

**‘Barn’ & Coach House,  
Rushford Hall,  
Euston, Suffolk  
EUN 032**

**Historic Building Record**

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# **‘Barn’ and Coach House, Rushford Hall, Euston, Suffolk**

(TL 926 812)

## **Historic Building Record**

*This report provides a written and photographic record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a group of redundant flint-rubble buildings known for planning purposes as a barn and coach house in the curtilage of a listed building. It has been prepared to a brief written by Suffolk County Council’s Archaeological Service (Edward Martin, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009, ref. SpecHBR(EM)\_RushfordHall\_Euston\_09) and is intended to inform and accompany an application to St Edmundsbury Borough Council for conversion.*

### **Introduction**

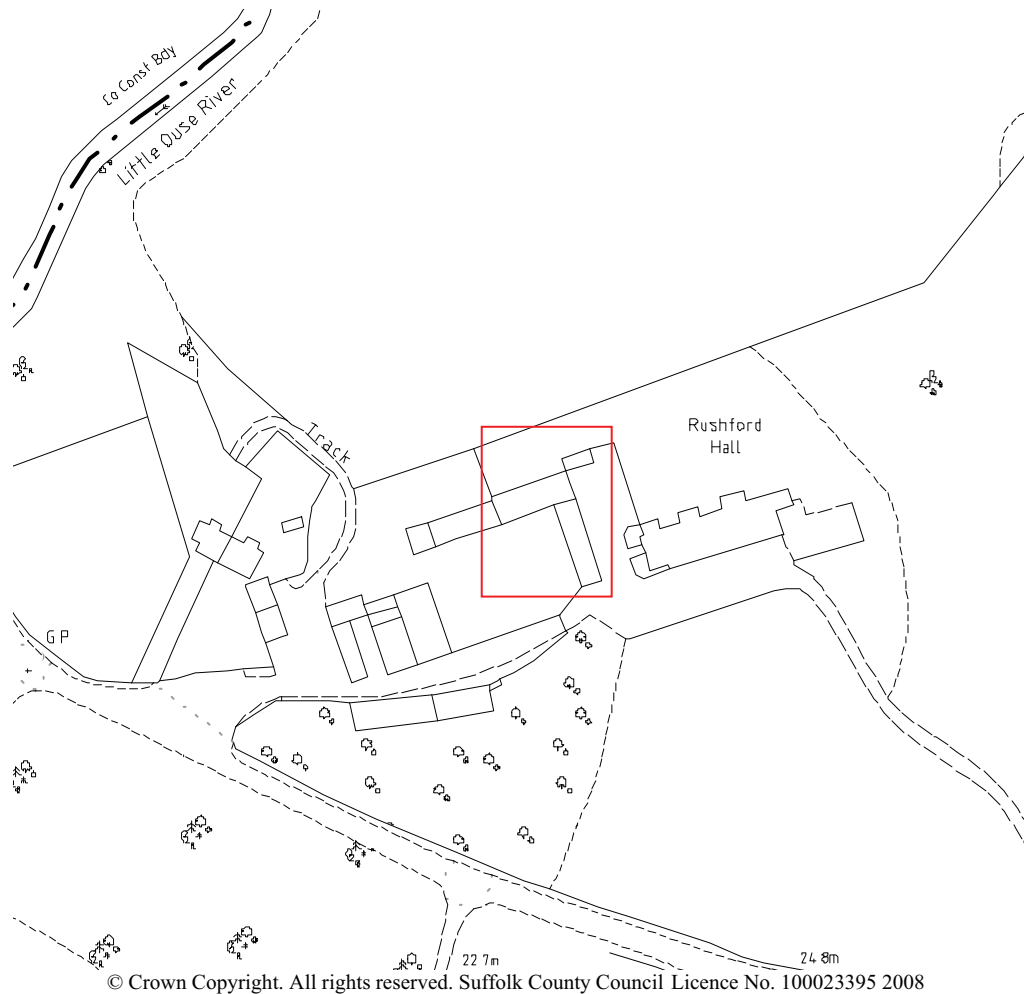
The report is accompanied by a CD containing a photographic record in the form of 72 digital images (Appendix 1), but also includes 10 printed photographs of key features to illustrate the text (Appendix 2). Each image is described in a separate schedule and wherever possible includes a scale rod with half-metre divisions in red and white. The site was inspected on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

### **Summary**

Rushford Hall is a substantial country house of rendered brick which is listed at grade II and described in the Schedule of Listed Buildings as an early-18<sup>th</sup> century former farmhouse considerably enlarged in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century. It was formerly known as Rushford Lodge, and formed the seat of Thomas Crookenden, Esquire, in the late-18<sup>th</sup> and early-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. White’s Suffolk Directory of 1891 refers to it as a tithe-free estate of about 1,200 acres. The site lies in Euston parish approximately 75 metres south of the Little Ouse River, which here forms the boundary between Norfolk and Suffolk, but until 1894 formed part of the Norfolk parish of Rushford.

The ‘barn’ is a two-storied flint-rubble and pantiled structure with brick dressing that formed a riding stable and coach house flanking the entrance to the house. It adjoins a larger clay-lump stable that probably accommodated working horses on the west. The flint stable is an early-19<sup>th</sup> century building with gault brick dressing to its doors, windows and corners, while the smaller coach house to the east represents a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century extension with dressing of red-brick. The stable’s original roof of staggered butt-purlins has been largely rebuilt, and the position of its loft door was moved when the coach house was added, but its wall fabric and general appearance remains largely unaltered. The coach house was converted into a game larder with an internal copper during the late-19<sup>th</sup> or early-20<sup>th</sup> century, and a contemporary single storied range of loose boxes and feed sheds to the east of the stable yard was extensively altered during its 20<sup>th</sup> century converted into a garage (or coach house) and kennel.

The stable range is of considerable historic importance to the landscape setting and social context of the fine 18<sup>th</sup> century ‘gentry’ house. The buildings’ form and fabric are typical of the area, with a picturesque mixture of glazed pantiles, flint rubble, brick dressing and louvered windows. Given the loss of a lean-to tack room from the northern elevation and the extent of the alterations to the earliest roof, however, they probably fail to meet to the strict English Heritage criteria for listing in their own right.



**Figure 1**  
**Current Ordnance Survey Site Plan**  
**Outlining the flint outbuildings in red and showing their proximity to Rushford Hall**  
**and the Little Ouse which forms the boundary between Suffolk and Norfolk.**

## **Historic Context: Documentary & Cartographic Record**

Rushford Hall lies in open arable countryside approximately 75 metres south of the Little Ouse River, which here defines the boundary between Norfolk and Suffolk, but until 1894 formed part of the Norfolk parish of Rushford. Rushford church and village are just 250 metres distant on the northern bank of the river, but the site now belongs to the Suffolk parish of Euston 3.5 km to the south-west. White's Suffolk Directory of 1844 has an entry for Rushford but notes that of its 2,100 acres of land and 172 inhabitants about 1,000 acres forming the Rushford Lodge Estate and 34 inhabitants are in Suffolk. Rushford Hall is clearly marked as 'The Lodge' on 19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> century maps. White also notes that Rushford parish church was appropriated to a College founded by Sir Edward Gonville in 1362 for a master and six priests; the Ordnance Surveys mark the site of this college on the northern bank of the river 100 metres north-east of Rushford Hall (its remains were incorporated into the Rectory). Rushford Lodge is a substantial country house of rendered brick which is listed at grade II and described in the Schedule as an early-18<sup>th</sup> century former farmhouse considerably enlarged in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century. It contains numerous features imported from elsewhere, including a 17<sup>th</sup> century staircase and 16<sup>th</sup> century panelling, and its porch is an addition of 1983. It formed the seat of Thomas Crookenden Esquire in the early-19<sup>th</sup> century, who sold the estate 'some years ago' to Sir Robert Buxton of Shadwell Lodge 1.75 km to the north (White's). By 1844 it was occupied as a tenanted farm by Robert Ringer.

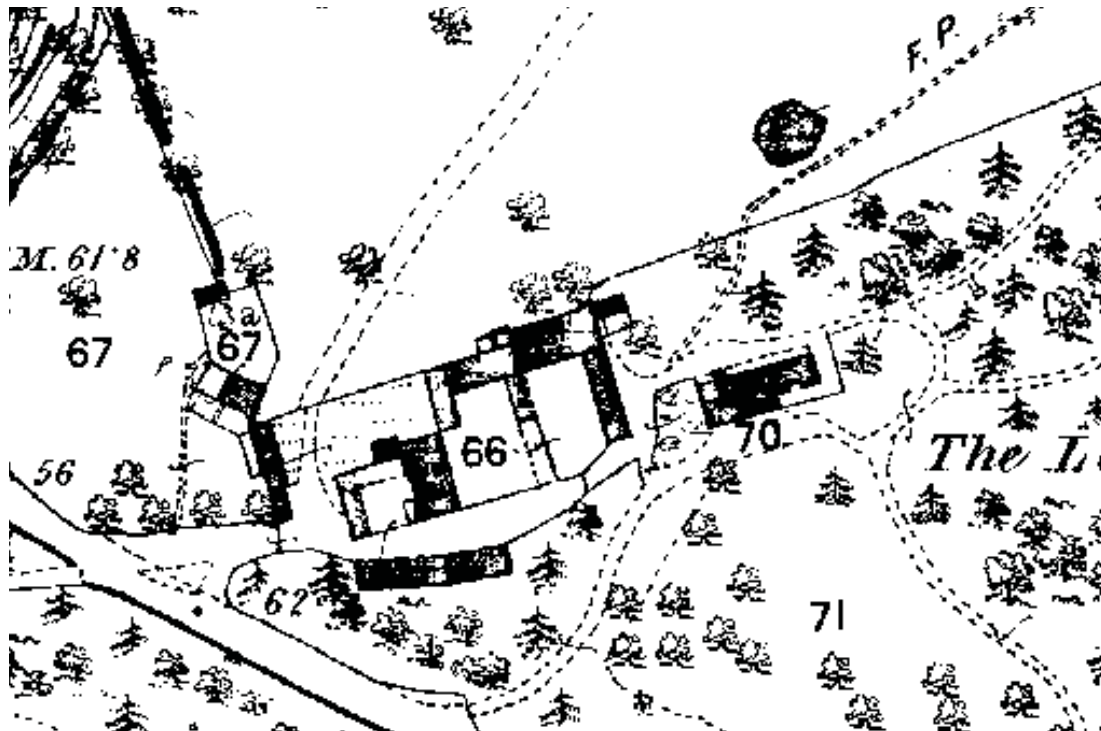


Figure 2

First edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1883 showing Rushford Hall as 'The Lodge'. The outbuildings are depicted much as they still survive, but the greater width of the two-storied northern range (1 & 2) suggests it was abutted by a northern lean-to. The southern stable yard is sub-divided by a range of shelter sheds of which no trace now remains.

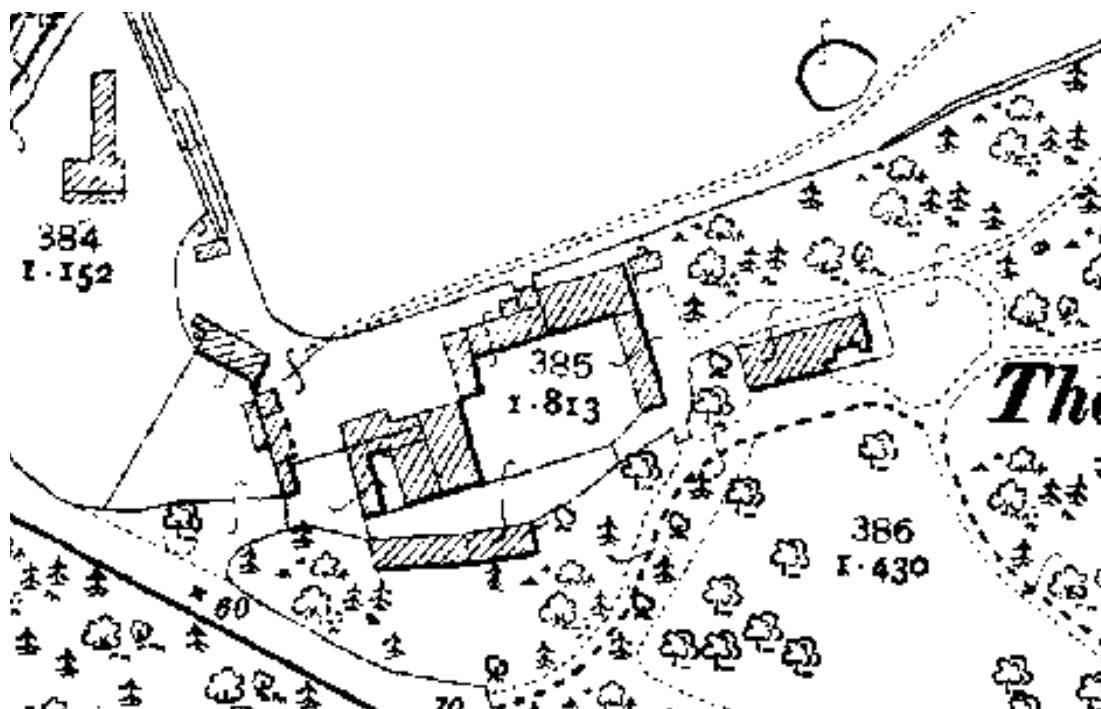


Figure 3

Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1905, showing a single stable yard (the shelter shed having been demolished) but otherwise little had changed since 1883.

White's Directory of 1891 offers dramatically different figures for the parish, with 6,118 acres in total and 1,495 on the south side of the river. Rushford Lodge was described as a tithe-free manorial estate of about 1,200 acres and the home of William Frederick King. The area does not appear on the tithe map of Euston parish, and the Norfolk Record Office appears not to possess a tithe map for Rushford (ref. David Gill, Archaeology Unit). The earliest available plan of the site is the 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1883 (figure 2) which shows the layout of the house and outbuildings much as they remain today. The former stable yard to the north of the drive was sub-divided by a narrow range of shelter sheds that had disappeared by the Second Edition of 1905 (figure 3) and the width of the two-storied flint sheds (1 and 2 in figure 4) suggests they were adjoined by a rear (northern) lean-to of which evidence still survives. It is not clear from these maps that its 20<sup>th</sup> century extensions 'have virtually doubled the house in size' as stated in the Schedule of Listed Buildings.

## Building Analysis

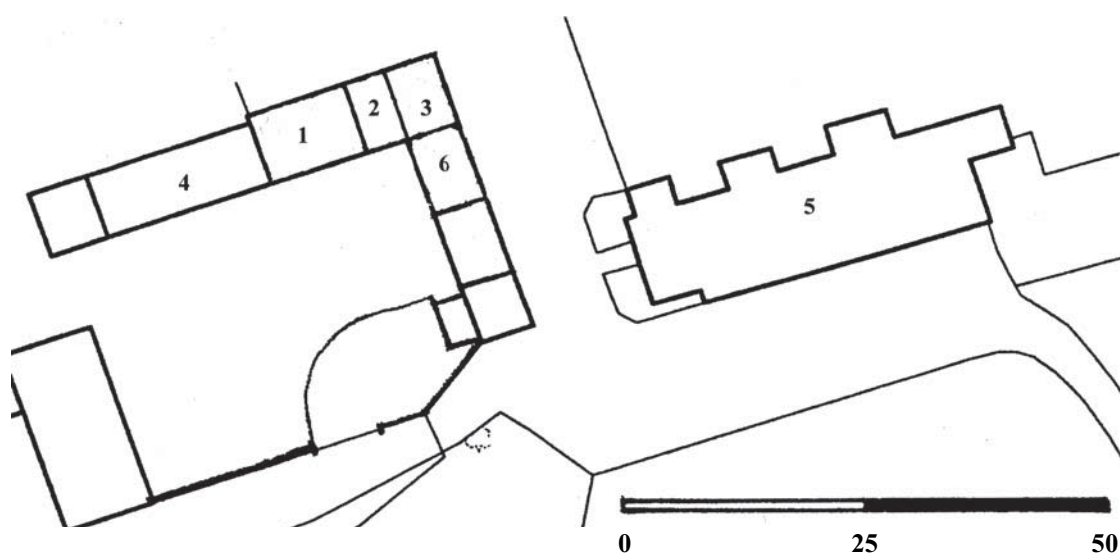


Figure 4

**Block Plan of site, identifying each building unit with a number for ease of reference in the text and photographic record. Scale in metres.**

### Key

**1** Early-19<sup>th</sup> century stable and hay loft of flint rubble with gault-brick dressing. Central door flanked by windows to southern stable yard with blocked door to demolished lean-to tack room against rear (northern) elevation. Remains of hay rack to western gable but otherwise stripped of historic fixtures and fittings. Deal roof of staggered butt-purlins largely rebuilt.

**2** Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century coach house and loft with wide arched entrance to south. Flint rubble with red-brick dressing. Converted into a game larder with a hot-water copper in late-19<sup>th</sup> or early-20<sup>th</sup> century. Built as an extension to the early-19<sup>th</sup> century stable (1) and now with integral roof of glazed pantiles. Originally with two rear doors opening onto a demolished lean-to shed, both now blocked and converted into windows. A clock bell with cast date 1831 projects from the southern elevation.

**3** Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century single-storied flint rubble shed with pantiled roof. Probably designed as a tack room and retaining some early-20<sup>th</sup> century harness hooks, but

**mutilated in 20<sup>th</sup> century by removing the southern half of its eastern elevation and converting its northern half into a kennel.**

**4 Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century clay lump and pantiled stable and hay loft, recently converted and outside the area of the current survey. Ground floor not inspected internally.**

**5 Rushford Hall. Formerly Rushford Lodge. Much enlarged 18<sup>th</sup> century grade II-listed house of rendered brick. Not inspected internally.**

**6 Mid-19<sup>th</sup> century single-storied flint rubble shed with pantiled roof. Now used as a coach house or garage with inserted 20<sup>th</sup> century double doors to east (replacing at least one door of standard proportions). Blocked door to stable yard to west. Probably designed as a loose box or feed store. The remaining section of the same range terminates in a two-storied structure with a turret clock (possibly a granary) but has been converted to domestic use and was not inspected.**

*N.B. The outbuildings lie to the north and east of a walled former stable yard adjoining the northern side of the hall drive. The western side of the same yard is formed by the estate office which probably represents a converted barn. The eastern range is a single-storied pantiled structure of flint rubble that has been much altered and partly converted to domestic use and is not discussed further below.*

### **1. Early-19<sup>th</sup> Century Stable**

The principal two-storied outbuilding at Rushford hall is a flint-rubble structure with brick dressings on an east-west axis to the north of a former stable yard. Its roof of glazed pantiles with a hipped eastern gable creates the appearance of a single building, but the walls contain a straight joint and the range was clearly built in two phases. The earlier of the two structures lies to the west and extends to 9.3 m in length by 6.7 m in overall width (30.5 ft by 22 ft) with rubble walls of 40 cm in thickness (16 ins) and gault (white) brick dressing to its corners, doors and windows. Its walls rise to 4 m at its roof-plates (13 ft) and it contains a loft of 1.7 m in height (68 ins) with a ground-floor ceiling of rendered tall-sectioned joists. The roof structure has been largely rebuilt in several phases but retains a narrow section of original staggered butt-purlins. Its relatively steep pitch suggests it may have been thatched initially. These various features suggest a date in the early-19<sup>th</sup> century or possibly the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The ground floor is entered by a central door flanked by louvered windows to the southern yard. A blocked rear door immediately opposite (now a window) opened onto a lean-to shed that probably operated as a tack room and the diagonal strut of a hay rack against the western gable still survives at the end of the southern internal elevation. The render and part of the western gable of the demolished lean-to also survive against the northern external elevation, and the historic Ordnance Surveys suggest a lean-to continued to the north-eastern corner of the complex. This layout is typical of stables in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when horses were often stalled against both gables rather than the rear wall (as was more usual in earlier examples). A number of horizontal wooden struts against the western gable may relate to a manger or shelf, but no other fixtures or fittings remain. The internal walls are painted in green with a dark band at a height of 1.5 m to imitate wainscot boarding.

The hay loft above the ground-floor stable is now reached by an external loading door at the eastern end of the southern elevation, but this appears to have originated as a window and the original door lay to the west of the same façade (and was later converted into a window). These alterations probably occurred when the coach house extension was built in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. There is evidence of a boarded partition between the central tie-beam of the loft, and

this too may be an addition of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The western gable adjoins a clay-lump stable range of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century but appears to retain part of a well-finished red-brick wall that may relate to an earlier building on the site; the roof scar of a slightly narrower structure can still be seen. The two lofts are now linked by a secondary door. A dentil cornice extends along the northern and southern elevations, and returns along the former eastern gable which was presumably hipped (now visible from the loft of the coach house extension).

## **2. Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century Former Coach House**

The eastern section of the two-storied range is a matching extension of 5.2 m in length (17 ft) with dressing of red brick as opposed to the gault brick of its earlier neighbour. A wide brick arch above the present southern entrance suggests it was designed as a coach house, but it appears to have been converted into a game store during the late-19<sup>th</sup> or early-20<sup>th</sup> century. Nails were hammered into the sides of its tall-sectioned ceiling joists to serve as hooks and a copper with an internal chimney (now truncated at eaves-level) was built in the centre of its rear (northern) elevation. There is no other evidence to suggest the building was used as a wash house or brew house, which seems unlikely given its distance from the house, and the hot water may have been required to de-feather and prepare game for the kitchen. The copper tub has been removed but its brick base and grate remain. A pair of rear doorways on both sides of this feature presumably opened into the missing lean-to shed mentioned above, but has since been converted into windows. A yard bell which projects from the junction between the two phases is cast with the date 1831 and may commemorate the construction of the coach house, but a date in the 1850s or 1860s is more probable. Its fabric appears integral with the much altered single-storied range to the east of the yard.

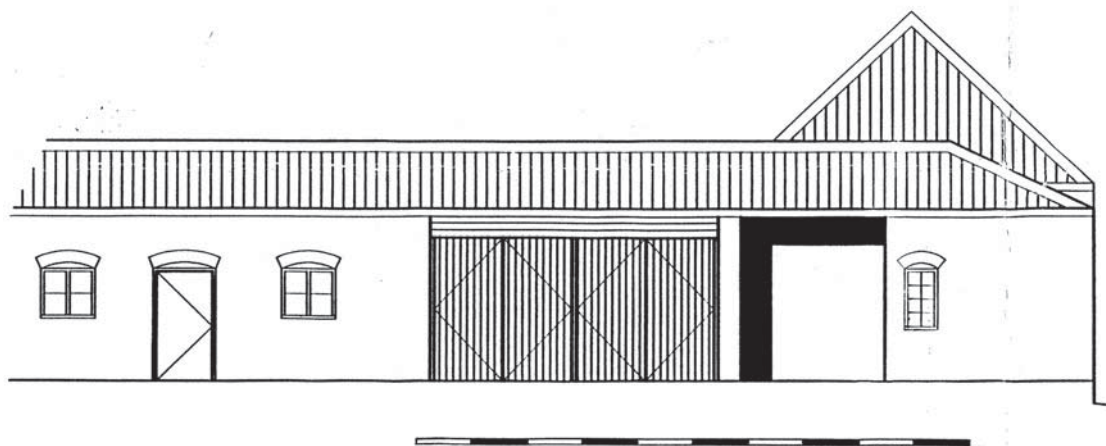
### **Historic Significance**

Despite its alterations the 19<sup>th</sup> century stable range at Rushford Hall is of considerable importance to the landscape setting and historic context of the fine 18th century 'gentry' house. The scale and proximity of the buildings to the drive suggest they were designed for riding horses and vehicles rather than agricultural animals, which were presumably accommodated in the much larger clay-lump stable (thirty or more would be required on an estate of 1200 acres). The buildings' form and fabric are typical of the area, with a picturesque mixture of glazed pantiles, flint rubble and brick dressings. Despite this historic interest, however, the extent of the repairs to the original roof structure and the loss of the northern lean-to sheds are probably too great for the range to meet the strict English Heritage criteria for listing in its own right.





**Figure 5**  
**External northern (top) and southern elevations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century stable and former coach house (scale in metres, omitting brick dressing). Drawn by Brown & Co. of Norwich. The arch of the coach house door is shown to the right. The left door was moved from the left-hand window to the centre of the new range in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century when the early-19<sup>th</sup> century stable was extended.**



**Figure 6**  
**Eastern external elevation showing the modern garage doors in the centre and the kennel to the right (the original window was bisected by the new entrance outlined in black).**



## **Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record**

### **Descriptions of Photographs in Appendix 1**

#### **Photograph no.**

1. General view site entrance from west showing stable (1) to left and hall in rear to right.
2. General view of yard entrance from south-west showing stable (1) to left and hall to right.
3. General view from south-east showing coach house (6) to right & site entrance to left.
4. General view of site from east showing yard entrance to right & estate office in rear.
5. General view of site from south showing hall to right and yard complex to left.
6. General view of site from south showing Rushford Hall with coach house (6) to left.
7. Southern facade of Rushford Hall (included for site context).
8. Northern rear elevation of Rushford Hall (included for site context).
9. General view from north showing coach house (6) to right and hall to left.
10. General view of yard complex from north-east showing stable (1) to right.
11. General view of yard from west showing stable (1) to left and Rushford Hall in rear to right.
12. Northern range of yard from south showing clay lump stable (4) left and flint stable (1) right.
13. Rear (northern) exterior of clay lump stable (4).
14. Hay loft of mid-19th century clay lump stable (4) from east.
15. Eastern end of northern internal elevation of hay loft (4) showing clay lump fabric.
16. Southern exterior of flint stable and coach house (1 & 2) showing clay lump stable (6) to left.
17. Northern exterior of flint stable and coach house (1 & 2) showing demolished tack room to right.
18. Remains of demolished tack room to rear (north) of stable (1) from north-east.
19. Blocked tack room door in rear (northern) exterior of flint stable (1).

20. Detail of junction between flint stable (1) and coach house (2) in northern exterior.
21. Detail of louvered loft window in northern exterior of flint coach house (2).
22. Detail of blocked western door to northern exterior of coach house (2).
23. Detail of blocked western door to northern exterior of coach house (2).
24. Northern exterior of flint stable and coach house (1 & 2) showing clay lump stable (4) right.
25. Detail of southern exterior of flint stable (1) showing blocked loft door to left.
26. Detail of southern exterior of flint stable (1) showing loft door to right.
27. Detail of external loft door to stable (1) - converted from original window.
28. Southern exterior of coach house (2) showing arch of blocked original vehicle entrance.
29. Detail of 1831 cast date to bell on southern exterior of stable (1).
30. North-eastern internal corner of stable (1) showing painted wainscot.
31. Southern internal elevation of stable (1) showing yard door and windows.
32. Interior of stable (1) from east showing yard window to left.
33. Interior of stable (1) from west showing yard door to right.
34. Detail from north-east of manger and hay rack struts to western interior of stable (1).
35. Southern interior of stable (1) showing central yard door flanked by windows.
36. Internal detail of louvered window to stable (1).
37. Detail of tall-sectioned ceiling joists in stable (1).
38. Northern interior of stable (1) showing manger struts and position of tack room door to right.
39. Interior of stable loft (1) showing western gable with later door to clay lump loft (4).
40. Interior of stable loft (1) from east.
41. Detail from south of fragmentary original staggered butt-purlin roof to stable (1).
42. Northern interior of stable loft (1) from south-west, showing remains of central partition.
43. South-western internal corner of stable loft (1) showing blocked external loading door to left.

44. Interior of stable loft (1) from west showing later door to coach house loft (2).
45. Internal south-eastern corner of stable loft (1) showing existing external door.
46. Brick external gable of stable (1) from loft of clay lump stable (4).
47. Brick external gable of stable (1) from loft of clay lump stable (6).
48. Flint rubble external western roof gable of stable (1) from adjoining loft (6).
49. Scar of earlier roof against western external gable of stable (1) from adjoining loft (6).
50. Eastern external gable of stable (1) from adjoining loft (2) showing dentil cornice.
51. Eastern external gable of stable (1) showing dentil cornice and later door to adjoining loft (2).
52. Northern interior of coach house (2) showing later copper between blocked original doors.
53. Detail of blocked door in northern interior of coach house (2).
54. Detail of louvered secondary window to east of northern elevation of coach house (2).
55. Eastern interior of coach house (2) from south-west.
56. Eastern interior of coach house (2) from north-west.
57. Southern interior of coach house (2) showing later yard door.
58. Detail from north of ceiling in coach house (2) showing game hanging nails.
59. Detail of copper against northern interior of coach house (2).
60. Detail of tall-sectioned ceiling joists of coach house (2).
61. Eastern interior of coach house loft (2) showing northern elevation to left.
62. Southern interior of coach house loft (2) showing yard window.
63. Northern interior of coach house loft (2) showing secondary copper chimney.
64. Detail of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century pencil portrait to internal jamb of stable door (1).
65. Eastern exterior of modern coach house (6) and shed (3) showing converted shed to left.
66. Eastern exterior of shed (3) showing secondary doorway and kennel.
67. Interior of kennel from east showing wooden harness hooks of former tack room.

68. Northern interior of kennel showing harness hooks.
69. Western exterior of modern coach house (6) showing blocked door to stable yard.
70. Eastern interior of modern coach house (6) showing vehicle doors.
71. Western interior of coach house (6).
72. Northern interior of modern coach house (6) showing vehicle doors to right.

## Appendix 2 (pp. 13-17): Selected Printed Photographs



A2.1 General view of site from south showing façade of Rushford Hall with modern coach house (6) and hipped gable of earlier coach house (2) visible to left



A2.2 General view of former stable yard from west showing from left to right: clay-lump mid-19<sup>th</sup> century stable, early-19<sup>th</sup> century flint rubble stable with later coach house to right (1 & 2), single-storied modern coach house (6), converted single-storied shed and probable granary (with turret clock), Rushford Hall (in rear) and yard wall to north of drive.



A2.3 Southern exterior of flint stable (1 to left) and later coach house subsequently converted into a game store (2 to right). Note blocked arched doorway of coach house and original first-floor loading door of stable to extreme left.



A2.4 Detail of clock bell with cast date 1831 to southern elevation of stable (1) and coach house (2).





A2.5 General view of former stable yard from west showing from left to right: converted single-storied shed and probable granary (with turret clock), single-storied modern coach house (6), single-storied tack room now converted into kennel (at corner), early-19<sup>th</sup> century flint rubble stable with later coach house to left (1 & 2) – showing remains of lean-to rack room to right – and clay-lump mid-19<sup>th</sup> century stable to extreme right.



A2.6 Southern interior of stable (1) showing central yard door flanked by windows and showing diagonal strut of former hay rack against western elevation to right.



A2.7 Interior of stable loft (1) from east showing central tie-beam with remains of lateral partition and fragment of original roof structure of staggered butt-purlins to right. The secondary door in the western gable opened onto the loft above the clay-lump stable (4).



A2.8 Interior of stable loft (1) from west showing later door to coach house loft (2) and external loading door to right. The eastern gable shows a section of clay-lump repair to the left.



A2.9 Northern interior of coach house (2) showing later copper between blocked original doors (now converted into windows).



A2.10 Northern interior of coach house loft (2) showing original window and secondary chimney of copper with dentil cornice of original external gable to stable (1) to left.