The castle lies on the west end of a low rocky promontory formed by the sea to the west and north and the Rheidol estuary to the south. The inner ward was roughly rectangular, with a round tower 8m in diameter at the more or less right-angled west corner, elongated D-shaped towers at the more acute north and south corners, and a huge twin towered gatehouse occupying the flattened east corner. The curtains were up to 2.4m thick and enclosed a court 54m long by 45m wide. At a distance varying from 10m to 15m lay an outer wall enclosing the middle ward. It also had round towers at the west, north and south corners, and a twin-towered gateway on the east, beyond which was a barbican. The NE and SE sides of the middle ward are each bowed inwards, having two straight walls meeting at an angle marked by a turret. A triangular outer ward with sides about 60m long now lacking any defences (a section of ditch on the NE was filled in when the Promenade was built in 1901) lay to seaward on the NW and was reached by gateways through both the inner and outer ward curtains, the outer gate being twin towered, whilst the inner gate was a single Dshaped tower pierced by a passageway. This inner NW gateway is now the only part of the inner ward to stand complete with its parapet. Except for sections which adjoined the missing west tower, and a short section south of the east gate, the wall of the middle ward still forms a circuit. It forms a retaining wall 6m high above the rock-cut outer ditch but has no more than a 19th century parapet above the ground level inside, and the NW gateway is in the same state. The north and south towers of the middle ward stand somewhat higher, but the east gateway is more fragmentary.

Until recent excavation all that remained visible of the inner ward apart from the NW gatehouse was a high fragment of the round outer part of the southern gatehouse, and the lower parts of the rest of the building, which was 27m wide. Each tower 18.5m long contained just one large U-shaped chamber with a pair of loops at the west end, a loop commanding the outer part of the entrance passage, and a doorway leading on to the central part of the passage, which had a portcullis and two leaved door at either end. Above were two storeys of fine chambers reached by spiral stairs in round turrets on the west corners and served by latrines where the curtain walls adjoined. The excavations have now revealed the bases of the south tower and the curtains on either side of it, that on the west extending to another D-shaped tower in the middle of the SW side. The remains of a building against the SW curtain and of a hall block between the gatehouse and south tower have also been found. The hall measured 15m by 6m and had a fireplace in the curtain wall. In the 17th century its west wall was mostly removed and a new wall built, halving the width of the building. The excavations also found evidence that the SW side of the inner ward and its towers may have been added as part of a revised plan after the 1282 attack and that the ward was originally larger, extending on this side to the line of the present outer wall.

The last remains of the town walls were removed in the 19th century. They ran from the castle along the shore to a point near the library and then followed a curve defined now by Baker St, Chalbeate St, and Mill St, to the River Rheidol, and then back along the river bank to the castle. One gate faced the river at the bottom of Bridge St. The Great Dark Gate lay in the street of that name, whilst Little Dark Gate lay at the bottom of Eastgate St. The footings of a wall 1.8m thick found in South Road in 1955 were probably part of the defences of the harbour on the south side.

ALLT Y FERIN SN 522233

The castle of Dinweiler mentioned in Welsh chronicles may have been on this site or at Pencader. A strong promontory 100m long by 60m wide high above the Cothi River is defended on the accessible NE side by a motte 9m high at the east end of a rampart 3m high with a ditch in front. Another ditch cuts off the tip of the promontory.

QWT5