

Prehistoric flint sites at Sandy Meadow, Wotton

Due to ploughing for the first time in many years, it has been possible for the writer, assisted by Ken Waters, to confirm the positions and provide further information on the surface finds noted in 1927, 1961 and 1963 at Sandy Meadow, Wotton, near Dorking. The field, comprising some 16ha, was random walked during the winter and spring of 1985–6 in some detail, and a number of additional finds were made. The field is situated at the foot of the North Downs escarpment, mainly on Folkestone beds though a patch of ochreous gravel at TQ 1155 4823 may be a terrace remnant from the brook which runs eastwards to Dorking.

Site D (TQ 1180 4835; fig 1) was first recorded by Dr E M Dance, and was relocated as the centre of a Mesolithic flint accumulation covering approximately 1ha. Site C (TQ 115 483; fig 1), previously noted by Hooper (1927, 223), Carpenter (1961, 110–11) and Corcoran (1963, 18), produced 38 more microliths centred around TQ 1153 4833. This site also covers approximately 1ha, and is adjacent to a spring-fed pond on the east. The brook from this small pond runs east past and close to Site D, and continues towards Dorking and the river Mole. Both sites C and D are situated on localised islands of silver sand of the Folkestone Beds, a noticeable contrast to the surrounding darker soil, perhaps indicating a preference for this type of well-drained soil for settlement.

Although occasional implements, microliths and arrowheads occur at random, the concentration of Neolithic finds (TQ 115 483: Hooper 1927, 223; Carpenter 1961, 110–11), which also includes Early Bronze Age arrowheads (Carpenter 1961, 110–111), forms part of Site B (fig 1), which appears to be centred at TQ 114 483 and covers approximately 2ha. The railway cutting to the north must have cut through part of the site as artefacts can be found right up to the Gault Clay disturbed by its construction, and similarly, to a lesser extent, the road bridge to the

TABLE 1. Selected artefacts collected at Sandy Meadow, Wotton, 1985–6, at present held by the author (for earlier finds, see bibliography)

	Site B	Site C	Site D
Blade cores	19	11	9
Flake cores	17	10	2
Scrapers	18	10	8
Utilised pieces	52	13	26
Primary flakes	3		3
Secondary flakes	140	172	52
Core rejuvenating flakes	30	20	13
Pebbles	4	1	2
Blades	62	46	45
Notched pieces	12	5	9
Burnt pieces	3	3	2
Burins	3		
Burin spalls	1		
Polished axe flakes	1		
Axe sharpening flakes		1	2
Transverse arrowheads (fig 2:1–3)	3		
Barbed and tanged arrowheads (fig 2:4)	1		
Leaf arrowheads (fig 2:5)			1
Lopsided arrowheads (fig 2:6)			1
Microburins		3	5
Blade butts			18
Microliths (fig 2:7–24)	2	38	16
Borers	7	6	8

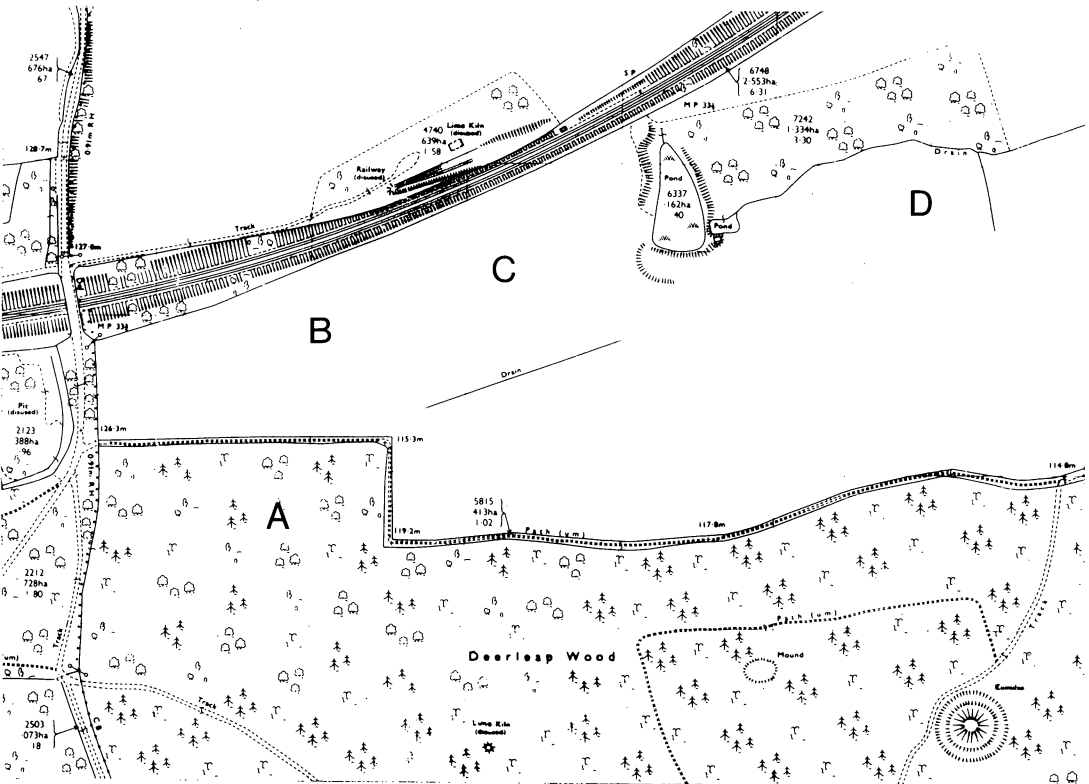
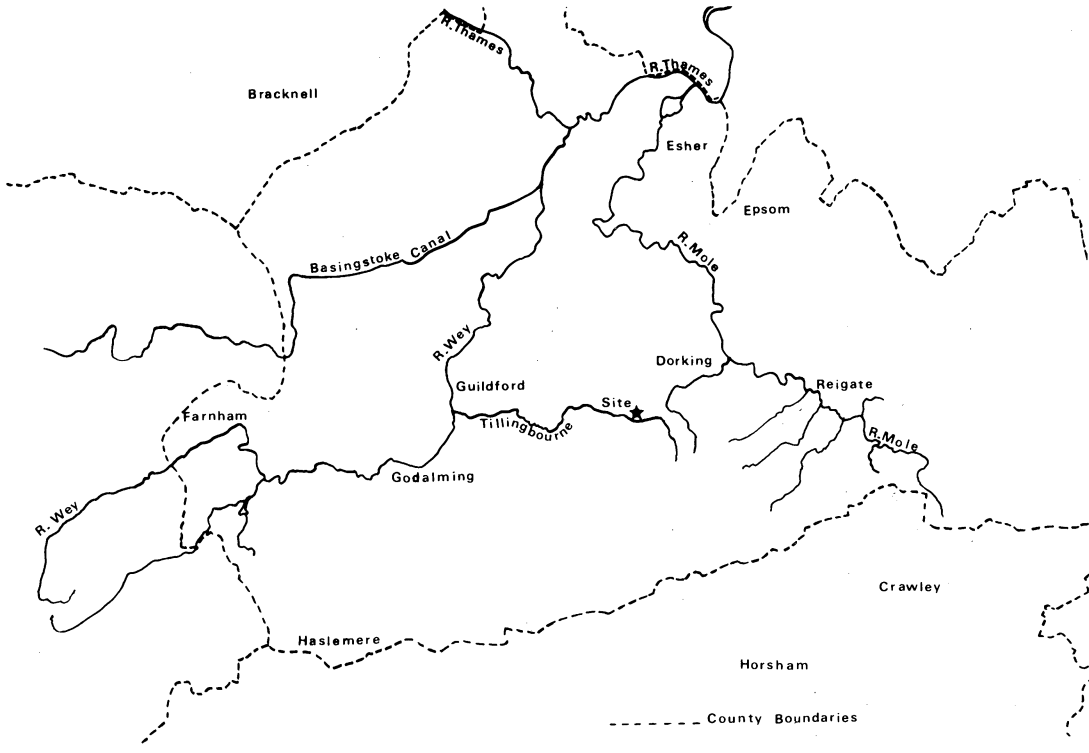


Fig 1. Sandy Meadow, Wotton: (top) location of field; (bottom) locations of Sites A–D

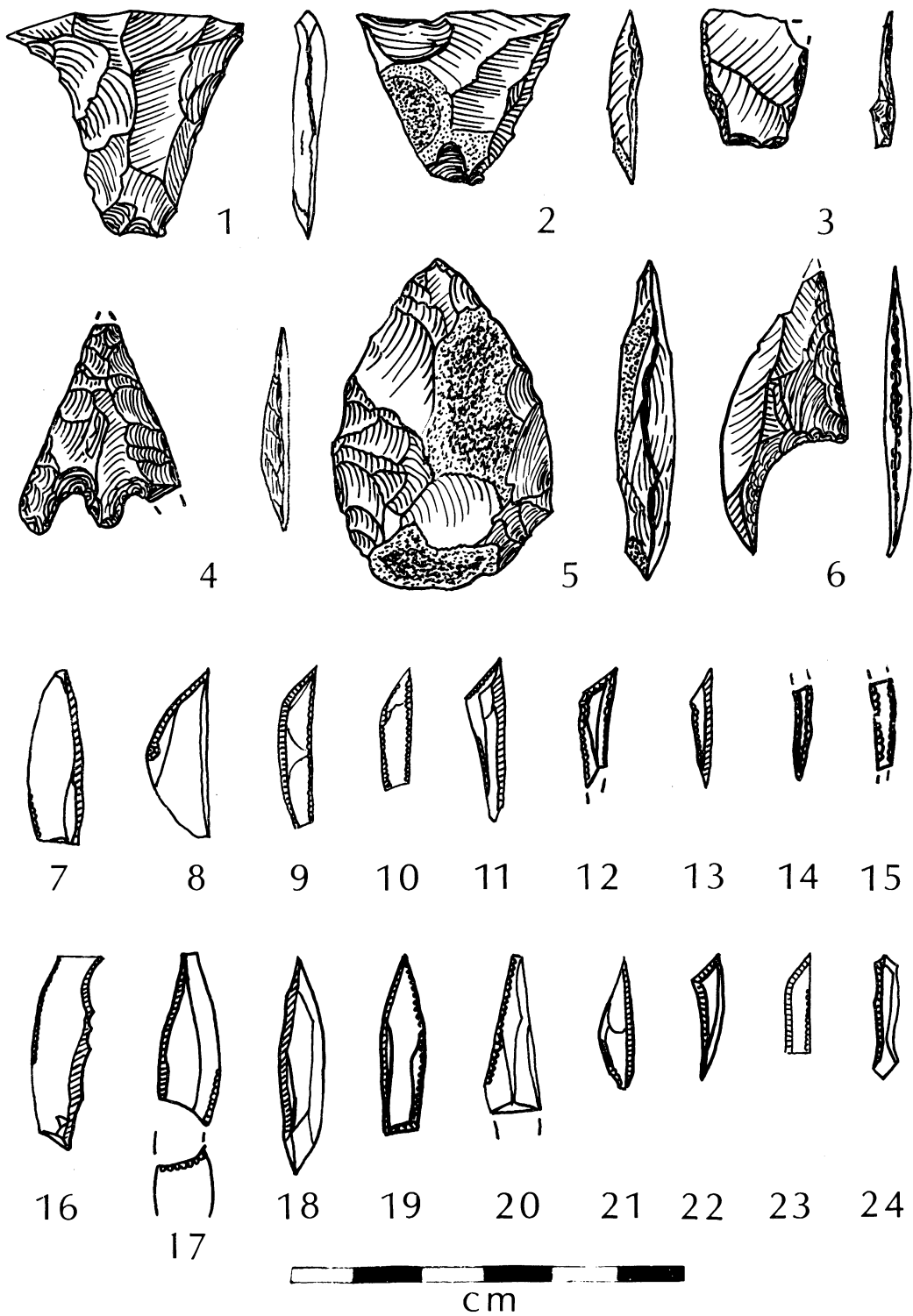


Fig 2. Sandy Meadow, Wotton. Flint artefacts from Sites B (1-4), C (7-15) and D (5-6, 16-24). 1:1

west. On the eastern side the site continues to a low eminence at TQ 1145 4828, where although flints per m² are at a maximum, the artefacts are considerably less in number than to the west. From this raised area the scatter continues east but gradually changes to a Mesolithic style and runs into Site C.

No further indication could be found of the Romano-British burial ground at TQ 1159 4832 (Hooper 1927), although a small fragment of black-burnished ware was recovered at TQ 1135 4830.

Site A (fig 1), overlooking the field from the south, is an unnatural-looking mound perched on the edge of a spur, and it is conceivable that this may be related to the tumulus in Deerleap Wood some 450m to the south-east, and indeed to the two other mounds at TQ 1169 4807 and 1112 4815 (Corcoran 1963). These could have links with Site B. They show no apparent sign of surrounding ditch, berm or bank. The Site A prominence, centred on TQ 1141 4817, is at present more noticeable due to clearfell forestry and subsequent replanting, with as yet minimal leaf cover.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to Mr Mathews, the farmer, and Mr Patrick Evelyn, the landowner, for allowing us the opportunity to obtain further information on this prolific area of prehistoric interest.

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