

# Corbridge

## Northumberland Extensive Urban Survey



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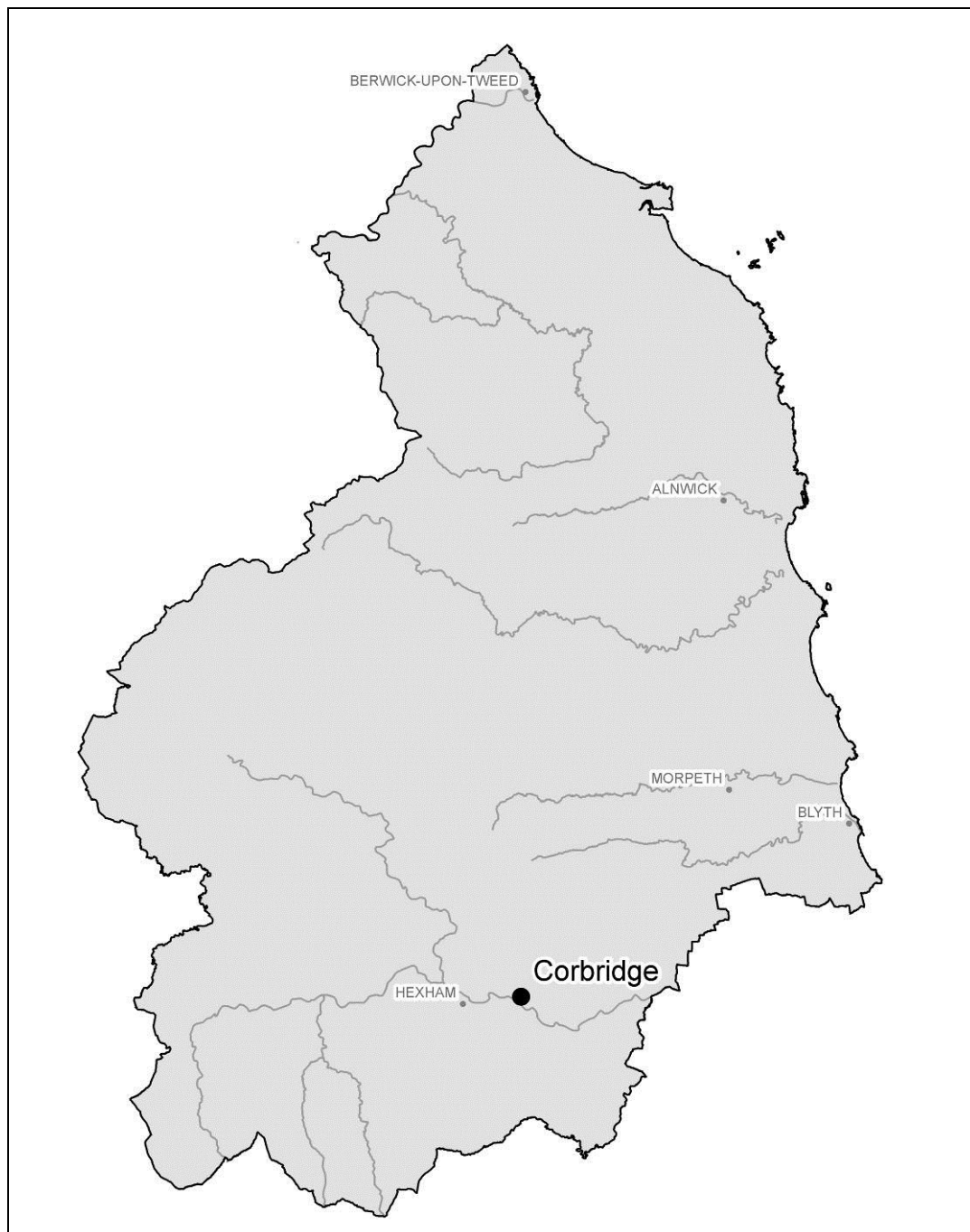
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*Figure 1: Location*

## PART ONE: THE STORY OF CORBRIDGE

### 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 - 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. Corbridge is one of 20 towns in Northumberland to have been reviewed, the results appearing in the following report which is divided into three main parts:

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

**Part 2** assesses the detailed archaeological potential of the town of Corbridge and how development could, potentially, 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 historic core of Corbridge and part of the Roman fort and town to the west. 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.

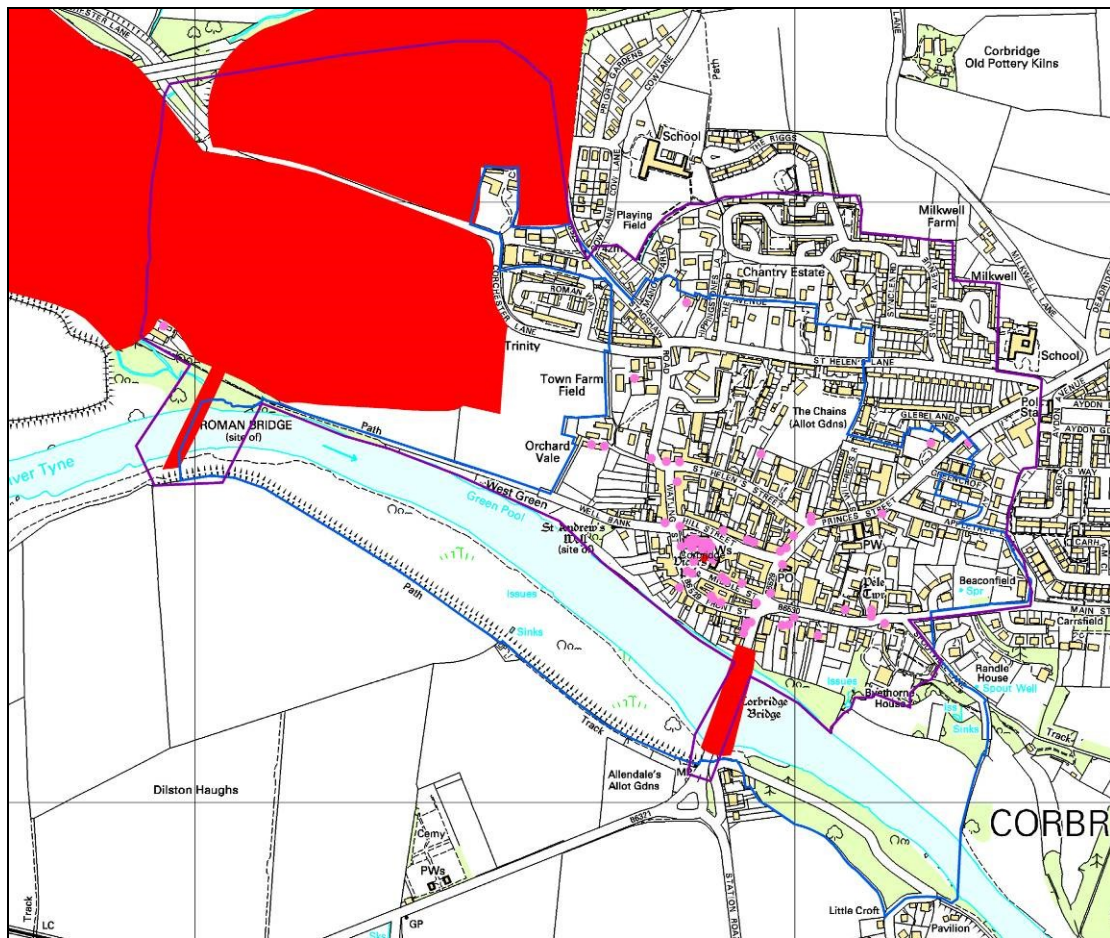


Figure 2: Study area (purple line), Scheduled Monuments (red), listed buildings (pink), Conservation Area (blue line).

## 1.2 Location, Geology and Topography

Corbridge lies in the Tyne valley, 5km east of Hexham. The town is situated at a bridging point of the river and is built on stepped alluvial terraces created by the changing course of the Tyne and the underlying geology. The terraces lie north of the Stublick fault and consist of the Stainmore Group of limestones and sandstones which contain thin coal seams above which lie glacial sands, gravel and boulder clay (Lovell 1981, 3-4). The boulder clay has been utilised industrially in the potteries of Corbridge and sandstone figures prominently as a building material in the town. The Roman town and fort lie immediately west of the modern settlement, also on the north bank of the River Tyne, on the terrace of a south-facing spur.

## 1.3 Brief History

The archaeology of Corbridge is dominated by two settlements: namely the Roman garrison town of Corstopitum and the later, medieval town of Corbridge just to the east. As with so many river valley towns, these settlements grew up at crossing points of the River Tyne. The river valley was also an important route along which communication and movement occurred from the earliest times and the relatively large number of prehistoric finds discovered around



Corbridge suggests that this was a site attractive to settlers for thousands of years before Roman soldiers arrived.

The Roman town, *Corstopitum*, was one of the largest stations in the north of England located at the junction of the Stanegate and Dere Street. Initially a fort was established there by Agricola and it later became an important supply base for the Roman military frontiers along Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall. The military function of the site attracted a civilian population of significant size and in the third and fourth centuries was an increasingly civilian town, with a military garrison. Little is known of the later Roman period or immediate post-Roman occupation of the site but fifth to sixth century burials and finds dating from this period have been found on the site indicating that settlement or use did not cease as abruptly as our current knowledge of the site does.

About half a mile east of the Roman town a new site for a village was chosen in early medieval times and the Roman town was used as a stone quarry for the construction of buildings, notably the church (HER 8996) and the Vicar's Pele Tower (HER 8991). There is also documentary evidence that a monastery existed at Corbridge in the eighth century. The early medieval village may have been protected on the north by a town ditch although evidence remains elusive. The village developed into an important market town in the medieval period, taking advantage of its location at major east-west and north-south routes, and was probably second only to Newcastle in its wealth and population at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the manor and the borough of Corbridge were held by the Percys until their rebellion in 1403, when they were briefly held by Prince John; Henry Percy was restored to his earldom and his estates in 1415 by Henry V, including those at Corbridge (Craster 1914, 110). The town suffered seriously in the Border wars, being burnt in 1296, 1312 and 1346, and also succumbed to the Black Death in 1349; tradition holds that only inhabitants who camped out in an open field called the Leazes to the north of the town survived the plague and when they returned to the town the streets were green with grass (Tomlinson 1888, 139; Graham 1992, 43). The prosperity of the town was certainly badly affected: the medieval bridge was allowed to fall into a state of disrepair and the market had failed by 1663. However, the Stagshaw Fair, held to the north of Corbridge, retained its prominent position in the Northumberland calendar.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, after a long period of stagnation and decline, the town began to prosper again and attract visitors, both as a health and as a tourist resort. Corbridge's prosperity was also enhanced at this time with some industrial activity including shoemaking, lime-burning, market gardening, brick and tile making, and ironworking. In 1835, the arrival of the railway from Newcastle to Carlisle added to the town's accessibility stimulating growth beyond its medieval extent and, with the railway station located on the south bank of the Tyne, on the south bank of the river as well.



#### **1.4 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 Corbridge, this included antiquarian discoveries, as well as more recent findings, including excavation and standing building descriptions. As additional sources were examined new entries were added to the HER and are noted throughout the report. A considerable quantity of medieval and post-medieval documents relating to Corbridge survives, including the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1296, and a series of surveys of the manor: the earliest was in 1310 on the death of the lord of the manor Roger fitz Roger (Craster 1914, 80-1), a Survey of Lord Percy's property in 1352, a Survey of Property held by Hexham Priory at Corbridge in 1379 (Craster 1914, 98), Stockdale's survey of 1586 (Craster 1914, 121-2), a survey of the 1635 (a Duke of Northumberland Mss cited by Craster 1914, 124), Clarke's survey of 1663 and particulars of the Corbridge demesne lands 1639 are very detailed (Craster 1914, 124-30). Many of these documents provide the sources for Volume 12 of the Northumberland County History by Craster which is given over completely to Corbridge. There are also numerous deeds dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards relating to properties in Corbridge. Undoubtedly further research of these rich documentary sources, particularly the deeds, would allow a more detailed history of the town to be established on a plot by plot basis. In the 1970s Iley wrote a history of the town and his papers, which include useful archaeological observations, are preserved in the Northumberland Record Office (NRO 3369 and 3592). They include observations by Walter Iley and John Gillam along with secondhand observations of workmen and householders of some excavations of service trenches in the 1970s and 80s, but were not available for consultation during the compilation of this report.

#### **1.5 Cartographic Sources**

The earliest depiction of Corbridge is Speeds' 1610 map of Northumberland on the road between Hexham and Newcastle, but the earliest detailed survey of the town is John Fryer's plan of the enclosed lands and open fields of Corbridge in 1776 and 1777 (NRO ZAN MSM.10). This map can be used in conjunction with modern maps to analyse the development of the town. The first and second edition Ordnance Survey maps, c.1860 and 1890 respectively show the subsequent 19th century development of the town.

#### **1.6 Archaeological Sources**

There are a number of antiquarian observations of below ground deposits in Corbridge from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, especially in relation to the Roman town. These, and work in the early and mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, have focused on the Roman town and are described below (see section 3.1). More recently there have been a number of archaeological investigations carried out in the modern town in response to development proposals (see Appendix 2). The archaeological information recovered has largely concerned the medieval and post-medieval periods.

### 1.7 Protected Sites (figure 2)

The study area includes three Scheduled Ancient Monuments: part of Corbridge Roman station and Roman town (SM Nd23), Corbridge Bridge (Nd123), and the Vicar's Pele Tower (Nd77). Many of the standing buildings within the area have Listed Building status and are listed in Appendix 1). The historic core of the town is also designated as a Conservation Area.

## 2 PREHISTORIC

Evidence of early prehistoric activity in Corbridge is limited to the surrounding area with Mesolithic flints from Leazes Cottage to the north of the town and around Red Houses, Shorden Brae, Gallowhill and Castron Field (HER 8683). There is more evidence of human activity and settlement in and around Corbridge in later prehistoric periods with a pre-Roman native site at Bishop Rigg (HER 8671) and, to the north-east of Corbridge, an Iron Age hillfort at Shildon Hill (HER 9011). A series of individual finds of prehistoric date from or near Corbridge include a Neolithic polished stone axe (HER 9054), a small Neolithic greenstone axe (HER 9008) found on the site of the Roman town, three flat Bronze Age axes (HER 9011), an early Bronze Age stone axe hammer (HER 9055), a Bronze Age bowl with four perforated feet (HER 9018), and two fragments of a bronze sword (HER 9029) which are possibly from the Roman town. Unfortunately the exact location of these finds is not known and so they are of limited use in predicting where further prehistoric discoveries may be made. Within the modern town excavation of a road to some new houses in 1922 revealed a Bronze Age burial cist (HER 9005); aligned roughly north-south, it comprised four stones on edge and contained a skull, but the cist was removed and partially destroyed and no other finds were recovered. The description of the discovery is typical of Bronze Age burials with confusion regarding the precise location of the burial and the closest it can be placed is in the vicinity of Leazes Terrace off Stagshaw Road.

Away from the modern town, excavations of the Roman town and fort have revealed evidence of prehistoric occupation on the site, although it has not been thoroughly investigated. One of the earliest features on the site is a Bronze Age palisaded enclosure (HER 9173). Other possible Bronze Age features include a possible cremation pit (HER 9174), a 'coracle burial' (HER 9175), sherds of "native" pottery which could be either Bronze Age or Iron Age (HER 9179), and a massive cup-marked sandstone block (HER 9043) in the foundations of the fourth century workshops. Other, more tentative evidence from *Corstopitum* includes ard marks which are characteristic of cross ploughing and are thought to be the result of the use of a heavy duty rip-ard used in clearance of the site. While these marks are undateable the context in which they were found indicates that they belong to the late first century AD.

### **3 ROMAN** (figure 3)

#### **3.1 The Roman fort and town** (HER 9002)

The Roman fort and town at Corbridge lie within a complex frontier zone of which the World Heritage Site of Hadrian's Wall is the best known element. The military base at Corbridge was established sometime after AD 85 on the line of the Stanegate Roman road and replaced an earlier fort at nearby Beaufront Red House. When Hadrian's Wall was built to the north of the Stanegate across the Tyne-Solway gap between AD 122 and 128, forts like Corbridge in the hinterland behind the Wall became redundant. However, Corbridge occupied a strategic position on Dere Street guarding the main supply route from York to Newstead in Scotland. Thus when Antoninus Pius re-advanced into Scotland and a turf wall, known as the Antonine Wall, was constructed in AD 142 between the Forth and the Clyde Corbridge became a significant point on the supply lines of the new frontier and new fort buildings were constructed there. Corbridge's location at a crossing point on the Tyne and at the junction of two of the principal Roman roads, the Stanegate and Dere Street meant that it retained its strategic importance despite subsequent changes to the frontier. The military *vicus* was enclosed within defences and a significant civilian settlement grew up around the military site which extends well beyond the area of visible remains. By the mid-second century it was a defended market town and had grown to around 13ha or 17ha by the third or fourth centuries; it continued in occupation until at least the late fifth century (Miles 1982, 385).

A summary of archaeological work at the Roman Fort between 1947 and 1988 is provided in Bishop and Dore (1988). Here, the history of archaeological excavation at the site is outlined beginning in 1906 with a short season of work on behalf of the committee compiling volume 12 of the Northumberland County History, an extended excavation programme between 1907-1914, and in 1930 the "*disengagement and consolidation*" of the central part of the site for public display by HM Office of Works; this latter area has been the focus for all subsequent archaeological work on the site to the extent that it was used as a training excavation for Durham University between 1934 and 1973. In 1976 and 1980 further work was undertaken in advance of the construction of a museum on the site.

The excavations conducted between 1906 and 1914 were extensive, however many of the buildings which were briefly revealed have never subsequently been examined and these excavations generally only penetrated down to the level of the latest Roman stone building (Bishop and Dore 1988, 1). This means that very little information has been obtained about the earlier phases of occupation. However, the Ministry of Works focused on a much smaller area and did investigate some of the earlier deposits in 1930, especially in the area of the Stanegate; these investigations indicated that the buildings which lay to the south of the Stanegate were contained within two compounds which faced each other across a north-south side street and were military in character.

Eventually, by the end of the 1973 season of work the plan of the central area of a series of forts predating most of the visible remains on the site had been recovered. The sequence for the later second century remained problematical but the sequence of building from the early third century onwards is fairly well understood. A major advance in the understanding of the earliest phases at Corbridge came from the discovery and excavation in 1974 of the Roman base at Red House, Beaufront, 2km north-west of the main Corbridge site, which was shown to pre-date the Corbridge fort. The result of all the excavations has been the formulation of an outline chronology scheme for a sequence of four forts on the Corbridge site prior to the construction of the stone buildings in the central area of the site (Bishop and Dore 1988, 2-3).

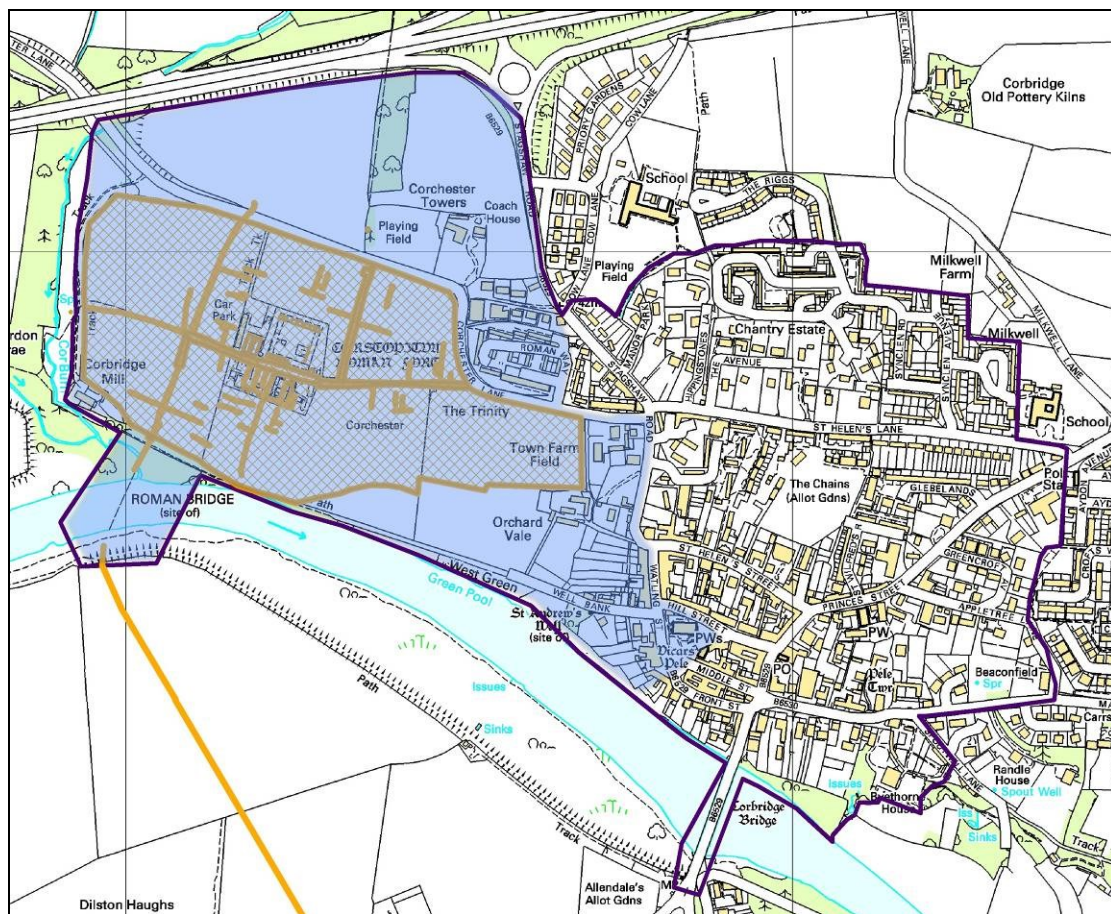


Figure 3: Roman potential (blue) within study area with features plotted from Bishop and Dore 1988 (orange).

### 3.2 Roman Roads

Corbridge Roman town lay at the junction of two principal roads – the Stanegate and Dere Street. These routes, together with a large number of streets in the Roman town have been mapped by Bishop and Dore who also discuss roads in the surrounding area which show up as crop and soil marks around the perimeter of the main site of Roman Corbridge (1988). There is some evidence to suggest that the course of Dere Street has shifted from its original

route. Forts were usually built next to, but not on, main roads, but by the third century Dere Street passes through the Roman town. Its original course may have been further west and may be detected in the course of a later side street. A watching brief across Dere Street, north of Corbridge and the A69 during the construction of a pipeline, suggested that part of the road has been quarried away, possibly for the construction of the later turnpiked road (Event ID 12526), but where the road does survive it can still be seen in the ground as a 2m high *agger*.

In 1949 an excavation was carried out to find the line of a Roman road between *Corstopitum* and Corbridge (HER 9062). The excavation located the northern gutter and southern kerb and up to three road surfaces. The road measured between 4.72m and 11.12m wide and in places was only 0.2m below ground level. At the eastern end of the road it appears to have turned southwards below the modern road but no trace of the Roman road was found in Trinity Field (Simpson 1972, 224-31).

Traces of another road were found in 1976 by a geophysical survey at Corchester School in Corbridge. Results suggest the likely presence of domestic or industrial remains over much of the site and several ditches, perhaps of different periods, were found. Although no north-south road was detected at least one east-west road possibly with walls to each side was found (Bartlett 1976).

Other remains directly associated with Roman roads include two milestones (HER 9000 and 9001) found in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries respectively at Corbridge and Corstopitum.

### **3.3 Roman Bridge (HER 9022)**

The remains of the Roman bridge that carried Dere Street over the Tyne can still be seen in the bed of the river immediately to the south of the Roman town. The bridge was noticed by Leland in 1540 when the remains may have been more substantial since in 1840 many of the stones were removed by the agent of the Greenwich Hospital Estate to build a water wheel at Dilston Mill. The foundations of the south abutment and two piers were visible in dry weather in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and now six piers are visible with further masonry visible on the river bank (Craster 1914, 457-9). Excavations were carried out here in 1906.

In 1995 an evaluation was carried out because of the effect of river erosion on the site and limited excavation on the north side of the river revealed the remains of a ramp, which carried Dere Street on to the bridge. The core of the ramp was mainly rubble, but included some large worked stone blocks. A retaining wall at the south east was stepped up into the bank and ran roughly at right angles to the line of the bridge. Four courses of worked stone blocks survived but the base of the revetting had been undermined by erosion, causing masonry to slide forward. Amongst the fallen masonry were two large moulded plinths interpreted as the support for a statue base. This masonry appears to have belonged to a massive and

elaborately decorated bridge and has close similarities with the second century bridge at Chesters. The remains of the bridge abutment revealed so far suggest that much more masonry remains *in situ* than at Chesters (Bidwell and Snape 1996, 20-2).

### **3.4 Bath house (HER 9032)**

The bath-house situated to the north of the military area and on the line of the aqueduct, was a successor to that at Red House Farm (Daniels 1959, 94).

### **3.5 Mausoleum (HER 9003)**

The remains of a mausoleum are visible on aerial photographs at Shoreden Brae. The thick-walled rectangular building measures about 10m square within a walled enclosure 41m square. Excavations in 1958 dated the building to first half of the second century AD and revealed a central rectangular monument, with burial shaft, bounded by a precinct wall with other burials immediately outside the enclosure. The site was probably one of the cemeteries of Corstopitum and appears to have been dismantled in the mid-fourth century. It is likely that the mausoleum was that of a Roman officer, but as no trace of the expected cremation was found, it may have been a cenotaph (St Joseph and Frere 1983, 227-8).

### **3.6 The extent of Roman archaeology**

Although the scheduled area of the Roman town occupies an extensive area west of the modern settlement this should not be regarded as the limit of Roman remains in Corbridge. Evidence from a wider area suggests elements of the town continue eastward and lie beneath the area of Orchard Vale, Town Farm Field and Trinity Terrace. Inhumation burials from Wellbank (HER 9130), a gravestone (HER 9007) and coffin (HER 9006) from Trinity Terrace suggest possible roman cemetery sites in these areas and such remains are typically sited along roadsides. However, subsequent work at Trinity Terrace in 1992 (Ryder) and in 1996 (The Archaeological Practice) recorded nothing earlier than medieval deposits. Roman pottery was found at Town Farm Field in 1993 (Event 12593) and again in 2003 (Event 401) during watching briefs although the ground here appears to have been terraced, perhaps in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, damaging Roman remains. A little to the south, at Orchard Vale, Roman finds were discovered in 1999 but it is unclear if they were *in-situ* (HER 9128).

There are many examples of Roman artefacts and the re-use of Roman stones in the later town of Corbridge which demonstrate the proximity of the Roman town but do not necessarily provide evidence relating to the extent of Roman settlement. Many of the objects are portable and could have been taken from their original context some time ago. They include a Roman altar (HER 8992) first noticed in Corbridge churchyard in 1702, where it “*had long been*”; a Roman altar and a fragment of a pre-Norman cross (HER 9026) discovered when pulling down an old cottage in Water Row (Front Street); a Roman altar (HER 9028) found in the vicar’s glebe a little before 1754 in the churchyard at Corbridge; as well as numerous other

Roman altars found at unspecific locations in Corbridge. A carved stone head (HER 9037) found in Corbridge in 1972 has been interpreted as of Celtic origin and may be connected with a native shrine (Harden 1956, 1-15). Other finds include Roman bronze coins (HER 9023) found in the graveyard of Corbridge church; a second/third century AD Roman relief of a lion (HER 9057) in an external wall of the vicarage bothy; two possible Roman stones (HER 9065) found in the allotments south of St Helen's Lane, Corbridge in 1995 – one may be a Celtic head and the second might be the top of a Mars statue; and an ornate silver dish (HER 8988), or plate, known also as the Corbridge Lanx was found in 1734, in the bank of a small stream where it enters the River Tyne 200 yards below the post-medieval bridge.

Aerial photographs have also added to the evidence of *Corstopitum* and give the impression of a settlement which developed beyond the immediate confines of military defences and the walls of the latest military works compounds. It was a settlement, which became more than a mere *vicus* and developed by the third century into a planned civilian town, the most northerly example in Britain. Only the most robust stone structures have been revealed as crop and parch marks and it is unlikely that earlier phases of timber built houses, and other buildings have been detected in this way. Aerial photographs show that large areas of Roman Corbridge have been severely eroded by modern ploughing and it seems that continual ploughing within the area of the Roman site may have led to a substantial loss of evidence for the latest phases of settlement from the third century to the end of the Roman period and beyond (Bishop and Dore 1988, 12). The area to the east of the visible Roman remains is down to pasture, but the area to the west is under crop, therefore being damaged with every ploughing.

#### **4 EARLY MEDIEVAL (figure 4)**

##### **4.1 Evidence of continued occupation of the site of the Roman town**

Little is known about the last years of Roman occupation at *Corstopitum* and the later history of the site is not clearly established. There is evidence that deposits, which relate particularly to the later Roman civilian occupation of the site, were removed and others destroyed by plough damage (Bishop and Dore 1988, 140-1) and in the same way evidence of post-Roman occupation of the site may have been truncated.

Traditional holds that the Roman town was abandoned and a new settlement was established on the nearby hill to the east in the early medieval period. The Roman town was probably used as a convenient quarry for stone for buildings in the new village. However, the true sequence is probably less clear cut, and despite the removal of deposits which may relate to this period and the fact that excavations have focused strongly on the military functions of the Roman site, some Anglo-Saxon material has been recovered from the Roman town. This includes two cruciform brooches found in 1908 with 32 glass beads, a small vessel found in 1909 near a cist, a sword scabbard mount, two skeletons and other objects found in 1947 or 1948 from the



area under the car park, oriented north-south and suggesting a probable date of the later fifth to early sixth century. However, others have suggested this material is not earlier than c.AD700 (Chapman and Mytum 1983, 226-7). Other post Roman finds include a sceatta-like imitation, possibly from “*later Dark Ages*” found at *Corstopitum* (Hill 1948, 154); in 1907 a pair of bronze cruciform brooches (see Bishop 1994, Fig 30, 38) were found, possibly from an inhumation; in 1908 a small Anglo-Saxon urn found near a stone cist, and a mount for a sword scabbard (Meaney 1964, 198); an Anglo-Saxon urn from *Corstopitum* (Hedley 1937, 102); and late fifth century Anglian burials. These various pieces of fragmentary evidence are sufficient to indicate that the site of the Roman town was used in the post-Roman period.

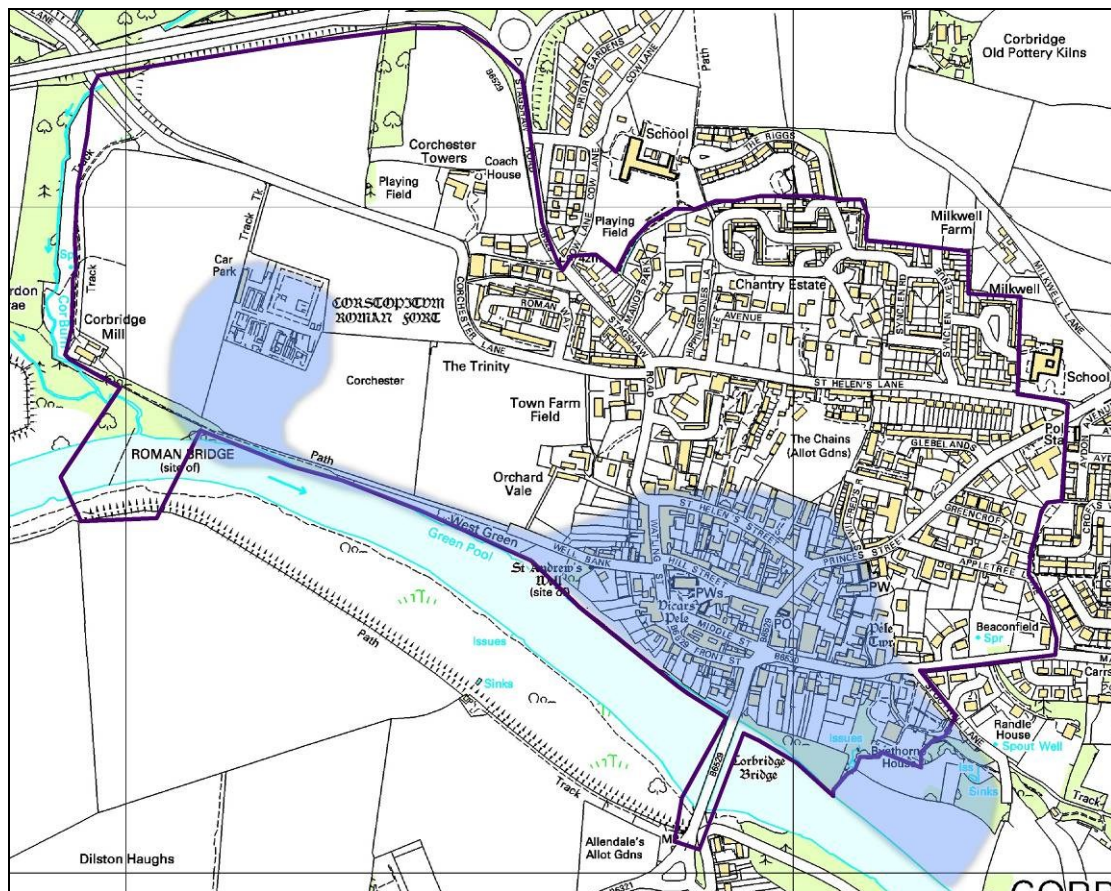


Figure 4: Early medieval potential.

#### 4.2 Early medieval roads and fording point

The earliest documentary evidence of a pre-Conquest settlement comes from the Northumbrian Annals of 786 where the town is called *Et Corabriga*. Craster states that ‘Et’ is a prefix commonly given to Anglo-Saxon place names and “*derived from some contiguous feature such as ford or river mouth*” and suggests that *brige* is not a corruption of *burh* but is named from the word bridge, probably being named from the Roman bridge (1914, 14). Although it is not known how long the Roman bridge continued in use, it had probably fallen into disuse before 1130 since at that date the boundary of the township of Corbridge and

Dilston was drawn to the ford rather than the Roman bridge (Craster 1914, 14). The new settlement, although a little removed from the Roman bridge, was immediately above a fording point and the medieval road leading down to the Tyne, called *Corwell*, was probably in use at a much earlier date (Craster 1914, 14). The junction of two major roads, the Stanegate and Dere Street, was still an important factor in the location of the town: the Stanegate survived into the early medieval period, then called the Carelgate, continuing east to Tynemouth; and Dere Street, which led south to York, remained the chief line of communication between Bernicia and Deira and after the Roman bridge had fallen into disrepair, traffic was diverted to the ford across the Tyne at Corbridge (Craster 1914, 32).

#### 4.3 Church (HER 8996)

The County History provides details and observations about the pre-Conquest church (Craster 1914, 15-16, 31). In 786 the Northumbrian Annals describe the consecration of Aldulf as bishop of Mayo “*in the monastery at Corbridge*”. From this it has been suggested that the town sprang up from a religious foundation and that the proximity of the Roman town, providing a quarry for stone, was a factor in the location of a church here. There is no doubt that the Church of St Andrew is largely built of Roman stones from *Corstopitum* and, excepting the crypt at Hexham, is the most important surviving Saxon monument in the county (Pevsner 1992, 236). The lower portion of the west tower and the walls of the nave arcade are the original Saxon structure, and the upper parts of the tower seem to be 11th century. Certain architectural features, and the dedication to St Andrew, suggest that the original foundation may have been in the late seventh century as there are similarities with other late seventh century churches at Jarrow and Monkwearmouth. However, although it may have been built as a monastic church there are no traces of other monastic buildings. Excavations in 1911 allowed the ground plan of the eighth century building to be drawn up and Bailey *et al* mention that these excavations revealed the east-west foundations of an early chancel (1988, 121). The plan of the earlier church has also been conjectured from a dowsing survey and appears to suggest another phase in the early medieval history of the tower, which had been altered and raised, by indicating traces of a north-south foundation underlying it (Briggs, Cambridge and Bailey 1983, 82). A watching brief in 2001 recorded the footings of a wall on the line of the south arcade, which may relate to the Saxon nave wall, and another in the south transept which could be part of a pre-Conquest porticus (Event 284).

Other pre-Conquest evidence includes two 11<sup>th</sup> century stone fragments in the church (Cramp 1984, 240-1). One is part of a grave slab and may have been part of an altar, the second is a fragment of a finial cross perhaps from the gable end of a church.

#### 4.4 Royal Villa

Corbridge can claim to have been a royal *vill* from the eighth century (Craster 1914, 28). The historian Craster argues that since Corbridge was a royal manor in the 12<sup>th</sup> century there is a

presumption that it was already a part of the royal demesne in the eighth century. This presumption was based on the fact that the church at Hexham (also dedicated to St Andrew) was built by Wilfrid on land granted by Queen Etheldreda, so the monastery at Corbridge may similarly have resulted from royal benefaction. Craster is also willing to draw the inference that as the Northumbrian Annals record the murder of King Ethelred in 796 at *Corbe* or *Corebrygge*, there may have been a royal villa at Corbridge. However, he also indicates that larger inferences should not be drawn, suggesting that there is insufficient evidence to support Bates's argument that after a defeat in 756, the centre for the kings of Northumbria removed from the royal castle of Bamburgh to Corbridge (1914, 17-18). On the basis that there is documentary evidence that Earl Henry fitz David, earl of Northumbria at least occasionally resided at Corbridge, Craster conjectures that there was probably was a royal residence at the town (Craster 1914, 31) although its location is not known.

#### **4.5 Watermill (HER 9052)**

Another element of the *vill* in this period is a watermill. In 1984 old timbers were seen in the riverbed on the north bank of the Tyne, 50yds downstream of the Roman bridge. Four large timbers, extending about 20ft into river, and the paving between timbers were interpreted as Roman in character with lewis-holes and toolmarkings. The timber and stone structure have subsequently been dated to the Anglo Saxon period and interpreted as a Norse type watermill built of dressed stone blocks from the Roman bridge.

#### **4.6 Ninth century Corbridge**

There is very slight evidence relating to Corbridge towards the end of the early medieval period. This has resulted in much speculation, but little hard evidence. In 1858 a coin dated 851-874 was found in a grave below the floor of the chancel of the church. It was inscribed *Barnred R E.*, with the moneyer's name Cered (HER 8996). The County History suggests that the monastery associated with the church may have been destroyed in the mid-ninth century, at the same time as Wilfrid's monastery at Hexham, and that this coin, which is of a similar date to a coin hoard found at Hexham, may represent part of a similar hoard buried at Corbridge in the face of a similar threat of Danish invasion by Halfden (Craster 1914, 20-1). Documentary evidence of battles fought at Corbridge in this period have also suggested that it "*can be accepted that a battle was fought between the Scottish king Constantine and Reginald, the Dane in 918*" at Corbridge (Craster 1914, 23). In 1959 a probable Anglo-Danish grave slab fragment from a tombstone was found in Corbridge Church (Collingwood and Wright 1965, 742).

#### **4.7 Town ditch (HER 9020)**

The County History describes a defensive work at Corbridge, extending from Stagshaw Road to Orchard Vale. Taking this feature, together with place name evidence, it has been speculated that it was the defences of a 'burh' in the late 10<sup>th</sup> or early 11<sup>th</sup> century. However,

the logic of this argument can be challenged by a suggestion elsewhere in the same volume that the name Corbridge is not a corruption from *burh*, but is a name derived from the Roman bridge (Craster 1914, 14).

Whatever the true origin of the feature, it seems to have used natural watercourses and other topographical features except where following a roadway. Its defensive qualities were therefore probably slight and its purpose may have been to delimit the town, rather than defend it (Craster 1914, 30-1).

More recent speculation has suggested that the ditch may have followed the line of an earlier *vallum monasteri* enclosing the seventh or eighth century monastery centred on St Andrew's Church" (Ryder 1992, 3), and the line of Spoutwell Lane at the east end of the town has also been described as "*forming part of the limits of the old town which some think were marked by a ditch or pallisade or both*" (Iley nd, 177). Archaeological observation at The Chains in 2000 recorded a noticeable 'crest' crossing the site on an east-west alignment which might possibly have been the town boundary (Event 91).

## **5 MEDIEVAL (figure 5)**

### **5.1 The medieval town**

Corbridge was already a borough when Henry II came to the throne in 1154 but the royal boroughs of Bamburgh, Rothbury and Corbridge were not so much formally founded as allowed to develop, in what had been pre-Conquest administrative centres (Lomas 1996, 90). In 1201 King John granted Corbridge the status of a royal borough with the same privileges as those he granted to Newcastle, Rothbury, and Newburn (Craster 1914, 59). One of the privileges was burgage tenure, but the rights of burgesses were never extended and the borough was under the control of the lord of the manor's offices; there is no indication of a borough court distinct from the lord's court. This is contrary to the more usual trend for burgesses to attempt to increase their rights and escape the control of the landowner of their borough by achieving a degree of self-regulation but there is evidence that they were concerned to maintain some of their traditional rights. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century these included taking wood, brushwood and dead timber for the repair of their cottages, withies for their fences and ivy for decorating their houses on midsummer's day. They were also allowed to take dry wood for burning in their fires and uprooted timber, if not required by the lord of the manor, as well as brushwood from the sides of the six roads that led to Corbridge from the south (Craster 1914, 62-3).





Dere Street, which later became known as Watling Street, continued in use through the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and was a conspicuous feature which served as a march or boundary for every neighbouring estate. It was converted to a turnpike in 1800 but became less important after the construction of the Great North Road (1914, 34, 231). The roads from the North Pennines probably owe their origins to the discovery of lead mines at Alston and Weardale in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and demonstrate the importance of Corbridge as a nodal point of communication and trade over a wide region.

The importance of Corbridge as a crossing point on the Tyne was ensured after the old disused Roman bridge was replaced by a new structure in 1235 (HER 8987) which stood on the site of the present bridge. The later history of the bridge mirrors that of the town: after Scottish raids in 1296 the burgesses were impoverished and allowed the bridge to fall into disrepair and the bridge is frequently referred to in the 14th and 15th centuries as being in great disrepair. One of the sources of income for the upkeep of the bridge was alms offered at a chapel (HER 9125) on the bridge, “...on the 31st January, 1401, a papal indulgence was procured for those who should visit the Chapel of St Mary the Virgin built on Corbridge bridge, and give alms for the repair conservation of the said chapel and bridge, they being in large part destroyed”; yet the chapel was also referred to as ruinous on the 3rd March, 1428 (Jervoise 1931, 23-4). The foundations of the 13<sup>th</sup> century bridge have been seen at low water. A ford is also known to have existed below Byethorn and a road called Holepethe, or the hollow road, led up from the ford to a point near to the modern Station Hotel on the south side of the river.

### 5.3 Street pattern

The street pattern of modern Corbridge was probably established in the medieval period, although exactly when is unknown. The structure of the town could have become fixed after becoming a burgh in the late 10<sup>th</sup> or early 11<sup>th</sup> century and a borough in the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, its status and extent defined by the completion of a town ditch in the same period. To date, the most extensive work on the village form remains that of the County History of 1914. Here several surveys are used as the basis of reconstructing the town at this time, including: a Survey of Lord Percy's property in 1352, a Survey of Property held by Hexham Priory at Corbridge in 1379 (10 burgages rented out, several street names mentioned), and a survey of property held by the church of St Margaret, Durham (Craster 1914, 98). Changes in ownership of various freehold properties are also recorded in surveys of 1500, 1586, 1653 and 1702 and with further research of these and other documents it may be possible to identify some of these holdings with particular burgage plots on the ground. It does, however, appear that there is a continuity in the total size of the borough over the period that these surveys cover and it has been suggested that the 14<sup>th</sup> century town covered the same area as that of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century town (Craster 1914, 104).

The conjectured map of 14<sup>th</sup> century Corbridge, published in the County History, shows the following streets:

County History's map	Streets on fryer's 1777 map	Modern equivalent
St Helens Lane	Back Row	St Helen's Street
Prent Street	Princes Street	Princes Street
Gormire	Princes Street	Princes Street
Fish Shamble Gate	Scamble Gate and Herron's Hill	Hill Street
Sidgate	Middle Street	Middle Street
Narrowgate	Water Row	Front Street
Smithy Gate	Main Street	Main Street
Market Gate running onto Westgate	West Street	Watling Street
Colwell Chare	no name	Well Bank
St Mary Gate	no name	St Mary Gate
Stagshaw Road	no name	Stagshaw Road
Colchester Way	no name	Colchester Lane

The conjectured medieval map and analysis of post-medieval maps allows the areas of the medieval town likely to have been occupied by burgage plots to be mapped out with the market place and church at the centre (figure 5). While the extent of the town does not appear to alter significantly it is clear that it does not emerge as a "planned" entity of the late 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century, defined by a town ditch. There is also evidence of re-building on plots during the medieval period and of plots left open, subsequently built on and then left to waste again. The form of the town and its development are examined in the following sections.

Archaeological evidence of medieval Corbridge remains limited, but in 2004 an evaluation behind Eastfield House at the east end of Main Street discovered a series of gullies and postholes which may be related to a timber structure of 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century date (Event 13471).

#### 5.4 Market (HER 9139)

At the centre of the town was, and is, the Market Place where markets were held weekly from the reign of King John at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The Old Market Cross (HER 8990) is now set against the churchyard wall 2m east of Vicar's Pele; its base is probably of Roman date, the shaft 13th century, and the head 18th century head. In the centre of the market place today is a 19<sup>th</sup> century pant (HER 9091) but it may have has a medieval predecessor which brought water from Springfield at the eastern end of the village, by lead pipe into the market place.

The medieval market place may originally have extended across land to the north and south of



Middle Street which is now built upon. These areas of building (HER 9140 and 9141) comprise small plots without burgage plots or garths attached, suggesting that they occupied an area where space was at a premium. The market may also have spread around the church as suggestions of previous names for Hill Street include Fish Shamble Gate, Fish-Market Gate, Horse-Market Gate, Hide-Market Gate, and Scramble Gate (Illey nd, 181).

### **5.5 Burgage plots**

There is only limited evidence for the layout of medieval properties in Corbridge and Fryer's map of 1777 is the first plan to show the town in detail. Here, buildings are shown on the street frontages with linear plots extending to the rear, a pattern characteristic of medieval burgage plots. From the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1296 we know that Corbridge was the most populous town in the county after Newcastle with 77 inhabitants liable for the tax. These property boundaries, which were probably established in the medieval period, are still respected in places in the modern town.

Dwellings on individual plots may have been rebuilt a number of times within the period. In 1296 a Scottish invasion led to destruction both at Hexham and Corbridge which was burnt during this raid, reportedly suffering almost total destruction. The burgesses were given a gift from the king of 40 oaks to rebuild their houses (Craster 1914, 78). There clearly was a degree of rebuilding on the same plots in the medieval period, and there are particular examples where a detailed look at the history is possible:

### **5.6 Manor Hall (HER 9017)**

An example of a sequence of re-building and possible relocation of a major building is the Manor Hall thought to have stood in the area now called The Chains. The manor was probably built by Robert fitz Roger, possibly shortly after 1296 when the Scots under William Wallace burned Corbridge. It may have replaced an earlier manor house built by the Clavering family, although the location for this earlier manor is not known. The manor house was probably a relatively short-lived structure and may have been abandoned by the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century, when once again the Scots, this time under Robert the Bruce, attacked Corbridge in 1312. The structure was certainly derelict by the time the manor was passed to the Percy family in 1331. An inquisition dated to 1352 refers to waste ground called "Auld Halles" and a rental document of 1500 mentions this area of land as "the site of the manor, called Hallgarth". Even if the manor stood for a comparatively short time, it would still have been substantial (PreConstruct Archaeology, 2000, 13). The exact location of this building is not known, but it has long been assumed that it was situated close to St Helen's chapel, which may have been a private chapel for the lords of the manor. It was therefore disappointing that an evaluation of The Chains allotment site, uncovered no evidence of the manor house (Event 92).

### **5.7 St Helen's Chapel (HER 8993)**

The earliest reference to the Chapel of St Helen is in about 1300, when a deed mentions a St Helen's Street. A rental of 1500 refers to land lying next to St Helen's Chapel and a St Helen's garth is mentioned in 1586. A survey in 1663 and Warburton writing in about 1710 both commented that the chapel was in ruins. In 1802, a gable end was pulled down and all that remained in about 1880 was the lower part of the east wall of the chancel, with an Early English chamfered course; by 1914 it too had gone. It is unclear why the town should have had a chapel located so close to the parish church and as there is no evidence of a burial ground attached to it, it may have been a private chapel of the Manor Hall of Robert Fitz Roger (HER 9017).

The exact location of the chapel is also unknown, although early plans place it on the north side of St Helen's Street in the area known as The Chains. Here, close to the Parish Hall, are 18<sup>th</sup> century boundary walls that incorporate medieval masonry and which have been associated with St Helen's Chapel although there is no firm evidence to support this.

Two remote sensing surveys in the 1990s failed to find any features associated with the chapel (Events 12562 and 12563). However, a watching brief in 1993-4 encountered sections of walling presumed to be medieval in date although no finds were recovered (Event 12561).

### **5.8 Church of St Andrew (HER 8996)**

St Andrew's Church is the parish church of Corbridge and has its origins in the early medieval period. In 1107 Henry I settled the church on his chaplain, Richard d'Orival, but subsequently, about 1122, gave it to the Augustinian monastery founded at Carlisle. The church was extensively altered in the 13<sup>th</sup> century bringing it to approximately its present form. The main phase of alteration was in 1200-1296, when the nave was reconstructed and the chancel, transepts and aisles were built (Iley 1974, 201-11).

The churchyard surrounding St Andrew's Church may have been larger than that of today, and extended across the line of Hill Street. Human remains and medieval pottery have been here, for example in 1973 outside No 41 Hill Street when a water main was being excavated (Hexham Courant, 9<sup>th</sup> Feb., 1973). These remains indicate that the churchyard in the medieval period extended northwards beyond its modern boundary, but there is not yet sufficient evidence to define its full extent.

### **5.9 King's Oven (HER 9118 and 9147)**

The churchyard wall incorporates the remains of a communal oven, called the King's Oven. This is first recorded in 1310 and was last used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### 5.10 Vicar's Pele Tower (HER 8991; SM Nd77)

Close to the church is another significant medieval building, the Vicar's Pele Tower. The tower is mentioned as the Vicar's property in the list of fortresses drawn up for Henry V in 1415 and although there is no record of its erection, it has been suggested it is of c.1300 in style and all of one date (Knowles 1898, 173-8). However, more recent work at the tower proposes a later date than this, in the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century based on the use of a late 13<sup>th</sup> century cross slab in the fabric of the building (Ryder 1994-5, 59). The building comprises a vaulted basement and two upper storeys with the entrance doorway in the east side at ground level. Many of the stones in the tower have cramp holes and must have been obtained from the Roman buildings at *Corstopitum*. There are detailed descriptions of the building in the County History (Craster 1914, 209-15) and by Ryder (1994-5, 58-9).

### 5.11 Low Hall/Baxter's Tower (HER 8995)

Low Hall has been described as the oldest remaining house in the village apart from the Vicar's Pele. Also known as Baxter's Tower, or Pele Tower, it stands at the east end of Main Street. The nucleus of the building is a medieval pele three stories high, and it retains many of its original features including a vaulted ground floor and part of the stone newel staircase. It was probably built by the Baxter family in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century; a Thomas Baxter is mentioned in a deed of 1381 and a John Baxter in 1431. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Pele was incorporated into Low Hall, which was attached to the west side of Baxter's Tower and was probably built by Richard Gobson (died 1678/9). Details of the ownership history are provided in the County History and a detailed description of the building can be found in Ryder (1994-5, 55-8).

In the latter it is suggested that although *"the tower is usually regarded as the oldest part of the building ... a glance at the fabric shows that this is incorrect; it in fact appears to be a later heightening of one end of an earlier medieval house"*. The sequence suggested is: the ground floor hall house is perhaps 13<sup>th</sup> century, the east end bay was heightened into a tower in around the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the hall block was probably remodelled in the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century; further alterations were carried out in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Ryder 1994-5, 55-8). A full survey of the building would be required to ascertain if this argument is correct.

### 5.12 Prison

The Knights Templars are known to have had property in Corbridge and there is a record in the 1256 assize that a thief who had been placed in the Templars' prison in the town had escaped from it (Craster 1914, 71). Further research would be required to attempt to locate the Templars' property including this "prison", or fortified house.

### 5.13 Trinity Church "suburb"

During the medieval period a little hamlet (or suburb) grew up on the priory lands around the Prior's Manor House and Trinity Church, north-west of Corbridge itself. It lay outside the

possible ditch that formed the defence and limit of the town and was not reckoned to be part of the borough, with the tenants of the church assessed separately from the rest of Corbridge, for example in the Lay Subsidy Tax in 1296. *'The Prior Manor would have been in existence early or mid 14th century, for in 1334 William de Kendal was Prior of Hexham, and was ordained sub-deacon of Corbridge, by the Bishop of Carlisle. Here is possibly the county or occasional residence of the Priors of Hexham, and the house now occupied by Mr Thomas Bell, which is a very old one, is stated to have been the residence of the Priors, and is called the 'Priors Manor House' (Forster 1881, 37). Prior Manor (HER 9021) is a pair of 17<sup>th</sup> century houses, with earlier fabric in the cottage and 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century alterations. Priory Mains was held in the medieval period by Carlisle Priory and became the Corbridge Rectory. Details of the history of the ownership of the house can be found in the County History (Craster 1914, 219-26).*

#### **5.14 Trinity Church (HER 8994)**

The earliest mention of Trinity Church occurs in 1356 and it was apparently still standing in 1549 but fell into ruin sometime afterwards. By the early 18<sup>th</sup> century it was ruinous and was cleared away before the end of the century. The site was converted into a garden, which was built over at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with a row of houses called Trinity Terrace. In laying the foundations of the terrace in the 1880s, about a dozen stones of what was interpreted as a Norman plinth were found *in situ*, and appeared to be the south-west corner of the nave. At the time C C Hodges made some plans and records but these have not survived (Ryder 1992, 3).

Trinity Church had a burial ground called the Trinity Kirk Garth, which formed one of the items of the 17th century terrier of Corbridge Vicarage. Burials, which are probably of medieval date, have been encountered here since the 1880s when 20 skeletons were found during the construction of the first houses of Trinity Terrace. Further burials have been found over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: in about 1940 when a sewer was excavated along the back lane of Trinity Terrace several burials were observed; in 1955 when 'Holbene' (a bungalow) was built fronting Stagshaw Road; in about 1990 when an extension built on the back of No 6 Trinity Terrace; in 1992, a watching brief at No 8 Trinity Terrace observed eight articulated burials in a small trench c.0.9m deep by c.0.6m wide for a rear extension (Event 12564); and in 1996 when a water main was renewed to the rear of Trinity Terrace three burials were discovered at a depth of between 0.5m and 0.8m below ground level (Event 12565). In this most recent work no evidence of coffins or grave linings were found, or any associated artefacts, with the exception of a 13<sup>th</sup> to early 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery sherd in a grave fill. The burials were generally in a poor state of preservation and although modern disturbance lies up to 1m deep, below this level deposits were well-preserved. However, despite ample evidence of a densely occupied cemetery its full extent remains unknown. It is also possible that the medieval cemetery overlies a Roman one, lying beside an as yet undiscovered Roman road. Most

recently, in 2004, a grave was found at Sunnybrae on Stagshaw Road, and it too had been heavily truncated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but survived at a depth of between 0.5-0.80m (Event 13353).

### **5.15 Corbridge Mill (HER 9148)**

Evidence of a medieval mill at Corbridge comes from a Pipe Roll entry in 1175 for expenditure of £6 for the repair of the mill which had been burnt in the Scottish War. A 14<sup>th</sup> century rental also mentioned mills at Corbridge in 1352. The location of a medieval mill is not known but the present mill building on the Cor Burn was built in about 1800 (HER 9122).

### **5.16 Industries**

#### *Iron working*

Iron working, an important activity in the Roman town, appears to have continued to play a role in the economy of medieval Corbridge. Four new forges were entered in to the Provost's account of 1525 and ironwork was known to be a principal commodity sold at Stagshaw Fair, with lists of purchases from the fair in 1298 and 1299 including horse shoes, nails and ironware (Craster 1914, 102-3). Main Street was formerly called Smithgate because of the numbers of iron working shops that were located there (Corbridge Village Trust 1983) this street name is shown on Craster's conjectured 14<sup>th</sup> century map (1914, 113).

#### *Goldsmithing*

A deed of 1245 alludes to a shop where the goldsmiths lived on the south side of the churchyard and the name Michael the Goldsmith occurs in the 1296 Lay Subsidy Roll (Craster 1914, 103).

#### *Silversmithing*

The County History indicates that silver mined around Alston was used in a mint at Carlisle from 1128 and that coinage was also minted at Corbridge (Craster 1914, 45).

#### *Tanning*

The medieval street name Hidemarket suggests a tanning industry and the County History notes that tan-pits lined with brick are said to have been found c.1760 nearby (Craster 1914, 103).

#### *Lime burning*

Lime burning and a lime kiln are mentioned in a deed from 1381. An old lime-burning pit (HER 9172) of unknown date was discovered in 1890 when the Blue Bell Inn was pulled down on the west side of the Market Place and is described as "*at a depth of 8 feet a layer of burnt lime resting on a thin stratum of charcoal and below these the calcined sand and gravel.....A large pit had been dug in sand and limestone had been laid on layers of wood placed in the pit and*

*so fired. The portion of the lime pit excavated measured 20 feet by 15 feet but its original extent must have been probably twice this area”* (Craster 1914, 103).

#### *Corn drying*

Evidence of a probable corn-drying kiln was found in an archaeological evaluation behind Main Street in 2004 (Event 13472). The structure may have been part of a wider medieval complex, perhaps of combined industrial and domestic activity.

### **5.17 Agriculture**

The medieval agricultural arrangements of the township were maintained until the close of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the common field system is mapped in the County History (Craster 1914, 136 and plate II). The cultivated land of the township was all on the north side of the river and land on the south bank was waste or common (Craster 1914, 139).

## **6 POST-MEDIEVAL AND NINETEENTH CENTURY** (figure 6)

### **6.1 The post-medieval town**

Corbridge appears to have stagnated in the post-medieval period despite the eventual cessation of border conflicts. Outward expansion of the town began only after the opening of the Newcastle to Carlisle railway in 1835, when the town expanded a little on the south bank of the river and the historic core of the town on the north bank became a little more built up although its boundaries did not expand greatly. Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries new building in the town continued to replace and adapt existing properties. Hutchinson, in 1776 found Corbridge to be to be dirty and disagreeable and John Hodgson writing in 1830 described it as *“dirty and in all the streets except that through which the Newcastle Carlisle road passes, filthy with middens and pigsties”* (Craster 1914, 175-6). However, towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was s a town apparently transformed into a resort as *“one of the most picturesque and interesting Northumbrian villages as it is one of the most considerable. From its high and dry situation on a gravelly hill, which is sheltered on the north and south by the steep sides of the river gorge, combined with the loveliness of the surrounding country, Corbridge has become one of the most popular health resorts in the country. Few villages have so many natural advantages and these are supplemented by historic associations of exceptional interest”* (Tomlinson 1888, 135). This could have been an early tourist brochure advertising the advantages of the town to the visitor, and the tourist trade has played an increasingly important role in the economic life of the town.

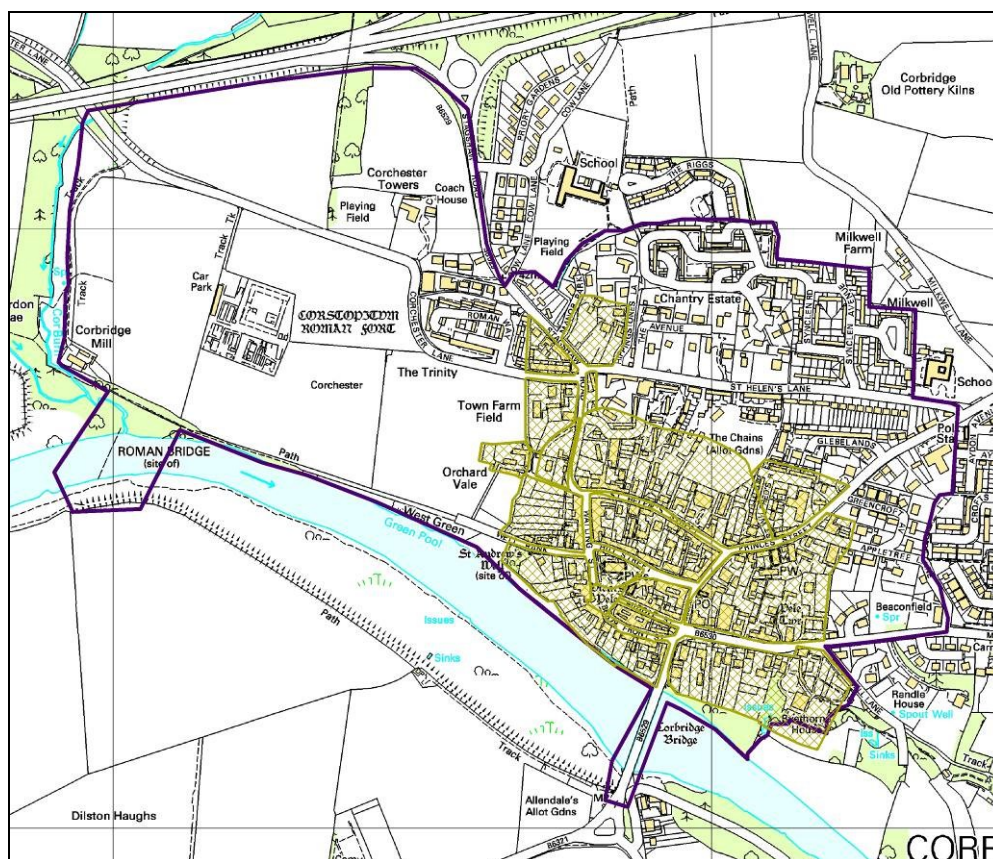


Figure 6: Post-medieval potential.

## 6.2 Building plots and buildings

Much of the post-medieval character of the town survives in the modern town. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century there was a great deal of re-building, and many of these structures survive today, albeit with later alterations. Some of the buildings have faced stones for their frontage and a rougher build to the sides and rear and some are of a rough build to all faces. Many of the boundaries are marked by stone walls which exhibit a multiplicity of builds and many may follow their original medieval alignments. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the town expanded a little to the west along the turnpiked road to Newcastle, but its medieval form appears to have been largely retained. In the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the building plots became a little more built up and some linear building plots were divided across their width with new dwellings built to occupy the “new” halves of the plot. After 1835 and the arrival of the railway, the station on the south bank of the river acted as a focus for some additional development.

The earliest map of the town is Fryer’s map of the enclosed lands and open fields in 1776/7. Here, the street frontages from Watling Street to Front Street are completely built up with rear plots extending down towards the river bank. Along the north and south of Main Street there are also almost continuous built-up frontages: those to the south have plots which extend towards the riverbank, and those to the north have plots which adjoin those facing onto Princes Street. At the eastern end of Main Street is Monks Holme (HER 8989), which juts out into the street so as to narrow the road before it opens out into the wide Main Street. Monks



Holme was formerly the New Inn and is one of the finest old houses left in Corbridge, with thick walls and a cellar with a barrel-shaped ceiling. There is some dispute regarding its date, which may be 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century with much 19<sup>th</sup> century restoration. The rear wing was formerly of greater extent with a barrel-vaulted cellar beneath the adjacent yard.

Adjacent to Monks Holme is Byethorne House (HER 9058), which was originally called 'The Willows'. It was built in 1786 and renamed in 1867 by Henry Smith Edwards after a ship he had built. He bought up adjacent land over the following 16 years and created 20 acres of gardens, parkland and woodland overlooking the River Tyne, later altering the main drive and adding water gardens, tennis courts and green houses. Although the estate went into decline in the earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century and parts were sold off, when it came under new ownership in the 1970s and 80s the land and property was bought back to recreate the estate.

Fryer's map also shows building plots fronting onto Scamble Gate and Herron's Hill (now Hill Street) (HER 9133) and those on the north side of Hill Street extended to St Helen's Street. It is apparent from the first and second edition Ordnance Survey maps that these plots were not divided and that the south side of St Helen's Street was not built on until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many of the buildings on Hill Street date from the 1700s to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including Nos 28-34 (HER 9082) which are cottages that retain the 18<sup>th</sup> century character of the town, and No 18 Heron House (HER 9081) now the Corbridge Larder, which is a good example of a building where rough large stones can be seen at the base of the side walls and may indicate the reuse of an earlier foundation.

The north side of St Helen's Street (HER 9136) is shown on Fryer's 1777 map as partially built up, but the area where the Manor House with its associated chapel (HER 8993) had been, is completely open at this time. After the survey of the 1777, the extent of the town expanded a little further to the east, out of Princes Street along the Aydon Road, the turnpiked road (after 1752) to Newcastle. This area includes the Vicarage (HER 9111), which dates from 1785 although incorporating earlier fabric and was altered in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

At the western edge of the town (HER 9138) an open area belonging to the Greenwich Hospital appears on Fryer's 1777 map and the northern field boundary appears to follow the line of the possible "town ditch". On the other side of the boundary lay what appears to be a farm building, built around a courtyard, also belonging to the Greenwich Hospital, this plot is now occupied by Town End Farm (HER 9144).

The medieval suburb around Trinity Church at the north-western edge of Corbridge did not increase in size in the post-medieval period. The area to the north of Stagshaw Road (HER 9142) is shown on Fryer's 1777 maps as belonging to the "*Dean and Chapter*", and the Kirk Garth (HER 9143) on the opposite side of the road is open ground on both Fryer's map (1777)

and the first edition Ordnance Survey map c.1860; it is now occupied by Trinity Terrace.

### **6.3 Market**

At the beginning of the post-medieval period Corbridge was not particularly prosperous and although after the Civil War, attempts were made to make the manor more profitable, these were not very successful. At some time between the late 16<sup>th</sup> and mid-17<sup>th</sup> century the market ceased to be held although Stagshaw Fair was still held, some 3km north of the town, and was described as the principal fair in the Tyne Valley (Craster 1914, 146). In medieval times ironware had been the most important commodity traded at the fair, but it later became a market for sheep and cattle brought by Highland drovers from Scotland on the border routes over Redesmire and Carter Bar (Graham 1992, 53; Hepple 1988, 72; Craster 1914, 146-7). Despite the lack of a market, the centre of Corbridge is still called Market Place on the first edition Ordnance Survey map. Front Street and Middle Street are quite built up by 1777 and Fryer's map, and may occupy part of the original medieval market place. The old market cross (HER 8990) was replaced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with a cast iron structure (HER 9121), which was erected in 1814.

### **6.4 Schools**

There is documentary evidence of a school in the town in 1578 but the first indication that there was a building built specifically for that purpose (HER 9149) is in 1726 when a room was built on the south side of the church tower. Hodgson describes this building in 1830 as 'a dirty dog-hole of a school' and it was pulled down in 1834 to make way for a vestry (Craster 1914, 215). A Church of England School (HER 8999) was built in 1855 and was completely remodelled in 1904 (Craster 1914, 216).

### **6.5 Places of Worship**

The Church of St Andrew (HER 8996) seems to have survived the post-medieval period with little alteration. Some new openings were made in the tower and others blocked and the crenellated parapet was added. The porch was added in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the internal fittings and furnishings are nearly all late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A vault built of 18<sup>th</sup> century brick was discovered in a watching brief at the church in 1997, at the west end of the nave. The vault now contained two coffins, identified as those of Lionel and Hannah Winship of Aydon, who died in 1811 and 1812 respectively. Rows of sockets in the side walls may suggest an earlier phase of use before the insertion of the present burials (Ryder 1998, 30).

A former chapel is now used as a library and tourist information office at the corner of Hill Street and Princes Street (HER 9126). It was designed by F Emily who, in 1887, also designed the Town Hall (HER 9103) on Princes Street. The former Primitive Methodist Chapel in Corbridge dates from 1867 (HER 9066).

## 6.6 Inns

There are several inns in Corbridge with Grade II Listed Building status. The *Angel Inn* (HER 9084) is a 17<sup>th</sup> century inn which was extended in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was formerly called the King's Head. From 1752 until the opening of the railway it was the posting inn for Corbridge. The *Wheatsheaf Inn* (HER 9119) a mid-18<sup>th</sup> century inn, altered and enlarged in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The *Black Bull Inn* on Middle Street (HER 9100) is dated 1765, but the western part dates from 1755 and incorporates earlier fabric and was a separate house until c.1670. The *Golden Lion Public House* (HER 9079) is a mid-18<sup>th</sup> century inn, which was built with materials from Dilston Hall in 1768. Monks Holme (HER 8989) was formerly the *New Inn* and is a 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century building. The *Boots and Shoes Inn* (HER 9151), now demolished, was another posting inn which was located in Water Road (now Front Street) and its name derived from the local industry of shoemaking.

## 6.7 Roads

The Newcastle to Carlisle Road was turnpike in 1752 and East House (HER 9127) on Princes Street may have been a toll house. Dere Street was converted to a turnpike in 1800 but its importance declined after the construction of the Great North Road (Craster 1914, 34, 231).

## 6.8 Corbridge Bridge (HER 8987)

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the upkeep of the bridge was taken over by the county and repairs were carried out in 1631. However, the county subsequently tried to relieve itself of the cost of upkeep, claiming that the bridge was not necessary, but the townspeople of Newcastle petitioned parliament in 1666 to say that it was very important that the bridge be maintained. In 1674 the old bridge was finally replaced by a seven-arched structure, which was the only bridge across the Tyne to withstand the flood of 1771 and is now the oldest surviving bridge on the Tyne. A series of repairs and alterations occurred through the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including: rebuilding the southern arch in 1829, adding 3 feet to the width of the bridge in 1881; raising the parapet in 1950, and building a new concrete invert in 1969. This bridge has Scheduled Ancient Monument status (SAM 123) and Grade I Listed Building status.

## 6.9 Industries

The principal industries of the town in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were shoe making, lime burning and market gardening (Craster 1914). The shoes were made for the coal and lead miners of the area and many were exported to Shields and became known as Shields shoes. Numerous orchards were planted about the town in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although they ceased to be profitable (Craster 1914, 147). Traditional iron working also continued in the town, with five smiths recorded in 1855 and some of the products may have been specialised, leading to the street name Filers Row, located at the Market Place end of Middle Street (Iley nd, 130).

Corbridge Pottery (HER 8673) in Milkwell Lane, although outside the assessment area, was

the chief source of permanent occupation in Corbridge in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, making tile and drain pipes. It was established c.1840 and two impressive early 19<sup>th</sup> century bottle ovens are the most prominent feature on the site.

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

### **7 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

This section deals with the possibility of discovering archaeological remains in Corbridge in the course of development and the potential these remains could have for the understanding of the past of the town, region and country as a whole. To be meaningful, any archaeological input in Corbridge 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 these 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 publicly, enabling archaeologists and other researchers to analyse this material to create a national picture of urban settlement change.

Corbridge is unique amongst the Northumberland towns included in this Survey in that it represents an important settlement spanning the Roman to the post-medieval period. It has not suffered from significant later development likely to have caused serious truncation of the below ground archaeological deposits. It was an important Roman site and an early medieval Royal borough with a possible monastic component, which became a prosperous medieval market town, second only to Newcastle in 1296. In the post-medieval period the town shows no significant expansion. Within the historic core of the town there was some infilling but mostly a reuse of medieval building plots. Cellaring is not a significant feature of buildings in Corbridge suggesting that archaeological deposits are likely to be well preserved. Archaeological excavations and observations in Corbridge together with spot finds recovered from all areas of the town indicate that within the whole of the assessment area significant archaeological remains are likely to survive and as too little is known of the extent of the archaeology, the whole area should be treated as one high in archaeological potential.

#### **7.1 Prehistoric Potential**

There is sufficient archaeological evidence to suggest that the Corbridge area has been the

focus of settlement since the very earliest prehistoric times. Its location on an alluvial river valley terrace is typical of other areas where prehistoric exploitation took place. The river valley was also an important route along which communication and movement occurred from the earliest times and the relatively large number of prehistoric sites and finds around Corbridge would suggest that the site has been an attractive area to settle for thousands of years. The Roman fort was certainly occupied in the Bronze Age and possibly the Iron Age, but the protected status of this site will ensure that such remains will not be destroyed by development. Outside the Scheduled area, a cist burial from Leazes Terrace, at the eastern edge of Corbridge, may be part of a larger cemetery. The potential also exists for waterlogged deposits near the river, which could provide well-preserved biological remains from this period. Unfortunately, the lack of provenance for the many prehistoric finds from Corbridge makes it difficult to predict with any certainty which areas of Corbridge are most likely to produce prehistoric archaeology.

#### *7.1.2 Research Agenda*

- What was the nature and extent of prehistoric settlement and activity in Corbridge?
- What evidence is there for the transition from a Mesolithic hunter-gatherer economy to a Neolithic economy based on animal husbandry?
- What changes were there in the use of the landscape between the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age? Can investigation of colluvial and alluvial sequences contribute to this debate together with environmental work like pollen sampling and study of waterlogged deposits?
- Good dating evidence is required to identify contemporary settlements and suitable discoveries will be assessed for carbon dating.
- What is the nature and extent of prehistoric burials in Corbridge?

#### *7.1.3 Archaeological Priorities*

In pursuit of Corbridge's prehistoric past, any specifications prepared by the County Archaeologist will:

- ensure that adequate archaeological evaluation takes place within the village so that any constraints can be identified at the earliest opportunity
- enhance our understanding of the prehistoric period by identifying the extent and nature of prehistoric land-use
- attempt to obtain more secure carbon dates from structural remains
- attempt to define the extent of the cemetery at Leazes Terrace
- ensure that environmental samples are taken from appropriate contexts to shed light on landscape and economic changes

## **7.2 Roman Potential (figure 3)**

Corbridge forms part of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and its research objectives are

in preparation elsewhere. They will be more extensive than those listed here and will be incorporated to formulate appropriate archaeological responses to development proposals. Corbridge has significant Roman archaeology, most of which lies to the west of the modern town and which is protected through scheduling. However, discoveries outside this area strongly suggest that the extent of the Roman town and its cemeteries exceeds the defined scheduled area. The areas thought to have the highest potential for uncovering Roman remains include: all land to the east of the fort up to and including the present day Watling Street, the churchyard and the Market Place; land to the north of the fort as far as Roman Way; and land to the south as far as the river. Environmental archaeology also has the potential to provide information on how the landscape has changed over a period of time and why these changes took place.

#### *7.2.1 Research Agenda*

- What effect did the construction and occupation of Hadrian's Wall have on native populations, in particular, how did it affect the native economy?
- To what extent did the abandonment of the Wall affect settlement pattern in the area?
- Did Hadrian's Wall continue to be respected as a boundary after the Roman administration broke down?
- What is the full extent of the Roman town?
- What evidence is there of interaction between the Roman military and civilian population?
- Where possible, environmental sampling will form part of archaeological requirements in the planning process so that changes in the military zone can be identified and through this, the impact of Roman occupation (and abandonment) in the landscape.

#### *7.2.2 Archaeological Priorities*

In pursuit of Corbridge's Roman past, any specifications prepared by the County Archaeologist will:

- ensure that adequate archaeological evaluation takes place within the village so that any constraints can be identified at the earliest opportunity
- attempt to define the extent of the Roman town
- ensure that environmental samples are taken from appropriate contexts to shed light on landscape and economic changes

### **7.3 Early Medieval Potential (Figure 4)**

Little is known about settlement in the vicinity of the Roman town following the end of Roman administration in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The founding of a religious house in the seventh or eighth century leaves a gap of at least 200 years after the end of the Roman period to be explored. This is a period that poses particular challenges to archaeologists throughout the country as the archaeology changes from stone-built ordered Roman settlements, which often survive to



the present day, to far more fragile remains, usually with little or no dating evidence. In Corbridge, the survival of the church and the excavated remains of a watermill provide direct evidence of early medieval occupation, although its extent is not known. The possible town ditch and river crossing may provide further clues. Areas most likely to uncover evidence of early medieval Corbridge are shown on figure 4.

### 7.3.1 *Research Agenda*

- Where was the early medieval town located and what was its extent and character?
- Can the existence of a town ditch be resolved and if so, was it defensive or administrative in function, or could it have been a *vallum monasterii* for the religious house?
- Where was the early monastic community located and what was its extent and character?
- Why did the focus of Corbridge shift eastwards, away from the Roman town, and when?
- What was the ground plan of the early church and when was it built?
- What evidence is there for a royal residence in Corbridge?

### 7.3.2 *Archaeological Priorities*

In pursuit of these and wider research agenda, the County Archaeologist will write specifications for development related archaeological work, which will seek to:

- establish a chronology for the growth of Corbridge from a Roman fort to an early medieval settlement
- define the extent and form of the early medieval settlement
- define the extent, date and function of the town ditch
- establish a dated ground plan for the early church
- establish whether the town was a royal *vill* and if so, locate the residence
- explore the relationship between the milling complex and the town
- include any research objectives identified as part of the Hadrian's Wall Management Plan
- ensure that environmental sampling is exploited to provide information on diet, the economy and landscape changes in the environs of Corbridge

## 7.4 **Medieval Potential** (Figure 5)

There is considerable documentation for the later medieval history of Corbridge, but little in the way of excavation has taken place to fill the gaps in our knowledge. We can estimate the extent of the medieval town from later maps and street names and this is shown on figure 5.

The Church of St Andrew, the Vicar's Pele and Low Hall (Baxter's Hall) are significant standing medieval buildings. There is considerable documentation for the later medieval history of Corbridge and because there has been little modern development in the historic

core and the street layout appears to have changed little, medieval remains are likely to survive well. Excavation has shown that although below ground medieval remains have been truncated in places, eg at Trinity Terrace, significant deposits and features can survive just 0.3m below ground level. At Trinity Terrace, burials are reasonably close to the ground surface and have been exposed during quite small scale developments; from the present ground level to about 0.9m the ground is disturbed and human remains tend to be disarticulated, but below that depth remains are well-stratified and in good condition.

#### 7.4.1 *Research Agenda*

- What archaeological evidence survives for the lives of the inhabitants of medieval Corbridge?
- Research of the rich documentary sources, particularly the deeds in the county Record Office dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards relating to properties in Corbridge, would allow a more detailed history of the town to be established on a plot-by-plot basis.
- To what extent have the burgage plot boundaries changed?
- What was the exact location of Trinity Church and what was its ground plan? What was the extent of its graveyard?
- What was the nature and extent of the suburb around Trinity Church and what was its relationship to Corbridge?
- Where was the Templar prison, mentioned in 1256, located?
- What evidence is there for medieval structures and activity around the site of the medieval bridge and fording point?
- Can detailed study of medieval buildings in Corbridge provide information which can be related to events such as Scottish attacks in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries?
- Where was St Helen's Chapel located?
- What archaeological evidence is there for specialist areas for different industries and where were they located? Where was the medieval iron industry located?

#### 7.4.2 *Archaeological Priorities*

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

- treat the area shown on figure 5 as a high potential area for producing evidence of medieval settlement. In this area archaeological evaluations are likely to be requested in advance of development proposals being submitted
- use wherever possible, building recording to identify medieval remains within existing buildings and to establish a relative chronology for those medieval buildings already recognised
- attempt to locate the extent of Trinity Kirk Garth

- attempt to locate different phases of industry within the town, including the mint
- examine the evidence for daily life in medieval buildings and how the burgage plots were used over time
- define the original extent of St Andrew's churchyard
- locate the manor house and the Templar's prison
- map the changes of use of different zones of activity in the town and relate them, wherever possible, to economic wealth or decline as identified in tax returns

## 7.5 Post-Medieval Potential (figure 6)

Corbridge is unusual in the North East in that it did not expand significantly, nor change its character with increasing industrialisation. The small amount of post-medieval development comprised some infilling of medieval plots but the boundaries were retained. The construction of a railway station on the south side of the river led to some expansion there and the turnpiking of the road from Newcastle to Carlisle also resulted in some expansion to the west. Many of the traditional industries continued and one industry that thrived in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was the pottery.

### 7.5.1 Research Agenda

- Why did the market die and yet Stagshaw Fair, held in a field alongside the ruins of Hadrian's Wall with no village facilities, survive?
- In the 1970s, a history of Corbridge was written by Iley, and his papers, which include useful archaeological observations, are preserved in the County Records Office (NRO 3369 and 3592). They include observations by Walter Iley and John Gillam along with second hand observations of workmen and householders of some excavations of service trenches in the 1970s and 80s (NRO 3369 and 3592). These were not consulted as part of this study, but include 71 items of articles and correspondence, which could contain useful information relating to the depth and preservation of archaeological deposits in the town.
- Did employees of the Corbridge Pottery live within a defined area of the town, as can be seen in other towns?
- Did guilds control the activities of this and other early industries?
- How did the town's relationship change with the increasingly industrilaised rural areas?
- Can the study of 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings reveal differences in the changing wealth of Corbridge's inhabitants?
- What impact did the change in importance of north-south communications have on the wealth of Corbridge's inhabitants? Is it reflected in the archaeological evidence?

### 7.5.2 Archaeological Priorities

In pursuit of these themes, archaeological briefs and specifications for development related

archaeological work, will be structured to:

- pursue research to form a more complete picture of the development of the town and any related industrial activity
- enhance our understanding of the surviving and extant heritage through recording
- examine the potential for archaeological activity and record layers of development

## **7.6 Summary of Archaeological Potential in Corbridge**

Corbridge is a special town and has a number of qualities which require considerable thought and care when planning for new developments. The town was nationally important over 2000 years ago and much of this archaeological material will still survive beneath the modern ground surface. The shift in population towards the current historic core will also have left well-preserved archaeological remains. Because the economic wealth of the town declined in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and never really recovered, there has been very little development to alter the character of the town or to damage sub-surface remains. This means that much of the town is either sitting on well-preserved archaeology, or it is built out of living archaeology in the form of medieval buildings and streets. Archaeological mitigation will not seek to fossilise modern development, but it will seek to ensure that:

- Archaeology is not needlessly destroyed
- That the character of the town is not destroyed or eroded
- That archaeological information will be obtained in return for acceptable levels of damage to the archaeology

In order to achieve this, it is probable that many developers will be required to research the impact of their proposals before submitting planning applications. It is also likely that many developments will also be required to obtain burial licences in addition to planning approvals because of the large numbers of areas which may contain human burials from Roman or medieval contexts.

## 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 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 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 Corbridge 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 Corbridge, the statutory development plan comprises the *Tynedale District Local Development Framework Core Strategy* and the saved policies of the *Tynedale District Wide Local Plan*. The Regional Spatial Strategy was revoked in July 2010.

The relevant policies within the Tynedale Local Development Framework Core Strategy are:

### **Core Strategy Policy BE1** (extract from)

*The principles for the built environment are to:*

- a) Conserve and where appropriate enhance the quality and integrity of Tynedale's built environment and its historic features including archaeology, giving particular protection to listed buildings, scheduled monuments and conservation areas.*
- b) Give specific protection to the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and its setting.*

The saved policies of the Tynedale District Wide Local Plan relating to the protection and management of archaeological sites and the historic environment are:

### **Policy BE25**

*There will be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation in situ of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other nationally important archaeological sites. Development, which would be detrimental to these sites or their settings, will not be permitted.*

### **Policy BE27**

*Development, which would be detrimental to regionally or locally important archaeological sites or their settings, will not be permitted unless the proposed development is considered to be of overriding regional importance and no alternative site is available.*

### **Policy BE28**

*Where it is not clear how important an archaeological site is, or where the impact of a development proposal on an existing archaeological site is uncertain, the developer will be required to provide further information in the form of an archaeological assessment and, where such an assessment indicates that important archaeological remains may be affected, a full archaeological evaluation.*

### **Policy BE29**

*Where sites or monuments of archaeological importance would be affected by development, their preservation in situ is preferred. Where the site is not considered to be of sufficient importance to merit preservation in situ and development is subsequently permitted, planning permission will be subject to an archaeological condition, or a Planning Obligation will be sought, which will require the excavation and recording of the remains prior to or during the development. In such instances, publication of the findings will also be required.*

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 BE28, 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 BE28, 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;
- ii)* the fewer the number of examples believed to exist the greater the interest that attaches to those places as representatives of their form;
- iii)* 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
- iv)* 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 Corbridge the majority of sites considered to be of archaeological interest are Roman, early medieval, medieval and post medieval in date. There are four listed buildings which have been given Grade I status, which means that they are of exceptional interest (less than 5% of buildings listed nationally are Grade I). There are no Grade II\* buildings but 57 are Grade II. These are buildings of special interest, which warrant every effort being made to preserve them. The large numbers of listed buildings reflect the high quality of historic traditional architecture in the village.

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Roman station west of granaries, photo 1950 VF 10331

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Corstopitum, section across main e-w street, late gate

of compound and earliest rampart VF 33040/6884/D407

St Andrews Church, photo c. 1900 VF 33336/9165

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**APPENDIX 1 : LISTED BUILDINGS****Grade I**

Vicar's Pele Tower (HER 8991)  
Church of St Andrew (HER 8996)  
Corbridge Bridge (HER 8987, LB no 21/113, SAM 123)  
Low Hall (Baxters Tower) (HER 8995)

**Grade II\***

(none)

**Grade II**

Corbridge Market Cross (HER 8990)  
Market Cross (HER 9121, LB no 21/164)  
Former Primitive Methodist Chapel (HER 9066, LB No 21/175)  
Old Prior Manor and Prior Manor Cottage (HER 9021)  
The Angel Inn (HER 9084)  
Wheatsheaf Inn (HER 9119)  
Black Bull Inn, Middle Street (HER 9100)  
The Golden Lion Public House (HER 9079)  
Spout Well on the south side of the B6530 (HER 9071)  
Bridge Bank Cottage and adjacent workshop to the north (HER 9072, LB no 21/115)  
Garden wall to the east of Bridge Bank Cottage (HER 9073, LB no 21/116)  
The Forge House (HER 9074, LB no 21/117)  
The Forge (HER 9075, LB no 21/118)  
No. 8 and 10 Front Street (HER 9076)  
No. 12-16 (even) Front Street (HER 9077)  
No. 18-22 (even) (Panache restaurant) Front Street (HER 9078)  
No. 14-16 Hill Street (HER 9080)  
No. 18 Heron House, Hill Street (HER 9081)  
No. 28-34 Hill Street (HER 9082)  
St Andrew's Cottage, Hill Street (HER 9084)  
Premises occupied by Smiths Gore and Christies Ltd. Main Street (HER 9085)  
Forecourt wall and gate piers to Low Hall (HER 9086)  
Corbridge House (HER 9087)  
Waverley House, Holly House (No. 5) and Glanthrone, Main Street (HER 9088)  
Pant in front of no. 5 Main Street (HER 9089)  
Riverside Hotel, Main Street (HER 9090)  
Pant, previously listed as Village Pump, Market Place (HER 9091)  
Lychgate to churchyard, Market Place (HER 9092)

Fawcett headstone 1783, 1m west of Church of St Andrews (HER 9093)  
Noble headstone 1764, 3m south of Church of St Andrews (HER 9094)  
Lumley headstone 1776, 5m east of Church of St Andrews (HER 9095)  
Lumley memorial 1775, 8m east of Church of St Andrews (HER 9096)  
Wilson tomb 3m east of Church of St Andrews (HER 9097)  
No. 9 Market Place (HER 9098)  
Norma James Dress Shop and attached cottage to the rear, north side of Middle Street (HER 9099)  
Sydgate House, Middle Street (HER 9101)  
Lloyds Bank, Middle Street (HER 9102)  
Town Hall with shops beneath (HER 9103)  
Hydrants and trough at the junction of Orchard Crescent and Princes Street (HER 9104)  
No. 1-3 Princes Street (HER 9105)  
No. 5-7 Princes Street (HER 9106)  
Cross House East and Cross House West, Princes Street (HER 9107)  
Fourcourt wall and gate piers to Cross House East and Cross House West, Princes Street (HER 9108)  
No. 3 St Helen's Street (HER 9109)  
Boundary walls to the north and west of the Parish hall, St Helen's Street (HER 9110)  
The Old Vicarage (South House, North House and the Old Vicarage Flat) Aydon Road (HER 9111)  
Croft House, Aydon Road (HER 9112)  
Town Farmhouse and garage to the west (HER 9113, LB no 21/200)  
Orchard Vale and Orchard Vale Cottage, Stagshaw Road (HER 9114, LB no 21/201)  
Forecourt walls and attached outbuildings to the north of Orchard Vale (HER 9115, LB no 21/202)  
Hydrant and trough 15m west of Wheatsheaf Public House, Stagshaw Road (HER 9116, LB no 21/203)  
No. 4-6 (consecutive) Watling Street (HER 9117)  
Churchyard wall with hearse house and entrance gateway, Watling Street (HER 9118, LB no 21/208)  
No. 14 Warden Cottage and Black House Crafts, Watling Street (HER 9120)  
Corbridge Mill, Mill House and adjacent byre (HER 9122, LB no 9/119)  
Ha-ha wall and attached garden wall to the south of Corbridge Mill and Mill House (HER 9123)  
Monk's Holme (HER 8989)

## 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 12593

Tyne and Wear Museums, 1993. *Town Farm Field, Corbridge. Archaeological watching brief*  
No archaeological features were encountered, although Roman pottery was found in a layer of sandy silt immediately overlying natural subsoil.

### Event No 12526

Northern Archaeological Associates, 1997. *Dere Street, Corbridge. Archaeological watching brief.*

A watching brief on the course of a pipeline that crossed Dere Street, north of Corbridge, revealed no surviving traces of the road. It is suggested that the Roman road material has been quarried away, perhaps to aid with the construction of the neighbouring turnpike road.

### Event No 79

J Watson, 1999. *Little Eden, St Helen's Street, Corbridge*

Two strip foundations were observed to a depth of 0.6m. Only 20<sup>th</sup> century disturbance was uncovered with no sign of any archaeological features.

### Event No 193

Northern Electric, 2000. *St Helen's Street, Corbridge*

A human skull was discovered whilst work to electricity supply was carried out.

### Event No 92

Archaeological Services University of Durham, 2000. *The Chains, Corbridge*

Thirteen trial trenches revealed very little evidence of past activity. There was a notable absence of medieval or earlier material as residual finds in the topsoil. Only one trench contained any archaeological deposits – a layer of disturbed soil containing two sherds of late medieval pottery and a tiny amount of samian.

### Event No 93

Tyne and Wear Museums, 2000. *Corbridge Water Mains Refurbishment*

A scheme of improvements and refurbishments to water mains throughout the village were observed. Almost no archaeological deposits were observed, the exception being a stone flag surface at the junction of Front Street and the approach to Corbridge Bridge, which may represent an earlier approach road to the bridge. In the middle of Watling Street a baulk between two service cuts revealed a deposit of compacted silt containing a sherd of 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> pottery.

### Event No 284

P Ryder, 2001. *St Andrew's Church*

Watching brief over works in and around the church. Some features of interest were found but little pre-dated the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the church was restored. The only earlier features exposed were footings of massive gritstone blocks, which pre-date the 19<sup>th</sup> century sleeper walls; one of these was aligned with the south arcade and may relate to the Saxon nave wall. A second footing projected from the east wall of the south transept and may relate to the original early 13<sup>th</sup> century aisle or possibly the pre-Conquest porticus.

### Event No 189

Archaeological Services University of Durham, 2001. *Archaeological evaluation of land at Duke's Cottages, Corbridge*

Two trenches were excavated, both revealing a soil layer with a little medieval pottery present.

One trench contained a shallow gully, possibly an old field boundary. The pottery included a possible early medieval sherd, although possibly residual in a later context. There was no later ceramic material suggesting that post-medieval activity had not disturbed these contexts.

**Event No 321**

Tyne and Wear Museums, 2002. *5 West Terrace, Corbridge*

A trench for a new electricity supply was watched over a 26.5m length and between 0.4m and 1.0m deep. A silty loam was uncovered, cut by various modern services, but no dating evidence was found.

**Event No 431**

Archaeological Practice Ltd, 2003. *Princes Street Garage, Corbridge*

Three evaluation trenches revealed little other than features indicative of widespread medieval and later farming practices. Most trenches revealed deep deposits of agricultural or garden soil underlying modern surfaces. One trench revealed a shallow ditch cut into subsoil, which contained charcoal, calcified bone and other remains consistent with domestic waste disposal.

**Event No 400**

Tyne and Wear Museums, 2003. *Princes Street, Corbridge*

An 89m long trench was watched but no evidence of archaeologically significant deposits was recorded.

**Event No 401**

Tyne and Wear Museums, 2003. *Corbridge*

A watching brief during updating of water services in Corbridge. Most of the information retrieved related to previous surfaces running beneath the course of modern tracks and roads. In several areas there was an extensive accumulation of these surfaces, implying that a significant amount of valuable archaeological material is preserved beneath the modern disturbances and build up of material. It is suggested that the area around Orchard Vale may show continuity of use from roman times to present, based in the pottery evidence.

**Event No 402**

Tyne and Wear Museums, 2003. *Corbridge Bridge*

Watching brief during insertion of an electric cable at the north and south ends of the bridge. An uncobbled surface was recorded to the south of the bridge which sat on unnatural deposits,

**Event No 13300**

Archaeological Practice Ltd, 2004. *Corchester Lane, Corbridge*.

Watching brief on the installation of a new footpath between Corbridge and the English Heritage Visitor Centre. Deposits of turf/topsoil and ploughsoil were identified to the maximum depth of the trench. However, two features were recorded at opposite ends of the trench. An apparent area of field clearance/levelling which comprised river-rounded cobbles, and a section of wall surviving up to four courses high, containing a worked Roman stone. The lack of finds made them impossible to date, however, the wall is considered most likely to be late Roman or medieval in date, and the cobbled area is probably post-medieval.

**Event No 13477**

Archaeological Services University of Durham, 2004. *Tynedale Hotel, Corbridge*

Two trial trenches in the garden comprised layers of dumped material and garden soil, with the foundations of a crude garden wall in one trench.

**Event No 13577**

Alan Williams Archaeology, 2004. *12 Market Place, Corbridge*

A watching brief on extensive groundworks required to terrace a new extension into the slope revealed relatively modern stratigraphy, probably the result of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century terracing and mineral extraction in the area.

**Event No 441**

Archaeological Practice Ltd, 2004. *Anchor Cottage, 30 Princes Street, Corbridge*

Two trial trenches revealed little significant archaeological evidence. They revealed disturbed deposits of agricultural or garden soil and part of a pit, the fill of which contained fragments of modern pottery, tile and glass.

**Event No 13353**

North Pennines Archaeology, 2004. *Land at Sunnybrae, Stagshaw Road, Corbridge*

A watching brief during topsoil stripping revealed nothing of archaeological significance in the general site levelling (c.500mm). During excavation of foundation trenches (to 800mm) archaeological deposits included an early garden/ploughsoil cut by a grave. It had been truncated by 19<sup>th</sup> century activity, removing part of the skeleton. The grave probably belonged to the medieval cemetery associated with the former Trinity Church. Evidence of 19<sup>th</sup> century activity (terracing and later service trenches) indicates a high level of truncation of medieval deposits, but this has not removed all traces of medieval activity; approximately 0.3m of undisturbed archaeological deposits survives in places.

**Event No 13471**

North Pennines Archaeology, 2004. *Land to the rear of Eastfield House, Corbridge*

An evaluation trench exposed the probable remains of one or more timber structures. The linear and circular features were cut into natural substrate which occurred at a depth of 1.1m. The features comprised two gullies and two large postholes associated with 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery, as well as a series of small undated pits.

**Event No 13472**

North Pennines Archaeology, 2004. *Land at Bishop's Garages Car Park, Corbridge*

Five evaluation trenches and one revealed the remains of a sub circular stone-built structure. It measured 0.8m in diameter and had a stone flagged floor; it is believed to be a possible corn-drying kiln. The kiln is thought to be part of a wider medieval complex, perhaps of combined industrial and domestic activity.

**Event No 13539**

North Pennines Archaeology, 2005. *Land at 19 Hill Street, Corbridge*

A watching brief revealed no features of archaeological significance.

**Event No 13530**

Tyne and Wear Museums, 2005. *7 Leazes Terrace, Corbridge*

A watching brief revealed soil layers of probable Roman and medieval date overlying clay subsoil, which was on average 0.95m below ground level.

**Event No 13516**

Archaeological Services University of Durham, 2005. *The Chains, Corbridge*

No archaeological evidence was recovered during a watching brief. Only modern domestic rubbish was encountered.

**Event No 13603**

Pre-Construct Archaeology, 2006. *Red Cross Hall site, St Helen's Street, Corbridge*

Three evaluation trenches revealed a number of archaeological features and deposits. They included: an extensive post-medieval flagstone surface; a linear feature which may be a drainage gully or boundary marker of medieval or earlier date; a stone-lined feature, probably a drain or culvert; and a pit with an assemblage of mid to late 12<sup>th</sup> century pottery. A developed soil was found in all three trenches and is thought to have accumulated when the site was used as a garden or for agricultural purposes.

**Event No 13613**

Pre-Construct Archaeology, 2006. *Appletree Rise, Corbridge*

No archaeologically significant deposits or features were discovered during geotechnical investigations.

## APPENDIX 3: HISTORIC MAPS



Figure 7: Armstrong's Map of Northumberland 1769 (NRO ZBK sheet 8)



Figure 8: Tithe Award Plan 21 May 1841 (NRO DT 114 L).  
Reproduced with permission of the Diocese of Newcastle



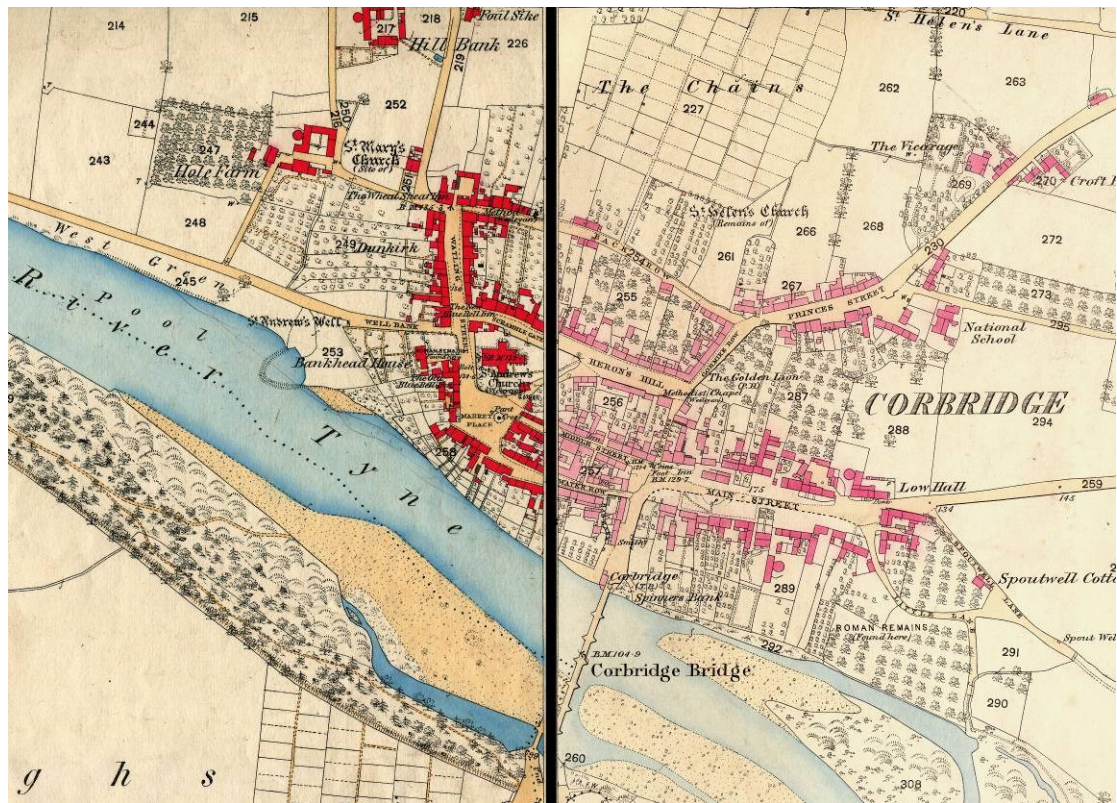


Figure 9: First Edition Ordnance Survey map 25-inch 1860 (Sheets 94.8 and 95.5)

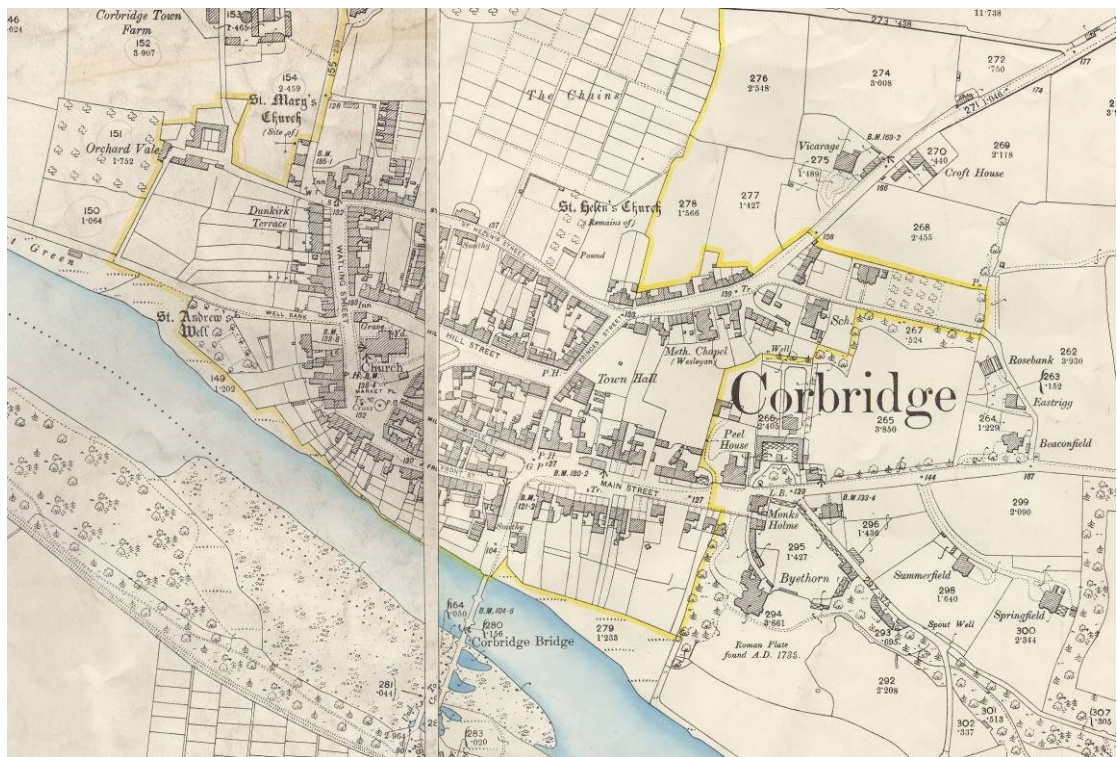


Figure 10: Second Edition Ordnance Survey map 25-inch 1897 (Sheets 94.8 and 95.5)





Figure 11: Third Edition Ordnance Survey map 25-inch 1920 (Sheet 92.9)

## APPENDIX 4: STRATEGIC SUMMARY

### CORBRIDGE STRATEGIC SUMMARY

#### A4.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Corbridge appears to have been a focus of settlement activity since the prehistoric period. The Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) combined documentary and cartographic evidence with the results of recent archaeological investigations within the town.

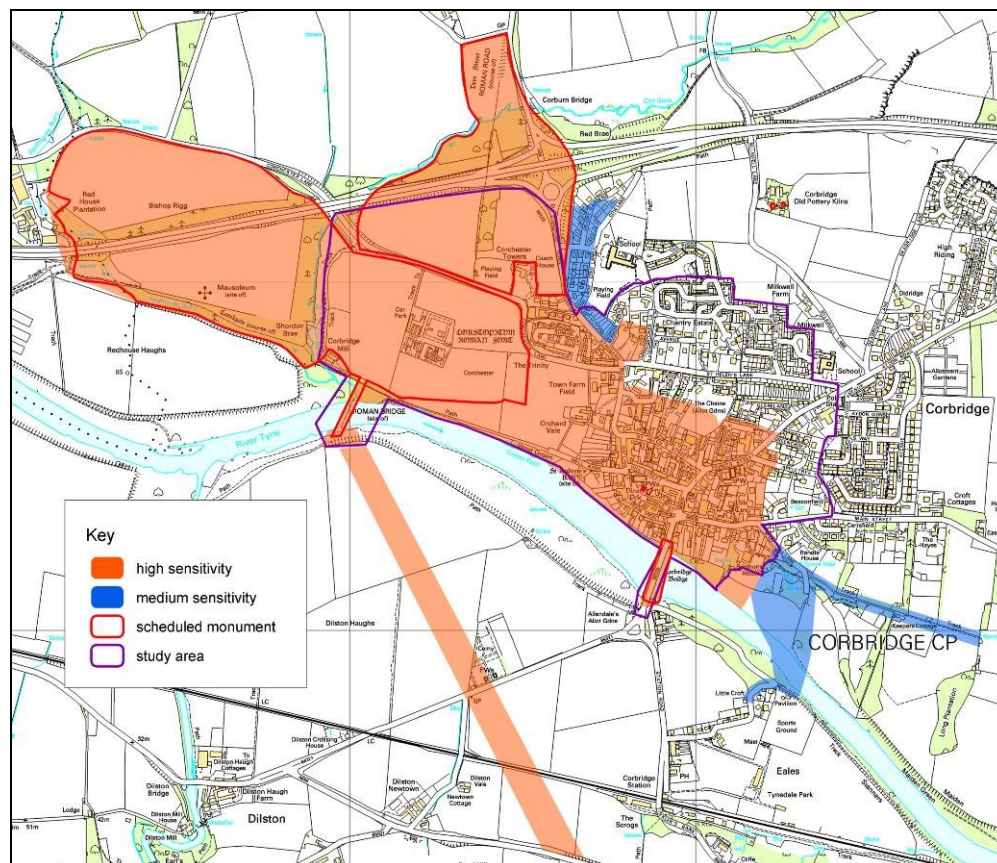


Figure 12: Corbridge areas of archaeological sensitivity

#### Prehistoric

- Corbridge is located within a wider prehistoric landscape, with a number of stray finds from Mesolithic to Bronze Age date being recovered in the town and surrounding area.
- A Bronze Age cist burial was found in the vicinity of Leazes Terrace off Stagshaw Road in 1922.
- Excavations within the Roman fort have revealed evidence of Bronze Age features including a palisaded enclosure, a possible cremation pit and a 'coracle' burial. There were also the undated remains of cross-ploughing which are characteristic of the late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.

#### Roman

##### Fort and town (vicus)

- Corstopitum fort and town, or vicus, are located to the west of the present town of Corbridge and have been designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It was one of the largest supply stations in the north of England due to its location on the junction of Dere Street and the Stanegate Roman roads, close to a river crossing point.



- The fort was built by Agricola after AD85 and replaced an earlier fort located nearby at Beaufront Red House. Despite a variety of changes in the Roman frontier, Corbridge fort retained its importance due to its strategic location.
- The fort has been the subject of various archaeological investigations from 1906 onwards, the combined results of which have revealed an outline chronology of at least 5 forts superseding each other.
- Due to the fort's strategic importance, a large associated settlement grew up to the immediate north of the fort. The military vicus, which was enclosed by a defensive ditch developed into a defended, planned civilian market town covering a 13-17 hectare by the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> centuries. Occupation of the site continued until at least the late 5<sup>th</sup> century.
- A geophysical survey undertaken at Corchester School identified likely domestic or industrial remains over much of that site, several ditches and an east-west road. It is likely that the Roman vicus extends over a much wider area than is indicated by the scheduling boundary.

#### Roads and bridge

- Roman Corbridge town lay on the junction of the principle roads of Dere Street and the Stanegate. Dere Street appears to have changed its course at least once with the later phase running through the fort rather than adjacent to it, which is more usual.
- A number of other streets have been identified within the Roman town, including the east-west orientated road identified at Corchester School, which was flanked by walls.
- Two Roman milestones were recovered in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries from Corbridge and Corstopitum respectively.
- Dere Street was carried over the River Tyne by a bridge, the remains of which still survive to the north and south of the river. The remains of the bridge and associated ramp to the south of the river have been the subject of a recent excavation, dismantling and re-erection on the river bank to combat the effects of river erosion.

#### Extent of Roman remains

- Roman structural remains include the bath-house to the north of the military area and a mausoleum at Shoreden Brae which is probably located within one of the cemeteries connected with the fort and town.
- The extent of Roman remains is likely to exceed the scheduled area (outlined in red on the attached plan). It is likely that Roman activity continued to the east into at least the western extent of the modern town in the areas around Orchard Vale, Town Farm Field and Trinity Terrace.
- Evidence of burial activity has been revealed at Wellbank and Trinity Terrace. This may indicate the location of a Roman cemetery, possibly sited along a roadside.
- Portable finds and re-used stonework within the present town may simply reflect its close proximity to the fort and the re-use of resources rather than any definite evidence of Roman activity in the places the stonework or finds were revealed.

### **Early Medieval**

#### Church

- The Northumbrian Annals of 786 refer to the consecration of Aldulf as Bishop of Mayo "in the monastery at Corbridge". The Saxon church appears to have been largely constructed from Roman stone quarried from the fort and town, which, it is theorised, could account for the church's position.
- The lower portion of the west tower and the walls of the nave arcade are Saxon in date. Excavations in 1911 recorded the plan of the 8<sup>th</sup> century church, however no associated monastic remains have ever been revealed. It has been suggested that the monastery at Corbridge was destroyed in the mid-9<sup>th</sup> century at the same time the monastery was destroyed in Hexham.
- A dowsing survey in 1983 has highlighted the possibility that there could be another phase of early medieval tower construction due to the conjectured remains of a north-south wall running beneath it. A watching brief in 2001 revealed wall footings which may relate to the Saxon nave wall.
- A grave slab and a fragment of a filial cross of 11<sup>th</sup> century date are located in the church, as well as a probable Anglo-Danish grave slab.

#### Royal villa

- It has been conjectured that a royal villa was located at Corbridge in the early medieval period. It has been presumed that as there was a 12<sup>th</sup> century royal manor at Corbridge,

it was already part of a royal demesne in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Comparisons have also been drawn with the early medieval church at Hexham built on land granted by Etheldreda. Contemporary sources appear to indicate that there may have been a royal residence in the town. Its existence and location have yet to be established.

#### Settlement

- It is traditionally thought that the Roman town was abandoned and a new early medieval settlement established on a hill to the east with the Roman town and fort being used as a convenient quarry for the construction of the new town. It appears likely that the sequence is less clear cut. While heavy ploughing may have affected the level of survival of the more ephemeral early medieval remains, excavation within the fort and vicus have revealed a range of early medieval finds and likely burials.
- The earliest documentary source for a settlement at Corbridge dates from 786. The place-name evidence may indicate an association with the Roman bridge. The settlement is likely to have been a little removed from the Roman bridge, immediately above the fording point. It is likely that Dere Street and the Stanegate continued to be used in this period and that the medieval road to the Tyne known as 'Colwell' may also have been in use in the early medieval period.
- There is documentary evidence of battles fought at Corbridge including the one fought between the Scottish king Constantine and Reginald the Dane in 918.

#### Town ditch

- There has been a lot of speculation on the presence, absence or function of the town ditch, boundary or defence running from Stagshaw Road to Orchard Vale. The feature appears to have utilised watercourses, topographic features and a roadway. Some believe it to be the defences of a late 10<sup>th</sup>-early 11<sup>th</sup> century 'burh'. Others conclude that it simply delimited the extent of the town or followed the line of the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> century monastic boundary.
- Archaeological investigations at the Chains identified a noticeable ridge running across the site but no ditch.

#### Water mill

- In 1984, the timber and stone structure of a Norse type water mill was revealed extending out into the river on the north bank, 50yds down stream from the site of the Roman bridge. The mill appears to have reused stonework from the Roman bridge in its construction

### **Medieval**

#### Churches and chapels

- **The parish church of St Andrew**, while being early medieval in origin, was significantly altered in the 13<sup>th</sup> century largely producing the form of the present church.
- St Andrew's churchyard may have been much larger than it is today, extending across the line of Hill street. Human remains and medieval pottery have certainly been recovered from 41 Hill Street.
- The churchyard wall incorporates the remains of the communal King's Oven which was in use from at least 1310 until the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- **St Helen's Chapel** is first referred to in c.1300. It is described as being in ruins by 1663. The close proximity of the chapel to the church may indicate that it served as a private chapel for the Lords of the Manor.
- An 18<sup>th</sup> century wall is located close to the Village Hall which incorporates medieval masonry but the exact location of the chapel on St Helen Street is not known. While no evidence of remains associated with the chapel were found using remote sensing techniques in the area or during archaeological investigations at the Chains, sections of walling of presumed medieval date were found in the area close to the Village Hall.
- **Trinity Church**, first mentioned in 1356, was still in use by 1549 but subsequently fell into disrepair. The site was cleared by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and after a period as a garden, a row of houses called Trinity Terrace were constructed on the site in the 1880s, at which time the likely remains of the south-west corner of the Norman nave were revealed. Burials of presumed medieval date continue to be uncovered in this area, frequently only 0.5m below the ground surface.

#### Manor Hall

- Documentary sources indicate that the Manor Hall was built and subsequently re-built a number of times, following destruction or abandonment associated with the Border

Wars. The manor built in 1296 may have replaced an earlier manor house, the location of which is not known. The 13<sup>th</sup> century structure was in a derelict state by 1331.

- It is thought that the later Manor Hall was located close to St Helen's Chapel, which may have been a private chapel to the Lords of the Manor. No evidence of a Manor House or associated remains was uncovered during archaeological investigations at the Chains.

#### Settlement

- The present street pattern was probably established in the medieval period. It is likely that the structure of the town became fixed either after becoming a burgh in the late 10<sup>th</sup> or early 11<sup>th</sup> century or a borough by at least 1154. Its extent may also have been defined by the completion of the town ditch in that period; however it does not appear to have been established as a definite planned entity. It appears that the total size of the borough had not altered significantly by the 14<sup>th</sup> century or even the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.
- The layout comprised the church and market place at the centre and linear plots running back from the street frontage in a typical medieval layout. There is documentary evidence of plots being re-built and left open a number of times in the medieval period. Archaeological investigations in Corbridge are increasingly revealing evidence of structural remains and the land-use.
- There was a weekly market at Corbridge from the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and it is possible that the medieval market place was larger than the current one extending to the north and south of Middle Street and potentially around the church.
- The Old Market Cross, which is now against the churchyard wall, has a re-used Roman base, a 13<sup>th</sup> century shaft and 18<sup>th</sup> century head. The 19<sup>th</sup> century pant in the middle of the present Market Place may have had a medieval predecessor.
- Its location at the junction of two ancient highways made Corbridge a natural commercial centre developing due to trade and the market place. The town was at its most prosperous in the 13<sup>th</sup> century being the second largest borough in the region after Newcastle. The town's prosperity declined in the 14<sup>th</sup> century due to repeated destruction during the Border Wars and population decline. The market had virtually disappeared by 1663.
- The Vicar's Pele Tower to the south-east of the churchyard is first mentioned in sources from 1415 but the date of its construction is not clear. Various dates have been proposed including c.1300 and the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century with a late 13<sup>th</sup> century cross shaft and Roman masonry re-used in its fabric. The building comprises a vaulted basement, two upper storeys and an entrance doorway in the east at ground level.
- Low Hall/ Baxter Tower stands at the east end of Main Street. There are various theories about the building's development over time. One theory is that the present building comprises a late 15<sup>th</sup> century, three-storey high pele tower incorporated into the 17<sup>th</sup> century Low Hall. Another theory states that the oldest part of the building is a 13<sup>th</sup> century ground floor hall house, the east end bay of which was heightened into a tower in the 15<sup>th</sup> century with the hall block being remodelled in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and later alterations in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The building requires a full survey to establish the sequence of development.
- The Knights Templar had property in Corbridge including a prison which is referred to in sources from 1256. The precise location of the prison is not known.
- A little hamlet or suburb grew up outside the town ditch to the north-west of the town. It was located on priory lands in the area around the Prior's Manor House and Trinity Church. The extent and nature of the hamlet is not known. Prior Manor comprises a pair of 17<sup>th</sup> century houses with earlier fabric in the cottage and 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century alterations. Prior Mains was held in the medieval period by Carlisle Priory and became the Corbridge rectory.

#### Roads and bridge

- The old Roman bridge was replaced by a new bridge in 1235 which stood on the site of the present bridge. The medieval bridge fell into disrepair in 1296. Although some of the upkeep of the bridge came from alms offered to the chapel of St Mary the Virgin which was located on the bridge, the chapel is also referred to as being in a ruinous state in 1428. The foundations of the medieval bridge can still be seen at low water.
- A ford is also known to be located below Byethorne which was accessed by a hollow way leading from the ford to a point near the modern Station Hotel on the south side of the river.

- Medieval Corbridge was located at an important transport junction with the bridging and fording points, two major routes (Dere Street and Stanegate) and several new roads. Roads from Newcastle and Carlisle, Alston and Penrith and Blanchland and Stanhope all converged on Corbridge. The route westwards out of Corbridge (the Carelgate) ran south of Corbridge Mill. Despite cultivation and tree planting damage along much of its length, the road survives as a metalled footpath between Corbridge and the mill.

#### Industries

- There are documentary references to a mill from at least 1175. The location of the medieval mill is not known, however it may have been located on the site of the present mill on the Cor Burn, which was built in 1800.
- Ironworking, an important industry in the Roman town, continued in importance in the medieval town. Main Street was formerly called Smithgate due to the number of ironworking shops located there. A recent watching brief to the rear of the Angel Inn at the western end of Main Street revealed evidence of ironworking.
- Documentary references indicate that gold smithing may have taken place on the south side of the churchyard. Coins were also being minted at Corbridge in this period.
- The medieval street name Hide Market is suggestive of a tanning industry and brick line tanning pits are said to have been located nearby in c.1760.
- A deed from 1381 refers to lime burning and a lime kiln. An old lime burning pit of unknown date was revealed in 1890 when the Blue Bell Inn was demolished on the west side of Market Place.
- Evidence of a probable corn-drying kiln was revealed in an evaluation to the rear and north of Main Street. It may have formed part of a wider medieval complex including both industrial and domestic activity.

#### **Post-Medieval**

##### Church and chapels

- The church of St Andrew was not altered significantly in the post-medieval period. One of the alterations/additions was a brick built, 18<sup>th</sup> century vault at the west end of the nave uncovered during a watching brief in 1997.
- Trinity Church and St Helen's Chapel were not in use by the post-medieval period.

##### Settlement

- The post-medieval town did not expand significantly from its medieval extent until the arrival of the railway in 1835 and even then, expansion appears to have been relatively limited. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, there appears to have been a great deal of re-building on existing plots and it is possible that some of the stone boundary walls may be of earlier, potentially medieval date. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the plots became a little more built up and sub-divided.
- The lack of prosperity in Corbridge led to the market ceasing to be held in Corbridge sometime between the late 16<sup>th</sup> and mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. The Stagshaw Fair was still held c.3km to the north of the town. While the Market Place still continued to be referred to by that name, it is likely that at least some of the properties on Front Street and Middle Street may encroach on a larger medieval market place.
- There are documentary references to a school in the town in 1578 in an unknown location. By 1725 a room was built on the south side of the church tower which was pulled down in 1834 so that a vestry could be built on the site.
- The Angel Inn (formerly the King's Head) is a 17<sup>th</sup> century inn which was extended in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was the posting inn from 1752 until the opening of the railway. Monks Holme was also formerly the New Inn and is of 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century date.
- 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings include various inns and Byethorne House.
- 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings include various places of worship and a Church of England School.

##### Roads and bridge

- The Newcastle to Carlisle road was turnpiked in 1752 and Dere Street was turnpiked in 1800, declining in importance after the construction of the Great North Road. East House on Princes Street may have been a toll house.
- In 1674 the old bridge which had fallen into disrepair was replaced by a new bridge which is the oldest surviving bridge on the River Tyne, albeit with some 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century repairs. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Grade I listed structure.

### Industries

- In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the principle industries in Corbridge comprised shoe making, lime burning and market gardening. Traditional ironworking also continued in the town. The Corbridge pottery located outside the EUS area in Milkwell Lane was established in 1840. Two early 19<sup>th</sup> century bottle ovens survive on the site. In addition, numerous orchards were planted around the town in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but ceased to be profitable.

## **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, 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 nature and extent of prehistoric settlement, burial and activity in Corbridge.
- Whether investigation of colluvial and alluvial sequences and environmental work including pollen analysis and analysis of waterlogged deposits indicate changes in land use between the late Bronze Age and Iron Age.
- Radio carbon dating, where appropriate, of prehistoric or potentially prehistoric remains.

### **Roman**

- The impact that both the construction and abandonment of Hadrian's Wall had on the native population in the area.
- The full extent and nature of the Roman town.
- Any evidence of interaction between the military and civilian population.

### **Early medieval**

- The location, nature and extent of early medieval activity.
- The location, nature, function and origin of the Town Ditch.
- The date and reason why the settlement focus shifted from the Roman town eastwards.
- The ground plan of the early medieval church.
- Any evidence for a royal residence at Corbridge.
- The relationship between the mill and town.

### **Medieval**

- The location, nature and extent of the medieval town and the suburb around Trinity Church and the relationship between the two settlements.
- The exact location and ground plans of Trinity Church and associated graveyard, St Helen's Chapel, the Manor Hall and Templar Prison.
- The medieval extent of St Andrew's churchyard.
- Evidence of medieval structures and activity around the medieval bridge and fording point.
- Evidence of the location and extent of industrial activity, particularly the iron industry and the mint.
- The potential presence of medieval structural remains within later buildings.

### **Post-Medieval**

- Any evidence of re-use of medieval or earlier post-medieval structures in later buildings.
- Any evidence of a defined settlement area from the workers at the Corbridge pottery.
- Any evidence indicating the post-medieval decline of the town.
- Any evidence of burning on standing remains and below ground remains.

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

The Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) has identified the areas of greatest archaeological sensitivity and potential in Corbridge 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 Roman activity. It is recommended that developers contact the Assistant County Archaeologist at Northumberland Conservation at the earliest opportunity 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 prior to the determination of planning permission. 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 Corbridge 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

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