

## **Assessment of the finds from Queens Staithe, York (OSA02 WB21)**

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Thirty-six sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from a watching brief at Queens Staithe, York (OSA02 WB21) Together with a single fragment of medieval roof tile. The finds range in date from the late 11<sup>th</sup>/mid 12<sup>th</sup> century to the mid 13<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> century but the majority date to the mid 12<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Description**

#### **Ceramic Building material**

##### **Medieval**

A single fragment of a curved roof tile was recovered from context 7000. To judge by its curvature this tile is likely to be the narrow end of a Roman-style curved tile, which would have been used in conjunction with flanged tiles to form a tegula and imbrex roof. This type of roof was reintroduced into England in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century from the continent, probably north of the Alps rather than the Mediterranean world where such roofing is still used today. It seems that the style was rapidly replaced with simpler tiling and it is unlikely that the tile would have been made later than the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century, although it might well have remained in use for generations. The associated pottery finds, however, are themselves likely to be of mid 12<sup>th</sup> century date. The fabric of this tile suggests a source in the Humber estuary, perhaps at Beverley.

#### **Pottery**

##### **Medieval**

The earliest sherds present were from contexts 7000 and 7020, although they were associated in context 7000 with later material. These sherds are of Stamford ware (a jug and a jar) and North Lincolnshire Fine Shelly ware (NLFS). All four sherds are likely to be post-conquest in date but in the case of the Stamford ware probably earlier than the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

The majority of the pottery present is of mid 12<sup>th</sup> to mid 13<sup>th</sup> century date and includes Yorkshire Gritty ware (YG), Beverley glazed ware (BEVO), Staxton ware (STAXTON) and York Splash-glazed ware (YSPL). There are no examples of York glazed ware in the collection and this might suggest that the pottery dates to the earlier part of this date bracket, ie the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century. However, larger assemblages would be required to prove this. The YG jars include at least three which have globular bodies, a short neck and squared rim. This contrasts with the typical YG jar form which is roughly cylindrical.

A single sherd of a copper-glazed Brandsby-type ware vessel was present (7035). The vessel has a dark reduced core and interior. This style of fining seems to be a late medieval trait in the north of England. Although Brandsby-type ware was being produced from the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Assessment**

#### **Stratigraphy**

The pottery was recovered from six contexts (Table 1). The earliest possible date for any context is for 7020 which is dated only by a sherd of NLFS. The Lincoln equivalent of this ware, unfortunately, was in use from the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century into the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Four of the contexts contain either

Beverley glazed ware or Staxton ware. Both are thought to be mid 12<sup>th</sup>-century introductions. Finally, context 7035 must date to the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century or (probably) later because of the sherd of Brandsby-type ware it contains.

**Table 1**

Context	BEVO	BEVO?	BRANDBYMTIL	NLFS	STAM	STAXTONYG	YSPL	Grand Total	
7000	1	1		1	1	2	4	12	
7007							2	2	
7008	1						2	3	
7020					1			1	
7025	1						4	5	
7035			1				1	2	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>

The late 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>-century wares are all small sherds, although none show signs of abrasion, whereas the mid 12<sup>th</sup>-century sherds are larger and include some smashed vessels (eg the YSPL jug). This suggests that there is primary or secondary refuse being deposited on the site in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century whereas the earlier material may well have arrived on the site after previously being deposited elsewhere.

There is clearly potential on this site to recover assemblages of well-preserved mid-12<sup>th</sup>-century ceramics (and by implication other finds). Six of the sherds could be illustrated to indicate the character of the pottery (Table 2).

**Table 2**

Context	Description	Cname	Form
7000	PULLED SPOUT	BEVO	JUG
7000	SQUARED RIM;GLOB BODY	YG	JAR
7000	POSSIBLY MORE THAN ONE VESSEL	YSPL	JUG
7007		STAXTON	JAR
7007	SQUARED RIM;GLOB BODY	YG	JAR

## Costing

Six pottery illustrations @ £10 per drawing = £60

### Appendix One

Context	REFNO	Description	Trench	TSNO	Cname	Form	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Subfabric	Part
7000		PULLED SPOUT			BEVO	JUG	1	1	46		R
7000		SQUARED RIM;GLOB BODY			YG	JAR	2	2	78		R
7000					YG	JAR	1	1	8		BS
7000					YG	JAR	1	1	22		B
7000		PLAIN GLAZE			STAM	PTCH	1	1	5		BS
7000		SOOTED EXT			STAM	JAR	1	1	5		BS
7000		DEPO INT			NLFS	JAR	1	1	7		BS
7000		POSSIBLY MORE THAN ONE VESSEL			YSPL	JUG	12	1	86		R
7000					BEVO?	JUG	1	1	37		BS
7000					MTIL	CURVED	1	1	68	SALT-SURFACED;SAND-TEMPERED	BS
7007					STAXTON	JAR	2	1	31		R
7007		SQUARED RIM;GLOB BODY			YG	JAR	2	1	39		R
7008					BEVO	JUG	1	1	3		BS
7008					YG	JAR	2	2	32		BS
7020					NLFS	JAR	1	1	5		BS
7025					YG	JAR	4	4	32		BS
7025					BEVO	JUG	1	1	3		BS
7035					YG	JAR	1	1	4		BS
7035		REDUCED INT			BRANDBY	JUG	1	1	7		BS