

# STAFFORDSHIRE FARMSTEADS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK



## CONTENTS AND INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDANCE

THIS DOCUMENT FORMS PART OF A SUITE OF GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

The Staffordshire Farmsteads Guidance 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.

### CONTENTS OF THE FARMSTEAD ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCING TRADITIONAL FARMSTEADS IN STAFFORDSHIRE	1
INTRODUCING THE FARMSTEAD ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK	2
STAGE 1: SITE SUMMARY	4
Understanding farmsteads in Staffordshire	5
STAGE 2: ASSESS HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE	7
Special significance	8
STAGE 3: NEED AND POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE	9
Issues for change	10
STAGE 4: SITING AND DESIGN ISSUES	11
Using historic character to guide change	12
ANNEXES	
1. Designation checklist	13
2. Using historic maps, the Historic Environment Record and other sources	14
3. Recording and research issues	16
4. Example of farmstead assessments	17
SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ADVICE	19

### CONTENTS OF THE STAFFORDSHIRE FARMSTEADS GUIDANCE

#### THE FARMSTEAD ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK (this document)

This 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.

#### STAFFORDSHIRE FARMSTEADS CHARACTER STATEMENT

This has an introductory summary followed by fully-illustrated guidance on the character and significance of the county's traditional farmsteads and buildings. It is presented under the headings of:

1. Historic development – how the county's farming history fits into a national context
2. Landscape and settlement – how farmsteads contribute to the landscapes and settlements in which they have developed
3. Farmstead and building types – how the functions of farmsteads are reflected in a variety of farmstead plan forms and building types
4. Materials and detail – the development and use of materials and building techniques across the county
5. Area summaries – the areas into which the county subdivides, based on analysis of its farmsteads in their landscape context

#### LOCAL AUTHORITY SUMMARIES

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

Cover image: 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



## INTRODUCING TRADITIONAL FARMSTEADS IN STAFFORDSHIRE

A farmstead is the place where the farmhouse and the working buildings of a farm are located. Some farms were also provided with field barns or outfarms sited away from the main steading. They are an integral part of their surrounding landscapes and settlements. A simple distinction can be made between traditional buildings which make a significant contribution to local distinctiveness and those prefabricated and standardised industrial buildings which are often added to traditional farmsteads but do not themselves display any local variation in their architectural character or distribution.



A simple distinction can be drawn between traditional buildings and modern pre-fabricated sheds which with their associated hardstandings are vital for the modern farming industry. Photos © English Heritage 29003\_013 and 27965\_002



There are different densities of farmsteads across Staffordshire's landscape, very few of them being now sited within villages. The highest densities of small-scale farms are found in the Moorlands to the north east, as here at Biddulph Moor (to the left). Across most of the county courtyard-plan farmsteads developed or were newly-sited within fields developed on a piecemeal basis from medieval open fields (centre), or more rarely within designed and newly-enclosed landscapes of the later 18th and 19th centuries (right). Photos © English Heritage NMR27963/024, 27999/016 and 27962/012

## INTRODUCING THE FARMSTEAD ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The Site Assessment Framework will, when used with the other parts of this guidance, help users develop an understanding of the historic character and significance of a site and identify any issues at the earliest critical stage in the planning process. It will also help in the preparation of documents for prior approval for commercial and residential uses under the General Permitted Development Order (see below).

Traditional farmsteads and buildings are heritage assets which make a significant contribution to both *landscape character* and *local distinctiveness*. In addition, through a diversity of uses, they also influence local communities and economies. As agricultural practices and the rural economy change, many such farmsteads and buildings become redundant from their original use, and are difficult to adapt to current farming needs: without appropriate uses they will not be maintained and may disappear from the landscape. New uses which both enhance and are sensitive to their historic character and significance are to be encouraged.

Using this guidance at the earliest stage in establishing development proposals will:

- Help get the proposed design right for such sensitive sites and buildings.
- Save time and costs before preparing a detailed application for development and other consents, such as listed building consent.
- Ensure that an application complies with national plan policy, and also local plan policies (including the neighbourhood plan if relevant) regarding landscape, the historic environment, neighbourhood issues, biodiversity, siting and design.
- Identify where professional advice and support, and perhaps more detailed survey, would be beneficial to a site to ensure significance is retained.

An application will have a much greater chance of success if these issues are identified and considered at the pre-application stage. It is also beneficial to have pre-application discussions with the local planning authority as these may help to reach an understanding on how the proposal should be taken forward.

### PLANNING CONTEXT

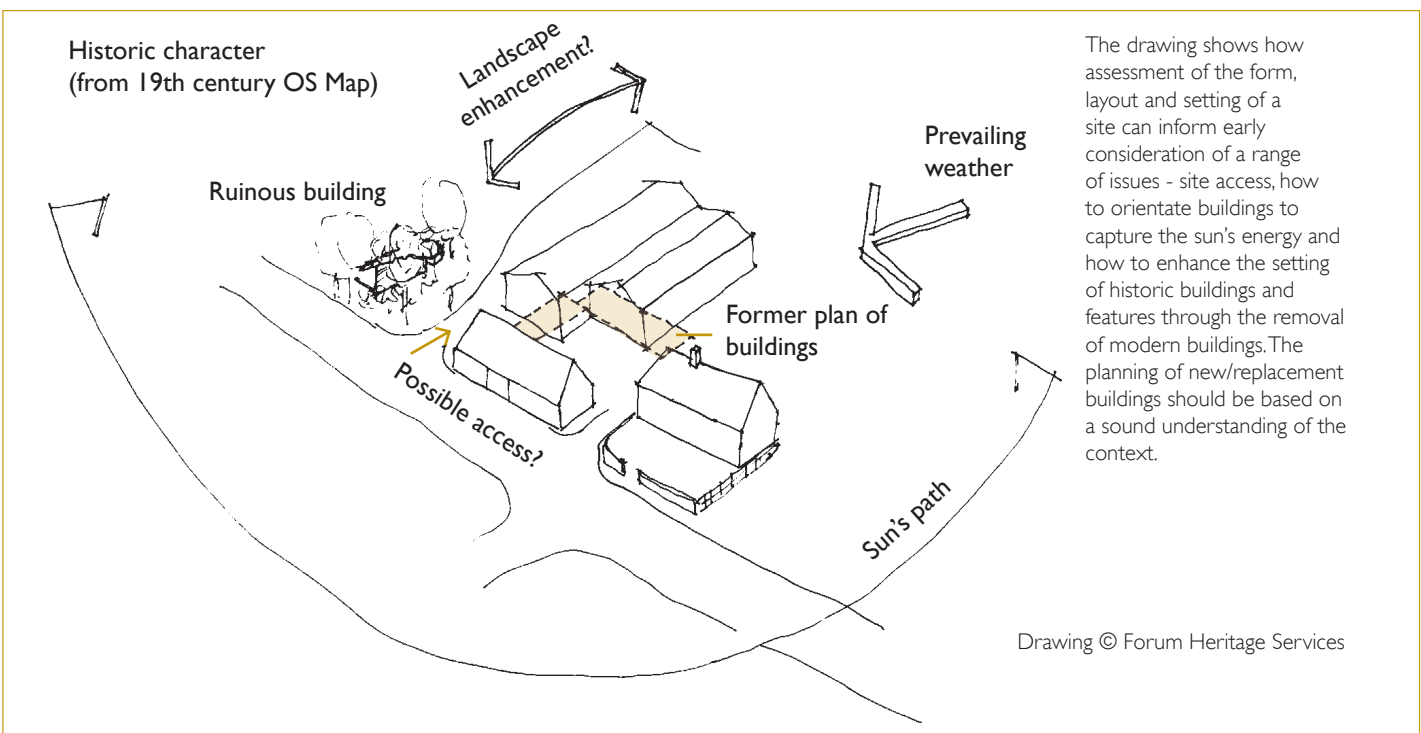
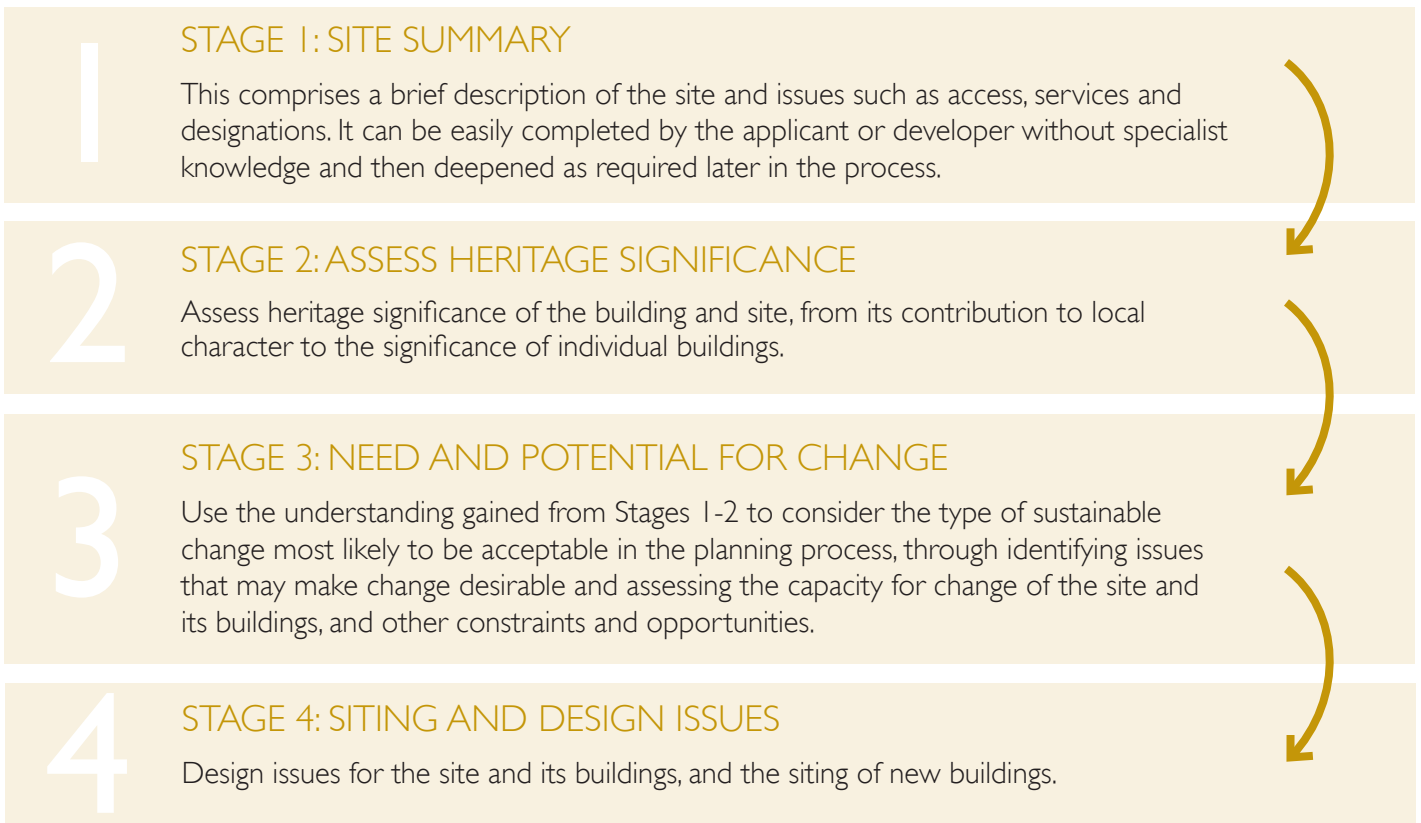
The requirements for sustainable development in rural areas are set out in both national and local planning policy. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) clearly identifies the protection and enhancement of the historic environment as part of sustainable development (paragraph 7), and pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the natural, built and historic environment (paragraph 8). The NPPF places good design, local character and conservation of the historic environment at the heart of sustainable development and good planning (paragraphs 58-64, 126-141). It states that the policies contained within it (in paragraphs 18-219) 'taken as whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system'. It stresses the importance of:

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

Government now allows the owners and tenants of agricultural units to change the use of an agricultural building and any land within its curtilage to commercial and now residential use, under the General Permitted Development Order. This excludes conservation areas, listed buildings, sites with scheduled ancient monuments, National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Prior approval is required in order to ensure that the change of use and any associated works do not create unacceptable impacts. These cover highways, transport and noise impacts, risks of contamination and flooding, location and siting of the building, and the design and external appearance of the building. For further details see [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/564/pdfs/ukxi\\_20140564\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/564/pdfs/ukxi_20140564_en.pdf) and for explanatory memorandum [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/564/pdfs/ukxiem\\_20140564\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/564/pdfs/ukxiem_20140564_en.pdf)

This guidance is set out in four stages, which will help to identify the need and potential for change and then prepare a scheme based on considering:

- *The landscape context*, including its boundaries and the potential that it offers as a habitat for wildlife.
- *The whole site*, including its form and scale, and where buildings are situated relative to historic and modern spaces on the site, routeways and the surrounding landscape.
- *The extent of historic change to the whole site and its landscape context*, including where traditional buildings and farmyards have been lost or redeveloped. This can inform opportunities to retain and reveal the significance of historic buildings and spaces, reinstate lost features and buildings or develop parts of the site.
- *The architectural patterning* present in building styles, materials and details which are important to maintaining or enhancing the character of the farmstead, including the siting and design of any new buildings.



# STAGE I: SITE SUMMARY

This stage will provide an important foundation for discussion with the planning authority and assist in the development of proposals. It is essentially a brief description of the site and its buildings, accompanied by a plan (see next page) showing its layout and distinguishing between any traditional and modern buildings. This plan can be cross-referred to photographs.

## SITE AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Identify:

- The boundaries of the farmstead.
- Ownership or tenancy.
- Use of the site and surrounding area.
- Access to the site, including sightlines from main entrances.
- Routeways within and around the site, including Public Rights of Way.
- Provision of key services such as water, sewage, electricity and telecommunications.
- Heritage assets and other designations on and around the site. One or more farm buildings, or a dwelling on the site, might be listed for its special architectural or historic interest or be sited within a conservation area (see Annex 1 checklist).

## HISTORIC CHARACTER

Draw a plan (see next page), identifying how the whole site in its setting has changed but not identifying significance at this stage. In particular:

- Views to and from the site and how these are framed by the surrounding form and features of the landscape, such as boundaries, trees and woodland, settlements and buildings.
- Hedges, walls, fences and other boundaries within and around the site.
- The plan form and layout of the site, distinguishing between traditional and modern working buildings and how they face towards or away from routeways, historic and modern spaces and the surrounding landscape.
- Domestic buildings and their principal elevations, gardens and other domestic areas.
- Other significant features such as farm ponds.

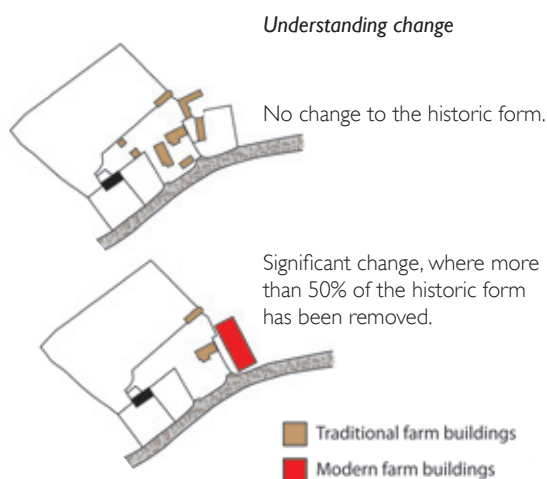
## UNDERSTANDING THE LAYOUT

### THE LAYOUT OR PLAN OF THE FARMSTEAD IS KEY TO UNDERSTANDING AND DESCRIBING ITS CHARACTER

A site plan, distinguishing between traditional and modern buildings, can reveal significant opportunities for enhancement and change. This understanding can be deepened by:

- Comparing site survey to historic maps (see Annex 2) to identify significant areas which have changed – in particular buildings and other features which have been lost or redeveloped.
- Considering whether the site is subdivided into distinct areas as a result of how these have functioned and changed.

Comparison of modern maps with historic maps of c. 1900, compiled after the last major phase of building traditional farmsteads, can provide a useful benchmark for understanding the survival of the historic form of the traditional farmstead.



Details of historic buildings can be numbered on a site plan and cross-referred to photographs and descriptions which note

- Building materials and structural condition.
- Doors and windows, including blocked openings.
- Internal walls, floors and carpentry, including roof trusses.
- Internal features, such as historic machinery, stalls, partitions (including grain bins) and graffiti.



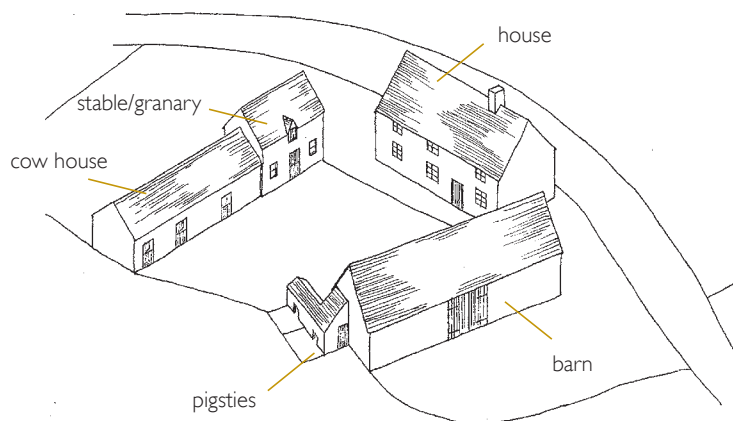
## UNDERSTANDING FARMSTEADS IN STAFFORDSHIRE

The Staffordshire Farmsteads Character Statement contains more detailed illustrated guidance.

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. The smallest farmsteads are concentrated in the Moorlands and the largest courtyard-plan farmsteads are concentrated in central and southern Staffordshire.

All farmsteads are made up of buildings and spaces that served several key functions, most important being to house the farming family and any workers, store and process corn, hay and any other crops, shelter farm vehicles and implements, shelter and manage 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.

*Courtyard plans*, which are the most common plan form (70% of all recorded farmsteads) have the buildings arranged around one or more yards. These buildings can be detached and loosely arranged (loose courtyards) or interlinked and more formally arranged (regular courtyards). The drawing shows a loose courtyard plan serving a mixed farm with working buildings to two sides of the yard. Drawing © Bob Edwards

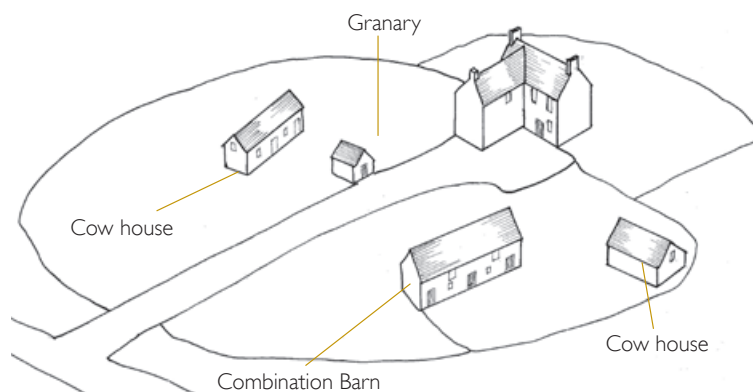


The *smallest-scale farmsteads* (19%), mostly comprise linear plans and L-shaped plans where the house and working buildings are attached in-line. The majority are concentrated in the uplands or areas of former heath and common such as around Cannock Chase and also in Biddulph Moor. Small-scale farmsteads also survive in pockets across the Staffordshire Plain; a distribution which may once have been more extensive prior to the reorganisation and amalgamation of the landscape. Surviving unaltered examples are very rare.



A linear farmstead in the Moorlands. Photo © Bob Edwards

*Dispersed plans* (11%) have no focal yard area and the working buildings are typically dispersed within the boundary of the steading. They are concentrated in pastoral landscapes including areas close to common land for holding stock.



## Building types

There are a wide range of building types which demonstrate the importance of arable farming and of dairying and cattle rearing in different parts of the county. Over the course of the 19th century the agricultural economy of Staffordshire became more pastoral with a particular emphasis on dairy farming. *Barns* for housing and processing the corn crop are commonly the largest and earliest buildings, 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. Many barns were converted into housing for dairy cattle in the late 19th century. *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.



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



Large red brick barns are common across the lowland areas. Note the wide cow house doors to the right of the double threshing floor doors in this example of a combination barn. Photo © Bob Edwards



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 for milk production. Photo © Jeremy Lake



Field barn range for housing livestock and storing hay in the Moorlands. Photo © Bob Edwards

*Outfarms* and *field barns* display strong localised patterns. Large outfarms are concentrated within the zones of large-scale farms. Field barns are apparent across the county but tend to cluster around the main settlement centres. There are 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.



## STAGE 2: ASSESS HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of farm buildings and farmsteads, and their settings, can be retained and enhanced through sympathetic change and development. The National Planning Policy Framework stresses the importance of:

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

The text boxes summarise the survival and heritage potential of farmsteads in the county, and (overleaf) how to identify any additional special significance. Further guidance is provided in the **Staffordshire Farmsteads Character Statement**.

### **1. At a basic level, and whether designated as heritage assets or not, significant farmsteads and buildings can contribute to local character and distinctiveness if they have one or both of the following:**

- Traditional farm buildings.
- Their historic form as traditional farmsteads, where the historic farm buildings, any houses and spaces relate to each other.

The great majority of farmstead buildings which make a positive contribution to landscape character are not designated heritage assets and will not fulfil the criteria for designation through listing. The greater the survival of the historic form and detail, the greater will be its significance as a traditional farmstead. Site survey and drawing out a site plan (see page 4) will help to identify the survival of the historic form of the site, its buildings and any historic detail such as building materials, doors, windows and internal features.

### **2. Heritage assets, including listed buildings, heighten the heritage significance of farmsteads and their buildings**

The more significant the heritage asset, as identified in Stage 1, the greater the weight that should be given to its conservation and the amount of detail provided in an application. Local planning authorities may require a more detailed level of recording of buildings and archaeological features to be carried out, although this should be proportionate to the known or potential significance of the asset in its setting (NPPF, paragraph 128). Local authorities have specific processes to follow for designated heritage assets and areas. Making contact with them is an important first step. Crucially, significant features may only be revealed through this process of assessment including buildings, which may merit designation as heritage assets, and archaeological remains. See Annex 3 for guidance on levels of recording and National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 126-141 for historic environment issues.

#### **Survival of traditional farmsteads in Staffordshire**

This text and the further guidance in the Staffordshire Farmsteads Character Statement uses the results of mapping the historic character, survival and use of the county's farmsteads, completed as part of the West Midlands Farmsteads and Landscapes Project (see [www.english-heritage.org.uk/wmidlandsfarmsteads](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/wmidlandsfarmsteads)).

Significant farmsteads will have retained all or some of their traditional buildings and historic form or layout, and so contribute to local character and distinctiveness. Comparison of modern maps with historic maps of c. 1900, compiled after the last major phase of building traditional farmsteads, shows that 81% of 5526 recorded farmsteads have heritage potential as traditional farmsteads because they have retained some or all of their historic form. Only 14% of these have any listed buildings, almost all of these being houses.

Additionally, some farmsteads and farmstead sites may retain significant below-ground archaeological deposits, including those that have lost all of their historic buildings. The heritage potential of traditional farmsteads, including those which have lost their working and domestic buildings, has been now entered onto the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

Outfarms and field barns were once a feature of most landscapes across Staffordshire particularly in the north-east of the county. Just 26.3% of 2069 recorded sites survive with less than 50% loss of their historic form but this masks a higher level of loss across the lowland west and south of the county. 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.

## Special Significance

Some buildings or farmsteads, including examples which are not designated as heritage assets, have the potential for special significance in a local or national context.

- Traditional farmsteads within or next to medieval and earlier earthworks remaining from settlements, buildings and ploughland (ridge and furrow and cultivation terraces). See front cover.
- Any 18th century or earlier buildings, including those with evidence for timber framing which can be encased in later brick or stone walling. Any evidence for cattle housing is extremely rare.
- 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.
- 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 including wheel houses or engine houses attached to barns.
- Historic graffiti and other marks relating to agricultural use and folk beliefs.
- Any intact 18th century or earlier examples of field barns and outfarms (see page 6), 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.



A timber-framed two-storey cow house of 17th or early 18th century date. Photo © Bob Edwards



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 © Mike Williams/ English Heritage



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



A rare example of mechanisation. This is wheelhouse which contained horse-powered machinery for threshing grain and processing fodder.

## STAGE 3: NEED AND POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE

This stage provides an opportunity to consider those issues which may make change desirable, for example:

- Heritage which is redundant and/or without viable use, and thus actually or potentially at risk.
- Opportunities to retain and reveal the significance of historic buildings and spaces, reinstate lost features or buildings or develop parts of the site.
- Opportunities to create space for job-creating businesses, additional housing, or other uses.
- Wildlife and habitat potential.
- Renewable energy potential.

All references are to National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs.

### 1. Capacity for change of the site and its buildings

The character of different sites and buildings will present different constraints and opportunities for conversion and development, whether they are designated as heritage assets or not. Consider, in addition to respecting the significance of the buildings, as identified in Stage 2:

- The scale and layout of the whole site and its setting, including vehicular access to it.
- The scale, provision of natural light and layout of individual buildings.
- The robustness or fragility of building materials and fabric, including the sources, costs and supply of traditional building materials.
- The potential for different uses to work together.

### 2. Access, neighbourhood, contamination and flood risk issues

*Existing and potential access*

- Safe access with clear sightlines onto highways is vital. Intensification of an access or creation of a new access will require approval from the Highway Authority and the local planning authority.
- Some farmsteads or buildings only have single track access and many field barns and outfarms have no vehicular access.

See NPPF paragraphs 29-41 for transport issues. (especially the final sentence of 29), but it is important to take account of the rest of the NPPF, especially paragraph 28, paragraph 55 including bullets two and three, and paragraph 70 bullet four.

*Neighbourhood issues*

- Consider the impact upon any neighbours affected by any increase in traffic and other activities such as over-looking, noise and loss of light.

*Flood risk and pollution issues*

- Flood risk assessments may be required for developments within or affecting Flood Zones, so that the risk of flooding is not increased elsewhere.

- Consider the removal of contaminated material, how to eliminate or minimise the flow and quantity of surface and groundwater (including contaminants), ground conditions and land stability.
- Consider the impact in particular of noise, dust, fumes and light on the surrounding area.

The local planning authority may require a risk assessment of land potentially affected by contamination or with land stability issues. Responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner.

See NPPF paragraphs 93-108, 120-125.

### 3. Wildlife and habitats

The site, including buildings, planting, ponds and boundary features, can provide significant opportunities for habitats and wildlife connected to its surrounding boundaries and features. Local planning authority permission will be required for removing hedges that are more than 20 metres long and more than 30 years old.

Consider also the need for any ecological surveys, if protected species (including bats) are present.

See NPPF paragraphs 109-125, especially 118.

### 4. Renewable energy

The location, layout and setting of a farmstead can offer opportunities to:

- Minimise energy consumption through landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping.
- Generate energy from renewable or low carbon sources - ground-source or air-source heating, geo-thermal sources, solar and wind power, biomass and anaerobic digestion systems.
- Minimise water consumption through sustainable drainage systems which recycle water (termed grey water). These include reed bed sewage disposal.

See NPPF paragraphs 93-108, 96.



## ISSUES FOR CHANGE

Structural changes in the farming industry have required farmers to construct new buildings that economise on labour and conform to animal welfare regulations. National research by English Heritage published in 2005-6 (see <http://www.helm.org.uk/regeneration-and-design/living-and-working-countryside/historic-farm-buildings/>) examined the drivers for change and the effectiveness of national and local policy. It found that:

- Historic farm buildings were more prone to both neglect and development than any other historic building type. Residential use made up the great majority of conversions, despite planning policies that favour employment and business uses.
- It identified the need for an evidence base, including within Historic Environment Records, and a consistent framework to inform decision-making by all those involved in the reuse and development of historic farmsteads.
- In the West Midlands 27% of listed working farm buildings have evidence for residential reuse (national level 30%), 3% other mainly commercial reuse (national 4%) and 70% have no evidence for other use (national 66%). 18.9% have evidence for structural failure (national 8.9%). These results have been deepened for the local authority areas so that residential conversion in East Staffordshire (17.1%) and Staffordshire Moorlands (18.5%) have the lowest rates of conversion, followed by Newcastle-under-Lyme (23.1%), Lichfield (33.3%), Stafford Borough (36.4%) and South Staffordshire (40%).

The mapping of the present-day historic character and use of traditional farmsteads across the West Midlands has deepened this understanding and demonstrated how they are an integral part of landscape character and the regional economy (see <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/wmidlandsfarmsteads>, 2010).

- Over 82% of traditional farmsteads have retained some or all of their historic form, the highest rates of survival being concentrated in upland and upland fringe areas and the highest rates of loss around areas of urban expansion.
- A third of these remain in agricultural use with varying degrees of diversification, being concentrated in the same areas of high survival, and only 5% have been converted to sole industrial, commercial or retail use. Significant diversification has taken place alongside farming operations in only one in twelve of these farmsteads (they tend to be the largest-scale historic farmsteads), in contrast to the minimal on-farm diversification that helps the primary agricultural enterprise to be retained.
- The remainder are conserved through varying degrees by residential use, which may involve the conversion of barns and other buildings into houses. Of particular importance is that residential property can accommodate significant, and until now largely hidden, business activity on historic farmsteads. In the West Midlands the proportion of historic farm properties with home-based limited liability companies is more than three times higher than in other dwellings regardless of where they are located.

In Staffordshire:

- The likelihood of a farmstead remaining in agricultural use is slightly higher than is characteristic of farmsteads across the West Midlands, especially in the area of far lower capital endowment and economic mass characteristic of the north-east of the county uplands.
- The likelihood of conversion to residential use is very similar to the region as a whole, but residential conversions are concentrated in the south of the county where they are readily accessible to the urban areas of the West Midlands conurbation and the towns surrounding it. Residential conversions also increase in the areas around Stoke-on-Trent.

## STAGE 4: SITING AND DESIGN ISSUES

Getting the design right is essential on such sensitive sites, and the understanding gained from Stages 1 and 2 will help to prepare a scheme that conserves and enhances the historic character and significance of the whole site. New development might include new buildings, the demolition of modern or insignificant buildings and the opening of spaces to better reveal the significance of heritage assets.

References are made to relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF can be found with other planning practice guidance on the Planning Portal at <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

### *Design issues which might be helpful to consider:*

- Enhance significant views to and from the site, through careful siting of any gardens, boundaries, access and parking.
- Select planting and landscaping (trees, hedges, the restoration of ponds etc.) to enhance the habitat for wildlife.
- Reinstate missing elements that may preserve or enhance the character and significance of the site. This does not generally mean replicating lost buildings but using an understanding of farmstead character to inform new design (see below).
- Retain and enhance the sense of space between buildings, and between working buildings and the farmhouse.
- Minimise alterations to prominent and significant external elevations, through careful attention to internal planning and how and where to introduce or borrow light. The size and detail of window design and materials has a major impact on overall appearance.
- Select paint colours that complement the patina of walling and roofing, using local colours where relevant.
- Repair historic fabric with suitable materials and techniques.
- Where possible conserve open interiors with impressive proportions and long sight lines.
- Retain, where possible, historic features including door and window treatment, exposed roof trusses, floor structure, machinery, floor surfaces and folk marks/ graffiti.

There is further detailed advice on the conversion and re-use of farm buildings in English Heritage's publication, *The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: A Guide to Good Practice*. The local planning authority may also have detailed supplementary planning documents including design guidance.

### *New buildings and their siting*

Consider how the understanding of the whole site and its historic plan form, as created in Stage 1, could:

- Secure the future of highly significant or traditional buildings which have low potential for adaptive reuse.
- Inform the siting of new buildings so that they are on the footprint of lost buildings or so that they are sensitive to the historic plan form of the site.
- Make use of materials and building techniques of appropriate quality.
- Minimise fuel costs and reduce carbon emissions at source through careful consideration of site layout, building design and materials.
- Maximise orientation of buildings to take advantage of the sun's energy: many historic farmyards faced south.
- Help to consider whether the site requires enabling development, in order to secure the future of heritage assets.

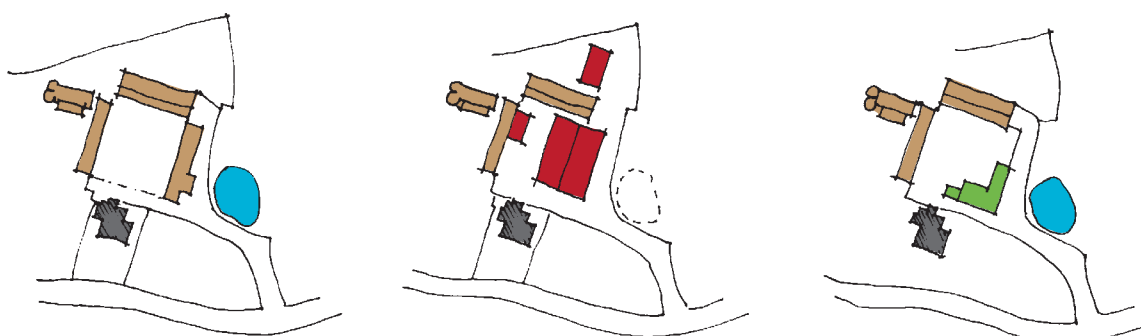
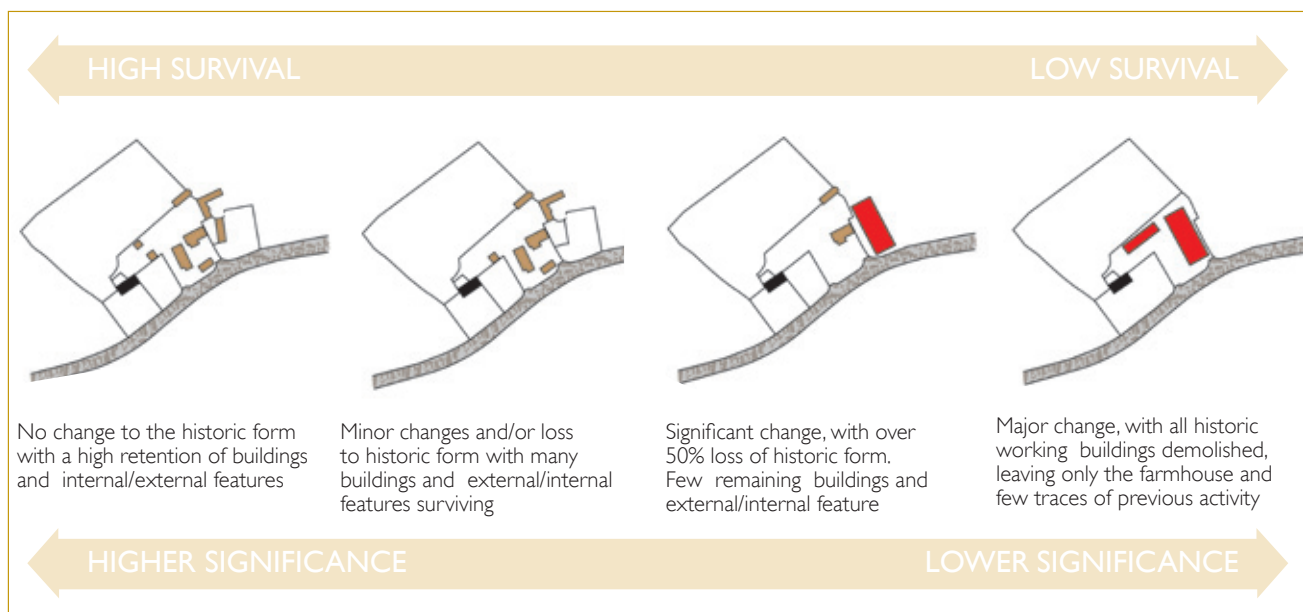
Enabling development is usually defined as development unacceptable in planning terms apart from where it would bring public benefits sufficient to justify it being carried out, and which could not otherwise be achieved. English Heritage has produced guidance on this and other key planning issues at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/advice/hpg/decisionmaking/NPPF/>

The NPPF (paragraph 55) states that in rural areas special circumstances for new housing include where development would:

- represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset;
- help secure the future of heritage assets;
- reuse redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.

### USING HISTORIC CHARACTER TO GUIDE CHANGE

A key issue governing these design issues is the survival and significance of the group as a whole, as identified at Stage 2, depending on which there is a range of scenarios for change to consider at this stage.



Historic character (from 19th century OS map)

Present inherited character

Future options

The drawings above show how an understanding of the present character of the site, and the extent to which it has retained or lost its historic form, can be used to inform the siting of new buildings – in this case respecting a formal courtyard layout - and the restoration of features such as farm ponds. A reinstated pond, as shown on the right, can also provide a balance pond for storm water and run-off collected through the application of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) from large areas of hardstanding (such as courtyards used for parking). Water can be re-used within the buildings (grey-water recycling). Ponds can also provide important wildlife habitats and visual interest.

Key	
	Traditional farm building
	Modern farm buildings / residential buildings
	Farm house
	Potential new / replacement buildings
	Ponds (historic)

The drawings on this page are from the Design Guidance which comprises Part 5 of the Kent Farmsteads Guidance (for more details see <http://www.kentdowns.org.uk/publications/kent-downs-aonb-farmstead-guidance>), and are illustrated here to show how applicants can work through a series of ideas and concepts which respond positively to local setting and distinctiveness.



## ANNEXES

References are made to relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

## I DESIGNATION CHECKLIST

The text below provides an introduction to heritage and other designations.

*Designated heritage assets* mostly comprise:

- Listed buildings. Over 30,000 farm buildings have been listed, over 95% of these at grade II and the most important at grade II\* and I. Guidance on the criteria for selection of agricultural buildings, and how to apply for designation, can be found on the English Heritage website at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/listing/>.
- Curtilage buildings. Pre- July 1948 farm buildings may also be protected if they are or were in the curtilage of a listed farm building.
- Farm buildings within Conservation Areas designated by local authorities, and generally covering settlements. Demolition of unlisted buildings in conservation areas requires planning permission and a similar process of justification as for a listed building.

They more rarely (in and around farmsteads) comprise:

- Scheduled Monuments of national importance, mostly in the form of earthworks relating to farmsteads such as medieval moats, settlement, cultivation earthworks and monastic farms. Scheduled Monument Consent must be sought from English Heritage for any works affecting a Scheduled Monument.
- Registered Parks and Gardens, World Heritage Sites and Registered Battlefields, within or adjacent to which farmsteads may have developed. While no consents specific to these designations are required, conservation of these places is given 'great weight' in the planning process.

Very few of the farmsteads in Staffordshire (less than 15%) have associated listed buildings; this is largely due to the high number of 18th and 19th century farm buildings in the county associated with changes to farming practices. There are notable concentrations of farmsteads retaining 17th century buildings in the Churnet Valley possibly associated with the growth of the iron industry. Farmhouses represent the majority of those buildings that are listed; those few farm buildings which are individually listed are either of at least post medieval origin or form part of a later model farm.

Curtilage structures. Some buildings and other structures not mentioned on the list entry may still be protected by the listed building regime if they are within the curtilage of the listed building, predate July 1948 and are or were ancillary to the listed building. There are a number of factors that go in to considering the extent of the curtilage of a particular building and whether the ancillary test is satisfied. It may be a criminal offence to fail to apply for listed building consent for works to a curtilage building when it is needed, so any doubt should be discussed with the local planning authority.

Details of nationally designated heritage assets, together with maps showing their location, can be found on the National Heritage List for England at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>. Information on Conservation Areas can be found on local authority web sites.

*Undesignated heritage assets* comprise:

- Buildings and sites identified on the Historic Environment Record, by local planning authorities during the process of decision-making or through the adoption by the local planning policy of a local list. The effect of an application on the significance of a local heritage asset is a material consideration in determining an application.
- Sites of national archaeological significance. Even where sites of national significance have not been scheduled as monuments (see above), if they are of the same significance as scheduled monuments they are treated in the planning system as if they were designated assets (see NPPF paragraph 139).

Local Lists, where they exist, may be found under the planning section of the relevant local authority's website (usually with information on Conservation Areas). They will normally be supported by local planning policy for their retention. However, most farmstead buildings that may be considered to be local heritage assets have yet to be formally identified. Information regarding the heritage significance of buildings and sites locally may be found on local Historic Environment Records (see the following page).

### Green Belt

The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl, and new buildings are generally regarded as inappropriate. Exceptions are specified in NPPF paragraphs 79-92. There are two main areas of Green Belt in Staffordshire. The largest area wraps around the West Midlands conurbation and includes all of south western Staffordshire across to Tamworth. The second area encompasses Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme north to the county boundary with Cheshire.

### Wildlife and habitats

In addition to protected species, some farmsteads may adjoin or be sited within:

- *Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)*, which are areas of land notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as being of special nature conservation interest.
- *Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC)*, which are sites of non-statutory designation recognised by local planning policies.

- *Special Area of Conservation (SAC)*. Approximately 1,2500ha of Cannock Chase was designated as a high-quality conservation site in 2005 by the European Union under the Habitats Directive (1992) in recognition of its rare heathland habitat."

### Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks

As well as being designated as a SAC Cannock Chase is also the only AONB to currently lie within Staffordshire. Conserving and enhancing the qualities of such landscapes are a material consideration in considering planning applications within or adjacent to them. Section 85 of The CROW Act 2000 places on local authorities a requirement to produce an AONB Management Plan and a 'duty of regard' to conserve and enhance AONBs. The Peak District National Park was the first to be designated in 1951 and approximately 20,700ha of north eastern Staffordshire lies within its Authority.

## 2 USING HISTORIC MAPS, THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD & OTHER SOURCES

Shown below is an extract from an Ordnance Survey (OS) 2nd edition map of around 1900. Maps of this date provide a useful baseline for measuring subsequent change because they were compiled after the last major phase in the development of traditional farmsteads. Most local libraries and county record offices hold historic OS maps. OS maps can also be viewed at <http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk>. Some historic Ordnance Survey maps can also be viewed at: <http://www.old-maps.co.uk> and Old Maps Online (<http://project.oldmapsonline.org/about>). Earlier and later OS maps will help to achieve a more detailed understanding if this is required or desired. County record offices also hold tithe maps which date from after 1836 and estate surveys mainly dating from the 18th and 19th centuries. Some counties have made these available on-line.

Websites such as Google Earth (<http://www.google.com/earth>) or Bing Maps (<http://www.bing.com/maps>) can be used to provide an overview of a site and its immediate area. The National Heritage List for England (<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england>) also has a useful map search section. Images of England ([\[imagesofengland.org.uk\]\(http://imagesofengland.org.uk\)\) includes a single photograph of most of the Listed Buildings that were on the list as of the year 2000.](http://www.</a></p>
</div>
<div data-bbox=)

### Historic Environment Records (HERs)

*Heritage Gateway* [www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk) provides links to local authority HERs, and allows text and limited map searches of a wide range of data from English Heritage's National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) and some local authority Historic Environment Records (HERs).

The Staffordshire Historic Environment Record holds information on all the designated and undesignated heritage assets within the county (comprising archaeological sites, historic buildings etc.) and farmstead plan forms. Please see the website for further information [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/historic-environment-record](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/historic-environment-record)

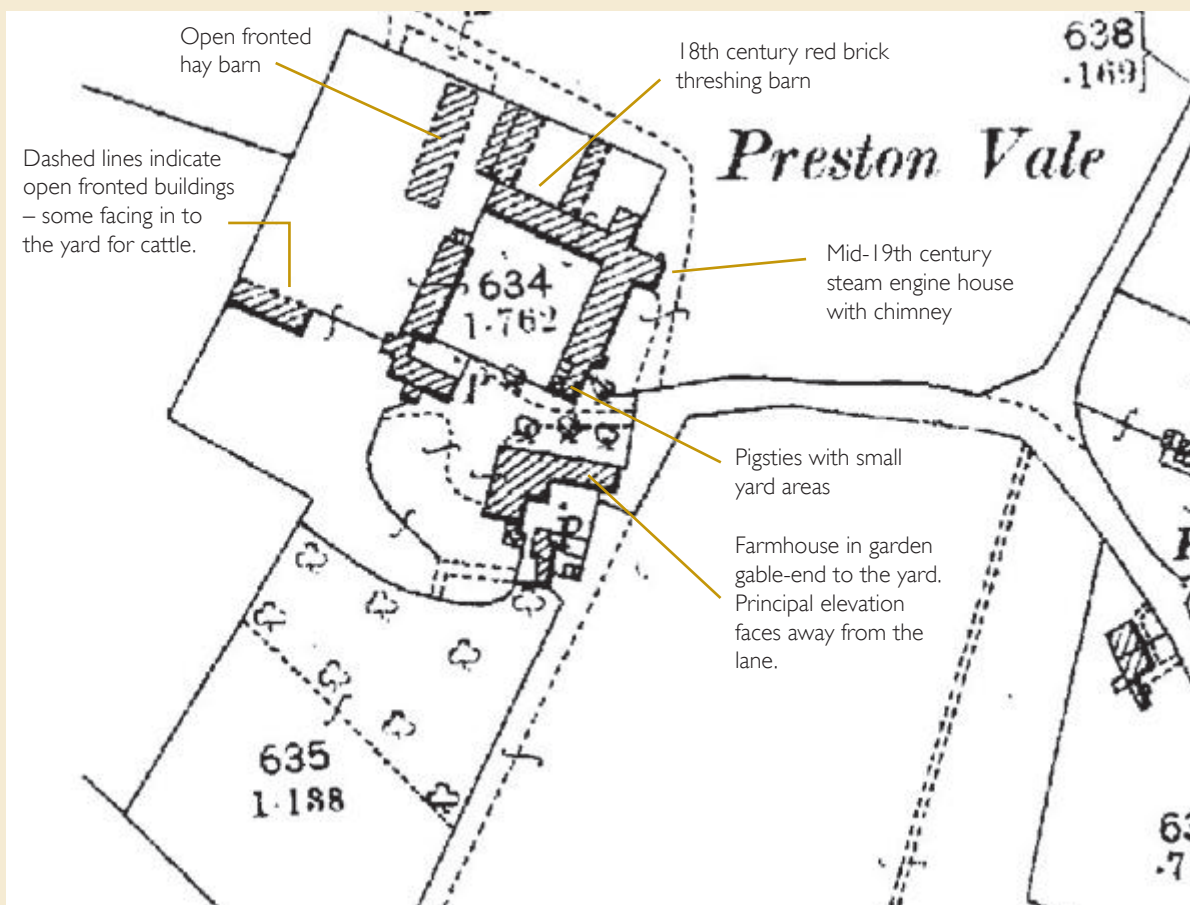
The HER can be contacted by telephone 01785 277281/277285/277290 or by email [her@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:her@staffordshire.gov.uk)

The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service hold a wide range of historical documentation, maps and photographs relating to the history of the county. The County Council website provides more detail on the records kept and their location <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/leisure/archives/homepage.aspx> Staffordshire Record Office can be contacted directly by telephone on 01785-278379 (Archive enquiries) or by email [staffordshire.record.office@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:staffordshire.record.office@staffordshire.gov.uk) .

The William Salt Library is administered by a trust and run as a registered charity in close conjunction with the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service. The library holds printed books, printed ephemera, pamphlets and illustrative material relating to Staffordshire the core of which was built up by a

19th century London banker, William Salt. The Library is located adjacent to the Staffordshire Records Office in Stafford and can be contacted by telephone on 01785-278372 and by email [william.salt.library@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:william.salt.library@staffordshire.gov.uk). Please see the website for further details including opening times <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/leisure/archives/williamsalt/home.aspx>

An online catalogue 'Gateway to the Past' for all of the archives, including the William Salt Library, is available at: <http://www.archives.staffordshire.gov.uk/DServe/DServe.exe?dsqApp=Archive2&dsqCmd=Index.tcl>



Map based on OS 2nd edition 25" map © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (all rights reserved) 2015. Licence Nos. 100019422 and LM00589



### 3 RECORDING AND RESEARCH ISSUES

Recording should be proportionate to the known or potential significance of the building and site. It may be required:

1. In support of a planning application and to inform the development of a scheme, once an initial assessment and discussion with the planning authority has identified potential for change within a farmstead;

and/or

2. Once permission has been secured, to make a record before and during the implementation of the scheme. The local planning authority may attach recording conditions to a planning or listed building consent to ensure that a record of a farmstead or building is made or for archaeological recording associated with groundworks on site is carried out. These records should be made publically available.

English Heritage's *Understanding historic buildings: policy and guidance for local authorities* (2006) describes the various approaches to and levels of recording buildings. In summary:

- Level 1 is equivalent to the **Site Summary** explained in this document, and will provide a useful record for the local Historic Environment Record.
- Level 2 is a more detailed descriptive record and assessment of significance, which is often required for sites with designated heritage assets. It will usually take between 1-3 days, depending on the scale and complexity of the site.
- Measured survey (Levels 3 and 4) are appropriate for the most significant buildings, Level 4 being the most detailed with a greater range of drawings. Both levels involve more detailed historical research using estate, tithe and historic Ordnance Survey maps and usually documentary sources.

These levels of recording contribute to our understanding of how Staffordshire's farmsteads and landscapes have developed, in particular:

- The density and location of farmsteads and the date and orientation of their buildings (including the farmhouse) contribute to an understanding of changing farming practices, social change, settlement patterns and landscape character.
- The development of farmsteads can supplement documentary and landscape evolution evidence to form a clearer understanding of the social and economic history of the county.
- 18th century and earlier buildings are rare, and it is important to try and spot evidence for partitions and floors which show how barns and other buildings were subdivided. Evidence for cattle housing and stabling is particularly rare.
- The scale, orientation and dates of rebuilding of farmhouses and working buildings can also reveal much about the development of increasingly large and higher-status farms.
- Staffordshire has significant evidence for the development of estates and of planned farmsteads from the 18th century, which can also be very well documented.
- Field barns and outfarms are very difficult to reuse and vulnerable to change. They document the exploitation of farmland away from the main stabling, on new sites in landscapes subject to piecemeal or planned enclosure or close to the sites of deserted farmsteads and settlements or platforms for stacking corn or hay.

## EXAMPLES OF FARMSTEAD ASSESSMENTS

This example uses the Stage 1 and 2 headings guidance. The text can be presented in bulleted form or as free text.

### Summary

This is a loose courtyard farmstead with at its core a group of buildings set around a yard, which was extended with a new shed and separate access to the north in the late 20th century.

### Site and management issues

1. *Site boundary, ownership and use.* The farmstead is in single ownership and all the buildings are now redundant for modern farming purposes.
2. *Site access and services.* Historic access off a minor lane to the south.
3. *Designations.* There are no designations – none of the buildings are listed and the site is not in a conservation area.

### Historic character

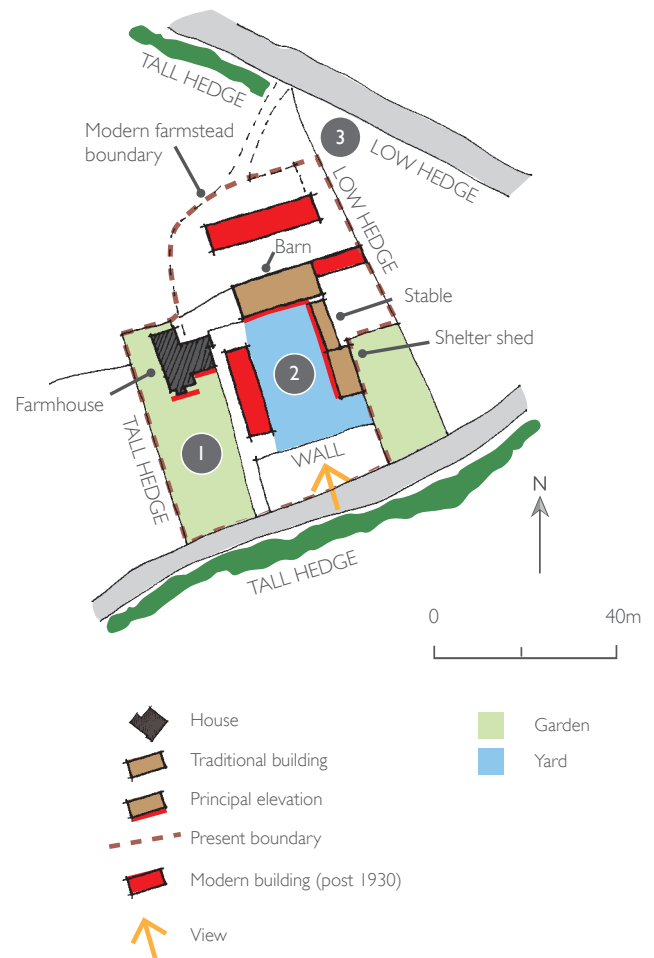
#### Setting

- The hedgerows to the site boundary link to similar hedgerows in the surrounding landscape.
- There is a view into the yard from the lane with the barn and the upper storey of the farmhouse being most prominent.

#### The farmstead and its buildings

This is identified as a medium-scale loose courtyard plan with detached buildings set around a yard. The farmhouse is set to the west of the historic farmyard, which has detached buildings to three sides of a yard that is open to and faces south. The whole site clearly divides into the following areas:

- **Area 1** The mid-19th century house, which faces south towards the lane and into its own garden area.
- **Area 2** The historic farmyard and buildings. This survives as a loose courtyard plan with traditional buildings to the north and east of the yard built of brick with slate roofs. To the west is a mid-20th century cow house built in industrial brick with a corrugated iron roof, on the footprint of an earlier building.
- **Area 3** North of the yard is a modern working area, with an industrial shed and separate access from the A-class road to the north. Historically, this area probably served as a stack yard.



### Significance

- The core historic farmyard (Area 2) retains the overall form of a traditional courtyard farmstead, and the farmstead clearly forms part of the enclosed landscape within which it developed.
- None of the buildings are listed.
- The farmhouse and farm buildings, and the materials they are built from, are typical of the area and contribute to local character.



Crown copyright and/or database right 2015. All rights reserved. Licence No. 100019422.

This drawing shows how the same approach can be used to describe a much more complex farmstead which has developed around several yard areas.

## EXAMPLE OF A COMPLEX SITE

### Summary

This is a regular multi-yard farmstead comprising a large early 19th century farmhouse (grade II), which faces the main road. The farmstead was considerably extended in the late 20th century with new sheds within and to the east of the historic plan form. The farmstead can be divided into the following areas:

#### Area 1

The grade II listed early 19th century house, typical of the large farmhouses of this area, which faces west over the main road with its back to the principal farm buildings (area 2). Attached to the north is a single-storey outbuilding, smithy and a two-storey cottage all fronting to the west. All of these buildings are also grade II listed. The buildings of this area are all of red brick with tiled roofs.

#### Area 2

The principal historic farm buildings lie to the east of the farmhouse/smithy/cottage range and are characterised by an E-plan form. This plan form provides three yard areas; a large central yard with two smaller yards to the north and south. A modern shed has been constructed in the larger central yard. The buildings are all single storey red brick buildings with tiled roofs.

#### Area 3

The two-storey stables, with haylofts over, constitute a separate yard with its own access off the main road to the west through an arched carriage-way. The buildings are all of red brick and tiled roofs.

#### Area 4

The area is represented by modern sheds of different sizes. These buildings have been constructed within and partly across yards which once represented the eastern limits of the farmstead. The access to the north is shown on 19th century maps

### Significance

- The core historic farmyard (Area 2) retains the overall form of a traditional regular courtyard farmstead, and the farmstead clearly forms part of the enclosed planned landscape within which it developed.
- Three of the buildings are listed.
- The farmhouse and traditional farm buildings, and the materials they are built from, are typical of the area and contribute to local character.



## SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ADVICE

### Agri-environment funding

Agri-environment funding via the Environmental Stewardship scheme has funded the maintenance and conservation repair of traditional farm buildings. Contact Natural England for further advice and eligibility on the Environment Stewardship schemes (<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk>).

### English Heritage grants

If the farm building is listed Grade I or II\* the work may be eligible for a grant from English Heritage as part of the Historic Buildings, Monuments and Designed Landscape grants scheme (<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/grants>). The grant application is more likely to be successful if it meets priorities that are outlined in the application pack. The application must demonstrate that there is financial need for a grant and that the work will be undertaken within two years. These and other sources of grant aid are described in detail in the Funds for Historic Buildings website (<http://www.ffhb.org.uk>).

### Wildlife

English Heritage, National Trust and Natural England 2009. *Bats in Traditional Buildings*. London: English Heritage.

The Bat Conservation Trust provides useful advice about bats and buildings. See [http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats\\_and\\_buildings.html](http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_buildings.html).

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds provides further advice about birds and buildings and on attracting wildlife to gardens. See <https://www.rspb.org.uk/advice/gardening/>

Natural England can provide further information about England's natural environment and biodiversity. <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/>

### English Heritage guidance

Most of the publications listed below can be downloaded from the HELM website, English Heritage's online resource for owners, planners and everyone else involved with caring for the historic environment at a local level. See <http://www.helm.org.uk/guidance>.

EH 2006. *The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: A Guide to Good Practice*

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