

**Fox & Goose Cottages,
Tostock (Elmswell Parish),
Suffolk
EWL 027**

Historic Building Record

OASIS ID: Suffolkc1-82367



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on behalf of
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service

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(TL 968 938)

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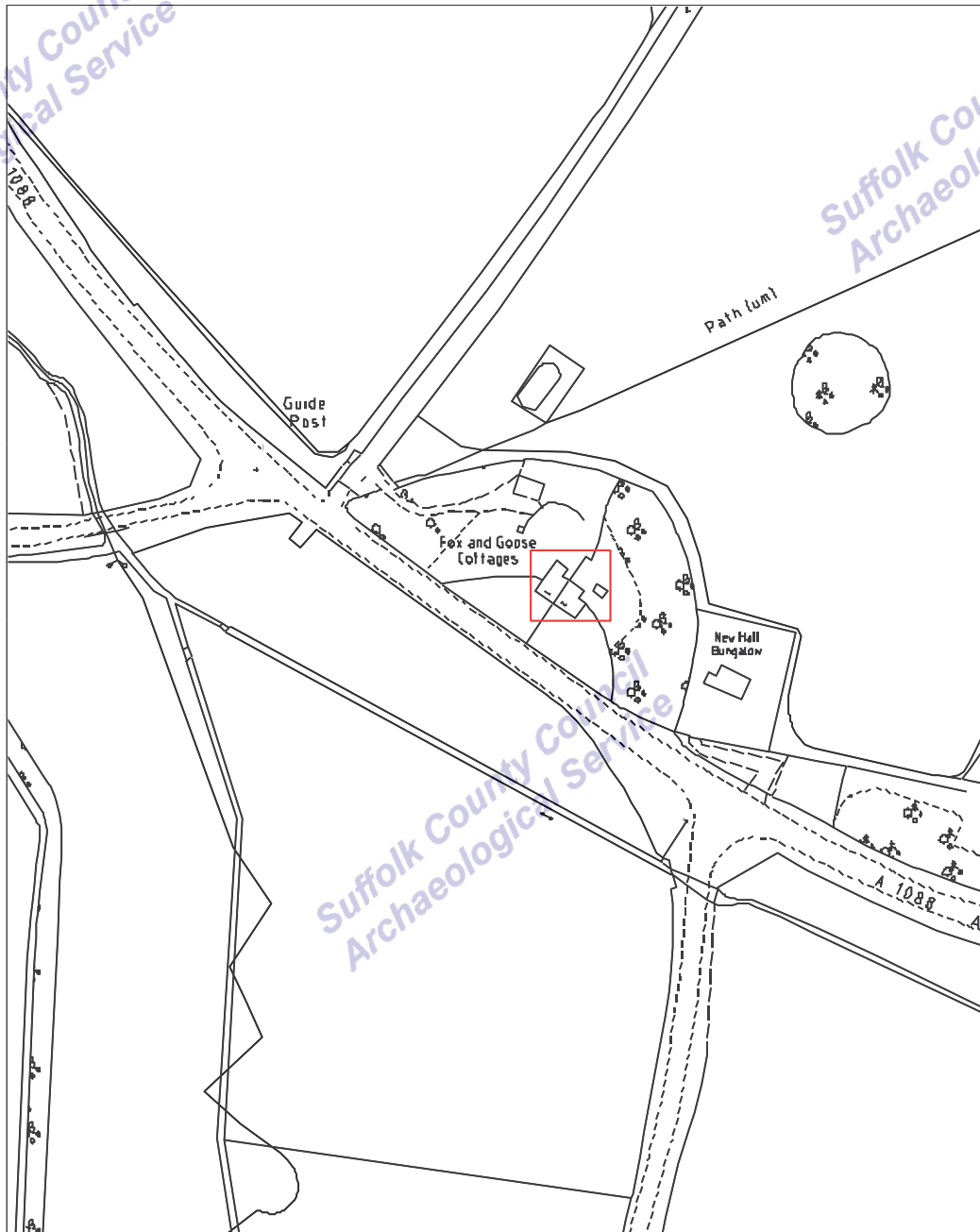
This report provides a written and photographic record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a pair of semi-detached cottages that were formerly listed at grade III. It has been prepared to a brief written by Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (Edward Martin, 14th July 2010, ref. SpecHAA(EM)_Fox&Goose_Elmswell_0545_10), and is intended to inform and accompany a planning application for demolition to Mid Suffolk District Council (application 0545/10).

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. The site was inspected on 5th August 2010.

Summary

Fox & Goose Cottages adjoin the northern side of the A1088 at the south-western edge of Elmswell parish, but their modern postal address places them in Tostock. The building was divided into a pair of cottages during the mid-19th century, but it was formerly the farmhouse of a substantial holding of at least 112 acres. The Elmswell enclosure map of 1814 shows it with much the same outline as today in the corner of a substantial complex of farm buildings and labels the site 'Fox and Goose Farm'. The outbuildings were demolished a few years later when new yards and a brick farmhouse known as Elmswell New Hall was built some 300 metres to the north-east (now the home of Elmswell Park Stud). The tithe map of 1843 shows the old farmhouse isolated behind a newly-planted screen of trees, much as it still remains, but by 1886 it had been sub-divided into tenements of which one operated as the Fox & Goose Public House. The building is a typical timber-framed and rendered farmhouse of the early-17th century with a hall of three bays to the east of a large axial chimney (no. 2) and a parlour of two bays to the west (no. 1). The 17th century 'lobby entrance' still opens onto the latter's newel stair but in other respects the internal layout has been altered by modern partitions. Much of the historic fabric is hidden on the ground storey, where 17th century fireplaces probably survive behind their 19th and 20th century successors, but more is visible on the first floor. The oak frame is of high quality, with tall-sectioned ceiling joists and deeply chamfered principals with elegant 'lamb's tongue' stops. The frame contains interesting evidence of a major mid-17th century remodelling which saw the raising of the external walls by 1.3 metres (4.5 ft) above their original height to increase headroom on the upper storey. At 6.4 metres in overall width the farmhouse is of Yeoman quality and remains largely intact despite an unsympathetic restoration in recent years which included the introduction of PVC doors and windows. Several internal doors of the 17th and 18th centuries remain *in situ*, and the render is likely to conceal additional contemporary fabric and possibly importance evidence of painted decoration. The early-17th century building is not currently listed, probably as previous inspectors were unable to gain access to the first floor, but it retains more of its historic integrity and framing than many listed buildings in the area and undoubtedly merits inclusion in the Schedule at grade II.



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Figure 1 Current Ordnance Survey Site Plan.

Enclosing the cottages and detached brick shed in red and showing the A1088 between Ixworth and Woolpit from left to right. The cottages are reached from the north-west by a track branching from the drive of Elmswell Park Stud

Historic Context: Documentary & Cartographic Record

Fox and Goose Cottages occupy a rural location adjoining the northern side of the A1088 between Woolpit on the A14 to the south-east and Ixworth on the A134 to the north-west. The site is approximately equidistant from Elmswell and Tostock parish churches to the east and west respectively, and lies in the south-western corner of Elmswell parish, but its modern postal address places it in Tostock. The cottages were formerly listed at grade III and are approached by a track which branches from the private drive of Elmswell New Hall, which is a grade II-listed building of the early-19th century 300 m to the north (now the home of 'Elmswell Park Stud').

The cottages stand alone in their gardens with no outbuildings of any age apart from a small gault-brick shed to the rear of no. 2 to the east which bears the incised date 1875 with the initials E.S.O. and C.S. (or possibly G.S.). The Elmswell enclosure map of 1814, however, shows the building in the south-western corner of a large farm complex with what appears to be a substantial barn to the east and five other outbuildings to the north (figure 2). It and the surrounding land belonged to 'S. Chinery and S. Sparke' and New Hall Farm was conspicuous by its absence.



Figure 2

The Cottages as depicted on the 1814 Elmswell enclosure map when they formed a farmhouse in the south-western corner of a large farm yard known as Fox and Goose Farm. The L-shaped profile of the building is largely unchanged, with a narrow shed projecting from the western end of its northern elevation.

The situation had changed dramatically by the time of the Elmswell tithe survey in 1843 (figure 2). The farm was owned by Sarah Spark and extended to 112 acres in the parish with (probably) more extending into Tostock and Norton – a substantial holding for the period. The old farmhouse (i.e. Fox & Goose Cottage) had been stripped of its farm buildings and replaced by a new house and yard at Elmswell New Hall. Sarah Spark was not in residence, and the land was leased to John Howlett while the 'mansion and pleasure grounds' were occupied separately by Mary Browne (whose address was given as 'New Building' in White's Suffolk Directory of 1844). The new farm buildings behind the mansion formed part of Howlett's farm, as did the old farmhouse which was described as a 'house, garden and plantation'. There is no indication that it was either sub-divided or used as an alehouse, but these changes had occurred by 1884 when the western half of the building (ostensibly) was labelled 'Fox and Goose' on the first edition Ordnance Survey and the internal partition was clearly shown (figure 4). A similar situation existed in 1904 (figure 3). Many new public houses were established during the mid-19th century and often consisted of no more than small cottages in this manner. The original building, however, is a typical farmhouse of the early-17th century that would have been entirely appropriate to a holding of 112 acres or more: it was converted into cottages only after its replacement with a new farmhouse in *circa* 1820. Many similar new farmhouses were erected in Suffolk at the same period as local farmers benefitted from the high cereal prices during and immediately after the Napoleonic wars (which restricted grain imports from the continent). Few farms were established on entirely new sites during the 17th century, however, and it is likely that the site occupies that of a medieval predecessor.



Figure 3

The Elmswell tithe map of 1843, showing the new farmhouse to the right (i.e. Elmswell New Hall) and the old house (Fox & Goose Cottages) now devoid of its farm buildings to the left. The direction of north lies towards the top right-hand corner. The curved feature to the rear of the house was a new plantation designed (presumably) to screen the old house from the new.

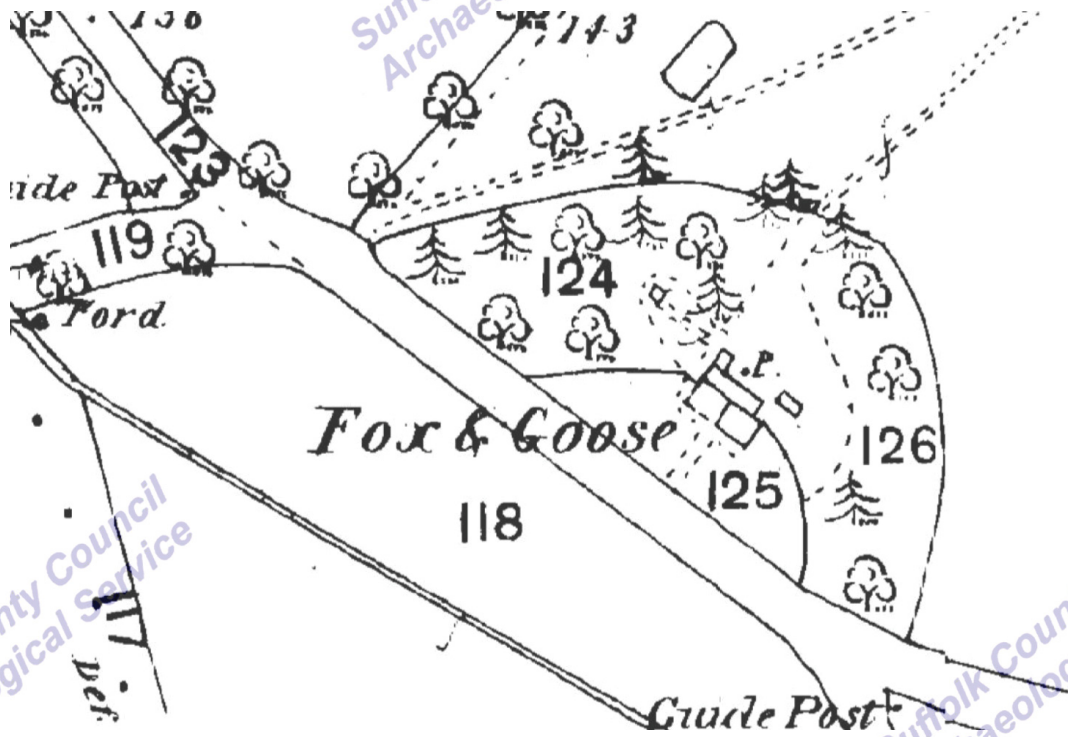


Figure 4

First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1884, showing the same building outline as today with the main house divided into a pair of cottages (one of which had become the Fox and Goose public house) and the single-storied extensions to the rear. The detached shed behind no. 2 to the right is also shown.

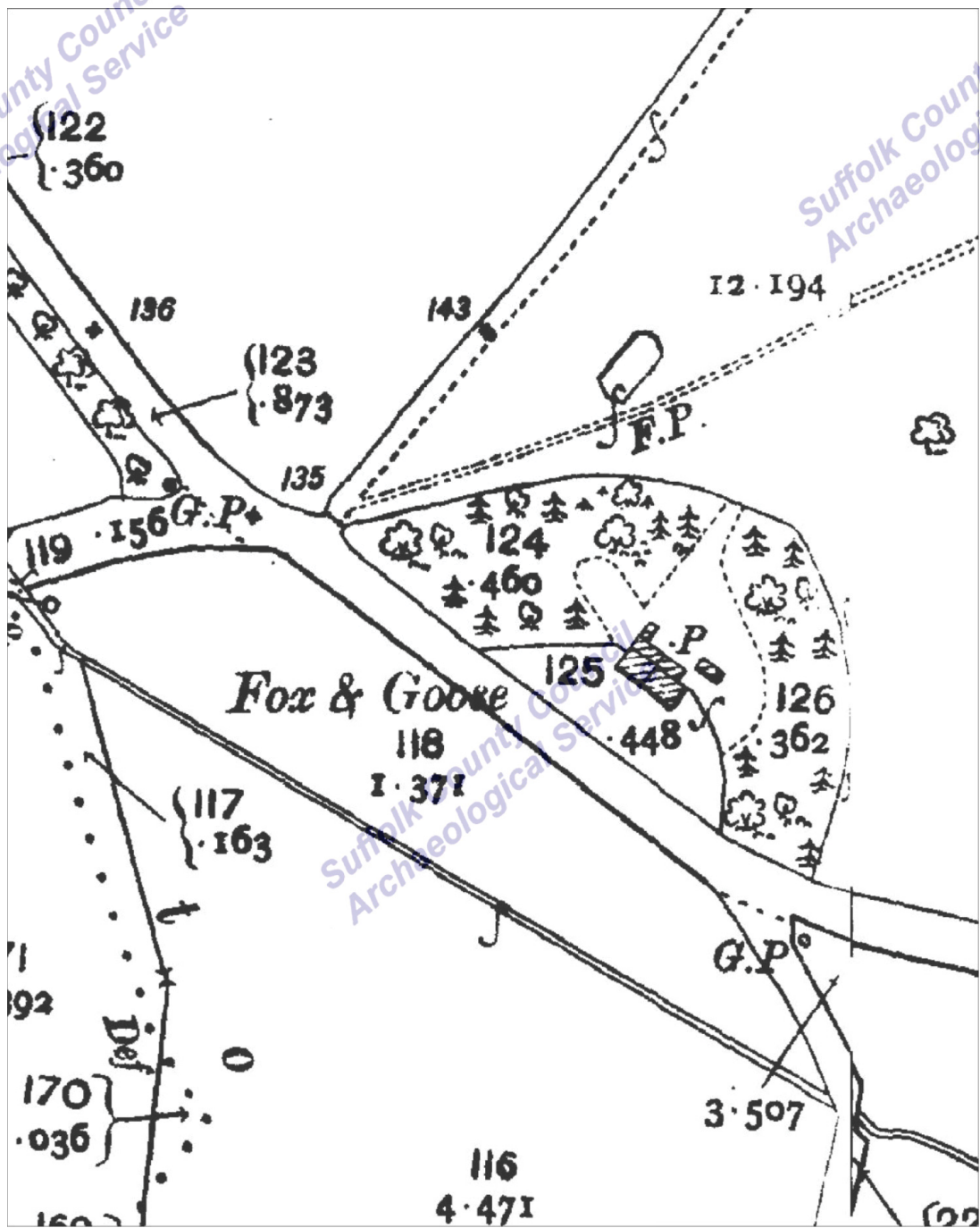
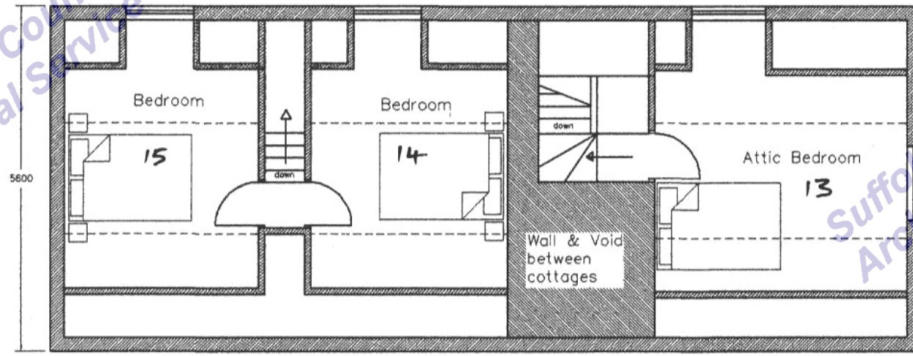
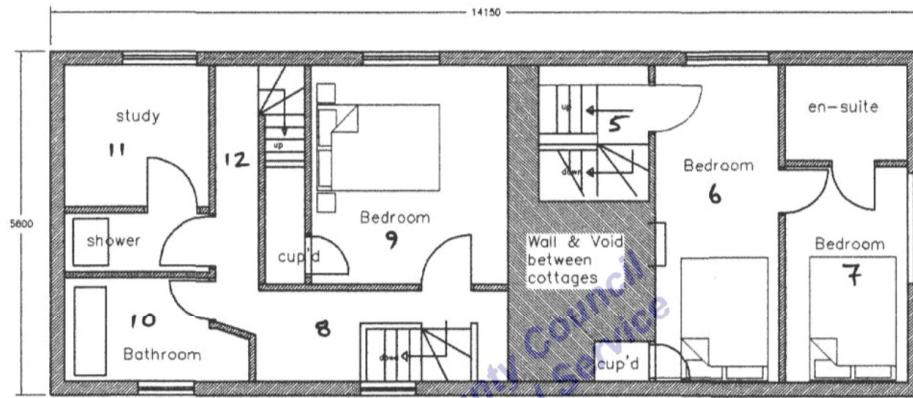


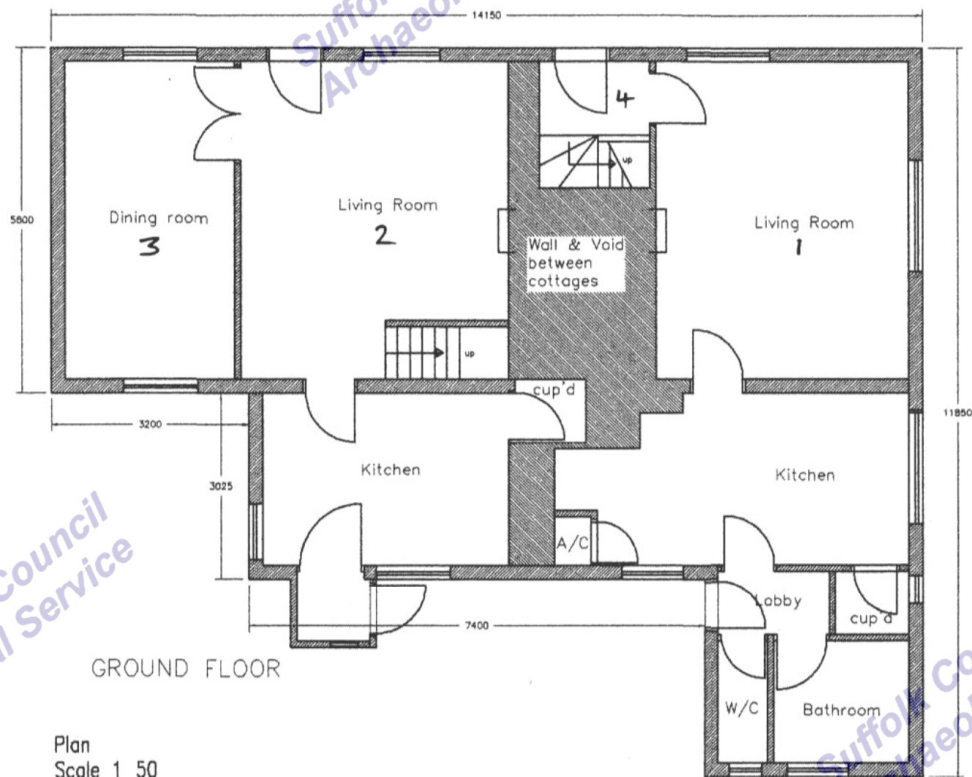
Figure 5
Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1904, showing no change since 1884



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

Plan
Scale 1:50

Figure 6
Modern plans of the cottages identifying each area in the 17th century front range with a number for ease of reference in the text and photographic record. From a survey by KWA Architects (1:50 scale void).

Building Analysis

Original Proportions and Layout

Nos. 1 & 2 Fox & Goose Cottages were built as a single timber-framed domestic house during the first quarter of the 17th century. The externally rendered and plain-tiled structure extends to 6.4 m in overall width (excluding its brick rear additions) by 13.7 m in length (21 ft by 45 ft) and reflects the standard internal layout of its period with a three-bay hall of 7.3 m in internal length to the east and a smaller two-bay parlour of 4 m to the west (24 ft and 13 ft respectively). The two rooms are separated by a large brick chimney in a dedicated bay of 1.8 m (6 ft), making six bays in all, with a lobby entrance and newel stair to the front (south) of the chimney. The timber frame is almost entirely hidden by modern render on the lower storey but the exposed binding joists of its ceiling are neatly chamfered with curled 'lamb's tongue' stops of typical 17th century form. The exposed side of the western binding joist in the hall reveals the joints of a pair of tall-sectioned common joists with incised Roman carpenters' numerals; these were removed to accommodate the present staircase of no.2 (presumably when the house was subdivided in the mid-19th century) but probably remain intact elsewhere. The fabric of the ground-floor walls is hidden by modern render but areas of wattle-and-daub are understood to have been exposed during recent investigations and the original structure may survive largely intact. The three fireplaces in the chimney (in the hall, parlour and parlour chamber) date only from the 19th and 20th centuries but the extensive voids shown on the ground plans (figure 6) suggest that larger 17th century fireplaces survive within.

Heightening of Walls

The internal framing of the upper storey is largely exposed, particularly in the hall chamber (no. 2) and reveals evidence of a significant heightening of the walls in the mid-17th century. The original roof-plate (which supported the rafters) lies 3 m (10 ft) above the present internal floor (and 66 cms or 26 ins above the ceiling) and belonged to a 1½ storey building with its first floor contained partly within the slope of its roof. The current roof-plate lies 1.3 m (4.5 ft) above its predecessor and the walls were raised to increase headroom by the simple expedient of adding short additional posts and studs above the original plate. The high quality of the secondary carpentry, with shaped jowls to the posts and lamb's tongue stops throughout, suggests this occurred within a relatively short period: given the presence of face-halved scarf joints (rarely used before 1600) and tall-sectioned joists the original house can be dated to *circa* 1620 while the 'lift' is unlikely to have occurred later than 1650. Both plates incorporate well-made face-halved scarfs and several internally trenched braces are visible in the upper walls. It became increasingly fashionable to sleep upstairs as the 17th century progressed and many local houses were raised in much the same way. The chimney was probably rebuilt at the same time.

Survival of Original Fabric

Accurate analysis of the building's early-17th century layout and subsequent development is hampered by the extent to which the ground-floor framing is concealed. The eastern gable appears to have been more extensively altered when the walls were raised in the mid-17th century, with the north-eastern corner post entirely replaced, and the house may have lost a service bay. (Early-17th century halls were usually flanked by a parlour on one side and service or storage room on the other, while the services were increasingly removed to rear wings or lean-to sheds during the mid-17th century.) Recent investigations of the walls are understood to have revealed wattle-and-daub and studwork, suggesting that evidence of original features such as doors, windows and painted decoration may lie hidden behind the render. The present front doors and windows are of late-20th century PVC but in all other

respects the building retains its historic profile and integrity with a number of good 17th and 18th century internal fittings such as doors and hinges. The clasped-purlin roof structure is largely concealed but also appears to be contemporary with the mid-17th century remodelling, although the presence of a ridge-board (exposed in a narrow attic void at the roof apex) suggests the common rafters may have been re-laid in the 19th century. Fragments of panelled roughcast parge to the rear elevation are also consistent with a 17th century date, although it too may well have been renewed in the 19th century. The brick lean-to against the rear elevation is a mid-19th century addition that probably replaced the rear projection shown to the west on the enclosure and tithe maps.

Historic Significance

The building known as Fox & Goose Cottages is a timber-framed farmhouse of the early-17th century which contains historically interesting evidence of a major mid-17th century refurbishment. Despite an unsympathetic restoration during the late-20th century, which saw the introduction of a number of internal partitions and PVC doors and windows, its historic fabric and integrity remain largely intact. Much of this fabric is hidden on the lower storey, which may explain why the building has been omitted in error from the Schedule of Listed Buildings, but the fireplaces of the 17th century chimney and important evidence of original painted decoration is likely to survive behind the render. Many less complete and more recent houses in the region are currently listed, and in my view the property undoubtedly meets the English Heritage criteria for listing in its own right at grade II.

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Descriptions of Photographs in Appendix 1

Photograph no.

1. General view of site from A1088 to south-west showing Cottages to left.
2. Southern exterior showing no. 1 to left and no. 2 to right.
3. General view of site from garden of no. 2 to south-east showing eastern gable.
4. General view of site from garden of no. 1 to south-west showing western gable.
5. Southern exterior from garden of no. 1 showing entrance to no. 1 to left.
6. External detail of PVC entrance door in southern facade of no. 1.
7. Northern external rear elevation from garden of no. 2.
8. General view of site from garden of no. 2 to north showing brick shed to left.
9. Exterior from north-west showing rear lean-to extensions to no. 1.
10. Exterior from north-east showing brick shed in garden of no. 2 to right.
11. Western external gable of brick shed in rear garden of no. 2 showing date above entrance.
12. Detail of date and initials above western entrance of shed in garden of no. 2 CS 1875.
13. Detail of rear exterior of no. 2 showing panelled roughcast pargeting.
14. Internal southern elevation of living room of no. 1 (1) showing exposed binding joist.
15. Internal western gable of living room of no. 1 (1).
16. Living room of no. 1 (1) from west showing fireplace with door to lobby entrance to right.
17. Northern interior of living room of no. 1 (1) showing door to kitchen extension.
18. Detail of lamb's tongue chamfer stop to southern end of binding joist in living room of no. 1 (1).
19. Entrance lobby (4) of no. 1 from west showing blocked door to no. 2 with stair to left & external door right.
20. 17th century door to cupboard under stair of no. 1 (4) seen from east.
21. Detail of 17th century moulded plank door and hinge to under-stair cupboard of no. 1 (4).

22. Interior from west of entrance lobby of no. 1 (4) showing stair opposite external door.
23. Newel stair (5) from upper storey of no. 1 seen from west.
24. Stair landing of no. 1 (5) from west showing door to attic stair.
25. Southern interior of stair landing in no. 1 (5) showing original roof-plate below jowled posts of raised wall.
26. Bedroom (6) on upper storey of no. 1 from south showing 19th century fireplace with modern partition under tie-beam to left.
27. Bedroom (6) on upper storey of no. 1 from north showing modern partition under tie-beam to right.
28. Detail from north of lamb's tongue chamfer stops of jowl and tie-beam on first floor of no. 1 (6).
29. 19th century fireplace in first floor bedroom of no. 1 (6).
30. Detail of strap hinge to door of first-floor cupboard behind chimney in no. 1 (6).
31. Detail of Suffolk latch to 18th century panelled door to bedroom of no. 1 (6).
32. Detail of 18th century HL hinge to bedroom door of no. 1 (6).
33. 18th century panelled door to bedroom of no. 1 (6).
34. Interior from south of western half of bedroom in no. 1 (7).
35. Interior from north of western half of bedroom in no. 1 (7).
36. Attic bedroom (13) in no. 1 seen from east.
37. Attic bedroom (13) in no. 1 seen from western gable.
38. Apex of roof structure of no. 1 seen from trap door adjoining western gable.
39. Detail of western gable in roof of no. 1 showing clasped purlin and fragment of wattle-and-daub.
40. Living room of no 2 from east showing 20th century fireplace and chamfered binding joist (2).
41. Living room of no. 2 from west (2) showing partition to eastern dining room (3).
42. Detail from east of lamb's tongue chamfer stop to binding joist of no. 2 living room (2).
43. Living room of no. 2 from south (2) showing binding joist with door to northern kitchen extension.
44. Living room of no. 2 from north (2) showing binding joist with fireplace to right.

45. Dining room of no. 2 from north (3) showing eastern gable to left and chamfered binding joist right.
46. Dining room of no. 2 from south (3) showing eastern gable to right.
47. Stair of no. 2 rising from living room (2) as seen from east.
48. Detail from west of binding joist above stair in no. 2 showing carpenters' numerals and tall-sectioned common joist mortises.
49. Stair landing (8) of no. 2 from west showing original roof-plate below with raised wall above.
50. Stair landing (8) of no. 2 from west showing extension above original storey post.
51. Detail from west of joint between original jowled storey post and extension on stair landing of no. 2 (8).
52. Stair landing (8) of no. 2 showing mid-17th century lift of rear northern wall to right & chimney cupboard in rear.
53. Detail of 17th century moulded plank door to chimney cupboard at western end of stair landing in no. 2 (8).
54. Detail of 17th century strap hinge to chimney cupboard door on stair landing of no. 2 (8).
55. Southern interior of western bedroom (9) in no. 2 showing secondary wall above original roof-plate.
56. Detail of face-halved and bladed scarf joint in original (lower) southern roof plate of no. 2 (9).
57. Detail of finely shaped jowl of upper storey post in southern elevation of no. 2 (9).
58. Detail of junction between upper and lower storey posts of southern interior of no. 2 (9).
59. Western bedroom of no. 2 from south (9) showing access from stair landing (8).
60. Western bedroom of no. 2 from east (9) showing southern exterior to right.
61. Detail of face-halved and bladed scarf joint of upper roof plate on stair landing of no 2 (8).
62. Detail of face-halved and bladed scarf joint in lower roof plate on stair landing of no. 2 (8).
63. North-eastern internal corner of no. 2 showing renewed 17th century corner post (10).
64. Detail of renewed full-height north-eastern corner post spanning both building phases (10).

65. Jowled upper storey post of northern interior within bathroom of no. 2 (10), seen from east.
66. Detail of south-eastern internal corner in cupboard of study (11) showing interrupted corner post.
67. Detail of shaped upper storey post to front interior of study (11) seen from north-east.
68. Passage to attic stair of no. 2 (12) showing two roof-plates of front elevation.
69. Southern interior from attic stair of no. 2 showing trenched brace of upper wall.
70. Western attic bedroom of no. 2 seen from east and showing dormer window to left (14).
71. Eastern attic bedroom of no. 2 from west showing contours of gable studs in render (15).
72. Apex of roof structure of no. 2 from east showing chimney in rear.

Photographic Appendix follows on pp. 13-17

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



Illus. 1. General view of site from A1088 to south-west showing Cottages to left.



Illus. 2. Southern exterior showing no. 1 to left and no. 2 to right (the 17th century parlour and hall bays respectively).



Illus. 3. Northern external rear elevation from garden of no. 2 showing panelled roughcast pargeting with 20th century lean-to kitchen extensions and detached brick shed dated 1875 to left.



Illus. 4. Living room of no 2 from east showing 20th century fireplace and chamfered binding joist (2) spanning width of 17th century hall. Much of the 17th century fabric, including an 'inglenook' fireplace, is hidden behind modern render.

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Illus. 5. Detail from west of chamfered binding joist above stair in living room of no. 2 showing carpenters' numerals and the mortises of the tall-sectioned common joists that were removed to accommodate the stair. The original joists probably survive elsewhere but are hidden by render.

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Illus. 6. Southern interior of western bedroom (9) in no. 2 showing the original roof-plate below the window with the mid-17th century heightening of the wall above.



Illus. 7. Detail of finely shaped and chamfered jowl of upper storey post in southern elevation of no. 2 (9). This structure was added to the original house in the mid-17th century to increase its height.



Illus. 8. Stair landing of no. 1 (5) from west showing door to attic stair with blocked access door to no. 2 in centre. The original roof-plate is visible to the right with the contours of the studs and brace of the second-phase wall visible in the render above.

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Illus. 9. Detail of 17th century moulded plank door and hinge to under-stair cupboard in lobby entrance of no. 1 (4).



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Illus. 10. Stair landing (8) of no. 2 from west showing original rear (northern) roof-plate below with raised wall above. The former has been cut to insert an external loading door of a kind often found in 18th and 19th century farmhouses.