



Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, Somerset

Observations and Recording during Excavation
of a New SSP Cable Duct



Report No. 53473/3/1

September 2017

Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, Somerset

Archaeological Observations and Recording during Excavation of a
New SSP Cable Duct, July 2017

Report No. 53473/3/1

September 2017

Client: The National Trust

Agent:

Report Author: Peter S Bellamy BSc (Hons) MCIfA

Illustrations: Peter S Bellamy BSc (Hons) MCIfA

Document Quality Control

Version	Status	Prepared By	Approved By	Date
1	Final	P Bellamy		15/09/2017
2				
3				

DISCLAIMER

Terrain Archaeology and the individual authors of this report have made every effort during its preparation to provide as complete and accurate an assessment as possible within the terms of the Written Scheme of Investigation. All statements and opinions presented in this document are offered in good faith. Terrain Archaeology cannot accept responsibility or liability for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or accept liability for any future loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

COPYRIGHT

Terrain Archaeology retains full copyright of this report and its images, excepting any data held under third party copyright and presented under license, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that Terrain Archaeology grants exclusive license to the client for the use of the aforesaid report and images by the client in all matters directly relating to the project. License is also granted to the Client, their Agents and Somerset Historic Environment Record and the National Trust to use the documentary archive for educational, public and research purposes, provided that Terrain Archaeology is duly acknowledged as its author. This license agreement excludes commercial use of the report, report images or archive by the client or any third party. The authors of any specialist contributions or images within the report or the archive shall retain intellectual copyright of their work, and may make use of said work for educational or research purposes for further publication.

Table of Contents

Part 1: Introduction

- 1.1 Project Introduction 1
- 1.2 Brief 1
- 1.3 Site Location and Topography 1
- 1.4 Geology 1
- 1.5 Archaeological and Historical Background 1
- 1.6 Aims and Objectives..... 2
- 1.7 Groundworks 2
- 1.8 Methods..... 2
- 1.9 Archive and Dissemination 3

Part 2: Results

- 2.1 Introduction 3
- 2.2 Natural Deposits..... 3
- 2.3 Archaeological Features 3
- 2.4 Drains 3
- 2.5 Modern Soils 4

Part 3: Finds

- 3.1 Finds Assemblage..... 4

Part 4: Discussion and Conclusions

- 4.1 Discussion 4
- 4.2 Conclusions 4

Part 5: References

- 5

Figures

- 1 Location Map 6
- 2 Plan of Observations 7
- 3 Extract from 1887 Ordnance Survey map with course of cable duct trench superimposed..... 8

Plates

- 1 View along trench from north 9
- 2 Field Drain 102 in base of trench 9
- 3 Backfilled trench in area where heavy clay 105 was found..... 9

Project Report Summary Page

Project Details			
OASIS Reference	terraina1-296045		
Project Title	SSP Cable Duct Watching Brief, Barrington Court, Somerset		
Short Description of Project	Terrain Archaeology observed the excavation of a cable duct trench at Barrington Court, Barrington, Somerset. No significant archaeology was revealed and the results confirm that most of the course of the new trench was dug through former agricultural land prior to the construction of the new estate layout of 1921-5. A heavy clay deposit next to the present ponds relates to the changes to the watercourses and features made as part of the 1920s estate layout.		
Project Dates	Start: 17-07-2017	End: 26-07-2017	
Previous/Future Work	Yes/No		
Project Code	53473		
Monument Type and Period	Field Drain (post-medieval)		
Significant Finds	None		
Project Location			
County/District/Parish	Somerset/South Somerset/Barrington		
Site Address	Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, Somerset TA19 0NQ		
Site Coordinates	ST 3972 1834		
Site Area	c. 55 m ²		
Height OD	c. 17 m aOD		
Project Creators			
Organisation	Terrain Archaeology		
Project Brief Originator	Martin Papworth, National Trust Regional Archaeologist,		
Project Design Originator	Terrain Archaeology		
Project Supervisor	Peter Bellamy		
Project Manager	Peter Bellamy		
Sponsor or Funding Body	The National Trust		
Project Archive			
Archive Type	Physical	Digital	Paper
Location/Accession No	No Archive	Terrain Archaeology offices, pending deposition with the National Trust.	Terrain Archaeology offices, pending deposition with the National Trust.
Contents	None	Digital photography	Context sheet, plan, report

Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, Somerset

Archaeological Observations and Recording during Excavation of a New SSP Cable Duct, July 2017

1. Introduction

1.1 Project introduction

Terrain Archaeology was commissioned by the National Trust, to undertake a programme of Archaeological Observations and Recording during the installation of a new SSP Cable from the Visitor Reception building to the garages north of Strode House..

Fieldwork was carried out between the 17th and 26th July 2017 by Peter Bellamy.

Terrain Archaeology wishes to acknowledge the cooperation and assistance of Martin Papworth, Neil Johnson, Richard Hann, and the two Deans (National Trust) during this project.

1.2 Brief

No written brief for the works was produced by or on behalf of South Somerset District Council and the National Trust.

1.3 Site Location and Topography

The site lies within the grounds of Barrington Court (Figure 1). The cable trench runs from ST 3957 1824 to ST 3974 1832 (Figure 2). The area of the archaeological observations lay to the north of Strode House, running from the modern garages past the moat and pond to run along outside the east side of the tennis court enclosure (Figure 2). The topography is flat and lies at a height of about 17 m above OD.

1.4 Geology

Bedrock geology is mapped as Jurassic Siltstone and Sandstone of the Dyrham Formation, with no recorded superficial deposits (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

1.5 Archaeological and Historical Background

The following archaeological and historical background was supplied by Martin Papworth, Regional Archaeologist, National Trust.

Barrington is an ancient site and Roman burials and occupation debris have been found just beyond the southern boundary of the present estate. Barrington is mentioned in Domesday Book and during the 1920s alterations to the Court House remains of a medieval stone building were reported under its east side. The Daubenay family held the estate from 1236 to 1543 and by 1483 a deer park was recorded at Barrington.

Barrington Court House is believed to have been built for William Clifton when he held Barrington 1552-64. The Cliftons were related to the Phelps family of Montacute who acquired the estate in 1605. The Strode family mortgaged Barrington in 1625 and it remained in their family until 1775. In 1674, the Strode family commissioned the building of the grand stable block on the west side of Barrington Court, converted to accommodation in the 1920s and now known as Strode House. Geophysical survey of the South Lawn and a survey of earthworks to the east of the house indicate that the mansion house was complemented by fashionable formal gardens (Papworth 2000).

In 1775, the Harvards bought the estate from the Strodes and kept it in their family for 4 generations before selling it to the Peters family sometime in the mid-19th century. As time went by, the Court slipped down the social scale, and through most of the 19th century was used as a farmhouse, known as Court Farm, tenanted by the Jacobs family. At various times Farm buildings were erected close to the Court including the Buss stalls to the north-west which are thought to originate in the 16th century. The remains of one of the robbed out farm buildings was discovered during the installation of a new biomass heating system in January 2016 (Bellamy 2016).

The tithe map, of 1842, shows that that much of the land around the village was still in open fields with strips held by different owners and tenants.

At some time in the 19th century, much of the old furniture and fittings in the Court, including wood panelling was sold. The journal *The Builder* of 1845 noted that no carved work remained within the house.

At the end of the 19th century Barrington changed hands frequently as the house fell further into disrepair. In 1904 the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings approached the National Trust and were commissioned by NT to make a survey and estimate for restoration and running costs. In 1905 Miss J. L. Woodward purchased the Court on the understanding that it would pass to the Trust. In 1907 the NT took on Barrington Court, its first large house. It was in a poor state and for the first few years funds were raised to keep the place watertight and it was still used as a farmhouse until 1918. In that year Colonel Abram Arthur Lyle took on the lease of the house. He was a partner to the Tate and Lyle sugar corporation. He commissioned the architect J Edwin Forbes to create an Estate Master plan which created a model estate with farm buildings moved to new locations away from the Court. The result is a layout of buildings dating from 1921-5 including many recreational buildings such as the squash court and cricket pavilion which show definite Arts and Crafts influence. Colonel Lyle furnished the Barrington and Strode House with his collection of historic panelling and architectural features brought from other historic houses.

The garden designs were influenced by Gertrude Jekyll and reflect her work with careful colour schemes, bold groupings and overlays through time. Her plans survive within the archive held at Somerset Record Office including a proposal for the South Lawn which was never carried out. The work had been completed by 1927.

The Lyles continued to lease the property until 1991 when Andrew Lyle relinquished direct management to the National Trust. The building was then leased by a business, 'Stewart Interiors'. The company used Barrington Court to display examples of their interior designs and reproductions of historic furniture and fabrics until 2008. Since that time the National Trust has displayed the house without historic collections using the room spaces for occasional art displays.

1.6 Aims and Objectives

The principle aim of the archaeological programme was to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on the site. The programme of works will also aim to place the archaeological results within the local, regional and national context, as appropriate, and advance understanding of the archaeology of the site and its surroundings.

Its objectives were:

- To investigate and record the all the *in situ* archaeological deposits and features revealed during the programme of works to an appropriate archaeological standard.
- To record recovered artefacts and other materials to an appropriate standard.
- To present the results in a report to the appropriate standard.

1.7 Groundworks

The new SSP Cable duct was excavated between the visitor reception building and the modern garages to the north of Strode House, roughly along the route shown on Figure 2. The trench was 0.3 m wide and 0.7 m deep.

1.8 Methods

The methodology, scope, aims and objectives of the works were largely the same as that set out in the biomass boiler installation Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Terrain Archaeology in January 2016 (Terrain Archaeology document no. 3449/0/1). Only the part of the route between the north east corner of the tennis court enclosure and the stables was observed archaeologically.

All archaeological works were carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Regulations for professional conduct* and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (CIfA 2014a-b) and with Somerset County Council's *Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook* (SCC 2011).

All features and deposits were recorded using components of Terrain Archaeology's system of complementary written, drawn and photographic records, regardless of their perceived date and archaeological significance. A photographic record of the works was maintained in digital format, which includes aspects of their setting, conduct and technical detail.

1.9 Archive and Dissemination

1.9.1 Paper Archive

The project archive, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and appropriate background documentation, has been compiled in a stable, cross-referenced and fully indexed archive in accordance with current guidelines (Brown 2011; CIfA 2014c) and the requirements of the receiving museum. It is currently stored by Terrain Archaeology under the project code 53473. In due course, the archive will be accessioned for long-term curation and storage by the National Trust.

1.9.2 Report

A copy of this report will be lodged with the National Trust Sites and Monuments Record and with Somerset Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER is a publicly funded and accessible resource, and deposition of the report will place it, and the project results, in the public domain.

A digital summary of the archive will be placed with the OASIS project (www.oasis.ac.uk) under the reference code *terrains1-296045*. A digital copy of this report will be uploaded for inclusion in the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) online 'grey literature' library.

2. Results

2.1 Introduction

Only a part of the route of the new cable duct trench was observed. A rapid check made along most of the trench on the northern side of the tennis court enclosure revealed no archaeology. The length of the trench running along the east side of the tennis court enclosure was observed in more detail. The last part of the route to the south into the garages was not observed (see 2.3.1).

2.2 Natural Deposits

The natural deposits comprised yellowish-brown clay (101) encountered immediately below the present topsoil.

2.3 Archaeological Features

2.3.1 Clay Deposit 105

A heavy brown clay deposit (105) was encountered in the trench where it runs along the road from Strode House, close to the moat and pond to the east and the drain to the west (Figure 2). This part of the trench was dug at a time when no archaeologist was on site and had to be backfilled before recording because the trench rapidly filled with water. It is likely that this clay is part of the construction of the pond and other water features in this area.

2.4 Drains

Two 6-inch clay field drains (102, 103) were exposed in the base of the trench at about 0.75 m below ground level in the positions shown on Figure 2. The cut for these drains was not visible in the natural clay above. No dating evidence was recovered for these drains, but they are likely to be nineteenth or twentieth century.

2.5 Modern Soils

The existing topsoil consists of a 0.15 m thick layer of soft dark reddish-brown silty clay and turf (100). This overlay the natural clay.

3. Finds

3.1 Finds Assemblage

No finds were recovered during the works.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

4.1 Discussion

The observed section of the new cable duct trench revealed little new archaeological information. North of the ponds, the only features noted were field drains. This is not surprising given that this area was agricultural land until included in the new estate layout created in 1921-6 by J. Edwin Forbes for Colonel Abram Arthur Lyle.

The heavy clay deposit encountered next to the ponds is likely to be the result of the redesign of the ponds as part of 1920s estate plan. Previously, the drain that runs along the north side of the Buss Stalls continued across the line of the present road (Figure 3). The clay is probably part of the infill of this drain and forms part of the waterproofing of the current watercourse and pond arrangement.

4.2 Conclusions

No significant archaeology was revealed during this project. The results confirm that the northern part of the trench was agricultural land before the 1920s, as indicated on the historic maps. The heavy clay deposit relates to the changes to the watercourses and features made as part of the revised estate layout of 1921-5.

5. References

- Bellamy, P. S., 2016 Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, Somerset: Archaeological Observations and Recording during Biomass Boiler Installation, January 2016. Terrain Archaeology Report No. 53449/3/1, June 2016.
- Brown, D. H., 2011 *Archaeological Archives. A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*. Second Edition, September 2011. Archaeological Archives Forum.
- ClfA, 2014a *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*. December 2014. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- ClfA, 2014b *Regulations for professional conduct*. December 2014. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- ClfA, 2014c *Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Preparation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives*. December 2014. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- Fretwell, K., 1993 *Barrington Court, Somerset. Park and Garden Survey*. The National Trust.
- Papworth, M. 2000 *Barrington Court, Somerset, South Lawn Archaeological Survey and Excavation*. The National Trust.
- SCC 2011 *Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook*. Somerset County Council.
- Terrain Archaeology 2016 *Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, South Somerset: Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Works during the Installation of a New Biomass Heating System*. Terrain Archaeology Document 3449/0/1, January 2016.

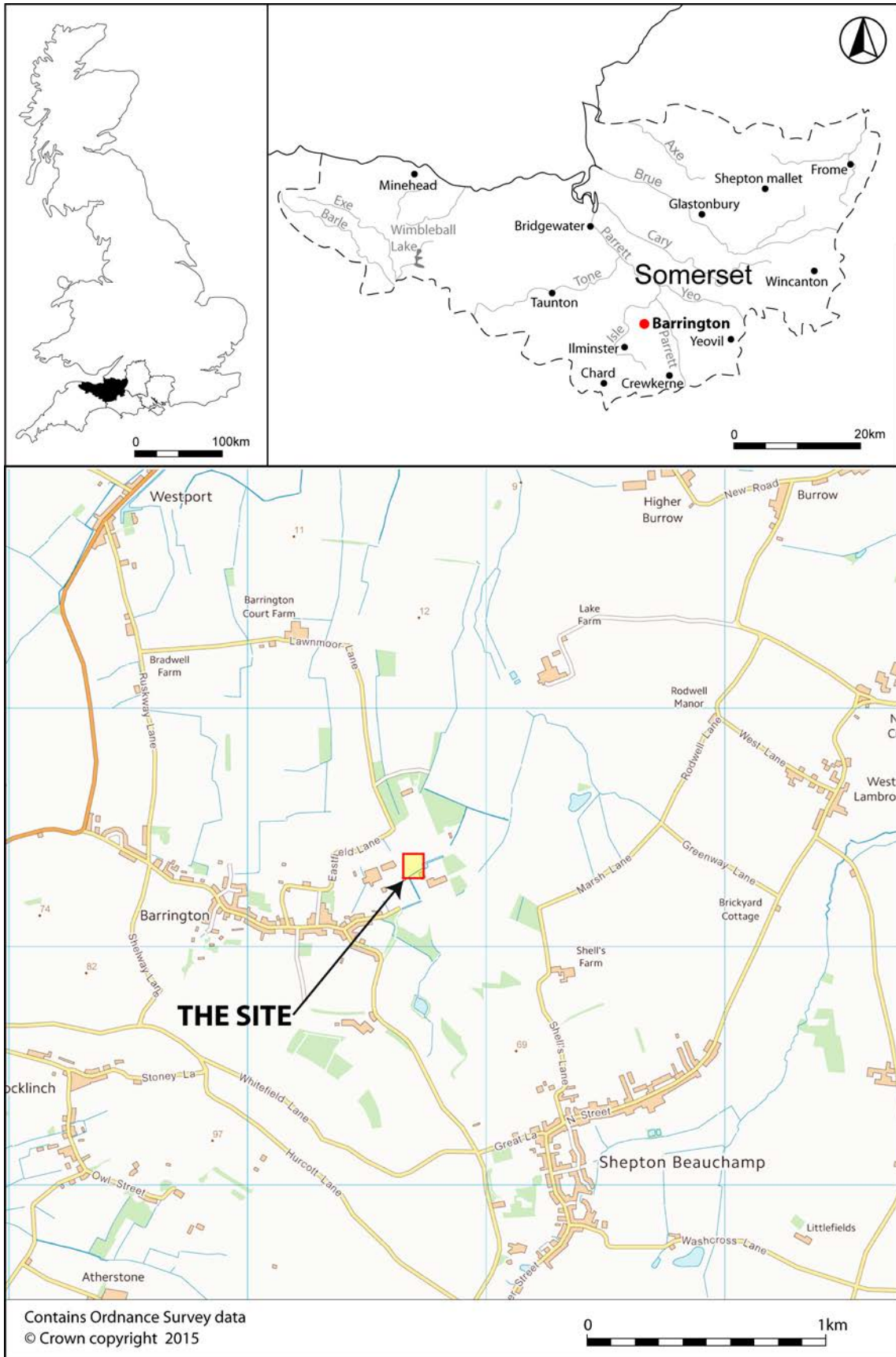


Figure 1 Location map.

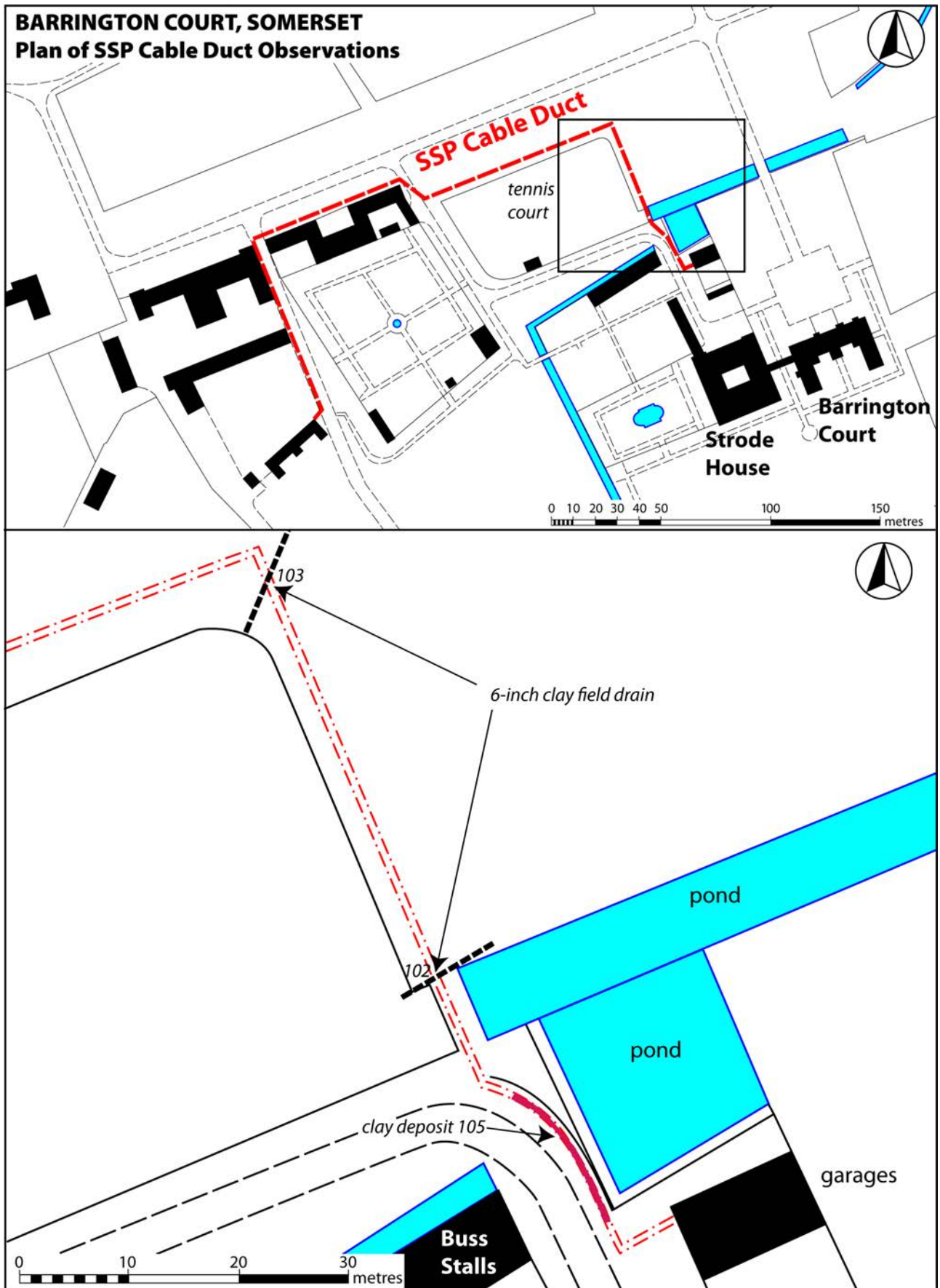


Figure 2: Plan of Observations

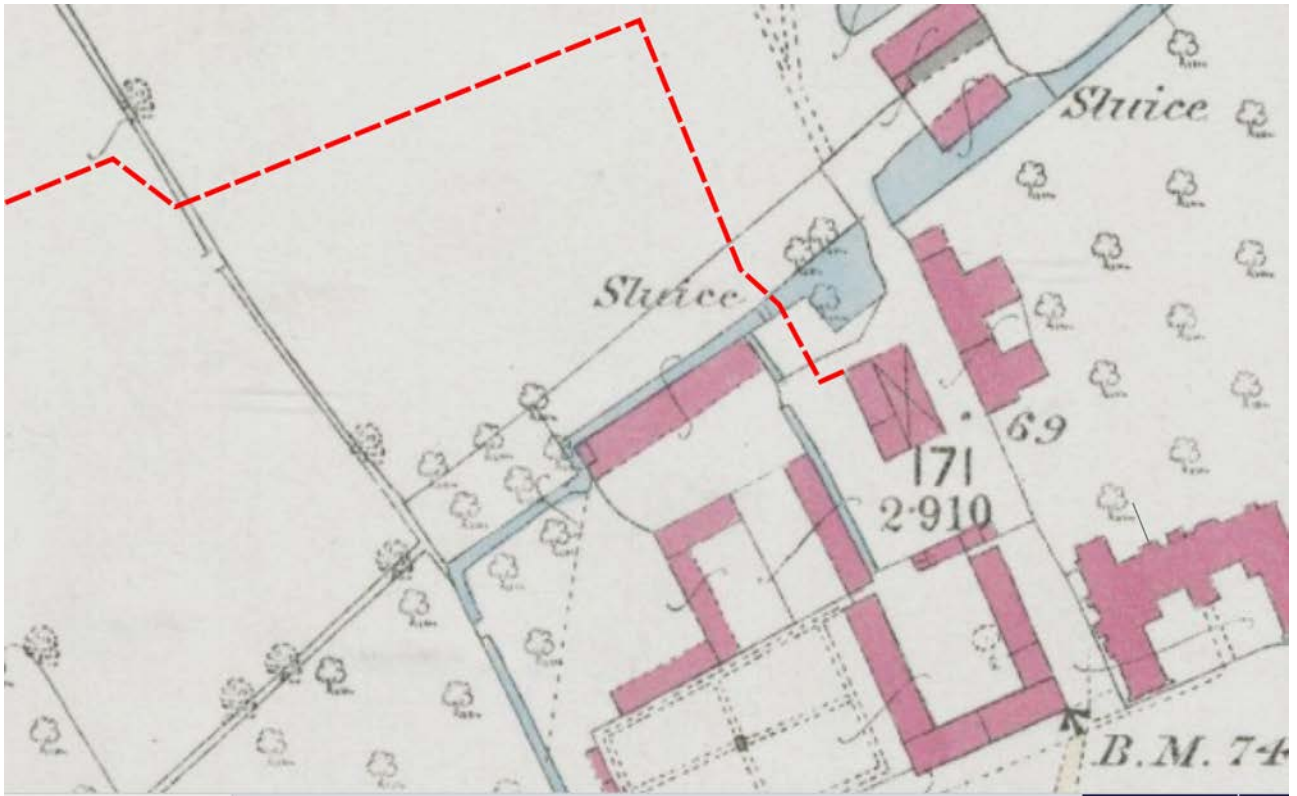


Figure 3: Extract from 1887 Ordnance Survey map with course of cable duct trench superimposed.



Plate 1: View along trench from north.



Plate 2: Field Drain 102 in base of trench.



Plate 3: Backfilled trench in area where heavy clay 105 was found.