

KENT FARMSTEADS GUIDANCE

PART 4 CHARACTER AREA STATEMENTS



Low Weald



Wealden Greensand



North Kent Plain



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The Kent Farmstead Guidance is the result of collaboration between English Heritage, Kent County Council and the Kent Downs AONB. It also builds on pilot work developed by English Heritage and the High Weald AONB. It has been revised further following consultation with key stakeholders in Kent. The revision has also integrated the result of the Kent Farmsteads and Landscapes Project, which represents the completion of rapid mapping of farmsteads supported firstly by the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee and then by English Heritage. The text was prepared by Jeremy Lake of English Heritage, with contributions from Bob Edwards and James Webb of Forum Heritage Services (substantially to Parts 5 and 6), & publication layout by Diva Arts.

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AIMS AND CONTENTS OF THE KENT FARMSTEADS GUIDANCE

The Kent Farmsteads Guidance aims to inform and achieve the sustainable development of farmsteads, including their conservation and enhancement. It can also be used by those with an interest in the history and character of the county's landscape and historic buildings, and the character of individual places. Traditional farmstead groups and their buildings are assets which make a positive contribution to local character. Many are no longer in agricultural use but will continue, through a diversity of uses, to make an important contribution to the rural economy and communities.

PART 1 FARMSTEADS ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

This sets out the aims and purpose of the Kent Farmsteads Guidance and is divided into two sections:

1. a **Site Assessment Framework** which will help applicants identify the capacity for change and any issues at the pre-application stage in the planning process, and then move on to prepare the details of a scheme.
2. **Farmsteads Summary Guidance** which summarises the historic character and significance of traditional farmsteads across Kent, the areas into which it subdivides and the issues for change.

PART 2 PLANNING CONTEXT

This sets out the national and local policy context, and summarises recent research on farmsteads including for each of Kent's local authorities.

PART 3 KENT FARMSTEADS CHARACTER STATEMENTS

Fully-illustrated guidance on the character and significance of Kent farmsteads, for use in individual applications and detailed design work, for the preparation of area guidance and for those with an interest in the county's landscapes and historic buildings. The guidance is presented under the headings of: Historical Development, Landscape and Settlement, Farmstead and Building Types and Materials and Detail.

PART 4 CHARACTER AREA STATEMENTS

These provide summaries, under the same headings and for the same purpose, for the North Kent Plain and Thames Estuary, North Kent Downs, Wealden Greensand, Low Weald, High Weald and Romney Marsh.

PART 5 KENT FARMSTEADS DESIGN GUIDANCE

This provides illustrated guidance on design and new build, based on the range of historic farmstead types. It is intended to help applicants who are then considering how to achieve successful design, including new-build where it is considered appropriate and fitted to local plan policy.

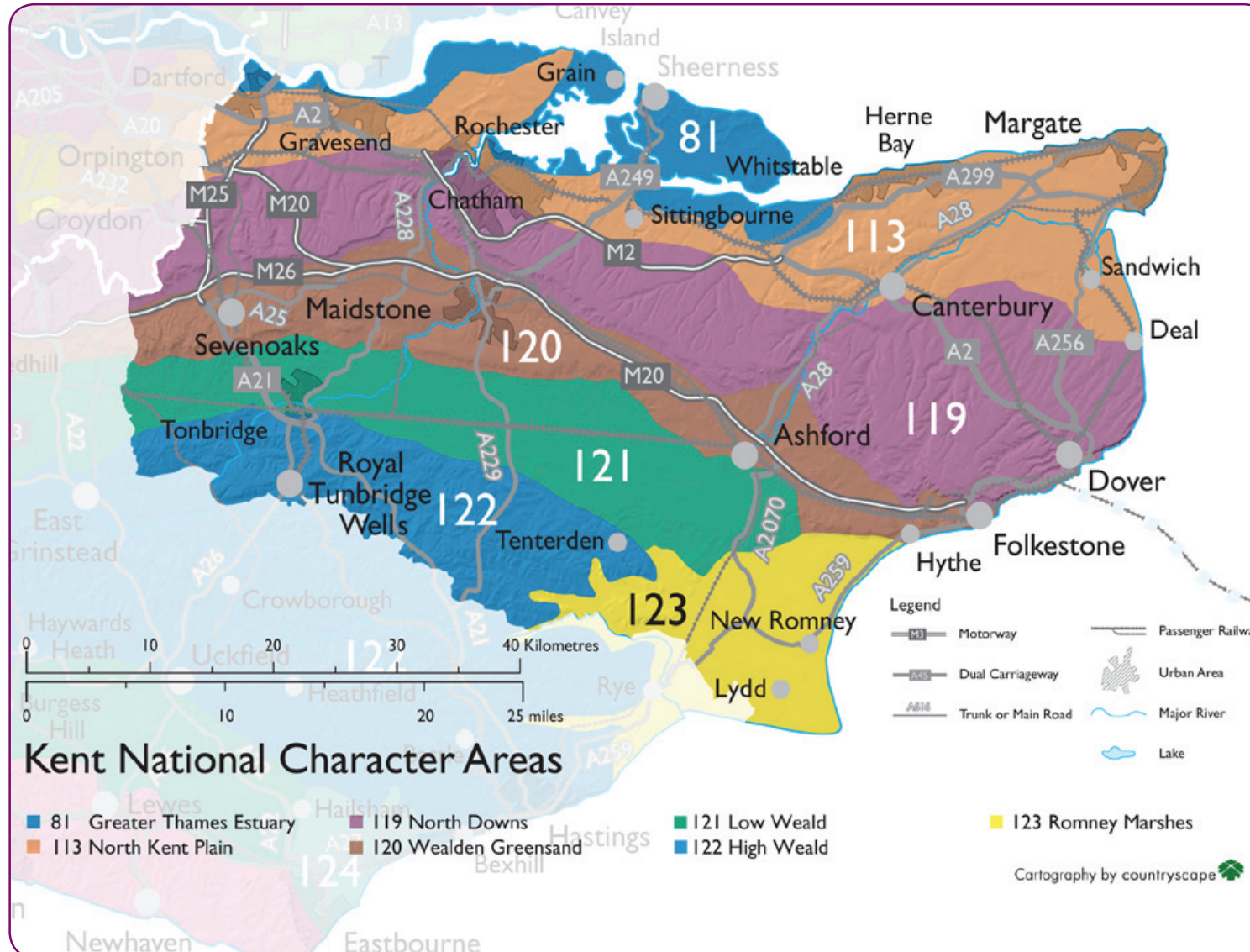
PART 6 RECORDING AND RESEARCH GUIDANCE

This summarises the main issues to consider when undertaking more detailed recording of a site, with a case study and research questions to guide the survey and assessment process.

PART 7 GLOSSARY

This is a glossary of terms to aid the user.

MAP AND INTRODUCTION

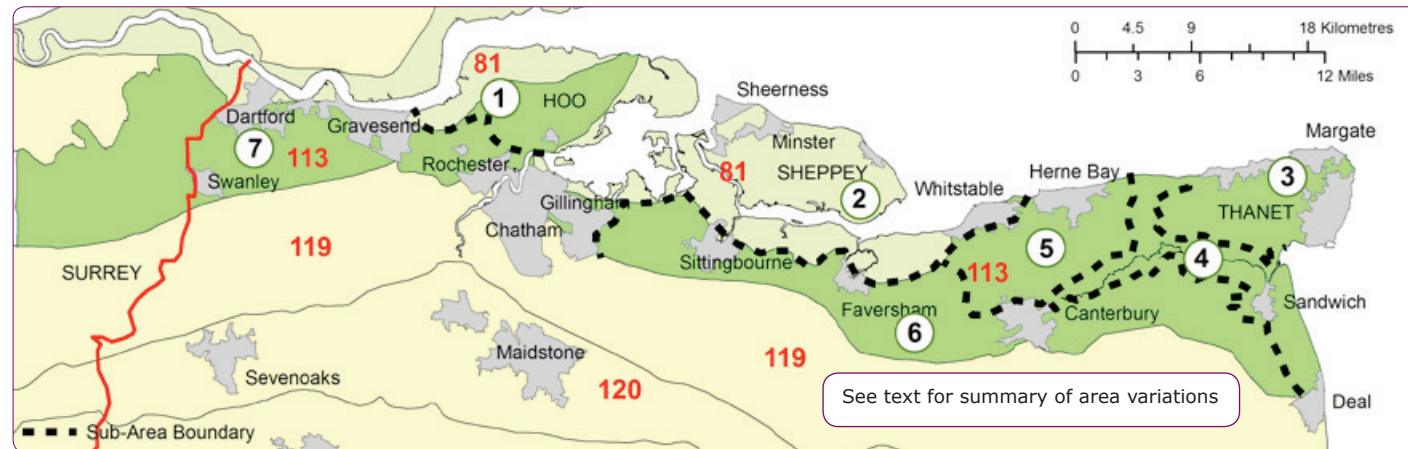


THE STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN ORGANISED UNDER THE FOLLOWING HEADINGS:

- 1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT
- 2 LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT
- 3 FARMSTEAD AND BUILDING TYPES
- 4 MATERIALS AND DETAIL
- 5 RARITY AND SIGNIFICANCE
- 6 AREA VARIATIONS

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1 NORTH KENT PLAIN AND THAMES ESTUARY NCA 113 (NORTH KENT PLAIN) AND 81 (THAMES ESTUARY)



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This area extends northwards from a narrow strip of land along the Thames Estuary to the chalk of the Kent Downs to the south and is divided by the three navigable rivers - the Darent, Medway and Stour. The sub-areas as indicated on the map are: 1) Hoo Peninsula, Northern Coast and Parkland, 2) Isle of Sheppey and Northern Coast and Marshland, 3) Thanet, 4) Wantsum and Lower Stour Marshes, 5) The Blean, 6) Northern Horticultural Belt and 7) The Western Area.

1 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

- The area has been an intensively utilised and exploited area from earliest times, and divided by the three navigable rivers of the Darent, Medway and Stour. The availability of water transport along the coast to London gave north Kent a distinct advantage over other fruit-growing areas such as mid-Kent. The Roman road of Watling Street also provided a direct link with London. The development of the railway network provided an even speedier way of moving goods to London.
- Corn production on the fertile brickearth soils of the North Kent Plain has been important since at least the Iron Age and, together with the development of brewing and malting from the 15th century, has been stimulated by the ease of access to the London

market. The wealth of the church and collegiate holdings on the coastal marsh lands was derived from sheep and wool.

- Large parts were owned by the Church, and the cathedrals of Rochester and Canterbury continued to manage large estates after the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16th century.
- The area has large numbers of medieval houses and barns by national standards – concentrated in a band across the centre of the North Kent Plain. These testify to a class of prosperous farmers who developed on these estates from the 15th century. Fewer, larger arable-based farms developed to the east of the Stour, and elsewhere the diverse economy sustained the development of middling-scale farms.
- Strong linear field systems reflected in the patterns of routeways express ancient patterns of movement and tenure between the arable clayland and the salt marshes. The marshes were used for fattening sheep and cattle.
- Fruit growing was also a major element in the agriculture of the western part of the area in particular from the 13th century, increasing from the 17th century with the establishment of larger orchards to supply the London market and the supply of the naval dockyards.

- Settlement was sparse along the coast until after the expansion of the railway system in the mid-19th century, after which market gardening, seaside resorts and a diversity of industries (mostly chemical, extraction and power) expanded.

2 LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT

The area had been largely cleared of woodland by the 11th century. Woodland is confined to small blocks and copses often on higher ground, and shelter belts of poplars protecting orchards and soft fruit. The only significant areas of woodland are confined to pockets of higher ground with acidic clay soils such as around Shorne, Chattenden and Blean. Within these woods are evidence of smaller medieval farmstead manors, with its associated fields: for example the deserted site of Randalls in Shorne Wood.

In the Thames Estuary:

- A low density of farmsteads scattered across the landscape, within a landscape that was sparsely settled until the development of coastal towns and industries from the late 19th century.
- Large high-status farmsteads, occasionally associated with moated sites, are intermixed with much smaller farmsteads which have been subject to much more change.
- In the low-lying coastal marshes there are some remains of sheep folds associated with routeways for moving stock to and from the marshes.

In the North Kent Plain:

- A medium density of farmsteads in the landscape, frequently prominently sited.
- Predominantly nucleated settlement in the east of the area.

3 FARMSTEAD AND BUILDING TYPES

Farmstead types ☒

- Courtyard farmsteads are predominant, with buildings to two or three sides of the yard and large regular multi-yard farmsteads

which relate to the importance of fattening cattle.

- Regular multi-yard plans developed across the area, including on farms with a mix of corn, hop and fruit production. Some farms around the coastal marshes of Hoo and Sheppey in particular developed with extensive farmsteads having many yards for fattening cattle. Largely absent from the Blean area.
- Other regular plan types, generally medium-scale L and U-plans, are uncommon except in areas of planned regular enclosure on or close to the coastal marshes; some, for example on the Hoo Peninsula and in the eastern part of the character area, result from a high level of rebuilding in the 19th century.
- Courtyard plans with an L-plan element and additional buildings are common across the North Kent Plain, especially in the eastern part of the area.
- Dispersed plan types, mainly cluster plans, were seen across the area, but many have been subject to change leaving few groups unaltered from the late 19th century.
- Outfarms and field barns were particularly common in the Northern Horticultural Belt but have been subject to high levels of loss. Small buildings were often associated with orchards.

Building types ☒

- Aisled barns 18th century and earlier buildings mostly comprise large aisled or unaisled barns, ranging from three bays to eight bays or larger, often on manorial farmsteads.
- There are some rare surviving examples of small three-bay barns associated with the smaller farms that developed along the fringes of the marshland.
- The largest farmsteads developed with two or more aisled or unaisled barns.
- Granaries, either free-standing on staddle stones or above cart sheds and stables are distinctive features across the Plain.
- Oast houses and other buildings associated with the hop industry found on some farms.

- In the low-lying coastal marshes there are some remains of sheep folds associated with routeways for moving stock to and from the marshes.

4 MATERIALS AND DETAIL

- Timber-framing is the characteristic building material for medieval houses and barns which are weatherboarded.
- Brick predominantly used for farm buildings from the 18th century.
- Hipped plain clay tile roofs.
- Survival of straw thatch on some barns.

5 RARITY AND SIGNIFICANCE

- Farmstead groups with less than 50% change since c.1900 are rare by national standards – 33.2% in the North Kent Plain, 26.7% in the Thames Estuary, which with Romney Marsh place these areas in the lowest categories of survival.
- 18th century and earlier working farm buildings other than barns – especially those with stables, granaries and cartsheds typical of arable-based agriculture – are exceptionally rare.
- Some manorial complexes, sometimes moated and accompanied by a church.
- Small-scale pre-19th century loose courtyard groups of a house and barn are rare; surviving examples are likely to be found east of the Medway.
- Dispersed cluster plans, once common across the North Kent Plain except in Thanet, now rarely survive with little change.
- There are some rare survivals of early multi-yard layouts fringing the coastal marshes, with shelter sheds and other buildings relating to the feeding of cattle and growing of corn on higher land.

- There are some high-status sites with large houses and barns, and very rarely with other farm buildings.
- Small-scale barns and farmsteads comprise rare survivals of formerly common marshland-edge farmsteads.
- Shelter sheds, including some very rare examples of pre-19th century date, are a highly distinctive building type.

6 AREA VARIATIONS

1 Hoo Peninsula, Northern Coast and Parkland

- Comparatively few isolated farms are located within and along the edges of the marshes.
- The area within the Hoo was historically dominated by arable and fruit growing, with shelterbelts to isolated farmsteads as well as blocks of coppice woodland and areas of 19th and 20th century development linked to military sites, power generation and commuting.
- Most farmsteads are isolated and set within landscapes of medium-large scale irregular fields largely enclosed by the 18th century.

2 Isle of Sheppey and Northern Coast and Marshland

- Sheppey or 'sheep island' was always used for fattening sheep and managed by land owners inland.
- The area developed in a broadly similar way to The Hoo, but with a dominant pattern of regular fields resulting from 19th century enclosure and reorganisation.
- 19th and 20th century development linked to military and industrial sites (e.g. Sheerness).

3 Thanet

- Market gardening is a characteristic of Thanet, where the exposure to wind limits fruit growing, and in the area around Sandwich which is sometimes regarded as the home of market gardening, as it was brought to this area by Dutch émigrés.
- Settlement is much more strongly nucleated within a very open landscape, and large arable farms with 18/19th century houses developed in tandem with the enlargement of fields but retaining earlier irregular boundaries.
- Strong urban influence with Margate and Ramsgate within the area, and extensive areas of 19th and 20th century housing across the area.

4 Wantsum and Lower Stour Marshes

- The marshland areas were subject to reclamation by ecclesiastical estates in the 12th-13th centuries. Improved drainage from the 19th century has resulted in much of these areas being converted to arable, with a mix of regular and irregular medium-scale fields and farms.

North Kent Plain

5 The Blean (Forest of Blean and Former Blean Forest to its north)

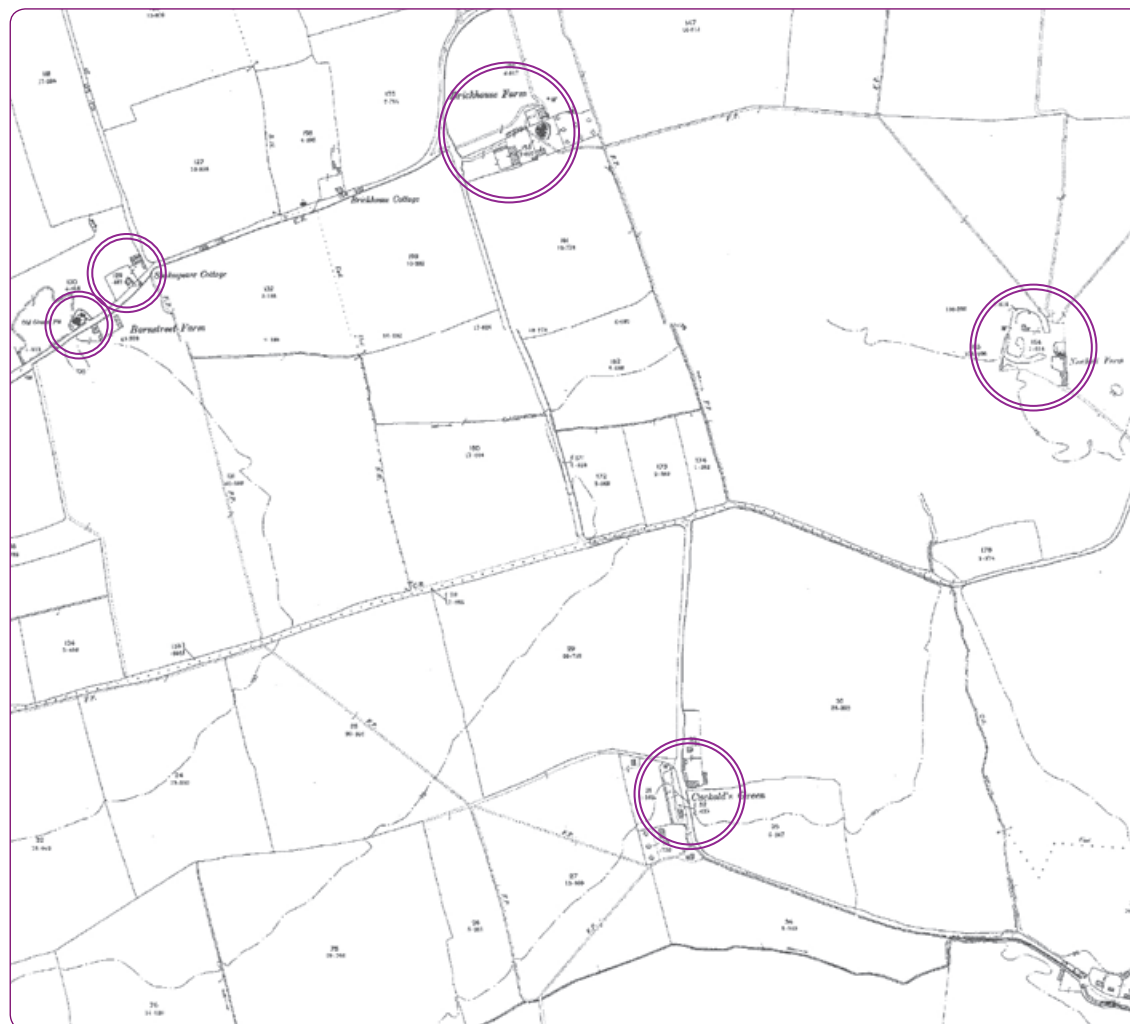
- A coppiced woodland landscape west and north of Canterbury of scattered dwellings amongst woodland and wooded heath, where smaller farms focused largely on dairying developed. Areas of small-scale encroachment and also of large fields and farms.
- To the north is an area of larger farms and fields resulting from the reorganisation of the landscape and more extensive removal of woodland from the 16th century.

6 Northern Horticultural Belt (Whitstable to Gillingham)

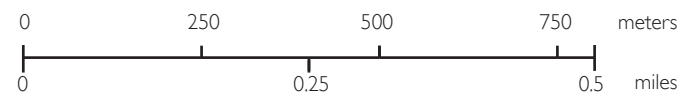
- Rich agricultural landscape of light soils either side of The Blean, running from Gillingham towards Thanet around Whitstable, where a mix of small and medium-large-scale farms developed within a wide variety of fields mostly with irregular boundaries that result from piecemeal enclosure and successive alteration. Some areas with very large fields and large-scale post-1950 farms.

7 The Western Area, including Rochester/Chatham Hinterland, Dartford/Gravesham Conurbation, and North-Western Foothills of the Downs

- Historically a mix of small-scale market gardens mixed with medium to large scale farms. Irregular fields set within pockets of woodland and some coastal marshland.
- It has been subject since the 17th century to increasing urban influences from London, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries, and is now an area with a predominant urban/suburban character.

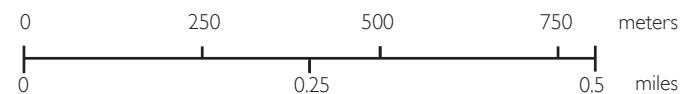


Farmstead



Hoo Peninsula

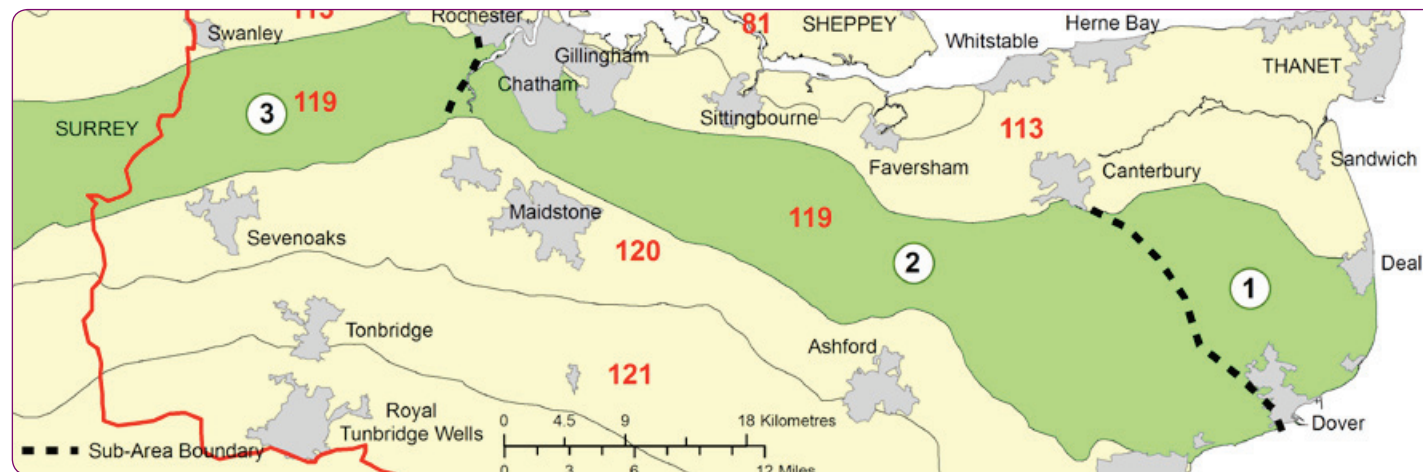
This low lying coastal area of the Hoo was a lightly settled landscape of predominantly dispersed small and medium sized farmsteads typically of loose courtyard form. These farmsteads are set within a landscape of generally medium and large scale fields largely created by the 18th century but which have since been subject to considerable boundary loss. This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. 100019238. 2010



Northern Horticultural Belt

In the central part of the North Kent Plain farmsteads specialising in fruit growing developed from the medieval period, utilising the Roman road and coastal shipping to get the produce to the London market. Settlement consists of a mixture of nucleated villages and isolated farmsteads and hamlets. Large areas of orchards, set within a framework of medium sized semi-regular fields, were served from medium and some small scale farmsteads, predominantly of loose courtyard form. This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. 100019238. 2010

2 NORTH KENT DOWNS NCA 119 (NORTH KENT DOWNS)



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The North Downs forms a chain of chalk hills extending from west Surrey into south London and across Kent, widening eastwards and terminating at the White Cliffs of Dover. The sub-areas as indicated on the map are: 1 East Kent Arable Belt/North Chalk Downs, 2 Clay-with-Flints – Central North Downs to Dover and 3 West Kent Downs.

1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

- The Kent Downs differ from most of the other chalk downlands in southern England; large areas of clay with flints supported woodland areas and made the land difficult to farm. Consequently, a smaller proportion of the higher downs were converted to arable than in most other downland areas – except in the richer East Kent Downs. Large extensive sheep walks are not a feature of the downs due to the clay and woods, and tend to occur in smaller pockets on the edge of the scarp and the scarp face.
- The pace of enclosure and ploughing up of the higher downland for arable farming increased in the late 18th to early 19th centuries when the Napoleonic Wars forced up wheat prices.
- Intensive arable cultivation continued until the late 1870s, when low wheat and wool prices forced some downland farmers to look to dairying, producing liquid milk for urban markets. Other farmers intensified wheat production, replacing sheep flocks with the new artificial fertilisers that were available which in turn allowed more downland to be ploughed up.
- Since 1940, this area has further developed into one of the most intensely-cultivated arable areas in England.

2 LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT

- A predominantly dispersed settlement pattern of isolated farmsteads and hamlets, established by the 9th century and sometimes earlier, set in anciently-enclosed landscapes carved out of woodland and wood pasture.
- Settlement tends towards nucleation in the form of small villages to the east with hamlets common across the central and western parts of the area. There are a number of small forstals (place in front of a farmhouse to hold stock perhaps to be milked) which later became synonymous with greens. Hasted refers to the small hamlets around forstals or greens, which probably indicate the splitting of an original farm holding through gavelkind. In fact many such hamlets here and in the Weald could have evolved in this way through the extended families dividing up and aggregating land.
- Isolated Court and Manor Farms associated with a church may represent shrunken settlement sites.
- Low density of very large-scale isolated farmsteads in the landscape, resulting from the growth of large capital-based farms and also the removal of the area's many small-scale farmsteads from agriculture in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- Large farmsteads, often manorial, can be found in close proximity to a medieval church or chapel representing an early church/manor relationship.
- Away from these settlement cores, some of which grew into trading settlements or villages, there are isolated farmsteads and hamlets, some with small chapels and churches linked to mother churches in the Holmesdale Valley or the river valleys such as the Stour and Medway.
- Within the pattern of dispersed farmsteads there are small nucleated villages; some on the higher parts of the area have 'Street' names usually indicative of the medieval development of secondary settlements.
- In the western part of the area, around and west of Sevenoaks, there is increased urban development.

3 FARMSTEAD AND BUILDING TYPES

Farmstead types ☑

- Farmhouses are commonly detached and often face into their own garden area. Farmsteads with buildings attached to the house – in a linear plan or with a barn attached making an overall L-plan, are rare and possibly early survivals.
- Medium - large-scale courtyard farmsteads, mainly loose courtyard, are concentrated to the east and centre of the area, with large barns, stabling, granaries, cartsheds and cattle yards.
- Small L-plan steadings with a barn and a later cattle shed attached at right angles are also widespread.
- Large regular courtyard farmsteads also developed, especially on the highest parts of the downlands, geared to arable production.
- Dispersed cluster and, to a lesser extent, dispersed multi-yard farmsteads, concentrated in the east of the area.
- Regular multi-yard plans are found across the area but with a slightly higher density in the west.
- Larger regular courtyard plan farmsteads – comprising full courtyard plans, some E-plans and steadings with covered yards are rare.

Building types ☑

- In the chalklands and vales large barns were built for storage and processing of the grain crop, and related to yards where straw and the manure from cattle was trodden down and redistributed to fertilise the fields.
- Increases in grain production and yields in the 18th and early 19th centuries often led to the construction of an additional barn and in many cases, the enlargement and adaptation of earlier barns.
- Barns, typically of five bays and including aisled barns, are mostly of 17th or 18th century date but with a high concentration by national standards of earlier examples. Barns dating from the 18th century or before tend to be fully aisled. This area has one of the major concentrations of aisled barns in the country.

- Barns were aisled or more commonly provided with a lean-to shed to at least one side resulting in low eaves-lines, emphasising the mass of the roof over walling.
- Mid-19th century barns built with brick and flint or brick are either unaisled or split-level combination barns.
- Granaries are typically of 18th or 19th century date, timber-framed and set on staddle stones. On larger farms the granary was often incorporated with the oast house or above a cart shed.
- Stables could be built within the end bays of barns or as detached structures. Stables mostly date from the late 18th or 19th centuries, earlier examples being very rare.
- Oast houses are concentrated in the central part of the area.
- A small number of late 18th or early 19th century outfarms survive on the downs, typically with barn and flanking shelter sheds facing into yards.
- Field barns are mostly 19th century but some may be much earlier in date.

4 MATERIALS AND DETAIL

- Hipped and half-hipped clay tile roofs are a strong feature, to typically large-scale houses, barns and oast houses, and smaller-scale cattle housing and other structures. Gabled roofs were more commonly used from the late 18th century.
- Timber-framing was typically used for houses and farm buildings. Its use for the latter continued in to the 19th century. Framed buildings were usually clad in weatherboard.
- Flint and brick was used for working farm buildings from the late 18th century, and earlier for houses.
- Some rare surviving examples of straw thatch.

5 RARITY AND SIGNIFICANCE

- 41.5% of farmstead groups have had less than 50% change since c.1900 – which makes substantially intact farmstead groups rare by national standards.
- Large-scale courtyard groups with ranges of buildings representative of arable-based agriculture are highly significant.
- Dispersed cluster and multi-yard plan farmsteads that have been subject to low levels of change are rare and significant.
- Farmsteads that retain unconverted oast houses, early to mid-20th century hop buildings and features such as hop-pickers huts are highly significant.
- Small-scale historic farmsteads are very rare survivals, as most were decoupled from agriculture in the 19th and 20th centuries.

6 AREA VARIATIONS

1 EAST KENT ARABLE BELT/NORTH CHALK DOWNS

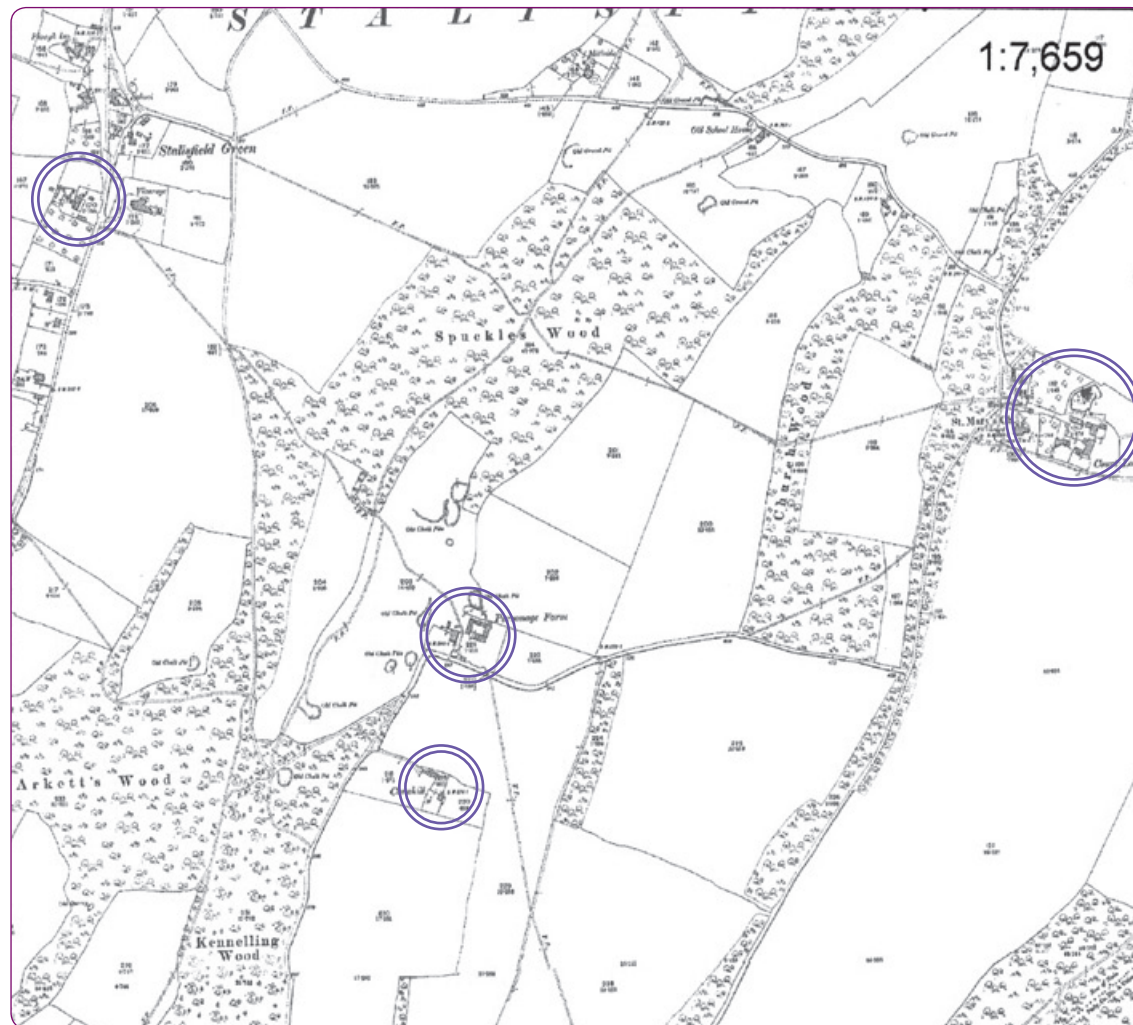
- The brickearth soils of the East Kent Downs, a triangular area between Dover, Deal and Canterbury with a higher concentration of larger estates, supported a major cereal growing economy. It had been largely stripped of its woodland by the 11th century.
- Large fields result from a piecemeal process of enclosure and reorganisation (especially in 19th and 20th centuries).
- A small number of large late 14th to early 16th century houses relate to the emergence of a wealthy class of rentier farmers on the church estates from the 15th century.
- This is an area with a higher concentration of larger estates with parks such as Bifrons, Goodnestone and Fredville, where there is evidence of 19th century farmstead improvements

2 CLAY-WITH-FLINTS – CENTRAL NORTH DOWNS TO DOVER

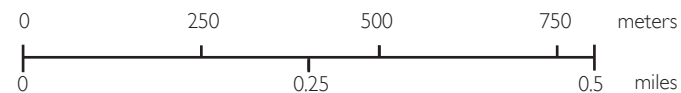
- This area was more difficult to farm, with more woodland, and farms were generally smaller in scale. Large-scale rentier farms developed in pockets of land – particularly the broad valleys and scarps – from the 15th century. There are more early buildings surviving to the west of the Stour, testifying to the prosperity of middling-scale farms extending in a north-south band down the centre of Kent.
- In the mid-19th century, and after 1950, large arable-based farms developed across this area together with field enlargement and reorganisation leaving a mix of regular and irregular boundaries.
- The area to the east retains more common, rough ground and downland, and was affected by extensive 19th and 20th century housing.
- The area to the west (south of Canterbury) and west of the Stour Valley has a higher incidence of woodland and less 19th and 20th century development.
- Orchards and hop gardens stretching towards the North Kent Plain.
- Stour Valley has woodland and historic estate centres.

3 WEST KENT DOWNS

- A more urbanised area with much 19th and 20th century settlement, long subject to influences from London, accessed by the M25 and M20.
- Generally larger fields linked to large arable farming and market gardening, with pre-18th century wavy boundaries.
- Woodland mixed with some earlier enclosure along scarp and valley sides.

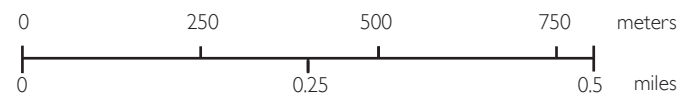
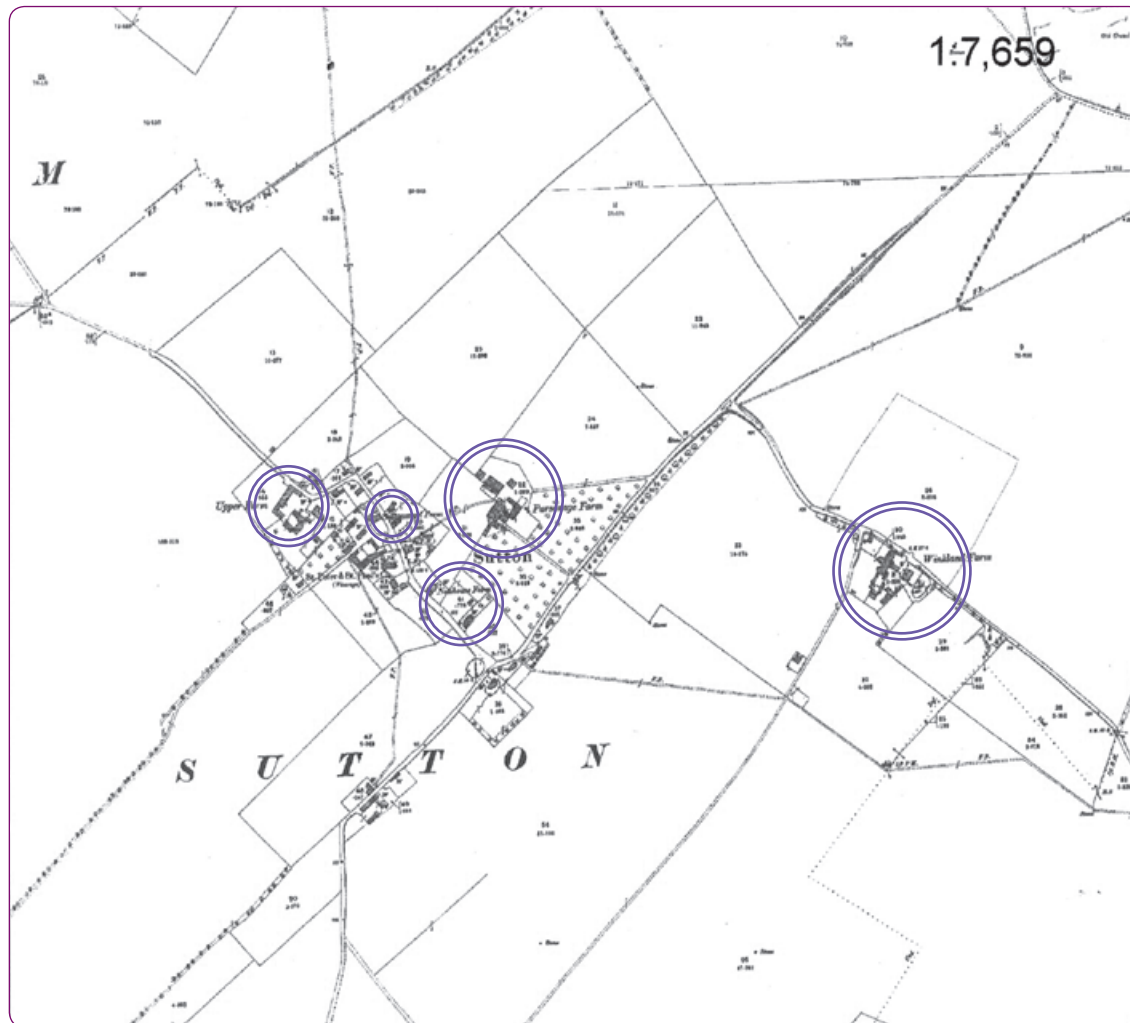


Farmstead



Central North Downs, Stalisfield Green

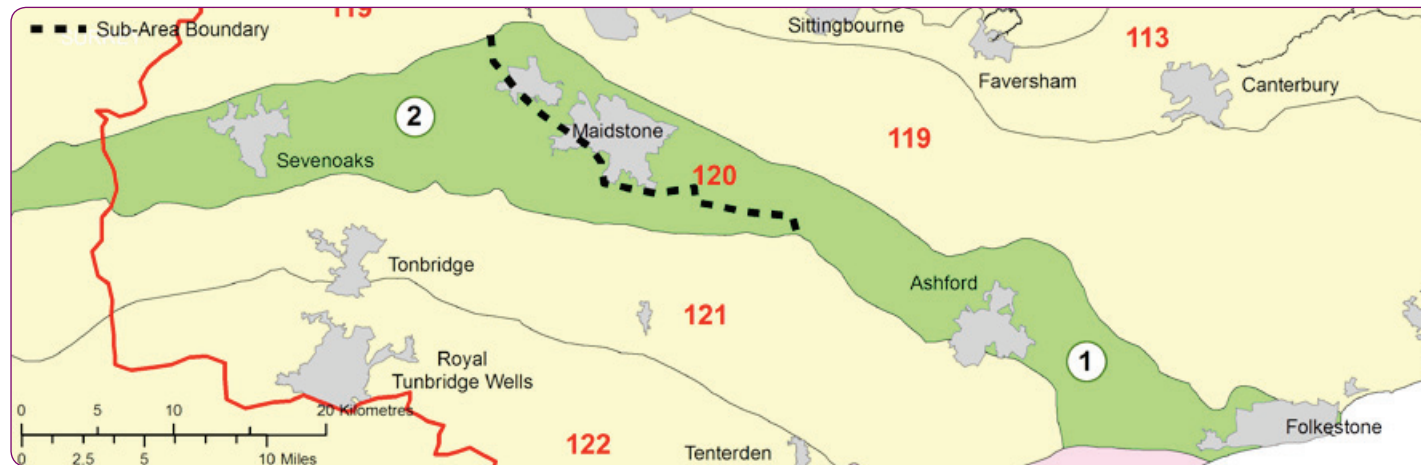
Within the Central Kent Downs dispersed settlement is predominant with high status, manorial farms often located alongside a church. Isolated farmsteads and hamlets often have 'green' or 'street' names indicating that they developed as secondary settlements in the medieval period. Fields are of medium to large scale intermixed with woodland with small fields typically found around the settlements. Farmsteads are generally of medium scale and typically of loose courtyard form with some regular courtyard plans, commonly L and U-plans. Smaller farmsteads are found within the hamlets. This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. 100019238. 2010



East Kent Downs, Sutton

In the East Kent Downs there is a higher degree of nucleated settlement with small villages intermixed with isolated farmsteads. In contrast to the central part of the character area, there was less woodland in this area and fields are generally large scale with smaller fields around settlements. Within this area farmsteads were of medium or large scale, often originating as loose courtyard plans although some developed into more regular plans with the addition of ranges to an earlier barn or the creation of additional yard areas creating regular multi-yard plans. This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. 100019238. 2010

3 NCA 120 (WEALDEN GREENSAND)



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The long curved belt of Wealden Greensand runs across Kent, parallel to the North Downs and through Surrey, south to the Hampshire Downs and curving back eastwards running parallel to the South Downs in West Sussex. The sub-areas as indicated on the map are: 1) Central Valley Area, 2) Greensand Horticultural Belt and Western Greensand and 3) Woodland (including on the Chart) and parks.

1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

- The variability of the soils, from fertile greensand to intractable clays, within relatively short distances made this an area of mixed farming but the balance can differ locally with elements such as dairying or hop growing having greater dominance in certain areas. Fruit growing was also important.
- The capital-intensive hop industry developed on an industrial scale by the 19th century in the eastern part of the area. The manure from cattle was important for fertilising hop gardens.
- The mixture of hops, fruit, dairying and poultry rearing and fattening insulated this area from the worst of the agricultural depression in the late 19th century.

2 LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT

- The narrow greensand belt represents a 'buffer zone' between the clay landscapes of the Weald and the more arable based landscapes of North Kent.
- Many farmsteads retain pre-1750 buildings set within a landscape largely of medieval origin but subject to a much higher degree of boundary loss than the High and Low Weald.
- Isolated farmsteads, often occupying ancient sites (some moated), form the predominant settlement pattern intermixed with small villages, often with 'Street' or 'Green' names suggesting secondary settlement.
- These farmsteads are associated with a landscape of small and irregular fields, created by assarting from woodland in the medieval period, or medium-sized and more regular fields created between the 15th and 18th centuries by enclosure through agreement of former arable strips. The latter are more common in the valley of the Rother in the south-west and in the central and eastern parts of the area. Field enlargement and reorganisation is a strong feature of this area, particularly in relation to the establishment of orchards.

- A mix of farmsteads of different scales is a strong characteristic of this area, the larger steadings relating to landscapes that have experienced field enlargement and reorganisation as well as farmsteads at the foot of the chalk scarp of the North Downs which had access to the downs as well as the greensand. Larger farms within the Holmesdale vale are often located in areas of early settlement (Roman and Romano-British). The smallest farms developed around extensive tracts of woodland (such as Mereworth Woods, Oaken Woods west of Maidstone, Ightham Woods east of Sevenoaks, Kings Wood east of Maidstone) and fragments of common in the Chart Hills (meaning rough stone ground) such as at Hothfield, which were used all year in contrast to the seasonal dens in the Weald. There is some common-edge settlement with small paddocks and sometimes regular enclosure where smallholdings were common with commoners utilising the heath for grazing stock. Many farmsteads in the heathland areas were created during attempts to improve the heath in the 19th century.

3 FARMSTEAD AND BUILDING TYPES

Farmstead types

- As with much of south east England, loose courtyard plans, typically with two or three detached working farm buildings standing around a yard area are the most common plan form.
- Regular L-plan and U-plan ranges are a strong feature of the character area although these plan types are seen in fewer numbers in the eastern area within Kent. Some of these plans consist of a barn with a later cattle shed attached at right angles but many are 19th century re-buildings of farmsteads of pre-1700 origin that retain the old farmhouse.
- In the west of the area in particular, purpose-built covered yards were built in the late 19th century and the yard areas of a considerable number of farmsteads in the west of the area were covered over in the early 20th century.

- Dispersed plan farmsteads, particularly clusters and multi-yards, are found in the character area but they are not as prevalent as in the Low Weald or High Weald.
- Regular multi-yard plans are common, particularly in the western and central parts of the area. Regular L- plans, some of which are developments from earlier loose courtyard groups are found across the area whilst regular U-plans are concentrated in the west.

Building types

- Barns in the area are typically of five bays with occasional larger examples extending to eight or ten bays. Barns dating from the 18th century or before tend to be fully aisled, this area having one of the major concentrations of aisled barns in the country. Many of the barns of the area are 19th century in date and have an aisle to one side or are unaisled and typically have half-hipped roofs.
- Some barns are of pre-1550 date but mostly of 17th and 18th century date.
- Free-standing granaries are an uncommon building type in the area. Grain was probably stored in the farmhouse or in a loft in the barn or over a cartshed.
- Oast houses are a highly characteristic farm building type, especially in the central part of the area. Most examples date from the late 18th and 19th centuries although there are some examples of older oast houses built within earlier barns.
- Stables are found on many farms and are typically built of stone or brick. Most date from the 18th or 19th centuries, although occasionally timber-framed examples may survive.
- Buildings for cattle include open-fronted shelter sheds often found attached to a barn, or single storey enclosed cow houses. Most cattle buildings date from the 19th century.
- Outfarms and field barns were once a common feature of the landscape, particularly in the southern part of the area, but many have been lost from the landscape. Often outfarms consisted of a typical five-bay timber-framed barn with a shelter shed attached at right angles. The surviving field barns are an important remnant of a once widespread building type.

4 MATERIALS AND DETAIL

- Timber-framing was typically used for medieval houses and barns with the barns being clad in weatherboarding. Timber-framing continued in use for some farm buildings into the 19th century, often combined with local stone for the plinth and weatherboarding for the wall covering.
- The greensand stone available in the area changes in character across the area with, in the west, malmstone, a soft creamy coloured greensand being widely used and harder, darker greensand being used in the central and eastern parts of the character area. Ragstone is also used. The use of stone gives the buildings of the area a distinctive character.
- Galleting, the insertion of small pieces of dark carstone or flint in the mortar between the stonework, is characteristic.
- In areas adjacent to the chalk downs flint was used, typically combined with brick. Flint walling may also be galleted with small flakes of flint.
- Brick was typically used in combination with the local stone for quoins and for door and window openings.
- Many farmhouses are clad in painted weatherboard or plain clay tile.
- In the western part of the area there is some straw thatch but generally plain clay tile is the characteristic roofing material. Welsh slate is found on some 19th century buildings.

5 RARITY AND SIGNIFICANCE

- 48% of farmstead groups have had less than 50% change since c.1900 – which occupies a middle level in terms of survival between the Weald (where survival is highest) and the rest of the county.
- Dispersed plan types that have been subject to little change are rare.
- High density of 17th century and earlier timber-framed buildings

although early working buildings in the Chart area are rare.

- Farmsteads that retain unconverted oast houses, early to mid-20th century hop buildings and features such as hop-pickers huts are highly significant.

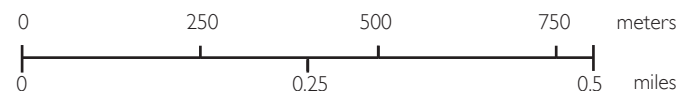
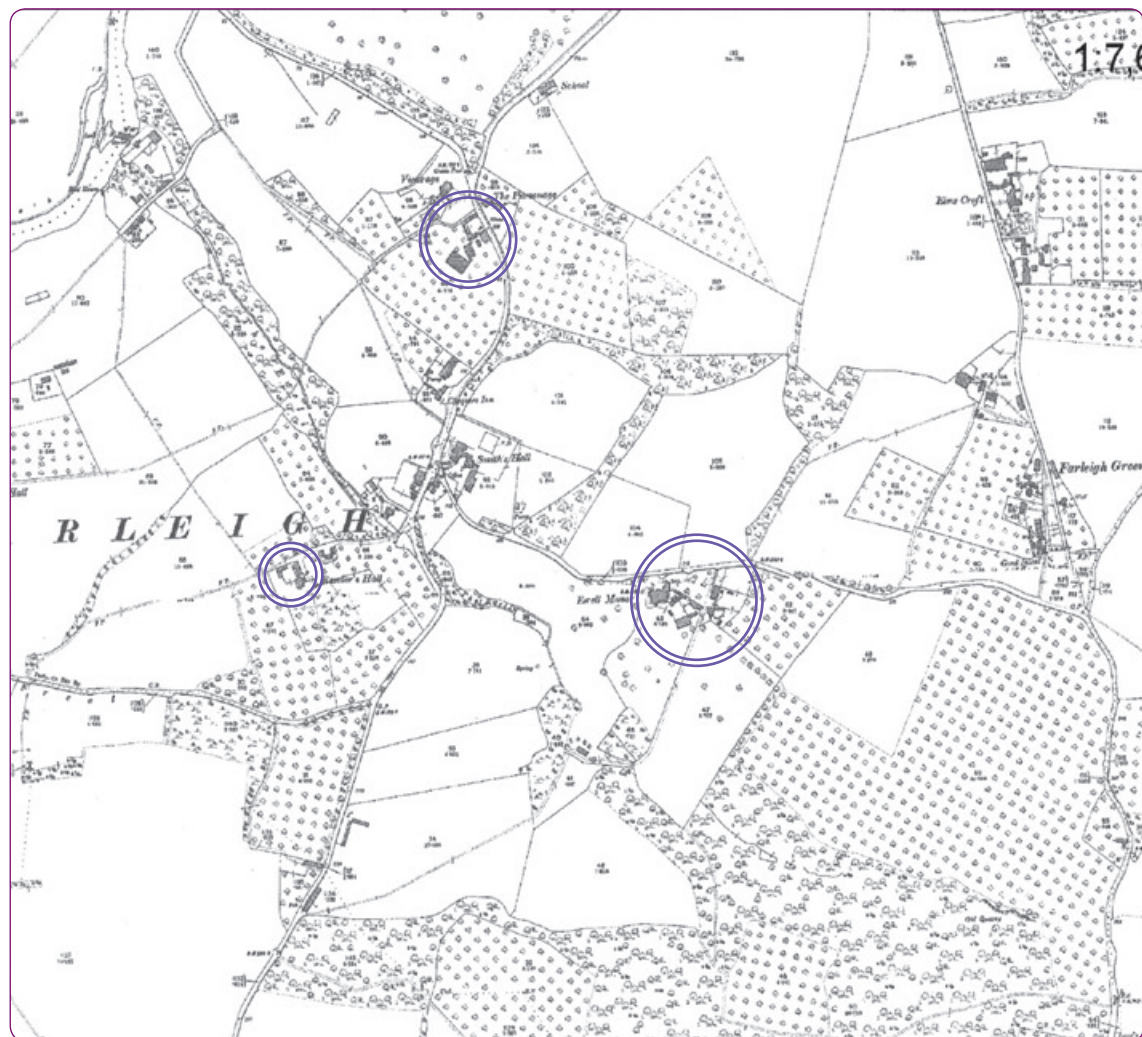
6 AREA VARIATIONS

1 Central Valley Area

- Larger farms, particularly at the foot of the scarp to the North Downs, had emerged by the 16th century away from the villages. Closer to the villages in the Vale of Holmesdale are large farms with 18th/19th century houses which developed in areas of more recent enclosure.

2 Greensand Horticultural Belt and Western Greensand

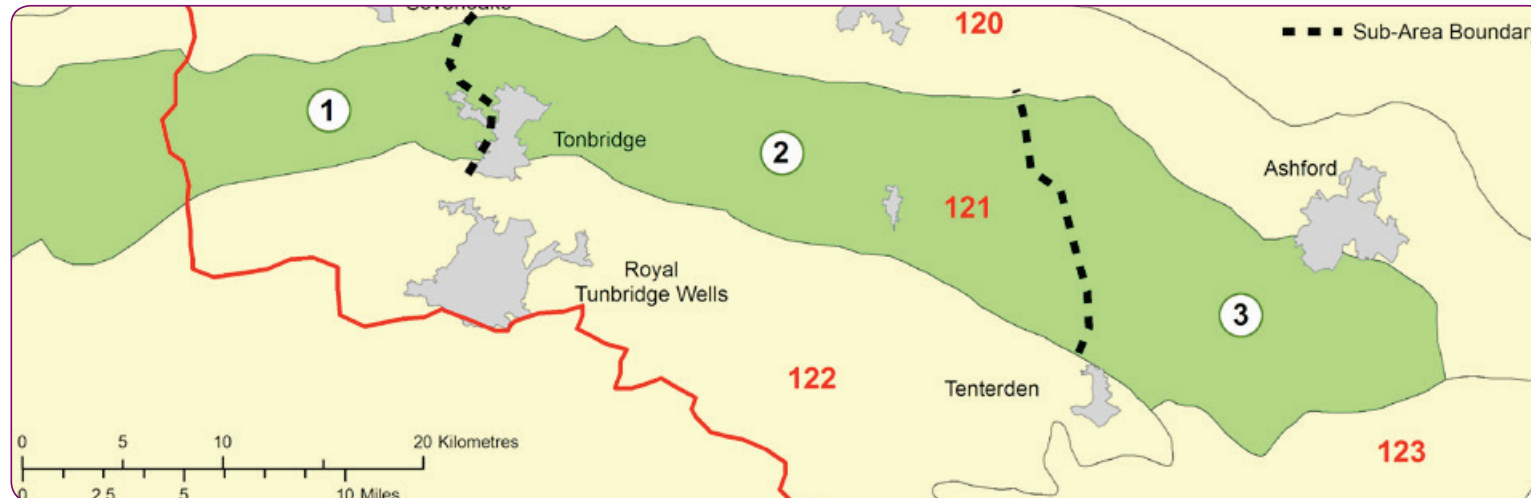
- An area of generally smaller fields and farms, many resulting from woodland clearance before the 14th century, which had easy access to London markets via the Medway and later by rail. Woodland (including on the Chart) and parks.
- An area of smaller farms around Sevenoaks, with a similar pattern of historical development, subject to suburban influences from the mid-19th century.



Farleigh

The Wealden Greensand character area is a landscape of predominantly dispersed settlement of isolated farmsteads and hamlets, the latter often having 'green' or 'street' names indicating that they are later, medieval development. Irregular fields tend to be small to medium in scale created through a gradual process of clearance of woodland in the medieval period. The wooded feeling of the landscape is enhanced by the numbers of orchards. The medium scale farmsteads in the area are commonly of loose courtyard form, some including an L-plan element. This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. 100019238. 2010

4 NCA 121 (LOW WEALD)



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The Low Weald is a low-lying clay vale encircling much of the High Weald. The sub-areas as indicated on the map are: 1) Western Weald west of Tonbridge, 2) Medway Basin and north Tonbridge and 3) Central Low Weald and Marling Weald

1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Agriculture on the heavy clay soils of the Low Weald was largely pastoral with the emphasis on fatstock with some dairying, but arable farming was also carried out. The extent of arable has fluctuated considerably over time – much arable was abandoned in the later 14th and 15th centuries.
- Mixed farming was found on the lighter soils on slightly higher ground, including arable and fruit growing on the better quality drift deposits of brick earths in Kent.
- Extensive arable – in contrast to the High Weald – was dominant in the 18th and 19th centuries, although the unworkable nature of the clay soils made this expensive in labour. The levels fell from the late 19th century with pastoral farming once again dominating.

2 LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT

- High densities of isolated farmsteads, small hamlets and farmstead clusters set within an anciently-enclosed medieval landscape. The enlargement of farms and mixed agriculture has resulted in generally larger farmsteads and fields than in the High Weald.
- In the west of the area farmsteads tend to form loose clusters to a greater extent than in the west.
- There are some small villages, including linear groups along roadsides and others centred on greens or commons.
- Fields are generally small and irregular, largely created through assarting of woodland up to the 14th century, and are divided by a dense network of hedges and shaws that are often remnants of ancient woodland.
- Fields are slightly larger and more regular on the higher ground and areas of lighter soils including the better quality drift deposits of brick earths in Kent, where there is a lower density of farmsteads and of pre-1750 fabric/farmstead sites.

- The arrival of the railways in the mid-19th century made a significant impact on the agriculture of the Weald, opening up the London market for hops, fruit and poultry. Hop gardens and orchards, widespread on the northern side of the Low Weald, insulated this area from the worst of the late 19th century agricultural depression.

3 FARMSTEAD AND BUILDING TYPES

Much of the Low Weald, together with the High Weald is remarkable in a national context for the very high numbers of farmsteads that retain early, pre-1750 buildings. The north part of this character area in particular has a major concentration of pre-1550 barns. These farmsteads are set within a landscape of fields and woodland that largely took its present form in the medieval period. The close association of these early farmsteads and landscapes is highly significant.

Farmstead types

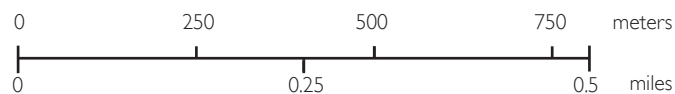
- Small loose courtyard plans with buildings to one or two sides of the yard are the most common plan form encountered in the Low Weald.
- Small L-plan steadings with a barn and a later cattle shed attached at right angles are also widespread. Loose courtyards with an L-plan element are mostly concentrated in the west of the area.
- Although not numerous, large-scale regular courtyard plan farmsteads (including full courtyard plans, E- F- and T-plans) are found in greater numbers in this area than in the other character areas of Kent.
- Dispersed plans are a characteristic of the Low Weald, particularly dispersed cluster and multi-yard plans. There are also a limited number of dispersed driftway plans where buildings are ranged alongside a routeway leading to the farmstead.
- Regular multi-yard plans where there are a number of separate yards reflecting the careful management of stock are a characteristic of the Low Weald, particularly in the west part of the area.

Building types

- Medieval timber-framed houses, including Wealden houses, survive on a considerable number of farmsteads.
- Barns, typically of three-five bays, were often aisled to at least one side resulting in low eaves-lines, emphasising the mass of the roof over walling. The earlier barns of the character area tend to be unaisled. Many barns retain evidence for being combination buildings in that they housed both animals and crops.
- The concentration of pre-1550 barns in the north of the character area is a particularly significant feature. The majority of barns in the area date from the 17th and 18th centuries.
- Granaries, either free-standing buildings on staddle stones or forming part of combination buildings such as granary/cart sheds, are relatively uncommon. It is probable that grain was stored within the farmhouse or in a loft in the barn. A small number of granaries date from before 1700 but most are of 18th and 19th century date.
- The importance of cattle on Low Weald farms is reflected in its numerous shelter sheds and cow houses, which are mostly 19th century in date. These may be found added to an earlier barn or detached and associated with individual yard areas.
- Pigs were a key feature of the Weald farming economy and pigsties would have been common to most farmsteads. Small stone or brick-built pigsties, which are mostly 19th century in date, are becoming increasingly rare.
- Oast houses are a building type highly characteristic of the Low Weald, particularly on the northern side of the Weald which, together with the Wealden Greensand in Kent, has the highest density of oast houses including large, industrial scale examples. Most date from the late 18th and 19th century although there are some examples of older oast houses built within earlier barns.
- Field barns were once a common feature but most have been lost from the landscape. The surviving field barns are an important remnant of a once widespread building type.



Farmstead



Puttenden

The Low Weald is a landscape of predominantly dispersed settlement intermixed with small villages. Fields tend to be small to medium scale irregular or semi-regular in form with some areas of regular fields, associated with farms that were re-organised or amalgamated in the 18th or 19th century. Farmsteads are commonly small to medium in scale loose courtyard forms with some dispersed plan types. Where farmsteads are associated with re-planned fields they can be of regular plan forms including L and U-plans with occasional examples of larger regular plan types. This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. 100019238. 2010

4 MATERIALS AND DETAIL ☒

- Timber-framing was typically used for medieval houses and barns with the barns being clad in weatherboarding. Timber-framing continued in use for some farm buildings into the 19th century, often combined with local sandstones derived from the bordering areas of the High Weald or the Wealden Greensand for the plinth. Sandstone rubble was also used for building.
- Bricks made from the local clays contribute to the distinctive character of the Weald having been used for farm buildings from the 18th century.
- Many farmhouses are clad in painted weatherboard or plain clay tile.
- Hipped and half-hipped roofs are the historically dominant roof form, gabled roofs being more generally used from the 19th century. Locally made plain clay tiles are the characteristic roofing material with some limited use of Horsham stone slates. Straw thatch was once widespread, but now is now rare.

5 RARITY AND SIGNIFICANCE

- This area with the High Weald has the highest percentage of farmsteads (61.3%, lower than that in other counties) with less than 50% change since c.1900 in the county.
- Dispersed plan types, especially cluster and multi-yard plans, are significant to the character of this area.
- High density of 17th century and earlier timber-framed buildings.
- Farmsteads that retain unconverted oast houses, early to mid-20th century hop buildings and features such as hop-pickers huts are highly significant.

6 AREA VARIATIONS

1 Western Weald west of Tonbridge

- Larger farms, fields and estates that in the 18th and 19th centuries changed the earlier underlying pattern of smaller farms and assarted fields.

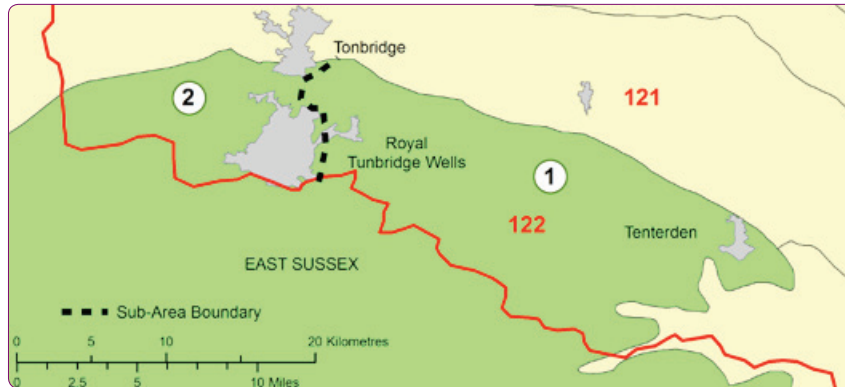
2 Medway Basin and north Tonbridge

- An area of 19th and 20th century domestic and industrial development with an underlying pattern of irregular fields and medium-scale farms, larger-scale to the north.

3 Central Low Weald and Marling Weald

- Irregular fields (including many marl pits that fertilised the clay soils) and medium-scale farms.

5 NCA 122 (HIGH WEALD)



The High Weald is at the core of the Wealden anticline comprising a central area of sandstone dissected by numerous rivers, and surrounded by the Low Weald and, to the east, Romney Marsh. Area variations as indicated on the map are: 1) *The Eastern High Weald* and 2) *The Western Weald west of Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells*.

1 HISTORIC BACKGROUND

- Quarrying and iron have been an important part of the High Weald economy from the Iron Age, and were especially important in the 14th-18th centuries. The iron industry and associated industries such as coppicing and charcoal burning was particularly important in the 15th – 17th centuries, and financed the building of large houses and parks.
- By the late 13th century the Wealden landscape comprised a scattering of gentry properties intermingled with a mass of small peasant holdings. These holdings grew in size from the 14th century, but into the 18th and 19th centuries most holdings remained under 50 acres (small by national standards) and holdings of over 150 acres were uncommon.
- Cattle rearing and fattening was the major contributor to agriculture in the High Weald from at least the 14th century to the 19th century, corn often being grown for cattle feed. Pig fattening and poultry production were also important, and the capital-

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intensive hop industry developed on an industrial scale by the 19th century. The manure from cattle was important for fertilising hop plantations.

- The importance of corn as a cash crop varied over time; the acreage under corn increased from the 1790s to the 1870s, and then declined.
- The arrival of the railways in the mid 19th century opened up the London market for hops, fruit and poultry, products which insulated this area from the worst of the late 19th century agricultural depression. This greater access influenced the design of new housing development, which was much inspired by the patterns of Wealden architecture that became evident in the Domestic Revival style in the late 19th/early 20th century.

2 LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT

- Settlement in the High Weald is predominantly dispersed with many scattered farmsteads set within small, irregular fields carved out of woodland.
- Farmsteads are often connected by networks of lanes and paths, many surviving as public rights of way that often pass through or close by the historic farmsteads. This character mostly results from the establishment, prior to the 14th century, of farmsteads from earlier seasonal camps associated with summer/

autumn pastures (called 'dens') used for foraging pigs from the communities around the Weald in the Saxon period.

- Farmsteads typically have smaller enclosures in their vicinity, which historically included orchards or sometimes cob nut plantations.
- Woodland exploitation in the form of charcoal production for the iron industry and the export of timber/fuel to London was followed in the 18th/19th centuries by replanting in Sweet Chestnut and other species for the supply of hop poles to the hopyards.
- Woodland clearance and small farm size also resulted in the characteristic pattern of small, irregular fields. The woods were used for production of food (cob nuts plantations, for example) and the supply of fuel for households and for the iron industry.
- Larger fields in some areas, resulting from amalgamation of holdings from 14th century, especially along the edges of flood plains and within many of the landscape parks of the area. These can be associated with much larger farmsteads.
- The relatively few nucleated villages (e.g. Goudhurst) and small towns are usually sited alongside the main routes through the Weald that follow the lines of the ridges. Many of these settlements developed as trading centres within the earlier pattern of dispersed farmsteads.

Key variations on this key theme of ancient enclosure and high densities of farmsteads in the High Weald are:

- Smaller fields and historic farmsteads become more dominant to the east, and in the Wealden Horticultural Pocket, where hop farming developed on an industrial scale in the 19th century (e.g. around Goudhurst), with a high proportion of orchards and woodland.
- Areas of 18th and 19th century enclosure, especially in the west of the area, which is associated with the reclamation of heath and a lower density of farmsteads in the landscape.

3 FARMSTEAD AND BUILDING TYPES

The High Weald has a high density, by national standards, of pre-1550 and pre-1750 buildings, which is also shared by other anciently-enclosed and dispersed settlement landscapes of south east England.

- From the medieval period to the later 18th century, many Wealden farms comprised no more than a house and barn. These buildings could be set close to one another or the barn could stand in a near-by close.
- Small-scale loose courtyard plans, typically with one or two detached working farm buildings standing around a yard area, are the most common plan form in this area.
- Dispersed plans are a major characteristic of High Weald farmsteads. Such plans include clusters of buildings with little or no evidence for planning in their arrangement and dispersed driftway plans where buildings are ranged alongside a wide route-way leading into the farmstead.
- Many farmsteads have dispersed multi-yard plans where there are a number of dispersed separate yards reflecting the careful management of stock.
- Larger regular courtyard plan farmsteads are mainly found in the western part of the High Weald where estates developed farmsteads in the 19th century, creating full courtyard plans and steadings with covered yards.

Key building types are:

- Separate housing for extended family members and farm workers often placed close to farmsteads and sometimes within them.
- Small-medium scale barns, typically of 3 – 5 bays. The earlier barns of the area, dating from the 15th and 16th centuries tend to be unaisled.
- Barns were often extended and later barns were aisled to one side, sometimes two.
- Barns often retain evidence for internal subdivision for livestock.

These partitions were typically removed when the interiors of barns were opened up for crop storage and new cattle housing built in the late 18th and 19th centuries. This evidence is highly significant in a national context, and is only matched for timber-framed barns and cattle housing in the Welsh borders and the claylands of East Anglia.

- Cattle housing, mostly single storey shelter sheds which are either attached to a barn or detached and facing into individual yards.
- Oast houses are a highly characteristic building type, but not as numerous as in the Low Weald. Most date from the late 18th and 19th century although there are some examples of older oast houses built within earlier barns.
- Hop pickers' huts, which rarely survive on farmsteads.
- Some outfarms and field barns, including some rare surviving examples of 18th century and earlier date.

4 MATERIALS AND DETAIL ▢

- Timber-framing was typically used for medieval houses and barns with the barns and sometimes other buildings being clad in weatherboarding. The upper storey of farmhouses and cottages are more likely to be clad in painted weatherboard or plain clay tile.
- Weatherboarding is commonly overlapped. There are some very rare surviving examples of butted boarding of pre-19th century date. These are found inside barns, on former external walls.
- Local sandstones were also used for building in the west of the area. Sandstone is also capable of being split into slates used for roofing (Horsham slates).
- Brick from the local clays was commonly used for plinths to timber-framed buildings but was not widely used alone for agricultural buildings until the 19th century.
- Many farmhouses are clad in painted weatherboard or plain clay tile.
- Hipped and half-hipped plain tile roofs are the historically dominant roof form, gabled roofs being more generally used from the 19th century.

- Tiles largely replaced straw thatch (and also broom, heather and reed) from the late medieval period and now thatch is rarely seen in the High Weald.

5 RARITY AND SIGNIFICANCE

- This area with the Low Weald has the highest percentage of farmsteads (60.6%, but lower than that in other counties) with less than 50% change since c.1900 in the county.
- Many small loose courtyard plans survive with minimal change.
- Dispersed plan types are particularly characteristic of the Weald and sites with little change are particularly significant.
- The area stands out in a national context for its very high densities of historic farmsteads dating from the medieval period and which were established with a landscape largely cleared from the woodland that had developed by the late Saxon period.
- This combination of medieval farmsteads and landscapes is highly significant, and it is heightened by the high survival of pre-1750 timber-framed buildings. These include rare examples of the pre-1550 period and significant evidence for multi-functional combination barns that housed the cattle that were an important part of the Wealden economy.

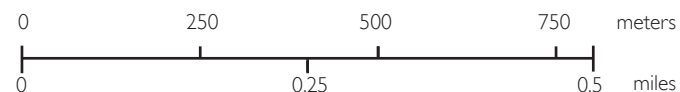
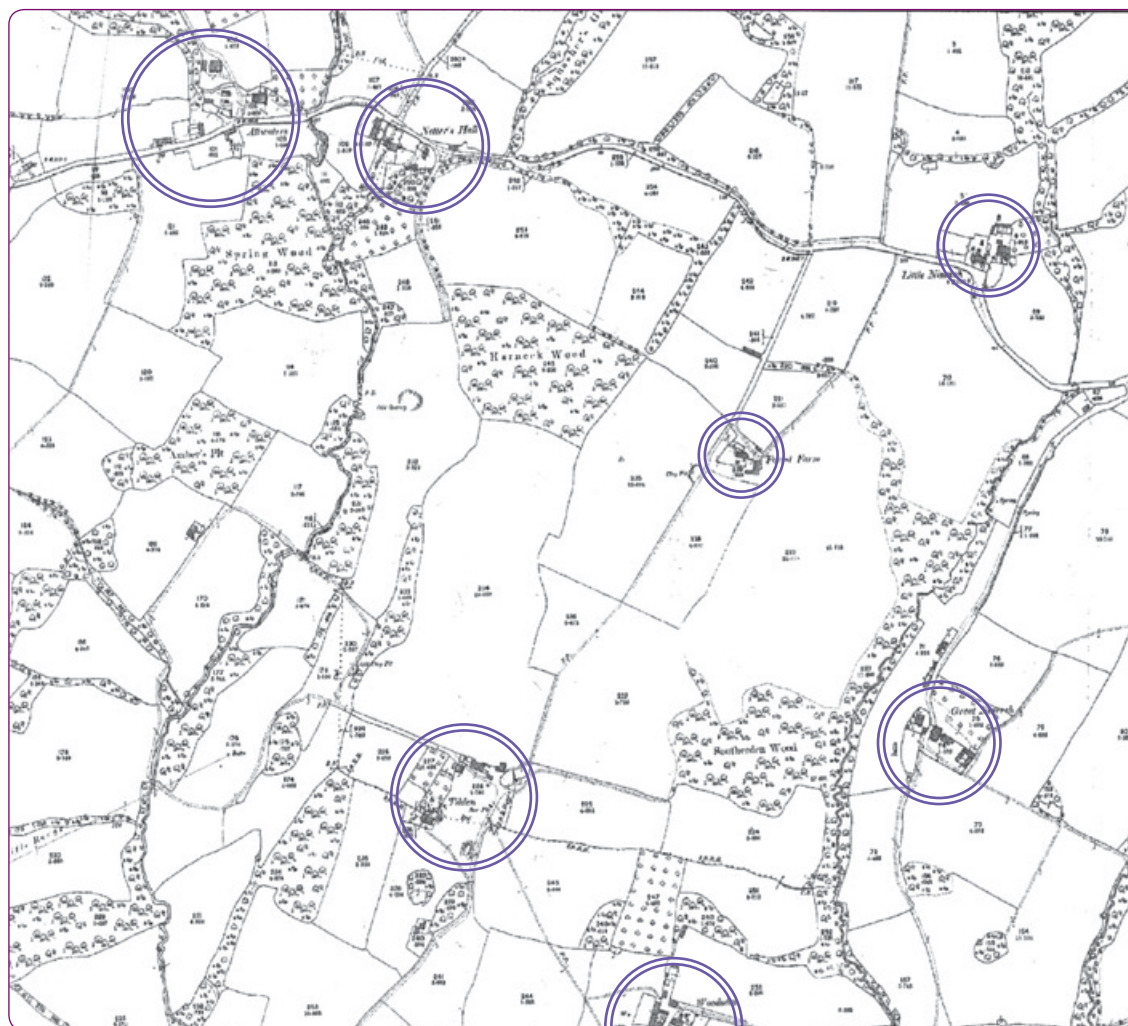
6 AREA VARIATIONS

1 The Eastern High Weald

- Smaller fields and historic farmsteads become more dominant to the east, and in the Wealden Horticultural Pocket, where hop farming developed on an industrial scale in the 19th century (eg around Goudhurst), with a high proportion of orchards and woodland.

2 The Western Weald west of Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells

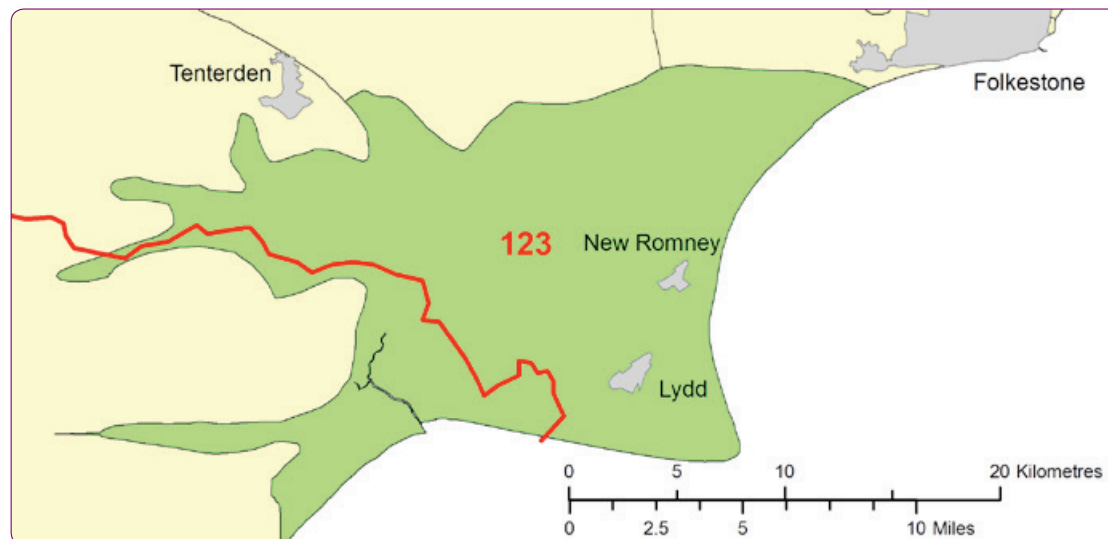
- Larger farms, fields and estates that in the 18th and 19th centuries changed the earlier underlying pattern of smaller farms, heathland and fields enclosed from woodland.



Attwaters

The High Weald is characterised by small scale irregular fields created through assarting (clearance) of woodland in the medieval period associated with numerous isolated small scale farmsteads linking by a network of lanes and tracks that developed in the Saxon period. Whilst small loose courtyard farmsteads are predominant, a process of amalgamation of farms, underway by the 16th century, led to the development of larger farmsteads including dispersed multi-yard and driftway plans. Some more regular plan groups developed in the 19th century, often re-organising a previously dispersed plan by adding ranges to an earlier barn to create L- and U-plan yards. This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. 100019238. 2010

6 NCA 123 (ROMNEY MARSH)



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1 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

- Until the 1st century AD the area was a shallow bay with settlement upon its numerous small islands, and the Marshes were created by the natural deposition of sediment from rivers such as the Rother behind shingle barriers thrown up by longshore drift and the reclamation of the area for agricultural use.
- Reclamation from the 8th century was driven by individual farmers from settlements on higher ground and alongside roads.
- Estates based outside the area exploited its resources, and in the 12th/13th centuries local abbeys drove much of the reclamation of Romney Marshes for agriculture. The Saxon royal manor of Wye, for example, had its sheep dairy farms in Denge Marsh on the Romney Marsh.
- Rye developed as a port serving the Weald through which local produce could be exported to London. Flooding in the 13th and 14th centuries, and French attacks, resulted in the shrinkage and abandonment of some settlements in the marshes, leaving some abandoned moated sites and churches, and created a greater emphasis on grazing. The principal later phases of reclamation and flood defences occurred in the 16th, 19th and mid-20th centuries.
- The flat, open areas provided rich grazing land, particularly for sheep, and it was considered that there were more sheep per acre on the Romney Marshes than anywhere else in England. Cattle, brought in from surrounding areas, were also fattened on the marshes.
- Further drainage works from the mid 19th century and especially the 1950s facilitated the widespread conversion to arable on the productive loam soils, although stock grazing persists in some areas of the marsh.

2 LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT

- Flat, low lying landscape of reclaimed coastal marsh, with higher ground extending into the area from the west.
- Low densities of farmsteads, mainly isolated but some within small village and hamlets, particularly on the slightly higher ground of the south-west of the area. Shepherding was the main occupation of communities and there were few if any landed families, the area being relatively poor.
- The irregular, small and medium-sized fields of Romney Marsh are almost entirely bounded by drainage ditches rather than hedges and there are very few trees. Shelter belts of willows are planted around many farmsteads.
- Rectangular fields are the result of more organised reclamation or the re-organisation of drainage.
- Low-lying levels have large farmsteads on raised ground.
- Some nucleated settlement on the higher land with steep valleys to the north of the area bordering the Weald, including on the Isle of Oxney and the raised area around Appledore surrounding Shirley, where there is more tree cover and orchards.

3 FARMSTEAD AND BUILDING TYPES

Farmstead types

- Small to medium scale farmsteads; mainly loose courtyard plans but some regular L- and U-plans of 19th century date.
- Dispersed cluster and dispersed multi-yard plans found mainly in the south-west part of the area off the marshland.
- Low survival of pre-1750 farmstead buildings, mainly threshing barns and farmhouses.

Building types

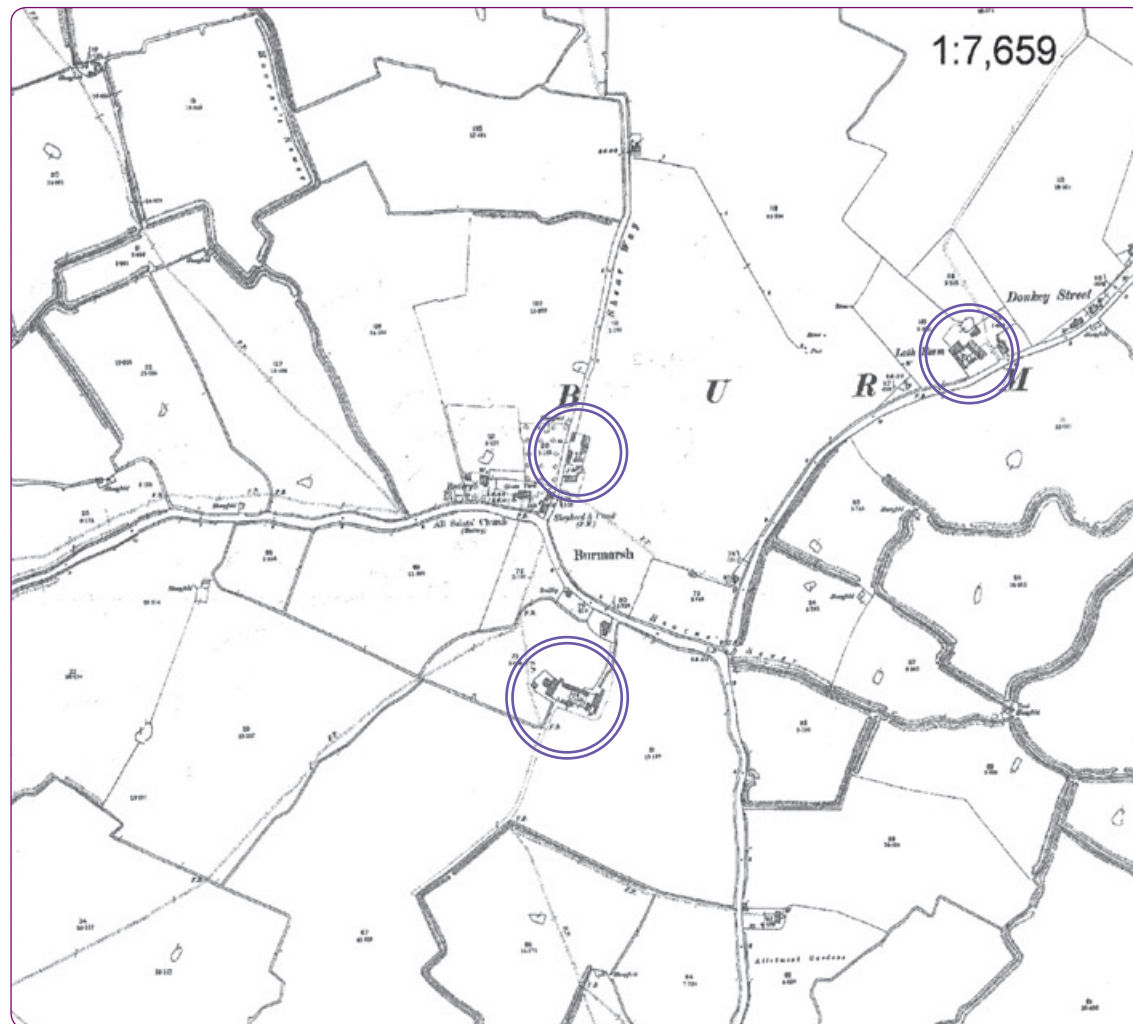
- Small number of timber-framed threshing barns.
- Buildings for cattle of 19th century and 20th century date.
- Lookers' huts for sheep are a highly distinctive feature, and many sheepfolds are marked on historic Ordnance Survey maps.

4 MATERIALS AND DETAIL

- There are some timber-framed buildings of medieval date with exposed framing, but typically the framing is either clad in white-painted weatherboarding or is tile hung.
- Brick is the predominant walling material across the area.
- Roofs are commonly plain clay tile. Hipped roofs seen on buildings of medieval date.
- Reed thatch was probably a common roofing material but is now very rare. There are more thatched properties in East Sussex along the valleys of the Brede and Rother.

5 RARITY AND SIGNIFICANCE

- 32.4% of farmstead groups have less than 50% change since c.1900 are rare by national standards – which with the Thames Estuary places these areas in the lowest categories of survival. A quarter of historic farmsteads are now only represented by a farmhouse.
- Pre-1750 farmstead buildings, mainly threshing barns and farmhouses, are rare across the marshes.
- Surviving field barns, sheep folds and 'lookers' huts' for shepherds are an important remnant of a once widespread building type.



Burmarsh

Romney Marsh is a flat, low-lying reclaimed landscape that was sparsely populated from the medieval period. Small villages and isolated farmsteads developed on areas of marginally higher land but much of the marsh was managed from farmsteads located on higher ground that fringes the area which largely falls within the High Weald NCA. The irregular fields of the marsh are typically small to medium in scale and are defined by drainage ditches with few trees or hedges in the landscape except where trees were planted to create wind breaks for farmsteads. Farmsteads were predominantly small to medium in scale and of loose courtyard form but many historic farmsteads have been replaced with modern sheds. This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. 100019238. 2010

