

Assessment of further finds from Old Library, Selsdon, Surrey (OSL03)

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A small group of finds from a watching brief at Old Library, Selsdon, carried out by Lindsey Archaeological Services, was submitted for identification and assessment. The finds consist of early prehistoric flints, a broken fragment of indeterminate ceramic and a piece of modern breeze-block.

Description

Flint

Five fragments of flint were recovered. All were struck from unpatinated flint, some still with its cortex attached. The appearance of the material suggests that it was mined rather than gleaned from superficial gravel deposits.

Table 1

Context	Ref No	Weight	No	Form	Condition	Description
206	51	5	1	WASTE	UNPATINATED	SHORT BROAD FLAKE;NO SIGN OF TRIMMING
205	53	9	1	WASTE		THICK BLADE;POSSIBLE TRIMMING ON ONE EDGE BUT NOT CONVINCING
15		30	1	WASTE	FIRE-CRACKED	
204	50	7	1	WASTE	UNPATINATED	BULB ON ONE SIDE;POSSIBLE TRIMMING ON THE OTHER TO PRODUCE A SMALL SEMI-CURCULAR MORE LIKELY NOT DELIBERATE
205		12	1	SCRAPER	UNPATINATED	D-SHAPED WITH CORTEX ALONG BACK

Only one definite implement was present (context 205), a D-shaped scraper, and the remainder are probably waste from the production of blades. Given the small assemblage only a broad date range can be assigned, from the Mesolithic to the Early Bronze Age.

Ceramic

A small lump of fired clay, now broken into 8 scraps, was recovered from context 205. The fabric is oxidized, fine-textured with abundant angular and sparse rounded quartz grains. It is impossible to identify but is probably of Roman to modern date.

Building material

A fragment of breeze block was recovered from context 205. The material is superficially similar to Mayen lava (examples of which were found in earlier work on the site, OSL03) but examination at x20 magnification clearly indicates that this is man-made, a concrete formed from concrete and ash which was aerated as it set. I am aware of breeze block structures of 2nd World War date but am unaware of the exact introduction date of the material.

Discussion

Contexts 15, 204 and 206 only produced prehistoric material whereas context 205 produced the modern breeze block. The unidentified ceramic may be of similar, recent date.

Assessment

The prehistoric flintwork from the site is the only significant group of finds. Even with the material from the 2003 work the collection is small and probably incapable of close dating or interpretation. However, the flints should be retained as more material may be found in the future.

Unfortunately, no further evidence of mid Saxon activity, noted in 2003, was found in this work, perhaps indicating that the current earthmoving took place outside the limit of the mid Saxon settlement.

Appendix

Context	cname	Form	subfabric	Weight	Nosh	NoV	REFN O	Condition	Use	Description
15	STONE	WASTE	FLINT	30	1	1		FIRE-CRACKED		
204	STONE	WASTE	FLINT	7	1	1	50	UNPATINATED		BULB ON ONE SIDE;POSSIBLE TRIMMING ON THE OTHER TO PRODUCE A SMALL SEMI-CURCULAR MORE LIKELY NOT DELIBERATE
205	STONE	BREEZEBLOCK	BLUE-GREY VESICULAR CONCRETE	26	1	1		ABR	MORTAR ON SOME EDGES	
205	FCLAY		FINE SA AND RQ SAND <0.3MM	5	8	1	52			OXIDIZED FEATURELESS FRAGS;FABRIC FINER THAN BRICKEARTH
205	STONE	WASTE	FLINT	9	1	1	53			THICK BLADE;POSSIBLE TRIMMING ON ONE EDGE BUT NOT CONVINCING
205	STONE	SCRAPER	FLINT	12	1	1		UNPATINATED		D-SHAPED WITH CORTEX ALONG BACK
206	STONE	WASTE	FLINT	5	1	1	51	UNPATINATED		SHORT BROAD FLAKE;NO SIGN OF TRIMMING