



Historic England

Farmstead and Landscape Statement

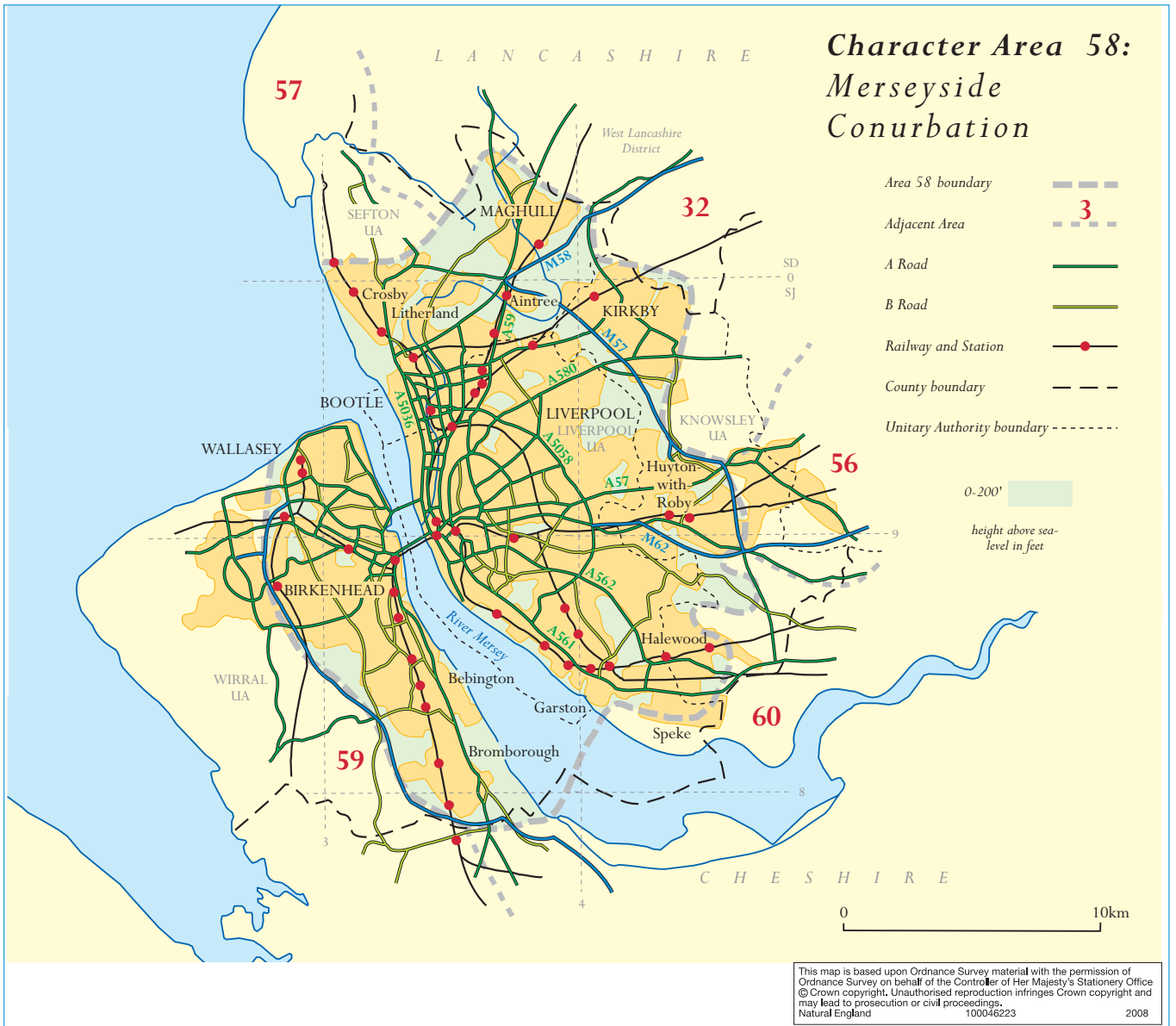
Merseyside Conurbation

NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA 58



Introduction

The Farmstead and Landscape Statements will help you to identify the historic character of traditional farmsteads and their buildings in all parts of England, and how they relate to their surrounding landscapes. They are now available for all of England's National Character Areas (NCAs), and should be read in conjunction with the NCA profiles which have been produced by Natural England using a wide range of environmental information (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>). Each Farmstead and Landscape Statement is supported by Historic England's advice on farm buildings (<https://historicengland.org.uk/farmbuildings>), which provides links to the *National Farmsteads Character Statement*, national guidance on **Farm Building Types** and a fully-sourced summary in the *Historic Farmsteads: Preliminary Character Statements*. It also forms part of additional research on historic landscapes, including the mapping of farmsteads in some parts of England (see <https://historicengland.org.uk/characterisation>).



This map shows the Merseyside Conurbation with the numbers of the neighbouring National Character Areas around it.

See the National Farmsteads Character Statement for a short introduction to the headings below, including maps and tables.

Historic character

Urban development, comprising Birkenhead to the south and Liverpool to the north of the Mersey, dominates this area, resulting from the following significant phases of expansion:

- after the construction of the Old Dock in 1715 and the opening of the Leeds to Liverpool Canal in 1773, and the growth of the transatlantic trade and of the market for cotton and other industrial products from either side of the Pennines
- after the development of steam navigation and of the railway network from the 1820s, which facilitated the development of villa housing and further urban development around Liverpool and the new docks at Birkenhead and Wallasey
- the development of large-scale development in the inter-war period after the introduction of slum clearance programmes and of rail and road tunnels under the Mersey.
- There was a low proportion, by national standards, of pre-1750 farmhouses and working buildings.
- There were some linear farmsteads where the houses, cattle housing and storage for hay were attached in-line in a single range, these being associated with the smaller farms.
- Courtyard-plan farmsteads – usually with buildings to one or two sides of a cattle yard – with combination barns (for storing and processing corn and housing cattle and horses with their fodder), and cattle housing illustrate the requirements of mixed farming with an increased emphasis on cattle, particularly for dairying. Cattle housing – and the development of dairy farms around the Conurbation from the 1850s – took the place of the urban cow houses that had become a feature of Liverpool in particular. Horticulture developed around the edges of this area.
- Building in timber-frame up to the early 18th century, of stone for some of the most prestigious buildings of this early period, and of brick and Welsh slate from the later 18th century.

Prior to urban development, the character of the Conurbation's rural areas and building stock was shared by that of its neighbouring areas – the Lancashire and Amounderness Plain (NCA 32), Lancashire Coal Measures (NCA 56), Sefton Coast (NCA 57), Mersey Valley (NCA 60) and Wirral (NCA 59). In summary:

Significance

- Traditional farmsteads are very rare in this area. Surviving buildings mostly comprise barns and some of the more prestigious 18th-century and earlier buildings associated with gentry and aristocratic houses (for example at Speke Hall).



Historic England

This guidance has been prepared by
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