



Ana Cross Round Barrow, North York Moors – Archaeological Watching Brief Report

North York Moors National Park Authority

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Executive Summary

Ecus Ltd was commissioned by the North York Moors National Park Authority to carry out archaeological monitoring of remedial management works at Ana Cross Round Barrow and Wayside Cross (Scheduled Monument NHLE: 1018976) centred on National Grid Reference 472460, 493812. The remedial works were to address the erosion issues facing the monument and to thereby remove the monument from Historic England's Monuments at Risk Register. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken on the site between 20th February 2018 and 22nd February 2018.

No archaeological deposits or artefacts were recovered during the archaeological monitoring.

The remedial works to the north-south track has addressed the erosion that had occurred from footfall, bicycle use and use of quad bikes. The southern side of the barrow mound was repaired with a stone track established to create a footpath and to deter visitors from creating further erosion across the monument. The erosion formed by the east-west track was repaired with local heather to deter visitors from using this path. All routes had appropriate grass seed mix spread to encourage natural grown grass on the scheduled monument.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Ecus Ltd was commissioned by the North York Moors National Park Authority to carry out archaeological monitoring of remedial works at Ana Cross Round Barrow and Wayside Cross (Scheduled Monument NHLE: 1018976, hereafter ‘the site’) centred on National Grid Reference 472460, 493812. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken on the site between 20th February 2018 and 22nd February 2018.
- 1.1.2 The remedial works were conducted to address the erosion issues facing the monument and to thereby remove the monument from Historic England’s Monuments at Risk Register.
- 1.1.3 The work was conducted with permission of Historic England through the North York Moors MMS. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists’ *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (ClfA 2014).

1.2 Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 The site is located at the Scheduled Monument Ana Cross Round Barrow and Wayside Cross (NHLE: 1018976). The monument lies within the North York Moors National Park (**Figure 1**). It is defined by a 3m high cross situated on top of a prehistoric round barrow (**Plate 1**).
- 1.2.2 The site is situated approximately 290 m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology of the site comprises sandstone, mudstone and siltstone of the Ravenscar Group; sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 165 to 176 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. There are no recorded superficial deposits (British Geological Survey 2018).

1.3 Background

- 1.3.1 The Ana Cross Round Barrow and Wayside Cross (Scheduled Monument 1018976) consist of a large round barrow which is surmounted by a wayside cross which is Grade II Listed. The cross is a modern replacement of the original medieval cross and it is set into a socket formed of two massive stones which are clamped together and sit on a plinth of coursed stonework. The barrow is about 18m in diameter and stands up to 1.2m high. The round barrow is prominently sited on top of a natural rise to the east of Ana Moss. It is inter-visible with the four barrows known as the Three Howes to the north-west.
- 1.3.2 There is a trackway crossing the barrow from north to south which approximately follows an old route across the moor; the original route can be seen as a hollow-way 5-10m to the west of the monument. The wayside cross marks a medieval routeway across the moor between Lastingham and the site of Rosedale Priory. A deeply incised hollow way skirts the western side of the barrow heading towards the modern village of Rosedale Abbey. For a number of years this path was a concessionary bridleway, and although it no longer has this status, it continues to be used.
- 1.3.3 The current cross, which at one time was known as Ain or One Howe Cross, but now more generally as Ana Cross, dates to 1949 when the original medieval cross was removed to the crypt of Lastingham Church. It was repaired in the summer of 1998 after its collapse in the winter of 1995.
- 1.3.4 There is now considerable erosion along the line of the former bridleway and around the cross on top of the mound caused both by footfall and mountain bikes which is damaging the prehistoric mound. A smaller east-west path also runs across the mound, and in recent years a set of vehicle tracks has appeared skirting the east side of the barrow mound.

2. Methodology

2.1 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1.1 The aim of the archaeological monitoring was to ensure that the monument was not affected negatively due to any of the remedial works carried out. In addition, any archaeological features exposed during the remedial works were to be fully recorded and interpreted if any disturbed remains were recovered.
- 2.1.2 The purpose of the remedial work was to;
- Reduce the area of bare ground on the mound surface and help it to re-vegetate using heather turves, SSSI approved grass seed mix and heather brash;
 - Repair deeply eroded areas by infilling with a combination of imported sandstone aggregate and locally extracted mineral soil, prior to re-vegetation
 - Protect the monument from future poaching and erosion using a robust infill for the area immediately around the cross and on the south side, prior to re-vegetation.

2.2 Fieldwork Methodology

- 2.2.1 The methodology for the archaeological monitoring was outlined within a Schedule of Works Brief. All archaeological works were undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA) '*Standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*' (ClfA, 2014).
- 2.2.2 There were six key areas that were targeted during the remedial works; these are marked on **Figure 2** in red.
- 2.2.3 A-B: At the top of the northern slope of the mound, grass was regenerating well. However, due to the winter conditions, partial areas of grass erosion had occurred on this slope and therefore SSSI approved grass seeds were laid to aid re-vegetation. In addition, the shallow eroded areas at the eastern edge of the top of the mound had a thin layer of mineral soil mixed with grass seed to aid re-vegetation.
- 2.2.4 C: The main path on the southern side of the mound had deep erosions due to footfall, bicycles and quad bikes. The deeper areas were infilled with crushed sandstone aggregate. This was mixed with the SSSI approved grass seeds and then compacted down with an approved small vibrating plate to aid the re-vegetation (**Plate 2**). The path was covered with chopped heather brash, locally extracted natural soil and further grass seeds.
- 2.2.5 D: A secondary deep gully path had formed adjacent to the main path on the southern side of the mound. The deep gully was initially filled with a layer of locally sourced natural stone. This was in order to create a sturdier platform for the succeeding layers. A layer of locally extracted mineral soil was placed on top to provide a platform for heather turves to grip into when they were subsequently placed on top.

- 2.2.6 E: The desire line on the western slope of the mound formed by footfall did have grass re-generating. However, in order to mask the line to dissuade visitors from using it as an alternative route to the main path, cut heather brash was placed along the route. It was subsequently topped with locally extracted mineral soil and SSSI approved grass seeds. Heather turves were positioned at the top of the route to blend it into the natural surroundings and deter visitors walking up to the monument in this direction (**Plate 3**).
- 2.2.7 F: Due to visitor footfall, a deep hollow had formed around the base of the cross. This caused water to pool around the cross and local wildlife used it as a water source which caused further erosion to the mound. Imported sandstone aggregate mixed with SSSI approved grass seeds were placed to infill the deep hollow. This was compacted with an approved small vibrating plate to create a level area and to aid in re-vegetation (**Plate 4**). The area was checked by the contractors to ensure the ground was level in order to prevent future water pooling. The area was subsequently topped with cut heather brash, locally sourced mineral soil and further grass seeds. The west to north sides of the mound were topped with heather turves.
- 2.2.8 The sheep track formed on the west side of the mound (not labelled on **Figure 2**) was covered with cut heather brash and topped with locally sourced mineral soil and grass seeds.
- 2.2.9 Digital photographs were taken of the general site conditions, working shots of the remedial works carried out by the contractors and shots of the monument after the work had been conducted; this was to produce a photographic record of the works.

3. Results

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The following section presents the results of the archaeological monitoring. The remedial works had a focus on six key areas as outlined in **Figure 2**. Overall, the works carried out have addressed the issues of erosion that were occurring at the site. The area has been landscaped to infill the routes of erosion that occurred from visitors, as well as creating one ‘designated’ path on the north-south track.
- 3.1.2 No artefacts were recovered during the monitoring works, no environmental samples were taken and no human remains were encountered.

3.2 Area A-B

- 3.2.1 The northern slope to the mound had areas of exposed soil due to footfall from visitors and vehicular erosion most likely from mountain bikes and quad bikes. In addition shallow eroded areas had formed at the east edge at the top of the mound. As part of the remedial works this erosion has been repaired by covering the area with a thin layer of mineral soil mixed with grass seed which will aid re-vegetation (see **Plates 5 and 6**).

3.3 Area C

- 3.3.1 The main path on the southern side of the mound had deep erosions due to footfall, bicycles and quad bikes. The remedial works have resulted in a more level smoother path which is more defined as the main route around and to the monument. The mixed grass seed and mineral soil will aid the natural re-vegetation of the mound in the future (see **Plates 7 and 8**).

3.4 Area D

- 3.4.1 The remedial works have successfully in-filled the deep gully with sandstone, mineral soil and heather turves. The contractors used locally sourced heather turves to ensure the repair blends into the surrounding topography of the barrow. The turves were laid on slightly higher ground in order to define the adjacent path (Area C) more clearly for visitors (see **Plates 9 and 10**); this will discourage visitors from creating their own path to the monument and thereby create another erosion scar.

3.5 Area E

- 3.5.1 The placing of heather turves at the top of the eastern side of the mound has created a natural vegetation barrier to deter visitors from approaching the mound from this direction. In addition, cut heather brash placed on this side of the monument will discourage visitors from using this animal track that was forming as a new route way onto the monument. The mixed mineral soil and grass seed will aid in re-vegetation which will allow grass to cover and infill the eastern path (see **Plates 11 and 12**)

3.6 Area F

- 3.6.1 The remedial works on the deep hollow around the base of the cross has resulted in a level surface that will prevent future pooling of water. The mixed mineral soil and grass seeds will aid re-vegetation on the top of the monument. In addition, the cut heather brash has added a layer of protection for the grass seeds as well as creating a more positive visual setting (see **Plates 13 and 14**).

3.7 Sheep track to eastern side of the monument

- 3.7.1 Cut heather brash was placed along the track on the eastern side of the monument to create a natural looking mask to cover the track. This will discourage visitors from using this path until the route is filled with grass from the mixed mineral soil and grass seeds that were sown to aid re-vegetation (See **Plates 15, 16 and 17**).

4. Conclusion

4.1 Discussion

- 4.1.1 No archaeological deposits or features were uncovered or disturbed as part of the remedial works to the scheduled barrow.
- 4.1.2 The works have addressed the ongoing erosion to the monument. The east to west track which had formed by grazing animals and subsequently used by visitors has been repaired through the placement of heather turves and cut heather brash. This will dissuade users from this route and will instead encourage them to use the north-south track. This track also provides a more defined path to the monument. The placement of sandstone aggregate on the north-south track topped with mineral soil and an appropriate grass seed mix has created a sturdier re-enforced path for visitors which will aid in the prevention of future erosion.
- 4.1.3 The sowing of grass seed on the northern side of the mound will aid in the re-vegetation of grass cover on the barrow. The southern side of the mound has been carefully repaired by in-filling the deep erosion scars that had become established and reflects the surrounding topography of the barrow. This was achieved by placing heather turves on a higher level than its adjacent path as well as creating a smoother path up the mound. Infilling the deep hollow around the cross base on the top of the barrow has created a level area which will prevent future water pooling and dissuade grazing animals from using it as a water source.

4.2 Archive

- 4.2.1 The complete project archive will be prepared and arrangements for the deposition of the archive on completion of the project will be made in accordance with guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990).
- 4.2.2 The digital archive is currently held by Ecus under the project code 10702. An OASIS form (OASIS ID: ecusltd1-310099) has been initiated and a copy is included within this report as **Appendix 1**. The digital photos, survey data and report will be uploaded to the ADS.

5. References

British Geological Survey 2018. Geology of Britain Viewer. Available at
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> [accessed 22/02/2018]

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA). 2014. *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief.*

6. Plates



Plate 1: View of the Scheduled Monument looking south



Plate 2: View of the southern side of the mound showing the placed heather turves and sandstone aggregate



Plate 3: View of the western track prior to the placement of heather turves



Plate 4: View of the crushed sandstone aggregate surrounding the cross base



Plate 5: The northern side of the mound before remedial works (November 2017)



Plate 6: The northern slope to the mound with scattered grass seeds (February 2018)



Plate 7: View of the path on the southern slope to the mound (November 2017)



Plate 8: View of the southern slope after the remedial works (February 2018)



Plate 9: A view of the deep gully on the southern slope of the mound (November 2017)



Plate 10: A view of the infilled deep gully on the southern slope of the mound after remedial work has been conducted



**Plate 11: A view of the track way on the western slope of the mound before remedial work
(February 2018)**



Plate 12: A view of the western track after remedial work (February 2018)



Plate 13: A view of the waterlogged hollow surrounding the monument before remedial work
(November 2017)



Plate 14 : A view of the repaired hollow surrounding the monument after remedial work
(February 2018)



Plate 15: A view of the eastern sheep track before remedial work (February 2018)



Plate 16: A view of the eastern sheep track before remedial work (November 2017)



Plate 17: A view of the eastern sheep track after remedial work (February 2018)

Appendix 1. OASIS FORM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: ecusltd1-310099

Project details

Project name	Ana Cross Round Barrow, North York Moors - Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Short description of the project	Ecus Ltd was commissioned by the North York Moors National Park Authority to carry out archaeological monitoring of remedial works at Ana Cross Round Barrow and Wayside Cross (Scheduled Monument NHLE: 1018976) centred on National Grid Reference 472480, 493812. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken on the site between 20th February 2018 and 21st February 2018. The remedial works was to address the erosion issues facing the monument and to thereby remove the monument from Historic England's at Risk Register. The archaeological monitoring resulted in the remedial works to the north-south track to fix the high amounts of erosion that had occurred from footfall, bicycle use and use of quad bikes by local park rangers. The southern side of the mound was re-landscaped to create one footpath and deter visitors from creating another. The east-west track was re-landscaped with local heather to deter visitors from using this path. All routes had grass seeds spread to encourage natural grown grass in the environment.
Project dates	Start: 20-02-2018 End: 21-02-2018
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	1018976 - NHLE No.
Any associated project reference codes	10702 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	BARROW Uncertain
Monument type	CROSS Modern
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Conservation/ restoration

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORTH YORKSHIRE RYEDALE LASTINGHAM ANA CROSS ROUND BARROW AND WAYSIDE CROSS
Study area	209 Square metres
Site coordinates	SE 7237 9383 54.334722222222 -0.886944444444 54 20 05 N 000 53 13 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	ECUS Ltd
Project brief originator	North York Moors National Park Authority
Project design originator	ECUS Ltd
Project director/manager	Paul White
Project supervisor	Sarah Gallagher
Type of sponsor/funding body	North York Moors National Park Authority

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	ADS
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive Exists?	No

Project bibliography 1

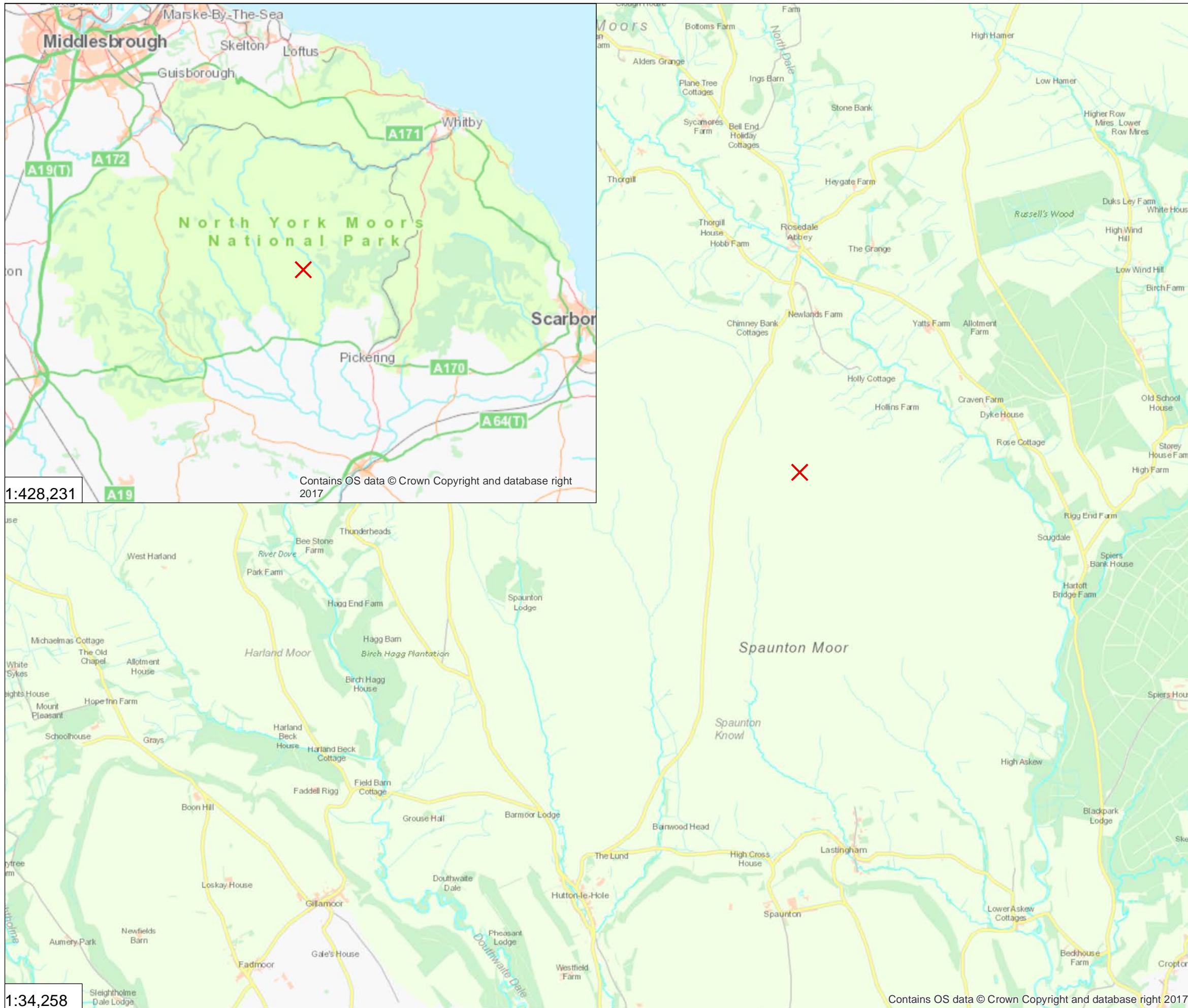
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Illustrations



✗ Ana Cross Round Barrow and Wayside Cross

The North York Moors National Park Authority Ana Cross Round Barrow

Figure 1: Location of Ana Cross round barrow and Wayside Cross

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