

**Outbuilding at Kent House,
Redgrave,
Suffolk
RGV 047**

Heritage Asset Assessment

OASIS ID: Suffolkc1-96672



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**

February 2011

Outbuilding at Kent House (Formerly the Bunch of Grapes Inn), The Street, Redgrave, Suffolk

(TM 044 779)

Heritage Asset Assessment

This report provides a written and photographic analysis and record at English Heritage (2006) Level 2 of a clay-lump outbuilding. It has been prepared to a specification written by Edward Martin of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (ref. SpecHAA(EM)_KentHo_Redgrave_3277_09, dated 5th January 2011) and is intended to fulfil a condition of planning permission for the conversion of the building and the demolition of an attached lean-to (Mid Suffolk District Council application 3277/09).

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 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 11th February 2011.

Summary

Kent House is an early-19th century grade II-listed building which occupies a prominent position on the western side of the triangular village green in the centre of Redgrave. It is marked on the 1886 Ordnance Survey as the 'Bunch of Grapes Inn', and as a public house on the Survey of 1904, but appears to have ceased trading early in the 20th century. The owner at the time of the tithe survey in 1846 was a 'wine, spirit and corn merchant', and by 1874 was also a coal merchant and an agent for Burton and Bury ales.

The general U-shaped outline of the house and the two-storied clay-lump outbuilding to the rear is shown on the tithe map, and the latter probably served as a warehouse in addition to accommodating horses and vehicles. Unfortunately it has been extensively renovated in recent years and stripped of any original fixtures and fixtures that might have indicated its initial purpose. The upper storey is undivided and reached by an internal stair from the courtyard, while the lower storey contains a secondary privy and a modern garage along with a bread oven of *circa* 1900. This oven has been largely demolished but retains an impressive decorative facade of cast iron set in glazed tiles. It was inserted to serve a single-storied flint-rubble bakery that was added to the gable of the house in the mid-19th century, and is of considerable significance to the local history of the village.

Despite its alterations the outbuilding is an unusual example of a substantial, two-storied clay-lump structure that may well be contemporary with the main house and continues to justify its current listing at grade II.

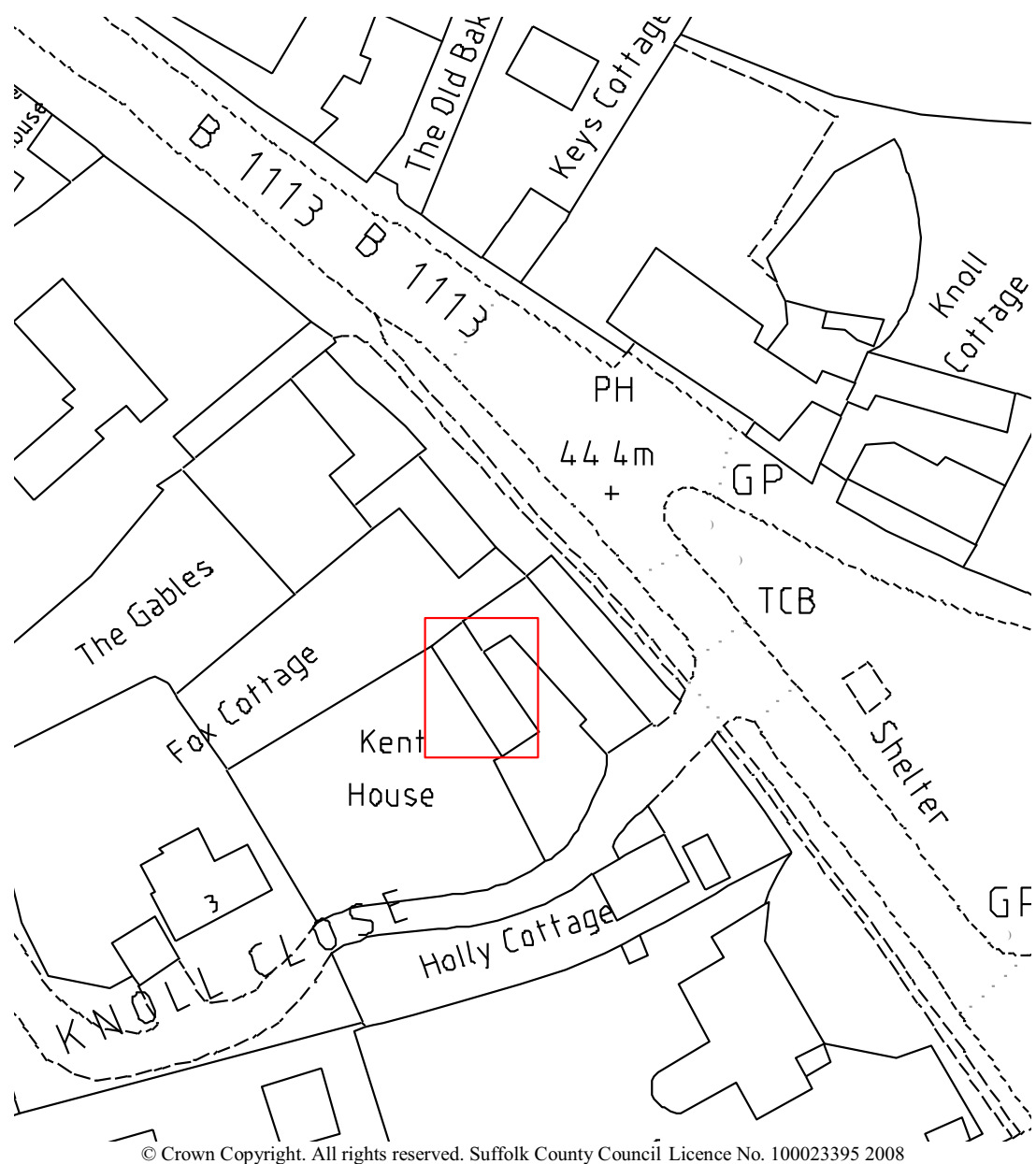


Figure 1
Current Ordnance Survey Site Plan
 Enclosing the clay-lump outbuilding in red, and showing Kent House adjoining to the right.

Historic Context: Documentary & Cartographic Record

Kent House is a grade II-listed building which occupies a prominent position on the western side of the triangular village green in the centre of Redgrave. It is marked on the 1886 Ordnance Survey as the ‘Bunch of Grapes Inn’, and as a public house on that of 1904, but appears to have ceased trading in the early-20th century. The house is a timber-framed and rendered structure of early-19th century appearance, but now incorporates two single-storied mid-19th century flint-rubble shops on each side. The right-hand (northern) shop is understood by the present owner to have been a bakery and the left-hand shop a butcher’s. The two-storied clay-lump parallel outbuilding to the rear contains a late-19th or early-20th century bread oven behind the former baker’s shop (attached by a single-storied link) and an undivided upper storey that in recent years was converted into an antiques shop but stood empty at the time of inspection. Both the house and attached outbuilding are listed under the

name 'Cartref', by which they appear on the Ordnance Survey of 1977, and they are described in the schedule as an early-19th century house with a former stable and coach house. No evidence for this identification of the outbuilding is cited and nothing now survives (although it is not unlikely) and the later bread oven is not mentioned. The exposed ceiling joists and other structural features within the house are entirely consistent with an early-19th century date, despite local suggestions of a 17th century origin.

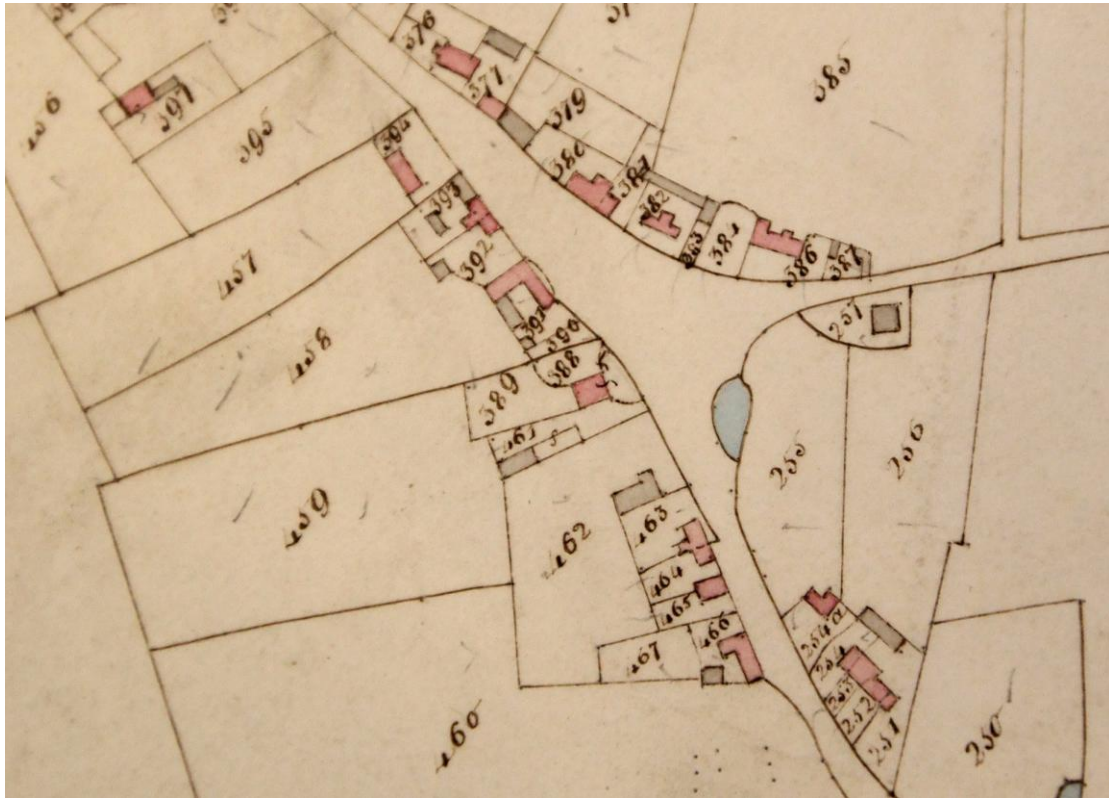


Figure 2
The Redgrave parish tithe map of 1846 showing the triangular village green with Kent House on the west.

At the time of the tithe survey in 1846 the property consisted of a 'house and garden' (plot 391 in figure 2) with an additional garden to the south (plot 390) and was owned and occupied by Robert Gates. Gates was described in White's Trade Directory of Suffolk in 1844 as a 'wine, spirit and corn merchant', but the only inns mentioned by name were the Cross Keys (which still survives on the opposite side of the Green) and the Fox which lay immediately to the north and was occupied by Sibery Holt. In addition to his 'house etc.' (plot 393) Holt possessed a 'yard and stable' adjoining Kent House and the 'meadow' of 1.25 acres to the west (from which the present back garden of Kent House was formed). The Fox had become the Fox and Hounds by White's edition of 1874, which also fails to mention the Grapes but names its probable owner as John Palfrey, 'corn, coal, wine and spirit merchant, and agent for Burton and Bury ales.' The general U-shaped outline of the house and outbuilding is shown on the tithe map, but it is not clear whether the latter's structure was identical to that of today; the red pigment of the house appears to extend across the outbuilding's northern gable, instead of abutting its eastern elevation, but tithe surveys were often inaccurate in such respects. The highly accurate surveys of 1886 and 1904 undoubtedly show the present buildings, including the flint-rubble shops, along with two small structures that no longer survive against the outbuilding's southern gable. While parts of the outbuilding may have been used as stabling and to accommodate vehicles (as might be expected on the site of an inn) the 19th century owners' trading activities suggest a dual purpose as a warehouse.

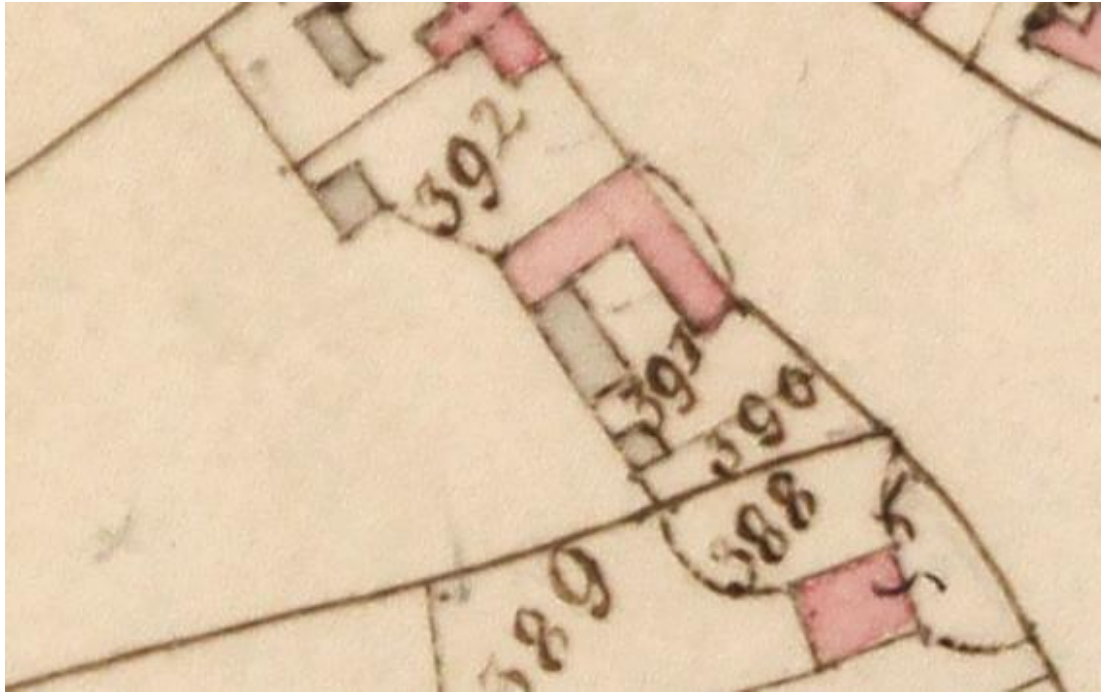


Figure 2a

Detail of the 1846 tithe map showing Kent House (391) as an L-shaped building in red with the clay-lump outbuilding in grey to the rear and a garden (390) to the south. The adjoining property on the north (392) was the yard and stable of the Fox Inn.

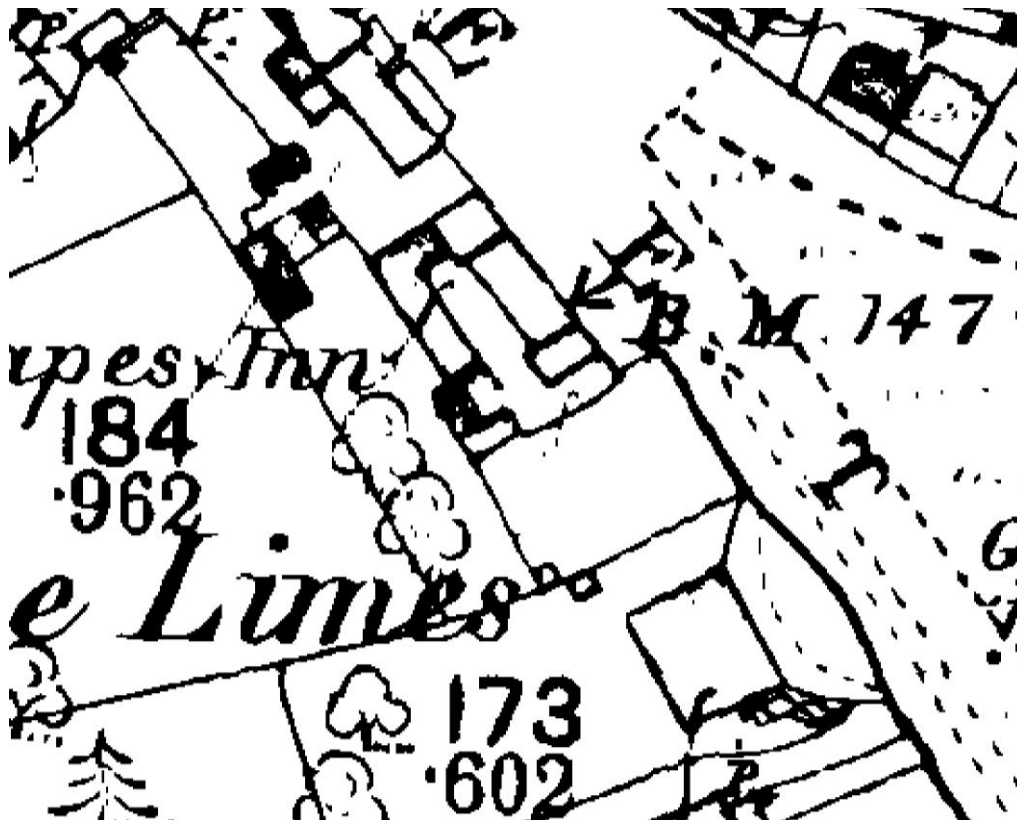


Figure 3

The first edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1886, naming the building as the 'Bunch of Grapes Inn' with 'The Limes' to the south. The two flint-rubble shops are clearly shown for the first time, with the present outbuilding to the rear.

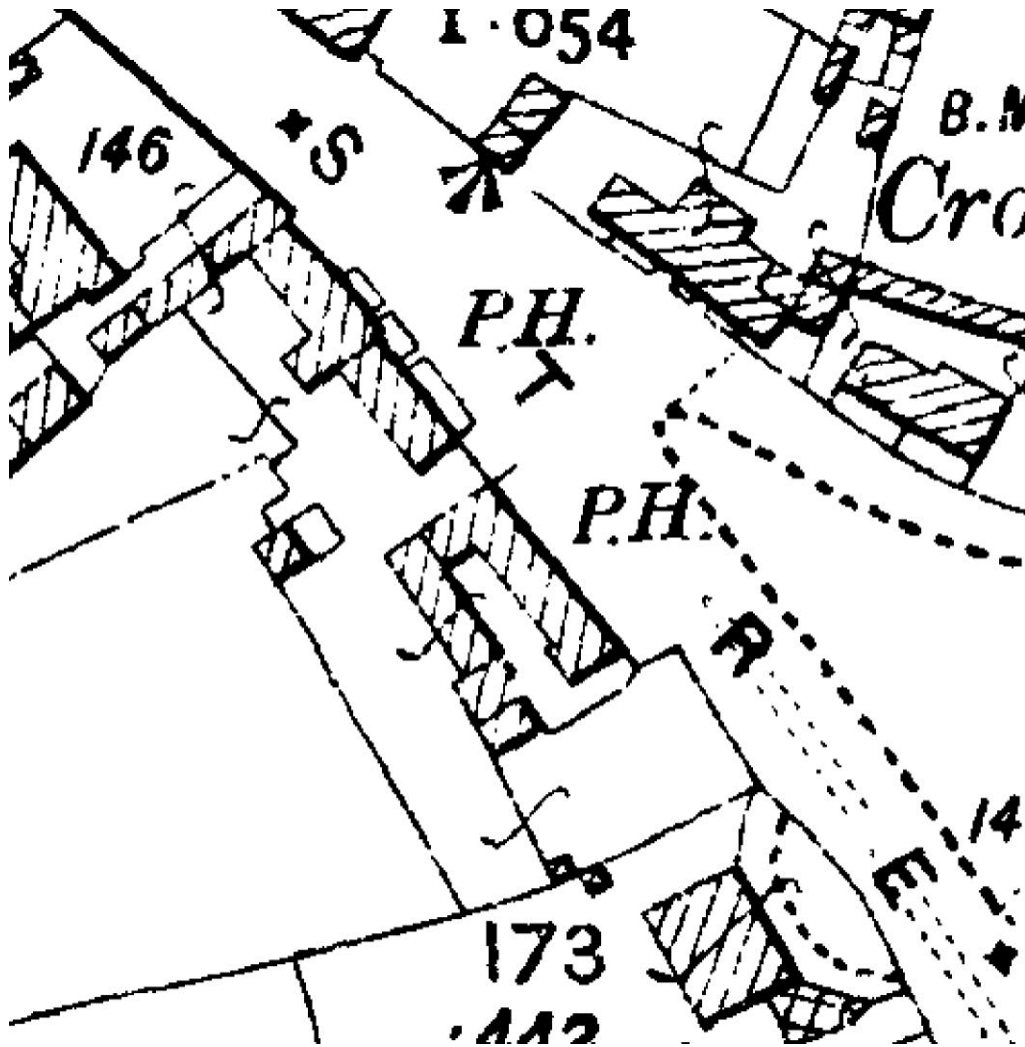


Figure 4

The second edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1904. The buildings had not altered since 1886 but the rear (western) elevation of the outbuilding appears to have been accessible from the entrance gate of the Fox and Hounds to the north of the house. The structure adjoining the outbuilding's southern gable (which no longer survives) had an open-sided eastern elevation in the manner of a cart shelter. The building is not named but is marked together with its neighbour as a Public House (PH).

Building Analysis

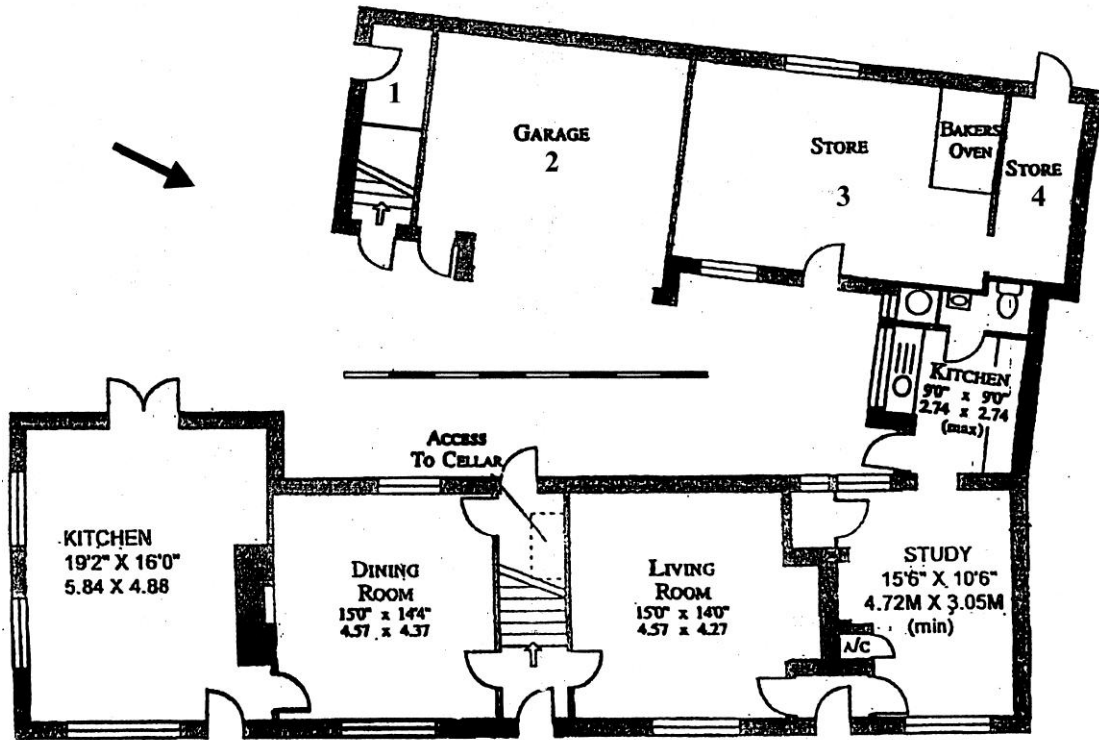


Figure 5

Ground plan of the site identifying each area of the clay-lump outbuilding with a number for ease of reference in the text and photographic record.

Scale in metres.

Adapted from an estate agent's plan provided by the owner.

The outbuilding to the rear of Kent House is a two-storied clay-lump structure on an approximately north-south axis which extends to 12.8 m in overall length by 5 m in width (43 ft by 16.5 ft). Its walls rise to 4 m (13 ft) in height at the roof-plates on a low flint plinth and the internal ceiling lies 2.2 m (7 ft) above the floors of modern concrete. A brick lean-to with a corrugated asbestos roof and a glazed 20th century western elevation (in the style of a greenhouse) projects by an additional 2 m from the northern gable.

The walls appear to consist largely of clay-lump but with the exception of a small area of the eastern exterior (to the right of the bakery door) they are rendered in modern cement or otherwise concealed and may have been substantially rebuilt in brick and block-work at lower levels. The internal walls of the undivided upper storey (reached by a 20th century boarded stair at the southern end of the eastern elevation) taper inwards towards the roof-plates in an unusual manner which suggests they still consist of clay-lump. The slate-covered, shallow-pitched roof structure consists of uniform tall-sectioned softwood with a ridge-board and appears to have been rebuilt in the mid-20th century but includes a number of re-used collars that may derive from the original. The plate-glass windows of the upper storey are modern, and probably relate to an extensive restoration of the late-20th century when the building was converted into an antiques showroom, but some rectangular mullions and frames may be original.

The ground storey is divided into four areas as shown in figure 5, but the presence of two redundant doors in the eastern elevation suggests that earlier partitions have been removed. The boarded ceilings and internal cement render date only from the recent refurbishment and there is no evidence of the building's 19th century layout or purpose (with the exception of the bread oven, which is a secondary insertion). The structure is also difficult to date, but can probably be equated with the structure shown on the tithe map of 1846 - at which time it would have been relatively new. Clay-lump was commonly employed as an inexpensive building material in the mid-19th century but is not found before *circa* 1800 and the outbuilding may well be contemporary with the central part of the adjoining house. The small privy in the south-western corner (1) is entered from the gable and is almost certainly a later insertion as its internal walls are of brick and an open-sided cart or vehicle lodge adjoined the same gable on the 1904 Ordnance Survey. The privy has been stripped of its fixtures and fittings. The central, cement-rendered garage (2) is entered by late-20th century vertical garage doors and its boarded ceiling is supported by a RSJ. The partition between the garage and bakery (3) is ostensibly an original feature of daubed clay-lump (albeit rendered in cement to the south) and the bakery retains an impressive bread oven in its north-western corner. The oven consisted of Fletton brick of the late-19th or (more probably) the early-20th century with a facade of glazed white tiles, but the oven and chimney – which projected beyond the gable into the secondary lean-to (4) – have been demolished to leave only the facade intact. The iron surround is cast with decorative wheat sheaves and fluted columns with an intact thermometer and bears the name 'Kent & Co. Globe Works Ltd. South Grove Bow London E3'.

Historic Significance

Although 19th century clay-lump agricultural buildings were once common in Suffolk and still survive in some numbers, the great majority are single-storied structures and examples of two storeys such as the outbuilding at Kent House are relatively rare. Documentary evidence indicates it was designed as much as a warehouse and granary for the 'wine, corn, coal and spirits' in which successive owners dealt, as for the usual domestic offices such as stabling. Unfortunately, however, the building has been extensively refurbished in recent years, resulting in the loss of any original fixtures and fittings and of much of its historic integrity. The bread oven of *circa* 1900, in contrast, is an impressive example of its kind despite the fact that it survives only as facade, and is of considerable importance to the local history of the village. The building retains its original proportions and proximity to the house, forming a narrow rear courtyard, and despite its alterations continues to merit its current listing at grade II (having been specifically described as part of the listed property in the Schedule of Listed Buildings).

Appendix 1 (on accompanying CD): Full Photographic Record

Descriptions of Photographs in Appendix 1

Photograph no.

1. General view of Redgrave village green from the east showing Kent House between The Limes to the left and Cross Keys PH to the right.
2. Facade of Kent House from village green to north-east showing mid-19th century shops flanking ostensibly early-19th century house.
3. Exterior of Kent House from north showing later flint rubble shop to right with lean-to shed (4) in rear.
4. Exterior of shop and lean-to shed (4) from entrance to adjoining property (Fox Cottage) to north.
5. General view of site from south-east showing clay-lump outbuilding in rear to left and gable of Kent House to right.
6. General view of site from lawn to west showing clay-lump outbuilding with Kent House in rear.
7. Yard from south-east showing rear elevation of Kent House to right and clay-lump outbuilding to left.
8. Eastern facade of reputed former bakery to north of Kent House.
9. Eastern facade of reputed former butcher's shop to south of Kent House.
10. Western exterior showing late-20th century cement render and windows with gable lean-to (4) to left.
11. Detail of western exterior showing flint plinth beneath late-20th century cement render.
12. Exterior from south-east showing steps to upper storey to left with late-20th century garage doors (2) to right.
13. Exterior from north-east showing garage (2) to left and door to bakery (3) to right with adjacent fragment of exposed clay lump.
14. Detail of exposed clay-lump fabric in eastern exterior to north of bakery door (3).
15. Southern exterior of single-storied link between outbuilding to left and Kent House to right.
16. Interior of privy (1) from south-west showing external door to right and slope of stair to upper storey.
17. Interior of privy (1) from north-east showing western window and external gable door to left.

18. Open entrance to 20th century pine stair leading to undivided upper storey.
19. Entrance door to stair leading to upper storey at southern end of eastern exterior, showing doors to garage (2) to right.
20. Interior of undivided upper storey from south, showing sloping clay-lump walls and 20th century clasped-purlin roof structure.
21. Interior of undivided upper storey from north showing 20th century clasped-purlin softwood roof with re-used collars.
22. Detail from north of 20th century clasped-purlin roof structure with uniform softwood rafters and re-used collars.
23. Interior of garage (2) from west showing late-20th century vehicle doors with pedestrian entrance to right.
24. Interior of garage (2) from south showing late-20th century cement render to western and northern partitions.
25. Interior of garage (2) from north showing boarded partition to stair with brick partition to privy (1) to right.
26. Interior of bakery (3) from north showing clay daubed partition to garage (2).
27. Interior of bakery (3) from west showing clay-daubed eastern elevation and re-used door to yard.
28. Interior of bakery (3) from east showing boarding to western elevation.
29. Interior of bakery (3) from south showing door to gable lean-to (4) to right and bread oven to left.
30. Bread oven in north-western corner of bakery (3) showing white-glazed tiles on Fletton brick fabric.
31. Detail of iron doors and decorative surround of bread oven in bakery (3).
32. Detail of oven name plate. Kent & Co. Globe Works Ltd. South Grove Bow London E3.
33. Detail of bread oven upper doors showing cast wheatsheaf to left.
34. Detail of lower bread oven doors showing cast wheat sheaves to left and right.
35. Detail of bread oven thermometer.
36. Interior of lean-to shed (4) from east showing truncated bread oven of Fletton brickwork to left.
37. Interior of lean-to shed (4) from west showing remains of Fletton brickwork of bread oven to right.
38. Interior of truncated bread oven from lean-to shed (4) to north.

39. Interior of lean-to shed (4) from east showing curved corner of bread oven in surviving lower brick courses.

Photographic Appendix follows on pp. 11-15

Appendix 2 (pp. 15-20): Selected Printed Photographs



Illus. 1. General view of Redgrave village green from the east showing the conspicuous location of Kent House in the centre between The Limes to the left and the Cross Keys Public House to the right.



Illus. 2. Exterior of Kent House from the north-east showing the flint-rubble sometime Baker's shop to the right and the identical sometime butcher's shop to the left. The northern gable of the clay-lump outbuilding with its lean-to shed (4) is visible to the extreme right where it adjoins the drive of the neighbouring property (Fox Cottage).



Illus. 3. General view of the site from the south-east showing the clay-lump outbuilding in the rear to the left and the gable of the flint-rubble sometime butcher's shop (now the kitchen of Kent House) to the right.



Illus. 4. The western exterior of the clay-lump outbuilding showing its shallow-pitched slate roof with late-20th century cement render and windows. The glazed lean-to shed adjoining the northern gable is visible to the left.



Illus. 5. The cement-rendered eastern exterior seen from the house to the north-east showing the late-20th century garage door (2) to the left and the door to the bakery (3) to the right with an adjacent fragment of exposed clay lump.



Illus. 6. Detail of the exposed clay-lump fabric in the eastern exterior to the north of the bakery door (3). This is the only exposed section of clay-lump in the building.



Illus. 7. The interior of the undivided upper storey seen from the south, showing its sloping clay-lump walls and the 20th century clasped-purlin roof structure of softwood joists and re-used collars.



Illus. 8. The interior of the bakery (3) from the south showing the door to the gable lean-to (4) to the right and the bread oven of Fletton brick with white-glazed tiled facade to the left.



Illus. 9. The iron doors and decorative surround of the bread oven in the bakery (3) showing its cast wheatsheaf ornaments and the superscript 'Kent & Co. Globe Works Ltd. South Grove Bow London E3'.



Illus. 10. The interior of the lean-to shed (4) from the east showing the truncated bread oven of Fletton brickwork to the left with cement-rendered walls and corrugated asbestos roof.