

Appendix 5: Flint Report

St Catherine's Excavation, Lincoln, Lincolnshire SCEL 07

Lithic Materials: Catalogue

Report by Jim Rylatt – December 2007

1.0 Introduction

This report concerns three pieces of worked flint recovered during an archaeological excavation at St Catherine's, Lincoln. These artefacts reflect an extended sequence of prehistoric activity: one, possibly two, having been manufactured during the early Neolithic, while the third is late Neolithic or early Bronze Age in date.

2.0 Method of study

The lithic artefacts were physically examined in order to create an archive catalogue. Their attributes were noted in order to determine their place in the reduction sequence, describe observable characteristics of the lithic technology utilised and provide an assessment of its functional potential. The catalogue also records the presence of patination, cortex and whether the piece has been burnt. The piece has been weighed and metrical data is recorded if it is a complete flake, tool or core. Selected artefacts have been examined with a x3 hand-lens to determine whether there is any evidence of localised modification that could be indicative of use.

3.0 Catalogue

Context	Type	Dimensions	Description
122	blade-like flake	- 1.5g	Distal fragment of blade or blade-like flake, with feathered termination; dorsal scars indicate 3 blade-like removals from opposed platforms; small area of thin abraded cortex (<10%); some chipping of margin, probably due to residual nature of piece; greyish-brown translucent flint (poss.) Meso (prob.) E.Neo
182	flake	22x34x4 1.5g	Tertiary hard hammer flake, relatively gracile with flat platform, pronounced bulb and feathered termination; dorsal scar of similar removal from same platform & lateral edge has scar of removal from oblique platform; some damage to margins; greyish-brown translucent flint L.Neo/EBA
192 S.F. 24	flake	46x34x13 24.3g	Thick hard hammer flake, with flat platform, pronounced bulb & feathered termination; dorsal scars of 4 or 5 flakes removed from same platform (previous removal had small pronounced negative bulb & stepped termination) & regular trimming of platform edge – also scar or 1 earlier removal from oblique platform; 1 lateral edge is cortical (c. 15% of surface), cortex thin & abraded; burnt after flaking, with granular structure, pot-lids detached & disintegration of margin; greyish-brown trans flint Neo/EBA

NB: measurements are only given for complete flakes, tools and pieces - the first figure relates to the maximum length, measured perpendicular to the striking platform; the second to maximum breadth, measured at a right angle to the length; the third to maximum thickness.

4.0 Comments

All three pieces of flint were residual artefacts recovered from later contexts. The blade-like flake fragment (122) is potentially the earliest in date. Its fragmentary condition prevents the ascription of a firm date, and thus it may have been manufactured during the Mesolithic, although the available indicators are suggestive of an early Neolithic industry. The large burnt flake (192) has many of the attributes of flakes produced during the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age, such as a broad butt and large bulb. However, the overall form of the piece and the relationships between the prior removals are comparable to the thick hard hammer flakes that were favoured as blanks for scrapers in the early Neolithic; an inclusive Neolithic/early Bronze Age date has therefore been assigned. The smaller flake, (182), is of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date.

Each artefact represents a snapshot of what is now known to be an extended sequence of prehistoric activity at St Catherine's in Lincoln. A recent excavation on the same street recovered 468 pieces of struck flint and seven fragments of fire cracked pebble from deposits at the base of the archaeological sequence (Rylatt forthcoming). This material included both early and late Mesolithic microliths and, as such, represents the first instance that early Mesolithic activity has been identified within the City of Lincoln. The largest component of the assemblage results from an early Neolithic presence at the site (c 4000-3300 BC). There was also relatively small-scale late Neolithic to early Bronze Age activity.

5.0 References

Rylatt, J. forthcoming St Catherine's, Lincoln, Lincolnshire (LISC 06). Lithic Materials: Catalogue and Assessment. (unpublished report for Lindsey Archaeological Services).