

## 1.1 Assessment of the Fired Clay and Ceramic Building Material

*by Susan Pringle*

### *Introduction*

- 1.1.1 Very small quantities of ceramic building material (345 g) and fired clay (415 kg) were recovered during the watching brief. It was hoped that they would provide evidence for structures, activities and chronology.

### *Methodology*

- 1.1.2 All the ceramic building material and fired clay from the site was examined for this assessment. Ceramic building material has been divided by form, and the fragments counted and weighed. The presence of distinctive fabric types has been noted and compared to the Museum of London ceramic building material fabric series, but no analytical work has been done on the fabrics from the site, as this task is more appropriately carried out at the next stage, should the material merit it. Other information recorded includes the presence of combing tally or signature marks, the presence or absence of glaze, and any complete dimensions.
- 1.1.3 The fired clay fragments have been counted and weighed, and notes made of the most distinctive fabrics and any unusual inclusions. Exceptionally reduced or vitrified material has been noted.

### *Quantification*

#### Ceramic Building Material

- 1.1.4 Four fragments of ceramic building material with a total weight of 345 g were recovered from the site (Table 1.4). It is post-medieval in date. Material of two types is present: two fragments of post-medieval brick in a red, sandy fabric (MoL type 3033), which is dated in the London area to *c* AD 1450-1700 and two fragments of field drain in a fine, red fabric. This appears to be machine made and is likely to be of 19th or 20th century date. Both types come from context 105, the fill of pit 106, and, apart from demonstrating some post-medieval use and disturbance of the area, neither is of archaeological significance.

#### Fired Clay

- 1.1.5 The total weight of fired clay is 415 g. Two contexts (38, the fill of pit 37, and 43, fill of late Bronze Age pit 42) contained fired clay which appeared to be fragmentary artefactual material, possibly loomweights. Daub with wattle impressions was noted amongst the medieval pottery forming scatter 32.

### *Provenance*

- 1.1.6 The post-Roman brick and tile comes from one context only, 105, the fill of pit 106, in the area of the ring ditches, which has clearly suffered from recent disturbance.
- 1.1.7 Although much derives from undated features, the dated features containing fired clay are mostly late Bronze Age and middle Iron Age. These are pits 33 and 42 and ditch 190, and the fired clay perhaps indicates the existence of some kinds of structures in the area in these phases. Probable clay artefacts, possibly loomweights, come from pits 42 and 38. A fragment of wattle-impressed daub came from a

medieval pottery scatter (32). A very small amount of fired clay was also found in the upper fill of ring ditch 90.

- 1.1.8 The condition of the material is fairly abraded, but there is no risk to its preservation.

*Conservation*

- 1.1.9 There are no special requirements for long term storage, other than the use of robust packaging materials and a dry environment. At this stage, all the material should be retained. In the future, the majority can be discarded. Material to be retained includes the fired clay which has features of interest and is likely either to be of assistance in the interpretation of the site or to provide useful material for comparison with similiar artefacts from other sites.

*Comparative material*

- 1.1.10 With the exception of the possible artefacts, there would be little to learn from comparisons of this material.

*Potential for Further Work*

- 1.1.11 The fired clay and daub is a potential source of information on the date and nature of occupation on the site, although given the size and nature of the assemblage there is no potential for further analysis. The ceramic building material is of significance only as evidence for disturbance of the site.

*Table 1.4: Summary of ceramic building material*

Context	Count	Weight (g)	Type	Period	Comments
105	2	87	Field drain	Post-med	Fine, red fabric, unglazed. 19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> century
105	2	258	Brick	Post-med	Red sandy fabric (MoL 3033); 1 indented border. 15 <sup>th</sup> - 18 <sup>th</sup> century
Total	4	345			

*Table 1.5: Summary of fired clay*

Context	Count	Weight (g)	Type	Period	Comments
2	15	33	Fired clay	-	Orange lumpy, sandy fabric with organic temper?
24	474	137	Fired clay	-	Abraded scraps of gritty, iron-rich clay; natural or iron-working debris?
32	1	18	Fired clay	Med	Orange micaceous sandy fabric; all with wattle imprints
34	3	144	Fired clay	MIA	Orange micaceous sandy fabric; no impressions
38	4	43	Fired clay	-	Smoothed surfaces ?artefact
38	4	20	Fired clay	-	Loomweight? Fragmentary
43	2	10	Fired clay	LBA	Odd fabric - artefact? Loomweight??
43	1	1	Fired clay	LBA	Pale orange clay with mortared surface, abraded
86	3	5	Fired clay	LN-EBA	Scraps, abraded
212	4	4	Fired clay	LBA	Crumbs
Total	511	415			