

Oxford Archaeology Monograph 2

Westhawk Farm is the site of a large Roman settlement established at an important road junction near Ashford, Kent, shortly after the Roman conquest. It was discovered and partly excavated in advance of a housing development. The settlement contained contrasting unplanned areas and groups of carefully laid out plots. Excavated timber buildings included circular and rectilinear structures and a polygonal shrine within a rectangular enclosure. The main concerns of the inhabitants were apparently agriculture and market services. Iron production was important, but probably only of local significance, although the settlement may have had a role in the administration of the iron industry. Activity at the site had declined greatly by the mid 3rd century; a striking pattern reflected elsewhere in the region but still of uncertain significance.



The cover shows a conjectural reconstruction of Building R as it might have appeared about AD 200. The building was used as a smithy, with a row of iron-smelting furnaces outside its south-west end, in the foreground. The smithy lay at the edge of the excavated area; there is no direct evidence for the buildings shown behind it but it is very likely that such structures existed, fronting onto the main road leading towards the centre of the settlement. Reconstruction by Peter Lorimer.