Appendix C17.06f

Archaeological Investigations (Testing) Programme Results

TA6 Drumgreggan Stage (i)a Test Excavation and Stage (i)h Metal Detection Survey Report

TEN-T Priority Route Improvement. Report on Stage (i) Test Excavation and Metal Detection at TA6 Drumgreggan, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal

Part 1 – Archaeological Information

Archaeological Management Solutions

Excavation Licence No.: 25E0792

Metal Detection Consent No.: 25R0354

Licence Holder: Derek Gallagher

Report prepared by Derek Gallagher

For Donegal County Council

December 2025

TITLE PAGE

AMS Job No.:	J3762
Project Name:	Drumgreggan Test Investigations for TEN-T PRI Project (1036)
Report Title:	TEN-T Priority Route Improvement. Draft Report on Stage (i) Test Excavation and Metal Detection at TA6 Drumgreggan, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
Client Name:	Donegal County Council
Date of Testing:	8 September 2025
Townland Name:	Drumgreggan
Grid Reference (ITM):	620852, 911349
Archaeological Site Type:	Nothing of Archaeological Significance
Excavation Licence No.:	25E0792
Metal Detection Consent No.:	25R0354
Licence Holder/Excavation Director:	Derek Gallagher
Senior Archaeologist:	James Hession
Report Status/Revision:	Ver_10
Revision Date:	28 November 2025
Report Author:	Derek Gallagher
Technical Reviewers:	James Hession and Zbigniew Malek and Joanne Hughes
Editor:	Bryn Coldrick
Approved By:	Fintan Walsh
Date of Issue:	01 December 2025
File Name:	J3762_Testing-Report_Drumgreggan_DONEGAL_25E0792_Part 1_ver_10

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Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by AMS on behalf of Donegal County Council. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) is fulfilling the role of Approving Authority for the Project, and it therefore comes under the Code of Practice for Archaeology agreed between the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and TII (2017).

The archaeological services were carried out under Licence Number 25E0792 and Metal Detection Consent Number 25R0354 issued by the National Monuments Service (NMS) of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, in consultation with the National Museum of Ireland.

AMS wishes to acknowledge the following key project stakeholders and the internal and external personnel who contributed to the work described in this report.

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Executive Summary

This report describes the results of Stage (i) Test Excavations and metal detection undertaken at a purported enclosure site which is included in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR; SMR DG053-059----) in Drumgreggan townland, Co. Donegal. The aim of testing was to provide further information as part of the design and environmental evaluation phase of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal.

The archaeological investigation was carried out in TA6, one of six areas along the preferred route of the TEN-T project which were identified for test excavation and metal detection works as part of the Design and Environmental Assessment Phase of the project. Testing Areas TA1–TA5 were previously investigated through geophysical survey, test excavations and metal detection surveys in 2020/2021 (Shine and McKee 2022a–2022e). TA6 (SMR DG053-059----) is a circular feature measuring *c*.35–38m in diameter which was identified in aerial photography and in LiDAR imagery and was thought to be an enclosure (AMS 2020a; AMS2020b and NMS 2023a). This is located in low-lying ground within the floodplain of the River Swilly.

The scheme is covered by the provisions of the Code of Practice agreed between Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Minister of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (TII & DAHRRGA 2017). TII has nominated Orlaith Egan as Project Archaeologist with responsibility for the management of all archaeological aspects of the project.

Stage (i) Test Excavations were carried out in accordance with the terms of the Stage (i) Test Excavation and Survey Archaeological Consultancy Services Contract between Donegal County Council (DCC) and Archaeological Management Solutions (AMS) and in accordance with the licence (25E0792) and consent to use a metal detection device (25R0354).

Three test trenches (TA1–TA3) were excavated across the investigation area TA6: T1 (30 linear metres), T2 (25 linear metres), and T3 which was a short extension (4m) to the west of T2 to investigate a possible feature which was found to be tree roots (Figure 5). A small trial pit (TP) measuring 2 sq m was also excavated into the west end of T1 to investigate the nature and depth of alluvium, the substrate below topsoil on the site. A layer of cockle shell was identified at a depth of *c.*1m within the natural alluvial deposits. This was determined to be a natural deposit associated with alluvial and tidal action associated with the River Swilly. This finding is consistent with similar findings in adjacent fields as described by the landowner.

No potential archaeological objects, features or deposits were found during the testing and metal detection at the location of the purported enclosure (SMR DG053-059----). The only features noted were stone-filled land drains in T1 and T2. These features are not considered to be of archaeological interest.

However, the archaeological potential of this area cannot be entirely dismissed given there is still a possibility for archaeology to survive beneath the alluvium. In the event of removal of the alluvium as part of the proposed road construction, further archaeological investigation should be considered as part of the archaeological advance works, to include:

- Full review of the results of any existing GI/SI investigations by a suitably qualified geoarchaeologist to determine the nature of the deposits and substrates along the proposed scheme in this area;
- A comprehensive palaeoenvironmental coring strategy across the site and immediate environs, directed by a suitably qualified geoarchaeologist and/or environmental specialist. This work would provide additional information on (a) the nature and morphology of the estuarine/riverine alluvial deposits in the area, and associated record of environmental change

in the locale during the Holocene and (b) potential further information on the archaeological potential of the LiDAR feature L212-3/SMR DG053-059----;

- Pending the results of any such investigation, and in consultation with the TII Project Archaeologist, further archaeological works may be required.

Recommendations are subject to the agreement of the TII Project Archaeologist, National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the National Museum of Ireland, and the local planning authority where required and should only be carried out in accordance with the necessary approvals. Please note that the statutory and local authorities may issue alternative and/or additional recommendations/conditions.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation/Acronym	Definition
AMS	Archaeological Management Solutions
DAHGI	Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands
DCHG	Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
DCC	Donegal County Council
DAHRRGA	Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs
ITM	Irish Transverse Mercator
LiDAR	Light Detection and Ranging
NMI	National Museum of Ireland
NMS	National Monuments Service
OD	Ordnance Datum
OS	Ordnance Survey
RMP	Record of Monuments and Places
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record
TA	Testing Areas
TP	Trial Pit
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Coordinate Reference System

All grid coordinates in this report use the Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM) coordinate reference system unless otherwise stated.

1 Introduction

This report describes the results of Stage (i) Test Excavations and metal detection undertaken at a purported enclosure site (SMR DG053-059----) at TA6 in Drumgreggan townland, Co. Donegal. The aim of testing was to provide further information as part of the design and environmental evaluation phase of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal.

The archaeological investigation was carried out in TA6, one of six areas along the preferred route of the TEN-T project which were identified for test excavation and metal detection works as part of the Design and Environmental Assessment Phase of the project. Testing Areas TA1–TA5 were previously investigated through geophysical survey, test excavations and metal detection surveys in 2020/2021 (see Table 1 below; Shine and McKee 2022a–2022e). TA6 is a circular feature measuring *c*.35–38m in diameter which was identified in aerial photography (Figure 5) and in LiDAR imagery (Figure 7) and was thought to be an enclosure (AMS2020a; AMS2020b and NMS 2023a). This is located in low-lying ground within the floodplain of the River Swilly (Plate 8– Plate 10).

The scheme is covered by the provisions of the Code of Practice agreed between Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) and the Minister of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (TII & DAHRRGA 2017). TII has nominated Orlaith Egan as Project Archaeologist with responsibility for the management of all archaeological aspects of the project.

Stage (i) archaeological works were carried out in accordance with the excavation licence and detection consent terms of the Stage (i) Test Excavation and Survey, Archaeological Consultancy Services Contract between DCC and AMS and in accordance with the licence (25E0792) and consent to use a metal detection device (25R0354).

Table 1: List of TEN-T test investigation areas and TA6 test investigation area.

Road Scheme Section	Site ID	ITM	Site Type	Licence Ref.
1	TA1	613410, 895454	SMR DG078-005---- 'site of' church known locally as 'The Abbey' and surrounding areas of archaeological potential	20E0455, 20R0167, 20R0078
2	TA2	621237, 911224	Area at and in proximity to SMR DG53-028---- and DG053-028001- 'site of' church and graveyard	20E0501, 20R0183, 20R0078
3	TA3	628587, 904423	Area at and in proximity to 'site of' enclosure SMR DG062-024---- and adjacent potential enclosure	20E0502, 20R0184, 20R0078
3	TA4	631615, 899290	Area in close proximity to SMR DG070-048---- 'site of' standing stone	20E0487, 20R0182, 20R0078

Road Scheme Section	Site ID	ITM	Site Type	Licence Ref.
3	TA5	632263, 897206	Area at and in proximity to SMR DG070-082---- souterrain and possible enclosure	20E0503, 20R0185, 20R0078
2	TA6	620852, 911349	Area at enclosure site SMR DG053-059----	25E0792, 25R0354

2 Receiving Environment

2.1 Site Location Overview

The site at Drumgreggan is located to the east of Letterkenny along Section 2 of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project: N56/N30 Letterkenny to Manorcunningham, Co. Donegal, comprising a new dual-carriageway road which will traverse the townland of Drumgreggan (Table 2; Figure 1 and Figure 2). TA6 is in a flat greenfield area within reclaimed lands of the River Swilly alluvial floodplains and overlooked by a high ridge to the south of the purported enclosure site (SMR DG053-059----).

There is no suggested/validated translation from Irish to English for Drumgreggan in the Placenames Database of Ireland.[1] However, a possible translation for Drumgreggan would be rock/ridge [*Droim* = 'hill', 'ridge' + *carraig* = 'rock' + *ín* = diminutive suffix. Note: in Donegal Irish, the genitive case sometimes nasalises the following consonant].[2]

Lough Swilly is a designated County Geological Site (Ref.: IGH 13; ND035)[i] as adopted under the National Heritage Plan.[3] It comprises 'a long, wide fjord, bordered by high, bold cliffs in the north, passing to gentler coastal slopes and shallow flats along its southern reaches', and is noted as being the only fjord on Ireland's north coast, according to the Geological Survey of Ireland's Public Data Viewer Series.[4] The quaternary geology and sediments are described as follows in Hennessy *et al*. 2019:

> *Glaciofluvial sands and gravels are deposited by meltwater issuing from a melting glacier. These deposits are usually well sorted, with the gravels often rounded. Outwash sands and gravels floor the Swilly Valley southwest of Letterkenny; these have been overlain by alluvium deposited by the modern River Swilly.*

The predominant Quaternary sediment, as classified in the Geological Survey of Ireland's map viewer,[5] is River Alluvium (O5RIV) which occurs in a central band through the flood plain of the River Swilly. The depth of alluvium is noted as being greater than 0.8m and it is noted as having poor drainage.

Lough Swilly is both a Special Ara of Conservation (Code: 002287) and Special Protection Area (Code: 004075) as set out in the DCC Development Plan 2024–2030;[6] both designations have statutory

[1] Available at: logainm.ie | Placenames Database of Ireland [Accessed: November 2025].
[2] Pers comm. Dr Caroline McGrath, AMS.
[3] See: https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/heritage-ireland-2030.pdf [Accessed: November 2025].
[4] Avbailable at: https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ebaf90ff2d554522b438ff313b0c197a&scale=0 [Accessed: November 2025].
[5] See: https://dcenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ebaf90ff2d554522b438ff313b0c197a&scale=0 [Accessed: November 2025].
[6] Available at: https://www.donegaldevplan.ie/ [Accessed: November 2025].

protection through their inclusion in that document. The Special Protection Area extends to immediately north of the subject site. In the same Plan, the River Swilly Valley Woods (Code: 002011) are Proposed Natural Heritage Areas, and which includes the area of the River Swilly Estuary. The portion of the River Swilly in the adjoining townlands of Ballyraine and Bunnagee are areas of reclaimed alluvial coastland.[7]

Table 2: Townland within which the investigation took place and its suggested placename meaning.[8]

Townland Name (English)	Barony	Civil Parish	Townland Name (Irish)	Suggested Translation
Drumgreggan	Raphoe North	Leck	*Druim gCreagain*	Not provided

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

2.2.1 Prehistoric Period (c.8000BC–AD400)

The Irish Mesolithic is subdivided into two phases on the basis of stone tool technologies and cultural traditions—the Early Mesolithic (8000–7000/6500 BC) and Late Mesolithic (7000/6500–4000 BC) (Bayliss & Woodman 2009; Chapple *et al*. 2022; Woodman 2011). Evidence for the Irish Mesolithic tends to be concentrated around or in close proximity to coastal areas, along river and lake shores, and elevated river valley positions. Mesolithic society was characterised by small kin groups of nomadic hunter-fisher-gatherers who exploited seasonally available food resources such as fruit, nuts, berries, fish and wild fowl. The archaeological record of this period presents as the remains of temporary settlements, fishing technology, chipped stone implements and production waste (debitage). There is no evidence of Mesolithic settlement in the vicinity of Drumgreggan, and furthermore there is sparse evidence for human activity in the Mesolithic period in Donegal overall, as recorded in the SMR. The most prominent example was an apparent industrial site at Dunaff Bay, c.50km to the northeast. This site represented an apparently temporary settlement location which featured large quantities of flint artefacts (Addyman & Vernon 1966).

The Neolithic period (4000–2400 BC) witnessed the introduction of agriculture to Ireland and the change from a highly mobile hunter-gatherer lifestyle to one of a more sedentary nature based on livestock husbandry and cereal cultivation. This brought corresponding changes in settlement form, food production, burial practices and material culture (e.g. Cooney 2000). The time between 3750 and 3600 BC saw a period of rapid expansion across the country, which included the construction of timber-

[7] See: https://consult.donegal.ie/en/system/files/materials/426/Environmental%20Report%20for%20the%20Draft%20Letterkenny%20Plan%20and%20Local%20Transport%20Plan%202023-2029%20including%20Mat%20Alt_0.pdf (page 29). [Accessed: November 2025].
[8] https://www.logainm.ie/en/15622 [Accessed: October 2025].

built rectangular houses and monumental hilltop enclosures, as well as monumental court tombs and portal tombs (e.g. Lynch 2014; Schulting *et al*. 2012; Whittle *et al*. 2011). Evidence of trade and exchange in the Neolithic period is in evidence in Donegal. A jadeite axe which originated in the Italian Alps was found in Kincraigy, Co. Donegal (Campbell Smith 2014), c.6km to the southeast.

The Bronze Age (2400–500 BC) is typically associated with the introduction and development of metal technology, the production of a diverse range of copper, bronze and gold objects, as well as the emergence of a distinct warrior elite class defined by high-status weaponry towards the end of the period (Waddell 2000). The material culture included not only weapons and tools, but also high-status items of personal adornment. This technological innovation went hand-in-hand with an intensification of agriculture that was largely facilitated by the availability of more efficient tools.

Prehistoric ritual monuments in the study area include a number of large stones with rock art carving in Trimragh townland to the northeast (RMP DG053-02701–, DG053-02704-; see Figure 2). The carving of symbols on exposed rock surfaces may have been a way of imbuing rock outcrops with special significance or as territorial markers. This phenomenon has been found in several locations in Ireland and seems to be a fashion in western Europe and the Atlantic region (Waddell 2000, 167). Geometric and other motifs were mostly pecked out, though some are incised, on earthfast boulders and rock outcrops, and occasionally on cist roofstones and standing stones. These associations suggest a Bronze Age date (c.2400–500 BC), though perhaps with origins in the Neolithic (c.4000–2400 BC). Rock art may be associated with metal deposits, boundaries and routeways (NMS 2023b). This cluster of carved stones contain cup marks, which are a common motif. The 'Giant's Rock' (RMP DG053-02701-) which was marked on the first edition of the OS six-inch map had seven cupmarks; these were not found in later surveys (NMS 2023a). A large flat stone (SMR DG053-02702-) c.100m to the east – also called the 'Giant's Grave'– had two cupmarks. The nearby rock surfaces (SMR DG053-027003- – SMR DG053-027004-) also had cupmarks (Van Hoek 1988, 23-25).

Fulachtaí fia (burnt mounds) are amongst the most common site types in Ireland (e.g. Hawkes 2015). The sites are characterised by a low horseshoe or kidney-shaped mound of heat-shattered stone discarded from the process of heating water in a subsoil-cut trough. Generally found in low-lying ground where the water table is close to the surface, the often wood-lined troughs filled naturally with water. Theories regarding the functions of *fulachtaí fia* vary from cooking to bathing places to brewing sites and sweat houses. The environment of the subject site should be considered to be amenable for the siting of *fulachtaí fia*.

The Iron Age (800 BC–AD 400) contrasts with the more plentiful remains of the previous Bronze Age and the subsequent early medieval period due to the paucity of material evidence. There is no

evidence of Iron Age activity in the vicinity of Drumgreggan. However, there is evidence of Iron Age settlement in the wider landscape, e.g the hillfort of Grianán of Aileach (DG047-012005-) which is located c.21km to the northeast.

2.2.2 Early Medieval Period (AD400–1100)

The early medieval period saw significant social, cultural, political and technological changes in Ireland. The beginning of the period saw the arrival of Christianity, the gradual conversion of the population, the flourishing of Irish monasteries, the development of church sites and the spread of literacy (De Paor & De Paor 1958, 14; Johnston 1993). The period, which spanned 700 years, was also a time of economic and environmental change. Surviving law tracts provide valuable insights into the nature of Irish society at the time, which suggest Ireland was roughly divided into overkingdoms, regional kingdoms and local kingdoms (*tuatha*) that largely operated as pastoral communities bounded by ties of kinship (Edwards 1996, 8).

Prior to the arrival of the Anglo-Normans, there were two dominant families in the region. The *Cineal Lughaidh* were thought to possess the land between 'the rapid Dore and the bright coloured Swilly', which would have included Letterkenny and the civil parish of Conwal (Maguire 1917, 26–27). At some point in the early medieval period, the *Cineal Ainmire* became the more dominant family supplying 'eight High Kings to Tara' and dominating the kingship of Donegal up to *c.*1200, while they also 'possessed themselves of such places as Letterkenny, the 'Hillside of the O'Canannains….' (*ibid.).* Internecine warfare was a common feature of Gaelic society, and Donegal was no exception, with numerous disputes recorded between the various families in the region (*ibid*.). For example, in 1160, the Annals of Ulster record that 'Ua Canannain, king of Cenel-Conaill, was killed by the Cenel-Conaill themselves, —namely, a house was burned by Ua Baighill upon him'.

Ringforts are one of the most numerous monument type in Ireland and represent the enclosed farmsteads of relatively prosperous farmers (O'Riordan 2019). The majority were constructed over a 300-year period from the beginning of the seventh until the end of the ninth century AD (Stout 1997, 24). They are subdivided into those of circular or subcircular earthen enclosures with encircling banks and ditches known as a *rath* or *lios* and those of dry-stone construction known as cashels or cahers. One of the most famous and striking upstanding cashels is Grianán of Aileach, which can be found 57km to the northeast in Inishowen, Co. Donegal. More local examples of cashels are found in Ballymacool townland (RMP DG053-015----), in Castlebane (RMP DG061-015----), and in Balie na Bó townlands (RMP DG061-010----).

Ringforts, raths and related monuments, such as cashels and raised/platform raths, are all traditionally considered forms of early medieval enclosed settlement (Stout 1997). However, excavation and topographical studies have shown that within these classifications are a wide variety of morphologies and dates (O'Sullivan et al. 2010). They can be univallate, bivallate or trivallate, can vary greatly in size, can occur singly or in dense concentrations and may or may not contain evidence of settlement. Although the vast majority appear to have been built during the second half of the first millennium AD, in areas of Gaelic rule they were sometimes inhabited into later times. This is particularly true west of the Shannon, especially in the Burren of Co. Clare where there are examples of continued occupation in cashels as late as the seventeenth century (Fitzpatrick 2009). It is also important to note, when considering what the early medieval inhabited landscape was like, that other forms of settlement existed; these included unenclosed settlements, crannogs, settlement cemeteries, rectangular enclosures and ecclesiastical sites (Ó Maoldúin 2020; O'Sullivan and McCormick 2017).

2.2.3 Later Medieval Period (AD1100–1600)

While the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland in 1169 resulted in immediate and drastic changes in Gaelic-Irish society, these changes were relatively slow to affect Donegal (Curtis 2024). The invitation of Diarmait MacMurchada to King Henry II to intervene in an inter-dynastic row led to the colonisation of Irish society by the Anglo-Normans through the English Crown. The Anglo-Norman armoured knights and archers had a military superiority over their Gaelic-Irish counterparts, who in little technological deviation from the Iron Age, fought with spears and were mostly unarmoured (*Ibid*.). As the Anglo-Norman conquest progressed, earth and timber motte and bailey castle structures were erected and were gradually upgraded with a small number of imposing stone castles and fortress towns. However, of the 56 known Anglo-Norman towns, none are in Donegal, nor are there any medieval walled towns in the county. While the Anglo-Normans were slow in both reaching and developing Donegal, by the early fourteenth century their impact started to be felt in the county as evidenced by Greencastle (Northburgh Castle) to the north of Derry.

The late Middle Ages saw English lordship and control throughout the country wane; by the 1500s only the area within the Pale (a linked network of linear earthworks through the four 'loyal' counties of Dublin, Kildare, Meath, and Louth) and parts of southern Ireland loyal to the English Crown were securely controlled by the English and Anglo-Irish (Egan 2016). Donegal retained a strong Gaelic-Irish influence, with the O'Neills and the O'Donnells dominating the political and social scene (MacCarthy-Morrogh 1983, 15). Following the failure of their rebellion between 1593 and 1603 and the subsequent Flight of the Earls, native Gaelic power in Donegal was decidedly on the decline. The aftermath of the

rebellion and their departure subsequently led to the Ulster Plantations and ultimately the founding of Letterkenny as a Plantation town.

2.2.4 Post-Medieval Period (AD1600–1900s)

Letterkenny was formally founded in the early-seventeenth century, likely on the site of a native Irish settlement. It occupies a natural fording point over the River Swilly and would have served as a market town for a wider hinterland. The land at Letterkenny was initially granted to Patrick Crawford *c.*1611.[9] It was noted as having 50 houses by 1622 and received a market grant in 1639 (Gillespie 2020, 151 & 154). Letterkenny also featured in the Cromwellian wars and is recorded in the 1641 depositions.[10] For example, George Sexton served in Ormond's army as Quartermaster General until June 1650, when he was captured at the town.[11]

By the eighteenth century, Letterkenny continued to grow and was becoming a very important market town in County Donegal. A return of "Papists" from 1731 reveals that in the parish of Conwal there was "no mass house, no friary, no nunnery, one school in the mountains, two Popish Priests officiate in the open fields. Leck – one Popish Priest officiates in the open field or in a poor cabin" (Maguire 1917, 96). Donegal also featured in Wolfe Tone's rebellion in 1798 when he was captured on Lough Swilly and held as a prisoner in either Letterkenny or Buncrana for a short time, depending on the source consulted (*ibid*., 30–33).

By 1837, Letterkenny had grown, largely due to its role as a market town serving the wider hinterland, including the parishes of Leck and Conwal. At the time, the town's population was recorded as 2,160 with 416 houses. There was a weekly market on Friday and five fairs annually. It also held Petty Sessions and Quarter Sessions further emphasising its importance as a service town in the vicinity. The Swilly was navigable at this stage for boats of up to 150 tons, again showing that the area had substantial trade links to the broader areas of Donegal and Derry (Lewis 1837, vol. II, 258).

In 1848, the town was described as:

> *standing on the side of a steep hill and consists principally of one long straggling street. Its harbour is a mile distant at the head of the estuary of the Swilly'. The wider environment of the town was depicted as 'a highly romantic, broken, and rocky country, interspersed with woods and demesnes, and blending at certain points with a magnificent general landscape of a large*

[9] Available at: https://virtualtreasury.ie/item/NAI-Lodge-3-101 [Accessed: October 2025].

[10] Available at: https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/search-results/?Forename=&Surname=&County=8&Keywords=&submit=Go [Accessed: October 2025].

[11] Available at: https://1641.tcd.ie/index.php/deposition/?depID=838292r323&Keywords=letterkenny [Accessed: October 2025].

> *part of Lough Swilly and its mountain screens.* (Parliamentary Gazetteer 1846, vol. 2, D–M, 618).

Letterkenny was further described as being "the only town within a great extent of country which possesses any good shops; and it supplies the more northerly parts of the county south of Lough Swilly with most of its miscellaneous articles of retail trade" (*ibid*.).

There were a number of improvements to Letterkenny between 1870 and *c*.1920, largely due to the introduction of the Local Government Act of 1898. For example, Maguire records that "Blocks of unsanitary dwellings have been cleared away and their former occupants transferred to commodious cottages; possessing the most modern equipment and very moderately rented" (Maguire 1917, 68–77). The telephone arrived in the town and the number of 'professional men' also grew, suggesting that the town was growing and developing in this period (*ibid*.).

2.3 Archaeological Heritage

2.3.1 Previously Recorded Archaeological Sites and Monuments

The indicative route of the proposed new road passes over the site of the purported enclosure (SMR DG053-059----) which is located in TA6 off the current N13 road on the northern side. There are no other recorded archaeological monuments within 500m of the footprint of the test excavation area TA6 (Table 3; Figure 2). One site – a church (RMP DG053-028----) and associated graveyard (SMR DG053-028001-) occur *c*.550m to the east of the subject site. In the wider landscape (within 1km) of the test excavation area there are a number of additional SMR and RMP sites, including the Rock Art sites RMP DG053-02702--, SMR DG063-027003- and SMR DG053-027004-

The SMR records the following description of the purported enclosure SMR DG053-059----:

> *Located in a field of flat, damp rush-grown pasture, which is traversed by field drains, in an area of lowlying terrain bordering the S bank of the River Swilly. The steeply rising slope of a NE–SW ridge borders the S side of the field, c. 30m S of the enclosure. Not shown on any edition of the OS 6-inch maps. Visible as a circular feature (diam. 35-38m) in aerial imagery (Digital globe; Google earth) and in LiDAR imagery. The imagery suggests the presence of a levelled circular enclosure. In the field a subtle rise is evident, which differs from the rest of the field in that it is largely devoid of field rushes, the grass growth has a slightly richer hue and the ground surface is drier underfoot. However, the full circular outline of an enclosure cannot be confidently traced at ground level. The E side of the area is defined by a slight raised grassy linear feature (Wth c. 2m; L c. 12m NNW–SSE). A field ditch (Wth 2m; D 0.8-1m) on a roughly NE-SW axis cuts across the N edge of the area, probably clipping the enclosure* (NMS 2023a).

Table 3: Recorded archaeological sites and monuments within 500m of TA6.

SMR/RMP Ref./CH No.	Site Type	Townland	Legal Status	Approx. Distance	ITM (centroid)
SMR DG053-059----	Enclosure	Drumgreggan	Included on the SMR	0m	620852, 911349

2.3.2 Previous Archaeological Investigations

No archaeological investigations are recorded in the vicinity of the test excavation area in the Database of Irish Excavation Reports (DIER).

An archaeological LiDAR survey was commissioned for the TEN-T Project by DCC to capture low- and high-resolution data to assist with the archaeological assessment of the TEN-T study area as part of the Design and Environmental Assessment Phase. The archaeological LiDAR data were captured and provided by BlueSky and subsequently assessed by Dr Richard Clutterbuck of AMS (AMS 2020a, AMS 2020b). The LiDAR survey records the following for the purported enclosure (DG053-059-): 'L212-3 Possible circular enclosure, a raised area possibly measuring c.40m in diameter with broad banks c.14m wide by 0.14m high' (AMS 2020a; AMS 2020b, 65–66).

2.4 National Museum of Ireland Topographical Files

The National Museum of Ireland (NMI) topographical files at Kildare Street, Dublin were visited by Dr Caroline McGrath of AMS on 28 November 2025 to review all potential records related to Drumgreggan townland. There are no stray finds recorded within the townland of Drumgreggan.

2.5 Built Heritage

There are two designated built heritage assets within 500m of the subject site. These comprise one asset which is listed on the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) (NIAH N0:40905339), described as a pair of semi-detached three-bay two-storey houses, built c.1860 (Figure 2). The second is the former double-arched rubble railway bridge which is included in the Record of Protected Structures (RPS No. 386/ RPS Ref. No. 40909306) in Dromore townland.

Table 4: Designated built heritage sites within 500m of TA6

Designation Ref. .	Site Type	Townland	Legal Status	Approx. Distance	ITM (centroid)
NIAH: 40905339	House	Dromore	Listed on the NIAH	495m	620527, 910938
RPS No. 386/ RPS Ref. No. 40909306	Railway bridge	Dromore	RPS	500m	620585, 910893

2.6 Historical Ordnance Survey (OS) Maps

A close examination of historical maps for the area shows that the TA at Drumgreggan has remained relatively undeveloped up until the present. The first-edition six-inch Ordnance Survey (OS) map (1836) depicts the site as a rectangular shaped field, subdivided from a larger a larger field system and bordered to the southeast with a lane leading to a group of buildings labelled 'Drumgreggan' depicted to the southwest of TA6. There is no evidence for the purported enclosure in this location (Figure 3).

The 25-inch OS map, which was surveyed in 1903 and published in 1904, shows that the area is still in fields, but the layout of the fields has changed (Figure 4). The smaller fields have been removed, and larger fields are now in place. Again, there is no evidence for the purported enclosure on this map.

The maps were also used to identify similar types of features to the purported enclosure that may have been located nearby. The nearest site (RMP DG053-026----) of a similar nature is located *c.*1.98km northwest of the Drumgreggan site in Ballyraine townland. This is explored fully in Section 5 below.

3 Methodology

3.1 Aims and Scope of the Archaeological Works

The aim of testing was to provide further information as part of the design and environmental evaluation phase of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal. Specifically, the testing aimed to investigate the purported enclosure and ascertain whether or not it was archaeological in nature.

3.2 Archaeological Testing Methodology

Three test trenches (TA1–TA3) were excavated across the investigation area TA6: T1 (30 linear metres), T2 (25 linear metres), and T3 which was a short extension (4m) to the west of T2 to investigate a possible feature which was found to be tree roots (Figure 5). A small TP measuring 2sq m was also excavated into the west end of T1 to investigate the nature and depth of the alluvium.

The test trench layout was designed in GIS/AutoCad and the locations of each trench were set out on site using GPS Trimble Geo 7x survey equipment and georeferenced to the ITM and Ordnance Datum (OD) by a qualified surveyor (Zbigniew Malek). Quality control was maintained for all survey set-out and pick-ups to ensure millimetre accuracy for all survey work.

Test trenches were machine-excavated with a 1.8m wide ditching bucket. Each trench and the test pit were excavated to the surface of the undisturbed natural soil. Topsoil was removed from the test trenches in horizontal levels of not more than 0.2m in thickness until sterile subsoil was exposed throughout. The mechanical excavator was always under the direction and supervision of the licensed archaeologist.

3.3 Recording Methods

Recording included written descriptions, surveying and taking photographs with appropriate scale and north point. AMS excavation practices are informed and guided by the Department's *Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage* (Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (DAHGI) 1999a), *Policy and Guidelines on Archaeological Excavation* (DAHGI 1999b), the National Museum of Ireland's (NMI) *Standards for the Care and Treatment of Archaeological Objects from Excavations* (NMI 2022) and AMS's in-house Fieldwork Procedures and Guidelines (AMS 2024) for excavation and recording.

Reporting is in line with the standards set out by the NMS in their *Guidelines for Authors of Reports on Archaeological Excavations* (DEHLG 2006).

3.4 Site Conditions

The weather conditions were favourable.

3.5 Constraints on Methods

There were no constraints on the archaeological testing methodology.

3.6 Finds Retrieval and Sampling Methods

During this project, every effort was made to ensure the highest possible level of identification and retrieval of archaeological objects during the excavations. No archaeological objects were recovered during the test trenching.

No environmental samples were taken during testing.

3.7 Publication and Dissemination Plan

The results of the archaeological testing will be uploaded to the Database of Irish Excavation Records.

4 Archaeological Testing Results

Three test trenches (TA1–TA3; Figure 5) were excavated across the investigation area TA6: T1 (30 linear metres), T2 (25 linear metres), and T3 which was a short extension (4m) to the west of T2 to investigate a possible feature which was found to be tree roots. A small trial pit was also excavated into the west end of T1 to investigate the nature and depth of the alluvium. A layer of shell was identified at a depth of c.1m within the natural alluvial soils. This was determined to be a natural deposit associated with alluvial and tidal action associated with the River Swilly. This finding is consistent with similar findings in adjacent fields as described by the landowner.

Test trenches T1 and T2 had no archaeological features present (Plate 2 and Plate 3; Figure 5 and Figure 6). There were three stone-filled land drains (C.4, C.6 & C.8; Appendix 1: List of Contexts; Plate 4 and Plate 7) present at the western and southern extent of the circular area of higher ground (LiDAR feature L221-3; Figure 7) identified in the LiDAR assessment (AMS 2020a and AMS 2020b). The drains appeared to coincide with and respect the outer circumference of the circular feature. This circular feature was slightly higher (up to 0.25m) and drier than the surrounding field levels around it. Two of the land drains (C.6 & C.8) were wide with a shallow 'U' shaped cut. They were parallel with each other and had a similar construction. They were 2.5–3m wide with a central stone fill (Plate 3; Figure 5 and Figure 6). The surrounding deposits were a humic peat sitting on top of a natural grey alluvial deposit. Stone filled land drain C.4 (Plate 7), was within the upper part of drain C.6, and immediately below the topsoil. It appeared to be draining water into C.6.

It is acknowledged that a raised circular area with dimensions commonly associated with ringforts and other prehistoric enclosures indicates archaeological potential; however, there was no other evidence of archaeological activity in the areas investigated, and the morphology of the identified features clearly corresponds with land drains. Furthermore, if the line of the identified land drains is projected beyond the limits of the test trenches, then the pattern would present as parallel and perpendicular linear land drains, to be expected in this type of environment. This is a wet field within the floodplain of the River Swilly.

A trial pit (TP1) was excavated at the western end of T1, to investigate the nature and depth of the alluvium. Shell deposits (cockle) were identified at 0.9–1.1m depth below ground level. However, these were determined to be natural deposits associated with alluvial and tidal action associated with the River Swilly. Drifts of cockle shell are often accumulated on beaches and in estuarine environments following storms and tidal action, and are, therefore, an important indicator of past environment and the intertidal zone. It should also be noted that cockle are an edible and important food resource for humans. However, local tradition (landowner, pers. comm.) holds that similar shelly deposits occur

within the alluvium across adjoining fields within the floodplain, suggesting that these are a widespread naturally derived feature rather than being anthropogenically deposited at this location. Palaeoenvironmental coring and/or examination of GI/SI borehole logs could confirm this hypothesis.

An organic deposit in T2 was investigated with a short, 4m long extension to the west, T3. The deposit clearly related to modern tree roots and was non-archaeological.

A metal detector was used under licence (25R0354) to survey the trenches and topsoil. No finds were recovered.

Table 5: Results of Test Trenches and Trial Pit.

Trench No./ Trial Pit (TP)	Length (m)	Description
T1	30	The trench was orientated roughly east–west and was excavated to a depth of 0.4–0.6m (Plate 2). There were two main land drains (C.6 and C.8) identified within the trench, and these corresponded to the location of the "ring" identified in the LiDAR assessment (Figure 7). C.6 was located on the east and C.8 on the west of the "ring". The land drains were exposed respectively to a depth of 0.8m and 0.7m below ground level. A narrower stone-filled land drain C.4 was within the upper section of land drain C.6 and appeared to be draining into C.6. A trial pit was excavated into the alluvium soil at the western end of the trench. This was excavated to a depth of 1.8m.
T2	25	The trench was orientated roughly north–south and was excavated to a depth of 0.4–0.6m (Plate 3). There were two land drains (C.6 and C.8) identified within the trench, and these corresponded to the location of the "ring" identified in the LiDAR assessment (Figure 7). C.6 was located on the north and C.8 on the south of the "ring". Likewise, to trench T1, stone-filled land drain C.4 linked into C.6. The land drains were exposed respectively to a depth of 0.8m and 0.7m below ground level. This matched the curvilinear aspect to the land drains in T1.
T3	4	A small extension was excavated to the west of T2 to investigate organic material seen in the trench. This was modern tree roots and non-archaeological in nature.
TP1	2	A trial pit measuring 2m by 1.8m by 1.8m in depth was excavated in the western end of Trench 1 (Plate 5) to investigate the nature and depth of the alluvium. A layer of cockle shell was identified at a depth of c.1m within the natural alluvial soils. This was determined to be a natural deposit associated with alluvial and tidal action associated with the River Swilly. This finding is consistent with similar findings in adjacent fields as described by the landowner.
Total	61	

5 Discussion

No potential archaeological objects, features or deposits were noted during the archaeological test excavation undertaken for TA6 investigation area (SMR DG053-059----). Therefore, the circular feature designated as SMR DG053-059---- (Enclosure) and as identified in the LiDAR assessment (L212-3; Figure 7) measuring 35–38m in diameter is unusual for a number of reasons, as discussed below.

This circular area was relatively dry in comparison to the rest of the field which was very wet. The land drains C.6 and C.8 in test trenches T1 and T2 corresponded with the limits of the LiDAR feature, however, if the line of these features were projected beyond the test trenches in which they were identified, then these could represent linear and intercutting perpendicular land drains throughout the wetter, lower-lying area around the circular area. These land drains would therefore respect the circumference of the circular area, which sits slightly (up to 0.25m max.) proud of the surrounding field levels. The fill of these drains was a peat very similar to the topsoil, with alluvium mixed within the peat deposit. The alluvium is the natural riverine and estuarine deposit lying under the topsoil. The drier ground within the circular area was at a higher level to the surrounding natural. There did not appear to be any natural reason for this. There was no gentle sloping up of the ground level, it just became higher on the interior of the circular area beyond the cut of the land drains. It was considered that the upcast from cutting of the drains may have been responsible for the rise in level within the circular area and purported enclosure (SMR DG053-059----). It was not possible to confirm this with certainty within the extents of the excavation because of the nature of the topsoil, which was soft and peaty throughout. The interface between the natural alluvium and topsoil varied, and this also gave the impression of a degree of disturbance. However, other than the field drains, there was nothing definite that could be shown as disturbance or as being anthropogenic in origin.

The stone used in the fill of land drain C.4 (Plate 7) is quarried angular limestone mixed with infrequent field stones. This field drain (C.4) appeared to link to field drain C.6 (Plate 4). There was a similar stone fill at the base of C.6, though these stones were not as concentrated and were more unevenly distributed within the topsoil-like peat fill C.5. There was very little difference between these deposits, and they were differentiated only on the basis of a tighter concentration of stone in the upper deposit (C.4). The fill of all the land drain features was considered to be early modern. A modern open linear drain is located to the north of the feature and is orientated northeast by southwest; this drain is visible in aerial and satellite images (Plate 10). These drains serve to further highlight the wet nature of the field.

A comparison was made with known monument types that fit the morphology of the investigated feature. The main monument type of enclosure is the ringfort, which typically date to the Early

Medieval period. Ringforts are predominantly enclosed farmsteads (see Section 2.2.2) and although there are a few different types of ringfort, the best comparison to this site would be a univallate ringfort with external ditch and internal bank. Univallate ringforts are the most numerous of the ringfort types comprising up to *c*.80% of the total in some areas. They generally have an internal diameter of 20–40m, which compares well with the subject site and often have no above ground expression. While the identified LiDAR feature L212-3 suggests an enclosing 'ditch' on the outside, there was no evidence for an internal or external bank identified in the testing at Drumgreggan. The ringforts' construction dates range from AD 600–1000 according to Lynn (Lynn, 1981, 2, 150) and AD 600–900 according to Stout (Stout, 1997, 24). The settings of ringforts in Ulster was studied by Kerr (2007), who identified that the preferred altitude range for univallate ringforts was 60–150m OD. Donegal was atypical, however, with lower altitudes of between 30–60m being preferred for the siting of ringforts in this county. The Drumgreggan site is situated at a very low altitude with topsoil levels recorded at 2.43m OD outside the enclosure and 2.67m OD inside the enclosure (Figure 6). Additionally, this site's location does not fit in with other diagnostic 'siting' aspects typically associated with settlement enclosures.

Intervisibility between ringforts or enclosures is a common feature throughout Ireland. This would have provided a degree of protection and security in the farming communities that lived in these places (Stout 1997, 20). The distance to the nearest recorded enclosures was investigated using the Historic Environment Viewer, including the Ordnance Survey mapping available thereon. There are only two sites listed within proximity to this site, located *c*. 2km and 2.74km away. There is no line of sight between Drumgreggan and either of these two sites. The nearest site was 1.98km to the west-northwest (RMP DG053-026----; Ringfort - Ballyraine). It is described as follows: "This site now consists of a steep-sided natural mound overgrown with trees and bushes. It was marked 'White Fort' on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map so there may have been a monument here then but no trace of this is visible now" (Lacey 1983).[12] The second enclosure is located 2.74km to the southwest (RMP DG053-034----; Enclosure – Scribly) and it was identified through aerial photography. It was seen as "a circular cropmark, c.30m-40m in diameter" (Lacey 1983),[13] but it was not inspected on the ground. These sites are too far away from and are not visible from Drumgreggan, which lies in low-lying ground with higher ground surrounding it.

[12] Available at: https://heritagedata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=0c9eb9575b544081b0d296436d8f60f8 [Accessed: November 2025]
[13] Available at: https://heritagedata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=0c9eb9575b544081b0d296436d8f60f8 [Accessed: November 2025].

From an archaeological point of view, the location of this enclosure is unusual as a potential medieval settlement as the ground is reclaimed land, with still very wet, peaty soil over deep alluvial deposits. However, settlement in riverine areas in Ireland has been recorded from the Mesolithic period onward. In prehistoric times, river locations provided opportunities for temporary or permanent settlement for groups of hunter-gatherers, with close access to river transport and supplies of fish, shellfish and water. Mount Sandel, one of the most significant Mesolithic settlement sites on the island, is located on the eastern edge of the estuary of the River Bann (Woodman 1985, Bayliss & Woodman 2009). Studies in the Barrow river valley in the southeast of Ireland revealed lithic evidence indicative of prehistoric settlement (Green & Zvelebil 1990, Zvelebil et al. 1996). These studies indicate a pattern of Mesolithic material to lie within alluvial material (Zvelebil et al. 1996, 36.)

Another monument type that fits the morphology of the potential site at Drumgreggan is the ring ditch. Ring-ditches were "a typically Bronze Age site type that originated in the Neolithic and continued to be constructed, used and reused into the early medieval period" (Clarke & Carlin 2006, 23). These features range in diameter from 3m to 90m, and many were encircled by an external bank, possibly containing a low internal mound, built up with the upcast from the ditch (*ibid*.). This does not correspond to the enclosure at Drumcreggan, which had no evidence of an internal or external bank.

McGarry (2009) undertook a study of Iron Age and Bronze Age burial ring-ditches or ring-barrows throughout Ireland. The concentration of these sites was found to be much lower than average in Ulster, and only one example was found in Donegal (ibid., 413).

There are examples of prehistoric sites within the wider landscape around Drumgreggan. A number of examples of cup-marked rock art (RMP DG053-02701-, RMP DG053-02702-, SMR DG053-027003- and SMR DG053-027004-) are recorded in Trimragh townland, c.0.8km to the northeast, though these assets are no longer in situ. Other prehistoric sites and/or sites of, namely a cairn (RMP DG053-039----) and a number of standing stones (RMP DG053-037----, RMP DG053-038----, RMPDG054-036----, RMP DG054-037---,RMP-DG054-038---- and RMP DG062-002----) are located some distance from the alluvial floodplain of the River Swilly on higher ground (c.60m OD) between c.1.8km and c.2.5km to the southeast.

The small trial pit excavated into the west end of T1 was to investigate the nature and depth of the alluvium. A layer of shell was identified at a depth of c.1m within the natural alluvial soils. This was determined to be a natural deposit associated with alluvial and tidal action associated with the River Swilly. This finding is consistent with similar findings in adjacent fields as described by the landowner.

It is likely that the upcast from drainage activity has formed a slight rise in ground levels in this area. The fact that the drainage corresponded with the edge of this higher ground is likely to be deliberate, though modern and not archaeological. The reason is unknown.

The only features identified within the excavated test trenches were land drains which appear relatively modern and correspond with the limits of the circular feature identified by aerial photography and LiDAR. The geographical setting does not equate from an archaeological point of view for SMR DG053-059---- to be a ringfort, settlement or burial enclosure. However, archaeology can occur in riverine and alluvial areas and even through no archaeological evidence was found, it is considered that some (low) potential still exists for the subject site to be archaeological in origin.

6 Recommendations

No potential archaeological objects, features or deposits were noted during the archaeological test excavation undertaken at TA6, for the design and environmental evaluation phase of the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Project, Donegal.

The purpose of the testing was to investigate the SMR site DG053-059----. No archaeological finds or features were uncovered within the excavated test trenches. However, the archaeological potential of this area cannot be entirely dismissed given there is still a possibility for archaeology to survive beneath the alluvium (should it be removed as part of the proposed road construction, as opposed to being buried beneath an embankment). As such, further archaeological investigation should be considered as part of the archaeological advance works, to include:

- Full review of the results of any existing GI/SI investigations by a suitably qualified geoarchaeologist to determine the nature of the deposits and substrates along the proposed scheme in this area;
- A comprehensive palaeoenvironmental coring strategy across the site and immediate environs, directed by a suitably qualified geoarchaeologist and/or environmental specialist. This work would provide additional information on (a) the nature and morphology of the estuarine/riverine alluvial deposits in the area, and associated record of environmental change in the locale during the Holocene and (b) potential further information on the archaeological potential of the LiDAR feature/SMR DG053-059----;
- Pending the results of any such investigation, and in consultation with the TII Project Archaeologist, further archaeological works may be required.

Recommendations are subject to the agreement of the TII Project Archaeologist, National Monuments Service of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, the National Museum of Ireland, where required and should only be carried out in accordance with the necessary approvals. Please note that the statutory and local authorities may issue alternative and/or additional recommendations/conditions.

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Plates

Plate 1: Pre-excavation view of test excavation area TA6, looking southwest.

Plate 2: Trench 1, looking west (Scale: 1m x 2).

Plate 3: Trench 2, looking south (Scale: 1m x 2).

Plate 4: Trench 2, parallel land drains C.6 and C.8, looking east (Scale: 1m x 2).

Plate 5: Trial Pit at west end of T1, with natural seashell deposit C.10 at 0.9–1m depth (Scale: 1m x 2).

Plate 6: Post-excavation view of test area TA6 with trenches backfilled

Plate 7: The quarried stone fill of land drain C.4 in trench T1. It sits high in the peat fill of the land drain C.6.

Plate 8: Area of link Road at Drumgreggan, facing north and general area of Farsetmore. The location of possible enclosure DG053-059 is on low-lying ground beyond the level ridge treeline (north) (© TII)

Plate 9: Photo looking north of area, showing possible enclosure DG053-059---- on the River Swilly floodplain overlooked by higher ground/ridge (© TII)

Plate 10: Aerial view of enclosure DG053-059---- with recent drainage feature intersecting the north of the site (Google Earth image)

Figures

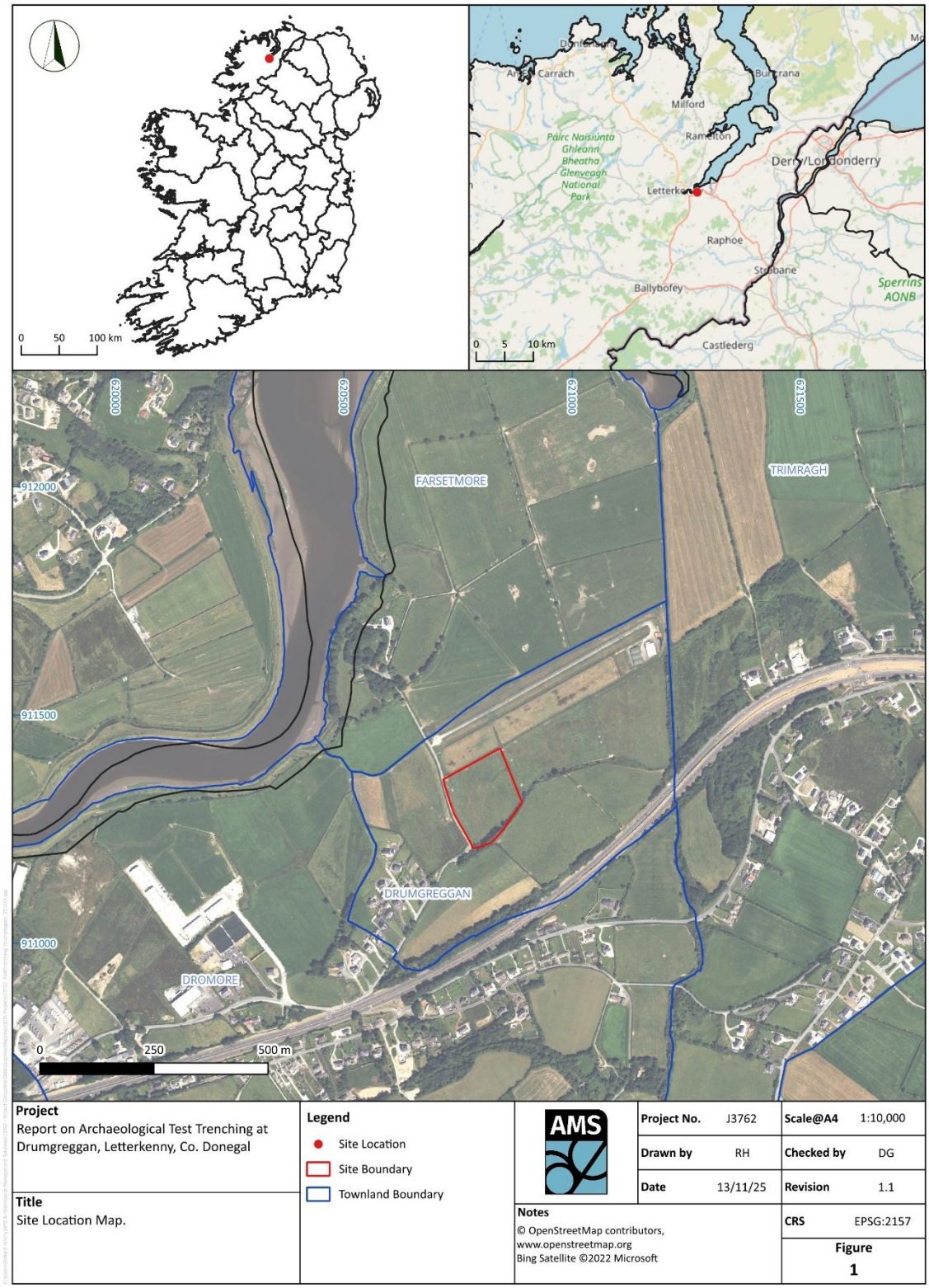

Figure 1: Site Location Map

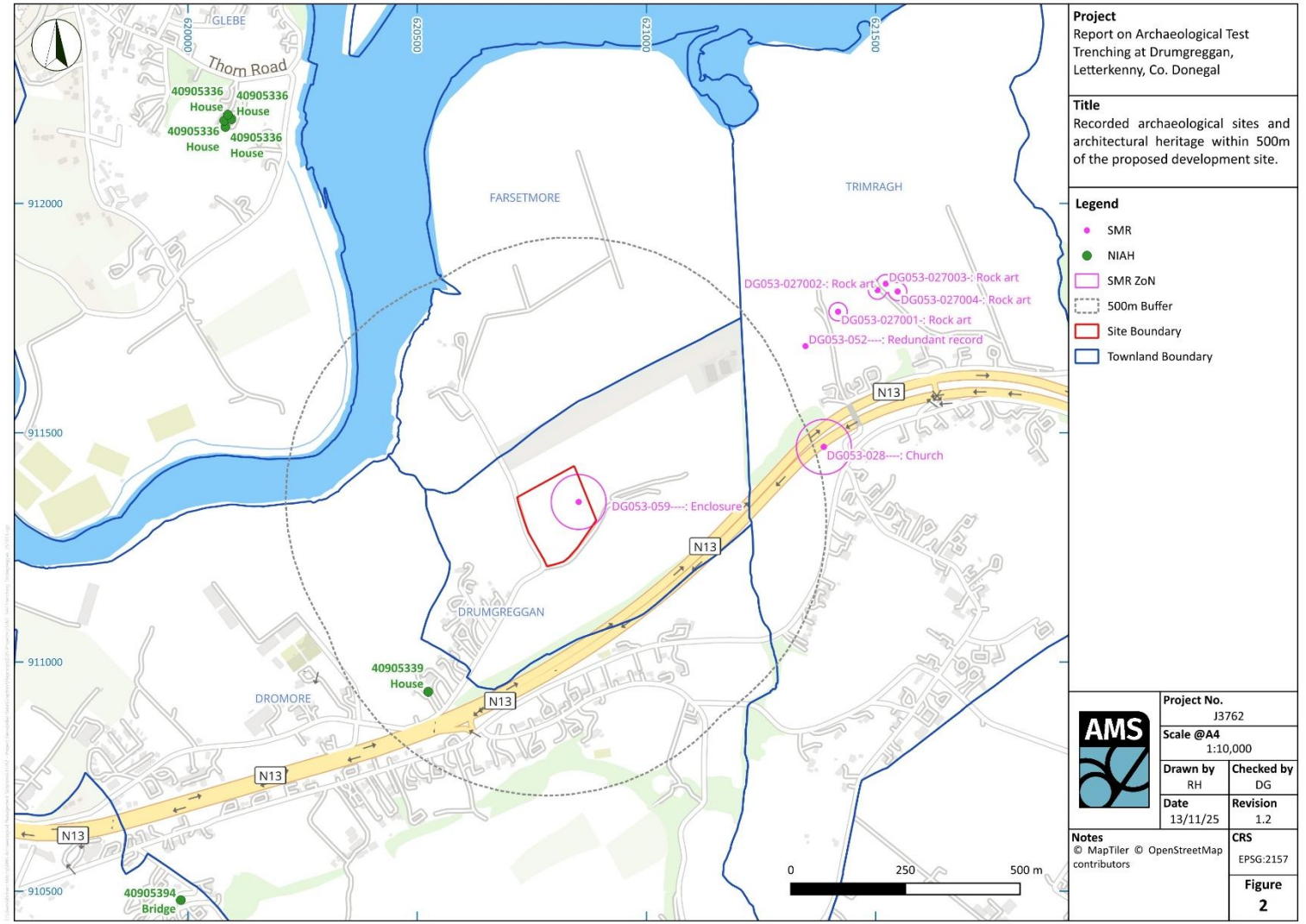

Figure 2: Recorded archaeological sites and architectural heritage within 500m of the proposed development site.

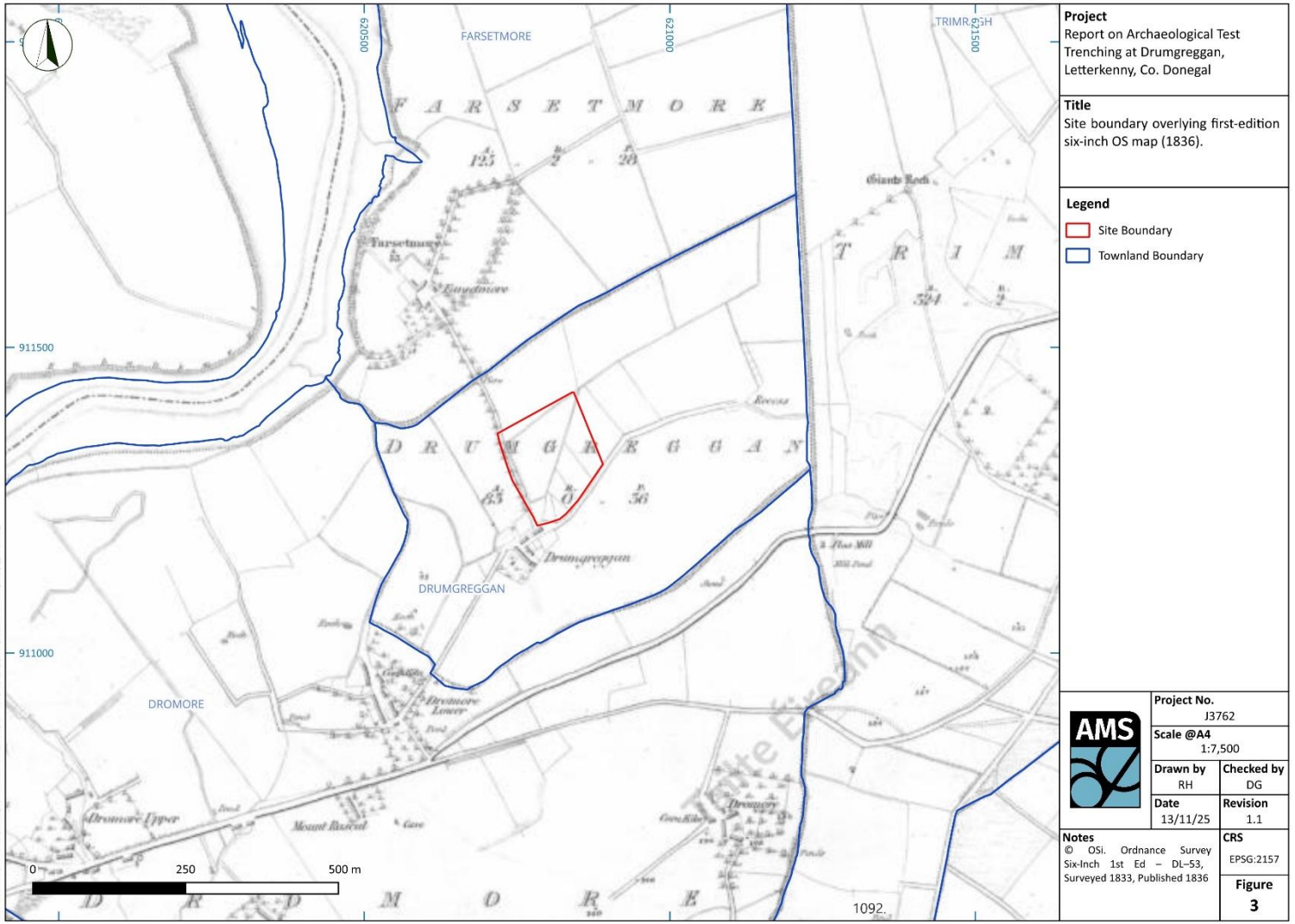

Figure 3: Site boundary overlying first-edition six-inch OS map (1836).

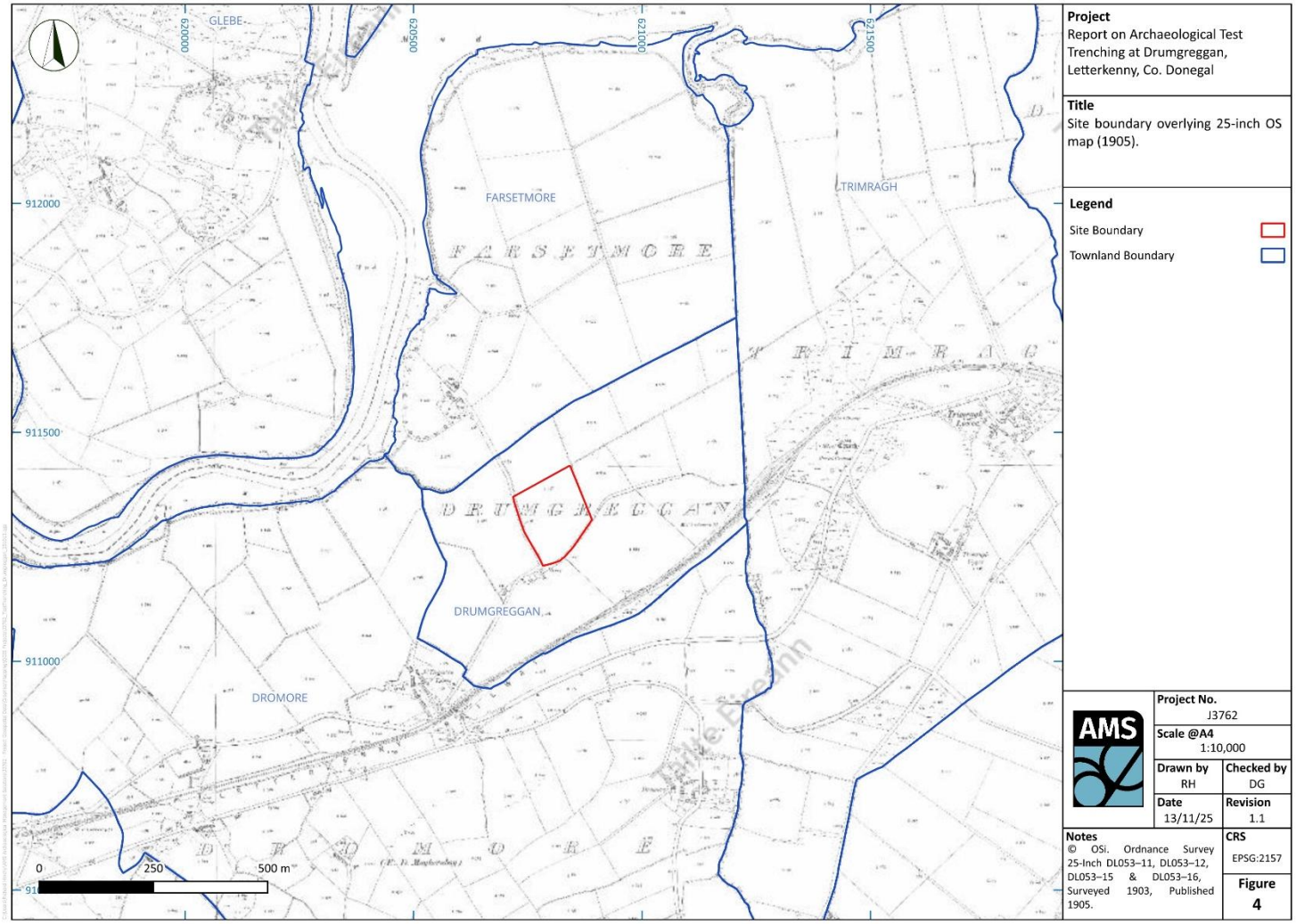

Figure 4: Site boundary overlying 25-inch OS map (1905).

Figure 5: Test trench layout overlying plan of test area TA6 on satellite imagery.

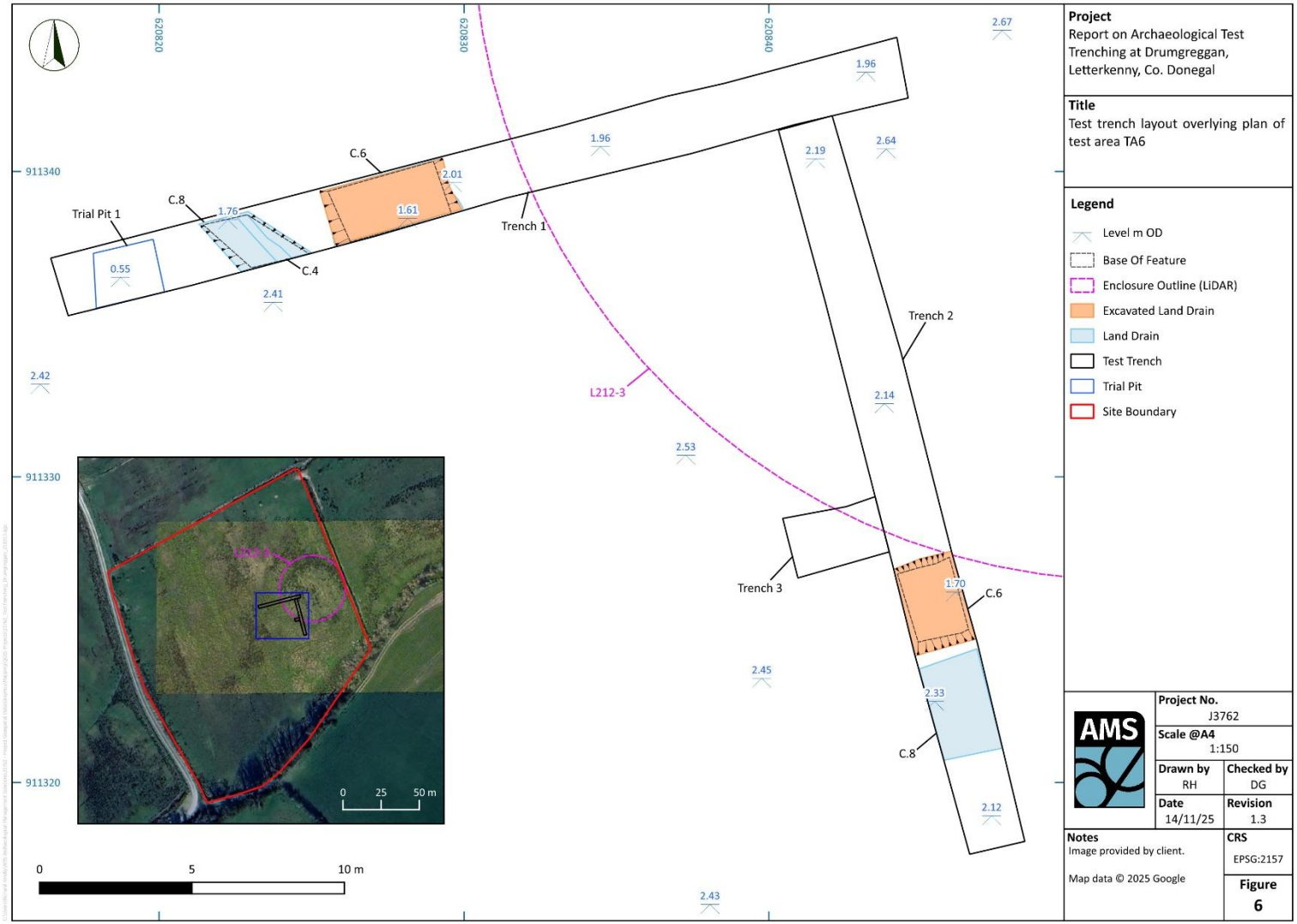

Figure 6: Test trench layout overlying plan of test area TA6.

Figure 7: LiDAR Archaeological Assessment at Drumgreggan (TEN-T LiDAR Assessment Survey AMS 2020a)

Appendix 1: List of Contexts

Context No.	Trench/Pit No.	Interpretation	Description	Max Dimensions (m) D
C.1	T1, T2	Topsoil	Mid-brown to dark brown peat and sandy clay.	0.3–0.6
C.2	T1, T2	Natural	Generally grey marl with some yellowish gravelly spots.	N/A
C.3	T1, T2	Field drain	Fill of stone-filled land drains. This stone is a mix between angular quarried stone and occasional rounded field stones.	L: 1.8 x W: 0.6 x D: 0.3
C.4	T1, T2	Field drain	Cut of stone-filled land drains.	L: 1.8 x W: 0.6 x D: 0.3
C.5	T1, T2	Field drain	Fill of land drain C.6—peat with alluvial soils mixed in and angular stones.	L: 1.8 x W: 3.0 x D: 0.5
C.6	T1, T2	Field drain	Cut of field drain. A shallow 'u' shape in section, with a central core of field stones forming a drainage channel.	L: 1.8 x W: 3.0 x D: 0.5
C.7	T1, T2	Field drain	Fill of stone-filled land drains—peat with alluvial soils mixed in and angular stones fill of a land drain.	L: 1.8 x W: 3.0 x D: 0.4
C.8	T1, T2	Field drain	Cut of field drain. A shallow 'u' shape in section, with a stone-filled centre with field stones forming a drain. Very similar construction to C.6. This is possibly two contemporary drains intercutting each other which may explain the width.	L: 1.8 x W: 2.4 x D: 0.4
C.9	Trial pit TP1	Shell within alluvial natural soils	Shell deposit, identified on site as cockle shell mixed in with the alluvial soils. This appears to be natural.	-

[i] See: https://gsi.geodata.gov.ie/downloads/Geoheritage/Reports/Donegal_Audit.pdf [Accessed: November 2025].