

# **The Queen's Head Inn, Bramfield, Suffolk**

## **Heritage Asset Assessment**



**Leigh Alston MA (Oxon)  
Architectural Historian  
4 Nayland Road  
Bures St Mary  
Suffolk CO8 5BX**

**December 2015**

Leigh A. Alston MA (Oxon)  
Architectural Historian

**4 Nayland Road  
Bures St Mary  
Suffolk CO8 5BX**

Tel. (01787) 228016  
E-Mail: leigh.alston@virgin.net

**The Queen's Head Inn,  
The Street,  
Bramfield, Suffolk**

**(TM 399 737)**

**Heritage Asset Assessment**

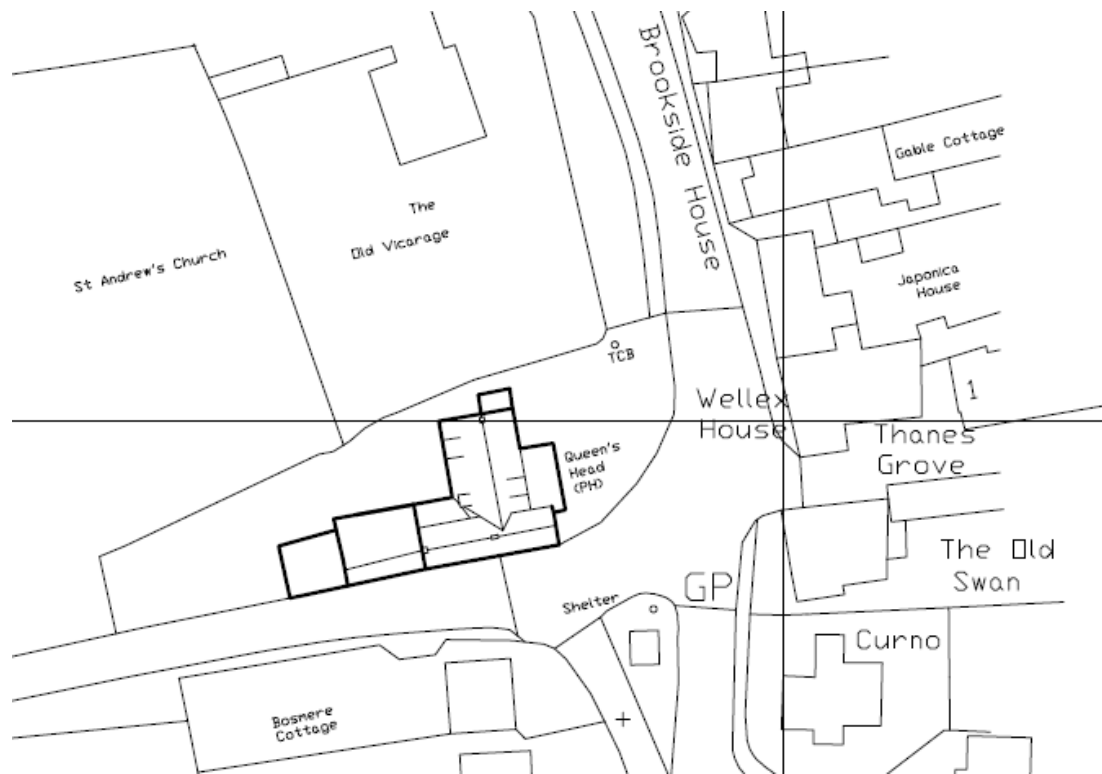
*This assessment is intended to inform and accompany an application for Listed Building Consent to Suffolk Coastal District Council.*

**Summary**

The Queen's Head Inn is a grade II-listed building at the southern entrance to the village of Bramfield adjoining the parish churchyard on the west and the former vicarage on the north. The site may represent part of the medieval market place. The building consists of a mid-16<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed range to the north and a taller brick cross-wing of the late-18<sup>th</sup> century to the south. The timber-framed structure was known as 'Skeltons' in 1584, and although much altered can still be recognised as a two-cell Tudor artisan's house containing a hall entered by a cross-passage on the right with a pair of service rooms to the left. The position of the original entrance remains unchanged, and the rear wall preserves two rare diamond-mullioned windows, but the hall ceiling has been removed and the entire roof was replaced when the brick wing was added. The latter survives relatively unaltered, and is exceptionally narrow with just 12 ft (3.6 m) between its walls. The layout of this wing is unusual, and suggests it was built as an inn, with three ground-floor rooms of which two were entered directly from the road and the other, designed as a kitchen, only from the rear yard. One of the two southern entrances has been blocked and replaced by a new door in the eastern gable. The former kitchen retains an impressive fireplace against its rear (western) gable and an intact 16<sup>th</sup> century chamfered ceiling that respects the building's narrow width but appears to have been re-used in its entirety from elsewhere – or possibly from a predecessor of the present structure on the same site.

The current proposals include the insertion of a dormer window or conservation light into the rebuilt roof of the Tudor house, and the removal of the remaining section of its original southern gable – which appears to have been rebuilt during an extensive restoration of 1982/3. The insertion of a new staircase in the 18<sup>th</sup> century kitchen will involve the insertion of a new internal door and the removal of part of the ostensibly re-used 16<sup>th</sup> century ceiling.

## Documentary and Cartographic History

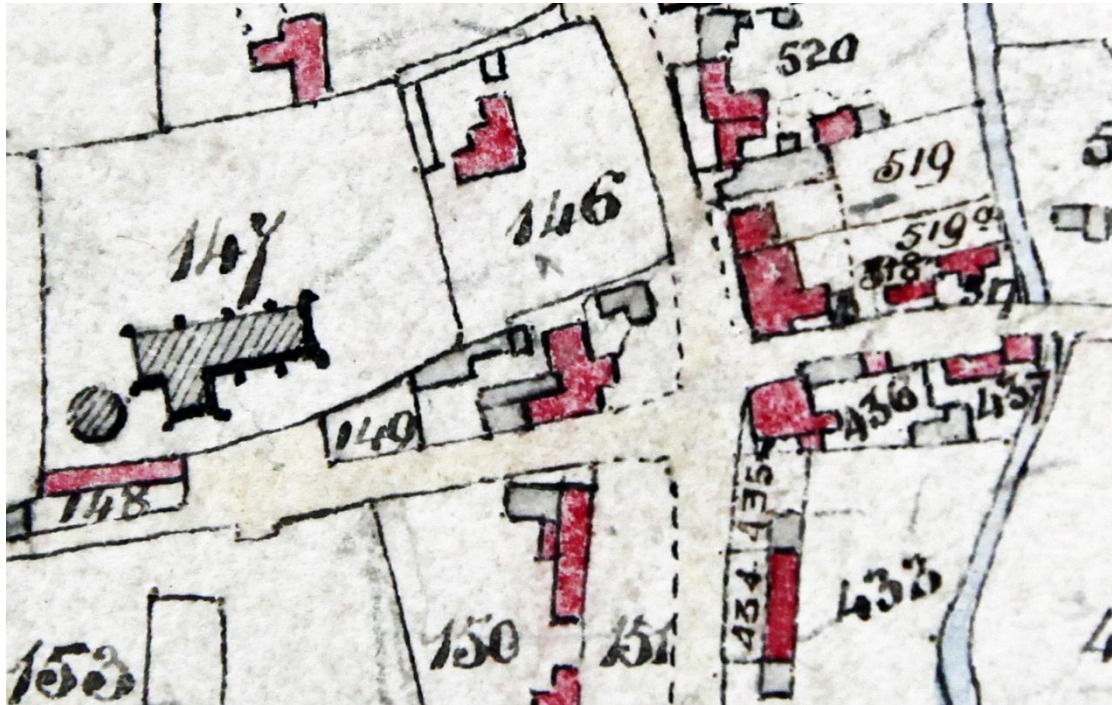


**Figure 1. Site plan showing the highly conspicuous location of the inn on the crossroads at the southern entrance to Bramfield with St Andrew's churchyard on the west.**

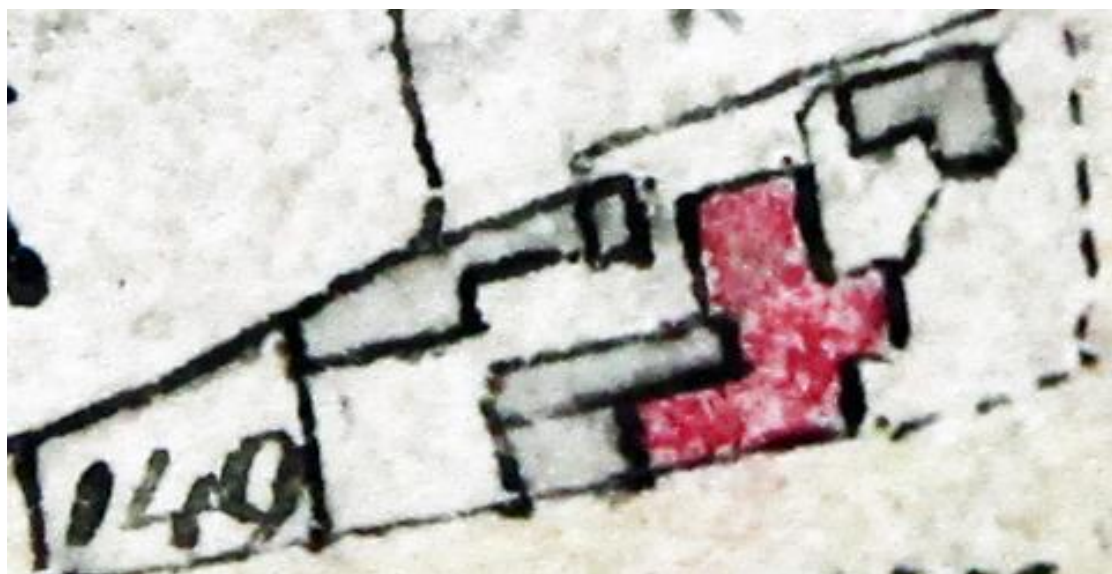
The Queen's Head Inn lies at the southern entrance to the village of Bramfield on the north-western corner of a crossroads between The Street (the main A144) and the roads to Walpole on the west and Thorington on the east. The property occupies an historically interesting triangular site in the corner of a rectangular block of land occupied by the churchyard and the former vicarage which is likely to have originated early in the Middle Ages, as highlighted in figure 2. This triangle may have been separated from the church land in the later medieval period to create a market place, for which the grant of a charter is recorded in 1270 (Historical Atlas of Suffolk, SCC, 1999). According to research published on the village website the inn was known in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as 'Skeltons', and a tenancy agreement of 1846 obtained from Adnams Brewery describes it a property 'formerly called Skeltons with an orchard and garden containing one rood and four perches more or less and for many years past called The Queen's Head Inn'. A Bramford manorial rental of 1584 refers to a copyhold property once belonging to William Vesey but now to Henry Hyndes 'called Skeltons with a yard, garden and one hempland adjacent to the highway'. Of the 23 individuals who were wealthy enough to pay tax in Bramfield in 1568 Henry Hyndes was the poorest, with lands worth 28s 8d (Suffolk in 1568, Suffolk Green Books, 1909). The same research indicates that an earlier reference to the site can be found in a rental of 1478/9, when the manor belonged to Mettingham College, suggesting that the present building replaced another in the same position.

At the time of the Bramfield tithe survey in 1841 the property belonged to the Revd. George Turner, who also owned Manor Farm and Street Farm, and was tenanted by Joseph Sillett. It was described in the apportionment as a 'house, yard, etc.' extending to 1 rood and 4 perches, and in parentheses as the 'Queen's Head Inn' (plot 149 in figure 2). Sillett also leased a nearby 1.5 acre pasture and an adjoining 2.5 acre arable field (to the south-east of the bridge on the road to Thorington), and White's Suffolk Directory for 1874 records Leonard Sillett as a farmer, butcher and victualler at the Queen's Head – which explains the extensive

outbuildings shown in figure 2-4 but since demolished. Licensees often doubled as butchers in this way, but more unusually the incumbent of 1891, James Fenn was also a shoemaker (as noted on a genealogical website), and an Adnams document of 1881 lists ‘a yard, stabling, shoemaker’s shop, cart and tenpin shed, garden, coach house and stable’. The lean-to extension which projects from the front of the house probably contained the shop, but the tenpin bowling alley probably lay to the rear.



**Figure 2. The Bramfield tithe map of 1841 (Suffolk Record Office), showing the close proximity of the Queen’s Head (centre) to the parish church with its rare detached round tower on the left and the Vicarage (146) on the north. The tenant of the inn also leased the field on the eastern side of the watercourse at bottom right.**



**Figure 2a. A detail of the building on the 1843 map with much the same outline that it retains today with the main structure in red and the outbuildings in grey. The detached L-shaped outbuilding to the north-east no longer survives but was shown as a single-storied shed in photographs of the 1950s and 60s (figure 8).**

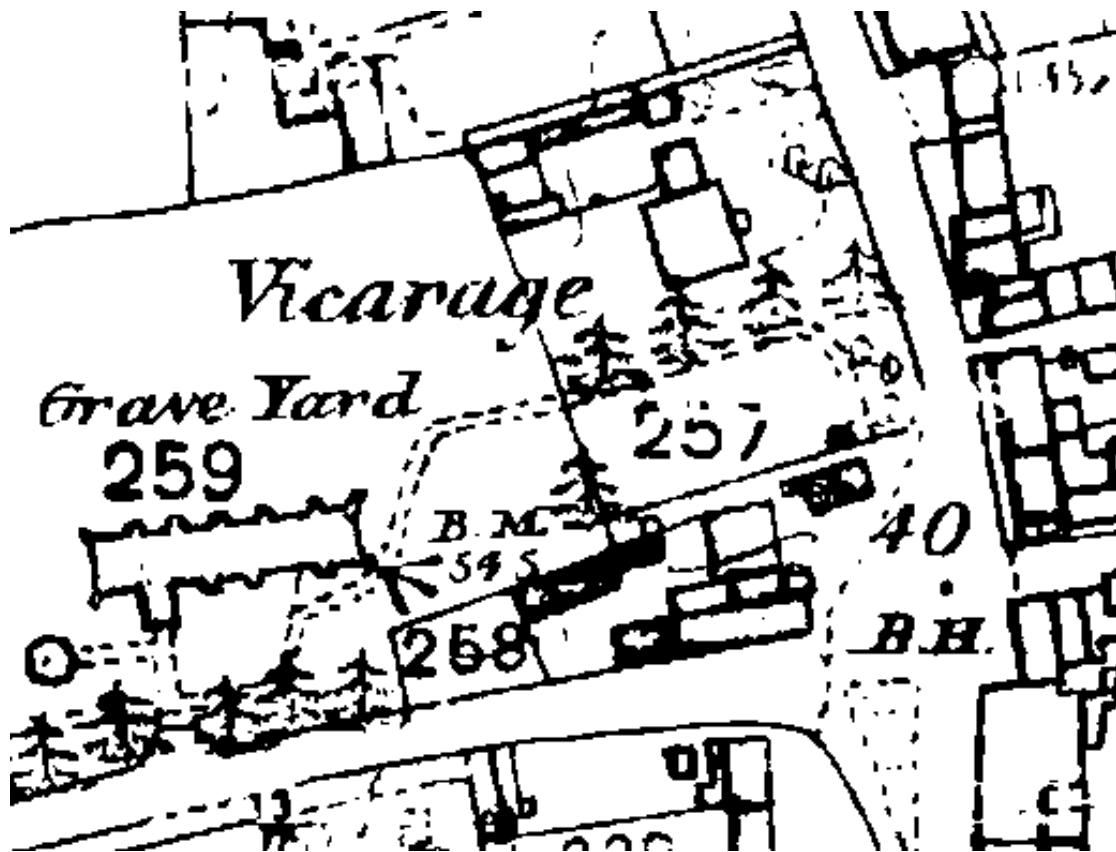


Figure 3. The First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1882. 'B.H.' stands for beer house.

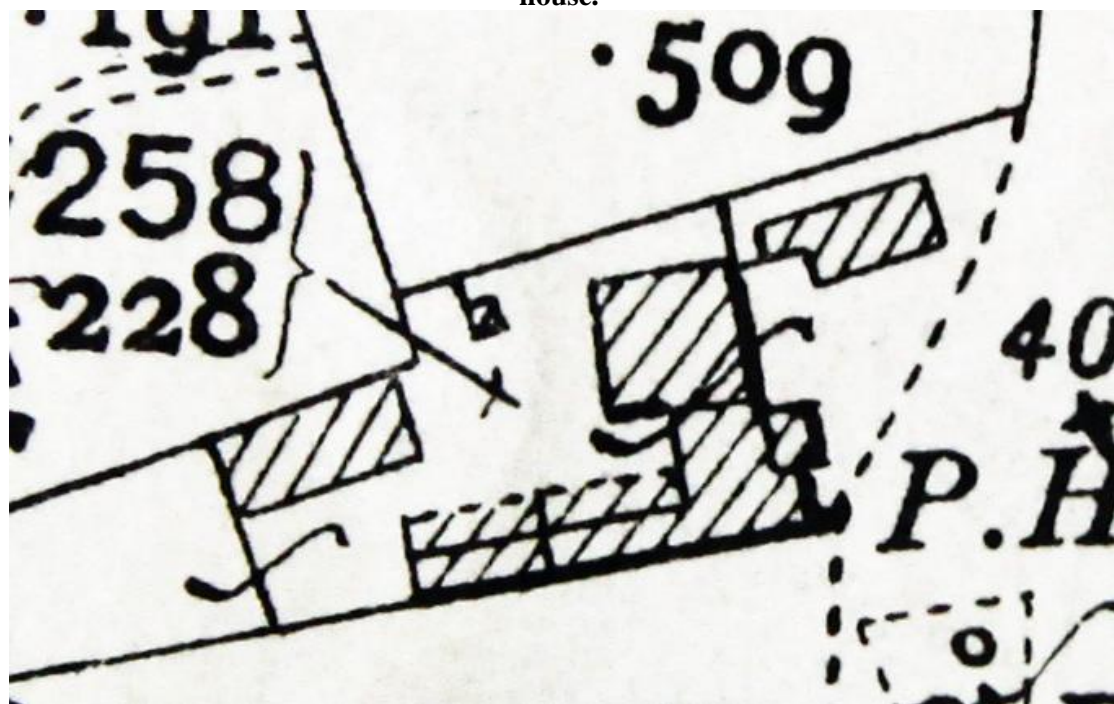


Figure 4. The Second Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey of 1903. The broken line of the building on the site of the present kitchen indicates that it was an open-sided structure such as a cart lodge or animal shelter-shed – or possibly the bowling alley mentioned in the document of 1881. The tenant of the Queen's Head in 1874 was also a butcher and farmer.

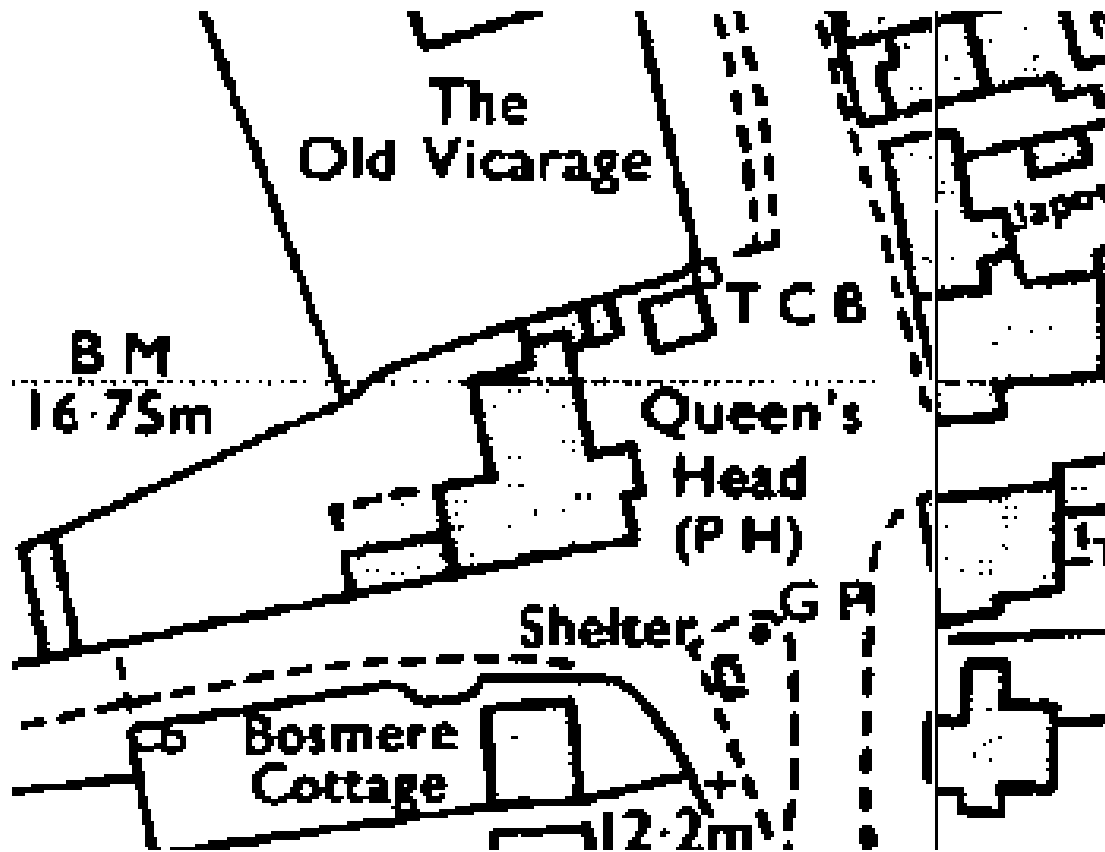


Figure 5. The Ordnance Survey of 1976. The modern kitchen had been enclosed since 1903 but the adjoining shed on the west remained open to the yard.



Figure 6. A postcard of the inn from the south-east taken in *circa* 1920. The southern elevation preserves its two original entrance doors but the present door in the eastern gable of the 18<sup>th</sup> century wing is conspicuous by its absence. Note the precariously tall chimney heating the eastern lean-to extension, which may have been the shoemaker's shop, necessary to clear the ridge of the nearby roof.

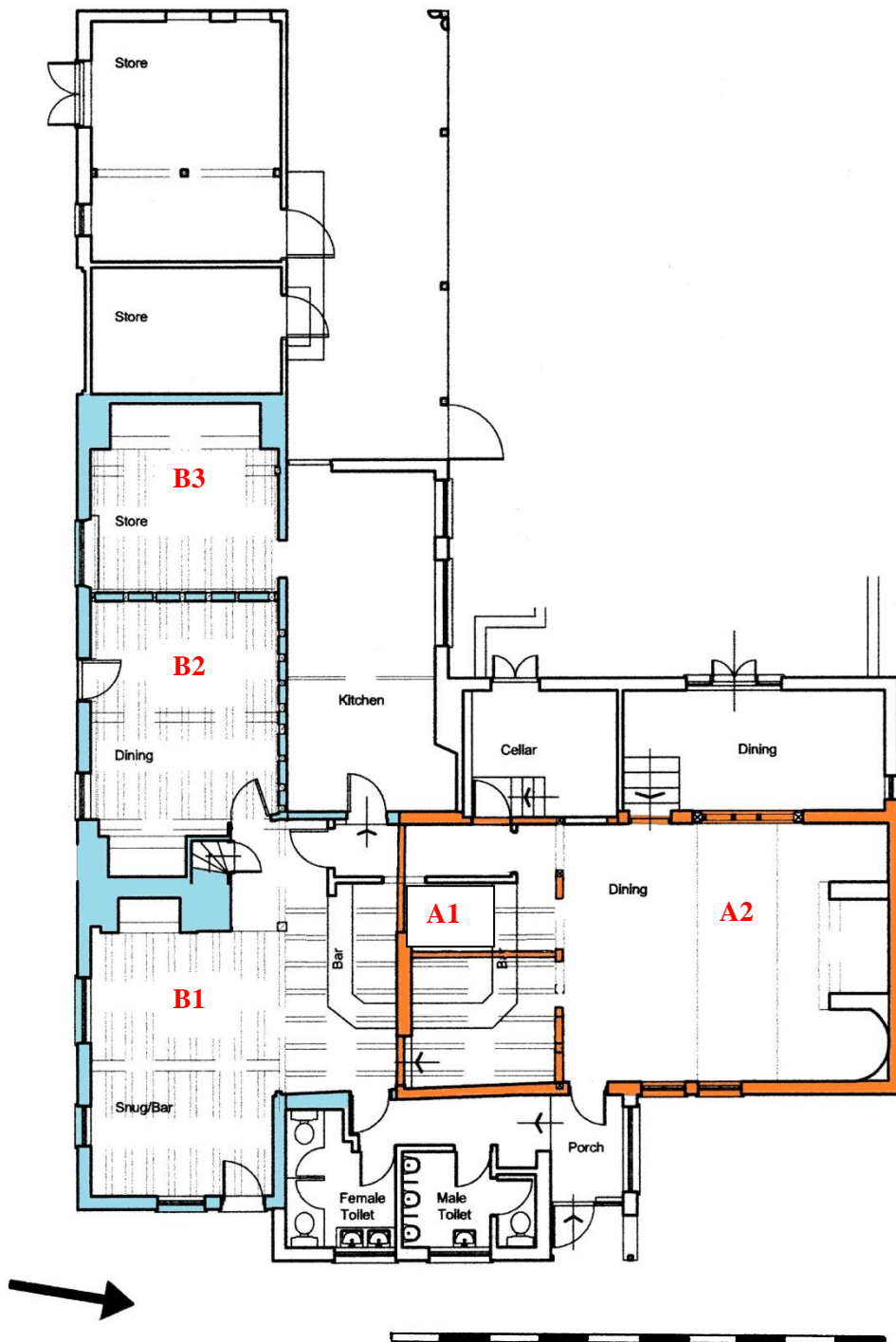


**Figure 7.** A postcard from The Street to the north in *circa* 1920, showing the broad crossroads in front of the inn.



**Figure 8.** A postcard of 1955 from the south showing a thatched bus shelter with the since demolished single-story shed in front of the inn immediately to its right.

## Building Analysis



**Figure 9**  
Ground plan of the house highlighting the original layout of its two principal phases of construction. The 16<sup>th</sup> century structure on the right contained a two-bay hall entered by a cross-passage with a pair of service rooms on the left. Adapted from a survey supplied by Ian Garrett Building Design Ltd. Scale in metres.



## Key to figure 9

### A. Brown

A mid-16<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed and rendered structure, originally of standard domestic layout with a pair of service rooms to the left (A1) and a two-bay hall entered by a cross-passage to the right. The roof was renewed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and at some point the hall ceiling was removed to create a barn-like open hall. The ceiling of the service bay has also been renewed, along with much of the wall framing, but the rear wall preserves two original Tudor windows with intact diamond mullions. Lean-to extensions were added in brick to the front and rear walls in the late-18<sup>th</sup> or early-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, with the former enlarged and possibly rebuilt in the 20<sup>th</sup>.

### B. Blue

A narrow late-18<sup>th</sup> century wing consisting of painted brick where its walls are visible from the road to the west, south and east but of rendered studwork infilled with re-used brick to the rear. The two rear rooms of the lower storey (B2 & B3) contain high-quality, intact chamfered ceilings of the 16<sup>th</sup> century which fit the building's unusually narrow width of just 12 ft (3.6 m) internally, but there is no evidence of any contemporary wall fabric and they appear to have been re-used from an earlier structure that may have occupied the site. The modern kitchen to the north is housed in a 19<sup>th</sup> century lean-to extension that was formerly open to the yard and may have operated as the bowling alley described in the survey of 1881.

The uncoloured walls represent lean-to brick extensions of the late-18<sup>th</sup> or early-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, all of which were much altered during a refurbishment of the early 1980s.



Illus. 1. The inn from the crossroads to the south-east showing the narrow 18<sup>th</sup> century wing (B) to the left of the lower 16<sup>th</sup> century range (A). The front (eastern) lean-to has been extended to the north since the 1920s (figures 6 & 7), removing the tall chimney, and the easternmost entrance of the cross-wing has moved to its gable.

*The Queen's Head Inn is listed at grade II and described in the Schedule as a 16<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed structure with a southern wing that was 'probably' added in the late-17<sup>th</sup> century but considerably rebuilt in the late-18<sup>th</sup> century (IoE no. 285612: Queens Head Inn, The Street (west side)). The description was last updated in the 1980s and mentions the renovation of both wings in 1982-83, which suggests the work was extensive. The following account is designed to be read in conjunction with the captions to illustrations 1-17, and deals with the principal phases in order of origin.*

## **The 16<sup>th</sup> Century House (A)**

The 1.5 storied northern range to the right of the eastern facade forms the oldest part of the inn, dating from the middle decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This timber-framed and rendered structure consists of three bays and originally reflected the standard domestic room plan of medieval and Tudor houses in England, as illustrated in the Appendix of this report (p. 23). The building was floored throughout, with its upper storey contained largely in the slope of its roof, and consisted of a two-bay hall of 22 ft (6.7 m) in length to the right and a service bay of 10 ft (3 m) divided into a pair of storage rooms on the left. The ceiling in the hall has since been removed. The house extended to a total of 33 ft or exactly two perches in length (10 m) by 17.5 ft (5.3 m) in overall width, but its original southern gable has also been largely removed and is indicated today only by its corner posts (e.g. illus. 11) and by a section of wall which appears to have been rebuilt in masonry and now bisects the bar (illus. 9). The northern gable is intact but any surviving framing is hidden and it is impossible to establish with certainty whether the house is complete or has lost a parlour as described in the Appendix. Although 'three-cell' houses were the norm in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, with central halls flanked by twin service rooms and parlours, many artisan houses in semi-urban locations were content with only two cells and this was probably the case here – particularly as there is evidence of corner braces at both existing gables (i.e. the northern gable possessed internally trenched wall braces, which typically defined the corners of timber-framed structures, matching the southern example shown in illus. 10).



**Illus. 2. The 1.5 storied 16<sup>th</sup> century house with its glazed black pantiles and enlarged lean-to addition. The original timber-framed structure (A) terminated beneath the left-hand mullion of the dormer window but was extended in the late-18<sup>th</sup> century to meet the new cross-wing (B). The right-hand section of the facade has been rebuilt in brick.**

The upper storey formed a single space from one end of the house to the other, open to its roof timbers in the manner of a barn and spanned by two horizontal tie-beams supported by arch-braces rising from the wall posts. The first floors of Tudor houses were often undivided in this way, and typically operated as warehouses or general-purpose storage areas. The tie-beam between the service and hall bays is still *in situ*, complete with both arch-braces (illus. 6), but has been incorporated into a later wall, while the tie-beam between the hall bays has been replaced and its missing arch-braces are indicated only by empty mortises in the posts. The rear wall preserves two rare 16<sup>th</sup> century windows with their original 'diamond' mullions, one of which lay above the hall (illus. 5) and the other above the service bay (illus. 10). There is evidence in the roof-plate of two matching windows which have lost their mullions in the front wall, and their survival to the rear suggests they were blocked at a relatively early date (i.e. before diamond mullions went out of fashion). They may have been replaced by dormer windows, which became common only during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, or have been blocked by a predecessor of the existing rear lean-to which is a brick structure of the 18<sup>th</sup> or early-19<sup>th</sup> century. Tudor windows usually lacked glass, but were closed by sliding or hinged internal shutters similar to the small example which probably survives from the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the front ground-floor wall of the service bay. The absence of any evidence for original first-floor windows in the northern bay of the hall suggests the area was lit by a gable window and that the house did not possess a parlour.



**Illus. 3. The brick and tiled southern elevation of the narrow late-18<sup>th</sup> century wing. The present door was formerly wider (its original jamb is visible in the brickwork to its right), and the narrow window on the extreme right was initially a second entrance with closers (quarter-bricks) descending to the ground (figure 6).**

The house has been much altered on the ground floor, and its original arrangement is no longer obvious, but clear evidence can still be found of the standard layout illustrated in the Appendix. The hall ceiling has been removed, but mortises for its principal joist are visible in its central storey posts, and the common joists of the service bay have been completely rearranged and probably renewed. The rail of the missing partition which divided the hall and service bays remains *in situ*, and careful measurement of the pegged stud mortises in its bottom edge reveals a distinctive pattern of gaps: a double-pegged post divided a pair of

central doors that opened into a buttery and pantry while a third door adjoining the back wall opened directly onto a straight stair lit by the window shown in illus. 10. There is now no trace of the partition which divided the service rooms (one of which may have been a shop if the crossroads operated as a market place as the topographical evidence suggests), but the outline of the blocked rear door of the cross-passage is shown to the left in illus. 5, complete with its internal rebate, and the 16<sup>th</sup> century entrance remains in use to this day.

Some of the key alterations to the Tudor structure may have occurred as part of the heavy restoration in the early 1980s mentioned in the list description, most notably the rearrangement of the ceiling in the service bay (the modern bar area), but others happened long before. The entire roof structure was replaced in the 18<sup>th</sup> century – probably as part of an extensive refurbishment that included the building of the existing brick wing (B) and the replacement of most wall timbers - leaving only the principal posts, roof-plates and rear window jambs in place. The original house would have possessed a chimney containing a single fireplace either in the angle of the cross-passage and the front wall or in the same position as the present brick chimney which is an insertion of the late-17<sup>th</sup> or early-18<sup>th</sup> century with a recently replaced timber lintel and rebuilt piers. The ceiling in the hall may have been removed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but the height of the fireplace suggests it may have been taken out long before, perhaps when the space was converted from a normal domestic hall into an open bake-house or brew-house.



**Illus. 4. The rear of the inn, showing the unglazed pantiles of the 16<sup>th</sup> century structure (A) and its lean-to extension on the left and the formerly open-sided lean-to kitchen and adjoining sheds on the right. The roof of the lean-to kitchen has protected the original external pargeting and 19<sup>th</sup> century ‘Suffolk Pink’ of the 18<sup>th</sup> century wing (B), as shown in illus. 15 & 16 below).**

## The 18<sup>th</sup> Century Cross Wing (B)

The southern wing of the inn is unusually narrow at just 12 ft (3.6 m), but its front room (B1) includes an additional area of 8 ft (2.4 m) beneath the same roof as the Tudor house (A). The roof structure consists of staggered butt-purlins in the typical manner of the late-18<sup>th</sup> and early-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and is identical to the renewed roof of the earlier building. The southern wall and both gables, which were visible from the road consist of brick laid in Flemish bond, but the wall to the rear yard is of cheaper timber-framing infilled with brick. The frame of the 16<sup>th</sup> century range was filled instead with wattle-and-daub, of which a panel is currently exposed in the later lean-to on the east. The roof above the present kitchen, which is also an extension, preserves an area of original external lime plaster bearing a 'basket-weave' pattern of pargeting beneath a later layer of red-ochre paint (Illus. 16). Most timber-framed 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings in East Anglia were rendered, pargeted and whitewashed, with ochre added to the wash only from the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The wing contains three ground-floor rooms with back-to-back fireplaces heating the front two (B1 & B2) and a large gable fireplace serving the rear (B3). An original newel stair rises against the northern wall of the double chimney. Both the central and eastern rooms were entered by original doors from the road on the south, each beneath segmental arches and respected by closers in the brickwork. The western door was initially wider than at present, but its counterpart on the east was narrow and is now blocked, with a replacement in the eastern gable. The rear (westernmost) room evidently operated as a kitchen, given the impressive scale of its fireplace (illus. 17), but is divided from the rest of the wing by an original solid partition (illus. 14) and was accessible only from the yard. This layout is highly abnormal and indicates the wing was built as an inn rather than a domestic house.



**Illus. 5. The rear (western) internal wall of the 16<sup>th</sup> century structure (A2). Now open to its late-18<sup>th</sup> century roof this room originally contained a ceiling and formed the two-bay hall of the Tudor house. The studs to the right of the central post have been replaced, leaving only the roof-plate *in situ*, but the diamond mullions of the first-floor window to the left are entirely original. 16<sup>th</sup> century windows typically lacked glass, but contained square mullions set diagonally and were closed by internal shutters. The outline of the blocked original back door can be seen to the left of the present door into the lean-to extension.**

The ceiling of the largest room to the east (B1) consists of re-used tall-sectioned joists that were formerly hidden by lath-and-plaster, as might be expected in the late-18<sup>th</sup> century, but both rear rooms (B2 & B3) contain intact 16<sup>th</sup> century ceilings of high quality. The common joists are flat-sectioned, with neatly cut chamfered edges and step-stops of the type normally found in merchants' houses or Yeoman farmhouses of the late-16<sup>th</sup> century. These common joists are fully tenoned to the identically chamfered principal joist above the studs of the internal partition (illus. 14), which are nailed additions, while the two principal joists in the central room are crudely finished and support the common joists from beneath. The exposed timbers of the northern wall are wholly or largely re-used, with no obvious evidence of intact 16<sup>th</sup> century fabric, so the Tudor ceilings were either imported from elsewhere or – more probably - remained in place when the cross-wing was effectively rebuilt around them in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as the chamfers of the principal joist respect the exceptionally narrow width of the existing walls. There is no evidence of the fragmentary 17<sup>th</sup> century framing mentioned in the list description (and said to have been considerably rebuilt in the late-18<sup>th</sup> century).



**Illus. 6**

**The ‘low-end’ of the 16<sup>th</sup> century hall (A2) seen from the north, with the original entrance door to the cross-passage on the left and the blocked back door on the right. The area above the bar ceiling was originally open to the missing chamber above the hall, with curved arch-braces supporting the original tie-beam. The two vertical studs that now support the horizontal mid-rail at ceiling height are later insertions, but the rail contains pegged mortises for original studs that formed a solid wall with two central doors and a third door against the back wall that opened onto a missing stair. Note the interesting 18<sup>th</sup> century hinged window shutter in the front wall to the left of the bar (A1).**

## Historic Significance and Impact assessment

The timber-framed northern wing of the Queen's Head has been much altered but can still be recognised as a probably complete two-cell artisan's house of the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century with a standard domestic layout. Known as Skeltons in 1584 it preserves two rare original diamond-mullioned windows and is of considerable historic interest. The narrow 18<sup>th</sup> century wing to the south is of unusual layout, with a rear kitchen entered only from the yard and two original entrances of different widths in its southern wall, having evidently been built when or after the property became an inn. It preserves a complete, high quality 16<sup>th</sup> century ceiling of chamfered joists that appears to have been re-used intact from an earlier building on the same narrow plot. The property fully merits its listing at grade II.

### **Removal of wall bisecting bar area (between A1 & B1)**

The wall which currently separates the two bar areas occupies the position of the original southern gable of the 16<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed house (illus. 9). The rest of this gable has been removed in the past, leaving only its corner-posts *in situ*. The wall consists of rendered masonry and appears to have been rebuilt as part of an extensive programme of restoration in the early 1980s, as mentioned in the list description – although in the absence of further investigation the presence of 18<sup>th</sup> century brickwork cannot be ruled out. No 16<sup>th</sup> century fabric will be damaged by its removal.

### **Insertion of dormer window or conservation light in the 16<sup>th</sup> century hall (A2)**

The 16<sup>th</sup> century roof was completely replaced by the present oak structure of staggered butt-purlins in the late-18<sup>th</sup> century, and the insertion of a light will not require the removal of 16<sup>th</sup> century fabric (illus. 8). The purlins and principal rafters of the present roof are exposed internally, but the common rafters are concealed by 20<sup>th</sup> century plasterboard and without further investigation it is impossible to determine whether they survive intact or were interrupted by dormer windows in the past. The exposed diagonal roof braces consist of pine rather than oak and are later insertions of no historic significance.

### **Insertion of a new door in the southern wing (linking rooms B2 and B3)**

The partition of vertical studs on a brick plinth (illus. 14) is an original feature of the late-18<sup>th</sup> century wing, which divided the rear kitchen (B3) from the central room entered from the road (B2). The kitchen was entered only by its present door from the rear yard (now the site of the modern lean-to kitchen). The insertion of a new door will require the removal of a single stud, nailed to the chamfered Tudor ceiling joist above, and the section of ground-sill and brick plinth beneath. The infill between the studs has been concealed or replaced by modern plasterboard.

### **Insertion of a new stair in the rear room of the southern wing (B3)**

The rear room was built as the small rear kitchen of the 18<sup>th</sup> century inn, entered only from the yard and extending to just 10 ft in length by 12 ft in width (3 m by 3.6 m). It preserves a large cooking fireplace against its gable (illus. 17), and a mid- to late-16<sup>th</sup> century ceiling of high-quality chamfered and step-stopped joists (illus.15). Although this ceiling is intact, and the chamfer stops of its principal joist respect the width of the present room, there is no evidence of contemporary fabric in the adjoining walls and it appears to have been re-used in its entirety from another building which may have occupied the same narrow building plot. It was not uncommon for complete ceilings to be recycled in this way during the 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, although most were disguised by plaster (as was formerly the case here). The insertion of a staircase will require the loss of two or possibly three 16<sup>th</sup> century common joists and their associated 18<sup>th</sup> century floorboards, along with the obstruction of the existing entrance door in the northern wall.



**Illus. 7. The 17<sup>th</sup> century chimney at the northern end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century hall (A2). The brick piers were rebuilt in the late-20<sup>th</sup> century and the timber lintel replaced. This fireplace may have operated in conjunction with the original ceiling, but may relate to the subsequent conversion of the hall into a bake-house or brew-house. The depth of the fireplace and the curved brickwork on the right suggests it was attached to a bread oven or copper.**

+++++

*Leigh Alston is a building archaeologist and architectural historian who lectures in the Department of Archaeology at Cambridge University but also undertakes commissions on a freelance basis for the National Trust and various county archaeological units. Publications include 'Late Medieval Workshops in East Anglia' in 'The Vernacular Workshop' edited by Paul Barnwell & Malcolm Airs (Council for British Archaeology and English Heritage, 2004) and the National Trust guidebook to Lavenham Guildhall (National Trust 2004).*

***Additional photographs follow on pp. 17-22***



**Additional Photographs (pp. 17-22)**



**Illus. 8. The late-18<sup>th</sup> century rebuilt roof of the Tudor hall, seen from the south. The tie-beam spanning the walls is also a replacement, along with its bolted knee-braces. The original tie-beam was arch-braced like its counterpart on the south (illus. 6), as indicated by mortises in the original wall posts.**



**Illus. 9. The service bay of the 16<sup>th</sup> century house (A1), seen from the north. The ceiling joists may be original but have been re-set and are now secured by late-20<sup>th</sup> century wire nails. This room was originally divided into a pair of store rooms with an axial partition and a stair to the rear (right). The solid wall in the centre of this image appears to consist only of late-20<sup>th</sup> century masonry but occupies the position of the original Tudor gable.**



**Illus. 10.** The original diamond-mullioned 16<sup>th</sup> century window in the back wall of the first-floor room above the bar area shown in illus. 9 above (A1, i.e. the original service chamber). The curved wall brace is also original, as is the ‘edge-halved and bridled’ scarf joint in the roof-plate to the right. Joints of this kind were standard in the 16<sup>th</sup> century but were quickly superseded after *circa* 1600.



**Illus. 11.** The dormer window in the front wall of the first-floor room above the barn (A1). The studs here are later replacements, along with the roof timbers, but the large post beneath the window remains *in situ* and marks the south-eastern corner of the Tudor house. The empty diamond-mullion mortises of an original window can be seen in the underside of the roof-plate on the left. This window would have matched the intact example in the opposite wall shown in illus. 10 above.



**Illus. 12. The front (eastern) room of the 18<sup>th</sup> century wing (B1) with the wall marking the original southern gable of the Tudor house adjoining the bar to the right. The plain, re-used ceiling joists here were formerly concealed by plaster, and the fireplace is a 20<sup>th</sup> century reconstruction.**



**Illus. 13. The central room of the 18<sup>th</sup> century wing (B2), seen from the west. The fireplace was largely rebuilt in the late-20<sup>th</sup> century but retains some 18<sup>th</sup> century brickwork. The timber-framed wall on the left consists entirely of re-used timber, and the high-quality chamfered ceiling joists, which date from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, are supported by roughly hewn principal joists of much later date.**



**Illus. 14.** The rear kitchen of the 18<sup>th</sup> century wing (B3) viewed from the west, showing the original solid partition adjoining the central room (B2). This room contains a complete, high-quality 16<sup>th</sup> century ceiling with neatly chamfered and step-stopped joists which extends into the central room. The common joists are tenoned to the contemporary principal joist, which is chamfered and stopped at both ends, but the vertical studs are nailed additions. Remarkably, there is no evidence of intact 16<sup>th</sup> century fabric in the external walls, and the entire ceiling appears to have been re-used from an older building of the same width.



**Illus. 15.** A detail of the high-quality 16<sup>th</sup> century ceiling joists in the north-eastern corner of the rear room (B3). Note the chamfer stop to the left of the principal joist, which is matched at its opposite (southern) end and indicates the ceiling was designed for a building of the same unusually narrow width (with just 12 ft or 3.6 m between its posts). The timber is lodged alongside the post of the northern wall on the left and is not integral to the frame.



**Illus. 16. The typical 18<sup>th</sup> century roof structure of staggered butt-purlins in the northern internal wall of the rear wing (above rooms B3 to the left and B2 to the right).**



**Illus. 15. The original northern external wall of the 18<sup>th</sup> century wing (B), now exposed in the lean-to roof above the modern kitchen (the exterior of the wall shown in illus. 14 above). The studwork and diagonal primary bracing is typical of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as is the infill of re-used brick as opposed to the wattle-and-daub used in the Tudor house (A).**



**Illus. 16.** A detail of the original external plaster above the modern kitchen, as shown to the right in illus. 15 above. The ‘basket-weave’ pargeting to the lime plaster illustrates the wall’s original appearance (contrasting with the brickwork of the western facade), but the red ochre pigment is a 19<sup>th</sup> century addition that illustrates an authentic version of ‘Suffolk Pink’.



**Illus. 17.** The imposing original fireplace on the rear (western) gable of the 18<sup>th</sup> century wing which served the inn’s small kitchen. This kitchen was entered from the yard on the right and was not connected internally to the rest of the building. The crudely hewn principal joist above the chimney lintel supports the opposite ends of the Tudor common joists shown in illus. 15.

## Appendix

### The Standard Room Plan of Medieval and Tudor Houses

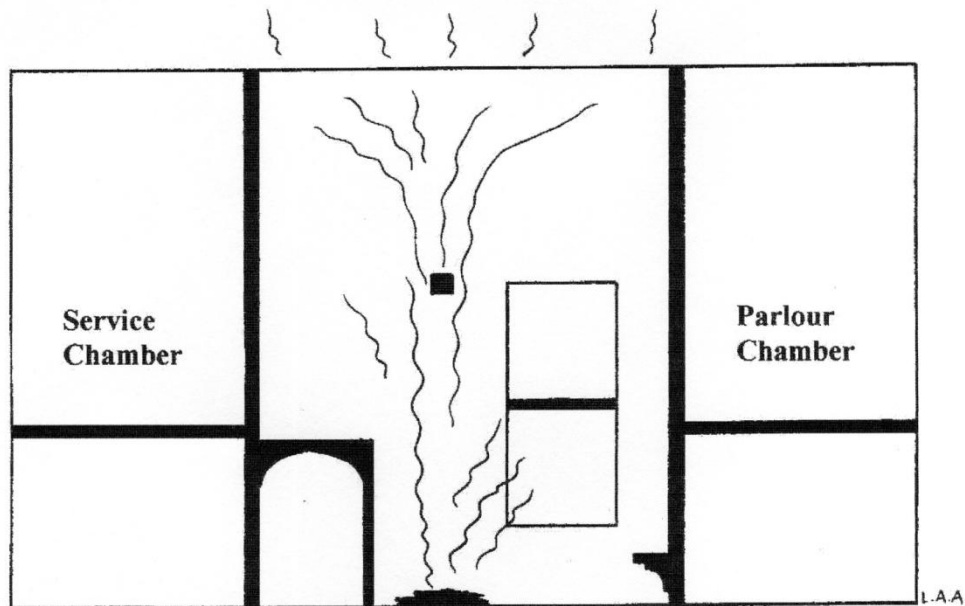
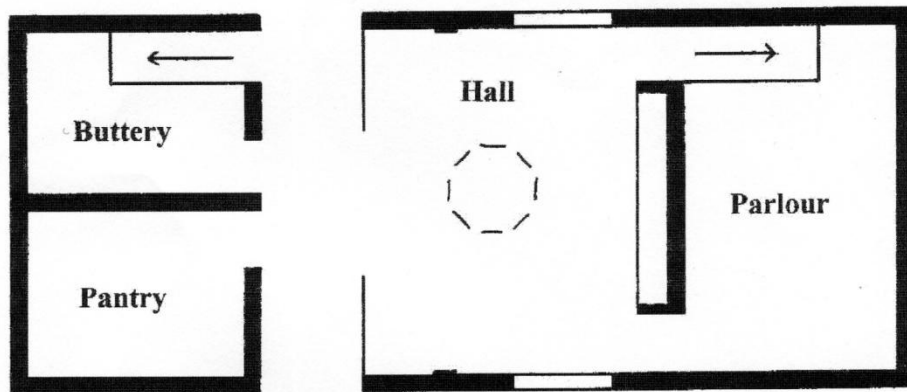
Although identical houses are rare, almost all domestic buildings constructed between the mid-13<sup>th</sup> and the early-17<sup>th</sup> centuries reflect the same room layout (see accompanying diagram). Until the opening decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century the only heated space in a typical house comprised an open hall with an open hearth akin to a bonfire burning on its floor. In the absence of a chimney the hall, as its name suggests, was open to its roof in the manner of a barn to allow smoke to escape through the roof covering and through tall, unglazed windows which rose from normal sill height to eaves level. The hall was a communal space with little or no fixed furniture, and was used as a dining room, a dormitory for household servants and apprentices, and as a kitchen and general purpose working area at varying times of the day. The hall was also designed to display the wealth and status of its owner, and at meal times was arranged like a modern college dining hall, with the head of the household sitting with his immediate family behind the 'high table' at one end, while his servants and employees were arranged in order of precedence at secondary tables along the side walls. The lower an individual's status in the household, the further he sat from the 'high' end of the hall. The high table was often raised on a platform or dais, but contemporary references to the high and low ends of houses relate rather to social than physical hierarchy. Halls were usually divided into two structural bays, separated by a pair of principal posts carrying a tie-beam that spanned the walls at eaves level, with the great windows in the high-end bay towards the dais. Fixing pegs for the high-end bench, which was often attached to the wall, can sometimes be seen in surviving examples. The front and back doors of the house (which often stood open for ventilation purposes) lay opposite each other at the low end of the hall, forming a cross-passage that was partly screened by boarded partitions to exclude the weather.

The open hall in the middle of the typical medieval house was flanked by additional rooms that were usually floored over. Beyond the high end of the hall lay a single room known as a parlour, that served as the main bedroom for family members and guests and contained at least one bed (perhaps consisting of nothing more than a straw mattress) and perhaps a few pieces of furniture that normally included a storage chest. The parlour was entered by a door to one side of the high-end bench, and sometimes a second door on the opposite side of the bench opened onto a stair to the solar (upper room) above. Medieval living took place primarily on the relatively warm ground-floor, and the two solars of the house were used chiefly for storage purposes. An increasing demand for domestic privacy during the later 16<sup>th</sup> century saw the provision of additional bedrooms on the first floor, and the 'parlour chamber', as the room over the parlour came to be known, was often provided with its own fireplace. Principal bedrooms, used more and more for sitting and entertaining as well as sleeping, remained downstairs until well into the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Beyond the low end of the hall lay two service or storage rooms termed butteries and pantries (or collectively as 'spences', i.e. dispensing rooms). As their names suggest, these were used for storing wet and dry goods respectively, and represent the household larder. The front service rooms of town houses often contained shops, and the buttery sometimes served as a dairy in rural contexts. Two doorways lying side by side in the middle of the low-end wall gave access to these rooms, usually in conjunction with a third door against the back wall that opened onto a stair to the service chamber above. Although the original arches of these doorways have frequently been removed, their position may be revealed by the distribution of peg holes used to secure the mortise and tenon joints of the wall timbers.

The tripartite plan described here is found in both large manor houses and small peasant cottages in the countryside, but is sometimes condensed in towns where houses consisting of only a hall and subdivided parlour (or occasionally a hall with service rooms) may be found. Houses of high status might also possess rear courtyards, containing additional

accommodation or perhaps bake-houses and workshops, but rarely add to the tripartite arrangement in their main ranges. Rectangular houses under a single roof are common, but more ostentatious town houses frequently contain their parlour and service rooms in relatively expensive cross-wings with jettied gables built at right-angles to their halls. From the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century chimney stacks were inserted into open halls, and new houses built with ceilings throughout, but the standard layout endured. By the end of the same century fireplaces were typically provided in parlours as well as halls, and often the parlour chamber was also heated (but rarely the hall chamber). Not until the second quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century did the cross-passage plan begin to disappear from new houses, to be gradually replaced by a number of different layouts of which the 'lobby-entrance', where the main door opens into a narrow 'lobby' in front of a chimney stack between the hall and parlour, was the most common.



### The Standard Medieval House Plan

The original 16<sup>th</sup> century layout of the Queen's Head was identical, although its hall contained a ceiling and chimney from the outset and it is impossible to be sure whether the house possessed a parlour. The studs of the partition adjoining the pantry and buttery have been removed, but there is clear evidence in the surviving mid-rail of a pair of central service doors and a stair door to the rear.