

23-24 KING STREET, SCARBOROUGH, NORTH YORKSHIRE

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REPORT ON AN HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY

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© York Archaeological Trust: a registered charity Cromwell House, 13 Ogleforth, York YO1 7FG Tel. (10904) 663000 Fax. (01904) 663024 e-mail:enquiries@yorkarchaeology.co.uk

SUMMARY

A building at 23-24 King Street, Scarborough was investigated to examine its constructional history and determine how much of the original structure survived. The building was found to have been constructed as a single small dwelling in c.1740. The house is remarkable for the quality of its detailing – principally internal joinery – most of which survives intact. In the late 18th century the house was refenestrated with 16-pane sashes and also with stylish tripartite bow windows of a pattern which became a prominent feature of Georgian Scarborough. At about the same time a service range, of plainer design, was built to the rear of the property. After further minor additions the building was subdivided; a process which involved considerable demolition and alteration to the rear ranges. Each half of the property in turn became a public house before it was turned over to low-status domestic occupation early in the 20th century. In spite of its poor condition the earliest section of the building retains a large number of high-quality 18th and 19th century features including panelling, moulded joinery detail, fireplace, and domestic fittings.

1. INTRODUCTION

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This report describes the development of Nos. 23-24, King Street, Scarborough (Figure 1); a divided building which appears as a single item, at Grade II*, in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. The report is intended to inform current proposals for partial demolition and refurbishment.

The report is divided into three principal sections: first, a review of the evidence from printed maps and other secondary sources; second, a phased description of the fabric; and third, an inventory of surviving historic features. These sections are followed by an appraisal, a timeline, and a list of sources.

An important element in the report is the series of coloured-up phase plans which accompanies the text. These plans incorporate a room-numbering system which forms the basis of the descriptive account and also of the inventory. For convenience the principal elevation has been regarded as facing east; although in fact it faces a little north of east.

The building was visited on Tuesday 20th November 2001 when nearly all areas, including the roofspaces, were found to be more or less accessible. The exception was the area of the basement beneath the north side of the building where the only access stair had collapsed; but here large and conveniently-placed holes in the floor of the rear range, caused by damp penetration, went some way to making good the deficiency. Nevertheless it is likely that this basement, like its smaller companion under the south-east corner of the building, which was visited, contains fabric and details of historic interest.

The law of diminishing returns applies rapidly to documentary research into smaller domestic buildings. Such research, in this case, was confined to printed maps augmented by information from early engravings, street directories, and electoral registers. It soon became apparent that the fabric itself would supply the bulk of the information required although the documentary evidence has helped to refine the dating of some elements of the building.

Figure 1 Site location

1000 metres

2. THE DOCUMENTARY BACKGROUND

2.1 Maps and Engravings

John Cossins 1725 (Figure 2)

Cossins' map shows that by 1725 the development of the west side of King Street – known until the late 18th century as Helperby Lane – had proceeded only as far as the lane which runs along the north side of No. 24. The site of Nos. 23-24 was apparently occupied by gardens or orchards. Cossins includes a sketch of the New Inn, off St Nicholas Street; a site which the inn was to occupy until at least 1834.

Kip 1731

Kip's engraving of Scarborough from the south (in the collection of Scarborough Borough Council, and not reproduced here) confirms that by 1731 development had not reached the cliff at the south end of Helperby Lane (King Street).

William Vincent 1745 (Figure 3)

Vincent's map shows that development of the west side of Helperby Lane (King Street) was almost complete by the time defensive works to protect the town against Jacobite rebels were being thrown up around the Bay.

Samuel Buck 1745

Buck's engraving of the Bay (in the collection of Scarborough Borough Council, and not reproduced here) confirms that building had reached the end of Helperby Lane, and that development included the steps down to a battery on the cliff.

John Wood 1828 (Figure 4)

Wood's fine plan shows the site in some detail for the first time. The single house which was to become Nos. 23-24 is shown; while the yard area behind it is already completely infilled. Wood omits the small open area in the south-west corner of the site – he may not have seen it.

It is clear from this survey that by 1828 the buildings had reached their present extent.

OS 1: 1056 1852 (Figure 5)

The bulk of the property, comprising the whole of the street frontage range and the infilled yard behind No 23, had become The New Inn by 1852; while most of the rear range to No 24 now appears to have been divided off to form a small, separate, property. The east-west dividing line falls within the rear range and in fact can be shown to correspond to an inserted wall which rises to meet the south purlin of the rear range roof. The aim of this alteration, as described below, was to maintain a passage, within the range, to the extension at its west end – which in 1852 therefore remained part of No 23.

OS 1: 500 1892 (Figure 6)

By 1892 internal works, described in Section 3.4, below, had been carried out. Their effect was to divide the properties along a rather different line: clearly shown on this survey. No 23 was now a private house; and No 24 (now including the west bay of the rear range) was the York Hotel. It is likely that these internal alterations were made at the time No 24 was converted into an inn.









