

Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) Impact report – Tournerbury

Tournerbury SAM is a univallate ring work 'hill fort' of 2.6 hectares on the east shoreline of Hayling Island. The earthwork occupies a raised tongue of land extending between two former tidal inlets and commands the mouth of Chichester Harbour. With post medieval reclamation the site is now 240m inland. The earthwork is broken by a single original entrance to the west, and still stands to a height of up to 4 metres within a small copse which roughly follows the limits of the higher ground in this area. The interior of the site is featureless.

A hill fort is a type of earthworks used as a fortified refuge or defended settlement, located to exploit a rise in elevation for defensive advantage. Tournerbury is unusual in this sense as it is on a flat coastal area rather than elevated on a hill side. They are typically European and of the Bronze and Iron Ages. Some were used in the post-Roman period. The fortification usually follows the contours of a hill, consisting of one or more lines of earthworks, with stockades or defensive walls, and external ditches. Hill forts developed in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age, roughly the start of the first millennium BC, and were used in many Celtic areas of central and Western Europe until the Roman conquest.

The venue area does not extend to the SAM. The primary access route from the public highway to the venue area does utilise the existing road / track which cuts through the western edge of the SAM. This track has been in situ for as long as records have been kept and has been utilised throughout past decades (known for certain for at least 140 years) for all traffic purposes whether on foot or vehicle for access to Tournerbury Woods, Woods Cottage and historic agricultural and industrial workings in Tournerbury Woods.

The road / track passes through the lowest northerly and southerly western side of the earthworks and the predominant remaining features of the earthworks are on the eastern side of the SAM. As the predominant moat and rampart sections of the SAM are not visible whilst travelling along the access road, guests to the venue would not know that they are driving through a SAM so the risk of additional footfall within the SAM from guests stopping to look at the earthworks is non-existent.

No structures are being requested to be developed within the SAM as part of this application and there is no negative impact on the SAM as a result of the wedding venue application.