



Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, Somerset

Observations and Recording during Installation of New Fibre Optic Cable



Report No. 53506/3/1

October 2018

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Archaeological Observations and Recording during Installation of
New Fibre Optic Cable, September 2018

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Project Report Summary Page

| Project Details | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| OASIS Reference | terraina1-330338 | | |
| Project Title | New Fibre Optic Cable Watching Brief, Barrington Court, Somerset | | |
| Short Description of Project | Terrain Archaeology observed the excavation of a cable duct trench at Barrington Court, Barrington, Somerset from Water Street to the Reception/Café building. No significant archaeology was revealed. | | |
| Project Dates | Start: 06-09-2018 | End: 06-09-2018 | |
| Previous/Future Work | Yes/No | | |
| Project Code | 53506 | | |
| Monument Type and Period | None | | |
| Significant Finds | None | | |
| Project Location | | | |
| County/District/Parish | Somerset/South Somerset/Barrington | | |
| Site Address | Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, Somerset TA19 0NQ | | |
| Site Coordinates | ST 3959 1818 | | |
| Site Area | c. 30 m ² | | |
| Height OD | c. 21 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 Installation of New Fibre Optic Cable, September 2018

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 fibre optic cable duct to the Visitor Reception/Cafe building from Water Street.

Fieldwork was carried out on the 6th September 2018 by Peter Bellamy.

1.2 Brief

No written brief for the works was produced by or on behalf of the National Trust.

1.3 Site Location and Topography

The site lies at the entrance to the National Trust estate at Barrington Court (Figures 1 and 2). The cable trench runs from ST 39618 18154 in Water Lane to the north west end of the reception building at ST 39558 18225, along the side of the entrance drive in the grass of the overflow car park (Figure 2; Plate 1). The topography is relatively flat and lies at a height of about 21 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 Phelips 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 principal 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 Fibre Optic Cable duct was excavated between a junction box near the end of Water Lane to the visitor reception building, along the route shown on Figure 2. The trench was 0.2 m wide and 0.5 m deep.

1.8 Methods

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).

The excavation of the trench was observed by a suitably qualified archaeologist. 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; ClfA 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 *terrains1-330338*. 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

The full length of the new cable duct from Water Street to the reception/cafe building was observed. No significant archaeology was recorded. The context descriptions are listed in Appendix 1.

2.2 Natural Deposits

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

2.3 Levelling Deposits

2.3.1 Rubble Layer 103

A 0.2 m thick layer of stone rubble (103), traced over a length of 1.85 m, was encountered below the topsoil in the southern end of the overflow car park area (Figure 3; Plate 2). This appeared to fill a slight dip in the natural below.

2.3.2 Clinker Layer 106

A 0.25 m thick layer of clinker (106) traced over a distance of 8.5 m was recorded in the northern part of the overflow car park (Figure 3; Plate 3). This clinker layer is visible as a slight rise in the surface of the ground.

2.3.3 Clinker Layer 107

Another deposit of clinker (107) was recorded in front of the reception/café building (Figure 3; Plate 4). This was 0.1 m thick and traced for a length of 1.8 m in the trench.

2.4 Metalling

The trench cut through the metalling of the entrance and exit tracks for the overflow car park (Figure 3). The track comprised grey crushed stone (104, 105) with brick rubble below the southern track (105) (Plate 5).

2.5 Drains

Just southwest of the Reception building where the duct enters the building, a plastic drain pipe covered in a layer of shingle (109), lay beneath the concrete surface (110) adjacent to the building (Figure 3). Slightly further south the duct trench cut through a steep sided cut filled with mixed greyish-brown soil and shingle (108). This feature was cut in two places where the trench turned a corner. This is likely to be associated with the manhole which lies close by (Plate 6).

2.6 Modern Soils

The existing topsoil along the hedge bank on Water Street consists of a 0.2 m thick layer of greyish-brown clay loam with occasional to moderate small stone (100). In the area of the overflow car park the topsoil was a 0.15 m thick layer of greyish-brown clay loam (102).

3. Finds

3.1 Finds Assemblage

A very small quantity of modern bottle glass and twentieth century pottery was noted in context 108. This was not collected or quantified.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

4.1 Discussion

The observations of the new cable duct trench revealed no significant archaeological information. The spreads of stone (103) and clinker (106, 107) are undated and it is unclear whether they were deposited when this area was orchards or later after the construction of the present access to the property in the mid/late twentieth century.

4.2 Conclusions

No significant archaeology was revealed during this project.

5. References

- 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.

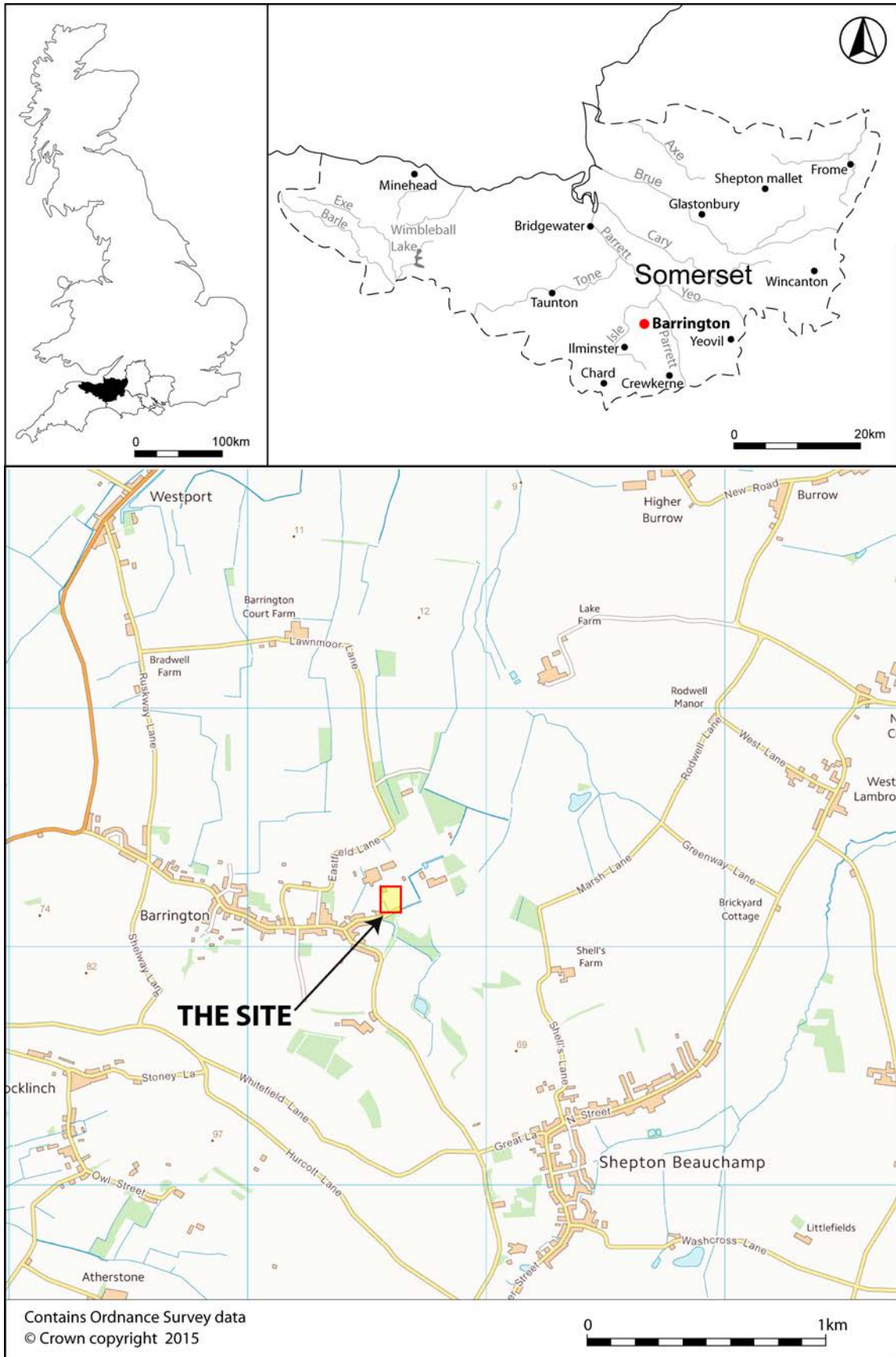


Figure 1 Location map.

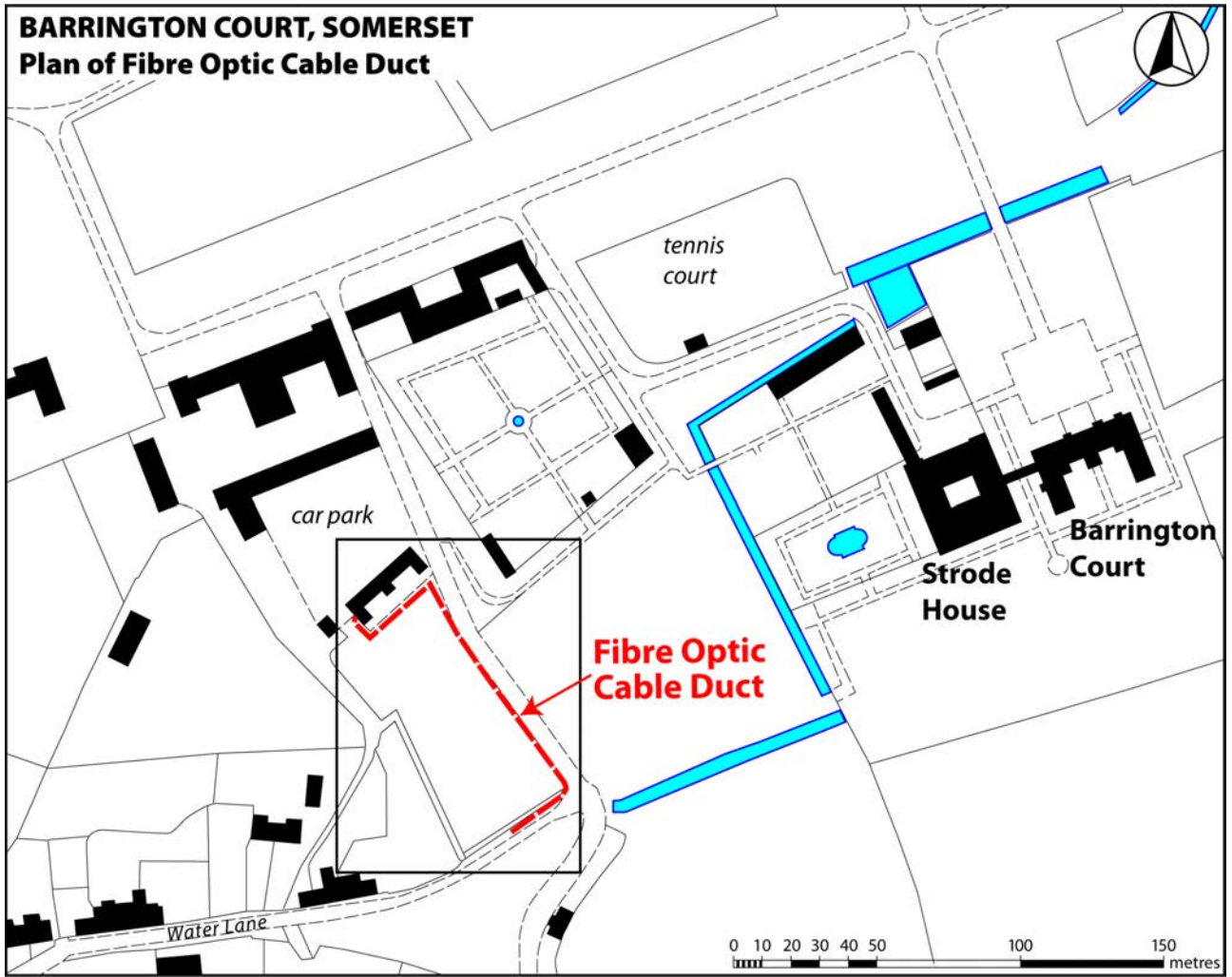


Figure 2: Plan of Route of Fibre Optic Cable Duct.

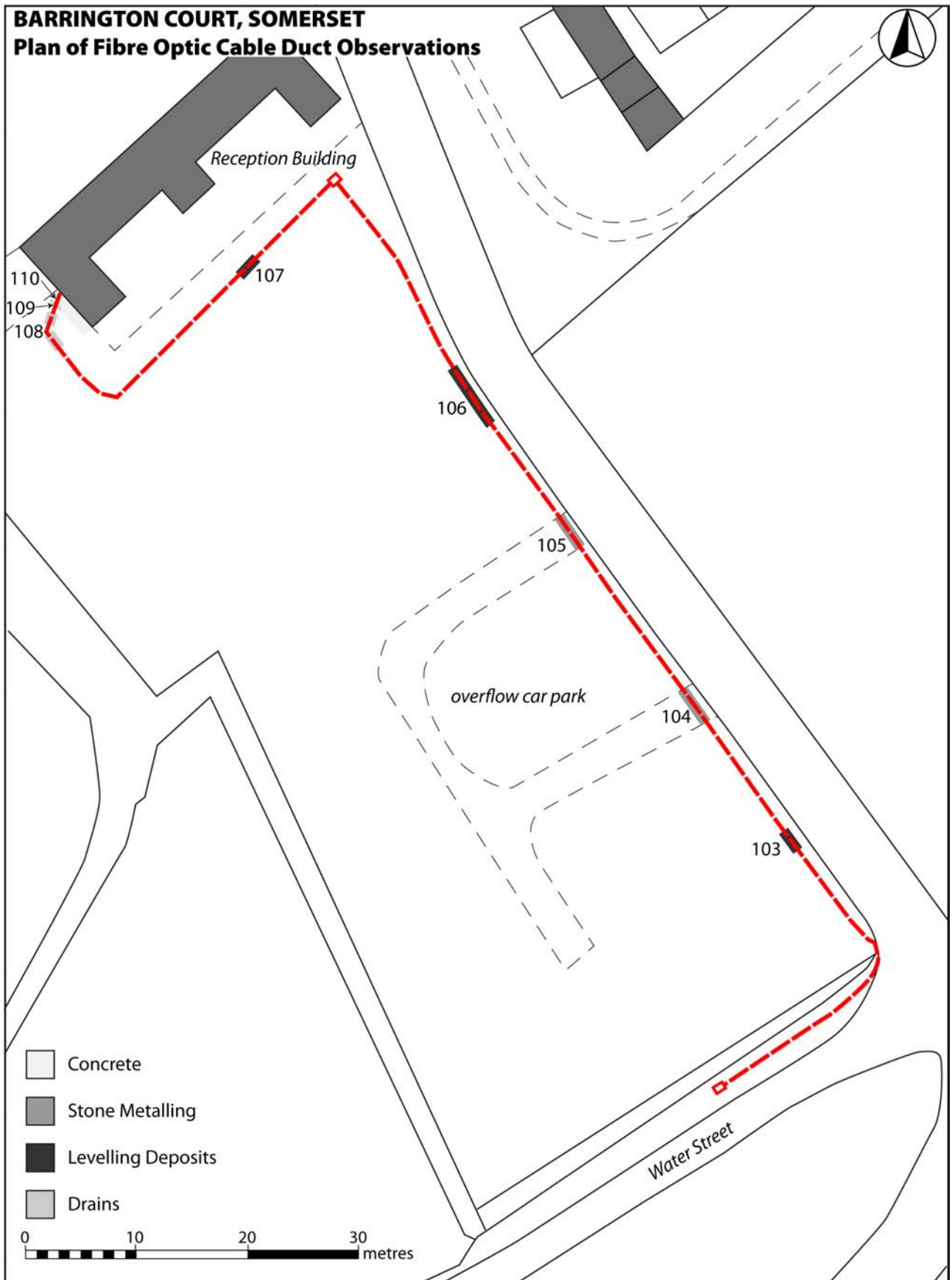


Figure 3: Plan of Observations.



Plate 1: View along trench from south east.



Plate 2: Stone rubble layer 103, viewed from south. 1m scale.



Plate 3: Clinker layer 106, viewed from east. 1m scale.



Plate 4: Clinker layer 107, viewed from west. 1m scale.



Plate 5: Brick rubble and stone overflow car park metalling 104, viewed from south. 1m scale.



Plate 6: Services disturbance 108, viewed from west. 1m scale.

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Trench 1

Length: c. 146 m; Width 0.2 m; depth 0.5 m.

| Context | Description and Interpretation | Depth (m) below ground level |
|---------|--|------------------------------|
| 100 | Topsoil in Water Street Verge: Greyish-brown clay loam with occasional to moderate small stone. | 0.00 – 0.20m |
| 101 | Natural: Yellowish-brown clay with occasional stone. | 0.15m+ |
| 102 | Topsoil: Greyish-brown clay loam with occasional to moderate small stone. | 0.00 – 0.15m |
| 103 | Levelling Deposit: Area 1.85 m long of stone rubble (100-200mm across) in a greyish-brown clay soil matrix, Below 102, above 101. | 0.15 – 0.30m |
| 104 | Track metalling: Grey crushed stone over brick rubble hardcore in southern entrance into overflow car park. | 0.00 – 0.30m |
| 105 | Track metalling: Grey crushed stone in northern entrance into overflow car park. | 0.00 – 0.25m |
| 106 | Levelling Deposit: Layer of dark brown/black clinker below 102 and above 101. Traced for a distance of 8.5 m. | 0.15 – 0.40m |
| 107 | Levelling Deposit: Layer of dark brown/black clinker below 102 and above 101. Traced for a distance of 1.8 m. | 0.15 – 0.25m |
| 108 | Manhole?: Steeply sloping sided cut into natural, filled with mixed gravel, yellowish-brown clay and greyish brown clay soil. Adjacent to manhole cover. Encountered in two places where trench turns corner. | 0.15 – 0.50m+ |
| 109 | Service Trench: Trench, 0.5 m wide running roughly NNW-SSE, containing a plastic drain pipe and backfilled with shingle. | 0.10 – 0.50m+ |
| 110 | Concrete Apron: Concrete area next to Reception Building, 0.8 m wide and 0.11 m thick. | 0.00 – 0.11 m |