

# Guidance on Traditional Farmsteads in East Staffordshire

March 2011



IN SUPPORT OF RE-USE OF RURAL BUILDINGS  
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

(Adopted August 2010)

Local Development Framework



**Staffordshire**  
County Council

  
ENGLISH HERITAGE

## Preface

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This document is designed to inform future change to farmsteads, particularly changes of use and non-agricultural development proposals to farmstead sites. It has been written in order to support East Staffordshire Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Document on the Re-use of Rural Buildings.

<http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/Services/Pages/PlanningPolicyLocalDevelopmentFramework.aspx>

Historic farmsteads make a fundamental contribution to local distinctiveness and a sense of place, through their varied forms, use of materials and the way that they relate to the surrounding landscape and settlement. Structural changes in the farming industry have required farmers to construct new buildings that economise on labour and conform to animal welfare regulations, and

the future of historic farm buildings is increasingly dependent on finding a use for which they were not originally intended. Future change in historic farmsteads is inevitable if they are to be retained as a distinctive part of the rural landscape. This can be achieved in ways which are based on an understanding of variations in the character and significance of farmsteads, and their sensitivity to and potential for change.

This document can assist in the preparation of planning applications, listed building consent and for the preparation of Heritage Statements and Design and Access Statements. It can also be used by individuals and groups with an interest in their place, such as those undertaking Village Design Statements.

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### Authorship and Copyright

This guidance has been written by Jeremy Lake of English Heritage, with the assistance of Sarah McCann of East Staffordshire Borough Council's Planning Policy Service and Suzy Blake, Historic Environment Record Officer at Staffordshire County Council. The photographs are by English Heritage and East Staffordshire Borough Council, and the maps have where stated been reproduced under licence from the Ordnance Survey.

The Site Assessment Framework (see Appendix C of *Re-Use of Rural Buildings*), when used with this guidance, will help the user identify the key issues for consideration before detailed proposals are drawn up, and in particular:

- how its *present character* results from change over time, and the extent to which its traditional character is still legible
- the *architectural patterning* – the building styles, materials and details – that are relevant and important to maintaining or enhancing the character of the farmstead as a group in its landscape setting
- identify its *sensitivity* to the changes being considered, due to key factors such as whether the farmstead is isolated or located within a settlement, its prominence in views across the landscape and the scale, layout and form of the buildings, including their condition;
- and its *significance*, which is of critical importance in determining planning applications.

The Site Assessment Framework has four stages that aim to help the user to identify:	Using This Guidance
1. Site and management issues	This is site specific. Refer to Stage 1 of the Site Assessment Framework.  Refer to Part 1 of this guidance Issues in East Staffordshire
2. Character and Condition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- landscape</li> <li>- the farmstead</li> <li>- the buildings</li> </ul>	Refer to Part 2 of this guidance Understanding Farmstead Character  Refer to Part 3 of this guidance Historic Farmsteads in East Staffordshire <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Historic Development</li> <li>2. Landscape and Settlement</li> <li>3. Farmstead and Building Types</li> <li>4. Materials and Detail</li> </ol>
3. Identify Significance <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. historic groups that have a clear visual relationship to the landscapes that they developed within</li> <li>2. legible historic groups that have experienced little or no change since the late 19th century (2nd ed OS map)</li> <li>3. historic buildings with minimal change to their traditional form, or in some cases their importance as estate or industrial architecture;</li> <li>4. locally distinctive building materials;</li> <li>5. heritage assets, which may be buildings or archaeological sites included on a local list, within a conservation area or within the setting of a designated national asset (a listed building or scheduled ancient monument)</li> </ol>	Illustrated Guidance on the individual Character Areas is available in Part 4 of this guidance
4. Potential for Change and Issues to consider and discuss with planners	Refer to the Site Assessment Framework and also the Supplementary Planning Document
IN PREPARING THE SCHEME	USE THE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT AND ENGLISH HERITAGE GUIDANCE ON CONVERSION  Part 1: <a href="http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Traditional-Farm1.pdf">http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Traditional-Farm1.pdf</a> Part 2: <a href="http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Traditional-Farm2.pdf">http://www.helm.org.uk/upload/pdf/Traditional-Farm2.pdf</a>

## PART 1 ISSUES IN EAST STAFFORDSHIRE

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This guidance has used the results of *The West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project* ([www.english-heritage.org.uk/wmidlandfarmsteads](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/wmidlandfarmsteads)), which was conducted by English Heritage in collaboration with Advantage West Midlands and local county and metropolitan authorities to understand how historic farmsteads contribute to local character and the economy, and to help decision-makers and applicants evaluate new uses for farm buildings. For the first time at a regional level the Project has:

- Mapped and described the locations and characteristics of all farmsteads, their change over time, and how they relate to the landscape.
- Described the present day role of historic farmsteads in the economy of the West Midlands.
- Developed a set of planning tools to inform spatial planning, land management and economic development.

The headline results of the study show that:

- Historic farmsteads, comprising the farmhouse and most or all of the working buildings, are assets which make a significant and highly varied contribution to the rural building stock, landscape character and local distinctiveness. The study has established that nearly 17,000 (82%) of historic farmsteads in existence at the beginning of the twentieth century have retained some or all of their traditional working buildings.
- Through agricultural and other new uses historic farmsteads make an important contribution to the rural economy and communities away from market towns and other rural centres. A third of these farmsteads remain in agricultural use with varying degrees of diversification, with only 5% converted to sole industrial, commercial or retail use. The majority of farmsteads, over two thirds, are in residential use where some or all of the working buildings have been converted into housing. These figures complement those available for listed farm buildings, which in the West Midlands show that 27.1% have been converted to residential use, 3% to other commercial uses and 69.9% have no other evidence for other use.
- The economic significance of residential use can be easily overlooked with residential and economic use often interlinked. The extent of business activity associated with farmsteads in residential use, as indicated by their role as bases of limited companies and substantial directorships, is higher in historic farmsteads than in other dwellings regardless of location.

The study has shown that:

- 1) The historic farmsteads of East Staffordshire, together with those of the Staffordshire Moorlands, have experienced a low degree of 20th century change:
  - 78.4% of historic farmsteads have retained more than 50% of their historic footprint (see p.7 of this guidance for further information).
  - The survival and densities of historic farmsteads are lowest in the east of East Staffordshire District, and highest in the upland or pastoral farming landscapes to the north and west.
  - Over 90% of historic farmsteads are sited away from villages and large settlements, and from the medieval period developed within small hamlets or as isolated individual sites or clusters.
- 2) East Staffordshire shows a slight departure from regional expectations – with a higher proportion of historic farmsteads currently in agricultural use and a slightly lower proportion in residential use. This reflects the contrasts noted in Staffordshire where residential conversions are concentrated in the more accessible south of the county in contrast to the far lower capital endowment and economic mass that characterise the north-east of the county.
- 3) More than 80% of farmsteads that survive to the present day do not include a listed building. In view of their predominant 19th century date few are likely to meet current criteria for listing. It is important that through new uses their contribution to the character of the landscape and local distinctiveness is retained and enhanced.

### 1 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

#### National Context

Historic farmsteads form part of distinct agricultural regions which developed across England from the medieval period, mixing or specialising to differing degrees in the production of corn, livestock or dairy products.

#### Background

A farmstead is the homestead of a farm where the farmhouse and some or all of the working farm buildings are located, some farms having field barns or outfarms sited away from the main steading. The character of farmsteads has been shaped by their development as centres for the production of food from the surrounding farmland, the result being an immense range in their type, scale, form and use of materials. They have always evolved, the result being the loss of buildings, the addition of new buildings, total replacement and, sometimes, total loss.

Most *traditional farmstead buildings* date from the 19th century, survivals of earlier periods being increasingly rare. Traditional buildings can be 'vernacular' or 'designed':

- Vernacular buildings are characteristic of their locality. They often use locally available materials, although they may include the use of imported brick, slate and other materials as these became available in the area. They will often display evidence for successive change, with farmsteads and buildings developing and being added to over time.
- Designed buildings are usually built in a single phase and sometimes in a recognisable architectural style. They are usually marked by a consistent use of local or imported materials, and can result from the activities of estates and be designed by architects, agents or engineers.

*Industrial buildings* can be:

- Factory-made prefabricated structures using steel/iron frames and corrugated iron cladding (eg Dutch barns as used from the later 19th

century) and examples of 1914-40 concrete and industrial brick structures (eg silage towers) and groups;

- Post-1950 wide-span and multi-purpose sheds, built in order to economise on farm labour and meet animal welfare standards.

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. This was followed by a long but regionally varied depression which lasted until the Second World War. From the 1950s family farms have further shrunk in number, as farm sizes and the intensity of production has increased. Historic farmsteads and their buildings have become redundant as new non-agricultural modes of rural living have become increasingly popular. Some of these farmsteads are in commercial use, but most are in domestic use, often combined with home-working.

#### East Staffordshire

Across East Staffordshire the principal agricultural processes, expressed in strong local differences by the 17th century, have been:

- A substantially sheep-based and stock-rearing pastoral economy developed in the uplands north of Uttoxeter.
- By the 19th century a large part of the area specialised in the production of butter and cheese for local conurbations as well as the London market. The supply of fresh milk became very important from the mid 19th century, enabled by the development of the railway system, and many farmsteads were rebuilt to house dairy cattle.
- Larger-scale arable farming developed across the rest of the area, combined with dairying and stock farming including the fattening of stock brought down from the uplands to the north.
- A number of large estates developed within the area, often on areas of poorer quality soils such as heathland.

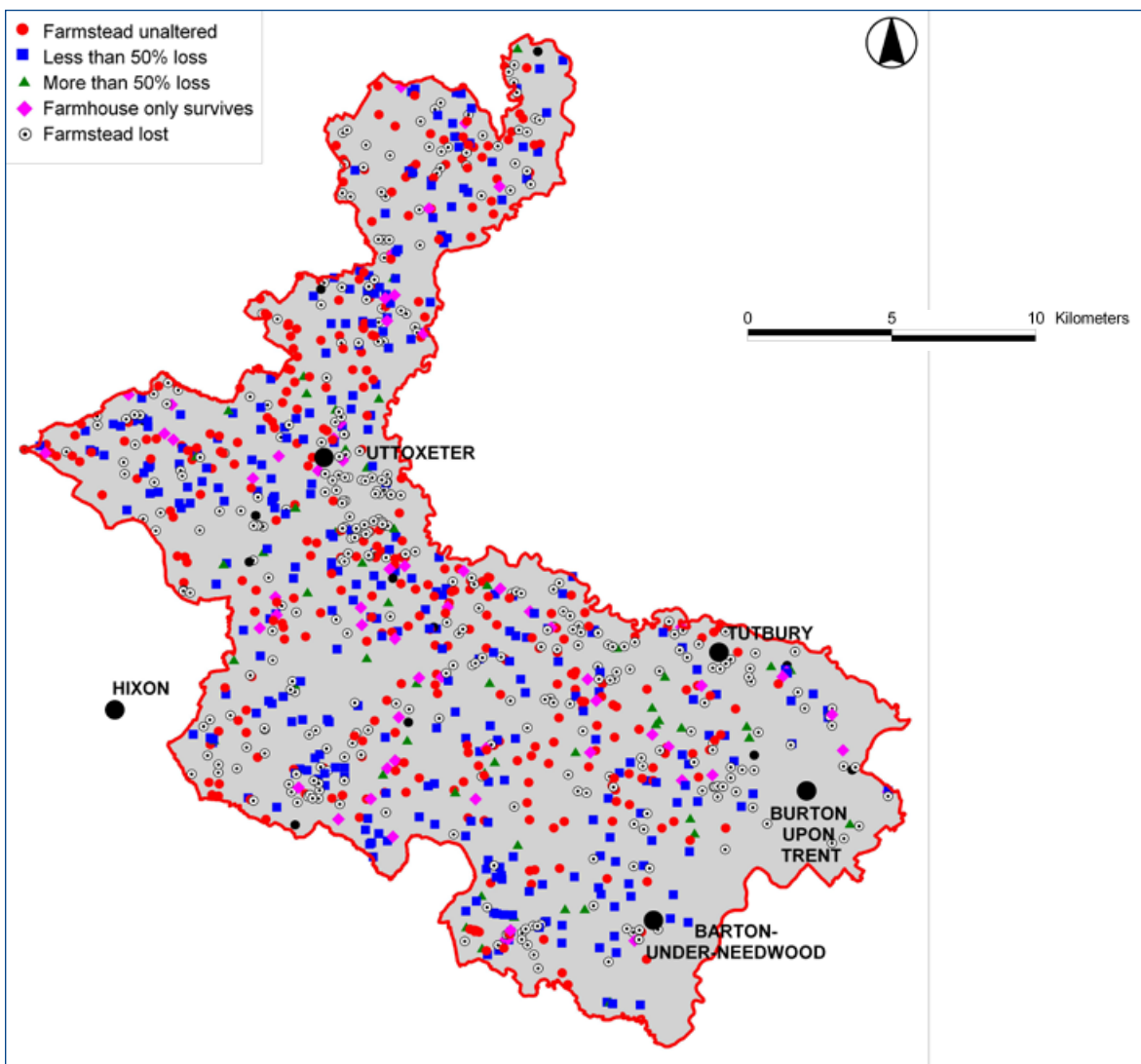


A number of farmsteads have buildings, mostly houses, of 17th century or earlier date. These all reflect profound changes in rural landscape and society, in particular the emergence of a class of larger farmer who wished to display their wealth. Working buildings, such as barns, that pre-date the 19th century are very rare.



The great majority of farmstead buildings were built or remodelled in the 19th century, such as this farmstead group where the symmetrical front of the house displays a public face away from the yard and its working buildings.





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The West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project (see p. 4) has mapped:

- *Historic farmsteads*, where the farmhouse and some or all of the working buildings are located. Their locations and characteristics have been mapped from the Ordnance Survey 2nd edition maps of c 1890–1900, which were published after the final significant period of development of traditional farmsteads and the general use of vernacular materials. Modern maps were then used to identify the rates of survival to the present day.
- *Outfarms, including field barns*, which were established away from the main stading, to the same method.

Comparison of c1890-1900 maps and present-day maps shows that:

- 39.6% of farmsteads have retained all of their working buildings, well above the county average of 31% and the regional average of 26%
- 38.8% of farmsteads have had some loss but retained more than 50% of their historic footprint, compared to the county average of 38.8% and the regional average of 40%
- 6.6% of farmsteads have retained some working buildings but with more than 50% loss of their historic footprint, compared to the county average of 7% and the regional average of 16%
- on 8% of sites only the farmhouse survives, compared to the county average of 5% and the regional average of 7.5%
- on 7% of sites all buildings have been demolished or the footprint of the whole site has changed, compared to the county average of 26% (mostly as a result of urban expansion) and the regional average of 2%

- The late 18th and 19th centuries was marked by dramatic levels of farm amalgamation and enlargement, with cattle yards and housing for the production of milk, cheese, meat and manure for boost crop yields, in part prompted by the area's favourable transport links and ability to serve developing urban centres.

## 2 LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT CONTEXT

### National Context

The density and distribution of farmsteads, and other features in the landscape such as trees and woodland, display strong variations that result from the way that people have lived within and used the land and its resources. By the 11th century, there were already distinctions between the central strip of village England, and areas where the pattern of settlement was mostly dispersed across the landscape. In the latter, woodland was commonly scattered across landscapes where routeways connected isolated farmsteads and hamlets to each other and regional markets. The lowest densities of farmsteads are found in areas where large arable-based farms developed, and the highest in areas of small cattle-rearing and dairying farms as well as areas of common-edge settlement next to heaths, moss and moorland. In some areas smallholders combined farming and industry, utilising common grazing on moorland and heath.

### East Staffordshire

The density of farmsteads in the landscape is intricately related to how landscapes changed over time, and in particular the patterns of enclosure – the shape of fields and the form of their boundaries.

Farmsteads within and on the edge of settlements can be appreciated in relationship to other historic buildings and surrounding fields.

Isolated farmsteads, including those in clusters and located in hamlets, can relate to:

- **irregular fields**, which are often associated with ancient woodland and can date from land clearance in the medieval period. High densities of farmsteads, often with buildings of early date, can be characteristic of these areas.
- **piecemeal patterns of enclosure**, often with a mix of straight and pre-18th century wavy or irregular boundaries. These can result from the enclosure of medieval strip fields (including the large common fields which surrounded villages) and open common land from the medieval period.
  - *Reorganised piecemeal enclosure*. The development of large farms and successive reorganisation of the landscape in some areas has resulted in the removal and sometimes the straightening of boundaries to create larger-scale fields.
- **planned enclosure** is typified by straight field boundaries, and mostly dates from the later 18th and 19th centuries. It results from the taking in of new farmland or the reorganisation of earlier patterns of fields. Sinuous roads may respond to the boundaries of earlier fields or tracks, whereas some areas were completely re-planned with straight roads. Planned enclosure landscapes display a great variety in the scale of fields and the density and size of farmsteads. The dating of buildings may indicate whether the farmsteads and their landscapes were laid out in a single phase, or, if they are of an early date, result from the transformation of an earlier farmed landscape.

Most isolated farmsteads date from the enclosure of the larger blocks of common land and the open fields which covered most of the farmland in the medieval period, and in some cases the shrinkage of farming settlements to individual farmsteads. In addition:

- Some are sited within small-scale irregular enclosure resulting from medieval woodland clearance.
- Some farmsteads relate to moated sites built for freehold farmers in the 12-13th centuries, particularly in the Middle Valleys and Plateau.
- Some isolated farmsteads relate to medieval shrunken settlement, and there are areas with well-preserved medieval ridge and furrow.
- Parklands – a major feature particularly across the Middle Valleys and Plateau – retain most of the historic woodland.

### Area Subdivisions (See p. 9 for map)

The main areas into which East Staffordshire can be subdivided are:

#### 1 The Uplands

This area forms part of the fringe to the Peak District, with a long history of stock rearing with dairying. High densities of small and some medium-scale farmsteads are predominant, these including L-plan, linear and loose courtyard layouts. Many farmsteads survive within farmstead clusters and hamlets, relating to irregular and semi-regular fields that result from medieval woodland clearance and the enclosure of medieval farming strips and commons. Some result from the 19th century enclosure of moorland. The widespread use of sandstone to the buildings and field boundaries gives it a strong unified character. Farmsteads and their landscapes have experienced the least degree of 20th century change in this area.

#### 2 The Hamlets/ The Upland Fringe

This is a transitional mixed farming landscape which extends from the uplands across the Churnet Valley to the Tean Valley, reflecting a history of mixed farming and dairying, the latter being increasingly dominant in the 19th century. Farmsteads are either isolated or

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sited in hamlets, and are characterised by a mix of sandstone and brick. Most are courtyard farmsteads of small-medium scale, also with small-scale linear, dispersed and L-plan (house attached) types, set within landscapes that result from a long process of piecemeal enclosure, combined with some early irregular enclosures and regular late 18th and 19th century enclosure of common land. There has been a noticeable expansion in the size of farms and their fields in the east of the area.

### 3 Middle Valleys and Plateau

This area extends across most of East Staffordshire District. Farmsteads are characterised by a similar mix of sandstone and brick, with timber frame often concealed by later walling. This area exhibits strong contrasts, often in small areas, between small to medium scale dairying farmsteads and large-scale corn-producing and stock-fattening farmsteads. There are extensive areas of 20th century expansion in the size of farms and their fields, especially to the east of this area.

- Farmsteads are larger to the south of a line running from Tutbury, Draycott in the Clay and the strip of woodland extending to Bagot Forest and Hixon beyond. They mostly relate to the post-medieval enclosure of blocks of common land and medieval strip fields that surrounded its villages. They are mostly set within fields with straight and semi-regular boundaries, the latter resulting from the reorganisation of piecemeal enclosure from strip fields and common land, and blocks of ancient and 18th-19th century woodland. There are large areas of parkland and designed landscapes including the 19th

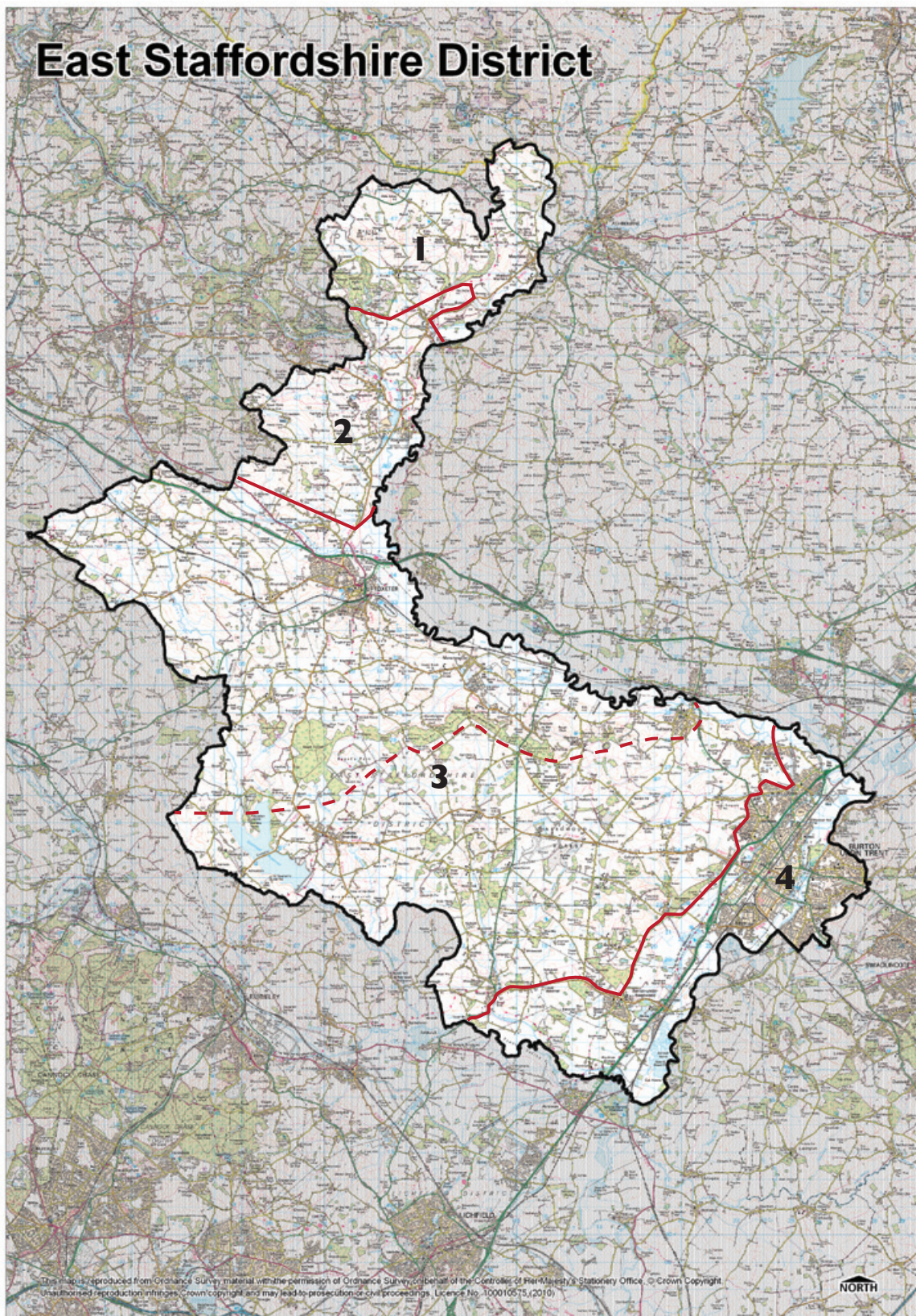
century transformation of the medieval hunting preserve of Needwood Forest. There is a strong underpinning element of smaller-scale courtyard, dispersed and linear-type farmsteads, which are strongly associated with areas of small-scale fields, some relating to medieval hamlets and dispersed settlement.

- To the north of this line, and south-west of Barton-under-Needwood, there are many medieval and post-medieval (16th-17th century) farmstead sites, including some which are moated. Species-rich and well-treed boundaries are more common than to the south, resulting from medieval and early piecemeal enclosure that relates to an early pattern of dispersed rather than village-based settlement. Medium-scale and small-scale courtyard farmsteads, as well as dispersed and linear-type farmsteads (see pages 9–22) of all types form a strong characteristic of this area.

### 4 Trent Valley Lowlands

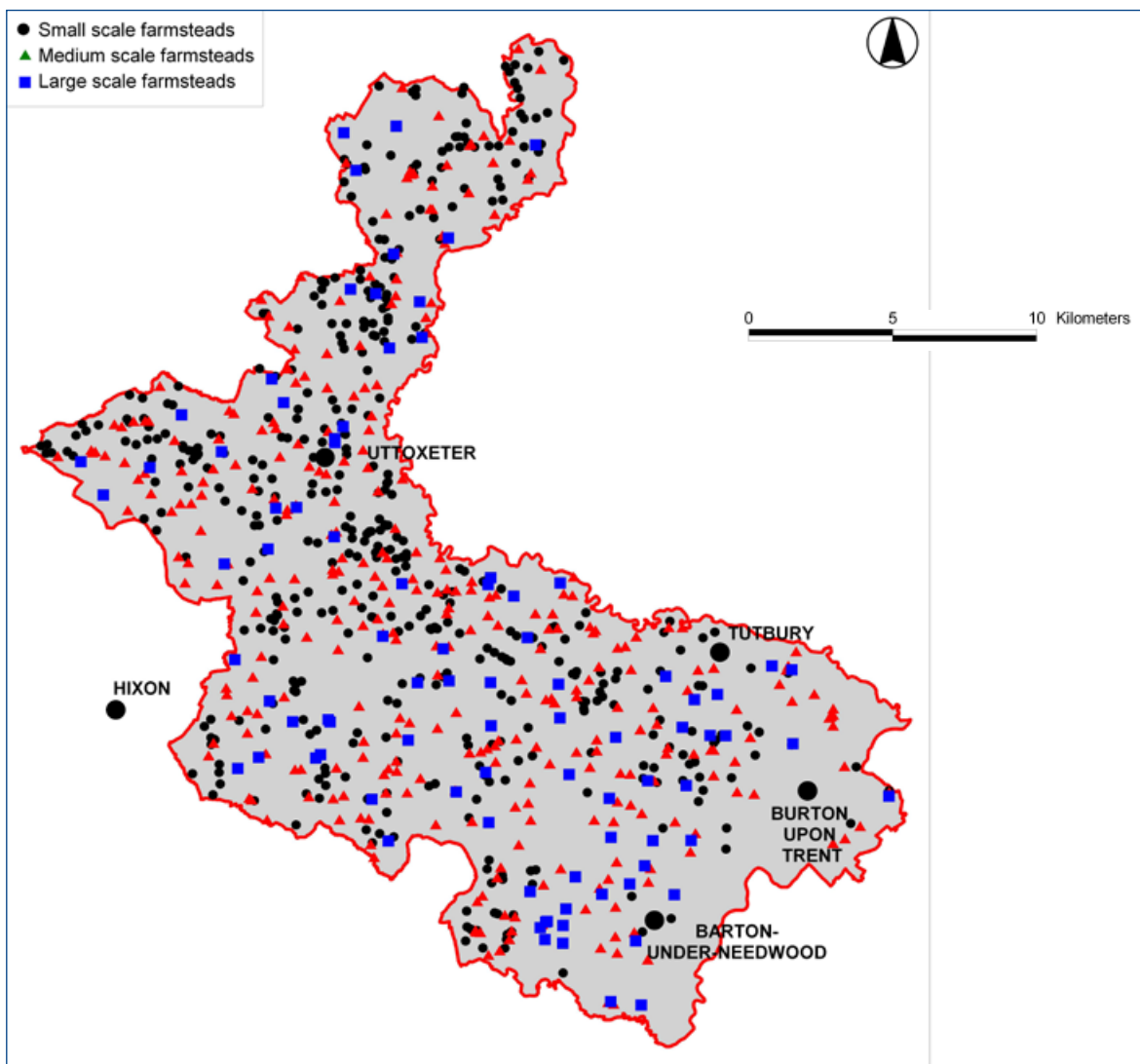
This area forms part of the central strip of village England where most farmsteads developed within villages, and there are relatively few large-scale regular courtyard farmsteads. These either remain within villages or are sited (often down their own tracks) in large-scale fields which date from the enclosure of the open fields which extended across most of the landscape. Brick and slate are the dominant building materials, with early timber frame rarely surviving. This area has experienced the most 20th century change.

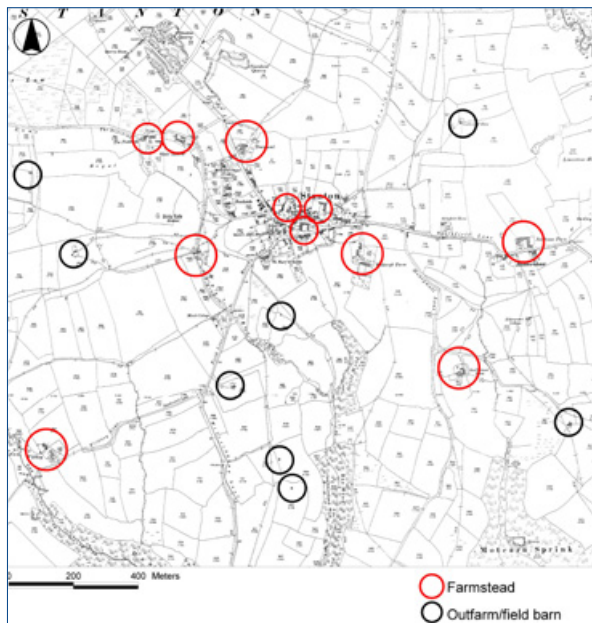
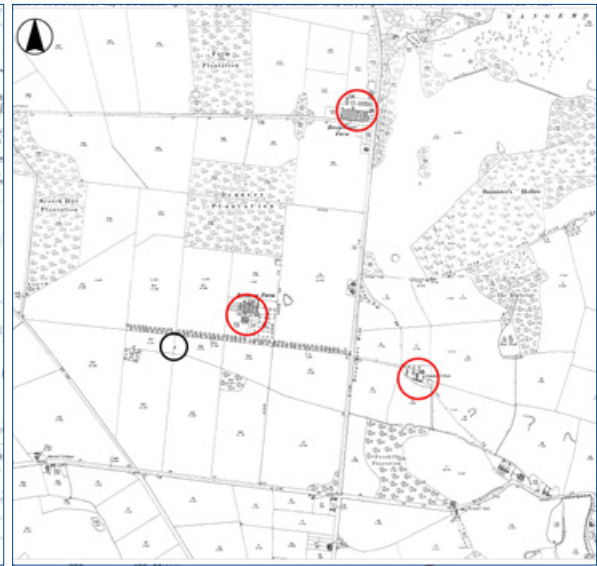
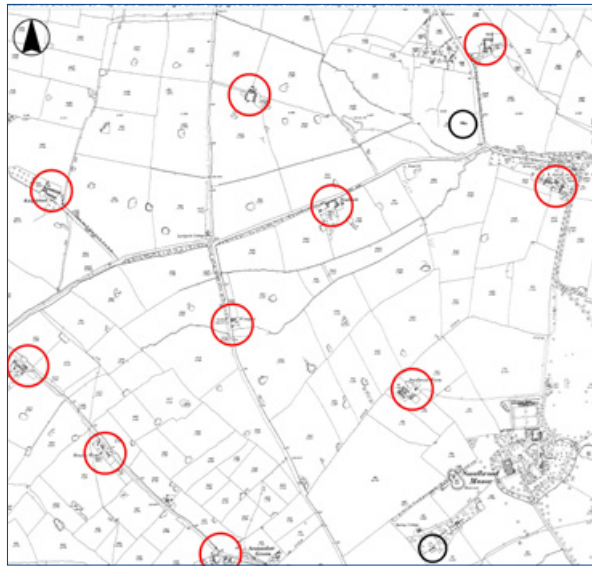




This map shows the area subdivisions outlined on pages 7–8







These maps, from the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey of around 1900, show how farmsteads in different parts of East Staffordshire had developed within their landscapes.

Top left. Medium-scale courtyard farmsteads had developed within fields enclosed from common land and strip fields in Scunslow, in the northern part of the Plateau.

Right. Large-scale regular courtyard farmsteads, including covered yards to Rangemoor Farm to the north, developed within rectilinear surveyor-drawn fields in the Forest of Needwood.

Bottom: Dispersed farmsteads, small-medium scale courtyard farmsteads and linear farmsteads (where the house and working buildings are attached in-line) had developed within and around the upland hamlet of Stanton. These farmsteads required field barns to work their holdings, which in this map were set within fields enclosed from medieval strip fields.



A cluster of two farmsteads at Slade Hollow in the Uplands, showing the symmetrical front to the early-mid 19th century farmhouse and working buildings behind. Many of the valleys around the Uplands were cleared from woodland in the medieval period, and farmsteads are often sited in relationship to scattered woodland and mature trees.



This planned late 18th-mid 19th century farmstead is an integral part of a designed parkland landscape at Dunstall in Needwood Forest, a 19th century designed landscape created out of a medieval hunting forest.



Large-scale farmsteads, as here north of Abbots Bromley with Bagot Forest serving as a backdrop, are set within fields with irregular and regular boundaries that result from the growth of farms and reorganisation of farmland.



Many of the large farmsteads in the south of the Middle Valleys and Plateau, in and around Needwood Forest, were well placed to further expand after the Second World War.

### 3 FARMSTEAD AND BUILDING TYPES

Farmsteads and buildings all required:

- access to the house and its garden;
- different types and size of building and open space, and different flows of movement within and around working buildings;
- access to routes and tracks;
- yards and other spaces within and around them for stacking crops, sorting and containing livestock, milking cattle, gardens or orchards.

Most historic farmsteads developed with the historic buildings arranged around a yard, these displaying a considerable range of scale and type. 8% of farmsteads are dispersed plans, where there is no focal area, and small-scale farmsteads, where the house and working buildings are set in-line in the same range, are a significant farmstead type that reflect the upland and upland fringe influences of this area. This variety in scale and type of farmstead layouts reflects the status of its occupants, and the importance accorded to the following key functions.

#### *Housing the farming family and any workers*

The farmhouse is either attached to the working buildings, or is detached from the main group. Separate cottages for farm workers could also be sited close to larger farmsteads (such as in the Forest of Needwood) or dispersed in the landscape.

#### *Storing Milk and Making Cheese and Butter*

The dairy was commonly a room at the rear of the farmhouse, where milk was processed to make cheese and butter. Cheese would be stored in a loft above the dairy or in the attic of the farmhouse.

#### *Crop storage and Processing*

Storing and processing the harvested corn crop over the winter months was the basic requirement of farms, and grain was stored either in the house or the loft of a working building.

#### *Horses and Cattle*

Straw was taken from the barn to cattle housing, yards and stables to be used as bedding for livestock. Cattle and horses required hay for winter feed which was kept in outside stacks, in lofts or (rarely until the late 19th century) in detached hay barns. With pastoral farming being predominant the storage of hay was a major concern on many farms. The resulting manure was then forked into carts and returned to fertilise the surrounding farmland.

#### *Pigs and Poultry*

Pigsties were usually sited close to the house, as pigs were fed on whey (a by-product of dairying). Poultry were often sited in small lofts (marked by a small pop door) above the pigsty.

#### *General Movement and Storage*

Other yards may also be built to sort and contain livestock, and in the 19th century be provided with their own working buildings.

In summary:

- Few farmhouses display origins pre-dating the 18th or early 19th century (although some houses retain some earlier timber-framing). Many farmhouses are late Georgian and Victorian in style.
- High-status groups, and those in arable farming areas, would have the largest working buildings. Large-scale buildings (in particular barns), which were consistently used for the same purpose or capable of being adapted to later uses, generally have the greatest chance of survival.
- Threshing barns are concentrated in the Trent Valley, and where they survive are very similar to those found elsewhere in England.
- Combination barns which housed a diversity of functions are found across the area, and in their planning and overall character are very similar to those found elsewhere in north Staffordshire and extending northwards into the Pennine uplands.
- Housing for cattle has shaped the character of every farmstead in East Staffordshire. They are either integrated into combination barns or stand as separate cowhouses with hay lofts, and are very similar to those found across the northern dairying parts of Staffordshire and Shropshire and into Cheshire and Lancashire.
- Stables and implement sheds are a feature of most mixed and arable-based farms, and are less common on the former pastoral farmsteads to the north.
- Dovecotes of 18th or 19th century date are found on some manor or estate farmsteads. Dovecotes are usually square or circular towers with pyramidal or conical roofs for housing pigeons and their manure, or are incorporated into other buildings such as the gable of barns.
- Outfarms and field barns are concentrated in the Uplands, where they are very similar in their character to those found in the Pennine uplands of England, and in the area west of the former Forest of Needwood where holdings were historically dispersed. Many are ruinous or in poor condition.



## Farmstead Types

East Staffordshire displays the full range of farmstead types. These are fully explained and illustrated on pages 15–21 and introduced on this and following page. In a regional and national context, there are much higher numbers of the small-scale loose courtyard and dispersed cluster plan types. Many of these display characteristics shared with the

farmsteads of the northern uplands of England and the dairy farms of north Staffordshire, Shropshire and Cheshire. Large-scale farmsteads are concentrated to the south and east, these bearing a strong resemblance to those found in the estatelands and arable vales of the English Midlands.

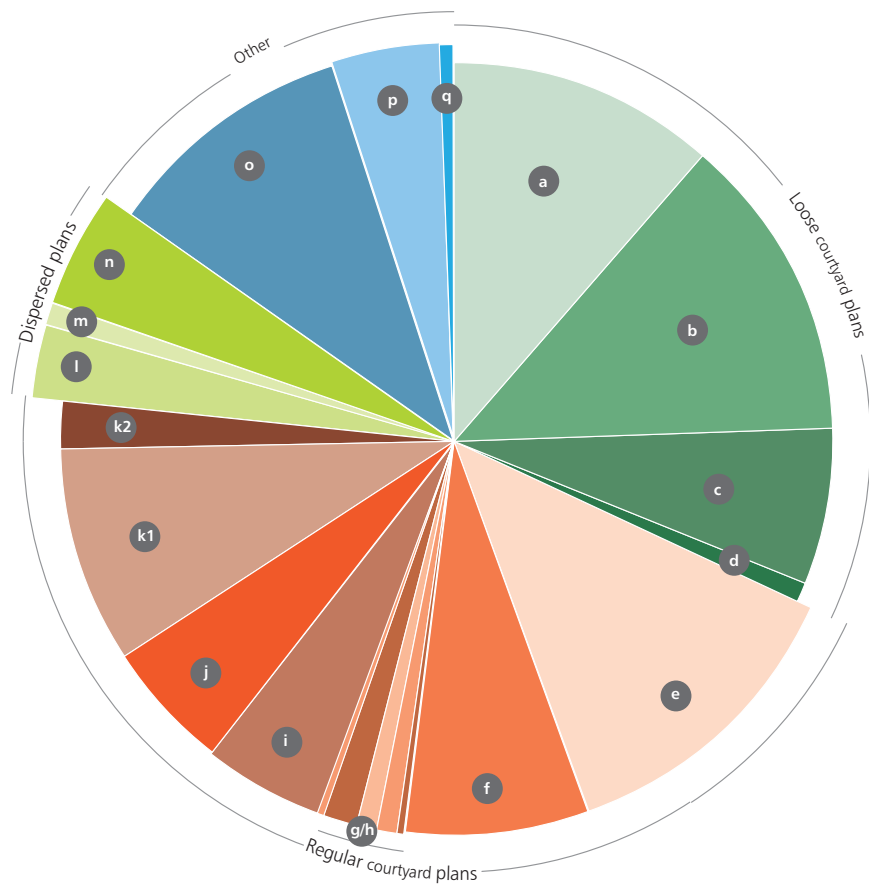
**COURTYARD PLAN FARMSTEADS** have the working buildings and sometimes the farmhouse arranged around one or more yards. The farmhouse may either face into the yard, be set gable end on to the yard or set to one side.

a-d) Loose Courtyard farmsteads have buildings loosely arranged around one (a) or more (b – 2; c – 3; d – 4) sides of a yard.

e-j) Regular Courtyard farmsteads consist of linked ranges, formally arranged around one or more yards, and subdivide into:

- e) L-plans are typically small-medium in scale, where additional buildings (if present) are typically small in scale
- f) U-shaped plans where one side has been left open
- g and h) comprising large to very large scale farmsteads where the buildings are arranged as an T- (1.3% of the total) F- (0.9%), E- (0.9%) or H-shaped plans around two or more cattle yards.
- i) Full Regular Courtyard farmsteads, typically large in scale, where the buildings are arranged around all four sides of the yard.
- j) Multi-Yard plans which are typically the largest in scale of the regular courtyard plan types, comprising farmsteads with multiple yards which are grouped together and regularly arranged.

k) L-plans with additional detached buildings to the third (k1) or fourth sides (k2) which are generally large to very large in scale.



**DISPERSED PLAN FARMSTEADS** subdivide into:

- l) Dispersed clusters where the working buildings are dispersed within the boundary of the steading.
- m) Dispersed driftways which are dominated by the routeways to them, and which often served to move stock from one farming zone to another. These are mostly small-medium in scale.
- n) Dispersed multi-yards, which are large-scale farmsteads containing two or more detached yards, often

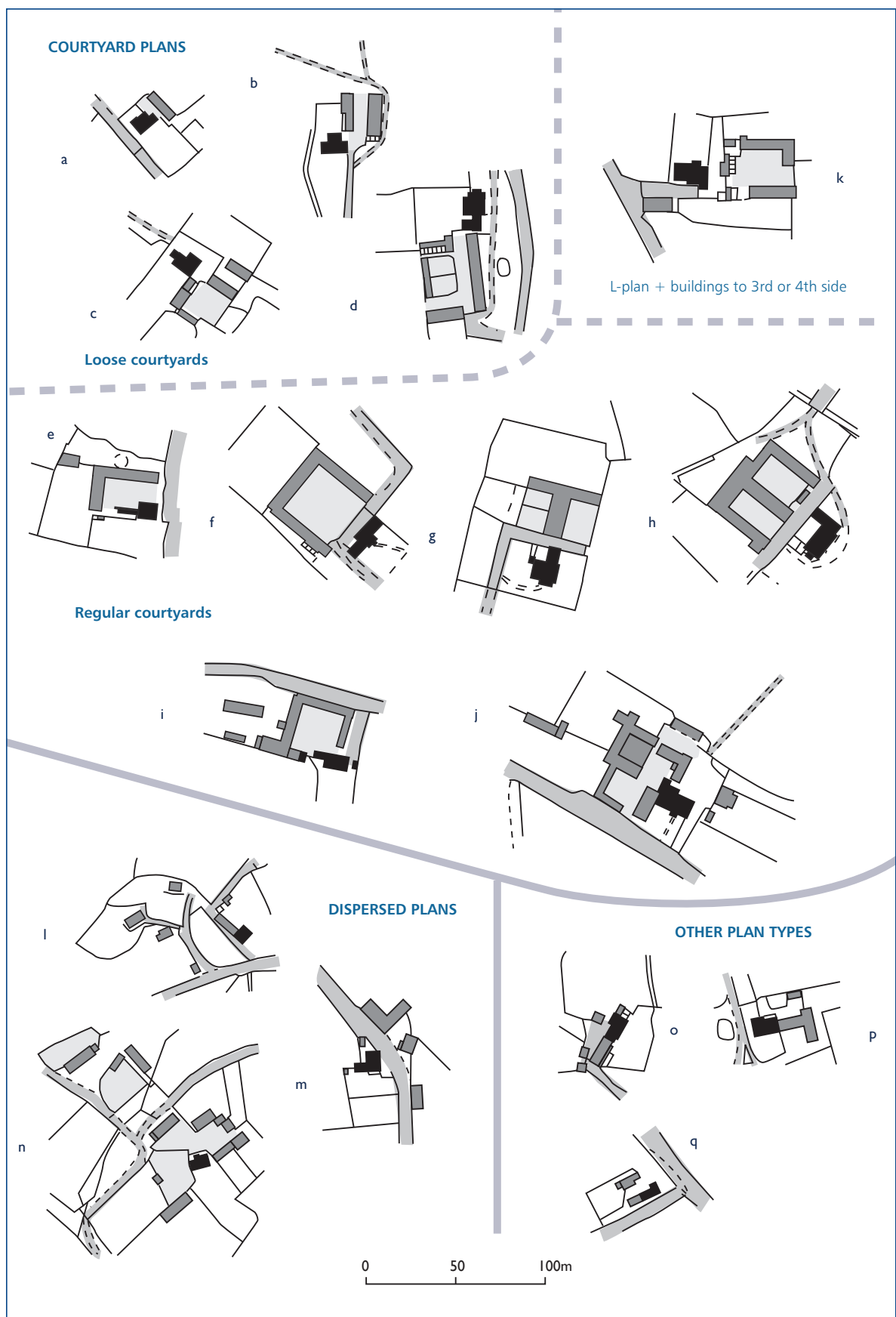
with other scattered buildings.

**OTHER PLAN TYPES** generally represent the smallest farmsteads and are most closely associated with upland and common-edge farmsteads:

- o) Linear farmsteads where the houses and working buildings are attached and in-line.
- p) L-plan (attached), which in this area is a linear-type farmstead, extended or planned with additional working buildings to make an L-shaped range.
- q) Parallel plans where the working buildings are placed opposite and parallel to the house and attached

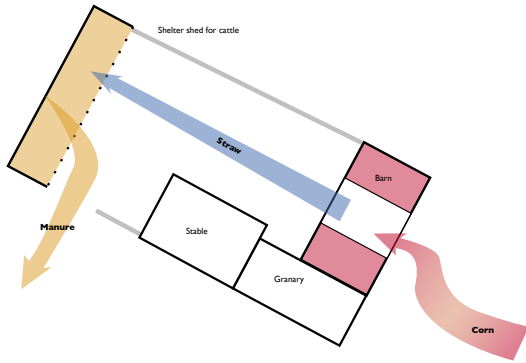
working buildings with a narrow area between. They have often developed from linear farmsteads.

Recorded smallholdings are very rare. They have no defined plan type or they fall into the categories of the smallest plan types. They can be identified from their position, often set within areas of enclosure of common land and associated with areas of industrial activity such as mining or quarrying.



## COURTYARD PLANS

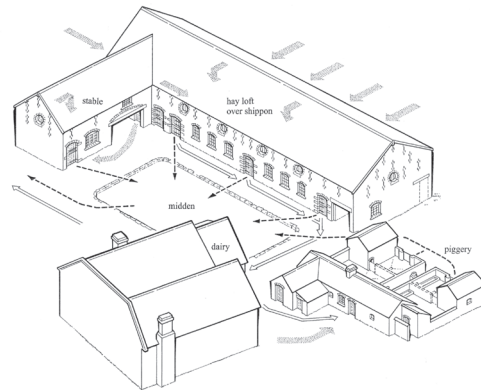
Courtyard plan farmsteads have the working buildings and sometimes the farmhouse arranged around one or more yards. The yards were used as areas for gaining access to the house and the working buildings, or could be entirely devoted to the management of livestock. In all cases,



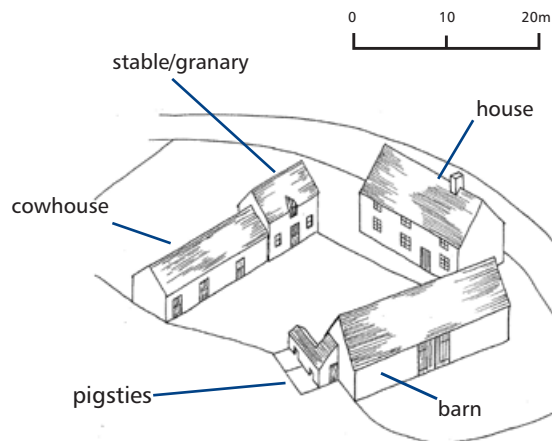
This simple schematic drawing shows the basic flow of processes on an arable-based farmstead. The harvested corn crop was brought to the farm and stored in the barn or stacked outside. It was then threshed and winnowed in the central threshing bay of the barn. Grain was then either fed to the livestock or taken to the granary and exported from the steading. The straw remaining from the harvested crop was then taken to the cattle housing and the yards, where once mixed with their manure it was returned to fertilise the land. (© Chantal Freeman)

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. This area has very high numbers (11.4% of the total, against 7.2% for the West Midlands) of the smallest-scale examples, with a working building to only one side of the yard: this reflects a concentration of these types in the north-east uplands fringes of Staffordshire, and in areas where small (mostly dairying and stock rearing) farms remained (see also p.10).

the manure would be collected in the yard and redistributed to the land. The drawings below illustrate the basic principles of the courtyard plan, as they applied to arable-based and dairying farmsteads.



The principal aim of farmsteads on dairying farms was to house cattle and their fodder, principally hay. The drawing of a dairy farmstead 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. (© English Heritage)





A small loose courtyard in the upland hamlet of Wootton with one working building – a combined barn and animal housing with additional housing for cattle in the rear lean-to.



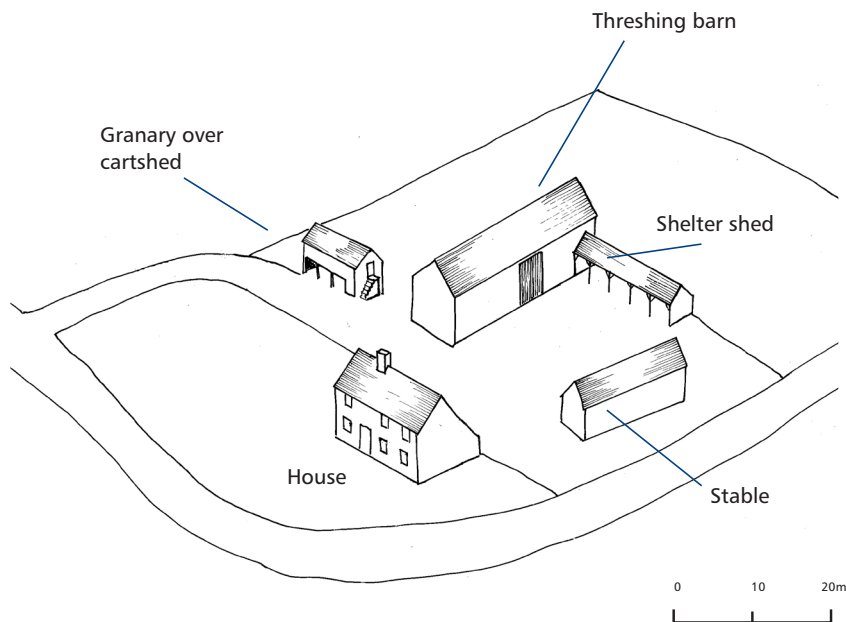
A loose courtyard plan with working buildings to two sides of the yard, with a barn and cattle housing on the left and a cowhouse on the right.

## REGULAR COURTYARD FARMSTEADS

Regular Courtyard farmsteads consist of linked ranges, often the result of a single phase of building or rebuilding, set around one or more cattle yards.

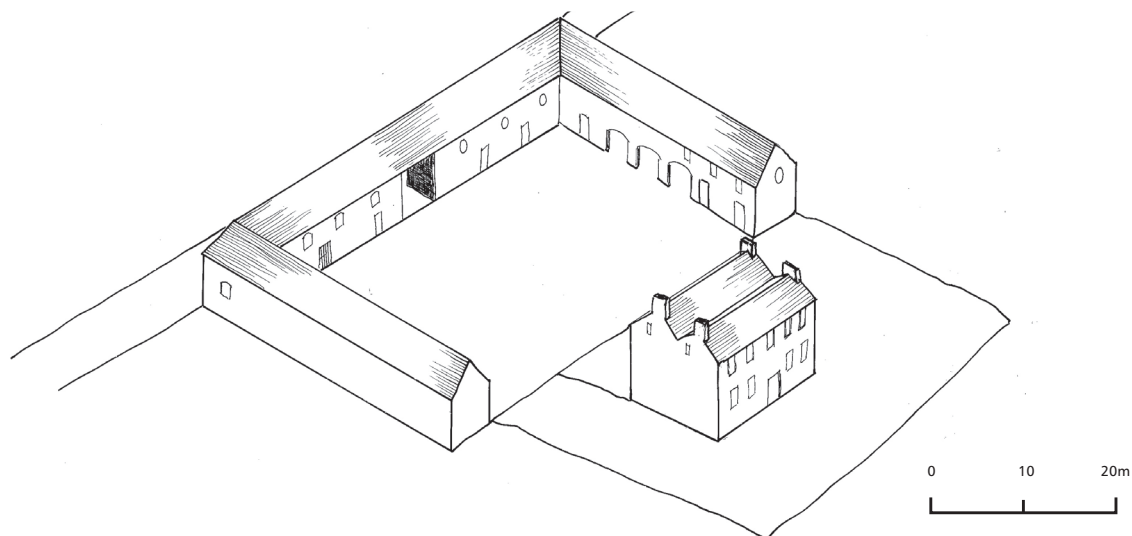


L-shaped plans (see page 13, f), usually combining cattle housing, stabling and barn into one range, are strongly associated with stock-rearing farms in the Uplands (right) and medium-small scale dairying farms (as here in the Hamlets) elsewhere.

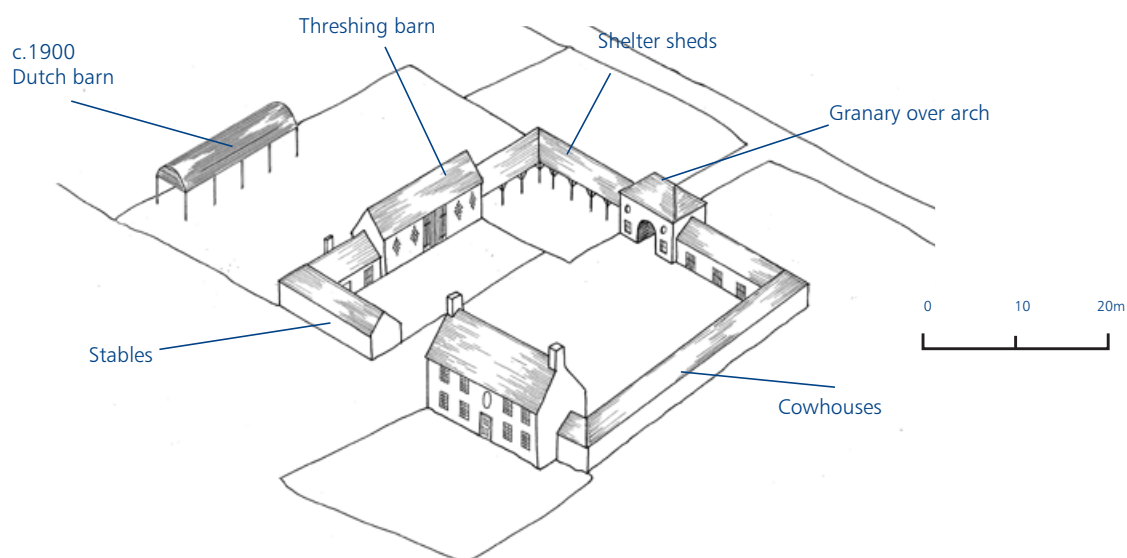


L-shaped regular courtyard farmsteads with additional buildings to the third (8.7% of the total) or fourth (2.1%) sides of the yard are in contrast concentrated along the Middle Valleys and Trent Valley, particularly where larger-scale arable-based farms developed.

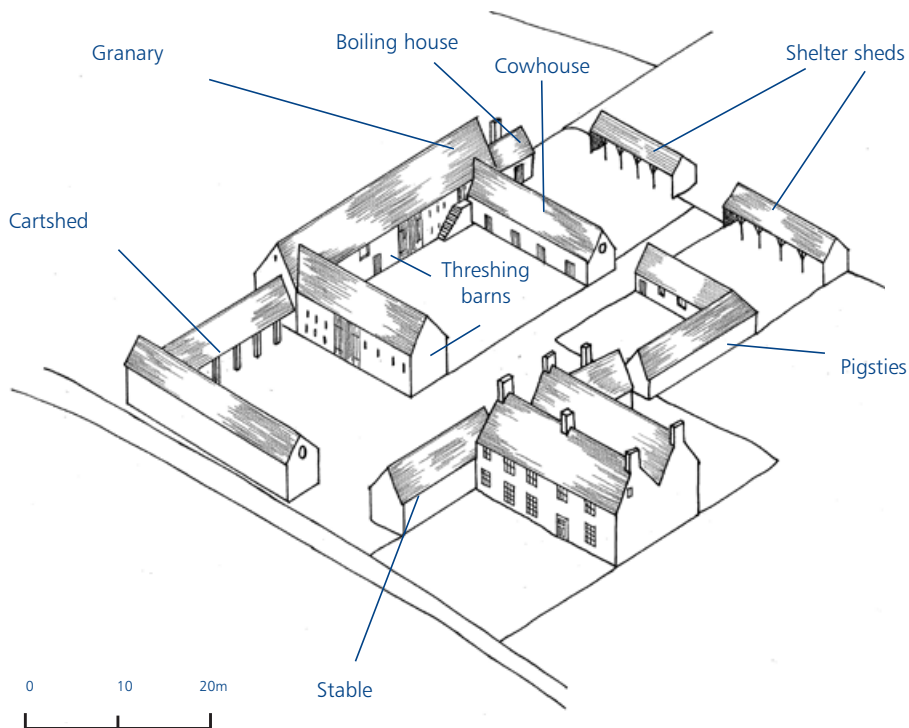




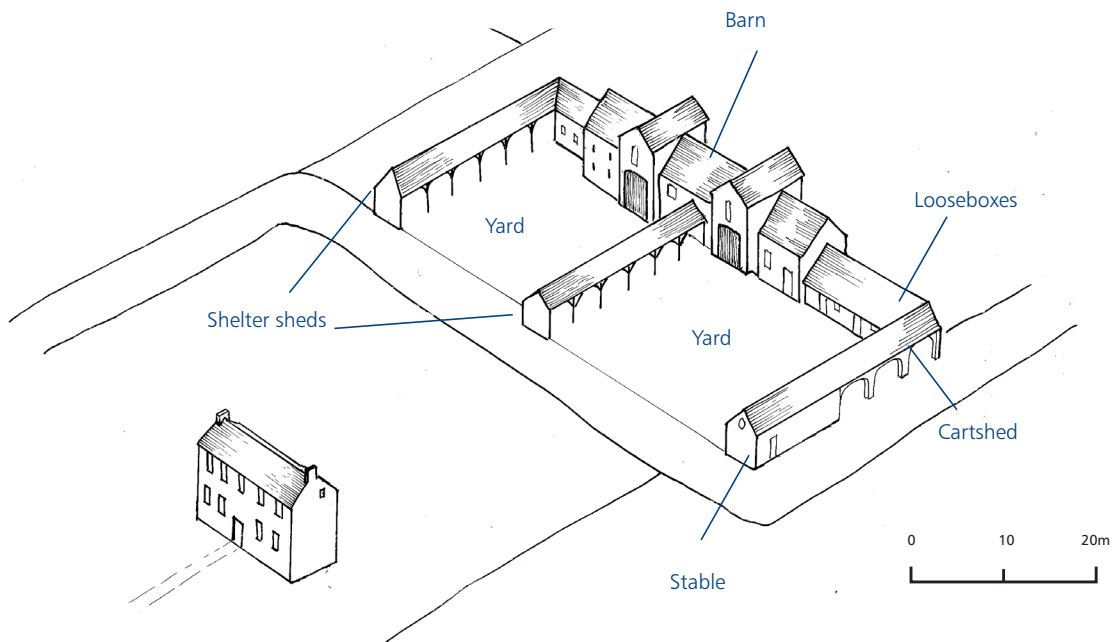
U-plans (7.4% of the total) are associated with planned enclosure, and are concentrated along the southern half of the Middle Plateau and Valleys and the Trent Valley. They have the buildings arranged around three sides of a yard which is open to one side.



Full regular courtyards, with the working buildings arranged around all sides of the yard, have a similar distribution.



Multi-yard plans are large or very large farmsteads that consist of a number of yards, either the result of piecemeal development of new development. These are concentrated in and around the former Forest of Needwood and along the Trent Valley, where the largest farmsteads developed.

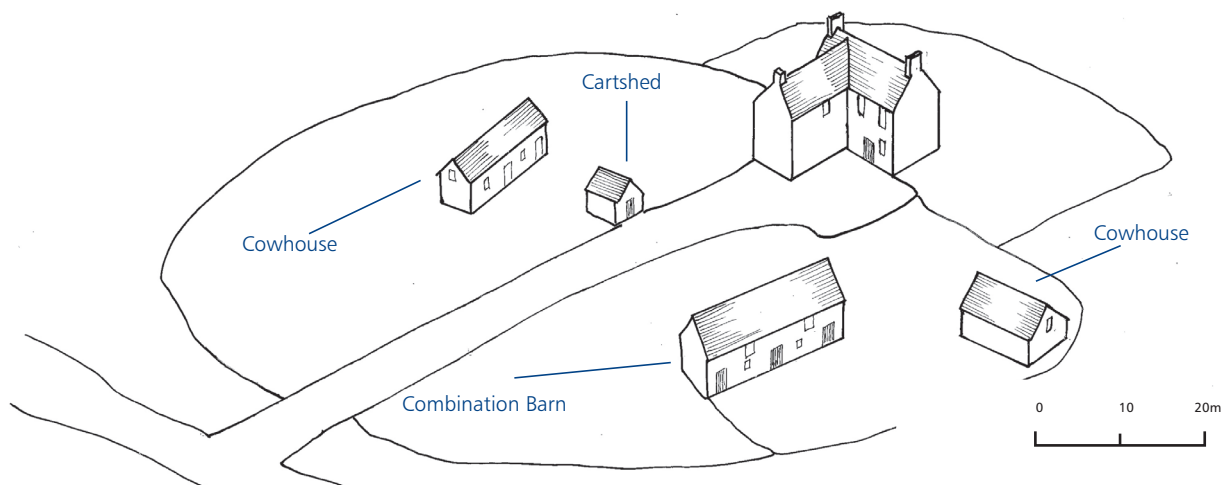


Regular courtyard farmsteads where the buildings are arranged as an F- or E-shaped plan around two or more cattle yards. Cattle housing and stabling typically extend as two ranges from the longer main range which includes a barn or mixing house. These farmsteads and the multi-yard plans, which clearly had developed as the foci of large holdings by the late 19th century, experienced high degrees of change in the 20th century.

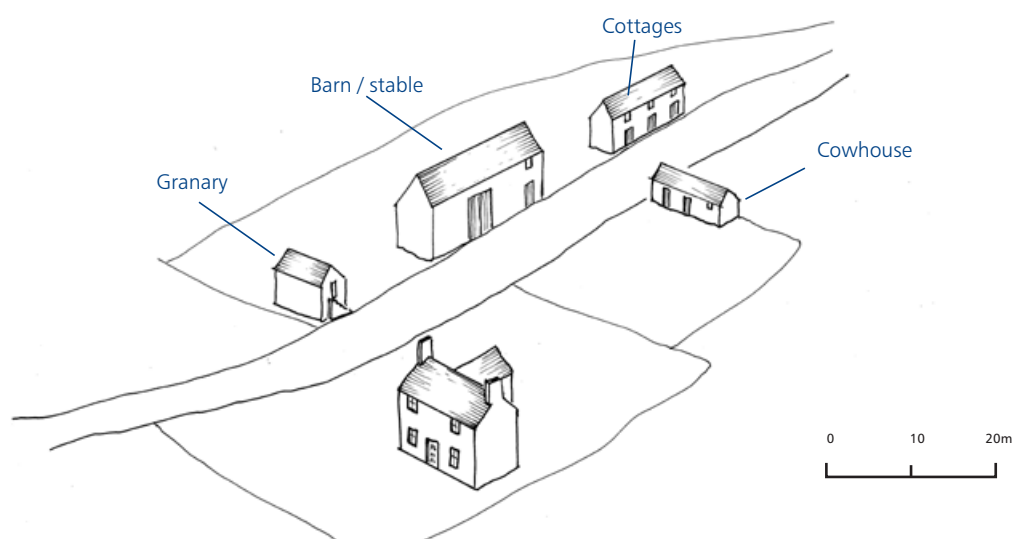
There are a small number of wide-span covered yards, built from the 1850s and concentrated in the Forest of Needwood area, which were designed the shelter of cattle and their manure, preserving its value as a fertilizer.

## DISPERSED PLANS

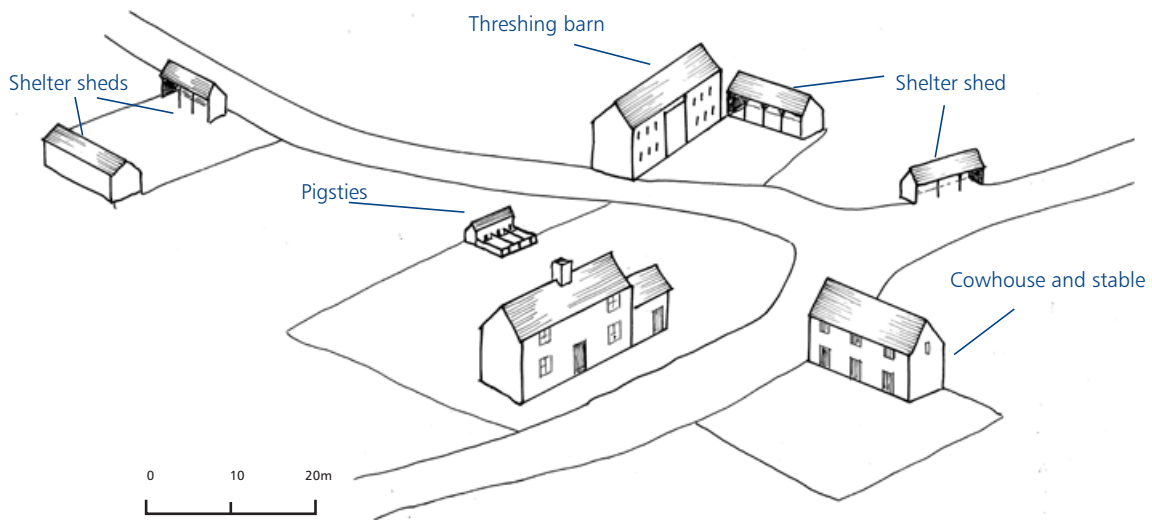
Dispersed plans generally show little evidence of planning in the arrangement of the farm buildings.



Dispersed Cluster farmsteads are typically small steadings that do not have a yard; instead working buildings are scattered around the farmhouse, often within a large, irregular paddock. They are focused in the north of the area and along the Dove valley, probably relating to the stock-rearing economies that developed around the fringe of the Peak District. There are nearly twice as many of these plan types across East Staffordshire than the West Midlands (4.5% against an average of 2.9%).



Dispersed Driftways have a routeway running through the farmstead along which some of the buildings will be aligned. They appear to be associated with medieval farmstead sites.



Dispersed Multi-yard farmsteads contain two or more yards that are detached from one another together with other scattered buildings. They typically display piecemeal rather than planned development, and are found away from the Uplands and on larger arable-based farmsteads.

#### LINEAR-TYPE FARMSTEADS



A farmstead where the house and working buildings are attached and in-line. Any detached buildings are typically small-scale, such as pigsties and calf houses. Linear plans occur mainly in the Uplands and Hamlets areas, and they extend northwards as a typical feature of the Peak and the Pennines. Across much of East Staffordshire they were replaced by larger-scale courtyard farmsteads from the 15th century as farms grew in size. This pattern of change continued into the 20th century, as 15% (double the average) have been lost or demolished. Most the attached working buildings have been brought into domestic use, the clear separation between domestic and working ranges is a distinctive characteristic.

## DETAILED GUIDANCE ON KEY BUILDING TYPES

### THRESHING BARN

The threshing barn was a building for the dry storage and processing of the harvested corn crop and for housing straw after threshing and before it was distributed as bedding for animals and trodden into manure to be returned to the fields.

#### Typical Features

- An area (the threshing floor) for beating by flail the grain from the crop and for winnowing the grain from the chaff in a cross draught.
- Opposing doors on the side walls to the threshing floor.



A threshing barn south of Yoxall, in a part of the southern half of the Middle Plateau and Valleys where smaller farmsteads remained into the 19th century. The square panel framing is a typical example of a distinctive carpentry tradition across the West Midlands.

- 'Leaps' – a slot in each post flanking the entrance to take a horizontal board which retained the grain while threshing and kept animals out
- Ritual and other marks (most commonly for tallying the output of threshed grain) close to the threshing floor.
- Evidence for earlier (including medieval) reused timbers, and for holes (mortices) in the undersides of cross beams indicating former partitions and evidence for animal housing.
- Belt drives and holes for drive shafts from earlier fixed or portable machinery.

#### Rarity and Significance

- Threshing barns are very uncommon across East Staffordshire, and concentrated in the Trent Valley area.
- It is probable that most threshing barns were replaced over the 19th century by multi-functional ranges with cattle occupying all or part of the ground floor and which incorporated an area for mechanical threshing. Others were also converted into cowhouses and dairies.
- Many barns have outshuts for cattle added to the end or sides (or both), with separate entrances to the yard and no communication into the barn.



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## COMBINATION BARN

These combined the storage and processing of the harvested corn crop with other functions such as cattle housing, stabling and granaries. These are the most common form of barn across East Staffordshire and mostly date from the 1820s-1870s.

### Typical Features

- An area (the threshing floor) for beating by flail the grain from the crop and for winnowing the grain from the chaff in a cross draught.
- The barn area is indicated by opposing doors (for winnowing) on the side walls to the threshing floor, and flanking ventilation slits. Other tell-tale signs are inserted windows for later cattle housing.



- Broad doorways to cattle housing (see below), and taller narrower doors to the stables (see below).
- Steps in the gable end or side wall to a first-floor granary (see below) and wool loft.
- Small, multi-functional buildings that incorporate a one- or two-bay cart shed, a stable and a granary are also found on some smaller farms.

### Rarity and Significance

- Any pre-19th century examples will be very rare.
- Examples with traditional stalling and other fittings for cattle housing and stabling, and grain bins in granaries, will be rare.



Combination barns are large buildings with multiple openings. In lowland arable-based farms these could include large double doors to the threshing barn, but across much of this area (and especially in the Hamlets and Uplands areas) the threshing bay required only opposing doors. Many were blocked (as on the left, between the drainpipe and the ivy) when these barns were converted into cattle housing in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

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## WHEEL HOUSES

Wheel houses dating from the early 19th century, where horses powered threshing and mixing machinery, were most commonly found on large corn-producing farms. They are very rare.

A rare surviving example of a wheel house (at Old Hall Farm, Dunstall) for housing gearing and a circular horse walk for powering threshing and fodder processing machinery inside the barn.



## CATTLE HOUSING

### Cowhouse

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.
- Windows and other features to assist ventilation dating from the mid-19th-early 20th centuries e.g. hit-and-miss ventilators, and air ducts and ridge ventilators.
- Interior stalling and feeding arrangements. Cows were usually tethered in pairs with low partitions of wood, stone, slate and, in the 19th century, cast iron between them. Feeding arrangements can survive in the form of hayracks, water bowls and mangers for feed.
- Loose boxes provide an individual cubicle for housing fatstock and can be found in the form of lean-tos attached to barns or other buildings, or as continuous ranges within late 18th and 19th century planned farmsteads where the loose boxes may back onto a feeding passage.

#### Rarity and Significance

- Any pre-19th century examples, including evidence for cattle housing in multi-functional barns, will be of great rarity.
- Cowhouses forming part of linear farmsteads rarely survive.
- Very few cowhouse interiors of the 19th century or earlier have survived unaltered because hygiene regulations for the production of milk have resulted in new floors, windows and stall arrangements being inserted.

Cattle housing similar to that found in West Staffordshire, North Shropshire and Cheshire, and extending into the Peak District and further north, was provided. Here brick shippons 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.



Many farmsteads bear witness to a considerable increase in cattle numbers and cattle housing in the 19th century, with full lofts provided above, as in the Uplands (left) and Hamlets (right)



Many cowhouses 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.

The supply of liquid milk was of prime importance from the late 19th century, and in the 1930s regulations led to the introduction of new stalling, windows and dairies (as here) to conform to hygiene regulations.

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### Shelter shed

An open-fronted single-storey structure for cattle facing onto cattle yards (see pages 18–22 for drawings). Cattle yards with shelter sheds were typical of mixed farming areas where cattle were housed on the steading as fatstock and for their manure. This building type is common in areas where cattle were fattened in yards, and they were historically concentrated across the Plateau and in the Trent Valley.

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### CART SHEDS

Cart sheds are open-fronted buildings which often face away from the farmyard and may be found close to the stables and roadways giving direct access to the fields. In many areas cart sheds are combined with first-floor granaries, accessed by external steps. Where cart sheds form part of regular plan farmsteads the cart shed will typically face outwards, representing the only major series of openings in the external elevations.

#### Typical Features

- Open-fronted and sometimes open at each end although one or two bays may be enclosed with doors for the storage of small implements.

- Cart sheds are typically either single-storey buildings or have two storeys with another use such as a granary above.
- 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 may also form part of the domestic service buildings near the farmhouse.

#### Rarity and Significance

- The size of cartsheds reflects the size and function of the farm – larger examples are found on large arable-based farms.



## GRANARY

A building or room for storing grain after it has been threshed and winnowed in the barn.

### Typical Features

- Ventilated openings - either louvres, shutters, sliding vents or grilles;
- 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;
- Steps at the gable end to the first floor granary, if located above the stable and/or cartshed, or at the end of a multi-functional range.

### Rarity and Significance

- Some very rare surviving evidence for granaries in the floored ends of barns in corn-producing areas.
- Granaries were a common building type on arable farmsteads, typically found in association with cart sheds or in combination ranges and usually dating from the late 18th or early 19th century. Where examples survive with internal fittings or form part of largely unaltered farmsteads they will be of significance. Earlier examples will be rare and of greater significance.



Steps to a granary door in the Uplands (left) and a granary and former stable (recently converted into a farm store) attached to cattle housing in the Middle Valleys and Plateau.



## CART SHEDS



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 needed for ploughing and many other tasks. Fewer horses were needed in cattle-rearing or dairying areas. Oxen used for ploughing until the 18th century would also be housed in stables but no purpose-built oxen houses are known to have survived in the Region.

### Typical Features

- Earlier stables are usually two-storey and well-lit buildings, with ground-floor windows, pitching openings and ventilation to the hay loft. In the West Midlands they are commonly timber-framed and weatherboarded with brick examples dating from the 18th century onwards.
- Early examples have the stalls across the end walls, whilst in examples dating from the later 18th century onwards the stalls are usually along the side walls, allowing more scope for lengthening the building and thus housing more horses.
- Stables dating from the 17th and 18th centuries are also found as part of combination buildings; for example, in Herefordshire stables are often attached to barns.
- Single-storey stables, commonly with cast-iron ridge vents, were built from the later 19th century.



- Stables can be distinguished from cowhouses as they have tall and relatively narrow doors.
- 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.
- Sometimes chaff boxes for storing feed, and cubby-holes for lanterns, grooming brushes, medicines etc.

### Rarity and Significance

- After the barn, the stable is often the oldest building on the farmstead, but pre-19th century examples are rare.
- The largest stables were built on the larger corn-producing farms.
- Examples retaining internal fittings including stall partitions and feed racks are rare and significant.



## OUTLYING BARNES AND COMPLEXES

Outfarms and field barns allowed certain functions normally carried out in the farmstead to be undertaken at locations remote from the main steading.

A field barn is a building set within the fields away from the main farmstead, typically in areas where farmsteads and fields were sited at a long distance from each other. This includes areas where holdings remained dispersed, in particular around towns and villages. Field barns could be:

- Shelters for sheep, typically with low doors and floor-to-ceiling heights.
- Shelters for cattle and their fodder (hay), with or without a yard.
- Threshing barns with yards.
- Combination barns with a threshing bay and storage for the crop, and housing for cattle.

An outfarm is a courtyard complex of buildings set within the fields away from the main farmstead, typically in areas where farmsteads and fields were sited at a long distance from each other. A cottage for a farm worker could also be sited nearby.

Outfarms and field barns are a highly vulnerable element of the rural landscape, particularly in the upland areas of the north-west of the county. They have been subject to high rates of loss, and as their sensitivity to other forms of use is very high (due to their generally limited access and prominence in the landscape) the most significant landscapes with field barns need to be identified for enhanced maintenance through the agri-environment schemes.



A field barn for housing around 12 head of cattle in the Uplands, of a type found across the upland and upland fringe areas of northern England.



A small brick field barn in the Middle Plateau and Valleys, sited within fields with mature and well-treed irregular boundaries that result from a long process of piecemeal enclosure.



A large field barn sited in a paddock on the edge of Marsh Lane, Stanton.

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## 4 MATERIALS AND DETAIL

### Materials

Historic farmsteads reflect England's huge diversity in geology, and differences in building traditions and wealth, estate policy, access to transport links and the management of local timber and other resources. This has contributed to great contrasts and variety in traditional walling and roofing materials and forms of construction, which often survived much longer on working farm buildings than farmhouses. Buildings in stone and brick, roofed with tile or slate, increasingly replaced buildings in clay, timber and thatch from the later 18th century. Building materials such as softwood timber, brick, slate and iron could also be imported onto the farm via coastal and river ports, canals and rail. There also appeared in the 19th century a range of standard architectural detail, such as part-glazed and ventilated windows and the use of cast and wrought iron for columns and other detail. Prefabricated construction in industrial materials made its way onto farms from the 1850s, but did not become dominant and widespread until after the 1950s.

### East Staffordshire

Some timber-framing survives within farmhouses and occasionally within farm buildings.

The main distinctions in building materials are between the Uplands, where sandstone was used for walls and stone slates, and the remainder of East Staffordshire where there is some use of stone but 18th and 19th century red brick and plain clay tile are dominant.



Tooled stonework



A loft door with wrought iron latch and strap hinges

There is much use of imported Welsh slate and Staffordshire blue tiles, and some rare surviving use of Westmorland slate. Millstone grit is seen in parts and reddish Hollington stone is used for detail in the Middle Plateau and Valleys.

### Details

Surviving fittings and details within farm buildings are mostly of 19th and early 20th century date. Examples of earlier doors, windows and flooring are very rare. Typical features are:

- Stalls and other interior features (e.g. mangers, hay racks) in stables and cattle housing of proven 19th century or earlier date.
- 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.
- 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) to planned and complexes, including inter-war county council smallholdings.



A window with hit-and-miss ventilators

The following National Character Areas fall within the boundaries of East Staffordshire Borough Council, providing a broader context to the variations in landscape character within it. These summaries are taken from the West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project.

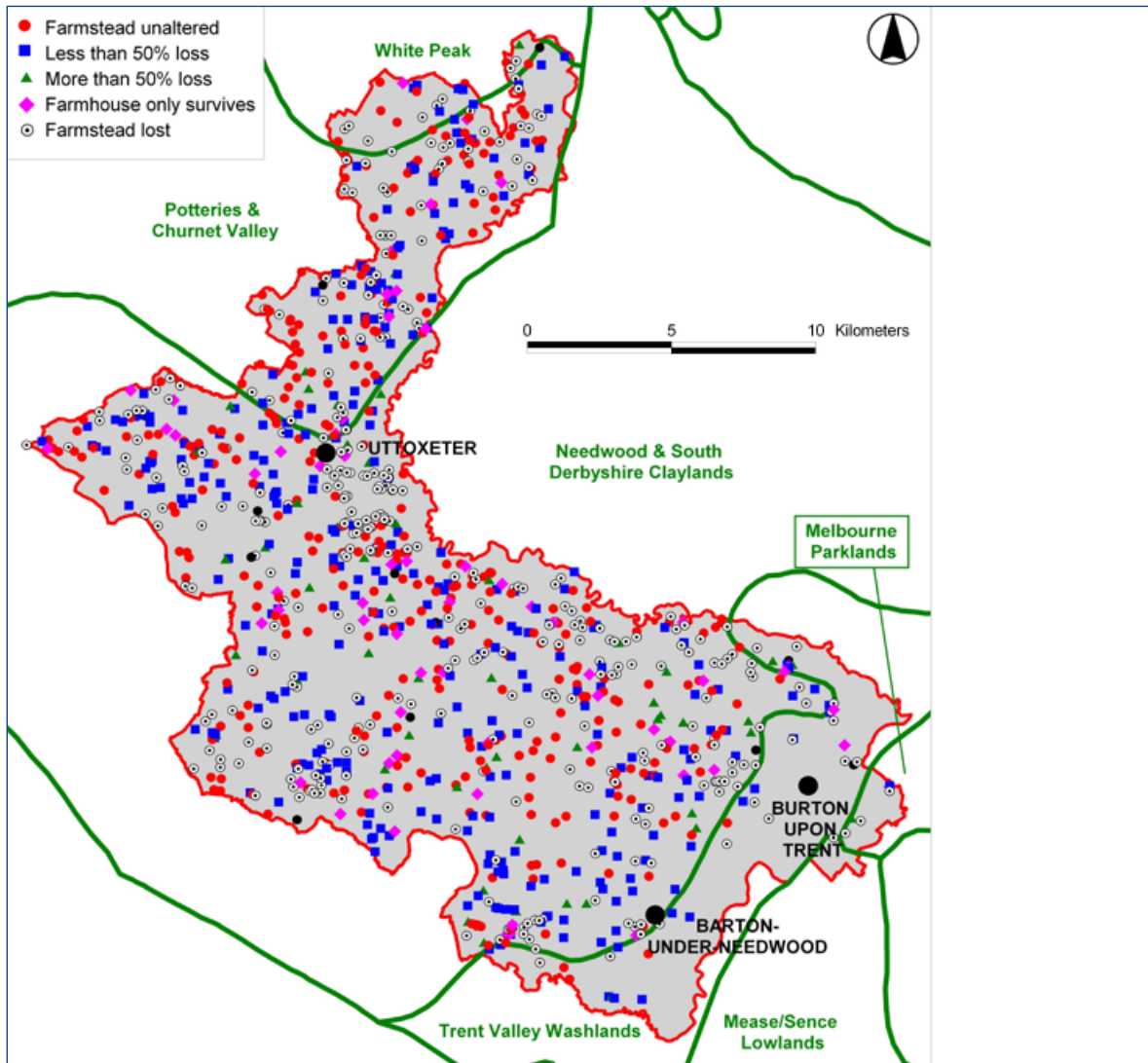
**64 Potteries and Churnet Valley**

**Character**

- High to very high levels of dispersed settlement, with 10% of farmsteads in villages and 7.4% in hamlets
- Very high density of farmsteads in the landscape, lower to the Churnet Valley and west of the Potteries
- Predominant pattern of very small farmsteads (48%) particularly around Biddulph Moor, with large-scale (21.1%) farmsteads concentrated to west, in Churnet Valley and in lowlands to south.

**Survival**

- Very high rates of survival, with 70% retaining more than half of their historic footprint – strong differences between higher loss (high proportion of the 15% across the area) and alteration around Potteries and to west in contrast to very high survival in the moorlands and Churnet Valley
- 5-10% of listed working buildings have obvious signs of structural disrepair, and 20-30% with visible adaptive reuse.



The survival of farmsteads in East Staffordshire, showing the National Character Areas (except those to the extreme east) referred to in the text.

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### Patterns of Use

High economic mass has allowed conversion of three fifths of farmsteads to residential use though participation of residents in business activity is relatively low.

### 68 Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands

#### Character

- Strong pattern of nucleated settlement, with 11.1% of farmsteads in villages and 17.7% in hamlets
- Medium density of farmsteads in the landscape (in 25-30% range, but very large lowest at 14.7%), increasing to the northern part of the area
- Broad range of very small to large-scale farmsteads, but with the smaller-scale farmsteads concentrated in the northern more hilly part of the area

#### Survival

- High rates of survival, with 75% retaining more than half of their historic footprint
- 0.5-5% of listed working buildings have obvious signs of structural disrepair, and 30-40% with visible adaptive reuse.

#### Patterns of Use

This area has a high proportion of historic farmsteads remaining in agricultural use (40%) with a very small proportion converted to non residential uses other than agriculture.



### 69 Trent Valley Washlands

#### Character

- Strong pattern of nucleated settlement, with 21.4% of farmsteads in villages and 5.7% in hamlets. Urban development has subsumed many small settlements
- Low density of farmsteads in the landscape
- Large to very large-scale farmsteads predominant (34 and 29.6%), with smaller-scale farmsteads concentrated in settlements

#### Survival

- Low rates of survival – 18% loss, 7% have lost all their working buildings but 57% retain more than half of their historic footprint
- 10-15% of listed working buildings have obvious signs of structural disrepair, and 40-50% with visible adaptive reuse.

#### Patterns of Use

High economic mass relates to a low proportion of farmsteads remaining in agricultural use (24%) but with high levels of farm diversification (with creation of office and retail facilities exceeding expectations). More than 70% of farmsteads have been converted to residential use, residents having high participation in small business (11% of farmsteads are company registered offices) but low participation in substantial firms at director level (< 10 directorships per hundred households).



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