

# Wooler

Northumberland Extensive Urban Survey

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## PART ONE: THE STORY OF WOOLER

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project Background

Towns and villages have been the focus of settlement in this country for many hundreds of years. Beneath our workplaces, beneath our houses and gardens, streets and shops – beneath our feet – there lie archaeological remains which can tell us how these settlements were once organised and how people went about their lives. Awareness and appreciation of this resource can enhance our sense of place and identity and help us understand how the past has directly shaped our present and how we can benefit from it in the shaping of our future. So that evidence for our urban past is not needlessly lost during development local and national government have put in place a range of statutory designations and policies to make sure that valuable remains are protected, preserved and understood.

In 1992, English Heritage published a national policy to help planners and developers deal with urban archaeology and any issues that might arise during the planning process (*Managing the Urban Archaeological Resource*). This led to the Extensive Urban Survey programme, where funds were made available to individual planning authorities to prepare material to explain how archaeology fits into the planning process and how issues raised can be best resolved. Wooler is one of 20 towns in Northumberland to have been reviewed, the results appearing in the following report which is divided into three main parts:

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

**Part 2** assesses the detailed archaeological potential of the town of Wooler and how development could, potentially, impact on significant archaeological resources which are of both national and local significance.

**Part 3** looks at the national and local planning process with regard to archaeology and is designed to give the developer, planner, and general public, the framework within which development in an historic town will normally proceed.

The present survey (fig 2) encompasses the full extent of the town of Wooler. Material within this report includes information available on the Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER) at the time this report was updated. Information on the HER is constantly being updated and should be used as the primary source for historical and archaeological information.

## 1.2 Location, Topography and Geology

The town of Wooler (present population just under 2000) sits within Glendale in north Northumberland. It is perched on the western side of the Wooler Water, a tributary of the River Till (fig 2), a site providing panoramic views across the Cheviots to the west and the Milfield Plain to the north-west. Berwick lies 15 miles to the north-east and Alnwick a similar distance to the south-east.

Wooler is a bustling, busy town, with its role as a local market-centre expanded over much of the year as a popular stopping-off and replenishment point for walkers and other holidaymakers. Its position, more than its architecture, is spectacular, but High Street and Market Place are lined with many solid and attractive buildings of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, with equally substantial buildings lining roads leading off and attractive Victorian and Edwardian suburbs to north and east.

*Figure 2: Study Area (purple), Scheduled Monument (red), Listed Buildings (pink)*

Like a number of smaller settlements on the Cheviot fringe, Wooler lies at the break of slope between two very distinctive geologies and landscapes. To the west is the massif of the Cheviot Hills formed of the enduring Andesites and other volcanic rocks of Old Red Sandstone Age which define the physical aspect of these uplands. To the east, the

Cementstone Group of Lower Carboniferous age, formed of a mix of limestone, mudstone and sandstone, is a much softer geology, and was already eroded in pre-glacial times to a reduced elevation. This levelling facilitated the subsequent progression of glaciers across the area east of the Cheviot, which deposited thick sheets of boulder clay over the former surface. At the end of the Ice Ages, this spread of boulder clay was striated in deep channels by periglacial meltwaters which in turn deposited extensive spreads of sands and gravels. Finally, temporary lakes formed by the meltwater filled with lacustrine clays and sands. Parts of the Milfield basin, to the north of Wooler, have been levelled with up to 160m of these deposits.

### 1.3 Summary History

As the only sizeable settlement within Glendale, Wooler has been, and still is, the natural market centre for both the Milfield Plain (today a productive arable area with rich alluvial soils ideal for wheat and 6000 years ago a glacial lake and honeypot for prehistoric peoples) and the surrounding uplands. Despite the rich prehistoric archaeology around Wooler, the only *in-situ* prehistoric feature discovered within the town is a Bronze-Age cist burial along Cheviot Street in 1872. By analogy, it is possible that there were, or are, other such burials close by.

Although there are a number of pre-Conquest worked stones from Wooler and its immediate vicinity, any substantial medieval settlement seems to have developed only after the Norman Conquest and comprised a defensive site - possibly a motte - and a church, located around 60m apart on higher ground above Wooler Water. Wooler was a part of the extensive Muschamp Barony from 1105 and the settlement which grew up here came to include 'messuages' or properties established along the frontage of High Street and possibly along the eastern edge of the present market place. The boundaries of these properties, particularly running back from High Street, survive in the modern town. Archaeological excavation to the north of High Street has shown that medieval archaeological deposits survive within the properties.

One of the reasons for the success of Wooler is that it lies on an important route (turnpiked in the 18<sup>th</sup> century) across the Borders (the present A697) between Morpeth to the south-east, and Coldstream to the north-west – ultimately a route between London and Edinburgh. It meant that over the later 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the town provided the important function of post or coaching stop. But until the Union of the Crowns in 1603, the route was a mixed blessing, bringing Border reivers and before this, the armies of England and Scotland; Wooler was substantially damaged by the Scots in 1340 and 1409, and the site of a major battle of the Border Wars, Homildon (now Humbleton) Hill lies only one and a quarter miles to the north-west of the town. And Flodden, for the Scots the bloodiest and most disastrous of all Border battles, lies only seven miles further along the road

The grazing of sheep on the higher land around the town is a mainstay of the agricultural economy today, just as it was over medieval times (the name Wooler, however, probably derives not from the profusion of sheep in the locale, but from a description of the location of the settlement - on a hill overlooking a stream).

An extensive market place lay adjacent to the church over medieval times, but this was progressively infilled as the town developed. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, buildings began to extend out along streets running into the Market Place from the south and some limited expansion took place to the west, notably the brewery. Development in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries also formed suburbs to the north of High Street.

#### **1.4 Documentary and Secondary Sources**

Documentary sources are not particularly rich for the town of Wooler, although it does appear in the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1296. And the complex inheritance divisions of the Muschamp estate and their land around Wooler, which required documentation in medieval times, still survive. There are a number of published works for the history of the town. Including vol. 14 of *A History of Northumberland* by M H Dodds; K H Vickers in vol. 11 of the *County History of Northumberland* and more recently, Collier and Stewart's *Wooler and Glendale, a brief history, Vol. 1 – Wooler*. (1986).

#### **1.5 Cartographic Sources**

Nor is the cartographic resource for the town particularly rich. Wooler appears on Speed's 1610 map of the county as 'Wuller' and on Armstrong's 1769 county map, but the first detailed survey of the town occurs in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a plan by Richard Cross in 1828 followed by the first Ordnance Survey in 1860.

#### **1.6 Archaeological Evidence**

There have been only few archaeological interventions within the study area to provide any useful indication of the presence, character or degree of preservation of archaeological deposits within the town. These include an archaeological watching brief carried out in 1999 at the Church of St Mary which indicates a likely high degree of structural survival of the pre-1765 church (Northern Counties Archaeological Services 1999). Other archaeological interventions have involved the excavation of land at the New Wooler Evangelical Church, Cheviot Street in 2003; to the rear of 5 and 6 Market Place in 2004; properties (27 to 33) to the south of High Street and at The Old Joiner's Yard, The Peth in 2005 (see Appendix 2 for a catalogue of these archaeological events).

#### **1.7 Protected Sites**

The area covered by this assessment (fig 2) encompasses the historic core of the town of Wooler, within which, Wooler Tower is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (HER

1549; SAM no.29337). Many of the buildings within the area are listed and these are included in Appendix 1 but Wooler is not covered by the protection of a Conservation Area.

*Figure 3: Prehistoric Wooler.*

## **2. PREHISTORIC (figure 3)**

### **2.1 Prehistoric Remains from around Wooler**

There is much evidence of prehistoric activity around Wooler. There are, for example, scatters of Mesolithic flint tools, including tiny composite blades known as microliths, from Common Burn to the west and from Wooler Common to the south of the town. There are Neolithic and Bronze-Age monumental sites on the Milfield Plain and cup and ring marked stones to the north on Doddington Moor, as well as Bronze Age and Iron Age settlements in the foothills of the Cheviots including hillforts at Yeavering and Humbleton. Just to the south of Wooler lies The Kettles, an extensive and intricate complex of earthworks. They date to the late Iron Age and Romano-British periods. Assessment of this rich landscape around Wooler is beyond the scope of this document, but much of its archaeology has already been designated as of national importance and is protected as such.

## 2.2 Prehistoric evidence from the town

The only *in-situ* discovery of prehistoric remains in Wooler was a cist burial (HER 1542) found in 1872 in a garden on the west side of Cheviot Street on the southern edge of the town. The cist, oriented east-west, about 1.37m long - tapering from east to west - and 0.6m deep, was formed of four vertical side stones and two flat cover stones. The skeleton survived within the cist and showed that when interred, the body had been placed in a contracted or foetal position. A conical jet button 54mm in diameter was the only object found alongside (Dodds 1935, 59). No other evidence of cists or Bronze-Age activity has been recorded in the adjacent area, although remains including cairns and an unenclosed roundhouse lie on Watch Hill and Fredden Hill to the south-west and an upright stone of Bronze-Age date still stands near to Cold Martin Loughs to the east of town. It is quite likely that there is more local activity of the period still to be found.

Within the town there have also been two finds of displaced prehistoric (or probably prehistoric) material. A boulder with incised decoration (HER 1534) including a cup, two rings and a channel or duct was found during demolition of a house in an unspecified location within the town in the 19th century (Dodds 1935, 67). Such incised work dates between the fourth and second millennia BC and is frequently associated with ritual or burial activities. The lack of specific origin within the town, and the obviously re-used and portable nature of the stone, means that it is of little help in anticipating the location of other prehistoric remains. Another incised stone (HER 1561) was found within the wall of a property at the junction of Ramsey's Lane and the Market Place in the 1930s. The carving represented an animal (although of an uncertain type) and was thought, when accessioned into the Society of Antiquaries Museum in 1938, to be stylistically similar to the work of prehistoric artists. Its chronology has never been certainly established (Davison 1939, 171; 217-18).

## 3 EARLY-MEDIEVAL (figure 4)

### 3.1 Worked Stones

Although there is no certain evidence for pre-Conquest occupation at Wooler, a number of pieces of worked stone of the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries found within or in the near vicinity of the town point to as yet unspecified activity. Part of a worn slab or shaft, one side of which is carved with a low-relief key pattern, is built into the external face of the south wall of the nave of St Mary's Church (HER 1584). It has been dated to the mid-10<sup>th</sup> to mid-11<sup>th</sup> century (Cramp 1984, 232-3). The stone is out of context within the fabric of the eighteenth-century rebuild of the church, but is unlikely to have travelled far. A portion of an 11<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-Saxon stone cross (HER 1563) was discovered in the early 1880s whilst workmen were taking down walls for the construction of the railway (Antiquity 1884, 230). Although the exact provenance is uncertain, it was probably found along the line of the railway to the west of the

town. The cross head is now in the Monks' Dormitory, Durham Cathedral. (Cramp 1984, 232-3).

*Figure 4: Early medieval Wooler*

#### **4 MEDIEVAL (Figure 5)**

Documentary references to a settlement at Wooler do not occur until after the Norman Conquest when, in 1107, the manor of Wooler was conferred on the Muschamp family by Henry I, Robert Muschamp becoming the first Baron of Wooler. Due to its proximity to the border, the settlement suffered greatly during the protracted wars with Scotland and had to petition the king to be relieved of tax burdens in 1340 after a particularly damaging raid. (Collier and Stewart 1984, 3). Raids continued to affect Wooler, though, and the town was badly hit again towards the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century and once more in 1409 (Vickers 1922, 300). In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Lord Dacre described it as a place of particular danger and as “the outermost town of the realm”. At this time, Wooler was considered of greater strategic importance than Chillingham and the men of the town were expected to assist in the defence of the township. In 1534, 10 men had to keep a watch day and night. Thanks partly to these precautions; the township did not suffer heavy losses of men or property during hostile raids

of the 16<sup>th</sup> century although these continued until the Union of the Crowns in 1603.

#### **4.1 Castle Mound (SAM no 29337; HER 1549)**

The tumbled ruins of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Wooler Tower (see below) lie over what is commonly interpreted as a 12<sup>th</sup> century castle mound or motte, presumed to be the location of a seat of the Muschamp Barony. The mound, natural or otherwise, “eminently defensible but with no sure sign of earthworks” (Pevsner 1992, 634) forms a narrow promontory of land rising abruptly from the east side of Church Street and overlooking Wooler Water beyond. Part of the mound was dissected when Nos.10-12 Church Street were constructed. A document of 1255, describing a “waste mote of no value” at Wooler was taken by Vickers (1922, 329-30) to be referring to this mound. He thought that it had fallen into ruin because Wooler was not the place of residence of the owners of the barony. Alternatively the “waste mote” could refer to Green Castle (HER 1547, SM No. 34226) a prominent mound topped with a ringwork which lies under a mile to the west. The relationship (both chronological and political) between the two sites is obviously of some interest.

*Figure 5: Medieval Wooler: tenement plots (blue), market place (pink), church and churchyard (green), Castle Mound (grey).*

## 4.2 Church of St Mary (HER 1584)

The present parish church of St Mary is located immediately north-east of the Market Place on high ground above Church Street. It was built in 1765 and replaced a church which had burnt down a few years previously. This earlier church may have been of 12<sup>th</sup> century date, possibly even earlier given the presence of a pre-Conquest sculpted stone built into the fabric. There is certainly documentary and some physical evidence for a post-Conquest church. In 1135, for instance, Robert de Mowbray granted the tithes of the church at Wooler to the Prior of Tynemouth. This grant was confirmed successively by Henry II in 1158 and Richard I in 1198. In 1307 the tithes and the right to appoint incumbents at the church were transferred to the Abbot and Convent of Alnwick (Collier and Stewart 1986, 13).

In 1999, an archaeological watching brief (Event: 10400) was carried out at St Mary's Church when service trenches were dug for the installation of new external lighting. This work revealed remains of the mortared-rubble foundation of a demolished wall at a depth of only 0.35m below the churchyard ground surface, its northern edge was 2m beyond and on the same alignment as the present north wall of the nave. A fragment of dogtooth or nailhead moulding, a form of decoration compatible with a 12<sup>th</sup> century structure, was found in a dump of rubble deposited in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and exposed in one of the trenches at the western end of the church.

At the shallow depths disturbed during the watching brief, no burials were disturbed. Interestingly, though, in 1834 the innkeeper of The Seven Stars public house (HER 1691) excavating a trench to link the pub to the water supply, found a stone coffin. (Collier and Stewart 1986, 29-32). The Seven Stars formerly stood in the vicinity of the present Wheatsheaf Inn in the Market Place, immediately to the south of St Mary's churchyard. Whilst the precise location of the coffin or trench is not known, the story is a strong indicator that the churchyard formerly extended beyond its present boundary.

## 4.3 The "Burgh" of Wooler

As mentioned, the manor of Wooler was conferred on the Muschamp family as part of their Barony by Henry I but seems never to have been used as a residence by the family (Vickers 1922, 306-11). In the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century the estate was divided into three parts amongst heiresses as there was no male heir, but the family retained their lands around Wooler. The complexity of the division led to the preparation of descriptions of each portion. Whilst these do not describe the township of Wooler in detail, they do provide some evidence of its character. For example, Isabel Ford's inheritance was recorded as consisting of a moiety of the capital messuage...part of the mill and the burgh (Vickers 1922, 310). In the 13<sup>th</sup> century the tenants of holdings in the "*burgh*" of Wooler were worth a total of £24 19s and the water mill £5.

Wooler is recorded in the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1296 as a 'reputed' borough and parish with 34 people assessed as liable for a total tax of £135 11s 6d (Fraser 1968, 38-9). Occupations noted include Robert the forester, Hugh the Nout[cattle]herd, Robert the carpenter, William the hunter, Robert - Stephen's groom and Adam the dyer: this last of interest in that it shows dyeing was a medieval as well as a later occupation in the town.

There are a number of documentary references to 'messuages' within Wooler (these generally comprised a property including a house with outbuildings and land). For example, in 1353, eight messuages as well as two carucates of land are noted as being held by William Collingwood in Wooler and Humbleton (Vickers 1922, 327). Although there is no easy means of locating specific messuages in Wooler, 19<sup>th</sup> century maps (Richard Cross's town plan of 1828, and the First Edition Ordnance Survey of 1860 in particular) show long, fairly narrow plots of land running from both sides of High Street. These properties, with buildings against the street frontages and frequently open areas to the rear are characteristic of medieval land division. Therefore, although the precise extent of the medieval town is not known, this cartographic evidence can be used as the basis for mapping properties (HER 1577; HER 1685) probably established in the medieval period. These are shown on figure 4 and form two blocks along the High Street, and further blocks along The Brae and Whitsun View. Archaeological evaluation has been carried out at two points within these medieval properties. The first was a yard area and an adjacent building at the rear of 5 & 6 Market Place in 2004 (Event No 13519). This area would seem to have been levelled by substantial dumping. In one of the three test pits dug, a probable medieval soil with medieval pottery was reached at a depth of 1.3m. The other excavation was carried out within properties to the south of buildings fronting High Street (27 to 33) in 2005 (Event No 13662). Medieval features were seen but at a relatively low density and at around 1m beneath modern overburden comprising ash dumps, rubbish and soil accumulation. Features included a substantial stone gully and an area of cobbling.

#### **4.4 Market (HER 1701)**

In 1199, Robert Muschamp was granted a Royal charter for a weekly (Thursday) market in Wooler, a privilege which lasted until the 1600s, when a new licence was granted to Sir Ralph Grey to hold a weekly market and two fairs per year in the Manor of Wooler. The modern market place is centrally located in the town at the junction of all the main streets. The medieval market place probably lay in the same area but was probably more extensive (fig. 4). Properties within the highlighted zone (small plots with no attached landholding, typical of infill) are surrounded by holdings (HER 1577; 1685) of characteristic medieval form.

Over the medieval period, Wooler became a centre for the wool trade and a focal point for sheep shearing. It grew in wealth as a result of the trade (Collier and Stewart 1986, 1), becoming a major centre for the export of wool to the Low Countries and the town will have

had a mechanism for levying customs dues: In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Adam of Corbridge, a resident of Wooler, was prosecuted unsuccessfully on a number of occasions for evasion of customs on wool and woolfells by avoiding the market at Wooler and sending his goods to Berwick (which frequently had lower customs rates than in the rest of Northumberland) and then to Flanders (Vickers 1922, 299).

#### **4.5 Hospital of St Mary Magdalene (HER 1560)**

Little is known of the Hospital of St Mary Magdalene at Wooler. It is first mentioned in 1288. In 1302 Adam of Sherburn was appointed master by Edward I and in 1342 William of Bamburgh was made master of the hospital for life. The establishment is mentioned in documents briefly in 1399 and again in 1490, after which it disappears entirely from the record (Vickers 1922, 292-3). Although the location of the hospital is not known, they frequently lay on the edge of a settlement.

## **5 POST-MEDIEVAL TO NINETEENTH-CENTURY (figure 6)**

### **5.1 Wooler Tower**

The 16<sup>th</sup> century, like the centuries before, was a troubled time for Wooler with cross Border strife becoming endemic, frequently at a local level. It was a town in need of protection. A 1509 garrison list for the English Borders notes that 20 soldiers were maintained at Wooler (Vickers 1922, 329-30). And the perceived threat of warfare with Scotland prompted the building of a defensive tower. The exact date of its construction is unknown; the 1509 list might imply that it was already in existence, but it may not have been built before the period of great anxiety following the Battle of Flodden in 1513. In 1526, the tower was still referred to as the 'new castle' (*ibid*). A survey of the Borders in 1541 described the tower as a "mervelous conveyent place for the defence of the country thereabout" and as still "standing strongly" (Vickers 1922, 329). Certainly in 1545, the tower and its garrison were still a part of the organised defences of the area, shown as such by Christopher Dacre in his plan of the Border defences (Vickers 1922, 329-30) and the tower is again shown on the prospect of the town made in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

All that survives today is three masses of pink-sandstone masonry held together by mortar (Vickers 1922, 329-0). Of the three blocks, one may still be *in-situ* (Ryder 1994, 24). The visible area of faced walling is uninterrupted by openings or any other distinguishable features. Whether the fall of the tower was a result of intentional demolition, decay or instability is uncertain.

*Figure 6: Post-medieval and 19<sup>th</sup> century Wooler. Extent in 1860 in blue tone.*

## **5.2 Development of the Town**

The only representation of Wooler over the later 16<sup>th</sup> century is a prospect (The Manor or Barony of Wooler) from the east which shows the Wooler Tower, a water mill below and the town beyond. It is a remarkable view but provides limited evidence for the full extent of the town and whether it had expanded from its medieval core, demarcated by the outlines of probable medieval properties. Speed marks the town on his county map of 1610 but provides no more detail. It seems unlikely, though, that the town did expand greatly. One obstacle to the development of Wooler was a tendency towards conflagration; the town was extensively damaged in 1693 when 54 houses were destroyed by fire and it struck again in 1722, but inertia seems to have been just as much of a concern:

*In 1722 Wooler was consumed by fire, since which period it has not made any improvement, except that of the town being supplied with water by means of pipes, and paving the main streets and lighting them with gas, from works established in 1846. (Slater's Directory 1864, 34)*

In fact, the improvements noted above seem no mean achievement, and the real problem with Wooler was its buildings. As a market centre for an improving agricultural region (Glendale and Milfield were the stamping grounds of Bailey and Culley, renowned

propagandists for and improvers of North East farming) Wooler must have grown increasingly wealthy but this was not generally reflected in its architecture. Although some buildings were undoubtedly of a solid and pleasant enough disposition, No. 5 Church Street, for instance, which dates from the 17th or early 18th century (HER 1618), much of the town appeared shabby and poor:

*The increasing opulence of the farmers operates favourably on the trade of this town, and the shops are well supplied with articles of almost every description: but though the adjoining lands have been for some time in a state of progressive improvement, most of the buildings [of the town] are suffered to remain in their ancient meanness, an emblem of the former poverty of the place* (Parson and White's Directory of 1827, 488)

This 'ancient meanness' of Wooler was rather drastically remedied when, in the winter of 1862:

*...a second fire broke out in the main street [High Street] which did considerable damage to the property, but fortunately no lives were lost.*  
(Slater's Directory 1864, 134)

Thirteen properties were completely destroyed in the fire and a further seven badly damaged. After this destruction the earl of Tankerville, Lord of the Manor, took the opportunity for a more significant rebuild, and within a few years a new High Street emerged with the old thatched houses replaced (Collier and Stewart 1986, 66-7). New buildings in Wooler were predominantly constructed of pink sandstone from local quarries at Doddington. In many cases, squared blocks in courses were used on frontages with rubble work at the side and rear. Pantiles became the predominant roofing material, superseding thatch.

Apart from Armstrong's sketch of Wooler on his County map of 1769, which is not easy to interpret, the first useful survey of the town was prepared by Richard Cross in 1828. It shows the town before the fire, as does the First Edition Ordnance Survey of 1860. Both surveys show a town expanded well beyond its putative medieval core. They also show that this expansion had slowed by the time that Cross's map was prepared; there is little difference in the extent of the town shown on his map and that on the First Edition Ordnance Survey.

By 1860, buildings stretched from the town along Cheviot Street to the south; out over Wooler Water to the east with buildings at Bridge End and at Wooler Brewery (HER 1700) along Brewery Lane. Church Street to the north saw new developments including the Police Station and Police House (HER 1619) of the 1850s; and Ramsey's Lane had cottages on the south side as well as No. 18 (HER 1638) a house constructed between 1810 and 1820. Padgepool, an area of former marsh to the south of High Street was by the 1840s the site of Glendale Poor Union Workhouse (HER 1682). The maps also show that properties within the core of

the town were often becoming densely developed. On the east side of Ramsey's Lane, at No.1, for instance, stables and carriage sheds fill the plot (HER 1637).

### 5.3 Market

The 17<sup>th</sup> century market at Wooler was considered to be "to the great impoverishment of the burgesses of Alnwick and the impeachment of the lord's profit" (Tate 1866, 443). Parson and White's Directory of 1827 describes Wooler as the only market town in Glendale (488). The Market Place appears to have been partly infilled with buildings in the post-medieval period, including Nent House (HER 1616) and the plot which includes The Wheatsheaf Inn. (HER 1694)

### 5.4 Inns

Wooler has many inns. Historically, these were sustained both by the town's role as a market centre and by its function as a post and coaching town. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Wooler also appears to have attracted other visitors, although the comment that the town was "formerly a place of great resort for invalids to drink goats milk or whey" (Parson and White's Directory of 1827,488) may only have been an indirect factor in their success. Whellan's Directory of 1855 lists 13 inns in Wooler (listed below) many of which were (many still are) clustered near the Market Place. Of those which remain, The Anchor Inn (HER 1687) at 2 Cheviot Street was also used as a court house (along with The Tankerville Arms) prior to the construction of a dedicated court house in Wooler. On the north side of the High Street is The 18<sup>th</sup> century Angel Inn (HER 1625), possibly successor to a 17<sup>th</sup> century inn on the same site. The present inn dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and is listed Grade II. Next door is The Black Bull (HER 1624). It is a building of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, but again successor to a probable 17<sup>th</sup> century inn on the same site. At the start of the 19th century the Black Bull was a posting inn and had extensive stables and byres to the rear. The building was remodelled in 1910 in the Arts and Crafts style; it is Grade II listed. On the opposite side of the road from the Black Bull is The Red Lion (HER 1628). Deeds relating to the property date from 1692. An early Wheatsheaf Inn on the south east side of the Market Place may have been damaged by the fire of 1863, as shortly after that date it was demolished and replaced by the present Wheatsheaf (HER1694; Collier and Stewart 1986, 31).

On the north side of Cottage Road is the 18th and early 19th century coaching inn and mail stop, The Tankerville Arms (HER 1621). It was extended in 1898 and is now Grade II listed. A garage and workshop (HER 1622) just north-west of The Tankerville Arms are former stable buildings and a carriage-house, all dating from the early 19th century.

Of the inns no longer standing, several were destroyed in the fire of 1863. The White Horse (HER 1695), Three Half Moons (HER 1693) and The Sun Inn (HER 1692) were demolished shortly after that date. The Masons Arms (HER 1688) once stood at the foot of Ramsey's

Lane. The Seven Stars (HER 1691) stood in the vicinity of the present *Wheatsheaf* in the Market Place. The Plough Inn (HER 1689) occupied a site on the High Street near the entrance to what is now Glendale Road. It was demolished by 1880.

## 5.5 Places of Worship

**St Mary's Church** (HER 1584) was already in a poor state by the early 16<sup>th</sup> century and by 1610 the ecclesiastical commissioners reported that it was 'in decay in stalls and windows, its wall tumbled; 'The churchyard dike layeth over' (Collier and Stewart 1986, 13-14). In 1694 the church was severely damaged by a fire that swept through Wooler; another fire in 1763 completed its destruction when the thatch set alight. The new parish church of St Mary was built adjacent to the old church (Parson and Whites Directory of 1827, 488). This new St Mary's was completed in 1765 in Doddington stone. It was enlarged in 1826 (Collier and Stewart 1986, 14-15), "Gothicised" in 1873 and the chancel and east vestries added in 1912-13.

A former **Presbyterian Meeting House** (HER 1617) in Cheviot Street was probably built in the late 1770s, replacing an older structure (Stell 1994; Collier and Stewart 1986, 19). It was altered to the fashionable Gothic style in the 1870s and remodelled in 1904 with *art nouveau* details, including stained glass (Pevsner 1992, 634). It is now a United Reformed Church and is listed Grade II.

**The Wester Meeting House** (HER 1632) at No 55 on the south side of the High Street was only the second meeting house established in Wooler around 1729 (Collier and Stewart 1986, 19, 20, 23). It was rebuilt in 1818 (Collier and Stewart 1986, 21; Stell 1994) and sold in the 1950s to become a Masonic Hall. The building is now used as a library and is listed Grade II.

The original **Tower Hill Presbyterian Church** (HER 1696) in Market Place at the corner of Ramsey's Lane was built in 1779, but the present building, known as Archbold Hall, dates to only 1868. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it became a grocery and a drapers shop and was then donated to the community as the village hall (Collier and Stewart 1986, 23).

**The Roman Catholic Church of St Ninian** (HER 1615) was built in 1856 by the architect George Goldie. The former presbytery to the church dates from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and was used during the Second World War as a hospital depot. It is now a guest house. The house (HER 1639), its garden wall and gate piers (HER 1640) are listed Grade II.

## 5.6 Public Buildings

**Glendale Poor Union Workhouse** (HER 1682) was erected in 1839 in the area known as Padgepool Place (Collier and Stewart 1986, 42). The building ranges, planned in a cross-shape, incorporated a school and hospital. Later it was used as council buildings and more recently as a Field Study Centre. Padgepool was once a marshy area. It was drained in modern times, but many of the buildings in the area have settled to a greater or lesser degree.

**The Mechanics Institute** (HER 1697) in Wooler was first established in 1828 but it was not until 1889 that a permanent home was built on the High Street at the corner of Meeting House Lane (Collier and Stewart 1986, 54).

## 5.7 Mills

A number of mills were established around the town (Collier and Stewart 1986, 32-3). Five mills, for instance, lay along a two mile run of Wooler Water; Coldgate, Earle, the Carding and Dye Mills and Woollen Mill. Most of these fall outside the assessment area but are mentioned because, apart from Colgate Mill, they were served by a common leat that came from a weir across Wooler Water and filled a pond above Earle Mill. This concentration of mills for textile production and cloth processing along Wooler Water is the town's only claim to industrialisation.

To the south of Wooler, Earle Mill (HER 1591) is probably one of the oldest mill sites in the area, with documentary evidence from 1663 to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Collier and Stewart 1986, 32-3). It has recently been renovated and traces of the millrace can be seen. The building is listed Grade II. Approximately 700m to the north of Earle mill along Wooler Water, the First Edition Ordnance Survey shows a carding mill (HER 1699). A dye mill was associated with the carding mill. Both were demolished in the 1980s, the carding mill already having been burnt out in the early part of the century (Collier and Stewart 1986, 33).

Further north but still within the town, a dye works (HER 1683) is shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey. Two dyers are mentioned in the Militia Lists of 1762 (Collier and Stewart 1986, 33) but there is documentary evidence that the trade of dying in Wooler has medieval origins; one of those liable for the lay subsidy tax in 1296 was Adam the Dyer (Fraser 1968, 39). The open area of ground near to the dye mill is annotated on Cross's map of 1828 as a bleach field (HER 1684). To the north of the dye mill and still standing on South Road is Wooler Mill (HER 1642), an 18th or early 19th century water mill which is now listed Grade II.

### **5.8 Brewery**

The only industrial development on the east bank of Wooler Water was Wooler Brewery (HER 1700). It lay along Brewery Road and appears on the First Edition Ordnance Survey at what is now the site of Brewery Farm.

### **5.9 Coming of the Railway**

The North Eastern Railway link between Alnwick and Coldstream was only completed in 1887. A station, yard and freight stores were built at Wooler. A mart (HER 1686) was also created in a field opposite the station. It was subsequently enlarged and an auction hall added (Collier and Stewart 1986, 37-8). The arrival of the railway also allowed Wooler to become a popular holiday retreat and it began to benefit from the tourist industry. After the track was badly flooded in 1948 the route declined, and parts were closed, although the Wooler to Cornhill section remained open until 1965. Many of the station buildings remain (HER 1665) and have been converted into houses. The station yard and freight buildings today form part of a small industrial estate.

### **5.10 Suburbs**

The town began to expand again after the fire of 1862. Many buildings were new, or at least newly faced, although many survived the fire. In late Victorian and early Edwardian periods, suburbs developed to the north of town along Glendale Road, Tankerville Terrace and Queen's Road.

### **5.11 Twentieth Century Defences and Memorials**

A lozenge-style polygonal pillbox (HER 1644) was part of a ring of these strong points constructed around Wooler in 1941 during World War II. This pill box and three others (HER's 1652, 1653 and 1654) fall within the assessment area, whilst eight others in the same system (HER's 1644 to 1651) fall outside.

The site of the post-medieval tower on Castle Mound is shared with a 1920s neo-Celtic War memorial (HER 1620).

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

### **6 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

This section deals with the possibility of discovering archaeological remains within Wooler in the course of development and to what extent these remains could contribute to the understanding of the past of the town and the country as a whole. To be meaningful, any archaeological input in Wooler should be weighed against the value of the likely returns. The most useful way of assessing this value is for it to be set against locally and nationally agreed research agendas which will allow relevant work to be planned and delivered to best value. Developer-funded archaeological work within Northumberland will always refer to these national and local research frameworks.

Historic towns represent one of the most complex and important forms of archaeological evidence, some having been occupied over two millennia (English Heritage 1992, 13). As well as information about the overall development of urban settlement and its planning, towns can also provide information on defence, ecclesiastical organisation, crafts, commerce, industry and the environment as well as about the individual occupants of a town and how they lived and died. As more work is carried out in our urban centres because of archaeological intervention in the planning process, more information is being accumulated. It is important that this information is synthesized and made accessible publicly, enabling archaeologists and other researchers to analyse this material to create a national picture of urban settlement change. Wooler, with its medieval origins and location within a disputed border zone, will have a useful role to play in this research.

#### **6.1 Prehistoric Potential**

Although lying within an area rich in prehistoric archaeology, the only significant prehistoric find made in the town has been a single Bronze-Age cist burial along Cheviot Street. It is possible that the burial was not isolated and that others exist (or did exist) in the same area. Burial of the dead, of course, presupposes a settlement fairly close by. The location of any such settlement remains unknown. Other prehistoric finds from Wooler were displaced from their original context and are of little use in predicting areas which may be of potential.

##### *6.1.1 Research Agenda:*

- Does the Bronze-Age cist burial found along Cheviot Street represent only one part of a more extensive burial ground?
- Is there any evidence in the Cheviot Street area for Bronze-Age settlement?

##### *6.1.2 Archaeological Priorities*

In pursuit of Wooler's prehistoric past, archaeological briefs and specifications will be written

to:

- ensure that adequate archaeological evaluation takes place within the area of Cheviot Street so that any constraints can be identified at the earliest opportunity,
- enhance our understanding of the prehistoric period by identifying the extent and nature of prehistoric land use.

## **6.2 Early Medieval Potential**

Evidence for this period, although sparse, does exist. Physically, it amounts to two sculpted stones, one built into St Mary's church, the other from beyond the town. The sub-surface remains around the present Church of St Mary may include pre-Conquest elements. Other than this, it is impossible to target any area of pre-Conquest archaeological potential other than in a general zone around the church.

### *6.2.1 Research Agenda:*

- What was the character of pre-Conquest activity in the area?
- Will further documentary analysis help to define pre-Conquest landholdings, estates and ecclesiastical provision around Wooler?
- Is there any evidence for other worked stone of early-medieval date built into the fabric of the standing Church of St Mary's?
- Is there any evidence for surviving early-medieval fabric within the sub-surface remains around the present St Mary's?

### *6.2.2 Archaeological Priorities*

In order to explore this area of potential, the County Archaeologist will consider the exploration of St Mary's Church and its immediate environs to be a high priority and specifications for archaeological work will:

- seek to identify the extent of early medieval activity and where possible its nature and form
- ensure that any works to St Mary's Church are accompanied by archaeological recording in pursuit of the above
- seek to explore the evolution of the village from the early medieval period

## **6.3 Medieval Potential**

There is substantial evidence for late medieval occupation at Wooler, although insufficient archaeological work has been carried out to confidently establish either its full extent or its character. Present opinion is that the foci of medieval activity within the town will have been the possibly 12<sup>th</sup> century parish church which burnt down and was replaced in 1765 and the 12<sup>th</sup> century motte or ringwork on Castle Mound.

Any ground works in the churchyard of St Mary's, as well as impacting on burials, will potentially come into contact with sub-surface remains of the medieval church. It is also likely that the churchyard in medieval times was more extensive than at present and graves and other early features may extend to the south of the churchyard wall.

The modern street pattern appears at least in part to be of medieval origin and medieval properties ran back from High Street; along the continuation of this street between Ramsey Lane and Cheviot Street; to the west of Cheviot Street; and possibly in an area to the north of The Peth and south-east of St Mary's Church. The medieval market place was probably more extensive than the present market place.

A Hospital of St Mary Magdalene was founded in Wooler in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It had ceased to function by the 15<sup>th</sup> century

#### 6.3.1 *Research Agenda*

- Of what date and how extensive are the sub-surface remains of the medieval church adjacent to the present Church of St Mary?
- How extensive is the medieval churchyard?
- How best can a chronology of Castle Mound, including the Tower, be established?
- How do Castle Mound in Wooler and Green Castle to the west of town relate to one another?
- Do archaeological deposits survive between the Castle Mound and St Mary's Church
- How extensive are medieval properties in the town?
- Does the form and layout of the properties vary across the town?
- Can surviving medieval documents be linked to specific properties?
- What evidence is there for the location of the hospital?

#### 6.3.2 *Archaeological Priorities*

In pursuit of Wooler's medieval past, the County Archaeologist will recommend archaeological works which will:

- establish the extent of occupation in medieval times
- record the evolution of the village from early medieval times
- confirm the medieval street pattern
- ensure proposals to alter listed buildings will be accompanied by recommendations for archaeological recording, so that early features can be identified and recorded
- examine the relationship between Castle Mound and Castle Green
- establish the location of the medieval hospital

## **6.4 Post Medieval and Modern Potential**

Historically, Wooler has been prone to destructive and extensive fires. Many buildings were destroyed during these conflagrations and new stock built. Although most buildings seem to date to the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, it is not clear to what extent buildings in the town may incorporate earlier fabric. World War II pillboxes are of undoubted national significance and a speedily wasting asset. The pillboxes ranged around Wooler are of special significance in that they represent a planned system of defences for the town. Any development proposals which would compromise this ring of defence works should be resisted and, whenever the opportunity arises, recording of the system and its components should be requested.

### *6.4.1 Research Agenda:*

- Is there evidence for early fabric in buildings in Wooler?
- How was the defensive system around Wooler intended to function?

### *6.4.2 Archaeological Priorities*

In order to discover more about the post-medieval and modern periods, the County Archaeologist will recommend archaeological works which will:

- ensure proposals to alter listed buildings are accompanied by recommendations for archaeological recording, so that early features can be identified and recorded
- ensure proposals that affect the defensive system of pillboxes are accompanied by recommendations for archaeological recording, so that they can be recorded

## **PART THREE: ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE PLANNING PROCESS**

### **7 THE EXISTING FRAMEWORK**

The protection and management of archaeological remains in England is achieved through a combination of statutory and policy based measures. For those sites considered to be the most important - of national or international significance - statutory protections are conferred. For many other sites, those considered of regional or local significance, protection is provided through planning legislation and policy guidance. An indication of best practice for the protection and management of all archaeological sites is provided by Planning Policy Statement 5 issued by the Government.

**7.1 Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5)** was published in 2010 and replaces Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG15). PPS5 is supported by a companion Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide endorsed by Communities and Local Government, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and English Heritage. The practice guide contains general and specific advice on the application of the PPS.

PPS5 recognises a heritage asset as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. It recognises that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource which should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations. It indicates that planning decisions should be made based on the nature, extent and level of significance investigated to a degree proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset (para 7). It establishes the principle that nationally important heritage assets and their settings, whether scheduled or not, should be preserved except in exceptional circumstances (HE9 and 10).

Policies HE6 and 8 require that local planning authorities should ensure that sufficient information on the significance of any heritage assets accompanies all applications with assessment being carried out by appropriate experts. In the case of archaeological assets, this may require desk-based assessment and where an assessment is insufficient to properly assess the situation, field evaluation may be required. Assessment and evaluation should be proportionate to the importance of the known or potential asset and no more than is required to understand the impact of the proposal on the significance of the asset. Where assessment and evaluation is required this needs to be undertaken prior to the submission of an application and included within the required Design and Access Statement (HE6 and 8). Pre-application discussion with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is recommended (HE8), in

particular Northumberland Conservation, who provide planning advice to the local authority on heritage issues.

Where the loss of part or all of the asset is justified, LPAs should require the developer to record and advance an understanding of the heritage asset before it is lost. Such actions can be secured by condition. The extent of mitigation requirements should be proportionate to the significance of the asset (HE12). These procedures are examined in more detail in section 7.7 and 7.8 below.

## **7.2 Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

The most important sites in the country are protected under the terms of section 1 of the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)*. For any works carried out on or in the vicinity of these sites consent must be granted by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), who take advice on these matters from English Heritage (EH). Scheduling is in many ways unsuited to widespread application in urban areas. It is not designed to protect extensive areas, but rather protects well-defined and easily identifiable monuments. Nor does it adapt well to protecting archaeological remains where the precise nature of deposits is not known. It is therefore necessary to protect many urban archaeological remains through the planning process and if necessary by controlling or reducing sub-surface interference through an Article 4 direction under the *Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988*.

## **7.3 Listed Buildings**

This is a statutory designation, the equivalent of scheduling for a building. Listed buildings can be altered, but only after due consideration to the nature of the building and its historic context. There is currently a range of listing grades: grades I and II\* are protected directly by English Heritage, grade II by local authorities.

## **7.4 Conservation Areas**

Conservation Areas are designated by the local planning authority under the terms of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Archaeological Areas) Act 1990. Conservation Areas are put in place in parts of towns which are considered to be of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. There are more than 50 Conservation Areas in Northumberland, but Wooler has no such designation.

## **7.5 Archaeological Sites without Statutory Designation**

The protection and management of the majority of archaeological sites in England - those which are not protected by statutory means - is carried out by local authorities. Measures for the protection of both known and unknown archaeological sites are set out as policies within

the statutory development plan and include specific requirements as well as reference to nationally agreed planning policy guidelines and statutory obligations.

## 7.6 Development Plan Policies

Responsibility for the protection and management of archaeological sites and the historic environment falls upon the Local Planning Authority (LPA). To assist the LPA in preserving the built and natural environment, the statutory development plan contains a comprehensive set of planning policies. For Wooler, the statutory development plan comprises the saved policies of the *Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan*.

The saved policies of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Local Plan relating to the protection and management of archaeological sites and the historic environment are:

### **POLICY F26**

*There will be a presumption in favour of the physical preservation of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other nationally important archaeological sites and their settings. Development which would prevent preservation in situ of the visible or non visible archaeological site and its setting will not be permitted.*

### **POLICY F27**

*Where the impact of a development proposal on an archaeological site or an area of archaeological potential, or the relative importance of such an area is unclear, the developer will be required to provide further information in the form of an archaeological assessment and in some cases an archaeological evaluation prior to a planning decision being made. Where the remains are found to be of national importance Policy F26 will apply.*

### **POLICY F28**

*Where archaeological sites or their settings will be affected by development, preservation in situ will be preferred. Where preservation in situ is necessary, development will only be permitted where such preservation can be accommodated within the scheme. In cases where preservation in situ is not considered necessary, planning permission may be granted subject to a condition or a legal agreement requiring the developer to make provision for the excavation and recording of the remains and analysis and publication of the findings.*

### **POLICY F29**

*In considering proposals within, or affecting the setting of, an historic park, garden or battlefield, regard will be had to the avoidance of damaging effects on historically important features of the site, on its appearance or on that of its setting.*

These objectives are implemented through the planning system and through protective legislation.

## 7.7 Pre-Application Discussion

Early consultation with Northumberland Conservation on planning proposals is of enormous importance and is highlighted in PPS5. Where assessment and evaluation are required, this needs to be undertaken prior to the submission of an application and included within the required Design and Access Statement in line with PPS5 policies HE6 and 8.

Northumberland Conservation can provide an initial appraisal of whether known or potential heritage assets of significance are likely to be affected by a proposed development and can give advice on the steps that may need to be taken at each stage of the process.

#### *7.7.1 Desk-based assessment*

Information on the likely impact a proposed development will have on the remains can be estimated from existing records (including this report), historical accounts and reports of archaeological work in the vicinity, in conjunction with a number of sources which suggest the nature of deposits on the site, such as bore-hole logs and cellar surveys. This is presented in a standard format, known as a Desk-Based Assessment, prepared by an archaeological consultant on behalf of the applicant, to a specification drawn up by, or in agreement with, Northumberland Conservation, which can assist by providing a list of organisations which do work of this sort (see Policy F27, above).

*Pre-application consultation with Northumberland Conservation is vital as desk-based assessment may not be necessary in many instances but where required, it will need to be submitted with the planning application.*

#### *7.7.2 Field evaluation*

Where an assessment is insufficient to properly assess the impact of a proposed development on known or potential heritage assets, field evaluation may be required. The requirements of this stage will also be determined by Northumberland Conservation. It may require a range of survey and analytical techniques including limited excavation. An evaluation is designed to provide sufficient information about the extent, character and preservation of archaeological remains to judge what planning decision would be appropriate and, if necessary, what mitigation measures should be adopted (see Policy F27, above).

*Pre-application consultation with Northumberland Conservation is vital as evaluation may not be necessary in some instances but where required, it will need to be submitted with the planning application.*

### **7.8 Archaeological Planning Conditions**

The Planning Authority can make the appropriate decision (in the context of the Policies set out in the statutory development plan) on whether or not to give consent to the scheme, based the information provided by the Historic Environment Record and assessment and evaluation reports, where necessary. If it is considered that an application can be consented, steps may be required to mitigate its impact on the archaeological remains. This can sometimes be achieved by simply designing the scheme to avoid disturbance, for example by the use of building techniques that ensure minimal ground disturbance. If planning permission is given and archaeological remains will be unavoidably destroyed, the developer may be

required to ensure that these remains are archaeologically investigated, analysed and published. In this situation, the requirements for further work will normally be attached to the Planning Consent as conditions, such as the standard Northumberland Conservation condition detailed below:

*A programme of archaeological work is required in accordance with the brief provided by Northumberland Conservation (NC ref X dated X). The archaeological scheme shall comprise three stages of work. Each stage shall be completed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before it can be discharged:*

*a) No development or archaeological mitigation shall commence on site until a written scheme of investigation based on the brief has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

*b) The archaeological recording scheme required by the brief must be completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.*

*c) The programme of analysis, reporting, publication and archiving if required by the brief must be completed in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.*

#### *7.8.1 Written scheme of investigation*

This is a detailed document which sets out the extent and the nature of archaeological work required, including any necessary analyses and research, finds collection, conservation and deposition policies as well as likely publication requirements. This document is usually prepared by the contracting archaeologist, who will undertake the work, to a brief prepared by Northumberland Conservation.

#### *7.8.2 The range of archaeological fieldwork*

The range of archaeological requirements set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation will vary. Many sites in historic urban areas will require full excavation. Frequently, though, the small-scale of disturbance associated with a development, or the low probability that archaeological remains will have once existed or survived on the site, will mean that a less intensive level of observation and recording is required. This may take the form of a Watching Brief; this is the timetabled presence of a suitably qualified archaeologist at the point when ground work on a site is underway. Any archaeological deposits encountered will be quickly recorded and any finds collected, without undue disruption to the construction work. Again, Northumberland Conservation will provide the brief for the Watching Brief and the contracting archaeologist will provide a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation which complies with the brief.

#### *7.8.3 Building recording*

Where historic standing buildings form a component of the archaeological resource affected by development, there may be a need to undertake building recording in advance of demolition or renovation. This requirement may apply to listed and unlisted buildings and will be dependent on the historical interest of the building; outwardly unprepossessing structures

may contain important information about past communities and industries and will merit recording by qualified archaeologists or building historians to an agreed specification.

### **7.9 Unexpected Discoveries**

Developers may wish to incorporate the potential for unexpected discoveries into their risk-management strategies. The PPS5 Practice Guide (paragraph 141) provides advice on the rare instances where, as a result of implementing a consent, a new asset is discovered or the significance of an existing asset is increased in a way that could not reasonably have been foreseen at the time of the application. It advises the local planning authority to work with the developer to seek a solution that protects the significance of the new discovery, so far as is practical, within the existing scheme. The extent of modifications will be dependant on the importance of the discovery and new evidence may require a local planning authority to consider reviewing its decision. Discoveries of treasure or human remains will need to be reported in accordance with the relevant legislation. English Heritage wishes to be informed if the discoveries are likely to merit designation.

The National Heritage Protection Commissions Programme Guidance on PPS5 Assistance Cases released in July 2010 indicates that English Heritage recognises that the best-planned and informed schemes can occasionally result in entirely unexpected discoveries of national significance, and therefore it may be possible to apply for funding as a last resort to ensure that a suitable record is made prior to destruction or loss of significance. English Heritage will only consider financial assistance towards the investigation, analysis or dissemination of such nationally significant discoveries if:

- The discovery is genuinely unexpected and could not have been predicted
- The asset discovered is of national significance
- The planning process set out in PPS5 has been followed
- Every effort can be demonstrated to have been made to accommodate unexpected discoveries within the available resources by prioritising the most important elements of the asset(s) being investigated

The request for funding must come from the appropriate local government heritage officer with responsibility for the case and not directly from the contractors or consultants conducting the investigation. Funding will be provided via the National Heritage Protection Commissions Programme (replacing the Historic Environment Enabling Programme in April 2011). English Heritage must be consulted at the earliest possible juncture so that they have an opportunity to shape the response to the unexpected discoveries. English Heritage will not consider retrospective applications to cover costs already incurred when they have not been consulted on or agreed to the response and its cost implications. The first point of contact should be the North-East English Heritage offices at Bessie Surtees House, 41-44 Sandhill, Newcastle upon Tyne (0191 269 1200).

### 7.9.1 *How is National Archaeological Importance Defined?*

A number of assumptions will be made when determining whether archaeological remains are nationally important or not. These have been set out by English Heritage (1992, 47):

- i) the further back in time the origins of the form the greater the interest to archaeology; the fewer the number of examples believed to exist the greater the interest that attaches to those places as representatives of their form;*
- ii) the greater the variation that can be perceived within any defined form the higher the archaeological interest in terms of opportunities to explore spatial and temporal variation in respect of social, economic, political, religious, and symbolic matters; and*
- iii) the more representative of the life and times of the periods during which defined forms were current the greater the archaeological interest in terms of providing insights into past lifestyles.*

These assumptions are not intended to apply to all of the town at all times. Nor will all of these assumptions be appropriate to all nationally important archaeological sites within the urban area. Instead they are used to help create a value judgement on particular archaeological remains and whether they may be nationally important or not. A number of discrimination criteria will also be applied to archaeological remains discovered during the course of development. These will relate more specifically to the remains uncovered and will include their state of survival, their potential to provide archaeological evidence, previous archaeological or historical documentation on site, their group value, diversity, and amenity value. These criteria have been developed by the Secretary of State to determine whether archaeological remains are nationally important or not.

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|---|---------------------|
| St Mary's Church Illustration c. 1750   | VF 12661            |
| Humbledon Mill photo c. 1890 and others | VF 26507/2875/A1256 |
| Humbledon Mill photo c. 1890            | VF 26506/2874/A1257 |

#### Northumberland Record Office

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| Plan of the town of Wooler surveyed and drawn by Richard Cross 1828 | (BRO) NRO 1862, |
| Historical notes of Wooler Presbyterian church                      | (BRO)           |
| Note on Muschamp Bovary of Wooler 1258                              | NRO 542         |
| Deed re Red Lion Inn 1692-1833                                      | NRO 2607/2      |
| Lease re dwelling house and garden 1754                             | NRO 2752        |
| Leases and deeds 1787-1826  | NRO 530 17/23   |
| Leases and deeds 1787-1826  | NRO 530 17/23   |

Plans of property in Wooler 1824 (Greenwich Hospital Estate)

NRO 1204/5/2

Photos of Wooler c 1915

NRO 733/5-9

Parish registers 1692-1880

EP 33

**APPENDIX 1: LISTED BUILDINGS****Grade II**

Church of St Mary(HER 1584)

Roman Catholic Church of St Ninian (HER 1615, 16/106)

Nent House(HER 1616, 18/107)

United Reformed Church (HER 1617, 503501)

No 5 Church Street (Miller's Antiques) (HER 1618, 17/109)

Police Station and Police House(HER 1619)

War memorial (HER 1620)

The Tankerville Arms (HER 1621)

Garage and workshop c.10 yards north west of The Tankerville Arms (HER 1622)

The Old Vicarage (HER 1623)

The Black Bull (HER 1624)

The Angel Inn (HER 1625,17/117)

Nos 6-8 High Street (HER 1626, 17/118)

Nos 10-14 High Street (HER 1627,17/119)

The Red Lion (HER 1628)

Nos 3-7 (odd) High Street (HER 1629)

Nos 15 and 17 High Street (HER 1630, 17/122)

No 21 High Street (HER 1631, 17/123)

The Masonic Hall (HER 1632)

Nos 14 and 15 Market Place (HER 1633)

No 16 Market Place (HER 1634)

No 18 Market Place (HER 1635)

Terrace retaining wall and railings 5 yards north of Nos 14-18 consecutive (HER 1636)

No 1 and attached garages, Ramsey's Lane (HER 1637)

No 18 Ramsey's Lane (HER 1638)

Loreto Guest House (HER 1639)

Garden wall and gatepiers east and south of Loreto Guest House (HER 1640)

Milepost by Millvale (HER 1641)

Wooler Mill (HER 1642)

Milepost c.1/4 mile north of Haugh Head (HER 3374)

## APPENDIX 2: ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVENTS

Material within this report includes information available on the Northumberland Historic Environment Record (HER) at the time this report was updated. Information on the HER is constantly being updated and should be used as the primary source for archaeological investigations in this area.

### Event No 10400

Northern Counties Archaeological Services, 1999. *Watching brief in churchyard of St Mary's Parish Church, Wooler*

Monitoring of excavation of installation of new external lighting system in trenches 0.35m deep. Mortared rubble foundation of an earlier structure was located to the north of the present nave. This was interpreted as the remains of the medieval parish church which had been burnt down in 1763 and new church built alongside. Few human remains and no articulated burials were located at the shallow depth excavated. A fragment of nailhead or dogtooth moulding (12<sup>th</sup> century) was found in one of the trenches.

### Event No 362

Bernicia Archaeology, 2003. *Watching brief at New Wooler Evangelical Church, Cheviot Street*

The new Church lies in an area at the rear of medieval burgage plots. No archaeological remains predating the 18<sup>th</sup> century were disturbed or exposed during the works. The local stratigraphy was cultivation soils overlying colluvium which in turn overlay undisturbed glacial silts, clays and sands.

### Event No 13515

Archaeological Research Services, 2005. *Evaluation trenching at The Old Joiner's Yard, The Peth*

Work, undertaken in advance of the construction of a dwelling, involved the excavation of one trench measuring 10m by 2m cut into a garden area. The trench exposed a series of linear and circular features, all of which contained modern artefacts.

### Event No 13519

Alan Williams Archaeology, 2004. *Evaluation trenching on land to the rear of 5 & 6 Market Place*

Evaluation, consisting of the excavation of three test pits in a yard and within a building at rear of Nos 5 & 6 Market Place. All test pits indicated that there was a considerable depth of post-medieval and modern soils had accumulated or been dumped in the area, some of which may have been used to level the site. In test pit C a soil deposit was reached 1.3m below the yard surface which contained exclusively medieval pottery. This layer may represent the surface horizon of medieval occupation of the site. No other potential mediaeval deposits were located during the fieldwork.

### Event No 13662

Alan Williams Archaeology, 2005. *Evaluation trenching at 27-33 High Street*

Evaluation consisted of the excavation of seven trenches in land to the rear of 27-33 High Street, an area within medieval properties still defined by stone walls. It showed that a considerable depth of post-medieval and modern garden soils had accumulated over a medieval soil horizon. The density of medieval features revealed below the overburden was low (they included a substantial stone gully in trench F, and a discrete area of cobbling and a probable soakaway in trench A).

**APPENDIX 3: MAPS**

*Figure 7: Wooler on Armstrong's map of Northumberland 1769 (ZBK Sheet 2)*

*Figure 8: First edition 25 inch to 1 mile. Reproduced from the 1860 Ordnance Survey Map*

*Figure 9: Second Edition 25 inches to One Mile Ordnance Survey 1897*

*Figure 10: Third Edition 25 inches to One Mile Ordnance Survey 1920*

## APPENDIX 4: STRATEGIC SUMMARY

### WOOLER STRATEGIC SUMMARY

#### A4.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

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

*Figure 11: Wooler areas of archaeological sensitivity*

#### **Prehistoric**

- Wooler is located within a wider, very rich prehistoric landscape,
- A Bronze Age cist burial was found in a garden on the west side of Cheviot Street on the southern edge of the town in 1872. There is the possibility that associated and comparable remains could survive in this area.

#### **Early Medieval**

- There is no documentary or physical evidence of a settlement at Wooler.
- Several 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> century stone carvings have, however, been uncovered within the fabric of the 18<sup>th</sup> century church and during the dismantling of a wall for the subsequent construction of the railway probably to the west of the town.

#### **Medieval**

##### Church

- The current church (built in 1765) replaced an earlier church, the precise date of which is not known. Documentary sources and limited archaeological investigations indicate at least a 12<sup>th</sup> century date. The early medieval stone carvings (see above) may indicate an earlier date.

- A stone coffin uncovered in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the south of the graveyard may indicate that the graveyard once extended over a much wider area.

#### Castle

- A 12<sup>th</sup> century castle mound or motte is thought to be located under the ruins of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Wooler Tower.
- Green Castle, under a mile to the west, also comprises another mound with a ringwork on the top. The chronological and political relationship between these two sites is not known.

#### Settlement

- The first documentary references for a settlement at Wooler occur in 1107.
- The layout of the medieval settlement is likely to be reflected in the post-medieval plans of the town with street frontage properties with narrow burgage plots to the rear, either side of the High Street with further blocks along The Brae and Whitsun View.
- Recent evaluations to the north and south of High Street have revealed a significant build-up of later deposits (up to 1.3m in depth) overlying medieval soil levels and relatively dispersed features. The depth of deposits and the density of archaeological features are likely vary across the medieval town dependant on medieval and later land-use.
- The town suffered greatly during the protracted wars with Scotland which continued until the Union of the Crowns in 1603.
- A Royal Charter to hold a weekly market was granted in 1199 and Wooler developed as a centre for the wool trade and a focal point for sheep shearing in this period. It became a major centre for the export of wool to the Low Countries.
- The current market is located centrally. The medieval market was probably also located in this area but is likely to have been more extensive given its significance in that period.
- Documentary records indicate a range of activities in this period including a water mill and dyeing.

#### Hospital

- The Hospital of St Mary Magdalene is mentioned in documentary references from 1288 to 1490. Its nature, extent and location is not known no although it is likely to be located on the edge of the medieval settlement.

### **Post-Medieval**

#### Church

- The church fell into disrepair in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Following two destructive fires in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the new parish church of St Mary was built adjacent to the old church in 1765.

#### Settlement

- In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the area around Wooler continued to be an embattled area and an English Borders garrison list from 1509 notes that 20 soldiers were maintained at Wooler for its defence.
- Wooler Tower was constructed as a defensive tower in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Neither its precise date of construction nor the date that it went out of use and fell into ruin area known. Three large blocks of stone are all that survive of the tower today, of which only one may actually be *in situ*.
- The extent or speed of expansion in the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries is not clear from contemporary sources. Maps from the 19<sup>th</sup> century show a town which has significantly expanded outside its presumed medieval core but do not show significant increase in size from 1828 to 1860. The maps show expansion from Cheviot Street to the south; out over Wooler Water to the east and buildings at Bridge End and Wooler Brewery.
- While continuing in use, the market place appears to have been partly infilled in the post-medieval period.
- The town had suffered a series of fires in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. After another fire in 1862, the Earl of Tankerville, Lord of the Manor used the opportunity to significantly rebuild the town including a new High Street.
- The number of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century inns in the town reflect its role as a market centre and a post and coaching town.

- There was a concentration of mills for textile production and cloth processing along Wooler Water. Earle Mill is possibly the oldest known mill in the area with documentary references dating from 1693 to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A dye works and bleaching field are located to the north.
- Wooler brewery also developed on the east bank of Wooler Water in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- There were a number of 18<sup>th</sup> century non-conformist meeting houses, many of which were restyled or rebuilt in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Presbyterian Meeting House on Cheviot Street was however built on the site of an earlier meeting house.
- 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings also include the Glendale Poor Union Workhouse and the Mechanics' institute.
- The railway came to Wooler in 1887 allowing Wooler to develop as a popular holiday retreat.

#### **A4.2 SUMMARY OF SETTLEMENT SPECIFIC RESEARCH AGENDAS**

As part of the planning process, it is important to establish the significance of surviving remains, in order to provide an appropriate and informed response for planning applications with the potential to impact on archaeological remains.

As stated in Part Two of the EUS, the most effective way of assessing the significance of archaeological remains is by comparing them with agreed national, regional and local research agendas and frameworks, particularly the North East Regional Research Framework (Petts et al, 2006).

These research agendas are discussed in detail in the EUS and summarised below.

##### **Prehistoric**

- The potential presence of a Bronze Age burial ground and further cists close to the known cist burial on Cheviot Street.
- Any evidence of an associated Bronze Age settlement in this area.

##### **Early Medieval**

- The nature and extent of early medieval activity.
- The presence of further stonework either within the fabric of St Mary's church or below ground in the church or churchyard.

##### **Medieval**

- The location and extent of the medieval church and associated graveyard.
- The nature and extent of remains associated with a medieval castle.
- The presence of any medieval remains in the area between the church and castle.
- The relationship between castle mound and green castle.
- The nature and extent of the medieval settlement.
- Variation in the layout and form of properties across the settlement.
- The location, nature and extent of the Hospital of St Mary Magdalene.
- Any evidence of medieval dyeing.

##### **Post-Medieval**

- The extent of the post-medieval village before late 19<sup>th</sup> century expansion.
- Any evidence of re-use of medieval or earlier post-medieval structures in later buildings.
- Any evidence of burning on standing remains and below ground remains.

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

The Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) has identified the areas of greatest archaeological sensitivity and potential in Wooler as summarised in the previous two sections. The attached plan further condenses the information into areas of high and medium archaeological sensitivity.

As stated in the EUS report, the protection and management of archaeological remains in England is achieved through a combination of statutory protection and protection through planning legislation and policy guidance. This framework is summarised in Part Three of the EUS.

There is a strong potential that archaeological work will be required by the Local Planning Authority on planning applications submitted within the areas highlighted as being of high and medium archaeological sensitivity. Areas outside the EUS area may also be of archaeological sensitivity, particularly remains associated with prehistoric activity. It is recommended that developers contact the Assistant County Archaeologist at Northumberland Conservation at the earliest opportunity, *prior* to the submission of a planning application, to establish if sites are of archaeological sensitivity and will require archaeological work as detailed below.

The nature and extent of archaeological work required as part of the planning process will depend on the location of the development in relation to the most archaeologically sensitive areas, the size of the development and the level of previous disturbance on the site. This could comprise one or more of the following:

#### **Pre-application work**

1. PPS5 indicates that, where assessment and/or evaluation are required on a site, the results of this work will need to be submitted in support of the planning application, and therefore will need to be completed prior to the submission of the application.
2. The EUS is used as an aid in the decision making process and helps to highlight large or particularly archaeologically sensitive sites which may require further, site specific, assessment or evaluation. In order to locate trial trenches or test pits most effectively, the commissioned archaeological contractor will need to provide a detailed project design for the agreement of Northumberland Conservation prior to work commencing. The project design will need to include:
  - i. A summary of all known archaeological remains and investigations in the surrounding area
  - ii. Historic maps of the specific site indicating earlier site layouts and the location of structures and features
  - iii. Any geotechnical, test pit data or records indicating the build-up of deposits and/or modern truncation of the site
3. The subsequent evaluation will need to work to the parameters agreed in the project design. Where undated features and deposits are revealed environmental sampling, analysis and radio carbon dating is likely to be required. The results of the fieldwork and any necessary post-excavation analysis or assessment will need to be provided in a report submitted with the planning application to enable an appropriate decision to be made.
4. It is important to have a good understanding of the nature and significance of historic buildings, any surviving features, fixtures and fittings or potential re-use of earlier buildings or material prior to the building's alteration or demolition. Dependant on the specific building and the nature of the proposed works, an application may require historic building assessment to be submitted with the planning application. This will enable a decision to be made on the appropriateness of the scheme and the nature and extent of any mitigation requirements required

#### **Post-determination mitigation**

1. The formulation of an appropriate mitigation strategy will be required and this will be based on the results of the evaluation. The majority of these options can be dealt with as a condition of planning permission comprising one or more of the following:
  - i. Preservation *in situ* of important archaeological remains revealed during evaluation. This could have an impact on the viability of the scheme and whether planning permission should be granted
  - ii. Full excavation prior to construction work commencing for significant remains that do not necessarily warrant preservation *in situ*. This will also require post-excavation assessment, full analysis, publication of the results and long-term storage of the archive at the appropriate museum

- iii. Strip and record prior to construction work commencing for a high density of less significant archaeological remains. The level of post-excavation work will depend on the significance of the archaeology revealed. Significant remains will require post-excavation assessment, full analysis and publication of the results. Archaeology of lesser significance may simply require an appropriate level of analysis and reporting. Long-term storage of the archive at the appropriate museum will be required
- iv. Watching brief during construction work for a low density of less significant archaeological remains. An appropriate level of analysis, reporting and long-term storage of the archive at the appropriate museum will be required
- v. No further work in areas where no archaeological remains are found
2. Small-scale development such as small extensions within the area of high archaeological sensitivity may not require pre-application evaluation and in some instances can be dealt with by an archaeological watching brief during construction. Given the high sensitivity of this area, the level of archaeological work required will very much depend on the nature, extent and depth of groundworks and the level of any previous disturbance on the site. An appropriate level of analysis, reporting and long-term storage of the archive at the appropriate museum will be required
3. The need for historic building recording is assessed on the significance of the building, its surviving fixtures and fittings, the potential re-use of earlier building fabric and the nature and extent of the proposed works. Sufficient information will be needed to assess the significance of the building either from existing records or the production of an historic building assessment prior to the determination of the application. An appropriate level of building recording will be identified in response to all these factors, adhering to English Heritage Guidelines
4. Ecclesiastical faculties involving groundwork and work on the historic fabric of the church are likely to require archaeological work of the nature detailed above.

***NB*** *The nature and extent of archaeological work is gauged for each individual site. It is therefore recommended that prospective developers contact the Assistant County Archaeologist at Northumberland Conservation at the earliest opportunity before the application is submitted to discuss the potential requirements on development sites in Wooler and the surrounding area.*

This document and plan have been produced based on the available evidence at the time that the EUS was produced. Our knowledge of the archaeology is continually being updated and as such this information should only be used as a broad indication of the archaeologically sensitive areas. In some instances development outside the highlighted areas may be required.

#### **Further Guidance**

Any further guidance or queries should be directed to:

Karen Derham/Nick Best  
Assistant County Archaeologist  
Northumberland Conservation  
Planning Strategy & Development Management  
Local Services  
Northumberland County Council  
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