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A477 NASH - BANGESTON IMPROVEMENT WORKS HEDGEROW AND BOUNDARY SURVEY

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By

Nigel Page

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ARCHAEOLEG CAMBRIA
Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf
Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir Gaerfyrddin SA19 6AF
Ffôn: Ymboliadau Cyffwrdd 01558 823121
Adran Rheoli Trefnadaeth 01558 823131
Ffacs: 01558 823133
E-bost: cambria@acadat.com Gwefan: www.acadat.com

CAMBRIA ARCHAEOLOGY
Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited
The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF
Tel: General Enquiries 01558 823121
Heritage Management Section 01558 823131
Fax: 01558 823133
Email: cambria@acadat.com Website: www.acadat.com

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT
A477 NASH – BANGESTON IMPROVEMENT WORKS
HEDGEROW AND BOUNDARY SURVEY**

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SUMMARY

Proposals to improve certain sections of the A477(T) between Nash and Bangeston, Pembrokeshire required an Environmental Impact Assessment. This was carried out in 1997, and it included an archaeological assessment of the likely implications of the scheme on the historic landscape. That initial assessment showed that the new road line would affect many hedgerows and boundaries and highlighted the importance of the features to the character of the historic landscape. It was felt that more information was required on the development of the present pattern of hedgerows and boundaries in order to fully assess the implications of the scheme and to comply with the Historic Hedgerow Regulations.

This survey was intended to address that issue and provide information on the development of the boundary pattern and to identify boundaries of significance. The boundaries ranged in date from medieval to modern, with most probably dating from the 18th century. The boundaries are mostly low earth banks topped with mature hedges, although two small streams which cross the scheme were used as historic parish boundaries, between the parishes of Pembroke St. Mary and Cosheston and between Cosheston and Nash. Medieval boundary lines were identified in association with the former medieval open strip field system that lay between the A477(T) and Cosheston to the north.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT PROPOSALS AND COMMISSION

The proposed improvement works on the A477 between Bangeston and Nash, Pembrokeshire (NGR SM98970301 – SN02180278) required an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). An archaeological assessment (Manning 1997) of the route of the proposed works, carried out as part of the EIA, highlighted the many hedgerows and boundaries along the route as important elements of the historic landscape. The National Assembly for Wales has advised that the issue of the historic hedgerows needs to be addressed at this stage rather than during pre-construction surveys, or during construction itself. Therefore, Parsons Brinckerhoff commissioned Cambria Archaeology to extend the initial assessment to incorporate a detailed assessment of the hedgerows and boundaries likely to be affected by the proposed improvement works.

1.2 SCOPE OF THE PROJECT AND METHODS

This project is an extension of the initial archaeological assessment (Manning 1997) and it is designed to assess the character, importance and vulnerability of the many hedgerows and boundaries along the route of the proposed improvement works. The methods employed concentrated on the development of the pattern of hedgerows and boundaries, and was of necessity narrow in its objectives. The research work involved in the initial assessment was not replicated and this study was very much a map-based exercise. A site visit was carried out to assess the current form and condition of the boundaries.

1.3 ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

All sites recorded on the county Sites and Monuments Record will be identified by their Primary Record Number (PRN) and located by their National Grid Reference (NGR). Boundaries considered to be significant and which are mentioned in the text are referred to by the number (1-8) allocated to them during this study. References to primary cartographic and documentary evidence and published sources will be given in the text with full details in the references section at the end of the report.

2. THE HEDGEROWS AND HISTORIC BOUNDARIES

2.1 THE HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

The hedgerows and boundaries in the assessment area are perhaps the most visible evidence of how the historic landscape has been utilised and divided in the past. They are the direct result of social and economic decision making at local, regional and national levels. This means that the boundaries themselves are embedded with the explicit and implicit meanings inherent in those decisions. They form physical barriers, which divide the landscape and promote exclusion. They pronounce private ownership and control of the landscape and, therefore, people's movements within it. Therefore, they are an important source of primary evidence for the history and development of the region.

2.2 THE HISTORIC HEDGEROW REGULATIONS

Legislation to protect historic hedgerows was initiated in the 1990s in order to control the wholesale removal of historic hedgerows and boundaries that had been gathering pace since the 1960s. The current Historic Hedgerows Regulations came into force on 1 June 1997.

The regulations are designed to protect hedgerows and boundaries through a system of notification, which is judged against several criteria, including '*archaeology and history*' (Historic Hedgerow Regulations 1997, Schedule I Part II).

2.3 THE HEDGEROWS AND BOUNDARIES WITHIN THE PROPOSED AREAS OF WORK

The area for this assessment was a c.3km stretch of the A477(T) between the Nash Fingerpost Junction and Bangeston Hall. This section of the A477(T) is gently undulating and it stays within 10m of 20m OD along its length. The road runs along the northern edge of the Upper Avonian limestone bedrock which is overlain by gleyed and ungleyed brown earths (Manning 1997; Allen, Thomas and Williams 1982; Rudeforth 1974)

Most of the boundaries within the proposed areas of work have been in place since at least the mid 19th century. The boundaries appear to date largely from the 18th century, although some, particularly those associated with the remnants of the strip fields at Cosheston and Nash (PRN 6412), are considerably older, possibly dating from the medieval period. A number of modern boundaries have also been identified. For the most part they are associated with the late 19th and early to mid 20th century house and gardens plots that have been developed alongside the road and are therefore not covered by the Historic Hedgerow Regulations.

Two of the boundaries (2 and 8) are historic parish boundaries, those between the parishes of Pembroke, St. Mary and Cosheston and between Cosheston and Nash. Other notable boundaries highlighted in the original assessment report (Manning 1997, 7) were those associated with the Cosheston open field system (PRN 6412), an

area of possible medieval strip fields (PRN 43413; NGR SN00870285), and a small parcel of land called Church Land (PRN 12091). All of these boundaries define former medieval land divisions.

Most of the boundaries consist of a low earth bank (up to 1m high) topped with a mature hedge, which included some standard trees and coppiced hazel trees (plate 1). In some places the banks were higher, but for the most part they averaged about 1m high. There were also two areas where stone walls lined the roadside (boundaries 1 and 3) and one decorative entrance with stone gate pillars and an ornamental wrought iron gate (boundary 5 - plate 2) was also recorded. All of these walls appeared to be modern. The two historic parish boundaries were small streams that had well developed riverside flora, including mature hedgerow plants and trees.

2.3.1 Medieval boundaries

The boundaries associated with the Cosheston Field System (PRN 6412) and the possible medieval strip field system (PRN 43413) are earth banks topped by mature hedges. The banks are on average 1m – 1.5m high and up to 2m wide and the hedges were mature with a well developed hedgerow flora and some standard trees.

Boundaries 6 and 7 (plate 3) flank the road that leads south from Cosheston and marks the eastern extent of the Cosheston Field System (PRN 6412) and the west edge of the possible field system PRN 43413. This suggests either that the road is earlier than the field system(s) and that its existence helped to define the area available for cultivation, or that it was part of the original medieval layout. Boundary 4 follows the line of one of the strip field divisions within the Cosheston system (plate 4).

It is possible that the banks alongside the road (boundaries 6 and 7) were originally thrown up during the medieval period, although their present form is likely to be much later, with the hedges planted during the later post-medieval or modern periods. Boundary 4 is likely to date from the post-medieval period when the field system was being enclosed and the various strips presumably coming into single ownership.

The west boundary of the so-called Church Land (PRN 12091) follows the line of a former strip field division on the southeast edge of the Cosheston Field System (PRN 6412). The present layout dates from the late 19th or very early 20th century, when the east and north boundaries were erected to enclose a small plot of land containing a house called Church Park and a garden. It is likely that the name reflects the plot's medieval origins, when the strip, or at least part of the strip belonged to Cosheston Church.

2.3.2 Post-medieval and modern boundaries

There are several post-medieval and modern boundaries of note along the length of the works. They include the stone walls (boundaries 1 and 3) and the decorative entrance to Brother-Hill Farm (boundary 5). The boundaries alongside the A477 are relatively modern and in some places consist of wooden post-and-rail fences with immature hedgerows alongside.

3. IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED ROAD IMPROVEMENT WORKS ON THE HEDGEROWS AND BOUNDARIES

3.1 GENERAL IMPLICATIONS

All of the boundaries assessed in this report will be affected to a greater or lesser extent by the improvement works. None of the boundaries will be entirely removed, and most will only be affected for a short length. In some cases the junctions between two boundaries will be lost, particularly where radial boundaries meet the roadside boundaries, although for the most part the roadside boundaries are fairly modern and this loss is therefore not considered significant.

3.2 THE LOSS OF THE HISTORIC BOUNDARIES

As outlined above none of the boundaries will be totally removed, and the loss of a short length of most is considered to be archaeologically inconsequential, as the overall boundary pattern remains intact. The boundaries that will be most affected are those that line the A477 itself, as many sections will be removed. However, these are relatively modern and their partial loss is not considered to be significant.

There are certain areas where the loss is potentially more significant: these are boundaries (6 and 7) that flank the road along the eastern edge of the Cosheston field system (PRN 6412) and along the west edge of the possible medieval strip fields (PRN 43413). Other areas of potential loss are the entrance to Brother-Hill Farm, with its decorative gate and stone gate pillars (boundary 5), part of the stone wall of boundary 1, a short length of boundary 3 and the new crossings of the parish boundaries (boundaries 2 and 8).

4. MITIGATION MEASURES

4.1 BOUNDARY SPECIFIC MITIGATION MEASURES

The loss of short lengths of most of the boundaries is considered archaeologically insignificant. However, those boundaries identified as being of potential interest should be subject to more detailed recording during construction works.

The following table outlines the boundaries that are considered to be of potential interest and the suggested actions to adequately mitigate the affects of the proposed improvement works.

BOUNDARY NUMBER	LIKELY IMPACT	MITIGATION
1 (see figure 2)	The loss of a short section of stone wall alongside the A477.	Record fabric and construction details of wall and any associated features during archaeological watching brief on road construction works.
2 (see figure 2)	New crossing of stream, part of the historic parish boundary.	Monitor construction works to record any streamside bank that may have been thrown up to demarcate the parish boundary.
3 (see figure 2)	The loss of a short length of the boundary bank and hedge during road realignment.	Record profile of the bank and any associated features during archaeological watching brief.
5 (see figure 3)	The loss of a decorative 19 th century? gateway to Brother-Hill Farm.	Photographic record of entrance during archaeological watching brief.
6 (see figure 4)	The loss of short lengths of possible medieval boundary	Record profiles of the bank and any associated features during archaeological watching brief on road construction works.
7 (see figure 4)	The loss of short lengths of possible medieval boundary	Record profiles of the bank and any associated features during archaeological watching brief on road construction works.
8 (see figure 4)	New crossing of stream, part of the historic parish boundary.	Monitor construction works to record any streamside bank that may have been thrown up to demarcate the parish boundary.

APPENDIX ONE: CATALOGUE OF RESEARCH ARCHIVE

The project archive has been indexed and catalogued according to National Monument Record (NMR) categories and contains the following:

- A. Copy of the report.
- B. Notes from site visits.
- D. Site photographs - catalogue, colour slides, B/W contact sheets.
- G. Documentary data, including primary and published sources.
- I. Draft copies of report.
- J. Publication drawings.
- M. Miscellaneous correspondence

There is no material for classes C, E, F, H, K, L and N.

The project archive is currently held by Cambria Archaeology Field Operations, Llandeilo, Carmarthenshire as project number 43291.

REFERENCES

PUBLISHED SOURCES

- Allen J, 1982 'The Old Red Sandstone North of Milford Haven'.
Thomas R & In Bassett M (ed), p123-49.
Williams B
- Bassett M (ed) 1982 *Geological Excursions in Dyfed, South-west Wales*. Cardiff
- Rudeforth C 1974 *Soils in Dyfed II: Sheets SM90/91 (Pembroke/Haverfordwest)*
Soil Survey Record No. 24. p51-57.

UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

- Manning A 1997 *A477 Trunk Road: Nash to Bangeston Improvement. Stage 2:
Archaeological Desktop Assessment and Field Search.*
Unpublished report produced for Howard Humphreys &
Partners Ltd. Cambria Archaeology. Llandeilo.

CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

- 1839 Pembroke St. Mary parish tithe map and apportionment
1841 Nash parish tithe map and apportionment
1841 Cosheston parish tithe map and apportionment
- 1891 Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:10560, sheet Pembs XL.NW
1906 Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 1:10560, sheet Pembs XL.NW



Plate 1: Boundary 3 showing coppiced and standard trees.



Plate 2: Boundary 5, the ornamental entrance to Brother-Hill Farm.



Plate 3: Boundaries 6 and 7 flanking the medieval (or earlier) road to Cosheston.



Plate 4: Boundary 4, bank and hedge following medieval strip field boundary line.

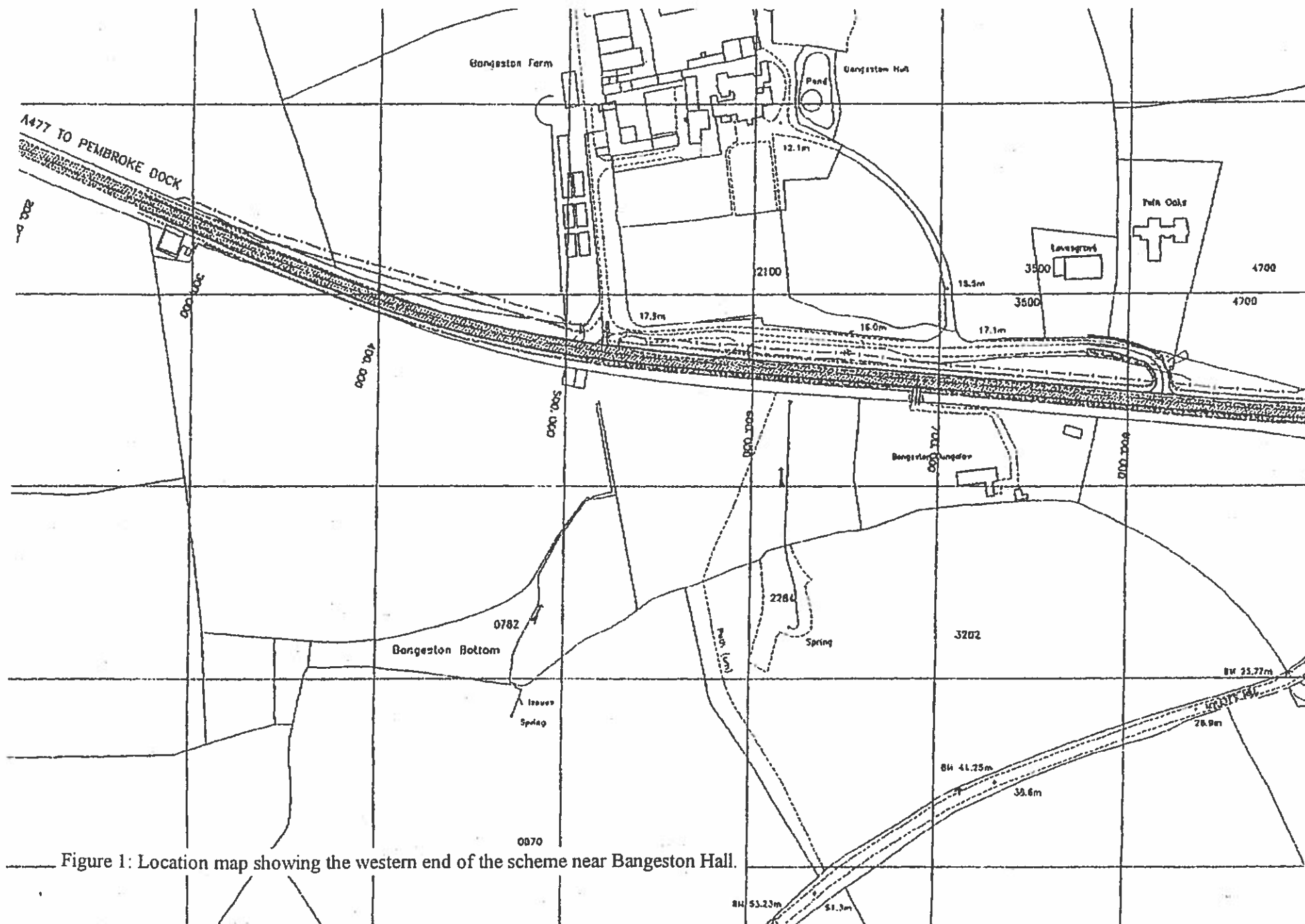


Figure 1: Location map showing the western end of the scheme near Bangeston Hall.

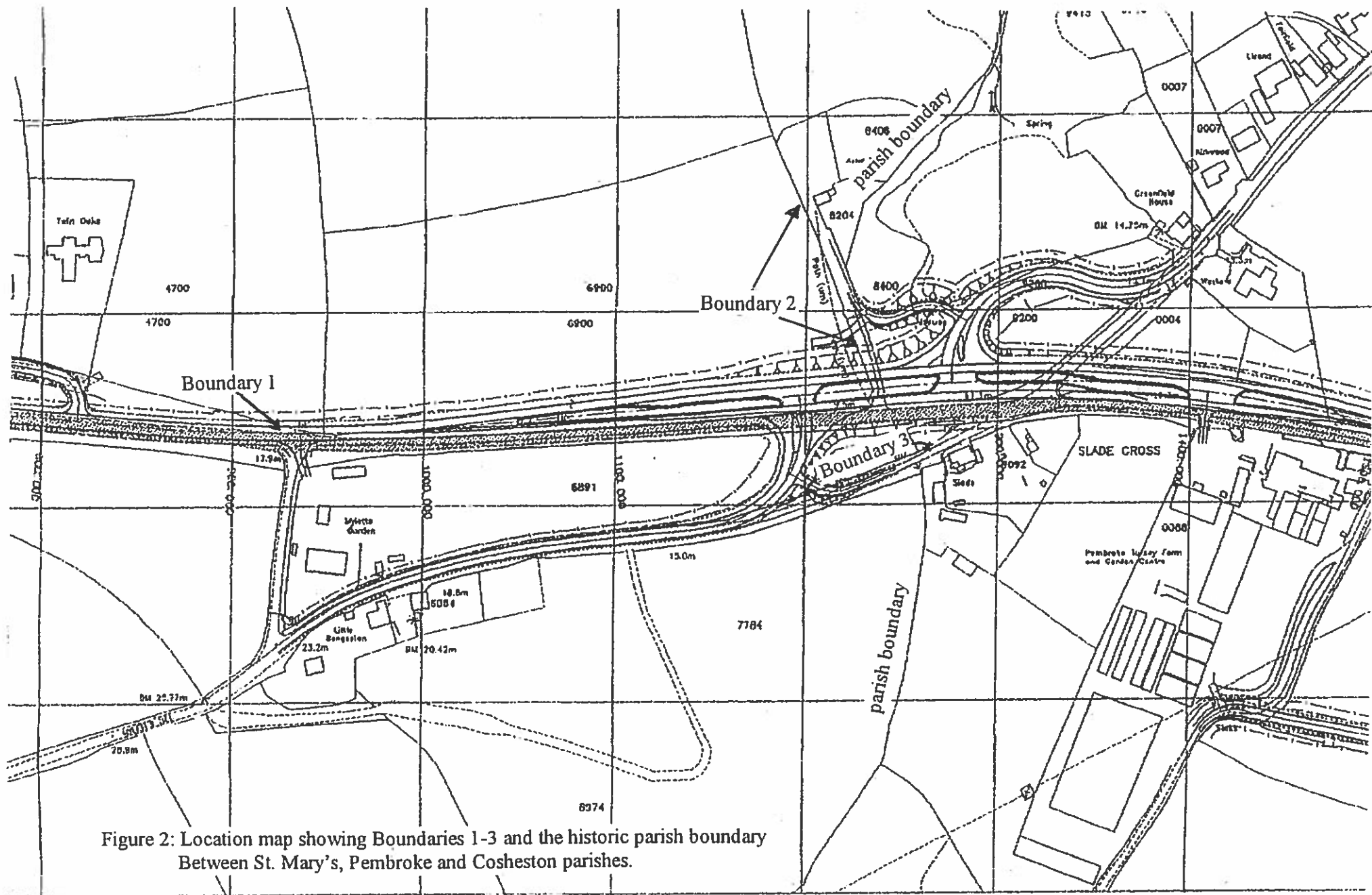


Figure 2: Location map showing Boundaries 1-3 and the historic parish boundary Between St. Mary's, Pembroke and Cosheston parishes.

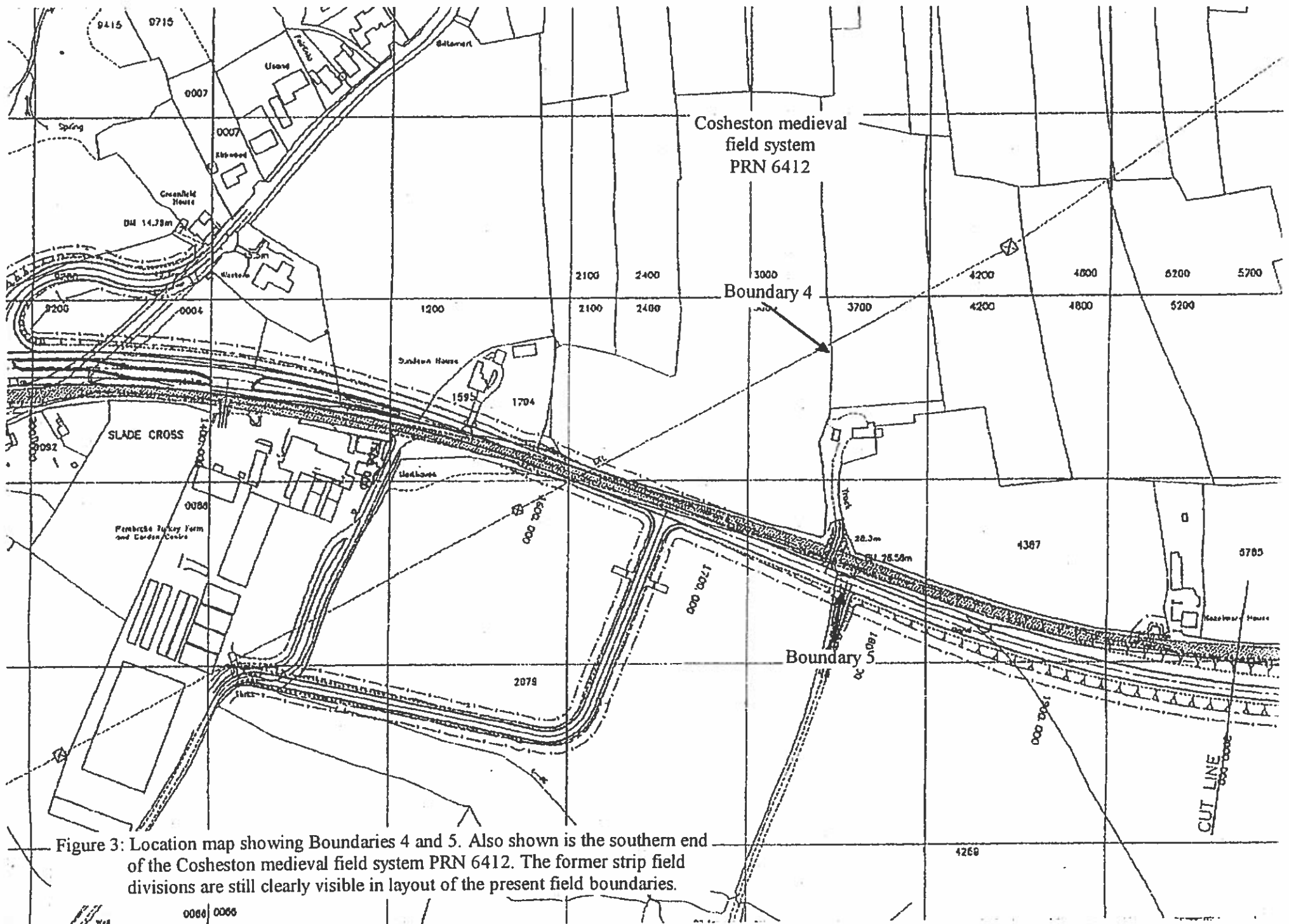
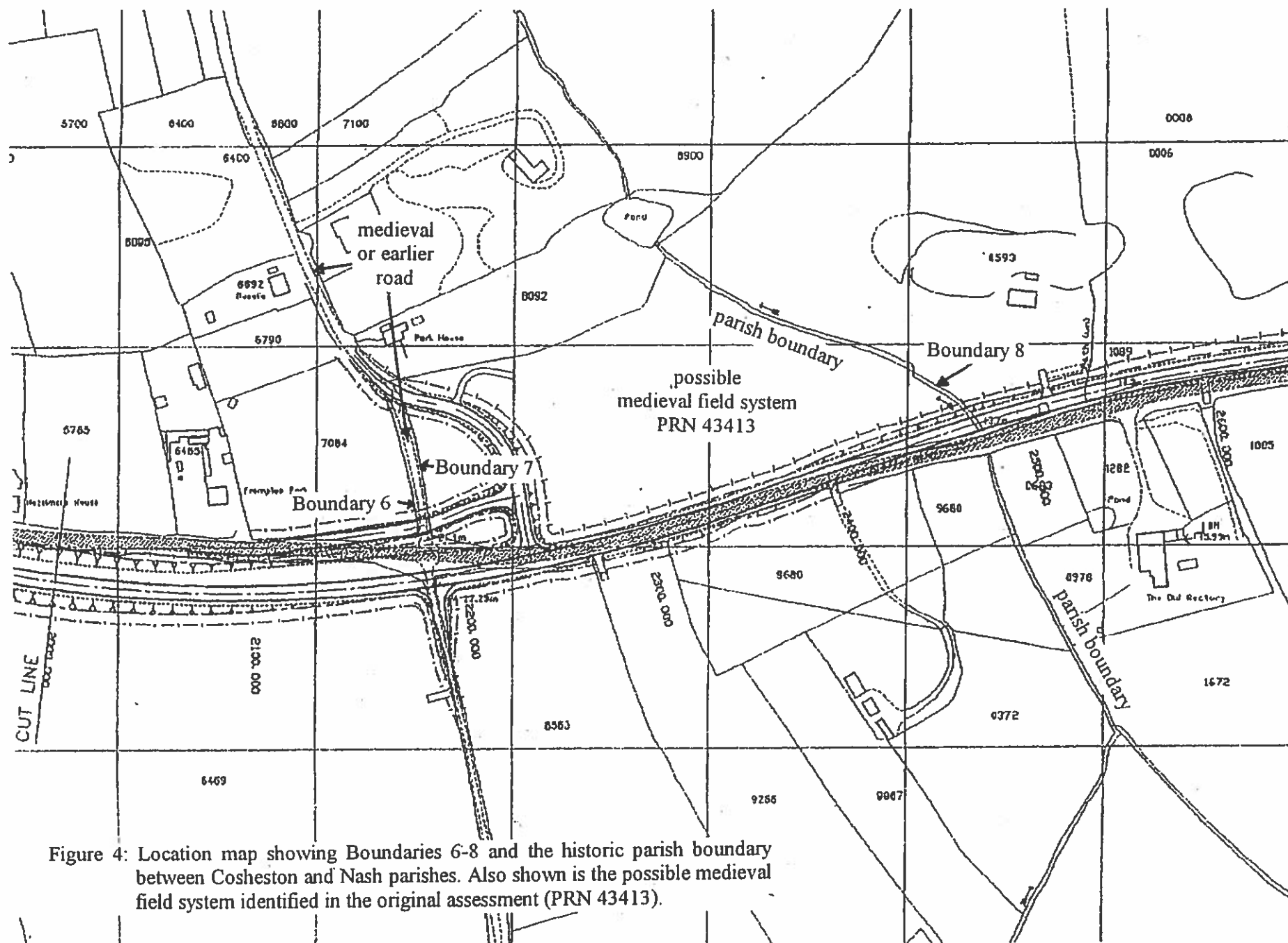


Figure 3: Location map showing Boundaries 4 and 5. Also shown is the southern end of the Cosheston medieval field system PRN 6412. The former strip field divisions are still clearly visible in layout of the present field boundaries.



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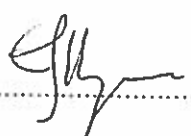
This report has been prepared by Nigel Page

Position Senior Archaeologist

Signature  Date 31/8/01

This report has been checked and approved by Gwilym Hughes, Cambria Archaeology, Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Position Director

Signature  Date 31/8/01

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report

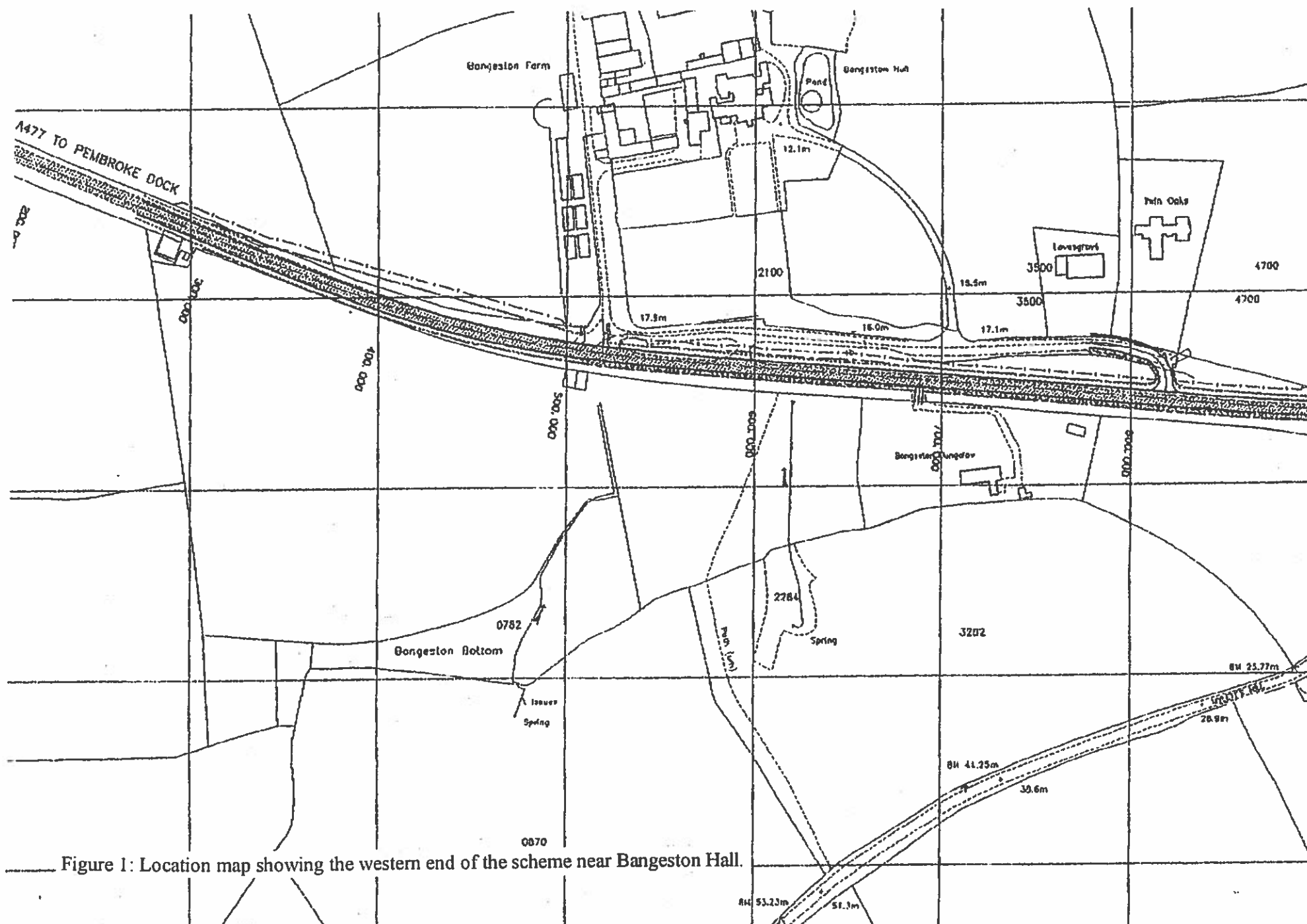


Figure 1: Location map showing the western end of the scheme near Bangeston Hall.

