

# Belford

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 Stationery 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

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

## CONTENTS

### PART ONE: THE STORY OF BELFORD

#### 1 INTRODUCTION

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

#### 2 PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN

- 2.1 Early prehistoric
- 2.2 Earthwork enclosures
- 2.3 Roman

#### 3 MEDIEVAL

- 3.1 Documentary Evidence
- 3.2 St Mary's Chapel
- 3.3 Moated Manor
- 3.4 Mill
- 3.5 Church of St Mary
- 3.6 The Village

#### 4 POST-MEDIEVAL AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY

- 4.1 Layout of the Settlement
- 4.2 Belford Hall
- 4.3 Market Place
- 4.4 Inns
- 4.5 The Union Workhouse
- 4.6 Nonconformist places of worship
- 4.7 Churchyard Watch House
- 4.8 Industries
- 4.9 World War Two Defences
- 4.10 Summary

### PART TWO: ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL OF BELFORD

#### 5 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 Prehistoric and Roman Potential
- 5.2 Medieval Potential
- 5.3 Post-Medieval and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Potential
- 5.4 Twentieth Century Potential

### PART THREE: ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE PLANNING PROCESS

#### 6 THE EXISTING FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5)
- 6.2 Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- 6.3 Listed Buildings
- 6.4 Conservation Areas
- 6.5 Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England
- 6.6 Archaeological Sites Without Statutory Designation
- 6.7 Development Plan Policies

- 6.8 Pre-Application Discussion
- 6.9 Archaeological Planning Conditions
- 6.10 Unexpected Discoveries

## 7 SOURCES

Bibliography  
Maps and Plans  
Documentary Sources

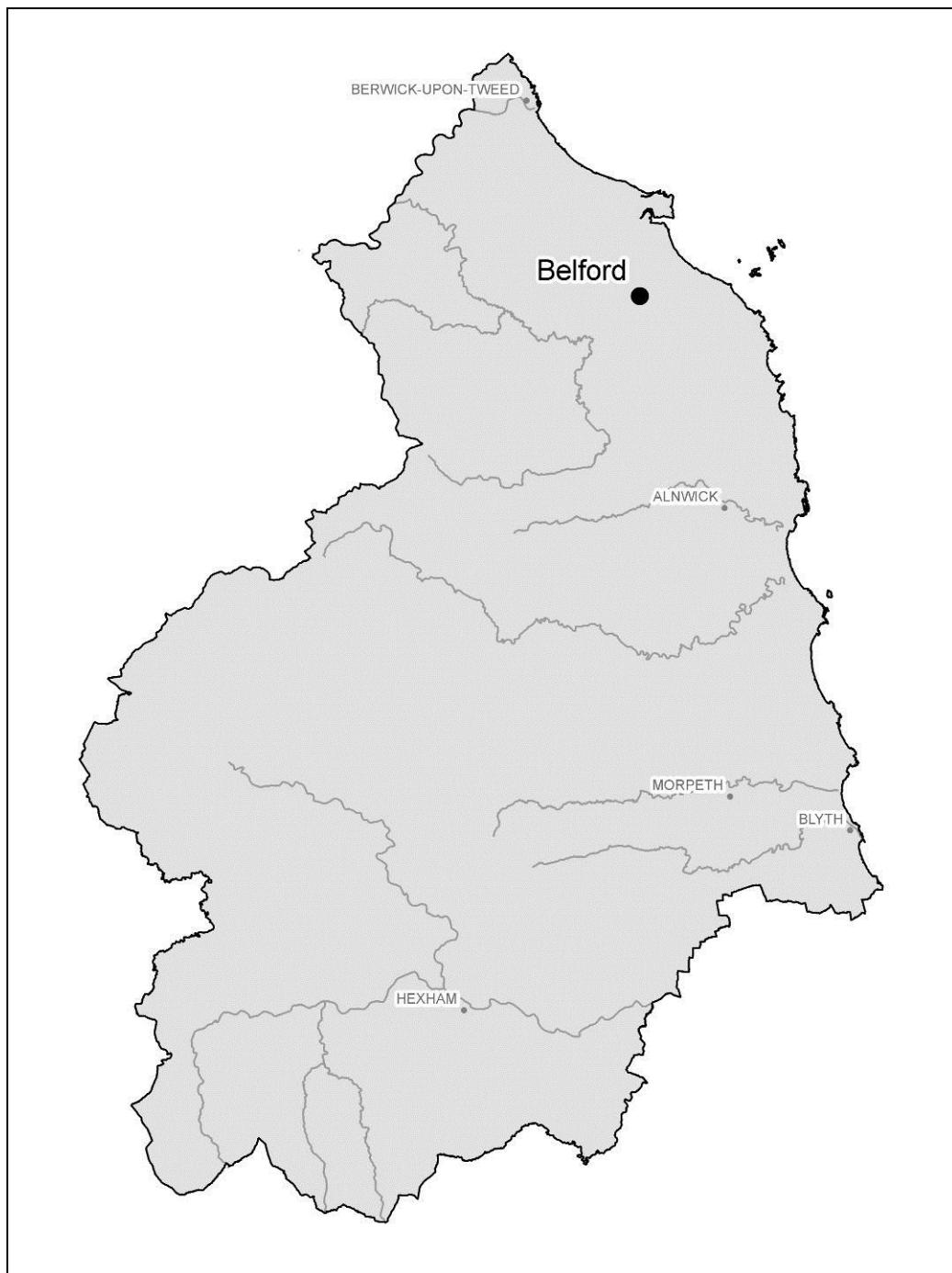
## APPENDIX 1: LISTED BUILDINGS

## APPENDIX 2: MAPS

## APPENDIX 3: STRATEGIC SUMMARY

## LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1: Location
- Figure 2: Study area
- Figure 3: Prehistoric period
- Figure 4: Medieval period
- Figure 5: Post-medieval
- Figure 6: Armstrong's Map of Northumberland 1769 (Ref ZBK sheets 4 and 5)
- Figure 7: Map of Belford Manor, May 1824
- Figure 8: First Edition 25 inch to 1 mile Sheet 68
- Figure 9: Third Edition 25 inch to 1 mile Ref Sheets 65.11 and 65.15
- Figure 10: Belford areas of archaeological sensitivity



*Figure 1: Location*

## PART ONE: THE STORY OF BELFORD

### 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 workplaces, beneath our houses, gardens, streets and shops - beneath our feet - there lie archaeological remains which can tell us how these settlements were once organised 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.

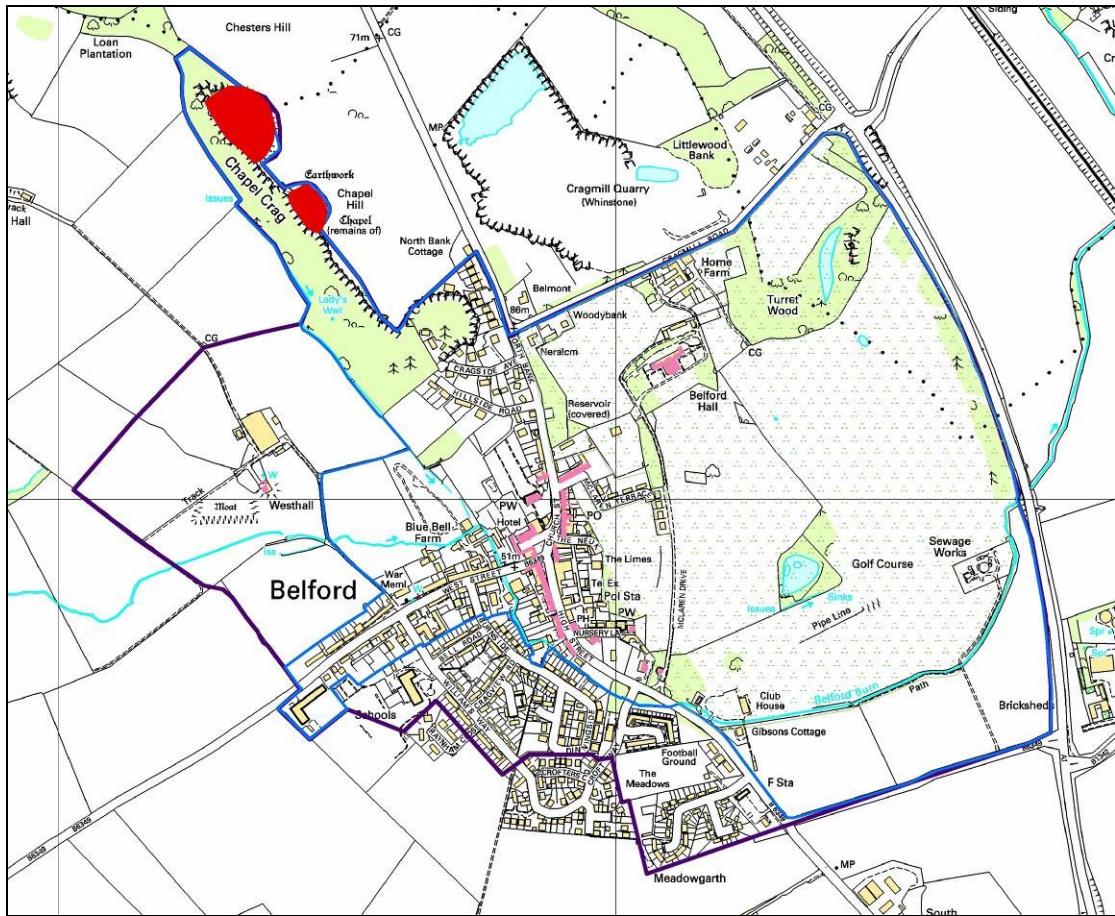
In 1992, English Heritage published a national policy to help planners and developers deal with urban archaeology and any issues that might arise during the planning process (*Managing the Urban Archaeological Resource*). This led to the Extensive Urban Survey programme, where funds were made available to individual planning authorities to prepare material to explain how archaeology fits into the planning process and how issues raised can be best resolved. Belford 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 Belford 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 Belford 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 (fig 2) encompasses the full extent of the town of Belford and its boundary is coincident with that of Belford 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.



*Figure 2: Study Area (purple), conservation area (blue), scheduled monuments (red), listed buildings (pink), registered park and garden (green)*

## 1.2 Location, Topography and Geology

The small town of Belford (present population just under 800) is located within the Northumberland coastal plain (fig 1) and on ground rising to the north. Bamburgh, and the coast, lies four miles to the east, and the sands at Fenham Flats to the south of Holy Island, lie three miles to the north. Alnwick is 15 miles to the south and Berwick-upon-Tweed a similar distance to the north. Both these towns and Belford are linked by The Great North Road, the modern A1, which passed through Belford and allowed the village to develop as a coaching and post town. Belford is also sited at the junction of this historic north-south route with another early road, West Street, running in from Wooler. Today, Belford is bypassed by the A1 which curves to the east of the settlement. High Street and Church Street mark its original course through Belford, joined at Market Place by West Street. Belford Burn runs in from the west, under West Street, along the rear of properties flanking High Street and then out under this road and away in a broad curve to the north east. The core of the town lies around High Street and Church Street and a little way along West Street. The Parish Church, dedicated to St Mary, sits on the western side of Church Street a little way to the north of Market Place. Immediately to the north of Belford is the prominent line of the whinstone

outcrop of Chapel Crag with its surmounting enclosures. To the west is Westhall and the remnants of a medieval moated enclosure, and to the east, Belford Hall, a classical structure of the mid 18th century by James Paine with wings added in the early 19th century by John Dobson set in fine parkland. Chapel Crag is wooded but elsewhere the landscape is generally open with scattered plantation woodland increasing to the north-west and the Kyloe Hills.

Geologically, Carboniferous sandstones, shales and limestones predominate to the south and south-west of Belford and outcrops of coal have been worked here in the past. Whinstone breaks through these sedimentary rocks and outcrops to the north and north-east of the town where it has been quarried for road metalling at the extensive Craigmill Quarry and as mentioned, forms a prominent feature at Chapel Crag.

### **1.3 Documentary and Secondary Sources**

Research on the town in this survey began with a review of information held in the county's Historic Environment Record (HER). For Belford, this was restricted largely to antiquarian discoveries and standing building descriptions. As additional sources were examined during this survey new entries were added to the HER and are noted throughout the report. The history of Belford is published in volume 1 of the *Northumberland County History* (Bateson 1893). A search for primary documentary evidence relating to the settlement indicates that records are sparse. Belford is recorded in the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1296 and there are deeds relating to the manor of Belford for the period 1661-1779 (NRO 4196) as well as some records of the Belford estate over the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century (NRO 692/40). Further analysis of these records could prove useful in establishing a more detailed history of the town.

### **1.4 Cartographic Sources**

The cartographic resource for Belford is quite poor. Historic maps of Belford are few and provide limited information from which to analyse the development of the plan-form of the village. Although the settlement appears on Speed's 1610 map of Northumberland and on Armstrong's map of Northumberland of 1769, detailed surveys only date from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest of these is from 1820, by John Dobson (NRO ZJ6 ZHE 8/1).

### **1.5 Archaeological Evidence**

The archaeological data from the area around Belford is restricted to antiquarian finds. There have been no archaeological interventions within the settlement and there is therefore an absence of data on which the depth, character or degree of preservation of below-ground deposits can be assessed.

## 1.6 Protected Sites

The study area includes two Scheduled Ancient Monuments: the earthwork enclosures on Chester Hill (SAM283) and Chapel Hill (SAM285) which lie to the north of the town. Some 48 listed buildings lie within the study area; all except Belford Hall are grade II and therefore protected by the local authority. Belford Hall (grade I) lies within Grade II registered parkland which is included on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens. The centre of the town is also designated as a conservation area, the extent of which is shown on figure 2.

## 2 PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN (figure 3)

### 2.1 Early Prehistoric

There is no evidence for prehistoric activity from within Belford itself, but evidence for early activity from the vicinity includes worked flints of Mesolithic date (HER 5116) found during archaeological excavations at Chapel Crag in the 1920s (Davies 1983, 18-24) probably from the area of the enclosures described below. The Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle also records a bronze axe head found in a field to the east of the village near to Belford Station beyond the line of the A1 (Anon 1944, 215).

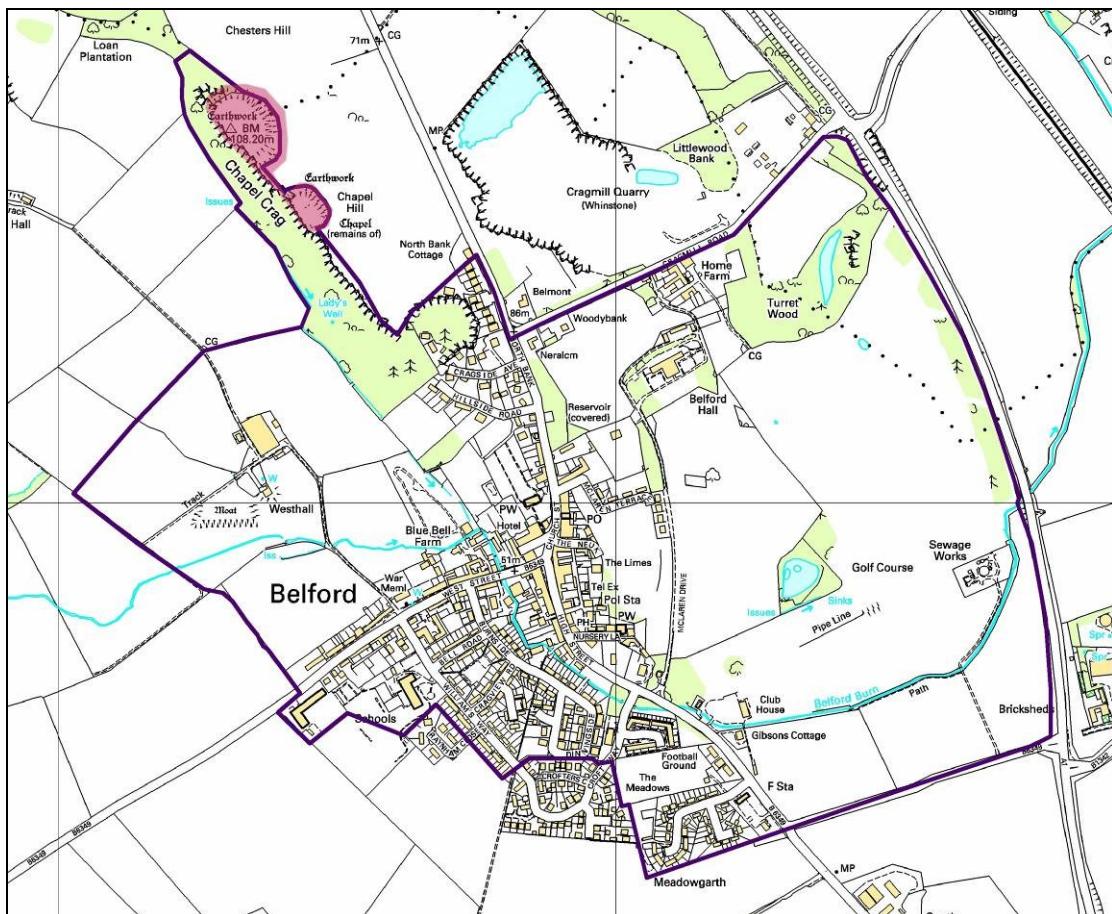


Figure 3: Prehistoric (dark pink)

## 2.2 Earthwork Enclosures

To the north-west of Belford along Chester Crag are two earthwork enclosures, Chesters Camp and Chapel Hill. Chesters Camp (HER 5111), a scheduled ancient monument (SAM 283) forms an eminently defensible 'D' shaped enclosure with eastern counterscarp (that is external) rampart and 12m wide flanking ditch with Chapel Crag forming the edge of the enclosure to the west. In the North East, the majority of ditched and banked hilltop enclosures tend to be ascribed, usually on morphological grounds alone, to the Iron Age. There is, in truth, very little useful dating evidence for many of them. This is certainly the case for Chesters Camp.

The Chapel Hill earthwork (HER 5113), also a scheduled ancient monument (SAM 285) and also on the edge of Chapel Crag, encloses the site of a medieval chapel (HER 5112, see below, section 3.1). The earthwork bank, too slight in MacLauchlan's view to have been defensive (1864, 36), is considered by Tomlinson (1888, 445) to be older than the chapel (it is bisected by, and therefore, he reasons, earlier than, a boundary wall, which appears to be contemporary with the chapel) although whether it is of prehistoric date is conjectural.

## 2.3 Roman

There are no known Roman remains in the town or immediately surrounding area

# 3 MEDIEVAL (figure 4)

## 3.1 Documentary Evidence

There is limited contemporary evidence relating to the township of Belford in the medieval period. Two small freeholdings are documented in the reign of Henry III (1216-72) and there were five bondmen and four cotters on each of the two parts of the divided manor in the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Bateson 1893, 375-85). At the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century 18 inhabitants were liable for the Lay Subsidy tax of 1296 when the total for the *vil* was £ 57 19s 4d (Fraser 1968, 132) indicating that it was a reasonably prosperous village at this time. The Scottish Wars and the Black Death had a serious impact on the prosperity of the village as elsewhere in the area.

## 3.2 St Mary's Chapel (HER 5112)

A 1738 reference quoted by Bateson (1893, 366) mentions "*the ruins of an old chapel called St. Mary's to be seen a little more than a quarter of a mile N.N.W. from the church. It stands on the top of a high rock from whence there is a very good prospect of all the neighbouring villages*". The remnants of this building (and its surrounding enclosure, see section 2, above), a platform about 0.4m high, 18m long and 6m wide, are still visible on the edge of Chapel Crag. Bateson (1893, 374) on the grounds of a 1220 reference to Robert de Muschamp's chaplain, suggests that it was domestic to the Muschamp family. The chapel was still standing in 1733, marked on a map of that date in Belford Hall (*op cit* 1893, 366, 72-4). Near to the site

of the chapel is St Mary's or Our Lady's Well (HER 5118), a natural spring flowing into a modern trough. The Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle suggests the well dates from 1399 (Anon 1942, 20).

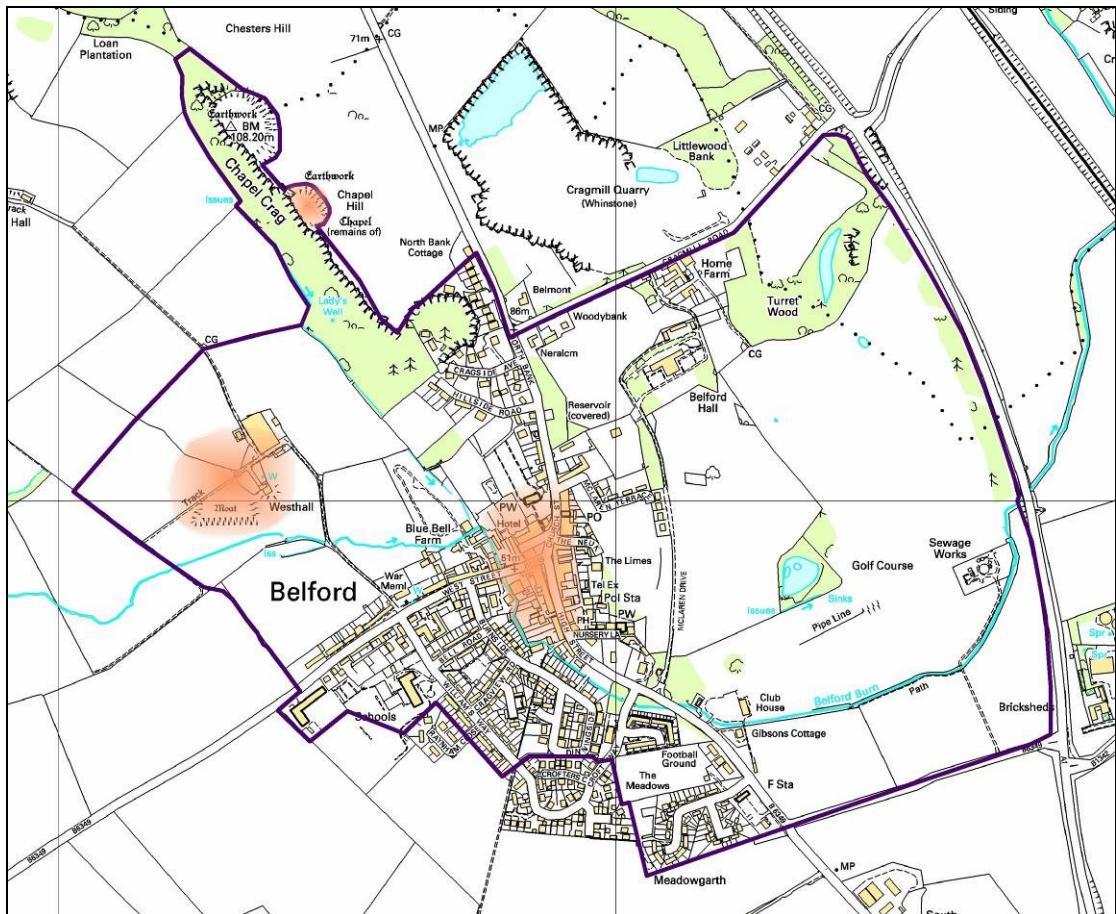


Figure 4: Medieval

### 3.3 Moated Manor (HER 5114)

Another significant component of the medieval settlement lies beyond the modern core of Belford. This is the site of the moated manor in a field to the west of the village and north of Belford Burn at Westhall first mentioned in 1415 (Bates 1891, 12-23). Tomlinson says that Westhall farm house was formerly "*Castrum de Beleford*" (1888, 444). Bateson concurs, saying there was no doubt that Westhall was the site of a tower or 'fortilage' (1893, 363-4). No remains of early structures can now be seen on the site which is largely occupied by the 19<sup>th</sup> century castellated farmhouse of Westhall. However, the remains of a moat can still be seen to the south of the farm, although it is partly obliterated by the modern farm buildings and the remainder has been greatly reduced by ploughing so only what is probably the southern arm and south west angle survive. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century workmen enlarging the mill pond, formerly a part of the moat, found some human bone and a pair of 15<sup>th</sup> century spurs (Bateson 1893, 364). The full extent of the moated site is not clear but the visible portion has been used as a guide to demarcate a likely area (see Figure 4). A complicating factor is that

the manor may have been the focus of the village in the medieval period and buried remains of medieval settlement could, therefore, be found in the vicinity.

### **3.4 Mill**

A mill pond (HER 5233) is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map close to Belford Burn, lying to the west of the village. The medieval mill (HER 5235) may have occupied the same site.

### **3.5 Church of St Mary**

The parish church is dedicated to St Mary and lies east of the site of the manor on high ground rising above the modern village (HER 5151). Although the church was repaired and rebuilt in 1700-1701, earlier fabric remains. The chancel arch, for instance, is of Norman date (Pevsner 1992, 162) and was only revealed beneath plaster in 1879 (Tomlinson 1888, 444). Pevsner states that there are other pieces of Norman stonework built into the wall above the chancel arch and interprets the whole as having been reset (Pevsner 1992, 162). There are also two 14<sup>th</sup> century windows. The south door of the chancel bears the date 1615 which Bateson suggests is a period of restoration, when older materials were incorporated into the fabric (1893, 365). A survey of churches compiled in 1650 locates a church at Belford on this site. In 1725 a documentary source cited by Bateson describes the building as "*new and very decent*" and in 1738 as "*small but handsome, and well built*". He also notes that an old sketch of the church from 1763 shows angular hood moulds over the windows, a Norman south door and a bell turret at the west end (1893, 365-7). The chancel was restored in 1828 and a tower and porch added later that century (Pevsner 1992, 83).

### **3.6 The Village**

While the limited documentary evidence gives no indication that Belford was a town in the medieval period, the church, chapel and moated manor are evidence for a substantial village. However, the location of the core of this village is uncertain. There are a number of alternatives: The village may conceivably have sat near to the site of prehistoric occupation along Chapel Crag to the north of the present village; or possibly adjacent to the moated manor west of the village. More likely, however, is that the T-shaped layout of the present village (first seen in detail on a survey of 1820 by John Dobson) with plots at right angles to the frontages of High Street, Market Place (there is no evidence for a medieval market at Belford) and West Street, could reflect and overlie the pattern established in the medieval period. As already mentioned, no archaeological excavation has been carried out at Belford to test these hypotheses.

## 4 POST-MEDIEVAL AND EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY (figure 5)

### 4.1 Layout of the Settlement

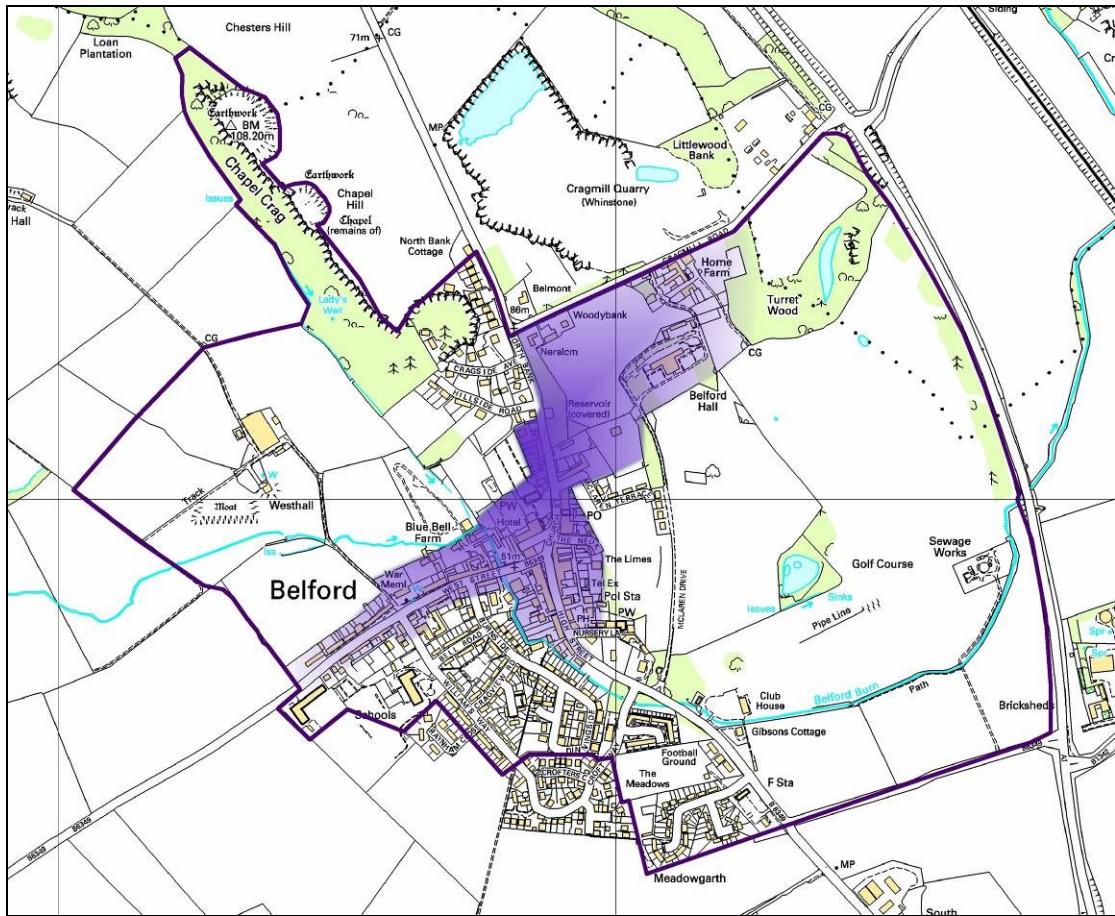
In 1743, when Abraham Dixon inherited the Belford estate, the village consisted of only a few cottages (Bateson 1893, 393). Armstrong's map of 1769 shows the village positioned as it is today, on the north-south main road at its junction with the road to Wooler. The earliest detailed cartographic evidence for Belford, as noted, is provided by John Dobson's survey of 1820 (NRO ZHE 8/1) It shows buildings along, the Great North Road (High Street and Church Street) and West Street, the road to Wooler. The T-form village on this map has the same layout as that depicted 40 years later on the first edition Ordnance Survey. Properties run back from the street frontages and there is a market place at the junction of the three thoroughfares. A number of standing buildings of early 18<sup>th</sup> century date demonstrate that the 'T- form' existed prior to these surveys but, as mentioned in section 3.5, it is not known just how early. Bateson thought that the town did "*not present any features worthy of remark*" (1893, 364) but this is to ignore the quality of the buildings and the overall pattern of the settlement. Modern development has left the street frontages of the historic core of the village largely unaffected and its streetscape is largely as it would have appeared over much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 4.2 Belford Hall

From the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Belford Estate, including the village, underwent substantial developments. These included the building of the now Grade I listed Belford Hall (HER 5174) in 1754-56 by James Paine for Abraham Dixon. John Dobson added wings and a rear entrance in 1818. The hall lies within attractive and extensive parkland. During the Second World War the hall was used as accommodation by the army and barrack huts were also constructed within the park. For many years after 1945, the hall was derelict and only saved from total loss by the Northern Heritage Trust. The hall was converted into flats in the 1980s. Some internal features were retained and the plasterwork has in part been recreated (Pevsner 1992, 163). An ice house to the north of the hall (HER 5175), and linked to it by a tunnel, is listed Grade II. It was probably built by Dobson. The park appears on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens.

### 4.3 Market Place

In 1741, Abraham Dixon obtained a licence to hold a weekly market at Belford (Clarke 1976, 3) but by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it had fallen into disuse (Tomlinson 1888, 444). A market cross (HER 5204) still stands in front of the Blue Bell Hotel (HER 5209). The main section dates to the 18th or early 19th century, but the base may be earlier. A set of stocks (HER 5117) is known from documentary sources. They probably stood in the Market Place (Bateson 1893, 364) but another source suggests they originally sat within the churchyard (Anon 1902, 299).



*Figure 5: Post-Medieval and early 19<sup>th</sup> century*

#### 4.4 Inns

The village's role as a post and coaching stop on the Great North Road encouraged the development of facilities for travellers. The Grade II Blue Bell Hotel (HER 5209) dates from the early 18th century. It may have been the "good inn" built as part of the improvements made by Abraham Dixon from 1743 onwards (Bateson 1893, 393). Garages and outbuildings (HER 5208) to the south and west of the Blue Bell are former stables and coach houses dating from c.1820. They are also listed Grade II, as is The Black Swan Hotel (HER 5205) which is of early 19<sup>th</sup> century date.

#### 4.5 The Union Workhouse

Belford's workhouse (HER 5232) is marked on the First Edition Ordnance Survey

#### 4.6 Non-conformist Places of Worship

Bateson describes The Scottish Church (HER 5231) in West Street as built in 1776 on the site of a former meeting house which was called the Protestant Dissenting Meeting House and which was renovated after 1870 (1893, 370). This "Scotch Chapel" is marked on the first edition Ordnance Survey map c.1860 in West Street and is clearly at a different site from the

Presbyterian Chapel (HER 5230) in Nursery Lane whose congregation originated in 1776. This chapel is now the United Reformed Church, and perhaps confusing it with the Scotch Chapel, Stell states that it may be on the site of an earlier meeting house converted from a cottage. Its features are characteristic of the early 19th century (Stell 1994).

#### **4.7 Churchyard Watch House (HER 5211)**

A stone churchyard watch house, located in the south-west corner of St Mary's churchyard and dating from early 19th century is in very good condition. It is Grade II listed.

#### **4.8 Industries**

The prosperity of the village increased in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century when Abraham Dixon established a woollen factory (HER 5237) and a tannery (HER 5236) (Bateson 1893, 393). The locations of these factory sites are not known.

Associated with Belford, but just outside the assessment area, are a brick works and a tile and brick works. Adjacent to the tile and brick works, the first edition Ordnance Survey marks old pit workings. These are all located on the road to Belford Station.

#### **4.9 World War Two Defences**

A lozenge-style polygonal pillbox (HER 5226), survives from c.1940, a part of the Wooler to Belford stop-line built in 1941. Three others lie nearby outside the assessment area (HER 5227, 5228 and 5229). Pillboxes were often built under local commands and by local builders, and have little documentary evidence associated with them in the Public Records Office. This, combined with their increasing rarity and their association with an internationally important event, makes pillboxes of considerable archaeological interest.

#### **4.10 Summary**

Post-medieval development, particularly from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, established the form and the fabric of the town as it survives today. Many of the standing buildings on the main streets have listed building status and all lie within the Belford Conservation Area. The buildings and boundaries of the post-medieval town may reflect a pattern already at least partly established in the medieval period but direct evidence for this is not available to date. Until the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Belford does not demonstrate the characteristics of a town and does not even appear to have served as a market.

Any economic growth at Belford was to a great extent dependant on investment by the owners of the Belford estate who introduced a market to the town and tanning and milling on a limited industrial scale. This allowed Belford to further capitalise on its function as a post-town and coaching stop on the Great North Road.

## PART TWO: ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL OF BELFORD

### 5 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

This section deals with the possibility of discovering archaeological remains within Belford in the course of development and the potential these remains could have for the understanding of the past of the town, the region and the country. To be meaningful, any archaeological input in Belford 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 made accessible to the public and is synthesized, enabling archaeologists to produce, amongst other things, models of changing urban form and spatial analysis of fluctuating zones of activity within towns and their suburbs. This will help to create a national picture of urban settlement change and Belford, with its apparently promising medieval origins followed by deprivation brought about by Anglo-Scottish warfare and recurring epidemics will have a useful role to play.

This assessment has suggested that the most likely areas to contain early remains will be around the moat at Westhall and on land around the church, quite probably extending down either side of the High Street.

The Local Plan published by Berwick Borough Council identifies only highway improvements on the High Street as a development which might have archaeological implications. Ground disturbance along the High Street may be able to determine whether this street originated in medieval times. Other proposed developments to the south of the town are beyond the presumed historic core.

## 5.1 Prehistoric and Roman Potential

There is no evidence that the land on which the town sits today was an area of prehistoric settlement. Therefore, Belford is unlikely to contribute significantly to research objectives for this period, either nationally or locally.

Prehistoric archaeology does exist to the north of the town on Chapel Crag. The scheduled status of the two enclosures assumes that they have a high archaeological potential to contribute towards our knowledge about prehistoric life. Although it is highly unlikely that any development would take place on the crag, should research excavation be proposed at some time in the future, the following questions may be considered:

### 5.1.1 *Research Agenda: The date and nature of the enclosures on Chapel Crag*

- When were the enclosures on Chester Hill in use, and are they contemporary?
- What evidence is there for the assumption that the enclosures are defended settlements?

## 5.2 Medieval Potential

As the development of the medieval core of Belford is very poorly understood, research questions must concentrate on basic problems concerning the origins of the settlement, its location, and to what extent it survives. There are, however, a number of known elements to the medieval settlement including the formerly moated site at Westhall, the Parish Church of St Mary, and St Mary's Chapel on Chester Hill; any development in the vicinity of these sites would be expected to have a high potential to impact on medieval remains. Within these areas, archaeological recording may be required depending on the scale of development, either before the determination of a planning application or as a mitigating measure as part of a planning permission.

### 5.2.1 *Research Agenda: Location and development of the medieval core*

- Is there any evidence for continuity of occupation within the defensible enclosures on Chester Hill through into the medieval period?
- How old is the street pattern of modern Belford?
- Do archaeological deposits of medieval date exist within the modern properties along High Street, West Street and Church Street?

### 5.2.2 *Research Agenda: Westhall Farm moated site*

- Can the original form of the moat be established?
- What evidence is there for medieval remains within the moated enclosure?
- Is there any evidence for the preservation of waterlogged deposits in the moat?
- Is there any evidence for medieval occupation adjacent to the moated site?

### 5.2.3 *Research Agenda: the Parish Church of St Mary*

- How much early fabric is there in the Parish Church of St Mary?
- What evidence is there for the ground plan of the early church?
- What evidence is there for an early cemetery and its extent?
- Is there any evidence for adjacent medieval occupation?

### 5.2.4 *Archaeological Priorities*

In order to explore these areas of potential, the County Archaeologist will consider the exploration of Belford 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 location and extent of the medieval town and, where possible, relate the plots to some of those mentioned in documentary sources
- seek to establish the extent, date and form of the moated site
- ensure that works to the church which require a Faculty from the Diocesan Advisory Committee are accompanied by archaeological recording to help establish dates and a ground plan for the early churches and to record the development of the church
- ensure that ground disturbance in the Market Place or the High Street are accompanied by archaeological recording

## 5.3 Post-Medieval and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Potential

By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Belford consisted of only a few cottages, therefore it is unlikely that any of the present day 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century historic buildings mask any earlier remains. There are few documentary sources available to study the growth of Belford, but between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, a range of documents were produced on the manor of Belford and the records of the Belford Estate. These have not been examined in detail but could provide more detailed accounts of the later period of growth in the town.

### 5.3.1 *Research Agenda: Growth of Belford in the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries*

- What evidence can estate records provide on the development of Belford in the post-medieval period?

### 5.3.2 *Archaeological Priorities*

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

- ensure that any works near the 19<sup>th</sup> century mill site at Belford Burn are accompanied by archaeological recording, so that the medieval mill can be located
- require contractors to assess the deeds relating to the manor of Belford for 1661-1779 (NRO 4196) and the records of the Belford Estate from the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries in terms of their ability to provide a detailed history of post-medieval Belford

#### **5.4 Twentieth Century Potential**

The presence of 20<sup>th</sup> century military structures brings us to the most recent margins of archaeological research. Pillboxes were not built to last and reinforced concrete tends to have a life of about 50 years. Therefore most of these pillboxes are nearing the end of their lives. Pillboxes in isolation are becoming rare as more of them start to disintegrate. But the importance of the Wooler to Belford Stop Line is far greater than local interest; it represents a rare survival of a complete defended system.

##### *5.4.1 Research Agenda: World War II Defences*

- Any proposals that seek to break up this Stop Line, should be resisted and where the opportunity arises, detailed recording of the system should be carried out before the pillboxes decay too much

##### *5.4.2 Archaeological Priorities*

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

- ensure that archaeological recording takes place of the World War II pillboxes surrounding the town

## PART THREE: ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE PLANNING PROCESS

### 6 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.

**6.1 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 6.8 and 6.9 below.

## **6.2 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*.

## **6.3 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.

## **6.4 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 Belford is one.

## **6.5 The Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England**

is compiled by English Heritage under Section 8C of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 (inserted by section 33 of, and paragraph 10 of Section 4 to, the National Heritage Act 1983-4). Registered sites are graded in a similar way to listed buildings: Grade I, II\* and II, and include those parks and gardens which are of particular historic

importance. Although this is not a statutory control, local authorities are required to consult English Heritage where an application affects a grade I or II\* registered site, and the Garden History Society on all applications affecting registered sites regardless of its grade.

## 6.6 Archaeological Sites without Statutory Designation

The protection and management of the majority of archaeological sites in England, *ie* those which are not protected by statutory means, is carried out by local authorities. Measures for the protection of both known and 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.

## 6.7 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 Belford, the statutory development plan comprises the saved policies of the *Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan*. The Regional Spatial Strategy was revoked in July 2010.

The saved policies of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan relating to the protection and management of archaeological sites and the historic environment are:

### POLICY F26

*There will be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other nationally important archaeological sites and their settings. Development which would prevent preservation in situ of the visible or non visible archaeological site and its setting will not be permitted.*

### POLICY F27

*Where the impact of a development proposal on an archaeological site or an area of archaeological potential, or the relative importance of such an area is unclear, the developer will be required to provide further information in the form of an archaeological assessment and in some cases an archaeological evaluation prior to a planning decision being made. Where the remains are found to be of national importance Policy F26 will apply.*

### POLICY F28

*Where archaeological sites or their settings will be affected by development, preservation in situ will be preferred. Where preservation in situ is necessary, development will only be permitted where such preservation can be accommodated within the scheme. In cases where preservation in situ is not considered necessary, planning permission may be granted subject to a condition or a legal agreement requiring the developer to make provision for the excavation and recording of the remains and analysis and publication of the findings.*

### POLICY F29

*In considering proposals within, or affecting the setting of, an historic park, garden or battlefield, regard will be had to the avoidance of damaging effects on historically important features of the site, on its appearance or on that of its setting.*

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

## 6.8 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.

### 6.8.1 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 F27, 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.*

### 6.8.2 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 F27, 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.*

## 6.9 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.*

### 6.9.1 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.

### 6.9.2 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.

#### **6.9.3 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.

### **6.10 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).

#### *6.10.1 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 Belford, the sites considered to be of archaeological interest are medieval in date. The two earthworks to the north of the town are already designated as nationally important. The moated manor is a rare site type in the county and it can therefore contribute significantly to our understanding of that particular type of monument. In architectural terms, the historic interest is much later, mainly 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. There is one listed building which has been given Grade I status (Belford Hall) which means that it is of exceptional interest (less

than 5% of buildings listed nationally). All other buildings are listed Grade II; these are buildings of special interest, which warrant every effort being made to preserve them.

## 7 SOURCES

### Bibliography

- Anon, 1935. *History of the Berwickshire Naturalist Club*, 25 part 3
- Anon, 1902. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle* series 2, 10 (299)
- Anon, 1942. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle* series 4, 9-10 (20)
- Anon, 1944. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle* series 4, 9-10 (215)
- Bates, C J, 1891. *Archaeologia Aeliana* 2 series, 14 (12-23)
- Bateson, E, 1893. *A History of Northumberland*, Vol. I
- Belford and District Local History Society, (1995). *Survey of Belford*
- Clack, P A G and Gosling, P F, 1975. *Archaeology in the North. Gazetteer*
- Clarke, D, 1976. *The History of Belford United Reformed Church*
- Davies, J, 1983. "The Mesolithic sites of Northumberland", *Northern Archaeology* 4, part 2 (18-24)
- Dixon, P J, 1984. *The Deserted Medieval Villages of Northumberland*, Vol. 2 unpublished thesis, University of Wales
- Fraser, C M ed., 1968. *Lay Subsidy Roll of 1296*, Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle
- Hodgson, J, 1820. *History of Northumberland*, Vol 3 part 1
- Hudleston, C R, 1944. *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle* series 4, 9-10, 235-7
- MacLauchlan, H, 1864. *Memoir to a Survey of the Eastern branch of Watling Street*
- Petts, D, Gerrard, C et al., 2006. *Shared Visions: The North-East Regional Research Framework for the Historic Environment*
- Pevsner, N et al, 1992. *The Buildings of England: Northumberland*
- Stell, C, 1994. *An Inventory of Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting Houses in the North of England*
- Tomlinson, W W, 1888. *Comprehensive Guide to Northumberland*

### Maps and Plans (Northumberland Record Office)

Speed, 1610, *Map of Northumberland*

Armstrong, 1769, *Map of Northumberland*

Tracing of plan of Belford Estate the Property of William Clarke surveyed in 1820 by John Dobson ZJ6 ZHE 8/1-2

1st edition OS map c. 1860

**Documentary Sources (Northumberland Record Office)**

Deeds re manor and properties at Belford, Ladyes Green, Belford Common or Morrt, tithes at Belford west Hall and Belford water corn mill, 1661-1779	NRO 4196
Belford Estate records and plans 18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> centuries	NRO 692/40
Mansion House, Blue Bell Inn and Post House for sale, 1808	ZHE 8/2
Tithe Award, 1843	EDT 30 5
Deed, 1847	NRO 530.4/17/13
Material accompanying the 1995 survey of Belford	BRO 564
Parish Registers 1701-1977	EP 124

**Documentary Sources (Newcastle City Local Studies Library)**

Belford Spindlestone Mill destroyed by fire, Newcastle Chronicle 6.2.1864, page 2

## APPENDIX 1: LISTED BUILDINGS

### Grade I

Belford Hall (HER5174)

### Grade II

Church of St Mary (HER5151)

Ice house c.40 yards north of Belford Hall (HER5175)

No.1 Church Street (HER5176)

No.2 (The Post Office) Church Street (HER5177)

No.3 Church Street (HER5178)

Nos 4-7 Church Street (HER5179)

Nos 1 and 2 Clark Place (HER5180)

Nos 3, 4 and 5 Clark Place (HER5181)

Garden wall c.20 yards east of No.4 Clark Place (HER5182)

Nos 1 and 3 High Street (HER5183)

Nos 5a, 5b and 7 High Street (HER5184)

No.9 High Street (HER5185)

Nos 33 and 35 High Street (HER5186)

No.37 (The Villa) High Street (HER5187)

No.41 (The Croft) High Street (HER5188)

South gateway to Belford Hall (HER5189)

South Lodge to Belford Hall (HER5190)

No.2 High Street (HER5191)

Nos 4 and 6 High Street (HER5192)

Nos 8 and 10 High Street (HER5193)

Nos 12, 14 and 16 High Street (HER5194)

Nos 18, 20 and 22 High Street (HER5195)

Nos 24 and 26 High Street (HER5196)

No.28 High Street (HER5197)

No.30 and Osborne House, High Street (HER5198)

Nos 32 and 34 High Street (HER5199)

No.36 High Street (HER5200)

Nos 38-46 (even) High Street (HER5201)

Nos 48 and 50 High Street (HER5202)

Nos 52 and 54 High Street (HER5203)

Market cross in front of Blue Bell Hotel 19/116 (HER5204)

The Black Swan Hotel (HER5205)

Nos 2 and 3 Market Place (HER5206)

Tait's Shop, W Patterson's shop and flats above, Market Place (HER5207)

Garages and outbuildings south and west of the Blue Bell Hotel, Market Place (HER5208)  
The Blue Bell Hotel, Market Place (HER5209)  
Brown headstone c.15 yards east of Church of St Mary (HER5210)  
Watch house c.20 yards south west of Church of St Mary (HER5211)  
No.1 (The Old Vicarage) North Bank (HER5214)  
No.3 North Bank (HER5215)  
Erskine Manse (HER5216)  
Westhall, courtyard wall and attached outbuildings (HER5218)  
Well c.10 yards north of Westhall (HER5219)  
No.1 West Street (HER5220)  
Nos 3 and 5 West Street (HER5221)  
No.2 West Street (HER5222)  
Garden temple or folly c.400 yards north east of Belford Hall (HER5223)

## APPENDIX 2: HISTORIC MAPS



Figure 6: Armstrong's Map of Northumberland 1769



Figure 7: Map of Belford Manor, May 1824



Figure 8: First Edition 25 inch to 1 mile Ordnance Survey, 1860

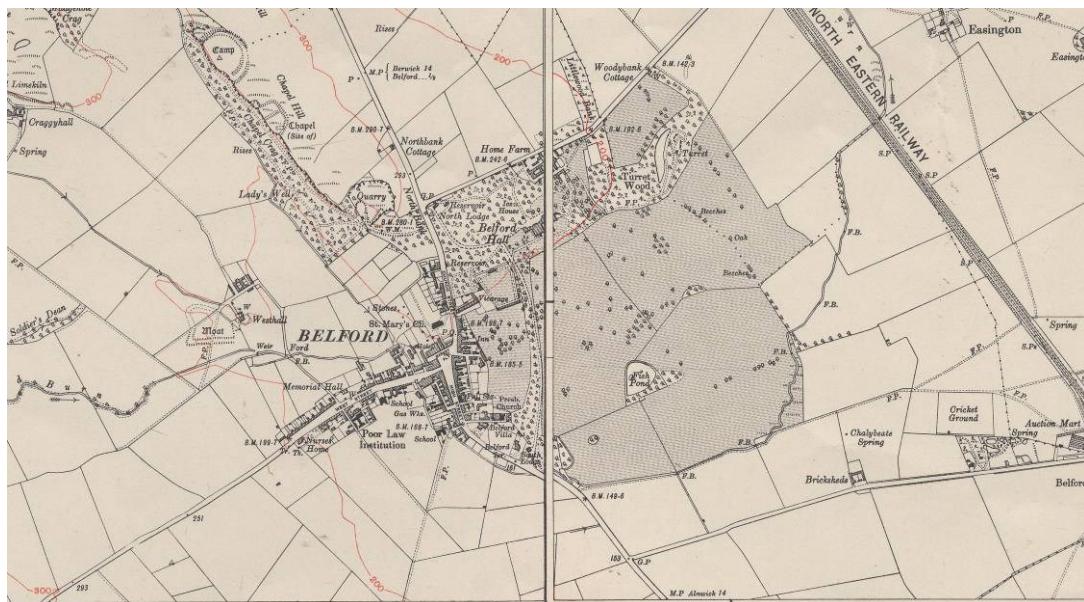


Figure 9: Third Edition 25 inch to 1 mile Ordnance Survey, 1920

## APPENDIX 3: STRATEGIC SUMMARY

### BELFORD STRATEGIC SUMMARY

#### A3.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Bedlington has been the focus of activity since at least the medieval period. The Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) combined documentary and cartographic evidence as there have not been any recent archaeological investigations within the town.

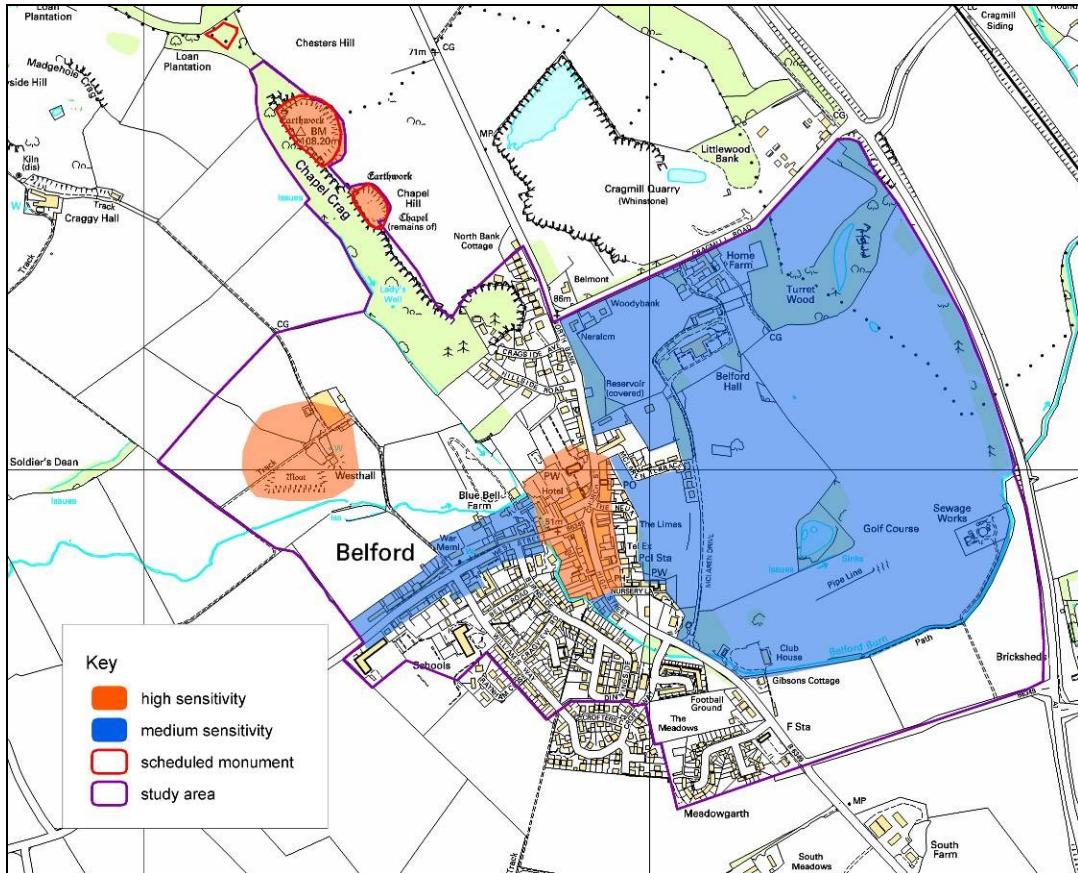


Figure 10: Belford areas of archaeological sensitivity

#### Prehistoric

- Chesters Camp and Chapel Hill on Chapel Crag to the north of the town are presumed to be two adjacent prehistoric enclosures, although they have not been subject to extensive intrusive investigation. They are both Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

#### Early Medieval

- There are no documentary sources of early-medieval activity in this area.

#### Medieval

##### Church and chapel

- On Chapel Crag, there are the remains of St Mary's Chapel within an associated enclosure with Sty Mary's or Our Lady's Well (also of presumed medieval date) located nearby.
- St Mary's church contains parts of the Norman church within the rebuilt 18<sup>th</sup> century building.

**Moated manor**

- The moated manor at Westhall to the west of Belford was first referred to in documents dated 1415.
- The remains of the moat can be seen to the south of Westhall Farm. The moat has been encroached on by later farm buildings and a pond and has also been affected by heavy ploughing but the surviving south and south-west portion of the moat broadly indicate its extent.
- The manor may have been a focus of medieval settlement and it is possible that associated remains could be located over a much wider area.

**Settlement**

- There are limited documentary references to settlement at Belford in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries but these sources do not indicate the precise location, form or extent of that settlement.
- The presence of St Mary's chapel and church and the Westhall moated site indicate a substantial settlement in that period.
- The precise location of the medieval settlement is not known. While it is possible that it may be located around any one of the known medieval sites, the 'T'-shaped street layout of High Street, West Street, Church Street and Market Place may indicate the location of the medieval settlement.
- There are no documentary references to a Markey place at Belford in the medieval period.
- A medieval mill may also have been located close to Belford Burn to the west of the village.

**Post-Medieval****Church**

- Some alterations were made to the church in 1615, it was heavily repaired and rebuilt in 1700-1701 and again in 1828.

**Belford Hall**

- Belford hall is a grade I listed building dating from 1754-56. It lies in extensive parkland which has been included on English Heritage's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. A grade II listed ice-house is connected to the hall by a tunnel.

**Settlement**

- The village began to grow and develop and importance from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century due to its association with the Belford Estate and its role as a post and coaching stop on the Great North Road. The post-medieval settlement appears to have continued in the 'T'-shaped layout.
- A licence for a weekly market was granted in 1741. The Market Cross in front of the Blue Bell Hotel is of 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century date, although the base may be earlier.
- A woollen factory and tannery are known to have been established in the village in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, although the precise location of these industries is not known. A brick works and brick tile works were also located on the road to Belford Station.
- 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings include various inns and non-conformist places of worship.
- 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings include various inns and non-conformist places of worship, the Union Workhouse and a stone churchyard watch house.
- In more recent times, the Wooler to Belford stop-line was built in 1941 and runs along to the immediate north of the town.

**A3.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH AGENDA**

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, 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**

- The known prehistoric sites are scheduled and therefore should not be subject to development. Research agendas are included in the EUS.

**Early Medieval**

- There are no documentary sources of early-medieval activity in this area.

**Medieval**

- The presence, nature, extent and development of the medieval settlement.
- The original form and extent of the moated site, chapel, church, churchyard and mill.
- Whether waterlogged medieval remains survive in the moat at Westhall.

**Post-Medieval**

- The nature, extent and development of the post-medieval settlement through archaeological investigations and estate records.
- The locations, nature and extent of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century woollen mill and tannery.

**A3.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS**

The Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) has identified the areas of greatest archaeological sensitivity and potential in Belford 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 Belford 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

