



Historic England

Farmstead and Landscape Statement

Eden Valley

NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA 9



Introduction

The Farmstead and Landscape Statements will help you to identify the historic character of traditional farmsteads and their buildings in all parts of England, and how they relate to their surrounding landscapes. They are now available for all of England's National Character Areas (NCAs), and should be read in conjunction with the NCA profiles which have been produced by Natural England using a wide range of environmental information (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>). Each Farmstead and Landscape Statement is supported by Historic England's advice on farm buildings (<https://historicengland.org.uk/farmbuildings>), which provides links to the *National Farmsteads Character Statement*, national guidance on **Farm Building Types** and a fully-sourced summary in the *Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Character Statements*. It also forms part of additional research on historic landscapes, including the mapping of farmsteads in some parts of England (see <https://historicengland.org.uk/characterisation>).



Large, mid-19th-century farmstead in the north-west of the area, situated on rising ground with an open aspect to the south. The landscape is one of large, regular fields of late enclosure in sharp contrast to the smaller field of piecemeal enclosure associated with the Rivers Roe and Calbeck further to the west. This is reflected also in the regular L-plan layout of the group, with additional cattle housing in the lean-tos facing the fields around it. Photo © Jen Deadman

Front cover: View looking towards the sinuous wooded line of Raven Beck, across fields which from at least the 16th century have developed in close association with the development of scattered and high-status courtyard farms with fabric dating from this period (see pp 9, 10 and 11). In the foreground is Nether Harescough, with its fine house dated 1612. Photo © Historic England 28575/027

Summary

See the National Farmsteads Character Statement for a short introduction to the headings below, including maps and tables.

The Eden Valley runs along the western side of the north Pennines, from Brough at its southern end through to Penrith and the urban fringe of Carlisle in the north. Around a quarter of the area is designated as a Less Favoured Area (LFA) and it is largely rural (94.4%). Relatively little land (3%) is designated for protection as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (7.6%). Of the area, 0.8% is common land.

Historic character

- Most farmsteads in this area developed within villages, working extensive open fields around them which had mostly been enclosed by the 18th century. Linear and loose courtyard farmsteads can be found within these villages and in landscapes of 17th-century and earlier enclosure.
- Many farmsteads in landscapes subject to 18th- and 19th-century enclosure were built to house stock and to store and process cereals as regular L-shaped and courtyard plans of two-storey buildings in the early to mid-19th century, with the farmhouse (sometimes of earlier origins) attached.
- Farm buildings share some of the characteristics of neighbouring upland areas (in particular bank barns, combination barns and cattle housing) but the arable farms of this area also required larger barns and cattle yards, and extensive stable and cart shed ranges.

Significance

- There are some rare surviving 18th-century and earlier working buildings, many farmhouses dating from a phase of rebuilding that affected Cumbria in the late 17th and early 18th centuries.
- Courtyard farms can retain a wide range of building types required for mixed farming and arable agriculture, including horse engine houses. Any internal machinery would be of exceptional rarity.

Present and future issues

- In this National Character Area The Photo Image Project (2006) recorded a medium proportion of listed working farm buildings converted to non-agricultural use (24.1%, the national average being 32%).

Historic development

- There is extensive earthwork and particularly cropmark evidence for Romano-British and earlier settlement. The lines of Roman roads and the sites of numerous forts (for example Kirkby Thorpe) attest to the importance of the valley as a transport corridor, there being extensive evidence for dispersed settlement of this period and earlier.
- The medieval period saw the rise of the 'Lords of Eden' and the development of castles, now mainly ruined, at strategic locations – the River Eamont as the 10th-century border with Scotland being amongst the most important.
- There was an increase of pasture and grazing from the 14th century, accompanied by the emergence of larger farms, followed by a combination of corn and fatstock which has continued. Lime kilns testify to the application of lime to increase fertility, and corn mills to increased arable output. Fertility was also boosted by rotations using root crops and grasses. Smaller farms, some with by-employment in coal mining and quarrying, survived in some areas.

Landscape and settlement

- The earthwork evidence of prehistoric and later settlement areas and cultivation is concentrated in some valley areas (for example next to the river Petteril at NY 468427) on the less intensively managed rough ground on the Penrith ridge and the eastern Pennine fringe.
- The settlement pattern has much in common with the lowlands of more central areas of England, being dominated in the medieval period by significant numbers of villages planned around rectilinear greens. Earthwork and other evidence date the development of the villages to the 12th and 13th centuries, probably superseding an earlier, more dispersed pattern. Many villages developed along the foot of the eastern Pennines as integral elements in extensive estates that stretched from lowland vales to the upper fells, which were used for the seasonal grazing of livestock. They operated common fields, but without the strict rotation of the classic three-field system.
- Enclosure of the common arable and meadows was largely complete by the mid-18th century, and patterns of long medieval curved strips remain visible in the later field boundaries running from village streets to the limits of the arable land. Larger farmsteads developed within these villages between the 14th and 19th centuries, replacing earlier sites which may retain as farmhouses or as empty plots (as at Maulds Meaburn). The fossilised fragments of field systems associated with settlement earthworks (Dolphenby, King's Melton, Great Musgrave) also survive as important evidence for the shrinkage and even abandonment of settlements.
- Some isolated farmsteads result from this process of settlement shrinkage, and others comprise moated medieval sites and the grange farms of monastic and secular estates. Irregular and piecemeal enclosure offers the setting to a higher density of 17th-century and earlier isolated farmsteads south of Appleby, and in some upland fringe areas such as the Irthing Valley to the north. Most isolated farmsteads result from the 17th-century and later enclosure of the extensive areas of open wastes, wood pasture and commons (including the formerly extensive lowland heaths) which enveloped medieval settlements. Extensive areas of designed landscapes with straight routeways, blocks of woodland and regular planned enclosure driven by estates result from this process, such as in the area of former Inglewood Forest to the north of Penrith which was enclosed after its sale in the 1790s.

- Field boundaries comprise mixed hedges to the north, thorn and elm to the south and stone walls along the upland fringes. Red sandstone walls are found on the Penrith Sandstone Ridge. Broadleaved semi-natural woodland is a prominent feature of the Eden

Valley – following the principal river valleys. Managed estate and farm woodland occupies large blocks of the broader valley floor and both small copse and shelter belts frequently accompany farmsteads.

Farmstead and building types

Most of the domestic building stock, including farmhouses, dates from extensive rebuilding in the period 1650–1750 and later.

Farmstead types

- There is a strong contrast between village-based farmsteads, which developed on a piecemeal basis into courtyard plans and may have retained earlier linear farmsteads, and the regular courtyard farmsteads (L-shaped and U-shaped plans being the most common) which are found in landscapes of regular enclosure. The largest farmsteads, often on the site of shrunken settlements or on high-status sites (for example Rayson Hall at Townhead which has a listed 17th-century byre), developed into multi-yard farmsteads. Some of these developed from shrunken settlements, such as Old Town south of High Hesketh. Farmhouses are frequently found attached to working buildings, classical styles being in general use and facing into gardens from the late 18th century. Isolated farmsteads with linear and loose courtyard plans are found in areas of earlier enclosure to the south of Appleby and some upland fringe areas.

Building types

- Bank barns are highly distinctive of the area. Variant bank barns, built across the slope with entry to cow house in gable end, are mostly 18th century in date: these typically had entries inserted into side walls to enable better access to stalls. Bank barns built along the slope (termed ‘true bank barns’) were built from the mid-18th century on many holdings.
- Single-storey and part-lofted combination barns display a great variety in scale, the largest being found on large-scale arable farms. They are usually found with the threshing area flanked by cattle housing and stabling and often with additional cattle housing in projecting wings or outshots.
- There are some rare surviving cruck-framed threshing barns, often with evidence for a walled-off end bay for livestock.
- There are wheel houses for horse-powered threshing machines.
- Extensive ranges are found, for cattle and their fodder, including looseboxes but most commonly found as single-storey and lofted cow houses.
- Large stable and cart shed ranges indicate the corn-producing economy of this area.
- Minor buildings include calf houses and pigsties, the latter often as lean-tos.



Regular courtyard farm in Castle Carrock in the north-east of the area, once the main farm serving Gelt Hall. The unusual triangular-shaped yard is flanked to one side by a long range which includes the farmhouse with attached working buildings of various phases. The farmhouse and its attached worker's cottage is flanked to the right by a former cow house added in 1818, with later pigsties with a loft over at the end of the range. Photo © Jen Deadman



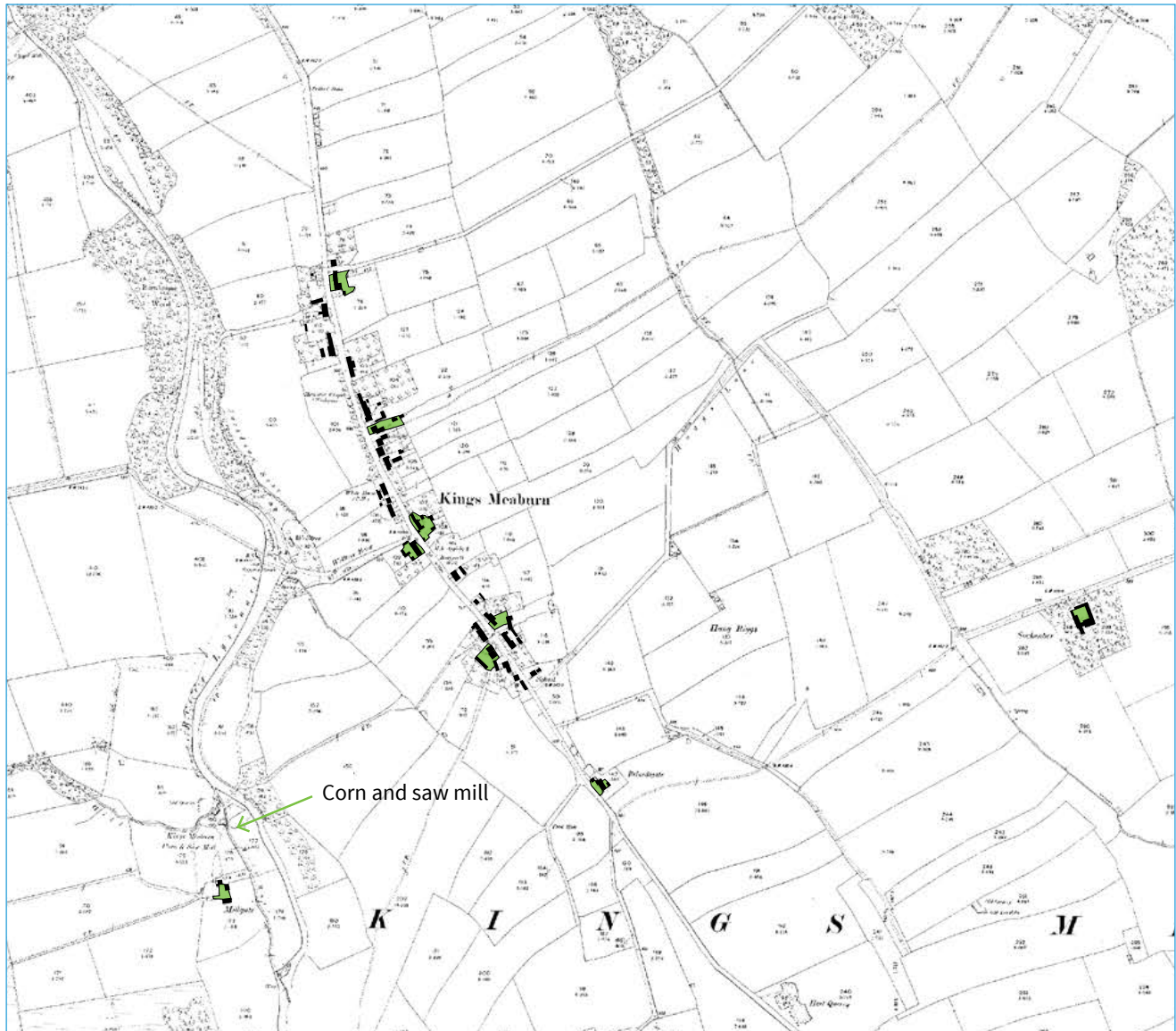
Pig sties with through-feeders and, unusually, a loft above. Note the decorative use of red sandstone for quoins and dressings, a typical feature of this area. Photo © Jen Deadman



Farmworkers' cottages. Photo © Jen Deadman



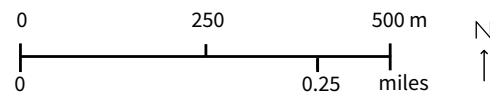
Mid-19th-century single-storey cow houses, probably for the loose housing of calves, the three-bay cart shed to the right converted into cattle housing in the late 19th century. Photo © Jen Deadman



Maps are based on 2nd edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps, which show farmsteads after the last major phase in the building of traditional farmsteads in England.
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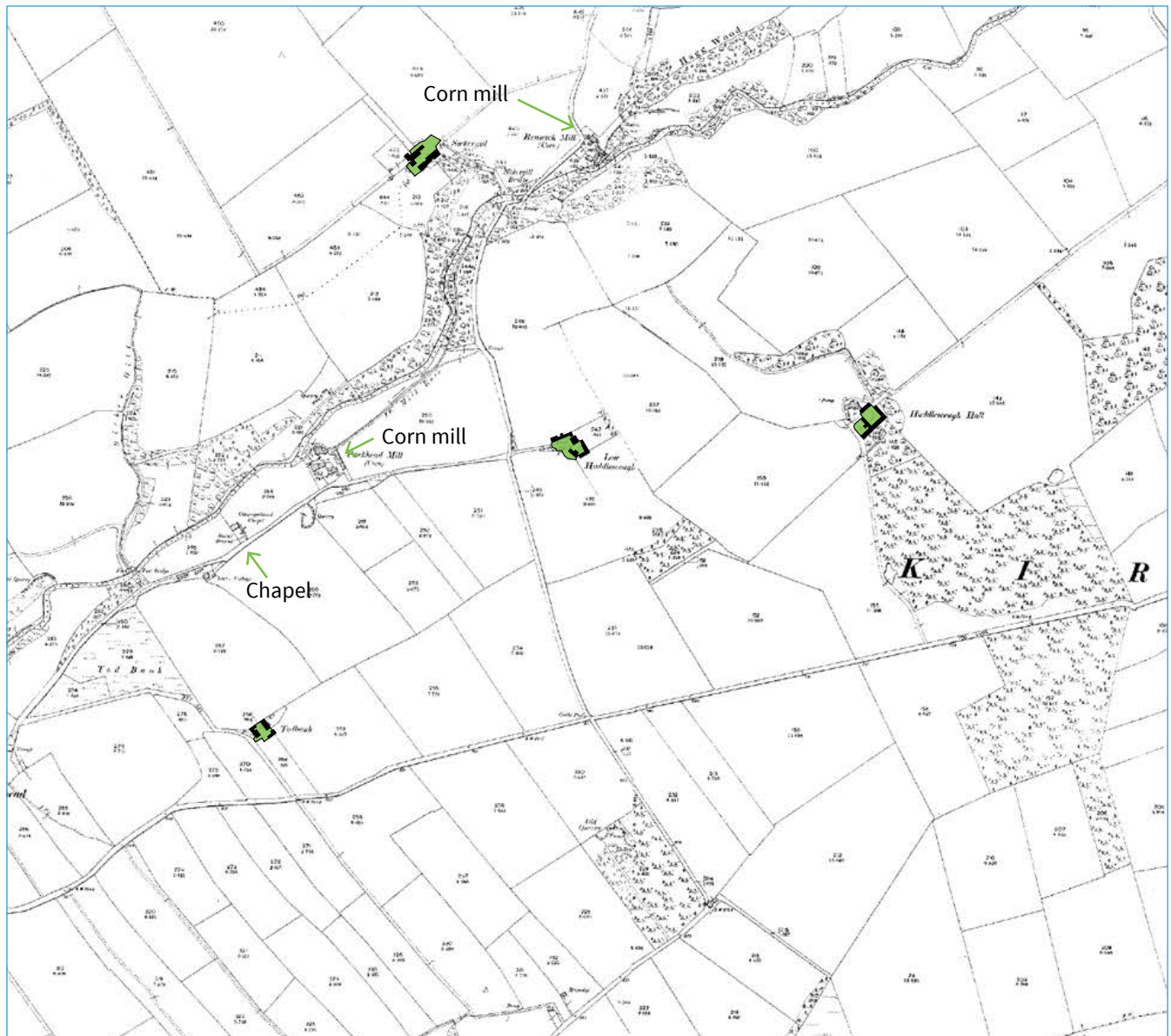


Farmstead, showing the buildings in black and the boundaries of the main yards (highlighted in green), working areas and gardens.




Kings Meaburn

Most of the farmhouses in King's Meaburn, which was probably established as a planned settlement in the 12th century, have origins as 16th- to 18th-century linear farmsteads with attached working buildings. Note the plan form of the settlement, which is typical of this part of Cumbria, with the garden areas (crofts) extending from the village street to back lanes – particularly legible to the east side. Most of the working buildings, including bank barns and cattle housing, were built or rebuilt in the early 19th century. Where not covered by post-medieval buildings the well-preserved earthwork remains of the medieval settlement consists of abandoned tofts (house plots), and associated earthwork enclosures (or crofts) which pre-date the existing post-medieval field system: these are a Scheduled Monument, on account of their remarkable degree of preservation. The corn mill to the south-west is dated 1811, and to the south-east is a full regular courtyard farmstead which was established here in association with the regular enclosures around it.



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

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South of Renwick

This is a landscape of large-scale and arable-based farms, all with fabric dating from the 16th and 17th centuries and adapted and expanded again as regular courtyard plans with threshing barns for arable production from the late 18th century: this emphasis on arable farming is also reflected in the string of corn mills that extend down Raven Brook. The Congregational chapel to the south-west, now a house, was founded in 1683.



The farmhouse at Huddlesceugh Hall (see front cover and map on p 9 for an explanation of the landscape context) dates from the early 16th century, was extended in 1617 and again in the late 18th century with an attached dairy and threshing barn. The courtyard group has 19th-century cattle housing. Photo © Historic England 28575/023



Low Huddlesceugh is a smaller-scale courtyard group with its house dated 1784 and its combination barn with integral stable 1765. Photo © Historic England 28575/023



The farmhouse at Nether Haresceugh (see front cover and map on p 9 for an explanation of the landscape context) dates from 1612, the taller block being dated 1701 over its central entrance. The farm buildings comprise a formal group of apparently early to mid-19th-century date, with a projecting horse-engine house to the barn. Photo © Historic England 28575/015



This small, isolated roadside farm, to the east of the area, is set around a single yard with a looser arrangement of buildings comprising byres, a combination barn and stables. The farmhouse with adjoining barn faces away from the yard but across from the byre and combination barn. Photo © Jen Deadman



The stable block at the above farm stands alone on the yard side furthest from the working buildings and closer to the farmhouse. Photo © Jen Deadman



As elsewhere in the north and north-west the combination barn is frequently the main component of the small village farmstead. This small farmstead in Hackthorpe boasts a fine bank barn with direct access from the road via a ramped entry. Farmhouses in this area are frequently rendered and surrounds picked out in a contrasting colour. Here, as in Lancashire there is a greater feeling for rendered surfaces and paint, generated by the porous and unsatisfactory nature of the unprotected sandstone. Photo © Jen Deadman



Combination barns are invariably the main agricultural building of the farmstead either as a component part of a yard range or as a freestanding structure. Here, at Pooley Bridge west of Penrith is an early 19th-century combination barn with a cow house to the left, with fine sandstone dressings to the cart entry. This building and the earlier combination barn to the right form two sides of a large yard: it has, from the left, a stable, stone steps to a granary and a hayloft over cattle housing with a blocked cart shed opening to the right. Photo © Jen Deadman





A conical roof to a horse-engine house attached to a combination barn. Photo © Jen Deadman



Field barns are not as common in the Eden valley as in other upland areas. Here, on the western fringe this field barn boasts crow-stepped eaves, more commonly seen on buildings in the Cumbrian fells. A blocked doorway in the gable end entered a cow house with a loft over and hay storage adjacent. The neighbouring farm also has crow stepped gables and is late 17th century in date. Photo © Jen Deadman

Materials and detail

- Predominant traditional materials are local stone and slate, the former mostly soft red sandstone with some limestone on the eastern upland fringes of the area and to the south of Appleby. Here, as in Lancashire, there is a greater use of rendered surfaces and paint to weatherproof its sandstone.
- There are some rare surviving earth buildings, of the type found in the Solway Basin (NCA 6), and cruck-frames.



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