

Medieval Pottery from Slingsby School (OSA02 WB19)

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Four sherds of pottery were recovered from context 003 at Slingsby School during a watching brief carried out by On-Site Archaeology (OSA01 WB19). The sherds are small but not abraded and do not seem to be typical of those found in ploughsoil which are normally interpreted as manuring scatter.

Description

Two of the sherds are of Staxton ware. This ware was produced at a number of centres in East and North Yorkshire, primarily Staxton and Potter Brompton in the Vale of Pickering. From excavations at Wharram Percy it is thought that production started at some point in the 12th century and continued into the 15th century. One sherd is a bowl rim and the other a jar body sherd with sooting on the exterior.

Two sherds are of Humber ware. They are too small to identify the vessel form but one comes from the base of a vessel with a stacking scar from the rim of a jar on it. This ware was produced at several centres in the Humber Basin, but principally at West Cowick, from the later 14th to the 16th century. Later vessels are often high fired with a purplish glaze whereas one of these sherds has a green glaze (the colour being caused by reduction rather than addition of copper) and the other is unglazed.

Assessment

The sherds could all be of similar date, in the late 14th or 15th centuries, or they might be the result of long-lived activity. It is impossible to say which on the basis of such a small collection. Nevertheless, they do seem to indicate settlement on or near the site rather than a manuring scatter.