

APPENDIX 3: ASSESSMENT OF CERAMIC ARTEFACTS

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1. Introduction

1.1 Eight accessioned finds were recovered from the excavation ARC CGC 98 in Zone 5. Seven of the accessions were recovered by hand excavation and one from an environmental sample.

1.2 The accessioned ceramic finds can assist the following fieldwork event aims:

- To determine the morphology and function of the settlement, including any adjacent enclosures and trackways etc

Methodology

1.3 The ceramic finds were accessioned in accordance with the Museum of London system. The ceramic finds have been counted and weighed and any features such as impressions and areas of surface were noted.

1.4 The records have been entered onto the Oracle relational database and transferred to RLE Datasets.

1.5 No sampling of the ceramic accessions was undertaken.

Quantifications

Table 10: Assessment of Ceramic Artefacts from ARC CGC 98

Context	Special Number	Material	Count	Period	Comments (Description)
122	4	Ceramic	6	LBA	Briquetage; unidentifiable forms.
142	8	Ceramic	37	LBA	Assorted fragments of briquetage (ceramic equipment believed to be associated with the manufacture of salt) including parts of pedestals and possibly angles.
160	2	Ceramic	4	LBA	Perforated clay slab
160	6	Ceramic	10	LBA	Briquetage; part of a possible pedestal and 9 very small fragments.
176	5	Ceramic	22	LBA	Loom weight; cylindrical form; near complete circumference.
176	3	Ceramic	17	LBA	Loom weight; cylindrical form.
176	1	Ceramic	1	LBA	Perforated clay slab
178	7	Ceramic	1	LBA	Briquetage; possibly part of a pedestal.

Provenance

- 1.6 The two loom weights and one of the perforated clay slabs came from flint packing in posthole [176] (sub-group 46). The second perforated clay slab came from pit [160] (sub-group 38). The fragments of briquetage came from pits [122] (sub-group 21; burnt in situ?), [142] (sub-group 29) and [160] (sub-group 38) and also from ?flint packing in posthole [178] (sub-group 47).
- 1.7 The material is quite a soft, fired ceramic and is, therefore, quite fragile and friable.

Conservation

- 1.8 The fragments are stable and packed appropriately for long term archive storage.
- 1.9 None of the ceramic accessions should be discarded. The study of perforated clay slabs is ongoing. It is still not fully understood what their function was so they should be kept for future research. Similarly the loom weights can add to any reference collection and the briquetage, which is evidence of possible salt production on or near the site is an important addition to Kent collections.

Comparative material

- 1.10 This is a small but very important assemblage of Bronze Age artefacts. Middle to late Bronze Age settlements in Kent are, at present, poorly understood (URL 1998, 42-3). It is recommended that the material is compared to other, similar sites on the CTRL, for example perforated clay slabs were recovered from a well at Singlewell, ARC 330 98, but not from any CTRL sites further to the west. This may indicate that settlement activity was more concentrated around the North Downs, rather than the North Kent Plain in the late Bronze Age.
- 1.11 In addition the finds should be compared with those found in Sussex (Black Patch, Patcham Fawcett, Varley Halls, Itford Hill (ibid)) and Essex (for example, Mucking). The latter has comparable assemblages of briquetage (Barford, 39-41 & 50-1).

Potential for further work

- 1.12 The accessioned ceramic finds have potential to assist with the following landscape Zone aim:
- *Farming communities (2,000-100BC)*
- 1.13 The site has been identified as probably being a small middle-late Bronze Age settlement. The ceramic accessions support this and are typical of assemblages found on other sites of this period (see 6.1 above). The loom weights provide evidence of settlement, as looms are unlikely to have been set up for short-term use. The briquetage is of particular interest and merits further work (see below). It is evidence of possible salt production on or near the site. The perforated clay

slabs, although of unknown function, are also typical finds on settlement sites of this period (Bond 1988, 39).

- 1.14 The ceramic accessions can assist the following fieldwork event aim:
- *To determine the morphology and function of the settlement, including any adjacent enclosures and trackways etc*
- 1.15 As stated above the ceramic finds are evidence of a settled community involved in textile working and possibly also salt production. Further work is required to integrate the finds evidence further with the stratigraphic evidence.
- 1.16 The following further work is required:
- Integration with stratigraphic information
 - Identification of fabrics
 - Catalogue for publication
 - Comparison with similar assemblages
 - Text
- 1.17 The following are recommended for illustration:
- The two perforated clay slab fragments
 - The two loomweights
 - Possibly 15-20 fragments of briquetage

Bibliography

- Barford, P, M, 1988, 'Salt production equipment (briquetage)' in D, Bond *Excavation at the North Ring, Mucking, Essex: A Late Bronze Age Enclosure*, East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 43, 1988, 39-41 & 50-1
- Bond, D, 1988, 'Perforated clay slabs' in D, Bond *Excavation at the North Ring, Mucking, Essex: A Late Bronze Age Enclosure*, East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 43, 1988, 39