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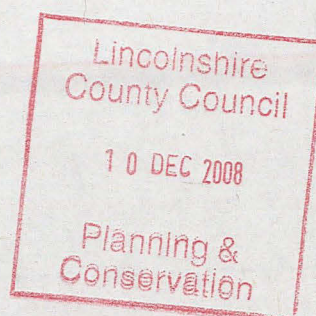
Garden to Rear of The Sycamores, Spalding, Lincolnshire



Assessment of Significance For South Holland District Council

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

South Holland District Council has acquired a site in the centre of the historic town of Spalding. The site, which is approximately 0.11 hectares, is undeveloped and has in recent times been a garden area to Dembleby House. It comprises two compartments subdivided by a garden wall with a single opening through. The site boundaries are largely brick walled.

A report has been commissioned from Anderson and Glenn to undertake an assessment of the significance of this site as an historic town garden.

The site was visited in conjunction with the local authority conservation officer on the 14th May 2007. Because the garden was significantly overgrown, a further visit was needed after ground cover clearance. Due to unusually bad weather, this second visit was not possible until July 2007. However, some research was carried out in the library of the Spalding Gentleman's Society. Historic maps found in their archives and also others supplied by the Local Authority have been used in this investigation. A site plan prepared by the Local Authority public buildings surveyor has also been utilised for the site appraisal.

2.0 LOCATION

The site is located to the rear of Dembleby House, currently a solicitor's office and accessed off Broad Street. It sits adjacent to the Herring Lane public car park and backs onto the private gardens of The Limes and The Sycamores. These are both Grade II* listed buildings, being nos. 12 and 13 Double Street respectively. Double Street faces the west bank of the River Welland, which runs through the centre of the town.

Adjacent to the site, on the northern side, is the former Manor House, now the Constitutional Club. This is also listed grade II* and it faces Broad Street and has a small forecourt bounded by wall, piers and gateway with overthrow.

The whole of the historic centre of Spalding is a Conservation Area. Broad Street leads to the Market Place, which is south of the site.

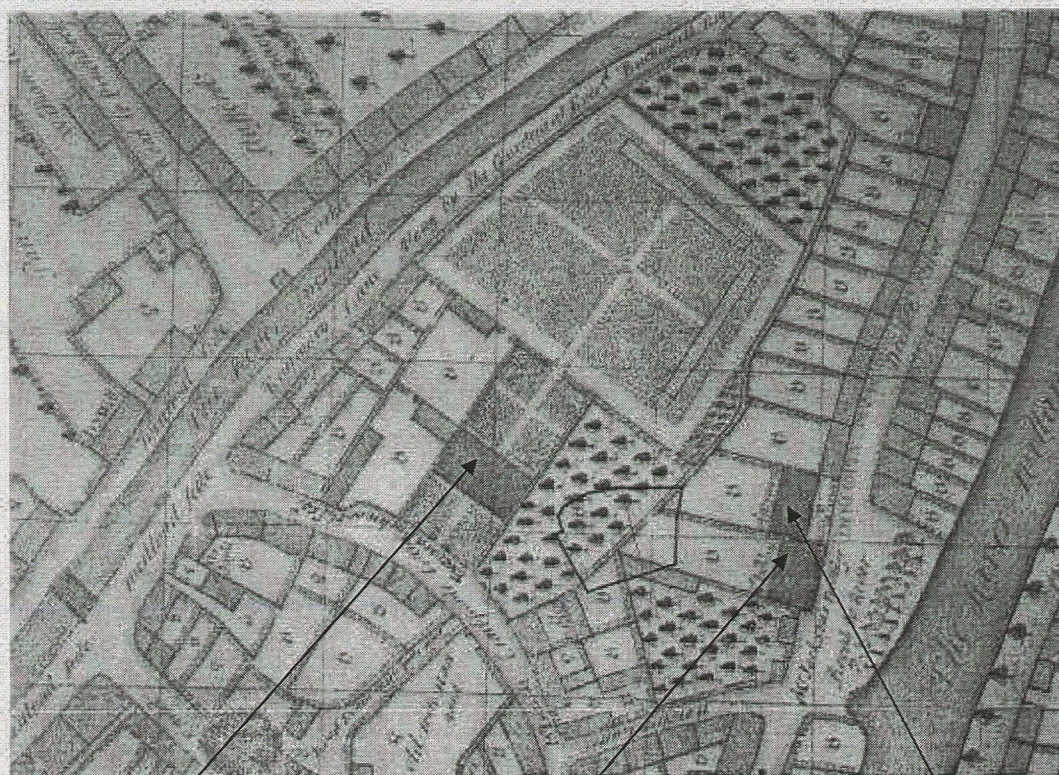
3.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Spalding developed as important fenland settlement in the Middle-Ages which focussed on the River Welland as a trade route. It was also notable because it was the site of a large Benedictine Priory which was located to the south of the Market Place. Most of this was destroyed following the dissolution of the monasteries, although some buildings and evidence of the Priory still remain. The medieval parish church is on the east side of the river and it was established by the Priory in the 13th century

Garden to rear of Sycamores Spalding

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The area occupied by the study site is not directly associated with either the Priory or the Church. It is however very close to the heart of the town, and may well have had buildings on or around it in the medieval period. This however is not known, and no archaeological assessment has been made as part of this study. The earliest available published evidence for this area is from the detailed map of 1732 prepared by the surveyor John Grundy, and presented to the Spalding Gentleman's Society where the original still exists. (Plate 1)



The Manor House

The Limes

The Sycamores

Figure 1 : Part of the John Grundy Map of 1732, the site area is outlined in red.

The plan shows Herring Lane at the bottom, Double Street to the right, facing the river and Broad Street (here called Crackpoole Lane) the curved street in the lower left hand part. The site area can only be approximated on this map. Its position has been assessed relative to the two buildings still standing today – namely the Manor House and the Sycamores. The site of the Limes is still occupied by a property of that name, but the house was rebuilt in the second half of the 18th century.

The Manor House was built by Everard Buckworth in 1727. The plan shows extensive formal gardens laid out to the rear of the house, with what appear to be grass plats and a forecourt in front. Adjacent to the south west, is an orchard, probably belonging to the

Garden to rear of Sycamores Spalding

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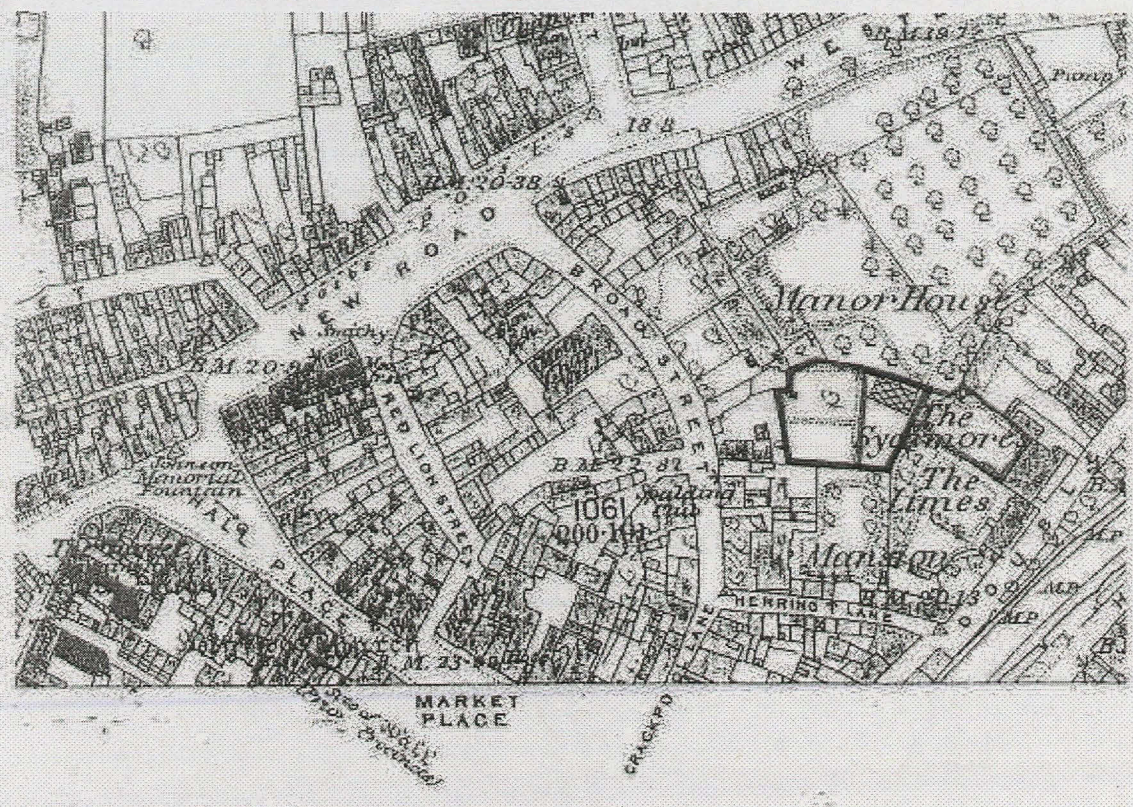


Figure 3: The earliest Ordnance Survey Map of 1880s.

On the map supplied to us by SHDC, this shows the study site with the eastern compartment highlighted as belonging to the Sycamores' garden. We do not know who has outlined this. The Limes site can be seen to have a laid out garden area, as has the property now located on the corner of Herring Lane and Broad Street. The eastern compartment of the study site, which was possibly by then associated with The Sycamores, appears to contain a large glass house. The western compartment has a simple arrangement of paths.

Figure 4 below shows the most detailed map of this area and the relationship between the study site and the adjoining gardens. At this time the two compartments are likely to be linked. Although there is a wall between them, it has an opening through which a path passes from one side to the other. The paths are not however completely aligned, suggesting that the opening through may have been a later addition to earlier path layouts.

Garden to rear of Sycamores Spalding

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Interestingly there is an opening through the dividing wall today, but not in the position shown here.

The path layout in Figure 4 does not conclusively show which site the area was connected to in 1887. Is it the Manor House or The Sycamores? The site to the east facing Double Street does not look as though it is a residential site in that it does not seem to have a landscaped garden area to it. The Mansion House, on the corner of Herring Lane and Broad Street, The Limes, The Sycamores and the Manor House all have well laid out garden areas.

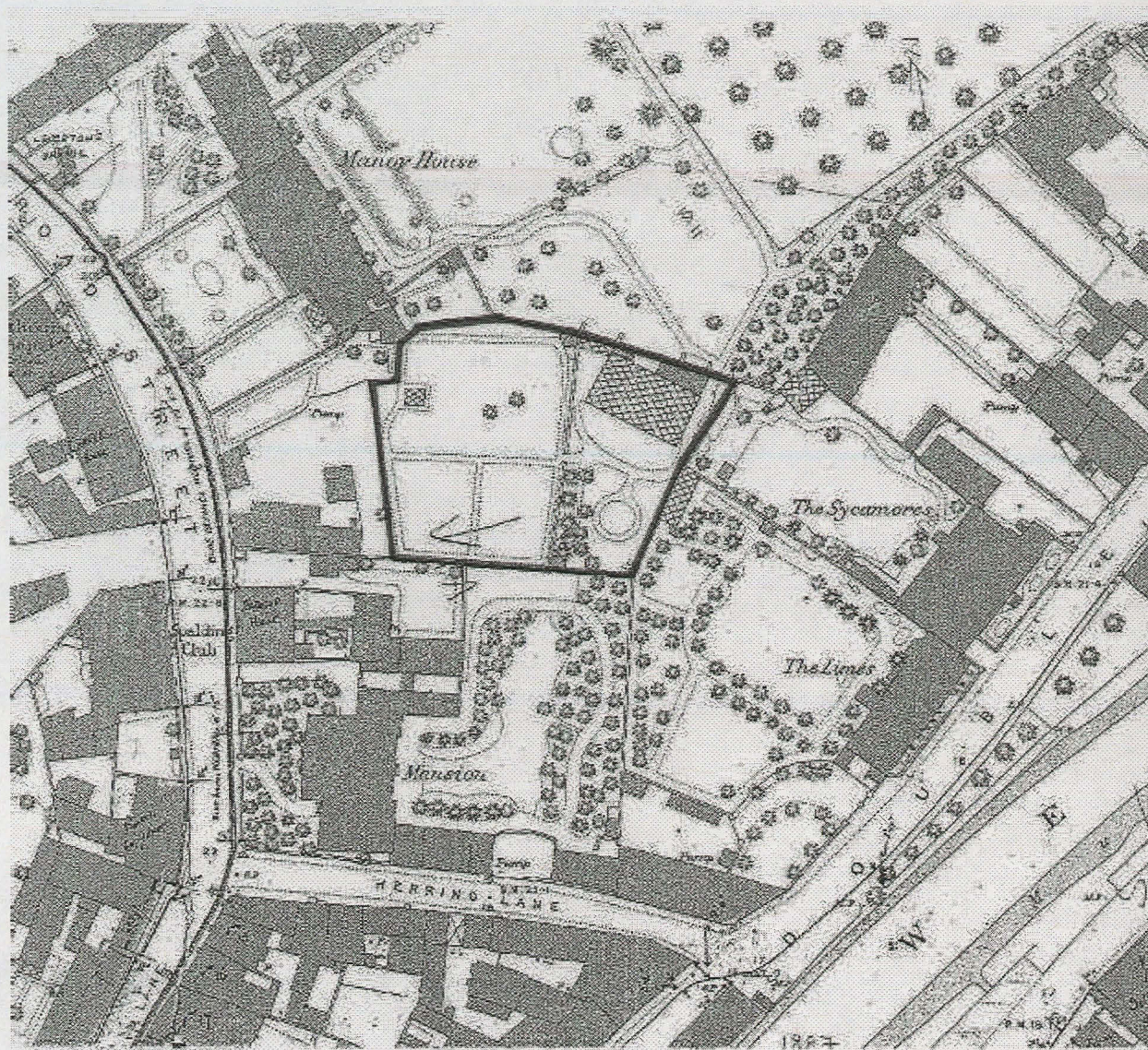


Figure 4: Larger scale Ordnance Survey Map of 1887

The study site still shows the glass house which featured on the map in Figure 3, and adjacent compartment suggest it is possibly a kitchen garden arrangement. Note that here

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the Manor House has an extension on the south side of the house beyond the frontage which faces the forecourt.

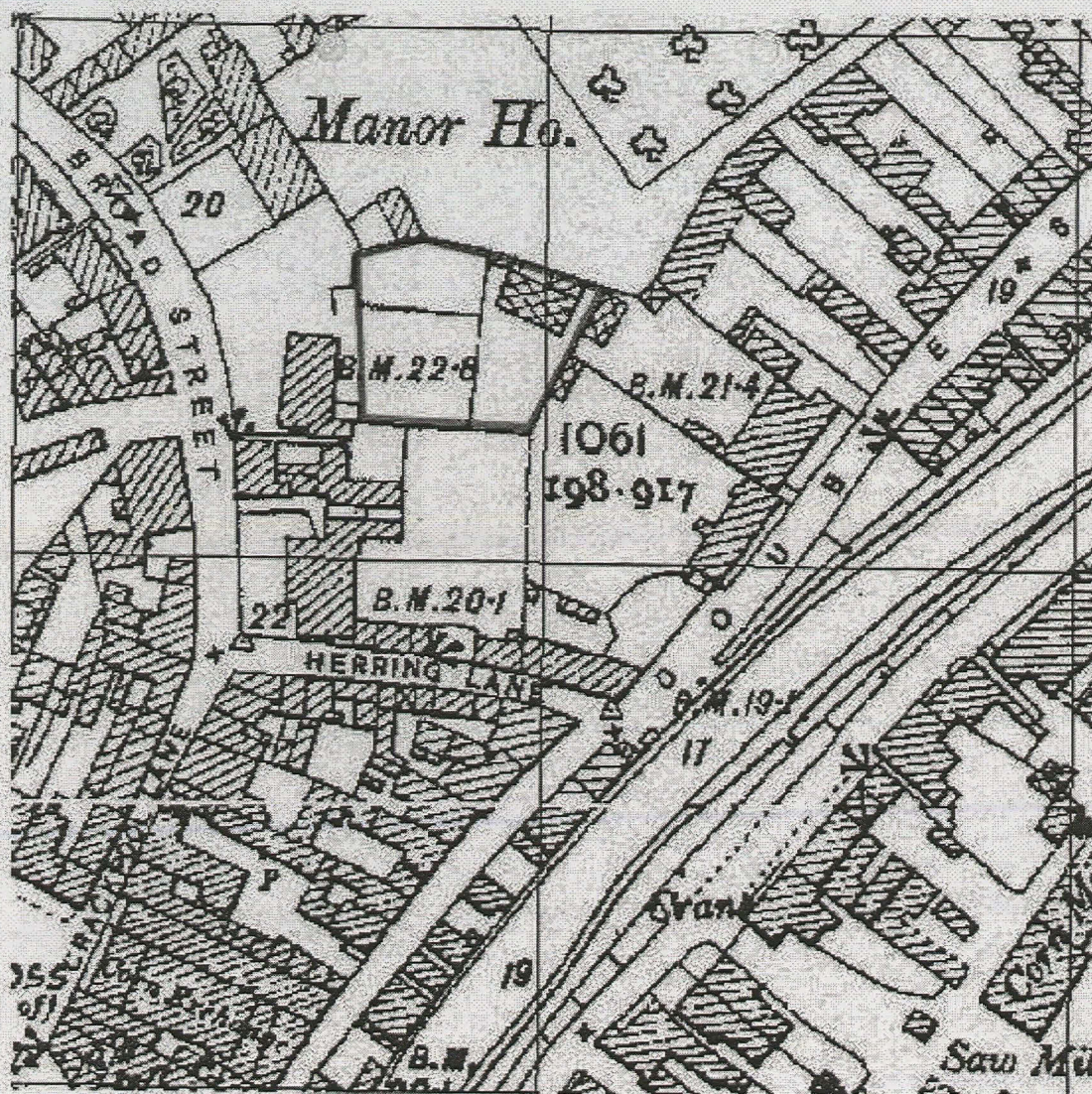


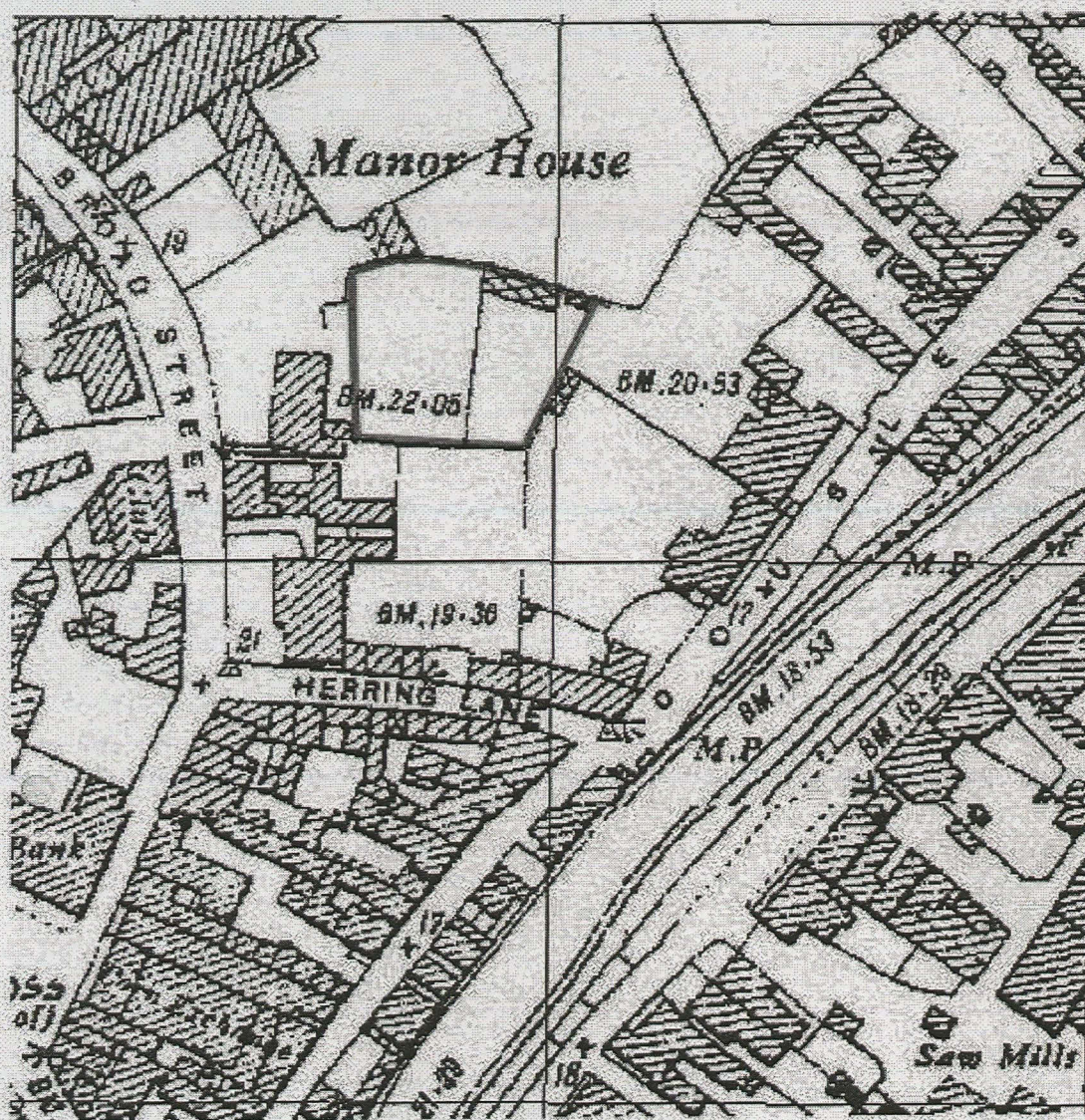
Figure 5: Ordnance Survey Plan of 1904.

At this time, the Manor House has lost its southern extension and a new house has been built on the land to the south immediately adjacent to the study site. This is Dembleby House which still stands today. Beyond this is Norwood House to the south, and the Mansion House, or Harrington House as it became known. The study site still retains the large glass house in the eastern compartment and the western compartment appears to be subdivided. Note that there is a smaller glass house up against the western wall of the Sycamores, the wall that divides it from the study site.

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The next map (Figure 6) in the sequence dates from 1931-2. This shows that The Sycamores is clearly in possession of the eastern compartment. The smaller glass house which was on the western wall has been removed, and the wall is also gone. The glass house in the compartment belonging to the Sycamores also looks smaller than the one shown in earlier maps.



1931-32

Figure 6: Ordnance Survey Plan of 1931-2.

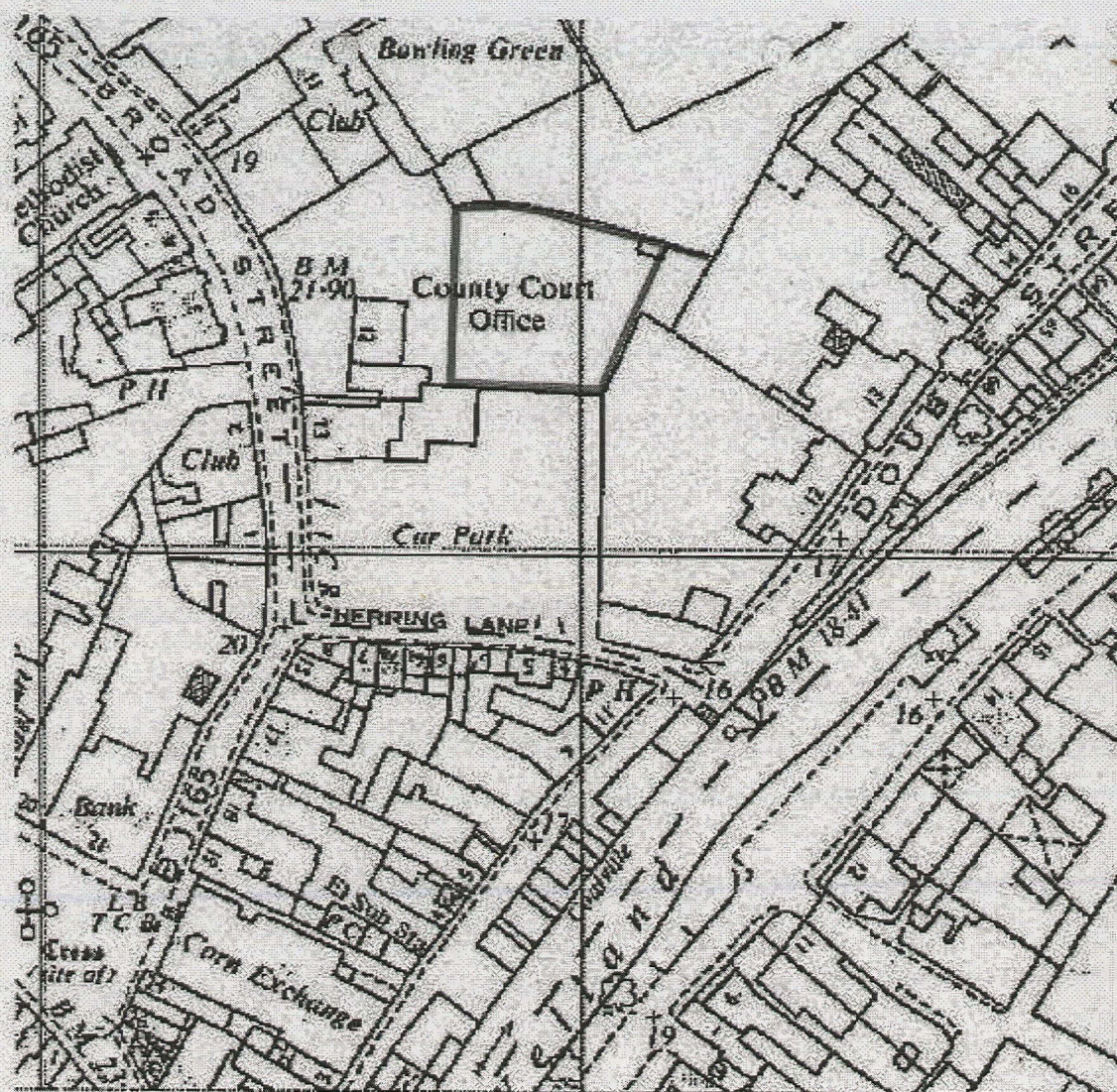


Figure 7: Ordnance Survey Plan of 1968.

This shows the demolition of Harrington House and the siting of a car park on the gardens and frontage. Dembleby House has become a county court and the Manor House a club. It was acquired by the Conservatives in 1911 to form the club house. On this map all of the site seems to have become part of Dembleby House. This accords with the recent sale of the property from the owners of Dembleby House, to the District Council.

Since the map of 1968, the granary on Herring Lane has been demolished and the road widened here. A new wall was built to the southern boundary of The Limes. Norwood House has also been demolished and its site incorporated into the Herring Lane car park.

Garden to rear of Sycamores Spalding

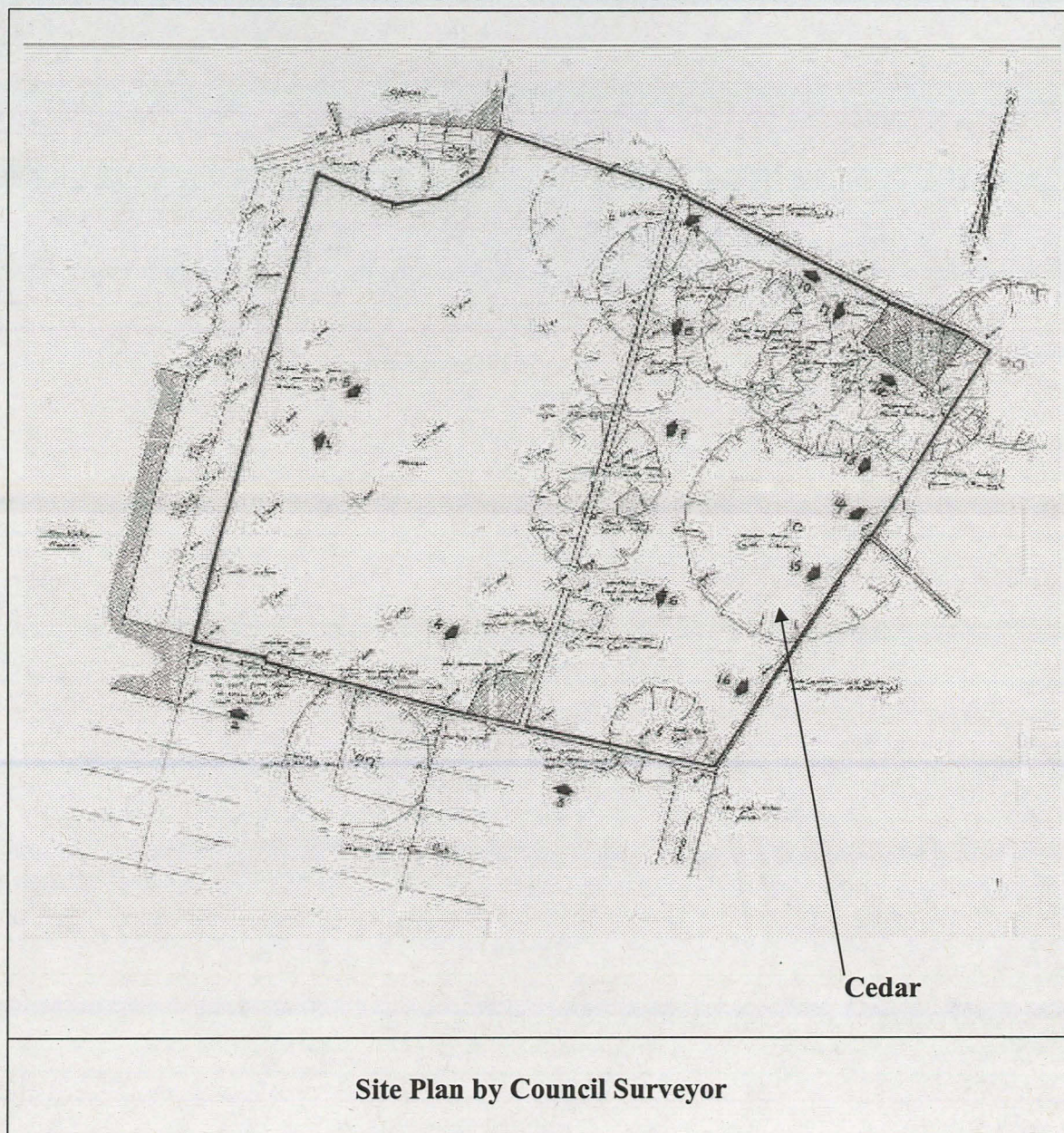
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There is some information on the Limes in the book by Elsdon and Leveritt on 'Aspects of Spalding' published in 1986. The Limes was sold in 1677 by William Wilsby to Edward Stevens and in 1731 the house and four cottages on Herring Lane were purchased by John Jackson. His frontages are shown on the Grundy map. It was sold twice in the first half of the 18th century and the Massey family then bought it in 1751 and owned it for over one hundred years. It is thought that they had the house rebuilt in the mid 18th century. They were a family of prominent Quakers. It was then sold to a solicitor Charles Harvey who re-sold it in 1860 to another solicitor Mr Bonner. He let the property to a tenant James Speechley who was churchwarden at the parish church from 1854 – 75. Gilbert Scott restored the church, 1865 – 74, when Bonner was warden.

Garden to rear of Sycamores Spalding

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4.0 SITE APPRAISAL



The site area has now been separated from Dembleby House (Plate 1) with a modern fence along its new western boundary. The western compartment has along its southern boundary a brick wall to the existing Council car park. This comprises in part a section of rebuilt walling, including some niches formed with reused stonework. This wall is likely to have been constructed in this way following the 20th century demolition of Norwood House and the incorporation of its site into the car park. (Plate 2)

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Plate 1

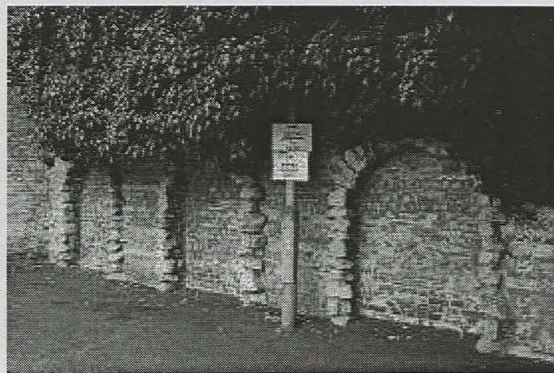


Plate 2

The wall beyond the niches is earlier and is in English garden wall bond. It has no coping and is missing upper courses. It is likely however that this wall is no earlier than late 18th century in date. (Plate 3).

Within this western compartment is an old summer house in the south east corner. This is rather overgrown but is clearly of timber construction. It is not shown on the very detailed garden plans on the 1889 Plan (Figure 4). From what can be seen of the remains, it is likely to date from the early twentieth century. (Plate 4)

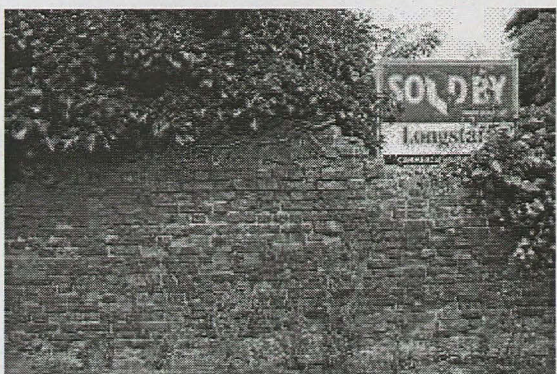


Plate 3



Plate 4

The wall between the two compartments has an opening with a shaped stone lintel which connects the two areas. (Plates 5 and 6). This opening is not in the position shown on Figure 4 and the brickwork around the lintel has been rebuilt with relatively modern brickwork suggesting that this is a late 19th or early 20th century formation.



Plate 5



Plate 6

This dividing wall, to the north of the opening, is in what appears to be late 19th century brickwork. It has a plinth with piers at approximately 4m centres and is in English garden wall bond. It has lost some of the upper courses and has no coping. (Plate 7) There is a change in build 8.2m from the northern end of this wall. (Plate 8) Here the lower section is built in a smaller format brick and has been painted, suggesting that it formed a back wall to a glass house. A Glass house is shown on the map in Figure 6 abutting this wall.

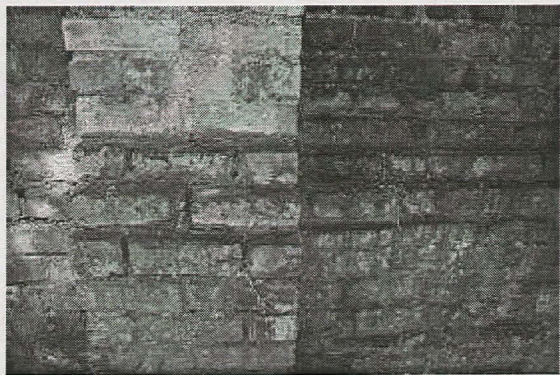


Plate 7

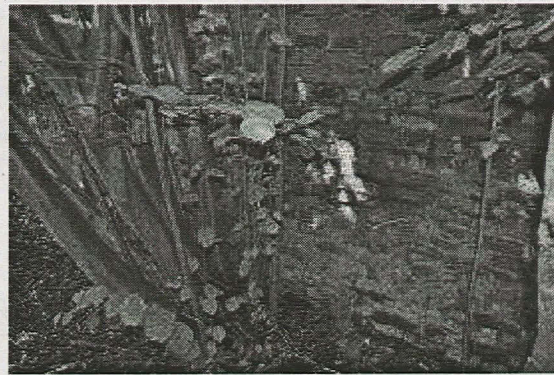


Plate 8

Garden to rear of Sycamores Spalding

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The northern boundary wall abuts the compartment wall and is in large format brick. (Plate 9) There is however a change in build along this northern boundary where the brickwork changes to a smaller brick (55mm by 220mm) (Plate 10).

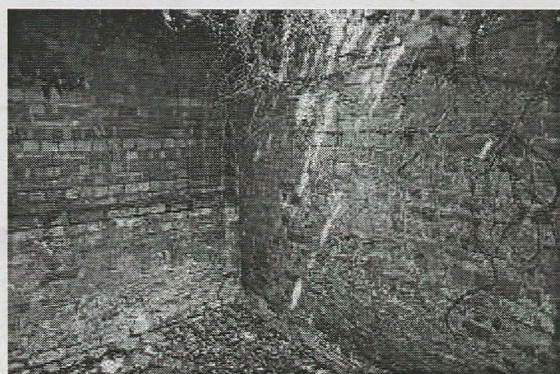


Plate 9

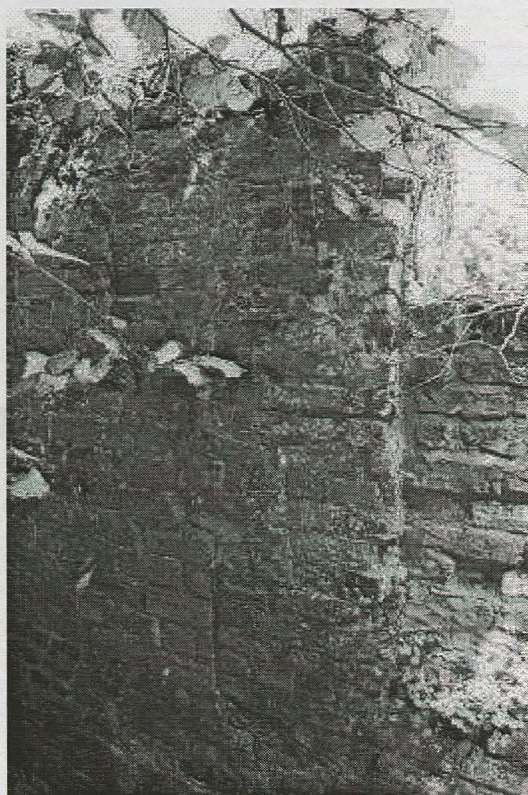


Plate 10

This smaller brick is however only in evidence for a small section as the majority of this walling has been rebuilt. At the eastern end of this wall there is the remains of a structure connected with the glass houses and may have been a buried section of a hot house. It is in blue bricks with its south facing wall rendered. (Plates 11 and 12)



Plate 11

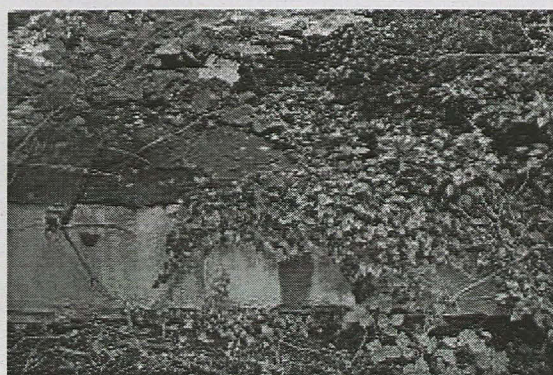


Plate 12

The eastern boundary that separates this site from the Sycamores is a modern fence. Figure 6 shows that in the 1930s this compartment of the study site formed part of the grounds to the Sycamores, so this modern boundary treatment is not surprising, although it does detract from the setting of this Grade II* building. (Plate 13). The corner of the garden wall that forms the boundary with the Limes has an interesting niche details. (Plate 14)

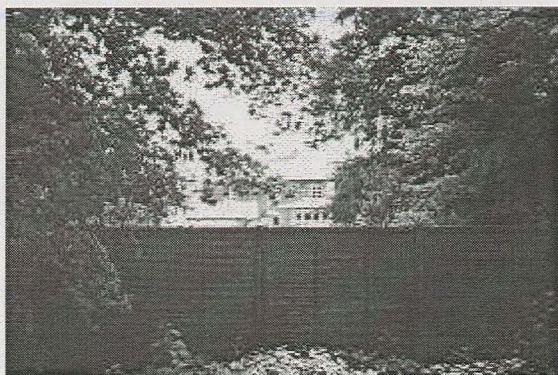


Plate 13

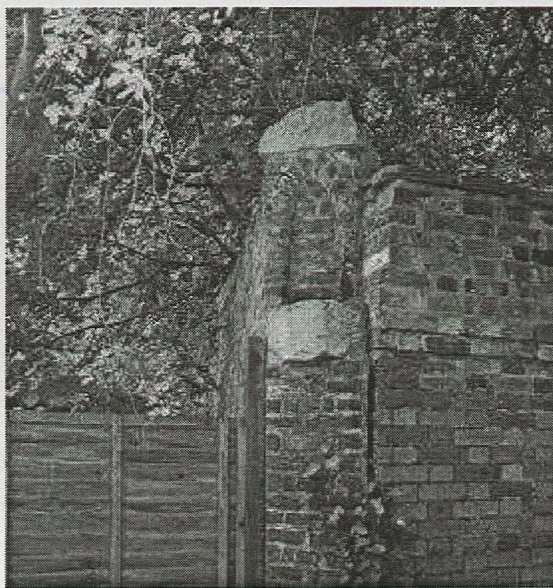


Plate 14

At about 2150mm from the corner niche detail is a blocked opening some 1000mm wide. This implies that at some time this eastern compartment of the study site also related to the Limes – as is suggested by the plan shown on Figure 2. This wall is in a 19th century looking brick in Flemish bond and is stone coped (Plate 15). Built on top of this boundary wall with the garden of the Limes is a limestone ashlar Gothic arch of the perpendicular period. It has been repaired quite considerably with cement mortar. The width of this arch is 3300mm and it is approximately 1900mm high. (Plate 16) It is a possibility that this arch came from the church when Gilbert Scott's restoration was underway. The churchwarden lived here and it was not uncommon for material being taken out of historic churches to be used as ornamentation in gardens at that time. Sleaford has a number of such examples from the houses belonging to the Kirks of Sleaford who were church restorers at a similar period. It is clear from the description by Pevsner of the work of Scott at Spalding (The Buildings of England, Lincolnshire volume) that some major windows were replaced in Spalding Parish Church.

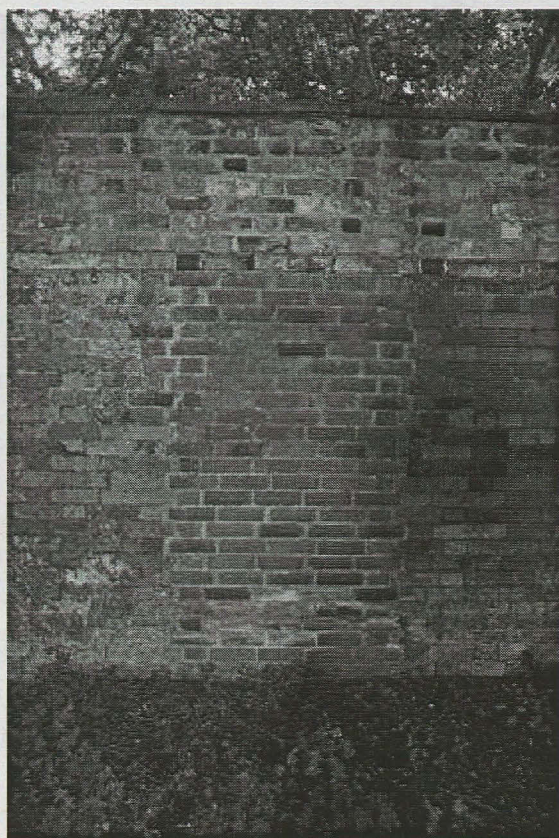


Plate 15

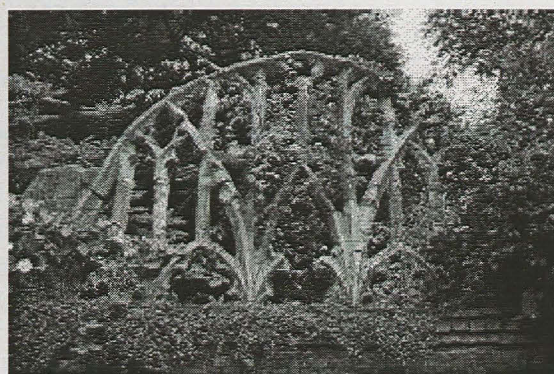


Plate 16

Garden to rear of Sycamores Spalding

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Trees and plantings

The site has currently been allowed to revert to nature and has consequently become somewhat overgrown with weeds and grasses. It is therefore impossible, without a careful removal of this vegetation, to determine if any evidence of the garden beds and paths remain. The only early planting of significance is a fine mature Cedar, beside the eastern boundary, which makes an important contribution to the space. The tree appears to be in good health.

5.0 SUMMARY

The evidence from the maps and from the field-survey indicates that the area occupied by this site did not form a specifically designed part of an early 18th century garden layout. In fact research indicates that the two compartments that currently make up the study site have not been joined together as a designed whole, until the twentieth century. At various times during the 19th century, the eastern compartment seems to have belonged alternatively to either The Limes or The Sycamores.

The site is currently overgrown and unused. It no longer forms a part of any of the gardens of the surrounding buildings. The walls which surround and subdivide the site, although in some areas containing bricks which may be of 18th century origin, have all been substantially altered. The opening between the two compartments is a late alteration.

There are the remains of two garden structures on the site – what may have been part of the glasshouse range in the eastern compartment, and the very overgrown timber structure in the western compartment are both fragmentary and late 19th/early 20th century. The feature associated with the site which is of particular interest is the Gothic stone window which is set on the garden wall of The Limes. This feature would appear to belong to that property rather than the study site. Any development of the latter will have a potential effect on the integrity of the window. There are also potential health and safety issues as the structure appears to require extensive conservation work.

Apart from the fine Cedar the other plantings are not of any great interest and some may be self sets.

6.0 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Assessing the significance of a site is a means of stating what is special about that place. An understanding of the significance of a site and its elements helps in the decision making process when planning the future of any site or area. In order to assist in that process it is important that the levels of significance are ranked.

As well as ranking the values of significance, this section also explains and describes why each element is important so that those using this document can enter fully into the process. A detailed and structured knowledge of any heritage asset is essential to formulating and developing future plans.

Each element is assessed on the basis of how it can demonstrate significance in the following categories:

***History:** British; local; connections with notable persons or events; industrial; social.*

***Archaeology:** Potential sites; information from finds/discoveries; the historic development of garden plans.*

***Architecture:** Character; aesthetic qualities; innovations in structure; phasing; vernacular survival.*

***Townscape:** Sense of place; group value; wider context; visual impact.*

***Conservation:** Conservation practice; ecology; landscape; craft techniques.*

***Community:** Local pride and identity; community use; amenity value.*

In order to weight the performance of each element a table of ranking has been developed, from high to low:

International Significance – demonstration of connections with international history and culture.

Exceptional Significance – relevance to British and local history culture and/or are of extraordinary or unique archaeological or architectural merit.

Considerable Significance – elements which can be strongly shown to demonstrate several areas of cultural significance.

Moderate Significance – elements which can be shown to relate to more than one area of cultural significance but do not demonstrate any one area to a strong degree.

Some Significance – elements which have at least one area of cultural significance.

Intrusive – these may include some elements which of themselves have a degree of cultural significance but detract from areas of greater significance.

The weighting of significance is not a scientific process; it a matter of value judgement based on the knowledge and experience of the contributors to the study. The ranking is provided to assist in understanding the relative importance of different elements of the site. This is not to imply that something of a lesser significance can be swept away, because all parts make the whole, but it should serve as a management tool for setting priorities and policies.

The site area

This site at Herring Lane has considerable significance for the following reasons:

- It relates both physically and historically to three Grade II* listed buildings, the former Manor House, The Limes and The Sycamores. At different times various parts of this site have related to all three properties in terms of their garden areas. Any development on this site will affect the settings of these listed buildings and the Conservation Area. (*townscape, potential visual impact*)
- The site it is in the centre of Spalding, an historic town of medieval origin. It is relatively close to the river where port activities took place. It is also near to the White Hart a known early structure in the town. There may also be connections with the Priory. It is considered likely that this site will have archaeological significance for the early period of Spalding's development. (*archaeological potential; Spalding's early history; garden development*)

It has moderate significance for the following reasons:

- The site contains a number of mature trees which are protected by virtue of being in the Conservation Area. These also provide a habitat for wildlife. (*ecology, landscape*)
- The boundary walls are in brick and some sections of the walling contains brickwork which may date from the 18th century. (*character, phasing*)

Individual elements

The Cedar Tree has considerable significance for the following reasons:

- This is a fine mature specimen which makes an important contribution to the Conservation Area. (*ecology, landscape, townscape*)

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The Gothic Arch has considerable significance for the following reasons:

- The arch may have been taken from the Parish Church during the renovations by Sir Gilbert Scott. Its use as a garden feature within the Limes is indicative of a trend that was fashionable in garden design in the 19th century. More research could be done on this feature to establish its possible origins. (*History, possible connection with notable person, architecture, aesthetic qualities, conservation practice, amenity value*)

The timber fences are intrusive

- The introduction of timber fences to an enclosure which is otherwise brick walled is intrusive. Within an urban setting the new boundary fence behind Dembleby House is quite noticeable and detracts from the Conservation Area setting. The fence used to close the boundary to the Sycamores equally detracts from the setting of the Grade II* listed building.