

SCARBOROUGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WATCHING BRIEF REPORT



NYCC HER	
SNY	11227
ENY	3486
CNY	
Parish	4899
Rec'd	19/10/06

SITE VINCENT'S PIER/LIGHTHOUSE PIER, SCARBOROUGH
NATIONAL GRID REF TA 04930 88578
SITE CODE LP06
DATE 18 SEPTEMBER 2006
MONITORING CARRIED OUT BY S M P Wood
REPORT BY S M P Wood

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report sets out the results of a watching brief carried out on behalf of Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society (SAHS) by the writer at a development site at the Vincent's Pier, Scarborough. The watching brief was carried out in response to Conditions imposed on planning decision 06/00026/FL and Listed Building Consent 06/00029/LB (condition 2 in each case). The condition reads:-

The excavation works for the foundations shall be monitored for their impact upon any historic masonry and to preserve by record the presence, or otherwise, of historic masonry within the structure.

1.2 The work the subject of the archaeological condition was the excavation of a trial pit in the position of the proposed foundations for a piece of public art to be known as Diving Belle

1.3 Note on nomenclature. There is much confusion over the naming of piers. The main pier is often erroneously referred to as Vincent's Pier. In fact it is Old Pier for the greater part of its length, it only becomes Vincent's Pier at the point where it makes a southerly kink. Vincent's Pier then continues across the gap spanned by the lifting bridge to what is popularly called Lighthouse Pier. Lighthouse Pier itself is a 19th century extension to Vincent's Pier – this trial pit was on that extension.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

2.1 The object of this trial trench was to inspect the composition of the ground underneath the cut sandstone slabs which form the paved area of the pier south of the lighthouse front.

2.2 The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological remains affected by this work and to provide an historical understanding of the site before the concrete foundations were cast.

3.0 Methodology

- 3.1 The excavation of the trial trench was monitored by SAHS. All archaeological deposits in were appropriately recorded by notes, drawings and photographs and dating evidence recovered where possible.
- 3.2 Finds and site archive. All artefacts and the site record will be deposited in the Rotunda Museum in accordance with SAHS practice

4.0 Background

- 4.1 The Listed Building description, which covers the West, Old, Vincent's and East Piers as one entry gives a brief history of the pier. The description is as follows :-

These Piers form the Old Harbour and East Harbour. The oldest is the Old Pier dating back in origin to the second half of the C10, but in a ruinous state by 1565-1566 when a large Grant was made by Queen Elizabeth for its reconstruction, later restoration as well : massive stone rubble with timber shearings, re-faced in parts. VINCENT'S'S PIER was built next soon after 1732 - also massive stone rubble with timber shearings. This Pier has the LIGHTHOUSE (qv). The EAST PIER was built between circa 1790-1812 creating the East Harbour. Massive stone blocks, set on curve, with sea wall. The WEST PIER was begun in 1817 as a southerly enclosing arm to the Old Harbour - similar massive stone blocks to East Pier. Late C19 Harbour Master's Office and Fish Sheds".

- 4.2 Woods map of 1828 shows the Vincent's Pier terminating just south of the Lighthouse. The proposal shown on Chapmans map of 1831 was for an arm to this pier running in a south-easterly direction from immediately opposite the Lighthouse – the purpose of this was to give greater enclosure to the Outer Harbour. It is apparent, however, that the new structure was not built like this but rather it was constructed to the south of Vincent's Pier and then in a south easterly direction from it. This was built about 1840.

5.0 Results of trial trench

- 5.1 The trial trench was approximately one metre square excavated by both hand and machine to the south of the Lighthouse – photo 1.
- 5.2 The york stone slabs were taken up and found to be embedded into 7-10 cms of sharp sand which was itself sitting on a layer of lumpy, rough, pebbly concrete, which was not of a uniform evenness.
- 5.3 Underneath the concrete was a loose gravel mixed layer of stones rubble, pebbles and sand. Dating evidence found in this layer consisted of some sea worn red clay tiles - 19thC , a fragment of 19thC clay pipe, a piece of blue and white transfer print pottery circa 1880. The first two would be consistent with a pier extension date of circa 1840 – photo 2.
- 5.4 To the south east corner of the trench was a steel pipe, lagged with dendrotape, this could have been a redundant oil or fuel pipe for waste from the yacht marina and indicating that later disturbance had already taken place here.
- 5.5 As the excavation progressed deeper the wetter the fill material became although it was still a sandy rubble mix of stone and rocks of a progressively larger size with no dating evidence.

5.6 At the southern end of the trench were three very big stones which were acting as stabilising structure for the looser infill of stones and sand. They were not sitting on other rocks so did not form part of a structure. (Photo 4)

5.7 At the northern side of the trench a huge roughly hewn stone block was found, measuring approximately 1metre x 1metre in size. This large rough block of stone is 11 metres from the southern edge of the pier wall, and is central to each side of it. It was not clear whether it formed part of a larger structure but an initial interpretation of this is that it is the end of the Vincent Pier alignment which existed prior to the circa 1840 build of the Lighthouse pier extension referred to in 4.2 above. The alignment of the hewn block of stone and the rough front stones is parallel, with a metre between but at an angle to the square sides of the trench, the gap of a metre is filled with stones sand and rocks wetter at the bottom with some mussel shells mixed in. Photos 3 and 4

5.8 Photographs are attached to this report to illustrate these points.

6.0 Interpretation

6.1 .The greater part of the trench revealed a loose amorphous fill to the core of the pier of no especial archaeological interest with artefacts generally consistent with a pier extension date of circa 1840. This material had been subject to later interventions in its upper layers.

6.2 Of more interest is the large stone block at the northern end of the trench which may provide important archaeological evidence of the end of Vincent's Pier prior to the circa 1840 extension to form Lighthouse Pier. The nature of the trial trench did not allow further examination of this piece of masonry.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The watching brief indicated that the foundation works could potentially impact upon the end of a historic pier structure. If the large block at the northern end of the trench is to be removed or disturbed then it should be fully recorded and monitored. Excavation near this block should be monitored to ascertain whether it forms part of a structure and thus Vincent's Pier.

7.2 . However over the greater part of the trench there will not be an adverse impact upon important archaeological deposits.

8.0 References

SAHS – A Guide to Historic Scarborough 2003. ISBN 0 902 41607 3
J Wood - A plan of the Town and Environs of Scarborough. 1828
Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:1056. 1852

9.0 Annexes

List of finds
List of photographs
Photos 1 to 4

SITE NAME		Lighthouse/Vincent's Pier			SITE CODE	LP 06
FILM NUMBER		1			FILM TYPE	Colour print
Date	Frame No	Direction of view	Description	Context	Scale	
18-Sep-06	13A	South	Panorama of pier showing area of investigation		500mm	
18-Sep-06	14A	North	panorama south of lighthouse showing area of investigation		500mm	
18-Sep-06	15A	West	Sharp sand bed under paved area		500mm	
18-Sep-06	16A	West	Sharp sand bed under paved area		500mm	
18-Sep-06	17A	North	rubble/stone/sand fill		500mm	
18-Sep-06	18A	North	rubble/stone/sand fill		500mm	
18-Sep-06	19A	North	rubble/stone/sand fill		500mm	
18-Sep-06	20A	North	stone rubble and sand fill		500mm	
18-Sep-06	21A	North	stone rubble and sand fill		500mm	
18-Sep-06	22A	West	Section of trench side showing layers of stone fill		500mm	
18-Sep-06	23A	West	Section of trench side showing layers of stone fill		500mm	
18-Sep-06	24A	North	Large stone to south of trench		500mm	
18-Sep-06	25A	North	Large stone to south of trench		500mm	
18-Sep-06	26A	North	Stone underneath top paved area		500mm	
18-Sep-06	27A	North	Stone underneath top paved area		500mm	
18-Sep-06	28A	North	Stone underneath top paved area		500mm	
18-Sep-06	29A	West	Fill between stone block N and stones S		2m	
18-Sep-06	30A	North	Fill between stone block N and stones S		2m	
18-Sep-06	31A	North	Face of large rough hewn stone		500mm	
18-Sep-06	32A	North	Face of cut stone block		500mm/2m	
18-Sep-06	33A	North	Face of cut stone block		2m	
18-Sep-06	34A	South	Gap between rough stones and cut stone north		2m	
18-Sep-06	35A	South	Gap between rough stones and cut stone north		2m	
18-Sep-06	36A	West	Cut stone N stones to S and fill between		2m	



PHOTO 1 - VIEW SOUTH SHOWING THE LOCATION OF THE TRIAL TRENCH MARKED BY THE 500MM SCALE



PHOTO 2 - SHOWING THE LOOSE UPPER FILL WITH RANDOM LARGER STONES SCALES 500MM WITH 100MM DIVISIONS AND LOWER PART OF 2M WITH 500MM DIVISIONS



PHOTO 3 SHOWING THE LARGE BLOCK AT
THE NORTHERN END OF THE TRENCH
POSSIBLY THE EARLIER END OF VINCENTS
PIER



PHOTO 4 SHOWING THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE
LARGE BLOCK AND THE THREE
SOUTHERN BLOCKS

SCALES 500MM WITH 100MM DIVISIONS AND 2METRE WITH 500MM DIVISIONS