
Application Ref: NP/13/0537

Application Type	Advert
Grid Ref:	SN11773887
Applicant	PCNPA
Agent	Mr P Songhurst
Proposal	Install 2 x pre-entrance arrival signs adjacent to the A487 to help visitors gain access to Castell Henllys
Site Location	Castell Henllys Iron Age Fort, Felindre Farchog, Crymych, Pembrokeshire, SA41 3UT
Case Officer	Matt Dash

Summary

This is an application made under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 (as amended) for the display of 2 x pre entrance arrival signs to Castell Henllys along the A487 Trunk Road. The advertisements comprise 2 x composite aluminium panels to be affixed to 2 x woven hazel wattle panels suspended between 2 x timber posts located on the grass verges between 210m and 280m distance from the main access road leading to the Castell Henllys site.

Whilst the signage may be replacing existing signs, its large scale, design and siting creates an unacceptable impression on the landscape which is considered to be harmful to the unique character and appearance of the area and wider special qualities, as well as potentially causing an unacceptable impact upon public safety. As such the advertisement is contrary to the primary purposes of the National Park at preserving or enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Park and promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities by the public. The advertisement therefore fails to comply with policies 1, 7, 8, 15 and 30 of the Local Development Plan and national guidance contained in Planning Policy Wales, Edition 5 (November 2012), Technical Advice Note 7- Outdoor Advertisement Control (1996) and the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.

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

Consultee Response

Trunk Road Agency: Recommend Refusal

Eglwysrwrw Community Council – No response received at time of writing this report.

Public Response

The application was advertised by a site notice displayed at the site and on a wooden stake on 10th December 2013. One letter response has been received objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- The signs are excessively large and disproportionate to the setting.
- The materials to be used are not in keeping and are considered to be loud and inappropriate.
- The policy is contrary to LDP Policy 1.
- The application is lacking a safety audit.
- The signs will create unnecessary glint and glare from sun and headlight reflections.

The letter also states no objection to the existing brown signs being enlarged or updated, and suggests an alternative siting.

Policies considered

Please note that these policies can be viewed on the Policies page Pembrokehire 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 Pembrokehire Coast National Park

LDP Policy 29 - Sustainable Design

LDP Policy 30 - Amenity

PPW5 Chapter 05 - Conserving and Improving Natural Heritage and the Coast

SPG06 - Landscape

TAN 07 - Outdoor Advertisement Control

TAN 12 - Design

Officer's Appraisal

Background

The A487 Trunk Road where the proposed signs are to be located, links Fishguard and Cardigan, passing to the south of Castell Henllys Iron Age Village. Castell Henllys is one of many prehistoric promontory forts in the National Park, with replica Iron Age Roundhouses built right on top of the excavated remains of an existing hill fort. It is situated north of the A487, approximately 6.4km east of Newport.

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.

Constraints

- Biodiversity Issue
- Recreation Character Area

Relevant Planning History

- NP/178/92 – Education/Interpretation Centre – Withdrawn 11th June 1992
- NP/363/92 – Educational Centre – Approved 7th October 1992
- NP/113/93 – Car Park – Approved 28th April 1993
- NP/262/96 – Portaloo – Approved 26th September 1996
- NP/008/97 – Erection of Toilet block for Public use – Approved 8th January 1997
- NP/041/98 – Iron Age Roundhouse – Approved 1st April 1998
- NP/99/403 – Portaloo toilet building – Approved 22nd October 1999
- NP/00/299 – Temporary residential occupation of roundhouse for historical documentary – Approved 15th September 2000
- NP/01/031 – Additional car parking – Cancelled 16th January 2001
- NP/01/141 – Provision of cattle access – Approved 23rd April 2001
- NP/01/143 – Erection of Oak post at entrance to car park – Approved 23rd April 2001
- NP/03/144 – Portaloo – Approved 23rd April 2003
- NP/04/258 – Erection of 2.5kw wind turbine & greenhouse – Approved 9th August 2004
- NP/04/561 – Erection of 2.5kw wind turbine – Approved 17th January 2005
- NP/05/295 – Temporary siting of portaloo for archaeology students – Cancelled 14th June 2005

- NP/06/373 – Temporary Portaloos for 5 years – Approved 13th December 2006
- NP/06/072 – Temporary change of use to living history exhibition with re-enactor living on site – Approved 24th March 2006

Current Proposal

This is an application made under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 (as amended) for the display of 2 x pre entrance arrival signs to the Castell Henllys Iron Age Village along the A487 Trunk Road. The proposal is to position the signs along the A487 approximately 210m west and 280m east of the main access road which leads north into the Castell Henllys site, and replacing the existing brown and white tourist signs. The advertisements comprise 2 x composite aluminium panels to be affixed to 2 x woven hazel wattle panels suspended between 2 x timber posts.

The proposed composite panels would measure 1500mm in width by 1900mm in height, with the timber structure to which they are to be attached measuring 2200mm in width by 2650mm in height.

The panels would have a background that is predominantly white. The panel would have the Castell Henllys name, logo and image of the site. The maximum height of the logo would be 450mm, with the text measuring 250mm.

Key Issues

In dealing with applications for Advertisement Consent the principal issues to consider 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.”

In regard of Local Policy the Local Development Plan Policy 15 seeks to conserve the National Park, with criteria (a) and (b) resisting development that would cause significant visual intrusion, and/or that would be insensitively or unsympathetically siting within the landscape. Policy 30 (d) seeks to avoid development that is visually intrusive.

The site lies in a remote rural location between Newport and Eglwysrwr to the north of the Preseli Mountains, and within the A487 Trunk Road Boundary. There are currently 2 x brown and white tourist signs indicating the direction and distance to the Castell Henllys Iron Age Fort which the proposed scheme would replace. On both sides of the Trunk Road, there are grass verges approximately 6m wide bounded by trees and hedging.

The surrounding land is characterized by rolling hills and unspoilt scenery, and whilst it is noted that the proposed signs would replace, not be in addition to the existing brown and white tourist signs, the large scale and design would appear as a large solid block, adding an urban form of advertisement to a rural area and would therefore be out of character with this setting. Whilst it is accepted that each application must be judged upon its own merits, approval of this scheme of advertising would potentially result in pressure for additional forms of advertisements alongside the site which will result in further detriment to the surrounding rural character.

Paragraph 7 of Technical Advice Note 7 States;

“Businesses located in the countryside expect to be able to advertise their whereabouts, especially to visitors, but care should be taken to ensure that signs are designed and sited to harmonise with their setting, and that a proliferation of individually acceptable advertisements does not spoil the appearance of open countryside. Wherever practicable, businesses in the same general location, or in by-passed communities, should be encouraged to combine their essential advertising needs so as to avoid a proliferation of advance signs. By-passed communities may wish to consider whether an officially approved highway sign can be produced to meet the needs of the whole community.”

In this instance whilst it is accepted that the Castell Henllys Iron Age Village wishes to promote and re-brand itself, signage of this scale and design is not considered appropriate in this rural location particularly when Trunk Road

Agency approved brown and white tourist signs are already located on the site.

Public Safety

On the issue of public safety PPW states at 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 advertisement’s 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.”

The Welsh Government Trunk Road Agency has objected to the proposed scheme together with a number of concerns and suggestions. The first objection is that they do not allow advertising signs on Trunk Roads and therefore this clearly fails that pre-requisite. Whilst this in itself is not a reason to refuse planning permission (but would result in the signs being unable to be erected) it is also noted by the Trunk Roads Agency that signage placed within the highway boundary would also be subject to a number of assessments as follows:-

- Risk Restraints Risk Assessment Process, to determine if the item is a hazard and whether safety fencing or passive measures are required to mitigate any hazard.
- Road Safety Audit, to ensure that the signs do not impede the visibility of vehicles exiting from side roads.
- Geotechnical Risk Analysis, to affirm that any excavations when installing the signs would not affect the stability of the Trunk Road.

There is no evidence supplied with this application that these assessments have been carried out, and that the proposed scheme would not create a hazard, or endanger either pedestrians or road users in the vicinity. As such it must be considered that there is the potential for these advertisement signs to have a detrimental effect on public safety.

Conclusion

In view of the above paragraphs it is considered that whilst the signage may be replacing existing signs, its large scale, design and siting creates an unacceptable impression on the landscape which is considered to be harmful to the unique character and appearance of the area and wider special qualities, as well as potentially causing an unacceptable impact upon public safety. As such the advertisement is contrary to the primary purposes of the National Park at preserving or enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Park and promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities by the public. The advertisement therefore fails to comply with policies 1, 7, 8, 15 and 30 of the Local Development Plan and national guidance contained in Planning Policy

Wales, Edition 5 (November 2012), Technical Advice Note 7- Outdoor Advertisement Control (1996) and the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.

Recommendation

The application be refused for the following reasons;

1. The proposed advertisement signage by virtue of its form, appearance and location represents an inappropriate form of signage within a rural location which is harmful to the character and appearance of the area and special qualities of the National Park. As such the advertisement is contrary to the primary purposes of the National Park at preserving or enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Park and promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities by the public. The advertisement fails to comply with Local Development Plan Policy 1 (National Park Purposes and Duty), Policy 7 (Countryside), Policy 8 (Special Qualities), Policy 15 (Conservation of the National Park), Policy 30 (Amenity) and national guidance contained in Planning Policy Wales, Edition 5 (November 2012), Technical Advice Note 7- Outdoor Advertisement Control (1996) and the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.

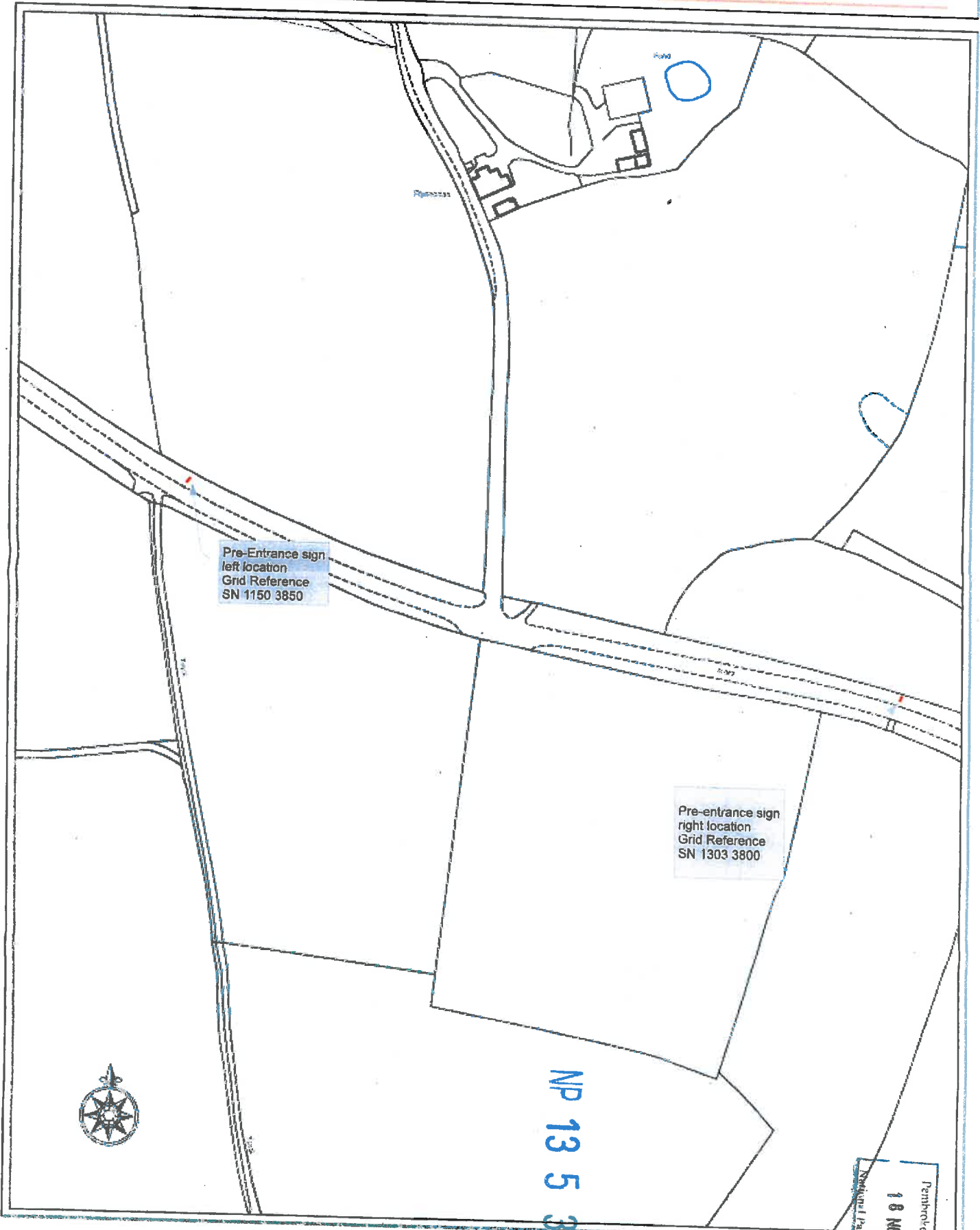
2. The application does not include a Risk Restraints Risk Assessment, a Road Safety Audit or Geotechnical Risk Analysis and as such insufficient information has been provided to assess the proposal with regard to road safety. The application therefore fails to comply with paragraph 3.5.1 of Planning Policy Wales Edition 5.

Drawings:

Castell Henllys entrance

Item 6p)

Scale 1:2500



Pre-Entrance sign
left location
Grid Reference
SN 1150 3850

Pre-entrance sign
right location
Grid Reference
SN 1303 3800

NP 13 5 37



Pembrokeshire Coast
National Park Authority
18 NOV 2013

Castell Henllys Arrival Signs

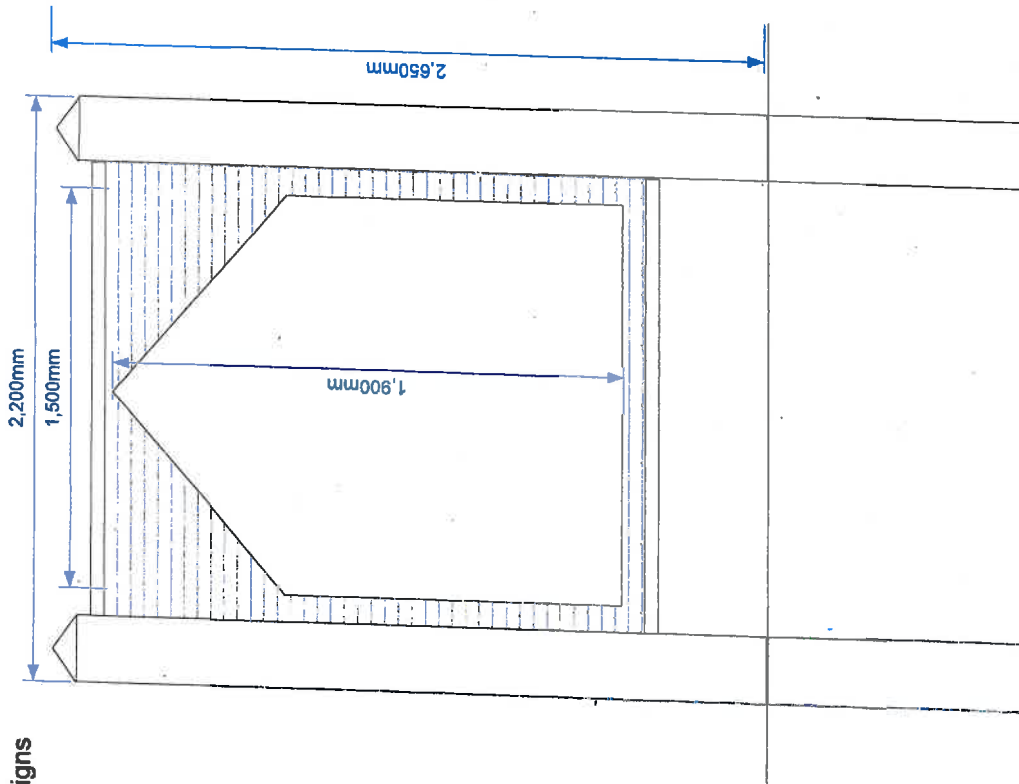
Green logged timber posts

Woven hazel wattle panel set in treated softwood timber frame

Main panel.
3mm white composite aluminium panel with a full colour, over laminated print applied to face
Fabricator to specify fixing detail.

Replaceable banner with current opening times.
3mm white composite aluminium panel with a full colour, over laminated print applied to face.
Fabricator to specify fixing detail

Below-ground detail specified by fabricator



Front face

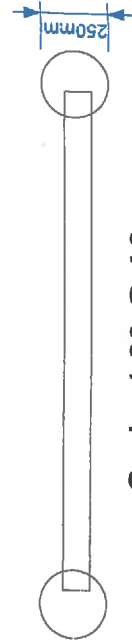
13 5 37

Pembrokeshire Coast
18 NOV 2013
Safford Engineering

Item 6p)

Drawing issue: For planning	
Drawn by: PDS Checked by: PDS	
Client: PCNIPA	Date: 18 th September 2013

Rear face



Scale: 1:20 @ A3