

# Rothbury

## Northumberland Extensive Urban Survey



The Northumberland Extensive Urban Survey Project was carried out between 1995 and 2008 by Northumberland County Council with the support of English Heritage.

© Northumberland County Council and English Heritage

2009

Produced by Rhona Finlayson and Caroline Hardie 1995-7  
Revised by Alan Williams 2007-8  
Strategic Summary by Karen Derham 2008  
Planning policies revised 2010

All the mapping contained in this report is based upon the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved 100049048 (2009)

All historic mapping contained in this report is reproduced courtesy of the Northumberland Collections Service unless otherwise stated.

Copies of this report and further information can be obtained from:

Northumberland Conservation  
Development & Delivery  
Planning Economy & Housing  
Northumberland County Council  
County Hall  
Morpeth  
NE61 2EF

Tel: 01670 620305

Email: [archaeology@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology@northumberland.gov.uk)

Website: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/archaeology>

## CONTENTS

### PART ONE: THE STORY OF ROTHBURY

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Project Background
- 1.2 Location, Geology and Topography
- 1.3 Brief History
- 1.4 Documentary and Secondary Sources
- 1.5 Cartographic Sources
- 1.6 Archaeological Sources
- 1.7 Protected Sites

#### **2 PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN**

- 2.1 Prehistoric Period
- 2.2 Roman Period

#### **3 EARLY MEDIEVAL**

- 3.1 Place name evidence
- 3.2 Rothbury Cross
- 3.3 Church
- 3.4 Early medieval settlement

#### **4 MEDIEVAL**

- 4.1 The Manor and Forest of Rothbury
- 4.2 Village layout
- 4.3 Burgage plots
- 4.4 Castle
- 4.5 Mill
- 4.6 Bakehouse
- 4.7 Church of All Saints
- 4.8 Market
- 4.9 Bridge and ford
- 4.10 Hurley Knowes

#### **5 POST-MEDIEVAL**

- 5.1 Village form
- 5.2 Castle/manor house
- 5.3 Rothbury Bridge
- 5.4 Church of All Saints
- 5.5 Market
- 5.6 Other buildings
- 5.7 Industry

#### **6 NINETEENTH CENTURY**

- 6.1 The 19<sup>th</sup> century village
- 6.2 Railway
- 6.3 Rothbury Cross
- 6.4 Livestock market
- 6.5 Places of worship
- 6.6 Other buildings
- 6.7 Industry

## **PART TWO: ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL OF ROTHBURY**

### **7 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

- 7.1 Prehistoric and Roman Potential
- 7.2 Early Medieval Potential
- 7.3 Medieval Potential
- 7.4 Post-Medieval and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Potential

## **PART THREE: ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE PLANNING PROCESS**

### **8 THE EXISTING FRAMEWORK**

- 8.1 Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5)
- 8.2 Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- 8.3 Listed Buildings
- 8.4 Conservation Areas
- 8.5 Archaeological Sites without Statutory Designation
- 8.6 Development Plan Policies
- 8.7 Pre-Application Discussion
- 8.8 Archaeological Planning Conditions
- 8.9 Unexpected Discoveries

### **9 SOURCES**

Bibliography  
Maps and Plans  
Documentary Sources

### **APPENDIX 1: LISTED BUILDINGS**

### **APPENDIX 2: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVENTS**

### **APPENDIX 3: MAPS**

### **APPENDIX 4: STRATEGIC SUMMARY**

### **LIST OF FIGURES**

- Figure 1: Location
- Figure 2: Study Area
- Figure 3: Early medieval potential
- Figure 4: Medieval potential
- Figure 5: Post-medieval and 19<sup>th</sup> century potential
- Figure 6: Armstrong's map 1769 (NRO ZBK sheet 5)
- Figure 7: Bell's Plan of Rothbury c1800 (NRO ZAN BELL 38.9b)
- Figure 8: Tithe Award 30 Dec 1848 (NRO DT 400 M).
- Figure 9: First Edition Ordnance Survey map 1860, Sheets 44.7, 44.8, 44.11 and 44.12
- Figure 10: Second Edition Ordnance Survey map 1897, Sheets 44.7, 44.8, 44.11 and 44.12
- Figure 11: Third Edition Ordnance Survey map 1920, Sheet 41.16
- Figure 12: Rothbury areas of archaeological sensitivity

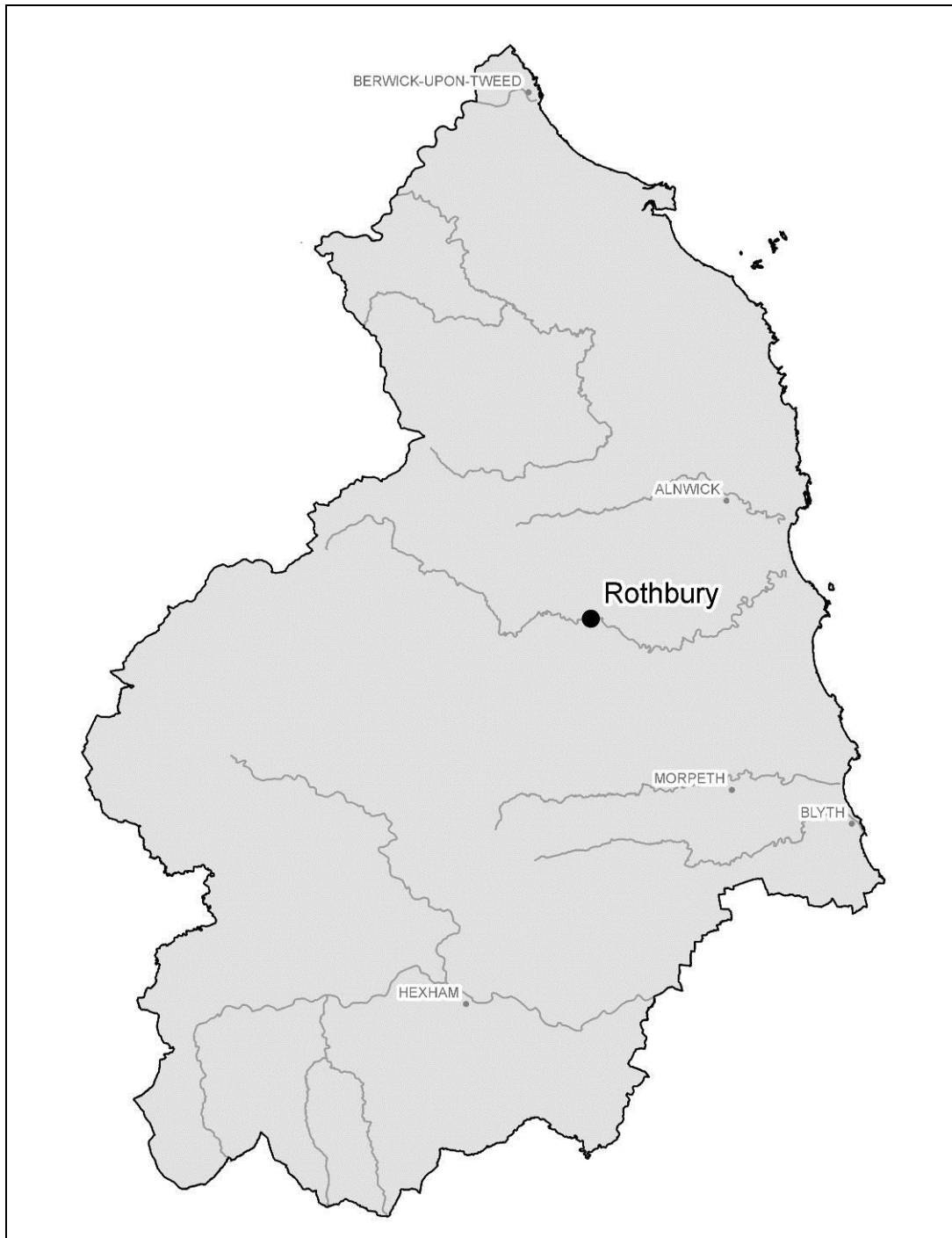


Figure 1: Location

## PART ONE: THE STORY OF ROTHBURY

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project Background

Towns and villages have been the focus of settlement in this country for many hundreds of years. Beneath our places of work, beneath our houses, gardens, streets and shops – beneath our feet - lie archaeological remains which can tell us how these settlements were once arranged and how people went about their lives. Awareness and appreciation of this resource can enhance our sense of place and identity and help us understand how the past has directly shaped our present and how we may use it to shape our future. To ensure that evidence for our urban past is not needlessly lost during development local and national government have put in place a range of statutory designations and policies to make sure that valuable remains are protected, preserved and understood.

In 1992, English Heritage published a national policy to help planners and developers deal with urban archaeology and any issues that might arise during the planning process (*Managing the Urban Archaeological Resource*). This led to the Extensive Urban Survey programme, where funds were made available to individual planning authorities to prepare material to explain how archaeology fits into the planning process and how issues raised can be best resolved. Rothbury is one of 20 towns in Northumberland to have been reviewed within this programme. The report is divided into three parts:

**Part 1** summarises the development of Rothbury using documentary, cartographic and archaeological sources, and examines the evidence for the survival of archaeological remains in the town.

**Part 2** assesses the archaeological potential of the town of Rothbury and how development could impact on significant archaeological resources which are of both national and local significance.

**Part 3** looks at the national and local planning process with regard to archaeology and is designed to give the developer, planner, and general public, the framework within which development in an historic town will normally proceed.

The present survey (figure 2) encompasses the whole of the modern village, and includes the Rothbury Conservation Area. Material within this report includes information available on the Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER) at the time this report was updated. Information on the HER is constantly being updated and should be used as the primary source for historical and archaeological information.

## 1.2 Location, Geology and Topography

Rothbury is a small market town, approximately ten miles south-west of Alnwick, which lies in a part of the county known as Coquetdale (NU 050010). It lies at the neck of the narrow cultivated valley of the River Coquet. The town occupies the valley bottom on both sides of the river and has expanded up the valley sides in more recent times. A bridge across the Coquet was first documented in 1616 but although an earlier crossing may have existed, and a fording point lies a little upstream from the bridge where a footbridge now crosses the river. The geology at Rothbury comprises two groups of Lower Carboniferous formation, Fell Sandstone and Cementstone. Alluvial sands and gravels are found within the flood plain of the river and the geological resources of the locality have provided an ample supply of building stone. They have not, however, been a source of economic development for the town.

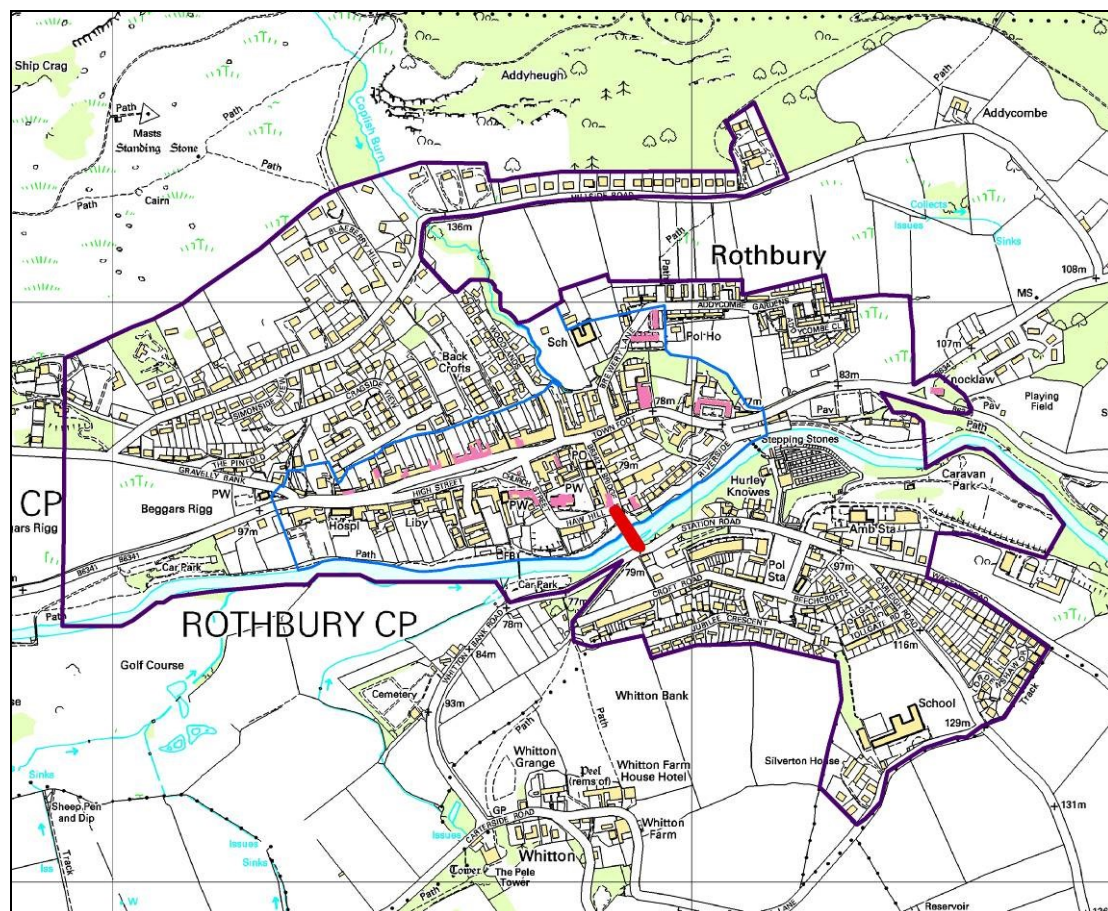


Figure 2: Study area (purple), scheduled monuments (red), listed buildings (pink), Conservation Area (blue line).

## 1.3 Brief History

There is a wealth of evidence of prehistoric settlement on the hillsides and hilltops around Rothbury, but none from the town itself. Place-name evidence suggests that the settlement may have had its origins in the early medieval period as a *burgh*, or fortified settlement. The Rothbury Cross, a ninth century preaching cross, is clear evidence of early Christian worship at Rothbury, as were the two pre-Conquest churches which once stood on the site of the

present day church. At the time of the Norman Conquest the manor and forest of Rothbury became royal possessions, thus converting the town into a royal borough. This remained for 100 years until, in 1201, its burgesses were granted leave by King John to farm the borough for £20 per year (Dodds 1940, 344-5). In 1205, King John granted all the rights and privileges of the manor and forest of Rothbury to Robert Fitz Roger, baron of Warkworth. The hereditary line of the Fitz Rogers, who had assumed the name Clavinger, died out in 1332 at which time the barony of Rothbury was granted by Edward III to the Percy family (Dixon 1903, 367).

The town developed as a small market town in the medieval period and has continued to serve that function to the present day. In common with many of the smaller towns of the border marches, Rothbury suffered from the disruption of the Scottish Wars and border raids that continued into the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Dodds 1940, 347). Indeed, Rothbury was burnt to the ground quite often at this time, but its part in the conflicts can be seen today from the fact that the surnames of Armstrong, Charlton and Robson, common reiver 'clans' in this area, still persist in the farming community. This, and the fact that Rothbury never became industrialised like some other parts of Northumberland, kept the town small until the middle and later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At this time, William Armstrong established the nearby Cragside estate, a rail link was connected (1870), and a large livestock market was opened near the railway station which boosted the economy. In the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Rothbury also became popular as a health resort. The historic core of the present day town strongly reflects the form and character of the town as it was established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and it has continued to attract visitors and to act as a market and service centre for Coquetdale to this day.

#### **1.4 Documentary and Secondary Sources**

The documentary and cartographic sources for Rothbury are quite sparse. There is no documentary evidence for the pre-Conquest period, but after 1066 there are the usual range of tenurial and taxation sources, notably Pipe Rolls payments for the *villata* or *burgh* of Rothbury to the sheriff of the county (Dixon 1903, 367). Later in the medieval period, appraisals of the manor of Rothbury and the town are included in the Lay Subsidy Assessment of 1296, and from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, surveys of the Earl of Northumberland's estates provide further evidence. Secondary sources, which cover the history of Rothbury, include volume 15 of the Northumberland County History and Dixon's *Upper Coquetdale* (1903), the latter deriving much of its information from Tomlinson's work (1888). There are other secondary sources which discuss particular features of Rothbury but these are neither numerous nor illuminating.



### **1.5 Cartographic Sources**

The cartographic evidence for Rothbury is also sparse. The town appears on Armstrong's 1769 *Map of Northumberland*, which shows the form of the town, but the first detailed survey is the first edition 6" Ordnance Survey (1866).

### **1.6 Archaeological Sources**

There have been a small number of archaeological investigations in the town in recent years, mostly carried out in response to development proposals (see Appendix 2). An archaeological evaluation in a former builders' yard off Wellstrand (Event ID 13362) did not encounter archaeologically significant deposits and lies outside the estimated extent of the medieval town (Macpherson 1999). While indicating the presence of waterlogged deposits, it provides very limited data on which to base a more general assessment of the depth, character and degree of preservation of archaeological deposits in the town. Of the few pieces of work which have been carried out within the supposed extent of the medieval town, only one has revealed evidence of medieval activity: a watching brief at All Saints Church (Event ID 13570) uncovered a medieval lime kiln and culvert and part of a pre-Conquest cross.

### **1.7 Protected Sites**

The study area includes one Scheduled Ancient Monument – Rothbury Bridge (Nd 124). Some 30 listed buildings lie within the study area; the Church of All Saints and Addycombe Cottages are Grade II\* listed and the remainder are Grade II. The village core is designated as a Conservation Area.

## **2 PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN**

### **2.1 Prehistoric Period**

A wealth of prehistoric finds have been discovered in and around Rothbury, which suggest activity here from Mesolithic times. A series of flint, stone and bronze implements have been found in the Rothbury area since the 19<sup>th</sup> century but few have a secure provenance. Mesolithic flints were found in the 'neighbourhood of Rothbury' (HER 2955); a polished greenstone axe was found somewhere in Rothbury (HER 2920); a bronze flat axe is recorded from the Rothbury area (HER 2928); and a collection of objects from 'near Rothbury' includes two polished stone axes, half a perforated stone hammer and two perforated stone discs (HER 2921). All these finds demonstrate there was prehistoric activity in the area but the known prehistoric sites lie outside the town on higher ground to the north and south. Closest are the Bronze Age cairns (HER 2915) and standing stone (HER 2917) and cup marked stone on the northern edge of the town, and just to the west is Old Rothbury Iron Age hillfort (HER 2839). A series of undated hollow ways across the moorland in this area may be prehistoric trackways. Across the valley, to the south, is Lordenshaws hillfort and Romano-

British settlement, whose slopes are dotted with earlier cup and ring marked rocks and cist burials.

## 2.2 Roman Period

There is little knowledge of Roman occupation in the Rothbury area. It is likely that there was not as much Roman influence in this area, as in other parts of Britain, since it is so far north of Hadrian's Wall.

## 3 EARLY MEDIEVAL

### 3.1 Place Name Evidence

There is no documentary evidence of Rothbury prior to the Norman Conquest; however, there is reason to believe, "...that the ancient vill of Roth was a settlement of some importance long before the coming of the Normans" (Dixon 1903, 366). In the early medieval period, Rothbury was one of the *burhs* on royal demesne, like Corbridge, Warkworth and Newburn, which, after the fall of the kingdom of Northumbria, passed to the earls of Northumberland (Dodds 1940, 343). The town is referred to in the reign of Henry I as *Rodeberia*, using a form of the Anglo-Saxon suffix *burgh* or fortified settlement, and during the next three centuries the name passed through 30 or 40 variations ending with the Old English *Rothbury* (Tomlinson 1888, 327). This is significant because it confirms the presence of a settlement from at least the Anglo-Saxon period, regardless if it was on the site of Old Rothbury or if it was encroaching the modern town limits (Dixon 1903, 366). The name "Rothbury", however, may also have Scandinavian influence since *Routh* was a common Scandinavian name, not unlike the nearby *Tosson* and *Snitter* (Mawer 1921, 17). This is quite possible since the eastern parts of the border between Scotland and England are known to have been repeatedly pillaged by Vikings for centuries during early medieval times.

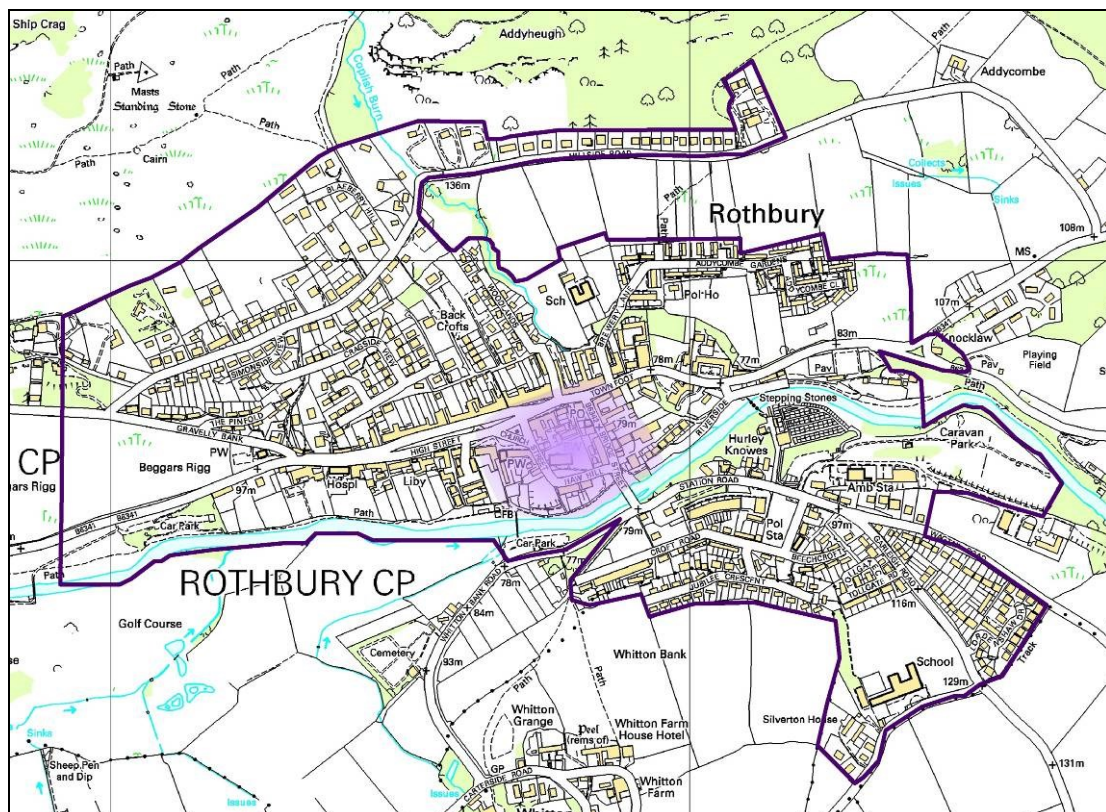
### 3.2 Rothbury Cross (HER 2932)

The only artifactual evidence of early medieval settlement in the upper Coquet valley are the fragments of an Anglian cross, found in 1849. Known as the Rothbury Cross, it is one of a number of crosses which acted as focal points of early Christian evangelism with the rich decoration on the cross providing an illustrated story of Christianity. Other surviving crosses of a similar nature are at Bewcastle and Ruthwell and fragmentary remains are known from Norham:

*...all are of the same period and are not widely separated in date; and precede by only a few years, the works of St Wilfrid and St Acca, in that very beautiful series of monumental crosses of the type known as the 'Hexham School' of stone carving" (Hodges 1925, 161-2).*

While the Ruthwell and Bewcastle Crosses have received more attention, largely because they are better preserved, "...the Rothbury Cross is an early and very important example of a Standard Cross". Its exact age, however, has been debated: Hodges dates the cross to the late seventh century, Collingwood to the tenth century, and most recently Cramp and Miket regard it as early ninth century.

The remains of the Anglian cross were discovered in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Two pieces were found when part of the church was demolished in 1849, and another was recognised supporting the font in 1856, where it still remains; the other parts are in the Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle. The cross pieces are heavily decorated with sculptured figures, basket work and entwined foliage. The degree of weathering of the surfaces of the shaft supporting the font suggests that it stood outside the church for a lengthy period of time, especially since the condition of the surfaces of the other two stones is much better. As the two smaller pieces were found in the walls of Rothbury church this suggests the cross had been broken up in the Norman period when the church was built. Despite its fragmentary condition it remains one of the major works of Northumbrian stone carving and is the earliest surviving stone rood in England.



*Figure 3: Area of early medieval potential.*

### 3.3 Church (HER 2961)

In the early medieval period, Christian missionaries, under the patronage of the kings of Northumbria, established a mission station at Rothbury. Bede writes that the town was included in the group of places Aidan periodically visited as his duty as first bishop of Lindisfarne. The present church is thought to stand on an important pre-Conquest site – that of a double Saxon church. The east and west naves were linked by a tower which became the west tower of one of the churches after the demolition of the other. And indeed, the foundations of a church lying to the west of the present church and extending beneath and beyond Church Street were traceable in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. A dowsing survey carried out in 1988, also revealed:

*...the extraordinary envelope of portic[i] around a long nave... which can be shown to be a type which is known elsewhere: Jarrow provides a good parallel both for the length of the nave and for the disposition of these chambers. The parallel of Jarrow might be thought to be particularly interesting given the fact that the high quality of sculpture from Rothbury not only suggests the former presence of a monastery here but also betrays stylistic links with Jarrow (Bailey et al 1988, 35-6 citing Cramp 1984, 217-21).*

The dowsed plan suggests that the main 13<sup>th</sup> century church lay to the west of the present building and was an ambitious plan of a long narrow nave flanked by a row of five portici. If the ground plan revealed by dowsing is accurate, then buried remains of this important early ecclesiastic site, with close parallels to Jarrow, may still survive below ground.

An archaeological watching brief carried out to the west of the church in 2005 (Event No 13570) did not reveal any structural remains or robbed out walls in this area which could represent the remains of an early medieval church. The precise nature of the Pre-Conquest church remains inconclusive.

### 3.4 Early Medieval Settlement

Although no evidence has yet been found for a secular settlement at Rothbury its presence is presumed because a church, or indeed a monastery, would not exist in isolation. A church needs a congregation and a monastery requires lay support to service it. The cross shaft from Rothbury was designed by literate, theologically aware people to convey the Christian message (Hawkes, 1999, 214) and in its design it seems suited to serve a lay audience, suggesting a settlement nearby. Any settlement would seem likely to have focused on the church and the level ground around the present building must be seen as the area of highest potential for below ground remains to survive.

## 4 MEDIEVAL

### 4.1 The Manor and Forest of Rothbury

The manor and forest of Rothbury appear to have been in the possession of the Crown for nearly a century after the Conquest and the government of the burgh was in the hands of a reeve appointed by the king (Dodds 1940, 344). Early Pipe Roll entries relate the payments made for the *villata*, or *burgh*, of Rothbury to the sheriff of the county who collected royal taxes. In 1165, five marks were collected for *Roberir*, in 1188, £3 2s 10d, and in 1196, £2 16s 4d for the *villata de Robiri* (Dixon 1903, 367). In 1201, King John granted the burgesses leave to farm the burgh for £20 rent and in 1205, he granted all rights and privileges of the manor, forest, and the right to hold a court at Rothbury to Robert fitz Roger, baron of Warkworth (Tomlinson 1888, 327; Dixon 1903, 367).

The value of the manor appears to have fluctuated. In 1296, the lay subsidy assessment amounted to about £37. Comparisons of this assessment with neighbouring towns, like Wooler (£135) or Alnwick (£78) suggest that Rothbury was not a particularly prosperous place at this time (Fraser 1968, 38, 52, 96). The manor was valued at £133 6s 8d in 1291 and on the death of Robert fitz Roger in 1310, it comprised a house, garden, water mill and bakehouse, all of which were leased out (Dodds 1940, 345). In the reign of Edward III, the hereditary line died out and Rothbury reverted to the Crown, who in 1334, granted it to Henry de Percy (Tomlinson 1888, 327; Dixon 1903, 367).

In 1357, the value of the manor and borough declined again to about £40, but then during the 14<sup>th</sup> century, in spite of the Scottish Wars, it began to rise (Dodds 1940, 345) and by 1535 the parish of Rothbury had the highest parochial value in Northumberland at £56 6s 8d. These fluctuations in the value of Rothbury may be partly explained by its exposure to Scottish raids, but the effects were limited and temporary. Yet border warfare and feuds undoubtedly had an effect since, as late as the 16th century Rothbury parishioners failed to attend church because of feuds, and at other times congregated in armed groups in segregated areas of the church (Goodman 1992, 249 and 260).

### 4.2 Village layout

In the medieval period Rothbury was for a lengthy time a royal burgh and then a baronial borough. The church and castle would have been focal points and the town was likely to have been a bridging, or at least fording point, of the River Coquet. Land was tenanted by burgesses, but there is no direct evidence of the layout of burgage plots in the medieval period, although post-medieval surveys suggest that there were two rows of houses, possibly to each side of Market Street. Post-medieval cartographic evidence can be used to infer the approximate extent of the medieval town (HER 3022) and it is likely that the church was the focus of this settlement.

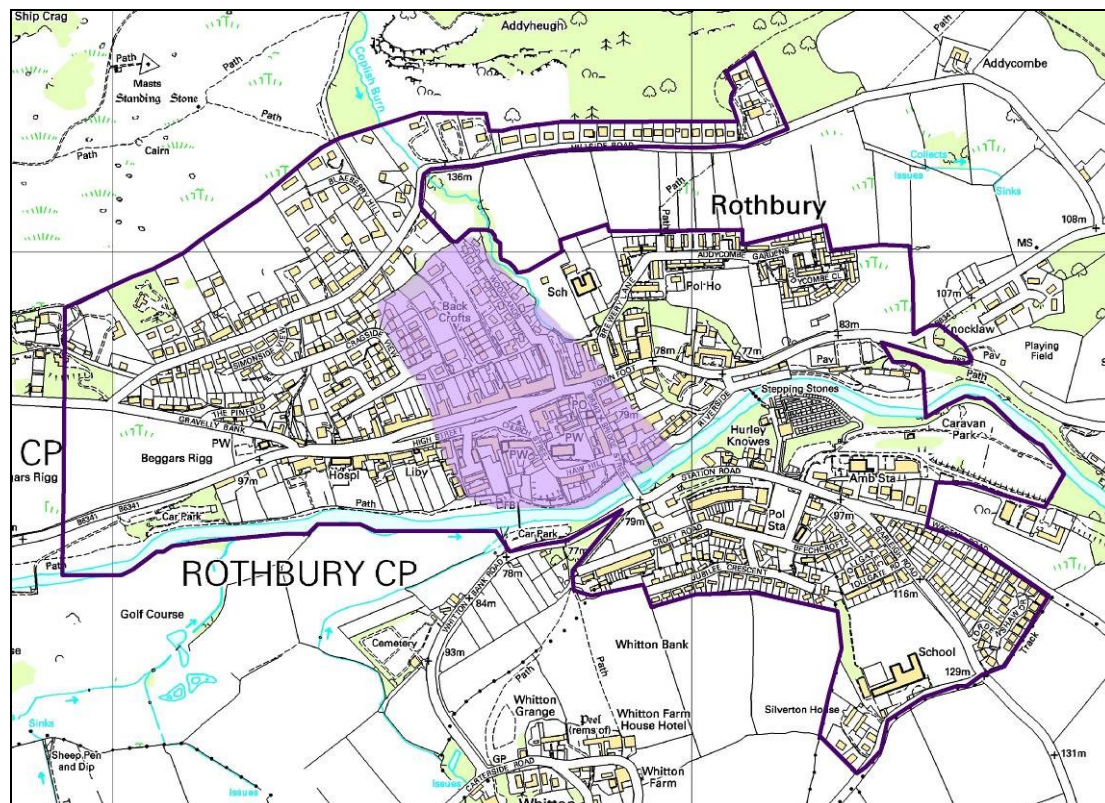


Figure 4: Area of medieval potential.

### 4.3 Burgage Plots

There is documentary evidence from the late 13<sup>th</sup> century showing that a burgage at Rothbury comprised a messuage, one acre of land and grazing rights on the moor (Dodds 1940, 345). The acre and half acre strips of the ancient arable land, divided by earthen dykes, were still visible in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but they had disappeared and the dykes had been levelled by the time Dixon was writing in the early 1900s (Dixon 1903, 423-4). While the value of the burgage plot rentals may have fluctuated in the medieval period there is little readily available evidence of the form and extent of the plots and to what degree they were built on in this period.

In Mayson's survey of 1616, Rothbury borough is described as, "the site of Rothbury town and garths begin[ing] with the south row and at the bridge end", with the North row beyond the South row (Dodds 1940, 348). The North and South rows may represent properties to each side of the modern day Market Place. The earliest cartographic representation of Rothbury is Armstrong's 1769 *Map of Northumberland*, which shows the road from the south carried over the bridge to the church located on a square with the road then dividing to the east and west. Buildings are shown on streets, which form the square, but plot divisions are not depicted. Armstrong's map shows development restricted to the north bank of the river and suggests that its extent at this time was considerably smaller than the modern town, with buildings on present-day Church Street, Bridge Street and Market Place, but not along Town Foot or far along the High Street. The extent and form of the town in the medieval period from this post-medieval cartographic evidence has been mapped (HER 3022) and depicted on Figure 4;

however, there is still scant evidence to base this on and future excavations could radically alter this plan.

#### **4.4 Castle (HER 2912)**

A Norman castle is thought to have existed at Rothbury on the north bank of the River Coquet a little to the west of the church on a site now occupied by the churchyard. This site would therefore have been levelled and the mound destroyed when the new churchyard was laid out in 1869. It is most likely that the lord of the manor, Robert Ogle, built the castle in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century when he enclosed his great park on the slopes of the Simonside Hills. The exact history and fortunes of the castle are unknown but it has been equated with later references to a hall or manor house at Rothbury, indeed it is possible that “castle” may be an inflated term for what was always a house or hall. The lord’s house is mentioned in a valuation of the manor in 1310. In 1616, the manor house of Rothbury was known as Hallyard and in 1661 it was known as Rothbury Hall; it was still inhabited in c.1850. All that is known of its structure comes from an account of a view of the ruins in 1843 (now lost) which showed that part of the castle consisted of a square tower with east and west gables. The building was demolished in 1869 and its removal appears to have been particularly thorough as the foundations were dug out and the site levelled. Descriptions of this hall include massive walls and stone arched vaults, not unlike William de Valence’s prison at *Rowebyre*, which is mentioned in a documentary reference from 1256 (Dixon 1903, 371-2; Dodds 1940, 344).

The presumed site of the castle is in the churchyard extension on the south-west side of Church Street, sitting on the highest part of a rise in the ground. Around the south side the River Coquet flows in a shallow bend and the rise overlooks a long stretch of the river valley to the west and would do so to the east, except that modern buildings on that side now block the view, giving it some defensive properties.

#### **4.5 Mill (HER 3019)**

There is documentary evidence from 1249 of a mill belonging to the manor of Rothbury and being leased for £22. It is again mentioned in a document of 1310 but its location is not known.

#### **4.6 Bakehouse (HER 3020)**

There is reference to a bakehouse in 1249 belonging to the manor of Rothbury which was leased for 20s. It is again mentioned in a document of 1310 but its specific location is not known.

#### **4.7 Church of All Saints (HER 2961)**

The first documentary evidence of the church at Rothbury occurs in about 1090 when Robert Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, granted the tithes of Corbridge, Newburn, Warkworth and

Rothbury to his newly-founded monastery at Tynemouth. Yet, although this grant was confirmed by Henry I in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century he also granted the churches of Warkworth, Corbridge, Rothbury, Whittingham and Newcastle to his chaplain Richard d'Orival for life. In 1122, after the death of d'Orival, these churches were granted to the newly-founded priory of Carlisle. How the claims of Tynemouth and Carlisle were adjusted is not known, but after Warkworth castle was built it may have been confiscated from the Merlays because of the part they played in Mowbray's rebellion against the king; Mowbray's grant of the tithes to Tynemouth Priory would then have been invalidated on the same grounds (Bates 1891, 83). Certainly after 1205, when King John granted the lordship of Rothbury to Roger fitz Roger of Warkworth, the rector and the new lord of the manor had to come to an agreement over their respective rights. The priory and bishop of Carlisle from time to time appropriated the tithes of Rothbury, but for the main part, the stipend of Rothbury was one of the richest livings in the diocese of Durham. This was partly because it largely retained its tithes and held Whitton as a lay fee (outside the study area). Whitton tower was the medieval parson's pele tower and rectory for Rothbury church and was later enlarged into a mansion house.

The present church probably stands on the site of the eastern nave of the pre-Conquest church; it was built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and rebuilt in 1850 after falling into ruin in the post-medieval period. The original western nave had disappeared before the 17<sup>th</sup> century but its foundations were traceable beneath and beyond Church Street in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The original west tower was demolished in 1850 and seems to have been the central tower of the pre-Conquest church.

*The oldest remaining part of the present fabric of the church is the chancel, which is of the earlier 13<sup>th</sup> century. Almost all the other portions have perished when the church was largely rebuilt in 1850 (Hodges 1925, 163).*

Several fragments of medieval grave covers (HER 3021) are built into the west wall of the porch and described as pieces of two 15th century floriated sepulchral slabs and a portion of a grave cover with ball ornamentation from Norman times. Another stone slab, with a circular cross on one face, was reportedly found in the school garden "some years ago" (before 1903) and identified as a boundary cross, but its current whereabouts are unknown.

#### **4.8 Market**

A market charter was granted to Rothbury in 1205 by King John (Tomlinson 1888, 327), and Edward I granted Robert fitz Roger a weekly market in 1291 (Dodds 1940, 345). The location of the market is unknown but the proximity of the green to the church suggests that this is a likely area.

#### **4.9 Bridge and Ford**

The bridge (HER 2923) over the Coquet is a grade II listed building and scheduled monument (ND 124). It is first documented in 1616 but is almost certainly of earlier date. Its structure is



quite complex and contains evidence of several medieval phases of construction. Although the deck was replaced in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the greater part of the structure below is medieval. The river is fordable and the Ordnance Survey, second edition (1897), marks stepping stones (HER 3038) across the river a little upstream from the bridge. This suggests it was a long-used fording point and today, a modern footbridge crosses the river at this point. The ford is described by Tomlinson as “the Scots’ Ford” and he suggests it was defended from the Hurley Knowes (HER 2924) in “unsettled times”.

#### **4.10 Hurley Knowes (HER 2924)**

Hurley Knowes is the name given to a short stretch of the south bank of the River Coquet at the east end of Rothbury. Here, a series of high earthen mounds once stood and were speculated to be burial mounds or mottes. The features are, however, natural alluvial mounds. Only one of the 'mounds' survives, the others probably having been destroyed by a small 20th century housing complex. It is a flat-topped natural hillock isolated by a short artificial ditch from the prominent ridge of which it is a part. This, together with the declivity on the south-west side, affords a strong defensive position which could have served as a motte (HER 2924, authority no. 5).

## **5 POST-MEDIEVAL**

### **5.1 Village form**

The surveys of the Earl of Northumberland’s estates begin in the second half of the 16th century and suggest that Rothbury had not altered significantly in character from its probable medieval form. The second survey of the Earl of Northumberland’s land in about 1586 includes an entry for Rothbury manor which mentions the market, fair, common bakehouse (HER 3020), water mill (HER 3019) and the burgage tenaments. The record of rentals and rates of 1663 names the Earl of Northumberland as the owner of Rothbury demesne, Rothbury East Mill and Rothbury Forest, and part of the town of Rothbury, with three freeholders, Henry Pitt, Thomas Ogle and George Gibson owning the remainder of the town. From the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century the number of freeholders in Rothbury increased considerably from three in 1663 to 12 who voted in the county election in 1710; by 1747 there were 22 voters and 39 in 1826. These figures suggest that the town increased in size in the later 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century (Dixon 1903, 369-70; Dodds 1940, 347-9).

The town saw little industrialisation through this period and retained its primary function as a market town. In 1760, bishop Pocock described Rothbury as:

*...a poor town of two streets which are not paved and the houses are mostly thatched. There are turnpiked roads to and from it to Hexham and Newcastle, Morpeth and Alnwick which makes it a thoroughfare from all the towns to the west and north*

*from Ellesden. It is a market town and they have fairs chiefly for black cattle and wool is sent from this place to Newcastle. They have several shops and handicrafts exercised here particularly that of hatters (Dodds 1940, 342).*

Armstrong's *Map of Northumberland* shows the road from the south running over the bridge to the church located on a square, and then dividing to the east and west. The Ordnance Survey, first edition (1866), shows plot holdings in a much enlarged town as long strips at right angles to the street. The houses on the street frontage may well reflect plots established in the medieval period which continued to be respected in the post-medieval period. Rothbury probably did not alter significantly in form during the post-medieval period, although older houses, often destroyed by fire, were replaced with new buildings. However, there does seem to have been some limited expansion and infilling of buildings as the number of freeholders gradually increased towards the end of the period.

## **5.2 Castle/Manor House (HER 2912)**

The manor or hall house was built in medieval times and survived until 1869 when it was razed to the ground and its foundations dug out (see 4.4 above).

## **5.3 Rothbury Bridge (HER 2923)**

This bridge spans the River Coquet and is a grade II listed building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Nd 124). There is some uncertainty as to the date of the earliest fabric in the bridge: its four arches are thought to be largely 16<sup>th</sup> century work, although three are reinforced by heavy chamfered ribs, a pattern prevalent in the North between the reigns of Henry III and William III. They are therefore difficult to date with accuracy, although it is almost certainly of pre-17<sup>th</sup> century date. In 1754, the road from Hexham to Alnmouth, which passed through Rothbury, was turnpiked and new bridges were built over the Debdon, Whitton and Lordenshaw burns. Rothbury Bridge, originally a packhorse bridge, was soon found inadequate for the greatly increased through traffic which followed and in 1759 it was widened by 6 feet on the upstream side to allow for the passage of vehicular traffic. Tenders were advertised for this work in September 1759 and it was undertaken by William Oliphant whose initials and the date 1759 are cut on one of the lower courses in the east side of the bridge. Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the bridge was widened again with the addition of concrete footpaths with projecting parapets and concrete and steel superstructure.

## **5.4 Church of All Saints (HER 2961)**

The church was allowed to fall into a ruinous state in the post-medieval period, but was then reconstructed in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the churchyard there are many unusual 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century tombstones, several of which are listed monuments. Of particular interest is a 1688 tombstone in the vestry which is dedicated to Isabella Sherburne and a fragment of a grave cover, which may have belonged to a Carrington.

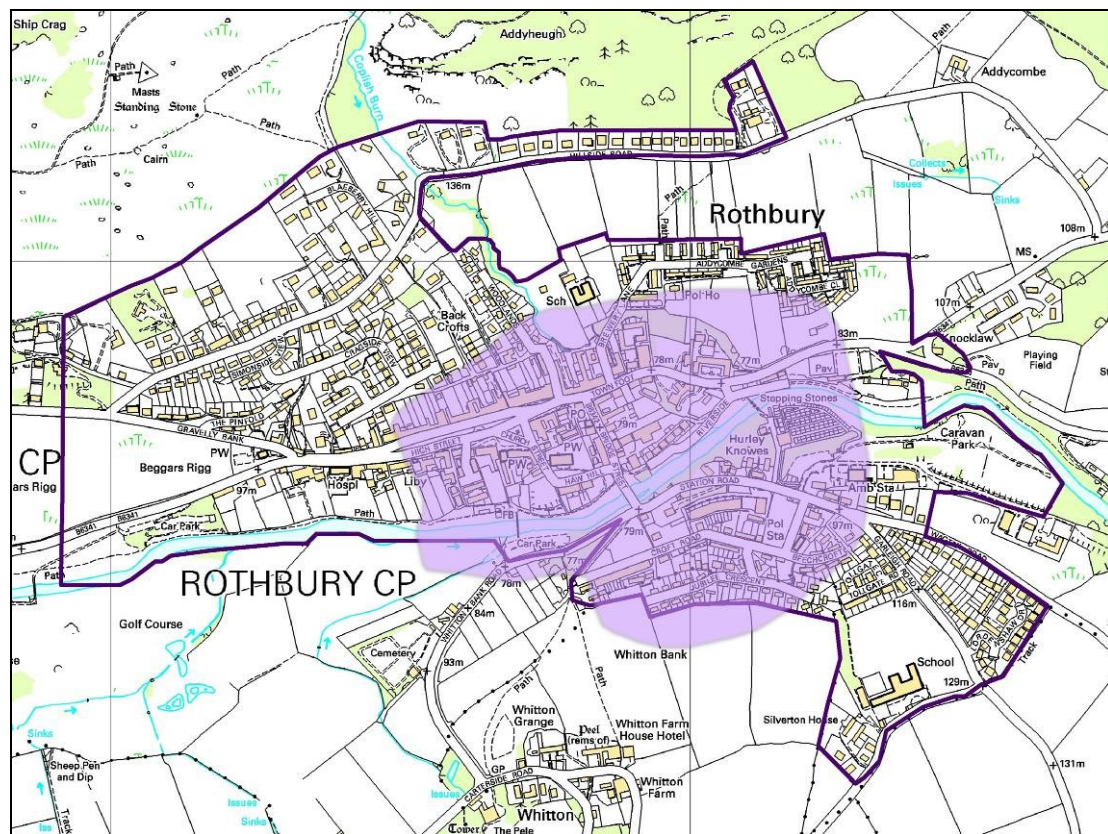


Figure 5: Area of post-medieval potential.

## 5.5 Market

In the 18th century, Rothbury's position on the newly turnpiked Hexham to Alnmouth road resulted in the town benefiting from increased through trade. Four cattle fairs were held each year and Rothbury acted as a market centre for the towns lying to the east and west of it (Dodds 1940, 350). A covered market cross (HER 3026) was built in 1722 for the sale of local produce. This octagonal structure had a hipped roof and four open, round-arched sides and is likely to have replaced an ancient market cross. However, it was not kept in good repair and its ruins were pulled down in 1827, and its inscription stone was incorporated into the gable of John Clark's house.

## 5.6 Other Buildings

Several disastrous fires in Rothbury in the 18<sup>th</sup> century destroyed many 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings. In 1738 and 1781, fires destroyed a brewhouse and 16 houses, which spurred the town to get a fire engine in 1788 (Dixon 1903, 388). Although by 1800 most of the houses in Rothbury had been rebuilt and modernised, some still remained bearing date stones from the early 1700s. The date stone of 1722 is found on Sandford House and Farley House, High Street (HER 3002). These were probably originally a single dwelling, but while the door head is dated 1722, the building itself may date from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. It is the only survivor of a late 17<sup>th</sup> /early 18<sup>th</sup> century house type once common in Rothbury and has

Grade II listed building status. West End House, High Street (HER 2997), is another mid 18<sup>th</sup> century house and has Grade II listed building status. There are several other fine buildings of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century origin which survive in Rothbury today, but most were altered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### *Inns*

Near the church are the ruined walls of the Three Half Moons (HER 3024), an inn with a 300-year history. Jacobite supporters of the Earl of Derwentwater reportedly met here in 1715 and it had been the principal inn in the town where public meetings and courts of justice were held. There were two other inns from this period: The Turk's Head (HER 2995) in the High Street was originally a late 17<sup>th</sup> century or early 18<sup>th</sup> century building destroyed by fire and rebuilt in 1874, and the early 18<sup>th</sup> century Sun Inn on High Street is now a pair of houses; all have Grade II listed building status.

### *Workhouse*

Parish records from 1725 indicate that the vestry was used as a poor house. There was another workhouse (HER 3025) established in the same year in a building on Church Street which had a date stone of 1685. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Union Workhouse was constructed half a mile to the south of the town (Dixon 1903, 387).

### *School*

A Grammar School (HER 2925) was in existence as a free school in Rothbury in 1673 and stood at the north end of Rothbury Bridge. The present building on the site has a datestone of AD1841 but there are no traces of the original 17<sup>th</sup> century school building. The school moved to new premises built in 1906, and in 1908 Mackays the Ironmongers moved into the old school.

## **5.7 Industry**

Industry had a limited role in Rothbury, although it was known for its hatters (Dodds 1940, 342). Further research would be required to verify and establish the extent and location of this industry. There are a number of linear buildings, which may have been built as workshops in the post-medieval period and which survive in the town today. Outside the town, small collieries were worked in Rothbury Forest, presumably in the post-medieval period, specifically Debdon Colliery from the 19th century (Dodds 1940, 360), and the small bell pits in the Lee area to the south of Rothbury (Rowland 1982, 180).

## 6. NINETEENTH-CENTURY

### 6.1 The Nineteenth-century village

He course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought about a change in the character of Rothbury. In the early part of the century it was described as:

*...in short the beau ideal of a dim, old border town - too insignificant to defend, and too humble to tempt the hand of the plunderer - a collection of grey old houses that might have been standing when Flodden Field was fought (Dixon 1903).*

That the town was not a great commercial centre is illustrated by the presence of only four shops in Rothbury in 1825 (Rowland 1982, 45). However, the later 19<sup>th</sup> century saw many improvements which were largely stimulated by the coming of the railway in 1870. Yet a few years before its arrival, in 1863, William Armstrong came to Rothbury and built his house at Craggside (outside the assessment area) and turned the surrounding countryside into park lands (Dodds 1940, 343). Northumberland Central Railway then arrived in 1870, and Donkin and Son's stock market was established in 1871. This was the biggest cattle and sheep mart in the county which, in the last 30 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, increased the town's business by a hundredfold. The town also gained a reputation as a health resort and "the number of houses and hotels fitted up for the reception of visitors...greatly increased" (Dixon 1903, 376). The population of Rothbury township in 1801 was 668 which fluctuated both up and down until the last quarter of the century when it steadily increased to 1303 in 1901 (Dixon 1903, 429).

By the later 19<sup>th</sup> century Rothbury comprised of a "long wide street, running east and west, called the High Street or Front Street and two shorter streets, Rotten Row or Bridge Street - branching off at different angles to the bridge" (Tomlinson 1888, 328). The town had well-built houses, a post office, banks, court house and shops (Dixon 1903, 376). Settlement had expanded further along the main street both to the east and west and the streets in the core of the town also began to fill up with buildings. The town also began to expand onto the slopes to the north of the main street as well as on the south bank of the river. The town then reached its limits as it was prevented from spreading to the east by the Craggside estate and to the west by the racecourse (Dodds 1940, 343).

### 6.2 Railway

Failed attempts had been made in 1852 and 1853 to open up the rich agricultural districts of Northumberland with a railway projected from Acklington to Rothbury and from Morpeth to Maxwellhaugh via Rothbury, Whittingham and Wooler (Tomlinson 1905, 522). So in 1870, when the Northumberland Central Railway from Newcastle to Rothbury was opened, and a station on the south side of the bridge was built, the town began to prosper (Dodds 1940, 343). The railway closed in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century and remains disused; but although the line

and station building at Rothbury have been removed, the line of the railway track is still revetted by a stone wall which may have originally been built to retain the railway.

### **6.3 Market and Rothbury Cross (HER 2953)**

The Rothbury Cross stands on the site of the 18<sup>th</sup> century covered market cross which was pulled down in 1827 (see 5.5 above). The cross was erected in 1902 in memory of the first Lord and Lady Armstrong. The market cross is a very fine, well-proportioned and carefully detailed stone cross in the Hexham style, similar to the original Rothbury Cross. The replica is in the Arts and Crafts style with a decorated shaft and Celtic cross head. It stands 6.9m tall and is carved out of stone from the freestone quarries of Craggside hill (Dixon 1903, 379).

### **6.4 Livestock Market (HER 3037)**

Rothbury's function as a market was greatly enhanced when Donkin and Son's large stock market was established in 1871. It lay close to the railway (now disused) on the south bank of the Coquet. Part of the penning area is now out of use and is grassed-over, but part is still a market. The buildings associated with the market still stand, although they do not retain their original functions.

### **6.5 Places of Worship**

*The Church of All Saints* (HER 2961) was substantially rebuilt in the middle of the 19th century.

*A Presbyterian Chapel* (HER 3031) was founded in Rothbury in 1804 but was given up in 1812 (Dodds 1940, 340). It has not been located.

*The Congregational Church* (HER 3000), now a church hall on the High Street, was built in 1842 and altered in 1906. It has Grade II listed building status and a date plaque of 1903. To make way for the new church building at the turn of the century, a 17<sup>th</sup> century almshouse with grey stone slate roof and mullioned windows with a date stone "D 1690 D", was demolished (Dixon 1903, 420). It is misleadingly marked as "Works" on the modern digital map.

*A United Reformed Church* (HER 3032) was built in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century and first appears on the Ordnance Survey second edition of 1897 in the Market Place and is currently still used as a church.

### **6.6 Other Buildings**

Since 1870, the town has been almost completely rebuilt and only a few old houses remain. Rothbury's town centre today reflects almost entirely this later 19th century development of the town, with its rebuilt church and well-built stone houses, hotels and shops.

There are a number of early 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings which have Grade II listed building status: 1 and 2 Church Street (HER 2990); Bridge Street House (HER 2984) (the former schoolmaster's house for Tomlinson school); Conway House, High Street (HER 2994), built in 1876 with an early 19<sup>th</sup> century rear wing; 1 Market Place (HER 3003); and 4 Market Place (HER 3006). There are other buildings, which date from this period and may deserve further research beyond the scope of this assessment. For example, The Jubilee Hall of 1887 (HER 3046), Coquetdale House (HER 3041), which has a date stone of 1872; The Model Buildings (HER 3042) behind the United Reformed Church; and Burleigh House (HER 3043), which has a mortar and pestle on its façade suggesting it may have been built as a dispensary in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and is currently still used as a chemist shop.

### *Banks*

Lloyds Bank, High Street (HER 3030) opened in 1869 and has Grade II listed building status. The North Eastern Bank (HER 3039) opened in 1871 and is currently disused.

### *Hotels/Inns*

The former County Hotel (HER 3029) is shown on the Ordnance Survey, second edition (1897), at the west end of the town; it is recently been converted to flats.

The Railway Hotel (HER 3028) in Bridge Street remains a public house. This may be the site of the brewery marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey.

The Queen's Head Inn (HER 3030) is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey and is still a public house towards the eastern end of the town.

The Station Hotel (HER 3040) is located near to the railway station on the south bank of the Coquet is still used as a hotel although the station is no longer in existence.

### *Almshouses*

The proximity of the Cragside estate resulted in additional building in the town of Rothbury. Retired staff from the Armstrong estates were at first allowed to live in an old house formerly belonging to the Donkin family (which had the date 1690 carved on the door head). This house was demolished when the Congregational Church (HER 3000) was altered in 1906. New cottages, designed by Norman Shaw, were built in 1873 on the western edge of the town for the retired staff, which are known today as Addycombe Cottages 1-12 (HER 2979) and Addycombe Cottages 13-19 (HER 2980). With their attached rear walls and outbuildings they have Grade II\* and Grade II listed building status respectively. In 1893, Lord Armstrong built a further 12 cottages as an almshouse. Located at the eastern end of the town, 1-12 Armstrong Cottages (HER 3008) have Grade II listed building status with their front wall and gateway (HER 3009).

### *School*

The first edition (1866) and second edition (1897) Ordnance Surveys show a free school (HER 3047) on the south bank of the river; this is annotated "hall" on the modern map.

### *Garage (HER 3010)*

Rothbury Motors Garage, Town Foot was built in 1913 and is virtually unaltered making it a rare survival. It is a Grade II listed building.

## **6.7 Industry**

Two smithies, one at the end of Providence Lane on the High Street (HER 3034) and another on the same street to the east (HER 3035), and a brewery (HER 3036) are marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey to the east of the Queen's Head Hotel. The second edition (1897) Ordnance Survey shows another smithy (HER 3027) immediately to the south of the bridge and a malting yard (HER 3033) on the south side of the High Street. The existence of craft scale activity is further illustrated by a number of buildings which appear to have been built as workshops in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and which still survive today (HER 3044 and HER 3045); however, none of these features signify manufacture on an industrial scale.



## **PART TWO: ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL OF ROTHBURY**

### **7 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

This section deals with the possibility of discovering archaeological remains in Rothbury village in the course of development and the potential these remains could have for the understanding of the past of the village, region and country as a whole. To be meaningful, any archaeological input in Rothbury should be weighed against the value of the likely returns. The most useful way of assessing this value is for it to be set against locally and nationally agreed research agendas which will allow relevant work to be planned and delivered to best value. Developer-funded archaeological work within Northumberland will always refer to national and local research frameworks.

Historic towns represent one of the most complex and important forms of archaeological evidence, some having been occupied over two millennia (English Heritage 1992, 13). As well as information about the overall development of urban settlement and its planning, towns can also provide information on defence, ecclesiastical organisation, crafts, commerce, industry and the environment as well as about the individual occupants of a town and how they lived and died. As more work is carried out in our urban centres because of archaeological intervention in the planning process, more information is being accumulated. It is important that this information is synthesized and made accessible to the public, enabling archaeologists and other researchers to create a national picture of urban settlement change. Rothbury with its early medieval origins will have a useful role to play in this. This assessment suggests that the most likely areas to contain early remains will be around the church and village green and down to the fording point and bridge.

#### **7.1 Prehistoric and Roman Potential**

The area around Rothbury has a substantial number of prehistoric monuments clearly indicating the importance of this area at that time. However, prehistoric settlement tends to lie on valley slopes and the hill tops, rather than in valley bottoms, and the potential to uncover prehistoric remains in the town is thought to be low. The presence of a substantial prehistoric settlement at Old Rothbury, also suggests that another settlement in the immediate proximity is unlikely. The many prehistoric artefacts discovered in the Rothbury area are without provenance, but given the wealth of sites on the slopes above Rothbury, it is likely that these finds have originated from there. This does not exclude the possibility that prehistoric remains will be uncovered in the town, and the fording point near to the bridge may be the most likely place where prehistoric remains could be found although river action may have either eroded such remains from the riverbank, or else buried such remains beneath several metres of alluvium.

## 7.2 Early Medieval Potential (Figure 3)

The early medieval period saw the last of the Viking raids and the Norman Conquest; both major forces of change. It also saw the flourishing of Christianity and Rothbury appears to have been the site of an important early Christian church or monastery. As the growth of Christianity and the influence of the church are national research priorities, Rothbury has an important role to play.

### 7.2.1 Research Agenda

- Does evidence of the early medieval church survive below ground or within the fabric of the existing church?
- What evidence is there for a monastery at Rothbury, and what was its extent and character? Where was the cemetery located?
- What date is the earliest church at Rothbury and where and who was the community it served?
- Where was the secular settlement? What was its extent and character?

### 7.2.2 Archaeological Priorities

In pursuit of these questions about Rothbury's early medieval origins, archaeological contractors will be directed towards:

- Establishing the extent and survival of early medieval settlement in the town
- Establishing the extent and nature of the early medieval church, did it form part of a monastery?
- Exploring the relationship between the church, town and other ecclesiastical establishments of that time such as Hexham and Jarrow.
- Any changes to the church requiring a faculty will be accompanied by recommendations for building recording to establish different phases of construction and to identify any pre-13<sup>th</sup> century fabric.

## 7.3 Medieval Potential (Figure 4)

The foundation and form of Rothbury are unknown in detail but documentary evidence provides information about land ownership, economic fluctuations and evidence of individual buildings in the town. The plan form of the village core suggests possible burgage plots, although the extent of the medieval form is uncertain. Little archaeological work has taken place within medieval Rothbury to date, therefore a high priority will be given to examining any land contained within the historic core, in particular along Bridge End, and around the market place and the church. We currently have no information about the likely depth of archaeological deposits and while medieval remains could be incorporated into present day buildings, buried deposits to the rear of the burgage plots may be some considerable depth where top soil has built up over the last few hundred years. The area of Rothbury most likely to contain medieval remains is shown on Figure 4.

### 7.3.1 *Research Agenda*

- What factors helped Rothbury survive throughout the medieval period when hundreds of other settlements failed and became deserted?
- To what extent can archaeological and documentary evidence reveal the distribution of wealth in Rothbury?
- What was the layout and extent of medieval Rothbury? Where were the market and burgage plots?
- What effect did the wars with Scotland have on the fortunes of Rothbury? Is there evidence of expansion and contraction of the town at this time?
- Did changes of ownership from royal burgh to baronial town affect the economy? Was there any change in the relationship between town and country?
- To what extent do medieval houses survive within standing buildings in Rothbury?
- How did the two medieval churches operate when there was no longer a monastery? Have their remains been incorporated into other buildings?
- To what extent might remains of the castle survive?
- How different was the medieval street pattern from that of today?

### 7.3.2 *Archaeological Priorities*

In order to explore these areas of potential, the County Archaeologist will consider the exploration of the historic core of Rothbury and the site of the church, to be a high priority and specifications for archaeological work will:

- seek to explore the evolution of the village from the early medieval period
- seek to establish the extent of the medieval town
- use wherever possible, building recording as a means for identifying earlier buildings, so that the evolution, date and function of these buildings can be examined.
- seek to locate the site of the medieval mill and bakehouse
- establish whether the present day green was in fact the medieval market place
- ensure that works to the church which require a Faculty from the Diocesan Advisory Committee are accompanied by archaeological recording to help establish a ground plan for the early churches and to record the development of the church. Works affecting Church Street and its environs should also have archaeological intervention so that any monastic buildings may be uncovered.

## 7.4 **Post-Medieval and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Potential** (Figure 5)

Until the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the town probably comprised two streets facing a market place and the road to the bridge. But it underwent radical transformation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the old houses were “swept away” and the town spilled out beyond its traditional medieval limits. It is therefore within this area and around the church that we are most likely to discover post medieval archaeology. A survey of the town in 1661 suggests that settlement at this time

focused around North Row and South Row which are presumed to be streets around a market place. Settlement also occurred along Bridge End. A hundred years later the town still consisted of two streets with thatched houses along side them and by c.1800, some of these houses had grey slate roofs. The town increased in size in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, to extend along the main roads.

#### 7.4.1 *Research Agenda*

- What was the extent of the post-medieval town before expansion in the 19<sup>th</sup> century?
- What evidence survives above and below ground of the pre-19<sup>th</sup> century town?
- How did border warfare and reiving affect the growth of Rothbury with its markets and fairs and position on a fording point?
- What evidence is there of any wealth difference between the older parts of the town and newer areas along Main Street and to the north and south of the town?
- To what extent did the improved communications brought by the railway lead to dilution of vernacular building traditions?

#### 7.4.2 *Archaeological Priorities*

The extent of post medieval and 19<sup>th</sup> century Rothbury is shown on Figure 5 and within these areas, archaeological briefs and specifications will direct contractors in Rothbury to consider:

- the potential for excavation within the historic core for evidence of commercial, industrial and residential use in the village;
- the usefulness of building recording in assessing the development of homes and the changing use of space within them;
- the changes in settlement pattern and architectural traditions brought about by the introduction of the railway and the turnpiking of the road between Alnmouth and Hexham.

## **PART THREE: ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE PLANNING PROCESS**

### **8 THE EXISTING FRAMEWORK**

The protection and management of archaeological remains in England is achieved through a combination of statutory and policy based measures. For what are considered to be the most important sites, those of national or international significance, statutory protections are conferred. For many other sites, those which are considered to be of regional or local significance, protection is provided through planning legislation and policy guidance. An indication of best practice for the protection and management of all archaeological sites is provided by Planning Policy Statement 5 issued by the Government.

**8.1 Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5)** was published in 2010 and replaces Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15). PPS5 is supported by a companion Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide endorsed by Communities and Local Government, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and English Heritage. The practice guide contains general and specific advice on the application of the PPS.

PPS5 recognises a heritage asset as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. It recognises that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource which should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations. It indicates that planning decisions should be made based on the nature, extent and level of significance investigated to a degree proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset (para 7). It establishes the principle that nationally important heritage assets and their settings, whether scheduled or not, should be preserved except in exceptional circumstances (HE9 and 10).

Policies HE6 and 8 require that local planning authorities should ensure that sufficient information on the significance of any heritage assets accompanies all applications with assessment being carried out by appropriate experts. In the case of archaeological assets, this may require desk-based assessment and where an assessment is insufficient to properly assess the situation, field evaluation may be required. Assessment and evaluation should be proportionate to the importance of the known or potential asset and no more than is required to understand the impact of the proposal on the significance of the asset. Where assessment and evaluation is required this needs to be undertaken prior to the submission of an application and included within the required Design and Access Statement (HE6 and 8). Pre-application discussion with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is recommended (HE8), in

particular Northumberland Conservation, who provide planning advice to the local authority on heritage issues.

Where the loss of part or all of the asset is justified, LPAs should require the developer to record and advance an understanding of the heritage asset before it is lost. Such actions can be secured by condition. The extent of mitigation requirements should be proportionate to the significance of the asset (HE12). These procedures are examined in more detail in section 8.7 and 8.8 below.

## **8.2 Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

The most important sites in the country are protected under the terms of section 1 of the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)*. For any works carried out on or in the vicinity of these sites consent must be granted by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), who take advice on these matters from English Heritage (EH). Scheduling is in many ways unsuited to widespread application in urban areas. It is not designed to protect extensive areas, but rather protects well-defined and easily identifiable monuments. Nor does it adapt well to protecting archaeological remains where the precise nature of the deposits is not known. It is therefore necessary to protect many urban archaeological remains through the planning process and if necessary by controlling or reducing sub-surface interference through an Article 4 direction under the *Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988*.

## **8.3 Listed Buildings**

This is a statutory designation, the equivalent of scheduling for a building. Listed buildings can be altered, but only after due consideration to the nature of the building and its historic context. There is currently a range of listing grades: grades I and II\* are protected directly by English Heritage, grade II by local authorities.

## **8.4 Conservation Areas**

Conservation Areas are designated by the local planning authority under the terms of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Archaeological Areas) Act 1990. Conservation Areas are put in place in parts of towns which are considered to be of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. There are more than 50 Conservation Areas in Northumberland of which Rothbury is one.

## **8.5 Archaeological Sites without Statutory Designation**

The majority of archaeological sites in England are not protected by statutory means. These are looked after and managed by local authorities. Measures for the protection of both known and (prior to discovery) unknown archaeological sites are set out as policies within the statutory development plan and include specific requirements as well as reference to

nationally agreed planning policy guidelines and statutory obligations.

## 8.6 Development Plan Policies

Responsibility for the protection and management of archaeological sites and the historic environment falls upon the Local Planning Authority (LPA). To assist the LPA in preserving the built and natural environment, the statutory development plan contains a comprehensive set of planning policies. For Rothbury, the statutory development plan comprises the *Alnwick District Local Development Framework Core Strategy* and the saved policies of the *Alnwick District Wide Local Plan*. The Regional Spatial Strategy was revoked in July 2010.

The relevant policy within the *Alnwick District Local Development Framework Core Strategy* is:

### **POLICY S15 - Protecting the built and historic environment**

*The district council will conserve and enhance a strong sense of place by conserving the district's built and historic environment, in particular its listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, conservation areas and the distinctive characters of Alnwick, Amble, Rothbury and the villages.*

*All development involving built and historic assets or their settings will be required to preserve, and where appropriate, enhance the asset for the future.*

The saved policy of the *Alnwick District Wide Local Plan* relating to the protection and management of archaeological sites and the historic environment is:

### **Policy BE2 Regional and local archaeological significance**

*Planning permission will not be granted for development detrimental to sites of regional or local archaeological importance, unless there is an overriding need for the development and no alternative location for the development can be found. Where the impact of the development is not clear, the developer will be required to provide an archaeological assessment or evaluation as appropriate. Before the development of sites of archaeological interest is permitted, the developer will be required to submit for approval a statement of investigation and proposals to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work before development commences.*

These objectives are implemented through the planning system and through protective legislation.

## 8.7 Pre-Application Discussion

Early consultation with Northumberland Conservation on planning proposals is of enormous importance and is highlighted in PPS5. Where assessment and evaluation are required, this needs to be undertaken prior to the submission of an application and included within the required Design and Access Statement in line with PPS5 policies HE6 and 8.

Northumberland Conservation can provide an initial appraisal of whether known or potential

heritage assets of significance are likely to be affected by a proposed development and can give advice on the steps that may need to be taken at each stage of the process.

#### *8.7.1 Desk-Based Assessment*

Information on the likely impact a proposed development will have on the remains can be estimated from existing records (including this report), historical accounts and reports of archaeological work in the vicinity, in conjunction with a number of sources which suggest the nature of deposits on the site, such as bore-hole logs and cellar surveys. This is presented in a standard format, known as a Desk-Based Assessment, prepared by an archaeological consultant on behalf of the applicant, to a specification drawn up by, or in agreement with, Northumberland Conservation, which can assist by providing a list of organisations which do work of this sort (see Policy BE2, above).

*Pre-application consultation with Northumberland Conservation is vital as desk-based assessment may not be necessary in many instances but where required, it will need to be submitted with the planning application.*

#### *8.7.2 Field Evaluation*

Where an assessment is insufficient to properly assess the impact of a proposed development on known or potential heritage assets, field evaluation may be required. The requirements of this stage will also be determined by Northumberland Conservation. It may require a range of survey and analytical techniques including limited excavation. An evaluation is designed to provide sufficient information about the extent, character and preservation of archaeological remains to judge what planning decision would be appropriate and, if necessary, what mitigation measures should be adopted (see Policy BE2, above).

*Pre-application consultation with Northumberland Conservation is vital as evaluation may not be necessary in some instances but where required, it will need to be submitted with the planning application.*

### **8.8 Archaeological Planning Conditions**

The Planning Authority can make the appropriate decision (in the context of the Policies set out in the statutory development plan) on whether or not to give consent to the scheme, based the information provided by the Historic Environment Record and assessment and evaluation reports, where necessary. If it is considered that an application can be consented, steps may be required to mitigate its impact on the archaeological remains. This can sometimes be achieved by simply designing the scheme to avoid disturbance, for example by the use of building techniques that ensure minimal ground disturbance. If planning permission is given and archaeological remains will be unavoidably destroyed, the developer may be required to ensure that these remains are archaeologically investigated, analysed and



published. In this situation, the requirements for further work will normally be attached to the Planning Consent as conditions, such as the standard Northumberland Conservation condition detailed below:

*A programme of archaeological work is required in accordance with the brief provided by Northumberland Conservation (NC ref X dated X). The archaeological scheme shall comprise three stages of work. Each stage shall be completed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before it can be discharged:*

*a) No development or archaeological mitigation shall commence on site until a written scheme of investigation based on the brief has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

*b) The archaeological recording scheme required by the brief must be completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.*

*c) The programme of analysis, reporting, publication and archiving if required by the brief must be completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.*

#### *8.8.1 Written Scheme of Investigation*

This is a detailed document which sets out the extent and the nature of archaeological work required, including any necessary analyses and research, finds collection, conservation and deposition policies as well as likely publication requirements. This document is usually prepared by the contracting archaeologist, who will undertake the work, to a brief prepared by Northumberland Conservation.

#### *8.8.2 The Range of Archaeological Fieldwork*

The range of archaeological requirements set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation will vary. Many sites in historic urban areas will require full excavation. Frequently, though, the small-scale of disturbance associated with a development, or the low probability that archaeological remains will have once existed or survived on the site, will mean that a less intensive level of observation and recording is required. This may take the form of a Watching Brief; this is the timetabled presence of a suitably qualified archaeologist at the point when ground work on a site is underway. Any archaeological deposits encountered will be quickly recorded and any finds collected, without undue disruption to the construction work. Again, Northumberland Conservation will provide the brief for the Watching Brief and the contracting archaeologist will provide a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation which complies with the brief.

#### *8.8.3 Building Recording*

Where historic standing buildings form a component of the archaeological resource affected by development, there may be a need to undertake building recording in advance of demolition or renovation. This requirement may apply to listed and unlisted buildings and will be dependent on the historical interest of the building; outwardly unprepossessing structures may contain important information about past communities and industries and will merit recording by qualified archaeologists or building historians to an agreed specification.

## 8.9 Unexpected Discoveries

Developers may wish to incorporate the potential for unexpected discoveries into their risk-management strategies. The PPS5 Practice Guide (paragraph 141) provides advice on the rare instances where, as a result of implementing a consent, a new asset is discovered or the significance of an existing asset is increased in a way that could not reasonably have been foreseen at the time of the application. It advises the local planning authority to work with the developer to seek a solution that protects the significance of the new discovery, so far as is practical, within the existing scheme. The extent of modifications will be dependant on the importance of the discovery and new evidence may require a local planning authority to consider reviewing its decision. Discoveries of treasure or human remains will need to be reported in accordance with the relevant legislation. English Heritage wishes to be informed if the discoveries are likely to merit designation.

The National Heritage Protection Commissions Programme Guidance on PPS5 Assistance Cases released in July 2010 indicates that English Heritage recognises that the best-planned and informed schemes can occasionally result in entirely unexpected discoveries of national significance, and therefore it may be possible to apply for funding as a last resort to ensure that a suitable record is made prior to destruction or loss of significance. English Heritage will only consider financial assistance towards the investigation, analysis or dissemination of such nationally significant discoveries if:

- The discovery is genuinely unexpected and could not have been predicted
- The asset discovered is of national significance
- The planning process set out in PPS5 has been followed
- Every effort can be demonstrated to have been made to accommodate unexpected discoveries within the available resources by prioritising the most important elements of the asset(s) being investigated

The request for funding must come from the appropriate local government heritage officer with responsibility for the case and not directly from the contractors or consultants conducting the investigation. Funding will be provided via the National Heritage Protection Commissions Programme (replacing the Historic Environment Enabling Programme in April 2011). English Heritage must be consulted at the earliest possible juncture so that they have an opportunity to shape the response to the unexpected discoveries. English Heritage will not consider retrospective applications to cover costs already incurred when they have not been consulted on or agreed to the response and its cost implications. The first point of contact should be the North-East English Heritage offices at Bessie Surtees House, 41-44 Sandhill, Newcastle upon Tyne (0191 269 1200).

### 8.9.1 *How is National Archaeological Importance Defined?*

A number of assumptions will be made when determining whether archaeological remains are nationally important or not. These have been set out by English Heritage (1992, 47):

- i) the further back in time the origins of the form the greater the interest to archaeology; the fewer the number of examples believed to exist the greater the interest that attaches to those places as representatives of their form;*
- ii) the greater the variation that can be perceived within any defined form the higher the archaeological interest in terms of opportunities to explore spatial and temporal variation in respect of social, economic, political, religious, and symbolic matters; and*
- iii) the more representative of the life and times of the periods during which defined forms were current the greater the archaeological interest in terms of providing insights into past lifestyles.*

These assumptions are not intended to apply to all of the town at all times. Nor will all of these assumptions be appropriate to all nationally important archaeological sites within the urban area. Instead they are used to help create a value judgement on particular archaeological remains and whether they may be nationally important or not. A number of discrimination criteria will also be applied to archaeological remains discovered during the course of development. These will relate more specifically to the remains uncovered and will include their state of survival, their potential to provide archaeological evidence, previous archaeological or historical documentation on site, their group value, diversity, and amenity value. These criteria have been developed by the Secretary of State to determine whether archaeological remains are nationally important or not.

In Rothbury the majority of sites considered to be of archaeological interest are medieval and later in date, although the area around the town contains important prehistoric remains. There are two listed buildings which have been given Grade II\* status; all other buildings are listed Grade II. These are buildings of special interest which warrant every effort being made to preserve them.

## 9 SOURCES

### Bibliography

- Bailey, R N, Cambridge, E and Briggs, H D, 1988. *Dowsing and Church Archaeology*
- Bates, C J, 1891. "The Border holdings of Northumberland", *Archaeologia Aeliana* 2 series, 14
- Collingwood, W G, 1927. *Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age*
- Cowen, J D, 1932. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne* 4 series, 5
- Cowen, J D, 1932. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne* 4 series, 11
- Cramp, R and Miket, R, 1982. *Catalogue of the Anglo-Saxon and Viking Antiquities in the Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle upon Tyne*
- Dodds, M H, 1940. *A History of Northumberland*, Vol. 15
- Dixon, D D, 1903. *Upper Coquetdale*, Sandhill Press 1987 edition
- Fortress Study Group, 1987. *Coquet Stop Line, Northumberland*, unpublished
- Fraser, C. M. (ed), 1968. *The Northumberland Lay Subsidy Roll, 1296*, Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne
- Goodman, A, 1992. "The Anglo-Scottish Marches", in R. Bartlett and A. Mackay (eds), *Medieval Frontier Societies*
- Handcock, R N, 1939. "A map of medieval Northumberland and Durham", *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4 series, 16
- Hawkes, J, 1999 "Anglo-Saxon Sculpture: Questions of Context" in Hawkes, J. and Mills, S.(eds) 1999 *Northumbria's Golden Age*
- Hedley, R C, 1888. "The Prehistoric Camps of Northumberland", *Archaeologia Aeliana* 2 series, 13
- Hedley, W P, 1950. "The medieval forests of Northumberland", *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4 series, 28
- Hodges, C C, 1925. "The ancient cross of Rothbury", *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4 series, 1
- Hunter Blair, C H, 1944. "Early Castles of Northumberland", *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4 series, 22
- Jervoise, E, 1931. *Ancient Bridges of Northern England*
- Macpherson, S, 1999. *Wellstrand, Rothbury, Northumberland, an Archaeological Evaluation*, Tyne and Wear Museums
- Mawer, A, 1921. "Early Northumbria in the light of its place names", *Archaeologia Aeliana* 3 series, 18 1-19
- Newbigin, N, 1935. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle* 4 series, 5
- Robson, D A, 1995. "Robson's geology of north east England", *Transactions of the Natural History Society of Northumbria*
- Rowland, T H, 1982. *The Alnmouth or Corn Road*

Ryder, P F and Sermon, R, 1993. *Historic Bridges in Northumberland* (unpublished)

Tate, G, 1868-9. *The History of the Borough, Castle and Barony of Alnwick*, Vol. I

Tomlinson, W W, 1905. *North East Railway*. David and Charles 1967 edition

Wymer, J J (ed), 1977. *Gazetteer of Mesolithic Sites in England and Wales*

### Maps and Plans

Armstrong, 1769. *Map of Northumberland*

First Edition Ordnance Survey map 1866

Second Edition Ordnance Survey map 1897

### Documentary Sources (Northumberland Records Office)

Deed 1460	NRO ZBR 14
Various papers re property at Rothbury 1692-1940	NRO 530 20/1-501
Deeds re property in Rothbury 1710-1820	NRO 2607/2
Leases and deeds 1756-1792, 1814-1852	NRO 530 17/21, 22
Deeds of Three Half Moons 1776-1880, and premises in the Market Place 1822-39	NRO 1976
Leases of Estate (Bigg family) 1778	NRO 324/F 2/17
Sketch of Rothbury Church c. 1800	NRO ZAN M 13/F 13 p 48
notes on plans re Rothbury Old Hall 1825-26	NRO ZAN M15/A31
Sketch of Rothbury Church c. 1841	NRO ZAN M 13/F 13 p 30
Tithe map (copy) 1848	NRO QCZ pl/51
Rothbury church dowsing survey 1983	NRO 2190/14
Various deeds of property in Rothbury	NRO 4915/2-9
Plans of various Rothbury property and farms	NRO ZAN Bell 39/3, 5a-d-8, 10- 19
Postcard High Street Rothbury	NRO 1311/19
Postcard Bridge, Rothbury	NRO 1311/18
Parish registers 1653-1977	NRO EP 103

### Newcastle City Local Studies Library

Discovery of 2 Bronze Age Swords near Rothbury Alnwick Journal, August 1868, p 29

Photographs of mill and church c. 1900 VF various

Cup marked stone, photograph c. 1930 VF 2204

Sculptured stone photograph 1964 VF 14002

The medieval forest of Rothbury was also a deer park of which Rowland states the substantial boundary walls can still be traced (Rowland 1982, 41).

Rothbury Forest (Dodds 1940, 352-60).

**APPENDIX 1: LISTED BUILDINGS****Grade II\***

Church of All Saints (HER 2961)

Addycombe Cottages, Nos 1-12 consecutive, with attached rear walls and outbuildings (HER 2979)

**Grade II**

Rothbury Bridge (HER 2923)

Free Grammar School (HER 2925)

Rothbury Cross (HER 2953)

Rothbury pill box (HER 2973)

Addycombe Cottages, Nos 13-19 consecutive, with attached rear walls and outbuildings (HER 2980)

Knocklaw and adjacent cottage to east (HER 2981)

Bridge Way, Nos 1, 2, and 3 (HER 2982)

Bridge House and Pinetree House (HER 2983)

Bridge Street House (HER 2984)

Purvis headstone 16m east of Church of All Saints (HER 2985)

Eleanor headstone 17m south of porch of Church of All Saints (HER 2986)

Bell headstone 21m south east of porch of Church of All Saints (HER 2987)

Monument to Walter Mavin at south east of detached graveyard (HER 2988)

Monument to 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Armstrong at south west of detached graveyard (HER 2989)

Nos 1 and 2 Church Street (HER 2990)

Lloyds Bank, High Street (north side) (HER 2991)

Alexandra House, High Street (north side) (HER 2992)

Premises of T. Rogerson and Sons, High Street (north side) (HER 2993)

Conway House, High Street (north side) (HER 2994)

Turk's Head Inn, High Street (north side) (HER 2995)

House belonging to Mrs. Armstrong and The Old Surgery, High Street (north side) (HER 2996)

West End House, High Street (north side) (HER 2997)

Ogle House, High Street (north side) (HER 2998)

Orchard Guest House, High Street (north side) (HER 2999)

Former Congregational Church, now church hall, High Street (north side) (HER 3000)

Highfield and adjacent cottage to east, High Street (north side) (HER 3001)

Sandford House and Farley House, High Street (south side, off) (HER 3002)

No 1 Market Place (south side) (HER 3003)

No 2 Market Place (HER 3004)

No 3 (Doctor's Surgery) Market Place (HER 3005)

No 4 Market Place (HER 3006)

No 5 Market Place (HER 3007)

Armstrong Cottages (Nos 1-12 consecutive) (HER 3008)

Front wall and gateway to Armstrong Cottages, Town Foot (north side) (HER 3009)

Rothbury Motors Garage, Town Foot (north side) (HER 3010)

Rothbury War Memorial (HER 20420)

## APPENDIX 2: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVENTS

Material within this report includes information available on the Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER) at the time this report was updated. Information on the HER is constantly being updated and should be used as the primary source for archaeological investigations in this area.

### **Event No: 119**

The Archaeological Practice, 2001. *Haw Hill*.

Two evaluation trenches were excavated, each 1m<sup>2</sup>. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed.

### **Event No: 13255**

Archaeological Services University of Durham, 2003. *Rothbury Motors site, Rothbury*.

An interim report on the results of palaeoenvironmental investigations at the former Rothbury Motors site. Works so far have comprised the field coring of peat deposits; preliminary assessment of potential; and radiocarbon dating of suitable materials from the top, middle and base of the peat. Three overlapping cores were obtained through peat deposits. Radiocarbon dating has demonstrated that the peat began to form in the late Roman/early post-Roman period and continued into the late medieval period.

### **Event No: 13362**

Tyne and Wear Museums, 1999. *Wellstrand, Rothbury, Northumberland: An archaeological evaluation*.

Notes of evaluation with some (though limited) survival and assemblages behind street frontage of Rothbury.

### **Event No: 13570**

Ian Farmer Associates, 2005. *All Saints Parish Church, Rothbury*

An archaeological watching brief and excavation at All Saints Parish Church Rothbury relating to the construction of a sewer pipe trench. These areas of archaeological importance were identified during the excavations. An unmortared stone-built conduit of possible medieval date was found in Area 1. In Area 2 a construction trench and fills associated with the Victorian church and tower were found along with the truncated remains of a human skeleton. A second inhumation and two large sandstone flags capping another conduit were also recovered. In Area 3 part of a medieval lime kiln was discovered and the watching brief was extended into an excavation to further investigate this feature. To the north of this kiln a third inhumation was revealed. A fragment of pre-conquest cross was also discovered in the kiln, presumably re-used in the kiln walls.



**APPENDIX 3: HISTORIC MAPS**

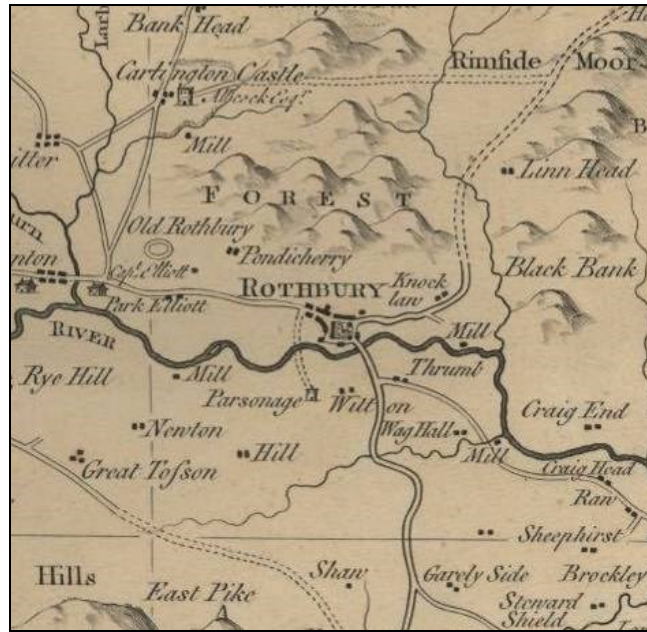


Figure 6: Armstrong's map 1769 (NRO ZBK sheet 5)



Figure 7: Bell's Plan of Rothbury c1800 (NRO ZAN BELL 38.9b)  
 (With permission of The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne)

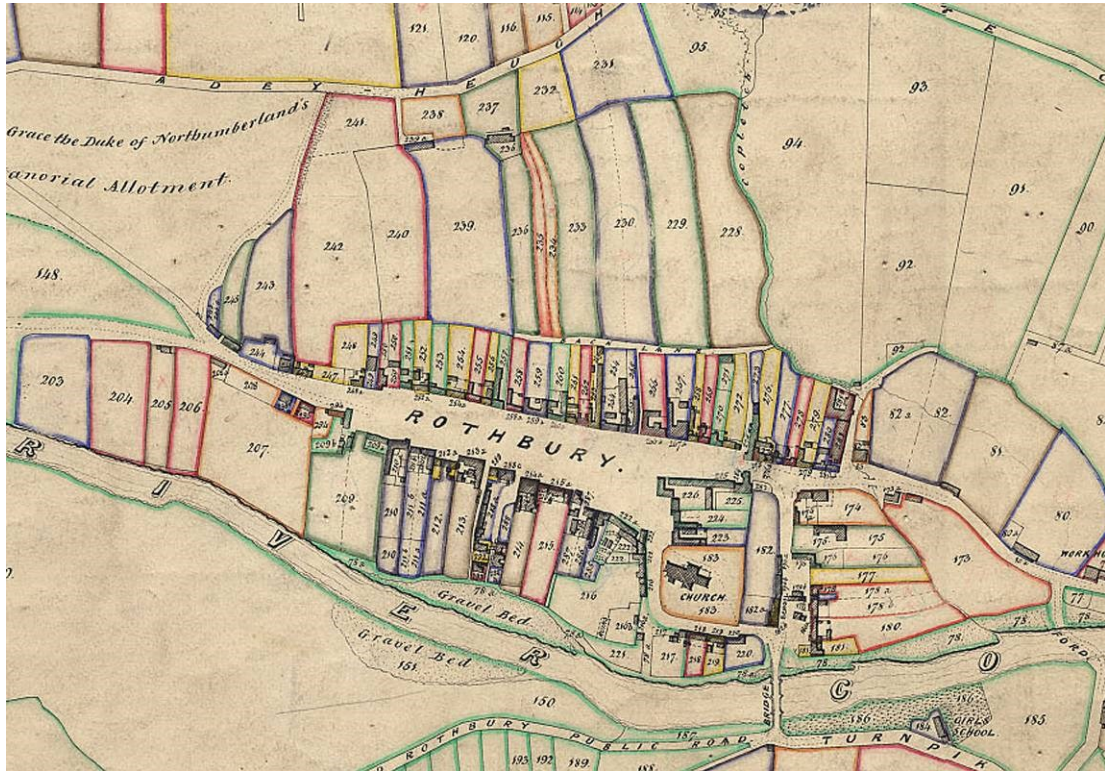


Figure 8: Tithe Award 30 Dec 1848 (NRO DT 400 M).  
(With permission of the Diocese of Newcastle)

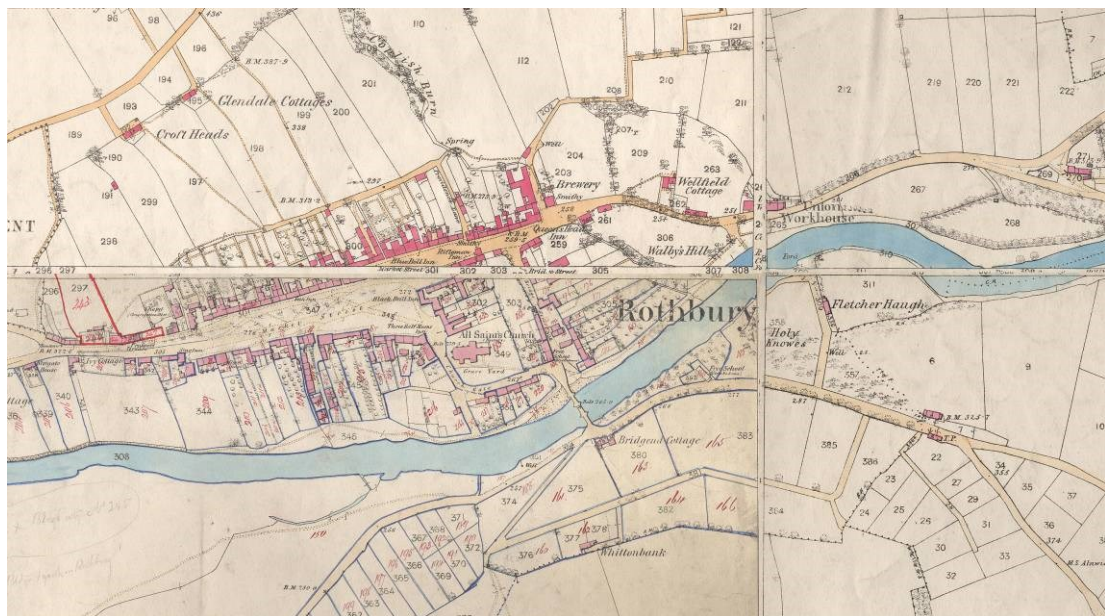


Figure 9: First Edition Ordnance Survey map 1860, Sheets 44.7, 44.8, 44.11 and 44.12



Figure 10: Second Edition Ordnance Survey map 1897, Sheets 44.7, 44.8, 44.11 and 44.12



Figure 11: Third Edition Ordnance Survey map 1920, Sheet 41.16

## APPENDIX 4: STRATEGIC SUMMARY

### ROTHBURY STRATEGIC SUMMARY

#### A4.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Rothbury appears to have been a focus of settlement activity since at least the early medieval period. The Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) combined documentary and cartographic evidence with the results of limited archaeological investigations within the town.

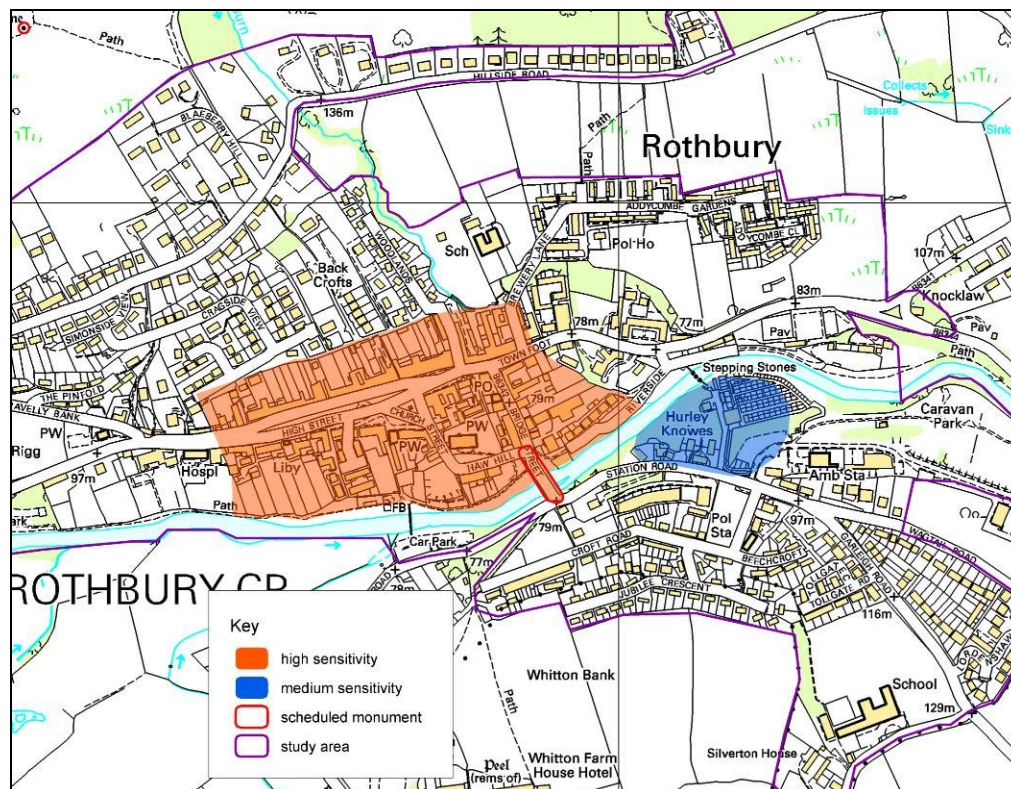


Figure 12: Rothbury areas of archaeological sensitivity

#### Prehistoric

- Rothbury is located within a wider prehistoric landscape, with all the known sites on higher ground to the north and south of the town
- While stray finds from the Mesolithic periods onwards have been recovered from the town and immediately surrounding area, no prehistoric sites have been revealed within the town to date.
- Given the close proximity to Old Rothbury hillfort to the north-west, the possibility that the stray finds could have washed down from sites on high ground and the level of subsequent development within town, it is unlikely that significant prehistoric sites will be present in the town.

#### Early Medieval

##### Church

- The fragments of the Rothbury Cross were discovered in 1849 and represent one of a limited number of crosses which would have acted as a focal point of early Christian evangelism. There is some uncertainty about its date with dates from the late 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, most recently it has been placed in the early 9<sup>th</sup> century.
- The present church is thought to stand on the site of an important double Saxon church with east and west naves linked by a central tower. Eighteenth century sources state that the foundations of a church were visible extending beyond Church Street and a

dowsing survey in 1988 appeared to lend weight to this theory. An archaeological watching brief in 2005 did not, however, reveal any structural remains in this area. The precise nature of the Pre-Conquest church remains inconclusive.

#### Settlement

- There is no documentary evidence of a settlement at Rothbury before the Norman Conquest and the limited archaeological investigations undertaken in the town have yet to reveal physical evidence of a settlement.
- The place-name evidence appears to indicate that the town has Anglo-Saxon origins and it is presumed that the church, if not monastery, of that date would not have existed in isolation.
- Any settlement would be most likely to be focused around the church. The high ground around the present church is the likely area of highest settlement potential.

#### **Medieval**

##### Church

- The first documentary evidence of the church dates to 1090. The present church is 13<sup>th</sup> century in date but was re-built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Several fragments of grave covers of likely 15<sup>th</sup> century date have been built into the wall of the current porch.

##### Castle

- A Norman castle is thought to have been located to the west of the church. The mound was levelled in the 19<sup>th</sup> century for a new churchyard.
- Sources indicate that the ruins of a square tower with east and west gables were entirely levelled and the foundations dug out when preparing the ground for the 19<sup>th</sup> century graveyard.
- It is most likely that the castle was built in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. There are later references to a hall or manor house at Rothbury and it is possible that it may only ever have been a building of that nature rather than a castle.
- The exact nature of the site may be very difficult to establish given the effective levelling in the 19<sup>th</sup> century although there is the possibility that remains could survive around the edge of this site.
- A number of high earthen mounds once stood at Hurley Knowes on the south side of the river which have been previously been thought to represent burial mounds or castle mottes. These features are undoubtedly natural in origin and the majority have been removed by 20<sup>th</sup> century development. One of the remaining mounds does appear to have a short length of artificial ditch, a flat top and affords a strong defensive position. It could potentially have been a natural hillock utilised as a motte. Evidence remains inconclusive.

##### Settlement

- The town was a royal burgh than a baronial borough for a long time in this period.
- The church, castle and likely bridging or fording point of the River Coquet are likely to have been focal points for any settlement, although its precise nature and extent have yet to be established.
- Post-medieval maps and surveys indicate the likely extent of the medieval settlement with two rows of properties to the north of the river, presumably either side of Market Street with the church as the settlement focus.
- There are documentary references to a mill and a bakehouse in 1249 and 1310 but their precise locations are not known.
- A market charter was granted in 1205 by King John. The precise location of the market is not known but it is most likely to have located on the green close to the church.
- The bridge is first documented in 1616 but almost certainly has an earlier origin. There are several phases of medieval construction visible within the bridge with the exception of the deck which was replaced in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- The river is fordable and the stepping stones shown upstream from the bridge on 19<sup>th</sup> century maps may indicate the location of the earlier fording point.

## Post-Medieval

### Church

- The church fell into disrepair in the post-medieval period and was reconstructed in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.
- There are a number of interesting grave covers of 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century date.

### Settlement

- 16<sup>th</sup> century surveys suggest that Rothbury had not altered significantly from its medieval form and retained its primary function as a market town with little industrialisation.
- There appears to be some limited expansion and infilling of buildings including the construction of long strips of development at right angles to the medieval street frontages. This may reflect the increased number of freeholders indicated in sources from the 17<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- Documentary references refer to burgage tenements, a market, fair, common bakehouse and water mill. While Rothbury was known for its hatters, the extent and location of that industry has yet to be established.
- In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Rothbury benefited from its position on the newly turnpike Hexham to Alnmouth Road and through-trade increased.
- The covered market cross was built in 1772, presumably on the site of an older market cross. It was an octagonal building which was demolished in 1827 due to its ruinous state.
- Several disastrous fires in Rothbury resulted in the loss of earlier buildings. Some buildings such as Sandford House/Farley House on High Street, appear to originally have been a single dwelling of late 17<sup>th</sup> century date which was reworked in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- Much of the present bridge over the River Coquet is thought to be pre-17<sup>th</sup> century in date. When the road was turnpiked in 1754, the existing packhorse bridge was updated and widened to enable vehicular traffic. The bridge was widened again in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- Rothbury's fortunes were improved in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the construction of Cragside nearby by Williams Armstrong in 1863, the coming of the railway in 1870, the establishment of Donkin and Sons livestock market. It became the biggest cattle and sheep mart in the county in 1871. Rothbury also developed as a health resort in this period.
- 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings include various inns and a workhouse on Church Street.
- 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings include various places of worship, inns, hotels, banks, almshouses, school, workhouse, smithies and buildings associated with the livestock market.

## A4.2 SUMMARY OF SETTLEMENT SPECIFIC RESEARCH AGENDAS

As part of the planning process, it is important to establish the significance of surviving remains, in order to provide an appropriate and informed response for planning applications with the potential to impact on archaeological remains.

As stated in Part Two of the EUS (Williams et al 2007), the most effective way of assessing the significance of archaeological remains is by comparing them with agreed national, regional and local research agendas and frameworks, particularly the North East Regional Research Framework (Petts et al, 2006).

These research agendas are discussed in detail in the EUS and summarised below.

### Prehistoric

- It is unlikely that prehistoric remains will be present within the town. Any potential remains would be most likely to be focussed around the fording point.

### Early Medieval

- Any evidence of the early medieval church either in the fabric of the church or below ground, its location, extent, nature and form.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can it categorically be shown that the church was not a double church.</li> <li>• Evidence of whether a monastery was present at Rothbury, its location, extent, character and the location of the cemetery.</li> <li>• Evidence of a secular settlement in this area, its location, extent and nature.</li> </ul> <p><b>Medieval</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The nature, extent and development of the medieval settlement.</li> <li>• Evidence of expansion or contraction of the settlement which may have resulted from the wars with Scotland.</li> <li>• Evidence of changes to the settlement which may relate to the change in ownership of royal burgh to baronial town.</li> <li>• Any evidence of medieval buildings surviving in what would appear to be later buildings.</li> <li>• Any surviving remains of the castle.</li> <li>• Differences between the medieval and present street pattern.</li> <li>• Evidence of a medieval market place on the site of the present green.</li> <li>• The location, nature and extent of the medieval mill and bake house.</li> </ul> <p><b>Post-Medieval</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent of the post-medieval village before 19<sup>th</sup> century expansion.</li> <li>• Any effect of border warfare and reiving on the growth of Rothbury, its markets, fairs and position on a fording point.</li> <li>• Any evidence of any wealth difference between the old parts of the town and the newer areas along Main Street and to the north and south of the town.</li> </ul>
---

#### **A4.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS**

The Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) has identified the areas of greatest archaeological sensitivity and potential in Rothbury as summarised in the previous two sections. The attached plan further condenses the information into areas of high and medium archaeological sensitivity.

As stated in the EUS report, the protection and management of archaeological remains in England is achieved through a combination of statutory protection and protection through planning legislation and policy guidance. This framework is summarised in Part Three of the EUS.

There is a strong potential that archaeological work will be required by the Local Planning Authority on planning applications submitted within the areas highlighted as being of high and medium archaeological sensitivity. Areas outside the EUS area may also be of archaeological sensitivity, particularly remains associated with prehistoric activity. It is recommended that developers contact the Assistant County Archaeologist at Northumberland Conservation at the earliest opportunity, *prior* to the submission of a planning application, to establish if sites are of archaeological sensitivity and will require archaeological work as detailed below.

The nature and extent of archaeological work required as part of the planning process will depend on the location of the development in relation to the most archaeologically sensitive areas, the size of the development and the level of previous disturbance on the site. This could comprise one or more of the following:

##### **Pre-application work**

1. PPS5 indicates that, where assessment and/or evaluation are required on a site, the results of this work will need to be submitted in support of the planning application, and therefore will need to be completed prior to the submission of the application.
2. The EUS is used as an aid in the decision making process and helps to highlight large or particularly archaeologically sensitive sites which may require further, site specific, assessment or evaluation. In order to locate trial trenches or test pits most effectively, the commissioned archaeological contractor will need to provide a detailed project design for the agreement of Northumberland Conservation prior to work commencing. The project design will need to include:

- i. A summary of all known archaeological remains and investigations in the surrounding area
  - ii. Historic maps of the specific site indicating earlier site layouts and the location of structures and features
  - iii. Any geotechnical, test pit data or records indicating the build-up of deposits and/or modern truncation of the site
3. The subsequent evaluation will need to work to the parameters agreed in the project design. Where undated features and deposits are revealed environmental sampling, analysis and radio carbon dating is likely to be required. The results of the fieldwork and any necessary post-excavation analysis or assessment will need to be provided in a report submitted with the planning application to enable an appropriate decision to be made.
4. It is important to have a good understanding of the nature and significance of historic buildings, any surviving features, fixtures and fittings or potential re-use of earlier buildings or material prior to the building's alteration or demolition. Dependant on the specific building and the nature of the proposed works, an application may require historic building assessment to be submitted with the planning application. This will enable a decision to be made on the appropriateness of the scheme and the nature and extent of any mitigation requirements required

#### **Post-determination mitigation**

1. The formulation of an appropriate mitigation strategy will be required and this will be based on the results of the evaluation. The majority of these options can be dealt with as a condition of planning permission comprising one or more of the following:
  - i. Preservation *in situ* of important archaeological remains revealed during evaluation. This could have an impact on the viability of the scheme and whether planning permission should be granted
  - ii. Full excavation prior to construction work commencing for significant remains that do not necessarily warrant preservation *in situ*. This will also require post-excavation assessment, full analysis, publication of the results and long-term storage of the archive at the appropriate museum
  - iii. Strip and record prior to construction work commencing for a high density of less significant archaeological remains. The level of post-excavation work will depend on the significance of the archaeology revealed. Significant remains will require post-excavation assessment, full analysis and publication of the results. Archaeology of lesser significance may simply require an appropriate level of analysis and reporting. Long-term storage of the archive at the appropriate museum will be required
  - iv. Watching brief during construction work for a low density of less significant archaeological remains. An appropriate level of analysis, reporting and long-term storage of the archive at the appropriate museum will be required
  - v. No further work in areas where no archaeological remains are found
2. Small-scale development such as small extensions within the area of high archaeological sensitivity may not require pre-application evaluation and in some instances can be dealt with by an archaeological watching brief during construction. Given the high sensitivity of this area, the level of archaeological work required will very much depend on the nature, extent and depth of groundworks and the level of any previous disturbance on the site. An appropriate level of analysis, reporting and long-term storage of the archive at the appropriate museum will be required
3. The need for historic building recording is assessed on the significance of the building, its surviving fixtures and fittings, the potential re-use of earlier building fabric and the nature and extent of the proposed works. Sufficient information will be needed to assess the significance of the building either from existing records or the production of an historic building assessment prior to the determination of the application. An appropriate level of building recording will be identified in response to all these factors, adhering to English Heritage Guidelines
4. Ecclesiastical faculties involving groundwork and work on the historic fabric of the church are likely to require archaeological work of the nature detailed above.

***NB*** The nature and extent of archaeological work is gauged for each individual site. It is therefore recommended that prospective developers contact the Assistant County



*Archaeologist at Northumberland Conservation at the earliest opportunity before the application is submitted to discuss the potential requirements on development sites in Rothbury and the surrounding area.*

This document and plan have been produced based on the available evidence at the time that the EUS was produced. Our knowledge of the archaeology is continually being updated and as such this information should only be used as a broad indication of the archaeologically sensitive areas. In some instances development outside the highlighted areas may be required.

**Further Guidance**

Any further guidance or queries should be directed to:

Assistant County Archaeologist  
Northumberland Conservation  
Development & Delivery  
Planning Economy & Housing  
Northumberland County Council  
County Hall  
Morpeth  
NE61 2EF

Tel: 01670 620305

e-mail: [archaeology@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology@northumberland.gov.uk)

