

## PROJECT DESIGN FOR EXCAVATION AT SLINDON WOOD MAY 2009

### 1 Introduction

This project design details the planned excavation in Slindon Wood, proposed for the May Day bank holiday 2009 (subject to the arrangement of the necessary licences, and the agreement of the National Trust).

Following a request from the National Trust, the Worthing Archaeological Society propose a small scale excavation on a brick built subterranean feature located in Slindon Wood (grid reference SU955074) prior to the feature being made safe.



Fig.1 Members of WAS visiting the site of the feature in Slindon Wood, facing west

### 2 Site Location & Geology

The site lies c30 above Ordnance Datum to the south of the Slindon Wood at grid reference SU955074. The area of the site is on the head gravel of the upper chalk.

### 3 Archaeological Background

The feature is visible as a square hole, approximately 0.8m x 0.8m, which at a depth of approximately 0.8m opens into a brick lined circular structure 2.4m in diameter, with a concrete roof. In the north-east quadrant a ceramic pipe leads into the structure just below the roof line (Fig. 2). The structure is currently partially filled with soil.

At present the construction date and the purpose of the structure are unknown.



Fig. 2 Internal brick structure with pipe, north-east quadrant of feature

## **4 Field Methodology for SLW09 Excavation**

### **4.1 Objectives**

Based on initial observation of the feature there are two main objectives for what this excavation.

**1. To record the structure**

**2. To ascertain whether the date and reason for construction can be determined prior to the feature being “made safe” by the National Trust.**

### **4.2 Excavation Approach**

Two trenches will be opened in order to investigate the objectives listed above. The trenches will be hand dug, with the spoil placed in the area adjacent to each trench.

#### **4.2.1 Trench A**

Trench A will be the inside of the structure. Initially, the internal fill will be levelled so the construction of the upper part of the internal build of the structure can be recorded. An attempt will then be made to try and determine the depth of the feature, and a decision would then be taken as to the how deep to excavate.

#### **Trench B**

Trench B will initially be a 1m x 1m trench located to the north of the feature. The trench will attempt to expose the upper roof of the structure below, and determine the stratigraphy of the soil above the structure.

#### **4.2.2 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 at Slindon House.
- Photographs will be taken using both a film camera and a digital camera as appropriate, using a suitable scale.
- Artifacts will be retained where considered appropriate in the light of their context and/or importance.
- All artifacts 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 artifacts will be quantified by number and where appropriate weight.
- All artifacts, except those excluded on the grounds of size/material, will be washed and marked with the site code.
- All artifacts 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.

#### **4.2.3 Environmental Material**

Environmental sampling will occur where appropriate.

#### **4.2.4 Metal Detecting**

Given the small scale of the excavation, it is not planned to use metal detectors during the excavation.

### **5 Timetable**

The excavation is potentially planned for 3 days commencing on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2009.

### **6 Post-Excavation Analysis**

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

### **7 Written Report**

1. A 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. Copies of the final report will be submitted to the following:
  - West Sussex County Council;
  - Slindon Estate;
  - Sussex Archaeological Society.

## **8 Deposition of Archive and Finds**

1. Artefacts remain in the ownership of the Slindon 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;
  - Slindon Estate
  - The Collection Discovery Centre at Fishbourne Roman Palace

## **9 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. As the feature is located on a footpath in the woods, overnight the area will be cordoned off with barricade fencing supported by road pins.
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: It is proposed that the excavation will consist of five excavators working on the two trenches, and two surveyors to map in the feature and surrounding earth works.