

Kesgrave Development of Housing and Road Network

Housing Development

Kesgrave has experienced considerable post war growth due in part to:

- Construction of Sizewell A and B Nuclear Power Stations
- Construction of RAF/ USAF Bentwaters Airforce base housing military and civilian staff
- Relocation of Post Office Research Staff to Martlesham (now BT) from Dollis Hill.
- Growth of the Port of Felixstowe.
- The town's proximity to an expanding Ipswich

Table 1 below records the post war census figures for Suffolk and its major towns. It is quite evident when comparing population growth that Kesgrave has increased significantly.

Table 1

Year	Population of Suffolk	Population of Ipswich	Population of Kesgrave	Increase since last census
1951	442,561	Not to hand	1388	
1961	471,974	Not to hand	3382	1994
1971	546,194	Not to hand	4749	1337
1981	590,133	Not to hand	4991	242
1991	636,266	Not to hand	5105	114
2001	668,533	117069	9276	4171
2011	728,200	133384	14141	4865
Post War Increase	Factor of 1.7 X		Factor 10.2 X	

Table 2 shows that the rate of growth for Kesgrave shown in Table 1 has been more than other towns in the county.

Table 1

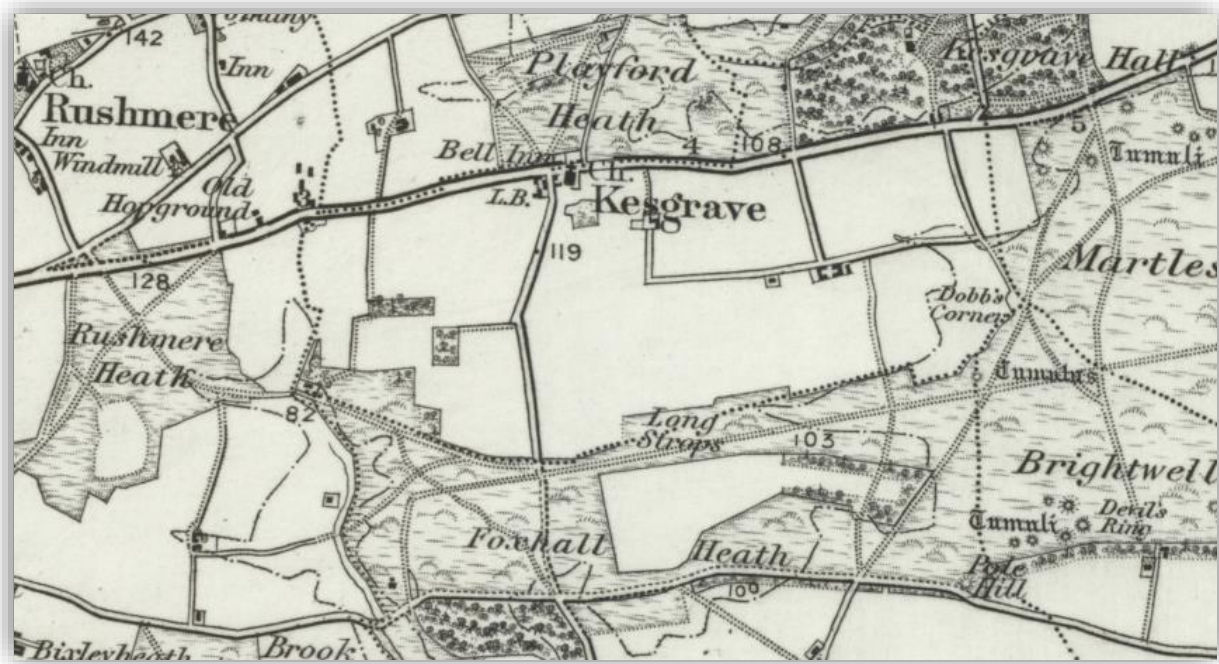
Year	Lowestoft & Colville	Bury St Edmunds	Felixstowe & Walton	Sudbury	Haverhill	Stowmarket	Woodbridge & Melton
1951					***	7325	
1961					5446	7795	
1971						8676	
1981						10940	
1991						13229	
2001	68850	35470	23921	20188	18464	16950	10956
2011	71010	41113	28311	22213	22041	21028	11467

The population of Suffolk as a whole has increased from 442,561 people (1951 census) to 728,200 (2011 census) or a factor of 1.7X . Its fastest rate of expansion was during the 1960's when its population increased by 15.7% but has moderated since to between 7% to 8% every census thereafter.

Landscape Development

This map depicts the village of Kesgrave in 1896 covering an area of 867 acres. It shows to the north, the main road (A12 as it was then) linking the County town of Ipswich with Woodbridge and the Suffolk Coast. Foxhall Road is shown to the south with Bell Lane bisecting the rural farmland village into east and west. These prominent features remain unchanged today.

The map shows farm tracks to the west, these are now Holly Road and Cambridge Road. The track leading to two plantations is now Orchard Grove. The track doglegs south (now Oregon Road) then eastward to link with Bell Lane, (now Penzance Road). To the east of Bell Lane lie the service roads to Bell Barn Farm (now St Olaves Road), then to the Grange Farm (Windrush Road, Ashdale Road and Dobbs Lane).

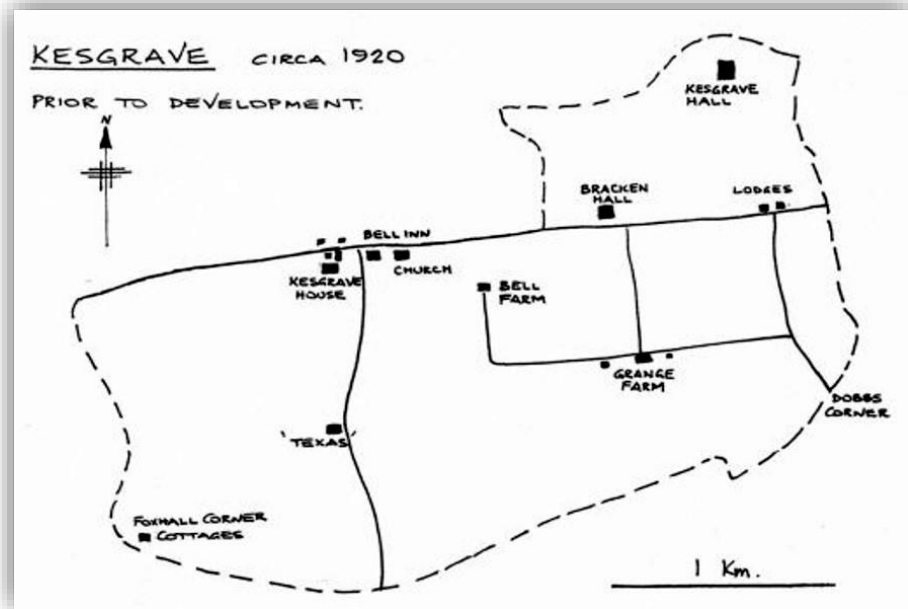


There are few buildings because the population of Kesgrave in 1901 was just 74 persons. At the junction of Bell Lane with the A12 trunk road lies the site of Kesgrave House (now demolished). The Bell Inn and the parish church of All Saints were adjacent and remain today. To the extreme upper right lies Kesgrave Hall (now Milsoms Hotel) and lower centre is the site of the Isolation Hospital that housed infectious patients (small pox and cholera) a safe distance from Ipswich to avoid contagious outbreaks of these killer diseases.

The following sketch diagram of Kesgrave (circa 1920) better illustrates the main areas of habitation. Bracken Hall was built in 1901. Bell Barn Farmhouse, the "Texas plantation" and Kesgrave House no longer exist (the latter was demolished pre-1939). The land that comprised Kesgrave House was developed post war to build Heath Primary School, a sheltered housing complex (The Walk) and private housing at MacKenzie & Quebec Drive.

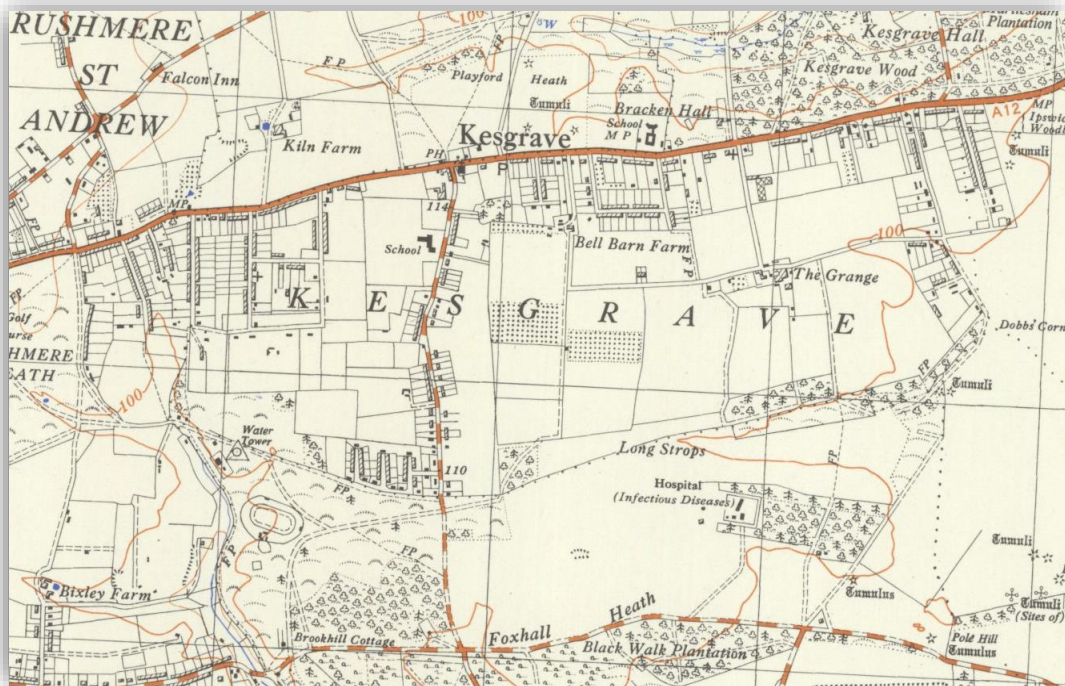
The land at Bell Barn Farm became the Royal British Legion Sportsfield, the war memorial and meeting rooms although much of that land was later swapped in the "Twelve acres" land deal that allowed the "Grange Farm" housing project to proceed.

Kesgrave Hall was built in 1812 and although owned by William Cunliffe-Shaw MP, he never lived there. Around 1870 the building became a boarding school until the RAF requisitioned it in 1939. After the war the building reverted to educational usage, then for a brief spell in the mid 1990's it became the offices of KDM timber with Milsoms restaurant chain purchasing the premises in 2007.



Apart from Kesgrave Hall, all that remains of original Kesgrave is the Bell Inn, The Church of All-Saints and the Grange Farmhouse. All four buildings are Grade II listed.

Old postcards show that Cambridge Road and parts of Edmonton Road saw rows of two bed bungalows being built and lining their length in 1932. Bungalows were also built in St Olaves Road and Windrush Road, all accessed from the main A12. However much of the village's enlargement commenced post war. This map is dated to 1959:



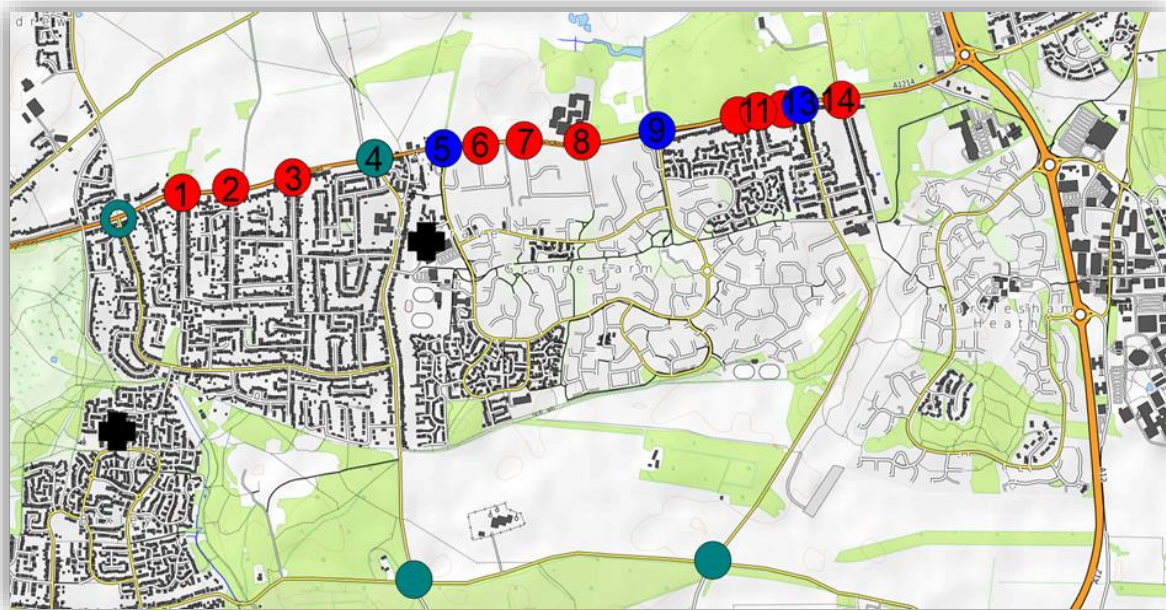
First came the Kesgrave House land development with Heath Primary School on Bell Lane, linking up the entire North West sector to Edmonton Road and down Oregon Road. This was quickly followed by linking Beech Road in Rushmere with Bell Lane by the creation of Penzance Road. This enabled the Cornish estate to the South West to develop stopping at the bridle way on Kesgrave Heath and Bell lane. Glanville Place was popular in the early 1970's housing some military personnel and their families from USAF Bentwaters.

1987 was the watershed moment in development as the entire eastern flank from Bell Lane to Dobbs Lane opened up for housing on the sites of Bell Barn and Grange Farms.

Development of the Road Network

This map shows that from Holly Road to Deben Avenue (that define Kesgrave Town's west and eastern boundary) there are fourteen road junctions. All fourteen link Kesgrave Town traffic to the main A1214 trunk road between Ipswich and Woodbridge and the Suffolk coast.

The distance between Holly Road and Deben Avenue is 2.85Km (1.8miles) so that means on average that there is a road junction onto the main road every 200 metres. On the opposite side of the main road there is primarily farmland with mineral workings at Sinks Pit and Kesgrave High School with northern link roads Doctor Watsons Lane and Hall Road.



A well-used cycle path runs parallel to Main Road that is also dissected by these fourteen junctions. This has a profound impact on cyclist safety and is a concern with up to 900 children cycling daily to and from Kesgrave High School which is located opposite junction 8.

The map of Kesgrave dated 1896 shows five road junctions along its length linking Kesgrave to the main A12 access road. By 1953 there were many more junctions but still only one road (Bell Lane) linking Kesgrave to the south and giving access to Foxhall Road. (Dobbs Lane was at that time mainly a military access road to RAF Martlesham Heath).

The post war development of western Kesgrave (1948 to 1969) provided much more road building to enable housing, than the period that followed with the exception of linking Penzance Road With Beech Road. This link provided traffic flow choice allowing the residents of the newly built Cornish

Estate (St Austell, Penryn, Padstow, Falmouth etc) to travel westward and join the A12 in Rushmere St Andrew or eastward to join Bell Lane and then exit south onto Foxhall Road.

The development of the Grange Farm estate in the 1990s and 2000s was confined to the elongation and linking of existing farm tracks to form Ropes Drive. This service road allowed house building to proceed by circumventing existing housing on St Olaves , Windrush and Ashdale Roads and all housing on Main Road. The creation of the two roundabout junctions on the main A1214 the road did nothing but add to traffic volume and as Grange Farm has continued to expand southward toward the natural boundary of Long Strogs, the creation of Wilkinson Drive, Century Drive and Jeavons Lane etc, have merely increased traffic volume onto the A1214. No exit south was provided.

Traffic Volume by Junction

The following table illustrates the number of houses and residents aged 18 or above that are served by the Kesgrave road network and the travel options that residents have. (Data from the 2011 Full register of voter in Kesgrave East, Kesgrave West and The Parish of Rushmere St Andrew).

Junction No	Road	Roads accessed	Population aged 18 and above	Properties served	Volume of traffic per junction
1	Holly Road	2	520	229	3.87%
2	Cambridge Road	9	502	272	4.60%
3	Edmonton Road	11	618	322	5.41%
4	Bell Lane	11	755	390	6.60%
Not in Kesgrave	Penzance link to Beech Road	18	1025	532	9.00%
	Total Kesgrave (WEST)	51	3420	1745	
5	Ropes Drive (West)	54	2331	1216	20.56%
6	St Olaves	1	199	93	1.57%
7	Windrush Road	3	202	100	1.70%
8	Ashdale Road	2	105	54	0.91%
9	Ropes Drive (East)	90	4417	2278	38.52%
10	Wards View	1	108	64	1.08%
11	Bracken Avenue	2	81	47	0.79%
12	East View	1	9	4	0.07%
13	Dobbs Lane	10	455	235	3.97%
14	Deben Avenue	2	155	80	1.35%
	Total Kesgrave (East)	166	8062	4171	
		217	11482	5916	100.00%

West Kesgrave accounts for 30% of traffic movements within the town and due to interconnecting roads, offers some element of choice for residents to use either the Main Road or venture south onto Foxhall Road. With four road junctions to the north (five including Beech Road in Rushmere St Andrew) and Bell Lane offering a southern option, it is fair to estimate 20% will use the Main Road (A1214) and 10% will use Foxhall Road.

From a residential perspective, 70% of Kesgrave East traffic have no choice but to use the A1214 to get to and from their homes. Most of that traffic volume being attributed to Ropes Drive. For any third exit route off Grange Farm to be of any serious consideration, the route should easily connect

direct to Ropes Drive whilst causing minimal disruption to existing houses and take traffic away from the A1214 and not merely move the traffic access points up or down that road.

A Third Exit and/or a Bypass?

Response to the town's engagement with Kesgrave residents has provided no clear contender. Residents in the east of Kesgrave advocated the conversion of the 12 Acre Approach guided bus-link to take Grange Farm traffic directly onto Bell Lane to have an alternative access through Beech Road to the A1214 or down bell Lane to Foxhall Road. Residents in west Kesgrave have advocated roads such as Bussy Way, Hartree way or Jeavons Lane be extended into Copswood Close or Dobbs Drift so they link up to Dobbs Lane then south onto the Foxhall Road or North onto the A1214. A third option favoured by others is to link Curtis Way or Century Drive directly south across Long Stroops to Foxhall Road.

All suggestions at first glance appear to have some merit but all also have negative aspects and even if feasible would have many objections from one section of the community or another. The one unifying factor is that residents are set against further major housing development and Suffolk County Council always maintain that development is necessary to fund any road network development. As it stands further major housing development being brought forward by district and nearby borough councils have the potential to greatly exacerbate the congestion problems along the A1214, in particular the 2,000+ homes at Brightwell Lakes expected to start in January 2020. SCC's proposed means of coping with the extra volume of traffic that will come onto the A12 south of Martlesham is to put lights on all roundabouts and reduce the speed limit to 40mph. Most Kesgrave and Martlesham residents think this will considerably worsen the traffic flow and increase morning rush hour traffic queues at two key roundabouts on the A12.

This is also the case in regard to a possible bypass solution. This was proposed in the late 1980s to the north of Kesgrave on a limited scale to give relief from local congestion as a concession for the building of Grange Farm. It did not go ahead and has remained a source of angst for residents who lived here at the time and who feel they didn't get what they were promised. More latterly a proposal for the Ipswich Northern Route which is on a significantly grander scale (cost estimate: £500-560m) with three possible routes has also failed to gain favour with the town council voting on a strong majority to oppose any of the plans. A key issue in this decision was knowing that this project entails the development of an additional 10-15,000 houses. This would be on top of the additional 17,000 houses already pipelined in Ipswich Borough and the former Suffolk Coastal emerging Local Plans. Kesgrave comprises approximately 5,000 homes so the scale of both the pipelined and bypass driven additional housing can be appreciated.

**Kesgrave Town Council
2017 (Updated July 2019)**