



## **NEGATIVE WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

### **Sign Replacement Scheme at Hill Head Farm East of Brunton Crossroads (B6318), Northumberland**

**Sign 301 (PH1&2) – NGR NY 93712 69398**

**Marker Post (PH3) – NGR NY 93990 69411**

**Sign 302 (PH4&5)– NGR NY 94219 69424**

**Contractor:** Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (Durham Office)

Unit 19a, Tursdale Business Park, Durham, DH6 5PG

**Contact:** Jennifer Proctor Telephone: 0191 377 1111 Email: [jproctor@pre-construct.com](mailto:jproctor@pre-construct.com)

**Client:** Northumberland County Council

**Planning Application Number:** n/a

**PCA Report Number:**

**PCA Site Code:** BCN18

**PCA Project Code :** K5883

**Oasis ID:** preconst1-335930

### **LOCATION**

**Planning Authority:** Northumberland County Council

**District:** Wall

**County:** Northumberland

**Site address:** Hill Head Farm (B6318), Northumberland.

### **DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:**

An appropriately specified programme of archaeological work was required in association with the installation of safety traffic signs along the B6318 at Hill Head Farm, east of Brunton Crossroads, 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 road signs 301 & 302 and a marker post. Originally installation of the marker posts was not to be monitored as they were planned to be of the stake variant, however, site conditions meant that a small posthole was required to be excavated prior to installation. Of the four marker posts planned for the scheme of works, only one was monitored (PH3) as the rest were abandoned due to access constraints.

Sign 301 was located to the east of St. Oswalds Church layby at NGR NY 93712 69398 (Figure 2). The marker post was situated immediately to the south of Hill Head Farm on the northern verge of the B6318 at NY 93990 69411. Sign 302 was to the west of an intersection with an unnamed road on the

southern verge of the B6318 at NY 94219 69424 (Figure 2). All signs and marker posts lay within Scheduled Monument 1010958 that includes Hadrian's Wall and vallum between field boundary east of milecastle 24 and field boundary west of the site of turret 25b in wall miles 24 to 25. This area is also within the World Heritage Site: Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Hadrian's Wall) (Ref. 1000098).

Throughout most of this section of Hadrian's Wall there are wide views to the north and south with undulating ground to the east and west restricting the outlook. The Wall survives as a series of buried remains below the course of the B6318 road throughout this section. Where the B6318 road changes direction east of Hill Head Farm the line of the Wall runs below the farm itself. Beyond the farm it survives as a turf covered mound 0.5m high.

The Wall ditch survives well as an earthwork visible on the ground for most of this section. It averages about 2.5m deep throughout, though it reaches a maximum of 3.6m deep in places. The upcast mound from the ditch, known as the *glaci,s* is visible intermittently, usually in places that have survived ploughing.

Five postholes were excavated during the scheme of works; two for each sign and one for the marker post. Postholes for Sign 301 and 302 were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.70m. The marker posthole was excavated to a depth of 0.40m. The table below summarises the dimensions of the archaeological intervention at each location:

Area	Posthole No.	Length	Width	Depth
Sign 301	1	0.32m	0.30m	0.60m
	2	0.30m	0.30m	0.60m
Marker Post	3	0.30m	0.26m	0.40m
Sign 302	4	0.35m	0.38m	0.70m
	5	0.34m	0.34m	0.64m

*Summary of excavated dimensions for posthole*

#### **REASON FOR WATCHING BRIEF:**

The work is of archaeological interest because it lies within the World Heritage Site (Ref. 1000098) and Scheduled Monument of Hadrian's Wall (Ref. 1010958). As the groundworks were undertaken within a Scheduled Monument, the installation of the signs was archaeologically monitored, as a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC ref. S00200917), 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 03/12/2018
- Tuesday 04/12/2018

#### **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 five postholes were monitored during the watching brief; PH1&2 for Sign 301; PH3 for a marker post and PH4&5 for Sign 302. The table below summarises the deposits encountered within each posthole:

Area	Posthole No.	Depth (max)	Topsoil		Made Ground	
			Context	Thickness	Context	Thickness
Sign 301	1	0.60m	[100]	0.20m	[101]	> 0.40m
	2	0.60m	[200]	0.20m	[201]	> 0.40m
Marker Post	3	0.40m	[300]	0.26m	[301]	> 0.14m
Sign 320	4	0.70m	[400]	0.30m	[401]	> 0.40m
	5	0.64m	[500]	0.24m	[501]	>0.40m

*Summary of encountered strata depths*

Strata	Context	Summary description
Topsoil	[100]	Friable dark brownish grey sandy clay topsoil.
	[200]	
	[300]	
	[400]	
	[500]	
Made Ground	[101]	Loose mid brownish grey clayey sand with frequent fragments of sub-angular sandstone. Road embankment.
	[201]	
	[301]	Compact dark brownish grey sandy clay.
	[401]	Compact black sandy clay with occasional small fragments of sub-angular sandstone. Road embankment.
	[501]	

*Summary of encountered strata descriptions*

Topsoil was encountered at each location throughout the scheme of work (contexts [100], [200], [300], [400] and [500]). Made ground was also observed at all locations and was interpreted as a ground raising dump for the road (contexts [101], [201], [301], [401] and [501]). No features of archaeological significance or superficial geological deposits were encountered during the investigation.

**ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION:**

Figure 1 - Site Location

Figure 2 – Detailed Site Location

**ARCHIVE DEPOSITION:**

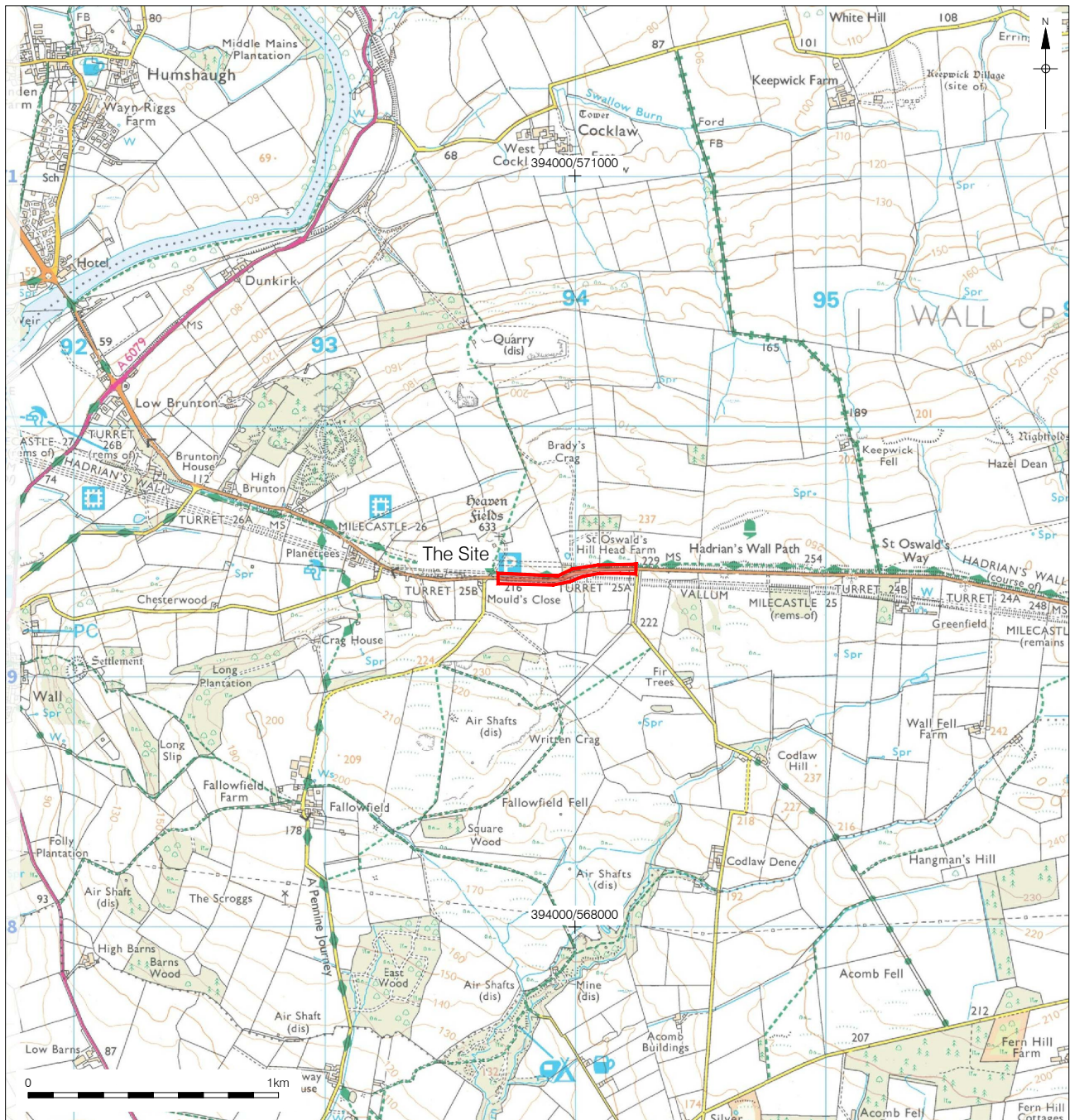
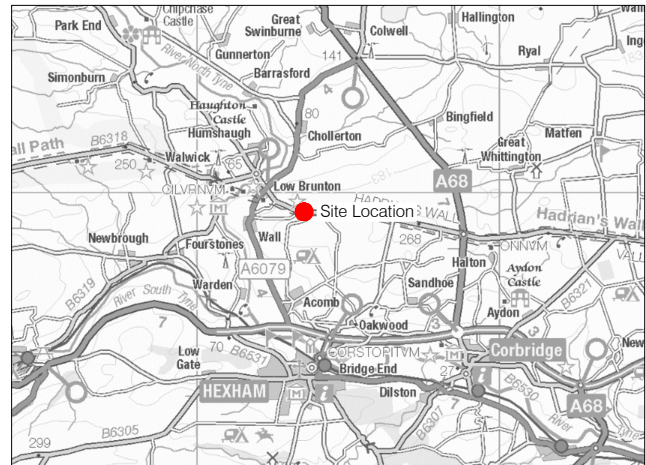
All documentation resulting from this project will be archived internally by PCA.

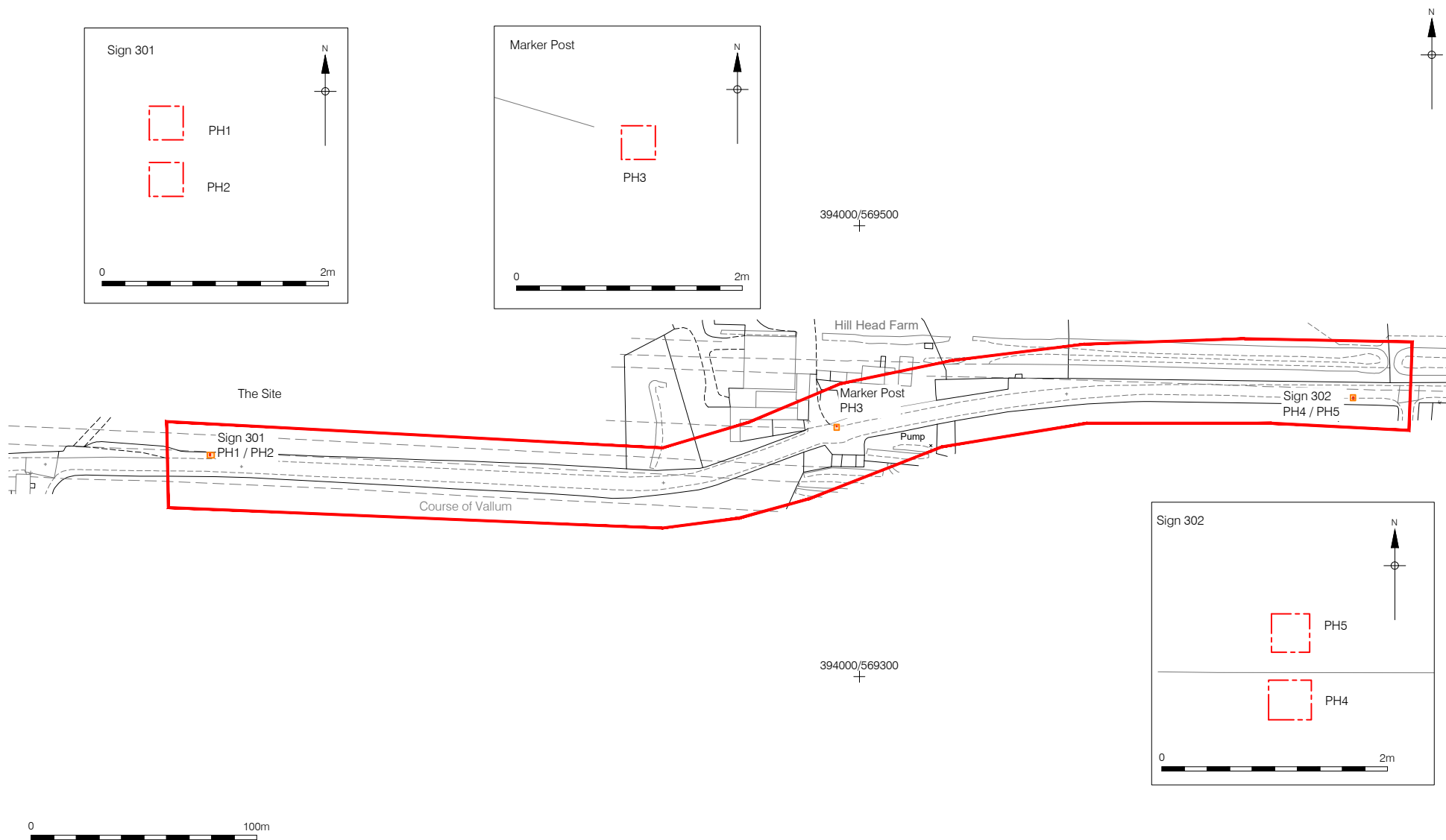
Author: Scott Vance

Checked: Jennifer Proctor

Authorised: Jennifer Proctor

Date: 11/12/2018







# PCA

## **PCA CAMBRIDGE**

THE GRANARY, RECTORY FARM  
BREWERY ROAD, PAMPISFORD  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 3EN  
t: 01223 845 522  
e: [cambridge@pre-construct.com](mailto:cambridge@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA DURHAM**

UNIT 19A, TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK  
TURSDALE  
DURHAM DH6 5PG  
t: 0191 377 1111  
e: [durham@pre-construct.com](mailto:durham@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA LONDON**

UNIT 54, BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE  
96 ENDWELL ROAD, BROCKLEY  
LONDON SE4 2PD  
t: 020 7732 3925  
e: [london@pre-construct.com](mailto:london@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA NEWARK**

OFFICE 8, ROEWOOD COURTYARD  
WINKBURN, NEWARK  
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NG22 8PG  
t: 01636 370410  
e: [newark@pre-construct.com](mailto:newark@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA NORWICH**

QUARRY WORKS, DEREHAM ROAD  
HONINGHAM  
NORWICH NR9 5AP  
T: 01223 845522  
e: [cambridge@pre-construct.com](mailto:cambridge@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA WARWICK**

UNIT 9, THE MILL, MILL LANE  
LITTLE SHREWLEY, WARWICK  
WARWICKSHIRE CV35 7HN  
t: 01926 485490  
e: [warwick@pre-construct.com](mailto:warwick@pre-construct.com)

## **PCA WINCHESTER**

5 RED DEER COURT, ELM ROAD  
WINCHESTER  
HAMPSHIRE SO22 5LX  
t: 01962 849 549  
e: [winchester@pre-construct.com](mailto:winchester@pre-construct.com)

