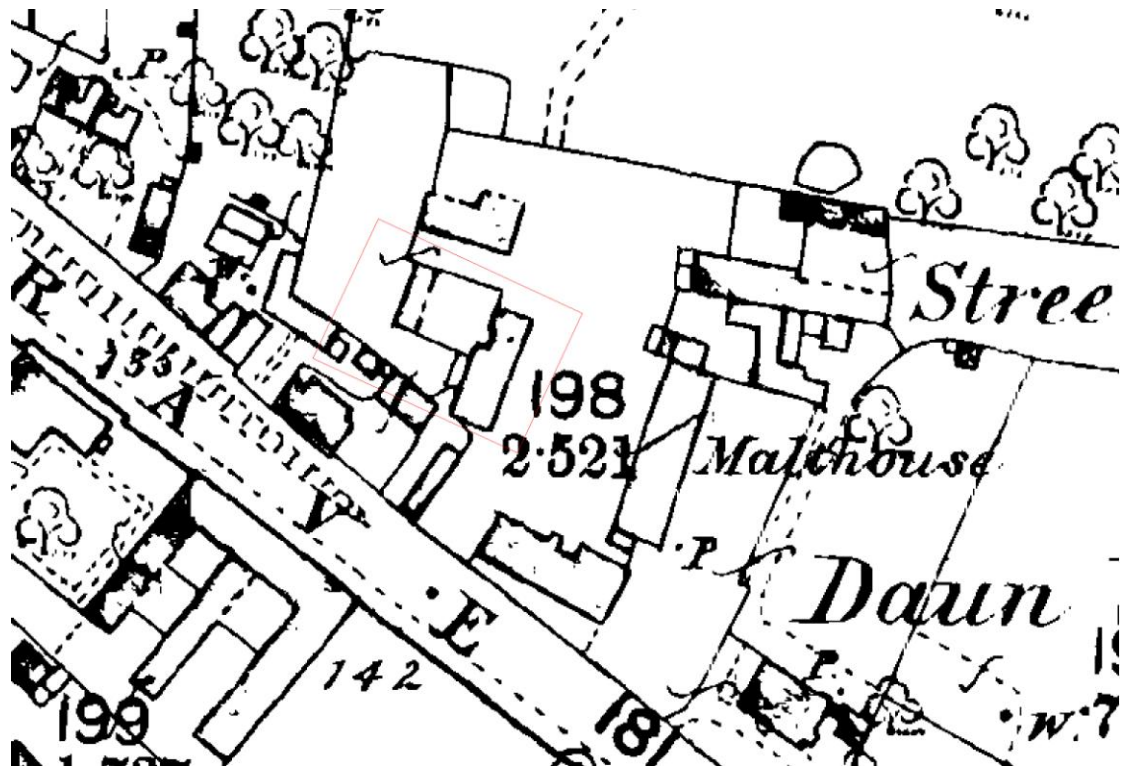


Figure 3. First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1886. The stable has the same indented outline as in 1846 but has been extended to the south, while the open-sided elevation of the shelter-shed is depicted with a broken line.

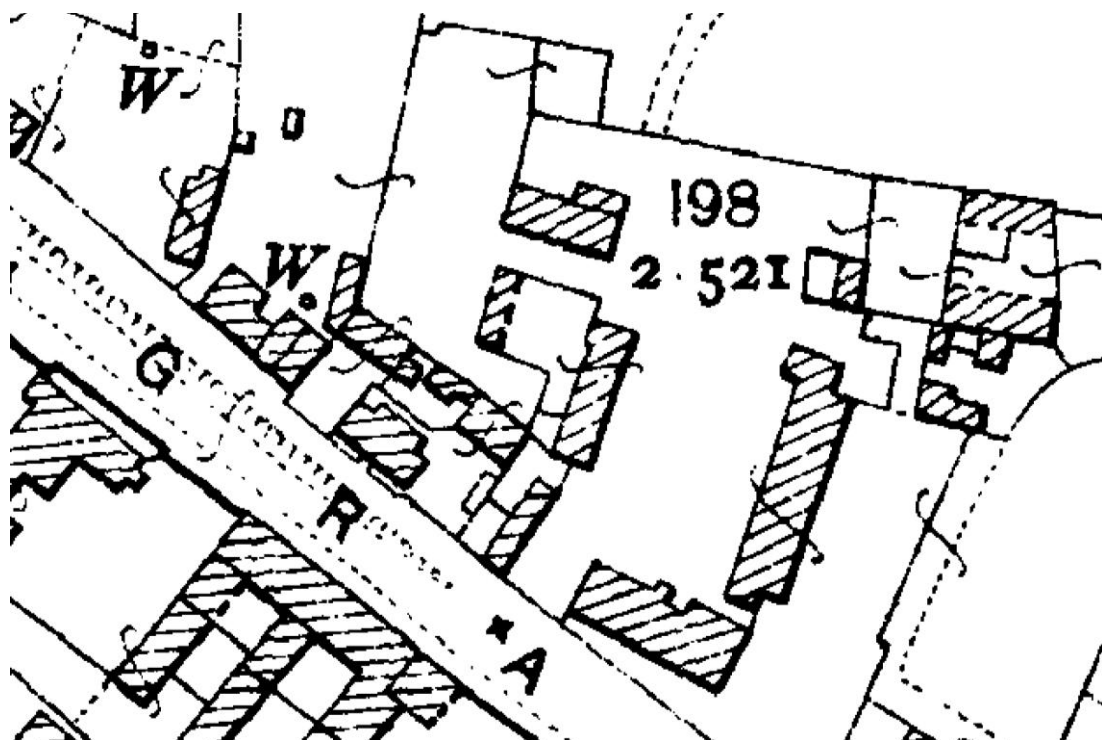


Figure 4. The Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1904. The stable and shelter-shed are shown much as they remain today.

Building Analysis

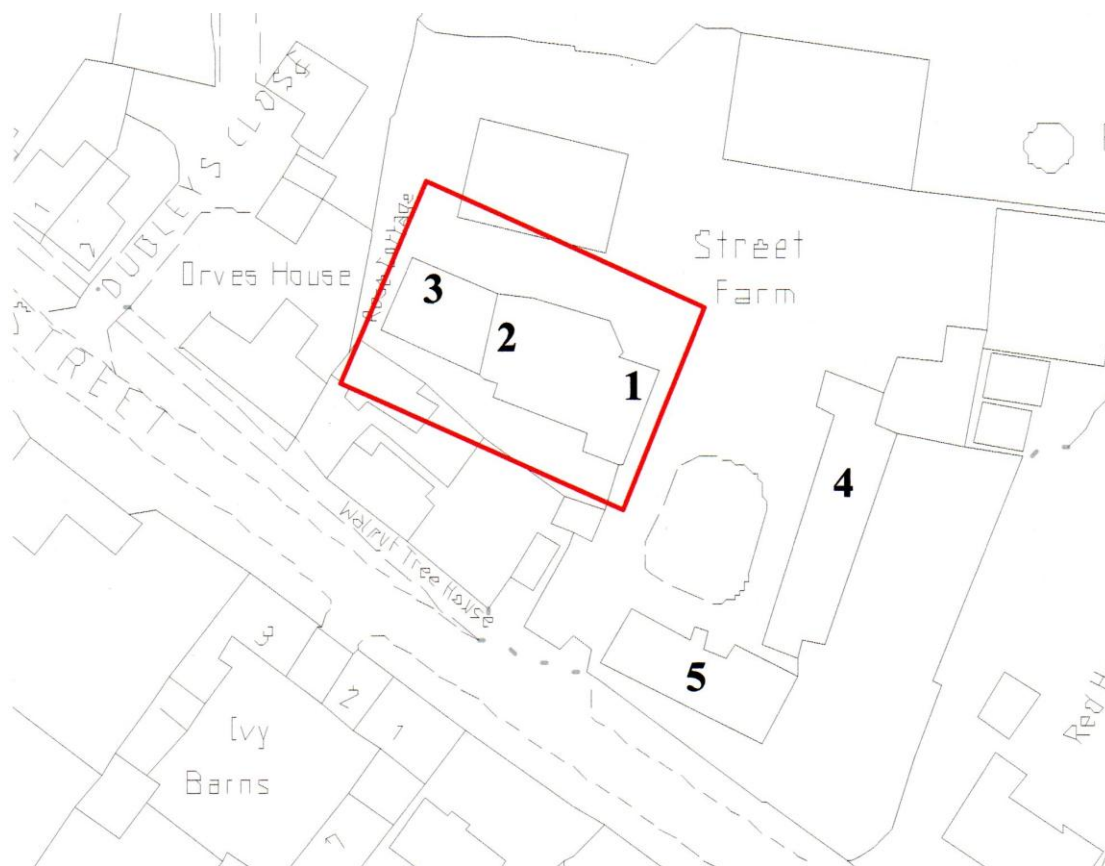


Figure 5

Block plan of the site (based on Ordnance Survey) numbering the principal buildings as follows: Stable (1), shelter-shed (2), 20th century corrugated iron vehicle shed of no historic significance (3), derelict 19th century brick maltings (4) and grade II-listed timber-framed 17th century farmhouse (5).

The Stable (1)

The timber-framed, weatherboarded and pantiled building adjoining the entrance track to the rear of the farmhouse is a stable range of the early-19th century which incorporates a stable to the north (1a in figure 6), a central tack room (1b) and a loose-box (1c) to the south. The structure extends to 17 m in length by 5.2 m in overall width (56 ft by 17 ft), rising to 2.75 m at its roof-plates (9 ft) including a brick plinth, and is aligned on a NNE-SSW axis – simplified to north-south for the purpose of this analysis. The wall fabric consists of uniform oak studs (tenoned but not pegged to the plates) interrupted by diagonal primary braces which are tenoned and pegged to the jowled storey posts and is typical of the first half of the 19th century. The building is shown on the title map of 1846 (figure 2) and dates from *circa* 1820. The shallow-pitched roof consists of butt-purlins with a ridge-board, and contains numerous substantial timbers with irrelevant mortises which have clearly been re-used from one or more older structures. The loft is whitewashed and sealed by lath and plaster between the pantiles and rafters, although much of the latter has collapsed. The ceiling of the northern stable lies 30 cm (12 ins) below the roof-plates and consist of flat-sectioned joists tenoned to a central binding joist and lodged on additional binding joists to north and south; gaps at both ends of the same stable formed hay drops above racks and mangers which no longer survive. The present owner of the farm recalls that three horses were still stalled at each end during the 1950s.

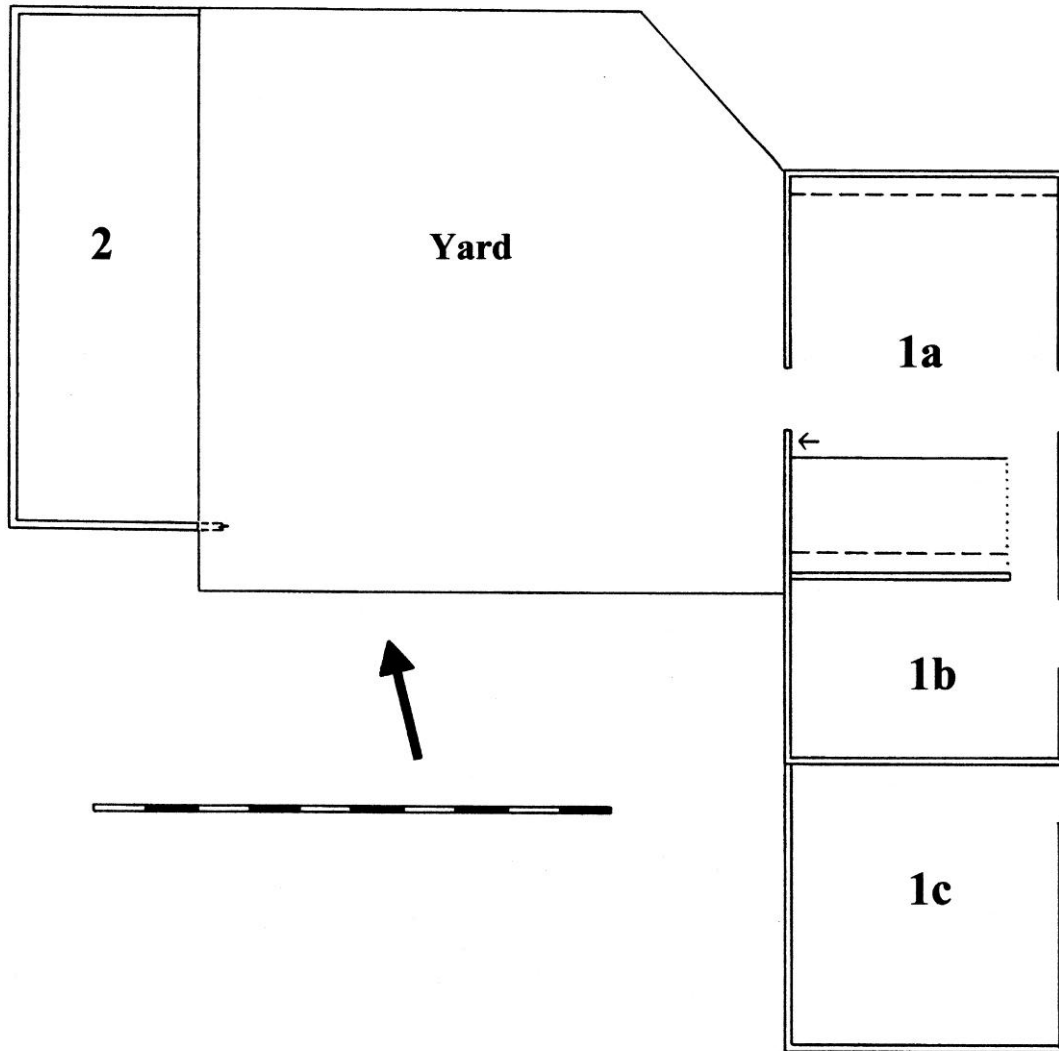


Figure 6

Ground plan of the stable (1) and shelter-shed (2) identifying the former's three compartments for ease of reference in the text and photographs. Scale in metres.

Key

1. A timber-framed and weatherboarded stable range with pantiled butt-purlin roof. *Circa* 1820. Divided into the following compartments:

1a. Stable with central cross-entrance and hay racks and mangers beneath hay drops indicated by broken lines at both gables (the racks and mangers removed). Sections of the original wattle-and-daub floor of the hay loft still extant. A later boarded stall to the south, preserving a cobbled floor, with an original eastern passage to the adjoining tack room. Internal loft ladder beside western entrance (indicated by arrow). Converted for cattle during 1960s by removing fittings and inserting an automatic drinker.

1b. Tack room with original rendered ceiling and internal walls. A rail of wooden harness hooks to the north still retaining some leather tack at the time of inspection. This compartment appears to have been designed as a stable for riding or trap horses since an oak stall partition with a carved finial adjoins the western end of the northern elevation (the larger northern stable intended for working animals).

1c. Loose-box used in the mid-20th century for mares and foals. Lacking its roof and the walls partly collapsed. The southern half of this compartment is of brick rather than timber and its present proportions appear to have been formed by extending the

original stable range and removing its southern gable in *circa* 1870, but precise analysis is hampered by its fragmentary condition.

2. A red-brick and pantiled open-sided shelter-shed serving the yard adjoining the stable. *Circa* 1870 but on the site of an earlier building shown on the tithe map of 1846. Softwood clasped-purlin roof structure with nailed collars. The timber arcade posts to the eastern elevation are 20th century replacements.

A later boarded stall has been inserted to the south of the central cross-entry and this has protected an area of original wattle-and-daub (i.e. coppice poles and clay) laid above the common joists but beneath the loft boards. This would have ensured that no dust fell through the boards into the stable beneath and is a fragile and unusual survival which has been removed from the rest of the ceiling where the soffits of the boards are now exposed. The remains of a loft ladder remain to the south of the western entrance. The floors are of 20th century concrete in much of the stable (laid when the space was converted for cattle in the 1960s as indicated by an automatic drinker adjoining the western entrance), but what appear to be original cobbles remain in the southern stall with original bricks in the passage linking the eastern entrance to the tack room – and original bricks also survive in the tack room itself.

The central tack room differs from the northern stable in that its ceiling is of tall-sectioned softwood joists at the same height as the roof-plates and was evidently designed for its present thick layer of lath-and-plaster, despite the presence of wattle-and-daub above. The internal walls are similarly rendered and whitewashed, with a wooden rail of harness hooks from which leather tack still hung at the time of inspection. The presence of a good oak stall partition at the western end of the northern interior indicates the room was designed not as a tack room but as a high quality stable (the chamfered finial is chamfered and carved) for riding or trap horses. This partition appears to be in situ, with an original flat surface against the wall.

The loose-box to the south of the building had largely collapsed at the time of inspection and lacked its roof. This area was used to accommodate mares and foals in the 1950s. The northern half of the eastern elevation consists of studwork while the rest is of brick, and in its present form the box probably represents a mid-19th century extension of 2.75 m (9 ft) to the southern gable of the original stable. Precise analysis of this point is hampered by its fragmentary condition but such an interpretation is consistent with the 19th century maps which show an increase in length between 1846 and 1886.

The Shelter-shed (2)

The open-sided shelter-shed to the west of the yard is a typical mid-Victorian example in red brick with a softwood roof of clasped-purlins with nailed collars. A building is shown on the same site in 1846 but the present structure is likely to be a replacement of *circa* 1870 (perhaps contemporary with the extension of the stable). Its timber arcade posts have been replaced and no hay racks or mangers remain. The building extends to 10 m in length by 3.6 m in width and rises to just 1.8 m at its roof-plates (33 ft by 12 ft by 6 ft) – an unusually low height for a shed that was presumably designed to accommodate horses rather than cattle. The yard walls to the north and south are of 20th century cement blocks, and both the corrugated iron roof and concrete floor are likely to date from its conversion into a cattle yard during the 1960s.

Historic Significance

The stable at Street Farm is in many respects an unusually well preserved early-19th century example with much of its original fabric and rare, fragile features such as wattle-and-daub ceilings, internal plasterwork and a carved stall partition. Its layout can be fully reconstructed

despite the loss of its hay racks, mangers and much of its historic character during its conversion for cattle during the 1960s. Stables of this type, with studwork walls and low proportions, are far less common than higher status examples in brick and cast important light on the nature of vernacular farm buildings in East Suffolk. A stock of six horses, which survived here as recently as the 1950s, would have been ideally suited to the 139 acres of the farm in 1846 (on the standard ratio of one horse per twenty or thirty acres). In contrast to the stable, the brick shelter shed adjoining the yard to the west is a standard mid-Victorian example of which many remain in the region and has been much altered by the loss of its original arcade posts. It remains of some historic interest however given its unusually low height for a shelter-shed serving a stable rather than a cattle yard. Despite the historic interest of the stable and its relatively complete condition it is unfortunately unlikely to meet the narrow English Heritage criteria for listing in its own right, but as it complements the nearby listed farmhouse it should nonetheless enjoy some protection.

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Descriptions of Photographs in Appendix 1

Photograph no.

1. General view of site entrance from The Street to west showing the grade II-listed 17th century farmhouse (5) to right.
2. General view of site entrance from The Street to south-east showing stable (1) in centre (behind trees) & farmhouse (5) to right.
3. Facade of grade II-listed 17th century farmhouse (5) from The Street to south. Included for site context.
4. Rear of grade II-listed 17th century farmhouse (5) from farm entrance to north-west. Included for site context.
5. General view of site from north showing maltings (4) to left, farmhouse (5) in centre and stable (1) to right.
6. Derelict maltings (4) to rear of farmhouse (5) seen from west. Included for site context.
7. Farm entrance track from south-west showing the stable (1) to the left and 20th century Dutch barn in rear.
8. Exterior of stable (1) from north-east showing farm entrance and farmhouse to left with covered yard and shelter-shed (2) to right.
9. General view of site from north-west showing 20th century vehicle shed to right with shelter-shed (2) and covered yard in centre.
10. Exterior of covered yard from north showing stable (1) to left and gable of brick shelter-shed (2) to right.
11. Interior of 20th century vehicle shelter (3) from north showing western exterior of brick shelter-shed (2) to left.
12. Western exterior of brick shelter-shed (2) from adjoining 20th century vehicle shed (3).
13. Exterior of loose-box (1c) from farm entrance to south-east showing entrance door to right and southern gable to left.
14. Eastern exterior of stable (1) showing entrance doors to loose-box (1c) to left, tack room (1b) in centre and stable (1a) to right.
15. Detail of half-hung entrance door to stable (1a) in eastern exterior showing blocked vent above.
16. Interior from west of covered yard to west of stable (1) showing 20th century corrugated iron roof and cement block walls.

17. Western exterior of stable from covered yard showing door to northern stable (1a).
18. Interior of covered yard from north showing stable (1) to left and brick shelter-shed (2) to right.
19. Exterior of shelter-shed (2) from south-east showing open arcade with 20th century covered yard in foreground.
20. Open-sided eastern exterior of brick shelter-shed (2) from 20th century covered yard showing pantiled roof and renewed arcade posts.
21. Interior of shelter-shed (2) from south showing renewed cylindrical arcade posts to right and original clasped-purlin roof structure.
22. Northern internal gable of shelter-shed (2) showing cement-block wall of adjoining covered yard to right.
23. Interior of shelter-shed (2) from north showing renewed cylindrical arcade posts to left and original clasped-purlin roof structure.
24. Southern internal gable of shelter-shed (2) showing remains of demolished contemporary yard wall to left.
25. Eastern interior of stable (1a) showing door to farm entrance track with concrete floor & hay drop adjoining northern gable to left.
26. Detail from west of ceiling in stable (1a) showing common joists tenoned to central binding joist with northern gable to left.
27. Interior of stable (1a) from north showing secondary boarded partition with opposing external doors to left and right.
28. Western interior of stable (1a) showing door to yard with loft ladder and 20th century cow drinker to left.
29. Northern internal gable of stable (1a) showing position of removed hay rack and manger.
30. Interior of stable (1a) from west showing hay drop in ceiling against northern gable to left and door to farm track to right.
31. Detail of from east of hay drop in ceiling against northern gable of stable (1a).
32. Detail of north-eastern corner of stable (1a) showing pegged and tenoned primary braces.
33. Detail of north-western corner of stable showing pegged and tenoned primary braces from hay drop to east.
34. Interior of stable (1a) from east showing southern hay drop to left and secondary boarded partition to right.
35. Interior of secondary stall to south of stable (1a) from west showing hay drop to right and truncated partition of tack room passage.

36. Detail from east of cobbled floor in secondary stall to south of stable (1a) with brick floor of tack room passage to left.
37. Southern interior of stable (1a) showing door to tack room (1b) to left and position of missing trough & rack under hay drop to right.
38. Filled eastern end of southern hay drop in stable (1a) above passage to tack room (1b) with truncated axial partition to left.
39. Ceiling at eastern end of secondary stall to south of stable (1a) showing truncated partition adjoining passage to tack room (1b).
40. Detail from east of ceiling in southern stall of stable (1a) showing wattle-and-daub laid over joists with hay drop to left.
41. Detail of loft ladder to south of western door in stable (1a) with cow drinker and later boarded stall partition to left.
42. Detail from north of butt-purlin roof structure of hay loft above stable (1a) showing whitewash and re-used timber.
43. Southern interior of boarded gable partition with central hatch between lofts over stable (1a) and tack room (1b).
44. Eastern interior of roof structure of loft over stable (1a) showing lath-and-plaster beneath pantiles with northern gable to left.
45. Northern interior of tack room (1b) showing door to stable (1a) to right with harness hooks and diagonal stall rail & finial to left.
46. Internal north-western corner of tack room (1b) showing remaining harness and diagonal stall rail with finial to right.
47. Detail of carved oak finial and pegged stall rail in northern interior of tack room (1b).
48. Detail of harness and harness hooks to northern interior of tack room (1b).
49. Detail of harness hooks to northern interior of tack room (1b) seen from west.
50. Eastern interior of tack room (1b) showing missing door to farm entrance track with door to stable (1a) and lantern hanging to left.
51. Detail of hanging lantern to eastern interior of tack room (1b) showing doors to stable (1a) to left and exterior to right.
52. Southern interior of tack room (1b) showing bent-wood harness hook to left.
53. Detail of bent-wood harness hook and ceiling trap to loft in south eastern corner of tack room (1b).
54. Interior of tack room (1b) from east showing harness hooks to right and evidence of removed partition in ceiling to left.

55. Detail of original brick floor of tack room (1b) seen from eastern entrance.
56. Detail of leather harness in north-western corner of tack room (1b).
57. Roof structure of loft above tack room (1b) from west showing re-used butt-purlin with missing southern gable to right.
58. Interior from south-west of loft over tack room (1b) showing boarded partition with hatch to stable (1a) and continuation of roof.
59. Southern external gable of tack room (1b) from partly collapsed loose box (1c) showing eastern entrance to right.
60. Eastern interior of loose box (1b) showing part brick and part timber construction.
61. Brick southern internal gable of loose box (1c).
62. Western interior of partly collapsed loose box (1c) showing southern external gable of tack room (1b) to right.

Photographic Appendix 2 follows on pp. 13-19

Appendix 2 (pp. 13-19): Selected Printed Photographs



Illus. 1. The cement-rendered facade of the 17th century grade II-listed farmhouse (5) seen from The Street to the south, with the farm entrance to the left. Included for site context.



Illus. 2. A general view of the site from the north showing the derelict 19th century brick maltings (4) to the left, the grade II-listed farmhouse (5) in the centre and the timber-framed and weatherboarded stable (1) to the right.



Illus. 3. The farm entrance track from the south-west showing the stable (1) to the left and a 20th century Dutch barn in the rear.



Illus. 4. The eastern exterior of the stable range (1) showing the three entrance doors to the partly collapsed loose-box (1c) to the left, the tack room (1b) in the centre and the stable (1a) to right.



Illus. 5. The interior of the 20th century corrugated iron vehicle shelter (3) from the north showing the western exterior of the 19th century brick shelter-shed (2) to the left.



Illus. 6. The open-sided eastern exterior of the 19th century brick shelter-shed (2) from the 20th century covered yard showing its pantiled roof and renewed arcade posts.



Illus. 7. The interior of the 19th century brick shelter-shed (2) from the north showing its renewed cylindrical arcade posts to the left and the original softwood roof structure of clasped-purlins with nailed collars (typical of the latter part of the 19th century).



Illus. 8. The eastern interior of the stable (1a) showing the half-hung door to the farm entrance track with hay drops in the ceiling to both left and right (the mangers and racks removed). The boarded stall to the right is a later insertion and the floor is of 20th century concrete.



Illus. 9. The interior of the stable (1a) from the west showing the hay drop in the ceiling against the northern gable (clad in corrugated iron) to the left and the door to the farm track to the right.



Illus. 10. The brick-nogged southern interior of the stable (1a) showing the door to the tack room (1b) to left and the position of the missing trough and rack beneath the hay drop to the right.



Illus. 11. A detail from the east of the ceiling in the southern stall of the stable (1a), showing the wattle-and-daub laid over the joists (under the loft boards) with the hay drop to the left.



Illus. 12. The butt-purlin roof structure of the hay loft over the stable (1a) seen from the northern gable. The lath-and-plaster beneath the pantiles appears to be original but many timbers show evidence of re-use from older buildings. The hatch in the rear is an internal feature which opens onto the loft of the tack room (1b).



Illus. 13. The northern interior of the tack room (1b) showing the door to the stable (1a) to the right with the original 19th century ceiling of tall-sectioned joists sandwiched between wattle-and-daub above and thick lime plaster beneath. Note the wooden rail of harness hooks (with harness still attached) and the slope of a stall partition with a carved oak finial to the left.



Illus. 14. The eastern interior of the partly collapsed loose-box (1c) showing what appears to be a 19th century brick extension to the earlier timber-framed stable range to the left.