The monument includes remains of activity on Tintagel Island and the adjacent mainland on the north coast of Cornwall dating from the Roman period to the 19th century AD. These remains include Romano-British occupation surfaces succeeded by a large fifth-sixth century settlement engaged in high status trading activity. Later medieval remains include an 11th century church on the island and a 13th century castle of the Earls of Cornwall, with features dispersed over both the island and the adjacent mainland. The monument also includes sites of two small 16th century blockhouses on the island and remains of medieval and later quarries and a lead/silver mine. Apart from the western defensive features on the mainland and the southern part of the castle's hollowed approach, this monument is in the care of the Secretary of State.

The monument's earliest occupation is dated by third-fourth century AD Roman finds associated with occupation surfaces excavated in the early 1990s on slight terraces on the steep eastern flank of the island. The surfaces include hearths, some slab-floored and lined, with traces of stake-built structures and are considered to indicate sites of industrial activity. These intact buried Romano-British remains on the island supplement less precise but wider occupation evidence derived from several hundred third to fourth century pottery fragments from exposed surfaces and excavations both on the island and the adjacent mainland. Some late third-mid fourth century coins in a leather purse have also been found near the mainland wards of the medieval castle. The scale of the known settlement increases dramatically in quantity, area, and diversity in the following period, dated by associated pottery to the fifth and sixth centuries AD and termed 'post-Roman' below. Structural remains of this period are visible on the surface and, with occupation layers, buried beneath later deposits and structures. Visible post-Roman remains include the earliest definition of the island and adjacent mainland area as a fortified entity. The cliffs of the island and neck are natural obstacles to seaward approach, while the mainland approach is restricted by a steep drop to the valley on the north east and by the sheer faces of an elevated crag on the south west. The only moderate access route, between the crag and the steep valley side, was constricted by a north east-south west ditch, 10m wide, 4.5m deep and flat-bottomed, with an inner rampart, leaving a narrow entrance by the east face of the crag. The inner rampart was later altered by the insertion along it of the 13th century
castle's lower ward wall with associated ground-raising deposits. Within the fortified area, post-Roman surface features include a complex of small subrectangular buildings, commonly c.7m long by c.4m wide internally, visible with associated features across the south, centre and north east of the island's plateau and on narrow terraces along the island's steep southern and eastern flanks. Most are blanketeted by thick turf but in 1983 a fire on the plateau revealed slight rubble foundation courses associated with fifth-sixth century pottery, together with a row of small pits where stake-points had chipped into bedrock. The remains show some internal organisation. The southern third of the plateau contains a spread of closely-spaced small buildings accompanied by slight hollows denoting well-used trackways. A similar clustering of buildings extends over a smaller area on the north of the plateau. The centre of the plateau has a looser scatter of buildings in a relatively sheltered location, focusing on an ovoid area, c.50m east-west by c.45m north-south, defined by a curving bank. This area contains at least six subrectangular buildings in its western half while its eastern half is occupied by four NNW-SSE terraced field strips, 7m-10m wide. At the south west crest of the plateau, slight ditches define further rectilinear plots on the steep upper slope.

The building remains on the island's south and east flanks are of similar form to those on the plateau but occur on narrow terraces levelled into the steep rocky slope. The precipitous topography dictates that the terraces are often small, some with only individual structures visible while others extend along the contour to support several buildings partitioning the terrace length. Denser clusters of terraces are visible on the upper slope to each side of the plateau's south east corner and overlooking a steep eastern spur that ends at the coast on the 'Iron Gate', the site of a later medieval defended quay. The post-Roman buildings show evidence for structural development, some walls appearing to overlie features of earlier buildings, particularly evident in areas reconstructed for public view on the east of the plateau and the eastern flank. Later phases appear as larger rectangular buildings whose date remains to be confirmed, whether as late post-Roman structures or as later medieval remains. Their excavated rubble walls are generally straight with squared corners, with ground plans commonly c.10m long by c.5m wide internally but in some instances up to 17m long by 7m wide. Some are partitioned, giving two or three rooms; a slab-built hearth and small oven associated with such buildings are exposed on the north of the plateau. These larger buildings dominate the reconstructions presented for public view and form clusters on the north and south east of the plateau, on the upper slope terrace south of the plateau's south east corner, and on the eastern flank terraces. More spaced large buildings are also visible elsewhere on the plateau.

Much of the character of this post-Roman settlement has been revealed by excavation and by study of its pottery finds. The early 1990s excavations revealed intact post-Roman occupation levels associated with walled buildings on newly recognised slight terraces on the island's east flank, confirming a far greater extent of buried remains of this period than is readily visible. Excavation has also shown that the 13th century castle's great hall was built on deep ground-raising dumps containing redeposited post-Roman debris overlying intact rubble walling set in clay. The eroding cliff section truncating the great hall confirms a substantial bedrock hollow beneath that part of the castle, with post-Roman occupation terraced across the hollow and associated with extensive intact deposits. As the most sheltered large area available for building on the island, near the landing point on the east coast and controlling access to the mainland, this buried terraced occupation is considered to mark the site of the chief buildings of the post-Roman settlement.

On the mainland, excavation outside the north east of the later castle's lower ward has shown intact post-Roman occupation levels with a clay-floored oven, slate-lined hearths and numerous stake-holes, associated with fifth-sixth century pottery and a 450-500 AD date from analysis of the oven fabric. Post-
Roman pottery has also been found elsewhere within the castle's lower and upper wards. The steep slope from the lower ward to the valley floor also contains slight terraces similar to those supporting post-Roman occupation on the island's east coast.

The monument's post-Roman pottery highlights the unusual nature of its fifth-sixth century settlement; it is dominated by imported material from various North African and eastern Mediterranean sources, including fragments of fine table wares: plates and bowls; numerous amphorae (wine and oil jars) of various forms, together with their neck-stoppers, and some cooking pots and jars in coarser fabrics. Fragments of fine glass drinking vessels from continental Europe or Egypt have also been recovered. This monument has produced more imported pottery of this period than the combined total from all other sites in the British Isles, emphasising the unparalleled scale of the post-Roman defended area at Tintagel as a controlled point of entry for shipborne high status goods during the fifth and sixth centuries.

In post-Roman south west England, the wealth and motivation to attract such trade and the power to restrict it to such a controlled point lay with the rulers of the kingdom of Dumnonia, the inheritors of political authority in the area following the collapse of the Roman administration in the earlier fifth century. The monument's post-Roman occupation is considered to reflect a settlement of that kingdom's ruling elite, operating under their sanction as a major focus for long distance maritime trade and the point of contact with the kingdom's internal trade network. It is unclear what was exchanged for the prestigious imports though it is considered that the principal goods traded out would come through tribute and exchange from the wider hinterland in the region controlled by the kingdom's rulers.

A broader context for the monument's post-Roman occupation is provided by contemporary remains nearby, especially from Tintagel parish churchyard where excavation has revealed a post-Roman burial ground also with imported pottery and considered to be directly associated with the contemporary occupation within this monument. Unlike this monument's occupation, which seems to have ceased from the seventh to the 11th century, the burial ground continued as a sacred site after the sixth century, forming the site for successive pre-Norman churches.

Pottery forms of the seventh to eleventh centuries AD are absent from the monument, suggesting an occupation break that ends with 11th-12th century carved stonework from remains of a small chapel on the south east of the island plateau. The chapel's dedication was to St Juliot, a Celtic saint, also corrupted to 'Juliane' or confused with St Julitta, and among its carved stone was a granite font of 11th century form, now relocated to the mainland parish church of Tintagel. The font, its implied baptismal right, and dedication to a Cornish saint support the chapel's origin as a landowner's 11th century foundation, an estate church, before the developing parochial system reserved baptismal and other rights to the mainland parish church. Detailed survey has shown the chapel was built up from a pre-existing post-Roman rectangular building lying almost east-west, 11.75m long by 3.7m wide, with walls 0.8m thick. Conversion to the early phase small church included creating a new doorway in the south wall, near the south west corner, still visible flanked by its low porch-walls. Further visible modifications, described below, result from its 13th century refurbishment as a chapel to serve the castle.

Folk memory of its association with post-Roman rulers of Dumnonia may have inspired the inclusion of Tintagel in two cycles of stories circulating in the 12th century. In Geoffrey of Monmouth's 'History of the Kings of Britain', c.1137, Tintagel is named as the site of the conception of the legendary Arthur. Geoffrey's 'History' proved highly influential and founded a wealth of Arthurian myths still associated with this monument. The other cycle identifies Tintagel as the residence of King Mark in most early versions of the Tristan and Iseult stories, lacking reference to an Arthur figure. Under the influence of these stories, popular at all social levels throughout Europe, Tintagel rose to prominence because of its mythic past, despite then
being a windswept headland in the relatively obscure Manor of Bossiney, held by a sub-tenant of the Earl of Cornwall. The heir to the manor attempted to harness this growing legendary fame by adopting the name 'de Tintagel' in 1207, but this was soon overtaken in a more radical fashion by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, who acquired Tintagel Island and the rest of Bossiney Manor as part of his personal estate between 1233 and 1236. His motivation was to bolster his regional authority and wider prestige as heir to the seat of the legendary Cornish rulers, acclaimed across Europe as leading players in a mythical 'Golden Age'. He immediately reinforced his objective by building a castle at Tintagel, already underway by 1233.

Earl Richard's castle has three wards, on each side of the neck to the island. The two mainland wards occupy the area already defined by the fifth-sixth century ditch and rampart and by the crag on the south west. The post-Roman entrance, constricted by the ditch to run alongside the crag, was reused for the castle and enhanced by a walled enclosure along the full length of the crag's side, flanked on its east by a 5m wide ditch. The foot of the crag is also flanked on the south by a ditch-like bedrock hollow, 10m wide and 1.75m deep, hindering close approach. The castle's entrance is approached by hollowed trackways descending the steep slope to the south from the western crest of the valley and from the direction of the parish church.

The castle's lower ward, between the ditch and the neck, is defined by a curtain wall surviving on the south east and north east, enclosing a subrectangular area 48m long, north west-south east, by up to 25m wide. As elsewhere in the castle, the wall is of irregular slate rubble, built through and laid to course. On the south east the curtain was built along the post-Roman inner rampart. On the north east, it was dug through post-Roman occupation levels on the upper slope; beyond the wall, a smoothed upper slope extends c.6.5m down to an artificial bank above the valley's rocky scarp. Small rectangular bases outside each end of the north east wall supported temporary platforms for the wall's construction. Beside the crag the lower ward has an arched gateway with remnants of greenstone facing and quoins, also found elsewhere in the castle; above, former upper chamber walls rise over 5m, supported by massive buttresses. The lower ward interior was levelled from a sloping and partly terraced post-Roman surface. By the south east wall are remains of a staircase to the wall walk, its lower end truncated by a later room built against the gateway. A double staircase to the wall walk rises behind the north east wall.

The upper ward is defined by a substantial curtain wall, up to 5m high, along the east and south east perimeter of the crag. Cliff erosion truncates this wall on the west, where the ward is defined by a later slighter wall with garderobe chambers (toilets) against its outer side at each end; steps rise to a floor over the southern garderobe. Traces of a staircase to a wall walk survive on the east of the ward. Within the upper ward are several large rooms whose broad lower courses suggest former upper floors. To their north is walling of a group of smaller service rooms level with the rear of the gateway and relating to access into the ward.

The third, inner, ward occupies the sheltered midslope hollow on the island by its neck with the mainland. Much of the inner ward's southern edge has eroded away but the cliff section and limited excavation have elucidated the sequence of building in this ward. The curtain wall was initially built along the east, on terraced post-Roman layers near the foot of the slope. Behind the curtain the ground was raised to 3m above the post-Roman terraces and a great hall was built on the resulting levelled surface, its outer wall rising from the curtain. The hall was 9m wide internally but of uncertain length, its south east end having eroded over the cliff. The curtain wall was then built north west from the hall and backed by further levelling dumps to complete the definition of the ward's eastern side. Service rooms were begun against the extended wall but before completion, lateral pressure from the weight of the levelling dumps and the great hall caused the curtain wall beneath the hall to
bulge. To counter this, buttresses were added to that wall and, as a precaution, against the extended curtain wall. Walling of the service rooms is visible within the curtain.

The inner ward curtain wall was then extended across the northern end of the hollow, where it incorporates an arched doorway, and along the crest of a rocky scarp that defines the western limit of the hollow. The eastern sector of this wall retains its stepped upper profile with pitched masonry coping, converting to battlements over and east of the doorway. The ward's curtain originally completed the circuit along the southern cliff but there it is almost entirely lost to erosion apart from a short curving remnant high up in the western sector. The battlemented wall with the present entrance door along the south edge of the ward is a 19th century addition.

Later alterations include garderobe chutes added outside the great hall and service rooms. The great hall was modified in several stages, initially partitioned to give a chamber at the north west but eventually reduced in size to a small two-storey building within the former hall, with two rooms on each floor, a rear staircase to the upper rooms and fireplaces on each floor. This building is considered to be the chamber and kitchen of the 14th century constable of the castle. A two-roomed lodging was built on a rock-cut site on the west of the ward, opposite the service rooms. The lodgings include a fireplace in the south east room and a staircase beside the south east wall. From the inner ward a track descends north to a small coastal spur on the island's east flank where the cliff drops vertically to form a natural quay. This quay and its potential as an enemy landing point were controlled by a straight battlemented wall with a wall-walk, built north west-south east across the base of the spur. The wall is pierced by an arched doorway, known as the 'Iron Gate', and is backed by a slight terrace. From the doorway, a hollowed path descends to the cliff edge where there are two rock-cut beam sockets associated with use of the quay. Later, a lower battlemented wall closed the south east end of the terrace behind the Iron Gate.

The earlier church on the island plateau was refurbished as the castle's extra-parochial chapel. Visible features of this phase include vertical grooves cut in the north and south walls for a screen separating nave from chancel, the kerbed chancel step and the addition of a small square structure at the west end, possibly a low tower, incorporating a new entrance; the earlier entrance was blocked. A masonry altar-block topped by a granite slab may also derive from the 13th century use, though the slab was replaced on the block in the 19th century after reuse in a 16th century defence described below. Excavation in the chancel revealed shallow slate-lined graves, now masked and believed to be of the castle's 13th-15th century chaplains. Four rock-cut east-west graves form a small cemetery north of the chapel; three found by excavation in the 1930s are now masked, the fourth, popularly termed 'King Arthur's Bed', is visible, covered by modern slate slabs, near the cliff edge north east of the chapel.

On the west of the island plateau, a tunnel cut WNW-ESE through bedrock is considered to be a naturally-ventilated food store serving the castle, whose wards' sub-surface geology rendered a cool store impracticable in their integral design. The tunnel has a pointed-arched profile, to 1.9m wide and 1.85m high, extending as a fully underground feature for c.8m and sloping down to the WNW. The floor and sides extend from each end as an open rock-cut channel, due partly to roof-collapse, continuing the tunnel's profile and slope over a full length of c.27m. In the western channel are vertical slots on each side for door jambs.

A walled garden was built on the east of the plateau, visible as a rectilinear enclosure 20m long, north east-south west, and tapering from 15m wide at the south east to 12.5m at the north west. It is defined by a rubble wall up to 1.5m wide and 0.9m high, overlying walls of the post-Roman settlement which project from near the north corner. It has an entrance, 0.9m wide, in the south east wall near the south corner. The garden's levelled surface contains a pattern of paths, up to 0.9m wide with edges defined by
To supplement the island's sparse water sources, a well was sunk near the centre of the plateau, 1.5m in diameter and 4.25m deep, lined with rubble walling; excavation produced 13th century pottery from its base. Two springs on the island's steep north east and north west flanks also have artificial surrounds of unknown date. A damp hollow cut 15m south of the well is considered to be a much later provision of surface water for grazing sheep. Historical sources supplement our knowledge of the castle. Accounts of 1305 describe the castle as manned by a constable, chaplain and lesser officials, but between 1328 and 1336, John Earl of Cornwall had dismantled the major roof timbers of the great hall. A survey in 1337 of possessions of the newly-created Duchy of Cornwall describes the castle with two chambers over the gateway, a stable for eight horses in the lower ward, a cellar, a disused bakehouse, and a chamber with small kitchen for the constable in the site of the great hall. The chapel and its priest are mentioned, as is the lease of grazing on the island. The castle held important prisoners on several occasions after Earl Richard was accused of sheltering the Welsh prince David ap Llywelyn at Tintagel Castle in 1245. In 1307, Thomas, Earl of Warwick was imprisoned there, and possibly John de Northampton, Lord Mayor of London, in 1384-5. By 1478 the castle was described as in ruins by William of Worcester, confirmed by Leland in 1540, when sheep and rabbits grazed the island. In 1583, Sir Richard Grenville surveyed Tintagel for potential landing sites for invading Spanish forces, recommending two small blockhouses, called rampiers, on the north of the island to cover a possible landing site on the cliffs below. His proposals were rejected but features at the sites of his intended rampiers suggest they were commenced. One is a levelled rectangular stance, 5.5m NNE-SSW by 4.5m ESE-WNW, below the crest of the island's northern cliff; it has a rubble backscarp revetment and a turf-covered wall along its SSW edge. The other is 35m to the south on the plateau, now partly rebuilt as the northern structure in a group of building reconstructions; it is a single rectangular room, 3.5m long, north east-south west, by 2.3m wide internally, with a rubble wall 0.3m high and an entrance in its south east wall near the south corner. In 1817 this building was noted as c.1.8m high with two window openings to the right of the entrance and contained the granite slab later moved to the chapel to cover the altar-block.

The rubble needed for the castle and its related features accounts for numerous quarried faces and hollows on bedrock exposures around the island. Quarryed hollows on the lower valley slopes below the castle's lower ward also reflect extensive slate-quarrying in this area from at least the later 15th century to the early 20th century. Later phases include rock-cut and wall-revetted stances for horse engines, called whim platforms, sockets for crane beams and rock-cut walkways at the head of Tintagel Haven, where the slate was transferred to coastal vessels. A circular whim platform and its access track are located by the cliff edge and valley floor in the north of the monument's mainland sector.

Mining for the lead-silver ore, galena, has also left traces; in 1870 a horizontal tunnel, called an adit, was sunk into a fault in the island's south east cliff to extract galena. A contemporary photograph shows a path in a deep groove cut along the cliff face from the island neck to the adit, carried over a large cave by a wooden walkway. The groove also held the mine's water pipe which descended the steep slope from the lower ward. The adit and rock-cut groove survive in the cliff face; excavation in the lower ward has revealed a
trench containing a ceramic pipe of 0.3m diameter bore, considered to be the mine's water supply pipe.

All English Heritage site buildings, modern built structures (apart from built reconstructions), drains and their trenches, fixtures, fittings, notices and fire equipment are excluded from the scheduling but the ground beneath them is included. Also excluded from the scheduling are the life-saving equipment and supports, the telescope in the lower ward, all public footpath waymarkers and National Trust signs, modern field walls, stiles and footbridges but the ground beneath them is included.

ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTANCE

The complex sequence of surviving remains on Tintagel Island and the adjacent mainland clearly demonstrates the major significance that this headland has held for successive societies since the Roman period, with peaks of activity and social status during the fifth to sixth centuries and the 13th century for related, though markedly differing, reasons. From an unusual expression of later Roman settlement in south west England, the monument developed into a defended early post-Roman settlement unparalleled nationally in its quality and quantity of evidence as a focus for trading links with the Mediterranean and in its size and structural diversity. A combination of factors imply that the fifth-sixth century occupation in this monument directly served the highest social ranks of the period. Consequently this monument is of major importance for our knowledge of social organisation and economic relations on a regional, national and international scale during the relatively poorly known early post-Roman phase. This is much enhanced by the good surviving structural integrity of the remains from this period, despite the construction of the later castle over part of its site. Neither is its integrity seriously affected by the excavations that have greatly elucidated the nature of the monument in this phase: these have been limited, affecting under 5% of the monument's area available for settlement, and leaving virtually untouched the thick stratified deposits beneath the castle's inner ward, identified as the likely core of the post-Roman settlement. The importance of the monument's post-Roman remains is further increased by their surviving wider local context, notably the post-Roman burial ground focussed on Tintagel parish churchyard (beyond this monument), and considered to have been directly associated with and complementary to the contemporary occupation of this monument. Later, the establishment of the chapel on the island provides a good and rare example showing the nature of ecclesiastical provision in the era leading up to the installation of the parochial system.

The monument's appearance in major 12th century story-cycles has lent it widespread fame ever since, and though bearing indirectly on the physical remains, the evolution to the present day of the monument's role in these stories provides an unusually well-documented example of the manner and motives by which folk memory and, later, recorded myths and legends can progress through time. The current expression of those myths and legends remains the medium by which this monument achieves its greatest renown.

As an early attempt to exploit the monument's legendary acclaim for personal prestige, the non-strategic situation of the 13th century castle provides an unusually clear and early illustration of those motivations other than the purely military that stimulated castle-building at this period. These include the expression of personal vanity and the desire to impress, which elsewhere are usually overlapped with military and strategic considerations until several centuries later. On a more detailed level, the difficult topography of the castle's site and the evident measures to overcome problems that ensued provide unusually good insights into the logistics of castle construction at that time.

SCHEDULING HISTORY
Monument placed in Guardianship on 28th January 1931 as:
COUNTY/NUMBER: Cornwall 279
NAME: Tintagel Castle

Monument's inclusion in the Schedule was confirmed on 9th October 1981. Monument included as:
COUNTY/NUMBER: Cornwall 279
NAME: Tintagel Castle and Celtic monastery on island

The reference of this monument is now:
NATIONAL MONUMENT NUMBER: 15446
NAME: Romano-British and early medieval settlement, medieval church, castle and associated features on Tintagel Island and adjoining mainland

SCHEDULING REVISED ON 18th November 1996