



NEGATIVE WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

Hadrian's Wall Tourist Signs Adjacent to Brocolitia Roman Fort and the Errington Arms Public House Northumberland

Sign 311 – NGR NY 86449 71340

Sign 312 – NGR NY 86008 71275

Sign 320 – NGR NY 98688 68712

Contractor: Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (Northern Office)

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Client: Northumberland County Council

Planning Application Number: n/a

PCA Project Number: 370

PCA Site Code: HWT 16

Oasis ID: preconst1-254167

LOCATION

Planning Authority: Northumberland County Council

District: Hexham

County: Northumberland

Site address: Hadrian's Wall, Northumberland.

DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:

An appropriately specified programme of archaeological work was required in association with the erection of traffic signs for the Hadrian's Wall Tourist Trail in Northumberland (Figure 1). The work was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited (PCA), and involved archaeological observation and recording during all invasive groundworks at the location of the three road signs.

The three road signs were split over two locations; Brocolitia Roman Fort: Signs 311 and 312 (Figure 1 & 2) and the Errington Arms Public House: Sign 320 (Figures 1 & 3). Sign 311 was located within Scheduled Area 26053 (NGR NY 86449 71340). This section includes Hadrian's Wall and associated features between the minor road to Simonburn in the east and the field boundary to the east of Carrawburgh car park in the west. This section of the wall follows an alignment straight from the North Tyne to the high point at Limestone Corner where it changes to a more westerly direction and occupies the gentle west-facing slope all the way to Carrawburgh. The wall survives as a buried feature for most of this section, except for the two well-preserved areas west of the minor road to Simonburn. The two upstanding sections of Wall are consolidated and in the care of the Secretary of

State. The east section is about 122m long and reaches a maximum height of 1.8m. The west section is about 48m in length and slightly lower. Elsewhere, the wall is visible as a low stony bank with a maximum height of 1m, or as a trench with spoil heaps to the side of it.

Sign 312 is located within Scheduled Area 26054 (NGR NY 86008 71275). The monument includes the Roman fort at Carrawburgh and the section of Hadrian's Wall between the field boundary east of Carrawburgh car park in the east and the field boundary west of Coventina's Well in the west. The upstanding remains of Hadrian's Wall from the field boundary east of the fort to the road junction west of Coventina's Well are Listed Grade I. Within this section the wall is situated in the shallow dip occupied by Meggie's Dene Burn and the wall survives below the course of the B6318 road. The wall ditch also survives well as a visible earthwork on the north side of the road and averages about 1m deep, although it attains a maximum depth of 3m in places. The upcast from the ditch, known as the glacia, survives well in this section as a broad low mound to the north of the feature. The fort at Carrawburgh (Brocolitia), occupies a slight terrace on an otherwise gentle east facing slope, 650m west of the modern farm of Carrawburgh.

Sign 320 is located within Scheduled Area 26047 (NGR NY 98688 68712). This section includes Hadrian's Wall between Fence Burn in the east and the west side of the track to Portgate Cottage in the west. The wall occupies an east-facing slope with limited views in all directions. The wall also survives as a buried feature under the B6318 road for much of this section. The stretch of wall 220m east to 320m west of the course of the A68, where the B6318 swings north to a roundabout, lies below the 18th-century metalled road which is now disused. The wall ditch survives as a buried feature for most of this section; however, towards the western end it survives as a visible earthwork.

Two postholes were excavated for each of the road signs to a maximum depth of 0.70m. The table below summarises the dimensions of the archaeological intervention at each location:

Sign No.	Northern Posthole			Southern Posthole		
	Length	Width	Depth	Length	Width	Depth
311	0.30m	0.30m	0.60m	0.30m	0.30m	0.62m
312	0.32m	0.30m	0.70m	0.30m	0.30m	0.62m
320	0.30m	0.30m	0.64m	0.30m	0.30m	0.58m

Summary of excavated dimensions for each road sign

REASON FOR WATCHING BRIEF:

The work is of archaeological interest because it lies within the World Heritage Site and Scheduled Monument of Hadrian's Wall and Vallum (SM Refs. 26053, 26054, and 26047). As the groundworks were undertaken within a Scheduled Monument, the installation of the signs were archaeologically monitored, as a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC ref. S00136111), on the advice of Historic England to the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS).

DATES WORK UNDERTAKEN:

Archaeological work was undertaken at the site on the following dates:

- Monday 06/06/2016

RESULTS:

During the watching-brief, separate stratigraphic entities were assigned unique and individual 'context' numbers, which are indicated in the following text as, for example (123).

A total of three areas were excavated across two locations. The table below summarises the deposits encountered within each location:

Sign No.	Depth (max)	Topsoil		Made Ground		Subsoil	
		Context	Thickness	Context	Thickness	Context	Thickness
311	0.62m	(100)	0.26m			(101)	0.36m
312	0.70m	(200)	0.20m	(201)	0.50m		
320	0.64m	(300)	0.32m	(301)	0.32m		

Summary of encountered strata depths

Strata	Context	Summary description
Topsoil	(100) (200) (300)	Friable dark brownish grey clayey silt topsoil
Made Ground	(201)	Compact dark brownish grey clayey coarse sand with frequent inclusions of shale.
	(301)	Soft dark brownish grey clayey silt. Very occasional fragments of modern concrete and flecks of degraded coal.
Subsoil	(101)	Soft dark brownish grey clayey silt. Frequent inclusions of sub-angular fragments of limestone. Poorly sorted.

Summary of encountered strata descriptions

Topsoil was encountered at each location throughout the scheme of work (contexts 100, 200, and 300). Made ground was observed at sign locations 312 and 320 and was interpreted as a ground raising dump for the modern tarmac road (contexts 201 and 301). Subsoil was only noted at sign location 320 and continued to the limit of excavation at the base of the postholes. No deposits of geological substrate or features of archaeological significance were encountered during the investigation.

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION:

Figure 1 - Site Location

Figure 2 - Location of Signs 311 & 312

Figure 3 - Location of Sign 320

ARCHIVE DEPOSITION:

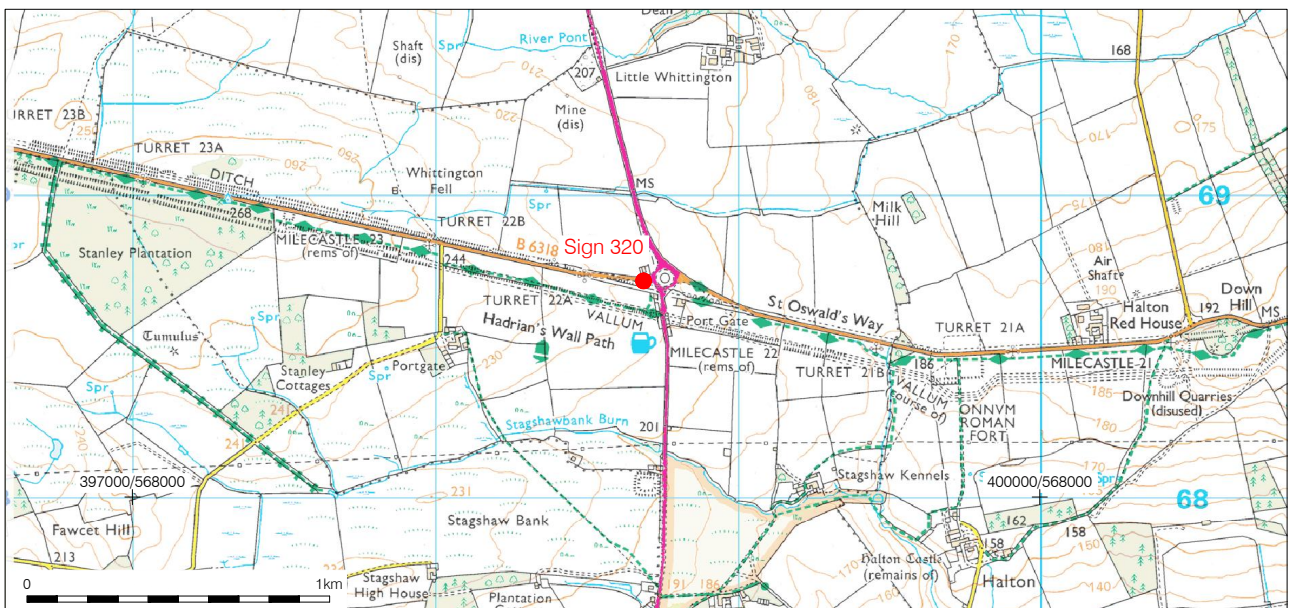
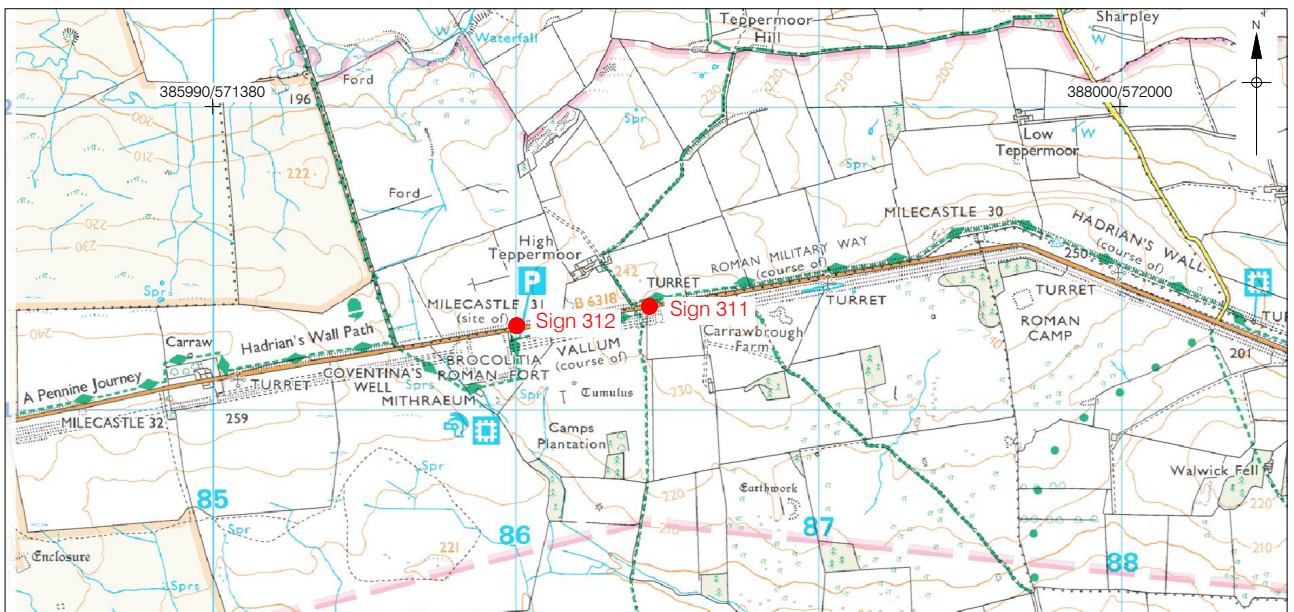
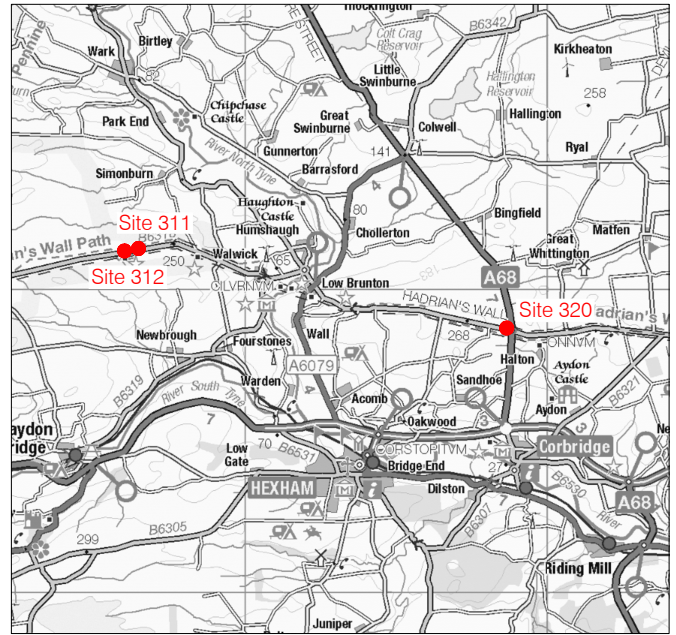
All documentation resulting from this project will be archived internally by PCA.

Author: Scott Vance

Checked: Jennifer Proctor

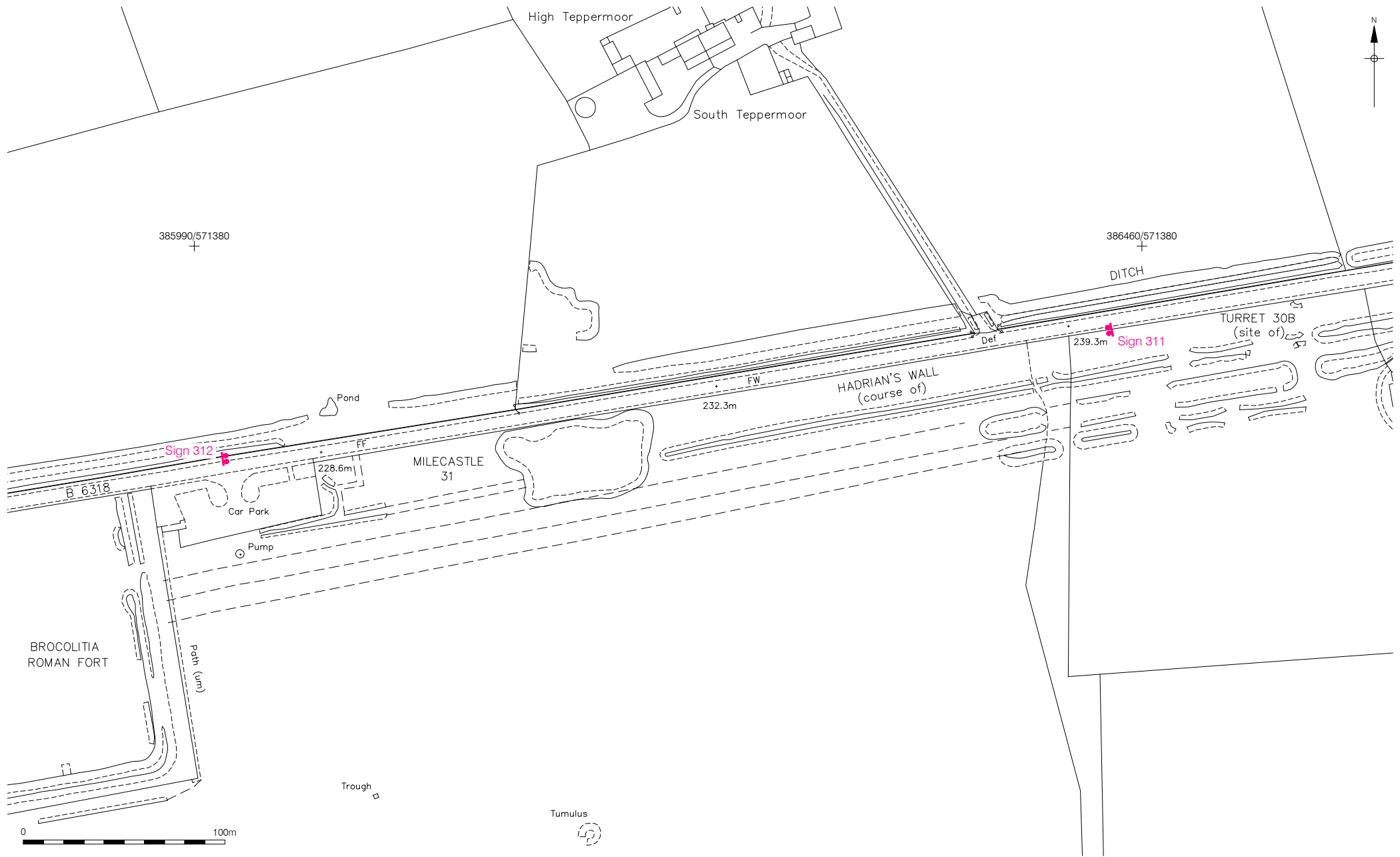
Authorised: Jennifer Proctor

Date: 13 June 2016



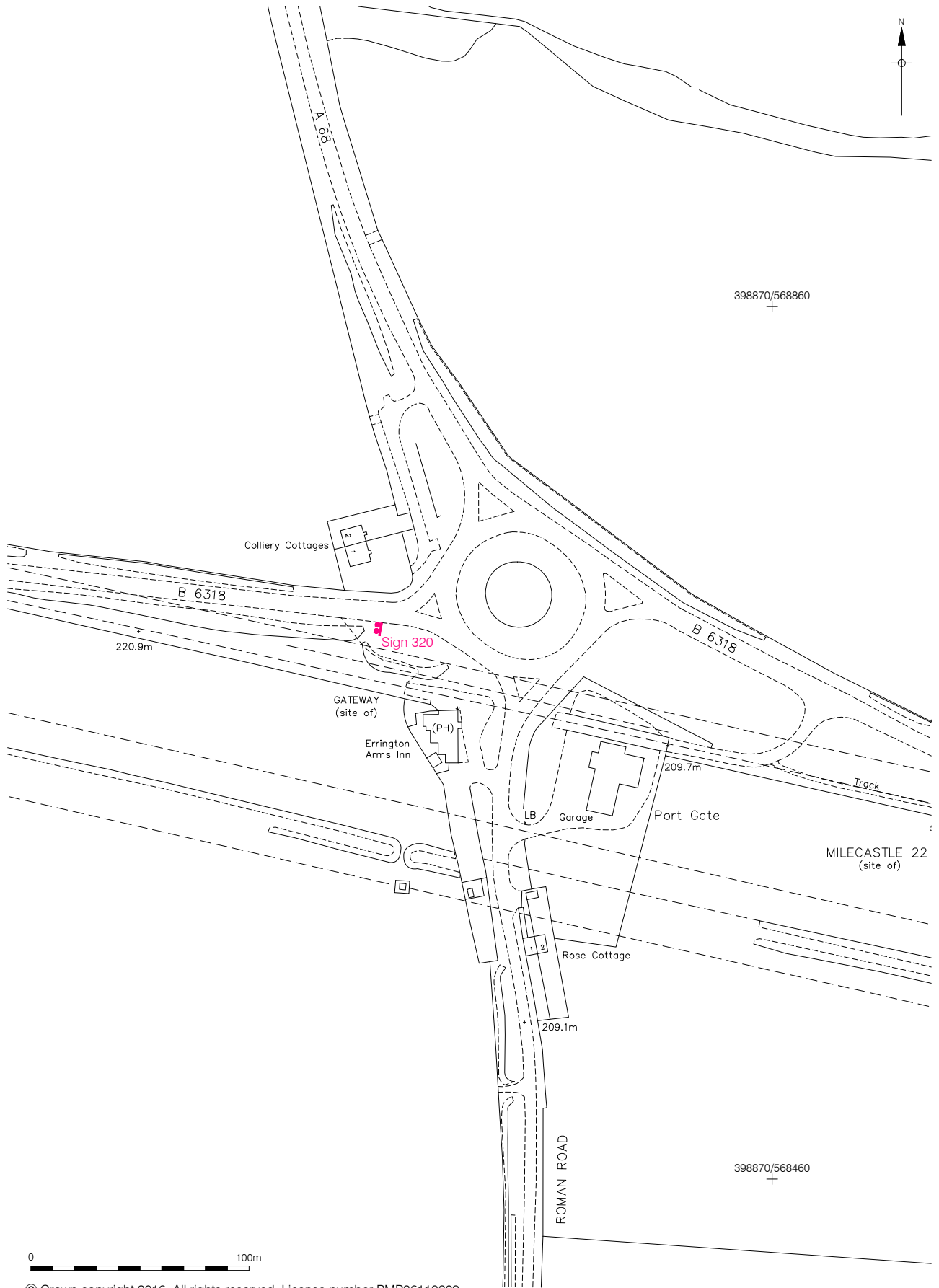
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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:2,000,000, 250,000 & 1:25,000 at A4



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Figure 2
 Location of Signs 311 & 312
 1:2,500 at A4



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Figure 3
 Location of Sign 320
 1:2,500 at A4