

A Field Walk at Sompting, West Sussex

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Worthing Archaeological Society

Project Report

C. Shirley

Finds Analysis

Gill Turner & Robert Turner



Figure 1 - View looking South

Acknowledgements

Frank Grantham – tenant farmer

Mike Tristram- for Sompting Estates

Members of Worthing Archaeological Society

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1. INTRODUCTION

The field is situated to the south of the A27 on the north -east of Worthing at TQ 156051 just south of the boundary of the South Downs National Park – see Figure 2. The area was part of Sompting Parish until the incorporation of the area into the borough of Worthing in 1933 (BHO a, 2016).

The site is about 2km inland from the coast at the head of an area of alluvial soils and drainage ditches and small streams – see Figure 3. A brief check on the eastern border of the field indicated alluvium at a depth of about 50cm

Historic England (2016) list a possible trackway (monument 1473424) of uncertain date and World War 2 defences (Monument 1446461) just to the south-east of the field surveyed. Roman remains (Monument 395585) were also identified about 500m along the line of the road which runs east-west through the village of Sompting (Ainsworth& Ratcliffe-Densham, 1974). Therefore, it was considered worthwhile to spend a day field walking while the field had been newly ploughed.

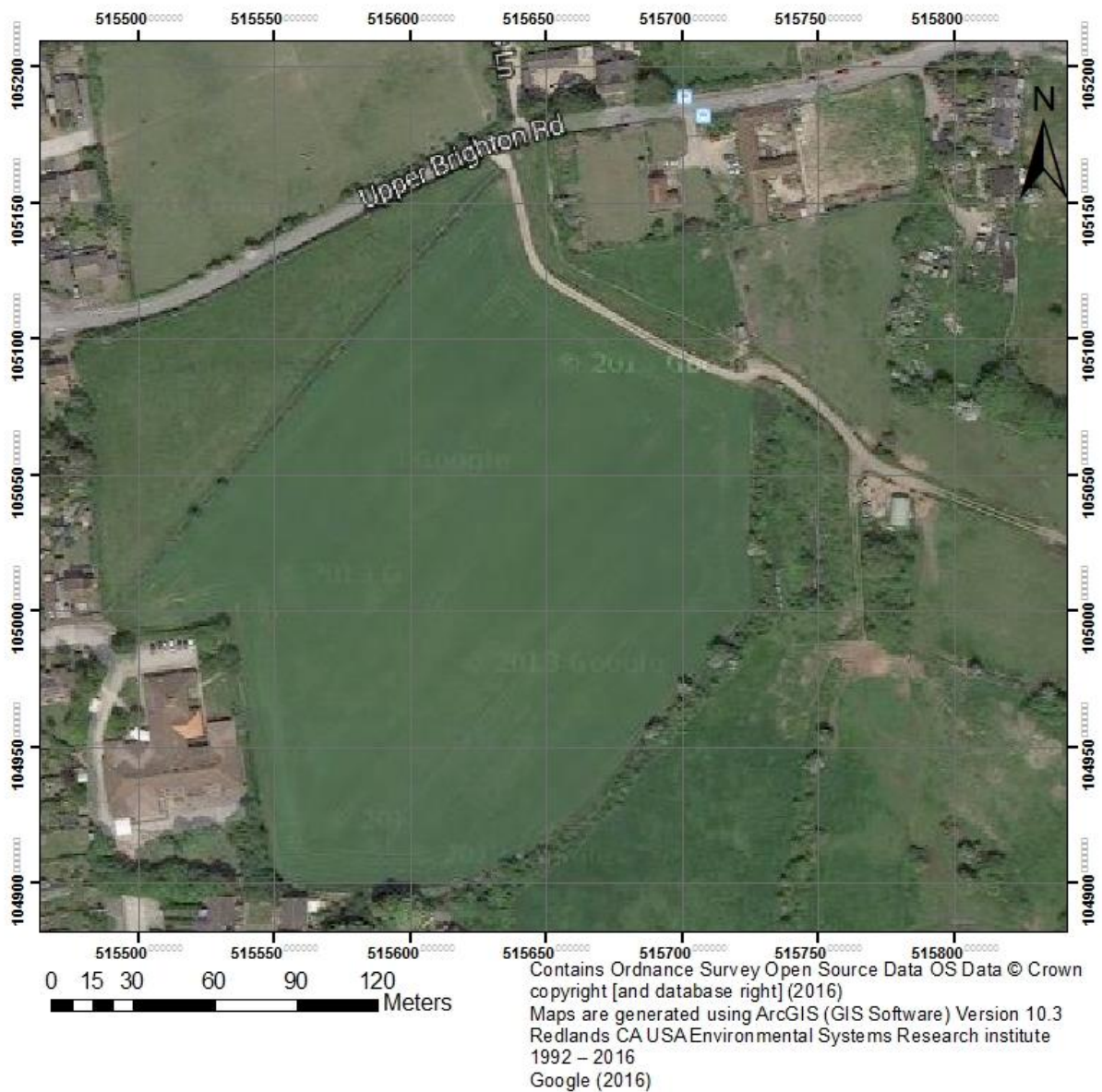
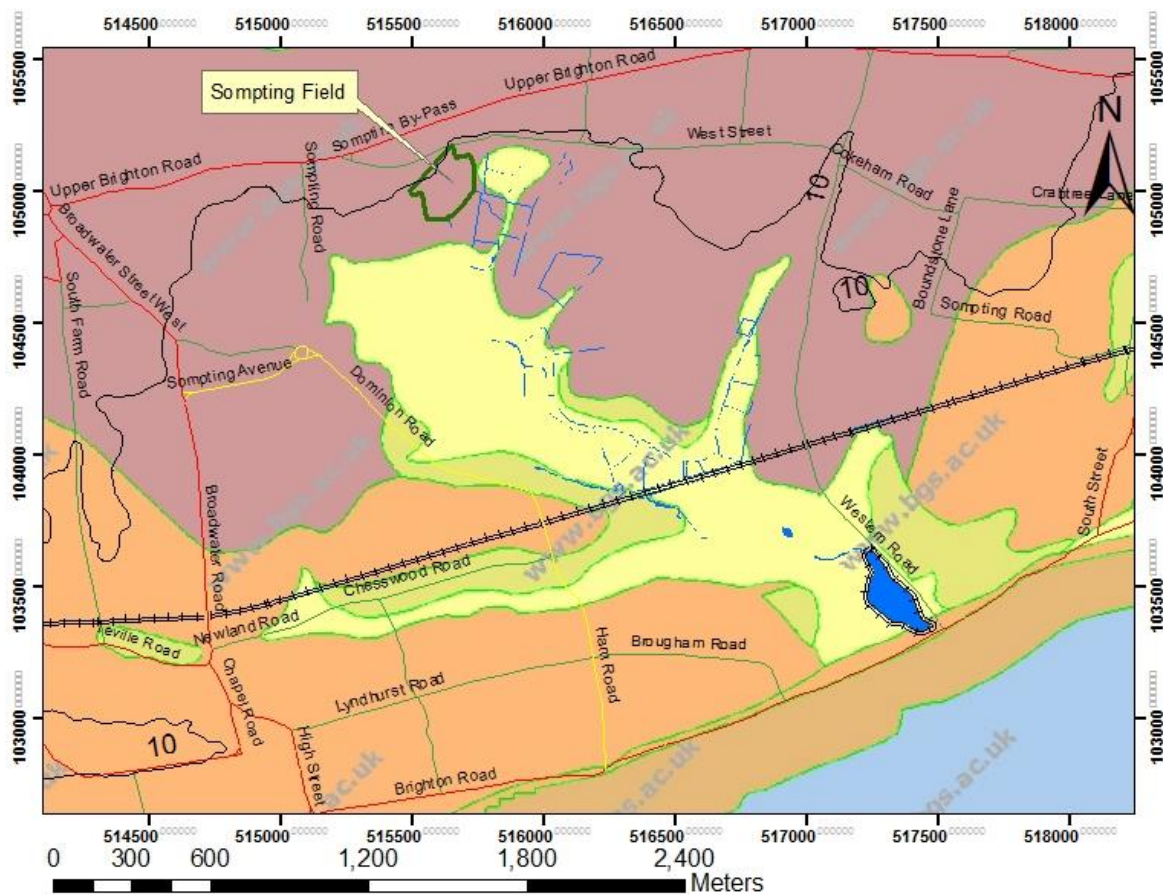


Figure 2 - The site in the local landscape



Contains Ordnance Survey Open Source Data OS Data © Crown copyright [and database right] (2016)
 Maps are generated using ArcGIS (GIS Software) Version 10.3
 Redlands CA USA Environmental Systems Research institute
 1992 – 2016
 BGS (2016)

Superficial deposits

- ALLUVIUM - CLAY, SILTY, PEATY, SANDY
- ALLUVIUM - CLAY, SILT, SAND AND GRAVEL
- BEACH AND TIDAL FLAT DEPOSITS
- (UNDIFFERENTIATED) - CLAY, SILT, SAND AND GRAVEL [UNLITHIFIED DEPOSITS]
- HEAD - CLAY, SILT, SAND AND GRAVEL
- HEAD, 1 - CLAY, SILT, SAND AND GRAVEL
- RAISED BEACH DEPOSITS - SAND AND GRAVEL
- RIVER TERRACE DEPOSITS
- (UNDIFFERENTIATED) - SAND, SILT AND CLAY
- STORM BEACH DEPOSITS - GRAVEL
- CLAY-WITH-FLINTS FORMATION - CLAY, SILT, SAND AND GRAVEL

Figure 3 - Geology of the Site (BGS, 2016)

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Yeakell and Gardner map of 1778 (Figure 4) shows the area at the top of the marshy innings which gave Broadwater its name. The marshland extends along the edge of the field and up to the road through Sompting village as well as abutting the village of Broadwater. EON in their archaeological assessment of the area for the Rampion windfarm cable works (2016) note that the name Sompting means *Settlement of the dwellers at the marsh*

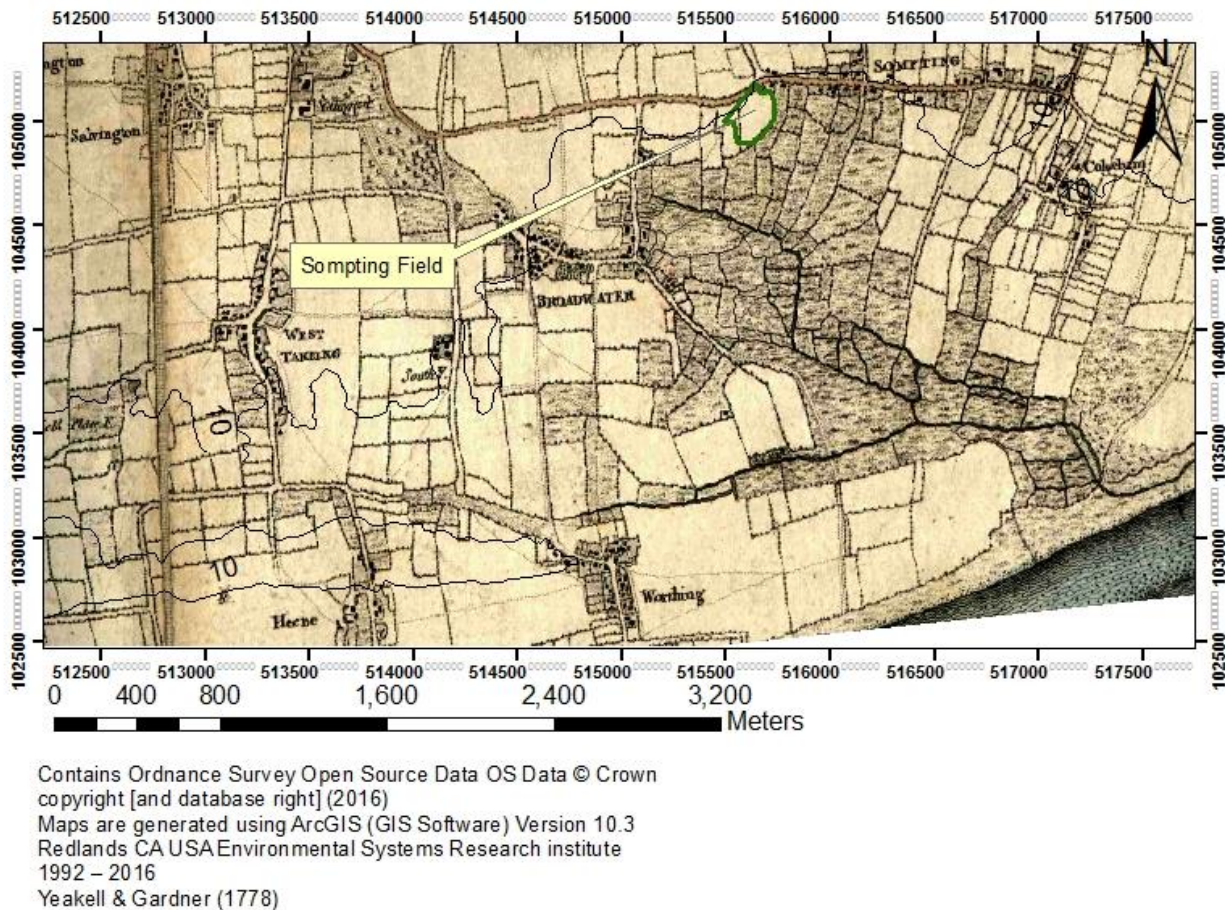


Figure 4 - Yeakell and Gardner Map (1778)

Although only just under 30 years later, the initial Ordnance Survey (BHO b, 2016) shows a significant alteration to the marshland. The area between the Sompting Brook and Sompting Village appear to have been drained and the field boundaries have altered – see Figure 5

The modern lidar map derived from lidar obtained in 2014 (EA 2014) does not show any traces of previous drainage or field boundaries see Figure 6. The area is now part of Sompting Estates (2016) and the field belongs to the Church Farm portion of the estate and is planted with arable crops.

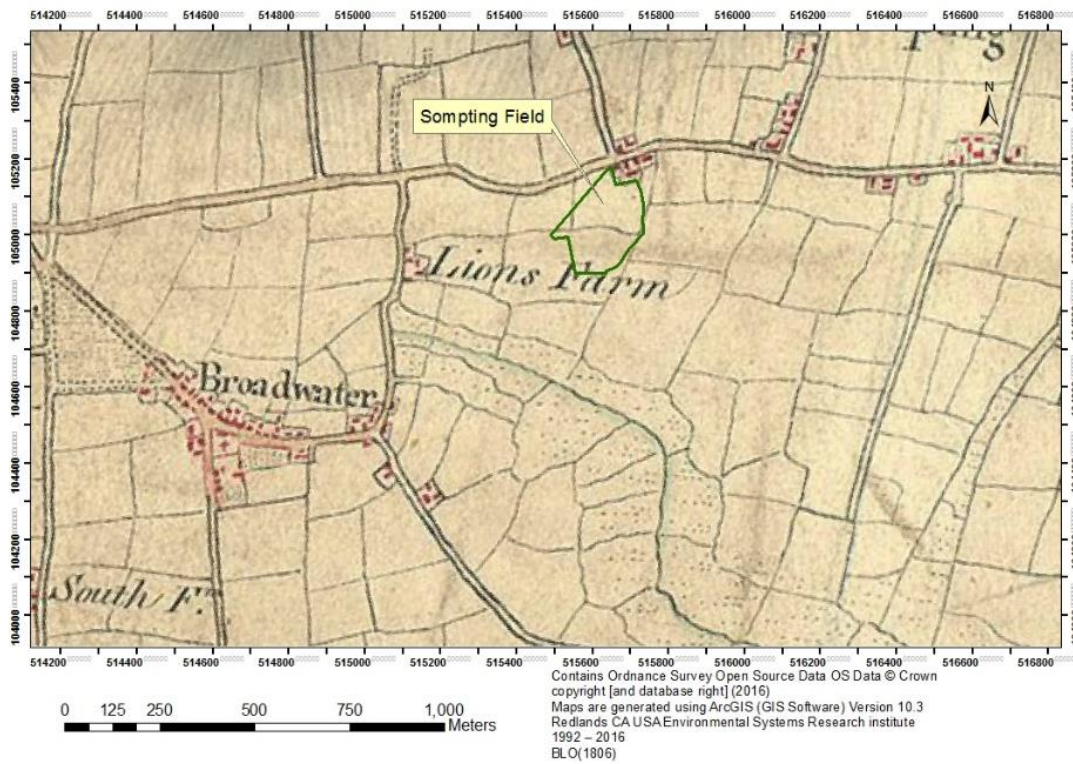


Figure 5 - Ordnance Survey Surveyors Initial Map

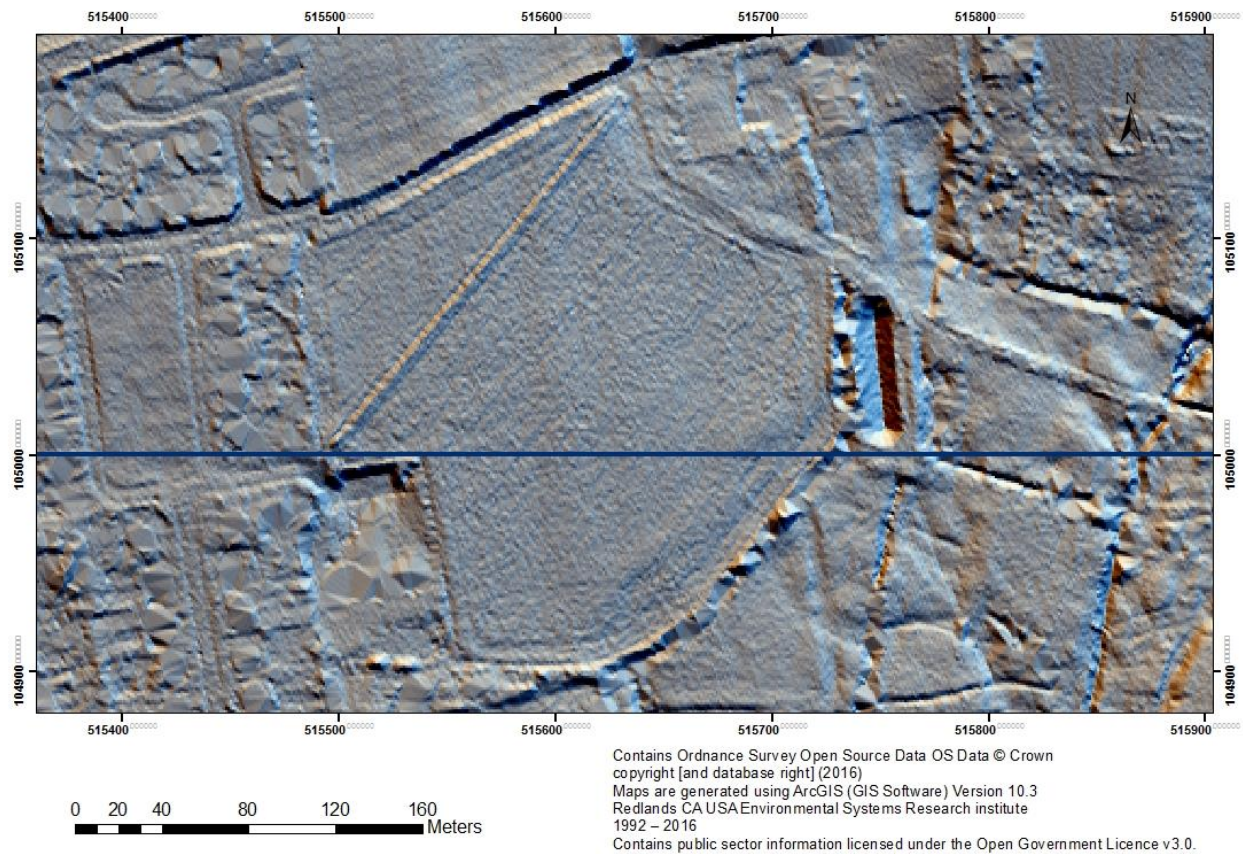
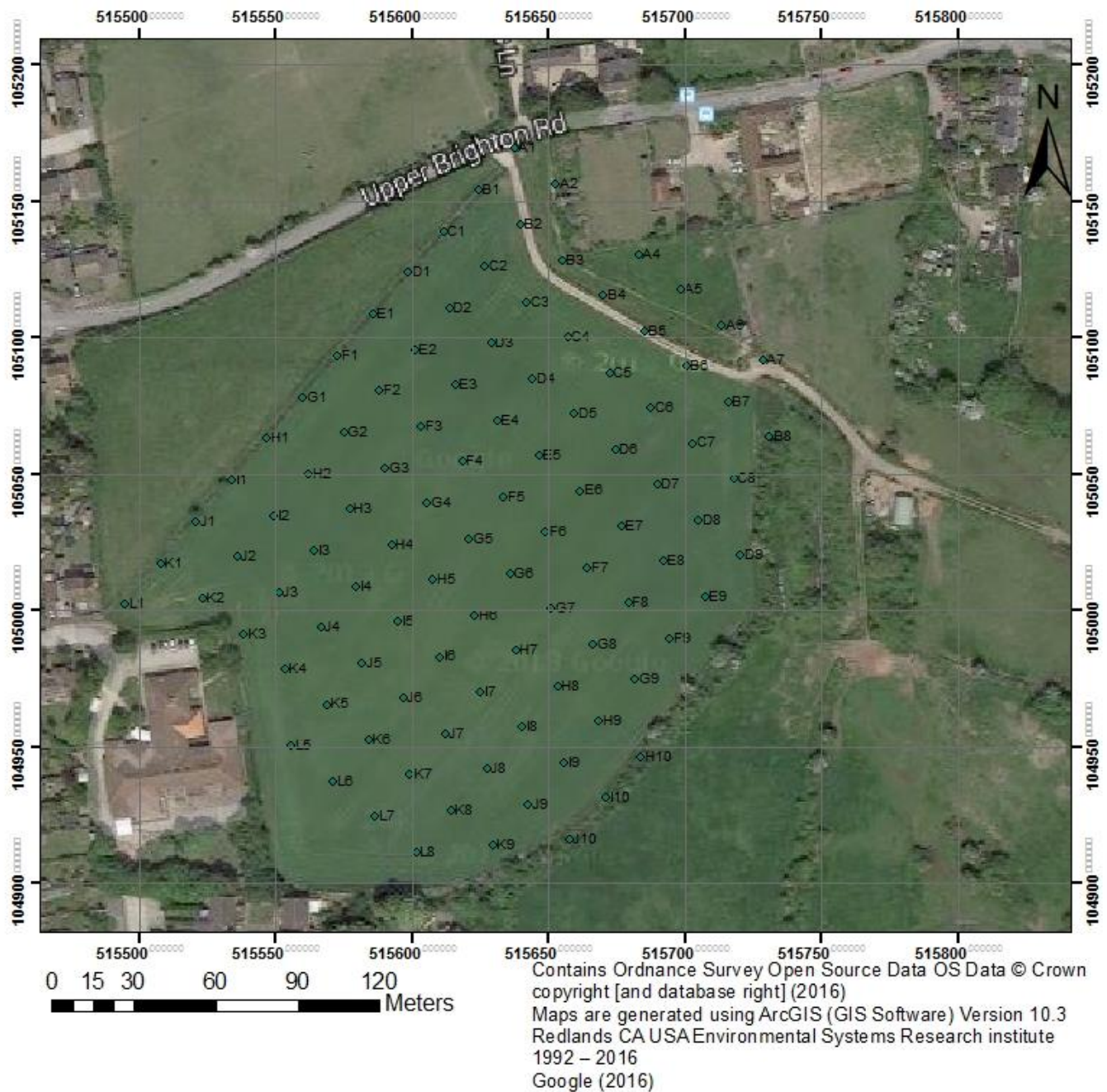


Figure 6 - Modern Lidar - Multi-hillshade model

3. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

A grid of 20x20m squares was laid out and collection was made for each square along the line of the grid with collection 1m either side representing 10% coverage of the field.



4. SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 All Finds

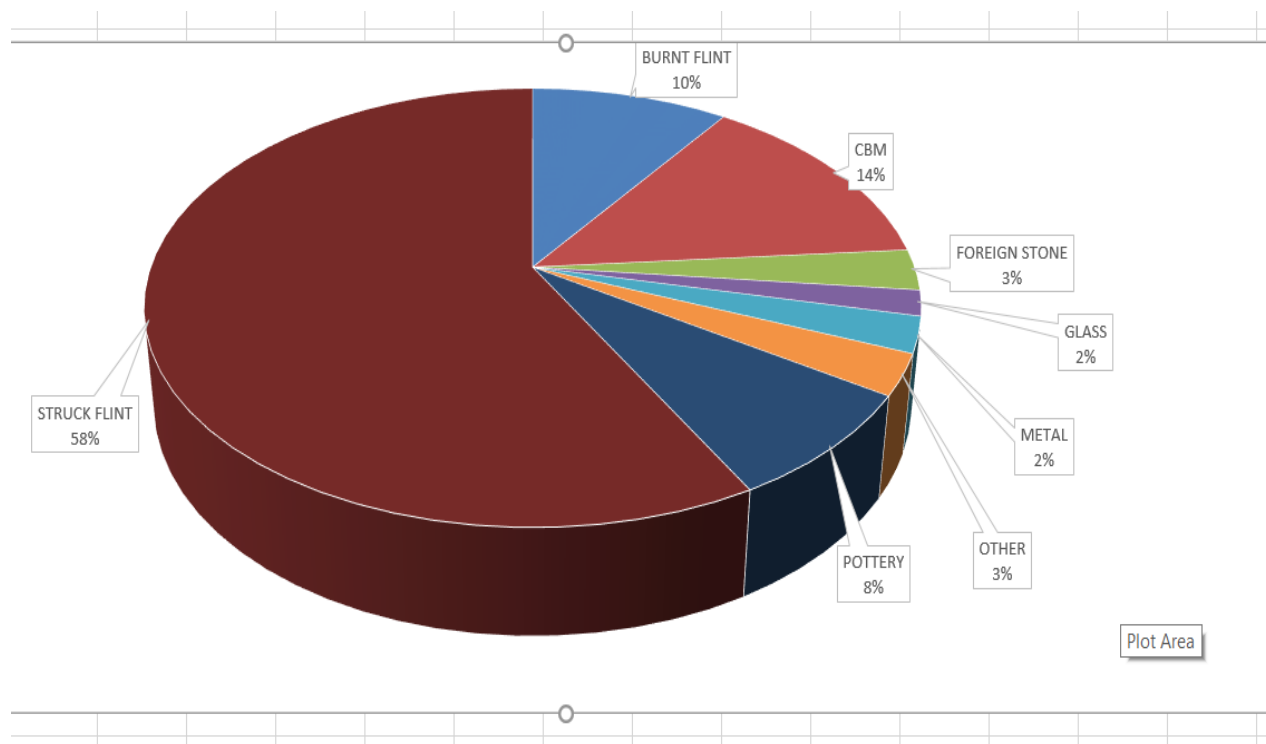


Figure 7 - Finds by type

Of the 246 artifacts recovered, struck flint was the predominant category (see Figure 7).

4.2 Struck Flint

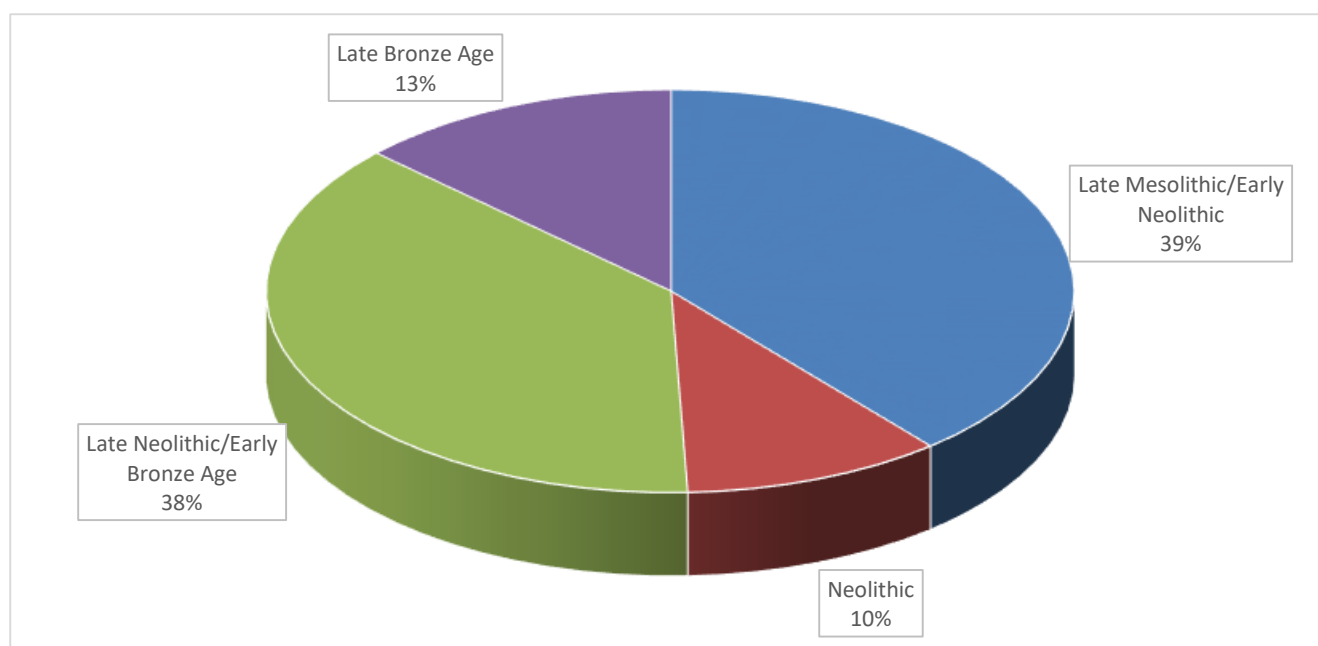


Figure 8 - Struck Flint by Periods

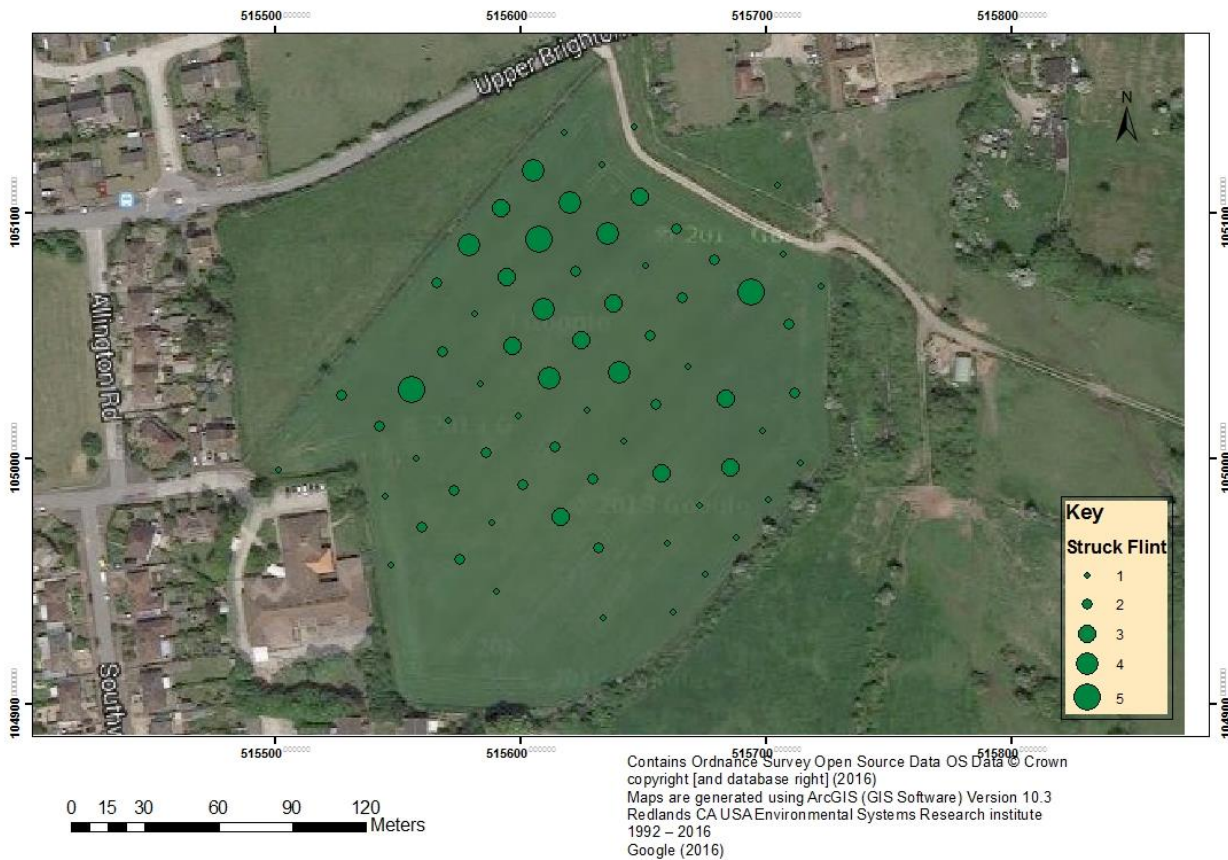


Figure 9 - Distribution of Struck Flint

Table 1 – Struck Flint by Tool Type			
Tool Type	Qty	Tool Type	Qty
AWL	1	DENTICULATE	3
AXE	1	FLAKE	18
BLADE FRAGMENT	1	H/H FLAKE	6
BLADELET	4	KNIFE	17
BURIN	1	NOTCHED FLAKE	9
CHOPPER	2	PIERCER	16
COMBINATION TOOL	10	REJUVENATED FLAKE	1
CORE	4	RETOUCHED BLADE	1
CORE BI POLAR	1	RETOUCHED FLAKE	20
CORE REJUVINATION FLAKE	2	S/H FLAKE	9
		SCRAPER	27
TOTAL	154		

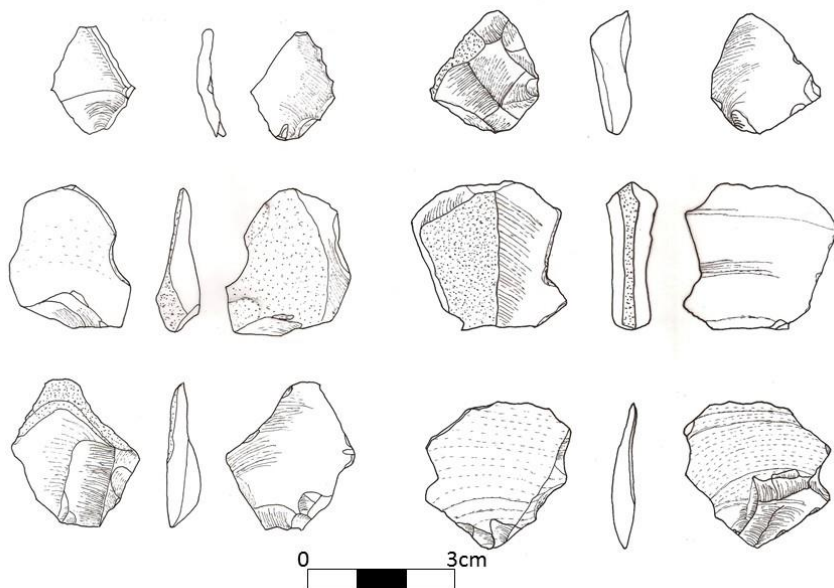


Figure 10 - LM/EN Scrapers

4.3 Other Finds

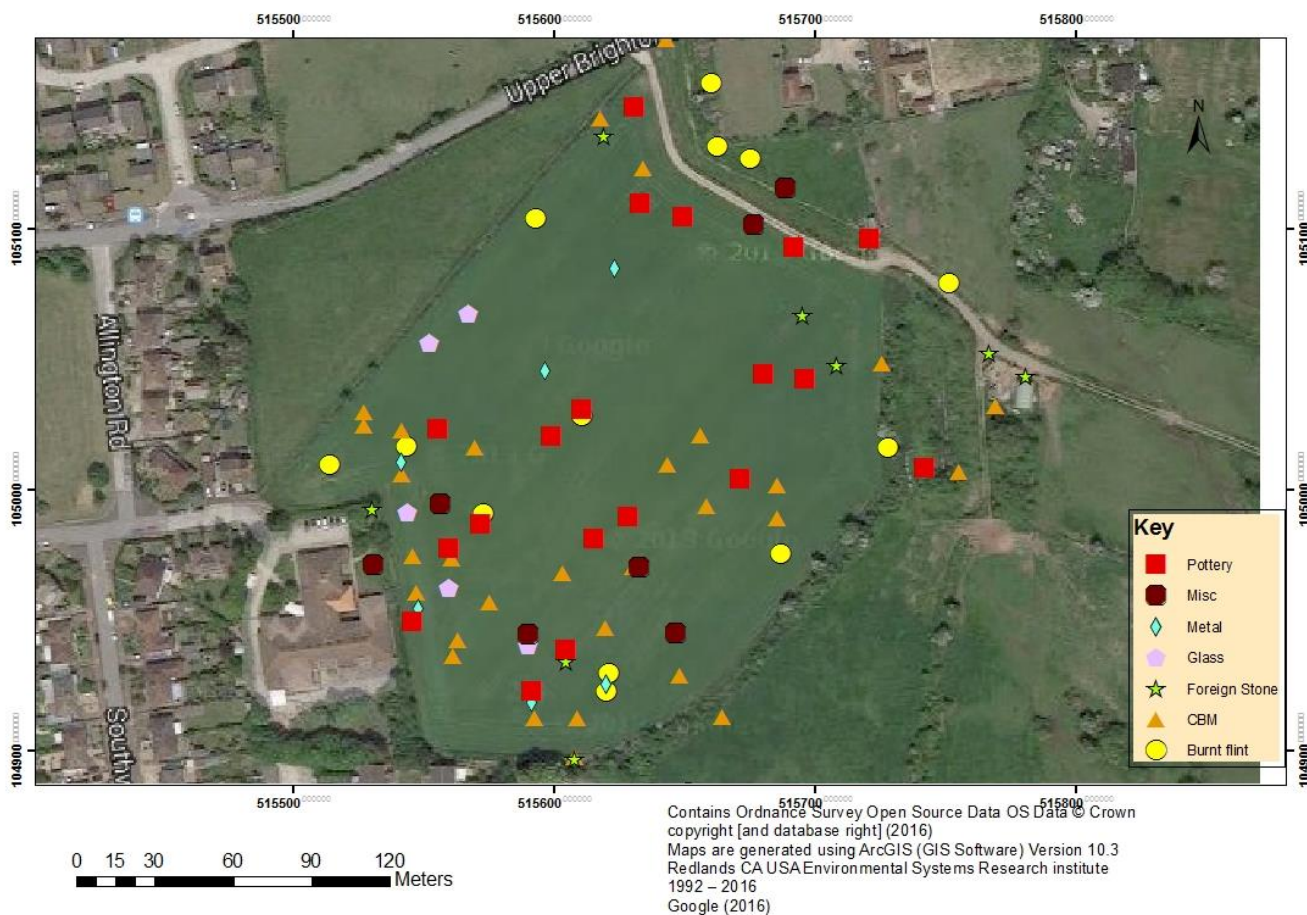


Figure 11- Distribution of Finds (excluding Struck Flint)

CBM - 35 pieces mostly 19th 20th C with one fragment of Medieval Tile (9grams)

Burnt Flint - 926grams

Metal Objects 7 fragments most 19/20th C

Glass – 7 fragments mostly 20thC

Table 2 – Pottery by Period		
Period	Weight	Items
Medieval	23	2
Post Medieval	827	17
Grand Total	850	19

Other miscellaneous items consisted of two golf balls and a child's china egg.

As well as the items collected during the field walk the eastern boundary had a collection of modern bricks.

5. DISCUSSION

The field borders the built-up area of Worthing and the path across the north east is much used, which is reflected in the miscellaneous collection of 20th and 21st C objects found. The field is adjacent to Upton Farm and its associated out-buildings but the field held very little of the material which could be expected from a farm midden. The field has been used for arable crops in recent years (Sompting Estates, 2016) but in the past, the area to the south of the parish tended to be used for low-lying pasture and meadow (BHO a ,2016) suggesting that the area tended to be water-logged and not manured with the farm midden. The difference between the patterns of deposition of struck flint and other artifacts is striking and suggests deposition or removal of soils within the field. The number of drainage ditches and streams suggest that clearing these must be a regular maintenance activity to keep them clear and prevent flooding.

A field located about 500m to the north of this field but at an elevation of about 40mOD (Funnell, 1995) produced a similar quantity of struck flint from a 10% collection pattern. However, a very different tool assemblage consisting primarily of flakes was found together with significantly more pottery (122 fragments) ranging in date from prehistoric, through Roman and Medieval as well as post-medieval.

6. CONCLUSION

Work on the Rampion wind farm cable routing took place soon after the field walk and resulted in the eastern edge of the field being stripped of top soil (see Figure 12). The area which has been stripped is along the edge of the earlier marshland and large spoil heaps are still in place.



Figure 12 - Field showing rampion works

The future of the site is uncertain with the local council plan listing it as potential for development (AWC, 2016). It may be worth field walking the area again when these heaps are redistributed to check the volume and period of struck flint before this type of evidence disappears.

References

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