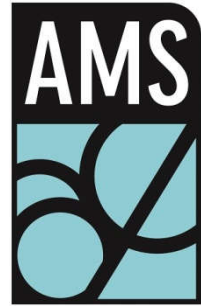


Addendum to Archaeological Testing Report, Kerdiffstown, Co. Kildare



Prepared for Kildare County Council/RPS
By Ger Dowling PhD MIAI

10 August 2019

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Document Reviewer: Bryn Coldrick

Approved By: Fintan Walsh

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Archaeological Management Solutions Limited
Unit 1,
Hector Street Mills, Kilrush,
Co. Clare.

T +353 (0)65 810 3001
www.ams-consultancy.com

Disclaimer

The results, conclusions and recommendations contained within this report are based on information available at the time of its preparation. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that all relevant data has been collated, the author and AMS accept no responsibility for omissions and/or inconsistencies that may result from information becoming available subsequent to the report's completion.

Summary

This addendum to the main archaeological testing report for Kerdiffstown, near Naas, Co. Kildare, describes the results of the latest phase of archaeological investigations at the former landfill site. The work was conducted in late July 2019 and involved test trenching in three distinct locations: Field Location 1, a small field of rough pasture at the southwestern end of the site; Field Location 2, in the vicinity of Kerdiffstown church (KD019-006001-) and graveyard (KD019-006002-); and Field Location 4, a narrow strip of land located between the southern boundary of the landfill and the L2005 road. A pair of masonry gate pillars near the northern perimeter of the site was also surveyed as part of the present work.

The present document should be read in conjunction with the results of three earlier phases of test trenching at the site, which were the subject of a comprehensive report (Dowling & Ó Maoldúin 2019) submitted via email to the Licensing Section, NMS, on 01 July 2019.

Two shallow ditch-type features in Field Location 1 are the only archaeological remains identified by the present work. A series of trenches and slots were also excavated in advance of the erection of a galvanised palisade fencing directly north and south of Kerdiffstown Church in Field Location 1. No obvious features of archaeological significance were revealed in Field Locations 2 and 4, though a number of medieval and post-medieval pottery sherds and some animal bone were recovered from topsoil in Field Location 2.

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Coordinate System

All GPS coordinates given in this report are in Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM).

Introduction

This document describes the results of the latest phase of archaeological investigations at the former landfill site at Kerdiffstown near Naas, Co. Kildare (Figure 1). The work was conducted in late July 2019 and involved test trenching in three distinct areas of the site: Field Location 1, a small field of rough pasture at the southwestern end of the site; Field Location 2, in the vicinity of Kerdiffstown church (KD019-006001-) and graveyard (KD019-006002-); and Field Location 4, a narrow strip of land located between the southern boundary of the landfill and the L2005 road. A pair of masonry gate pillars near the northern perimeter of the site was also surveyed as part of the present work.

Permission to undertake the investigations was granted by the National Monuments Service (NMS) on 29 July 2019 following the submission of two separate Addendums (Nos 3 and 4) to the original Method Statement relating to Excavation Licence 18E0665. The work builds on the results of three earlier phases of test trenching that were the subject of a comprehensive report (Dowling & Ó Maoldúin 2019) submitted via email to the Licensing Section, NMS, on 01 July 2019. The present document should be read in conjunction with the latter (main) report.

The investigations at Kerdiffstown were undertaken on behalf of Kildare County Council and RPS consulting engineers in advance of remedial works that aim to develop the site into a multi-use public park. The remediation project was granted planning permission in May 2018 (An Bord Pleanála Case Reference: PL 09.JA0041).

Previous Archaeological Investigations

Kerdiffstown landfill has been the focus of archaeological investigations by Archaeological Management Solutions Ltd (AMS) since late 2018. The work to date has involved mechanical test trenching in five separate areas (Field Locations 1, 2, 4–6) in the immediate vicinity of the site (see Figure 2). The investigations were undertaken in three separate phases in November 2018, late February–early March 2019 and mid-April 2019. A variety of archaeological features of varying date and significance were identified in three of the five areas investigated (namely Field Locations 1, 2 and 4). A ring-ditch (c.6m in diameter), several pits and linear ditches, as well as the possible metalworking feature or charcoal-production pit were encountered in Field Location 1. Archaeological features (ditches and pits) and deposits (cultural soil layers) were also identified in the lands surrounding Kerdiffstown Church and Graveyard (KD019-006001–4) in Field Location 2, while a possible ditch was discovered close to the southern limit of Field Location 4. As noted above, a comprehensive report detailing the results of this work was submitted to the Licensing Section, National Monuments Service, on 01 July 2019. A wade survey at the proposed location of the surface

outfall point into the Morell River was also conducted and is the subject of a separate report (Hardy & Rudzinski 2019, licence refs. 18D0126 & 18R0238).

Proposed Development Works

The present investigations were prompted by the recent receipt from Kildare County Council (KCC) of updated plans detailing the scope of works at Field Locations 2 and 4. Proposed works in Field Location 2 will involve the erection of galvanised palisade fencing along the northeastern perimeter of the site. The fence will extend southeastwards from near Kerdiffstown House (ITM 691244, 722495) to a point (ITM 691634, 721978) located roughly midway along the southern boundary of the former landfill (Figure 3). It will stand 2.40m above ground surface and comprise a series of pale panels welded to steel fence posts spaced 2.75m apart (Figure 4). The pale panels will not impact the ground surface, while the maximum depth of penetration of the fence posts will be 0.75m, though this will be reduced to 0.50m in areas where previous testing has revealed the presence of archaeologically significant features and deposits (see below). Individual fence posts will be positioned within a square foundation pad measuring 1.5m by 1.5m in size. The proposed fence line will lie directly adjacent to the test trenches previously excavated in this area. It is not intended to erect any fencing around the northern, western and southern boundaries of Kerdiffstown Church and Graveyard (KD019-006001–4) at the present time.

Kildare County Council has also commenced groundworks associated with the installation of a foul/leachate outfall pipeline along the length of Field Location 4. The pipeline trench (c.0.90m deep by 4m wide) may traverse the line of a putative ditch identified during previous testing in this area (Figure 5).

The present investigations also provided an opportunity to complete the archaeological investigation of Field Location 1. The work here had been curtailed by the establishment of an exclusion zone around a badger sett in the eastern field boundary in late February–early March 2019. As such, the potential significance of a curving trend identified by geomagnetic survey in 2017 (labelled '5' on Figure 6) could not be established; nor indeed was it possible to test for any other potential archaeological remains elsewhere in the exclusion zone.

Archaeological Testing Strategy

This latest phase of archaeological works was conducted by Ger Dowling, with the assistance of Niall Fitzpatrick and Conall O’Callaghan, over four days (30 July to 2 August 2019). It involved the excavation of four trenches in Field Location 1, two trenches as well as a series of slot trenches in Field Location 2, and one trench in Field Location 4.

Each of the test trenches and, where possible, the fence post foundation pads were set out with a differential GPS and the excavations were conducted using a mechanical digger with a toothless (grading) bucket measuring 1.5m in width. All soils in each of the test trenches were excavated in horizontal layers of no more than 0.2m in thickness until sterile subsoil/bedrock or the surface of potential archaeological features/structures/deposits/objects were encountered in Field Locations 1 and 4, or until the required 0.50m depth had been achieved in Field Location 2. Any newly-identified features of archaeological potential were cleaned and test excavated by hand in order to help establish their nature, extent and significance.

Field Location 1

In Field Location 1, the test trench layout was designed to encompass as much of the footprint of the target area as possible, whilst minimising potential disruption to the badger sett. To this end, and following consultation with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and the submission of a revised testing methodology (Addendum No. 3), the number of test trenches in this area was reduced to three (Trs 1.8–1.10) from five originally, and none were placed within 20m of the sett (see Figure 7; Table 1). Tr. 1.9 was designed to test the potential significance of the faint curving trend identified in the 2017 geophysical survey (labelled ‘5’ on Figure 6 & Figure 7), while Tr. 1.11 was excavated to help establish the nature and extent of a ditch-type feature identified during the present works (see below). To further help reduce ground disturbance, a small 8-tonne mechanical excavator was employed for the testing programme.

Table 1: Test trench lengths, Field Location 1

Trench No.	Length
1.8	28m
1.9	20m
1.10	27.5m
1.11	5.5m
Total length	81m

Field Location 2

The testing methodology for Field Location 2 aimed to reduce, as much as possible, the potential impact of construction of the perimeter fence on subsurface archaeological features/deposits in this area. Informed by the results of previous test trenching, the line of the proposed fence was divided into four separate zones (green, red, blue and yellow) of archaeological potential, with the following strategy – auguring or trenching – suggested for each (see Figure 8):

Zones 1 and 4 (green and yellow)

These zones, extending northwestwards from previous Trench 2.6 (Zone 1) and southeastwards from previous Trench 6.1 (Zone 4) produced only scant evidence for potential archaeological features during previous investigations. Erection of the fence post in these zones will involve the auguring of the foundation pads for individual fence posts to a maximum depth of 0.75m.

Zones 2 and 3 (red and blue)

Zone 2 extends southeastwards from previous Trench 2.6 towards Kerdiffstown Church, while Zone 3 encompasses the combined length of previous Trenches 2.1–2.5. A dense concentration of archaeological features and deposits were identified in these areas during testing, the vast majority of which were recorded at depths of 0.50m or more below the ground surface (see Table 2 and Table 3; for associated plans see Dowling & Ó Maoldúin 2019). As such, the maximum depth of penetration of the foundation posts for the new fence in Zones 2 and 3 will be 0.50m.

To further reduce the impact of the fence in this location, it was also proposed to excavate two trenches (1.50m wide by 0.5m max. depth) along the entire length of the fence line in Zones 2 and 3: 130m-long Tr. 2.17 (Zone 2); and 172m-long Tr. 2.16 (Zone 3). These trenches were to be left open for the fencers to follow, thus avoiding further ground disturbance in this area. However, once on-site, AMS were informed that the fence line north of the church had very recently been altered to make it more or less coterminous with the existing fence separating the landfill from the lands of Kerdiffstown Estate. Apart from a small green space (lawn) at the northern end of Zone 2, the presence of mature trees, dense vegetation and other obstacles along the existing fence line meant that it was not possible to excavate a continuous trench in this area. It was, therefore, decided to excavate the foundation pads for each of the fence posts (total 38) along the length of Zone 2 (Figure 9); a small, 15m-long trench was also excavated at the northern end of the Zone (marked 'Tr. 2.17' on Figure 9). As the fence panels will not penetrate the ground surface, the excavated pads (1.5m x 1.5m x 0.5m) provide a comprehensive archaeological assessment of the fence line in this area. Trench 2.16, to the south of the church, was excavated as planned.

Due to health and safety concerns, moreover, it was not possible to leave the excavated trenches open as originally intended. Therefore, the base of Trs 2.16 and 2.17, as well as each of the foundation pads, were lined with terram before being lightly backfilled (Plate 1).

Table 2: Zone 2, Trs 2.9–2.15

Trench No.	Feature	Depth below topsoil*
2.15	C.105, ditch/drain (c.0.2m thick)	0.2m
2.15	C.103 ditch/spread (c.0.32m thick)	0.2m
2.14	C.109 soil layer (c.0.35m in max. thickness)	0.35m
2.14	C.110 soil layer (0.4m thick) – this layer lies below C109	0.7m
2.13	C.109 soil layer (c.0.35m in max. thickness)	0.35m
2.12	C.113 soil layer (c.5m in max. thickness)	0.5m
2.9	C.94	0.8m

*i.e. depth from ground surface to top/surface of archaeological features/deposit

Table 3: Zone 3, Trs 2.1–2.5

Trench No.	Feature	Depth below topsoil*
2.5	C.52, ditch/drain (c.0.25m thick)	1m
2.5	C.13 soil layer (not tested)	1m
2.2	C.13 soil layer (c.0.2–0.35m thick)	0.6m
2.2	C.17 soil layer (not tested)	c.0.8m
2.2	C.6 linear ditch (0.3m thick)	0.6m
2.1	C.13 soil layer (c.0.2–0.35m thick)	0.5–0.8m
2.1	C.8 linear ditch (0.25m thick)	c.0.5m
2.1	C.12 linear ditch (0.25m thick)	c.0.6m
2.1	C.25 linear ditch (under C13)	c.1m
2.3	C.13 soil layer (c.0.2–0.35m thick)	c.0.8m
2.4	C.13 soil layer (c.0.2–0.35m thick)	c.0.4–0.5m

*i.e. depth from ground surface to top/surface of archaeological features/deposit

Field Location 4

As noted above, the installation of the foul/leachate outfall pipeline in Field Location 4 may impact on a possible ditch identified during previous testing in this area (see Figure 5 & Figure 10). The putative ditch (c.2.5m wide and c.0.3m deep) was identified at a depth of about 1m below the ground surface. Therefore, an 18m-long trench was excavated across the projected line of the ditch

to a depth of 0.90m, the maximum depth of the pipeline trench (Figure 11). Should the ditch or other archaeological remains be identified, the test trench was to be widened to about 4m in that area to encompass the maximum width of the pipeline trench.

Archaeological Testing Results

Field Location 1

The soil stratigraphy in all of the trenches (Trs 1.8–1.11) is generally uniform, comprising a moderately compact greyish-brown sandy topsoil that averages about 0.50–0.60m in depth.

A shallow linear feature, possibly the remains of a ditch, was identified in Trenches 1.9 and 1.11 (Figure 12 & Figure 13; Table 4). It was cut into the glacial till, an orangey-brown sandy matrix with occasional gravel patches. Nothing of potential archaeological significance was identified in Trenches 1.8 and 1.10.

Trench 1.9

This trench measured 20m in length (northeast–southwest) and c.0.5m in average depth (Plate 2).

A shallow linear feature (C.327) was identified in the approximate centre of the trench. Oriented roughly east–west, C.327 is about 0.9m wide and reaches a maximum depth of some 0.2m (see Figure 12 & Figure 13; Plate 3). It has moderately sloping sides that give way to a broad, U-shaped, slightly uneven base. It is filled by a friable dark-brown humic clay (C.326) that contains occasional animal bone and flecks of charcoal. Its shallow nature may indicate past disturbance to this feature, further traces of which were identified in Trench 1.11 some 5m to the east. A second possible feature (C.328) was revealed directly north of C.327 in Trench 1.9 (see Plate 3). The former is defined by a band of dark brown silty clay, measuring some 0.3m in length by 0.5m in width. It was not tested and extends under the eastern bank of the trench. C.328 was not recorded in Trench 2.11.

The features identified in Trenches 1.9 and 1.11 do not appear to correspond to the faint curving trend identified in the 2017 geophysical survey (labelled '5' on Figure 6 & Figure 7). Rather, they seem more likely to reflect the weak magnetic linear mapped by survey directly north of anomaly 5 (see Figure 12). The date and significance of C.327 and C.328 are unknown, though they may be of some antiquity.

Trench 1.11

This cutting measured c.5.5m in length (northeast–southwest) and c.0.5m in maximum depth.

A probable continuation of ditch-type feature C.327 was identified in this trench (Plate 4). It is defined by the same dark-brown humic clay (C.236) as noted in C.327 in Trench 1.9 and measures about 0.9m in width.

Table 4: Contexts in Trs 1.9 and 1.11

Context	Type	Description
C.326	Fill	Fill of linear ditch C.327. Dark-brown silty clay containing animal bone and charcoal.
C.327	Cut	Cut of linear ditch, oriented E–W and filled by C.326. C.327 is c.0.95m wide and 0.2m deep. It has moderately sloping sides that break gradually to a concave base.
C.328	Fill	Fill of linear ditch C.327. Dark-brown silty clay containing animal bone and charcoal. It measures c.0.3m in length by 0.5m in width.

Field Location 2

A continuous trench (Tr. 2.16), as well as a series of slot trenches and short ditch segment (Tr. 2.17), were excavated to the south and north respectively of Kerdiffstown Church and Graveyard (KD019-006001–4) (see Figure 9). The maximum depth of these cuttings was 0.50m. Apart from one sherd of Blackware pottery from a slot close to the church, as well as several sherds of medieval pottery, some animal bone and a single roof slate from Trench 2.16, nothing of archaeological interest was encountered during this phase of archaeological investigation in Field Location 2.

Trench 2.17, ditch and slot trenches

In addition to a short, angled trench through a green space at the far northern end of Trench 2.17, a total of 38 slot trenches (foundation pads) for fence posts were excavated along the line of the proposed fence north of the church. The trench segment measured some 15m in length (Plate 5), while each of the slots had maximum dimensions of 1.5m by 1.5m (Plate 6–Plate 8). Given the 0.5m maximum depth of these cuttings, the stratigraphy encountered in most of the cuttings was limited to a dark brown topsoil, averaging 0.20–0.30m in depth, that overlay a 0.25m-deep subsoil defined by a band of mid-brown sandy clay containing occasional small stones. An accumulation of modern debris-filled soil that derives from the adjacent landfill bank to the west was noted in places along the fence line, as was the upper surface of a deposit of loose gravelly light-brown silty clay. The former material corresponds to C.107 identified in Trenches 2.12–2.14 during previous testing, while the latter corresponds to C.109 encountered in earlier Trenches 2.13 and 2.14. The topsoil in three slot trenches nearest the church was defined by a thick band of dark, humic clay (Plate 9). A single sherd of Blackware pottery was found in this topsoil.

Trench 2.16

This cutting extended for a distance of approximately 190m along the perimeter of the landfill site south of the church (Plate 10 & Plate 11). The topsoil was between 0.3m and 0.5m deep, with accumulations of other colluvial and fluvially derived material encountered in places along the trench. Only the upper surface of the latter materials was exposed and they likely correspond

respectively to C.13 and C.17, which were revealed during earlier testing in this area. The topsoil contained some pottery sherds and occasional animal bone, as well as a single roof slate. No archaeological features were identified, as they likely lie below the 0.5m depth of the trench.

Field Location 4

This area corresponds to the length of the foul/leachate outfall pipeline between the southern boundary of the landfill site and the L2005 road. One trench (Tr. 4.4) was excavated at the southeastern sector of this area (see Figure 11).

Trench 4.4

Trench 4.4 was located on a relatively steep slope. It was positioned to investigate a potential ditch-type feature identified during earlier testing in this location. The trench measured 18m in length and reached a maximum depth of 0.90m (Plate 12). The topsoil here is about 0.20m in depth and covers a mid-brown silty clay up to 0.80m deep that likely comprises colluvium (hill wash) material. No trace of the putative ditch or any other features of archaeological potential were identified; a modern plastic pipe was encountered in the approximate centre of the trench (Plate 13).

Backfilling

All areas were carefully backfilled and tracked-over by the mechanical excavator to ensure a neat finish.

Gate Pillars

Two rounded gate pillars located along the northern perimeter of the landfill site, a short distance southwest of Kerdiffstown House, were also surveyed as part of the present work (Figure 14). Built of roughly coursed masonry rubble bonded with lime mortar and topped with dressed sandstone pillar caps (each c.1.1m in diameter), the pillars appear to have originally flanked a narrow path that extended towards the gardens of Kerdiffstown House from the west. The path is depicted on both the first- (1839) and second-edition (1871) Ordnance Survey maps, although the gate pillars are not and they may be a later feature (Figure 15).

The pillars (set some 3.60m apart) appear to be relatively sound and stable, though both are heavily overgrown with vegetation and surrounded by extensive dumps of soil (Plate 14). The eastern pillar stands approximately 1.5m high but it is likely to be somewhat taller (Plate 15). A small iron gate hanger is affixed to the inside of the pillar, perpendicular to the former gate, and it is abutted by the dilapidated remains a low external wall. The western pillar still retains a horizontal steel plate with notch that likely functioned as a gate latch (Plate 16). Careful clearance of the surrounding soil heaps and vegetation will allow for a better understanding of the fabric of the gate pillars.

Conclusions

The present investigations at Kerdiffstown have yielded additional evidence for archaeological activity at the site, most notably in Field Location 1. Here, a shallow linear feature (possible ditch) was identified in the southeastern quadrant of the area. While the precise date and significance of this, and the adjacent feature C.328, are unknown, they appear to be of archaeological interest.

No obvious features of archaeological significance were revealed in Field Locations 2 and 4, though a number of medieval and post-medieval pottery sherds and some animal bone were recovered from topsoil in Field Location 2.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the present testing, the following recommendations are made:

Field Location 1

1. It is recommended that if preservation *in situ* is not possible that the archaeological remains within the footprint of the proposed development in the subject area be archaeologically excavated and recorded in advance of development at the site.

Field Location 2

1. No archaeological remains were uncovered along the line of the proposed fence to the north and south of the church and no further work is recommended in respect to the erection of the fence in Zones 2 and 3.

Field Location 4

1. No archaeological remains were uncovered and no further work is recommended in this area.

Gate Pillars

1. Careful clearance of the surrounding soil heaps and vegetation will allow for a better understanding of the fabric of the gate pillars.
2. Any excavations in this area should be undertaken under archaeological supervision to ensure preservation of any subsurface remains potentially associated with the path marked on early cartographic sources.

The above recommendations are subject to the approval of the National Monuments Service and the National Museum of Ireland. Proposed mitigation measures should comply with the *National Monuments Act 1930* (as amended). Archaeological excavation should be undertaken under a licence issued under Section 26 of the *National Monuments Act 1930* (as amended) and be in accordance with the *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* (DAHGI 1999).

References

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Figures

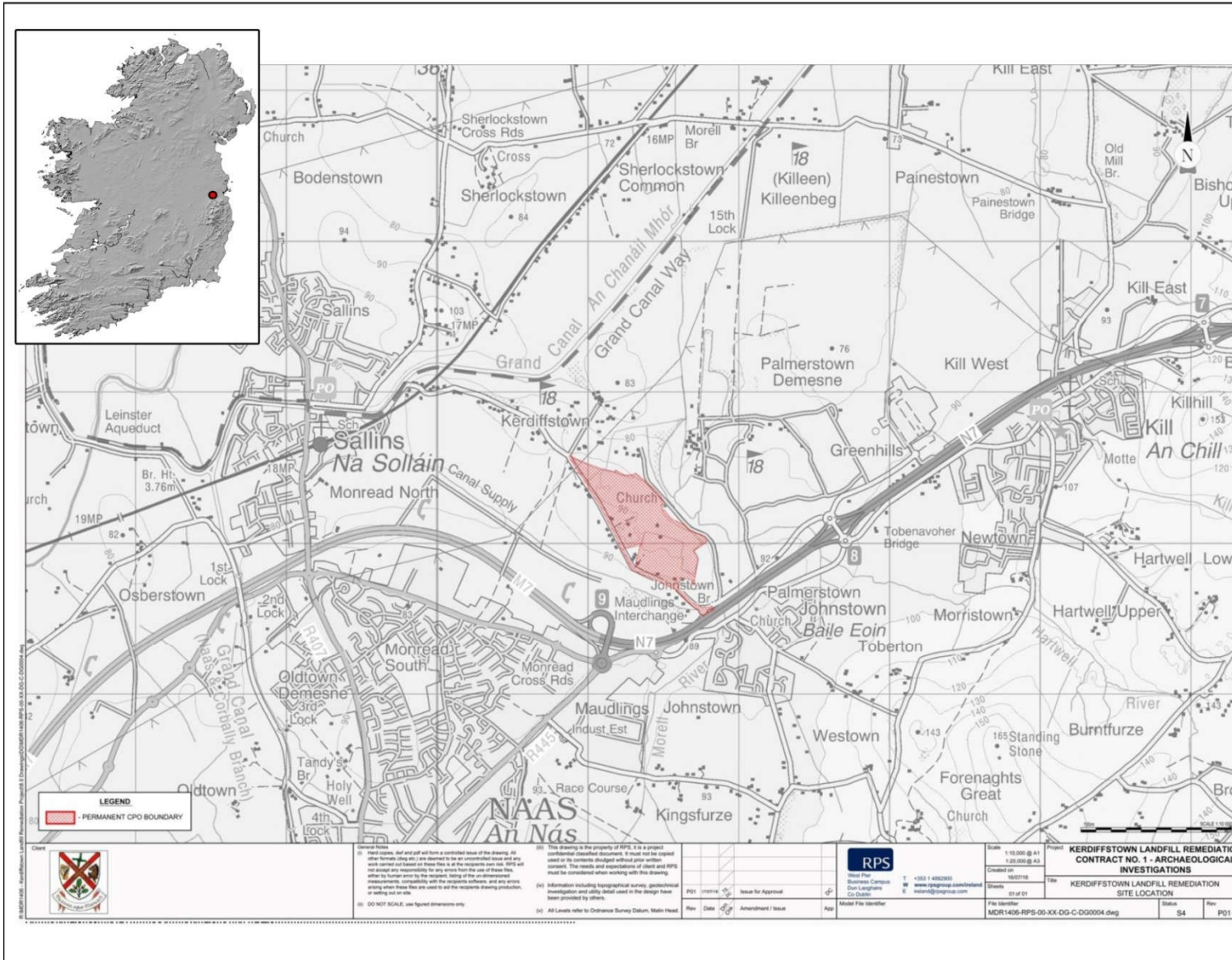


FIGURE 1

Kerdiffstown Landfill Remediation Project, Naas, Co. Kildare

Site Location Map

AMS Job No.: J2007

Testing Reg. No.: 18E0655

Notes

Source: image supplied by client



Figure 1: Kerdiffstown Landfill Remediation Project site location map

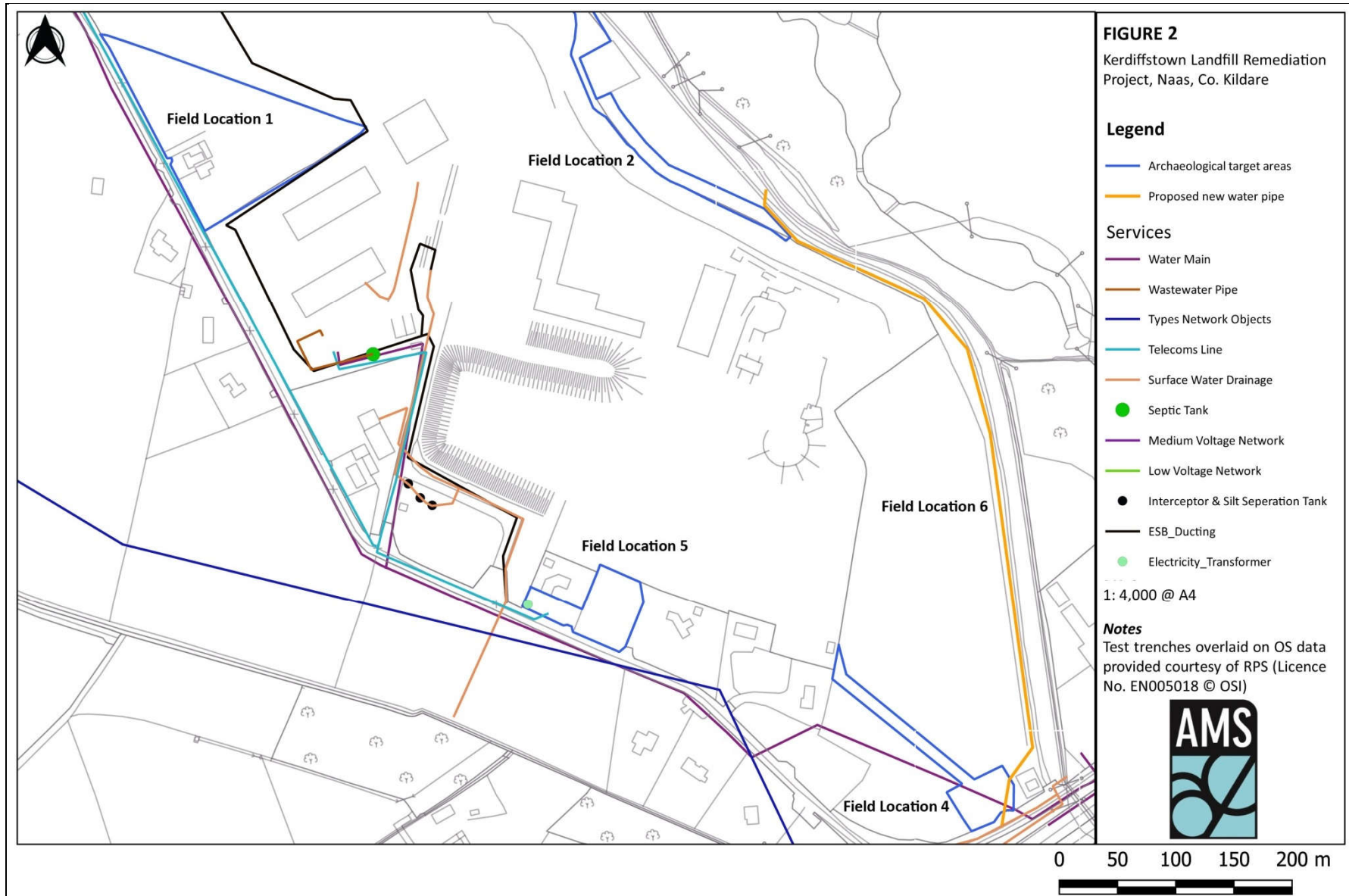


Figure 2: Location of previously tested areas (Field Locations 1, 2, 4–6) at Kerdiffstown

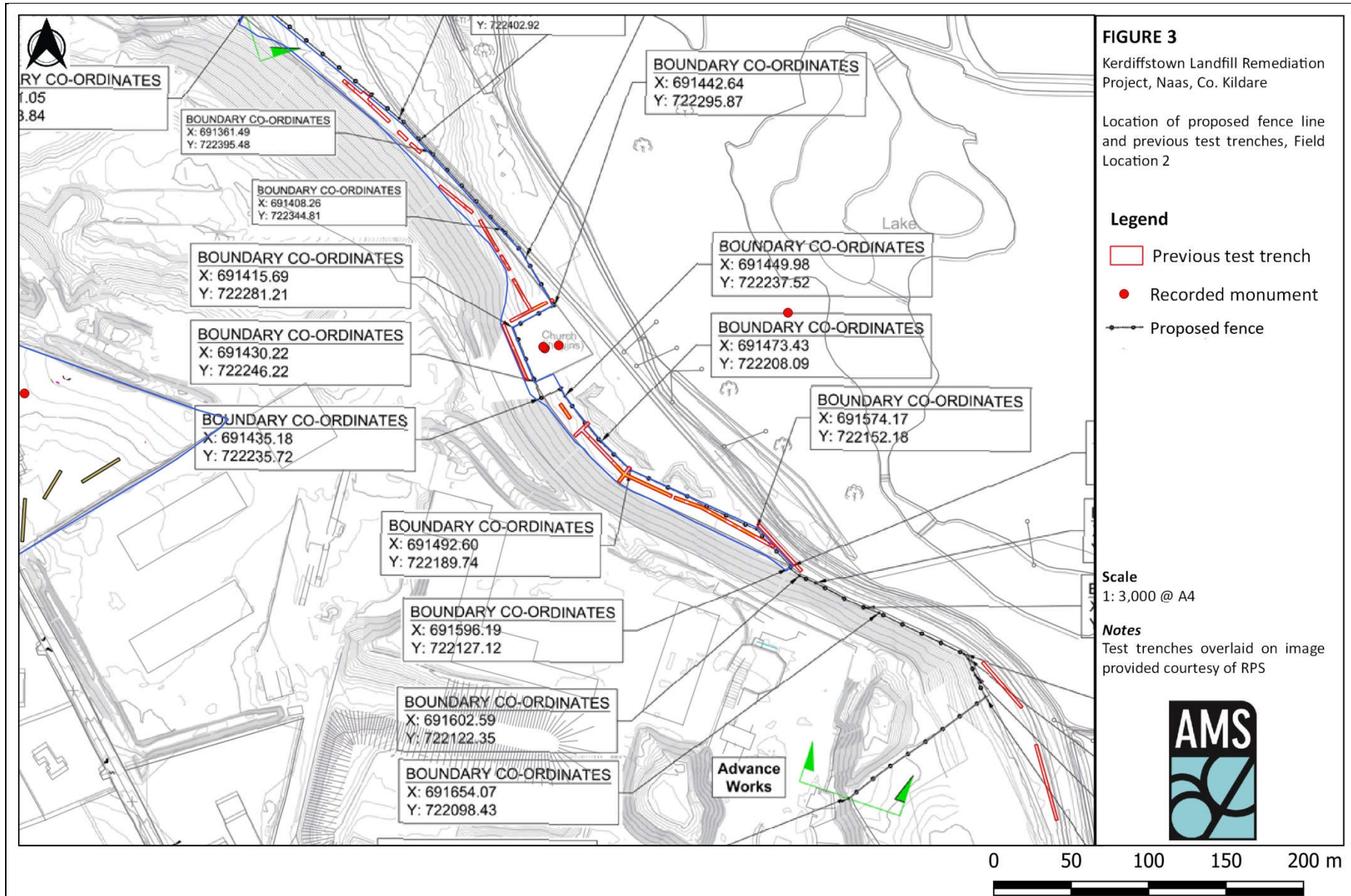


Figure 3: Location of proposed fence line, Field Location 2

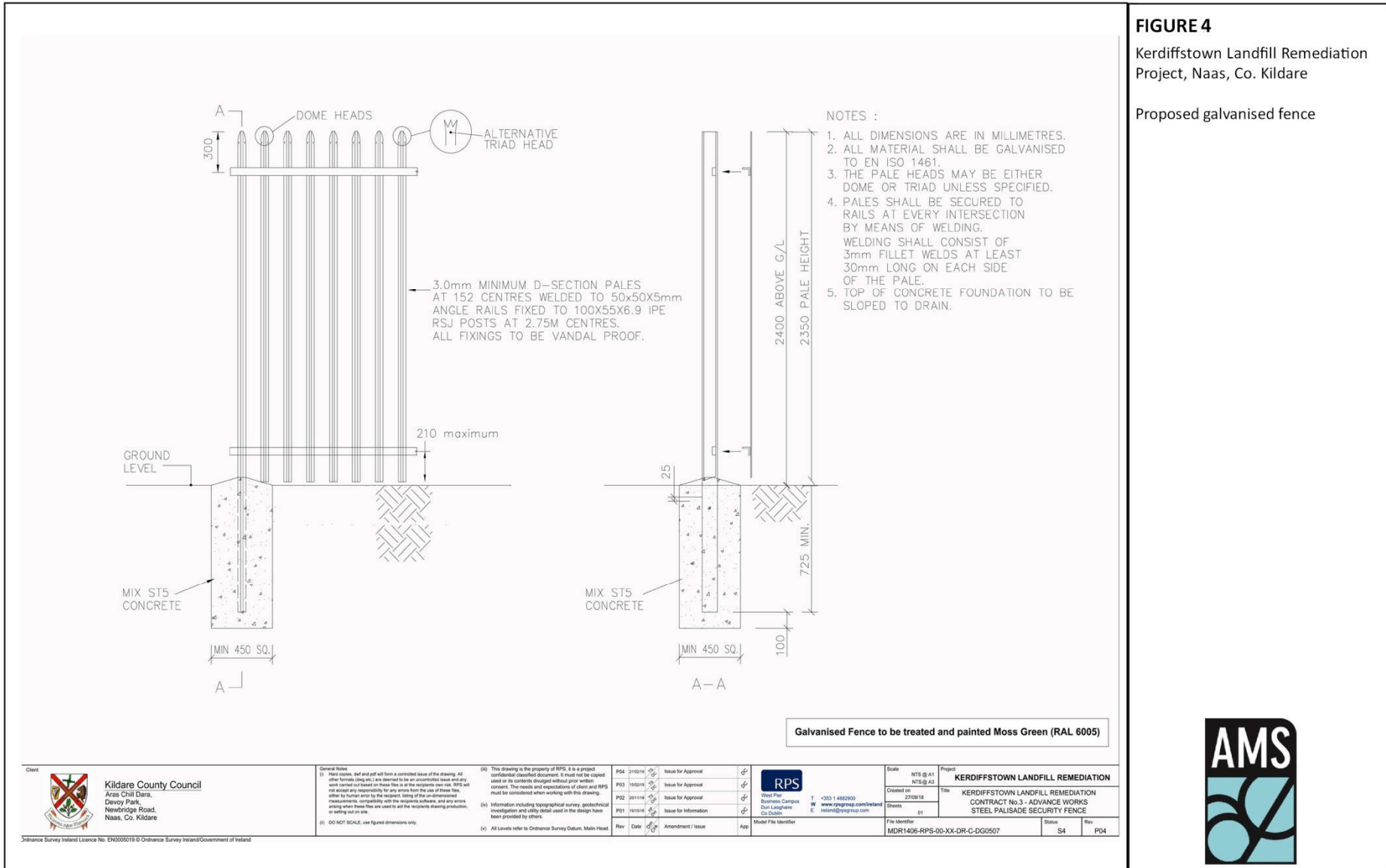


Figure 4: Proposed galvanised fence, Field Location 2

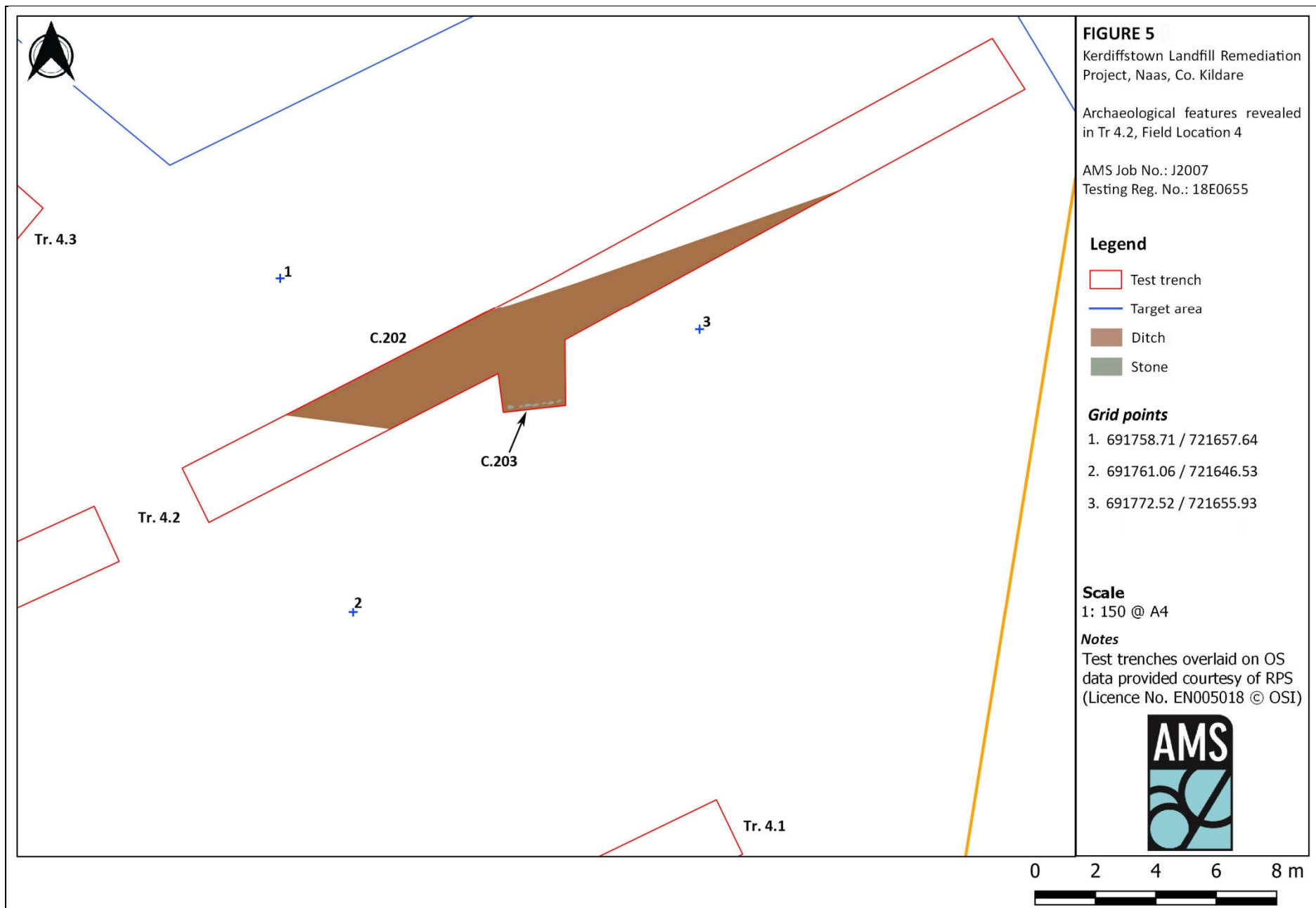


Figure 5: Possible ditch, Field Location 4

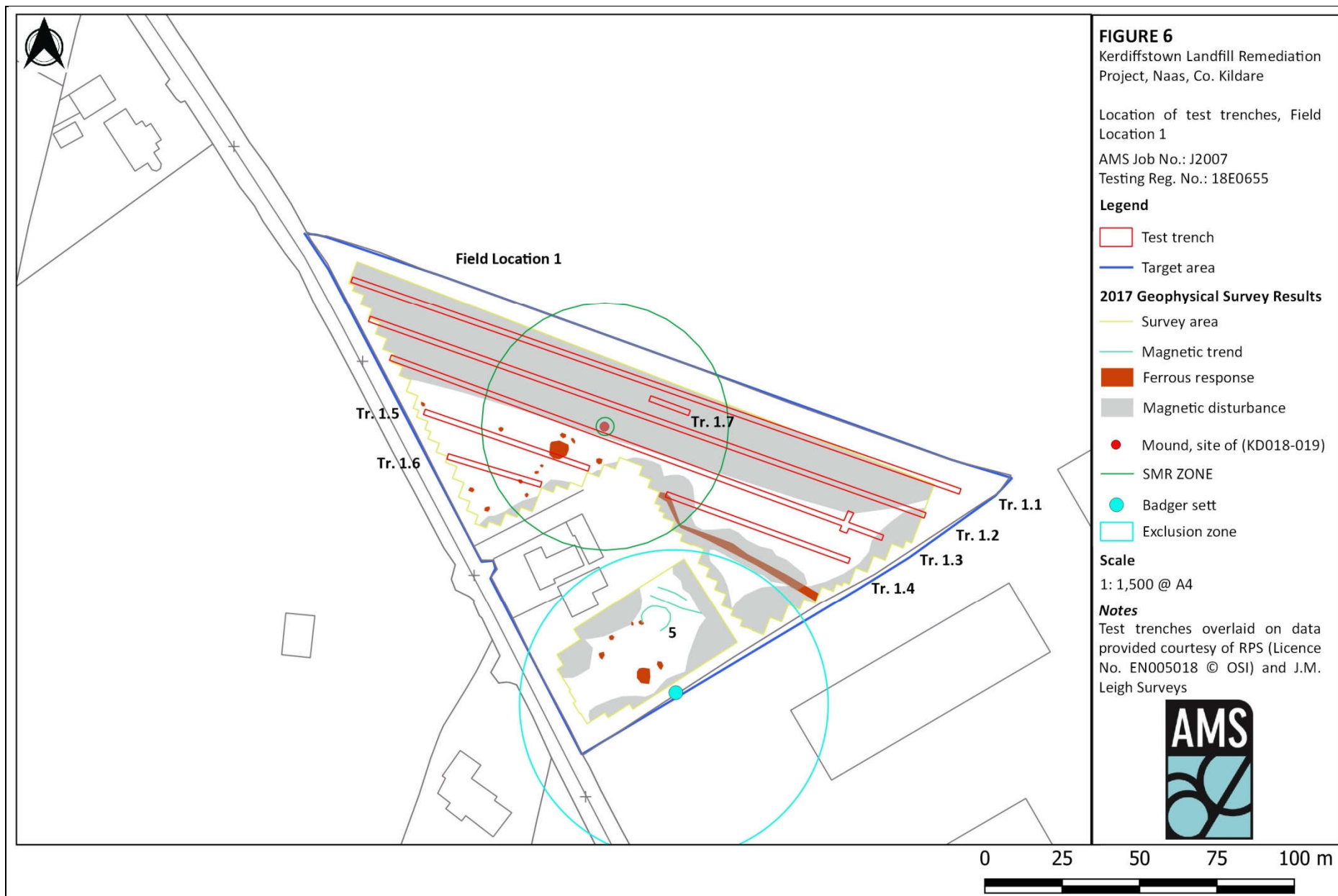


Figure 6: Location of previous test trenches, badger exclusion zone and 2017 geophysical survey results, Field Location 1

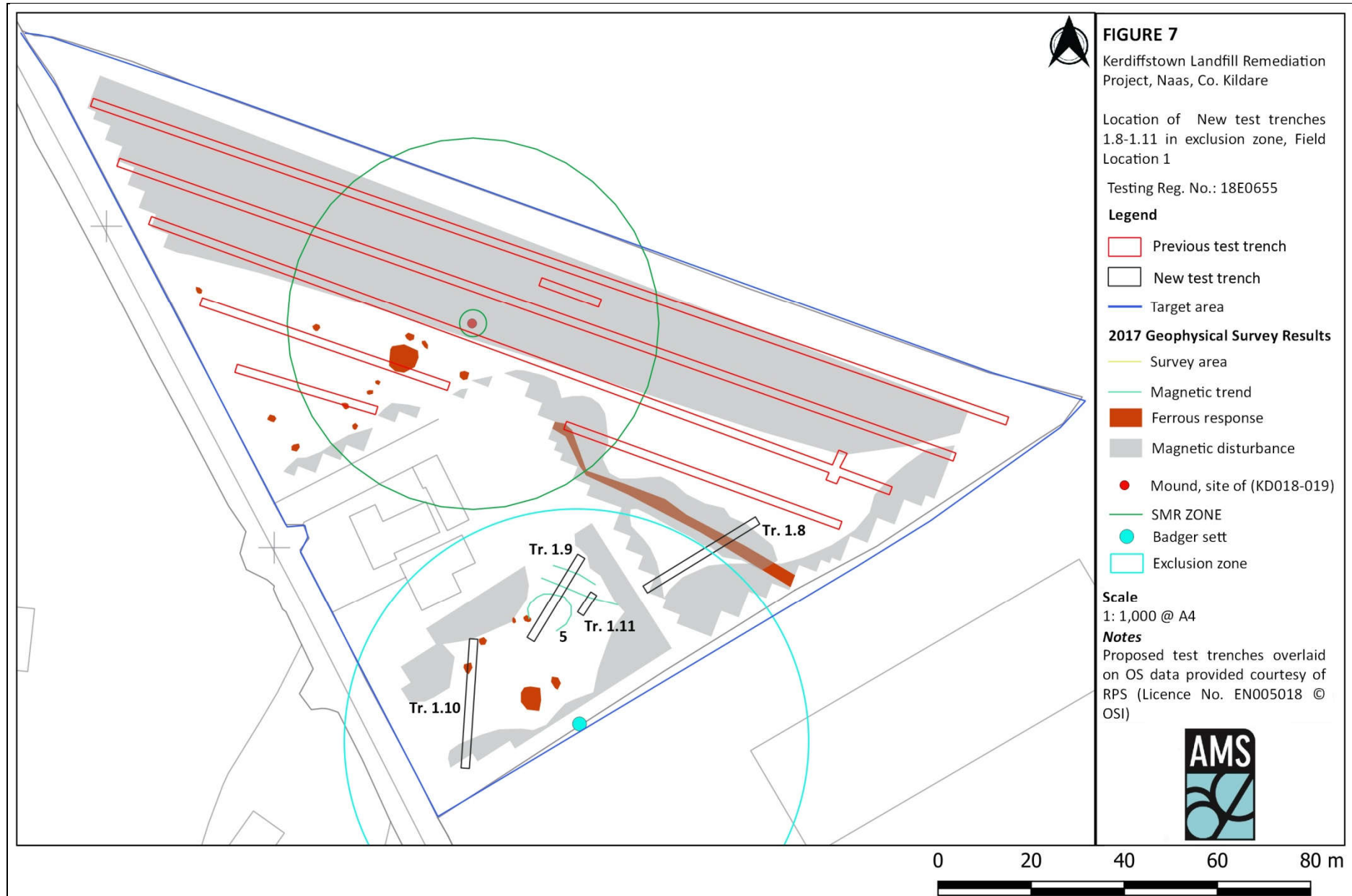


Figure 7: Location of new test trenches (Trs 1.8 –1.11), Field Location 1

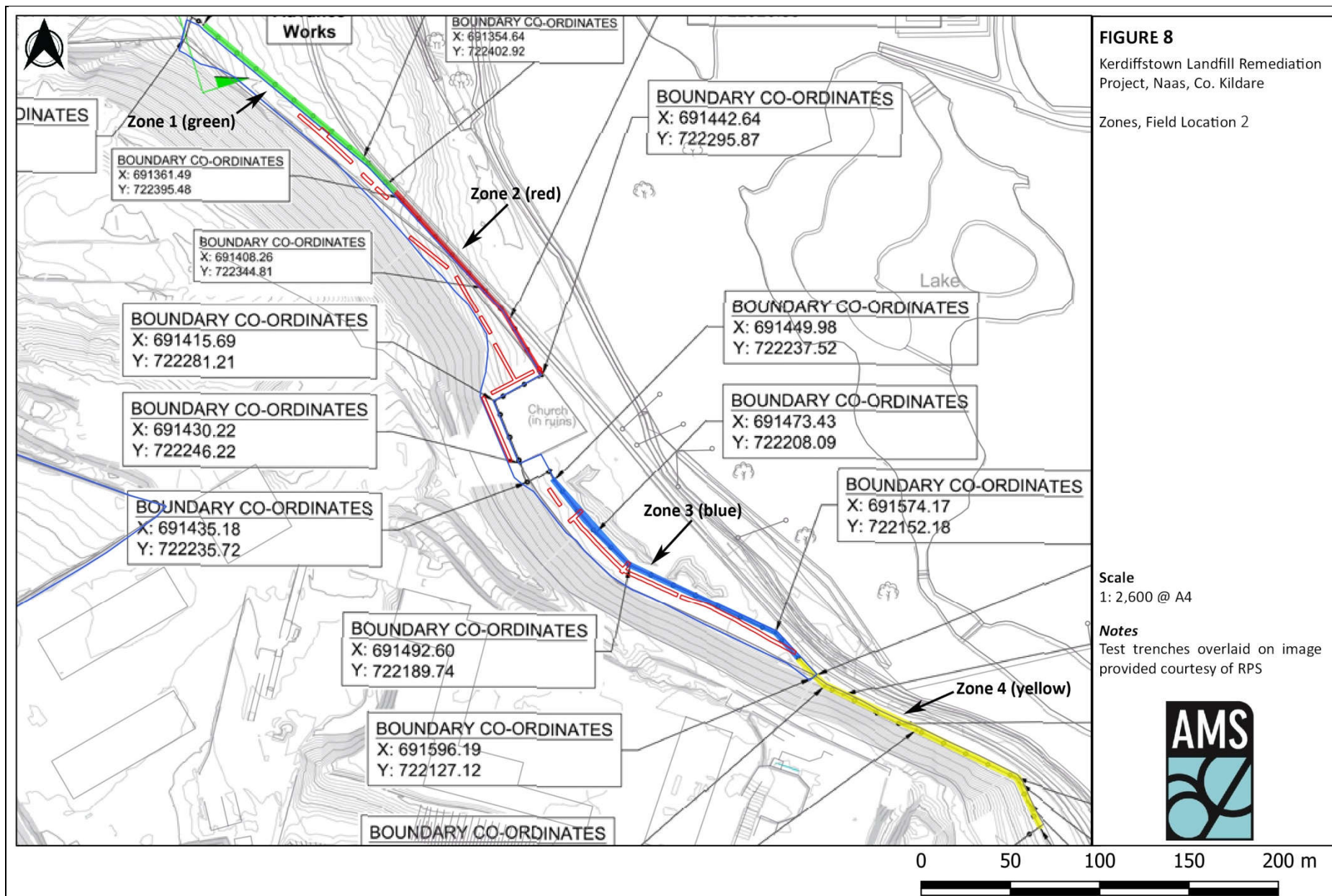


Figure 8: Location of archaeological zones, Field Location 2

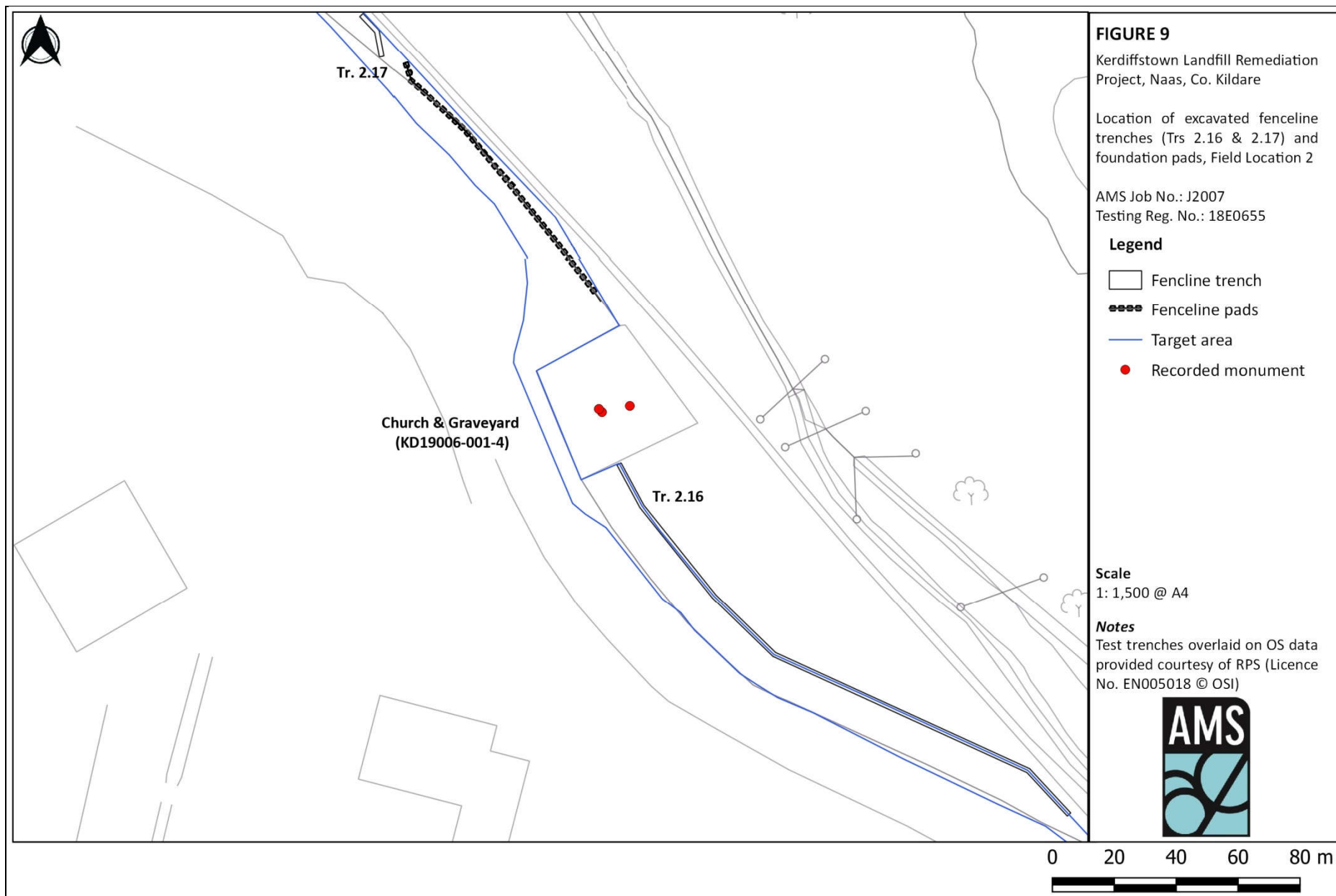


Figure 9: Location of test trenches and foundation pads for fence posts, Field Location 2

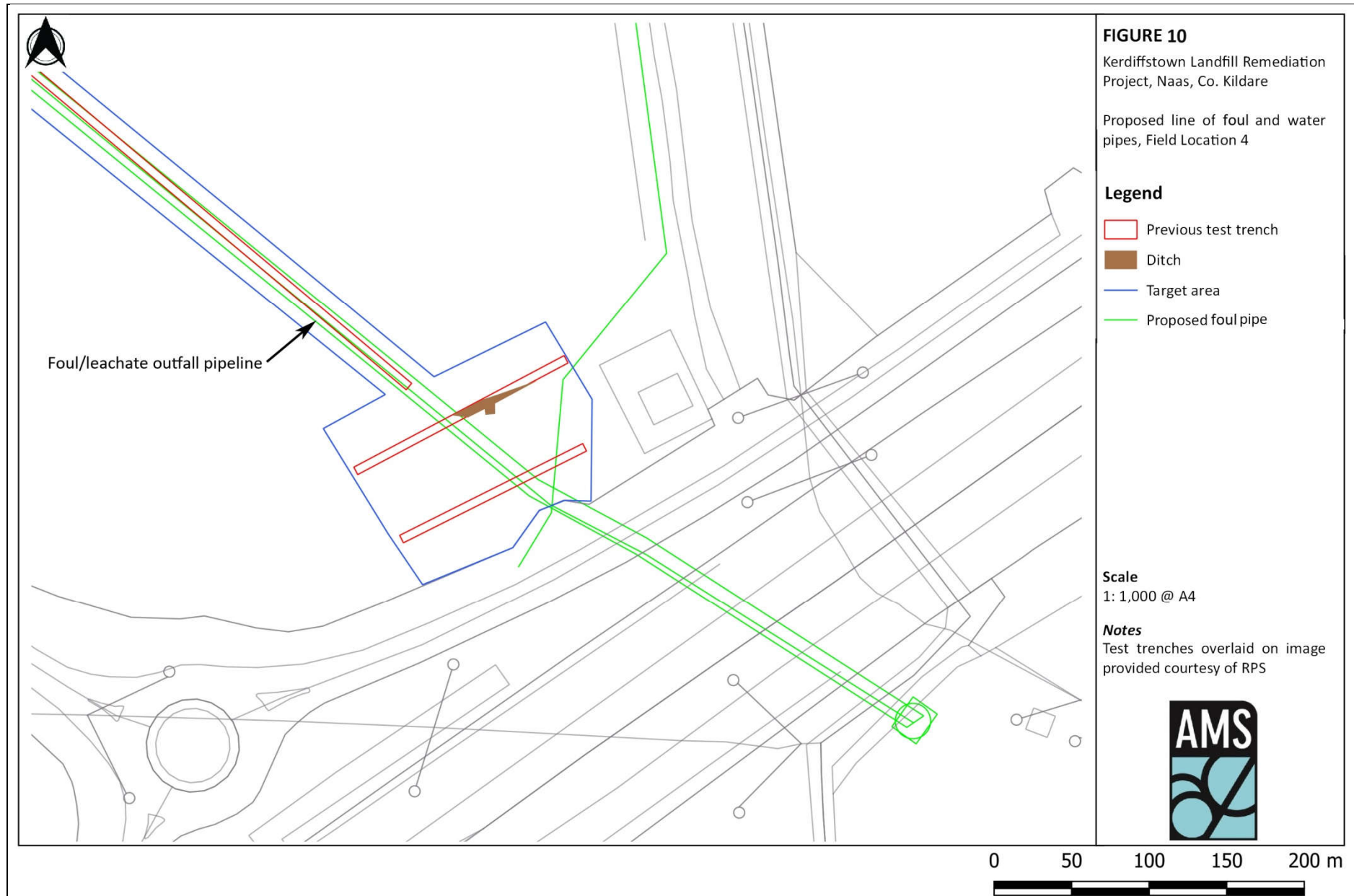


Figure 10: Location of proposed foul and water pipes in relation to possible ditch, Field Location 4

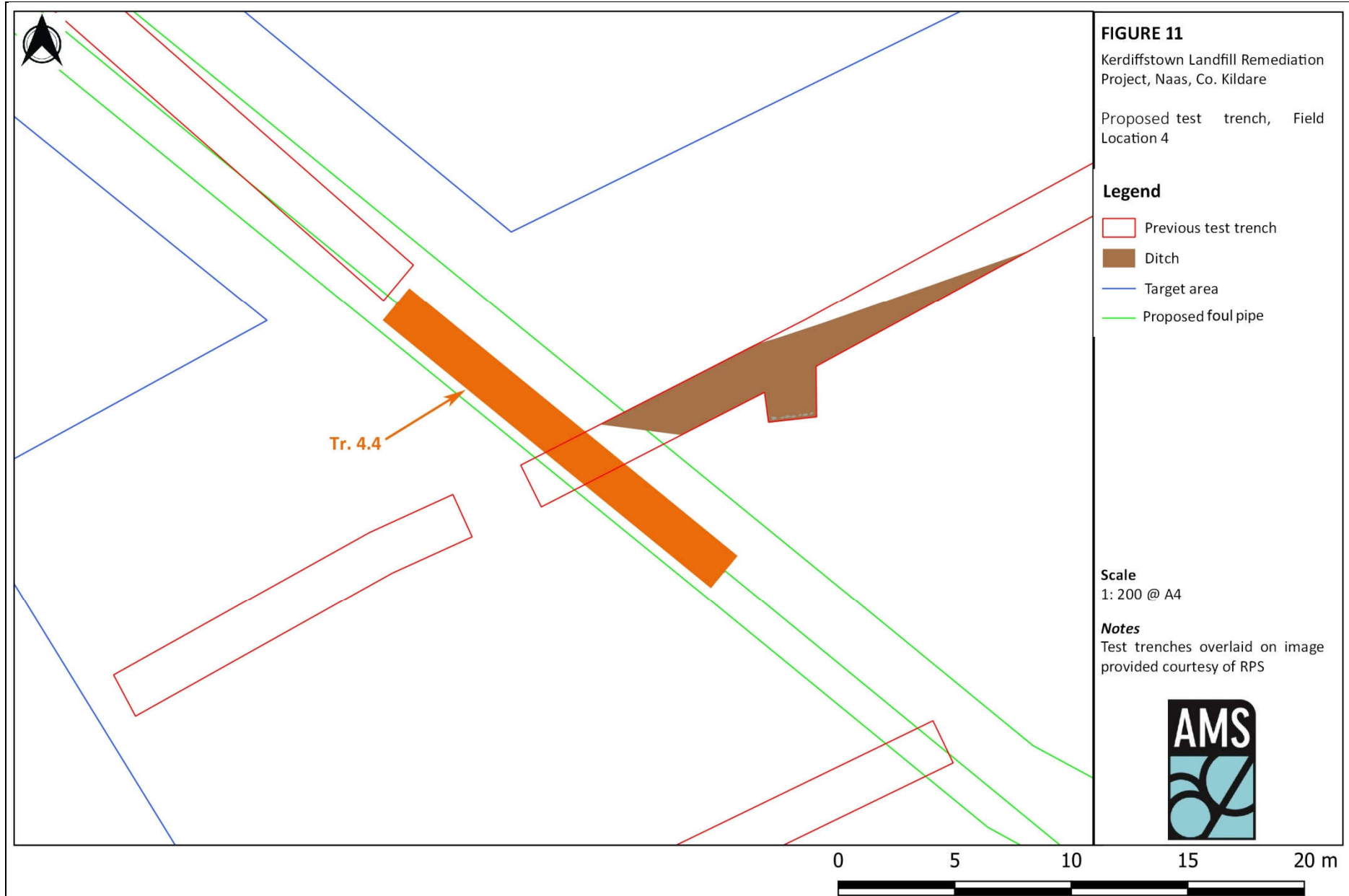


Figure 11: Location of Trench 4.4, Field Location 4

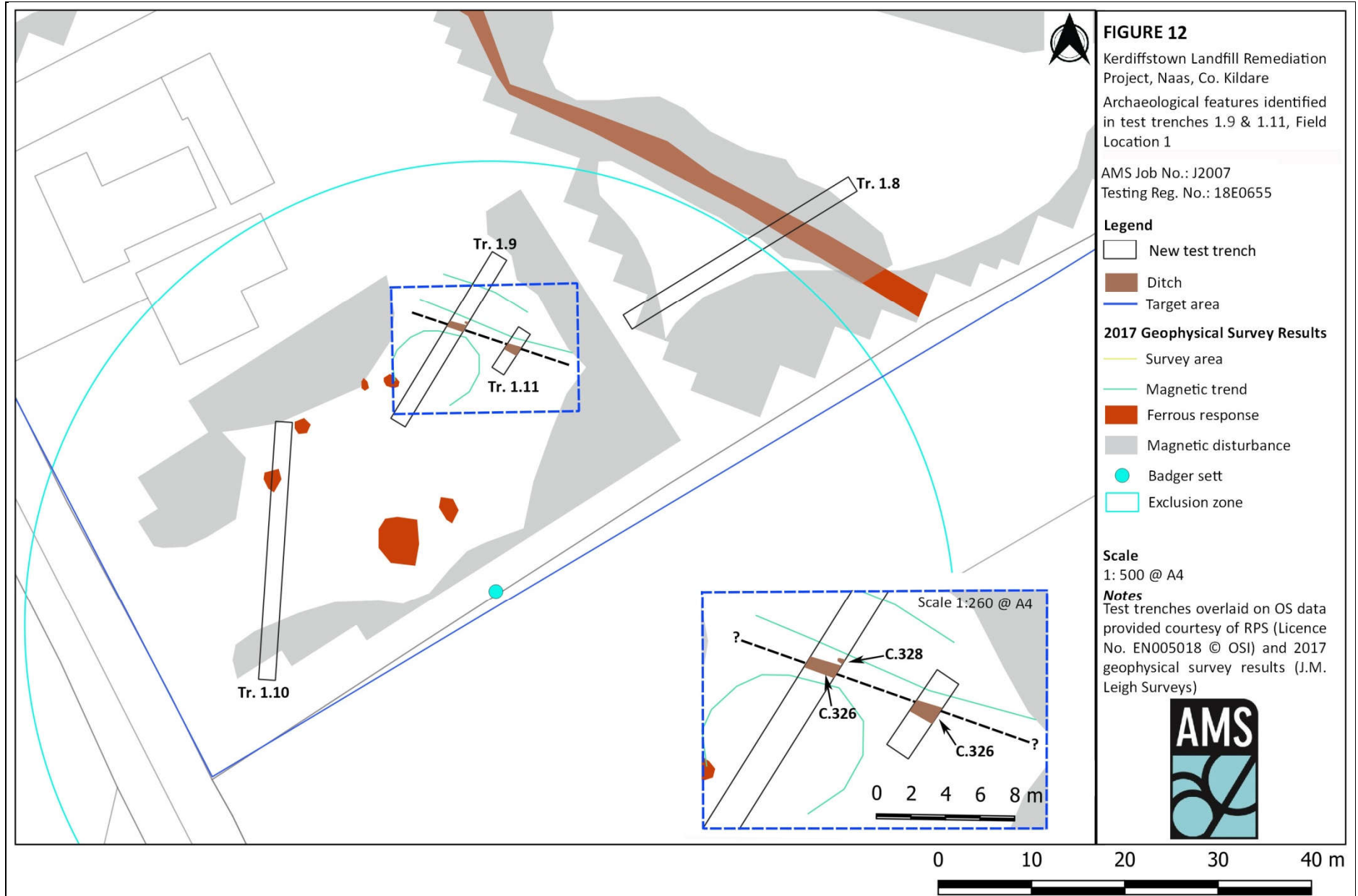


Figure 12: Archaeological features identified in Field Location 1

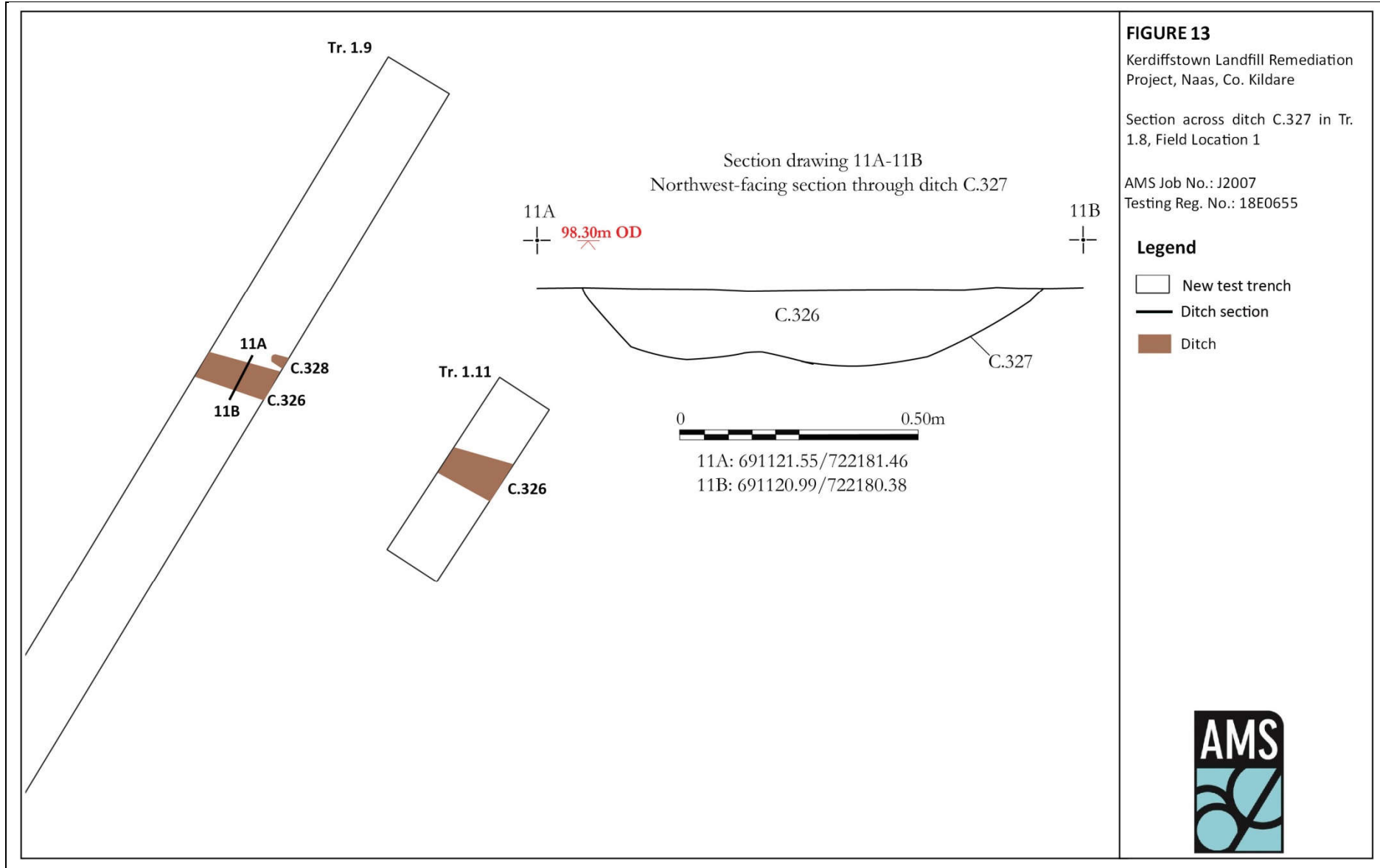


Figure 13: Section drawing of C.326/327, Field Location 1

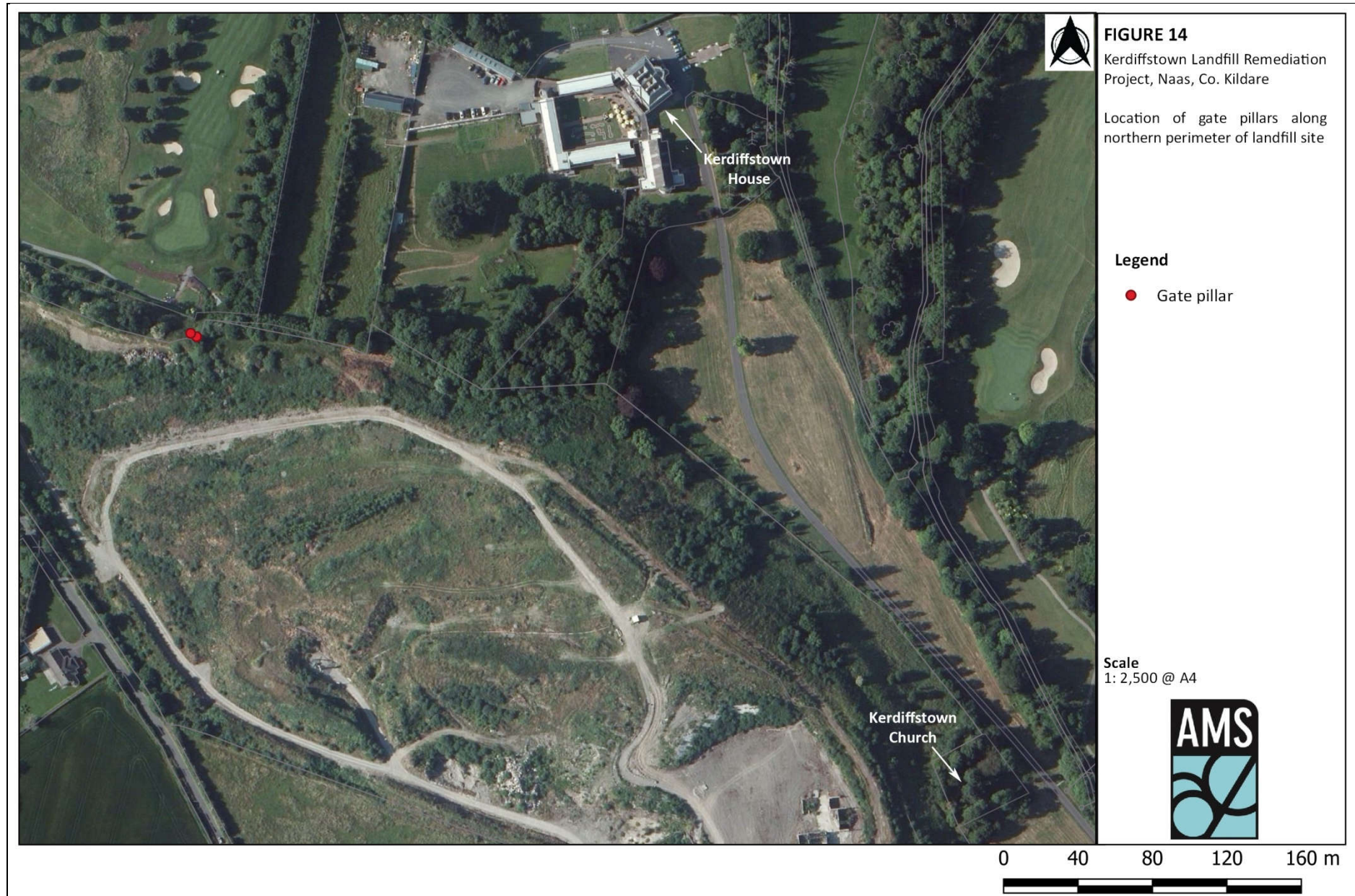


Figure 14: Location of the gate pillars

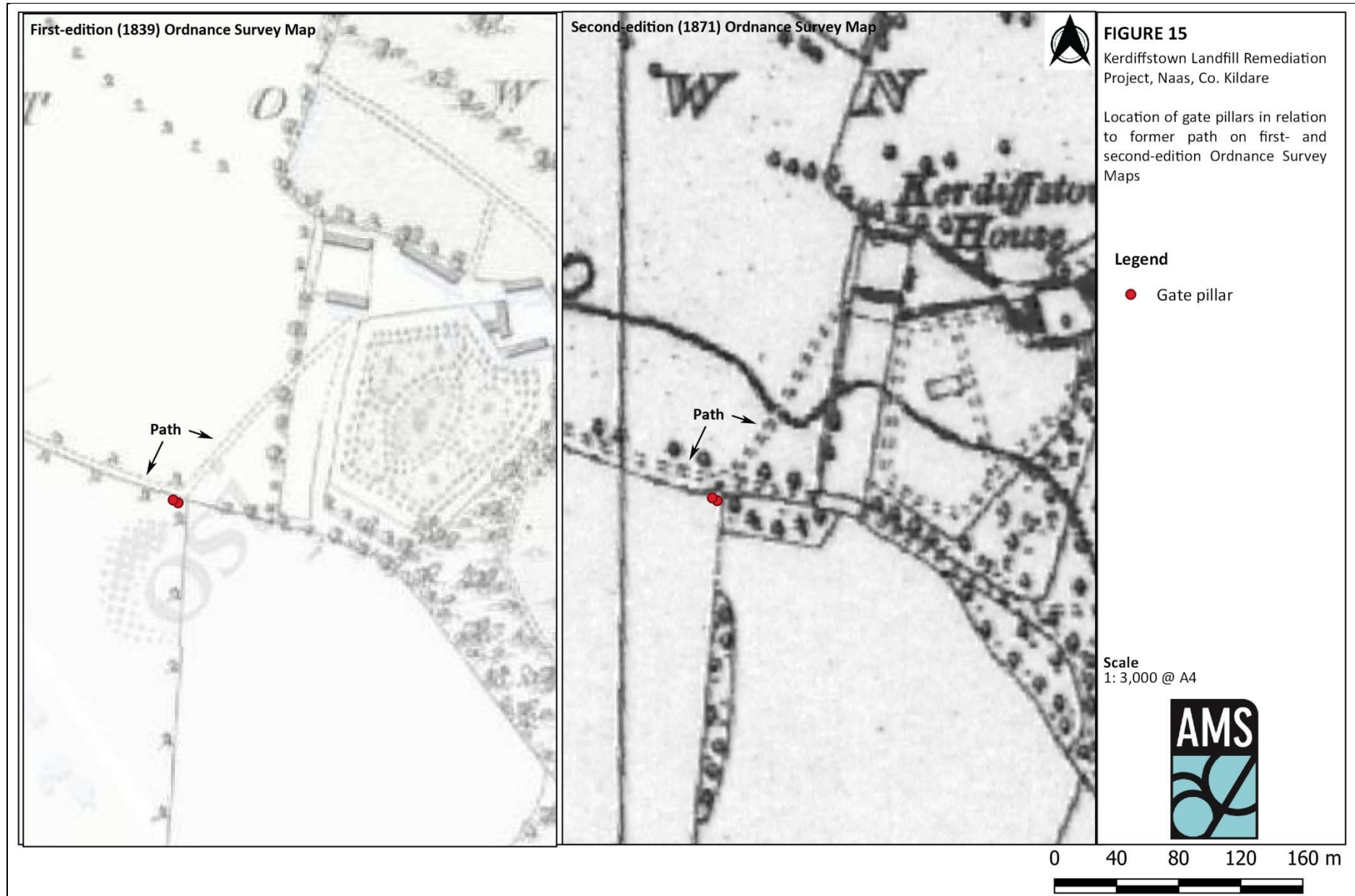


Figure 15: Location of gate pillars in relation to former path marked on the first- and second-edition Ordnance Survey Maps

Plates



Plate 1: Terram lining base of Trench 2.16, Field Location 2, looking southeast



Plate 2: Trench 1.9, looking northeast



Plate 3: Looking east over linear feature (C.326), possible ditch, in Trench 1.9, with C.328 to left



Plate 4: C.328 in Tr. 1.11, looking northeast



Plate 5: Trench 2.17, looking southeast



Plate 6: Excavated slot trench along fence line north of church, looking northwest



Plate 7: Slot trench under excavation, looking southeast



Plate 8: Excavated slots, looking southeast. Note terram lining in foreground example



Plate 9: Slot trench close to Kerdiffstown Church, looking southeast



Plate 10: Trench 2.16, looking southeast



Plate 11: Trench 2.16 under excavation, looking southeast



Plate 12: Trench 4.4, looking northwest



Plate 13: Modern plastic pipe in Trench 4.4, looking northwest



Plate 14: Gate pillars, looking south



Plate 15: The eastern gate pillars, looking west



Plate 16: Gate latch on the western pillar