

**Outbuilding at
Wood Farm,
Gipping, Suffolk
GPP 009**

Historic Building Record

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Outbuilding at Wood Farm, Back Lane, Gipping, Suffolk

(TM 0815 6228)

Historic Building Record

This report provides a written and photographic record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of an outbuilding in the curtilage of a grade II-listed former farmhouse. It has been prepared to a specification written by Edward Martin of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (ref. SpecHBR&Mon(EM)_WoodFm_Gipping_1256_07, dated 27th January 2011) and is intended to fulfil a condition of planning permission for demolition (Mid Suffolk District Council application consent 1256/07, condition 2).

Introduction

The report is accompanied by a CD containing a photographic record in the form of 39 digital images of 21 megapixels (Appendix 1), but also includes 12 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 3rd February 2011.

Summary

Wood Farm lies in open countryside on the northern side of Back Lane, approximately 2 km south-east of St Nicholas's chapel and the adjacent site of Gipping Hall. It occupies the crest of a ridge above a tributary valley of the River Gipping and commands fine views of the eponymous Gipping Great Wood to the north-west. An unusual linear pond divides the site from the adjoining pasture in the same direction and may represent the remains of a medieval moat, but is not shown on the tithe map of 1846 and its origins are uncertain. The timber-framed and rendered farmhouse is listed at grade II and dated in the Schedule to the mid-16th century. Its conspicuous location is typical of 16th century park lodges but by 1846 the farm was a modest holding of 46 acres on the Gipping estate belonging to Charles Tyrell of Polstead Hall (Gipping Hall then serving as his 'sporting seat' before its eventual demolition in *circa* 1860). The outbuilding which flanks the entrance to the farmhouse is a small, single-storied clay-lump structure with a pantiled roof which dates from the third quarter of the 19th century. It appears on the Ordnance Survey of 1886 but not the tithe map. The interior retains its original partitions and contains a central vehicle shed flanked on the west by a small storage shed and a 'double-seater' privy (with two circular apertures in its damaged seat-board), and on the east by a larger storage shed lit by a gable window. The privy contains a lath-and-plaster ceiling that is probably original and its internal walls are whitewashed, while those of the smaller storage shed and the vehicle shed are rendered with clay daub. The interior of the eastern shed, in contrast, is not rendered and its clay blocks are exposed to view, suggesting that it was originally boarded and may have formed a tack room alongside the vehicle shed. The clay render of the external walls has been replaced by cement, leading to water penetration and some decay, and the rear wall of the vehicle shed was removed entirely when a corrugated iron lean-to extension was added in the mid-20th century. In most respects the structure forms a typical service outbuilding of the mid-19th century, although the location of the privy to the front rather than the rear of the house is unusual (but readily explained by the presence of the linear pond). While it represents a good example of an increasingly rare form, the building is not of sufficient age or architectural merit to justify listing in its own right.

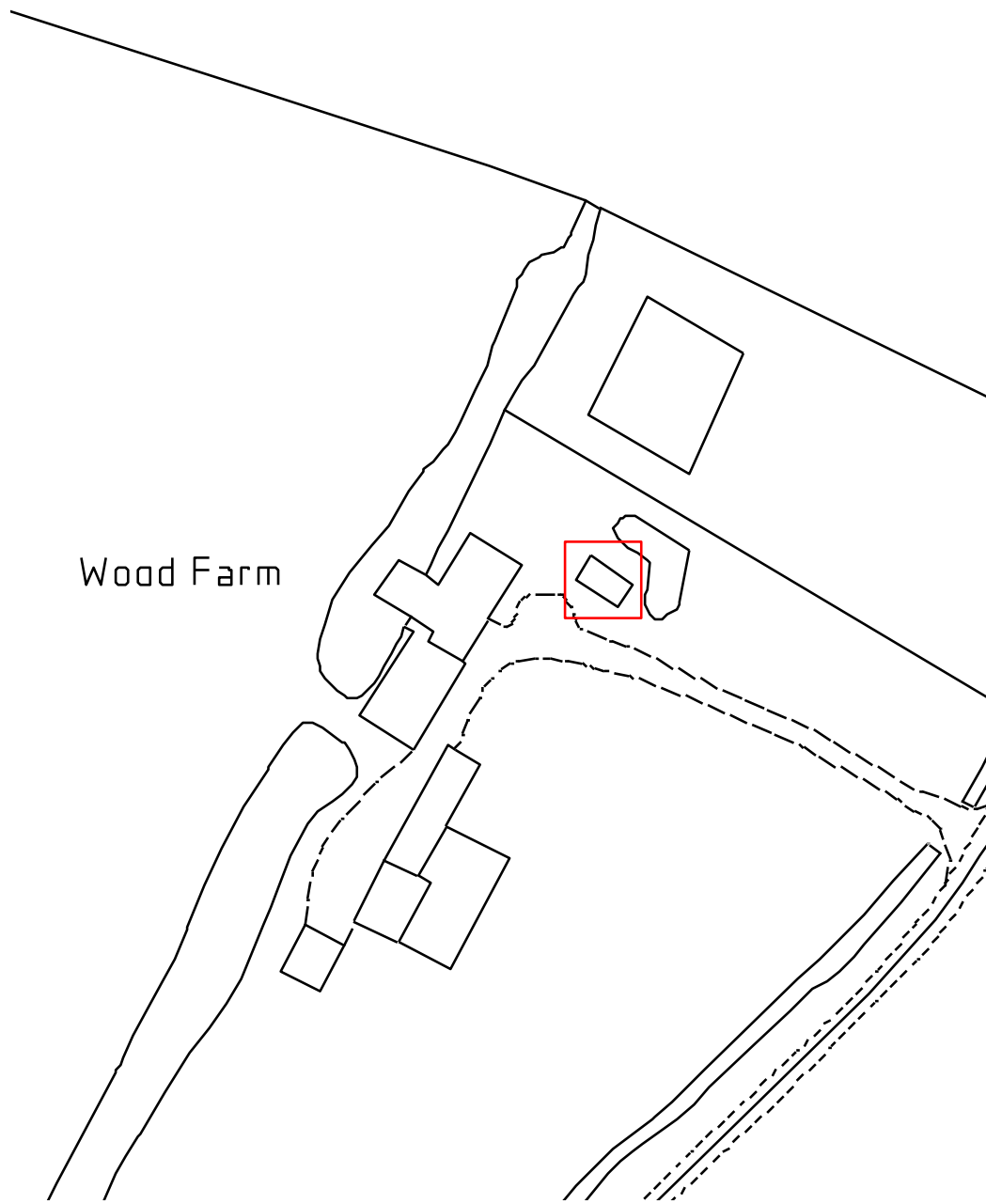


Figure 1
Current Ordnance Survey Site Plan
Enclosing the clay-lump outbuilding in a red square and showing the grade II-listed former farmhouse immediately to the west and the agricultural buildings to the south-west. The recently completely ‘barn’ adjoining these buildings is not indicated.

Historic Context: Documentary & Cartographic Record

Wood Farm lies in open countryside on the northern side of Back Lane, approximately 2 km south-east of St Nicholas’s chapel and the adjacent site of Gipping Hall, which was demolished in *circa* 1860. It occupies the crest of a ridge above a tributary valley of the River Gipping and commands fine views of the eponymous Gipping Great Wood (an ancient woodland and SSSI) to the north-west. An unusual linear pond divides the site from the adjoining pasture in the same direction and may represent the remains of a medieval moat. The timber-framed and rendered farmhouse is listed at grade II and dated in the Schedule to



Figure 2.
The Gipping tithe map of 1846, showing Wood Farm to bottom centre with Gipping Hall and chapel top centre and the large, irregular outline of the eponymous Gipping Great Wood between the two sites.



Figure 2a.
Detail of the slightly damaged 1846 tithe map showing the rectangular farmhouse in red and what appears to be a barn with a central porch to the south. The clay-lump outbuilding had not yet appeared. The linear pond to the rear of the house is also conspicuous by its absence, although smaller ponds are depicted elsewhere on the map.

the mid-16th century but was not inspected internally for the purpose of this report. Its rear elevation abuts the linear pond, into which it has been recently extended. A group of former farm buildings to the south-west includes an ostensibly mid-19th century single-storied stable which has been newly converted but retains an original hay rack and brick manger. A new timber-framed extension designed to resemble a large weatherboarded barn now adjoins the stable and flanks the approach to the house on the south. The single-storied clay-lump outbuilding which forms the subject of this report lies on the opposite side of the same approach.

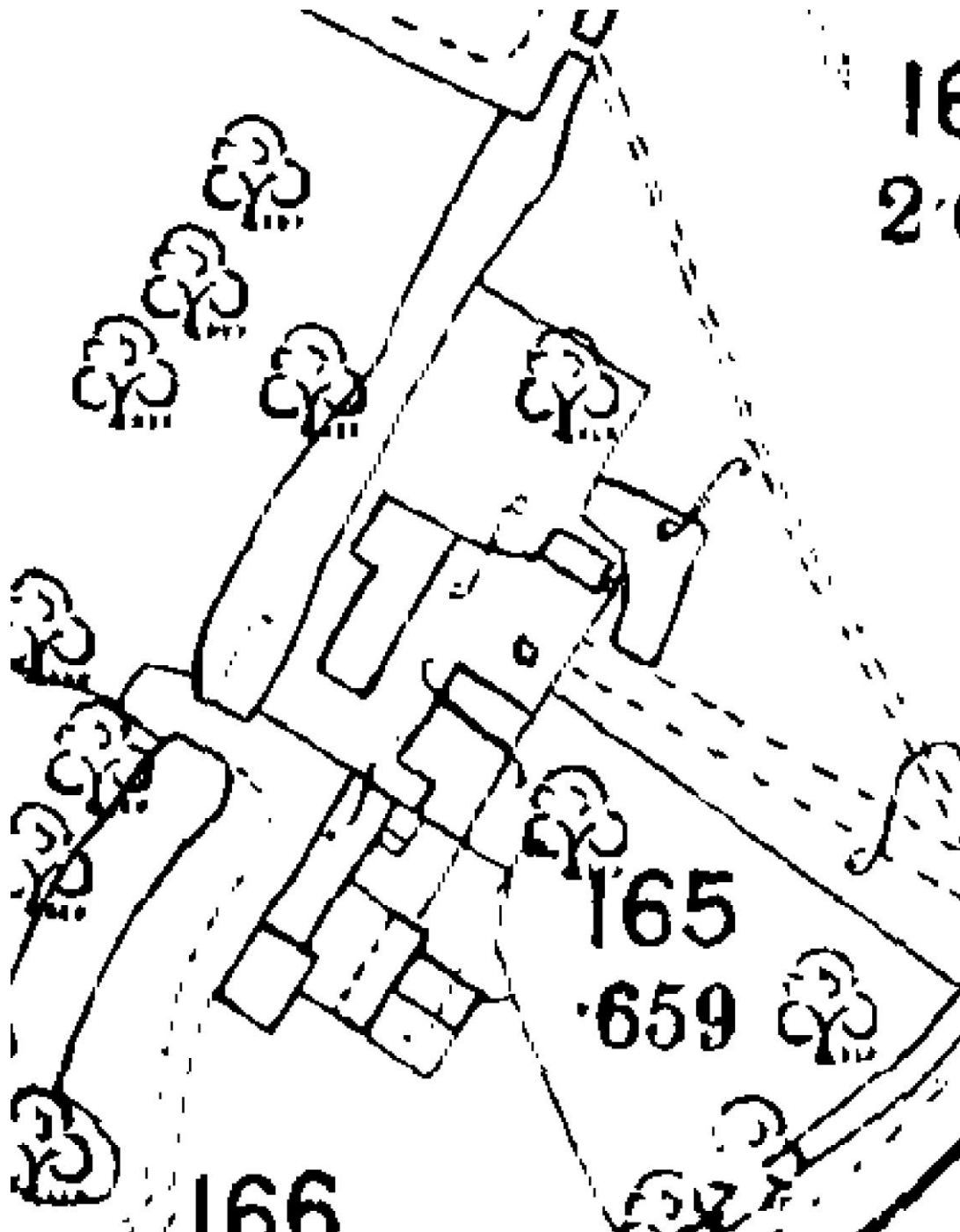


Figure 3.

Wood Farm on the First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1886, showing the linear pond and the present clay-lump outbuilding adjoining another L-shaped pond (the latter now indicated only by a declivity). The barn of 1846 had been replaced by a new complex of farm buildings which included the surviving stable.

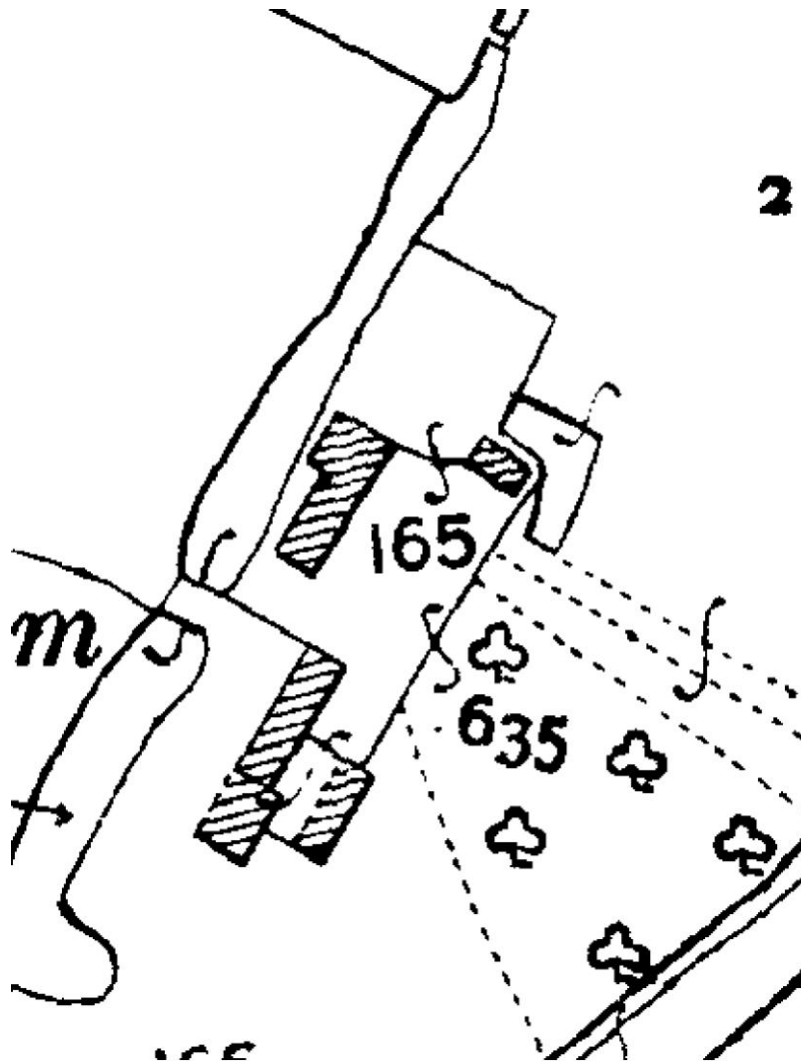


Figure 4

The Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1904, showing the clay-lump outbuilding and farmhouse as in 1886, but with a reduced farm complex to the south.

At the time of the Gipping tithe survey in 1846 Wood Farm was a modest tenanted holding of 46 acres on the Gipping Hall estate of Charles Tyrell Esquire, and was occupied by James Hunt. The site was described only as ‘homestead’ but the tithe map shows two buildings: the rectangular farmhouse in red and what appears to be a substantial parallel barn with a central porch to the south-east (figure 2). The clay-lump outbuilding and stable had not yet been built. Curiously, the linear pond is conspicuous by its absence, although smaller ponds are shown on neighbouring farms. There is no trace of anything resembling a moat. White’s Suffolk Directory of 1844 notes that Charles Tyrell resided at Polstead Hall and that Gipping Hall alongside the chapel was ‘a large, ancient brick mansion in a park of 60 acres ... now occupied only occasionally as a sporting seat’. By the edition of 1855 it was unoccupied and by that of 1874 had been demolished. The Tyrells had owned the manor since the Middle Ages and may well have used the Great Wood for hunting (medieval deer parks resembled woodlands rather than open pasture). Given Wood Farm’s dominant position in the landscape it may have been designed as a lodge from which the hunt could be observed, in which case the linear pond may have been intended as a boundary feature rather than an encircling moat.

The 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1886 (figure 3) illustrates a major mid-19th century transformation of the site, reflecting the standard development of local farms in response to

the new system of intensive, yard-based mixed animal husbandry now known as Victorian High Farming. The barn shown in 1846 had been replaced by a complex of smaller sheds and yards that includes the recently converted stable, and the clay-lump outbuilding had been erected on the opposite side of the approach to the house. Both developments were probably the work of Charles Tyrell Esquire, who was still recorded as the estate's owner by White's Directory of 1874, and his incised initial 'T' can still be seen on the stable's brick manger. The southern yard complex had been reduced in size by 1904 (figure 4) but the farmhouse and clay-lump outbuilding remained unaltered. The broad linear pond behind the house was shown in both 1886 and 1904, along with a small L-shaped pond immediately east of the outbuilding (now indicated only by a declivity in the lawn), but it is unclear whether these features had been dug since 1846 or were omitted in error from the ostensibly highly accurate tithe map.

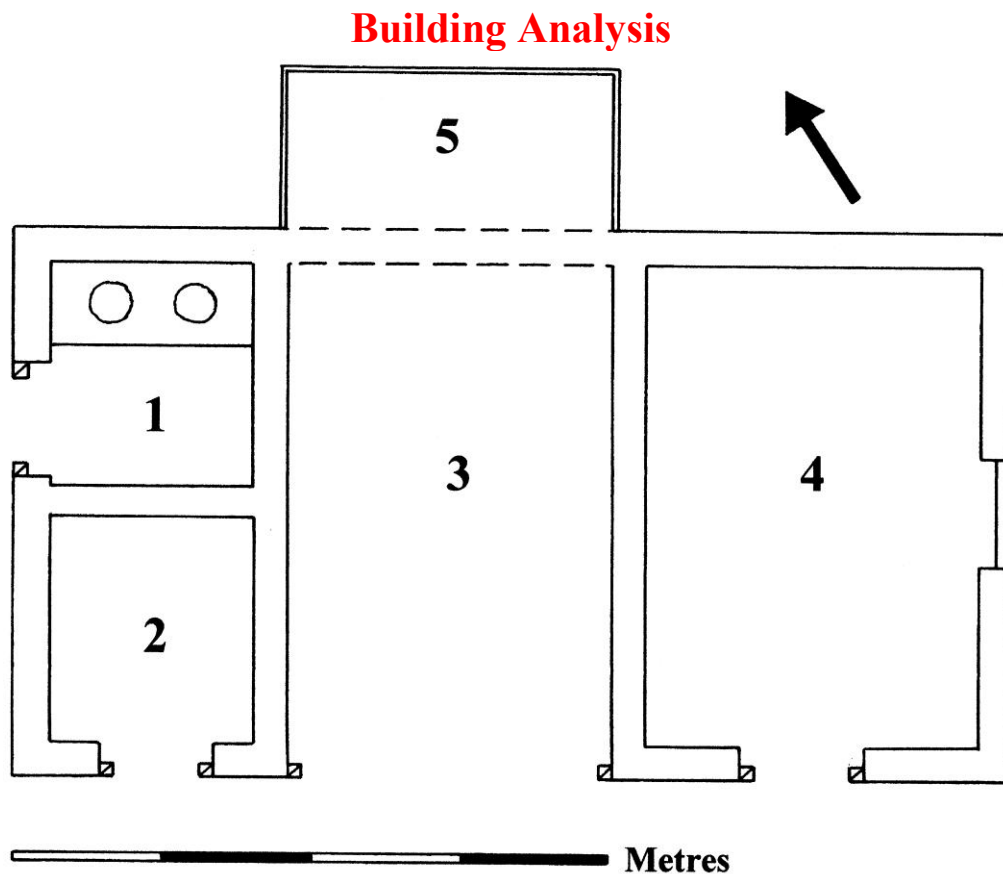


Figure 5
Block plan of the clay-lump outbuilding identifying each compartment with a number for ease of reference in the text and photographic record.

Key

- 1. Privy with remains of lath-and-plaster ceiling, internal whitewash and boarded seat pierced by two circular apertures of identical size.**
- 2. Small storage shed with clay-rendered internal walls.**
- 3. Vehicle shed with clay-rendered internal walls.**
- 4. Storage shed with un-rendered internal walls and gable window. Traces of coal.**
- 5. Mid-20th century lean-to extension of boarding and corrugated iron to vehicle shed (3).**

Proportions, Fabric and Date

The clay-lump outbuilding at Wood Farm lies 7.5 m (25 ft) east of the farmhouse, as indicated in figure 1, and flanks the approach to the site from Back Lane. It is a small, single-storied structure which extends to 6.7 m (22 ft) in length by 3.65 m (12 ft) in overall width and rises to only 1.7 m (5.5 ft) at its roof-plates. The walls consist of clay-lump, i.e. blocks of unfired clay laid in a clay-based mortar on a low brick plinth, with each individual clay block measuring approximately 48 cm in length by 15 cm in height and 23 cm in thickness (19 ins by 6 ins by 9 ins). The external walls are now largely rendered in 20th century cement with some reconstruction in brick, but would have been clay-rendered and probably lime-washed when first built. The shallow-pitched roof of red pantiles (with occasional glazed pantiles) rests on a clasped-purlin structure with nailed collars and a ridge-board which consists largely of roughly hewn pitch-pine. The floors are of beaten earth throughout. The nature of the roof and wall fabric is typical of the mid-19th century and is consistent with the appearance of the building on the Ordnance Survey of 1886 but not the tithe map of 1846. A date of *circa* 1860 is most likely.

Layout and Purpose

The interior is divided by clay-lump partitions into four original compartments as numbered in figure 5 with a secondary lean-to extension projecting from the rear (northern) elevation. The central compartment (3) was designed as a vehicle shed of 2.2 m (7 ft) in width for a small trap or cart as the double-doors in its southern elevation are original features (the doors themselves are 20th century replacements but the clay-lump partitions respect the opening and have not been truncated: the door jambs, like most of the timberwork elsewhere, contain irrelevant mortises and have been re-used from an older structure). The rear elevation of this shed was removed when the lean-to of boarding and corrugated iron (5) was added in the mid-20th century. The western end of the building is divided by an axial partition into two small sheds of which the rearmost, entered by a gable door in the direction of the farmhouse, contains a boarded two-seater privy (1). There is no evidence of an evacuation aperture in the northern elevation and the seat probably lifted to reveal twin buckets but has been badly damaged. The interior is whitewashed and provided with what may be an original lath-and-plaster ceiling. The whitewash preserves some graffiti including a series of parallel wavy lines that may be apotropaic (evil-averting) but this is not certain. The southern shed is entered by a door to the south and its original purpose is unclear: it probably operated as a wood shed or general store (2). Unlike the western sheds, the internal walls of the eastern shed (4), which also extends to 2.2 m in width and is lit by a gable window, are not rendered with clay and the individual blocks appear to have been exposed from the outset. They may have been protected by boarding which has since disappeared, but the narrow width of the original southern entrance (with just 66 cm or 26 ins between its jambs) seems insufficient to accommodate the trap horse that would normally be stalled in a boarded stable alongside a trap shed. The space may have served as a tack room for the adjacent trap or simply as general storage space, and was most recently used as a coal shed (as indicated by the presence of old coal at the time of inspection).

Historic Significance

The structure is a typical mid-19th century service outbuilding of the third quarter of the 19th century, cheaply constructed in clay-lump, which combines trap and storage sheds with a small double-seater privy. The location of the privy to the front of the house rather than the rear is unusual but explained by the presence of a linear pond where it would normally stand. The building is a good example of an increasingly rare type, remaining largely intact with its original internal partitions, but has been re-rendered in cement and is now in need of extensive remedial work. It is not of sufficient age, rarity or architectural merit to meet the strict English Heritage criteria for listing in its own right.

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Descriptions of Photographs in Appendix 1

Photograph no.

1. General view of entrance to site from Back Lane to east showing farmhouse in rear to right.
2. General view of site from south-east showing stable and new 'barn' to left, house in centre and outbuilding to right.
3. General view of site from south-east showing outbuilding to right and farmhouse in centre.
4. General view of site from south-east showing clay-lump outbuilding to right flanking approach to grade II-listed farmhouse.
5. General view of site from field to north-west showing outbuilding in rear to left and farmhouse with modern rear extension in centre.
6. Farmhouse from south-west showing modern rear extension intruding onto possible moat to left (included for site context).
7. Modern rear extension of farmhouse from north-east showing possible moat to right (included for site context).
8. South-western section of possible moat from field bridge to north-east (included for site context).
9. Southern exterior of clay-lump outbuilding showing pantiled roof and doors to sheds 2, 3 & 4 from left to right.
10. Eastern end of southern exterior showing door to eastern shed (4) and re-facing of wall in brickwork to right.
11. Eastern exterior showing weatherboarded gable and original window in cement-rendered clay-lump above English-bond brick plinth.
12. External detail of original window in eastern gable showing re-used timber and weathered sill.
13. Northern exterior from north-east showing 20th century lean-to (5) with farmhouse in rear & scattered glazed pantiles.
14. Eastern end of northern exterior showing exposed clay-lump fabric.
15. Detail of exposed clay-lump fabric at eastern end of northern exterior.
16. Northern rear external elevation showing 20th century corrugated-iron lean-to projecting from central shed (3).
17. North-western external corner showing cement-rendered clay-lump fabric with door to privy (1) in western gable to right.

18. Western external gable showing door to privy (1) to left.
19. Interior of privy (1) from western entrance showing whitewashed walls & broken seat with two chamfered circular apertures to left.
20. Detail from south-west of broken 'double-seater' privy showing chamfered circular apertures in remaining board.
21. Detail from south of broken 'double-seater' privy showing chamfered circular apertures in remaining board.
22. North-western internal corner of privy (1) showing whitewashed walls and remains of seat board.
23. Interior of privy (1) from south-east showing entrance and remains of lath-and-plaster ceiling.
24. Detail of graffiti to southern interior of privy (1) showing initials and parallel lines.
25. Detail of boarded door to privy (1).
26. Internal western gable showing softwood clasped-purlin roof structure with nailed collars and ridge-board.
27. Interior of south-western shed (2) from southern entrance showing daubed walls.
28. Southern interior of south-western shed (2) showing re-used timber forming jambs of entrance door.
29. Clasped-purlin softwood roof structure seen from south-western shed (2) with axial partition to privy (1) in centre.
30. Interior of central vehicle shed (3) from north showing southern double-doors.
31. Interior from south of central shed (3) showing 20th century lean-to (5) beyond removed northern wall in rear.
32. Interior of central shed (3) showing internal western partition with 20th century lean-to (5) to right.
33. Internal eastern partition of central shed (3) showing re-used timber of southern door jamb to right and lean-to (5) to left.
34. Interior of eastern shed (4) from south showing original window in eastern gable to right.
35. Internal eastern gable showing original central window to eastern shed (4).
36. Interior of eastern shed (4) from north showing original southern door with gable window to left.
37. Internal partition of eastern shed (4) showing clay-lump fabric with studwork gable.

38. Softwood clasped-purlin roof structure of eastern shed (4) from south showing eastern gable to right and internal partition to left.
39. Detail of clasped-purlin roof structure with nailed collar seen from eastern gable and showing internal partition of eastern shed (4)

Photographic Appendix follows on pp. 11-16

Appendix 2 (pp. 11-16): Selected Printed Photographs



Illus. 1. General view of site from entrance to south-east showing converted stable and new weatherboarded 'barn' to left, grade II-listed former farmhouse in centre and the clay-lump outbuilding in the bushes to the right.



Illus. 2. General view of site from south-east showing the close proximity of the clay-lump outbuilding (right) to the grade II-listed former farmhouse. The timber-framed and rendered house is dated to the mid-16th century in the Schedule of Listed Buildings.



Illus. 3. The farmhouse from the south-west showing the modern rear extension intruding onto a possible moat which separates the site from open countryside to the left (included for site context). The outbuilding is hidden by the bushes to the right.



Illus. 4. The southern exterior of the clay-lump outbuilding showing its pantiled roof and the doors to its various sheds (a pair of storage sheds flanking a central vehicle shed numbered 2, 3 & 4 from left to right).



Illus. 5. The eastern external gable of cement-rendered clay-lump showing the weatherboarded roof-gable and an original central window. The brick plinth is laid in English bond.



Illus. 6. The northern exterior from the north-east, showing 20th century lean-to extension to the central vehicle shed (5) with the farmhouse in the rear. The eastern end of the elevation has lost its render and the clay blocks are exposed.



Illus. 7. The cement-rendered western external gable showing the door to the privy (1) in the north-western corner.



Illus. 8. The interior of the privy (1) from its western entrance showing the whitewashed walls and decayed lath-and-plaster ceiling with the remains of two chamfered circular apertures in the damaged boarded seat to the left.



Illus. 9. The interior of the central vehicle shed (3) from the north showing the daub-rendered clay-lump internal partitions to left and right. The original jambs of the southern double-doors consist of re-used timber but the doors themselves are 20th century replacements.



Illus. 10. The interior of the central vehicle shed (3) from its southern entrance showing the 20th century lean-to extension (5) and the position of the removed original clay-lump northern elevation.



Illus. 11. The interior of the eastern shed (4) seen from the south and showing the original window in the eastern gable to the right. The internal walls of this shed appear never to have been rendered and the individual clay blocks are exposed.



Illus. 12. The interior of the eastern shed (4) from the north showing the original southern entrance door and the softwood clapped-purlin roof structure with nailed collars.