



**Herefordshire  
Council**

## **HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY**

### **Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording at Snodhill Castle, Herefordshire.**

**January 2017**



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**Herefordshire Archaeology Report No. HAR 367**

**Herefordshire Archaeology**  
Environment, Planning and Waste  
Economy, Communities & Corporate Directorate  
Herefordshire Council



**NGR SO 3223 4038  
EHE 2081**

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## Summary:

A series of initially for test pits were excavated in order to reveal the internal and external faces of the south bastion of Snodhill Castle, two on each face. A fifth trench was added in order to investigate a presumed cupboard within the internal face of the wall and this trench was then extended in order to reveal the entire internal face of the bastion.

The two external trenches provided information concerning the extent of the ashlar wall face and the extent of footings.

The internal trenches revealed the location of two windows, one facing east-north – east and one facing to the south east. It was evident that the internal face of the wall had been rebuilt in order to accommodate at least the north-east facing window and moving the internal angle of the wall to the east. It was also noted that the western jamb of the south-eastern window had been altered in order to change the angle of the window and that the wall had been roughly cut back at this point and that the top section of the north-eastern wall had been re-built using re-used stone.

It is suggested that the latest phase of rough re-building and re-modelling of the window jamb is associated with the hurried re-fortification of Snodhill Castle during the Civil War.

The external trenches confirmed that the wall appears not to have any below ground foundation and that it was constructed onto a terrace cut into the hillslope.

Disclaimer: It should not be assumed that land referred to in this document is accessible to the public. Location plans are indicative only. National Grid References are accurate to approximately 5m. Measured dimensions are accurate to within 1m at a scale of 1:500, 0.1m at 1:50 and 0.02m at 1:20m

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## 1. Introduction

This report (Herefordshire Archaeology Report No. 367, EHE 2081) provides an account of archaeological observation, investigation and recording at Snodhill Castle, Herefordshire.

Snodhill Castle is located at NGR SO 3223 4038 approximately 1.5km south-east of the village of Dorstone in western Herefordshire. The site is a multi-period Marcher Castle near the Welsh border, originating in the late eleventh century. The Castle has a commanding view over the Dorstone and Peterchurch area of Herefordshire. An unusual decahedral shell keep sits on a steep motte at the east end of a bailey elevated over the surrounding country. It is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (1015168) and Grade 2 Listed Building (1172756), featuring on the Heritage at Risk register as a priority, due to immediate risk of rapid deterioration and loss of fabric.

Having been in private ownership for a many years, Snodhill Castle has recently been acquired by the Snodhill Castle Preservation Trust. Historic England is funding, through the Trust, a range of work to ensure the long term survival of the castle and its significance.

Between March and August 2016, MOLA, (Museum of London Archaeology), carried out an archaeological watching brief during preparatory and remedial works at Snodhill Castle, Peterchurch, Herefordshire. The works were carried out in such a way as to minimise disturbance of the site and any areas of intrusive work were recorded. (Barrett & Bassir 2016)

Herefordshire Archaeology were commissioned by Alastair Coey Architects, Historic Building Specialists to undertake archaeological monitoring and recording work as set out in a brief prepared by Bill Klemperer, Historic England, on 30th November 2016. A Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared by Herefordshire Archaeology in response to that brief. Archaeological monitoring and test pitting is required in order to facilitate urgently needed structural repair to the monument. The monument is in need of repair and it is currently categorised as "At Risk" on the Historic England, Heritage at Risk Register. The phase two works are required in order to provide information concerning the extent and condition of wall sections and foundations in order to inform and advise the Project Architect, Alastair Coey Architects and the main contractor, Sally Strachey Historic Conservation.

Proposed repair work and consolidation works will be carried out to the following structures:

Section 1, North Bastion – Removal of vegetation and root systems, consolidation of wall core and repointing and soft capping of wall head.

Section 2, Low level wall segments of north side of keep - Removal of vegetation and root systems, consolidation of wall core and repointing and soft capping of wall head.

Section 3, Keep - Removal of vegetation, structural interventions to leaning wall, consolidation of wall core and repointing and soft capping of wall head.

Section 4, Gatehouse - Removal of vegetation, consolidation of wall core and repointing and soft capping of wall head.

Section 5, South flanking wall - Removal of vegetation, consolidation of wall core underpinning repointing and soft capping of wall head.

Section 6, South east bastion - Removal of vegetation, repointing and soft capping of wall head.

This report only describes works associated with section 6 in accordance with the brief and WSI which states: Section 6, SE Bastion, is required urgently in order to inform the specification for that area. It is anticipated that the other items, 1 to 5, will be undertaken at the beginning of the main contract in April 2017.

## **2. Aims and Objectives**

The objectives of the program of works were as follows:

Section 6. SE Bastion: Three trial excavations c. 2x1 metres behind the wall to establish if there is an inner face and the nature of the wall generally, and depth and nature of archaeological deposits internally adjoining the wall. Two trial excavations c. 2x1 metres across the projected line of the bastion foundation to establish the extent of survival. All assessment excavations will go down as far as the uppermost in-situ archaeology, or 750mm maximum if no in-situ archaeology is encountered.

## **3. Policy and guidance**

The works have been undertaken with reference to relevant legislation, National Planning Policy and Guidance, and Regional and Local Planning Policy relating to Cultural Heritage.

### ***Legislation***

Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings are protected by statute. Legislation regarding Scheduled Monuments is contained within The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Under this legislation it is an offence to carry out any works resulting in the demolition or destruction of or any damage to a scheduled monument without prior written consent.

Scheduled Monument Consent is deemed for this project under Class 9 of the Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) Order, 1994, that relates to work undertaken by Historic England under S24 of the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (as amended).

## 4. Site location, Description, Setting

Snodhill castle is located on the western side of the Golden Valley approximately 1.5 km to the south-east of the village of Dorstone. The castle sits on a ridge that juts out into the valley providing extensive views to the north, south and east.

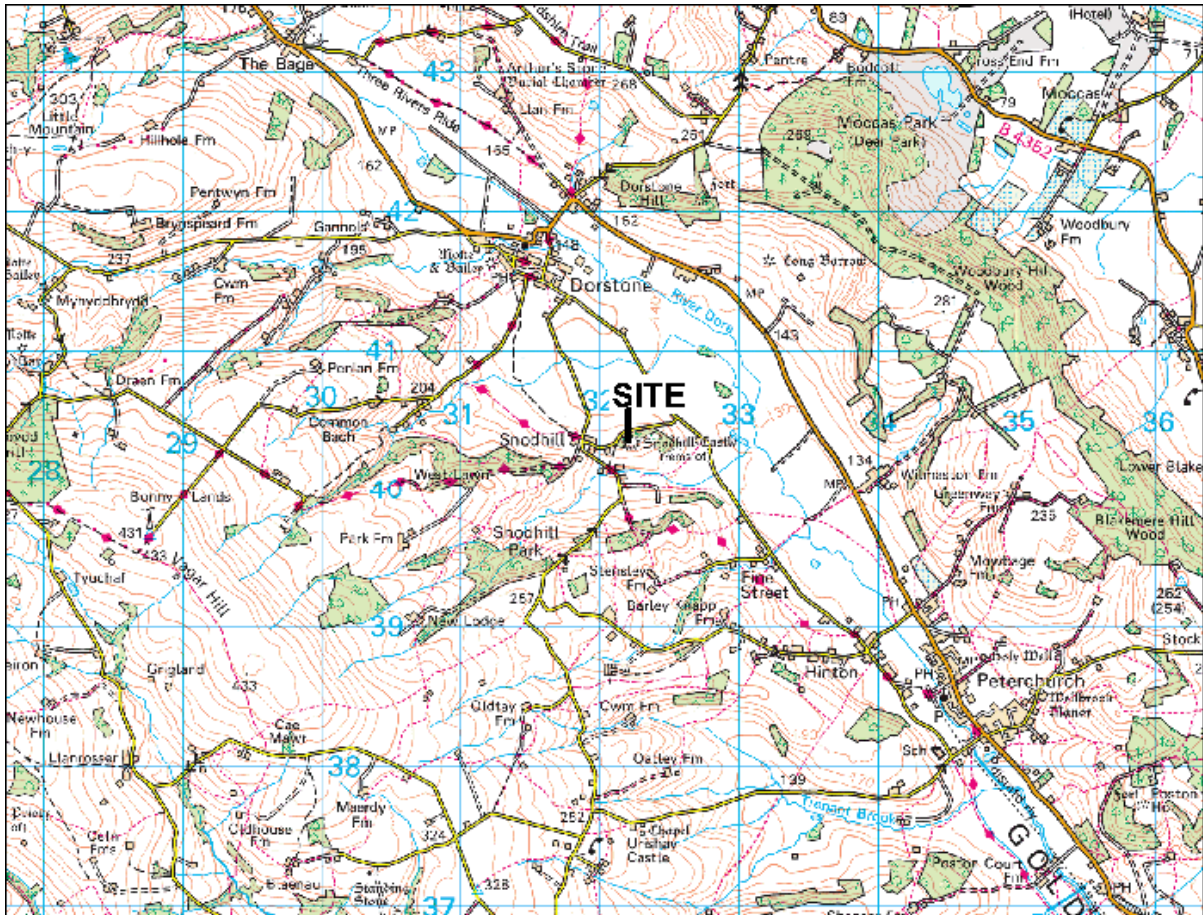


Figure 1: Location of Snodhill Castle in relation to surrounding villages. © Herefordshire Council

The schedule description for the monument is as follows:

Snodhill Castle – Monument number: 1157.

Description of Monument

Site name – Shell keep castle and associated fish ponds at Snodhill.

Heritage category and location– Scheduled monument (national monument number – SM 27509), national grid reference SO32254040.

This monument is scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 as amended as it appears to the Secretary of State to be of national importance.

Site type – Defensive castle, Snodhill Castle was a key element in the Norman line of defence through the English and Welsh Marches.

The monument includes the earthwork, buried, and ruined remains of a shell keep castle and the associated fish ponds at Snodhill. The monument occupies a spur of high ground overlooking the River Dore, near the head of the Golden Valley. The monument was constructed over several phases which namely included the strengthening of the castles defences, these changes consisted of some three centuries of occupation and modification. The shell keep was constructed on the site of an earlier motte and bailey castle, which is believed to have been established in the 11th century AD, other features included a motte on the summit of the spur, with a bailey to the west and an outer enclosure to the east below the level of the bailey (English Heritage 1996). The monument was owned by several owners; it is recorded as belonging to the crown in 1195-7, and was restored to Robert de Chandos in 1197. The keep dates from c. 1200, the next recorded change occurred during the 14th century when the Chandos family remodelled the masonry defences. The next recorded activity occurs in 1403 when it was ordered to be held against Owain Glendwr. The manor and castle of Snodhill were then granted by Elisabeth I to Robert Dudley who was the Earl of Leicester, who later sold the monument to the Vaughan family. When the property was sold to Thomas Prosser of London the castle was ruinous, consequently he lived in a nearby house known as The Court.

The remains of the motte and bailey castle include an earthen motte mound, oval in form, with a maximum diameter of 35m. The motte is steep sided and stands c. 3.5m high, it is defended to the east by a c. 20m stretch of dry ditch which is approximately 5m wide and 2m deep. A path survives on the west side of the motte that leads to the ruinous gateway of the shell keep, this path probably functioned as the original access to the mottes timber tower. Other defences include the artificial steepening of the hillslope on the eastern side on the ditch. This triangular enclosure would have been further defended by a timber palisade. The sub-rectangular bailey was formed by terracing the natural hillside to the west of the motte, and measure roughly 25m east-west by 18m transversely. Below this terrace the bailey is surrounded by a second level terrace, which has a maximum diameter of 10m on the western side. A slight causeway is visible leading from this terrace up to the bailey terrace in the south-west quarter; this may represent the original access to the castle (English Heritage 1996). This feature has lead Chris Musson to speculate that the castle is built on an Iron Age hillfort, however this is difficult to determine without further archaeological investigation, these features could be medieval rather than Iron Age, but other medieval defended sites have been constructed within hillforts eg. British Camp and possibly Goodrich Castle which is less than 30 miles away from Snodhill castle (Field Meeting at Snodhill).

Below the outer terrace/bailey the already steep slope has been artificially scarped to the north, approximately one third of the way down this slope, on the north side of the eastern enclosure, is a series if rectilinear fishponds aligned east-west and terraced into the hillslope. The three ponds are contained by an earthen bank up to 1.5m high. They measure c 25m x 8m, 30m x 10m, and 35m x 10m the smallest being the most easterly. The fishponds were separated by earthen banks forming dams which would have originally housed sluices. The cracked surface of the ponds suggests that they are still seasonally wet and possibly spring-fed. These ponds provided a food source for the occupants of the castle, and provided a symbol of power and high status attached to its owner.

The standing remains of the shell keep are Listed Grade II, and include the remains of an irregular ten-sided keep of stone rubble construction. Its external plan was an irregular ten-



sided polygon, with a gateway in the west side flanked by two circular towers or bastions. A stone curtain wall followed the line of the bailey and ran up the motte to join the keep at its northwest and south west corners. The standing remains are in very bad condition and Historic England has carried out urgent propping works to prevent any further collapse of masonry. A programme of stabilisation has been established between Historic England and the Preservation Trust to commence works in 2016/2017.

### Importance and Reasons for Designation

Motte castles are medieval fortifications introduced into Britain by the Normans. They comprise a large conical mound of earth or rubble, the motte, surmounted by a palisade and a stone or timber tower. In the majority of examples an embanked enclosure containing additional buildings, the bailey, adjoined the motte. Motte castles and motte and bailey castles acted as garrison forts during offensive military operations and as strongholds. In many cases they were aristocratic residences and the centres of local or royal administration. Although over 600 motte castles or motte and bailey castles are recorded nationally, examples converted into shell keeps are rare with only about 60 sites known to have been remodelled in this way. As such, and as one of a restricted range of recognised post-Conquest monuments, they are particularly important for the study of Norman Britain and the development of the feudal system. In view of this, all surviving examples will normally be identified as nationally important. Snodhill Castle is a well preserved example of this class of monument, which retains invaluable information in the form of standing, earthwork, and buried features. Its strategic position above the River Dore Snodhill Castle forms part of a chain of defensive monuments along the Golden Valley. As such it contributes to the wider picture of the medieval defences of Herefordshire. When viewed in association with other similar examples along the valley it can increase our understanding of the medieval political and social organisation of the county

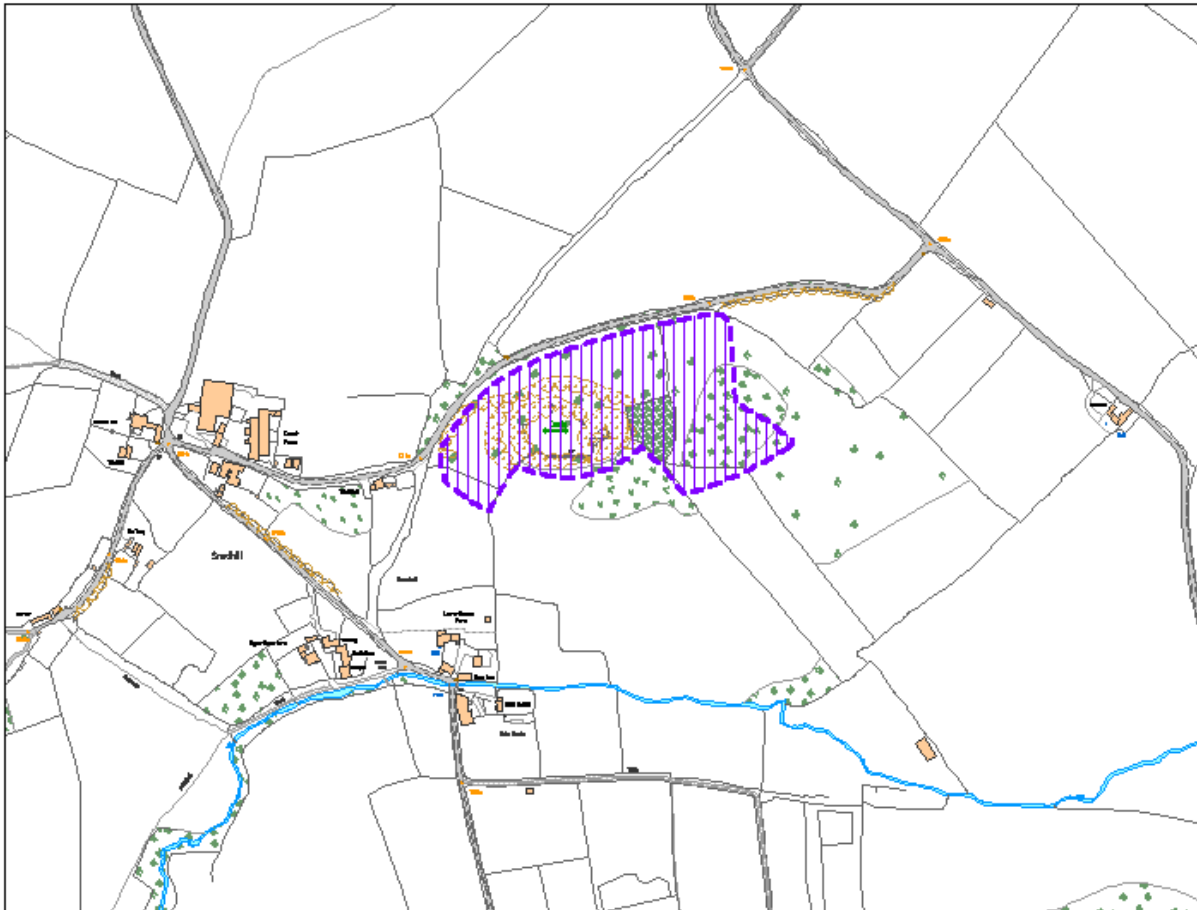


Figure 2 Location of Snodhill Castle in relation to area of scheduled monument.

## 5. Geology

The underlying solid geology within the area of works comprises Dittonian deposits of the St. Maughans Formation forming mudstone and siltstone, red with interbedded purple, red-brown and green sandstones and calcrete. This is overlain by slightly acid, loamy and clayey soil with impeded drainage.

(British Geological Survey website, Sheet 197 Hay-on-Wye, Accessed 30-10 2016; (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk>).

## 6. Historical and archaeological background

Henry I gave lands in Peterchurch to Great Malvern Priory and these were referred to as *terra de strada* when in 1127 the Priory exchanged them with Robert de Chandos for the manor of Hatfield. The Chandos family built a castle on the newly acquired lands and this was known as the “castle of Straddle” as well as the “castle of Snodhill”. It is recorded as *castellum de Stradle* in 1136, *Snauthill* in 1196, *Snothulle* in 1280 and *Snowdenhulle* in 1397. It is suggested that the root of the first element was originally *snawede* meaning snowy therefore describing it as a “snowy hill”. (Coplestone-Crow 1989).

Leland noted in about 1540 that “*There is a castell a mile or more beneath Dorston upon the right ripe of Dour. It is called Snothil, and ther is a parke wallyd, and a castle in it on an hill called Southill, and thereby under the castle a quarry of marble. The castle is somewhat in ruine. Ther is a Fre Chappell. This castle longyed to Chandos*”. (Shoemith 1996).

No recorded archaeological research has been undertaken on the site. The earliest historical account of the development of the castle can be found in Rev. C. J. Robinson, *A History of the Castles of Herefordshire*, 1869. The copy in Hereford Library has been annotated by observations by George Marshall LL.D., FSA (1839–1905), an early antiquarian (figure 3).

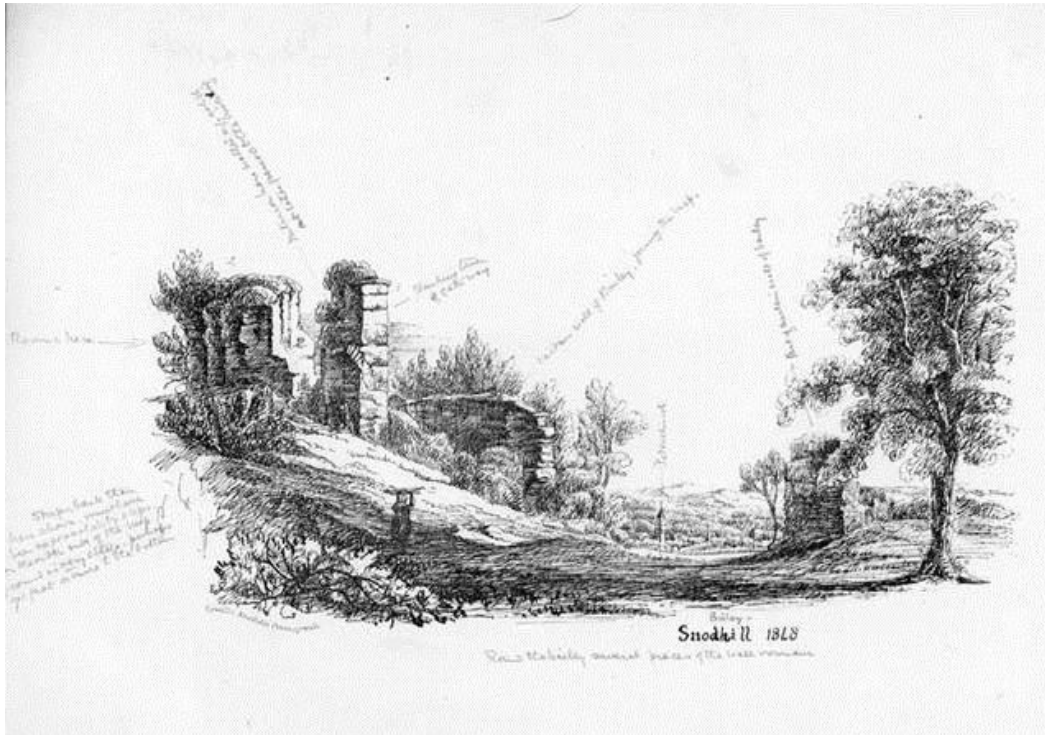


Figure 3: A drawing by Lady Frances Vernon Harcourt 1848, (Robinson 1869)

The annotations on this copy of the drawing are in the hand of George Marshall, clockwise from the left they read:

1. Steeper bank than here shown – must have been approached by steps. On the other side of the keep the ground is very steep, perhaps 70 feet or more to the bottom.
2. Rooms here
3. Interior here walled up solid at later period than the building
4. Flanking tower of the gateway
5. Curtain wall of Bailey, joining the keep
6. Peterchurch
7. Part of Curtain wall of Bailey

8. Bailey
9. Round the Bailey several pieces of the wall remain

The following is the entry from Robinson:

*Upon the summit of a low but steep hill in the middle of the Golden Valley, and in close proximity to the site of Dorston Castle, may be seen the ruined tower of Snodhill,[1] interesting alike from its picturesque form and from the associations which have attached themselves to it. For more than two centuries it was the abode of the Chandos family, and though the hero of Poitiers[2] cannot be claimed as a "worthy of Herefordshire", yet it is something that the county formed the cradle of his race.*

*The possessor of Snodhill at the Domesday Survey was a follower of the Conqueror, one Hugh l'Asne, whose quaint surname (like that of Lupus, Earl of Chester) may perhaps have been derived from some personal characteristic—the ass, it must be remembered, had not then fallen into his present disrepute but was regarded as the symbol of patient zeal. Roger de Chandos brother (not son, as Dugdale makes him) of Richard, the founder of Goldcliff, seems to have been the first of that family who held the honour of Snodhill. He died in the reign of Henry I, and sixth in descent from him was Roger de Chandos (son of Robert who went with King John to Ireland in 1210) whose name occurs in 1221 as obtaining from Henry III license to hold a fair at Fownhope, within the honour of Snodhill (Close Rolls). He died about the year 1266 and was succeeded by his son Robert, who took part with King Edward I in his expedition into Wales. At his death, which happened in 1302, it was found that he held the manor of Snodhill by barony and the service of two knight's fees. His son and successor Roger de Chandos served in the Scottish wars in the time of Edward II, and received the honour of knighthood. In 1321 he was made sheriff of Herefordshire and in the first year of Edward III held that office and the governorship of Hereford Castle. To him succeeded Thomas de Chandos, whose heir was his brother Roger, the first of the family who was summoned to Parliament. He was cited as a Baron from 1337 to 1355 and had previously been made a Banneret by the king whom he attended in France. In Edward III he was constituted Governor of Hereford Castle, and previous to his death in 1355 granted the church of Wellington to Robert Foliot, the Bishop of Hereford. (Harl. M.S., 6868.) Neither his son Sir Thomas nor his grandson Sir John (who has been erroneously identified with his celebrated namesake the Knight of the Garter) had summons to Parliament, and the latter who held the Castle against Glendwr in 1403 dying without issue, 16 Dec. 1428, the estates in Herefordshire devolved to the surviving daughter of his sister Elizabeth (who had married Thomas Berkeley of Coberley, in Gloucestershire) viz. Margery, wife of Nicholas Mattesden, and to his great nephew, Giles Bruges, who, through failure of the other line, became the eventual heir.*

*Snodhill in the reign of Henry VI,[3] was the property of Richard Neville," the stout Earl of Warwick" in right of his wife Anne, the heiress of the Beauchamps, and she, after the death of her husband, (who was slain at the battle of Barnet) settled the Castle and manor of Fownhope (part of the Honour) upon Henry VII and the heirs of his body.(Blount's MS ) Queen Elizabeth granted it to Sir Robert Dudley, K.G., the infamous Earl of Leicester, as part of the possessions called " Warwick's and Spencer's lands," (Ibid.) and after passing through the hands of the Vaughans, it was purchased from them about the year 1665 by*

*William Prosser of London, (Hill's MS.) whose initials (with the above date) are carved upon the front of Snodhill Court - an interesting building constructed in great part of materials drawn from the ancient Castle. The manor and site continue in the possession of the Prosser family, the representation of which is now vested in the wives of the Rev. Thomas Powell and the Rev. J. W. Sawyer.*

*There seems good reason to believe that the Castle was erected before the close of the twelfth century for the keep tower, to judge from the scanty remains, is of Norman or semi-Norman construction, octagonal in form with buttresses at the angles. One of the gateways is tolerably perfect, showing an Edwardian archway and a portcullis groove, and there are still some fragments of the walls of the outer bailey. Within the Castle was a free chapel, certain portions of the tithes of which in Snodhill, Fownhope, & c., were granted by Queen Elizabeth to Cecily Pickering and her heirs. There are no traces of this building at present extant: in fact, the Castle, which was a ruin in Leland's time, suffered so severely from a bombardment by the Presbyterian army in the next century that it is even surprising that so much of the structure has survived. Either the head-quarters of the troops or the battery from which the numerous cannon-balls found within the ruins were projected was at a place called Scotland, about two miles higher up the valley, (there is a "Scotland Bank" near Bage Court to the north of Dorstone).*

*The Castle key is in the possession of the Rev. T. W. Webb of Hardwick, and the bell was removed some 50 years ago, at which date there was a good deal of ancient armour in the Court. There are still some curiously carved corbels and massive oak beams to be seen there, relics of the stately Castle which have escaped its general ruin. (Robinson 1869).*

## 7. Map regression

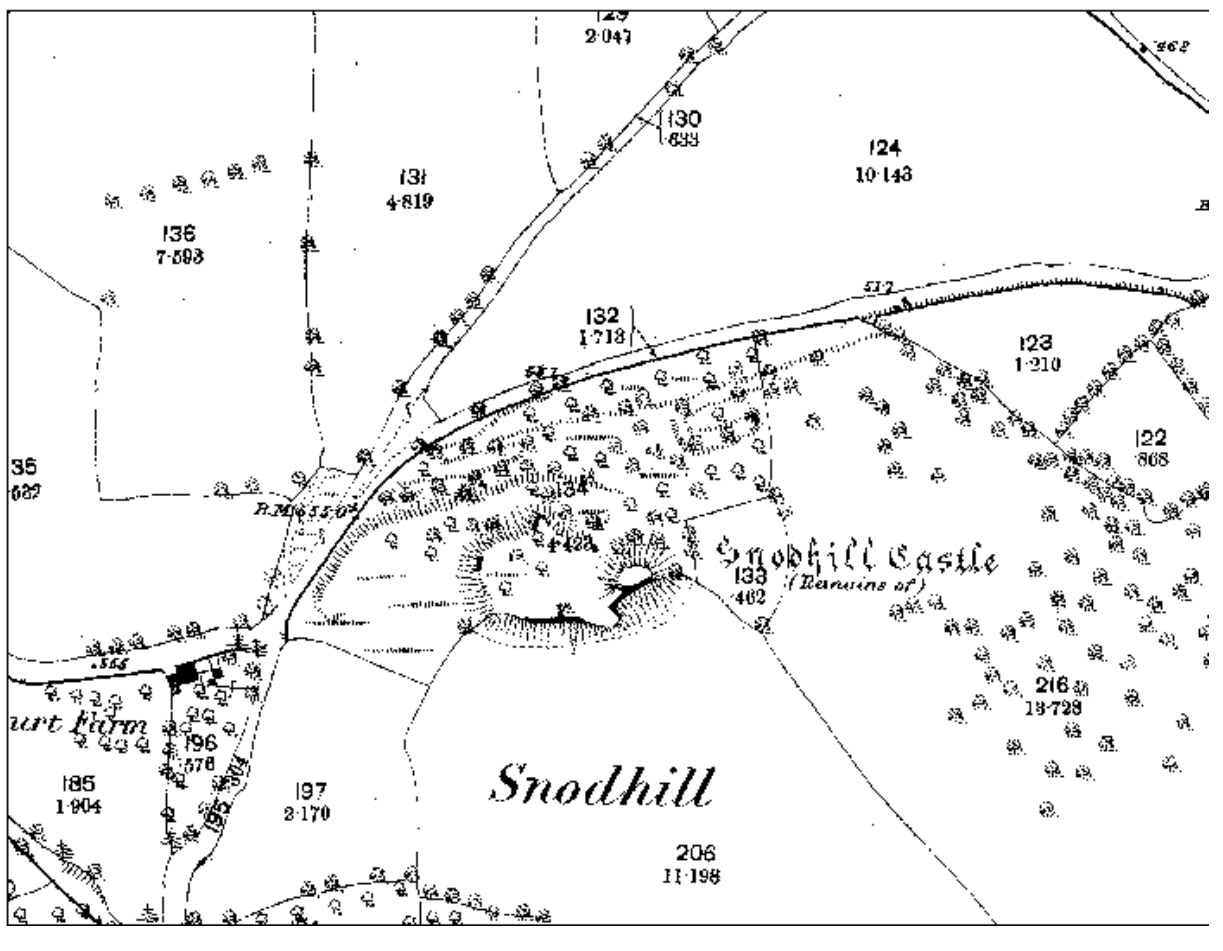


Figure 4: Extract from the 1887 Ordnance Survey Map.

The earliest accurate map available for the study area is the Ordnance Survey map of 1881 published in 1887, the map shows the main earthworks and the extent of upstanding masonry.

In 1952 the castle was visited by Richard Kay who between 1946 and the early 1990's made detailed and accurate surveys of monuments on both sides of the Welsh border. A selection of his measured plans and sketches are below.



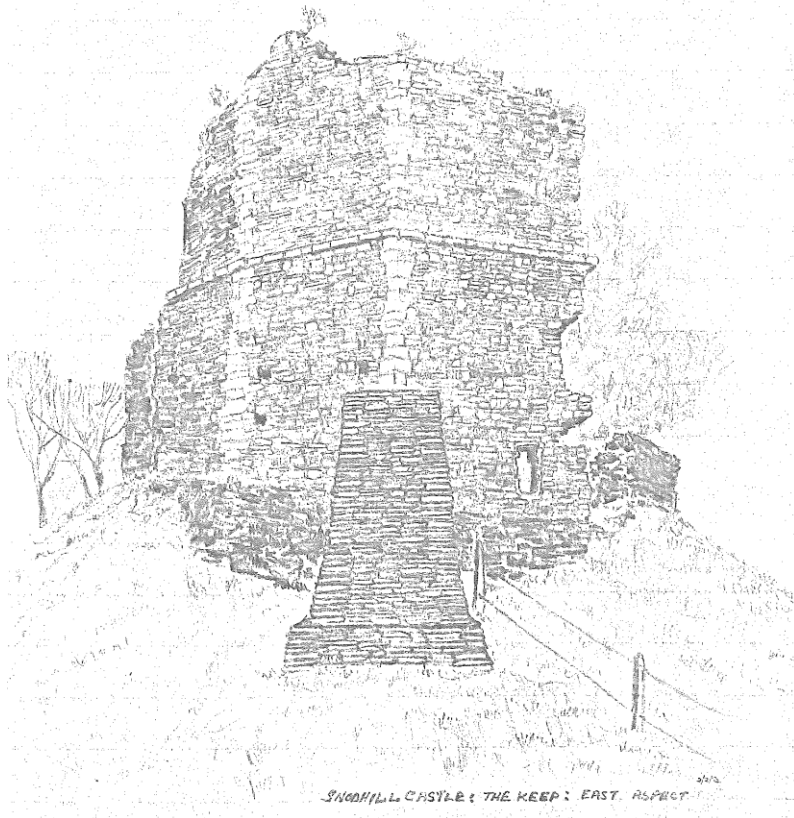


Figure 6: Richard Kay's illustration of the Keep.

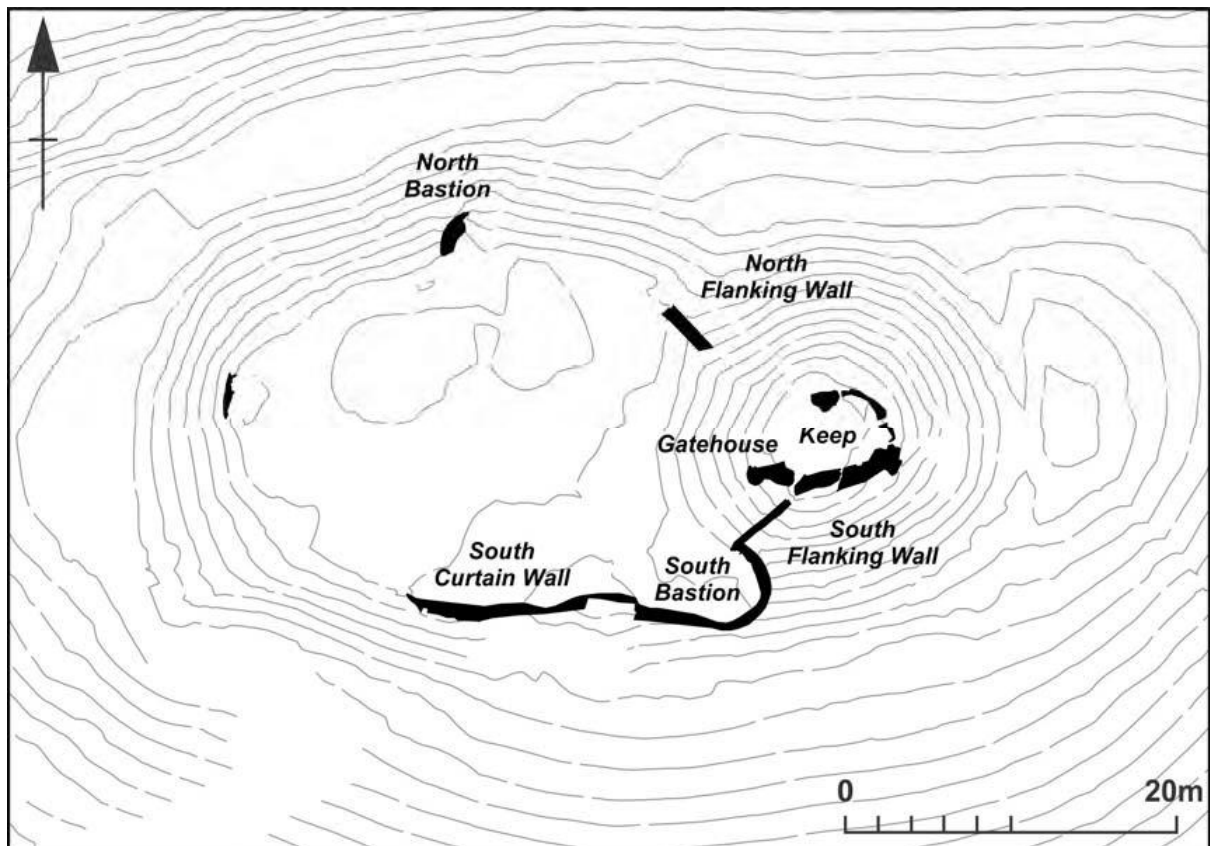


Figure 7: Plan of Snodhill Castle showing the extent of standing masonry.



## 8. Methodology

Initially it was proposed that three test pits should be excavated by hand along the internal face of the South Bastion in order to provide information concerning the preservation of the internal wall face and the depth to original floor, (TP1, TP2 & TP3 Drawing number DW60). Prior to work commencing, it was agreed that two further test pits should be excavated against the outside face of the bastion, (TP4 & TP5), in order provide information concerning the depth and type of foundation. Due to the unexpected preservation of the internal wall face it was later agreed to excavate the area between TP1 and TP3 linking the two trenches so that the majority of the internal wall face could be exposed. Site work began on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December and site work was completed on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January. A progress meeting was held on site of Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December and a post site-work meeting was held on site on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January.

It should be noted that the numbering of the test pits has been changed within this report and differs from those on drawing number DW60.

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). All contexts were given unique numbers. All recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards that conform to accepted archaeological norms. Photographs of archaeological features, deposits and general area were taken using 16mp digital camera.

Registers were kept for context records, photographs and drawings.

Prior to the works taking place the top of the bastion(internal) had been cleared of surface vegetation and the large Ash tree which had been growing through the eastern angle of the bastion wall had been felled leaving the roost and stump in-situ.

## 9. Results

### Excavation

The site work comprised the excavation by hand of five test pits, three along the internal face of the south bastion and two against the external face. These were excavated to a depth of 0.75m with the exception of TP4 which was excavated to a depth of 1.15m at the wall face.

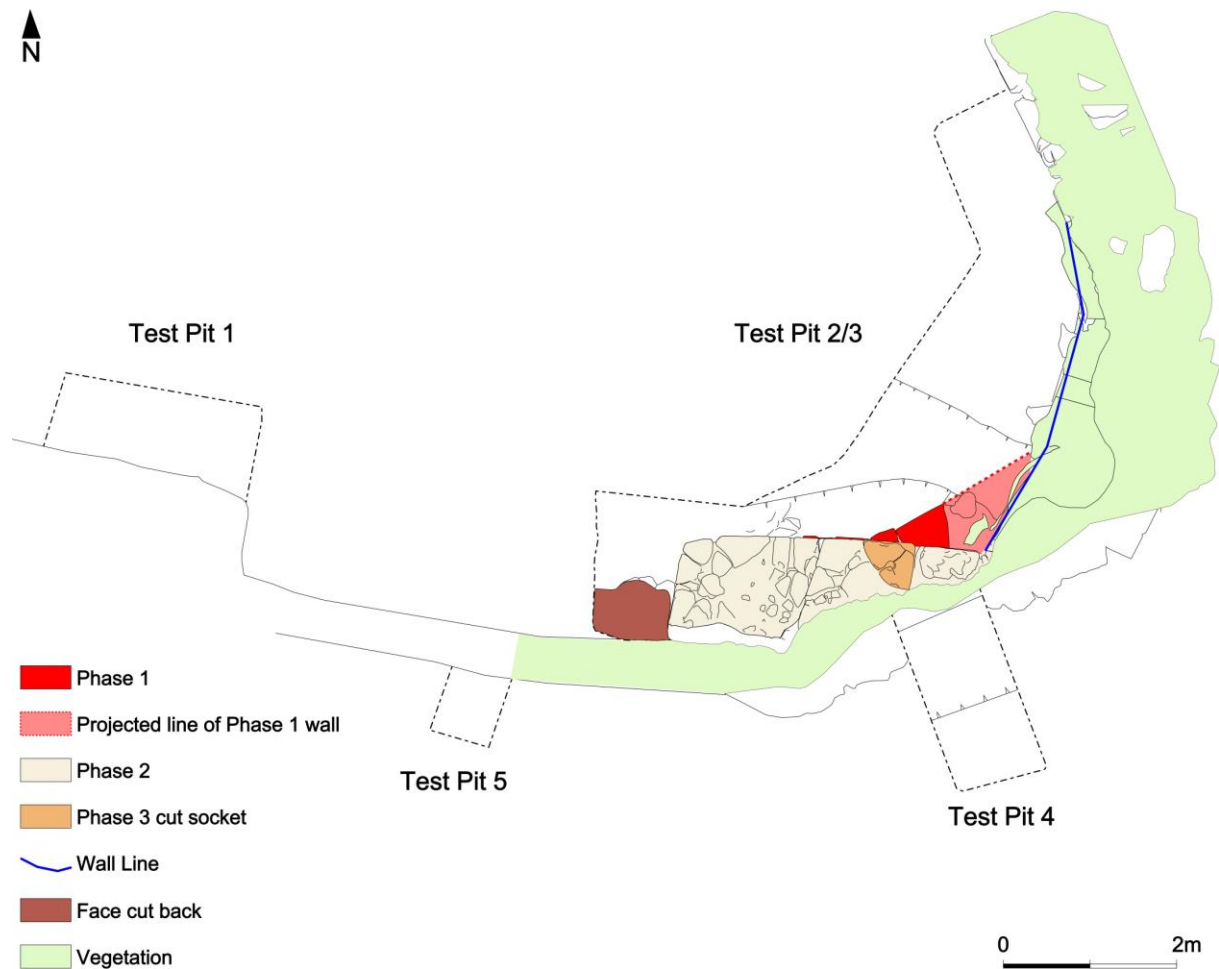


Figure 8: Plan of test pits and features recorded during the excavation.

### TP1

This was located immediately adjacent to a standing fragment of internal bastion wall and was 2m long and 1m wide. This was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.8m in order to reveal a rough, lime mortar, bonded surface. It revealed that the internal face of the wall at this location appeared to be of a single phase, using coursed but relatively rough and small stone, and continued through the base of the trench.



Plate 1: TP1 showing the mortared rubble "floor".

## TP2

This was located roughly central to the curve of the internal wall of the bastion and was 1m square. It was positioned so that the remains of the wall top could be revealed and the face of the wall recorded.

Immediately below the topsoil it was evident that the wall top survived and that the trench was positioned over the western reveal for a window (plate 1). This was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.7m in order to reveal the base of the window and the wall face beneath. The window jamb / reveal, is plain chamfered and terminates with a pyramidal chamfer stop at its base, (plate 3).



Plate 2: TP02 after initial topsoil strip showing the remains of the wall top and window reveal.



Plate 3: TP02  
Window reveal  
showing pyramidal  
chamfer stop.

**TP3**

This was located against the internal face of the bastion wall close to its junction with the south flanking wall and was 1m square. It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.75m



Plate 4: TP3 showing the rubble collapse within the southern section.



Plate 5: TP3 showing the well coursed and squared internal wall face.

#### TP4

This was located against the core work where the external face has collapsed and was 1m wide (north / south) and 2m in length. The excavation at this location was intended to expose the buried face and to reveal the type of foundation. It became apparent that, at this location, the external facing stones appear to be completely absent. The excavation was continued in order to follow the loose core-work so that the cut for the foundation could be observed. At a depth of 1.4m natural clay / marl was encountered onto which the core-work was sitting.



Plate 6: location of TP4 in relation to the external wall of the bastion.



Plate 7: TP4 showing the extent of core work and the top of natural.

It would appear that the bastion has no “dug” footing or foundation but is built directly off the natural clay. It is suggested that the natural slope of the hill was terraced into and the bastion wall built onto the terrace.

#### TP5

This was located against the external face of the bastion at the point where the wall began to curve outwards to form the bastion and was 1m square. It was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.95m and followed the external wall face in order to establish whether the change in angle continued and to attempt to find the foundation course. Due to space and health and safety constraints the excavation was terminated at a depth of 0.95 without establishing the foundation depth.



Plate 8: TP5 showing the high quality, well coursed, squared and tooled external wall facing.

**Additional works:**

At the progress meeting that was held on site of Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December, it was decided that due to the preservation on the internal wall face and the depth of rubble above any internal floor surfaces, TP2 should be excavated to join up with TP3. It was also agreed that TP2 should be enlarged further to the west in order to locate the western window jamb / reveal. TP3 was also extended to the north in order to investigate a recess in the wall thought to represent some form of cupboard.



Plate 9: General view of excavation looking south.



Plate 10: The partial excavation of the recess / cupboard.





Plate 11: internal wall face looking east showing the blocked eastern window.



Plate 12: Detail of the change in angle between the east face and southern face.



Plate 13: Phase 1 wall line showing under the Phase 2 south face.



Plate 14: internal south wall face with window opening and Phase 1 wall line.

## General stratigraphic sequence

The general stratigraphic sequence of the site comprised a thin, loose and free draining dark loam topsoil which extended to an average depth of 0.18m. This directly overlay a 0.45m thick layer of dark earth mixed with rubble which became more compacted with depth. At an average depth of 0.7m there was a well compacted deposit of mid brown, loamy clay which contained large amounts of lime mortar. This, in TP1, immediately overlay what appeared to be a rough mortar and stone floor level. This floor level was not reached within the other Test Pits.

## 10. Discussion

Whilst the excavation of the 5 separate test pits provided much useful information concerning the extent, type and condition of wall face and (in the case of TP4) the method of construction of the wall base, the joining together of TP2 and TP3 revealed additional information regarding the historical development of the bastion.

Three distinct phases have been identified (see figures 9 & 11). Phase 1 comprises the original angle of the internal wall face and is apparent as a “step” approximately 0.7m below the surviving wall top. The Phase one wall was aligned on a north-east / south-west axis. Only a single course of this wall was excavated.

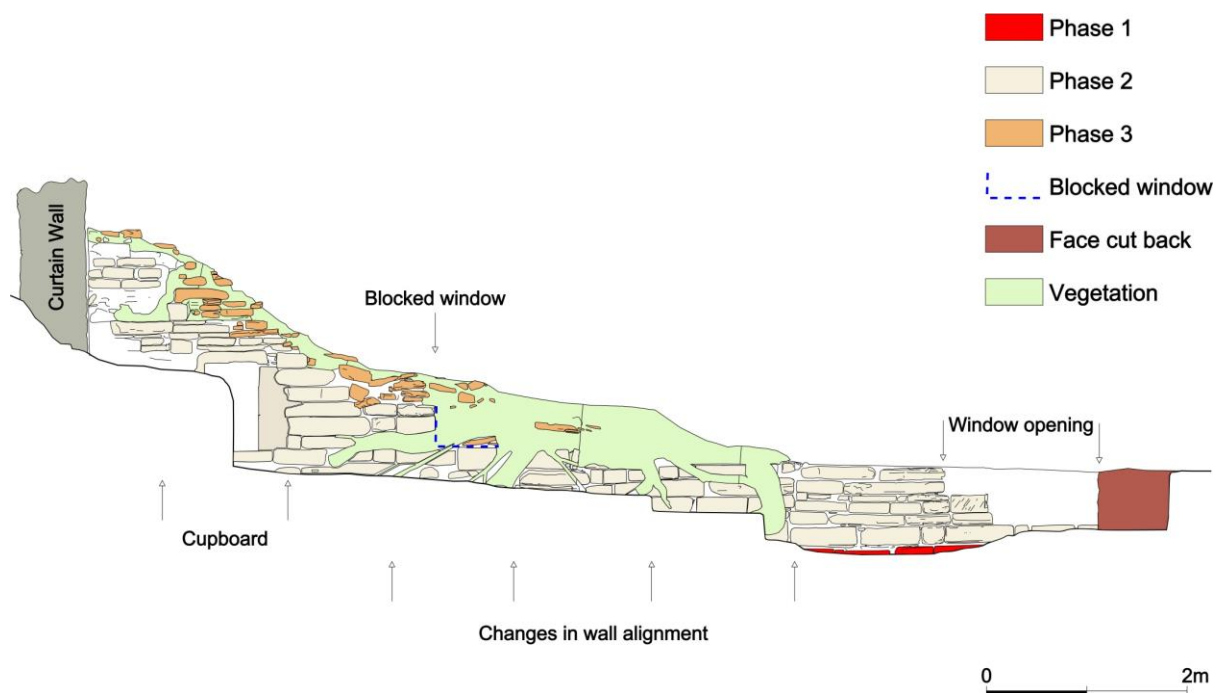


Figure 9: Internal face after TP2 and TP3 have been joined together.

The Phase 2 wall appears to have been required in order to insert two windows into the bastion, one facing almost due east and one facing south. The south facing window has a

plain chamfer on its eastern jamb with a pyramidal chamfer stop at its base. The western jamb has been cut back and the angle of the reveal altered as part of the Phase 3 works.

Only the northern jamb of the east facing window is apparent and is seen as a straight construction break filled by Phase 3 blocking before being obscured by tree roots.

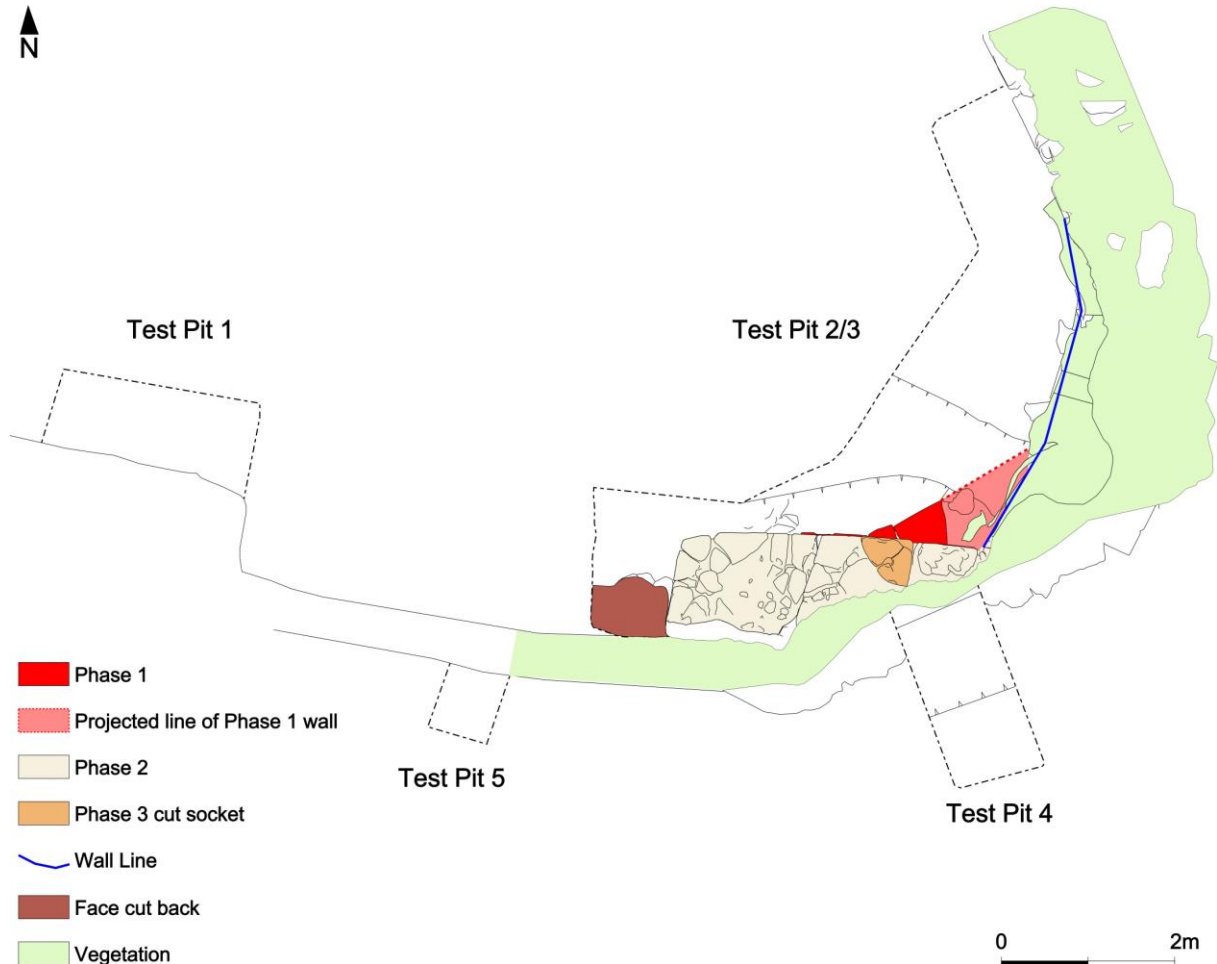


Figure 10: Plan of test pits and features recorded during the excavation.

It is likely that the external wall face was added during this phase of activity. The re-modelling of the wall from just above apparent floor level may suggest a change in use of the room within the bastion. The only reason for re-modelling and changing where the wall angle occurs appears to be in order to accommodate an east facing window. If this is the case then it would seem reasonable to suggest that the east facing window was required for a specific reason or purpose. The most obvious purpose would be for the accommodation of a chapel. If this room was a chapel, this may also explain the presence of the rectangular cupboard, less than 2m to the north of the eastern window and indeed the second cupboard which appears to have been built into a wall stub against the curtain wall.

Phase 3 appears to have been a phase of rapid rebuilding and alteration undertaken in a very “rough” way, almost certainly after a period of disuse and even decay. Evidence from the surviving internal wall face and wall top would suggest that the Phase 3 work was

undertaken when the height of the bastion wall was very similar to its present height. The eastern window opening appears to have been blocked and the south facing window's western jamb re-modelled so that its splay is no longer a mirror image of the eastern jamb but had been re-built to be almost parallel so that instead of facing due south, it now faces to the south-west.

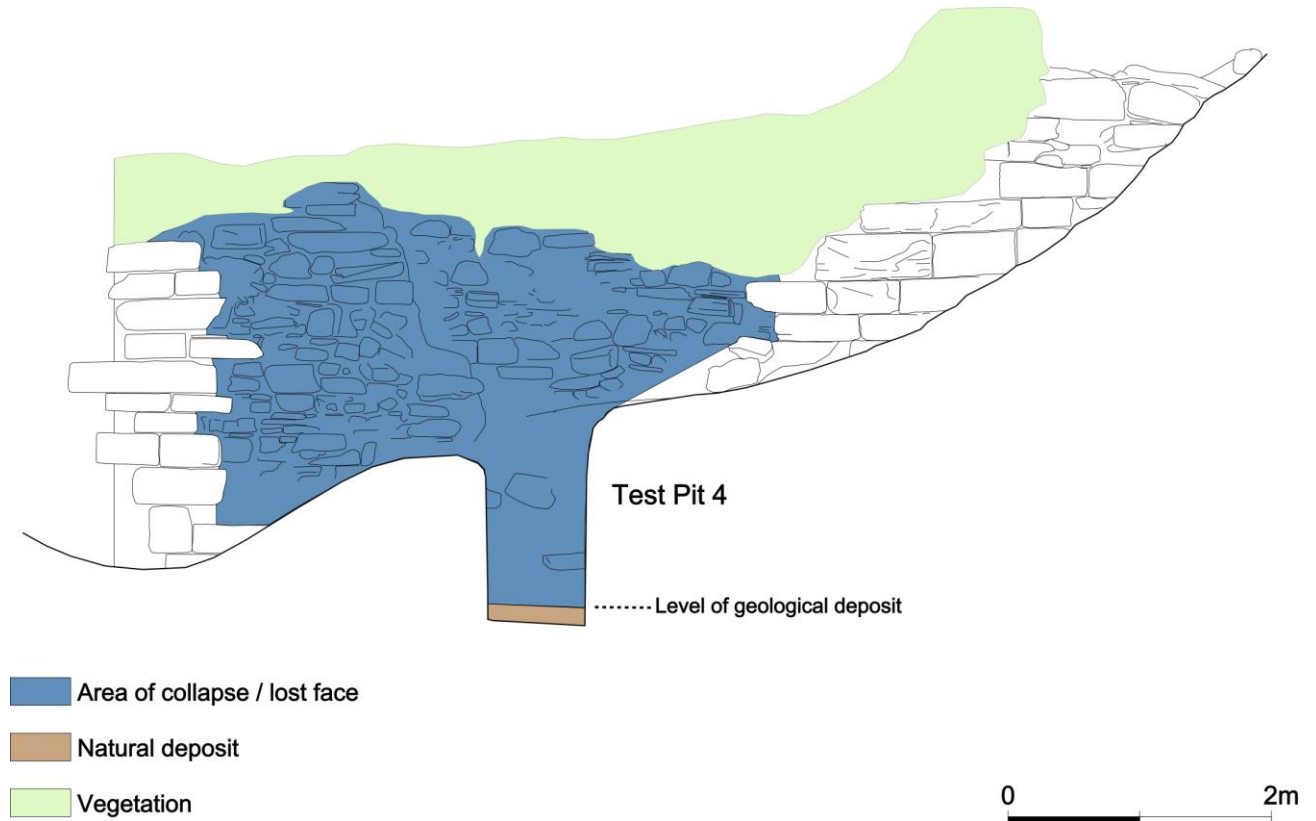


Figure 11: External face showing extent of collapse / core work and level of natural subsoil.

The western Jamb has also been cut back by approximately 0.5m. One of the stones which form the eastern jamb of this window, has a circular hole chiselled into it approximately 3.5 cms in diameter and 7cms deep. The chiselling, or perhaps the subsequent use of the hole, has split the stone.



Plate 15: Detail of stone with hole chiselled into it during Phase 3.

The rough quality of work together with the evidence that the bastion wall was not at its original height and therefore the bastion was not usable as a room would suggest that Phase 3 comprised a rapid re-fortification event almost certainly related to the Civil War.

## 11. Conclusion

These investigative works have not only provided much useful information concerning the structural integrity, general condition and extent of the bastion wall, but have also enabled a basic phased development of the bastion to be put together.

Whilst difficult to accurately date these Phases at this point in time, it can be reasonably suggested that the Phase 3 “rough” work which has been undertaken when the bastion wall was in a ruinous state and resulted in the blocking of the east facing window and the re-modelling of the south facing window opening is associated with a rapid re-fortification episode associated with the attack on the castle during the Civil War.

Phase 2 appears to represent a re-design of the bastion from just above the internal floor level and it is suggested that it was during this phase that the bastion was re-faced externally with unusually finely cut and squared stone. This would certainly have simplified the insertion of the eastern facing window. The fact that the window was designed to face in this direction and in order to construct this, involved the redesign of the entire bastion, suggests that this was for a specific purpose. The eastern facing window together with the recessed cupboard, or aumbry, may indicate that this was re-built as a private chapel. These works may have been done as late as the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The fact that the bastion wall appears to just sit on a cut terrace is of huge importance both for our understanding of its original construction and in the approaches that will be implemented relating to its stabilisation and conservation. The works have revealed that the internal bastion wall face survives to a height of almost 1m above presumed floor level. This enhances the physical remains of the bastion whilst offering a solution with regard to Health & Safety concerning how the bastion is used when the site is publically accessible.

Although providing significant information concerning both structural and historical elements, these works have also raised further questions regarding the development of Snodhill Castle. Immediate questions which it would be useful to address might include:

- Is it possible to date the masonry which makes up the external face of the bastion? As this type does not appear anywhere else at Snodhill
- Where between TP1 and TP2 does the internal wall face change from large well squared blocks, visible within both TP2 and TP3, to the considerably smaller and less well coursed face within TP1? And at what level?
- Is there further evidence both physical and documentary for this room being a chapel?

## 12. Acknowledgements

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- Archaeological records held by Herefordshire HER
- Historic maps and plans held in the Herefordshire Archives;
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## **14. Site Archive**

- 130 digital photographs.
- 15 context records.
- 6 site drawings on perma-trace @1:20 scale.
- DXF datafiles (CAD)
- This Document