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## RICHMOND

## TRINITY TOWER ROSE GARDEN

Watching Brief  
14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> October 2002

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## Watching Brief

### Background

In October 2002 ArcheType was asked by Richmond Town Council to carry out an archaeological watching brief at the Trinity Tower Rose Garden in the market place, Richmond. The watching brief was to monitor the removal of garden soil and a raised paved area in order to reduce the level to that of the surrounding pavement; the site would then be paved, and seats and planters provided, making a low-maintenance leisure area in the town centre.

The area in question, approximately 13m by 10m, lies on the south side of Trinity Church (now the Green Howards Museum). Part of it was originally within the south aisle of the church; the present south wall of the building is blocked-in internal arcading. By the mid-eighteenth century the south aisle was apparently no longer a part of the church, but instead had been infilled/converted to housing and shops. All the buildings that had grown up around Trinity Church were demolished in 1923, taking the remnants of the original south aisle with them; these works caused considerable structural damage to the church. The Rose Garden is the last survivor of garden beds constructed after this demolition, in the mid to late 1920s.

### The Watching Brief

The garden soil (001) was removed by a small mechanical excavator using a ditching bucket. The soil was a homogenous layer covering three-quarters of the site to a depth of 40cm max; it was completely clean with the exception of a few fragments of modern glass, plastic etc, and had obviously been brought in to the site during the construction of the planting bed.

The soil overlay a compacted layer of sand/gravel/cement (002) which extended over the whole area. This layer contained no finds apart from a few fragments of brick, and may have been either left after the demolition and removal of the buildings from the site, or brought in as levelling once the site had been cleared. It had been cut through in a number of places by small planting pits, and a concreted base for a modern signpost, none of which was recorded in detail.

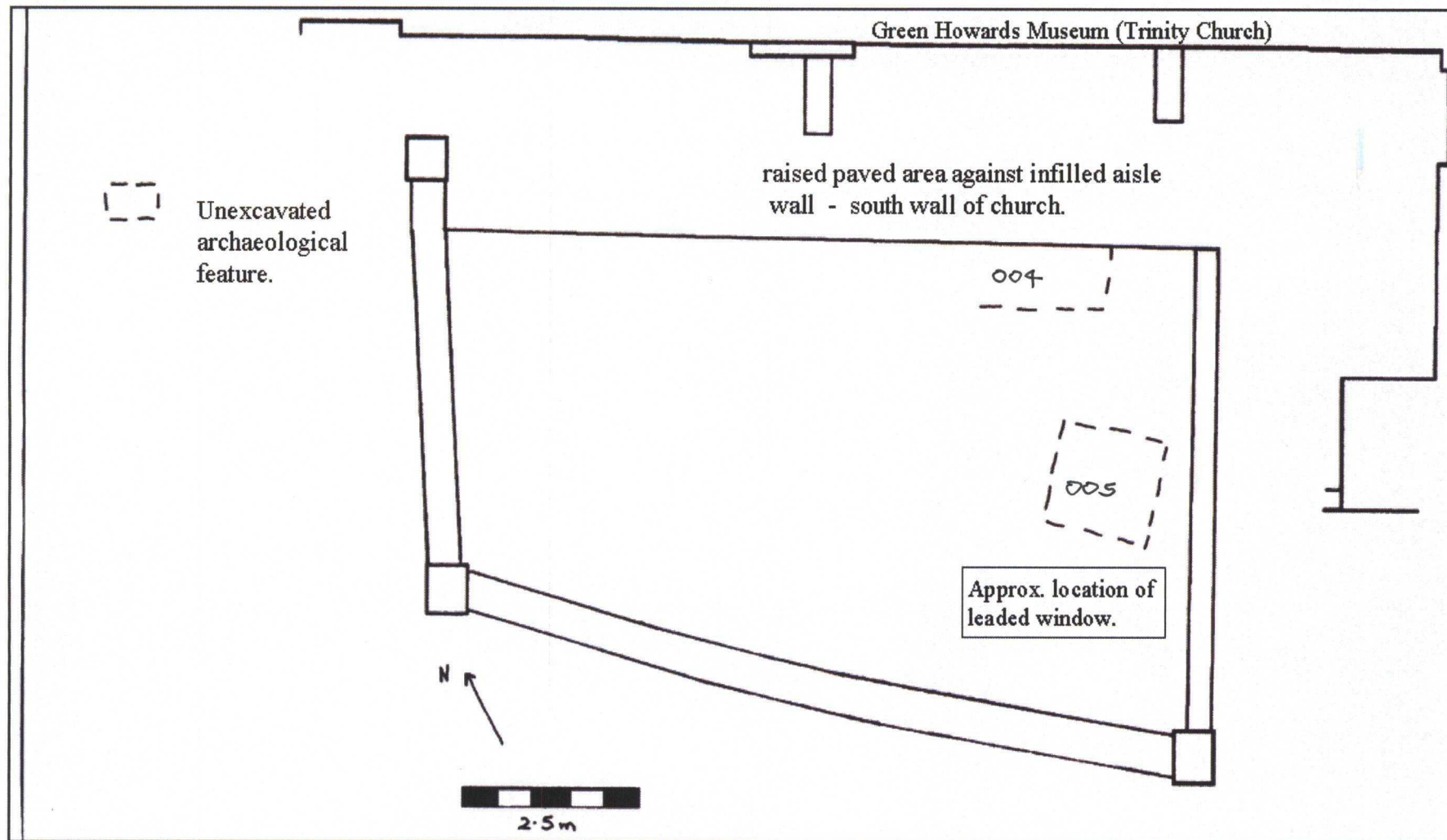
At the east end of the site, on the top of 002, and underlying 001, were two large sections of a decorative leaded glass window, together with glazing bars. It is assumed that the window came from Trinity Church – possibly from one of two, two-sectioned windows at the south side on ground floor level, the glass of which was replaced by louvres sometime in the twentieth century. For some reason this window, which may have broken on removal, had simply been left on the ground and buried by the imported garden soil.

002 overlay a yellow/ginger sandy clay subsoil (003) which appeared to be the 'natural' in this area. A number of finds – glass bottle fragments, clay pipe stems and blackware sherds, all of nineteenth century date, were recovered from its surface. None of these artefacts was stratified, and they were discarded after identification.

003 was cut in the north-west corner of the site by services (drains etc) relating to the standing building, which were not investigated. A close inspection of this area, as the 'natural' 003 ran under the raised area of paving to the east, revealed that the existing south wall of the church, the blocked-in arcading, had no foundations to speak of but appeared merely to rest on the subsoil. There also appeared to be earlier 'paving' (a possible grave-slab?) under the raised area. In consultation with the Quantity Surveyor from Acomb Construction (the site managers) it was decided only to lower the paved area to an appropriate level rather than remove it completely, leaving sufficient to buttress the south wall of the church and to protect any graves which might remain in this part of the missing south aisle of the church.



RICHMOND - Trinity Tower Rose Garden. Site Plan.



'Natural' 003 covered the whole area of the site. Towards the west of the site, close against the raised paved area and within the lost south aisle, a rectangular cut (004) was identified which may have been a grave cut. Adjacent to this was a rectangular stone area 005, probably belonging to the demolished post-medieval houses, which may have been the base for an internal stair. Both of these features lay below the required level and were therefore not investigated.

### Discussion

Although the area on the south side of Trinity Church is known to have been occupied by at least two phases of building – the original south aisle of the church, followed by houses/shops constructed within it in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – the work on the Rose Garden revealed that very little remains of any structure in this area. Site clearance in 1923, probably immediately before the construction of the Rose Garden, had apparently been very thorough, and had probably lowered the original ground level over almost all of the site. This had either removed or truncated any archaeological remains, and none survived at the level of the current works, though there was some indication of archaeological features below this.

The only possibility of survival at the original level lies beneath the raised area of paving against the present south wall of the church. This paved area was left in situ during the present works, although reduced to a lower height, because of the apparent lack of foundations for the wall behind it.

### The Window

The window lay at the east end of the site, and was in two parts, one of which appeared to be the top half curving round to a shoulder. The central part was made up of diamond-shaped quarries of pale green glass 8.5cm wide by 13.3cm long. This was surrounded by a border of red and amber stained glass and clear glass painted in red with a variety of motifs including tendrils, fleur-de-lis and abstract patterns, in small curvilinear leaded sections. Bordering this again was a thin border of rectangular clear glass strips, typically 1.6cm wide by 8.5cm long. The total width of the leaded glass was approximately 72cm.

Associated with the glass window sections were three horizontal iron glazing bars, with three fragments of copper wire remaining, and a fourth iron bar, approx 2m long and surmounted by a fleur-de-lis, which is probably the vertical bar supporting the three horizontal ones.

The vertical bar was removed by the Clerk of Works for Richmondshire District Council; the three horizontal bars, together with the two sections of window, were placed in the Richmondshire Museum for safe-keeping while their future is decided.

Dr Hugh Willmott of Sheffield University was contacted for assistance with the dating and typology of the glass. He considers the glass to be of later nineteenth century date, and an 'interesting and (to my knowledge) unique find'. This date might well relate to a known refurbishment of the church in 1864.

Further research into the window is unfortunately beyond the scope of this project. It is unusual to find any sections of leaded glass in this size and condition – even more so as the glazing bars are present, making it possible to reconstruct the size and shape of the window. Dr Willmott recommends careful cleaning with distilled water and cotton buds; he also suggested that Dr Pam Graves at the University of Durham Department of Archaeology should be contacted for further advice and information.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The works to remove the topsoil in the area known as the Rose Garden, Market Square, Richmond, did not disturb any archaeological layers. However, truncated archaeological remains relating to the



18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century buildings previously on the site, and to the South Aisle of Trinity Church, may survive below the level of the present works, and should be investigated ahead of any deeper ground disturbance – even small trenches eg for drainage - in this area. It should be noted that such deeper ground disturbance close to the church may well disturb medieval and later burials which were originally within the south aisle of the church.

The sections of window were taken from site to the Richmondshire Museum for safe-keeping. After cleaning they could be restored and back-lit for display.

#### Site Archive

The site archive will be deposited in the Richmondshire Museum, together with the leaded window.

#### Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Shirley Thubron for information relating to the history of Trinity Church and the adjacent area; and to Dr Hugh Willmott for assistance and advice regarding the leaded glass window. Thanks are also due to the Members and Officers of both Richmond Town Council and Richmondshire District Council for their interest, hospitality and assistance.

Vivienne Metcalf  
ArcheType  
11th November 2002



Trinity Tower, Richmond. The two sections of nineteenth century leaded window found below the imported topsoil during the archaeological watching brief on the Rose Garden site. For more detailed views see page 5.





The two sections of leaded nineteenth century window found at the Trinity Tower Rose Garden, Richmond. The lower picture is the top of the window.

