

**Channel Tunnel Rail Link  
London and Continental Railways  
Oxford Wessex Archaeology Joint Venture**

**The post-Roman pottery from Bower Road, Smeeth,  
Kent (ARC 440/99)**

by Lorraine Mephram

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

A total of 138 sherds (1290 g) of post-Roman pottery was recovered during the watching brief at Bower Road (ARC 440 / 95+900 to 97+100). Apart from three post-medieval sherds, the assemblage is entirely of medieval date, with a potential date range of mid 11th to mid 16th century, although there is nothing diagnostically earlier than 12th century.

## 2 METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The pottery was recorded using a project-specific Access database. Fabric types were defined following the Canterbury Archaeological Trust (CAT) type series for post-Roman pottery. A scheme-wide type series was created for rim, base and handle forms, and this was linked where possible to vessel forms whose definition followed nationally recommended nomenclature (MPRG 1998). Details of decoration, surface treatment, manufacture, use-wear and condition were also recorded. Quantification in all cases is by both number and weight of sherds; EVEs have not been considered appropriate for use with post-Roman assemblages.

## 3 DESCRIPTION OF ASSEMBLAGE

Twelve medieval and one post-medieval fabric were identified; totals by fabric type are given in Table 1. The medieval fabrics include early medieval (EM) medieval (M) and late medieval (LM) wares, all of which are local or regional wares with known or likely sources in Kent or East Sussex.

*Table 1: Fabric totals*

Fabric Code	Fabric Name	No. sherds	Weight (g)	Date range
EM1	Canterbury Sandy Ware	17	22	1050 – 1225
EM4	West Kent Fine Sandy Ware	4	22	1125 – 1250
EM.M5	Ashford Potters Corner Sandy Ware with fossil shell	33	182	1125 – 1250
EM28	Kentish Sandy Ware with shell and sparse grits	2	2	1175 – 1225
EM31	?Kentish Coarse Sandy Ware with moderate shell	1	16	1100 – 1200
EM32	UNDEFINED	9	72	1150 – 1225
EM33	?East Sussex Shell & Flint-Tempered Coarse Sandy Ware	1	2	1075 – 1225
M10	Wealden-Type Pink-Buff Sandy Ware	4	17	1350 – 1550
M40A	Ashford/Wealden Sandy Ware with sparse chalk/shell	51	691	1175 – 1400
M40B	Ashford/Wealden Sandy Ware with very rare shell	1	1	1175 – 1400
LM2	Canterbury-type earthenware	1	4	1475 – 1550
LM4	Wealden Buff Sandy Ware	11	94	1450 – 1550
PM2.6	Wealden Buff Earthenware	3	65	1550 – 1675
	TOTAL	138	1290	

The most common fabric types seen here are sandy-shelly (EM.M5) and sandy wares (M40A, M40B) comparable to the products of the 13th century Ashford Potters Corner kiln and probably also manufactured at other sites in the Ashford area. Evidence from other sites on

the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, such as North of Westenhanger Castle (ARC WGC 98) and Mersham (ARC MSH 98) indicates that both the Ashford sandy and the sandy-shelly ware traditions may have their origins in the Late Saxon period, although the vessel forms in both ware types present at Bower Road – jars with flat-topped and squared rims – belong to the developed, late 12th-13th century industry. There are also four handles from glazed jugs, two with stabbed dots and two with ring-and-dot stamps.

Other wares are present in much smaller quantities, with very few diagnostic sherds – a jar rim and a possible glazed skillet rim in Wealden Buff Sandy ware (LM4). These diagnostic pieces, combined with the potential date ranges of individual fabric types (see Table 1), confirm that the bulk of the assemblage is likely to date to the later 12th or 13th century, with nothing that can be definitively dated earlier, and with a small amount of later medieval material.

#### **4 PROVENANCE**

Very little of this material can be related to stratified deposits. Fifteen sherds of M40A (all probably from the same jar) came from boundary ditch 170; two sherds of EM1 and one of EM33 from enclosure ditch 171; eight sherds of EM1 and one of EM.M5 from layer 459 which underlay the possible sheep pen walls; and one sherd of EM1 from tree throw 186.

#### **5 REFERENCE**

MPRG 1998, *A Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms*, Medieval Pottery Research Group Occas. Paper 1