

## **14. PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK HISTORIC FARMSTEADS GUIDANCE (BJT/AEB)**

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is principally to endorse recently completed joint work by Historic England and Locus Consulting, supported by the National Park Authority, to provide a suite of reports and guidance detailing the significance of historic farmsteads in the Peak District.

A further reason for this report is to set out the intended application of these documents by the Authority, including the potential for some of the work to be brought forward as a supplementary planning document and to underpin emerging work on defining the special qualities of the National Park.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Planning Committee:**

- 1. Endorses the suite of documents forming the Peak District Historic Farmsteads Guidance; and**
- 2. Supports the future development of the Peak District Farmstead Assessment Framework as a Supplementary Planning Document; and**
- 3. Supports the use of the guidance in contributing to current work on redefining the National Park's special qualities.**

### **Background**

Traditional farmsteads and buildings make a special and significant contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Historic England have been active in developing historic farmstead assessments across England. Early evidence indicated that there was a high survival of such farmsteads in the Peak District and consequently in 2012 the Authority agreed with Historic England that the Peak District should form the basis of the next in-depth area of work.

Since that time the historic character and survival of over 2500 farmsteads has been recorded across the Peak District. The levels of survival are higher than across most of areas of England that have been mapped to date. Findings have revealed that 87% of the Peak District's recorded farmsteads have heritage potential as traditional farmsteads because they have retained some or all of their historic form. This is one of the highest percentages of survival in England.

The outcome of the work is a suite of documents forming the Peak District Historic Farmsteads Guidance. The guidance aims to inform and achieve the sustainable development of historic farmsteads, including their conservation and enhancement where appropriate. It will also be of relevance to those with an interest in the history and character of the Peak District's landscape, settlements and historic buildings. The completion of our project is timely as Historic England's own revised guidance on farmsteads was launched on 20 October 2017.

All of these resources will become accessible at [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/living-and-working/farmers-land-managers/historic-farmsteads-guidance](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/living-and-working/farmers-land-managers/historic-farmsteads-guidance). Underpinning the guidance documents is a geospatial dataset of the 2500 farmsteads that has been included as a GIS layer in the HBSMR (Historic Buildings, Sites & Monuments Record). The guidance includes:

### **Peak District National Park: Farmsteads Character Statement**

This provides illustrated guidance on the character and significance of the Peak District's traditional farmsteads and buildings. It will be of use to all those involved in the conservation of the Peak District and its historic buildings, as well as those with an interest in its history and special character.

### **Peak District Farmstead Assessment Framework**

This document provides a step-by-step approach to help owners and applicants consider the 'significance' of a farmstead and their buildings by identifying any distinctive features, its setting, and its significance in a local and national context in order to evaluate the potential of these buildings for change. This should be undertaken before submitting an application for planning permission, and should inform any scheme as it develops. This will also help applicants/agents/developers complete a Heritage Statement to accompany a planning application and to justify their proposals against the relevant policies in both the Core Strategy and the emerging Development Management Policies Document.

### **Farmstead & Landscape Statements**

Illustrated statements about the three main National Character Areas are introduced in the Character Statement, each defined according to their landscape character by Natural England. Each statement provides information about the historical development of farms in the landscape, landscape character and the types of farmstead found in each area.

### **Peak District Farmsteads & Landscapes Project Report (Volumes 1 & 2)**

These are a summary of the overall results of mapping the historic character, survival and date of farmsteads across the Peak District National Park.

### **Heritage Database User Guide**

This User Guide helps owners, land managers and developers to make sense of the results of an HBSMR search report, allowing them to understand the character of their farm buildings, and in turn create more viable development schemes and prepare planning applications accordingly. The guide is also useful for enthusiasts and members of the public with an interest in the traditional farm building stock of the National Park who have received HBSMR information.

### **Production of the Peak District Farmstead Assessment Framework Supplementary Planning Document**

From the suite of documents above it is evident that the Farmstead Assessment Framework provides a ready-made product with potential for adoption as a supplementary planning document. In the light of this evidence the opportunity has also been taken to refer to these documents in the emerging Development Management Policies Document. This will provide a clearer policy framework to connect this work when undertaking future planning assessments involving historic farmsteads and their associated buildings.

It will be necessary to make some minor amendments to refer to emerging policies (reference is already made to the adopted Core Strategy) and to initiate a period of consultation as defined by regulations. However this could be viewed as a relatively quick-win as the document is already fit for purpose.

The historic farmsteads documents will also be supported by a Detailed Design Guidance Note on the conversion of redundant buildings to new uses. The relationship between these documents will be considered further over the next few months. The intention is to create a package of guidance aimed at improving our understanding of the significance of heritage assets in the National Park. These documents will be brought forward as Supplementary Planning Documents for consultation during 2018/19.

## **Proposals**

1. To formally endorse the suite of documents as the basis of future management of historic farmsteads across the National Park;
2. To utilise the weight of evidence regarding survival of historic farmsteads as an underpinning element of the work to redefine aspects of the National Park's special qualities;
3. To utilise the basis of the Peak District Farmstead Assessment Framework to bring forward a Supplementary Planning Document for consultation during 2018/19.

## **Human Rights**

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

## **Sustainability**

The guidance aims to inform and achieve the sustainable development of historic farmsteads, which in turn plays a direct role in the sustainable development and future of the National Park.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)