



Aerial of view of Dunbar Battery prior to project works



Historic aerial view of Dunbar Battery showing 19th Century hospital building

Introduction

This project is for the design of a new public gathering and performance space within the Category B Listed Lamer Island Battery in Dunbar. The civil defensive bastion was built in 1781.

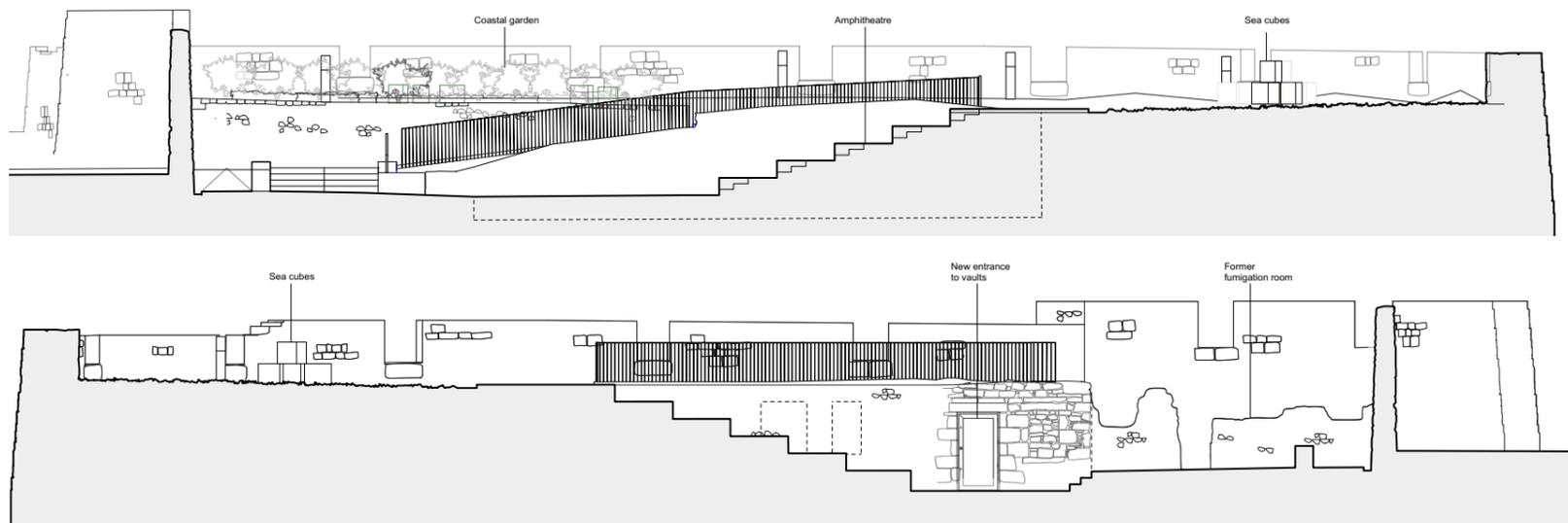
The site subsequently housed a hospital for infectious diseases and a military hospital during WWI. Whilst latterly it became ruined, it remained full of potential due to its stunning location, rich history and intriguing topography. In 2009 Dunbar Harbour Trust engaged rankinfraser to prepare a feasibility study looking at ways in which the battery could be re-imagined as a public gathering and performance attraction for visitors and a local resource.

Design

The battery design exploits the site's palimpsest, using the layers of history to inform and guide the design and distribution of various contemporary interventions. The interventions were not intended to compete with, or overpower, the historic structure. Rather, the design works seek to amplify the existing spatial character whilst transforming the space into a multi-functioning public arena. For example the most significant new structure, the amphitheatre, is integrated into the void formed by the walls of the former hospital so as to leave the trace of the hospital untouched and the views unimpeded. The design purposely works with the existing structure of the battery and the exceptional setting and does not seek to compete with either. The robust and reduced material palette of; primarily oak, larch and concrete responds to the exposed location and complements the richness of the existing stone walls. Bespoke metal work is deliberately delicate and transparent so as not to obscure views across the site.



Aerial photo of completed battery project.



Sections of the proposed amphitheatre

The Dunbar Battery