

PROJECT DESIGN FOR EXCAVATION AT PARHAM HOUSE, August 2013

1 Introduction

This project design details the planned excavation Parham House over the period 17th to 31st August 2013. 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 trackway 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. Excavations in 2011 revealed the presence of walls beneath the chalk feature on the western side of the feature. Further work in 2012 developed our understanding of these walls. They extend to a depth of nearly 2m and possibly represent the remains of an early medieval Monastic Grange known to have existed from the written record. The current view is that what has been uncovered so far is the garderobe pit at the western end of a substantial building. The traces of various other walls were also located.

2 Site Location & Geology

The site lies at a height of c35m above Ordnance Datum to the south of the main House and east of the Church, centred around 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. Excavations in subsequent years showed the extent of the chalk feature, with post pads in places, and the presence of an extensive packed flint layer to the eastern side of the site. A sondage sunk through the chalk feature came upon a wall., and subsequent excavations established the positions of three walls of a 'room', most likely a cellar or undercroft. This was looked at again in 2012, when a firmer plan of the features was established.

4 Field Methodology for PAR13 Excavation

4.1 Objective

1. What are the size, shape and function of the room(s) represented by the walls discovered in 2011?

The excavation in 2011 began to establish the position of a building beneath the chalk surface. This has been tentatively identified as an early medieval Monastic Grange known to have existed from the written record. As the remains are at depth a larger area and more time is needed to continue the investigations, hence the larger trench and extended length requested for the excavation. This would enable us to develop the floor plan of the building starting from the features recorded in 2012.

4.2 Excavation Approach

One trench (see Figure 1) will be opened measuring 14m by 10m, position to cover the area of the three walls seen in 2011. The turf will be carefully cut by hand and stored for replacement at the conclusion of the excavation.

The trench will be excavated, by hand, to expose the chalk surface, which will be recorded prior to removal. No finds will be retained from the context above the chalk surface (context 200), experience on the site has shown this context to be a mixed deposit containing artefacts from the 12th to 20th centuries AD. An extensive collection has already been made from this context and further material would be superfluous.

Once the chalk feature has been removed the positions of the walls and their relationship will be established. Sondages will be located as and when the need arises in order to test the depth of any features revealed.

At the conclusion of the excavation, the spoil will be returned by machine, the site landscaped (i.e. levelled) and then the turf relaid.

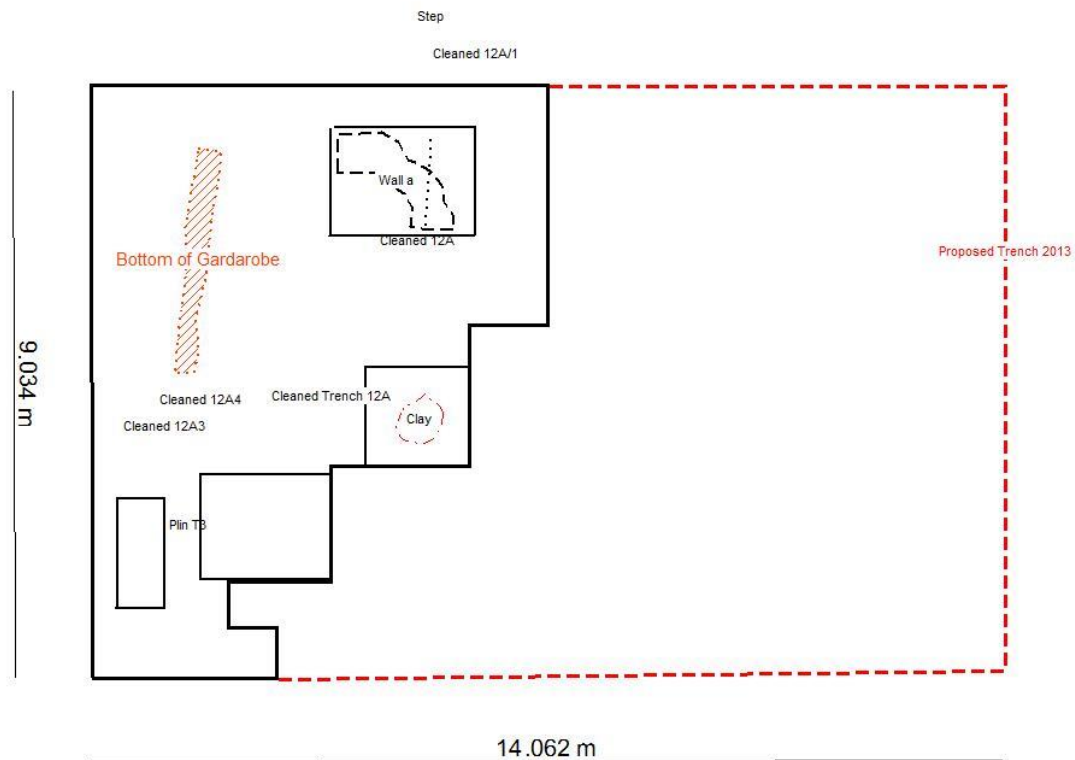


Figure 1. Proposed trench, August 2013

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 14 days commencing on Saturday 17th August. WAS members will be on site from Friday 16th in order to facilitate a quick start on the Saturday. The site will be restored by Saturday 7th September.

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 reports will be produced within three months of completion of the excavation. This report will be distributed to those mentioned below, and will 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 conversation 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.

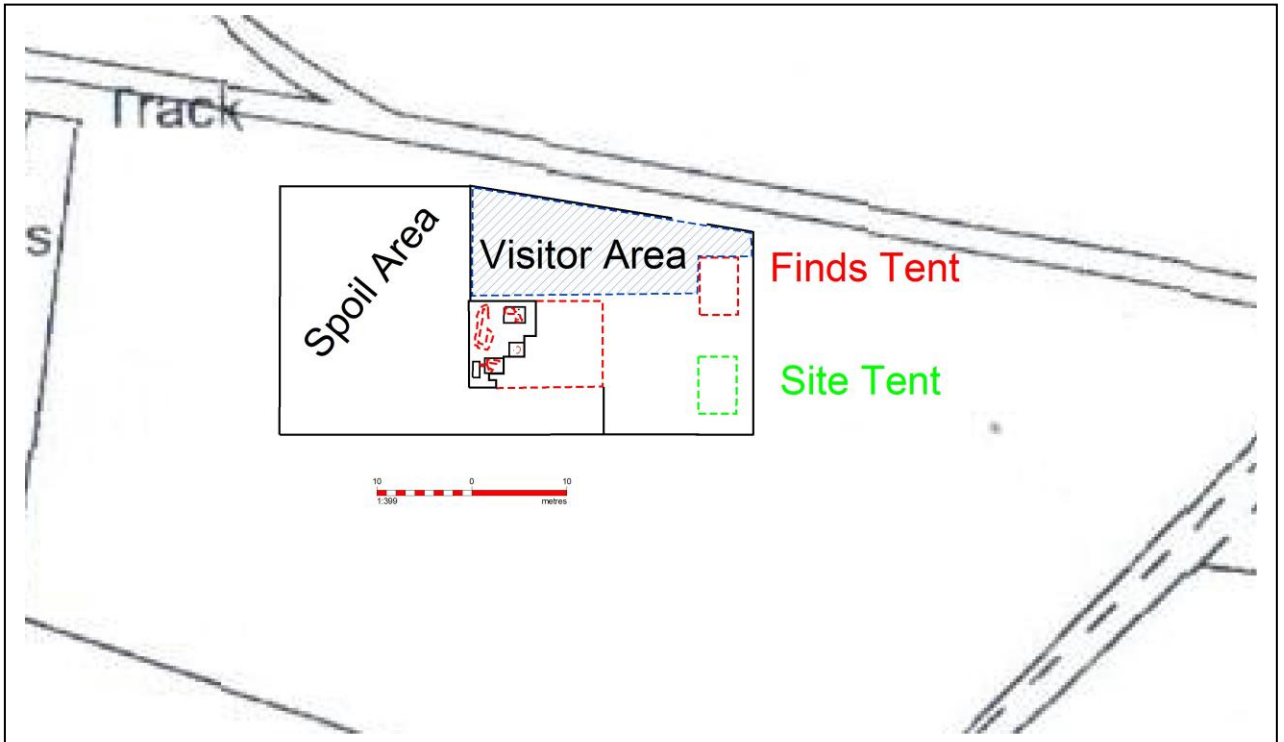


Figure 2. Site Layout 1

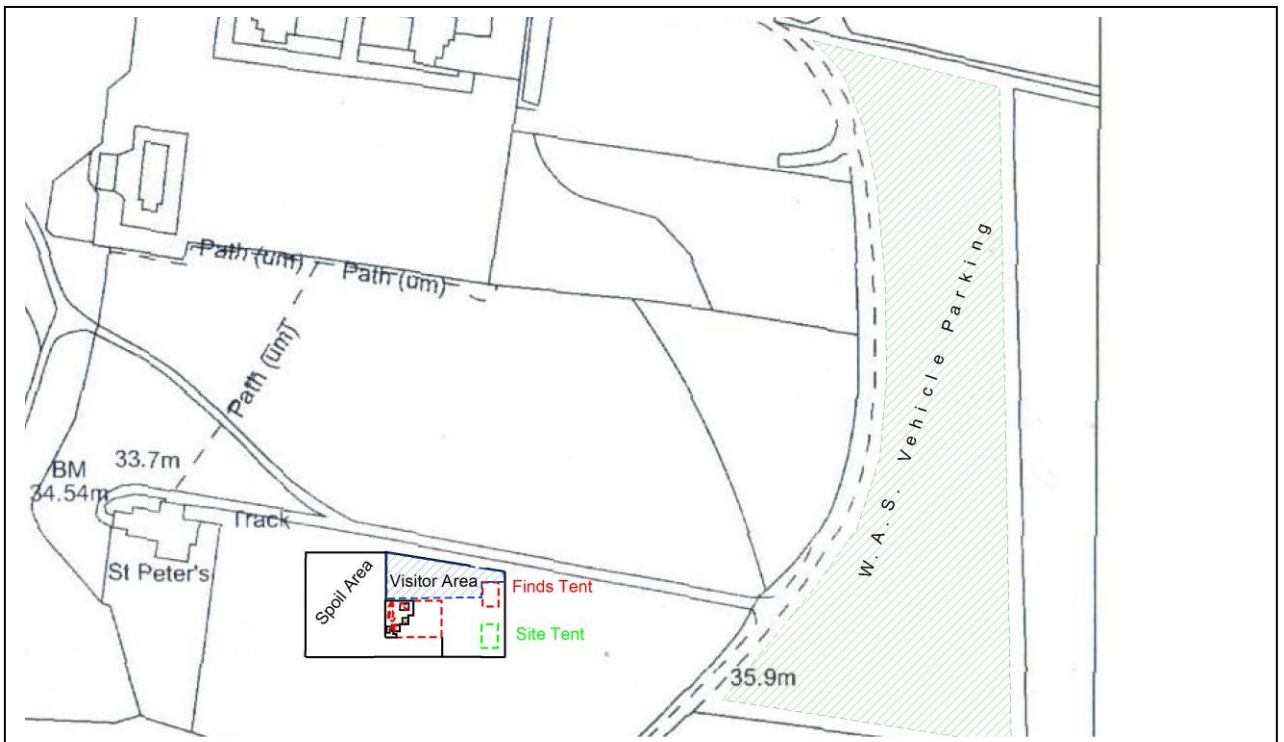


Figure 3 Site Layout 2