

PROJECT DESIGN FOR EXCAVATION AT PARHAM HOUSE, July 2010

1 Introduction

This project design details the planned excavation Parham House over the period 16th to 19th July 2010. Worthing Archaeological Society excavated a series of trenches and test pits in 2009. These revealed the presence of a chalk surface, thought to represent the yard of the parsonage demolished in the 1730s. These results backed up the evidence provided by the resistivity survey and from documentary sources. Further investigations in May/June 2010 revealed the presence of a timber framed building on the southern edge of the built area, the south west corner of the built area, confirmed the position of the track way that borders the southern edge of the parsonage, and the presence of a feature beneath, and therefore older than, the chalk yard. An evaluation trench over the resistivity anomalies found in the survey carried out in May 2010 proved the existence of a flint feature further to the east than we had previously expected to find archaeology..

2 Site Location & Geology

The site lies at c35m above Ordnance Datum to the south of the main House and east of the Church, at grid reference SZ50601141. The area of the site is supposedly on the Arun Valley river terrace 5 deposits, however previous excavation on the site suggests that there are no river terrace deposits remaining and the geology below the soil is the Upper Greensand.

3 Archaeological Background - Previous Excavations

Excavations were carried out in 2007 and 2008 to try to locate the position of the medieval village. A total of 8 trenches were dug in 2008, only one of which revealed any significant archaeology. This was trench G, located in the eastern arm of the ha-ha, which showed the presence of a substantial wall. Unfortunately, this structure remains undated at present and requires further work. Archive research has failed, up to now, to reveal the location of the village. However, this is a long-term project designed to increase the understanding of the Parham Estate's evolution. Further extensive archival work (possibly accessing the archives at Kew and Canterbury) is required before we can expect to locate the missing village. However, the location of the Parsonage is of interest to the current estate management, and documentary sources have suggested that it was to the east of the Church. The Parsonage appears to have consisted of a dwelling, a barn and stables. The dwelling appears to have been a substantial building; an inventory from 1708 (see appendix 1) shows the presence of 10 rooms and a cellar. Interim reports on the excavations in 2009 are available on the WAS website.

4 Field Methodology for PAR09/c Excavation

4.1 Objectives

1. What is represented by the archaeology found beneath the chalk yard in trench 108?

Trench 108 (excavated May/June 2010) showed a depression in the chalk surface in the northwest corner. A 1m x 1m sondage through the chalk layer showed that the archaeology continued to a depth of at least a further 1m (see figure 1). The current view is that this represents a pit that was capped by the creation of the chalk yard, and as such represents the first archaeology on site in a truly sealed context.

2. What is the southern limit of the building marked by the three brick built post platforms found in May 2010?

Trench 108 contained three brick built features currently interpreted as post platforms for a timber framed building, with the building extending to the south.

3. What is the significance of the flint feature found in trench 106?

Trench 106, excavated June 2010, revealed the presence of a flint layer that appeared to extend across most of the 3 x 3m trench. Along the western edge of the trench was an area of broken roofing in the form of both Horsham stone and ceramic roof tiles. The flint extended to a depth of c500m, and there appeared to be an area of mortaring.

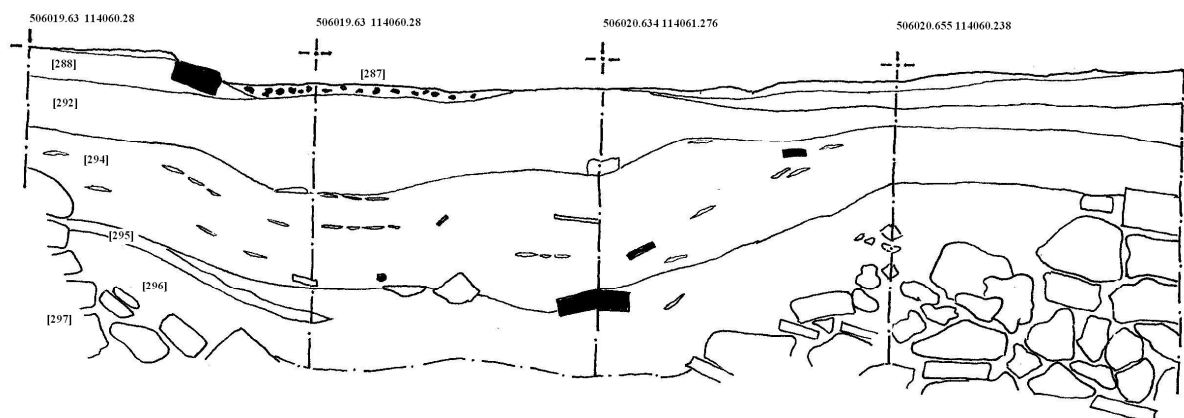


Figure 1. Box section of the sondage excavated in Trench 108

4.2 Excavation Approach

Depending on the numbers of members attending and weather four trenches will be opened (trenches 106, 112, 113 & 114) along with a series of test pits. These will be deturfed and dug by hand. The maximum depth of excavation will be controlled by the depth of the archaeology in the trenches.

Trench 106 (3m by 3m) will be partially reopened and extended to further investigate the area of flint and its significance.

Trench 112, (3m by 3m) will be centred over the sondage previously excavated in Trench 108, and will investigate the feature below the chalk yard. All spoil removed from this feature will be sieved.

Trench 113 (1m by 6m) will be to the south of Trench V (excavated in 2009) and will investigate the southern limit of the flint feature seen in Trench V.

Trench 114 (1.5m by 1.5m) will be adjacent to Test Pit 10 (excavated in 2009) to investigate the eastern limit of the flint feature seen in Trenches V and 108.

The area around trench 106 will be surveyed by probing, and, if there is sufficient time and diggers, test pits will be dug to try to ascertain the extent of the flint feature.

4.2.1 Site Records

- Details of the nature, extent and date (where it is possible to determine) of archaeological contexts will be recorded upon the standard pro forma sheets that would be provided by WAS (as drawn up in conjunction with the County Archaeologist).
- Measured drawings (plans at 1:20, sections at 1:10) will be made as appropriate, with particular emphasis on sections. All drawings to be accurately related to the OS National Grid.
- Levels will be taken where appropriate; ensuring that each context recorded can be related to Ordnance Datum. A TBM will be established on site and linked into the nearest OS BM.
- Photographs will be taken using both a film camera and a digital camera as appropriate, using a suitable scale.
- Artefacts will be retained where considered appropriate in the light of their context and/or importance.
- All artefacts recovered during the excavation will be processed according to guidelines as set out in *First Aid for Finds*, 1998, and to the standards of Worthing Museum.
- All artefacts will be quantified by number and where appropriate weight.
- All artefacts, except those excluded on the grounds of size/material, will be washed and marked with the site code.
- All artefacts will be bagged and boxed in containers approved by the museum and sympathetic to their condition. Specialist help will be sought via

the Sussex Archaeological Society where more detailed analysis and/or conservation is required.

4.2.2 Environmental Material

Environmental sampling will occur where appropriate.

4.2.3 Metal Detecting

Metal detectors will be used to scan the various spoil heaps to locate finds missed by the diggers. This has proved to be very successful in the past, increasing our recovery rate of coins by 100%. If possible, metal detectors will be used over the area of the trenches after machine digging but prior to hand excavation. Any 'hits' will be marked and left for recovery in the course of excavation.

5 Timetable

The excavation is planned for 4 days commencing on Friday 16th July 2010. WAS members will be on site from Friday 16th in order to facilitate a quick start on the Saturday.

Post-Excavation Analysis

It is envisaged that where possible all artefacts will be identified and reported on by local specialists.

6 Written Report

1. An interim report will be produced within three months of completion of the excavation. This report will be distributed to those mentioned below, and will be posted on the WAS website. It will also be published in the WAS newsletter/journal.
2. A final report (detailing the excavations in 2007, 2008, 2009 & 2010) will be prepared, which will include details of the excavation method, a description of the archaeological features, details of artefacts and an assessment of environmental evidence. The report will also include site location, trench details and feature plans tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid and sections showing levels above Ordnance Datum.
3. Copies of the final report will be submitted to the following:
 - West Sussex County Council;
 - Parham Estate;
 - Sussex Archaeological Society.

7 Deposition of Archive and Finds

1. Artefacts remain in the ownership of the Parham Estate and will be stored, initially at the Slindon office. Where relevant some material will be kept off-site if conservation standards require it.
2. A copy of the site archive will be offered to the following:
 - West Sussex County Council;
 - Parham Estate

8 Other

1. The trench(es), when unattended, will be secured and clearly marked in a manner commensurate with Health & Safety regulations. 'Deep Excavation notices will be used if appropriate.
2. A Risk Assessment will be carried out prior to the archaeological excavation and all relevant Health and Safety regulations will be complied with during the excavation. All members of the excavation team will be briefed on its contents before commencing work at the site. A first aid kit will be available on site at all times.
3. WAS are fully insured (as arranged through the Council for British Archaeology) to undertake all aspects of archaeological fieldwork
4. The initial excavation will be funded by the Worthing Archaeological Society. If dating or other scientific analysis is required, Sussex Archaeological Society will be approached for a Margary Grant. Alternatively the CBA South East regional society will be approached for a grant.
5. Personnel. All personnel will be members of WAS.