

PLANNING ISSUES

Use the FARMSTEAD ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK to demonstrate how development proposals comply with national and local planning policy. The National Planning Policy Framework stresses the importance of:

- Retaining and enhancing local character and distinctiveness.
- Conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.

Local plan policy generally supports the re-use of significant historic buildings, and includes specific requirements and planning considerations, particularly in relation to residential additions and alterations, neighbourhood issues and taking account of biodiversity. It is important to identify any heritage assets and other designations where specific policies might apply, including listed buildings and conservation areas.

Use the FARMSTEAD ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK four stages to identify and consider the need and potential for change at the earliest stage of considering change for a farmstead or farm building.

1 SITE SUMMARY

This comprises a brief description of the whole site and its landscape context, and identification of other key issues such as site access, services and designations. It provides the essential first step and can be easily completed by the applicant or developer without specialist knowledge.

2 ASSESS HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Assess heritage significance of the building and site, from its contribution to local character to the significance of individual buildings.

3 NEED AND POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE

Use the understanding gained from Stages 1 and 2 to consider constraints and opportunities for sympathetic change and development, and the type of sustainable change most most to be acceptable in the planning process.

4 SITING AND DESIGN ISSUES

Design issues for the site and its buildings, and the siting of new buildings.

For English Heritage research and guidance see its HELM web pages at <http://www.helm.org.uk/farmbuildings>

This guidance follows the development of an evidence base for the historic character and survival of the county's farmsteads, which has been entered on the county's Historic Environment Record at <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Historic-Environment-Record>. It includes the mapping of historic character, survival and use of farmsteads across the county as part of the West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project (see <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/wmidlandsfarmsteads>).

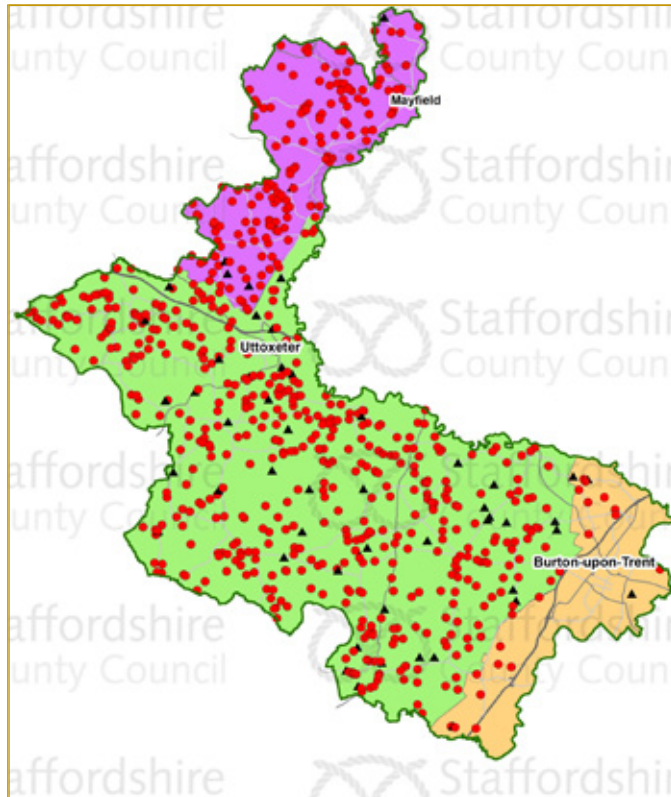
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS IN THE STAFFORDSHIRE FARMSTEADS GUIDANCE

STAFFORDSHIRE FARMSTEADS CHARACTER STATEMENT provides fully-illustrated guidance on the character and significance of Staffordshire's traditional farmsteads and buildings in their landscape and settlement context, and the areas into which it subdivides.

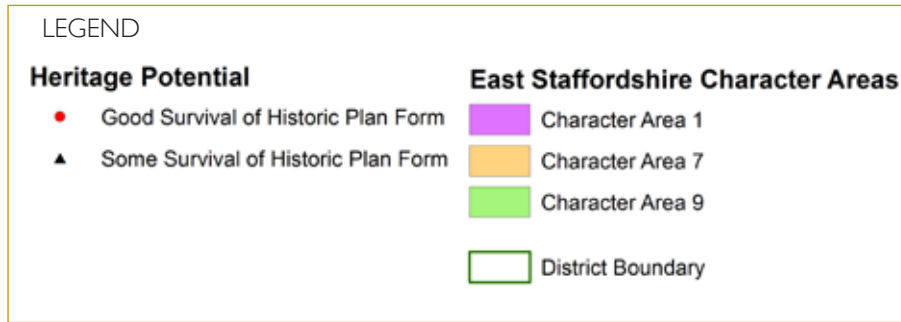
AREA SUMMARIES for the areas into which the county subdivides, based on analysis of its farmsteads in their landscape context.

For planning policies in East Staffordshire Borough see <http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/Planning/PlanningPolicy/Pages/default.aspx>

TRADITIONAL FARMSTEADS IN EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH



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HISTORIC FARMSTEAD CHARACTER

- 17% of the county's farmsteads lie within the District.
- Large-scale farmsteads (36%) are represented in low densities across the District. Large regular courtyards, however, are particularly characteristic of the Needwood plateau. This is a highly planned agricultural landscape dominated by regular field systems and straight roads which was created following an Act of Enclosure (Needwood Forest) passed in 1801. This area includes a high proportion of landscape parks.
- Small-scale farmsteads (43%) are almost entirely absent from the area of the former Needwood Forest. They are associated with those landscapes enclosed from woodland in the medieval period to the south of Uttoxeter and to the south of Hanbury. They are also present in high densities around the small settlements to the north and west.
- Regular L-plans (13%), associated with dairy farming, are particularly concentrated within or on the edge of the Dove valley, its tributaries and the upper (northern) stretches of the Blithe and its tributaries. They are also found to the south of the District within and on the edge of the Trent Valley and its tributaries including within or adjacent to areas of historic water meadows.

SIGNIFICANCE

Farmsteads which have retained traditional buildings and/or their historic form make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, whether they are designated as heritage assets or not. The greater the survival of the historic

form and detail of the whole farmstead and any buildings, the greater will be its significance.

The heritage potential of traditional farmsteads, based on the survival of their historic form from Ordnance Survey maps of c. 1900, has been entered onto the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

- 78% of recorded farmsteads (county average 59%) have high heritage potential as traditional farmsteads, because they have retained more than 50% of their historic form.
- 7% (county average 9.5%) have some heritage potential because they have retained less than 50% of their historic form.

The remainder may have retained a house (which may be a listed building) or have lost all of their buildings. These may still retain archaeological deposits which can be revealed through development.

PRESENT AND FUTURE ISSUES

Research led by English Heritage (see text box on first page) has shown that historic farm buildings have been more prone to both neglect and development than any other historic building type. They are also associated with high levels of home-based business use.

- 17% of farmstead sites retaining working buildings have one or more converted buildings.
- 35% of listed working farm buildings have evidence for non-agricultural reuse (32% being residential and these being associated with a very high proportion of directorships).