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**BUILDING RECORDING  
MASTER GUNNER'S HOUSE  
SCARBOROUGH CASTLE  
NORTH YORKSHIRE**

**REPORT**  
February 2000

*On behalf of:*

English Heritage  
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document reports on a building investigation undertaken by Field Archaeology Specialists Ltd during the refurbishment work on the Master Gunner's House at Scarborough Castle, North Yorkshire. The work was carried out on behalf of English Heritage between March and April 1999.

### 1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the building investigation was to record any archaeological features that were exposed or disturbed in the removal of wall renderings within the building.

### 1.2 LOCATION AND LAND USE

The Master Gunner's House (NGR TA 04936 89225) is situated within the outer ward of Scarborough Castle (Fig.1). The site has been in guardianship since 1920, although the Master Gunner's house is excluded from the Schedule (see EH File AA 16228/1).

It has to be stressed that the Master Gunner's house formed the core of the complex of buildings in this area of the castle by the eighteenth century (Fig.2). These included the Storehouse Range, a building at right angles to the Master Gunner's house, built against the northern stretch of the inner bailey curtain wall. A further building existed by 1746 built against the west gable wall of the Master Gunner's house and referred to in the early nineteenth century as the Royal Invalid Artillery Barracks. Two other structures existed within an enclosure extending from the north of the Master Gunner's house. One of these was the North Magazine erected in c.1745, possibly as a result of the 'old magazine' in the Mosdale hall (WORKS 31/1137) being converted into a barracks block. A further building which is described in 1823 as the 'Shifting Room' and built by the Ordnance in 1813 for £77 4s 7d was designed for the airing of ammunition and was located immediately to the north of the North Magazine.

The Master Gunner's house is one of the most interesting buildings surviving from the post-medieval period at Scarborough Castle. Essentially the building retains its mid-eighteenth century appearance. The eastern facade presents a series of rectangular sash windows at ground and first floor levels, those at first floor level being nearly square. The centrally placed doorway has a surround of alternating large and small blocks, with a head consisting of graded voussoirs cutting a straight lintel. A string-course divides ground and first floors and the whole is faced with local yellow coloured sandstone as seen elsewhere in the castle fabric. The string-course is carried round to the north gable wall, but not that to the south which would perhaps suggest there was always the intention to have further buildings at this end of the Master Gunner's. The gable walls have pairs of small rectangular windows opening at second floor level and the walls are topped with crow-steps and centrally placed chimneys.

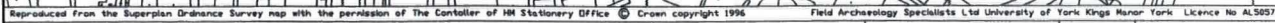
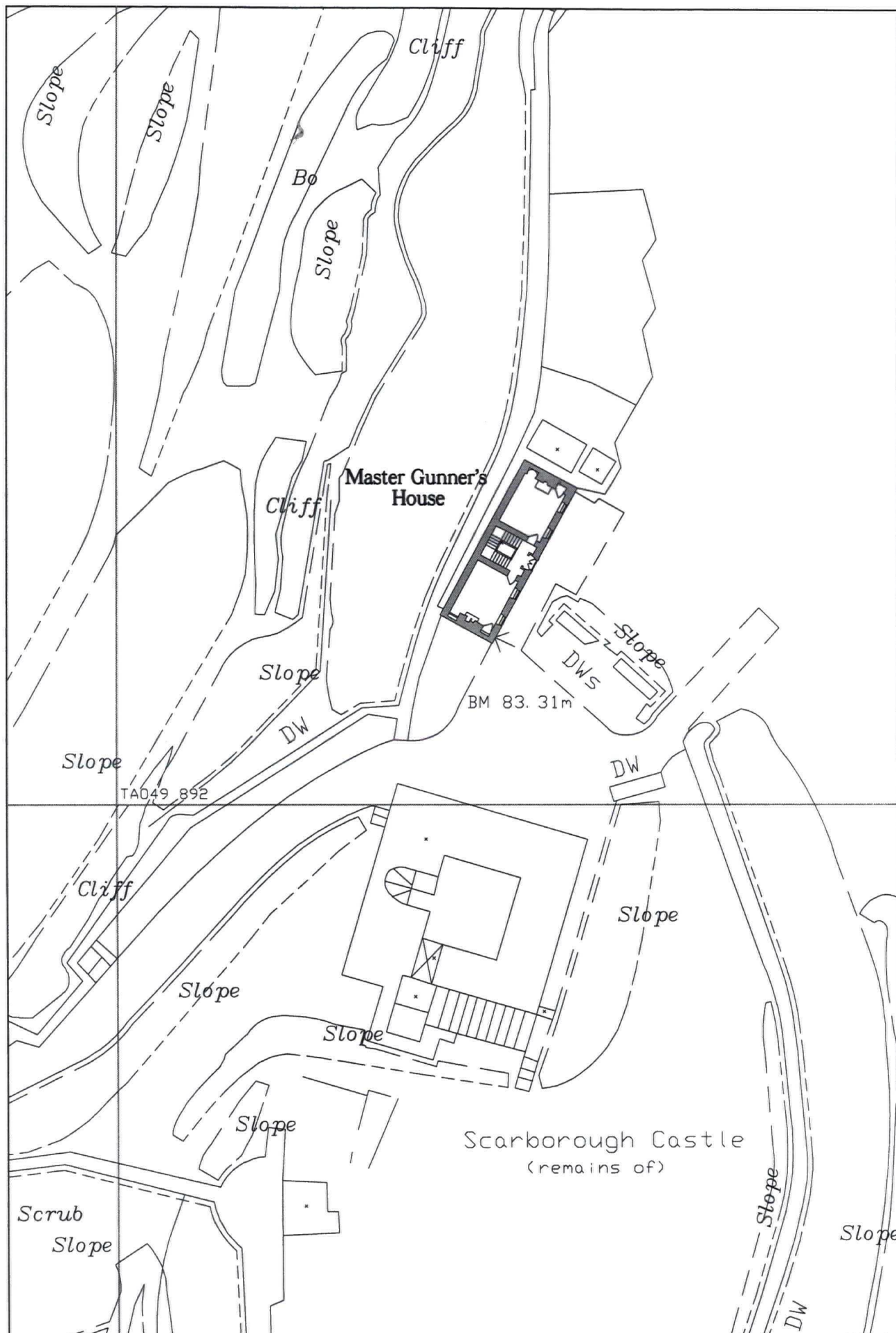


Figure 1



Reproduced from the Superplan Ordnance Survey map with the permission of The Controller of HM Stationery Office © Crown copyright 1996 Field Archaeology Specialists Ltd University of York Kings Manor York Licence No AL50575A

Scarborough Castle The Master Gunner's House and environs

Scale 1 500



Figure 2

### 1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Neither the survey of 1361 or that of 1538 indicates that a building existed in the location now occupied by the Master Gunner's house. In addition, an illustration contemporary with the 1538 survey shows this part of the outer bailey largely devoid of any structures, although it should be noted that this drawing does not show the curtain wall at this point which clearly would have been in existence for over 300 years when the drawing was executed.

The Master Gunner's House first appears on the earliest eighteenth century maps of Scarborough Castle, including a Board of Ordnance map of 1742 (re-drawn from Captain Phillips' survey of 1716) in which it is described as the 'Gunner's house' (WORKS 31/1138). The same plan indicates a small structure at right angles to the house, built against the inner ward curtain wall. The Master Gunner's house and the perpendicular range of ancillary buildings is also shown in William Vincent's plan drawn up in 1745 during the Jacobite rebellion, on a plan of the town and castle dating to 1746 (WORKS 31/1139), and on another undated but probably contemporary plan (WORKS 31/1139). However, Captain Phillips' survey of 1716 (EH 1/42) shows the Master Gunner's house in plan which is clearly in a very different form from that today.

The building had certainly reached its present form and appearance by c.1821, when it was drawn by the Board of Ordnance (PRO WO55/2490). Comparisons with early twentieth century photographs and the present structure indicate that in 1821 the four ground floor windows had shutters which have been removed. The four ground floor windows also appear to have been eight-pane sashes at this date, rather than twelve. The first floor windows are identical to those depicted on early twentieth century views, and do not appear to have been greatly altered. However, there are three small dormer windows shown in the roof in 1821, which were presumably designed to light the attic garrets, but which have subsequently been removed. During the late nineteenth or early twentieth century a neo-Gothic porch had also been added to the front of the building. It was still in place in 1914, when the keep was damaged by shell fire, but appears to have been removed before the demolition of the ancillary structures surrounding the Master Gunner's house in c.1947.

The appearance of the buildings to the east of the Master Gunner's House is known from early twentieth century photographs. They were built against the inner bailey curtain wall, with two sash windows piercing the fabric to form part of the northern elevation. Part of the medieval curtain wall was partly refaced with brick, a technique employed in the construction of the barracks in the outer bailey. The south face of the structure was of stone, probably of the yellow sandstone used extensively around the castle, although without colour photographs it is difficult to be certain. This is supported by the view of the south face of the range in the 1821 survey (PRO WO55/2490). At this date the range consisted of a wash house, 'Guard room' and another small store room, which was apparently used for storing 'Round Shot Wads and Ordnance Side Arms'. This range also appears on maps from 1819 (PROMPH 5291), 1849 (PRO WO44/565), 1857 (PRO WO44/568), 1879 (PROMPH 364), on OS maps, and at the edges of early twentieth century photographs of the Master Gunner's house and the keep, particularly photographs of the shell damage to the keep. It is likely that this