Witham Archaeology

A Report to Seagate Homes
April 2021



SPALDING COMMON WINDMILL, MILLFIELD NURSERIES, SPALDING, LINCOLNSHIRE

Historic Building Recording
(Draft)

V Mellor

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SPALDING COMMON WINDMILL, MILLFIELD NURSERIES, SPALDING, LINCOLNSHIRE

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

PROJECT QUALITY CONTROL DETAILS:

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SPALDING COMMON WINDMILL, MILLFIELD NURSERIES, SPALDING, LINCOLNSHIRE

NGR: TF 23386 20079
Planning Reference: H16-0668-16
Museum Accession Code: LCNCC:2021.39
Site Code: SCSP21

Historic Building Recording

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SPALDING COMMON WINDMILL, MILLFIELD NURSERIES, SPALDING, LINCOLNSHIRE

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

SUMMARY

This report presents the results of a programme of historic building recording undertaken by Witham Archaeology at Spalding Common Windmill, Millfield Nurseries, Spalding Common, Spalding, Lincolnshire, in advance of the demolition of the windmill. The project was commissioned by Seagate Homes in response to a condition of planning permission (SHDC Planning Ref. H-16-0668-16) imposed by South Holland District Council.

Spalding Common Mill was erected in about 1816. It was a five-floored tower mill which was powered by wind until 1930, and an engine until 1936. The mill was cut down to its present two-storied stump in 1943.

The circular structure is open to the elements, and internal floor structures are collapsed. The thick ground floor walling of the mill and evidence for two substantial beams supporting the ground floor are indicative of the former presence of heavy millstones on the first floor of the mill, and it is probable that the first floor was the 'stone floor' where flour was ground. Documentary evidence indicates that the mill had three pairs of stones.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of a programme of historic building recording undertaken by Witham Archaeology at Spalding Common Windmill, Millfield Nurseries, Spalding, Lincolnshire. The project was commissioned by Seagate Homes, in response to a condition of planning permission imposed by South Holland District Council. Fieldwork was carried out on 25th March and 10th April 2021.

The information in this document is presented with the proviso that further data may yet emerge. Witham Archaeology cannot, therefore, be held responsible for any loss, delay or damage, material or otherwise, arising out of this report. The document has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

2.0 SITE LOCATION (see Figs 1 & 2)

The town of Spalding, in the parish of the same name, is located in the administrative district of South Holland, approximately 25km north north-east of Peterborough and 30km south-east of Sleaford.

The site lies at the southern edge of Spalding, approximately 2.5km from the centre of the town. Until recently the site was used as a plant nursery and is located between the thoroughfares Spalding Common and Cradge Bank. The recorded building lies within the former nursery, centred at NGR TF 23386 20079.

3.0 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Spalding Common Mill is the sole survivor of seven windmills working in Spalding in the later 19th century. This five-floored tower mill was erected in about 1816 and worked by wind until 1930, when the shutters were removed and milling continued with engine power until the death of the miller, Robert W Rhodes, in 1936 (Sass 2012, 63). The mill had three pairs of stones (Jager 2007, 137). The sail frames were removed in 1939 and the mill was subsequently cut down to the present two storied stump in 1943 (Sass 2012, 63).

This chronology is confirmed by Wailes (1991) who records that the mill was built in *c.*1816, was working in 1923 and had been reduced to a stump by 1953 (107).

Undated photographs of the fully intact mill are reproduced by Sass (2012, 63) and Jager (2007, 137). These show the mill from the west, with a ground floor doorway and a series of four windows above the door indicating the floors above. All four sails are intact in these photographs. A small single-storey building with a pitched roof and apparently of wood is visible adjacent to the southwest side of the mill. A hedge to the west of the mill marks the edge of an access from Spalding Common. Although undated, these images presumably pre-date the removal of the shutters in 1930.

A postcard of the full-height mill with sails, but with shutters removed, is also reproduced by Jager (2007, 137).

A photograph of the two-storey mill stump as it was in 1977, and viewed from the northeast, is reproduced by Dolman (1985, 57). A more recent photograph of the stump from the northwest is reproduced by Jager (2007, 137).

First edition Ordnance Survey mapping (published in 1888) shows the windmill and its access from Spalding Common to the west. A small adjacent building is depicted immediately southwest of the mill (Fig. 4).

4.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the project is to:

- Produce a photographic archive record of the building prior to its demolition.
- Produce a project archive for deposition with the appropriate museum together with a client report.
- Provide information for accession to the county Historic Environment Record.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

Fieldwork was carried out in accordance with guidelines issued by Historic England in the document *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2016). The site record was compiled in accordance with the archive guidelines issued by The Collection, Lincoln.

The photographic record was compiled in colour digital in RAW format (to be converted to TIFF for archive storage) using a DSLR camera.

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An index to the images was compiled on Witham Archaeology *pro forma* registers. The photographic record comprised:

- General views showing the building and its setting.
- A series of oblique views showing the exteriors of the building.
- Views taken at right angles to the elevations.
- Internal views showing the rooms, circulation areas and roof structures where accessible.
- Specific views of any internal and external detail which might not be apparent on the more general photographs.

The photographic survey was linked to floor plans.

The building was inspected for evidence of structural alteration and development over time.

A brief search was made online and in local libraries for material relevant to the history and chronological development of the building.

6.0 DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT OF SPALDING COMMON WINDMILL (Fig. 3)

6.1 Setting

The windmill stands in a former plant nursery, surrounded by concrete surfacing and with large greenhouses on its east side. Residential properties are located to the west of the mill, along Spalding Common (Cover photo).

6.2 Exterior

The extant mill structure comprises ground and first floor levels, with the upper storeys having been removed (Plate 1, Plate 2 & Plate 3). The upper level of the extant building is irregular, but overall stands to nearly 6m tall.

The structure is circular and narrows with increasing height. At its base the mill is approximately 6.8m in diameter externally. The mill is aligned on cardinal points, with opposing ground floor doorways to the east and west with first floor windows over each door (Plate 1& Plate 2). Ground and first floor window openings are present to the south and north (Plate 1, Plate 2 & Plate 3).

The structure is entirely of brick, with English Bond brickwork of alternate header and footer courses. The bricks are irregularly-sized, with measured examples ranging from 230-250mm x 110mm x 63-70mm. Many bricks have pronounced horizontal skintling or hack marks along their length.

Patches of what appears to be a cementitious render were noted across the exterior of the building (Plate 2 & Plate 3).

A horizontal timber is set into the brickwork beneath the south ground floor window (Plate 3). The dating and function of this is uncertain, but this degraded timber has iron fixings of various shapes and sizes protruding from it (Plate 4).

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An iron bar protrudes from the ground floor walling of the mill on its southwest side (Plate 3). A cable also enters the building adjacent to the bar.

Each of the doors and windows has a simple brick segmental header arch over it, although some of these have collapsed. Each of the openings contains traces of timber surrounds, and the door frames were constructed using wooden pegs (*Plate **5***).



Plate 1: East elevation of mill, looking west, scale 5m

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Plate 2: General view of mill from northwest, showing west door and north windows



Plate 3: South side of mill, scale 5m



Plate 4: Timber in south wall of mill, looking north, scale 1m



Plate 5: Detail of exterior of east doorway, showing wooden peg construction and iron pintle, looking west

6.3 Interior

The floor inside the mill is completely obscured by rubble, and the interior is overgrown with a tree at the centre of the building (Plate 6, *Plate 7*).

A few traces of what appears to be lime wash were noted on the internal surface of the brickwork, possibly indicating the interior wall finish during use.

Each of the doorways has a wooden frame internally, and all openings have internal timber lintels which are curved to match the form of the building (Plate 15).

Joist holes at first floor are visible in the brickwork, and it appears that these received north-south aligned joists (Plate 6). Just a single fragment of joist survives within one of these holes, at the southwest of the building (*Plate **12***).



Plate 6: View into mill from east door, looking southwest

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Plate 7: View into mill from east door showing internal rubble

Recesses above and flanking each of the two doorways would have supported two substantial east-west aligned beams (Plate 8, Plate 9 & Plate 12). Parts of these beams survive where they have collapsed, to either side of the west door (Plate 9, Plate 10 & Plate 11). The beams are both 0.26m wide and at least 0.30m deep. Part of a possible joist attached to the north beam is 0.17m by 0.08m wide.



Plate 8: East doorway of mill with beam holes above door (see arrows), looking east

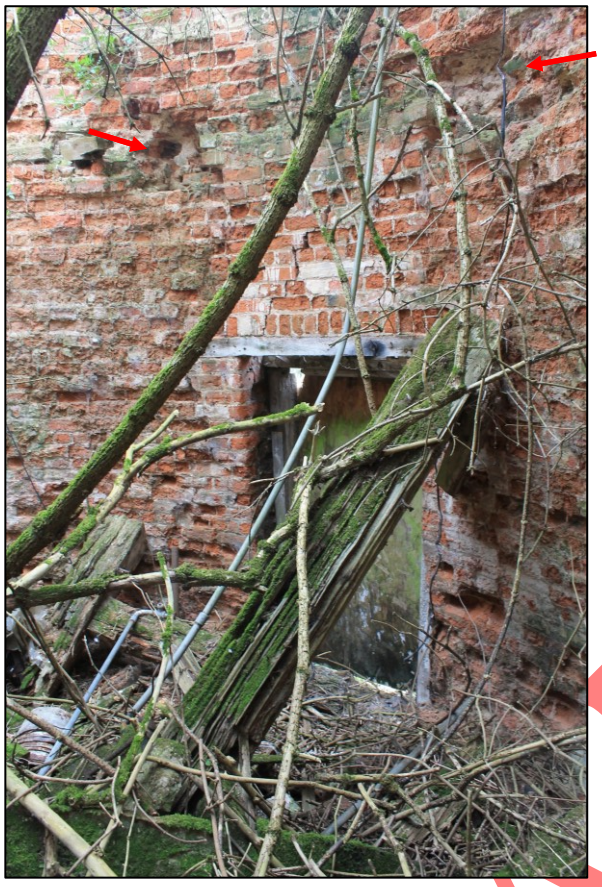


Plate 9: West doorway of mill with collapsed beams and beam holes (see arrows) in brickwork above, looking southwest



Plate 10: Fallen beam at north side of west mill door, looking north

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Plate 11: Collapsed beam and joined timber at south side of west door of mill, looking south



Plate 12: Beam hole in brickwork at south side of west door and extant joist fragment, looking west and up

The brick walling of the mill steps in internally at first floor level, with thinner walling above the first floor beams (Fig. 3).

A timber noted amongst the debris inside the mill has a clear carpenters mark "XV", and is likely to be a joist (*Plate **13***).



Plate 13 Fallen timber, probable joist with carpenters mark 'XV', looking south

A small recess is located to the north of and slightly higher than the east door of the mill (*Plate **8*** & *Plate **14***). This contains several pieces of timber and an iron fixing. Although the function of this recess is unclear, it may relate to a former ladder up to the first floor.



Plate 14 Recess in brickwork with timber to north of east doorway, looking east

Two iron bars protrude from the internal sill of the south first floor window and these may be associated with notches noted in the timber to either side of the window (*Plate **15***).



Plate 15 First floor window in south side of mill, looking southeast

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7.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Originally a five-storey tower mill, the recorded structure built in *c.*1816 is shown in its complete form, as it appeared while still in use, in several contemporary photographs. Only two storeys of brickwork now remain, the structure is open to the elements, and the floors in the interior have collapsed.

The ground floor walling is up to 0.50m thick, with walls becoming thinner at first floor level. Recesses in the brickwork and collapsed timber fragments indicate that two substantial east-west wooden beams were once supported by the thick ground floor walls, and these in turn supported the first floor joists.

The strength of the first floor structure is indicative of the presence of heavy millstones on the first floor of the mill, and it is probable that the first floor was the 'stone floor' where flour was ground. Documentary evidence indicates that the mill had three pairs of stones, which may have all been located on the first floor.

The ground floor may have served as a 'meal floor' where flour was weighed and bagged. Higher floors are likely to have been 'bin floors' where grain could be stored, and a 'dust floor' immediately beneath

the cap.

A small internal recess in the internal wall at the northeast side of the mill might potentially suggest the former location of a ladder to the first floor, although this is uncertain.

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Witham Archaeology would like to thank Seagate Homes who commissioned the project. Thanks are also due to the staff of Sleaford Library.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Wailes, R., 1991, *Lincolnshire Windmills: Part II Tower Mills*, Reprinted from the transactions of the Newcomen Society Vol XXIX – 103 – 22 (1953-55)

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10.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS

10.1 Project Details

FIELD OFFICERC: C Ayres, V Mellor

PLANNING REFERENCE: H16-0668-16

SITE CODE: SCSP21

NGR: TF 23386 20079

CIVIL PARISH: Spalding

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 25th March and 10th April 2021.

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Historic Building Recording

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Seagate Homes

10.2 Archive Details

PRESENT LOCATION: Witham Archaeology Ltd, 2 High Street, Ruskington, Lincolnshire, NG34 9DT

FINAL LOCATION: The Collection, Lincoln

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: LCNCC:2021.39

OASIS ID: withamar1-420989

ACCESSION DATE: - October 2021

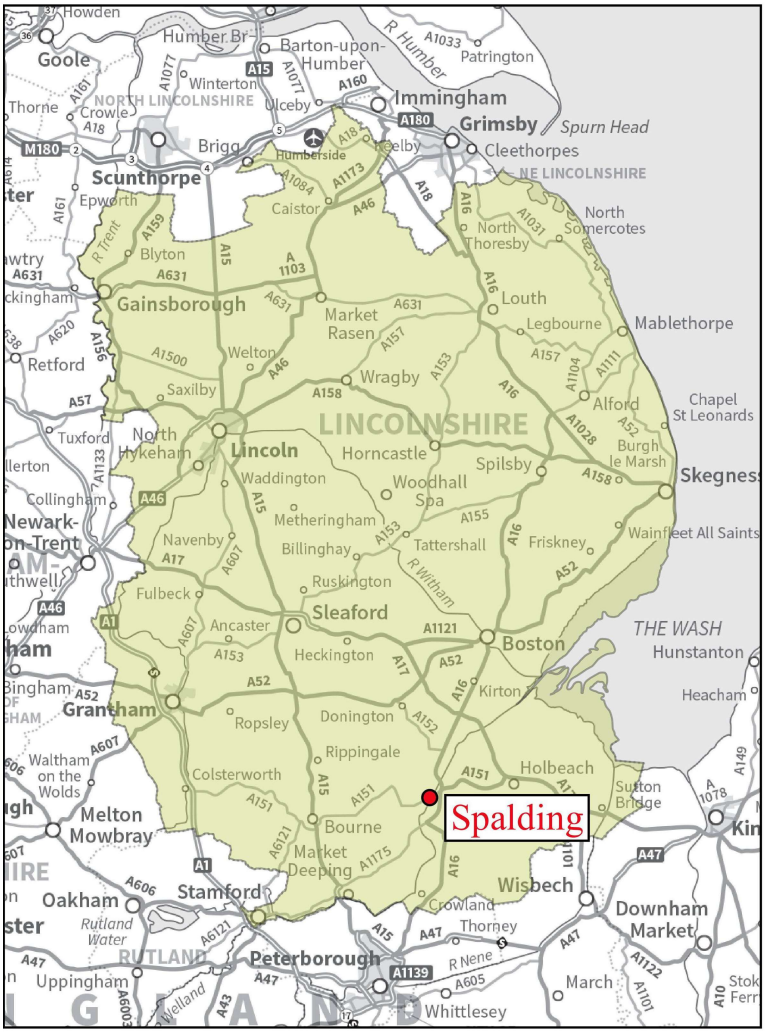
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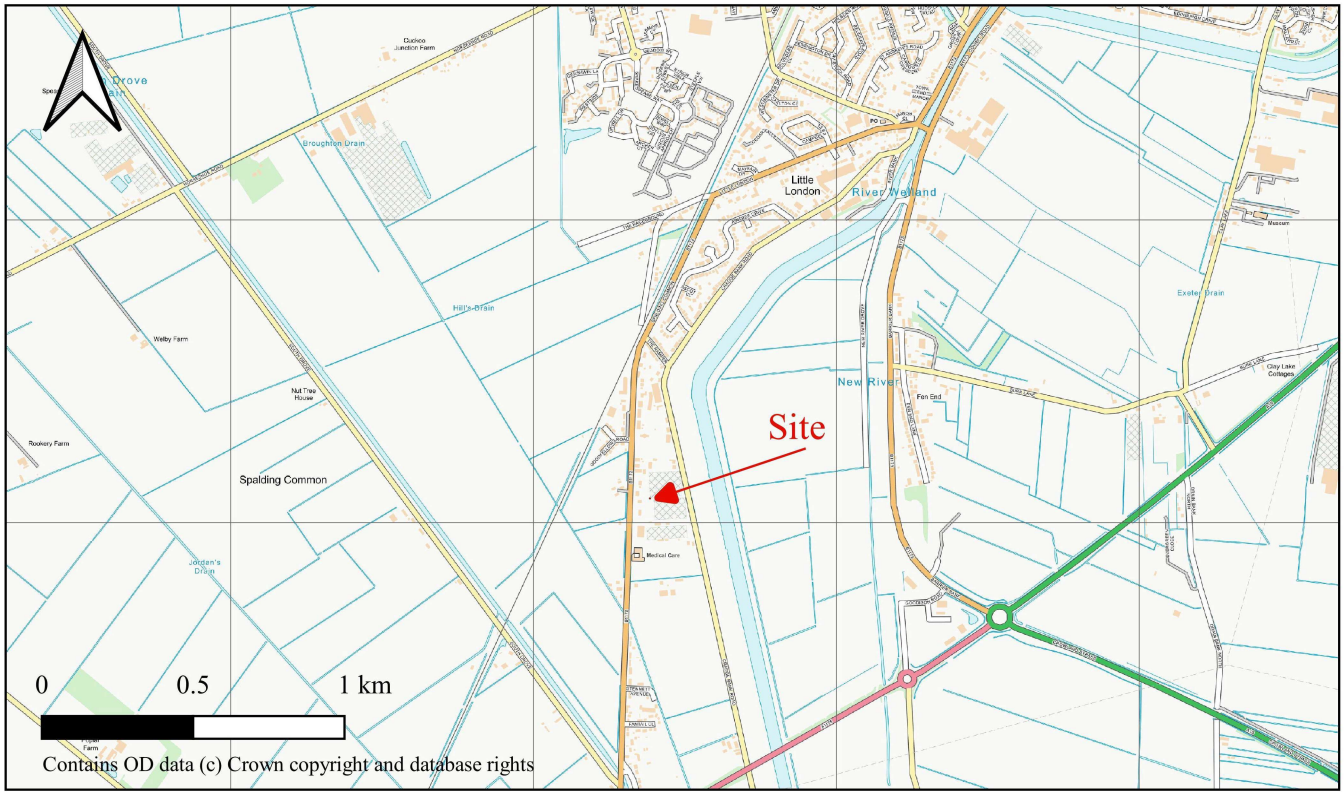
Digital Photographs	148
Set of Site Notes	1

It is intended that transfer of the archive in accordance with current published requirements will be undertaken following completion of this project.

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Site location maps

Fig. 1

MILLFIELD NURSERIES
SPALDING COMMON

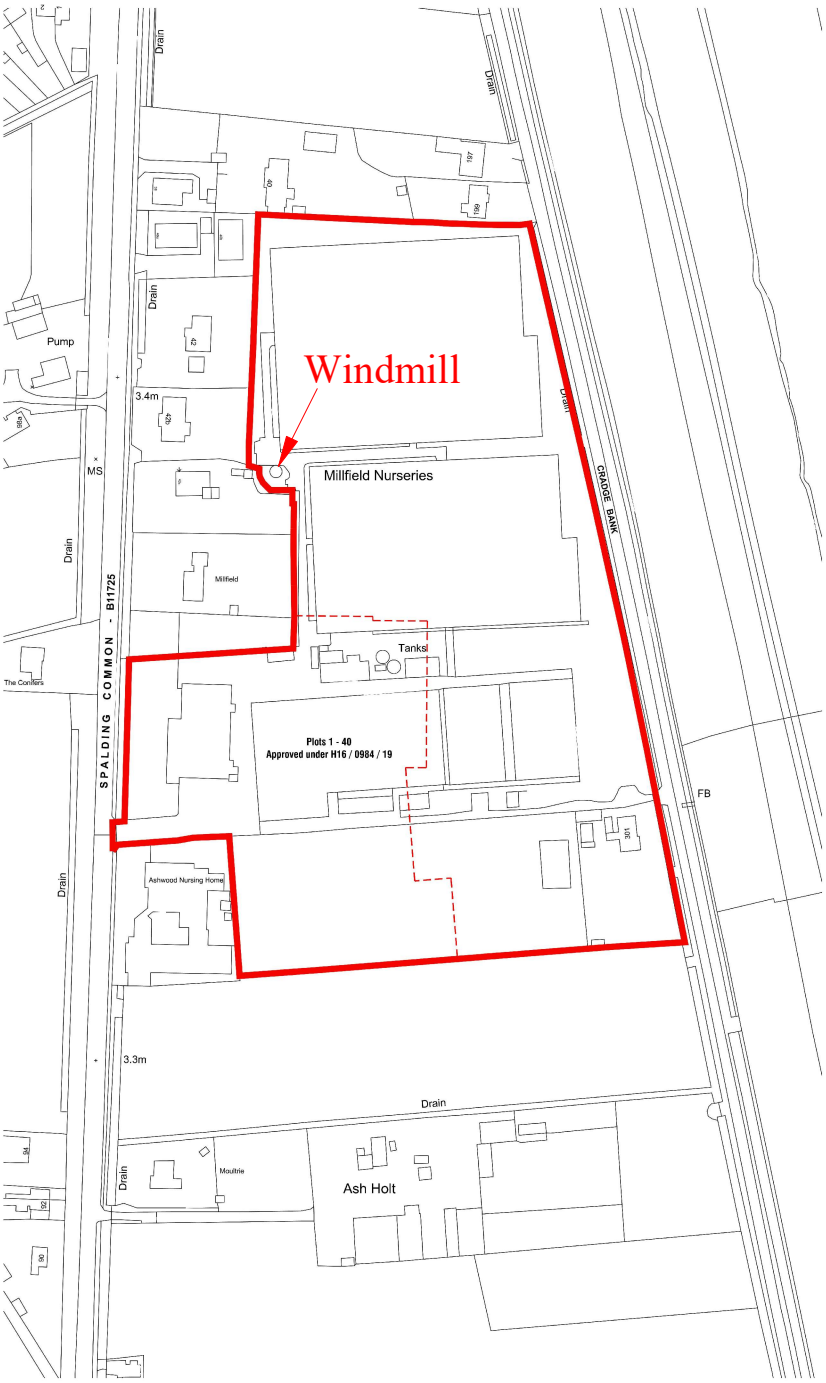
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Revision	Notes	Date

SEAGATE HOMES

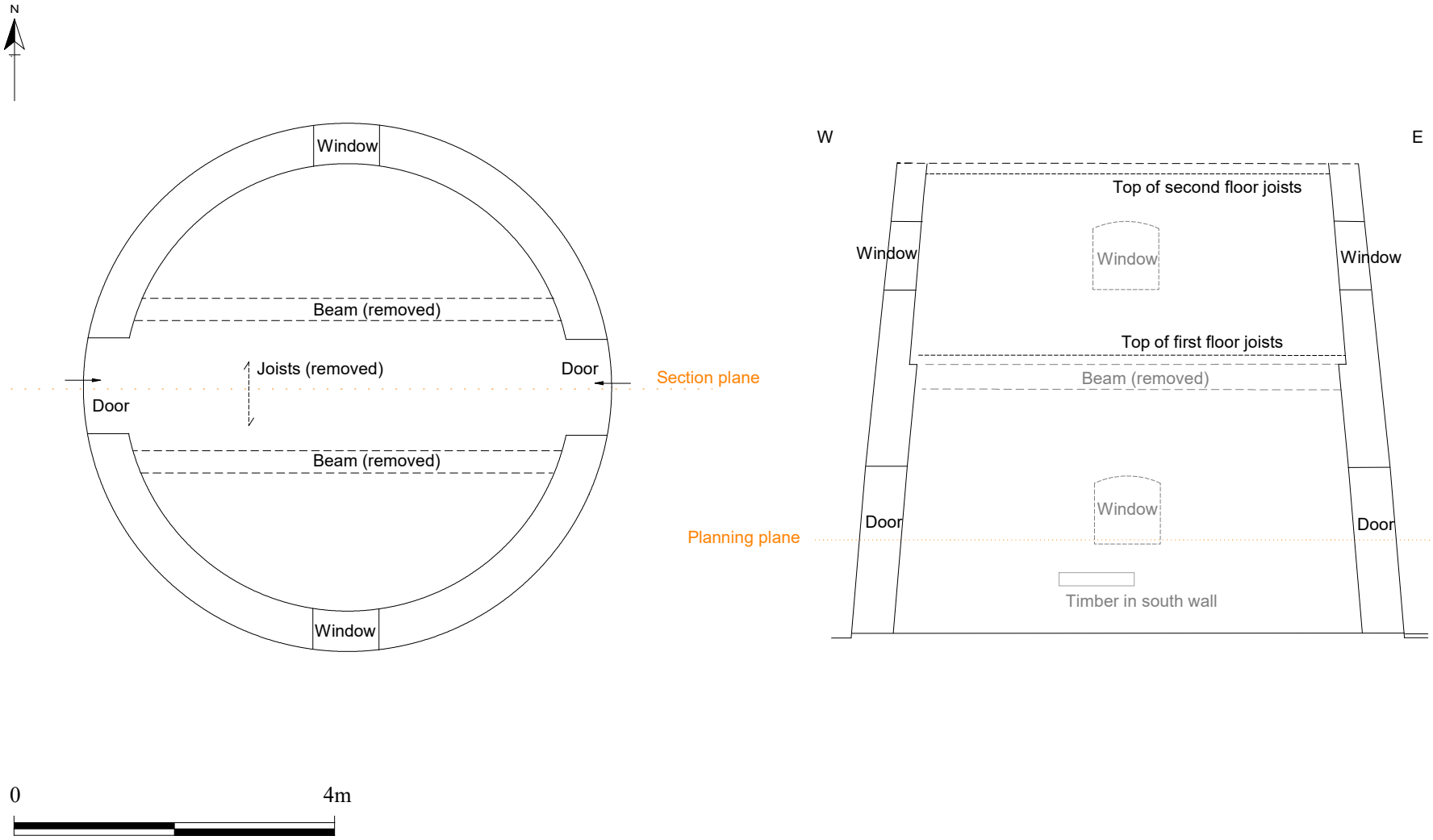
Project:
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT,
MILLFIELD NURSERY,
SPALDING COMMON, SPALDING

Drawing:
LOCATION PLAN

Drawn: MD Date: 04.11.2020

Status: PLANNING Scale: 1:1250 @ A2

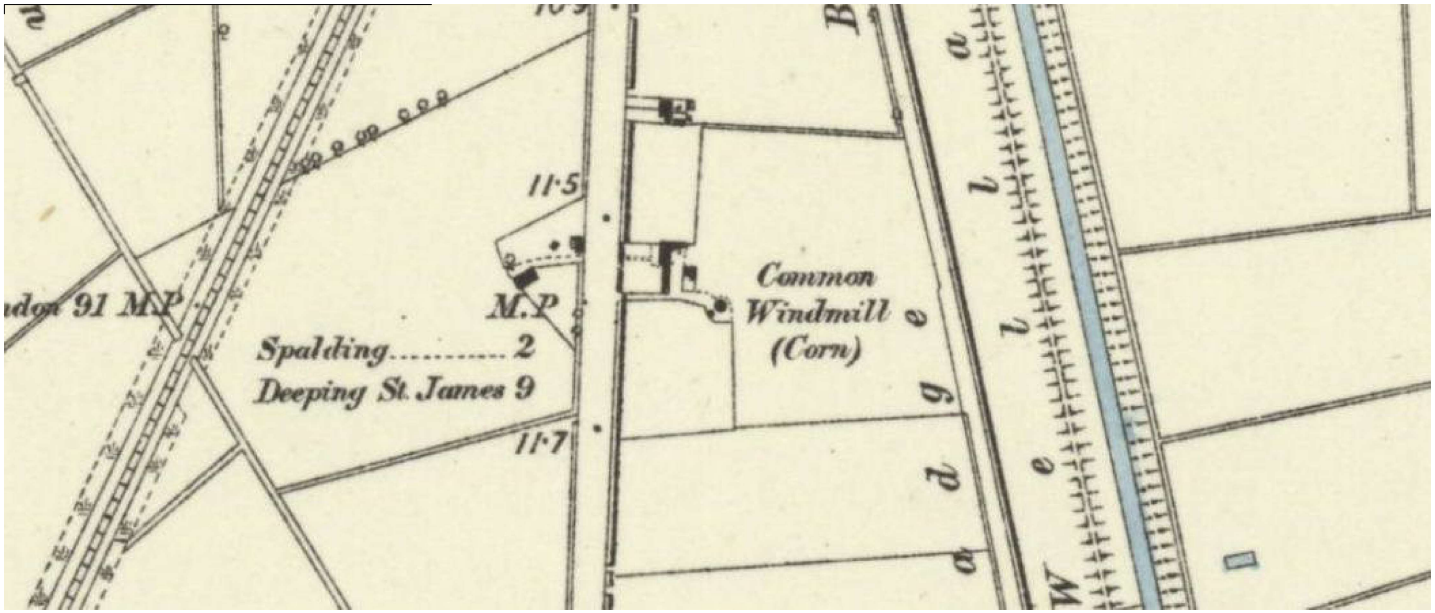
Drawing Number:
MNSC-SH-SP-AR-002



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Plan and section of mill, Scale 1:75

Fig. 3



Extract from Ordnance Survey 6" map sheet CXLII.NW, Surveyed 1887, Published 1888, not to scale

APPENDIX A:
OASIS SUMMARY
DETAILS FORM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

Printable version

OASIS ID: withamar1-420989

Project details

Project name	Historic Building Recording at Spalding Common Windmill, Millfield Nurseries, Spalding, Lincolnshire
Short description of the project	A programme of historic building recording was undertaken in advance of the demolition of the surviving lower part of a windmill at the former Millfield Nurseries site, Spalding, Lincolnshire. The windmill is believed to have been erected in around 1816 but was part demolished in 1943 leaving the two storey (originally it was five storey) structure recorded by the recent survey. The survey confirmed that all of the floors of the building had collapsed leaving only the brick outer shell. Remains of substantial beams to carry the first floor were noted in the demolition debris and it was surmised that the heavy millstones were at first floor with the storage areas above.
Project dates	Start: 25-03-2021 End: 10-04-2021
Previous/future work	No / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	LCNCC:2021.39 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	SCSP21 - Sitecode
Type of project	Building Recording
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	WINDMILL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Annotated Sketch","Photographic Survey"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	LINCOLNSHIRE SOUTH HOLLAND SPALDING Spalding Common Windmill, Millfield Nurseries, Spalding, Lincolnshire
Postcode	PE11 3AJ
Study area	100 Square metres
Site coordinates	TF 23386 20079 52.763850408274 -0.171148121091 52 45 49 N 000 10 16 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Witham Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Russell Trimble
Project director/manager	Russell Trimble
Project supervisor	Vicky Mellor
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Seagate Homes

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	The Collection, Danes Terrace, Lincoln LN2 1LT
Digital Archive ID	LCNCC:2021.39
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	The Collection, Danes Terrace, Lincoln LN2 1LT
Paper Archive ID	LCNCC:2021.39
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Miscellaneous Material","Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes","Plan","Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Spalding Common Windmill, Millfield Nurseries, Spalding, Lincolnshire. Historic Building Recording
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Trimble, R.
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Entered on	6 May 2021

OASIS:

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