



making sense of heritage

RNLI Selsey Lifeboat Station Kingsway, Selsey, West Sussex

Photographic Survey



Planning Ref: 15/00303/FUL
Ref: 103212.01
July 2015



**RNLI Selsey Lifeboat Station
Kingsway, Selsey
West Sussex**

Photographic Survey

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The building was recorded by Vijaya Pieteron who wrote this report. Figures and plates were prepared by Vijaya Pieteron and Karen Nichols. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Matt Rous.



RNLI Selsey Lifeboat Station Kingsway, Selsey West Sussex

Photographic Survey

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Ramboll UK Limited (hereafter 'the Client') on behalf of Studio Four Architects for the RNLI, to undertake a comprehensive Photographic Survey of the existing RNLI Selsey Lifeboat Station, Kingsway, Selsey, West Sussex, PO20 0DJ, (hereafter 'the Site'). The lifeboat station houses an all-weather Tyne class lifeboat which launches from a slipway and is accessed via an elevated walkway from the RNLI compound. The lifeboat house is open to the public.

1.1.2 Planning permission has been granted (Ref: 15/00303/FUL), with certain conditions, by Chichester District Council to replace the present ageing boathouse with a new facility that will consolidate the current RNLI operations into a single building. This new building will provide all facilities which currently operate from the site, housing both the inshore and all-weather lifeboats, the station RNLI Selsey museum and shop, and will be open for public visits. It will also provide much improved crew facilities. Condition 9 of the planning permission states:

"Prior to the demolition of the existing ALB Station, the applicant will provide a detailed photographic survey and deposited within the District Historic Environment Record (HER). The Survey shall be undertaken in accordance with the requirement of the Photographic Survey detailed within Historic England's Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice. Reason: To enable items of archaeological interest to be recorded in accordance with the policies of the Development Plan."

1.2 The Site

The RNLI Selsey Lifeboat Station is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) 486287 092663 and is located on the east coast of the Manhood Peninsula, north of its tip, Selsey Bill. The lifeboat station is one component of the RNLI compound which also comprises the onshore facilities and a section of beach lying adjacent to the onshore area, above mean high water, and directly below the elevated walkway.

1.2.1 The onshore RNLI compound is adjacent to suburban development around the historic core of Selsey, approximately 12 km south of Chichester, West Sussex. It comprises the inshore lifeboat house which operates a D class inshore lifeboat, a station museum and shop, and associated tarmacked surfaces.

1.2.2 The section of beach between the compound and the lifeboat station consists of shingle foreshore between two groynes. It is separated from the RNLI compound area by the concrete sea wall and a tarmacked path which runs along the seaward side of the sea wall.



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims and objectives

- 2.1.1 The aims of the Photographic Survey were to make a permanent record of the RNLI boathouse and raised walkway due to be affected by the redevelopment works and that the full photographic archive record is made available to interested parties.
- 2.1.2 The survey comprised a visual record of the subject in accordance with the guidelines for comprehensive photographic survey as detailed in the document: *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (English Heritage 2006). A detailed heritage statement and desk-based assessment of the RNLI Selsey compound and all buildings associated with it, are provided in the documents written by Ramboll UK Limited, 2014.

2.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 2.2.1 The photographic survey comprises a comprehensive visual record, accompanied by brief written description of the building.
- 2.2.2 The photographic survey was undertaken on the 17th July 2015. The weather was overcast at the time, offering sufficient light and few shadows. The Tyne class lifeboat was housed in the lifeboat station for much of the time of the survey obstructing any all-inclusive views of the interior. Shortly before the conclusion of the survey, the life boat was released upon an emergency allowing an unobscured view of the interior of the boathouse.
- 2.2.3 Eighty-four high-quality digital images were taken with a Canon EOS 5D MkII digital SLR camera. A photographic scale of appropriate size was included in all general and specific detailed views, except where considered inappropriate or prevented by on-site conditions or health and safety concerns.
- 2.2.4 A selection of the photographs is included in this report. Photographs taken include the following :
- All external elevations of the RNLI Lifeboat Station
 - The relationship of the structures to their surroundings and the wider landscape
 - Architectural details of the structure and associated features

3 BUILDING DESCRIPTION

3.1 RNLI Selsey Lifeboat Station

History

- 3.1.1 The present boathouse is a non-designated heritage asset which dates from c.1960. It is a utilitarian maritime structure with very limited aesthetic value and no architectural pretensions. It was built to provide adequate housing for the lifeboat, associated machinery and maintenance facilities.

Description

- 3.1.2 **Plates 1-22** provide a visual record of the building.



- 3.1.3 In brief, the RNLI Lifeboat Station comprises a Dutch barn type structure which is rectangular in plan and supported on offshore concrete piles. It is oriented north-west – south-east along its long axis and measures roughly 9 m in width and 23 m in length. Construction comprises of external corrugated steel cladding and a curved roof formed by four exposed, light-weight steel bow trusses. Steel purlins span the length of the boathouse and support the insulated roof cladding. The steel frame of the roof is supported by a series of steel posts which extend onto a plinth wall obscured behind modern cladding. The interior walls are clad with a series of modern plastic-coated insulation boards fitted within a lightweight aluminium frame.
- 3.1.4 The lifeboat station is predominately single-storey but accommodates an elevated crew room, making it a two-storeyed structure at the landward end. The ground-floor is mainly open-plan with a sloping boat ramp housing the Tyne class lifeboat. A storage room occupies the north-west corner of the ground floor and small toilet occupies the north-east corner, with the lifeboat retrieval winch and locking arrangement positioned between the two. They are located directly below the crew room which occupies the first-floor and is accessed via a narrow staircase located along the east wall.
- 3.1.5 Pedestrian access into the building is on the north-west elevation via a fabricated steel gantry walkway from the RNLI compound, through timber-framed double doors. The elevated walkway is approximately 110 m in length and accommodates a gentle kink, turning slightly eastwards. The south-east elevation has a concrete slipway on the seaward side, allowing the lifeboat to be launched directly into the sea, with large hanging roller doors that fold and slide when opened.
- 3.1.6 Fenestration is regular with twelve timber-framed windows on the first-floor of the south-west and north-east elevations and uPVC window on the ground-floor of the south-west elevation. The north-east elevation also comprises a single uPVC window on the first-floor.
- 3.1.7 The building contains commemorative material relating to the history of lifeboat operations at Selsey, chiefly continuations of service boards and other commemorative plaques, from the onset of operations in the mid-19th century. The boathouse also presently contains a lifeboat release and retrieval system (LRRS) as it is still a working lifeboat station. These materials and equipment have important historical value, both as a document of local events but also in how they document the operation of a lifeboat station. The present structure is also associated with particular rescues, documented in the RNLI's archival records but also in local memory.

4 STORAGE AND CURATION

4.1 Archive Preparation and Deposition

- 4.1.1 A copy of the final report will be supplied to the Chichester District Historic Environment Record.
- 4.1.2 The complete site archive includes paper records and digital photographic records. No other depositable archives were generated during the project.
- 4.1.3 Details of the Site will be submitted online to the OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) database.



4.2 Security Copy

- 4.2.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.
- 4.2.2 For small projects we may retain only digital copy of the records. The digital records will be submitted to the HER, with a copy retained in the Wessex Archaeology security-copied and backed-up digital archive storage facility, under its designated Wessex Archaeology project code 103212.

4.3 Copyright



- 4.3.1 Wessex Archaeology shall retain full copyright of this report under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved, excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the Client for the use of the report by the Client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the specification. Any document produced to meet planning requirements may be copied for development control, planning and educational purposes without recourse to the Copyright owner, the copyright owner to be given full acknowledgment in any reproduction of material.
- 4.3.2 This report and the archive generally, may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. All remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of this report.

5 REFERENCES

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- English Heritage, 2006: *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice*. English Heritage, London.
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Site location

Figure ?



Plate 1: General view from the north-west of the onshore RNLI facilities.



Plate 2: View from the north-west of the RNLI shop and elevated walkway.


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Plate 3: View from the north-west along the elevated walkway.



Plate 4: North-west elevation.


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Plate 5: South-west elevation of the RNLI Lifeboat Station and the elevated walkway.



Plate 6: Oblique view from the west of the north-west and south-west elevations.


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Plate 7: North-east elevation of the RNLI Lifeboat Station and the elevated walkway.



Plate 8: Oblique view from the north of the north-west and north-east elevations.


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Plate 9: South-east elevation.



Plate 10: View from the east of the entryway and fixture commemorating the crew of the first lifeboat.


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Plate 11: View from the north-west.



Plate 12: View from the west.


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Plate 13: View from the south-east.



Plate 14: View from the north-west to the seaward doors.


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Plate 15: View from the south-west of stairs leading to the first-floor crew room.



Plate 16: View from the south-west facing the entryway and toilet.


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Plate 17: View from the south-east into the storage room.



Plate 18: View from the east of the first-floor crew room.


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Plate 19: View from the south-west of commemorative fixtures dating from the mid to late 19th century.



Plate 20: View from the north-west of the sloping boat ramp.


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Plate 21: View from the south to the crew room and entryway.

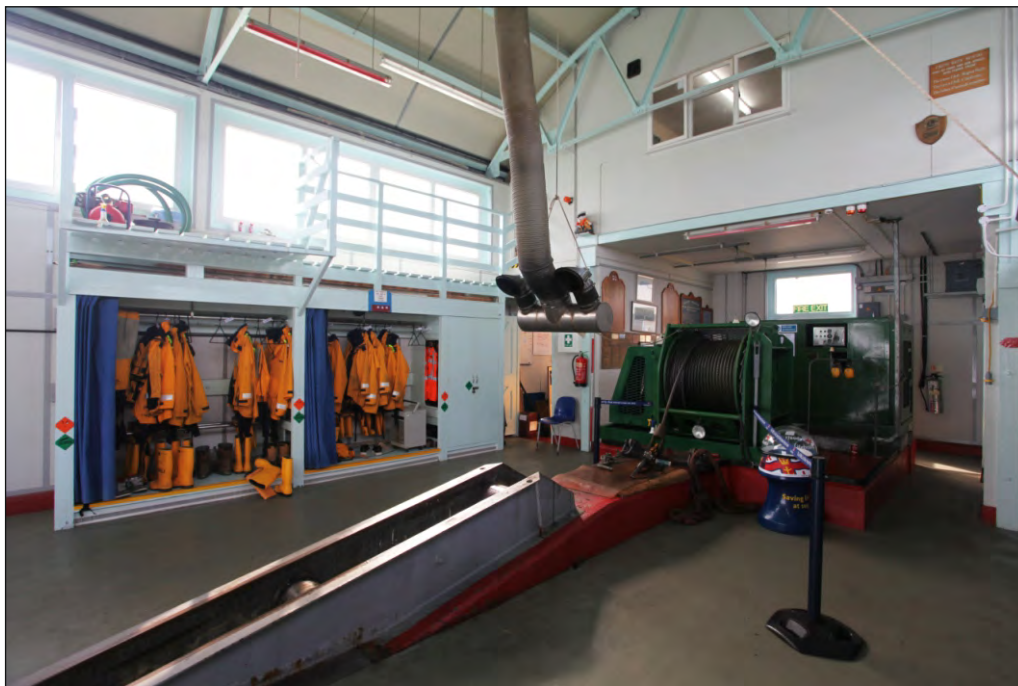



Plate 22: View from the east to the storage room and personal equipment lockers.

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