

SETTLEMENT, FARMING AND INDUSTRY FROM PREHISTORY TO THE PRESENT IN THE THAMES ESTUARY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT DP WORLD LONDON
GATEWAY PORT AND LOGISTICS PARK, ESSEX,
AND ON THE HOO PENINSULA, KENT

SPECIALIST REPORT 2
ROMAN POTTERY
BY EDWARD BIDDULPH

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Twenty-eight sherds of pottery dating to the Roman period were recovered from the London Gateway project (Tables 2.1 and 2.2). Twelve of the sherds came from the inter-tidal survey (COMUD09), nine of the sherds came from the Pipeline Diversion (COLP15), two from the Rail Corridor (COMWR12), another two from the geoarchaeological watching brief (CORSH08), and three from the Cooling marshes (Salt Fleet Flats; CSCOX13) on the Kent side of the estuary.

The pottery from Salt Fleet Flats included two dishes, one with a plain rim in Cooling black-burnished ware (B20; Fig. 1, no. 1), the other with a bead rim in north Kent Thameside reduced ware (R30; Fig. 1, no. 2). Both are likely to have been manufactured between the second quarter of the 2nd century and mid-3rd century AD (Monaghan 1987, 141, 148). Another north Kent product, a flagon in fine oxidised (Upchurch) ware (O10), represented by a handle and dating to the late 1st or 2nd century AD (*ibid.*, 51-54), was collected from the Rail Corridor. Locally produced pottery was also attested in the groups from the Pipeline Diversion and the inter-tidal survey. Both included pottery in a shell-, sand- and grog-tempered fabric (E40) that had been manufactured nearby at Mucking (fabric group BLA; Jefferies and Lucy 2016, 158) during the 1st century AD; a bead-rimmed jar was identified in the fabric. Another fabric, a micaceous, sand-tempered fabric with moderate flint inclusions and a red-brown core and surfaces (O50), may also be a Mucking product; dating is uncertain, but a mid- or late-1st century date seems likely. In addition, the Pipeline Diversion and inter-tidal groups included fragments of grog-tempered pottery (E80) of late Iron Age or early Roman date. Other fabrics, such as fine reduced wares (R10) and medium-sandy reduced wares (R30), are of uncertain source, but are likely to be local in origin.

Some pottery arrived from further afield. A bead-rimmed lid in a fine oxidised fabric (O56; Fig. 1, no. 3), recovered from the Pipeline Diversion, is a Hadham product from Hertfordshire and dates to the 3rd or 4th century. A plainware form in South Gaulish samian ware (S20) reached Salt Fleet Flats during the second half of the 1st century AD. Another piece of samian, in this case a dish (Drag. 31) which arrived from Central Gaul (S30) during the second half of the 2nd century, was recorded in the Pipeline Diversion assemblage (Fig. 1, no. 4).

It is difficult to make meaningful observations from such a small and disparate assemblage, but it is worth noting that there is an emphasis on the 1st and 2nd century AD and on local manufacturers. The condition of the assemblage on the whole is poor. The mean sherd weight (weight divided by sherd count) is 8g, which attests to a high level of fragmentation. Much of the pottery is very worn, too. The bead-rimmed dish from Salt Fleet Flats had smoothed surfaces and rounded edges, as did the entire group from the inter-tidal survey. Such characteristics are typical of long-term exposure and movement of the material in the deposits from which it was recovered through agricultural practices and the action of the tide.

References

Jefferies, R, and Lucy, S, 2016 Romano-British pottery, in *Romano-British settlement and cemeteries at Mucking: Excavations by Margaret and Tom Jones, 1965-1978* (S Lucy and C Evans, with R Jefferies, G Appleby and C Going), Oxbow Books, Oxford, 154-99

Monaghan, J, 1987 *Upchurch and Thameside Roman pottery: a ceramic typology for northern Kent, first to third centuries AD*, BAR Brit Ser **173**, Oxford

Tomber, R, and Dore, J, 1998 *The National Roman Fabric Reference Collection: A handbook*, Museum of London, London

Roman Pottery Tables

TABLE 2.1: QUANTIFICATION OF ROMAN POTTERY BY SITE

Site	Sherds	Weight (g)	MV	EVE
COMUD09	12	94	1	0.05
COLP15	9	71	2	0.1
CSCOX13	3	34	2	0.15
COMWR12	2	7	0	0
CORSH08	2	14	1	0.05
Totals	28	220	6	0.35

Key: MV minimum number of vessels, based on rim count; EVE estimated vessel equivalent, which records the surviving proportion of the rim circumference (0.05 EVE = 5% of the rim).

TABLE 2.2: ROMAN POTTERY BY FORM AND FABRIC

Fabric	Description	Sherds	Weight (g)	MV	Form (EVE)
B20	Black-burnished ware (COO BB 2)	1	14	1	Plain-rimmed dish, Monaghan 1987, 5E (0.05)
E40	Shell-tempered ware, with additional sand and grog inclusions	5	36	1	Bead-rimmed jar (0.05)
E80	Grog-tempered ware	2	14		
O10	Fine oxidised ware, including Upchurch fine oxidised ware	5	20		
O20	Sandy oxidised wares	1	4		
O50	Oxidised sand-tempered fabric, micaceous and containing moderate flint inclusions	1	8		
O56	Hadham oxidised ware (HAD OX)	1	12	1	Bead-rimmed lid (0.05)
R10	Fine reduced wares	4	16		
R20	Sandy reduced wares	1	15		
R30	Medium-sandy reduced wares, including North Kent Thameside reduced ware	5	61	2	Bead-rimmed dish, Monaghan 1987, 5C1 (0.1) Bowl with grooved rim (0.05)
S20	South Gaulish samian ware (LGF SA)	1	2		
S30	Central Gaulish samian ware (LEZ SA 2)	1	18	1	Dish, Drag. 31 (0.05)
Totals		28	220	6	0.35

Fabric codes from Booth (2016). Additional fabric codes from the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber and Dore 1998)

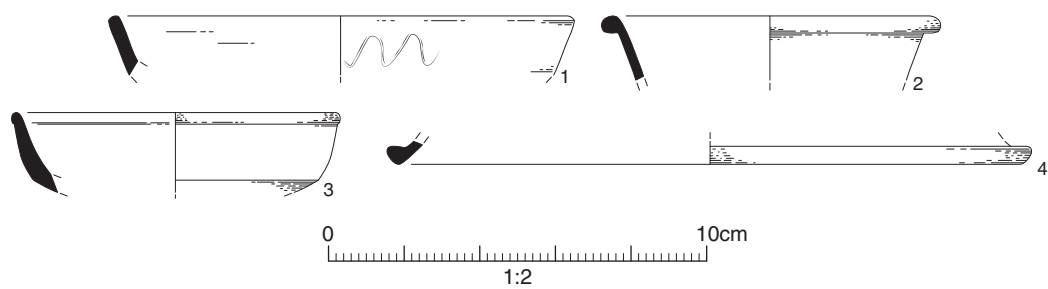
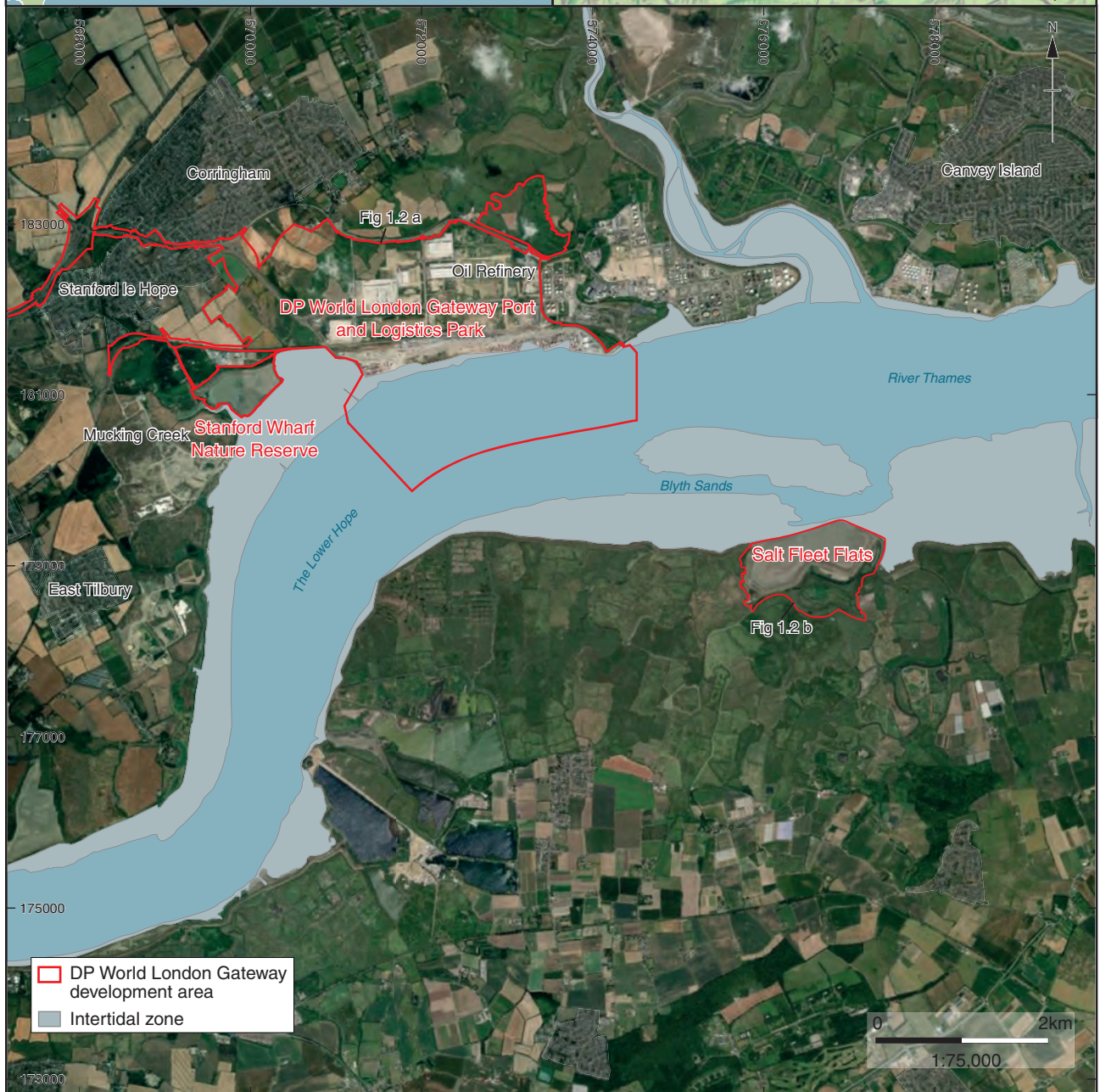
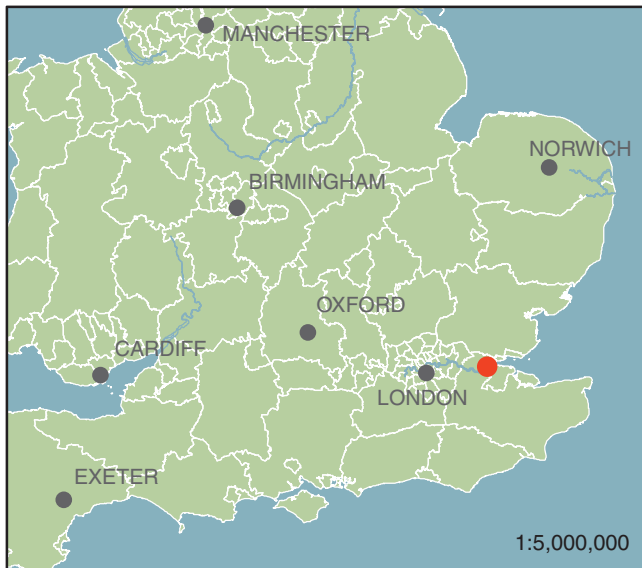


Figure 2: Roman pottery from London Gateway



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