

SCARBOROUGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

c/o 4c Dunslow Court
Eastfield
Scarborough
YO11 3XT



10 November 2020

Dear Sirs

Application Ref 20/02167/FL

Demolition of existing building and erection of building to provide commercial floorspace (Class E) at ground floor and accommodation for NHS key workers and students at the upper levels at 50-59 Newborough, Scarborough

We write on behalf of Scarborough Archaeological & Historical Society about the archaeological aspects of the above application.

General

The Historic Environment Desk Based assessment is deficient in that it has failed to interrogate a number of key sources ie

- *An Archaeological Survey of Scarborough* published 1987 by Scarborough Borough Council/Birmingham University
- *Medieval Scarborough; Studies in Trade and Civic Life* published 2001 jointly by Yorkshire Archaeological Society and Scarborough Archaeological & Historical Society. Specifically the chapters *The Legendary Origins of Scarborough* by Dr Martin Arnold and *Church Life in Medieval Scarborough* by Prof. David Crouch
- *The Archaeology of Medieval Scarborough* published 2005 by Scarborough Archaeological & Historical Society

Section 5.4 does not reference the most detailed published source for the history of the Carmelite Friary (W. Page 1913 *Victoria History of the County of York: Volume 3*, 274-80). This source includes evidence that the friary grew by amalgamating a number of properties during the 14th century indicating that the area was occupied before the foundation of the friary. In view of this evidence, the assessment should have considered the potential survival of medieval remains predating the friary.

The regressive map analysis (5.7) has failed to interrogate a number of key maps, including:

- Vincent's Map of 1747
- Jeffery's Map of 1771
- Hinderwell's maps of 1798 and 1811
- John Wood's Plan of the Town & Environs of Scarborough of 1828
- Theakston's map of circa 1867

Section 6: Statement of Significance

Section 6.1 in our view understates the significance of the Carmelite priory which occupied the site and this underestimation means that, in our view, the response to the archaeological potential of the site is not sufficiently robust.

(1) There were only four other Carmelite friaries in Yorkshire and 38 in England and Wales in total so the Scarborough site could be stated to be something of a rarity (Archaeological Survey of Scarborough 1987, p26).

(2) the fact that Scarborough supported three friaries is an indication of the town's importance in the middle ages therefore the present site is a tangible link to the town's former status.

(3) As regards our understanding of medieval Scarborough, the site offers the last and best opportunity to use archaeology to learn something of this otherwise little-known institution.

Section 7.5: Potential Impacts on Unknown Archaeology

This states that there is a potential for as yet unknown archaeological remains within the Site to be physically impacted by the Development and goes on to acknowledge that:-

The full extent of truncation within the site is yet to be determined and it must be noted that the presence or absence of archaeological remains cannot currently be proven. It is possible for pockets of as yet unknown archaeological remains to survive within the Site.

As yet unknown archaeological remains have the most potential to be physically impacted on within the Site from the from medieval period onwards.

Given the potential importance of any remains of the Carmelite friary, and the significance of that friary we consider that this is a very good argument for a pre-determination evaluation (rather than a post-determination evaluation) which could then be used to inform any further mitigation measures.

In this context, it is worth noting that the Society's own investigations at the adjacent Dominican Friary site produced fragments of architectural stone even though that site had been subject to later building development.

We consider that a watching brief, as suggested by the Desk Based Assessment is not good enough and we would go further and suggest that the Borough Council, as a party to the development, should go beyond its narrow role as planning authority and take this site as an opportunity to investigate the Carmelite friary and to promote the town's heritage and community involvement in that heritage. Our Society is taking active steps to engage the local community in the town's archaeology even during the pandemic (Scarborough Big Dig-ital) so we see this site as potentially a most useful tool in community engagement

Furthermore, if there are waterlogged deposits on site (which the Desk Based Assessment suggests is a possibility) these should be subject to characterisation and analysis of preservation in line with Historic England guidance published in 2016 <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/preserving-archaeological-remains/heag100a-preserving-archaeological-remains/>

Finally, although a walk-over survey has been done, this does not mention that a section of stone wall survives on the rear boundary of the Shakespeare Public House, St Helen's Square. This may be a survival of the friary and it should certainly be the subject of archaeological investigation and recording.

Yours faithfully

Trevor Pearson FSA – President SAHS

Chris Hall – Vice president and Field Officer SAHS

John Oxley FSA – committee member SAHS

Marie Woods – Field Officer SAHS