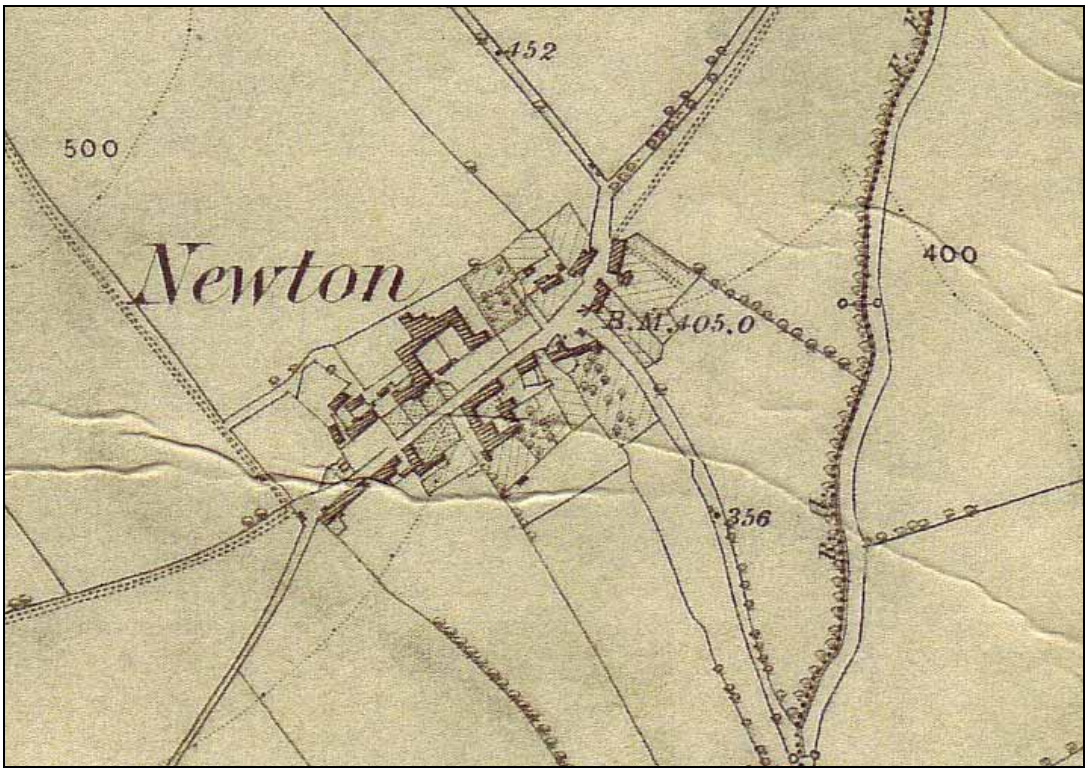
Tynedale
COUNCIL

NEWTON

Conservation Area Character Appraisal



APRIL 2008

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990, places a duty on every local planning authority to determine which parts of their district are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The Act also requires that local authorities should from time to time formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of their conservation areas. The purpose of this document is to assist in this process by providing an appraisal of Newton Conservation Area that describes the general character of the area, and by defining what is of special historic importance. It gives guidance to the form of possible future change, the scope for enhancement and protection of the historic environment, and includes a review of the boundaries of the conservation area. A glossary of conservation terms and techniques is included at the end of the appraisal.

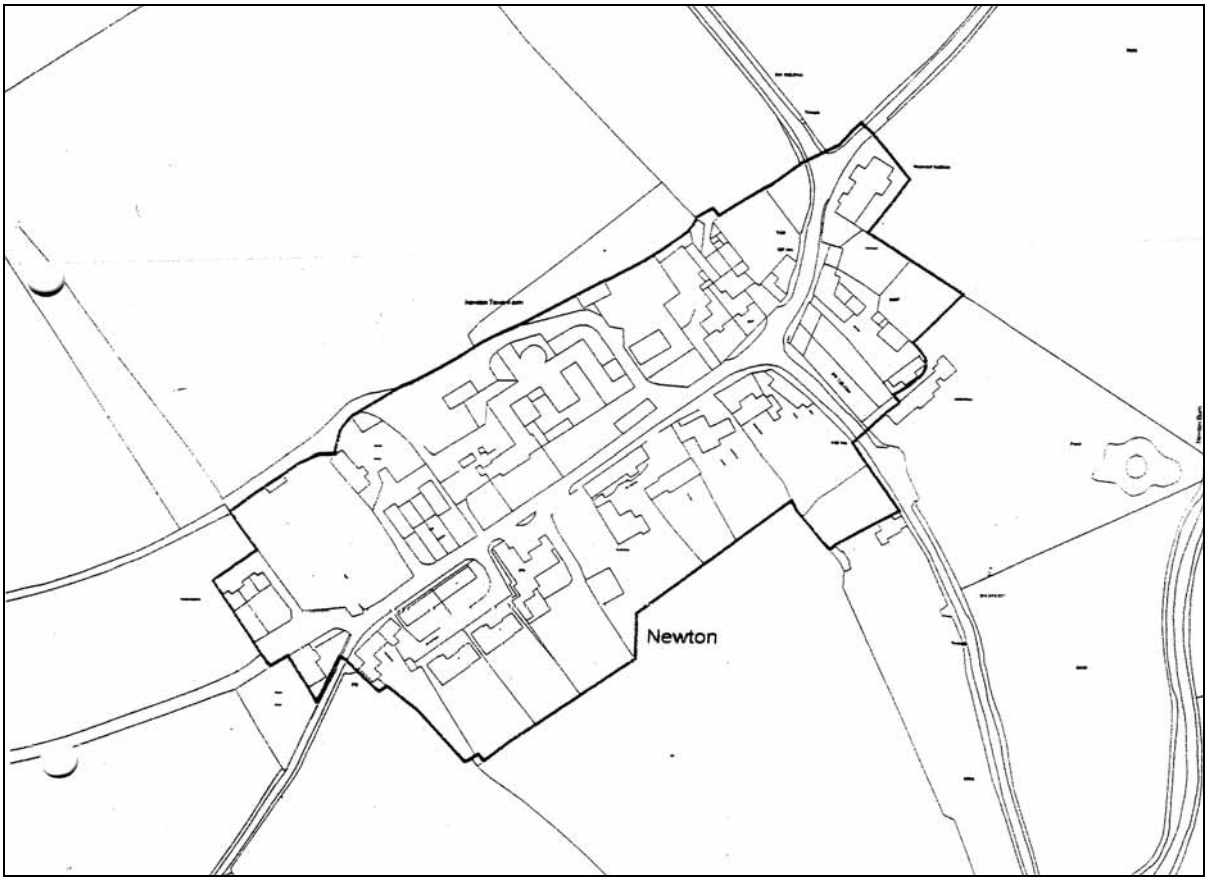

Figure 1 *Newton Conservation Area*

2.0 THE CURRENT PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 Newton Conservation Area was designated on 30 April 1991. The settlement is included in the Northumberland Green Belt.

2.2 The following planning policies apply to the settlement of Newton:

- Tynedale Local Development Framework Core Strategy Policy NE1

- Tynedale Local Development Framework Core Strategy Policy BE1
- Saved Tynedale District Local Plan Policies BE17 and BE18
- Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Policy 33
- Adopted Regional Spatial Strategy ENV 6 and ENV 8

Green Belt Policies:

- Tynedale Local Development Framework Core Strategy Policy GD3
- Saved Tynedale District Local Plan Policies NE7, NE8, NE9 and NE14
- Draft Regional Spatial Strategy Policies 6 and 41
- Adopted Regional Spatial Strategy Policy GB1

Nationally, guidance introduced through PPG 15 directs the development and implementation of conservation area policies.

3.0 DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

3.1 Newton is a stone built village that is cut into the northern slope of the valley. It is primarily built on two development platforms that are separated by the road. It is approached from the east and the west by roads that are trenched between high banked verges, some contained by stone retaining walls. This method of containment continues through the village to form the southern edge of the northern development platform. Stone and slate dominates throughout the village giving a sturdy and robust character that connects buildings and structures to the ground in a way that gives a feeling of permanence and longetivity. The mellow patina of the stonework adds to the sensation of age, and the use of locally quarried materials reinforces the harmonious link between buildings and their natural surroundings. The linear pattern of the village, ranged on either side of the main road (U8194) is broken by building setbacks and different types and scales of built masses together with landscaping. This is an evolution of the historic roots of the village that focussed on two groups of farm buildings that were added to as population levels grew together with the development of appropriate services such as shops, a chapel, a village hall and a school.

3.2 The character of the village has changed with the decline of its agricultural base – the sounds, smells and activities that would have dominated the senses have given way to a more genteel, domestic way of life. This is reinforced by the extensive replacement of agricultural/industrial openings and original mid-nineteenth century sliding sash fenestration by modern windows, many designed to replicate late eighteenth century/early nineteenth century multi light units that do not fit the historic origins of buildings. The brilliant white of frames and glazing bars, rather than the more subdued tones that were common in the nineteenth century, further interrupts the historic harmony.

3.3 However, the generally fine quality of the historic building stock; the retention of some building patterns and historic details during conversion processes; the preservation of the retaining walls that wind into and through the village; the continued presence of important green spaces, albeit within the curtilege of buildings; and the survival of humble, yet historically significant outbuildings, combine to create the special character of the village. This is reinforced by uncluttered roofscapes and adjacent field patterns that frame attractive distant views of Newton. There have been changes that have altered the historic layout and appearance of the village, primarily infill developments, substantially limited to the west end; developments and partial demolitions associated with changes of use; and modifications to fenestration and openings that have followed conversion and maintenance works. However, in spite of some inappropriate changes, the overall special character of the conservation area remains largely intact. The possibility exists that this character

could be reinforced through the reversing of inappropriate alterations over time, and the introduction of policies and guidance to help prevent any further erosion of the architectural details that give life and authenticity to the historic character of Newton.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

4.1 Location and Setting

4.1.1 Newton is located in the Tyne Valley some six kilometres to the east of Corbridge. Most of the village is contained in the conservation area with the boundaries drawn to contain the built settlement and immediate curtilage space. It sits on the fertile rising side of the valley virtually midway between the River Tyne and the break of slope delineated by Hadrian's Wall. Newton is one of a number of settlements that are strung at regular intervals along the northern side of the river. It is close to Newton Hall, which is located some 800 metres to the north east of the village. The 1811 Hall contains fragments of a thirteenth century castle. This together with tenancy records going back to the thirteenth century indicates that there has been a settled population in the area for at least six hundred years.

4.1.2 Historically, the local economy has been agriculturally based. In addition to the farms in Newton, a significant agricultural machinery and equipment manufacturing plant flourished in the village, diversifying and widening both the employment and economic base of the area. The configuration of the surrounding landscape reflects this use, with traditional field patterns supporting a rich agrarian industry.

4.1.3 Figure 1 illustrates the extent of the conservation area. Its southern boundary runs along the garden boundaries of the properties ranged along the southern side of the main street to return along the western boundaries of the former Methodist Wesleyan Chapel and West End Cottages. The northern boundary follows the margin of Newton House, Town Farm and the residual properties that stretch along the northern side of the main street to return along its eastern boundary that contains the Women's Institute and gardens of properties at this end of the main street.

4.2 General character and plan form

4.2.1 Newton is linear in form, and is ranged along the northern and southern sides of the U8194. The buildings fall into groups that reflect the historic development of the village. The focus is Town Farm and its associated outbuildings. The group is positioned at the centre of the elevated northern development platform where the design quality of the farmhouse and the traditional open courtyard plan of the farm outbuildings make it the predominant built element of the village. The character of the group has changed with the subdivision of the farmyard. However, its dominance in the streetscene remains intact.

4.2.2 Town Farm is counterbalanced on the southern side of the main street by South Farm and the Duke of Wellington public house. Although less prominent because of size, irregularity of form, partial demolitions and later alterations, and their lower elevation down the slope, this group combines to create a building mass that is the visual counterpoint and the historic focus of the south side. Buildings have spread out, with some occasional changes, on both sides of the two focal points to create the contemporary ribbon plan form of the village.

4.3 Geology and topography

4.3.1 The geology of the area is typical of the central Tyne Valley where the underlying rock is predominantly limestone. The topography is the product of glaciation and

river erosion. The village sits between 120 and 130 metres above sea level on the southern face of a suppressed bluff that that lies between two tributary valleys leading to the River Tyne. The tributaries, Brockhole Burn and Newton Burn, are two of a number of streams that form a corrugated profile over the northern flanks of the river valley. Newton sits in a position where it is offered some shelter by rising land to the north, but has the full advantage of a southern aspect. The soils in the area are well drained and fertile.

4.4 Landscape setting

4.4.1 The general landscape of the area is dominated by the field patterns that surround Newton. There are plantations that are interspersed amongst the arable fields and provide visual foils and backdrops to the village. Of particular interest is the plantation located to the south of the village where the approach road from Shaw House splits to go to Newton Hall (marked A on Figure 2). This area of planting rises from Newton Burn to provide a wooded setting to the south west corner of the settlement. The plantation on Toft Hill to the north east of the village provides a backdrop that is of historic landscape value, predating the 1862 Ordnance Survey (marked B on Figure 2).

4.4.2 The fields that run down the slope from the southern edge of the built settlement are divided by fence lines, with occasional remnants of hedging and associated field trees. Early photographs show that the fields were fully hedged, creating a strong landscaped setting to the village, and reinforcing the perception of its agricultural base.

4.4.3 The village is relatively well planted with garden shrubs. However, early photographs from the late nineteenth/early twentieth century show the presence of a limited number of substantial trees in the gardens of properties on the northern side of the road, which overhung the carriageway to create a soft, green, spine to the settlement. The trees had reached maturity by 1900, that suggesting that they were planted in the early to mid-nineteenth century, about the same time as Town Farm was developed. The loss of the trees, as illustrated in Figure 3, has had a radical impact on the emerging appearance of the streetscape, in terms of colour, massing and structure. The trees filled the space between the built frontages, which, when exposed, creates a void and diminishes the skyline.

4.4.4 New housing in the village is ornamented by species of plants that are currently fashionable, particularly ornamental conifers.

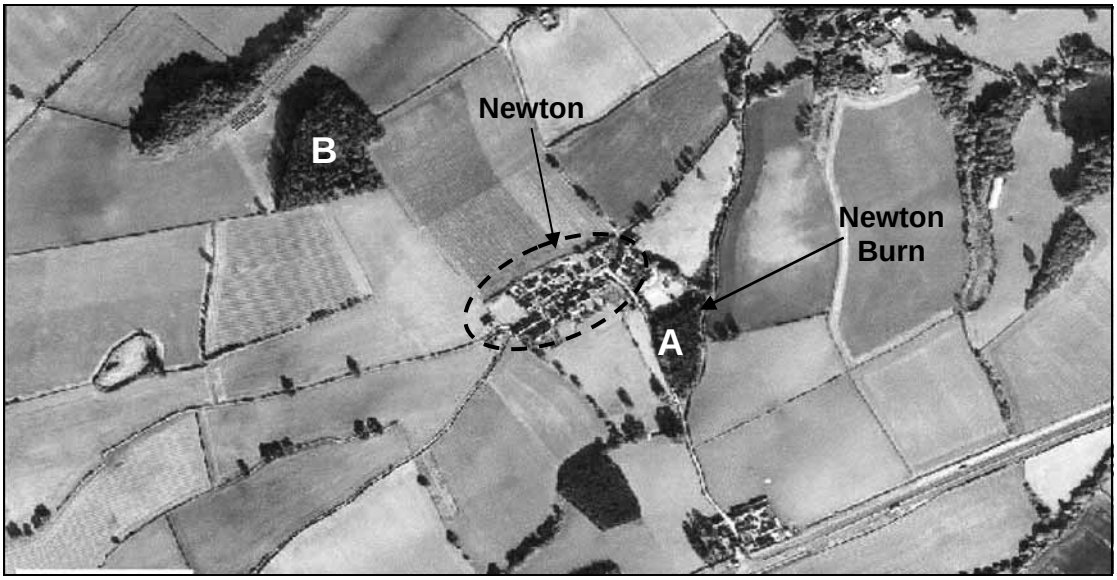

Figure 2 Aerial photograph showing landscape pattern around Newton

East end of village c.1900 with tree cover

East end of village 2006

West end of village c.1900 with tree cover

West end of village 2006

Figure 3 Photographs showing the visual change to the nineteenth century character of the village following the felling of maturing hardwood trees

4.5 Significant landmarks

4.5.1 There are no distinctive landmarks in the village that interrupt or focus views. Within the village, the brick chimney stack beside the former threshing house engine room of Town Farm creates a point of visual interest, and is a pointer to the economic history of the village.

4.6 Key views and vistas

4.6.1 Views to Newton from a southerly aspect are particularly important because of the impact that the settlement makes on the wider valley side. From the A69, the village appears to run along the edge of a valley fold, marking the crease with a single line of building mass (Figure 4). New development, together with modifications to older properties and changes of use from agricultural to residential purposes, has resulted in the presentation of a series of elevations, some with dormers, that take advantage of a south facing prospect and spectacular views across the Tyne Valley and beyond. This represents an alteration from the historic presentation of buildings that hitherto had simpler elevations with fewer windows overlooking the valley to, in parts, a suburban edge to the village (Figure 5). This is reinforced by the containment of gardens by panel fencing and conifer hedging. The loss of hedgerows has altered the traditional quilted pattern of fields that would have surrounded the village, but enough survive to trace their outline. Views to the village from other directions tend to be constrained by the channelling of roads with high banksides. This means that

the visual impact of the village is reduced to glimpses of roofscapes from the far and middle distance and the immediate impact of single or limited groups of buildings on entry into the settlement.

Figure 4 Newton from south of the A69

Figure 5 Suburban southern edge of Newton

4.6.2 As a rural settlement, the agricultural hinterland decorated by stands of trees provides a distinctive setting to the village. Views to and from Newton over this open landscape are critical to creating and maintaining its distinctive character and must be protected.

5.0 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND ARCHAEOLOGY

5.1 The origins and historic development of the area

5.1.1 There is little physical evidence regarding the origins of Newton. Its recorded roots go back to post-conquest times with reference to 'messuages', or tenemented smallholdings, from the medieval period. John Crawford Hodgson writing in his book, The History of Northumberland (1902), mentions that, as a consequence of border raids, Newton had become deserted and ruinous. This pattern of periodic destruction and rebuilding from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries is not uncommon in the Tynedale area, with the consequence that many settlements do not have substantial secular built remains pre-dating the mid-seventeenth century. The surviving earliest buildings probably date from the nineteenth century, although they may incorporate, or be built upon, the remains of earlier structures.

5.1.2 Nineteenth century Newton focussed on five built elements – South Farm, Town Farm, Symm's Agricultural Engineering Works, Duke of Wellington public house and residual groups of residential properties. The two farms and the Duke of Wellington were located at the centre of the village, forming the built fulcrum point around which the remainder of the settlement spread. Town Farm was built in the 1830s, and its fine and robust courtyard design with attached farmhouse facing over the village street from an elevated platform would have visually dominated the settlement. The farm was sold and converted to residential use in 1996. South Farm was probably built about the same time, but would not have had the same visual impact due to its reduced massing, less formal design and lower elevation. It was sold in 1978 to be converted into residential use. The Duke of Wellington is of a mid-nineteenth century appearance with later additions, but could incorporate earlier building fabric. The presence of an inn on this site is reputed to be of historic significance. Symms Agricultural Engineering Works was probably founded in the mid-seventeenth century. It developed into a well known and highly respected business whose standing and products spread across the globe. The factory, which was small for its outstanding reputation, was located to the west of the Duke of Wellington. It and an adjoining cottage were burnt down in 1911, and a new manufacturing plant was built in its stead. The business closed in 1984 and the site cleared and redeveloped for

housing in 1986. Residual groups of houses were built in the nineteenth century to accommodate the extended families of those working in the village.

5.1.3 The turn of the twentieth century was marked by the development of the Methodist Wesleyan Chapel at the extreme west end of the village in 1899 and the construction of the Women's Institute Hall at the opposite end of the village in 1923. Since that time, new building has been restricted to the redevelopment of the former factory site and work associated with farm conversions.

5.1.4 Many of the surviving buildings have been altered through maintenance and repairs where new materials and styles have been introduced. The changes from 1866 onwards can be identified through an appraisal of Ordnance Survey plans. Figure 7, Figure 8, and Figure 9 show how the shape of the village changed, and Figure 10 summarises the extent of change over the last 140 years.

5.1.5 The historic relationship between Newton and Newton Hall is noteworthy. Newton Hall is located some 800 metres to the north east of Newton. The Hall complex once incorporated the remains of a thirteenth century tower that was sadly demolished in the 1800s to provide stone for the construction of a new house in the locality. The presence of the tower, which was the corner of a larger building and the home of the de Insula family, illustrates the settled nature of the area in medieval times. Whatever remained, other than the surviving remnants of the tower, was replaced by a country house and landscaped estate built by Robert Jobling in 1811. It was modified to designs prepared by John Dobson. Newton Hall was later purchased by the Joicey family. John Joicey built the attractive and substantial Church of St James in 1854 (enlarged in 1874) together with its vicarage for the inhabitants of Newton. In 1874 the village school, now converted to residential use, was also built within the estate (Figure 6). Consequently, although separated by open countryside, Newton Hall estate has made an important contribution to village life throughout recent history.

Figure 6 The village school, converted to residential use

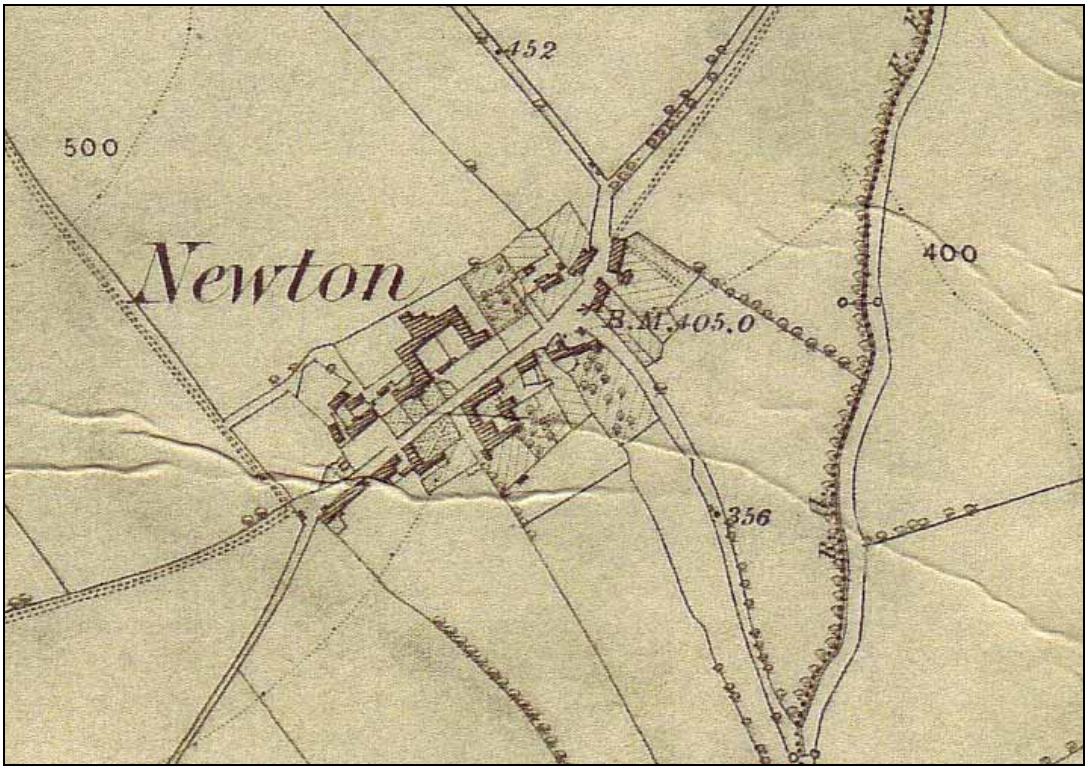

Figure 7 Newton 1862 Ordnance Survey

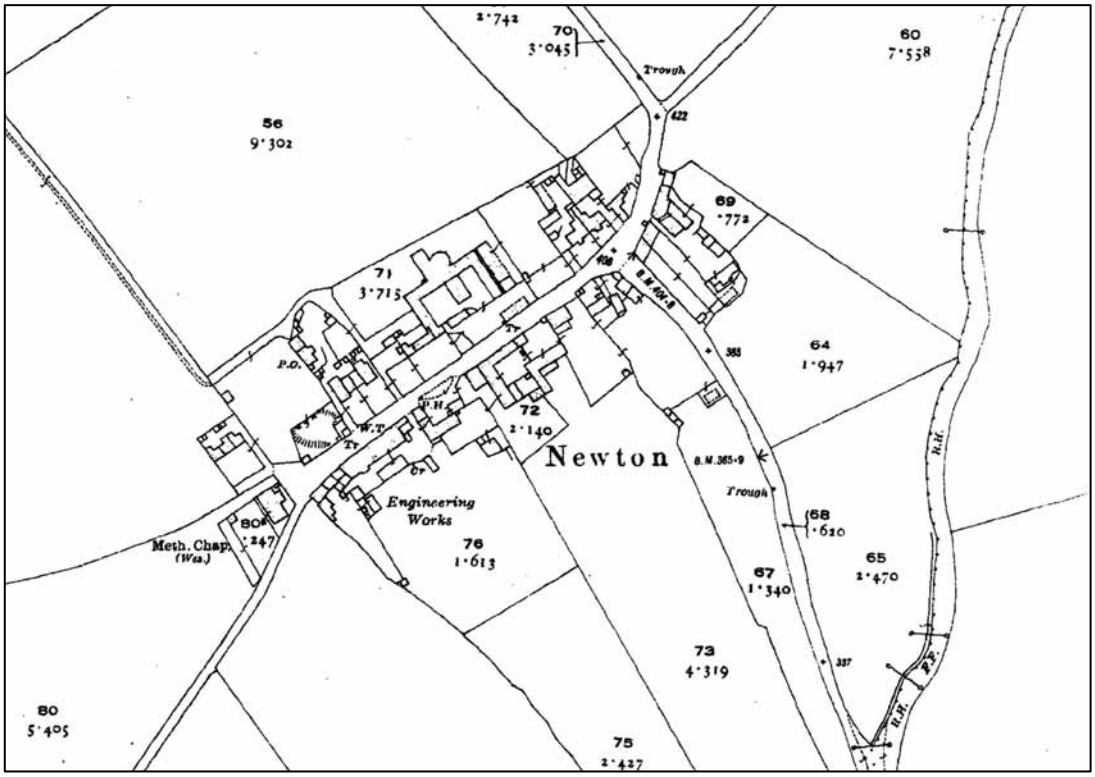

Figure 8 Newton 1921 Ordnance Survey

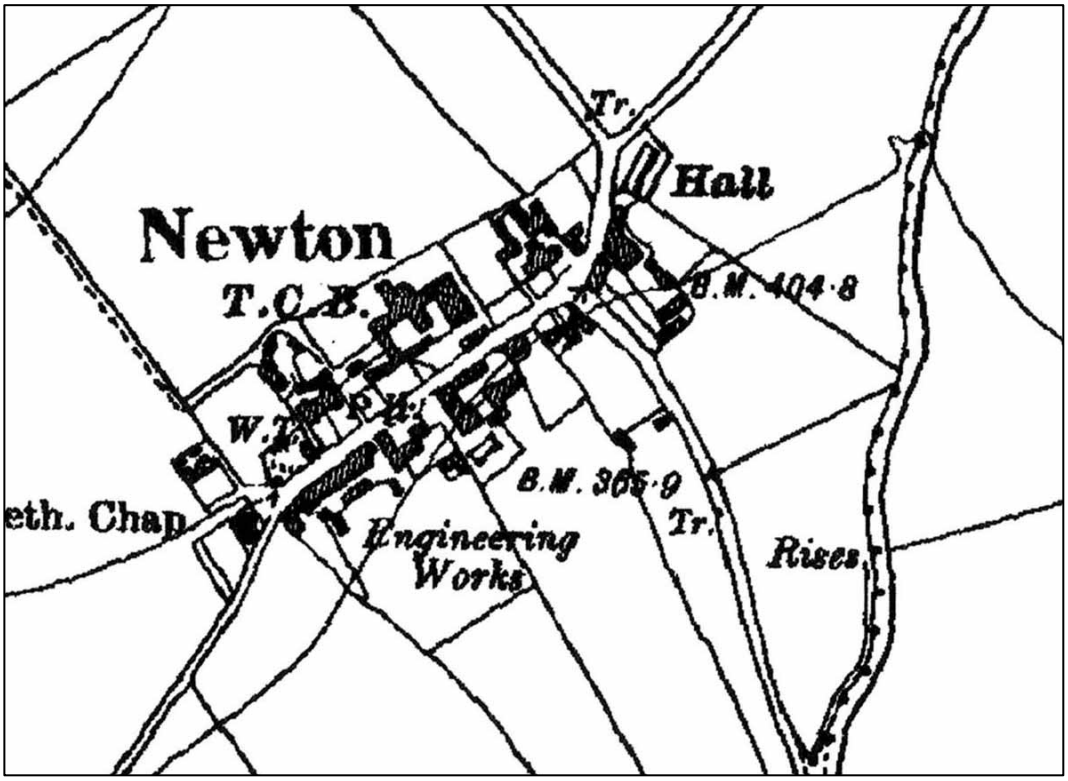

Figure 9 Newton 1947 Ordnance Survey

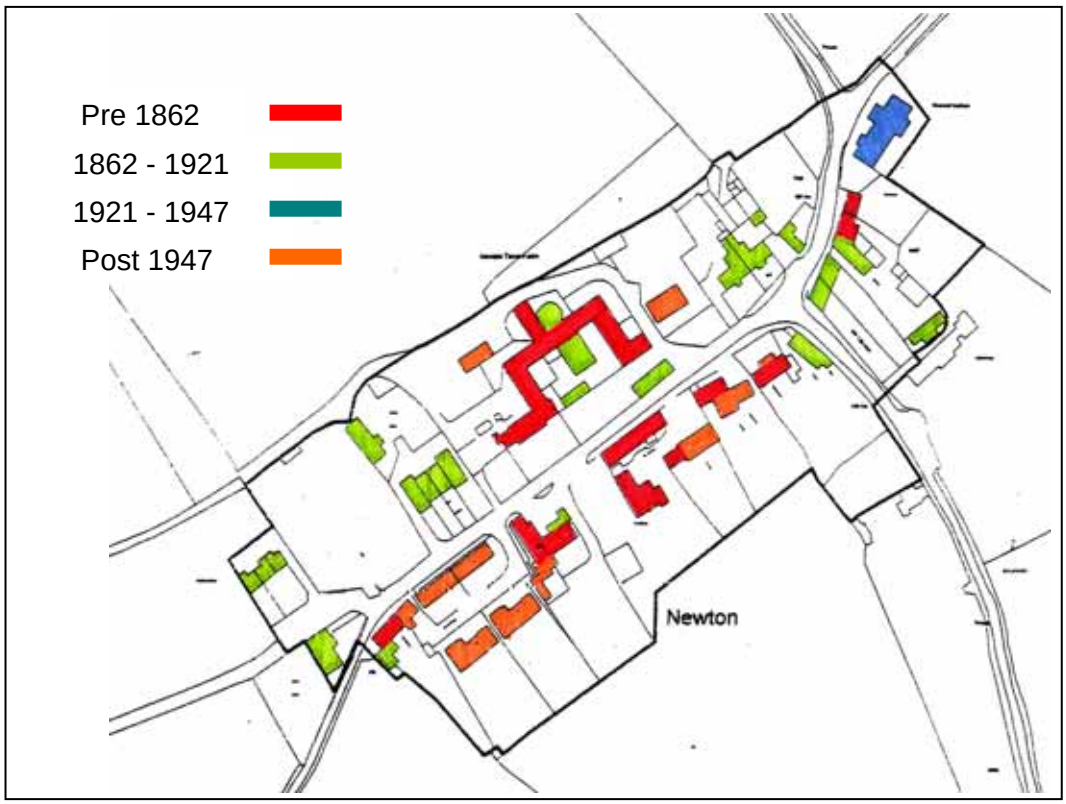

Figure 10 The morphology of Newton from 1862 to 2006

5.2 The archaeological significance and potential of the area

5.2.1 To date, little of conspicuous archaeological significance has been discovered in Newton and its hinterland. The surrounding landscape does not contain field markings or patterns that belie current contemporary agricultural methods. Northumberland County Council's Historic Environment Record identifies four points of interest:

- A suspected Roman signal station in Toftshill plantation some 400 metres to the north west of Newton (SMR ID 10092).
- The line of the proto-Dere Street Roman Road in the vicinity of the signal station and the village (SMR ID 10092).
- A well approximately 4 metres deep below the party wall of 'Lowlands' and Town Farm house. The well is of unknown age (SMR ID 10115).
- Farm buildings to the north east of Town Farm house (SMR ID 12791).

5.2.2 However, the area's archaeological potential is possibly significant. Records indicate almost continuous occupation of the village since medieval times and it lies within the zone of Roman occupation and activity, with possible sites in close proximity to the settlement.

5.2.3 Consequently, it is clear that successive developments will almost certainly overlay the village's earlier plan form and buildings. There is the possibility that the remains of earlier structures survive beneath extant buildings. There is also the possibility that parts of the lost village survive in gardens and open spaces. One area of potential interest lies within the field located between Newton House and West End Cottages where a levelled area suggests the presence of an ancient development platform (Figure 11).

Figure 11 Possible ancient development platform to the west of Newton House

5.2.4 Newton should be regarded as being of potential archaeological interest and the County Archaeologist should be informed of proposed developments in order that due regard can be given to the possible disturbance of historic remains and their proper recording.

5.3 Heritage audit

5.3.1 There are three Grade 2 listed buildings in the conservation area that combine to form the Town Farm complex located on the northern side of the main road. The buildings are:

- Town Farmhouse and attached outbuilding to east, built circa 1830;
- Farmbuildings to north-east of Town Farmhouse, built circa 1830, and;
- Roadside walls with attached trough and hydrant to the south of Town Farmhouse.

6.0 SPATIAL ANALYSIS

6.1 Character and interrelationship of spaces within the area

6.1.1 Newton can be divided into two spaces that connect and overlap to create a blend of open aspects and built form. This is the framework that determines the spatial character of the area. Figure 12 describes the location of the spaces.

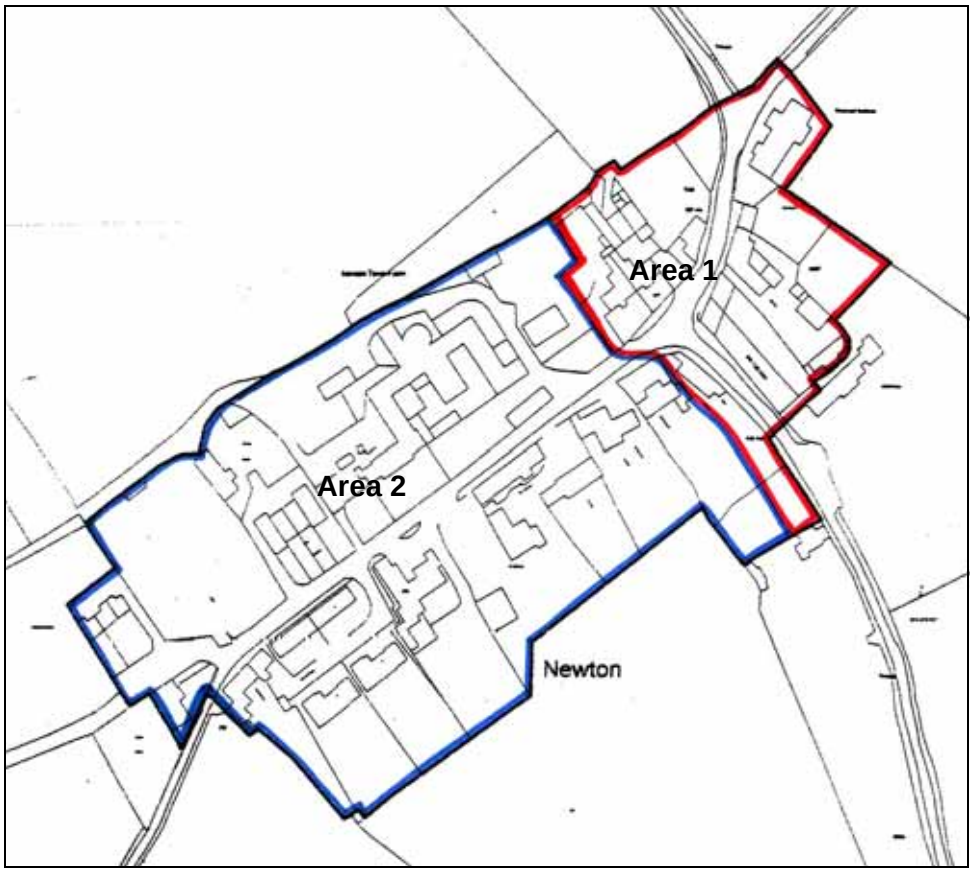

Figure 12 Character areas

6.2 Area 1

6.2.1 Area 1 is located to the eastern end of the village and comprises the approaches from Newton Hall together with the junction of the main street with the approach road from the A69 and Shaw House Farm. The approach from the east is via two roads, one along the slope and one down the slope, that meet at the edge of the settlement. There is visual surprise as the built envelope is reached because of the high banksides of the roads that are cut into the valley slope, with stone retaining walls which add to the sense of channelled containment and history (figures 13 and 14). The walls are an important element in the defining the character of the eastern approach to the village. The Women's Institute dominates and anchors the eastern edge of the village. Its typical pre-war design and construction provides a distinctive point in the timeline of the built and social development of Newton. From this point, the street curves along the side of the slope to be flanked along its southern edge by terraced properties with built frontages immediately adjacent to the back of verge.

The properties are built in blocks, two storeys high, that step down the street to reinforce the visual fall down the slope. There is limited fenestration overlooking the street, particularly at first floor level, giving a sense of strength to the buildings and containment to this space (Figure 15). A grassed gap halfway along the terrace provides a glimpsed view towards the landscaped containment of the village. Cartographic evidence suggests that this gap had been reduced in width and the backland developed between 1862 and 1921 with infill housing and the shop.

Figures 13 and 14 The approach to the east end of the village

Figure 15 View to east end Newton

Figure 16 View to the junction from the south

6.2.2 The northern side of the street is characterised by a looser arrangement of built form that, from cartographic evidence, appears to have changed dramatically in terms of design appearance with new development between 1922 and 1947 replacing all of the earlier buildings. It is possible that some minor elements of the earlier structures were incorporated into the later, extant, buildings. Before 1922, a short length of buildings fronted directly onto the main street to provide a visual pinch point at the eastern extremity of the built envelope. The form and purpose of the buildings is unknown. These were replaced by an 'L' shaped single storey building positioned at right angles to the road reducing the throttle effect. An attractive stone boundary wall provides a degree of containment at this point. A house, or group of houses, was set back from the road to the west of the former building, establishing a building line that continues along the full extent of the northern side of the main street. This building was replaced between 1862 and 1921 by a terrace that was built to a single, formal, design that provides a robust and attractive architectural statement where the linear alignment of the main street starts to curve towards the east end of the village

6.2.3 The junction of the main street with the approach road from the A69 (Figure 16) is visually dominated by this terrace, which is positioned on the elevated development platform that overlooks the valley. The set back gable of the terrace located to the east of the junction and a robust terrace, built between 1862 and 1921 ranged

immediately to the back of verge on the western side contain the remaining two sides of the junction. This has changed with the southern side of the junction now being tightly contained by buildings, whereas historically it was much more exposed with a range of buildings on the western side angled back to form a more generous, open, space. The approach to this junction from the south is via the steeply sloped road leading from the A69, curving as it draws towards the village, revealing views of the southern elevations of properties positioned along the main street. The appearance of the approach road has altered with the development of Highfield Grange and its associated set back vehicular access that cuts into the road side. Ornamental planting in the angled cut back competes with the otherwise agricultural landscape that dominates this approach. Highfield Grange, although part of the built envelope of the village, is not included in the conservation area.

6.2.4 The **floorscape** is dominated by tarmac roads with grass verges occasionally interrupted by short lengths of open paths to front doors.

6.2.5 The **street furniture** in this area comprises speed restriction traffic signs and a red telephone box located on the north side of the road. The telephone box, which is partly subsumed by shrubs, adds a historic statement, enhances the visual quality of the street scene and makes a significant contribution to the character of the conservation area. A modern directional sign is located at the junction of the main street with the approach road from the A69.

6.3 Area 2

6.3.1 Area 2 comprises the remainder of the village. This area runs from western end of the settlement to the junction of the approach road the A69 with the main street. It is linear in form with the main street dipping in the middle to provide a dished centre to the village.

6.3.2 In terms of the general disposition of buildings, the appearance of the northern side of the street has remained largely unchanged since the 1862 Ordnance Survey. They fundamentally retain their building mass and conform to the set back from the street that is largely dictated by the topography of the slope and the need to build a development platform, whilst taking the opportunity to develop gardens with a south facing aspect. Changes have taken place, with the conversion of Town Farm to residential use with associated car parking, and the construction of a new house to the north of the farm buildings in the 1990s. A site to the east of Town Farm, that was formerly an orchard, was infilled at about the same time. Other works included the redevelopment of an earlier building to form Tofts Cottages to the west of Town Farm, together with the development of Newton House to the north of Tofts Cottages between 1862 and 1921. The most radical impact has been the development of the house on the site of the earlier orchard, removing from the street scene an important area of open space, a land use that was rooted in the past, and an element that would have made a substantial contribution to the landscape of the village.

6.3.3 Although undertaken with some sensitivity, the conversion of Town Farm to residential use has brought with it a number of domestic features that affect the character and appearance of the traditional street scene, such as the provision of a car parking area between the farm buildings and the main street, and the subdivision of the farm yard into individual gardens/yards. However, the open aspect between the buildings and the main street has been retained although modified in appearance. An important element in the street scene is the stone wall that retains the development platform. The wall extends along the front of the main street and incorporates historic features such a water pump trough (Figure 17) and steps (Figure 18). The extreme west end of the wall contains a blocked up doorway that once led into Symm's works toilet, a surviving remnant of the industrial history of the

village. The wall is an attractive feature that dominates the streetscape and provides a sturdy visual plinth to the buildings that range behind the edge of the road.

6.3.4 The west end of the settlement is entered by a single track road cut into the slope of the valley reflecting the channelled appearance displayed in the eastern and southern approaches to Newton. The former Methodist Wesleyan Chapel and the western elevation of West House, which was extended between 1921 and 1947, dominate this approach and provide an offset built frame through which the village can be observed (Figure 19). The former chapel has been converted to residential use which has had a radical impact on its appearance.

6.3.5 The southern side of the street has changed, with only the Duke of Wellington being largely unaltered. Historically, South Farm, the Duke of Wellington and Symm's Agricultural Engineering Works dominated the street. Unlike the northern side, all of the buildings were physically linked to the edge of the street albeit with some perforation caused by links to rear yards and the provision of forecourts. Although this built arrangement still applies, there are changes that alter the historic character and appearance of the space. They relate to the consequences of change of use, primarily to South Farm, the redevelopment of the engineering works with its industrial elevations being replaced by conventional house designs, and modifications and alterations to other building stock as result of modernisation and maintenance. The character of this side of the main street is now clearly residential, both in terms of appearance and in the way that building mass has been cut and separated to provide residential units (Figure 20). This had had an adverse affect on the historic character of this space.

6.3.6 The **floorscape** in the public realm is dominated by the tarmac road with a tarmac footpath along the southern edge of the street. There is no corresponding footpath on the northern side, an omission that reinforces the rural character of the village.

6.3.7 The **street furniture** in this area comprises speed restriction traffic signs and a timber bench to the east of the former chapel.

Figure 17 The trough and hydrant

Figure 18 The stone stile

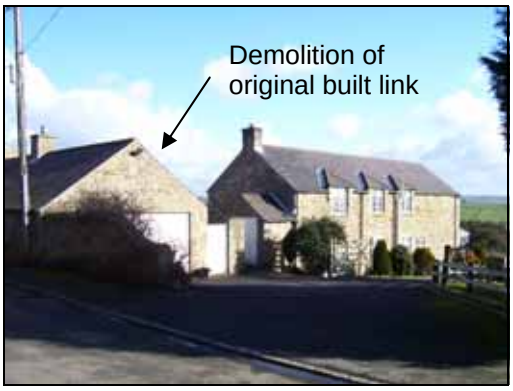

Figure 19 View to west end of village **Figure 20** Sub division of building mass

6.3.8 Generally, the layout of the village and its spaces reflects the historic development pattern of Newton from at least the mid-nineteenth century. There have been some changes, principally along the southern edge, that have altered the visual appearance of the village through the introduction of new designs and changes to built forms that do not reflect the historic character of Newton. The layout and form of spaces should not be reconfigured or manipulated in a way that further compromises their historic arrangement. Furthermore, future changes should be controlled in a way that reinforces the historic spatial pattern and enhances its appearance through the eventual removal of inappropriate features and the introduction of appropriate details. The fragmentation of spaces through subdivision should be resisted as should the loss of open space that exists within the built form of the settlement.

7.0 ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

7.1 The architectural character of Newton is substantially established through the almost exclusive use of sandstone for all buildings and other structures, and the ubiquitous application of Welsh slate. Virtually all buildings are two storeys in height with pitched roofs. Within this general description there are a number of variables, in terms of design, detail and appearance, which determine the contribution that they make to protect or diminish the historic character of the area.

7.2 The analysis starts at the east end of the village with the Newton and Bywell Community Hall (Figure 21). In 2006, what was the Newton Women's Institute building was demolished and replaced, on the same footprint, by the new Newton and Bywell Community Hall. The new building was architecturally designed to vastly improve the appearance of the old hall and to complement the architecture of the conservation area. The building anchors the eastern extremity of the built envelope of the village and brings visual interest and with it a statement that the social and community life of the village is thriving.

7.3 Immediately to the west of the hall, a group of nineteenth century houses is arranged down the slope leading to the junction of the main street with the A69 approach road. This group steps down the incline with one centrally positioned gap. The group substantially pre-dates the 1862 Ordnance Survey with the surviving sliding sash window styles suggesting that the properties were built circa 1840 to 1860. Cartographic evidence indicates that the eastern half of the group was extended or redeveloped between 1862 and 1921. The stepped gabling reinforces the visual fall of slope and creates a serrated skyline. The roofscape is punctuated by a series of attractive stone and brick built chimney stacks and has not been adversely affected by later additions such as dormers and rooflights. Only the extreme east end property of the terrace has water tabling. The front elevations of the buildings link together to provide a substantial stone façade with limited fenestration to reinforce the powerful, robust impact that the terrace makes in containing the southern edge of the street. The stonework is an attractive combination of rough irregular and squared stone regular coursing with stone lintels, cills and quoins. However, some limited repointing has diminished the look of the stonework with the use of cements and an application that smears the mortar over the arrises of the stone to create a semi-rendered appearance. The fenestration and doors are attractive and appear to be substantially authentic. The property incorporating the shop front was added to the earlier terrace in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century, the stone quoins of the original group being incorporated into the support structure of the shop doorframe. The shopfront, together with the detailing of the windows and doors inserted into the west elevation

that returns along the edge of the gap that bisects the terrace, are remarkable survivors from the origins of the building (Figure 22). They have been conserved and decorated in a sensitive manner that brings great quality to the architecture of the village. The retained design of the windows reflects the combination of domestic, retail and industrial uses that once occupied the building and as such add to the historic character of Newton. This building is noteworthy and its appearance should be conserved.

Figure 21 The Women's Institute

Figure 22 The surviving shop front

7.4 The west side of the junction of the A69 approach road and the main street has changed in both layout and appearance. The early nineteenth century group of buildings that created a more spacious arrangement were removed and the site redeveloped between 1862 and 1921 to create a pair of stepped terraced houses separated from the road by a grass verge. It is possible that a single storey extension to the north of the two storey properties survives from the earlier period. The houses are constructed in irregular coursed stonework with stone quoins, lintels and cills. The roofs are unadorned by later intrusions. The northern property has some water tabling and both have attractive brick chimney stacks. The fenestration is a combination of original timber sliding sash windows and modern replacements.

7.5 Moving to the west, the next group of buildings incorporating South Cottage and the former South Farm impact on the historic character of the village. This group made a robust, agricultural contribution to the streetscene and overall character of the village. The elevations that overlooked the road were plain and substantially without window or door openings. The buildings were converted into residential use in the 1970s. The conversions included substantial redevelopment that changed their shape, massing, height and appearance. The design of the conversion and redevelopment is typical of its period. The radical approach taken to the conversion of South Cottage and South Farm has diminished their contribution to the historic and visual character of the village. The original front building line of South Cottage was constructed along the back of the road with a single storey running through from the main two storey roof pitch. This single storey was removed and a new two storey building line, set back from the road edge, was constructed with extensions to the side and rear (Figure 23). The property has been manipulated and fenestrated in a way that makes it look as if it had been originally built as a detached house. South Farm has been treated in a similar way. The problem is exacerbated by the partial demolition of the farm to break-up a substantial 'L' shaped single building that faced the road and returned along the western boundary of the farmstead to form two detached houses. Furthermore, the partial open barn that enclosed the southern edge of the farmyard has been substantially demolished and rebuilt as a two storey detached house (Figure 24). The demolitions and introduction of domestic details, particularly the design of the fenestration, and the omission of lintels and the insertion of up and over double garage doors, has removed the agricultural origins of the complex to no more than visual hints. The eaves of some of the buildings have been penetrated by dormers. The conversion has resulted in the substantial removal

of an important historic and architectural complex at the built core of the village, and its replacement by an infill housing scheme.

Figure 23 The reconfigured front elevation

Figure 24 Site of the former open sided barn

7.6 The Duke of Wellington public house, located to the west of South Farm, has been extended in the past, but still substantially retains most of its original fabric, except the fenestration that has been largely replaced by modern units. The original building is constructed in rough irregular coursed sandstone, the extension to the front being built in contrasting squared sandstone with an attractive first storey cill string line of slightly projecting dressed stone (Figure 25). A number of attractive details survive, including ventilated ceramic ridge tiles and metal pivoted brackets anchored to the walls from which the gates leading into Symm's Agricultural Engineering Works yard would have been hung (Figure 26). Such details are signposts to the history of the village and should be retained.

Figure 25 Duke of Wellington

Figure 26 Surviving gate support pin

7.7 Symm's works, to the west of the Duke of Wellington, was demolished in the mid-1980s, to be replaced by an infill housing scheme comprising two large stone faced detached houses along the southern edge of the site and a block of stone faced terraced housing fronting onto the street. The designs are clearly modern and do not attempt to confuse observers by appearing to be part of nineteenth century Newton (Figure 27). The detached houses are substantially hidden from view from the main street. Their principal visual impact is from the south, where they dominate views of the village from the wider valley. Their designs, particularly large fenestrated gables and white barge boarding, present a modern suburban appearance to the village which is reinforced by the design of the southern facades of the South Farm conversions. The terraced housing is slightly set back from the road edge to permit the construction of porches. The rhythm of the terrace is broken by the visually unnecessary insertion of a single storey link, possibly introduced to create aesthetic interest (Figure 28). This is not a common feature in Newton where terraced housing creates a substantial two storey containment of space. The stonework is random rubble with concrete lintels and sills. The steep pitch of the roofs adds weight and

height to the buildings, in contrast to the shallower, less invasive appearance of the roofs of the adjacent older properties, where the visual balance between walls and roof produces a less top heavy massing. The fenestration is modern, using non-traditional materials. The carriageway/courtyard area contained by the detached houses and the terraced housing has been laid in grey concrete blocks (Figure 27). This is an attempt to create a less formal, more traditional floorscape. The colour of the blocks is not appropriate to the village where sandstone setts would have been used to create hardstandings, as evidenced in the lane leading to Newton House where delaminating tarmac has revealed the original material. Retaining the colour of the traditional floorscape through the choice of appropriate modern materials would have reflected the historic character of the village within a contemporary development context.

Figure 27 Symms redevelopment **Figure 28** New terraced frontage

7.8 The residual block of terraced housing joined to the new properties is nineteenth century in origin and contains the remains of lost openings to reveal earlier articulations of internal space and external appearances. The stonework is a combination of regular and irregular coursing with substantial stone quoins. Some windows are original timber sliding sash, and some are modern replacements. The roofline is uninterrupted by modern insertions and additions, and is decorated by substantial brick chimney stacks and chimney pots. The pitched roof returns along its western elevation to provide a substantial and attractive termination point to the southern side of the street. The terrace has been added to at its eastern end. The additional property successfully blends in with the older buildings in a way that does not interrupt the general appearance of the block.

7.9 Until the end of the nineteenth century, the village terminated at this point. In 1899 the Methodist Wesleyan Chapel was built, West End Cottages being developed at about the same time. They combined to extend the boundary of the built envelope of the village further westwards. The chapel closed as a place of worship in the 1950s and was converted to residential use in the 1970s. The conversion has drastically altered the appearance of the building through the removal of lancet style windows and their replacement by rectangular openings; the insertion of a large bay window on the southern elevation and the addition of a long box dormer projecting from the west elevation with a conservatory almost reaching the base line of the dormer; and the addition of an integral garage. Architecturally, the building is now of little historic significance or aesthetic value, its principal contribution to the streetscape being a visual containment to the southern end of the village. West End Cottages are detached from the main built form of the settlement at its north west corner. The short terrace of three properties was built between 1862 and 1921. It is constructed in irregular coursed rubble with stone quoins, sills and lintels and timber vertical sliding sash windows. The Welsh slate roof is surmounted by two brick built chimney stacks. The cottages are designed without ornamentation and their simple, unaltered style and material content adds to the quality of the character of the area.

Figure 29 Former Methodist Chapel

Figure 30 West End Cottages

7.10 Moving along the northern side of the main street, Newton House is positioned some 100 metres from the road and set into the slope (Figure 31). It was built between 1862 and 1921. It comprised two properties, one of which housed the village post office until 1948. They were later converted into a single house. The house is built to a simple but attractive design in irregular coursed rubble with substantial dressed stone quoins, stone sills and stone lintels. New twelve and six light modern windows have replaced the original fenestration that would probably have been two light sliding sash units given the age of the building. Three stone chimney stacks surmount the roof. The lack of general ornamentation and minimal fenestration is typical of this building type and period in the village and as such it consolidates its overall character.

7.11 An impressive group of properties is ranged between Newton House and Town Farm House. Set back but fronting onto the main street, Tofts Cottages replaced an earlier building between 1862 and 1921. Tofts Cottages belies its name by being a substantial two storey group of four houses conforming to a suppressed 'H' footprint. There is a clear symmetry to the layout, and in the fenestration overlooking public space. The wings are set at right angles to the main street which is overlooked by flat gables. The building has offshoots to the rear. It is built in irregular coursed squared sandstone with substantial dressed stone quoins. The windows are set into complete dressed stone surrounds that project slightly from the main elevations. The windows are pivoted timber four light assemblies, probably replacing earlier sliding sash windows. They do not, however, detract from the general appearance and historic interest of the building which makes a considerable contribution to the character of the village (Figure 32).

Figure 31 Newton House

Figure 32 Tofts Cottages

7.12 Town Farmhouse, to the east of Tofts Cottages, is of outstanding quality, retaining its original features and fenestration. Built in about 1830, it was the principal building of the adjacent planned farmstead. It is has a central projecting portion with two

wings, one of which returns to form part of the planned range of farm buildings. The house is built in squared stone except for the west end bay which is coursed rubble. The windows are original sixteen light timber sliding sash units painted light tan that adds to their authenticity. The coped gables with corbelled stops, the fine chimney stacks and clay pots, and boarded doors complete the attractiveness of the house (Figure 33)

Figure 33 Town Farm House

7.13 The adjacent 'U' shaped range of farm buildings has been converted to residential use. The conversion has retained the early twentieth century footprint of the agricultural holding and to a large part the arrangement of openings. Eaves line has not been interrupted by the insertion of dormers, but chimney stacks and vents have been added that break the hitherto flat roofline. This has resulted in a scheme that keeps much of the general visual integrity of the farmstead, including the impressive brick chimney stack that served the mechanically driven threshing/milling machines which replaced the need to house the horse drawn equipment in the gingan. The introduction of domestic fenestration in the openings impairs the quality of the conversion. For example, the use of windows designed to echo the pattern of the timber slatted units that once occupied the openings would have respected and related to the agricultural origins of the buildings. This is retrievable in the future if and when the existing units are replaced. The farmyard is subdivided into individual gardens/yards, but this fragmentation is substantially obscured from public view by the substantial, original yard boundary wall.

Figure 34 Town Farm 1980 before conversion

Figure 35 Town Farm post conversion

7.14 Two new houses were built about the same time as the farm conversion, one to the north of Town Farm House (Figure 36) and the other to the east of the farm complex (Figure 37). Both are large detached properties built in stone with Welsh slate roofs. They have been designed to reflect the grandeur and period of Town Farm House, including the use of sixteen light windows. Although clearly modern, their style leans towards a suggestion that they form part of a group of early nineteenth century buildings, focussed on Town Farm House. Town Farm House is historically unique to the village and its contribution should not be diminished by copies. It would have been more appropriate to design the new houses in a way that they could make their own sympathetic contribution to the evolution of the development of the village.

Figure 36 New Town Farm development

Figure 37 New Town Farm development

7.15 Opposite the junction of the main street with the A69 approach road is another high quality group of late nineteenth /early twentieth century properties (Figure 38). This group acts as a visual counterweight to Tofts Cottages at the western end of the main street. Constructed between 1862 and 1921 and replacing an earlier building, Town Croft is attractively designed with a level of detailing that is uncommon throughout the rest of the village. It is built in irregular coursed squared sandstone with stone quoins. There are four pitched dormers over first and second floor windows. The dormers have water tabling with substantial stone corbelling. The windows have continuous dressed stone surrounds with carved details. The four light sliding sash fenestration is original. Two stone built pitched roof porches project beyond the front building line. They are decorated by tall six light arched windows overlooking the main street. The fenestration is original. This group is of outstanding quality and its unaltered appearance and design interest makes a substantial contribution to the character of the village.

7.16 A number of dilapidated stone buildings are located behind Town Croft (Figure 39). Their appearance suggests that they have agricultural origins and cartographical evidence indicate that they were built at the end of the nineteenth century. They are of historic interest and should be retained.

Figure 38 Town Croft

Figure 39 Buildings behind Town Croft

7.17 The north side of the village is terminated by a small group of single storey buildings that is ranged at right angles to the main street (Figure 40). The back unit with a chimney stack might have been used as a cottage. The group is an attractive stone built collection with an original four light sliding sash window. It is substantially built with stone quoins, sills and lintels with ceramic ventilated ridge tiles that match the appearance of those found on the Duke of Wellington. This group is visually attractive, unaltered and of historic importance.

7.18 A stone wall runs along the length of the northern side of the main street between Tofts Cottages and the east end (Figure 41). It is substantial, but in a state of disrepair in places, particularly where it returns along the lane approaches to Tofts Cottages and Town Croft, and is showing signs of salt erosion along its base. It has been patch repaired in the past using cements that occasionally obliterate part of the stonework. The wall contains a stone stile to the front of Town Farm and two water troughs with ornamental cast iron hydrants. The wall is a significant structure and makes an extremely important contribution to the attractive appearance and character of the village.

Figure 40 Agricultural workshops

Figure 41 North side retaining wall

7.19 There is little scope for any new development in the village. Existing open spaces should be retained in order that the historic pattern of built form and green space is not compromised, further eroding of the rural nature of the village. Additions to buildings should always be subordinate to original building mass, kept below eaves height, with a break between eaves and new roofs. Additions should be designed in a way that reflects in a natural and harmonious manner original styles and details. The introduction of roof lights and dormers should be resisted, as should architectural details that diminish the historic character of the area. Whenever possible, inappropriate details and features should be removed and replaced by materials and styles that complement the eighteenth and nineteenth century origins of the surviving buildings.

7.20 When undertaking maintenance works, owners of properties should be encouraged to use traditional materials and techniques to secure both the general health and care of the historic buildings and an attractive appearance.

8.0 REVIEW OF THE CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

The conservation area contains the historic settlement of Newton. Highfield Grange, the only building located outside the boundary, is modern and makes no contribution to the character of the conservation area. The current planning policies that affect the envelope of the conservation area apply sufficient controls to ensure that the setting of the area will not be compromised by inappropriate developments and changes to the character of the landscape. Consequently, it is recommended that the boundary of the conservation area is not modified.

9.0 MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

9.1 Newton Conservation Area remains focused on its mid-nineteenth century origins. Subsequent phases of development combine to produce the current pattern of development. Newton will continue to change in the future. It is important that these changes are controlled and directed towards respecting and enhancing the quality of the area. The following proposals will assist in this process:

9.2 Views to and from Newton over this open landscape are critical to creating and maintaining its distinctive character and must be protected. Policies and initiatives that lead to the reintroduction of missing hedgerows and their cultivation and maintenance using traditional methods should be pursued.

9.3 The layout and form of spaces should not be reconfigured or manipulated in a way that further compromises their historic arrangement. Furthermore, future changes should be controlled in a way that reinforces the historic spatial pattern through the retention of open spaces and building to building relationships. The fragmentation of spaces through subdivision should be resisted.

9.4 There is little scope for any new development in the village.

9.5 Additions to buildings should always be subordinate to original building mass, kept below eaves height with a break between eaves and new roofs and designed in a way that reflects in a natural and harmonious manner original styles and details.

9.6 The introduction of roof lights and dormers should be resisted as should architectural details that diminish the historic character of the area.

9.7 Whenever possible, inappropriate details and features should be removed and replaced by materials and styles that complement the eighteenth and nineteenth century origins of the surviving buildings.

9.8 When undertaking maintenance works, owners of properties should be encouraged to use traditional materials and techniques to secure both the general health and care of the historic buildings and an attractive appearance.

9.9 Design guidance should be produced to encourage property owners who manage and maintain shared features, such as the wall along the northern side of Main Street, to take a collective approach and to ensure that a high standard of appearance is achieved.

- **Developments should be regarded as affecting land that is of potential archaeological interest and the County Archaeologist should be informed of proposed work in order that due regard can be given to the possible disturbance of historic remains and their proper recording.**
- **Opportunities should be undertaken to enhance the wider environment and public spaces in Newton, including:**

❖ **the undergrounding of overhead cables;**
❖ **the introduction of natural materials in floorscaping;**
❖ **the removal of timber fences and the reintroduction of domestic hedges along property boundaries; and**
❖ **the planting of a limited number of specimen trees to recreate the decorated village spine.**

10.0 GLOSSARY OF CONSERVATION TERMS

The character appraisal contains terms and expressions that are particular to historic buildings and structures. They are used to describe the way that buildings are constructed and the types of materials that have been used. This glossary identifies and explains some of these expressions and historic building techniques. It is aimed to help understand the appraisal and, hopefully, interest the reader in our historic buildings. The glossary is split into the principal components of historic buildings – roofs, walls and windows.

1. Roofs

a. Roof design.

Roofs come in a variety of designs:

- **Common pitched roof** have two pitched slopes and a flat gable at each end.
- **Hipped roofs** have four pitched slopes without gables.
- **Mansard roofs** have a break along the pitched slope of the roof to create a double slope, usually with the upper portion having a steeper pitch.
- **Catslide roofs** can be found in Northumbrian villages. A catslide roof comprises an extension of the main slope of the roof to cover a single storey extension. It is also used to describe roofs over dormer windows that follow, albeit at a gentler angle, the slope of the main roof.
- **Ridges.** The ridge is where the pitched slopes of a roof meet. They are normally covered by clay or stone **ridge tiles** that protect and weatherproof the joint where the slopes meet. The ridge tiles might be decorated.
- **Water tabling.** Water tabling, or raised gables, are located along the top of gables and cover and protect the edge of the pitched slopes. They are usually formed from cut stone flags and sealed with mortar to stop water and wind from entering or damaging the roof. The flags are normally prevented from slipping off the roof by the bottom one being fixed onto **corbels** that project out of the wall at eaves height. Stone or brick corbels are built into the wall to provide a firm footing for the water tabling. Corbels can be carved or shaped to provide an ornamental feature.

b. Roofing material

Roofs are normally covered in slates, stone flags or pantiles. Thatch would have been used before the widespread introduction of slate.

- **Thatch**. Thatched roofs were made by layering organic material to build-up a weather resistant protective coat over timber rafters. Thatched roofs are normally steeper than slate or stone roofs. The most commonly used thatch in Northumberland would have

been either reed or heather. Heather thatch is known locally as black thatch. An outstanding example of a restored black thatch roof can be found at Causeway House near Vindolanda.

- **Welsh slate** is the most common roofing material. It is either blue with a purple hint or blue grey depending upon the location of the quarries. Blue grey Scottish slate was used until the mid-nineteenth century when large quantities of welsh slate began to be shipped from north Wales to the River Tyne. Slate roofs are sometimes graduated with smaller, lighter, slates being used nearer to the ridge.
- **Stone** flags are split mica rich sandstone blocks, such as quarried in the Allen Valley that are normally larger than welsh slates.
- **Pantiles** are made from clay. They are normally a flat 'S' shape so that they can interlock to prevent wind and water penetration giving the roof an attractive corrugated appearance. Traditionally one or two courses of stone tiles were placed between the pantiles and the eaves of a building to spread the flow of rain water that would otherwise shoot off the roof via the corrugated channels. Occasionally pantiles are semicircular in shape.

2. Walls

The external walls of buildings form spaces and support roofs. Historically, they were built throughout Tynedale using local buff coloured sandstone. Bricks were uncommon until the early nineteenth century when the demand for low cost industrial housing in the urban centres led to the spread of brick laying to the rural areas.

Walls can incorporate a number of features, either to strengthen their structure or provide ornamentation.

a. Structural features include:

- ***Quoins.*** Large stones to strengthen the corners of buildings, usually laid in an alternative ***stretcher*** (where the longest face is exposed) and ***header*** (where the shortest face is exposed) pattern. Quoins can be dressed and laid to project slightly proud of the face of the wall to create a strong visual feature
- ***Cills*** or ***Sills.*** Horizontal timber or stone beam that forms the bottom of a window or door opening.
- ***Lintels*** or ***Lintols.*** Horizontal timber or stone beam that forms the top of a window or door opening. The beam carries the wall over the void created by the opening. Lintels were occasionally decorated or ornamented by a ***hoodmold*** that projected beyond the face of the wall to prevent water dripping onto the windows or doors.

b. Ornamental features include:

- ***String course***. A projecting band or moulding running across the face of a wall. A ***Cill Course*** links projecting window cills into a single horizontal feature.
- ***Rustication.*** Stonework that is cut with the edges cut deeply into the face of the stone to give an exaggerated appearance of strength.

c. Stone walls

Stone walls come in a variety of forms and appearances.

- ***Random rubble.*** Walls constructed of stones that are irregularly shaped and of different sizes laid in random patterns. Large stones are occasionally laid through the thickness of the wall to bond the rubble together.
- ***Coursed random rubble*****.** The same as above but laid so that the stones form courses of an approximately uniform height. The courses might comprise one or more stones in depth, rising to a uniform upper height.

- ***Squared coursed rubble*.** Rubble roughly formed of uniformly sized rectangular blocks laid in courses. The height of the various courses may differ.
- ***Squared uncoursed rubble.*** Roughly squared stones of different sizes laid in a random pattern with small stones, known as ***levellers*** or ***snecks*** to fill the voids between the larger stones.
- ***Ashlar.*** A type of stonework that comprises blocks that are accurately dressed, cut and squared with sharp edges, called ***arrises***.

d. Brick walls

Brick walls are built in ***bond patterns*** that are formed by arranging the courses of bricks to overlap joints to create a sound structure. There are a huge number of brick bonds. Nineteenth century brick walls in Northumberland are predominantly formed using the basic ***English Garden Wall*** bond. This bond comprises one course of headers to every three to five courses of stretchers.

e. Mortar

Bricks and stones in walls are normally bound together by ***mortar***. Before the twentieth century mortar was usually made from crushed burnt limestone mixed with sand and water with additional brick and stone dust, known as ***lime mortar***. The twentieth century saw the widespread introduction of the hard, quick drying, ***Portland cement***. Traditional ***Lime mortar*** was an integral part of how older buildings 'worked'. Lime mortar, unlike cement mortar, is porous. Water entering walls from the ground or above could escape through the mortar, rather than leaving the wall waterlogged, which would lead to increased dampness inside. Many old buildings have been damaged by being repointed in modern harder cements which are not porous. Lime mortar is also more flexible than Portland cement, so building movement is less likely to crack the mortar and the edges of stones and bricks are less likely to be damaged.

3. Windows

Windows are an important tool in understanding the age of buildings and make a critical contribution to their visual character. They vary in size, shape, pattern and position. The earliest surviving windows in Tynedale are normally ***sliding sash*** windows that came into widespread use in the early eighteenth century. A sash is a frame within which one or more panes of glass are fitted, the sash being set in a larger outer frame that fills the whole window opening. The sashes were glazed using handmade cylinder or crown glass which had to be cut into relatively small squares. The sashes were subdivided by glazing bars to hold the small panes of glass resulting in the familiar multi-paned 'Geogian' windows. Over time, subtle changes were made to the design of the glazing bars to enhance the elegance of the windows and reduce their intrusive visual impact to a minimum. Two sashes were normally set vertically into the overall window frame, one overlying the other with a cord sliding mechanism to allow one or both sashes to open and close, known as ***single sliding sash windows*** or ***double sliding sash windows*** respectively.. Occasionaly the sashes would move horizontally. This type of window is called a ***Yorkshire Sliding Sash*** window. As time passed, extra glazing was sometimes introduced at the sides of the sashes in narrow strips called ***margin panes***.

In the 1830's and 1840's manufacturing techniques had advanced to the point where larger panels of glass could be made at a reasonable cost. This meant that glazing bars could be removed, resulting in ***single or double pane sashes*** that came to characterise the Victorian and Edwardian periods. The number of windows also increased from the mid-nineteenth century with the repeal of the infamous window tax in 1851.

Windows, known as ***roof lights***, were occasionally set into the roofs of buildings. Roof lights are normally one or two small vertical panes of glass set into a cast iron frame with a single glazing bar, the frame being positioned into the roof where it lay flush with or rebated below the slope of the slates, flags or pantiles.

Casement windows are windows with hinged or pivoted openings or sashes hung from a vertical or horizontal element of the window frame.