



ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AT 60-62 QUAY STREET SCARBOROUGH

BY CHRISTOPHER HALL



60-62 Quay Street in 2013

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By
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Contents

Summary

List of text drawings and photographs

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Historical and archaeological background

3.0 Objectives and Methodology of the excavation

4.0 The excavations

5.0 Interpretation and conclusions

6.0 Acknowledgements

7.0 References

Annex 1 – Finds database

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SITE: 60-62 Quay Street Scarborough 2011/12

National Grid Ref TA 0508 8882 National Grid Co-ordinates 50508 48882

Site Code 60QS11 and 60QS12

Scarborough Museums Trust accession reference 2014/496

List of text drawings and photographs

Figure 1 Location plan. Extract from a plan in The Archaeology of Medieval Scarborough

Figure 2 Site plan. Extract from a plan in An Archaeological Survey of Scarborough

Figure 3 Extract from the Building byelaw drawing showing the earlier cottage

Figure 4. Plan of the site showing location of trenches

Figure 5 Trench 1 East facing section

Figure 6 Trench 1 West facing section

Figure 7 Trench 1 plan of feature F39

Figure 8 Trench 1 plan of features F13 and F22

Figure 9 Trench 2 plan

Plate 1 Trench 1 Looking north along the East facing section showing F40

Plate 2 Trench 1 Looking north along the East facing section showing F39

Plate 3 East facing section of Trench 1 showing F13 (right) and F22 (left)

Plate 4 Trench 2 looking north showing wall F55, drain F68, sondage into cellar fill and the cellar floor

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society were sponsored by the owner to carry out a research excavation to establish the nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains within the site. The site comprises a group of buildings on the north (landward) side of Quay Street, towards the eastern end of the street. Figure 1 shows the location of the site in relation to the wider context of the area. Trenching was done within the buildings. Investigations were carried out in two phases; 16 September to 25 September 2011 and 1 June to 4 June 2012.

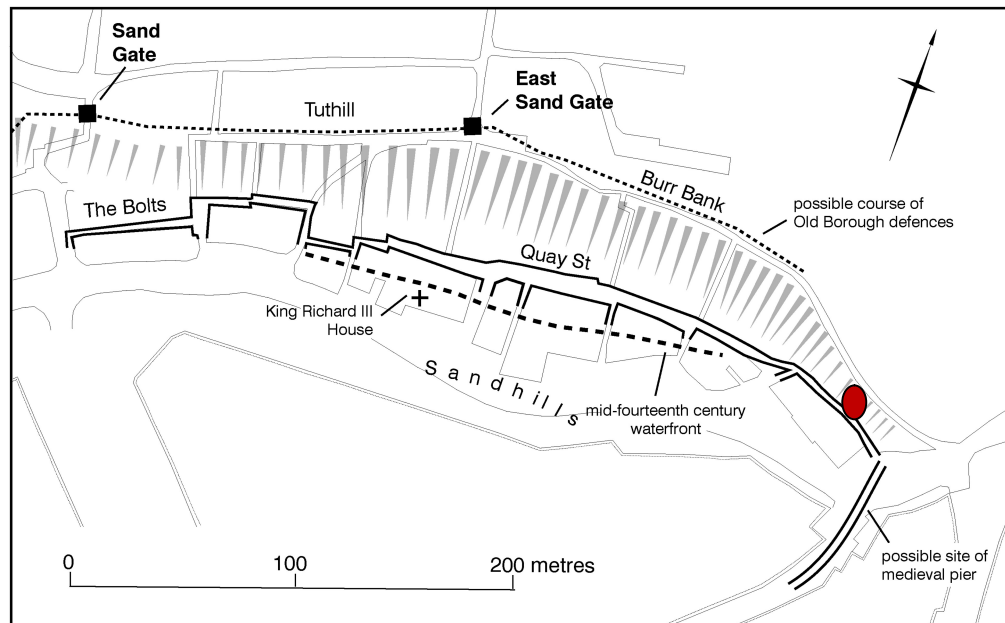


Figure 1 Location plan. Extract from a plan in *The Archaeology of Medieval Scarborough* (Pearson, 2005) showing the site marked in red

- 1.2 The site was occupied by two distinct buildings. No 60 Quay Street (which has now been demolished), outlined in red in Figure 2 below was divided into two, numbered 60A and 60B, the former being two storeys at street level built in Scarborough orange/red common brick, with recessed upper floors, whilst 60B, which is of the same build was single storey at street level again with recessed upper floors. 60A/60B Quay Street had been erected in the early part of the 20th century as a warehouse or workshops and replaced a pair of small cottages which are shown on the Building bye-law drawing for this re-development of the site (Figure 3).
- 1.3 To the east is number 62 Quay Street, outlined in blue on Figure 2 which is three storeys on the street frontage and is a little older probably built in the last quarter of the 19th century possibly as a sail loft or net store. It had been intended to carry out excavation within this building, but the potential for ground contamination precluded this.

2.0 Historical and Archaeological Background

2.1 The site lies in the area of the medieval town of Scarborough, within the Oldborough, close to the medieval harbour. Work in several locations elsewhere along Quay Street, as set out below, has demonstrated reclamation of the area from the 14th century. This made ground was used for progressive quay alignments and the erection of structures from this period onwards thus the archaeology was expected to be complex.

2.2 Previous archaeological work in the vicinity

30 Quay Street 1978 (Pearson, 1978)

A trial excavation in advance of a planned housing development unearthed the remains of a stone pavement formed of large slabs at a depth of 2m and buried under clay dumps in the fourteenth century. Overlying these deposits were the remains of a post-medieval yard surface and a boundary wall.

The Three Mariners, Quay Street 1996 - Site Code: TM96 (Hall & Pearson, 1996)

Work to refurbish the cellar below what is one of Scarborough's oldest surviving buildings presented an opportunity to excavate below the cellar floor. It was discovered that the tiled floor, which probably dated to the nineteenth century, rested on beach sand containing a small quantity of water-worn medieval pottery. The north wall of the cellar is constructed with stone and may represent an early alignment of the medieval waterfront along the edge of Quay Street. It is possible that the cellar was constructed forward of this line as part of the process of reclaiming land from the sea for building.

Land adjacent to No. 22A Quay Street 1996 - Site Code: QS96 (Pearson 1996)

The site is on the north side of Quay Street in the area of the medieval harbour and was excavated when plans to build on the land were put forward. The excavation found that a thick deposit of household refuse had been dumped onto the site in the fourteenth century prior to the construction of a building represented by a single surviving stone wall. The purpose of the refuse dump was probably to raise the ground level to give the new building some protection from the worst ravages of the sea since the waterfront was then much closer to the line of Quay Street.

32-33 Sandside 2000 – Site Codes SND00 and SND13 (Hall, 2001)(Hall 2015)

The cellar of number 33, which is an early 18th century building was examined during its refurbishment in 2000 and was found to be constructed with brick on top of stone. The stonework suggests there was an earlier structure on the site. The floor of the cellar rested on sand the upper levels of which appear to have accumulated during the later medieval period. Number 32 was examined in 2013 when it was found that the spine wall, which is shared with number 33, at this point consisted of stone masonry, unlike the situation found in 2000 where 18th century brick was built off stone masonry. However both this spine wall and the brick cross wall at right angles to it appeared to be built off clean sand though one piece of medieval pottery was found. It may be the case that as at number 33 this is a late medieval build-up of sand.

However in the south east corner a substantial stone structure of large coursed and well-dressed stones was seen, clearly a much earlier structure

since the sand was butting against it. It may have been built off an earlier beach level. The exact function is at present is unknown but it may relate to the development of the quay as this building may be one of those which had its own pier.

58 Quay Street 2003 - Site Code: QS03 (Hall, 2003)

A depth of re-deposited clay and sand resting on the natural shoreline was revealed. It was interpreted as evidence of deliberate dumping in the Middle Ages to raise the ground level near the harbour prior to building. Evidence was also found that the base of the cliff forming the northern boundary of the site had been cut back to increase the area available for development.

23 Quay Street 2005 –Site code PL05 (Hall, 2006)

Prior to the erection of a garage (since demolished) in about 1925 this site was occupied by a late 14th century timber framed building. Removal of the concrete floor slab to the former garage revealed a rubble in-filled cellar, the clearing out of which revealed the medieval side wall of the former house and an earlier cross wall. Excavations below the cellar floor showed that building took place off sand which contained exclusively medieval pottery. Although the sand was naturally deposited, the pottery was not worn, showing that the house was built not long after the pottery was dumped.

Former Marine Engineers 2008/09,- Site Code: ME09 (Hall & Hinchliffe)

Below late medieval foundations of the former 25 Quays Street in Trench 1 and throughout Trench 2 was a massive dump of soil, c2.5m deep, representing a major episode of land reclamation in the late medieval period. Incorporated within the reclamation was a well-constructed stone-lined drain running north-south. The excavations suggested that the rise in the modern ground surface outside the site is a reflection of a pre-existing dune system of which the reclamation took advantage. Overall, the excavation revealed two major phases of land reclamation adjacent to Scarborough harbour. The former, assumed to date to the fourteenth century, was clearly a major engineering exercise, creating what was effectively a new maritime suburb to the town on the south side of Quay Street.

3.0 Objectives and Methodology

- 3.1 The overall objectives of the archaeological evaluation were to establish whether there are any remains which will be affected by any future development of the site and to
- 3.2 It was initially envisaged that up to three trenches would be excavated, one each in numbers 60A, 60B and 62 Quay Street. However due to the potential for ground contamination in number 62, excavation in this building was ruled out. Excavation was carried out in accordance with a Project Design
- 3.3 In accordance with SAHS practice, all deposits were fully recorded on standard context sheets, photographs and conventionally-scaled plans and sections showing the horizontal and vertical distribution of contexts. The limits of excavation are shown in all plans and sections,
- 3.4 Note on context numbers. Contexts in Trench 1 (60QS11) commence at 10 running through to 42 inclusive; in Trench 2 (60QS12) commence at 50 running through to 68 inclusive.

4.0 The excavations

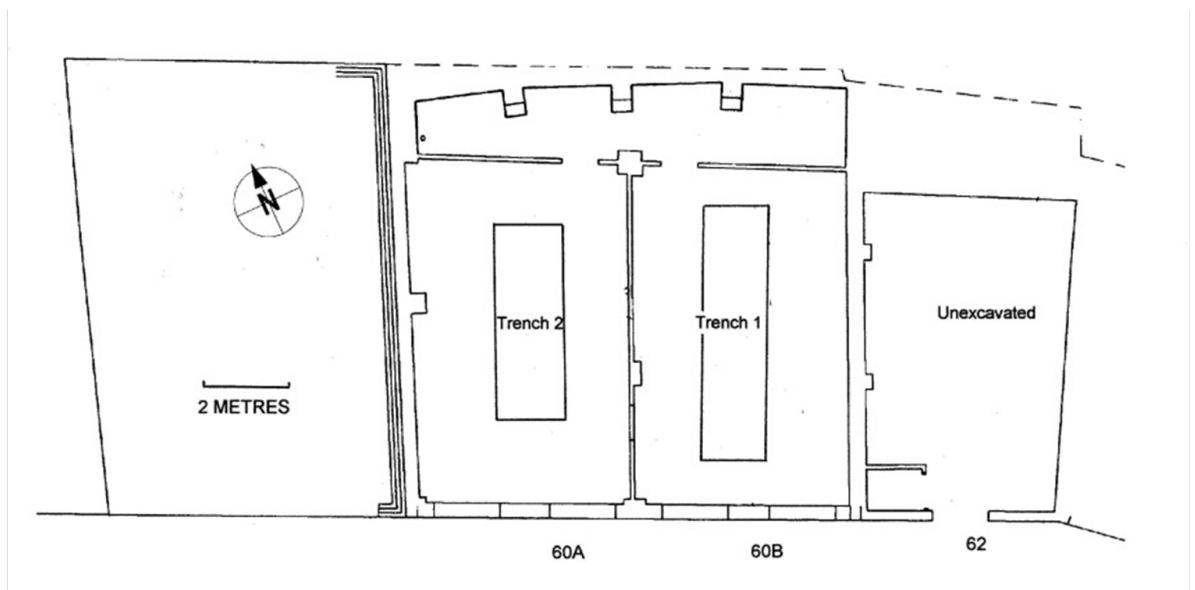


Figure 4. Plan of the site showing location of trenches

Trench 1

- 4.1 This trench was carried out in September 2011 in 60B Quay Street and measured 1.5 by 5.8 metres – see the trench plan..
- 4.2 The earliest feature was found at the very northern end of the trench ie the first 1.4 metres from the northern edge where almost immediately under the concrete floor natural clay was encountered (Figure 6). Some of this 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. No further work was done at this end of the trench.
- 4.3 At a depth of 1.65 metres (3.21 metres AOD) at the north end of the remainder of the trench on its west side under the slumped clay was an area of organic material (42) containing one post. This is thought to be associated with an adjacent feature F40 which appeared to be a buried barrel (now filled by sand) presumably for

Plate 1
Trench 1
Looking north along the
East facing section
showing F40



the collection of water – see Plate 1. These two features could not be fully resolved due to the difficulties of continued excavation and no diagnostic artefacts were recovered. The next feature which was thought to be either contemporary or only a little later was a stone and brick lined saucer shaped feature F39 containing a thin layer of organic material overlain by sand and sealed by a layer of coal dust (33) – see Figures 6 and 8 and Plate 2. F39 contained entirely medieval pottery. These features taken together were 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.

Plate 2
Trench 1
Looking north along the
East facing section
showing F39



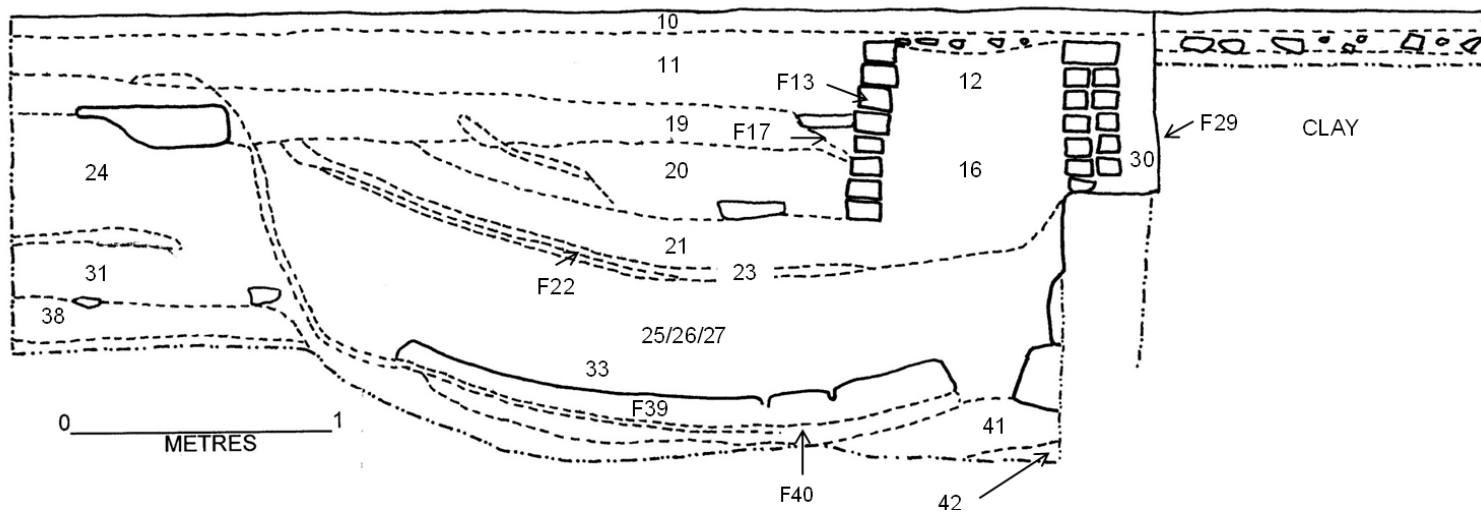


Figure 5. Trench 1 East facing section

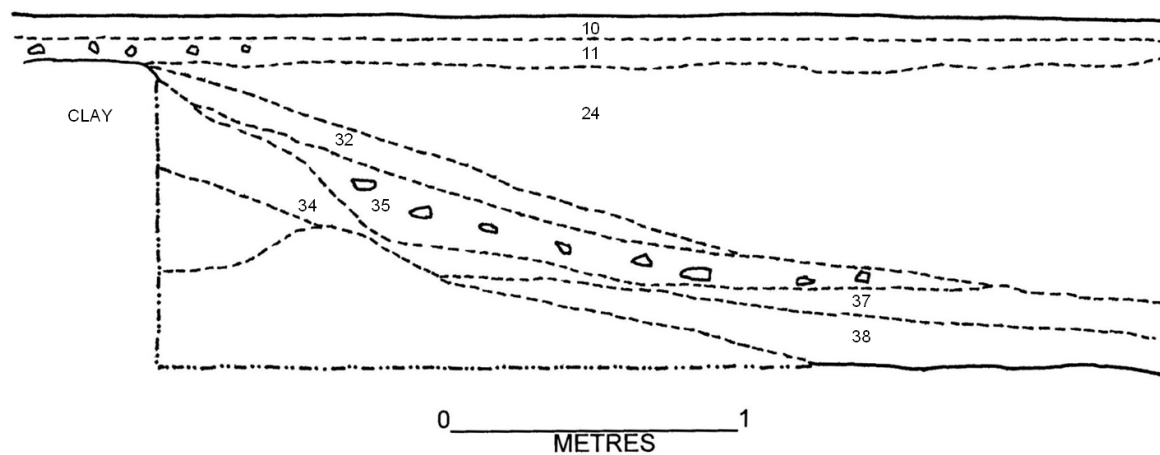


Figure 6 Trench 1 West facing section

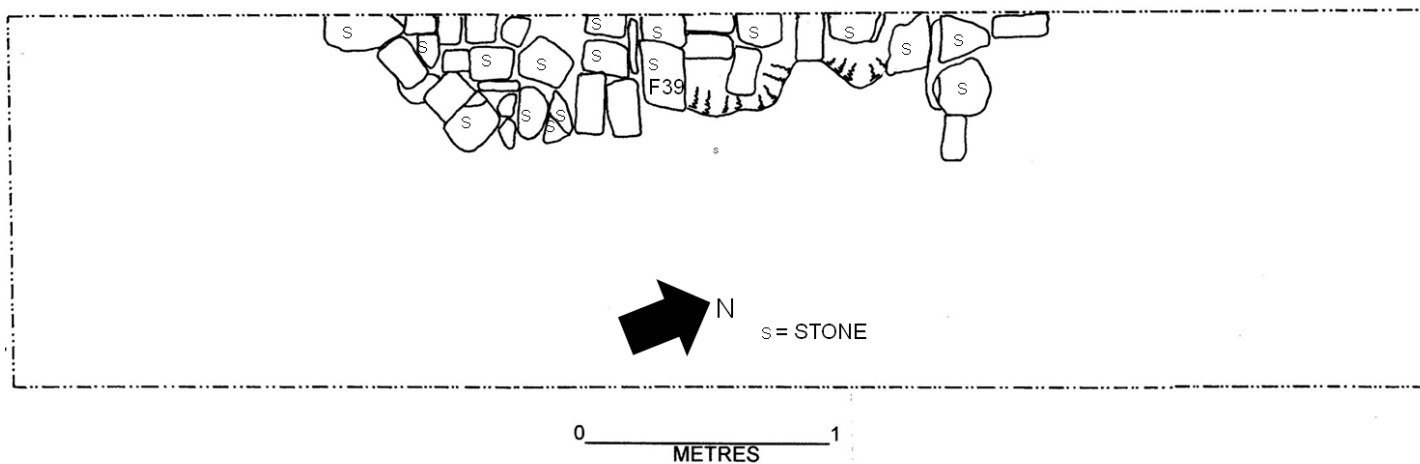


Figure 7 Trench 1 plan of feature F39

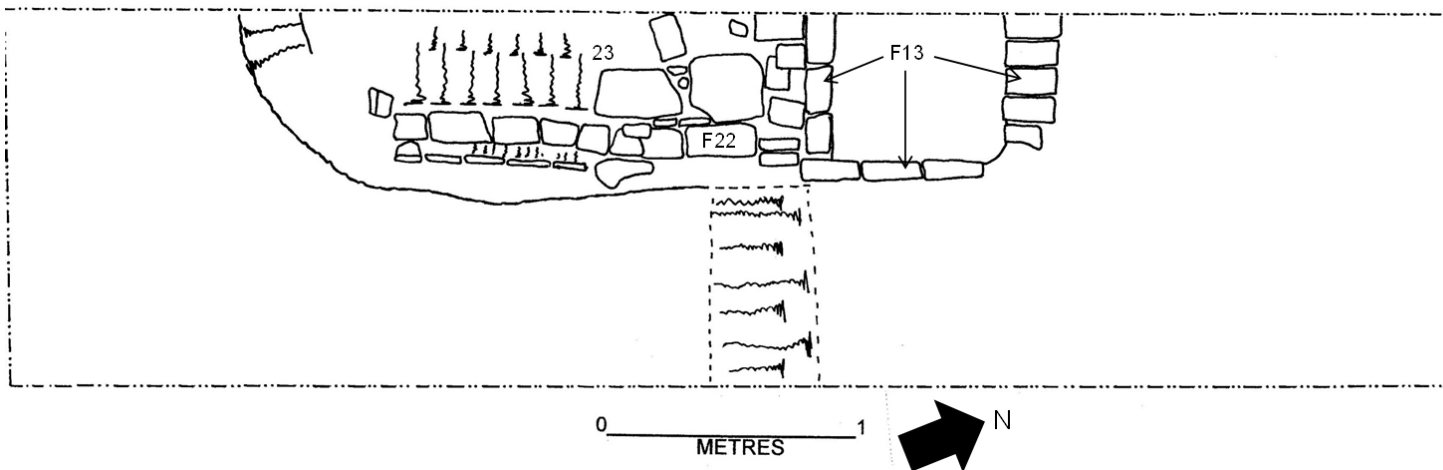


Figure 8 Trench 1 plan of features F13 and F22

- 4.4 The creation of the brick and stone hardstanding appears to have been partly contemporaneous with the deposit of sand and rubble loam at (24,31 32,34, 35 and 38) towards the south end of the trench which was interpreted as an initial phase of reclamation possibly also to protect feature F39 from the sea – Figures 6 and 7.. These layers contained mostly medieval pottery but with some post medieval in context 34 which may be due to the fact that any beach sand within these contexts used in the dumping may contain a mixture from various periods
- 4.5 Above F39 on the west side of the trench and above sand on the east side to a depth of between 1.5 and 2 metres were layers of sand some of it intermixed with loam which had clearly been tipped from both the south and the north (21,23, 24 25,26 and 27 in the east facing section; 24, 32, 34, 35 37 and 38 in the west facing section) creating a slightly saucer shaped stratigraphy above F39 and more consistently north to south sloping elsewhere. These layers 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 either in this trench or trench 2. This sandy stratigraphy was interpreted as deliberate dumping, in the post medieval period, in order to make up the land between the natural slumped clay to the north and the made ground referred to in 4.4 to the south. At some stage this dumping had ceased and a feature given the number F22 was cut into layers 21 and 23 – Figure 6 and Plate 3. This feature consisted of an outer edging of stone and some brick set on edge and 'lined' by a black gritty layer, possibly coal – Figure 9. It was not clear whether this 'lining' was a deliberate attempt to make the drain waterproof or the result of sedimentation in the drain. It is suggested that this drain was created in order to alleviate a problem in the dumped material due to water seepage out of the cliff which would have caused the made ground to be difficult to build on
- 4.6 The upper part of the north end of this trench contained a brick structure numbered F13 which at its north end had been cut into the naturally slumped clay referred to in 4.2 above – Figure 6 and Plate 3. No building cut was present for this feature on its south and east sides in layers 11, 19 and 20 except for a small cut into 19 for the insertion of a small drain F17.



Plate 3 – East facing section of Trench 1 showing F13 (right) and F22 (left)

It seems that layer 11 which was a clayey material, layer 12 which was loam with sandy inclusions and layer 20 which was yellow clay with stone are all part of a levelling phase contemporary with the creation of F13. This feature was interpreted as a 18th century cistern possibly associated with the erection of the earlier cottage, consistent with post 1700 pottery in context 20.

Trench 2

- 4.7 This trench measuring 1.6 by 4.5 metres was carried out in June 2012 in 60A Quay Street. As with Trench 1 the earliest feature, occupying the northernmost 1.3 metres was levelled off natural clay (66 and 57) which again showed signs of natural re-deposition during the process of cliff slumping – see Figure 10. Surprisingly, in contrast to Trench 1 the clay was retained by a large stone wall of 11 mostly uniform courses but apparently only one stone thick. This wall F55 had been cut into the clay (cut F65, fill 64). No dating evidence was found in this fill, but it is likely that this wall is contemporary with the erection of the cottage shown in Figures 3 and 9 (thought to be early 18th century). A number of small linear features in the clay are thought to have been associated with the drainage of the area behind the wall. These were topped by an area of late 18th or early 19th century bricks (56) probably an external yard. The last phases were the insertion of a 19th century salt glazed drain (F68) and then the covering of the whole site with concrete
- 4.8 South of wall F55 was a deep deposit of rubble fill. It was not possible to safely or easily excavate this, so a sondage was put down close to wall F55. This revealed a stone and brick cellar floor at 2.0 metres AOD sitting on clay and sand, the cellar having a depth of 2.2 metres. It was topped by a brick floor surface (52) underneath the present concrete surface. This brick floor is likely to date from the early 20th century rebuilding referred to in paragraph 1.2 and it appears that a pre-existing cellar to the cottage had been in-filled by pushing the previous cottage into it. The bricks recovered from this fill suggest an early 18th century date for the cottages.



Plate 4. Trench 2 looking north showing wall F55, drain F68, sondage into cellar fill and the cellar floor

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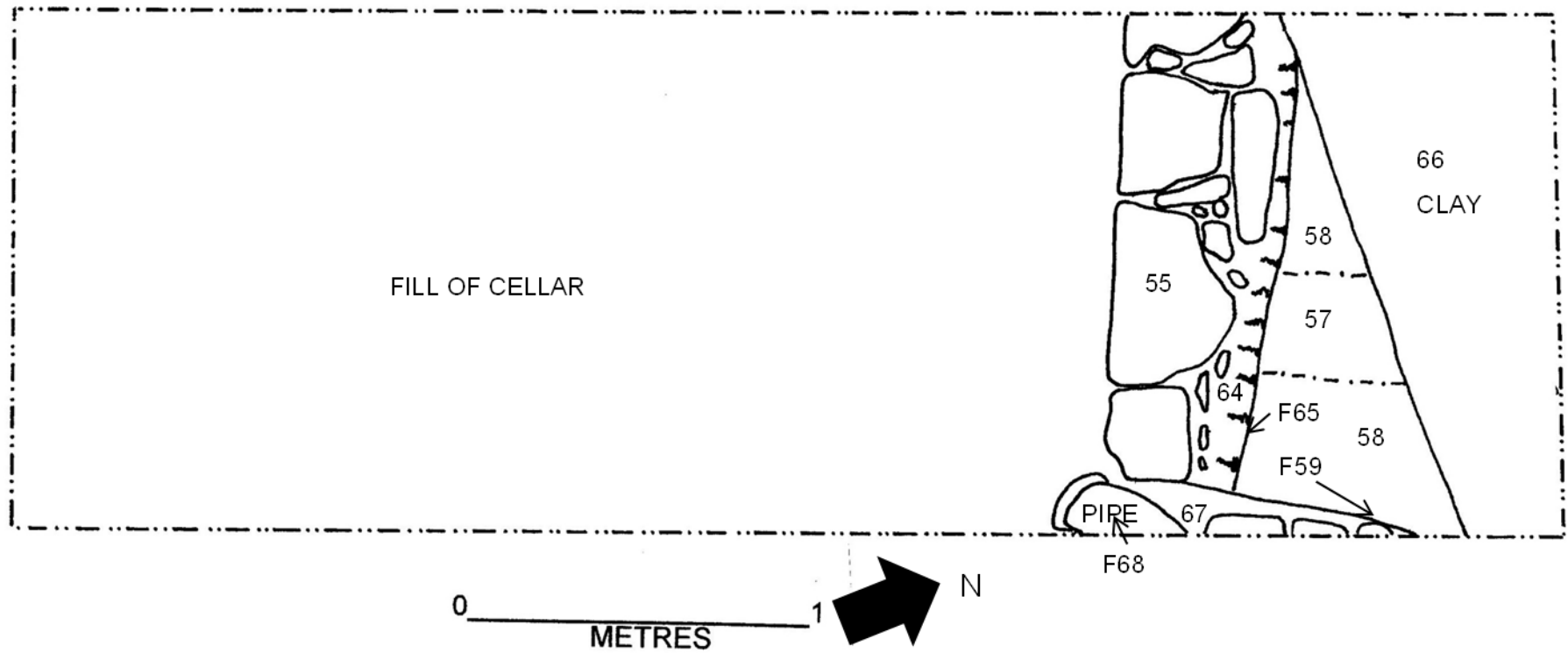


Figure 9 Trench 2 plan

5.0 Interpretation and conclusion

- 5.1 The relationship between what was found in Trench 1 ie a series of features within re-deposited sand and Trench 2 ie a retaining wall and building cellar is unknown and therefore makes it difficult to come to precise conclusions. Now that the buildings are demolished it would be useful to excavate a third trench between locations of the two previous ones in order to better understand the interface between the tow.
- 5.2 What can be said however is that the relative levels of the sand in trench 1 and the cellar in Trench 2 have confirmed that in the medieval period there was no road along this part of what is now Quay Street as here was further to the west. It is likely that the road originally extended only as far east as the point where modern Sandside intersects with 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.

6.0 Acknowledgements

- 6.1 The excavations were sponsored by the site owner, James Corrigan, who also carried out the cutting and breaking out of the existing concrete floor
- 6.2 The excavations were directed by the author and John Hinchliffe FSA and carried out by SAHS members Steve Bence, Martin Bland, Chris Evans, Sirlol Hinchliffe, Mick Panton, Jane Peutrell, Emily Taberner Emma Temlett and , Simon Temlett.

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Maps & Plans Consulted

- | | | |
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| 1725 | A new and exact plan of Scarborough | J Cossins |
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| 1852 | Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:1056 | |
| 1892 | Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:500 | |
| 1912 | Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:2500 | |
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| 1939 | Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:2500 | |
| 1965 | Ordnance Survey plan of Scarborough at a scale of 1:1250 | |

ANNEX 1 FINDS DATABASE

TO BE ADDED IN

RECENT FIELD WORK REPORTS

Report 40	Investigation of a pre-historic square enclosure at Racecourse Road, Seamer Moor	2013
Report 41	An archaeological excavation at 34 Queen St, Scarborough	2013
Report 42	Archaeological investigations into a linear earthwork at Seamer Moor, Scarborough	2013
Report 43	Archaeological excavations at 60-62 Quay Street, Scarborough	2020
Report 44	Archaeological investigations on land at Raven Hall Rd, Ravenscar, North Yorkshire	2014
Report 45	Archaeological investigations at Ayton Castle, West Ayton	2013
Report 46	An earthwork survey of Castle Hill, Brompton	2016
Report 47	Raincliffe Woods archaeological survey Dec 2015-April 2016- Interim Report	2016
Report 48	An excavation at Castle Hill House, Brompton	2018
Report 49	An archaeological survey of Forge Valley, Raincliffe and Row Brow Woods, Scarborough	2018
Report 50	An excavation at Castle Hill, Brompton	2018
Report 51	A survey of The Forge, Forge Valley, Scarborough	2019
Report 52	An Archaeological excavation at Scarborough Castle	2019
Report 53	The 2019 excavation at Castle Hill, Brompton	2019