

Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest, (2022-23): Iron Age Gold Brooches with Linked Chain	
Statement from Expert Adviser	Statement of the Expert Adviser to the Secretary of State that the brooches meet Waverley criteria one, two and three. See below
Statement from the Applicant	Statement from the applicant referencing the three Waverley criteria against which the Committee will consider whether an item referred to it is of national importance. a) <i>Is it so closely connected with our history and national life that its departure would be a misfortune?</i> b) <i>Is it of outstanding aesthetic importance?</i> c) <i>Is it of outstanding significance for the study of some particular branch of art, learning or history?</i> The applicant did not dispute that the objects met the Waverley criteria.
Note of case hearing	See below
Press release	A press release was issued by the Secretary of State on 24 November 2023: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/iron-age-gold-brooches-at-risk-of-leaving-uk
Recommended price	£260,000 (plus VAT of £52,000 which can be reclaimed by an eligible institution)
1st Deferral period	23 February 2024
2nd Deferral period	
Note of outcome	

RCEWA – Iron Age Gold Brooches with Linked Chain

Statement of the Expert Adviser to the Secretary of State that the brooches meet Waverley criteria one, two, and three.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brief Description of object(s)

This is a rare piece of composite jewellery consisting of two brooches and chain connected by a pendant, all entirely made from gold. The form of the two brooches and the style of gold working on the chain and pendant are indicative of a first century BC date, c. 80 to 20 BC. The best comparison for this is the Winchester Hoard, discovered in Hampshire in 2000 and now on display at the British Museum¹. In both examples the makers used pre-Roman Mediterranean craft techniques on object forms particular to France during the time of the Gallic wars and Roman incursions into southern Britain. However, the exceptional combination of three chains, two brooches and pendant in this single piece of jewellery is unique. Measurements cannot be provided because access to the object has not been possible but a weight of 142g is given in the application.

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¹ British Museum Gallery 50; https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_2001-0901-4

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*[Information has been withheld here in line with the requirements of **section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – prejudice to commercial interests**. A public authority is entitled to withhold information under this provision where disclosure of that information would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any persons or organisations.]*

Consideration of 1st Century BC gold chain, pendant and brooches in relation to the Waverley Criteria

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- 1. The brooches, chain and linking pendant are so closely connected to our history (including local history) and national life?**
2. [.....]
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If this is a piece brought to Britain and cached in the period prior to Roman colonisation, it may represent documentation of Roman colonialism, trade with the empire or migration from France caused by the violence of Caesar's Gallic Wars. Properly recovered and recorded this object might represent a significant moment in national history and its loss would be a misfortune.

3. The jewellery is of outstanding aesthetic importance

This 2,000-year-old piece of rare gold jewellery is preserved in exceptional condition. It exhibits a high quality of craftsmanship that is impressive in a modern context but outstanding in an ancient artefact. This is especially impressive given that it was made using techniques established well before the arrival of the standardised practices of the Roman empire and without

many of the tools and equipment available to jewellers in the post-medieval period.

As gold does not tarnish, this jewellery that could still be worn today. It bears no visible signs of repair or alteration and from the photographs it appears that only the attachment for the third chain, perhaps another brooch, is missing.

4. The brooch set is of outstanding significance for the study of some particular branch of art, learning or history?

The brooch set is exceptionally significant for the study of goldwork and gold working, dress and adornment, trade and status during the last century BC. It is a rare and well-preserved object made and worn at a time of complex political and social upheaval as the pressure and influence of the Roman empire brought desired goods across Europe but also the threat and violence of invasion. This is a period vital to studies of the impact and influence of empire, colonialism and the endurance of craft skills and expertise. Recent research on pre-Roman gold in France, Belgium and Germany has shown the high level of skill available at this time but distinctive local variation². Such research is only possible through examination of the objects under a microscope and using metallurgical analyses which cannot be carried out from photographic records alone.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

This assessment has been made without access to the objects.



Figure 1. The gold chain and brooches.

² See for example Dubreucq et al. 2018 and Nordez et al. 2019

Brooches

The date of the brooches is determined by the well-established chronology based on brooch types. This pair have a simple sloped, tapered bow form with four coil spring, internal chord and open triangular catchplate (Figure 1 and 2). The bows are flat on the underside and the upper surface is decorated with three long round ribs that taper towards the catchplate. In typological terms they are described as La Tène D2 forms of post 80 BC and pre 20BC date. These developed from the Nauheim and wire-like *Drahtfibel/Filiform* brooches known primarily from France, Belgium and Switzerland but with examples reaching further afield including to southern England³. These types of brooches are usually rendered in copper alloy with plain or minimally decorated bows.



Figure 2. Details of the brooches and flexible chain from the gold chain and brooches.

Unusually on this brooch the catch plate that holds the end of the pin, is adorned with a scroll of beaded wire soldered across the triangular space, referencing the beaded wire filigree seen on the pendant of this piece (described below). Normally any features crossing this space are angular cast shapes or windows cut into the same sheet of metal as the triangular surround, as on the Winchester brooches (Figure 3). Beaded filigree wire was a decorative tradition that lasted from the late sixth to the first century BC in goldwork in continental Europe⁴ but is rare and only recently identified on pre-Roman gold objects in England⁵.

Pairs of brooches joined by chains are known from both sides of the channel in the first century BC, although these are not common and tend to be made from silver rather than gold⁶. The practice of joining pairs of brooches by chains is found as early as the fifth century BC in, for example, France, and is rare in pre-Roman Britain. The

³ Hill et al. 2004; Mackreth 2011; Fitzpatrick et al. 2017; Hamilton et al. 2022

⁴ Dubreucq et al. 2018; Nordez et al. 2019

⁵ La Niece et al. 2018

⁶ Hill et al. 2004

Winchester hoard⁷ was the first British discovery of a pair of gold brooches connected by a chain (Figure 3). Both the chain and the way it is attached to the brooches is like that on the submitted item. The Winchester hoard was discovered by a metal detectorist. It was considered so important that it was immediately followed up with archaeological fieldwork including excavation which confirmed the findspot to be accurate⁸. The Winchester find includes a second pair of brooches without a chain, although it is thought that these were also once joined by a chain. Each pair of the Winchester brooches is ascribed to a different type but both types date to the mid first century BC. The chained pair are of *Knotenfibeln* form so named because the prominent collar protruding from the arch of the bow resembles a knot. The second pair, without a linking chain, are closer in shape to the brooches under consideration but with a thicker, curving faceted bow and fenestrated catch plate. Examples of each occur in southern England but are far more frequent finds in northern France⁹.



Figure 3. The Winchester Hoard (BM. 2001,0901.1 to 10). © Trustees of The British Museum

Chain

The chain has a plaited design formed with a loop-in-loop technique known from fifth century BC Etruscan gold-working in Italy. Several comparisons are held in the British Museum's collections including a necklace from Chiusi, Tuscany (480–460 BC)¹⁰ and a necklace from Canosa di Puglia, Bari (460–440 BC)¹¹. Each chain is comprised of a series of pairs of circular gold wires, compressed to form an oval and

⁷ Ibid.; BM 2001,0901.1-10

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Edgar 2012

¹⁰ BM 1884,0614.16

¹¹ BM 1872,0604.659

looped together to form the flexible chain (Figure 4). The last pair loop through the central pendant at one end of the chain and onto a small pivot rod at the opposite end. The rods are also passed through the narrow end of a double-ring, double-wire loop and secured with washers at either end. Each double loop is held together by a single collar decorated with either a ribbed or beaded granulation consisting of a single row of tiny beads around the circumference of the collar. The broader end of each loop is passed through the coiled spring of a brooch thereby affixing all components together. The pin of the brooches would have attached this beautiful chain to a fabric garment, draping magnificently across the bust.

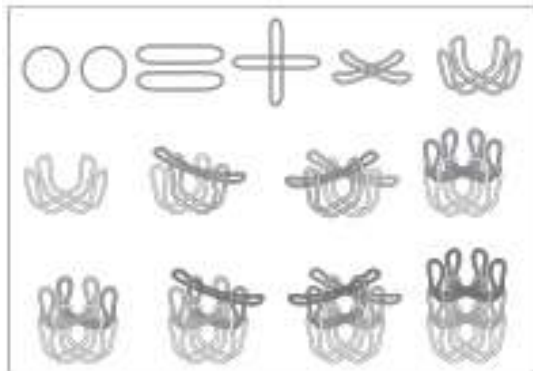


Figure 4. Loop-in-loop chain manufacture. Drawing by Karen Hughes¹².

Again, the closest local comparison is the chain for linking the two brooches in the Winchester hoard (Figure 3)¹³. That chain, like the flexible, torc-like necklaces from the Winchester hoard¹⁴ has two pairs of loops per section, compared to the finer single-pair form of the gold chain in this object. Research on the Winchester chains has confirmed a strong Mediterranean influence in the construction of the chains, this combined with the high purity of the gold has led researchers to propose an origin outside of Britain¹⁵. Production in France is most probable for the Winchester items given the incorporation of Mediterranean artefacts in pre-Roman graves in this region and the design of the brooches. The same is probable for these brooches.

Pendant

The central pendant in this set consists of four discs, three at the edges attached to the chains and one in the centre (Figure 5). The whole piece is edged all round with a beaded filigree wire that is pulled away slightly at each point where a chain is attached. The lack of such a feature on the fourth disc illustrates that the piece was intentionally made with only three chains attached, rather than four. Each disc is surmounted with openwork consisting of two spring coiled wires curved round in a circle, one smaller and higher up than the other, separated by a smooth circular wire. The coils surround a central hollow cup. Each of the cups on the two outer discs is surmounted by a small domed gold cap. A further single straight coil between two slightly curved wires separates each disc from the next. It is not possible to

¹² From Hill et al. 2004

¹³ BM 2001,0901.5

¹⁴ BM 2001,0901.1 and 2

¹⁵ La Niece et al. 2018

ascertain from the photos whether these components are joined together using a metallic gold solder or the classical technique of diffusion soldering¹⁶.



Figure 5. Details of the pendant from the gold chain and brooches.

Body-chains comprising four chains joined to pendants are known from representations of women in Hellenistic period Greek art from the fourth to first century BC, as well as Roman imagery of this period¹⁷. The chains cross over the chest of the wearer joining a pendant at the centre. A rare surviving example was found in the Hoxne hoard from Suffolk (Figure 6)¹⁸ and dated to the fourth century AD by the Trier minted coin mounted within the clasp at the back of the body¹⁹. It is not clear without further research whether the tripartite form of 'gold chain and brooches' could have been worn across the body or how the third chain was used in the design.

The Hoxne chains are also loop-in-loop forms but with far more loops and finer wires than those observable on this example. The central pendant is also highly elaborated with garnet and amethyst cabochon jewels. Comparison of the designs of the two show the Hoxne example to be a more complex, sophisticated version of chain and pendant form than those on the submitted set in which the brooches are typologically older.



Figure 6. Late Roman body-chain from the Hoxne Hoard (BM 1994,0408.1). © Trustees of The British Museum

¹⁶ Hill et al. 2004

¹⁷ Hill et al. 2004

¹⁸ BM 1994,0408.1

¹⁹ Johns 2010

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La Niece, S., Farley, J., Meeks, N. and Joy, J. 2018. Gold in Iron Age Britain. In Schwab, R. Milcent, P-Y., Armbruster, B. and Pernicka, E. (Eds). *Iron Age gold in Celtic Europe: Society, Technology and Archaeometry*. Proceedings of the International conference in Toulouse, 11-14 March 2015. *Forschungen zur Archäometrie und Altertumswissenschaft*, 6,1. Rahden: Verlag Marie Leidorf. 407-430.

Mackreth, D. F. 2011 *Brooches in Late Iron Age and Roman Britain*. Oxford: Oxbow.

Nordez, M., Armbruster, A. Blet-Lemarquand, M., Milcent, P-Y., Nieto-Pelletier, S. and Olivier, L. 2019. L'Or Des Gaulois. La Gaule du second âge du Fer (Ve-1er Siècles avant notre ère). *Archéologia*. 579. 36-45.

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[Information has been withheld here in line with the requirements of section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 –Personal information. A public authority is entitled to withhold information under section 40 (2) where the information is personal data]

Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest, note of case hearing on 9 November 2022: Iron Age Gold Brooches with Linked Chain (Case 3, 2022-23)

Application

1. The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (the Committee) met on 9 November 2022 to consider an application to export two iron age gold brooches with linked chain. The value shown on the export licence application was £250,000 which represented an estimated price with supporting evidence put forward by the applicant. The expert adviser had objected to the export of the brooches under all three of the Waverley criteria on the grounds that their departure from the UK would be a misfortune because (i) they were so closely connected with our history and national life, (ii) they were of outstanding aesthetic importance, and (iii) they were of outstanding significance for the study of goldwork and gold working, dress and adornment, trade and status during the last century BC.

2. Seven Committee members and two independent assessors, acting as temporary members of the Committee joined in person and inspected the brooches on the day of the hearing. One Committee member and one independent assessor joined remotely, having viewed the brooches before the hearing on the 2nd and 4th November. The Chairman explained that the binding offers mechanism was applicable for this case. The Chairman stated at the meeting that the determination as to whether the Waverley criteria were or were not satisfied was a separate exercise to a determination on provenance and that a finding that any of the Waverley criteria were satisfied did not entail an endorsement in relation to provenance, which was not within the Committee's remit.

3. The applicant was informed that there was currently an interim process in place for Committee hearings. The Committee was still holding hybrid meetings but any Committee members, including the independent assessors, were required to attend in person and inspect the object/s under consideration prior to discussing the case and voting. Any permanent Committee members or independent assessors who were not able to view the object in person were not able to vote.

4. It was established at the meeting that the value did not include VAT and that VAT would be payable at 20% in the event of a UK sale which could be structured in such a way as to enable an eligible institution to reclaim it. It was also established that there would be a benefit from a tax free private treaty sale to a UK institution. The applicant confirmed that they understood the circumstances under which an export licence might be refused.

Expert's comments

5. The expert adviser did not wish to add anything to their written submission. When questioned about the configuration of the brooches, the expert replied that it was an unusual configuration and although there is one brooch missing, the placing of the different elements suggests it was intentional. They added that it was difficult to ascertain if these were made and buried in France or England and that at the time Mediterranean techniques were being used to manufacture these pieces. It could be possible to know more about the manufacturing with microscopic evidence and further analysis of the objects could help establish the source of the gold.

Applicant's comments

6. The applicant confirmed that they did not dispute that the brooches met the Waverley criteria. When questioned about scientific analysis done on the objects the applicant confirmed that no detailed scientific testing had been undertaken although they had been examined by one of the leading authorities in ancient jewellery manufacture.

Discussion by the Committee

7. The expert adviser and applicant retired and the Committee discussed the case. They agreed that the fact that the provenance information on the brooch set was incomplete had limited their ability to consider Waverley criterion one, as provenance was essential to determine their connection to national life.

8. They agreed that this piece of gold jewellery demonstrated highly skilled workmanship and was a unique piece of impressive size and in exceptional condition. They noted the remarkable survival of the brooches, the mixing of styles in the construction of the piece and the use of beaded wire and filigree.

9. The Committee was intrigued by the rarity of the brooch set, of which the closest parallel would be the Winchester Hoard. This seemed to highlight the international importance of the piece and the fact that we do not know much about this particular time of flux in Europe during the 1st century BC.

Waverley Criteria

10. The Committee voted on whether the brooches met the Waverley criteria. No members voted that it met the first Waverley criterion, all the members voted that it met the second and third Waverley criteria. The brooches were therefore found to meet the second and third Waverley criteria for their outstanding significance for the study of goldwork, colonialism and empire during the 1st century BC.

Matching offer

11. The Committee discussed the valuation of the brooches. The two comparables which had been provided by the applicant were, in the opinion of the Committee, not sufficient to justify the estimated valuation or to enable the Committee to reach a clear view on the value of the brooches.-The estimate did not appear to take into account the lack of provenance; or the fact that the brooch set is incomplete (evident from the loss of end on the third chain). Both factors would affect their open market value.

12. The Committee did not, therefore, consider that the valuation provided of £250,000 had been adequately substantiated and it agreed to recommend that the Secretary of State should obtain an independent valuation of the brooches. Before that could be undertaken, however, more due diligence was required into their provenance.

Communication of findings

13. The expert adviser and the applicant returned. The Chairman notified them of the Committee's decision on its recommendations to the Secretary of State.

14. The Chairman clarified to all parties that in the absence of evidence that the brooches had been imported into the UK in the last 50 years the Committee's remit was to advise the Secretary of State on their national importance according to the Waverley criteria. The Committee, he said, had serious concerns about the gaps in the provenance of the brooches and felt that they were unable to adequately consider Waverley one due to the missing details.

Subsequent developments

15. The Secretary of State agreed with the Committee's recommendation that the brooches satisfied the second and third Waverley criteria and that an independent valuation should be obtained. The process of establishing an independent valuation, which was agreed with the applicant beforehand, was that set out in paragraph 54 of the 2021 Issue 2 Arts Council's [Guidance for exporters](#) and in this case proceeded as follows:

16. The Secretary of State appointed Joanna van Der Lande as an independent valuer suitably qualified to advise on the brooches. The owner was informed of her identity and the letter of instruction to her was agreed beforehand with the applicant.

17. Joanna van Der Lande provided a valuation of £260,000. This was shared with the owner and submitted to the Secretary of State who agreed that was the fair market price for the brooches.

18. Having regard to this the Committee agreed to recommend to the Secretary of State that the decision on the export licence should be deferred for an initial period of three months to allow an offer to purchase to be made at the

fair matching price of £260,000 (plus VAT of £52,000 which can be reclaimed by an eligible institution). At the end of the first deferral period, the owner would have a consideration period of 15 Business Days to consider any offer(s) to purchase the brooches at the recommended price of £260,000 (plus VAT of £52,000 which can be reclaimed by an eligible institution) and enter the Option Agreement. The second deferral period will commence following the signing of an Option Agreement and will last for three months.