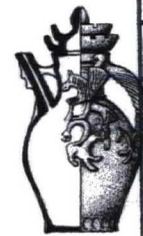


SCARBOROUGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WATCHING BRIEF REPORT



NYCC HER	
SNY	11329
ENY	3272
CNY	3778
Parish	4899
Rec'd	11/12/06

ROTUNDA MUSEUM
MUSEUM TERRACE
SCARBOROUGH



GROUND WORKS IN PROGRESS

C 3778

E 3272

S 9852

S 11329

M 24898

SITE ROTUNDA MUSEUM, SCARBOROUGH

NATIONAL GRID REF TA 0434 8836

SITE CODE RT06

MUSEUMS & GALLERY SERVICE ACCESSION NO. SCAR.2006.709

DATE October 2006

MONITORING CARRIED OUT BY S M P Wood

REPORT BY S M P Wood

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Introduction

This report sets out the results of a watching brief carried out by Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society (SAHS) at the development of the Rotunda Museum. The particular aspects of the development work being monitored were:-

Excavation of the ground slope in front of the Museum to allow the erection of a forward extension of the Museum at lower ground floor level of about 3.5 metres

Excavation within the existing basement of a well for a lift shaft

The watching brief was carried out in response to condition 8 imposed on planning decision 04/01511/FL which stated:-

No development shall take place within the application area until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.

A standard Written Statement of Investigation provided by North Yorkshire County Council was used.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the watching brief and monitoring was to record any archaeological remains affected by the development and to provide an historical understanding of the site before foundation works for the new development commenced.

Methodology

The archaeological monitoring was carried out in accordance with a standard Written Scheme of Investigation, which in brief included:-

Monitoring the machine stripping of current surfaces at the front of the building prior to the excavation for the formation of the new lower ground floor extension.

Monitoring the removal of features within the garden.

Observation of the excavation of trenches within the cellar.

Recording of archaeological features was carried out using standard techniques as follows:-

Drawn plans and sections where appropriate to a scale of 1:20

Written site notes

Stratigraphic recording using the Society's pro-forma context recording sheets which comply with standard requirements.

Colour print photography indexed to a data base in the site archive

Evidence collected:-

All small finds which provided dating and archaeological evidence such as pottery, bone and other finds were collected, recorded contextually, marked and analysed by and entered on a database in the site archive.

All finds will be deposited with the Scarborough Museums and Gallery Service along with the archaeological site archive in accordance with the Society's formal practice established over 60 years – Accession number SCAR.2006.709.

Context numbers. The Society's system of context numbering consists of two letters representing the site name, followed by two digits representing the date followed by a four digit number (preceded by F for a feature), for example RT 06 1004. For simplicity in this report RT 06 is omitted.

Annex 1 is a list of contexts.

In accordance with paragraph 3.5 4 of the document *An assessment of Stone Artefacts – Rotunda Museum Scarborough*, the removal of vegetation prior to site stripping was also monitored.

Archaeological and Historical Background

The site lies in an area of potential archaeological interest, to the south-west of the medieval Newborough defences. Although there has been limited archaeological investigation in this area and the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits is

unknown there was considered to be the potential for remains of the medieval extra mural settlement to be found and possibly earlier deposits.

There have been no previous archaeological investigations on the site nor is there any record of finds being made during the construction of the Rotunda Museum. Hinderwell in his history of Scarborough refers human bones being found in St Nicholas Cliff in 1786 and 1791. He also refers to a copper plate 'appertaining to a tombstone' found in 1810 and a tombstone found 'some years since'. None of these finds is precisely located but are thought to be unlikely to be in close proximity to this site.

The earliest map of Scarborough (as opposed to the military view of 1538) is John Cossins map of 1725 but this barely touches the site. Vincent's map of 1745 shows a battery of six guns occupying the undercliff at the meeting of the Mill Beck and the coast. This map is not sufficiently precise to allow the exact location of this battery to be determined – it may be in the position now occupied by the Rotunda but a more likely location is where the cliff tramway now stands.

By the time of publication of Jeffries' map plan of Scarborough of 1770 the battery has gone and there are no other possible archaeological features shown on this map and the same applies to all other 18th century maps which are listed below (see References).



Figure 1 The Rotunda Museum in 1828 from John Wood's map

John Wood's map of 1828 shows the drum of the Rotunda in place although without the flanking wings which are a later addition. Museum terrace is not shown; again this is later. Woods map depicts the topography as a series of hachures indicating that the museum had been built into the steeply sloping cliff side. No other archaeological features are apparent from this map.

It appears that the cellar to the building was an afterthought and only exists due to the extensive foundation works required during the erection of the drum. There is a reference in the history of the building to the removal of a large portion of sand and earth to form the foundations and this cellar – see Conservation Plan section 3.1.3.

The east and west wings were added in 1860 which would have resulted in further ground works at the front of the Museum, whilst the west wing was further extended to the north in 1886. The latter extension is at the rear and would not have impacted

upon the area in question. The final extension was between 1892 and 1906 when the apse was added to the west wing

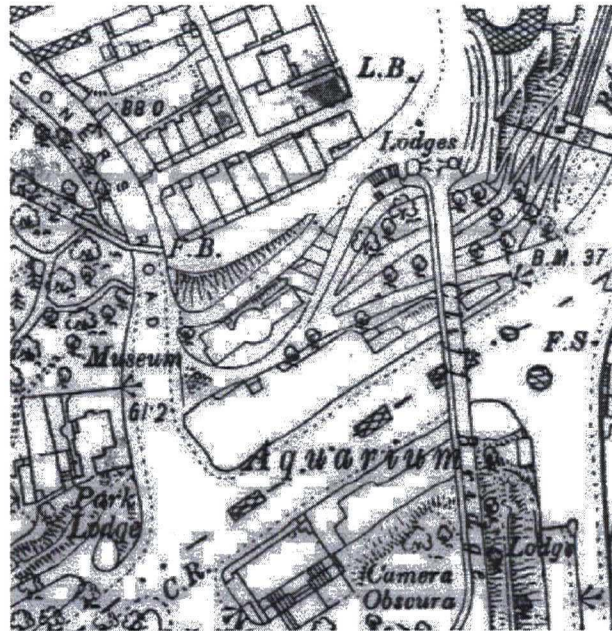


Figure 2 – extract from the 1:2500 scale OS map of 1892 showing the Museum extended with the wings

Monitoring

Vegetation removal

The document *An assessment of Stone Artefacts – Rotunda Museum Scarborough*, - at paragraph 3.5 4 recommended monitoring of the removal of vegetation prior to site stripping. The reason for this was to ascertain whether any further stone artefacts lay amongst the vegetation which had not been assessed through this document. This monitoring was carried out - no further artefacts were found.

Trenches within the cellar

The excavation of five trenches of about 1m square was monitored. The cellar floor was found to consist of modern concrete approximately 150mm thick overlying a polythene damp proof membrane. No earlier flooring material such as stone slabs was present. In the southern trenches the damp proof membrane lay directly on top of a very firm mid brown clay similar to that under the east wing. In the northern trenches the clay was more orange brown in colour with a more sandy texture getting less sandy with depth - Photograph 1. All these clays were consistent in texture and contained no charcoal or contaminants nor were there any artefacts present. The conclusion was drawn that the cellar was built directly off the natural glacial clay and this would be consistent with the documentary evidence about the construction of the cellars. The construction of the pit for the lift shaft would therefore have no archaeological impact

Ground works for extension

The upper layers were stripped off by back actor machine using a toothless ditching bucket. These layers consisted of a mid to dark brown loam consistent with the use of this area as a garden following the erection of the museum. The dismantling of the