

**Wincobank Hillfort, Sheffield,
South Yorkshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief



Excavated post holes for a lectern at Wincobank Hillfort, Sheffield.

ARS Ltd Report 2014/16
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Archaeological Research Services Ltd

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In February 2014 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by Sheffield City Council Culture and Environment, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Wincobank Hillfort, Sheffield, during ground-works related to the construction of a lectern outside the north-eastern entrance to the hillfort.

The ground-work comprised the excavation of two small post holes to accommodate the erection of the lectern.

The ground-work excavation was monitored in order to determine the potential, presence, extent, depth, state of preservation and significance of any potential archaeological remains; however, no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were identified.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Wincobank Hillfort is located approximately 3.5km to the north-east of Sheffield city centre and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM no.13375). A previous desk-based assessment undertaken by ArcHeritage (2011) has identified several previously unknown or little-known documentary and cartographic sources for various features on Wincobank Hill. These include the earliest known illustration of part of the course of the Roman Ridge to the south of Jenkin Road, dating from 1788, original photographs and site drawings from the 1899 archaeological excavation at Wincobank hillfort and the previously undocumented 1903 excavation at the hillfort. The desk-based assessment has also identified areas of potential further work relating to the hillfort, the Roman Ridge and Wincobank Wood and also Wincobank Castle, the Winco Wood Lane cottages and the site of the 20th-century allotments.

1.2 Based on the significance of the heritage asset, Archaeological Research Services Ltd (ARS Ltd) was commissioned by Sheffield City Council Culture and Environment, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Wincobank Hillfort, during ground-works related to the construction of a lectern outside the north-eastern entrance to the hillfort (Fig. 1).

1.3 The archaeological watching brief has been carried out under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DCLG 2012), ‘The Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs’ (Institute for Archaeologists 2008) and a brief for archaeological monitoring issued by Sheffield City Council Culture and Environment (Appendix I).

1.4 The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government’s requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. The purpose of the NPPF is to contribute to the achievement of *sustainable development*, which includes “...contributing to, protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment...” (DCLG 2012, 30).

1.5 The underlying geological deposits in the Wincobank area are Lower Coal Measures (Westphalian A), whilst the ridge that runs across the area comprises Silkstone Rock with an outcrop of bedded Parkgate Rock Sandstone to the south-east of Wincobank Hill (British Geological Survey 2014). The solid geology is overlain by free-draining, slightly acid loamy soils (National Soils Resources Institute 2014).

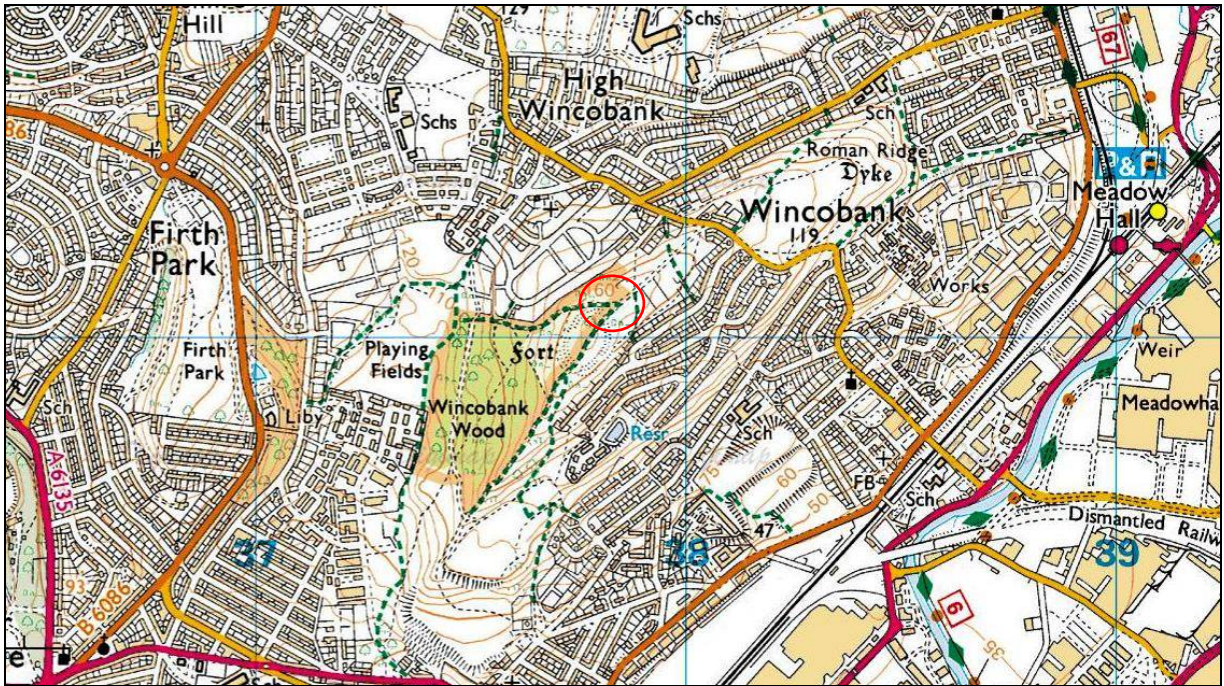


Figure 1: General site location (circled).

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2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 The archaeological watching brief aimed to provide an appropriate level of preservation by record and interpretation of any archaeological deposits and/or features exposed or surface earthworks impacted during the proposed ground-works relating to the construction of a lectern at Wincobank Hillfort. Further details are included within the brief prepared by Sheffield City Council Culture and Environment (Appendix I).

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Alvaro Mora-Ottomano of ARS Ltd in February 2014. All excavation on the site was observed to ensure that no archaeological remains were disturbed. Any features or structures were fully cleaned and recorded in accordance with the standards stipulated by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008). The records consisted of the following.

- Any features or structures were photographed, recorded and, where possible, fully excavated.
- All the contexts were recorded on pro-forma sheets and context register was maintained.

3.2 The location of the watching brief area is illustrated below (Fig. 2). Full details of the recording methodology are provided in the brief (Appendix I).

3.3 A risk assessment was undertaken before commencement of the work and health and safety regulations were adhered to at all times.



Archaeological Research Services Ltd
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 Portland Square
 Bakewell
 Derbyshire
 DE45 1HB

Site Code: WHS'14
 Drawing Ref:
 Date: 10 March 2014
 Drawn: AMO
 Scale: 1:1000@A4

Figure 2:
 Plan of the hillfort showing
 the location of the lectern's
 post holes

Key:

Notes:

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4 RESULT

4.1 The ground-work comprised the excavation of two small post holes to accommodate the erection of a lectern at Wincobank Hillfort. The location of the post holes were immediately to the south-eastern edge of a track-way that runs across the monument where it converges to meet an additional footpath at NGR: SK 37850 91082 (Fig. 2).

4.2 The post holes were aligned north-west to south-east and each of them measured 250mm in diameter and 500mm in depth, with a gap of 250mm between them. The post holes had straight sides and flat bases. The stratigraphic sequence exposed within the post holes consisted of a layer of topsoil with an overall thickness of 300mm over a thin sub-soil layer (c.100mm in thickness), composed of hard mid brown clay, which in turn overlay a the natural sub-stratum that consisted of sandstone rubble within a clayey matrix (Figs 3 – 5).

4.3 The ground-work excavation was monitored in order to determine the potential, presence, extent, depth, state of preservation and significance of any potential archaeological remains. In the event, no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were identified. The post holes were to be backfilled with concrete and the two metal posts that supported the lectern interpretation panel for visitors (Fig. 6).



Figure 3: Excavated post holes adjacent to the confluence of footpath, looking north-west (scale 300mm).



Figure 4: Post hole 1, looking north-east (scale 300mm).



Figure 5: Post hole 2, looking north-east (scale 300mm).



Figure 6: Detail of lectern interpretation panel.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd was commissioned by Sheffield City Council Culture and Environment, to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Wincobank Hillfort, Sheffield, during ground-works related to the construction of a lectern outside the north-eastern entrance to the hillfort within the site. The ground-work comprised the excavation of two small post holes to accommodate the erection of a lectern.

5.2 The ground-work excavation was monitored in order to determine the potential, presence, extent, depth, state of preservation and significance of any potential archaeological remains; however, no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were identified.

6 PUBLICITY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND COPYRIGHT

6.1 Any publicity will be handled by the client.

6.2 Archaeological Research Services Ltd will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

7 STATEMENT OF INDEMNITY

7.1 All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.

8 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

8.1 A digital and paper archive will be prepared by Archaeological Research Services Ltd, consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, photographs and electronic data, which will be deposited at Sheffield Museum (accession number: SHEFM:2014.13.) in April 2014.

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

9.1 Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those involved with the archaeological project, Michelle Gane of Sheffield City Council Culture and Environment, for commissioning the work and Jim McNeil of South Yorkshire Archaeology Service for monitoring and providing advice throughout the project.

10 REFERENCES

ArcHeritage 2011. Wincobank Hill, Sheffield. Desk-Based Assessment. Unpublished report 2011/422.

British Geological Service 2014. Geology Viewer. Available online at: <www.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer> [Accessed March 2014].

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APPENDIX I: SPECIFICATIONS AND OASIS FORM

BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING (Watching Brief)

WINCOBANK HILLFORT, SHEFFIELD.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The background to the site and proposed conservation works are described in the appendix. This brief outlines the requirements for archaeological monitoring of ongoing works during construction.

The aims of the archaeological monitoring are:

- to ensure that any archaeological features revealed during the restoration and repair works are identified and recorded;
- to identify and record any information relating to the construction of the dam, including walls and clay lining;
- to identify and record features within the buildings to inform a chronological understanding of change within the workshops.

The accompanying planning report outlines the known or suspected archaeological implications of development on the development site.

1.2 There is reason to believe that archaeological remains may be disturbed in the course of the proposed development, though little is known of their nature or state of preservation.

1.3 Archaeological monitoring (often referred to as a 'Watching Brief') is required to ensure that remains that are affected can be recorded and/or retrieved.

1.4 The archaeological contractor will report any significant or unexpected discoveries immediately to the project monitors.

1.6 The archaeological contractor should be aware of the relevant conditions of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM no.13375) Consents for works at Wincobank Hill Fort issued by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, covering site works, archaeological recording and reporting.

2 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

2.1 The work shall be carried out by appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

2.2 Where structures, features or finds of archaeological interest are exposed or disturbed by construction works, the archaeological contractor must be given the opportunity to observe, clean, assess and, where appropriate, hand excavate, sample and record these features and finds.

2.3 Any human remains which are revealed must initially be left *in situ* and, if removal is necessary, this must comply with the relevant Ministry of Justice (formerly Home Office), Diocesan and other regulations, as appropriate.

2.4 All finds that are 'treasure' (in terms of the Treasure Act 1997) will be reported to the Coroner and appropriate procedures then followed.

2.5 Heavy plant or excavators must not be operated in the immediate vicinity of archaeological remains until the remains have been recorded and the archaeological contractor on site has given explicit permission for operations to recommence at that location. Note that a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent is that equipment and machinery shall not be used or operated in the scheduled area in conditions or in a manner likely to result in ground disturbance or other damage to the monument, other than that which is expressly authorised in this consent. Any use of machinery on site beyond that authorised in the consent should be agreed beforehand with the project monitors.

2.6 Where archaeological remains are observed by contractors or plant operators, they must immediately notify the archaeological contractor.

2.7 If it becomes clear during the monitoring that little of archaeological interest is likely to survive on the site, the contractor should discuss their work with the monitor. A joint decision will be made on reducing the work to an intermittent watching brief or ceasing observation of groundworks.

3 ARCHIVE

3.1 Upon completion of fieldwork, any samples taken will be processed and all finds will be cleaned, identified, assessed, spot-dated and properly stored.

3.2 A field archive will be compiled, comprising all primary written documents, plans, sections and photographs.

3.3 The field archive should be deposited with the appropriate museum or other archive (specified in the accompanying planning report). The archaeological contractor must contact the archive at the beginning of the project to arrange this and then to discuss conservation issues identified during the project.

4 REPORT & PUBLICITY

4.1 The archaeological contractor will provide for a written report within 3 months (or shorter period by mutual agreement) on completion of their fieldwork. A report will be produced to include the following:

- background information
- a summary of the works carried out
- a description and interpretation the findings
- an assessment of the importance of the archaeology found

4.2 All excavated areas must be accurately mapped with respect to nearby fixed structures and roads, and all archaeological features should be illustrated with appropriately scaled plans and sections. The report should be appropriately illustrated, including all of the following (unless agreed otherwise):

- a detailed location map

- a site plan showing all identified features of archaeological interest
- if possible, phase plans should be produced
- detailed plans and sections of features
- a selection of scanned photographs of work in progress
- select artefact illustrations

4.3 Acceptable digital formats are:

- text (Word and ASCII);
- images (.JPG at no less than 300 dpi. resolution).

Appendix WINCOBANK HILL, SHEFFIELD *DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT*

Report Number 2011/42 August 2011 produced by ArcHeritage

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: archaeo15-174014

Project details

Project name	Wincobank Hillfort, Sheffield, South Yorkshire. Archaeological watching brief
Short description of the project	watching brief at Wincobank hillfort during ground-works related to the construction of a lectern
Project dates	Start: 26-02-2014 End: 27-02-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	HILLFORT Iron Age
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent

Project location

Country	England
Site location	SOUTH YORKSHIRE SHEFFIELD SHEFFIELD Wincobank Hillfort, Sheffield
Study area	1.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	SK 3785 9108 53.414907336 -1.43047189762 53 24 53 N 001 25 49 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeological Research Services Ltd
Project brief originator	Sheffield City Council
Project design originator	Sheffield City Council
Project director/manager	Robin Holgate
Project supervisor	Alvaro Mora-Ottomano

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	Sheffield City Museum and Mappin Art Gallery
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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