

## 6.5 Farmstead Types

### □ *The Position of the Farmhouse*

The development of the farmhouse has been the subject of regional and national studies (Barley 1961, for example). The dating, planning and scale of farmhouses can tell us much about the former prosperity and development of rural areas. Houses developed from the medieval period as 3-unit plans, with a central hall/kitchen separated by a cross-passage from the service rooms and with an inner room that usually served as a parlour. There are high concentrations by national standards of houses and barns built for an emerging class of wealthier farmer dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> century and in some very rare instances the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Some had cross-wings built at one or even both ends. Smaller farms had 2-unit houses, and the smallest – including smallholdings – simply one unit. There is evidence along the Welsh border, and especially in the south of the region and across into Wales, for longhouses where cattle used the same entrance and were housed in the outer room: these date from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, farmhouses in most areas of England (except in the extreme south west and the north) had been built or adapted into storeyed houses with chimneystacks. The most common form of arrangement was the one whereby the stack was inserted against the cross-passage, hence the distinctive outward appearance of an axial stack set to one side of a door. By this period parts of the West Midlands (especially Shropshire) and adjacent parts of Wales had adopted the lobby-entry plan, where the main entrance is sited opposite the stack thus making a lobby providing access into the rooms either side (Smith 1975, 456-62).

From the later 17<sup>th</sup> century (roughly around 1650), services in some areas were being accommodated in lean-tos (outshots) or rear wings: by around 1700 the stair was housed in a rear lean-to or wing also. They have a distinctive outward appearance as the stacks are sited on the gable ends and the door may be either central or off-centre: symmetry is more prized as the 18<sup>th</sup> century progresses and is commonplace from around 1750.

Houses faced towards or away from the yard, and may be attached or detached from the working buildings. Local tradition and status were the principal reasons for whether the house was accessed through the yard and buildings were attached, or whether the house looked toward or away from the yard. Farmhouses included, or were placed very close to, areas for brewing and dairying, and pigsties were often placed close to the houses. As a general rule, farms over 70 acres needed to look beyond the family for additional labour, and so rooms for live-in farm labourers – usually in the attic or back wing of the house – became a feature of many farmhouses.

<b>Farmhouse Position</b>	ATT LONG GAB DET UNC	Attached to agricultural range Detached, side on to yard Detached, gable on to yard Farmhouse set away from yard Uncertain (cannot identify which is farmhouse)
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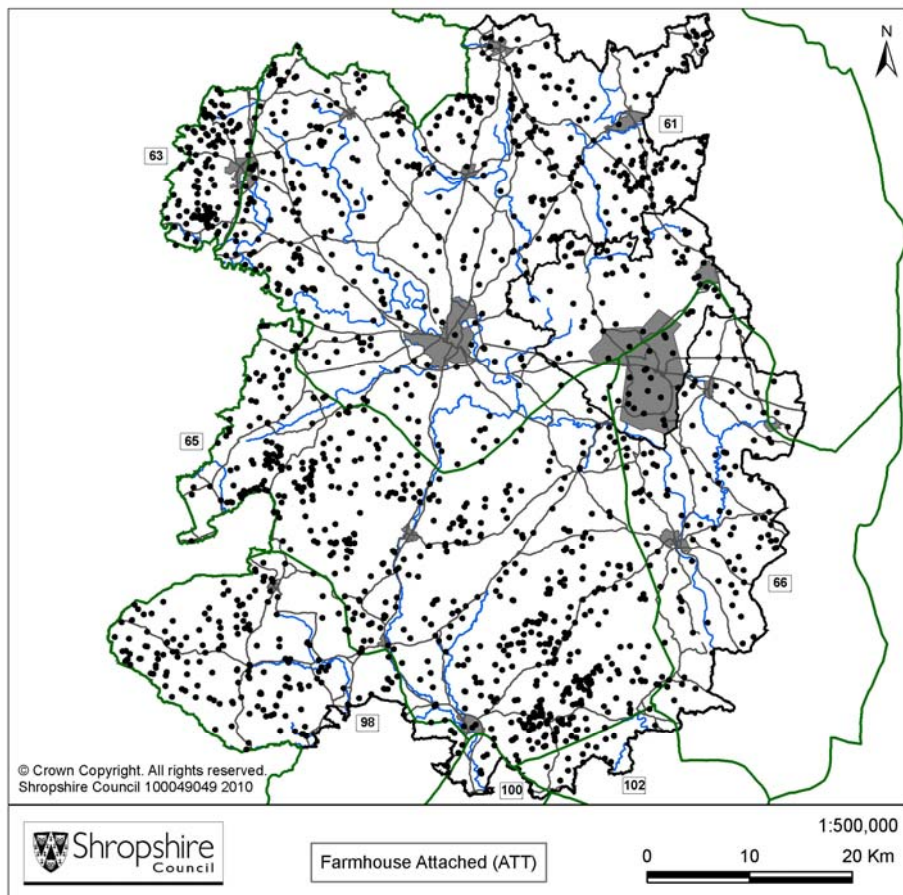
<b>NCA</b>	<b>ATT</b>	<b>LONG</b>	<b>GAB</b>	<b>DET</b>	<b>UNC</b>
Area 61 Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain	546 (21.0%)	620 (23.8%)	444 (17.1%)	943 (36.3%)	48 (1.8%)
Area 63 Oswestry Uplands	120 (43.0%)	57 (20.4%)	38 (13.6%)	61 (21.9%)	3 (1.1%)
Area 65 Shropshire Hills	589 (30.2%)	502 (25.8%)	266 (13.6%)	537 (27.6%)	55 (2.8%)
Area 66 Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau	138 (20.6%)	124 (18.5%)	70 (10.5%)	319 (47.7%)	18 (2.7%)
Area 98 Clun and North West Herefordshire Hills	184 (32.7%)	133 (23.7%)	74 (13.2%)	145 (25.8%)	26 (4.6%)
Area 100 Hereford Lowlands	8 (17.8%)	6 (13.3%)	8 (17.8%)	23 (51.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Area 102 Teme Valley	14 (16.7%)	21 (25.0%)	18 (21.4%)	30 (35.7%)	1 (1.2%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1599</b> <b>(25.8%)</b>	<b>1463</b> <b>(23.6%)</b>	<b>918</b> <b>(14.8%)</b>	<b>2058</b> <b>(33.2%)</b>	<b>151</b> <b>(2.4%)</b>

**Table 14: Farmhouse positions against NCA areas**

Farmsteads with farmhouses attached to a farm building (ATT) are concentrated in the south western half of the county, within the Oswestry Uplands, The Shropshire Hills, and the Clun and north west Herefordshire Hills NCAs. The Oswestry Uplands has the highest percentage of attached farmhouses compared to other farms in the area, proportionally higher than any other NCA at 43%, compared with the mean of 25.8% for the entire county. This pattern running along the Welsh borderlands correlates to the dominant pattern of attached farmhouse in Wales. Significant concentrations of attached farmhouses are also apparent in the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain NCA, particularly across the enclosed lowland heath, and around the mires and mosses around Whixall Moss. The majority of these farmsteads are Linear and L-plan farmstead types making up 55.9 % of all plan types with an attached farmhouse. Therefore the majority of these farmsteads are small and are typically located in isolated upland and common edge locations, or associated with smallholdings and industrial areas in loose farmstead clusters. Most date to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century, but include a significant number of pre-1600 farmsteads. Larger plan types with attached farmhouses such as the full regular courtyard form a minority of farmsteads with attached farmhouses.

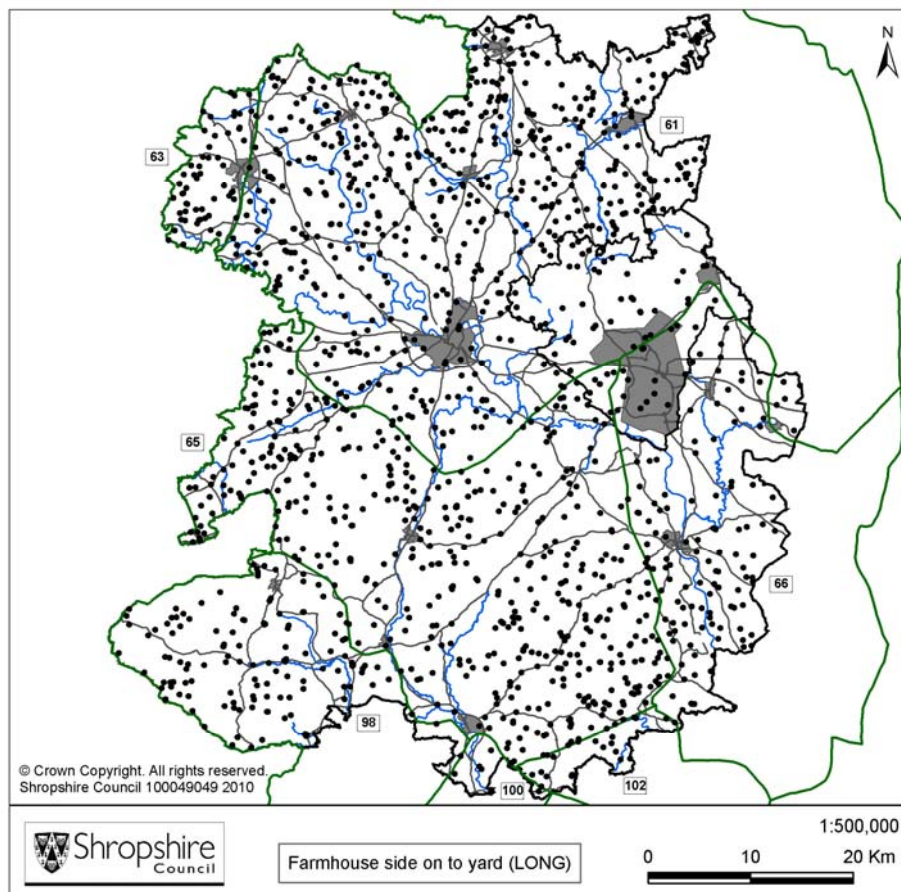
<b>Farmhouse Position</b>	<b>ATT</b>	<b>LONG</b>	<b>GAB</b>	<b>DET</b>	<b>UNC</b>
<b>Pre-1600</b>	59 (15.2%)	104 (26.9%)	54 (13.9%)	167 (43.1%)	3 (0.8%)
<b>C17</b>	123 (18.2%)	168 (24.9%)	114 (16.9%)	262 (38.8%)	7 (1.0%)
<b>C18</b>	87 (18.1%)	112 (23.4%)	62 (12.9%)	213 (44.4%)	5 (1.0%)
<b>C19L</b>	19 (13.2%)	26 (18.1%)	25 (17.5%)	69 (48.2%)	4 (2.8%)
<b>C19</b>	1313 (29.1%)	1053 (23.3%)	662 (14.7%)	1349 (29.9%)	131 (2.9%)

**Table 15 Farmhouse location against Date**



**Left, Figure 26**  
Map showing the distribution of farmsteads that have farmhouses attached to a working building (ATT)

**Right, Figure 27**  
Map showing the distribution of farmsteads that have farmhouses sited side on to the yard (LONG)



The largest proportion of farmhouses positioned side on to the farm yard (LONG) are found in the Shropshire Hills NCA (25.8%). Further significant concentrations occur in the southern end of the Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau NCA where more restricted settlement and small-scale land reclamation predominates, and the northern extent of the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain NCA, concentrating in the dairying areas. Farmhouses gable on to the yard (GAB) are the least common arrangement in Shropshire. Concentrations are found in the north eastern part of the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain NCA, particularly across the enclosed lowland heaths and within the dairying region of Shropshire. It is also often associated with common edge encroachments and smallholdings in much of the rest of Shropshire.

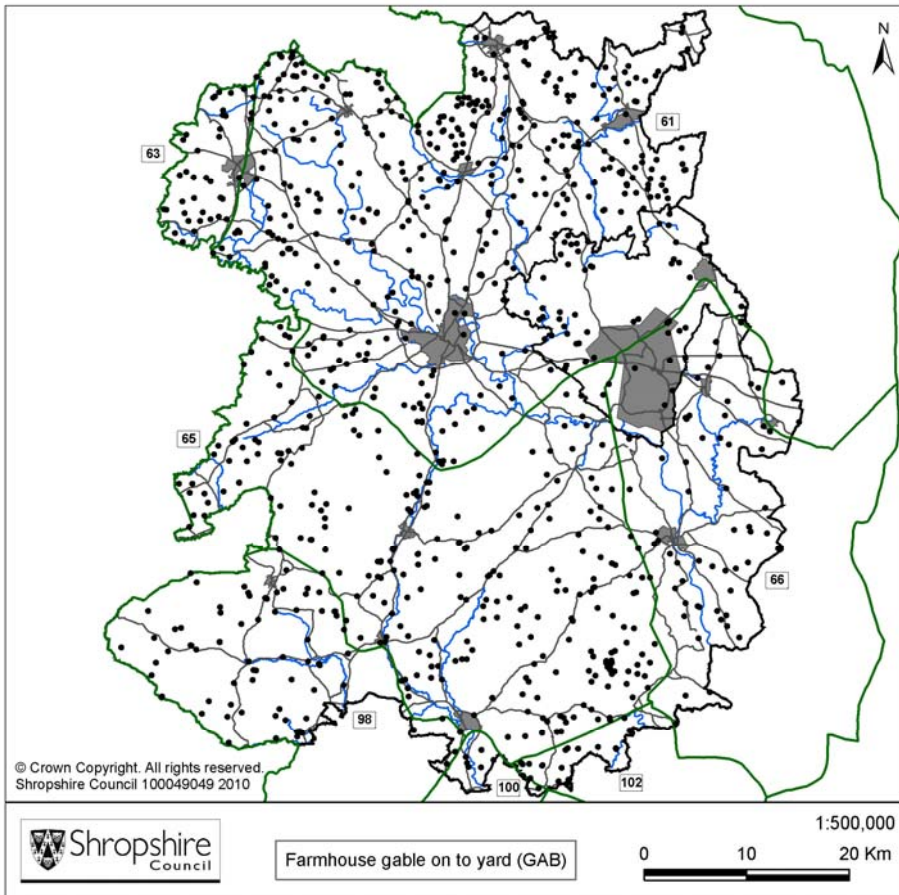
Farmstead with LONG and GAB arrangements are most often associated with pre-1600 and 17<sup>th</sup> century farmsteads, suggesting that farmhouses which are more intimately connected to the farmyard tend to develop over a greater period of time, and have the potential to be of earlier date. This is reinforced by the fact that LONG arrangements are the most common plan form found in association with deserted or shrunken medieval village sites. For the most part the pre-1600 and 17<sup>th</sup> century farmsteads are found in the south western half of the county, to the south of Shrewsbury, with the 18<sup>th</sup> and listed 19<sup>th</sup> century farmsteads focused in the north and east. Similarly, Loose Courtyard plans and those including L-ranges (RCL, RCL3/4, LCL3/4) are most often associated with the LONG and GAB farmhouse arrangement, suggesting a link to small to medium farms that often developed in a piecemeal fashion. A significant number of Regular Courtyard Multi-yards also follow this arrangement, perhaps indicating that they developed in several phases over an extended period of time. Plan forms most likely to have been constructed in a single phase are generally less likely to have this farmhouse arrangement, the main exception being the RCu which lends itself to having the farmhouse on the fourth side of the yard.

	ATT	LONG	GAB	DET	UNC
<b>VILL</b>	156 (21.4%)	158 (21.7%)	136 (18.7%)	244 (33.5%)	34 (4.7%)
<b>HAM</b>	277 (23.5%)	278 (23.6%)	203 (17.2%)	395 (33.5%)	27 (2.3%)
<b>FC</b>	535 (35.1%)	316 (20.7%)	229 (15.0%)	416 (27.3%)	28 (1.8%)
<b>ISO</b>	561 (24.1%)	623 (26.8%)	298 (12.8%)	791 (34.1%)	50 (2.2%)
<b>PARK</b>	18 (12.7%)	22 (15.5%)	8 (5.6%)	89 (62.7%)	5 (3.5%)
<b>SMV</b>	36 (18.9%)	53 (27.9%)	31 (16.3%)	66 (34.7%)	4 (2.1%)
<b>CM</b>	9 (10.3%)	10 (11.5%)	10 (11.5%)	56 (64.4%)	2 (2.3%)
<b>URB</b>	7 (41.2%)	3 (17.6%)	3 (17.6%)	1 (5.9%)	3 (17.6%)

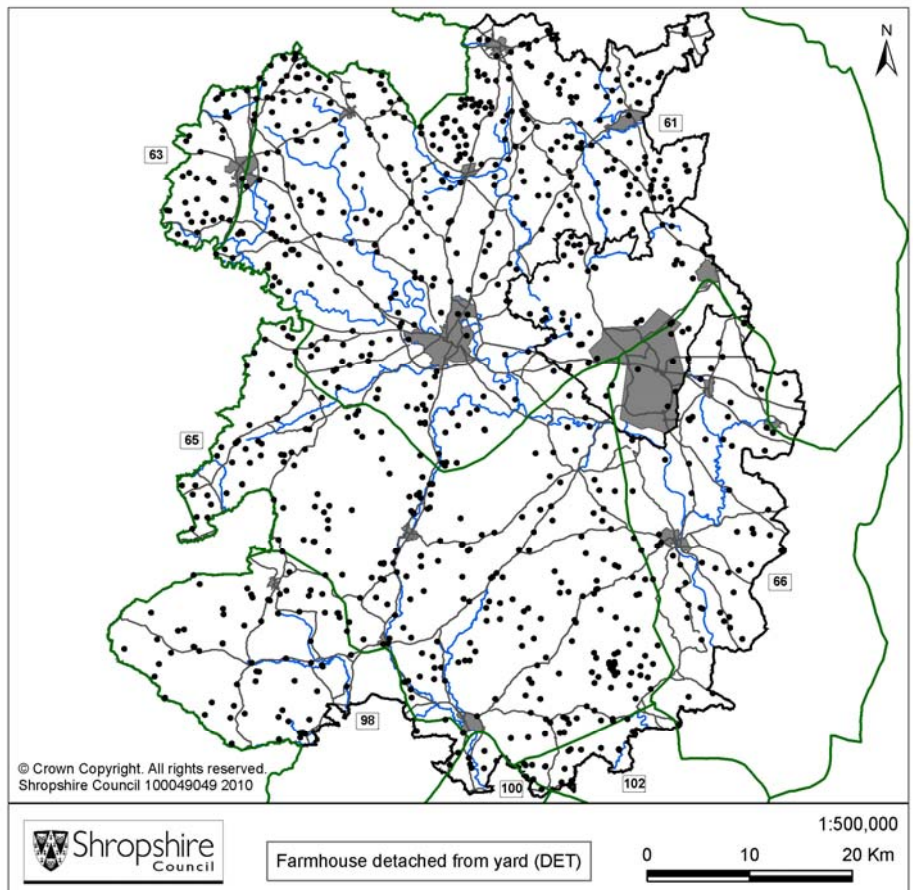
**Table 16 Farmhouse location against Farmstead Location**

Farmsteads where the house is fully detached from the yard increase in number on the eastern side of the county, with one of the highest percentages (47.7%) found in the Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau NCA. The highest proportion (51.1%) is found within the small area of the Herefordshire





**Left, Figure 28**  
Map showing the distribution of farmsteads that have farmhouses with their gable on to the yard (GAB)



**Right, Figure 29**  
Map showing the distribution of farmsteads that have farmhouses entirely detached from the yard.

Lowlands in the south of the county, the majority associated with larger farmstead complexes. Detached farmhouses are most often associated with 18<sup>th</sup> and listed 19<sup>th</sup> century farmsteads reflecting the changing perceptions of the time, where owners attempted to disassociate themselves with the working buildings, and wished to demonstrate their increasing status and prestige. These detached farmhouses often face away from the working yard, into the garden with separate access, and overlook a 'prospect' of improved or newly-enclosed landscapes. There are still significant numbers of earlier farmsteads where the house is detached and these are often associated with high status halls and manor sites, where newer farm buildings have been built away from the main house. It is therefore not surprising that the majority of farmsteads located within parks, or associated with high status sites, have the house separated from the working buildings. Most often it is the larger plan types that have this arrangement and in particular those which are likely to be of one phase of building, such as the Full Regular Courtyard, the E-, F- and H-plans. The vast majority of Loose Courtyards with four working buildings also have detached farmhouses, reinforcing their strong relationship with the more planned farmstead types.

<b>Plan</b>	<b>ATT</b>	<b>LONG</b>	<b>GAB</b>	<b>DET</b>	<b>UNC</b>
<b>DISPcl</b>	8	19	12	53	9
<b>DISPdw</b>	36	56	26	43	10
<b>DISPmy</b>	24	64	45	112	7
<b>LC1</b>	13	150	121	119	10
<b>LC2</b>	102	213	133	230	21
<b>LC3</b>	68	92	49	96	8
<b>LC4</b>	13	17	9	35	3
<b>LC L3/4</b>	47	83	59	124	3
<b>RCL</b>	30	143	122	197	6
<b>RC L3/4</b>	77	120	75	204	12
<b>RCu</b>	59	138	77	187	15
<b>RCe</b>	10	36	9	63	2
<b>RCf</b>	7	29	16	43	3
<b>RCt</b>	23	22	18	40	4
<b>RCb</b>	1	2	1	5	0
<b>RCz</b>	3	4	7	11	0
<b>RC</b>	86	32	17	171	8
<b>RCmy</b>	93	180	105	268	13
<b>LIN</b>	669	0	0	0	0
<b>LP</b>	225	0	0	0	0
<b>PAR</b>	1	51	0	0	0
<b>ROW</b>	3	11	12	26	1

**Table 17: Plan types against Farmhouse position**