



Historic England

Farmstead and Landscape Statement

Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe

NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA 37



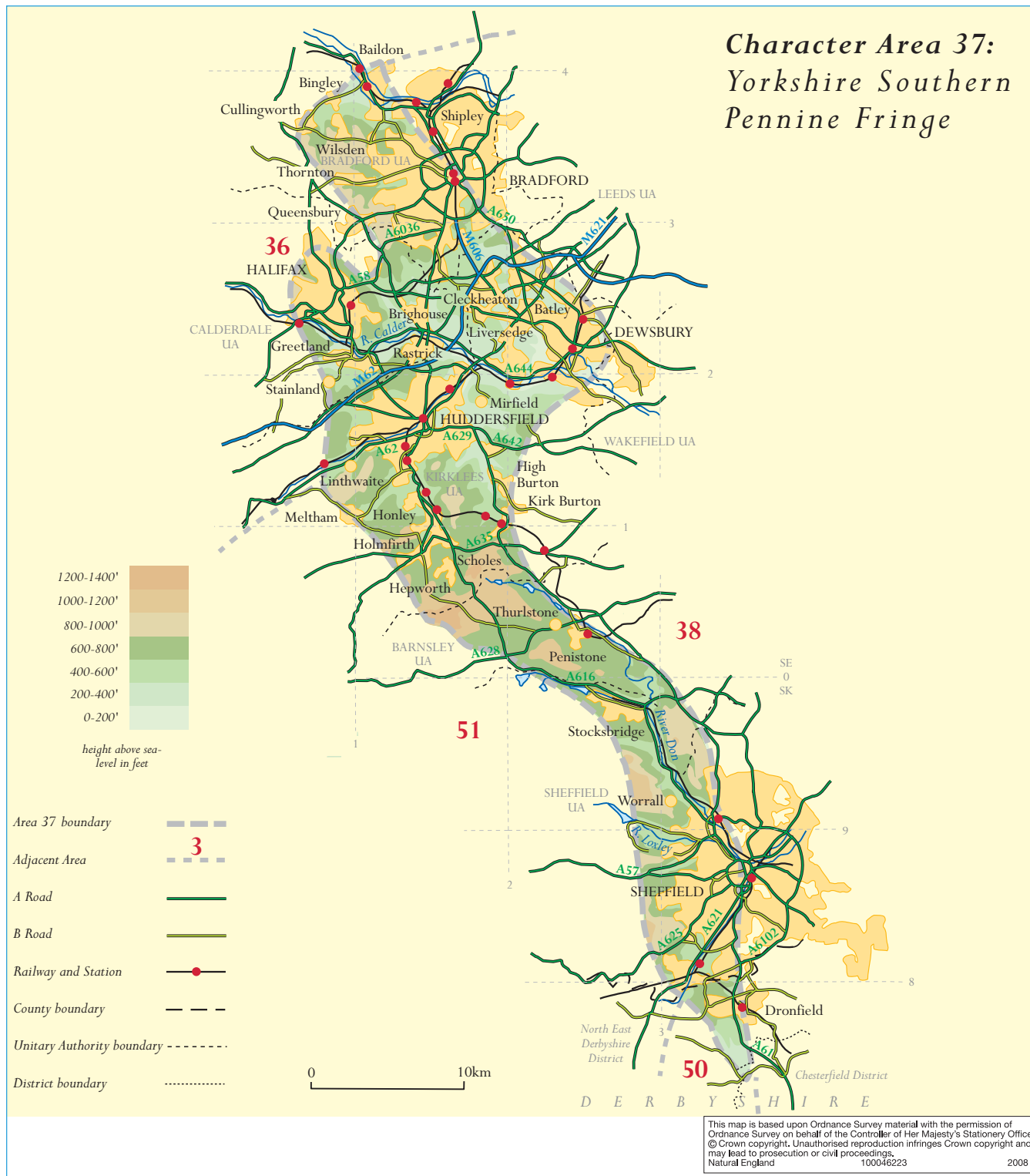
Introduction

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>).



A valleyside farmstead to the south of Meltham, the late 17th-century house facing into the valley and adjoining a combination barn which contained most functions of the farmstead. Photo © Jeremy Lake

Front cover: Two farmsteads at the hamlet of Raynor House to the south of Stocksbridge, including a 16th-century cruck barn. Photo © Historic England 28598/051



This map shows the Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe, with the numbers of the neighbouring National Character Areas around it.

Summary

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

This is a transitional area, lying along the eastern flanks of the Southern Pennines, extending between Bradford and Sheffield. About 37% of the area is defined as urban, 66% is under cultivation and 8% is woodland.

Historic character

- The character of this area is very similar to that of the Southern Pennines (NCA 36) and the Dark Peak (NCA 51).
- Linear farmsteads predominate, with dispersed layouts at the meeting point of routeways and some – particularly on manorial and gentry sites – developing into courtyards. These are set in landscapes that mostly result from the piecemeal enclosure of woodland and moorland from the medieval period, and from the 18th- and 19th-century, regular enclosure of moorland and reorganisation of farmland. The influence of estates, in estate villages, planned farmsteads set in regular enclosures and country houses, is more evident than in the Southern Pennines.
- The building stock is dominated by combination barns and housing for cattle, and construction in stone and slate with remnants of earlier timber- and cruck-frames.

Significance

The area has a lower survival of traditional farmsteads than in the Southern Pennines. Of special significance in a national context are:

- farmsteads that have retained their historic layout with 18th-century and earlier buildings
- cruck-framed and aisled buildings
- combination barns and cattle housing from the 18th century and earlier
- field barns of pre-19th-century date, which are very rare; those which survive being within now-rare, species-rich, hay meadows
- farmsteads with evidence for textile production, for example in the form of loom-shop windows.

Present and future issues

- In this National Character Area, the Photo Image Project (2006) recorded a high proportion of listed working farm buildings converted to non-agricultural use (48.5%, the national average being 32%). The project also recorded an above-average percentage (17.8%, the national average being 7.5%) of listed working farm buildings that show obvious signs of structural disrepair.

Historic development

- The valleys in this area have been used as communication routes from the prehistoric period, and as elsewhere in the Pennines, there is evidence for prehistoric land use and settlement that is preserved best on moorland and in some of the late-enclosed valley sides. Packhorse routes developed in the medieval and post-medieval period.
- Sale of cloth from this area enabled the importation of food, with the woollen towns of Halifax (strong growth as a market centre from the 15th century), Huddersfield (strong growth in the 18th century as a commercial centre for industries in Colne and Holme valleys), Wakefield (a cloth centre up to the 17th century, developing as an administrative centre from the late 19th century) and Bradford (its greatest growth of 1811 to the 1830s linked to worsted industry) growing from marketing to production centres. The textile industry, at first home- and sometimes farm-based, was increasingly factory based and steam powered from the late 18th century, and boosted by the development of canals from the 1760s. Sheffield developed around the cutlery and steel industries, at first involving farmsteads in small production which in some cases survived into the early 20th century.
- The area has specialised in livestock and its production since the 13th century. Farming landscapes dominate the centre of the area, with the smaller towns of Penistone and Holmfirth developing as markets from the 13th century or earlier. Pastoral farming (sheep, beef and some dairying) has dominated land use in the west of the area, giving way in places to arable cultivation on mixed soils derived from mudstone, silts and sandstone in the east.

Landscape and settlement

- Settlement is marked by high densities of dispersal, with hamlets typically set around commons and greens and farmsteads along trackways; early hall-church foci at the heart of settlements are another distinctive feature. Industrialisation, especially in the late 18th and 19th centuries, led to the nucleation of some settlements.
- The distinctive pattern of small and irregular fields – bounded by dry stone walls to the west, and increasingly hedges towards the east – results from a long history of piecemeal enclosure, including those enclosed from woodland prior to the 14th century, with intake encroachment associated with the construction of new farmsteads and those developed in the 17th and 18th centuries as weavers' subsistence plots. Medieval arable land and meadows were concentrated in closes or small common fields around individual settlements, separated by stock-proof boundaries, from an 'outfield' area of less productive pasture which was subject to communal control. Walled tracks extend from the valley bottoms to the open moorland for summer grazing.
- Regular enclosures are mostly associated with the taking in of moorland for pasture and arable from the later 18th century, and sometimes the building of new farmsteads and the redevelopment of earlier ones.
- Ancient woodland is concentrated in valley sides, with internal subdivision (in the form of banks) for coppicing and evidence for charcoal-burning platforms and white-coal (dried wood) kilns for supply to lead smelters.

Farmstead and building types

The area has a rich range of historic domestic and farmstead architecture, from aisled, 15th- and 16th-century houses and barns to a strong, vernacular tradition with mullioned windows, that continued into the 19th century. Many farmhouses retain evidence for cruck-framing (continuing until the mid-17th century) and for the re-use of crucks within houses rebuilt in stone. Many farmhouses were provided with dairies, and also with loomshops on upper floors or in their lower ends.

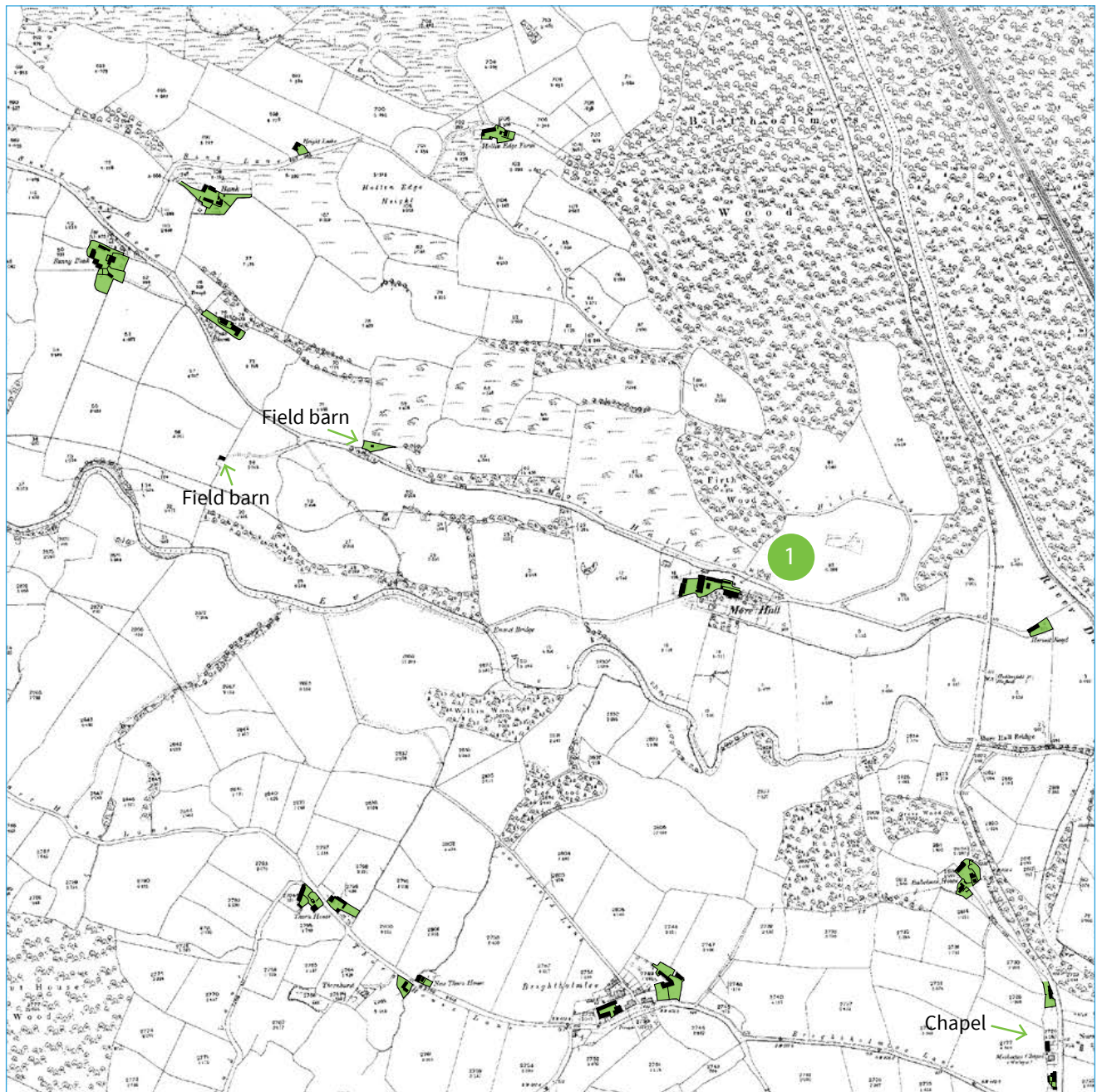
Farmstead types

- Linear farmsteads, either the result of gradual development or building in a single phase, are the most prominent type of farmstead in the landscape. Also common are groups that developed as L-plan ranges and as courtyards with working buildings to two or three sides of the yard. The largest farms, and typically the earliest, with a long history as gentry or other high-status farms, developed from at least the 15th century around courtyards and with dispersed multiple yards at the meeting point of routeways.

Building types

Housing for cattle tied in stalls, and storage for hay, dominates the traditional farmsteads of this area with the exception of some areas where barns for threshing and larger stables and cart sheds met the requirements of larger-scale arable farming.

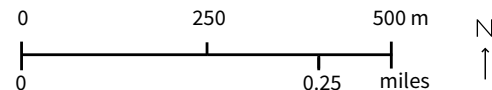
- Cruck-framed and aisled barns are often reclad and extended and include some large-scale examples on high-status sites, for example the early 17th-century aisled barn at Shibden Hall near Halifax and the mid-16th-century barn at Gunthwaite Hall.
- There are many medium-scale cruck barns, often with integral outshots with aisles open to a 'nave'.
- There is high survival of small (three-bay) cruck-framed barns either on small farms (which survived in this area due to poor soils, proximity to industrial areas and by-employment) or re-used as cattle housing on larger steadings.
- Combination barns include some dating from the 17th century on high-status sites, with cattle housing accessed by side or gable-end doors and integral outshots.
- Combination barns can have gable-end doors to cow houses, and are also found with doors in the side walls for a cart entry, stables and cattle housing.
- Outshots for cattle are a common feature of barns, either additional or original – the latter often with internal stone piers to aisles.
- L-shaped cattle ranges with stabling date from the 17th century.
- The area has some field barns for in-wintering cattle and some outfarms with threshing barns and cattle yards on higher ground, although these are less common than on other Pennine areas.



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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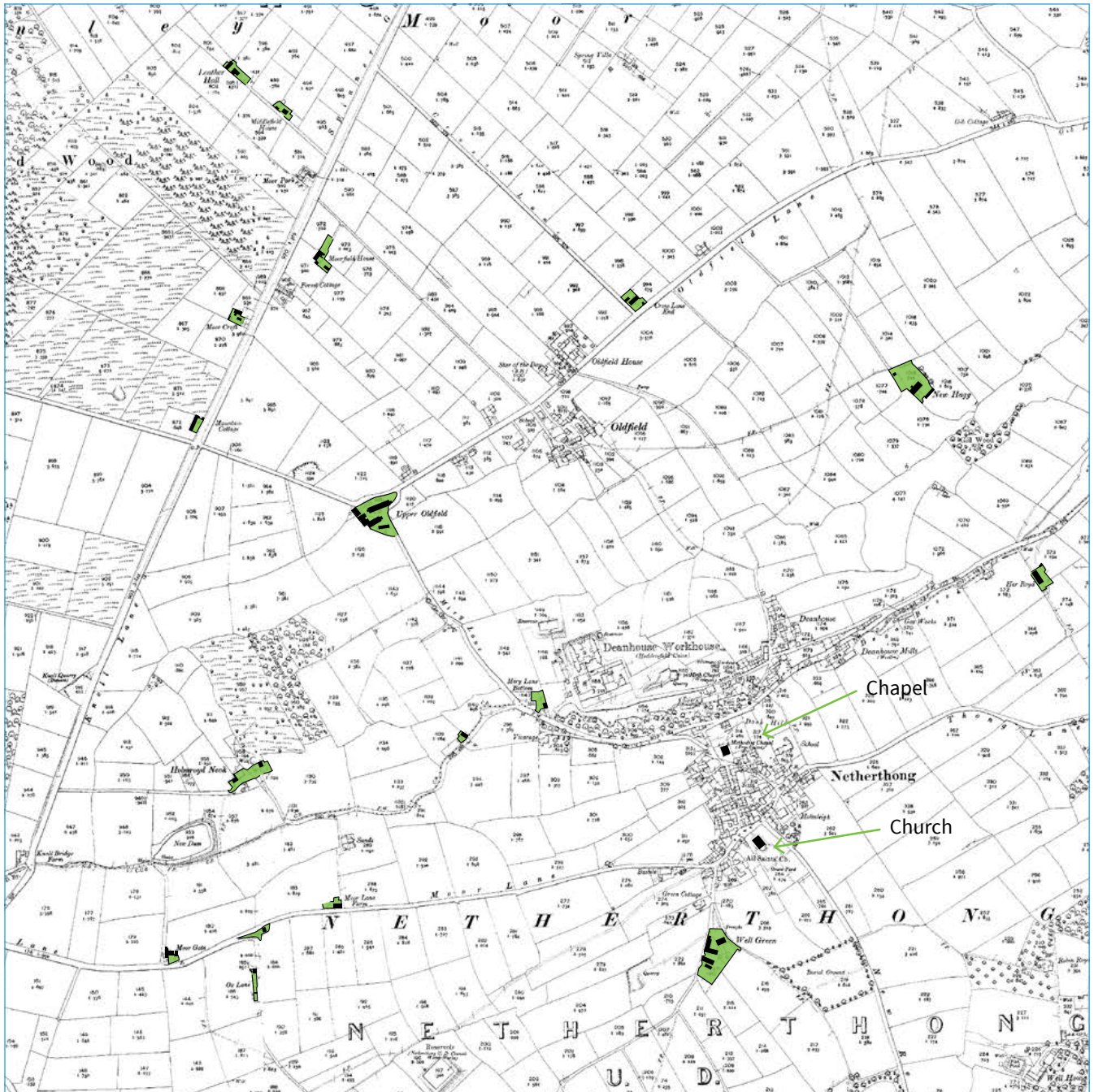


Farmstead, showing the buildings in black and the boundaries of the main yards (highlighted in green), working areas and gardens.



Wharncliffe

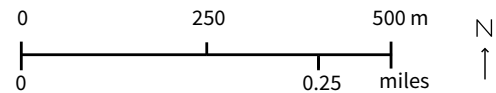
A landscape of medieval to 17th-century farmsteads, set within irregular and semi-regular fields spanning the same period. The timbers used for building the farmhouse at Old Hall Farm in Brightholmlee to the south, for example, for felled in 1484. Subsequently in the 17th century the house was extended with a chamber block encased in stone with two gables to the front elevation, indicating that a first-floor was inserted at this time. The combination barns – with pigsties added to them – facing the road were built in the 17th and early to mid-18th centuries, one of them having an aisle across its rear elevation. In this area, larger farms such as this working a mix of arable and pasture developed with working buildings to two or more sides of yards or as dispersed multi-yards. Mere Hall (1) is another late 17th-century farmhouse which was remodelled with a south-facing front in the early 19th century, when the regular L-plan arrangement of farm buildings was built in association with the regular enclosure of fields extending towards the river that drains into the River Don to the east.



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



Netherthong

Netherthong developed as an industrial settlement over the 18th and 19th centuries, with mills, a gasworks, a workhouse, a Wesleyan chapel (a very early example, built in 1771) and a church built in 1829-30. This period witnessed the enclosure of Honley Moor to the north of Oldfield, a medieval hamlet developed as a small, industrial settlement with row houses and 'weavers' windows' for lighting loomshops. Weavers' windows form part of the later 18th- and early 19th-century rebuilding and building of houses and farms across this area, most farmsteads comprising small-scale dispersed-plan and linear farmsteads.



Some of the most substantial 15th- to 17th-century farms, as here at Brighthouse Towngate, have substantial houses adjoining aisled barns with cattle stalled in the aisles. Photo © Jeremy Lake



Two, late 17th-century linear farmsteads, rebuilt in the early to mid-19th century but retaining their strong traditional form and detail (including carved kneelers to the gable ends and mullioned windows) at Oldfield to the south of Holmfirth. Photo © Jeremy Lake



A linear farmstead in the north of the area. The 18th-century house, with probable earlier origins, adjoins an agricultural range rebuilt in the early 19th century with stables, cattle housing and hay storage. Photo © Jen Deadman



This mid-19th-century farmstead is typical of some farms dating from the mid-18th century, in having its house set parallel to a combination barn. Photo © Jen Deadman



Courtyard farmsteads, as here at Elmley Moor to the east of the area, are unusual and may represent the high point of arable farming in the mid-19th century. This example has the house to the left of a yard with a large combination barn and a stable/cart shed range. Photo © Jeremy Lake



Single-storey threshing barns, dating from the 18th century and earlier as here at Shelley, are far less common than the substantial, storeyed combination barns which brought different functions under one roof and were increasingly built from the later 18th century. Photo © Jeremy Lake



A landscape of scattered farmsteads to the south of Oldfield, mostly dating from the late 18th century and set within a landscape of reorganised regular enclosure with a mix of thorn hedgerows and drystone walls. In the foreground are the remains of a 19th-century field barn for cattle. Photo © Jeremy Lake

Materials and detail

- Sandstone and gritstone are the predominant building materials, with a greater use of finished stone for quoins, lintels and kneelers to stone copings from the later 18th century.
- Roofs are of sandstone slates, laid in diminishing courses to roofs, with Welsh slate introduced from the late 18th century.
- There are remnants of generally 16th-century or earlier timber-frame – the latter often surviving as cruck-framed buildings with later stone infill and as aisled structures, again with later infill and cladding.



Historic England

This guidance has been prepared by
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Please refer to this document as:
Historic England 2020 Farmstead and Landscape
Statement: Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe.
Historic England: Swindon

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Product code: 52151 RRL code: 041/2020

Publication date: February 2020 © Historic England

Design: Historic England and Chantal Freeman, Diva
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