



## Newenden, Kent

Nīpanðenne

Castle Toll

Grid ref ..TQ 8520 2835

Eorpeburnan burh (remains of)

A motte and bailey castle, apparently occupied only in the early and mid-13th century, but overlying a larger earthwork enclosure which has been argued to be the Saxon burh of Eorpeburnan. It is claimed that the castle represents a military post intended to block French raids up the Rother.

*B K Davison, 'The Burghal Hidage Fort of Eorpeburnan: A suggested identification', Mediaeval Archaeology 16 (1972) pp 123-7*

## Description

The mutilated and eroded remains of a low motte at the northeast corner of a roughly square bailey at the edge of the Rother Levels of Romney Marsh. It is close to the Hexden Channel, a tributary of the River Rother to the south. 'The earthworks occupy the hooked end of a mile-long peninsula jutting ENE into Romney Marsh.' The motte is c. 15 ft high. There are earthwork traces of a larger enclosure, which formed a defence against raiders making their way inland.

## Importance

The site has considerable importance given the evidence for late-Saxon defences on the site. The castle is of conventional form, even if severely damaged, and if it was intended as a strategic defence of the river Rother, it is an unusual forerunner of later coastal defence works.

## Condition

The motte is pitted with rabbit burrows and a badger set and the edges of the mound have been ploughed close. The cross-trenching carried out in 1965 is still visible. The interior of the bailey is ploughed and, at the time of visit, supported a crop of linseed. Parts of the bailey enclosure have been ploughed out although the southwest corner survives to a substantial height but is densely covered with tree and scrub.

Ownership (or tenancy): Not known

Use(s) of the site: Agricultural

Statutory protection: Scheduled ancient monument

Nature conservation interests: AONB - High Weald; Badger set

## Relationship to other sites

Isolated situation but can be related strategically with other defensive works of various periods around Romney Marsh.

## Potential as part of an economic regeneration package

Agricultural use is the only possible future unless the site is adopted for conservation and tourist potential.

## Interpretational potential as an educational resource

Although in a degraded condition there is the possibility for developing its educational potential especially in the light of the late-Saxon evidence. This is the only place in Kent where there might be physical remains of a burh\*.

## Tourism potential

In view of the comments above there is scope for developing the site because of the existence of a public footpath to it. The agricultural value of the castle site itself must be marginal and negotiations might be initiated with the new owners for the conservation of the site.

## Potential for other beneficial re-use

None, other than agriculture and tourism.

## Date visited

16/06/1999 AS

Public access to the site: Access from public footpath from Lossenham

*Andrew Saunders and Victor Smith  
December 2001*

## Editor's note

\* There are actually remains of a burh at DOVER CASTLE, qv.