

**MALTHOUSE FIELD, SOMPTING PADDOCKS, WORTHING
INTERIM FLINT REPORT SPW.17 & SPW.18**

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July 2019

INTERIM REPORT ON FLINT FINDS FROM SOMPTING PADDOCKS, WORTHING FOR 2017 & 2018

Introduction:

The worked flint finds were recovered, by the Society, from excavations during the summers of 2016 and 2017 in the Malthouse Field, Sompting. From the 2017 excavation there were 116 flints weighing 1445 grams and from 2018, 166 flints weighing 2330 grams.

For analysis purposes each flint has been recorded by context and classified as a tool type or debitage with dimensions, weight and other characteristics noted. The majority of the flints are afforded a specific time period.

The assemblage appears to be predominantly Neolithic leading into Bronze Age with a smaller background of Mesolithic flints.

A full catalogue is available and only significant items are described and commented in this report.

This is an interim report and following the examination of the flint finds from the 2019 excavation a further report will be produced which will have the advantage of a larger assemblage from which to draw conclusions.

Worked Flint:

The majority of the flints were recovered from top soil and open contexts. Only five were retrieved from closed contexts of which, the only tool, a water rolled retouched flake, was found adjacent to a possible medieval wall and categorised as Late Mesolithic/Early Bronze Age.

The remaining four from closed contexts are debitage flakes, of which three are located next to a possible medieval wall, two are dated Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic and a single Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age. The fourth, possibly a thinning flake, is from a burnt deposit and is undated.

The overall condition of the flints is of a fairly good quality and shows no significant plough damage. The majority, 58%, comprise of local grey and mottled grey some with fossil inclusions, and 21%, comprise of better quality black and dark grey flint that is likely to be imported.

In addition, there are 24 stained brown and red flints possibly from river sources, two with white patination from surface weathering, probably on Downland chalk. A significant number of the

flints showed evidence of water- rolling and two show signs of burning. There is a single worked quartzite flake from an unknown source.

As the majority of the contexts were open and in the vicinity of the remains of a possible medieval building, some of the flakes may not to be prehistoric. Forty nine of the debitage flakes are clearly not identifiable by date and are therefore not assigned a period. These flakes may have originated from subsequent flint wall construction.

A total of 62 pieces of fire-cracked flint were found during the excavations, weighing 1887gm and these were disposed of on site.

Analysis of the 2017 and 2018 Assemblages

The flint included struck flint as well as thermal flakes and natural pieces with indications of use-wear but no secondary working. These are categorized as tools and shown to be utilized flakes, blades or pieces. There is a significant number of heavily water rolled flints.

For analysis purposes the flints are attributed, where possible to the following time periods:

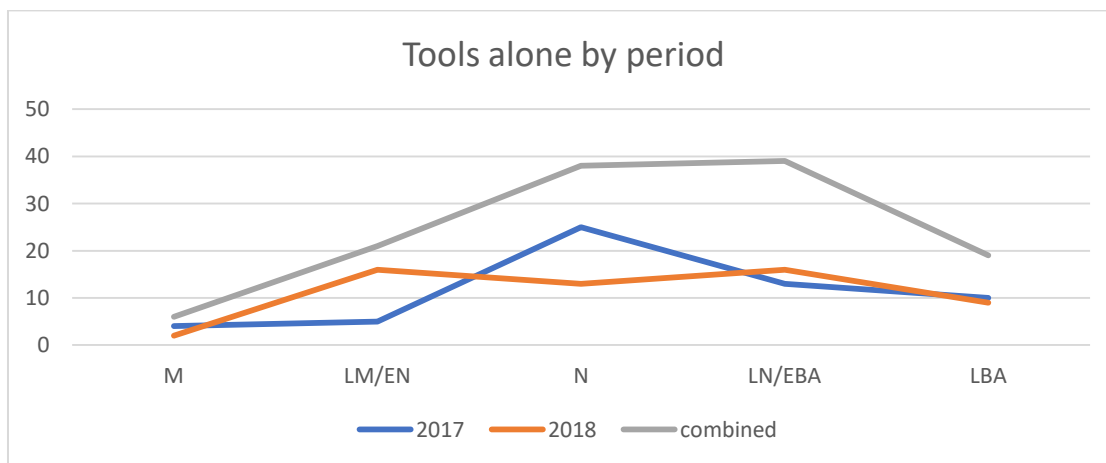
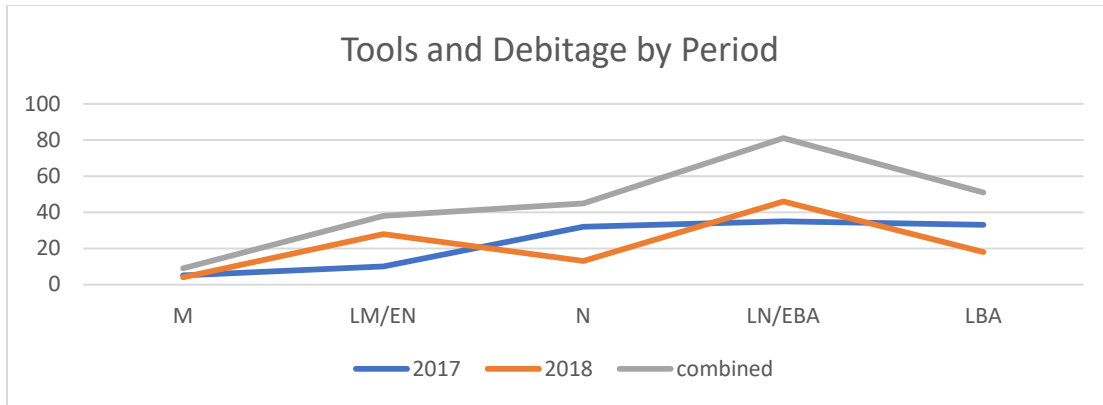
M	Mesolithic
LM/EN	Late Mesolithic/ Early Neolithic
N	Neolithic
LN/EBA	Late Neolithic /Early Bronze Age
LBA	Late Bronze Age

The following tables show the number of tools and debitage recovered from 2017 and 2018, excluding the worked quartzite flake and 49 debitage flakes which have not been assigned any period:

Period	2017 Debitage	2018 Debitage	Combined Debitage
M	5	4	9
LM/EN	10	28	38
N	28	14	42
LN/EBA	34	49	83
LBA	33	18	51

Period	2017 Tools	2018 Tools	Combined Tools
M	4	2	6
LM/EN	5	16	21
N	23	13	36
LN/EBA	12	19	31

The graphs below show the number of tools and debitage by period, and the number of tools alone by period.



The tools anddebitage together show a predominance of Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age going into Late Bronze Age whereas the tools alone show a predominance of Neolithic flints going into Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age.

Some tools types are recognisable as specific to period, so the graph for tools alone is likely to be the more accurate.

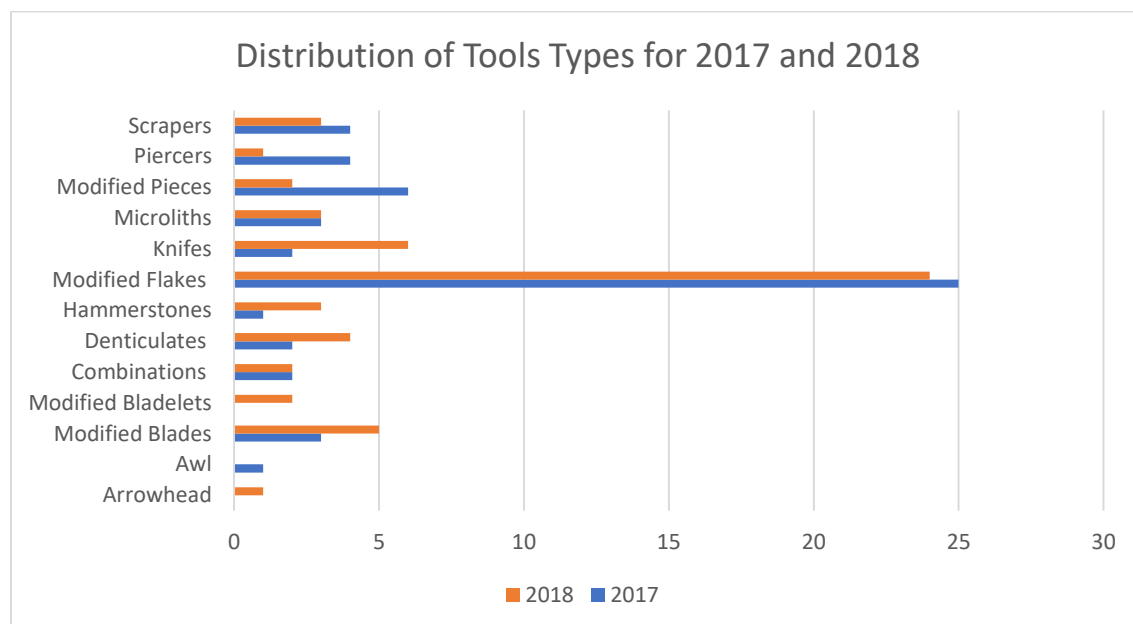
Tools

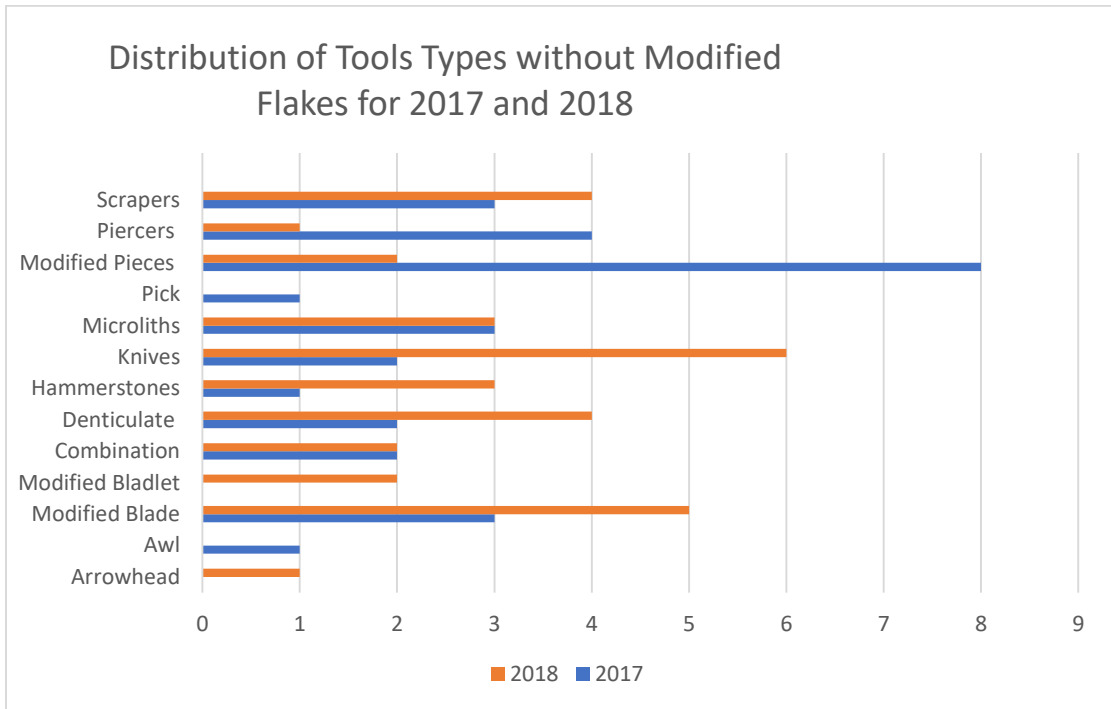
Tools comprise 41% of the assemblage.

The following table shows the number of tools recovered from 2017 and 2018

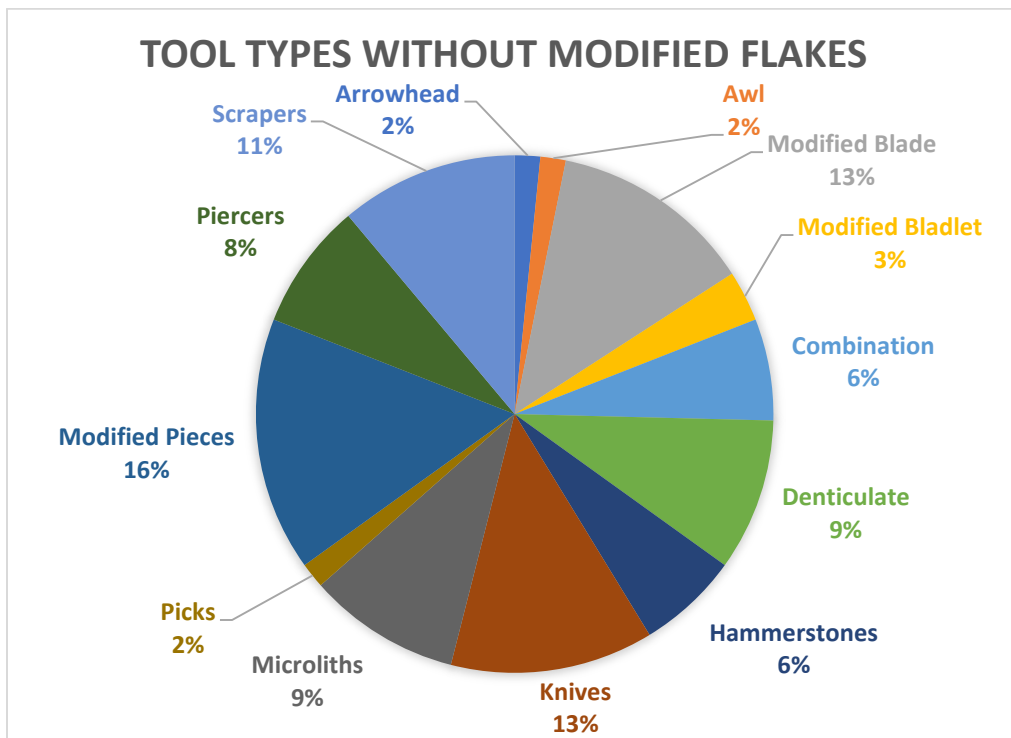
Type	2017	2018	Total
Arrowhead	0	1	1
Awl	1	0	1
Notched Blade	0	1	1
Retouched Blade	3	4	7
Retouched Bladelet	0	2	2
Combination	2	2	4
Denticulate	2	4	6
Notched Flake	1	3	4
Retouched Flake	23	18	41
Utilised Flake	1	3	4
Hammerstone	1	3	4
Knife	2	6	8
Microlith	3	3	6
Pick	1	0	1
Notched Piece	2	0	2
Retouched Piece	4	2	6
Utilised Piece	2	0	2
Piercer	4	1	5
Scraper	0	3	3
Button Scraper	1	0	1
End Scraper	2	0	2
Hollow Scraper	1	0	1
			112

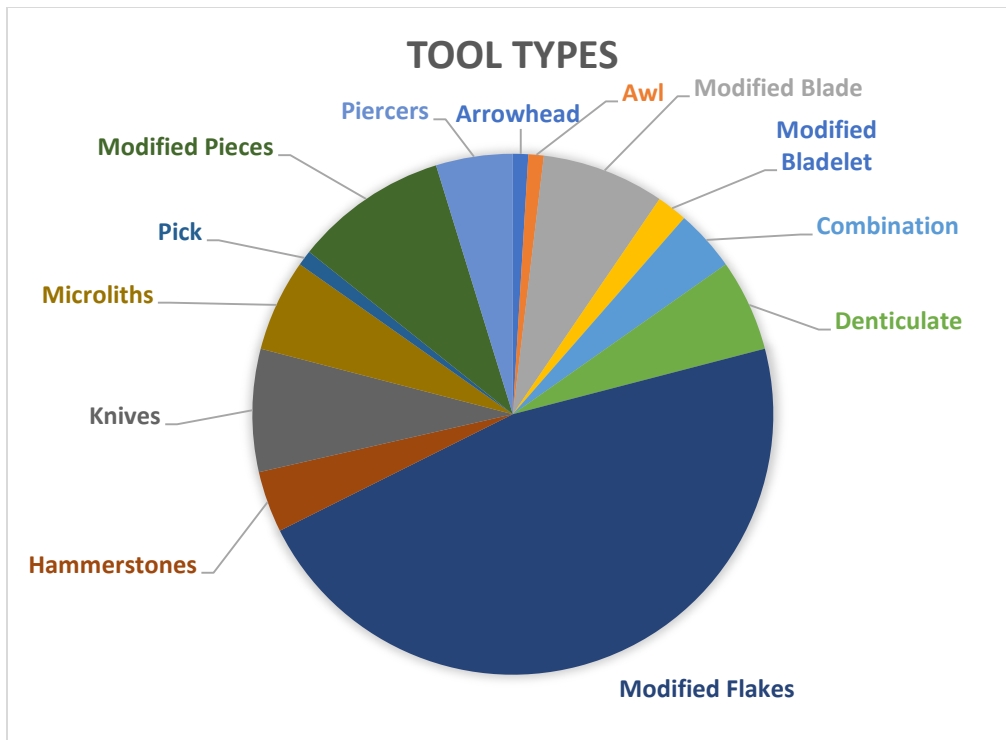
The graphs below show the distribution of tool types for 2017 and 2018. As there is a greater predominance of flakes the second graph has been produced with the flakes omitted in order to show the distribution of the remaining tools more clearly.





The pie chart immediately below shows the distribution of tool types for the assemblage omitting the modified flakes, and the second pie chart shows the distribution of the tool types for the complete assemblage.





Significant tools are described below:

Oblique Arrowhead Cat 108.8 Tr4C, Context 55, size 30x21mm

Good quality grey flint with blue grey mottling and triangular in shape. Retouched on both lateral sides, narrowing to distal tip. Visible platform and bulb of percussion, dorsal side has three thinning removals. The proximal end has been retouched on one side and notched on the other to form a short tang that may have assisted hafting. Late Neolithic.

Awl Cat. 61.7, Context 4, size 47x25mm

Dark grey /brown flake with visible platform and bulb, cortex extending along lateral edge and covering half of dorsal side. Awl at distal end is retouched on alternate sides and has a thick triangular cross section. Neolithic

Retouched Bladelet Cat 113.8 Tr4A, Context 41, size 20x5mm

Grey bladelet with some retouch on lateral sides and distal end. Good quality flint. Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic

Retouched Blade Cat 110.8 Tr 4A, Context 41, size 50x22mm

Dark grey retouched crested blade, pointed, with retouch on one lateral side. High quality flint in good condition. Some cortex remaining on crest. Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic

Retouched Blade Cat 64.7, Context 22, size 20x19mm

Mottled grey broken proximal end of blade, with retouch on one lateral side. Although water rolled the opposing side shows signs of use wear. Neolithic

Retouched Blade Cat 63.7, Context 14, size 30x23mm

Mottled light brown blade, broken on distal end with retouch on one lateral edge. Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age

Retouched blade Cat 11.8 Tr4C, Context 55, size 75x25mm

Dark grey mottled retouched crested blade, with cortex on dorsal side. Crude retouched on both lateral edges. Late Bronze Age

Combination tool Cat 116.8 Tr3, Context 30, size 40x25mm

Dark grey combination tool, Y shaped scraper with one edge abrupt retouched and retouched point to form a thick piercer. Neolithic

Combination Tool Cat 66.7 Tr 2E, Context 20, size 43x17

Red, water rolled flint elongated flake, with a retouched distal end forming a piercer and a lateral edge forming a knife. Neolithic

Denticulate Cat 117.8 Tr4B, Context 35, size 48x28mm

Grey flint denticulated blade with cortex on one end and retouch along one lateral edge to create serration. Neolithic

Denticulate Cat 120.8 Tr5, Context 68, size 26x10mm

Micro denticulated bladelet, light grey good quality flint. Visible platform and bulb on ventral side. There is micro retouch along one lateral edge creating a very fine serrated blade. Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic

Modified Flake Cat 121.8, Tr3, Context 29, size 25x40mm.

Mottled grey asymmetric notched flake with a visible platform and bulb of percussion, and a large retouched notch on one lateral side. The distal end of the flake has been abraded. Late Neolithic / Early Bronze Age.

Retouched Flake Cat. 71.7, Context 4, size 35x26mm

Dark grey flake with visible bulb and platform with two flake removals on dorsal side, retouched all along one lateral edge, across distal end and down the opposing edge. Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic.

Retouched Flake Cat. 141.8, Tr4A Context 82, Size 19x19mm

Small pale blue/grey, retouched disc shaped flake, retouched around most of edge and water rolled. Late Mesolithic/Early Bronze Age.

Retouched Flake Cat. 87.7, Tr2W, Context 17, size 27x20mm

Dark grey flake ovoid in shape with visible platform and bulb and small cortex patch on distal end. Five removals on dorsal side and two removals on ventral side. Possible unfinished arrowhead roughout. Early Neolithic

Retouched Flake Cat. 88.7, Tr2W, Context 19, Size 30x48mm

Light grey/ blue flake, large notch on one lateral side extending to distal end. Invasive retouch all along opposing lateral side with worn abrupt retouch at distal end and two removals. Neolithic.

Retouched Flake Cat. 139.8, Tr3, Context 64, Size 45x50 mm

Grey mottled retouched flake with visible platform and bulb. Invasive retouch on distal end and cortex remaining around proximal end. Bronze Age.

Utilised Flake Cat. 144.8, Tr3, Context 29, Size 31x32mm

Mottled grey overshot flake with visible bulb and cortex on proximal end. Visible use wear on one edge. Neolithic.

Knife Cat 151.8, Tr4B, Context 32, size 37x13mm

Grey blade with one unmodified lateral cutting edge showing use wear. Late Mesolithic/Early Bronze Age.

Backed Knife Cat.150.8, Tr1, Context 63, size 54x28mm

Mottled grey flake, cortex along one thick lateral edge, the opposing edge retouched and with signs of wear. Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age.

Microlith Cat 98.7 No Tr, Context 20, size 22x12

Grey microlith made on broken distal end of a bladelet. Narrow strip of cortex along one lateral edge with retouch along opposing side. Mesolithic

Microlith Cat 156.8 Tr4A, Context 31, size 15x20

Grey microlith on proximal end of broken blade, fine retouch along one lateral edge. Flake removal from dorsal side. Mesolithic

Microlith Cat 155.8 Tr 3, Context 29, size 14 x 11

Dark grey microlith on broken proximal end of bladelet with a narrow strip of cortex along one lateral side and fine retouch along opposing side. Mesolithic

Pick Cat 99.7, Context 4, size 75x33mm

Grey mottled nodule, parallel along its length tapering toward the distal end, with cortex covering two sides. The proximal end is flat and four sided with several flake removals. The distal end is sharpened by a tranchet flake removal. The distal end appears blunted through use. Mesolithic

Notched Piece Cat 100.7 Tr 2, Context 17, size 35x30

Grey flint piece with a small area of cortex along one edge and a worked notch on adjacent lateral edge. Bronze Age

Utilised Piece Cat 107.7 Context 14, size 60x38

Mottled grey utilised piece with cortex covering most of one side. Along one edge there are signs of use ware and a short section of semi-abrupt retouch. Late Bronze Age.

Retouched Piece Cat 105.4 Context 18, size 48x23

Mottled grey retouched piece with iron staining and small patches of cortex. There is evidence of a flake removal and retouch along one edge. Bronze Age

Piercer Cat. 110.7, Context 14, size 10x20mm

Grey broken soft hammer flake, on good quality grey flint, small platform and bulb with piercer on lateral edge, worked on single side. Neolithic

Piercer Cat. 159.8, Tr3, Context 29, size 59x40mm

Grey mottled flake, bulb and platform intact with cortex along one lateral edge. The opposing edge is retouched halfway along one side to form a piercer. Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age.

Scraper Cat 116.7, Context 14, size 24x26mm

Dark grey hollow scraper with cortex at proximal end, manufactured on a flake with semi-abrupt retouch at the distal end. Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic

Scraper Cat 114.7, Context 4, size 51x25

Light grey elongated flake, with abrupt retouch across the proximal end to form an end scraper. There is cortex on the dorsal side. Neolithic

Scraper Cat 113.7, Context 17, size 36x30mm

Light grey button scraper, with partial cortex on dorsal side. There is semi-abrupt and invasive retouch around the distal edge. Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age

Scraper Cat 162.8 Tr4A, Context 31, size 56x62mm

Grey mottled scraper modified from a flake. The retouch is crude around the distal end. Cortex remaining on most of the dorsal side. Late Bronze Age

Debitage

Debitage comprises 59% of the assemblage

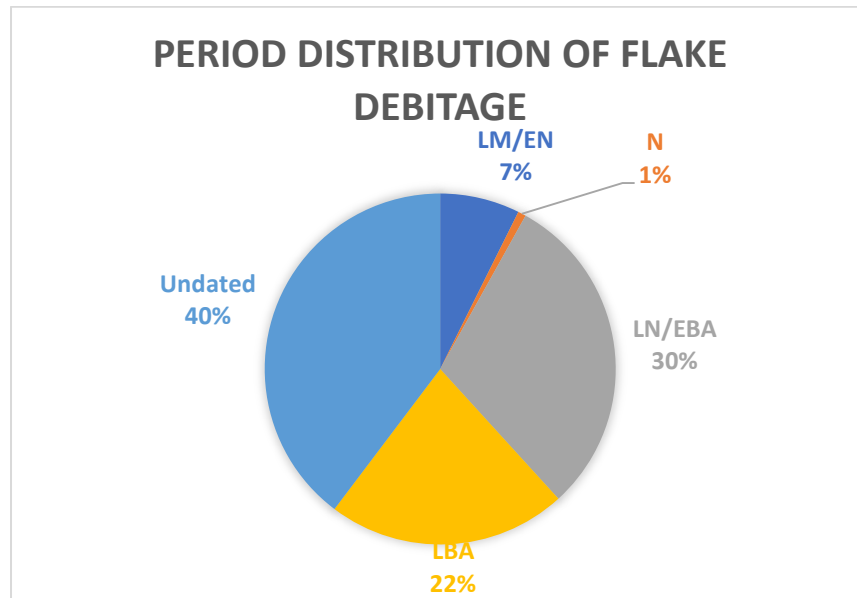
The types of debitage recovered are shown in the following table:

Type	2017	2018	total
Blades	2	5	7
Bladelets	2	2	4
Cores	2	4	6
Core fragments	4	5	9
Flakes	47	91	138
Burin spall	1	0	1
Total	58	107	165

A large proportion 84% of the debitage is comprised of flakes, with 9% cores and core fragments and 7% blades and bladelets and a single burin spall.

Flakes

Of the 138 debitage flakes, 54 were undated, 42 were dated Late Neolithic /Early Bronze and 30 Late Bronze Age. There were a few Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic, one Neolithic and none were Mesolithic.



Blades and Bladelets

The seven blades comprise, one Late Mesolithic /Early Neolithic, a single Neolithic and four Late Neolithic/Early Bronze. Four of these are broken.

Of the four bladelets one is Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic and three are Late Neolithic /Early Bronze Age.

Cores

The fifteen cores and core fragments comprise three Mesolithic, three Neolithic, three Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age and one Late Bronze Age, including:

Cat. 14.8, Tr4B, Context 32, size 30x21mm

Dark grey to black good quality bi-polar core with an area of cortex patch. Careful platform preparation for blade removals on two sides. Mesolithic

Five Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic including

Cat. 5.7, Context unknown, size 60x40mm

Grey core with cortex on one face. One blade removal terminating in a hinge fracture with three, later flake removals. Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic

Cat. 7.7 Context 2, size 35x36mm

Dark grey bi-polar core fragment with inclusions and some cortex. Bladelet removals from one face and partial removals from the opposing face, restricted by inclusions. Neolithic

Cat. 8.8 Tr3, Context 29, size 45x48mm

Dark grey core with extensive cortex. Evidence of platform preparation for flake removals. Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age

Cat. 6.7, Context 14, size 79x44mm

Irregular shaped light grey core with extensive cortex. There are one or two small flake or blade removals from each of three irregular platforms. Late Bronze Age

Burin Spall**Cat. 60.7 Context 9, Size 15x4.**

Light grey spall with visible bulb of percussion, from a dihedral burin. Neolithic

Flint colour and quality

The colour and quality of the flint was noted for each flint and is summarized in the table below.

Colour	Tools	Debitage	Total
Black	10	6	16
Dark Grey	25	36	61
Dark Grey Mottled	2	6	8
Grey	44	75	119
Grey Mottled	13	20	33
White/Light Grey	7	3	10
Dark/Light Brown	9	14	23
Red	2	0	2
	112	160	272

Discussion/conclusions

The flint assemblage for 2017 and 2018 indicates activity at the site from the Late Mesolithic through to the Late Bronze Age. The majority of worked flints date from Neolithic through to the Early Bronze Age.

The raw flint material is mainly locally sourced grey and mottled grey flint (59%), together with better quality dark grey (22%) and black flint (6%). There are several iron-stained flints and few white flints from Chalk Downland, also several burnt flints and one quartzite flake from an unknown source.

Although there are large numbers of worked flakes, there are very few primary flakes indicating there was no significant knapping at the site, and the lack of scrapers would indicate the site was not used for habitation.

The range of tools and cores excavated, dating from the Later Mesolithic through to the Late Bronze Age, indicates the site could have been used as a temporary hunting, farming and butchery site through that period.

As the site contains flint walls possibly dating from the medieval and later, and almost all of the flint assemblage comes from open contexts, it is difficult to make overall assumptions.

The relatively small assemblages for 2017 and 2018 make it difficult to produce statistically viable conclusions. A future report to include the 2019 assemblage promises to provide greater enlightenment as to the activity at the site.

Acknowledgements:

We would like to express our very great appreciation to Bob and Gill Turner for their valuable and constructive suggestions during the planning and development of this report.

We would also like to thank Connie Shirley and Gordon Hayden as supervisors at the Sompting Dig for their insights and knowledge of the site. Also thank you to Richard Griffiths for helping us with I.T. issues.

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