

# **Assessment of Finds from Land west of Holly House, 55 Grange Road, West Cowick, East Yorkshire (OSA07 EV08)**

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A small group of pottery production waste was recovered from an archaeological evaluation on land west of Holly House, Grange Road, West Cowick, East Yorkshire, carried out by On-Site Archaeology Ltd.

The material consists of brick and tile, used as kiln furniture, mainly to separate and support glazed vessels, and sherds of waste vessels. The typology of these vessels suggests a later 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> century date. This is considerably later than other production waste from the area, which is dated to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and is interesting in that it is of the Humberware tradition rather than the "Late Humberware" tradition whose products are found mainly with 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>-century factory-made vessels but which is surmised to have begun in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Alternatively, the waste may indeed be of 15<sup>th</sup> century date, in which case the site was producing flowerpots at a remarkably early date.

## **Description**

### **Ceramic Building Material**

A single fragment of brick with a variegated fabric was recovered from context 102. There is no evidence for its use in pottery production and it is presumably structural debris of late medieval or post-medieval date.

Thirty fragments of ceramic building material were recovered from context 104, the fill of pit 105. These finds consist of flat tiles, made in a sanded mould, and bricks. Both types are coated with lead glaze and the flat tiles have the scars where pottery vessels were placed on them, inverted so that glaze has melted and run off the pot onto the tile. The exact manner in which the bricks were used is unclear but they have glaze on their top surfaces and sides so presumably were free-standing in the kiln rather than forming part of the superstructure.

An unusual tile has two edges at approx 60 degrees, both knife-cut (normally flat roof tiles have sanded sides). This tile was therefore produced for a specific, but unknown, function (Fig 1).



*Figure 1*

The brick and flat tiles appear to have been produced from different fabrics. Both contain lenses of lighter-coloured silty clay but these are more common in the bricks, which also appear in the hand to be more silty in texture.

To test whether the bricks and tiles were actually produced from the same clay as the pottery waste, samples of each type were taken for chemical analysis, together with one thin section.

### **Iron**

A nail was recovered from context 102.

### **Pottery**

Context 102 produced three sherds of pottery, two of Humberware (HUM; a beaded jar rim and a strap handle) and one from a Black-glazed Cistercian ware cup (CSTN). None of these sherds have any evidence for being production waste. The Cistercian ware cup has a similar fabric to the Humberware vessels.

Sixty-four sherds of pottery, representing no more than sixty vessels and weighing 2.112Kg were recovered from context 104. All are Humberware (HUM) and all probably production waste. Most of the sherds come from hollow ware vessels of indeterminate form (JUG/JAR) but the most common of the identified forms is the jug (19 sherds, 16 vessels, 793gm). One rim was present, with a pulled spout. Seven handle fragments are present, all from strap handles ranging between 37mm and 57mm wide. Decoration on these handles consists of a single central groove. One handle joins the rim at the top, rather than a few mm below the rim which is the norm in the late medieval period. Decoration consists of cordons (3 sherds) and widely-spaced horizontal grooves (6 sherds).

The next more common form is the pancheon, a large conical bowl form, sometimes provided with a lip. These vessels are thought to have been used for separating cream from milk but probably had several functions. Three flanged rim sherds were present (two vessels) together with 3 body sherds.

Bowls were represented by 4 sherds, two rims and two body sherds.

Pipkins were also represented by 4 sherds, two from handles and one from a foot. The handles include one strap handle and one rod handle.

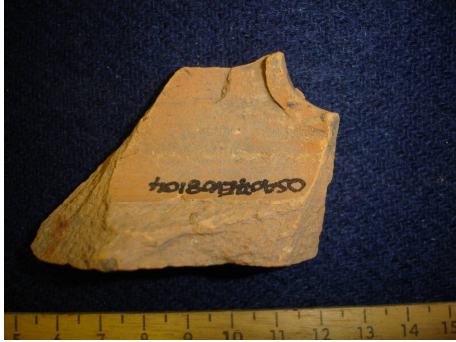


Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



*Figure 6*



*Figure 7*

Three sherds of flower-pots were present (Figs 2-7). These have pre-firing circular holes in the body (Figs 6-7) and just above the base (Figs 2-3 and 4-5). One of these vessels has a bead rim (Fig 6-7) whilst all have splashes or dribbles of glaze but were probably intended to be unglazed. Flowerpots of this type occur mainly in the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.



*Figure 8*



*Figure 9*

A single everted rimmed jar was present (Figs 8-9). There is no sign of glaze. This form is found in the 15<sup>th</sup> to early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries where it has a flat base and internal glaze on the base.



*Figure 10*



*Figure 11*

A single sherd of a chafing dish (Figs 10-11) has a white slip internally and externally under a copper-green glaze. A rectangular hole was knife-cut in the wall. Chafing dishes occur in pottery in England from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards but become much more common in the later 15<sup>th</sup> century. They retained their popularity into the 17<sup>th</sup> century but do not occur after the mid century.

All other sherds are likely to be of one or other of these forms.

Samples of the pottery waste were taken for chemical analysis, to establish whether or not the pottery was made from the same raw materials as the brick and tile, and for comparison with samples of late medieval waste from West Cowick.

## **Assessment**

The Grange Road site has produced a small assemblage of late 15<sup>th</sup> century or later finds from the filling of a linear feature and an assemblage of production waste whose date is discussed below. The most interesting aspect of the production waste is the presence of sherds of several flowerpots. West Cowick is unusual as a pottery production site in that it produced plant holders, large decorated, handled vessels, a vessel form which is otherwise uncommon in late medieval England (Moorhouse 1984). It seems from this site that this speciality continued into the early post-medieval period.

## **Chronology**

The assemblage from context 102 can be dated to the later 15<sup>th</sup> century or later through the presence of the Cistercian ware cup sherd.

It is possible that the waste from context 104 is actually a mixture of material from different production phases, in which case the earliest phase represented is probably 15<sup>th</sup> to early 16<sup>th</sup> century centuries and the latest the later 16<sup>th</sup> to mid 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

If, on the other hand, the waste from context 104 is actually debris from a single production phase then there is a chance that it dates to the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, based on the presence of the chafing dish, although that vessel is similar in form to 16<sup>th</sup>-century French forms. Jugs with strap handles attached at the top of the rim were present in the 12<sup>th</sup> century but then disappear until the post-medieval period, when they also appear on handled jars and chamber pots. Pancheons with flanged rims probably first appear in the late medieval period but are also most common in the later 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The presence of both of these forms probably pushes the date of the production to the late 16<sup>th</sup> century or later whilst the presence of a chafing dish probably dates the activity to the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century or earlier.

The waste can therefore probably be dated to the later 16<sup>th</sup> to mid 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, with a lesser likelihood of dating to the later 15<sup>th</sup> to mid 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## **Retention**

The finds should be retained for future study.

## **Further Study**

To establish whether the Grange Road site was producing tile and brick or merely re-using these materials as kiln furniture, samples of the brick, flat tile and definite pottery waste have been taken for thin section and chemical analyses.

The waste sherds are not sufficiently large to warrant illustration but the sherds could be more precisely described by comparison with larger, better preserved assemblages.

## Bibliography

Moorhouse, S. (1984) "Late Medieval Pottery Plant-Holders from Eastern Yorkshire."

*Medieval Archaeol*, XXVIII , 194-202

## Appendix 1

TSNO	class	Context	Subfabric	Cname	Action	Weight	Form	Description	Part	Nosh	NoV	Condition	Use
	CBM	102	VARIAGATED	MTIL		0	BRICK		BS	1	1		
	POTTERY	102	HUM	CSTN		1	CUP		BS	1	1		
	POTTERY	102		HUM		29	JUG		BS	1	1		
	POTTERY	102		HUM		26	JUG		BS	1	1		
	IRON	102				5	NAIL		BS	1	1		
	POTTERY	104		HUM	PHOTO	22	JAR	EVERTED RIM; NO GLAZE	R	1	1		
	POTTERY	104		HUM		29	JUG/JAR/BOWL	GLAZE INT/EXT	BS	2	2		
	POTTERY	104		HUM		116	PIPKIN	STRAP HANDLE 40 ACROSS WITH CENTRAL GROOVE AND SQUARED END; 90 LONG	H	1	1		
	POTTERY	104		HUM		27	PIPKIN	ROD HANDLE 21 ACROSS	H	1	1		
	POTTERY	104		HUM		12	PIPKIN	POINTED FOOT	FOOT	1	1		
	POTTERY	104		HUM		110	PANC	FLANGED RIM	R;BS	2	1		
	POTTERY	104		HUM		28	PANC	FLANGED RIM	R	1	1		
	POTTERY	104		HUM		63	PANC		BS	3	3		
	POTTERY	104		HUM	PHOTO	42	FLP	HOLE CUT INTO SIDE; SPLASHES OF GLAZE	B	1	1		
	POTTERY	104		HUM		11	JUG/JAR		BS	2	2	UNDERFIRED	

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POTTERY	104	HUM	PHOTO	31	FLP	HOLE CUT INTO SIDE; SPLASHES OF GLAZE	R	1	1	
POTTERY	104	HUM		23	JUG	PULLED SPOUT	R	1	1	
POTTERY	104	HUM		17	JUG/JAR	NO GLAZE	BS	2	2	
POTTERY	104	HUM		8	BOWL		R	1	1	
POTTERY	104	HUM		15	JUG/JAR	NO GLAZE	BS	3	3	UNDERFIRED
POTTERY	104	HUM	PHOTO	30	FLP	HOLE CUT INTO SIDE; SPLASHES OF GLAZE	B	1	1	
POTTERY	104	HUM		95	JUG	WIDE HORIZ GROOVES EXT	BS	2	1	
POTTERY	104	HUM		49	BOWL/PANC		B	1	1	UNDERFIRED
POTTERY	104	HUM		44	BOWL/PANC		BS	1	1	OVERFIRED
POTTERY	104	HUM		53	JAR		R	1	1	FRIED GLAZE
POTTERY	104	HUM		52	JUG	STRAP HANDLE OVER 50 ACROSS	H	1	1	UNDERFIRED
POTTERY	104	HUM		105	JUG	STRAP HANDLE 57 ACROSS WITH CENTRAL GROOVE	H	1	1	UNDERFIRED
POTTERY	104	HUM		42	JUG	STRAP HANDLE 37 ACROSS WITH CENTRAL GROOVE	H	1	1	
POTTERY	104	HUM		91	JUG/JAR		B	1	1	
POTTERY	104	HUM		90	JUG	THICK BASE	B	2	1	

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	POTTERY	104		HUM		54	JUG	STRAP HANDLE 43 ACROSS WITH CENTRAL GROOVE	H	1	1	SECOND; SOME GLAZE OVER BREAK
	POTTERY	104		HUM		17	JUG	CORDON	BS	2	1	
	POTTERY	104		HUM		22	JUG	CORDONS	BS	1	1	
	POTTERY	104		HUM		151	JUG	HORIZ GROOVES EXT	BS	4	4	
	POTTERY	104		HUM		11	JUG	STRAP HANDLE	H	1	1	
V4585	POTTERY	104		HUM	ICPS	62	BOWL		BS	1	1	WASTE; GLAZE OVER BREAK
	POTTERY	104		HUM		208	JUG/JAR		BS	11	11	
	POTTERY	104		HUM		32	JUG	STRAP HANDLE 40 ACROSS WITH CENTRAL GROOVE	H	1	1	
V4594	CBM	104	VARIAGATED	MTIL	ICPS	142	BRICK	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
V4584	POTTERY	104		HUM	ICPS	23	PIPKIN	POINTED FOOT	FOOT	1	1	WASTE; GLAZE OVER BREAK
	CBM	104		MTIL		118	FLAT	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
	CBM	104		MTIL		30	FLAT	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
	CBM	104		MTIL		30	FLAT	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	3	3	REUSED AS KILF

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	CBM	104		MTIL	PHOTO	86	FLAT CUT TO 60 DEGRE	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
	CBM	104		MTIL		71	FLAT		BS	1	1	
	CBM	104		MTIL		24	FLAT	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN INCL GLAZE OVER BREAK	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
V4593	CBM	104	VARIAGATED	MTIL	ICPS	128	BRICK	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
	CBM	104		MTIL		32	FLAT	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN INCL GLAZE OVER BREAK	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
	CBM	104	VARIAGATED	MTIL		67	BRICK	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
	CBM	104	VARIAGATED	MTIL		9	BRICK	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN INCL GLAZE OVER BREAK	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
	CBM	104	VARIAGATED	MTIL		22	BRICK		BS	1	1	
	CBM	104		MTIL		406	BRICK	REDUCED; GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
	CBM	104		MTIL		82	BRICK	REDUCED; GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
	CBM	104		MTIL		5	BRICK	REDUCED FRAGS	BS	2	2	
V4592	CBM	104	VARIAGATED	MTIL	ICPS	235	BRICK	GLAZED IN	BS	1	1	REUSED AS

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ID	Material	Quantity	Category	Sub-Category	Count	Shape	Description	Material	Count	Count	Notes
	CBM	104	MTIL		54	FLAT	POTTERY KILN KILN SCAR OF POT; GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	1	1	KILF REUSED AS KILF
	POTTERY	104	HUM		99	JUG	STRAP HANDLE OVER RIM; 38 ACROSS WITH CENTRAL GROOVE	R/H	1	1	THICK BEIGE DEPOSIT INT
V4583	POTTERY	104	HUM	PHOTO;ICPS;TS	38	BOWL		R	1	1	WASTE; GLAZE OVER BREAK
V4586	POTTERY	104	HUM	ICPS	64	JUG/JAR		BS	1	1	WASTE; GLAZE OVER BREAK
V4587	POTTERY	104	HUM	ICPS	36	JUG/JAR		BS	1	1	WASTE; GLAZE OVER BREAK
V4588	POTTERY	104	HUM	ICPS	73	BOWL		BS	1	1	WASTE; UNDERFIRED; GLAZE OVER BREAK
V4589	CBM	104	MTIL	TS;ICPS	117	FLAT	KILN SCAR OF POT; GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN INCL GLAZE OVER BREAK	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
	CBM	104	MTIL		135	FLAT	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN INCL GLAZE OVER BREAK	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF
V4591	CBM	104	MTIL	ICPS	133	FLAT	KILN SCAR OF POT; GLAZED IN POTTERY	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF

	POTTERY	104		HUM	17	BOWL	KILN	R	1	1	SECOND; SOME GLAZE OVER BREAK	
	CBM	104		MTIL	87	FLAT	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF	
	CBM	104		MTIL	104	FLAT	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN INCL GLAZE OVER BREAK	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF	
	CBM	104		MTIL	49	FLAT	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN INCL GLAZE OVER BREAK	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF	
	CBM	104		MTIL	47	FLAT	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN INCL GLAZE OVER BREAK	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF	
	CBM	104		MTIL	213	FLAT	KILN SCAR OF POT; GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN INCL GLAZE OVER BREAK	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF	
	CBM	104		MTIL	25	FLAT	GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF	
V4590	CBM	104		MTIL	ICPS	106	FLAT	KILN SCAR OF POT; GLAZED IN POTTERY KILN INCL GLAZE OVER BREAK	BS	1	1	REUSED AS KILF

