7863 Farmsteads in the Suffolk Countryside

FINAL REPORT

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SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE

7863 - Farmsteads in the Suffolk Countryside

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Front Image: Extracts from the 1886 1st edition Ordnance Survey maps

Aerial image of Yew Tree Farm, Laxfield © Google Earth

Non-technical Summary

Suffolk, as a rural county, has many historic farm buildings. The vast majority of them are not listed buildings, but they contribute to the historic landscape and also hold valuable evidence about changing rural life. In many cases, their significance has not been systematically assessed.

Between 2018 and 2022, with funding from Historic England, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service undertook a project to add information about the historic farmsteads to the county Historic Environment Record (www.heritage.suffolk.gov.uk). The project was designed to capture information about these historic buildings, and to raise awareness of them to all who may be involved in the planning process. Where development proposals such as conversion or even demolition could potentially affect historic buildings, we are aiming, through the project, to help ensure that changes can be sympathetically managed. The project data can also inform research.

This report presents the background to the project, our methodology, and insights we gained into the survival of building and rates of change. It also presents some broad historical patterns we have observed in the data.

The report can be read in conjunction with our presentation, available online, which provides further case studies.

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1.0 Introduction and background

1.1 Introduction

A high proportion of the built heritage assets in the countryside of Suffolk consist of farmsteads, which are, for the most part, unlisted or outside designated conservation areas. Given this, and as is set out in this report, the *Farmsteads in the Suffolk Countryside* project responded to a need for action to broaden the information base of these buildings, and to build on established local practice in implementing current national and local planning policies that relate to Non-designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs). Towards securing sustainable development of these valuable elements of the county's heritage, the intended legacy of the project is that these assets are more appropriately understood and managed in the planning process, in a timely and effective manner.

Section 1 gives the background to the work. It summarises the context of the project as one of a suite carried out nationally. It also presents Suffolk's natural geography, which was a factor in shaping the historic landscape development and hence the nature of farm buildings. The section then discusses previous work on farmsteads in the county and broadly summarises its findings. Finally, it sets out details of the previous baseline data and the need for reflecting on the management of these buildings in the planning process.

Section 2 sets out the project aims and objectives, and Section 3 the methodology used for identifying and categorising farmsteads for inclusion in the Historic Environment Record.

Section 4 presents some high level results from the project data, drawing out patterns in the survival of historic farm buildings that are of historic interest in terms of their development, and also their survival. Section 5 draws out these themes and provides an initial commentary on the data in the context of previous work in the county and nationally, and Section 6 presents a conclusion and pointers for further research, highlighting how the project results can support the planning process.

Detailed analysis and research, and detailed case studies of individual buildings, were both beyond the scope of the project.

1.2 Previous projects/ National background to the project

The project has been generously funded by Historic England (HE), and it is one of a suite of national and regional Farmstead Characterisation studies. The work, a strand of Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC),[1] represents HE's development of new ways to understand the historic character, survival and use of farmsteads and their significance to England's landscapes (HELM 2009, Lake 2014 and 2015, and, e.g., Preece and Rimmington 2008, Edwards and Lake 2010 and 2015, Partington, McIntosh and Lake 2015, Johnson *et al* 2018).

The landscape and evidential value of farmsteads generally, as well as information on character and historical development in the Eastern region, is set out in HE's *Historic*

[1] https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/rural-heritage/farm-buildings/farmstead-characterisation/

Farmsteads Preliminary Character statement East of England Region.[2] This a valuable resource and source of information on themes such as: regional settlement patterns (a mixture of villages, hamlets and dispersed farmsteads, many clustered round commons or greens); economic bases (mixed farming, with areas of specialisation and of clayland historically suited to dairying); historical changes (e.g. the coming of the railways in the 19th century and an increasing role provisioning London); building materials (clay lump, timber-framing, and later brick, with thatch and later tile); farmstead type (generally with detached farmhouses in comparison, to, for example, the north and west of the country, and with early survivals) (Lake and Edwards 2006). This work, which we only have scope to summarise so briefly here, provides the broad context for study of Suffolk's farmsteads.

1.3 The Suffolk Landscape

The national characterisation work emphasises that the character of farm buildings and their development is intricately linked to the needs of farming practices and the rural economy, in turn linked to historic patterns in the development of fields and settlement that are influenced by landscape. The availability of building materials also influences local and regional building form and appearance. Within the national context of upland and lowland landscapes, Suffolk, in East Anglia, is an agricultural county, within Natural England (NE)/Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)'s 'Eastern arable' Agricultural Landscape Type. This is characterised by the development, after c.1750, of agricultural landscapes associated with large corn-producing farms and courtyard farmsteads, but often retaining earlier enclosed fields and buildings (Lake 2014, 20).

However, within this, the county, which stretches from the Cambridgeshire chalk and fens in the west, the Norfolk Broads to the north-west and to the shingle shores of the East coast, has a varied landscape. This can be elegantly captured in extracts from the works of two scholars of the county. On Suffolk's character, Norman Scarfe wrote in *The Suffolk Landscape* that:

> '…one soon comes to recognise and identify a landscape of cornfields, scattered farms and villages and flint-towered medieval churches. Many of its farmhouses and churches face up to the cold winds of winter and springtime that blow over the North Sea and across marshes and heaths and clay plateaux, but usually they have been found some shelter in the depths of a small valley of willows or a fold in the clay' (1972, 24).

In the *Historical Atlas of Suffolk,* Edward Martin wrote that:

> 'It has long been recognised that Suffolk contains several distinct regions and landscapes, which are largely the products of different soils… About two-thirds of the county is covered by a great mantle of chalky boulder clay… the clayland to the north is flat with wide interfluves, but to the south it is much more

[2] https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-farmsteads-preliminary-character-statement-east-of-england/

dissected by streams. Flanking the clay are two large areas of sandy soils. In the west, these cover chalk…while in the extreme northwest the sands dip under the peats of the fen basin. In the east, great expanses of sand overlie crag deposits, except in the Shotley and Felixstowe peninsulas, where the covering is a wind blown loess' (1999, 20).

National Character Areas[3] (NE 2014) have been developed for understanding landscape, and they are areas that share similar characteristics which follow the natural environment rather than administrative boundaries. They are a useful tool, and NCA areas within Suffolk that reflect the geography summarised above are: Suffolk Coast and Heaths (NCA number 82); South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands (83); the South Suffolk and North Essex claylands (86); Breckland (85); the Fens (46); East Anglian chalk (87); and The Broads (80) (*ibid*, 21-3). These are returned to in Section 5, below, and form the background for any research into the character of farm buildings in the county.

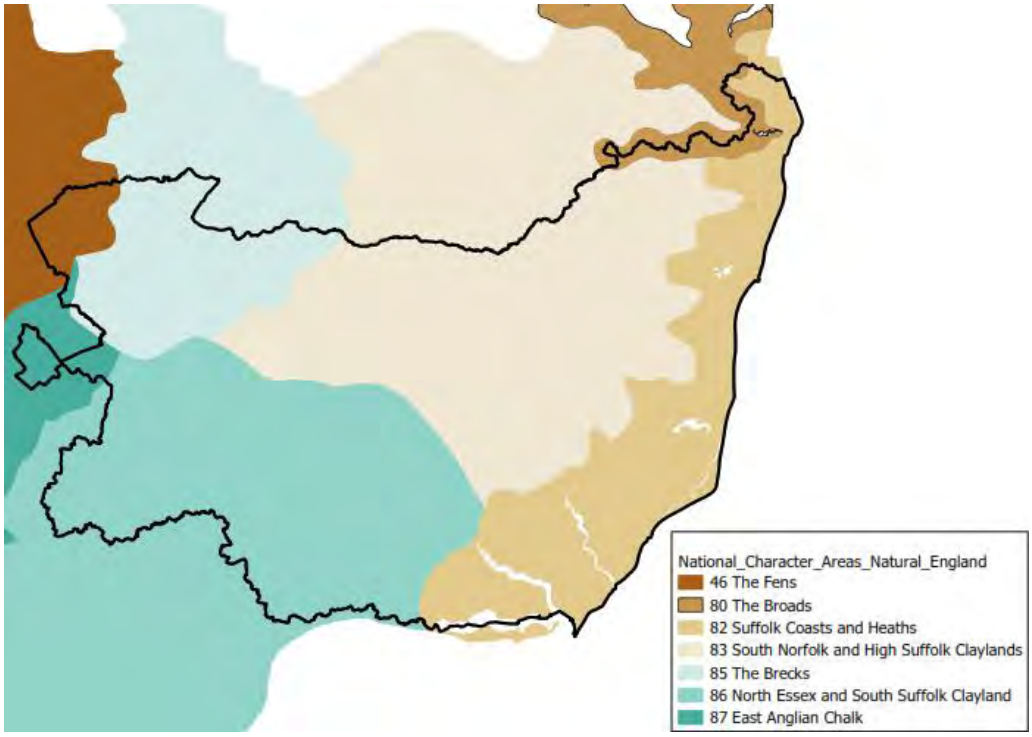


Figure 1: Map of the Natural England national character areas in Suffolk

1.4 Understanding Suffolk's Farmsteads

The National Heritage List includes around 3700 listed farmhouses, barns and agricultural buildings, ranging from the medieval period to c.1950. Despite the relatively high number of listed buildings, a significantly larger proportion of historic farm buildings are undesignated and under-researched, although high-level work has been undertaken. The 'Farmstead and

[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles

Landscape Statement' (FLS) for each National Character Area (NCA) provides an overview of the characteristics of farmsteads and historic landscapes within it, and are recommended also as a brief illustrated introduction to the areas[4]. In brief, and to set the scene, key areas are:

- The Fens, which have a wide variety of farmstead types, in villages on low former banks or islands, or isolated in former fens and marshes where they are tied to patterns of droves and embankments (but with rare buildings pre-dating 1750), with piecemeal enlargement and improvement of holdings, high levels of survival and adaption, and occasional field barns and out farms and 19th century workers cottages (Lake 2020d, 4).

- The Broads, where barns, stables and cattle housing reflect mixed agriculture on the edge of marshland, with a trend to farmsteads on higher ground and upper parts of valleys and a low density of traditional farmsteads in the drained marshlands; with monastic and early drainage schemes and some high status barns, with cattle housing added to earlier buildings; and with combined cattle housing and turnip stores (Lake 2020c,4).

- Suffolk Coast and Heaths, which has seen major historical changes, with early clearance of woodland to form heaths and sheepwalks, to a current trend to irrigated crops and diminishing heath since the 18th century, enclosure of earlier open fields in the 18th and 18th centuries which saw some new farms, and a tendency for large farms incorporating several soil types as a result of poor soil, often with outfarms and fieldbarns on marsh and heath (for grazing cows and sheep respectively); with fewer early buildings than the neighbouring clays (Lake 2020b; 4).

- South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands, an area of mixed settlement with nucleated villages particularly in the west and along river valleys, with dispersed farmsteads and hamlets; with distinct dairying areas of smaller mixed farms and areas of arable; with significant post war changes; with often loose courtyard plan farmsteads with perhaps a cow house; with increasing 18th-19th century arable production and conversion and addition of buildings; and high survival of early buildings including early cow or 'neat houses' (Lake and Edwards 2020b; 4).

- The Brecks, an area of poor sandy soil over chalk, extensive heathland dating to Neolithic clearance; with warrening and sheep grazing and short rotations under crop, with some earlier farms on better valley soils, some pre 1800 enclosure but to the west and the heath, enclosure in the 19th century; with much of the area being in the hands of large estates by the 18th century; with some surviving field barns and 19th century farmsteads exemplifying agricultural improvement (Lake and Edwards 2020a; 4).

[4] https://historicengland.org.uk/research/current/discover-and-understand/rural-heritage/farmsteads-character/).

- South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland, an area of complex irregular landscape, with hedged closes, isolated farms, greenside hamlets and some nucleated settlements; with much woodland cleared in the 19th century and heathland enclosed in the 18th century; some surviving streamside pasture; a mixed farming area now largely arable, with a high survival of pre-1750 buildings, and some examples of early cattle housing, 18th century and earlier combination buildings, detached kitchens and hay houses. (Lake, Edwards and Podd 2020, 4-5).

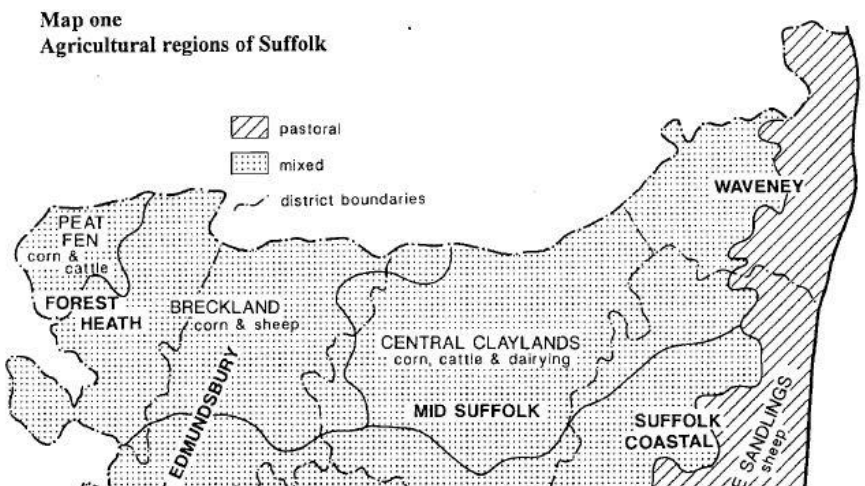
- The East Anglian Chalk, with early farmsteads developed within villages with open fields and unenclosed pasture, and nucleated villages concentrated on slope edges, river valleys and near springs; with 18th-19th century enclosure linked to the reorganisation and enlargement of farmsteads and the creation of straight roads, copses, shelter belts; with former open downland for sheep grazing increasingly converted to arable; and with some malthouses noted as being distinctive (Lake 2020a, 4).

From a county level review (Aitkens and Wade Martins 1998):, the following themes, based on recognised agricultural regions, were particularly identified from the NCAs.:

- Pre-1750 buildings survive in the central and southern claylands of Suffolk to an remarkable extent by national standards, perhaps because there was little investment in these mixed and later dairying farms until the C19th. When investment did come to these areas, it tended to be cautious and incremental change of the existing farmsteads. The most common addition were cattle yards, incorporating or adjacent to earlier barns stables and cattle buildings or "nettus" (neat houses).

- Pre-1750 buildings are largely absent from the heathland coastal lands and focused in valley bottoms on these areas.

- The coastal light lands, as well as the Brecks and Fens in the west reflect their agricultural wealth and comparative modernity with late C18th and C19th planned farmsteads.



In many areas, and the claylands in particular, these farmsteads consist of a combination of Medieval, Early Modern and Modern buildings of heritage interest. The farmsteads and even the individual buildings within them are, like the landscapes of which they are part, a palimpsest, recording economic, social and cultural changes, in rural Suffolk.

Whilst research has been done on a national and regional level regarding the character of Suffolk Farmsteads (HE 2006, Aitkens and Wade Martins 1998) (Figure 2), there was a lack of robust evidence about the condition and quantity of the resource. Systematic analysis of the resource to date has focussed on designated assets, to improve the criteria for listing (Aitkens and Wade Martins 1998) and subsequently (Aitkens and Wade Martins 2002, Wade Martins and Satchell 2002). In addition, there was an attempt to integrate the findings of this work with the HLC (Wade Martins and Satchell 2002). This was not pursued in detail because of the complexity and difficulty of doing so, although the broad themes identified above were noted . Concerted effort had in the past been made by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS) to incorporate buildings reports into the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (SHER), through various projects and tasks assigned to student placements, but this did not give systematic coverage.

To aid in the development of this project a small pilot study was carried out in a sample of 12 parishes across Suffolk, to assess the quality of existing data in the SHER. It was found that the SHER only had *c.* 750 historic farmsteads recorded out of over 36,000 records relating to archaeological remains of all periods. This under-representation was reflected in the pilot study, where out of the 257 recorded sites only 45 had an existing SHER record. The pilot project showed, even from a relatively small sample, that historic farmsteads are a dwindling resource and highlighted the lack of understanding about the rate of loss. It also showed that historically sites have been lost without being recorded.

The SHER for this asset type was, therefore, a reactive dataset. Records were only created when historic buildings reports were added to the SHER, therefore only farmsteads currently part of a planning application were being recorded. Further, there was an identified need to ensure the establishment of the potential interest and significance of farmsteads early on in an application process, through heritage statements for example, to avoid delays further

down the line (e.g. at consultation stage). In the climate of decreasing local authority resources, it should be easy to identify:

1) what further information do we need on any individual development proposals in terms of requirements from applicants?

2) strategically, how would any given proposal affect the resource, both in terms of conservation and information that should be recorded?

1.5 Managing Suffolk's Farmsteads – the current situation

Across the county there are a high number of proposals for conversion of agricultural buildings to domestic use, and proposals for demolition. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 Chapter 16, 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' gives weight to the protection and management of NDHAs in the development process. This is reflected in adopted and emerging local plan policies (Babergh and Mid Suffolk (2020) draft Joint Local Plan policy LP20 'The Historic Environment'; East Suffolk 'Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Guidance' (2021); Ipswich Emerging Local Plan 2018-2036 policy DM 13, 'Built Heritage and Conservation'; Suffolk Coastal (2020) Local Plan policies SCLP11.3, 'The Historic Environment' and SCLP11.6 'Non-Designated Heritage Assets'; Waveney Local Plan (2019) policy WLP8.27, 'The Historic Environment'; West Suffolk Joint Development Management Policies 2015, policy DM16 Local Heritage Assets and Buildings Protected by an Article 4 Direction[5]. West Suffolk Policies are older, but in the meantime, there is a 'One Stop Shop' for applications which gives information on validation requirements for different application types, and this includes non-designated heritage assets.[6]

Whilst designated assets are within the caseload of the Conservation Officers (COs)/Heritage teams working in the county's Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), to date there has been no comprehensive approach to tackling the management and conservation of NDHAs. SCCAS has a role as a consultee, providing advice to LPAs on archaeology (which is most often undesignated), with a remit that includes standing buildings. SCCAS has worked with LPAs to secure assessment and recording of agricultural buildings, through either pre-application advice or at the point of public consultation on an application, but there is a need for a more

[5] https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Waveney-Local-Plan/Adopted-Waveney-Local-Plan-including-Erratum.pdf
https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Local-Plans/Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan/Adopted-Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan/East-Suffolk-Council-Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan.pdf
https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Local-Plans/Supplementary-documents/Historic-Environment-SPD/Historic-Environment-SPD-reduced.pdf
https://www.babergh.gov.uk/assets/Strategic-Planning/JLPExamination/CoreDocLibrary/A-SubmissionDocs/A01-Part-1-Objective-and-Strategic-Policies-Part-2-Local-Policies.pdf
https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/Planning_Policies/local_plans/west-suffolk-local-plan-former-forest-heath-and-st-edmundsbury-areas.cfm
https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/sites/www.ipswich.gov.uk/files/core_strategy_and_policies_development_erratum_with_plans_0.pdf

[6] https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning_applications/

strategic and joined up approach, to facilitate advice and sustainable heritage-led development, which will be enabled by this project.

Progress in the past has been hampered by the lack of comprehensive information about the extent and condition of the existing resource. Given that most farmsteads or elements of them are, mostly, unlisted or are outside designated Conservation Areas, there was a lack of an obvious trigger for appropriate assessment of individual sites within the planning process, (for example, a polygon or point on the SHER). Although HE have produced a considerable amount of guidance about the assessment and reuse of historic farmsteads, there appears to be a lack of awareness amongst owners, planners, agents and architects about these resources and their application, and the outreach from this project is intended to highlight information available.

The apparent ubiquity and persistence of farmsteads in the landscape can lead to them being overlooked when in plain sight. Furthermore, building conversion, which can significantly reduce their heritage value and information potential, does not lead to the loss of their visible presence in the landscape, so the impacts of development proposals on what is historically significant about a building or elements of a building in terms of being examples of their type, their condition, their rarity, or their information potential, may be more nuanced. Historic farmsteads are therefore highly susceptible to change, and successful adaptive reuse is dependent on an understanding of their significance to the wider corpus and their historical and landscape context, as set out in Historic England's 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (English Heritage 2008),[7] and Historic England's Advice Note 12, 'Statements of Heritage Significance' (2019).[8]

2.0 Introduction/Framework to the project

The project is set out fully in the Project Design (PD) (Campbell 2019) and is appraised in the Closure Report (CR) (Campbell 2022). The aims and objectives are summarised below:

[7] https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/constructive-conservation/conservation-principles/
[8] https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/

2.1 Aims

The aim of the project is to evaluate the existing management of historic farmsteads and ensure a sustainable future for Suffolk farmsteads, by providing a comprehensive evidence base to support informed and reasonable decisions.

2.2 Objectives

1. Enhance the SHER to provide better data and clarity of baseline data.

2. Identify the sources and degrees of risk to the resource and how these could be mitigated.

3. Understand the scale and pace of change affecting the significance of historic farm buildings, functionally redundant vernacular buildings and small estates.

4. To clarify processes and expectations about what is reasonable and appropriate, for both officers and applicants, to allow more timely and effective delivery of advice on planning cases.

5. To aid Archaeological and Planning Officers in their decision making as to what is reasonable and appropriate in terms of the recording of buildings prior to conversion, and or reasonable/appropriate in terms of the retention of building elements.

6. To enhance skills and knowledge of built heritage within the existing team at SCCAS, and to retain that knowledge base beyond the lifetime of the project.

3.0 Methodology

This project has mapped all farmsteads, out-farms and field barns present on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map (1886), in accordance with the methodology set out in *Historic Farmsteads: a manual for mapping* (Lake and Edwards 2017). This has been slightly adapted to suit the needs of the project. Usually the farmsteads would be recorded straight into the GIS software and then imported into HBSMR however due to the parish code recording system used in Suffolk this would have meant having to individually assign each record a code when the data had been imported. Therefore it was decided to record the data directly into HBSMR using a bespoke table originally developed by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) for their project. This is the same methodology used in other farmsteads projects such as those carried out by the YDNPA (Johnson et al 2018), Herefordshire County Council (Preece and Rimmington 2008), and the Peak District National Park Authority (Edwards and Lake 2015).

In brief, this included templates for recording attributes of farmsteads and appropriate thesaurus terms. It uses 19th century mapping to capture characteristics such as layout and location, and then compares them to modern mapping to assess survival. Character/type is based on function, layout, spaces, types and locations of buildings. Other sources such as tithe maps, aerial imagery and later editions of the OS maps were used for comparison and baseline information. An example of a farmsteads record can be seen in Figure 3.

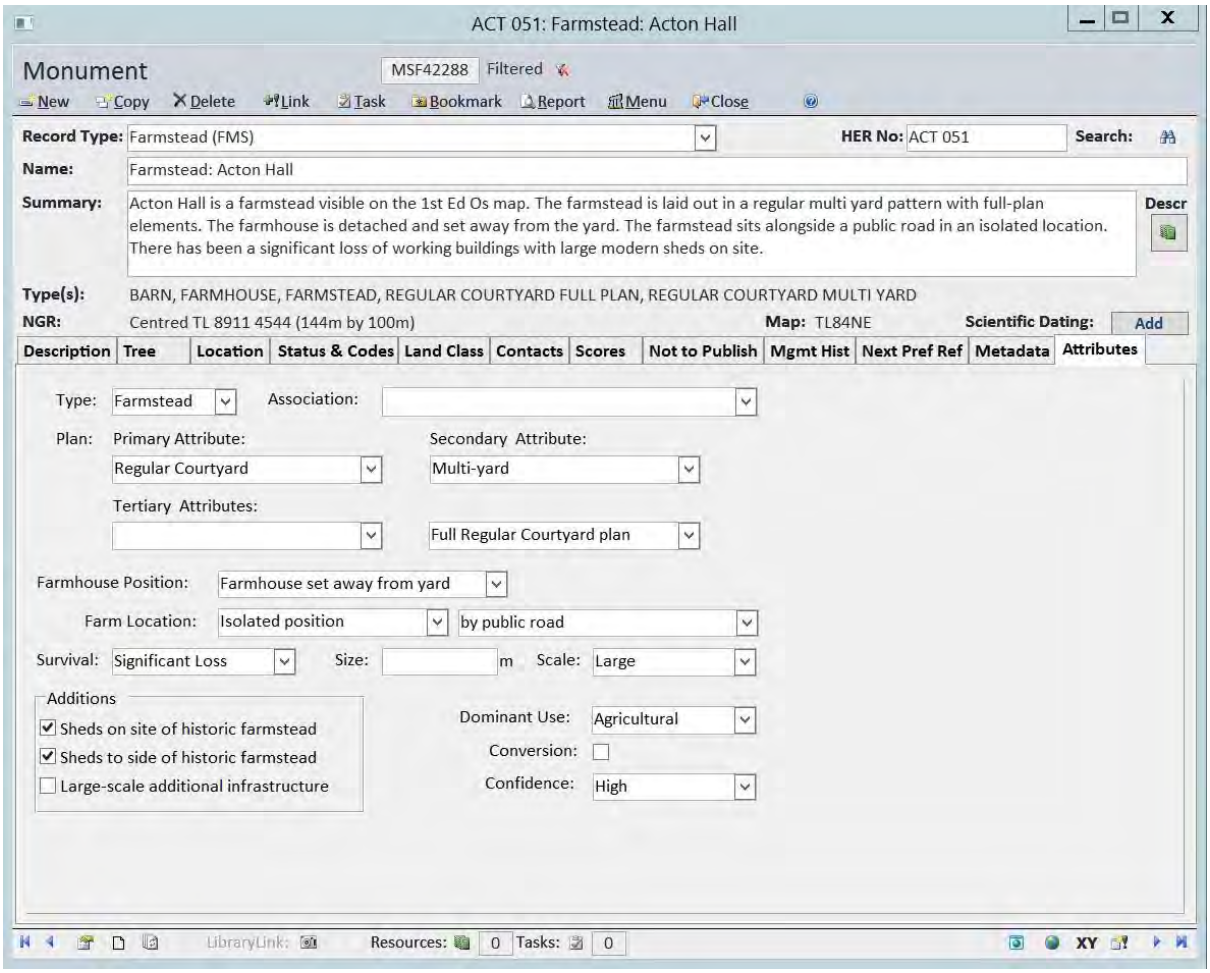
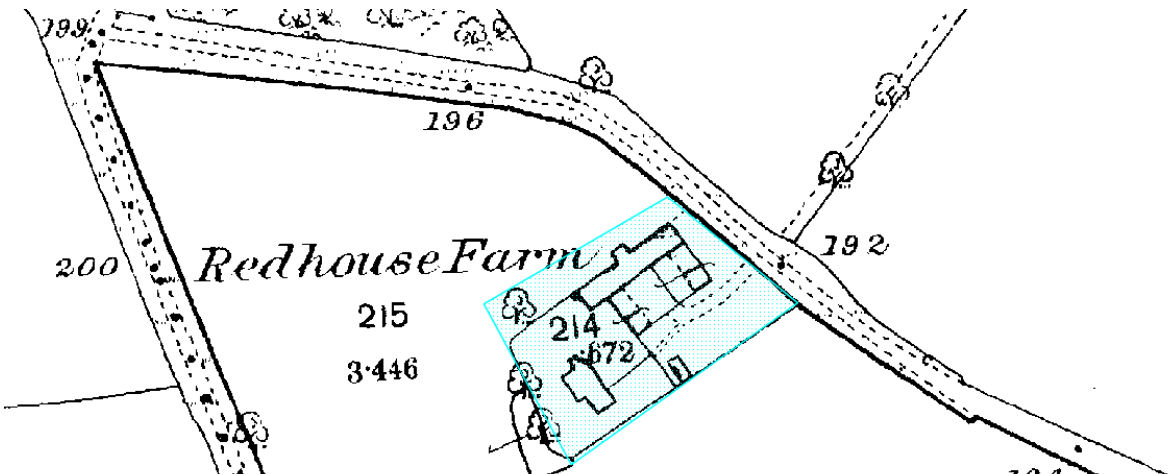


Figure 3: Screenshot of the farmsteads recording form in HBSMR

The data has been recorded in a bespoke table in our exegesis HBSMR software by kind permission of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, who originally developed it for their farmsteads project. Farmsteads were mapped as polygons around the farmstead as it was on the 1st edition OS map (Figure 4).



Suffolk County Council (SCC) has their own, although incomplete, copy of the 1st and 2nd edition OS maps and the use of these has been supplemented by use of the maps available from the National Library of Scotland (NLS) website. Where no copy of the 1st edition map exists, farmsteads have been mapped from the 2nd edition (1904). Digitised copies of the tithe maps were accessed from The Genealogist website. Aerial imagery sources included Google Earth and Google Streetview.

The data is publicly accessible, along with the rest of the SHER data on the Suffolk Heritage Explorer web page, and is also available as a standalone GIS (Geographical Information Systems) layer, which has been distributed to each district planning team. Feedback from district COs has been positive and the data has already been used in planning cases.

3.1 Identifying Farmsteads

For the full methodology please see *Historic Farmsteads a Manual for mapping* (Lake and Edwards 2009) and for the full attribute table see Appendix A.

The mapping was carried out by two members of staff, and while all attempts were made to make the recording consistent, due to the subjective nature of some of the attribute categories, some individual bias will be present. An example of this could be what one person has classified as a Loose Courtyard plan another person may have recorded it as a Regular Courtyard plan. This issue is addressed in the mapping methodology.

A farmstead consists of the farmhouse and the working buildings of a farm. Some farms may also have outfarms or field barns away from the main buildings.

Outfarms have one or more buildings set around a yard located away from the main farmstead.

Field barns are single buildings set away from the main farmstead.

- *Farmsteads Plan Form*
  The dominant character has been recorded using a combination of the primary and secondary attributes. The primary attribute records the main characteristic of the

farmstead plan: Loose Courtyard, Regular Courtyard, Linear, L-Plan (attached house), Parallel, or Row. The secondary attribute records the variations that are possible within the primary plan types. Where necessary tertiary attributes have been recorded.

- Regular Courtyards have a regular or planned appearance with buildings focused around one or more yards. The difference between a Regular- and a Loose Courtyard is the presence of linked ranges of buildings around the yard.

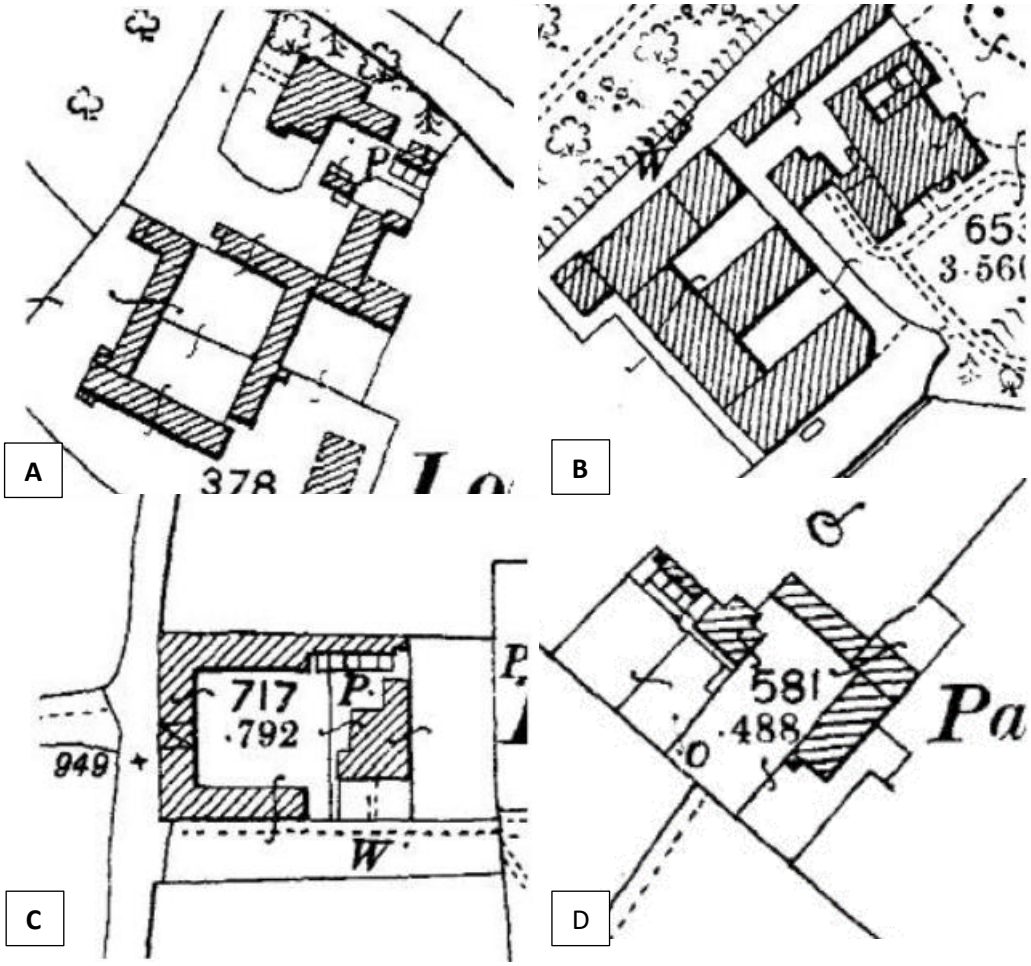


Figure 5. Examples of Regular Courtyard plan types. A: Full Courtyard; B: E-plan Courtyard; C: U-plan Courtyard; D: L-plan courtyard

- Loose Courtyards are characterised by detached farm buildings that are grouped around an area that can be defined as a yard

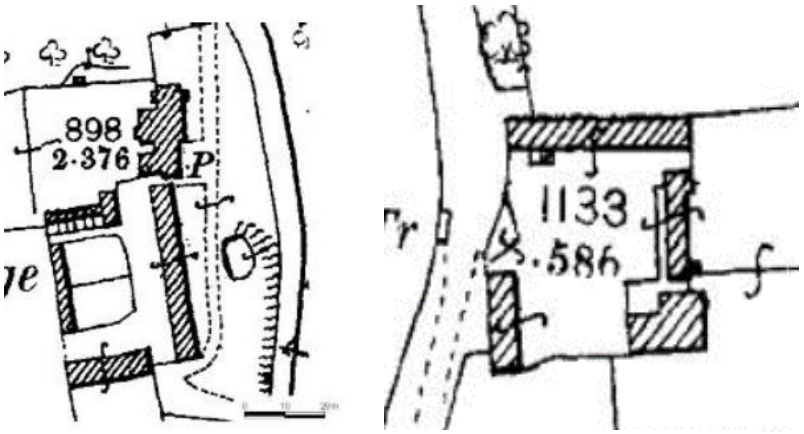


Figure 6. Examples of Loose Courtyard plans

- Dispersed plans are defined as having no main yard area

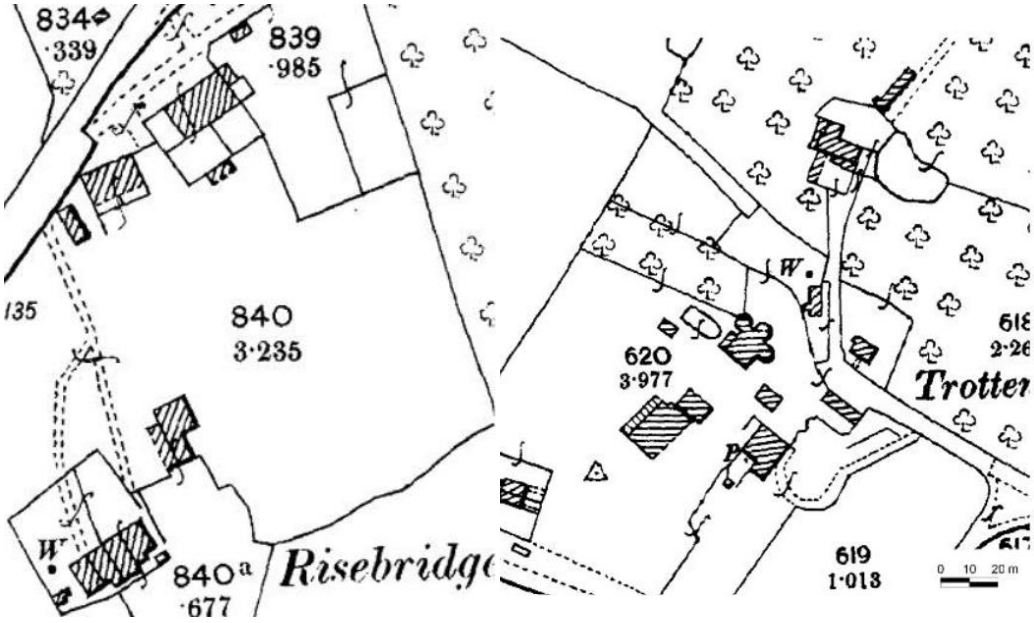


Figure 7. Examples of Dispersed plan farms

- Linear and L-Plan plans are characterised by having the farmhouse attached to the farm buildings

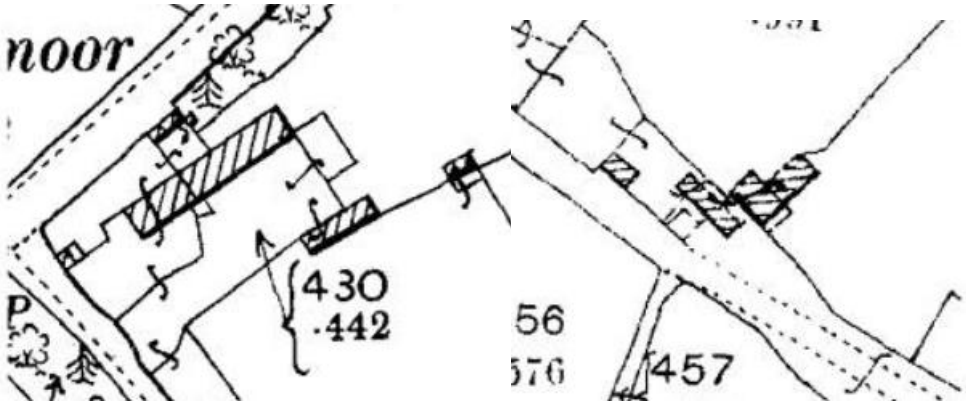


Figure 8. Examples of Linear and L-plan farms

- Parallel plans are characterised by the farmhouse and a farm building lying close together and parallel. They are differentiated from Loose Courtyard types by the narrow space between the two buildings. They are relatively uncommon.

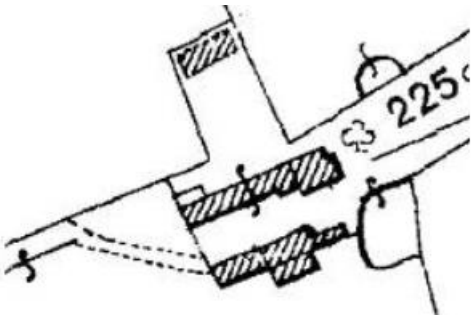


Figure 9. Example of a Parallel plan farm
© Lake and Edwards 2009

- Row plans are characterised by one or more ranges of working buildings attached in a line. Some Row plans are associated with yards areas and have a multi-yard tertiary characteristic.

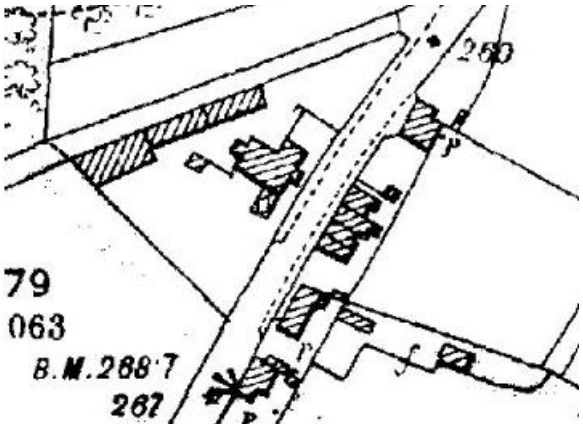


Figure 10. Example of a Row plan farm
© Lake and Edwards 2009

- *Farmstead Date*
  Where possible dating of the farm buildings has been taken from listed building records. In the absence of any listed building information the earliest date the buildings could be, from the available mapping, has been recorded. It is important to be aware that although barns and farmhouse have been recorded as 19th century, they may be older than this.

- *Farmstead Location*
  The location of the farmstead in relation to other settlements.

- *Farmhouse Position*
  The farmhouse is either attached or detached from the farm buildings. For detached farmhouses they may be either set away from the farmyard or form part of the farmyard presenting side on, or gable end on.

- *Farmstead Survival*
  The extent of change in the farmstead since the 1st edition OS map, ranging from being mostly unaltered to the farmstead being completely lost. In other instances, only the farmhouse may survive, or the site is still a working farm, but all the buildings present on the 19th century mapping have been demolished. Where there has been some loss of farm buildings these have been recorded as partial loss (less than 50%) of the buildings) or significant loss (over 50% of the buildings).

- *Farmstead size*
  This is based on the number of working buildings.

- *Modern* Sheds
  Whether there are modern buildings on the site of the historic farmstead, or to the side of it.

- *Dominant Use*
  The current use of the farmstead, either agricultural, residential, commercial or industrial. If the farmstead has been completely demolished the site has been recorded as abandoned. This information is based on modern aerial photography and where available, Google Streetview. For some farmsteads there was ambiguity over the current use was and for some categories such as retail and industrial, it was down to personal interpretation as to which category a farmstead was recorded in. The term abandoned is used here instead of the term 'lost;, which is used in the survival characteristic, to explicitly differentiate between current use of the site of the farmstead and the survival of the historic farmstead.

- *Conversion*
  Address point data (APD) was used to identify conversion of the farm buildings to residential use, this has been recorded. This is dependent on whether the conversions pre-date the address data used; any conversions post-dating this APD will not have been recorded. This data on conversions cannot therefore be taken as definitive.

4.0 Results

The Farmsteads in the Suffolk Countryside project has recorded 5886 sites in total comprising 5293 farmsteads, 317 outfarms, and 276 field barns. Only 482 were existing HER records,

meaning the project has considerably increased our understanding of historic farmsteads in Suffolk and will provide a solid evidence base for planning decisions on historic farm buildings.

The average density of farmsteads across Suffolk is 1.5 farmsteads per sq km. The density for Mid Suffolk is higher, at 2.1 farmsteads per sq. km and lower for Forest Heath at 0.7 farmsteads. This is in line with what would be expected based on landscape, soils and geology with a greater density of farmsteads across the claylands, and a lower density on the sandy soils of Suffolk Coastal (hereafter 'Coastal') and the Brecks.

	No. of farmsteads	No. per sq. km
Babergh	595	1.8
Mid Suffolk	871	2.1
Waveney	370	1.9
Coastal	891	1.5
Forest Heath	377	0.7
St Edmundsbury	657	1.2
Ipswich	39	0.9
Suffolk	3798	1.5

Table 1. Total number of farmsteads in Suffolk

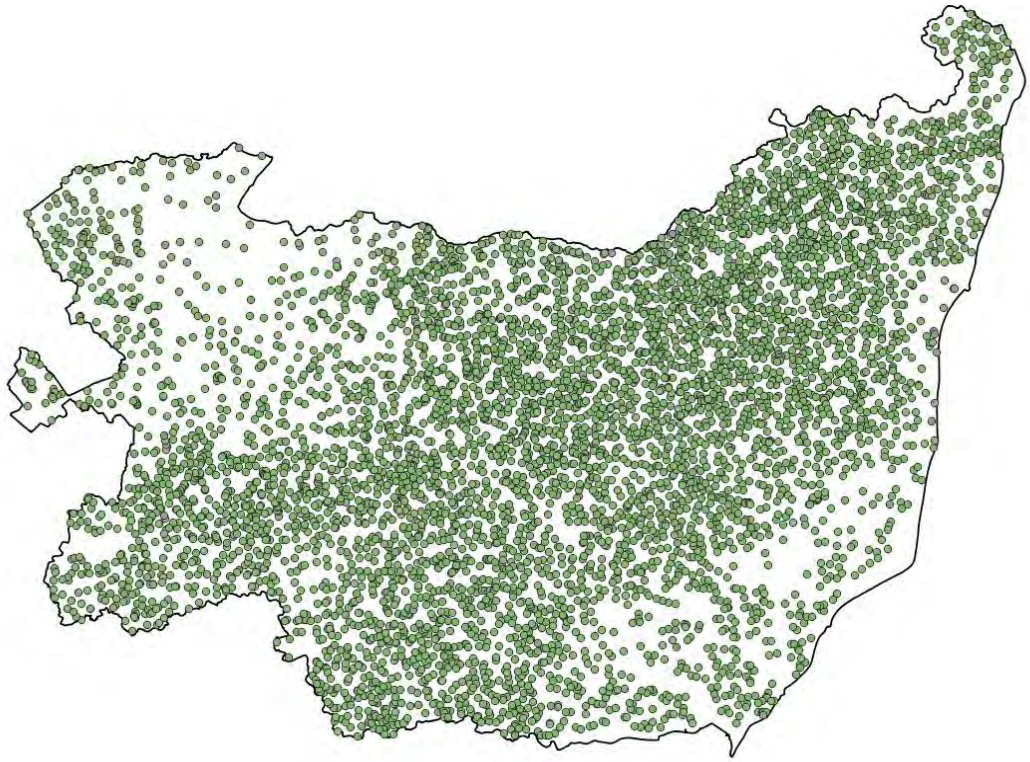


Figure 11. Map of the distribution of historic farmsteads across Suffolk

As a caveat, there are some issues in identifying farmsteads which should be borne in mind when considering the results. These are:

- The potential for missed farmsteads: recording of farmsteads has been done by each parish being scanned as methodically as possible but there is always the possibility of human error and sites being missed.
- Dating: from a desk-based review, it is difficult to tell the dates of buildings unless they are listed, and even then, the listing information may be incorrect. It is not always possible to get a clear view of the buildings from Google Streetview, and older buildings often have more modern roofs which can also make interpretation difficult. Dating has been assigned from map regression and buildings have been dated based on either listing information or the oldest map that they appear on that we have available.
- Potential recording biases, as noted above (section 3, methodology).

4.1 Type

Type	Farmstead	Outfarm	Barn
Babergh	967 (91%)	43 (4%)	50 (5%)
Mid Suffolk	1702 (91.25%)	138 (7.4%)	26 (1.4%)
Ipswich	35 (97.2%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.8%)
Coastal	1146 (88.1%)	50 (3.8%)	105 (8.1%)
Waveney	598 (87.2%)	39 (5.7%)	49 (7.1%)
Forest Heath	258 (92.1%)	13 (4.6%)	9 (3.2%)
St Eds	742 (90.7%)	37 (4.5%)	39 (4.8%)
Suffolk	5293 (89.9%)	317 (5.4%)	276 (4.7%)

Table 2. Site type results

Field barns are less common in Mid Suffolk than across Suffolk as a whole, whereas they are more common in Coastal and Waveney districts. On the whole, field barns are not frequently found in Suffolk. Farmsteads are the most common site type.

4.2 Plan

Plan	Dispersed	Loose Courtyard	Regular Courtyard	Single building	Other	Uncertain

Babergh	80 (7.5%)	125 (11.8%)	758 (71.5%)	51 (4.8%)	46 (8%)	0 (0%)
Mid Suffolk	125 (6.7%)	261 (14%)	1424 (76.3%)	39 (2.1%)	15 (0.9%)*	2 (0.1%)
Ipswich	2 (5.6%)	2 (5.6%)	30 (83.3%)	1 (2.8%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.8%)
Coastal	36 (2.8%)	78 (6%)	998 (76.7%)	82 (6.3%)	106 (8.2%)	1 (0.1%)
Waveney	19 (2.8%)	34 (5%)	546 (79.6)	43 (6.3%)	44 (6.5%)	0 (0%)
Forest Heath	8 (2.9%)	37 (13.2%)	207 (73.9%)	9 (3.2%)	19 (6.7%)	0 (0%)
St Eds	48 (5.9%)	81 (9.9%)	598 (73.1%)	40 (4.9%)	51 (6.3%)	0 (0%)
Suffolk	309 (5.2%)	600 (10.2%)	4436 (75.4%)	262 (4.5%)	275 (4.7%)	4 (0.1%)

Regular Courtyard plan is the most common plan type for all of Suffolk, followed by a Loose Courtyard plan type.

Loose Courtyard plans are much less common in Coastal, Waveney and Ipswich.

There are very low percentages of the other plan types e.g Row, Linear etc.

DISP plan	cluster	multi-yard	driftway
Babergh	71 (88.8%)	7 (8.8%)	0 (0%)
Mid Suffolk	85 (68%)	40 (32%)	0 (0%)
Ipswich	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Coastal	29 (80.6%)	5 (13.9%)	2 (5.6%)
Waveney	17 (89.5%)	2 (10.5%)	0 (0%)
Forest Heath	7 (87.5%)	1 (12.5%)	0 (0%)
St Eds	46 (95.8%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Suffolk	250 (80.9%)	53 (17.2%)	2 (0.6%)

Table 4. Dispersed plan type results

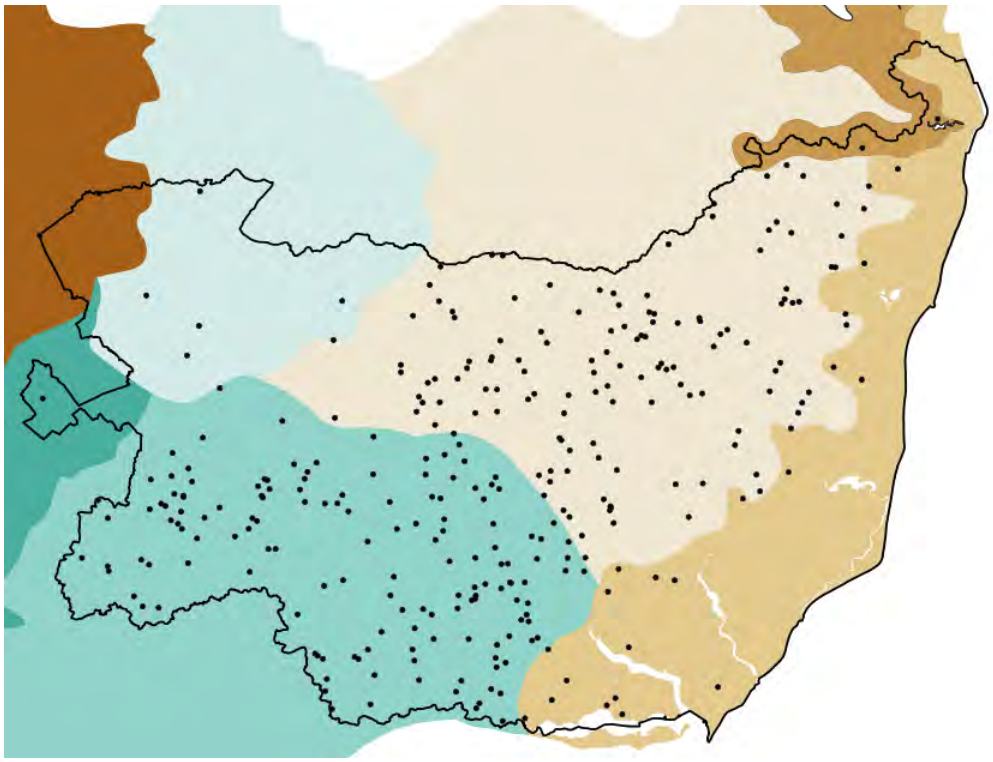


Figure 12: Distribution map of dispersed plan types

Dispersed plan type was the third most common plan type for Suffolk. There are three secondary characteristics for the Dispersed plan the most common of which is Dispersed Cluster plan. Mid Suffolk had a lower percentage of Dispersed Cluster plan than the rest of Suffolk but a higher percentage of Dispersed Multi-yard plans. This is likely linked to farmsteads generally being larger in Mid Suffolk than the rest of the county. Dispersed driftway plans are very uncommon with only two instances being recorded, in Coastal.

LC plan	1-sided	2-sided	3-sided	4-sided
Babergh	5 (4%)	37 (29.6%)	38 (30.4%)	24 (19.2%)
Mid Suffolk	12 (4.6%)	113 (43.5%)	80 (30.7%)	56 (21.5%)
Ipswich	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Coastal	5 (5.1%)	29 (37.2%)	28 (25.9%)	8 (10.3%)
Waveney	0 (0%)	13 (41.2%)	14 (41.3%)	6 (17.6%)
Forest Heath	1 (2.7%)	7 (18.9%)	14 (37.8%)	14 (37.8%)
St Eds	4 (4.9%)	26 (32.1%)	30 (37%)	10 (12.3%)
Suffolk	25 (4.3%)	221 (36.8%)	199 (33.2%)	113 (18.8%)

Table 5. Loose Courtyard plan type

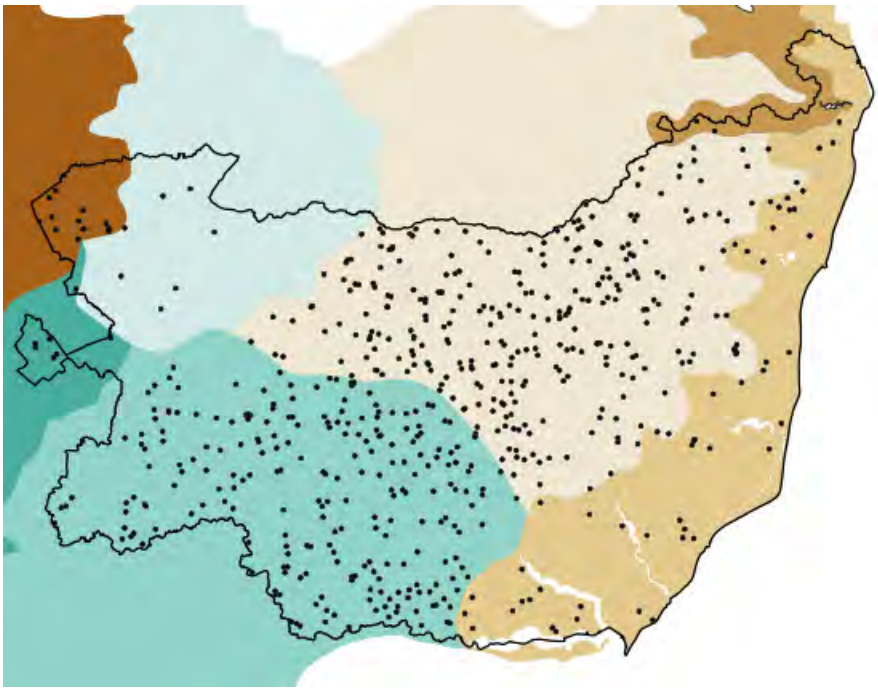


Figure 13: Distribution of loose courtyard plan types

Ipswich has no Loose Courtyard plan types.

Mid Suffolk has a much higher percentage of 2-sided Loose Courtyard plan type than the rest of Suffolk.

Waveney has a higher percentage of three-sided Loose Courtyard plan type and Forest Heath has a higher percentage of four-sided Loose Courtyard (LC-4) plan type. This LC 4 is less common in Coastal, Waveney and St Edmundsbury.

RC plan	Babergh	Mid Suffolk	Ipswich	Coastal	Waveney	Forest Heath	St Eds	Suffolk
Full	165 (21.8%)	246 (17.3%)	5 (16.7%)	100 (10%)	70 (12.8%)	50 (24.4%)	127 (21.2%)	740 (16.7%)
E	66 (8.7%)	120 (8.4%)	4 (13.3%)	97 (9.7%)	63 (11.5%)	23 (11.1%)	79 (13.2%)	436 (9.8%)
F	43 (4.5%)	55 (3.9%)	2 (6.7%)	97 (9.7%)	36 (6.6%)	10 (4.8%)	41 (6.0%)	266 (6%)
H	4 (0.5%)	12 (0.8%)	1 (3.3%)	21 (2.1%)	5 (0.9%)	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.2%)	45 (1%)
T	15 (2%)	14 (1%)	1 (3.3%)	39 (3.9%)	13 (2.4%)	3 (1.4%)	9 (1.5%)	92 (2.1%)
U	233 (30.7%)	419 (29.4%)	9 (30%)	335 (33.6%)	229 (41.9%)	71 (34.3%)	177 (29.6%)	1435 (32.3%)

Z	4 (0.5)	8 (0.6%)	0 (0%)	19 (1.9%)	4 (0.7%)	1 (0.5%)	9 (1.5%)	43 (1%)
L	140 (18.5%)	209 (14.7%)	4 (13.3%)	227 (22.7%)	87 (15.9%)	32 (15.5%)	123 (20.6%)	801 (18.1%)
L3	17 (2.2%)	77 (5.4%)	1 (3.33%)	29 (2.9%)	10 (1.8%)	1 (0.5%)	4 (0.7%)	137 (3.1%)
L4	0 (0%)	4 (0.3%)	0 (0%)	7 (0.7%)	4 (0.7%)	3 (1.4%)	3 (0.5%)	19 (0.4%)
my	63 (8.3%)	240 (16.0%)	3 (10%)	21 (2.1%)	20 (3.7%)	11 (5.3%)	20 (3.3%)	370 (8.3%)
d	12 (1.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.5%)	3 (0.5%)	16 (0.4%)
cov	5 (0.7%)	20 (1.4%)	0 (0%)	5 (0.5%)	4 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	2 (0.3%)	36 (0.8%)

Table 6. Regular Courtyard plan type results

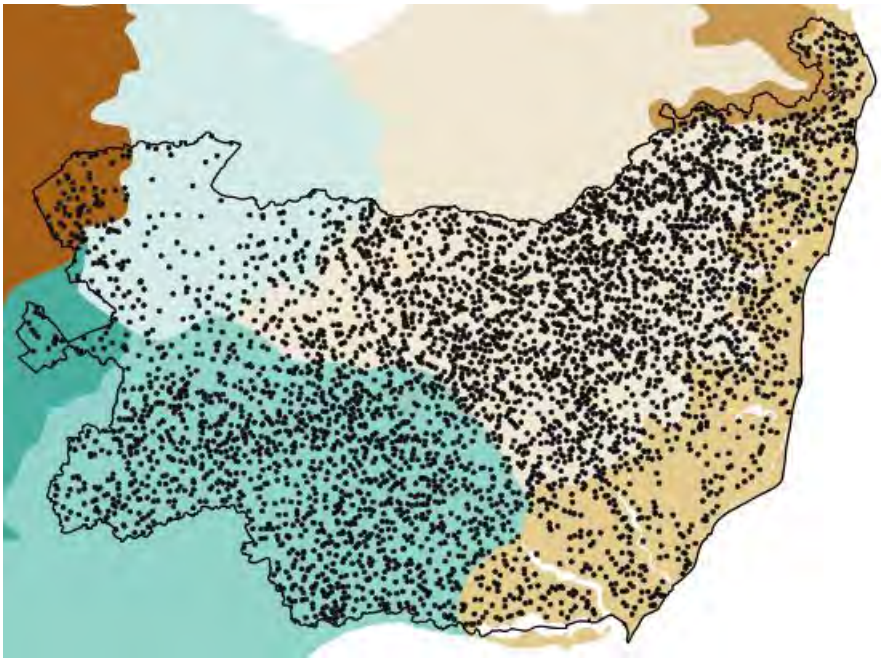


Figure 14: Distribution of Regular Courtyard plan types

Regular Courtyard U-shaped plan is the most common plan type for all districts apart from Ipswich. Waveney has a slightly higher percentage of U-shaped plans than the other districts.

Regular Courtyard L-shaped plan is the second most common plan type closely followed by a Full Courtyard plan.

Mid Suffolk has a higher percentage of Regular Courtyard Multi-yard plans compared to the rest of Suffolk, and also of Covered Yard plan types.

Coastal has a lower percentage of Full plan types and Multi-yard types.

4.3 Farmhouse Location

Farmhouse	Attached	Detached	Uncertain	Det. Gable	Det. Long
Babergh	78 (7.4%)	825 (77.8%)	95 (9%)	19 (1.8%)	43 (3.8%)
Mid Suffolk	83 (4.4%)	1527 (81.8%)	169 (9.1%)	19 (1%)	68 (3.6%)
Ipswich	6 (16.7%)	27 (75%)	3 (8.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Coastal	96 (7.4%)	1009 (77.6%)	5 (0.4%)	37 (2.8%)	154 (11.8%)
Waveney	51 (7.4%)	521 (75.9%)	88 (12.8%)	8 (1.2%)	18 (2.6%)
Forest Heath	50 (17.9%)	189 (67.5%)	22 (7.9%)	3 (1.1%)	16 (5.7%)
St Eds	77 (9.4%)	611 (74.7%)	76 (9.3%)	11 (1.3%)	43 (5.3%)
Suffolk	428 (7.3%)	4574 (77.7%)	601 (10%)	62 (1.1%)	221 (3.8%)

Table 7. Farmhouse location results

Across Suffolk the most common position for the farmhouse to be located is detached set away from the yard. Detached with the gable end facing onto the yard is the least common. Ipswich and Forest Heath have higher numbers of farmsteads where the farmhouse is attached to the farm buildings. Farmsteads with detached farmhouses are less common in Forest Heath compared to the other districts. Coastal has significantly higher numbers of farmsteads where the farmhouse is detached facing long side onto the yard than the rest of Suffolk.

4.4 Farmstead Location/ Settlement patterns

Location	Isolated	Farmstead cluster	Village	Church & Manor	Hamlet	Urban
Babergh	604 (57%)	158 (14.9%)	121 (11.4%)	9 (0.8%)	168 (15.8%)	0 (0%)
Mid Suffolk	792 (52.4%)	321 (17.2%)	301 (16.1%	48 (2.6%)	399 (21.4%)	0 (0%)
Ipswich	30 (83.3%)	0 (0%)	2 (11.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (2.5%)
Coastal	980 (75.3%)	117 (9%)	109 (8.4%)	5 (0.4%)	87 (6.7%)	0 (0%)

Waveney	490 (71.4%)	88 (12.8%)	54 (7.9%)	2 (0.3%)	49 (7.1%)	3 (0.4%)
Forest Heath	194 (69.3%)	13 (4.6%)	59 (21.1%)	2 (0.7%)	12 (4.3%)	0 (0%)
St Eds	542 (66.3%)	66 (8.1%)	96 (11.7%)	2 (0.2%)	107 (13.1%)	5 (0.6%)
Suffolk	3509 (59.6%)	748 (12.7%)	729 (12.3%)	68 (1.2%)	813 (13.8%)	16 (0.3%)

Table 8. Farmstead location results

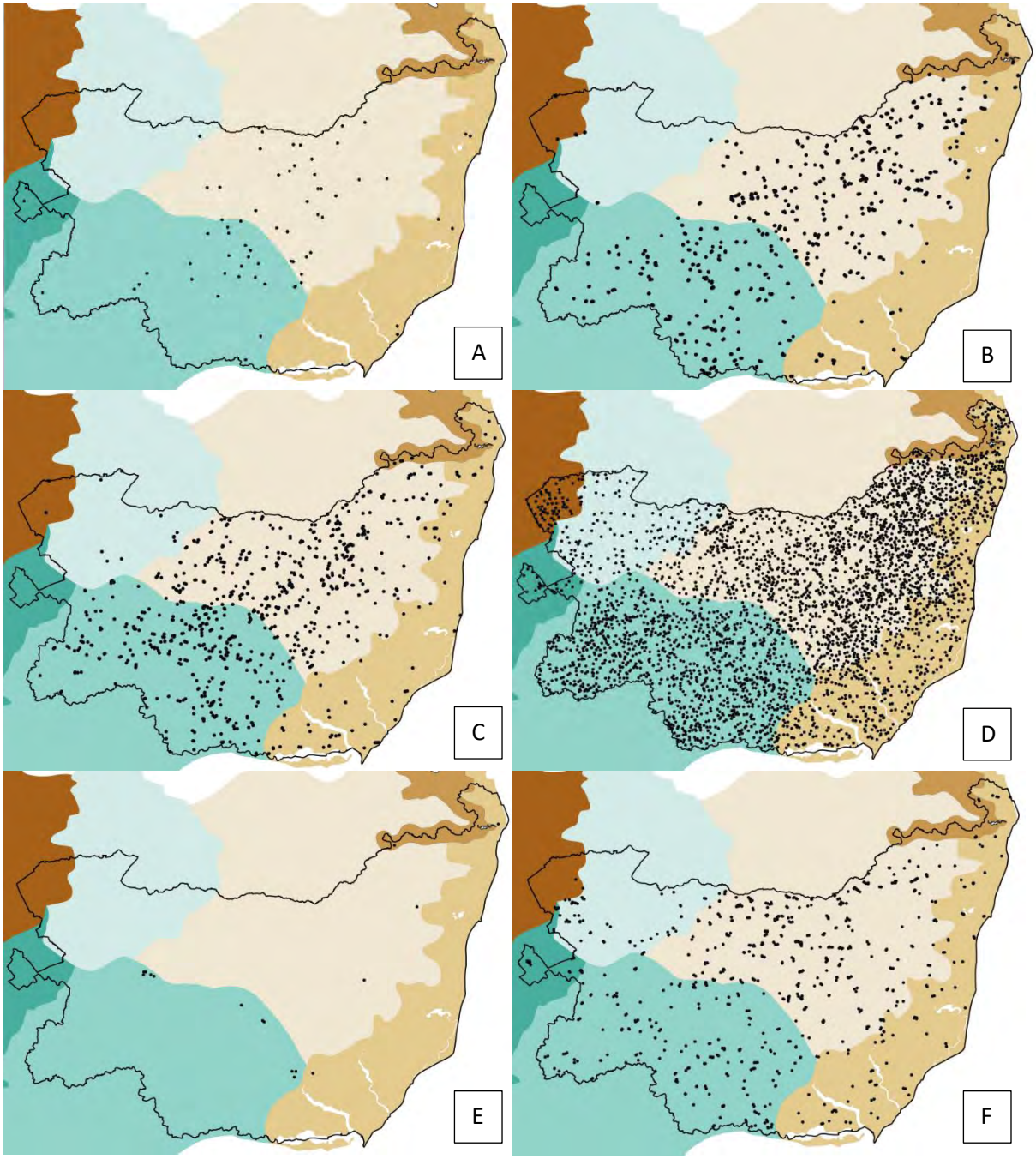


Figure 15. Distribution of farmstead location type. A: Church and Manor Farm group; B: Loose Farmstead cluster; C: Hamlet; D: Isolated position; E: Urban; F: Village

In Babergh and Mid Suffolk the percentage of farmsteads located in hamlets is higher than Suffolk as a whole and the percentage of isolated farmsteads is lower. This most likely reflects differences in settlement patterns with the Babergh and Mid Suffolk claylands characteristically having multiple hamlets and greenside settlements across parishes.

The majority of farmsteads are in an isolated position, meaning they are situated more than 300m away from another farmstead or house. Ipswich and Coastal have a significantly higher percentage of isolated farmsteads than for Suffolk as a whole and Mid Suffolk has a significantly lower percentage.

Babergh and Mid Suffolk have higher percentages of farmsteads located in loose farmstead clusters. Coastal and Waveney had lower percentages of farmsteads located in villages.

4.5 Survival

Survival	Partial Loss	Significant loss	Demolished	Extant	House only	Lost
Babergh	323 (30%)	260 (24.5%)	36 (3.4%)	176 (16.6%)	125 (11.8%)	140 (13.2%)
Mid Suffolk	540 (28.9%)	491 (26.3%)	133 (7.1%)	155 (8.3%)	301 (16.1%)	246 (13.2%)
Ipswich	4 (11.1%)	1 (2.8%)	1 (2.8%)	2 (5.6%)	5 (13.9%)	23 (63.9%)
Coastal	323 (24,8%)	361 (27.7%)	40 (3.1%)	276 (21.2%)	146 (11.2%)	155 (11.9%)
Waveney	146 (21.3%)	177 (25.8%)	12 (1.7%)	149 (21.7%)	86 (12.5%)	116 (16.9%)
Forest Heath	33 (11.8%)	55 (19.6%)	32 (11.4%)	33 (11.8%)	54 (19.3%)	73 (26.1%)
St Eds	185 (22.6%)	219 (26.8%)	22 (2.7%)	149 (18.2%)	106 (13%)	137 (16.7%)
Suffolk	1516 (25.8%)	1527 (25.9%)	263 (4.5%)	918 (15.6%)	769 (13.5%)	866 (14.7%)

Table 9. Farmstead survival results

Only just over 15% of the historic farmsteads in Suffolk are extant and just under 15% have been completely lost. Approximately 25% have lost over 50% of their traditional farm buildings and another 25% have lost less than 50% of their farm buildings.

Forest Heath and Ipswich have the highest percentages of lost farmsteads and Coastal the lowest. Coastal and Waveney have a slightly higher percentage of extant farmsteads than the other districts. Forest Heath and Mid Suffolk have slightly higher percentages of farmsteads where the historic buildings have been lost but replaced with modern farm buildings.

Location	ALT	ALTS	DEM	HOUS	LOST	EXT
ISO	830 (23.7%)	903 (25.7%)	148 (4.2%)	402 (11.5%)	669 (19%)	557 (15.9%)
FC	195 (26%)	193 (25.8%)	46 (6.1%)	127 (17%)	75 (10%)	112 (15%)
VILL	207 (28.4%)	208 (28.5%)	18 (2.4%)	128 (17.6%)	46 (6.3%)	122 (16.7)
CM	25 (36.7%)	22 (32.4%)	5 (7.4%)	4 (5.9%)	5 (7.4%)	7 (10.3%)
HAM	255 (31.4%)	199 (24.5%)	46 (5.7%)	131 (16.1%)	62 (7.6%)	120 (14.8%)
SMV				1 (100%)		
URB	3 (18.5%)	2 (12.5%)		1 (6.3%)	9 (56.6%)	
HOME	1 (50%)			1 (50%)		

Table 10. Farmstead location compared against survival

Table 10 shows that of the farms classified as being in an urban location, 56% have been lost. Across the board, isolated farmsteads have shown the highest percentage of loss or alteration, with almost 70% of lost farmsteads being in an isolated position. The majority of extant farmsteads are also in an isolated position. Figure 16 below shows the pattern of loss against NCA.

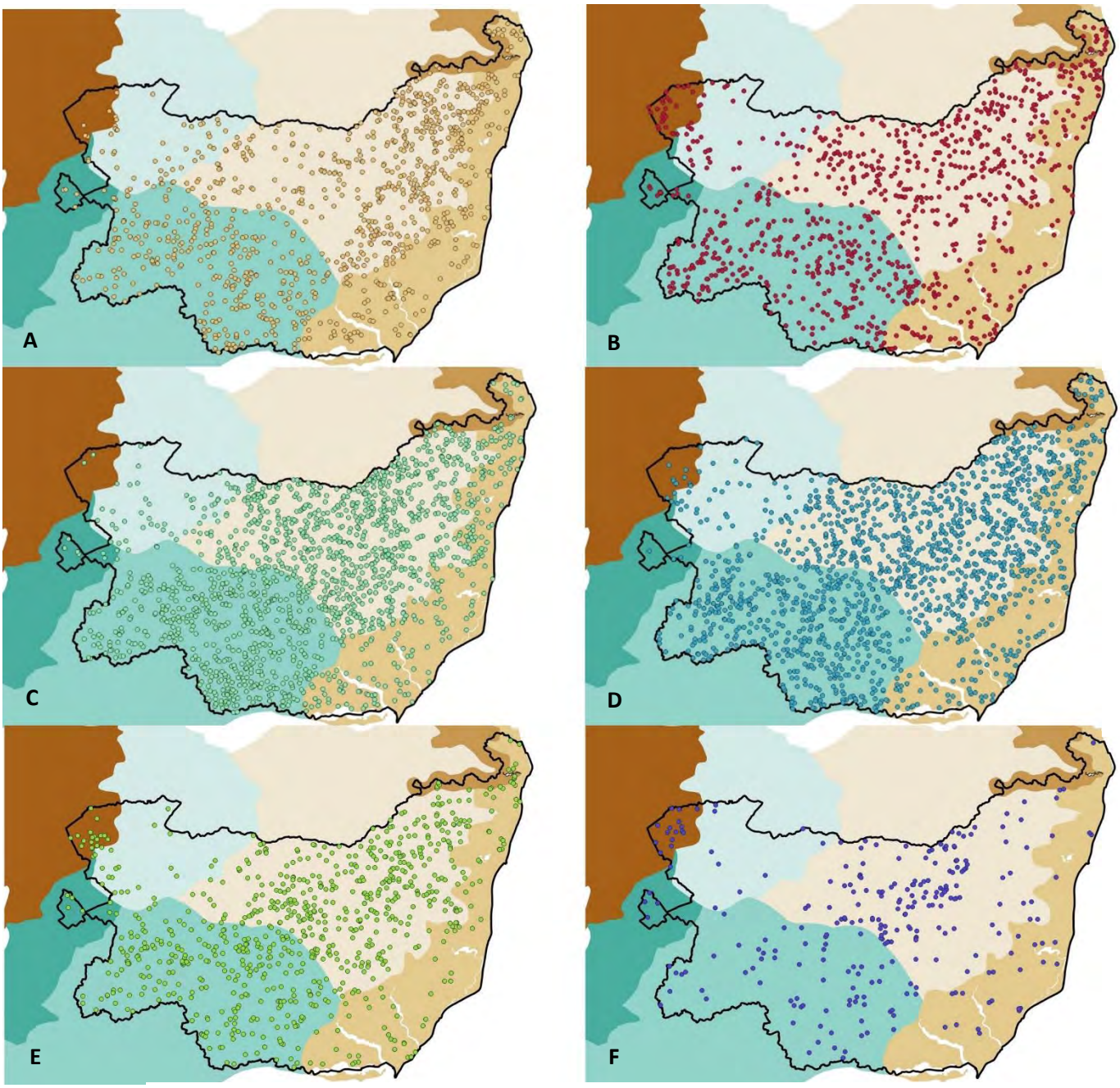


Figure 16. Distribution map of the different states of survival of historic farmsteads in Suffolk. **A** Extant; **B** Lost; **C** Partial loss; **D** Significant loss; **E** Farmhouse only; **F** historic farmsteads replaced by modern farm.

4.6 Size/Scale

Scale	Very Small	Small	Medium	Large	Very Large
Babergh	63 (5.9%)	491 (46.3%)	403 (38%)	101 (9.5%)	2 (0.2%)
Mid Suffolk	9 (0.5%)	297 (15.9%)	1208 (64.7%)	246 (18.5%)	6 (0.3%)

Ipswich	7 (19.4%)	18 (50%)	9 (25%)	2 (5.6%)	0 (0%)
Coastal	256 (19.7%)	498 (38.3%)	434 (33.4%)	99 (7.6%)	14 (1.1%)
Waveney	82 (12%)	341 (49.7%)	223 (32.5%)	39 (5.7%)	1 (0.1%)
Forest Heath	13 (4.6%)	140 (50%)	98 (35%)	28 (10%)	1 (0.4%)
St Eds	47 (5.7%)	242 (51.8%)	268 (32.8%)	75 (9.2%)	4 (0.5%)
Suffolk	472 (8%)	2140 (36.4%)	2575 (43.7%)	671 (11.4%)	28 (0.5%)

Table 11. Farmstead size results

Farmsteads tend to be larger in Mid Suffolk than across Suffolk, perhaps due to higher levels of affluence compared to other parts of the county. Very small and small farmsteads are much less common with a significantly higher percantage of medium sized farmsteads.

Coastal has the highest number of very large farms.

The most common size is small (2-3 buildings) for all districts apart from Coastal and Mid Suffolk.

4.7 Current Use

Use	Abandoned	Agriculture	Commercial	Residential	Industrial	Retail
Babergh	138 (**13%**)	445 (**42%**)	29 (**2.7%**)	444 (**41.9%**)	4 (**0.4%**)	0 (**0%**)
Mid Suffolk	215 (11.5%)	817 (43.8%)	41 (2.2%)	785 (42.1%)	6 (0.3%)	2 (0.1%)
Ipswich	23 (63.9%)	6 (16.7%)	1 (2.8%)	6 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Coastal	156 (12%)	653 (20.2%)	34 (2.6%)	455 (35%)	0 (0%)	3 (0.2%)
Waveney	109 (15.9%)	295 (43%)	17 (2.5%)	264 (38.5%)	1 (0.1%)	0 (0%)
Forest Heath	70 (25%)	117 (41.8%)	15 (5.4%)	78 (27.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
St Eds	140 (17.1%)	319 (39%)	21 (2.6%)	338 (41.3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Suffolk	828 (14.1%)	2568 (43.6%)	153 (2.6%)	2321 (39.4%)	11 (0.2%)	5 (0.1%)

Table 12. Current use results

Most historic farmsteads are still in agricultural use with residential use the second most common modern-day use. Ipswich has a much lower percentage of farmsteads in residential

use compared to other districts; as the town has expanded farmsteads have been demolished rather than converted.

Forest Heath has a lower percentage of historic farmsteads that are now in residential use – again possibly linked to a higher rate of loss of farmsteads? A low survival rate in fenland areas of even relatively late eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings has been previously commented on (Aitkens and Wade Martins 1998, 11).

4.8 Conversion

Conversion	Yes	No
Babergh	370 (34.9%)	690 (65.1%)
Mid Suffolk	391 (21%)	1475 (79%)
Ipswich	4 (11.1%)	32 (88.9%)
Coastal	438 (33.7%)	863 (66.3%)
Waveney	248 (36.2%)	438 (63.8%)
Forest Heath	78 (27.9%)	202 (72.1%)
St Eds	339 (41.1%)	479 (58.6%)
Suffolk	1824 (31%)	4062 (69%)

Table 13. Conversion rates of historic farmsteads

Mid Suffolk and Ipswich have the smallest number of converted buildings and St Edmundsbury has the highest. The rate of converted buildings is still relatively low across Suffolk at approx. 30%.

4.9 Dating

The maps below (Figures 17-20) show the distribution of historic farmsteads across Suffolk, by date. This is the latest date the working buildings could be, based on the available evidence (maps and listed buildings records). This means that the buildings could be of an earlier date and therefore should not be assumed to definitely be the recorded date. The limitations of the dating methodology do not consider the multi-period development of many of Suffolk's farmsteads. However, these maps do illustrate the predominant number of surviving farmsteads from the 19th century rather than earlier periods.

There is a clear distribution of pre-AD 1600 and seventeenth century farmsteads in the clay land areas of Suffolk, with fewer surviving in the sandier regions where the soil quality is poorer.

In the 18th century, buildings were often added to older farms rather than new farmsteads being created which may explain the difference in the number of farmsteads surviving from this period. The wider distribution of farmsteads of this date compared to earlier farmsteads is suggested to be related to the increase in economic productivity on the poorer soils – in the previous study, a band of seventeenth-century buildings were noted in the north-east of the county. This is reflected in the project data, which also indicates a further concentration towards the southwest (Aitkens and Wade Martins 1998, 45).

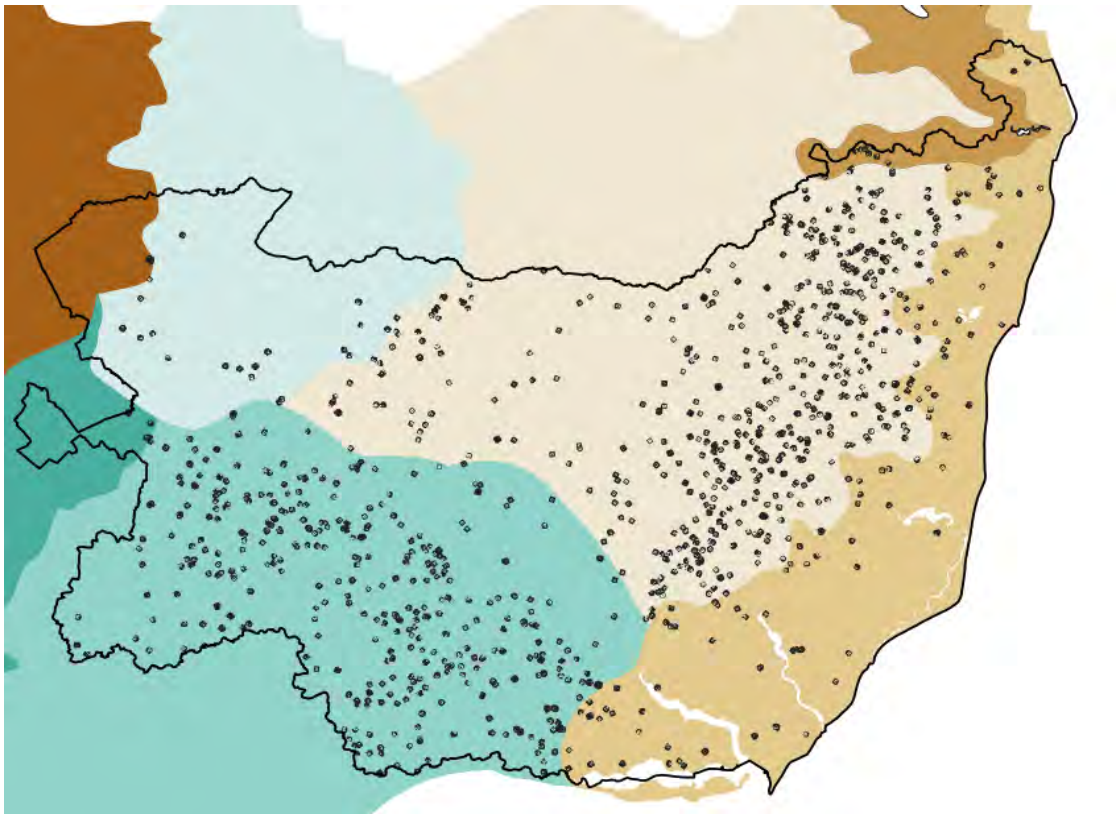


Figure 17. Distribution of pre-1600 farmsteads

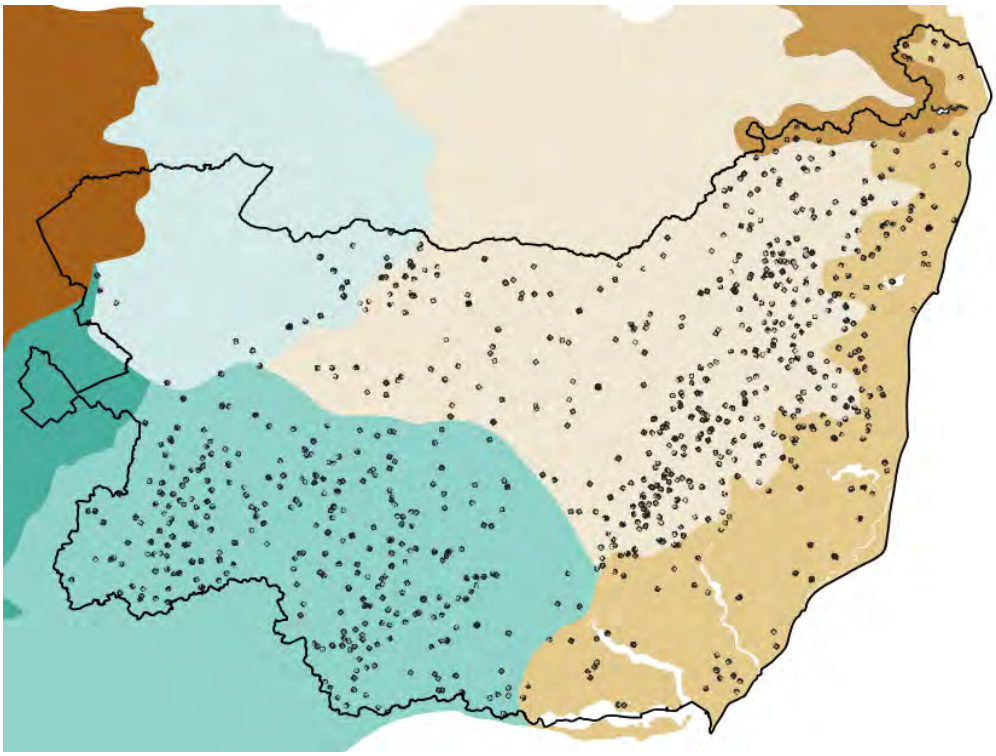


Figure 18. Distribution of 17th century farmsteads

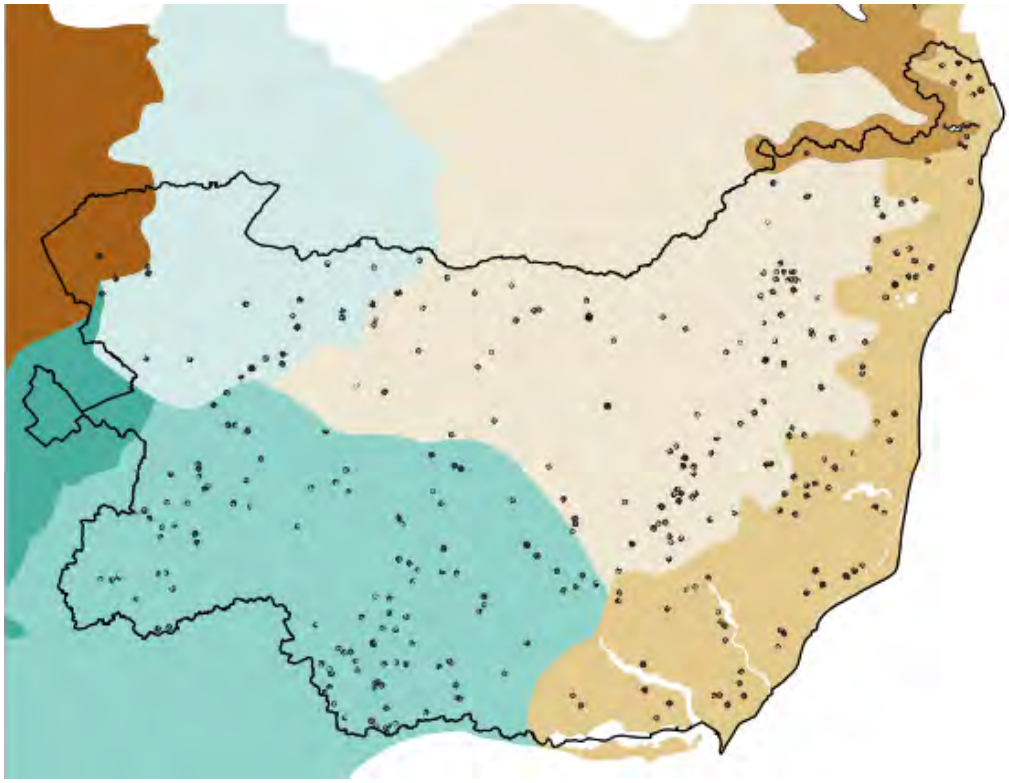


Figure 19. Distribution of 18th century farmsteads

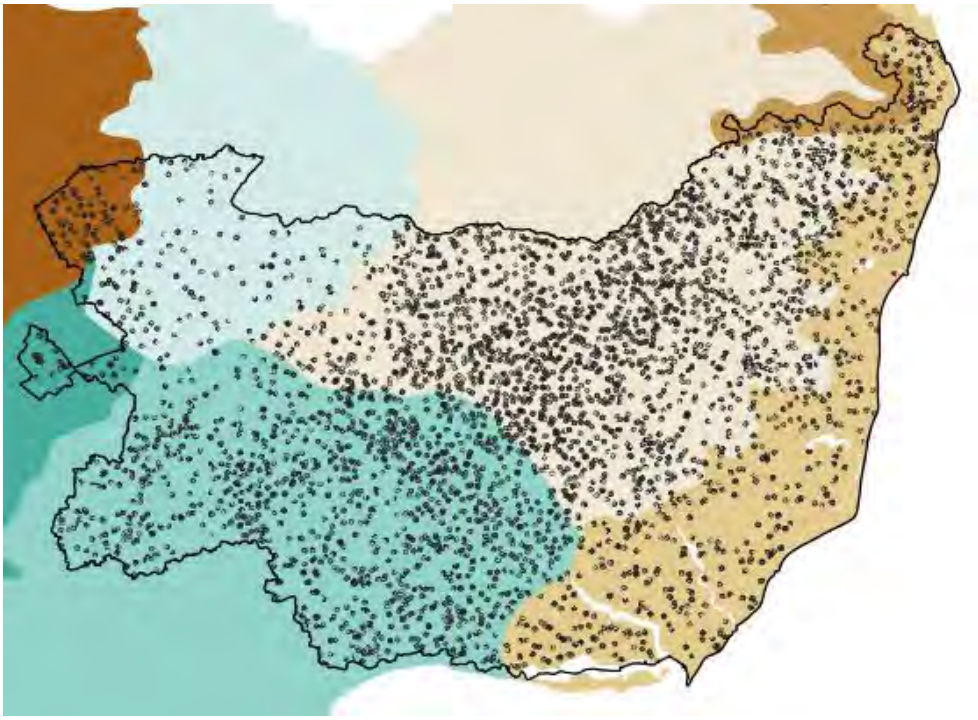


Figure 20. Distribution of 19th century farmsteads

5.0 Discussion

As is the case nationally, and as introduced in Section 1, above, the form and location of farms is related to factors such as landscape character, prevailing farming regimes and agricultural innovations, for example, and farm building stock reflects periods of significant development in agricultural and rural history (Lake 2014, 6 and 20). Detailed research and analysis are beyond the scope of this current project as was set out in the PD, but this section considers a few themes with reference to both previous research in Suffolk, and high-level information relating to the national picture. Some caveats with dating and recording bias were noted above and should be borne in mind (Sections 3 and 4). Discussion of the highlights of individual farmsteads is also beyond the scope of the project.

5.1 Farmsteads

Farming has been central to Suffolk's economy for centuries (e.g. Lake 2020b for a summary). Nationally, substantially complete farm buildings pre-dating 1750 are rare (Lake and Edwards 2006, 6), but generally it has long been acknowledged that, compared to Essex and Kent, Suffolk has a high rate of survival of pre 18th century farm buildings, particularly in the central and southern clay lands. This survival in these areas is understood to be partly a result of a general tendency towards additions to older (good quality) farmsteads, rather than the more wholesale rebuilding and new building in the 19th century that the Breckland and Sandlings areas saw during consolidation of estates in areas of former fen, heath, sheep walk and grazing marsh. The clayland farms were often substantial yeoman holdings on anciently enclosed clay lands in wood pasture areas, away from improving estates (Aitkens and Wade Martins 1998, 16,60). It is noted that in the 18th century following the rise of arable farming, dairy farms that had thrived on an industry based on cabbage-fed beasts were converted to

arable through, for example, conversion of hay barns in wood pasture areas to threshing barns (Aitkens and Wade Martins 1998, 52, Lake 2014,13).

Summary data from the FLS for each NCA (see above, Section 1.1) is also relevant. For Suffolk Coast and Heath, most farmsteads were suggested to have originated as Dispersed plans, whilst inland clay land farmsteads developed as Loose Courtyard layouts, with estate farms redeveloped in the 18th and 19th centuries into U- or Eplans (Lake 2020b). For South Norfolk and High Suffolk, larger farmsteads were noted to have developed as Loose Courtyard complexes, some as Dispersed and Multi-yard layouts, again with regular plans to U-plan and E-plan layouts for estate farms (Lake and Edwards 2020b, 7). For the Brecks, many farmsteads were noted on a U- or E-plan (Lake and Edwards 2020a). For South Suffolk/North Essex, farmsteads are noted to be predominantly of Loose Courtyard and Dispersed plan, with pockets of Courtyard plans concentrated on estates improved in the later 19th century (Lake, Edwards and Podd 2020, 8).

The project data confirms the largest farmsteads were in Coastal (Table 11) and shows that Loose Courtyards were less common in Coastal, Waveney and Ipswich. The data generally supports the themes and trends noted from previous studies (FLS statements for NCAs, cited above in Section 1, Aitkens and Wade Martins 1998). However, it also offers a particular and potentially surprising statistic in that the number of Regular Courtyard plan appears much higher and more common across the county as a whole (75% overall, with U-plans most common within this group), and also in Mid Suffolk. Previous studies have highlighted that text-book E- and U-planned farmsteads were 'not such an important characteristic of the county's landscape as evolved groups [are]' and that many retained a scatter of free-standing buildings around a yard (Aitkens and Wade Martins 1998, 39, 49, 60). The higher numbers may represent the fact that the project has drawn on a systematic county-wide dataset of designated and non-designated assets, and also reviewed farmsteads that have been lost. Possibly, recording bias and some caveats with dating may be reflected in the data, but the subject appears at face value to warrant further research, in relation to farmstead form and agricultural improvement.

5.2 Field Barns

The project data generally confirms the conclusions of previous studies, that field barns are not frequently found in Suffolk. Nationally, intact eighteenth century or earlier examples are rare and field barns and out-farms have been vulnerable to dereliction once redundant, with many lost from the landscape since the end of the nineteenth century (Lake 2014, 13). However, field barns are often a feature of areas where land holdings were intermixed, especially nationally in some upland and wood pasture areas (Lake 2014, 13).

The depiction of neathouses in meadows a short distance from houses was commented on as a feature of early maps (Aitkens and Wade Martins 1998, 39) but when field barns are found in Suffolk, they are more common in Coastal and Waveney districts rather than the clays in Mid Suffolk, and in this the project data corroborates the observation for East Suffolk that on poor upland soils, farms tended to be large and that many farmsteads were developed as regular courtyards, often with out-farms and field barns on marsh and heath, with some rare surviving field barns and out farms particularly concentrated on the Sandlings and coastal

fringes (Lake 2020b, 4-5). The project also shows higher numbers of isolated farmsteads in Coastal (Table 8). The Breckland percentages for the presence of isolated farmsteads may be lowered in this case by the presence of areas of fenland landscape character within the Forest Heath administrative area used for analysis, although in the Norfolk Brecks field and out-farms were noted (Lake and Edwards 2020a, 7 and Aitkens and Wade Martins 1998, 43). Generally, however, it could be a genuine absence. For Lincolnshire, a relative scarcity of field barns and out-farms was not explicable within the parameters of the project, although it was noted that there was a difference in numbers in comparison to areas of dispersed settlement pattern (Partington, McIntosh and Lake 2015, 74). It was also noted that out-farms may have been subsumed into later farmstead complexes or that sheep or cattle may generally have been kept outdoors (ibid). In the Suffolk clay lands, it is likely related to generally smaller farms and patterns of landholding.

5.3 Other Plan types

There are very low percentages of the other plan types e.g. Row, Linear etc. Dispersed plans are noted generally, nationally, to be concentrated in upland and wood pasture landscapes, including areas close to common land for holding stock, whilst Linear and other (Parallel, Row) types were noted to be more closely associated with upland and common-edge farmsteads. (Lake 2014, 10), and almost entirely absent from southeast England (HELM 2009, 8). For Lincolnshire, it was noted that the smattering of less common types such as linear and L-plan farmsteads, especially in the fens and the coast and marshes, reflected a more dispersed settlement pattern in these areas (Partington, McIntosh and Lake 2015, 73), which may also be the case in the Suffolk data.

5.4 Numbers and Survival

The project results can be compared to high level, national headline statistics that were presented in 2014, from sample areas where farmsteads had been mapped at that time (Lake 2014, 20):

Headline statistics 2014 (Lake 2012, 20).	**Suffolk project results 2022**
60% of farm buildings had high heritage potential as they were extant or retained more than 50% of their historic form.	40% of farmsteads have high heritage potential as they are extant or retain more than 50% of their historic form.
17% had some heritage potential because they retain some working buildings but have lost more than 50% of their historic form.	25% have some heritage potential because they retain some working buildings but have lost more than 50% of their historic form.
9% retained the farmhouse but had lost all of the working buildings.	13% retained the farmhouse but had lost all of the working buildings.
4% had lost all buildings from the OS 2nd edition maps but remained in farming.	4.5% are classified as 'demolished'.

10% had been completely lost from the historic landscape, mainly due to urban development.	14% have been completely lost from the historic landscape. (Table 8 shows that, of the urban farms, the majority, 56%, have been lost).
39% of listed farm buildings had been converted to commercial/residential use (Lake 2014, 20).	39.4% are recorded as of residential use.

Table 14 Comparison selected with headline statistics

These statistics would suggest that Suffolk's farmsteads have faced a relatively high level of change since the late 19th century (illustrated graphically in Figure 3, Distribution map of the different states of survival of historic farmsteads), and further detail could be obtained through analytical research into planning applications. The project aimed to identify the sources and degrees of risk to the resource and how these could be mitigated. At a high level, these are alteration and demolition, seeking of uses for functionally redundant buildings and, anecdotally, the subdivision of farmsteads into smaller plots. Whilst most farmsteads are still in agricultural use, this is only 43% across the county, and 39% have residential use attributed to the farmstead, although the rate of conversion is closer to 30% (Tables 12 and 13).

6.0 Conclusion and future research

As a result of the project, there are currently 5,886 records in the SHER relating to farmsteads, out-farms and field barns. The starting number of records was 482. This means that before the enhancement, only 8% of farmsteads that were present in the late 19th century were captured in this valuable tool for research and planning advice. The statistic reinforces the case that there was a need for a systematically created county-wide baseline dataset, rather than the previous situation which had relied on reactive recording. We now know how many farmsteads there are, where they are, broadly what they consist of and broadly the level of survival of historic fabric. The enhanced data is kept live, as part of the SHER, and is publicly available online.

The information is all held by SCCAS and is stored within HBSMR as part of the county HER (see Section 3, methodology), with mapped data linked to information in the records (see above, figure 3). This data is fully available to the public through the Suffolk Heritage Explorer, the online version of the Historic Environment Record, which can be found here: www.suffolk.heritage.gov.uk. This can be searched via a map search, or via key words or with 'farmstead' as a site type. LPAs have also been provided with the GIS layer, for incorporation into their own map systems. The data is therefore available to support research and management.

6.1 Future Research

Historic England has championed the broad relationship between regional differences in building form, date and distribution and different soil types, which in turn affects landscape

character, historic patterns of fields and settlement, farm systems, land ownership and the architectural needs of the rural economy (e.g. Lake and Edwards 2006, 6, HELM 2009). The complexity and difficulty involved with integrating the findings of systematic analysis of just designated assets with the Historic Landscape Characterisation for Suffolk was noted above (Section 1) (Wade Martins and Satchell 2002). Should such work be revisited, the project data provides a baseline, including GIS data, to support development of an approach.

The East Anglian Archaeology Regional Research Framework for the Post-Medieval period highlights that 'work on farm buildings should attempt to consider how they have been used, and their relationship to the farmstead and wider landholding. The development of the farmstead *c*. 1750-1914, and the way buildings reflect changing agricultural practice, remains an important research topic' (Andrews 2018)[9]. The SHER data provides a quantified baseline which will allow numbers to be attached to any research proposals that might seek to explore farmsteads further by theme, period, historic landscape type or by administrative district.

For different regions, previous farmstead projects have also explored potential research questions which may be translatable. For example, for Worcestershire, just a selection from the questions and suggestions include: the potential for farmstead buildings to contribute to understanding of the date of landscape elements, particularly where historic phases of landscape development have since been overwritten; the potential for patterns in amalgamation and growth in some areas at the expense of small farms vs the survival of small farms in others; the orientation and location of farmhouses and the re-orientation and relocation of them, and what it might say about the status or preoccupation of owners and tenants, is the relative date of farm houses related to their location? Are there patterns in dates relating to waves of enclosure and location on boundary zones on the edges of common land? How did farmsteads develop within villages and to what extent did they influence village development? How did manorial estates close to churches develop, and have they always been high-status sites? Both continuity and revolution in farming practice can be evident in buildings - where and when did change occur and how did it relate to factors such as patterns of lordship/tenure/distribution of wealth/the emergence of market based and specialist regional economies? To what extent do dispersed types relate to seasonal movements of stock? (Hathaway, Lake and Mindykowski 2012 , Chapter 7).

The research question 'How can we characterise medieval rural farms and farmsteads? (Med (Rural)17) is also presented in the regional research framework for the East:

> The form of farms and farmsteads, the range of building types present, and their functions need research. Also, non-farmstead farm buildings such as sheepcotes, remote hay barns, pounds, etc. need more study and identification. Further work could be done mapping farmstead plan types against landscape and investigating the spatial distribution of farmstead plan in this context, in relation to requirements for storage, working buildings, livestock, routes.[10]

[9] https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/resource-assessments/post-medieval/ accessed 28/01/2022
[10] https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/research-agenda/medieval-rural/ accessed 28/01/2022

For future projects that may address this, the project data may usefully be combined with archaeological information. An emerging picture for the medieval period, for example, is note of a landscape with farmsteads isolated or in small groups, particularly in the clay land, which may, after desertion, have survived into the 1950s as discernible enclosures or yards, perhaps served by driftways, but which have since been obliterated by removal of hedges and enlargement of fields and may be evident in finds scatters (Martin 1999b, 88).

The number of farmsteads also highlights their enduring significance to the landscape, particularly where more than 50% of their historic form survives. The project data will enable future high-level comparison to other regions, to continue to help build a national picture.

As noted in the methodology section, in many cases, without field visits or further research into historical documents, such as glebe terriers and other maps, dating is not certain and more reflects the presence of buildings at a point in time when historic tithe or OS maps were produced. The HER therefore serves as a pointer towards a need for more detailed historical assessment for individual farms or specific themes.

6.2 Future Management

The crucial product of the project is the GIS identification of farmsteads on the SHER, and the triggering effect that this has for their consideration in all stages of the planning process, and potentially in farm management plans (see above, Section 6.1). The mapping of farmsteads with polygons on maps should provide a flag in the planning process, to LPAs and others, and should measurably reduce the possible adverse impacts of non-designated assets being overlooked until a late stage in schemes, (particularly once applications are validated and out for public consultation), through missing or insufficiently detailed Heritage Statements.

To allow this to be measured, a sample year of planning applications relating to historic farm buildings was counted, through systematic analysis of published weekly lists of validated applications, from November 2018 to November 2019, prior to project commencement, and compared against SCCAS database. The results are presented in Table 15. It is suggested that the exercise is repeated again in 2023.

District	No of applications relating to farm buildings	Applications with Heritage Statements	Applications looked at by SCCAS	Applications where condition advised
West Suffolk	13	10 (76%)	8 (61%)	1 (7%)
East Suffolk	37	30 (81%)	27 (72%)	5 (13%)
Babergh and Mid Suffolk	48	31 (64%)	23 (47%)	5 (10%)
Ipswich	0	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 15 number of applications related to farm buildings 2018-2019

Another measure would be that reports are routinely submitted to the SHER, and this could also be quantified in the future.

Outreach for the project (see Campbell 2022) is also intended to raise the awareness of planning officers, applicants, and owners. The SHER data is available online, and the online information on the project on a dedicated webpage will provide links to relevant sections of local planning websites that relate to policy, heritage statements and validation guides, and also to suites of guidance (e.g. Lake 2015, Historic England 2017a - c).[11]

At a basic level, for individual sites and planning applications, a mapped polygon can serve as a pointer to flag a farmstead and highlight whether there is a need for more detailed assessment of historical significance to both inform proposals for change, and to allow for evidence of changing fixtures, fittings, and structures to be recorded prior to change. The data provides a springboard for individual buildings to be assessed for significance against knowledge captured in the NCA statements, against HE's Listing Selection Guide for agricultural buildings,[12] and against regional criteria noted by Aitkens and Wade Martins in 2002. It will also support wider studies such as landscape and visual impact assessments for larger or more impactful schemes.

The data allows the number and character of NDHAs to be considered in strategic planning, supporting assessment of what is important to landscape character and historical development (especially Local Plans, and Neighbourhood Plans where they identify Local Lists). Areas of priority for development in Local Plans could be further investigated. The data also may provide information where potential grants are available (for example, Suffolk has a high number of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects that often affect large areas, particularly relating to energy schemes, and funds may be forthcoming for offsetting of impacts, especially in the county's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Suffolk Coast and Heaths and Dedham Vale). The data could be interrogated to identify and characterise coherent groups of survival or character, if further thematic projects are undertaken in the future. The baseline data would allow for the number of farmsteads for all of these potential enhancement and research projects to be quantified, which is essential for putting together bids if funding may be available (e.g., the Government's 'Local List Heritage Campaign' of 2021).

The project information may also support a Listing review. Early sites or key words in descriptions could be reviewed, as well as distributions against designations to identify whether there are any potential gaps. The 1998 study involved assessment of sample parishes in areas where it was considered that listing was under-representative (Aitkens and Wade Martins) but, as for other areas where farmstead projects have been carried out, this is the first time the entire dataset has been mapped and quantified, to support this potential exercise more widely. Finally, the project allows a snapshot of the current situation that will support ongoing research into rates of change.

[11] https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/rural-heritage/farm-buildings/
[12] https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dlsg-agricultural-buildings/

6.3 Meeting the Aims and Objectives

The aim of the project was to improve the existing management of historic farmsteads in Suffolk, and ensure a sustainable future for the resource, by providing a comprehensive evidence base, to support informed and reasonable decisions by Development Management staff in the county. This sections reviews how progress on the project objectives has contributed to achieving this aim.

The project objectives were to:

- 1. Enhance the SHER to provide better data and clarity of baseline data.

As noted above (section 6.2), only 8% of the county's over 5000 farmsteads were on the HER prior to the commencement of the project. Data is now available to the public. Further, to enhance awareness of the data, SCC website will have a dedicated web page for *Farmsteads in the Suffolk Countryside*, which will promote the project, and links will be circulated to LPAs, for highlighting with their own resources, given that Local Plan policies require information on NDHAs (and inclusion on the HER is cited as a baseline criteria towards identifying an NDHA).

The website will include this Report, and a Powerpoint presentation that highlights the key points of the project.

- 2. Identify the sources and degrees of risk to the resource and how these could be mitigated.

These are discussed in sections 4.5 (survival), 4.7 (current use), 4.8 (conversion) 5.4 (numbers and survival) and 6.2 (future management).

- 3. Understand the scale and pace of change affecting the significance of historic farm buildings, functionally redundant vernacular buildings and small estates.

These are discussed in sections 4.5 (survival), 4.7 (current use), 4.8 (conversion) 5.4 (numbers and survival) and 6.2 (future management).

- 4. To clarify processes and expectations about what is reasonable and appropriate, for both officers and applicants, to allow more timely and effective delivery of advice on planning cases.
  and
- 5. To aid Archaeological and Planning Officers in their decision making as to what is reasonable and appropriate, in terms of the recording of buildings prior to conversion, and or reasonable/appropriate in terms of the retention of building elements.

The impacts of the project and the way in which information has been disseminated is discussed in section 6.0 and above, under objective 1. SCCAS presented the project at the Suffolk Conservation Officers Forum in 2022, and case officers commented that the data has proven useful for giving advice to individual applicants, supporting communities developing

local lists, and in considering the character of the built environment where character statements are being prepared for settlements to support evolving local plans.

- 6. To enhance skills and knowledge of built heritage within the existing team at Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, and to retain that knowledge base beyond the lifetime of the project.

A day workshop was held in 2019, delivered by Leigh Alston and attended by SCCAS staff, COs, other SCC staff and members of the public. One of the principle officers for the project, Grace Campbell, is also now (2022) providing development management advice on farmsteads and other buildings that are NDHAs to LPAs, using expertise and contacts gained through the course of the project.

7.0 Acknowledgements

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9.0 Appendix : Farmstead attribute table

PRN	HER No.	Numeric sequence chosen to fit with any existing data set PRNs
Site Name	Modern Name (Historic Name)	Modern farm name with historic name (if different) recorded in brackets
Classification Primary Attribute	FARMSTEAD OUTFARM FIELD NAME	Farmstead with house Outfarm Field barn
Classification Secondary Attribute	HOME MAN MILL PUB RECT	Farmstead identified as a Home Farm of an estate Farm buildings associated with a Manor Farm buildings associated with a Mill Farm buildings associated with a Pub Farm buildings associated with a Rectory
Plan Type		Combination of Primary and Secondary Plan Attributes
Plan Type Primary Attribute	DISP LC LIN LP PAR RC ROW UNC	Dispersed Loose Courtyard Linear L-Plan (attached house) Parallel Regular courtyard Row Plan Uncertain
Plan Type Secondary Attribute	1,2,3,4 L3 or L4 L u e f h t z cl dw my cov d y	No. of sides to a Loose Courtyard formed by *working* agricultural buildings Yard with an L-plan range plus detached buildings to the third and/or fourth side of the yard (may be used with LC or RC) Regular Courtyard L-plan (detached house) Regular Courtyard U-plan Regular Courtyard E-plan Regular Courtyard F-plan Regular Courtyard H-plan Regular Courtyard T-plan Regular Courtyard Z-plan Cluster (Used with DISP) Driftway (Used with DISP) Multi-yard (Used with Disp or RC) Covered yard forms an element oof farmstead Additional detached elements to min plan Presence of small second yard with one main yard evident
Tertiary Attribute		Codes as per Secondary Attribute table e.g. cov or combination of Primary and Secondary Attributes e.g. RCL notes presence of a prominent Regular L-plan within a dispersed multi-yard group (DISPmy)

Farmhouse Position	ATT LONG GAB DET UNC	Attached to agricultural range Detached, side on to yard Detached, gable on to yard Farmhouse set away from yard Uncertain (cannot identify which is farmhouse)
Location Primary Attribute	VILL HAM FC ISO PARK SMV CM URB	Village location Hamlet Loose farmstead cluster Isolated position Located within a park Shrunken village site Church and Manor Farm group (or other high-status farmstead) Urban
Location Secondary Attribute	RPR RPU	By public road By private track/rod
Survival	EXT ALT ALTS DEM HOUS LOST	Extant – no apparent alteration Partial loss – less than 50% change Significant loss – more than 50% change Total change – farmstead survives but complete alteration to plan Farmhouse only survives Farmstead/Outfarm totally demolished
Sheds	SITE SIDE	
Size	Very small Small Medium Large Very large	1 working building 2-3 working buildings 4-5 working buildings 6-7 working buildings 8+ working buildings
Dominant Use	AGRIC COMM RET RESID IND ABAN	Agricultural Commercial Retail Residential Industrial Abandoned
Converted buildings?	Yes/No	Note presence of converted buildings based on address point data
Confidence	H M L	High Medium Low

Table 16. Attribute table used for the mapping from Lake and Edwards (2009)

Depiction of a farm c.1473 (Germany or Austria). The British Library Burney 272 f34.v
https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/ILLUMIN.ASP?Size=mid&IllID=9731

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