Assessment of the Finds from Pasture Lane, Hovingham, North Yorkshire (OSA08 EX02)

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A collection of finds from an archaeological excavation at Pasture Lane, Hovingham, North Yorkshire undertaken by On-Site Archaeology Ltd was submitted to the authors for identification and assessment. The finds range in date from the prehistoric period to the early modern period.

Description

Finds of ceramic building material (Table 1 CBM); copper alloy (Table 1 COPP); Iron; glass (Table 1 PMGL) and pottery were identified and a catalogue prepared (Appendix 1).

Table 1

class	Sum of Nosh	Sum of NoV	Sum of Weight		
CBM	5	5	1105		
COPP	1	1	12		
IRON	1	1	128		
PMGL	4	4	10		
POTTERY	119	99	1573		
Grand Total	130	110	2828		

Ceramic Building Material

Five fragments of ceramic building material were submitted. Two were identified as being of Roman date, two of medieval (or later) date and one was too small to identify.

Roman

One fragment of *tegula*, 32mm thick, and one fragment identified as Roman brick, 30mm thick, were present. The latter cannot be from either a *tegula* or *imbrex* tile since it has no curvature nor flanges although the thickness can be matched with *tegulae*.

Medieval to post-medieval

Two fragments of flat roof tile of medieval or post-medieval date were identified. One has an 8mm square peg hole. Flat roof tiles were produced on one of the Rievaulx Abbey granges, Wethercotes, and it is possible that this is the source of these pieces, although their fabrics have not been compared (Stopford 2005; Vince 2006a).

Copper Alloy

A copper alloy object was submitted and requires an x-ray before it can be identified and assessed.

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Glass

Post-medieval

A fragment of a dark green glass bottle was recovered from context 3029. It could be dated between the mid 17th and mid 18th-century on the basis of its weathering and shape.

A fragment of window glass from the same context has a light blue tinge, a feature of late 17th to mid 18th-century glass.

Early Modern

A fragment of clear glass moulded bottle from context 1011 is dated to the modern period.

A fragment of dark green glass bottle from context 3037 comes from a tall vessel datable to the late 18th century or later.

Iron

An iron object from context 3031 requires an x-ray before it can be identified and assessed.

Pottery

Prehistoric?

Eleven fragments of pottery, representing no more than 5 vessels and weighing only 22gm in total might date to the prehistoric period. Of these, only one was large enough to identify. This is a fragment of erratic-tempered ware jar from context 3021. This fabric contains large angular fragments of rock, which on analysis usually prove to be either fine-grained basic igneous rocks from England north of the Tees estuary or SE Scotland, or coarser acid igneous rocks of Lake District or Scottish origin. The fabric is one of the most common found in East Yorkshire in the pre-Roman Iron Age and has been thought to have continued in use into the century of Roman occupation. However, recent work at Melton, on the north bank of the Humber, suggests that the ware had ceased to be used by c.70AD, although this could be a local development related to the foundation of the fort at Brough and the ferry crossing of the Humber.

Roman

Four fragments of Roman pottery were identified. Two of these were from greyware jars (coded here G1, using the York Archaeological Trust system, although the identification as York products has not been tested, Monaghan 1997. A fragment of possible mortaria was identified (coded M3) and a small scrap of samian ware, not identifiable either to source area or form, completes the assemblage.

Medieval

Ninety-one sherds of medieval pottery were identified. These represent no more than 79 vessels and weigh in total 1.351 Kg.

The earliest type present is York Gritty ware, produced in West Yorkshire from the mid 11th to the mid 13th centuries (coded YG). Only a single example was present and nineteen sherds which on first glance appeared to be of this ware were found on closer examination to be of North Yorkshire origin (coded YORK, subfabric LEP1). Thin section and chemical analysis of examples of this type from Easingwold suggests that they are early products of the North Yorkshire whiteware pottery industry, but their precise date is not known (Vince 2006b). Most likely, they have a slightly later starting date but are otherwise contemporary with the West Yorkshire industry.

Thirty-two sherds are of types which first appeared in the later 12th century and were then current in the 13th century (and sometimes into the 14th century). The most common are of York Glazed ware (Jennings 1992, coded YORK). These include 11 jug sherds, 6 jars and one which could be either form. These jars are distinguished from the earlier type by a finer sand tempering and sometimes the present of glaze spots. Wasters of York Glazed ware have recently been identified at Byland Abbey, confirming that this is a North Yorkshire whiteware (Vince 2007).

The next most common type is Staxton-type ware (STAX). Several production centres for this ware have now been identified, using thin section and chemical analysis, but the closest of these to Hovingham is Staxton itself, 24 miles to the east. Excavations at Wharram Percy have suggested that Staxton ware continued to be produced into the 14th century or later. However, in the authors' experience it is rare to find this ware in association with Humberware and therefore probably it ceased to be used before the mid 14th century.

Two sherds of Northern Gritty ware, defined as having inclusions derived from the Millstone Grit in an off-white to light brown matrix (NGR) came from wheelthrown jars which cannot be closely dated between the late 12th and the mid 14th centuries (Vince and Young 2007).

Later medieval wares present were Brandsby-type ware and Tees Valley ware, both probably ranging in date from the mid/late 13th century to the 15th century.

Brandsby-type ware was produced in several villages in the Hambleton Hills utilising Middle Jurassic light-firing clays. The most common form found at Hovingham was the jug (22 sherds from no more than 16 vessels). None of the vessels were decorated, apart from grooves on the shoulder of a sherd from context 3021. Jars were the next most common form (11 sherds from no more than 10 vessels). Two of these had glaze, spots in one case and an internal coating in the other. One sherd came from a bowl, an unusual form in this ware and worthy of illustration.

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The Tees Valley ware sherd is from a jug with roller-stamped decoration. This ware is common on sites in the Tees valley, such as Hartlepool and Yarm, but rare outside that area and is probably evidence for the passing of long-distance traders through Hovingham.

Post-medieval

Tensherds of post-medieval pottery were identified. Six of these came from Ryedale ware bowls. This ware was produced in the same general area as Brandsby-type ware, as well as further afield (e.g. Osmotherley) and exploited similar clays to those used by the Brandsby-type potters. The seventh sherd comes from a Cistercian ware vessel. The only known sources for this ware north of the Humber are in West Yorkshire (e.g. Potovens, Brears 1965; Brears 1967, and Wrenthorpe, Moorhouse and Roberts 1992) but no characterisation studies have yet been carried out on vessels from consumer sites. Cistercian ware is now thought to have been current in the later 15th and throughout the 16th century, following which the range of vessels expanded and are termed Blackware. Three sherds come from a single white stoneware tankard with slipped surfaces. This form had a short period of use in the second decade of the 18th century (c.1710-1720).

Early Modern

Three sherds of early modern pottery, dating to the late 18th century or later, were identified. They consist of a Creamware bowl (CREA); a porcelain cup of European (i.e. not far eastern) origin (ENPO) and a transfer-printed ware plate (TPW).

Assessment

Table 2 lists to terminus post quem of each context which produced pottery or other datable finds.

Table 2

Context	TPQ	Context	TPQ	Context	TPQ
1009	Late 12 th C	2000	Late 13 th C	1026	Late 18 th C
1013	Late 12 th C	2008	Late 13 th C	3037	Late 18 th C
1017	Late 12 th C	2060	Late 13 th C	3039	Late 18 th C
2000	Roman	3001	Late 13 th C	3029	Mid 17 th C
2018	Late 12 th C	3021	Late 13 th C	2028	Prehistoric
2052	Late 12 th C	3043	Late 13 th C		or later
2058	Late 12 th C	1000	Late 15 th C	3002	Prehistoric or later
2060	Mid 12 th C	1015	Late 15 th C	3035	Prehistoric
3004	Late 12 th C	2046	Late 15 th C	0000	or later
3022	Late 12 th C	3019	Late 15 th C	2044	Roman
3041	Late 12 th C	3059	Late 15 th C	3031	Roman
1034	Late 13 th C	1024	Late 18 th C		

Area 1

Eighteen finds were recovered from Trench 1. Of these, five came from the fill of Ditch 1035, dating its backfill to the late 13th century or later. The upper fill of Pit 1018 also produced a sherd of medieval pottery, dating its backfill to the later 12th century or later. The remaining finds either came from the fills of postholes or were unstratified. The postholes could be divided into those sealed by ploughsoil and those cutting it. The earlier group produced finds which gave TPQs of medieval (1010, 1014) and post-medieval (1016) whilst three of the later group produced finds of early modern date (1012, 1025, 1027).

The finds suggest that occupation took place in Trench 1 in the later 12th through to the early post-medieval period, after which it was ploughed and then a farm outbuilding with timber postholes was built on the site.

Area 2

Fifty-four finds were recovered from Area 2. They came from a series of postholes, two features and two ditches.

Two of the postholes produced sherds of prehistoric or Roman date but these are interpreted by the excavator as being residual and the date of these features is thought to be similar to the others, one of which, 2009, produced two medieval potsherds, of which one is of mid 13th century or later date.

Features 2019 and 2059 both produced small groups of medieval pottery dating their fills to the later 12th century or later.

Ditch 2052 (equated with 1035 in Area 1) also produced a sherd of pottery dating to the late 12th century or later. Ditch 2047/2061 cut across the backfilled ditch 2052 and produced an assemblage of pottery which was mainly of medieval date but included a sherd of Cistercian ware, dating the final fill of the ditch to the later 15th century or later.

Area 2 therefore provides some evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity but all the excavated features appear to be of medieval date, covering the same time span as those in Area 1.

Area 3

Twenty-four finds were recovered from Area 3.

One of these was a sherd of prehistoric pottery from the fill of posthole 3036. A second posthole, 3032, produced a sherd of Roman pottery and two metal finds awaiting further study was sealed by ploughsoil. Similar finds in Area 2 were interpreted as being residual in medieval features.

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Three finds come from ditch 3005, equated with ditches 1035 and 2052 in Areas 1 and 2 respectively. One is definitely a Roman potsherd, another is undatable and the third is an early North Yorkshire Whteware vessel (YORK LEP1). The lack of finds from this section may indicate that it was filled quite early, and the finds support a 12th century or later date.

A possible corn-dryer, 3024. was located on the west side of the ditch. Finds from the lower fill indicate a later 12th-century or later date whilst the upper fill includes a sherd of mid 13th century or later date.

Pit 3020, located on the eastern side of the ditch. Its fill produced sherds of later medieval pottery together with two sherds of Ryedale ware, dating the fill to the later 15th century or later. A second pit, 3052, produced a single sherd of Brandsby-type ware from its upper fill, dating the backfill to the mid 13th century or later (but possibly much later).

The remaining finds from Area 3 come from features which cut through ploughsoil or are otherwise identified as being of post-medieval or modern date (Table 3).

Table 3

Feature TPQ

ANIMAL BURIAL 3030 Mid 17th C

ANIMAL BURIAL 3040 Late 18th C

GARDEN FEATURE 3038 Early 18th C

GARDEN FEATURE 3042 Residual pot

PIT 3060 Late 15th century or later

Stratigraphic and chronological discussion

The archaeological evidence from each of the three areas excavated gives a similar story. There is a hint of prehistoric and Roman activity but unless some of the post-holes which produced these finds are of that date, which seems unlikely, then the finds are all residual and may indicate settlement in the general area but not necessarily on the site itself.

The medieval activity on the site can probably be dated from the mid to late 12th century although most of the excavated features cannot have been backfilled until the late 12th century at the earliest and most of these presumably date to the early to mid 13th century. Activity seems to have continued on the site through the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries but at that point the site seems to have been abandoned and ploughed. Assuming that the Ryedale ware found in Pit 3060 is residual, then this phase may have continued into the early 18th century when various features associated with the modern farm and predecessors were constructed.

Further Work

The copper alloy and iron finds should be x-rayed and re-submitted for identification and assessment. The Brandsby-type ware bowl should be drawn and the Tees Valley ware roller-

stamped sherd should be drawn and photographed. No other work is recommended at this stage.

Retention

The finds from stratified deposits should all be retained for potential future study. The unstratified finds include the only example of a tegula from the site and the Tees Valley ware sherd, both of which should be retained. The remaining sherds are all of types represented in the stratified collection and could be discarded.

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Appendix 1

Action	Context	class	Description	Cname	Subfabric	Form	Part	Nosh	NoV	Weight	Condition	Use
	1000	POTTERY		RYEDALE		BOWL	R	1	1	47		
	1000	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	BS	2	2	6		SOOTED EXT
	1009	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	BS	1	1	3		SOOTED EXT
	1009	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	BS	1	1	8		SOOTED EXT; BLACK DEP INT
	1011	PMGL	MODERN MOULDED BOTTLE	PMGL	CLEAR	BOTTLE	BS	1	1	1		
	1013	POTTERY		MISC		JAR	BS	1	1	4		
	1013	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	BS	1	1	3		
	1015	POTTERY		RYEDALE		BOWL	BS	1	1	20		
	1017	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	BS	1	1	6		SOOTED EXT
	1024	POTTERY		ENPO		CUP	BS	1	1	2		
	1026	POTTERY		TPW		PLATE	BS	1	1	1		
	1034	POTTERY		G1		JAR	BS	1	1	3		
	1034	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	BS	1	1	4	BURNT OVER BREAK	
	1034	POTTERY		STAXT		JAR	BS	1	1	8		SOOTED EXT; BLACK DEP INT
	1034	POTTERY		BRAN		JAR	BS	1	1	10		SOOTED EXT

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	1034	POTTERY		NGR		JAR	BS	2	2	2		
	2000	POTTERY	GLAZE EXT	BRAN		JUG	В	1	1	65		WHITE DEP INT
РНОТО	2000	POTTERY	RST	TVW		JUG	BS	1	1	1		
	2000	POTTERY		BRAN		JAR	BS	1	1	7		SOOTED EXT
	2000	POTTERY	HANDLE/BODY JOIN	BRAN		JUG	BS	1	1	44		
	2000	CBM		RTIL		TEG	BS	1	1	133		
	2000	POTTERY		STAXT		JAR	В	1	1	7		
	2000	POTTERY		BRAN		JAR	В	1	1	43		SOOTED EXT
	2000	POTTERY		BRAN		JUG	BS	1	1	10	SOIL DEP	
	2000	POTTERY		BRAN		JAR	BS	1	1	127		SOOTED EXT
	2000	POTTERY		BRAN		JUG	BS	2	2	21		
	2000	POTTERY	DRIBBLE OF GLAZE INT	BRAN		JAR	BS	2	1	6		SOOTED EXT
	2008	POTTERY		BRAN		JUG	BS	3	1	40		
	2008	POTTERY		STAXT		JAR	BS	2	2	4		
	2018	POTTERY	SPOT OF GLAZE EXT	YORK	LEP 1	JAR	В	1	1	4		SOOTED EXT
	2028	POTTERY	ONE WITH A CONCAVE CURVE, REST BLOBS	PREH		?	BS	7	1	4	ABRA	
	2044	POTTERY		S0		?	BS	1	1	1	ABRA	
	2046	POTTERY		CSTN		CUP	BS	1	1	15		

	2046	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	R	1	1	6	SOOT UNDER RIM
	2046	POTTERY	GLAZE INT/EXT SHOULDER	BRAN		JUG	BS	1	1	14	
	2046	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	BS	1	1	10	
DR	2046	POTTERY		BRAN		BOWL	R	1	1	11	
	2046	POTTERY		STAXT		JAR	BS	1	1	2	SOOTED EXT
	2046	POTTERY		STAXT		JAR	BS	1	1	18	
	2052	СВМ		CBM		CBM	BS	1	1	1	
	2052	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	R	1	1	6	SOOTED EXT
	2052	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	В	1	1	17	SOOTED EXT
	2052	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	BS	1	1	36	SOOTED EXT
	2058	POTTERY	GLAZE EXT	YORK		JUG	BS	1	1	2	
	2058	POTTERY		STAXT		JAR	BS	1	1	7	WHITE DEP INT
	2058	POTTERY		YG		JAR	BS	1	1	1	
	2060	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	В	1	1	52	SOOTED EXT
	2060	POTTERY	GLAZED INT AND ON RIM INT	BRAN		JAR	R	1	1	52	SOOTED ON RIM EXT
	2060	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	R	1	1	13	
	2060	POTTERY	THUMBED BASE	YORK		JUG	В	2	1	52	SOOTED EXT
	2060	POTTERY		BRAN		JAR	BS	1	1	5	SOOTED EXT

2060	СВМ		MTIL		FLAT	BS	1	1	387	
2060	POTTERY		YORK		JAR	BS	2	1	7	SOOTED EXT
2060	POTTERY	GLAZED EXT	YORK		JUG	BS	1	1	3	
2060	СВМ		RTIL		BRICK	BS	1	1	386	
2060	CBM	SQUARE PEG HOLE 8 BY 8	MTIL		FLAT	BS	1	1	198	
2060	POTTERY	ROD HANDLE 36 ACROSS; 7 SHALLOW GROOVES ALONG	YORK		JUG	Н	1	1	152	
3001	POTTERY		BRAN		JUG	R	1	1	29	
3002	POTTERY		PREH		JAR	BS	1	1	1	
3004	POTTERY		G1		JAR	BS	1	1	6	
3004	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	R	1	1	5	SOOTED EXT AND ON RIM
3019	POTTERY	HORIZ CORDON; GLAZED EXT	YORK		JUG	BS	1	1	8	
3019	POTTERY	UNGLAZED	BRAN		JUG	R	1	1	10	
3019	POTTERY	UNGLAZED	BRAN		JUG/JAR	BS	4	4	36	
3019	POTTERY		BRAN		JAR	BS	1	1	3	BLACK DEP INT
3019	POTTERY	GLAZED EXT	BRAN		JUG	BS	6	5	17	
3019	POTTERY	GLAZED INT	YORK		JAR	BS	1	1	8	SOOTED EXT
3019	POTTERY	GLAZED INT	RYEDALE		BOWL	BS	1	1	19	

3019	POTTERY	GLAZED INT; EXT	RYEDALE		BOWL	BS	1	1	7		
3019	POTTERY		STAXT		JAR	BS	2	2	7		SOOTED EXT
3019	POTTERY		STAXT		JAR	BS	1	1	6		SOOTED EXT; BLACK DEP INT
3019	POTTERY		STAXT		JAR	В	1	1	4		SOOTED EXT
3019	POTTERY		YORK		JAR	BS	1	1	5		SOOTED EXT
3021	POTTERY		BRAN		JUG	BS	4	1	16		
3021	POTTERY		IAERR		JAR	BS	1	1	18		BLACK DEP INT
3021	POTTERY		YORK		JUG	BS	1	1	8		
3021	POTTERY	SPOT GLAZE INT	YORK		JAR	BS	1	1	6		
3021	POTTERY		YORK		JAR	BS	1	1	7		SOOTED EXT
3021	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	В	1	1	7		SOOTED EXT
3021	POTTERY	GROOVED SHOULDER	BRAN		JUG	BS	1	1	15	BONFIRE SOOTED	
3021	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	BS	1	1	5		SOOTED EXT
3022	POTTERY	THUMBED EXT; GREEN GLAZE EXT	YORK		JUG	B;BS	4	1	211	BONFIRE SOOTING	
3022	POTTERY		STAXT		JAR	BS	1	1	15		SOOTED EXT
3029	PMGL		PMGL	DKGR	SG/ONION	BS	1	1	4	DECAY	
3029	PMGL		PMGL	LTBL	WIND	BS	1	1	1		

	3029	POTTERY		YORK		JUG/JAR	BS	1	1	11		
	3031	POTTERY		M3?		MORT?	BS	1	1	20	ABRA	GRITS WORN AWAY
X-RAY NEEDED	3031	COPP		COPP			R	1	1	12		
X-RAY NEEDED	3031	IRON		IRON			BS	1	1	128		
	3035	POTTERY		PREH		JAR	BS	1	1	1		
	3037	POTTERY	HORIZ GROVES AT BASE	SWSG	SLIPPED	TANK	B;BS	3	1	34		
	3037	PMGL		PMGL	DKGR	TALL	BS	1	1	4		
	3037	POTTERY		BRAN		JAR	BS	1	1	8		SOOTED EXT
	3039	POTTERY		CREA		BOWL	BS	1	1	2		
	3039	POTTERY		RYEDALE		BOWL	BS	1	1	9		
	3041	POTTERY		YORK	LEP 1	JAR	BS	1	1	6		SOOTED EXT
	3043	POTTERY		BRAN		JAR	BS	1	1	3		
	3059	POTTERY		RYEDALE		BOWL	BS	1	1	8		