1.1 Ceramic Building Materials

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Introduction

1.1.1 Ceramic building material was recovered during excavation and watching brief works at South of Snarkhurst Wood.

1.1.2 The majority of the material was hand retrieved on site. Small quantities were recovered from sample sieving.

1.1.3 The ceramic building material was collected in accordance with the Fieldwork Event Aims and Landscape Zone Priorities for the projects, which are set out in section 2 of the main report, above. The recovery of ceramic building material was undertaken to help refine understanding of the morphology and function of the late Iron Age and Romano-British settlement.

Methodology

1.1.4 The material has been examined microscopically (x10) and the material has been recorded by count and weight. Museum of London fabric codes have been used to describe the fabric types present. Samples of these are held in the Museum of London fabric reference collection.

Quantification

1.1.5 The ceramic building material is mainly extremely small and fragmentary. It comprises roofing tile, brick and daub. Fragment counts and weights by context are listed in Tables 1.8 and 1.9.

Roman

Roofing Tile

1.1.6 Three fragments of tegula were recovered (contexts 138, 228) along with a curved tile, possible an imbrex from context 198 (although this is far from certain). These are in fabric group 2815 (comprising individual fabric types 2459A and 2452).

Brick

1.1.7 Roman brick of two thicknesses are present. This suggests that there are two different types, as larger bricks are normally thicker. The thinner type (context 138) measures 29-32mm thick (fabric group 2815, type 2459A) whilst the thicker type (context 312) is 47mm thick (fabric 3238). The latter comes from an as yet unknown kiln source.

Abraded, form uncertain

1.1.8 There are many fragments of highly abraded fired ceramic Roman tile which are too small to identify the type present. All but one is in fabric group 2815 (individual types 2452, 2459 and 3006). The exception is a fragment of yellow tile (context 201) in Museum of London fabric 2454.

Daub

1.1.9 Fragments of daub, or probable daub, were recovered from contexts 117, 173, 237, 239, 247, 280, 282. There is no indication of function, although the fragments from 247 may be part of a loomweight.

1.1.10 All the tile dates to the early Roman period (1st to mid-2nd century).

Medieval / Post-medieval

1.1.11 The peg tiles were all from the watching brief at South of Snarkhurst Wood (ARC 420, 66 + 300 to 67 + 100 - contexts 1, 7, 13, 15). They are in Museum of London fabric type 3097, which occurs in medieval layers in London sites. Some of the watching brief material, however, has fine moulding sand which in the London area is normally a feature of late-medieval and particularly post-medieval peg tile. The seven roofing tiles are probably therefore post-medieval. One tile (context 7) has the remains of a distorted square nail hole measuring 8 x ? mm. Two such holes would have been originally have been present on each tile.

1.1.12 Two fragments of what may be post-medieval brick were recovered from context 15.

Provenance

1.1.13 The majority of Roman material is in fabric group 2815 (comprising individual types 2452, 2459, and 3006). These tiles probably originate from one or more of the tile kilns which occur in the countryside around London. The yellow tile in fabric 2454 probably originates from a tilery situated in the Eccles area of north-west Kent, whilst the location of the tilery supplying the silty tile in Museum of London fabric 3238 is still unknown.

1.1.14 The peg tiles are probably from a tilery situated somewhere in Kent.

1.1.15 The majority of the assemblage is very small, abraded and fragmentary and has very little research value.

Conservation

1.1.16 The material does not require any specific conservation action. Since the material provides evidence for trading networks in both the Roman and medieval periods, permanent retention is recommended for the tegula, Roman brick, definite daub, peg tile and possible brick. The small abraded fragments of definite Roman ceramic tile should be retained (particularly the fragment in Museum of London fabric 2454), the remaining material could be discarded.

Comparative material

1.1.17 The Roman building material found on minor rural sites may not have arrived from the tilemakers directly, but have been part of a much larger order for a more substantial Roman building. In the case of the roofing tile and brick it would be useful to compare the tiles types and fabrics present with those found at the villa site of Thurnham.

1.1.18 The peg tiles in fabric type 3097 have been found on London sites, although only in very small quantities, as well as a number of other CTRL sites. It would be useful to plot their distribution to see if this gives clues as to the location of the source tilery.

Potential for further work

1.1.19 The Roman building material provides dating evidence for the Roman occupation of the site and may be of value if present in secure contexts lacking Roman pottery.

1.1.20 If the building material is to be published the roofing tile, brick, daub and peg tile will need to be discussed in relation to the site stratigraphic sequence and all the available dating evidence. It is possible, for example, that the material may derive from the more substantial ragstone-founded building identified during the 1950s

excavation to the south, in advance of the construction of the Maidstone Bypass. This will address the fieldwork event aims related to understanding of the late Iron Age and Romano-British settlement.

1.1.21 The material has potential for contributing to understanding of sources and supply networks for ceramic building material in the Kent region. The Roman material should be compared with that found on other Roman sites in the area, in particular the villa at Thurnham, since links between the sites would be of considerable interest. This addresses the Landscape Zone Priorities for the project concerning evidence for trade and the effects of the Roman administration.

Table 1.9: Building materials from South of Snarkhurst Wood ARC SNK 99

Context	Count	Weight g	Type	Period	Early date	Late date	Comments
117	4	3	Daub	Roman	40	400	Very small
117	3	2	?	Roman	50	160	Fired ceramic, MoL fabric 3006
120	1	2	?	Roman	50	160	As above
132	2	2	?	Roman	50	160	As above
138	1	25	Tegula	Roman	50	160	MoL fabric 2459A
138	3	490	Brick	Roman	50	160	MoL fabric 2459A, 29-32mm thick
151	1	1	?	Roman	50	160	As above
163	1	2	?	Roman	50	160	Fired ceramic, MoL fabric 2459
173 <112>	103	160	Daub	Roman	40	400	Very small daub (& fired ceramic?)
173	218	380	Daub	Roman	40	400	As above
173	10	45	?	Roman	?	?	Fired ceramic, MoL fabric 3006
173	2	15	?	Roman	?	?	Iron Pan? (BM?)
173	2	15	Stone	Roman	?	?	Hassock Sandstone?
196	1	40	Brick?	Roman	50	160	MoL fabric 2452, near 3006
198	9	65	?	Roman	50	160	Fired ceramic, MoL fabric 3006. One imbrex?
201	1	1	?	Roman	50	160	Fired ceramic, MoL fabric 2452
201	1	10	?	Roman	50	75/80	Fired ceramic, MoL fabric 2454
220	3	10	?	Roman	50	160	Fired ceramic, MoL 2452
228	2	290	Tegula	Roman	50	160	Fired ceramic MoL fabric 2542
228	3	30	?	Roman	50	160	Fired ceramic, MoL fabrics 2452 & 3006
230-239 <128>	1	10	?	Roman	?	?	Fired ceramic
237 <127>	100+	520	?	Roman	50	160	Fired ceramic MoL fabrics 2452 & 3006
237	2	15	Daub?	Roman	?	?	-
237	2	10	?	Roman	?	?	Fired ceramic?
238	5	15	?	Roman	?	?	Fired ceramic
239	3	25	Daub	Roman	40	400	Part burnt
239	1	2	?	Roman	?	?	Fired ceramic
247	5	250	Daub	Roman	40	400+?	Part burnt loomweight?
280 <129>	1	5	Daub?	Roman	?	?	-
281	1	10	?	Roman	?	?	Fired ceramic/ daub, partly vitrified
281	10	110	?	Roman	?	?	Fired ceramic/ daub
282	6	20	Daub?	Roman	?	?	-
312	1	60	?	Roman	?	?	BM?
312	1	312	Brick	Roman	70	100+	MoL fabric 3238, 47mm thick
322	1	2	?	Roman	50	160	Fired ceramic, MoL fabric 3006
326	1	5	?	Roman	50	160	Fired ceramic, MoL fabric 3006