

Feb 2013

CASTELL HEINIF, PEMBROKESHIRE FOOTPATH RE-ROUTING 2012: WATCHING BRIEF



Prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust
For Cadw and PCNPA



ymddiriedolaeth archaeolegol

DYFED
archaeological trust

DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NO. 2013/3
RHIF Y PROSIECT / PROJECT RECORD NO. 105346
Cadw Project No. DAT 123

Chwefror 2013
February 2013

CASTELL HEINIF PEMBROKESHIRE FOOTPATH RE-ROUTING 2012:

Gan / By

P Crane

Paratowyd yr adroddiad yma at ddefnydd y cwsmer yn unig. Ni dderbynnir cyfrifoldeb gan Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf am ei ddefnyddio gan unrhyw berson na phersonau eraill a fydd yn ei ddarllen neu ddibynnu ar y gwybodaeth y mae'n ei gynnwys

The report has been prepared for the specific use of the client. Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited can accept no responsibility for its use by any other person or persons who may read it or rely on the information it contains.



Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf
Neuadd y Sir, Stryd Caerfyrddin, Llandeilo, Sir
Gaerfyrddin SA19 6AF
Ffon: Ymholiadau Cyffredinol 01558 823121
Adran Rheoli Treftadaeth 01558 823131
Ffacs: 01558 823133

Ebost: info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Dyfed Archaeological Trust Limited
The Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo,
Carmarthenshire SA19 6AF
Tel: General Enquiries 01558 823121
Heritage Management Section 01558 823131
Fax: 01558 823133

Email: info@dyfedarchaeology.org.uk

Cwmni cyfyngedig (1198990) ynghyd ag elusen gofrestredig (504616) yw'r Ymddiriedolaeth. The Trust is both a Limited Company (No. 1198990) and a Registered Charity (No. 504616)

CADEIRYDD CHAIRMAN: C R MUSSON MBE B Arch FSA MIFA. CYFARWYDDWR DIRECTOR: K MURPHY BA MIFA

SUMMARY

Due to coastal erosion a small length of the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail was re-routed where it passes through the Iron Age Fort of Castell Heinif, near St Davids. Cliff erosion was encroaching on the path where it ran to the north of the fort's inner bank. The new length of path leads along the bottom of the fort's inner ditch. No disturbance was caused during creation of the new route other than cutting through a post-medieval boundary bank and the excavation of small holes for signage through modern infill or natural subsoil.

INTRODUCTION

Castell Heinif is located on a promontory on the mainland overlooking Ramsey Sound 3km west of the City of St Davids and 0.5km south of St Justinians (National Grid Reference SM 7238 2466). It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM PE 295).

Due to the limited nature of this project it is not intend here to provide a full description of the site. The following is taken from Dyfed Historic Environment Record (Record No. 2714):

Castell Heinif is a coastal promontory fort. It is naturally well defended on the north, west and southwest sides by 25m high sea cliffs. A curving, bivallate rampart, c.115m long protects the landward side. The inner banks stand about 2.5m above the interior and 2.3m above the bottom of the ditch. The outer bank is a similar size. A c.30m long curving slight bank lies between the two main banks on the southeast side. The purpose of this feature is unclear, but it seems to have been to protect the entrance, which must have lain in this area. However, field banks built over the bank and landslips in the area have obscured the entrance.

The form of the fort is typically Iron Age and one of 52 similar forts on the Pembrokeshire Coast. There is no recorded excavation, although the northern end of the inner back was cut back and re-built to some extent a few years ago to re-align the old path due to erosion - this is the same area of erosion that necessitated the path re-routing described here.

The Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail passed to the north of the inner bank of Castell Heinif. Continuing erosion on the adjacent slope was creating a pinch point that disconcerted walkers, as the path here was forced very close to the cliff edge. As continuing erosion was likely to exacerbate the problem the only alternative was to create a new route for the path. Cutting back the end of the fort's bank again was not considered a viable option as this would be just a short term fix.

METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Following site meetings with both Cadw, in regards of Schedule Monument Consent (SMC) and the National Trust, the site owners, and having gained permissions from both them and Countryside Council for Wales, as the site is within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the Coastal Path was re-routed along the inner ditch in January 2012.

The hedge bank at the southern end of the defences was cut through to allow the new path into the inner ditch (Photo 3). At the northern end the base of a former hedge-bank was very slightly reduced to remove a trip hazard (Photo 4). Postholes were dug in non-sensitive areas for direction signs at either end of the re-routing. The sign to the south (Photo 5) was outside of the fort defences and the northern sign (Photo 6) was located on modern infill on the inner ditch from when the original coast path was constructed. The old path has been left as was.

It is considered that there was no disturbance to the Iron Age elements of this site.

DISCUSSION

The area PCNP Ranger has reported that by the summer of 2012 about 80% of those walking the Coast Path were now using the new route. Most walkers still using the old path were coming from the north. The use of the paths and coastal erosion on this site will continue to be monitored for the foreseeable future. It is likely that as the old path grows over fewer people will use it. However, it may be necessary to either block off the old route or alternatively, at a later date, reform the north end of the inner bank if the old path continues in use and becomes dangerous.

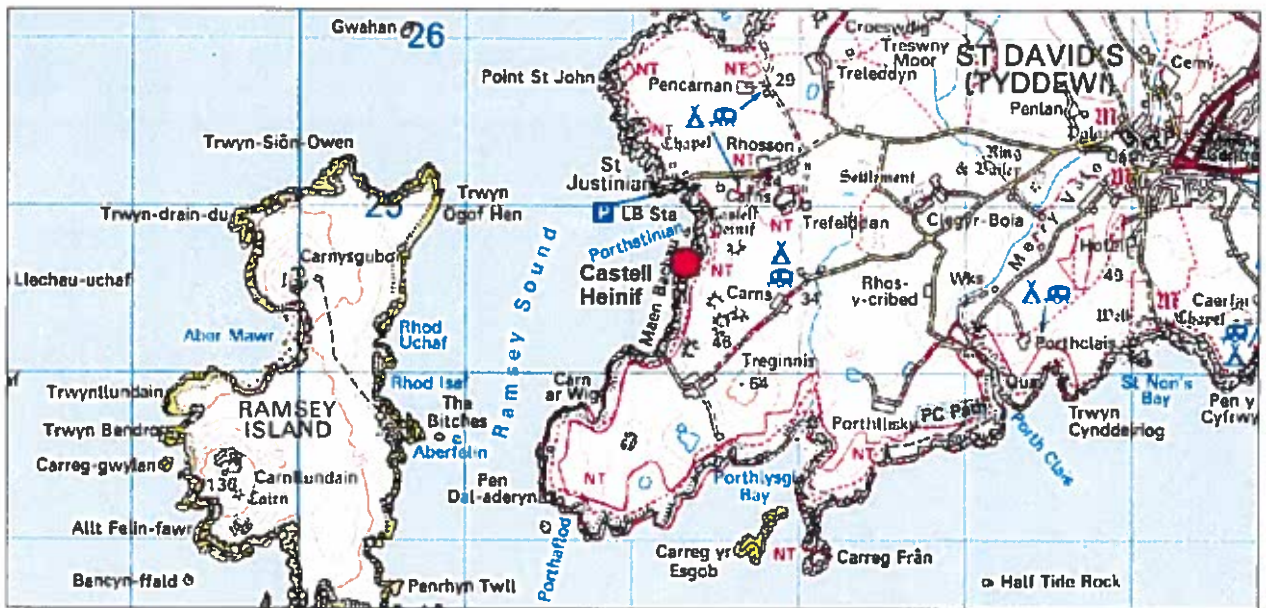


Figure 1: Location of Castell Heinif. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved

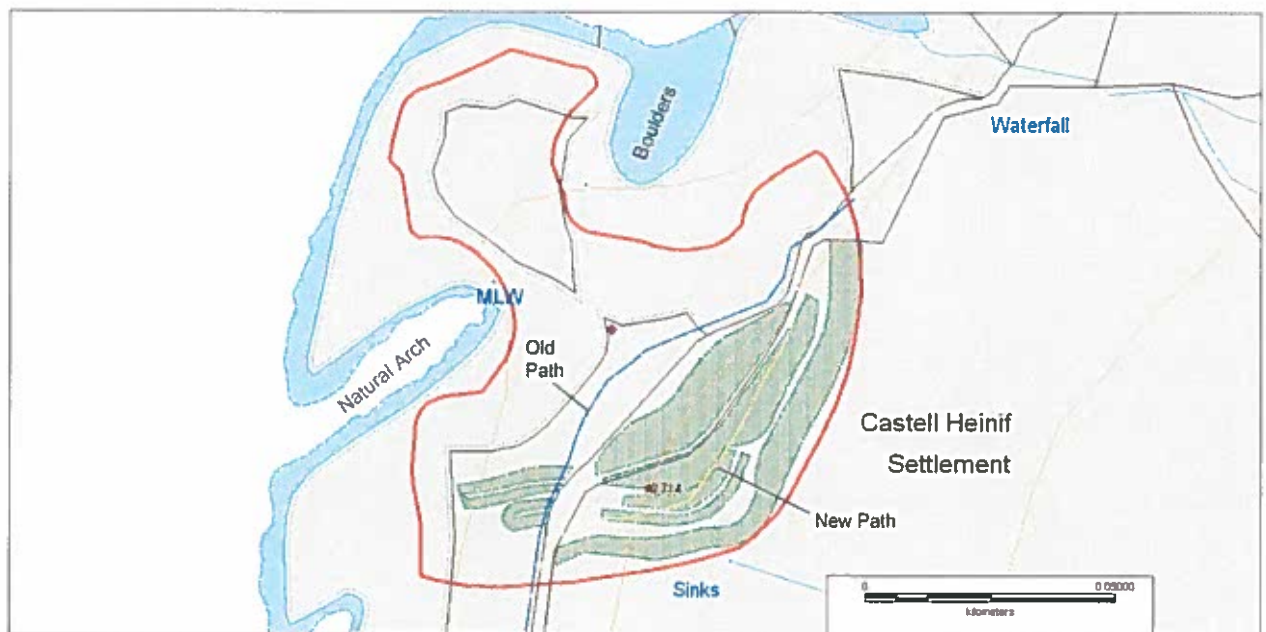


Figure 2: Approximate old (blue) and new (yellow) paths. SAM area in red. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved



Photo 1: Castell Heinif. Pinch point of former coast path between inner bank of fort and cliff erosion. View SW



Photo 2: Castell Heinif. Pinch point of former coast path between inner bank of fort and cliff erosion. Scale 1m. View E



Photo 3: Castell Heinif. New route through hedge bank to the south of fort. View S



Photo 4: Castell Heinif. Remains of hedge bank in northern end of inner ditch. View S



Photo 5: New path and sign, old path to left 17/09/2012. Scale 1m.
View N



Photo 6: New path and sign 17/09/2012. The slight remains of the hedge bank (Photo 4) is adjacent to the left scale. Scales 1m. View SW

CASTELL HEINIF PEMBROKESHIRE FOOTPATH RE-ROUTING 2012: WATCHING BRIEF

RHIF YR ADRODDIAD / REPORT NUMBER 2013/13

Chwefror 2013
February 2013

Paratowyd yr adroddiad hwn gan / This report has been prepared by P Crane

Swydd / Position: PCNPA Archaeologist

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date 04.02.2012

Mae'r adroddiad hwn wedi ei gael yn gywir a derbyn sêl bendith
This report has been checked and approved by K Murphy

ar ran Ymddiriedolaeth Archaeolegol Dyfed Cyf.
on behalf of Dyfed Archaeological Trust Ltd.

Swydd / Position: Trust Director

Llofnod / Signature Dyddiad / Date 04.02.2013

Yn unol â'n nôd i roddi gwasanaeth o ansawdd uchel, croesawn unrhyw sylwadau
sydd gennych ar gynnwys neu strwythur yr adroddiad hwn

As part of our desire to provide a quality service we would welcome any
comments you may have on the content or presentation of this report

