

# Archaeological investigations at 60-62 Quay Street Scarborough

## Preliminary report

**NGR** TA 0509 8882

**SAHS SITE CODE** 60QS11 and 60QS12

This report is prepared in response to the comments by the NYCC Historic Environment Team on Planning Application 12/00089/FL which state that the proposed development lies within the extent of the former medieval town of Scarborough close to the medieval and later waterfront. Any excavations for footings etc may encounter previously disturbed archaeological finds and/or in situ archaeology. The team note that SAHS has undertaken some archaeological investigation and wish to see the results.

A brief report on these investigations at this site will appear in the Transactions of the Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society, number 44 to be published in 2013/14. A more detailed report will appear in the SAHS Report series number 43. A brief report is already in the public domain on the SAHS web site [www.scarborough-heritage.org](http://www.scarborough-heritage.org)

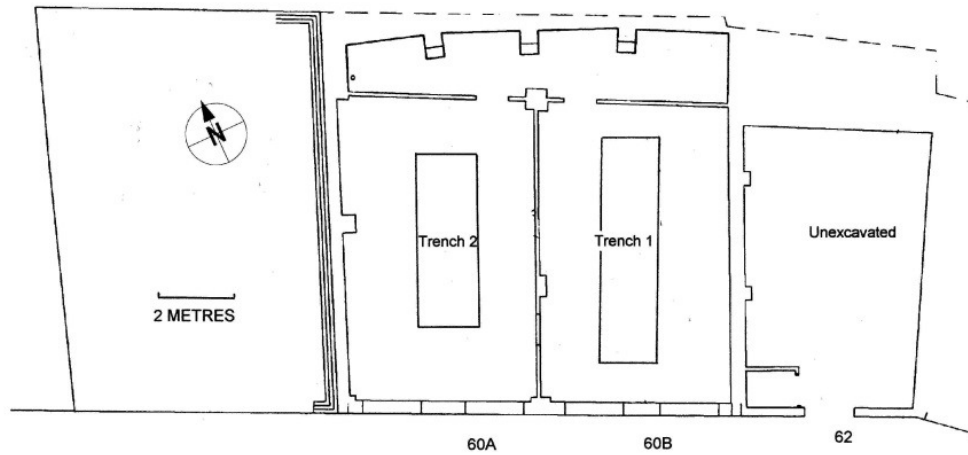
At the time of writing no decision had been made on the Planning Application.

Investigations were carried out at this site in two phases; 16 September to 25 September 2011 and 1 June to 4 June 2012. The site is a group of buildings on the north (landward) side of Quay Street, towards the eastern end of the street. Trenching was done within the buildings.

No 60 Quay Street was erected in the early part of the 20th century replacing a pair of small cottages of which little or no trace was found during the excavation although the Building bye-law drawings shows a two storey cottage with a very steeply pitched roof suggesting an 18th century date. Number 62, which forms part of the site but was not excavated, is a little earlier

At the back of the site is a huge retaining wall below Burr Bank and whilst number 62 butts up to it, number 60A/60B stops short with a small yard separating the wall from the building thus allowing the construction of the wall to be seen.

The archaeological investigation was carried out in advance of the possible re-development of the site.



**Figure 1 Trench plan**

Trench 1 was carried out in September 2011 in 60B Quay Street and measured 1.5 by 5.8 metres – see the trench plan..

The very northern end of this Trench ie the first 1.4 metres from the northern edge almost immediately came down on to natural clay some of which showed signs of natural re-deposition during the process of cliff slumping. This clay had been levelled off to form a platform for building probably during the early 18th century and at this time the stone retaining wall which forms the northern boundary of the site seems to have been underpinned.

The upper parts of this trench revealed some brick structures which were interpreted as 19th cisterns surrounded by a fill of a similar date. Below this down to a depth of between 1.5 and 2 metres were layers of sand which had clearly been tipped and which contained a mixture of medieval pottery (some of it water abraded) and post medieval pottery. There were substantial quantities of furnace slag although no evidence of a furnace or forge was found. This sandy stratigraphy was interpreted as deliberate dumping in order to make up the land in the post medieval period and is confirmation that in the medieval period there was no road along this part of what is now Quay Street. In other words the quay frontage was not continuous between the main part of the harbour and the landward end of the pier.



**Figure 2. The barrel feature in Trench 1**

At the north end of the trench below the sand was a brick lined saucer shaped feature shown in the photograph above, containing a thin layer of organic material. This was interpreted as being associated with a spring or well in the cliff face and the brick layer may be a 'hard-standing' to aid the filling of barrels to supply ships with water

Trench 2 was carried out in June 2012 in 60A Quay Street. This trench measured 1.6 by 4.5 metres. As with Trench 1 the northernmost 1.3 metres consisted of levelled off natural clay. In this case however the clay was retained by a large stone wall. No such feature had been found in trench 1 nearby. The south end of Trench 2 revealed a cellar which had been in-filled by pushing the previous cottage into it. The bricks recovered from this cellar confirm an early 18th century date for the cottages. The infilled cellar was 2.2 metres deep, with a floor of stone slabs built off naturally deposited beach sand. Thus trench 2 revealed a completely different response to land reclamation in this area from that in both Trench 1 and investigations some years earlier at 58 Quay Street.\*



**Figure 3. The stone retaining wall in Trench 2 showing the excavation down to the tiled floor in front of it**

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that should the site be re-developed the excavation of footings on the Quay Street frontage should be archaeologically monitored and this may provide evidence of pre-existing buildings on the site.

C W Hall  
Field Officer  
Scarborough Archaeological & Historical Society

10 October 2013

\* Hall, C. *An archaeological excavation and watching brief at 58 Quay Street, Scarborough* SAHS Interim Report 35