



Wansbeck District Council

Regulatory Services Division

Bothal

Conservation Area



Character Appraisal

Produced by

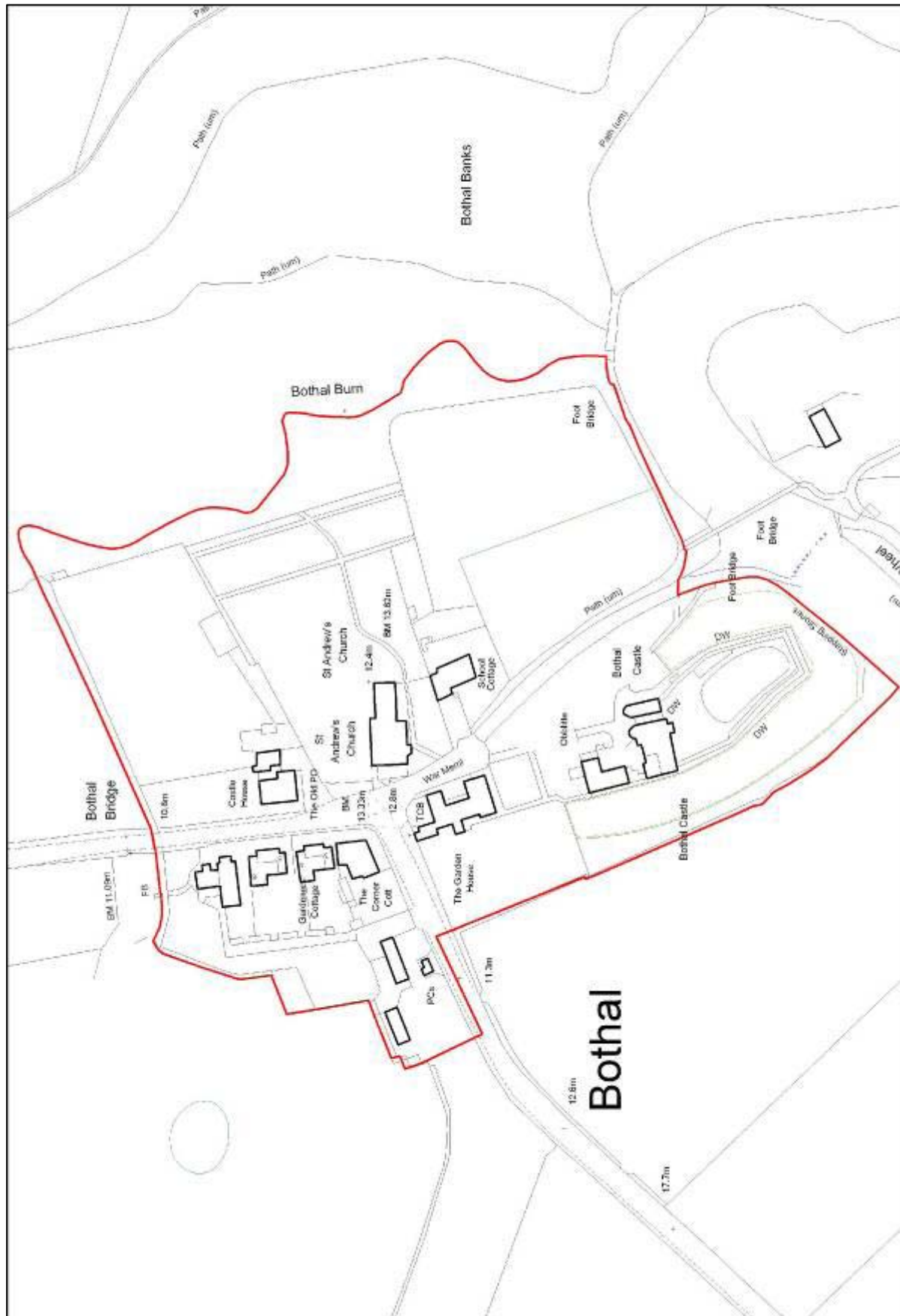


NORTH of ENGLAND CIVIC TRUST

**Final Draft
July 2008**

www.wansbeck.gov.uk

Fig 1. Bothal Conservation Area



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1 Introduction

1.1 Conservation Areas

Conservation areas are “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”¹. They are designated by the local planning authority using local criteria.

Conservation areas are about character and appearance, which can derive from many factors including individual buildings, building groups and their relationship with open spaces, architectural detailing, materials, views, colours, landscaping, street furniture and so on. Character can also draw on more abstract notions such as sounds, local environmental conditions and historical changes. These things combine to create a locally distinctive sense of place worthy of protection.

Conservation areas do not prevent development from taking place. Rather, they are designed to manage change, controlling the way new development and other investment reflects the character of its surroundings. Being in a conservation area does tend to increase the standards required for aspects such as repairs, alterations or new building, but this is often outweighed by the ‘cachet’ of living or running a business in a conservation area, and the tendency of a well-maintained neighbourhood character to sustain, or even enhance, property values.

The first conservation areas were created in 1967 and now over 9,100 have been designated, varying greatly in character and size. There are three in Wansbeck district:

- Bedlington
- Bothal
- Newbiggin-by-the-Sea

1.2 Town Planning Context

Designation remains the principal means by which local authorities can apply conservation policies to a particular area. The Council has a duty, in exercising its

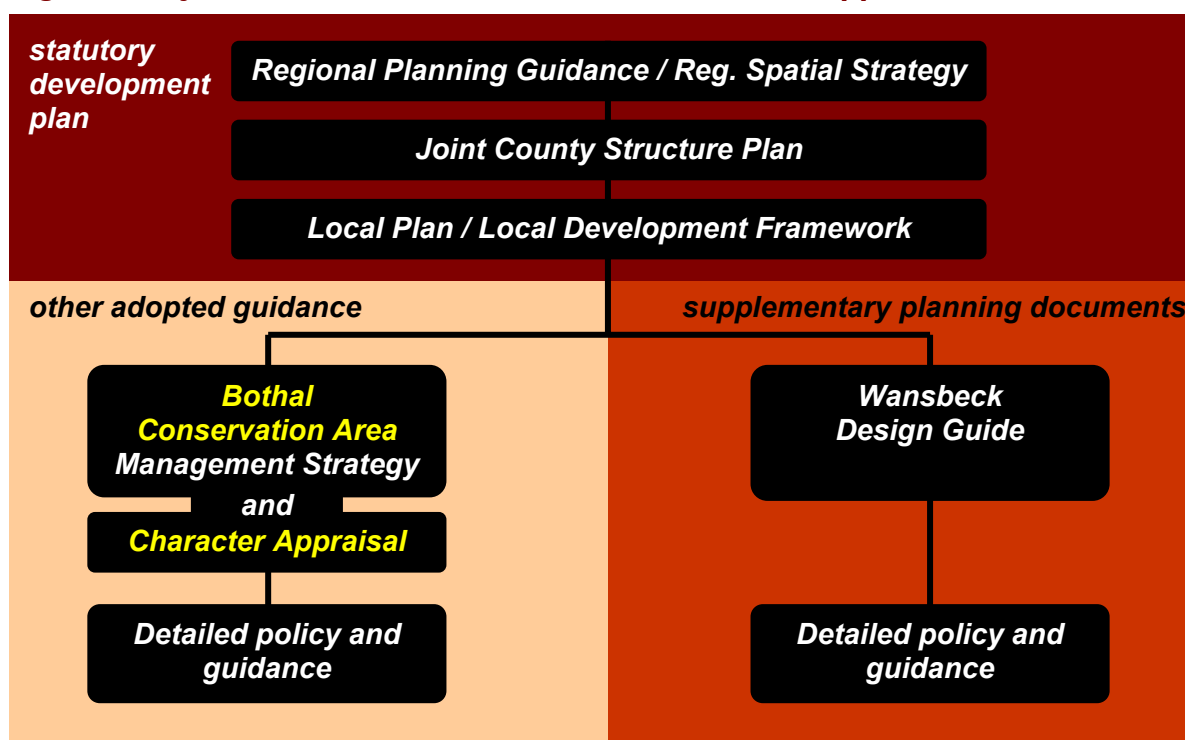
¹ Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s69.

planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. It also has a duty, from time to time, to draw up and publish proposals for preservation and enhancement, and to consult local people on them². The local planning authority also has extra powers in conservation areas over demolition, minor developments, and tree protection (see page 71). Government policy in PPG15³ stresses the need for local planning authorities to define and record the special interest, character and appearance of all conservation areas in their districts.

The Wansbeck District Local Plan was adopted on 3 July 2007, replacing that adopted in 1994. This, together with the Northumberland County & National Park Joint Structure Plan 2005, forms the development plan for Wansbeck. Under the new planning system, the Council is preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF), a portfolio of development plan documents used to plan and control development across the district. Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), also part of this system, sets out a spatial vision for the north east (but as RSS is draft; 2002 *Regional Planning Guidance* is still relevant⁴).

More specific guidance is contained in the *Wansbeck Design Guide*, adopted in July 2007 as a supplementary planning document (SPD) as part of the new LDF.

Fig 2: Policy and Guidance Context of this Character Appraisal



² Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s72 and s71

³ Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning & The Historic Environment

⁴ *Regional Spatial Strategy*, North East Assembly, due 2007

1.3 ***This Character Appraisal***

This character appraisal was prepared during spring 2008 by North of England Civic Trust for Wansbeck District Council. After consultation, it will be adopted during 2008 as planning guidance, though not as an SPD as part of the LDF. It can be downloaded from www.wansbeck.gov.uk.

By its very nature, this document cannot be exhaustive. Omissions should not necessarily be regarded as having no special interest or making no positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. The character appraisal should be updated every five years or so, taking account of changes in the area and further understanding of the place.

1.4 ***Further Information***

For further information on conservation, character appraisals, design, planning permission or building regulations, please contact:

- Wansbeck District Council, Council Offices, Bedlington, N'land, NE22 5TU
- Planning Policy E-mail: ldf@wansbeck.gov.uk
Tel: (01670) 843 405 Fax: (01670) 843 484
- Development Control E-mail: planningenquiriesmailbox@wansbeck.gov.uk
Tel: (01670) 843 434 Fax: (01670) 843 484
- Building Control E-mail: buildingcontrolmailbox@wansbeck.gov.uk
Tel: (01670) 843 467 Fax: (01670) 843 484
- Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, N'land, NE61 2EF
- Archaeology E-mail: archaeology@northumberland.gov.uk
Tel: (01670) 534 057 Fax: (01670) 534 117

For information provided in other languages and alternative formats eg. Braille, audiotape and large print, contact Planning Policy on (01670) 843 405. Fax (01670) 843 484. E-mail: ldf@wansbeck.gov.uk.

1.5 ***Note on Local Government Reorganisation***

This appraisal has been prepared in the knowledge of expected local government reorganisation in 2009 when all the existing councils in Northumberland, including Wansbeck District Council, will be replaced by a single unitary authority. As the life of this document is longer than 2009, it must continue to apply after reorganisation.

2 *Location and Context*

2.1 *Location*

Bothal is in Wansbeck District in Northumberland County, and is 3.5km west of Ashington, the principal commercial and administrative centre in the District. It is 4.5km east of Morpeth, whilst Newcastle Upon Tyne, the regional capital, is 21km to the south. The centre of the conservation area is at grid reference NZ 240 866.



Although Bothal is flanked by the busy settlements of Ashington, Pegswood and Morpeth, its location deep in the valley of the river Wansbeck, its lack of any commercial activity and being by-passed by all major roads, isolates it somewhat from the rest of the district, the environment of which is characterised by busy settlements linked by a comprehensive network of busy roads. This degree of isolation and tranquillity in the district is almost unique to Bothal.

Although considerable effort has gone into diversifying the local economy of the district over the last ten years, unemployment levels have remained consistently higher than regional or national levels. However, because of the specific ownership circumstances of Bothal as an estate village, the need for regeneration is not so evident here as elsewhere in the district. The land of the Welbeck Estate, the historic owners of Bothal, continues in agricultural use while most of their buildings in the village are in mixed commuter and local residential use. Apart from the Welbeck Estate Office, the village's only service use now is the parish church of St Andrew.

2.2 *Boundary*

The conservation area was designated in 1986. The boundary, based on Bothal Castle, the church and the village's single street, has not changed since.

Starting at Bothal Bridge on the northern edge, the boundary follows the line of Bothal Burn first eastwards and then southwards to just short of the edge of the River Wansbeck. It then turns south west following the top of the river bank and past the castle. The boundary then turns north to include two narrow fields that flank the west side of the castle, before turning east at the main road and then north to include the public conveniences and nearby agricultural buildings. It then skirts gardens and outhouses to the rear of cottages on the west side of the main road, before finally turning east along the north bank of Bothal Burn to join Bothal Bridge again.

Within the boundary are the church and its yard, the castle and its approach, the dozen or so houses that flank the only road through the village, a narrow strip of open land to the west of the settlement, and a broader band to the east, some of it woodland along the bank of the Bothal Burn.

2.3 **Context**

2.3.1 **Geology and Landscape Character**

The conservation area is at the western edge of the South East Northumberland Coastal Plain countryside character area (No.13)⁵. This plain extends south from the River Coquet to the northern edge of the Tyneside conurbation, encompassing what was once the Northumberland coalfield. The plain is underlain by mudstones, sandstones and numerous coal seams, all of Upper Carboniferous age, above which is a heavy mantle of boulder clay from the last glacial period. This typically gives rise to a relatively

featureless plain with underlying coal measures only revealed in the banks of the incised Blyth and Wansbeck river valleys flowing east to the sea. Bothal Conservation Area is in the incised Wansbeck valley.

The natural building material of Bothal is the local Northumberland sandstones which vary considerably in texture, hardness and colour. Some are coarse in texture and can be very hard wearing whilst others are finer in grain and may become powdery over the years. The colours when freshly quarried range from grey, through pale honey to pale red, and all tend towards a grey or lighter version of their original colour as they weather. It is the handsome, honey-coloured carboniferous sandstone that was used to construct Bothal's buildings and boundary walls from early times onwards.



Northumberland sandstone – the local natural building material



⁵ Countryside character areas, devised by the Countryside Agency, provide a context to local planning and development. There are 159 areas in England, unique in terms of land form, historical and cultural attributes.

The 2000 Landscape Character Assessment of south east Northumberland, completed as part of the Northumberland Coalfield enhancement Strategy, identified four distinct landscape areas in Wansbeck: coast, valley of the River Blyth, valley of the River Wansbeck, and Willow Burn and Sleek Burn valleys. The conservation area is sited in the valley of the River Wansbeck.

2.3.2 **Topography and Aspect**

The village is defined by the single overwhelming characteristic of being well below the usual level of the coastal plain in a deep ravine incised by the river Wansbeck and its tributary Bothal Burn. This is an unusual location for a Northumbrian village which, historically, were normally sited on high points to provide protective surveillance of surrounding territory. The choice of site was, presumably, made by the originators of Bothal Castle who preferred a sheltered, well-watered location on a major Northumbrian river to a windy, elevated site elsewhere. Maybe this indicates that the site of Bothal is older than other elevated Northumbrian castle villages, which may have moved from lowland sites in response to the growing violence of the early/mid medieval period.

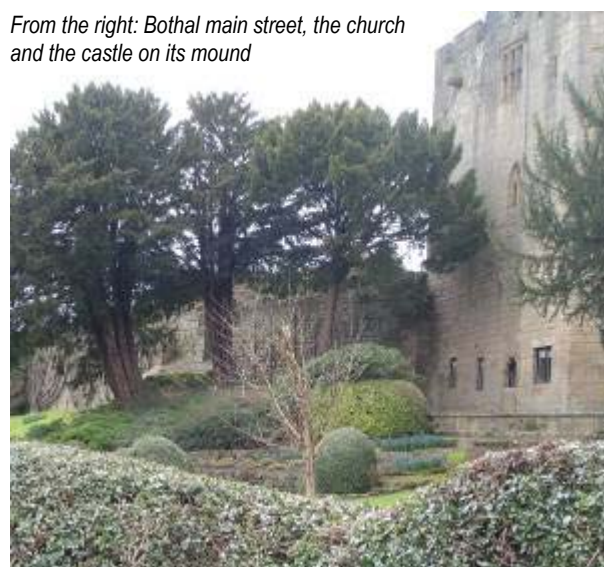


View of Bothal from west

Bothal Castle occupied a natural defensive mound commanding the confluence of the river and the burn. The dependant church and village was developed on drier ground north of the castle along its northern approach. Although the traditional east-west axis of the church sets it at right angles to this approach, other village buildings are along its sides facing into the space

Location on the north bank of the river means that the general aspect of the village is to the warmer, brighter south, with protection from the

From the right: Bothal main street, the church and the castle on its mound



northern weather provided by the steep sides of the valley of the Bothal Burn. However, its unique valley location prevents the village having any wide open aspects at all, except for the relatively open view westwards along the Wansbeck Valley.

2.3.3 **Setting and External Relationships**

The conservation area boundary is drawn relatively tightly against the castle, churchyard and the back of the development lining Bothal's only street. The setting beyond this is very different, characterised by an open pastoral landscape confined on the west by steep fields and on all other directions by steep wooded banks that provide a varied and continuous backdrop.

The village's external relationships are virtually all one way – out of the village. As there are no retail, commercial or leisure services in the village, it does not attract many visitors from elsewhere and, at the same time, requires residents to travel for even basic requirements. Church worshippers do come regularly, as do visitors and school parties, but none in large numbers as, although the village is one of the most attractive in the area, it offers little to the visitor – for example, the castle is not open to the public. This isolation has long been maintained by the Welbeck Estate for the benefit of local people, but is in itself a considerable attraction to those seeking a quiet walk. The village is off the classified road network with very few drivers indeed finding it necessary to pass through Bothal, making its single street feel very safe.



Above: a school group on a visit to Bothal. Below: Bothal is a quiet place with very little traffic



2.4 **Views of the Area**

Being hidden in a deep ravine, Bothal has no skyline presence from the surrounding area at all. Even within the ravine itself, views of the village are severely limited by dense tree cover on topography, but there are some.

The most distinctive and memorable view is from west of the village over the open fields in the bottom of the Wansbeck valley. Here, the castle is seen to its best advantage – from the side in a romantic valley setting and framed by mature trees. The only other clear view of the castle from outside the village is from the south bank at the stepping stone crossing from where the castle is at its most dramatic,

towering above riverside trees. General views of the village in the winter months are had from open parkland to the north west and from the steep road approaching Bothal from the north east. However, come the summer, these views are mere glimpses.



Bothal's appearance changes greatly with the seasons and weather. Above: in the spring overcast spring day. Below: in the low winter sun



These views are incidental and not deliberately composed. However, two views of Bothal do have some measure of past composition. The first is the romantic view of the castle from the west where tall trees to the north and south separate to allow an unimpeded picture of the west face. The other is from the bottom of the bank at the north, where the road turns south to approach the village. Along this approach seem to be the vestiges of a formal tree-lined avenue of alternate broad-leaved and evergreen trees, now sufficiently overgrown to compromise the formality of the original avenue. Such composed views is characteristic of estate villages in England.

See page 23 for a discussion of views within the conservation area.

3 *Historical Development*

3.1 *Development History*

3.1.1 *Name*

The name Bothal is Old English in origin, originating some time between the earliest Anglo-Saxon settlements in the fifth century AD and about 1100. The earliest recorded spelling, *Bothalle*, dates from 1233; subsequent variations include *Bothal* (1250), *Bottal* (1346) and *Bottell* (1428). Locals pronounced the name 'bottle' in the nineteenth century and earlier. It is believed to come from *Bota's halh*, i.e. land by the river belonging to Bota. Bota is likely to have been a distinguished Angle from a nearby settlement such as Ashington, Pegswood or Ulgham. Another theory is that the name comes from the Old English *botl*, meaning a dwelling, as evidenced in other local place names such as Harbottle and Shilbottle.

3.1.2 *Prehistoric and Roman Periods*

A number of primitive graves were unearthed in the nineteenth century during works to form a driveway for the rectory which once stood at Bothal Haugh, but to date there is no other recorded link to prehistoric or Roman periods. It is not until the Anglo-Saxon period that there are signs of settlement at Bothal. Little or no archaeological investigation has been undertaken at the castle, nor presumably in or around the village.

3.1.3 *Medieval and Post-Medieval Periods*

Aerial photographs indicate several fields of ridge and furrow to the west and a curved cropmark at Bothal Barns. A type of Anglo-Saxon coin called a sceatta was found in a garden in the village, dating from 680-710AD and a number of fragments of Anglo-Saxon crosses are embedded in the chancel walls of St Andrew's Church indicating that the earliest church on the site was probably tenth or eleventh century. The earliest records of Bothal indicate an Anglo-Saxon foundation.

Bothal's history is bound to that of the families who owned the estate and developed or improved the village as required. There is evidence that the area was royal land during the Anglo-Saxon and Norman period, belonging first to the Kings of Northumbria and then the Kings of England, but administered by royal deputies,

the Earls of Northumberland at the time. Following suppression of the earldom after a dispute with William II, a series of baronies were set up with close ties to the royal castle at Newcastle. The most significant of these new baronies was given to Guy de Baliol and included large swathes of forest in Teesdale (where Barnard Castle was later founded by Bernard de Baliol) as well as the townships of Bothal, Woodhorn, Newbiggin and Cresswell in Northumberland.

However, it was not long before Bothal passed to the Bertram family by marriage. The Bertrams were Lords of Bothal from the late twelfth century until 1406. It is thought there was a building on the site of the present castle by around 1150, known as a manse or mansum (nothing of which survives) and likely to have been fortified before the Norman Conquest. It was not until 1343 that Robert Bertram IV, high sheriff of Northumberland, was given a licence to crenellate. Thereafter the gatehouse keep was built, the great hall enlarged, the curtain wall strengthened and the angle towers in the south west and south east corners erected. The Blanche Tower, named after Robert Bertram's second wife and situated west of the gateway, is thought to have been built in the late fourteenth century with the Yethouse Court in front of the gatehouse towards the village, and Ogle Tower at the north west corner of Yethouse Court, probably being added between 1470 and 1576. The geographical location of such a castle is unusual since most fortresses in Northumberland are highly visible for miles around.

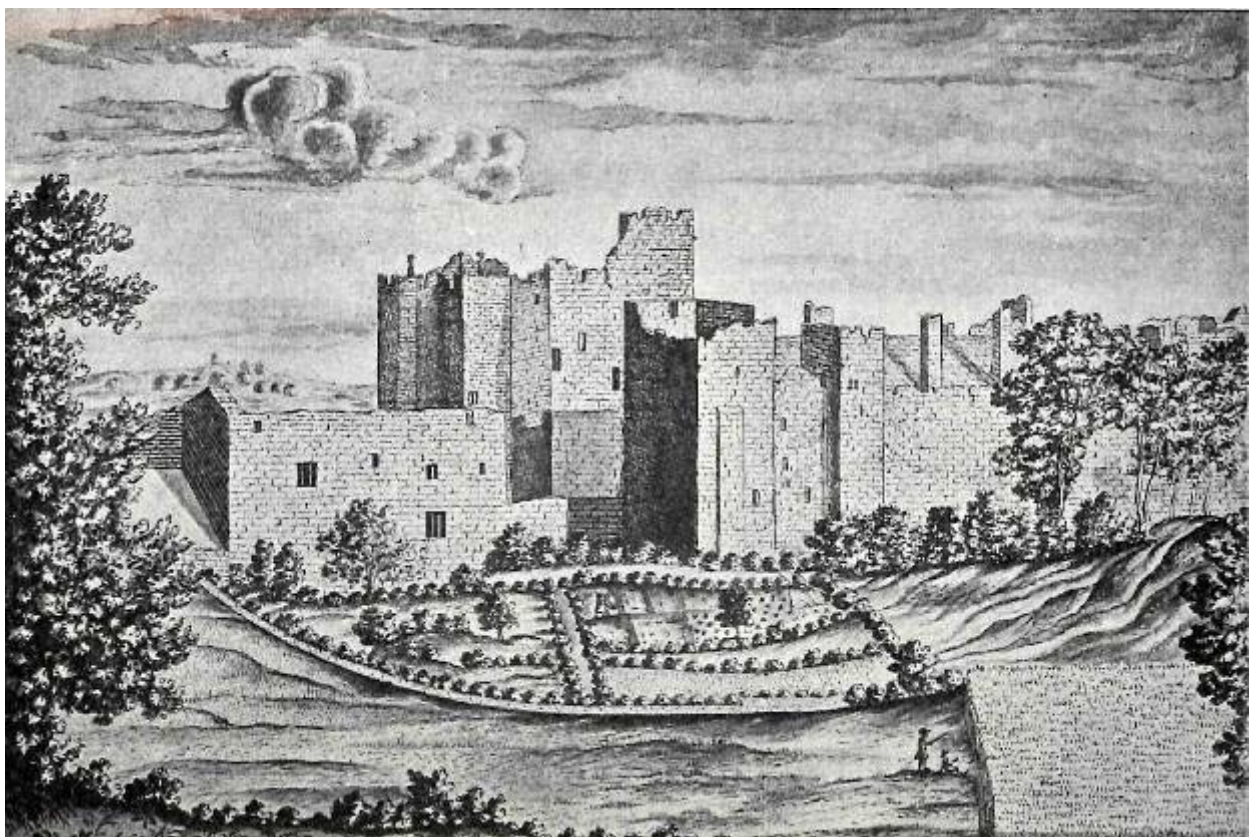
St Andrew's Church had its origins in Anglo-Saxon times – foundations of a small stone church, possibly dating from around 900AD have been traced under the floor and some of its stones were re-used in later churches. The reddish hue of many of these stones, the result of calcination, indicates it may have been set alight, perhaps by the Scots during their twelfth century raids. A Norman church appeared in the late twelfth century, probably built by Richard Bertram, the first lord. His son Robert was the first of the family to be called Baron of Bothal, granted by Richard I around 1199. Robert made significant alterations to the church, adding a chancel, a south chapel and a north aisle, replacing the north wall with an arcade. The south aisle was built by Robert Bertram IV around the same time as the castle's gatehouse; further alterations were made c1400 by Helen Bertram, made Baroness after her father died without a male heir. She passed Bothal to the Ogle family by marriage.

The Ogles held Bothal until 1629, a colourful period in its history which included a family dispute in 1410 that resulted in Sir Robert Ogle III laying siege to the castle for four days in an eventually abortive attempt to unseat his younger brother, John. A survey of the estate was undertaken in 1576. *The Booke of Bothoole* records the manor owning the castle (490 feet in circumference and including gatehouse keep, great hall, parlour, seven bed chambers, gallery, buttery, pantry, larder, kitchen, bakehouse, brewhouse, stable, Yethouse court (containing a prison), porter's lodge, various chambers, a common stable, the Blank Tower, a garden, nursery, chapel, the Ogle Tower, and "many other prettie beauldings here not specified". It recorded that Bothal was noted for its "fair gardinges and orchetts, wherein growed

all kind of hearbes and floures, and fine applies, plumbes of all kynde, peers, damsellis, nuttes, wardens, cherries to the black and reede, wallnutes, and also licores verie fine”.

The estate later passed to the Cavendish family, first to Sir William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle 1676-91, who was born at Welbeck Abbey in Nottinghamshire. During the Civil War, there is evidence that Cavendish installed his family at Bothal Castle, as reference is made to him visiting his children there in 1642. However, by the time that William's son Henry became 2nd Duke of Newcastle, Bothal appears to have fallen into disrepair and the Duke was very much an absentee landlord. The estate thereafter passed, via John Holles, 3rd Duke of Newcastle, and Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford, to the Bentincks, Dukes of Portland. An illustration of the castle's state of neglect by the early eighteenth century can be seen in *The Saunders' View of 1724* (*Bothal Observed*, Roland Bibby, 1973).

It was during the Earl of Oxford's time, and on his instruction, that Bothal School was founded in 1725. The small school house and Master's house were built next to the churchyard. Christopher Stafford, rector of the parish, bequeathed £80 to be used for teaching eight scholars yearly. Both school and endowment were still in place during the 1820s, by which time 70 children were receiving education at the school, the schoolmaster was receiving £10 a year plus his house from the Duke of Portland, with nearly £3 from the endowment and a “quarterage of two shillings from each scholar”. The school remained in use until a new school was opened in Ashington in 1873.



The Saunders' View, 1724

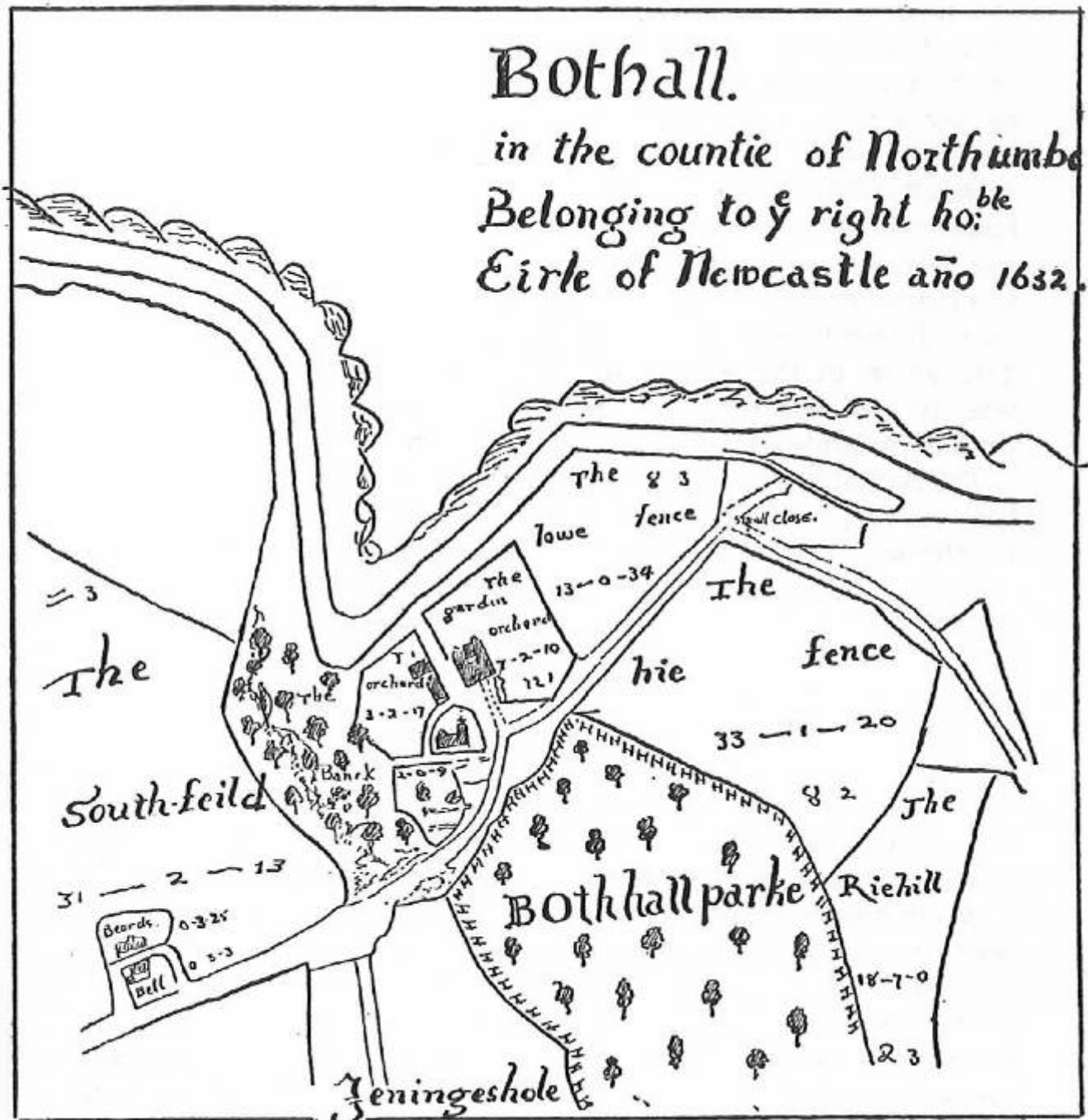
In 1828, William Sample was appointed agent to the Bothal estate by the 4th Duke of Portland, and the estate remains in the stewardship of the Sample family to this day. William Sample persuaded the Duke to finance restoration of the gatehouse, works which were undertaken in 1830-31. Bricks and stone from the ruins of the castle were reused where possible, and the inappropriate shed-like construction which blocked the archway, as illustrated in Gastineau's c1840 drawing, was removed.

The large Sample wing, adjoining the west side of the gatehouse, was constructed in 1858-59 during Thomas Sample's stewardship. The wing was enlarged in 1909 when an additional storey was added to the east.



Gastineau Drawing of c1840 showing shed- like construction at archway

William Charles Ellis, rector of Bothal 1861-1923 and brother of the 7th Lord Howard de Walden (eldest joint heir to the baronship of Ogle), also made a significant impression on the village during his time. He built a new rectory house at Bothal Haugh – a red-brick Elizabethan style mansion with an octagonal turret to the south west elevation, with hydraulics which opened the main internal doors on approach. It was during works to form a driveway for this house that the primitive graves mentioned above were discovered. Rector Ellis also had the private suspension bridge erected which, unlike the house, survives to this day to facilitate access between house and church (although the original wooden bridge was replaced with railway wires around 1935). Further significant alterations to the church were also carried out in his time, in 1887, during which an ancient apse and



Plan of Duke of Newcastle's estate, 1632

other relics were uncovered. Rector Ellis is commemorated by a plaque on the south wall in the chancel at St Andrew's.

The earliest representation of the village is the 1632 plan of the Duke of Newcastle's estate, the few buildings shown probably functional rather than residential. The row of estate cottages, which makes up most of the village today, were remodelled in 1885 and the village hall built in 1895. The Castle Inn, which closed as a public house between 1855 and 1887, was rebuilt in 1897. Since then, little has changed, other than the conversion of the village hall and billiard room to residential use, the rebuilding of Glebe Cottage on the site of the vergers cottage and former school to form School Cottage in the 1970s, and the more recent conversion of the joiner's workshop

3.1.4 ***Post-Map Development History (1632 Onwards)***

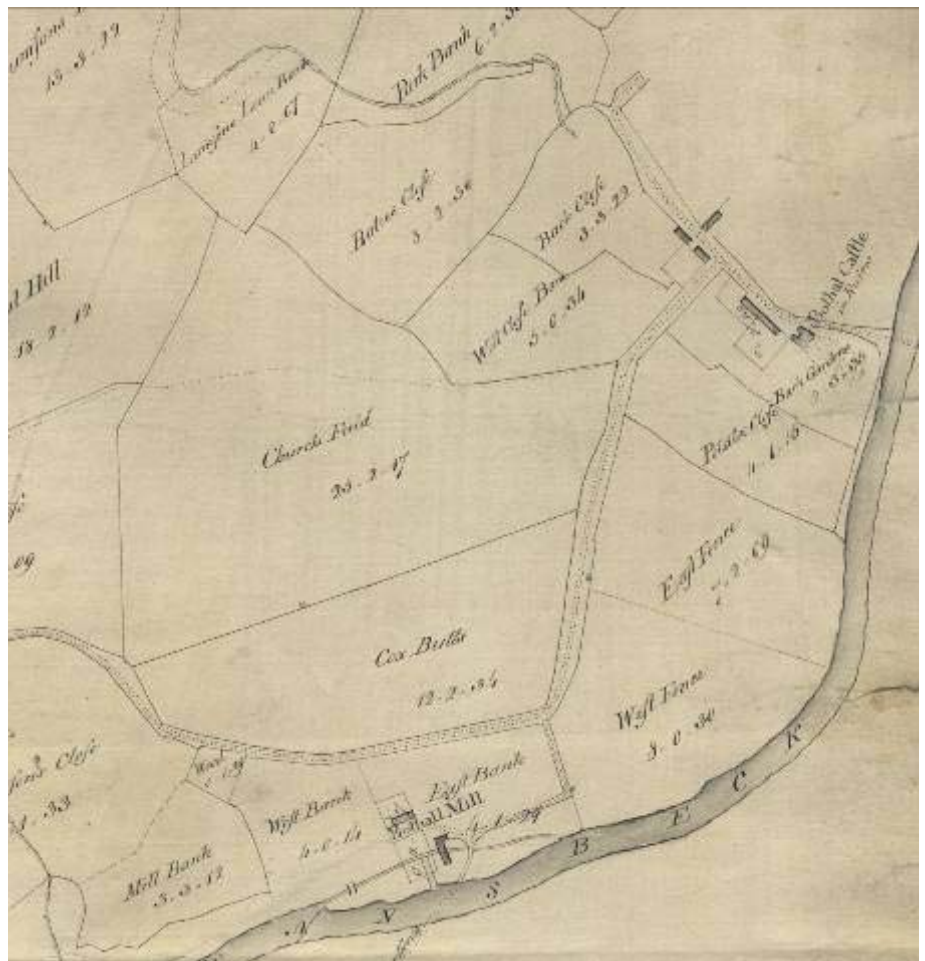
Historically, for small estate villages such as Bothal, maps were often only required for land disputes, when land changed hands or when tithe awards were re-assessed. Many such hand-drawn plans were poorly produced, have been lost over time or remain in private archives. The readily available map sequence for Bothal only becomes continuous from the mid nineteenth century with the usual Ordnance Survey (OS) sequence.

A plan of the Bothal estate was drawn in 1632, followed by a gap of around 170 years until an estate plan and a plan of Bothal demesne land belonging to the Duke of Portland, both c1800. The First Edition OS map is dated 1864.

The 1632 plan, from the description in *Bothal Observed*, by Roland Bibby, shows a building in the 'gardin orchard' south west of the castle gatehouse, and two large buildings to the east in another orchard. Two smaller buildings, one possibly a cottage with garden, are located in an enclosure roughly midway between the church and the road ascending Bothal Bank. A third building lies north west of the road junction in the village set well back from the present dwellings, at the edge of the enclosed 'Bothall Parke'. None of these survive; some have been replaced on the same site, though just north of the church, on the site of the Castle Inn and adjoining farm shed, appear to be two additional buildings. There is no

recognisable village pattern to the buildings and they would appear to be mainly agricultural buildings related to the estate. Residents would have been servants. There is also no sign of the diverted stream running under the road from west to east at the north end of the village. There appear to be only two entrance points to the village, as today, making defence easier.

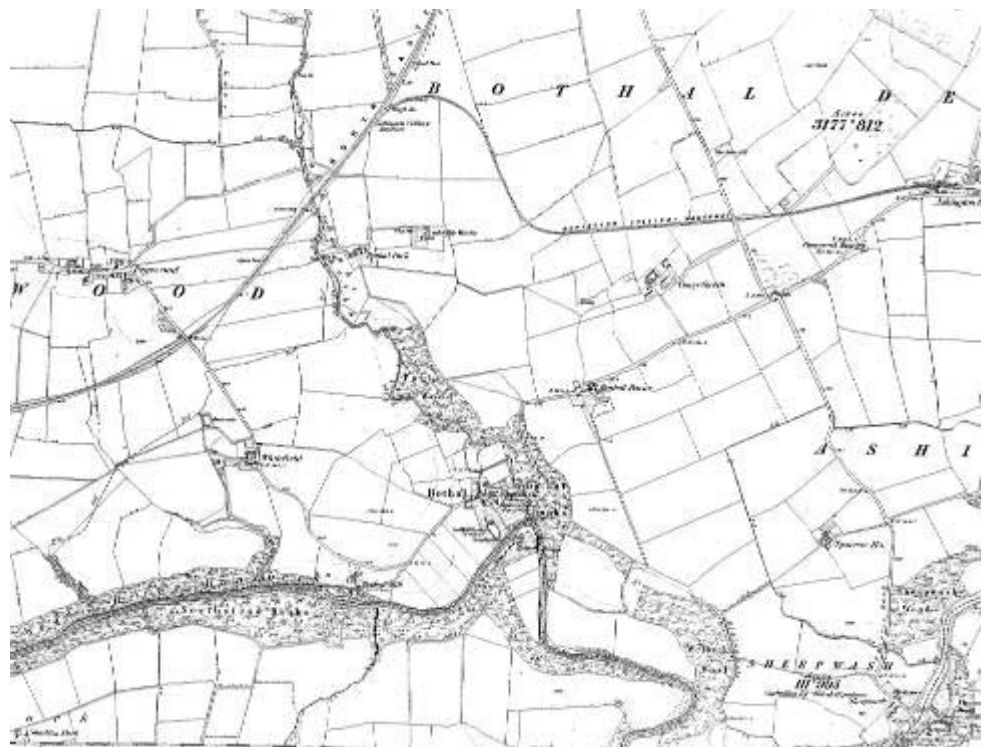
The *Plan of Bothal Demesne Lands* belonging to the Duke of Portland appears to slightly predate the other estate plan of



Bothal Demesne Lands around 1800

around 1800 as it shows a substantial building just to the north of the castle with two smaller buildings in the approximate position of present day cottage No.3 (formerly the Post Office) and the former Castle Inn. The slightly later map has more detail and indicates a second building across the road from the Castle Inn site, roughly in the position of cottage Nos.5 and 6 and also appears to show an extension to the mill. Apart from the buildings at Bothal Barns, the village is surrounded by arable land.

The 1st Edition OS map, 1864, does indicate the diverted stream, dividing a field to the north of the Castle Inn, beyond which is the joiner's workshop. This diversion added much interest to the garden of the converted Reading Room, was likely to have been carried out for



1st Edition OS Map, 1864

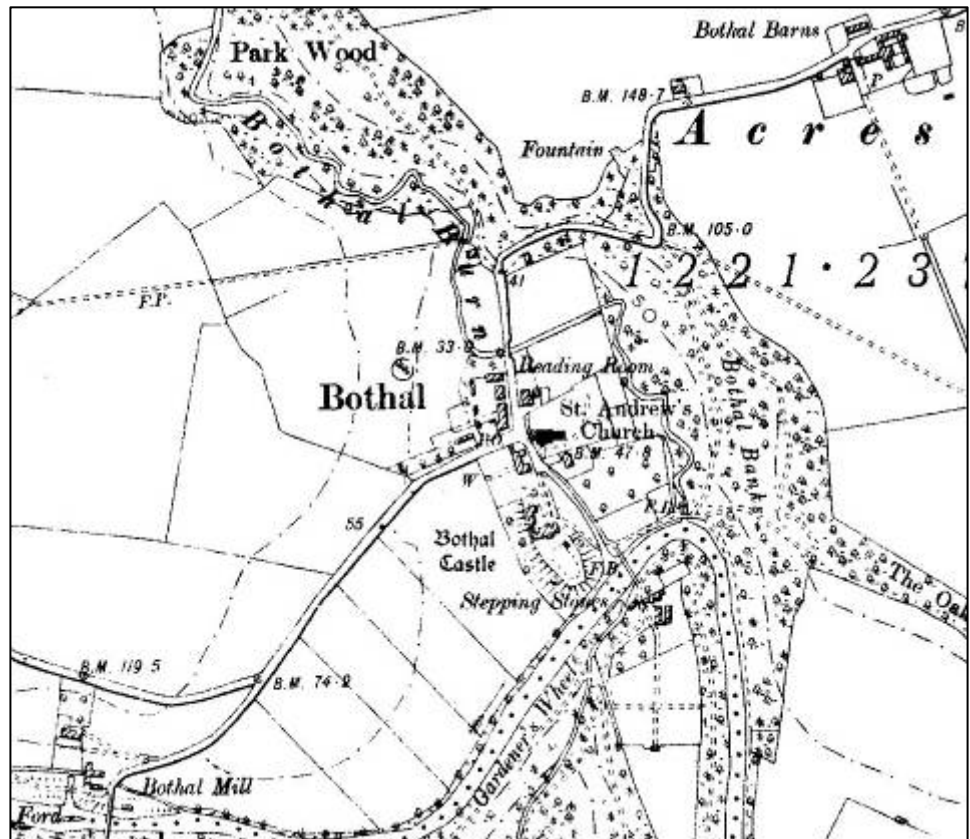
land management reasons rather than for amenity. To the north west, just off the bend in the main road, is a detached cottage dated 1859. The earlier estate cottages also appear, with projecting outhouses and gardens to the rear. Bibby suggests the building on the site of the present Garden House, opposite the Endowed School, is the farmhouse for Castle Farm which had been rebuilt by 1837. The castle is surrounded by orchards reaching down to the road to the rear of the farmhouse, to the school grounds, and south across the river to Bothal Haugh. Bothal Mill appears to the south east. Otherwise, much of the area is enclosed farmland, little different to today.

By the time of the 2nd Edition OS, 1898, the estate cottages had been rebuilt, as well as the farmhouse. Separate outhouses at the end of the cottage gardens, which still survive today, can be seen. Most of the orchards surrounding the castle had gone. The buildings across the river at Bothal Haugh were replaced, presumably by the new rectory. The farmland to the south east of the village now included a cricket ground. Within the village was the new Reading Room, the Post Office appeared at No.3, and the school was no longer indicated as it had moved to

Ashington. A single storey agricultural outbuilding appeared to the south west of the village.

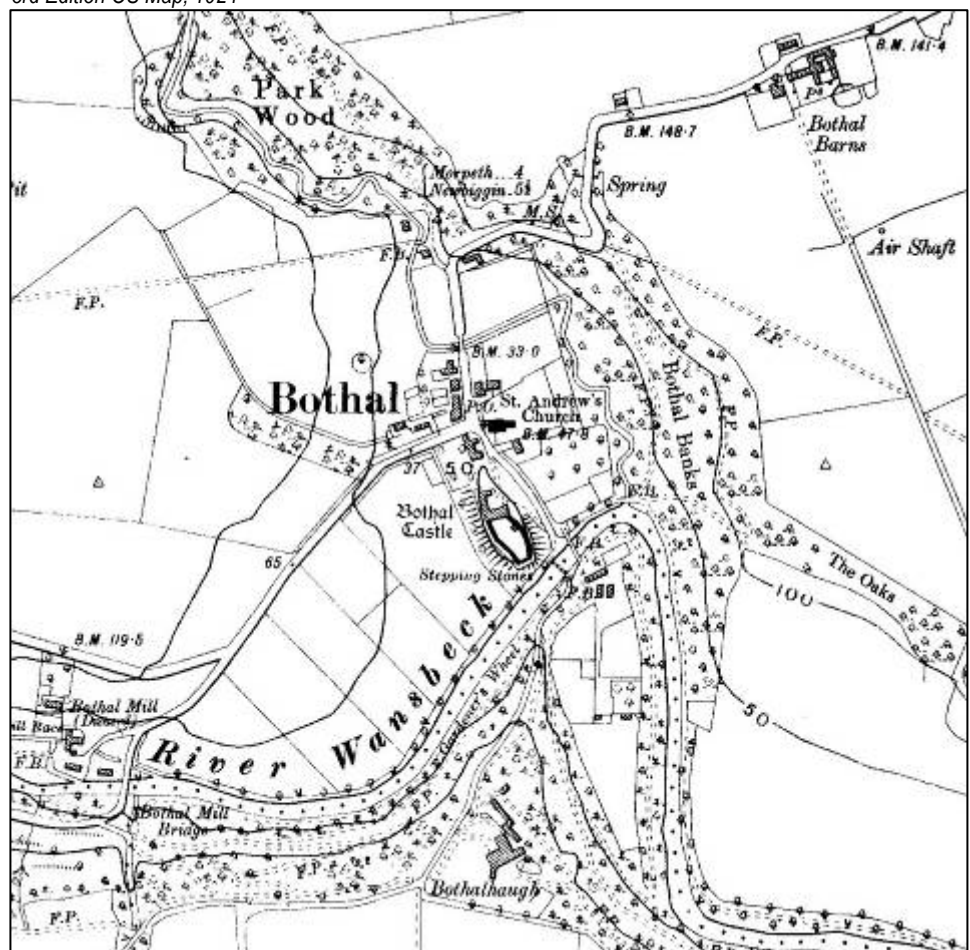
By the 3rd Edition OS of 1924, the cricket ground had disappeared but several features had been added: the timber barn next to the agricultural outbuilding, the 1914 billiard room extension to the village hall, and an extension at right angles to the joiner's workshop, as well as a spring to the east of Bothal Bank towards Bothal Barns.

The 4th Edition OS of 1938 is unchanged from the 3rd as far as the village and its immediate environs are concerned, and there is very little change between then and the conservation area today. The 1970s alterations to the billiard hall



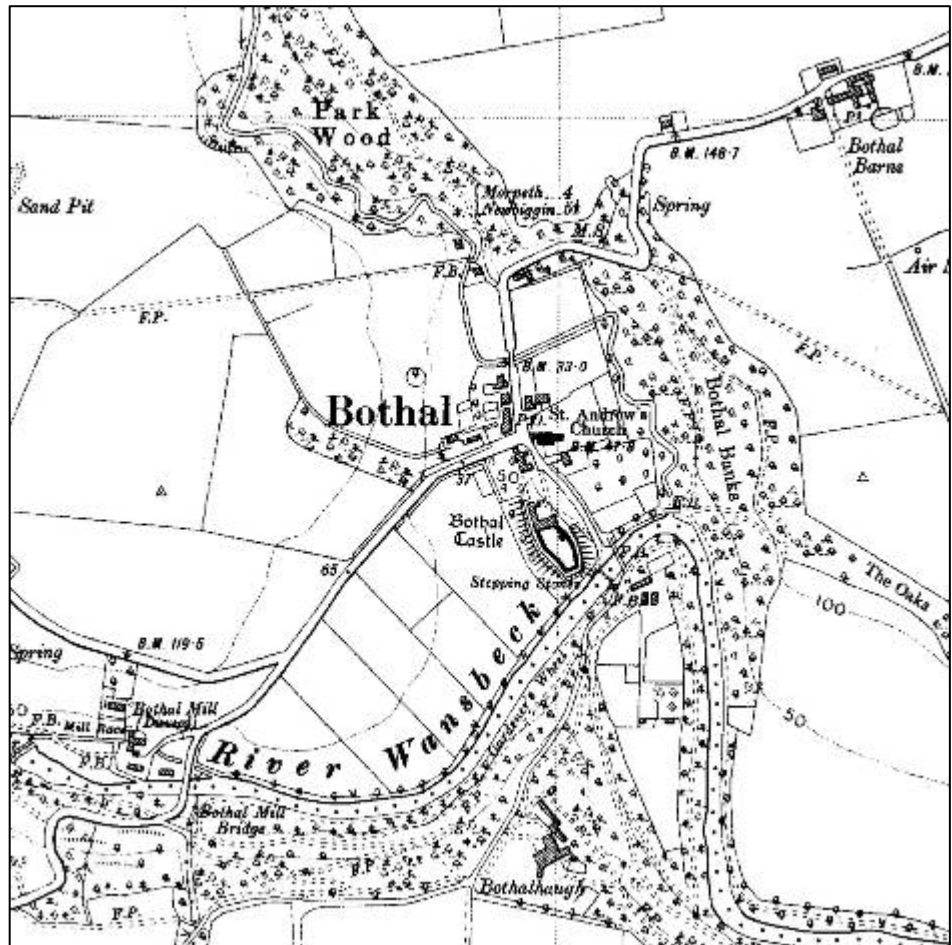
2nd Edition OS Map, 1898

3rd Edition OS Map, 1924



(to make a home for the present owner of the estate, Lady Anne Bentinck) are indicated, as well as the rebuilding of Glebe Cottage as School Cottage, the loss of the joiner's workshop extension and the appearance of the public convenience .

Overall, the village pattern of the 1880s has continued remarkably unchanged into



4th edition, OS 1938

the twenty-first century. As an historic village, Bothal is somewhat unusual in having a long historical continuity through two separate medieval buildings, but only a relatively short continuity of its overall plan. This adds to the special character of its historical development.

3.2 **Archaeology**

There are a number of entries relating to Bothal in Northumberland County Council's Sites & Monuments Record, which collates archaeological information relating to Northumberland. In addition to the castle, church and war memorial, the fields of ridge and furrow to the west, the Saxon sceatta coin and the remains of Anglo-Saxon crosses (as referred to above) are also included. Additionally, the well, ford, stepping stones, bridge and footbridge indicated in early mapping of the area, and a defensive loophole in a wall looking along the road, dating from World War II, are mentioned.

Despite these finds, there seems to have been little or no archaeological exploration carried out, either at the castle or within the immediate area of the village. Further desk study and archaeological investigation could be very fruitful in elaborating the history of the village, particularly with regard to its medieval layout, and could help in its presentation.

4 *Spatial Analysis*

4.1 *Development Pattern*

The development pattern of Bothal is straightforward – the Castle, with its north/south axis, is set defensively above the river and the single village street leads up to its main gate. Although all the village houses line this street, the church, on its traditional east/west axis, is set at right angles to the street. Access into the village is from the north along this street and from the west via a lane facing the west end of the church. The basic determinants of this pattern have been the valley topography and the single ownership of the land which have long maintained the simple relationship between castle and village, ensuring its unique compactness and keeping it free from such additions as ribbon development and intensive backland infills which have so disfigured many old villages elsewhere.

4.2 *Layout, Grain and Density*

Although the simple linear layout of the village does not include any formal public spaces, the short section of street between the church, Garden House and the castle entrance gates has an extra quietness which sets it apart from the general tranquillity of the village and gives it distinctiveness. Most buildings are towards the front of their plots though with generous space all around to afford a rich greenness to the street. There is no



Distinctive linear layout of village with buildings set back behind vegetation



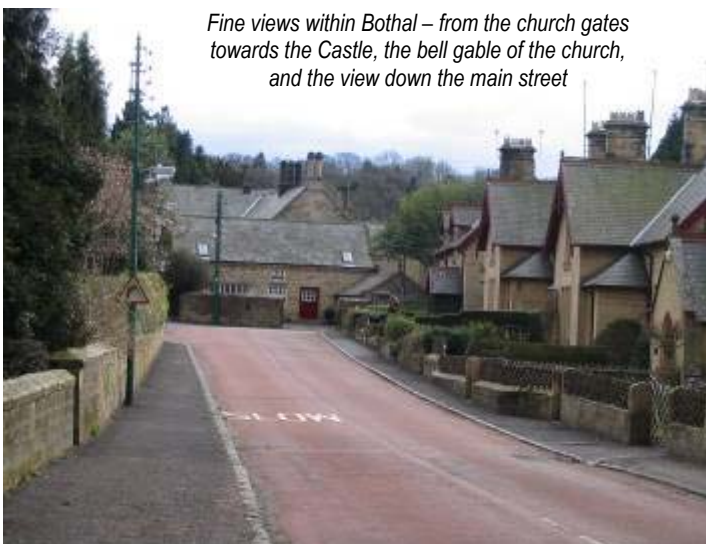
complexity in the grain of the village development as it is all orientated north/south, except for the church. Throughout the village the density of building development is low, yet high enough to give Bothal's street a distinct rural village townscape.

4.3 *Views within the Area*



Because of the small size of the village and its linear form, which gives it a lack of physical and townscape depth, most views from public places within the village are also views out towards nearby fields and wooded banks of the river valley. Although there are a few glimpses of the surrounding landscape between buildings on the street, most public views are along the streets. No internal views can really be described as having been formally composed, but several have some distinctiveness as they are framed by buildings and focus on a significant feature.

The first is the view from the church gates up through the trees towards the castle – the castle gate opens and the garden beyond provides the focus of the



Fine views within Bothal – from the church gates towards the Castle, the bell gable of the church, and the view down the main street



view The second is that along the west access road, visually stopped by the war memorial and the bell gable of Bothal's ancient church . Thirdly, the view south along the full length of Bothal's main street towards the columnar chimneys of Garden House is attractive and highlights the estate village characteristics of the housing.



Enticing paths and successful merging of built and rural environment

Two other views are worthy of mention. The green walk between the castle and School House is attractive and mysterious enough in to entice walkers down to the river crossing, and the glimpse north along the back gardens and outbuildings at the western edge of the village is an exemplar of how to successfully merge the built into the rural.

See page 11 for a discussion of views of the area from outside it.

5 *Character Analysis*

Because of the small size of the Bothal Conservation Area and the uniformity of its character, it cannot sensibly be divided into character sub-areas. This character analysis addresses the whole area but highlights differences within it.

5.1 *Land Use*

Although the manorial status of Bothal was considerable under its illustrious local families in the past, it is now much more modest in its purposes and activities. The castle still contains the administrative offices for the Welbeck Estate, and agriculture and agricultural tenancy is still the main business of the village and its immediate environs, as it has been for many years. Now the main building use in the village is residential, in detached and semi-detached properties plus flats in the castle. All properties, with the exception of School Cottage and the public WCs, are in the ownership of the Estate. The stock of purpose-built residences has been increased by conversion from other uses – the village Reading Room and Billiard Room became a large single house in the 1970s and an outbuilding next to the Garden House was converted into residential use in 2000.



Change of use has not meant loss of form in the area

The village was once served by a post office in cottage No.3, but this is now closed, and it also had a public house in the nineteenth century though this was demolished and replaced by a house. It was called the Castle Inn and a miniature castle is displayed on the corner of the replacement property.

Orchards that once surrounded the castle and a village cricket field have also long gone, leaving no commercial or recreational amenities. Even the amenity of the public WCs has been withdrawn following closure due to vandalism. But the village still has the local parish church and churchyard, although no longer a vicarage. The



The tranquil church and churchyard with its mature trees

church use has survived for over 1,000 years, bringing regular activity into the public spaces of this otherwise tranquil village.

5.2 **Architectural Qualities**

The historic architecture of Bothal is of considerable interest and significance, as much for its survival as its quality. In addition to its ancient fortified and ecclesiastical architecture, the village is recognised for the quality of its late Victorian estate cottages.

5.2.1 **Form, Height and Scale**

The usual height of residential buildings in Bothal is two-storey. Only the four storey castle is taller. The oldest form of housing is semi-detached, with only one detached house being added in the twentieth century, still two-storey and relatively small in scale. The older residential and agricultural outbuildings are small single storey blocks, apart from the two large timber structures to the east and west of the village. Apart from the church and castle, scale is firmly rural domestic.

5.2.2 **Periods and Styles**

Most of Bothal's architecture is from two very different periods of development history:

- **Medieval**

This period in Northumberland's history was one of uncertainty and unrest, which the village's two medieval buildings illustrate. The church is mainly from the late twelfth and fourteenth centuries. The attractive bellcote on the west gable end is possibly post-Reformation and reuses a fourteenth century cusped head. Major restoration work took place again in 1887, rebuilding of the chancel and adding the south porch. The castle began as a mansum, thought to date from around the mid twelfth century, and was not fortified until the mid fourteenth when the gatehouse keep was built and the curtain wall

strengthened. The gatehouse is distinctive for the two badly weathered carved stone figures above the rampart, below which are various carved shields.

- *Nineteenth Century*

Dating from the mid nineteenth to the turn of the twentieth, Victorian architecture is very varied with many sub-categories, but much is based on showy, confident themes. Rich, traditional materials are used – often brick, stone, timber and iron – with good quality, solid construction and much design flare. The three strongest Victorian revival styles were Gothic (defined by verticality, asymmetry, pointed arches, gables and carving), Italianate (with low roofs, bracketed eaves and some stucco) and Queen Anne (red brick with Dutch gables, white joinery, doorcases and terracotta). There were also other revival styles. In addition, the Arts & Crafts style began in the late nineteenth century. Apart from the castle and church, most of Bothal's buildings belong to the late nineteenth century. The estate cottages owe much to the Arts & Crafts style, and both the church and castle underwent significant restoration and extension in this period.

- *Twentieth Century*

Bothal completely avoided the housing booms after both World Wars, as well as the generic styles of mass commercial housing of the end of the century. Modest extension and conversion of cottages happened in this period – eg. extension of the Victorian cottages, extension of Glebe Cottage to become School Cottage, and addition of the public WCs.

5.3 ***Features, Detailing and Materials***

The character of Bothal comes from a variety of different architectural features, simple detailing and a uniformity of materials. The features are:

- masonry
- doorways
- windows
- roofs, including ridges, eaves, verges and rainwater goods
- dormer windows and rooflights
- chimneys

Most of these features are simple yet informed, but some have considerable elaboration. The limited palette of materials contributes to the appealing unity of much of the area's architecture. Some details have been altered more than others, but a great deal of original fabric and character is intact.

5.3.1 ***Masonry***

The principal walling material throughout Bothal is locally sourced natural sandstone. Although most of the stone walling is tooled, and some is roughly coursed rubble, decoratively treated ashlar has been used for the castle and church. Window and door surrounds and quoins are also dressed stone, some with decorative hood moulds



The house on the site of the former Castle Inn, has 'Rebuilt 1897' carved into a quoin, below which a small carving of the castle gatehouse has been inserted, and the detached cottage at the north end of the village has '1859' carved into dressed sandstone over the drip mould above the door.



Decorative features used with local stonemasonry



Brick is used in some later additions and outbuildings. Timber is also used in places as a walling material, which is more suited to the agricultural character and history of the area. The public WCs are pebble-dashed, quite out of character with the rest of the area.

5.3.2 Doorways



Doorways are set back in a deep reveal. All residential doors are timber panelled – some half-glazed, some with rectangular fanlights – and most appear to be original. Garages and outbuildings have vertical plank doors of traditional design



Clockwise from top left: robust domestic doorway in Victorian terrace. Delicate lattice timber porch. Functional openings to rear outhouses and yards. Former agricultural opening converted to window

A number of the traditional cottages have porches which define their appearance, in



stone with timber lattice upper sections, decorative barge-boards and finials, cast iron guttering and natural slate roofs. Doors to the castle and the church are also of a traditional timber design, those at the church of considerable age. Some large agricultural openings have since been converted to windows with timber inserts

5.3.3 **Windows**



Richly distinctive windows of the estate cottages and at the castle.

Traditional window openings are strongly vertical, one of the defining features of the area's architecture. Many openings are in pairs or groups. Windows are set back in a reveal, adding life and character to elevations. Most windows are traditional timber sliding sashes, most vertical and some horizontal (known as Yorkshire sliding sashes). But there is also an

attractive and distinctive metal casement window dominant in the estate cottages and typical of their period and style. It consisting of stone mullions, timber frames and decorative metal casements divided into diamonds and elongate hexagons.

Under the control of the Bothal Estate, many of these original nineteenth century windows survive. A point of interest is a window in the cottage which formerly served as the post office – the letter box can still be seen, painted over to match the window subdivisions in a trompe l'oeil effect. As for the twentieth century additions, School Cottage has PVCu windows, as has the converted outhouse to the north of Garden House, both of which intrude on architectural quality. The castle has stone mullioned and timber framed windows with timber subdivisions, but also some very fine, smaller, decorative lights with tracery and what are likely to be metal or leaded frames.



Ingenious use of painting to disguise the former post office's letterbox despite a change of use to residential

5.3.4 **Roofs and Rainwater Goods**

Steeply pitched and animated roofs are used almost exclusively in Bothal, with plain flat roofs confined to the odd modern porch or rear extension. Original pitched roofs are shaped and enlivened with stone ridges or, on the row of estate cottages, terracotta ridges, plus stone water tabling and decorative corbels. Most



houses have their original roof structure and materials intact. Natural Welsh slate is used throughout. Original Welsh slate is rough-looking with slightly uneven edges and subtle variations in shade and tone – often with blue or purple hints – which help define the richness and texture of the area's



Steeply pitched roofs are a feature of this village, often decorated and with chimney pots still in place

character. It produces a visually recessive yet deeply textured appearance.

The castle is likely to have a lead roof, whilst the church has stainless steel at the west end and red clay plain tiles at the east. The public WCs have an uncharacteristic felt roof.

Traditional rainwater goods, including gutters and down-pipes are usually of cast-iron as half-round gutters and full round pipes. Traditionally, gutters were supported on spikes driven into the walls rather than the modern way of mounting them on a timber fascia. Fortunately, much of these original cast-iron water systems and traditional fixings have survived on the houses in Bothal, and all continue to be properly maintained. The church also has a cast-iron rainwater system but with decorative hoppers on the west end. Garden House has a veranda running along the east elevation with a natural slate roof, cast iron rainwater goods and cast iron decorative columns.



Decorative pipe brackets at the church and columns on a veranda at Garden House

5.3.5 **Dormer Windows and Rooflights**



Wall-head dormers are a very distinctive feature of Bothal's nineteenth century cottages, attractively built with slate roofs and decorative bargeboards and ridges. The fine agricultural outbuildings at the west of the village, now used as garages, have a few 'glass slates', the traditional way of providing light into attic space.

However, the village is not without inserted modern dormers on visible elevations, which is unfortunate. Large, chunky modern rooflights are also visible, most noticeably on the former village hall, former billiard room and joiner's workshop. Most of the village houses have, however, kept their original roof pattern with 'clean' roof slopes.



5.3.6 **Chimneys**



Chimneys are a key part of the architectural presence of most buildings in Bothal, enlivening the roofscape and adding to the authentic scene. As heating systems have changed, chimneys have become one of the features of old buildings most vulnerable to removal and loss. Luckily, most of the buildings in Bothal have retained their chimneys and their pots; the most recent house in the village has also been built with chimneys.

The traditional

village chimneys are sizeable, tall features typical of the Victorian style of the cottages. All are in

decorative ashlar sandstone. The Garden House has decorative clustered columnar stacks, also in sandstone. The castle carries sandstone chimney stacks, a mix of functional and decorative in appearance.



5.4 **Contribution of Spaces**

Although the length of street in the village is small, it nonetheless has three distinct parts, each with their own character. There are also three identifiable green spaces in the village that contribute to its character and appearance:

- the central north/south section of the main road,
- the war memorial area, the area from which the church, castle and several houses are accessed,
- the western approach to the village,
- the churchyard,
- the lane to the river,
- private gardens.

As well as these, the general contribution of trees is discussed below.

5.4.1 **Central Section of the Main Road**

The wide open character of the central part of the main road has been



determined by the considerable width of the highway in proportion to the relatively low height of the surrounding cottages. The cottages are also set back from the road behind



Characteristic red tarmac roads flanked by darker pavements with whinstone kerbs

traditionally bound gardens, adding more open space between them. The road surface is traditional red tarmac so characteristic of the minor roads of Northumberland, flanked on each side by pavements in darker tarmac with local whinstone kerbs, also a traditional local treatment. The spatial enclosure of the two-storey cottages is strongly reinforced to the north by the mature trees that line the road on each side after the cottages. The space is neatly terminated to the north by a curve in the road and to the south by the animated collection at Garden House. The experience of this central section is therefore of a generous space, attractively enclosed all around by traditional buildings, gardens and trees. In addition, the space is more attractive by not being endlessly cluttered by stationary or moving vehicles, part of the unique character of this village conservation area.

5.4.2 **War Memorial Area**



The informal heart of Bothal has a different road surface giving a sense of dignity and purpose to the war memorial area



Here, a change in road surface to crushed grey whinstone and a lack of pavements mark the special character, status and significance of this space. It is no longer part of the thoroughfare through the village, but a peaceful,



separate entrance way. It is the quiet meeting point of the handsome stone gateways at the entrances to the castle and church, two of the village's most important structures, plus the start point for the romantic lane down to the river. With its innate sense of arrival, this area can be considered the informal heart of Bothal. Its special nature is further strengthened by being surrounded by buildings and structures of varied shapes, sizes and purposes, not replicated elsewhere in the area, and the sturdy presence of the large village war memorial which adds dignity and purpose to the space.

5.4.3 **Western Approach**



A more rural approach to the village from the west towards the church

Like the central section of the main road, the western approach serves to link the village with the rural lands beyond and as well as being terminated by traditional features at each end – a curve of the road to the west and the church and war memorial to the east. However, unlike the central section, it does not have a strong townscape feel as it is not lined with houses.



Running from the west, the space is defined by mature trees, hedges and low timber fences, penetrated by glimpses of the castle to the south. These boundaries soon give way to the isolated modern public WCs, rear garden accesses and a corner house to the north, and more trees and hedges to the south. Although it shares the same traditional red tarmac and pavement treatment, it is altogether a much more rural affair.

5.4.4 **Churchyard**



Although the church is generally well kept, some areas show signs of neglect. Native and exotic trees enrich the scene



This historic and distinctive space behind the church is very much hidden away from Bothal's street environment. It is accessed on foot from north of the church and by foot and vehicle from the south. The yard contains many upright stones, the oldest closest to the church. Although later extensions to the burial area have pushed the yard closer to the Bothal Burn in the east, these later areas show the greatest signs of overgrowth, neglect and damage. These areas also carry the greatest tree-cover, except for the section north east of the church, which has been planted with specimens of exotic species that enrich the nearby mature common species. Tended



grass clearings extend round from the south of the church and intersect informally with the stands of trees in the rest of the yard. The yard is bounded by a mix of fences, hedges and



Characteristically English churchyard with a romantic, slightly gloomy atmosphere, slightly decaying but very evocative

walls, some of which are broken down or have almost disappeared, particularly at the eastern end. Substantial and healthy planting visually separates the yard from the street at the north west. Because of its age, its intimate association with local families and, to some degree because of its decay, the churchyard has acquired that romantic, slightly gloomy, atmosphere so characteristic of English country churchyards, and so attractive to local urbanised locals seeking refreshing tranquillity. Such familiar pleasures are much enhanced in Bothal's yard by its unusual and mature exotic plantings.

5.4.5 ***Lane to the River***



An enticing path lead to a great destination, encouraging exploration

Although there is no visual connection from the village to the river, there is an attractive physical link which, as a common route, is of some considerable age; a link is certainly marked on the c1800 maps and is most likely to have been in use much earlier. Today, the path, with its clipped hedges and trees, presents an inviting view from the war memorial area. Although its grassed surface is somewhat

worn with use, it is the only green public route in the village. In addition to its attractive greenery, the path also has an air of anticipation as its destination – River Wansbeck – is hidden around a curve. The crossing itself has its own special character made up of stepping stones and a wire



bridge. The river itself adds excitement in all its moods. This attractive green lane is characterised by good maintenance, a feeling of expectation and real purpose, and a desirable destination at each end.

5.4.6 **Private Gardens**



Public and private spaces merge in this well tended village, hard natural materials contrast with soft green countryside.

Although private gardens are separate, individually tended green spaces, when considered together they form large blocks of open space that contribute much to the character of the conservation area. They are also definitive of Bothal's low density. Front gardens make a strong positive contribution to the central section of the main road through the village, this further enhanced by the attractive uniformity of the rustic design and natural stone walls and rustic criss-cross boundary fences. The back gardens and yards to the rear of the cottages lining Bothal's main street are also well kept, and most retain their original late nineteenth century outbuildings, an important feature in the rear garden area.

But the gardens and outbuildings achieve more than just being a soft green area in contrast to the nearby houses. They are part of a distinctive sequence from the urban character of the village to the rural character of its landscape setting. The sequence starts with the houses, moves through the private gardens, then through the outbuildings – mini-versions of the houses in form and materials – to the common grassed drying area and, finally, over the fence into the open countryside. This soft edge works well here primarily because of the survival of traditional outbuildings and the progression from separate to communal occupation. Disturbance of this sequence edge would harm the special character of this part of the conservation area.

5.4.7 **Contribution of Trees**



The contribution which a wide variety of trees, hedges and other greenery makes is very high

This significance of tree cover to the character and appearance of the conservation area should not be underestimated. Trees make a great contribution to Bothal's landscape setting. The densely wooded valley sides

to the north, east and south neatly define the space in which the village stands, providing a continuous and natural skyline feature of mature trees. On the west side where both valley sides and dense planting are missing, groups or belts of trees divide up the space into a more subtle pattern, reminiscent of traditional English parkland (itself designed to celebrate a 'created' rural scene). Trees also play a large part in the attractive scene inside the village. They provide informal avenues along the two approach roads into the village, the churchyard is enhanced by mature trees of local and exotic species, tree groups retain the enclosure of the central section and the war memorial spaces, and a stand of mature trees shrouds the entrance into the castle, giving

its approach an air of mystery. Individual trees, such as the weeping specimen tree by the war memorial, are small focal points in their own right. The positive relationship between trees, buildings and spaces suggests an element of modest composition in the planting. In addition, especially in the village core, carefully tended and clipped hedges and shaped ornamental trees give the village a cherished appearance, a significant part of its character.



Bothal seen through bare trees in early spring give glimpses of the village unseen later in the year.



5.5 **Loss, Intrusion and Damage**

Loss, intrusion and damage are not a particular characteristics of the village. Although it is not entirely without some problem historic environment aspects, the care taken in the past, together with the continuing high level of maintenance and management exercised by the Estate, has ensured that harm to the village has been minimal. Problem items recorded below are therefore the exception seen in the positive context of the exemplary appearance of the village, but which are nonetheless highlighted with a view to longer term enhancement opportunities.

5.5.1 **Neutral Parts**

Neutral parts are those with a balance of positive and negative characteristics, which neither detract strongly nor make a great contribution. The only part of Bothal that might be considered neutral is the small field and plantation in the south east corner of the conservation area. Its neutrality is simply due to its invisibility but it nonetheless contributes positively in terms of its openness which would, of course, be compromised should it be developed. Neutrality would also change where there a change in physical or visual access or if the taller trees on the site, which contribute to the spatial enclosure of the village, were removed.

5.5.2 **Negative Parts**

There are no wholly negative parts of the conservation area.

5.5.3 **Incremental Change**

Although the process of modernisation has not been absent in the area, there is very little evidence of incremental erosion of character from minor alterations or losses of features, the sort of changes which individually may be of little consequence but which *en masse* damage to the integrity of historic areas.

But some works of modernisation have affected Bothal's character and appearance. There has been little loss or replacement of original architectural details, but a few windows and the odd door are replaced. The loss of windows is particularly unfortunate and the effect which fenestration has on a building's character and appearance should not be underestimated.



In addition, inappropriate designs, methods and materials have left a modest mark on the area. The highest profile being non-traditional roof dormers and rooflights together with enlarged original window openings and over-sized extensions to traditional buildings. However, many of these predate designation as a conservation area, and others were believed to have been acceptable at the time. Today's more conservation-minded times would apply different criteria resulting in less obvious additions.

Areas giving cause for concern throughout the village are minimal due to the maintenance undertaken by the Estate, but some (eg. outhouses) appear to be long term problems



5.5.4 **Condition and Vacancy**

The village continues to be generally well-maintained throughout so there is little decay or dereliction that is of significance today. Vacancy is confined to the modern public WCs, because of vandalism and one or two small traditional outbuildings, such as that on the southern edge of the churchyard, due to neglect. In addition, minor repairs appear to be needed to the base of the war memorial, to cracks in some masonry, to remedy loose tiles on roofs, and to some outbuildings

5.5.5 **Other Pressures for Change**

At present, there seems to be little evidence suggesting there is any pressure for further development of the village or of any need for regeneration, recognising that the initiative for any of these pressures lies with the Welbeck Estate, the owners of most of the conservation area.

6 *Management*

Change is an inevitable component of most conservation areas; the challenge is to manage change in ways which maintain and, if possible, strengthen an area's special qualities. The character of conservation areas is rarely static and is susceptible to incremental, as well as dramatic, change. Some areas are in a state of relative economic decline, and suffer from lack of investment. More often, the qualities that make conservation areas appealing also help to encourage over-investment and pressure for development in them.

Positive management is essential if such pressure for change, which tends to alter the character that made the areas attractive in the first place, is to be limited.

Proactively managing Bothal Conservation Area will therefore be an essential way of preserving and enhancing its character and appearance into the future. In accordance with English Heritage guidance, the Council has prepared a Conservation Area Management Strategy (CAMS) for Bothal.



Management topics addressed in the CAMS include the following¹:

- boundary review
- permitted development rights
- enforcement and monitoring change
- local list
- site specific design guidance or development briefs
- thematic policy guidance (eg. on boundary treatments)
- enhancement opportunities
- trees, green spaces and public realm
- archaeology
- regeneration issues
- decision making and community consultation
- available resources

Some of these are briefly discussed below. For further information and to find out how you could become involved, use the contact information on page 7.

6.1 **Boundary Review**

The conservation area was designated in 1986 and the boundary has not been reviewed since. National guidance suggests boundaries should be reviewed at regular intervals, in particular where there is pressure for change and where original designation took place many years ago. A review of the boundary is overdue.

6.2 **Enhancement Opportunities**

Although the buildings of the conservation area are well maintained, there are opportunities for the enhancement of some green spaces and of the public realm. In particular, the unused public WCs and the network of overhead wires detract from the character of the conservation area. These and other possibilities are considered in the CAMS.

¹ *Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas*, English Heritage, April 2006

7 Further Information & Guidance

7.1 Other Designations

The following heritage designations are found within the conservation area. For information on what these designations mean, go to www.english-heritage.org.uk.

15	Listed Building entries
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There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Tree Preservation Orders, Historic Parks & Gardens, Historic Battlefields, or entries in the national Buildings At Risk Register. The Council has neither a local Buildings At Risk Register nor a Local List. Bothal is also an inset to (ie. surrounded by but excluded from) the Green Belt.

7.1.1 Listed Buildings

Entries on the 'Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest' cover the whole building (including the interior), may cover more than one building, and may also include other buildings, walls and structures in the building's curtilage. Contact us for more advice (see page 7).

No.	Name	Grade	GV
235944	The Joiners Shop	II	GV
235945	The Church of St Andrew	I	GV
235946	3 stone coffins and font, St Andrew's Church yard	II	GV
235947	Smalridge Memorial, St Andrew's Church yard	II	GV
235948	Churchyard wall, piers and gate, St Andrew's Ch	II	GV
235949	Bothal Castle gatehouse and west wing	I	-
235950	Bothal Castle, remains of curtain wall	I	GV
235951	B. Castle, Welbeck Estate office & stableyard bldgs	II	GV
235952	Garden House and attached outbuilding to north	II	GV
235953	Cottages 1 and 2, Bothal Village	II	GV
235954	Cottages 3 and 4, Bothal Village	II	GV
235955	Cottages 5 and 6, Bothal Village	II	GV
235956	Village Hall and attached house	II	GV
235957	Front wall and gate piers to B Cottages 1-6, Village Hall and Adjacent Cottage	II	GV
494612	Bothal War Memorial	II	-

7.2 **County Historic Environment Record Entries**

The following entries from the Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER) are within, or partly within, the conservation area boundary. The HER is accessed on-line via a joint project with Co Durham at www.keystothepast.info.

No.	Site Name	Period
11538	Bothal Castle	medieval
11541	Cross	early medieval
11551	Bothal ridge and furrow	medieval
11557	Church of St Andrew, Bothal	medieval and post-medieval
11577	Find of a sceatta (coin)	early medieval
18169	Well in Bothal	post- medieval
18173	Ford across the Wansbeck, Bothal	post-medieval
18174	Stepping stones across the river, Bothal	post-medieval
18175	Bridge in Bothal village	post-medieval
18176	Footbridge	post-medieval
20066	Loophole in wall	modern
20432	Bothal War Memorial	modern

Notes: 'No.' = HER number. 'Period' = broad archaeological periods, not architectural periods.

7.3 **Local Plan Policies**

The following are relevant policies from the Wansbeck Local Plan, adopted in July 2007. Other policies will also be relevant. See page 6.

Conservation Areas	
GP17	<i>Conservation Area designations in the District will be kept under review. Only areas which are judged to be of special architectural or historic interest and whose character and appearance it is considered desirable to preserve or enhance will be designated, or continue to be designated, as Conservation Areas. Character appraisals and management plans will be prepared for those areas where they do not already exist and they will be kept up-to-date.</i>
GP18	<i>The special architectural or historic interest of the District's Conservation Areas will be preserved and enhanced. Special regard will be paid to the impact of proposed development on the special architectural or historic interest of a Conservation Area and its setting. Development within, or otherwise affecting, a Conservation Area must be in sympathy with the character and appearance of the Area. Development likely to have an adverse impact will not be permitted. Demolition of a building, feature or structure which makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area will not be permitted unless there is conclusive evidence that it is beyond reasonable economic repair.</i>
GP19	<i>If it appears to the authority that permitted development is having, or</i>

	<i>is likely to have, an adverse effect on the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, the authority will bring the development under planning control by seeking to make an Article 4 direction.</i>
	Green Belt
GP2a	<p><i>Within the villages of Nedderton, Hartford Bridge and Bothal, only infill development will be permitted. Such development must meet the following criteria:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a) the site is previously developed and within the defined settlement limit; and</i> <i>b) the development will occupy a small site largely surrounded by existing development; and</i> <i>c) the development is sympathetic in scale, density and design with the character of the village and surrounding countryside.</i>

7.4 **The Implications Of Conservation Area Status**

The local planning authority has a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing character and appearance of conservation areas in exercising their planning powers. In particular, the local authority has extra controls over the following in conservation areas:

- demolition
- minor developments
- the protection of trees

7.4.1 **Demolition**

Outside conservation areas, buildings which are not statutorily listed can be demolished without approval under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Within conservation areas, the demolition of unlisted buildings requires conservation area consent. Applications for consent to totally or substantially demolish any building within a conservation area must be made to Wansbeck District Council or, on appeal or call-in, to the Secretary of State. Generally, there is a presumption in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

7.4.2 **Minor Developments**

Within a conservation area, legislation² states that there are certain cases where permission must be obtained before making alterations which would normally be permitted elsewhere. This is to ensure that any alterations do not detract from the area's character and appearance. The changes include certain types of exterior painting and cladding, roof alterations including inserting dormer windows, and putting up satellite dishes which are visible from the street. The size of extensions to dwelling houses which can be erected without consent is also restricted to 50m³.

² Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995

Under Article 4 of the same legislation, there can be further measures to restrict other kinds of alteration which are normally allowed under so-called 'permitted development rights'. Called Article 4 Directions, these measures effectively control the proliferation of relatively minor alterations to buildings in conservation areas that can cumulatively lead to erosion of character and appearance over time.

Development is not precluded, but selected alterations would require planning permission and special attention would be paid to the potential effect of proposals when permission was sought. The local authority has to give good reason for making these restrictions, and must take account of public views before doing so. Too many owners, any tighter restrictions or additional costs, such as for special building materials, are more than outweighed by the attraction of living or running a business in such an area. There are two types of Article 4 Direction, 4(1) or 4(2).

7.4.3 **Trees**

Trees make an important contribution to the character of the local environment. Anyone proposing to cut down, top or lop a tree in a conservation area, whether or not it is covered by a tree preservation order, has to give notice to the local planning authority. The authority can then consider the contribution the tree makes to the character of the area and if necessary make a tree preservation order to protect it.

7.5 **Unlisted Buildings In A Conservation Area**

When considering the contribution made by unlisted buildings to the special architectural or historic interest of a conservation area, the following questions might be asked³:

- Is the building the work of a particular architect of regional or local note?
- Has it qualities of age, style, materials or any other characteristics which reflect those of at least a substantial number of the buildings in the conservation area?
- Does it relate by age, materials, or in any other historically significant way to adjacent listed buildings, and contribute positively to their setting?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, serve as a reminder of the gradual development of the settlement in which it stands, or of an earlier phase of growth?
- Does it have significant historic association with established features such as the road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?
- Does the building have landmark quality, or contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces, including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character of, or former uses within, the area?

³ Taken from *Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals*, English Heritage, April 2006

- Has it significant historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the conservation area?
- If a structure associated with a designed landscape within the conservation area, such as a significant wall, terracing or a minor garden building, is it of identifiable importance to the historic design?

Wansbeck District Council believes any one of these characteristics could provide the basis for considering that a building makes a positive contribution to the special interest of a conservation area, provided that its historic form and values have not been seriously eroded by unsympathetic alteration.



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