

1.1 Assessment of Worked and Burnt Flint

by Philippa Bradley

Introduction

- 1.1.1 A small collection of flint was recovered during excavation and strip, map and sample works at West of Blind Lane.
- 1.1.2 The material was hand retrieved on site.
- 1.1.3 The material was recovered in accordance with the Landscape Zone Priorities and Fieldwork Event Aims for the site, set out in section 2 of the main report, above. It was hoped that this material would provide evidence for the date and character of earlier prehistoric activity on the site.

Methodology

- 1.1.4 All of the flint was briefly scanned and recorded, with information regarding dating, technology and general condition being noted. The material was added to an Access database. All of the burnt flint was scanned and weighed; general comments on the condition of this material were also made.

Quantification

- 1.1.5 A total of 129 pieces of worked flint and 17 pieces of burnt unworked flint (89 g) was recovered. This material is summarised below in Table 2.1 (worked flint) and Table 2.2 (burnt flint). The flint was recovered from 34 contexts and with a few exceptions was spread thinly across the site. No diagnostic retouched artefacts or distinctive debitage was recovered but the technological traits of the material combined with the retouched forms identified have allowed broad Neolithic to early Bronze Age dating to be suggested.

Provenance

- 1.1.6 Much of the flint was found in the fills of various late Iron Age-early Roman and post-medieval ditches, predominantly those in the western SMS area and the westerly part of the area of detailed excavation (eg ditch 3002, contexts 2002 and 2008; ditch 3013, context 2010; ditch 3004, context 2041; ditch 3005, contexts 2043, 2046 and 2059-60; ditch 3007, context 2062). This material is clearly redeposited as the datable artefacts suggest a broad Neolithic to early Bronze Age date. The numbers of pieces from individual contexts is small (Table 2.1).
- 1.1.7 A few other features produced a little flint (eg natural feature 2014, posthole 2130, context 2128 and posthole 2143, context 2141); however, the flint in feature 2014 was found together with medieval pottery and was therefore also redeposited. The five pieces of flint from 2141 are not closely datable (one retouched blade and four flakes) and they were the only finds from the feature. The other posthole produced an early Bronze Age knife and a core on a flake (2128), together two pieces of burnt unworked flint and some late Iron Age pottery. Larger assemblages of flint came from topsoil and subsoil layers (eg 1009, 2013 and 2181); this material is probably later Neolithic. A few pieces of flint came from disturbed natural (eg context 2077, 2103 and 2131), and a later Neolithic date also seems likely for this material. The site produced a little burnt unworked flint from surface and colluvial layers, a posthole fill, disturbed natural and the fill of a natural feature.

Conservation

- 1.1.8 Much of the flint has suffered some post-depositional damage; cortication is mixed. Several pieces of burnt unworked flint and a piece of burnt quartzite were also recovered; this material was very heavily calcined either grey-white or red. A few pieces of worked flint were also burnt. Some of the burnt unworked flint is beginning to disintegrate, but little can be done to prevent this. The flint is adequately bagged and boxed for long term storage. There are therefore no storage or conservation requirements.
- 1.1.9 The material should be retained pending final decisions about the scope of further analysis.

Comparative Material

- 1.1.10 The material is comparable with other Neolithic and Bronze Age assemblages from the CTRL route, particularly the better-stratified assemblages. Comparable assemblages from within the CTRL project would be those from Eyhorne Street, Tutt Hill, South of Snarkhurst Wood, Chapel Mill, Thurnham and White Horse Stone. A substantial flint scatter was identified approximately 300m away from the excavated site (URL 1994, no. 1820; Booth and Everson 1995), which would provide useful comparative material.

Potential for Further Work

- 1.1.11 This small assemblage, although not *in situ*, provides evidence for Neolithic to Bronze Age activity of a domestic nature. The assemblage is dominated by debitage, which is typical of such assemblages, and the retouched assemblage is composed of scrapers, knives, and serrated and retouched flakes. This range of artefacts would suggest that hide preparation and a range of processing tasks were occurring on site, as well as possibly knapping. The lack of small chips and flakes, which would support knapping occurring on site, may be attributable to post-depositional factors or the on-site recovery methods.
- 1.1.12 Further analysis in conjunction with other comparable assemblages from the vicinity, and from CTRL sites, would therefore have the potential to contribute to wider study, at Landscape Zone level, of the interaction of early prehistoric communities with the palaeo-environment.

Bibliography

Booth, P, and Everson, P, 1995, Earthwork survey and excavation at Boys Hall Moat, Sevington, Ashford, *Archaeologia Cantiana* CXIV, 411-34

URL 1994, Channel Tunnel Rail Link: assessment of historic and cultural effects, final report, prepared by the OAU for URL

Table 2.1: Summary of worked flint

Context	Count	Period	Context date	Comments
1009	4		-	2 flakes, 2 blade-like flakes both with ?usewear
1024	3	LNE; EBA	-	1 knife, neatly and steeply retouched, also some inverse retouch, 2 flakes, Neolithic-early Bronze Age
2002	2	LNE; EBA?	LIA; ERO	?rod, steeply retouched piece, strong ?natural glossing, 1 flake, ?Later Neolithic-early Bronze Age
2008	3		LIA; RO	2 flakes, 1 misc retouched piece with denticulated type retouch, possibly a scraper fragment
2010	1		-	End scraper on a long blank, later damage
2013	7	NE?	-	2 flakes, 2 small cores (1 multi-platform flake, 1 single platform flake), 2 end and side scrapers (both are quite large neatly retouched, made on trimming flakes, one is very worn), 1 serrated flake with additional retouch, Neolithic, possibly later?
2015	11		LIA; ERO	11 flakes (2 burnt, two have usewear), one flake may be natural
2025	2		-	2 flakes
2041	2		PM	2 flakes
2043	1		LIA; ERO	1 heavily used flake
2046	1		LIA-ERO	1 flake
2053	8		M-LBA	1 ?single platform core, 2 heavily burnt chips, 5 flakes one of which has been heavily used, also 2 natural
2059	2		PM	1 blade-like flake, 1 flake
2060	1		PM	1 flake
2062	1		LIA; ERO	1 flake
2071	1		LIA; ERO	1 blade with used edges
2075	5		-	3 flakes (one with blade scars on dorsal face) 1 chip, 1 end scraper with worn edge, on poor quality flint
2077	1		-	1 flake with used edges
2097	-		-	1 natural
2100	1		LIA; ERO	1 opposed platform flake core, some preparation, very heavily corticated
2103	4		-	1 end scraper on a blade-like flake, 1 used blade-like flake, 1 keeled core (flake core two or more platforms), 1 flake
2128	2	EBA	LIA; ERO	1 invasively retouched knife, very finely worked – more steeply worked LHS, invasive retouch RHS, cortical, 1 core on a flake, early Bronze Age
2131	37	NE?	-	30 flakes (2 are burnt, some have usewear), 2 discoidal cores (1 is burnt), 2 misc retouch (1 is a bifacially worked piece, the other is an invasively worked flake) 1 side and 1 end and side scraper, both neatly retouched and worn, 1 retouched blade-like flake, also 1 non-flint, Neolithic possibly later
2133	1		-	1 flake
2141	5	NE?	LIA; ERO	1 retouched blade, very fine retouch and some is probably usewear, 4 flakes (one is heavily burnt), ?Neolithic
2144	5		-	1 blade (recent break), 3 flakes, 1 misc retouch (inversely retouched flake)
2160	-		-	Natural
2168	2		-	2 flakes
2172	1		LIA; ERO	1 flake
2181	4		-	4 flakes, some usewear noted
2185	1		-	1 blade-like flake
2188	2		MLBA?	2 flakes
2221	3		MLBA	3 flakes
2248	5		-	1 blade, 3 flakes (1 is burnt, 1 is very large), 1 misc

Context	Count	Period	Context date	Comments
				retouch (flake with some sporadic retouch, possibly just usewear)
Total	129			

Table 2.2: Summary of burnt unworked flint

Context	Count	Weight (g)	Comments
2013	5	40	Heavily calcined grey-white
2015	1	6	Heavily calcined red
2128	8	14	Heavily calcined red, also includes 1 burnt quartzite fragment
2131	2	11	Heavily calcined grey, one has reddish tinges, also 1 natural
2144	1	18	Heavily calcined grey-white
Total	17	89	