



Historic England

# Farmstead Assessment Framework

Informing sustainable development and the  
conservation of traditional farmsteads

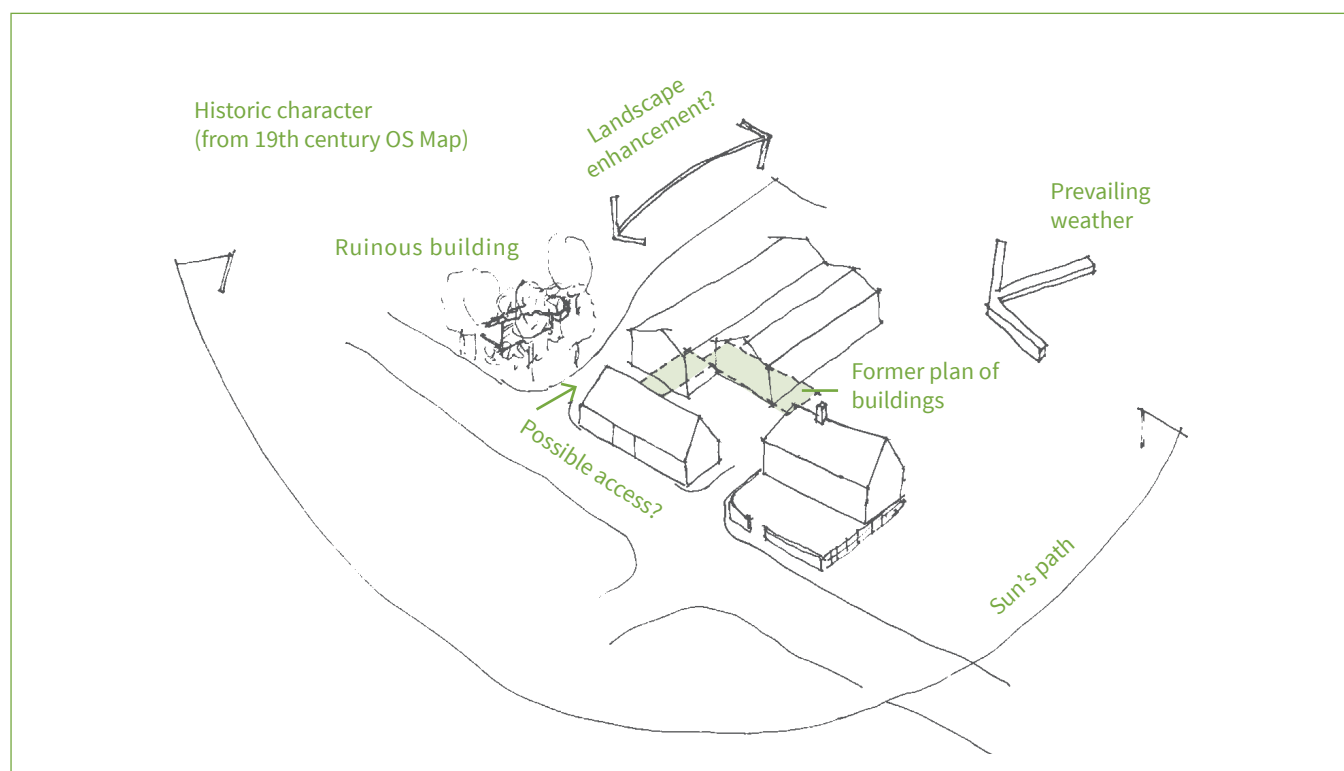


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[www.HistoricEngland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/rural-heritage/farm-buildings](http://www.HistoricEngland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/rural-heritage/farm-buildings)



## Cover image

Barns and other traditional stone and slate buildings intermixed with 20th century sheds on a north Wiltshire farmstead.

Photo © Historic England NMR 27595/035

## Figure (above)

This guidance shows how to work with the historic character and significance of the whole site and its buildings when considering change. It draws a simple distinction between modern and traditional buildings. Drawing © Forum Heritage Services

# 1 Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to help secure sustainable development and the conservation of traditional farmsteads and their buildings through the planning system. It will help:

- Identify their historic character and significance, including the extent of change to the site and its setting.
- Use this understanding to consider the constraints and opportunities at the earliest stage when considering change. This may include space for job-creating businesses, additional housing or other uses, and their potential to work together.
- Save time and costs before preparing a detailed application for development and other consents, such as listed building consent.
- Follow national and local planning policies regarding landscape, the historic environment, neighbourhood issues, biodiversity, siting and design.
- Identify where professional advice and support, and perhaps more detailed survey, would be helpful.

We encourage new uses which sustain and enhance their value. Traditional farmsteads and buildings make a fundamental contribution to both *landscape character* and *local distinctiveness* through their varied forms, use of materials and the way that they relate to the surrounding landscape and settlement.

Our research has also found that they are assets which, through agricultural and other new uses, can make an important contribution to the rural economy and communities away from market towns and other rural centres. As agricultural practices and the rural economy change, many such farmsteads and buildings have become redundant from their original use. In future years the pace of change will accelerate further in response to the restructuring and diversification of farm businesses and the increasing demand for living and working in rural landscapes.

## PLANNING CONTEXT

Planning permission is needed for most new buildings, works that affect the external appearance of a property and for material changes of use. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places good design, the enhancement of local distinctiveness and conservation of the historic environment at the heart of sustainable development and good planning in rural areas (paragraphs 7-8, 55, 58-64, 126-141).

Permitted development is allowed for the conversion of agricultural buildings to residential and commercial use, provided that they do not create unacceptable impacts. Prior Approval for this is required from the local authority, covering the design, external appearance and siting of buildings, risks of contamination and flooding and any highways, transport and noise impacts. Listed buildings and sites with scheduled ancient monuments are excluded, as is all Article 1(5) land (National Parks and the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites and certain areas specified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981).

For further details see Class MB in [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)

## Introducing traditional farmsteads

Traditional farmsteads comprise the farmhouse and some or all of the working farm buildings, some farms also having isolated field barns or outfarms. This guidance makes a simple distinction between traditional buildings, which predate 1940, and the wide-span industrial sheds which are critical to the modern farming industry.

Traditional buildings display an immense variation in their architectural form and use of materials. Most date from the 19th century, rarely before, and few were built after the 1880s. Industrial and pre-fabricated materials such as metal, concrete and machine-made brick were used from the mid 19th century. The most common non-traditional buildings of the pre-1940 period are so-called Dutch barns and dairies.

Like the landscapes around them, they often display evidence of successive episodes of change and different farming regions. They are made up of buildings and working areas that served several key functions, most important being to store and process crops, 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.

See **Section 4 Where to Get Advice** for national and regional guidance on the historic character and significance of farmsteads and farm building types in their landscape and settlement context.



A



B



C



D

### Images

A. Traditional buildings, such as here in the Peak District, often use locally available materials, but may also include imported brick, slate and other materials. Photo © Peter Gaskell

B. Traditional buildings, as here in West Sussex, can also be designed by architects, agents or engineers. Photo © Bob Edwards

C. A Dutch barn. This is the most common prefabricated building dating from the 1870s. Photo © Paul Stamper

D. A 1920-30s dairy built of machine-made brick with concrete lintels over metal-framed windows. Photo © Staffordshire County Council

# 2 Using the Assessment Framework

The first two steps of the Assessment Framework enable an initial site assessment of the historic character and significance of a whole site in its setting. This can then be used to consider the constraints and opportunities for change and any siting and design issues, based on considering:

- *The landscape setting*, including its boundaries and the potential that it offers as a habitat for wildlife and to enhance landscape character.
- *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 for maintaining or enhancing the character of the farmstead, including the siting and design of any new buildings.

The Assessment Framework can then be re-used as a checklist to prepare a planning application in further detail, depending on the significance and sensitivity to the type of change being considered.

Stages	
1	<b>SITE SUMMARY</b> Identify the historic character of the site in its setting and issues such as access, services and designations.
2	<b>ASSESS HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE</b> Assess its contribution to local distinctiveness and the significance of individual buildings.
Produce <b>SITE ASSESSMENT</b> – an initial understanding of the site which can be developed without specialist knowledge, and deepened as required later in the development process.	
3	<b>CAPACITY FOR CHANGE</b> A checklist to help consider the capacity for change including site access, the impact on neighbours and opportunities to enhance habitats, landscape character and improve energy efficiency.
4	<b>SITING AND DESIGN ISSUES</b> Using the understanding gained to inform the design and development process, including opportunities to conserve and enhance the historic character and significance of the whole site in its setting.



# Stage 1: Site Summary

## Site and management issues

Identify the use of the site (agricultural, residential and commercial) and then the following key issues and features within and around the site:

- *Property boundaries*, including their ownership or tenancy.
- *Site access*, including any Public Rights of Way.
- *Services*, in particular water, sewage, electricity and telecommunications.
- *Designations*, including listed buildings (see the designation checklist at the end of this guidance).
- *Non-designated heritage assets* including archaeological remains and historic buildings which are entered onto the local Historic Environmental Record.

### HERITAGE INFORMATION

The National Heritage List for England provides details on listed buildings and other designated heritage assets, including through a map search facility that shows their landscape and settlement context: see [www.HistoricEngland.org.uk/listing/the-list](http://www.HistoricEngland.org.uk/listing/the-list), which also provides links to the selection guide for agricultural and other building types.

Heritage Gateway provides links to local Historic Environment Records (HERs) and other information contained in the National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE): see [www.heritagegateway.org.uk](http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk)

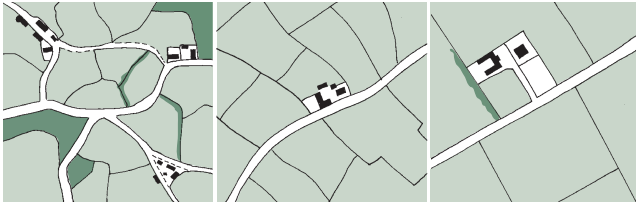
## Identify the historic character

Visit the site and draw a plan to identify the historic character of the site in its setting, considering how it has changed. If necessary or desired divide it into different areas if these are sufficiently distinct from each other, mark main elevations to show which way they face, indicate key viewpoints and also any heritage assets and features noted on the Historic Environment Record.

- *Setting*. Consider how the site is viewed in its wider setting, in particular how prominent viewpoints are framed by any heritage assets, any other farmsteads, houses and development and landscape features such as field and property boundaries, tracks, trees and farm ponds.
- *Site*. Look around the site to consider its plan form and layout. Distinguish between traditional and modern farm buildings, and then note how the houses and farm buildings face towards or away from the surrounding landscape, routeways and historic and modern spaces including farmyards and gardens.
- *Buildings and other heritage features*. These can be numbered on a site plan and, if desired, cross-referenced to photographs and text noting building materials and structural condition; doors and windows including blocked openings; internal walls, floors and carpentry, including roof construction; and internal features such as historic partitions, grain bins and stalls, machinery and graffiti.

## Site survey and using historic maps will help to identify how the site and its setting has changed

Traditional farmsteads are an integral part of how rural landscapes and settlements have developed across England, from areas dominated by villages with few farmsteads to those dominated by dense scatters of isolated farmsteads and houses.



A.

B.

C.

A. High densities of farmsteads - often with dispersed plans of scattered yards and buildings - can be found in areas of ancient irregular fields enclosed from woodland and rough ground.

B. Farmsteads, as here with a loose courtyard plan of detached buildings, developed or were resited within fields enclosed from medieval strip fields with their distinctive curved profiles.

C. Some, often built as regular courtyard plans and established after 1750, were built within designed landscapes whose regular fields were newly-enclosed from rough ground or reorganised from earlier farmland.



D.

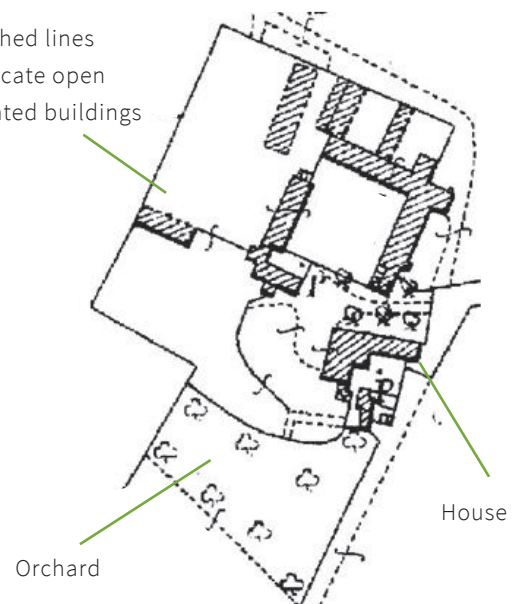
Traditional farmsteads still make a significant contribution to the character of villages in some areas, as here in east Staffordshire. Working farms often moved out of villages when the surrounding medieval strip fields were amalgamated and enclosed. Photo © Historic England NMR27994/037

Modern maps can be viewed at [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk) and online mapping by Google Earth ([www.google.com/earth](http://www.google.com/earth)) and Bing are useful ([www.bing.com/maps](http://www.bing.com/maps)).

The Ordnance Survey (OS) 2nd edition maps of around 1900 were compiled after the last major phase in the development of traditional farmsteads in England. They clearly indicate working buildings. Earlier and later maps will help to achieve a more detailed understanding if this is required or desired.

Historic maps can be found in your local archive or library and online at [maps.nls.uk/os/6inch-england-and-wales](http://maps.nls.uk/os/6inch-england-and-wales); [project.oldmapsonline.org](http://project.oldmapsonline.org) and [www.old-maps.co.uk](http://www.old-maps.co.uk). 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 online.

Dashed lines indicate open fronted buildings



Map based on OS 2nd edition 25" map © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (all rights reserved). Licence No. 100019422.

# Stage 2: Assess Heritage Significance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stresses the importance of:

1. *Retaining and enhancing local character and distinctiveness*, bearing in mind that the great majority of surviving traditional farm buildings do not fulfil the criteria for listing, and are not identified as designated heritage assets.
2. *Conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*. 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.

Crucially, significant features may only be revealed through this process of assessment, including buildings, archaeological remains and areas which may merit more detailed investigation (see page 9 for levels of recording) or even designation.

**1 Farmsteads and buildings can contribute to local character if they have one or both of the following:**

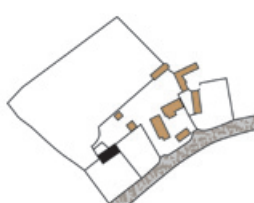

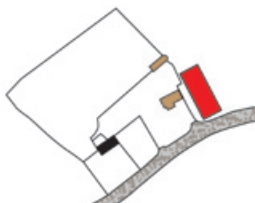
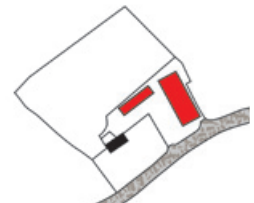
- Traditional farm buildings.
- Their historic form as traditional farmsteads, where the historic farm buildings, houses and spaces relate to each other.

**The greater the survival of the historic form of the group and the detail of individual buildings, as identified in Stage 1, the greater will be its significance as a traditional farmstead.**

Historic maps of the early 1900s, verified by fieldwork, provide a useful benchmark to measure the degree of change to a farmstead.

← HIGH SURVIVAL

LOW SURVIVAL →

			
<p>No change to the historic form with a high retention of buildings and internal/external features.</p>	<p>Minor changes and/or loss to historic form.</p>	<p>Significant change, with over 50% loss of historic form and few remaining buildings.</p>	<p>Major change, with all historic working buildings demolished, leaving only the farmhouse.</p>

- Traditional farm buildings
- Modern farm buildings
- Farmhouse



## 2

### Identify any special significance in a local or national context

This will heighten significance and sensitivity to change. At a national level these include:

- Sites within or adjacent to archaeological remains of local and national importance, surviving historic parkland for country estates and common land.
- 18th century or earlier buildings, particularly if they are minor buildings other than barns. Well-preserved groups including buildings of this date are especially rare (see page 14).
- Buildings and groups built to the designs of land agents, engineers or architects, which may display innovative design, planning and features such as early ironwork (see page 13).
- Rare surviving materials and detail, such as thatch and earth walling, historic fittings (doors, windows, stalls etc) and inscriptions (folk marks or graffiti).



A

A. Farmsteads relating to the earthworks of the shrunken medieval settlement at Strixton in Northamptonshire. Photo © Historic England NMR 23762 18



B

B. The Victorian estate farmstead at Coleshill in Oxfordshire, an innovative planned layout which is sited to the edge of the park and close to the estate houses of the same date. Photo © Historic England NMR 27294 003



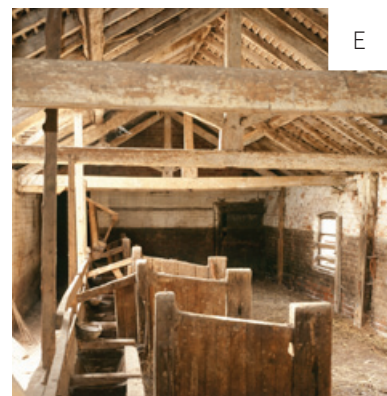
C

C. A rare surviving example of a small earth-walled building in the New Forest. Photo © Bob Edwards



D

D. Inscription on a wall post in a Wiltshire barn. Photo © Bob Edwards



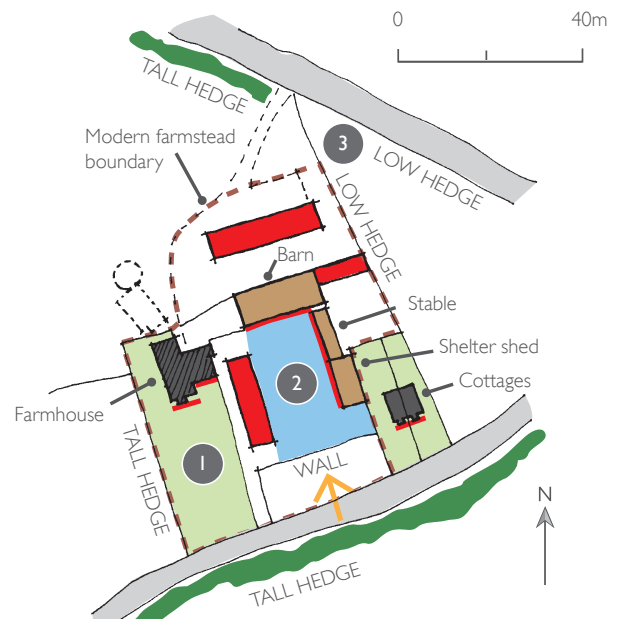
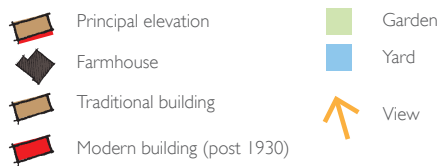
E

E. Traditional cattle stalls. Photo © Historic England, Mike Williams

## Example of a Site Assessment Summary

A plan can identify any distinct areas into which the farmstead can be subdivided, and be cross-referred to photographs and a list of the buildings on site. This will help keep the text short and focused. The report and plan can then be used and deepened as required later in the planning process.

It can also be useful to mark main elevations to show which way they face, to indicate key viewpoints and also any heritage assets and features noted on the Historic Environment Record.



### 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.* With the historic access off a minor lane to the south.
3. *Designations.* The house is listed at grade II.

### Historic character

#### Setting

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

#### The farmstead and its buildings

This is a courtyard plan with detached buildings set around a yard that is open to and faces south. The whole site clearly divides into the following areas (see plan):

- Area 1 The late 18th century house, which faces south towards the lane and into its own garden area.
- Area 2 The historic farmyard, with traditional buildings to its north and east built of local stone 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 yard for stacking corn.

**Significance** The group contributes to local distinctiveness because:

- The core historic farmyard (Area 2) retains the overall form of a traditional courtyard farmstead, clearly visible from the lane to the south and within the setting of its surrounding fields.
- The barn, stable and shelter shed are shown on the second edition Ordnance Survey map of around 1900 and are typical in their overall form and use of local stone and slate for the area.
- The traditional farm buildings make a positive contribution to the setting of the grade II listed farmhouse

# Stage 3: Capacity for Change

This stage provides an opportunity to consider the sensitivity to the type and level of change that is being considered. References are made to relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which can be found with other planning practice guidance on the Planning Portal at [www.planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk)

## 1. Site and its buildings

Different constraints and opportunities are offered by:

- The scale and layout of the whole site in its landscape setting.
- The scale, layout, construction and condition of individual buildings, and the provision of natural light to them.
- The costs, robustness and supply of traditional building materials.

Making contact with local authorities is an important step when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset and the contribution made by their setting, usually requiring more detailed justification and recording depending on their significance. 'The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be' (NPPF 132), the greatest weight being accorded to designated heritage assets. Buildings of the highest significance and sensitivity to change might form part of sites with other adaptable buildings. They might be eligible for grant aid (see Further Reading) or enabling development (see Stage 4).

See National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 126-141 for historic environment issues.

### LEVELS OF RECORDING

Recording may be required:

- 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. 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 that will be publicly available or for archaeological recording associated with ground works on the site.
- The level of recording should be proportionate to the known or potential significance of the building and site. The basic level is equivalent to the Site Assessment Summary explained in this document. More detailed assessment and drawings are often required for sites with designated heritage assets.

## 2. Access

Safe access with clear sightlines onto highways is required by the Highway Authority. Consider how to use modern and historic points of access that minimise impact on the landscape setting, avoiding suburban landscaping such as wide bellmouth-type openings. Some field barns and outfarms have vehicular access and may be sited close to roads.

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

## 3. Neighbours, flooding and contamination

Consider any impact due to:

- Increases in traffic, over-looking, noise and loss of light.
- Developments within or affecting Flood Zones and within land potentially affected by contamination or ground stability. The local planning authority may require a risk assessment of land. Responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner.
- The local planning authority may require a risk assessment of land potentially affected by contamination, or ground stability and slope stability. Responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner.

See NPPF paragraphs 93-108, 120-125.

## 4. Habitats and landscape character

- Features within and around the site, particularly buildings, shelter belts and other planting, ponds and boundary features (including protected hedgerows), can provide significant opportunities for the enhancement of wildlife habitats and landscape character.
- Consider the need for ecological surveys, including if bats, owls and other protected species are present.

See NPPF paragraphs 109-125, especially 118.

## 5. Energy efficiency

Consider the cost and potential impact of services as identified in Stage 1. The location, layout and setting of a farmstead can also offer opportunities for environmentally efficient design by:

- Generating energy from renewable or low carbon sources – ground-source or air-source heating, geo-thermal sources, mini-hydro energy generation, solar and wind power, biomass and anaerobic digestion systems.
- Identifying suitable areas for minimising water consumption through sustainable drainage systems which recycle water (termed grey water). These include reed bed sewage disposal.

See NPPF paragraphs 93-108, 96.

# 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 in their settings.

Listed below is a checklist of key issues to consider for conversion, re-use and new development, working from the landscape setting to internal detail. For further detailed advice on conversion and maintenance see **Section 4 Where to Get Advice**. The local planning authority may also have detailed supplementary planning documents including design guidance.

See NPPF paragraphs 56-67 for national policy

### Landscape setting

- Enhance significant views to and from the site, through careful siting and use of local materials of any gardens, boundaries, access and parking so they respect local character.
- Retain and enhance the sense of space between buildings, and between working buildings and the farmhouse.
- Consider restoration of features such as historic boundaries and farm ponds.
- Consider how water can be re-used within the buildings (grey-water recycling) and how water catchments such as farm ponds can be used to store water as part of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) from parking and other areas of hardstanding.

### Work to existing buildings

- Retain existing historic openings and 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, proportion and detail of window and door design and materials has a major impact on overall appearance.
- Minimise external lighting which can lend a suburban character to farmsteads.
- Repair historic fabric with suitable materials and techniques.
- Select paints that complement the colours and texture of walling and roofing, using local colours where relevant.
- Where possible conserve open interiors with impressive proportions.

- Retain historic features where possible, including door and window treatment, exposed roof trusses, floor structure, machinery, floor surfaces and folk marks/ graffiti as these often give most information about historic function and innovation.

- Minimise fuel costs, maximise the sun's energy and reduce carbon emissions at source through careful consideration of site layout, building design and materials. Many historic farmyards faced south.

### Issues for new buildings and their siting

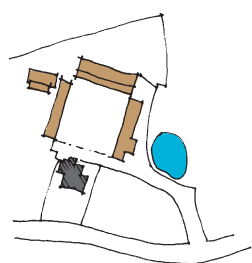
- Site new buildings on the footprint of lost buildings or site them so that they respond and are sensitive to the historic plan form of the site and its wider setting in the landscape.
- Use the historic character of the site to inform the scale, massing and form of new buildings. Ideally the new elements should not compete or be overbearing to the traditional farmbuildings.
- Consider whether the site requires enabling development, in order to secure the future of historic buildings of high significance and sensitivity to change

**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. Historic England has produced guidance on this and other key planning issues at [www.HistoricEngland.org.uk/images-books/publications/enabling-development-and-the-conservation-of-significant-places](http://www.HistoricEngland.org.uk/images-books/publications/enabling-development-and-the-conservation-of-significant-places)

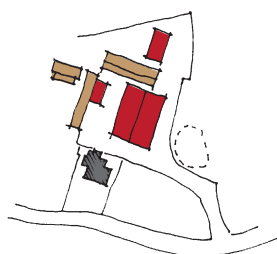
The NPPF (paragraph 55) states that in rural areas special circumstances for new housing include where development would represent the optimal viable uses for and help secure the future of heritage assets, re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.

## USING HISTORIC CHARACTER TO GUIDE CHANGE

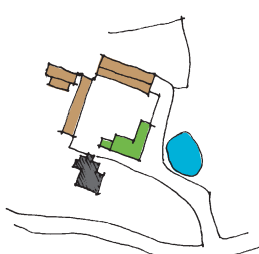
The drawings in the Kent Farmsteads Design Guidance help the user to identify and inform opportunities for new buildings and design which respond positively to local setting and distinctiveness. The worked examples illustrate the issues and opportunities that flow from an understanding of the basic farmstead type and how it has changed. These are not intended as planning briefs or definitive design solutions. In each case there are references to plan form, layout, degrees of enclosure, scale and massing, form of buildings, orientation and detailed design, including form of openings. For more details see Part 5 of the Kent Farmsteads Guidance [www.kentdowns.org.uk/publications/kent-downs-aonb-farmstead-guidance](http://www.kentdowns.org.uk/publications/kent-downs-aonb-farmstead-guidance)



Historic character  
(from 19th century  
OS map)



Present inherited  
character



Future options

#### Key

- Traditional farm building
- Modern farm buildings / residential buildings
- Farm house
- Potential new / replacement buildings
- Pond

An understanding of the present historic character of the site, and how it has changed, can inform options for the demolition of modern buildings (in red) and their replacement with new buildings (in green). The siting of this example of a potential new building (top right) is informed by its historic character as a courtyard plan.

# 3 Designation Checklist

The text below provides an introduction to heritage and other designations. It is important to note that most farmsteads and their buildings are not designated as heritage assets even though they make a substantial contribution to local character.

*Designated heritage assets* mostly comprise:

- Listed buildings, which are graded according to their significance: grade II (over 92%) and the most important at grade II\* and I. Listing status covers the entire building, internal and external. Any works to alter, extend or demolish the building in a way that affects its character as a building of special interest require listed building consent from the local planning authority, whether planning permission is also needed or not.

- Curtilage buildings. Pre-July 1948 farm buildings may also be protected if they are or were in the curtilage of a listed farm building (see text box below).
- Buildings within Conservation Areas (mostly settlements) designated by local authorities. Demolition of unlisted buildings in conservation areas requires planning permission, and a similar process of justification as for a listed building.

**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. 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 if in doubt contact your local planning authority.



The most significant buildings at a national level are listed at grades I and II\*. This architect-designed farmstead, built 1878 on the edge of parkland, is listed at grade II\* on account of

its technical innovation such as the use of steam power and covered yards with laminated timber roofs and ironwork. Photo © Historic England/ Mike Williams

Rarer types of designated heritage assets in and around farmsteads comprise:

- Scheduled Monuments, which are mostly archaeological remains rather than standing buildings. Consent for any works affecting them must be sought from DCMS through Historic England.
- Registered Parks and Gardens, World Heritage Sites or
- Registered Battlefields – conservation of which are given ‘great weight’ in the planning process.

Undesignated heritage assets, normally supported by local planning policy for their retention, comprise:

- Buildings and sites identified by local planning authorities during the planning process 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, whether they are designated heritage assets or not (see NPPF paragraph 139).

Wildlife and habitats:

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) is the principal law protecting wildlife, habitats and species in Great Britain, and was strengthened and updated by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000).

Seek expert advice to find out whether any protected species – including bats, predatory birds and reptiles – are present within or adjacent to a farmstead site. Additional consideration should be given to farmsteads adjoining or 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.
- Important hedgerows are protected from removal by the Hedgerows Regulations 1997.



Over 95% of listed farm buildings are listed at grade II. They include intact 18th century or earlier buildings, 17th century or earlier buildings (as here) being especially rare.  
Photo © Shropshire County Council



# 4 Where to Get Advice

## Farmsteads and farm buildings

English Heritage/Countryside Agency 2006. *Living Buildings in a Living Landscape: Finding a Future for Traditional Farm Buildings*

English Heritage/Countryside Agency 2006. *Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Character Statements* (a series of eight regional documents)

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

English Heritage 2006. *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*

English Heritage 2008. *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*

English Heritage 2009. *Historic Farm Buildings: Extending the Evidence Base*

English Heritage 2011. *The Setting of Historic Assets*

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

English Heritage 2011. *Designation Selection Guide. Agricultural Buildings*

English Heritage 2014. *National Farmsteads Character Statement*

English Heritage 2014. *National Farm Buildings Types*

## Historic building grants

Countryside Stewardship funds the maintenance and conservation repair of traditional farm buildings in agricultural use. Contact Natural England at [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk). For Historic England and other grants see the Funds for Historic Buildings website [www.ffhb.org.uk](http://www.ffhb.org.uk)

## Landscape character

Historic England is continuing to work with its partners at the completion of Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC), and the results of these have helped to inform the National Character Areas (NCAs) led by Natural England. These divide England into 159 distinct areas, with summaries of how they have changed and the issues for change in the future. For these and links to finer-grained Landscape Character Assessment, often developed by local authorities, see [www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/nca/default.aspx](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/nca/default.aspx). Historic England is producing *Farmstead and Landscape Statements* for the NCAs that bring together the results of our research on farmsteads, fields and settlement.

## Wildlife and habitats

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 [www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats\\_and\\_buildings](http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_buildings)

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds provides further advice about birds and buildings and on attracting wildlife to gardens. See [www.rspb.org.uk/advice/gardening](http://www.rspb.org.uk/advice/gardening)

Natural England provides further information about England's natural environment and biodiversity, including the Hedgerow Regulations. [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

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# Historic England

We are the public body that looks after England's historic environment. We champion historic places, helping people to understand, value and care for them, now and for the future.

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