

STAFFORDSHIRE FARMSTEADS CHARACTER STATEMENT



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This document provides fully-illustrated guidance on the character and significance of the county's traditional farmsteads and buildings. It forms part of the *Staffordshire Farmsteads Guidance*, which aims to inform and achieve the sustainable development of historic farmsteads, including their conservation and enhancement. It will also be of interest to those with an interest in the history and character of the county's landscape, settlements and historic buildings.

The other parts of the *Staffordshire Farmsteads Guidance* comprise:

THE FARMSTEAD ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK, which provides a step-by-step approach to considering the reuse of traditional farm buildings and the sustainable development of farmsteads, through identifying their historic character, significance and potential for change.

LOCAL AUTHORITY SUMMARIES

Summaries for planners and applicants in each of the county's local planning authorities.

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Cover image: Morfe House Farm, a regular courtyard farmstead lying in South Staffordshire with a late 18th century farmhouse facing into its garden, with working buildings reflecting mixed dairying with arable production. To the rear of the house and its dairy are pigsties and calf houses. Attached to these are a two-storey cowhouse with a hay loft and a long hay and corn barn with stables facing the yard and a cartshed facing the road. Photo © English Heritage 2900/03

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

INTRODUCING FARMSTEAD CHARACTER

A farmstead is the place where the farmhouse and the working buildings of a farm are located, some farms having field barns or outfarms sited away from the main steading. Most traditional buildings date from the 19th century and few were built after the 1880s. They display an immense variation in their architectural form, detail and use of materials, reflecting local differences in key functions such as the need to house and process harvested crops and shelter farm animals. Traditional farmstead plans are similarly varied in their layout and scale.



The farmsteads shown also reflect the distinction in building traditions to be found within the county. The brick farmsteads are typical across most of Staffordshire, with stone buildings being mostly confined to the north and north east. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27962/008 and NMR 27964/039

Four sections summarise the historic character of the county's farmsteads.

1 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT – how the county's farming history fits into a national context

Farmsteads and their buildings reflect the development of agricultural regions and areas over centuries. Staffordshire's farmsteads and landscapes display a strong difference between the corn-growing south and south west of the county, and the remainder of the county where cattle rearing and dairying emerged as particularly significant.

2 LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT – how farmsteads contribute to the landscapes and settlements in which they have developed

Farmsteads are an integral part of rural settlement and the landscape. Many of Staffordshire's farmsteads are associated with the 18th and 19th century reordering of its landscape, which worked upon pattern of fields, routeways and woodland inherited from the medieval period. Staffordshire is predominantly a county of dispersed settlement, often with high densities of farmsteads and historic houses, linked to an intricate network of winding lanes, in areas of woodland, common and heath. Villages were historically concentrated in the south east of the county.

3 FARMSTEAD AND BUILDING TYPES – how the functions of farmsteads are reflected in a variety of farmstead plan forms and building types

The key plan types are:

- *Courtyard plans* (70% of all farmsteads recorded) where the working buildings are arranged around one or more yards. The largest are concentrated in the mixed farming and estate landscapes of central and southern Staffordshire, and the smallest in the uplands.
- The *smallest-scale farmsteads* (19%), which mostly comprise those with houses and working buildings in-line, are concentrated in areas of former heath and common such as around Cannock Chase, on Biddulph Moor, in the Moorlands of north-east Staffordshire and around areas of common land that survived into the 20th century. Smallholdings tend to occur in the same areas, and can be difficult to identify as they have no defined plan type.
- *Dispersed plans* (11%) where there is no focal yard area and the working buildings are dispersed within the boundary of the steading. Except the multi-yard variants, these are mostly concentrated in upland landscapes in the north east of the county.

Outfarms and *field barns* display strong localised patterns. Large outfarms are concentrated within the zones of large-scale farms. Field barns, mostly for housing cattle, tend to cluster around the main settlement centres and in the northern dairying and stock-rearing parts of the county.

There are a wide range of building types across the county. *Barns* are commonly the largest and earliest buildings on Staffordshire farmsteads, but such was the extent of rebuilding in the 19th century that few earlier examples have survived. *Housing for cattle* has shaped the character of every farmstead in Staffordshire, either as storeyed or single-storey ranges which include cow houses for dairy cattle, open-fronted shelter sheds, loose boxes and bull pens. *Dairies* and more commonly pigsties are found on dairy farms and estate farms in particular, and *milking parlours* dating from the late 19th century become larger and more industrialised from the early to mid 20th century onwards. *Stables* and *cart sheds* are less common on the pastoral farms to the north, and are largest in scale on large arable-based farms. *Dovecotes* of 18th or 19th century date are found on some manor or estate farmsteads

Over the course of the 19th century the agricultural economy of Staffordshire became more pastoral with a particular emphasis on dairy farming. This change in the agricultural economy can be read in the surviving historic farmsteads where many former threshing barns are converted to other agricultural uses particularly for cattle housing. Large milking parlours and dairies become a feature of the larger farmsteads during the 20th century.

4 MATERIALS AND DETAIL – the development and use of materials and building techniques across the county

The main distinctions in building materials are between the uplands, where sandstone was used for walls and stone slates for roofing, and the remainder of Staffordshire where there is some use of stone but 18th and 19th century red brick and plain clay tile are dominant. Some timber-framing survives within farmhouses and very rarely within farm buildings. There is much use of imported Welsh slate and Staffordshire blue tiles, and some rare surviving use of Westmorland slate.

INTRODUCING SIGNIFICANCE

I Significance as a traditional farmstead

At a basic level, and whether designated as heritage assets or not, significant farmsteads and buildings contribute to local character and distinctiveness. They can do this if they have retained their traditional farm buildings and some or all of their historic form, where the historic farm buildings, any houses and spaces relate to each other. The greater the survival of the historic form and detail, the greater will be its significance as a traditional farmstead.

The mapping of traditional farmsteads across Staffordshire, as part of the West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project (see www.english-heritage.org.uk/wmidlandsfarmsteads), has recorded onto the county Historic Environment Record the historic character and survival of 5526 farmsteads from Ordnance Survey second edition maps of c. 1900. This is a good benchmark for recording change, as very few traditional buildings were built after this date. The levels of survival are higher than across most of the West Midlands. 82% of Staffordshire's recorded farmsteads have heritage potential as traditional farmsteads because they have retained some or all of their historic form, which is the same as the average for the West Midlands:

- 73% have high heritage potential because they have retained more than 50% of their historic form, this being much higher than the average across the West Midlands (66%) and particularly high (over 85%) in the Moorlands.
- 9% have some heritage potential because they have retained less than 50% of their historic form.

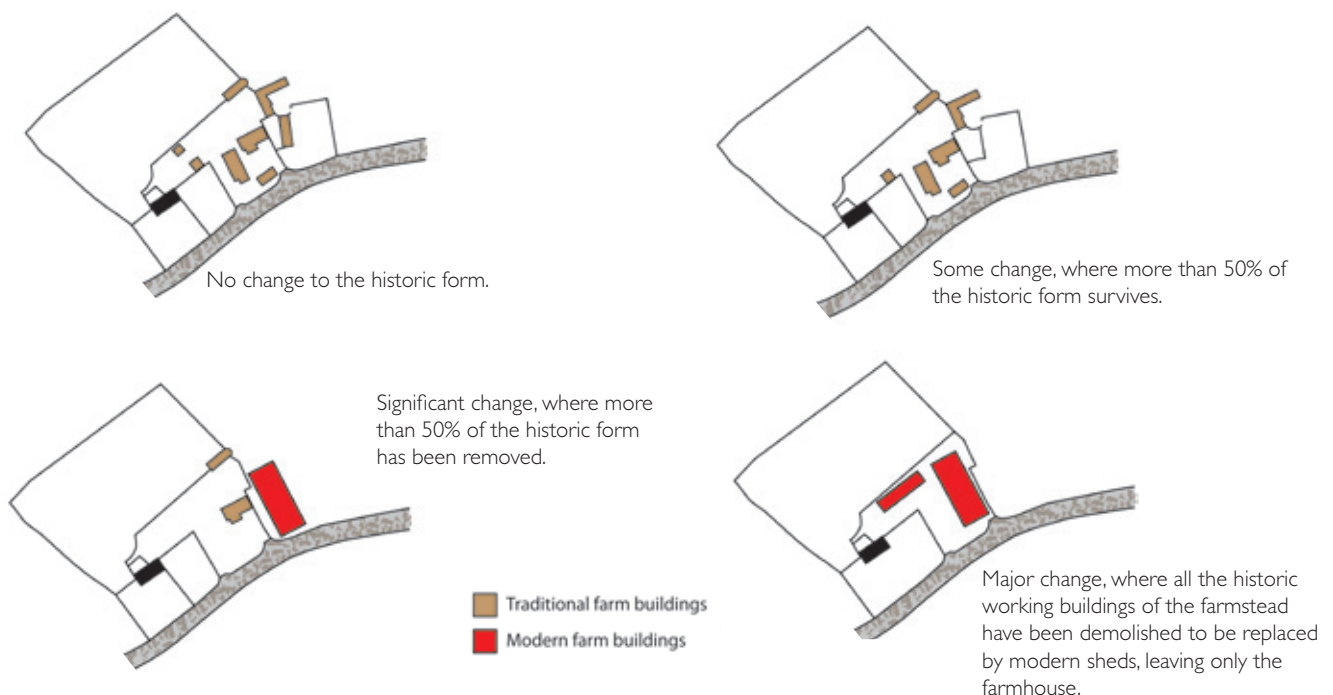
Of the remaining farmsteads in Staffordshire:

- 7% only retain the farmhouse with all the working buildings being lost (6% average for West Midlands), these being concentrated in and around villages where farms have greatly expanded over the last 100 years.
- 1% have been entirely rebuilt, but remain in farming use (2% average for West Midlands).
- 10% (the same as the West Midlands) have been completely lost from the landscape, the main reason for this being urban development.

These may still retain significant below-ground deposits which may be revealed during development.

Just under a third of recorded farmsteads have agricultural sheds, either within or to one side of the traditional farmstead.

Only 32.7% of 2069 outfarms and field barns survive in some form, survival being highest again in the dairying north and especially the Moorlands.



2 Special significance

Some buildings or farmsteads have the potential for special significance when compared to farmsteads and their landscapes in other parts of England. Of particular rarity and significance are:

- Traditional farmsteads within or next to medieval and earlier earthworks remaining from settlements, buildings and ploughland (ridge and furrow and cultivation terraces). See below.
- Any 18th century or earlier buildings, pre-1700 examples including evidence for timber framing (often encased in later brick or stone walling) being extremely rare by national standards.
- Documented planned farmsteads associated with landed gentry and/or architects which date from the later 18th century; mostly within or on the edge of landscape parks. See page below.
- Legible small-scale farmsteads and smallholdings, in particular those sited around areas of heath and other types of common land (or within areas of former heath/common) and which are generally associated with areas of former mineral/stone extraction or other industrial activity.
- Unusual surviving building types, including smithies, brewhouses and dovecotes.
- Interior stalls and other interior features (e.g. mangers, hay racks) of 19th century and earlier date.
- Evidence for mechanisation within the farmstead; wheel houses or engine houses; belt-drive wheels for powering steam engines.
- Historic graffiti and other marks relating to agricultural use and folk beliefs.
- Any intact 18th century or earlier examples of field barns and outfarms, which may be the remnants of former farmsteads where the house has been lost but the buildings retained as a result of farm amalgamation. These have always been vulnerable to dereliction once redundant. Most outfarms and field barns present at the end of the 19th century have been lost from the landscape.



This regular courtyard farmstead was created as a model farm within Enville Hall landscape park circa 1747-8 and is attributed to the architect William Baker. It is typical of those architect-designed farmsteads associated with landed estates which are particularly to be found within south western Staffordshire. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27767/025



The early 19th century regular courtyard farmstead to the right of the image was constructed upon part of the medieval ploughland, indicated by the surviving ridge and furrow earthworks, at Wychnor in the Trent Valley. On the land between the River Trent (to the left) and the Trent & Mersey Canal the medieval remains of the moated manor house (cut by the canal to the right) and manorial fishpond survive as earthworks. Further impressive earthworks are shown including an enclosure and hollow way on the slope between the farmstead and the canal as well as the remains of an 18th-19th century water meadow system which extends across the valley floor. Photo © English Heritage 29005/044

SECTION I: HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

In England agricultural productivity has long been sustained by new techniques in crop and animal husbandry, and the restructuring and enlargement of farm holdings. Mixed farming has always formed the bedrock of Staffordshire's rural economy and, although the ratio of arable to grassland fluctuated, there was a general shift towards greater grassland so that by the 19th century it was renowned for cattle-rearing and dairying. The ratio of arable to pasture differed across the county at different times and is supported by both historical research and the legacy of the historic landscape.

Medieval pattern

Arable farming in the medieval period dominated the rural economy along the major rivers valleys in eastern Staffordshire, large parts of western Staffordshire where hamlets are particularly prominent, parts of the south west and in a few discrete areas of northern Staffordshire, particularly to the north east. Even within these landscapes there was usually easy access to a variety of other resources including riverside meadows, woodland and uncultivated commons. The open fields within these landscapes were largely enclosed incrementally through co-operation of landholders during the post-medieval period. Only within a very few parishes were the open fields enclosed by Act of Parliament in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Post-medieval pattern

From the mid 16th century onwards the ratio between arable and pasture was more evenly balanced, although in parts of western and south western Staffordshire arable continued to make a greater contribution to the rural economy. Further north in western Staffordshire and within the river valleys of eastern Staffordshire, particularly along the River Dove, cattle farming was prevalent from the 17th century onwards. By the 18th and 19th centuries this was principally dairying; the importance of this industry in the Dove Valley is reflected in the status of Uttoxeter as a principal market for cheese and butter. Arable continued to play a part in the economy of these areas, although it is unclear as to the extent this related to the provision of animal feed.



A loose courtyard farmstead revealing several phases of development, the core of which is represented by a late 16th century – early 17th century timber framed threshing barn and 17th century timber framed farmhouse. Alterations were made to the threshing barn possibly in the early-mid 19th century as the focus of the farmstead changed from arable to stock rearing. The barn itself was converted to cow housing and a shelter shed added to the south (visible in photograph). The red brick 'U'-shaped cow house range was added in the mid-19th century. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27961/038

Estates and agricultural improvement

The period from the mid-16th century also saw a considerable change in land ownership particularly following the Dissolution, which resulted in the expansion of estates owned by old county families (such as the Bagots of Blithfield) and the creation of estates by 'new men' who had made their fortunes in trade (such as the Levesons of Trentham) or in law (such as the Littletons of Pillaton and later of Teddesley). The majority of the landed estates, and their associated country houses and landscaped gardens, were located in the southern half of the county. Some were at the forefront of post-1750 agricultural improvements, including Thomas Anson II of Shugborough Hall who was the son-in-law of the noted agricultural improver Thomas Coke of Holkham, Norfolk. These estates came to dominate the landscape in the south and west of the county in particular and often encouraged improvement led by the larger tenant farmers and yeoman occupiers, who in turn often amalgamated smaller farms. By 1873 it could be said that 31% of the county was owned by just eight men with a further 17% of the land being comprised of 26 estates of between 3,000 – 10,000 acres. Whilst large tenanted farmsteads came to dominate southern Staffordshire these figures conceal the large numbers of smaller farmers who continued to work the land as is evidenced from the surviving small-scale farmsteads particularly in the north and north east. Many of the smaller farmers were undoubtedly the tenants of larger landowners.

The fragmentary remains of Cannock, Kinver and Needwood Forest survived until the late 18th-early 19th century when they were finally enclosed under Acts of Parliament. The enclosure of these landscapes was given added impetus by the increased demand for home grown grain during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars of 1793-1815. Prices rose and accordingly production increased with the extension of the area of arable. The fall in grain prices after the war resulted in contraction of arable but the generally diverse nature of the agriculture of the county meant that the period of post-war decline had a limited impact on the farmers of Staffordshire.

19th century pattern

By 1840 the extent of grassland exceeded the amount of arable in the north of the county and equalled the area of arable across most of the county except in the south-west, west of Stafford and around Tamworth where more than 60% of farmland was regularly arable. The conversion to grassland continued over the next twenty years, especially in the north. Possibly one of the greatest improvements employed, particularly in the heavy soils of the central clays and marls was the use of under-drainage which increased the productivity and value of large areas of pasture. Drainage was also beneficial for arable lands which had previously been too wet for turnips. Drainage allowed the use of this fodder crop which in turn allowed greater stocking.

The growth of industry in the Potteries and on the fringes of the Black Country resulted in the development of intensive corn cropping and horticulture producing large quantities of potatoes, carrots, onions and peas utilising town-manure. The expansion of potato growing into the Moorlands was probably linked to the growth of the market in the Potteries.

As was the case in the period after the French Wars when grain prices fell, the depression that ensued after the 1870s was felt less severely than in some other parts of the country that were more dependent on arable and wool. Although arable farms were hit by the fall in grain prices and cheese makers were affected by the import of cheap cheese from America, the price of grain also meant that the price of cattle feed also fell which was beneficial to the stock-rearing and dairying farms. The reaction to the falling grain price was a further increase in the extent of permanent pasture across much of the county and a move towards liquid milk from cheese production; the period 1875 – 1915 saw the extent of arable decline from 226,566 acres to 150,554 acres. Milk was carried by the railways to the growing urban areas within and around the county and milk was also sent to London. The area of market gardening also doubled in the period 1872 – 1896.

20th century pattern

The balance between arable and pasture fluctuated in the early to mid-20th century; arable increased during World War I but fell back until price guarantees were introduced in the 1920s. World War II meant that arable was once again encouraged and this time, aided by the introduction of mechanisation which made the working of the heavy clay soils considerably easier, much of the converted land remained in arable use. The mid to late 20th century, in common with much of lowland England, saw farm amalgamation and the conversion of historic farm buildings to residential and, less commonly, commercial/office use. The Moorlands part of the county, however, does not appear to have been subject to these changes to the same degree and many small farms remain in agriculture. Where traditional farmsteads have continued in agriculture, the sites are often accompanied by large modern sheds either within the plan form or more commonly to the side or at a distance – around one third of the total, but much higher in the Moorlands.

SECTION 2: LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT

Historic farmsteads and their buildings are an integral part of the rural landscape and how it has changed over the centuries. They relate to different scales and patterns of fields, to boundaries, trees and woodland and sometimes to areas of surviving common land and industrial sites. Most parts of the country are characterised by a mix of settlement patterns, but a clear distinction can be drawn between those areas, mostly in central England, dominated by large nucleated villages with few isolated farmsteads and those areas that have fewer and smaller villages and higher densities of isolated farmsteads and hamlets.

Staffordshire is a predominantly lowland county with the exception of the Staffordshire Moorlands to the north east, which forms part of the foothills of the Pennines; a large part of this landscape lies within the Peak District National Park. Just under a quarter of all Staffordshire's farmsteads lie within settlements, the majority of Staffordshire's farmsteads being either isolated or forming loose farmstead clusters. The county is dominated by a dispersed settlement pattern with larger more nucleated villages only being prominent on the eastern edges of the county where it reveals greater comparison with central England. Elsewhere there is a greater concentration of small villages, hamlets and isolated farmsteads, although these are less apparent in the highland zone of the north and north east of the county. Within the latter landscape individual farmsteads, sometimes clustered in high densities, dominate the settlement pattern. The high density of historic settlement across much of Staffordshire, particularly to the north and west, has left a legacy of narrow winding lanes, bridlepaths and footpaths which link the villages, hamlets and the isolated clusters of farmsteads. In some cases those farmsteads which form clusters are associated with place names and may, therefore, represent shrunken hamlets or villages of at least medieval date.

Farmsteads in settlements

Despite the low number of farmsteads located in settlements 68% have largely retained their historic plan forms. Those villages which experienced the greatest housing expansion during the 20th century have seen the greatest loss of farmstead character either through entire demolition or through the loss of the farm buildings (with only the farmhouse surviving). Overall, however, very few farmsteads have been entirely lost. In the south of the county, where the majority of villages are located, there has been an increase in the demand for the conversion of farm buildings to domestic use and this pressure is likely to increase in the future.

The earliest known recorded farmstead buildings are mostly found within settlements. The majority are houses. In Yoxall, for example, eight out of twelve farmsteads located in the village were associated with an early farmhouse.



Haunton, lying within the parish of Clifton Campville, is a small nucleated settlement typical of those located in south eastern Staffordshire. A number of large-scale courtyard farmsteads line the village street, mostly regular in plan form, interspersed with red brick cottages and detached houses both historic and modern. The farmsteads in their current form probably date to the 18th-19th century, but probably evolved from earlier holdings focussed upon amalgamated medieval tofts. In common with many village farmsteads in Staffordshire the majority of the traditional working buildings have been converted to other uses, but they have a strong influence on its character. Photo © English Heritage NMR27994/037

Farmsteads and fields

Isolated farmsteads most clearly relate to the fields around them, which may survive from 18th and 19th century enclosure and reorganisation of farmland and rough ground or earlier phases of enclosure. Much of central and southern Staffordshire has been enclosed either incrementally during the post-medieval period in a process known as 'Piecemeal Enclosure' or during the 18th-19th century when the existing field patterns were either entirely re-planned ('Planned Enclosure') or partly re-laid ('Reorganised Piecemeal Enclosure'). Hedgerows represent the most common field boundary type across Staffordshire, except in the uplands of northern Staffordshire where they are characterised by stone walling.

- Piecemeal Enclosure is identifiable by the morphology of their field boundaries which form either 'S' curves (which follow the line the medieval plough took across the field) or as 'dog legs'. In areas where the piecemeal enclosure survives the fields are enclosed by mature species-rich hedgerows. Many of these older hedgerows include trees which in parts of the county contribute considerably to the woodland character; particularly of western Staffordshire.
- Irregular enclosures, particularly in the Moorlands, and in other areas on the edge of formerly uncultivated land or woodland probably relate to early (17th century and earlier) encroachment and assarting.
- Regular or planned enclosure. The 18th-19th century improvements resulting in the planned landscapes are dominated by fields exhibiting straight boundaries principally of single-species hedges. These planned field systems were mostly created by private agreement with only a few being the subject of Acts of Parliament. The planned landscapes associated with the latter are mostly associated with the areas of uncultivated lands such as the areas which had formerly comprised Cannock Forest, Needwood Forest and the highest land within the Staffordshire Moorlands.



In the foreground the landscape associated with the 17th century farmstead probably originated as encroachment into the moorland or as assarting, the clearing of trees to create farmland. Two phases of enclosure are shown; that to the left of the farmstead in the foreground is irregular in form whilst that lying beyond it is more rectilinear, perhaps created at a later date. In the far distance are regular planned fields which were created under the direction of a surveyor following an Act of Parliament (1767). Photo © English Heritage NMR 27966/033



The landscape in and around the Churnet Valley comprises a number of steep-sided valleys still clothed with ancient woodland. Coniferous plantations, as shown, were established on the valley tops on the site of earlier woodland and heath, a process begun in the later 19th century. The small enclosures represent encroachment or assarting (the clearing of trees to create farmland), which is strongly associated with small 16th and 17th century farmsteads. The high numbers of such farmsteads within this landscape is likely to be due to the local iron-working industry which expanded during this period. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27967/006

Densities of isolated farmsteads

The highest densities of isolated farmsteads can be found in the north of Staffordshire particularly in landscapes of small regular enclosures, mostly created through the enclosure of moorland from the 18th century onwards. These are mostly small farmsteads created as part of a subsistence economy which was divided between farming and participation in local extractive industries.

The density of isolated farmsteads otherwise remains fairly consistent across the county with the exception of the far east, south east and western edges. To the east and south east the lower density of isolated farmsteads is due partly to the predominance of nucleated settlement. These are also landscapes of larger fields, mostly originating as open fields until their piecemeal enclosure in the post-medieval period, where large regular farmsteads lie at the centre of large holdings. To the west planned landscapes dominate where the isolated farmsteads are again predominantly regular in form, although their size varies more widely than to the east and south east.



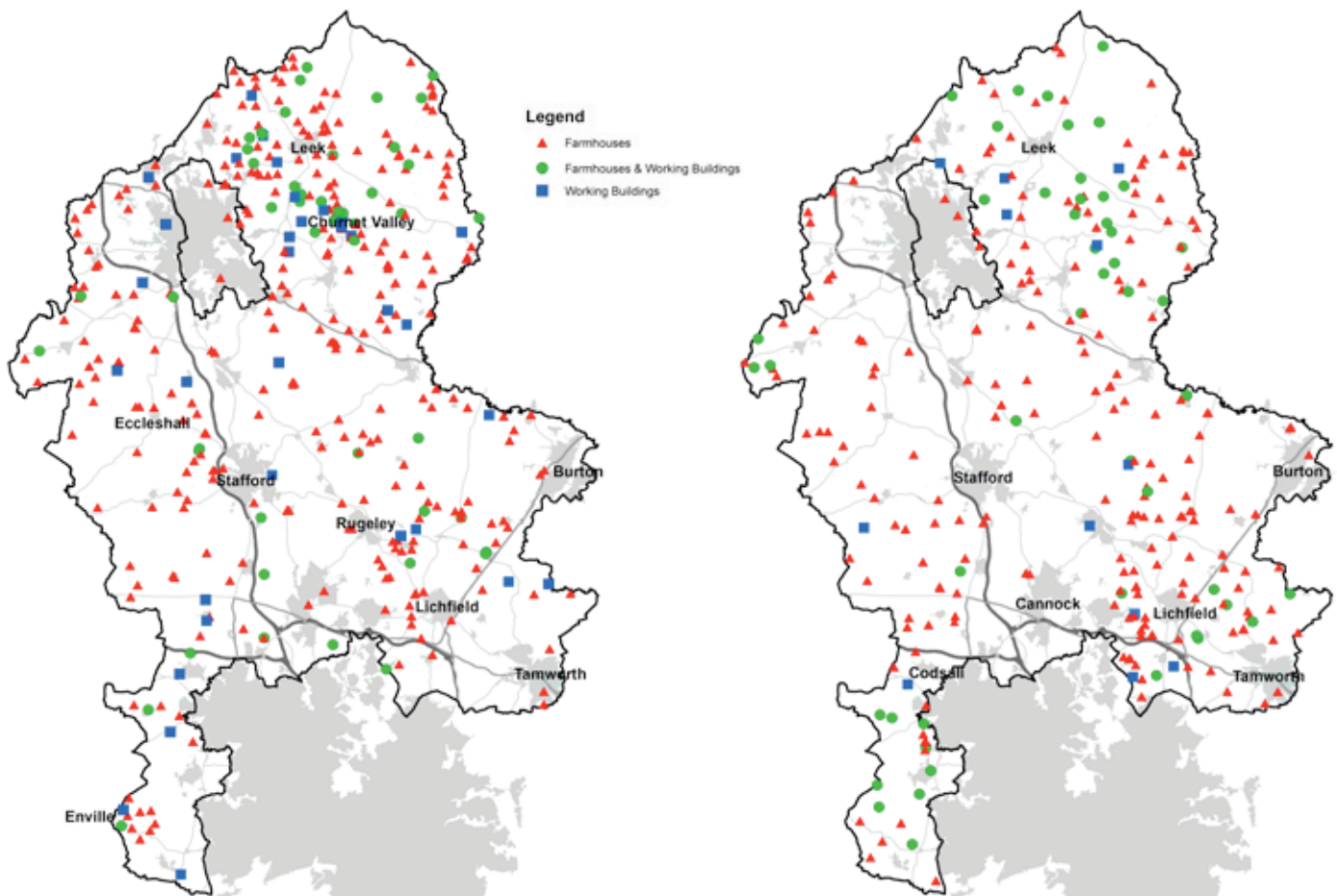
High densities of isolated farmsteads are a particular feature of northern Staffordshire, but nowhere more so than here at Biddulph Moor. The small regular fields are characteristic of those created out of the moorland and associated with extractive industries. At Biddulph Moor this was a process which existed by the late 18th century. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27963/033



In western Staffordshire, by contrast, the landscape is dominated by large farmsteads in very low densities. The farmstead is associated with planned enclosure probably created in the late 18th century; the wider landscape also reveals evidence for planning in the straight roads and the plantation woodland known as 'Folly Wood'. This is an estate landscape created under the hand of the Chetwode baronets of nearby Oakley Park. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27962/012

Dating buildings in the landscape

Successive waves of rebuilding reflect historic developments and local variations in the prosperity of farming. The period 1750-1880, and especially the capital-intensive 'High Farming' years of the 1840's-70's, saw a particularly sharp increase in productivity, in which the rebuilding of farmsteads played a key role. The majority of Staffordshire's historic farmsteads date from the late 18th and 19th centuries, and compared to other parts of the West Midlands the proportion of 18th and in particular 17th century and earlier farmhouses and buildings is very low. These tend to be associated with landscapes of piecemeal and irregular enclosure, rather than landscapes subject to reorganisation with enlarged fields and straight boundaries and planned fields with regular enclosures. This low survival reflects the extent of post-1750 reorganisation of farms across the county. 17th century or earlier farmsteads concentrated in the Moorlands and to the south west of the county in the parishes of Bobbington and Enville as well as towards the east in the parishes of Armitage with Handsacre, Hamstall Ridware, Longdon and Yoxall. Only thirty-nine cruck and timber-framed barns have been recorded on the Historic Environment Record (both listed and unlisted), mostly in the southern half of Staffordshire. One of the earliest identified, of probable 15th century date, is an aisled timber-framed barn in Shareshill although like many other barns the external walls have largely been rebuilt in red brick. There is the potential for other superficially brick and stone farm buildings to, therefore, incorporate earlier timber-framing within their structure.



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This map shows the distribution of buildings recorded in the descriptions of listed buildings as being of 17th century or earlier date. Many of these are based on external survey only, but they provide a broad idea of survival. A high proportion of early farmsteads survive in and around the wooded Churnet Valley in northern Staffordshire. These farmsteads mostly date to the 17th century and may be associated with the intensification of metal-working in the valley during this period. Concentrations of isolated farmsteads retaining 17th century buildings (usually the farmhouse) can also be found in the parishes of Enville in south Staffordshire; Eccleshall in western Staffordshire; and Armitage with Handsacre near Rugeley. Around Enville these farmsteads are associated with a piecemeal landscape created possibly at a contemporary date from an open field system associated with the village.

The greatest concentration of 18th century farmsteads is in the south-eastern corner of the county, where estates were particularly active in this period, and in the south west sandstone-based estatelands reflecting a pattern seen across the border in Shropshire.

SECTION 3: FARMSTEAD AND BUILDING TYPES

Introducing traditional farmsteads and their buildings

Traditional farmsteads and their buildings contribute to local character and distinctiveness through variations in their scale, layout, the types and dates of buildings and their materials. Their present character has been shaped by their development as centres for the production of food from the surrounding farmland. They also reflect local traditions and national influences, and include some built to the designs of agents, architects and engineers.

Most traditional buildings date from the 19th century, rarely before, and in most areas few were built after the 1880s. They will often display evidence of successive episodes of change. A small number continued to be built for individual farmers, estates and county council smallholdings into the 1930s.



A group of traditional buildings built of brick with plain tile roofs, in the Cannock area. Note the large double doors and ventilation holes to the barn, and the chimneystack which served an engine house to the left. Photo © Bob Edwards

Modern prefabricated and standardised industrial buildings

These were built on the site of the older farmstead or to one side, often with separate access. So-called Dutch barns, built of metal or machine-sawn timber; were built from the 1870s and had become common in some areas by the 1930s. Machine-made brick was commonly used in the inter-war period, in combination with metal roofs, windows and concrete floors for dairies conforming to new hygiene standards. Multi-functional sheds and their associated hardstandings for vehicles and moving stock, were widely introduced in the 1950s and are a vital feature of the modern farming industry.



By the late 19th century mass-produced buildings were becoming available, the Dutch barn being the most commonly seen prefabricated building of the period. Photo © English Heritage



An inter-war dairy built from machine brick, these were commonly provided with metal truss roofs. Photo © Staffordshire County Council

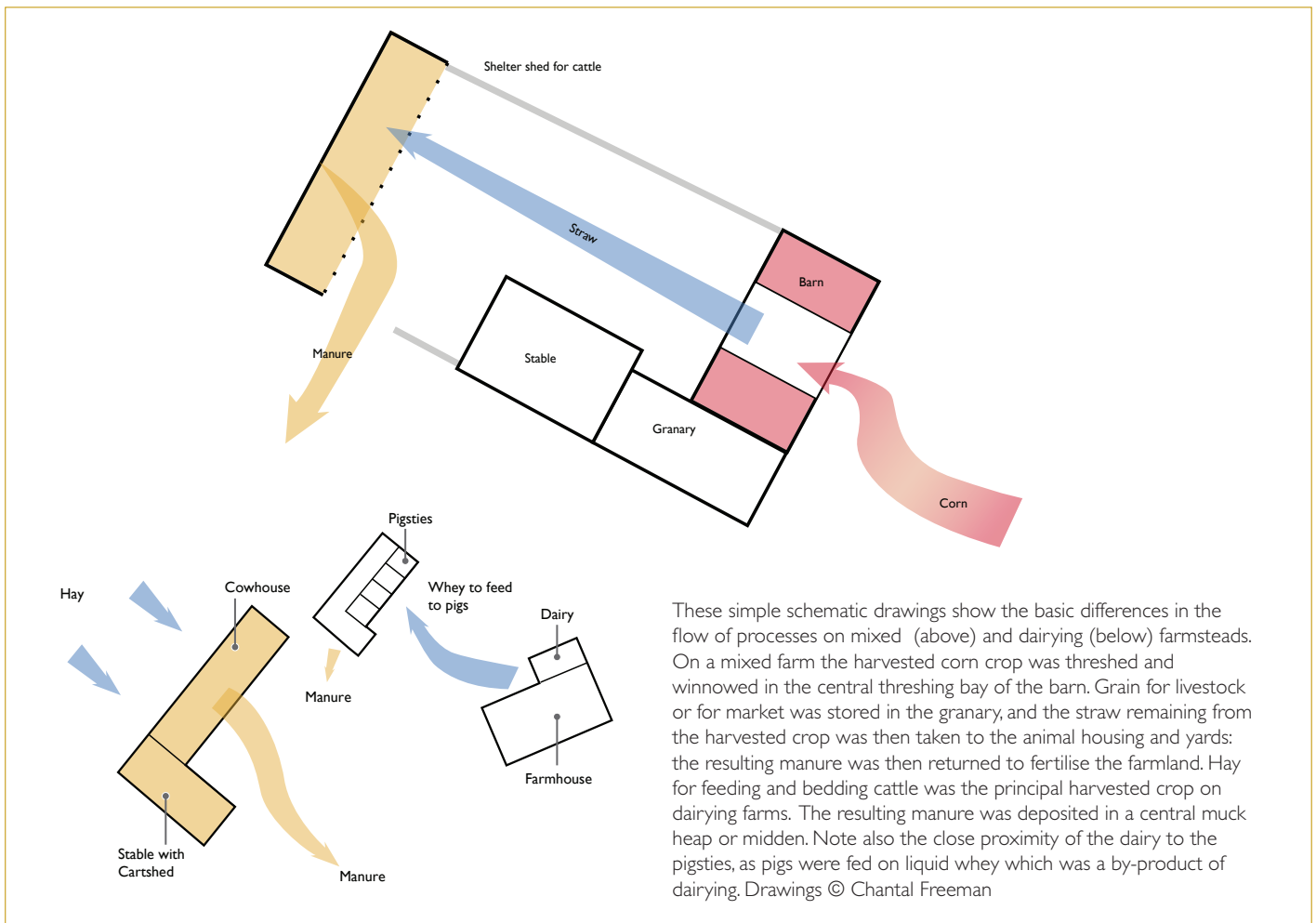
FARMSTEAD TYPES

The layout or plan of the farmstead is the key to understanding and describing its character. It is made up of specialist or combination buildings and spaces that served several key functions - to house the farming family and any workers, store and process the harvested crop, shelter farm vehicles and implements, shelter farm animals, and keep their manure for returning to the fields around them. Gardens usually developed as private areas with a distinct and separate character, screened from the working areas of the farm by hedges or walls. Routeways connected farmsteads to fields, unenclosed land, other settlements and markets.

In addition to the farmstead, *field barns* and *outfarms* enabled animals to be housed, crops to be processed and the farmland remote from the main farmstead to be enriched with farmyard manure.

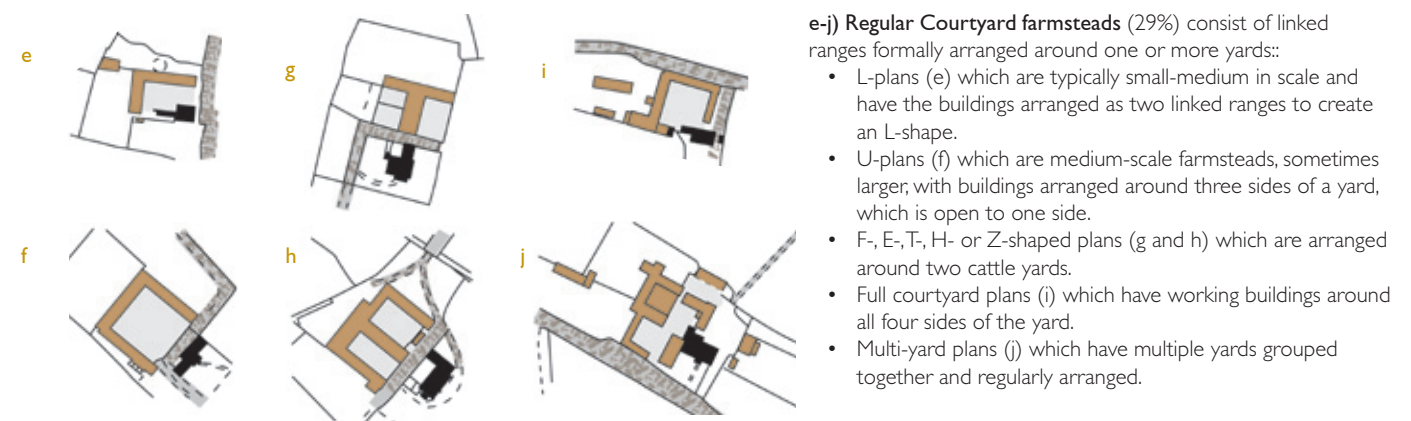
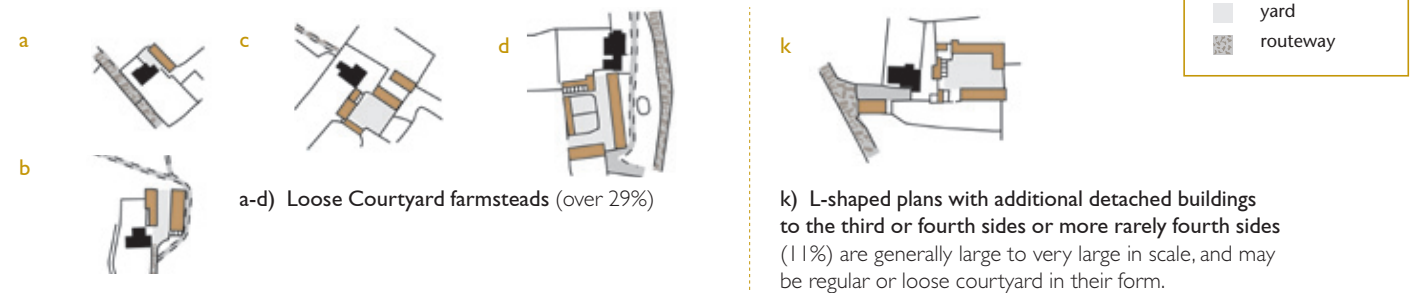
Some important functions, such as the summer fattening of cattle on rough ground (moor, marsh and fen) for export, did not require working buildings.

The relationship between the farmhouse and the working area of the farmstead can vary. Farmhouses can be attached to the working buildings (commonly found in upland areas), be positioned on one side of the yard or stand detached from the farmyard with their own driveways and gardens, a position often seen in larger and high-status farmsteads of the 18th and 19th centuries. Some farms were provided with cottages for farm workers or rooms for live-in farm labourers – usually in the attic or back wing of the house. Seasonal workers were often housed in the lofts of farm buildings.



These plans show the full range of farmstead plans which are encountered across England.

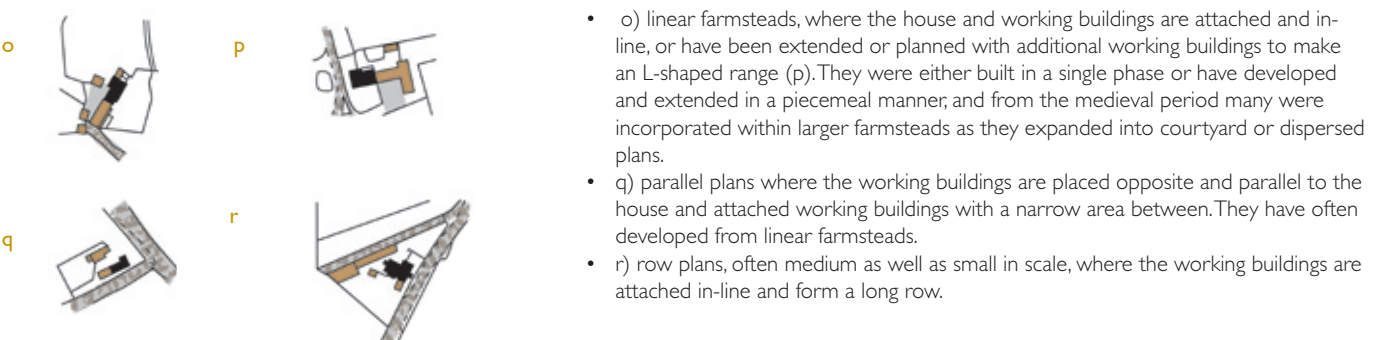
COURTYARD PLANS are the most common forms of farmstead layout (over 70% of recorded farmsteads), where the working buildings are arranged around one or more yards.



DISPERSED PLANS (11%) have no focal yard area and the working buildings are dispersed along a routeway or within the boundary of the farmstead. They are concentrated in upland and wood pasture landscapes including areas close to common land for holding stock. They vary greatly in scale and are often bisected by routeways and public footpaths.



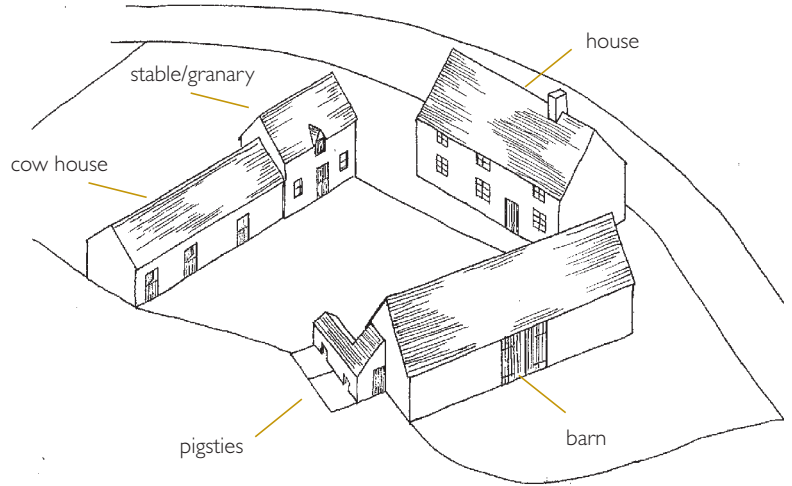
LINEAR AND OTHER RELATED FARMSTEAD TYPES (19%) are most closely associated with upland and common-edge farmsteads.



COURTYARD PLANS

Loose courtyard plans

- These represent 29.6% of farmsteads recorded across Staffordshire.
- The smallest of these farmsteads with buildings to one (10.5%) or two (12.6%) sides of the yard are often historically associated with industrial areas e.g. quarrying and mining (particularly to the south of Cannock Chase and to the north-east of the Trent).
- Larger examples have buildings to three (5.7%) or four (0.8%) sides of the yard. They are associated with high-status farmsteads and are more likely to be formally planned. They are concentrated in the arable vales.



Loose courtyard plans have detached buildings facing one or more sides of a cattle yard with or without scatters of other farm buildings close by. High numbers of the smallest-scale examples, with a working building to only one side of the yard are found in the north-east of Staffordshire, and in areas where small (mostly dairying and stock rearing) farms remained. Drawing © Bob Edwards

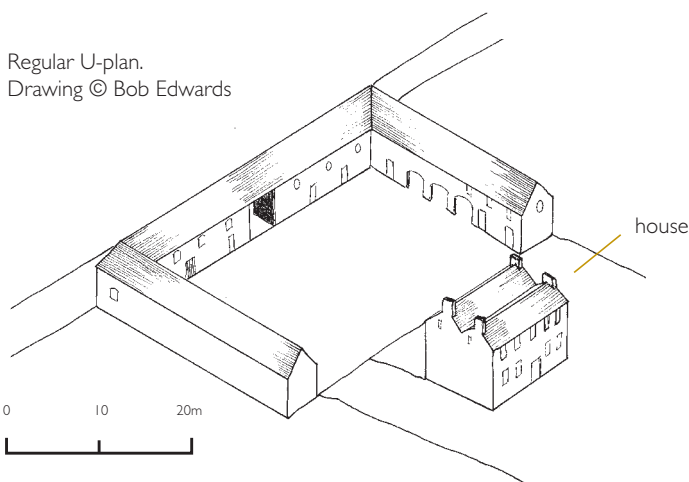


A small loose courtyard farmstead, constructed of local stone, typical of upland landscapes with working buildings to two sides of the yard. The detached elements include a pigsty to the top right. The building in the foreground appears to have once formed part of a detached outfarm with its own yards. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27964/018

Regular courtyard plans

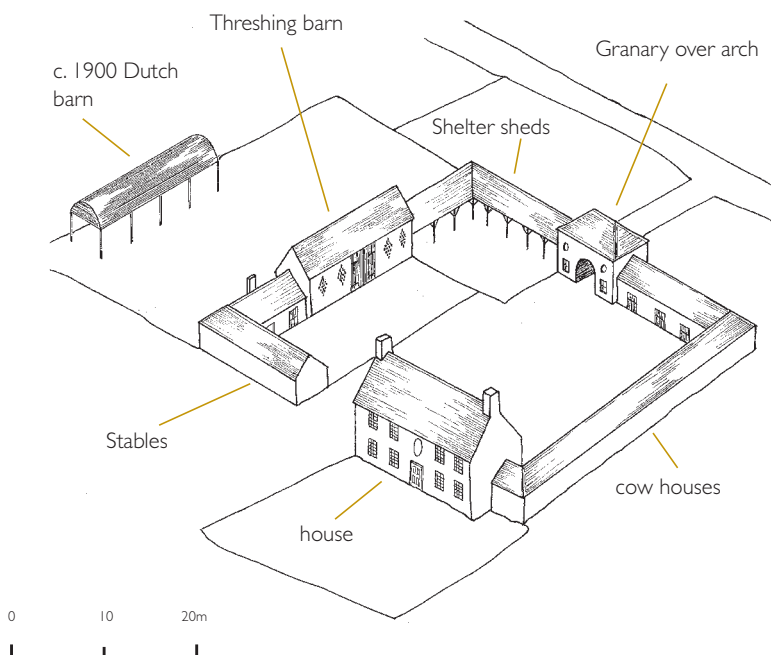
Regular courtyard farmsteads consist of linked ranges, formally arranged around one or more yards. This formal planning is reflected in the dominance across large parts of the county of fields that have been subject to successive reorganisation including boundary removal and straightening, a process that often went hand in hand with the amalgamation of farms and their associated land.

- Regular courtyards represent 29% of farmsteads recorded across Staffordshire.
- They often result from a single phase of building or re-building and in Staffordshire are generally of red brick with plain tile roofs; occasionally non-local materials like Welsh slate can be found.
- Smaller farmsteads, notably the L-plans (10.7%, see page 17), are generally widespread across the county, but particular concentrations can be found within the pastoral and dairying areas notably in north-west Staffordshire.
- The large regular courtyards - E-plan, F-plan and T-plan (3.1%), H and Z-plans (0.1%), full regular courtyards (3%) and regular multi-yard plans (4.3%) - are predominantly found within lowland Staffordshire, with only very few to be found in the Moorlands to the north east.
- The U-plans (7%) are widespread but more frequently to be found within lowland Staffordshire.
- Covered yard farmsteads (0.9%) date from the 1850s and are dominated by a large building forming a covered yard for cattle

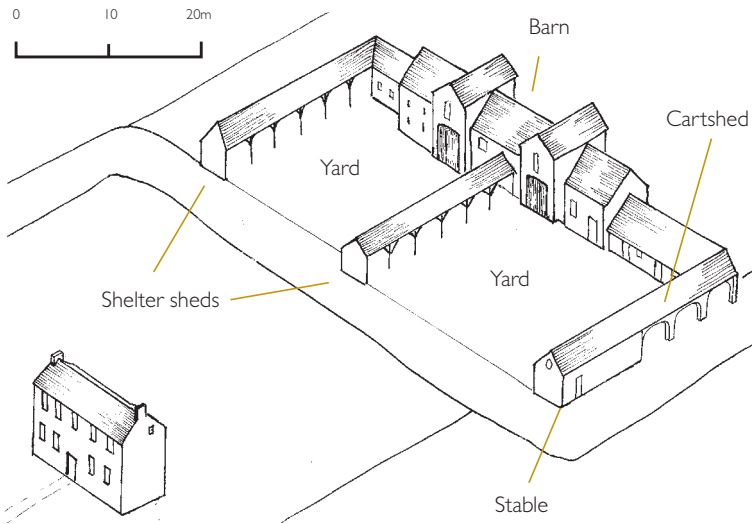


A regular courtyard 'U' plan constructed of brick and typical of the larger farmsteads to be found in the lowland areas of Staffordshire. The historic map evidence suggests that the working buildings had originally stood adjacent to the late 18th century three-storey farmhouse, but were rebuilt on a new site on the opposite side of the road in the mid-19th century. The new arrangement appears to be a reflection of the social aspirations of the occupier with the farmhouse sited with its back to its working buildings. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27701/003

Full-regular courtyards, with working buildings arranged around all sides of the yard. Drawing © Bob Edwards

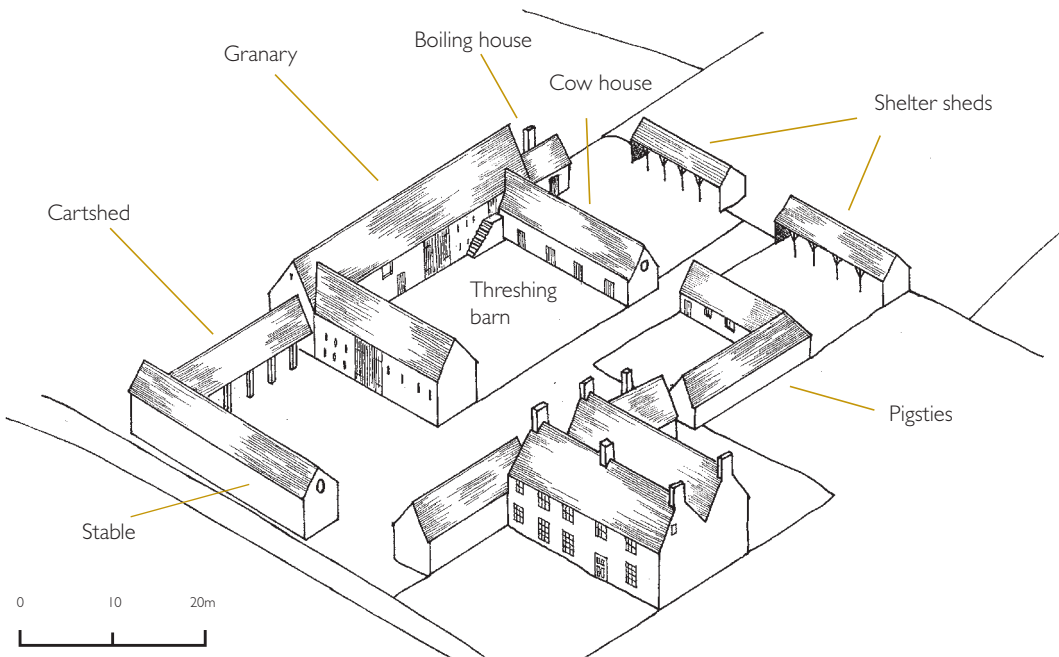


A full regular farmstead, designed by the architect Samuel Wyatt circa 1803, forms one of the country's earliest model farms lying at the heart of Lord Anson's estate at Shugborough. The complex comprised open-fronted shelter sheds for cattle and, in the foreground, a barn with its threshing and other machinery powered by a water wheel fed from the mill pond shown towards the bottom of the image. The Temple of the Winds, divided from the farm by a belt of trees, forms part of an earlier phase of landscaping at Shugborough Park in the late 18th century. The ground floor of the temple was converted to a dairy by Samuel Wyatt as part of the works on the model farm. Photo © English Heritage NMR 29002/034.



Regular courtyard farmsteads where the buildings are arranged as F-, E-, T-, H- or Z-shaped plans are concentrate in areas of large-scale fields in the west and south of the county. Most numerous are the E-, F- and T-shaped plans (3.2%) plan farmstead which usually have open-fronted working buildings around cattle yards. Drawing © Bob Edwards

A regular courtyard farmstead with an 'E' plan form typical of the largest farmsteads to be found in southern and western Staffordshire. The farmhouse is detached from its farm buildings and is orientated to face away from the working area thus emphasising their social aspirations. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27962/0025



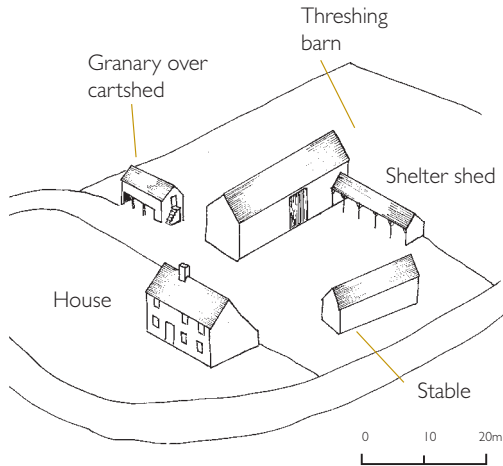
The larger farmsteads of the west and east in particular can have multiple yards either arranged in a formal E- or F- plan arrangement or with larger groups of yards grouped together although these yards may not be defined by regular, linked, ranges of buildings. Drawing and photo © Bob Edwards

Drawing © Bob Edwards



A regular courtyard with multiple yards representing at least two phases of development. The farmhouse dates to the 17th century and the detached 'L' plan range is probably a 19th century addition. The farmstead, being located in the Staffordshire Moorlands, is constructed of stone. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27964/024

L-PLAN COURTYARD PLANS WITH ADDITIONAL BUILDINGS TO THE THIRD OR FOURTH SIDE



Drawing © Bob Edwards

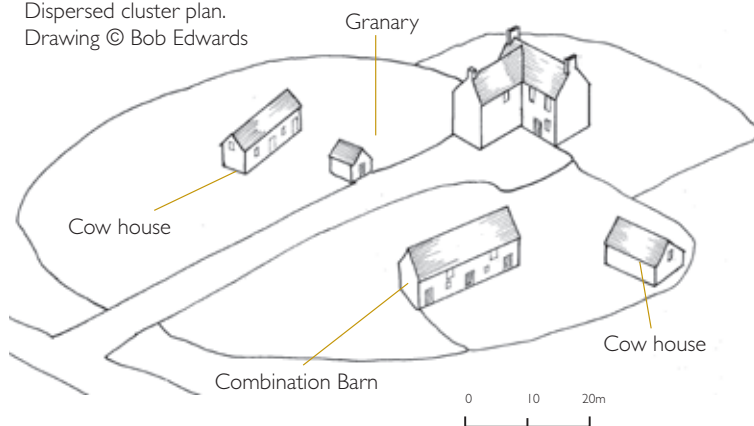


A small roadside farm, built to a regular courtyard L-shaped plan, which is located in an isolated position in western Staffordshire. This red brick farmstead dates to the 19th century and, with its cattle housing and hay lofts, is typical of small dairy holdings established during this period in this part of Staffordshire. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27999/007.

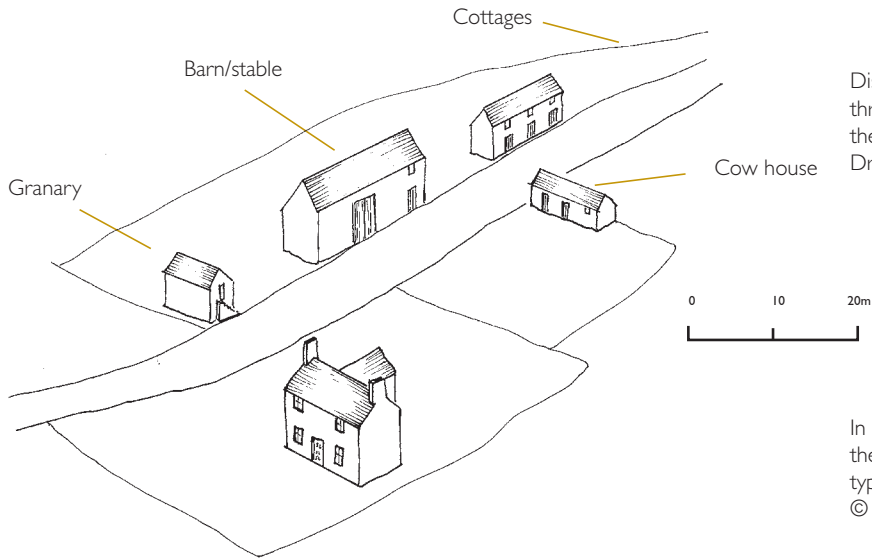
DISPERSED PLANS

- Dispersed Clusters (6.4%) are generally the smallest and the most common of these plan forms to be found in Staffordshire and comprise small tight groups of buildings. These farmsteads are strongly associated with landscapes of former rough land and common, and areas of assarting dating from the medieval period onwards.
- Very few Dispersed Driftway farmsteads (0.6%) have been identified within the county. The examples known concentrate in areas where there was historically large areas of common land particularly in the Staffordshire Moorlands in the north east of the county (see map).
- The Dispersed Multi-yards (3.3%) are generally the largest in scale and more evenly spread across the county and are more numerous in the lowland areas than the other dispersed plan forms.

Dispersed cluster plan.
Drawing © Bob Edwards

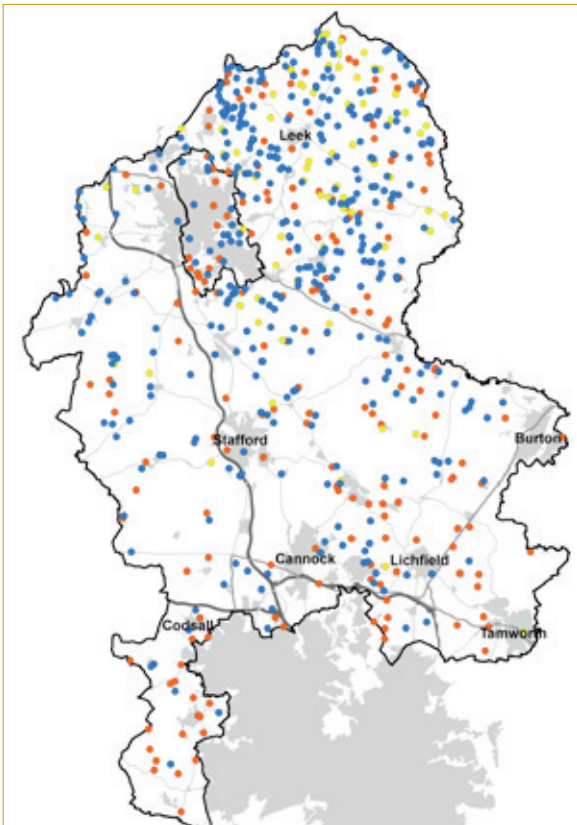
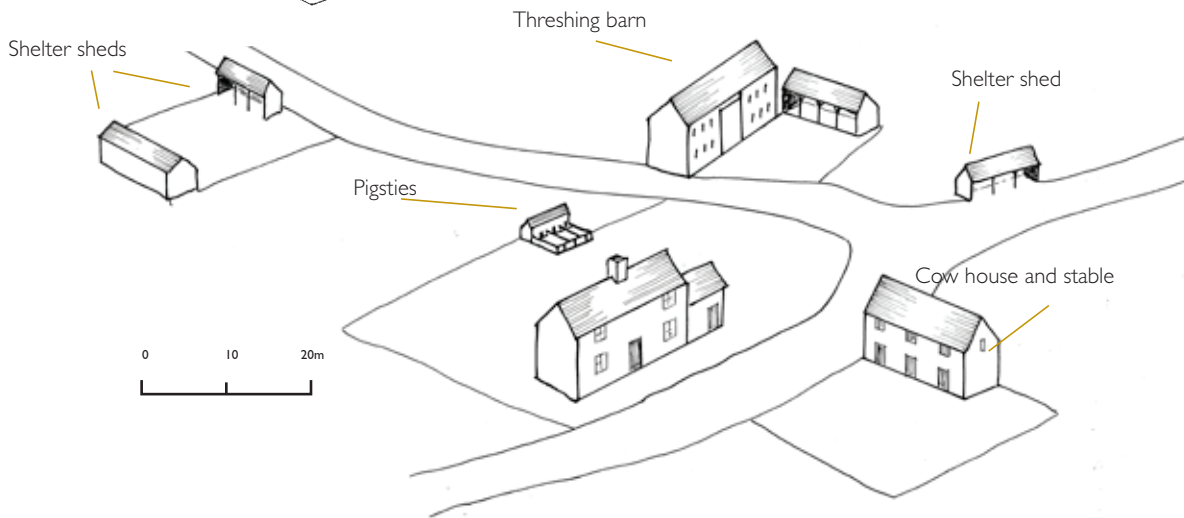


A small dispersed cluster plan from the Churnet Valley with the farmhouse set away from the working buildings and with no obvious yard area. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27967/005



Dispersed Driftways have a routeway running through the farmstead along which some of the buildings are aligned. Drawing © Bob Edwards

In contrast to the Regular Multi-yard plans the yards in Dispersed Multi-Yards are typically detached from one another. Drawing © Bob Edwards



Distribution of Dispersed plan farmsteads, noting their concentration in the north east with the exception of the generally large-scale multi-yards which are found in the arable lands to the south.

Legend

- Dispersed Cluster (DispCL)
- Dispersed Driftway (DispDW)
- Dispersed Multi-Yard (DispMY)

LINEAR, L-PLAN, ROW AND PARALLEL PLANS

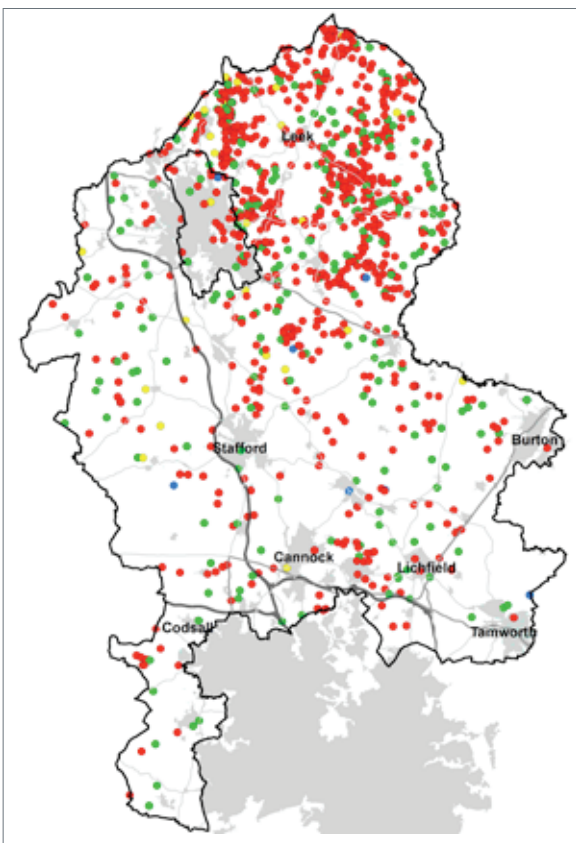
- This group are generally the smallest farmstead types, most commonly associated with upland and common-edge areas, they are predominantly found in the Moorlands of the north east of the county although examples can be found across Staffordshire.



Linear farmsteads are concentrated in the uplands, as here at Onecote. Photo © Bob Edwards



L-plan ranges which incorporate houses are also a typical feature of the uplands. Photo © Bob Edwards



Distribution map of linear, L-plan, parallel plan and row plan farmsteads, noting their concentration in the north east and elsewhere around areas of historic common land.



Legend

Plan Type

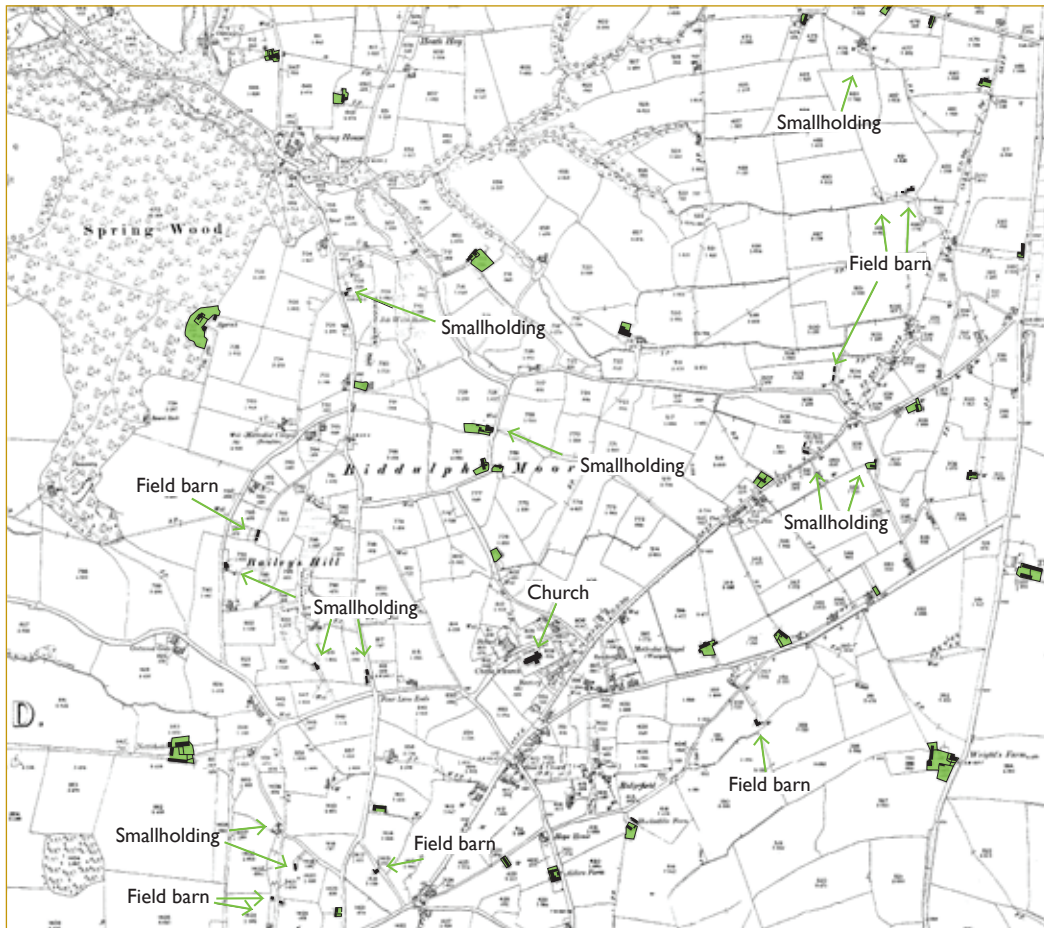
- Linear Plan
- L-Plan
- Parallel Plan
- Row Plan

The core of the farmstead comprises a parallel plan with the farmhouse and working buildings lying adjacent to one another. Other farm buildings form detached elements to the farmstead. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27964/016

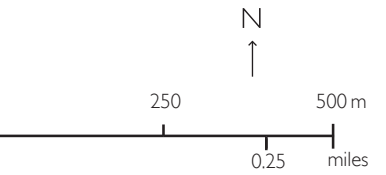
SMALLHOLDINGS

In contrast to farmers, who derived their primary income from the pursuit of agriculture, smallholders combined small-scale subsistence farming to supplement the income derived from other (usually industrial) activities such as woodland management, quarrying, coal or lead mining or metal working. Smallholders often relied upon access to common land and woodland and typically had little or no enclosed land. Smallholdings will often be identified by their location in areas of small fields close to areas of common land – what Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) has identified as areas of squatter enclosure – whereas

cottages, which may be of a similar size, will usually be set on roadsides without a clear association with fields. There is clearly a degree of overlap in these areas with sites that can be mapped as farmsteads, in particular the smallest farmsteads that can be identified as linear, loose courtyard (the smallest ones in this category with a building to only one side of a yard) and dispersed cluster plans. Their size and association with smallholdings may however imply a similar small-scale subsistence farming practice coupled with other activities.



Farmstead, showing the buildings in black and the boundaries of the main yards (highlighted in green), working areas and gardens.



Biddulph Moor
 Biddulph Moor to the north was an area of open moorland into the 18th century but was subject to enclosure during the 19th century. In some areas this enclosure took the form of regular, planned fields as on the east edge of Spring Wood but most of the area was enclosed with small irregular fields associated with a very high density of small farmsteads and smallholdings, the farmsteads typically being loose courtyards with working buildings to one side of the yard or small L-plan yards. Small field barns were also built within some of the fields, possible associated with the smallholdings. After enclosure a small settlement to the south grew up with a church, chapel, school and public house; the farmsteads in and around this settlement are likely to pre-date it.

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Many smallholdings consist of the house and a small cow house attached to the gable creating a small linear plan. Photo © Bob Edwards.

OUTLYING FIELD BARN AND OUTFARMS

Field barns and outfarms are set within the fields away from the main farmstead. They saved on transporting the harvested crop (hay or corn crops) to the farmstead, and enabled manure from the cattle housed in them to be carted back out to the distant fields.

A total of 2069 outfarms and field barns were recorded and are represented in most of Staffordshire's landscapes albeit with the highest proportions being located in the north east. The outfarms of the lowland areas have suffered considerable loss whereas in the north-east they continue to form an important element of the landscape. Overall 32.7% of outfarms and field barns survive in some form, although this figure could be overly positive with modern mapping identifying ruinous buildings as well as extant buildings.



Field barns, even those in a ruinous condition, make an important contribution to the character of the upland landscapes of the Peak and Peak fringe areas of Staffordshire and are a very distinctive feature. They comprise a variety of forms from a range of buildings as (a) near Onecote; a large combination barn as (b) just outside the village of Stanton and as small as the cattle shelter as (c) near Croxden. Photos © Bob Edwards.

Typical features of field barns

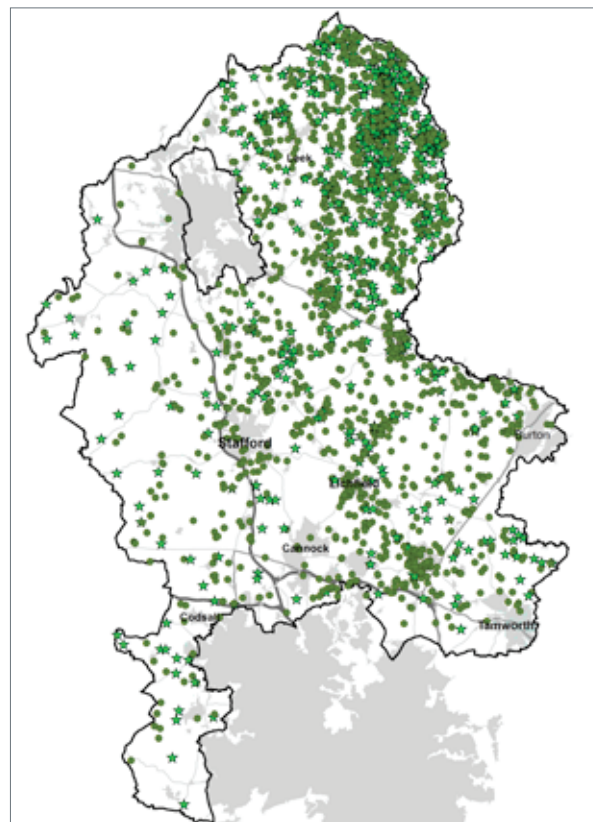
Field barns are single buildings set within or on the edge of a field away from the main farmstead. They are often found in areas where land holdings were intermixed, especially in some upland and wood pasture areas. The earliest examples date from the 17th century.

Field barns could be:

- Shelters for sheep, typically with low doors and floor-to-ceiling heights.
- Shelters for cattle and their fodder (hay). See page 28.
- Threshing barns with yards. See page 24.
- Hay barns.
- Combination barns with a threshing bay and storage for the crop, and housing for cattle.

Typical features of outfarms

Outfarms consist of one or more buildings set around a yard away from the main farmstead, typically having shelter sheds for cattle flanking a threshing barn. A cottage for a farm worker could also be sited nearby. They are particularly associated with areas of large farms which could have fields a long way away from the farmstead. Some outfarms eventually became farmsteads in their own right.



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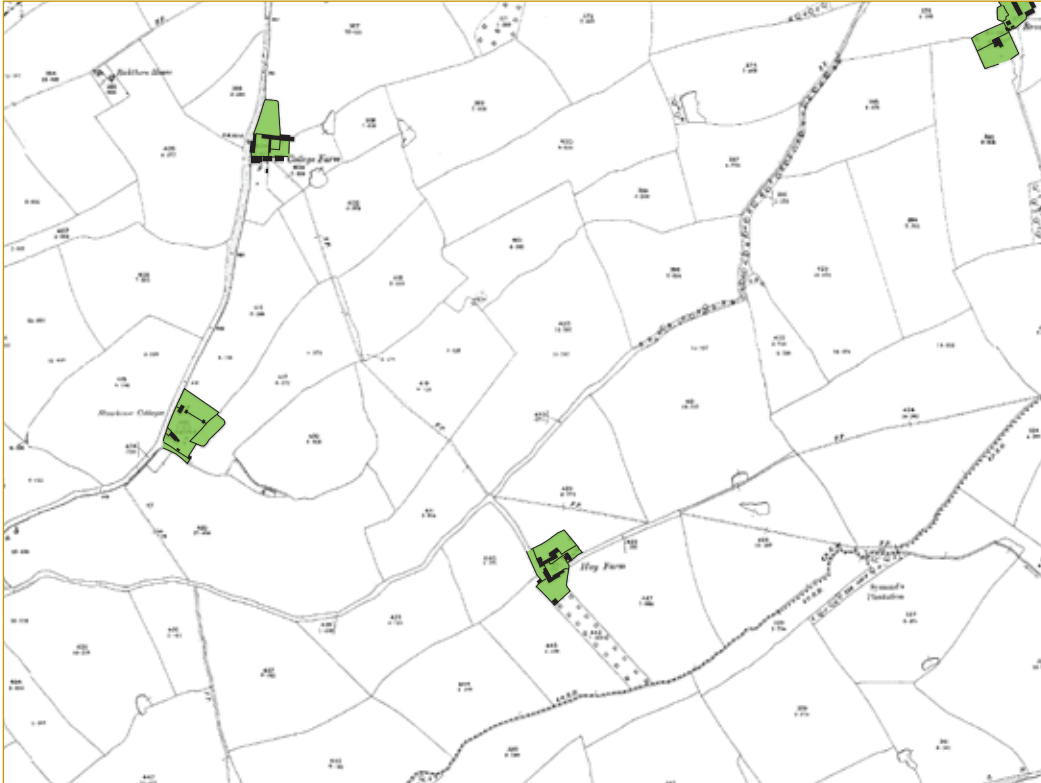
Legend

- ★ Extant (to some degree)
- Lost or Redeveloped

Distribution map of outfarms across the county showing both where they are extant and where they have been lost.

FARMSTEADS IN THE LANDSCAPE

There can be very strong variations, marked by contrasting farmstead and landscape types, in small areas. The largest courtyard and dispersed multi-yard farmsteads are associated with medium to large-scale piecemeal and planned enclosure, especially in eastern and south eastern Staffordshire where corn production was more significant. The smallest-scale courtyard plans, dispersed plans and linear plans are predominant in upland, wooded or common edge landscapes with small-scale enclosed fields. The smallest farmsteads, particular of a linear plan form, are often associated with the late enclosure of moorland in the Staffordshire Moorlands.




Near Bobbington in south Staffordshire the landscape is one of large isolated farmsteads with regular or loose courtyard plans. The fields are largely the result of piecemeal enclosure of former arable and commons, a process largely completed before the 18th century resulting in fields with wavy boundaries. Some of these farmsteads contain buildings of at least 17th century date, and their piecemeal development is reflected in the loose courtyard plan forms. The occasional straight boundary suggests that some re-organisation of the fields had taken place by the late 19th century.

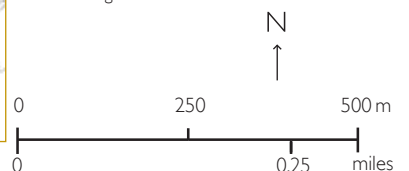
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Needwood Forest was enclosed in the early 19th century which led to the creation of a large number of new farmsteads associated with medium-sized regular fields and woodland blocks. A large number of landscape gardens with small country houses were also developed. Farmsteads created with this newly enclosed landscape tend to be large in size, typically of regular courtyard form including the covered yard at Rangemoor Farm.

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 Farmstead, showing the buildings in black and the boundaries of the main yards (highlighted in green), working areas and gardens.



Farm buildings were required for the following range of functions, some of which were often combined into a single range rather than specialist individual buildings.

Storing and processing crops

- A **barn** for storing and processing the harvested corn crop over the winter months was the basic requirement of farms, corn could also be stacked in yards adjacent to the barn.
- Grain was stored in a **granary**, which could be detached, sited over another farm building, incorporated in the barn or in the farmhouse.

Transport

Cartsheds typically face routes and tracks. **Forges** are rare.

Housing and managing farm animals

Farm animals were highly valued for their manure, provided motive power and produce for export from the farm on the hoof or as finished goods. They required one or more yards to aid free movement and the management of stock.

- Straw was taken from the barn to **cattle housing**, yards and **stables** to be used as bedding. The resulting manure was then forked into carts and returned to fertilise the surrounding farmland.
- **Pigsties** were built on most farms, and particularly on dairying establishments where there would have been whey – a waste product from cheese making – to feed them on.

find yards around upland and downland farmsteads.

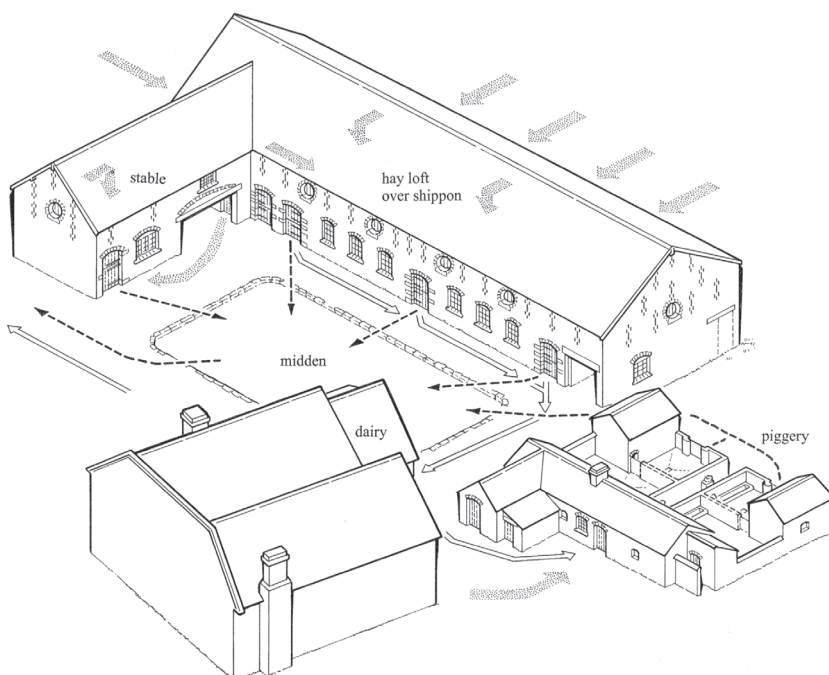
- Farm birds required **hen houses**, **goose houses**, **doveholes** and more rarely **dovecotes**.

Storage was also required in hay lofts or **hay barns** for hay from surrounding fields and meadows. Hedgerows, woodland and rough ground was also an important source – especially upland and wood pasture areas – of holly and ash, bracken and also gorse from roadside verges and common land. Root crops, primarily turnips, and then imported feed such as oilcake became increasingly widespread from the late 18th century and required their own **root houses** and **mixing houses** which were incorporated into farmstead plans.

Brewing, baking and dairy products

Purpose-built **dairies** are very rare as they were commonly sited within the farmhouse along with **cheese rooms** in some areas. **Bakehouses** and **brewhouses** were commonly detached. **Malthouses** and **kilns** for drying corn are very rare.

A range of other buildings can also be found in a farmstead, including **boiling houses** for animal feed; **forges** or dog kennels incorporated beneath granary steps.



Regular L-plan of the type found in the dairying areas of north-west Staffordshire, north Shropshire and Cheshire. The principal aim of farmsteads on dairying farms was to house cattle and their fodder, principally hay. The drawing of a dairy farmstead typical of the north of the county shows the basic flow of movement, hay being brought into lofts above the cattle, manure being returned via the yard to the land and pigs which fed on the liquid whey (a by-product of making cheese and butter) being housed close to the house. Drawing © English Heritage

BARN

The principal purpose of the barn was to store and process the harvested corn crop, and after threshing store straw before it was distributed to yards and buildings for farm animals. This function could also be combined with others, such as storing grain, carts and farm equipment and housing livestock and their fodder. In many areas the barn was the principal or only building on the farmstead until the 19th century.

Whilst all barns contain a threshing floor and storage bays, there are significant distinctions between:

- **Threshing barns** which contain one or more threshing floors and bays for storing the sheaves of unthreshed corn and often the straw after threshing.
- **Combination barns** which were built to also house other functions, notably storing grain and carts or housing animals and their fodder. Most of these date from the late 18th century and replaced smaller-capacity barns, bringing the key functions of these farmsteads under a single roof. There are no known examples of bank barns with upper-floor threshing barns, although examples are known elsewhere in the Penines.

The smallest barns are concentrated in upland and upland fringe areas. In much of the upland areas of the county the barn was of lesser importance from the 17th century onwards as the extent of arable decreased - surviving barns often show evidence for conversion to cattle housing with blocked threshing bays. More commonly, early barns have been replaced by multi-functional ranges with cattle occupying all or part of the ground floor and which incorporated an area for mechanical threshing.

Typical features of all barns

The most commonly encountered features are:

- Internal subdivision into '**bays**', marked by roof trusses, wall posts or brick piers. The number of these bays could reflect the size of the farm and its corn crop, and they could also mark internal subdivision into **stalls** for animals and lofts for storing grain or hay.
- Opposing doors to a 'threshing bay' where the harvested crop was beaten out on the threshing floor and then the grain was separated from the lighter chaff in the cross-draught (a process known as winnowing). Opposing doors in pastoral or hill farming areas might in contrast be very small, and in some cases there might just be an opposing opening (sometimes called a winnowing door) to enable a cross-draught.
- Other openings for forking the crop into storage bays, or hay for animals, and doorways into animal housing or spaces which could be used for a variety of purposes (such as shearing sheep).
- Some barns retain chaff houses – small rooms accessed from the threshing bay for storing husks from the grain crop (chaff), after it has been threshed and winnowed in the barn, for use as animal feed.
- Barns were commonly extended with lean-tos (also called outshots) for cattle. From the late 19th century, many barns were converted into **cow houses** and fodder processing and storage buildings. Barns may retain evidence for this change of function in the retention of stalling etc

Significance

- Timber-framed threshing barns of 17th century or earlier date are very rare and concentrated in the Staffordshire Plain, although here the timber-frame has often been encapsulated with brick and there has been a higher level of replacement of timber-framed barns with brick barns in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- Ritual and tally marks can be found scratched into walls and timbers around the threshing floor.
- Evidence for mechanisation which was introduced in the 1790s and taken up in some areas, most obviously in the form of rare surviving horse engine houses and additions with chimney stacks for stationary steam engines. Evidence for water power, in the form of leats to carry water to the barn and for water-powered machinery, is exceptionally rare. Evidence for wind power is rarer still.



Timber-framed barns are rare survivals. Photo © Jeremy Lake

Cruck-framed barns are widely documented across the upland and upland fringe areas of northern England. They often had one end partitioned off for a cowhouse. Only four cruck-framed barns are known to exist in Staffordshire and these all lie in the southern lowlands.



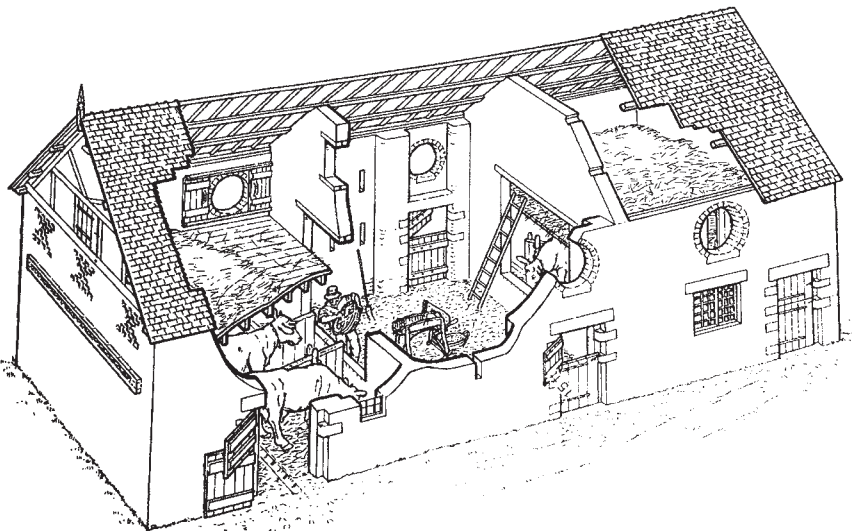
Interior of a cruck-framed barn (since converted to domestic use) in western Staffordshire. A cruck is formed from a pair of curved timbers, usually halved from the same tree trunk, that form an A-frame extending from the ground to the apex of the roof. A raised cruck has the feet of the cruck raised off the ground, usually embedded in a masonry wall. Jointed crucks are individual cruck blades formed by two timbers joined together. Photo © Staffordshire County Council



Large red brick threshing barns are common across the lowland areas (a). Combination barns (b) make a notable contribution to farmsteads across Staffordshire. Note the wide cow house doors in this example of a combination barn. Photos © Bob Edwards



19th century stone-built barns survive in the uplands of the north east. The largest are associated with medieval monasticism (c). The 16th century Croxden Abbey barn (above) was originally timber-framed but was largely rebuilt in stone in the 19th century. Almost all combination barns (d) date from the early-mid 19th century. Note the ventilation slits to the areas for crop and hay storage. Both of these barns were converted into cattle housing in the 19th century emphasising the increasing predominance of pastoral farming in the uplands of the county. Photos © Bob Edwards and Jeremy Lake



This example of a combination barn from south Cheshire shows an arrangement found across the north of Staffordshire and in the Moorlands. It shows storage for hay above cattle stalls that face the central bay, which has opposing doors for winnowing the small amount of corn crop that was grown in dairying and stock rearing areas. Drawing © English Heritage.

Evidence for mechanisation

The take-up of mechanised methods of threshing the corn crop – by horse engines from the 1790s, water power, wind power and from the 1820s steam – was regionally very varied. Belt drives and shafting conveyed power to rooms for mixing animal feed elsewhere in the barn. Mechanisation was usually associated with the subdivision of the barn into smaller spaces for housing the threshing machine, the straw, grain and also preparing feed for cattle. A number of the larger estate farms in Staffordshire retain evidence for the mechanisation of agriculture during the late 18th-19th century. The evidence includes purpose-built buildings to house horse-engines, waterwheels and steam-engines (the latter typified by tall chimneys) to power the machinery. Furthermore the conversion of barns to cow housing evident during the 19th century potentially indicates the increasing use of portable steam engines within Staffordshire’s agricultural economy.



A wheelhouse with a conical roof projecting from a combination barn. Such survivals, which housed horse-powered machinery for threshing grain and processing fodder, are very rare. They were initially built on the largest farms, usually the home farms to estates. Photo © Jeremy Lake

Occasionally evidence for the use of mechanisation for threshing and processing feed can be found in the form of external fly wheels and internal gearing power which were powered by portable steam engines. Photo © Bob Edwards

BANK BARN

A type of combination barn, usually of two storeys, which are concentrated in England’s upland landscapes. Through constructing the barn against a bank, both floors can be entered from ground level. There is the potential for bank barns to exist in the upland areas of Staffordshire, although none have been recorded to date.

BREWHOUSE/ BAKEHOUSE

Detached buildings separate but close to the farmhouse for brewing beer and baking bread, often combined into a single building.

Typical features

- A single-storey building, usually with a single entry, and windows to the side walls.
- They will always have a chimney stack.
- Internally an oven and usually a copper.

Significance

- Examples appear to be concentrated in the west of England, extending into Wales. Most are 19th century, and earlier examples are very rare.
- Few examples survive as they have usually been subsumed by the farmhouse and converted for other use.
- Surviving bread ovens and copper vessels for brewing and washing are rare.



Brewhouse, Hodge Hill Farm, Worcestershire
A) exterior; B) interior showing 'copper'. Photos © Worcestershire County Council

CART SHED

A building used for housing and protecting carts, waggons and farm implements from the weather, often open-fronted.

The cart shed housed not only carts for transporting muck to fields, the harvest to the farmstead and grain to market, but also the implements needed (primarily for arable cultivation) on the farm. It could also accommodate the coach or pony trap.

Typical features

- Open-fronted and sometimes open at each end, positioned facing routeways and often close to the stables. One or two bays may be enclosed with doors for the storage of small implements.
- In many areas cart sheds are combined with first-floor granaries, accessed by external steps. These may have evidence for hatches for dropping sacks of grain from granaries into carts; hoists for hauling grain; steps to granaries with internal grain bins and louvred windows.
- Trap houses or coach houses may also form part of the domestic service buildings near the farmhouse.

Significance

- The size of cart sheds reflects the size and function of the farm – larger examples are found on large arable-based farms.
- Pre-19th-century examples are rare. The earliest surviving cart sheds date from the 17th century but the majority are late 18th or 19th century in date.
- The largest cart sheds are found on large corn-producing farms.



Large cartsheds are a feature of larger and particularly arable or mixed farms. Photo © Bob Edwards



Cartsheds can also be incorporated into multi-functional ranges. Photo © Staffordshire County Council

COACH HOUSE

A building similar to a cart shed used for storing a coach or pony trap, but situated closer to the farmhouse.

CATTLE HOUSING

Most building for cattle date from the 19th century and comprise calf houses, cow houses, loose boxes for fattening, open-fronted shelter sheds and hemmels, and covered yards from the 1850s.

CALF HOUSE

A building, or part of a building, for housing calves.

Typical features

- Calf houses are similar to but typically smaller in scale, with lower eaves, than cow houses or loose boxes.
- They are often located close to the farmhouse.

Significance

- Calf houses are a distinctive feature of cattle-rearing farms, particularly in upland and upland fringe areas.



Single-storey cattle-housing used to accommodate young stock. Photo © Bob Edwards

COVERED YARD

A covered yard for the shelter of cattle and the conservation of their manure, first used on planned and model farms of the 1850s to 1870s following scientific research which proved that manure stored undercover had improved qualities as a fertiliser. They became increasingly common from the 1880s when former open yards were roofed over with timber or metal-framed superstructures.

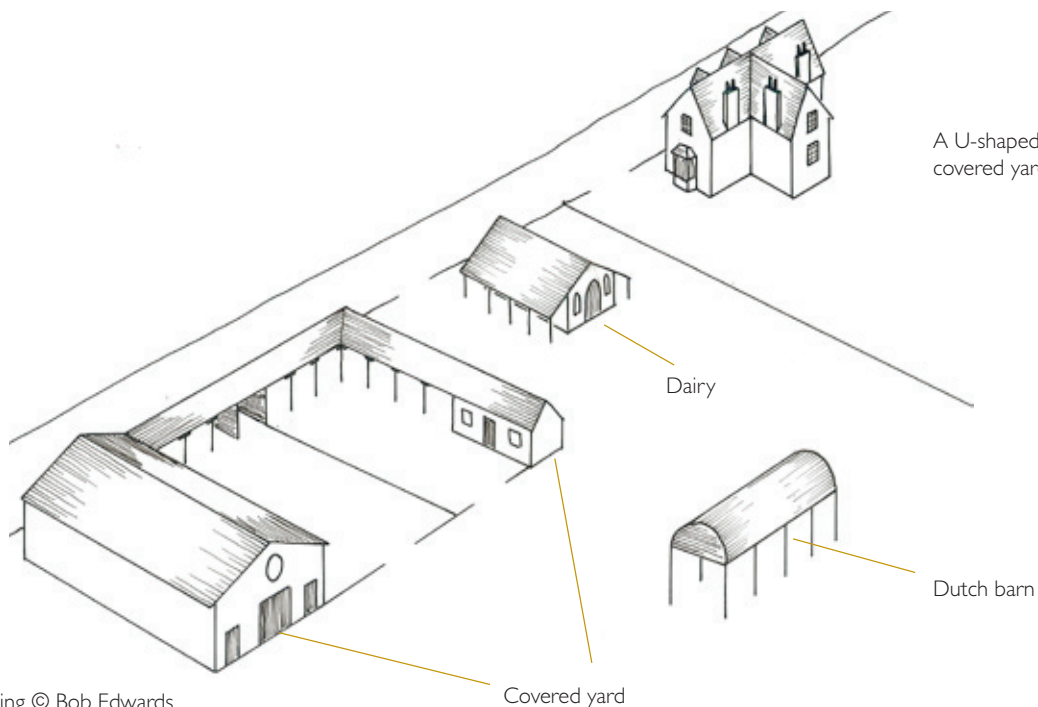
Typical features

- Wide-span roofs are a defining characteristic. Covered yards needed adequate ventilation, and could be provided with complex systems of louvres and shutters.

Significance

- Covered yards, particularly those on the home farms of large estates, can be of high architectural quality and incorporate new constructional techniques, cast iron stalls and feed and water bins.

- Covered yards that form part of coherent planned and model farm complexes of the 1850s to c 1880, and later examples with architectural quality are significant.
- Covered yards inserted into pre-existing open cattle yards from the late 19th century are much more common.



Drawing © Bob Edwards

COW HOUSE

An enclosed building, or part of a multi-functional building, for stalling cattle (often dairy cattle).

Typical features

- Externally, lower and wider doorways than stables and more limited light and ventilation in the form of ventilation slits.
- Windows and other features to assist ventilation were widely introduced from the mid-19th to early 20th centuries, e.g. hit-and-miss ventilators, air ducts and ridge ventilators.
- Cow stalls comprise low partitions of wood, stone or slate. Feeding arrangements can survive in the form of hayracks, water bowls and mangers for feed. Cast iron was used from the late 19th century.
- On the larger-scale dairy enterprises on the Staffordshire Plain, cattle housing similar to that found across the border in Cheshire was provided. Here brick shippens with large haylofts above were typical and were characterised by decorative ventilation panels in the hay storage areas above and dominant loading bays, often in the form of circular pitching eyes.
- Cow houses forming part of linear ranges are a common feature in the north-east of the county although the cowhouse has often been converted to form part of the domestic accommodation.



Many cow houses were converted from earlier barns and other buildings in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The windows to this range have been inserted, and the metal frames conform to 1930s hygiene regulations. Photo © Jeremy Lake



An L-shaped range of cattle housing, all built in different phases between the mid 19th century and (right) the 1920s-30s. Photo © Staffordshire County Council

Significance

- Surviving examples of pre-19th-century cow houses – including within combination barns (see page 24) – are rare in a national context and are of high significance.
- Any documented evidence for accommodation for draught oxen will be extremely rare. These may have wider doorways. In many areas oxen had been replaced by draught horses by the 18th century.
- Hygiene regulations from the early 20th century resulted in new floors, windows and stall arrangements being inserted, replacing earlier traditional stalling and floors. The latter survive best in the north and west of England.



An early to mid 19th century storeyed cow house with later single storey extension. Photo © English Heritage



This shelter shed is part of a large late 18th century planned farmstead in north west Staffordshire. Photo © Staffordshire County Council

DAIRIES AND CHEESE ROOMS

A dairy is a detached building, or more often a room at the rear of the farmhouse, used for the cool storage of milk and its manufacture into butter and/or cheese.

Dairying for urban markets was already a specialised enterprise by the 1750s. Commercial cheese making and foreign imports (from the colonies) made inroads from the 1860s, and by around 1914 very little was being produced and sold from farms. The sale of liquid milk had become massively important in many areas by the early 20th century. The stand for milk churns, and the abandonment of all but a handful of farmhouse dairies and cheese rooms for new milk-production plants were the other visible consequences of these developments.

Typical features

- Wide doors. Ventilated and/or shuttered windows and verandahs to aid cooling. Internal slate shelves and brick/stone floors to keep milk and interior cool.

Significance

- Complete surviving examples with original fixtures, such as slate or stone shelves for cooling the milk, are very rare. This is because changes in hygiene regulations and the centralisation of production through the 20th century had a major impact on dairies, with the majority becoming redundant to their original use.
- Ornate dairies may form part of estate home farms.

CHEESE ROOM

A separate **cheese room** could also be provided in a loft above the dairy or in the attic of the farmhouse.

Typical features

- A room with shelves for storing cheese, and sometimes with a hoist for hauling the heavy cheeses into or out of the loft.

Significance

- Intact examples have been identified in Staffordshire, but are very rare.



Cool storage and surfaces were provided in dairies by slate shelves supported on brick or stone piers or arches. Photo © Worcestershire County Council



Plaster floor and walls to a cheese room at Birchensale Farm, Redditch. Photo © Worcestershire County Council

DOVECOTES

Dovecotes are usually square or circular towers with pyramidal or conical roofs for housing pigeons and their manure. Holes for doves can be incorporated into the walls of other buildings such as stables and barns.

Typical features

- Dovecote doorways were low to discourage the birds from flying out.
- Nest boxes, in the earliest examples were formed in the thickness of the wall but usually in stone, brick or wood.
- A potence, a central pivoted post with arms supporting a revolving ladder, provided access to the nest boxes for collection of the young birds (squabs) and eggs.

Significance

- Timber-framed dovecotes have been subject to the greatest rate of loss over time, and are now extremely rare.
- Surviving internal fittings are of great rarity, notably potences and removable wooden nest boxes.



A large red brick dovecote, part of a late 18th century planned farmstead in west Staffordshire. Photo © Staffordshire County Council.

DUTCH BARN

An open-fronted building roofed in corrugated iron for the shelter of hay or (less commonly) corn. They date from around the mid 1870s, the first examples being built of timber. Iron-framed Dutch barns became standardised from the 1880s when firms began to advertise them along with other prefabricated buildings such as village halls.

Typical features

- Timber frames are usually linked by iron straps.
- Metal frames are sometimes accompanied by a manufacturer's nameplate or relief moulding.
- Corrugated-iron roofing and sometimes side walls.



Late 19th century Dutch barns built partly of timber can have wrought-iron struts to a corrugated iron roof and cast-iron braces to strengthen the construction. Photo © Joan Grundy

Significance

- These are highly distinctive but typical buildings with a widespread national distribution, most examples being concentrated in the wetter western half of England. Any documented pre-1880s examples will be rare.



Metal-framed example. Photo © Paul Stamper

FORGE

A building housing the ironworking processes of a blacksmith. Iron-working forges served the blacksmithing needs of farming and rural communities, and were also built on large estate farms.

Typical features

- Forges required wide doorways and access to a water supply.
- They were built to serve farming and rural communities, and were also built on large estate farms.
- They required bellows for working the forge and benches for working.

Significance

- Examples with internal fittings (bellows, hearth) are rare, and those with internal racks for forge implements rarer still.
- Associated with the forge there may be features such as a wheel clamp for fitting iron tyres to cart wheels.



Single-storey smithy fronting onto village street, but attached to a range of farm buildings. Photo © Jeremy Lake

GRANARY

A building, or first-floor room in a building, for the dry and secure storage of grain after it has been threshed and winnowed. The size of the granary provides an indication of the arable acreage of the farm.

Typical features

- Ventilated openings - either louvres, shutters, sliding vents or grilles.
- If the granary was sited in the loft of a working building, it required substantial external steps and/or a hoist for pulling up or lowering the heavy sacks of grain.
- Close-boarded or plastered and lime-washed walls internally, and a strong load-bearing floor construction with tight-fitting lapped boards to prevent loss of grain.
- Grain bins, or the slots in vertical timbers for horizontal planking used to make them, may survive.



A granary and former stabling attached to cattle housing. Photo © English Heritage

Significance

- Granaries were a common building type on mixed and arable farmsteads, typically found in association with cart sheds, stables or in combination ranges.
- Most examples are of 19th-century date, earlier examples being of great rarity.



Steps to an upper floor granary and wool loft in the gable end of a combination barn. Photo © English Heritage

HAY BARN

An open-fronted building for the storage of hay, with a roof supported on high brick, stone or timber piers. Initially hay was stored in lofts above the animals but as the importance of good ventilation for animal welfare was increasingly understood in the 19th century, other methods of storing hay were required – either in ricks or purpose-built hay barns.

Significance

- Most examples are mid-late 19th century, making earlier survivals rare.



A hay barn at Bradley-in-the Moors. Photo © Bob Edwards

HORSE ENGINE HOUSE

A round or polygonal building containing a horse engine used for powering threshing machinery following its invention in 1786. These were either attached to existing barns, entailing the insertion of new floors and partitions, or were an integral part of new mechanised farmsteads. The equipment was also used for chopping and crushing fodder.

See BARNNS for more detail.

KENNELS

Farm dogs were accommodated in recesses beneath steps that led up to lofts, and rarely in their own kennels. These are mostly found in upland areas. Kennels for hunting dogs are found in areas where hunting was practised on estates and are typically low, single-storey buildings with attached individual yards enclosed by metal railings. Complete example are rare.



Kennel set in a recess under granary steps, Trent Valley. Photo © Bob Edwards

LONGHOUSE

A building with a shared entrance for humans and cattle under one roof, the cow house being usually built down-slope from the accommodation. No known examples have yet been identified in Staffordshire.

MALT HOUSE

A low-ceilinged building for the malting of barley before brewing, specifically for the germination of the crop on malting floors and then drying in a kiln. After the early 19th century malt houses were rarely built on farms as the malting industry became concentrated in urban areas where larger breweries developed. An early 19th century example is known on a model farm in western Staffordshire, where it was attached to a watermill.

Typical features

- Steeping tanks where the barley would be soaked to swell the grain prior to being laid out to germinate.
- A kiln to heat the germinated barley.
- The malting/drying floor would be slatted or made of perforated tiles to allow warm air from the kiln to pass through the barley to stop germination.

Significance

- Surviving rural malt houses are rare and significant.
 - Any examples that retain internal features such as steeping tanks, kilns or drying floors are of high significance.
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MILL

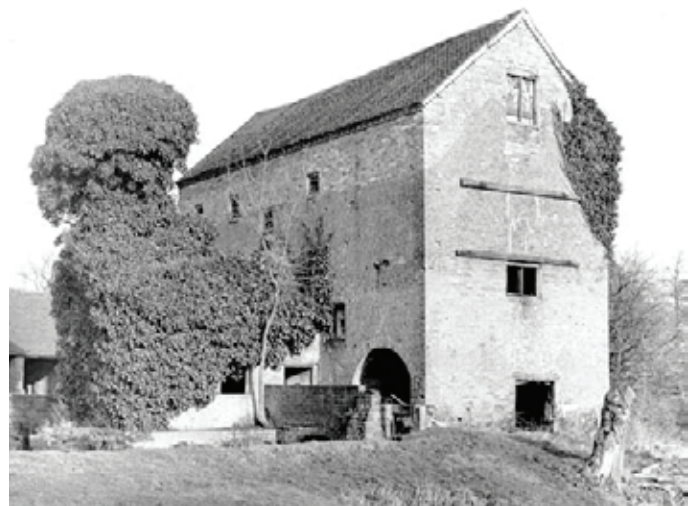
Mills, to grind corn into flour or for animal feed, were either water powered or wind powered. The presence of fast flowing rivers and streams mean that water power was favoured but wind mills were also built, their presence remembered by topographical names such as 'Mill Hill'. Some mills on farmsteads may have originated for the fulling of cloth. A number of watermills are known associated with farmsteads particularly in south and western Staffordshire.

Typical features

- A structure of two storeys or more with storages areas for the grain and milled flour; the mill machinery and associated water wheel.
- Watermills are typically associated with water management features such as mill ponds to provide a sufficient head of water and leats which may take water from a river some distance upstream.

Significance

- Watermills were rarely built on farms and so are highly significant where they form part of a farmstead group.
- Examples with surviving machinery and/or waterwheels are of extreme rarity.



The watermill at Somerford Mill Farm; the farm buildings are just visible to the rear. © Staffordshire County Council

PIG HOUSING

Structures providing secure housing for pigs.

On most farms only a few pigs were kept for domestic use and here they were normally fed on kitchen scraps or whey and so pigsties were often placed near the kitchen or dairy. Pigsties are most commonly found in the dairying north of the county.

Typical features

- Pigsties were typically built as single-storey structures comprising individual boxes with their own individual yards. They were built individually or more commonly in rows and could be served by external feeding chutes.
- Some had upper floors with poultry houses.
- A small chimneystack could mark the position of a meal house for boiling swill for pig feed

Significance

- They can form part of complete dairying farmsteads together with the dairy and cattle housing.
- Any pre-19th-century examples are very rare.

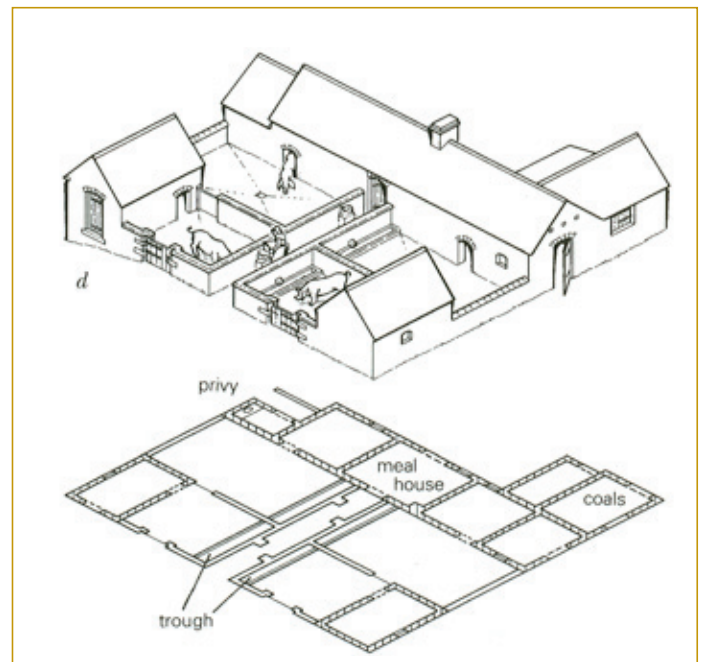


Pigsty with pop-hole to hen house. Photo © Bob Edwards

A large-scale piggery of the type occasionally found in the dairying area of Staffordshire and Cheshire. A chimneystack marks the position of a meal house (also called a boiling house) for preparing feed, with access to a feeding passage. Drawing © English Heritage



This pigsty has the more usual walled enclosures in front of it, but it is unusual in having the upper-storey hen house, the arrangement of the brickwork being unusually decorative. Photo © Jeremy Lake



POULTRY

Hens usually ran freely about a farmyard, but were encouraged to nest safely away from predators and so that the eggs could be more easily collected. They were often housed above pigsties. Geese could be housed in free-standing pens or alcoves in farmyard walls.

See PIG HOUSING FOR ILLUSTRATION

SHEEP HOUSING

There is widespread archaeological and documentary evidence for medieval sheep houses, but otherwise evidence for sheep housing is very rare.

SILAGE CLAMP AND TOWER

Airtight containers for the storage of freshly cut grass and its conversion into silage were first developed in the 1880s, after its initial use elsewhere in Europe. Silage afforded the opportunity to cut and store grass for bulk fodder without the risk of poor weather or storage conditions spoiling the hay or root crop.

Typical features

- **Silage clamp** An airtight container for the storage of freshly cut grass and its conversion into silage. Silage clamps were brick or concrete walled structures, in which the silage would be placed and then covered over.
- **Silage tower** A tower for the airtight storage of freshly cut grass and its conversion into silage. A silage tower is recognisable as a tall structure. Tower silos were introduced from the United States in 1901, but were not in general use until after the Second World War

Significance

- There is at least one example of a silage clamp in mass concrete of the 1880s, otherwise they are modest structures.
- Intact examples of silage towers of 1940 or earlier, using concrete or displaying a degree of architectural elaboration, are rare.



An example of 1940 from Shropshire. Photo © Paul Stamper

SLAUGHTERHOUSES

Occasionally a farm had its own slaughterhouse but many of these buildings do not have any characteristic external features, although internal features often included a higher ceiling and possibly a wheel to raise carcasses. Examples are known to have existed on farms in western Staffordshire. Some served the larger farmsteads, but those identified on small farms were usually associated with farmers who were also butchers.

STABLE

A building, or part of a building, for housing horses and their harnessing and tackle. The largest stables are concentrated in corn-producing areas, where farms were larger and more horses were need for ploughing and many other tasks. Fewer horses were needed in cattle-rearing or dairying areas.

Typical features

- Externally distinguishable as they have tall and relatively narrow doors compared to cow houses, and are often well-lit. Single-storey stables, commonly with cast-iron ridge vents, were commonly built from the later 19th century, as also were loose boxes for horses.
- Wooden or cast-iron (for high-status or late examples) stalls with access to manger and hayrack.
- Floors of earth, stone flags/cobbles and from the mid-19th century of engineering brick, sloping to a drainage channel.
- Pegs for harness and tack, sometimes in a separate harness room with fireplace. Stables might also be provided with cubby-holes for lanterns, grooming brushes, medicines etc.
- Chaff (a by-product of threshing, comprising husks from the grain crop) might be stored in a separate room with its own external loading door sited next to the stable.

Significance

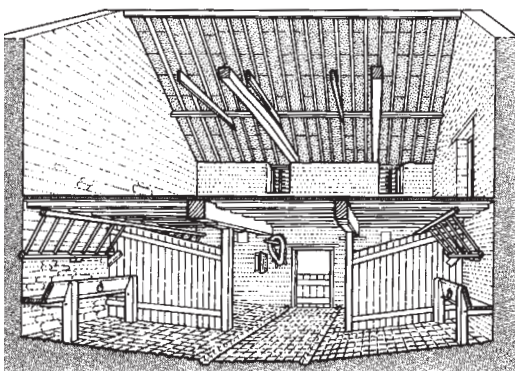
- After the barn, the stable – either detached or part of combination barns (see page 24) - is often the oldest building on the farmstead. A few stables dating to before 1700 have been identified in local surveys, while many more date from the 18th century. One of the reasons for this rise in number was the decline in the use of oxen.
- Some stables can be architecturally ornate, those on stud farms (and often built in courtyard layouts) being unusual in a national context.
- Examples retaining internal fittings including stall partitions and feed racks are rare and significant.



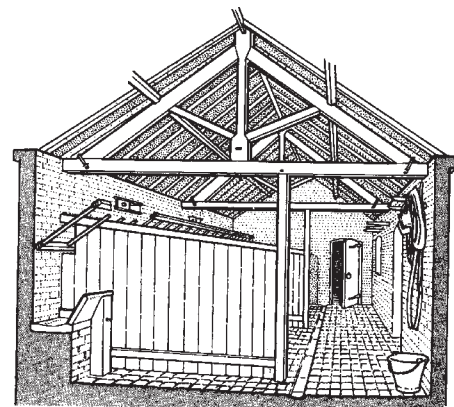
Stable with hay loft over. Photo © English Heritage



These stables form part of a combination range. Photo © Bob Edwards.



Stable with loft over with stalls across the end walls.
© English Heritage



Late 19th century single-storey stable with stalls along the side walls.
© English Heritage

STACK STAND

Raised platform on which hay, corn, peas etc were raised out of the reach of vermin and thatched to protect from rain. Stacks were termed ricks in some parts of England. Surviving examples are extremely rare.

SECTION 4: MATERIALS AND DETAIL

In Staffordshire the main distinctions in building materials are between the uplands, where sandstone was used for walls and stone slates, and the remainder of Staffordshire where there is some use of stone but 18th and 19th century red brick and plain clay tile are dominant. Some timber-framing survives within farmhouses and occasionally within farm buildings. There is much use of imported Welsh slate and Staffordshire blue tiles, and some rare surviving use of Westmorland slate.

Architectural detail and internal fittings

Surviving fittings and details within farm buildings are mostly of 19th and early 20th-century date but occasional examples of earlier doors, windows and flooring can be found.

Typical features

- Stalls and other interior features (eg mangers, hay racks) in **stables** and **cattle housing**.
- Doors (usually planked/ledged and braced, from c 1850 on horizontal sliding rails) with iron strap hinges and handles, and heavy frames.
- Windows, often of a standard type nationally, that are half-glazed, shuttered and/or with hit-and-miss ventilators. Horizontal sliding hit-and-miss ventilators achieved wide popularity in the mid- to late 19th century.
- Historic surfaces such as brick, stone-flag and cobble floors to stables and cattle housing, with drainage channels.
- Industrial fittings (iron or concrete stalls, mangers etc) associated with planned or industrial 19th-century farmsteads.

Rare survivals

- Particularly vulnerable historic floors (eg lime ash doors, rush withy floors, threshing floors).
- Stalls, internal fittings, doors and windows of pre-19th-century date, eg mullioned windows, sliding shutters to windows.
- Tramways to planned industrial complexes with good survival of other features (see below).

Unusual features of historic interest, often difficult to spot, include:

- *Tallies* near threshing floors in barns for noting production of grain and numbers to grain bins. Tallies are also found in hop buildings for keeping track of the number of pockets produced.
- *Incised ritual marks* for protecting produce or livestock, *burned marks* (either scorching from lights or made for ritual purposes) and *graffiti*, recording names of workers, sales etc. There are very few recorded examples in Staffordshire.



Loft door with strap hinges. Photo © Bob Edwards



Hit and miss ventilator. Photo © Jeremy Lake



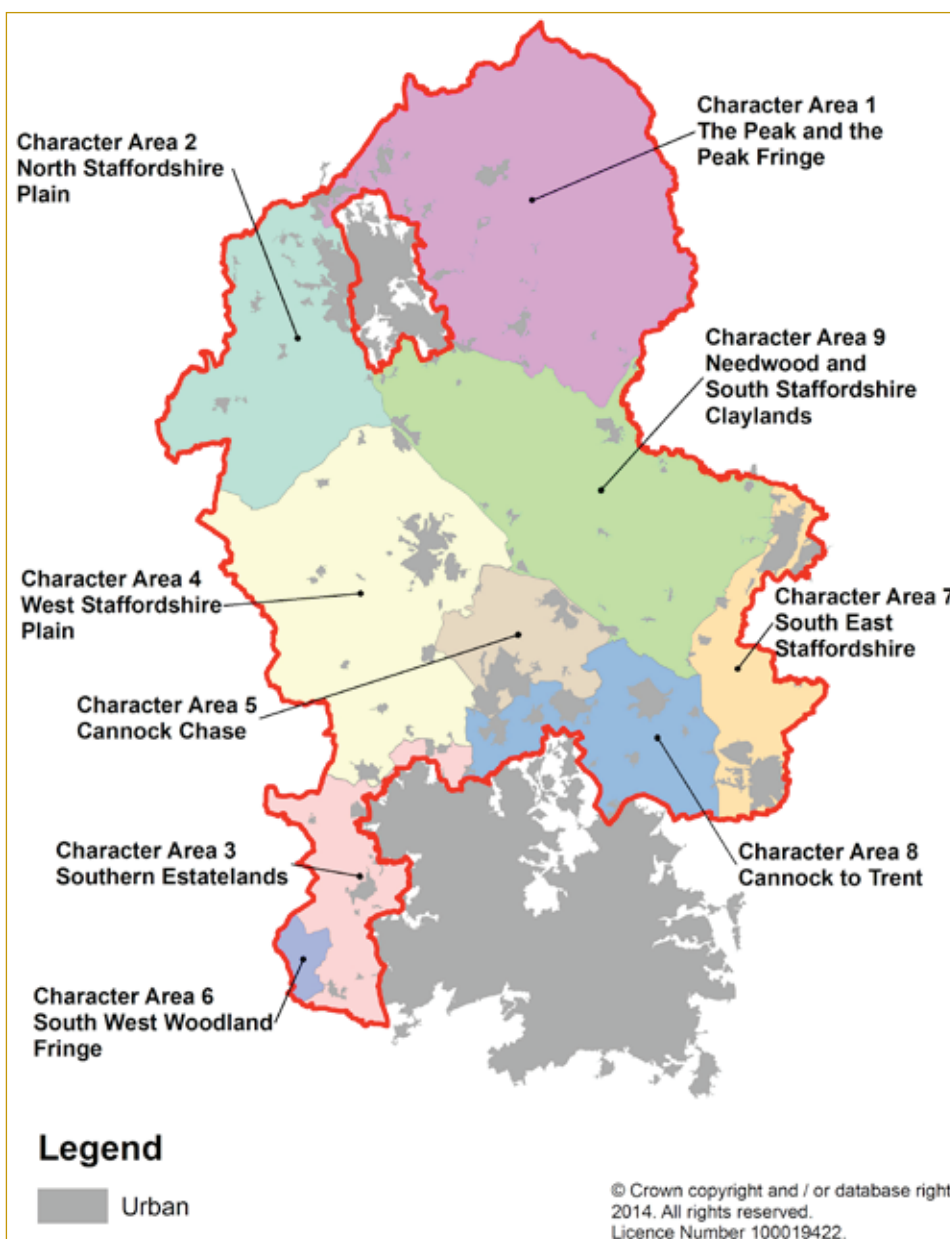
Interior of a cow house showing wooden stalls and king post roof. King post roofs made from imported softwood with iron stays and bolts comprise a standard form of roof truss used in the 19th century, most commonly from the 1840s. Photo (c) Mike Williams/ English Heritage

SECTION 5: AREA SUMMARIES

This section summarises the historic character and significance of farmsteads for the various areas into which Staffordshire can be subdivided.

Farmstead types. Very small-scale farmsteads (linear, L-plan with farmhouse attached and loose courtyard plans with buildings to one side of the yard) are particularly highly concentrated in the upland areas in the north-eastern part of the county. These are often landscapes dominated by small holdings and part-time farmers. There is a particularly dense concentration at Biddulph Moor. By contrast the largest estate planned farmsteads are more common in those landscapes where mixed farming traditionally dominated, in the west, south west and south east of the county. In these landscapes they are associated with 18th-19th century farm amalgamation and improvements. The increasing importance of dairy farming in the county has also influenced Staffordshire's farmsteads, and is reflected in abundant evidence for cow houses with hay lofts, particularly in the north west and to the east of the county.

Outfarms and field barns display strong localised patterns. Large outfarms are concentrated within the zones of large-scale farms, and field barns are apparent across the county but tend to cluster around the main settlement centres, with denser concentrations in the north of the county particularly in the dairying region, perhaps for sheltering cattle. These are generally not suitable for alternative use, and have been subject to high rates of loss.



This map shows the main areas into which the county can be divided.

Area I The Peak and the Peak Fringe

HISTORIC CHARACTER

- An upland and upland fringe farming area with a very high density of farmsteads.
- The smallest farmsteads are concentrated to the north and east and are represented by linear farmsteads, loose courtyards with buildings to one or two sides of the yard, dispersed driftway and dispersed cluster plans. These farmsteads are associated with generally small enclosures often rectilinear in form and frequently representing late enclosure out of moorland and enclosed by stone walls.
- Farmsteads increase in size towards the south, reflected in greater numbers of loose courtyard plans with buildings to three sides of the yard, regular courtyard L-plans with an additional building to the third side of the yard and regular courtyard U-plans. The enclosures within these landscapes are predominantly small-medium and irregular in form representing an earlier phase of enclosure. In some areas these farmsteads are located with field systems, which were enclosed out of medieval open fields associated with villages and hamlets, prior to the 18th century.

- High number of farmsteads with surviving 18th century or earlier farm buildings (usually the farmhouse). There is a particularly high density of 17th century farmsteads along and above the Churnet Valley, which is noted for its ancient woodlands. In this landscape the farmsteads are associated with small-medium irregular enclosures whose creation is probably linked with industrial activity within the valley particularly during the 16th and 17th centuries.
- Local stone is the principal building material for traditional farmsteads; in the upland areas stone walling characterises the field boundaries.

SIGNIFICANCE

- A high proportion of the farmsteads (81%) have been identified as having a high heritage potential and 5% have some heritage potential.
- 15% of the farmsteads with a high heritage potential have one or more listed buildings.



Biddulph Moor is typical of the upland and upland fringe landscapes to be found within Character Area I. There is a high density of small farmsteads associated with small fields. The regular nature of the field system both here and in the middle distance to the right is typical of landscapes enclosed in the 18th or 19th century out of moorland. Towards the centre of the photograph, on the lower lying land, shows an older landscape of smaller more irregular fields with mature vegetation. The land rises up from here to the upland moors of the Peak District. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27963/024.

Area 2 North Staffordshire Plain

HISTORIC CHARACTER

- High numbers of small-scale farmsteads intermingled with large-scale courtyard farmsteads reflect a diversity of enclosure scale and type in this landscape.
- The smaller steadings mostly comprise dispersed plan types, loose courtyard plans with buildings to one or two sides of the yard and regular courtyard L-plans: the latter consist of cowhouse/fodder ranges of a type characteristic of the Cheshire Plain. Larger scale regular courtyard plans include U- and E-plans and some regular courtyard multi-yard farmsteads.

- The eastern border is becoming increasingly urbanised with the expansion of the Potteries and Newcastle-under-Lyme. Woodlands (both ancient and plantation) are a feature of the southern part and some of the smaller farmsteads may have been established through the clearing of woodland before 1800.

SIGNIFICANCE

- 65% of farmsteads have been identified as having high heritage potential and 14% have some heritage potential.
- 15% of the farmsteads with a high heritage potential have one or more listed buildings.



On the western borders of Staffordshire the landscape reveals a diversity of enclosure and farmstead types. The foreground shows a large regular courtyard farmstead surrounded by large planned enclosure subdivided by a single-species hedge. The trees in this landscape are confined within the large contemporary plantation. Beyond the woodland, to the right, lies an older landscape of piecemeal enclosure revealing some re-organisation at a later date. The field boundaries are sinuous and contain mature in-hedge trees. Associated with this landscape are a number of small loose-courtyard farmsteads. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27962/012.

Area 3 Southern Estatelands

HISTORIC CHARACTER

- Estates had a fundamental impact on this area, from the reorganisation of farmland to the building of farmsteads, houses and churches.
- Large and medium-scale farmsteads have developed within landscapes which have been subject to successive reorganisation and enlargement. These include full regular courtyard plans, regular courtyard multi-yard plans and regular courtyard L-plans.
- There are occasional pockets of smaller farmsteads including some linear plans.
- The majority of the landscape to the south was first enclosed in the late 18th-19th century and retains its planned form. On the poorest soils conifer plantations have been established from the 19th century onwards.



This landscape lies to the far south of the county near Kinver and adjacent to the county boundary with Dudley Metropolitan Borough. It is a landscape dominated by large isolated traditional farmsteads; one lies to the left above the road and the other to the right below the road. These farmsteads are still closely associated with the planned enclosure which was created, out of what remained of the medieval Kinver Forest, in the late 18th century. The curving boundary above the road is the legacy of an earlier land use perhaps indicating the site of former woodland or a deer park (the farmstead to the left is 'Iverley Park Farm'). Where the land was not deemed suitable for agriculture woodland was either planted or allowed to develop. The woodland shown to the bottom right, part of a much larger area, lies on steeply sloping land. The deciduous trees may reflect those trees which would have been found in the area when it had formed part of the Royal Forest. The other buildings in the photograph relate to development influenced by the suburban expansion of Dudley in the mid and late 20th century. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27701/005.

SIGNIFICANCE

- 66% of farmsteads have been identified as having high heritage potential and 15% have some heritage potential.
- 18% of the farmsteads with a high heritage potential have one or more listed buildings.



Large regular courtyard farmsteads dominate this landscape which lies on the western edge of county and is characterised by large and medium-scale field systems the result of centuries of changing farming practices. Planned enclosure dominates the top of the image and was created following an Act of Parliament passed in 1799 to enclose all the agricultural and common land within the parish of Pattingham and Patshull. This area had previously comprised a small common located on the edge of the parish. The landscape in the foreground within which most of the farmsteads are located has been more recently enlarged out of an earlier field pattern of piecemeal enclosure originally created between the 14th and 18th centuries. The earlier historic character is fossilised in the 'S' shaped morphology of many of the field boundaries and road alignments. These surviving landscape features are also testimony to the fact that this land had originally formed part of a once extensive medieval open field system associated with the nearby village of Pattingham. Photo English Heritage NMR © 2900/042

Area 4 West Staffordshire Plain

HISTORIC CHARACTER

- An area displaying a range of pre-1700 field systems many of which are small in scale, but there are areas of later reorganisation particularly of late 18th and 19th century date. This is reflected in the diversity of farmstead plans, and the comprehensive rebuilding of farmsteads over this period.
- Large to medium-scale courtyard farmsteads, including estate farms, are combined with a strong underpinning of smaller farmsteads - mostly loose courtyard plans with buildings to one or two sides of the yard and some linear plans.

SIGNIFICANCE

- 67% of farmsteads have been identified as having high heritage potential and 13% have some heritage potential.
- 16% of the farmsteads with a high heritage potential have one or more listed buildings.

The landscape around Wheaton Aston is dominated by well-preserved small-scale fields of piecemeal enclosure created between the 14th and 18th centuries. Strong hedgerows, mature in-hedge trees and narrow winding lanes are a particular feature of the Staffordshire Plain landscape. Ridge and furrow earthworks survive across this area indicating that medieval open fields, belonging to the village of Wheaton Aston, once dominated this landscape. The two farmsteads, one lying immediately to the right of the road and the other to the top right, both originated as isolated small regular 'L' shaped courtyards. The former, New Buildings Farm, originated as a red brick farmstead whose architectural form and name suggest an origin in the 19th century. English Heritage NMR © 27999/016



The photograph reveals the complexity of the historic landscape character within the West Staffordshire Plain, which here is bisected by a disused railway indicated by the parallel line of trees. Towards the centre there is a landscape of small irregular fields with strong hedgerows associated with a network of narrow lanes along which stand small farmsteads and cottages. In the foreground ridge and furrow, evidence for medieval and later ploughing, survives within a field system first created as piecemeal enclosure in the post medieval period, but reorganised in the late 18th-19th century. This is associated with a large regular farmstead and a further large farmstead lies to the right associated with fields of similar origin as indicated by a number of straight hedgerows. A small area of planned enclosure survives adjacent to the expanded settlement of Gnosall Heath. Enlarged fields, created in the later 20th century, are also represented to the right of the image. The surviving field boundaries are a mix of both straight and sinuous. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27961/015.

Area 5 Cannock Chase

HISTORIC CHARACTER

- The central portion is dominated by the largely unsettled Cannock Chase, which comprises a mosaic landscape of heath and forestry plantation, urban development focused on Cannock and a series of former mining villages.
- Fringing the area to the south and east is a landscape of predominantly small-scale enclosure with small farmsteads which rarely survive – linear and loose courtyard plans with buildings to one or two sides of the yard and small regular courtyard L-plans.

- To the west there are a number of large-scale courtyard farmsteads associated with estates, mostly established in the 18th and 19th centuries on former heathlands.

SIGNIFICANCE

- 47% of farmsteads have been identified as having high heritage potential and 13% have some heritage potential.
- 17% of the farmsteads with high heritage potential have one or more listed buildings.



An isolated regular courtyard farmstead dominates the foreground surrounded by large fields of planned enclosure the result of wholesale reorganisation in the 18th-19th century. This site lies adjacent to the former Teddesley estate, whose influence is clearly legible within this landscape. A country house and landscape park was created in the late 18th century, although much of the parkland has been lost, but large woodlands, such as the shelter belt to the left of the farmstead and a number of surviving parkland trees, are testimony to its presence. The highly planned character of this landscape is typical of that lying on the western side of Cannock Chase in contrast to the landscape to the south and east. The Chase itself is indicated by the dense forestry plantation extending towards the top left of the image. English Heritage NMR © 29001/009



To the south and east of Cannock Chase small-scale irregular fields, enclosed by mature hedgerows, dominate the landscape. Lines of mature trees indicate the presence of now lost hedgerows, revealing a process of field enlargement which has occurred from the middle of the 20th century. To the foreground right a small regular courtyard 'L' plan farmstead survives relatively unaltered; such small-scale farmsteads were once common across the landscape lying to the south and east of Cannock Chase. They often represented small holdings whereby the occupiers subsisted by combining farming with working in local industry, which in this area was dominated by iron working and coal mining. English Heritage NMR © 27995/037

Area 6 South West Woodland Fringe

HISTORIC CHARACTER

- Medium-scale farms developed within landscape of piecemeal enclosure with heavily wooded boundaries that sometimes reflect medieval woodland clearance. 42% of the farmsteads contain at least one building (usually the farmhouse) which dates to at least the 17th century.
- Dominated by large-scale regular courtyard plans, including full courtyards, L-plans with an additional building to the third or fourth side of the yard, U-plans and regular multi-yards, which relate to landscapes affected by the reorganisation of earlier enclosure and

regular enclosure in the 18th and 19th centuries.

- The creation of Enville Hall Park by the 4th Earl of Stamford in the mid-18th century may have been the catalyst for much of this reorganisation.

SIGNIFICANCE

- Only small numbers of farmsteads are recorded (31), but of these 80% have been identified as having a high heritage potential and 13% with some heritage potential.
- 44% of the farmsteads with high heritage potential have one or more listed buildings.



The influence of the Enville estate on the landscape is evident from the extent of parkland in which the hall, towards the centre of the image, sits. Investment was also made in the creation of large water bodies, a sizeable walled garden as well as the 18th century model farm (centre left). In the distance, to the right, an irregular field pattern, of piecemeal enclosure, is evident. Photo © English Heritage NMR 27767/013

Area 7 South East Staffordshire

HISTORIC CHARACTER

- Settlement in this area is predominantly nucleated (and includes two large conurbations) with surviving farm buildings within villages.
- There is a diversity of farmsteads, which include small loose courtyard plans to medium-large scale regular L-plans and U-plans with some larger regular multi-yard plans.
- Isolated farmsteads in this landscape are usually the result of the movement of farmsteads out of the villages following the enclosure of the open fields. Some farmsteads are associated with earthworks of former

land use including ridge and furrow and shrunken or deserted settlement, although these are increasingly rare.

- The landscape has been subject to successive reorganisation and enlargement.

SIGNIFICANCE

- 50% of farmsteads have been identified as having high heritage potential and 8% have some heritage potential.
- 34% of the farmsteads with high heritage potential have one or more listed buildings.



In the foreground a large estate farm dominates a landscape which exhibits evidence of successive reorganisation and enlargement. The farm comprises a detached farmhouse immediately adjacent to which is a large red brick range with a series of pitched roofs representing a late 19th century covered yard farmstead. The landscape around the farmstead is dominated by cultivated fields, mostly enlarged during the 20th century, whose surviving historic sinuous field boundaries indicate that this area had once been dominated by medieval open fields. Large regular blocks of woodland and the occasional straight field boundary represent a period of re-organisation within this landscape during the 18th-19th century. The pasture lying above the farmstead represents a landscape park associated with a small country house dating from the late 16th century, alongside which stands a now isolated medieval church. Ridge and furrow earthworks survive within the parkland and represent part of the ploughland associated with a deserted medieval settlement, also surviving as earthworks, which once stood adjacent to the church. English Heritage NMR © 27994/010



Haunton is typical of the nucleated villages which dominate this character area. Red brick courtyard farmsteads and their farmhouses continue to form a prominent feature of the village streetscene. English Heritage NMR © 27994/037

Area 8 Cannock to Trent

HISTORIC CHARACTER

- An area of medium to large-scale courtyard-plan farmsteads, including many planned regular layouts, set within re-organised piecemeal and planned enclosure intermixed with small loose courtyard plans and some dispersed plan types.

SIGNIFICANCE

- 66% of farmsteads have been identified as having high heritage potential and 11% have some heritage potential.
- 29% of the farmsteads with high heritage potential have one or more listed buildings.



Two medium-sized farmsteads stand opposite one another across the central road. That to the left has a loose courtyard plan and the one to the right has a regular courtyard with multiple small yard areas. They lie within a wider landscape of large fields indicative of successive episodes of reorganisation, which originated as medieval open fields. The open fields were enclosed by private agreement from the 14th century onwards and the resultant piecemeal enclosure is evidenced by sinuous 'S' curve field boundaries which clearly survive to the left of the road. The landscape to the right has similar origins, but a straight field boundary lying just below the farmstead, indicates reorganisation in the 18th-19th century. A further episode of field reorganisation has occurred from the mid-20th century. English Heritage NMR © 27995/003

Area 9 Needwood and South Staffordshire Claylands

HISTORIC CHARACTER

- Much of the central plateau comprises the former Needwood Forest. This is now a landscape dominated by 19th century planned enclosure with a straight road pattern and large-scale regular courtyard farmsteads.
- In pockets and around the fringes of this area is a landscape of piecemeal enclosure, often reorganised in the 18th and 19th centuries, where there are greater numbers of small villages and hamlets. In this landscape the farmsteads are mostly of a small and medium scale, mostly of loose courtyard type with buildings to one to three sides of the yard, regular L- and U-plans.

SIGNIFICANCE

- A high proportion of the farmsteads (76%) have been identified as having high heritage potential and 10% have some heritage potential.
- 13% of the farmsteads with high heritage potential have one or more listed buildings.



The Needwood plateau is dominated by a highly planned landscape which was created wholesale out of the former forest in the early 19th century following the grant of an Act of Enclosure. The re-planning comprised the creation of extensive tracts of planned enclosure, with straight single-species hedgerows, and straight roads, producing the grid-like pattern shown in the image. Contemporary large-scale regular courtyard farmsteads dominate the built heritage lying isolated within their holdings. Small blocks of regular woodland are also characteristic of this planned landscape. English Heritage NMR © 29004/013



A landscape of piecemeal enclosure, dating from the 14th century and associated with loosely clustered small-scale farmsteads, survives to the north of the Needwood plateau. These enclosures developed within part of a medieval open field belonging to the small village of Bramshall, lying to the west of Uttoxeter. The creation of the surviving historic field pattern, associated with mature hedgerows and in-hedge trees, may be related to the expansion of cattle rearing, and later dairying, which was expanding in the landscape around Uttoxeter from the 17th century. This is supported by the built heritage, which comprises two loose courtyard farmsteads (in the foreground right of the road and mid-ground left of the road) and an L-plan farmstead (at top of image). More recent field enlargement has occurred in the area to the left of the image. English Heritage NMR © 29005/017

SOURCES

Heritage guidance

For English Heritage's policy position, which will be revised in late 2013-2014 in consultation with key partners including the Country Land and Business Association, see:

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For guidance on conversion and maintenance see:

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EH 2011. *The Maintenance and Repair of Traditional Farm Buildings: A Guide to Good Practice*.

For an analysis of the evidence base and the drivers for change see:

EH 2009. *Historic Farm Buildings: Extending the Evidence Base*

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