

Embury Beacon Camp

Earthworks of an Iron Age hillfort on the South West Coast Path, with what remains gradually being lost as it slips down the cliffside



A 3D model was made using photos taken from a drone. Click on the drone to find out more.



[Click here to see the earthworks up-close through the interactive 3D model!](#)

Remains of an internal rampart

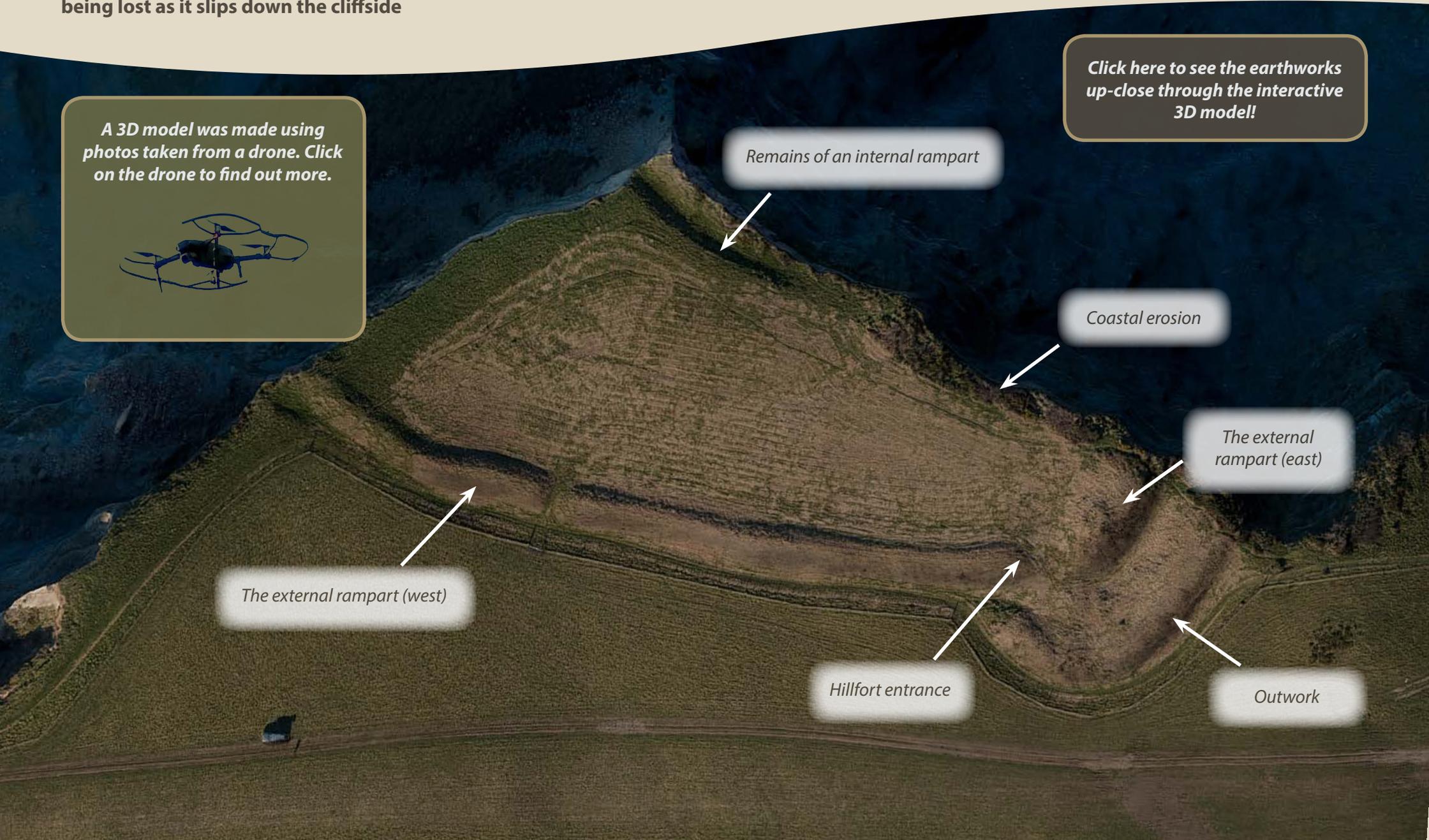
Coastal erosion

The external rampart (east)

The external rampart (west)

Hillfort entrance

Outwork



Remains of an internal rampart

A small section of rampart, shown as a bank and ditch, survives on the north-western cliff edge. The rest of this rampart has been eroded over thousands of years by coastal erosion, leaving little to tell us what the original size or shape of the area it enclosed would have been.

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The external rampart (west)



The western end of the external rampart is the longest surviving section of rampart at the site, and is formed of a bank and external ditch. A gap in this part of the rampart is thought to be the result of the medieval or later use of the site, perhaps relating to access for grazing sheep within the enclosed space. This was later used to allow access along the former route of the South West Coast Path, although this has since been re-directed to minimise further rampart erosion.

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The external rampart (east)



Formed of a linear north-south bank and external ditch, the earthwork is slightly more spread and less uniform than the remainder of the rampart to the west. It may be the case this change in is the result of long-term weathering to the hillfort on its north-eastern side, or a result of a change (most likely later prehistoric) to the layout of the earthworks. This section of rampart is separated from the western section by an entrance gap.

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Hillfort entrance

The hillfort entrance is located at the north-western end of the site, and is approximately 6m wide. The entrance gap is enclosed by a further earthwork, or 'outwork' (see right) which was intended to prevent quick and easy access to the interior of the hillfort.

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Outwork

The outwork rampart is formed of a section of bank on the eastern edge of the site, which curves around the external rampart at the location of the north-eastern entrance. The outwork would have acted as a barrier to prevent easy access to the hillfort entrance.

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Coastal erosion



The earthworks at Embury Beacon Camp are being eroded away by the loss of the cliff edge and weathering. Historic maps and historic aerial photographs show little more than what the surviving earthworks show today, and the extent, shape, number of ramparts, and any unique features of this hillfort remain very much uncertain. It is possible that all of the earthworks will one day be lost as the coastline erodes away.

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Creating the 3D model of Embury Beacon Camp

[Click here to see the earthworks up-close through the interactive 3D model](#)

The 3D model was produced from a series of high quality aerial photographs taken by drone above the site. The drone was flown in a grid patten, taking a large number of high quality photographs, each overlapping the one before it. This method can survey over large areas in relatively short time-frames when compared with surveys which can be undertaken on foot. The images are processed to produce 3D models.

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[Click here to find out more about Embury Beacon Camp on the North Devon Coast AONB website](#)

