Evaluation of biological remains from excavations at Britannia car park, York (site code: YBC00)

by

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Summary

A single sediment sample from deposits revealed by excavations at Britannia car park, York, was submitted for an evaluation of its bioarchaeological potential.

Small quantities of plant and vertebrate remains were recovered from the sample. These were of extremely limited interpretative value but did indicate the potential to recover biological remains from deposits in this area.

No further work on the current sample is warranted and any remaining sediment may be discarded (unless it is to be sieved for artefact recovery).

KEYWORDS: Britannia car park, York; St Leonard’s Leper Hospital; evaluation; medieval; charred plant remains; plant remains; shell; vertebrate remains

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25 January 2001
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Introduction

An archaeological evaluation excavation was carried out by Field Archaeology Specialists at Britannia car park, York revealing two medieval boundary ditches (F1 and F8, possibly associated with the St Leonard’s Leper Hospital) and a later brick culvert (F4, possibly associated with the 18th century inn).

A single sediment sample (‘GBA’/‘BS’ sensu Dobney et al. 1992) was recovered from the deposits. Dated artefacts recovered from the deposits (pot sherds and tile) were all of medieval date.

The sample was submitted to the EAU for an evaluation of its bioarchaeological potential.

Methods

Sediment sample

The sediment sample was inspected in the laboratory and its lithology recorded using a standard pro forma. The sample was processed following the procedures of Kenward et al. (1980; 1986).

Results

Archaeological information, provided by the excavator, is presented in square brackets. The sample number has been created for EAU internal record keeping purposes and is derived from the context number.

Discussion and statement of potential

The sample does not warrant further study though it clearly shows that deposits in this area may well yield small, but potentially...
useful, quantities of biological remains (particularly of charred plant and bone).

In the event of further excavation, examination of more material from the area may offer evidence for fuel consumption and use of raw materials.

**Recommendations**

No further work is necessary on the present sample, though the possibility of recovering interpretatively useful assemblages of biological remains from similar deposits should be borne in mind when planning future interventions. Additionally, deeper deposits may well have some waterlogged preservation.

**Retention and disposal**

The remaining sediment from the current sample may be discarded unless it is to be sieved for artefact recovery.

**Archive**

All material is currently stored in the Environmental Archaeology Unit, University of York, along with paper and electronic records pertaining to the work described here.

**Acknowledgements**

The authors are grateful to Justin Garner-Lahire of Field Archaeology Specialists for providing the material and the archaeological information, and to English Heritage for allowing AH to contribute to this report.

**References**

