



# An interim report on an excavation at Eardisley Castle, Herefordshire, 2011



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**Herefordshire Archaeology** is Herefordshire Council's county archaeology service. It advises upon the conservation of archaeological and historic landscapes, maintains the county Sites and Monument Record, and carries out conservation and investigative field projects. The County Archaeologist is Dr. Keith Ray.

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## **1. Introduction**

This is an interim report on an excavation at Eardisley Castle, Herefordshire (NGR SO 312491) undertaken in March 2011 by the Eardisley History Group and Herefordshire Archaeology with financial support from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The report has been produced to give an initial account of the excavated stratigraphy and some of its implications in advance of full specialist contributions on the pottery, botany and animal bone. It has however been able to incorporate early contributions on the archaeological soils (by Michael J Allen) slag (by Gerry McDonnell), and an initial assessment of the pottery (by Stephanie Ratkai). The report is designed to be read in conjunction with the report on a geophysical survey undertaken at the castle in 2010 by ArchaeoPhysica Ltd (Roseveare 2010).

Eardisley Castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (HE 86). The excavation (site code EC 11) appears in the county Historic Environment Record as event EHE 1855.

## 2. The historical background

Eardisley Castle does not appear to be well enough documented to establish either the date of its foundation or (through account rolls, for example) its general architectural character through the medieval centuries. Further documentary research is being undertaken by the Eardisley History Group as part of the present project; the aim of this brief summary is merely, from available secondary sources, to set in context the initial results of the 2011 excavation.

The earliest certain mention of Eardisley Castle in the historical record appears to be in the Pipe Rolls for 1182-5 (DoE Scheduling documentation SAM 86) and soon after, in a list of Herefordshire castles of 1209 (Robinson 1869, 52). It is however not unlikely that the site of the castle is also the site of the fortified house (*domus defensabilis*) listed by the Domesday Survey (f 184v) as part of the manor of Eardisley, held by one Robert from Roger de Lacy. It is not absolutely certain from Domesday that the fortified house was part of the pre-Conquest manor, though this is the most probable implication. The close physical association of St Mary's Church and the castle site on a slightly elevated east-west ridge strengthens the probability that the castle was developed from an earlier manorial complex that included the church.

Eardisley Castle featured in the Welsh rebellion under Llywelyn in 1262, first when, with Wigmore, it was plundered, and then the next year was used as a place of imprisonment for the Bishop of Hereford and Macy de Bezile, the Sheriff of Gloucester. At some point in the 13<sup>th</sup> century the castle passed into the hands of the Baskerville family: the manor was granted to Walter de Baskerville in 1251, though there is evidence of their connection with Eardisley going back to c.1194. In 1272 Walter de Baskerville was licenced by the Bishop of Hereford to hold divine service in an oratory in the castle (Robinson 1869, 54). The family was still in possession of the castle in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the last of the Baskervilles lived in poverty in the gatehouse until his death in 1684 (Robinson 1869, 54; Hyett Warner 1904, 262). The present farmhouse was built on the site in 1705 (pers comm. Malcolm Mason).

## 3. Eardisley Castle: an introductory description

Eardisley Castle is a motte-and-bailey earthwork castle lying across a slight east-west ridge on the south-west side of the modern and medieval settlement of Eardisley, which follows the main Hereford to Kington road (Church Street) orientated north-south. Parts of the bailey ditches having been infilled in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the best representation of the site is the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887. This shows the bailey occupying an approximately square area of just over an acre with the motte occupying a projecting salient in the south-west corner. Geophysical survey in 2010 (see below) has shown that the motte was formerly separated from the bailey by a ditch. Two further ditches run north-west to south-east to the west of the motte and bailey; they are both at their deepest as they cut across the summit of the ridge, and both carry watercourses flowing from north to south. Neither is completely certainly part of the castle – they could be features

relating to water-milling, a mill having stood immediately north of the inner bailey – though the likelihood is that either or both ditches represent re-used and deepened features of medieval date. There is a substantial bank between the bailey ditch and the eastern watercourse ditch, the bank at its highest where the ditch is deepest. The western watercourse ditch also has a much slighter bank on its east side. The long pasture between the two has been characterised as a possible outer bailey (e.g. Shoemith 1996 92-3) though this attribution assumes that both features had a medieval defensive origin. There are furthermore no earthworks or other surface features to indicate that the pasture was defended or occupied in the Middle Ages.

Park Road, a lane running along the south side of the bailey, may also follow the line of a former ditch, and there is now archaeological evidence for two further ditches: slender evidence of a north-south return to a ditch on the Park Road line between the castle and the church, much better evidence of a north-south ditch running along the western side of the main north-south road (Church Street). In short, Eardisley Castle is a complex multivallate earthwork whose components are not yet fully understood.

There is now no trace of medieval stonework above ground, though fragmentary remains of uncertain date have been reported in the past (Stirling-Brown 1992; Skelton 1999). The 2010 geophysical survey results for the motte are ambiguous. The resistivity survey reported an annular feature (catalogue no.28), possibly the base of a round tower, on the top of the motte with walls potentially 3m thick enclosing an area 7.5m in diameter, but not, it seems, deeply founded. Only excavation will resolve this question.

## **4. The 2011 excavation**

The background and aims of the excavation

In July 2010 Herefordshire Archaeology was asked by Malcolm Mason of the Eardisley History Group to design, secure the consents for and supervise an excavation at the castle. Following discussions with English Heritage, an excavation strategy was formulated that had the following broad aims:

- Eardisley and its castle. Apart from the parish church of St Mary and, in all probability, the plan-form of the present village, the castle is the most important and tangible link with Eardisley's origins and its medieval past. Yet, before 2011, no excavation had taken place there and many of its most basic characteristics remained unknown – when it was founded; whether, for example, its earthwork defences were ever (or to what degree) supplemented in masonry; its general architectural character; the density to which its component areas were built up or occupied; and when and how it went into decline. The primary aim of the Eardisley History Group was therefore to establish these most basic characteristics.
- Informed conservation and long-term management. The geophysical surveys commissioned by the Eardisley History Group prior to the excavation revealed

It was felt that the best way of achieving these two broad aims was to excavate just within the perimeter of the inner bailey at a point where geophysical survey showed that substantial, probably masonry, remains lay below the surface, so that the character of the defences (and the presence or not of a masonry phase) could be established, together with that of any buildings that might have been built immediately within a curtain wall or rampart. Specifically, a site was selected towards the south-east corner of the bailey to investigate a strong, discrete signal produced by ground-penetrating radar (anomaly 34, Roseveare 2010), just within a blank strip on the edge of the GPR survey area that was taken – wrongly as it turned out – to represent featureless silts within the filled-in moat.

## Methodology

Following the grant of Scheduled Monument Consent (ref. S00006590) a 6m by 3m trench was excavated over a three-week period in March 2011. Excavation and backfilling was by hand throughout, and the excavation was undertaken within a polytunnel, in false expectation of bad weather. The excavation was supervised by the writer, together with David Williams BA MIFA, and staffed by volunteers from the Eardisley History Group. Topsoil, varying in depth between c.20cms and 30cms was removed rapidly and the underlying surfaces cleaned. Undisturbed natural subsoil was not definitively contacted anywhere within the area, though a sondage at the eastern end penetrated much of the depth of the perimeter rampart, though was halted for safety reasons at 1.65m below present ground level. Occupation on top of the rampart was sampled by excavation as far as time constraints allowed. Soil samples were taken from occupation surfaces and from the rampart material for botanical/environmental evidence, and further samples from occupation surfaces for metallurgical evidence, slag being present in some such contexts.

## The excavation: results

Removal of the turf (context 001) and topsoil (002) revealed patches of pink clayey material, eventually resolved into the top of intact medieval strata cut by a number of topsoil-filled features. The artefactual content of the topsoil was suggestive of gardening activity to the present day, though the quantity of unabraded medieval cooking-pot sherds at the base of the topsoil suggested a sharp transition to 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>-century deposits. Garden paths detected by geophysical survey within the cultivation soil were scarcely apparent on excavation, though were seen in fragmentary form as, for example, lenses of charcoal (003) and gravel (004).

Additionally a single large stone protruded from the cultivation soil in the south section.

Further cleaning distinguished a number of discrete cut features. Shallow gullies and flat-bottomed slot-like features (008, 014, 029, 038), filled with topsoil, were interpreted as traces of cultivation trenches and cuts extending down from the base of the topsoil into the underlying medieval deposits. Towards the western end of the area, excavation of a roughly square cut feature with rounded corners (007), also filled with a topsoil-like deposit, revealed a number of substantial flat stones in a matrix of buff plastic clay. At first interpreted as a cut feature with a stone floor, further investigation suggested it to be the base of a robber trench salvaging masonry from a substantial clay-bonded stone footing (040, see below).

At the eastern end of the trench an area of stone rubble (012) bounded the west side of an area of dark soil (011). Removal of the latter showed that it, and the rubble, were fills within a partly stone-lined square or rectangular pit (013) extending beyond the excavated area. The lining walls (030), carefully built of sandstone rubble in a clay matrix with packing stones behind, survived on two sides. The wall on the third (south) side had been removed; in its place was a tip of orange-brown clayey soil (031). The base of the pit was flat and compacted. On it lay traces of green silt, interpreted as surviving remnants of cess in a stone-lined latrine pit. Removal of the lining walls allowed the earlier stratigraphy penetrated by the pit to be seen in section; the latrine pit cut was subsequently extended to form a deep sondage within the larger excavated area.

### The medieval building

Apart from the eastern c. one-third of the area, the excavation was dominated by a sequence of alternating floor and occupation deposits, the former generally of re-deposited red-brown or orange clays containing varying quantities of gravel, often laid c. 5cms thick (005, 009, 044, 033, 028, 056, 063, 065, 066, 067, 068). The occupation deposits that developed on these surfaces were generally of dark grey or black clayey soil with large quantities of charcoal (019, 045, 039, 046, 064, 069, 053). These deposits were much thinner than the floors on which they formed and many, after excavation, could not be detected in the sections. Both the floor surfaces and the occupation deposits exhibited a range of variation. Amongst the successive clay floors there was a single thin skim of mortar floor surface (043). Towards the bottom of the sampled sequence, exposed where a pit (050) in the north-west corner had cut down from a higher level, were a possible clay-bonded cobble surface (066) and a possible clay-bonded flagged surface (068) composed of sandstone slabs each up to c.30cms square. However, only a very limited exposure of these surfaces was possible, little of their character could be determined and their extent is unknown. Amongst the occupation horizons two (054 and 055) stand out by reason of their high iron-slag content. Both were very compact and 055 incorporated patches of concreted slag (see slag report, below); the lack of hammer scale from both deposits suggests that they derive from imported material used to level up an uneven floor rather than representing the product of iron working in situ.

The succession of red/orange clay floors and black occupation horizons continued below the level to which most of the site was excavated, the lowest such deposit (067, a compact orange clay surface) being exposed in a limited area in the north-west corner at a depth of 0.72m - 0.76m below ground level. There was no indication of the depth to which this sequence continued.

The successive floor and occupation deposits were confined to the area west of a zone of sandstone rubble (with stones up to c.25cms) in a matrix of mottled buff-yellow clay with soil (018). Within this material two square patches were visible in outline (036 and 037) which were at first thought to be post-holes but, on excavation, appeared more likely to have been a pair of post positions where timbers had stood on a firm base while material had accumulated around them. The rubble zone was resolved into a clay-bonded rubble wall (062), running north-south, terminated on the north side of the excavation by a clay-filled cut (010) of unknown function. The wall 062 had a clearly defined eastern, exterior, face though its west, interior, side had been largely destroyed. Enough survived however to show that the wall had been 0.7m wide at its south end, reducing to 0.54m where truncated at its north end. A discontinuity in the east face suggested that the wall was built in two sections, each of which carried one of the square post positions, that on the south part of the wall (037) being 0.68m square, that to the north (036), 0.56 x 0.62m. The floor/occupation sequence described above overlapped the yellow plastic clay bonding material of the wall on its west side, suggesting that floors were continuing to be laid and occupation material was accumulating while the internal face of the wall was in a ruined or damaged state.

#### A possible tower footing?

Within the area of the successive floor surfaces, excavation of the probable robber-trench 007 cut down from the topsoil had revealed a substantial L-shaped masonry wall footing. This (040) was composed of massive blocks and slabs of sandstone rubble, the largest measuring 1.6m x 0.67m and at least 0.2m deep, set in a matrix of yellow plastic clay of the same kind seen in the construction of the rubble wall to the east. The depth of the footing was not established by the excavation, though the ground-penetrating radar results suggested that it was very deeply founded. This feature was built within the area of successive re-laid and occupied floors, while these were in use. A clear foundation cut (074, 075) was visible in the black occupation material (039) to the east, whereas the succeeding clay floor surface (033) to the west lapped up against and partly over the slabs. The masonry footing appeared to represent the end of a wall 1.06m wide running south out of the excavated area, with a terminal extending about 2m wide. Within the limited area of excavation no definitive interpretation of this footing was possible, though the solidity of its construction left no doubt that it was intended to support a considerable load, probably a structure of some height, just possibly a tower. This is discussed further below.

The preliminary assessment of the pottery (Ratkai, below) suggests that the building was in use in the late 12<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup> century.

## The rampart sequence

At the eastern end of the excavated area a sondage was dug to investigate the earlier deposits underlying the structures described above, without disturbing their densely-layered stratigraphy, by extending the emptied cut for the cess-pit 013. The sondage revealed what is interpreted as a turf rampart, its back overlain or cut by a series of deposits of uncertain function. The uppermost of these, 034 and 035, were both of red-brown clayey soil containing extensive rounded gravel and appeared to be re-deposited natural material. These were not excavated (having been cut away within the area of the sondage by later pit 013) and it was uncertain whether they occupied a sloping cut in the back of the earlier rampart material (015), or were dumps onto the back of the rampart. Similar material (048) below these deposits was sampled in a very limited area but, again, was of uncertain function.

The main bulk of the rampart was composed of mottles and stripes of khaki-coloured silt contrasting with orange, more plastic, silty clay with some charcoal flecking. This material (015), which survived to a depth of 0.8m, is interpreted as degraded turf and/or topsoil mixed with re-deposited natural clay subsoil (see soils report, below). In the extreme south-east corner of the excavated area this deposit rose to within 0.25m of the present ground surface and was exposed immediately on removal of the topsoil (002), suggesting strongly that the rampart formerly stood to a greater height but had been planed-off to a common level and the site cultivated. Below the turf deposit 015 was a tip of much harder clay with sandstone rubble (057); below that was a series of smaller tips of clays and silts (072, 073, 070, 071) over a much thicker and more homogenous mass of grey-brown/khaki silt (059) interpreted as a re-deposited topsoil. This contained no artefacts other than a single flint scraper. Its interpretation is uncertain, but it too may have been part of the rampart, bringing the total surviving depth to about 1.4m. Below, explored in a very limited area at the base of the sondage, was a very stiff red-brown sterile clayey silt (061) containing pieces and flecks of green sandstone and very occasional small flecks of charcoal. Tested to a depth of only 20cms, this material appeared to be of re-deposited or weathered natural origin. Undisturbed natural deposits were not contacted within the 1.65m depth of the sondage.

The preliminary assessment of the pottery (Ratkai, below) shows that three cooking-pot sherds from the rampart turf material (015) are of 12<sup>th</sup>-century date: this is the only dating evidence from the rampart sequence but is consistent with the late 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century date of the building on top and (as far as it goes) with the documentary evidence for the appearance of the castle by the 1180s (see historical summary, above).

## A preliminary assessment of the pottery by Stephanie Ratkai

### Summary

The pottery is chiefly made up of medieval cooking pot of 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century date. There are very few glazed sherds of any date.

The principal cooking pot fabric is Malvernian (Hereford fabric B1). None of these have the 'classic' in-turned, late 13<sup>th</sup> century rim form. Other cooking pot fabrics known at Hereford and present at Eardisley Castle are fabrics A2 and C1. A very small percentage of cooking pots can be paralleled by the micaceous siltstone and coarse siltstone fabrics known from Wigmore Castle. Glazed wares consisted of Malvernian ware (Hereford fabrics B2 and B4), Worcester-type glazed ware (Hereford fabric C2), Hereford fine redware (Hereford fabric A7b) and a probably more locally produced variant of fabric A7b (A7b-type ware) which is known from other Marcher sites such as Wigmore Castle and Montgomery Castle.

There was no pottery which could be dated to before the Conquest. A fine-bodied, pale orange-pink, glazed ware from context (053) is unlikely to be local or even from the West Midlands region. It is possible that it is a Continental import but finding a definite source for the sherd requires further research.

Sherds from contexts (05) and (024) had an internal deposit which under x 20 magnification appeared to consist of lime and carbonised matter. It should be possible to have these residues scientifically analysed but it is generally difficult to get someone to undertake the work. The appropriateness of commissioning such work rather depends on the intrinsic interest of the context.

To date, all contexts have been spot-dated and the results are shown in Table 1.

Code	Ctxt	Qty	Date	Comment	Rim	Fabs
EC11	20	69	early 13th c	2 small intrusive post med sherds. Mainly Malvernian cpj. 1 piece of charcoal	9	B1, B3, C2
EC11	28	91	late 12th - early 13th c	All cpj. Sherds of Wigmore micaceous siltstone -tempered ware fabric S01. 1 piece of micaceous stone	8	A2, B1, C1
EC11	39	31	late 12th c?	All cpj. No Malvernian rims but body and base sherds. Sand and siltstone tempered fab of Wigmore type. 1 piece animal bone	7	A2, B1, C1
EC11	42	55	late 12th c?	All cpj.	12	A2, B1, C1
EC11	44	17	late 12th c?	All cpj.	4	B1, C1
EC11	19	11	13thc ?	1 vesicular semi-vitrified fragment	0	B1
EC11	25	15	late 12th - early 13th c	All cpj	4	B1, C1
EC11	54	8	early-?mid 13th c	All cpj. Peridot crystals visible in one rim sherd	3	B1
EC11	24	4	13th c	Sherds from one vessel with int. deposit consisting of lime (or lime based substance) and charcoal		B1
EC11	18	3	late 12th - early 13th c	All cpj	2	B1
EC11	53	15	late 12c		5	A2, B1, C1 A2, A7b, B1, B4, C1, C2, MOT, WSG, CRW, BLTRSF, BONEC
EC11	2	64	19th c	Mainly 12th-13th c cooking pot sherds with 10 x 19th c sherds, 3 x 18th c	5	B1, B4, post- med and modern
EC11	1	45	19th c	6 medieval sherds	0	
EC11	10	7	late 12th- early 13th c		0	A2, B1,C1
EC11	45	9	late 12th- early 13th c		1	A2, B1
EC11	23	2	12th c	cindery sherd	1	B1
EC11	27	1	12th c		1	C1
EC11	25	1	mid 13th-mid 14th c	△ 5	1	A7b-type
EC11	12	1	late 12th- early 13th c	△ 4	0	B2
EC11	4	1	13th-15th c		0	A7b-type
EC11	53	1	?	△ 3 Not local	0	?
EC11	31	1	13h c		0	B1
EC11	36	1	12th c		0	B1
EC11	29	3	early 13th c		0	B1, C1
EC11	15	3	12th c		0	C1
EC11	9	7	late 12th c		1	A2, B1
EC11	5	4	late 12th- early 13th c	3 B1 base sherds with int limescale, Wigmore-type coarse siltstone tempered rim sherd	1	B1

EC11	47	4	late 12th- early 13th c		0	A2, B1
EC11	33	2	late 12th- early 13th c	1 coarse siltstone tempered sherd? Has similar int deposit to sherds from 24	0	B1
EC11	22	3	13th c		0	B1
EC11	6	3	?later 13th c	1 small piece of slag, 1 piece of siltstone	0	B1
EC11	38	5	mid 13th- 15th c	1 piece of animal bone, the B1 sherds are residual	0	A7b-type, B1
EC11	46	15	12th-early 13th c		0	B1, C1

The pottery seems to reflect 12<sup>th</sup> to early (or possibly mid-) 13<sup>th</sup>-century occupation of the castle. This is consistent with the absence of fabric B1 in-turned rim cooking pots and the paucity of glazed wares. Even late contexts such as (01) and (02) contain pottery mainly of this date. The range of fabrics present at the site is largely what would be expected in this area of Hereford.

#### *Further work*

It would be advisable to quantify fully the medieval pottery by fabric and form and to have the data accessible to future researchers.

Fabrics not found in the Hereford City reports should be matched to the Wigmore Castle Pottery Type Series, and a source found for the glazed sherd from (053) if possible. It would be useful to illustrate some of the cooking pot sherds, although many are too fragmentary to merit this. Sixty-five rim sherds were recorded and a representative illustrated sample of c. 20 should suffice. A synopsis of the results of the pottery analysis should be written and interpreted in the light of contextual information, where possible. A brief comparison of the pottery from the castle with that from Eardisley village and Wigmore should be given, along with a general appreciation of how the Eardisley Castle assemblage fits into the region.

## Geoarchaeology by Michael J Allan

### Aims

The excavation was visited on the 21st March 2011 with the aims of providing a geoarchaeological record, and sampling, as appropriate, to test the supposition that the rampart was comprised in part of turves, and to examine the horizon then exposed at the base of the rampart to see whether it represented a buried soil and land surface on which the rampart was constructed.

## Methods

The exposed excavated face of the sondage section through the rampart was cleaned carefully before description to expose an unweathered surface and attempt to reveal any soil or sediment structure. The deposits were described moist following nomenclature outlined by Hodgson (1976), and munsel soil colours recorded in natural light. It was noted, however, that the polytunnel over the excavation severely affected both the hues and chroma of the recorded colours, giving more strong grey and green hues than when observed in natural light.

Test augering was undertaken with a 10mm diameter rod gouger auger, and with a 25mm diameter gouge auger, from which the descriptions were made. Augering was conducted at the point at which the profile was described to augment those from the exposed section.

An undisturbed sample was taken in a metal Kubiena tin for consideration for soil thin-section manufacture and soil micromorphological study. This was cut and tapped into the exposed section and removed as an undisturbed block of soil.

The underlying geology is recorded as Lower Old Red Sandstone and is locally variable comprising sandstones and mudstones.

## The geoarchaeological record

The full geoarchaeological record is given below, with a summary interpretation of each layer and their context ascription.

The description was undertaken at a point 1.35m from the south section and of the western (i.e. east facing) face of the sondage through the rampart. The depths given refer to the sondage section, measured down from the top of the section at the excavated surface after removal of the garden soil (002). A single Kubiena sample was taken at 1.00m from the southern section and 120mm from the top of the section.

<b>context</b>	<b>Depth * (cm)</b>	<b>Unit samples</b>	<b>Description</b>
002			Garden soil 29cm thick, abrupt to sharp contact
034	0-8		Reddish brown (5YR 5/3) silty clay loam mixed with dark reddish brown silty clay loam, many medium stones, rare fine charcoal fragments. Fill of cut
015	8-69	<K1>	Mixed deposit – at the top deep reddish brown 5YR 4/4 - 5/4 stone-free massive, structureless silty loam with bands or lenses of between 20mm and 45mm thickness and up to c. 130mm width of greyer deposits – dark reddish gray to dark reddish brown, stone-free silty loam with no observable structure. Towards the base the deposit becomes more consistent with less bands and is a moist yellowish red (5YR 4/6) silty clay loam, abrupt wavy boundary. Rampart A horizon material and turves

059	69-84		Brown (7.5YR 3/3) (looks greyish under awning light) massive structureless stone-free silty clay loam, at c. 104cm mottled with few to common very fine distinct reddish brown (2.5YR 4/4) mottles
	84-125	*** ***  **	Continued in auger as Brown (7.5YR 3/3) stone-free silty clay loam @ 112cm fine charcoal fragments @ 114cm fine charcoal fragments with small stones @ 125cm charcoal fragment to 4mm Clear boundary Gleyed A horizon material
	125-131/133		brown (7.5YR 4/4) moist silt clay ?depleted former gley soil
	133-145+		Brown to strong brown (7.5YR 5/4 - 6) sandy silt to silty sand with common very small sandy stones, clear boundary Rw – gleyed weathered parent material
stone	145+		Stone Rw – weathered parent material 'natural'

\* depth from top of excavated sondage section

The centre of the rampart (as seen in the southern (north-facing) section) was a pile of tabular and other stones over soil material. This was deposited on reddish brown moist silty clay, but was a dumped lens as stone-free brown (7.5YR 3/3) silty clay loam occurred beneath.

#### Geoarchaeology; the rampart construction and its significance

The main rampart (015) was c. 0.7m of stone-free reddish brown (5YR 4/3) stone-free silty clay material containing distinct browner (reddish brown 5YR 4/4) lenses with abrupt to sharp edges and clear boundaries. These seemed to be darker and possibly more humic discrete sediment inputs, they contained no structure (i.e. crumb or small blocky structure) that might be expected in a turf. Nevertheless they were probably turf or spadefuls of topsoil material, within the main rampart matrix comprising largely soil derived (A and B horizon material) rather than the natural parent material (Lower Old Red Sandstone geology).

Below the main rampart fill and under the stone core the deposit had clear dumps and lenses indicating this was an accumulatory deposit and not a soil, and that it was a continuation of the rampart material.

Contexts 048 and 049 were brecciated sub-rounded sandstone in a silty matrix, which looked like re-worked and re-deposited parent material (i.e. 'natural' geology), contrasting with the rampart make-up.

Below the main rampart (015) was a 'grey' (reddish brown to brown) gleyed silty clay 0.56m thick with at least two zones of charcoal (at 112-4cm and 125cm), the latter being at the base of the deposit. It seemed to be structureless and had fine mottles. Although moister and with slightly more clay than the main rampart, this may have been essentially the same; the colour variation being due to groundwater table conditions reducing the deposits. This does not, for instance, seem to have been a

well developed brown forest soil, that might have been expected if this had been under woodland; at least no soil structure, horizonation or differentiation was noticed throughout this deposit in either the exposed (weathered) section face or in the augered profile. This was gleyed Ah (i.e. topsoil) material comprising the rampart, or possibly pre-rampart accumulations.

A brown (looked grey) moist silty clay 0.12m thick with many small sandy stones lay under this horizon, and although also massive it may have been the truncated gleyed remnants of a former soil. It sat on a sandy silt which was weathered sandstone and probably the weathered natural. Augering was impeded by a stone at 1.45m.

There is no evidence of flooding or flood deposits in the profile. However, high ground water tables are evident in the gleyed sequences as indicated by the grey colours and the fine mottling.

### Sample

A Kubiena tin (K1) of undisturbed soil was taken through one of the darker 'turf' bands.

Sample location      100cm from south section, and 12cm down section profile.

Sample size            120mm high × 80mm wide

No similar or other undisturbed sample was taken from the basal horizon as this was not a buried soil per se.

### Summary

1. The main rampart (015) was comprised of soil material with possibly turfs or 'spadefuls'/small dumps of topsoil material.
  2. The greyish layer beneath (059) was not a buried soil, but essentially the same material (without turves and topsoil dumps), gleyed as a result of the groundwater table
  3. Despite the proximity to water and the depth of the deposits indicating much lower levels in the past there is no evidence of flooding or flood deposits, or standing water conditions
- The slag

### An assessment of the slags, by Gerry McDonnell

This assessment report describes the material classified as slag recovered from 2011 excavation in the inner bailey. A brief overview of the material from the site is provided, followed by a detailed description and quantification. The significance of the material is discussed and recommendations made for further work.

## Slag Classification

The slags were visually examined and the classification is based solely on morphology. In general metalworking debris can be divided into two broad groups. First is the diagnostic ferrous material which can be attributed to a particular industrial process; this comprises ores and the ironworking slags, i.e. smelting and smithing slags. The second group is the non-diagnostic slags, which could have been generated by a number of different processes but show no diagnostic characteristic that can identify the process. In many cases the non-diagnostic residues, e.g. hearth or furnace lining, may be ascribed to a particular process through archaeological association. The residue classifications are defined below. The count and weight of each slag type present in each context was recorded.

### *Diagnostic Ferrous Slags and Residues*

Smelting Tap Slag (TAP) - iron silicate slag generated by the smelting process, i.e. the extraction of the metal from the ore. Tap slag is one of the most characteristic forms and is distinguished by either a ropey morphology of the upper cooling surface or a fine crystalline fracture with spheroidal vesicles.

Smithing Slag Lumps (SSL) - randomly shaped pieces of iron silicate slag generated by the smithing process. In general slag is described as smithing slag unless there is good evidence to indicate that it derived from the smelting process.

Hearth Bottom (HB) - a plano-convex accumulation of iron silicate slag formed in the smithing hearth. The largest diameter (major diameter D1) and the least diameter (minor diameter D2) and the depth (Dp) of each hearth bottom is recorded and presented in Table 2.

Metal (Metal) - metallic iron fragments, that lack a distinctive morphology of an artefact and may be fragments e.g. of bloom, the raw metal extracted from the furnace.

Hammer Scale (HS) - there are two forms of hammer scale, flake and spheroidal. During heating a piece of iron may develop a thin skin of scale, which is predominantly iron oxide. This will break from the metal during hammering, and normally falls to the ground as small (usually less than 5 mm long) fish-scale like flakes. During fire welding, the mechanical joining of two pieces of metal at high temperature, the surfaces to be joined will have been cleaned by the addition of a flux (usually sand). The flux reacts with any scale present to form a thin film of liquid slag. When the pieces are hammered together the slag is expelled, and during flight forms balls of liquid slag (<10 mm diameter) and freezes. Both micro-slags are generated during smithing, and are normally deposited around the working area (around the anvil). The presence of hammer scale is therefore a strong indicator that smithing (primary or secondary) was carried out on the site. Their small size precludes their hand recovery, and they are usually recovered during soil sample sieving (for environmental data).

## *Non-Diagnostic Slags and Residues*

Hearth or Furnace Lining (HL) - the clay lining of an industrial hearth, furnace or kiln that has a vitrified or slag-attacked face. It is not possible to distinguish between furnace and hearth lining.

Cinder (Cin) - high silica-content slag that can either be formed as described above or by high temperature reaction between silica and ferruginous material. It can be considered either a non-diagnostic slag or a diagnostic slag depending on its iron content and morphology.

## Results

A total of 5.7kg of material classed as slag was recovered from the excavation.

### *Overview*

The majority of the slag recovered derives from iron smithing slag, and includes smithing slag and hearth bottoms; there are some possible tap slag fragments.

### *Description*

Table 1 lists the slag types present on the site, the majority of the material was smithing slag lumps (4.75kg), and hearth bottoms (0.7kg). Five possible tap slag fragments (244grams) were identified in the large quantity of slag recovered from context 054. A very small quantity of early modern coal clinker (8gm) was recovered from the topsoil. Context 001 contains nine corroded iron objects, all probably modern, including nails (3), hooks etc., and two copper alloy objects a ring and a picture hook. Three iron objects were recovered from medieval contexts: these included two nails and a large piece of either iron or iron rich slag (context 042, weight 265g).

The slag was concentrated in three contexts (context 054 – 2.2kg; context 020 – 1.6kg; Context 42 – 1.0kg). During a site visit the exposed surfaces were checked for the presence of hammerscale, but none was found. A series of soil samples were taken to be assessed in the laboratory for hammerscale (Table 3). The samples were dried and checked for the presence of hammerscale by trawling the soil sample with a magnet. Small amounts of magnetic material were detected but no hammerscale.

The presence of possible tap slag is highly significant, as it would indicate iron smelting being carried out within the castle. However it is probable that as the five fragments represent only 4.3% of the total assemblage by weight, they are not significant. Furthermore they could be smithing slag lumps that were overheated in the hearth and flowed. It was also noted that some of the smithing slag lumps had black vitrified surface, again indicative of possible melting. To rapidly assess whether the possible tap slag fragments differed significantly in manganese content three samples were analysed by non-destructive hand-held X-Ray Fluorescence. The first sample was a control sample, a fragment of one of the hearth bottoms (context 054), a fragment of the tap slag (context 054) and a slag fragment displaying the black vitrification (context 038). The results showed that manganese was not detected in

the hearth bottom fragment, but was present in the tap slag fragment and a minor trace in the black vitrified surface. This data supports the initial identification of the tap slag.

### *Significance*

This small assemblage of ironworking slags is of national importance because there have been very few excavations of castles in recent years, and most data from castles date back to the first part of the last century. Notable exceptions were the excavation of Sandal Castle near Wakefield in the 1960s and 1970s (Johnson et al 1983) which recovered both smelting and smithing slags, which have been recently re-assessed (McDonnell and Andrews 2009). Another problem is that recent excavations rarely investigate early castle stratigraphy and normally reveal information to the latest phases of castles, often the Civil War (e.g. excavations at Pontefract Castle (Roberts 2002)). Hence the slag from Eardisley Castle is of national importance for three reasons. First, its 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>-century AD date; secondly, a randomly-positioned excavation trench in the bailey of a motte and bailey castle revealing evidence of iron smithing indicates that it was a common craft in the castle; thirdly there is some evidence to indicate the smelting of iron as well as blacksmithing was taking place.

Importantly, there are no fragments of hearth lining or scrap bars which are other key indicators of a smithy assemblage. This suggests that the slag was taken from a slag dump outside a smithy and re-used either as infill or hard-core; the lack of hammerscale confirms this interpretation.

### Conclusions

The excavation recovered nearly 6kg of slag from a small trial trench. The majority of the slag (95% by weight) derived from iron smithing; a few pieces are possibly derived from iron smelting. The slag is not in a primary or secondary deposit, as the assemblage lacks the other key indicators of hammerscale, hearth lining and stock iron. The slag was imported from a nearby smithy dump to act as hard-core or in-fill. The assemblage is of national importance as it is securely dated and there are few modern excavations in medieval castles. The slag demonstrates the importance and ubiquity of iron working in medieval castles.

No further work is recommended.

context	Phase	SSL count	SSL wt.	HB wt.	Tap count	Tap wt.	HL count	HL wt.	Fe metal	Cu alloy	other wt.
1									9	2	
2		3	23						2		8
9									1		
18									1		
20		20	1399	190							
25									1		
38		2	36	177							
39		4	143								
42		16	998						1		
53		1	9								
54		>100	1900	320	5	244					
55		15	250								
			4758	687		244					8

Table 1 Slag Listing by Context Number (weight in grams)

Context	Phase	HB wt.	D1	D2	Dp
20		190	85	65	30
38		177	85	60	30
54		320	90	80	35
Mean		229	87	68	32

**Table 2 Hearth Bottom Dimensions (Wt in Grams, D1, D2 and Dp in millimetres)**

context	Sample num	Phase	HS?	Slag?	HL?
54	5		N	N	N
54	6		N	?	N
55	7		N	?	N
55	8		N	N	N
39a	9		N	N	N
39b	10		N	N	N
46a	11		N	N	N
46b	12		N	N	N
46c	13		N	N	N

**Table 3 Summary of soil samples taken for hammerscale**

## 5. Discussion and interim conclusions

### 1. The excavated medieval sequence and the character of Eardisley Castle

The 2011 excavation trench was designed to illuminate – via a sample of a fraction of one per cent – the general character of the medieval castle, by defining the character of the inner bailey perimeter and any buildings that might have been built immediately within it. In both of these aims it was successful.

The excavated evidence, in combination with very limited documentary evidence, suggests that Eardisley was an earthwork castle later supplemented by masonry defences. The earliest excavated feature was the rampart, constructed mainly of turf with substantial dumps of earth, clay and sandstone rubble. Where excavated, towards the south-east corner of the inner bailey, the rampart was found to survive to a height of about 1.4 metres but had clearly once been higher, probably substantially higher, before being removed to create a flat garden at some point in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The excavation trench was located about 15-17 metres back from the edge of the moat on the south side (as recorded by the first edition Ordnance Survey) and about 12 metres within the moat on the east side. The reverse slope of the rampart may be represented in the sondage section by the top of the turf layer 015, though this may to an extent be illusory, the product of cut

features (034/035). No east-west rampart profile was obtainable because of the overlying building and its floor sequence, but the difference in elevation between the base of the floor sequence at the east end of the area and the lowest of the excavated floors at the west end of the area (067), around 40cms lower, suggests a strong underlying slope down to the west, almost certainly the back of the eastern rampart. The implication of ramparts thus demonstrated to be 15 metres wide or more around the bailey perimeter are considerable. The former farmyard and garden representing the levelled inner bailey was calculated by the Ordnance Survey as an area of about 1.7 acres. In its original form, the flat area of the bailey would have been barely a quarter of this. Depending on the form of the bailey defences around the foot of the motte and its encircling ditch, found by the geophysical survey, it seems unlikely that the bailey interior would have been able to accommodate buildings much more extensive than the present farmhouse. Clearly, the early castle was a fortress and not merely a defended household.

Given the limited space within the bailey, and also the proximity of the water table to the present surface, it is no surprise to find what appear to have been dumped deposits of natural material behind the rampart (048 and possibly others) where levelling-up would create more space and dryer living conditions. It also explains the superimposition on top of the rampart of the building represented by wall 062 and the floors to its west.

The principal evidence for the strengthening of the defences in masonry is the recently-discovered early 19<sup>th</sup>-century sketch of 'The walls of Eardisley Court' from the south-east, showing a low and ruinous masonry wall with a corner in the left foreground and what appears to be the crudely-drawn roof of the present farmhouse visible over the wall in the centre. Two higher areas of masonry in what would have been the south-east corner of the enclosure may have been tower footings, though this is uncertain or even speculative; in two places the wall is broken down showing a mass in shadow behind the face, either the wall core or the rampart material behind. Taken with Robinson's account of 'a massive piece of masonry which had probably formed a part of the ancient draw-bridge or sluice-gate' found when labourers were cleansing the 'inner moat' (Robinson 1867, 48), the drawing provides sound, though very limited, evidence of the former presence of a masonry curtain wall.

Was the masonry footing 040 part of the enhanced defences? Built of very large blocks of sandstone and, from the radar results, deeply founded (presumably down to the base of the rampart material), it was apparently designed to carry a significant load, in other words a building of some height. However, as a clay-bonded structure it is unlikely to have been built in masonry to any great height and is assumed therefore to have carried a timber superstructure. It could well have been a tower but it was set back some distance (up to c.15-17 metres) from the curtain wall and the edge of the moat, precluding the possibility of it having been a conventional mural tower, certainly not one projecting forward from the curtain. Only a fragment of the structure lay within the excavated area, cut into the reverse slope of the rampart, though the geophysical anomaly of which it formed part (Roseveare 2010, catalogue no.34) confirms that the main bulk of the structure lay outside

the excavation to the south, closer to the perimeter, but still set back from it. The strongest alternative possibility is perhaps that it was directly associated with the building into which it was inserted, possibly as the footing of a chimneystack to one or more major fireplaces lying just outside the excavated area.

The masonry footing was inserted into a pre-existing building represented by the earlier rubble wall foundation 062 bounding a series of clay floors and occupation layers. Again, it is difficult to comment on the form of this building as only a part of it was seen. The floors extended over a distance of more than 4 metres west of the wall with no sign within the excavated area of an opposing wall, but its overall dimensions are unknown. The post positions 036 and 037 on the wall top could represent the vertical posts of a closed timber-framed wall, or they could have been free-standing, forming one side of an open-sided shed-like structure. The nature of the activities taking place within the building must await clarification from the specialist analyses, though it is clear that heat, specifically wood fires, was a dominant feature. At this interim stage the most likely function is cooking, though it is also clear that iron smithing was taking place nearby (McDonnell, above). Exactly how the masonry footing 040 related to this larger building is unclear. Its footings were dug through a freshly laid clay floor (028) and then an identical clay floor (033) laid to its south and west, sealing the cut and lapping over some of the stones. The clay floor surfaces were then covered by further charcoal-rich occupation material (045) and subsequently by further floors. There was however very little sign of in-situ burning associated with the masonry to support the idea that it was part of a chimneystack, other than a very small patch of burning on its west side (032) against the south section. In short, the insertion of the masonry footing had no archaeologically observable impact on the character of the site on which it was built – there was no discernable difference in the subsequent character of the stratigraphy either side of the masonry footings.

The deposits sampled by the 2011 excavation derive from the domestic (probably kitchen) and craft/industrial functions taking place within the castle – the latter in particular being under-represented in the archaeological record of most castles, leading the specialist to observe that the slags recovered at Eardisley are of ‘national significance’. The discovery of such functions in the south-east quarter of the castle (and perhaps spreading eastwards beyond the inner bailey ditch to the site of the 1994 salvage excavation) is consistent with the finding of a recent survey of thirty historic buildings in the settlement that nearly all were built with their high-end accommodation towards the north-east and (by implication) their service ends to the south-east to accord with the local prevailing wind (James 2005).

## *2. The question of the domus defensabilis*

Disappointingly, the excavation shed no further direct light on the issue of the character and location of the fortified house listed by Domesday Book in Eardisley (DB f.184v) and there was no pre-Conquest pottery amongst the

excavated assemblage. However, the supposition that the Domesday *domus defensabilis* occupied the same site as the castle is strengthened by the links that can now be demonstrated between the castle site and the church next door, although the archaeology of these is post-Conquest. Not only do the church and the castle occupy adjoining sites on a slight west-east ridge – the motte lying on a westward extension of the church's axis – the two sites were isolated from the rest of the settlement by a north-south ditch, cutting across the ridge alongside and parallel to the main road. Excavated on a site a few metres to the north of the church, the ditch was 5.8m broad, but only 1.3m deep and contained 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>-century pottery in its fill. Whether this was a serious defensive feature or a property boundary distinguishing the church and castle and their surroundings from the remainder of the settlement, is unclear (Archer 2009).

However, one implication of the castle excavation is that it now seems less likely that the footprint of the bailey, without its motte, can be taken to reflect closely that of a pre-existing fortified enclosure around a pre-Conquest or very early Norman hall. The size of the ramparts found by the excavation suggests that the construction of the castle was accompanied by a great deal of earth-moving, and that this was not a case where an earlier enclosure was simply retained, strengthened and re-used. There was no evidence of any turf-line within the rampart material suggestive of a substantial pause or gap between construction phases. A pre-Conquest hall and enclosure may well underlie the castle, but no evidence of it was forthcoming from the small excavated sample; the evidence was rather of a very substantial disruption to the pre-12<sup>th</sup>-century landscape capable of obscuring all earlier evidence – at least without total excavation on the lines of that at Goltho in Lincolnshire.

Attention has been drawn by Malcolm Mason to the subtle west-east ridge shared by the church and castle. This is apparent cartographically in the line of the 75-metre contour, which reveals the ridge as an east-facing promontory, extending eastwards across the main north-south road, with low-lying flood-prone land to the north bisected by watercourses, one of which also crosses the road. Archaeobotanical work on the Eardisley district in the early medieval period is lacking, but if the Domesday description of Eardisley – a fortified house in the middle of a wood – is taken at face value, the possibility arises that the east facing ridge approximately represents the early clearing, Aegheard's *leah*, which gave the settlement its name (Copplestone-Crow 1989, 77).

### 3. *The castle and the borough*

Disregarding, for the moment, the enticing but unprovable proposition above, there is no doubt that the east-west ridge represents a settlement focus that was well established by the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century at the latest. In addition to the church and the castle, salvage excavation in 1994 between the two found a number of floor surfaces and other deposits, burnt clay fragments, either from a wattle-and-daub panel or from an oven, and some evidence of iron working (a hearth bottom). The associated pottery was not closely dateable

but was mainly 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>- century. A substantial cut was also observed in section on the west side of the lane running between the castle and the church, suggesting the possibility that these deposits belonged to an outlying part of the castle, perhaps a narrow strip of ground between the known inner bailey ditch and an outer concentric ditch where the lane now runs (Topping 1994). In general terms the deposits recorded on this site and those in the 2011 excavation, a few metres to the west across the inner bailey ditch, appear to have been similar, and show that the eastern periphery of the castle was, despite its proximity to the church, characterised by activities that involved burning for domestic and industrial purposes. The suggestion of an outer ditch between the castle and the church is speculative, given the fragmentary nature of the evidence, but the existence of a third ditch, running north-south along the main road frontage is more secure given that this is based on a full excavated profile (see above). On balance it appears that the area around the church, including the 1994 salvage excavation site, lay within the bounds of the castle, but the possibility of domestic tenements within some kind of outer bailey cannot be excluded.

Was this the origin of the nucleated settlement at Eardisley that went on to acquire urban characteristics in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, recognised by the grant of a market charter and fair in 1233 (Buteux 1996, 2)? This is a possibility, though occupation has now also been demonstrated before the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century on the east side of the main road, 150 metres to the north, on a low-lying and flood-prone plot that had reverted to agricultural use by the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century (Stone 2001). Such a location is most unlikely to have been the first occupied site in the village, raising the possibility that the settlement of Eardisley had achieved more or less its present linear form by c.1200.

This, in turn, further underlines the present unpredictability of medieval urban development in western Herefordshire. While, it seems, 12<sup>th</sup>-century Eardisley grew rapidly and almost instantly reached its full pre-Black Death extent, recent work by Herefordshire Archaeology has suggested that 13<sup>th</sup>-century Kington, despite its sophisticated grid-plan was occupied mainly by farmers, while at nearby Lyonshall a framework was created for settlement which was scarcely if ever occupied.

#### *4. The archaeology of Eardisley Castle: management implications*

Before the excavation, information on the below-ground composition of Eardisley Castle came from three sources. The first was the brief 1994 intervention described above just east of the inner bailey, which found medieval deposits at 0.3m to 0.4m below the modern ground surface, where they lay to a depth of roughly 0.8 metres. The second source was a pair of investigations of very limited extent around Castle House. In 2005 underpinning to prevent subsidence by means of two test pits and two bore holes was archaeologically monitored (SMR 42633). A bore-hole drilled from the base of a test pit struck natural subsoil at a depth of c.1.8m, but other than this no archaeological data was forthcoming (Ward 2005). In 2006 six holes

were dug around the house during the repair of its drains (also SMR 42633), none, however, penetrated below previous disturbance (Crooks 2006).

The final source of information was the geophysical survey undertaken by ArchaeoPhysica Ltd, referred to extensively already (Roseveare 2010). Without the opportunity for ground testing, this predicted that castle-period deposits lay at a depth of about 0.65m under the gardens south of Castle House and would continue to a depth below ground level of about 1.44m. The ground-penetrating radar survey also showed a distinct clear band, devoid of hard reflective targets, around the eastern edge of the survey area, and this was interpreted as silt within the infilled moat.

The 2011 excavation trench has provided an invaluable control on the geophysics results. The depth of burial of castle-period deposits beneath the garden soil proved to be less than predicted, at 0.31 to 0.41m below the current surface – very well preserved deposits of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and earlier lie just over a spade-depth below the garden. The overall depth of archaeological deposit on the excavated site was not established definitively, but was at least, and probably just over, 1.72m. Moreover, although the complexity of the archaeology was hinted at in the geophysics in terms of the multiplicity of hard reflective targets, remote sensing could not have predicted the extremely dense character of the stratification, with over twenty successively re-laid floors, patches and occupation deposits within a vertical depth of c.45cms, commencing immediately under the cultivation soil. And, as noted earlier, many of these layers – while perfectly apparent when excavated in plan – were invisible in section and would not have been susceptible to recording during a watching-brief.

The excavation was also able to show that the strongly reflective anomaly (Roseveare 2010 catalogue no.34) targeted by the trench was, as predicted, a substantial masonry feature (040), increasing confidence that other such anomalies are what they appear to be and that the inner bailey does indeed contain a multiplicity of masonry and partly masonry features. Finally, the anomaly-free zone around the eastern edge of the lawn and the geophysics survey area was shown to represent not the edge of the infilled ditch but the rampart within it.

In summary, although the 2011 excavation was, at six metres by three, an extremely small sample of the inner bailey, let alone the castle as a whole, it has been able to demonstrate the extreme sensitivity of the core of the monument, with very well preserved deposits close to the present surface. While there has been a major levelling-down episode that saw the removal of the inner bailey ramparts and, almost certainly, the truncation of the uppermost archaeological deposits in the interior, the result has been to expose sensitive, complexly-stratified earlier (12-13<sup>th</sup>-century) deposits to the base of the present cultivation horizon.

## *Further Work*

As the introduction outlined, this is an interim report produced in advance of major specialist contributions on the pottery, animal bone and botany. These are expected to be able to illuminate the chronology of the sequence, the use of the medieval building, the environmental context of the site and something of its range of contacts with the outside world. The final report is due for completion in July 2011.

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# ILLUSTRATIONS

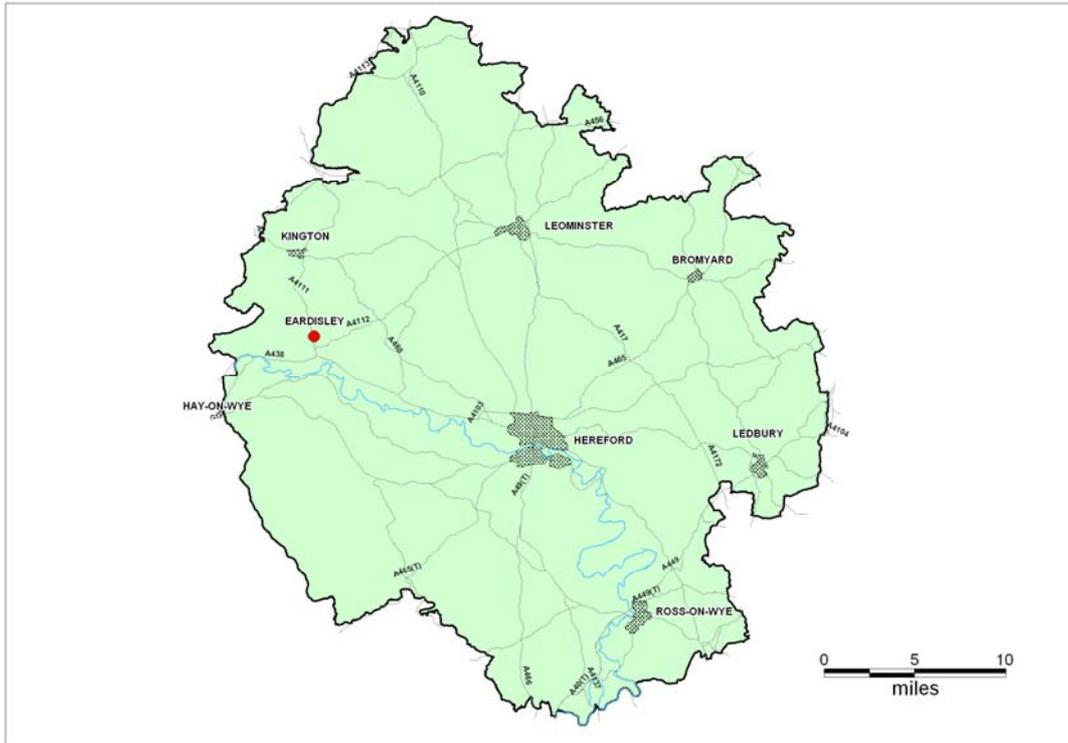


Fig.1 Location plan

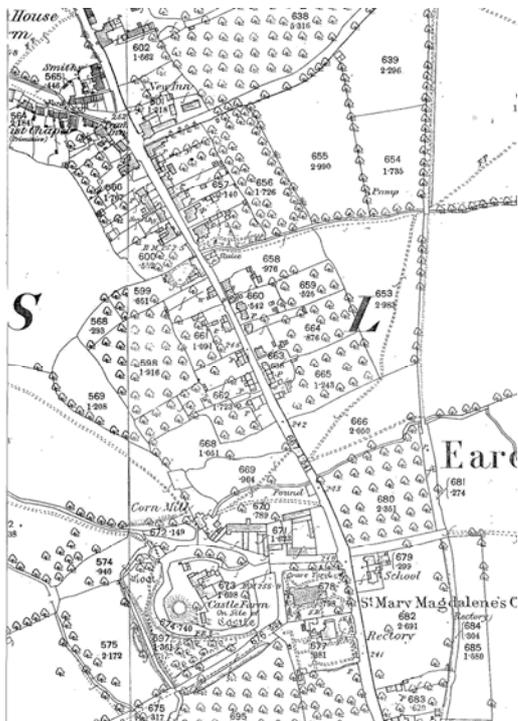


Fig. 2 Eardisley Castle and village as surveyed in 1885 (Ordnance Survey first edition 1:2500)

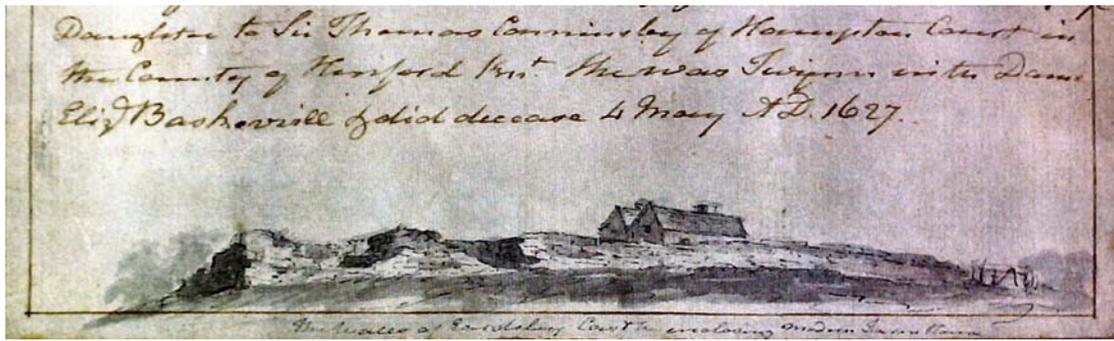


Fig. 3 'The walls of Eardisley Court'. Early 19<sup>th</sup>-century sketch of the castle, probably from the south-east.

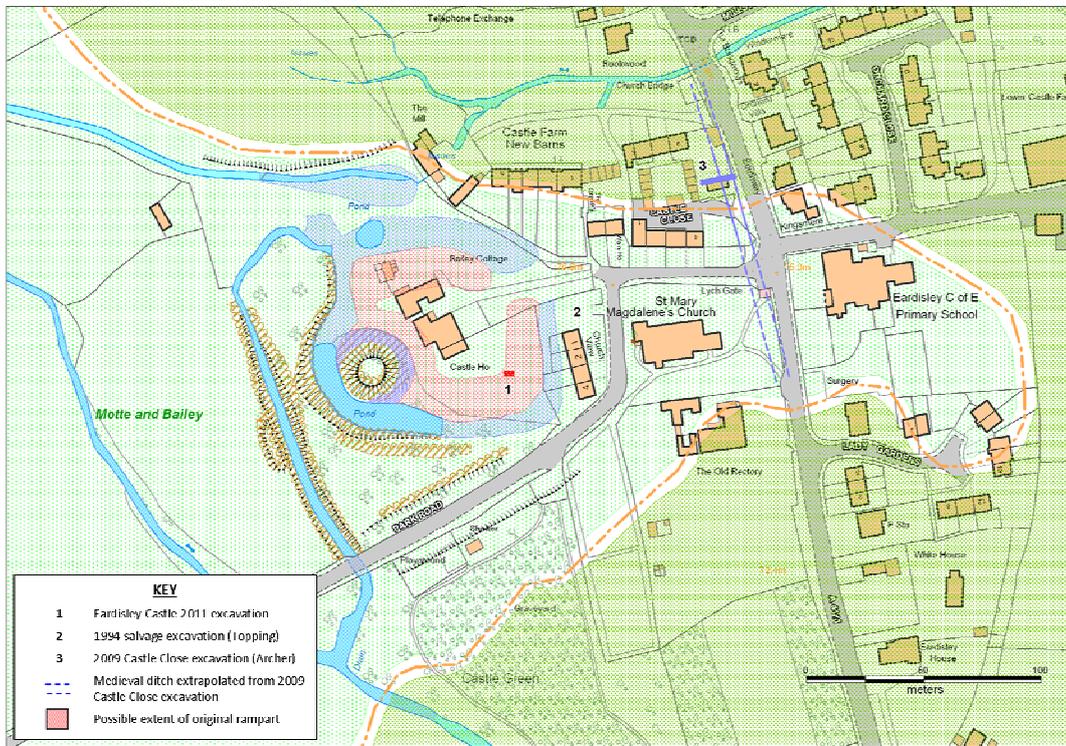


Fig.4. Eardisley Castle and its immediate setting: the east-west ridge, the castle and the church



Fig. 5 Aerial photograph of Eardisley Castle looking north (Neil Rimmington, Herefordshire Archaeology)



Fig. 6 The motte, looking north-west along the bailey ditch



Fig.7 Castle House, the former inner bailey and the motte: contextual view from the church tower, looking west. The excavation is just visible bottom centre-left



Fig. 8 The 2011 excavation. Cess pit 013 foreground; rubble around post-settings 036 and 037 centre, masonry footing 040 to rear. Looking west



Fig. 9 The final stage of excavation: east end sondage in foreground; wall 062 centre with black occupation horizon 039/046 behind, masonry footing 040 to rear



Fig.10 Masonry footing 040, looking south



Fig.11 Rubble wall 062, looking south



Fig.12 East end sondage: section through turf rampart

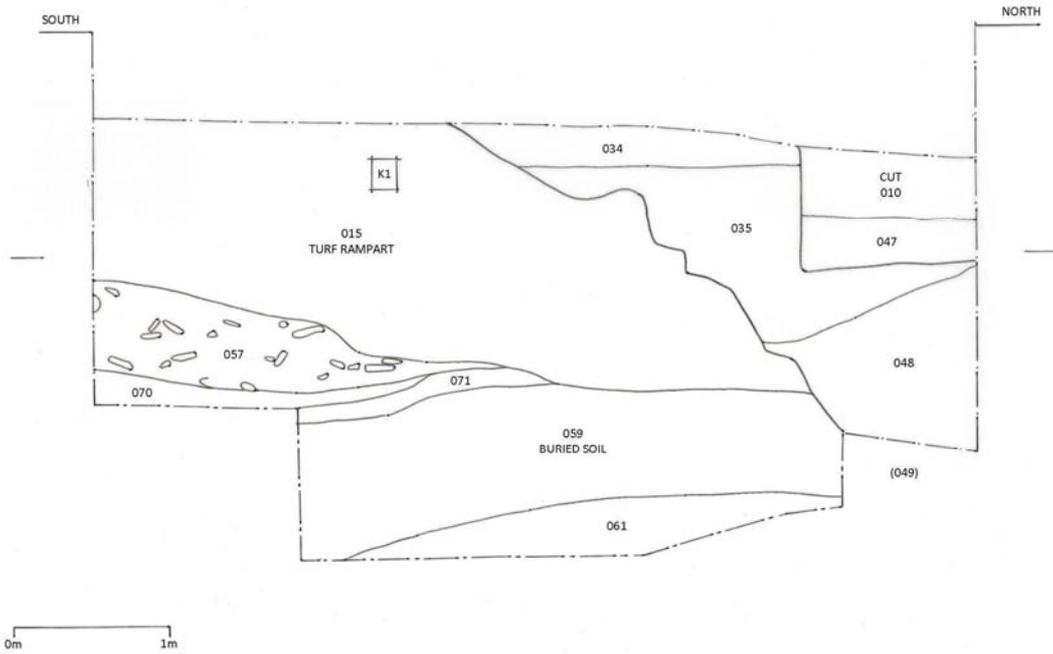


Fig. 13 Rampart section, east end sondage

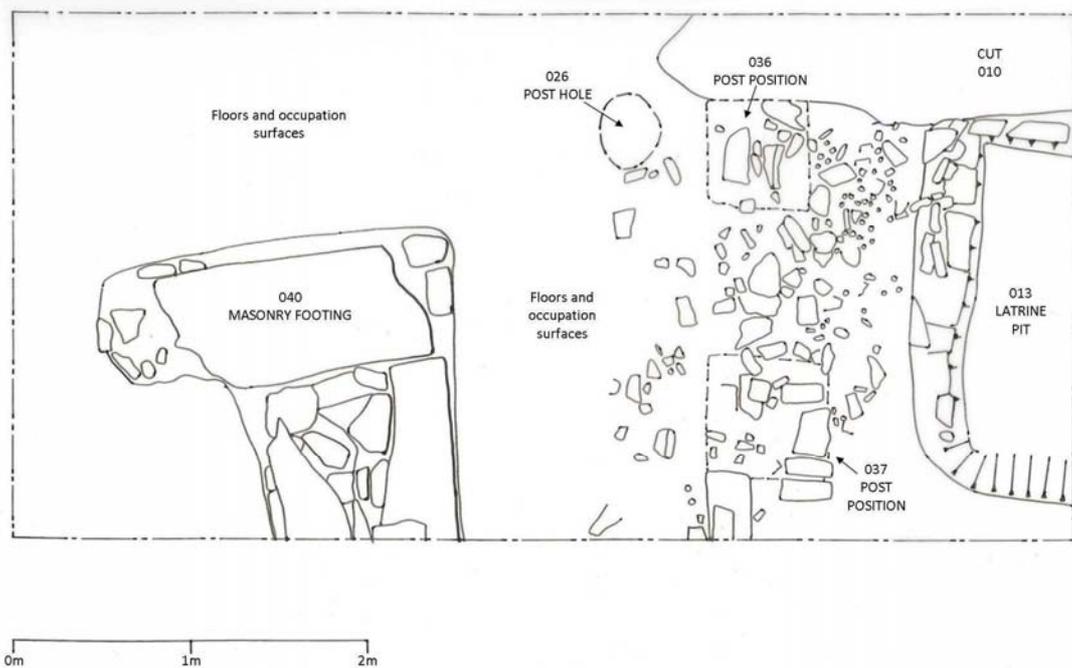
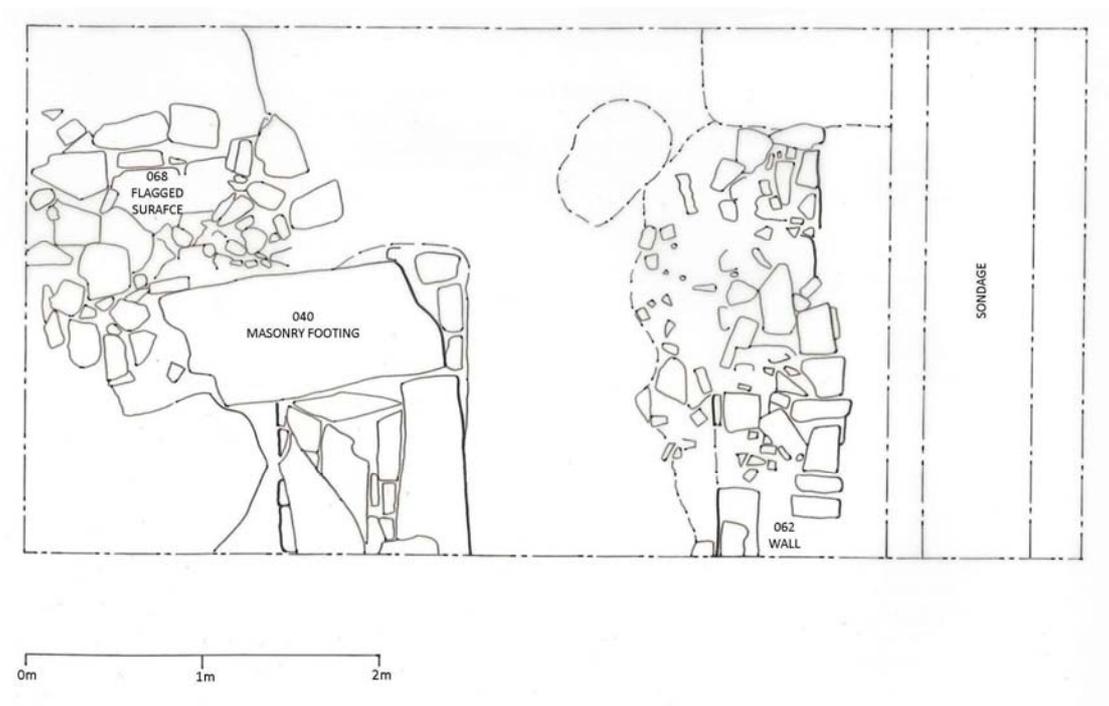


Fig.14 Excavation plan, penultimate stage, before definition of wall of wall 062. North to top.



Fig,15 Excavation plan, final stage. North to top.