

## Assessment of the Pottery and Ceramic Building Material from the Sadlers Farm Road Improvements, Essex (A13-2-3)

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Pottery and ceramic building material from archaeological fieldwork on the junction of the A13 and A130 at Sadlers Farm, Essex, carried out by Network Archaeology Ltd was submitted for identification and assessment.

In total, 33 sherds of pottery and 62 fragments of ceramic building material, weighing 400gm and 1484 gm respectively were examined. The pottery includes a single fragment of possible later prehistoric date and is otherwise of post-medieval and modern date. The ceramic building material contains a number of fragments which cannot be closely dated, being of mid 12<sup>th</sup> or later date whilst the only closely-datable pieces are of 19<sup>th</sup>- or 20<sup>th</sup>-century date.

### Description

#### Ceramic Building Material

##### Fabrics

The ceramic building material was all examined at x20 magnification using a stereo-microscope. Based on the presence/absence and rough quantity of inclusion types the material was divided into 15 fabric groups (Table 1). Most of the fabrics were probably made from red-firing Tertiary clays somewhere in the Thames basin. A smaller quantity include or are made from a light-firing fine-textured clay such as the Reading Beds or the Bagshot Beds. A group of calcareous fabrics probably comes from the southeast Midlands, for example the LBC brickworks in the Peterborough area. Finally, one fabric is made from Coal Measures white- and red-firing clays and therefore has to have been made at some distance from south Essex, probably in Staffordshire.

*Table 1*

Fabric	Description	Comments
Fabric 1	Poorly mixed slightly silty micaceous clay with no large inclusions. Streaks of light-coloured clay	Probably utilising the Reading Beds
Fabric 2	Sparse to moderate rounded, polished quartz grains in a	Probably utilising a Tertiary clay

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	groundmass of fine silty clay	
Fabric 3	A silty micaceous groundmass with few large inclusions	Probably utilising a Tertiary clay
Fabric 4	Overfired calcareous inclusions in a silty, micaceous groundmass	Probably utilising a Tertiary clay
Fabric 5	Similar to Fabric 3 but higher fired	Probably utilising a Tertiary clay
Fabric 6	Abundant rounded quartz sand in a silty micaceous groundmass	Probably utilising a Tertiary clay
Fabric 7	A silty micaceous groundmass with sparse rounded quartz and large muscovite flakes	Probably utilising a Tertiary clay
Fabric 8	A blocky, calcareous clay with abundant angular calcareous mudstone pellets	Probably a Jurassic marl
Fabric 9	Similar to Fabric 7 but with a lower iron content in the groundmass	Probably utilising a Tertiary clay
Fabric 10	A calcareous groundmass with abundant, red-stained quartz sand (and burnt-out calcareous inclusions)	Probably a Jurassic marl
Fabric 11	A poorly mixed fabric with a silty/fine sandy groundmass	Probably utilising a Tertiary clay
Fabric 12	A silty, micaceous groundmass with no large inclusions. More/coarser silt than Fabric 3	Probably utilising a Tertiary clay
Fabric 13	A yellow calcareous clay with abundant fine quartz sand	probably a Jurassic marl, but possibly Flanders
Fabric 14	Abundant red-firing and light-firing mudstone/clay pellets, plus vitrified iron-rich inclusions in a clean red-firing slightly micaceous groundmass	Utilising a Coal Measures clay

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Fabric 15	A light-firing clay with moderate angular clay pellets	Either utilising the Reading Beds or possibly a Jurassic Marl (but no certain evidence for carbonate presence)
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## Forms

The ceramic building material included examples of seven forms (Table 2). The most common was the flat roof tile (44 definite and one probable example). Only one of these had evidence for the suspension method, a square peg hole. No examples had glaze. One had mortar traces on the underside, probably indicating the use of mortar between the layers of tile on the roof, a common medieval and later technique for cutting down the amount of draught blowing through the roof. One had traces of a black tarry substance on the upper surface. Tar is used on agricultural and other outbuildings as an additional weatherproofing agent on tile roofs.

The next most common form present was the brick. Eight examples were identified of which two were frogged. These frogged bricks were made in a blocky fabric probably indicating the compression of the clay into the mould by machine (Fabric 8). Therefore a third example of Fabric 8 is probably also from a frogged, machine-made brick.

A single fragment of brown salt-glazed stoneware drainpipe was recovered together with four fragments of unglazed field drain. The latter have a corrugated outer surface and a smooth interior, suggesting the use of a mould or machine in their manufacture.

Two examples of pantiles were present and one example of a wall tile. The latter is fired to near stoneware or porcelain temperatures and is unglazed. It was made in a two-part mould.

*Table 2*

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Form	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
BRICK	8	263
DRAIN	1	17
FIELD DRAIN	4	69
FLAT	44	993
FLAT?	1	4
PANT	2	63
WALT	1	74
Grand Total	61	1483

## Pottery

### Later Prehistoric

A single fragment of flint-tempered pottery was recovered (IAFLINT). The sherd contains abundant angular fragments of white flint in a groundmass of dark brown baked clay. The vessel is a handmade closed form and is 4-5mm thick. The outer surface is smooth, although no traces of burnishing survive.

By a process of elimination, a later prehistoric date is attributed to the sherd but the sherd should perhaps be shown to a specialist on the Iron Age pottery of Essex for study.

### Mid Saxon?

A single sherd was tentatively identified as Ipswich ware (IPS). The sherd has no positive evidence for wheelthrowing, although it is of regular thickness and has smooth surfaces. The fabric contains sparse rounded, polished quartz grains in a groundmass of quartz and muscovite silt and baked clay. It has been fired light grey.

The two possibilities for the identity of the sherd are a Romano-British greyware storage jar or an Ipswich ware jar. It is probable that the sherd is too small for positive identification, even by a specialist familiar with the Romano-British greywares of Essex.

### Medieval

A single sherd from a lead-glazed jug (from Plot 51) is possibly of medieval date. The fabric is similar to that of Harlow Medieval ware, which is probably of later 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century date.

### Post-medieval

Two heavily abraded sherds of Harlow Transitional ware were recovered (Plots 6 and 69). This ware, which was either unglazed or sparsely glazed was produced in the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries at Harlow.

Three sherds of later Harlow products (two plain lead-glazed examples (PMFR) and one with a black glaze, PMBL) were recovered (Plots 6, 51, and 60). These probably date to the later 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Four sherds of London Stoneware (LONS) brown salt-glazed bottles were recovered. This ware was first produced in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century at Woolwich but the main period of production was from the later 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Given the lack of post-medieval material from the fieldwork, it is likely that the pottery dates to the later part of this range.

## Modern

Twenty two sherds of late 18<sup>th</sup> century or later date were recovered. Most are of mass-produced refined earthenwares (Table 3). The low frequency of white-bodied refined earthenwares, which are normally the most common type present, is remarkable.

**Table 3**

Cname	Description	Sum of Nosh	Sum of Weight
BLUE	Refined earthenware coloured with cobalt	1	7
DERBS	Derbyshire stoneware	4	49
ENGS	Unidentified English stoneware	8	140
LPMLOC	Local earthenware	2	16
NCBW	Buff ware	2	14
SUND	Sunderland Coarseware	1	31
TPW	Transfer-printed refined white earthenware	1	1
WHITE	Miscellaneous refined white earthenware	3	7
Grand Total		22	265

## Discussion

The finds are mainly consistent with the spreading of domestic refuse and farm midden material on the fields as manure. As such, it does not even necessarily originate in the immediate area of the site, since night soil was a traded commodity. A notable feature of the collection is the very low level of modern refined earthenwares in relation to stonewares. The most likely explanation for this is the selective rejection of sherds of modern appearance (some of which could easily be of early/mid 18<sup>th</sup> century date) but if this is not the case then the assemblage is remarkable and inexplicable.

The exceptions to this manuring interpretation are the later prehistoric sherd from Plot 69, which is in relatively fresh condition and was probably dislodged from an archaeological feature, the putative Ipswich ware sherd from Plot 61, which is also relatively fresh, and the fragments of field drain, which are probably evidence for the drainage of Plot 60.

## Further study

It is recommended that the sherd of late prehistoric pottery is submitted to a specialist in the Iron Age pottery of Essex for confirmation of the identification.

The remainder of the pottery collection should be retained whilst for the ceramic building material only a sample of each fabric need be retained.

*Appendix 1*

Trench	REFN	Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use
PL03		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 6	FLAT	BS	1	1	10	
PL03		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 7	FLAT	BS	1	1	11	
PL03		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 4	BRICK	BS	1	1	11	
PL03		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 3	FLAT	BS	3	3	63	
PL03		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 5	BRICK	BS	1	1	36	
PL03		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	PANT	BS	1	1	49	
PL03		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS	2	2	34	
PL03		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 2	FLAT	BS	1	1	23	
PL03	3052		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 5	FLAT	BS	1	1	2	
PL03	4055		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 2	FLAT	BS	1	1	98	MORTARED UNDERSIDE
PL03	4055		POTTERY	ENGS		JAR	BS FELDSPATHIC GLAZE	1	1	26	
PL05		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 8	BRICK	BS	1	1	19	
PL05		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 2	FLAT	BS	1	1	20	
PL05		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 9	FLAT	BS	1	1	30	
PL05		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 3	FLAT	BS	1	1	32	
PL05		US	POTTERY	LPMLOC		FLP	BS STAMPED ".TUCK.W."	1	1	15	
PL05	3044		POTTERY	ENGS	GREY WITH BLACK VITRIFIED INCLUSIONS	JAR	BS CF DERBS BLACKLEADING BOTTLES	1	1	8	
PL05	3048		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 13	BRICK	BS	1	1	26	

Trench	REFN O	Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use
PL05	4051		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 5	FLAT	BS	1	1	33	
PL05	4052		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 8	BRICK	BS FROGGED	1	1	104	
PL05	4054		POTTERY	ENGS		JAR	B FELDSPATHIC GLAZE;"20" STAMPED ON BASE	1	1	25	
PL06		US	CBM	LPMLOC		FLP	BS	1	1	1	
PL06		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 2	FLAT	BS	1	1	20	
PL06		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS	3	3	88	
PL06		US	POTTERY	HARLOW TRANS	FABRIC 2	JAR	BS	1	1	17	
PL06	3034		POTTERY	PMBL		PANC	BS INT BLACK GL	1	1	9	
PL06	3035		CBM	ENGS		DRAIN	BS BROWN SALT-GLAZED	1	1	17	
PL06	3036		POTTERY	DERBS		JAR	BS	1	1	12	
PL06	3041		POTTERY	DERBS		JAR	BS	1	1	8	
PL06	4043		POTTERY	ENGS		JAR	B INT AND EXT WHITE FELDSPATHIC GL	1	1	17	
PL06	4044		CBM	WHITE	ALMOST PORCELAIN	WALT	BS MOULDED;UNGLAZED	1	1	74	
PL06	4045		POTTERY	ENGS		JAR	B INT AND EXT WHITE FELDSPATHIC GL	1	1	12	
PL06	4047		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS	1	1	28	
PL06	4048		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS	1	1	46	
PL51	3003		POTTERY	SUND		BOWL	B INT WHITE SLIP;INT GL	1	1	31	
PL51	3005		POTTERY	LONS		BOT	BS BROWN EXT WASH;SALT GL EXT	1	1	33	
PL51	3007		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 9	PANT	BS	1	1	14	

Trench	REFN O	Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use
PL51	3008		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 10	FLAT	BS	1	1	30	TAR ON ONE FACE
PL51	4008		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS	1	1	16	
PL51	4010		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 11	BRICK	BS	1	1	6	
PL51	4010		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 2	FLAT	BS	1	1	17	
PL51	4010		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 7	FLAT	BS	1	1	14	
PL51	4011		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 5	FLAT	BS	1	1	61	
PL51	4011		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 2	FLAT	BS	1	1	17	
PL51	4013		POTTERY	PMFR		PANC	BS INT GL	1	1	7	
PL51	4014		POTTERY	ENGS		JAR	BS INT AND EXT WHITE FELDSPATHIC GL	1	1	7	
PL51	4015		POTTERY	ENGS		JAR	BS INT AND EXT BROWN FELDSPATHIC GL	1	1	23	
PL51	4016		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 12	FLAT	BS	1	1	4	
PL51	4016		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 2	FLAT	BS	1	1	11	
PL51	4017		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS	1	1	16	
PL51	4019		POTTERY	WHITE		CUP	BS	1	1	1	
PL51	4019		POTTERY	HARLOW MED		JUG	BS PLAIN GL INT AND EXT	1	1	3	
PL51	4019		POTTERY	WHITE		BOWL	BS SPONGED DEC	1	1	1	
PL51	4020		POTTERY	NCBW		BOWL	B	1	1	8	
PL51	4021		POTTERY	ENGS		JAR	R INT AND EXT BROWN FELDSPATHIC GL	1	1	22	

Trench	REFN O	Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use
PL55	3011		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 11	BRICK	BS	1	1	7	
PL55	3012		POTTERY	LONS		BOT	BS BROWN EXT WASH;SALT GL EXT	1	1	9	
PL55	4023		POTTERY	NCBW		BOWL	R	1	1	6	
PL55	4023		POTTERY	TPW		PLATE	B	1	1	1	
PL55	4024		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS	1	1	14	
PL55	4024		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS SQUARE PEGHOLE	1	1	26	
PL55	4025		POTTERY	DERBS		MEASURE	B	1	1	11	
PL60	3016		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT?	BS	1	1	4	
PL60	3018		POTTERY	PMFR		JAR	R	1	1	15	
PL60	4026		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS	1	1	8	
PL60	4027		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 15	FIELD DRAIN	BS CORRUGATED MOULDED	1	1	14	
PL60	4028		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 2	FLAT	BS	1	1	12	
PL60	4030		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 15	FIELD DRAIN	BS CORRUGATED MOULDED	1	1	15	
PL60	4033		POTTERY	WHITE		PLATE	B	1	1	5	
PL60	4034		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS	1	1	35	
PL60	4035		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 15	FIELD DRAIN	BS CORRUGATED MOULDED	1	1	16	
PL60	4036		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 15	FIELD DRAIN	BS PROBABLY CORRUGATED AND MOULDED BUT OUTER SURFACE SPALLED	1	1	24	
PL61		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS	1	1	28	

Trench	REFN O	Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Use
PL61		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 3	FLAT	BS	1	1	18	
PL61		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 3	FLAT	BS	1	1	28	
PL61		US	CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 8	BRICK	BS FROGGED	1	1	54	
PL61	3023		POTTERY	IPS		JAR	BS ID?	1	1	6	
PL61	3032		POTTERY	DERBS		JAR	BS	1	1	18	
PL61	4038		CBM	ASBESTOS		FLAT	BS RED	1	1	3	
PL61	4039		POTTERY	BLUE		TPOT	BS MOULDED WITH RELIEF DEC	1	1	7	
PL61	4040		POTTERY	LONS		JAR	B FLAT BASE	1	1	15	
PL69	3001		POTTERY	IAFLINT	A WHITE ANG FLINT <1.0MM	JAR	BS	1	1	10	
PL69	3002		POTTERY	LONS		BOT	BS BROWN EXT WASH;SALT GL EXT	1	1	11	
PL69	4001		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 5	FLAT	BS PEGHOLE (UNKNOWN SHAPE)	2	2	21	
PL69	4002		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 1	FLAT	BS	1	1	9	
PL69	4003		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 9	FLAT	BS	1	1	26	
PL69	4004		POTTERY	HARLOW TRANS	FABRIC 2	-	BS	1	1	1	
PL69	4005		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 14	FLAT	BS	1	1	20	
PL69	4006		CBM	PMTIL	FABRIC 5	FLAT	BS	1	1	21	