



Tintagel Castle, Cornwall

Archaeological impact assessment of site interpretation proposals 2015



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This study was commissioned by Win Scutt, Assistant Properties Curator (West), English Heritage and was carried out by Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Cornwall Council. The Project Manager was Jacky Nowakowski.

The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of Cornwall Archaeological Unit and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

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Cover illustration

An artist's impression of the larger than life sized statue of King Arthur, proposed for a site above the western cliffs on Tintagel Island.

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Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	2
2.1	Project background	2
2.2	Aims	2
2.3	Methods	2
3	Location and setting	2
4	Designations	2
4.1	National	2
4.2	Regional/county	3
5	Significance	3
6	Management issues	3
7	Site history	4
8	Summary of interpretation proposals	5
9	Archaeological impact assessment	6
9.1	Introduction	6
9.1.1	Physical impacts	6
9.1.2	Setting and visual impacts	6
9.2	Assessment of impacts by site area	7
9.2.1	The valley and approach track	7
9.2.2	The haven and beach	7
9.2.3	The Barbican and Lower Ward	7
9.2.4	The Upper Ward	8
9.2.5	The Inner Ward and Lower terraces	8
9.2.6	The Iron Gate	9
9.2.7	The upper parts of the Island	9
9.3	Assessment of impact by interpretation method	10
9.4	Assessment of impact by individual site	12
10	Suggested mitigation strategy	15
10.1	Physical impacts	15
10.2	Setting/visual impacts	16
10.3	Cumulative impacts	16
11	Overall Conclusions	16
12	Summary impact table	17
13	References	18
13.1	Primary sources	18
13.2	Publications	18
13.3	Websites	19
14	Project archive	20

Figures

Figure 1 Map showing the locations of interpretation features in the new proposals for Tintagel.

Abbreviations

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CAU	Cornwall Archaeological Unit
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
CRO	Cornwall Record Office
EH	English Heritage
HER	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record
NGR	National Grid Reference
OD	Ordnance Datum – height above mean sea level at Newlyn
OS	Ordnance Survey
RCHM(E)	Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England)
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

1 Summary

Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU) was requested by Win Scutt (Assistant Properties Curator (West), English Heritage) to provide the costs for an archaeological appraisal of interpretation proposals for Tintagel Castle on 15 January 2015. CAU were commissioned to undertake this work on 21 January 2015.

The majority of the current interpretative material sited at Tintagel Castle is acknowledged to be inadequate, and is proposed for replacement. A new interpretative scheme has been drawn up with the aim of engaging a wider audience than currently visits the site and providing them with information appropriate to the international importance of this site.

The interpretation proposals considered in this appraisal are those set out in detail in a document titled *Tintagel Castle: Scheme Design Proposals* produced by Bright3d and dated December 2014, as revised by Angharad Brading, Interpretation Manager (west), English Heritage, document revision dated January 2015.

The new interpretation proposed for Tintagel includes a new exhibition in the visitor centre, waymarkers, information panels and a small number of sculptural features. All areas of the site, including the approach track from Tintagel Hamlet, are to be addressed in the new scheme.

This appraisal considers the range of impacts which might arise from the implementation of this scheme, including not only physical impacts on underlying archaeology or historic fabric but also visual, setting and cumulative impacts on components of the site and on the monument as a whole.

2 Introduction

2.1 Project background

Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU) was requested by Win Scutt (Assistant Properties Curator (West), English Heritage) to provide the costs for an archaeological appraisal of interpretation proposals for Tintagel Castle on 15 January 2015. CAU were commissioned to undertake this work on 21 January 2015.

Planning permission PA14/05729 has recently been granted for improvements to visitor facilities comprising: relocation of existing skip and associated landscaping, separation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic within drop-off area, improved drainage and service routes, the removal of the existing stepped bridge and provision of a new ramped bridge and a new link bridge across the stream, relocation of walls, improved materials within forecourt, small extension to and a new canopy to the Visitor Centre, the removal of existing ticket hut and the construction of a new ticket kiosk.

Cornwall Council planners have indicated that the extent and range of works would be considered as being more than a non-material amendment to permission PA14/05729 and that a minor material amendment by varying the approved plans condition of PA14/05729 would effectively result in a requirement for a fresh application, for which English Heritage would need to re-submit full details of the visitor centre works and the new on-site interpretation proposals.

2.2 Aims

This appraisal is intended to assess the potential impacts (both physical and setting/visual) of the interpretation scheme on the Guardianship site of Tintagel Castle and its environs. The outputs from the project consist of this report to English Heritage and an entry in the OASIS/ADS-Online archaeological projects database.

2.3 Methods

The proposals set out in the interpretation scheme have been assessed on a methodological and site by site basis, based on current archaeological knowledge of the site (see References section of this report), and utilising the 2011 English Heritage guidance on the assessment of setting impacts. The means by which such impacts might be mitigated have also been considered.

3 Location and setting

Tintagel Castle is located on a rugged section of the north coast of Cornwall and is centred at SX 20494 89102 in the parish of Tintagel, the parish church being located on the clifftops to the south of the Island. The Island extends to approximately 116,000 square metres and ranges in elevation from sea level to 84m OD on the almost level plateau forming the upper part of the Island, though the Scheduled Monument includes the Upper and Lower wards of the Castle on its landward side. Tintagel Castle is one of the county (and nation's) top premier visitor attractions with yearly estimates of over 200,000 visitors.

4 Designations

4.1 National

Tintagel Castle, Cornwall is an internationally significant scheduled ancient monument (SAM 1014793) owned by the Duchy of Cornwall and under the guardianship and management of English Heritage.

4.2 Regional/county

The site is located within an AONB, Heritage Coast, SSSI, and is surrounded by Public Rights of Way around the southern areas of the site.

5 Significance

The 2013 revised Conservation Plan for Tintagel Statement of Significance states:

Tintagel is a site of international significance. This is based on the dramatic setting of the north Cornish coastline that continues to influence archaeological, historic, artistic, architectural, and literary works. Some of these cultural works are successive revisions of poorly understood events during the period of the post-Roman Celtic settlement. This process occurs over a period of 1500 years, within a Cornish, British and European cultural framework, which has expanded throughout the 20th century to achieve global significance.

Tintagel, as a monument and a place, can be used to assert or reinforce a wide range of contrasting and sometimes conflicting cultural concepts, ideas, identities and interests, such as:

- *The international significance of the site in the post-Roman (Dark Age) period;*
- *The international significance of the site to Plantagenet and Angevin attempts to form an Anglo-Franco cultural identity;*
- *The international significance of some aspects of the ecology of the site;*
- *The role of Tintagel in popular British mythology as the place most closely linked to King Arthur's birth.*

Other aspects of the site – e.g. much of the ecology, the castle and medieval remains, the geology, its role in literature and art - would all place Tintagel as a nationally important site.

6 Management issues

As summarised in the 2013 Conservation Plan, the principal issues affecting Tintagel are identified as:

- *The fragility of the internationally important archaeological remains;*
- *The vulnerability of the internationally important standing remains;*
- *The many understandings and interpretations concerning cultural identity and spirituality;*
- *The predominant aesthetic is the wild dramatic character, with a secondary aspect due to the juxtaposition of high status medieval castle against the vernacular nature of the remains of the local post-medieval slate industry and agriculture;*
- *The visual and historic links between the island and the parish church and between the castle and the village;*
- *Insufficient information to fully understand many aspects of the property.*

The Conservation Plan notes that:

'Recent management has been driven by; inter alia, the implications of substantial visitor numbers, the impact of erosion on archaeological remains, and health and safety concerns. The scale and cumulative effect of these works are increasingly creating a distinct character for the property. This could give rise to an effect that acts against, rather than protects, the significance and character of the property. Further incremental changes could leave visitors without a clear image of the site and its significance. Landscape design, including a reduction in the use of signage, especially on the island, should be consistent with the wild character, where it should be directly

linked to nature conservation measures. Here and elsewhere, future maintenance programmes could remedy the less sympathetic aspects of the work carried out over the past 60 years'.

In relation to the archaeology of the site, the 2013 Conservation Plan states:

'The archaeological remains at Tintagel are an internationally significant source of information on a period in history, and a series of socio-cultural processes, of international interest. The primary purpose for the monument being in Stewardship is to ensure that the remains are conserved for the appreciation and education of future generations'.

'The most basic philosophic tenet of this plan is that the management of the monument should maximise visitor's enjoyment, appreciation and understanding, commensurate with the long-term conservation of the most significant aspects of the monument'.

'The sites and areas reviewed in this Conservation plan were originally taken into Stewardship in order to ensure the conservation of those important remains to the highest standards – and this remains the raison d'être for the Stewardship site today. The conservation of these sites and remains in the future is the highest priority for this Plan. Conservation is interpreted to mean ensuring physical survival for the benefit of future generations, and also promoting/increasing intellectual understanding through providing interpretation for present and future generations to appreciate'.

7 Site history

There is currently very little evidence for pre-Roman occupation on the headland of Tintagel though occurrences of prehistoric flints and Neolithic/Bronze Age cup-marked stones do provide evidence for some activity at this time.

There is some evidence that Tintagel was a relatively important place by the Roman period and it has been suggested that Tintagel was possibly the "Durocornovio" (fort of the Cornovii) of the *Ravenna Cosmography* (Thomas 1993, 84). During the post-Roman period (from the 5th to early 7th centuries AD) the headland of Tintagel developed into a major fortified citadel (the neck of the headland being separated from the Mainland by the excavation of the "Great Ditch"). It is suggested that this may point to the origin of the place-name, in Cornish *'dyn tagell'* as this means the fortress of the constriction or throat (Padel 1988).

The survey of the Island undertaken by RCHM(E) during the 1980s together with excavations undertaken since the 1930s have revealed numerous buildings and structures related to the post-Roman period, most particularly on the Island, though excavation, artefactual and survey evidence from the mainland parts of the site suggest that the early medieval occupation extended on to the landward part of the site.

All suggest that at Tintagel there was a degree of control, organisation and power to trade directly with the Byzantine Empire. The nature of the trade is not known though there is some evidence from other sites that the distribution of tin was an important element (Thomas 1993; Harry and Morris 1997; Barrowman *et al* 2007).

Subsequently the Island was abandoned (apart from a small chapel being built on the peak of the Island c 1100) until the present castle was constructed by Richard, Earl of Cornwall during the mid-13th century. Though the more substantial buildings on the Island, along with the garden and the tunnel, date from this period, the ceramic evidence suggests that occupation appears to have been sporadic (it was sometimes used as a state prison in the 14th century), ceasing by the 15th century. In the 16th century, two small gun houses were built on the Island in response to a possible threat from the Spanish (it is uncertain if they were ever completed); the rest of the castle however was by then described as a picturesque ruin (Thomas 1993).

During the 19th and early 20th centuries Tintagel quickly became an increasingly popular and highly romanticised tourist destination, particularly following the coming of the main line railway to Cornwall and the construction of the Railway Hotel at Tintagel. The

Reverend Kinsman, taking on the title of the Constable of the Castle, oversaw the reconstruction of some elements of the monument, and a guide was employed to take visitors around the Castle.

Tintagel Castle is owned by the Duchy of Cornwall, but its management passed into the Guardianship of the State, being cared for by the Office of Works (and its successors) from 1929 and became a Scheduled Ancient Monument in 1981 (Monument No 1014793). Archaeological investigations overseen by C.A. Raleigh Radford during the 1930s, were followed by some landscaping, reconstruction and repair works. English Heritage commissioned Glasgow University (GUARD) to undertake research excavations at Site C (an area previously excavated by Radford's pre-war campaigns, Barrowman, Batey and Morris 2007) and elsewhere from 1990 to 1999, whilst Cornwall Archaeological Unit and its successors have undertaken a number of watching briefs during safety, visitor management and other works within the Castle site since the mid-1980s to the present day (see for example Hartgroves and Walker 1986; Appleton, Fox and Waters 1998; Lawson-Jones 1994; Thorpe 2004; Reynolds 2006; Thorpe 2007; 2014).

8 Summary of interpretation proposals

The majority of the current interpretative material sited at Tintagel Castle is acknowledged to be inadequate, and is proposed for replacement. A new interpretative scheme has been drawn with the aim of engaging a wider audience than currently visits the site and providing them with information appropriate to the international significance of this site.

The interpretation proposals considered in this appraisal are those set out in detail in a document titled *Tintagel Castle: Scheme Design Proposals* produced by Bright3d and dated December 2014, as revised by Angharad Brading, Interpretation Manager (West), English Heritage (revision dated January 2015), together with further information provided by Win Scutt dated 11 February 2015 and comments from on earlier drafts of this assessment provided by Jeremy Ashbee and Heather Sebire.

The introduction to the interpretation scheme states:

Tintagel Castle is undergoing a period of development to enhance and enrich the visitor experience. The new interpretation at Tintagel forms part of a larger project. Set on a rugged headland, Tintagel Castle has an amazing story which combines romantic fiction from both the Dark Ages and the medieval period of kings, castles, intrigue, myth and legends. Visitor numbers to the Castle have been growing steadily and English Heritage now want to create an outstanding and memorable visitor experience which encourages more visitors from the key targets of Child Pleasers, Experience and Culture Seekers.

Given the very unique nature of the site and its stories, there has been a desire to take a more creative approach to the interpretation and develop a range of features that will engage a broader audience than is traditionally expected at a site of this kind.

The project team at English Heritage has developed a number of key themes on which it is proposed that the interpretative stories will be built. These are:

- *Tintagel and legend: Geoffrey of Monmouth and King Arthur;*
- *Dark Age Tintagel, community and trade;*
- *The medieval castle and Earl Richard;*
- *Later visitors to Tintagel and its industrial heritage;*
- *Natural Tintagel – flora, fauna, geology (more of a sub-theme).*

Given that the King Arthur legend is so central to many visitors' interest in the site, the interpretation needs to be a careful blend of historical facts and a more whimsical and creative storytelling.

The aims of the project are stated as to:

- *Encourage more visitors to pay to visit the site;*
- *Enhance the visitor experience throughout the site;*

- *Provide engagement opportunities for the core audience of Child Pleasers, Experience and Culture Seekers;*
- *Help visitors plan their visit and orientate themselves;*
- *Engage visitors in both the King Arthur and more factual history of Tintagel;*
- *Create a sense of surprise and discovery to enhance the visitors' enjoyment;*
- *Help visitors to have an emotional connection to the site and its stories;*
- *Respect the sensitive natural and historical significance of the site.*

The scope of the project combines both a range of new interpretative material within and surrounding the pay boundary as well as a complete upgrading of the exhibition material within the visitor centre, which will interpret the archaeological, historical, mythical and ecological importances of the site.

The proposed externally-sited interpretative material comprises a mixture of waymarkers, information panels (some plinth-mounted and accompanied by artefacts) and sculptural features. Some of this material is proposed to be sited on the approach track from Tintagel hamlet and around the Haven; a limited amount of new features will be sited in the mainland wards of the Castle – this will include a 'sword in the stone' sculpture; there will also be reinterpretation of several aspects of the Island, and the scheme includes a life size, free-standing statue of King Arthur overlooking the western Island cliffs and a 'Tristan and Yseult' carved slate bench accompanied by new paving with inscribed text in the walled garden.

The scheme is currently at the design stage, and no information was available concerning the text and graphics to be included on the panels, waymarkers and other features, nor that which will be sited in the Visitor Centre.

9 Archaeological impact assessment

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 Physical impacts

The installation of some elements of the proposed interpretation may result in physical impacts on both sub-surface archaeology and the upstanding historic building fabric. Some areas, structures and features are of potentially higher sensitivity than others, particularly those which are known or strongly suspected to contain shallowly-buried archaeological layers or features, or which represent historically-significant stonework. These impacts could, in some cases be avoided by the relocation of the interpretation feature, could be minimised by light-touch attachment methods or could be mitigated to some degree through archaeological recording, either prior to, or during the installation phase.

9.1.2 Setting and visual impacts

Another range of impacts may arise where the installation of the interpretative material impacts on the setting of features or areas of the historic site by detracting from their visual appearance or diminishing their authenticity. Such effects can also be cumulative, for example where multiple interpretation features are proposed within specific areas of the site, leading to intrusive visual clutter. Again, some parts of the site have higher sensitivities to this type of impact, particularly those which currently lack much in the way of modern infrastructure, where such features would not be expected to be found, or where they would be unduly visible.

Setting impacts are sometimes capable of mitigation through careful design and siting.

Factors to be considered when assessing the magnitude of impacts upon setting (English Heritage, 2011) include the following:

- Visual dominance;
- Scale;
- Intervisibility;
- Vistas and sight lines;

- Movement, sound or light impacts;
- Unaltered settings.

English Heritage promotes a five-step assessment process of which the first three steps are particularly relevant here. This assessment is therefore based on a consideration of the following:

- Heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposals;
- Analysis of the contribution made by setting to the significance of these assets;
- Assessment of the impact of the development on the significance of these assets based on an understanding of any visual change in their settings.

9.2 Assessment of impacts by site area

9.2.1 The valley and approach track

Several interpretative features are proposed for the approach track from Tintagel hamlet to the present carpark near the visitor centre, these consisting of wall-mounted bronze strips with etched text at the head of the approach track, a plinth-mounted interpretation panel and a welcome panel inset into a vertical piece of slate. Existing visual clutter will be removed from the approach route to the castle.

This area of the broader site is thought to be archaeologically relatively insensitive and is also capable of accommodating the limited number of proposed interpretation features without these being overly visually intrusive.

9.2.2 The haven and beach

Several new features are proposed in and around the Haven. These comprise 'Arthur's Compass' – a metal and slate sculptural feature set into the ground surface immediately above the Haven, a pair of fence-mounted information panels interpreting the site's natural history and the story of Merlin and the historic use of the haven, and the sculptural carving of one of the rock outcrops on the beach to represent Merlin's face. Metal strips with etched text are proposed for the steps up to the Island.

This area is characterised by partly stabilised ruined structures relating to the interface between the local quarries and the sea, and most are of 19th-century date. There is some modern infrastructure including modern steps and railings, though the scale of the cliffs prevent these from being visually dominant. The beach itself is characterised by natural features, and the former concrete steps to the beach have been converted into quasi-natural features by the erosive power of the waves.

Interpretation of the archaeological features making up the Haven is currently limited, and some features require active management to prevent them being lost to storm and wave damage. Some of the proposals for this area are low-key in nature; others, such as 'Arthur's Compass' and 'Merlin's Face' may have some impact on the setting of the Haven, given the absence of any relationship between them and the archaeology of this part of the site.

9.2.3 The Barbican and Lower Ward

The new features proposed within this area consist of a plinth mounted information panel interpreting the Lower Ward story and the 'Sword in the Stone' sculptural feature. The structures within the Lower Ward almost entirely consist of consolidated medieval walling, though there is a modern wall at the northern end of this part of the Castle. The paving within this area and along the track from the Barbican entrance was installed a few years ago. There is little overtly modern infrastructure in this area with the exception of the present ticket hut, which is to be removed and a replacement constructed at the southern entrance to the Barbican, which will significantly de-clutter this part of the castle.

The plinth-mounted interpretation panel is typical of the 'furniture' which a visitor would expect to find on a site such as Tintagel. The 'Sword in the Stone' sculpture is deliberately intended to be a visually arresting feature. Given its proposed location with

the Island as a backdrop, some impacts on the settings of adjacent elements of the site may occur. Dependant on the final sites chosen for the plinth-mounted panel and the sculpture, there may be some limited potential for physical impacts on the archaeology of the Lower Ward.

There have been a number of small-scale archaeological recording projects within this area of the Castle. These have tended to show that the Medieval deposits below the current ground surface tend to be archaeologically relatively sterile, but that these overlie significant Early Medieval features and sites (see for instance Hartgroves and Walker 1986).

9.2.4 The Upper Ward

The only new feature proposed for the Upper Ward consists of a wall-mounted panel interpreting this element of the Castle. The panel is a direct replacement for an existing one.

The structures within the Upper Ward almost entirely consist of consolidated medieval walling, though there are areas of modern safety walling along the western side of this part of the Castle. There is almost no modern infrastructure within this area of the Castle. The installation of the panel is unlikely to result in any significant setting impacts given its size and proposed character as traditional interpretation furniture on sites such as Tintagel. Physical impacts are likely to be very limited.

The Upper Ward has been little investigated archaeologically since the work undertaken by Raleigh Radford and the Office (later Ministry) of Works during the 1930s (Barrowman, Batey and Morris 2007).

9.2.5 The Inner Ward and Lower terraces

A number of new features are proposed for the Inner Ward and Lower Terraces on the Island. Etched metal strips attached to the front of the shelter near its southern entrance, together with a small, wall-mounted information panel are intended to interpret Florence Nightingale Richards' story; within the Inner Ward, a plinth-mounted panel is intended to interpret the Great Hall, whilst a further plinth-mounted panel explains the architectural history of this part of the Castle.

Beyond the northern gateway of the Inner Ward, a wall-mounted panel on the Custodians' Hut will tell Tintagel's archaeological story, a plinth-mounted panel with 3D elements is to interpret the nearby reconstructed Site F buildings, two small fence-mounted panels next to the path above Site F relate to 'views, vistas and tourism'. A, landscaped, stone-faced, slate-topped bench is proposed immediately adjacent to the Site C buildings next to the path up to the top of the Island.

The structures within the Inner Ward almost entirely consist of consolidated medieval walling, though there is a Custodian's Hut just to the north of the Inner Ward. Many of the Early Medieval structures on the Lower Terraces were reconstructed in masonry with turf cappings following their excavation by Raleigh Radford, but these blend in well with the remainder of the site, and are not visually obtrusive.

The positioning of the plinth-mounted panels within the Inner Ward will be critical in minimising their physical and setting impacts. The original locations proposed for these features are in archaeologically-sensitive parts of this area, but revised locations for both the plinth-mounted panel and sculpture have been made and these should considerably reduce the potential for physical impacts and for visual and setting impacts.

The panel on the Custodians' Hut will result in no setting or physical impacts, whilst Feature 13, adjacent to the reconstructed Site F buildings will replace an existing panel. The fence-mounted panels on the path will be relatively unobtrusive and their installation will have no physical impacts.

The creation of the bench (B1) might require some limited excavation of material currently forming the adjacent bank, which is in a location (below early buildings) which has typically been found to be artefact-rich during previous archaeological

investigations at Tintagel. There is also the possibility that this bank covers presently-undocumented structures. It is recommended that if the construction of this feature requires excavation then such work should be preceded by an appropriate level of archaeological investigation and reporting.

The bench will also introduce a new built element into an area of the site where all other such features represent historic elements of the site. It is unlikely, however, that this new feature will be interpreted as being part of the upstanding historic fabric of Tintagel.

Archaeological investigation of the Inner Ward has, by and large, been limited to the exposure of the Medieval Great Hall and associated buildings. However, the small-scale investigations which have taken place here strongly indicate the presence of an underlying high status Early Medieval site (Appleton et al 1988).

The area to the north of the Inner Ward was also partly investigated by Raleigh Radford, whilst the 1985 mapping undertaken by RCHM(E), the re-excavation of some buildings at Site C by Glasgow University and small-scale excavations by CAU have revealed the extent and significance of the Early Medieval sites and artefactual deposits along the eastern side of the Island.

9.2.6 The Iron Gate

One interpretative element is proposed for this part of the site: a small fence-mounted interpretation panel adjacent to the Iron Gate.

With the exception of the modern safety post and rail fence, there is no modern infrastructure within this area of the site.

The new interpretation proposed for this part of the site is low-key and will have no physical or setting impacts.

Little excavation appears to have taken place within the area abutting the Iron Gate, though it is thought likely that this Medieval structure had an earlier precursor (see Thorpe 2007).

9.2.7 The upper parts of the Island

A number of new interpretative features are proposed for the open, upper part of the Island. These comprise a plinth-mounted panel adjacent to some of the excavated and conserved Early Medieval buildings, interpreting them, a vertically-set slate waymarker, a plinth-mounted panel at the entrance to the garden, slate paving inset into the surface of the garden and a carved slate bench set against the garden wall telling the Tristan and Yseult story, a small information panel fixed to the fencing round the well, a post-mounted panel adjacent to the tunnel, a plinth-mounted panel adjacent to the chapel and the King Arthur sculpture set on an area of bedrock overlooking the western cliffs.

This section of the site is characterised by extensive open, often level spaces and low, turf-capped ruins (some consolidated), together with low earthworks, short turf, earth or rock-surfaced paths and, in some parts near the cliffs, extensive areas of bare rock. There is almost no modern infrastructure within this large open area, and the impression gained by the visitor is of a wild, 'natural' section of coastal landscape containing some generally under-interpreted archaeological sites. This part of the site is thus very sensitive to change, particularly through the introduction of modern features, especially anything vertical, and especially if intended to be eye-catching. In this respect, the proposed statue of King Arthur could have a significant impact on the setting of the archaeology of the Island.

In relation to the other interpretative features proposed for this part of the site, the fence and post-mounted panels are all relatively small, will have negligible visual impacts and will result in no physical impacts. Plinth-mounted panels raise some limited potential for physical impacts on any underlying archaeology and will need to be sensitively sited to avoid visual impacts, as will also be the case with the vertical slate waymarker. The slate paving stones proposed within the garden are unlikely to give rise to physical impacts, though being non-original features could have some potential

to detract from the authenticity of this element of the site. The bench may be appropriate at this location, though will be a non-original feature.

The principal element of the proposals – the 2.5m high cast metal statue of King Arthur on the western cliffs – is also likely to be the most contentious. Physical impacts on the Scheduled site will be limited to a small number of holes drilled into bedrock for the bolts which will secure the statue to the ground. In contrast, the visual impacts resulting from the erection of this statue may be more substantial. The sculpture is tall and intended to be visually arresting, but is to be sited in an area characterised by bare rock and very low turf within which there may be very subtle archaeological remains or areas of thin soil under which slight features might be concealed. The 1985 RCHM(E) survey revealed lines of stakeholes in now-exposed bedrock and partially exposed low-lying wall footings across the southern and western part of the Island. These have the potential to be impacted upon by the enhanced footfall within this area which would result from the installation of this sculpture, and English Heritage should monitor the effects of any erosion which takes place. This statue may also be visible across the upper part of the Island, and possibly also in some views of the Island from areas of the adjacent mainland.

Although a small number of structures on the upper part of the Island were excavated and consolidated by Raleigh Radford and the Ministry of Works during the 1930s, the RCHM(E) survey of the Island revealed for the first time the density and wider extent of apparently Early Medieval sites across this exposed, more or less level area, and on its western slopes. No excavation has taken place anywhere within this area since the 1930s, and some sites are so shallowly-buried that they must be considered vulnerable to loss through erosion, particularly as this part of the Island is likely to experience significantly higher visitor footfall if the statue is placed at the proposed location.

9.3 Assessment of impact by interpretation method

Inserted metal strips

These features are proposed for fixing to walls in a number of locations, as well as into a stairway surface. These are not likely to have any significant physical impacts on the archaeology of the site. They will however introduce some modern elements into historic parts of the site and its approaches, and the example fixed to the shelter at the entrance to the Inner Ward (13) will alter the appearance of an historic structure.

Engraved text on slate slab

This feature will require some limited excavation and the emplacement of concrete in order to site and secure it, so will have some potential for physical impacts on sub-surface archaeology. Despite being a relatively small feature, the waymarker is to be sited on the Island and therefore has the potential to result in both some limited physical and visual impacts.

Panel on slate plinth (including 3D elements)

These features will need to be provided with shallow foundations, raising the potential for physical impacts to sub-surface archaeology, except where the features are to be sited in areas of known low sensitivity. Where they are proposed to be sited within the Castle and on the Island, the plinths need to be visually distinguishable from the historic masonry fabric, which will be achieved by using machine-cut slate. Within more open areas of the site there is the potential for the plinths to give rise to visual impacts unless care is taken to identify locations where this will not be the case.

Welcome sign

The mounting of this sign will require some limited excavation, raising the possibility of some minor damage to sub-surface archaeology, although the location proposed for this feature is thought to have a low potential for the survival of sub-surface archaeological features. Visual impacts will be limited given the nature of the location proposed for this feature (a car park), despite its size.

Arthur's compass hard surfacing

The creation of this feature will require some degree of landscaping, raising the potential for physical archaeological impacts, though as this area formerly sited a telescope, this is unlikely. The size and design of the feature and the character of the location suggested for it are likely to result in some visual impacts, though as the feature is at ground level, these will be limited.

Fence-mounted panel

The method of interpretation will result in no physical impacts. Given the scales of the panels, visual impacts will be negligible.

Sculpted rockface

Some permanent physical and visual impacts are inevitable if this approach is pursued, though the small scale of the carving will limit these.

HPL mounted panel

Given the location proposed for this panel, physical and visual impacts will be minimal.

Wall mounted panel

Physical impacts will be limited to those arising from the fixing methods. One of these panels is proposed to be fixed to the Custodian's Hut, a modern building where impacts will be insignificant. The other panel is to be sited in the Upper Ward, where, it is proposed to re-use the existing panel mounting.

Slate paving stones

The emplacement of these slabs will require some limited excavation of the surface of the Garden area, and as a result there may be some potential for physical impacts on the archaeology of this part of the site. The slabs will introduce modern elements to an area of the site which currently contains no other modern features apart from fences, and so to some degree they will be visually intrusive. They will also have some impacts on the setting of the Garden.

Post-mounted panel

Existing posts are to be used to site these features avoiding any physical impacts. Providing that the panels are small in scale they should have only limited visual impacts.

King Arthur sculpture

Given the location at which this major feature is proposed, direct physical impacts will be limited to drill holes in the underlying rock, though collateral impacts through erosion caused by greatly increased footfall in the surrounding area is likely to have more damaging impacts on the fragile archaeology of this part of the Island. Visual impacts on the low-lying archaeology of the adjacent upper parts of the Island may occur given the exposed location at which this element of the interpretation is proposed.

Sword in the Stone sculpture

Mounting this feature has the potential for some limited physical impacts, though these will be limited given that it is proposed to site it is proposed to site the feature within an area which has already been excavated on the surfaced area or near the head of the steps to the Island. The sculpture will be a deliberately visible 'feature' and therefore has the potential to result in some setting impacts on the Lower Ward and on views of the Island from it.

Bench built into bank

Any landscaping undertaken during the creation of this feature could result in potential physical impacts, and prior archaeological excavation of the proposed location is recommended should a requirement for this be indicated. Providing that is sensitively designed, the visual impacts of the bench should be limited, though it will be important to ensure that the bench cannot be confused with historic features.

Tristan and Iseult bench

Some landscaping is proposed within the Garden to site the bench, which may physically impact shallow sub-surface archaeology. Provided that the bench is sensitively designed and relatively unobtrusive it should not give rise to significant visual impacts.

9.4 Assessment of impact by individual site

Site 1. Metal strips on walling

The attachment of these features to walling near Tintagel hamlet will have minimal physical impacts within an area and on a feature of low archaeological sensitivity. Setting impacts will be negligible. The existing rather obtrusive sign will be removed, and the alternative proposed here will result in a positive impact.

Site 2. Panel on slate plinth

There is the potential for physical impacts given the associated landscaping, but the area proposed for this feature is considered to have low archaeological potential. The construction of the plinth will result in some very limited visual impacts on views towards the Castle site.

Site 3. Welcome sign

The site chosen for the welcome sign is likely to have low archaeological potential and limited physical impacts. The car park is an appropriate location for this feature, and contains and is bordered by modern features, so the potential for setting impacts is low.

Site 4. Arthur's compass

The site chosen for this feature has not been archaeologically investigated and there is some potential for physical impacts on underlying archaeology, though this area formerly sited a telescope. Visual impacts are likely given the location proposed for the compass, which does not contain many modern features. The feature is unconnected to its location, and although visual impacts will probably be limited, some setting impacts may result.

Site 5. Panel fixed to fence

Given that this panel is to be mounted on an existing modern fence there will be no physical impacts. There are no existing signs at this point, and minor visual impacts may result, but an interpretative panel would not be out of place at this point on the path from the visitor centre to the Island.

Site 6. Fence mounted panel

Given that this panel is to be mounted on an existing modern fence there will be no physical impacts. There are no existing signs at this point, and minor visual impacts may result, but an interpretative panel would not be out of place at this point on the main pathway from the visitor centre to the Island.

Site 7. Partial face carved into in rock

The creation of this sculpture will result in some irreversible physical impacts, though these would be limited in scale if the face is life-sized; it would also result in some limited setting impacts on the Haven, as this area of the beach does not contain any man-made features. In addition, the feature proposed does not reference the archaeology or history of Tintagel, but instead refers to a myth associated with the adjacent cave.

Site 8. Metal strip on stairway fence

The installation of this feature would produce no significant physical impacts, and, being mounted on an existing fence, would result in minimal visual impacts.

Site 9. Metal strip on shelter

Physical impacts associated with the installation of this elongated metal strip would be limited to the need for fixing points within a modern timber lintel. The addition of this feature would alter the appearance of a Victorian structure.

Site 9a. HPL panel on shelter wall

Impacts associated with the installation of this feature would be limited to those arising from fixing the panel to the historic fabric. Given that this panel would be inside the shelter, it would not be visually obtrusive.

Site 10. Panel on slate plinth with 3D metal elements

The site proposed for this feature overlies shallowly-buried Early Medieval layers, raising the potential for physical impacts on the underlying archaeology which would need to be mitigated. The precise positioning of a plinth and information panel within the Inner Ward should be carefully considered to avoid such impacts.

Site 11. Panel on slate plinth

The proposals for this feature include not only the construction of a plinth adjacent to a consolidated Medieval building but also a degree of landscaping, raising the potential for physical impacts on the underlying archaeology, as well as a limited degree of intrusion into the setting of the building.

Site 12. Panel fixed to wall of store

The store is a modern structure and mounting this panel to its walls will not result in any physical impacts. There are already some features attached to the wall of this building. Rationalisation of these during the installation of the panel would help to reduce visual impacts, which would, in any case, be limited.

Site 13. Panel on slate plinth with 3D element

This plinth-mounted panel is proposed at the foot of the new steps in a currently relatively uncluttered area. Providing that the foundations for the plinth are limited in depth, there are unlikely to be only minor physical impacts on buried archaeology. This feature is on the site of an existing panel, and though it would be preferable to re-site at to a location which would reduce visual impact on the nearby reconstructed Site F buildings, it is understood that this would not be not be practicable.

Site 14. Panel fixed to fence

This panel is to be attached to an existing modern fence and will not produce any physical impacts. Given its restricted size and location, visual impacts will be negligible.

Site 15. Two panels fixed to existing fence

This pair of panels is proposed to be attached to the fence at the viewpoint above Site B. There will be no physical impacts. There is an existing interpretation panel next to the fence at this point, and its replacement by a pair of panels would result in neutral visual impacts.

Site 16. Small panel on slate plinth

A plinth-mounted panel is proposed in an area occupied by early Medieval earthworks and reconstructed excavated buildings in the northern section of the upper part of the Island at this location. There is the potential for some limited physical impacts on the sub-surface archaeology of this area. The very open character of this part of the Island and the absence of modern features suggests that the plinth and panel could potentially be visually obtrusive to a limited degree.

Site 17. Engraved text on slate rock

Given the site chosen for this feature and the need to set it into the ground, there is the potential for some limited physical impacts on the underlying archaeology. The low key design of and local material used for this feature will greatly limit its visual impact.

Site 18. Small panel on slate plinth

This plinth-mounted panel is proposed as a replacement for an existing small interpretation feature adjacent to the entrance to the garden. There is some potential

for visual confusion with the historic fabric of the garden wall, for which reason a contrasting material is to be used in its construction.

Site 19. Slate paving stones in ground

It is proposed to install slate paving carrying text into the surface of the walled garden. Provided that any excavation required to install the paving is very limited in depth, there are unlikely to be any physical impacts, as this area has already been excavated. The feature is intended to reference detail recorded during the excavation of this site, though the inscribed text relates to a myth associated with the garden.

Site 20. Small panel fixed to fence

A small panel is to be bolted to the modern wooden fencing surrounding the well. This proposal will not give rise to any physical impacts and, given the small scale of the panel, it will be visually unobtrusive.

Site 21. Small panel on existing post

A small panel is to be attached to an existing post adjacent to the modern metal fencing around the tunnel. The visual impacts of this proposal will be negligible.

Site 22. King Arthur sculpture

A 2.5m high cast metal sculpture of King Arthur is proposed for a clifftop location in an open, exposed and isolated part of the Island which is characterised by rock outcrops, bare rock, very low wind-clipped turf and many subtle archaeological sites. There are no readily perceptible built elements within this part of the Island. The attachment of the sculpture to the bedrock would result in a negligible physical impact.

However, the substantially increased footfall across the inherently fragile maritime turf and underlying thin friable soils within the surrounding area may result in their accelerated erosion and the exposure of and damage to fragile underlying archaeological deposits and features, and it is understood that consideration will be given to how this could be minimised.

Such a deliberately-visible sculpture at this location might well be considered to be out of character with this part of the site. Its installation has some potential to impact on the setting of the wider Tintagel site, given that it could potentially be visible across some of the upper parts of the Island.

This is clearly the most contentious element of the new interpretation proposals. This sculpture celebrates and places a mythical figure within the new interpretation scheme for Tintagel, and will inevitably be the most memorable element of the new interpretation scheme.

Site 23. Small panel on slate plinth with 3D element

A plinth-mounted information panel is proposed in an area of complex and not at present fully-understood excavated and consolidated set of buildings including the early chapel. Although much of this area was probably excavated by Raleigh Radford and others, there is no guarantee that this has comprehensively been the case, and so physical impacts on the below-ground archaeology of this area cannot be discounted, and should receive appropriate archaeological mitigation. The materials proposed for the mounting of this panel should be carefully selected to minimise any potential for confusion with the historic building fabric.

Site 24. Panel on slate plinth with 3D element

A plinth-mounted interpretation panel is proposed for this area of the Lower Ward. The area occupied by the slate path was excavated under archaeological supervision a few years ago (Reynolds 2006), and the underlying material was found to be archaeologically more or less sterile, so the potential for physical impacts is assessed as low. A location on the site of the removed ticket office has been chosen, in order to minimise the visual impact on the lower ward.

Site 25. Sword in the stone sculpture

This 'statement sculpture' which links Tintagel Castle to another aspect of the Arthurian legend is proposed at the northern end of the Lower Ward and will reinforce links between Tintagel Castle and the legend of King Arthur.

This feature will be sited on an area occupied by the recently-installed path, and thus impacts on any below-ground archaeology will be avoided. Some visual impacts from the installation of this feature will be unavoidable, as it will be a deliberately visible feature of this area of the Castle.

Site 26. Panel fixed to wall in Upper Ward

A small interpretation panel is proposed to be attached to one of the consolidated walls in the Upper Ward. It is understood that there is already a panel at this point in the upper Ward, whose attachment points will be re-used, so no physical impacts will result from its installation. The visual impacts arising from the installation of this panel would be relatively low, as such features are common interpretational furniture on sites such as Tintagel.

B1. Bench built into bank

A bench has been proposed on the path leading from the Lower Terraces to the upper parts of the Island at a point adjacent to the excavated and conserved buildings which make up Site G. Locations downslope from these buildings and other artificial terraces on the Island have been shown through past interventions to have significant archaeological potential, as their hillwash deposits are often rich in artefactual material (Thorpe 2015). If the creation of the bench entails excavation into the bank adjoining the path, the area of the bank likely to be affected by these works should be archaeologically excavated in advance of the works. In order to limit visual impacts, the materials and styles used to construct the bench should be clearly distinguishable from the historic and consolidated building fabric on the Island. The construction of the bench will, however, reduce impacts on adjacent walling, which is used by visitors for this purpose.

B2. Bench with Tristan and Yseult interpretation

A rustic slate bench is proposed alongside the internal face of the south-western wall of the enclosed garden, carving on this referencing a legend associated with Tristan and Yseult (a legend which features Tintagel and which may have some historical grounding). It seems likely that Raleigh Radford's team has already excavated most of this area, substantially limiting the potential for physical impacts on its sub-surface archaeology. Visual impacts could be limited if the bench, were to be sensitively designed, used local materials and is relatively austere in appearance. That having been said, it will be an inauthentic feature within the garden and will be a bold interpretative statement, so some visual and setting impacts are inevitable.

10 Suggested mitigation strategy

10.1 Physical impacts

Whilst many of the new interpretation features will result in no or minimal physical impacts, some interpretation mounting types, particularly the plinth-mounted panels and vertically-set slate waymarker, and also Bench B1 and the paving slabs in the walled garden (should these be installed), will intrude into the Scheduled site, and may intersect shallowly-set archaeological layers, potentially resulting in limited negative impacts occurring.

Relocation of these features to less archaeologically sensitive locations (for instance areas of the site which have already been documented as having been excavated) may be possible in one instance, allowing such physical impacts to be reduced to a negligible level. For those sites where this is not possible, it is recommended that a programme of archaeological evaluation trenching or, as a less satisfactory alternative, archaeological watching briefs during the groundworks phase of the works, would allow these sites to

be investigated and recorded, and any artefacts within the affected areas to be collected for future analysis.

10.2 Setting/visual impacts

Some of the setting/visual impacts of the new interpretation strategy arise from the materials proposed in specific areas, some from the particular locations proposed for interpretative materials; a small number result from the form of interpretation proposed.

Where possible, as set out in section 9.4 above, suggestions have been made on a site by site basis as to how visual or setting impacts might be mitigated, generally by some degree of relocation of individual interpretation features to reduce clutter, visual dominance, or competition which might impact on the settings of authentic historical or archaeological features.

Four features – those which are key components in the new interpretative strategy – appear incapable of mitigation in this respect: the statue of King Arthur to be sited above the western Island cliffs, the paving slabs in the walled garden, the sculpted face on a rockface adjacent to Merlin's Cave and Arthur's Compass. Each represents a significant new element in the Tintagel landscape, and in each case they relate to myth and legend rather to the archaeology and history of the site. In the case of three of these features their setting impacts may be relatively limited, though this will be unavoidable in the case of the statue of King Arthur.

10.3 Cumulative impacts

English Heritage advocate the assessment of cumulative impacts in undertaking assessments of the type attempted here. In the context of the current proposals, this requires an assessment of the changes to the site which would result from the totality of the interpretative scheme, including the removal of all existing interpretative materials, and also taking into account the material to be incorporated into the new Visitor Centre exhibition and the recently-produced site guide.

In the majority of the areas of the site, the proposed interpretation is restrained in extent and, provided that some careful thought is given to positioning and the use of appropriate materials in order to prevent the interpretative features from becoming visually dominant, cumulative impacts will not arise. The use of an integrated design style and a limited range of features should avoid visual dissonance, particularly since the existing interpretation is also to be removed.

In one area – the Haven and its surroundings - it is suggested that the change from an area which is currently not interpreted to one which will site four new features will need to be particularly carefully handled. It must be borne in mind that it is the site itself which is important, and interpretative features should not detract from it.

Cumulative physical impacts are unlikely given the small footprints of the limited number of interpretative features whose proposed sites will require some groundworks.

The final potential cumulative impact to be considered is neither physical nor visual, but relates to perceptions of the entire monument. A relatively wide range of topics are proposed for interpretation at areas around the site and in its wider surroundings. However, all of the five sculptural elements of the new interpretation relate either to the links between Tintagel, King Arthur and Merlin or the less-well known Tristan/Yseult story. These will be the most visually striking and memorable of the physical interpretative features. It is important, therefore, that the new interpretation, viewed in the whole, achieves an appropriate balance between these myths and the internationally-significant archaeology of the site.

11 Overall Conclusions

The recently-updated Conservation Plan clearly states that Tintagel's international significance is based on the fact that *'The archaeological remains at Tintagel are an internationally significant source of information on a period in history, and a series of*

socio-cultural processes, of international interest. The primary purpose for the monument being in Stewardship is to ensure that the remains are conserved for the appreciation and education of future generations.'

Alongside this must be considered English Heritage's requirements for the future development of the site for which they have management responsibility, these being based on a desire to increase paying footfall at Tintagel, particularly for two identified key visitor groups, and to produce high quality interpretation for the site covering a broad range of themes.

The proposed new interpretation strategy clearly attempts to these address these twin requirements, and the new interpretative material covering the archaeology, history and natural history of the site is relevant and will be provided in the new exhibition in the visitor centre. The sculptural features, in particular the larger than life statue of King Arthur proposed for the western cliffs, will probably be very popular with the visiting public, though will inevitably be contentious, particularly amongst the professional archaeological community.

12 Summary impact table

Feature No	Likely physical impact	Suggested mitigation	Likely visual/setting impact	Suggested mitigation
1	Neutral	None	Minor positive	None
2	Minor negative	Watching brief	Neutral	None
3	Negligible negative	Watching brief	Neutral	None
4	Minor negative	Watching brief	Minor to moderate negative	None
5	Neutral	None	Neutral	None
6	Neutral	None	Neutral	None
7	Moderate negative	None	Moderate negative	None
8	Negligible negative	None	Minor negative	None
9	Neutral	None	Neutral	None
10	Minor negative	Relocate or watching brief	Minor negative	Relocation would be preferred
11	Minor negative	Relocate or watching brief	Minor negative	None possible
12	Neutral	None	Minor positive	None
13	Minor negative	Watching brief	Minor negative	None possible
14	Neutral	None	Neutral	None
15	Neutral	None	Neutral	None
16	Minor negative	Watching brief	Minor negative	Identify visually unobtrusive location
17	Minor negative	Watching brief	Minor negative	None possible

18	Negligible negative	None	Minor negative	None possible
19	Minor negative	Watching brief	Minor to moderate negative	None possible
20	Neutral	None	Neutral	None
21	Neutral	None	Neutral	None
22	Minor negative to moderate negative (damage through increased footfall)	Monitor erosion and mitigate if this takes place	Moderate negative	None possible
23	Minor negative	Watching brief	Minor negative	Identify visually unobtrusive location
24	Minor negative	Relocate or watching brief	Minor negative	None
25	Minor negative	Relocate or watching brief	Minor negative	None
26	Minor negative	Relocate to modern wall	Neutral	None
B1	Minor to moderate negative	Excavation in advance of construction if required	Minor negative	Careful selection of materials to avoid visual dissonance or confusion with historic features
B2	Minor negative	Watching brief	Minor negative	Careful selection of materials to avoid visual dissonance or confusion with historic features

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13.3 Websites

<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/> English Heritage's online database of Sites and Monuments Records, and Listed Buildings

14 Project archive

The CAU project number is **146460**

The project's documentary, digital, photographic and drawn archive is maintained by Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Cornwall Council, Fal Building, County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro, TR1 3AY.

English Heritage/ADS OASIS online reference: [cornwall2-202999](#)

Tintagel Castle Interpretation and Wayfinding Location Schedule

Last Updated: 28/10/2014 @ 16:00pm

Interpretation and Wayfinding

1. Strips of metal fixed to existing wall (General interpi.
2. Panel on slate plinth (General site info).
3. Bespoke welcome sign. (On path, edge of carpark next to bridge).
4. Interpretive hard landscaping (Arthur's compass).
5. Panel fixed to fence (natural history story).
6. Fence mounted panel (Merlin's story).
7. Partial face in rock (Merlin's Story).
8. Metal Strip on stair way to island entrance.
9. Strip of metal fixed to edge of smaller. (Florence Nightingale Richards story).
- 9a. HPL panel on wall of shelter. (Florence Nightingale story).
10. Panel on slate plinth with 3D metal elements on slate plinth shelf (Great Hall story).
11. Panel on slate plinth (architectural story).
12. Panel fixed to wall of store (Archaeology investigation).
13. Panel on slate plinth with 3D element to the side (Dark Age story).
14. Panel fixed to fence (Iron Gate story).
15. Two panels fixed to existing fence (Views, vistas and tourism).
16. Smaller panel on slate plinth (Dark Age story).
17. Engraved text on slate rock (General directional info)
18. Smaller panel on slate plinth (Garden Story).
19. Slate paving stones inserted into ground (Tristan and Isolt story).
20. Small Panel fixed to fence (Well Story).
21. Small panel on existing post (Tumult Story).
22. Sculpture: King Arthur.
23. Small panel on slate plinth with 3D element (Chapel Story).
24. Panel on slate plinth with 3D element (Lower Ward story)
25. Sculpture: Sword in the stone.
26. Panel fixed to wall (Upper Ward story).

Interpretive Bench Seating

- B1. Bench built into bank.
- B2. Bench - With interpretation (Tristan and Isolt).

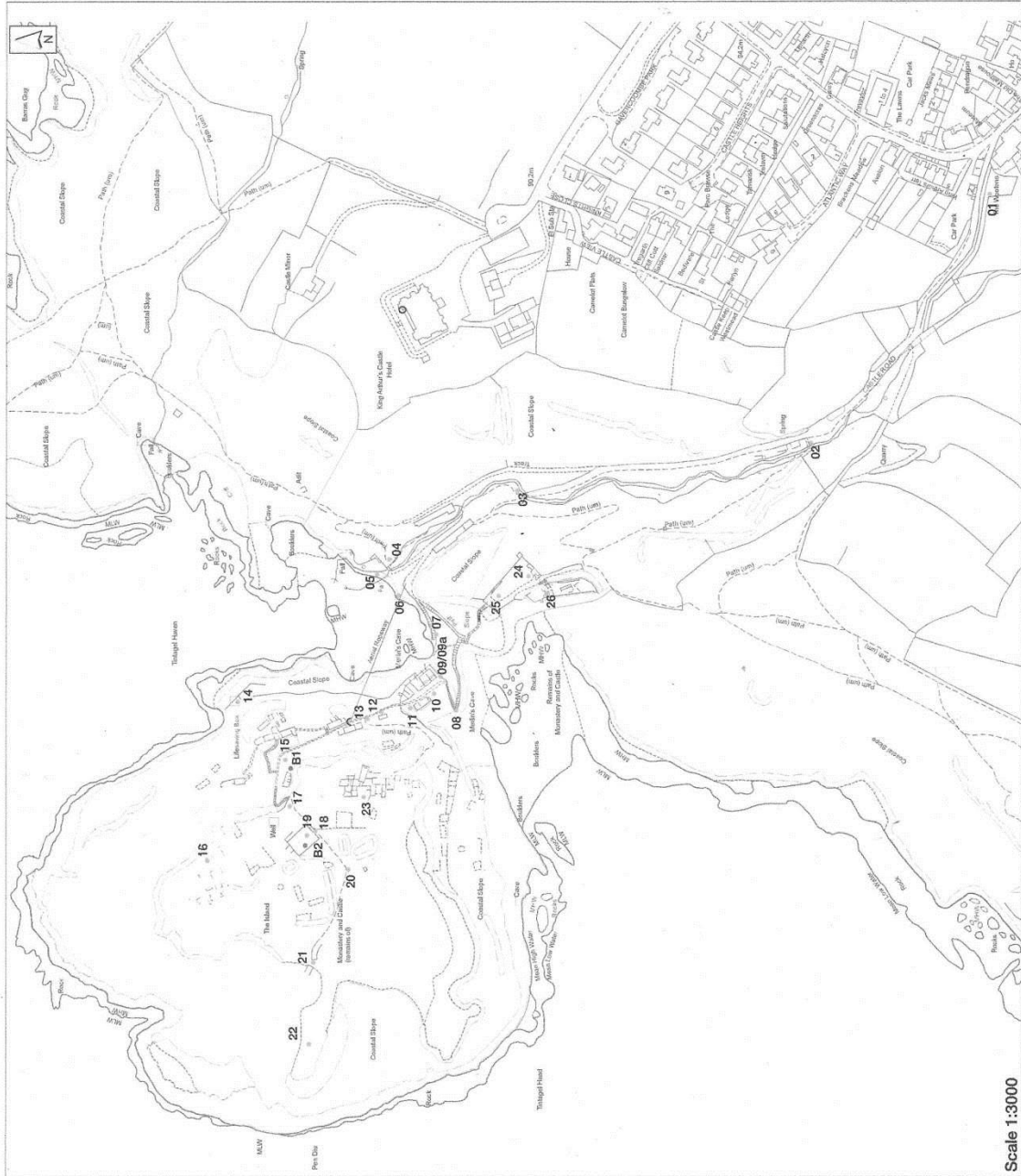


Fig 1. The locations of the features proposed in the new interpretive scheme for Tintagel. Source bright3d 2015