

A WATCHING BRIEF ON THE INSTALLATION OF NEW PATH FURNITURE AT

**CAYNHAM CAMP,
CAYNHAM, LUDLOW,
SHROPSHIRE, 2017**

by
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A report for
Countryside Maintenance, Outdoor Partnerships,
Shropshire Council

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In July 2017 improvements were made to footpath furniture on a public right of way (Footpath Routecode: 0514/18A/6) at Caynham Camp, near Ludlow, Shropshire. Caynham Camp is an Iron Age hillfort situated on the summit of a small spur at the western foot of the Clee Hill escarpment.

1.2 Caynham Camp is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (National Ref.: 1010313) as defined by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, and the location of the footpath works lay within the boundary of the Scheduled Ancient Monument (see Fig. 1).

1.3 In accordance with the Scheduled Monument consents for these works, an archaeological watching brief was maintained by the Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council, on the excavation of post-holes for a new gate and a waymark post. The excavations were carried out by the Shropshire Council Countryside Maintenance team and Parish Paths Partnership volunteers. The excavations were carried out with minimal disturbance to the ground.

1.4 The aim of the archaeological watching brief was to allow for the preservation by record of any archaeological remains that were encountered during the excavations for the new path furniture.

1.5 A schedule of work was prepared for the work and submitted to Historic England with the application for scheduled monument consent.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Caynham Camp is a well-preserved Iron Age hillfort of a nationally rare type (large in area and with a single defensive rampart), and is noted for its exceptionally fine and apparently undisturbed entrance earthworks. The hillfort is roughly oval in plan with maximum dimensions of 460m south west to north east by 190m transversely and has a total enclosed area of approximately 4ha. The defences are designed to take maximum advantage of the natural strength of the hill and show three phases of construction. The hillfort has three annexes on its southwest side, two of which are included in the Scheduled area. Tradition also links the hillfort with Cromwell's campaign against the Royalist-held Ludlow Castle, stating that he used the hill as a camp from which to launch his attack.

2.2 Peter Gelling undertook three seasons of small-scale excavation work at Caynham Camp between 1959 and 1961. This work concluded that the rampart was of four phases starting with a stone wall with timber post and a rock cut ditch, thought to have been constructed in c. 600BC. This was replaced by a rampart of

dump construction with a loosely built stone revetment. In the third phase the rampart was significantly enlarged and provided with a well-constructed stone revetment wall and the ditch was recut. The final phase saw a further enlargement of the rampart and repairs to the revetment walling. Excavation in the interior found evidence of occupation in the form of numerous rock-cut post holes, though they were few finds. (Gelling, 1959-68; Dorling & Wigley, 2012)

2.3 Caynham Camp was included in the assessment of the major later prehistoric enclosures in Herefordshire and Shropshire carried out by Herefordshire County Council and Shropshire Council in 2011-2 (Dorling & Wigley, 2012).

3 THE WATCHING BRIEF

3.1 The site of the footpath work Caynham Camp lay on a footpath (Route code: 0514/18A/6) running eastwards up the hillside towards the northern rampart of the hillfort. The 2017 footpath work here involved the removal of an old stile and its replacement with a new metal kissing gate, and the siting of a new waymark post beside the path c. 20m below the ramparts.

3.2 The location of the new gate lay on a fenceline running north from the northwest corner of the main fort rampart (see Fig. 1). Four postholes for the new gate were excavated by hand. Two postholes 0.5m deep and by 0.3m in diameter were excavated for the gate and strainer posts on the fenceline, and were linked by a shallow trench 0.9m long by 0.08m deep for the gate sill (see Fig. 2a). Two further postholes 0.47m by 0.3m in diameter were dug for the gate surround.

3.3 A thin topsoil up to 0.1m deep (Fig. 2a; 1) was seen to overlie a deposit of light brown sandy silty loam (2) up to 0.35m thick. This may have been hill-wash or disturbed natural subsoil. This in turn lay over intact natural subsoil comprising a compact buff sandy silty (3).

3.4 A new way mark post was installed 115m northeast of the new gate at the junction of the path with another footpath running southeast up the hillside and onto the ramparts of the hillfort. The post hole for the new waymark post was cut up to 0.65m deep by 0.3m in diameter. The post was located on the sloping hillside at the base of the hillfort's northern rampart

3.5 Here a thin topsoil layer 0.05m thick (Fig. 2b, 4) lay over a deposit of light brown sandy silty loam (5) with small angular stone fragments. This deposit may have represented natural hillwash (including degraded rampart material) but might possibly have been the tail of a glacial deposit at the base of the rampart.

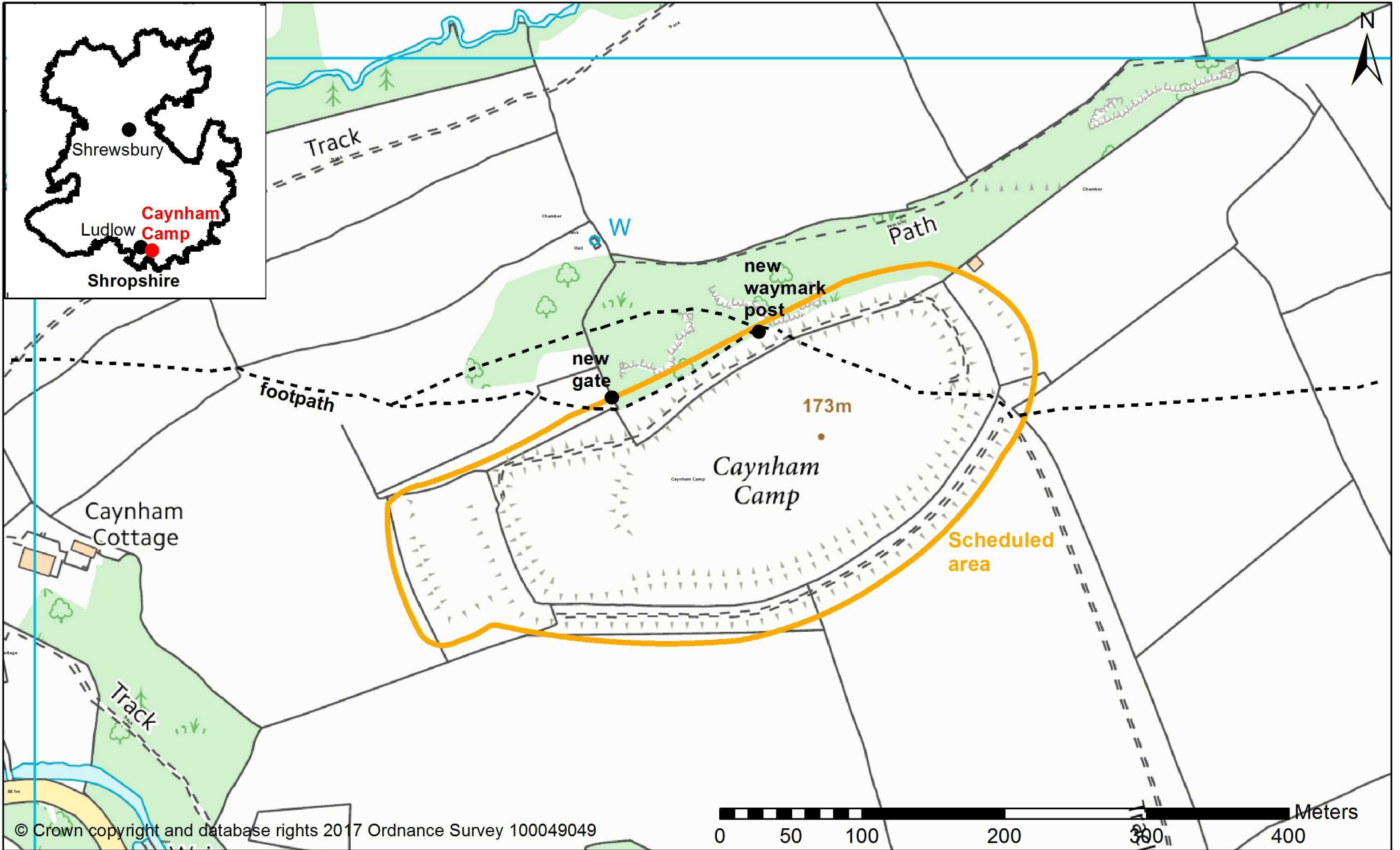
3.6 No other significant archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

4 REFERENCES

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ABBREVIATIONS

CBA	Council for British Archaeology
HER	Historic Environment Record, Shropshire Council
NGR	National Grid Reference
OS	Ordnance Survey
SAM	Scheduled Ancient Monument
TSAH	Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society
TSAHS	Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society



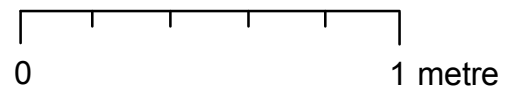
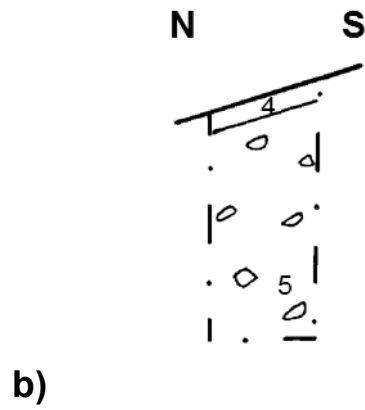
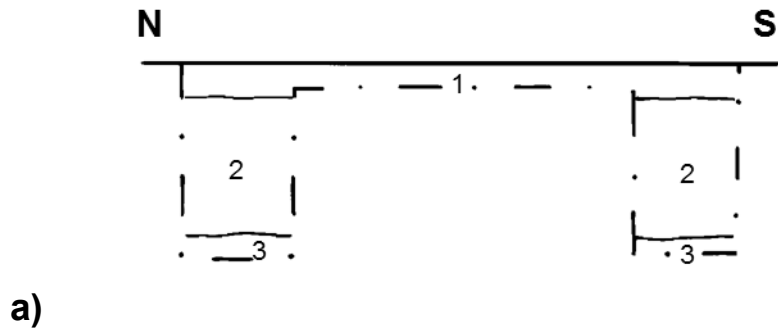
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 Figure 1: The location of the footpath work

Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council,
 Historic Environment Team, Business Growth & Prosperity,
 Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Scale: 1:3,501



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Figure 2: a) West-facing section through the post-holes for the new gate; b) west-facing section through the post-hole for the new waymark post; scale: 1:20

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Photo 1: The location of the new gate, looking SE



Photo 2: The new gate post holes, looking W; scale bar 1m



Photo 3: The new gate installed, looking S

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Photo 4: The location of the new waymark post, looking SE



Photo 5: The post hole for the new waymark post, looking SE; scale bar 1m



Photo 6: The new waymark post, looking S

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