

6.0 RESULTS

6.1 Historic Farmstead Records

Classification	FARMSTEAD	Farmstead with house
Primary	OUTFARM	Outfarm or field barn
Attribute	SMALLHOLDING	Smallholding

9724 farmsteads, smallholdings, field barns and outfarms were recorded during the West Midlands Farmstead and Landscape project, creating 9278 new sites for the Shropshire Historic Environment Record (HER).

▮ *Farmsteads*

373 farmsteads were previously recorded on the Shropshire HER, the majority resulting from the 1982-3 Farm Building Survey in North Shropshire. The West Midlands Farmstead and Landscape Project has now added a further 5821 farmstead records, giving a total 6194 historic farmstead records across Shropshire, including Telford and Wrekin.

▮ *Smallholdings*

Only 15 smallholdings were previously recorded on the Shropshire HER. The West Midlands Farmstead and Landscape Project has added a further 1751 smallholding records, giving a total 1766 historic smallholdings across Shropshire, including Telford and Wrekin, with further areas mapped as polygons in northern Shropshire and the Shropshire coalfields.

▮ *Field Barns and Outfarms*

22 outfarms and field barns were previously recorded on the Shropshire HER. The West Midlands Farmstead and Landscape Project has added a further 1742 field barn and outfarm records, giving a total 1764 across Shropshire, including Telford and Wrekin.

▮ *Census Data*

The total of 6194 farmsteads in (Shropshire, out of a total of 205, 717 for England) compares to a figure of 5396 given in the 1851 Agricultural Census Reports, which enumerated heads of households who gave farming as their principal occupation (Shaw-Taylor 2005, 169). In 1871 the number of farms in England had slightly risen to 208, 980, and the census recorded an additional 160, 000 whose primary occupation was not farming (Shaw-Taylor 2005, 167). In contrast the Agricultural Returns that date from 1866 record all holdings but are of limited use as a guide to the number of farms.

The farmsteads mapping data is important in this respect, as it similarly indicates the location of farming complexes which required buildings for the housing and processing of animals and harvested produce. In all cases the mapping data exceeds the numbers given in the 1851 census, the remaining sum serving as an indication of those smaller farms and smallholdings whose occupants were engaged in small-scale subsistence agriculture, often in combination with other sources of income. Linear, dispersed cluster and smaller loose courtyard plans (typically with one working building) comprise the smallest-scale farmstead types which fall into this category and which are the dominant type in small-scale farming and smallholder landscapes. The issue of farm size, and its relationship to farmstead plan, is further explored in section 6.6.

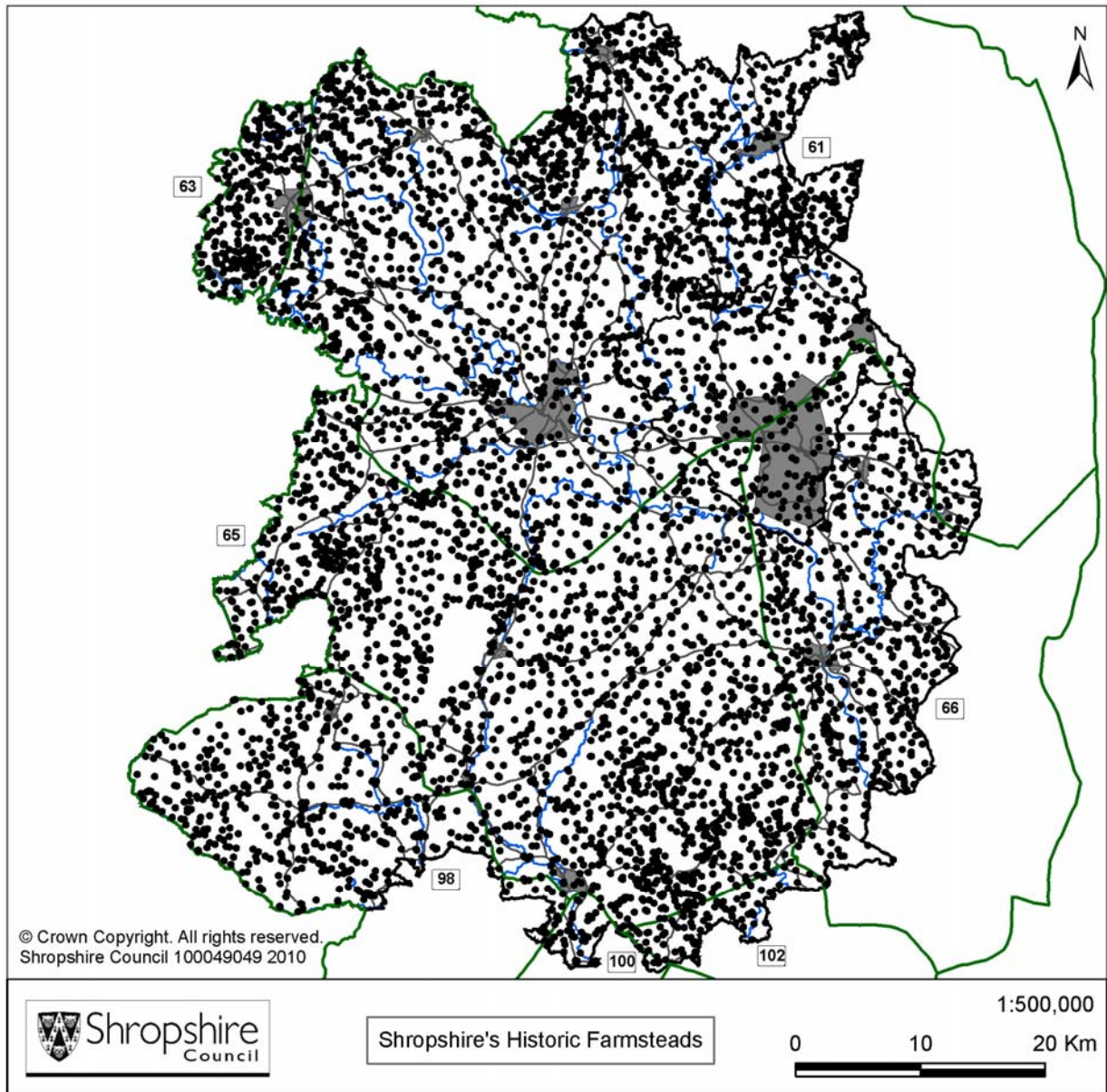


Figure 6: The Historic Farmsteads Data

Map showing the distribution of the 6194 farmsteads across Shropshire. The denser concentrations visible on the map often indicate areas of smaller farmsteads in less agriculturally viable or restrictive landscapes, or industrial areas associated with smallholdings.

6.2 *Historic Farmsteads: Landscape and Settlement Context*

▯ *The historic patterns of settlement*

Location Primary Attribute	VILL	Village location, larger in scale and/or identified through the presence of a church forming the focus of the village. Can often include other amenities such as a school or public house. A significant number of non-agricultural buildings and dwellings are also present
	HAM	Hamlet location, smaller in scale and often identified by the presence of a close group of farmsteads and/or a small number of non-agricultural buildings and dwellings. A church or another amenity can be present (though usually one). Hamlets usually have settlement names.
	FC	Loose farmstead cluster. This term represents small loose groups of farmsteads where they are not sufficiently grouped to be regarded as a hamlet. A guide of c.300m between farmsteads has been used to date. In areas with a high density of small farmsteads the guide distance may be insufficient to identify farmstead clusters. The farmsteads will probably be linked by roads, tracks or paths. This has also been used when a farmstead is located less than 300m from a settlement, but is not an integral part of the settlement.
	ISO	Isolated position. Isolated. Used where a farmstead is located in an isolated position in relation to other farmsteads and settlement.
	PARK	Located within a park
	SMV	Shrunken village site
	CM	Church and Manor Farm group (or other high status farmstead)
	URB	Urban

Although the farmsteads have been assigned the above attributes for location, it has become clear that the settlement pattern in Shropshire is extremely varied, and does not always conform to these predefined categories. Villages can comprise nucleated settlements as well as loose poly-focal arrangements. Hamlets can range from a tight cluster of three or four farmsteads, to a sinuous arrangement of farms and wayside cottages strung along a road. In some cases two farms can develop either side of a road, neither being characteristic of a hamlet or a loose farmstead cluster. In a few cases loose farmstead clusters can be named like hamlets and villages but appear as groups of individual farmsteads surrounded by their own small fields and enclosures interspersed by cottages and inter-connected by trackways. Isolated farmsteads can be extremely dense with farmsteads no more than a few metres beyond the 300m threshold.

The location of farmsteads has been mapped against the 2nd edition OS map of c.1900 date and comparisons with 19th century HLC settlement HLC data provides some indication of the variations in understanding Shropshire's settlement pattern. For example, of the 2500 farmsteads set within 19th century HLC settlement polygons 273 are marked as isolated farmsteads and 428 are marked as Loose Farmstead Clusters. This highlights the need to better understand Shropshire's settlement pattern, and provides an opportunity to both refine the farmsteads data and the HLC settlement data allowing a fuller understanding of the evidence base.

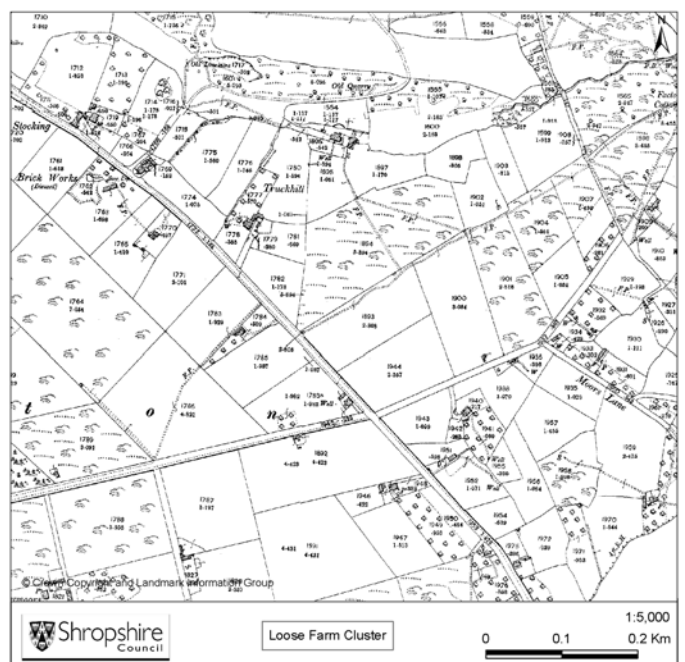
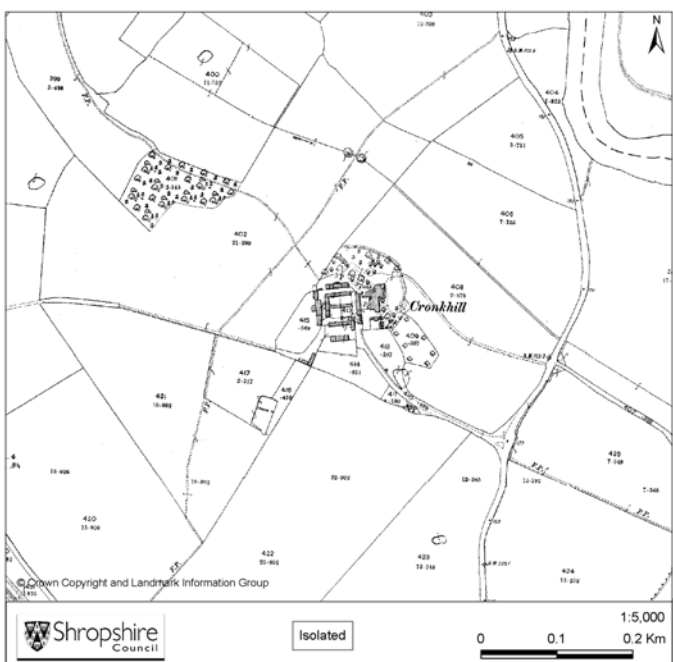
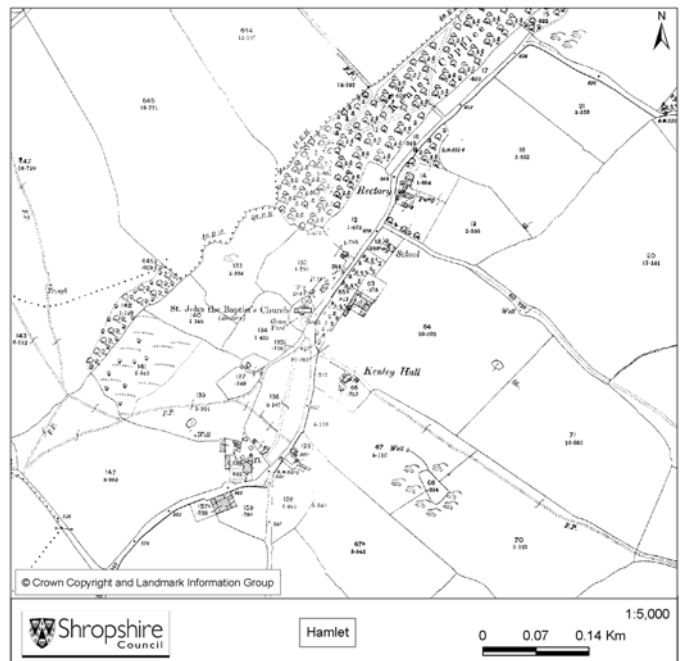
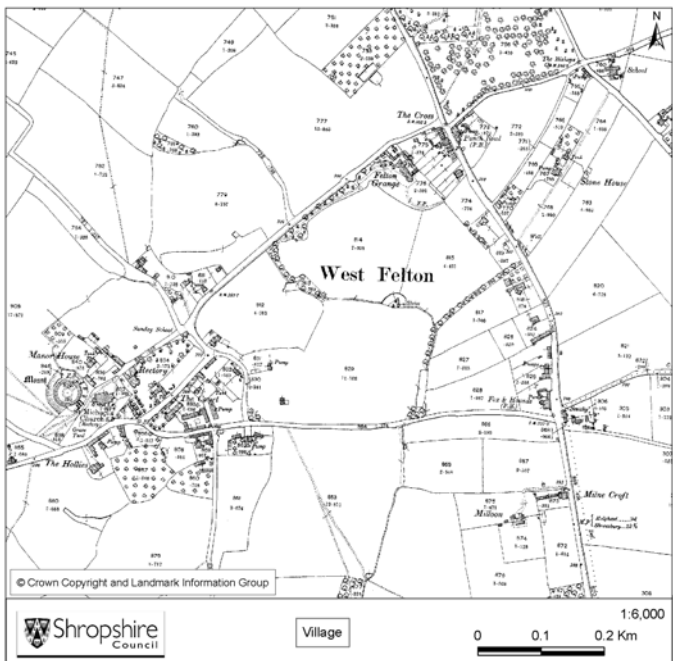
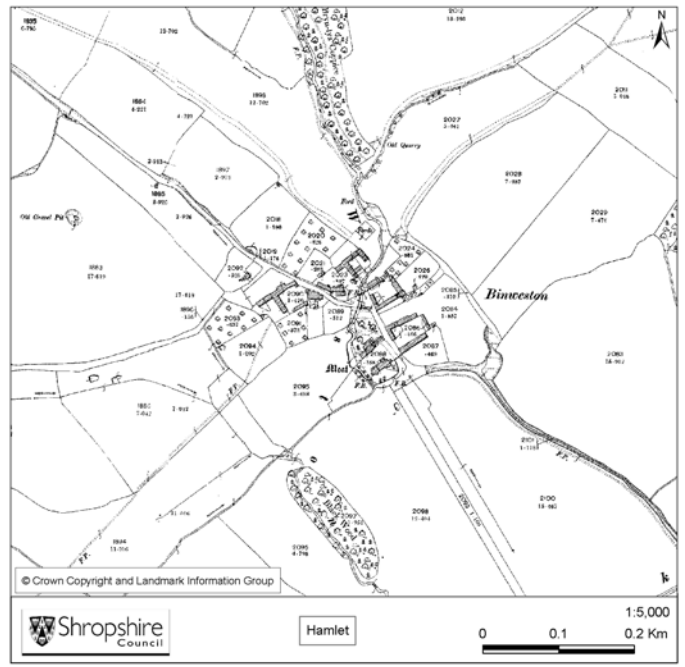
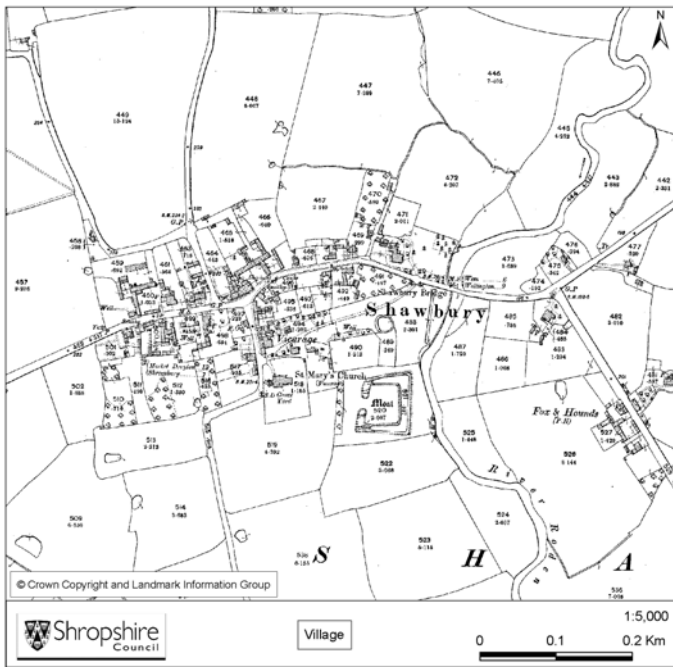


Figure 7: 2nd edition OS historic mapping showing variations in settlement pattern seen across Shropshire

National Character Areas			
Name	No of Farmsteads	Km/Sq	Av Den Km/Sq
61 Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain	2601	3662.47	0.71
63 Oswestry Uplands	279	99.81	2.80
65 Shropshire Hills	1951	1079.88	1.81
66 Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau	669	888.03	0.75
98 Clun and North West Herefordshire Hills	562	624.7	0.90
100 Hereford Lowlands	45	192.98	0.23
102 Temе Valley	84	886.8	0.09

Table 1: National Character Areas and farmstead density

Patterns in the data conform to broad differences in Shropshire's historic settlement pattern.

▮ *Isolated Farmstead*

36.9% (2287) of farmsteads are recorded as isolated. Different levels of dispersal are however apparent across the region, with figure 8 showing the density of isolated farms increasing in the southern half of Shropshire, and in the north west, particularly in upland areas. Both the Oswestry Uplands NCA and the Shropshire Hills NCA contain the highest densities of farms with an average of 2.8 farms per km² and 1.81 farms per km² respectively (Table 1, below). These same areas are dominated by smaller plan types and therefore smaller land holdings.

Greater distances between farms are evident across the Shropshire Plain NCA and the Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau NCA, borne out by an average of 0.71 farms per km² in the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain NCA and 0.75 farm per km² in the Mid Severn Plateau NCA (Table 1, above). These landscapes witnessed greater large-scale capital investment in the 1840-70 period, characterised by the reorganisation of the landscape, accompanied by increased numbers of the larger planned farmsteads and larger land holdings. Denser clusters still exist in these areas, but they generally relate to the medium to smaller farmstead types, often associated with small pockets of residual common.

▮ *Loose Farmstead Clusters*

24.2% (1497) of farms are part of loose farmstead clusters, which are most apparent in upland areas, but also heavily featured on the lowland commons. In upland areas these clusters commonly comprise areas of small farms intermixed with smallholdings, associated with irregular squatter enclosure and industrial areas. In the Shropshire Plain NCA loose clusters of small farms are evident across the enclosed lowland heaths and lowland moors, where they form components of an ordered, small -scale, rectilinear landscape encroaching onto lighter, impoverished soils. The larger farmsteads in this category often comprise a single farmstead set on the edge of a settlement. Loose farmstead clusters are not as apparent on the Clun Hills, where smallholdings are less frequent and isolated farms predominate.

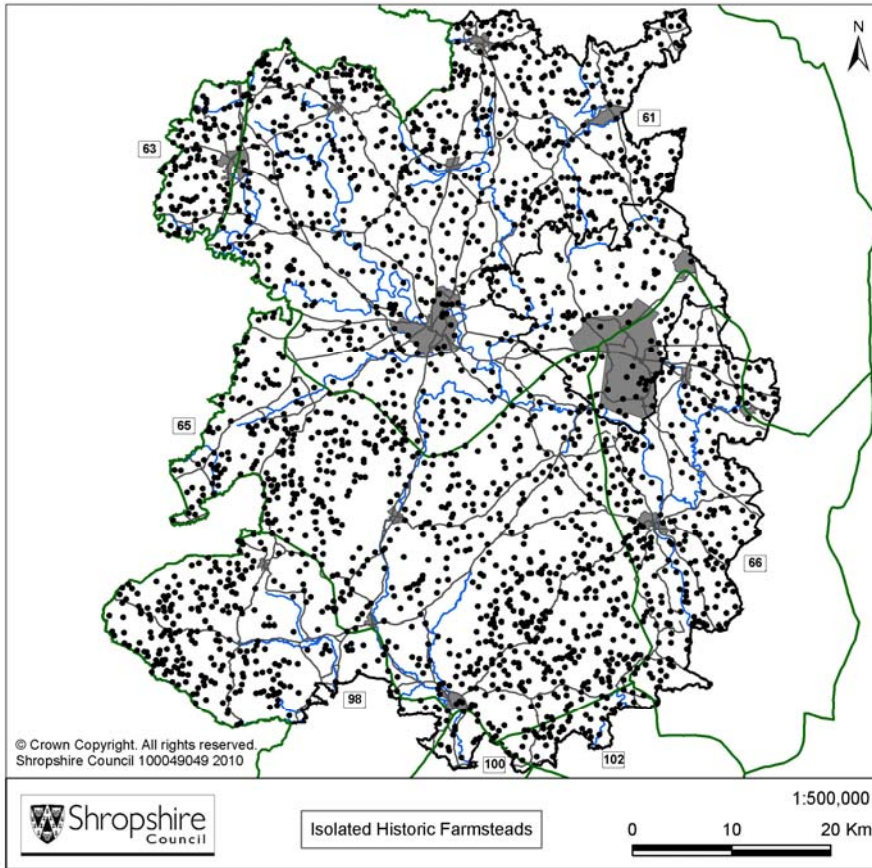
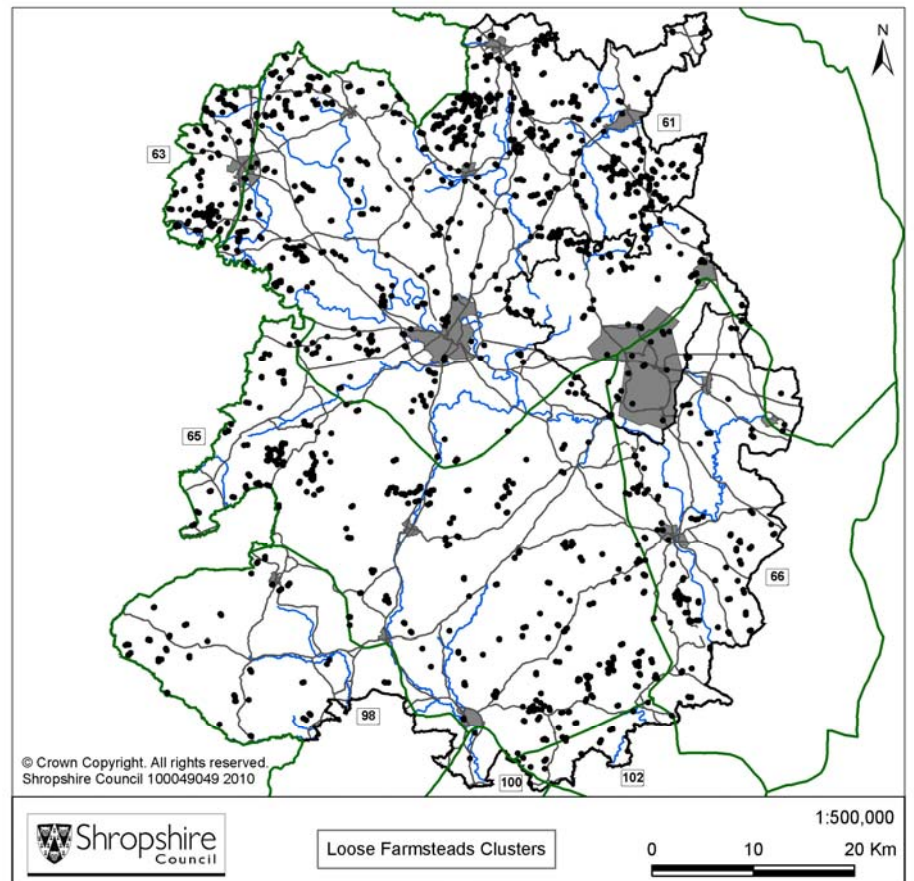


Figure 8: Historic Farmsteads located in isolated positions

Figure 9: Historic Farmsteads located in Loose Farm Clusters
 Loose Farm Cluster correspond to the denser distributions of isolated farms



□ *Hamlets*

18.9% (1172) farmsteads are located within hamlets. They are found across much of the county in both upland and lowland locations. As figure 10 below shows, hamlets are less prevalent along the northern boundary of Shropshire, across the uplands plateau of the Clun Hills NCA and in the Oswestry Uplands NCA. There are also limited numbers of farmstead in hamlets on the timbered plateau farmland E of the Cleve Hills. Clusters of hamlets also correlate with areas of smallholdings and industrial activity around the Cleve Hills and Stiperstones, where they have usually developed from the loose farm clusters.

□ *Villages and Shrunken Village Sites*

Only 11.5% (714) of farmsteads are located in villages, and there appears to be a greater survival of farmsteads in villages in the southern half of the county. Fewer farmsteads are located in villages in the northern half of Shropshire and in most cases only the farmhouse survives or indeed the farmsteads have been lost altogether. In the south villages remained as farming communities; to the north they have become service and residential centres. The shrinkage and abandonment of villages is also highlighted by the 3.1% (190) of farmsteads associated with shrunken village sites, with distributions concentrating along the Corve Dale, around the Cleve Hills, to the south and southwest of Shrewsbury, and along the boundary between the Shropshire Hills and the Shropshire Plain. Some of these farms now reside in smaller hamlets whilst others sit entirely isolated.

□ *Located within a park*

The vast majority of the 167 farmsteads located within parks are found across the Shropshire Plain and the Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau, where estate landscapes predominate. Similarly the 150 farmsteads associated with churches or high status buildings focus on these same estate landscapes, usually within hamlets and villages. Farmsteads located in parks or in association with high status sites have the best survival rates, probably as a result of their continuity of function.

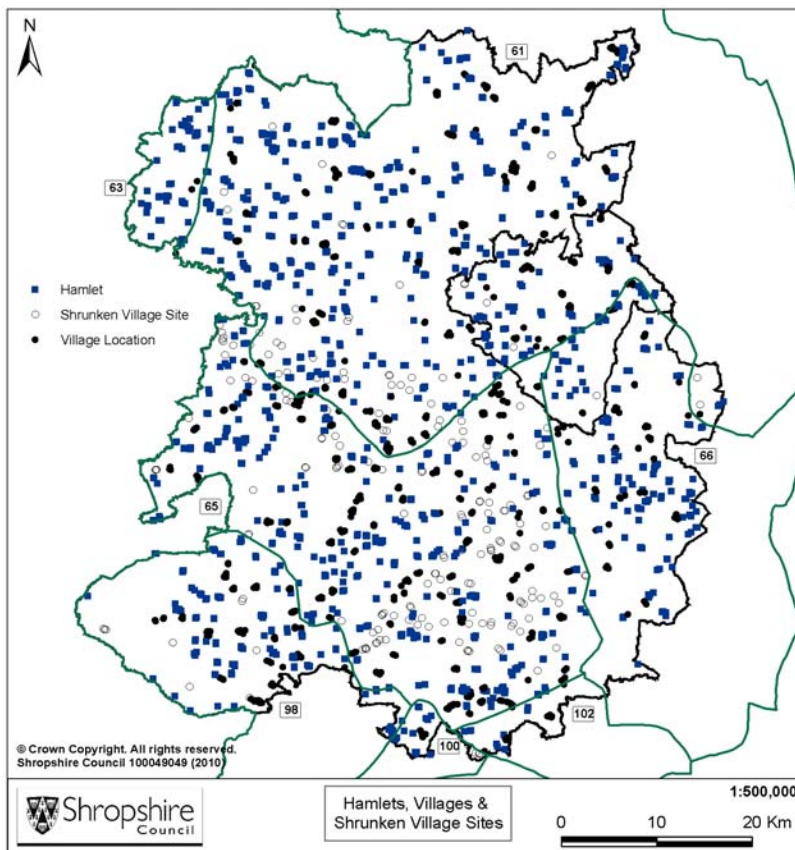


Figure 10: Historic Farmsteads located in Villages, Hamlets & Shrunken Medieval Villages

□ *The present patterns of settlement*

The expansion and redevelopment of settlement is one of the key factors influencing the loss of historic farmsteads. Table 2 below, illustrates survival rates against recorded location in c.1900, and suggest that within the historic cores of settlements, survival is relatively good; with far more survive in one form or another than have been completely lost. This is comparable to HLC data for late 19th century settlement pattern (Table 3: *Historic Core & pre-1880*) where most farms have encountered little or no loss to historic fabric. It is very reassuring to see that total loss within the historic cores of settlements is exceptionally low.

Location	EXT	ALT	ALTS	HOUS	LOST
Isolated Farmstead	726 (32.2%)	852 (37.8%)	417 (18.5%)	141 (6.3%)	116 (5.2%)
Loose Farmstead Clusters	553 (37.5%)	471 (32.0%)	190 (12.9%)	159 (10.8%)	100 (6.8%)
Hamlet	391 (33.5%)	437 (37.5%)	228 (19.6%)	75 (6.4%)	35 (3.0%)
Village	225 (31.7%)	289 (40.5%)	124 (17.4%)	59 (8.3%)	16 (2.2%)
Shrunken Medieval Village	44 (23.2%)	85 (44.7%)	51 (26.8%)	3 (1.6%)	7 (3.7%)
Park	47 (28.3%)	77 (46.4%)	36 (21.7%)	5 (3.0%)	1 (0.6%)
Church, Manor or High Status	35 (23.3%)	66 (44.0%)	41 (27.3%)	6 (4.0%)	2 (1.3%)

Table 2 showing the survival rates in the different locations

However when comparing farmstead survival data to areas of redeveloped pre-1880 settlement and to the expansion of post-1880 settlement, the rate of loss increase drastically. In redeveloped areas of 19th century settlement the house is often the one thing that survives, with the rest having been considerably altered or lost altogether. In post 1880 expansion a large proportion of the farmsteads have also been lost, however it appears survival is often much better, and far more farm buildings have been integrated into later settlement development.

HLC Types	EXT	ALT	ALTS	HOUS	LOST
Historic Core & pre-1880	771 (32.6%)	994 (42.0%)	465 (19.7%)	120 (5.1%)	15 (0.6%)
Redeveloped pre-1880s	10 (8.4%)	16 (13.4%)	28 (23.5%)	36 (30.3%)	29 (24.4%)
Post-1880s	49 (29.7%)	47 (28.5%)	17 (10.3%)	16 (9.7%)	36 (21.8%)
Non-Settlement	1197 (35.3%)	1129 (33.3%)	580 (17.1%)	279 (8.2%)	203 (6.0%)

Table 3 showing the survival rates of farmstead associated with Settlement and Non-settlement HLC types

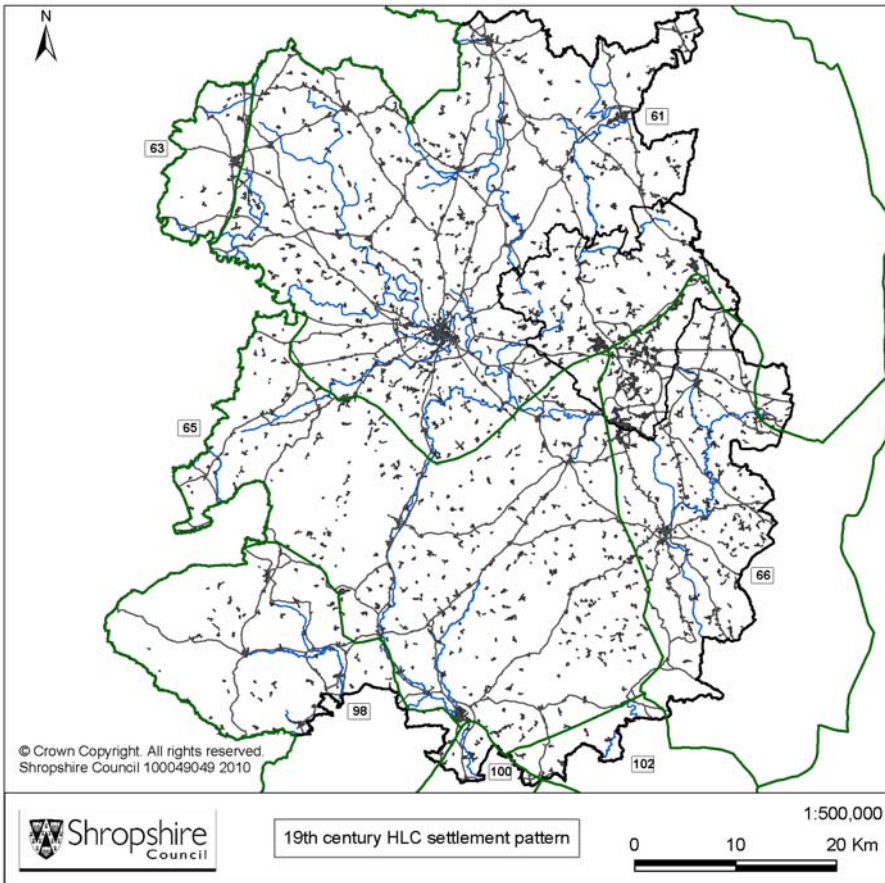
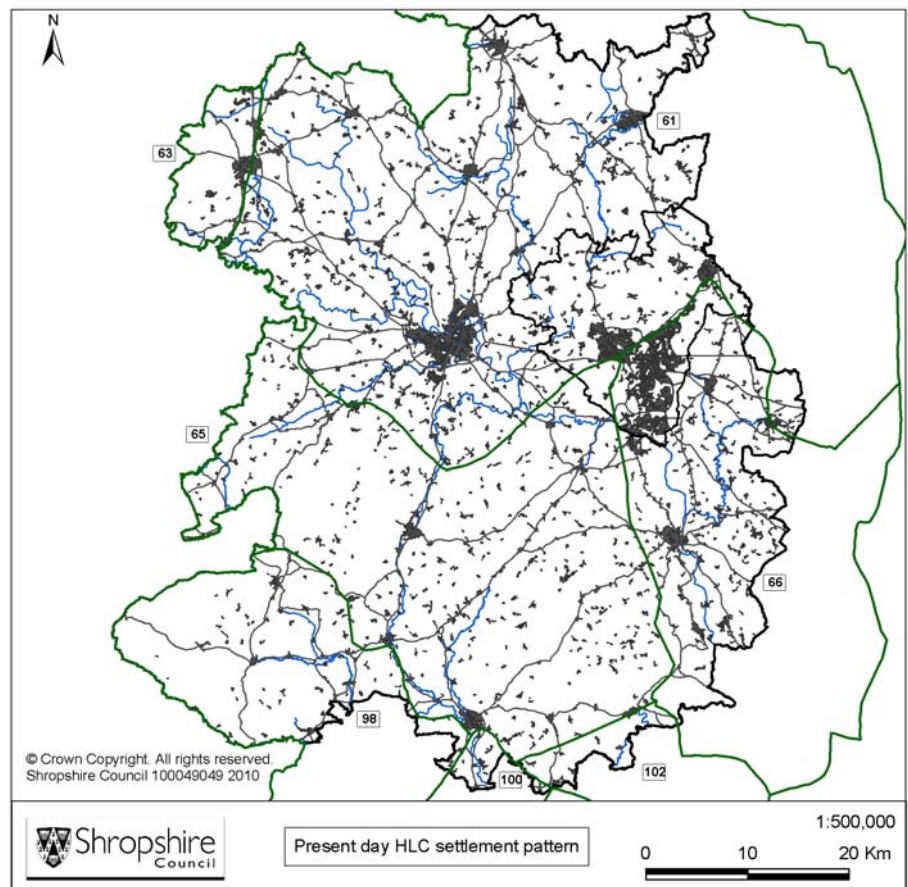


Figure 11: Map showing the extent of the 19th century settlement pattern as defined by HLC settlement types.

Figure 12: Map showing the extent of the present day settlement pattern as defined by HLC settlement types



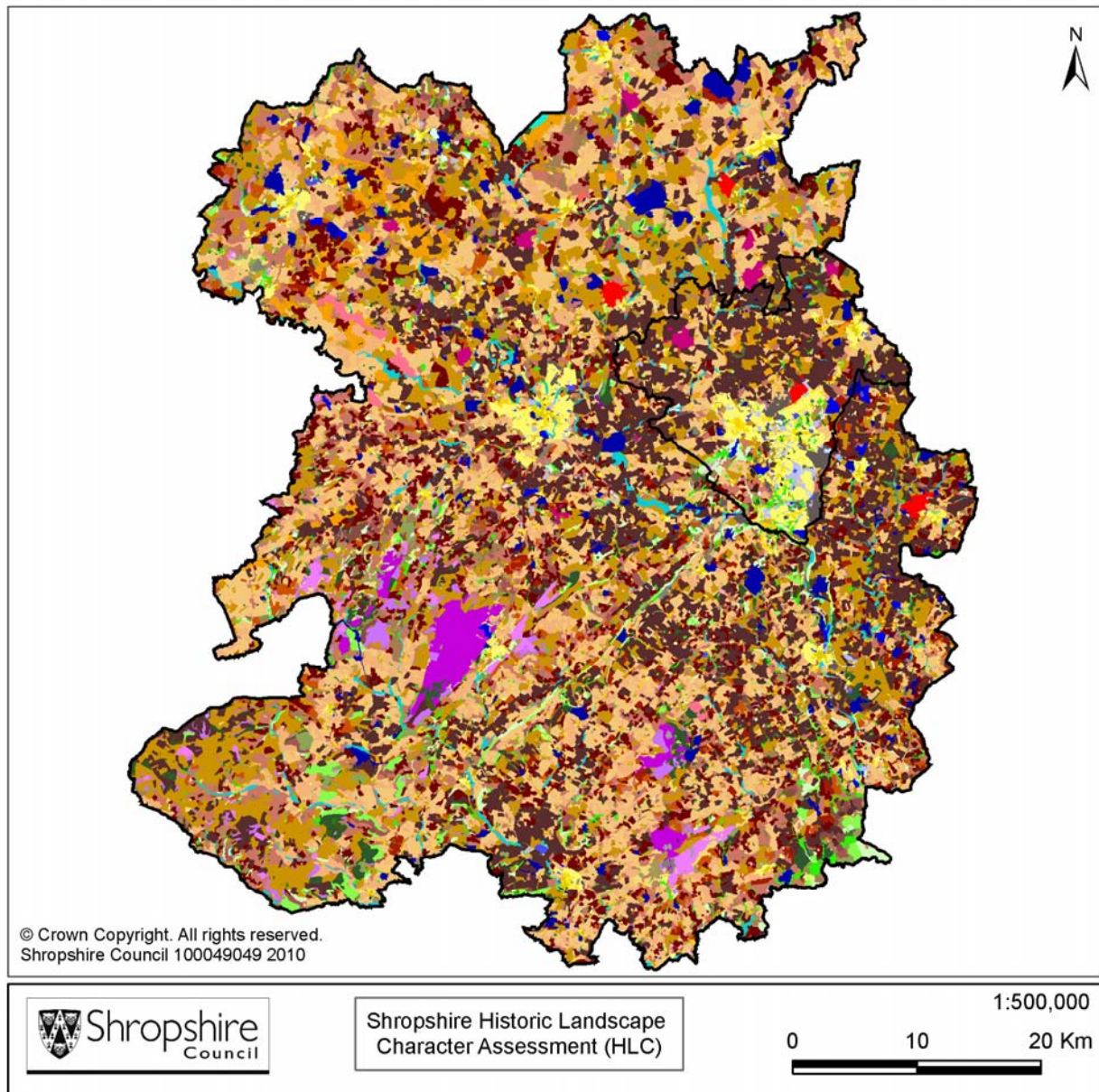


Figure 13 Shropshire Historic Landscape Character Assessment

The Shropshire Historic Landscape Character Assessment is available online on the Shropshire Council website. Extracts of the particular HLC types discussed in this report are included in the annex 2.

Despite the visual complexity of the Shropshire Historic Landscape Character Assessment, the farmsteads data shows significant correlations with the historic landscape types in terms of distribution and density, and in section 6.7 the relative times depths of each type. As a result the relationship between the HLC and the farmstead date allows us to assess in much greater detail the development of Shropshire's diverse landscape.

HLC Code	HLC Type	No of Farmsteads	Km/Sq	Av Den Km/Sq
34	Irregular squatter enclosure	287	25.23	11.38
35	Rectilinear squatter enclosure	146	13.46	10.85
37	Small assarts	150	47.92	3.13
40	Small irregular fields	853	315.44	2.7
44	Planned enclosure	588	467.02	1.26
41	Piecemeal enclosure	272	236.59	1.15
42	Reorganised piecemeal enclosure	319	518.45	0.62
47	Large irregular fields	149	307.07	0.49
48	Very large post-war fields	138	571.08	0.24

Table 4: The Historic Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) shown against the average density of farmsteads

When the farmsteads data is compared to the Shropshire's HLC it becomes clear that the density of farmsteads is intricately related to the development of the landscape over time. Shropshire's fieldscapes ranges from ancient small-scale irregular fields and piecemeal enclosure, to post-medieval common edge encroachments, and 18th and 19th century reorganised piecemeal enclosure, and finally planned and large-scale post-war field systems. It becomes clear that as time passed, fields increased in size, and where they did, holdings were amalgamated or enlarged and farmsteads became more and more spread out. The farmsteads themselves also increase in size along with their surrounding fieldscapes.

The greatest densities of farmsteads tend to be found in areas of post-medieval squatter encroachment on commons and upland fringes. The combination of small-scale subsistence farming, supplemented by the income derived from other activities such as woodland management, quarrying, coal or lead mining or metal working, results in clusters of small farms and smallholdings focused on specific areas. These developed from the 16th to 19th centuries, with earlier examples often being more irregular in appearance and the later being more rectilinear.

Medium to high densities of farmsteads are also found area of small irregular and small assarted fields, which comprise some of the oldest enclosure patterns in Shropshire. Many of these fields were created through the incremental clearance and enclosure of woodland, common and waste between the medieval and earlier post-medieval periods, with the majority of farmsteads being relatively small and where the land is likely to have been held in severalty from the outset. The density of farmsteads decreases in areas of piecemeal enclosure, where the open field systems surrounding the settlements were gradually enclosed from the 15th century onwards. This created small to medium irregular or rectilinear fields, with farmsteads either remaining in the villages and hamlets or newly established on isolated sites.

Much lower densities of farmstead are also evident in the areas of reorganised piecemeal enclosure, where fields were amalgamated and enlarged in the 18th and 19th centuries. Holdings were rationalised, farmsteads were enlarged, and brand new planned farmsteads were established, set within large irregular or rectilinear fields. Areas with planned field systems, created through Parliamentary Enclosure of commons or the rationalisation of ancient field patterns between the 17th and 19th century, also tend to have lower densities of farmsteads. However, these areas display significant variation in terms of the size and distribution of the related farmsteads. For example, areas

with small planned allotment fields on former heathlands tend to correlate with small clusters of farmsteads linked by straight roads. However, within areas of Parliamentary Enclosure in the uplands substantial isolated planned farmsteads were constructed in the middle of extensive areas of large planned enclosure, leading to an average medium density for the distribution of these farmsteads, although extremes exist. The lowest densities of farmsteads occur in areas with the highest levels of field amalgamation and boundary losses in the later 20th century, often resulting in the creation of very large 'prairie' fields ('very large post-war fields' HLC type).

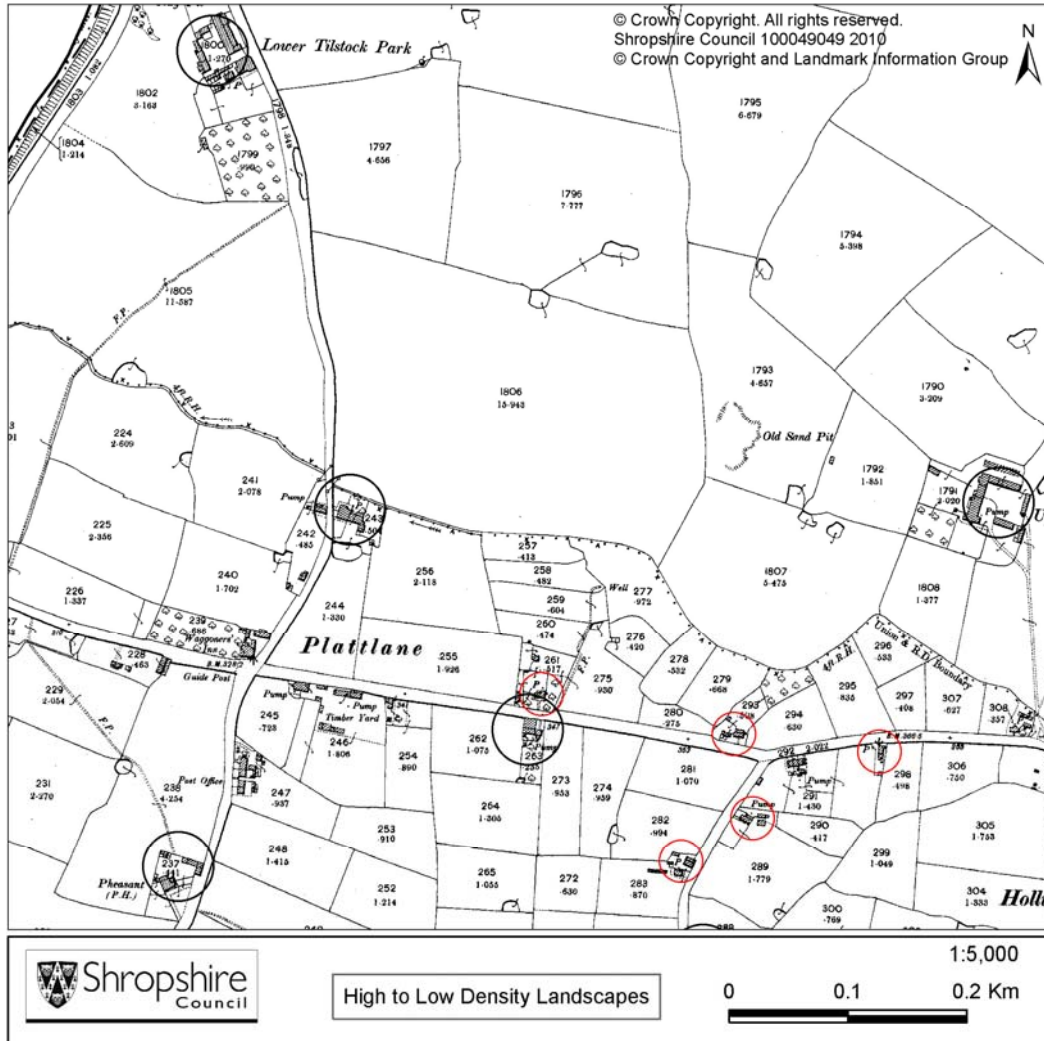


Figure 14 Farmstead density and the diversity of the landscape over short distances

The diversity of Shropshire's landscape over short distances is one of the region's key characteristics. Here the two large planned farms are set within the former Deer Park of Tilstock Park, enclosed by small to medium irregular fields and reflecting the medium densities seen in these fieldscapes.

The Parish boundary forms a definite line between this and the small planned enclosures and squatter enclosure to the south (smallholdings highlighted in red). Here settlement is much denser as encroachment were made on to the moors and wetlands around Whixhall Moss, with the highest densities associated with the irregular squatter enclosure.

▮ Landscape Character Areas

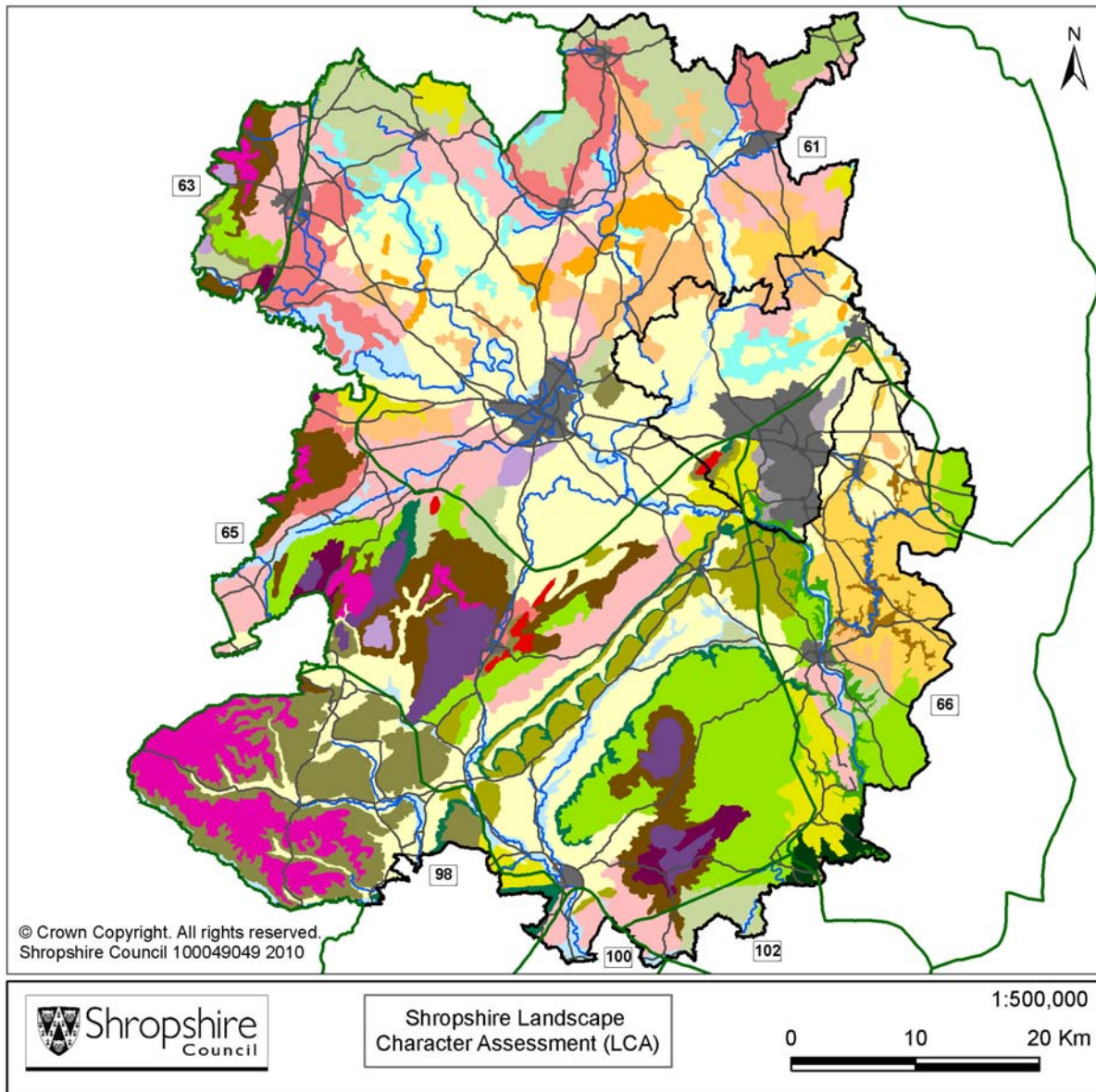


Figure 15: Landscape Character Assessment across Shropshire.

The full Shropshire Landscape Character Assessment report is available to download from Shropshire's Council website. Further extracts relating to the LCA types noted in this report are included in the annex 3

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|---|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | 1 - High open moorland |  | 13 - Forest smallholdings |
|  | 2 - High enclosed plateau |  | 15 - Timbered plateau farmlands |
|  | 3 - High volcanic hills & slopes |  | 17 - Principal timbered farmlands |
|  | 4 - Upland smallholdings |  | 18 - Timbered pastures |
|  | 5 - Upstanding enclosed commons |  | 19 - Wooded estatelands |
|  | 9 - Pasture hills |  | 20 - Estate farmlands |
|  | 6 - Principal wooded hills |  | 21 - Settled Pastoral Farmlands |
|  | 8 - Wooded river gorge |  | 22 - Principal settled farmlands |
|  | 7 - Wooded hills & farmlands |  | 23 - Enclosed lowland heaths |
|  | 10 - Wooded hills & estatelands |  | 24 - Lowland moors |
|  | 11 - Sandstone hills |  | 25 - Riverside meadows |
|  | 14 - Sandstone estatelands |  | 26 - Lowland moss |
|  | 29 - Incised sandstone valleys |  | 27 - Coalfields |
|  | 12 - Wooded forest |  | 28 - Urban |

LCA Code	LCA Type	No of Farmsteads	Km/Sq	Av Den Km/Sq
4	Upland Smallholdings	145	47.15	3.08
23	Enclosed Lowland Heaths	373	167.30	2.23
21	Settled Pastoral Farmlands	332	174.09	1.91
22	Principal Settled Farmlands	793	423.70	1.87
20	Estate Farmlands	1383	888.96	1.56
2	High Enclosed Plateau	137	155.43	0.88

Table 5: The Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) shown against the average density of farmsteads

This understanding is deepened when the farmsteads data is compared to The Shropshire Landscape Typology which brings together the mapping (including HLC) and extensive survey of the county's geology, land cover, landscape context, in terms of landscape development, settlement pattern and the fieldscapes. It has been demonstrated that these are closely linked to the key HLC types of common edge encroachment landscapes, ancient landscapes and 18th and 19th century landscapes.

The Upland Smallholdings LCA Type around the fringes of high moorland has one of the highest densities of farmsteads. This correlates with the Shropshire HLC, and specifically those areas characterised by small irregular fields and squatter enclosures related to mineral wealth. Similarly the Enclosed Lowland Heaths type has a relatively high farmstead density, characterised by ordered patterns of small to medium planned fields of the 18th and 19th centuries, with earlier small irregular fields around the fringe.

Settled Pastoral Farmlands have a medium to high density of farmsteads. Some fields are derived from the informal, piecemeal enclosure of open fields during the late medieval and early modern period, while most derive from a mixture of woodland clearance, together with intakes and encroachment in areas of former common rough pasture. The larger size of farms within the Principal Settled Farmlands is reflected in medium densities of farmsteads, relating to areas of 18th and 19th century rationalisation interspersed with earlier patterns of relatively small, sub-regular fields.

The Estate Farmland underwent extensive rationalisation of pre-existing field patterns resulting in the development of much larger holdings, and lower densities of farmsteads. The High Enclosed Plateau exhibits one of the lowest farmstead densities. Although some common edge encroachments exist on the lower slopes, the higher ground is dominated by large geometric field patterns resulting from planned enclosure during the late 18th and 19th centuries, and is therefore associated with large isolated regular planned farmsteads, surrounded by extensive holdings.