Application Ref: NP/13/0530

Application Type: Advert  
Grid Ref: SN16473324  
Applicant: PCNPA  
Agent: Miss J Simpson, PCNPA  
Proposal: Interpretation Panel  
Site Location: Open Access Gateway, Near Mountain Bach, Foel Drygarn & Carn Menyn, Nr Cymych, Pembs  
Case Officer: Matt Dash

Summary

This application seeks advertisement consent for the erection of an interpretation panel sign to be positioned onto a public right of way gate near Mountain Bach, Foel Drygarn & Carn Menyn, within Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. The proposal is not considered to have a detrimental impact upon the amenity of the national park or public safety due to its scale, design, siting and the associated removal of four signs in proximity to the proposed sign. The application is therefore considered to comply with the relevant policies of the LDP and as such is recommended for approval.

The application has been referred to the Development Management Committee due to the applicant being the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.

Consultee Response

Pembrokeshire CC - Common Land: No adverse comments  
CADW - Protection & Policy: No adverse comments  
PCC - Transportation & Environment: No objection  
Crymych Community Council – No response received at time of writing this report.

Public Response

The application was advertised by site notice displayed at the site on 10th December 2013. No letters have been received from third parties.

Policies considered

Please note that these policies can be viewed on the Policies page Pembroke Coast National Park website - http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=549

LDP Policy 01 - National Park Purposes and Duty  
LDP Policy 07 - Countryside  
LDP Policy 08 - Special Qualities
LDP Policy 15 - Conservation of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
LDP Policy 29 - Sustainable Design
LDP Policy 30 - Amenity
PPW5 Chapter 04 - Planning for Sustainability
PPW5 Chapter 06 - Conserving the Historic Environment
SPG03 - Loss of Hotels and Guesthouses
SPG08 - Affordable Housing
TAN 07 - Outdoor Advertisement Control
TAN 12 - Design

Officer’s Appraisal

Background and Description

The application site is located a couple of hundred metres down a non-metalled vehicular track that leads off the B road linking Mynachlogddu and Crymych, on the edge of the Preselli Mountains within North Pembrokeshire. There are two gates, a timber vehicular farm gate and to the left a timber pedestrian gate leading on to the public right of way that climbs up towards Bryngar Foel Drygarn Hillfort. The timber gates and gate post have three existing signs attached to them with another timber ground mounted sign located several metres beyond. The sign on the gate post measures approximately 40cm x 30cm, notifies the public that the land is Access Land and informs them of the Countryside Code. The second sign measuring approximately 20cm x 30cm, located on the pedestrian gate warns that the land is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and describes the rules relating to this. Thirdly, the sign attached to the vehicular gate measuring approximately 40cm x 60cm warns against the use of non-authorised vehicles. All the existing signage is non-illuminated.

Constraints

- Special Area of Conservation - within 500m
- Site of Special Scientific Interest - within 50m
- Common Land CROW Access
- Biodiversity Issue
- Historic Landscape
- Safeguarding Zone
- Rights of Way Inland - within 50m
- Hazardous Zones
- Recreation Character Areas

Relevant Planning History

No relevant planning history
Current Proposal

This is an application made under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 (as amended) for the erection of 1 x non-illuminated interpretation panel onto a timber access gate for a public right of way, to replace the existing 3 signs on the gate and timber ground mounted sign beyond within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

The Origins project is part of the 'Makers of Wales' prehistoric strand of the Cadw pan-Wales interpretation plan. The funding comes from the Welsh Government's Heritage Tourism Project, which is backed with European funding. The project aims to maximise the economic value of heritage through increasing the volume, length and value of visits to Wales, linking themes of Welsh heritage at national, regional and local levels. The project will also make sure that Wales's outstanding heritage is more accessible and enjoyable to visit – for those who live in Wales and for visitors. The funding will support the following PCNPA project:

- To enhance the site at Castell Henllys including developing it as a regional hub for the origins and prehistory of Wales.
- The upgrading of the Castell Henllys site, together with directional signs and interpretation panels all form part of this project.

In addition, the project is proposing the installation of interpretation panels/signs at various prehistory satellite sites throughout the North of the County within the National Park.

The proposed sign will measure 500mm x 420mm and be constructed of Duraltie. The maximum height of lettering will be 12mm, with the predominant colouring being blue, brown and black with the majority of text to be printed in white or black. The sign is proposed to be fixed to a timber gate at a height of 750mm from the base of the sign to the ground.

The contents of the proposed sign will inform readers in both Welsh and English of historic information related to the landscape around them, as well as coalesce the information contained within the existing signage that is to be replaced by the proposed sign.

Key Issues

The main issues to be considered in this case are:-

- Amenity
- Public safety

Amenity
Paragraph 3.5.2 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) notes that:

"The test in considering an advertisement’s impact on amenity is whether it will adversely affect the appearance of the building, or of the immediate neighbourhood, where it is to be displayed. Local planning authorities should therefore consider the local characteristics of the neighbourhood, including its scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features. Because assessment of these factors may appear to involve some subjective judgement, authorities should be consistent in their assessment of visual impact in similar or comparable neighbourhoods or surroundings."

Technical Advice Note 7 - Outdoor Advertisement Control offers specific advice in the case of National Parks advising that close scrutiny of applications for advertisement consent is required. Paragraph 19 states:

"In National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and conservation areas, stricter controls usually apply to the display of advertisements which do not require the local planning authority’s express consent. Applications for express consent also need to be closely scrutinised to ensure that the proposals do not compromise the aims of an area’s designation."

Policy 8 of the LDP refers to the Special Qualities of the National Park and lists priorities to ensure that these qualities will be protected and enhanced. Criterion ‘a’ of Policy 15 and criterion ‘d’ of Policy 30 of the LDP seek to resist development that would cause significant visual intrusion. Policy 29 of the LDP seeks to ensure the sustainable design of all new development within the National Park, listing key requirements which developments will be assessed against.

The scale of the proposed sign at 500mm x 420mm is relatively modest and can be considered even more so when the removal of the 4 existing signs is also taken into account.

In terms of design, the proposal will contain fairly muted colours such as brown, blue, black and white and is non-illuminated.

The proposed sign is not in a prominent position, situated on the gate, 750mm above the ground. In the countryside and surrounded by hedges and trees, it will not appear visually intrusive as it will not be visible from the metalled public highway to the south east, and will only be seen when members of the public want to access the public footpath or travel down the track.

The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of amenity as the design, scale and positioning will not be visually intrusive and will protect the Special Qualities of the National Park.

**Public Safety**

On the issue of public safety PPW states in paragraph 3.5.1:-
"The control regime does not enable the authority to regulate the subject-matter of any advertisement. The test in assessing an advertisements impact on public safety is whether the advertisement itself, or the exact location proposed for its display, is likely to be so distracting or confusing that it creates a hazard to, or endangers, people in the vicinity who are taking reasonable care for their own and others' safety."

Pembrokeshire County Councils Highways Department has been consulted to assess the proposals impact on the adjacent highway, though no objections were raised.

The application is therefore considered acceptable in terms of public safety.

**Conclusion**

The proposed sign is considered to be acceptable in terms of public safety and will not be visually intrusive in of itself, and will be even less so when taking into account the removal of the four existing signs attached to the gates and gate post. It therefore complies with the relevant policies of the LDP and as such is recommended for approval.

**Recommendation:**

The application be approved subject to conditions relating to the 5 year time limit, compliance with plans, maintaining the advertisements in a clean, tidy and safe condition, and their removal to the satisfaction of the LPA on the expiry of the 5 year permission applicable to all advertisement consents.