

NORTHERN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATES LTD

HOUGHTON NORTH FARM, HEDDON-ON-THE-WALL

Negative Watching Brief Report

Site name: Houghton North Farm

Grid reference: NZ 126 673

Parish: Heddon-on-the-Wall

Administrative Authority: Northumberland CC

Development: Repair to telecommunication ducting

Client: Morrison Utility Services Ltd

NAA Monitoring Archaeologist: Andrew Durkin

Project Manager: Oliver Cooper

NAA Project No: 1234

Date: 16.12.2014

Reasons for watching brief

The excavations were on the line of Hadrian's Wall and ditch (Fig 1), and entirely within a section of Scheduled Monument recorded as 'Hadrian's Wall and vallum from East Town House, Heddon-on-the-Wall to the A69 trunk road in wall mile 12' (SM 26038; HA 1010617). This also forms part of the Roman Frontiers World Heritage Site. There was therefore the potential for groundworks to encounter remains associate with Hadrian's Wall and its ditch.

The work entailed the excavation of three pits in the north footway of the B6318/Military Road (Fig 2), over the existing BT Openreach ducting, to identify areas of collapse, and facilitate repairs. Scheduled Monument Consent for investigation work was obtained in advance (consent ref. S00090631). The footway abutted a retaining wall constructed along the south lip of the Wall ditch, which was visible as an earthwork to the north (Plate 1, Fig 2 profile).

Results

The three pits each measured approximately 0.5m x 0.7m, and up to 0.7m deep and were excavated directly above the Telecom and electric cables. The fill of the pits consisted of a mid-brown silty gravel, representing the backfill of the original duct trench, and no archaeological features or artefacts were encountered.

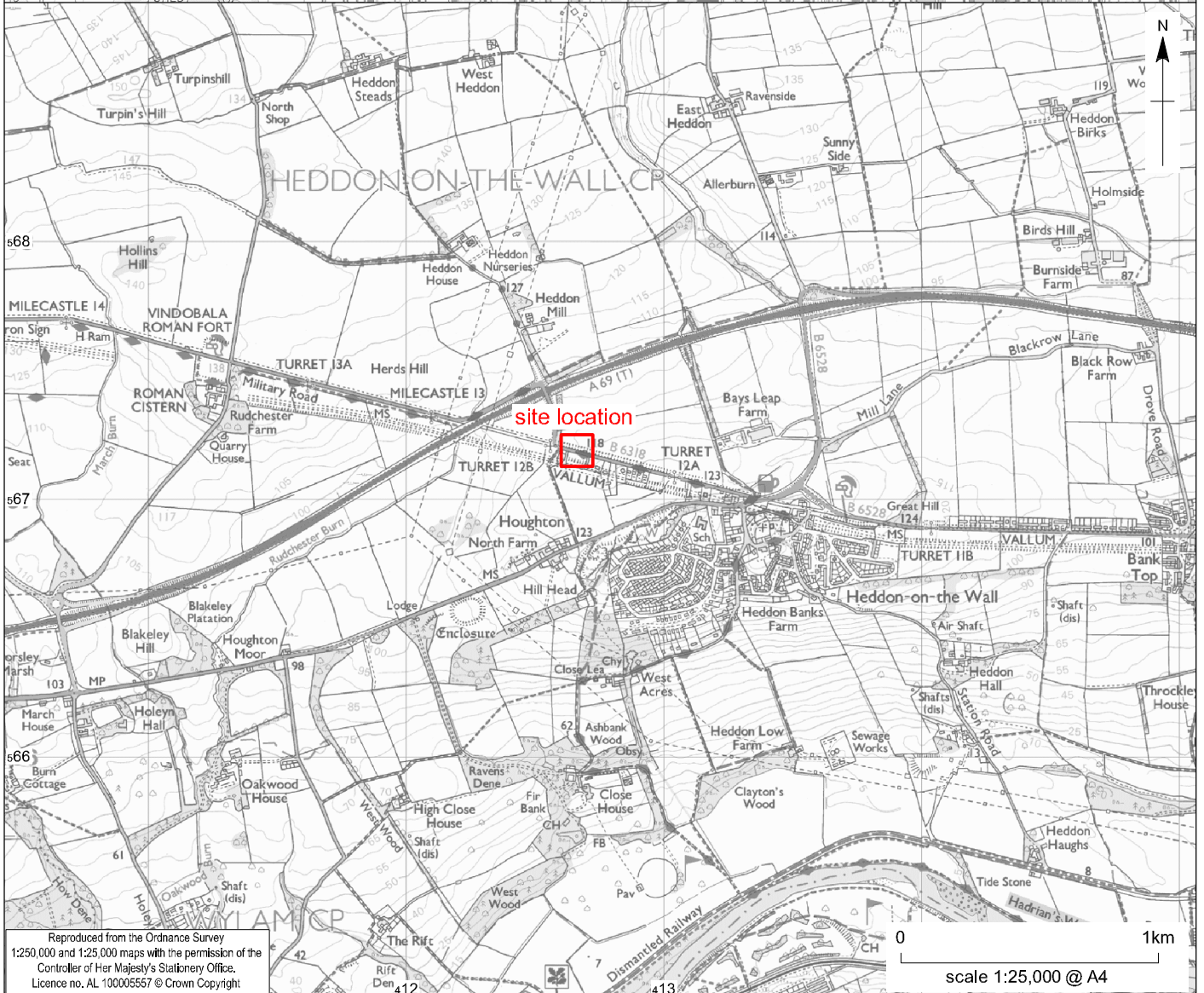
A profile across the ditch and pavement (Fig 2) shows the projected line of the ditch, with the pavement sitting on an area of made ground supported by the retaining wall.

Documentation: Digital Photographs

Archive: Internally archived

Report No: 14/117

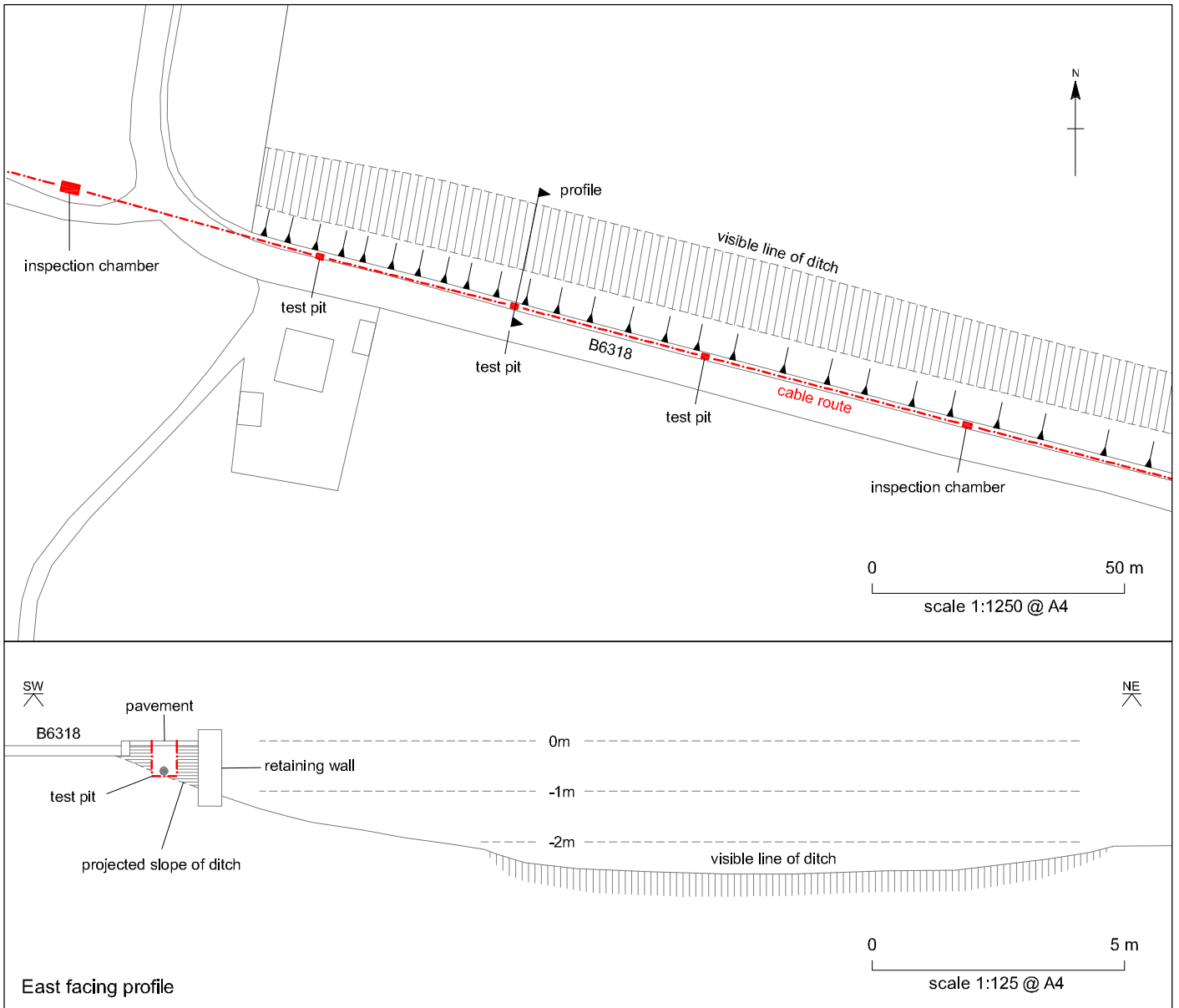
Report Date: 22/01/2015



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Houghton North Farm: site location

Figure 1



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Houghton North Farm: monitoring results

Figure 2



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Houghton North Farm: site location showing wall ditch to north (left)

Plate 1