Prehistoric and Roman settlement at Tothill Street, Minster in Thanet, Kent

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Prehistoric and Roman settlement at Tothill Street, Minster in Thanet, Kent

by J Cotton with I Betts, M Henderson, N Macpherson-Grant, M Marshall, G Monteil, J Morris, A Pipe, K Stewart and A Thorp

Introduction

This report presents the results of two phases of archaeological work undertaken by Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) prior to the construction of a two-storey hotel with ancillary restaurant, parking and landscaping on the east side of Tothill Street, Minster in Thanet.

The site lies c 100m south of the Mount Pleasant roundabout on the A253 and is centred at National Grid (NGR) TR 631123 165582 (Fig 1). It is situated at an altitude of 45m OD just south of a high point (Telegraph Hill, at 55m OD) which lies north of the A299 (Fig 2). The geology is Upper Chalk. The ground slopes gently across the site from north-north-east to south-south-west, before falling away more steeply down to the former Wantsum channel c 1.5km to the south.

An initial evaluation of 14 trenches (completed in March 2010) was followed by a programme of full excavation later in 2010 and in early 2011. This was carried out in three phases: phase 1, within the footprint of the proposed buildings in the west of the site (six weeks extended to ten); phase 2, within the area of the proposed car park in the east of the site (four weeks); and phase 3, at the site entrance (January 2011). The complete archive and finds are currently held by MOLA under site code KT-TSM10.

Archaeological background

Tothill Street lies within a multi-period landscape intensively utilised for settlement, ceremony, burial and agriculture since at least the Neolithic period (Birchenough 2010, figs 2–3). Various elements of this plough-reduced landscape have been examined in archaeological interventions conducted over the last 20 years or so (Fig 2). Two of these projects are of particular relevance to the Tothill Street site. The first, undertaken on the Minster Services site immediately to the north (Fig 2), effectively represents a spatial continuation of the Tothill Street sequence (Gollop and Mason 2005). Features recorded here included a single crouched inhumation and a Bronze Age round barrow, two Iron Age enclosures and a small Late Iron Age inhumation cemetery consisting of 11 graves – the latter provisionally dated on the basis of a single pottery vessel to c 100 BC–c AD 50. The larger of the two Iron Age enclosures, provisionally dated c 600–400/350 BC,
The Tothill Street site sequence

The basic unit of reference used throughout the archive that supports this report is the context number, a unique number given to each archaeological event on site. Context numbers in the text and tables are shown in square brackets, thus: [100]. The graphical conventions used in the period plans are shown in Fig 3.

The archaeological sequence was arranged into subgroups and groups during analysis, and these have been interpreted in terms of land use. Land uses are defined as Structures (S), Open Areas (OA) and Buildings (B), and are numbered in this report as recorded in the MOLA Oracle database. Finds have been assigned unique publication numbers with a letter prefix denoting their category, as follows: <F1> for flint, <P1> for pottery, <S1> for accessioned finds and <T1> for ceramic building material.
A large number of truncated features were identified during the MOLA work at Tothill Street (Fig 4). Ten periods were defined, as follows:

Period 1: natural landscape;
Period 2: Early and Middle Neolithic (c 3800–2800 BC);
Period 3: Early Bronze Age (c 2000–1500 BC);
Period 4: Middle Bronze Age (c 1500–1150 BC);
Period 5: Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age (c 950–850/800 BC);
Period 6: Early/Middle Iron Age to Late Iron Age/early Roman (c 600 BC–AD 50);
Period 7: early Roman (late first century AD);
Period 8: later Roman (second to third centuries AD);
Period 9: medieval;
Period 10: post-medieval/modern.

In terms of the quantity of features and finds, the best represented periods are period 5 (Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age) and period 8 (later Roman, second to third centuries AD). However, as noted above, the site lies within a wide and intensively exploited landscape, and the presence or absence and expansion or diminution of activity within its limited footprint need signify little more than localised shifts in the pattern of inhabitation. Moreover, the shallow and disturbed nature of the site created further difficulties in assigning a number of contexts to specific periods. This is most obvious with regard to the ‘natural’ hollows, many of which contained finds of all periods in their fills – though the question of intrusion or residuality is relevant to most contexts. The present report concentrates on the prehistoric and Romano-British elements of the site sequence.

The natural landscape (period 1)

GEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL FEATURES (OA1)
A number of shallow features in the surface of the chalk bedrock are of geological or natural origin. These include a series of broadly parallel but discontinuous linear periglacial ‘stripes’, with a common downslope alignment, broadly north-north-east to south-south-west, and irregular circular hollows (eg contexts [1339] and [1665]). Many contained cultural material in their upper fills.
The periglacial stripes are natural thermal fissures in the surface of the chalk subsequently exploited by water run-off. These have been noted elsewhere on the Thanet chalk (e.g. Moody 2008, 27–9, figs 8–9) and beyond. Some of the irregular circular hollows are likely to represent the positions of former trees.

**Early and Middle Neolithic, c 3800–2800 BC (period 2)**

**LOCALISED INTERVENTIONS IN THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE (OA2)**

No cut features certainly attributable to this period were identified, although Neolithic material was present in the upper levels of several amorphous hollows. Low numbers of diagnostic lithic and ceramic finds (Fig 5) were also incorporated in later contexts, including the Roman sunken-featured buildings.

One fragment of Early Neolithic pottery was recorded from irregular hollow [346], in the form of a flint-tempered sherd with a simple, slightly incurving and rounded rim (Fig 6, <P1>). Its burnished exterior surface and rim top are stab-decorated with neat impressions arranged in a series of irregular diagonal lines. The simple form and type of decoration are broadly similar to vessels from Windmill Hill, Wiltshire (Smith 1965, fig 27, nos P180, P192, P194) and from an unpublished intercutting pit sequence at Court Stairs, Ramsgate. These various vessels all belong...
to the ‘southern decorated’ tradition of the later phases of the Kentish Early Neolithic, currently dated to c 3650–3350 cal BC (Barclay and Edwards 2006, table 2.1).

Two Middle Neolithic sherds were recovered from fill [197] of large hollow [344] (OA8, below), with other single sherds from fill [414] of pit [415] and from the tertiary fill [1319] of Structure 1 (below). Both sherds from context [197] belong to a coarsely flint-tempered round-bodied bowl with pale buff oxidised surfaces (Fig 6, <P2>). The external surfaces are decorated in the Mortlake style of the Peterborough ware tradition, with horizontal rows of diagonal whipped-cord ‘maggot’ impressions arranged herringbone fashion. This style of decoration is widely paralleled, as for example at White Horse Stone, Kent (Barclay and Edwards 2006, fig 2.6, no. 15; Booth et al 2011, fig 3.33, no. P6), and dates to c 3350–2800 cal BC.

The complete shafthole adze <S19> (Fig 5) of unsourced stone (possibly quartzite or similar) was reused as packing for an internal structural post in Roman Building 6 (Fig 44). It belongs to a class of artefacts that are widely distributed but not closely datable (eg Roe 1979, 36 and fig 12), though generally assumed to belong within the later Neolithic/Early Bronze Age.

**Period 2 summary**

Although no features could be ascribed to the Neolithic period, a number of scattered finds of pottery and struck flint in later contexts probably reflect small-scale episodic interventions in the local landscape. Similar groups of material have been recovered from locations on the chalk ridge and beyond (eg Boast 2007, 421; Bennett et al 2008, 10–15; Mason and Andrews 2012, 30; Hearne et al 1995, 261, 283–6).

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### Early Bronze Age burials, c 2000–1500 BC (period 3)

**CROUCHED INHUMATIONS (OA3)**

Two truncated inhumation burials placed in small, shallow oval graves are attributable to the Early Bronze Age (Fig 7). Neither grave appears to have been associated with any other contemporary features. The first grave cut [176], 1.22m north–south by 0.83m east–west with a retained depth of only 0.09–0.15m,
contained the crouched remains of a moderately well-preserved (41.3% complete) single subadult aged 12–17 years at death (Fig 8). This individual lay on their right side with the head to the west, facing downslope to the south. A single calibrated radiocarbon date of 2015–1772 cal BC (UBA-22902, 3555±35 BP) was obtained from a tooth. The grave backfill [174] contained a small sherd identified as the lower part of the collar of a collared urn (Fig 6, <P3>), together with some fragments of fired clay. The sherd is in a near-black friable grog-tempered fabric, the exterior surface decorated with three/four lines of diagonal closely-spaced twisted cord impressions, almost certainly from a collar design of filled triangles (cf Gibson 1986, fig 17.1). The radiocarbon date from the tooth is within the earlier half of the recognised regional currency of collared urns. Two other stray sherds of collared urn were identified elsewhere on the site, from fill [758] within hollow [617] and fill [1083] of ditch [1084] (S7).

The second grave cut [747] lay some 60m further south. Measuring 1.02m east–west by 0.48m north–south, with a retained depth of 0.06m, it contained the truncated and mixed (possibly crouched) remains of at least two subadults, whose fragmented skulls appear to have lain at opposite ends of the grave. The older of the two was moderately well preserved (24% complete) and aged 6–11 years at death; the younger was poorly preserved (14.9% complete) and aged 1–5 years. Heavy dental wear to several teeth suggested the presence of a third, older, individual in the grave, although no further adult skeletal elements could be identified. A handful of struck flint spalls, low quantities of charcoal and two unidentifiable cereal grains were present in the backfill [744]. Attempts to obtain a radiocarbon date were unsuccessful, and the double burial is assigned to this period solely on the basis of its level of preservation and the possibly crouched mode of burial.

A third, much-disturbed inhumation lying within the top few centimetres of shallow hollow [1465] further east may also belong with these burials. It comprised the disarticulated remains of a partial skeleton (11.6% complete) of a subadult aged <18 years at death.

Period 3 summary

Three isolated inhumation burials of subadults were located across the site; only one, burial [176], could be dated to the Early Bronze Age with certainty. No other features of this date were identified. Crouched burials have been found on the Minster Services site to the north (Gollop and Mason 2005, 2) and along the route of the A253 further west (Bennett et al 2008, 15–21). The Minster Services burial was accompanied by a jet bangle and two beads, one of amber and a second fashioned from a polished fossil sponge with an elephant tusk shell inserted through it. Several of the burials along the A253 provided calibrated radiocarbon dates that overlap with the earlier end of the calibrated date range from Tothill Street burial [176] (ibid, 17, table 1.4). As at Tothill Street, a number of these burials were of subadults.
Middle Bronze Age, c 1500–1150 BC (period 4)

POSSIBLE BARROW/ENCLOSURE (S1)

Period 4 is represented by a gently arcing length of a substantial ditch (S1) located in the south-east corner of the site (Fig 7). The 12m arc of Structure 1 was sectioned in two separate slots, [1321] (north) and [1493] (south). These demonstrated that the ditch had a surviving width of 2.80m and had been cut 1.30m deep into the chalk (Fig 9). Its profile was asymmetric, with a noticeably steeper (inner) eastern face and a narrow base.

The ditch fills were consistent across both slots and suggest that loose chalk [1318] and [1490] from a mound (or bank) had begun to slip into the ditch from the south-east soon after construction, sealing the primary silts [1320] and [1492] on its floor. Thereafter equilibrium was probably relatively quickly achieved with the deposition of tertiary fills [1319] and [1489], creating a stable profile in which a series of final fills including [1316] and [1478] had accumulated (Fig 10).

Fig 9 Northern slot [1321] through barrow/enclosure ditch (S1) under excavation, looking south-east

Fig 10 North-east facing section of barrow/enclosure ditch (S1), northern slot [1321] (scale 1:80)
A small botanical assemblage recovered from the primary fills in both slots included a single unidentifiable cereal grain and some unidentified wood charcoal. That from primary fill [1492] provided a calibrated radiocarbon date of 1369–1056 cal BC (UBA-22906, 2975±34 BP), which dates the construction of the ditch to the latter part of the conventional Middle Bronze Age.

Finds from the lower ditch fills were few and not particularly informative. They include a small assemblage of 27 pieces of struck flint, mostly debitage but including a snapped and obliquely retouched piece (Fig 11, <F4>); a scrap of Middle Neolithic Peterborough ware; and fragments of fired clay including a flattened rod with a T-shaped terminal (not illustrated), possibly kiln or oven furniture.

Finds from the final fills, [1316] and [1478], comprise a medium-sized assemblage of Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age pottery (over 80 sherds weighing 814g); nearly 1.5kg of animal bone, principally cattle with some sheep/goat; 52 fragments of flint debitage including a single core, a notched piece and two flakes from an anvil or quern (Fig 11, <F5>–<F7>), perhaps the residue of a discrete knapping episode; a chipped sandstone roundel (Fig 11, <S22>); and a fragment of unburnt human skull.

The faunal remains include a number of cattle teeth and long bones that had been deliberately fragmented, perhaps to access the marrow; one of the latter bore evidence of a healed break. In addition, a horse pelvis with butchery marks was recovered from [1486]. Bendrey (2010) has suggested that the horse becomes more common in the Middle Bronze Age as an animal conferring prestige and status.

Information as to the nature of the landscape in which the monument lay is provided by terrestrial mollusca. Few were recovered from the primary silts, although an assemblage recovered from final fill [1478] in the southern slot denoted well-drained, dry, short-sward calcareous open grassland (Pipe 2011). The presence of heath snail, together with the relative abundance of moss chrysalis snail, suggests that the sward was grazed by sheep rather than cattle. Moreover, the relative abundance of moss chrysalis snail and eccentric...
grasp snail suggests the presence of grassland exhibiting some decalcification and associated vegetation impoverishment, for example through tillage (Davies 2008, 63).

**Period 4 summary**

The Structure 1 ditch is here interpreted as the remains of a large plough-reduced earthen barrow up to c 30m in diameter, although the possibility that it belongs to a settlement enclosure ditch cannot be entirely discounted. If a barrow, it may have formed part of the linear cemetery visible as a series of cropmarks in the fields to the east (Fig 2); the barrow located on the Minster Services site may also belong to this same group.

A calibrated radiocarbon date of 1369–1056 cal BC (UBA-22906, 2975±34 BP) from the primary fill of Structure 1 dates its construction to the end of the conventional Middle Bronze Age. Finds from the lower ditch fills were few; those from the upper fills include sherds of Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age pottery, indicating that the monument continued to provide a focus of interest for some time following its construction. Assemblages of animal bone and lithics – the latter technologically indistinguishable from those assigned to period 5 contexts (below) – could mark the routine deposition of feasting waste, although the presence of a carefully chipped sandstone roundel and of a partial right adult human parietal (skull) bone is suggestive of non-utilitarian activity. The high proportion of cattle teeth among the faunal assemblage suggests the presence of at least three skulls and calls to mind the deposition of cattle skulls at Early Bronze Age barrows such as Irthlingborough (Davis and Payne 1993) and Gayhurst (Deighton and Halstead 2007). Terrestrial molluscs from the final ditch fills indicate that latterly the monument was surrounded by impoverished sheep-grazed grassland.

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**Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age c 950–850/800 BC (period 5)**

This comprises one of the major periods of activity within the site footprint. Features focused on two ditched enclosures: northern enclosure 1 (S2 and S3/S4, enclosing OA5); and southern enclosure 2 (S7 and S8, enclosing OA6). A range of post-built structures and post alignments lay both within and beyond the enclosures (eg S5, S6, S9–S13, S33, S34), together with a scatter of somewhat amorphous hollows, pits and postholes (OA7), including a marked concentration in the north-west corner of the site. Ditch recuts (S2–S4) associated with northern enclosure 1 suggest that this element of the sequence underwent at least three phases of activity spanning the Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age. Ditch recuts associated with southern enclosure 2 indicate at least two phases of activity (Fig 12).

![Fig 12 Plan showing archaeological features of period 5 (scale 1:1250)](image-url)
**Northern enclosure 1**

Northern enclosure 1 measured some 32m across and was defined by shallow recut ditches (S2 and S3/S4; Fig 13). It was open to the south and extended beyond the site footprint to the north. The space enclosed by the ditches was 27m across and is designated Open Area 5.

**ENCLOSURE DITCHES (S2 AND S3/S4)**

Ditch Structure 2 was 16m in length and comprised the eastern arm of northern enclosure 1 (Fig 14). Excavation indicated that it was made up of at least three, possibly four, narrow intercutting ditches ([1611], [1612] and [1613]) identified in four excavated slots (Table 1).

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*Fig 13 Plan of northern enclosure 1 and associated contexts (scale 1:400)*

*Fig 14 The eastern arm of the northern enclosure 1 ditch (S2), looking north-east*
The earliest feature in the sequence was ditch 2 [1611] which, at c 0.4m in depth, was the shallowest of the three. This was replaced by ditch 3 [1612], which was c 1m wide and c 0.5m in depth, while ditch 1 [1613], 1.20m wide by c 0.6m in depth, appears to have been the largest and latest in the sequence (Fig 15). Three postholes were noted in the base of ditch 1 in slot 2, though in none of the others. A molluscan assemblage recovered from [1426], the secondary fill of ditch 1, is similar in composition to that from the final fill of barrow/enclosure ditch Structure 1, and confirms the presence of impoverished short-sward sheep-grazed grassland in the vicinity.

A total of 228 pottery sherds weighing 3078g were recovered from the various ditch fills, mostly from the secondary silts; all are typical of regional Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age assemblages. Ditch 2 produced 21 sherds (172g), ditch 3, 142 sherds (2200g) and ditch 1, 65 sherds (695g). Fill [1538] within the earliest (ditch 2) contained an unworn fragment from a fine hemispherical bowl with an internally bevelled rim (Fig 16, <P4>), while more mundane elements came from secondary fill [1426] and undifferentiated fill [1507] of the latest (ditch 1) (Fig 16, <P5>, <P6>).

The fills of ditch 3 were the most productive and included 42 sherds (749g) from primary fill [1536]. Noteworthy vessels include the fine thin-walled cup/beaker <P7> (Fig 16), the slightly coarser jar <P8> (Fig 16) and a single sherd from an exceptionally large and fine thin-walled bowl with horizontal combed decoration (Fig 16, <P9>). The secondary fills, [1354] and [1418], contained several coarse jars with neatly cable-decorated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ditch 1</th>
<th>Ditch 2</th>
<th>Ditch 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cut [1613]</td>
<td>Cut [1611]</td>
<td>Cut [1612]</td>
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<tr>
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<td>[1415] fill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[1366] primary fill</td>
<td>[139] cut</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>[1359] cut</td>
<td>[1379] primary fill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slot 2</td>
<td>[1487]* fill (→3 postholes [1382]/[1381]; [1384]/[1383]; [1386]/[1385])</td>
<td>[1473]* fill</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>[1488] cut</td>
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<td>[1468]* fill</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[1440] cut</td>
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<td>[1538]* fill</td>
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<td>(S terminus)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>[1536]* primary fill</td>
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<td>[1537] cut</td>
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Key: * = Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age pottery

Table 1 Concordance of Structure 2, ditches 1–3, and fills across excavated slots 1–4

The fills of ditch 3 were the most productive and included 42 sherds (749g) from primary fill [1536]. Noteworthy vessels include the fine thin-walled cup/beaker <P7> (Fig 16), the slightly coarser jar <P8> (Fig 16) and a single sherd from an exceptionally large and fine thin-walled bowl with horizontal combed decoration (Fig 16, <P9>). The secondary fills, [1354] and [1418], contained several coarse jars with neatly cable-decorated

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rims (Fig 16, P10–P12). A majority of the faunal assemblage recovered from the primary fill [1536] of ditch 3 comprised horse, possibly from a single individual.

A handful of struck flints was recovered from the ditch fills. Most of these comprise unmodified debitage, although a single convex side scraper of Bullhead Bed flint (Fig 18, F10) came from [1426], the secondary fill of latest ditch 1. The only other find is a simple copper alloy cast ring fitting (not illustrated) from undifferentiated fill [77]. This is not intrinsically datable and could as easily be Roman as prehistoric.

Structure 3 was 12.60m in length, up to 1.99m in width and up to 0.34m in depth, and represents the western side of northern enclosure 1. Recorded as a single irregularly sided shallow ditch [303], the section drawings suggest that this too may have comprised a series of shallow ditches recut on the same alignment, although they were not differentiated in the field.

The relationship of Structure 3 to the larger ditch Structure 4 could not be established, but in plan it seems likely to be the earlier of the two. In scale it is closer to the ditches comprising the eastern arm of northern enclosure 1 (S2), although it produced few finds including 12 sherds (73g).

Structure 4 was recorded as a 30m length of shallow ditch [1621] up to c 2.2m in width and 0.20m in depth that curved gently south-south-east of Structure 3. Like ditches Structure 2 and Structure 3, the site records suggest that Structure 4 may have comprised a sequence of narrower ditches recut on the same alignment, one of which was recorded as a 5.80m length of narrow gully [1446], 0.18m deep, close to the terminus. It produced a negligible ceramic assemblage of four sherds (22g).
The southern terminus of ditch Structure 4 lay some 26m south of ditch Structure 3 and, at 3.80m wide by 0.19m deep, was broader, shallower and more irregular in plan. Structure 4 may have replaced Structure 3 to create a more enclosed space, as it effectively halves the 40m wide gap between ditches Structure 2 and Structure 3. The remaining 21m gap between Structure 4 and Structure 2 was still wide but would have been narrowed further if accompanied by an internal earthen bank.

THE INTERIOR OF NORTHERN ENCLOSURE 1 (OA5): SIX-POST STRUCTURE (S5)

Structure 5 was situated on the east side of northern enclosure 1 and presumably in the lee of an earthen bank associated with ditch Structure 2. It comprised a robust six-post rectangular structure 3.75m in length and 2.75m in width, aligned north–south (Fig 13).

The structure appears to have had more than one phase of use, as both posts at its southern end had been replaced at least once, as had the middle post on the west side. Five of the six postholes were 0.40–0.50m in depth; the double posthole [1683] in the middle of the west side and the replacement postholes [1661] and [1671] at the southern end were noticeably shallower. Small but fresh body sherds of Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age pottery were recovered from all six postholes (a total of 25 sherds, 101g).

A number of postholes may be associated with this structure. These include a short row of four within horizontal spread [1420] c 5m to the south. It is possible that these and others further to the west (below) formed part of a fence that screened off Structure 5 from the open entrance to northern enclosure 1.

THE INTERIOR OF NORTHERN ENCLOSURE 1 (OA5): SOIL LAYERS AND ASSOCIATED FEATURES

In addition to six-post Structure 5, Open Area 5 contained two discrete but extensive spreads of shallow horizontal stratigraphy, [1449] and [1420], c 0.2m thick. These appear to have survived later disturbance by virtue of the fact that they occupied shallow hollows or undulations in the chalk bedrock. Spread [1449] probably consisted of a combination of occupation and standing midden deposits, and perhaps also incorporated the plough-reduced remains of an internal earthen bank (whose existence could explain the absence of features immediately inside ditches Structure 2 and Structure 4).

Significant quantities of possibly structural and/or occupation debris were recovered from [1449] in particular, in the form of fired clay, butchcred sheep/goat long bones and pottery – much of the latter re-fired – as well as a series of postholes and small pits towards its periphery. Several of the latter contained cremated bone and botanical remains. Sub-circular pit [1584], measuring 1.00 x 0.70m with a retained depth of 0.60m, for example, contained fragments of burnt and heavily fragmented long bone, along with substantial and only slightly worn sherds of a very large fine bowl (Fig 17, <P13>) and a complete coarse jar base (Fig 17, <P14>) crusted with burnt flint. An associated molluscan assemblage again indicates the presence of impoverished short-sward grassland. In addition, fragments of cremated bone were noted in the base of a deep double posthole [1644], 0.54m in depth, several metres to the north. It is possible that this, together with a further posthole [1655], formed part of a gently curving linear fence that screened off Structure 5 (above). Fill [1447] of shallow pit [1496], 0.25m in depth, produced a small charred botanical assemblage which included a single charred barley grain (Hordeum vulgare) together with seeds of maple-leaved goosefoot (Chenopodium hybridum), some fragments of a plum or cherry (Prunus sp) stone, and two seeds of bedstraw (Galium spp).

A large assemblage of 534 sherds (6028g) of worn and abraded pottery was recovered from [1449] and its associated fills [1448], [1494] and [1515]. These include a number of same-vessel joins, while more than a hundred sherds were lightly or more severely re-fired. Re-fired elements include a small bowl with an omphalos base (Fig 17, <P15>) and a larger shouldered bowl (Fig 17, <P16>). Unburnt vessels include a small cup/beaker (Fig 17, <P17>), the finely-moulded angle-shouldered and bevelled-rim bowl <P18> (Fig 17) and a horizontally comb-decorated bowl (Fig 17, <P19>), together with a range of coarse jars with both plain and decorated rims (Fig 17, <P20>–<P25>).

The weathered nature of much of the faunal and ceramic assemblages suggests that these had lain open to the elements for some time – perhaps in a standing midden deposit, for example – while the quantity of re-fired sherds suggests intensive use of pyrotechnology, though to what end remains unclear. Similar
Fig 17 Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age pottery from cremation pit [1584], spread [1449] and large pit [1455] within northern enclosure 1 (OAS): fill of pit [1584], <P13> and <P14>; spread [1449], re-fired vessels <P15> and <P16>, and unburnt vessels <P17>–<P25>; fill of large pit [1455], <P26>--<P28> (scale 1:4)
observations were made at Cliffs End Farm too (Leivers 2014, 148). Metalworking or salt evaporation are possibilities, although no diagnostic residues connected with either were located apart from a small stray fragment of plano-convex copper ingot (Fig 18, <S7>) from [1515]. Cooking/feasting and cremation are further activities generating heat, for which there is evidence in the form of burnt bone from pit [1584] and double posthole [1644].

Fig 18 Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age finds from northern enclosure 1, Open Area 5 and associated features: fragment of plano-convex copper-alloy ingot <S7> from spread [1515]; fragments of fired clay with wattle impressions <T1> from [1447], [1494] and [1642]; polished bone point <S14> from pit [1673]; flint side scraper <F10> from northern enclosure 1 ditch fill [1426]; flint borer <F11> from spread [1420]; single-platform core <F9> from fill [1306] of posthole [1307] (S6) (scales as shown)
A considerable quantity of daub, some partly burnt, was recovered from Open Area 5 (Fig 18, <T1>). Many fragments retain impressions of round withies and rectangular lath impressions, and presumably represent the remains of collapsed domestic structures such as walls and/or ovens. Other fired clay fragments from the fill of pit [1476] probably belong to perforated pyramidal weights. In addition to the fragment of plano-convex copper-alloy ingot from [1515], notable finds include a single perforated whelk shell from the same context and a polished bone point fashioned on the proximal end of a cattle metatarsal (Fig 18, <S14>) from the fill of a shallow elongated pit [1673] immediately to the north of spread [1449]. The bone point may be compared with three others from contexts in Open Area 7 (below; Fig 24, <S13>, <S15>, <S16>).

Though more extensive in area, spread [1420] produced fewer finds apart from those deposited in large oval pit [1455]. This lay just inside the entrance to northern enclosure 1 adjacent to the terminal of ditch Structure 2. It measured c 5 x 2.6m in plan, with a retained depth of up to 0.60m. Sampling of its lower fill [1477] recovered a small charred botanical assemblage including two cereal grains and a pea, together with low concentrations of wood charcoal. Two large conjoining fragments of unburnt supra-occipital bone from an adult human skull lay within its upper fill [1454], along with over 2kg of animal bone, mainly cattle with some sheep. In addition, fills [1454] and [1477] produced over 165 sherds (2434g) of pottery, including a shouldered jar (Fig 17, <P26>), a small fine angle-showered bowl (Fig 17, <P27>) and a small sherd of cordon-decorated storage jar (Fig 17, <P28>) – one of the few examples recorded from this site (cf Highstead, Chislet, period 2: Couldrey 2007, fig 71, no. 188).

Compared with the quantities of pottery, fired clay and animal bone, Open Area 5 produced only a small lithic assemblage, most of which came from spread [1420] and fill [1454] within large pit [1455]. It mainly comprises unmodifieddebitage but includes a single robustly retouched borer (Fig 18, <F11>) from [1420].

**POST SETTING (S6) WITHIN THE SOUTH ENTRANCE TO NORTHERN ENCLOSURE 1**

Structure 6 comprised a subrectangular arrangement of seven postholes between ditches Structure 2 and Structure 4. These varied from 0.27m to 0.50m in depth. Two adjacent postholes [1294] and [1307], each c 0.5m in depth, contained ten body sherds of Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age pottery weighing 70g and a single-platform flake core (Fig 18, <F9>).

Triple posthole [1484] has been included here, although it is eccentric to the subrectangular post setting and lies at the mid point between the termini of ditches Structure 2 and Structure 4. All three postholes were 0.40m deep.

**Possible southern enclosure 2**

Southern enclosure 2 is less convincing than its northern counterpart, but is defined by two shallow ditches c 50m apart (Fig 12). The space between the ditches is designated Open Area 6. This possible enclosure lay immediately to the west of Middle Bronze Age barrow/enclosure Structure 1.

**ENCLOSURE DITCHES (S7 AND S8)**

Ditch Structure 7 comprised a truncated 14m arc of ditch [1615] between 1.80m and 1.20m in width and 0.10m in depth that curved gently to the north-east (Fig 12). It is possible that Structure 7 represents the western arm of an open enclosure whose eastern arm is ditch Structure 8, 50m distant.

Ditch Structure 8 comprised a 10m length of ditch aligned north-north-east to south-south-west (Fig 12), with at least two phases of use. Ditch [1501], 1.30m wide by 0.24–0.28m deep, was the earlier of the two and had been recut at least once by ditch [1497], which was of similar width but 0.48m deep. Fill [1502] of the earlier phase produced a small assemblage of ten moderately worn body sherds (76g); fills from the later phase produced a handful of small, fresher body sherds (137g), some conjoining.
THE INTERIOR OF POSSIBLE SOUTHERN ENCLOSURE 2 (OA6): LARGE PIT [1315]

A large pit [1315] lay midway between ditches Structure 7 and Structure 8 in Open Area 6 (Fig 19), and may be the southern equivalent of pit [1455] within Open Area 5 to the north. Pit [1315] measured 3.45m east–west by 2.54m north–south, with a retained depth of 0.94m. Its stepped profile contained a sequence of fills [1314], [1333], [1313], [1285] and [1284]. Significant botanical and ceramic assemblages were recovered from primary fill [1314], including a sooted sherd which produced a single calibrated radiocarbon date of 1110–921 cal BC (UBA-22907, 2843±23 BP), placing it within the earlier part of the conventional Late Bronze Age.

The small charred botanical assemblage from [1314] incorporated two barley grains as well as five unidentifiable cereal grains, along with two fragments of celtic/horse bean (Vicia faba) and a seed of black bindweed (Fallopia convolvulus). In addition, over a kilogram of animal bone was recovered, much of it from final fill [1284]. A large proportion comprises worn cattle and sheep/goat elements, with some evidence of butchery. Elements of a single dog were also recovered from [1284] together with the fragmented right tibiotalus of an adult buzzard; a left tibiotalus – possibly from the same bird – was present in [1313].

In addition to the botanical and faunal assemblages, the fills of pit [1315] also produced a large ceramic assemblage of 283 sherds (5828g), many conjoining. Half of the assemblage by sherd count and 64% by weight was recovered from primary fill [1314], including a large and slightly over-fired sherd from a large globular jar (Fig 20, <P29>), the part-profile of a large soot-encrusted bowl with an inner rim bevel and neatly decorated rim (Fig 20, <P30>) and a rim sherd from a small bevel-rimmed jar (Fig 20, <P31>). Sooting from bowl <P30> furnished the single calibrated radiocarbon date of 1110–921 cal BC (above). Secondary fill [1333] produced a further bevel-rimmed jar (Fig 20, <P32>) and final fills [1284] and [1285] three other vessels (Fig 20, <P33>–<P35>) including the regionally unique handled cup (Fig 20, <P33>).

Fig 19  Pit [1315] under excavation, showing the pottery group from primary fill [1314]
THE INTERIOR OF POSSIBLE SOUTHERN ENCLOSURE 2 (OA6): POSSIBLE FOUR-POST STRUCTURE (S13)
Structure 13 (Fig 12) comprised an undated group of three postholes between 0.18m and 0.28m deep within Open Area 6. These appear to represent three quarters of a four-post structure c.2.5m square, disturbed by a modern path. A single small sherd of pottery was recovered from [1301].

Features outside the enclosures
FOUR-POST STRUCTURE (S9) WEST OF NORTHERN ENCLOSURE 1
Structure 9 (Fig 12) comprised a four-post structure 3.00m square west of northern enclosure 1. All four postholes produced small, fresh body sherds and were 0.35–0.49m deep. A small group of four undated postholes, 0.27–0.34m deep, within the footprint of Structure 9 may be associated with its use.
FOUR-POST STRUCTURE (S10) WEST OF NORTHERN ENCLOSURE 1

Structure 10 (Fig 12) comprised a four-post structure 3.00m square west of northern enclosure 1. The postholes were 0.20–0.38m deep, though only one, [407], produced any dating evidence in the form of three body sherds with light unifacial wear. A group of postholes to the south and south-west of the structure may be associated.

POST SETTING (S11) NORTH-WEST OF POSSIBLE SOUTHERN ENCLOSURE 2

Structure 11 (Fig 12) comprised an L-shaped arrangement of postholes north-west of possible southern enclosure 2. Most were very shallow and apparently truncated, while several were paired (eg [978]/[980], [988]/[1039] and [1087]/[1089]). One, [1112], consisted of a tight cluster of four deeper (0.37–0.48m) postholes.

POST SETTING (S12) EAST OF NORTHERN ENCLOSURE 1

Structure 12 (Fig 12) comprised a group of postholes, small pits and a linear gully east of northern enclosure 1 that may have formed part of one or more post-built structures. Several of the postholes were paired (eg [1428]/[1430]), while at least one, [1524], consisted of a multiple cut. Finds were few, although conjoining fragments of saddle quern (not illustrated) were recovered from the fills of adjacent postholes [1370] and [1376] – the latter cutting shallow gully [1378], whose fill contained an upturned pot base. In addition, upper fill [1349] of a small pit [1351] contained a small fossil sea urchin or echinoid (Conulus), together with fresh sherds including part of the upper body of a large thin-walled jar with impressed cable-style decoration on its rim.

PITS AND UNATTRIBUTED POSTHOLES (OA7)

Open Area 7 comprises a dense complex of shallow hollows, small pits and postholes that mainly cluster north-west of Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age enclosure ditches Structure 3 and Structure 4 (Fig 12). A number of the postholes were deep and flint-packed; others were slighter and less well-defined. Most produced no finds.

With the exception of several linear alignments, perhaps fence-lines (eg S33/S34; below), the arrangement of the postholes cannot be read as any obviously meaningful structures. However, they presumably indicate the presence of multiple short-term phases of structural activity. The absence of postholes and other features from a small circular open area north of shallow hollow [288] may be significant. A further larger hollow to the south, [315] with a depth of 0.20m, contained a number of discrete features, including a small U-shaped setting of sandstone blocks [316] set into an irregularly shaped pit [330]/[331].

Small botanical assemblages were recovered from three contexts: fill [483] of posthole [484], 0.36m in depth, contained three unidentifiable cereal grains and three legumes of vetch/pea type (Vicia/Lathyrus/Pisum spp); fill [289] of pit [290], 0.80m in depth within hollow [288], contained a wheat grain, some unidentifiable cereal grains and a small assemblage of wild seeds, including field bindweed, a bedstraw (Galium sp) and a seed of hemp agrimony (Eupatorium cannabinum); and fill [1342] of cremation pit [1343], 0.30m in depth and east of northern enclosure 1, contained wood charcoal and a single grain of barley.

The most important ceramic assemblage from Open Area 7 comprises 142 sherds (2200g) from the fill of shallow oval hollow [315]. This contained sherds of furrowed bowl (Fig 21, <P36>) and furrowed jar/bowl (Fig 21, <P37>): both have heavy unifacial wear, presumably sustained from lying exposed prior to or following their incorporation in the hollow. Fine furrowed vessels are not unknown from the region, as at East Northdown (Smith 1987, fig 10, nos P6, P9) and Iwade (Hamilton and Seager Thomas 2005, fig 35), but <P36> is the most complete profile recovered to date. Its decoration and oxidised orange-buff surfaces suggest an intention to emulate contemporary bronze vessels.
Another small fine ware sherd (Fig 21, <P38>) is from a jar with both diagonal and horizontal combed decoration similar to vessels from Highstead, Chislet (Couldrey 2007, fig 39, no. 53) and nearby Monkton Court Farm (Macpherson-Grant 1994, fig 5, no. 3). Both a cup (Fig 21, <P39>) and a bowl (Fig 21, <P40>) have similar tooled or combed horizontal decoration. Other vessels from the same context, both with internally-bevelled rims, include a fine thin-walled jar with flared mouth (Fig 21, <P41>) and a coarse jar with neat cabled decoration (Fig 21, <P42>). Fill [289] of pit [290] contained a third furrow-decorated vessel (Fig 21,
together with a fine horizontally comb-decorated bowl (Fig 21, <P44>), a jar with a very neatly decorated internally-bevelled rim (Fig 21, <P45>) and a small closed-mouth coarse jar (Fig 21, <P46>). Another relatively rare decorative type was found among much daub in fill [673] of pit [674], namely a large fragment of a fine jar with broad horizontal tooling framing a narrow panel with arcaded loops (Fig 21, <P47>).

Open Area 7 also produced a number of placed deposits including a small metalwork cache [177] tightly packed within subrectangular pit [208], 0.19–0.25m deep (Fig 22), between the two fence lines (S33 and S34; below). The cache weighs 246g and contains five objects of Ewart Park/Carp’s Tongue type comprising two complete penannular bracelets with expanded terminals <S1> and <S2>, and single fragments of a winged axe <S3>, a socketed axe <S4> and a leaf-shaped spearhead <S5> (Fig 23). In addition, a small pit [1343], 0.30m deep, immediately to the east of enclosure ditch Structure 2, contained a small amount of cremated human bone weighing 90.2g, comprising elements of cranium, humerus, radius, ulna, femur, tibia and os coxa belonging to a single adult of undetermined sex. This was accompanied by a small botanical assemblage incorporating wood charcoal and a single grain of barley. A further shallow pit [1341], 0.18m deep and some metres to the south, contained a single fragment of cremated bone.
Other notable finds from Open Area 7 include a single fragment of antler working waste <219> in the form of a sawn tine from pit [611], and two polished bone points <S13> and <S15> (Fig 24; Fig 55), possibly connected with weaving, from pit [289] in hollow [288]. One, <S15>, appears to have been made on the distal end of a horse metatarsal, and the other is fashioned on an unidentified long bone mid shaft. A further perforated spatulate piece, <S16> (Fig 24; Fig 55), on an unidentified split rib from fill [758] within hollow [617], may have had a similar function. Other weaving-related objects comprising spindle whorls and pyramidal weights were recovered from various later contexts elsewhere on the site (Fig 24, <S8>, <S10>–<S11>), while a residual copper-alloy razor of Hallstatt C type (Fig 23, <S6>) from hollow [344] in Open Area 8 was associated with a large Middle Iron Age ceramic assemblage (below).

Fig 24  Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age weaving gear from Open Area 7 and related contexts: polished bone points <S13> and <S15> from pit [289]; perforated bone spatulate piece <S16> from fill [758] of hollow [617]; clay spindle whorls from Open Area 15 <S8> and pit [721] in Open Area 10 <S10>; pyramidal perforated clay weight <S11> from fill [196] of hollow [344] (scales as shown)
Over 60% of the struck flint from period 5 was recovered from the various contexts in Open Area 7, although only two contexts, large shallow hollow [317] and pit fill [752], produced more than a handful of pieces (eg Fig 25, <F12>, <F15>). The later prehistoric lithic assemblage contains few formally retouched tools, such as the small convex scraper (Fig 25, <F16>), although a group of 11 neatly spherical flint ‘hammerstones’ or mauls (one incorporating a small fossil bivalve) accompanied by an unmodified natural cobble of similar size and weight were found in hollow [315] (Fig 25, <F19>–<F22>), along with the sherds of furrowed bowls <P36> and <P37> (Fig 21). A further group of three, including one made from a fossil sea urchin (*Echinocorys*) were recovered from pit [427]. Similar objects have been found elsewhere, such as at Monkton Court Farm (Healey 1994, 303), and suggestions for their use include the dressing of the surface of querns or the pounding of burnt flint for pottery temper (Healey 2007, 252).

![Fig 25: Late prehistoric lithic finds from Open Area 7 and from residual contexts: steeply retouched pieces <F12> and <F15> (OA7), <F17> (B6) and <F18> (S25); convex scraper <F16> (OA14); and three of the 11 spherical flint mauls and an unmodified flint cobble <F19>–<F22> from hollow [315] (OA7) (scales as shown)](image)

**NORTHERN FENCE LINE (S33)**

Structure 33 (Fig 12) comprised a linear alignment of seven postholes, 0.15–0.39m deep, orientated north-west to south-east running along the site’s northern boundary, c 3m north of Structure 34. There was a slight dog-leg to the north at the western end of the alignment, an arrangement mirrored by a second parallel alignment of postholes (S34, below) to the south. A single large worn sherd of storage jar with a fingertip-decorated shoulder cordon from fill [269] of posthole [270] is more in keeping with local Early/Middle Iron Age trends, and could suggest a later date for Structure 33.
Structure 34 (Fig 12) comprised a linear alignment of ten postholes, 0.09–0.39m deep, orientated north-west to south-east running inside the site’s northern boundary, c 3m south of Structure 33. There was a slight dog-leg to the north at the western end of the alignment, an arrangement mirrored by Structure 33 (above).

**Period 5 summary**

Within the site footprint, activity focused on two possible open enclosures situated adjacent to the Middle Bronze Age barrow/enclosure. The most convincing of these is northern enclosure 1, c 32m across, and whose slight but periodically recut ditches enclosed a robust six-post structure (S5) and two surviving areas of shallow horizontal stratigraphy incorporating a series of discrete features including deep pit [1455]. Structure 5 may have been screened off to the south by a short fence line. Similar though longer screens have been noted within other ringwork enclosures, as at North Ring, Mucking, Essex (Bond 1988, 13 and fig 3, fence 1739). Finds hint at a range of activities, some involving the use of pyrotechnology. These are likely to have encompassed feasting, craft activity, and the manipulation of burnt and unburnt human remains.

Southern enclosure 2 was somewhat larger but less convincing, and activity here was more diffuse. Associated features comprise a possible four-post structure (S13) and large pit [1315], the latter producing a sealed ceramic assemblage and the single calibrated radiocarbon date of 1110–921 cal BC (UBA-22907, 2843±23 BP). On this slender evidence it might be suggested that southern enclosure 2 is the earlier, and that activity shifted gradually northwards over the lifetime of the settlement.

Beyond these two enclosures, other features comprised a number of isolated pits and a range of post settings including several four-post structures (S9 and S10) and two fence lines (S33 and S34), the northerly of which (S33) may represent a later replacement of the southern one. The fence lines lay within a dense concentration of erosion hollows, small pits and postholes north-west of northern enclosure 1. Fence lines apart, however, no obvious post-built structures could be recognised within this cluster, although a circular area free of features and c 5–6m in diameter was noted.

The various period 5 contexts also contained a number of significant deposits presumably connected with various customary observances involving acts of commission, inhabitation or termination. The most notable of these was the small Carp’s Tongue/Ewart Park metalwork cache between the two fence lines in Open Area 7, tightly packed within a shallow pit. Other significant deposits include 11 spherical flint mauls (one incorporating a fossil bivalve) in hollow [315], and three others, including one made from a fossil sea urchin in pit [427]; conjoining fragments of saddle quern from adjacent postholes in Structure 12; closure deposits of pottery and a fossil sea urchin from pit [1351]; and deposits of pottery and animal bone from large pits [1455] and [1315] – the latter incorporating several elements of an adult buzzard. Given the importance attached to raptors and corvids, the latter may constitute a deliberately placed deposit in its own right (Serjeantson and Morris 2011). Finally, token amounts of unburnt and cremated human bone occurred within, and just beyond, northern enclosure 1. These include substantial conjoining fragments of an unburnt adult skull from the upper fill of [1455], together with another fragment from final fill [1478] of the Middle Bronze Age barrow/enclosure. It is possible that a further fragment, from mixed fills within hollow [344], belongs here too.

**Early/Middle Iron Age to Late Iron Age/early Romano-British, c 600 BC–AD 50 (period 6)**

**SCATTERED PITS AND RESIDUAL FINDS (OA8)**

Period 6 is represented by a number of scattered hollows, pits and stray finds incorporated into later contexts (Fig 26). These contained diagnostically Middle Iron Age ceramics, including a large assemblage of nearly 900 sherds (over 15kg) recovered from large shallow hollow [344], alongside a presumably residual Hallstatt C razor datable to c 800–600 BC (Fig 23, <S6>). The fills of hollow [344] also produced over 10kg of
animal bone, principally cattle with small amounts of sheep/goat, pig and red deer, the latter including a sawn antler offcut. A number of the faunal elements show evidence of canid gnawing and at least three dogs are represented in the assemblage. Other notable finds include fragments of human skeletal material: a partial adult parietal (skull) bone fragment from the secondary fill [197] of hollow [344], and a stray neonate rib and distal humeri in the fill [304] of shallow hollow [305].

Based on the ceramic data, there were a small number of postholes within the complex at the north-western corner of the site that also belong here. These include double posthole [189]/[281], 0.35m deep, which produced a large fragment of whale vertebra; a calibrated radiocarbon date of 413–210 cal BC (UBA-22903, 2307±35 BP) was obtained from the associated terrestrial animal bone. Apart from the single perforated whelk shell from Open Area 5 (above) there is no other evidence for the exploitation of marine resources at Tothill Street until the Roman period.

Finds of later Iron Age date include two stray bronze units of Dubnovellaunus (c 25–5 BC; Lion Box: ABC, 342; Fig 27, <S17>) and Eppillus (c AD 1–15; Bull and Eagle: ABC, 411; Fig 27, <S18>) found by metal detector in the upper fills of hollows [344] and [315] respectively. Pottery of this date is sparse but includes three sherds of a Belgic sandy ware vessel with sparse flint (CAT code B3) from ditch fill [1033] and a single sherd of ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered ware (CAT code B2) from the fill of posthole [1037]. Both fabrics are consistent with transitional material between the Late Iron Age and early Roman periods. Fill [416] of irregular pit [417] also produced a small worn and intrusive rim sherd in a mixed flint- and grog-tempered fabric. The rim is Late Iron Age ‘Belgic’ in style, from an undecorated closed mouth bead-rim jar with a broad, flat and thin bead with no internal thickening (cf Thompson 1982, 240, no. 24 (type C4)). The form is technically late, broadly c AD 25–75 in date, although, even as a handmade product, it is unlikely to be much earlier than c AD 25.
Period 6 summary

Period 6 is represented by a thin scatter of features towards the north-western boundary of the site. On the face of it, this suggests a local diminution of activity. However, the size of the ceramic assemblage from hollow [344], some of which has parallels in the Pas-de-Calais region, and the presence of two Iron Age enclosures on the Minster Services site to the north, indicates that this was not necessarily the case.

A further point of interest is the whale bone from double posthole [189]/[281]. Cetacean bone has been recorded from a number of prehistoric and Roman contexts on Thanet (eg Bennett et al 2008, 254; Hambleton 2008; Moody 2008, 77). There is only limited evidence for whaling at this period (Mulville 2002) and the vertebra is more likely to have come from the opportunistic scavenging of a chance stranding along the Wantsum.

The steady northward drift in the focus of activity during later prehistory may reflect the growing importance of the east–west axial route along the chalk ridge to the north (Perkins 2001, 46–7; Moody 2008, 116 and fig 66).

Early Roman, later first century AD (period 7)

SCATTERED FEATURES AND RESIDUAL FINDS (OA9)

A limited number of features are assigned to Open Area 9 (Fig 26). They comprise several pits [415] and [490], a small linear gully [544], and a curvilinear gully [1041] inserted into the northern edge of period 6 hollow [305]. Two inhumation burials, accompanied by carinated beakers of late first-century AD form, could belong here too, but are considered separately with other unaccompanied inhumation burials in period 8. In addition, several poorly-dated post-built structures associated with later sunken-featured Building 2, Building 3 and Building 5 are dealt with below. Two early brooches of Nauheim derivative and Colchester form may relate to this phase of activity (Fig 28, <S24>, <S25>), although neither are usefully stratified.

The majority of the Roman pottery recovered from these features comprises ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered wares (CAT code B1/B2). Pit [490] contained sherds of a platter and the well-preserved rim of a jar/bowl (Fig 29, <P48>, <P49>). The closest parallel for the latter is a Thompson type D2-1 (Thompson 1982, 320, no. 3) which was produced throughout the first century AD. A base of a reduced (coarse) Canterbury ware (CAT code R5) jar from the fill of the curvilinear gully [1041] would be consistent with a Flavian date.
CURVING GULLY (S15)

Structure 15 is one of few features datable to period 7 and comprised a short length of shallow gully up to 0.35m in depth curving north-eastwards, and subsequently cut by the period 8 boundary ditch Structure 16 (below). It narrowed from 1.70m in width at the west to 0.50m at its northern terminal. A series of undated segmented features to the north of the apparent northern terminal could be related as they share the same alignment (not shown on Fig 26).

Three body sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the fills of the gully alongside two sherds of residual Early Iron Age pottery. A single sherd of locally produced Thanet ware (CAT code B/ER16) is the only type specifically attributable to the first century AD.

Period 7 summary

The low level of activity present during period 7 may have been peripheral to a focus that lay beyond the site footprint to the north and west – the latter bounded by ditch Structure 15 and represented by a number of residual finds of pottery and copper-alloy objects in later contexts. (Several poorly-dated posthole alignments close to Buildings 2, 3 and 5 are dealt with in the period 8 sequence, below.)

Two adult male inhumations accompanied by late first-century AD pottery beakers could also belong here. They are later in date than the provisional terminal date of c AD 50 given for the Minster Services burials (Gollop and Mason 2005, 3), but may represent outliers of an extensive mixed rite cemetery thought to cover ‘several hectares’ beneath the modern Minster-Thanet cemetery on the west side of Tothill Street (Kent HEA 1; Perkins 2001, 50–1, site 58). These two burials are considered along with other inhumation burials below.

Later Roman settlement, second to third centuries AD (period 8)

This comprises the second major period of activity represented within the site footprint. It was bounded by a substantial north–south ditch that marks the eastern extent of the later Roman settlement. West of this ditch were a series of at least three compounds delineated by shallow ditches. These enclosed open areas containing pits, possible post-built structures and up to ten sunken-featured buildings (Table 2). Seven inhumations form part of a small cemetery considered separately.

It is likely that the period 8 settlement comprises a number of closely successive phases of activity. However, these are difficult to separate as there were few direct stratigraphic relationships and the associated pottery is broadly similar throughout, with a marked residual component in many of the assemblage groups. Furthermore, much of the pottery was recovered from abandonment deposits. Three of the sunken-featured buildings (B1, B5 and B6) physically cut compound ditches Structure 16, Structure 19 and Structure 20, respectively, but others had no direct physical relationship and in spatial terms appeared to respect them.

Based on a combination of spatial analysis and limited stratigraphic data the period 8 inhabitation of the site has been organised here into three sequential – but in practice probably overlapping – phases. None of these are beyond challenge. While all fall within the second to third centuries AD, there are persistent hints of earlier activity represented by a number of residual finds (eg Fig 28) as well as several possible post-built structures associated with Buildings 2, 3 and 5 (below).
The western later Roman settlement, second to third centuries AD (period 8, phase I)

Features ascribed to this phase were concentrated close to the western boundary of the site, within a ditched compound enclosing Open Area 11. This was delineated by north–south ditch Structure 16, which swung west at its southern end. It enclosed Buildings 2–4 and Building 10, a number of postholes and a series of deep, vertical-sided pits. A single inhumation [1097] at the northern edge of Open Area 11 formed part of a small cemetery discussed separately (Fig 30).

The western later Roman settlement, second to third centuries AD (period 8, phase I)

Table 2 Summary of period 8 sunken-featured buildings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land use</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Internal features</th>
<th>Finds</th>
<th>Phase/date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>5.6m E–W x 4.8m N–S x 1.0m deep (floor area: 26.8m²)</td>
<td>E–W</td>
<td>two-phase domed oven; rake-out; postholes</td>
<td>large ceramic assemblage; registered finds incl iron tools; botanical &amp; faunal assemblages; v abundant marine molluscs</td>
<td>III; AD 175–250/300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>5.0m E–W x 3.0m N–S x 0.5m deep (floor area: 15m²)</td>
<td>E–W</td>
<td>earth floor; hearth/ rake-out pit; postholes</td>
<td>medium-sized ceramic assemblage; botanical assemblage; marine molluscs</td>
<td>I; AD 150–200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>3.84m E–W x 2.24m N–S x 0.46m deep (floor area: 8.6m²)</td>
<td>E–W</td>
<td>chalk surface; postholes</td>
<td>medium-sized ceramic assemblage; botanical assemblage; abundant marine molluscs</td>
<td>I; AD 175–250/75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4</td>
<td>c 5m N–S</td>
<td>?E–W</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>small ceramic assemblage</td>
<td>I; AD 175–300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5</td>
<td>5.5m E–W x c 19m N–S x (variously) deep (floor area, room A: 36.9m²; room B: 6m²; room C: 19.24m²)</td>
<td>N–S</td>
<td>room A: oven; internal partition; postholes; pit; flint nodule cache room D: flint nodule cache; infant burials</td>
<td>large ceramic assemblage; accessioned finds; botanical &amp; faunal assemblages; marine molluscs</td>
<td>III; AD 175–250/300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B6</td>
<td>4.8m E–W x 8.3m N–S x 0.58m deep (floor area: 39.84m²)</td>
<td>N–S</td>
<td>hearths; internal N–S partition; patchy chalk floor</td>
<td>medium-sized ceramic assemblage; accessioned finds; Neolithic shafthole adze; botanical &amp; faunal assemblages; abundant marine molluscs</td>
<td>III; AD 175–275/300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B7</td>
<td>5.0m E–W x &gt;5.0m N–S x 0.5m deep</td>
<td>?N–S</td>
<td>domed oven in NW corner; rake-out pit; postholes; pits with animal burials</td>
<td>small ceramic assemblage; botanical &amp; faunal assemblages; marine molluscs</td>
<td>II; AD 175–275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B8</td>
<td>3.5m E–W x 3.9m N–S x 0.4m deep (floor area: 13.65m²)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>remnant clay floor</td>
<td>large ceramic assemblage; botanical assemblages; marine molluscs</td>
<td>III; AD 175–250/75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B9</td>
<td>3.5m E–W x 5.0m N–S x 0.6m deep (floor area: 17.5m²)</td>
<td>?N–S</td>
<td>clay floor surface with flint nodule cache</td>
<td>medium-sized ceramic assemblage; marine molluscs</td>
<td>III; AD 175–250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B10</td>
<td>5.5m E–W x c 11m N–S</td>
<td>?N–S</td>
<td>in situ burning; post- &amp; stakeholes</td>
<td>large ceramic assemblage</td>
<td>I; AD 150–250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE WESTERN DITCHED COMPOUND BOUNDED BY DITCH STRUCTURE 16

Ditch Structure 16 (Fig 30) comprised a linear feature some 70m in length that cut across the period 7 ditch (S15). It defines an open area (OA11) extending away beyond the site footprint to the west. The ditch had clearly suffered considerable truncation at its northern end and retained a depth of only 0.30m; it widened and deepened to 1.00m further downslope.

Its precise stratigraphic relationship with shallow gullies Structure 21 and Structure 22 (Fig 30) is ambiguous;
these were assumed to pre-date it in the field, although both terminate at Structure 16, which suggests a close relationship between them. Further south ditch Structure 16 was clearly cut by Building 1, the latter ascribed here to period 8, phase III (below).

The Structure 16 ditch fills produced a ceramic assemblage of 56 sherds (690g). The date ranges primarily span the late first to early second centuries AD: Thanet ware (CAT code B/ER16), ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered wares (CAT code B1/B2) and Canterbury wares (CAT code R5/R9.1) are all present. The latest material comprises four sherds of native coarse ware (CAT code R1), but the dominance of earlier wares suggests closure of this feature by the end of the second century AD.

SUNKEN-FEATURED BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATED FEATURES WITHIN THE WESTERN DITCHED COMPOUND (OA11)

Building 2
Sunken-featured Building 2 lay west of Structure 16, immediately east of Building 4 and north of Building 3 (Fig 30). A number of undated postholes to the north (S31) and an undated irregular segmented gully to the east (S28) may be associated with Building 2 itself, or possibly with an earlier post-built structure on the same footprint (below). (Pit [821] lay to the south of Building 2, and was similar in dimensions to pit [844] sealed beneath the building’s floor).

Building 2 was rectangular in plan, 5.00m long east-west by 3.00m wide north-south (Fig 30, inset). It had
sharp vertical sides with a gradual break of slope at the base, with a maximum depth of c 0.6m at its north-eastern corner. The entrance lay at the south-west corner; it was represented by a slight worn depression and a single sloping step cut into the chalk. Internal structural evidence was limited to a group of three shallow post settings, [1187], [1189] and [1191], 0.10–0.16m deep, though it is possible that two other groups of external features are related: these comprise a posthole structure (S31) and a shallow linear gully (S28) (below).

A large circular pit [844], c 0.4m deep, lay beneath the sunken floor within the western end of Building 2, but had been backfilled in one operation and sealed with compacted chalk. It was overlain by a trampled earthen floor [847] in use during the building’s occupancy. Its fill contained a moderate charred cereal assemblage dominated by six-row barley, with wheat chaff, grasses (Poaceae) and other wild taxa. If pit [844] belongs with the earliest occupancy of Building 2, as the site record suggests, it was awkwardly positioned just inside the entrance in the south-west corner. Other internal features contemporary with the use of the building include rectangular hearth [1140] and a small square rake-out pit [1139] adjacent. A semicircular recess at the western end of the building also bore traces of in situ burning and could mark the former position of a brazier (Fig 31).

Building 2 produced a small finds assemblage which included pottery, a small faunal assemblage of mainly sheep/goat loose teeth, marine molluscs and fragments of rotary quern. Ceramic building material was limited to a couple of fragments of roof tile and a few fragments of daub. Following abandonment, the building filled with a mix of chalk and flint that probably represents elements of collapsed chalk cob walls.

The ceramic assemblage comprises 123 sherds (1904g). The majority are small groups with the exception of an interesting assemblage from floor level [847]. This consists of 73 sherds that mostly belong to two vessels.
The first is an unsourced white-slipped ware, possibly a flagon, which has clear evidence of stripping and pockmarking on its interior surface, most likely caused by the storage of acidic contents. The second vessel is an oxidised Canterbury ware flagon with distinctive rilling on the body, datable to the late second century AD. There is also a single sherd from an east Gaulish samian Curle 15 dish with a noticeably flared wall.

The fill of pit [844] sealed beneath the floor of the building produced just six sherds, but the presence of two sherds of native coarse ware (CAT code R1) indicates a mid to late second-century AD date for its filling. Sherds of native coarse ware are also key indicators for the dating of other features, including the rake-out pit adjacent to the hearth and destruction debris.

Possible structural features associated with buildings 2 and 3

Structure 28 (Fig 30) comprised a shallow segmented gully [1080], 4.90m in length and 0.22m in depth, east of Building 2 and set within a slight hollow. It is possible that this is connected with Building 2, or that it belongs with a separate structure represented by post settings Structure 31 and Structure 32. A small assemblage of six sherds retrieved from its fill can only be dated to c AD 70–200 by a base fragment of an oxidised Canterbury ware flagon (CAT code R9.1).

Structure 31 (Fig 30) comprised a group of four postholes [1271], [1273], [1274] and [1277], 0.18–0.24m deep, that flanked the north-east corner of Building 2. It is possible that a fifth posthole [1082], 0.30m in depth east of a segmented gully Structure 28, formed part of this group.

Structure 32 (Fig 30) comprised a group of nine postholes [44], [160], [162], [164], [166], [168], [170], [1231] and [1283] aligned north–south on the northern and eastern sides of Building 3. Of these, [44] represents a multiple posthole, while postholes [1231] and [1283], 0.42m and 0.31m in depth, respectively, had been cut by Building 3.

If not forming part of Building 2 and Building 3, it is possible that Structures 28, 31 and 32 belonged to a separate and possibly earlier post-built structure 9.5m long by 5m wide with its long axis aligned north–south.

Building 3

Sunken-featured Building 3 (Fig 30) lay to the west of ditch Structure 16 and south of Building 2. It is associated with a shallow dog-legged gully [1096] at its north-eastern corner, and possibly with a group of nine postholes to the north (S32) (above).

Building 3 was subrectangular in plan, 3.84m long east–west by 2.24m wide north–south. It had sharp vertical sides with an abrupt break of slope at the base and a retained depth of up to 0.46m. There was no evidence for the position of the entrance. Structural evidence comprises two flint- and quern-packed postholes [1227] and [1229], 0.18m and 0.22m in depth, respectively, more or less aligned on the centre of the building’s long axis; although shallow, these presumably acted as roof supports.

There was no internal evidence as to the building’s use, but its small size and the absence of internal features suggests that it was an ancillary structure. The primary fill/lower occupation deposit, [35]/[1219], contained a large assemblage of marine molluscs, together with a number of charred hazelnut shells. Other marine molluscs, including oyster and mussel, were present in the upper occupation deposit [1198]. This fill also included a small and eroded faunal assemblage comprising long bones of sheep, cattle and horse. Following abandonment the building was infilled with deposits containing pottery dating to c AD 175–250/75, and ceramic building material including fragments of tegulae and brick.

A ceramic assemblage of 239 sherds (3720g) was retrieved from the building. The largest group is a medium-sized assemblage of 99 sherds (1857g) from upper occupation layer [1198]. This can be dated to c AD 175–250 based on the presence of sherds of native coarse ware (CAT code R1) and black-burnished ware 2 vessels. In addition, a large part of this group comprises sherds of north Kent grey ware and Canterbury ware (both oxidised and reduced) vessels; identifiable forms of the latter include a ring-necked flagon and a necked jar. The lower occupation deposit [1219] contained a smaller assemblage of just 20 sherds, but with
sherds of the same fabrics represented (and some potentially from the same vessels), it shares a similar date. The backfill [1197] contains a further medium-sized assemblage of 64 sherds of the same date.

Gully (S22) associated with Building 3

Structure 22 (Fig 30) comprised a gently curving, narrow linear gully [1096] 0.17m in depth. It abutted sunken-featured Building 3 at its western terminal, and is recorded as having been cut at its eastern end by ditch Structure 16 (above). It is here interpreted as a shallow gully channelling surface water or roof run-off away from Building 3. (A similar gully may be associated with Building 10 (below) and could have performed a similar function, although the intersection between the two lay beyond the excavated area.)

Only four sherds were retrieved from the fill: two fragments of native coarse ware (CAT code R1) provide a date of c AD 175–300, although a sherd of Canterbury ware lies at the earlier end of this date range.

Building 4

Sunken-featured Building 4 (Fig 30) lay to the west of Building 2, but only a small part of the structure was accessible for examination. Its long axis is likely to have been aligned east–west and it was c 5m wide. The sides were sharply cut and vertical, with a variably sharp to gradual break of slope at the base. The entrance lay in the south–east corner and comprised a series of shallow rough-hewn steps cut into the chalk.

Little Roman pottery was retrieved from the small area of Building 4 excavated. An assemblage of ten sherds in the tertiary fill [1278] is dated to c AD 175–300 by three sherds from a native coarse ware (CAT code R1) bowl or wide-mouthed jar.

Possible Building 10

Sunken-featured Building 10 (Fig 30) comprised part of a shallow hollow that extended beyond the excavated area at the north-western edge of the site. It lay over 40m north of Building 2 and may have been associated with shallow gully Structure 21. In plan it is the least convincing of the sunken-featured buildings.

Building 10 measured at least 11m north–south by at least 5.5m east–west. Structural evidence was limited to a number of internal post- and stakeholes in its north-eastern corner. There was a sequence of shallow pitting, in situ burning and associated residues here too, together with a large spread of pottery from [1329] dated c AD 150–250. The general infill is dated c AD 150–75.

A ceramic assemblage of 282 sherds (7739g) was retrieved from the building. The assemblage is characterised by a more restricted range of fabrics and a higher average sherd size than those recovered from Building 2 and Building 3. A majority of the sherds are from grog-tempered ware vessels with identifiable fabrics almost evenly divided between native coarse ware (CAT code R1) and ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered wares (CAT code B1/B2).

The largest group of material (223 sherds) originated from the fill of pit [1353]. There is a noticeable residual component to this assemblage, with more ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered wares (CAT code B1/B2). The infill of the building is dated to the late second to early third century AD by native coarse ware sherds in [1328]. However, there are some unusual occurrences among the earlier material from this context. These include part of a probable butt beaker variant and an unsourced fine oxidised ware dish (of similar appearance to Gallo-Belgic platters). Also present were flint-tempered sherds belonging to a handmade Late Iron Age ‘Belgic’ style bead-rim jar with a thick, internally prominent and externally undercut rim (Thompson 1982, type C1-4). The fabric is hard and thin, and a production date between c 25 BC and c AD 50, or slightly later, is possible.

Gully (S21) possibly associated with Building 10

Structure 21 (Fig 30) comprised a narrow, shallow gully [1610] aligned west-north-west to east-south-east, which is recorded as having been cut by Structure 16. Although the intersection between Structure 21 and Building 10 lay beyond the excavated area, it is possible that it relates to the latter in the same way that
shallow gully [1096] (S22) does to Building 3.  
Two small ceramic assemblages were retrieved from the gully fill, but both are likely to be residual as they contain sherds of ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered ware (CAT code B1) and probable Upchurch wares.

DEEP STRAIGHT-SIDED PITS

In addition to the various sunken-featured buildings and their associated features, Open Area 11 contained a series of four more or less equidistantly spaced circular straight-sided pits [296], [872], [833] and [821] (Fig 32). These had been dug to depths of 1.30–1.50m into the chalk, although pit [833] had been truncated by Building 1. (It is possible that pit [844], sealed beneath the floor of Building 2, was originally part of this same group and that it was replaced by pit [821] following the construction of the building.)

The pits appear to mirror the line of ditch Structure 16, although it is unclear whether they pre- or post-date the latter. The nature of their fills suggests organised patterns of use and disuse, and significant finds include part of a prehistoric saddle quern from undifferentiated fill [38] in pit [821], and a small group of complete and semi-complete pottery vessels connected with the storage and consumption of drink from secondary fill [856] (<P51>–<P53>) and the overlying fill [871] (<P50>) within pit [872] (Fig 33, <P50>–<P53>). The inversion of the vessel <P50> would appear to represent a deliberate act of termination. A shallow irregular pit [307], 0.20m deep, further north on the same alignment, contained a bone-handled iron clasp knife in the form of a gladiator (Fig 34, <S28>), together with a slender square-sectioned fragment of copper-alloy bar. These various objects appear to have been deliberately buried, perhaps as part of customary observances associated with the commissioning or closure of activity.
Fig 33  Group of flagons and beaker from the fill of pit [872] in Open Area 11: <P50>, flagon inverted over secondary fill [856] in the mouth of the pit; <P51>–<P53>, flagons and carinated beaker within secondary fill [856] (scale 1:4)

Fig 34  Bone gladiator-handled clasp knife <S28> from pit [307] in Open Area 11 (scale 1:1)
Botanical assemblages were retrieved from the primary fills of pits [821] and [872]. That from fill [820] of pit [821] was better preserved than others from the site, and grains of barley and spelt/emmer were evenly represented, with fewer free-threshing wheats. There were also two grains of emmer (*Triticum cf dicoccum*) and a single grain of rye (*Secale cereale*) – the only occurrence of this taxon on the site. Wild seeds are represented by grasses (Poaceae) only. This context also produced a small molluscan assemblage composed entirely of hairy snail, a species found among ground litter in moist, generally well-vegetated places. Fill [888] in pit [872] contained a small assemblage of spelt grains (*Triticum spelta*) and chaff. Wild seeds were again represented only by grasses. Faunal remains were only recovered from pits [296] and [872], and are principally represented by cattle-sized long bones, over half of which had been subjected to canid gnawing.

The deep straight-sided pits within Open Area 11 contained the majority of the pottery found within this land use. It includes some late first- to early second-century AD material (eg from pit [296]) but mostly comprises late second- to early 3rd-century AD groups. To judge from their smaller average sherd size and occasional signs of abrasion, the earliest sherds are most likely to have been redeposited.

The assemblages from pit [872] are of particular interest, with larger quantities of pottery and several complete and semi-complete vessels. The medium-sized group from secondary fill [856] contained the top section of a ‘Belgic’ grog-topped ware flagon (CAT code B1), as well as a large portion of a north Kent grey ware carinated beaker (Fig 33, <P53>) and a virtually complete oxidised Canterbury ware ring-necked flagon (CAT code 9.1) (Fig 33, <P52>). The presence of three sherds of native coarse ware (CAT code R1) in this group suggests that the closure of this deposit could be late second-century AD. However, the semi-complete vessels are more likely to date to the Hadrianic to Antonine period, suggesting that they are earlier survivals. A further, almost complete oxidised Canterbury ware flagon inverted in fill [871] (over fill [856]) (Fig 33, <P50>) appears to support this interpretation. The survival of these various drinking vessels suggests disposal shortly after disuse, probably from one of the sunken-featured buildings adjacent.

**Eastward expansion of the later Roman settlement, second to third centuries AD (period 8, phase II)**

During this phase the later Roman settlement expanded eastwards, away from the western compound, and its boundary was formalised by the digging (or possibly recutting) of a substantial north–south ditch. Two further ditched compounds were inserted into the area bounded by this substantial ditch, and these enclosed Open Areas 12 and 13. Open Area 12 is associated with a single sunken-featured building and other traces of settlement activity (Fig 35).

**FORMALISING THE SETTLEMENT’S EASTERN BOUNDARY: NORTH–SOUTH DITCH (S14)**

Structure 14 (Fig 35) comprised a north–south ditch that marks the eastern boundary of the later Roman settlement. It was a substantial V-sectioned ditch up to 1.98m in width and varying between 0.52m and 1.00m in depth along its 90m length. It appears to have been recut on a number of occasions. Its occasionally irregular outline also suggests that it had broached a number of earlier features and/or that it had been modified by localised quarrying and poaching. No trace of any accompanying bank was located, although there is some evidence to suggest that this lay on the west side of the ditch (below).

A ceramic assemblage of 234 sherds (3800g) was retrieved from the various ditch fills (Table 3). As might be expected, they represent a greater variety of wares and forms than those from other land uses. Residual first-century AD material is particularly noticeable in some of the secondary ([101]/[510]) and tertiary ([509]) fills. In particular tertiary fill [682] yielded a sherd belonging to a chaff-tempered ware vessel (CAT code B/ER15) more typical of early Roman deposits, and one of only three such from the site.
Fig 35 Plan showing archaeological features of period 8, phase II (scale 1:650); inset, sunken-featured Building 7 (scale as shown)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cut</th>
<th>Primary fill</th>
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Table 3 Fills of north–south ditch Structure 14
The vast majority of the pottery was retrieved from the secondary and tertiary fills, with only two sherds present in the primary fills; the identification of these sherds cannot be pinpointed to specific industries and so can only provide a wide date covering the whole of the Roman period. However, selected deposits from the secondary and tertiary fills [1055] and [1054], respectively, are more indicative of the later recuts of the ditch. The assemblages from these deposits include a higher proportion of native coarse ware (CAT code R1) and, in the case of [1054], sherds of black-burnished ware 2 and central Gaulish samian. Sherds of an unsourced oxidised ware hook-flanged mortarium provide a vessel link between the secondary fill [1045] and the tertiary fill [1044], indicating a short chronology for the sequence of backfilling at this point.

Marine molluscs comprising whelk and large quantities of oyster and mussel were also recovered from the primary, secondary and tertiary fills. They include a perforated oyster shell ‘strainer’ from secondary fill [510] (Fig 36, <S32>). A small faunal assemblage consists of cattle long bone elements and loose teeth.

**THE SOUTHERN DITCHED COMPOUND BOUNDED BY DITCHES (S16–S18)**

Structure 17 (Fig 35) comprised a narrow U-shaped gully, 0.10–0.25m in depth, that extended 21m south from the western compound ditch Structure 16 to enclose Open Area 12 and Building 7. It lay immediately west of and parallel to a second, more substantial and slightly longer ditch Structure 18, although it is uncertain which is the later of the two. Just four sherds were retrieved from the ditch fill, with a date of c AD 175–300 provided by a single sherd of native coarse ware (CAT code R1).

Structure 18 (Fig 35) lay east of Structure 17 and effectively extended the Structure 16 alignment 26m further to the south; its U-shaped section retained a depth of up to 0.60m. Both Structure 18 and Structure 17 terminated to the north-west of Building 7, and may be associated with its construction and subsequent use. Furthermore, it is possible that posthole [803] (with fired clay post packing) was deliberately sited to restrict access to Building 7.

Pottery from the fill of ditch Structure 18 is sparse: 12 sherds include the rim of a native coarse ware (CAT code R1) jar/bowl which provides a wide date of c AD 175–300. Earlier material includes both Canterbury and Thanet ware sherds.

![Fig 36 Perforated oyster shell 'strainer' <S32> (060714007) from secondary fill of main north–south ditch Structure 14 (scale 1:1)](image-url)
SUNKEN-FEATURED BUILDING (B7) AND ASSOCIATED FEATURES WITHIN THE SOUTHERN DITCHED COMPOUND (OA12)

Open Area 12 formed the space enclosed by ditches Structure 17/18 and the western arm of Structure 16. It contained sunken-featured Building 7, a small group of undated postholes, and an L-shaped quarry [906] up to 0.70m in depth.

Aside from Building 7 (below), Roman pottery from this area was limited to 20 sherds (356g). Several contexts appear to have contained only residual material, including two dated to the Flavian period by sherds from ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered wares alongside north Kent grey ware and Canterbury ware sherds. The fill of quarry [906] contained residual sherds including a thin-walled decorated Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age jar and a single sherd of a reduced Canterbury ware storage jar dated c AD 70–200. However, given the other pottery from the land use, this could well be Flavian too.

Building 7

Sunken-featured Building 7 (Fig 35) lay within Open Area 12 and continued beyond the site footprint. It is associated with a series of undated postholes and L-shaped quarry [906]. Posthole [803] (and possibly feature [814]) may have deliberately restricted access from adjacent Open Area 10.

Although not accessible for complete excavation, it is likely that the long axis of Building 7 was aligned north-south (Fig 37). It measured 5.00m wide east-west by at least 5.0m long, with a retained depth of c 0.5m. Two possible entrances were represented by shallow pits [1172] and [1208]/[1210] towards the north-eastern corner and close to the putative mid point on the west side, respectively.

Fig 37  Sunken-featured Building 7 under excavation within Open Area 12, looking north-west
There were a number of internal features around the periphery of the sunken interior (Fig 35, inset); these include a series of shallow postholes perhaps marking the position of internal fittings and partitions. In the north-west corner a well-preserved circular domed oven [1126], 0.90m in overall diameter (0.70m internal diameter), was undercut into the chalk bedrock, and a rectangular hearth [1184] constructed of three tegulae [1290] positioned immediately to the east. The fired clay superstructure of the oven survived to a height of 0.56m, with a narrow aperture 0.30m in width facing south-east (Fig 38). Sub-circular pit [1204] just inside the western entrance may be connected with its use: the ashy primary fill [1203] contained fragments of fired clay (including a wedge-shaped piece) and a small charred botanical assemblage of barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and wheat (*Triticum cf spelta*) grains with a number of dock seeds (*Rumex spp*). Traces of a narrow right-angled chalk cob partition [1147] defined a small rectangular ‘cupboard’ space between the oven/hearth and the north-western corner of the building. Towards the north-eastern corner two small circular pits, [1164] and [1166], each 0.19m deep, were associated with partially articulated animal skeletal material. Pit [1164] contained an almost complete adult sheep/goat. Both forelimbs were present but only the right hind limb; a chop mark was present on a cervical vertebra. The remains from pit [1166] comprise a young sheep (3–6 months old) missing some vertebrae and the lower feet. Butchery marks are present on the radius, vertebrae and astragalus. Both animals may represent the disposal of the remains from feasting episodes; similar deposits have been noted elsewhere (Morris 2011, 177).

Building 7’s final phase of use/disuse, [1205], dates to c AD 175–275; it was abandoned and infilled in the late second to early third centuries AD, hence broadly contemporaneously with the abandonment of the other sunken-featured buildings.

The dating of the features in Building 7 is notably consistent and the residual material appears to be restricted to sherds of ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered ware vessels (CAT code B1/B2). The occupation debris from the
primary disuse of the building, [1205] and [1148], contained two assemblages totalling 55 sherds. Based on a combination of sherds of native coarse ware (CAT code R1) and Canterbury ware vessels, both groups can be dated to c AD 175–250. This element of the assemblage contains larger sherds and a wider range of fabrics and forms. The small group from [1205] includes sections of two imported vessels: a central Gaulish samian cup and a Gauloise 12 amphora (manufactured in Normandy), alongside local wares. Building 1 is the only other structure to contain sherds of this amphora type (below). A further unusual find is a north Kent grey ware dish which has had its flange deliberately trimmed away and a hole neatly drilled in the centre of the base (Fig 39, <P54>).

A medium-sized assemblage of 54 sherds was retrieved from the general infill of the building, [884]. The dating appears contemporary with the primary disuse, with further sherds of central Gaulish samian, black-burnished ware 2, and native coarse ware (CAT code R1) vessels. A small assemblage of 14 sherds was retrieved from fill [1125] of the domed oven; the majority are from native coarse ware (CAT code R1) vessels. Identifiable forms include three jars and a lid, and several sherds show signs of burning. The fill [1165] of one of the shallow pits ([1166]) containing a partial sheep burial produced a single sherd of a north Kent grey ware vessel dating to c AD 50–275.

THE EASTERN DITCHED COMPOUND (OA13) BOUNDED BY L-SHAPED DITCH STRUCTURE 19 AND DITCH STRUCTURE 20

Structure 19 comprised a short length of L-shaped ditch 0.30m deep immediately to the north of the later Building 5 (Fig 35; Fig 40); it was aligned north–south and turned through 90° to run east–west, with a squared-off terminal. There was no sign of the southern return of the ditch beyond the footprint of Building 5, suggesting that Structure 19 was broadly coterminous with the eastern arm of southern compound ditch Structure 18.

Structure 20 (Fig 35) comprised a short east–west length of shallow ditch c 4m east of Structure 19 and clearly formed part of the same scheme. It had a squared-off terminal c 2m short of main north–south ditch Structure 14 (which may hint at the presence of an accompanying bank on the west side of the latter). The fill of ditch Structure 20 contained two sherds from a single ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered ware (CAT code B2) vessel which is likely to be residual.

The final later Roman settlement, second to third centuries AD (period 8, phase III)

In this final phase a series of sunken-featured buildings were sited across the ditches that define the eastern and western ditched compounds (Fig 40). A small inhumation cemetery incorporating two apparently earlier
graves respected the main eastern boundary of the settlement and is considered separately.

SUNKEN-FEATURED BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATED FEATURES POST-DATING THE EASTERN DITCHED COMPOUND (WITHIN OA13)

Building 5 and Building 6 were inserted into Open Area 13 and physically cut the earlier compound ditches Structure 19 and Structure 20. Small irregular sunken-featured Building 8 and Building 9 have no direct relationship with the compound ditches, but are clearly spatially ancillary to Building 6.

Building 5

Sunken-featured Building 5 (Fig 41) was the largest uncovered at Tothill Street. It cut L-shaped ditch Structure 19 and adopted the latter’s north–south alignment. Building 5 was divided into at least three separate modular rooms which presumably reflect various phases of extension and/or refurbishment.

Building 5 was c 19m long north–south and up to 5.50m wide east–west. It was subdivided into a series of three or possibly four discrete rectangular or subrectangular rooms (A–D) dug to different depths into the chalk (Fig 42). The entrance lay south of room B and comprised a shallow inward slope in the south-eastern corner of room A. There may originally have been a further point of access from the north through narrow room/corridor D.
Fig 41  Sunken-featured Building 5, with associated post settings, Structure 29 and Structure 30 (scale 1:200)

Fig 42  Sunken-featured Building 5 under excavation, looking north
Room A formed the principal component of Building 5 and was c. 9m long north–south by 4.10m wide east–west, with a depth of 0.60m. The entrance lay in the south–east corner (south of room B) and comprised a shallow sloping triangular ramp. Three equidistantly spaced and centrally aligned postholes [828], [1200] and [1195] are likely to have supported a pitched roof. A series of deposits on the floor of room A included a cache of flint nodules [1135] and various ashy ([1122]) and burnt ([1236]/[1237]) deposits. These produced assemblages of both marine and terrestrial molluscs, the latter comprising a large group, dominated once again by species indicative of well-drained, dry, short-sward, sheep-grazed calcareous grassland. In addition, a charred botanical assemblage from [1236] contained a single charred grain and small amounts of wood charcoal. A shallow but well-defined circular cut [1221], 0.90m in diameter, in the north–west corner was probably the setting for an oven, dismantled when chalk cob wall [1233]/[1133] was inserted across the north end of the room.

The final silting [815] and [1121] of room A contained a combined total of 344 sherds. The assemblages contain a small residual component including sherds of early Belgic sandy wares datable to the first century AD. However, this is far outweighed by sherds from later vessels, indicating that this part of the building was abandoned either in the late second or early third century AD. The proportion of sherds from reduced Canterbury ware vessels (CAT code R5) is particularly high, suggesting that a late second-century AD date is more probable. Ashy dump [1122] produced a further medium-sized assemblage of 96 sherds of similar date, dominated by both Canterbury ware and native coarse grog-tempered ware (CAT code R1). This assemblage contains a number of heavily burnt and distorted sherds from fire-damaged vessels, including part of a reduced Canterbury ware (CAT code R5) necked jar.

Aside from the final silting and ashy dump, most of the deposits associated with room A contained just a few sherds. The exceptions to this are the post setting [1235], associated with cob wall [1233]/[1133], and the oven collapse [1162], both of which contained semi-complete sections of north Kent grey ware carinated beakers. These are likely to be contemporary with the first-century AD (or early second-century AD at latest) elements of the Building 5 assemblage, especially that from [1235] which is similar to Monaghan's type 2F1.4 (Monaghan 1987, 67–8).

The final silting deposits of room A also produced the majority of the animal remains recovered from the building. These principally comprised elements of cattle and sheep/goat, though pig, chicken and dog are also represented. Much of the material was fragmented and appeared to have been highly processed. Many of the cattle bones had been chopped in a style similar to that observed in Roman urban contexts (Maltby 2007).

The narrow area to the north of chalk cob wall [1233]/[1133], designated room D, represents little more than a widening and deepening of the southern return of compound ditch Structure 19 and presumably functioned as a passageway or corridor leading into room A. Following the insertion of the cob wall, it was deliberately backfilled and two infant burials were incorporated in the fills. Infant [793] was 34.7% complete and aged c. 38 weeks; infant [1137] was 13.2% complete and aged c. 35 weeks. Both died at or around the time of birth. Other finds from the final silting [788] included a bone hinge <22> and a fragment of fine colourless glass bowl <122>.

Although small (totalling 30 sherds) the assemblage from room D contains a similar mixture of pottery to that from room A. The final silting [788] indicates abandonment in the late second century AD, with sherds from native coarse grog-tempered ware (CAT code R1) alongside black-burnished ware 2, central Gaulish samian and Canterbury sandy wares.

Room B, [817], consisted of a small extension at the south–east corner of room A. It measured 2.64m east–west by 2.30m north–south and retained a depth of 0.88m. It was accessed through room A and its entrance was marked by a low natural chalk ‘lip’ or threshold and an adjacent socket that probably housed a door-post.

Pottery retrieved from room B was sparse, with a total of just nine sherds; these consisted of Canterbury sandy wares and north Kent white-slippered ware, dating the deposits to c AD 70–200. In light of the assemblages from room A, the latter half of this range appears more likely.

South of the main room A, and slightly offset to the west, was room C. This measured 5.20m north–south by 3.70m east–west and retained a depth of 1.35m, making it the deepest component of Building 5. Access
from room A was via a shallow sloping ramp in its north-east corner. No traces of any internal roof supports were present, although a series of postholes (S29) outside its footprint to the south and west may be related (unless these belong to an earlier post-built structure; below). Its infill [936] contained marine molluscs, possible fragments of human subadult vertebrae <135>, and a rich and diverse charred botanical assemblage – the largest recovered from the site. This comprised over a thousand cereal grains with numbers of identifiable spelt/emmer wheat (Triticum spelta/dicoccum), along with cereal chaff – particularly glume bases – also overwhelmingly of spelt. There were also low numbers of barley grains. Wild seeds were numerous, with those of white charlock (Silene cf alba), goosefoot (Chenopodium sp), black bindweed (Fallopia convolvulus) and grasses (Poaceae) particularly common.

The deposits from room C contained just under 200 sherds. In contrast to those from room A, these include a higher proportion of earlier material likely to be of late first- to early second-century AD date (including Thanet ware and large sherds of ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered ware vessels). These vessels could hint at the presence of an earlier structure; however, the continued occurrence of native coarse grog-tempered ware (CAT code R1) and Canterbury wares suggests that the closure of the deposits can still be dated to within the late second century AD.

Building 5 produced a combined ceramic assemblage of 714 sherds (just over 10kg), the second-largest ceramic assemblage from any of the sunken-featured buildings. The composition of the assemblage is not as varied as that from sunken-featured Building 1 (below), and it is dominated by local grog-tempered wares and Canterbury sandy wares.

The dating indicates that room A fell out of use c AD 175–250/300. This is consistent with the period of disuse of the other sunken-featured buildings. However, the presence of late first-century AD material including a copper-alloy Colchester brooch <42> and a copper-alloy pin with a plain head <43> from the final silting [815], suggests the existence of an earlier structure or structures hereabouts, to which post settings Structure 29 and Structure 30 may belong (below).

Building 5 also produced the largest assemblage of struck flint of any of the Roman buildings, which is perhaps not surprising in view of its large footprint. Technologically, there is little to distinguish this material from that recovered from the earlier period 5 features, and much of it is likely to be residual. There remains a further possibility that some of it results from the contemporary dressing of flint nodules for building purposes, such as those found in rooms A [1135] and D [1114].

Possible post-built structures (S29 and S30) south and north-east of Building 5

Two groups of postholes were located to the south and north-east of Building 5 (Fig 41). These could represent some form of external roof support, or indicate the position of an earlier post-built surface construction some 18m in length on a marginally different north‒south alignment. Similar groups of post settings were found in the vicinity of Building 2 and Building 3 to the north-west.

Possible Structure 29 comprised a series of nine postholes external to room C at the southern end of Building 5: [1247], [1261], [1259], [1257], [1255], [1253], [1251], [1263] and [1245]. These varied between 0.14m and 0.43m in depth, with an average of c 0.3m. They have no direct stratigraphic relationship with Building 5 and produced only a small pottery assemblage of 13 sherds, principally from [1247]. Despite its wide date bracket the presence of Thanet ware (CAT code B/ER16) indicates that a late first- or early second-century AD date is most likely. Five sherds from three different vessels comprising a lid-seated bowl and jar forms can be identified.

Possible Structure 30 comprises a small group of six postholes north-east of Building 5: [13], [15], [19], [1265], [1241] and [1239]. They varied between 0.13m and 0.35m in depth, with an average of 0.25m. Apart from [1239] none of the postholes are independently dated, although [1265] had been cut by room D of Building 5. Four sherds from a north Kent grey ware jar/beaker were retrieved from [1239]; the material is burnt and abraded, and could be residual.
Building 6

Sunken-featured Building 6 lay north-east of Building 5 (Fig 43). It post-dated the eastern compound ditch Structure 20 but respected its east–west alignment. Building 6 was closely flanked to east and west by irregular ancillary structures Building 8 and Building 9, respectively.

Building 6 was rectangular in plan and measured 8.30m north–south by 4.80m east–west. It had sharp, vertical sides with an abrupt break of slope at the base and retained a maximum depth of 0.58m. Two opposed entrances were set in the middle of the long sides and marked by two shallow rough-hewn steps cut into the chalk. A number of shallow internal postholes are likely to have been structural; one of three at the north end of the building, [901] 0.11m in depth, contained a complete prehistoric stone shafthole adze <S19> incorporated as post packing (Fig 44).

There were traces of a slight internal north–south chalk cob partition, [1026], in the north–west corner of Building 6. An earthen floor [932] was overlain by patchy chalk spreads [1070] and [1072], with post pads

Fig 43  Sunken-featured Building 6 under excavation, looking north

Fig 44  Neolithic/Early Bronze Age shafthole adze <S19> reused as post packing within posthole [901] at the north end of Building 6 (0.20m scale)
[877] and [935] incorporating fragments of rotary querns (Fig 45, <S44>, <S45>), and an area of in situ burning (possibly from a brazier) against the side wall south of the western entrance [934]. Three hearths, [842], [933] and [853], included central hearth [853] which had been furnished with a rubble make-up incorporating a broken rotary quern (Fig 45, <S46>). The hearth make-up was associated with a large assemblage of mussel shells. Other finds include two identical dumbbell-shaped lead weights (Fig 58, <S43>) from the primary disuse [787] on the western side of the building, along with a small botanical assemblage containing a low number of cereal grains.

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Fig 45  Rotary quern fragments from Building 6: <S44> and <S45> from post pad [877]; <S46> from rubble make-up of central hearth [853] (scale 1:8)
The building was infilled with a number of deposits dating to the late second to early third centuries AD. These included part of a possible collapsed chalk cob wall [789] at the north end.

A ceramic assemblage of 153 sherds (1913g) was retrieved from Building 6. As with the other sunken-featured buildings, there is a consistent emphasis on material dating to the late second and early third centuries AD. The dating is primarily led by native coarse ware (CAT code R1) vessels, along with black-burnished ware 2 and sherds of central Gaulish samian.

The largest groups were retrieved from deposits relating to the primary disuse [787] and latest occupation [932]. The former contained a medium-sized assemblage of 40 sherds, notable for the range of types identified: these include amphorae, samian, black-burnished ware and a potentially imported mortarium sherd, alongside the expected grog-tempered wares. Reasonable quantities of plain ware samian sherds were found across the site, but sections of decorated vessels are comparatively rare. Context [787] contained a single sherd from a central Gaulish samian bowl of Dragendorff form 37; unfortunately, only the top of the ovolo border survives, so the vessel has only a wide date bracket of c AD 120–200. A further assemblage of 87 sherds from the occupation deposit [932] is dated by a single sherd of native coarse ware (CAT code R1). However, in this case the group contains a greater proportion of north Kent grey ware sherds, including a substantial section of a flask with a short neck; the type can be dated to the mid to late second century AD (Monaghan 1987, 48–9 (type 1B7)), so the assemblage is potentially slightly earlier than that of the primary disuse deposit.

Fragments of ceramic building material include various Roman roofing tiles, one partially complete and bearing a signature, and brick. Pieces of daub, some with a flat surface, were recovered from occupation/floor layer [787]. A small faunal assemblage comprises cattle and sheep/goat long bones and loose teeth, but also includes a tibia shaft fragment possibly belonging to a fallow deer, from [932].

**Building 8**

Sunken-featured Building 8 (Fig 40) lay 3.00m to the east of Building 6, and had cut through a natural periglacial feature. It had also narrowly missed the double inhumation grave assigned to period 3. Its relationship with feature [876] to the north-east could not be established.

Building 8 was irregular in plan and measured c 3.5 x 3.9m. It had irregularly cut sides which were steep in places and elsewhere more gradual, and the building retained a maximum depth of 0.40m. A shallow slope suggests that the building was entered from the north-west. A raised pedestal of chalk in the centre of the floor may have acted as a post pad for a roof support. (A further posthole [826] lay at the southern edge of the cut.)

A remnant patch of clay floor [808] survived within the eastern side of the building. This produced marine molluscs and a botanical assemblage containing low concentrations of charcoal and charred grains, including one identified as barley (*Hordeum vulgare*). Overlying use and disuse deposits contained a more diverse botanical assemblage comprising charred grains of spelt (*Triticum spelta*) and chaff, together with some grains of barley. Wild taxa include fat hen (*Chenopodium album*), bedstraws (*Galium* sp) and vetch/pea type (*Vicia/Lathyrus/Pisum* spp). A large assemblage of oyster shell was incorporated in the final infill [804].

The use and disuse deposits provided consistent dating evidence, with an emphasis on the late second century AD. Notable finds include an iron knife blade with double looped handle from dumped refuse deposit [805] (not illustrated), and a small socketed iron cleaver <S29> from use/disuse layer [806] (Fig 46).
A total of 452 sherds (3971g) were retrieved from Building 8. This constitutes the third-largest assemblage from the sunken-featured buildings, with only Building 1 and Building 5 producing more material.

The final infill [804] of the building contained a large assemblage of 263 sherds. In line with the other sunken-featured buildings, the dating is consistently late second- to early third-century AD. However, it is noticeable that the final infill assemblage includes a high proportion of residual material: this primarily consists of ‘Belgic’ grog-tempered ware (CAT code B1/B2) from a series of jars and a section of a lid. A good proportion of the material in this group appears to have been either burnt or misfired: this was particularly apparent on sherds from black-burnished ware 2 bowls. Given that the material includes sherds from different vessels and other fabrics, fire damage is more likely. Similar burning and re-oxidisation was also observed on sherds from the dumped refuse deposit [805] and use/disuse layer [806].

Various fragments of Roman tegulae were found in Building 8. This could indicate a tiled roof, but the lack of imbrices suggests that the tegulae had been used for some other purpose. Remarkably, one tegula fragment (Fig 47, <T2>), bears footprints of dog, bird (probably chicken) and a small hoofed animal, possibly a very young sheep or goat (A Pipe, pers comm).

**Fig 47** a – Fragment of tegula <T2> from Building 8 bearing animal footprints belonging to dog, chicken and small sheep/goat (scale 1:4); b – detail showing the various animal prints

**Building 9**

Sunken-featured Building 9 (Fig 40) lay barely 2m west of Building 6 and adjacent to the latter's west entrance. It effectively constricted access into Open Area 13, whose entrance lay c 5m to the north.

Building 9 was roughly triangular in shape with a maximum length of 5.00m north–south and a maximum width of 3.50m. It had sharp, vertical walls with an abrupt break of slope at the base and retained a depth of 0.60m. It was entered via a series of three rough-hewn steps cut into the chalk in its north-east apex. A large cache of flint nodules [943] lay on its floor. Other finds include marine molluscs and a copper-alloy pin with a small head (Fig 58, <S28>) from [915], a clay ?floor surface over the nodule cache, and a stray neonate clavicle from final fill [913].

A ceramic assemblage of 192 sherds (2873g) was recovered from the building and can be dated to the late second to early third centuries AD. A majority of the material (148 sherds) was recovered from the final infill [913] and dates to c AD 175–250. Though not so large, the assemblage is broadly similar in composition to that from Building 8, with a range of both fabrics and forms represented. North Kent grey ware sherds account for almost a third of the group; parallels for both a beaker and a bowl form (Monaghan 1987, 67–8
(type 2E1.1), 140–1 (type 5C2)) indicate a concentration of late second-century AD material. The dating of these local types is also supported by sherds of black-burnished ware 2 and Cologne colour-coated ware vessels. Further local wares are a distinct feature of the assemblage, with sherds from a range of Canterbury wares, including oxidised flagon and jar forms as well as a single sherd from a reduced reed-rimmed bowl. The assemblage includes one of the few identifiable mortaria from the site. Despite abrasion, a large portion of the hook-flanged mortarium is identifiable (including the spout). It has a similar appearance to the Canterbury wares, although the fabric contains a high mica content.

The small assemblage recovered from the clay floor surface [915] contained a residual sherd from a La Graufesenque samian bowl of Dragendorff form 30 stamped by Germanus i and dating to c AD 65–90. Given the scarcity of decorated samian vessels across the site, the presence of this vessel is noteworthy, despite being residual.

The cache of unworked flint nodules on the floor of Building 9 may have been collected for building and other purposes during the lifetime of the Roman settlement. It is possible that a small assemblage of struck flint, principally waste flakes and irregular nodular shatter, was connected. As with Building 8, other building material was present in the form of tegula roofing tile, but there were no accompanying imbrices. There was also a fragment of brick.

BUILDING 1 POST-DATING THE WESTERN DITCHED COMPOUND

Sunken-featured Building 1 cut the western compound ditch Structure 16 and pit [833] (Fig 40). This suggests that the building was a further late addition to the Tothill Street Roman settlement. Furthermore, the quantity of finds recovered suggests that its fixtures and fittings had not been subjected to the same degree of salvage as those of the other buildings. As such it may represent the last of the Tothill Street sunken-featured buildings to have been abandoned (below).

![Fig 48 Sunken-featured Building 1 and earlier pit [833] under excavation, looking east; note the well-preserved second-phase domed oven](image-url)
Building 1 was subrectangular in plan, measuring 5.60m east–west by 4.80m north–south (Fig 40, inset). It had sharp vertical walls with an abrupt break of slope at the base and retained a maximum depth of c 1m. The entrance lay at the south-west corner and was marked by several shallow rough-hewn steps cut into the chalk. Posthole [1094] was sited more or less centrally within the building and may have been structural in purpose; it incorporated saddle quern <197> as post packing. Two other postholes, [974] and [976] in the north-east corner, could be related, as could an undated external posthole beyond the south-eastern corner of the building footprint.

The south-east corner of Building 1 was occupied by a well-preserved circular domed oven [850], 1.10m in overall diameter with a north-west facing entrance, which had replaced an earlier, slightly larger one [1030] (1.30m overall diameter), and whose truncated remains survived beneath it (Fig 49). A sequence of levelling deposits can be related to the use of the second-phase oven, and include rake-out deposit [825]. Botanical assemblages were recovered from occupation deposit [799], associated with the use of the first-phase oven, from fill [881] of the second-phase oven and from rake-out deposit [825]. All produced moderate numbers of charred cereal grains variously identified as six-row barley (Hordeum vulgare) and free-threshing (Triticum aestivum/durum) and spelt (Triticum spelta) wheats, along with a range of wild taxa including numerous seeds of corn gromwell (Lithospermum arvense), a common weed of arable fields, particularly of spring-sown crops, from oven fill [881]. Eleven seeds of rose (Rosa sp) were recovered from the rake-out deposit [825].

Building 1 is also notable for the number of iron tools and fittings recovered from deposits associated both with its occupancy and with its disuse (Fig 50). These include three reaping hooks <S39>, <S40> and <S42> from occupation deposits [799]/[1021]; part of a pair of shears <S38> and a drill bit <S37> from primary disuse deposit [798]; and a possible vessel/vehicle fitting <S31>, an ox goad <S36> and a further reaping hook <S41> from final infill [791]. The sharply-angled blades of reaping hooks <S42> and <S41> in particular are unusual, and may have had a specialised function. Also likely to have had a specific, if unknown, function is a collection of eight elongated pestle-shaped beach pebbles with battered ends, recovered from contexts [790], [791], [798] and [829]. (Another single example came from B5.) One further notable find from primary disuse deposit [798] is a fossil echinoid (Echinocorys), perhaps originally collected as a curio.
Following its disuse, Building 1 was backfilled with dumped deposits containing large finds assemblages datable to c AD 175–250/300. The ceramic assemblage of 1322 sherds (over 33kg) is considerably larger than those from the other sunken-featured buildings across the site. It represents almost a third of the Roman pottery retrieved from all period 8 land uses, and the peak in material is particularly interesting given that Building 1 was probably the latest-occupied structure in this part of the Tothill Street settlement. The presence of larger sherds, and of partial and full profiles of vessels, is also more prevalent than elsewhere on the site.

As with the other buildings, the majority of the pottery was recovered from the final infills [790] and [791] and primary disuse [798] deposits: these contexts account for almost two thirds of the material found within the structure. The proportions of wares are similar across these groups and vessel links between them suggest broad contemporaneity. A concentration of late second- to early third-century AD material is evident, as with previous buildings, principally sherds of native coarse ware (CAT code R1) and a high proportion of black-burnished ware 2. The decorative schemes on the black-burnished jars and bowls are also typical of later second-century AD groups, with open acute lattice and obtuse line decoration both identifiable.

The range of fabrics and forms is more comprehensive and also incorporates more fine wares (including imports) than most of the other individual building assemblages. This could be a function of the size of the assemblage available for study, but it may also indicate a late surge in traded goods reaching the settlement.
The latter interpretation is supported by the appearance of new forms, including sherds from a seria, an unguentarium and a possible cheese press. The cheese press, like the mortarium, was a post-conquest introduction to Britain but is rare even in urban assemblages (Cool 2006, 95–7). A further unusual type is a diagnostic section of a furrowed-rim amphora (Gauloise 12) probably originally containing wine (Fig 51, <P55>); the fabric of the vessel has more visible inclusions than usual but the matches known variants (shards of another were recovered from Building 7). Finally, a small section of a Romano-British ovoid beaker with mica-dusted surfaces is the only vessel identified with this decorative technique among the Tothill Street assemblage.

![Selected pottery from primary abandonment [798] and final infill [791] of Building 1: imported amphorae <P55> and <P56>; native grog-tempered ware jars <P57> and <P58>; black-burnished ware 2 dish <P59>; sans-tempered ware jar <P60> (scale 1:4)](image)

A total of 54 samian sherds (plain and decorated vessels) were retrieved from Building 1; despite representing only 4% of the overall ceramic assemblage from the structure, this is a much higher proportion than from the other sunken-featured buildings. The condition of the sherds is also notably different, with vessel connections between deposits and larger sections of bowls. The decorated sherds are all central Gaulish samian products dating to the Antonine period (late second century AD) and originate from five vessels: a bowl by Quintilianus or Laxtucissa, a stamped bowl by Cinnamus ii, another one by Criciro v, and two vessels by Casurius ii (Monteil 2012). Two further central Gaulish samian ware cups are contemporary with these decorated bowls: bearing stamps of Doeccus i and Banoluccus, they date to c AD 170–200 and c AD 150–75, respectively.

A considerable quantity of Roman roofing tile, both tegulae and imbrices, was associated with Building 1, suggesting the existence of a tiled roof. A few bricks are also present in the building material assemblage, one with a slightly blackened top, and these were probably used in features such as hearths.

A reasonably large animal bone assemblage dominated by sheep/goat and cattle was recovered from the primary and secondary infills. Both species appear to be represented by a high number of head and lower foot elements, although the material is variably preserved and highly fragmented. Elements of horse and dog are also present, alongside three sawn palmate antler fragments belonging to fallow deer.
FEATURES BETWEEN THE MAIN EASTERN BOUNDARY STRUCTURE 14 AND WESTERN COMPOUND DITCH STRUCTURE 16 (OA10)

Open Area 10 (Fig 40) comprised the area lying between the main eastern boundary Structure 14 to the east and the western compound ditch Structure 16 to the west; it was bounded to the south by eastern ditched compound Structure 19/20. A small number of miscellaneous features datable to this period include three pits, [721], [731] and [896], around earlier shallow hollow [305]. These incorporate a number of residual objects including a fragmentary spindle whorl of Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age type from pit [721] (Fig 24, <S10>), and a chalk object with a crudely hollowed recess from the primary fill of pit [731]; the latter is comparable to several others found at Monkton, and there suggested to be of Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date (Gibson 2008, 85–7 and fig 1). The front elements of an adult dog and a cast red deer antler fragment had been incorporated within the secondary fill of the same feature. An irregular linear north–south ditch (S23) may have served to drain hollow [305]; three sherds of pottery including a single sherd of black-burnished ware 2 bowl furnish a date of c AD 120–350 for this. A group of inhumation graves at the northern end of Open Area 10 is considered separately below.

The Roman inhumation cemetery

In addition to the various settlement features, a small number of inhumation burials were located in Open Areas 10 and 11 (Fig 52). Two of these burials, [724] and [1097], were accompanied by single pottery drinking vessels dating to the late first or early second century AD. None of the remaining burials were furnished with grave goods, but finds in the grave fills – and their north–south alignment which is shared with the main eastern boundary ditch Structure 14 – suggest that they are likely to be of late Roman date.

THE DATED BURIALS

Grave [724] had been dug 0.54m deep into the eastern edge of period 6 hollow [305] in Open Area 10. It contained the well-preserved skeleton of a male aged 36–45 years at death (75.2% complete), with an estimated stature of 161.8cm, aligned north–south with the head to the north. The backfill of the grave [722] also contained a proximal hand phalanx reassociated with the occupant of the grave. A complete carinated beaker <P61> had been placed adjacent to the skull (Fig 53).

Fig 52 Roman inhumation burials in Open Areas 10 and 11, and infant burials within room D of Building 5 (scale 1:500)
This individual had suffered ante-mortem tooth loss, caries, calculus (mineralised plaque), periodontal (gum) disease and externally draining abscesses at the sockets of the upper right first premolar and the second and third molar teeth. Non-metric traits comprised a bilateral mastoid foramin (hole). The right first metacarpal (thumb) had severe osteoarthritic joint changes to the metacarpophalangeal joint with marginal osteophytes, porosity and eburnation. Degenerative joint disease of the spine included osteophyte formation in the cervical (neck) and lower lumbar vertebrae. Small indentations into the mid thoracic spine reflected the herniation of the intervertebral disc into the adjacent bone surface. These Schmorl’s nodes may relate to underlying weakness, illness or higher stresses placed on the spine, possibly from a young age.

Grave [1097] lay at the north-western edge of the site in Open Area 11. Although heavily truncated and retaining a depth of only 0.27m, it contained the moderately well-preserved remains of a male aged 36–45 years at death (41.3% complete) with an estimated stature of 179.9cm, aligned north–south with the head to the south. The lower half of a pottery vessel had been placed adjacent to the skull.

This individual had suffered ante-mortem tooth loss, caries, calculus and periodontal disease. Degenerative joint disease of the spine comprised osteoarthritis of the cervical vertebrae and osteophyte growth in the lumbar spine. There was purple staining to the left radius.

Both adult males were accompanied by pots placed near the head. The beaker accompanying [724] is a complete north Kent grey ware carinated form typically dated to the first century AD and usually residual in early second-century AD deposits (Monaghan 1987, 68–71). Grave [1097] contained the lower half of a north Kent grey ware vessel, probably another carinated beaker. It is possible that the vessels were ‘heirlooms’ buried out-of-time, although the burials they accompanied are more likely to represent outliers from a cemetery associated with period 7 settlement activity off-site to the north and west.

THE UNDATED BURIALS

In addition to the two dated burials, a further five inhumations lay in grave cuts close to the northern edge of the site, within Open Area 10. It seems likely that further graves exist beyond the site footprint to the north and west. The graves are poorly dated and are described here working from south to north.

Grave [380] was one of a tight group of three (Fig 54) lying to the west of the main north–south ditch Structure 14 and c 24m north of dated grave [724]. It retained a depth of 0.32m and contained the moderately well-preserved skeleton of a female aged 26–35 years (66.1% complete) with a stature of 160.8cm, laid out north–south with the head to the south. This individual had suffered from ante-mortem tooth loss, caries,
calculus, periodontitis and hypoplastic defects to the enamel surfaces, suggesting a period of systemic stress or childhood illness. The roots of the anterior teeth, the incisors, canines and premolars appeared to be abnormally shortened. Non-metric traits comprised a septal aperture (hole) to the left humerus. Degenerative spinal joint disease comprised osteophyte formation between the fifth lumbar and first sacral elements. The backfill [378] also contained an intrusive cow tibia, and a re-fired fragment of an Early Iron Age horizontally-handled bowl – the first such from the region.

Grave [356] retained a depth of 0.53m and lay a metre or so to the north-west of [380]. It contained the well-preserved skeleton of a subadult aged 12–17 years (13 years) (70.2% complete) laid out north–south with the head to the south. The upper left molar tooth had enamel pearl, a separate nodule or extension of the tooth enamel on the root surface (Hillson 1996, 98). The grave cut was noticeably deeper than any of the others, and its fill also contained intrusive animal bone comprising a roe deer radius and two pig molars, together with an intrusive human right humerus, radius and ulna and a calcined tooth fragment. Moreover, half of a rotary quern had been buried on edge against the south-eastern corner of the grave.

Grave [377] retained a depth of 0.30m and lay a metre or so to the north-east of [356]. It contained the well-preserved skeleton of a subadult aged 12–17 years (15 years) (65.3% complete) laid out north–south with the head to the south. The dentition showed evidence of calculus and there was deciduous retention of the maxillary and mandibular canines. The roots of the maxillary canines were visible, although they had failed to erupt. There was also severe attrition wear to the deciduous canines and permanent incisors.

Grave [179] retained a depth of 0.25m–0.53m with an incline to the north and lay c 8m further north, adjacent to the main north–south ditch Structure 14. It contained the well-preserved remains of a female aged ≥45
years (63.6% complete) with a stature of 156.9cm, laid out north–south with the head at the shallower south end of the cut. This individual had suffered from ante-mortem tooth loss, deposits of calculus adhering to the crown surfaces, periodontal disease and an externally draining dental abscess to the socket of the upper right first premolar. Coarse pitting was present at the joint surfaces of the first and second cervical vertebrae, indicating degeneration of the intervertebral disc, and Schmorl’s nodes affected the lumbar vertebrae of the lower spine. Non-metric traits comprised a supraorbital foramen above the right eye socket. A spur of bone projected from the posterior aspect of the right femur above the inside surface of the knee, and may have resulted from an injury to the overlying muscle or soft tissue.

Grave [1365] retained a depth of only 0.10m and lay c. 7m to the west of [179] at the very northern edge of the site. It contained a badly disturbed inhumation on a north–south alignment. A disarticulated partial adult fifth lumbar vertebra and mandibular second molar were identified at analysis.

The tight group of three inhumations (an adult female and two adolescents) could only be dated to the Roman period by the presence of part of a (possibly deliberately placed) rotary quern, and one or two sherds of either north Kent grey ware or reduced Canterbury ware incorporated in the grave fills. However, they are likely to have been interred within a relatively short space of time, and may even have been related. The unusual depth of grave [356] may be accounted for by its distance from ditch Structure 14, into whose accompanying bank the other two graves in the group had presumably been cut.

In addition to these formal burials a number of stray neonate and subadult remains were recovered from a range of period 8 contexts. These are the two infants/neonates [793] and [1137] interred in the backfill of sunken-featured Building 5 room D (above), together with possible fragments of subadult vertebrae from infill [936] in room C; a right neonate clavicle in the final fill [913] of Building 9; a neonate femoral shaft from the infill of Building 1; a subadult right proximal third of a tibia from the secondary fill of pit [731]; and an adult right proximal ulna shaft from fill [308] of pit [309] in Open Area 11.

**Period 8 summary**

Period 8 encompasses the main later Roman settlement, although, as noted above, there are few direct stratigraphic inter-relationships. An attempt to phase the various components has employed a combination of stratigraphic and spatial argument.

The main features of the settlement consisted of a number of ditched compounds, modified on several occasions, that both enclosed, and were on occasion superseded by, sunken-featured buildings, pits and post settings. A small inhumation cemetery lay to the north. The various features presumably formed part of a larger settlement that extended beyond the site footprint.

Up to ten sunken-featured buildings were identified. These had been cut into the chalk to depths of 0.40–1.50m, and were entered either by sloping ramps or via shallow flights of rough-hewn steps. The number and orientation of the entrances varied, although this appears to have depended on the overall size of the structure: large Building 5 (room A) and Building 6 had more than one entrance, for example. No traces of any external walls survived in situ, although it is likely that these would have been constructed of chalk cob or turf. Sunken floor areas varied in size and range from 8.6m² (B3) to nearly 40m² (B6). Internal features included cob partitions, pits, stakeholes, postholes and post pads (some structural), hearths and circular ovens. Localised traces of burning indicate the positions of moveable braziers. Building 2, Building 3 and Building 5 were accompanied by a series of external postholes. These are not well dated: a single posthole had been cut by Building 5 and two others by Building 3, while a small group of pottery from one of the postholes around Building 5 contained earlier sherds. There are two possible explanations: either these represent the remains of earlier surface buildings, or they are external structural elements integral to the sunken-featured buildings themselves.

The position of the inhumation burials within the site sequence is also problematic. Two adult male burials could even belong within period 7 on the basis of their accompanying north Kent grey ware carinated beakers, although it is possible that these represent heirlooms buried out-of-time (Wallace 2006; Booth 2011,
The other burials lacked grave goods but were aligned with the main north–south ditch marking the eastern boundary of the settlement, and several appear to have been dug into its bank. Moreover, the presence of stray human remains in the fills of several of the sunken-featured buildings suggests that the latter had disturbed other burials. The formal burials comprise adults and subadults, and include a possible family group made up of an adult female and two adolescents. Oral hygiene was poor across the assemblage, and back problems common; one older female appears to have endured a particularly hard life. The two neonates inserted in the fill of Building 5 room D follow a well-known Romano-British cultural practice of infant burial in settlement rather than cemetery contexts (Pearce 1999, 155).

The principal components of the suggested phases are as follows:

**Phase I:** S16/OA11, B2, B3/S22, B4 and possibly B10 and S21 (?S14/OA10);
**Phase II:** S14, S17/OA12, B7 > S19/S20/OA13;
**Phase III:** B5 > B6 > B8 and B9, B1.

**Phase I, the western compound:** this was delineated by ditch Structure 16, and four sunken-featured buildings (B2, B3, B4 and B10) were sited within the area enclosed (OA11). Building 2 and Building 3 may have been preceded by a post-built structure (or structures) represented by Structure 28, Structure 31 and Structure 32. Shallow gully Structure 22 connected Building 3 and Structure 16; it is possible that Structure 21 linked Building 10 with Structure 16 too.

A series of deep straight-sided pits were dug inside the line of Structure 16. These appear to be roughly equidistantly spaced and include [296], [872], [833] and [821]. Pit [844] may represent a truncated example of the group. Deposits contained within these pits appear to reference customary observances connected with the initiation or termination of activity; pit [872] in particular contained a group of flagons and beakers, while the bone gladiator-handled clasp knife was buried in a shallow irregular pit [307] a little to the north.

**Phase II, eastward expansion:** substantial ditch Structure 14 was laid out (or possibly recut) to the east of Structure 16, and ditches Structure 17, Structure 18, Structure 19 and Structure 20 shared its axis. North–south ditch Structure 17 extended the alignment of Structure 16 to the south, and enclosed Open Area 12 within which Building 7 was sited. (It is possible that sunken-featured Buildings 2–4 and Building 10 remained in use during this phase.) Ditch Structure 17 was then perhaps replaced by ditch Structure 18, whose width was similar to those of shallow ditches Structure 19 and Structure 20. The latter two enclosed Open Area 13; Structure 20 terminated 2.00m short of Structure 14, which suggests the prior existence of ditch Structure 14 and an accompanying earthen bank.

**Phase III, the final settlement:** sunken-featured Building 5 was laid out over the north–south axis of ditch Structure 19, although there is no indication that Structure 19 continued further south beyond Building 5. It is possible that Building 5 was preceded by an earlier post-built structure (or structures) on more or less the same footprint, the latter represented by Structure 29 and Structure 30. (Alternatively, Structure 29 may have supported the roof of room C.) Sunken-featured Building 6 was laid out over ditch Structure 20, and ancillary Building 8 and Building 9 appear to have been associated with its occupancy.

Sunken-featured Building 1 was sited across the alignment of Structure 16, which had presumably fallen out of use as a meaningful boundary, leaving the main north–south ditch Structure 14 to mark the eastern boundary of the Roman settlement. The quantity of finds recovered from Building 1 suggests that it was the last structure to be abandoned.

**The Roman inhumation cemetery:** a series of inhumations were interred in north–south aligned graves, several of which had been dug into the bank that presumably accompanied Structure 14; one grave lay west of the line of Structure 16, suggesting that the latter no longer functioned as a meaningful boundary, and by implication suggesting that the other graves within the small cemetery post-date Structure 16 too. Only the two adult males were furnished with grave goods – grey ware pottery beakers in both cases – which may be a reflection of local cultural practice.
Concluding discussion

The Neolithic to Middle Bronze Age landscape

The Tothill Street landscape has been utilised since at least the early Neolithic period. Direct evidence for the earliest phases of activity is slight, however, and the scattered finds probably reflect small-scale interventions in a locally wooded setting. Elsewhere clearances in the tree cover were facilitating the construction of large communal monuments, such as the causewayed enclosures at Chalk Hill and Court Stairs overlooking Pegwell Bay to the east (eg Moody 2008, 64–8).

By the Early Bronze Age, Tothill Street was part of a wider funerary landscape, other elements of which have been recorded along the chalk ridge at Minster Services and Monkton. The single calibrated radiocarbon date of 2015–1772 cal BC (UBA-22902, 3555±35 BP) from a Tothill Street burial, one of several subadult inhumations, partially overlaps with other dates obtained from burials at Monkton (Bennett et al 2008, 17, table 1.4) and from a two-phase co-axial field system located a kilometre downslope to the south-south-west at Monkton Road, Minster (Barclay et al 2011; Martin et al 2012). Taken together, this could suggest that cleared land and settlement lay on the lower slopes of the central chalk ridge, with the elevated areas towards the ridge top being reserved for burial.

This focus on funerary activity appears to have continued into the Middle Bronze Age, with the construction of a large barrow in the south-eastern corner of the site. The possibility that it belongs to an enclosure cannot be entirely discounted as Middle Bronze Age enclosures have been located on Thanet, as at South Dumpton Down and Westwood Cross, Broadstairs, for example (Champion 2007, 104). A single calibrated radiocarbon date of 1369–1056 cal BC (UBA-22906, 2975±34 BP) from the primary ditch fill places its construction within the latter part of the conventional Middle Bronze Age. Several of the ring ditches excavated along the A253 between Monkton and Mount Pleasant were thought to be of Middle Bronze Age date too (Bennett et al 2008, 96, ring ditches IX and X), while sherds of Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age pottery were recovered from the upper ditch fills of others (ibid, 65).

If a barrow, the Tothill Street monument presumably forms part of a linear cemetery aligned north-east to south-west, which is visible as a series of cropmarks in the fields to the east of the site (Fig 2; Birchenough 2010, fig 3; Kent HER TR36 NW85). A further barrow on the Minster Services site to the north (Gollop and Mason 2005, 2) probably also belongs to this group. There is a notable concentration of such monuments on Thanet (eg Grinsell 1992; Moody 2008, fig 45), many of which are sited on false crests when viewed from lower ground. It is possible that the Tothill earthwork took advantage of an elevated area already sanctified by the presence of the period 3 crouched inhumations – the latter effectively acting as founding deposits within the local landscape.

Furthermore, there is little doubt that the earthwork remained as a visible point of reference long enough to have influenced the siting of the Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age activity ascribed to period 5. Finds from the upper fills of the ditch clearly indicate a continuing interest in this already presumably numinous location during period 5, and appear to incorporate residues connected with feasting and with the manipulation of human remains. Similar continuity has been noticed elsewhere on Thanet, as at Cliffs End Farm some 4km to the east (McKinley et al 2014).

The Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age settlement

It is likely that the various features ascribed to period 5 reflect a number of overlapping phases of activity. However, apart from a series of ditch recuts within the eastern arm of the northern enclosure 1 (S2) and within the eastern arm of southern enclosure 2 (S8), there are few direct stratigraphic relationships available with which to document these. Terrestrial molluscs from three contexts – the final fill of the period 4 barrow/enclosure (S1) (above), the secondary fill of the latest ditch recut comprising the eastern arm of northern enclosure 1 (S2), and a cremation deposit within the same enclosure – indicate that the local landscape was
dominated by impoverished short-sward, probably sheep-grazed, calcareous grassland.

The overall longevity of the period 5 settlement is difficult to determine, but assuming that the northern enclosure 1 ditches were recut once every generation or so, upwards of a century of use might be indicated for this element of activity at least. The ceramic assemblage spans the plain and decorated phases of the Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age (sensu Barrett 1980), although – as at Cliffs End Farm (Leivers 2014, 147, 159–61) – neither label is particularly helpful in characterising and understanding the material. In the absence of a secure radiocarbon framework a conservative date range of c 950–850/800 BC is suggested here for the Tothill Street assemblage, with a focus on the ninth century BC. Sherds of furrowed bowls (eg <P36> and <P37>, Fig 21) certainly hint at an early, probably tenth-century BC start, however, as does the single calibrated radiocarbon date of 1110–921 cal BC (UBA-22907, 2843±23 BP) from large pit [1315] associated with southern enclosure 2.

Within the site footprint activity appears to focus on northern enclosure 1, which may be the later of the two enclosures. It comprises the southern half of a small sub-circular open enclosure surrounding localised spreads of midden-like dark earths and post-built Structure 5, the latter perhaps screened off to the south by a post alignment. Similar ringwork enclosures have been located elsewhere within Kent and beyond (eg Allen et al 2008, 306–7 and fig 24), and appear to have hosted a range of secular and non-secular activity. There are striking similarities between Tothill Street northern enclosure 1 and the central enclosure at Cliffs End Farm less than 4km to the east (McKinley 2014, fig 2.8). Both are sited close to earlier and possibly supernaturally charged monuments; both are broadly similar in size (32m at Tothill and 38m at Cliffs End Farm); and both enclose single large pits, localised concentrations of small features, ‘empty’ spaces and midden-like deposits that incorporate the residues of feasting/burning and involve the manipulation of human remains. There are some differences though: most obviously, the Tothill Street six-post Structure 5 is not matched at Cliffs End Farm. However, an open C-shaped enclosure on the Boreham Interchange site in the Chelmer valley in Essex offers a parallel, as it contains a substantial ten-post structure interpreted as a possible shrine (Lavender 1999, 21; Brown and Medlycott 2013, 153). A further rectilinear post-built structure (with evidence of rebuilding, as at Tothill Street) has been recorded at Broads Green, also in Essex (Brown 1988, 7).

The faunal and botanical evidence recovered from the various period 5 contexts points to a subsistence economy geared to a mixed pastoral/arable economy, with only incidental exploitation of wild resources. Cattle (60%) and sheep (25%) dominate the faunal assemblage, and the high proportion of the former could indicate a distinctive approach to animal husbandry which is at variance with the usual dominance of sheep in the Late Bronze Age faunal record. The small quantity of pig remains may hint at a lack of woodland in the local area, while a number of the horse remains appear to have been disposed of in privileged locations, for instance within the ditches of northern enclosure 1, suggesting that these animals were particularly valued. Barley was the most commonly identified cereal, with traces of wheat alongside a wide suite of crop weeds. Grain was processed on saddle querns of unsourced but presumably local sandstone. The ceramic assemblage incorporates a number of high-quality vessels, some of potentially Continental inspiration, including jars for storage and finer bowls and cups geared to the serving and consumption of food. The lithics are limited but typical of later prehistoric assemblages (cf Humphrey 2007), and are dominated by debitage in the form of unmodified hard hammer flakes, spalls and irregular nodular waste. Formally retouched tools are few. The range of functions performed by such late assemblages is open to debate, although butchery is a possibility. A series of spherical flint hammerstones or mauls may be connected with the finishing of querns, or the preparation of flint temper for potting.

Spinning and weaving gear includes spindle whorls of globular and biconical form, and a number of fragments of heavy pyramidal weights, although – with the exception of three fragments within northern enclosure 1 – none of the Tothill Street examples are usefully stratified. Unusually, not a single scrap of the otherwise ubiquitous perforated clay plates was identified among the fired clay (intriguingly, these are also absent from Cliffs End Farm (Leivers 2014, 162)); this may have both cultural and chronological implications following Champion’s identification of these objects as components of bread ovens (Champion 2014). Bone tools perhaps used as beaters in the weaving process are present within the interior of northern enclosure 1 and Open Area 7 (Fig 55), and provide a further link with the depositional signatures at Cliffs End Farm. The
perforated spatulate piece <S16> from Open Area 7 may have been connected with weaving too, or used as a tool for modelling clay or wax. Either way its form invites comparison with other similar examples, including those from North Shoebury, Essex (Wymer and Brown 1995, 127–8, fig 86, nos 1–2).

Late Bronze Age/Earliest Iron Age settlement is now well represented in east Kent, and comprises a range of open and enclosed sites of various forms (Champion 2007, 104–6) that are likely to have held secular and/or spiritual significance for their communities. Structural evidence encompasses post-built structures such as the four-posters recorded at Tothill Street. Metal hoards are especially well known on Thanet too, and focus on localities overlooking the Wantsum (Perkins 1991; Perkins et al 1994, 289–97; Moody 2008, 110–15). The small Tothill Street cache (Fig 22; Fig 23; Fig 56) can be added to other recent discoveries on the Ebbsfleet peninsula (Andrews et al 2009b) and from low-lying areas along the East Kent Access Road, the latter including a pair of gold penannular bracelets (Mason and Andrews 2012, 31). Token deposits of burnt and unburnt human bone are another feature of this period (Brück 1995), although the elaborate mortuary deposits recorded at Cliffs End Farm (McKinley et al 2014) are so far without British parallel. The presence there of a number of foreign individuals (‘isotopic aliens’) provides a further point of reference for Thanet’s far-flung contacts along the Atlantic seaboard and across the North Sea, and underlines its status as a gateway island situated at a major maritime crossroads.
Later prehistoric and early Roman settlement

Compared to period 5 later prehistoric activity is less well represented, although it is clear from the amount of ceramic material and from the Iron Age enclosures on the Minster Services site to the north that people were present in the local landscape at this time. It seems likely that during the early Roman period the focus of activity also lay off-site to the west and north. The major east–west route along the ridge top appears to have become increasingly influential at this time.

The later Roman settlement

The Tothill Street later Roman settlement is one of several extensive non-villa settlements known on Thanet (Perkins 2001; Bennett et al 2008). Bounded to the east by a substantial north–south ditch, it is characterised by a series of ditched compounds. These enclosed open areas containing up to ten sunkeneatured buildings, possible post-built structures and a series of deep straight-sided pits. A small inhumation cemetery of seven formal burials was also located, while stray human remains including two infant burials were recovered from the fills of a number of the sunken-featured buildings. It seems likely that these various features form part of a more extensive settlement that stretched away westwards under modern Tothill Street.

The Tothill Street settlement is notable for its sunken-featured buildings. These represent a distinctive regional style of vernacular architecture with its origins in later prehistory. Examples of Iron Age date have been excavated on the Minster Services site immediately to the north (Gollop and Mason 2005, 2), at Cliffs End Farm (Mason and Andrews 2012, 32) and at Mill Hill, Deal (K Parfitt, pers comm). Once established, this building tradition continued in use through the Roman and Saxon periods and on into medieval times (Bennett et al 2008; Schuster and Stevens 2009). Its employment at Tothill Street (and Monkton; below) was probably at least in part a pragmatic response to the exposed and windswept nature of the elevated south-facing location.

In terms of size, layout and design the Tothill Street sunken-featured buildings are closely akin to those excavated at Monkton 800m or so further along the ridge top to the west, most of which also date to the mid second to early/mid third centuries AD (Bennett et al 2008, 107–50). Unlike the Monkton examples, however, the Tothill Street buildings were arranged on two main orientations, east–west and north–south. No two structures are alike, but each is discrete and possesses a more or less regular shape, means of access, evidence of structural support, a lowered and more or less even floor, and internal features (cf Hicks 2008, 273–4). Most appear to have possessed a ridged roof supported by wooden posts whose outward thrust was presumably absorbed by thick cob walls. The smaller, irregular ancillary structures Building 8 and Building 9 may have had simple conical roofs. The poorly-dated post settings adjacent to Building 2, Building 3 and Building 5 remain an enigma, although several of the posts appear to pre-date the sunken-featured elements.

The functions of the sunken-featured buildings within the Tothill Street settlement are difficult to determine, and in any case some may have served more than one purpose. The range of uses is likely to have encompassed domestic, agricultural, storage and light craft/industrial activity. One small late first-century AD example at Monkton was interpreted as a privy (Bennett et al 2008, 107–8). Viewed simply in terms of their size and internal fittings, Tothill Street Building 1, Building 5 (room A), Building 6 and Building 7 seem the best candidates for domestic dwellings, while the smaller Building 3, Building 8 and Building 9 (and rooms B and C in Building 5) could have functioned as ancillary storage facilities. The circular ovens recorded in three of the buildings, including the well-preserved examples in Building 1 and Building 7, could be interpreted as bread ovens, and assemblages of charred cereals and cereal chaff – perhaps used as kindling – were associated with both phases of the oven in Building 1. It is uncertain how long individual buildings remained in active use, although the rebuilt oven in Building 1 might suggest longevity. It is unlikely that all of the sunken-featured buildings were in simultaneous use.

There are similar issues with regard to the dating of the small inhumation cemetery, although the formal burials were certainly interred between the late first and third centuries AD. As such they post-date the small
group of 11 Late Iron Age/early Roman burials located on the Minster Services site to the north which were
ascribed to c 100 BC–AD 50 on the basis of a single pottery vessel (Gollop and Mason 2005, 3). The balance
of probability suggests that the Tothill cemetery was peripheral to a settlement whose focus lay further
north and west, and that it was overtaken as the settlement expanded. An extensive mixed rite cemetery
thought to cover ‘several hectares’ was recorded in the 1920s and 1930s beneath the modern Minster-
Thanet cemetery on the west side of Tothill Street (Kent HEA 1; Perkins 2001, 50–1, site 58; Birchenough
2010, 9).

The Tothill Street settlement appears to have been essentially agricultural, with evidence for mixed farming.
The faunal assemblage is dominated by cattle (50%) and sheep/goat (40%), with smaller numbers of pig,
horse, chicken and dog represented. The terrestrial molluscan evidence also suggests the presence of sheep-
grazed grassland close by. This pattern is generally similar to that from recent excavations along the East Kent
Access Road (L Strid, pers comm) and Ickham (Palmer and Powell 2010), although the faunal assemblage
from Monkton is dominated by sheep/goat rather than cattle (Bendrey 2008).

The Tothill fauna shares one similarity with that from Monkton, however, in the form of fallow deer:
elements of these were recovered from Building 1 (cast antler fragments) and Building 6 (tibia), and from a
presumably intrusive position within fill [197] of period 6 hollow [344] (phalanges) (Fig 57). The carbon and
nitrogen isotopic signatures of the antler from both sites have recently been investigated by Madgwick et al
(2013) as part of a wider study of fallow deer management in Roman Britain. The three samples from Tothill
Street produced signatures divergent from those at Monkton (Bendrey 2008, 254, 261–2), suggesting either
that the Tothill Street beasts were not local or not managed as part of the same herd. That said, one of the
Tothill Street antlers corresponds closely with fallow deer material recovered from the East Kent Access
Road. Isotopic signatures notwithstanding, the evidence now strongly suggests the presence of a managed
herd on Thanet.

![Fig 57 Fallow deer elements from various period 8 contexts (scale 1:2)](image)

There is also clear evidence for arable cultivation in the form of a rich and diverse charred botanical
assemblage dominated by spelt, alongside crop weeds such as black bindweed and corn gromwell. The nature
of the assemblages suggests that primary crop processing probably took place away from the settlement,
perhaps at field edges. Other wild plants include cherry/plum, hazel, rose and blackberry/raspberry, the latter
suggesting the presence of scrubby/shrubby habitat in the vicinity. Rotary querns of three major lithological
groups were used to process the cereals: sandstone from Kentish Lower Greensand formations including

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those to the east of Folkestone (Keller 1989), basalt lava from the Mayen/Niedermendig region of western Germany, and unsourced coarse pink/grey/buff sandstone also utilised at Monkton (Riddler 2008, 210). It is possible that the pestle-shaped objects from Building 1 and Building 5 may be connected with cereal processing too. Despite the presence of a number of iron tools and fittings, some of which were probably custom-made for a specific purpose (e.g. the distinctively hooked pruning knives <S41> and <S42> (Fig 50)), there is no evidence for iron smelting or smithing. Such activities presumably took place elsewhere within the settlement.

Although the sunken-featured buildings represent a distinctively regional phenomenon, the range of domestic and personal equipment indicates that the inhabitants enjoyed the trappings of a generally Romanised lifestyle. Some objects would not have been out of place on an urban or villa site, for example (Fig 58). These include good-quality glass vessels such as <S33>, imported fine wares, shale furniture comprising part of a possible table leg <S34>, units of graduated weight for accurately establishing equivalence such as <S43>, dress accessories like pins <S26> and <S28>, and the bone gladiator-handled clasp knife <S28> (Fig 34). Such figural clasp knives are well known, and gladiators appear to have been popular subjects (Bartus and Grimm 2010). The Tothill Street example features a heavily armoured *murmillo* and was probably a treasured personal possession, perhaps purchased as a souvenir during a visit to an amphitheatre such as that at Richborough.

*Fig 58  Selected Roman finds from various period 8 contexts and beyond: fragment of large convex wheel-cut bowl of colourless glass <S33> from Building 5; worked shale <S34>, possibly part of a table leg, intrusive within spread [1420] (OAS); cylindrical bone hinge <S35> from a chest or cupboard from Building 5; copper-alloy hair pins <S26> and <S28> from Building 5 and Building 9, respectively; dumbbell-shaped lead weight <S43> (weight 201.9g), one of two identical examples from Building 6 (scales as shown)*
Notions of ‘being Roman’ extended to culinary matters, too, and included the adoption of new eating and drinking habits requiring novel pottery vessels such as mortaria, flagons and amphorae, different butchery practices, and the exploitation of economically important marine resources such as common/flat oysters and common mussels. The absence of encrusting flora or fauna from the large sample of oysters analysed from eastern boundary ditch Structure 14 precluded any identification of the source fisheries, however. Access to a maintained fallow deer herd may be a further reflection of status and of a wider connectedness as well.

Alongside this Romanised lifestyle elements of folk belief are played out in the various items buried in pits and within the sunken-featured buildings. These include pottery vessels, animal carcasses and objects such as the gladiator clasp knife. The fills within the deep straight-sided pits in Open Area 11 are a particular case in point. These appear to incorporate residues of customary observances, perhaps connected with rites of commission or termination. This is most clearly shown in pit [872] with the burial of drinking gear in the form of flagons and a carinated beaker <P50>-<P53> (Fig 33; Fig 59). Several such vessels from the site – including perhaps those buried with the two adult males – may have been old at the time of their deposition (cf Booth 2011, 322). Similar motivations could also underpin the burial of the partially articulated animal remains in adjacent pits in Building 7, and the reuse of prehistoric objects such as the saddle quern and shaft hole adze <S19> as post-packing material in Building 1 and Building 6 (Fig 44), respectively (Ferris 2012, 84). Finally, it could be argued that the many serviceable or recyclable objects, including the rotary quernstones, pestle-shaped objects and iron tools found in Building 1, were also deliberately buried, again perhaps as part of a termination rite (Hingley 2006).

Fig 59  Group of drinking vessels comprising flagons <P50>-<P52> and carinated beaker <P53> from the fill of pit [872] in Open Area 11 (not to scale)

Overall, it is likely that the period 8 Tothill Street settlement was sited to take advantage of the main east–west axial routeway that ran eastwards from Sarre along the summit of the chalk ridge to the north. The Monkton sunken-featured buildings also had a close relationship with this route, which appears to have grown in importance throughout later prehistory, and which was eventually integrated into a network of Roman roads that later became Jutish and medieval Dunstrete, ‘the street over the down’ (Bennett et al 2008, 2). Moreover, the third-century AD terminal date of the Tothill Street settlement is one shared by
Monkton and by others (Booth et al 2008, 394–6; 2011, 334–8), and hints at wider social, economic and political upheavals that are reflected in the repurposing of the military installations at Richborough and Reculver on the Wantsum. While the nature of the relationship between the Tothill Street and Monkton settlements and the neighbouring winged corridor villa at Abbey Farm, Minster in Thanet, a kilometre to the south – itself demolished ‘sometime during the third century’ (Parfitt et al 2009, 356) – is unclear (Fig 2), it raises intriguing questions about the relative wealth and status of their inhabitants, about matters such as land ownership and tenure, and about the production, control and redistribution of agricultural and other surpluses across Thanet and beyond.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: C14 dates using IntCal09 (Reimer et al 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context no.</th>
<th>Context type</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Lab no. &amp; date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[1314]</td>
<td>pit in OA6</td>
<td>charred residue adhering to inner surface of pot</td>
<td>date of large deep bowl with internal bevel &amp; LBA activity in enclosure 2</td>
<td>UBA-22907 2843±23 BP 1110–921 cal BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[175]/[176]</td>
<td>inhumation in OA3</td>
<td>bone</td>
<td>date of child inhumation</td>
<td>UBA-22902 3555±35 BP 2015–1772 cal BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[745]/[746]</td>
<td>double inhumation in OA3</td>
<td>bone</td>
<td>date of double child/infant inhumation</td>
<td>failed dates x2 (one on tooth; one on charred cereal grain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[1492]</td>
<td>primary fill of ditch S1</td>
<td>botanical charcoal</td>
<td>date of monument construction</td>
<td>UBA-22906 2975±34 BP 1369–1056 cal BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[188]</td>
<td>posthole in OA7</td>
<td>animal bone</td>
<td>date of whale vertebra within same context</td>
<td>UBA-22903 2307±35 BP 413–210 cal BC</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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