

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Head of Economy	Report Number: N20
To: Strategy Committee	Date of meeting: 13 June 2013

ADOPTION OF KETTLEBASTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members of the results of the recent public consultation on Kettlebaston conservation area appraisal and to seek approval for the adoption of the document as non-statutory Supplementary Planning Guidance.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Conservation Area Appraisal (Appendix A) be adopted as non-statutory Supplementary Planning Guidance with immediate effect.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 None.

4. Risk Management

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
Working on planning applications and appeals with inadequate and outdated (1973) information	High	Significant	Adopt new appraisal as recommended
Council not fulfilling its duties to 'review from time to time' its conservation areas under section 69 of Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	Low	Marginal	Undertake further conservation area appraisal work (31 in District)

5. Consultations

- 5.1 Extensive consultation has been undertaken as detailed below.

6. Equality and Diversity Impact

- 6.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising directly from this paper.

7. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

This appraisal has been written in a format matching both Babergh's other conservation area appraisals and those produced for Mid Suffolk District Council.

8. Key Information

- 8.1 A conservation area appraisal sets out to define what is important about the area's character and appearance, describing its 'quality of place' so that we understand what it is we are trying to safeguard. It identifies the area's special features and changing needs through a process, which includes researching its historical development, carrying out a basic townscape analysis and preparing a character assessment. It thus becomes a vital tool for enabling the active management of the conservation area.
- 8.2 A public consultation exercise was undertaken between February and April 2013. This included letters to Kettlebaston Parish Council, Babergh's local Ward Member, Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Preservation Society and English Heritage, requesting their views on the draft appraisal and its proposals.
- 8.3 In addition an open morning was held as part of a Parish Council Meeting on Saturday 13 April 2013 for members of the public to see the appraisal in exhibition format and give their views. The meeting was publicised locally and eight persons attended. The appraisal document was also made available online at Babergh's website and a copy was available for inspection at Babergh's Planning reception with comments forms.
- 8.4 At the open morning, the implications of living in a conservation area and a few local planning issues were discussed, such as the use of modern materials on extensions to traditional buildings and the problems with potential 'Buildings at Risk'. Following the event, Kettlebaston Parish Council confirmed by email their support for the appraisal, saying they had nothing further to add.
- 8.5 By the close of the consultation period a letter and four further emails had been received, mostly from former Parish Councillors. Two of the emails simply reiterated support for the contents of the letter. Loss of trees was of considerable concern and other comments made were about weather-boarding as a local material, and expressing support for any undergrounding of overhead wires should this become possible.
- 8.6 The Appraisal as now presented for adoption has therefore been amended to take account of these various comments as far as possible and corrects any other minor errors brought to our attention.

9. Appendices

Title	Location
A. Kettlebaston Conservation Area Appraisal	Attached

10. Background Documents

- 10.1 Kettlebaston Conservation Area correspondence and working file.

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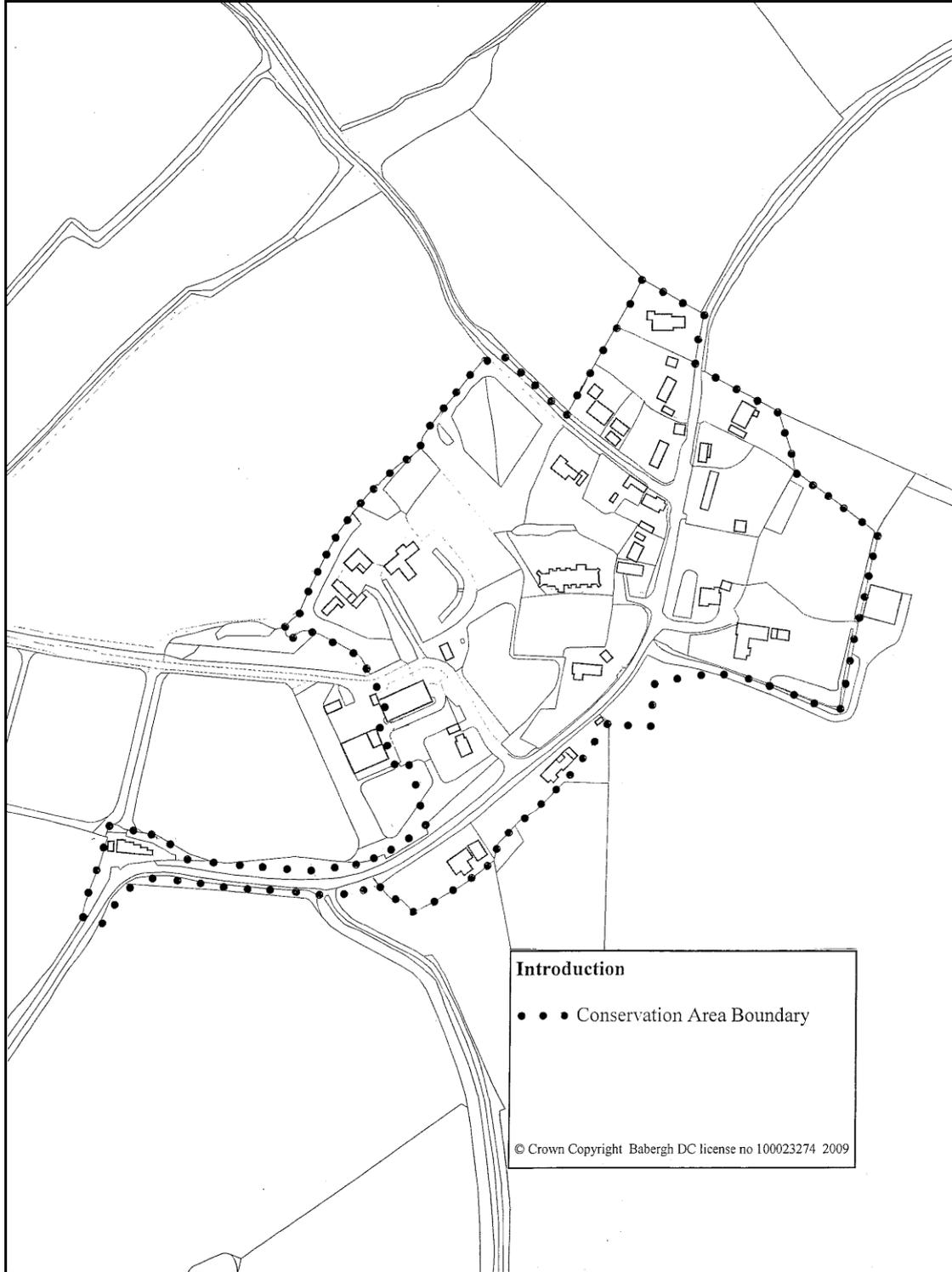
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conservation area appraisal



Introduction

The conservation area in Kettlebaston was originally designated by Babergh District Council in 1981.

The Council has a duty to review its conservation area designations from time to time, and this appraisal examines Kettlebaston under a number of different headings as set out in English Heritage's new 'Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals' (2006).

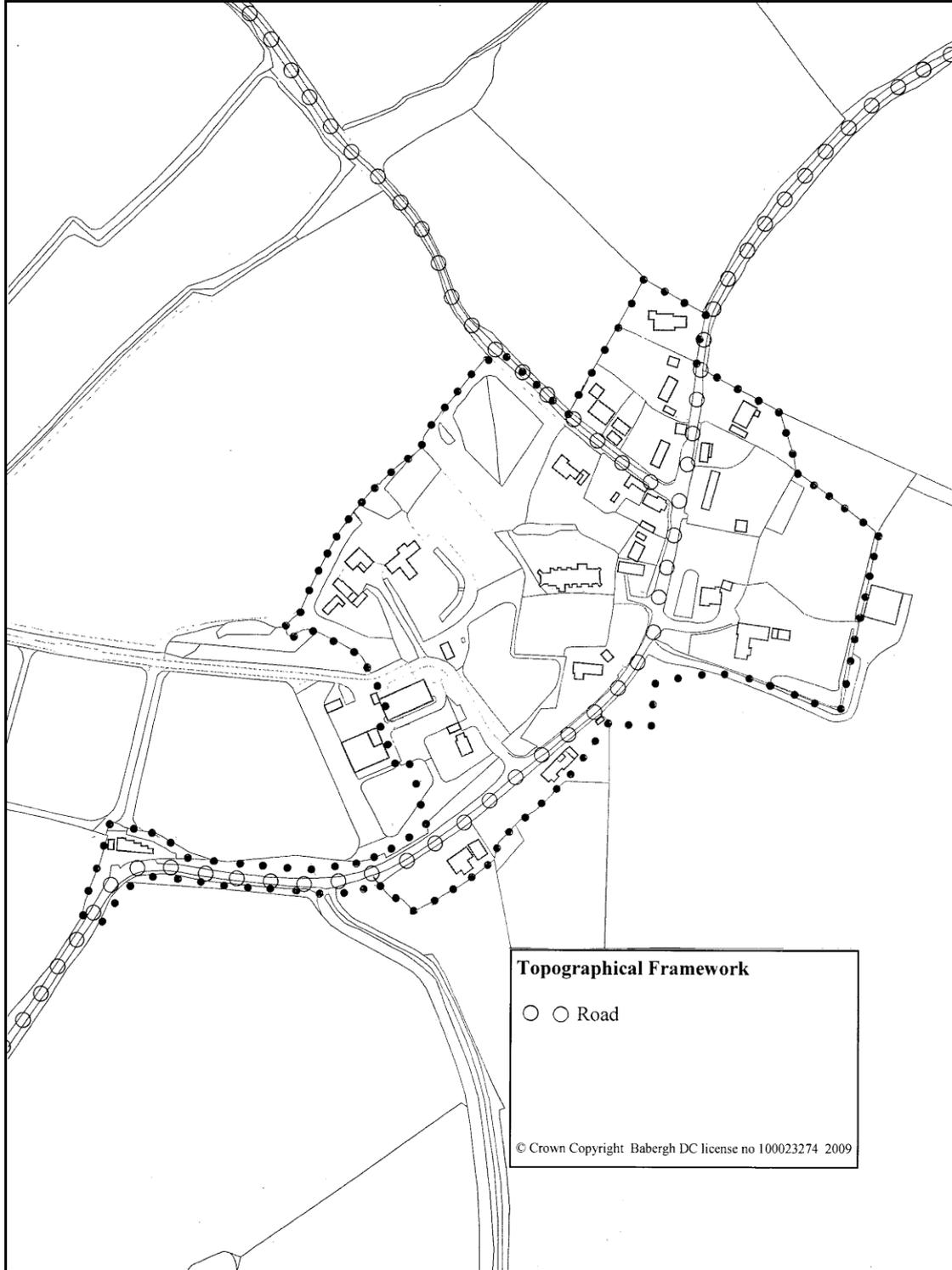
As such it is a straightforward appraisal of Kettlebaston's built environment in conservation terms.



As a document it is neither prescriptive nor overly descriptive, but more a demonstration of 'quality of place', sufficient to inform those considering changes in the area. The photographs and maps are thus intended to contribute as much as the text itself.

As the English Heritage guidelines point out, the appraisal is to be read as a general overview, rather than as a comprehensive listing, and the omission of any particular building, feature or space does not imply that it is of no interest in conservation terms.

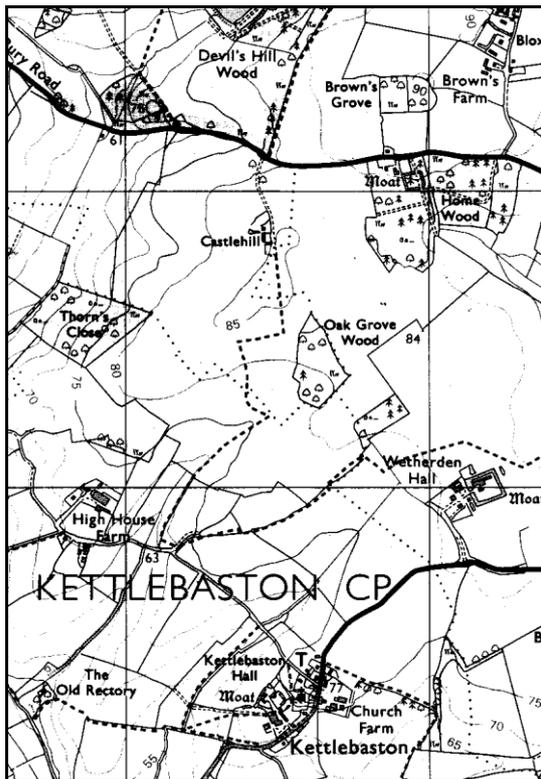
Text, photographs and map overlays by Patrick Taylor, Conservation Architect, Babergh District Council 2013.



Topographical Framework

Kettlebaston is a small village in west central Suffolk about three miles east of Lavenham and six miles south-west of Stowmarket. The local geology is mostly the boulder clay of High Suffolk overlying chalk with mainly alluvial deposits in the valleys to the south.

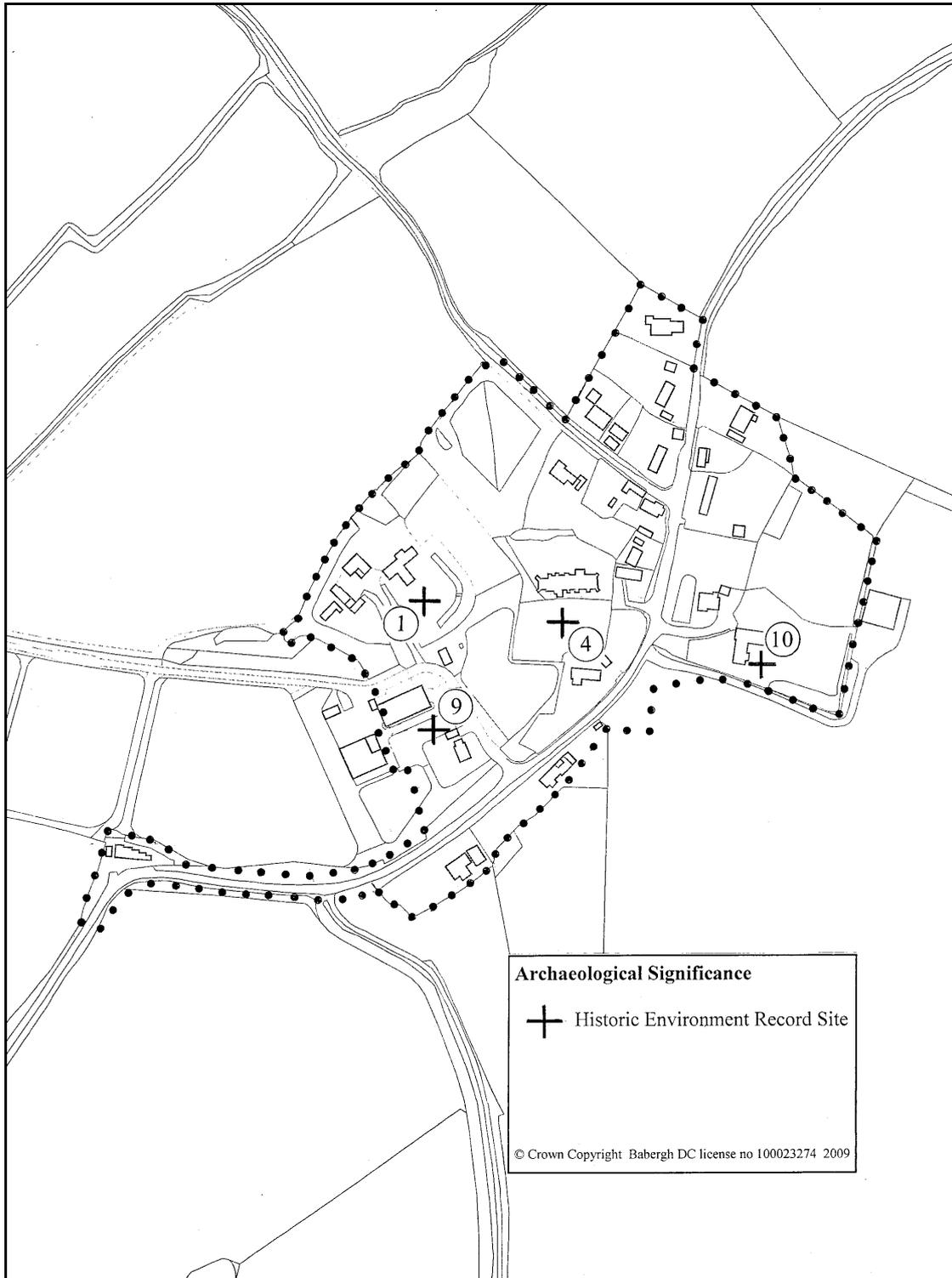
The parish is near the watershed between the Stour and Gipping valleys, on higher land between the River Brett and one of its tributaries, both flowing south before they join just beyond Chelsworth. The Brett continues through to Hadleigh before eventually joining the River Stour at Higham. The Stour then continues eastwards to the estuary at Manningtree and its eventual meeting with the both the Gipping and the open sea at Harwich.



Historically the river valleys were the main routes of communication, the Stour valley having been canalized up to Sudbury by 1709 and the Gipping up to Stowmarket by 1793.

The London to Norwich railway line still goes through Stowmarket, but Sudbury is now the terminus of the branch line off this, which formerly continued north to Lavenham and onwards to Bury St Edmunds.

The route of a former Roman Road crosses south-west to north-east across the southern part of the parish, originally joining the two river crossings at Long Melford on the Stour and at Coddendam on the Gipping.



Archaeological Significance

The wider parish of Kettlebaston has about a dozen sites listed in the Suffolk County Historic Environment Record.

The oldest entry is a Mesolithic axehead found about half a mile south-east of village, whilst an undated Ring ditch cropmark about a mile to the north-west is probably of Neolithic or Bronze Age origin.

The much later Roman Road runs north-eastwards from Wagger Farm past a point just south of the axehead site, and there are scatter finds, coins and pottery of Roman date from two other sites nearer the village.

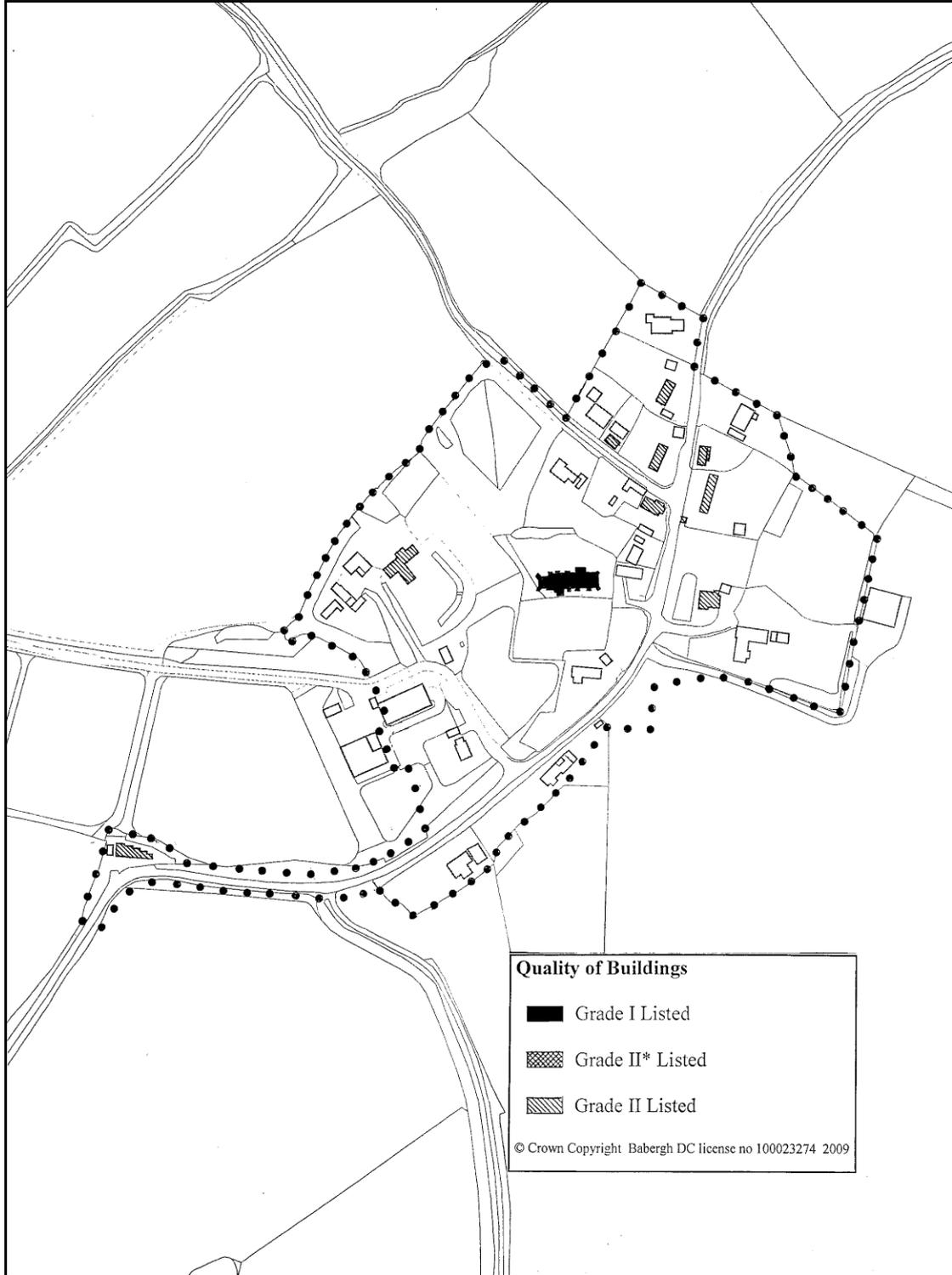


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In MANTON and KETTLEBASTON St. Edmund's held 4 free men before 1066. They have 2 carucates of land.
Meadow, 6 acres.
8 smallholders; 3 slaves.
Always 3 ploughs ploughing.
They could grant and sell their land. St. Edmund's had the jurisdiction, patronage, and every customary due.
Value always 60s.
Of this land, Gamas holds 1 carucate; 2 ploughs in lordship.
Humphrey (holds) 1 carucate. Value 40s in the same assessment.
Their land has 6 furlongs in length and 4 in width; 3d in tax, but others hold there.

The Medieval period is represented by the church, a chapel site (at Chapel Farm to the south-east) and two moated sites. Of the latter only that around Kettlebaston Hall is in the conservation area, the other being at High House Farm to the north-west of the village.

Kettlebaston is described in the Domesday survey of 1086 as a manor held by St Edmunds, although 'others hold there'.



Intrinsic Quality of Buildings

Being such a small settlement, Kettlebaston has only 13 listed buildings, one of which is a K6 red telephone box.

The other dozen are mostly grade II listed houses of timber-framed construction, two of which are farmhouses set within the wider parish: Wagger Farm to the south and High House Farm within its moat to the north-west.

The only grade I building is the Church of St Mary, mainly 14th Century, in flint with stone dressings and a plaintile roof. Parts of the nave are Norman in origin and there are remnants of a 13th Century wall painting. It has a later red brick south porch and at one time housed the original Kettlebaston Alabasters (c.1350), now in the British Museum.



Nearby, Kettlebaston Hall sits within the remnants of its moat, the present building having replaced an earlier hall. It is 17th Century and L-shaped in plan with a jettied south-east wing, all timber-framed and rendered with a plaintile roof and decorative bargeboards.

Many of the other timber-framed and rendered listed buildings in the village are thatched. One of these, known as the Old Convent, dates from the 16th Century, but got its current name from the Sisters of the Holy Childhood, who ran an orphanage for 12 boys there in the early 20th Century.



Traditional Building Materials

Kettlebaston is fairly typical of south Suffolk in terms of the building materials employed there. Many of the older buildings, the majority of those listed, are rendered timber frames, with variously plaintiled or thatched roofs, the former usually replacing the latter.

Later buildings are more often in brick, usually the local soft Suffolk red variety. This has sometimes been used alongside flint, as a dressing at Stone Cottage and for the entire south porch at the Church.

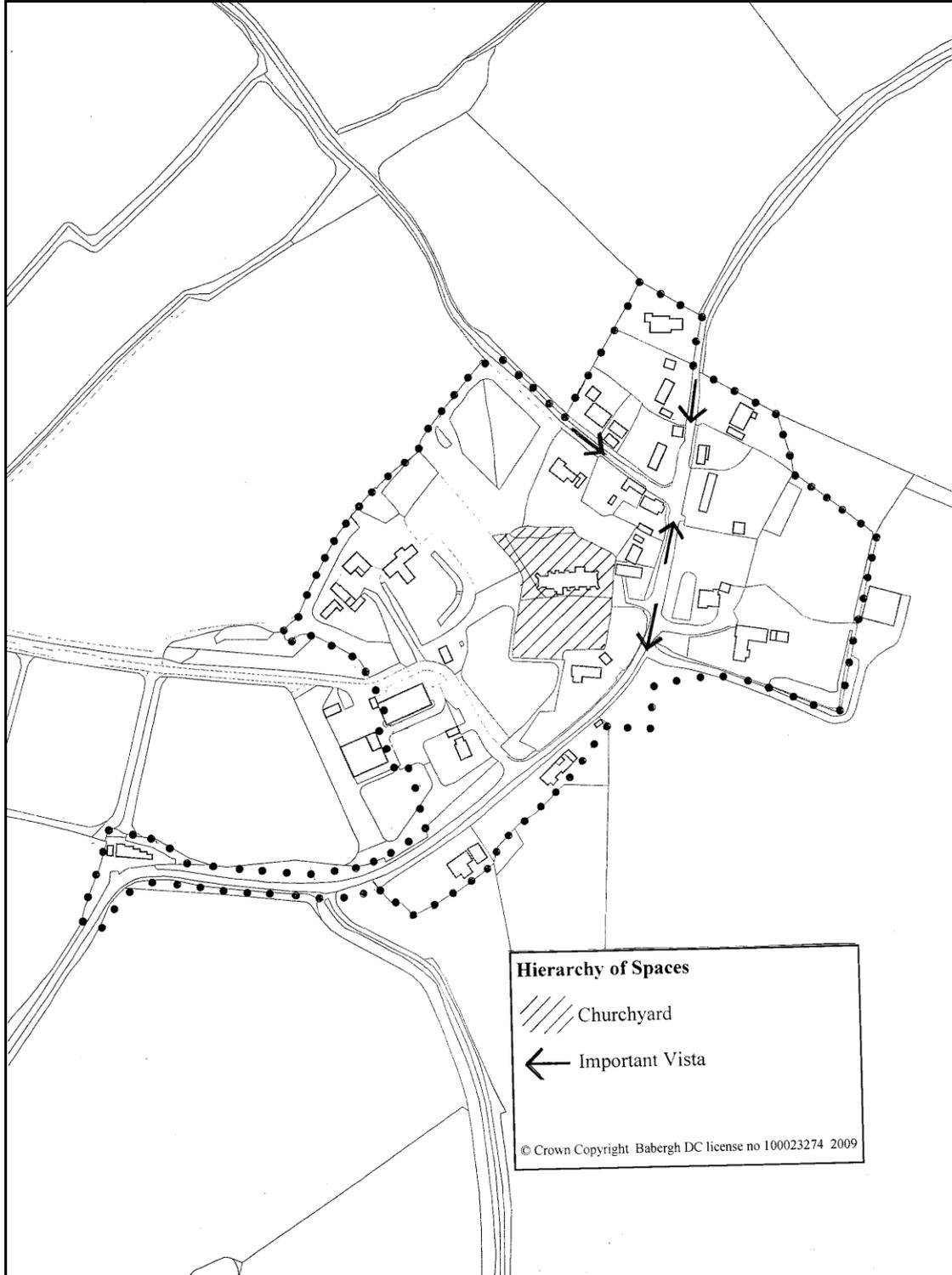
Red brick also appears on chimneys and part rendered or painted over on some more recent buildings.



Other typical Suffolk building materials can be found such as white weatherboarding and clay pantiles, some plain red, others of the black glazed variety.

One unusual local material is clay lump, used on the single storey thatched Clay Cottage, grade II listed.

Two otherwise common materials, Suffolk white brick and slate, are perhaps notable by their absence, presumably because little was built in the village during the 19th Century when these were fashionable materials.



Hierarchy of Spaces

Kettlebaston is a small compact settlement, comprising a cluster of buildings with a church and hall.

The cluster is most apparent at the north-east end of the village where buildings face each other across a gently winding road. There is no particular focal point here other than at the centre of this cluster where Back Lane joins the road through, opposite the telephone kiosk.

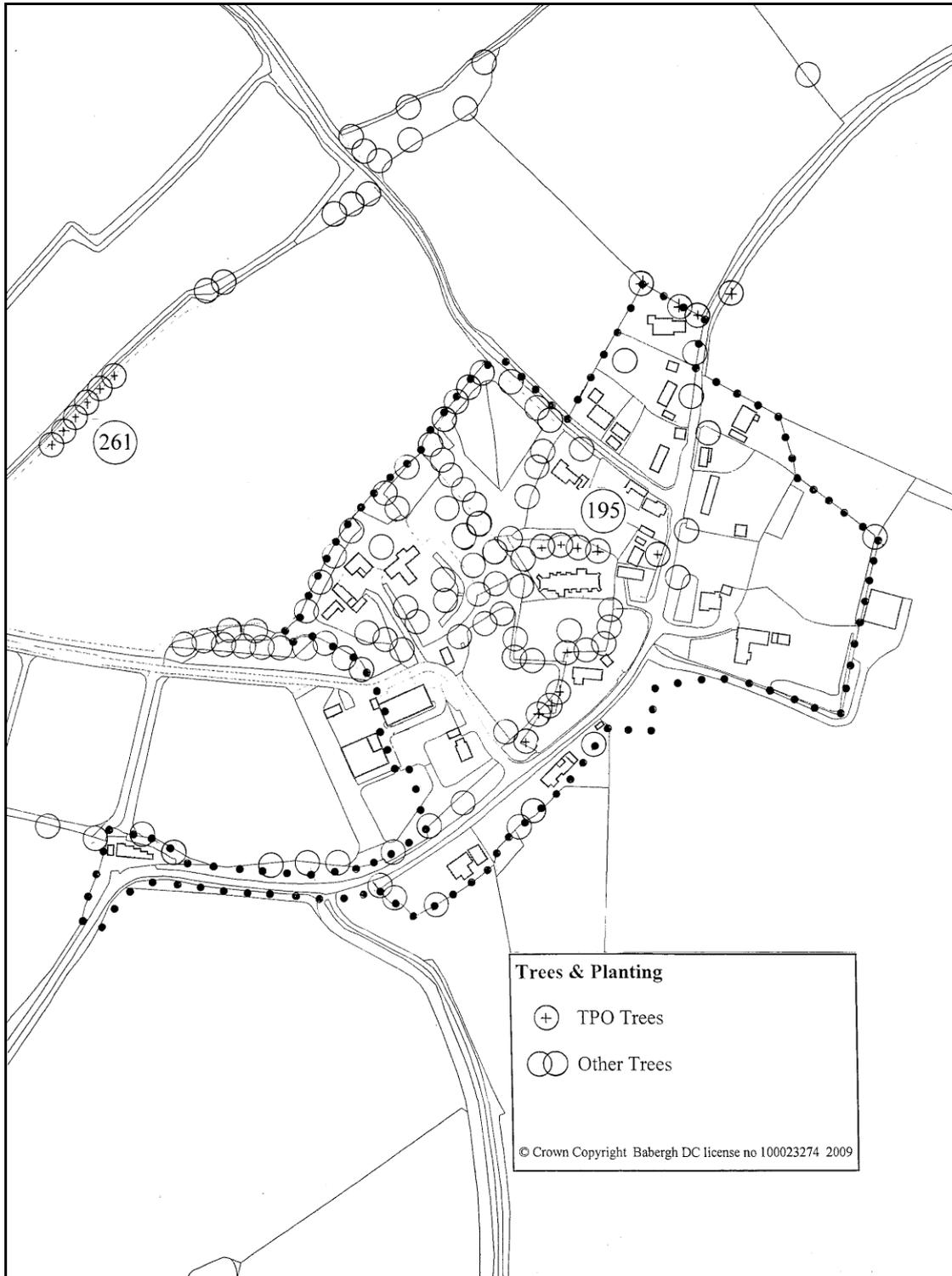
Immediately west of this cluster the buildings, which include the Church and Hall, are set back within their own grounds, whilst to the south-west they are more strung out along the road on one side or the other.



Good views in this direction from the centre emphasise the village's hilltop location with the ground dropping away to the Brett valley.

Following the road in this direction it winds to the west for a while before dropping into the valley at Evans Corner.





Trees & Planting

About a kilometre due north of the village, just over the parish boundary in Brettenham, there is a remnant of ancient woodland known as Oak Grove Wood.

Within the village a number of individual trees and areas of trees have been felt of sufficient importance to be given the protection of Tree Preservation Orders over the years.

The earliest of these, TPO 195, was made by West Suffolk County Council covering various Pine, Beech, Lime, Sycamore, Ash, Willow and Elm trees around the village centre, although a good many of the last may have now been lost.

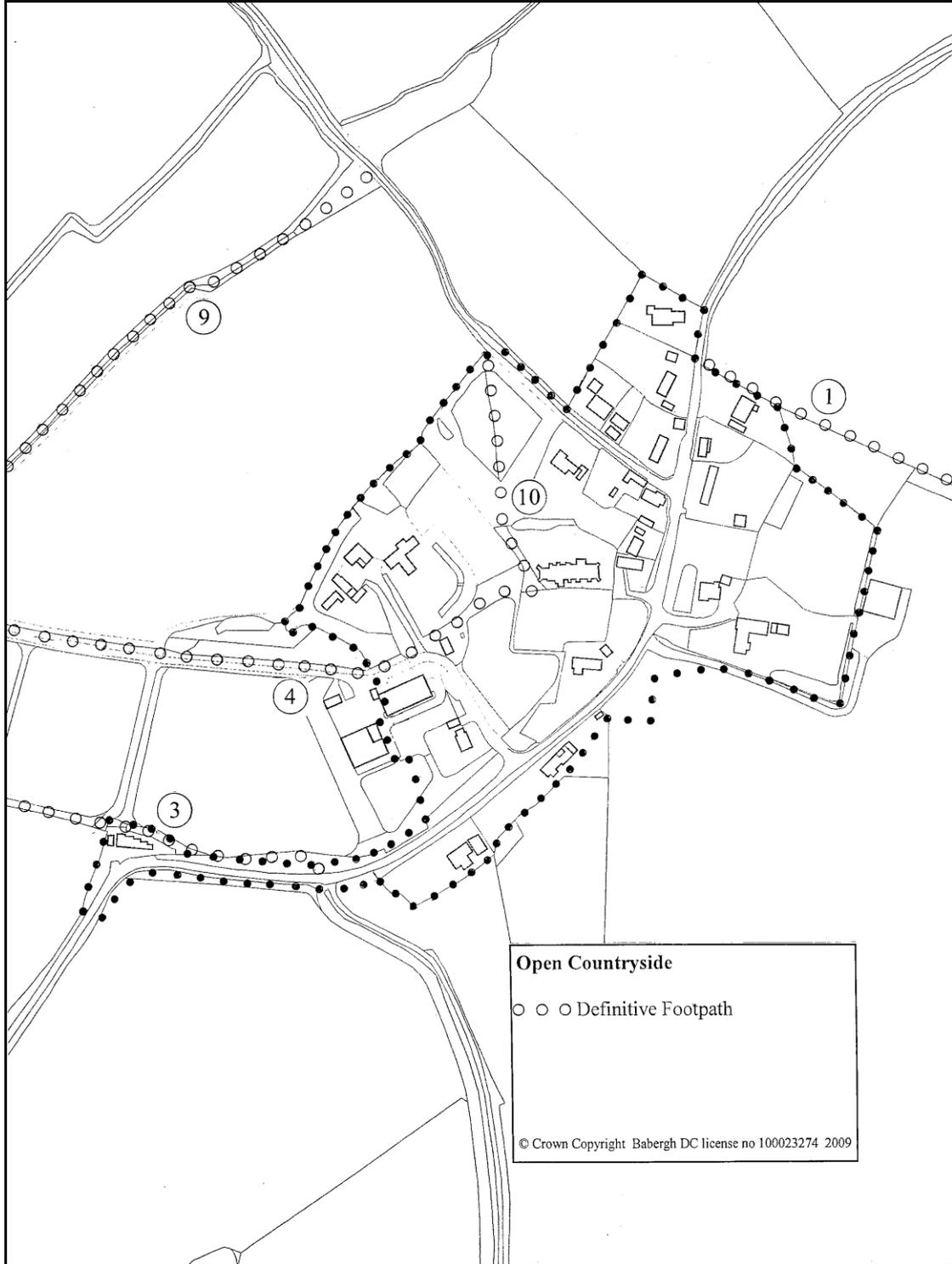


The more recent TPO 261 made by Babergh D.C. covered a group of Elms north-west of the village, some of which survive, although one was felled in 2010.

Some of the recent losses should be made good by replanting, as required by the lost trees' TPO status, however this does not necessarily apply to trees simply protected by their being in the conservation area.

Overall it is the trees in the village that make the settlement stand out like an oasis from the surrounding desert of arable farmland, where even hedges are few and far between. The new area of trees planted to help screen the industrial looking farm buildings south-west of the Hall helps continue this.





Relationship to Open Countryside

Kettlebaston is so small that it does not have a built up area boundary as defined by Babergh's Local Plan. The whole village is therefore technically classified as 'countryside' and thus remains relatively protected from development.

What limited development there has been is mostly one plot deep on one or both sides of the road, so most properties have countryside at least to the rear.

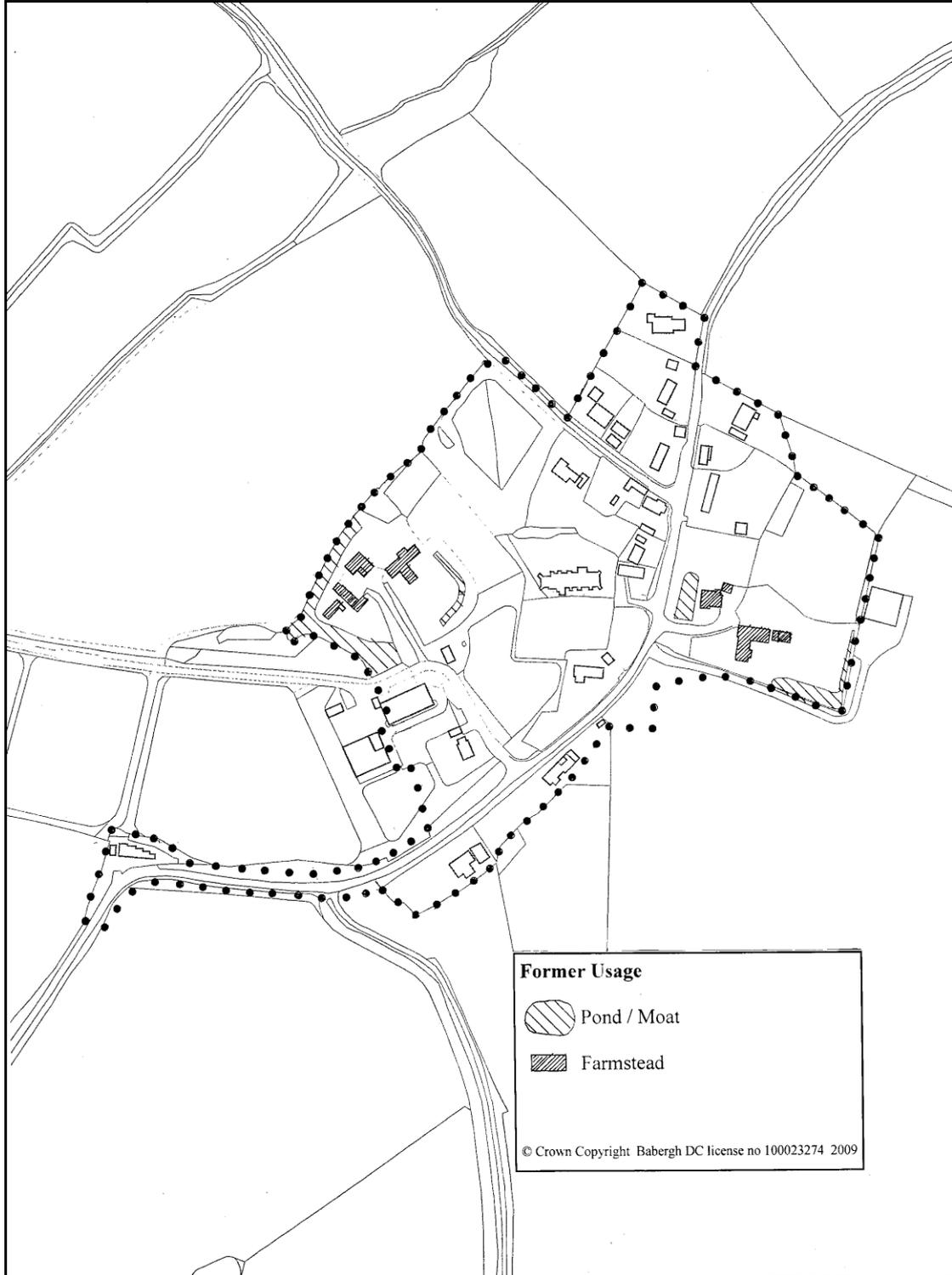
Older maps show more in the way of a radial pattern of footpaths emanating from the central Church than is evident now, some of these having been diverted or extinguished. One that has not changed is definitive footpath FP10 heading directly north from the Church a short distance to join Back Lane.



Around Church Farm two paths have disappeared and definitive footpath FP1, approaching from the south-east, now diverts northwards around the east side of the village to join the road through the village at its northern end.

Similarly around Kettlebaston Hall, FP3 approaching from the west comes out onto the road at the southern end of the village. Shortly before reaching the village FP4 used to branch off this towards the Church, where FP9 heads north-eastwards across to Back Lane.

Back Lane itself and the road through the village are probably themselves upgraded paths, now in use as roads to the north-west, north-east and south-west.



Prevailing & Former Usage

Kettlebaston is a small Suffolk village with Hall and Church and a primarily agricultural background. Records for the early 17th Century show the presence there of just 3 yeomen and 2 husbandmen along with a minister and a labourer. Later in that century there were 6 yeomen and 1 husbandman.

Much the same level of basic agricultural activity is shown by directory entries in 1844, when there were 5 farmers and a schoolmistress.

No mention is made in these various records of a miller in Kettlebaston, however three possible windmill sites are identified by field names in the wider parish by the 1841 Tithe apportionment.



Also shown at this date are fields called 'Hop Ground Piece', 'Pit Meadow', 'Clay Pits' and 'Kiln Field', indicating both local brewing activity and most probably brick / tile making.

During the 20th Century the School became a Village Hall, the Orphanage reverted to domestic use and the village became just a dormitory, the only economic activity there, that of the stud farm south of Kettlebaston Hall.





Losses & Possible Gains

The use of modern materials such as concrete roof tiles or uPVC windows and boarding on many of the unlisted but otherwise traditionally built buildings can detract from the overall appearance of a settlement. Some of the more recent farm buildings south of the Hall are rather industrial in their form, setting and materials.

Newer domestic infill has also brought in modern materials and non-traditional forms, and fortunately this is often successfully screened by native hedging or other suitable boundary treatments. Wide vehicular entrance drives can thwart this, opening up views to non-traditional buildings, and sometimes the screening itself in the form of 'leylandii' hedging can be intrusive.



The village also suffers from an excess of overhead wiring, supplying the homes there with their power and telephone services. Should the opportunity (and funding) become available, these should be undergrounded.

One listed building at Evans Corner has a thatched roof, the condition of which is of some concern. Its condition is not yet sufficiently poor to place it on the 'Buildings at Risk' register, but it should be monitored.



References & Further Reading

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*This Appraisal adopted as
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Babergh District Council Strategy
Committee 13 June 2013*