

## **Brightwell BFRLMF18**

### **Ceramic Building Material Report**

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#### **Introduction**

A total of 19 fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) weighing 1064g was recovered by hand excavation from 15 contexts. The ceramic building material can be divided into Roman and medieval - post-medieval forms. Almost all the tile was found in ditch fills apart from a tiny scrap in a post hole and a fragment in a subrectangular pit or ditch segment.

All the material is fragmentary with no complete dimensions other than thickness. The mean fragment weight of 49g is low, but abrasion is variable. The Roman material is fresh and unabraded, suggesting rapid deposition following disuse, whereas the medieval tile has suffered greater abrasion.

#### **Methodology**

The assemblage has been fully recorded on an Excel spreadsheet in accordance with guidelines set out by the Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group (ACBMG 2007). The record includes quantification, and details of fabric type, form, surface finish, diagnostic features, markings and evidence of use/reuse (mortar, burning etc). The terminology for Roman tile follows Brodrigg (1987); coding for markings, tegula flanges, etc. follows that established by OA for the recording of CBM and tegula cutaway types are linked to those classified by Warry (2006).

Fabrics were characterised with the aid of x20 hand lens. Medieval fabrics were assigned to the Oxford tile fabric series based on comparison with examples held by Oxford Archaeology. An internal site fabric series was assigned for Roman material.

#### **Roman CBM**

The Roman tile included the most common forms of tegula, imbrex and brick and was made in a variety of orange-red sandy fabrics containing varying quantities and grades of quartz sand. The fabrics were distinguished as:

- fabric A: coarse quartz sand and scattered small white chalk/limestone grits 1-2mm
- fabric B: medium-coarse quartz sand and red iron oxide grits up to 2mm
- fabric C: hard fired, moderate density of medium-coarse white/clear quartz sand
- fabric D: hard fine sandy micaceous clay
- fabric G: high density of coarse quartz sand c 1mm and rare small red iron oxide grit

Tegula, made in fabrics B, C and D, was the most common form recovered (4 fragments, 464g). They measured 20-24mm thick and two lower corner fragments had both flange and lower cutaway surviving. The flanges included rounded and rectangular profiles, measuring 23 and 28mm wide and 48 and 52mm high. The cutaways were both of the same D16 type, which Warry (2006) suggests is a late form dating from mid-3rd to 4th century.

A single fragment of imbrex (31g) was made in fabric D. It measured 17mm thick and was only slightly curved suggesting a fairly angular profile.

A fragment of thick tile made in fabric G and measuring c 37mm thick is probably a fragment of brick.

No markings such as signature marks or imprints were found.

No evidence of re-use was found except for burning on one small scrap. Abrasion is light or absent suggesting the tile was incorporated relatively quickly into deposits following disuse and was not subsequently disturbed or reworked to any great extent.

### **Medieval - Post-medieval CBM**

This material consisted entirely of flat roof tile apart from one broken fragment of post-medieval brick. The tile probably all derived from standard rectangular peg tile, though only two pieces had actual evidence of peg holes. Surfaces and edges had a fairly rough finish usually with a coating of medium-coarse moulding sand over the base and edges. They measured 13-17mm thick with most towards the upper part of the range. The two cylindrical peg holes measured 15mm in diameter and one had a halo of thickened clay 33mm in diameter encircling the base. They were centred 30 and 38mm from the upper edge and 60mm from the side. One had a finger tip depression from handling on the upper surface. They were made in Oxford fabric IIIB, an orange red coarse sandy fabric, and IVA/B/C an orange sandy fabric characterised by cream marl streaks and pellets and red ferruginous grits. Fabric IIIB was in use during the 13th-15th centuries and may have been produced in the Brill/Boarstall area, where there is evidence for floor tile production in this fabric. The group IV fabrics are slightly later in date from the 14th to 16th century and are probably related to production in the south-east of Oxfordshire in the Nettlebed area or Penn, in the neighbouring area of Buckinghamshire where floor tiles were produced in the 14th century.

The medieval - early post-medieval tile was probably incorporated into deposits as a result of agricultural activity.

### **Bibliography**

ACBMG 2007 *Ceramic building material, minimum standards for recovery, curation, analysis and publication*

Brodribb, G, 1987 *Roman brick and tile*, Alan Sutton Gloucester

Warry, P, 2006 *Tegulae manufacture, typology and use in Roman Britain* BAR British Series 417