

## **APPENDIX 2: INTERIM SUMMARY REPORT**

As part of a larger programme of archaeological investigation along the route of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, Union Railways (South) Limited (URS) commissioned the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) to undertake an archaeological excavation at the Rochester and Cobham Golf Course (site code ARC CGC 98), Cobham Park, Kent. Evaluations in 1995 and 1997 had indicated the archaeological potential of the site. The excavation concluded that the area of the site was a focus of activity in the Middle to Late Bronze Age, probably in part agricultural and possibly including one or more burials; presumably there was a settlement near the site, if not actually within it. Evidence was also found of activity in the Late Iron Age or early Roman period, probably agricultural.

The site measured approximately 320m west to east by 35m north to south and was investigated on a 'strip, map and sample' basis between August and October 1998. The site was situated on land sloping gently down from west to east, to the south of the A2 trunk road. Soil conditions did not allow bone to be preserved, and botanical material survived very poorly or not at all.

The excavation revealed widespread plough damage, all features being truncated horizontally up to 0.5m below the present ground level. On the higher area to the west many struck and burnt flints were collected during bulk stripping, probably indicating an area of occupation that had been ploughed out. Lower down the slope ditches, pits and postholes were traced where they were cut into the underlying natural colluvium. The most significant feature was a ring ditch measuring 18m to 20m in internal diameter, with a gap 2m wide to the south. A systematic sample of 50% of this ditch was excavated by hand. The initial fills of the ditch contained Late Bronze Age struck flints and pottery, and subsequent fills Late Iron Age/ early Roman pottery; the latter fills were probably deposited by slippage from the centre of the ring. Presumably the ditch was all that remained of a Bronze Age barrow, perhaps ploughed out in the Late Iron Age or early Roman period.

A total of 35 small pits and postholes, or similar features, were recorded in the centre of the site. Most of these features only survived to a shallow depth; two, marked by burning and scorching, may have been hearths; others were deeper and variously contained Middle Bronze Age, Late Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age/ Early Iron Age pottery. No structural pattern in their layout was obvious. Two or three of these features contained considerable amounts of pottery, including many parts of single vessels. Nearly all these features were situated to the south of a straight ditch running roughly west-east and traceable for a distance of at least 100m. Traces of two much shorter north-south ditches were also found.

The subsoil which overlay the archaeological features contained many flecks of chalk, a result of marling, indicating a medieval or post-medieval plough soil. A metal detector survey of the topsoil found numerous cartridge cases and shrapnel—the site was a part of a practice range in the Second World War. More recently the construction of a golf course had caused large parts of the site to be badly disturbed by irrigation pipes, bunkers and platforms for teeing-off greens, the platforms being built up with a blue clay that had deeply stained the deposits underlying them.