



Directorate of Community Services
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Historic Environment Action Plan

Rural Settlement Type Report

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HEAP for Isle of Wight Rural Settlement and Rural Buildings December 2008

Introduction

This HEAP document assesses the character, conservation and management needs of Isle of Wight rural settlements and rural buildings under a series of headings as suggested in the English Heritage publication 'Using Historic Landscape Characterisation' (2004). These headings have been modified to take account of a more recent English Heritage publication 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (2008).

Section 1 of this document considers the historic character, evolution and time-depth of rural settlements. Section 2 assesses the heritage significance of the resource. Section 3 identifies heritage values, based on the information in the preceding sections. Section 4 addresses the conservation and management of the resource.

Section 4 of this document will be of the greatest practical value for people and organisations involved in the daily management and conservation of the Island's rural settlements; for instance planners, property owners, developers and conservation organisations. However, the identified issues and recommendations in this final section flow from the characterisation and analysis of the previous sections, the study of which should give a clear understanding of rural landscape character on the Isle of Wight.

1. Understanding Historic Character, Evolution and Time-Depth

Character of English Rural Settlement

- English rural settlement has been characterised by Roberts and Wrathmell (2000; 2002) who define three settlement provinces, these being the 'Central Province', the 'Northern and Western Province' and the 'South-Eastern Province'.
- The 'Northern and Western Province' and the 'South-Eastern Province' are distinguished by generally high levels of *dispersed settlement* relative to the 'Central Province' and by levels of *nucleated settlement* that are less dense than in the 'Central Province'.
- The two outer provinces are also distinguished by early *piecemeal* enclosure patterns and have been described as areas of *ancient countryside* (Rackham 1986, Chapter 1) or *evolved landscapes* (Wade-Martins 2004).
 - In contrast, within the 'Central Province' many arable *open fields* continued to be cultivated in common as unenclosed strips until enclosed by acts of parliament in the 18th and 19th centuries. The 'Central Province' has been described as a *planned countryside* or *planned landscape*.
- There appears to be a relationship between farming systems and settlement patterns.
 - It is thought that the nucleated villages of the 'Central Province' may have been deliberately laid out or reorganised in the 9th and 10th centuries at the same time as the common open fields were laid out or re-planned (Williamson 2003, 18) .
 - In contrast, the more dispersed settlement pattern of the outer provinces appears to be linked to open fields that were less regular and occupied a smaller proportion of the total farmland. These open fields were generally enclosed earlier than those in the 'Central Province'.

Regional Rural Settlement Character

- The Isle of Wight falls within Roberts' and Wrathmell's 'South-Eastern Province' and 'East Wessex Sub-Province'.
- Within most of the 'East Wessex 'Sub-Province' there are low densities of dispersion except along the mainland coast of Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight.

Morphology of Rural Settlements

- The form or *morphology* of village plans in England has been studied by Roberts (1982). He distinguishes two basic *plan types* – plans based on *rows* and plans based on *agglomerations*. Other factors include the degree of *regularity*, the presence or absence of *greens* and the existence of *composite* or *polyfocal* plans.
- Roberts' national study of village plans was based on the form of settlements as shown on 19th century Ordnance Survey Maps.
- The analysis of Isle of Wight rural settlement morphology below is based on the form of settlements as shown on the unpublished Ordnance Survey Drawings at six inch scale in the British Library. These were prepared from a field survey carried out in 1791-1793.
 - 19th and 20th century growth greatly modified the form of some settlements and is discussed under principal historical processes.
- The analysis below also draws on a published two part study of Isle of Wight village morphology (Margham 1982; Margham 1983).

Location, Morphology and Character of Isle of Wight Rural Settlements

- The Isle of Wight has a mixture of small nucleated villages, hamlets and dispersed settlements.
- The form of rural settlements is influenced by topography as well as by origins and function.
 - Settlements occupying *combes* at the edge of downland are generally linear in form (e.g. Whitwell, Chillerton, Gatcombe).
 - Settlements on relatively flat ground with rising ground behind usually take the form of *agglomerations* or *clusters* (e.g. Niton, Godshell, Brighstone).
- Springline settlement is particularly noticeable at the interface between the *West Wight Downland Edge and Sandstone Ridge* and the *South-West Wight Coastal Zone* HEAP Areas. Here there is a string of settlements at the base of the sandstone ridge including Hulverstone, Mottistone, Brighstone and Shorwell.
 - As a general rule *nucleated settlements* are found at the interface between HEAP Areas, often at the base of high ground and are thus able to exploit a variety of landscape resources.
- Distinctive patterns of rural settlement can be distinguished in the different HEAP Areas and have been discussed in the documents for these Areas.
- Margham (1983) studied the 46 Isle of Wight settlements shown on the 1793 OS map as having ten or more buildings.
 - This study found that the most frequently occurring plan type was the irregular two-row street with 10 examples (22%).
 - The different variants of row plans – single, double, regular, irregular, with or without greens – together accounted for 24 settlements (52%), thus constituting the predominant plan type.
- The Island has relatively few of the regular-row settlements that were established in areas of *planned landscapes*, appearing in many cases to have been deliberately planned and laid out rather than having evolved gradually.
 - Carisbrooke may be a deliberately planned settlement of Norman date (Edwards 1999a; Margham 1992a; West Wight Downland HEAP 2008).
 - Brading is a regular two-row settlement that was probably planned as a small market town by the local lord of the manor in the late 12th century.

- St Helens is the only place on the Island which in 1793 comprised a regular two-row settlement around a green with evidence for former regular open fields to the north and south of the green (Margham 1983; Edwards 1999 b; Brading Haven and Bembridge Isle HEAP 2008).
- It has been suggested that a planned regular one-row settlement was created to the north of Freshwater Green during manorial re-organisation after the Norman Conquest (Margham 1992b; Freshwater Isle HEAP 2008). However, if this was the case the settlement was no longer significant by 1793 when only three plots to the north of the green contained a dwelling.
- Newchurch and (historically) Upper Ryde can be classified as *regular-row* settlements.
- Most nucleated rural settlements on the Isle of Wight other than those above display more irregular forms, including *irregular and interrupted rows, agglomerations* and hamlets in a *polyfocal* pattern.
 - Chillerton is an example of an *irregular double row* settlement.
 - Thorley Street and Wellow are examples of *interrupted row* settlements.
 - Niton is an example of a simple *agglomeration* around the church.
 - The historic settlement pattern in *Freshwater Isle* is *polyfocal* with one or more small hamlets within each of the medieval manors.
- Some settlements consist of a number of elements.
 - Brighstone comprises an *agglomeration* around the church with outlying polyfocal elements.
 - Thorley, Arreton and Gatcombe all include a *church/manor house complex* and a *row or street* element.
 - Chale has three elements, a *church/manor house complex*, a *row or street* element and a settlement element around a green.
- Although the Island has only a limited number of *regular* settlements around a green there appear, historically, to have been a number of smaller *irregular* settlements around irregularly-shaped greens.
 - This type of settlement may have originated when landless 'squatters' built dwellings around areas of open grazing land.
 - Historically, there was a concentration of this settlement type in the *South-West Wight Coastal Zone*.
- In addition to small villages and hamlets the Isle of Wight also possesses many isolated farmsteads of medieval origin.
- There are a number of Manor Houses, dating from the late 16th to the 18th Centuries which sit within landscaped parks and gardens, including associated structures, such as the Freemantle Gates at Appuldurcombe.

Built Character of Rural Settlements

- The built character of the Island's rural settlements, including farmsteads, is varied and generally attractive.
- Building plan types for farmhouses and cottages have been discussed by Brinton (1987, 59-98)
- Building materials have been discussed by Brinton (1987, 23-58) and by Lloyd & Pevsner (2006, 7-9).
- The Island has only a few 'grand' country houses (the most important being Appuldurcombe and Osborne) but is notable for its stone-built manor houses, mainly of 17th century date although there are a few examples dating from the 16th century
- Hardly any farmhouses or cottages pre-date the 17th century when stone became the usual building material. Very few timber-framed buildings of earlier date have survived.
- Vernacular architecture is usually in local stone, varying within the individual HEAP Areas according to the geology within these areas.

- Stone from the Upper and Lower Greensand Groups is the most widely used building material in the south of the Island but chalk blocks and sandstones from the Wealden Beds are also used.
 - In the Lower Greensand Groups, it is the Ferruginous Sands and the Carstone that produces suitable building stone. The Lower Greensands outcrop around Brighstone, Mottistone and Shorwell where cottages and farmhouses display distinctive orange-brown stone as well as paler-coloured stone.
 - The Upper Greensand forms the bedrock on the northern edge of the *South Wight Downland* and also outcrops around Gatcombe and Chillerton in the *West Wight Downland Edge and Sandstone Ridge Area*. The stone is greyish green in colour and weathers easily. It is extensively used throughout the Island particularly in the south.
 - In the *South-West Wight Coastal Zone* bands of sandstone with a high iron content occur within the *Wealden Group* deposits. This orange/brown sandstone is utilised as rubble in buildings at Shorwell, Brighstone, Mottistone and Yafford.
 - Chalk is a soft and not very durable building material but is used in the form of chalk blocks in the Brighstone and Mottistone areas and also around Arreton and Havenstreet.
 - Flint occurs as bands in the chalk deposits but is not much used in rural buildings on the Island due to the availability of more suitable materials.
- In the north of the Island the main building stones are the Bembridge Limestones which outcrop from Freshwater to Bembridge. There are many different beds of these limestones and also a number of older limestones in the Headon Hill Formation. Two varieties of this limestone used for building have been recognised by archaeologists, although further research is being carried out in this area:
 - Binstead Stone is a coarse variety, containing whole fossils of shells. It was used widely for domestic and farm buildings in the 17th and 18th centuries as quarried blocks for quoins and plinths, and as rubble for walling.
 - Quarr Stone is finer grained with crushed fossil fragments but was not much used in vernacular post-medieval buildings as the quarries around Binstead were largely exhausted by the beginning of the 13th century.
- Brick buildings in rural areas of the Island generally date from the mid 19th century or later when the development of local brickworks resulted in an abundance of cheap bricks. Brick-built cottages from this period are quite common in the Island's rural settlements and dominant in some areas such as *Freshwater Isle*.
- The Island falls within one of the two main areas of thatch; one being the Norfolk and Suffolk region and the other being the region across the south of England from West Sussex to Devon, including the Isle of Wight.
 - Straw (as opposed to reed) is and was the material most commonly used locally (Brinton 1987, 39-40).
 - Thatch was almost universal on vernacular buildings of 17th century date but by the 18th century had been relegated to use in only the humblest cottages whilst better quality buildings had roofs of plain clay tiles.
 - During the late 18th century and the 19th century the *Picturesque Movement* led to the building of *cottages ornés*, often with thatched roofs. Isle of Wight examples can be seen in Shanklin 'Old Village'.
 - By the mid 19th century Welsh slate replaced thatch in all parts of England including the Isle of Wight
- At the present day the majority of rural buildings on the Island have slate roofs but there are also many examples of thatched cottages and of farmhouses and other buildings with tiled roofs.
 - There are no known examples of roofs clad entirely with stone tiles but stone tiles are used for the lower courses on the clay-tiled roofs of some buildings e.g. Mottistone Manor and Hanover House. The presence of stone tiles (probably shipped from the Purbeck area of Dorset) may indicate roofs that were originally mainly thatched; the stone tiles giving extra protection in the most vulnerable area.

- Although the *historic cores* of most rural settlements contain mainly traditional vernacular buildings, the overall built character of some settlements is now dominated by late 20th century development, mainly comprising brick-built bungalows.

Principal Historical Processes

- There is archaeological evidence for human occupation of the Isle of Wight in the form of artefacts from the *Lower Palaeolithic* onwards and burial sites from the *Neolithic* onwards.
 - However, apart from evidence for one or two huts of *Bronze Age* and late *Iron Age* dates the earliest recorded settlement sites are Roman villas, seven of which are known (Isle of Wight County Council 1992).
 - Roman villas were high status settlements with associated farm estates.
- The origins of many existing rural settlements on the Island appear to pre-date the Norman conquest of AD 1066 and the majority of settlements had come into existence by the end of the Middle Ages.
 - Over 100 Isle of Wight manors were named in Domesday Book (1086).
 - Domesday manors cannot automatically be assumed to equate with settlements but these named manors equate to a large degree with villages, hamlets or farmsteads existing at the present day.
- Settlement density at the time of Domesday Book varied in different parts of the Island.
 - Generally speaking settlement densities were higher to the south of the central chalk ridge (Welldon-Finn 1962).
 - However, Margham (1988) has pointed out that certain areas to the north of the chalk ridge had settlement densities comparable with those to the south of the ridge.
- There is considerable documentary evidence for medieval desertion but not very much archaeological evidence.
 - There is some *morphological* evidence for medieval settlement shrinkage and settlement shift.
 - French raids in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries may have contributed to depopulation on the Island although there was a general population decline in Late Medieval England.
- Newtown started life as a planned medieval town in the 13th century but by the end of the Middle Ages had shrunk to a small hamlet and has remained this size ever since.
- There is little evidence that fishing was the major occupation in more than one or two rural settlements during the medieval and post-medieval periods despite the fact that the Island is surrounded by sea
 - However, fishing did play a part in the subsistence of coastal settlements.
- Some rural settlements appear to have originated at quite a late date.
 - Newbridge, for instance, is not shown on the OS 1793 map.
- A number of medieval rural settlements changed their character as a result of the Island's popularity with wealthy mainlanders from the late 18th century. Binstead and Niton Undercliff are two places where cottages ornés were built in the late 18th century and in the 19th century, strongly influenced by the *Picturesque Movement*.
- Some rural settlements were subsumed within urban developments from the late 18th century onwards e.g. Upper and Lower Ryde and Sandham.
 - During the later 20th century other rural settlements near towns and along main roads became suburban in character e.g. Wootton, Binstead.
- Many rural settlements did not change their size or shape very greatly from the time of the 1793 OS drawings until the later 20th century.
 - However, other settlements expanded considerably in the 19th century and earlier 20th century, often as a result of wealthy incomers settling or possessing summer homes in coastal areas e.g. at Bembridge.
- A few rural settlements originating in the later 19th century are largely unconnected with agriculture e.g. Gurnard, which was developed as a villa estate for wealthy settlers, and Totland, which developed as a small seaside resort.

- During the 19th century some minor settlements declined or disappeared as large landowners rationalised their estates. Currie (1999) has documented this process on the Mottistone estate.
- Estate cottages were built on the Island in the 19th century e.g. Mottistone Estate, Osborne Estate, Shorwell area, Bowcombe area).
- In 1894-6 Whitecroft Hospital was built as the County Lunatic Asylum in the countryside to the south of Newport.
- From the 1960s an in-migration of people retiring to the Island led to the building of houses (mainly bungalows) around the *historic settlement* cores of many villages and hamlets.
 - Some of these modern buildings are distributed amongst the older houses but others are grouped into estates, often considerably altering the historic form and character of settlements.

Time-Depth

- Visible remains of Roman villas at Newport and Brading.
- *Plan types* of many rural settlements may have originated in medieval times.
 - However, except in the case of settlements planned and founded at a known date, such as Newtown, it is not possible to date these plan types with confidence.
 - It must also be borne in mind that settlement is a dynamic process and therefore, in many cases, plan types undoubtedly changed over time.
- Where a settlement possesses a parish church this will nearly always be the oldest building within the settlement.
 - Most parish churches are of medieval origin and retain much medieval work, even if greatly modified at a later date.
- The oldest secular buildings in most rural settlements are manor houses.
- A few manor houses include medieval work.
 - Part of the medieval manor house survives at Swainston, attached to the 18th century mansion.
 - Chale Manor House has surviving medieval work.
 - The remains of a small medieval manor house survive at Woolverton (St Lawrence).
- The manor houses at Mottistone, Wolverton (Shorwell) and Westcourt are of 16th century origin but most Island manor houses are of 17th century date with a few early 18th century examples.
- The majority of vernacular farmhouses and cottages date from the 17th and 18th centuries.
- Vernacular farm buildings are mainly of 18th and 19th century date.
- The *Picturesque* style is evident in some rural settlements. This is associated with the cottages ornés built by wealthy incomers in the late 18th century and the 19th century.
- A range of buildings within rural settlements date from the 19th century and early 20th century e.g. estate cottages, non-conformist chapels and village halls.
- Some rural settlements expanded greatly in the later 20th century and in these settlements brick-built bungalows and houses of this period can be seen, often grouped into housing estates.

2. Assessing the Resource

Existing Research and Documentation

- The *IW Historic Environment Record* is the basic resource for archaeology, built environment and historic landscape character (includes *HLC* layer).
- The Isle of Wight HLC Final Report considers rural settlements within the various HLC Areas, now known as HEAP Areas (Basford 2008)
- Rural settlement within the 15 HEAP Areas has been further characterised in the HEAP documents for those Areas, which should be used in conjunction with the present document to inform future growth within rural settlements
http://www.iwight.com/living_here/planning/Archaeology/historic.asp
- The Isle of Wight AONB Management Plan (2009) discusses historic settlements in the sections on the historic environment and landscape character types.
- Roman rural settlements and medieval rural settlements are discussed in the resource assessments for these periods prepared for the Solent-Thames Archaeological Research Framework
<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/get/assets/docs/archaeology/RomanWIGHT.pdf>
<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/get/assets/docs/archaeology/Isle%20of%20Wight%20med%20Resource%20Assessment.pdf>
- John Margham's study of Isle of Wight village morphology has been used in this document but only considers settlements with ten or more buildings (Margham 1982; 1983).
- Medieval desertion of rural settlements throughout the country including the Isle of Wight was considered by Beresford and Hurst (1971).
 - This data was reviewed in an undergraduate dissertation which found limited archaeological evidence for desertion (Sly 1988).
- Parish surveys for Freshwater and Thorley discuss settlements within these parishes (Margham 1990; Margham 1992b).
- A study of Carisbrooke discusses its possible planned medieval origins (Margham 1992a).
- A study of the Swainston Manor Survey of 1630 includes information on the buildings of Calbourne and Brighstone and on the dispersed farmsteads within the manor (Jones 1991; Jones 2003).
 - The study also provides information on the contrasting patterns of enclosure and farming within the parishes of Calbourne and Brighstone in the 17th century.
- The 'Extensive Urban Survey of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight' includes studies of Carisbrooke and St Helens, two settlements that are rural in character although, historically, they may have possessed certain urban attributes (Edwards 1999a; Edwards 1999b).
- Surveys for the National Trust consider rural settlement within the Mottistone, Newtown, St Catherine's and Ventnor Down Estates (Currie 1999; Currie 2000; Currie 2001; Currie 2002).
- The built character of rural settlements is discussed in 'Farmhouses and Cottages of the Isle of Wight' (Brinton 1987) and in 'The Buildings of England: Isle of Wight' (Lloyd and Pevsner 2006).
- Character Appraisals have been prepared for Conservation Areas within nine rural settlements (including Brading) and one rural hospital site (Whitcroft).
http://www.iwight.com/living_here/conservation_and_design/Conservation_Areas/
- Twenty-two of the Island's parishes have prepared parish plans, some of which discuss the historic environment of individual villages.
- A PhD thesis is currently being prepared on patterns of medieval and post-medieval rural settlement and land use on the Isle of Wight (Basford forthcoming).
- A PhD thesis is currently being prepared on Isle of Wight medieval settlement desertion (Sly forthcoming).

Gaps in Knowledge affecting Understanding and Management

- Isle of Wight Farmsteads require characterisation to inform future management. The characterisation study should consider the range of farm buildings within each farmstead, the date and fabric of buildings, the plan form of each farmstead, and variations between the different HEAP Areas.
- The built environment of rural settlements also needs to be characterised in relation to the various HEAP Areas to inform future management.
- Some small settlements of 19th century origin are related to tourism or were built to provide homes for wealthy mainlanders. These settlements require further study to understand their character, assess their heritage value and determine whether they are worthy of Conservation Area Status.
- Many Conservation Areas within rural settlements do not yet have character appraisals.

Academic Research Potential

- Understanding of medieval rural depopulation and desertion is still incomplete.
- The relationship between Isle of Wight rural settlements and their surrounding agricultural land has not been studied except on the Swainston estate (Jones).
- The administrative and tenorial framework within which Isle of Wight medieval rural settlements functioned requires study.
 - Most parishes were divided into several *tithings*. These tithings equated with the units called *townships* in other parts of England and formed the smallest unit of civil administration.
 - Each tithing seems to have contained several agricultural holdings, which in some cases would have held by tenure from the local manor estate.
 - The relationship between parishes, tithings, manors and individual rural settlements has not been fully explored.
- The size of farm holdings has not been discussed in any published documents.
- The distribution and morphology of Isle of Wight rural settlements with fewer than 10 buildings has not been studied.
 - Small irregular green-edge settlements need to be identified on historic maps and analysed to ascertain both the distribution of these settlements within the different HEAP Areas and the relationship between these minor settlements and the main settlement within each parish.
 - The distribution of isolated farmsteads needs to be studied in relation to HEAP Areas.
- The settlement patterns within individual HEAP Areas require further study. For instance the *polyfocal* settlement pattern within *Freshwater Isle* does not occur in the same form within other HEAP Areas. Further study may identify special factors which led to the development of this pattern within *Freshwater Isle*.
- The morphology of individual rural settlements requires further study. For instance, St Helens is the only surviving example of a *regular row* settlement with a green. Further investigation may suggest why this settlement form occurs at St Helens.

The relationship between the settlement pattern and enclosure pattern around Bembridge requires explanation.

 - The 1793 OS drawing shows a hamlet of *row form* named 'Bembridge Street' along the present High Street.
 - To the south of Bembridge Street a regular grid of roads and fields is shown with individual farmsteads at road junctions.
 - The HEAP document for *Brading Haven and Bembridge Isle* has suggested that this grid of roads and fields may follow the layout of an ancient *coaxial field system*.

Rarity and Typicality

- Newtown retains its original planned form as a medieval borough, including street pattern and house plots), in a state that is, at a national level, unusually complete.
- The Island's settlement pattern is not typical of the 'East Wessex Sub-Province' in which it is placed by Roberts and Wrathmell.
- The *polyfocal* settlement pattern within *Freshwater Isle* is atypical of the Island as a whole.
- The *regular row* settlement plan around a green at St Helens does not occur elsewhere on the Island.
- Archaeological evidence exists for several medieval *moats* on the sites of manor houses but these do not appear to have been commonplace on the Isle of Wight as they were in some parts of England.
- Timber-framed farmhouses and cottages are extremely rare on the Island.

3. Identifying Heritage Values

Archaeological Significance (Evidential Value)

- Roman villas provide evidence for high-status *Romano-British* settlement on the Island
 - The villas at Newport and Brading have been uncovered and conserved.
 - The villas at Rock, Clatterford, Carisbrooke and Combley have been excavated or partially excavated (not all to modern standards) and the remains are now buried.
- The Island's settlement pattern is not typical of the 'East Wessex sub-Province' in which it is placed by Roberts and Wrathmell.
 - This atypicality gives the Island settlement pattern an increased significance and provides an opportunity to assess whether there is an 'island factor' involved.
- The significance of individual surviving rural settlements, either in relation to other such settlements on the Isle of Wight or in relation to mainland rural settlement, is more difficult to assess.
 - All rural settlements offer the potential to recover archaeological evidence relating to the occupation of these settlements but opportunities to recover evidence are limited because the *historic settlement cores* are usually occupied by buildings (often of historic value) that are still lived in.
- The *plan types* of rural settlements provide evidence for their origins and development.
- The pattern of rural settlement provides evidence for the agricultural and social organisation of rural society in the past.
- The buildings within nearly all rural settlements provide a valuable source of evidence for local vernacular architecture.
- Physical remains of deserted medieval settlements have considerable evidential value because there is limited archaeological evidence relating to medieval desertion on the Isle of Wight and these sites offer the opportunity for archaeological study of the problem of medieval depopulation on the Isle of Wight.
 - Newtown retains the layout, *burgage plots* and street pattern of the medieval planned borough, although now only a small hamlet. The evidential value of this settlement is increased by the survival of *ridge and furrow*, indicating the area of the medieval open-field land.
 - East Ashley, Stenbury Manor, Wolverton (Centurion's Copse), Nettlecombe and West Nunwell are of particular significance

Illustrative, Associational and Symbolic Values (Historical Value)

- Rural settlements provide visual evidence of their origins and development during medieval and post-medieval times in their *plan type*, in the sites and fabric of their churches and in their vernacular architecture.
 - Most of the Island's rural settlements retain a range of traditional buildings such as churches and chapels, manor houses, farmsteads, cottages and mills although in some cases buildings are no longer used for their original functions.
- *Cottages ornés* and *marine villas* in rural areas provide visual evidence of the Island's importance in the *Picturesque Movement*.
- Changing social conditions and beliefs in the 19th century and early 20th century are illustrated by buildings such as non-conformist chapels, village schools, literary institutes and village halls.
- The symbolism of nucleated rural settlements with their clustered vernacular buildings around the church and pub has a great appeal for many people.
- Rural settlements make a strong contribution to the Island's overall historic landscape character.

Aesthetic Values

- The traditional vernacular architecture of the Island's rural settlements has a strong aesthetic appeal for many residents and visitors.
 - The landscape setting of rural settlements plays a large part in their aesthetic appeal.
- The Island's rural settlements provided subject matter for many 19th century artists who often romanticised the reality of Victorian cottage life.
 - A typical artist working in this genre was Helen Allingham (1848-1926). McInnes (1993) provides a list of artists working on the Isle of Wight in the late 18th century and the 19th century.

Amenity and Educational Values

- Rural settlements have a considerable amenity value as tourist attractions.
 - At Godshill, tourism has come to dominate the village, arguably at the expense of the tranquil quality of life which is one of the main attractions of rural settlements.
 - In most places, however, tourism plays a less dominant but welcome role.
 - Amenities include local pubs, cafés, restaurants, shops, churches and other historic buildings.
- Schoolchildren and students, both from Island schools and from the mainland, sometimes study local villages from an architectural or social history perspective but there is scope for much more use of rural settlements as an educational resource.
 - One good example of such work is the 'Discovery Project' piloted by the Isle of Wight AONB Partnership at Brighstone Primary School.
- Several Island villages and parish councils have prepared trails which guide visitors and provide historical and architectural information.

Communal Values

- The Island's rural settlements have a special value for people whose families lived there in the past, providing a strong physical link with family history.
 - These rural settlements also have meaning to a much larger group of Islanders who were not born locally but have come to value the physical fabric and community life of the Island's rural settlements and to enjoy living in them.

4. Conservation and Management of the Resource

Designations

- Approximately half of the Isle of Wight is designated as an AONB and this designation places a strong emphasis on historic character and environment.
- *Conservation Areas* have been designated for 18 rural settlement sites (see below under Management Issues).
- The Island's rural settlements contain many *Listed Buildings*.
- 13 *Scheduled Monuments* are examples of rural settlement sites.
 - Roman villas at Brading, Downend (Combley), Newport (Shide), Carisbrooke, Clatterford and Rock.
 - Medieval moat at Wolverton Manor
 - Medieval moat and settlement remains at Stenbury Manor.
 - Medieval settlement remains at Newtown
 - Medieval settlement earthworks at East Ashley
 - Remains of medieval Quarr Abbey
 - Site of medieval *grange* at Haseley Manor.
 - Appuldurcombe House (early 18th century mansion house).

Planning Policies and Guidance relating to the Countryside, Rural Settlements and Rural Buildings

- Planning Policy Statement 7: 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' (2004) sets out guidance for the re-use or replacement of buildings in the countryside.
- PPS 7 supports the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives.
 - It is stated that re-use for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations, and for some types of building.
- PPS 7 states that local policy criteria for permitting the conversion and re-use of buildings in the countryside should (amongst other criteria) take account of:
 - the potential impact on the countryside, landscapes and wildlife;
 - the need to preserve buildings of historic or architectural importance or interest, or which otherwise contribute to local character.
- English Heritage has also issued guidance in the publication 'The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: a guide to good practice' (2004).
- Locally, the Isle of Wight Council has published Planning Policy Guidance on Conversion of Rural Buildings (2004)
http://www.iwight.com/living_here/planning/images/Rural_Buildings.pdf
- Where a particular building or place has been identified as a *heritage asset* the Isle of Wight Council now requires diversification, conversion or rebuilding schemes to produce a comprehensive *heritage statement* covering building character and the impact of the scheme on the historic landscape.
http://www.iwight.com/living_here/conservation_and_design/Heritage_Statements/
 - Heritage assets include listed buildings (national or local), buildings and structures identified in the Historic Environment Record, conservation areas, archaeological remains, as well as registered parks and gardens (national and local), sites of historic battlefields and historic wreck sites.
 - The purpose of a Heritage Statement is to identify the important characteristics/significance of the existing heritage asset, to explain how the proposals would affect these, and to justify why this is necessary or desirable.

- A Heritage Statement must include a statement of significance of the heritage asset, details of the proposal and analysis of the impact of the proposal on its significance (including a statement of need & statement of impact).
- The 'Isle of Wight 'Countryside Design Summary' (1998) is available on the Council website. http://www.iwight.com/living_here/planning/images/CDS.pdf
 - It may be appropriate to update this guide as further characterisation studies of the rural built environment are carried out.
- The Isle of Wight Council's Conservation and Design Team is currently working with local groups and parish councils to produce a Local List of Buildings, Structures, Parks and Gardens of Architectural or Historic Interest. http://www.iwight.com/living_here/conservation_and_design/Local_List/
- Policies on the historic environment form a key part of the AONB Management Plan (2004).

Vulnerability

- Farm buildings and structures not adaptable to modern agricultural needs are vulnerable to decay or to conversions that may not respect historic character.
 - Relatively insubstantial structures such as granaries and shepherd's huts are particularly vulnerable to decay.
- Unlisted post-medieval buildings of heritage value are vulnerable to demolition or conversion resulting in loss of character e.g. non-conformist chapels.

Condition

- Farmhouses and cottages are generally maintained in good condition.
- Some farm buildings are in poor condition or have been subjected to conversion that has resulted in a loss of character.
- Where buildings are *listed* there are restrictions on alterations to roofs and to external doors and windows
 - These restrictions have helped to conserve the external character of historic buildings although internal room plans may be altered.
- Unlisted buildings are more likely to have been altered externally although *Conservation Area* status may impose some restrictions.

Forces for Change

- Housing development in rural settlements:
 - Expansion in the later 20th century has already substantially modified the historic form of many rural settlements.
 - The Island Plan Core Submission Strategy (December 2008) sets out a settlement hierarchy. This identifies certain rural settlements with the potential for limited growth that is sustainable in terms of local infrastructure and facilities
- Road schemes may affect the historic routes of roads in rural settlements.
- Agricultural Change:
 - In some cases farm houses have become dissociated from the historic farm holding, with farm houses sold or leased and farm buildings converted for residential use, tourist use or light industry.
- Adaptation to climate change may mean that 'traditional' building forms are no longer fit for purpose as housing or as shelters for livestock and storage.
- Increased seasonal rainfall may contribute to erosion of buildings.
- Rising sea and river levels may threaten low-lying land within or adjacent to certain historic settlements e.g. Yarmouth and Newtown. Risks to potential development sites and likely long-term effects of climate change are analysed in the Isle of Wight Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Entec UK Ltd 2007).

Management Issues affecting Rural Settlements and Buildings

- There are three major issues relating to rural settlements and buildings:
 - Retention of historic *plan types* within rural settlements.
 - Retention of the character and fabric of vernacular buildings
 - Ensuring that future development within historic settlements is both sustainable and enhances character.
- In many cases Conservation Area designations with full character appraisals will be the best way to address these issues.
- Many of the Island's historic rural settlements with medieval parish churches do not have Conservation Areas i.e. Binstead, Brook, Chale, Gatcombe, Kingston, Mottistone, Newchurch, Niton, Northwood, St Lawrence, Thorley, Whitwell, Wootton and Yaverland.
 - Thirteen historic rural settlements with medieval parish churches **do** have Conservation Areas (Arreton, Bonchurch, Brading, Brighstone, Calbourne, Carisbrooke, Godshell, Shorwell, Shalfleet, Shanklin, St Helens, Whippingham Church and Yarmouth) but character appraisals and character maps have been prepared and adopted only for Bonchurch, Brading, St Helens and Whippingham Church.
 - Within Freshwater Isle there are Conservation Areas for The Briary, Norton Green and Pound Green but no character appraisals or maps that place these polyfocal settlement elements within the context of the overall settlement pattern in Freshwater Isle, in particular the areas of settlement around the parish church and around Freshwater Green.
 - Newtown has a Conservation Area but no character appraisal, although such an appraisal may not be a top priority for this well-researched settlement.
 - The 19th century settlement of Seaview has a Conservation Area supported by a character appraisal and map, as does Whitecroft, a former mental asylum of late 19th century date.
- Existing Conservation Areas on the Island favour historic settlements that are visually attractive but ideally Conservation Areas should include a range of rural settlements that have evidential value or are illustrative of different historical processes.
- Conservation Areas may not be the most appropriate way in which to ensure the conservation of small hamlets and dispersed farmsteads.
 - These smaller settlements must be recognised as important elements of the Island's rural settlement pattern and ways must be found to ensure their effective conservation.
- Some unlisted post-medieval buildings of heritage value have been lost e.g. non-conformist chapels.
- *Heritage statements* are potentially a very valuable tool to ensure that the character of rural settlements and buildings is conserved and to prevent unnecessary demolition of unlisted buildings of local heritage value.
 - However, developers need to be aware of the need for heritage statements and planners must ensure that these statements are of an adequate quality and detail.

Management Issues relating specifically to Farmsteads and Rural Dwellings

- The Island now has relatively few traditional farm buildings in good condition that are either in an unaltered state or converted in a manner which respects their historic character.
 - This loss has been sustained mainly over the last twenty years. Photographs in the *HER* show that few buildings had been converted by 1986 when a comprehensive survey of all Island buildings predating c.1840 was completed (Brinton 1987, 9-10).
- The contribution made by traditional farmsteads to the Island's historic character is being eroded in various ways:
 - Farmhouses are increasingly being sold or leased separately from the farm holding.
 - Some redundant farm buildings are becoming ruinous and irreparable.
 - Other farm buildings have been subject to inappropriate conversion for residential, commercial or tourism uses.

- Funding may be available to assist with the preservation of derelict farm buildings under the Landscape Enhancement Grant Scheme (LEGS) of the West Wight Landscape Partnership.
- Government policy in recent years has been to encourage farm diversification including the re-use of redundant farm buildings.
 - In some cases on the Island this has led to unsuitable conversions and to unplanned clutters of new and older buildings, sometimes with intrusive signs advertising business premises or inappropriate planting of conifers.
- The conversion of farm buildings raises two main issues.
 - Ensuring that the proposed new use is sustainable and does not have an adverse impact on the countryside, particularly within the AONB.
 - Ensuring that the design of the proposed conversion does not compromise the historic character of the building.
- A separate management issue relates to the replacement of rural dwellings.
 - Some isolated rural dwellings have been rebuilt with a much larger footprint than the previous building or have employed inappropriate building materials, thus creating a much larger impact on the landscape.

Management Issues relating to the Maintenance and Restoration of Historic Buildings within Rural Settlements

- Non-availability of local stone (no Isle of Wight quarries are now producing building stone).
- An acute shortage of skilled labour within the traditional crafts sector on the Island.
 - http://www.iwight.com/living_here/conservation_and_design/THI_Training/
 - The Ryde Townscape Heritage Initiative scheme runs 1 day training courses and other initiatives to improve building conservation skills on the Island.
 - The Landscape Strategy of the West Wight Landscape Partnership (2007, 26) identifies a need to 'ensure that the skills are available for conservation projects by promoting training in traditional techniques'. Now that the Landscape Strategy has obtained HLF funding there may be opportunities to bid for grant-aid for training events.

Management Issues affecting Archaeological Sites associated with past Rural Settlement

- Significant archaeological sites offering potential for research into medieval settlement desertion are unscheduled. These sites are Wolverton (Centurion's Copse) Nettlecombe and West Nunwell.

Proposed Management Actions

The following actions should be advocated and facilitated by the HEAP Steering Committee and, where possible, implemented by the committee or its member organisations:

- Monitoring of future documents forming part of the Island Plan to ensure development proposals under the *settlement hierarchy* set out in the Core Strategy will sustain the historic landscape character of rural settlements.
- Advocating detailed *character appraisals*, including a consideration of the form and pattern of historic settlement, as a precondition of development within rural settlements identified in the Island Plan as suitable for limited development.
- Supporting Conservation and Design Team in carrying out character appraisals for existing Conservation Areas and in designating new Conservation Areas as appropriate.
- Encouraging planning officers to make full use of planning policy statements and good practice guides when conversions or new buildings within rural settlements are considered.

- Ensuring that all sections of the Island community, including developers, are aware of the need to prepare *heritage statements* for planning applications that affect *heritage assets*.
- Monitoring *heritage statements* submitted in support of planning applications to ensure that these are of adequate quality and detail.
- Encouraging Isle of Wight Council to recognise the local heritage value of certain rural buildings by local listing (e.g. non-conformist chapels) and to find sustainable new uses for such buildings when they become redundant.
- Encouraging the use of design guides that emphasise both historic form and building character to inform new development.
- Encouraging English Heritage to review scheduling of medieval settlement earthworks and buried remains.
- Preparation of a project design to carry out an inventory, condition survey and characterisation of Island farmsteads that would provide accurate information to inform future conservation.
 - This should include the investigation of funding sources, including the possibility of grant-aid from the West Wight Landscape Partnership for a pilot study in the West Wight.
- Characterisation of the built environment of rural settlements in relation to HEAP Areas.

The *Isle of Wight HEAP Vision, Aims, Objectives and Actions* document sets out generic objectives and proposed actions for the conservation and management of the historic environment. Those that are particularly relevant to the *Rural Settlements* HEAP Type are cited below. Each objective has more specific and closely targeted actions nested within it.

- A14 Complete Rural Settlement HEAP (i.e. present document)
- A16 Completion of character appraisals for all existing and potential Conservation Areas, using appropriate HLC and HEAP data.
- A29 Complete Climate Change HEAP.
- A35 Promote conservation of historic farm buildings, and ensure that permitted conversions retain fabric and character of buildings
- A45 Advocate maintenance of historic character of rural roads.
- A48 Promote the conservation of historic buildings and their settings where these contribute significantly to the character of HEAP Areas.
- A55 Encourage inclusion of HEAP information in community based strategies/initiatives (e.g. community archaeology projects, Parish Plans, Village Design Statements, interpretation projects and trails)
- L2 Characterisation study of Isle of Wight farmsteads in relation to HEAP Areas.
- L3 Study of Island seaside resorts in terms of historic processes and historic character.
- L4 Academic study of rural settlement patterns, including settlement morphology, significance of dispersed settlement and evidence of medieval desertion.