

# The pottery from Manor Farm, Upminster

Site code: UP-MF83

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# **Landuse report**

## **Period 2 Natural**

Twelve sherds of intrusive post-Roman pottery were recovered from the natural [2], of which three are Early Saxon, the remainder dating to the 19th century. The Saxon sherds from [2] are in coarse sandstone-tempered ware (ESSTC) and sandy chaff-tempered ware (CHSF), the latter from the shoulder/neck. A single body sherd of bone-tempered ware found at the interface of [2] and the topsoil [1]. The post-medieval fabrics comprise post-medieval redwares, English stoneware, English porcelain and refined white earthenware.

## **Period 5 Early to mid Roman**

Three tiny sherds of post-medieval pottery (3g) were found during the cleaning of pit [60], presumably at the surface and derived from a later deposit. The fabrics comprise early post-medieval redware, refined white earthenware and transfer-printed ware with brown decoration, the latter dating this activity to after 1810.

## **Period 7 Indeterminate Roman**

Four small sherds of post-medieval pottery (22g) were found in pit [53]. They comprise sherds from a post-medieval redware flower pot, a cup and plate in refined white earthenware and a green transfer-printed jug, the latter dating the disturbance of the pit to after 1825.

## **Period 8 Early and early Middle Saxon**

Three small sherds of Saxon pottery (27g) were recovered from three different features. One, from external dump [21], is in fabric ESSTC, while another, from ditch [24] is in ESSTD. The third, from ditch [175], is a small abraded sherd of chaff-tempered ware.

## **Period 9 Post-medieval**

The largest group, comprising 29 sherds from up to 26 vessels (200g) was found in the topsoil, [1], of which seven are of residual Early Saxon wares. These comprise four sherds of ESSTC, one with mixed sandstone (ESTM), one bone-tempered (ESBO) and one in a sandy fabric with occasional larger quartz inclusions (ESANQ/ESSTC). Three sherds of German stoneware from Siegburg, Cologne and Westerwald are of 16th-/17th-century date, while the remainder date to the 19th

century. Refined white earthenware and transfer-printed wares are the most common types, with a few sherds of creamware, English stoneware, English porcelain and Sunderland ware. It is likely that these finds represent manuring of the fields. One sherd of refined white earthenware was found in drainage ditch [9].

# The pottery – specialist report

## Saxon fabrics and forms

Seven fabrics were identified, of which the majority are sandstone-tempered. Recent thin section and chemical analysis of such wares (by Alan Vince) has defined two main fabric groups in the London area, both of which have a characteristic sparkle to the surfaces. Both types are represented here. The first, represented by six sherds (26g)b from contexts [1], [2] and [21], contains large angular large inclusions of coarse-grained sandstone that is mainly composed of quartz and minor feldspar grains up to 1.5mm (and in some cases up to 4mm) across. In most of the sherds from other sites that have been analysed this sandstone is derived from the Lower Carboniferous strata of Derbyshire and further north, where it forms the Millstone Grit. A number of fabrics are represented in this group. Five sherds from have a dense fine silty matrix, one with relatively sparse large quartz grits ([1]), four more abundantly tempered with some grits up to 2mm across ([1], [2] [21]). The sherd from [2] is partly reduced and some of the quartz grits appear grey; one sherd from [1] and that from [2] may contain igneous inclusions - check).

Possibly belonging to this group are two other sherds. One, from [1] (B050060) has a sandy ?brickearth matrix also contains sparse large quartz grits up to 2mm across. This was recorded as ESANQ, but should perhaps be ESSTC. The other, from [1] (also area B) appears to have a fine calcareous matrix with abundant fine voids where the calcareous content has leached out. The inclusions comprise abundant angular quartz (0.25mm up to 1mm across) and sparse larger inclusion up to 2mm across. This sherd could be of prehistoric date.

A second type, represented by one sherd from [24], contains abundant fine-grained sugary sandstone of uncertain origin and would be recorded as ESSTD but for the presence of a few large angular quartz inclusions that could belong to the Millstone grit category. This fabric could, therefore, be a coarse variant of ESSTM (mixed sandstone). Another sherd of this type was found in [1]; it differs from the above in the it is less heavily tempered and contains moderate rounded iron-stained quartz sand, mostly less than 0.5mm across, but up to 1mm.

In addition there is a coarse sandy ware that may also contain some sandstone (ESANQ). The other fabrics comprise two sherds of bone-tempered ware (ESBO, a sandy variant), and two that contain organic matter. Both of the former have a fine silty fabric typical of Essex wares; one (from [1]) contains sparse quartz sand, while the other, from [1]/[2] has more abundant quartz sand. One of the chaff-tempered wares has an inclusion-free matrix ([175], while the other contains abundant very fine sand ([2]).

All the sherds are from jars; one is from the shoulder (CHSF), and one is probably from the base angle (ESSTD?); the remainder are body sherds. One sherd of ESSTC from [21] is coarse-slipped, while one of ESBO ([1]) has a fingernail impression; the sherd is too small to know if it was fully rusticated.

## **Post-medieval fabrics and forms**

To insert

## **Discussion**

See thematic texts

## **Revised research aims**

1. Is there more Saxon pottery in the unexamined prehistoric material?
2. What was the extent of the Saxon activity?
3. What other sites have been found to the east of the Lea that have comparable material, other than Lessa Sports Ground?

## **Method statements**

1. Selection of sherds for TS and chemical analysis. **0.25 day**
2. Scientific analysis: 4 samples at £22 per sample = c.£100 allowing for price increases
3. Comparative research into Essex finds: **2.5 days** including travelling
4. Preparation of pottery report, including fabric descriptions. **1 day**
5. Discussion of the finds in the regional context **0.5 day**
6. Editorial. **0.5 day**

## **Bibliography**

See combined bibliography

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