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**MESOLITHIC OCCUPATION AND LATER
PREHISTORIC ACTIVITY AT HILLBOROUGH, NEAR
RECULVER**

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Mesolithic Occupation and later prehistoric activity at Hillborough, near Reculver

Barry John Bishop with Malcolm Lyne

ABSTRACT

A desk-based assessment following proposals to redevelop land at the Hillborough Caravan Park, Reculver Road, Reculver (NGR: TR 2064 6800) led to archaeological field evaluation consisting of fifty 20m long trenches across the site. These revealed archaeological features and flint scatters and, accordingly, two open area excavations were carried out. A significant assemblage of struck flint in mostly pristine condition was recovered from a 'relict' soil horizon. Typology indicates that it dates from the Early to Middle Mesolithic period and may possibly have 'Horsham' industry affinities. Two ditches and two pits contained relatively large pottery assemblages comprising both Middle Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury and Late Bronze Age types. Iron Age activity was represented by a series of narrow trenches, post holes and stake holes producing some Late Iron Age pottery. Large quantities of burnt daub suggested the presence of former structural features.

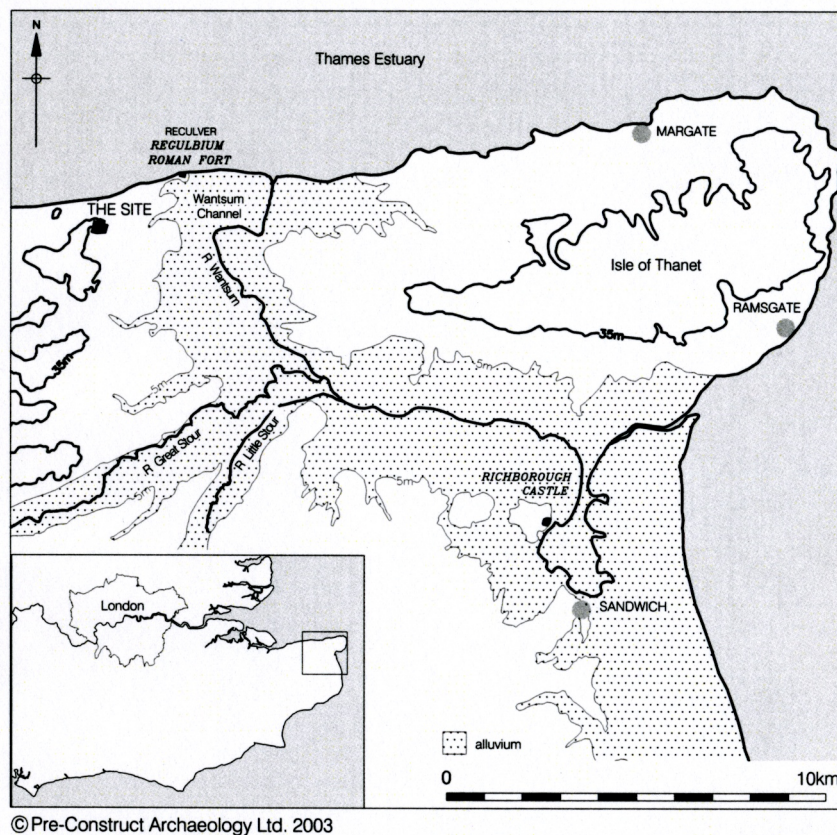


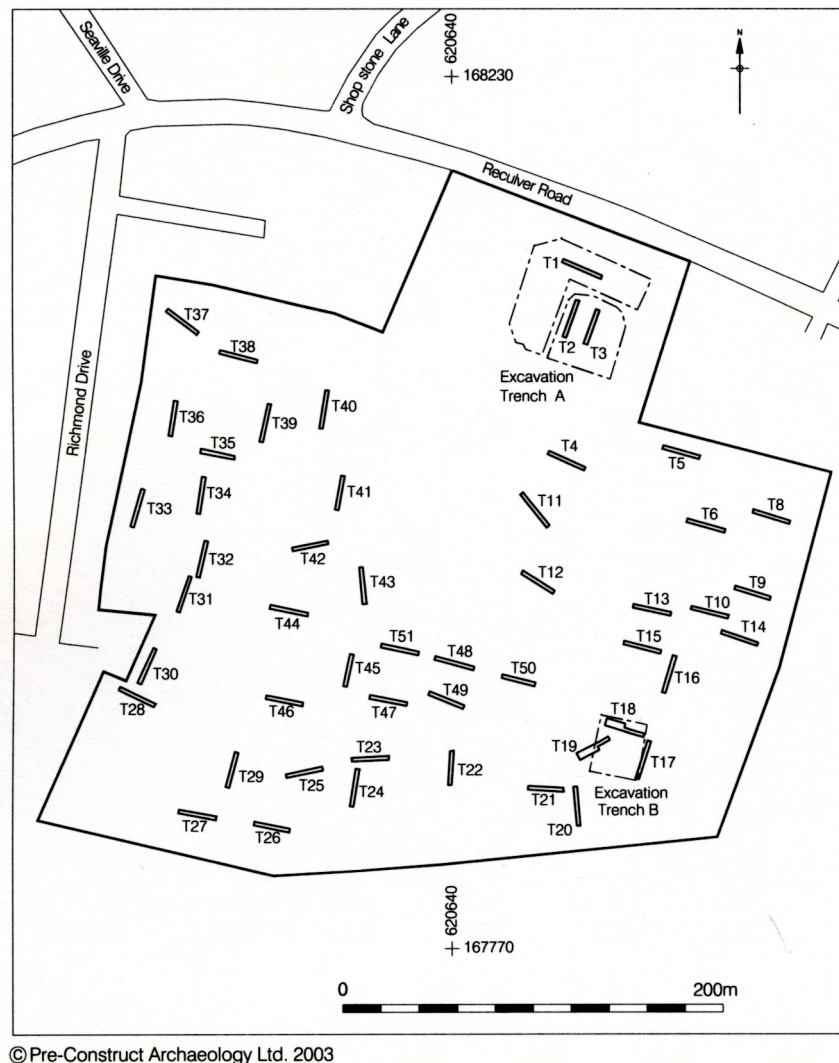
Figure 1

INTRODUCTION

Following proposals to redevelop land at the Hillborough Caravan Park, Reculver Road, Reculver for housing (NGR: TR 2064 6800, See Fig. 1), and in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (DoE 1990), a Desk Based Assessment for the site was commissioned (Chadwick 1998). The findings of this, and on the advice of Richard Cross, Archaeological advisor to Canterbury City Council, led to an archaeological field evaluation being conducted, consisting of the excavation of fifty 20m long trenches across the site (Fig. 2). These revealed the presence of archaeological features and a scatter of struck flint in the north and further features in the southeast of the site. Accordingly, two open area excavations, measuring c.3500m² and c.1000m² respectively, were undertaken, focussing on the two areas of archaeological interest. The evaluation was conducted during January 2000 and the excavation undertaken between the 3rd January and 7th February 2001. All work was commissioned by Redrow Homes (South-East) Ltd., and conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeology under the Supervision of Kevin Wooldridge and Project Management of Gary

Brown. The fieldwork was monitored by Richard Cross on behalf of the planning authority with Paul Chadwick of CgMs Consulting acting as Archaeological Consultant for Redrow Homes (South-East) Ltd.

The evaluation and excavation were allocated the site code HCP 00 and local accession/archive number 1409. All records and finds from the fieldwork will be deposited with Canterbury City Museums.



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Figure 2. Trench location

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The site is located on the north Kent coast, at the end of a promontory of relatively high ground (the Blean Hills or Uplands) on the western side of the Wantsum valley. The present coastline is located less than 1km to the north and the Stour valley some 6km to the south (Fig 1). Immediately to the northwest and to the southeast of the site are two minor valleys, leading down into the Wantsum valley. The northern valley has now been partially truncated by coastal erosion.

The geology of the site consists of Eocene London Clay, in places overlain with thin and discontinuous deposits of small gravel pebbles, presumably representing remnants of Quaternary Terrace. Immediately to the east of the site the Wantsum valley has exposed earlier Palaeocene Thanet Beds and on the eastern side of this valley the land rises up to the Chalk of the Isle of Thanet.

Although recent construction and landscaping works had affected the surface topography of the site, consideration of the geology would indicate that it is located on a terrace of relatively flat ground with the highest levels on the London Clay recorded towards the northwest corner of the site at just under 35m OD, it then gently sloped down to the north, south and east, where around the perimeter of the site levels were recorded at between 32.5m OD and 33m OD.

The excavation of the southeastern area revealed the features identified during the evaluation to consist of naturally formed but undated rainwater run-off channels eroded in to the surface of the London Clay. These drained towards the minor valley immediately to the southeast of the site. No cultural features or materials were present in this area.



Figure 3. Distribution of prehistoric finds

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

Mesolithic

The earliest indications of cultural activity at the site consisted of a large but relatively discreet scatter of struck and burnt flint within the northern trench (Fig 3; see Appendix 1). This appeared to be associated with, and mostly contained within, a layer consisting of mixed grey and orange brown humic silt-clay, surviving in an area of approximately 15m by 15m and measuring up to 80mm thick. This layer was located immediately below the topsoil, which had been greatly disturbed and possibly imported to the site following extensive construction and landscaping activities associated with the former caravan park. The recovery of struck flints of almost exclusively Mesolithic date in a mostly pristine condition from the lower layer suggests that it may have represented part of a 'relict' soil horizon, which may have been formed by the early post-glacial and only seen minor disturbance since the flints were discarded. No faunal or other biological remains were recovered from this layer, nor from any other deposits recorded at the site, presumably due to adverse soil conditions.

Discussion of the Mesolithic Occupation

The main concentration of flint was centred on the 'relict' soil, it being spatially discrete with a few small outliers, but apparently mostly contained within the limits of excavation; no other struck flint was recovered from any of the evaluation trenches, suggesting that this was the only scatter within the site's boundaries. It is not known what proportion of the original assemblage may have been lost during recent construction and landscaping works, although it was possibly significant. The original size and extent of the artefact scatter is therefore unknown, making it impossible to estimate the size of the group responsible for its formation or the duration of the use of the site. The size of the

assemblage as recovered was comparatively small, and by itself would not indicate anything more than short-term occupation.

The vast majority of the assemblage consisted of characteristically Mesolithic flintwork representing the full reduction sequence, from primary nodule dressing through to tool manufacture and use, although a small proportion may have been of later date. The scatter was clustered just below and immediately to the east of the highest ground in the immediate area, possibly utilizing the lee of the hill against westerly winds.

The precise dating of the scatter is somewhat problematic although considerations of debitage size and microlith typology would indicate Early to Middle Mesolithic characteristics, the microliths possibly having 'Horsham' industry affinities, and a date within the last three quarters of the eighth and the seventh millennium uncal. Bc (c.9000BC to c.6800BC) would be the most appropriate, with occupation most probably occurring later rather than earlier during this range.

The possible 'Horsham' affinities of some of the microliths from this assemblage is interesting; these sites are concentrated in the Weald and especially around its western side in Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire. The previously most easterly recorded 'Horsham' site was at Harrietsham (Jacobi 1982), and interestingly, the composition of the microliths from there were comparable to those recorded here, suggesting the possibility that the distribution of 'Horsham' sites may extend beyond the North Downs into the far northeast corner of Kent.

It cannot be demonstrated whether this scatter presents a single occupational event or a palimpsest of repeated visits. The noticeable homogeneity of the flintwork, including the obvious similarities in the imported raw materials, would suggest either a single occupation or a series of closely associated visits, such as through consecutive seasonal use. The presence of a large unreduced 'testing' nodule may even indicate a degree of caching, with raw material being left for use during subsequent visits.

In addition to the core reduction, tool manufacture and maintenance recorded at the site, the number and variety of tool types identified is consistent with Mellars' (1976) 'balanced assemblages' and would suggest a multitude of other tasks were conducted. This range of tool types can be favourably compared to those from Early Mesolithic sites located within the lower Thames basin, including West Heath, Hampstead (Collins and Lorimer 1989), Thatcham in Berkshire (Wymer 1962; Healy *et al* 1992), Three Ways Wharf in the Colne valley (Lewis 1991) and the series of sites in Southwark (Sidell *et al* 2002), as well as several of the 'Horsham' industry sites located between the North and South Downs, such as at Farnham (Clark and Rankine 1939). Micro-wear studies conducted at the Southwark sites indicated hide working was occurring, along with antler/bone working, wood whittling, meat cutting and vegetable processing (Donahue 2002). Similar studies from Thatcham (Grace 1992) and Three Ways Wharf (Lewis 2000b) also indicated a variety of activities were being pursued. Mesolithic sites where a variety of activities can be identified are often interpreted as 'home-bases', although neither the Southwark sites nor Three Ways Wharf were likely to represent more than temporary encampments. Due to the lack of faunal remains and unsuitability of the material here for micro-wear analysis, no specific activities can be unequivocally demonstrated, although the broad range of tool types leaves no reason to doubt that an equally varied range of tasks were performed. No actual hearths were identified but it is likely that the nearly 3kg of burnt flint recovered from the 'relict' soil originated from hearth construction, which at other sites, including Southwark (Sidell *et al* 2002) and Three Ways Wharf (Lewis 1991), provided the focus for many of the activities identified.

The location of the site and the nature of the assemblage would be consistent with changing settlement patterns during the Mesolithic as suggested by Myers (1987; 1989). He argues that changes in projectile technology from the Early to Late Mesolithic may reflect responses to the changing character of resource procurement, with 'wait and see' strategies of the Early Mesolithic becoming increasingly organized towards smaller task-specific groups pro-actively searching for prey during the Later Mesolithic. Although far from exclusive, there may be a tendency for earlier sites to be larger, more multi-functional and located at fixed points within the landscape, with later sites tending to be smaller, more task-specific and more variably distributed across the landscape. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that the choice of location would have been based purely on what would seem to us today to have optimum functional requirements, but on the way that the inhabitants perceived their landscape and the values that they ascribed to various places within it. Certain locations were likely to have had significance for reasons that had little to do with modern perceptions of optimal hunting strategies (Pollard 1999). That minimally dressed raw materials were brought from some distance to the site, rather than dressed at source, may suggest that this location was regarded as suitable for such activities rather than at task-specific camps.

To put the Mesolithic occupation into perspective, it is also necessary to appreciate the topographical situation of the site, as it would have been during the early Holocene. Lower sea levels during the early Postglacial would have resulted in the sea being some considerable distance away. Rapid rise in sea levels throughout the Mesolithic would have resulted in the coastline advancing closer and closer to the site, although it would still have been some considerable distance to the north and east, with coastal resources unlikely to have been significant. The north Kent coast is presently subjected to marine erosion, although according to Allen (2000) the coastline in the vicinity of Herne Bay and Reculver has been primarily formed not through long-term and progressive marine erosion of the headland, but through marine transgression into and along what would have been an eastwards extension of the Swale valley, with its southern flanks ultimately forming the present coastline. If this is correct, the location of the site during the prehistoric period would have been at the end of a west-east aligned peninsular of high ground facing the chalk highlands of the Isle of Thanet, with the Wantsum / Great Stour valleys to east and south and the Swale valley to the north. Its location, on higher ground peripheral to the valley floor would have provided excellent visibility along the valleys whilst being situated far enough back to allow unimpeded observation of, and access to, the river margins. Although such 'panoramas' are rarely described in publications, relatively elevated locations providing excellent vantage points appear to have been favoured settlement foci during the Mesolithic, and several comparably located Early Mesolithic sites have been identified overlooking tributaries of the lower Thames, including Carshalton (Turner 1965; Leary *et al* 2005), West Heath, Hampstead (Collins and Lorimer 1989) and High Beach, Epping (Jacobi *et al* 1978).

The uncertainty of the dating of this site and the rapid rise in temperature during the early Postglacial makes it difficult to place within a secure ecological setting. Evidence from east Kent indicates that during the 8th millennium uncal. bc the tundra conditions of the Late Glacial were gradually replaced by birch dominated open woodland (Kerney *et al* 1980), a process continuing throughout the early Holocene and culminating in closed, mixed oak, elm, hazel and lime woodland, traditionally marking the boundary of the Early and Later Mesolithic periods. These woodlands would have been home to large potential prey species, including red and roe deer, pig and auroch, and possibly elk during the earlier parts of the Mesolithic (Grigson 1978). In addition, diverse smaller animals and abundant plant resources would have been available from the varied ecological habitats provided by the river margins, valleys and higher ground in the area.

Findspots of Mesolithic materials occur throughout Kent (Wymer 1977) and there would appear little reason to doubt that much of the county was occupied in some form throughout the Mesolithic. However, the vast majority of Mesolithic finds consist of poorly provenanced and rarely published single items or small assemblages. This is no less true for north Kent, where numerous finds are recorded from along the valleys of the Thames, Medway and Stour and their tributaries, probably indicating fairly prolific activity along these valleys, but few large assemblages or detailed accounts are available. Much material of Mesolithic date has been recovered from the north Kent coast, including around Reculver and Herne Bay, either from the sea or picked up off the shore (*ibid*). The condition of many of these pieces would lend support to the theory that this part of the coast was in fact the southern side of an extended Swale valley (Allen 2000) and that *in situ* material may still be present along the coastline. Comparable published sites are therefore very few in number and direct local comparisons for this assemblage absent. Jacobi (1982) could only suggest a single Early Mesolithic site, at Ditton on the Medway, and a further Middle, or 'Horsham' site, at Harrietsham, for the whole of Kent.

Later Prehistoric Activity (Fig. 4)

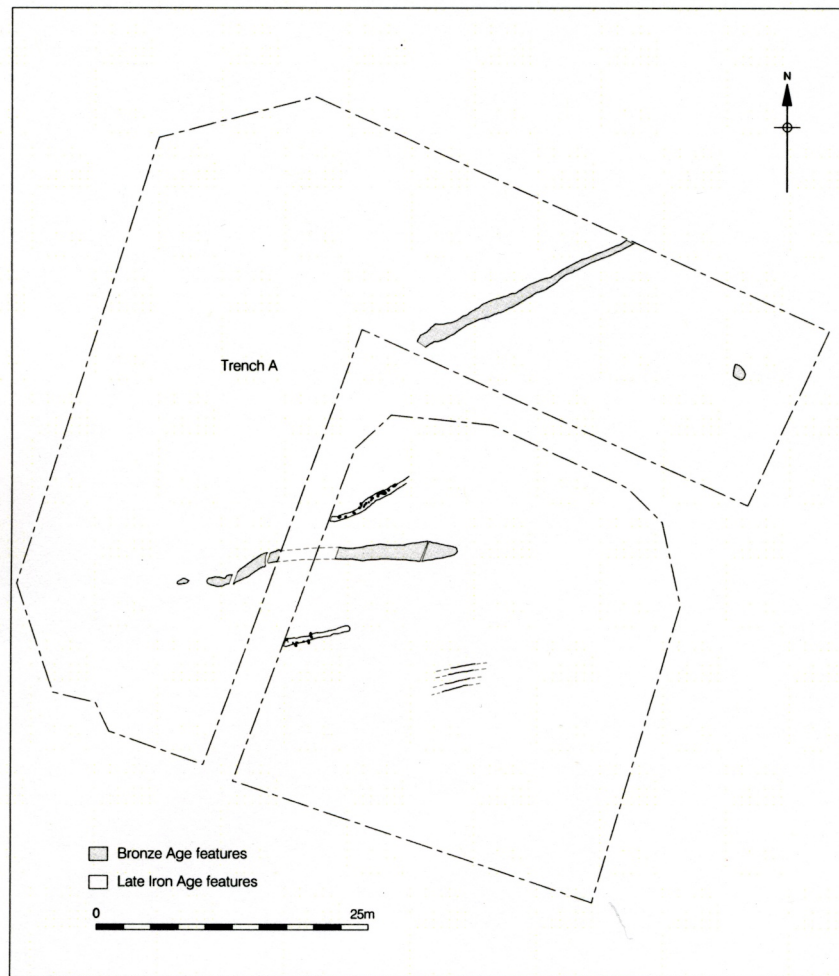
Bronze Age

Immediately northwest of the 'relict' soil was a SW-NE aligned ditch. It varied between 0.60m and 1.20m wide, had steep sides, a flat base and was up to 0.37m deep. It continued beyond the edge of excavation to the north but could be traced for over 22m to the south, where it appeared to terminate, its actual terminal lying within an unexcavated part of the site. Recovered from its fills were 182 sherds of a single Middle Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury type bucket urn, and a further 27 sherds representing two other vessels, one of which appeared to have been underfired. Also within the fill were charcoal flecks and burnt daub fragments and a small collection of struck flint, mostly having Mesolithic characteristics and presumably residually deposited.

A similar ditch, but on a different alignment, was located approximately 20m to the south of it. It measured up to 1.10m wide, had steep sides, a slightly concave base and was 0.40m deep, its irregular sides and base giving the appearance of a linear series of intercutting pits. Its charcoal rich fill produced thirteen sherds of pottery representing fragments from two vessels, a biconical bowl or cup of Post Deverel-Rimbury tradition and a further Deverel-Rimbury type bucket urn. Immediately to

the west and on the same line as this ditch was a small pit. It measured 1.10m long by 0.50m wide and had vertical sides and a flat base, and produced 97 sherds of a large finger-impressed biconical urn (see Lyne appendix 2).

In the northeast corner of the excavated area was a sub-circular pit 1.50m long by 1m wide and 0.31m deep. Its sides varied from vertical to gently sloping and it had a flat base. Recovered from its fill were 16 fragments of a Deverel-Rimbury urn and two sherds of a Bronze Age closed vessel (see Lyne appendix 2). Also recovered were 22 struck flints, many undoubtedly of Mesolithic origin and presumably residually deposited, including a burin and a few blade-like flakes, although some were more crudely produced, including several squat flakes and a randomly aligned multi-platformed core, typical of industries dating to the Middle Bronze Age and after. Quantities of burnt flint and charcoal flecks were also recovered from this feature.



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Figure 4. Later prehistoric features

Discussion of the Bronze Age Occupation

Evidence for the Bronze Age occupation of the site consisted of two ditches, at least one probably formed by a series of intercutting pits, and two other pits, one an outlier of the intercutting series and the other more isolated. All of the features were filled with a homogeneous silt-clay, their clear cut steep sides suggesting that they had filled fairly quickly after being dug with little time for their edges to erode.

All contained relatively large pottery assemblages, often consisting of nearly complete or substantial portions of individual vessels. The pottery recovered comprised both Middle Bronze Age Deverel-Rimbury and Late Bronze Age types. The few relevant radiocarbon dates from Kent indicate that its Deverel-Rimbury traditions fall towards the latter part of the second millennium BC, with Deverel-Rimbury and Post Deverel-Rimbury potting traditions overlapping around c.1100-1000BC (Hamilton and Seager Thomas 2005), suggesting that occupation of this site occurred around the end of the second or beginning of the first millennium BC.

Possible functions of the ditches include their use as field boundaries, trackway marker ditches or elements of a ceremonial complex. Regularly laid out agricultural systems involving ditched or hedged fields are known in south-east Britain from the Middle Bronze Age although do not become a common feature of the landscape until the Late Bronze Age (Richmond 1999; Yates 2001). However, no other elements of field systems were recorded in any of the evaluation trenches and it may be argued that this site, with its heavy London Clay geology, would make an unlikely setting for such a field system.

The rough similarity in the alignments of two ditches is suggestive of routeway marker ditches, although if so they would be very discontinuous. They are perpendicular to the contours of the hill and if marking a routeway, it would connect higher ground to the west with the Wantsum valley to the east.

Any functional interpretation of the features is hampered by the unusual nature and quantities of the finds recovered. Rather than mixed rubbish, the finds appear to consist of a series of substantial portions of pots, deposited either singularly or in pairs. Similar Middle and Late Bronze Age deposits are often interpreted as having ceremonial or ritual connotations. If so, the number recorded here would signify this location as having been regarded as somewhat special in character. Except for a few struck flints of later prehistoric date, no other artefacts were recovered, although small quantities of dumped burnt flint and charcoal suggested the presence of hearths nearby.

The archaeology of the Middle Bronze Age in Kent is dominated by usually poorly contexted but abundant metalwork or ceremonial structures such as barrows, and there are still few indications of economic or domestic life, such as settlements or agricultural systems. A Middle Bronze Age defended settlement has been identified at Monkton Court Farm on the Isle of Thanet (Perkins *et al* 1994), but the only evidence of field development in the region comes from Netherhale Farm, immediately across the Wantsum valley (Macpherson-Grant 1993, referenced in Yates 2001). Environmental evidence for woodland clearance suggests agricultural intensification was occurring by the Middle Bronze Age (Cross 1992, referenced in Yates 2001), but the paucity of evidence for actual field systems in the area contrasts sharply with the relatively abundant evidence for Late Bronze Age agricultural activity, with 'regimented field systems' identified on the Isle of Thanet and a 'dense pattern of prehistoric settlement across the Reculver Peninsula' (Yates 2001, 76).

More extensive evidence of Middle Bronze Age settlement has been found further west, in the London region, and on the north banks of the Thames in Essex (Brown and Cotton 2000, 90; Yates 2001, 73). These tend to prefigure the later formalized agricultural landscapes, usually comprising pits dug within rectangular enclosures and set within larger field systems. Even with these, the ceramic assemblages tend to consist of deliberately placed deposits rather than refuse (Brown and Cotton 2000, 91), and little continuity with the later, more explicit, agricultural systems has been recognized (Yates 2001, 73). A similar pattern may also be discerned in north Kent. Recent excavations at Iwade, in a comparable topographical location but looking out towards the Isle of Sheppey, has revealed four pits and a well; dating towards the end of the Middle Bronze Age, two of the pits and the well contained complete pots interpreted as having been ritually placed (Bishop and Bagwell 2005).

In northeast Kent, Bronze Age ceremonial activity is also prominent. Barrow cemeteries have been recorded across the Wantsum, located along the high ground overlooking the southern Wantsum channel. These include a ploughed out barrow containing an urned cremation and with sherds from a broken Middle Bronze Age cordoned urn (1600-1400BC) deposited into the surrounding ditch. Further ring ditches and possibly even a post-defined 'ceremonial' routeway, all of probable Bronze Age date, have been recorded (Canterbury Archaeological Trust 1995; Denison 1995). Further barrows and cemeteries are located along the north coast (Champion 1982). Other indications of Middle Bronze Age ceremonial activity on the Isle of Thanet include a complete bucket urn containing bone, shell and three bronze pins found at Ramsgate (Hawkes 1942), and a hoard of 14 palstaves found within a pottery vessel at Birchington, immediately across the Wantsum (Powell-Cotton and Crawford 1924). Originally interpreted as stock ready for distribution, such hoards are now more commonly considered as having ritual significance.

During the later prehistoric period erosion and successive sea level rises would have rendered the Wantsum channel a wide expanse of navigable water (Jessup 1936, 191), separating the site from the Isle of Thanet and with either sea or a broad 'drowned' valley of the Swale to the north. Progressive silting during the historic period has resulted in the Wantsum channel largely disappearing to become marshland, which has only recently been drained (Jessup 1936, 192-194). During the Bronze Age the site would therefore have commanded extensive views across the channel and would have been easily visible from the Isle of Thanet. The importance of such

locations has been realized by Yates (2001, 76) who suggests that the impressive earthworks at Chislet, some 2.5km south of the site and in a similar commanding position, mark the location of a Late Bronze Age aggrandized enclosure.

To summarize the Bronze Age evidence, it would suggest activity occurring at the site during the late Middle Bronze Age, although too little was found to confidently characterize the activities represented. The nature of the finds, consisting of complete or substantial portions of pots, may suggest that the site was more closely associated with ritual or ceremonial activity than simple domestic settlement.

Iron Age

Iron Age activity at the site was represented by a series of roughly parallel narrow trenches. The best-preserved examples consisted of a southwest-northeast aligned pair approximately 10m apart. The southern one, recorded for 6.26m, was 0.76m wide and 0.18m deep with vertical sides and a flat base. Its fill contained frequent charcoal flecks and burnt daub, and 12 sherds of Late Iron Age pottery. Cutting through its fill were eight post- or stakeholes, most of which also contained daub. In addition, large quantities of burnt daub were found scattered in this area. The northern trench was similar in shape and size but had a series of 18 post- or stakeholes cut along the length of its base. Its fill contained Late Iron Age as well as residual Bronze Age pottery.

To the southeast of these structures were two other similar but shallower trenches, on a similar alignment to the others but set less than a metre apart. No post- or stakeholes were observed and they could only be traced for about 2.5m. A single sherd of Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from the fill of the southern trench although similarities in shape, size and alignment suggest that they were related to the better preserved and dated examples to the northwest.

Discussion of the Iron Age Occupation

The features and pottery recovered demonstrate activity was occurring at the site during the Late Iron Age, although it is difficult to interpret the nature, form or function of the structures identified. The more extensive examples at least would appear to represent structural features, such as a series of walls or screens, comprising foundations made by setting posts or stakes within bedding trenches, the presence of burnt daub indicating that they had been blocked in but eventually burnt down. During the Iron Age, such construction techniques are usually associated with buildings such as roundhouses, although the arrangements here were linear and no coherent ground plans were evident. However, little corroborative evidence was recovered to indicate they were part of a settlement, nor were any other indications of settlement, such as domestic or ancillary buildings, enclosures or field ditches, identified across the rest of the site.

The pottery recovered was mostly undiagnostic, only two 'Belgic' sherds were present and the high percentage of calcined-flint tempered wares suggested that occupation on this site took place during the earlier part of the Late Iron Age, between approximately 125 and 25 BC (see Lyne appendix 2). Recent excavations, such as at the series of sites in the Whitstable area, suggest that the Blean uplands were intensively settled during the Late Iron Age, following a pattern similar to that of the Late Bronze Age (Canterbury Archaeological Trust 2001, 10-12).

Despite the recognition of an intensive Late Bronze Age and Late Iron Age utilization of the landscape in northeast Kent, it would appear that this site at least was largely avoided between these periods, at least for archaeologically visible activities. Nor was any succeeding Roman activity identified at the site, despite only being 200m from the Roman road from Canterbury to Reculver. The focus of first century AD activity may have been at Reculver (Gossup 1936, 190-1), and it has been suggested that, at least further west in the Faversham area, systematic displacement of the Iron Age settlements and their replacement by villa-style occupation may have occurred (Denison 2000, 7). However, pottery evidence from this site indicates it may have been abandoned prior to the Roman conquest.

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APPENDIX 1: DESCRIPTION OF THE LITHIC ASSEMBLAGE

Barry John Bishop

Introduction

In total 1083 pieces of struck flint and 3654g of otherwise unmodified burnt flint fragments were recovered from the excavations. The material was mostly derived from a scatter concentrated around a possible 'relict' soil horizon, located immediately above London Clay within Trench A, with a small percentage (8%) deriving from the fills of cut features. Despite careful observation during the removal of the ploughsoil only 25 struck pieces were recovered from it and it is assumed that later activity, including construction works and landscaping associated with the former caravan park, had mostly removed the original soil and replaced it with imported turf and soils. It is therefore unknown what proportion of the original assemblage was recovered, although it is probable that considerable quantities had been removed during the earlier ground works.

The assemblage has been dated on the basis of microlith typology and metrical analysis of the debitage to the Early/Middle Mesolithic. No diagnostic pieces of Later Mesolithic or Neolithic date were identified although a few pieces, characterized by their raw material and an expedient approach to reduction involving little or no core preparation, were associated with the Bronze Age and possibly even Iron Age activities identified. Although most of the assemblage clearly belongs to the earlier industry, some overlap does occur, notably the preparatory stages of the earlier industry can be confused with some of the products of the later industries. For this reason no attempt was made at precisely quantifying either industry, suffice to note that the overwhelming majority of the assemblage as a whole appeared to be the product of the earlier strategy, and that the latter material was mainly present (amongst much residual material) within the fills of the cut features.

Condition

Despite the fact that much of it consisted of thin, fragile pieces, the assemblage was generally in good condition, with minimal chipping or rounding of even the thinner edges. Not surprisingly, many of the longer and narrower pieces, especially the blades, had snapped into two or more pieces. Under magnification slight silica polishing and edge rounding, especially along the more prominent flake edges, was occasionally noted, probably caused by rubbing with fine-grained particles, consistent with natural processes such as the 'settling' of the artefacts within their matrix. Although some movement is indicated, the general condition of the assemblage suggests little post-depositional disturbance had occurred. Recortication was rare and, where present, variable, and no chronological significance could be recognized.

Raw Material

The bulk of the assemblage was manufactured from a fine grained flint that varied in colour from translucent black with opaque grey patches to translucent brown with opaque yellow patches and, where present, retained a light yellow to light grey weathered chalky cortex <1mm to 5mm in thickness. Approximately 10% of the assemblage consisted of 'bullhead' bed flint, with its distinctive glauconitic cortex, found within tertiary deposits overlying the chalk in the Thames basin (Barber *et al.* 1999). Both types consisted of large nodules of good knapping quality but were occasionally prone to thermal fracturing, and although slight weathering to the cortex was observed, there was little evidence for any extensive rolling or alluvial displacement. It was probably obtained from derived sources close to the parent chalk, such as deposits of peri-glacial mass weathered chalk (Gibbard 1986). The nearest sources would be the Isle of Thanet to the east or the North Downs, approximately 10km to the south. A few pieces of reddish-brown and yellowish brown coarser grained cherty flint were also present, possibly derived from the Greensand beds further to the south. Also present were a few thick flakes and chunks from heavily battered beach pebbles, probably derived from the beaches around the Isle of Thanet. These were likely to be exclusively later prehistoric in origin, as during the Mesolithic the coast would have been some considerable distance away.

Typology and Technology

The struck material was classified according to a basic technological/typological scheme (see Table 1).

Type	Description	No	Percentage
Primary/Preparation flakes	Flakes removed early in the reduction sequence to decorticate, mass reduce and shape the core	250	23.1
Maintenance flakes	Core tablets and other core rejuvenation flakes removed to enable continued flaking	48	4.4
Crested Flakes	A type of preparation flake aimed at enabling blade production by forming a ridge through extensive transverse flaking. Many of the examples here were actually made subsequent to a period of flaking to create new platforms or extend old ones	11	1.1
Blades	Flakes at least twice as long as wide and with approximately parallel margins and dorsal scars	114	10.5
Broken blades	Flake fragments with parallel margins and dorsal scars with the potential to have been at least twice as long as wide	167	15.4
Retouched	Flakes or blades exhibiting secondary modification	61	5.6
Flakes	Flakes not included in any of the above	225	20.9
Flake fragments	Unclassifiable fragments of flakes	113	10.4
Cores	Pieces of parent material from which flakes and blades have been removed	38	3.5
Shatter	Undiagnostic chunks of flint exhibiting concoidal fracture. These mostly consist of shattered cores	56	5.1
Total		1083	100

Table 1: Quantification of the struck assemblage by class

The bulk of the assemblage was made using a single technological tradition. No refitting was attempted although it was clear that several sequential refits were present, and systematic attempts at refitting would likely produce many others.

All stages in the reduction sequence were present, including large fragments of nodules that had been tested then discarded or cached, primary decortication flakes, core mass reduction and shaping flakes, small trimming flakes, potentially useable flakes and blades, finished products in the form of retouched and utilized flakes and blades and the by-products of tool manufacture, as represented by micro-burins. Many of the preparation flakes were wholly or substantially cortical, including flakes removing nodular protuberances or other irregularities, suggesting that despite the raw materials having to be brought to the site, the nodules were imported virtually complete with minimal attempts to dress them.

One core was manufactured on an axe fragment and another may have been (see below). The others were initially prepared by the removal of frequently bulky cortical flakes until the basis of a suitable platform and core face was present, although areas of cortex and nodular protuberances were often retained, and several of the cores utilized large decortication flakes.

The high proportions of blades and broken blades present demonstrated a desire to produce long and narrow flakes, often enabled by the use of cresting (Fig 5, f1, f2). In addition, many of the preparation and maintenance flakes were also long and narrow, and many of the flakes had parallel sides and dorsal scars, demonstrating the prevalence of blade production.

After the initial platform had become exhausted or unusable a second or third was sometimes prepared, often involving the decortication and shaping of an unmodified part of the nodule, as demonstrated by the presence of flakes that removed areas of cortex or other irregularities as well as parts of exhausted platforms.

Many core rejuvenation flakes were recovered, including true 'core tablets' (Fig 5, f3, f4) and flakes struck transversely (Fig 5, f5) or longitudinally (Fig 5 f6) across the core face, either to remove hinge and step fractures or remnants of cortex. Some of the longitudinal rejuvenation flakes struck from the base may have resulted from attempts to keep the core face perpendicular to the platform. Platform

maintenance was routinely attempted, mostly removing overhangs and altering platform angles by chipping or abrading the platform edge, although true platform modification, such as faceting, was rare.

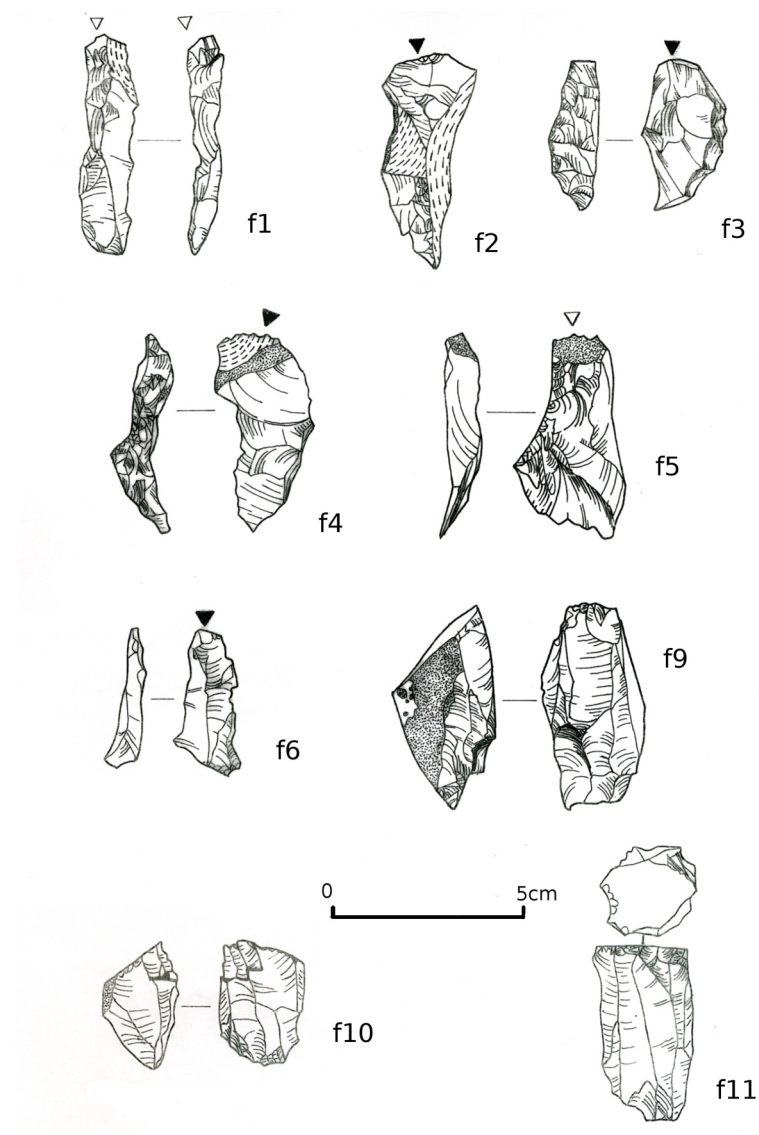


Figure 5

Flakes and Blades

Metrical Considerations

A random sample of 305 complete flakes and blades flakes were measured according to Saville (1980), and their average size and weight given in Table 2.

N= 305	L/B ratio	L (mm)	B (mm)	W (mm)	Wt. (g)	SP width (mm)
Average	1.84	33.8	22.0	5.9	5.2	2.9
Standard Deviation	-	13.8	11.0	3.7	7.0	2.7

Table 2: Average metrical values

In an attempt to provide dating evidence, and following the standard work by Pitts (1978a; 1978b) and Pitts and Jacobi (1979), the shape distribution of all measured unmodified complete flakes was established by dividing their breadths by lengths and they were compared to samples from other dated assemblages as given in Pitts (1978b, 194) and modified from Pitts and Jacobi (1979, 166) (Table 3).

Reference	Suggested Date	Breadth/Length Ratio					
		<0.2	0.2-0.4	0.4-0.6	0.6-0.8	0.8-1.0	1.0+
Hillborough		0.7	23.6	22.6	16.6	14.6	22
Pitts	Early Mesolithic	2	43	27	13	6.5	9
Pitts and Jacobi	Early Mesolithic	1	34.5	26	15	9.5	14
Pitts	Later Mesolithic	0.5	15.5	30.5	22	14.5	17
Pitts and Jacobi	Later Mesolithic	0.5	13	27	22.5	14	23.5
Pitts	Early Neolithic	0	11	33	27.5	14.5	13
Pitts	Later Neolithic/Bronze Age	0	3	16	25	23	33

Table 3: Breadth divided by Length Ratios

These results indicated that there were fewer narrower flakes than may be expected for Early Mesolithic assemblages but more than from Later Mesolithic or later assemblages, suggesting either the assemblage was mixed with both Early and Later Mesolithic material present or, the suggestion favoured here, that it belongs between these periods. This result is obviously crude in that the assemblage here is undoubtedly mixed with later prehistoric material, albeit in only small quantities, and possibly contains a higher proportion of large decortication and nodule trimming flakes than some of the compared assemblages; both being factors likely to result in a later date being indicated. Other factors that have to be taken into account include the possible varying methods of measuring the flakes, and the influence of differing qualities of raw materials used. Nevertheless, and as important as these qualifications may be, the results do suggest that the vast bulk of the assemblage may be dated to before the Later Mesolithic.

Key Attributes

The key-attributes of a randomly selected sample of 640 flakes and blades were recorded and the results of these are presented in Table 4 (discrepancies in the totals between categories are the result of broken pieces being included in the sample).

Platform	Flakes	Percentage	Distal termination	Flakes	Percentage
Edge trimmed	218	46.5	Feather	321	71.4
Cortical	39	8.3	Hinged	89	19.8
Dihedral	21	4.5	Plunged	24	5.5
Faceted	20	4.3	Stepped	15	3.3
Plain	116	24.7	Total	449	100
Shattered	55	11.7	Dorsal Scars	Flakes	Percentage
Total	469	100	Multidirectional	100	15.7
Bulb Type	Flakes	Percentage	None	25	3.9
Diffuse	250	51.7	Orthogonal	24	3.8
Intermediate	57	11.8	Parallel	336	52.6
Pronounced	77	15.9	Single	60	9.4
Discretely rounded	100	20.6	Unidirectional	93	14.6
Total	484	100	Total	638	100

Table 4: Key Attributes

Table 4 demonstrates that despite the numerous preparation and maintenance flakes present there was a definite tendency for flakes and blades to exhibit diffuse or, especially with blades, small discrete hemispherical bulbs of percussion, and feather distal terminations. The edges of striking platforms were frequently modified through careful chipping or abrasion but were rarely modified further. There was a preponderance of flakes with parallel dorsal scars indicative of blade production and it was noted that those with multidirectional scars tended to correlate with preparation flakes and orthogonal scars with core rejuvenation flakes.

Cores

Altogether 38 cores and 56 chunks, most probably representing fragments of cores, were recovered (see Table 5). Eight of the complete cores were irregularly shaped flake cores, four of which were minimally reduced with only a few flakes removed from each. Although possibly representing either failed attempts to produce blade cores or exhausted blade cores, some were likely to belong to later prehistoric industries.

Core Description	Number
'Testing Nodule'	1
Single platform blade core	7
Opposed platform blade core	8
Blade core with two platforms at right angles	2
Keeled blade core	3
Irregular blade core	6
'Pseudo-burin' type blade core	3
Multi-platformed flake core	2
Irregular flake core	6
Small chunks, mostly fragments of shattered cores	56

Table 5: Description and quantity of cores

Cores varied in shape and size; most had been made on 'quartered nodules', some large flakes were also employed and two examples appeared to re-use axes (Fig 7, f7, f8 and see below). Most had been extensively reduced (eg Fig 5, f9, f10) but a few discarded while still quite large, possibly due to thermal faults.

A single testing nodule, weighing just over 2.7kg, was recovered. It is not certain why this had not been used; it had thermally shattered into three large fragments, probably while being 'tested', but each fragment could have provided at least one ample core. It is possible that it represents raw material left at the site for use during later visits but never recovered.

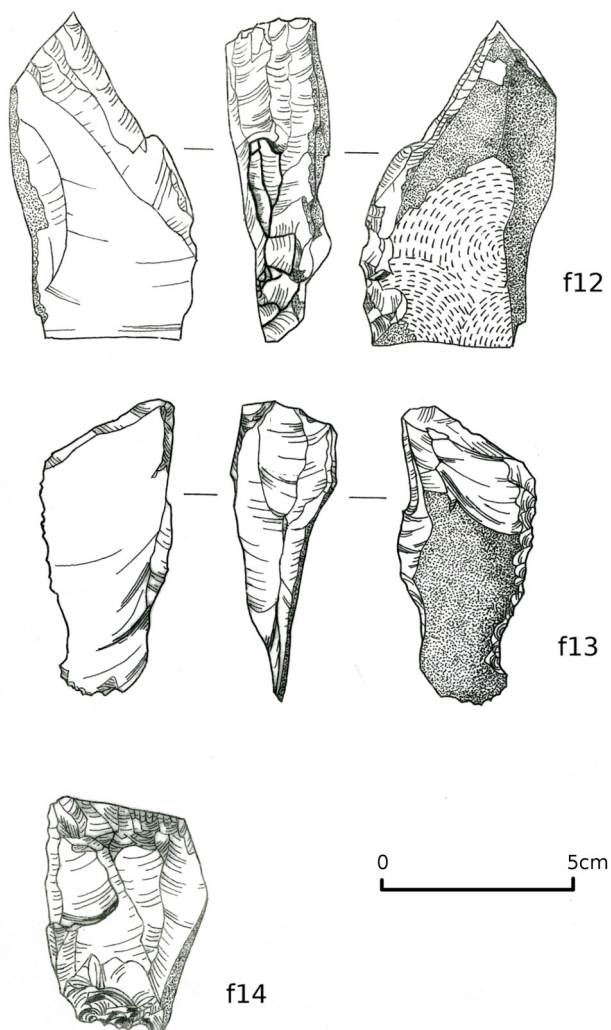


Figure 6

A few truly prismatic cores were present (Fig 5, f11), but most were more irregular in shape, usually with more than one platform but generally with only part of the nodule fully prepared and reduced. The unreduced parts were sometimes suggestive of 'handles'; in some cases these parts had been blunted, possibly enabling them to have been more easily held in the hand whilst being reduced (Fig 6, f12, f13). Other cores appeared to have been rested on hard surfaces during reduction, a variant on the 'anvil' technique, causing splintering to the base of the core (Fig 6, f14; Fig 7, f15) and occasionally on the distal ends of some blades and flakes. At least three cores had parts of their striking platforms modified by the removal of a series of very narrow blades resulting in a beaked gouge-like working edge. These are very reminiscent of 'pseudo-burins' and it remains possible that these were actually intended for use as tools rather than for blade production (Fig 7, f8, f15, f16; also see below).

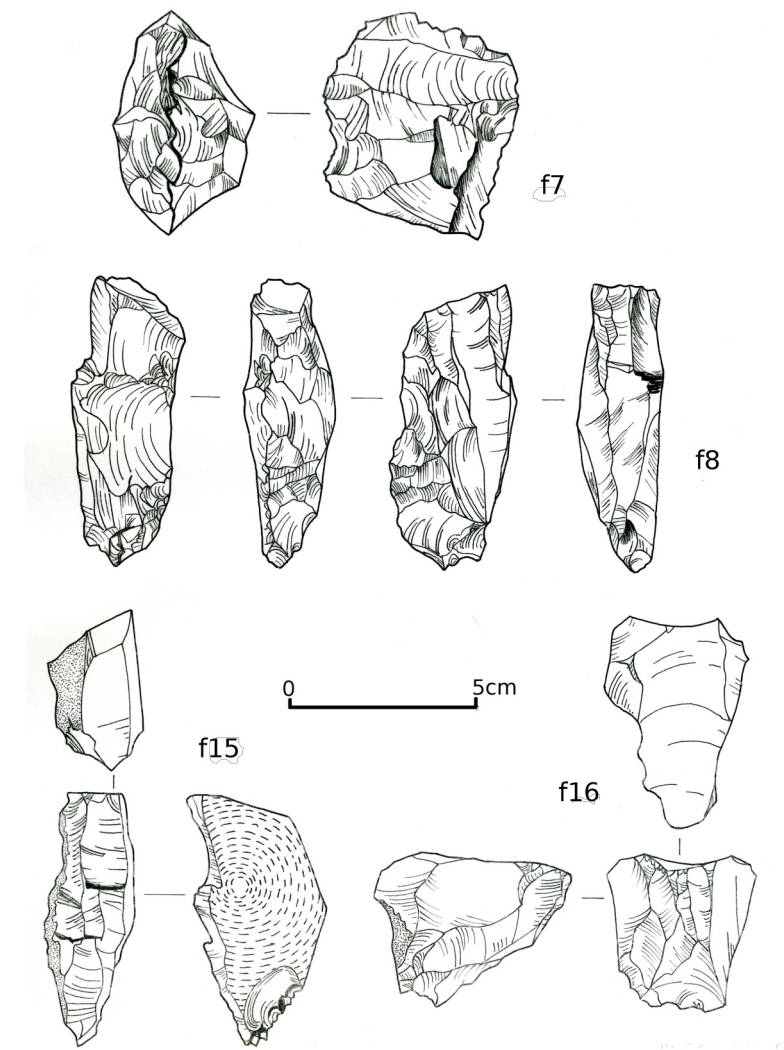


Figure 7

Implements

Including the two reused axe fragments, 63 flakes or blades with secondary modification were identified, representing a relatively high (5.8%) proportion of the struck assemblage. A variety of types were present, suggesting a wide range of activities were conducted at the site, although the terminology used here does not imply any specific functions for the tools. The majority of implements, including all of the microliths, serrates, edge trimmed flakes and burins, were probably associated with the Mesolithic assemblage. A few pieces, including some of the miscellaneous retouched pieces, possibly the fabricator and some of the scrapers may be the product of later industries. Formal tool types are rare amongst assemblages dating to the Middle Bronze Age or after, when lithic material appears to have been produced less formally and used more opportunistically.

Microliths

Fig No	Dimension (mm)	Description	Switsur and Jacobi (1979) type
F17	>25 X 13 X 2	Trapezoid, tip and base missing	2b
F18	36 X 10 X 3	Obliquely truncated. Complete	1a
F19	>28 X 11 X 2	Obliquely truncated. Lateral burin-like break at tip - impact fracture?	1a
F20	>30 X 8 X 3	Slightly oblique/straight backed, partial blunting on opposite side, possibly elongated rhombic, base missing	3a or d, possibly 10a
F21	>35 X 10 X 3	Rhomboid, proximal tip missing, slightly concave basal retouch	3a
F22	40 X 13 X 3	Obliquely truncated, bulb partially intact. Complete	1a
F23	>14 X 7 X 2	Obliquely truncated, only tip present	?1a
F24	25 X 9 X 2	Obliquely truncated down all of one edge, partial blunting on opposite edge and transversely across ventral at its base. Complete	As 10c although not hollow based
F25	>30 X 13 X	Angled back, tip missing	?2as

Table 6: Microlith Descriptions

All nine microliths were made by obliquely truncating the proximal end of blades. With at least three the retouch was partially bi-directional, indicating the use of the 'anvil' method, and the location of this retouch suggested these at least were made using the micro-burin technique, although no micro-burin scars were actually identified. Confirmation of the use of this technique is provided by four micro-burins, all proximal and notched on the right dorsal (with proximal end nearest the observer) (Fig 8, f26, f27), although at least one microlith had not been notched (Fig 8, f22). Several possible failed micro-burin attempts were identified although none were particularly convincing.

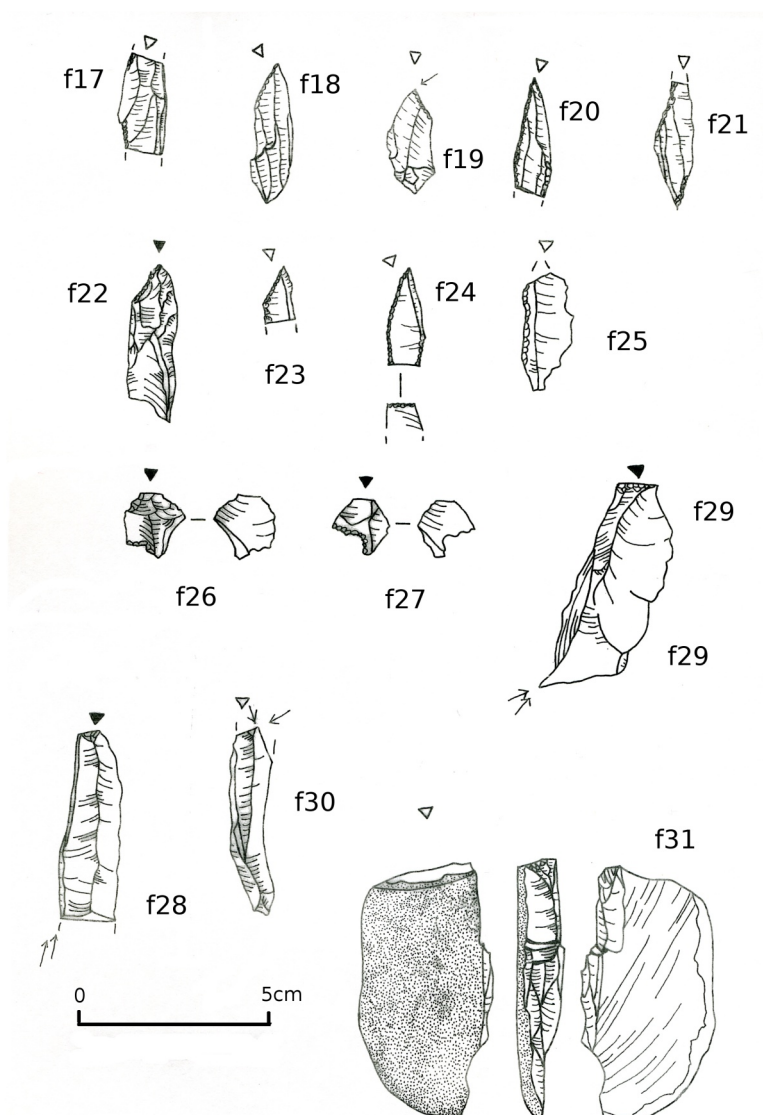


Figure 8

Although only a small sample, both the types present and their sizes indicate Early Mesolithic (c.9000-7800BC) affinities (Switsur and Jacobi 1979; Pitts and Jacobi 1979, fig 5), the high proportion of more elaborately retouched pieces possibly indicating a later rather than earlier date during that period (Jacobi 1987). A later date is also suggested by the presence of obliquely truncated types alongside straight-backed and bi-truncated pieces, a characteristic of 'Deepcar' type assemblages. These are particularly associated with the major river valleys of southern Britain and dated to the latter part of the Early Mesolithic, after c.8400BC (Reynier 1998).

The presence of a basally retouched piece, reminiscent of a 'Horsham' point (Clark 1934; 1939; Jacobi 1976) may even indicate a later date, towards the middle of the Mesolithic. Such assemblages appear to represent a transitional or intermediate stage between the Early and Later Mesolithic, dating to c.7000-6000 uncal. bc (8200-6800BC) (Ellaby 1987; Lewis 2000). It is possible that its presence amongst what essentially would be regarded as a characteristic set of Earlier Mesolithic types may possibly indicate an early 'Horsham' type assemblage (cf Janaway 1974 ref. in Ellaby 1987, 63; Jacobi 1976, 20). Other evidence of 'Horsham' type influences includes an almost shouldered piece (Fig 8, f21) (cf Clark 1934 class G) and any of the three microliths with missing bases could potentially have been basally retouched.

It should be emphasized, however, that basally retouched pieces can occur in true Early Mesolithic assemblages and are recovered from beyond the Weald, and not too much reliance should be placed on a single piece. Due to the typological ambiguities, as well as the small number of microliths involved, further discussion on the precise affinities and dating would be unproductive. Despite these uncertainties, both metrical analysis of the debitage and consideration of the microlith typology would indicate that the assemblage was produced sometime during the last three quarters of the 8th or the 7th millennium uncal. bc (c.9000-6800BC).

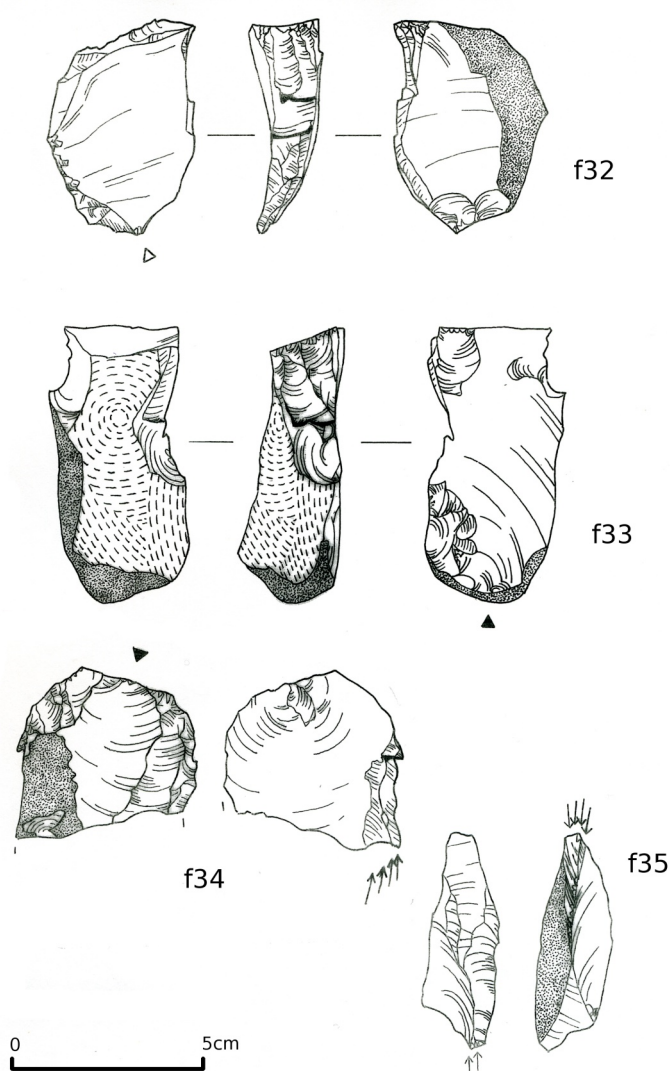


Figure 9

Axes

No complete adzes or axes were present although one core, probably a 'pseudo-burin' had been made on a fragment of a tranchet axe (Fig 7, f8, cf Jacobi 1978, 217, fig 4.31; Ashton 1988, 318, fig 3.9; Lewis 1991, fig 23.10) and a further keeled blade core had probably been made using a bifacial implement (Fig 7, f7). Such re-use of core tools is not uncommon and may reflect the recognition that such raw material would be of proven quality (Jacobi 1982), or even that such implements held deeper symbolic or ritual significance than as a purely economic commodity (Lewis 2000b, 17).

Burins

Nine burins were identified, mostly made on the scars of snapped flakes or blades but varying quite considerably in shape and size. Four consisted of snapped blades; two with longitudinal burin removals (Fig 8, f28), one transversely struck (Fig 8, f29) and a dihedral example with blows in both directions (Fig 8, f30).

The other examples were all larger and thicker and exhibited multiple removals (Fig 8, f31; Fig9, f32, f33). One was a composite burin/scrapper (Fig 9, f34) and appeared to either represent a scraper re-used as a burin, or a burin that has been blunted, presumably to aid handling. Another consisted of a core fragment with burin type removals taken off opposite ends (Fig 9, f35).

Whilst the working edge of the blade burins ranged from 2-4mm wide those made on flakes were 8 – 16mm across; although the same basic gouging action may be involved it would seem unlikely that all of these tools were used for precisely the same functions or on the same materials.

More or less representing a continuation in form from the larger burins were several cores that may have been used in a similar manner, comparable to 'core-gravers' or 'pseudo-burins' (Wymer 1962, 346; Jacobi 1978, 217-218). These had at least a part of the striking platform accentuated to form a beak-like projection by the removals of a sequence of blades, often terminating in step-fractures and often producing blades apparently too small for practical use (Fig7, f8, f15, f16).

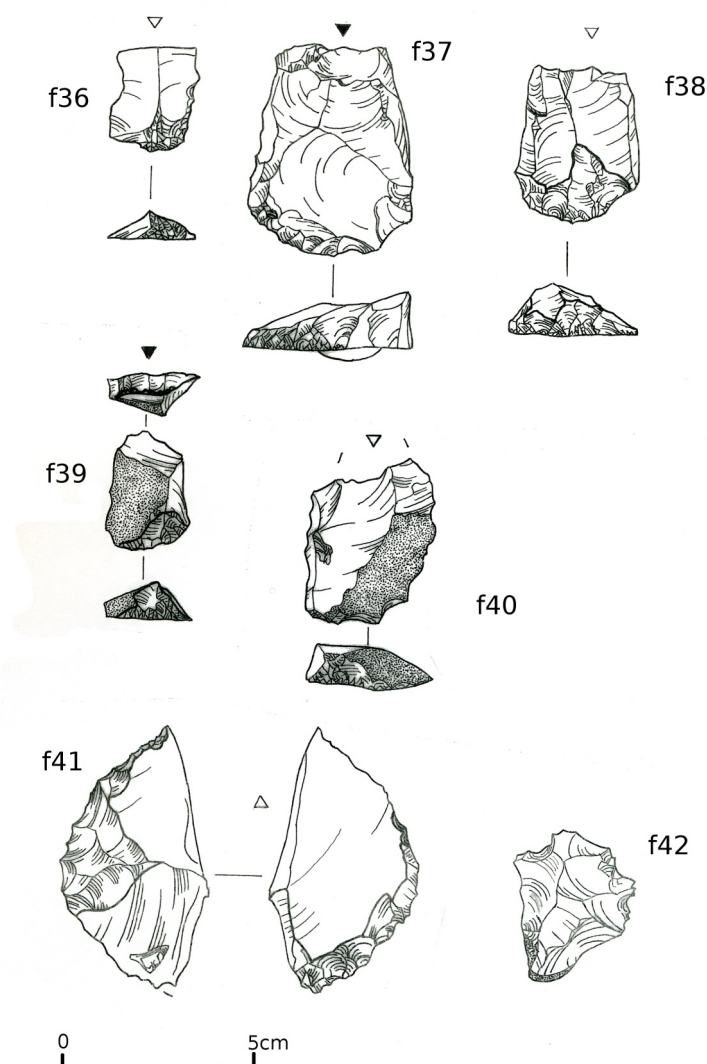


Figure 10

Scrapers

Including the composite burin/scrapper (see above), eleven scrapers were recovered. All were made on thick flakes with the exception of a single example made on a blade, although this had snapped transversely and part of the working edge had broken (Fig 10, f36). The others included four short end scrapers with gentle convex edges (Fig 10, f37, f38), including one made on a core tablet (Fig 10, f39) and one on a cortical flake. The others consisted of: two side and end scrapers, both broken; two irregular scrapers, one consisting of a large flake with a notched proximal end and a slightly denticulated scraping edge on its distal (Fig 10, f40); a large thick flake or shattered core with sporadic steep convex retouch on different parts of both its dorsal and ventral surfaces (Fig 10, f41) and a core fragment with a steep denticulated edge (Fig 10, f42). Scrapers are traditionally associated with hide preparation although were probably used for a variety of tasks, including woodworking (eg various authors referenced in Barton 1992, 213-4).

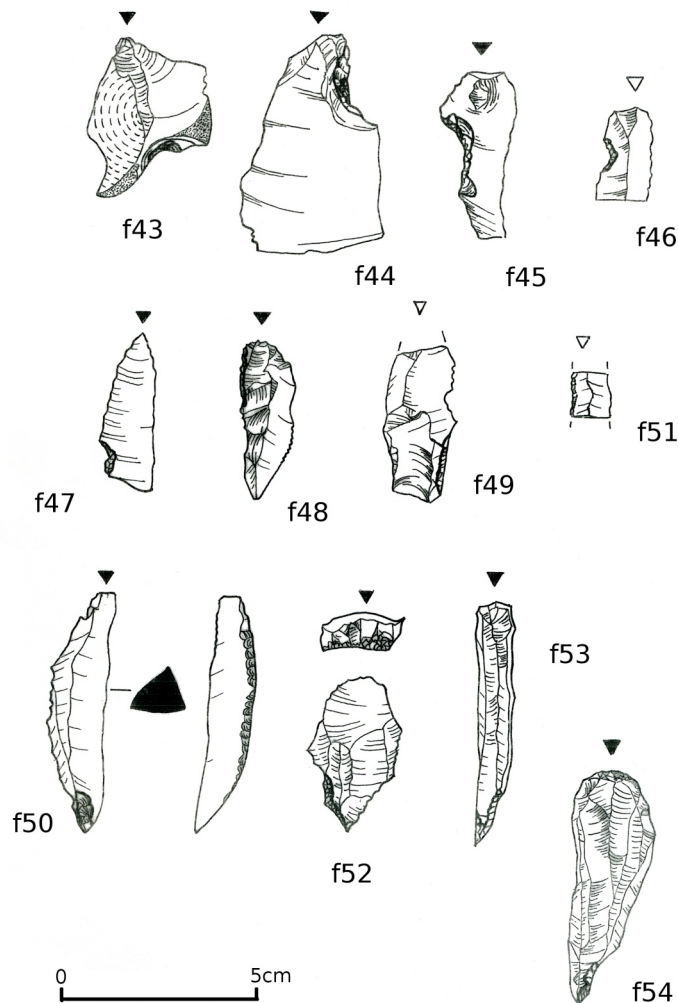


Figure 11

Notches

Ten examples of notched flakes and blades were identified and several other possible notched pieces were examined but discounted due to the possibility of accidental damage. Their retouch varied from heavy to light and from 6 to 23mm across, with half made on various parts of thick flakes (Fig 11, f43, f44) and the others made on the lateral margins of blades or narrow flakes (Fig 11, f45, f46, f47). These latter examples may have represented failed micro-burin attempts, although the notch on Fig 11, f47 is on the ventral and would have removed the distal end.

Although common to all postglacial industries, notched flakes rarely form such a high proportion of the retouched component. A few Early Mesolithic sites have produced significant numbers, including at High Beach in Epping (Jacobi 1978), and may reflect the prominence of specific activities such as arrow shaft manufacture.

Edge Trimmed Flakes

Ten edge-trimmed flakes were recovered, all consisting of blades or narrow flakes with fine abrupt retouch along at least part of one or both edges. Most appeared to have been blunted, possibly to make them easier and safer to handle, and were most likely used for fine cutting (Fig 11, f48, f49), or in the case of one narrow flake with a thick triangular cross section, for piercing (Fig 11, f50). One small blade segment may have formed part of a composite tool or possibly even a microlith fragment (Fig 11, f51).

Piercers

Five piercers were recovered, one, with elaborate retouch, was made on the end of a core tablet (Fig 11, f52), the others made on narrow flakes or blades with only minimal retouch accentuating the converging lateral edges at the distal end (Fig 11, f53, f54).

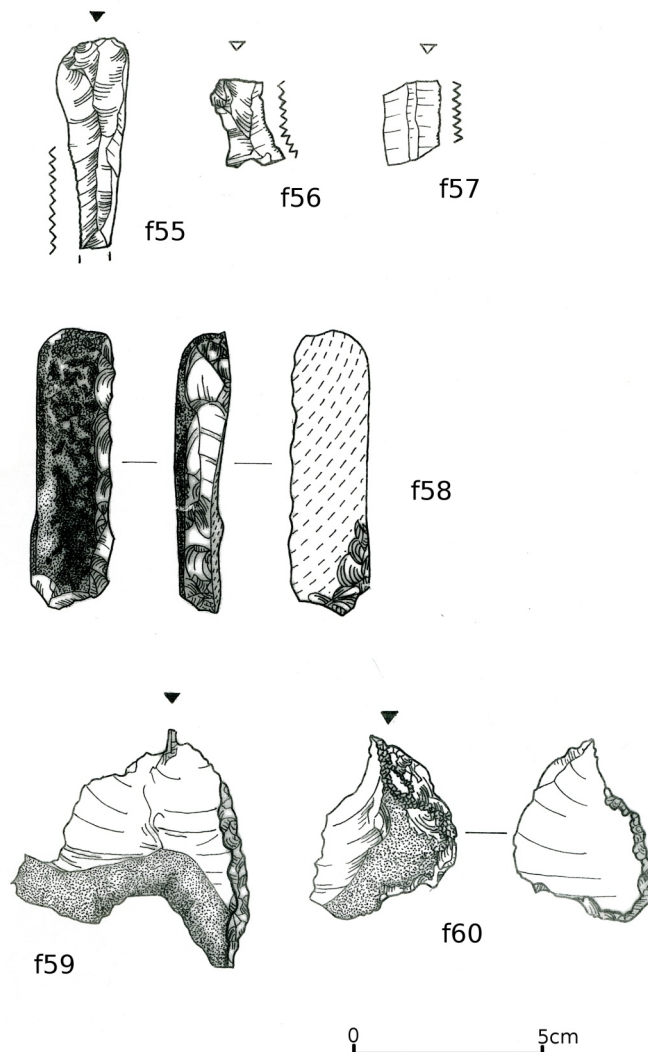


Figure 12

Serrated flakes

Three serrated (micro-denticulated) pieces were recovered. One consisted of a nearly complete blade with a rather abraded and slightly concave cutting edge with c.10 teeth per cm (Fig 12, f55). The other two had c.14 teeth per cm, one consisting of a blade segment with a slightly concave edge with deeper notches either end of the teeth, possibly a device to aid hafting (Fig 12, f56), the other a burnt fragment (Fig 12, f57). Slightly concave edges are commonly observed on serrates from Mesolithic contexts (Jacobi 1978, 214). Serrates are usually associated with plant cutting and processing although fine wood or bark sawing may also be appropriate (Barton 1992, 218, 239-246). No gloss, often reported as being present on serrates, was present on any of these examples.

Fabricator

A single fabricator, consisting of a rod with a 'D' shaped cross section with a smooth rolled upper surface exhibiting many incipient Hertzian cones and heavily battered and splintered ends was recovered (Fig 12, f58). These are found amongst all postglacial assemblages, traditionally interpreted either as 'strike-a-lights' or as *retouchers*. It appeared to have been manufactured from a different type of raw material to the rest of the assemblage and, interestingly, its very smooth upper surface was covered with incipient Hertzian cones, suggestive of use as an anvil, which although small would have been ideal for fine retouching, such as blunting the microliths (see above).

Miscellaneous Retouched Pieces

Of the two miscellaneous retouched pieces recovered, one consisted of a large flake with slightly invasive retouch along one edge and which probably functioned as a cutting implement (Fig 12, f59). The remaining piece consisted of a thick flake made from a beach pebble core with sporadic steep retouch along various parts of its margins, and was probably a product of the later industry (Fig 12, f60).

Spurred Flakes

Two pieces, both rather thick blade-like flakes, had abrupt retouch truncating their proximal ends and a contiguous part of one edge, forming sturdy, slightly beaked obtuse chisel-like edges. Spurred flakes are probably more commonly found among later prehistoric assemblages although are found within Mesolithic assemblages (eg Barton 1992, fig 5.22, 6-7). They may have been used for heavy duty piercing, scoring or engraving, possibly comparable in function to a burin (Fig 13, f61, f62).

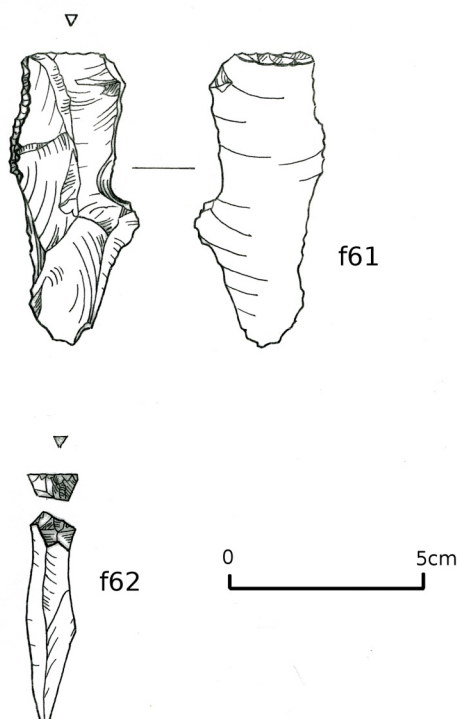


Figure 13

Utilized Flakes

Numerous flakes and blades had traces of damage consistent with utilization along one or more edges. However, due to the problems inherent in trying to differentiate the effects of deliberate utilization from accidental or post-depositional damage, only those flakes and blades which display macroscopically a series of regular micro-fractures but otherwise unabraded edges, or with clear abrasion or edge polish limited to specific areas were considered here. It is likely that many more flakes and blades had been utilized but either exhibited no damage or were rejected due to the problems outlined above. Of the 15 convincing examples identified, all were made on blades or blade-like flakes, eleven of which had utilization traces on their longer lateral edges consistent with use as cutting tools, whilst four had damage and/or polish to convergent distal ends, consistent with a fine piercing use.

BURNT FLINT

Just over 3.6kg of burnt flint fragments were recovered, mostly from within the 'relict' soil with minor amounts also recovered from surface scatter and the feature fills. The burning was mostly intense and is consistent with the flint having been placed in a hearth, accidentally or as a structural component. The bulk of the burnt flint was recovered from the 'relict' soil, although no concentrations were found to identify their precise location this material almost certainly derives from hearths.

APPENDIX 2: THE POTTERY ASSEMBLAGE

Malcolm Lyne

INTRODUCTION

The site produced a total of 417 sherds (7788g) of pottery from 17 contexts, ranging in date from between the Middle/Late Bronze Age and Late Iron Age.

METHODOLOGY

All of the assemblages were quantified by numbers of sherds and their weights per fabric. These fabrics were classified using a X8 magnification lens with in-built metric scale, enabling the natures, sizes, forms and frequencies of any added inclusions to be determined. Fine fabrics were further examined using a X30 magnification pocket microscope with artificial illumination source.

Two numbered fabric series were drawn up with the prefixes BA for Bronze Age and IA for Late Iron Age. Two of the 'Belgic' Late Iron Age fabrics are, however, covered by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust's codings for East Kent (Macpherson-Grant *et al* 1995).

FABRICS

Early/Late Bronze Age

BA.1 Lumpy with sparse to moderate up to 5.00mm ill-sorted calcined flint filler.

BA.2 Finer version with up to 2.00mm ill-sorted calcined flint filler.

BA.3. Fine patchy grey-black fabric with sparse up to 1.00mm calcined flint filler.

Late Iron Age

IA.1. Handmade fabric with profuse ill-sorted up to 3.00mm calcined flint filler, patchy fired buff/grey/black

IA.2. Similar but with additional up to 1.00mm crushed brown grog.

B.2. Coarse brown-black grog-tempered ware with external furrowing

B.3. Similar but with additional sparse calcined flint.

THE ASSEMBLAGES

Late Bronze Age

Assemblage 1. From the fill of the northernmost ditch

The 210 sherds (2756g) of pottery from this feature are largely made up of 182 fragments (2642g) from the following vessel:

Bucket urn of Deverel-Rimbury tradition in patchy black/brown Fabric BA.1 with flattened rim and raised finger-impressed body-cordon, c.1500-1000BC (Fig 14, p1).

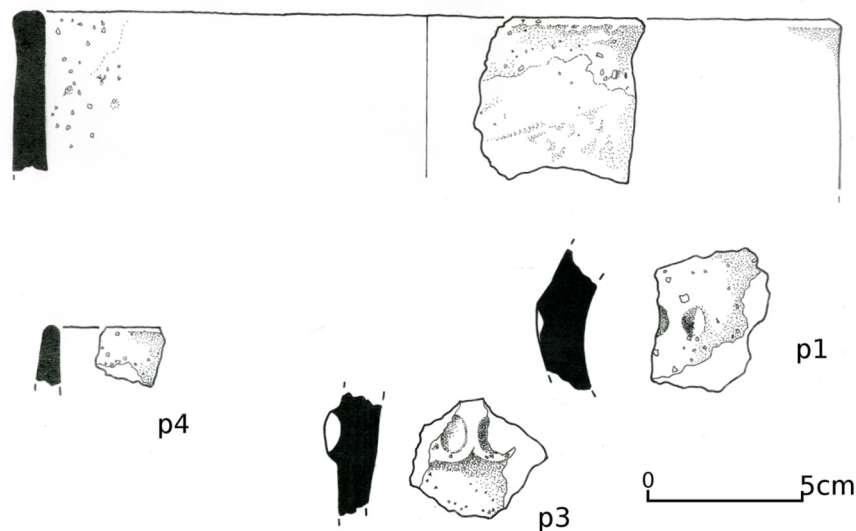


Figure 14

The other sherds comprise 24 underfired lumps from another urn of uncertain form in the slightly finer fabric BA.2 and three sherds in patchy grey/black Fabric BA.3 with sparse up-to 1.00mm calcined flint filler

Assemblage 2. From the fill of the pit adjacent to southern ditch

The 97 sherds (4138g) of pottery from this feature are all from the following vessel:

Greater part of urn in patchy black/brown/grey Fabric BA.1 with finger-impressed decoration on the rim and a double cordon of similar decoration on the body. Most of the rim is missing and it has not proved possible to join up any of the sherds. One fragment, however, does indicate that the vessel was probably a biconical urn with a further band of finger-impressed decoration on the carination, c.2000-1000BC (Fig15, p2).

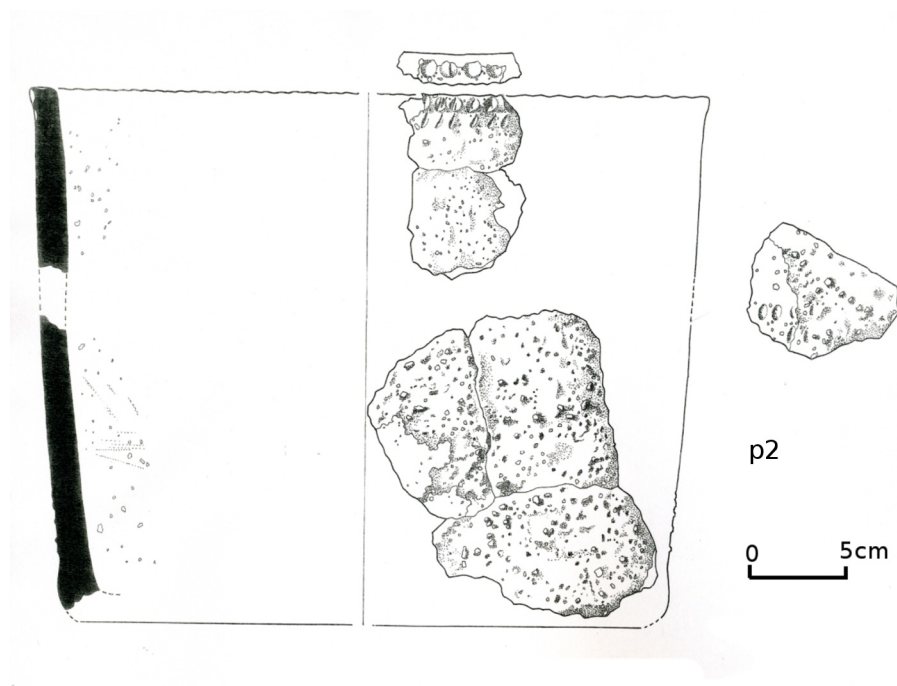


Figure 15

Assemblage 3. From the fill of the southernmost ditch

The 13 sherds (112g) of pottery from this feature comprise the following:

Bucket-urn fragment with raised finger-impressed cordon in patchy black/brown/orange Fabric BA.1. One of seven sherds from this vessel, c.1500-1000BC (Fig 14, p3).

Rim sherd from small, possibly biconical bowl or cup in smooth black Fabric BA.3 with moderate to profuse up-to 1.00mm crushed calcined flint filler. One of six sherds from a vessel possibly similar to Runnymede Bridge Type 4A (Longley 1980) and in similar fabric, c.1000-700BC (Fig 14, p4).

The presence of both of these vessels together suggests that the ditch was open between c.1100BC and 900BC

Late Iron Age

The few sherds in Late Iron Age fabrics are lacking rim fragments and other diagnostic pieces needed for more precise dating: of the 48 sherds, all that can be said is that the majority (96%) are in calcined flint-tempered fabrics. Only two sherds are in 'Belgic' grog-tempered fabric variants and include a fragment from a furrowed jar. This very high percentage of calcined flint-tempered wares suggests that occupation on this site took place during the earlier part of the Late Iron Age between approximately 125 and 25BC (Macpherson-Grant 1993).

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