### Impact case study (REF3b)

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<tr>
<th>Institution:</th>
<th>University of Liverpool</th>
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<td>Unit of Assessment:</td>
<td>17B - Archaeology</td>
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<td>Title of case study:</td>
<td>Castell Henllys and the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park</td>
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#### 1. Summary of the impact

Mytum’s research excavation and extensive reconstructions at the Iron Age archaeological site at Castell Henllys benefitted Pembrokeshire Coast National Park through integration of the research results into their visitor resources, educational programmes and management plans, developed with the Castell Henllys project’s guidance. In particular, because the ‘Celts’ are a key part of the Welsh National Curriculum at Key Stage 2, Castell Henllys features both on the National Park website provision and as an important element of their schools visit programme. This previously unvisited site has become a major educational centre and significant local tourist attraction only because of the project’s long-term excavations and reconstruction.

#### 2. Underpinning research

Mytum excavated and conducted on-site building reconstructions from 1982 until 2008, first from University of Newcastle, then York and finally Liverpool (from January 2008). This resulted in the complete excavation of the fort interior and annexe, and extensive excavation of the enclosing earthworks. Mytum designed and saw to completion three archaeologically supported reconstructed roundhouses (including the longest standing reconstruction in UK) and one four-post structure. The longitudinal study of the on-site reconstructed buildings continues. Thus Liverpool based fieldwork was conducted in 2008 and then Liverpool based post-excavation analysis from 2009-2012, and final writing up, in effect the conclusions upon which the impact is based, have been undertaken at Liverpool, as is continued research on the experimental structures and on the ongoing site interpretation strategies and practices. Chronology of the fort (c. 450 BC – c. 100 BC) established by C14 dating funded by Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and NERC.

The research findings include key original work:
- first extensively excavated *chevaux-de-frise* in Britain, preserved under annexe rampart
- first extensively excavated inland promontory fort in England and Wales
- first extensively excavated fort annexe in UK
- completely excavated complex double-guard chamber gateway and later gateway phases
- long lengths of rampart fully excavated to reveal 3D complex construction of the dump rampart for the first time, and differences between one rampart and another
- identified role of ritualised activity during the construction of the ramparts
- reconstruction of one double-ring roundhouse, none of which could be discerned from traditional trench sections
- reconstruction of two other roundhouses with no interior posts and wall plates
- reconstruction of one four-post structure with the unique interpretation of a circular structure on the platform supported by the four posts
- these are now the longest-standing Iron Age experimental structures in the UK (others have been moved); these building reconstructions are the only ones on their excavated sites in the UK which provides particular value for longitudinal studies
- research into the role of Castell Henllys in education and in public perceptions of the past began in the 1980s and is ongoing, as longitudinal data provides unique insight into changes in public perceptions, as well as studying the building reconstructions over time.

The research is the most extensive in Britain on a small Iron Age fortified settlement, and provides an important highly contextualised case study linked to excavation and survey of other settlement types, notably enclosed farmsteads, allowing interpretation of settlement hierarchies and shifts (Mytum Output 3). This provides important interpretive opportunities in public engagement at Castell Henllys, but also informs wider management policies by Cadw, Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, and Dyfed Archaeological Trust. The research on the ramparts, whilst building on...
that at the Breiddin and Crickley Hill, has been able to investigate construction methods and social implications of fortified sites much more substantively than previously.

This work has been published in some of the best peer review journals such as *Antiquity* and resulted in a high quality definitive monograph submitted to REF2014 (Mytum Output 1).

3. References to the research


Mytum, H, 2013 *Monumentality in Late Prehistory: Building and Rebuilding Castell Henllys Hillfort* (REF output 1)

4. Details of the impact

The beneficiaries of our research project at Castell Henllys include 1) the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, 2) the schools and teachers that visit the site and visitor centre, in particular those that use materials in their learning and teaching and 3) the general public. Castell Henllys is the only hillfort in the UK where the public interpretation is so intensive and includes on-site interpreters and on-site reconstructions informed by substantive on-site research. The public can experience the physical character of the site and structures, and the landscape, which they can then take with them to make sense of other hillforts, many of which have public access but have no on-site interpretation.

In relation to 1) the National Park, the excavation and post excavation analysis of the evidence from the site allowed the development of an accurate and informative Iron Age fort reconstruction. Prior to Mytum’s research, the site was a scheduled ancient monument in private ownership with no public access or interpretation. Mytum played a key role in the translation of the archaeological findings into the reconstruction and public interpretation, commenced under private ownership and subsequently through the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. Mytum has ensured that the associated knowledge set has been communicated to Park guides and integrated into educational resources, and continues to provide regular refresher CPD to site staff on the archaeological research and its interpretive potential. The reconstructions are specifically designed to inform visitors of a number of distinctive aspects of the experience of Iron Age life, of the challenges for those living in this period and their sophisticated architectural achievements, but also their distinctive ideological and social worlds. Mytum’s team also provided detailed materials aimed at both school groups and the general public for the Castell Henllys visitor centre, aimed to inform those visitors more broadly about the Iron Age past and the nature of the Iron Age landscape based directly on results from the excavations. In addition, Mytum had a significant input into the Park management plan based on the outcomes of the project, including location and size of structures, location and form of the complex entrance, the *chevaux-de-frise*, and the earthwork defences, visitor routes and information on interpretive panels. This input has been regular and ongoing since the opening to the public in 1982, and continues until today. A major restructuring of the visitor centre is being planned at present as one of 9 Cadw and EU-funded Heritage Tourism Projects with Castell Henllys acting as a regional hub. Artefacts and results from Mytum’s excavations will be central to this new design, with Mytum’s expert input.

2) Based on the excavations and the subsequent post-excavation work (2008-2013), the materials
A typical online review from 27 November 2008 “Castell Henllys is the ideal place to visit if you’re a teacher teaching about the Celts.” A typical online review from 27 November 2008 “Castell Henllys is the ideal place to visit if you’re a teacher teaching about the Celts.” A typical online review from 27 November 2008 “Castell Henllys is the ideal place to visit if you’re a teacher teaching about the Celts.” A typical online review from 27 November 2008 “Castell Henllys is the ideal place to visit if you’re a teacher teaching about the Celts.”
reason for the visit was to learn about history and all except 3 responses indicated that these expectations had been met or exceeded. In the Visitor Book for 2012 and 2013 63% of visitors commented that they found the visit informative.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

1. Llandovery College Prep School’s website and Pontybrenin Primary School’s blog (year 4 visit 22/04/2013) are two examples of school websites which corroborate that the results of the excavations and reconstructions informed and inspired the children and stimulated their learning (2).

2. A selection of evaluation forms from schools (in English and Welsh) which visited Castell Henllys (October 2012 to March 2013) demonstrate the influence of visits to Castell Henllys on the school curriculum.

3. A collection of comments from Castell Henllys’ Visitors Book corroborating visitors’ views of the informative nature of the site.

4. BBC Wales Iron Age Celts website for key stage 2 corroborates that Castell Henllys is used as a key site across Wales in schools teaching (2).

5. Iron Age Celts web page from the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales corroborates claims that Castell Henllys is acknowledged as a national centre of excellence in excavation, reconstruction and interpretation by the heritage industry (3).

6. Valuing the Welsh Historic Environment (2010) from Cadw corroborates claims that Castell Henllys is acknowledged as a national centre of excellence in excavation, reconstruction and interpretation (3)

7. Examples of visitor reviews on line:
   c. https://plus.google.com/101313925265499577937/about#101313925265499577937/about

   These comments on the internet indicate the positive effects of the experience of visiting Castell Henllys on the general public and teachers, both in terms of quality of life and increasing awareness of the local heritage.

8. The Senior Archaeologist and Public Interpretation and Outreach Lead at the Southeast Archaeological Center, US National Park Service, is an international heritage expert (with particular expertise in public site interpretation and the role of on-site reconstruction) who has also visited Castell Henllys and can be contacted to corroborate that Castell Henllys is an international leader in on-site reconstruction and public interpretation (3)

9. The former Education Officer at Castell Henllys (now Manager of Castell Henllys & Newport Visitor Centre), Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, can be contacted to corroborate the claims that Mytum’s research through excavation, reconstruction and interpretation has been essential for past and continuing Pembrokeshire Coast National Park management and staff training, and in the design and construction of educational resources. She can confirm that Mytum continues to input his ongoing research into the developing CPD and interpretive programmes at Castell Henllys (1, 2)