Assessment of the Pottery from 64 Middle Street South, Driffield, East Yorkshire (OSA08 EV07)

Alan Vince and Kate Steane

An archaeological evaluation at 64 Middle Street South, Driffield, East Yorkshire, was carried out in 2008 by On-Site Archaeology Ltd (Site Code: OSA08 EV07). The finds include a collection of medieval pottery spanning the late 11th to 12th centuries through to the 15th or early 16th centuries together with two post-medieval potsherds and a single fragment of ceramic building material.

Description

Ceramic Building Material

A single fragment of flat roof tile was recovered, from context 135. Flat ceramic roof tiles were introduced to Yorkshire during the 12th century and continued to be produced into the post-medieval period (and sometimes even later).

Pottery

Medieval

One hundred and nine sherds of medieval pottery were recovered. They came from no more than 104 vessels and weigh in total 2.156 Kg (Table 1).

Table 1

cname	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight
BEVO1A	1	1	3
BEVO1B	3	1	42
BEVO2B	6	6	29
BEVOB	10	10	79
DUTR	2	2	16
HUM	40	38	1677
MEDLOC	5	5	92
NGR	1	1	4
REDC	1	1	19
SCAR	1	1	29
STAXT	39	38	526
Grand Total	109	104	2516

The Alan Vince Archaeology Consultancy, 25 West Parade, Lincoln, LN1 1NW
http://www.postex.demon.co.uk/index.html
A copy of this report is archived online at
http://www.avac.uklinux.net/potcat/pdfs/avac2008057.pdf

These sherds range in date from the late 11th to 12th century through to the 15th or early 16th century and for the later periods include some large fragments which could be reconstructed.

Late 11th to Mid 12th century

A single sherd from the base of a handmade jar was recovered from context 108. At x20 magnification, the fabric is seen to contain rounded chalk and angular flint fragments and has a black, carbon-rich core and dark brown surfaces (Fig 1).

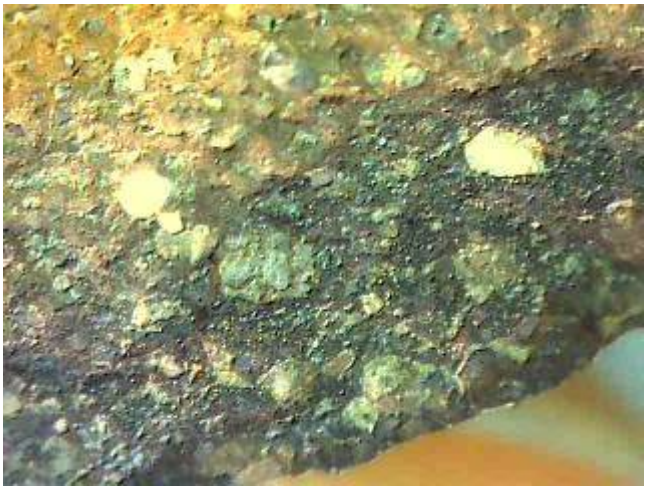

Figure 1

This sherd is clearly related to Beverley Reduced Chalky Ware (Watkins 1991) but lacks the rounded quartz seen in that fabric. It may therefore be a local version of the Beverley-made ware. If so, it is the first example known to the author.

Later 12th to Mid 14th centuries

Sixty-six sherds, representing no more than 63 vessels and weighing 804gm in total, are of types dating between the later 12th and the mid 14th centuries. Most of these are handmade jars of Staxton-type ware. Staxton-type ware was produced at several centres in East Yorkshire and neighbouring counties and a conclusive identification cannot be made by eye. Driffield is about equidistant from the Vale of Pickering production sites at the neighbouring villages of Staxton and Potter Brompton and Beverley, where production of Staxton-type ware has been identified through fabric analysis (Vince 2004).

Twenty sherds come from Beverley Glazed ware jugs. These include one splash-glazed vessel with a calcareous sand temper (BEVO1A), three sherds with a splash glaze and a fine untempered body (BEVO1B) and six with a suspension glaze and untempered body (BEVO2B). In ten examples, there was either no glaze or the glaze had been abraded. All were untempered vessels (BEVOB).

Five sherds came from vessels with quartz sand temper which could not be readily matched with known wares. These may be local products (MEDLOC).

One sherd, from a jar with sooting on the exterior, had a light-firing fabric with a coarse quartz sand temper derived from sandstones (NGR). Similar vessels were produced in West Yorkshire at several sites.

Finally, one sherd from a Scarborough ware jug was present, in context 108. This had a plain glaze and was decorated with iron-rich clay pellets. Scarborough ware was produced in Scarborough itself and where found in datable contexts is of mid 13th to mid 14th century date (SCAR).

Mid 14th to Early 16th centuries

Forty-two sherds of later medieval date were present. Where typological features were present the sherds come from 15th or early 16th-century jugs and jars but it is possible that body sherds of Humberware from the site are of earlier date. The jugs are large vessels with cylindrical necks and a flat-topped, slightly expanded rim and the jars are probably all from square vessels with flat bases and sharply everted rims. No sherds with mid to late 14th century features were present (e.g. unglazed drinking jugs, jugs with copper mottled glaze, sometimes mixed with white slip before application, or vessels with rounded rims), nor were any sherds present with purple overfired glaze present. The latter are mainly found in the 16th century, although earlier examples occur, especially on production sites where they probably occur through the accidental overfiring of vessels.

A single vessel from context 108 is overfired and is either a second or perhaps waste.

Humberware was produced at several centres in the Humber estuary and surrounding areas and production sites are known through waste at West Cowick, York and Holme-upon-Spalding Moor. In addition possible waste has been reported from a site close to Barton-upon-Humber in north Lincolnshire and production in the Beverley area is indicated by fabric analysis. Without analysis it is impossible to say where the Driffield vessels were made. The closest sources and Beverley (21 miles), Holme-upon-Spalding Moor (21 miles) and York (28 miles).

Two sherds of Dutch Red Earthenware (DUTR) vessels were present. Both were probably from two-handled, three-footed cauldrons, although neither had any typological features. These vessels are common on later medieval sites in Yorkshire are were probably imported through Hull.

Post-medieval

Two sherds of Ryedale ware were present, in contexts 102 and 130. This ware was produced in villages around the North Yorkshire Moors, from Osmotherley to the Hambleton Hills, from the later 15th to the 17th centuries. Both sherds are too small to identify the form closely without which only a broad date can be given.

Assessment

The two earliest features excavation on the site were Pits 107 and 115. The former can be broadly dated to the later 12th century or later and the latter is dated to the 15th century or later through the presence of a Humberware jar rim.

Both of these pits were truncated by Pit 113. Three fills in this feature produced pottery, in each case consisting of Humberware (and in one case Dutch Red Earthenware) together with sherds of earlier medieval pottery, often much smaller in size. One of the Humberware sherds was also abraded. The Humberware sherds include three jug rims and three jugs handles, all consistent with a 15th century date. This feature also produced the possible Humberware second.

Gully 134 cut the fill of pit 113 and also contained assemblages of Humberware, including a jar rim.

At the northern end of the site, Pit 107 was cut by a probably ditch, 103, whose fill produced a small assemblage of which the latest sherd was from a Ryedale ware bowl, dating the fill to the later 15th century or later.

The latest feature to produce finds in the northern area was a probable garden feature, 136, which produced medieval pottery which was probably residual.

In the southern part of the evaluation, the earliest features were again two pits, 131 and 143. Pit 131 produced 37 sherds, of which one appears to be from a small thin-walled Ryedale ware cup. However, the remaining sherds are all of later 12th to mid 14th century character, apart from one Beverley Glazed ware sherd which is probably of mid 12th century date, and it is more likely that this is the date of deposition of the fill and that the Ryedale ware is either a mis-identification or an intrusive sherd. Pits 143 produced three sherds, again of later 12th to mid 14th-century date.

Pit 143 was truncated by gully 142, the latest feature in this part of the trench, which produced a featureless sherd of Humberware which might be of any date from the mid 14th to the early 16th century.

The overlying garden soil, 101, produced a collection of medieval pottery identical to that in the underlying deposits and it is likely that this material is derived from the disturbance of those features. The lack of later types might suggest that no manuring of this soil took place during its cultivation.

In summary, the finds from this evaluation indicate activity in the area from the later 11th or early 12th century onwards but no features of this date survive. Similarly, there is a single sherd of Beverley Glazed ware for which a mid 12th century date is likely. The site was certainly occupied between the later 12th and the mid 14th centuries but no close dating is possible and then appears to have been occupied in the 15th century. Because of the relatively discrete periods of activity and the isolated nature of the pits, which intercut but not

to the extent that their contents are completely intermixed, it is possible to use the pottery from this site to illustrate the medieval pottery supply of Driffield. For the late 11th to mid 12th century, the Reduced Chalky ware jar requires further study to determine its source but for the subsequent period it seems that supply was dominated by Beverley. Production is known nearby, at Little Kelk, during this period, but from the surviving wasters it does not seem that any of the Middle Street pottery came from that source. For the 15th century, the source of the Humberware is completely unknown and the three closest sources are all approximately equidistant. Furthermore, the presence of an overfired "second" suggests that there might have been a local source. Since reference material is available for comparison, it would be possible to analyse a sample of this material and determine its source.

Further Work

It is recommended that samples are taken from the Reduced Chalky ware vessel for thin section and chemical analysis, using Inductively-Coupled Plasma Spectroscopy. It is further suggested that two Humberware jars and four Humberware jugs are drawn, and likewise analysed. Only a single thin section would be required, however. The results of this analysis and the illustrations should then be prepared for a short note in a local archaeological journal.

Costing

Task	Unit cost	Cost	VAT
Thin section and chemical analysis of REDC vessel	£52.00 plus VAT	£52.00	£9.10
Illustration of 6 Humberware vessels, plus scanning.	£20.00 plus VAT	£120.00	£21.00
Thin section analysis of Humberware	£26.00 plus VAT	£26.00	£4.55
Chemical analysis of Humberware	£26.00 plus VAT	£156.00	£27.30
Production of note for publication	£26.00 plus VAT	£104.00	£18.20
Total		£458.00	£80.15

Retention

All of the finds were stratified and should be retained for future re-examination. No special storage conditions are required.

Bibliography

Vince, Alan (2004) *Characterisation studies of medieval coarsewares from Wawne, East Yorkshire (OSA02 EX02)*. AVAC Reports 2004/21 Lincoln, Alan Vince Archaeology Consultancy

Watkins, G. (1991) "The Pottery." in P. T. D. Armstrong and D. H. Evans, eds., *Excavations at Lurk Lane Beverley, 1979-82*, Sheffield Excavation Rep 1 J R Collis Publ , Sheffield, 61-103

Appendix 1

Context	class	cname	Form	subfabric	Action	Drawing ID	.Description	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
101	POTTERY	BEVOB	JUG/JAR					BS	1	1	7		
101	POTTERY	HUM	JUG					R	1	1	15		
101	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	1	1	8		SOOTED EXT
101	POTTERY	HUM	JUG/JAR					BS	1	1	6		
101	POTTERY	DUTR	CAULD					BS	1	1	12		SOOTED EXT
101	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	1	1	2		
101	POTTERY	BEVOB	JUG/JAR					BS	1	1	12		WHITE DEP INT
101	POTTERY	BEVOB	JAR					BS	1	1	6		SOOTED EXT; BLACK DEP INT
101	POTTERY	BEVOB	JAR					BS	1	1	5		SOOTED EXT
101	POTTERY	BEVOB	JUG	WHITE SLIP				BS	1	1	5		
101	POTTERY	ZDATE					L14+	BS	1	1	0		
101	POTTERY	MEDLOC	JUG					BS	1	1	42		
102	POTTERY	HUM	JUG/JAR					BS	1	1	2		WHITE DEP INT
102	POTTERY	RYEDALE	BOWL				FLANGED	BS	1	1	4		
102	POTTERY	BEVO2B	JUG/JAR					BS	1	1	16		
102	POTTERY	HUM	JUG/JAR					BS	1	1	25		
102	POTTERY	HUM	JUG	WHITE SLIP			SQUASHED ROD HANDLE 27 ACROSS, 20 DEEP; 4 GROOVES	H	1	1	62		
102	POTTERY	ZDATE					L15+	BS	1	1	0		
106	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	1	1	10		SOOTED EXT
106	POTTERY	MEDLOC	JAR					BS	1	1	38	ABRA	WHITE DEP INT
106	POTTERY	ZDATE					L12+	BS	1	1	0		

Context	class	cname	Form	subfabric	Action	Drawing ID	.Description	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
106	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	2	2	13		
108	POTTERY	HUM	JUG/JAR					BS	4	4	65		
108	POTTERY	REDC	JAR		TS; ICPS			BS	1	1	19		
108	POTTERY	SCAR	JUG				LINES VERT IRON RICH PELLETS	BS	1	1	29		
108	POTTERY	HUM	JUG	WHITE SLIP	DR; TS; ICPS	4		R	1	1	30		
108	POTTERY	HUM	JUG		DR; ICPS	5	STRAP HANDLE 36 ACROSS	H	1	1	84	OVERFIRED	
108	POTTERY	HUM	JUG				STRAP HANDLE 49 ACROSS, 5 GROOVES	H	1	1	97		
108	POTTERY	HUM	JUG		DR; ICPS	3		R/H	1	1	220		
108	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					B;BS	2	2	22		SOOTED EXT
108	POTTERY	DUTR	CAULD					BS	1	1	4		
108	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	1	1	7		
108	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					R	1	1	65		
108	POTTERY	ZDATE					L14+	BS	1	1	0		
110	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	2	2	13		
110	POTTERY	HUM	JUG		DR; ICPS	2	STRAP HANDLE 54 ACROSS, 4 GROOVES	R/H	2	1	450		
110	POTTERY	HUM	JUG/JAR					BS	1	1	22	ABRA	
110	POTTERY	HUM	JUG/JAR					BS	4	4	51		
110	POTTERY	ZDATE					L14+	BS	1	1	0		
112	POTTERY	HUM	JUG/JAR					BS	2	1	9		WHITE DEP INT
112	POTTERY	BEVO2B	JUG					BS	1	1	2		
112	POTTERY	ZDATE					L14+	BS	1	1	0		
114	POTTERY	HUM	JAR		DR; ICPS	1		R	1	1	132		
114	POTTERY	HUM	JUG/JAR					BS	4	4	78		

Context	class	cname	Form	subfabric	Action	Drawing ID	.Description	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
114	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	1	1	1		SOOTED EXT
114	POTTERY	ZDATE					L12+	BS	1	1	0		
114	POTTERY	ZDATE					L14+	BS	1	1	0		
125	POTTERY	ZDATE					L12+	BS	1	1	0		
125	POTTERY	BEVO1A	JUG				WIDE HORIZ GROOVES	BS	1	1	3		
125	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	1	1	8		WHITE DEP INT
125	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	4	4	47		SOOTED EXT
125	POTTERY	MEDLOC	JUG					BS	1	1	5		
125	POTTERY	BEVO2B	JUG				COMBED DEC	BS	1	1	2		
126	POTTERY	ZDATE					L12+	BS	1	1	0		
126	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	1	1	2		
126	POTTERY	BEVOB	JUG/JAR					BS	1	1	3		WHITE DEP INT
126	POTTERY	BEVO1B	JUG	WHITE SLIP				BS	3	1	42		
127	POTTERY	ZDATE					L12+	BS	1	1	0		
127	POTTERY	BEVOB	JUG				THUMBED BASE	B	1	1	11		
127	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	7	7	62		SOOTED EXT
127	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					R	1	1	12		SOOTED EXT
127	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					R	1	1	9		
127	POTTERY	BEVOB	JAR					B	1	1	19		SOOTED EXT
127	POTTERY	BEVO2B	JUG					BS	1	1	4	ABRA	
127	POTTERY	BEVO2B	JUG					BS	1	1	1		
127	POTTERY	BEVOB	JUG/JAR					BS	2	2	11		
130	POTTERY	ZDATE					L15+ (BASED ON 2 SHERDS. THE REST ARE L12+)	BS	1	1	0		
130	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	2	2	11		SOOTED EXT

Context	class	cname	Form	subfabric	Action	Drawing ID	.Description	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
130	POTTERY	BEVO2B	JUG					BS	1	1	4		
130	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	2	2	24		SOOTED EXT; BACK DEP INT
130	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					B	1	1	26		SOOTED EXT
130	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					R	1	1	17		
130	POTTERY	MEDLOC	JUG					BS	1	1	1		
130	POTTERY	RYEDALE	CUP					BS	1	1	1		
132	POTTERY	HUM	JUG/JAR					BS	8	8	150		
132	POTTERY	HUM	JAR		DR; ICPS	6		R	1	1	108		SLIGHT SOOTING UNDER RIM
132	POTTERY	ZDATE					L14+	BS	1	1	0		
132	POTTERY	MEDLOC	JUG					BS	1	1	6		
132	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					BS	3	3	34		
133	POTTERY	HUM	JUG/JAR					BS	1	1	19		
133	POTTERY	HUM	JUG				PART HANDLE JOIN	BS	1	1	21		
133	POTTERY	HUM	JUG					BS	1	1	16	ABRA	WHITE DEP INT
133	POTTERY	ZDATE					L14+	BS	1	1	0		
135	CBM	MTIL	FLAT				17 THICK	BS	1	1	275		
135	POTTERY	ZDATE					M12+	BS	1	1	0		
135	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					R	1	1	75		SOOTED EXT
139	POTTERY	HUM	JUG/JAR					BS	1	1	15		
139	POTTERY	ZDATE					L14+	BS	1	1	0		
141	POTTERY	NGR	JAR					BS	1	1	4		SOOTED EXT
141	POTTERY	ZDATE					L12+	BS	1	1	0		
141	POTTERY	STAXT	JAR					R	2	1	58		SOOTED EXT; BLACK DEP INT