

The pottery from Hunt's Hill, Landuse report

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Author: Lyn Blackmore



Museum of London Archaeology
© **Museum of London Archaeology**
Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf
Road, London N1 7ED
tel 0207 410 2200 fax 0207 410 2201 email
mola@mola.org.uk



Landuse report

Period 5 Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age (c 1000–300BC)

Waterhole S105

Two intrusive sherds of medieval pottery and one of post-medieval pottery were found in this feature. The former comprise two sherds of shell-tempered ware dating to the 12th century. The latter, from fill [2830], is from a dish in an oxidised fabric that resembles Surrey-Hampshire border redware, but could be from Essex. Also present is a small sherd of possible early Saxon sand-tempered pottery ([2700], fabric ESANDO?).

Curvilinear post fast structure S114

Part of a small rounded post fast structure c 3.40m in diameter was made up of five undated and unnumbered postholes. The associated pottery includes for sherds from a chaff-tempered Saxon jar dating to the Saxon period and six post-medieval sherds dates of mixed date, including

Period 7 Early Iron Age (c 600–300BC)

Open enclosure S125

Two intrusive sherds of medieval pottery were found in a fill of the large obscurely aligned ditched enclosure S125 (grid D42, Gp 3093), while three tiny fragments of 18th-century pottery were found in grid square E95 (Gp 4110).

Unspecified post-fast structure S126

(Described as structure 4304 by the excavator)

One tiny rimsherd of what appears to be medieval pottery (fabric EMSHX) was possibly found in a posthole associated with this structure (Gp 4248), but the sherd is unmarked and the bag did not have a label. Even if the location is correct, the sherd much be intrusive.

Waterhole S130

As well as LBA/EIA pottery, this feature contained a Bronze Age flint core or hammer, and flint flake, and one sherd of what seems to be late Saxon or 12th-century pottery (Gp 2433, grid square D68).

Period 9 Late Iron Age and the Roman occupation c 100BC–AD 400

Well S205

This feature (gp 5459, not positively identified on the digitised plan) contained a Dressel 1 amphora, a small sherd of reduced sandy ware of indeterminate date, and one sherd that could be Iron Age or Saxon in date. This is in a fine sandy fabric and contains moderate organic inclusions (fabric CHSF); it could be either residual or intrusive.

Period 10 Roman c AD40-AD400

Ditches S136

Three of the many ditches or field boundaries contain possible Saxon pottery. The most definite find is from Area A, where three sherds of sandy chaff-tempered ware (CHFS) were recovered from the surface of ditch [270]. These are from a shouldered or rounded jar with inverted upright rim, a form typical of the early Saxon period. The same deposit also contained two small sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery, indicating probable disturbance in the 19th century. The ditches in the northern part of the site overlie much of the earlier archaeology, but the pottery is of uncertain date. It contains abundant fine sand and was recorded as fabric ESANA but could be of Iron Age date. Ditch [6179] contained a single abraded base sherd of Iron Age or Saxon date, while ditch [6597] contained the rim of a bowl or dish.

Waterhole or sump S132

Cut into the western ditch of the LIA enclosure S131 after it had filled up was a deep curvilinear cut c 4.78m in diameter by c 2.88m deep with steep sides and a much smaller diameter base of c 1m (GP 5265). Associated with this feature were sherds from two or three Saxon vessels (total 47g). Those from fill [[5114] comprise 14 sherds of chaff-tempered ware (CHAF), and three of fine sand-and-chaff-tempered ware with sparse rounded quartz grains up to 1mm across (CHSF); another sherd in this fabric, possibly from the same vessel, was found in fill [5269].

A (hollow?) tree trunk (?) was found in the ditch (?S131), possibly to hold back the sides and aid in water extraction and lots of twigs.

Well S140

The fill ([5125] of this large well contained 12 sherds from three different chaff-tempered vessels (54g) which are either intrusive or suggest that the feature is later than 2nd- or 3rd-century in date. The largest is from a jar with a flat base 11m thick (CHAF). Five very small sherds are in a similar fabric with sparse to moderate rounded quartz grains p to 1mm across (CHAFRQ), while six small sherds are in a fine sand-and-chaff-tempered ware.

Period 11 Anglo-Saxon c AD 400–AD1066

Cemetery S144

A row of eight possible graves were recorded in the north of the site, although no bone was found within them. However, a number of these contained an iron blade like object in a similar position, and one produced a red and white cube-shaped bead. A single sherd from a jar with everted rim in a sandy fabric was found in grave [5419] (A<P1>, fabric ESANAO) while a small sherd, possibly of ESANB was found in grave [5421]. Three tiny sherds of post-medieval pottery were found in grave [5282]; they either indicate disturbance after 1840, or were introduced at the time of excavation.

Pit S183

This circular pit (GP 5145) was situated immediately next to cemetery, and the fact that it contained a complete small jar (damaged in antiquity) suggests that it is contemporary with it. The vessel is in a fine sand-and-chaff-tempered ware and has a slack-shouldered profile with upright rim (A<P2>, diameter 84mm, height 86mm). It is too small for a cremation and it is unclear whether it was a grave good or part of some other ritual.

Ridge and furrow S145

No post-Roman pottery was found in the probable truncated plough furrows (GPs 167 1033 1136 4315 4496 4546) but the some of the boundary or drainage ditches surrounding the fields may be of Early Saxon or early Middle Saxon date (c 550-750). Ditch [1007] contained six small sherds of chaff- and sand-and-chaff-tempered ware (CHAF, CHSF), and one abraded fragment of uncertain date. This is a sand-tempered ware with abundant rounded quartz grains (ESANC or prehistoric). Ditch [4108] contained two sherds of sandy ware with organic inclusions (CHSF/ESANAO) while ditch [4238] contained two sherds of CHSF. These features and [4496] also contained small amounts of residual Roman and prehistoric pottery.

Waterhole S181

The large pit [4568] in the area of the ridge and furrow S145 contained eight sherds of Early to early Middle Saxon pottery that probably date to between c 450-750. Six, all in sand-and-chaff-tempered ware (CHSF), were from fill [4567], including part of a slack-shouldered jar or bowl A and a base that may be from another vessel. The one sherd from [4566] is probably from A, but the small sherd from [4566], also CHSF, may be from a different pot.

Ditch S179

The excavated length of ditch [4363] contains some residual prehistoric pot and two sherds, one from a thick-walled flat-based jar, in sand-tempered wares that were recorded as Saxon (ESANBO, in ESANCO) but which could be prehistoric. The feature should, however, be Saxon or later as it cuts across two of the furrows of S145.

Period 12 Later medieval c AD 1066–present day

Early Norman Hall House B131

(Excavator's structure no. 3142)

A large amount of pottery was associated with the foundations of this structure. The earliest finds are one sherd of Iron Age/Saxon pottery found towards the eastern end of the north wall ([3095]) and four sherds from the base of a Saxon chaff-tempered jar found in a posthole that to the south-east of the main part of the building ([3101]).

In addition there are 302 sherds of 11th- to 12th-century pottery (129 vessels, 1490g). These were found in postholes around most of the perimeter of the building, mostly as one or two sherds, but occasionally in larger groups. One of the main clusters are at the southwest corner of the main hall, in posthole [2960] (31 sherds from eight vessels, including four rims, two with thumbed decoration). Nearby, and just to the west of the building, 29 sherds (four vessels) were found in posthole [2714], while posthole [2732] contained 42 sherds from four vessels, including a large jar or cauldron with thumbed rim (A<P3>, EMSHX). The fourth main cluster is in the large posthole [2724] at the south-east corner of the porch/lean to, where 45 sherds from 16 vessels were found, including A<P00> and A<P00>. In addition, two pits on the southern side of the building contained 11 and 12 sherds each ([3396] and [3394] respectively).

Only nine sherds from the various postholes are sand-tempered (eight of EMSX, one of ?SOWX), and the majority are shell-tempered. Of these, four sherds from three jars and a dish could be in LSSX, while fabrics EMSSX and EMSHX are almost equally represented, with c 120 sherds each. Fabric EMSSX (118 sherds are from up to 49 vessels) includes rims from three jars, including A<P00> ([2744]). Fabric EMSHX/EMSHXS (121 sherds from up to 44 vessels) includes six rims, three with thumbed decoration. One of these is of flaring everted form (A<P00>); the others are too small to be sure of the original profile, but one has thumbing on top of the rim, while on the other it is on the inner edge. Fabric SSWX is less common, with only 45 sherds from up to 19 vessels, although all three variants are present. These include rims from two necked jars in SSWX1 and SSWX3 (A<P00>, A<P00>) and part of a possible cauldron with thumbed rim (A<P00>). Also present are a few sherds of sandy oxidised ware, early Surrey ware and tiny crumbs that are too small to be identified. Sherds from what is probably the same pot were found in [2723] and [2743, and possibly in [2932]; these are in EMSX, but the fabric is verging towards SOWX; the rim from [2743] is typical of the 11th century.

Dating the building is difficult, but although the different wares generally have a long date range, it seems likely that the bulk of the material dates to between c 1050-1150. Looking at the overall distribution, the northern part of the hall, which might be taken as the original building, contained 96 sherds (318g), of which only ten are of SSW. The structural features forming the southern part of the building yielded 102 sherds; these include slightly more SSWX, but are otherwise the same in character. It is not possible, therefore, to distinguish different building phases from the pottery alone. It would seem that the postholes contain general rubbish that was in the area when the building was demolished, although this would suggest that the property was abandoned in the 13th century

Building B136

The only medieval pottery associated with this post-built structure was found in pit [2536]. This, however, comprises one of the more complete vessels from the site, a small shell-tempered ware cooking pot with squat profile and everted rim (A<P4>); the fabric was recorded as SSWX but the vessel is handmade and should be earlier than the London equivalent; on the basis of form parallels in London this pot probably dates to c 1100-1150.

Rectangular Building B146

This building is dated to c 1150-1225 by ten sherds of sand-and-tempered pottery (SSWX) found in posthole/beamslot [2385]. These derive from four vessels and include one rim sherd.

Pit S164

Fill [255] of this pit, situated c 41m southeast of B131, but within the enclosure ditch S147, contained 13 sherds (91g) of early medieval pottery. Most are shell-tempered (fabric EMSHX), but one is sand-tempered (EMSX) while another could be from Surrey (fabric ESUR).

Pit S174

The large rounded pit [2799] immediately south of the hall contained only one sherd of medieval pottery. This is in a sand-and-shell-tempered fabric (SSWX) and probably dates to the 12th century.

Pit S175

Ten small sherds of 11th- to 12th-century pottery were found in the fill of this large rounded pit. One is sand-tempered (fabric EMSX), but most are shell-tempered (fabrics LSSX, EMSHXS).

Pit S176

This large rounded pit, some 9m to the east of B131, contained the numerous rims, bas and body sherds from a shell-tempered cooking pot with everted rim (A<P5>, fabric LSSX) and the rim of a large wheel-made lid in a semi-reduced sandy ware A<P6>, fabric EMSX).

Ditched enclosure S147

Post-Roman pottery was found in two parts of the enclosure ditch that may have been associated with B131 (ten sherds 72g). Fill [1009] contained one sherd of early medieval sandy ware (fabric EMSX) and one of 19th-century majolica ware. Fill [2577] contained one sherd of EMSX, five sheds of sand-and-shell-tempered ware (SSWX) and two sherds from green-glazed jug. The character of the glaze suggests that this may be an early post-medieval find, but if not it should date to the 13th century.

Road or track way R100

A total of 45 sherds of early medieval pottery were found in the ditches associated with this road (219g). All but one of these are from ditch [2067], which contained a range of shell-tempered wares. The most notable piece is a large jar with a distinctive deep everted rim with cabled decoration around the rim edge (A<P7>, EMSHX), another sherd of which was found in a posthole associated with building B131. Ditch [2427] contained a single sherd of Rhenish red-painted ware, one of the very few imports from the site.

The pottery from [2067] was originally dated to 1100-1175, but could be a little earlier, perhaps 1050-1150.

Field system S146

Three small sherds of fine redware pottery were found in ditch [6599]. It is not impossible that these are Roman sherds, but they appear to be Essex post-medieval wares dating to after c 1580/1600.

Field systems S148

A large amount of pottery was recovered from the various field boundary and drainage ditches, mainly in the southern part of the site. Plotting the distribution of the finds was not possible, and so the following comments are broadly by period.

Eight sherds of possible Saxon pottery were recovered from seven features; six of these are in area D: [2079], [2162], [2435], [2437], [2457], [2483], and one in area E ([4194]). In the case of [2079] and [4194] no other pottery was found, but the other features all contained small amounts of medieval pottery.

Medieval pottery was recovered from 18 features; most contained less than five sherds, but five contained over ten sherds. The pottery is generally homogenous in character and it is hard to see any real variation in the different groups. Within area D the largest group is from [2359], which contained 27 sherds from six vessels, mainly 11th- to 12th-century in date. Contexts [2162] and [2437] each contained 14 sherds. The former mainly contained fabric SSWX (seven vessels plus one possible) while the latter contained sherds from three vessels in EMSX, EMSHX and possible SSWX1 (handmade).

The largest cluster was in area E, where [4050] contained 91 sherds from 15 vessels. This appears to be one of the latest groups, comprising mainly fabric SSWX with a grog-tempered fabric, an Essex coarseware cooking pot (A<P8>), possible medieval Harlow ware and part of a green-glazed jug in a fine sandy oxidised ware (A<P9>).

A small part of the field system(s) may date from the later Saxon/Norman period, but most appear to derive from the later medieval/post-medieval. There are undoubtedly numerous separate phases of activity here.

GPs 1003 2067 2070 2079 2162 2345 2349 2359 2427 2345 2435 2437 2441 2457 2484 2540 2566 2568 2578 2427 2652 2685 2933 3093 3095 3137 3141 3148 3178 4048 4050 4113 4194 (which also contained a late Mesolithic or early Neolithic worked flint)

Ditches without dating include: GPs 1005 1007 1011 1013 1075 1274 2001 2008 2010 2014 2016 2072 2088 2100 2103 2115 2117 2164 2177 2208 2220 2245 2353 2361 2472 2508 2538 2542 2564 2571 2573 2580 2582 2584 2586 2589 2593 2603 2620 2646 2648 2676 3045 3051 3592 3600 4003 (which contained a Bronze Age flint core) 4009 4013 4060 4066 (which contained a late Neolithic or early Bronze Age worked flint) 4068 4211 4213 4217

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