

**Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample
Land at Ridgewood Farm
Uckfield, East Sussex**

**NGR: 547080 119820
(TQ 47080 19820)**

**Planning Reference: WD/2017/1368/MRM
ASE Project No: 170858
Site Code: RWF17
ASE Report No: 2018278
OASIS id: archaeol6-327934**



By Greg Priestley-Bell

**Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample
Land at Ridgewood Farm
Uckfield, East Sussex**

**NGR: 547080 119820
(TQ 47080 19820)**

Planning Reference: WD/2017/1368/MRM

**ASE Project No: 170858
Site Code: RWF17**

**ASE Report No: 2018278
OASIS id: archaeol6-327934**

Prepared by:	Greg Priestley-Bell	Senior Archaeologist	
Reviewed and approved by:	Lucy Sibun	Senior Archaeologist	
Date of Issue:	September 2018		
Version:	1		

**Archaeology South-East
Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex
BN41 1DR
Tel: 01273 426830
Fax: 01273 420866
Email: fau@ucl.ac.uk**

Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological strip, map and sample on land at Ridgewood Farm, Uckfield, East Sussex, Areas A and B, between 6th and 8th August 2018. The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting.

Both areas were found to have intact subsoil horizons and, aside from an existing sewer pipe, were undisturbed. No archaeological features were identified and only small quantities of residual prehistoric worked flint, mixed 19th- to 20th-century material and undated iron slag were identified in the overburden. These finds could well result from manuring. As a result, Areas A and B are not deemed to have any archaeological potential.

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 The Finds**
- 6.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

Bibliography
Acknowledgements

HER Summary
OASIS Form

TABLES

- Table 1 Quantification of site paper archive
Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples
Table 3: Area A list of recorded contexts
Table 4: Area B list of recorded contexts
Table 5: Quantification of finds

FIGURES

- Figure 1: Site location
Figure 2: Location of monitored areas
Figure 3: Photographs of stripped areas and sample sections

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake an archaeological strip, map and sample on land at Ridgewood Farm, Uckfield, East Sussex, centred at National Grid Reference 547080 119820 (Figure 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

- 1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 scale geological mapping the bedrock geology of the site comprises Wadhurst Clay Formation – Mudstone (BGS 2017). There are no superficial deposits recorded.
- 1.2.2 The site is a roughly rectangular plot, lying to the south of Uckfield. It is currently bounded by open fields on all sides (Fig. 1). The areas for strip, map and sample (Figure 2) form two small parcels of land (Areas A and B) within the wider development area.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 The site is subject to proposals for residential development. Consultation with the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Archaeologist resulted in the requirement for archaeological evaluation, the first phase of which was undertaken in October - November 2014 (AOC 2015). Evidence for archaeological features dating back to the Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic and covering periods through to post-medieval was represented.
- 1.3.2 On the basis of these findings, ESCC's Archaeologist requested that limited further trial trench evaluation take place, consisting of three trenches, in order to identify the extent of the features already observed in previous trenches.
- 1.3.3 The Stage 1 work identified limited archaeological evidence comprising an undated pit and a post-medieval field boundary represented by two parallel ditches (ASE 2017).
- 1.3.4 ASE prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for Stage 2 archaeological mitigation consisting of strip, map & sample (ASE 2017b) that was submitted to CgMs for onward submission to the ESCC Archaeologist for approval prior to the commencement of the fieldwork.

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1 This report details the results of the archaeological strip, map and sample carried out on the site between the 6th and 9th August 2018, and has been prepared in accordance with the WSI (ASE 2017b).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The information below incorporates data from the first stage evaluation report (AOC 2015) and the second stage 2017 evaluation (ASE 2017) with due acknowledgement. It includes an archaeological/historical background as well as the results from both evaluations.

Prehistoric

- 2.2 The 2014 evaluation identified some gullies and stakeholes, which were dated, on the basis of recovered lithic material, to the later Mesolithic/early Neolithic period; in addition a sherd of Late Iron Age/ Roman grog-tempered ware was recovered from one of these gullies and interpreted as intrusive to the feature. It seems more probable, however, given the rarity of cut features of this type in the Mesolithic/ early Neolithic periods that the gullies are of late prehistoric/ Romano British date and that the lithic material is residual. The lithic analysis report for the evaluation did, however, conclude that the concentration of many pieces which fit into a Later Mesolithic or Early Neolithic time frame were indicators of later Mesolithic/ early Neolithic activity on the site (AOC 2015).

Iron Age/Romano-British

- 2.3 The London to Lewes Roman road is located to the west of the site. Roman activity within the area focused on the iron industry, with mineral extraction sites recorded further north along the Uck Valley. During the 2014 evaluation, a ditch and a spread dating to the Roman period were identified and yielded a significant amount of pottery. In another area, several boundary ditches and pits dating back to this period were also identified.

Saxon and medieval

- 2.4 The proposed development site was most likely used for agricultural purposes during the medieval period. During the 2014 evaluation, ridge and furrow dating to this period were identified.

Post-medieval

- 2.5 Brickworks are recorded in the southern part of the site and a watermill is known on Ridgewood Stream immediately adjacent to the western boundary. The town of Uckfield developed as a market centre from the 13th century. From the mid-16th to the 18th century, Uckfield was a centre of local pottery production and by the mid-18th century, brickworks were established on Ridgewood Common utilising the local Wadhurst Clay. The 2014 evaluation identified a stone lined drain and both evaluations identified several field boundary ditches belonging to this period.

Undated

- 2.6 The 2017 evaluation identified a single, isolated, pit, which was oval in plan with possible *in situ* burning in evidence. The pit is undated. In terms of function, it is possible that this feature was used for low level industrial or domestic activity (possible iron working or a hearth), although there was no direct evidence to confirm this from the environmental samples collected.

2.7 Project aims and objectives

2.7.1 General Aims

The general aims of the archaeological investigation were:

- To excavate and record all archaeological remains and deposits exposed with a view to understanding their character, extent, preservation, significance and date before their loss through development impacts.
- To understand to what extent the features exposed during the evaluation can be explained through excavation of the wider area.
- To refine the dating, character and function of the landscape features at this site.
- To make the results of the investigation publicly accessible through submission of a report to the East Sussex Historic Environment Record and the project archive to the local museum

2.7.2 Site Specific Research Aims

The site specific aims of the archaeological investigation were:

- Does the Mesolithic/ Neolithic and Romano-British activity identified by the 2014 evaluation extend into the access road area?

2.7.3 South-East Research Framework

The archaeological investigation sought to address the following questions:

- To what extent and in what ways have environmental factors (e.g. geology, soils and climate) influenced historic landscape development?
- Late Mesolithic findspots are often from similar contexts to significant early Neolithic deposits: how do these finds and sites articulate? Are our techniques for finding these sites working?
- Can we compare the Weald in the Roman period and parts of the near Continent, such as the Sandy Flanders region, which have a similar profile of alternative use, and alternative patterning in the overlap of geology, soils and culture (tile making, iron industry...)?
- To what extent and in what ways have economic and social factors influenced historic landscape development?
- To what extent and in what ways can past landscapes and their components (prehistoric onwards) be understood in the present landscape?

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 All works were conducted in compliance with the standards outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (revised)* (CIfA 2014a), excepting where they are superseded by statements made below.
- 3.1.2 A Risk Assessment and Method Statement (RAMS) was produced prior to the commencement of the work for approval by CgMs. A copy of this document was maintained on site by ASE throughout the fieldwork.
- 3.1.3 The strip, map & sample exercise was applied to two areas (A and B) along the strip of the site access road. The northern Area A measured 96m x 10m and the southern Area B measured 77m x 8m.
- 3.1.4 The stripping was carried out using a 360 degree slew mechanical excavator. The areas were excavated through undifferentiated topsoil and subsoil in spits of no more than 0.20m with artefact recovery taking place every scrape until archaeological deposits were encountered or the top of the underlying natural sediments reached. The excavator was fitted with a 1.8m wide toothless grading bucket and care was taken that archaeological deposits were not damaged due to over machining. All machining stopped when potential archaeological deposits were encountered.
- 3.1.5 Topsoil and subsoil were stored in separate bunds to either side of the trenches. The deposits were backfilled in order.
- 3.1.6 Provision was made for exposed archaeological deposits to be cleaned by hand and recorded in plan and section. After hand cleaning, pre-excavation plans would be prepared using Global Positioning System (GPS) planning technology. No significant archaeological features or deposits were identified.

3.2 Excavation and Recording Techniques

- 3.2.1 All recording was undertaken in accordance with the WSI unless otherwise agreed in writing by the ESCC Archaeological Officer.
- 3.2.2 Provision was made for bulk soil samples to be taken where appropriate. No deposits suitable for environmental or specialist sampling were encountered.
- 3.2.3 The ESCC Archaeological Officer was kept informed of progress and given the opportunity to attend site once the areas had been opened.

3.3 Archive

3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Lewes Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Tables 1 and 2).

Context sheets	6
Section sheets	0
Plans sheets	0
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	12
Context register	1
Drawing register	0
Watching brief forms	0
Trench Record forms	0

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box)	1 bag
Registered finds (number of)	0
Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples	0
Palaeo-environmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides)	0
Waterlogged wood	0
Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples	0

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

4.0 RESULTS (figure 3)

4.1 Area A

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length m	Width m	Depth m	Average Height m AOD
001	Layer	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.25	25.60
002	Layer	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.07	25.35
003	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	Na	25.28

Table 3: Area A list of recorded contexts

- 4.1.1 The recorded sequence of deposits was: natural [003] consisting of mid-yellowish brown silty clay with frequent manganese and occasional mudstone; subsoil [002] consisting of mid-grey silty clay; topsoil [001] consisting of mid-yellowish brown silty clay.
- 4.1.2 A small quantity of unstratified finds were recovered, including mixed 19th- and 20th-century material and residual worked flint; no archaeological features or deposits were identified.

4.2 Area B

Context	Type	Interpretation	Length m	Width m	Depth m	Average Height m AOD
004	Layer	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.30	31.12
005	Layer	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.10	30.82
006	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	Na	30.72

Table 4: Area B list of recorded contexts

- 4.2.1 The recorded sequence of deposits was: natural [006] consisting of mid-yellowish brown silty clay with frequent manganese and occasional mudstone; subsoil [005] consisting of mid-orangey grey silty clay; topsoil [004] consisting of mid-yellowish brown silty clay.
- 4.2.2 A quantity of iron working slag was recovered from the subsoil at the northern end of the area; no archaeological features or deposits were identified.

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the watching brief on Land at Ridgewood Farm, Uckfield. All finds were washed and dried or air dried as appropriate. They were subsequently quantified by count and weight and were bagged by material and context (Table 5). All finds have been packed and stored following ClfA guidelines (2014b).

Context	Lithics	Weight (g)	Pottery	Weight (g)	CBM	Weight (g)	Slag	Weight (g)	CTP	Weight (g)	Glass	Weight (g)
5							7	624				
Area A u/s	5	118	6	16	2	47			1	2	3	10
Area B u/s	1	16										
Total	6	134	6	16	2	47	7	624	1	2	3	10

Table 5: Quantification of finds

5.2 The Flintwork by Karine Le Hégarat

5.2.1 Six pieces of worked flint weighing 134g (five pieces in Area A and one piece in Area B) and a burnt unworked flint weighing 10g were found unstratified. The small assemblage comprises four flakes, a blade and a multiplatform flake core. The flake from area B is burnt and fragmented; and it cannot be closely dated. The pieces from Area A are made from a dark grey / green flint with a stained weathered cortex. The blade displays part of a fossil inclusion. It is in a poor condition, but indicates a presence during the Mesolithic or Early / Middle Neolithic. The small multiplatform flake core (96g) was used to remove thin flakes. It is likely to predate the Middle Bronze Age. The flakes are technologically poor.

5.2.2 No diagnostic tools were found during the excavation. The small assemblage of worked flint provides limited evidence for prehistoric presence. The blade indicates low-key presence during the Mesolithic or Early – Middle Neolithic. The remaining pieces could be later.

5.3 The Pottery by Luke Barber

5.3.1 The archaeological work recovered just six sherds (16g) of post-Roman pottery from the site. All was recovered from unstratified deposits. Blue transfer-printed whiteware is the most common type present (3/10g) and is represented by two plates, one with willow pattern, the other with Asiatic pheasant designs. There is a further whiteware plate with a black sheet pattern (2g) as well as a 2g fragment from a plain whiteware mug. The only other type of pottery consists of a 2g scrap from an English porcelain (bone china) eggcup. Overall, the assemblage can be placed in a c. 1850-1910 date range.

5.3.2 The post-Roman pottery is late in date, from unstratified deposits and is of well-known industrialised types. It is not considered to hold any potential for further analysis beyond that done here. The material has been discarded.

5.4 The Ceramic Building Material

- 5.4.1 Two small, unstratified fragments of undiagnostic roof tile were recovered unstratified from Area A; the material was not retained.

5.5 The Metallurgical Remains by Luke Barber

- 5.5.1 Subsoil [005] produced a small assemblage of relatively fresh-looking slag (7/572g). Five of the pieces (524g) are dark grey, dense (with little aeration) and irregular in form with some evidence of former melting on their surfaces. The remaining two pieces (48g) are a mottled grey/brown and notably more aerated (less dense). Although all of the slag clearly derives from iron working it is not diagnostic of a specific process, or date.

5.6 The Clay Tobacco Pipe by Elke Raemen

- 5.6.1 A clay tobacco pipe (CTP) bowl fragment weighing 2g was recovered from the topsoil in Area A. The fragment shows an oak leaf decorated ribbed seam. This type of bowl was common in the second half of the 19th century.

5.7 The Glass by Elke Raemen

- 5.7.1 Three fragments of glass, weighing a combined 10g, were found unstratified in Area A. Included is a clear glass window pane fragment measuring 2.25mm thick. The piece dates to the later 19th to 20th century. The fragment from a colourless (blue tinged) panelled bottle with part of the embossing ([...]ABL[...]) surviving dates to the later 19th to early 20th century. Finally, the topsoil contained a black glass faceted button with copper-alloy looped attachment of 19th-century date.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

6.1.1 The stratigraphy recorded in Areas A and B was very similar. Topsoil was a consistent mid yellowish brown silty clay, overlying subsoil consisting of mid-orangey grey silty clay. Natural geology was mid yellowish brown silty clay with frequent manganese and occasional mudstone and encountered at heights between 25.28m and 30.72m AOD.

Area A

6.1.2 No archaeological features or deposits were identified. The trench scar for the existing sewer pipe was visible running the length of the stripped area. A small quantity of mixed, unstratified finds were recovered from the topsoil and subsoil, dating to the 19th-20th century. This material was almost certainly derived from farmyard middens and its presence was the result of manuring. A small quantity of unstratified, residual worked flint was also recovered.

Area B

6.1.3 No archaeological features or deposits were identified. The trench scar for the existing sewer pipe was visible running the length of the stripped area. A small quantity of iron working slag was recovered from the subsoil at the northern end of the area.

6.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

6.2.1 Although the areas had been ploughed in the past, there was no evidence of deep ploughing or sub-soiling. In view of this, the historic and modern agricultural use of the site is likely to have had minimal, or no, archaeological impact.

6.3 Consideration of research aims

6.3.1 The general aims of the archaeological investigation have been met in so far as:

- the character, extent, preservation, significance, date and quality of any archaeological remains and deposits has been assessed
- how these remains might be affected by development of the site has been assessed
- the extent to which previous groundworks and/or other processes have affected archaeological deposits at the site has been assessed.

6.3.2 The specific aim of the archaeological investigation sought to identify further evidence for Mesolithic/Neolithic and Romano-British activity as recorded during the 2015 evaluation. The small quantity of worked flint recovered in Area A is residual. No Roman material was recovered.

6.3.3 The limited results do not have the potential to address any specific research aim from the draft South East Research Framework.

6.4 Conclusions

- 6.4.1 Both areas were found to have intact subsoil horizons and, aside from an existing sewer pipe, were undisturbed. No archaeological features were identified and only small quantities of residual prehistoric worked flint, mixed 19th- to 20th-century material and undated iron slag were identified in the overburden. These finds could well result from manuring. As a result, Areas A and B are not deemed to have any archaeological potential.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AOC 2015, *Ridgewood Farm, Uckfield, East Sussex: An Archaeological Evaluation Report*. Unpublished AOC Report No 32712.

ASE 2017 *An Archaeological Evaluation at Land at Ridgewood Farm, Uckfield, East Sussex (Areas 1A and 1B)* ASE unpub. doc. Report no. 2017132

ASE 2017b, *Land at Ridgewood Farm, Uckfield, East Sussex: Written scheme of investigation for archaeological strip, map and sample*. Unpub. Doc.

British Geological Survey 2015, <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed 02/02/2017)

ClfA 2014a, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*

ClfA 2014b, *Standard and Guidance for the Collection, Documentation, Conservation and Research of Archaeological Materials*

ESCC 2017, *Archaeological Consultation (13th February 2017)*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and Greg Chuter, ESCC Archaeologist for his guidance and monitoring. The work was carried out by Greg Priestley-Bell (Senior Archaeologist). The fieldwork was managed by Paul Mason and the post-excavation work by Dan Swift.

HER Summary

HER enquiry no.	Na					
Site code	RWF17					
Project code	170858					
Planning reference	WD/2017/1368MRM					
Site address	Ridgewood Farm, Uckfield, East Sussex					
District/Borough	Wealden					
NGR (12 figures)	547080 119820					
Geology	Wadhurst Clay Formation – Mudstone					
Fieldwork type	Eval	Excav	WB	HBR	Survey	Other strip, map and survey
Date of fieldwork	6 th to 8 th August 2018					
Sponsor/client	CgMs					
Project manager	Paul Mason					
Project supervisor	Greg Priestley-Bell					
Period summary	Palaeolithic	Mesolithic	Neolithic X	Bronze Age X	Iron Age	
	Roman	Anglo-Saxon	Medieval	Post- X Medieval	Other	
Project summary	<p><i>This report presents the results of an archaeological strip, map and sample on land at Ridgewood Farm, Uckfield, East Sussex, Areas A and B, between 6th and 8th August 2018. The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting.</i></p> <p><i>Both areas were found to have intact subsoil horizons and, aside from an existing sewer pipe, were undisturbed. No archaeological features were identified and only small quantities of residual prehistoric worked flint, mixed 19th- to 20th-century material and undated iron slag were identified in the overburden. These finds could well result from manuring. As a result, Areas A and B are not deemed to have any archaeological potential.</i></p>					
Museum/Accession No.	Lewes Museum					

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-327934

Project details

Project name An archaeological strip, map and sample at Ridgewood Farm Uckfield (Areas A and B)

This report presents the results of an archaeological strip, map and sample on land at Ridgewood Farm, Uckfield, East Sussex, Areas A and B, between 6th and 8th August 2018. The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting.

Short description of the project Both areas were found to have intact subsoil horizons and, aside from an existing sewer pipe, were undisturbed. No archaeological features were identified and only small quantities of residual prehistoric worked flint, mixed 19th- to 20th-century material and undated iron slag were identified in the overburden. These finds could well result from manuring. As a result, Areas A and B are not deemed to have any archaeological potential.

Project dates Start: 06-08-2018 End: 08-08-2018

Previous/future work Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference codes RWF17 - Sitecode

Any associated project reference codes 170858 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Cultivated Land 2 - Operations to a depth less than 0.25m

Monument type NONE None

Monument type NONE Uncertain

Significant Finds WORKED FLINT Neolithic

Significant Finds SLAG Uncertain

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England

Site location EAST SUSSEX WEALDEN UCKFIELD Ridgewood Farm

Postcode TN225SL

Study area 1500 Square metres

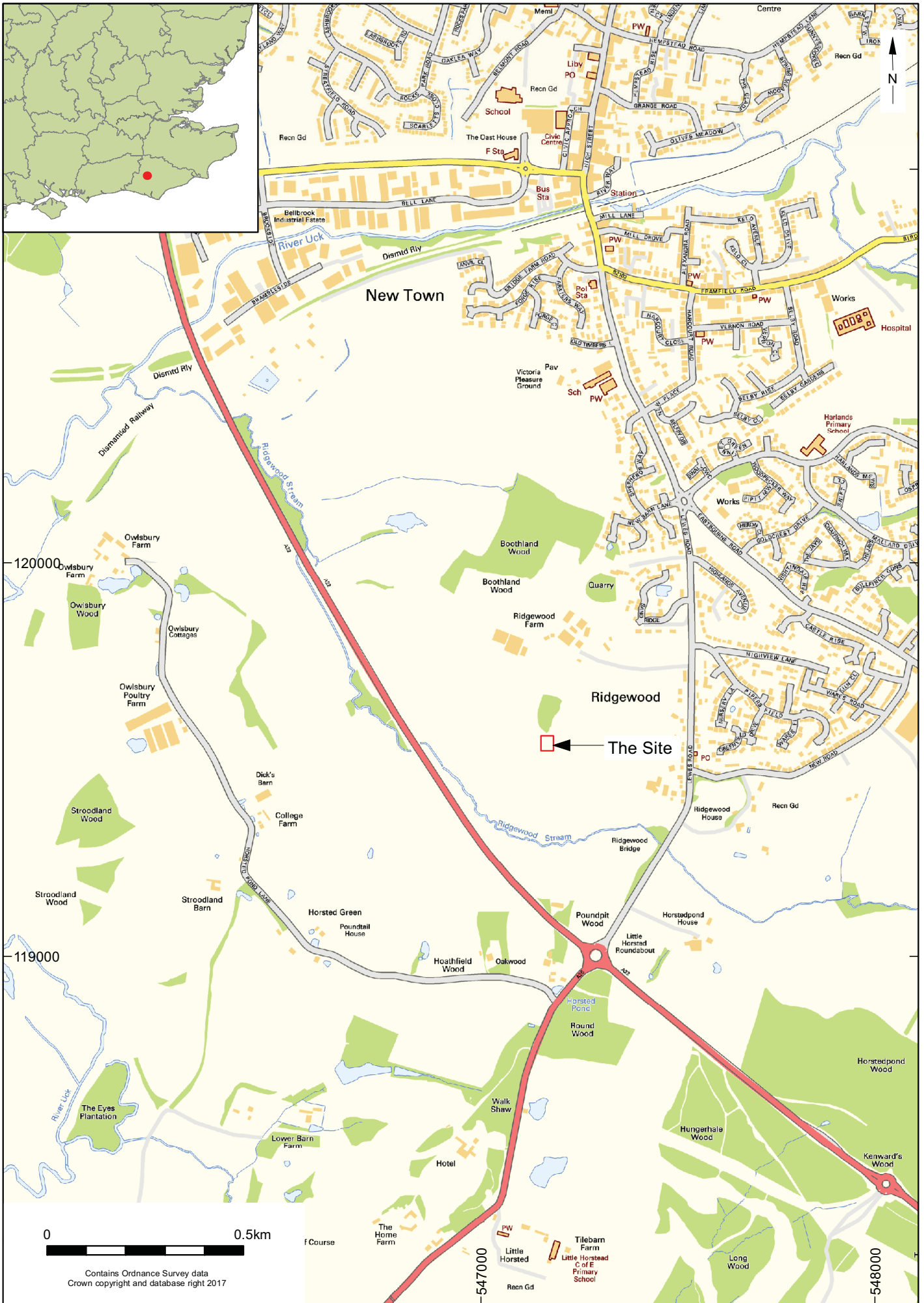
Site coordinates TQ 46788 20066 50.960727707571 0.090436711815 50 57 38 N 000 05 25 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South-East

Project brief originator CgMs

Project design originator	CgMs
Project director/manager	Paul Mason
Project supervisor	Greg Priestley-Bell
Type of sponsor/funding body	CgMS
Name of sponsor/funding body	CgMs
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Lewes Museum
Physical Contents	"Worked stone/lithics","other"
Digital Archive recipient	Lewes Museum
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey"
Paper Archive recipient	Lewes Museum
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Report"
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An archaeological strip. map and sample at Ridgewood Farm (areas A and B), Uckfield, East Sussex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Priestley-Bell, G.
Other bibliographic details	Rep. no. 2018278
Date	2018
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue or publication	Portslade
Description	Booklet
Entered by	Greg Priestley-Bell (gregpbell@btinternet.com)
Entered on	9 September 2018



Contains Ordnance Survey data
Crown copyright and database right 2017

© Archaeology South-East		Ridgewood, Uckfield		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 170858	September 2018	Site location		
Report Ref: 2018278	Drawn by: AR			



© Archaeology South-East		Ridgewood, Uckfield	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 170858	September 2018	Location of monitored areas	
Report Ref: 2018278	Drawn by: AR		



Area A, [001],[002], [003], looking south east



Area A, looking north east



Area B, [004], [005], [006], looking south east



Area B, looking north east

Sussex Office

Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex BN41 1DR
tel: +44(0)1273 426830
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.archaeologyse.co.uk

Essex Office

27 Eastways
Witham
Essex
CM8 3YQ
tel: +44(0)1376 331470
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.archaeologyse.co.uk

London Office

Centre for Applied Archaeology
UCL Institute of Archaeology
31-34 Gordon Square
London WC1H 0PY
tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.ucl.ac.uk/caa

