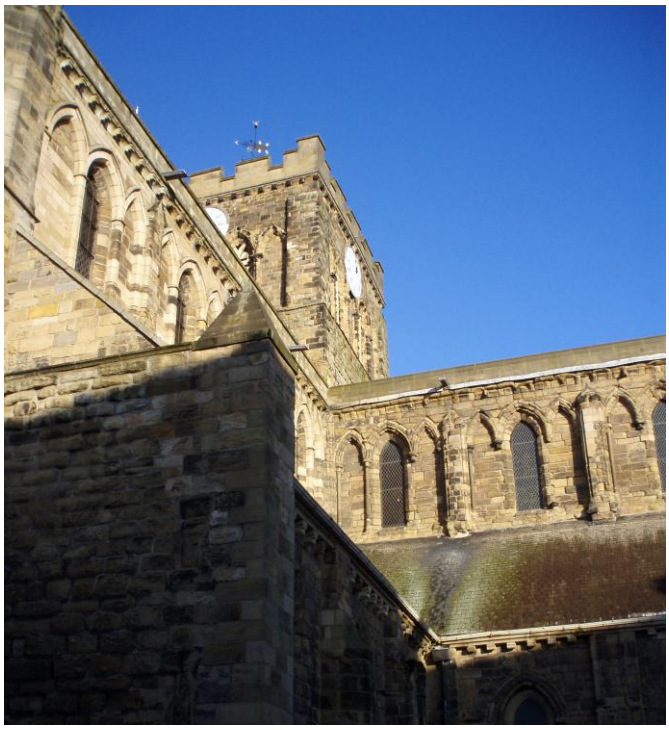
Tynedale
COUNCIL

HEXHAM
Conservation Area Character Appraisal



Adopted March 2009

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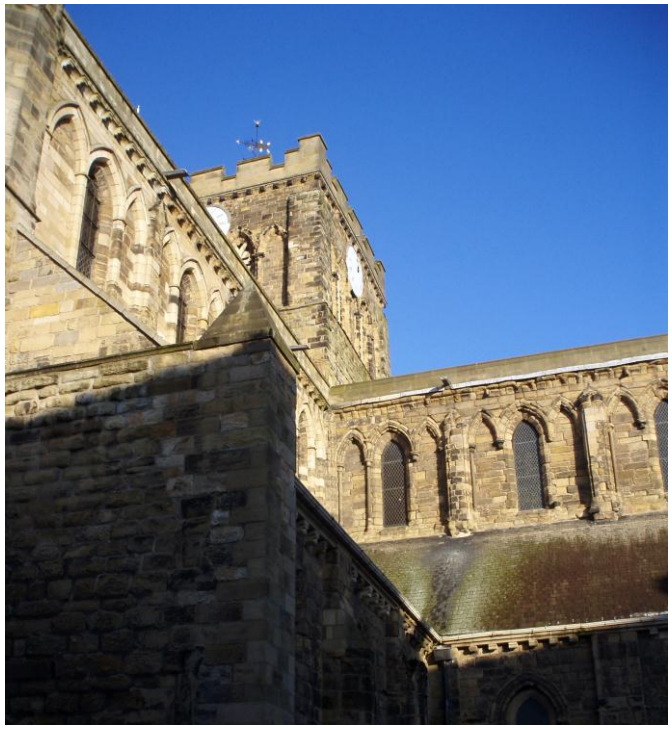


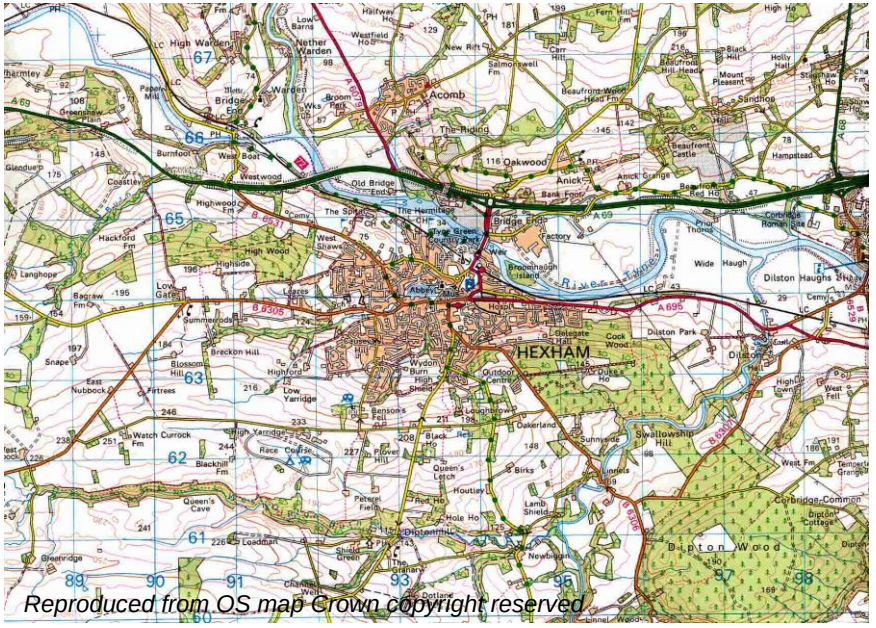
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location

Hexham is situated in the Tyne valley, just east of the confluence of the rivers North Tyne and South Tyne. Newcastle is 40km to the east and Carlisle 65km miles west, joined by the A69 trunk road, built in 1969, which bypasses the town c.1km to the north. The town is also a stopping point on the Newcastle-Carlisle railway (Map 1).

Hexham has a population of about 11,000 and is the administrative centre for Tynedale District, in the Northumberland County Council area. The town is an important local shopping centre and the site of the local district hospital and several schools. Its situation, close to the World Heritage site of Hadrian's Wall, has encouraged the growth of tourism. A cluster of industrial estates, mainly near the river, provides local employment and residents also commute to the Newcastle area.

The town is built on a raised glacial terrace c.20m above the south bank of the river, dissected by several burns flowing north to the Tyne; to the west, the Cockshaw Burn and Halgut Burn flow each side of The Sele to merge at Cockshaw, while the Skinner Burn marks the east side of the town centre. The steep edge of the terrace to the north, and the slightly less pronounced slope to the south, define the remainder of the historic core of the town. As well as forming natural site boundaries the burns are followed by transport routes, and form green 'fingers' bringing the countryside into the town. The broad, flat-bottomed valley below the town is subject to flooding but contains considerable industrial development. The valley sides surrounding the town have arable farmland at lower level and woodland above, leading to the open moorland of the North Pennines



Map 1: The location of Hexham

1.2 Hexham Conservation Area

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 and street furniture. 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.

The central part of Hexham Conservation Area was designated as 'outstanding' in 1973 in response to the clear historic and architectural significance of the town that can be traced back to Saxon times with the construction of St Wilfred's church. The conservation area was considerably extended in 1992 in order to protect the setting and character of the central area in the face of new housing and industrial developments (Map 2). The collection of over 200 listed buildings in the conservation area is testimony to the area's heritage importance.

[1] Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s69

1.3 Planning Context

Conservation area 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 planning powers, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. This includes when determining planning applications. It also has a duty, from time to time, to draw up and publish proposals for its preservation and enhancement, and consult local people on them.

The protection and preservation of historic environments are now extensively recognised for the contribution that they make to the country's cultural and historic heritage, its economic well-being and quality of life. Public support for conservation - both in the built and natural environments - is also well established. National and regional government guidance reflects this. It is not the purpose of conservation areas to prevent change but to manage change in such a way as to maintain and, if possible, strengthen the area's special qualities. Current legislation is set out in the Planning

(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This places a duty on the Council to declare as conservation areas those parts of their area that they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest. It also imposes on the Council a duty to review past designations from time to time. Conservation area status also means that there are stricter controls on changes that can be made to buildings and land including the need to secure consent to demolish any building, strengthening controls over some minor forms development and the automatic protection of all trees in conservation areas. Furthermore, there are many listed buildings in Hexham (Appendix 3) and three scheduled ancient monuments which have legal protection,. An assessment of planning controls (conservation area, listed buildings and scheduled ancient monument) that apply in Hexham Conservation Area can be found in Appendix 1.

Tynedale Council has adopted a number of policies that are directed towards preserving and enhancing the character of the conservation area. Detailed in Appendix 2, they cover new development, alterations, demolition and protecting the setting of the conservation area. A number of other policies which affect the conservation area and its setting are included in the Tynedale Core Strategy development plan document which was adopted in October 2007. The Core Strategy is a critical part of the emerging Local Development Framework which is replacing Tynedale District Local Plan. The Core Strategy is designed to shape future development in Tynedale by setting out policies on the general location of housing, employment and services and on protecting the environment and provides the most up-to-date planning policy framework for Tynedale until a new Northumberland-wide Core Strategy is adopted in a few years' time. Tynedale Council adopted a consolidated Proposals Map at the same time as the Core Strategy which shows the adopted Core Strategy policies and the saved policies from the Tynedale District Local Plan. Policies shown on the Proposals Map which affect the conservation area and its setting include the Strategic Green Belt, which washes over part of the area, and policies relating to housing, retail and economic development (Appendix 2).

It is intended that this Character Appraisal, once adopted, will become a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will provide a relevant range of details, guidance and principles which development is expected to follow. SPD’s are considered as material considerations when processing planning applications and

development proposals. This means that they have to be considered when making a planning decision.

Following the introduction of 'Best Value Performance Indicator (BV219: Preserving the special character of conservation areas, ODPM, 28th February 2005)', the duty to regularly reappraise conservation areas – and formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of these – has become more urgent.

1.4 Hexham Conservation Area Character Appraisal

This character appraisal is the first step in a dynamic process, the aim of which is to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area (Map 2). It defines and records the factors that make the conservation area special, thereby providing a baseline for decisions about the area's future. It also identifies features and problems that detract from the special quality. The appraisal also provides the opportunity to review the boundaries of the conservation area and, where appropriate, propose amendments.

The survey and appraisal were carried out during Spring 2006 and February 2009 following the methodology suggested by English Heritage. To ensure that a complete picture is built up about the value and character of the area the Council consulted with people who live, work and visit the area to secure their views, including what they like or dislike about the area, and their ideas about how the area could be preserved or enhanced.

The next stage the process will be to prepare a detailed Management Plan for the conservation area. This will be undertaken once the Character Appraisal has been approved by the Council.

This document is not exhaustive. Omissions should not necessarily be regarded as having no interest or making no positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The character appraisal will be updated about every five years in order that it can take account of changes in the area.

Further information

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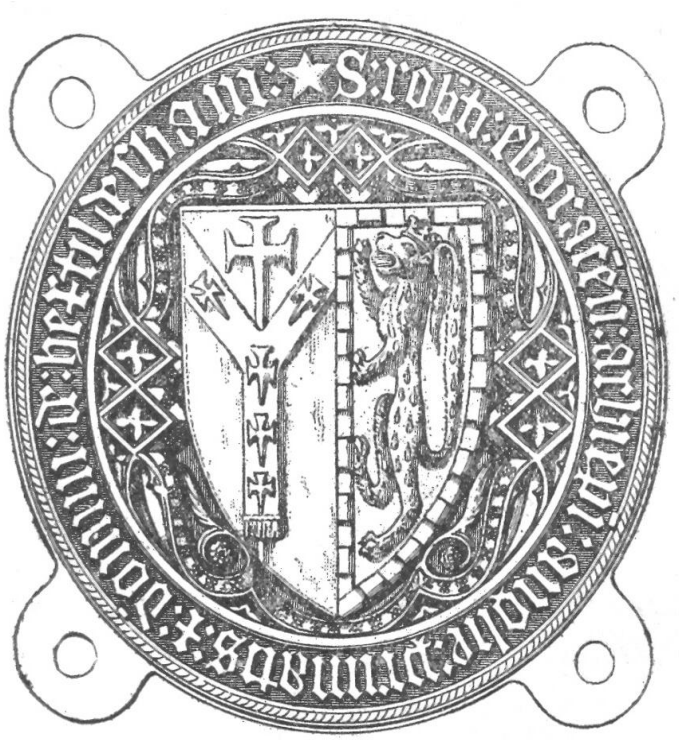
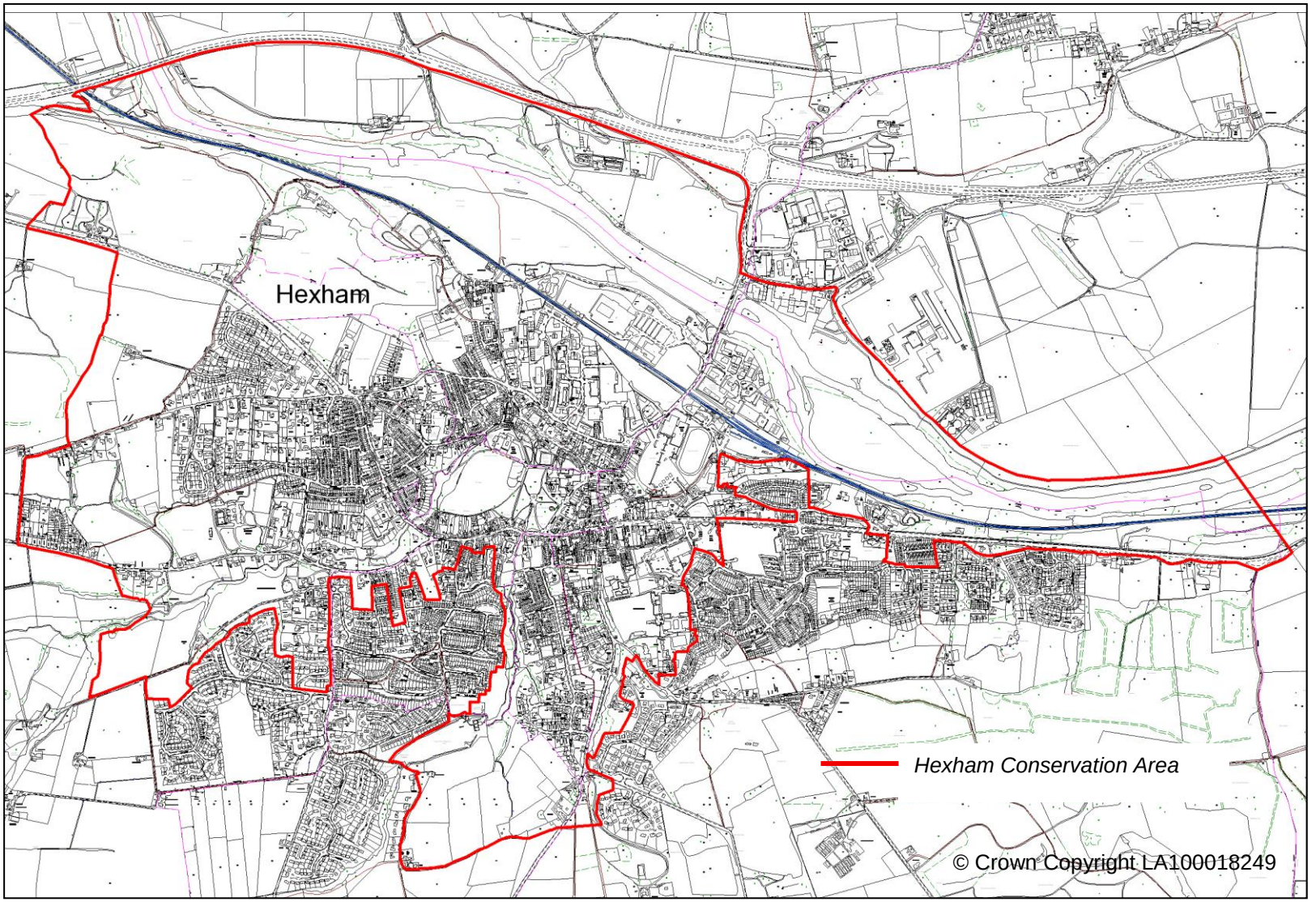
This document can be downloaded from:

http://www.tynedale.gov.uk/residents/docushow.asp?serviceid=73



The Seal of the Regality of Hexham 1397-98

From Hexham and its Abbey by Charles Clement Hodges and John Gibson 1919



Map 2: Former Hexham Conservation Area
(see Map 11 for the proposed and subsequently revised boundary adopted in 2009)

2 STATEMENT OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Hexham's elevated position on a glacial terrace overlooking the Tyne valley is of immense visual importance. With a rural backdrop of fields and tree clad slopes, views of the town dominated by the silhouette drawn by the medieval buildings spread across the scarp of the terrace are extremely attractive. The terrace is cut by burns which not only provided the running water to encourage Saxon settlement and drive early industry, but also created a landform over which later roads and buildings twist and turn to create a development pattern and built form which displays subtlety and frequent surprise. The burn valleys draw tentacles of wooded countryside into the town, splitting the built-up area. Furthermore, the Abbey Grounds and the Sele introduce expansive and contrasting swathes of open space into the heart of the town providing a wonderful landscape setting for buildings.

Hexham is a town of great historic and architectural significance. Its Saxon roots can be seen in the crypt of the Abbey, a medieval edifice which succeeded Wilfred's great cruciform Cathedral. The site was a major centre of Christianity in a region that was flowering with great works of literature, art and craft during the Dark Ages. The thread of religion and the administration of the Hexhamshire regality by the Archbishop's of York led to the construction of the town's great medieval buildings which continue to dominate the townscape. Hexham's rich and exciting early history, which can still be traced in the street layout of the town centre and surviving Middle Age structures, provides a tangible connection with the turbulent and creative dynamics that drove the region's political, economic and social development.

The collapse of the religious centre and Archbishop's regality following the Reformation encouraged the growth of Hexham as a market town and the development of rural based industries including skin works, crop processing and market gardening. Traces of the first two activities can still be seen in buildings which have been adapted to accommodate new uses. Unfortunately the market gardens which once spread over the floor of the valley have been developed as industrial estates and car parks with no architectural or townscape connection with the historic town.

Extremely attractive Victorian and Edwardian housing developments built to accommodate an explosive population growth in the late C19th wrap around the southern and western edges of the historic core. They range from modest terraces to flamboyant villas, all adding to the rich mix of styles which combine to give the town its special character.

3 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Prehistory and Roman occupation

The Tyne valley would have been inhabited in prehistory. Its rich hunting grounds, agricultural fertility, command of communication routes, defensive topography and supply of water would have attracted nomads and settlers for millennia. Although there is no extant physical evidence of prehistoric settlement in Hexham, Charles Hodges records in his book 'Hexham Abbey and its Precincts' that ….'There are also in the immediate neighbourhood of the town several ramparted camps, and natural mounds artificially defended, which are known to have formed the dwelling places and strongholds of people in prehistoric times. Windmill Hills, a quarter of a mile to the west of the Abbey, is one of these. The access to the promontory, so named, has been cut down so as to isolate to some extent the summit, which retains traces of earthen ramparts'[2]. There is a paucity of random prehistoric finds, those being limited to two burials dating to the Bronze Age discovered near Hexham in 1830 on the Newcastle road and one in 1921 on the Golf Course. This, combined with a Bronze Age axe from the town, suggests a fairly small presence in the area at that time. There is even less evidence relating to the Iron Age with only a coin from an unknown location in Hexham being found, an item which may well have originated from elsewhere.

There are more artefacts to be found in Hexham dating from the Roman period, a time which continues to cause some debate amongst archaeologists. The discussions relate to questions emanating from the origin of the many Roman stones to be found in the town, such as one found near Hallstile Bank and others embedded into later buildings.

Roman stone used in the construction of the Old Gaol

[2] Hexham and its Abbey : Charles Clement Hodges 1919

Do they come from a previously unknown Roman site in Hexham or were they transported from Corbridge where the large Roman military supply base and town might have provided a ready source of carved stone for the Anglo-Saxon church which was subsequently built in Hexham? The sources of the stones are not mutually exclusive with compelling evidence that building material was brought to Hexham from Corbridge arising from the discovery in 1887 of a large Roman altar cut into three for ease of transport lying on the bed of the River Tyne by Hexham ford[3]. However, two Roman altars which were found when Beaumont Street was built alongside the Abbey in 1864 and a Roman coin found when two houses adjacent to the Abbey were demolished in 1841 have led to some suggestions that the Abbey is the site of a former Roman fort.

The first recorded mention of Hexham is from 674, when the area of Hexhamshire was given to Wilfrid, the Bishop of York. He founded a church and monastery whose crypt, which probably housed a reliquary containing pieces of clothing or material relating to St Andrew, survives below the present buildings. The church, which became the diocesan cathedral, was built on a grand scale with rich carvings. It was claimed to be the finest church north of the Alps. It lost its bishop and cathedral status in the C9th and was plundered during the politically unstable period leading up to the Norman Conquest. Wilfrid also founded a parish church, St Mary's, to the south of the present market place. The town's Saxon roots can still be traced through some of the street names including Cockshaw and Hencotes, the former deriving from cochhou, or the redhill, and the latter from Hengacote, or Henga's cottage. Popple, as found in Priestpopple is Saxon for a bubbling spring or well, a feature which was still visible in the early C20th.

The ruined former Cathedral was re-founded in the continental mode by Thomas, the Archbishop of York, as an Augustinian priory in 1113, with the current nave and transepts dating from that period. The C12th priors encircled the priory complex by a substantial wall which was punctured by the main entrance, St Wilfrid's Gate, which dates from 1160. Part of the gateway survives on the south side of Market Street, the roof and upper floors being removed in the C19th in order to relieve the thrust on the ground floor walls and to create a 'Romantic' ruin. Parts of the perimeter wall survive along the western boundary of St Mary's Chare. The Priory became the centre of a large and wealthy farming and landholding enterprise.

[3] ibid

Priory precinct wall, St Mary's Wynd

St Wilfred's Gate

Its prosperity and pivotal position in the Tyne valley between two principal routes into and out Scotland made it a convenient place of comfortable refuge for travellers including royal and papal messengers, ambassadors and English and Scottish kings.

The church and its ancillary buildings, the present day Abbey, was substantially ruined by the Scots in 1296 when the nave was destroyed. It was substantially rebuilt in the C15th with only the lower south and west walls surviving. Generally, the present day building dates from two periods, c.1180 to 1250 and c.1850 to 1910. The east end facing onto Market Place which was designed by John Dobson and styled on Whitby Abbey dates from 1858 with a later addition made to the nave in 1907/09. The Choir School was added in the late C20th.

The Archbishop was responsible for the administration of the Liberty of Hexhamshire, the Liberty being the area of land where all administrative duties that were normally carried out by sheriffs or royal commissioners became the responsibility of the Archbishop and his bailiff. The bailiff and his officers were housed opposite the Abbey in the area now occupied by the Moot Hall and the Old Gaol. From this centre laws were enforced, taxes collected, and rents and fines paid. In 1330, Archbishop William Melton ordered the construction of the gaol which is thought to be the first purpose built and architecturally definable prison in England.

The Archbishops' 'hall of pleas' was reported to be in a state of disrepair in 1355 and by 1400 the surviving replacement Moot Hall had been built. This third massive tower in the town centre was multi-functional and included accommodation for the representatives of the Archbishops', a courtroom and a hall. It also served as a defensive and controlling gateway into the Archbishop's precinct, or Hall Garth. It is extremely probable that the Moot Hall and Old Gaol were linked by a wall which was extended to enclose the precinct which commanded a prominent position at the end of the spur overlooking the valley.

The Market Place lodged between the Abbey and Archbishops' administrative precincts has probably been in use since the Saxon

period. It may have previously extended as far south as Cattle Market, with St Mary's Church in the centre forming a physical link between the Abbey and 'Hallgarth', positioned between the power bases of church and local government. The Market Place would have been colonised by stalls and workshops which would have gradually became permanent buildings alongside houses and cottages. This spilled out alongside approach roads beyond the confines of the central space. It is known that cottages were built by Lord Coastley along the line of Fore Street, known until the C19th as Coastley Row. The area between Coastley Row and the Priory precinct wall might have formed part of a wider market space leading through to Priestpopple, then a parcel of land occupied and farmed by the ecclesiastic community.

The narrow medieval entrances to the space still exist, although somewhat compromised by the creation of Beaumont Street in the C19th and the clearance of buildings to the north of the Moot Hall in the C20th. It has been the setting for several events of national significance, including the hanging of the Duke of Somerset during the Wars of the Roses (1464), the proclamation of Prince James (the 'Old Pretender') as king (1715) and the killing of 50 people by the York Militia during a riot (1761). The covered Shambles was built here in 1766, and markets are still held twice a week.

The Shamble with the Whitby Abbey style east front to the Abbey

The Sele, the rising glacial terrace to the west of the Abbey, was under cultivation during the C13th as part of the farmland of the Abbey, although some public access seems to have been allowed. A medieval bridge still connects the Abbey with the Sele across the Halgut Burn, and its continued presence as a large publicly accessible open space in the town centre is very important to the character of the conservation area.

The medieval Cowgarth bridge with C19th Gothic adornments

The Sele

These four medieval sites, the Abbey, Hallgarth, Market Place and Sele, are key to the growth and character of Hexham. Their boundaries have influenced the layout of roads and buildings and their continued presence is a critical component in the formation of the character of the town. They also give the town centre particular archaeological importance.

Much of the intricate pattern of roads and paths in the town centre evolved during the medieval period giving it special historic importance. The medieval river crossing was by one of two fords, the upper crossing at The Spital, leading to Gilesgate, and the lower entering the town via Hallstile Bank. The outlying leper hospital of St Giles at Spital, possibly sited here in connection with the 'upper ford', was connected to the town centre via Gilesgate/Chareway.

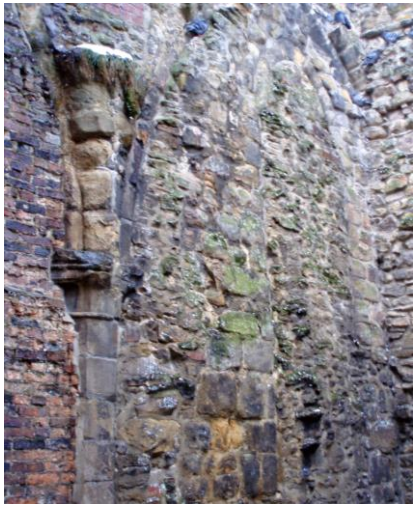
The current river bridge was designed by Robert Mylne and completed in 1793, following several unsuccessful attempts over the previous 30 years. It formed part of the Alemouth Road, an early turnpike linking Hexham with the port of Alnmouth.

In medieval times the main east-west route along the valley ran to the south of the market square, along Dean Street, Priestpopple and Hencotes, following the curve of The Sele. This route was never easy, and in 1745 General Wade's army was prevented from reaching Carlisle by the state of the roads at Hexham. This led to the construction of the Military Road (B6318) following the course of Hadrian's Wall to the north of the river..

Post-Reformation history

The priory was dissolved during the mid-C16th Reformation. At the same time the semi-autonomous status of the Liberty of Hexhamshire was replaced by the imposition of royal controls in order to restrict the power of the church and provincial earldoms. This led to the rapid decline of Hexham’s important role as an administrative and religious centre. The buildings and land around the Abbey became private dwellings, principally for Sir Richard Carnaby who in 1538 converted the Prior’s house to his own residence, his crest still adorning the north elevation. The chancel

and transepts of the Abbey became the parish church. As a consequence, St Mary's Church was abandoned, with houses and shops being built outside the north wall and a substantial four-storey house on the site. In spite of considerable redevelopment over a long period of time, the line of the transept remains a public right of way and traces of lost arches can be seen set into the fabric of later buildings.



St Mary's church embedded in later buildings

C17th houses in Market Street

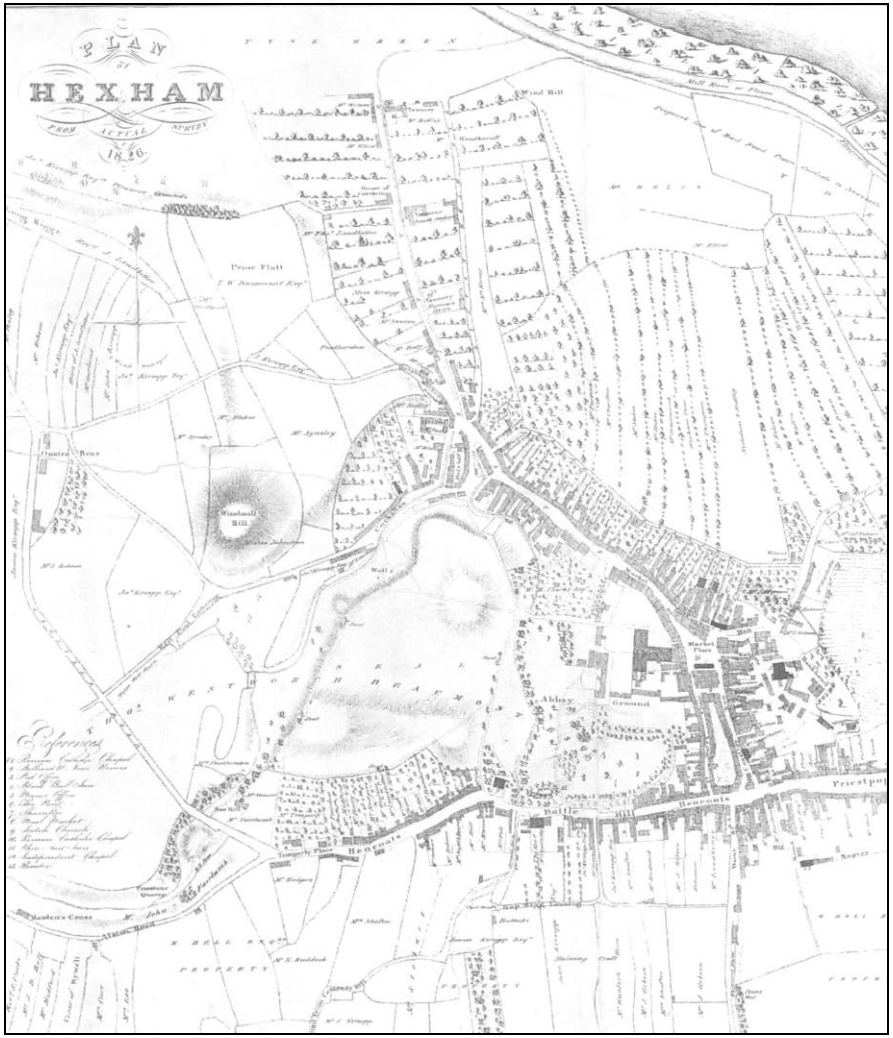
Most of the housing from this period has been redeveloped, although a few buildings such as the Old Grammar School, 20-22 Market Street, and Holy Island House in Gilesgate, remain. Other buildings are likely to contain historic remains of earlier structures giving the conservation area special archaeological importance.

The burgage plots south of Priestpopple, Hencotes and Battle Hill which can be seen on Wood's map of 1826 (Map 4) were also developed over former Abbey land, probably following the Reformation. Gaprigg Lane and the Ropery represent their southern boundaries. Many of the arched entrances to properties at the rear of the long burgage plots still survive, an important part of the town's character. Some modern street lines date from this period such as Haugh Lane which represents a widening of the back lane which historically marked the ends of the burgage plots on Gilesgate and Market Street. The back lane of the medieval tofts south of Hencotes and Priestpopple can similarly be traced in the route from Priestlands Lane to Ropery Lane

Wood's map shows the post-medieval layout pattern of the town which grew alongside the roads which led into the Market Place. Armstrong's map of 1769 (map 3) shows that this arrangement had been established by the mid C18th which almost certainly followed a development pattern which gradually spread from the post-Conquest historic core focused on the Abbey, Hallgarth and the Market Place. It also shows the lost bridge at Spital to the north of

Gilesgate which then took the main road out of Hexham to the north.

Map 3 : Armstrong's map of 1769



Wood's Map of 1826

Bridges across the Tyne have had a chequered history. The current bridge was designed by Robert Mylne in 1793 following several unsuccessful attempts over the previous thirty years. It formed part of the Alemouth Road, the early turnpike linking Hexham with the port of Alnmouth.

Milne's Tyne Bridge

Many Georgian houses evident today probably represent rebuilding or re-facing of pre-existing buildings, allowing the earlier plot width and street line to shape their scale and typically resulting in a three-storey building with a narrow frontage.

Probable refaced buildings, Hencotes

The importance of agriculture to the economic and social wellbeing of the town intensified with the agricultural revolution and the mechanisation of crop processing. This was reinforced by the ever increasing demands for food from the expanding conurbations.

Several mill buildings of varying types still exist, the façade of the Henry Bell & Sons warehouse in Gilesgate being a particularly impressive survival. The Ropery is another important reminder of the agricultural industries once so prominent in the town

Bell's warehouse on Gilesgate

The Ropery off Argyle Street

Tenement building in Hencotes

In the C17th and C18th the Gilesgate/Cockshaw and Hencotes areas were less expensive, and a late C18th tenement pattern of a three-storey building, often with two central doorways and up to four separate staircases leading to rooms each with its own cooking range, is still visible here. Although the Gilesgate/Cockshaw area was criticised in public health reports throughout the later C19th, many buildings survive, improvements in water supply and sanitation allowing them to be considered picturesque rather than unhealthy.

The ends of the Priestpopple, Hencotes and Battle Hill plots together with the Cockshaw Burn area became increasingly important to the economic wellbeing of the town with the development of industrial and manufacturing outlets, broadening its base away from simply servicing agriculture. The town was internationally known for tanning and glove making which developed in the Gilesgate Cockshaw area alongside the fast flowing streams which provided a ready source of water for washing, dying and cooling. Wood's plan shows the agglomeration of buildings around this area.

The plan also illustrates the solid building lines fronting onto the roads running through the town and in the Market Place. Houses were built against the east elevation of the Abbey to link Market

Street with St Mary's Chare, and also against the west elevation of the Moot Hall to compress the size of the Market Place. The main east to west routes through the town were along the narrow Fore Street, across the Market Place and down Market Street and Gilesgate with subsidiary paths along St Mary's Chare and down Hallstile Bank, then known as Bull Bank named after the Grey Bull pub at the top of the slope. The importance of the route down Market Street and Gilesgate towards the ford and the ill-fated Spitals Bridge led to the development of fine houses. The map also shows the extensive area of nurseries and market gardens ranged along the northern edge of the town.

Properties built against the east end of the Abbey, which link Gilesgate with St Mary's Chare, and against the Moot Hall compress the size of the Market Place

The mid C19th saw changes which reflect social development, such as the opening of the Subscription School (now Sele First School) and the workhouse; economic and communications development with the construction of the railway station in 1838 and the gradual opening of the Newcastle to Carlisle line, the first cross-country rail link; and the intensification of the town's industrial base with the Ironworks and gasworks opening on Gilesgate to complement the thriving hatting, tanning, glove making, weaving and woolstaplering activities. The processes undertaken in the industrial area, still dominated by the various hide and tanning works, led to a poor state of public health in the area, primarily polluting the streams. The 1860 First Edition Ordnance Survey (Map 5) shows how tanneries bridged the streams, discharging waste into the watercourses. The map illustrates the changes identified above together with modifications to the shape of the Market Place with the demolition of the houses built against the east end of the Abbey when the new Dobson elevation was built. The early to mid-C19th also saw houses being built alongside Hencotes as it stretched towards its junction with Allendale Road. The plan also shows an intensification of building in the Cockshaw area and development creeping along Hall Orchard Road which overlooked the market gardens, creating a built link between the railway station and the town centre.

As well as providing transport to cities for Hexham's market garden produce, the arrival of the railway brought new building materials to the area, particularly Welsh slate and mass-produced red brick; although some of the brick frontages in the town centre are earlier than this, using locally-made bricks.

The railway also opened up Hexham to tourism and early convenient commuting to Newcastle. The 1850s Westfield House was enlarged to form the Hydro in 1879. Set in landscaped grounds, it underlines the status of the area as a healthy place to visit and recuperate.

Beaumont Street c1920

Beaumont Street 2009

Beaumont Street was formed in 1866 to radically alter the shape of the western edge of the historic town centre and the setting of both the Abbey and its grounds. It introduced a swathe of new buildings on a civic scale dominated by the French style town hall and corn exchange (now the Queen's Hall) designed by John Johnstone of Newcastle.

It was part of a wider proposal to open up the Abbey grounds for development, although only the east side of the street was completed, retaining the fine views towards the Sele. The street has a self-confident Victorian character, with it the use of structural steel, and, in the case of the 1906 Primitive Methodist Church at the Southern end, reinforced concrete, allowing a grander scale of building.

The 1897 Second Edition Ordnance Survey (Map 6) shows the changes wrought by the emerging development of Beaumont Street. It also shows that Hexham still generally retained its C18th and C19th shape with development mainly strung alongside the principal roads entering and running through the town, the greatest conglomeration of buildings being to the east of Fore Street where backlands were packed with workshops, stores and houses.

By the end of the C19th a combination of terraced and villa development had started to appear on the southern and eastern edges of the town. Quite grand groups of houses had been built along Hextol Terrace and St Cuthbert's Terrace with more modest

brick dwellings at the south end of Cockshaw. Villa development in large gardens was also taking a hold on Allendale Road.

Between 1880 and 1910 the population of the town doubled from 5,000 to 10,000 which inevitably led to a considerable amount of house building, mainly to the south and west of the town centre. The 1920 Third Edition Ordnance Survey (Map 7) shows that this was not generally along pre-existing roads, as previously, but on greenfield sites. Typically a parcel of land, often attached to one large house, such as Haining Croft, would be purchased speculatively and plots sold off to builders, a few at a time, giving rise to subtle variations along streets. These were mainly terraced houses, although some semi-detached properties were built around 1900. The new roads were laid out to Local Authority standard widths, with back roads for deliveries etc.

Although in 1853 an Inspector of Health reported that '..in no town… have I found more filth, overcrowding, and general neglect, than in Hexham…'[4], it was not until the 1920's that organised slum clearance was carried out, at the time a pre-requisite for the building of council housing. One hundred and eighty one people were re-housed from Cockshaw and Gilesgate area in 1935 which coincided with other sporadic demolition and infill development. Garden Terrace, 1925, was followed by Peth Head, Chareway, White Cross and Round Close. These developments prompted the comment that….'the approach to the Town from the East has already been much marred by the erection of working men's houses of an ugly and common appearance'[5]

By the early C20th the concentrated but small-scale industries were becoming less important, and in 1932 Hexham was described as a shopping town, noted for its beautiful old Abbey and other ancient and interesting buildings but with no industries of any moment. Since then flood protection works have allowed considerable industrial development to take place on both sides of the river flood-plain, separating the town from its rural setting at this important entrance point

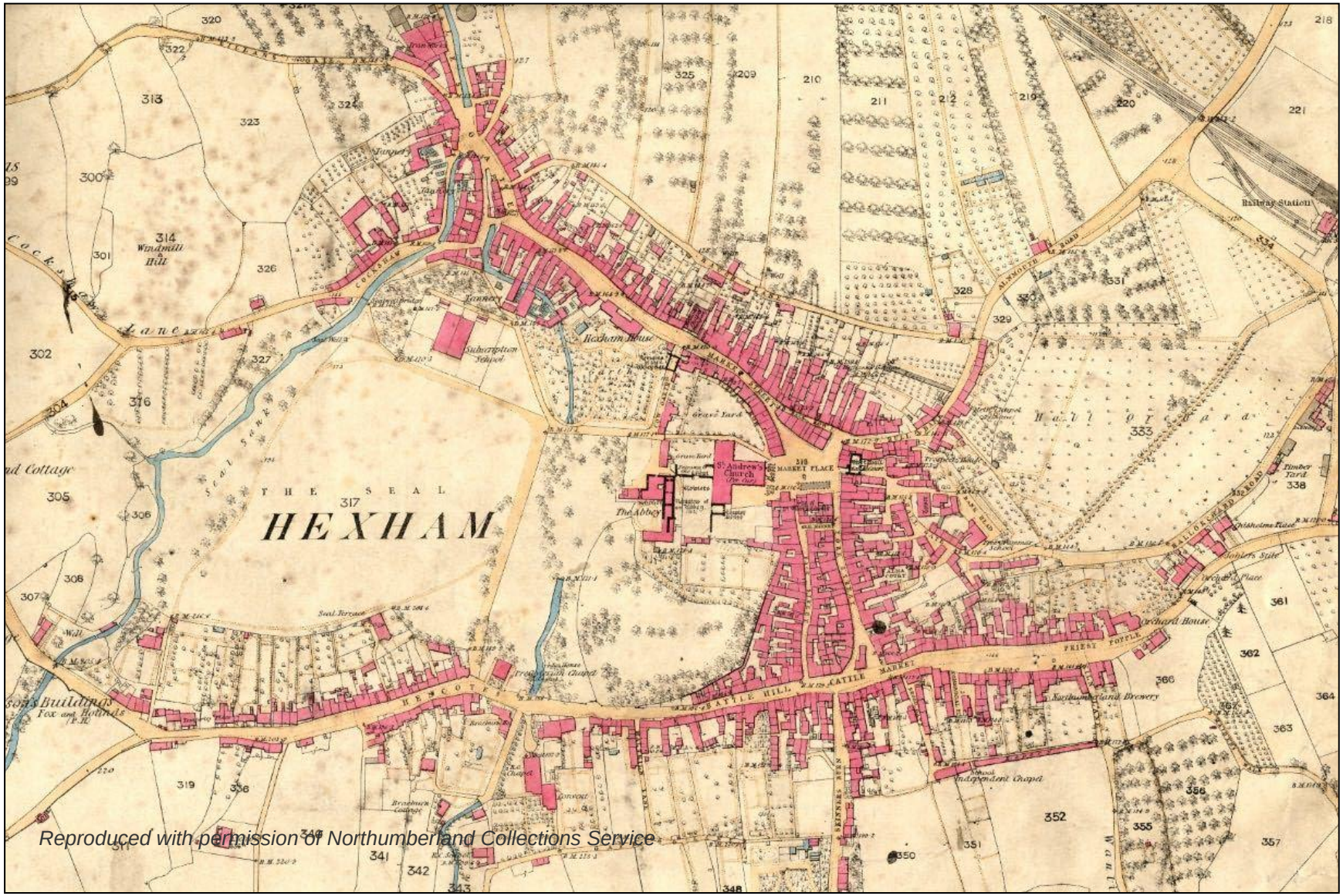
The first half of the C20th also saw the development of new residential areas to the south and west of the centre. They ranged from the construction of numerous stone and brick built long and short lengths of terraces to the west of Cockshaw Burn and the

[4] Hexham 1854 to 1939 : David Jennings 2005

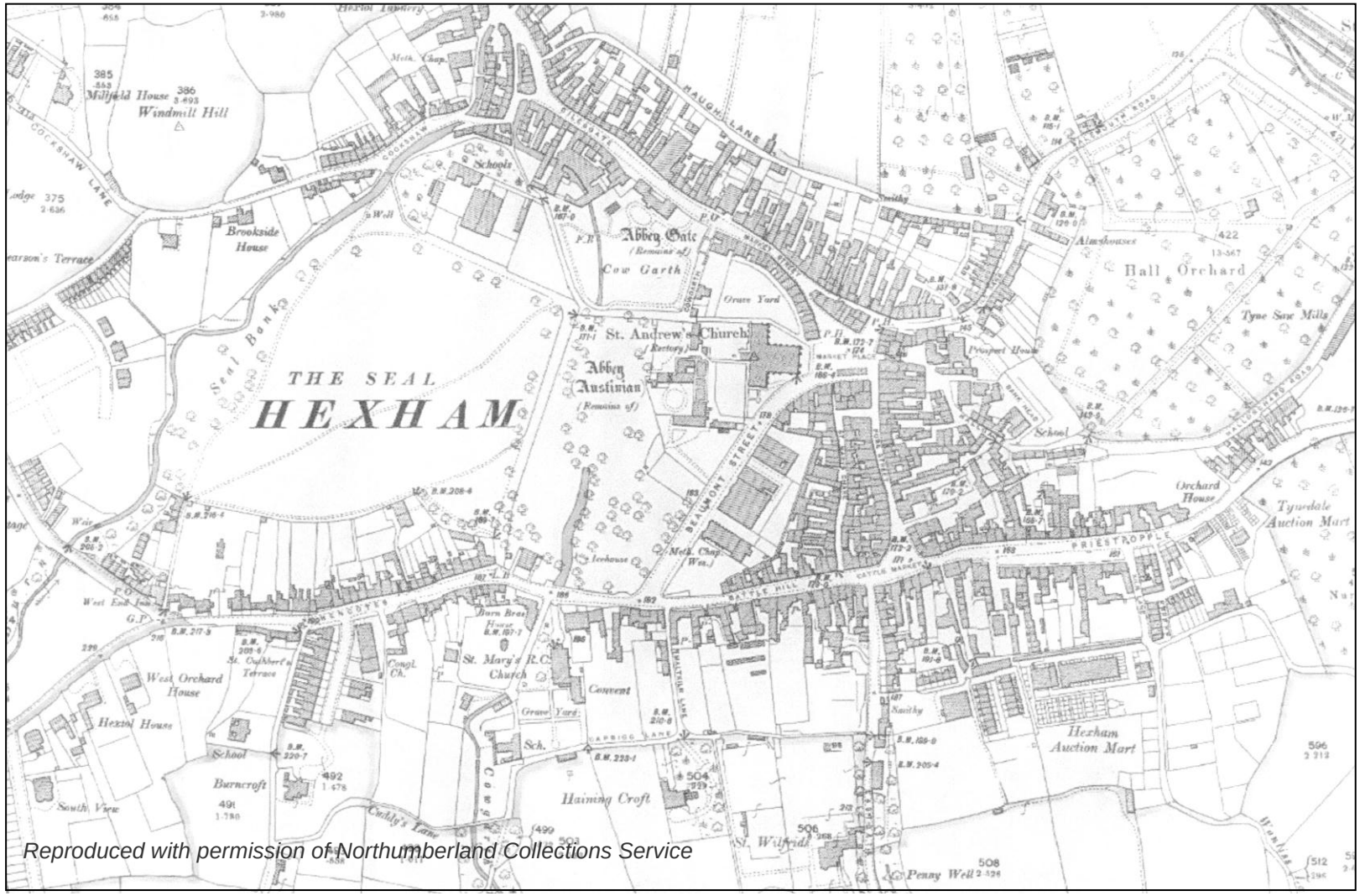
[5] ibid

subdivision of nurseries adjoining Leazes Lane into individual plots approached by private roads to provide building plots for detached suburban villas, many of which are wildly individualistic.

Since then a considerable amount of housing development has taken place in the conservation area, mainly in the form of housing estates although some infill/rebuilding is also evident.



Map 5: 1860 First Edition Ordnance Survey



Map 6: 1897 Second Edition Ordnance Survey


Club House
Tynegreen
Spital Cottage
Sewage Works
(Hexham U.D.C.)
Nursery
Bridge End
Sewage Tanks
Tyne Metal Works
Boat Houses
Old Weir
Priors Flat
East Shaws
Broadway House
Allotment Gardens
Gas Works
West Quarter
Tyne Mill
Station
Broomhaugh Island
Allot. Gdns.
Almshouses
Wentworth Nurseries
Tyne Saw Mill
THE SEAL
St. Andrew's Church
Abbey
HEXHAM
NEWCASTLE & CARLISLE
N.E.R.
U.M. Ch.
Hexham Hydropathic
Whetstone Bridge
Lodge
Elmgrove
Union Workhouse
Tynedale Auction Mart
Nursery
Isolation Hospital
Convalescent Home
Priest's Plantation
Queen Elizabeth Grammar School
Penny Well
Bogacres
SOUTH PARK
Hudshaw
Fell
Delegate Cottage
R.C. Ch.
School
Mortuary
HEXHAM U.D.

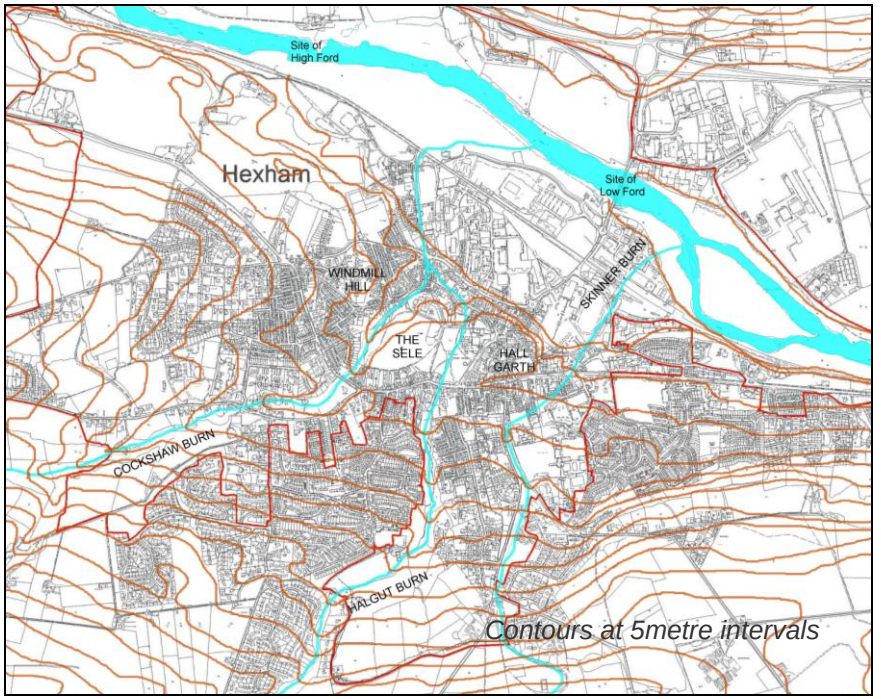
4 CONTEXT

4.1 Geology

Hexham is situated over carboniferous limestone that is overlain by thick boulder clay and alluvial soils. The soils are up to two metres deep on the valley floor where the market gardens flourished.

4.2 Topography

The town lies on the spur of a raised dissected terrace of sands and gravels which sits over the floor of the Tyne valley, the Market Place being about 53 metres above sea level and 16 metres above the valley floor (Map 8). Generally, the land gently rises from west to east across the terrace and more aggressively up the slope of the valley towards Yarridge. The terrace undulates where the three burns, which flow down the side of the valley, have scoured the land over many thousands of years. This creates flattened ridges between the watercourses to produce a landform over which buildings have spilled to create different horizons and vantage points resulting in frequently being able to see the next part of the town and across the surrounding countryside. The burn valleys were also used to provide the principal transport routes into Hexham from the south. The Skinnerburn valley contains two historic routes that converge just south of the town centre, one of which is the only road running south into Hexhamshire, the other continuing over the Durham Moors. The valley of Cockshaw Burn, the largest of the three, carries the road south west to Allendale, Weardale and Cumbria.



Map 8: The topography of Hexham

4.3 Building Materials

Clay

Brick is the most common material using clay. There are examples of locally produced hand-made 'Hexham' bricks which tend to be dark red. Old handmade bricks have been used to repair defective stonework, such as the flue lines on the gables of properties. Later mass produced bricks are found throughout the town, particularly in the late C19th and C20th terraced suburbs. Again, they tend to be red but with some cream and biscuit shades. They are usually laid in English Bond, Flemish Bond or English Garden Wall bond.

Other applications of clay include the use of red rosemary tiles, pantiles, ridge tiles, the construction of chimney stacks and the manufacture of chimney pots. There is an interesting variety of chimney pots including square spiked, plain square, plain canon, octagon, beehive, louvered and marcone. They bring variety of shape to the traditional roofline silhouette which is a valuable and attractive characteristic of the conservation area.

Stone

Stone is used extensively throughout the conservation area. It tends to be local creamy-buff sandstone frequently tinted grey with age where used as a building material or for ornamentation and Welsh slate when used on roofs. There is the occasional use of contrasting red sandstone, grey granite and polished marble. Sandstone flagged roofs can be seen on some buildings, notably in the Hallstile Bank area. Rough, rock finished and tooled stone are used throughout the conservation area with ashlar and carved masonry providing decorative features such as window and door surrounds and quoins. Stone is laid in courses, random rubble or a hybrid of both. It occasionally shows signs of wear, particularly at street level where erosion is accelerated by road and pavement spray contaminated by salt and acids.

Stone is also used to provide front boundary and retaining walls and as copings and gateposts. There are rare examples of both sandstone and whin setts to hint at the appearance of earlier surfaces. A number of stone gutters and kerbs survive along the edge of carriageways.

Timber

Timber is used for the manufacture of window frames, window shutters, doors, fascias, barging and fences. It is invariably painted when used in association with buildings. A number of good quality nineteenth century timber shopfronts survive in the town centre and along Hencotes. They are of varying size and decorative complexity

and remain a distinctive and attractive element in the townscape. Generally, some original joinery survives which appears to be generally well maintained. However, there are many replacements in uPVC which diminish the historic character and aesthetic quality of the conservation area. The survival of historic timberwork is vital for the heritage wellbeing of the conservation area.

Metal

The most common use of metal is through the fabrication of rainwater goods. They are invariably cast iron and tend to be plain and utilitarian. Unfortunately, virtually all historic metal fences were removed during WWII. Those that survive range from utilitarian to highly decorative. Metal is used for functional purposes such as cellar lights, utility markers and street and railway furniture and as decorative features including wrought ornamental hanging basket supports, the gates to The Sele and the Abbey Grounds and the cast bronze soldier on the War Memorial. Lead is used as flashings and wrought iron fastenings can be seen clamping stones together.

Render and paint

There is some render used in the Tudorbethan style of some early-C20th housing development in the town such as along Elvaston and Tynedale Terrace. Render is also used to cover some, probably defective, stonework.

Virtually all timberwork is painted. Some stone and brickwork is also painted to provide decoration and weather protection. However, this can be aesthetically damaging and lead to high maintenance costs.

Other materials

Modern materials, such as concrete roof tiles, are used sparingly on historic buildings in the conservation area. However, their use is visually jarring and detracts from the appearance of the area in general and to specific sweeps of roof in particular. Artificial or composite stone is used in some modern buildings to the detriment of the area. Plastic is used to replace rainwater goods. uPVC windows have been extensively introduced throughout the area. These often have clumsy, chunky proportions and are usually placed flush with the face of the building, rather than being set back into an appropriate reveal, thus losing depth and shadow to the building's architecture. Roads and footpaths are generally surfaced in asphalt with concrete blocks occasionally used as a decorative contrast material.

The industrial estates are occupied by buildings which are made from a variety of modern materials with a predominance of plastic coated metal cladding.

4.4 Views out of the conservation area

The wider setting and views out of the conservation area are largely determined by topography. Hexham sits on the southern flank of the glacial Tyne valley which is interrupted by gaps and rounded knolls formed by tributaries running off the fells. The base of the valley is broad allowing the river to meander over its flood plain.

The valleyscapes to the south and north of Hexham provide contrasting landscapes and views. To the south the valley is largely decorated by fields interlaced by areas of substantial woodland with views across to St John Lee, Acomb and Oakwood. The side of the valley dips towards its confluence with the River South Tyne to create a notch in the skyline with the west side of the South Tyne Valley disappearing behind foreground slopes. To the south, the rising slope of the valley provides, in part, a substantial forested backdrop to the town. This is dominated by the woodland spread across Swallowship Hill which links into the groups of trees that spread across the horizon that runs along the scarp of the valley from Loughbrow towards and past the race course. This backdrop can be seen over the rooftops, along roads leading out of the town and between buildings.

The flattened 'U'-shape of the valley is clear from a number of vantage points around the town. Views to the east follow the flattening slopes and broad base of the Tyne valley as the river moves along its course. The views are contained by the distant north side of the valley as it turns south beyond Corbridge. Egger UK, the visually invasive industrial complex, straddles the valley floor to dominate views. Views to the west are foreshortened where the river loops towards its confluence with the River South Tyne.

4.5 Notable people and events

- **People**

St Wilfred's role in establishing Hexham at the forefront of the development of Christianity in the region and raising the religious, architectural and administrative profile of the town is of immense importance. His legacy can be seen in the monumental medieval architecture which followed his establishment of the Saxon Christian settlement.

William Hewson is of national importance on the sphere of haematology and immunology. Born in Hexham in 1739 and

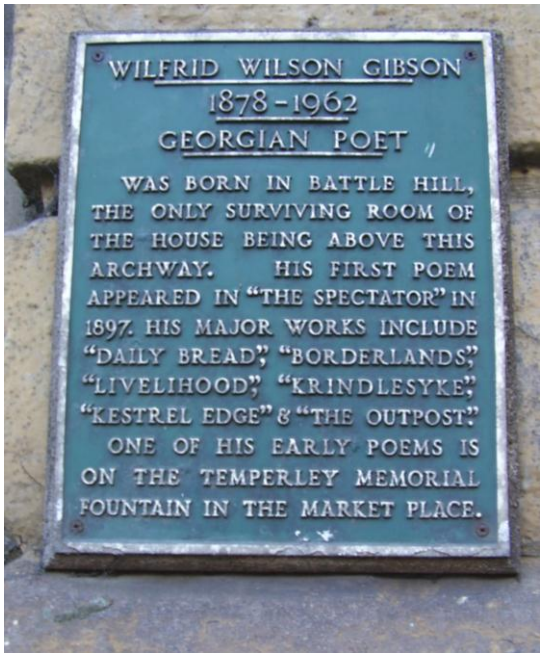
educated at the town's Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Hallgate, he became a contemporary of Benjamin Franklin at the Royal Society. He became best known for his work on the nature of red blood corpuscles and the process of coagulation.

J.P.Gibson, pharmacist and early photographer has provided much of the evidence of C19th life in Hexham. He lived and had a surgery at the top of Battle Hill with only an archway of his fine three-storey Georgian house surviving.

His son, ***W. W. Gibson*** (1878-1962) was a nationally known poet who wrote verses for some of the memorials round the town. A close friend of Rupert Brooke, he was greatly admired by his peers 'The evolution of W. W. Gibson's art is among the most remarkable and significant phenomena in the literary history of our generation'[6].

- **Events**

The Market Place has provided a setting for several notable recorded events. ***The Duke of Somerset*** was executed there immediately after losing the Battle of Hexham at the Linnels during the War of the Roses in 1464. In 1715, ***James III***, The Pretender' was proclaimed in the Market Place. In 1761 a ***bloody massacre*** took place when thousands of people crammed into the Market Place to protest against enlistment by ballot. The magistrates called upon the Yorkshire Militia to maintain order which resulted in the death of fifty and injuring of three hundred protesters.



Plaque outside the entrance to W.W.Gibson's house

[6] Maurice Browne : Poetry Review Volume 1 Number 1 January 1912

5 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

5.1 Development pattern and layout

Little is known about pre-Conquest Hexham other than references to the Wilfred's settlement and the presence of surviving remnants of his Cathedral. It seems that Wilfred established his church in a an established and thriving large village or town with Saxon halls at its the east and west ends. However, nothing survives of the Saxon settlement.

The post-Conquest medieval development pattern of Hexham focused on the ecclesiastic complex crowned by the Abbey and surrounded by the substantial 3 metre high precinct wall; the administrative centre comprising the Archbishop's 'Hall of Pleas', replaced by the Moot Hall in c.1400, and the Old Gaol; and the intervening Market dominated by the parish church built by St Wilfred.

The Market Place probably extended to the south around and beyond the C13th St Mary's church, which replaced St Wilfred's parish church, towards Priestpopple. It was the medieval focus of the community. Buildings would have ranged along the northern edge of the extensive open space which would have been colonised by a changing jumble of stalls, workshops, middens, inns and cottages. Following the Reformation and the disposal of Abbey lands, burgage plots were created down the slopes of the scarp towards the valley floor. The Abbey was protected by its precinct wall and it is highly probable that the Moot Hall and the Old Gaol were contained by an encircling curtain wall. The market place and the remainder of the town were left undefended, the citizens probably taking shelter in the Abbey precincts or the administrative centre in times of conflict..

The main roads would have entered and exited market place roughly along the lines of Fore Street and Market Street/Gilesgate. The former linked to the medieval east-west route which ran along the line of Dean Street, Priestpopple, Battle Hill and Hencotes and the latter ran down past St. Giles Hospital to the Upper Ford. As early as the C14th development is recorded along the line of Fore Street with the construction of a row of cottages by Lord Coastley. Thus it can be seen a substantial part of the frame of the spatial arrangement at the heart of the conservation area has remained substantially unchanged since the C12th/C13th in spite of the damaging consequences of border warfare and the successive replacement of buildings. The c.1769 Armstrong map (Map 3) and subsequent Ordnance Survey plans (maps 5, 6 and 7) illustrate this

arrangement and how subsequent changes to its containment and built content have not obscured the centuries old historic pattern.

The form of the historic town centre became firmly established in the immediate post medieval period, a layout pattern that remained remarkably unchanged until the development of Beaumont Street in the latter quarter of the C19th which removed the south west corner of the market place and created a new southern edge to the historic core.

The tightly knit frontages emphasised the narrowness of the streets entering and exiting the Market Place which became wider along Gilesgate, Hencotes and Priestpopple (Map 3). By the C18th, many of the buildings would have been quite tall, including some three and four-storey houses such as 22/24 and 44 Fore Street, to exaggerate the tightness of the spaces. These roads would have funnelled people into the open but irregularly shaped Market Place where buildings in front of the Abbey and Moot Hall would have helped to create a busy and bustling containment of the space. This was not appreciated by all visitors. In 1823 A. B. Wright gave the following description '…The mean and inelegant Market Place is an extraordinary instance of the perversion of taste and the abuse of capability. The gloomy courthouse with its corresponding neighbour, and the noble cathedral, might have formed the sides of a square seldom equalled in a country town; and if the new shops on the north side had kept a line parallel to the present shambles, which ought to be removed, the Market Place of Hexham would have done honour to Northumberland'[7]

Market Street squeezes through a gap before widening out

The shape of the Market Place is still irregular. Spatially, this irregularity has become more exaggerated with the demolition of the buildings in front of the Abbey and Moot Hall which has created gaps and revealed set backs. The demolitions have opened out the face of the Abbey to change the pre-mid-C19th relationship where the Abbey was visually and functionally separated from the market

[7] History of Hexham : A.B.Wright 1823, reprinted by Frank Graham 1973

space by either the precinct wall or buildings. The opening out of the area redefines the historic spatial relationship creating the impression that the Market Place was formed to provide a huge forecourt in front of the Abbey. The gap formed by the development of Beaumont Street opened out views towards the Abbey grounds, visually and physically linking the two spaces.

The Abbey opens out onto the Market Place and the loss of medieval buildings destroys the sense of enclosure

Narrow lanes squeezed between buildings led to backlands behind properties fronting onto the main streets which were densely built-up with workshops and cottages filling spaces. Only the slopes behind Market Street and a handful of large gardens provided relief from the congested conglomeration of buildings which had colonised almost all of the developable land.

Subtle and gentle twists along the medieval streets introduce visually throttles which, along with the height of buildings, compacts and tightens space. Mixtures of roof pitches and heights create a serrated containment of space which is exaggerated by chimney stacks and pots. This is particularly relevant where street frontages move down slopes such as Hallstile Bank and Gilesgate. The silhouette created by the varied roof lines, roofscapes and associated roof furniture is an important part of the character of Hexham.

The tightly congested town centre with its rich variety of built form and height embedded into old street frontages, cumulative building mass, winding spaces, and organic development pattern which has evolved over centuries contrasts with the post mid-C19th town expansion which wraps around the historic core. Starting gradually during the latter half of the C19th, the town rapidly spread in the

early C20th as the population grew from c.5,000 in 1851 to over 10,000 in 1911.

Twisting streets and tumbling rooflines

The Victorian and Edwardian terraces have a regularity which flows from the commercial demands of speculative building and emerging local authority highway standards. This regularity is varied by topography which creates undulating rooflines and also periodic changes to details and material content, probably as a consequence of cost, fashion and incremental development. Short terraces run off longer terraces with some slotted into former backlands merging with the old town.

In the first quarter of the C20th, large detached and semi-detached villas with substantial gardens introduced groups of fine buildings, many with heavily ornamented details, set into attractive landscape settings towards the then edge of the urban settlement, notably alongside Causey Hill, Allendale Road, Burswell Villas and Woodside.

Fine late C19th terraces and detached housing in the suburbs

The land to the north of the historic core was primarily given over to market gardens to create a lush cultivated setting and approach from Tyne Bridge and the railway station to create a distinctive and probably most attractive spatial and visual relationship with the dramatic backdrop of the medieval town dominated by the Abbey, Moot Hall and Old Gaol sitting on top of the rising slope of the glacial spur. This has radically changed with the development of Haugh Lane industrial estate, Wentworth car park and its supermarket and leisure centre which are notable for a preponderance of industrial materials and lack of meaningful landscaping. This spread of development has completely changed

the historic setting of the town and the character of this part of the river corridor.

5.2 Green Spaces

The three large areas of public open space in the town were all formed or improved in the late C19th.

Tyne Green, an area of open grassland decorated by fine mature trees, stretches along the river corridor from Tyne Bridge to the western limit of the town.


Tyne Green along the river corridor

It was common land used for grazing and market gardening, cut through by the railway in 1836, and gifted to the Council in 1887 by Lord Allendale. It is now an area comprising a combination of mixed formal and informal uses including a golf course, children's play areas and walks. It acts as a substantial green buffer between the C20th industrial areas ranged along the northern edge of the town and the river. Beyond Tyne Green, the river corridor includes a variety of landscapes. To the east of the bridge there are extensive shingle and willow beds where the river divides into separate streams when not in flood. To the west of the bridge along Tyne Green, the river is channelled, darker and deeper.

The Sele is flows over an area of rising glacial moraine to the east of the Abbey grounds. The top of the slope was probably occupied by a hall in Saxon times, Sele or Seal meaning hall in Old English. It was farmed by the Abbey's canons from the early C13th. Extending over 1.5 hectares, it has remained open ever since. In the C18th the paths round the perimeter of open area, stated in 1753 to be 'the place of exercise and amusement for all'[8] were improved, and seats added; in 1856 public access was allowed all year round. In 1908 the land was given to the Council by Lord Allendale. It is a vast and majestic area of grassland bordered along its western edge by the woodland that cloaks the side of the Cockshaw Burn valley and ornamented by trees planted in the north east corner. Its

[8] Tynedale Council website

size, location and dramatic slopes ensure that it makes a positive and distinctive contribution to both the historic and environmental integrity of the town. Commanding views of the town centre and the north side of the Tyne valley from the top of the slope add to its importance. The Sele has an informal character and is used for community events.

The Sele

The Abbey Grounds Is the area of open space positioned between Beaumont Street and The Sele. It was formerly the park of the Abbey when it was the residence of the Lord of the Manor and became part of the landscaped garden of the Beaumont house. It was purchased for public use in 1910 and re-landscaped by 1912 when the fine bandstand was added courtesy of Henry Bell. The entrances off Beaumont Street are decorated by substantial stone gateways. The gate at the north-west corner was a gift of the Benson family and consists of three large iron gates with six stone pillars and curved wing walls. The stone gate opposite Queen's Hall comprises the William and Mary archway relocated from the demolished White Heart Inn on Fore Street. It acts as both an entrance and memorial to the Hexham based 4th Battalion of the Northumberland Fusiliers. The town's War Memorial is located in the landscaped grounds.

The Abbey Grounds with the William and Mary gate and the bandstand

Together with The Sele and the gardens of Hexham House it was improved in 2002 which included restoring some of its early C18 layout and refurbishing its associated structures.

In addition to these, the Cockshaw and Halgut burns continue to act as important pedestrian routes for at least part of their length, their landscaped banks remaining too steep for development. The water

courses and woods add natural drama and areas of tranquillity into the urban area. Cockshaw Burn has been affected by flood defensive works which has resulted in relining part of its bed as it runs emerges onto the base of the Tyne valley. A public art project associated with these works has introduced a number of installations which add visual interest.

The burns bring tendrils of countryside into the town and public art heightens visual interest

Parts of the conservation area are dominated by gardens which contain mature trees to provide a general green canopy through which houses can be seen. This is reinforced by hedges which provide soft edges to carriageways and diminish the presence of buildings.

5.3 Grain and density

The grain of the historic core of the conservation area is characterised by continuous lines of shops and houses built along twisting street frontages which converge on and around the Market Place which is dominated by the massive medieval Abbey and Moot Hall. Many of the buildings date primarily from the mid-C18 to late C19th, most sitting on the footprints of older buildings. Built along the edge of streets, they do not have front gardens with backlands tightly developed with outbuildings and former workshops. This leads to high density and spatial intimacy which dramatically contrasts with the landscaped open spaces of the Abbey Grounds and The Sele and the undeveloped water courses of Cockshaw and Halgut Burns.

The remainder of the conservation area to the south, east and west tends to be a mix of late C19th and C20th houses combining terraced, detached and semi-detached dwellings with some apartment and institutional developments. The density becomes more relaxed towards the edge of the town where later larger Victorian terraces, detached houses and C20th housing estates conform to more generous space standards with front and back

gardens. The post WWII estate layouts bear little regard to contours and town design tradition.

The industrial and edge of town retail areas to the north are laid out to typical estate patterns of distributor roads and culs-de-sacs and large buildings edged by extensive car parking.

5.4 Land use

Hexham's religious and administrative activities dominated and underpinned the economic prosperity of the town in the Middle Ages. Its agricultural hinterland provided produce, both livestock and crops, to be processed and traded in and around the Market Place. Animal auction markets and later market gardening expanded with the development of the railway in the mid-C19th which enabled fresh produce to be taken to nourish the rapidly expanding Tyneside conurbation.

Hexham was internationally famous for its tanning and leather trades. The small areas of Cockshaw and Gilesgate with buildings that straddled the burns, had a Glover's Guild as early as 1464. The C17th was the height of prosperity for the guilds. In the early C19th trade for the Company of Skinners and Glovers flourished with the production of fine gloves known as Hexham Tans which derived their name from the local yellow fell clay which was used as a dye. At that time is claimed that over 10,000 people worked in the Hexham area in the gloving trade. The fountain at the bottom of Gilesgate which provided a source of valuable spring water was inscribed 'Glover's Fountain 1858' until worn away. Cockshaw and Gilesgate were also the centre for wider skin preparation processes which generated wealth but greatly contributed to the poor state of public health in the area. In 1853 a public health report stated that the streets in Cockshaw were irregularly planned, houses were of unequal height, without order or symmetry, made from brick and whitewashed stone with ling and heather thatch or stone slates. Everything was cramped and intermingled with pigsties, privies, cesspools and middens.

Other industries in Hexham in the C19th century included carding and dressing wool, the manufacture of linen and cotton garments, rope making and food processing. There were thirty-two inns and public houses, printing works and an iron foundry.

Hexham is now predominantly residential (Use Classification C3). It's historic role as a service and trading centre and as a settlement close to important road junctions extends into the C21st with shops (Use Classification A1 and A3), cafes and public houses (Use Classification A4) being spread throughout the historic core,

principally the Market Place, Market Street, St Mary's Chare, Fore Street and Battle Hill. Private and public sector office based businesses (Use Classification A2 and B1) enrich the commercial mix. Churches and their ancillary buildings (Use class D1) together with their halls provide community and spiritual support whilst clubs, Queen's Hall Library and Theatre and Wentworth Leisure Centre provide recreational outlets for both visitors and residents. Hexham's position in Hadrian's Wall country and its own rich heritage and surviving medieval roots make it a tourism centre. Hotels, guest houses, restaurants and public houses benefit from tourism. Relatively large industrial estates have been developed in the conservation area along the base of the valley. They also contain retail outlets. The largest employer in the town, Egger UK, which manufactures wood and MFC panels, is located to the north of the river outside the conservation area.

5.5 Views within the area

Views within the area are varied and attractive. They tend to be informal with the only 'grand design' to be found along Beaumont Street where the French style former Town Hall and Corn Exchange provides an exuberant focus to a collection of fine late C19th and early C20th buildings which, although differing in style and material content, combine to provide an imposing frontage opposite the landscaped Abbey grounds. This view is enriched by the south elevation and tower of the Abbey which contains views to the north.

Views along streets and across spaces in the historic core rarely follow straight lines. Kinks, twists and gradients shuffle views around corners where they are trapped by building lines which bend behind one another or which are terminated by cross streets. Differing heights, roofscapes add building styles add to the irregularities which characterise views and impart a sense of gradual development evolving over a long period of time. Glimpses into backlands show an intriguing, and frequently random, arrangement of spaces and infill buildings

Views and glimpses of the surrounding countryside can be seen from most parts of the town centre, sometimes framed by buildings and in other places sweeping over rooftops.

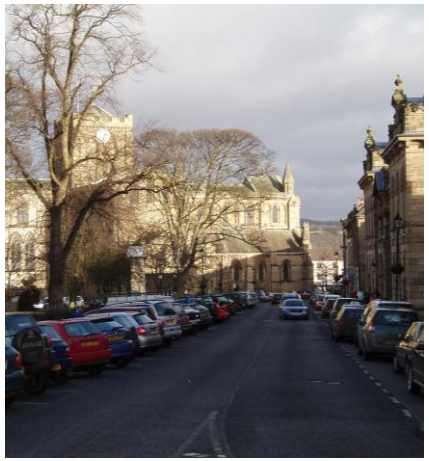
Key views in the historic core are:

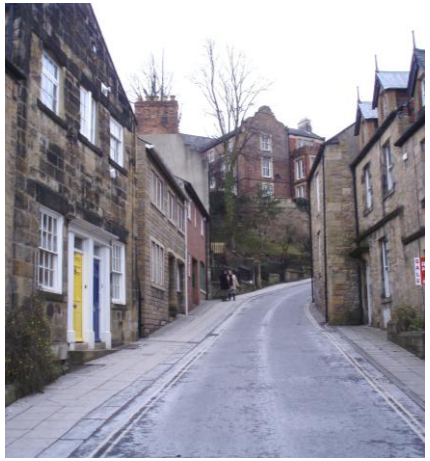
- Across the Market Place to the Abbey and to the Moot Hall, including the Shambles. They are inherently attractive and iconic.
- Along Beaumont Street towards the Abbey.

- Up Hallstile bank as it cranks towards Market Place.
- The views along Fore Street and Market Street. They follow the north-south medieval road line and are of historic significance. They also contain attractive C18th and C19th properties and C19th shopfronts.
- The tightly drawn view along Hallgate which takes in the Moot Hall and the Old Gaol.
- The view along St Mary's Chare, possibly the most historic street in Hexham.

Key views

Across the Market Place





Views along Beaumont Street and up Hallstyle Bank

Views along the old south-north route along Fore Street and Market Street

Views along Hallgate towards the Moot hall and past the Old Gaol

Views along St Mary's Chare

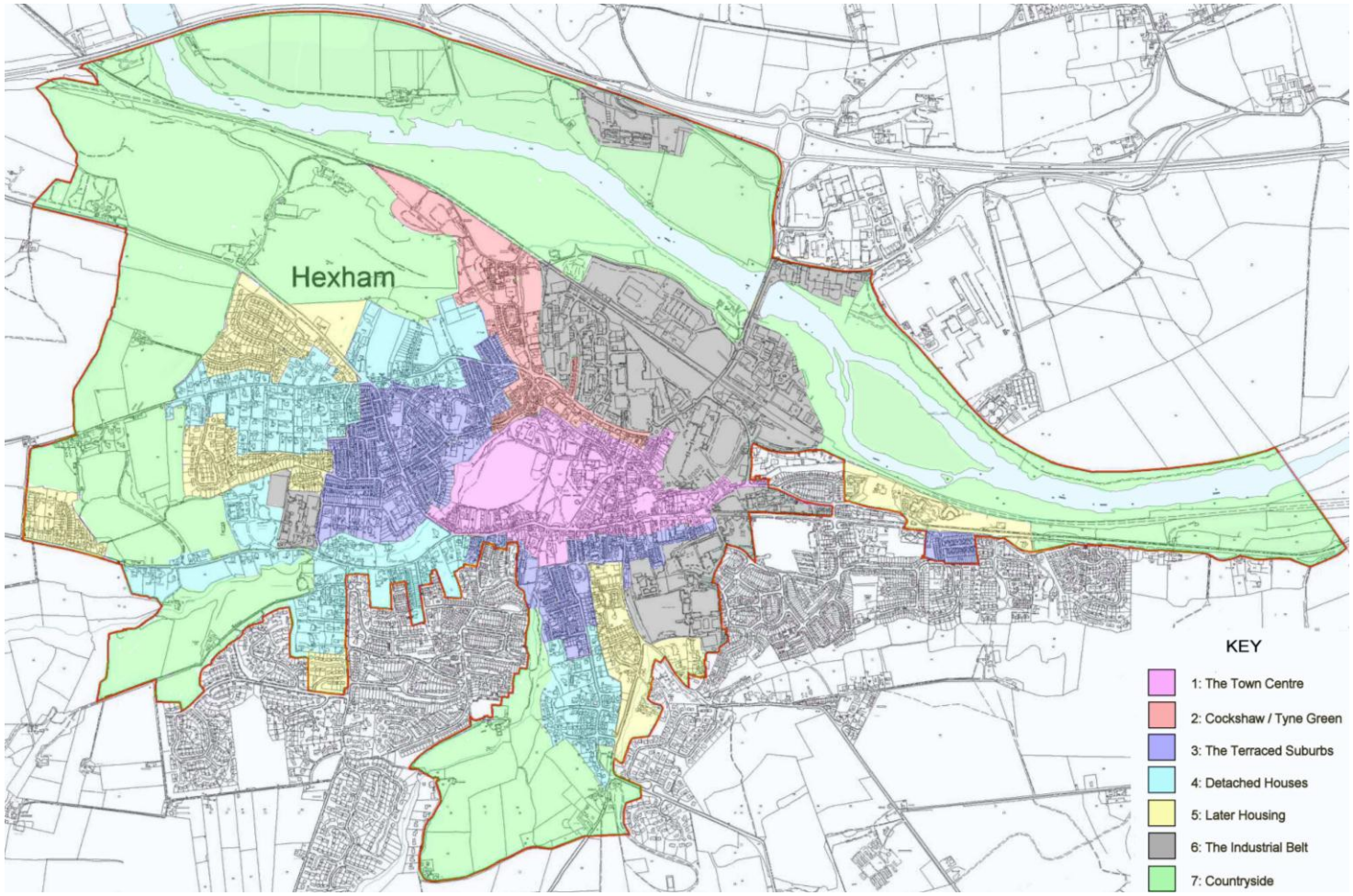
There are a number of interesting views of the historic town centre from its edge. They include:

- From the junction of Alemouth Road with Station Road to the south where the outline of the medieval core sits on the raised river terrace. The quality of this view has been diminished by the bland and expansive north elevation of the Forum Cinema and the welter of undistinguished modern buildings that now spread across the base of the valley.
- From the junction of Eilensgate Terrace and Kingsgate Terrace across the Gilesgate/Cockshaw area to the Abbey. This includes an interesting roofscape where buildings dip down into the valley formed by Cockshaw Burn.
- The view across the Abbey Grounds from the top of the Sele.

Views tend to be more controlled beyond the town centre. The ranks of houses which form the late C19th and early C20th terraces channel views in a more disciplined manner, albeit some, such as along Hellpool Lane, bend as roads follow earlier alignments. The presence of the surrounding countryside is more conspicuous, frequently rising above rooftops and between blocks of buildings. The sense of countryside is brought into the town along the lines of Wydon Burn, which runs into Halgut Burn, and along the valley formed by Cockshaw Burn. Views along the burns provide sharp contrast to the adjacent built-up areas.

The presence of gardens and some street trees in residential areas, such as along Burswell Villas, soften views.

6 CHARACTER ANALYSIS



Map 9: Character areas

The conservation area is large, dating from several periods and with a variety of land uses. It can however be divided into a number of fairly distinct character sub-areas (Map 9). Each contains a variety of townscape and built form, and at places their boundaries become less defined, but they act as an aid to understanding the character of the conservation area as a whole.

- **The town centre**, mainly C18th and C19th redevelopment of the medieval town.
- **The early industrial belt** including Cockshaw/Tyne Green and the C19 industrial fringes of the town.
- **Areas of terraced houses**, representing the later C19th and early C20th growth of the town.
- **Areas of detached houses**, mainly early C20th suburbs.
- **Later housing**, mainly late C20th developments.
- **The industrial landscape**, mainly C20th development of the river flood plain but including similar scale developments elsewhere.
- **Countryside**, areas surrounding the above.

6.1 Character Area 1: The town centre

6.1.1 Townscape and building form

The historic core of the town focuses on the three surviving medieval anchor points, the Abbey, the Moot Hall and the Old Gaol and the Market Place which still retains the essence of its ancient form. The three buildings make a massive contribution to shaping the character of the conservation area because their height, mass, prominence and settings makes them highly visible from close quarters and as part of the irregular stepped appearance of the town's roofscape and silhouette when seen from afar, such as the northern approach to the town from the A69.

The east end of the Abbey looks into the Market Place. It was designed in 1858 by John Dobson to reflect the appearance of Whitby Abbey. Pevsner described it as disappointing. The present front replaced a far more varied medieval east end, but, ironically the building was never meant to be seen from the Market Place. In 1860 the medieval buildings were cleared to reveal the east front and as a consequence the Abbey has become defining feature of the Market Place

The structure is basilican or crucifix in form with a tower in the centre. Notable external features of the building are it's generally

uniform two-storey height, fully developed clerestory and the considerable length of the transepts. The presence of the central tower with its suppressed pyramid roof ensures that the Abbey is immediately recognisable from many viewpoints within and outside the town.

The Abbey showing the Early English choir and transepts, the Dobson mid-C19th east end, the early C20th nave and the late C20th Choir School

Although the Abbey is uniform in plan, each side faces a different space within the town and a walk outside the building induces a sense of discovery. To the north side, along Abbey Flags, is a shady, channelled footpath with old stone boundary walls which connect three spaces, the Market Place, the elevated Abbey graveyard and the main gated route into the open ground via St Wilfrid's gate, which dates from around 1160. A smaller ancient archway gives further definition to this point of arrival, as do the boundary walls. Several routes offer alternative venues, seen in close and intermediate views.

Abbey Flags and a medieval arch and the Abbey graveyard

To the west and south, extensive open parkland is seen through a soft frame of trees. To the north, a further walled area, accessed through a small stone doorway, provides an appealing and inviting prospect. Paths continue into the grounds of Hexham House, an

C18th residence that was formerly the Vicarage. Within the grounds is the Bowling Green, which is surrounded by paths and formal seating. It is a sheltered and peaceful area, offering respite from the busy narrow streets of the town centre. The views of the Abbey, Hexham House and the abundant trees and greenery are all very attractive features which contribute very positively to the conservation area.

The south elevation of Hexham House overlooking its gardens, the bowling greens and the wilder dene cut by Halgut Burn

The Moot Hall on the eastern side of the Market Place opposite the Abbey, is an impressive and imposing building. It is a four-storey tower gate, built in the late C14th/early C15th. In terms of function, it housed the courthouse of the Archbishops of York who held the title of the Lord of the Liberty and Regality of Hexham. Also, the building must have served as a gatehouse to control movement between Market Place and the enclosure within Hallgate to the east.

The Old Gaol was completed within three years with 3.5 metre thick walls constructed mostly from Roman stone brought from Corbridge. Like many substantial buildings built Northumberland during the troubled C14th, the huge oblong gaol tower was massively defensible. However, it is probable that its scale and dominant position were more likely to have been intended as a highly visible deterrent against challenges to the authority of the Archbishops of York and to ensure that felons did not escape. The battlemented pediment and few window openings contribute to the intimidating presence of the building, its external appearance having changed little in almost 700 years. It has had only three other uses in that time, as an office, a bank and now as the Museum of Border History. The sheer bulk and simplicity of the buildings, which clearly evokes its functional origins, together with its proud and prominent setting, have ensured that it remains one of the most symbolic structures in the conservation area.

Market Place is a public space of great character and interest. It is probable that it once extended further south than its present boundaries, originally leaving St Mary's Church isolated in a more extensive public area. This supposition is borne out by the place

name of Cattle Market located immediately to the south of Fore Street. Within the present day Market Place are two notable structures, the Shambles and the Temperley Memorial Fountain. The Shambles is both a listed building and scheduled monument. Erected in 1766 by Walter Blackett, it is a covered market, with Tuscan stone columns on three sides and a wooden posts along its southern edge. The roof is shallow, dual pitched and slated. The scale of the structure is very human because of its low profile. It also provides a sense of security in that it can not be overrun by vehicles, unlike the other surfaces in the market area.

The Shambles and the Temperley Memorial Fountain

The fountain, or 'pant' dates from 1901 and is a memorial William Angus Templerley. It replaced an earlier pant of 1703. Listed grade II, it is as red sandstone monument copper plaques inscribed with a poem by W. W. Gibson around its base.

Market Place is enclosed on all sides by buildings. It is roughly square in plan, but the roads and buildings have followed the curves of the thoroughfares as they entered what had been the arrival point into the town many centuries. The irregular shape and the variety buildings give the space an informal feel. There are five vehicular entrance points into the Market Place, and a sixth pedestrian route from the gateway of the Moot Hall. Each of these is narrow with the exception of the Beaumont Street opening which was carved into the Market Place in the 1860's. The Market Street entrance particularly forms a pinch point for traffic.

Victorian Beaumont Street sweeps into the Market Place, and the medieval pinch point at Market Street

In the 1950s, buildings against the Moot Hall were demolished to allow easier vehicular access into the Hallgarth area following which the archway access was restricted to pedestrian use only.


New vehicular route into the Hall Garth area and the pedestrianised arch beneath the Moot Hall

The north side of the Market Place is an island of flat fronted buildings dating from between the mid C18th to mid to late C19th ranging from three to four storeys in height. They are either painted brick or stone with dual pitch slated roofs and brick chimney stacks. Number 27/28, built in 1749, is particularly distinctive because of its position at the turn of Market Place as it moves into Market Street, its height, width and principal elevations built in hard grey stone. The rainwater head on the back elevation is decorated by the cast 1749 date. Back Row to the north of the island links Hallstile Bank with Market Street. Many of the buildings were demolished in the late C20th to make way for the development of apartments, a process the started during the inter-war period with the construction of the Forum Cinema.


The north side of the Market Place and the late C20th development behind

The south side of the Market Place is interesting. Some buildings incorporate the remnants of the C13th St Mary's Church. Fortunately, exposed back elevations by the archway that leads into St Mary's Chare reveals part of the north arcade of the church with an octagonal pier and a late medieval window which was inserted when the arcade was blocked up during the church's transformation into a house. Other buildings in this group were probably re-fronted during the Georgian period when rear passageways were enclosed and external windows inserted into the fabric of earlier inner walls. The east end of the row, where it turns into Front Street, is marked by a feature that is typical in Hexham. This is the graceful curved corner which is carried out in an ordered and restrained manner with little ornamentation, characteristic of the Georgian period. The

west end runs into the late C19th Beaumont Street which starts with tall redbrick buildings with very steep slated roofs.

Curved end to the south side of the Market Place where it moves to Fore Street and the tall C19th frontage at the Beaumont Street end

The Moot Hall and a mid C19th fine ashlar faced house and shop with a curved corner running into the medieval structure, contain the east end of the Market Place. ***Hallgate***, accessed through the arched passage that runs through the Moot Hall twists past Prospect House, a solid mostly late-C19th house with tall exotic spiked chimneys to a small square dominated on the north side by the Old Gaol. The south side, with some C19th buildings fronting onto the square, has been opened out by the construction of a service area and car park for Robb's Department store which runs behind the eastern side of Fore Street, a development which has removed virtually all traces of the late medieval backland layout.

The early C19th cottages and houses which survive in Hallgate tend to be fronted in hand made rich red bricks, some painted, with stone quoins and lintels and stone to the side and rear elevations, typical of the Regency period in Hexham. Many original sixteen pane sliding sash windows survive. The properties are constructed in short, stepped, terraces to take account of the steep drop in ground levels. The late C17th Grammar School, one of Hexham's most distinctive buildings, sits between Hallgate and Bankhead.. It is whitewashed rubble with stone dressings and rusticated quoins. The mullioned windows, the lower with trefoiled heads, and curly segmental pediment add architectural details which can be found elsewhere in the town.

The Grammar School, Bank Head

Temperley Place, Hallgate, 1826

Fore Street, Market Street, Hallstile Bank and Beaumont Street penetrate the four corners of the Market Place.

Fore Street is the principal shopping street in the town centre. Formerly Coastley Row, a line of medieval cottages, it was gradually redeveloped over the centuries to become a street of primarily Georgian and Victorian buildings, former inns and houses, which have been converted into shops. There are some unsuccessful C20th inserts, particularly at the south end where post war buildings introduce bland and inarticulate elevations into the street scene.

Fore Street looking north

The late C19th Midland Bank and bland new development on the right

The street is narrow and pedestrianised. The buildings vary in height with pitched roofs adding to their tallness with some buildings rising above their neighbours to dominate the skyline and others with gables facing the street to create different planes and setbacks. There are a variety of styles ranging from plain brick flat fronted Georgian elevations to more elaborate and visually exciting Free Renaissance patterns. The shopfronts at ground level vary in quality. Many are spoilt by large modern fascias with machine cut lettering. There are exceptions, the most notable being the highly ornamental shopfront (formerly Gibson's the Chemist) carved after a disastrous fire in the early C19th destroyed the original high Victorian façade. Historic details introduce visual interest, including the sign bracket outside the former Sun Inn. The south end of Fore Street is terminated by the free standing Midland Bank designed in 1896 and decorated by a red sandstone frieze carved with coins of the realm.

C18th buildings and a surviving old pub sign bracket

St Mary's Chare, squeezed between Fore Street and the alignment of the Abbey's medieval precinct wall, is of both historic and visual interest. It is a narrow and road which slightly bends as it moves

between Battle Hill and the Market Place. It probably reflects the siting of earlier structures built up against the precinct wall. The street contains a good collection of two and three storey C17th buildings which still retain many of their original details including open segmental pediments, not unusual in Hexham, mullioned windows and swan necked pediments.

The street looking north with the former Primitive Methodist Chapel and C17th details

The former whitewashed George and Dragon Inn stands out with dormers ornamented by curled gablets decorating the roof. The addition of the Grapes public house at the north end introduces an elaborate and substantially intact Victorian façade with etched windows and the construction of the former Primitive Methodist Chapel in 1862 on the west side adds a restrained classic style into the street. St Mary's Chare has been relayed using granite setts and stone flags and recent conversion and development works have sensitively regenerated a section of backland.

The elaborate C19th Grapes and new courtyard development between St Mary's Chare and the old precinct wall

Hallstile Bank, formerly Bull Bank, twists as it runs down the side of the spur from the north east corner of the Market Place to Haugh Lane and the valley floor. The stone and brick built buildings, mostly built in the C18th and C19th, step down the bank to provide an attractive foreground to views over the valley, now dominated by Egger UK's steam stack and its emissions. Some of the properties have settled with obvious leans. Number 14 near the top of the bank is a particularly fine early C18th detached red brick house which provides an attractive foil to views over the valley from the Market Place. Its neighbour, part of Prospect House oversailing

from Hallgate, sits over a medieval basement which might have been part of a gatehouse spanning the road. The basement is sealed by an iron gate which allows glimpses of the old groin vaults from the street.

Possible medieval groined basement under Prospect House

C18th house with new, less attractive, neighbours

The single storey Tudorbethan Henry King Alms Houses at the bottom of Hallstile Bank are entered through a late C17th arch, almost certainly removed from a property during the Victorian redevelopment of the town centre.

Unfortunately, some new development on the north side has introduced bland designs and artificial stone, both of which diminish the quality and character of the street.

Market Street in the north west corner of Market Place follows the line of the main street medieval Hexham, becoming ***Gilesgate*** beyond the Abbey Gatehouse. The street curves around following the line of the Abbey precinct wall. By the C17th the street was lined with substantial houses. Whilst some are known to have been demolished in the C19th, several are still in existence. As a consequence, Market Street displays a great variety of building types, perhaps more so than any other part of the historic core. The back of Market Street, Church Row, displaying a mixture of pitches and gables, backs onto the Abbey graveyard.

C17th buildings in Market Street, the backs, Church Row overlooking the graveyard

Many of the later frontages screen earlier C18th houses. Building heights are predominantly three-storeys, reflecting the need at the time to make the maximum use of the original narrow width of property boundaries dating from up to four hundred years ago. Frontages are varied, using stone, brick or painted brick finishes. Window detailing is largely uniform with moulded surrounds being common. The three storey buildings tend to have three bays, whilst the two storey examples have two bays. Properties also display more decoration than is usual elsewhere. This is probably because it was the principle street during the C17th and early C18th where wealthy townsfolk would live and conduct their business. Interesting details include moulded cornices, sash windows with exposed boxes, tripartite sash windows suggesting earlier mullioned openings, tumbled brick to roof edges and lightly hammered ashlar. There are a number of traditional shopfronts and some good modern examples with arched windows and recessed doors.

The former post office, now Hadrian House, is a fine and robust three storey, five bay, detached early C18th house which sits opposite St Wilfred's Gate. It is separated from the former baths built behind the 1885 façade of Henry Bell's wool warehouse by a late C19th low slung sheltered housing scheme. The square Hexham House opposite is a contemporary of Hadrian House.

The old Post Office

The former swimming baths behind the façade of Bell's wool warehouse

Beaumont Street at the south west corner of Market Place is where the Victorian's left their most distinctive mark on the town centre. It is a microcosm of mid to late-C19th town planning. From the southern corner of the Abbey, the road is straight and noticeably wider than any other street in the town centre. The introduction of the Benson Monument at the southern end introduces an appropriate example of statuary that marked 'civic' spaces at that time.

The buildings along Beaumont Street are large. This was an expression of the wealth generated by C19th industrial expansion and assisted by the technical advances including structural steel which enabled much greater floor to ceiling heights. The eclectic

mixture of building styles to be found along Beaumont Street was also a characteristic of the period.

In the centre, the French style Town Hall and Corn Exchange (now Queen's Hall) was built in 1865/66. The two storey ashlar building with flat and round headed windows, rusticated ground floor and tall hipped roof is particularly notable.

Fine styles with Queen's Hall and the Abbey dental surgery

Contrasting styles can be found along the street, including the free Baroque neighbour to the Queens Hall (Abbey dental surgery), the tall steeply pitched stone and brick terrace with Renaissance motifs which wraps around the corner into Market Place; the Free C13th style Trinity Methodist Church with its mimicry of the Abbey's east end beside Queen's Hall and the quite exotic and free style former Primitive Methodist Church with its massive semi-circular bastions at the south end. The wide street flows into the Abbey Grounds, once bounded by a stone boundary wall and now a metal fence. Mature trees behind the fence provide a sylvan setting to the buildings.

The south end of Beaumont Street

Priestpopple, Battle Hill and Hencotes form the southern edge of the historic core, following an old east-west route from Newcastle to Carlisle. Armstrong's Map of 1769 (Map 3) shows that both sides of the road were developed with buildings stretching to the south along East Gate towards Hexhamshire.

Priestpopple is a wide road, typical of the medieval period, running from Loosing Hill to Cattle Market. The northern side comprises a mixture of buildings, some dating from the early C18th and all sitting on the footprints of earlier properties. The west end is most

impressive with the two banks bringing fine and extravagant style into the streetscene. Their mass and appearance, complemented by the close proximity of Oliver's Midland Bank at the end of Fore Street, provide visual focus to the street as it moves up Battle Hill towards Hencotes. Of particular note is the well crafted Arts and Crafts frieze running beneath the eaves of Barclays Bank.

Looking east along Priestpopple with Lloyds Bank on the left and the inappropriately designed night club on the right

The remaining buildings are lower, two or three storeys high, other than the Royal Hotel with its dome-topped tower. They were generally built as houses with dual pitch roofs mounted by stacks and pots. However, elevations have been altered with the insertion shopfronts and the application of new facing materials. This has created a jumbled and unflattering appearance.

Looking west along Priestpopple with County Mills on the left and the dome of the Royal Hotel and the two grand banks on the right

A narrow lane, New Court, runs between Priestpopple and Hallgate – a valuable and rare reminder of the network of paths that would have threaded through the backlands. The north side is marked by a combination of solid C18th and C19th buildings, gaps and modern, poor, development. The County hotel, which includes C17th fabric and County Mills, built in 1884, a solid mass of sandstone, bring quality whereas the set back night club and freezer shop at the west end diminish the appearance of the street. The bus station creates a gap.

Broadgates to the east of the nightclub leads to a small area of terraced housing and Eastgate, nearly opposite Fore Street, rises up the side of the valley bringing tendrils of countryside towards the town centre.

Battle Hill rises up one of the undulations that crinkle the glacial terrace. Narrower than Priestpopple, it is a tighter space with greater regularity to the height of buildings. There are a number of solid and attractive dual pitch brick built two and three storey C18th houses with modern shopfronts with larger and more elaborate C19th inserts, most notably Excelsior Buildings and the earlier NatWest Bank which curves into St Mary's Chare. Details, including the survival of many late C18th/earlyC19th sliding sash windows, moulded iron rainwater goods spiked to walls and chimney pots, reinforce and embellish the historic character of the street. Some of the new development sandwiched between Excelsior Buildings and the block of C18th and C19th properties with fine shopfronts located around the junction of Battle Hill and St Wilfred's Road, is an unfortunately unsuccessful pastiche of the earlier styles. The use of artificial stone further diminishes its contribution to the otherwise comfortable appearance of the street.

Looking up Battle Hill with the late C18th and early C19th houses and commercial properties on the right

NatWest Bank turning into St Mary's Chare

Excelsior buildings and later, less attractive, developments

Hencotes twists from Halgut Burn up the spur before dropping down to cross Cockshaw Burn. The Gothick early C19th St Mary's RC Church is set back from the road opposite the more modest mid-C19th St Aiden's Church which sits on the edge of the Abbey Grounds overlooking Halgut Burn.

St Aiden's Church and St Mary's RC Church

The north side and the eastern end of the south side pre-date the remainder of the street. The properties are predominantly Georgian and Regency and include both fine detached houses and attractive terraces of smaller houses and cottages. The C18th red brick Burn Brae House with its large Venetian windows and Sele House with an applied C19th front elevation stand act as an attractive skewed eastern gateway to the remainder of Hencotes.

Burn Brae House and the former Selegate Surgery

The south side backs onto the Sele with large rear gardens contained by a high, and visually important, stone boundary wall. There is some backland courtyard development. Lengths of terrace of different periods and styles are stitched together to provide a visual essay of the historic development process. There is an interesting cluster of small lengths of terraced housing behind the Fox and Hounds overlooking a square of gardens. Built in the mid-

C19th, the two-storey red brick cottages occupy the site of a demolished house and its grounds. The south side includes a terrace of tall and solid C18th houses with a neat symmetry of doors and windows.

C18th tenements and a fine house on the south side of Hencotes

C18th and early C19th houses on the north side

Mid-C19th Stone and brick terraced houses behind The Fox

The reset C17th doorway in West Terrace

Historic details survive including a C17th doorway removed from a house in Meat Market when it was demolished in 1883 which has been set into the west elevation of 9 West Terrace.

6.1.2 *Key Buildings*

The importance of the Abbey, Moot Hall and Gaol is underlined by their Grade I listings. As the largest buildings in the conservation area, prominent in historic views of the town, they remain the defining features of the conservation area and Hexham as a whole. The Abbey is also the main orientation feature within the town centre area.

Other key townscape buildings include the HSBC at Fore St/St Mary's Chare, a confident and decorative marker of this important junction, the Tyne Green Works, a focus for the eye to rest on down the slope of St Giles, and the former Methodist chapel (now Hexham Community Church), whose spire is visible from many places within the southern part of the conservation area. St. Aiden's Church marks the bend in Hencoates and forms a transition between the built-up street and open area of Abbey Park. The cinema frontage and bus station stand out as individual designs, without overwhelming their neighbours. The mid-C19th Gothic Sele School defines the northern edge of the Sele.

The original Gothic Subscription Schoo, The Sele

6.1.3 *Materials and colours*

The local cream/grey-coloured sandstone predominates, laid either as ashlar or coursed rubble, although many buildings are rendered and painted white or a light colour. There are one or two exceptions such as the grey granite used to create the ground floor plinth to Lloyds Bank. Bricks are used, for whole buildings or side and rear elevations. Local 'Hexham' warm red and brindle hand made bricks can be seen throughout the area. They were replaced by harder, regular and evenly coloured red and buff bricks in the mid C19th. Roofs are generally Welsh slate; chimneys brick with buff, or red clay pots, some decorative. Welsh slate, which became popular in the early C19th when it arrived as ballast on Tyneside, replaced red pantiles. Calcott's 1815 painting of Hexham clearly shows the preponderance of red pantiles.

Quoins are often expressed strongly, sandstone quoins sometimes being used on brick facades, and cill bands and eaves courses are a feature of some elevations. Windows, although generally rectangular timber sashes painted white or cream, also display a range of arched tops and stone surrounds.

Paving is often varied, particularly on pedestrianised areas, with materials and textures including sandstone slabs, setts and bricks. Rainwater goods are cast iron or lead spiked to walls and painted black although plastic runs fixed to timber fascias are present.

6.1.4 *Details*

Decorative arches and gateways are a feature of the historic heart of the conservation area, either freestanding or attached to buildings. Sometimes re-used, many have inscriptions or other

written material, encouraging an intellectual understanding of the townscape and providing a reminder of the town's historical importance.

Historic shop fronts are an important feature of this part of the conservation area, with a variety of form and detail adding a rich vitality to the plainer facades above. Some old shopfronts probably survive behind modern fascias. This hidden historic fabric should be revealed and repaired in future development/improvement works. The variety of individual business, building and street names contributes to the lively character and visual richness of the area.

Low walls are characteristic of the roads outside the central commercial area. Unfortunately most of the original railings were removed during WWII. However, some survive, such as can be seen on Argyll Terrace

Attractive shopfronts, although some need maintenance

6.1.5 *Listed buildings and buildings at risk*

Neither the Hexham Community Church building nor the Henry Bell warehouse facade are listed, but they are important buildings, both in their own right and in the townscape, and consideration should be given to putting them forward for listing

None of the buildings in the area appear on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk register.

6.1.6 *Neutral and Negative Features*

Some parts of this area do not share its character fully, but can be regarded as neutral in their impact; these include the rows of shops on the south side of Battle Hill and the north of Market Street, where

care has been taken to echo the traditional narrow frontages and built form.

Some developments have been less successful, and should be seen as having a negative impact. These include the night club on Priestpopple, with its uncompromising flat roof, weak corner and horizontal emphasis, and the facades of Robs on Priestpopple and Fore Street, and the infill development on Hallstile Bank and Battle Hill.

Although many modern shop fronts are well designed, some are flat and unimaginative, and have insensitive modern machine lettering in garish colours, reducing the quality of the conservation area.

The bulk of the cinema tends to overwhelm the other buildings, in views into the centre from the Wentworth car park; reducing the importance of the key historic buildings; it should not be taken as a precedent for future developments.

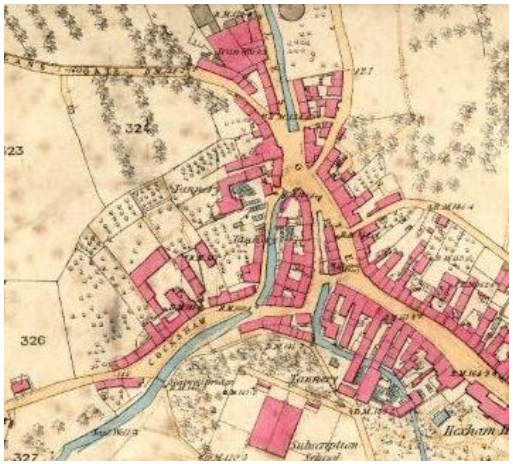
The open area of the Bus Station breaks into Priestpopple, with no tall buildings or trees, even in the background, to enclose the space.

Car parking in the Market Place restricts its appreciation and enjoyment on non-market days, and heavy traffic passing through effectively cuts the space in two. From the Market Place vehicles exit via Hallstile Bank, the pedestrian route into the town from the Wentworth car park; in both these areas the needs of pedestrians and vehicles conflict in an obvious way.

6.2 Character Area 2: The Early Industrial Belt

6.2.1 Townscape and building form

The Cockshaw Burn and Tanners (Halgut) Burn area at the bottom of the glacial terrace where it emerges across the flood plain of the River Tyne became the focus of Hexham's hide trades. The factories and workshops were located beside and over the burns which provided the water which was a vital element in processing and dyeing the animal skins. The 1860 First Edition shows the arrangement of buildings clustered around the water courses together with the mid-C19th iron foundry.



First Edition Ordnance Survey 1860 showing the industrial area around Cockshaw

This pattern has changed as a consequence of the cessation of the hide trades and the loss of buildings following the changes to the road layout, particularly the construction of Haugh Lane together with associated junction improvements. However, parts of the area still retain much of their original character and appearance.

A unifying factor of this area is its dense and interwoven complexity of form, with buildings set at varying heights (Haugh Lane, Cockshaw Burn) and angles (Tanners Yard, Holy Island) alongside roads which twist and curve downhill, following the course of the Cockshaw Burn until it ducks under the railway line. Together with Tanners Burn, Cockshaw Burn plays an important part in the character of the area, being visible and audible for most of its course; the flood defence walls through which it runs providing a thread of visual unity and emphasising the enclosed, complex form of the surrounding street pattern.

The area is focused on the Holy Island area which has C17th roots; the adjacent road junction with Haugh Lane is an important gateway into the area from the west, and a hinge point between the flood plain to the north and the sloping land to the south, with its consequent complex layout.

Tyne Green Road has a more straightforward layout and open character. Buildings are still arranged along it informally until the open space of Tyne Green is revealed, the houses fringing it giving the effect of a village green, bounded to the north by the railway

embankment. The surviving mix of housing and small-scale industrial/commercial property recalls the history of the area, and emphasises its links with the rest of the town. A number of tannery buildings have survived and been adapted to new uses.

The area extends to the north to include a section Tyne Green to the south of the railway line. It derives its character from its flatness, shape (leaf-shaped, with constricted entrances at each end) and high sense of enclosure, with surrounding walls, backed by trees, to the south and the railway embankment to the north. It is not visible from much of Tyne Green Road, and the surprise generated by the sudden appearance of the wide open space is considerable. A smaller section to the west is approached by a narrow roadway with high walls, a memorable contrast with the open area beyond. Although the country park to the north is accessible to pedestrians and vehicles, the railway embankment provides a firm visual edge to the space and defines the edge of the town at this point.

Cockshaw Row and its various sub-terraces include stone and brick-built houses which have been built over centuries, including C17th survivors. Some show signs of industrial pasts with previously developed backlands approached through gateways. Narrow frontages face onto a narrow street and pitched roofs with tight eaves and brick chimneys create falling silhouettes as the street tumbles down the slope. The later houses along Dunwoodie Terrace with their attractive clipped stone elevations have short front gardens. This creates a sense of intimacy which is exaggerated by the backdrop of trees fringing the Sele and the twists in the road. The mixture of natural building materials adds variety and visual interest. Tanners Row sheltered housing scheme maintains a solid street frontage leading the eye towards the bottom of Gilesgate.

C17th and C18th houses on Cockshaw Row and the later clipped stone Dunwoodie Terrace

The buildings along ***Gilesgate*** which back onto Tanners Burn are altogether grander and architecturally robust C18th three storey brick and stone buildings standing on the back of the wide footpath with offshots which historically merged into groups of tannery buildings which spread over the watercourse. All but one of these

backland buildings have been removed to create an open area with the shallow stream running over setts and flags. This area with its backdrop of trees and the Sele School perched on the top of the slope creates an area of calm which was once characterised by noise, smell, effluence and intense human activity. The street is decorated by the Tanners Arms, a fine late C19th public house.

Fine three storey buildings front onto Gilesgate, their backs running into tanneries by and over Tanners (Halgut) Burn

Holy Island sits in isolation. It is a group of exceptionally fine C17th stone buildings which extend the visible depth of history in this part of Hexham. The area opposite between Gilesgate and Haugh Lane has opened out with the engineering of the latter and the formation of a wide junction. The intimacy of the area and the predominant alignment of Gilesgate to Tyne Green Road (formerly known as Gilesgate) have been lost as a consequence of the highway works. However, the trees surrounding the Sele continue to form a backdrop to the Cockshaw and Holy Island area, emphasising its low-lying, densely built-up character. The attractive and historically important 1858 Glover's Fountain sits at the end of Holy Island.

C17th Holy Island

The modern road layout destroys the historic built pattern

Some of the buildings on the steep bank along the northern edge of ***Haugh Lane*** between Gilesgate and Alemouth Road have an industrial character, with an area of late C19th two storey red-brick narrow fronted artisan terraces marking the east end at the junction with Hallstile Bank. New housing development has been introduced, some of which does not add to the quality of the area in terms of scale and appearance creating an ad hoc collection of mid to late C20th buildings without a sense of coherence or distinctiveness.

Tree and shrub colonisation of some of the slope provides an attractive backdrop.

C19th housing with annexed new terraced development

More recent and less successful development

Old industrial buildings survive, but some in a state of extreme dilapidation

Tyne Green Road slightly curves away from its junction with Haugh Lane towards Tyne Green. Much of its historic appearance has been lost with only a handful of buildings, notably the foundry house and a short terrace of worker's cottages, the old foundry which straddles the burn and the House of Correction, remaining to mark its C19th character. The development of Chareway, a mid-C20th municipal housing development and the bus depot has changed the nature of the street through the introduction of large blocks of building over hitherto open land where the House of Correction once stood in rural isolation. Boundary walls are very important on Chareway, where they define the space even where buildings are sparsely sited along the road.

The Foundry house and cottages

The old foundry straddling Cockshaw Burn

A cluster of short terraces, Hebron, Ridley and Bell Terrace, were built in the mid-C19th where Tyne Green Road emerges onto the open space bounded by the railway line. They are attractive red/brindle brick buildings with horizontal dual pitched roofs and

chimneys. All are marked by inscribed name and date stones but most have unfortunately lost their original joinery. New housing provides a backdrop to the terraces, the development to the south of Hebron Terrace rearing over and dominating the Victorian houses.

Hebron Terrace

C19th Bell Terrace and new terraced housing development

6.2.2 *Key Buildings*

Some houses in the Holy Island area retain their C17th character, emphasising the historical importance of the area.

On Tyne Green Road, the mills and the House of Correction provide a subtle variation in scale and detailing to the houses, while the foundry straddling the burn is an important reminder of the part played by water power in the development of the town.

The Old Tannery pub occupies a prominent position in the area, and forms a flamboyant contrast to the surrounding buildings.

Glover's Fountain standing at the end of Gilesgate is a substantial stone feature and a reminder of the scarcity and importance of clean water in a period when disease was rife and deadly.

The House of Correction and Glover's Fountain

6.2.3 *Materials, Colours*

Most of the older buildings are of sandstone, laid as coursed rubble or occasionally ashlar; terraces are of warm red brick. All have Welsh slate roofs and brick chimneys. Timber sash windows are white painted, doors dark green or similar painted timber; rainwater gutters and downpipes black painted cast iron. uPVC windows and plastic rainwater goods are becoming commonplace in parts of the area. Boundary walls are of sandstone rubble, as are the walls

along the burn. Surface treatments include granite cart tracks and whin setts.

6.2.4 *Details*

The Cockshaw burn has been re-walled and paved with cobbles, emphasising its importance and adding visual appeal. In contrast, the Tanners (Halgut) Burn flows freely across Tanner's Yard towards Holy Island.

Street names carved into the fronts of terraces are a feature of the area.

6.2.5 *Listed Buildings, Buildings at Risk*

Several houses in Holy Island and a couple in Cockshaw are listed Grade II or II*. Although a full survey was outside the scope of this study, there may be other potentially listable buildings in the area including the foundry house and its associate cottages.

There are remnants of industrial buildings along Haugh Lane which are in a state of extreme disrepair and danger of collapse.

6.2.6 *Negative and Neutral Areas*

Housing developments at Tanners Row, The Green and Chareway can be regarded as neutral. Considerable development is taking place along Burn Lane, although the new stone wall along the lane forms a firm edge.

The road junction at the south end of Tyne Green Road is important as a point of entry to the Cockshaw area. At present it is formless, open and wholly undistinguished. This is in complete contrast to the former pattern and appearance which was characterised by tightly developed groups of buildings which contained the roads that ran through the area.

The central part of Haugh Lane has some open areas which tend to weaken rather than strengthen its road frontage, as well as some undistinguished new development and advertising which reduce the quality of the conservation area.

6.3 *Character Area 3: Areas of terraced and semi-detached houses*

6.3.1 *Townscape and building form*

The population of Hexham doubled from 5,000 to 10,000 between 1880 and 1920. This was the consequence of rural populations being sucked into the urban area to seek employment, improved transportation networks encouraging commuter development and, connected with the former, a desire to live in a 'healthy' town. The increase in population led to town expansion with the development of a range of housing but primarily terraced to maximise commercial returns. There are some rare clusters of semi-detached housing integrated into this swathe of terraced development.

The housing spreads along the southern and western edges of the town, flowing over the undulating glacial terrace. Speculators purchased parcels of land to be divided up into plots and sold off to builders who would usually buy about four plots and take options on others as work progressed. Many terraces record this building method through progressive changes to materials and details. Thomas Dorin, a leading local developer, carried out extensive building work in Hexham between 1890 and 1914 including half of Alexandra Terrace, large sections of Tynedale, Spital, Monks, Prior and Croft Terraces.

The terraced areas are characterised by small groups of straight roads, their linearity emphasised by the line of the terraced housing on either side. The formal rhythm of main roads and narrower service lanes is occasionally varied by changes of alignment at road ends or a wall or gateway leading to a larger house in its own grounds. This pattern derives from 'by-law streets' as prescribed by local building bye-laws which were developed from the Public Health Act of 1875. Amongst other things, the bye-laws defined the minimum distance between front elevations of opposing houses. The demands imposed by the bye-laws together with the desire to maximise profit led to high density development of continuous runs of terraced housing with narrow frontages.

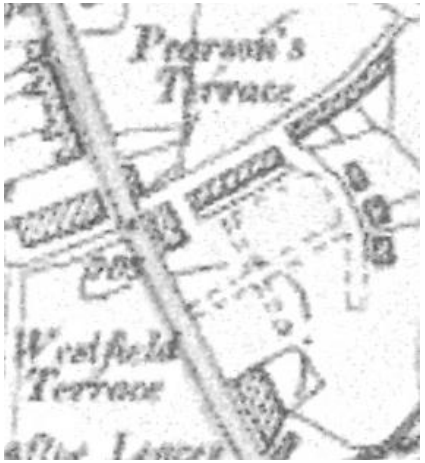
The road patterns vary in scale and complexity with the 'first phase' late C19th terraces (Map 6) being built in simple and uncomplicated straight lines either fronting onto or leading off the main roads over areas of flat land. They are already reflecting different economic bands with groups of large houses adorned with flamboyant detailing, such as the Gothic Revival ***St Cuthberts Terrace*** with its stone cill courses and dentilled cornices, bay windows and segmental pediments over the front doors and decent sized front

gardens once contained by stone boundary walls and wrought iron fences; and stretches of much more modest houses including the redbrick ***Pearsons Terrace*** which sits immediately behind the pavement and displays few decorative refinements other than the use of stone door surrounds and flattened brick arches over windows.

Flamboyant detailing on St Cuthberts Terrace compared to the plainer Pearsons Terrace

Deep front gardens along ***Hextol Terrace*** set back front elevations to soften built impact and create more generous and relaxed space, a rare commodity as the pressure for development grew following the turn of the century. This contrasts with the cramped space forced between more humble groups of buildings such as ***North Terrace*** which presaged a pattern of development which was to progress through the first two decades of the C20th.

Spatially relaxed long front gardens in Hextol Terrace contrast with tight space in North Terrace



The 1897 Ordnance Survey shows the first sign of this roll-out of development with the street pattern of Crescent Avenue and Shaftoe Crescent sketched-out over open land. Short and medium lengths of terraces were placed at right angles and in regular patterns behind front streets. The incremental development of some terraces can be seen through mixes of materials, styles and size of houses as can be seen along Alexandra Terrace.


Different sizes, designs and materials in Alexandra Terrace


Simple rectangular buildings built without extensions and larger terraced properties with original off-shots

However, most house types tend to gather in distinctive groups such as the collections of smaller rectangular buildings along Eilansgate Terrace and Kingsgate Terrace and the larger buildings with kitchen/bathroom off-shots along Woodbine Terrace and Glen Terrace. There is a meeting of the two along Windsor Terrace. The differences are reinforced by a paucity of detailing on the simpler smaller houses and the application of features such as gabled dormers and bays on the larger properties.

Prime locations delivered higher quality housing. This can be seen along the western edge of Cockshaw burn where the steep slope of the valley offered long gardens and a sylvan setting for large semi-detached properties ranged along Shaftoe Crescent and the dome of Windmill Hill presented fine views towards the Sele and the Abbey accompanied by a degree of seclusion in the cul-de sac. These locational advantages resulted in the construction of a mixture of detached and semi-detached houses.


Shaftoe Crescent and Windmill Hill

Similar size terrace houses change appearance in Tynedale Terrace

There are occasional mixtures of styles which create variety and interesting visual deceit. This can be seen along Tynedale Terrace where most of the cream brick houses along the northern side sit under a long flat dual pitch roof with little ornamentation whereas the southern side, which comprises similar sized dwellings, is set back in long front gardens, in shorter groups, and designed in Tudorbethan style with large dormers to give the appearance of much larger and grander buildings.

Later housing development to the east of Wydon Burn introduced greater variety of style into the town's growing residential stock. Elvaston and the terraces running off Elvaston comprise a mixture of two and three storey properties, all stone built and many in mixed medieval style. There are large detached and semi-detached villas and relatively small terraced houses in adjacent streets in this, a less formally planned area. The designs and detailing are diverse. Red pantiles and grey slates add colour and different types of windows, some incorporating curved timber and stained or painted glass, introduce interest. Window shapes and surrounds range from plain to decorative with some classical styles introduced including round heads with voussoir detailing. Timber porch details provide attractive features on some of the houses including lengths of continuous canopy supported by carved posts spreading over adjoining bays. Tudorbethan black timber is incorporated into gables. This is particularly notable on the large semi-detached houses along the east side of Elvaston where the timberwork, the shape of the windows and tall chimney stacks edge the buildings towards the vernacular 'Cottage' style favoured at the turn of the century.

Gothic motifs on Elvaston and 'Cottage' style houses

Canopy and canopy detail

6.3.2 ***Key Buildings***

Buildings such as the police station and West End Methodist Church, set back from the road within their own green areas, create breathing spaces and provide a contrast in scale with the surrounding houses.

Other key buildings include Haining Croft which sits on the edge of the area but substantially subsumed by new within curtilege housing development and the mid C19th former Independent Chapel and its small adjoining school at the top of Broadgate.

West End Methodist Church and the Police Station

The former Independent Chapel and attached schoolroom

6.3.3 *Materials, Colours*

The local yellow/grey sandstone is common, as is red brick, sometimes complemented by stone dressings. Roofs are natural Welsh slate, sometimes with red clay ridges and hips topped by brick chimneys. Red pantiles and Rosemary tiles are used, particularly in the Elvaston area.

6.3.4 *Details*

Within the terraces there is a pleasing uniformity of detailing. Windows and porches, white or pastel painted softwood; doors dark green or similar timber; gutters and drainpipes black cast iron, gives them an orderly sense of community.

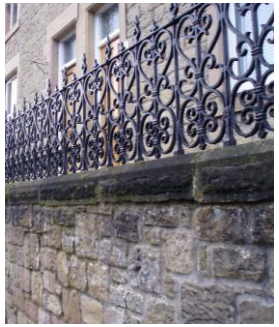
The variety of detail is one of the charms of this character area. Porches and gables can have decorative timber features and barge boards. This is typical of the turn of the C19th and C20th when mechanisation of the production of building materials combined with cheap labour encouraged the use of elaborate and affordable timber details.

Masonry or brick string courses, eaves, cills and window surrounds are treated in a wide variety of ways; the repetition on terraces providing emphasis while subtle variations make for further interest.

Some metal fences survive to hint at the original appearance of the area.

In some places, the pavement edges are marked by an area of cobbles; emphasizing the street lining and adding variety.

Several road names are of a pleasant standardised format in enamelled metal.






6.3.5 *Listed Buildings, Buildings at Risk*

There are no listed buildings in the area, and none appear on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk register.

6.3.6 *Negative and Neutral Areas*

Unsuitable replacement windows and doors become particularly obvious in a terraced setting, and a number of examples can be seen where the materials and proportions are inappropriate and spoil the design of individual properties and erode the unity of the terraces as a whole. In general however the original forms have been respected and the majority of the houses retain their original features.

Some later extensions to the backs of properties are clumsy and detract from the apparance of the area.

6.4 Character Area 4: Areas of detached houses

6.4.1 Townscape and building form

In contrast with the swathe of terraced housing which spread along the southern and western edges of the town in the late C19th and early C20th, contemporary and later detached houses tend to turn away from the roads and are set within private and individual walled or hedged gardens. Where boundaries are low this results in a loose-knit, open texture, with views within and through the area, but where they are taller, for example parts of The Leazes, the sense of containment can become acute. Trees and garden hedges sometimes almost obscure the buildings, softening the skyline and emphasising the spaciousness of the area.

Main roads through the area have subtle curves, but within the area they are straight; often narrow cul-de-sacs, emphasising the private, segregated nature of the communities by making them more difficult to penetrate.

The houses are individual in appearance, form and size but tend to reflect periods of style.

Few pre-date the 1860 First Edition Ordnance Survey, most notably Burswell House (then known as Boswell House) off Leazes Lane, Westfield House (later extended to become the Hydro and now part of Queen Elizabeth High School) and the C18th mansion, The Spital, now Hexham Golf Clubhouse.

Westfield House, now the east wing of the Hydro

By the end of the C19th, groups of detached houses were being developed alongside the eastern end of Allendale Road and in South Park with individual properties being built in more isolated locations in the surrounding countryside. The next twenty years saw

more lengths of road leading out of the town faced by large detached villas and semi-detached houses designed to look like single properties, notably up Causey Hill and alongside Burswell Villas. Advantage was also taken to build large houses in the denes which penetrated into the town centre such as the Larches, Maiden's Cross and West Acres beside Cockshaw Burn.

Maidens Cross with an elaborate conservatory

This period also saw the start of the development of the Leazes Nurseries area. This was to become the largest area of detached housing in the town before the late C20th development of the substantial housing estates of tightly packed detached properties elsewhere. The Leazes area was completed during the inter-war and immediate post-war period to be followed by the more tightly developed Leazes Park estate in the 1980's.

Windows at the Larches

The chronology of development can be traced through the emerging styles of the detached houses starting with traditional mid to late C19th Gothic with details such as crenallated bay windows, tall battered chimney stacks and, as can be seen in the Larches, the insertion of Decorated style stained glass windows over the staircase. Many of the detached houses of this

period are relatively simple with chunky details and few alterations to compromise their appearance.

A fine Gothic style house, Allendale Road

Stylistic changes occurred with the emergence of freer styles at the end of the Victorian and start of the Edwardian period. These can be seen with the inclusion of Tudorbethan gables, verandas and balconies. A good example can be found on Osborne Avenue

Early C20th freer styles, Osborne Avenue

Arts and Crafts designs stretched from the 1880s through to the 1920s. It developed as a reaction against what was seen as the brutality of industrialisation. There is not one particular Arts and Crafts style – it ranges over a number of approaches including romantic Gothicism, rustic vernacular and Queen Anne. The over-riding principal was to let designs to be honest to materials, construction method and function

The Arts and Crafts movement is represented in the conservation area.

An Arts and Crafts detached house

The development of the Leazes Nursery area led to an expansion of the town's detached housing incorporating inter-war styles. Some later houses have been built in accordance with the pattern established in the earlier layout of houses set in large well-landscaped gardens.

Later detached houses built over the former Leazes nurseries

6.4.2 *Key Buildings*

The Territorial Army Centre at the west end of Hencotes is a well-designed building with a strong character, which marks the edge of the town centre at this point.

The Hydro building is of importance in its own right as recognised by its listing, but being set within its wooded grounds has little effect on the conservation area as a whole.

6.4.3 *Materials, Colours*

Materials vary from local sandstone through red brick to colour-washed render, with examples of other finishes such as tile-hanging

or half-timbering. Joinery is generally painted white. Roofs are clay tiled more often than slated.

6.4.4 *Details*

Boundary walls to roads are important, for example along Leazes Lane.

Pavements on Elvaston Road have cobbled edges, similar to those in Character Area 3.

6.4.5 *Listed Buildings, Buildings at Risk*

None are at present listed, but research on the buildings in the area and their architects could well suggest some of listable quality.

6.4.6 *Negative and Neutral Areas*

The character of the area relies heavily on the design of the individual buildings. In some places, for example along the Cockshaw Burn near the High School, the quality of the designs is reduced and the area can be seen as having a negative influence on the conservation area.

The grounds of some of the large houses have been developed obliterating original design relationships between houses and gardens, cutting-off important views and bringing hard development close to road frontages.

New detached houses can sit uncomfortably beside older properties

New development in large gardens can be invasive and reduce the visual impact and scale of earlier structures

6.5 Character Area 5: Later housing

6.5.1 Townscape and built form

These areas generally consist of closely built modern suburban houses in their own small plots with low boundary walls along fairly wide curved roads, reflecting modern highways planning. Compared to the previous areas, the height of the buildings relative to their spacing gives a less vital, more relaxed and open character emphasised by frequent open planning. The lack of variety between the houses contributes to a general sense of blandness.

Grass verges and trees are special features of this area; which has a garden suburb character.

The houses are generally small scale, two storey, detached or semi-detached, with pitched roofs and clipped eaves, but no chimneys. Windows vary, but are often horizontal in format or square, reflecting modern movement design influences. Porches and bays can add interest to an otherwise bland appearance.

Some new housing has been slotted onto brownfield sites. This tends to be high density. Some high density housing has been built on the urban edge where a lower density would be more in keeping with the historic spread and layers of development.

Mid C20th housing development

Late C20th housing development

Later C20th housing development

High density 'town' development on the urban fringe

6.5.2 ***Materials, Colours***

Brick is the most common building material, with slate or clay tiled roofs and white painted joinery. Some houses have areas of white painted render or pebbledash, or tilehanging.

6.5.3 ***Details***

Porches, bays, garages and vehicle hard standing between low garden walls fronting the street.

6.5.4 ***Listed Buildings, Buildings at Risk***

None

6.5.5 ***Negative and Neutral Areas***

In the context of the conservation area as a whole, the entire character area can be regarded as neutral or negative.

6.6 Character Area 6: The Industrial Belt

6.6.1 Townscape and built form

The flat river plain proved the ideal location for the extensive market gardens and nurseries which were cultivated on the rich alluvium soils. This use created an attractive open and green foreground to the town which rose and sat over the glacial terrace, a setting whose historic character remained substantially unchanged for centuries until the mid-C20th development of industrial-scale buildings over the open space.

This has resulting in an amorphous landscape of industrial estates and car parks, a combination of developments which radically diminishes the impact of the historic town from its main approach, over the river bridge from the north, and creates an unsatisfactory foreground and background to views into and out of the town. Sinews and islands of older buildings such as the railway station and its associated structures in the wider yard together with the important surviving remnants of C19th industrial buildings and houses squeezed between Hall Orchard Road and Loosing Hill/Station Road off-set the impact of the industrial belt. The latter group of buildings and remnants is of particular importance, providing a C19th built link between the railway station and the historic town centre. Such links and buildings are rare in the industrial area and should be preserved and incorporated into new developments.

Haugh Lane Industrial Estate and its neighbouring supermarket

Tyne Mills Industrial; Estate, the red door building marking the location of the old mill

The railway station and water tank

The Station Inn, houses and remains of C19th buildings along Hall Orchard Road

Other flat areas in the town share similar features, with large-scale buildings such as schools and the new Hexham General Hospital, recently built on Corbridge Road, taking advantage of developable land. The Middle School off Wanless Lane was formerly the Grammar School. Built in 1910, it is a pleasant and stylish group of buildings which still retains much of its original character. This contrasts with the inelegant late C20th Queen Elizabeth High School on Whetstone Bridge Road.

The Middle School 1910

The new hospital 2009

6.6.2 *Key Buildings*

Although the river bridge is the most important structure in this area, it can be appreciated most readily from Tyne Green and thus appears in Area 7.

The outstanding building in the area is the old Workhouse, now part of Hexham Hospital. In spite of its size it has a sober, domestic quality which is very attractive, and it commands a key position on Corbridge Road, marking the entrance to the town centre and giving a foretaste of the important buildings to come. Surprisingly, it is not

yet listed, and consideration should certainly be given to protecting it in this way.

The railway station is well presented, with a recently landscaped forecourt.

The Workhouse

6.6.3 *Materials, Colours, Details*

Apart from the old workhouse and the railway station, which are domestic in scale and built of sandstone and slate with restrained classical detailing, buildings are generally large, low, and flat-roofed, faced with brick or sheet cladding with little attempt at architectural detail.

6.6.4 *Listed Buildings, Buildings at Risk*

The Ropery is empty and in very poor condition. By its nature it is a building with a very individual form, difficult to use for other functions; however it is an unusual survival of a small-scale agricultural industry, and marks an important historic boundary. It is on the SAVE Buildings at Risk register, as is the old workhouse and the interesting but neglected complex of buildings to the east of the railway station.

The ropery

6.6.5 *Negative and Neutral Areas*

Apart from the ropery, the railway station, the eastern edge Hall Orchard Road and the Workhouse, the character area as a whole can be seen as having a neutral or negative effect on the

conservation area. Two areas which affect the town centre particularly are:

- The Wentworth car park is very large and open, with insubstantial landscaping. The entrance to Hallgatehas been recently paved, and the new tourist information centre acts as a modest and attractive entrance marker at this important point in the conservation area.
- The supermarket, the sports centre and the new swimming baths at the north end of the car park loom up in views of the town centre from the north, overwhelming the surroundings. The buildings lack any design relationship to the established architectural character of the town centre. The large expanse of the reflective ribbed roof of the swimming baths emphasises this departure from the historic charm and personality of the town centre.

View from the north towards the town centre c.1900 where the nurseries and gardens create an open and green foreground

The leisure centre and swimming baths create a new foreground. The swimming baths roof has an invasive impact

6.7 Character Area 7: Countryside

Hexham is surrounded by the open countryside of the Tyne valley. This is characterised by fields contained by hedgerows and woodlands. Some of the area is still farmed and characterised by occasional buildings or structures scattered over and subsumed into the landscape. It includes the managed leisure areas of Tyne Green Park and the Golf Course, as well the cemetery and some water meadows and other agricultural land.

Buildings are very much subsidiary to the landscape. The river bridge defines views in Tyne Green Park, its arches echoed by the lines of trees. Some buildings of interest such as the cemetery, Spital House and Leazes Farm are protected by listing.

Although forming part of the general landscape setting of the town, the area is not visible in views from within the body of the conservation area and has little direct influence on it apart from appearing in long-distance views of the town from the north.

All of the open countryside beyond the built-up edge of the conservation area is protected by the Green Belt.

Rural landscapes on the edge of the town north of Corbridge Road

7 ARCHAEOLOGY

In 1965, Hexham was included in the Council for British Archaeology's list of two hundred and thirty two towns in England, the historic quality of which warranted careful treatment in any planning or redevelopment proposals. Its special merits were listed as:

- The ancient town plan.
- Major ecclesiastical site well preserved.
- A number of buildings worthy of protection from the medieval period to the C17th and from the Georgian and Regency periods.

The historic core is of high archaeological importance and several major finds of national significance have been made in Hexham. The Hexham bronze bucket was recovered in 1832 under a grave in the Abbey cemetery. It contained thousands of C9th coins which are now kept by the British Museum.

Any redevelopment in the central core of Hexham which requires below ground works must be given special archaeological consideration. Even now, the origins of many of Hexham's buildings are still to be discovered. Knowledge sometimes comes to light through unpredictable events. For example, more of the extent of St Mary's Church in the Market Place was discovered following a fire at 11 and 13 Market Place in September 2000. The developer commissioned a recorded study and a full height C13th lancet window was revealed inside the upper floors of the three-storey corner building with the Georgian façade.

The Abbey, its immediate precincts, the Old Gaol and the Shambles in the Market Place are scheduled ancient monuments. The Moot Hall was de-scheduled but remains a grade I listed building.

There is much conjecture about interpretation of the recorded archaeology of the Hall Garth area of Hexham. Local archaeologist Peter Ryder's book, 'The two towers of Hexham', 1994, expands upon the origins of the Moot Hall and the Old Gaol. However, it is generally acknowledged that further archaeological research of this part of Hexham's early history will greatly enhance overall understanding of the present town centre.

8 PUBLIC REALM

Public realm is the space between buildings that are publicly accessible, including streets, squares, forecourts, and open spaces. The quality of the public realm throughout the conservation area is varied. Very little historic fabric survives, the obvious examples being the sandstone setts in front of the former Independent Chapel on Broadgate, the granite sett and flagged beds under Tanners Burn and some whin or granite setts and stone cart tracks laid in lanes between houses leading to backlands. Stone kerbs and some setted gutters can also be found with other surfaces possibly surviving under asphalt.

Sandstone setts in Broadgates

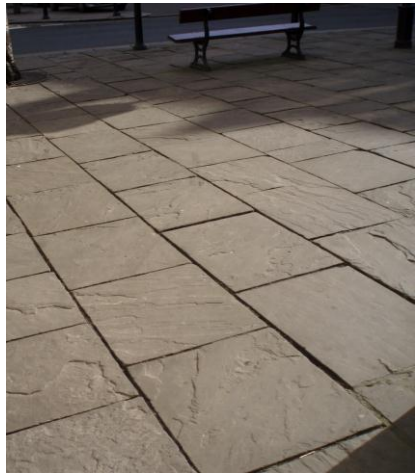
Granite setts and cart tracks off Hencotes

Granite setts lost beneath asphalt

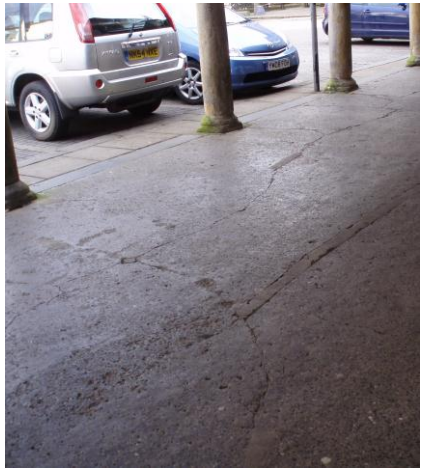
Asphalt has been applied as a road and footpath surface across much of the conservation area to create a generally dull floorscape. The major exceptions are in the Market Place and along Fore Strreet, St Mary's Chare and Meal Market. The results are varied. The area immediately in front of the Abbey facing the Market Place has been laid in rectangular Yorkstone flags to provide an attractive effect and setting. The remainder of the Market Place is a

combination of asphalt; poured concrete under the Shambles; and small, square, yellow concrete flags with concrete blocks. St Mary's Chare and Meal Market have been laid in domed grey granite setts and Yorkstone flags. The pedestrianised Fore Street has been resurfaced using pink and light grey flat-topped granite setts and sandstone flags. The finishes in Fore Street, St Mary's Chare and Meal Market provide an extremely attractive contrast to the uniform and bland man-made surface treatments in much of the Market Place.

Repairs to surfaces in the Market Place are generally poor using concrete rather than making good with original materials.



Yorkstone outside the Abbey



Concrete under the Shambles

Attractive use of natural materials in St Mary's Chare (left) and Fore Street (right)

Made-made materials in the Market Place and poor quality repairs

There has been some tree planting in both the Market Place and Beasumont Street. Large planters outside that Abbey and in Fore Street introduce lower level planting.

Tree planting in the Market Place

Street lighting comprises post top and bracketed lanterns throughout most of the area. Some 'period' columns and heads have been introduced in the historic core. The Market Place is substantially free of lighting columns other than some period lanterns around the Abbey. The space is illuminated by lights attached to walls. The units are varied, probably reflecting a gradual introduction. The effect is somewhat addled.

Different types of wall mounted lights in the Market Place

A variety of public benches and metal bollards have been introduced reflecting the incremental nature of their procurement and installation.

9 MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Boundary review

The Council has a duty to review the boundaries of conservation areas from time to time and to determine whether or not they should be amended.

The original conservation area as designated in 1973. At that time, the boundary largely followed the pre mid-C19th limits of the town. Subsequently, it was considered that this boundary had been drawn too tightly to adequately protect the extensive setting of the conservation area. In 1992 the boundary was redrawn to address these concerns. On the northern limit, the area controversially included C20th industrial estates. However, this was supported on the grounds that the A69, which was built after the original designation, now formed the new 'natural' limit to potential development. It was considered that it was important to protect the surviving bands of farmland and the northern bank of the river as development in these areas could have potentially a very damaging impact upon the setting of the conservation area.

Planning policies now exert much stricter controls over the more peripheral areas of Hexham. These include the Green Belt which sits alongside the boundary of the urban area. Furthermore, Tynedale District Local Plan addresses issues relating to proposals affecting the setting of a conservation area. Policy BE18 states:

Outside a conservation area, development will be permitted if it would not harm the character, setting or views into or out of the conservation area.

This means the conservation area boundary can be revised to reflect more accurately the historic, architectural, industrial and townscape interest of the settlement in the knowledge that it will not be adversely affected by inappropriate changes to its setting.

Consequently, it is recommended that the boundary is amended as follows (Maps 10 and 11)

1. ***To exclude*** all of the land included in the Green Belt from the conservation area. This area is adequately protected by Tynedale LDF Green Belt policies NE7, NE8, NE9 and NE14 which are reinforced by Policy BE18.
2. ***To exclude*** the residual area of land to the north of the railway line from the conservation area. This is primarily Tyne Mills Industrial Estate to the east of Rotary Way and the Auction Mart to the west of Rotary Way. Both comprise modern buildings and

settings which do not contribute to the historic character of the conservation area.

3. ***To exclude*** all of the land to the north of Haugh Lane and Eilansgate ***apart from***:

(a) Prior Terrace

(b) Spital Terrace

(c) Park Avenue

(d) The properties ranged alongside the northern edge of Eilansgate between Park Avenue and the B6531 (West Road) together with the allotments to the east and west of Park Avenue.

Items (a) to (c) above are of historic interest, forming part of and linked to the late C19th and early C20th terraced housing expansion of Hexham. Item (d) includes remnants of the C18th hamlet of Quatre Brae. The allotments provide important areas of open space on the urban fringe which are not protected by Green Belt policies.

The remainder of the land, which is recommended for exclusion from the conservation area, comprises:

- Haugh Lane Industrial Estate and land to the north and east of the estate. The development is of no historic interest and generally lacks any architectural distinctiveness. It introduces a hard urban environment in a location which, historically, was occupied by gardens thereby adversely affecting the town's historic setting.
- Tyne Green Road leading to and including Hebron Terrace, Ridley Terrace and Bell Terrace. The short terraces were surrounded by fields until the mid-C20th development of Chareway housing estate and the bus depot on the west side of Tyne Green Road tied them into the urban area. They are now linked to modern housing developments. The terraces have had original windows removed and replaced by uPVC units. The terraces are now substantially detached from the remainder of the historic town by post WII developments.
- The cricket ground and tennis courts. They have been identified as areas of Strategic Green Space which will be protected and enhanced by Tynedale LDF policy NE2. This offers them adequate protection.

4. ***To exclude*** Wentworth car park and its associated development. As with Haugh Lane Industrial Estate, the car

park is of no historic interest and its buildings lack any design relationship to the historic town centre. It introduces a hard urban environment with little effective landscaping in a location which was historically occupied by market gardens.

5. ***To exclude*** land to the south of the railway line and west of Peth Head. Part of this land is Strategic Green Space and part developed as a residential care home which is of no historic or architectural interest. The area also includes the Edwardian terraces of Woodlands, Woodside and Monks Terrace which are a substantial distance away from the remainder of the historic town. They remain substantially unaltered and it is recommended that the issuing of an appropriate Article 4 Direction(s) is given urgent consideration to prevent any unsympathetic alterations should the terraces be excluded from the conservation area.

6. ***To exclude*** Hexham General Hospital; Marks and Spencer and its car park; and land to the east of Dipton Mill Road. The new hospital and the shop and car park are modern built complexes with large car parks which do not add to the historic character of the conservation area. Land to the east of Dipton Mill Road is identified as Strategic Green Space which offers it adequate protection.

7. ***To exclude*** the late C20th housing along the west side of Eastgate and Dipton Mill Road (Gibson Fields and Moonfield) which do not contribute to the historic character of the town.

8. ***To exclude*** the post-war housing to the south of Elvaston Park Road which does not contribute to the historic character of the town (south side of Elvaston Park Road, Elvaston Drive and Elvaston Gardens)

9. ***To exclude*** the course of Wydon Burn. This is identified as Strategic Green Space which offers it adequate protection.

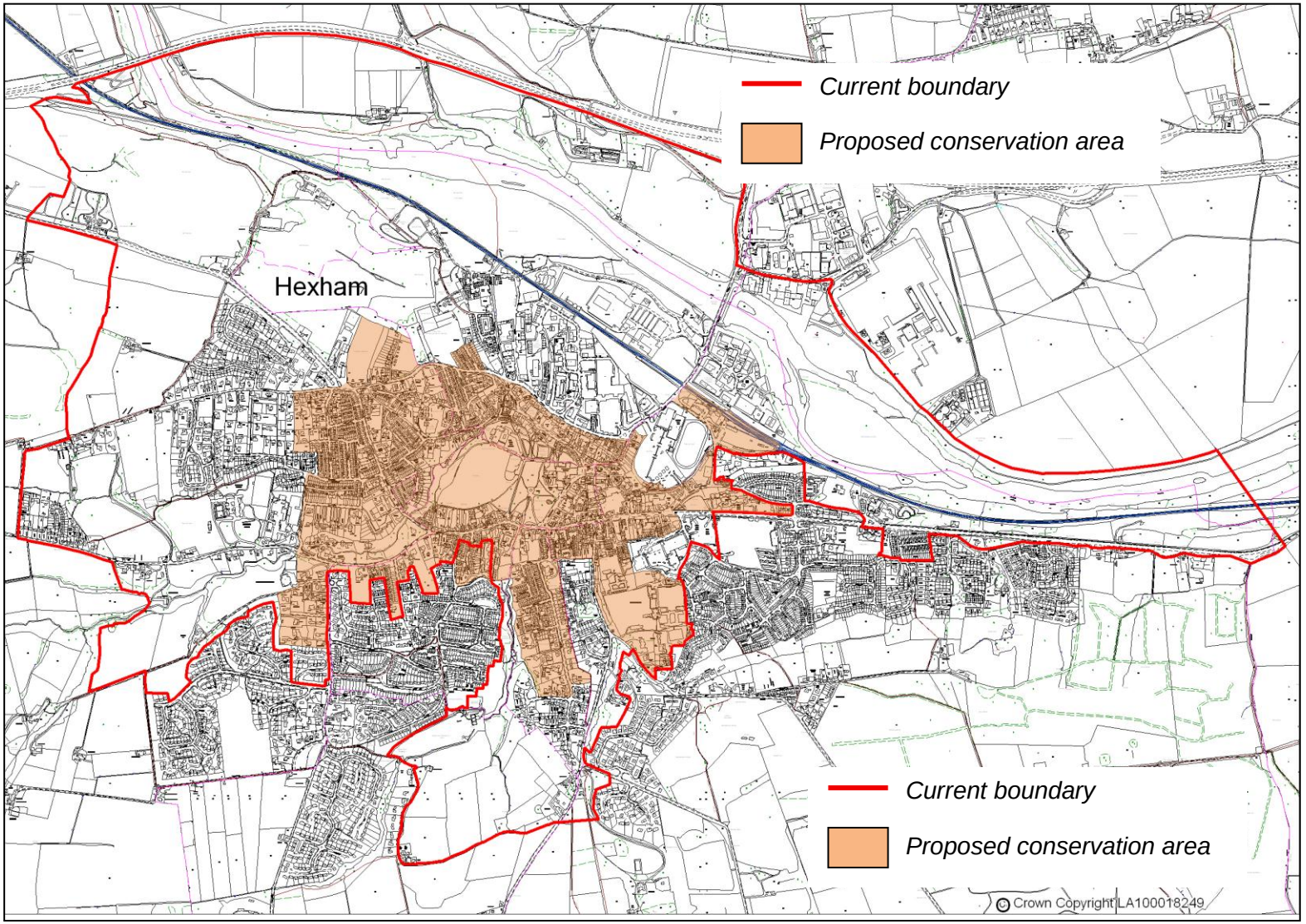
10. ***To exclude*** The Chase to the west of Causey Hill. The Chase is a late C20th housing development built over a former field which does not contribute to the character of the conservation area.

11. ***To exclude*** Queen Elizabeth High School and the Hydro. The High School is a large late C20th slab complex which does not contribute to the distinctive historic character of the area. The Hydro is a grade II listed building which offers it and its setting adequate protection.

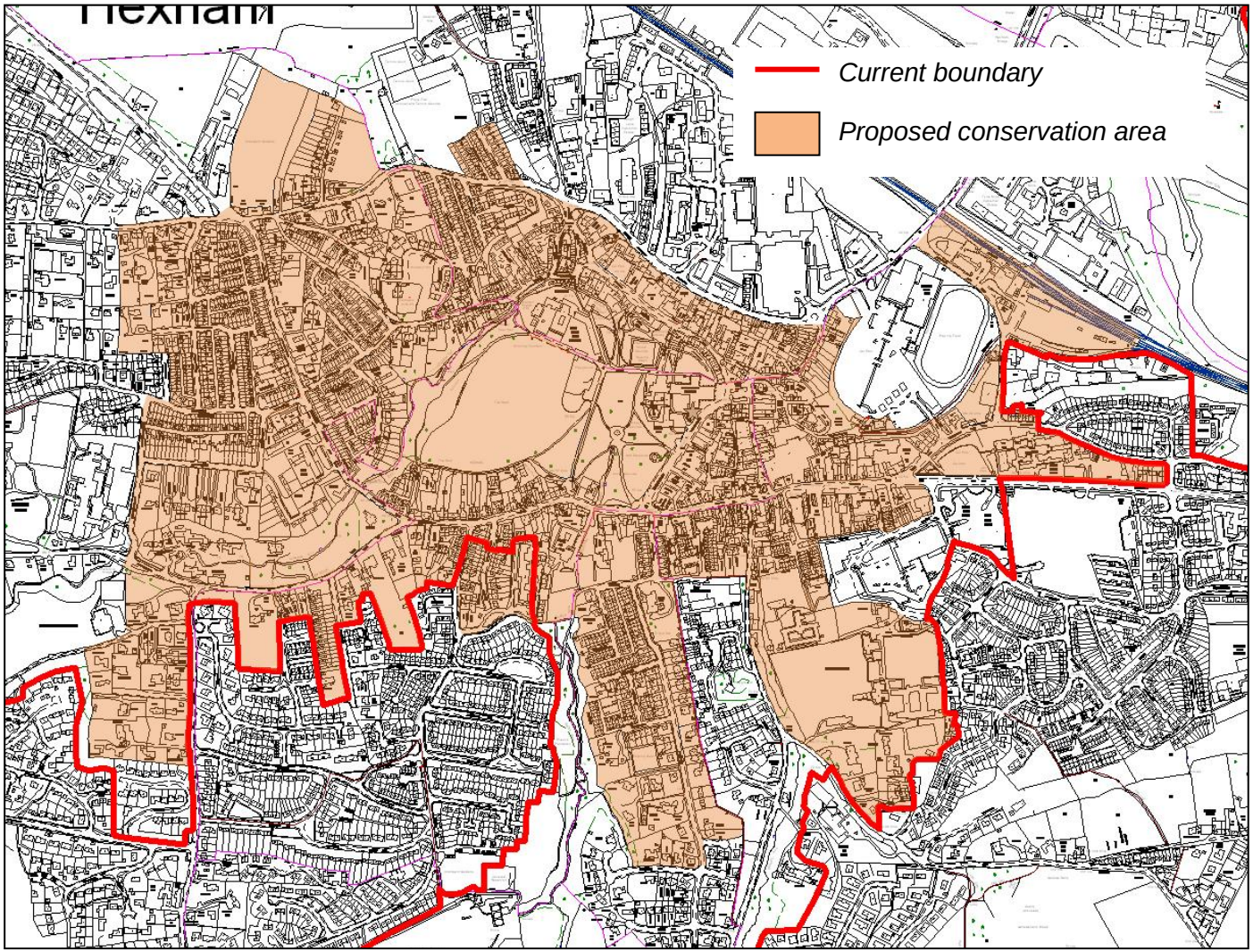
12. ***To exclude*** the predominantly inter-war and mid to late-C20th housing to the north of Whitby Avenue and Osborne Avenue/Burswell House and the east and west of Leazes Lane.

This comprises a mixture of detached houses in relatively large gardens and modern estates, including Leazes Park and Shaws Park, which are laid out to standard patterns using contemporary materials. They are not of architectural significance in the context of the historic character of Hexham.

13. ***To include*** St Cuthbert's Terrace and St Cuthbert's Close. St Cuthbert's Terrace is part of the good quality terraced housing that emerged in Hexham in the late C19th and is important in its own right and in the contribution that it makes to the views along Hencotes.



Map 10: Proposed boundary changes



Map 11: Proposed conservation area

9.2 Buildings at risk

There are no buildings in the conservation area included on the English Heritage Building at Risk Register. However, there a number of properties that pose a local risk. They are:

- The ropery off Argyle Street. The building is empty and in very poor condition. By its nature it is a building with a very individual form, difficult to use for other functions; however it is an unusual survival of a small-scale agricultural industry, and marks an important historic boundary
- The old workhouse is vacant and vulnerable. It is a substantial and important architectural and social landmark which should be preserved and protected.
- The interesting but neglected complex of buildings to the east of the railway station.

9.3 Listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments

There are many of listed buildings in the conservation area and three scheduled ancient monuments (Appendix 2). The listing of buildings of architectural or historic interest is carried out by English Heritage on behalf of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. Additions to the list can only be suggested.

The listed buildings include good examples of period architecture and buildings of historic interest. There are other buildings that also encapsulate the heritage distinctiveness of the town that could be worthy of consideration for inclusion on the list. They include shops with surviving C19th frontages together with surviving C17th and C18th houses together with appropriate C19th/early C20th terraced houses (group value) and detached houses. It is recommended that they should be researched to discover whether any are worthy of listing.

9.4 Future Management

Conservation status does not mean that the area should remain preserved as a museum piece but that it should be managed in a way that responds to its heritage significance, ensuring that changes enhance its special character. Good design, careful maintenance and sensitive handling of public space will allow the area to live and develop but in a way that responds to the conservation of its special character. A Conservation Area Management Plan will be prepared following the adoption of this Character Appraisal. The Management Plan will be seek to achieve the following objectives:

- To establish and define the significance of the conservation area as a whole and of the individual elements found within it such as architectural, historical, residential, commercial, ecclesiastic, landscape and social components.
- To assess and define the threats and opportunities within the area and how these impact on the significance of individual elements and of the conservation area as a whole.
- To provide policy guidance to ensure that the significance of the conservation area will be maintained whilst changes occur rather than being lost or damaged and that opportunities for enhancement are maximised.

English Heritage recommends that the following topics should be considered in the preparation of the Management Plan[9]:

- Article 4 directions
- Enforcement and monitoring change
- Buildings at risk
- Site specific design guidance or development briefs and thematic policy guidance
- Specific enhancement opportunities
- Trees and green spaces
- Urban design and public realm
- Regeneration issues
- Decision making and community consultation
- Available resources

The overall purpose of this Character Appraisal is to provide a benchmark for assessing the impact of development proposals on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The management plan will be based on the characteristics identified in the character assessment and provides policy guidance for their preservation and enhancement.

[9] Guidance on the Management of Conservation Areas, English Heritage 2006

10 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Planning procedures in Hexham Conservation Area

1. Introduction

Stricter planning controls are exerted in the conservation area to ensure that local character is strengthened and not diminished. The Council has a duty to make sure that developments and change will preserve or enhance its character and appearance. This appendix looks at the impact of planning controls. Finally, the Council has statutory powers enabling it to take action to instigate repairs when it becomes evident that a listed building is falling into decay

Demolitions, alterations, extensions and other works affecting the character or appearance of properties in the conservation area will probably require planning permission and/or listed building consent or conservation area consent.

The Council is generally requires more detail than usual with applications submitted for listed building consent and full planning permission and conservation area consent of buildings within the conservation area. Written guidelines describing the extent and kind of detailed information required when submitting an application are available from the Council's Planning Department. The guidance below outlines current planning requirements and is not a precise statement of the law. It is always advisable to discuss any proposals within Hexham Conservation Area with the Council's Planning Department at the earliest opportunity.

2. Control of works to unlisted flats, dwelling houses and commercial properties within Hexham Conservation area.

Flats

Residents living in a flat in Hexham Conservation Area will need planning permission to extend their property. Planning permission will also be needed for alterations to a flat that would materially alter the appearance of the building. For example, the installation of roof lights.

Dwelling houses

Residents living in a house in Hexham Conservation Area require planning permission to extend or alter their property in the following circumstances:

- If the cubic capacity of the original house is going to be increased by more than 50 cubic metres or by more than 10% of its original volume, whichever is the greater. The term 'original house',' means as it was first built or as it stood on the 1st July 1948 if it was built before that date. Any additional building over 10 cubic metres in volume in a garden. (for example, a garage or shed) is treated as an extension to the house and therefore counts against the volume allowance.
- If a resident wants to extend their property beyond the front of the original house bringing it closer than 20metres away from any highway. This does not apply to porches, as there are special rules for them. The term highway used here includes all roads, footpaths byways and bridleways if they are public rights of way.
- If more than half the area of land that surrounds the original house is going to be covered by additions or other extensions.
- If the extension is going to be higher than the highest part of the roof of the 'original house'.
- If any part of extension is going to be more than 4m high and within 2m of the boundary of the property.
- The construction of a building or enclosure within the garden for the personal enjoyment of the occupants of the house and relates to its residential use that has a volume of over 10 cubic metres.
- Enlargements and alterations, such a dormer windows, whether on the front or other roof slopes.
- The cladding of any part of the exterior of a dwelling house with stone, artificial stone, brick, render, timber, plastic or tiles.
- The installation of a satellite dish or large aerial array that exceeds 15m in height on the chimney of a building or on a wall or roof slope which fronts a highway.

Unlisted Commercial Properties

Commercial properties are governed by normal planning controls and most external alterations such as the replacement of timber sash windows with uPVC or the installation of a satellite dish will require planning permission.

Demolition

Although planning permission is not required to demolish any unlisted building within the conservation area. Conservation area consent will be necessary. Conservation area consent is required to

totally or substantially demolish most buildings within the conservation area. Residents should contact the Planning Department for more information.

Conservation area consent is also required to totally or substantially demolish a gate, fence, wall or railing over 1 m high where it is next to a highway (including a public footpath or bridleway) or public open space, or over 2 m high anywhere else. Residents should contact the Planning Department for more information.

3. Listed buildings

Owner's responsibilities

Buildings are listed to protect them from demolition or unsympathetic alterations. The protection given by this legislation applies to the whole of all listed buildings, including their exteriors and interiors and to any objects or structures fixed to them or forming part of their curtilege area, unless it is a freestanding building, object or structure that was constructed after 1st July 1948.

The main effect of listing is that before any work affecting the character of a listed building can be carried out it is necessary to apply to the Council for listed building consent. This is required in addition to any other planning or building regulation approvals which may also be needed. The are circumstances where it is necessary to alter a listed building , for example, to suit a new use, but it cannot be demolished completely or in part, extended or altered in any way that would change its appearance and character, without the written agreement of the Council in the form of a listed building consent.

It is a criminal offence to carry out work to a listed building, other than minor straightforward like-for-like repairs, without first obtaining consent, that could lead to imprisonment and/or a very heavy fine. The Council's Planning Department could also serve a listed building enforcement notice requiring the building to be restored to its former state. Contact should be made with the Council's Planning Department for advice on whether listed building consent is required or likely to be obtained for proposed work. For considered advice, it is helpful to provide scaled plans.

Works and alterations to listed buildings requiring consent

Listed building consent is required for any alteration that affects the character and appearance of a listed building. For example,

consent would normally be needed for any of the following alterations:

a. External

- Adding an extension.
- Changing the roof pitch or roof covering materials.
- Inserting roof lights.
- Removing, altering or adding dormer windows.
- Altering or removing chimney stacks or pots.
- Rebuilding walls in different materials.
- Covering the existing walls surface in any way, such as render, cladding, paint etc.
- Changing the size of a door, window or other opening.
- Forming new openings for any reason, including balanced flues or ventilators.
- Altering window frames and doors and replacing them with a different type.
- Removing any features such as. door cases and balustrade etc.
- Changing the material and shape of rainwater goods.
- Adding any new features such as porches and signs etc.
- Adding a satellite antenna and dishes.
- Adding security alarm boxes or closed circuit TV cameras.
- Adding external floodlights.

b. Internal

- Altering the plan by removing or adding walls or forming new openings.
- Taking out or altering staircases, fireplaces, decorative plasterwork, panelling, shutters, doors, architraves, skirting etc.
- Installing new ceilings, partitions, secondary glazing etc.
- Filling in cellars.
- Removing or replacing floors of floor finishes.
- The obliteration of wall painting, decorative tiles, mosaics etc.

Repairs to listed buildings requiring consent.

Repairs involving replacement with identical features do not require listed building consent if they are for a small area or the work is carried out in situ. Great care must be taken to match the material,

construction, moulding and colour of the original feature. When undertaking alterations or repairs to historic buildings it is advisable to seek the advice of an architect or surveyor who is particularly knowledgeable about restoration techniques and the legislation relating to listed buildings. Before carrying out repairs, clarification should be sought from the Planning Department that the work does not need listed building consent.

4. Scheduled ancient monuments

Scheduled ancient monuments are protected against disturbance or unlicensed metal detecting. The Secretary of State must be informed about any work which might affect a monument above or below ground, and English Heritage gives advice to the Government on each application. In assessing each application the Secretary of State will try to ensure that damage done to protected sites is kept to a minimum.

5. Works to trees

It is the character and appearance of a conservation area as a whole that the Council is required to preserve and enhance, not just that of the buildings within it. A major element in the character and the appearance of the Hexham area are the trees, gardens and open spaces within it. Therefore, ill-considered works to trees may not only lead to the loss of the trees themselves but also ruin the appearance of the area surrounding them and spoil the setting of any buildings nearby.

All trees with a trunk diameter of 75mm, measured at 1.5m. above ground level within the conservation area are protected. Any works to them including pruning and felling will require a written notification to the Council six weeks before the works start. There are exemptions:

Trees that are dead, dying or that have become dangerous.

Pruning fruit trees in accordance with good horticultural practice events or control a legal nuisance.

If in doubt, clarification should be sought from the Planning Department that prior notification is not required.

6. Advertisements

Additional planning procedures apply to the display of advertisements within the conservation area. In particular

prohibiting the use of advertising hoardings around building sites and the use of captive balloons for advertising. Residents should contact the Planning Department for more information.

7. Urgent works and repair notices

Keeping historic buildings repaired and, where possible, in use, is the key to their preservation. The Council can take action to make sure that listed buildings are kept in a good state of repair to ensure their preservation when it becomes evident that a building has fallen into decay.

Urgent works notices to secure emergency or immediate repairs to stop deterioration can be served on the unoccupied parts of both listed and unlisted buildings in the conservation area. An urgent works notice is a statement of the Council's intend to carry out works itself if the owner does not and to reclaim the cost from the owner. It is hoped that such notices are sufficient to encourage owners to repair the buildings or to put them onto the market.

Repairs notices, requiring works reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of a building, can be served on listed buildings. The service of a repairs notice can be the first step towards compulsory purchase, but the service of most notices persuade owners to sell the building concerned rather than allowing the procedure to run its course. Much more work can be specified in a repairs notice than in an urgent repairs notice.

Appendix 2

Relevant Council Policies

Tynedale Council has a raft of policies that are designed to protect and enhance the historic environment. The Council is moving towards the completion of its Local Development Framework (LDF). This is the folder of local development documents that outlines how planning will be managed in the future. It will gradually replace the adopted Tynedale District Local Plan. The LDF consists of several documents and plans that form a framework for planning future development in Tynedale, including where new housing, employment and community facilities will be located and for safeguarding the environment of the District. Three important documents have already been adopted including the Core Strategy. The Local Plan is slowly being superseded by the LDF documents but elements of it will remain as "saved" while further new documents are produced.

The key relevant parts of the LDF Core Strategy and saved Local Plan policies that impact upon the conservation area are as follows:

The LDF Core Strategy:

Core Strategy BE1 includes:

To 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.

Core Strategy GD3

The existing boundaries of the Northumberland Green Belt will be maintained. It is designed, in part, to protect the character and setting of historic settlements (Map 12).

Saved policies from Tynedale District Local Plan

BE19 - Demolition of Listed Buildings

The total or substantial demolition of a listed building will not be permitted.

BE18 - Development affecting the character and setting of a Conservation Area

Outside a conservation area, development will be permitted if it would not harm the character setting or views into or out of the conservation area.

BE20 - Demolition of structures in the curtilage of a listed building

Listed building consent for the demolition of structures within the curtilage of a listed building will be permitted where:

- the structure to be demolished does not make a significant contribution to the character of the Listed Building or its setting,
- any redevelopment proposals meet the requirement of Policy BE22; and
- the structure is not listed in its own right or mentioned in the list description

BE21 - Alteration and extension to listed buildings

Proposals for the alteration or extension of listed buildings will be granted consent where:

- the essential character of the building is retained and its features of special interest remain intact and unimpaired,
- the works proposed make use of traditional and/or sympathetic building materials and techniques which match or are in keeping with those found on the Listed Building,
- the architectural details (e.g. doors, gutters, windows) match or are in keeping with the Listed Building; and
- the proposal meets the requirement of General Development Policy GD2.

All applications for such development must be accompanied by detailed drawings of both the existing structure and the proposed development

BE22 - The setting of listed buildings

Proposals for development which would adversely affect the essential character or setting of a Listed Building will not be permitted.

Proposals for development within the setting of a listed building will only be appropriate where the following criteria are met:

- the detailed design is in keeping with the listed building in terms of scale, height, massing and alignment; and
- the works proposed make use of traditional or sympathetic building materials and techniques which are in keeping with those found on the listed building

BE23 - Change of use of listed buildings

The change of use of a listed building in order to restore or maintain its viable use will be permitted provided the proposal accords with Policy BE21

BE27 - Regional and locally important archaeological sites and settings

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

BE28 - Archaeological Assessment

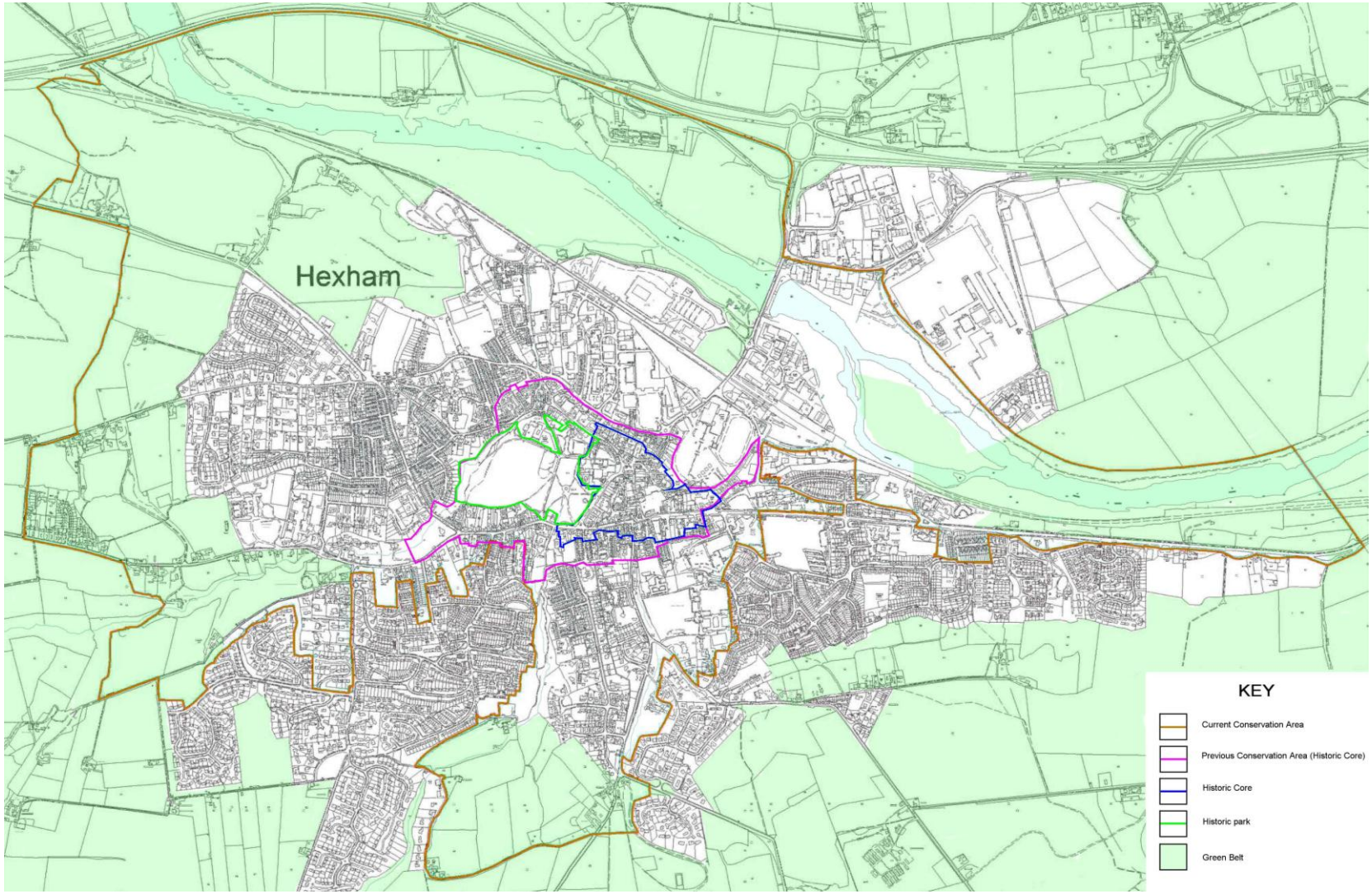
Where it is not clear how important an archaeological site is, or where the impact of a development proposal on an existing archaeological site is uncertain, the developer will be required to provide further information in the form of an archaeological assessment and, where such an assessment indicates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

BE29 - Development and preservation

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.

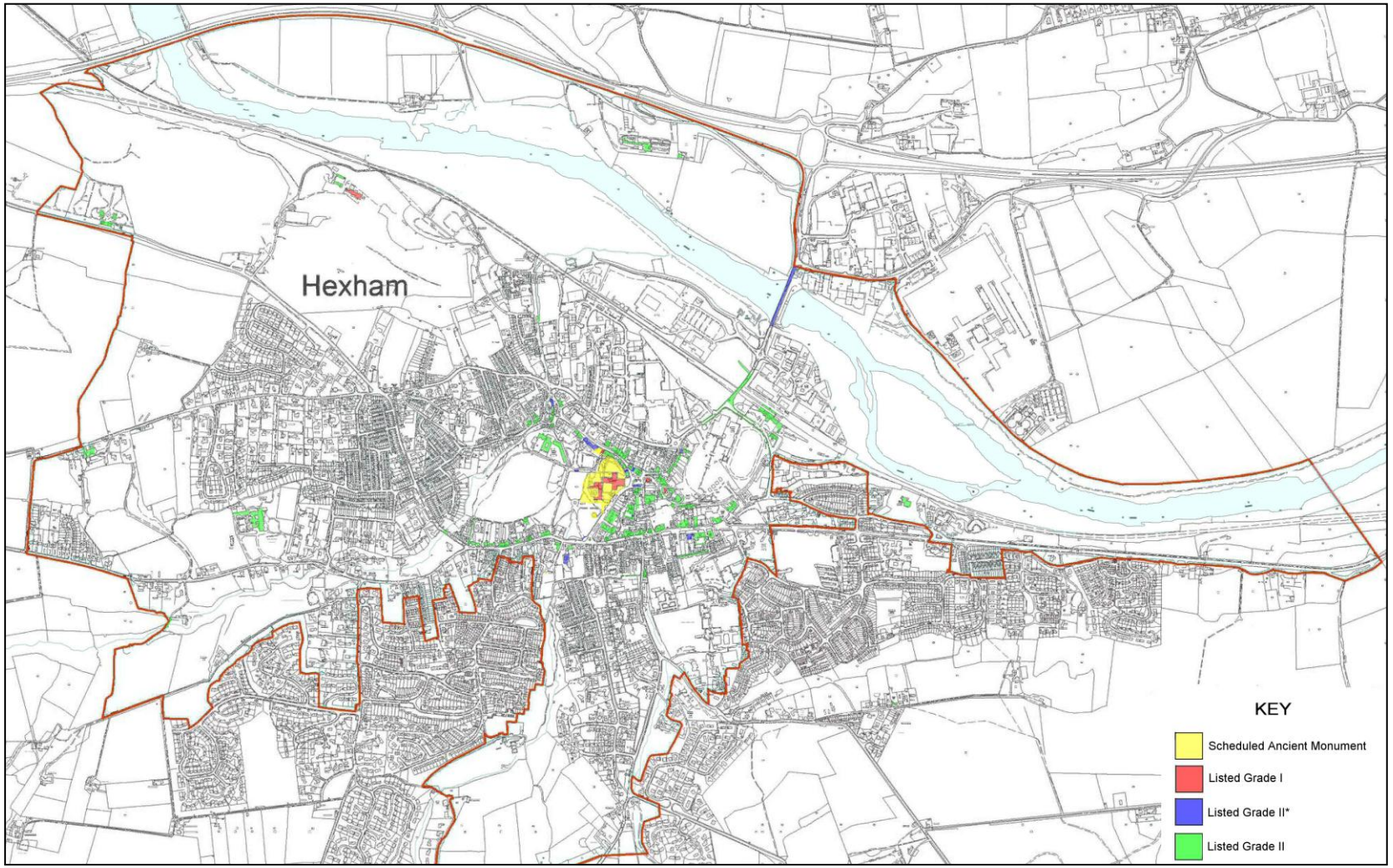
There are a number of other LDF policies impacting upon the conservation. They relate to:

- ***Economic development and tourism*** – Policies ED1.8, ED5.3, ED1.6, ED5.2, ED1a.
- ***Housing*** – Policies H4.2, H4.3, H4.4
- ***Transport*** – Policy TP9
- ***Retail*** – Policies RT4.1, RT4.2
- ***Historic Parks and Gardens*** – Policies BE1, BE24
- ***Strategic Green Gaps*** – Policies BE1, BE17, BE18



Map 12 : The extent of the Green Belt and boundaries

Appendix 3 : Listed buildings



Listed buildings and scheduled ancient monument, Hexham Conservation Area

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