Historic England

Farmstead and Landscape Statement

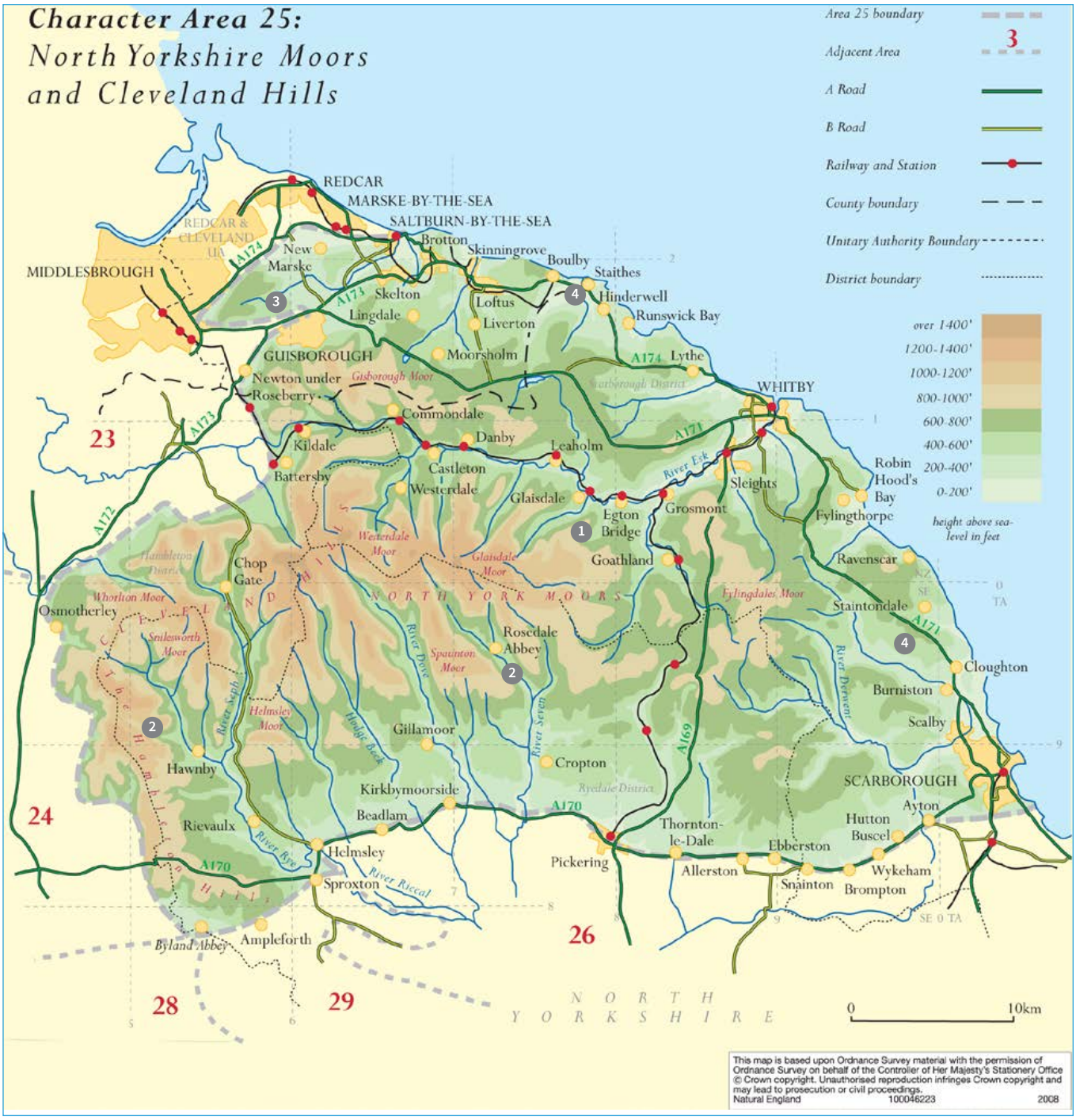
North Yorkshire Moors and Cleveland Hills

NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA 25

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).

Front cover: Bransdale, showing the linear farmstead at Cowl House (see map on previous page) and in the foreground a loose courtyard farmstead with buildings to four sides of the yard, with the house facing away from the yard into its own garden. Photo © Historic England 28474 060



This map shows the North Yorkshire Moors and Cleveland Hills, with the numbers of neighbouring National Character Areas around it. It subdivides into the following areas:

1. Northern dales, focused around the rivers which flow north from the Moors, with a mix of ancient and piecemeal enclosure relating to dispersed settlement.
2. The wider, limestone-based western and southern dales, where there is a chain of villages and larger estate farmsteads.
3. Northern Cleveland Hills, where 19th-century industrialisation drove the development of villages and the transformation of the earlier pattern of dispersed settlement.
4. North and north-east coastal strip, where large estate farms developed.

Summary

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

The North Yorkshire Moors and Cleveland Hills comprise a well-defined area of upland lying between the Tees Lowlands in the north, the Vale of Pickering in the south and the Vale of Mowbray in the west. To the east, the area borders the North Sea. About a quarter of the area comprises high moorland, 20% is wooded (split evenly between broadleaved woods and conifers) and 54% is agricultural. Of the area, 85% lies within the North Yorkshire Moors National Park, and 30% is designated as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Historic character

- Isolated farmsteads mostly relate to fields resulting from pre-19th century piecemeal enclosure. Villages and hamlets are concentrated in the valley bottoms or on lower valley sides.

- The area's traditional architecture was subject to extensive rebuilding from the late 18th century, linked to the improvement of farmland for growing corn. Farmsteads are dominated by multifunctional combination barns, frequently with wheelhouses, with other single-storey structures mostly built for cattle housing of various forms, pigsties (often located close to dairies), stables and cart sheds with granaries. The earlier tradition of linear farmsteads is widespread, also being reflected in highly distinctive rows of working buildings with stepped profiles. There are many dispersed layouts, especially those laid out along routeways. Courtyard layouts are a highly distinctive feature of this area, in contrast to other upland areas, and many have the working buildings set around three or four sides of the yard: many farmsteads were also rebuilt to multi-yard layouts. Large-scale, courtyard plan farmsteads are concentrated in designed landscapes with plantations, straight roads and plantations.

- The major traditional materials are sandstone, and limestone to the south, with red pantile roofs and some thatch. Occasional stone slates in evidence.

Significance

- There is an exceptionally high survival of traditional farmsteads, as in many of the other northern England uplands, although due to the long history of arable use the landscapes do not retain such visible evidence for land use and settlement from the prehistoric period as other northern upland areas. Of special significance in a national context, and for the uplands of northern England, are:

- The architecture of this area is highly-distinctive, which, in the importance accorded to corn production as well as pastoral farming, strongly contrasts with that of other upland areas of northern England. These are broadly related to the farmsteads of other arable areas in north-east England, from the Yorkshire Wolds northwards, and also the south-east of Scotland.

- There is rarity of working buildings with 18th-century and earlier fabric, which are most commonly found attached to houses or found on high-status farmsteads.
- The exceptionally high survival of longhouses is higher than in any area of north and west England except in Dartmoor.
- Horse engine houses retain historic gearing and machinery.
- The use of thatch, again in part reflects the importance of corn production in this area and represents, along with Dartmoor, the highest survival of thatch in an upland area.

Present and future issues

- The Photo Image Project (2006) recorded that 7.5% of buildings (primarily redundant ones) in the NCAs exhibit obvious signs of structural disrepair, this figure being much lower for NCAs dominated by National Parks (2.3%, but much higher at 7.6% for this one). This area has a low rate of conversion of listed buildings to non-agricultural – primarily domestic – uses (22%, the national average being 34%). This figure underestimates the present total, but it is much higher than other areas in northern England that are dominated by National Parks.

Historic development

- The area has a long history of cultivation and settlement reaching into the Romano-British period and earlier – including evidence concentrated in the south and east of enclosed and unenclosed farmsteads with round houses.
- The moorland results from clearance in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages and retains the highest concentrations of prehistoric settlement and ritual sites. It was utilised for centuries by surrounding communities for summer grazing, with peat, heather and bracken cut for fuel, bedding, roofing and fodder. It is now the largest expanse of heather moorland in England and Wales, sustained since the late 19th century by its use for grouse shooting.
- Late 12th- to early 13th-century markets at Helmsley, Pickering and Kirkbymoorside developed along the southern fringe at the boundary with the Vale of Pickering (Area 26). Coastal towns and settlements developed around the key functions of trade, transport and fishing, Whitby expanding into a major port and resort and Scarborough into a resort from the late 18th century.
- From the 12th century, monastic grange farms specialised in sheep rearing for wool production (some earthwork enclosures survive) and some cattle farms (vaccaries). In the 13th and 14th centuries, much valuable raw wool, a principal element of England's foreign trade, was collected from the area and sent to York or Hull, to be purchased by Flemish and Italian merchants. Rabbit farming developed from the medieval period and continued on an industrial scale until the late 19th century in some areas and left numerous earthworks (for example, 18th- and 19th-century pillow mounds on Tabular Hills and at Hutton Nab).
- Country houses and parks developed from the mid-16th century on monastic estates that came into the possession of prominent local families.
- The extraction of the area's rich mineral deposits (including jet working in the valleys and along the coast, alum along the coast and the iron mining in the Cleveland Hills) was separate from agriculture, but the development of other industries, particularly small-scale quarrying and coal mining, lime kilns (clustered in the west of this area) and potash and estate water mills of 1790s

to 1850s (in Bransdale/Eskdale and to the north), was more closely linked to agricultural improvement and increased in intensity in the 19th century.

- Arable-based husbandry, by the 19th century combined with root crops, was widely practised. Pasture and hay-making was concentrated in the northern dales. At the end of the 19th century, the growing importance of butter, cheese and milk production combined with the rise of recreational land use including fox hunting and grouse shooting. The Cleveland area – generally regarded as backward by contemporaries – specialised in horse breeding, with the Cleveland Bay gaining widespread recognition.

Landscape and settlement

Most of the farmland had been enclosed on a piecemeal basis by the 18th century. Large-scale and regular enclosure of the late 18th and 19th centuries was accompanied by the reorganisation or creation of much larger farms and the attendant appearance of cottages for a growing body of labourers, either purpose-built, incorporated into farmsteads or converted from former farmhouses. Larger, regular enclosures on the moorland tops are mostly associated with short-term ploughing for arable in the late 18th or early 19th centuries. The area retains a high proportion of ancient woodland, despite widespread clearance of the former royal forest of Pickering by the 17th century. Some large coniferous plantations (for example, Langdale Forest) were created in the mid-20th century, but there are many small-scale blocks of broadleaved woodland dating from the 17th century or earlier which are dispersed across the landscape, and extensive areas of ancient woodland concentrated in the valleys and to the north-east around Grosmont. The isolated farmsteads of the upper dales, generally subject to later, post-1750 enclosure, are sometimes sheltered by groups of sycamores.

The major distinctions are:

- Designed landscapes with regular enclosure and planted woodland of the later 18th to 19th centuries are concentrated on plateaux to the north-east and in areas where large estates developed from the medieval period (for example, close to the Howardian Hills).

- There are areas of piecemeal, post-medieval enclosure dating from the 16th century to around 1750 on the valley sides, which are often associated with intakes around the edge of the moorland.

- Fields which indicate the enclosure of medieval strip fields are concentrated around the villages south of Castleton and Ainthorpe and between Appleton-le-Moors and Spaunton. Along the southern border of the area, and running into the Vale of Pickering, these can retain traces of the very long infield strips (up to 1000 metres) set between trackways leading to outfield areas and then rough moorland grazing: these have 9th- and/or 11th-century origin, as observed also in the Yorkshire Wolds and Holderness. Villages are mostly linear in their form, retaining or amalgamating medieval plots which extend to back lanes.

- Higher densities of farmsteads in valley sides are associated with oval enclosures of medieval or earlier date, or with irregular enclosures that might result from the clearance of woodland (for example, in Farndale of the 11th to 13th centuries) and intakes from the moor (the latter usually 16th to 17th centuries).

- Some isolated farmsteads and enclosure also results from the leasing of monastic grange farms and of extensive royal hunting forest from the 14th century. The common grazing lands were divided and enclosed under Parliamentary Acts in the late 18th and 19th centuries, with clusters of common-field enclosure to south (Pickering eastwards) and east.

- Larger, more regular enclosures on moorland tops are most associated with short-term ploughing for arable in late 18th to early 19th centuries, with outfarms of the same period and sometimes isolated farmsteads that have often regressed to a derelict condition.

- Some farmsteads relate to blocks of modern, improved fields which result from the replacement of earlier patterns of enclosure with post-1850, regular, enclosed fields.

- Industrialisation in the 19th century drove the development of villages and the transformation of the earlier pattern of dispersed settlement in the Lower Tees and Cleveland Hills to the north. This has been much more greatly affected by late 19th and 20th-century change, both in the form of the expansion of villages and in the amalgamation of the enclosed strip fields around them (for example, around Marske at NZ612217). Many boundaries are fences not walls, and the majority of the woodland is concentrated in steep valleys.

Farmstead and building types

The earliest surviving houses below gentry status are principally of 17th-century date. Most of the domestic building stock, including farmhouses, dates from extensive rebuilding between 1650 and 1750 and later.

Farmstead types

Longhouses

- The longhouse accommodated both family and cattle at different ends of a single range of buildings, and in its earliest form a common entrance was shared via a cross passage. Those built in or before the 17th century were originally entered from a passage which also served as the entrance to the house, but during the 18th century, social pressures led to the provision of a separate byre door, to the demolition of some byres, and the conversion or rebuilding of others to domestic use. These later changes are clearly visible in the buildings, as also is evidence about the size and layout of the original housing for cattle (byres), and of the arrangement of the passage which once formed the common entrance to the whole of these longhouses.

- The initial dominance of the longhouse is significant, since, as a house type capable of almost infinite adaptation, it exerted considerable influence on the subsequent evolution of farmhouses. The piecemeal rebuilding and conversion which it permitted tended to discourage total reconstruction. Despite radical alterations over the years, many former farmhouses betray their ancient origins not only by evidence of cruck, but sometimes in the plan form where the cross-passage plan is revealed and indicates 17th-century or earlier origins, including as longhouses.

- In the North York Moors region, it is clear that the longhouse plan was dominant among farmhouses in the 17th century and earlier. Survivals are concentrated in the southern dales.

- Plans are linear, L-shaped (house attached) and row.

- In this area, buildings were often added to one end or another to produce an elongated range or simply to join together individual buildings or groups formerly not connected.

- The linear plan frequently incorporates a scatter of loose working buildings or alternatively a simple return to form an L-shaped plan. It is the core element from which later plan forms evolved.

- A highly distinctive feature of the area is the row plan, where the working buildings are attached in a long row.

Dispersed plans

- Many farmsteads have dispersed layouts of scattered buildings, often in a ‘dispersed driftway’ arrangement with buildings often sited either side of a road or trackway.

Courtyard plans

- The courtyard plan is evident in villages where the gentrification of farmsteads began to emerge in the later 18th century, although smaller yards are found throughout, in both villages and isolated settings.

- Many courtyard farmsteads, whether they are loose (with detached buildings) or regular (with interlinked buildings) layouts, have their working buildings set around three or four sides of the yard where the manure was collected.

- Double yards, backing and fronting a single range are common with multiple yards defined by ranges of buildings evident on the largest estate farms.

Building types

These, and particularly the scale of barns, granaries, cart sheds and stables, testify to the importance of arable agriculture across much of the area. Key building types are:

- Combination barns, commonly the largest building on the steading and dating from the late 18th century. They comprise threshing barns flanked on one or both sides by stabling, cart shed(s) or, (less frequently) cattle housing, with first-floor granaries and mixing houses. Most are marked by small doors to the threshing bay. Some barns stand detached from other buildings, though generally only in farmsteads with a dispersed layout. Others were originally detached, but later had built against them an addition serving another function such as a cart shed or stable. Within a courtyard arrangement the barn normally sits on the north side of the yard, occasionally with some degree of prominence by being taller than the buildings to which it is attached.

- Horse engine houses were commonly built in the period c 1800-1850. They are a distinctive feature of this area and the eastern arable zone of England from the Yorkshire Wolds to the Northumberland coastal plain. Some are associated with barns which are divided between a threshing/fodder-mixing block and a lower straw barn; this is a barn type concentrated in the arable areas of Northumberland and Scotland. The most popular type is square in plan, with the wall furthest from the barn usually gabled. The main variations of the square plan concern the number of openings, and virtually every combination actually occurs.

- Granaries, often built as an upper storey above a cart shed, the free circulation of air below the floor helping to keep it dry. Others were built as an extension to the farmhouse. All are approached by external steps.

- Cart sheds, common to most farmsteads and generally dating from the 19th century. On large arable farms these include those with several bays set below a granary or as part of a larger range. The openings are spanned by wooden lintels or stone arches. Piers are of stone, sometimes columnar, or brick. Small cart sheds with a door in the gable end are occasionally found by the roadside adjacent to the farm track in isolated settings.

- Cow houses and open-fronted shelter sheds which faced cattle yards for the production of manure.

- Stables, single-storeyed or two storeys with hay loft above. Either individual buildings or incorporated in yard ranges. Unlike cow houses windows are common.

- Pigsties, typically with troughs built into the wall with an inclined slab above acting as a baffle. Mainly 19th century with one or two earlier examples. Can be a single unit but often two or three in one block. Free standing, attached to farmhouse or integrated with one range of a courtyard farm. Sometimes combined with lofts for hens. Pigsties were

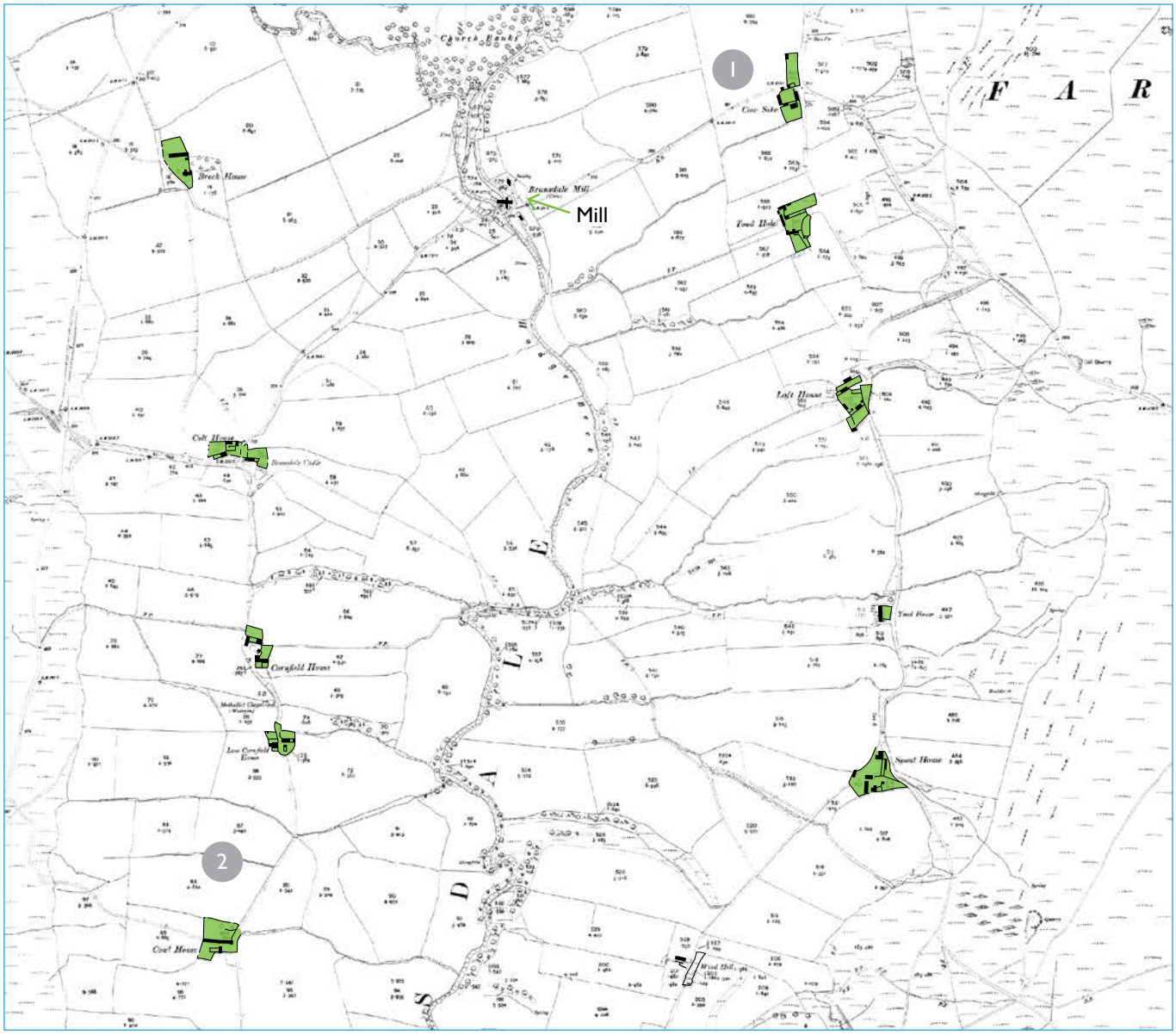
- Hen houses, generally in pigsties or nesting boxes in wall recesses.

- Pigeon lofts in gable ends of farmhouses and working buildings. Dovecotes are associated with houses of manorial status.

- Open-sided hay barns, found on the farmsteads of progressive and wealthy landowners and farmers (such as the Duncombe estate).
- Dog kennels, frequently situated under external granary or hay loft steps.
- Field barns and outfarms. Field barns for cattle and hay are smaller and not as common as in other northern upland areas. Outfarms with barns, cattle housing and yards for the production of manure are much more common, reflecting the importance of arable cropping in this area. There are some isolated threshing barns, often with housing for cattle.

Spout House, showing the early 19th-century farmhouse facing away from the working buildings and yards, which are arranged along a routeway (note the stables and granary with its external stone steps).
Photo © Historic England 28475/005

Levisham is one of several planned, linear villages located in the south of the area. These often display distinctive layouts in their pattern of tofts, crofts and strip fields sited behind the farmsteads which line the main streets. The main street and its back street at Levisham are aligned north to south. Piecemeal enclosure, reorganised with straight boundaries and often enlarged fields in the late 18th and 19th centuries, has retained the outlines of medieval strip fields. The larger farmsteads that developed within the village developed around courtyards, and were rebuilt with large farmhouses and ranges of working buildings (combination barns and cattle housing) from the late 18th century. There is one recorded example of an earlier farmstead range, comprising a linear farmstead with a house and attached barn/cattle housing of the early 18th century. On the southern part of Levisham Moor are the buried and earthwork remains of a range of agricultural, domestic, industrial and ritual features dating from the prehistoric and medieval periods, including a medieval grange and iron ore bloomery. Photo © Historic England 28475/020



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. © Crown Copyright [and database rights] 2020. OS 100024900

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

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Ordnance Survey map of **Bransdale**

Bransdale is a moorland dale set to the north-west of the area, one of several served by north-south watercourses. Hodge Beck rises on Bransdale Moor, eventually converging with the river Dove in the Vale of Pickering to the south. Isolated farmsteads connected by roads running parallel with the valley bottom are strung out low on both valley sides. They sit amongst small, irregularly-shaped fields which date from medieval and later enclosure. Larger fields representing later enclosure are evident at the valley head. Cowl Sike (1) developed into a loose courtyard with working buildings to four sides of the yard, a plan form found on larger farmsteads in the North Yorkshire Moors. At Cowl House (2) substantial additions were made to the early 18th-century linear farmstead to produce a range ultimately 50 metres long, with an additional range of multifunctional buildings forming a loose courtyard arrangement. Although the nature of farmstead plan forms is diverse in the dale, the ancient origins of the farmsteads and surrounding enclosures, is evident in the dominance of dispersed plans with multiple yards, including Bransdale Mill to the centre.

Northern coastal landscape viewed from Borrowby Moor. This isolated courtyard-plan steading is set in late enclosure fields on the Mulgrave estate. The loose courtyard arrangement, with detached buildings to three sides of the yard, incorporates the distinctive stepped roofs of a piecemeal linear development. Fertile farmland with hedgerows and hedgerow trees is characteristic of the coastal plains. Photo © Jen Deadman

View from Great Fryup Dale to Esk Dale in the northern dales. View across a landscape of 15th- to 18th-century piecemeal enclosure, towards large, regular intake fields below the moor edge. Shelter beds of deciduous trees protect the farmsteads, and in the foreground is a courtyard-plan farmstead comprising a loose courtyard arrangement of buildings set around four sides of a yard. Photo © Jen Deadman

Bilsdale is one of the southern dales. This isolated farmstead has its buildings dispersed along a routeway, and is set within small, regular fields which date from reorganisation in the late 18th or 19th centuries. The large, 20th-century conifer belt above, set along the moor edge, is a typical feature of the area. Photo © Jen Deadman

Fadmoor village, one of several planned linear settlements situated in the lower southern belt. Substantial courtyard farmsteads are set around a wide, linear green. Strip fields lie behind the steadings, bounded east and west by deciduous and conifer plantations. Photo © Jen Deadman

Linear plans Lealholm, at Eskdale in the northern dales. This small farmstead or smallholding, which adjoins common moorland in the foreground, was built in the mid-19th century. This range comprises a cow house with loft over and pigsty in the gable end, the farmhouse and a single-storey stable. Photo © Jen Deadman

Isolated linear smallholding on the Mulgrave estate near Egton in the northern dales. The farmhouse and buildings are 18th or early 19th century in date and appear to be new builds on a much more ancient site. The steading sits centrally within a cluster of very small fields which appear to be subdivisions of roughly circular enclosures, sited immediately below the moor edge. The lower range to the right is a former pigsty, that to the left a byre, formerly housing five cows, and a stable. Photo © Jen Deadman

Isolated steading set along the roadside in Fadmoor in the southern dales. The farmhouse and attached barn with wheelhouse form the major elements in the long, linear range. The stepped appearance of the roof-lines is a characteristic feature of the North York Moors. It faces a routeway which also relates to a scatter of associated working buildings. The farmhouse is stylistically late 18th- or early 19th-century and possibly replaces an earlier building. The steading is set amongst small irregular fields of piecemeal enclosure towards the valley bottom. Photo © Jen Deadman

At Skyreholme in Bransdale (southern dales), many farmsteads are loosely strung along the roadside, developing in linear form along the roads or as loose courtyard arrangements. Photo © Jen Deadman

Longhouses Former longhouse at Pockley in the southern dales. Pockley has longhouses, many dating from the 17th century, which were conserved through residential and small-scale agricultural use when the estate invested in the rebuilding of farmsteads to serve larger improved farms. The cross passage lay behind the stack, with the byre for cattle beyond. Here, an extra bay was added later. Each bay was defined by a cruck-frame. Photo © Jen Deadman

Former longhouse at Egton in the northern dales. The byre to the left of the cross passage was replaced with a small service room. Photo © Jen Deadman

L-shaped plans The house, built in the early to mid-19th century, is an integral part of this L-shaped group. Adjoining is a barn with loft over, stable and cow house. Photo © Jen Deadman

Dispersed plans Laskill Pasture in the southern dales. This dispersed-plan steading straddles the roadside. The working buildings and yard, dated 1846, are sited opposite the farmhouse, which developed from a cruck-framed longhouse, and attached working buildings. Photo © Jen Deadman

Courtyard plans Farmstead occupying corner site in Lockton village, with farmhouse fronting a yard arrangement which includes combination barn, dairy, pigsties and stables. Photo © Jen Deadman

Isolated farmstead at Fadmoor in the southern dales. This is a loose courtyard arrangement, with detached working buildings planned around three sides of the yard. Photo © Jen Deadman

A 19th-century estate farm at Grosmont in the northern dales. This is a regular courtyard plan, with interlinked buildings including a cart shed facing the road. Photo © Jen Deadman

This isolated farmstead on the western edge of the area was rebuilt to a regular multi-yard plan in the early to mid-19th century. It has the farmhouse, dairy and stable range facing multiple yards. Photo © Jen Deadman

Large, late 18th- or early 19th-century combination barn at Great Fryup Dale, with hay loft and granary above threshing floor and stabling. The single-storey attached building is a cow house. Photo © Jen Deadman

Griff Farm, at Rievaulx in the southern dales, formerly the home farm of Duncombe Park Estate. This very large combination barn, in its scale similar to those found on the estate farms of the Howardian Hills and Yorkshire Wolds, provides threshing barn, stables and loose box with granaries over. Adjoining to the west is a single-storey cart shed accessed from the gable end. A horse engine house formerly adjoined the building on the yard side. Photo © Jen Deadman

Horse engine houses are associated with barns where corn was threshed, machinery for mixing fodder was located, and straw was stored. Photo © Jen Deadman

Here, the main cross beam to which the revolving central shaft was attached and the support beams remain in situ. Photo © Jen Deadman

Granaries are commonly located above cart sheds, as here at Fadmoor. Known to exist by1827, the granary probably replaced one in the farmstead attic. It sits adjacent to the roadside and forms part of a dispersed plan farmstead. Photo © Jen Deadman

Here the granary is sited over a cart shed and stables, and accessed by external steps in the gable end. Photo © Jen Deadman

Only the larger farms have cart sheds of more than three bays. Griff Farm, Rievaulx, has possibly the largest in the area, with six open bays supported by six cast iron columns, as well as two closed bays at one end and one at the other. It was built after 1850 and stands outside and apart from the two yards. Photo © Jen Deadman

Single-storey, two-bay cart shed attached to large combination barn (at Sneaton in the southern dales), a common arrangement evident throughout the area. Photo © Jen Deadman

Ellerby village in the northern dales. Granary over stable adjoining farmhouse. The access is via stone steps on the front elevation. Photo © Jen Deadman

Cow houses An open-fronted shelter shed for cattle opening onto a yard and built in the angle of an L-shaped range. Photo © Jen Deadman

Single-storey ranges which incorporate pigsties and calf houses are common. The feed chute, evident in the wall, is a feature common to pigsties in this area. Photo © Jen Deadma

Stables A small stable adjoining a pigsty, the stack indicating the position of a meal house for boiling feed. Photo © Jen Deadman

This stable range and loose box forms one side of the courtyard on a large planned farmstead in Rievaulx. Photo © Jen Deadman

Pigsties Pigsties with a hen loft over. In the foreground is a raised walkway with a revetted wall. Below is the midden. Photo © Jen Deadman

The scale of pigsties, particularly in the eastern part of the area (as here at Hackness), is comparable to that of areas further to the south, particularly the Vale of Pickering and Holderness. This large pigsty has feeding troughs built into both side walls. It is adjacent to a mill. Photo © Jen Deadman

Little Fryup Dale. Dovecote taking the form of tower over former archway set between two single-storey ranges in an estate farmstead rebuilt c 1850 to a regular multi-yard plan. Photo © North Yorkshire Moors National Park

Entries to pigeon loft in gable end of farmhouse. Photo © Jen Deadman

Hay barn An early 19th century hay barn with stone piers, at Duncombe Park, Helmsley. Photo © Jen Deadman

Field barns and outfarms An outfarm in Bilsdale with provision for cattle housing in three buildings. Photo © Jen Deadman

Field barn for cattle at Danby, incorporating a cart shed for taking manure to the surrounding fields. Photo © Jen Deadman

Materials and detail

- Timber-frame, including cruck framing, was subject to extensive rebuilding from the late 18th century, using sandstone or limestone with red pantile roofs. There are some very rare remnants of generally 17th-century or earlier timber-frame – the latter often surviving as cruck-framed buildings with later stone infill or cladding.

- The limestone belt of the lower foothills between Pickering and Helmsley was widely employed for building purposes, although inferior to the sandstone. The same series of rocks also provided roofing materials and lime for mortar and plaster.

- In the south these have rubble walls of small roughly-shaped stones of limestone or sandstone, either coursed or randomly laid. Coarser rubble is often used on the side and rear of a farmhouse or working building, with finer coursed and squared material on the front elevation.

- Further north the better-quality building stone is reflected in the almost universal use of more regularly coursed and worked squared sandstone with tooled faces.

- Roughly dressed rubble continued in use in the 18th and 19th centuries but more regular finished stone became more common. In the south, even the limestone was often cut into blocks of brick-like proportions sometimes combined with sandstone quoins and details. Dressed squared sandstone rubble gave an even appearance to a wall although the evenness varied with the type of tooling.

- Coarse diagonal tooling was often employed in the 17th century, and a scutched tooling occurs sporadically from the late 17th century onwards. In the mid- to late 18th and 19th centuries, however, the most widespread type was herringbone tooling.

- Stone slates (locally ‘theaksteeans’) were used from early times and were popular in and near the limestone zone along the southern border of the North York Moors.

- There are some very rare surviving traces of heather thatch as in the other northern uplands. Thatch consisted of rye or wheat straw, but reeds, rushes, heather and bracken were all used.

- From the 17th century red pantiles became available in increasing quantities and were extensively produced locally by the late 19th century. Many thatched roofs were replaced with pantiles in Victorian times. The North York Moors forms part of one of the two major areas for the distribution of pantiles in England, extending into north-east England and south-east Scotland: the other area in lowland Somerset, where Bridgwater was a manufacturing centre.

- Well-preserved detail includes plank-hinged and sliding doors, wooden hit-and-miss ventilations to upper floor granaries and mixing rooms, and original door and window fitments. Window detail includes horizontal sliding sashes to some working buildings, these being a feature of small-scale domestic architecture in this region up to the mid-19th century.

Coarse diagonal tooling. Photo © Jen Deadman

Scutched tooling. Photo © Jen Deadman

Herring bone tooling. Photo © Jen Deadman

Herring bone tooling with milled edges.
Photo © Jen Deadman

Historic England

This guidance has been prepared by Jeremy Lake with Jen Deadman.

First published by Historic England 2013. This edition published by Historic England 2020.

Please refer to this document as:
Historic England 2020 Farmstead and Landscape Statement: North Yorkshire Moors and Cleveland Hills. Swindon: Historic England.

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Product code: 52139 RRL code: 029/2020
Publication date: February 2020
Design: Historic England and Chantal Freeman, Diva Arts