Historic farm buildings represent a significant proportion of the nation’s stock of listed buildings in a rural county such as Hampshire.
The importance of historic farm buildings within the environment has been recognised for many years, and is high on the agenda for those involved in building conservation throughout the country.

Historic farm buildings represent a significant proportion of the nation’s stock of listed buildings and in a rural county such as Hampshire their impact on the historic environment and landscape is highly significant.

Problems of redundancy are not new; the typical Hampshire timber framed threshing barn saw its decline start with the introduction of machinery almost two hundred years ago.

In recent decades the number of farm units has decreased significantly, with a corresponding increase in the size of holdings. Fewer buildings are needed to service the farm unit, and increased mechanisation has meant that historic farm buildings are less adaptable to modern agricultural use. Many have been sold off as surplus to requirements or allowed to fall into disrepair. They have also been a source of materials for salvage and re-use on other buildings.

Recent changes in European and Central Government policies will make significant impacts on the rural environment and historic farm buildings.

There has been a movement away from European Union funding for increased food production towards more support for the conservation of the rural environment. This includes the historic environment, archaeology and historic man made structures, which add to the distinctive character of regions, as well as the natural environment and wildlife.

The Department for Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), through its Environmental Stewardship initiatives developed in recent years, has increased funding available for the repair of historic farm buildings and structures. Funding is administered by Natural England (NE).

There have also been pressures from Central Government through Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) for sustainable rural development, stimulation of rural economies and farm diversification.

Hampshire is part of the South East Region under considerable pressure of economic growth and it is important that the contribution made by historic farm buildings to the environment which we cherish is properly addressed.

This document looks at the historic farm building stock of Hampshire and identifies some key issues and provides guidance for farmers, landowners, professionals and advisors.
Glossary

- **Gable Wall**
- **Pitched**
- **Hipped**
- **Half-Hipped**
- **Gabled**
- **Lean-To or Outshot**

**Types of Roof Forms**

- **Queen Post**
- **Queen Strut**
- **King Post**

**Common Types of Timber Roof Trusses**

**Cross Section of Timber Framed Barn**, Queen Post Roof Aisled on Both Sides

- **Purlin**
- **Tie-Beam**
- **Collar**
- **Queen Post**
- **Up-Brace**
- **Aisle Tie**
- **Arcade Posts**
During the medieval period most areas practiced mixed farming, with the chalk downs of Hampshire famed for their wool production. The manure and folding process on the arable land supported valuable corn production.

The Bishopric of Winchester and other monastic institutions dominated land ownership in the county. This began to change in the 15th and 16th centuries when land holdings were broken up by the Dissolution putting large estates into secular ownership often accompanied by rebuilding of farmhouses and major farm buildings.

The areas of clay to the north and south of the chalk and in the Weald to the east showed the process of enclosure from the 10th century, with the clearance of woodland (assarting) continuing until the 14th century. Farms were smaller and where a less rigid manorial system operated land owners flourished often through involvement with other activities such as coppicing, brick-making or hop growing and brewing around the east of the county.

The word ‘barn’ is of Anglo-Saxon derivation meaning ‘barleyhouse’. At harvest time the corn was cut with a sickle (or later with a scythe), tied up in sheaves and stooked in the field to await transport by wagon back to the farmstead. On arrival at the barn the wagon was driven inside (through the cart entrance) and the sheaves unloaded and stacked.
Some barns have a single winnowing door without cart entrances on both sides, but most have opposite openings.

Threshing would have taken place during the winter. The threshing floor was located in the central ‘bay’, barns typically being of five bays long, early smaller barns having been lost or extended. Smaller and larger derivatives exist in considerable numbers. The width of the bay varied little across the county, dictated by being able to easily accommodate a pair of oxen and loaded wagon.

The threshing floor was covered with oak planks to withstand the impact of the flail. During threshing the barn doors were left open to promote a through draught. The grain was scooped up in shallow baskets and tossed in the air (winnowing) so that the light chaff and dust could be blown aside. Interestingly, the term ‘threshold’ comes from use of timber boards placed across the cart entrance to prevent spillage of the grain.

Until the 17th century, the clean grain, precious and small in quantity, was commonly stored within the farmhouse. During the 18th and 19th centuries granaries became more widespread, small timber framed structures mounted on staddle stones as a precaution against vermin and damp. The threshed straw was stacked in the ends of the barn or taken straight out to the farm yard to serve as litter for animals, a vital part of the manure on which the continuing survival of the farm depended. Straw also supplied roofing material for buildings on the farm and nearby settlements.

So, the barn was both a storage building and factory unit. It was not until late in the 18th century that the first signs of change appeared with the introduction of the threshing machine. Barns were adapted to house these labour saving devices, though mechanisation was rare in Hampshire since cheap labour enabled hand flailing to remain common, well into the 19th century.

Early machines contained a ribbed drum driven by gearing so that it revolved rapidly against a sloping chute of boarding. Corn was fed in through a hopper, and straw and grain emerged at the bottom of the chute, then separated using a mesh screen.

In Hampshire there was no shortage of manpower to operate these threshing machines, though there are...
examples where animals were used to power machinery (Lodge Farm barn, Elvetham) and the use of water power, in conjunction with corn milling (Hockley Farm). Such examples are rare.

During the 17th and 18th centuries the rapidly increasing population coincided with considerable change in chalk downland farming practice. The large estates expanded and downland converted to arable use. Smaller landowners were unable to maintain sheep flocks of sufficient size to provide manure for fields. This period also saw the development and increase in the use of water meadows in river valleys. Sheep were grazed on water meadows by day and at night driven up to the arable fields where they were ‘folded’ to manure and improve the poor chalk soils.

Despite the demise of the sheep/corn system in the 19th century, water meadows continued to be used for grazing cattle, but by the 20th century spiralling labour costs and the introduction of cheap fertilizer led to their decline.

By the mid 19th century steam-powered traction engines were coming into service and the threshing floor fell into permanent disuse. Travelling contractors would set up their gear in the farmyard and thresh the year’s stock of corn in one short operation. A farmer could store un-threshed corn temporarily in an open rickyard with conical roofs of thatch and throw it straight into the threshing machine.

As the 19th century progressed some barns were equipped with stationary steam engines, sited in purpose-built brick engine houses with tall chimneys. There is little survey information on such structures, and in Hampshire this practice is limited to the larger estates.

The use of steam power in the barn was relatively short-lived, supplanted in the 20th century by the internal combustion engine and in turn by the electric motor.

After the Second World War, with the coming of the combine harvester, all the functions could be performed in one operation. Many barns were converted to accommodate grain drying plant which has helped to secure their survival.

Arable farming in Hampshire increased, particularly in the downland areas, up to the time of the Napoleonic Wars. After the war ended, grain prices fell then rose again between 1815 and 1836, creating prosperity to many cereal farmers. The repeal of the corn laws and import of cheap grain brought economic depression to many arable farmers by the mid 19th century. In the south of the county stock rearing and dairying to supply the growing markets of Southampton...
and Portsmouth took place. A flourishing market garden industry mainly in the south-east supplied the expanding London market which developed with the rapidly increasing railway system, and also supplied the naval dockyards of Portsmouth Harbour. During the 19th century, ‘modern’ farming methods were increasingly introduced to arable farming in Hampshire - particularly on the downland areas where more organised fertilization and manure production was associated with large farm units. Some of these farms later converted to dairying.

The end of the 19th century and early 20th century marked a severe depression in rural Hampshire resulting in abandoned farms, neglected hedges, ditches, water meadows systems and farm buildings, although the dairy industry still flourished. Urban expansion continued in the inter-war period and since the 1950s. In the 1960s some areas of the chalk countryside were lost to the GLC overspill towns of Andover and Basingstoke.

More of the county’s chalk downland has been turned to the cultivation of cereal crops, and there has been a marked increase in the size of farm units.

The general enlargement of farm units across the whole county and the increase in mechanisation has led to the widespread redundancy of historic farm buildings for agricultural use, and in many cases the complete disassociation of farmsteads from agriculture.

The vernacular tradition in Hampshire is strongly influenced by the availability of basic natural building materials. Much of the county is founded on chalk and open downland predominates. The chalk outcrops again in the south-east in the form of the long coastal ridge of Portsdown Hill. Elsewhere in the south it is overlaid by deposits of sand and clay, with gravel in the river valleys. The landscape changes again in the north-east where greensand and clay intrude and these subsoils continue down much of the eastern boundary. The geology and topography of Hampshire is discussed further in section 7, Landscape Character.

In the Middle Ages, oak was the main building material of choice, and supply in Hampshire was abundant. It remained in common use for the framing of farm buildings until the late 18th century.

Early use of oak is characterised by straight and well-squared material of large cross section. In later barns the structural members are smaller in size and can be less regular in shape with sapwood and waney edges (particularly in rafters), indicating that carpenters had to convert smaller baulks of timber. For some early barns ‘cruck’ frames were constructed using curved timbers meeting in pairs at the apex of the roof. Although these provided clear floor areas and reasonable headroom they depended on the availability of larger timber with grown bends. In Hampshire, only two known...
examples of cruck framed farm buildings survive and are extremely important.

Other hardwoods were sometimes used, but oak was preferred for its superior strength and durability. Frames were set out on the ground (‘carpenters marks’ chiselled into adjoining sections of timber to assist assembly), joints being held together using wooden ‘pegs’. Timbers were frequently re-used in new and adapted farm buildings which explains the strange location of some joint details and peg-holes.

The most common form of walling was weatherboarding. Early examples which survive are of oak or elm, of rectangular sections (not ‘feather edged’) and of substantial width. This would have originally been fixed into place with wooden pegs or iron nails, the latter being available from the medieval period. Boarding was renewed piecemeal as and when necessary and resulted in a characteristic patchwork appearance – an important point to remember. Survival of original boarding is very rare, and therefore of high importance.

Vertical oak boarding is rare, but sometimes encountered where it can be rebated into the frame and as such is important to retain.

Later, feather-edged boarding of elm or softwood, coated with coal tar, is probably the most common cladding material found in historic farm buildings in Hampshire, though originally the oak or elm boarding would have been left untreated to weather naturally into a silver/grey colour, or in some cases limewashed.

Some early timber framed barns – usually the more prestigious – have infill panels of wattle/daub or brick. This is particularly so in the north-east part of the county in Hart District and parts of Basingstoke where local brick making was more common.

Malmstone, a coarse sandstone found along the eastern boundary with Sussex and most commonly in East Hampshire District, was used in random or roughly squared rubble walling and is a distinctive feature of historic farm buildings in the area. There are no current commercial supplies of the material available locally so it is a rare and valuable resource.

Limestone has been used in a few high status farm buildings, often salvaged from other buildings. A fine example is the tithe barn near Titchfield Abbey.

Flint is common and was used extensively throughout the county in chalk rich areas. As with malmstone, it is often used in conjunction with brick where openings are formed and at the corners of buildings.

Cob earth material was widely used in vernacular buildings, typically in the New Forest, Test Valley and, to a slightly lesser extent, in the districts of Winchester and Basingstoke. The further to the east, the rarer are surviving chalk or clay cob structures.

The cob walls were built up from a plinth base, usually of flint or brick, and gained strength from their thickness. Openings were kept to a minimum and gables avoided because of their structural weakness.

Cob buildings were often protected from the weather with lime renders or slurry, and had to be regularly limewashed. They are particularly vulnerable to wet conditions and so were commonly built with thatched roofs and deep overhanging eaves to throw water well clear of the wall.

Their relative vulnerability means that it is important to conserve surviving examples, particularly where farm holdings with cob boundary walls are alongside roads and are at the centre of villages. They are a distinctive local part of the historic rural scene.
Excellent clay earths exist in Hampshire and brick has been used for farm buildings in some areas (e.g. Basingstoke) since the 16th century.

Early use of brick for walling is seen in the larger, more important farm buildings such as the Tithe Barn at Old Basing and at Palace Gate Farm at Odiham.

It was more usual in the 17th and 18th centuries for the precious brick to be used on low plinth walls on which the timber framed structure was constructed.

During the 19th century and early 20th century there was an increase in the use of brick in farm buildings with mechanised brick production and improved transportation. It was widely used, often in conjunction with flint, in more planned farmsteads in courtyard layouts, with slate roofs or patent interlocking clay tiles.

### Roofing Material

The roofs of traditional farm buildings are particularly important and form a distinctive feature of villages, hamlets and the wider landscape. The aisled barn is an iconic feature across Hampshire and its sweeping roof form is often the largest and most dominant part of a farmstead.

Thatched farm buildings still survive in Hampshire, particularly in the Test Valley, and are important characteristic features of the local and wider landscape. The County Council has worked with the Council of Historic Thatch, (COHT) Committee and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) in their efforts to promote the retention of...
traditional thatching; important in maintaining local identity, and in terms of sustainability. This will result in the publication of 'Growing Straw for Thatching'.

By the late 18th century, and throughout the 19th century, Welsh slate was increasingly used, as were patent interlocking clay tiles. This followed improvements in transportation and their distribution can be seen to be influenced by proximity to water or rail transport.

Though thatch continued to be widely used in the county through the 19th century, the high cost of repair of roof materials and periods of economic depression in the 20th century led to the re-covering of many former thatched or tiled roofs on farm buildings with corrugated iron sheeting. The tarred iron roof is now a familiar feature and is an effective means of protecting historic timber frames from rain penetration and decay.

It is lightweight, can accommodate irregularities in roof form and is visually pleasing.

**DESIGN AND FORM OF FARM BUILDINGS**

**Timber framed barns**

In Hampshire there is a remarkable lack of change in the design of timber framing from the 16th/17th century for a 200 year period.
The most characteristic type of roof construction is the ‘queen post’ and ‘queen strut’ truss. In the 18th century ‘queen strut’ construction became more widely used, and the use of ‘king post’ trusses in the 19th century was common. (See glossary on page 3)

Timber framed barns relied on heavy section oak sole plates, sometimes laid directly onto the ground (particularly if this was chalk), but more commonly on top of a low brick plinth wall. The sole plate distributed the weight and load of the vertical timber posts evenly to the ground.

The importance of the sole-plate and plinth to the structure of the barn is high as these are commonly the first parts to decay or collapse.

The top of the vertical post widened to form a ‘jowl’ which could accommodate the complicated joint of the post, horizontal wall plate, tie beam and principal rafter. Jowls of later timber framed buildings of the 19th century are commonly narrower and more angular.

As brick became more readily available, the height of plinths increased and also provided a more substantial enclosure for livestock and drier conditions for the storage of cereal products. It is thought that the increase in population of the brown rat also encouraged the use of brick walling.

In brick walled barns the walls were built to wall plate level and the timber framed roof structure constructed above. With brick built barns it is more likely for the barn to be built with gabled ends, with a pitched roof. Where the construction is flint with brick the roof is usually hipped.

Timber framed barns provided ventilation through gaps between weatherboarded walls and through roof areas. Brick walled barns have ventilation ‘slits’ – narrow vertical openings which will not allow rain penetration and which are splayed to allow greater air flow and natural internal lighting.

Some late 18th century and more commonly 19th century brick walled barns used panels of pierced brickwork, often diamond shaped, formed by leaving gaps in the bonding.

These are important features which are distinctive of the local tradition and should be retained.

From early times, the length of the barn was measured in ‘bays’, practical limitations on the size of timber dictated the width or span of the building and so greater capacity was achieved by increasing the number of bays.

Smaller three or five bay barns had a single central entrance, with larger seven bay barns and above, usually having double entrances to provide a second threshing floor and more area for stacking corn.
The main requirement in any barn was the most economic enclosure of the maximum possible floor area and volume.

In Hampshire, the ‘aisled’ barn is a particular characteristic form – with the pitched roof extending beyond the main posts to provide additional storage area. Aisles can be on one side, both sides, and at the ends of the barn.

Aisled barns are a particularly important feature in the landscape with large expanse of roof sweeping down to low walls of brick or more usually weatherboarding.

At the cart entrances it is common to have projecting canopies which both protected the threshing floor from driving rain and also allowed the last wagon of the day to be left under cover for unloading the next morning. These canopies are often additions to earlier buildings, and can incorporate small ‘dovecotes’.

The cart ‘exit’ opposite did not usually have such a porch.

Generally, the aisles of barns were used for storage but were sometimes fitted out as stalls for cattle. Some rare examples of use as pigsties also exist.

On earlier aisled barns with thatched or clay tiled roofs the steep roof pitch resulted in narrow aisles. Later barns with slate roofs had lower pitched roofs which could allow wider aisles to be formed, though aisled barns were less commonly constructed in the 19th century.

In most cases aisled barns have a fully hipped or half-hipped roof.

Barn doors, constructed of vertical timber planks on a ledge and braced frame were hung on iron hooks and could be lifted down to
provide working platforms, for example during sheep shearing. Later doors used hinged iron brackets.

Doors and fixings, where they survive, should be retained.

The simple rectangular timber-framed barn with lean-to extensions called ‘outshots’ was a common alternative in Hampshire to the true aisled form. Where stock was to be accommodated the outshot had the advantage of less restricted access with the absence of transverse post plates.

There are examples, notably in the Test Valley and northern parts of the county at the boundary with Wiltshire and Berkshire, of large ‘staddle barns’, where the threshing barn was supported on staddle stones, with no facility for a direct entry for a cart or wagon.

These are unusual and of considerable importance.

**Granaries**

Although there are examples of granaries provided over the top of cartsheds and stables, typically of the later 19th century, the most common type in Hampshire is the free-standing timber framed structure. Usually this is square on plan, constructed on staddle stones to be clear of the ground, with weatherboarded walls and a tiled or slate roof – usually hipped. Sometimes the height of the staddle stones varied to maintain a level floor on sloping ground. The interior was plastered or timber lined with a boarded floor. Internal timber grain bins sometimes survive and should be retained wherever possible though this restricts re-use for other functions.

Variations which occur, particularly in the north of the county, are infilling of the timber frame with panels of brickwork rather than weatherboarding.

Because of their size and construction, granaries have been particularly vulnerable to neglect, demolition and salvage; the staddle stones being valued as decorative garden features.
As such their conservation *in situ* is important. Their re-use is severely limited by their form and size, so pro-active maintenance and repair is additionally vital to avoid loss.

**Oast houses/hop drying kilns**

These occur towards the eastern part of the county, notably in East Hampshire and Hart Districts.

The soils in this area encouraged the growing of hops, and hop kilns are distinctive characteristic agricultural buildings of the area.

Typically in Hampshire the kiln was square in plan, with walls of local malmstone or brick, with a pyramidal roof with vent on top. Circular buildings with conical roofs are less common.

Fires were lit in combustion chambers below a wooden slatted floor on which the hops were laid for drying.

**Dovecotes**

Pigeons and doves were kept in dovecotes or pigeon lofts for their meat and eggs.

The earliest are medieval, some of which have been designated scheduled ancient monuments. They occur in farmsteads across the county, typically of square or circular plan of stone or more usually brick or brick and flint often lined with chalk block to incorporate nesting boxes.

Some larger barns incorporated dovecotes, or pigeon lofts, commonly in the porch over the cart entrance.

**Cartsheds and shelter sheds**

During the 18th and 19th centuries, special buildings were being constructed for carts, wagons and large implements. Typically these were of rectangular plan, timber framed with an open front and with hipped roofs of tiles, or on later buildings slate or interlocking tiles.

Cart sheds were not provided with doors, spaces between the timber posts allowing for easy passage of vehicles, though sometimes one bay was divided off and provided with a door to store small implements.

They have a relatively good survival rate because of their adaptability for other uses.
such as general storage or for garaging, but where cartsheds are located outside the main farmyard they can be vulnerable to neglect.

**Piggeries**

Whereas cattle and hens provided milk and eggs, pigs were kept purely for meat, and until the 19th century for the family rather than for the market. Pigs were kept alongside the farmhouse and fed on domestic food waste or allowed to roam freely, particularly in the New Forest.

The new urban population of the Victorian period created a demand for pork and bacon, which could be produced more cheaply than beef or mutton, and purpose built piggeries were constructed, with a small house, open run and feeding trough.

Their limitations for adaptation to other uses has meant that most historic piggeries have fallen into disrepair, and our knowledge of their occurrence is poor. Where good examples have survived, their recording and/or retention is important.

**Cattle buildings**

Records show that there were medieval cattle houses in Hampshire, and though some cattle housing from earlier periods survives, there is little evidence for the provision of accommodation for cattle before the 19th/20th century. Barns did provide shelter for cattle within farmyards, and sometimes outshots on the side of barns were constructed. Where shelters were provided in fields they were of poor quality and only a few have survived. Especially on the downland areas, where farmsteads remained in villages after the enclosure of open fields and downland, “out farms” were built, with cattle providing manure to fertilize arable land.

It was not until the 19th century that purpose made cow houses and covered yards associated with dairy herds came into being. These structures are typically of brick construction, sometimes with flint, and tiled or slate roofs. Where yards were covered to provide protection for livestock and to prevent rain from leaching manure, the roofs were often of slate or, later in the 20th century, corrugated iron.

These covered yards are rare until the early 20th century (in East Hampshire many small L and U shaped yards were covered over).

**Stables**

Stables on earlier farms were often incorporated in barns, or as outshots to barns. More specialist accommodation was provided for horses, particularly in the late 18th and 19th century. Many were built of brick, or flint with brick used for corners and around openings.

Doors were provided, usually split with lower and upper
opening sections, vertically boarded. Inside the space was divided by wooden partitions, and many incorporate upper floors which enabled hay to be stored in the hayloft. Floors were commonly of brick, or stone setts to ease drainage and the collection of manure. On larger more prestigious farms and estates, separate tack rooms for storage of harness etc were provided, and some had accommodation for stable hands.

Few stables survive with interior features intact, where they do their retention and/or recording is important.

Timber framed stables were mainly replaced by brick construction from the late 17th century onwards, reflecting that horses were a valuable asset so good quality buildings were provided in contrast to those for cattle.

**Plan Form**

The most common ‘plan form’ of historic farmsteads in Hampshire is the loose courtyard type, with the farmhouse situated on one side of the yard, with barns, granary, and stables loosely arranged around the yard, with the cartshed next to an access track. This courtyard arrangement provided shelter for animals, usually cattle, with shelter sheds frequently added in the 19th century to the loose courtyard side of older buildings.

The more regular courtyard plan farmstead with linked buildings ranged around a yard usually divided into two areas, was the result of the application of ‘modern’ farming methods of the late 18th and during the 19th century. This reflected the more organised management particularly of cattle and manure production linked with arable.

**Typical farmstead plan types**

The basic information on historic farm buildings is contained within the List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest. This schedule of ‘listed buildings’ was compiled by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) under the advice of English Heritage.

As from April 2005 English Heritage is responsible for the updating and management of this statutory list of buildings/structures. The designation of the historic environment is under review but at present listed buildings are classified into three grades I, II* and II and the relevant legislation is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 guides how the Act is applied by local planning authorities.
The number of farm buildings added to the 'list' increased significantly during the 1980s following a national resurvey which concentrated on rural areas previously not looked at in any detail.

Within Hampshire, listed buildings which might be included as 'agricultural' (such as barns, granaries, cowsheds etc) produces a figure of over 1700 (excluding farmhouses). This represents approximately 13% of the total number of listed buildings. Of this, the vast percentage of listed farm buildings are Grade II. 19 are Grade I or II*.

This, however, presents a somewhat distorted picture of the actual situation 'on the ground'. Not every potential historic farm complex was inspected. Also the resurvey was undertaken during a period of significant change in the countryside with farm estates/landholdings being fragmented. Many farmstead buildings were surplus to requirements and unsuitable for modern farming practices.

As a result, farmhouses and adjacent buildings were sold off as private houses and alternative more economically viable uses sought for non-residential farm buildings.

The statutory list of historic farm buildings does not accurately reflect the current use of the buildings or physical alterations which have taken place, some with 'listed building consent' and others where changes occurred between the survey and the actual date of listing.

Some buildings have been altered to such an extent that their character no longer warrants inclusion in the lists. Other, more sensitive, conversions have resulted in buildings which should still be protected from damaging alterations, but whose change of function and detail design must be noted and recorded in the list descriptions.

This will enable a more informed decision making process to protect the fast dwindling stock of unaltered historic farm buildings. Research undertaken by the University of Gloucestershire estimates that over a third of listed historic farm buildings in the south-east region had been converted to residential use by 2005.

The criteria for listing all buildings meant that structures dating from after the mid 19th century were rarely considered to be of sufficient merit for statutory protection.

Thus a significant number of historic farm complexes which contribute to the Hampshire landscape are both unrecorded and unprotected.

During the 1970s and 80s, invaluable work was undertaken in the county by the then Southampton University Industrial Archaeology Group (SUIAG), now the Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Group.
This has improved the data held in the County Council’s Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record (AHBR) which has also been augmented by information gathered from historic building grant applications and surveys undertaken by District Councils.

Despite this, there is a need for further survey work to be undertaken to properly assess our existing historic farm building stock. This is necessary to provide informed decision making concerning proposals which affect the character of our landscape and rural farms and villages.

Some Hampshire local planning authorities have carried out, or are considering undertaking, pilot surveys of historic farm buildings to ascertain the extent of the problem.

The recent pilot project for English Heritage, ‘Historic Farmsteads and Landscape Character in Hampshire’ with which Hampshire County Council has been closely involved has also highlighted the need for increased information on the historic farm building resource to enable better informed decision making to take place. As part of the project the County Council has been able to identify the locations and character of farmsteads from historic mapping and incorporate the data into the Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record.

Early conclusions from the pilot study comparing the distribution of recorded farmsteads to farmsteads identified from listed building data clearly shows the use of listed building data alone to be unreliable when describing present day farmstead character.

### PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, proposals which would affect the special interest of listed farm buildings require listed building consent and often planning permission as well, (and usually building regulation approval) from the local planning authority.

Also, buildings which were built before 1948 and are considered to be within the curtilage of a listed building (such as a farmhouse) are also deemed to be listed.

Some farm buildings, particularly if forming part of a village or larger market town, may lie within a Conservation Area and as such be subject to additional planning control than normal, particularly over demolition.

Local planning authorities are expected to undertake Conservation Area Appraisals which will identify if and how historic farm buildings and features such as boundary walls contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of the area.

Many historic farm buildings, more so than other types of listed buildings, are under particular pressure for change. In Hampshire, and other relatively prosperous regions, there is considerable demand for housing. Historic farm buildings are often located in high quality landscape settings, and on sites where new development would not normally be permitted and as such a barn with planning consent for residential use may be a valuable asset.

In contrast, a listed barn which is no longer of use as a farm building and has no other viable economic use can be regarded as an economic liability.

For example, thatched farm buildings are under particular threat, even where they are listed and would require consent from the local planning authority for change to another roofing material.

Unlike thatched houses which command a market value, the thatched barn which in many cases is used for general storage or garaging, presents an ongoing maintenance liability for which the owner can often see little economic justification.

Pressure on local authority finances has led to a steady decline in discretionary grants for repairs to historic buildings across the county.

English Heritage has encouraged local planning authorities to undertake surveys of historic buildings to ascertain those ‘at risk’ from neglect and decay.
The extent of such surveys is dependent on resources available and historically has understandably been limited to listed buildings, if done at all.

Hampshire County Council has assimilated information on historic buildings at risk since the mid 1970s and farm buildings have featured heavily in such tables every year. English Heritage expects local planning authorities to monitor Buildings at Risk (BAR) in their area.

It is important to remember that historic farm buildings are not necessarily part of active farms, and that this trend continues at a pace.

The relatively new agri-environment schemes administered by Natural England (NE) include protection of the historic environment as one of its primary objectives. This includes historic farm buildings and structures.

Grants for repair of historic farm buildings where they are still in agricultural use or part of agricultural holdings may be available through NE, which has established regional advisors for farmers, landowners and agents. (See useful contacts at the end of this document).

The available resources are targeted and one major criterion is whether a historic farm building or built feature such as a boundary wall has been identified as being ‘at risk’.

As such, the importance of BAR surveys is significant, and should be extended to include, where possible, listed and unlisted historic farm buildings which are of local importance and where there is a lack of information. This is particularly relevant where the buildings are located on working farms and would be potentially eligible for repair grants via NE.

The Historic Farmsteads and Landscape Character in Hampshire Pilot Project is a first stage in the development of a policy framework by putting historic farm buildings at a farmstead scale into their landscape context. This characterisation can be used as a positive tool for strategic planning and land use management.

Historic farm buildings often provide habitats for wildlife, some of which are legally protected such as all bat species and all nesting birds, e.g. house martins and barn owls. Any works which might cause disturbance to such species is covered by The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and some are also offered additional protection under the provisions of The Habitat Regulations 1994. Advice can be obtained from Natural England, which is the primary statutory nature conservation body in England, and from the Wildlife Trust and the Bat Conservation Trust.

The provision and enhancement of habitats for wildlife may also be considered for funding through NE as part of its agri-environment grant schemes.

**Conversion of farm buildings**

Much has been written and said about the conversion of historic farm buildings, in particular to residential use, and the issue has been highlighted in English Heritage’s ‘Heritage Counts 2005’ which focussed on the English countryside.

Listed building legislation
under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in conjunction with Government Guidance in PPG 15 (under revision) can be used to determine the way in which change of use can be controlled.

The acid test is whether a building after conversion, to whatever use, retains the special architectural and/or historic interest which warranted its ‘listing’.

Too many conversions undertaken in the 1980s and 1990s have not survived this test.

There are some useful lessons to be learned from case studies in Hampshire; low key new uses, particularly in the case of timber framed structures which are of inherent interest for the survival of the structural oak frame and largely unsubdivided interior and simplicity of form, can be successfully reused for stabling, vehicular repairs etc where low cost investment can provide a useful building.

Other, more long term uses, usually require fundamental change in the nature of the fabric of the building – insulation, heating and alterations often requiring building regulation approval.

It is not uncommon for the cost of alterations to be significantly higher than repair cost of the farm building. This is the case with most residential and office conversions. Perhaps the most common problem with the conversion of historic farm buildings has been the introduction of new openings into previously blank elevations and roof surfaces.

Historically, farm buildings have been repaired and adapted using simple techniques and traditional skills of the carpenter or blacksmith. Brick piers have replaced bottom sections of rotted timber posts and splits in tie beams and wall plates have been held in place with iron and steel straps, with the retention of most of the original historic fabric.

All too often ‘conversions’ have been tantamount to rebuilding, with sections of the original building integrated into a new design.

Many ‘unlisted’ historic farm buildings have survived, typically of mid to late 19th century, often of brick, or flint and brick walling with tiled or slate roofing, and built for dairy farming or as stabling, as well as barns. These often have existing openings and are of a ‘domestic’ scale and layout, whose external appearance is valuable in terms of landscape character and local distinctiveness.

Large threshing barn converted to office use, minimal new openings. It is not uncommon for the cost of alterations to be significantly higher than repair cost of the farm building. This is the case with most residential and office conversions. Perhaps the most common problem with the conversion of historic farm buildings has been the introduction of new openings into previously blank elevations and roof surfaces.

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and to address issues of setting in regard to associated subdivision of farmyards and surface materials to ensure that essential characteristics are retained during conversion.

The numbers of historic farm buildings which have become redundant are large, and many more than is required for “low key” uses. Their landscape value needs to be considered when justifying their retention and/or conversion.

There is a potential for conflict between various Government guidance which relates to issues of historic building conservation, the rural economy and diversification and sustainability (PPG 15, PPS 7 and PPS 1).

It must be the case that individual buildings and farmsteads are dealt with on their merits and that inevitably compromise may be necessary to achieve a satisfactory outcome, and to secure the preservation of both listed and unlisted historic farm buildings.

Historic buildings are an intrinsic part of the evolution of our landscape and it is useful to outline the geology of Hampshire.

A chalk belt runs south-east to north-west across the county with downland dominating the character of much of the landscape. Over lying the chalk in some parts, but particularly in the east, is ‘clay with flints’ – a loam or clay-loam of variable depth. To the north and south of the chalk are regions of sands and clays forming part of the Thames Basin and the Hampshire Basin. Soil quality here varies from sandy areas supporting little but heathland, to good quality agricultural land.

North of Portsmouth is the chalk ridge of Portsdown Hill, fringed by fertile brick earths, much of which has been lost to urban expansion. The eastern boundary contains a varied geology of sands, gault clay, and upper and lower greensands. This area contains the chief source of stone in Hampshire – malmstone, a coarse sandstone which occurs mainly in East Hampshire District.

The New Forest to the south-west is a large expanse of heathland bordered to the west by the fertile valley of the River Avon, and to the south by the coastal plain, a mixture of good quality loams and poorer sandy soils.

The river valleys of the Test, the Itchen and the Meon drain the main chalk area, with the River Wey in the east and the Loddon in the north-east.

The lack of naturally available building stone (apart from limited supply of malmstone in the east) has resulted in timber framed buildings dominating the historic farm buildings across the county.
In particular the aisled barns with weather boarded walls are an iconic feature in the Hampshire landscape.

The Countryside Agency, (now part of NE) in conjunction with English Nature and English Heritage, have created Joint Character Areas (JCAs) of which there are 159 in England.

These are being used as the framework for the delivery of advice, land management and the targeting of resources for many aspects of the environment.

NE uses these JCAs for their application of grant assistance under the Higher Level Stewardship Agri-Environment schemes.

The JCAs form the basis for policy planning affecting rural areas and are an integral part of NE targeting of financial support. Each JCA has a statement which attempts to identify particular aspects of the environment in that character area for which attention may be directed.

In the case of the historic environment, targeting statements invariably include buildings which are ‘at risk’. As has been mentioned this places an important emphasis on the quality and comprehensiveness of the Buildings at Risk surveys.

It is important to distinguish between a local authority Buildings at Risk register (which includes all grades of Listed Buildings) and the English Heritage national register which only refers to the small percentage which are Grade I, II* or Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

The Joint Character Areas which cover Hampshire are:

- 120 Wealden Greensand
- 125 South Downs
- 126 South Coast Plain
- 128 South Hampshire Lowland
- 129 Thames Basin Heath
- 130 Hampshire Downs
- 131 New Forest
- 132 Salisbury Plain and West Wiltshire Downs
- 133 Dorset Downs and Cranbourne Chase
- 134 Dorset Heaths
Some JCA historic environment statements refer to specific farm building types, e.g. New Forest (granaries), and materials, Test Valley (cob structures), East Hampshire (malmstone).

In the context of Hampshire this may be more usefully defined in terms of local distinctiveness, rarity, survival and vulnerability. Thus, thatched roofs, cob buildings/walls and malmstone buildings would all merit targeted attention.

The County Council commissioned an assessment of Hampshire, covering the historic and archaeological aspects of the landscape. The Historic Landscape Character Assessment was published in 1999 and is a useful tool in understanding how the historic landscape has evolved, what areas are vulnerable and what is important in maintaining diversity and local distinctiveness.

For the purposes of this document, it is useful to examine historic farm buildings and farmsteads in relation to the eleven Hampshire Landscape Character Areas identified in the County Council’s “The Hampshire Landscape – a Strategy for the Future” document. Fig A shows the Character Areas, which are assessed at a more detailed level than the JCA’s, which are regionally based.

The Character Area analysis demonstrates both similarities and local distinctiveness of historic farm buildings and farmsteads across the county, and as such provides support for the decision making process of strategic planning, development control, agri-environment funding and land management.

The following farmstead Character Statements resulted from the English Heritage pilot project analysis and discuss each Character Area in the context of historic farm buildings. It is important to remember that the areas are loosely defined in terms of ‘boundaries’ and that adjacent character areas merge with one another in a subtle manner.

The four River Valley Character Areas have been discussed individually.
The agricultural history of this area is closely linked with that of the mid and south Hampshire downs with farming based on a sheep/corn system with many large and valuable farms. Evidence for medieval field systems is limited to areas immediately surrounding small villages, a large proportion of the open fields and downland being enclosed by agreement in the 17th and 18th centuries. Records from the 19th century show that the eastern part of the area (Basingstoke to Alton) had a greater proportion of arable and fewer sheep than the western part. There is evidence of watermeadows in the Bourne valley.

Settlements are mostly nucleated in the villages lying in the river valleys of the Test and Itchen. Away from these, small villages and hamlets are scattered across the area in sheltered dry valleys and more exposed ridge top locations.

Many isolated farmsteads of probably medieval origin have disappeared, some that survive representing sites of shrunken villages.

Farmsteads are often located on the edge of villages and set close to roads and are very prominent, as are those in isolated locations set on higher ground.

The dominance of arable and the large size of the holdings has resulted in relatively large farmsteads, with often two or three timber framed ailed barns being provided. These are typically of 5 – 6 bays, but barns of up to 9 bays or just 3 bays are not uncommon. By the 19th century, most farmsteads had courtyard plans, often loosely arranged. Some smaller farms (notably in the north west) adopting an L-shaped plan.

The presence of some large estates within the area where ‘modern’ farming practice of the 19th century is evident. As is typical throughout the county, the farmhouse is usually sited away from the yard, occasionally set at right angles to it, with gable end on to the yard.

The importance of cereal production is reflected in the provision of granaries – mostly of timber frame on staddle stones, boarded with louvred window openings for ventilation. Roofs are typically half-hipped.

Most cattle rearing was carried out in the river valleys – where housing for cattle existed in the area it is usually a later addition to existing buildings, open fronted shelters facing on to a yard, or part of 19th century re-organisation reflecting increasing dairy production or fattening. These were typically of brick or brick and flint construction, though the larger estates show the early use of mass concrete.

The use of teams of horses in this arable area is reflected in the provision of stables. As throughout the county the quality of housing for horses was higher than for other animals and examples from the 16th century survive, though most date from the 18th and 19th century, often of brick or brick and flint construction.

As previously mentioned, timber framed weatherboarded barns are distinctive features of many farmsteads, often ailed on at least one side with large area of roof sweeping down to low walls, sometimes wholly or partly of brick. Traditionally thatched roofs of long straw with flush ridge and sparred eaves are particularly important in the west of the area in the Bourne valley. Many roofs have been replaced with tile, slate or corrugated iron sheeting. The use of brick was more common from the 18th century, and by the 19th century timber framing had been replaced almost totally by brick or brick and flint for farm buildings. Smaller farm buildings of cob survive on some farmsteads and for boundary walls. This is most evident in the north-west of the area.
Boundary walls in and around farmsteads are typically of flint and brick or cob with thatched or tile cappings and add to the distinctive character of villages and the landscape.

**AREA 2 MID HAMPSHIRE DOWNS**

This area forms part of the central chalk belt historically renowned for sheep/corn farming. From the 18th century downland was brought into arable use, the farms being amongst the largest and wealthiest in Hampshire.

Main settlement areas lie within smaller tributary valleys of the River Test where most early farmsteads were located. Some villages, such as Grateley, lie in more open locations in undulating landscape.

There are many historic farmsteads along the valley of the Wallop Brook. Though few remain in agricultural use they form prominent features in the villages. Barns are often sited alongside roadways.

There are few isolated farmsteads in the area, typically dating from the late 18th and 19th century relating to enclosure of open fields or downs; often prominent features alongside roads and in longer views across the landscape.

Dominance of arable farming and large farm size results in large farmsteads, commonly forming a courtyard plan by the 19th century. Few examples fully enclosed the yard – the smaller farmsteads being typically L-shaped plan with barn, stables, cartshed and granary.

Isolated farmsteads demonstrate more formal plan forms incorporating 'modern' 19th century farming practice – several showing E-plan layouts.

Arable farming is reflected in the size and number of barns on many farmsteads – often up to three provided, typically of 5 – 6 bays, timber framed and weather boarded and aisled on at least one side. Some larger barns of up to 11-bays, and occasionally staddle barns are found, and small 3 or 4 bay barns a feature of village centres. Later 19th century barns are often multifunctional, incorporating cartshed, stables and stores.

Granaries, usually timber framed and weatherboarded on staddle stones are common, some larger of two storeys in places. Later planned farmsteads on larger estates often have granaries incorporated into one of the ranges, usually above a cartshed. These also include buildings for cattle, which on earlier farmsteads in village locations tend to be open fronted shelters attached to older buildings facing the yard.

Stables, many dating from the 18th century occur on many farmsteads and are a reflection of the importance of the use of horses for use on arable farms. Brick and clay tile was commonly used from the 18th century for these and other farm buildings, and widespread in the 19th century, often in conjunction with flint. Chalk cob was used for smaller farm buildings.

Straw thatch was the traditional roofing material but has been replaced on many buildings with tile, slate or corrugated sheeting. The roof form of timber framed ailed barns being a feature of the downland areas with semi or fully hipped roofs.

Boundary walls to farmsteads are typically of flint and brick or chalk cob with thatched or tile capping, the latter a distinctive and vulnerable feature.
Historically a sheep/corn farming area with many large valuable holdings. The area west of the River Test retains a more wooded character and there is more evidence of fields created from woodland clearance (assarting) than elsewhere in the area.

There are few villages in the area, particularly in the central section to the east of Winchester, and most are smaller than those of the river valley area which cross the area (exceptions being Owslebury and Hambledon). There are hamlets and isolated farmsteads of medieval origin.

Farmsteads are located within the villages and in isolated positions in the undulating downland landscape. Both are prominent, in villages set close to roadways, and where isolated on higher ground being visible in more distant views.

Again, farmsteads display plans typical of the arable dominance and relative size of holdings, with large groups of buildings arranged round the yard on three sides by the 19th century.

Often two or three threshing barns exist typically of 5 bays, though larger (up to 9 bays) and smaller (3 bays) are not uncommon. In many cases barns were enlarged as grain production increased in the 18th and 19th centuries, and staddle barns survive on some farms.

Granaries are present in many farmsteads, often free standing timber framed and weather boarded. Housing for cattle where present usually consists of low open fronted shelters facing on to a yard, a later addition to an existing building.

As with other chalk downland areas, arable dominance required teams of horses and stables are provided on many farmsteads usually in good quality buildings often of brick or flint and brick dating mostly from the 18th or early 19th century. Also common to other downland areas, the wealth of farms is demonstrated in farmhouses, many of which were enlarged, refaced in brick or totally re-built in the 18th or early 19th century. Some large farms were provided with walled gardens giving greater
separation from the working farm. Such gardens could incorporate features such as summer houses or gazebos.

As across all the county, most pre-19th century farm buildings are of timber framed construction, usually weather boarded. At the western and southern edge of the area brick farm buildings of the 18th century are more common being close to areas of brick and tile making industries. By the mid-19th century, brick or brick and flint construction was used for nearly all farm buildings. Some small buildings were constructed from cob, with a lime render or slurry coat, and of particular interest is the use of malmstone in the area south of Petersfield, often appearing as the plinth wall of timber framed barns or for smaller farm buildings.

Roof covering was traditionally straw thatch, which has been replaced with clay tile, slate and corrugated sheet on most buildings. Roof forms are typically half hipped or fully hipped – a particularly characteristic of aisled barns.

### AREA 4
**CRANBORNE CHASE**

This character area shares features with those of the central Hampshire chalk belt, with farming based on sheep and corn. Villages and sites of farmsteads lying in the valleys of small chalk streams and isolated farmsteads on the downs, most villages are linear, though Damerham is polyfocal, with several distinct areas of settlement often focussed on a farmstead.

The area shows relatively few isolated farmsteads, mostly of 18th and 19th century, with the oldest farmsteads located in village centres, with medieval barns surviving on manor farms at Rockbourne and Damerham.

By the 19th Century, most farmsteads were of courtyard plan with buildings ranged round three sides of the yard, though many are L shaped consisting of barn, stables, cartshed and granary.

The importance of arable is reflected in the size and number of barns on farmsteads, most are of 5 bays, but many were increased in the 18th and 19th centuries up to 9 bays.

Granaries are typically timber framed on staddle stones, though as is less common in other parts of the county several brick granaries are found.

Though timber framed barns do occur on farmsteads, few are fully aisled, and the oldest barns are stone built, reflecting the proximity to Dorset. Brick farm buildings dating from the 18th century onwards are also relatively common, as are brick and flint buildings with slate and tiled roofs of the 19th century.

There is some evidence of housing for cattle in the form of open shelter sheds facing yards, and many farmsteads have stabling.

As fewer barns are aisled, roof forms are not usually hipped but half-hipped or gabled. Traditional thatch has typically been replaced with tile or slate or corrugated iron/steel sheet, though several larger barns would have originally been provided with tiled roofs from the 18th century.

Some smaller farm buildings are of chalk cob construction which is also used for boundary walls to farmsteads particularly in the villages of Damerham and Rockbourne, with distinctive thatched or tiled cappings. Other boundary walls are of brick or brick and flint.
An area of heavy clay soils and sandy heath, historically well-wooded, extensive areas of woodland subject to clearance or assarting by the 14th century. Capable of arable production, though the eastern part towards Aldershot/Farnborough is unproductive heath.

The area supported a sheep/corn system of farming, and more fattening of cattle and dairying than the chalk downland to the south. Farms are generally small, though there are some large estates including Highclere, Stratfield Saye, The Vyne and Elvetham.

The area has a relatively dispersed settlement pattern with a number of small villages, more common in the east of the area. Much settlement is in hamlets, often clustered around small areas of common.

Historic farmsteads found in small villages and hamlets are a prominent and distinctive feature of the area.

They are typically small with buildings reflecting the mixed agriculture practised with barns, granaries, stabling and cattle housing. Plans vary from dispersed to U-shaped enclosing a yard. In contrast, the farmsteads of the larger estates demonstrate more planning and greater investment to conform to ‘modern’ farming methods of the 19th century.

Timber framed barns, typically of 5 – 6 bays, weatherboarded with roofs tiled, thatched (rare) or covered with slate or corrugated sheet are common, though the clays available in the area has resulted in a greater number of earlier brick buildings than in the central chalk area to the south. Important brick barns dating from the 16th century occur in the Basingstoke and Odiham area and those of the 18th and 19th century are quite common. Flint is used where the area borders the chalk downland.

Free standing granaries, timber framed on staddle stones, usually weatherboarded but also with brick infill panels, are common, but smaller than other character areas where grain production was greater.

Open fronted shelter sheds for cattle are a more common feature than on the chalk downland areas – often of timber frame or brick with tiled roof they can be confused with cartsheds – normally sited alongside a track and not always part of the yard.

Many farmsteads have stables, usually of 18th and 19th century, brick with tiled roofs. In the north west part, some farmsteads specialising in horse breeding led to the construction of large stable blocks.

There is more use of tile for historic farm building roofs than downland areas, though straw thatch was traditionally used. Corrugated steel sheet has replaced traditional materials on many buildings. The ailed barns result in fully or half-hipped roof forms.

Boundary walls to farmsteads are commonly of brick, or brick and flint, where the area borders the chalk downland.

A complex and varied landform, the range of soil types resulting in mixed farming and a wide range of size of farms. Particularly important is the growing of hops from the late 17th century and the availability of greensand and malmstone (the only major area of Hampshire with local stone available for building) – factors which influence the local distinctiveness of historic farm buildings in this area.

Farmsteads are a prominent feature of most of the villages and hamlets – often close to the village street.
Less dependence on arable farming in the area results in smaller barn sizes generally of 3 and 5 bays (usually of 18th century with a few earlier examples), though some larger barns exist in the best arable parts of the area.

Granaries are less common than in other mainly arable parts of Hampshire – those existing typically timber framed and boarded on staddle stones, though some brick granaries are found.

Hop kilns are characteristic of the area, of mainly square plan though several circular buildings survive. Often built of locally available malmstone – a distinctive pale cream / green/grey colour – and brick.

Despite the locally available stone, the use of timber frame predominates, as is the case across the county. The stone was used more for plinth walls to barns, or for smaller farm buildings such as stables.

By the mid 19th century the use of timber farming had been replaced by brick, or brick and flint construction.

The area displays a particularly large number of aisled barns with fully hipped or half hipped roofs. As is the case throughout the county, straw thatch has been replaced by tile and corrugated iron/steel of many farm buildings though the presence of a brick and tile industry in the area from the 15th century led to clay tile being used on the larger important farmsteads from the medieval period.

AREA 7
SOUTH HAMPSHIRE
LOWLAND AND HEATH

An undulating landscape based on clays and sands containing the former Royal Forest of Bere and influenced by the conurbations of Southampton, Eastleigh, Portsmouth and Havant. The river valleys of the Test, Itchen and Meon divide the area.

There were many small farms in the area by the early 19th century, with the expanding urban areas to the south encouraging the development of market gardening and the growth of dairy farming. Railway development saw produce grown for an increasing London based market, particularly for fruit.

The area shows a higher degree of dispersion particularly in the west where scattered farmsteads predominate. The numerous woodlands and hedgerows limit wider views and farmsteads, set close to roads are often viewed from close quarters where the visual impact of dereliction or conversion is great.
Medium to large farmsteads typically contain a range of buildings by the 19th century organised around a yard often of L or U shaped plan. Also several small farmsteads occur, especially those based on dairy with only one or two buildings. Though mostly wood-pasture, the area had some arable farming where barns of up to 10 bays can be found, though the majority are of 3 to 5 bays, and ailed on at least one side.

Granaries less common, usually timber framed and boarded on staddle stones. Many farmsteads have buildings for cattle, usually 19th century open fronted sheds along one or two sides of the yard. Stables and cartsheds are found on many farmsteads. Few buildings for pigs have survived due to their scale and limits for re-use through some 19th century brick built examples many survive.

As elsewhere, timber framed structures with weatherboarded walls dominate historic farm buildings, though the brick and tile industries from the 18th century provided materials for some farm structures.

Tile, slate and corrugated iron/steel has replaced traditional thatch on many farm buildings, with the aileded construction emphasising the expanse of roof and low eaves.

Boundary walls in and around farmsteads are commonly built of brick.

The area is based on acidic sands, clays, gravels and waterlogged bogs and mires with very poor agricultural quality. Smallholders used common right in the Forest to practise a wood-pasture economy keeping pigs, beef cattle, horses and ponies.

This relative agricultural poverty is reflected in the few farmsteads, though the large number of smallholders meant that most cottages were farmhouses. Few buildings were needed, mostly of poor construction and have not survived. Along the western edge, the north-east corner and alongside the Beaulieu river, fields were developed from woodland and farmsteads exist, usually based on a loose courtyard plan.

The low level of arable production results in a few small barns, typically of just 3 bays, with most buildings on the larger farmsteads relating to cattle housing.

Few traditional timber framed and weatherboarded farm buildings exist, most surviving buildings being of brick construction. Cob was used for some farm buildings, often left unrendered, with rough timber planking and corrugated iron sheeting on other small buildings. Roof coverings on the larger farm buildings are commonly of clay tile, slate or corrugated iron/steel.

The poor quality of the buildings and vulnerability especially of cob structures, combined with the ‘tidying up’ of the fashionable New Forest, has resulted in historic farm buildings in this area which do survive being particularly threatened.

This area shares many characteristics of the Avon Valley – field size and importance of arable farming. The Cistercian abbey at Beaulieu with its large and prosperous estate influenced the south-east part significantly, with remains of prestigious stone built barns surviving at locations such as St Leonard’s.

 Settlements are mostly dispersed, with isolated farmsteads, a few small hamlets
and villages. Farmsteads set in isolation, sometimes clustering to form a small hamlet, and are generally larger with greater prominence than the adjacent lowland and heath. 19th century planned farmsteads often not containing a threshing barn.

Farmstead plans are generally loose courtyard with L and U shape being typical. A model farm complex on the Beaulieu Estate is a rare example in the county.

Arable farming was important and this is reflected in most pre 19th century farmsteads dominated by a threshing barn. Unlike other parts of the county, aisled barns are relatively rare, most have half-hipped roofs.

Free standing granaries usually timber framed and weather boarded occur on farmsteads. Cow houses found on most farms, with some having open fronted shelter sheds facing the yard, or lean to “outshots” to earlier barns. Cartsheds and stables of 18th and 19th century on many farmsteads.

Brick was commonly used for farm buildings from the 18th century, replacing timber framing by the 19th century. Particularly important for local distinctiveness is the use of “Beaulieu brick” a yellow/pale grey brick from local clays which features in many farm buildings in the area.

Thatch, though traditionally used for roofing is rare, most roofs being covered with plain clay tile, slate, interlocking tiles or corrugated iron/steel sheeting.

An area of brick earths, marine clays and silts supporting cereal production, cattle, dairying, pig keeping and market gardening. From the 13th century the area was dominated by urban market centres at Fareham, Gosport, Portchester, Emsworth, Havant, Portsmouth and Titchfield (in the Meon Valley). West of the Meon valley, large monastic estates are found at Netley, Hamble-Le-Rice and Titchfield Abbey.

Urban encroachment has removed much of the best agricultural land with only fragments of its landscape remaining. To the west of the area along the River Hamble, small enclosures with areas of woodland survive. In the east, farmsteads lie mostly within villages and where not engulfed by urban expansion, continue to be important visual features.

Larger farmsteads are located in the east of the area, typically with a loose courtyard plan with one or two larger barns.
These may be up to nine bays, timber framed and ailed on at least one side. To the west, small farmsteads display more L-shaped plans, with smaller barns of three to five bays.

Granaries are free standing, timber framed and boarded, on staddle stones.

Thatch has been the traditional material for roofing farm buildings, though tile has been available from the medieval period. Tile, slate and corrugated sheet has replaced thatch on most farm buildings.

Boundary walls to most farmsteads are constructed of brick.

**AREA 11**

**RIVER VALLEYS/AVON**

The Avon Valley was largely an area of corn production combined with cattle rearing from the 17th century, though some areas of pasture and heath supported sheep and pigs. Dairy production developed in the 19th century providing markets at Bournemouth and Southampton.

The presence of some large estates resulted in the development of watermeadows which are a distinctive feature of the area. Structures including sluices, hatches and bridges still survive.

Farmsteads are dispersed, villages not strongly nucleated, with the market towns of Fordingbridge and Ringwood lying at the important crossing points of the river.

Large estates farmed the best land along the valley, with a high proportion of the poorer quality land comprising of many small holdings.

Most farmsteads were courtyard plan, of L or U shape. 19th century planned farmsteads of the 19th century predominate.

Farmsteads located close to the river show the importance of arable, barns sometimes of 9 bays being present, most are of 3 or 5 bays, timber framed with boarded walls, aisles being less common than in other areas.

Timber framed granaries, with boarded walls appear, mostly in the north of the area; stables, cartsheds and shelter sheds for cattle dating from the 19th century are found on many farmsteads.

Cob walling is evident in some smaller buildings and for boundary walls. By the mid-19th century brick had taken over as the main material for farm buildings, sometimes used with flint.

Most roofs of traditional thatch have been replaced with tile, slate, interlocking tile or corrugated iron/steel sheeting.

Boundary walls are mostly of brick construction, some of cob still survive and are of particular importance.

**Barn with animal shelter.**

**19th century L-shaped stables and open fronted animal shelter.**
As with the Itchen and Meon Valley, the Test Valley character is a reflection of adjacent character areas.

The chalk downland and sheep/corn farming also encouraged development of watermeadows during the 17th and 18th centuries – a characteristic feature of the chalk valleys. Further south, the valley lies within the Lowland and Heath character area with smaller fields and isolated farmsteads.

In the chalk area to the north, farmsteads are located in the linear villages, mostly alongside roadways and are particularly prominent. Further south towards Romsey the wider, flatter valley is predominantly water meadow.

Most farmsteads are of courtyard plan, unconnected buildings ranged around 2 or 3 sides of the yard. Few fully enclosed the yard, with smaller farms based on L-shape plan with barn, stables, cartshed and granary. Some farmsteads completely rebuilt in the 19th century, incorporating 'modern' farming practice but not true model farms.

Arable farming of the adjacent downland is reflected in the size and number of barns on many farmsteads. Most date from the 18th century, often two provided, some on staddle stones. Typically of 5 bays and aisled on at least one side, though larger barns of up to 10 bays and smaller of 3 are also found.

Free standing timber framed weatherboarded granaries, are found on most farmsteads with stables, usually dating from the 18th and 19th century of brick construction or brick and flint with tiled or slate roofs.

Roofs are usually fully or half-hipped, the traditional thatched roofs to barns surviving better than in other areas of the county, though many have been replaced with tile, or corrugated iron/steel sheeting.

Many small farm buildings and boundary and farmyard walls are constructed of cob – a distinctive feature of the area, the walls often with thatched or tile cappings. Brick or brick and flint boundary walls to farmsteads are also commonly found.

The upper part of the Itchen valley is bounded by chalk downland with sheep-corn farming dominating historically, with watermeadows developing in the valley during the 17th and 18th century forming a characteristic feature in the landscape. Historic structures including sluices, hatches and bridges relating to the watermeadows still survive, though under threat from dereliction and neglect. In the southern part of the valley, adjacent to the Lowland and Heath character area the landscape is markedly different; small fields created from woodland clearance and subject to the expansion of Eastleigh and Southampton.
Where the valley runs through the chalk area, settlements are concentrated in linear villages, with higher density. Several large villages exist south of Winchester. Between Eastleigh and Southampton there are just a few isolated farmsteads.

The oldest farmsteads are located in the valley settlements, with buildings sited close to roadways and prominent. Water meadows are present and a particular feature of the valley where it passes through the lowland area.

Farmsteads of courtyard plan ranged round two or three sides of the yard, smaller farms having an L-shaped plan containing barn, stables, granary and cartshed. Barns are typically of 5 bays, though 3 bay and up to 10 bays also occur. Most are timber framed and ailed, many on three or four sides, with fully hipped roofs.

There are few buildings for cattle – usually open sheds of 19th century date.

Stables are of brick, or brick with flint with tile or slate roofs.

Roofs were traditionally thatched, though some larger barns used tiles from the medieval period. Most roof coverings are now of tile, slates, or corrugated iron/steel sheeting. Most are half-hipped, or fully hipped where ailed on all sides.

Farmstead boundary walls are typically of flint and brick, or chalk cob with thatched or tile cappings.

As with the Test and Itchen river valleys, the upper part of the Meon valley is influenced by the chalk downland to either side with sheep/corn farming and the development of watermeadows in the 17th and 18th centuries. To the south, the valley is flanked by the South Hampshire Lowland and Heath, with small irregular fields created by woodland clearance from the 14th century and small regular fields from the enclosure of heath and common. Settlements are concentrated in linear villages close to the river with some medieval farmsteads.

The Meon finally passes through the South Hampshire Coast Area, retaining its rural character despite having large urban areas to either side. This part of the valley has been influenced by the presence of Titchfield Abbey and Park, and 17th century reclamation of the estuary and canalisation of a branch of the river as far as Titchfield.

Market gardening in the area supplied produce for Southampton, Portsmouth and the Royal Navy victualling yard at Gosport. Apart from the market towns of Wickham and Titchfield, settlement is limited to isolated farmsteads.

Most farmsteads in the area are of courtyard plan by the 19th century, with unconnected buildings around two or three sides of the yard. Few are fully enclosed. Some farmsteads within the valley were wholly rebuilt in the 19th century incorporating ‘modern’ farming practices.

The importance of arable farming is reflected in the size and number of timber framed barns on many farmsteads in both the downland part of the valley and further south. Farmsteads with two or three barns are common, typically of 5 bays, ailed on at least one side and often on three or all sides. Larger barns of up to 9 bays lie within the southern part of the valley. Roofs are half-hipped or fully hipped, thatch being replaced by tile or corrugated iron/steel sheet on most farm buildings.
There are free standing timber framed granaries on many farmsteads, usually weatherboarded with tiled or slate half-hipped roofs. Some cattle rearing was carried out in river valleys – there are some 19th century shelter sheds opening on to yards. Stables of brick or brick and flint walls with tiled or slate roofs dating from the 18th and 19th centuries typically survive on some farmsteads.

Brick and brick and flint is evident in farmbuildings in the area, with a few small chalk buildings surviving in the north part of the valley.

Farmstead boundary walls are of brick, brick and flint with a few chalk cob walls surviving, with thatched or tiled cappings.

**ADVICE AND REPAIR**

When owners are faced with problems associated with historic farm buildings either due to disrepair or redundancy, it is important to seek advice at an early stage from local authorities conservation officers, architects, surveyors and contractors who have experience of historic buildings.

Where the future of a historic farm building is uncertain and there is a danger of further deterioration and potential collapse it is vital that an assessment is made on necessary works to be undertaken.

Temporary props or scaffold can be used to support timber frames, which have failed. A recent ‘pioneering’ project in Basingstoke District has successfully used straw bales to act as temporary support under tie beams in a listed barn at risk, with the advice of a structural engineer.

Straw bales used for emergency propping of roof trusses.

Frequently, the roofing material may be failing because of corrosion of fixings of tiles or slates, or the battens attached to the rafters. To avoid loss of historic material it may be practical to salvage the roof material and provide protection to the structure with tarpaulins or lightweight sheeting. This may require listed building consent from the local planning authority.

On many early timber framed buildings the timber cill beam was laid directly onto the ground, which can lead to the decay of this and the bottom of vertical oak posts.

In some cases this has been replaced with short brick or concrete piers, a rough and ready solution, but which was practical and cost effective and extended the life of the building.

Concrete at base of timber post.
which may otherwise have collapsed. More appropriate ‘scarfing-in’ of replacement timber sections is always a future long-term option.

On most barns the timber cill beam or sole plate is laid on a solid low brick plinth wall, which keeps the structure dry. The plinth wall rarely had much of a foundation, particularly if laid on chalk base, and local ground subsidence caused by poor drainage can allow distortion of the frame to rotate and collapse the plinth wall. The frame has to be supported, taking loading off the vertical posts, and cill beams and the wall repaired.

Timber members were often over-designed, and decay from rot and insect damage which may have occurred early in the life of a building when the wood was still ‘green’ is not still active. Timbers can lose quite a large proportion of the original section but still provide structural support. Where decay has resulted from the ingress of water, it is usually better to provide additional structural support than to completely replace historic fabric unless it is totally decayed.

‘Honest’ practical repairs using iron/steel plates and straps to deal with cracked or split timber members have been used in the past and are still effective in extending the life of a building at low cost.

Cob buildings and structures are especially vulnerable to excessive water penetration at wall bases and at the top. Where there has been failure in roofing material on a cob wall or building, immediate action must be taken to stop further water ingress until proper repairs can be undertaken. Rainwater must be shed well clear of cob wall surfaces. Similarly, the base of cob walls must be protected from saturation by preventing build up of soils/debris and by good local land drainage systems.

Repairs to historic masonry, stone, brick and flint, should be undertaken using lime-based mortars, which allow flexibility in the structure and the wall to ‘breathe’. Hard cement-based mortars and renders must not be used as they will accelerate decay of historic masonry, apart from any aesthetic reasons.

Rainwater goods, where fitted, should be regularly checked for proper functioning. Water must be prevented from pouring down walls. Although rainwater goods are not traditional to many farm buildings, they can be a useful addition to prevent water penetration and damage. Where listed buildings are concerned advice should be sought from the conservation officer.

Hampshire County Council has published advice notes on historic building repair also available on its web site at: www.hants.gov.uk/environment/historic-environment/
Threshing Barns

- Typically of timber framed construction – retain timber frame and avoid subdivision of interior where possible.

- Where aisled construction with large area of roof and low eaves retain uninterrupted roof form, avoid roof lights etc particularly on the most visible (e.g. road side) elevations.

- Retain historic roof coverings – particularly long straw thatch, clay tiles, slate.

- Corrugated iron sheeting is a perfectly acceptable roof covering and will protect historic timber frames.

- Retain cart-entrances and porches – in particular local detail e.g. provision for doors / pigeon lofts.

- Walls commonly weather boarded with blank elevations. Retain original wide boarding where possible and avoid new openings, particularly on most visible elevations.

- Where brick construction avoid new openings and retain existing features such as ventilation slits, perforated brickwork, decorative brickwork e.g. use of glazed blue ‘headers’ to create patterns.

- Barns incorporating local materials such as malstone or cob are especially important to local distinctiveness and may represent irreplaceable historic features.

- Retain extensions / outshots which indicate adaptation for use such as cattle shelters.

Granaries

- Typically separate, freestanding timber framed structures set on staddle stones, weather boarded walls, or brick (occasionally wattle/daub or rendered) infill panels. Usually with half hipped or more rarely fully – hipped roofs of clay tile, slate, corrugated iron and occasionally weatherboarded.

- Commonly of one storey but two storey structures are also found.

- Ventilated window openings.

- Granaries also provided above other farm buildings – typically cart sheds.

- Retain in existing location.
• Retain simple roof form and cladding, particularly original boarding and unusual examples e.g. use of vertical tongue and grooved boarding.

• Retain staddle stones

• Where brick or brick and flint construction avoid new openings.

• Retain surviving features – of particular importance are internal surviving features such as grain bins, ladders.

• Cartsheds may have one bay with doors for storage of farm implements. Cattle shelter may have feeding trough along rear wall.

• Retain simple roof form – typically hipped construction.

• Retain open front and existing features such as doors to implement stores, feeding troughs to rear of cattle shelters.

**Stables**

• Stables of timber frame, and brick, brick and flint, and malstone construction.

• Openings for doors and windows / haylofts often demonstrating high quality of detailing – use of cambered bricks, decorative brickwork reflecting importance of horses in agricultural history.

• Roofs commonly gabled, half hipped or fully hipped, usually of tile or slate, corrugated iron or interlocking tiles. Occasionally thatched.

• Retain existing openings in walls, and avoid new openings in boarded or masonry walls, particularly on most visible elevations.

• Retain simple roof forms and materials.

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**Cartsheds and shelter sheds**

• Often of similar construction, timber framed with one open side. Cattle shelters usually integral part of yard, open side facing yard. Cartshed often sited away from yard, facing along road or track.
• Retain original surviving interior fittings such as stalls, feeding grills, hay lofts, ladders.

• Retain surviving split doors where these survive.

**Dovecotes**

• Typically of square plan form, though some circular examples occur.

• Retain surviving split doors where these survive.

- Typical of square plan with walls of brick or malmstone and pyramidal roof with a vent or cowl on top. Some circular plan examples, with conical roofs. Often grouped together. Openings for doors and windows and ventilation. Kiln combustion chambers on ground floor, with slatted floors above.

- Retain existing openings in masonry.

- Retain roof forms and historic tiled or slate roof coverings and cowls/vents where they survive.

- Retain existing surviving interior features – slatted floors / kiln structures of particular rarity.

**Hop Kilns/Oast houses**

- Few if any have survived unaltered, and restricted to parts of east/north east Hampshire.

- Typically of square plan with walls of brick or malmstone and pyramidal roof with a vent or cowl on top. Some circular plan examples, with conical roofs. Often grouped together. Openings for doors and windows and ventilation. Kiln combustion chambers on ground floor, with slatted floors above.

- Retain existing openings in masonry.

- Retain roof forms and historic tiled or slate roof coverings and cowls/vents where they survive.

- Retain existing surviving interior features – slatted floors / kiln structures of particular rarity.

**Piggeries**

- Small-scale structures typically of brick, brick and flint, cob with a small house, open run and feeding trough.

- Surviving examples are rare and should be retained where possible though size limits re-use potential.

**Other Structures**

- Farmyard walls - typically of brick, flint and brick with brick copings. Also cob, brick and cob, flint and cob with thatched, tile or slate wall tops.

- Particularly vulnerable to neglect and loss, these walls (commonly alongside roadways) should be retained, repaired and maintained.

- Historic fencing and gates - commonly of iron and may be examples of local foundries and blacksmiths work. Retain and keep clear from overgrowth/vegetation.
Setting of Farm Buildings

- The setting of farm buildings, in terms of new walls, fencing, planting and surface treatment should reflect the working nature of the farmyard.
- Avoid domestication or urbanisation in planting/paving/lighting proposals.
- Retain historic farmyard/courtyard layouts where possible - avoid over subdivision of yards.
- Retain existing walls - particularly where alongside roadways or public rights of way.
- Retain historic surfaces where they survive (e.g. stable block paving), and keep new surfaces simple using gravel/hoggin as appropriate and avoid modern block paving.

Water meadows structures. Typically bridges, sluices, hatches of stone, brick, timber and iron.

Retain where possible and keep clear from overgrowth and vegetation. (See Conservation of Watermeadows Structures)

Domestication of setting.

Setting spoilt by parking.
This document and the English Heritage Pilot Project highlights the importance of historic farm buildings in Hampshire which contribute to local identity and landscape character. If our historic farm buildings are to continue to contribute towards the quality of our environment and landscape it is clear that we need to address:

- the need for more information on the existing historic farm building resource
- the continued pressure on historic farm buildings for conversion to residential use
- the conflict between planning policy guidance which may preclude the appropriate re-use of historic farm buildings which contribute to the character of settlements and the wider landscape
- the need to target limited financial resources such as agri-environment funding towards the most appropriate maintenance and repair programmes, particularly for those buildings for which re-use is impractical and uneconomic
Contacts and Organisations

Landscape Planning and Heritage Group
Environment Department
Hampshire County Council
The Castle, Winchester,
SO23 8UD
Tel 01962 846832
Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record (AHBR)
Tel 01962 846736
E-mail: historic.
environment@hants.gov.uk
www.hants.gov.uk/environment/historic-environment/

English Heritage S.E. Region
Eastgate Court
195-205 High Street
Guildford, Surrey, GU1 3EH
Tel 01483 252000
www.english-heritage.org.uk
www.helm.org.uk

Dept. for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
South East Region
Government Buildings,
Coley Park
Reading, Berkshire,
RG1 6DE
Tel 0118 939 2205
www.defra.org.uk

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
37 Spital Square
London E1 6DY
Tel 0207 377 1644
www.spab.org.uk

Natural England
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Region
1 Southampton Road,
Lyndhurst, Hampshire
SO43 7BU
Tel 02380 286 410
www.naturalengland.org.uk

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
Beechcroft House,
Vicarage Lane,
Curdridge, Hampshire
SO32 2DP
Tel 01489 774 400
www.hwt.org.uk

The Bat Conservation Trust
Unit 2, 15 Cloisters House'
8 Battersea Park Road,
London SW8 4B
Tel 0207 272 629
www.bats.org.uk

Acknowledgements to:
English Heritage
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
Bob Edwards
Ruth Garner
John Reynolds
Glossary

Types of Roof Forms

- **Gable Wall**
- **Pitched**
- **Hipped**
- **Half Hipped**
- **Gabled**
- **Lean to or Outshot**

Common Types of Timber Roof Trusses

- **Queen Post**
- **Queen Strut**
- **King Post**

Cross Section of Timber Framed Barn, Queen Post Roof Aisled on Both Sides

- **Purlin**
- **Tie Beam**
- **Collar**
- **Queen Post**
- **Up Brace**
- **Aisle Tie**
- **Arcade Posts**
- **Aisle**