

## APPENDIX 9: ASSESSMENT OF CERAMIC ARTEFACTS

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Three accessioned finds were recovered from the watching brief excavations ARC 330 98 in Area 330 Zone 4.
- 1.2 All of the accessions were recovered by hand excavation.
- 1.3 The accessioned ceramic finds can assist the following fieldwork event aims:
  - To recover dating evidence from the features located to enable a chronology for the division of the landscape to be established.
  - To determine the form, function and chronology of occupation.

### 2. Methodology

- 2.1 The ceramic finds were accessioned in accordance with the Museum of London system.
- 2.2 The records have been entered onto the Oracle relational database and transferred to RLE Datasets.
- 2.3 No sampling of the ceramic accessions was undertaken.

### 3. Quantifications

*Table 19: Assessment of Ceramic Artefacts from Area 330 Zone 4*

Context	Special Number	Material	Count	Period	Comments (Description)
529	79	Ceramic	3	LBA	Perforated clay slab; all three fragments join and include one right-angled corner, the beginning of a rounded edge and part of one perforation.
529	107	Ceramic	3	LBA	Perforated clay slab; the fabric has fewer and larger flint fragments; the largest fragment has the remains of a perforation.
529	106	Ceramic	12	LBA	Perforated clay slab; remains of one corner and possibly two perforations.

#### **4. Provenance**

4.1 The perforated clay slabs all came from [529] (sub-group 4173) the fill of pit 537 (Figure 10). This context also produced Later Bronze Age pottery dating to 1150-800BC.

4.2 The material is quite a soft, fired ceramic and is, therefore, quite fragile and friable.

#### **5. Conservation**

5.1 The artefacts are stable and packed appropriately for long term storage.

5.2 The ceramic artefacts should be retained for further analysis and research.

#### **6. Comparative material**

6.1 This is a small but very important assemblage of Bronze Age artefacts. Middle-Late Bronze Age settlements in Kent are, at present, poorly understood (URL 1998, 42-3; Mudd 1995, 406). It is recommended that the material is compared to other, similar sites, for example Area 330 Zone 5 (ARC CGC 98) and those found in Sussex (Black Patch, Patcham Fawcett, Varley Halls, Itford Hill (URL 1998, 42-3)) and Essex (for example, Mucking).

#### **7. Potential for further work**

7.1 The accessioned ceramic finds have potential to assist with the following landscape zone aim:

- *The socio-economic landscape of the later agriculturalists (2,000-100BC)*

7.2 The ceramic accessions are late Bronze Age in date and are typical of assemblages found on other sites of this period (see 6.1 above).

- *To recover dating evidence from the features located to enable a chronology for the division of the landscape to be established.*

7.3 Perforated slabs are quite commonly found on sites dating to the later Bronze Age (Bond 1988, 39). In Zone 4 they were found in a pit with pottery which also dates to the late Bronze Age.

- *To determine the form, function and chronology of occupation.*

7.4 The occurrence of the three fragmentary perforated slabs is of interest as they indicate a Bronze Age settlement in the vicinity. The function of these objects is unknown, although it has been suggested that they were used in some form of 'cottage industry' (Perkins 1995, 311). Perkins has suggested that they may have been used in bronze melting furnaces (ibid, 311-2) but the lack of vitrification would seem argue against this. Other uses that have been suggested for them include cooking and salt production.

7.5 The following further work is required:

- Confirmed identification of fabrics
- Catalogue for publication
- Comparison with similar assemblages
- Text
- The three perforated clay slab accessions should be illustrated

## 8. **Bibliography**

- 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
- Perkins, D R J, 1995, 'The deposition of the Monkton bronze hoards and the 'perforated clay plaque'' in D R J. Perkins, N. MacPherson-Grant & E. Healey *Monkton Court Farm evaluation, 1992*, Archaeologia Cantiana, Vol. CXIV (1994), 311-2
- Mudd, A, 1995, '*The excavation of a Later Bronze Age site at Coldharbour Road, Gravesend*', Archaeologia Cantiana, Vol. CXIV (1994), 363-410