



## Help to Stop Damage to Heronbridge Scheduled Ancient Monument

Over the past year, metal detectorists have been damaging the archaeological site at Heronbridge, which lies on both sides of Eaton Road between Heronbridge Cottage and the bridge over the A55. This is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and metal detecting there is illegal.

Heronbridge is uniquely important to local and regional history as the site of a Roman settlement, a rare early medieval earthwork and the location of the 7<sup>th</sup>-century Battle of Chester between the forces of Northumbria and Mercia and the Welsh kingdoms.

Perpetrators can be prosecuted for Theft by Finding if they remove objects from the site. They can also be prosecuted under the *Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act* for damage to a protected monument; use of metal detectors on a Scheduled Monument; and removal of items from a Scheduled Monument.

The site is already being watched by the Cheshire Police Rural Crime Team as part of Operation Arrowhead, which targets Heritage Crime across the country, but you can play your part as well.



If you are in the area you can help to stop this damage by visiting the site and looking out for illegal activity. If you see any metal detecting, do not get into a confrontation but phone 999 as it is a Heritage Crime in progress. If it is safe to do so, take the registration numbers of any vehicles that may be associated. Please report any other relevant information by phoning 101.

While you are out and about, be sure to observe the current lockdown restrictions. Many thanks for your help in helping to protect our shared history!

If you would like to know more about Heronbridge, there are two recent articles in our journal:

D J P Mason, III: The Heronbridge archaeological research project: an interim report on the 2002 and 2003 seasons of the Society's new fieldwork initiative, *JCAS* 78, 2003, 49-106

C V Tolley, V: Æthelfrith and the Battle of Chester, *JCAS* 86, 2016, 51-95

