



**Northumberland**  
County Council

# **Northumberland Historic Environment Record**

## **Access and Charging Policy**

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Content of the Historic Environment Record**

Northumberland County Council maintains the Historic Environment Record for the county of Northumberland. The Historic Environment Record (HER) is the primary source of information about the historic environment in the Unitary Authority and Northumberland National Park Authority. It includes a database that contains more than 28,000 records with information about remains from the prehistoric period to the present day. These provide information on nationally designated (conservation areas, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and scheduled monuments), locally designated and undesignated heritage assets. Full details of the remit and content of the record can be found elsewhere in the HER's Information Policy.

### **1.2 Mapped data**

The database is represented on digital maps held as Geographic Information System (GIS) files. The maps contain geographical depictions of all sites on the database, ranging from simple point locations to complex plots of extensive sites such as ancient field systems. Maps provided from the HER GIS are for information purposes only. Due to Ordnance Survey copyright restrictions this mapping must not be reproduced in researcher's own reports.

### **1.3 How do I access the HER?**

The HER is based at County Hall in Morpeth. You can get information from the HER in a number of different ways, such as by letter, email or telephone, or make an appointment to visit in person.

### **1.4 Opening times**

The HER is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.\* If you wish to visit in person you will need to telephone first to make an appointment and make sure that someone is available; please call Morpeth (01670) 622656. An appointment can normally be arranged within five working days. (The HER Officer will endeavour to assist in establishing whether a visit is advisable but cannot be expected to undertake detailed assessment of the relevance of specific material).

\* **COVID-19 update** – in person visits have been suspended until further notice whilst staff are working at home.

### **1.5 Facilities**

If you choose to visit the HER in person, we have a workspace available for you to use. The HER Officer will assist you and make you familiar with the equipment, if you choose to use it, and can make photocopies or scans for you. Details of charges for photocopying and printing can be found in section 3. There is a range of additional resources available to visitors.

### **1.6. Searching the HER**

Historic Environment Record (HER) searches provide information selected from the record, normally for a defined area, although bespoke searches can also be done for particular periods or types of records. The HER includes both

digital and hard copy information and references to other sources held outside the HER. It is constantly being enhanced and the absence of a record should not be relied upon as indicating a lack of heritage interest, other national or specialist sources may contain information not held or indexed.

## **2. Conditions of Use**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Northumberland County Council is committed to the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. In order to ensure that information from the Northumberland HER is used responsibly, those applying to consult it are requested to provide details about the nature of their enquiry and to follow the Guidance for Users outlined below. Please note that permission to use the HER may be refused or limited in certain circumstances.

### **2.2 Guidance for Users**

1. Northumberland HER users are requested to inform Northumberland County Council of the following, in writing or online by submitting the form below:
  - (a) the subject and purpose of their enquiry;
  - (b) the use to which the information will be put; and
  - (c) the names of any other bodies or individuals outside their organisation to whom it is intended to pass HER information.
2. Northumberland County Council service charge is made for enquiries to the Northumberland HER, but this is normally waived for enquiries for non-commercial, educational or personal research, except where searches require extensive work. The costs of paper, printing and other incidental expenses may be charged to all users.
3. The Northumberland HER is the copyright of Northumberland County Council. Some information held in the HER may also be the copyright of others. It is the user's responsibility to ensure that copyright law is not breached.
4. Users are requested to inform, and to make their research available to the Northumberland HER where new archaeological sites or data are discovered as a result of their work.
5. Users are requested to make appropriate acknowledgement of the Northumberland HER in any publication or report which has made use of its data.
6. While efforts have been made to verify the data held in the Northumberland HER, Northumberland County Council cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy of any particular data and its source.
7. Northumberland County Council accepts that there may be a requirement to treat certain enquiries in confidence. Equally, the HER expects that users will not pass on information in an irresponsible or unethical manner.

8. Northumberland County Council reserves all rights of Copyright which are owned in the material provided. Dissemination to a third party without the written consent of the HER Officer is a breach of copyright. Information supplied shall be used for the specified purposes only.
9. Access to all or part of the information requested may be refused in certain circumstances.
  - 9.1 Information may not be disclosed if:
    - (a) it relates to the subject matter of any legal or other proceedings, actual or prospective (including Local Planning Inquiries);
    - (b) it relates to confidential, internal communications of Northumberland County Council;
    - (c) it is contained in a document or other record which is still in the course of completion.
  - 9.2 Information will not be disclosed if:
    - (a) it was supplied to the Council by another party who was under no legal obligation to do so and could not have been put under any legal obligation to supply it and has not consented to its disclosure;
    - (b) its disclosure would increase the likelihood of damage to the environment affecting anything to which the information relates.
10. A request for information may be refused if it is manifestly unreasonable or is formulated in too general a manner.
11. Every endeavour is made to respond to enquiries within five working days.

### **2.3 Complaints procedure**

If you have any complaint about the service you have received please write to: Environment & Design Team Manager, Conservation Team, Planning and Economy, Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF, or email [archaeology@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology@northumberland.gov.uk), or telephone 0345 600 6400.

Alternatively you can make a complaint through the Northumberland County Council's complaint form available on our website here: [Make a complaint](#)

## **3. Charging Policy**

### **3.1 Search fee**

A search fee is normally only made where the enquiry is for commercial or profit-making purposes. This applies to consultations made in person or by telephone, letter, or email. The fee is to cover staff time and will vary according to the nature of the enquiry. Fees may be waived in certain circumstances. For most other users, such as members of the public and students carrying out personal research, there is no search fee unless the enquiry is particularly complicated or time consuming to deal with. In such cases any charge will be agreed before the work is carried out.

### 3.2 Scale of Charges (fixed rate)

Our current fees are based around development types and are not subject to VAT:

- Householder/Domestic development £25
- Minor development £50
- Major development £75
- Strategic development £100

Search fees are set out in the [Northumberland Conservation Charging Policy](#). All fees are subject to review. Prices correct at 24 August 2021.

### 3.3 Screening opinion for Environmental Impact Assessment

In addition to charging for enquiries made for commercial purposes, we also charge for enquiries for a screening opinion for Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) (England) (No 2) regulations 2006. A separate fee applies to each holding. The charges are based on the size of the holding.

The current rates are as follows:

Band	Screening areas	Rate (no VAT)
1	0 - 30 ha	£35
2	31 - 75 ha	£70
3	76 - 150 ha	£140
4	150 ha +	£280

The current response time for consultations is 20 working days.

### 3.4 Incidental expenses

All HER users may be liable for incidental expenses such as photocopying, printing and postage. The costs are as follows:

- photocopying or printing A4 or A3 = 10p/copy
- postage over large letter rate.

### 3.5 Method of payment

Payment for commercial enquiries is required prior to searches being carried out unless this will result in unacceptable delays. Payment by debit/credit card can be made online and details will be sent when confirming the search fee or by telephone by calling 01670 622656.\* Where an invoice is raised payment for the HER search is to be returned directly to the Director of Finance. Cheques should be made payable to 'Northumberland County Council'. When visiting in person and photocopying is the only charge, cash payment is normally requested on receipt.

**\*COVID-19 UPDATE** Payment by telephone is suspended whilst staff are working from home.