

APPENDIX 2: ASSESSMENT OF CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL AND FIRED CLAY

Susan Pringle

1. Introduction

1.1 All the building material from ARC SSR 99, a total of 3.360kg, including 2.25kg of daub or fired clay, 1.02kg of stone and 0.09kg of tile, was examined. A further 2.8kg of daub from ARC 330 98 (Zone 2) was examined, but is unstratified.

1.2 The study of the material should assist with the following fieldwork event aims:

- *to establish a record of changing settlement and landscape morphology for the area, to include habitation areas and associated enclosures and trackways etc;*
- *to determine the function of these areas and changes through time;*

2. Methodology

2.1 All the material was examined and recorded for the assessment using a binocular microscope. Fired ceramic building material has been divided by form, and fragments counted and weighed. The fabric types have been noted, using the Museum of London fabric type series, and any complete dimensions or other features of interest recorded.

2.2 The fired clay assemblage has been counted and weighed, and the presence of features such as original surfaces, impressions, and the presence of mortar or tempering noted.

2.3 The data have been entered on an ORACLE database and transferred to the RLE Datasets.

2.4 All the material has been retained for reference at present.

3. Quantifications

3.1 The total weight of building material scanned for the assessment is 6.16kg, including 5.05kg of daub, 0.09kg of tile, and 1.02kg of stone. Daub accounts for 67% of the assemblage from ARC SSR 99 by weight (2.25kg), with tile comprising 2.7% (0.09kg), and stone 30.4% (1.02kg). The assemblage from ARC 330 98 (Zone 2) consists entirely of daub (2.8kg), from a single, unstratified, context.

3.2 Building materials were recorded from 15 contexts of which four are large, four medium and seven small; of these, one context contains datable material, of Roman date (ARC SSR 99, sg 118), details of which are set out below.

3.3 The Roman tile fabric is similar to examples of the 2815 group from London. This group comprises red-firing fabrics made from London clays, with varying quantities of quartz sand, and occasional red iron-rich and/or white calcareous

inclusions. The tile fabric in ARC SSR 99 [29] contains some medium to coarse quartz grains and sparse white calcareous inclusions. The tile itself, from sg 118, is abraded and could be a tegula or a brick, although the former is more likely. Apart from its use as evidence for Roman activity on the site, there is little significance in the presence of a very small quantity of such abraded material.

3.4 The daub assemblages from both ARC SSR 99 and ARC 330 98 are of interest. ARC SSR 99 produced 2.25kg of daub from 12 contexts, ten of which have early Roman spot dates (sgs 114, 115, 116, 117 and 120). Much of the daub was made from a fine, sandy, slightly micaceous, orange-firing clay, but other types were also noted. Seven of the contexts contain samples taken from ovens or hearths, and appear to represent early Roman domestic or industrial activity. Samples <4>, <14>, <17>, <20>, and <22> contain fragments of a 'skin', c 10-20mm thick, of compressed, fairly coarse, clay granules. The light yellowish-brown clay contains fine black iron oxides and flint inclusions of similar grade to the clay granules; surfaces are flat. Samples <21> and <23> are slightly different in character, consisting of lumps of very reduced and blackened fine clay with very coarse pebbles. Probable wattle impressions were noted on the daub in context [35] (sg 114), which suggests that it is from a wattle and daub structure, possibly a house or hut.

3.5 A single fragment of stone was examined from ARC SSR 99, sgp115, which has an early Roman spot date. It has not been securely identified, but resembles a laminated, fairly fine-grained, puddingstone. It is 35-40mm thick, and its function is uncertain; it may have been used for paving, or could be a fragment of artefact such as a hone, quern or rubbing stone.

4. Provenance

4.1 The bulk of the building material from Zone 2 is of Late Iron Age/early Roman date and was recovered from an oven (sgs 114, 115) and a series of ditches (sgs 116, 117, 118).

5. Conservation

5.1 The material is well-preserved and should not deteriorate as long as it is stored in clean, dry conditions.

5.2 Access may be needed to the daub from ARC SSR 99 for further analysis before the material is published.

6. Comparative material

6.1 The material can be compared with that from a number of other sites in the project which have produced assemblages of fired clay and daub of late Iron Age/early Roman date.

7. **Potential for further work**

7.1 The assemblage appears to be composed mainly of material of Late Iron Age to early Roman date, and it has the potential to provide information on the following original Landscape Zone aims and Field Event aims.

7.2 Towns and their rural landscapes (100 BC – 1700 AD)

- *How were settlements and rural landscapes organised and how did they function?*

7.3 The presence of Roman material on sites with ample evidence of Late Iron Age occupation has the potential to provide evidence of continuity of use from the Iron Age to the Roman period.

7.4 The Roman tile indicates the presence of Roman activity in the vicinity of the site.

7.5 Field event aims:

- *To establish a record of changing settlement and landscape morphology for the area, to include habitation areas and associated enclosures and trackways etc.*
- *To determine the function of these areas and changes through time*

7.6 The daub from ARC SSR 99 represents the remains of kiln or oven structures from a well dated, 1st century AD deposit. Its analysis has the potential to provide information on Iron Age to early Roman land use and environment.

7.7 No further work is needed on the Roman ceramic building materials.

7.8 Tasks: building materials or fired clay specialist.

- re-examine the daub to define more precisely the function of the different types and materials of which the structures were built (e.g. dimensions of wattles and other organics), and select material for illustration
- write report
- editing time to check text and illustrations

8. **Bibliography**

None

Table 5: ARC SSR 99: count and weight of Roman tile types

Form	Number of fragments	Count as % of total	Weight (g)	Weight as % of total
Tegula (?)	1	100	90	100
Total	1	100	90	100

Table 6: Assessment of Ceramic Building Material /Assessment of Fired Clay

Event code	Context	Count	Weight	Type (brick/ tile etc.)	Period (spot date)	Comments (decoration/ glaze/ fabric)
ARC SSR 99	10	11	200	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	12	2	85	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	13	1	10	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	16	1	10	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	28	1	10	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	35	1	25	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	40	10	70	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	49	15	160	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	59	1	1020	PAV	UN	3120
ARC SSR 99	62	31	220	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	63	25	400	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	64	30	440	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	65	20	620	DAUB	UN	3102
ARC SSR 99	29	1	90	TEG	RO	2815
ARC 330 98	1066	24	2800	DAUB	UN	3102