

Summary

- An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the groundworks for a new residential unit on land at Fir Tree House, Main Street, Haconby, Lincolnshire
- Worked flints and Roman pottery have been recovered from close to the development site, and the site lies in the core of the medieval village.
- The watching brief exposed a large pit of probable post-medieval to early modern date containing the semi-articulated remains of an adult cow. No other archaeological finds or features were identified.

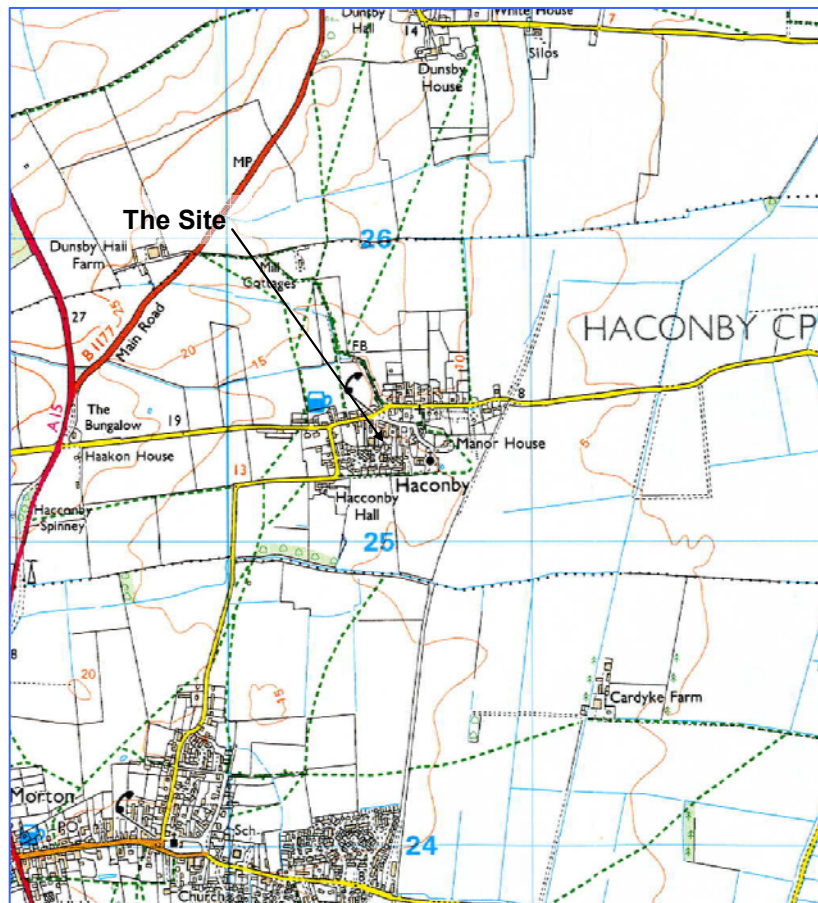


Figure 1: Site location at scale 1:25,000
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeological Associates was commissioned by Mr M Carty to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks for a residential development on land to the rear of Fir Tree House, Main Street in Haconby, Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 The site monitoring, recording and reporting conforms to current national and local guidelines, as set out in the Institute for Field Archaeologists '*Standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs*' (IFA 1999), the Lincolnshire Archaeology Handbook (LCC 1998), and a specification prepared by this company (Allen 2007).
- 1.3 The archive will be submitted to The Collection, Lincoln, within six months of the completion of the report, and can be accessed by the Accession Number 2007.119.

2.0 Site location and description

- 2.1 Haconby is in the administrative district of South Kesteven, approximately 5km north-north-east of Bourne. Fir Tree House is on the south side of Main Street, with the development area positioned to the south of Fir Tree House. The application area is bounded to the east, west and south by existing residential properties. The site centres on NGR TF 1051 2536, and lies at a height of approximately 10m above Ordnance Datum.
- 2.2 The site lies on a solid geological boundary between Jurassic deposits of Oxford Clay and Kellaways Sand, with Glacial sand and gravel overlying (British Geological Survey 1973).

3.0 Planning background

- 3.1 Full planning permission was granted for the erection of a single residential dwelling to the rear of Fir Tree House (Planning Application Reference S06/1073/40). The permission was granted subject to the undertaking of an archaeological watching brief during all associated groundworks.

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

- 4.1 Prehistoric evidence in the vicinity of the site is limited to a small number of worked flints. Evidence for Romano-British activity is more abundant however. A substantial roadside settlement has been identified at Stainfield, approximately 2km to the west of the site (Whitwell 1992). Further traces of a Roman road have been identified to the south-east of the village, in association with scatters of Roman and medieval pottery (Archaeology Data Service ref. NMR_NATINV-350666). Further Romano-British pottery scatters have been identified to the north of the site and on Haconby Drove to the east, along with pottery of Saxon and medieval date (South Kesteven Planning Archaeologist's Comments, August 2006).
- 4.2 A late Saxon origin for the settlement is suggested by scatters of Saxon pottery, confirmed by the place name, which derives from the Old Danish, meaning 'Hakon's village' (Cameron 1998). Haconby also appears in the Domesday Book, when the principal landowners were the Bishop of Lincoln, Odger the Breton, Robert of Stafford, and Heppo the Crossbowman. The land of Heppo also included a mill, and a church with a priest (Morgan and Thorne 1986), probably a precursor to the existing parish church of St. Andrew's, the earliest elements of which date to c.1200 (Pevsner & Harris 1989).

- 4.3 There are also numerous earthworks of medieval and post-medieval date around the village, mainly providing physical evidence of ridge and furrow farming, as along with the remains of a formal garden that was associated with the manor house of Haconby Hall.

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The groundworks for the new extension involved an initial phase of site stripping to level the development area. This entailed the removal of between 0.2m and 0.8m of overburden across the site. The groundworks were carried out using a JCB fitted with a 1.2m wide toothless bucket, and were monitored by the author on Wednesday June 6th 2007.
- 5.2 During excavation, all exposed plan and section surfaces were examined and periodically cleaned, in order to determine the stratigraphic sequence. Context information was recorded for each individual deposit on standard watching brief record sheets, and sample sections of the stratigraphic sequence were completed at a scale of 1:20.
- 5.3 A photographic record was maintained throughout the watching brief, including general site shots and photographs of the sequence of deposits with appropriate scales and a north arrow. A selection of photographs are included as an appendix (Appendix 1).

6.0 Results

- 6.1 The uppermost deposit in the stratigraphic sequence was a topsoil, 01, of dark grey clayey sand with occasional sub-angular flints. This was up to 0.4m deep and overlay a subsoil of dark grey/brown clayey sand, with occasional sub-angular flints, 02. The underlying natural geology was an orange/brown sandy clay, with frequent sub-angular flint and occasional lenses of compact grey clay, 03.
- 6.2 A single archaeological feature was identified towards the south end of the site. Pit 04 was sub-rectangular in plan, and measured 1.8m long by 0.85m wide. Excavation of the feature exposed the almost complete semi-articulated remains of an adult cow and several bones from a juvenile cow (J Kitch *pers. comm.*), and a small fragment of machine made brick of 19th/20th century date. The fill, 05, was a backfill deposit of dark grey clayey sand, very similar to the topsoil 01. In section, the feature could be seen to cut subsoil 02, and was sealed by a mixed deposit of dark grey sandy clay with lenses of re-deposited natural, 06.

7.0 Discussion and conclusion

- 7.1 The watching brief exposed a single archaeological feature, identified as a post-medieval or early modern cow burial. The presence of the bones of a juvenile within the feature suggests that the animal may have died during childbirth. The pit cut the subsoil, and was sealed by a mixed deposit that has been interpreted as excess material following the burial and backfill of the pit.

8.0 Effectiveness of methodology

- 8.1 The watching brief methodology was appropriate to the scale and nature of the development. It showed the proposed development will have a negligible impact on the archaeological resource.

9.0 Acknowledgements

- 9.1 Allen Archaeological Associates would like to thank the client, Mr M Carty for this commission, and to Mr Mark Walker for his cooperation during the fieldwork.

10.0 References

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- Pevsner N., and Harris J., 1989, *The Buildings of England: Lincolnshire, second edition*, Penguin, London
- Whitwell J.B, 1992, *Roman Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire Committee, Lincoln

11.0 Site archive

- 11.1 The documentary archive is currently in the possession of Allen Archaeological Associates. It will be submitted to The Collection, Lincoln within six months, where it will be stored under the unique archive code 2007.119.

Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: General view of the development area after topsoil stripping, looking east-south-east.



Plate 2: Pit 04 with some of the cow bones visible in plan and section. Looking south.



Plate 3: Pit 04, half sectioned. Looking south.

Appendix 2: List of archaeological contexts

Context No.	Type	Description	Interpretation
01	Layer	Dark grey clayey sand	Topsoil
02	Layer	Dark grey/brown clayey sand	Subsoil
03	Layer	Orange/brown sandy clay	Natural
04	Cut	Sub-rectangular pit cut, with semi-articulated cow burial	Pit cut for cow burial
05	Fill	Dark grey clayey sand	Backfill of pit 04
06	Layer	Dark grey sandy clay, lenses of re-deposited natural	Possible dump of material from excavation of pit 04