

Archaeological Excavation

Seaton Carew Green

Hartlepool



TA25/02

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Summary

This report describes the methodology and results of an archaeological excavation undertaken by Tees Archaeology at Seaton Carew Green, Hartlepool. The site is centred on National Grid Reference NZ 5245 3002. The fieldwork was undertaken in August 2024 as part of the National Heritage Lottery Funded SeaScapes Project.

The site is a grassed area of common land within Seaton Carew known as 'The Green' and is maintained by Hartlepool Borough Council as an open space. It is bounded by houses on three sides and has an open aspect to the eastern side, with views of the sea. There are two footpaths running diagonally across The Green from the centre in the north to the south-east and south-west corners.

A geophysical survey was carried out on the site in April 2024; this was supplemented by further survey work in July 2024. A subsequent excavation followed in August 2024 in order to identify any surviving remains relating to the 19th Century fountain and suspected WWII bomb crater, raising awareness of the history of the area whilst also providing an opportunity for local people to be involved.

The archaeological works comprised the excavation of four trenches.

The excavations demonstrated that structural remains of the 19th Century drinking fountain were present on site. A feature suspected to be the bomb crater was also exposed, suggesting that the bomb hit the central/south-eastern area of The Green rather than the south-west, as indicated by newspaper accounts at the time. The artefacts recovered from site dated from the 19th and 20th centuries; many of these have been deposited in the bomb crater, backfilling it, and were identified as household debris. The possible remnants of a fence that may have surrounded the bomb crater were also recovered.

Acknowledgements

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The project could not have taken place without the permission and support of Hartlepool Borough Council and we would like to thank all those involved.

The project was part of the SeaScapes, Tyne to Tees Shores to Seas project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and we would like to thank Jenny Swainston, SeaScapes Project Manager for her support.

1. Introduction

An archaeological excavation of land on Seaton Carew Green, Hartlepool (Figure 1) was undertaken between 19th and 23rd August 2024, as part of the National Heritage Lottery Funded SeaScapes project. The fieldwork was led by Rosemary Banens and Emma Watson of Tees Archaeology and supported by Robin Daniels, and was carried out with the help of local volunteers.

A geophysical survey had previously taken place across the site; this was initially carried out in April 2024 and supplemented by further work in July 2024. Excavation trenches were targeted on anomalies from the survey results. The project was carried out in order to assess the archaeological remains in the area, involve local people and to raise awareness of the heritage of the area.

The excavation was designed to uncover the site of a 19th Century drinking fountain and to explore a possible bomb crater from World War II, as well as to raise awareness of the historical importance and heritage of the area.

The excavation involved thirty volunteers, between whom were on site for 61 days.

Throughout the project, volunteers and staff engaged with the public, from whom there was a high level of interest.

There was strong media coverage of the project, with daily videos recorded and posted to the Hartlepool Borough Council's social media, and the Hartlepool Mail running a piece on the excavation.

2. Location and Geology

The site is an area of maintained open space within Seaton Carew, with views out to sea to the east (Figure 1). The site is bounded by roads, with housing along the north, south, and western sides (Figure 2). There are two footpaths running diagonally across The Green from the centre in the north to the south-east and south-west corners.

The site was predominantly level with a mean elevation of approximately 8.5m OD; there is a slight oval depression in the south of The Green. The underlying geology of the site comprises sandstone bedrock overlain by superficial blown sand and till deposits.

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

Seaton Carew is a medieval village, probably established soon after the Norman Conquest. The medieval villagers of Seaton Carew would have farmed the fields around the village and fished close inshore, but they also made salt to preserve food and the mounds from this can still be seen on Seaton Common behind the sand dunes. However, there is little evidence for the location of the medieval village, with only one building identified which may contain fabric dating to the medieval period.¹

The more modern origins of the village lie in the later 18th Century, when Seaton Carew began to develop as a seaside resort. Many of the buildings constructed during this period

¹ Archaeological Services Durham University (ASDU) 2024

were focussed around The Green, with a secondary focus to the southern end of the village near South End.² The village continued to develop steadily throughout the 19th Century, aided by the advent of the railway.

Historic mapping indicates that The Green remained undeveloped throughout the 19th Century, with the two footpaths crossing this space still in use today. A drinking fountain was installed on The Green in 1870, as a gift from William Charles Ward Jackson, and is marked on the 1897 OS map (not illustrated).³ At the time, Ward Jackson was a Justice of the Peace living at Greatham Hall; his father, Ralph Ward Jackson, an entrepreneur and politician, is credited with the founding of West Hartlepool.

The fountain was designed and manufactured by Andrew Handyside and Co at the Britannia Ironworks in Derby.⁴ As well as ornamental fountains, Handyside's output included garden ornaments, railway bridges, and lamp posts for the new gas street lighting.

The Seaton Carew fountain was described in the South Cleveland and Durham Mercury as being of "a most beautiful design consisting of a pillar richly ornamented, and surmounted by two intertwined dolphins."⁵ The fountain also incorporated an animal drinking trough at the base. It is listed as design No. 24 in the company's catalogue of illustrated fountains and vases, with prices ranging from £1 to £1,200. This particular fountain was listed as being between £18 and £20 5/-, equivalent to around £2,000 today, depending on what finish was to be applied - painted bronze or white and gold, gilded in bronze and gold, or marble.⁶ It would have been 2 feet 2 inches (0.7m) square at the base and it stood 7 feet 8 inches tall (2.34m). It is not known what finish was applied to the one installed on The Green and historical photographs are black and white and too blurry or distant to be certain (Figure 27). A similar fountain can be found in Eastbourne where it has been restored and enjoys Grade II Listed status. There is also another one at Alum Chine, Bournemouth, which is in a poor state of repair.

A newspaper article from the Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail in 1919 indicates that the fountain had fallen into disrepair, or possibly been removed; by 1933, another article indicates that the fountain had been removed. While the exact date and reason for its removal cannot be ascertained, the approximate date of its removal can be narrowed down to the early 20th Century.⁷

Bombing was a regular occurrence along the coast in the Second World War, and a siren was erected on the corner of The Green.⁸ On the night of 2nd October 1941, and into the early hours of 3rd October, there was a bombing raid on the north-east coast involving around fifty German aircraft. Much of it centred around South Shields, but several other places along the north-east coast were also hit including Seaton Carew.⁹ One of these bombs fell directly on The Green, shattering the windows of nearby houses, while the

² ASDU 2024a

³ Northern Echo 1870; South Durham & Cleveland Mercury 1870; Darlington & Stockton Telegraph 1870

⁴ https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Andrew_Handyside_and_Co

⁵ South Durham & Cleveland Mercury 1870

⁶ Bank of England – Inflation Calculator; Andrew Handyside & Co Ltd catalogue 1876

⁷ The Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail 30th October 1919; The Northern Daily Mail, 10 June 1933

⁸ Haliday, Robina, WW2 People's War

⁹ Ripley, R and Pears, B. 1999

blast of a nearby bomb flipped a nearby car over a block of houses onto The Green.¹⁰ While it is generally the consensus that the bomb hit the southern part of The Green, accounts vary on if it was south-east or south-west corner.

Although the beaches were closed during the Second World War, the visitors returned after the war and Seaton Carew's popularity continued throughout the 1950s. Its popularity faded with the advent of cheap package holidays, although in recent years it has enjoyed a bit of a renaissance.

A geophysical survey of The Green, using both magnetometer and electrical resistance survey types, was carried out in April and July 2024.¹¹ The most prominent feature on the magnetometer survey was a rectangular area of intense dipolar magnetic anomalies (typically reflecting ferrous and/or fired materials) in the south of The Green. This anomaly corresponds well with LiDAR imagery of the site (Figure 3) and can also be seen on historic aerial imagery.¹² The aerial photographs from 1944 show a large dark rectangle, while the aerial photograph from 1948 has the rectangle as paler than the surrounding grass with a darker central oval feature. Also visible on the LiDAR, this oval was interpreted as the possible location of the bomb crater.

4. Aims and Objectives

There were three primary aims of the project:-

- to locate and investigate the site of the drinking fountain
- to discover the location of a bomb crater resulting from an air raid in October 1941
- to raise awareness of the site's history and involve local people in the project.

The results of the project will form part of a permanent archive of the site. The archive will be deposited with Tees Archaeology under the site code **SCG24**.

5. Methodology

Four trenches were opened by hand – this involved carefully removing the turf from the trench locations, placing the sods on plastic sheeting to be reused at the end of the excavation, and trowelling back the top of the exposed trench (Figure 2). The excavation of the trenches was carried out under the direct guidance of the supervising archaeologist.

Subsequent excavation and recording was undertaken following the methodology set out in Tees Archaeology Fieldwork Recording Manual. Following excavation, the sections and the base of each trench were cleaned using the appropriate hand tools. Sections within each trench were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20. The location of each trench was surveyed using GPS.

Deposits were recorded using pro forma context recording sheets. A photographic record of the investigations was compiled using digital cameras. All photographs include a

¹⁰ The Northern Daily Mail, "Last Night's Raids", 3 October 1941; The Sunderland Echo, "Nazi Bomber in Flames off Tyne", 3 October 1941; The Hartlepool Mail, "Considerable Damage", 8 June 1972

¹¹ ASDU 2024b

¹² Historic England Archive (RAF photography)

graduated metric scale. The photographic record forms part of the project archive. A temporary benchmark was established on the site using established survey information.

Following the completion of the excavation, the trenches were backfilled by hand and recovered with the previously removed turf sods.

6. Results

Excavation Descriptions

Trench 1 (Figures 4, 5, 9, & 10)

Trench 1 roughly square shaped, stepping out slightly to the north and south on the eastern side of the trench. The trench measured 2.56m east-west; its north-south dimensions ranged between 2.25m in the west to 2.52m in the east. It was sited along the eastern boundary of The Green.

In 1870, the drinking fountain was erected on The Green. The base of the fountain, [102], comprised worked sandstone stone slabs. The slabs were 0.20m thick, with a moulded lip running along the top. The slabs measured 1.80m in length; however, the full extent of the foundation base was not exposed as it continued beyond the limit of excavation. It sat upon a stepped red brick foundation, [103], consisting of two courses. Bonded with a grey cement mortar, the bottom step measured 1.96m x 0.94m, while the upper step was 1.84m x 0.94m.

The fountain was removed and taken down to foundation level in the early-mid 20th Century. The interior of the fountain plinth was backfilled; first with an orange sandy clay [108] at least 0.26m thick, followed by a dark grey sand and rubble infill, [107]. This 0.12m thick sandy rubble layer contained fragments of brick, glass, and slate. Overlaying this was a sterile dark grey brown sandy silt, [106], only 0.12m thick, which was capped by a 0.24m long and 0.07m thick stone slab, [105].

The trench was capped by a 0.13m thick mid-light grey brown sandy silt topsoil and turf layer, [100].

Trench 2 (Figures 6, 7, 11 - 13)

The natural horizon, [203], was exposed at a depth of 0.10m below ground level. This firm orange brown clay contained moderate sub-angular to rounded stones, measuring between c. 30mm and 100mm.

A large steep-sided feature, [204], was cut into natural horizon [203]. It is thought that this may be the crater of the bomb that hit The Green in 1941, and has been phased accordingly. Extending beyond 0.8m in depth, the base of this feature was not reached.

Two fills were recorded within [204]. The lower fill, [202], was a firm dark grey brown silty sand, at least 0.20m thick and continuing down below the limit of excavation. This deposit contained pottery, bone and shell, glass, metal, and ceramic building material, though there were fewer finds than the overlying deposit, [201]. Also a dark grey brown sandy silt, [201] was looser than [202] and contained a multitude of finds, including clay tobacco pipe, pottery, bone and shell, glass, metal, and ceramic building material. Sea coal was

mixed into this deposit, with patches of large concentrations. This deposit was 0.40m thick. Both [201] and [202] are thought to be dump deposits, comprising primarily of household waste/debris, used to infill [204].

A layer of topsoil and turf, [200], ranging in thickness from 0.10m at the east end of the trench to 0.20m in the west, sealed the trench.

Trench 3 (Figures 8, 14 & 15)

The natural horizon, [303], was exposed at a depth of 0.36m below ground level. This firm orange brown clay contained moderate sub-angular to rounded stones, measuring between c. 30mm and 100mm.

A mid brown sandy silt layer with large slag inclusions, [304], filled a hollow in the natural, [303], in Trench 3. This 0.05m thick deposit was overlain by a compacted sandy silt containing 20mm aggregate, [302]. Ranging in thickness from 0.04m to 0.1m, this layer has been interpreted as forming a historic 'gravel' pathway across The Green, seen on the magnetometer survey as a dark line extending NW-SE. Windblown sand sealed this deposit, extending across the entirety of the trench. This 0.10m thick silty sandy layer, [301], sloped down from north to south and likely indicates that the 'pathway' had fallen out of use. Fragments of glass, brick, bone, pottery, and clay tobacco pipe were found in this deposit, along with iron nails.

A 0.2m thick layer of topsoil and turf, containing pottery, glass, iron, and bone, capped Trench 3. A .303 drill round (Tr3 SF1) was recovered from this light brown sandy silt layer.

Trench 4 (Figure 16)

A compact mid orange brown clay, [401], similar to the natural horizon ([203]/[303]), was exposed in Trench 4; this has been interpreted and phased as a redeposited clay layer. Frequent fragments of angular sandstone were observed in this layer, along with occasional fragments of shell, small sub-rounded stones, and manganese. This deposit covered the entirety of the trench, and was excavated to a thickness of 0.12m; its full thickness is unknown as it continued deeper than the limit of excavation. Two blocks of concrete with metal had been deposited within this layer; while there was no obvious cut, it is possible that this relates to a fence footing as this roughly corresponds to an anomaly identified as 'ferrous' in the geophysical survey report.

Sealing the trench was a 0.15m-0.18m thick layer of topsoil and turf. This mid grey brown sandy silt contained fragments of charcoal, occasional small sub-rounded pebbles, pottery and glass.

Phasing

Trench 1

This trench exposed the remains of the 19th Century drinking fountain stone plinth and its stepped brick foundation. Following the removal of the foundation in the early-mid 20th Century, the interior of the plinth was backfilled and capped.

Trench 2

The earliest deposit exposed in this trench was the natural horizon. This had been cut by a large feature extending beyond the boundary of the trench, which has been interpreted as a WWII bomb crater. The full extent of this feature was not revealed during the excavation. It had been backfilled with 19th/20th Century household debris.

Trench 3

The earliest deposit overlying the natural horizon in this trench has been interpreted as a historic 'gravel' pathway across The Green, with a subsequent wind-blown sand deposit indicating its disuse. The finds from these deposits were dated to the 19th/20th Century.

Trench 4

This trench revealed a deposited clay layer, within which two blocks of concrete with metal were recorded. It is possible that these blocks formed part of a fence footing, as their location roughly corresponds to an anomaly identified as 'ferrous' in the geophysical survey report.

7. Finds

Finds Report by Cliff Cordiner

Introduction

In the summer of 2024, four trenches were opened on The Green, Seaton Carew. Trench 1 targeted the site of a drinking fountain while the other trenches sought to investigate a bomb crater resulting from an air raid on 2nd October 1940. The drinking fountain had been removed and the site made good and levelled, and the bomb crater had been filled in, although there was still a dip in the level of The Green where the bomb had reportedly fallen. It was evident from a visual inspection that The Green was uneven and two dips could be seen. Coupled with the geophysical survey this indicated two possible locations for the bomb crater, so it was decided to open two trenches initially. However, after de-turfing it quickly became evident that one of the locations was incorrect and was closed down. While investigating the bomb crater, another trench was subsequently opened. Some of the items recovered were consistent with the period, but a significant quantity clearly dated from a later time. While it is possible that some of the material recovered may have been as a result of the bomb damage to neighbouring properties, none of the material can be clearly associated with them. All of the material has been catalogued and the details of this are held in the archive.

Pottery

The majority of the pottery was of 19th Century or later date and mostly small in size suggesting that it had been graded and sorted prior to deposition on the site. Pottery was assigned a fabric number as it was encountered. For ease they are grouped below by period and are discussed on the basis of minimum number of vessels. Sherd counts and weights have also been recorded. Table 1 below summarises the total numbers from each trench.

	Number of Sherds	Weight (grams)	Minimum number of Vessels
Trench 1	64	352	43
Trench 2	222	3,678	192
Trench 3	34	130	24
Trench 4	17	123	13
Totals	337	4,283	272

Table 1: Total amount of pottery recovered

Trench 1

This trench was positioned to locate the base of the 19th Century drinking fountain, which was removed in the early part of the 20th Century.

Context	Post medieval	19/20th Century onwards
100	-	13
101	-	47
105	1	3
Totals	1	63

Table 2: Trench 1 pottery sherds by context

Trench 2

Trench 2 was placed over the suspected site of the bomb crater, which had been filled in and grassed over.

Context	Post medieval	19/20th Century onwards
U/S	-	10
200	-	87
201	-	115
202	-	10
Totals	-	222

Table 3: Trench 2 pottery sherds by context

Trench 3

Trench 3 was placed over a suspected site of the bomb crater.

Context	Post medieval	19/20th Century onwards
300	-	13
301	-	20
302	-	1
Totals	-	34

Table 4: Trench 3 pottery sherds by context

Trench 4

Trench 4 was positioned over feature identified as 'ferrous' on the geophysical survey, possibly associated with the suspected bomb crater

Context	Post medieval	19/20th Century onwards
401	1	16
Totals	1	16

Table 5: Trench 4 pottery sherds by context

Fabrics

The following fabrics were identified:

Fabric	Description of Fabric	Surface Treatment	Decoration	Other
1	Fine ceramic porcelain	White, all-over glaze	None	Porcelain Figurine / child's tea pot
2	Red/Brown	Interior white slip with cream glaze. Exterior clear glaze	None	Kitchen Earthenware
3	Coarse light grey	All over glaze, white slip both sides	None	Sanitary ware
4	Fine light grey fabric with few inclusions	Internal & External clear glaze	External fine ribbing	Stamp on base with 'W', 'TRADEMARK REGD' and possible anchor design. Stoneware Marmalade Jar
5	Fine white/cream fabric	Internal & External clear glaze	Moulded leaf shape and other moulded decoration.	Creamware

			Various colour transfers	
6	White/light grey fine fabric	Internal & External clear glaze	Fragment of black lettering visible	Creamware
7	Light grey fabric with many small grog inclusions	All over white slip, internal clear glaze, external blue / green glaze	Moulded decoration to exterior	Creamware
8	Cream with a number of dark inclusions	All over clear glaze	Applied blue and red bands and lines	Creamware
9	Dark red quite coarse	Dk brown glaze all over	None	Redware
10	Cream fabric with many grog inclusions	Clear glaze over white slip internally and over light brown slip externally	Yellow/green foliage transfer	Creamware
11	Cream fabric few inclusions	All over dark brown glaze	Moulded decoration to exterior	Creamware
12	Fine light grey fabric	All over clear glaze with	Painted yellow/green foliage	Bone China
13	Fine cream fabric	All over glaze, white slip to interior	External moulded decoration	Creamware mixing bowl
14	Pink / brown with inclusions	Green glazed	None	Storage vessel

Table 6: List of Fabrics

As noted above, with the exception of Fabric 14 which is post medieval dating from the 16th Century, all fabrics are 19th Century or later in date. They fall into six main groups

Porcelain: Fabric 1 is a fine porcelain figurine or part of a children's tea set

Kitchenware: Fabrics 2 and 13 are from pottery used in the kitchen

Storage: Fabrics 4, and 14 are all stonewares used for storing foodstuffs such as

Marmalade

Tableware: These chiefly comprised a range of creamwares, Fabrics 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. While Fabric 12 was a slightly finer bone china. These also included examples of redwares, Fabric 9.

Sanitary ware: Fabric 3 was part of a sanitary ware suite, perhaps a toilet bowl.

Frequency of Fabrics

Fabric Functions	Number	Weight (g)	Vessels
Porcelain: 1	3	21	2
Kitchenwares: 2 & 13	74	1,166	52
Storage: 4, 14 & 15	9	108	3
Tablewares: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, & 12	244	1,865	213
Sanitary ware:3	7	1,133	2
Totals	337	4,293	272

Table 7: Fabrics by function

Miscellaneous:

In addition to the ceramic vessels, there was a single gaming piece from Trench 2. This measures 14mm x 14mm x 19mm and has ribbed sides (Figure 17). This is probably a jack from a children's' pocket game known as Bobber and Kibs, a variation on a game sometimes referred to as jackstones or simply jacks. It is played using a large marble known as the bobber, and rectangular pieces known as kibs. Originally, they would have been made of bone, but in later versions, they were made of pottery.

Pottery Conclusion

The majority of the pottery comprises items used as tableware for dining. There is also a significant amount of kitchen ware present. The building of domestic houses around The Green did not start until the late 18th early 19th Century, and the preponderance of 19th/20th Century pottery is in keeping with this. Given the medieval history of Seaton Carew, it is perhaps surprising that there was no medieval and virtually no post-medieval pottery pre-dating the 19th Century.

Clay Pipes

Clay Pipes are usually ever-present on sites from the 17th Century onwards and particularly those of 19th Century date. There are insufficient examples here to draw any conclusions.

Trench	Context	Quantity	Description
1	100	3	Pieces of stem
1	101	9	Pieces of stem
1	105	7	Pieces of stem
2	200	4	Pieces of stem, one stamped with "TTON-LE-H" and "ARTON & S"
2	201	8	Pieces of stem and one partial bowl stamped with makers name R Barton & Co, Hetton or Hutton le Hole
3	300	1	Piece of stem wider at one end
3	301	14	Pieces of stem and one partial bowl
3	302	2	Pieces of stem
3	304	1	Pieces of stem

Table 8: Clay pipes

CBM

There were small quantities of CBM, comprising roof tiles, pieces of brick and pieces of dark brown glazed drain. These ranges in date from 19th to 20th Century. There was also one large piece of flat CBM, layered internally with a mottled pattern, possibly from a floor, and a small quantity of decorative wall tiles.

Glass

Glass is divided into three main categories, windows glass, bottle or vessel glass, and glass marbles. Compared to the amount of bomb damage that was reported there was not a lot of window glass. This suggests that the bomb crater had not been used as a convenient way to dispose of items broken by the bomb blast although, as we did not reach the bottom of the hole, it is possible that there could have been window glass in it, at a lower level than we were able to excavate. There was a large quantity of bottle glass, including some complete examples as well as a large quantity of glass marbles.

Window Glass

Trench	Context	Quantity	Description
2	200	159	Frosted door or window glass, smooth on one side dimpled on the other. One piece silvered, possibly a mirror
2	201	26	Frosted door or window glass, smooth on one side

			dimpled on the other. Possibly some mirror glass
3	300	13	Two pieces of pressed glass, four pieces of frosted / dimpled window glass
3	301	18	Two pieces of frosted dimpled window glass, one piece possibly mirror glass

Table 9: Window glass by context

Vessel Glass (Figures 18 & 19)

Trench	Context	Number of pieces	Description	Number of bottles
1	100	109	Assorted fragments from bottle necks, bases, and sides, some with lettering	87
1	101	1	Top of glass bottle complete with vulcanised rubber stopper. Heslop stamped into stopper	1
1	105	8	Assorted clear and brown bottle fragments	8
1	108	1	Curved bottle glass with green tinge	1
2	u/s	3	Bottle base shards, part of a word ...OLLIDAY's on one piece	3
2	200	3	Glass bottle neck complete with cork stopper; complete small clear glass bottle, possibly perfume, missing the stopper; complete clear glass bottle. Lettering reads J.W.CAMERON & Co LTD.	3
2	201	202	Assorted shards some with lettering. Includes one complete milk bottle and one complete jam jar	172
2	202	20	Clear glass with Lowcocks written on, mix of base and sides. One small bottle neck.	10
3	300	13	Various curved bottle shards	8
4	401	13	Pieces of flat pale green glass, and clear bottle glass including part of bottle neck.	6

Table 10: Vessel glass by context

Marbles

Trench	Context	Quantity	Description
2	u/s	8	Selection of coloured glass marbles
2	200	31	Selection of coloured glass marbles
2	201	36	Selection of coloured glass marbles including three broken
2	202	2	Selection of coloured glass marbles
3	300	1	Coloured glass marbles
4	400	1	Coloured glass marbles
4	401	1	Coloured glass marbles

Table 11: Marbles

Metal

Iron: An assortment of iron objects were found including nails, screws, washers, and furniture decorations and keys. In addition, there was a large decorative iron finial, possibly from the drinking fountain (Figure 20).

Lead: A number of lead items were found including sections of lead pipes which would have been common at the time. A lead collar and a small piece of lead pipe attached to a piece of iron which may have supplied the water to the drinking fountain (see Figure 21).

Of particular interest was a piece of lead found in Trench 2 measuring 6cm by 6cm with a German swastika carved into it (see Figure 22). During World War II German prisoners of war were used as labourers in the construction industry and were known to carve the German swastika into building materials such as bricks as a mark of defiance. It is possible that a German P.O.W. may have done this while carrying out building work or repairs, or it may simply be graffiti.

Copper Alloy: A selection of George V, George VI, Edward VII coins were found as well as a number of later coins. The dates of the coins spanned a period of 90 years, the earliest being an Edward VII penny from 1902 and the latest a 10 pence coin from 1992.

Among the finds was a .303 rifle drill round which was used to practice loading and unloading, identifiable by the red markings on the shell casing in order to avoid confusion with a live round (see Figure 23), as well as a button with the word "Beacon" with an image of a beacon basket with a ring on the back of the button (see Figure 24).

The button is typical of those found on 1940s British overalls made by the Beacon clothing company as part of the CC41 utility scheme. They were made from a cotton drill material and featured patch pockets to the breast, a removable waist belt with a metal buckle, a patch pocket to the seat and a spanner pocket to the side of the right leg. The overalls

were deep indigo blue in colour which faded to grey as the dye washed out. The buttons were removable for washing purposes and featured a brass split ring to the reverse for that purpose.

Clothes rationing was put in place in Britain in 1941 in order to limit consumption by the public due to the shortage of raw materials. During this time, the Government imposed regulations whereby special releases of cloth were made for the production of clothing for general utility use. The aim being to make quality clothing available to every class.

In 1941 the Board of Trade issued a directive that all cloth and clothes must carry the official mark CC41 which was applied to all Utility cloth, clothing, shoes, furniture, and homewares (including home textiles) as either a label, printed, or impressed mark. The symbol, which was often referred to as 'cheeses' was designed by Reginald Shipp, and may have stood for 'Civilian Clothing 1941'. Clothes rationing finally came to an end in 1949, and the utility scheme in 1952.¹³

Other: In addition to the metal items discovered a single item was found in Trench 2 which is thought to be a whistle (Figure 25). During World War II there were several Air Raid Precautions wardens living in the houses around The Green, so it is possible that it belonged to one of them.

Stone

Slate:

Slate becomes common on sites from the mid 19th Century when it is imported for roofing purposes. Twenty-four pieces of slate were recovered from Trench 2. They included two fragments with nail holes to help fix them in place and make the roof watertight, and chamfered edges to help the water run off.

Ecofacts

Bone: A small quantity of animal bone was found, mostly butchered, including cattle, sheep, and chicken. Part of a domino was also found featuring two holes with green colour around them and indentations on one side.

Other:

Plastic: Faux tortoise shell plastic folding item. Possibly a nail cleaner, or part of manicure set

Round black plastic poppy insert

¹³ <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/how-clothes-rationing-affected-fashion-in-the-second-world-war>

Plastic button with a ring or pin (Figure 26). During World War II a range of luminous accessories were produced that would reflect light and help make their wearers more visible during the blackout. This included pin-on brooches, luminous handbags, and luminous buttons. In the early days of the Second World War more civilians died in accidents in the Blackout than were killed by enemy action. One of the most famous slogans that appeared on Ministry of Information posters at this time instructed people to 'Wear Something White at Night' to make them more visible to drivers and fellow pedestrians

Discussion of Finds

The finds assemblage dates wholly to the 19th and 20th centuries which would be consistent with the period when the drinking fountain was installed and the bomb crater which was formed during an air raid in 1940.

The absence of medieval material, considering Seaton Carew is a village of medieval origins may suggest the assemblage was drawn from the immediate area around the site, which was not developed until the late 18th early 19th Century, prior to which it was grazing land.

8. Discussion

The excavations have shed light on Seaton Carew Green during the 19th and 20th Centuries. Primarily, they have confirmed the presence of remains associated with the 19th Century fountain, and likely identified the site of a WWII bomb crater.

19th Century

Newspaper articles state that the foundation was installed in 1870, as a gift from William Charles Ward Jackson. Although the fountain itself would have been composed of cast iron, only the stone plinth and stepped red brick foundation remained. A large decorative iron finial and lead pipe and collar found in Trench 1 are believed to be associated with the fountain.

20th Century

Although the exact date of the fountain's removal is unknown, analysis of historic newspaper articles suggests that it occurred prior to 1933. The reason for its removal is also unclear – it may be that the cast iron had corroded with prolonged exposure to the sea air, or the metal may have been requisitioned for the war effort during WWI. Regardless of the reason, the fountain was taken down in the early-mid 20th Century, and the interior of the stone plinth and brick foundation was backfilled. The majority of the remains were covered over by turf, with one slightly askew stone slab from the plinth exposed and indicating the fountain's whereabouts.

Historical records show that an air raid took place on 2nd October, 1941, in which a number of bombs were dropped on Seaton Carew including one on The Green. However, accounts differ on the exact location that the bomb hit, with some indicating that it fell south-west corner, where a dip in the footpath is said to mark the spot where it landed. Other reports suggest that the bomb fell on the south-eastern corner of The Green; these reports also refer to the damaged air raid siren which was located there. Given the disparity between the reports, it was decided that both areas would be investigated, with Trench 2 situated in the south-east of The Green and Trench 3 in the south-west.

Trench 2 revealed the remains of a large cut feature, the full extent of which is unknown. It is suspected that this steeply-sided feature is the crater resulting from the bomb strike on The Green. The cut had been backfilled with significant quantities of household debris and waste dating from the 19th-20th Century. It is possible that these were items that had been damaged from the blast, or it could be that the crater was just a convenient tip.

Trench 3, placed over a dip in the ground near the footpath, did not uncover any remains associated with the bomb crater. This trench was found to have a natural depression, which seemed to have been used as a 'gravelled' path for a time before falling out of use. The finds from this trench dated to the 19th/20th Century; within the topsoil was a .303 drill round cartridge, indicating that The Green may have been used for weapons practice during WWII.

A fourth trench targeted a rectangular area identified as 'disturbed' on the geophysical survey. It was suspected this may have been caused by building rubble. However, the trench was relatively sterile, with the exception of two concrete blocks with metal situated within a redeposited clay layer. Although there was no obvious cut, these blocks form part of a fence footing; the nature of the geophysical anomaly suggests that the disturbed area/bomb crater was perhaps demarcated with a boundary fence.

Conclusion

The excavation was successful in locating both the 19th Century drinking fountain remains and the suspected bomb crater. It has demonstrated that the bomb likely struck the central-south-east corner of The Green rather than the south-west, as many sources stated.

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Figure 1: Site Location Plan

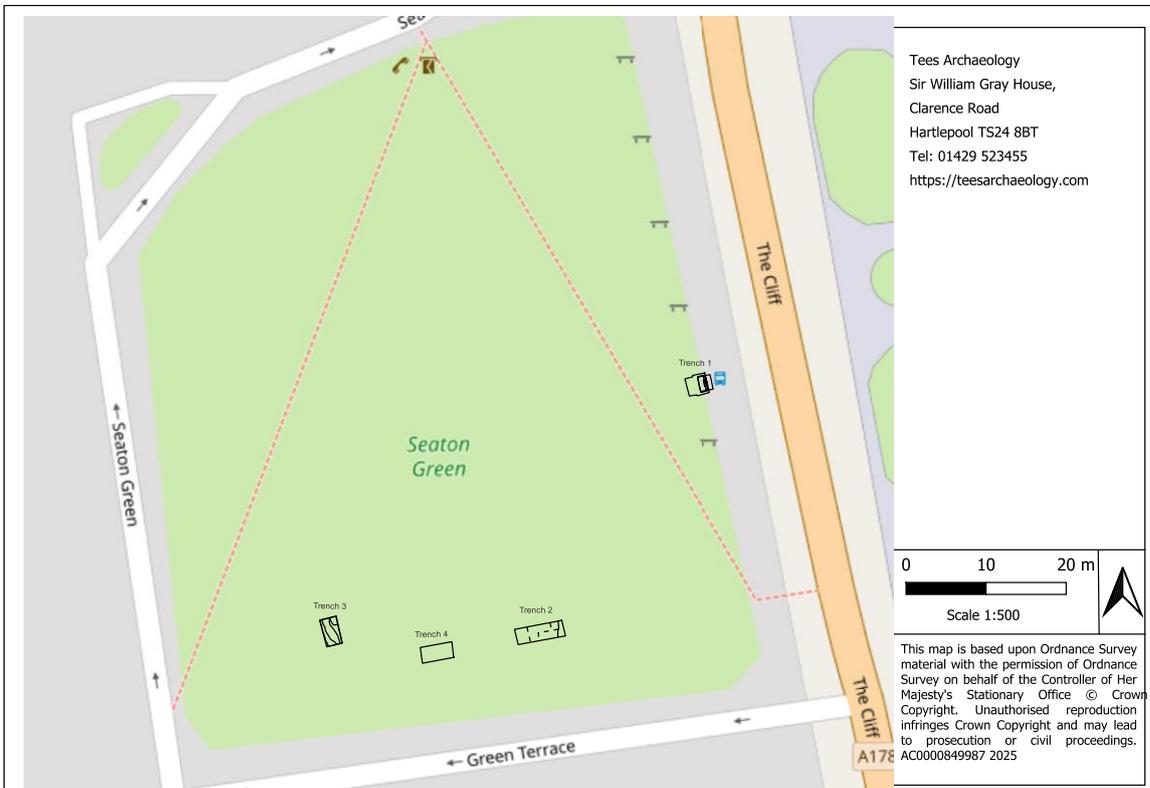


Figure 2: Trench Location Plan

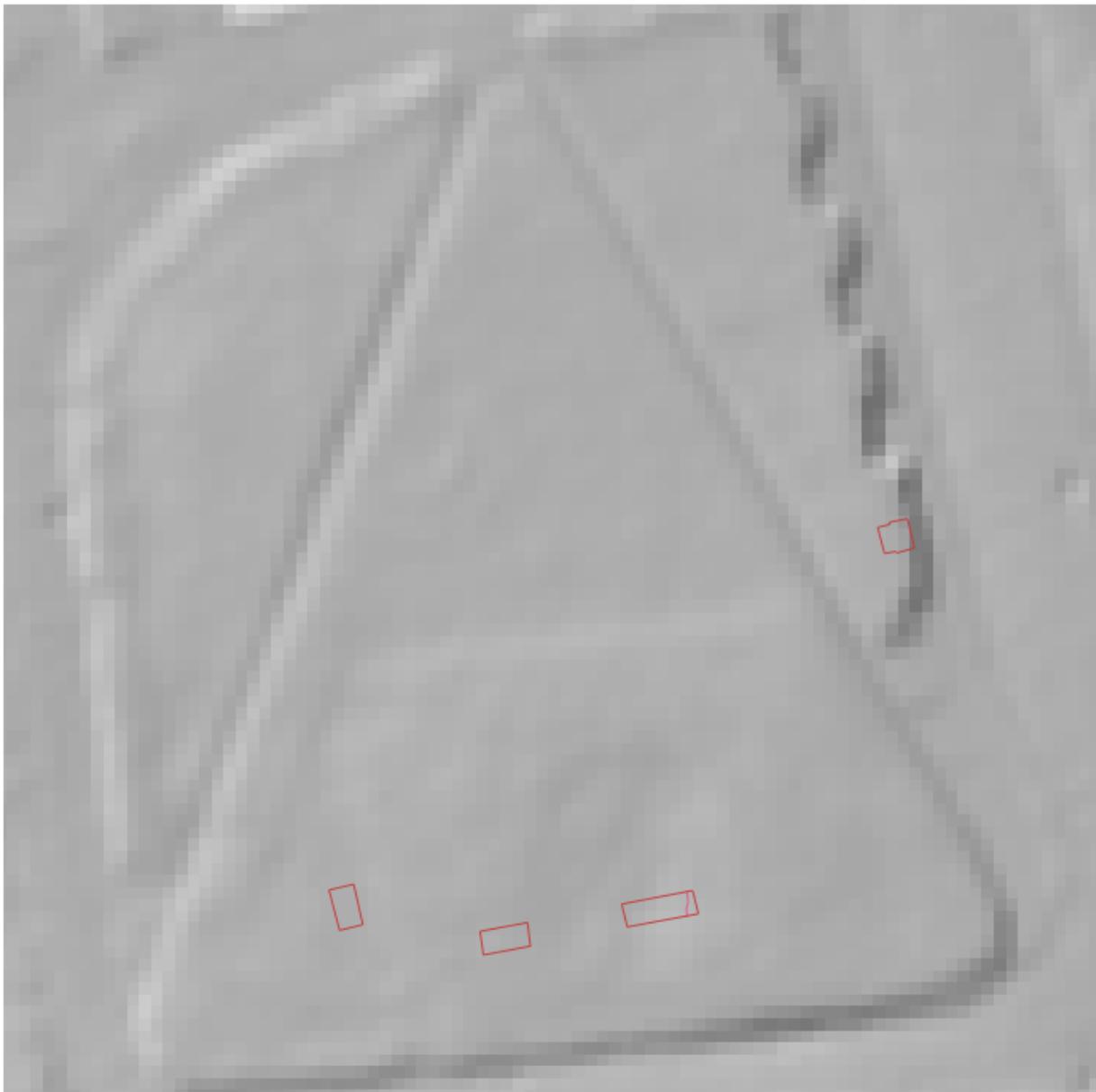


Figure 3: Trench plan overlain on LiDAR; 1:500 scale

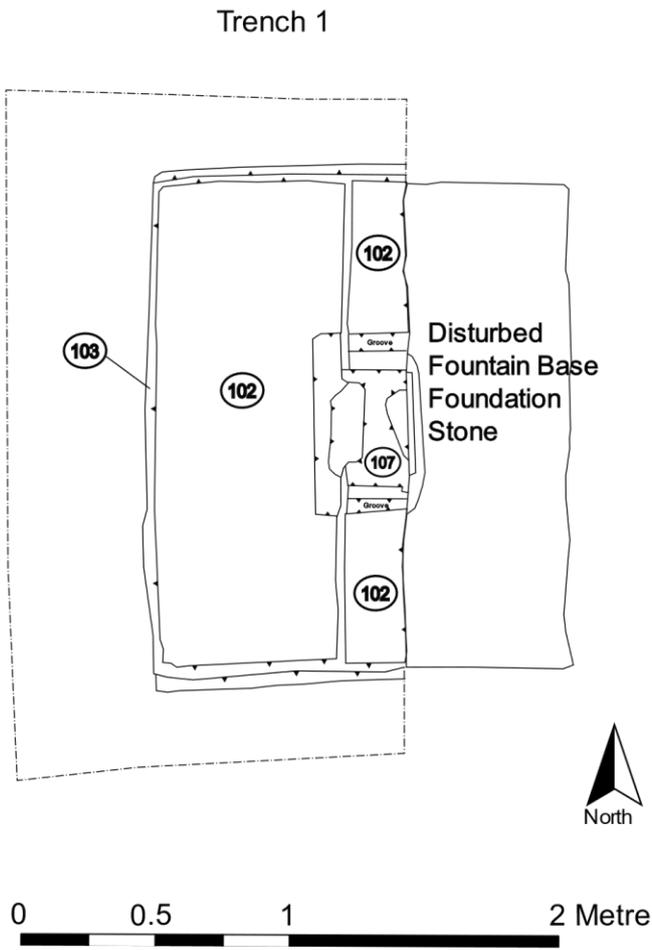


Figure 4: Trench 1 Plan

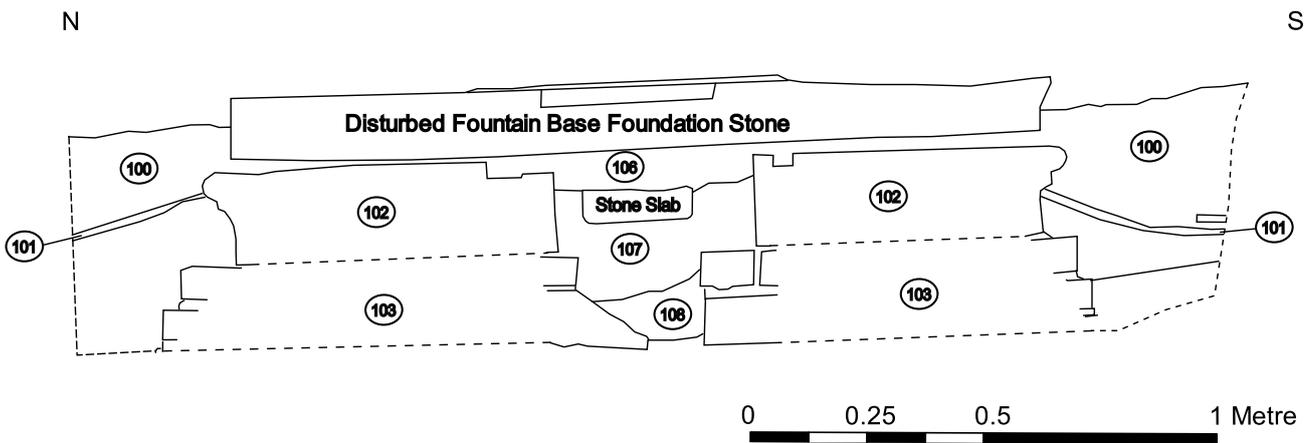


Figure 5: Trench 1 Section

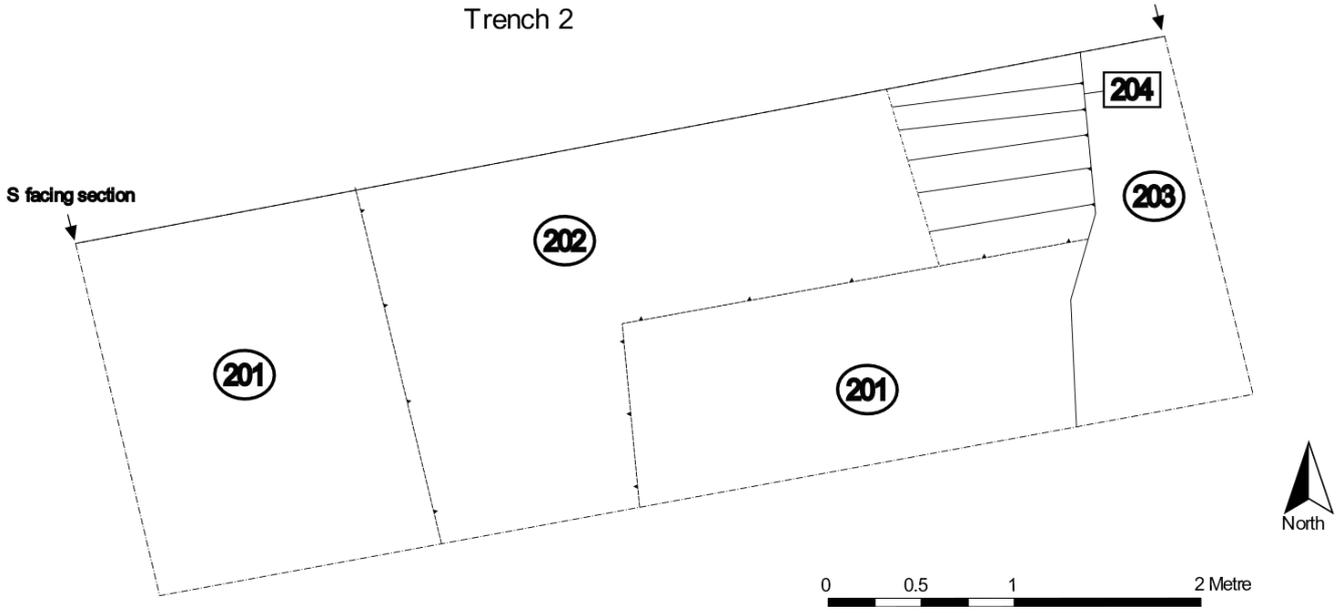


Figure 6: Trench 2 Plan

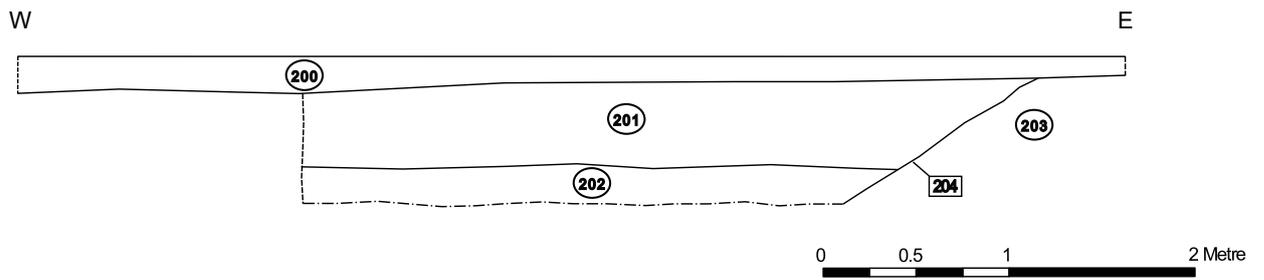


Figure 7: Trench 2 Section

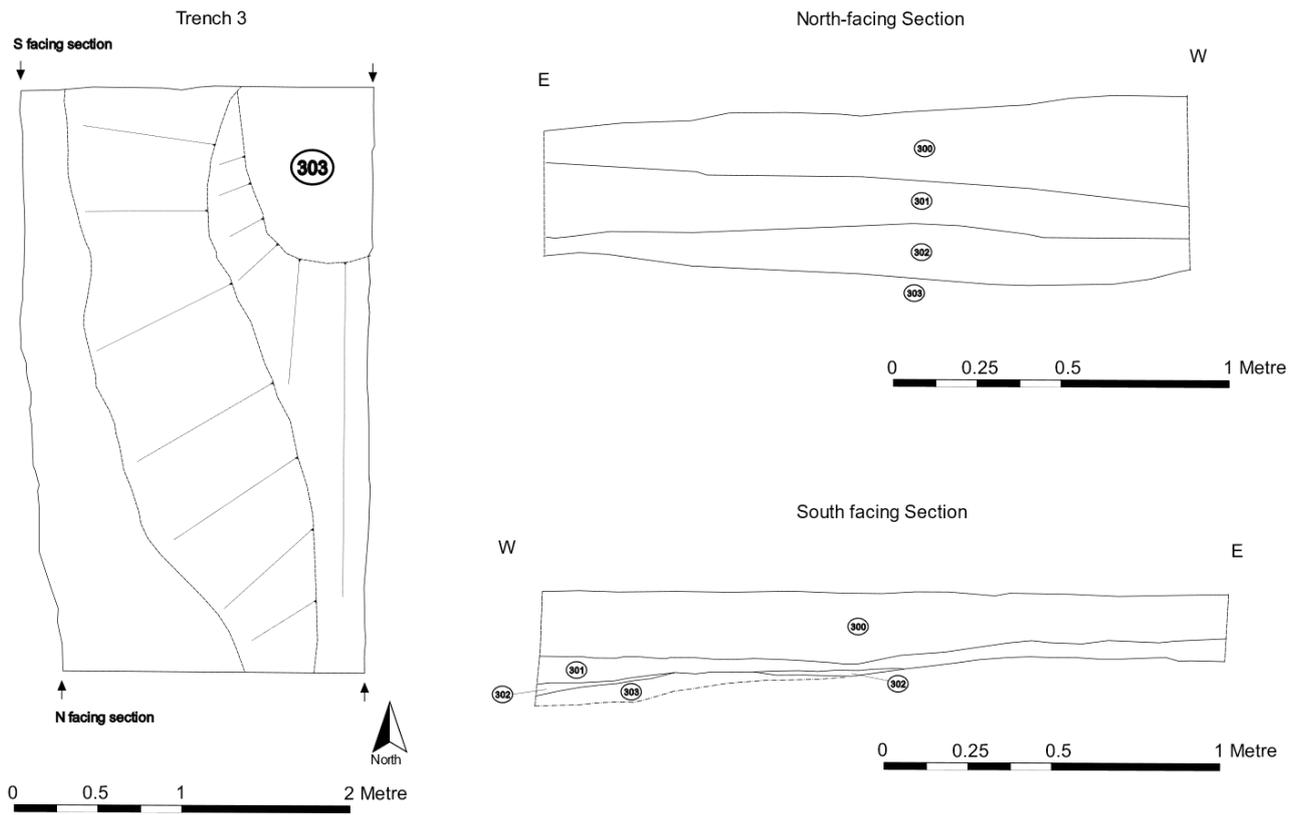


Figure 8: Trench 3 Plan and Sections



Figure 9: Trench 1, fountain base, looking east. 1m and 2m scales

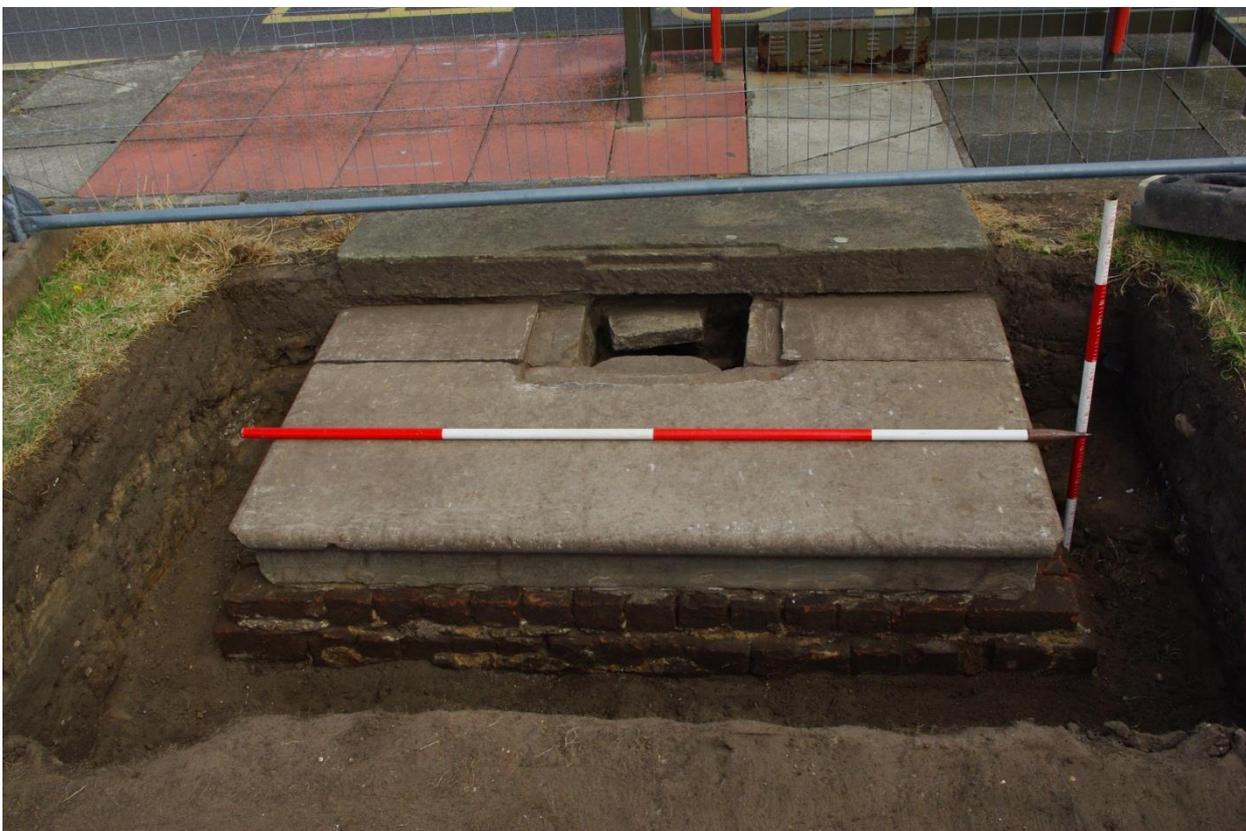


Figure 10: Trench 1, fountain base and foundation, looking east. 1m and 2m scales



Figure 11: Trench 2, looking east. 1m and 2m scales



Figure 12: Trench 2, south facing section. 1m scale



Figure 13: Trench 2, working shot



Figure 14: Trench 3, looking south. 1m and 2m scales

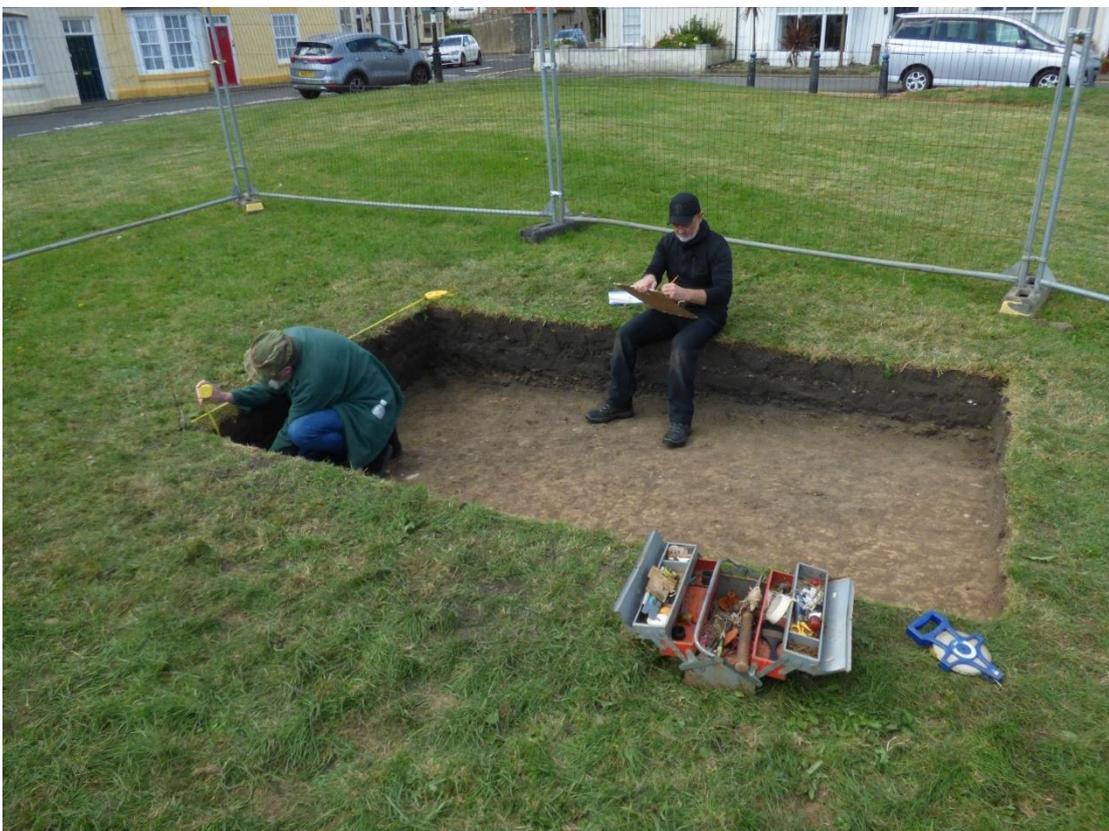


Figure 15: Trench 3 working shot



Figure 16: Trench 4 concrete blocks, looking south. 1m scale



Figure 17: Ceramic gaming piece, Trench 2



Figure 18: Perfume bottle; Trench 2



Figure 19: Cameron's bottle, Milk bottle, and Jam jar; Trench 2



Figure 20: Finial from drinking fountain; Trench 1



Figure 21: Lead collar and lead piping from drinking fountain; Trench 1



Figure 22: Lead with German swastika carved into it; Trench 2



Figure 23: .303 drill round cartridge; Trench 3

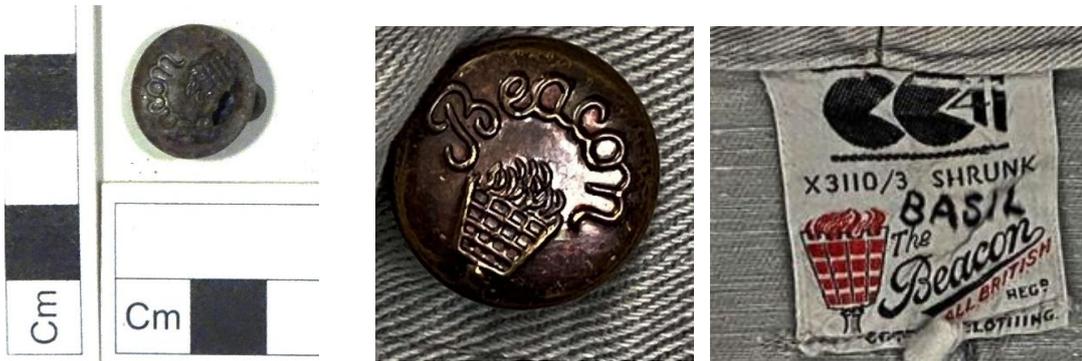


Figure 24: Beacon "workwear" metal clothing button; Trench 4



Figure 25: Tin whistle Trench 2



Figure 26: The picture on the left shows a luminous button found in Trench 1. In the centre is how the buttons appeared in normal conditions and to the right when aglow in the dark (© Imperial War Museum)



Figure 27: Seaton Carew Green Fountain (Brittain & Wright Phoenix Series Postcard No. 229)