



# Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, Somerset

## Observations and Recording during Biomass Boiler Installation



Report No. 53449/3/1

June 2016



# Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, Somerset

Archaeological Observations and Recording during Biomass Boiler  
Installation, January 2016

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## Project Report Summary Page

Project Details			
<b>OASIS Reference</b>	terraina1-256606		
<b>Project Title</b>	Barrington Court, Biomass Boiler Installation		
<b>Short Description of Project</b>	Terrain Archaeology observed the excavation of a new heat main trench associated with a new biomass boiler at Barrington Court, Barrington, Somerset. The trench ran between the new boiler in a modern garage building, across the west edge of the north lawn and into the Strode House boiler room. A small number of nineteenth and twentieth century features were found, including a boundary ditch for a track shown on the 1842 Tithe Map and a robber trench associated with the demolition in the 1920s of a later nineteenth century farm building in the area of the north lawn.		
<b>Project Dates</b>	Start: 18-01-2016	End: 27-01-2016	
<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	No/No		
<b>Project Code</b>	53449		
<b>Monument Type and Period</b>	Boundary ditch (post-medieval), Robber trench (modern).		
<b>Significant Finds</b>	None		
Project Location			
<b>County/District/Parish</b>	Somerset/South Somerset/Barrington		
<b>Site Address</b>	Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, Somerset TA19 0NQ		
<b>Site Coordinates</b>	ST 397 183		
<b>Site Area</b>	48.75 m <sup>2</sup>		
<b>Height OD</b>	c. 17 m aOD		
Project Creators			
<b>Organisation</b>	Terrain Archaeology		
<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Martin Papworth, National Trust Regional Archaeologist,		
<b>Project Design Originator</b>	Terrain Archaeology		
<b>Project Supervisor</b>	Peter Bellamy		
<b>Project Manager</b>	Peter Bellamy		
<b>Sponsor or Funding Body</b>	The National Trust		
Project Archive			
<b>Archive Type</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
<b>Location/Accession No</b>	No Archive	Terrain Archaeology offices, pending deposition with the National Trust.	Terrain Archaeology offices, pending deposition with the National Trust.
<b>Contents</b>	None	Digital photography	Context sheets, plans, sections, report

# Barrington Court, Barrington, Ilminster, Somerset

## Archaeological Observations and Recording during Biomass Boiler Installation, January 2016

### 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 biomass boiler and associated pipework.

The archaeological programme was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Observations and Recording (Terrain Archaeology 2016), and in fulfilment of Condition 4 of the granting of approval of Planning Application No. 15/04032/FUL by South Somerset District Council. This states “No work or excavation on the creation of a heat main pipeline referred to in Condition 3 above shall be undertaken unless the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority.

*Reason: To safeguard any archaeological remains on the site and to accord with the aims of the NPPF and Policy EQ3 of the South Somerset Local Plan.”*

‘Archaeological observations and recording’, also more colloquially known as an archaeological watching brief, is defined by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) as “a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered archive” (CIfA 2014a). Its purposes are: “to allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works “ and “to provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.”

Fieldwork was carried out between the 18th and 27th January 2016 by Peter Bellamy.

Terrain Archaeology wishes to acknowledge the cooperation and assistance of Dunster Biomass Ltd and Martin Papworth and Sarah Jack of the 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 centred on ST 397 183 at a height of about 17 m above OD (Figure 1). It consists of the area north of Strode House, including the kennels and garages, the north lawn in front of Barrington Court and the road running between Strode House and Barrington Court (Figure 2). The ground is flat and

low-lying with the northern side of the area bounded by a moat and pond. The roads and courtyard in front of Barrington Court are slightly sunken.

## 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 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 in fulfilment of the Planning Conditions. 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 biomass boiler was installed in the existing modern garages to the north of Strode House. A new heating main to serve Barrington Court and Strode House was laid in a trench running across the front of the garages, then across the edge of the north lawn into the road between Barrington Court and Strode House and into the Strode House Boiler Room (Figure 2). The trench was 0.6–0.8 m wide and 1.2–1.6 m deep.

## 1.8 Methods

The methodology, scope, aims and objectives of the works was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Terrain Archaeology in January 2016 (Terrain Archaeology document no. 3449/0/1).

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. These records have 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. 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, is currently stored by Terrain Archaeology under the project code 53449. 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](http://www.oasis.ac.uk)) under the reference code *terrains1-256606*. 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 Natural Deposits

The natural deposits comprised yellowish-brown clay (103) at a depth of about 0.95 m below present ground surface with a layer of dark grey clay with roots and charcoal flecks (102) about 0.2 m thick above.

### 2.2 Archaeological Features

#### 2.2.1 Ditch 110

Ditch 110 was a linear feature running roughly NNW-SSE across the North Lawn (Figure 3; Plate 4). The western side was encountered obliquely near where the northern end of the pipe trench changed direction and was disturbed by the later insertion of a water pipe. The base of the ditch broadly ran along the line of the new pipe trench (Figure 4) and the eastern side lay beyond the excavated area. The ditch was cut into the natural clay and had fairly steeply sloping sides which curved into a rounded flat base. It was filled with a basal layer of soft mid brownish-grey clay with occasional wood or root fragments (111), 0.15 m thick. Above this was a 0.45 m thick fairly soft layer of mid reddish-brown clay with moderate stone rubble up to 150 mm across, occasional small brick rubble and frequent small pieces of slate (112). Over 112 was a 0.35 m thick layer of fairly firm mid reddish-brown clay (105) containing frequent stone rubble and occasional brick rubble. It is unclear whether this rubbly layer was within ditch 110 or overlay it, but it did not appear to continue westwards beyond the edge of the ditch so most likely forms its upper fill.

#### 2.2.2 Ditch 116

Ditch 116 was a linear feature running roughly ENE-WSW across the North Lawn (Figure 3; Plate 6). It measured about 0.8 m wide and 0.6 m deep with sloping sides and a rounded base. It was only observed in an oblique section. It was filled with brownish-grey clay with frequent stone rubble up to 250 mm across (117).

#### 2.2.3 Robber Trench 108

A vertical-sided flat-bottomed cut (108) was observed along the eastern edge of the new pipe trench (Figure 3). It was 0.55 m deep but its full width was not exposed within the trench. It cut through layers 105 and 112 within ditch 110 (Figure 4; Plate 5). At the base and on the lower part of the side was a discontinuous thin layer of pale yellowish-grey lime mortar (113), over which was a 0.2 m thick layer of soft mid greyish-brown clay with frequent mortar flecks (114). The upper part of the trench was filled with soft dark orangey clay with sparse mortar fragments and flecks (109).

### 2.3 Services

A number of services were encountered along the length of the trench. These were marked on a plan but were not otherwise recorded. Two metal water pipes were uncovered in the north lawn, both encountered in two separate places (Figure 3). Three other water pipes were found in the area in front of Strode House. Two electricity cables and another larger diameter metal pipe were found running roughly westwards from the Boiler Room and Water Tank in front of Strode House (Figure 3). Part of the walls of the Boiler Room and Water Tank were exposed at the end of the new pipe trench. These yellow brick walls (120) were constructed in a construction trench (121) filled with mid grey clay with moderate charcoal flecks (122) (Figure 4; Plate 9).

Two ceramic drains were found in the roadway between Barrington Court and Strode House (Figure 3; Plate 8).

## 2.4 Modern Surfaces and Deposits

### 2.4.1 Garages

In the forecourt area of the modern garages the surface comprises tarmac and stone (100), 0.2 m thick, over a 0.2 m thick bedding or levelling layer of mixed stone, sand and paving slab fragments (101).

### 2.4.2 Lawn

The existing north lawn of Barrington Court consists of a 0.15 m thick layer of soft dark reddish-brown silty clay topsoil and turf (104). This overlay the natural clay and also the upper fill of Ditch 110 (105) and Robber Trench 108 (109).

### 2.4.3 Strode House

The road and the area in front of Strode House was surfaced by a 0.1 m thick layer of tarmac (115) over a 0.25–0.5 m thick levelling layer of reddish-brown clay loam with very frequent stone rubble, up to 400 mm across, and moderate brick rubble (116).

## 3. Finds

### 3.1 Finds Assemblage

A small quantity of material was collected during the observations. This was all recovered from context 105 and consists of a random sample of the material within this context. The finds are tabulated by number and weight in Table 1. The finds have not been retained, but were discarded after recording.

Context	Post-med. pottery	Tile	Slate	Glass	Plastic	Animal bone
105	10/448	1/168	1/444	3/131	6/16	3/66g
<i>Total</i>	<i>10/448g</i>	<i>1/168g</i>	<i>1/444g</i>	<i>3/131g</i>	<i>6/16g</i>	<i>3/66g</i>

*Table 1: Quantification of finds by context (count/weight in grams)*

### 3.2 Pottery

Ten sherds of pottery were recovered from context 105. They are all post-medieval or modern in date. The assemblage consisted of four sherds of nineteenth century spongeware and transfer printed ware, one possibly twentieth century coffee cup and five sherds of local coarsewares. The coarsewares were derived from probably two different vessels: a chamber pot and a large shallow bowl, both with internal yellow brown glaze and of nineteenth century date.

### 3.3 Building Materials

The building material consisted of one fragment of clay pantile and one small roofing slate with a single nail hole.

In addition a chamfered coping stone was also noted in context 105 (Figure 5) and was retained at the property.

### 3.4 Glass

The glass consisted of two sherds of brown wine bottle and a clear window sherd, all probably nineteenth century in date.

### 3.5 Plastic

Six pieces of translucent white flat pieces of plastic were found in context 105.

### 3.6 Animal Bone

Three animal bones, both sheep, were recovered from 105.

## 4. Discussion and Conclusions

### 4.1 Discussion

The new heat main trench for the new biomass boiler encountered a relatively small number of archaeological features, probably all nineteenth and twentieth century in date.

A ditch (110) was found running NNW-SSE about 5.5 m from the west side of the north lawn. Its dating is not secure, but it contained nineteenth/twentieth century finds in its upper rubble fill. The lower fills were clay and appear to be the result of natural silting, but the upper part is a deliberately deposited layer of brick and stone rubble, perhaps consolidating the ditch after it had gone out of use. This ditch is along the approximate line of the east edge of a trackway shown on the 1842 Barrington Tithe map and may have been a boundary or drainage feature as part of this track. Another undated ditch crosses the line of this track, but it is unclear what was its relationship with ditch 110. It may be a drainage feature as it was filled with stone rubble.

Along the eastern side of the heat main trench was a vertically-sided flat-bottomed trench (108), which had traces of mortar and mortar rubble remaining in the base and in the backfill. It has been interpreted as a robber trench removing the remains of a farm building shown on the 1886 and 1903 Ordnance Survey maps (Figure 2). This building was demolished in the period 1921–25 (Fretwell 1993).

The other features recorded were mainly nineteenth and twentieth century drains and services and included part of the Strode House boiler house.

### 4.2 Conclusions

A small number of features of nineteenth and twentieth century date were observed. These included a possible boundary ditch to a track shown on the 1842 tithe map and the robber trench associated with the demolition of a late nineteenth century farm building in the 1920s.

## 5. References

- |                     |       |   |
|---------------------|-------|---|
| Brown, D. H.,       | 2011  | <i>Archaeological Archives. A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation.</i> Second Edition, September 2011. Archaeological Archives Forum.  |
| ClfA,               | 2014a | <i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief.</i> December 2014. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.   |
| ClfA,               | 2014b | <i>Regulations for professional conduct.</i> December 2014. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.   |
| ClfA,               | 2014c | <i>Standard and Guidance for the Creation, Preparation, Transfer and Deposition of Archaeological Archives.</i> December 2014. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.  |
| Fretwell, K.,       | 1993  | <i>Barrington Court, Somerset. Park and Garden Survey.</i> The National Trust.  |
| Papworth, M.        | 2000  | <i>Barrington Court, Somerset, South Lawn Archaeological Survey and Excavation.</i> The National Trust.   |
| SCC                 | 2011  | <i>Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook.</i> Somerset County Council.   |
| Terrain Archaeology | 2016  | <i>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.</i> Terrain Archaeology Document 3449/0/1, January 2016. |

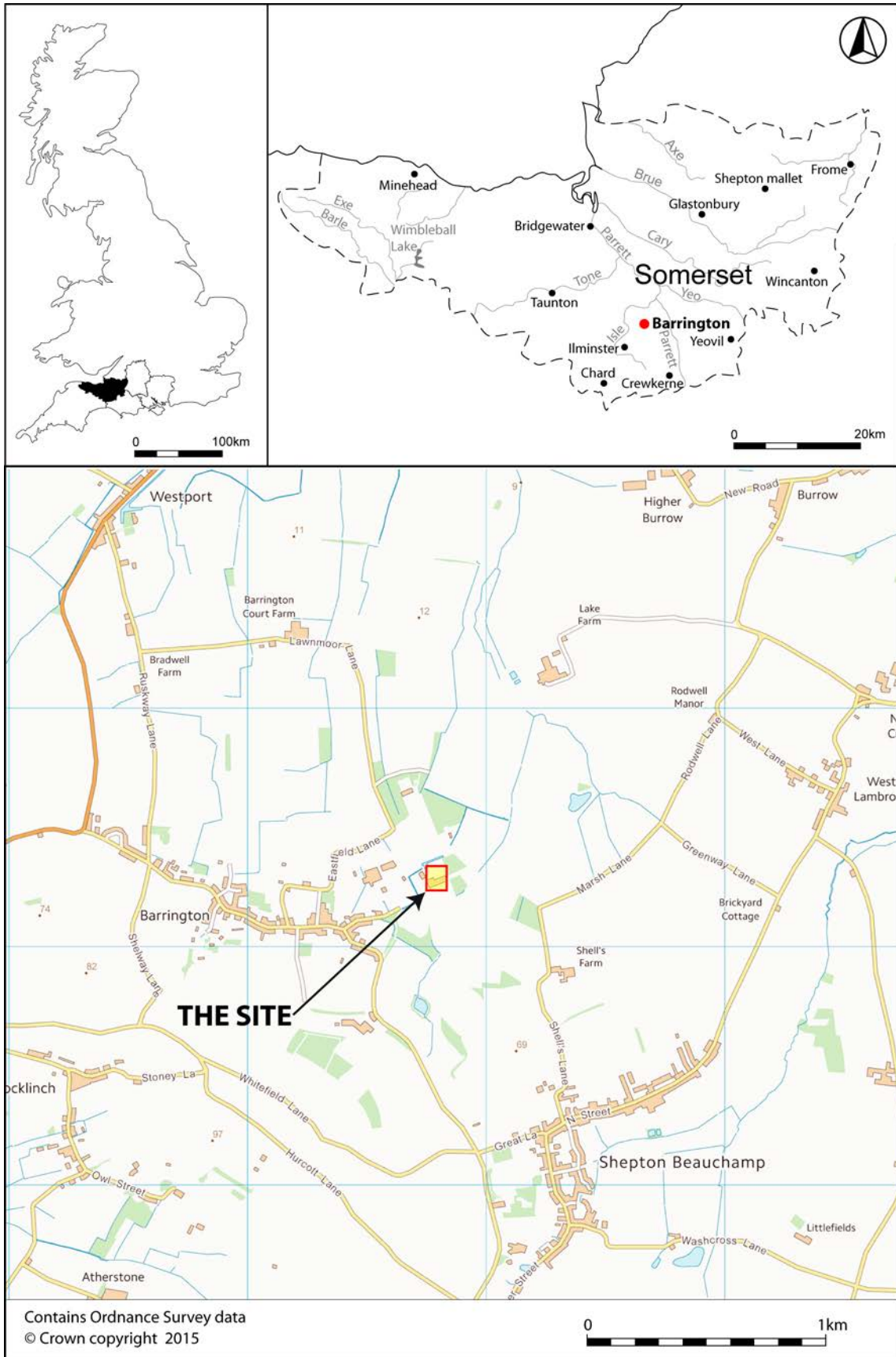


Figure 1 Location map.

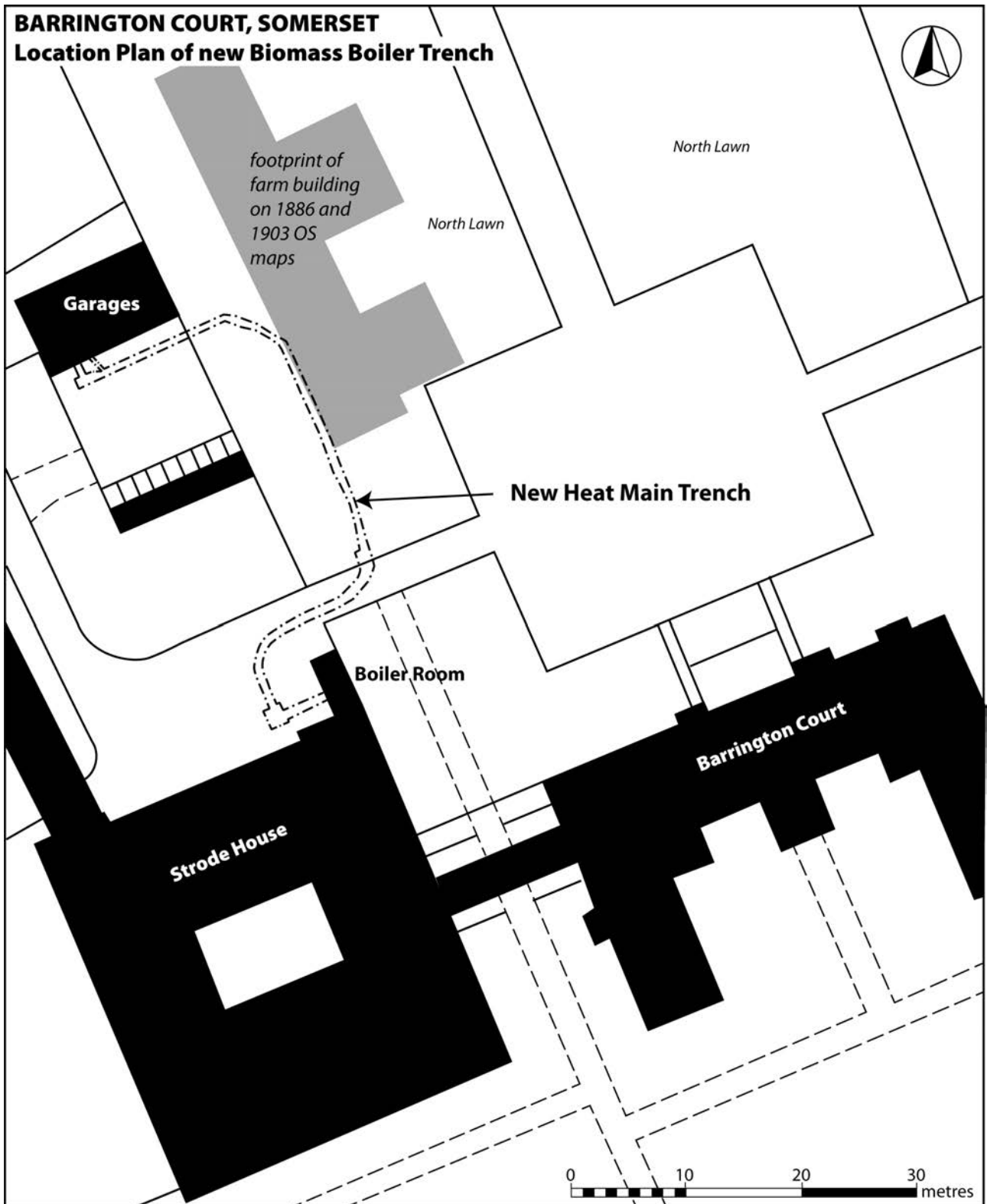


Figure 2: Location of New Heat Main Trench.

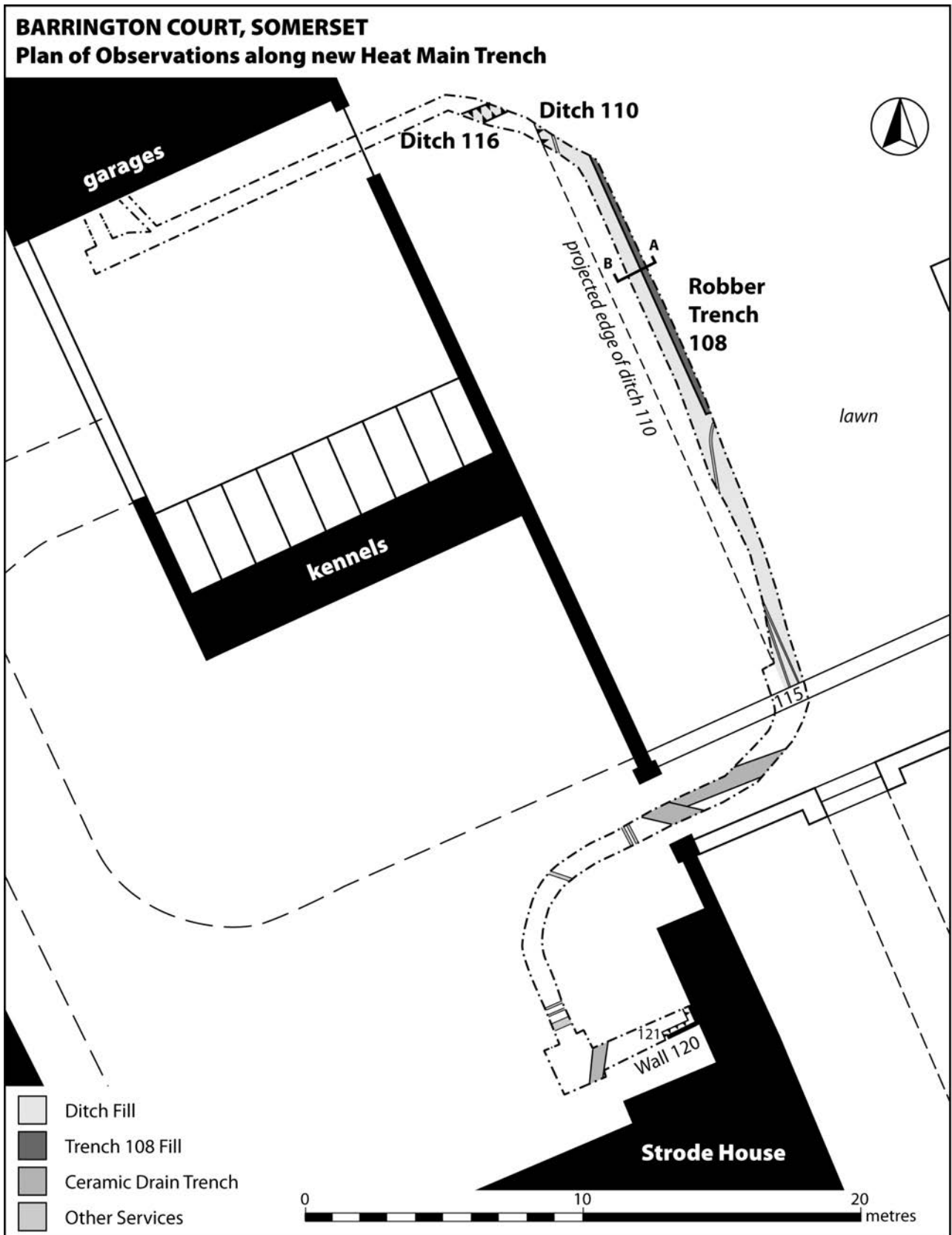


Figure 3: Plan of Observations.

### North-facing Section across New Heat Main Trench

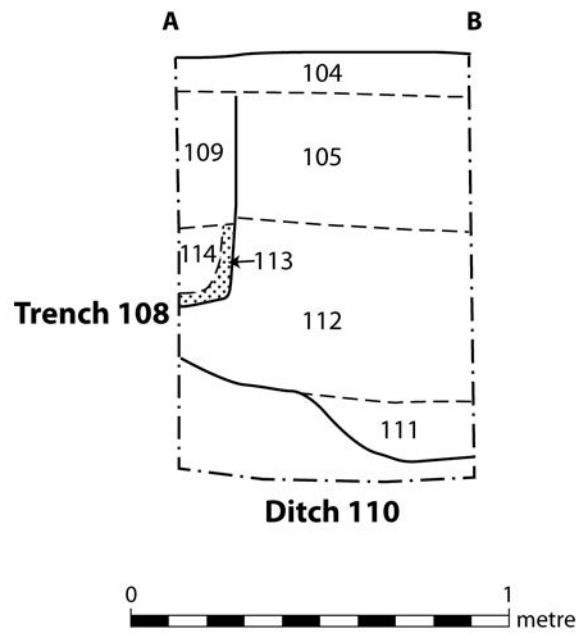


Figure 4: Section through Ditch 110 and Robber Trench 108.

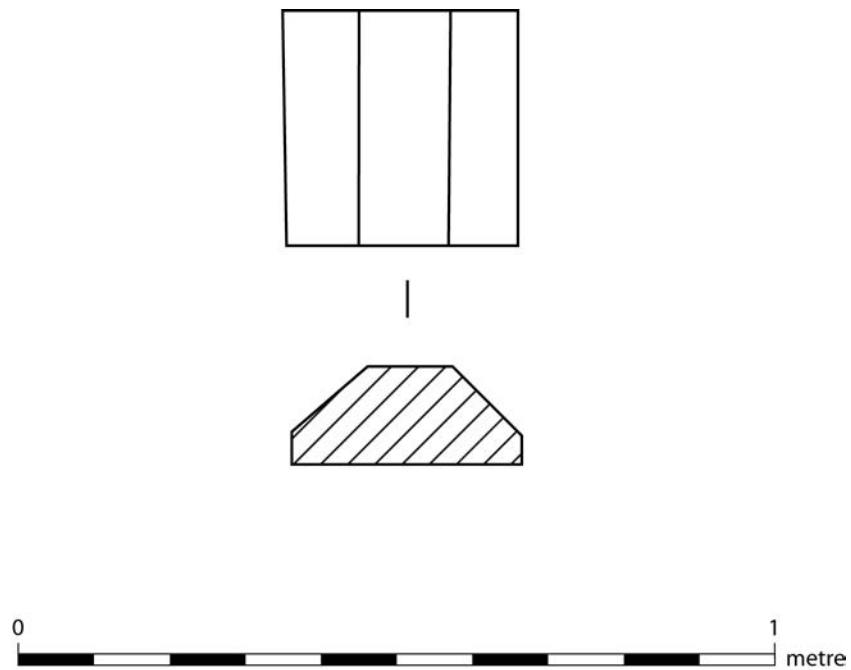


Figure 5: Coping stone found in Context 105.





*Plate 1: New heat main trench where it enters new boiler room in garages, viewed from E. 2m scales.*



*Plate 2: New heat main trench running from garages into north lawn, viewed from ENE. 2m scales.*



*Plate 3: Course of new heat main trench running across north lawn, viewed from NNW. 2m scales.*



*Plate 4: Ditch 110, viewed from S. 2m scales.*



*Plate 5: Ditch 110 to right and Robber Trench 108 on left side of new heat main trench, viewed from NNW. 2m scale.*



*Plate 6: Ditch 116, viewed from ENE. 2m scales.*



*Plate 7: New heat main trench where it cuts through lawn re-vestment wall 115, viewed from ENE. 2m scales.*



*Plate 8: New heat main trench along road, showing drains and services, viewed from SW. 2m scales.*



*Plate 9: Walls of Strode House boiler room 120, in construction trench 121, viewed from W. 2m scales.*