

Assessment of the Finds from Panshill Wood, Boarstall, Buckinghamshire (PWB 1-6)

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Archaeological investigation at Panshill Wood, Boarstall, Buckinghamshire, undertaken by Network Archaeology Ltd produced a small quantity of finds, ranging in date from the later medieval period to the 19th century. The finds consist of fired clay, ceramic building material, and pottery.

Description

Ceramic Building Material

Fragments of flat roof tile and brick were recovered from context 001. All have a similar fabric, containing abundant subangular quartz, sparse red sandstone fragments and sparse light-coloured clay lenses and angular fragments. The fabric of the brick is slightly coarser in texture with more clay and sandstone inclusions than the flat tiles. All are oxidised throughout. The flat tiles include one with a circular peghole, which from its position is probably one of two. The brick fragment is featureless, having lost all surfaces.

Such brick and tile probably dates to the later medieval or earlier post-medieval periods and a date-range of 14th to 17th centuries is likely.

Fired Clay

Numerous small fragments of fired clay were recovered from contexts 002 and 003. Those from context 003 are smaller than those from context 002 but are otherwise comparable.

At x20 magnification, it can be seen that the fragments occur in three distinct fabrics and vary in the intensity of heat-alteration. The majority have few visible inclusions other than irregular fragments of iron-rich material up to 2.0mm across and sparse rootlet voids. A few have a similar fabric with moderate rounded quartz grains up to 0.5mm across and individual pieces have the standard fabric but were heated to a lower temperature or a higher temperature. All the pieces were oxidised throughout and most have a blocky shape with no signs of human working. A small number of pieces might have been humanly worked but even these are not definite.

It is likely that this material results from a process such as the accidental burning of subsoil or ploughsoil, or the burning of a tree bole, accidentally including subsoil clinging on to the

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tree roots. The material is undatable and the appearance of the fabric suggests that they might be derived from a Jurassic clay, either weathered in situ or redeposited as boulder clay.

Pottery

Two fragments of medieval pottery were recovered from context 001. They come from a wheelthrown jug of Oxford Fabric AM (Brill/Boarstall ware). They are both abraded but show no signs of being waste. The vessel probably dates to the later medieval period but might be slightly earlier (i.e. later 13th to mid 14th century).

Two fragments of post-medieval pottery, possibly manufactured at Brill, were present. Their form indicates a later 16th to 18th century date whilst a kiln of 17th-century date was excavated at Brill.

Two fragments of transfer-printed ware plates, of 19th century date, were recovered from context 001.

Assessment

The burnt clay fragments from contexts 002 and 003 cannot be reliably linked to human activity and certainly cannot be dated.

The finds from context 001 range in date from the later medieval period to the 19th century. The size and condition of the material suggests that it probably derives from activity on or close to the site rather than being a manuring scatter.

No further work is recommended and the finds should be retained for potential future study.

Appendix 1

Context	class	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part	Description	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition
003	FCLAY	FCLAY	FINE-TEXTURED;SPARSE BLACK FE		BS		22	1	73	
002	FCLAY	FCLAY	FINE-TEXTURED;SPARSE BLACK FE		BS	BLOCKY FRAGS NO SIGN OF HUMAN WORKING	20	1	276	HIGH-FIRED (MOSTLY)
002	POTTERY	FCLAY	ORGANIC VOIDS		BS	BLOCKY FRAGS NO SIGN OF HUMAN WORKING	1	1	11	
002	POTTERY	FCLAY	FINE-TEXTURED;SPARSE BLACK FE;M RQ <0.5MM		BS	ONE FLAT FACE?	1	1	11	
002	POTTERY	FCLAY	FINE-TEXTURED;SPARSE BLACK FE		BS	BLOCKY FRAG	1	1	4	VITRIFIED
002	POTTERY	FCLAY	FINE-TEXTURED;SPARSE BLACK FE		BS	ROUGHLY CUBIC,POSSIBLY HUMANLY WORKED	1	1	23	LOW-FIRED OXID
001	CBM	MTIL	A SAQ <0.3MM;S RED SST;S LENSES OF LIGHT-COLOURED CLAY	FLAT	BS		6	6	144	
001	CBM	MTIL	A SAQ <0.3MM;S RED SST;S LENSES OF LIGHT-COLOURED CLAY	FLAT	BS	ONE (OF TWO) CIRCULAR PEGHOLES)	1	1	58	
001	CBM	MTIL	A SAQ <0.3MM;S RED SST;M LENSES OF LIGHT-COLOURED CLAY	BRICK	BS		1	1	65	
001	POTTERY	OXAM		JUG	B	FLAT BASE WITH FOOTRING;L14TH/15TH?	2	1	51	ABR
001	POTTERY	PMBRILL		BOWL	R	INT PLAIN GL	1	1	30	
001	POTTERY	PMBRILL		BOWL	R	INT PLAIN GL	1	1	17	
001	POTTERY	TPW		PLATE	BS		2	2	10	

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