

DINEFWR CASTLE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF STEPS IN THE DEFENSIVE DITCH IMMEDIATELY NORTHWEST OF DINEFWR CASTLE

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By

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SUMMARY

Two short site visits were carried out to archaeologically monitor the construction of a path and steps immediately to the northwest of Dinefwr Castle, Carmarthenshire. Very little of archaeological interest was noted, although the rock-cut edge of the defensive ditch was cut through immediately below the western corner of the masonry castle. This was recorded photographically.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The fieldwork and report was undertaken by K Murphy, Cambria Archaeology Field Operations.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project commission

Dr Sian Rees of Cadw asked Cambria Archaeology to undertake this watching brief on 12 November 2002.

1.2 Scope of project

Two short site visits were made by the watching archaeologists, one on 12 November and one on 18 November. Colour slide and digital photographs were taken.

1.3 Report outline

This report describes the physical environment of the site (Section 2) before summarising the watching brief results (Section 3) and the conclusions (Section 4) based on the results of Sections 2 and 3.

2. THE SITE

2.1 Location

The new path lies immediately to the northwest of Dinefwr Castle. It runs along the floor of the defensive ditch before turning sharply to the southeast and climbing the side of the ditch below the western corner of the masonry castle. It leads to a new seat/viewing point located outside the foot of the castle's curtain wall a few metres southeast of the western corner. Because of steep slopes steps (timber and stone chipping) had to be constructed on part of the ditch floor and on the ditch side.

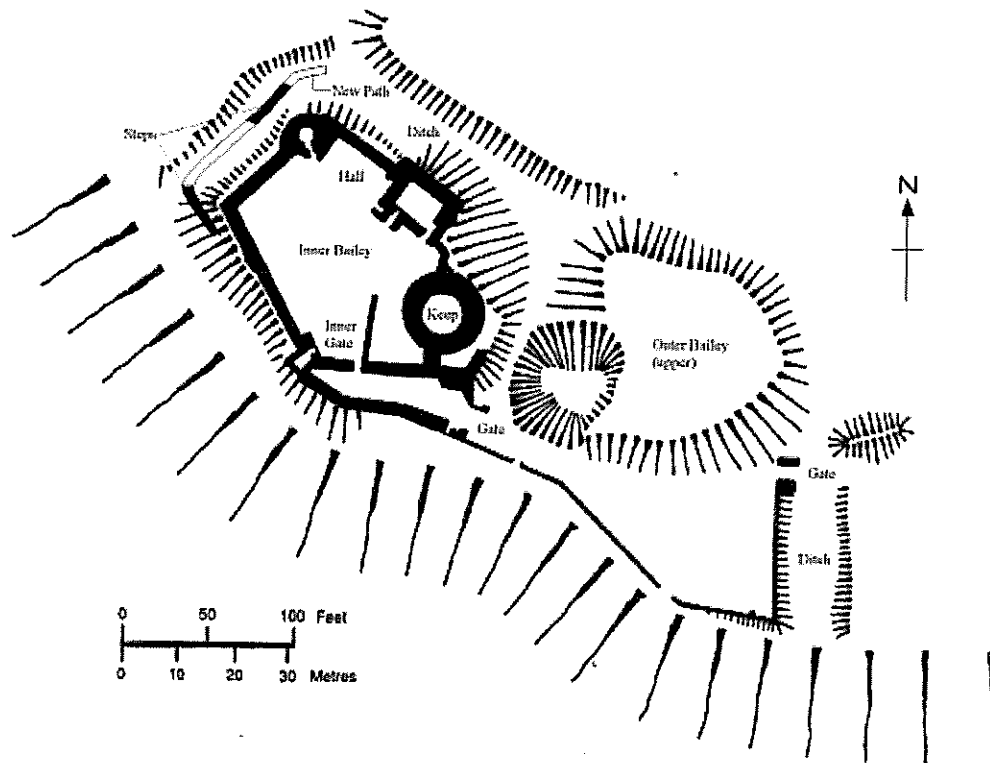


Figure 1. Location plan showing new path and steps

3. SUMMARY OF WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

It was only necessary to cut approximately 20cm to 30cm into the ditch floor for step construction. The material cut through consisted of loose stone rubble in black soil. According to the site workers this material had been recently deposited during conservation work on the castle. The nature of the material confirmed this.

On the steep ditch side similar material was cut through on the lower slopes. The ditch lip, however, was here rock-cut with an almost vertical slope. In order to achieve the correct slope for the flight of steps it was necessary to cut through approximately 50cm of the bedrock ditch-lip. This was recorded photographically. No structural details and no deposits other than modern ones were noted.



Plate 1. General view of steps running up ditch side



Plate 2. Detail of steps showing cutting of bedrock ditch-lip



Plate 3. Steps on ditch floor

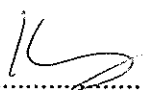
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This report has been prepared by K. Murphy

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This report has been checked and approved by G Hughes on behalf of Cambria Archaeology,
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Position Trust Director

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