

SUMMARY REPORT

West of Blind Lane, Sevington, Kent (NGR TR 04045 40101)

The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) was commissioned by Union Railways (South) Limited (URS) to undertake detailed archaeological investigation at West of Blind Lane Sevington, Kent. This work formed part of an extensive programme of archaeological investigation carried out in advance of the construction of the CTRL.

The excavation area exposed at least 16 ditches, five gullies, three postholes and two undated charcoal-filled pits. A Deverel-Rimbury bucket urn recovered during the evaluation from one of a pair of parallel ditches, indicates that this possible trackway is middle - late Bronze Age in date *c.* 1750 BC – 1150 BC. One of these ditches had been recut.

Pottery from the remaining ditches was sparse. A late Iron Age or early Romano-British date (*c.* 100 BC – 200 AD) is indicated for eight of the ditches and two smashed vessels were found in adjacent cuts forming part of a single Romano-British boundary. One of the vessels was a fragmented handled jar dated to *c.* 50 – 200 AD. Some intercutting and recutting of the ditches suggests that there are three phases to the late Iron Age/ early Romano-British activity, but it probably represents a relatively short-lived period of activity.

A large natural depression in the centre of the excavation area contained a thin deposit of waterlain sand and clay, which was overlain by colluvial deposits. The areas adjacent to the depression revealed areas of erosion, which produced late Iron Age/early Romano-British pottery as well as prehistoric struck flint.

A total of 426 pottery sherds were recovered from the site (in addition to the 127 sherds of mainly Bronze Age pottery recovered during the evaluation). 218 of these represent two fragmented early Romano-British vessels. There were few diagnostic sherds apart from the two vessels. A total of 111 pieces of struck flint and five pieces of burnt flint were recovered. The majority of the flints were recovered from topsoil, colluvial deposits or erosional features. A small assemblage of poorly preserved bone was recovered from the site.

Two metal artefacts were recovered, including a copper alloy late Iron Age brooch and a copper alloy pin.

The site is situated *c.* 300 m south of a dense surface concentration of pottery and flintwork, and an extensive cropmark complex of ring ditches, enclosures and field boundaries, which probably include a later prehistoric and Roman settlement focus. This suggests that later prehistoric and early Romano-British farming communities in this area may have favoured the better-drained geology of the Hythe Beds for settlement sites, rather than the heavy Atherfield Clay.