

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

HALL FARM HOUSE, SPANBY,
LINCOLNSHIRE

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY (Lincoln)

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HALL FARM HOUSE, SPANBY

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

FOR

MR AND MRS M. LUKER

BY

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1.0 Abstract

An archaeological watching brief took place on August 22nd, 1995 during the construction of a westerly extension to Hall Farm House, Spanby, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). No significant archaeological remains were exposed during ground works on this site, which had been part of a garden area.

The site central national grid reference is TF 0944 3813

2.0 Introduction

Mr and Mrs M. Luker were granted full planning permission in April 1995 to construct a westerly extension to Hall Farm House, Spanby. The house lies within the Shrunken Medieval Village (SMV), where extant remains were visible in fields south and south-east of the present development, prior to their in-filling in 1980. A condition requiring an archaeological watching brief to take place during development was therefore attached to the planning permission.

To fulfil the planning requirement, the clients commissioned Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) to undertake a watching brief so that archaeological deposits exposed as a result of the development could be recorded and interpreted to standards set by the Community Archaeologist for North Kesteven.

Copies of this report will be/have been deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record, the Community Archaeologist for North Kesteven and the Lincolnshire Archives Office, effectively placing the information in the public domain.

3.0 Location and description

The hamlet of Spanby lies in the parish of Threekingham, approximately 7.5km south of Sleaford. Hall Farm House is situated on the north side of an east-west road which traverses the modern settlement.

The new development is a small extension to the west side of a large brick-built house, possibly C18th in origin. The 1903 edition of the Ordnance Survey shows Hall Farm House to have been part of a range of structures which surrounded a rectangular parcel of land.

The new development is of red brick construction and has been designed in keeping with the existing structure.

Spanby lies on land approximately 11.0m above modern sea level, a short distance west of the west fen edge. The solid geology consists of undivided Oxford clay, which

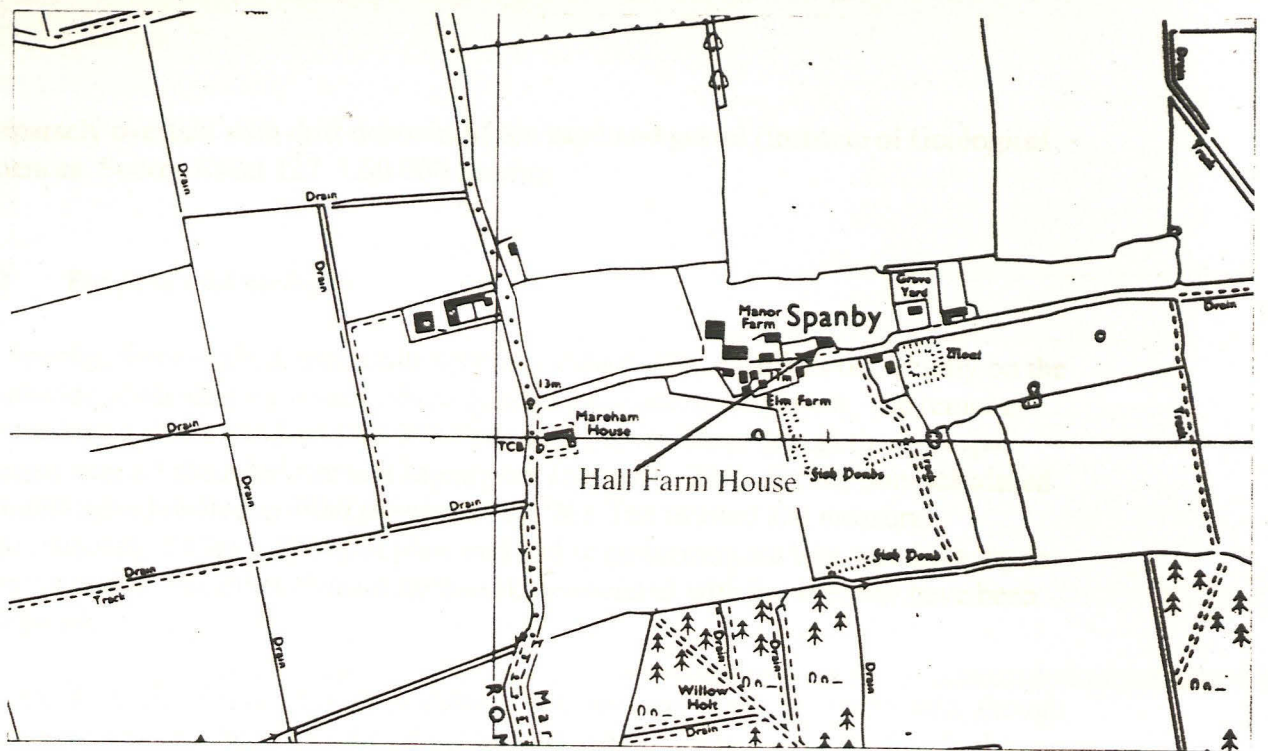


Fig. 1 Site Location

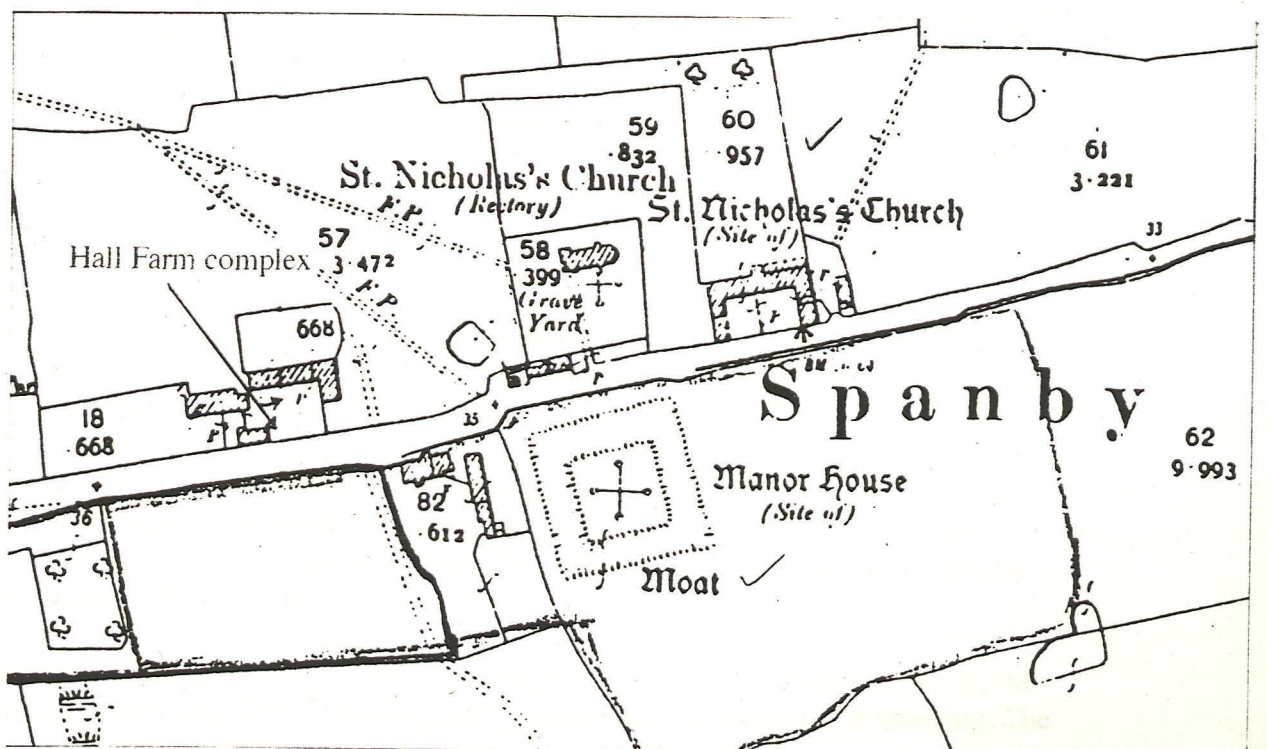


Fig. 2 Annotated extract from 1903
Ordnance Survey (Sheet CXV SE)

is sparsely overlain with drift deposits of fen sand and gravel (Institute of Geological Sciences: Survey Sheet 127, 1:50 000 Series).

4.0 Purpose and methods

At Spanby, there existed, until quite recently, extant village earthworks, chiefly on the south side of the east-west road which divides the modern settlement. The remains are indicated on the modern 1:10 000 Ordnance Survey Map, though the principal moated site, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Schedule 241), and the non-Scheduled remains were levelled in 1980 (Healey 1981, 76). The moated site measures approximately 30.0m x 27.0m in plan and had been surrounded by a wet ditch, up to 6.0m in width. The other (linear) earthworks associated with the site may have been fish ponds.

As noted, the development site lies north of the, previously extant, earthworks, though there is no reason why the medieval settlement should not have extended on both sides of the road. Indeed, the parish church, dedicated to St Nicholas (redundant since 1973), lies approximately 150m east of the present development. It is of red brick construction and was apparently rebuilt in 1881 by Burrell & Harrison of London (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 679).

Spanby was a Domesday settlement; known in 1086 as *Spanebi* (Morris 1986). There are two entries; one relating to land held by Kolsveinn, the other to land held by Odger the Breton:

26, 39 LAND OF KOLSVEINN

In Spanby 2 carucates of land taxable. Land for 3 ploughs. 12 Freemen have 2 ploughs and meadow, 20 acres.

42, 7 LAND OF ODGER THE BRETON

In Spanby 4 bovates of land taxable. Land for 6 oxen. An outlier of Bourne. Odger has 1 plough and meadow, 18 acres. Value before 1066 and now, 10s.

There have been no excavations within the modern settlement, though the earthwork remains have been mapped and published and are incorporated as part of the County Sites and Monuments Record (PRN 60048).

Given the historical background of the site, there was a possibility (presented by the new development) that foundation trenching would disturb medieval settlement remains and present an opportunity, therefore, to assess their potential and, perhaps more importantly, their date.

In recognising the potential archaeological significance of the development site, the District Council issued an archaeological requirement as a condition of planning. The

level of recording deemed to be most appropriate was an archaeological watching brief. This may be defined thus:

'An archaeological watching brief is defined as a programme of observation and investigation conducted during the destruction of archaeological deposits, resulting in the preparation of a report and ordered archive' (Institute of Field Archaeologists draft on Standard Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs, 1993)

Due to a slight misunderstanding on the part of the Client, the development commenced before arrangements were made for an archaeologist to be present. As such, no project brief was issued by the Community Archaeologist. Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) were notified after trenching had commenced and the (acting) Community Archaeologist was then informed.

Recording was achieved using standard watching brief daily log sheets and context record sheets. Sketch drawings were made as part of the record, though accurate scale drawings were not deemed necessary on this occasion, due to there being an absence of archaeological remains in the three foundation trenches inspected.

5.0 Results

Foundation trenches measured approximately 70cm in width and were excavated to a depth approximately 80cm below the modern ground level (surface vegetation was removed in advance of trenching). They extended the full width of the house (approximately 5.7m) and c. 3.0m west of it.

Most of the trenching was monitored retrospectively, involving a detailed inspection of the sides and base of each cutting. No archaeological features were exposed, the natural strata comprising a complex of stiff yellow/grey boulder clay mixed with small gravel inclusion, possibly indicative of reworking.

The only 'feature' considered to be of potential archaeological interest was the foundations on which Hall Farm House rested: these, unlike the superstructure, were of stone construction and extended to a depth c. 50cm below the modern ground surface. They were bonded with yellow sandy mortar and may have been part of an earlier build - which could not be dated.

6.0 Conclusions

The development at Hall Farm House, Spanby, did not involve the disturbance of any significant archaeological remains, excluding the stone foundations on which the existing structure rests (which could relate to an earlier phase of building, though this was not proved).

7.0 Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are expressed to the clients, Mr and Mrs Luker, for commissioning Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) on this occasion. Thanks also to Hillary Healey for providing valuable background information and to Mark Bennett for allowing access to the County Sites and Monuments Record.

8.0 Appendices:

8.1 References

8.2 Site archive

8.3 Information extracted from the County Sites and Monuments Record

8.1 References

Healey, H 1981 Threkingham, Spanby Manor Site, in *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology* 16, 76

Mills, AD 1993 *English Place-Names* (Oxford)

Morris, J (ed) 1986 *Domesday Book: Lincolnshire*

Pevsner, N and Harris, J, 1989 *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire*

8.2 Site Archive

The basic site archive comprises:

x1 watching brief record sheet

x5 colour prints/negatives

x1 architects drawing, scale 1:50

Primary records are currently with Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln), though a complete and ordered archive will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln within 1 year of completion of this report.

8.3 Information extracted from the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)

PRN	NGR	Description
60048	TF 095 381	Medieval moated site; Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 241). Bulldozed flat in September 1981
60040/60041	TF 0956 3809	Moat + fishponds; probable site of manor house
60039	TF 0956 3815	St Nicholas Church (redundant): dates from C13th, rebuilt 1882