

HLTC13/001



## HOCKENHULL HALL LAKE

*Archaeological Metal-detector and Walkover Survey*

*commissioned by Mr J. Wright*

12/01041/FUL

July 2013

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HA Job no.: HLTC13/001

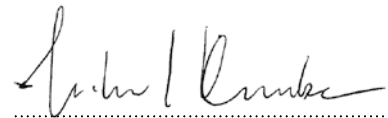
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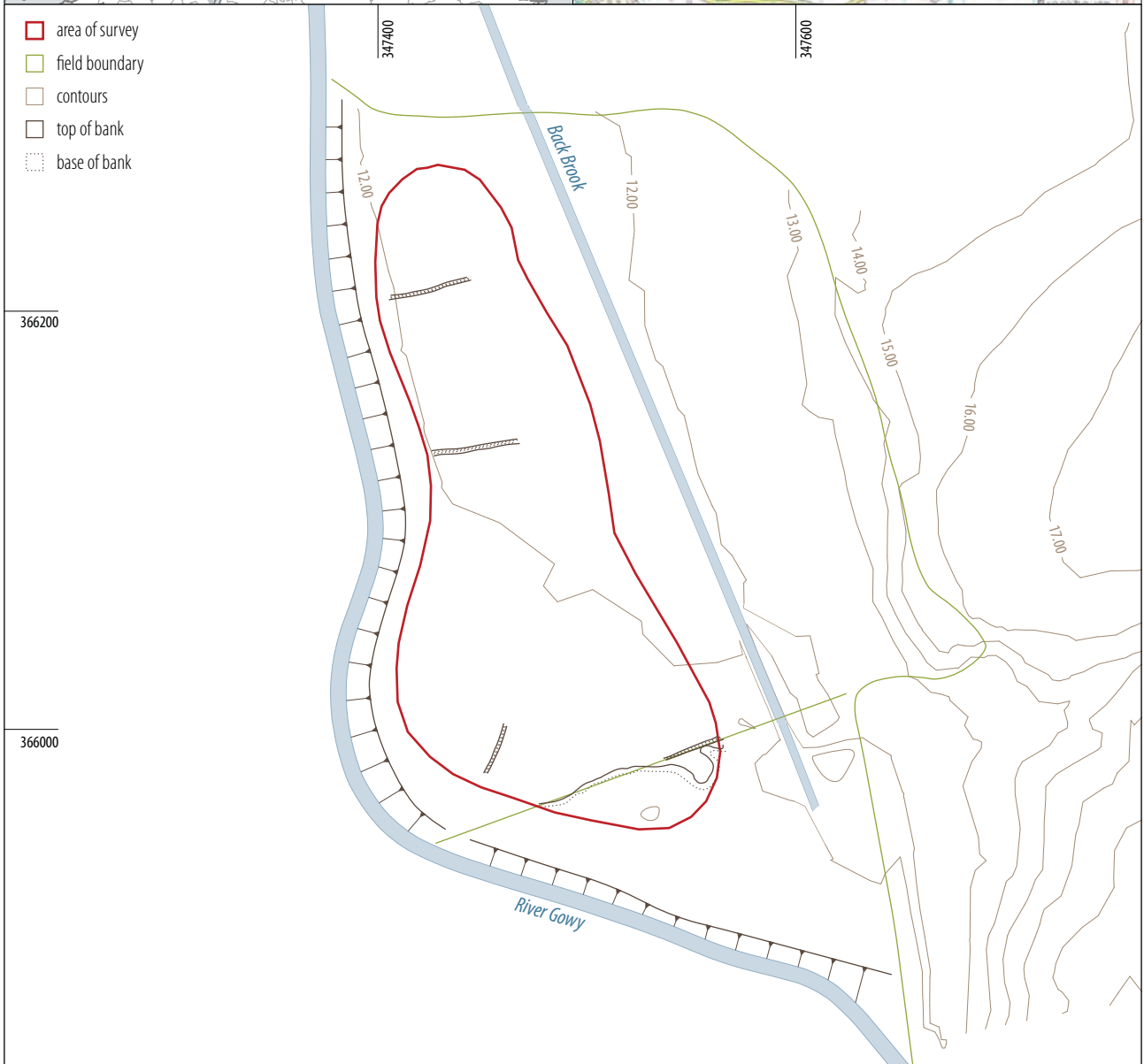
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private lake at  
Hochenhull Hall  
Tarvin  
Cheshire West & Chester



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0 150m

## Illus 1

Site location

# HOCKENHULL HALL LAKE

## Archaeological Metal-detector and Walkover Survey

*Headland Archaeology (UK) Limited carried out an archaeologically supervised metal detector survey and walkover survey at Hockenhull Hall, Cheshire, in respect of a planning application to construct a new lake in the grounds of Hockenhull Hall. The metal detector survey identified a large number of agricultural artifacts dating between the late 17th century and the present day.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned in 2013 by Jo Vallender of The Environmental Dimension Partnership, acting on behalf of the client Mr J. Wright, to provide an archaeological metal detector survey and walkover survey within the foot print of a planned private lake at Hockenhull Hall (planning ref: 12/01041/FUL).

Through consultation with Mark Leah and Julie Edwards, Development Control Archaeologists at Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service (a joint service providing archaeological advice to Cheshire West and Chester Council, and Cheshire East Council) (hereafter referred to as CAPAS), it was agreed that the first stage of archaeological assessment was to comprise a metal-detector survey and an archaeological walkover survey of the application site.

The program of fieldwork, conducted on 18/06/2013 and 19/06/2013, was project managed by Mike Kimber of Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd and carried out by volunteers from the Crewe and Nantwich Metal Detecting Society (CNMDS) to a written scheme of investigation (WSI) (Headland Archaeology June 2013) approved in advance by CAPAS.

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd is a Registered Organisation (RO) with the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA). The program of fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the IFA Code of Conduct (2008) and Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation (2008), and the Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (English Heritage 2006).

Each individual volunteer of the CNMDS is affiliated to the National Council for Metal Detecting (NCMD) North West Region, and agree to the Metal Detecting on Archaeological Excavations in Cheshire Guidelines, prepared by the Detectorists and Archaeologists Liaison Group (DALG).

### 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The site lies within the jurisdiction of Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWAC) located in an area known as Hockenhull Platts, lying to the southwest of the village of Tarvin and approximately 3km to the east of Christleton, Cheshire.

The area of the survey is directly adjacent to the River Gowy and bounded to the east by the Back Brook. The site lies approximately 12.00m above Ordnance Datum (OD). The approximate National Grid Reference (NGR) for the site centre is SJ 474660

Currently the site is uncultivated meadow (graded 3b & 4), lying between two areas of high ground, the meadow forms the flattened area of a very shallow "U" shaped, possible buried, valley. The shape of the valley suggests that the River Gowy once meandered its way through the centre of the valley, the current course being a partial by-product of land reclamation.

### 3 GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The local bedrock, geology, comprises of Chester Pebble Beds Formation, a pebbly/gravelly Sandstone. This sedimentary bedrock was formed approximately 242 to 248 million years ago in the Triassic Period and is indicative of a local environment previously dominated by rivers.

The superficial deposits are noted by the British Geological Society (BGS) as a mixture of alluvium – clay, silt, sand and gravel. These superficial deposits were formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period and again indicate a local environment previously dominated by rivers.

The formation of these deposits is primarily by transportation by rivers subsequently depositing sand and gravel detrital material in channels to form river terrace deposits. The river terrace deposits comprise of fine silt and clay from overbank floods which form floodplain alluvium and areas of bog peat deposits.



## 4 BACKGROUND HISTORY

Hockenhull Hall is a grade II\* listed building (English Heritage Building ID: 55735, (22 October 1952), NGR: SJ4839466108). The site is recorded as previously having a Pele tower with the possibility of the site having been moated.

The present building comprises a late 17th century manor house decorated in the Queen Anne style that was remodelled in 1715. The roof has subsequently been reconfigured, as a consequence of the removal of the original of parapets.

The title map of 1836 shows a building with strongly projecting terminal bays, however by the 1879 first edition OS edition the central bay had been in-filled to assume the form of the present frontage.

The building sits within an extensive formal garden. An adjoining L shaped farm range of late 18th or early 19th century origin adjoins the site to the east, the whole forming an intimate courtyard grouping.

The Hall lies in an open and elevated location, towards the crest of the gently sloping flanks of the Gowy valley.

The approved location of the private lake, within the Gowy valley, appears to have been always associated with agricultural activities and no information regarding its historic uses has been identified at the time of writing this report.

## 5 METHOD

### 5.1 METAL DETECTOR SURVEY

The survey area comprised a single field with a total area of approximately 5 hectares. The metal detector survey covered the 3.2ha footprint of the lake within this field.

Transects were marked out across the survey area at intervals of 10m. As the reach of a metal detector is approximately 1m this allowed a 2m scanned area per transect, equalling a 20% sample of the area.

Transects were laid out using tapes, and their positions recorded using dGPS.

The survey instruments were set to find 'all metal' as more prosaic finds are of great value archaeologically. Each signal encountered was hand-excavated.

All artifacts retrieved during the survey were bagged and marked with the site code (HTLC13) and a unique small find number; the finds were then 3D located using a dGPS.

### 5.2 WALKOVER SURVEY

The development area was systematically inspected by a Headland archaeologist. Any earthworks or relevant topographic features were recorded by surveying breaks of slope with dGPS.

## 6 RESULTS

### 6.1 METAL DETECTOR SURVEY

Julie Franklin

A total of 137 objects were recovered from 132 individual finds spots. Where more than one objects were numbered together these were either clearly two parts of the same object or in one case a number of the same type of object, found together.

The majority of finds, 97 objects were of iron, with 20 of copper alloy, 12 of aluminium and five of lead. In terms of date they are likely to range from the 18th century through to the present day, though a few items may be a little older.

The most notable part of the assemblage is a collection of 42 horseshoes, some 28 of which are complete. Horseshoes can be difficult to date as some of the variation seen within them is due to the idiosyncrasies of individual craftsmen or the needs of individual horses. In this assemblage an added problem is the thick corrosion products seen on many shoes, obscuring diagnostic details such as the presence or absence of fuller grooves and the shape of the nail holes. However, some dating inferences can be made from their overall size and shape based on typologies published by Hume, Clark and Goodall (Hume 1969, 238–9; Clark 1995, 75–123; Goodall 1983, 251).

There are a number of examples with in turned heels, forming a distinctly key-hole shaped space in centre. These are typical of the second half of the 17th century but continue through to the end of the 18th century. A fuller groove is visible on a number of shoes indicating a post mid 17th century date. Others have remains of a toe clip, a mid 19th century innovation, while many others are broken at the toe, possibly where toe clips have broken away, though possibly due to other wear and tear. Others are very heavy duty, or very large which again implies a 19th century or later date. Though conceivable that some of the smaller and less diagnostic shoes are in fact considerably older, the likelihood is that all are post-medieval. Reviewing all the dating evidence, the earliest shoes range from at least the 18th century, possibly the 17th century through to the late 19th century or later. Large numbers of horseshoes are often found in fields where horses have been kept and where shoes accidentally lost are unlikely to be found. The high number of shoes suggests horses have been kept in the field over a long period. The horseshoes are scattered over the whole survey area but are more concentrated at the south-eastern end, close to the stream. The water source would have made this an area more frequented by horses, and more muddy, and hence easier for shoes to be lost. There is no discernible difference in the distribution of shoes of different ages.

Five coins also provide some dating evidence though for the most part these are very worn with little or no detail visible, though some inferences can be drawn from their size. Three appear to be George IV halfpennies dating between 1825 and 1830 (SF55, SF73, SF88). One is possibly a little older, being of equivalent size to a George III farthing (SF50). One is clearly later, being a George V penny, dated 1920 (SF76).

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## Illus 2

Showing the distribution of horseshoes

Two buttons are also of some age, being 18th or 19th century in date (SF116, SF129) and two spoons (SF72, SF125) may be of similar age.

The only other type of find found in some numbers were aluminium seals, either circular in shape or in the form of strips of metal, both types stamped with batch numbers. These probably derive from bags of animal feed, and are clearly of modern origin. Their distribution is similar to that of the horseshoes, with a particular concentration at the south-eastern end of the area. However, a particular close concentration of six seals (SF63, 64, 65) at the western side, along with three nearby horseshoes, suggests this was also an area where animals were routinely fed.

Other notable finds include a 0.22 calibre bullet (SF131), a folding knife (SF121), a lipstick tube (SF26) and a modern marker pen (SF41) and screwdriver (SF85). The bullet must date from the late 19th century or later. The lipstick is probably of mid 20th century vintage and is perhaps the most out of place of the finds, though it is possible to imagine scenarios about how it may have been lost here.

The remaining finds represent machine parts and fittings such as bolts and chains but can provide little detail about the use of the land.

### 6.2 WALKOVER SURVEY

During the walkover survey a series of short drain gullies or grubbed out field boundaries were noted within the site. The gullies appeared as very shallow depressions approximately 2m wide and 0.10m deep, aligned at right angles to the course of the stream the gullies probably represent drainage channels as the area is prone to flooding.

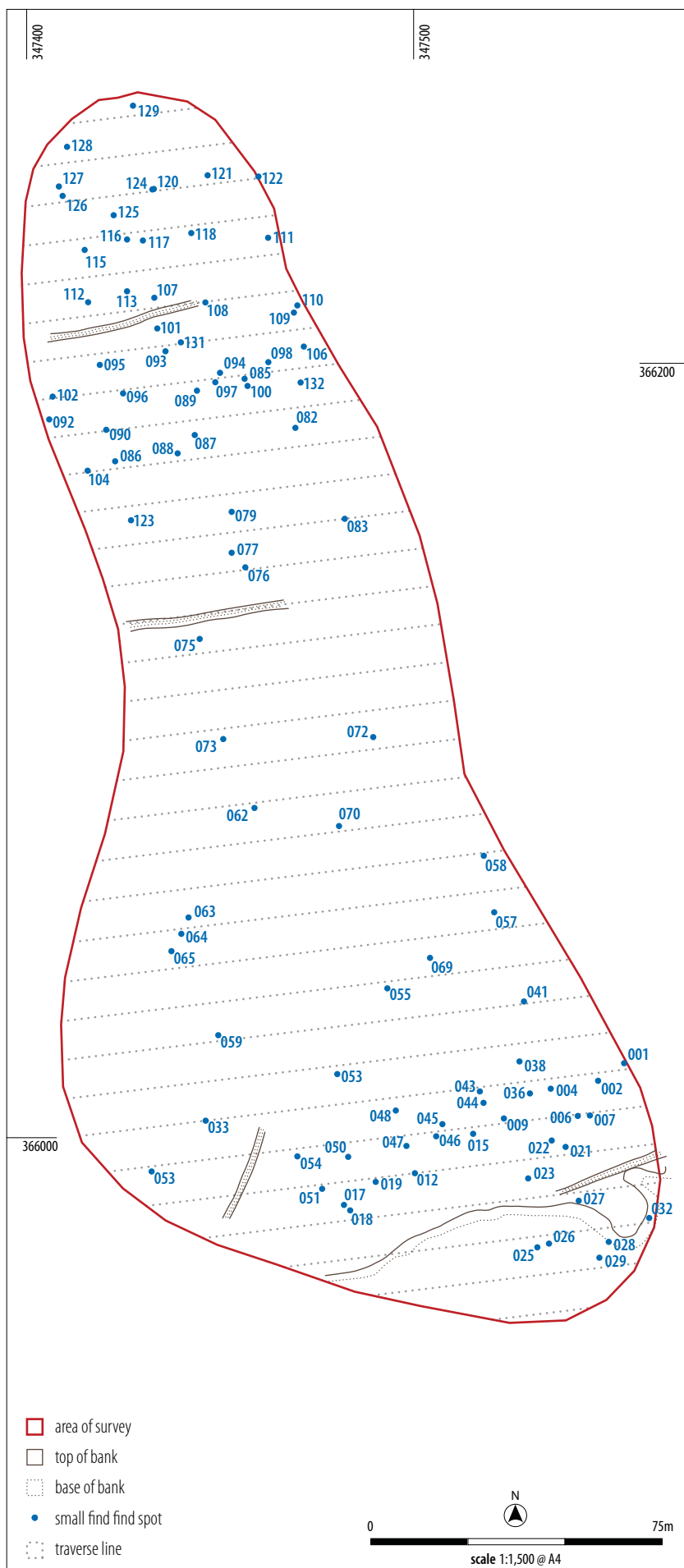
Located towards the south of the site, a snaking earthwork was observed, the earthwork probably represents a redundant bank of the River Gowy (see *Illus 1*).

## 7 CONCLUSION

The results of the metal detector and walk over survey have identified only objects of post medieval date and natural land forms within the area of the planned lake.







### Illus 3

Showing the distribution of the other finds

The finds indicate that the area was in use in the late 17th century through to the late 19th century and into present day, while the walkover survey identified only drainage channels and an indication of a change in course of the River Gowy.

The metal detector survey has illustrated that the survey area was probably used as grazing for livestock, this is probably due to the frequent flooding of the area.

The same wet environment that inhibits the use of the land in the present day, probably influenced past activities within the area meaning any evidence of historic occupation is more likely to be located on higher ground.

The results of the metal detector and walkover survey have not identified evidence indicating that activity of any great antiquity has taken place within the survey area.

The majority of the finds recovered were recovered from within the top 0.30m of topsoil and the dating of the artefacts implies, through association that the survey area is post medieval in date, however the excavation for the construction of the private lake will expose deposits at a greater depth than the metal detector survey was able to detect, therefore the likelihood of cultural material being present at greater depths must not be overlooked.

## 8 ARCHIVE

Metal artifacts to be retained by the Client

Paper archive to be sent to the Cheshire Museum service

## 9 REFERENCES

- Clark, J 1995 'Medieval finds from excavations in London' in *The Medieval Horse and its Equipment* London: Boydell Press pp 75-123.
- Goodall, IH 1983 'Iron Objects' in Mayes, P & Butler, LAS *Sandal Castle Excavations 1964-1973 Leeds*, pp 240-252.
- Hume, IN 1969 *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America* Philadelphia : University of Pennsylvania Press.

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## 10 APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 FINDS CATALOGUE

SF	Material	Object	Qty	Description	Spot Date
1	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, in turned heels, forming partial inner keyhole shape, worn calkins, length 127, width 124, web width 36	17th–18th
2	Iron	Nut	1	hexagonal	19th+
3	Iron	Horseshoe	1	part of branch, damaged at edge and tip	
4	Iron	Unidentified	1	long piece of cast iron, shape unclear	
5	Iron	Horseshoe	1	branch and toe of very small shoe, tapers to narrow heel, branch width 28, height c.95	
6	Aluminium	Seal	1	round feedbag seal, painted red, stamped '06'	20th+
7	Iron	Hinge	1	butt hinge, broken	
8	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, in turned heels forming inner keyhole shape, length 125, width 120, web width 32	m.17th–18th
9	Iron	Unidentified	1	long object, shape unclear	
10	Iron	Horseshoe	1	near complete, damaged at toe and missing one heel, distorted, worn calkin, length c.130, width c.149, web width 30	18th+
11	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, in turned heels, forming inner keyhole shape, damaged at toe, length c.130, width 128, web width 30	m.17th–18th
12	Aluminium	Seal	1	strip feedbag seal, stamped '3105'	20th+
13	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, heavy shoe, fuller groove, calkin more worn on one side, damage at toe, length 128, width 127, web width 36	m.17th+
14	Iron	Horseshoe	1	part of branch, toe and heel missing, web width 32	
15	Iron	Nail	1	offset rectangular head, clenched tip	
16	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, pronounced calkin, fuller groove and toe clip, length 170, width 140, web width 29	m.19th+
17	Copper Alloy	Wire	2	small wire fragments, twisted	
18	Copper Alloy	Wire	1	length of thick wire	
19	Iron	Unidentified	1	rod with shaped fitting at one end	
20	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, heavy shoe, slightly in turned heel, length 130, width 136, web width 34	PM?

SF	Material	Object	Qty	Description	Spot Date
21	Iron	Machine Part	1	large chunk of moulded cast iron, function unclear	19th+
22	Iron	Object	1	large bar with two loops bolted through either end	
23	Iron	Unidentified	1	long object, shape obscured by corrosion	
24	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, small heavy shoe, fuller groove, length 110, width 104, web width 28	m.17th+
25	Aluminium	Seal	1	strip feedbag seal, stamped '24'	20th+
26	Copper Alloy	Lipstick	1	small cylindrical object with three circumferential grooves towards base and pointed top, stamped 'TANGEE' and '????ENGLAND' on base. Tangee lipstick tube, c.1950s?	20th
27	Copper Alloy	Object	1	round with two ears at edge and bar across both faces, possibly a seal	
28	Aluminium	Seal	1	strip feedbag seal, stamped '570'	20th+
29	Copper Alloy	Unidentified	1	strip, bent	
30	Iron	Horseshoe	1	part of branch/toe? Of large heavy horseshoe, web width 36, broken both ends and distorted	
31	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, calkin, poss fuller groove, worn at toe, length 152, width 145, web width 38	18th+
32	Iron	Object	1	C-sectioned plate, with staple fittings	
33	Aluminium	Seal	1	strip feedbag seal, stamped '792'	20th+
34	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, large shoe, pronounced calkin and toe clip, length 190, width 155, web width 32	m.19th+
35	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, worn calkin, distinct inner keyhole shape, length 122, width 126, web width 34	m.17th–18th
36	Iron	Machine Part	1	large ring with cog teeth at edge - machine part	19th+
37	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, pronounced calkin, fuller groove, worn toe, length 150, width 150, web width 37	18th/19th
38	Iron	Wire Loop	1	small wire looped fitting	
39	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, worn calkins, fuller groove, U-shaped, length 116, width 125, web width 31	19th+
40	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, calkin, distinct inner keyhole shape, length 130, width 132, web width 38	m.17th–18th
41	Aluminium	Marker Pen	1	barrel from permanent marker 'Wonder Marker No.100'	L.20th+



SF	Material	Object	Qty	Description	Spot Date
42	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, worn calkin, distinct inner keyhole shape, length 162, width 140, web width 32, wider at heel	m.17th–18th
43	Iron	Chain	1	three joined oval links	Mod
44	Iron	Horseshoe	1	one branch with heel, worn calkin, possibly worn toe (or break), web width 35	
45	Aluminium	Seal	1	strip feedbag seal, , stamped '2976'	20th+
46	Copper Alloy	Object	1	irregular shaped object, slightly conical, possibly a seal	
47	Copper Alloy	Object	1	fitting part of cylindrical object with rilled rim, cf. SF48	
48	Copper Alloy	Object	1	fitting part of cylindrical object with rilled rim, cf. SF47	
49	Iron	Horseshoe	1	one branch and toe of medium horseshoe, worn calkined heel, worn toe, web width 34, narrowing at heel	
50	Copper Alloy	Coin	1	Circular coin, very worn, diam 23mm, possibly George III farthing?	L.18th/ e.19th
51	Iron	Unidentified	1	fitting, long rectangular with U-shaped section	
52	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, large shoe, pronounced calkin, fuller groove, worn toe, length 160, width 149, web width 34	18th/19th
53	Iron	Plate	1	triangular	
54	Aluminium	Seal	1	sub-rectangular feedbag seal, painted green, stamped '313'	20th+
55	Copper Alloy	Coin	1	Circular coin, very worn, head facing left, diam 26mm, probably George IV halfpenny, 1825-1830	e.19th
56	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete but distorted, length 122, width c.135, web width 36	18th+
57	Iron	Unidentified	1	long piece of cast iron, shape unclear	
58	Iron	Plate	1	small, broken	
59	Iron	Lever/Bicycle Handlebar	1	straight iron rod with grey plastic grip at end	
60	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, possible fuller groove, damaged at toe, length c.124, width c.118, web width 38	m.17th+
61	Iron	Horseshoe	1	part of branch with heel, pronounced calkin, at least two nail holes, possible fuller groove, one with nail in place, web width 30mm	
62	Iron	Nail	1	large nail with small round head	
63	Aluminium	Seal	4	strip feedbag seals, stamped '3338', '574'; '279'; '6682'	20th+
64	Aluminium	Seal	1	strip feedbag seal, stamped '6709'	20th+
65	Aluminium	Seal	1	strip feedbag seal, stamped '858'	20th+

SF	Material	Object	Qty	Description	Spot Date
66	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, small shoe, one worn calkin, one thickened pointed heel, length 122, width 107, web width 31	13th+
67	Iron	Horseshoe	1	branch and toe of large horseshoe, worn calkined heel, worn toe clip, web width 32	
68	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, in turned heels, forming slight inner keyhole shape, length 125, width 110, web width 32	17th–18th
69	Copper Alloy	Object	1	thick plate with parallel grooves along one side	
70	Iron	Machine Part	1	large hat-shaped boss	19th+
71	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, small shoe, U-shaped, fuller groove, length 115, width 111, web width 30	18th+
72	Copper Alloy	Spoon	1	tablespoon, long oval bowl	18th–20th
73	Copper Alloy	Coin	1	Circular coin, very worn, head facing left, diam 26mm, probably George IV halfpenny, 1825–1830	e.19th
74	Iron	Horseshoe	1	one branch, very worn calkin, web 32	
75	Iron	Hook	1	wall hook	
76	Copper Alloy	Coin	1	One penny, George V, 1920	1920
77	Iron	Hook	1	large rod with hooked ends	
78	Iron	Horseshoe	1	part of branch, broken both ends, web width 30	
79	Iron	Unidentified	1	large triangular chunk of cast iron	
80	Iron	Horseshoe	1	branch with heel and toe, wide web, narrowing to worn calkined heel, worn toe, web width 40	
81	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, heavy shoe, slightly in turned heels, narrow web, damaged at toe, length 128, width 122, web width 27	19th+
82	Iron	Unidentified	1	sub-triangular shaped piece	
83	Lead	Unidentified	1	large flat irregular shaped piece	
84	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, worn calkins, partial inner keyhole shape, length 129, width 123, web width 30	m.17th–18th
85	Iron & Plastic	Screwdriver	1	flat head screwdriver with translucent orange plastic handle	L.20th+
86	Iron	Spring	1	small coil with rod, similar to SF96 & SF120 but smaller	20th+
87	Iron	Nail	1	small nail, small round flat head	

## Headland Archaeology

SF	Material	Object	Qty	Description	Spot Date	SF	Material	Object	Qty	Description	Spot Date
88	Copper Alloy	Coin	1	Circular coin, very worn, diam 26mm, probably George IV halfpenny, 1825-1830	e.19th	113	Lead	Token?	1	round flat object, no markings, rounded edges, possibly a token	
89	Iron	Rod	2	short lengths of rod		114	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, calkin, fuller groove, length 142, width 140, web width 32	18th+
90	Aluminium	Seal	1	round feedbag seal, painted red, stamped '32'	20th+	115	Iron	Staple	1	U-shaped staple	
91	Iron	Horseshoe	1	toe, with missing heels, toe, web width 32		116	Lead	Button	1	round disc, rough at edges, raised rim at back and central cone for loop fastening, diam 25mm	18th?
92	Iron	Chisel	1	small nail headed chisel		117	Iron	Washer	1	large	
93	Iron	Staple	1	heavy duty U-shaped staple		118	Iron	Unidentified	1	long object, shape unclear	
94	Iron	Unidentified	1	small lump, shape unclear		119	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, heavy shoe with wide web, in turned heels, worn calkin, fuller groove, length 132, width 124, web width 42	m.17th+
95	Iron	Unidentified	1	long object, shape unclear		120	Iron	Spring	1	large coil and rod, same as SF96 (see also SF108)	20th+
96	Iron	Spring	1	large coil and rod, same as SF120 (see also SF108)	20th+	121	Iron	Folding Knife	1	folded knife, handle obscured by corrosion, blade folded in place, broken at end	
97	Iron	Unidentified	1	curved shaft, with fitting through it		122	Iron	Strap	1	end of strap, broken end, single nail hole	
98	Iron	Bolt	1	head and part of shaft		123	Iron	Unidentified	1	ovoid lump of iron	18th/20th
99	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, small heavy shoe, pointed heels, possible fuller groove, length 112, width 110, web width 38	m.17th+	124	Iron	Plate	1	rectangular, folded, nail in one corner	
100	Iron	Chisel	1	small nail headed chisel (or wedge?) - similar to SF92 but with cleft in blade		125	Lead	Spoon/Fork	1	cutlery handle, rounded end with moulded decoration	18th/19th
101	Iron	Machine Tooth	1	large tooth, square sectioned, curving to blunt point	19th+	126	Iron	Machine Tooth	1	slightly curving to blunt point, rectangular sectioned	19th+
102	Lead	Unidentified	1	small flat irregular shaped piece		127	Iron	Rod	1	long rod with curved end	
103	Iron	Horseshoe	1	chunk of cast iron, toe and part of both branches, heels missing, toe damaged, possibly worn, web width 32		128	Copper Alloy	Cap	1	round cap with flanged edge	
104	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, worn calkin, fuller groove, length 127, width 142, web width 32	18th+	129	Copper Alloy	Button	1	Disc & loop button, diam 19, makers mark on back	18th/19th
105	Iron	Horseshoe	1	complete, pronounced calkin, wide webs, distinct inner keyhole shape, length 133, width 133, web width 40	m.17th-18th	130	Iron	Horseshoe	1	single branch, worn calkin at heel, branch width 25mm	
106	Iron	Nut	1	hexagonal	19th+	131	Copper Alloy	Bullet	1	Small pointed bullet, diam 5.6 (0.22"), length 19.0mm	
107	Copper Alloy	Fitting	1	disc with cylindrical fitting on one side		132	Iron	Nut	1	hexagonal	19th+
108	Iron	Spring	1	large coil, same as SF96 & SF120 but missing rod	20th+						
109	Iron	Bolt	1	head and part of shaft							
110	Iron	Unidentified	1	square chunk							
111	Iron	Unidentified	1	sub-rectangular lump							
112	Iron	Rod	1	large rod, painted, pointed at one end							



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