

EATON'S FARM, FOOTBRIDGE, ASHURST, WEST SUSSEX

(NGR: 519030 116177)

**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD
(HISTORIC ENGLAND LEVEL 2)**



**Project no. 160804
Report ref: 2016375**

October 2016



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Commissioned by West Sussex County Council

**Project no. 160804
Report ref: 2016375
Site code: EFO 16
OASIS ID: archaeol6-266230**

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Date of Issue:	October 2016		
Revision:			

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SUMMARY

In October 2016 Archaeology South-East (a division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology, UCL) carried out a programme of historic building recording (Historic England Level 2) at Eaton's Farm Footbridge, Ashurst, West Sussex (NGR: 519030 116177). The work was commissioned by West Sussex County Council (WSCC).

The site is located c.2.2km west of Henfield and c.1km east of the village of Ashurst in West Sussex. The footbridge is located at c.4m AOD at the intersection of marked footpaths which run east – west to the north of Eaton's Farm (just to the west of the footbridge) and follow the west bank of the river (south of the footbridge) and the east bank to north and south.

Other than four possible pile bases no sign of the earlier bridge, as shown on the early 19th-century mapping, was seen. Should the observed features pertain to the earlier bridge, it might be presumed that the structure would have been of a similar size to the existing crossing.

The existing bridge was constructed in the early 20th century in the location of an earlier crossing. The bridge is in a dilapidated condition, yet has an indelible charm largely pertaining to its pleasant setting. The bridge's haphazard appearance is owed to a number of repairs and alterations of 20th- and early 21st-century date. Such alterations include replacement and repair to the bridge's handrails, timber piles and the adjacent bank.

The bridge forms an important local link, being situated between footpaths connecting the towns of Ashurst and Henfield. The bridge holds interest as a part of a local circulation network through an evolving agricultural and riverine landscape, which has seen associated shifts in leisure, water-management, and agricultural activity through the 19th- and 20th-centuries.

The bridge is also interesting in its construction, being of concrete and steel-girder construction, rather than timber, brick or stone. The construction of the bridge reflects the falling cost of steel and cement in the early 20th century, and the increasing reliance on the materials as resilient, cheap and efficient materials to work with.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In October 2016 Archaeology South-East (a division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology, UCL) carried out a programme of historic building recording (Historic England Level 2) OF Eaton's Farm Footbridge, Ashurst, West Sussex (Figure 1; NGR: 519030 116177). The work was commissioned by West Sussex County Council (WSSCC).
- 1.3 The site comprises a footbridge over the River Adur. The bridge is of early 20th century origin and is thought to be a replacement of a former bridge in the same location as shown on the Henfield tithe map dating to the mid-1840s. The bridge is now in a poor state of repair and is due to be replaced.
- 1.4 The work was commissioned in order to provide a record of the structure prior to its proposed replacement. A brief issued for the work by West Sussex County Council set out the requirements for the work (Taylor 2016).

2.0 SCOPE & METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The scope of work and methodology for the building recording is detailed in a written scheme of investigation produced for the work by Archaeology South-East, dated September 2016. The work was also carried out in accordance with the relevant ClfA standards and guidance.
- 2.2 The building was recorded to Historic England Level 2 as defined in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (Historic England 2016). A Level 2 record is essentially a descriptive record.
- 2.3 The site was visited by Seth Price and Vas Tsamis on 3rd October 2016 in order to carry out the recording work. This entailed the compilation of written notes and the production of a photographic record.
- 2.4 The drawn record comprises a plan, elevation and section of the bridge. This is based on an existing measured drawing, which has been augmented and annotated where necessary. The resulting scaled drawing is included within the report as Figure 2.
- 2.5 The photographic record was made using high-quality digital photography, including the use of a DJI Phantom 4 SUA (Small Unmanned Aircraft) to document inaccessible areas of the bridge. Within the report selected digital images have been reproduced as plates, together with a full index of the digital photography and location plots (Appendix 1). A full catalogue of all photographs is included in the archive.

3.0 SITE LOCATION

- 3.1 The bridge is situated within a picturesque flatland agricultural landscape c.2.2km west of Henfield and c.1km east of the village of Ashurst in West

Sussex (Plate 1). The footbridge is located at c. 4m AOD at the intersection of marked footpaths which run east – west to the north of Eaton's Farm (just to the west of the footbridge) and follow the west bank of the river (south of the footbridge) and the east bank to north and south.

- 3.2 The bridge spans the breadth of the River Adur, a tidal watercourse with reed-studded muddy banks rising to cropped grass banks. Embankments constructed above the riverbanks contain the river in spate, with intermittent sluices and channels running off to drainage systems between the adjacent fields. Post-and-wire fencing and mature trees – mixed willow, oak, hawthorn, ash and lime, amongst others – mark field boundaries within the wider landscape.

4.0 HISTORIC BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The following information has been synthesised from the archaeological recording brief produced for the site (Taylor 2016).
- 4.2 The earliest map to show the site is the Yeakell and Gardner map of Sussex dating to 1778-83. The footbridge itself is not shown on this map. Three bridges in the vicinity of the site are however recorded: Bineham Bridge, Bramber Bridge and an additional minor bridge (unnamed) located upstream from the latter. This map shows the nearby farm as 'Etons'.
- 4.3 The Ordnance Survey Draft of 1806-7 (Littlehampton to Shoreham sheet) again shows no sign of the footbridge. Eaton Wharf and Bineham Bridge are named on this map.
- 4.4 The first map to show the footbridge with certainty is the Henfield tithe map of 1844-47. From this point onwards a footbridge is marked in this location on all 1:2500 Ordnance Survey mapping to the present day.
- 4.5 Historic mapping suggests the absence of a footbridge in this location during the 18th or early 19th century. The historic Ordnance Survey mapping from 1874 to 1974 (Figures 3 – 6) shows a continual presence of a bridge – labelled as 'Eatons Bridge (Foot)'. The style and design of the extant bridge is consistent with an early 20th century construction and is likely to form a replacement of the original bridge, with a similar size and footprint. The 1874 mapping appears to show the bridge as slightly longer on the west bank than it is later depicted. The stanchions of the bridge bear the name 'Every Lewes', indicating the Phoenix Iron and Steel Works which flourished in Lewes from 1832 until the mid-20th century.

5.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE STRUCTURE

- 5.1 The bridge is orientated north-west – south-east across the River Adur, connecting footpaths on the opposing banks (Plates 2 and 3). With the exception of four submerged square-sectioned (presumed) piles situated

adjacent to the existing piles, no signs of an earlier bridge were observed (Plate 4). The construction of the submerged features could not be determined. It might be presumed, on the basis of the observed submerged features, that the earlier structure would have been of similar size to the present bridge. It is likely that the earlier bridge was of timber construction – as no brick, stone or relevant structural features were observed in the vicinity of the site.

- 5.2 The existing bridge is early 20th-century in date. It is a pedestrian bridge of steel girder construction with a total span of c. 20.25m and a width of 1.38m (2.00m across the piles) (Plate 5). The bridge has a rise from low water of c. 4.04m. The bridge features cast-in-place concrete piers to either bank, reinforced at a later date with steel scaffolding on the east bank (Plate 6). Concreted sandbags form a ramp up to the east side of the bridge, likely compensating for subsidence of the river bank (Plate 7). The rise of the bridge may be to accommodate the passage of small vessels along the River Adur.
- 5.3 The bridge substructure comprises a pair of short box stanchions to either side, rising from the concrete piers, and a pair of timber piles supporting the main span of the bridge. The timber piles (Plate 8) are formed of a pair of uprights (measuring >4.04m x 0.32m x 0.32m), recently reinforced with timber splices, rising to a composite tie-beam (measuring 2.00m x 0.15m x 0.23m), and tensioned by cross bracing (measuring 3.71m x 0.15m x 0.23m). The tie-beams are of paired timber beams bolted to the east and west faces of the uprights. The uprights rise above the level of the tie-beams to deck level and, excepting where weathered away on the south-east upright, are crowned with a simple tapered finial (Plate 9).
- 5.4 The superstructure is of three sections, constructed of parallel I-girders and reinforced by angle-iron bracing to the soffit (Plate 10). From the east bank the bridge's first section rises to the first pile over a distance of 4.83m, runs level between piles for 8.62m, and descends again to the west bank over 6.82m. The girders are connected to one-another with bolt-plates between sections. The girders appear to be bolted down to the timber tie-beams of the piles. In places angle-iron ties, set perpendicular to the deck, extend beyond the girders to provide a base for steel-bracing supporting handrails above.
- 5.5 The deck of the bridge is of heavy-duty oak boards set between the channels of the I-girders (Plate 11). Along the rises of the bridge, regularly spaced battens atop the deck boards provide purchase for the boots of passing pedestrians.
- 5.6 The bridge is protected by handrails. The handrails to the west side of the bridge appear largely original, comprising three-tiers of square-sectioned iron railings which run through ball joints within cast-iron balusters (Plates 12 and 13). The other handrail sections, later replacements, are formed of angle-iron uprights with two tiers of welded-on flat iron railings (Plate 14). Wrought iron gates allow access to either end of the bridge, and are likely original features of the bridge (Plates 15 and 16). On the west end of the bridge it can clearly be seen that the gate there is contemporaneous with the older handrails, with the end balustrades being equipped with hinges and a catch for the latch on the

gate. The gates and original handrails are early 20th-century in style and construction.

6.0 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 Other than four possible pile bases, no sign of the earlier bridge, as shown on the early 19th-century mapping, was seen. Should the observed features pertain to the earlier bridge, it might be presumed that the structure would have been of a similarly size to the existing crossing.
- 6.2 The existing bridge was constructed in the early 20th century in the location of an earlier crossing. The bridge is in a dilapidated condition, yet has an indelible charm largely pertaining to its pleasant setting. The bridge's haphazard appearance is owed to a number of repairs and alterations of 20th- and early 21st-century date. Such alterations include replacement and repair to the bridge's handrails, timber piles and the adjacent bank.
- 6.3 The bridge forms an important local link, being situated between footpaths connecting the towns of Ashurst and Henfield. The bridge holds interest as a part of a local circulation network through an evolving agricultural and riverine landscape, which has seen associated shifts in leisure, water-management, and agricultural activity through the 19th- and 20th-centuries.
- 6.4 The bridge is also interesting in its construction, being of concrete and steel-girder construction, rather than timber, brick or stone. The construction of the bridge reflects the falling cost of steel and cement in the early 20th century, and the increasing reliance on the materials as resilient, cheap, and efficient materials to work with.

7.0 SOURCES CONSULTED

ASE., 2016. *Eatons Farm, Footbridge, Ashurst, West Sussex, Building Recording Written Scheme of Investigation*. Archaeology South-East, September 2016, Portslade.

ClfA, 2014 *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*

Historic England, 2015. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*.

Historic England, 2016. *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*.

Taylor, M. August 2016. *Eatons Farm footbridge, on footpath 3625, archaeological recording brief*. West Sussex County Council

8.0 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

A full archive will be produced intended for deposition with a suitable local museum under the site code EFO16. The archive will be prepared according to the principles of Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (Historic England 2015) and the requirements of the recipient record office (West Sussex Record Office). The archive will comprise a hard copy of the full report, a pdf version of the report on CD, the full photographic record with registers, field notes and drawings. A copy will also be submitted to WSCC to be added to the Historic Environment Record.

9.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology South-East would like to thank Jonathan Perks of West Sussex County Council for commissioning this report.



Plate 1: Looking north along the River Adur towards the bridge (#EFO16-0025)



Plate 2: South elevation of the bridge (#EFO16-0026)



Plate 3: North elevation of the bridge (#EFO16-0054)



Plate 4: Submerged possible former piles visible just beneath the water below the existing bridge (#EFO16-0060)



Plate 5: Oblique view of the north elevation of the bridge (#EFO16-0030)



Plate 6: Concrete pier, box stanchion and inserted scaffold (#EFO16-0041)



Plate 7: Concreted sandbag ramp to east side of the bridge (#EFO16-0032)

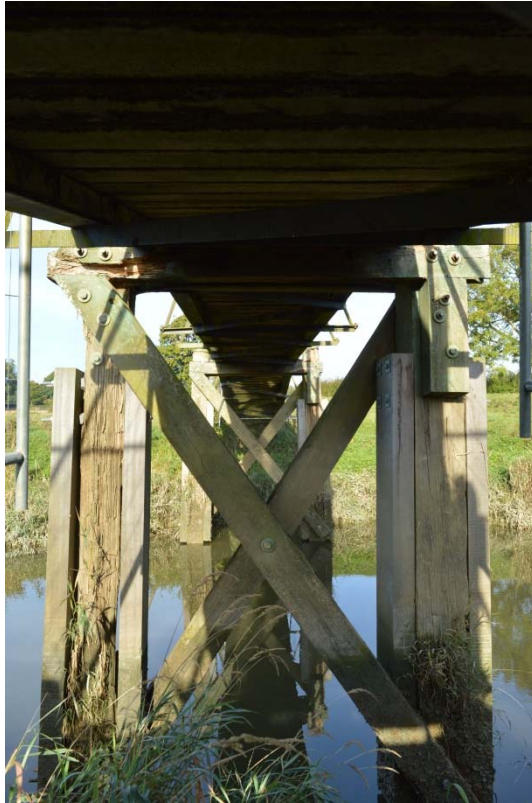


Plate 8: Timber piles supporting the main span of the bridge (#EFO16-0037)



Plate 9: Timber pile finial and tie-beam detail (#EFO16-0055)



Plate 10: Soffit of the bridge (#EFO16-0038)



Plate 11: View west along the bridge deck (#EFO16-0044)

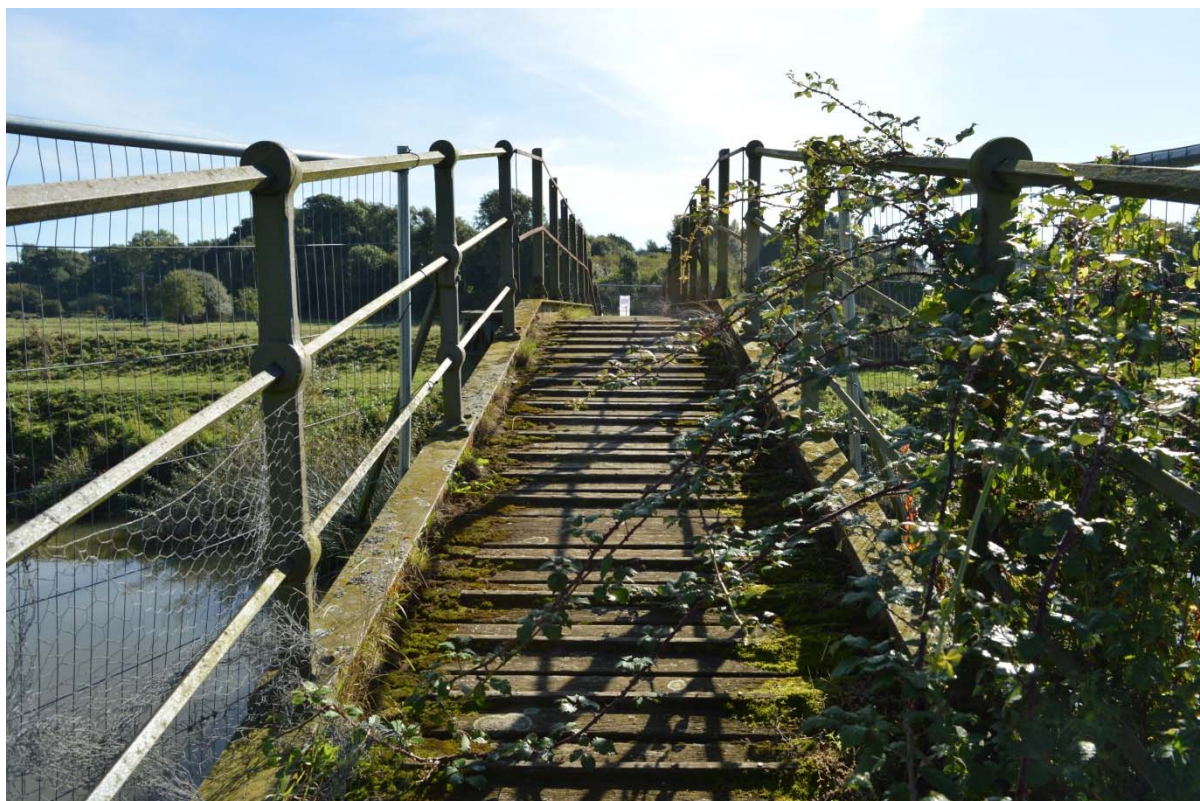


Plate 12: View east along the bridge deck – note the handrails (#EFO16-0067)



Plate 13: Bollard in original handrail, supported by angle-iron bracing (#EFO16-0056)



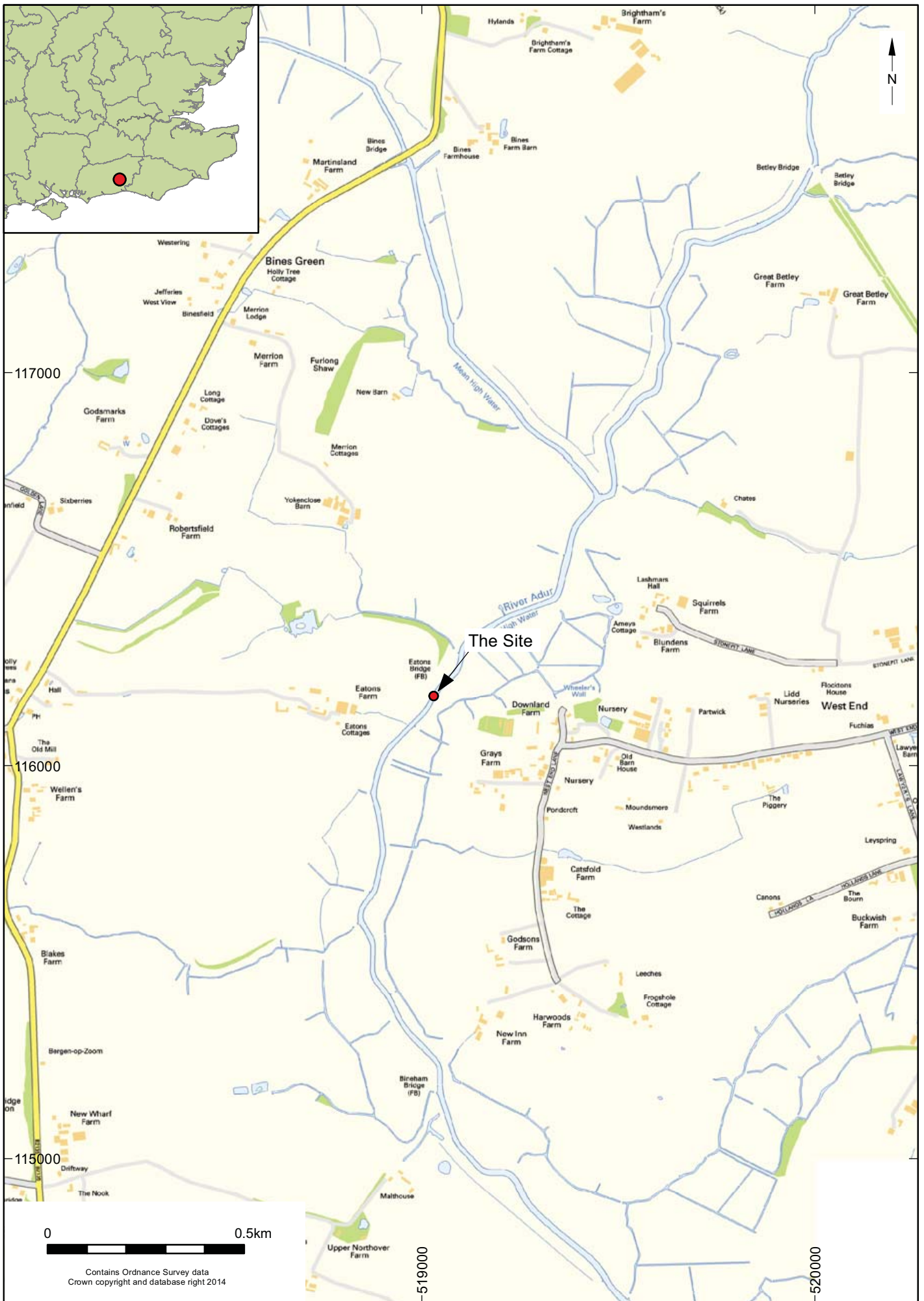
Plate 14: Replacement angle-iron and flat iron handrail (#EFO16-0042)



Plate 15: West gate to the bridge (#EFO16-0068)

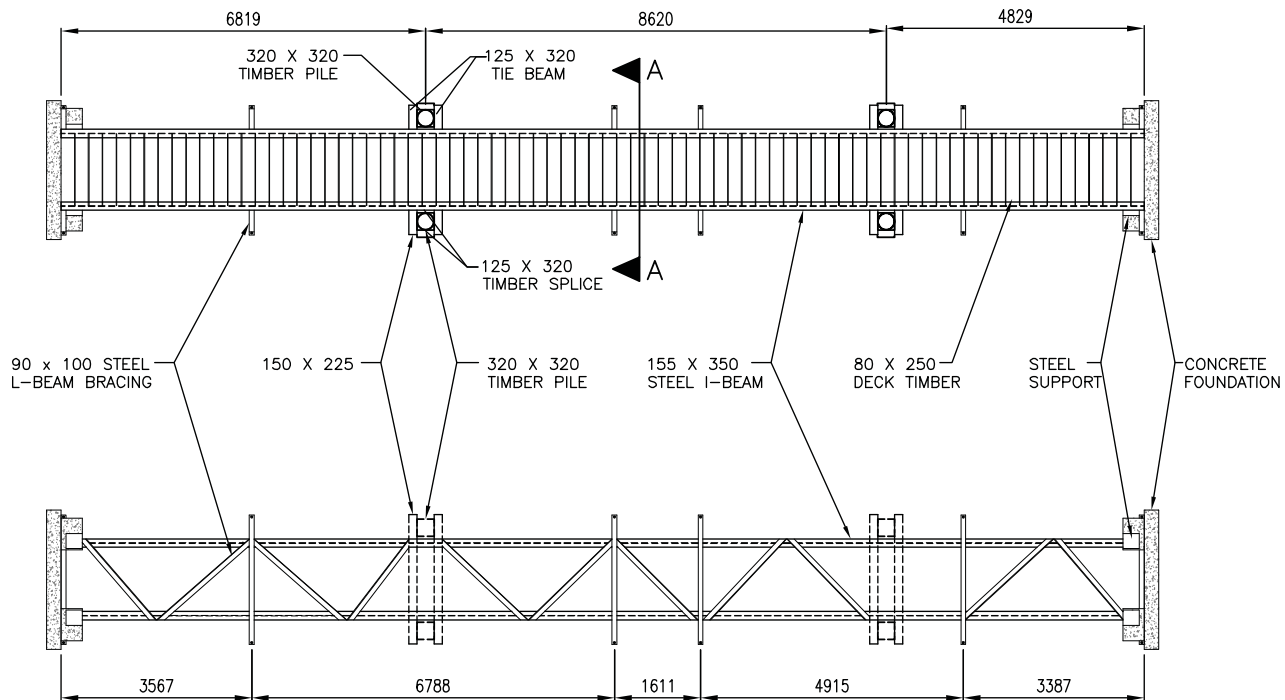


Plate 16: East gate to the bridge (#EFO16-0031)

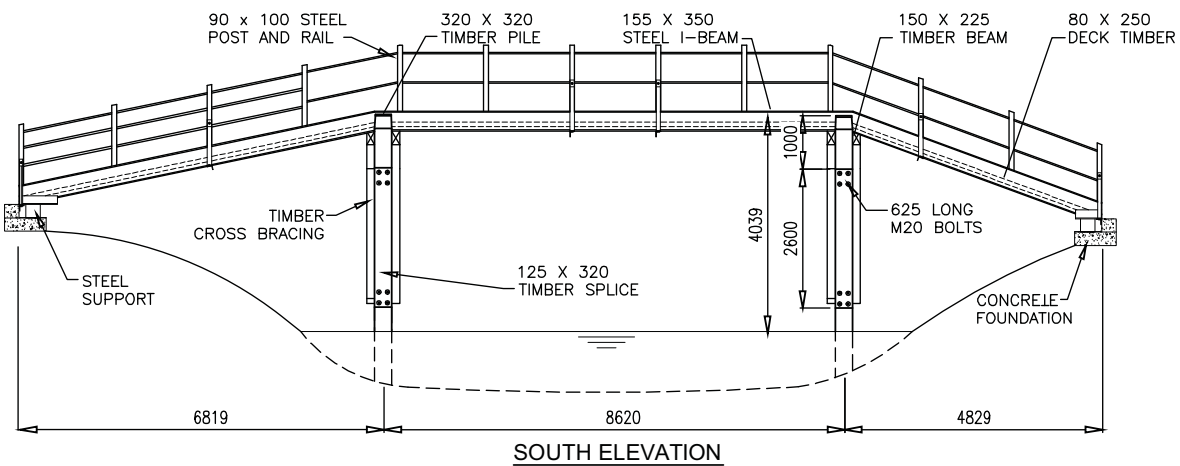
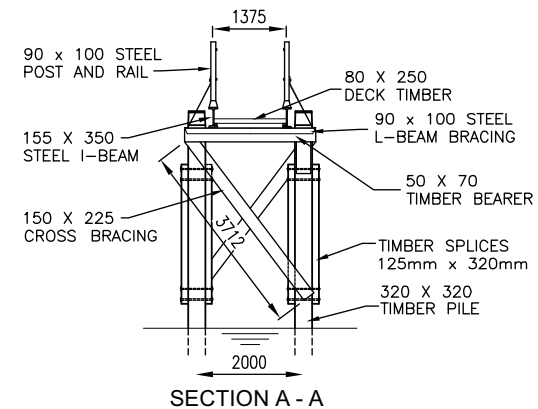


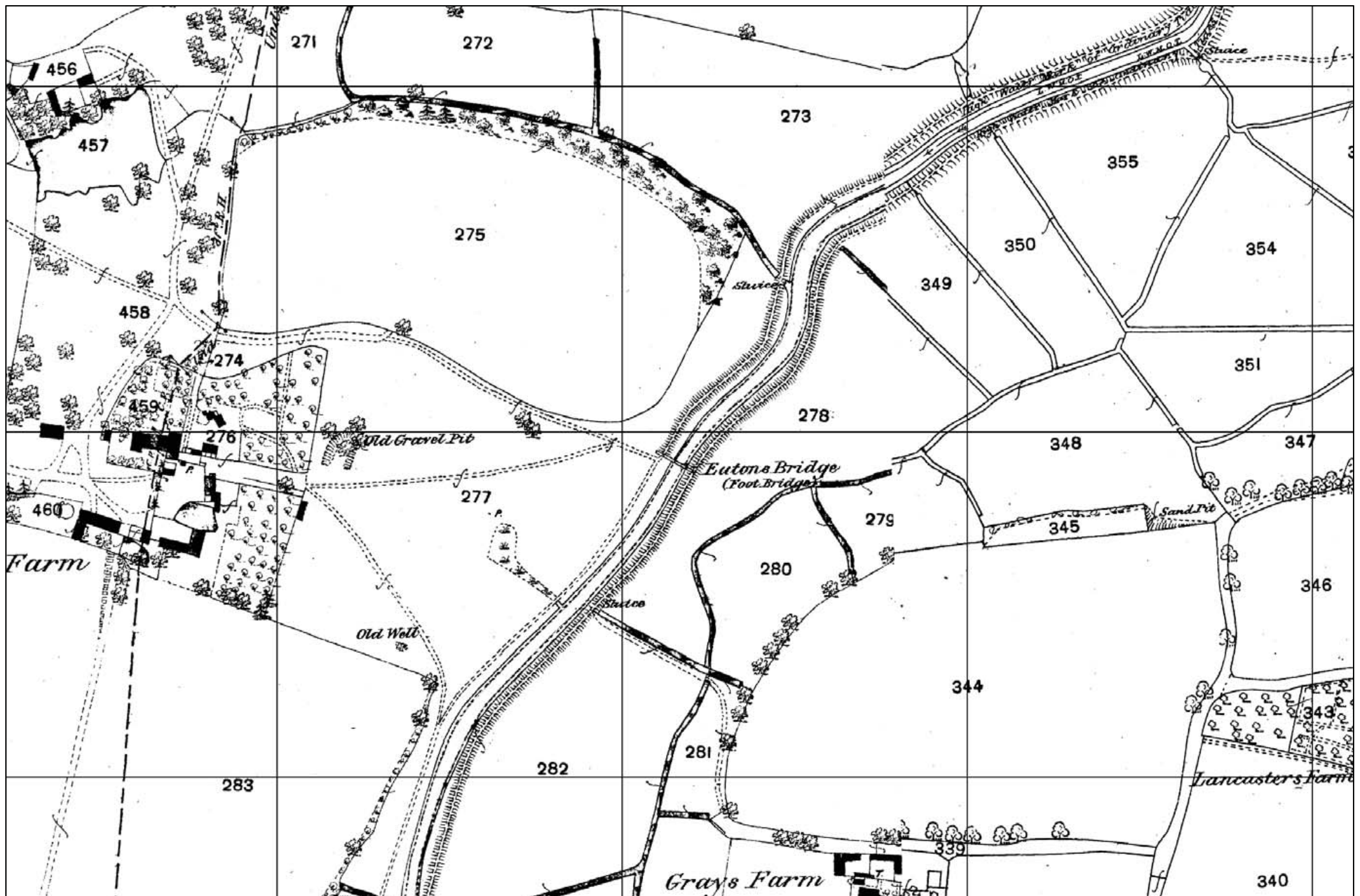
© Archaeology South-East		Eatons Farm, Footbridge, Ashurst, West Sussex	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 160804	September 2016	Site Location	
Report Ref: 2016375	Drawn by: HG		

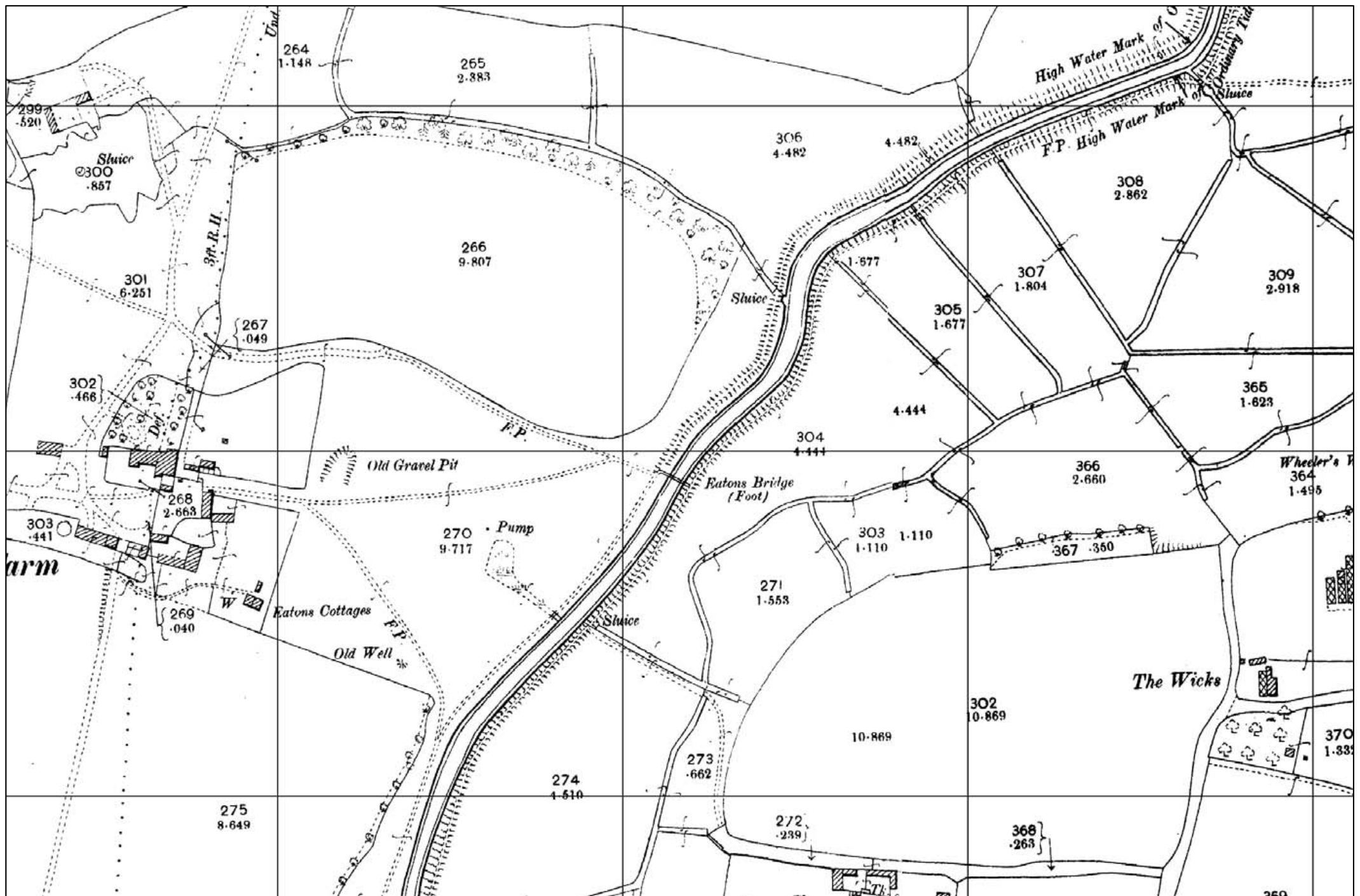
PLAN - TOP

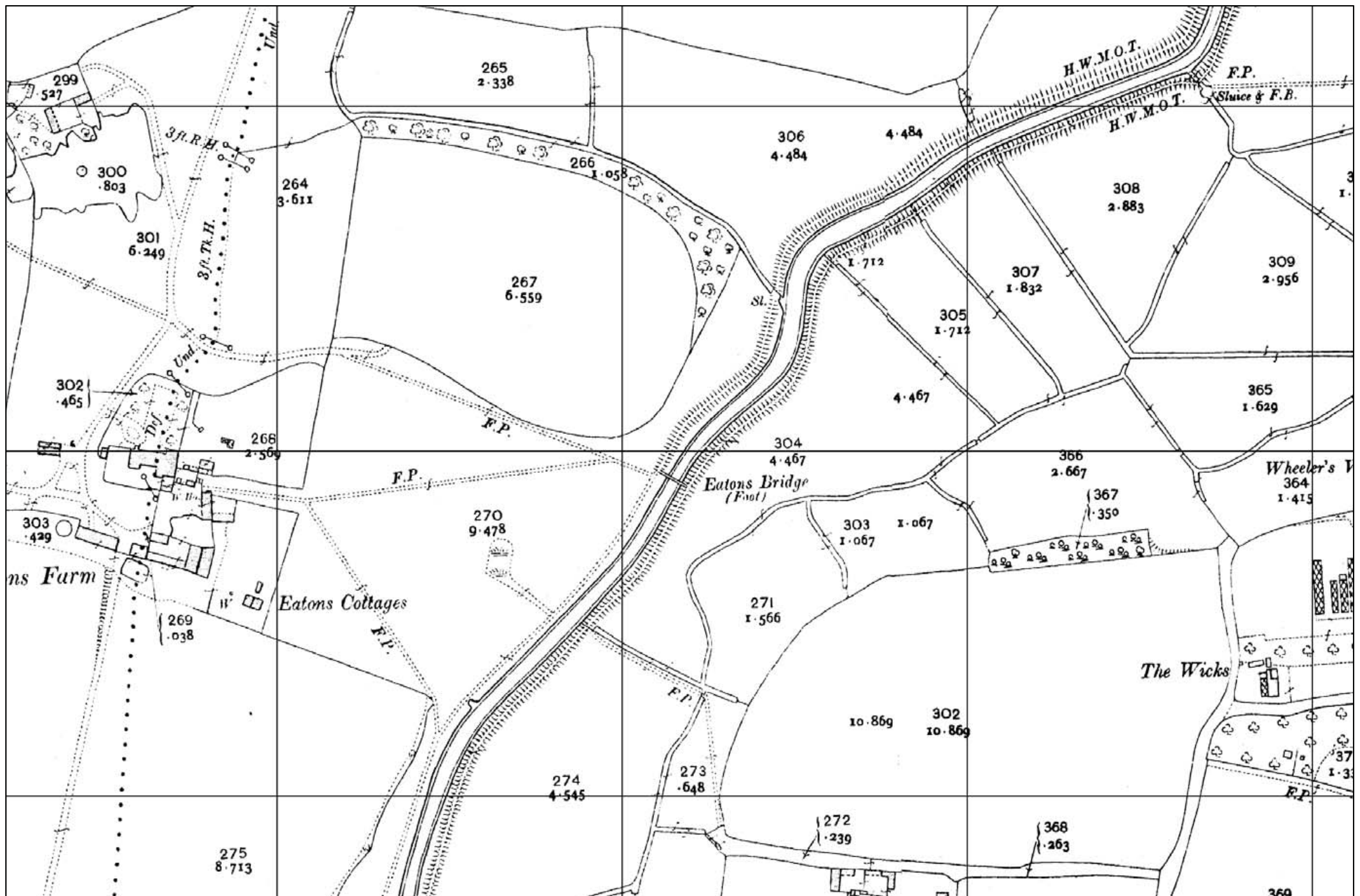


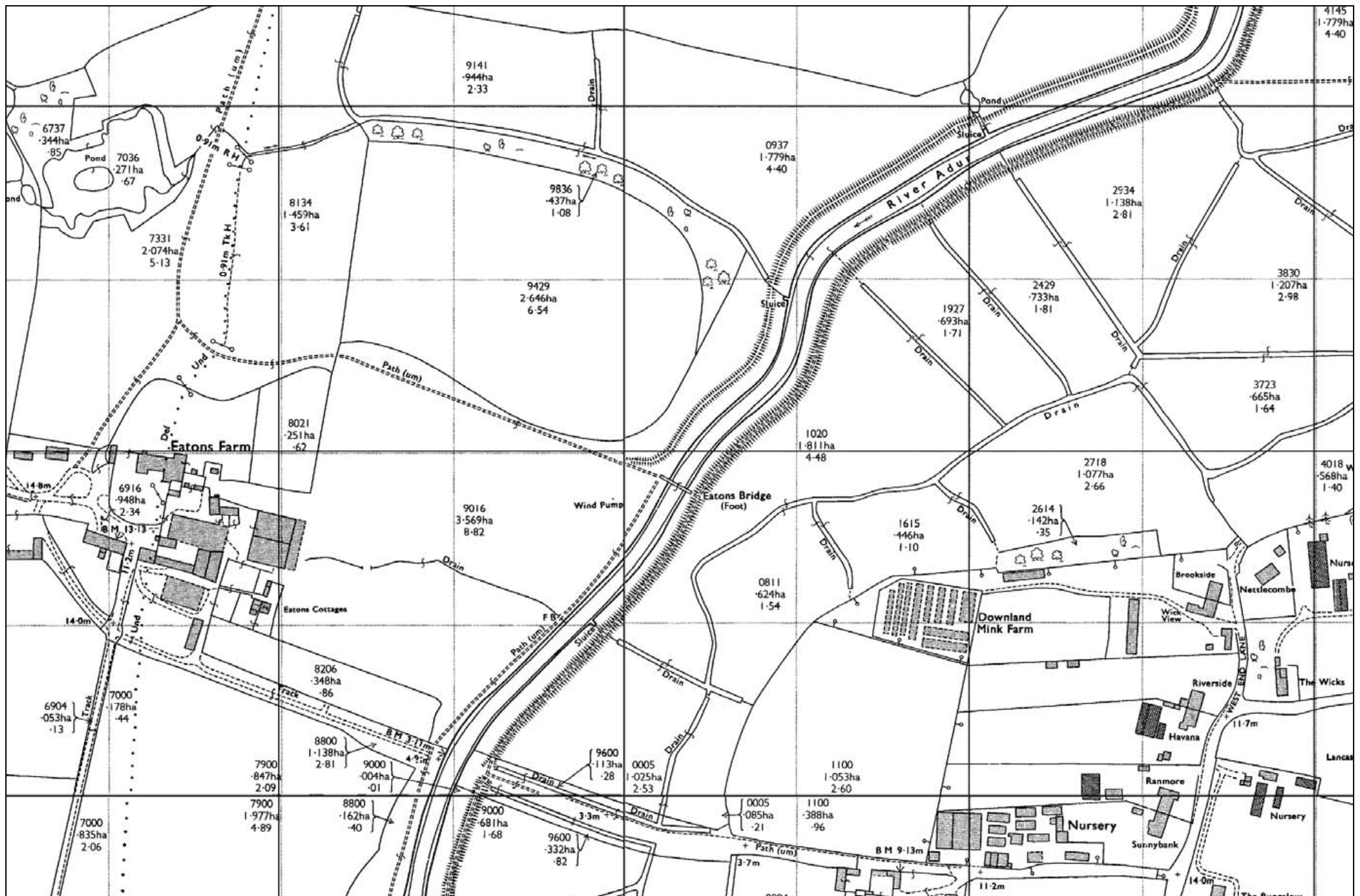
PLAN - BOTTOM











Appendix 1 Index of Digital Photographs



EFO16-0001



EFO16-0002



EFO16-0003



EFO16-0004



EFO16-0005



EFO16-0006



EFO16-0007



EFO16-0008



EFO16-0009



EFO16-0010



EFO16-0011



EFO16-0012



EFO16-0013



EFO16-0014



EFO16-0015



EFO16-0016



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EFO16-0018



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EFO16-0038



EFO16-0039



EFO16-0040



EFO16-0041



EFO16-0042



EFO16-0043



EFO16-0044



EFO16-0045



EFO16-0046



EFO16-0047



EFO16-0048



EFO16-0049



EFO16-0050



EFO16-0051



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EFO16-0055



EFO16-0056



EFO16-0057



EFO16-0058



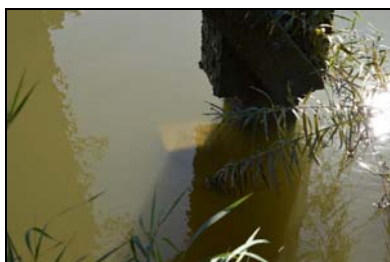
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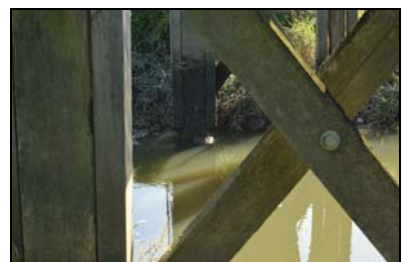
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EFO16-0061



EFO16-0062



EFO16-0063



EFO16-0064



EFO16-0065



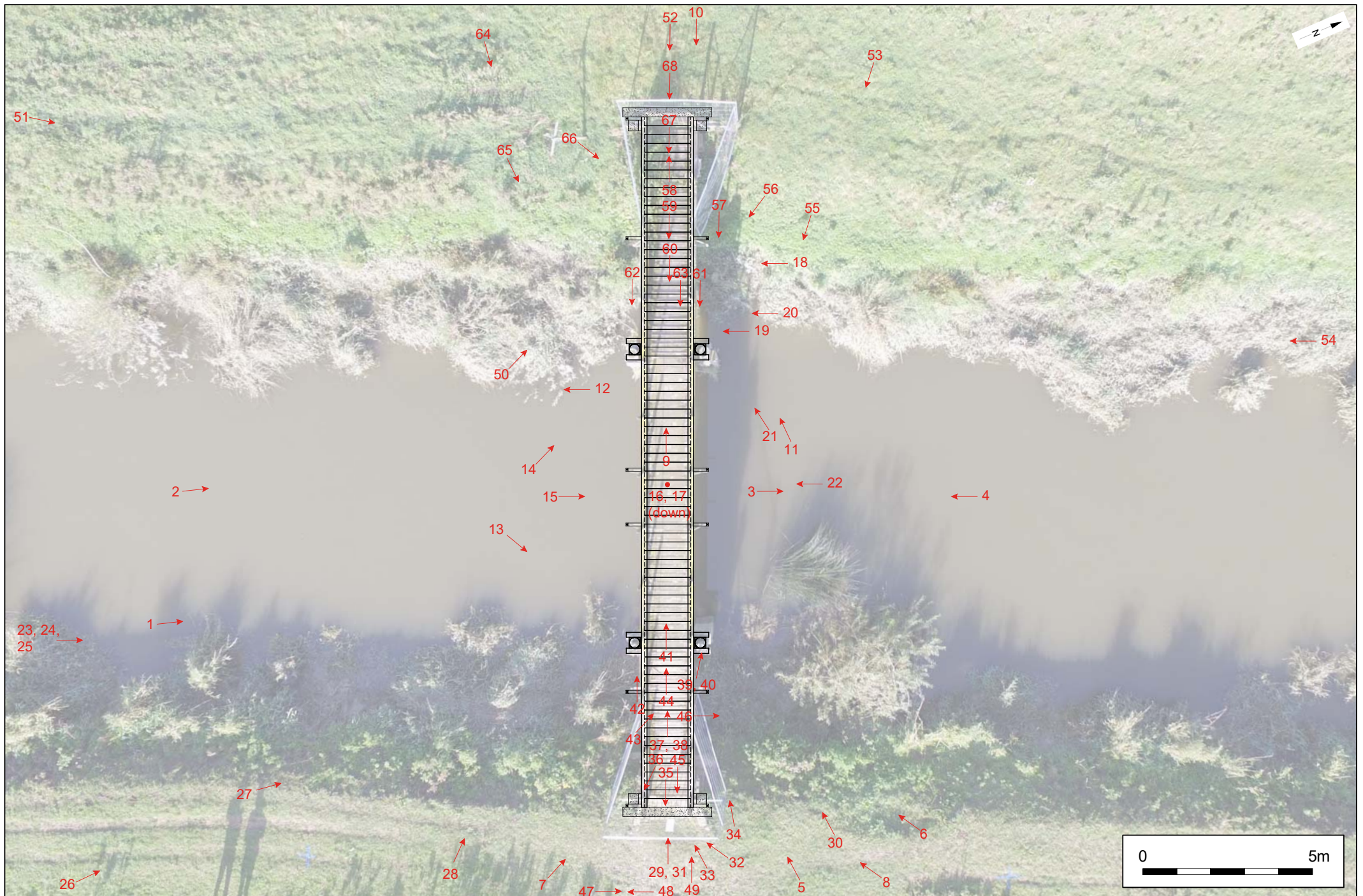
EFO16-0066



EFO16-0067



EFO16-0068



© Archaeology South-East		Eatons Farm, Footbridge, Ashurst, West Sussex	Fig. A1
Project Ref. 160804	Sep 2016	Photo Location Plan	
Report Ref. 2016375	Drawn by: SP		

Appendix 2 OASIS Data Collection Sheet

OASIS ID: archaeol6-266230

Project details

Project name HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD (HISTORIC ENGLAND LEVEL 2) EATONS FARM, FOOTBRIDGE, ASHURST, WEST SUSSEX

Short description of the project In August 2016 Archaeology South-East (a division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology, UCL) carried out a programme of historic building recording (Historic England Level 2) at Eatons Farm, Footbridge, Ashurst, West Sussex. The work was commissioned by West Sussex County Council. The site is located c.2.2km west of Henfield and c. 1km east of the village of Ashurst, West Sussex. Other than four pile bases, no sign of the earlier bridge, as shown on the early 19th-century mapping, was seen. Should the observed features pertain to the earlier bridge, it might be presumed that the structure would have been of a similar size to the existing crossing. The existing bridge was constructed in the early 20th century in the location of an earlier 19th-century crossing. The bridge is in a dilapidated condition, yet has an indelible charm largely pertaining to its pleasant setting. The bridge's haphazard appearance is largely owed to a number of repairs and alterations of 20th- and early 21st-century date. Such alterations include replacement and repair to the bridges handrails, timber piles, and the adjacent bank. The bridge forms an important local link, being situated between footpaths connecting the towns of Ashurst and Henfield. The bridge holds interest as a part of a local circulation network through an evolving agricultural and riverine landscape, which has seen associated shifts in leisure and commercial activity through the 19th- and 20th-centuries. The bridge is also interesting in its construction, being of concrete, steel-girder and timber construction, rather than pure timber, brick, or stone. The construction of the bridge reflects the falling cost of steel and cement, and the increasing reliance on the materials as resilient, cheap, and efficient materials to work with

Project dates Start: 01-09-2016 End: 31-10-2016

Previous/future work No / Not known

Any associated reference codes project EFO16 - Sitecode

Type of project Building Recording

Site status None

Current Land use Open Fresh Water 1 - Running water

Current Land use Transport and Utilities 2 - Other transport infrastructure

Monument type BRIDGE Post Medieval

Monument type BRIDGE Modern

Significant Finds NONE None

Methods & techniques ""Photogrammetric Survey"", ""Photographic Survey""

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England

Site location WEST SUSSEX HORSHAM ASHURST Eatons Farm Bridge

Postcode BN44 3AQ

Study area 100 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 19030 16177 50.932185630374 -0.305935603496 50 55 55 N 000 18 21 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	West Sussex County Council
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Ron Humphrey
Project supervisor	Seth Price
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	West Sussex County Council
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	West Sussex County Council
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Aerial Photograph","Photograph","Plan","Report","Unpublished Text"
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD (HISTORIC ENGLAND LEVEL 2) EATONS FARM, FOOTBRIDGE, ASHURST, WEST SUSSEX
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