

DUNSANDLE CASTLE

June 26th 2010

A condensed profile of Dunsandle Castle and environs.

Dunsandle was built circa 1460, De Burgo castle and one of eighteen castles built in the immediate vicinity between Craughwell and Kiltullagh.

Site

Using both the mound and the tail of a sand esker deposited by a glacier running West / East forming Galway Bay and running on over the midlands, Dunsandle was built on an elevated site. The esker tail appears to be steepened on both sides and leads directly to the castle gate.

Points of interest

- Corner tower
- Ice house / on site of 2nd corner tower
- Remains of Manor House built circa 1640 / 1660
- Bread oven
- 19th century building likely farm outhouse built on site of a church perhaps
- Inter mural tie beams
- Groin vault

Castle

The castle is built on sand with no solid foundation. The reasons for this are likely to be that it was previously a strategic occupied site or simply to gain height for defensive purposes.

On each corner the castle rests / floats on large limestone slabs. At first floor level the castle is held by inter mural tie beams and again at its upper level indicating a concern of building settlement.

The use of a groin vault instead of a barrel vault may reflect the same concern in relation to possible movement nonetheless this all adds to the building's intrigue.

The castle was harled or plastered and good examples can be seen on the North elevation.

Fireplaces were fitted later possibly in the 1650s.

There is a good example of an oubliette / prison on the top floor below what was originally a window ope but now a fireplace.

Habitation / from circa 1460 through till 1750 / Manor House burnt 1691

Restoration architect: David Newman Johnson