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**Application Ref: NP/13/0538**

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

**Summary**

This is an application made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for the display of 2 x pre entrance arrival signs to Castell Henllys along the A487 Trunk Road. The signs 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 highway 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 Act 1990.

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

**Eglwysrwr 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 Pembrokeshire 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 05 - Conserving and Improving Natural Heritage and the Coast

PPW5 Chapter 06 - Conserving the Historic Environment

SPG05 - Sustainable Design

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 portalooos for archaeology students – Cancelled 14th June 2005
- NP/06/373 – Temporary Portalooos 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 Act 1990 for the erection 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 signs 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**

The key issues to consider are:-

- Principle of Development
- Siting, Sustainable Design and Special Qualities of the National Park
- Neighbouring Amenity
- Highway Safety

### *Principle of Development*

The proposed signage is located at two positions along the A487 Trunk Road, approximately 210m to the west and 280m to the east of where the main access road to Castell Henllys adjoins the Trunk Road. This is classified as being within the 'countryside' as defined within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (LDP). The proposal is considered to be acceptable under criterion e) of Policy 7 in that a tourist attraction or recreational activity is proposed where the need to locate in the countryside is essential, as the proposed timber construction supports a sign which is related to the tourist attraction of Castell Henllys. As such the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle.

### *Siting, Sustainable Design and Special Qualities of the National Park*

Policy 8 of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (LDP) is a strategy policy which ensures that the special qualities of the National Park will be protected and enhanced. Of particular relevance is Policy 15 of the LDP which states that development will not be permitted if it causes significant visual intrusion (criterion a); failing to harmonise with, or

enhance the landform and landscape character of the National Park (criterion d); losing or failing to incorporate traditional features (criterion e).

The proposed signs are to be positioned in prominent, elevated positions along the A487 Trunk road in an area characterized by rolling hills and open countryside. Despite being constructed partly of woven hazel panels the design will result in the signs appearing as two solid masses within the landscape, as opposed to the sympathetically designed and approved brown and white tourist signs currently in situ, that the proposed would replace.

The proposal is therefore viewed as being an undesirable intrusion into the area and will have an unacceptable impact upon the special qualities and character of the National Park. Accordingly the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy 8 and 15, of the Local Development Plan.

Policy 29 of the LDP states that all proposals will be expected to demonstrate an integrated approach to design and construction, and will be required to be well designed in terms of place and local distinctiveness (criterion a); which embraces the historic landscape, geo-diversity and biodiversity (criterion b and supportive text); which is accessible (criterion d) and well designed in terms of materials and resources (criterion g).

The accompanying design and access statement states that materials used will be from sustainable natural sources or inherently recyclable which will be in keeping with the features of the site. It is proposed that the timber will be from sustainable FSC accredited sources with natural finishes. Furthermore the sign uses a woven hazel backing panel which is associated with the building techniques employed in the Iron Age, with the hazel being sourced locally from a sustainable source with the intention of employing the services of local craftsmen to manufacture certain elements. In view of the above, whilst it is considered that the proposal is compliant with criterion (d) and (g) of Policy 29, by reason of its incompatibility with the surrounding landscape the proposal is considered to be contrary to criterion (a) and (b) of Policy 29 of the LDP.

### *Neighbouring Amenity*

Policy 30 of Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development is a criterion based policy which aims to protect the amenity enjoyed by people in their residences, workspaces and recreational areas. The policy seeks to avoid development where it has an unacceptable impact on amenity particularly where a) the development is for a use inappropriate for where people live or visit and/or; b) the development is of a scale incompatible with its surroundings and/or; d) the development is visually intrusive.

There are no neighbouring properties within proximity of the application site therefore the proposal will have no adverse impact upon the amenity of the immediate neighbourhood and as such is compliant with policy 30 of the Local Development Plan.

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### *Highway 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 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 highway 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 proposed signs therefore fail 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 Act 1990.

### **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

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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.

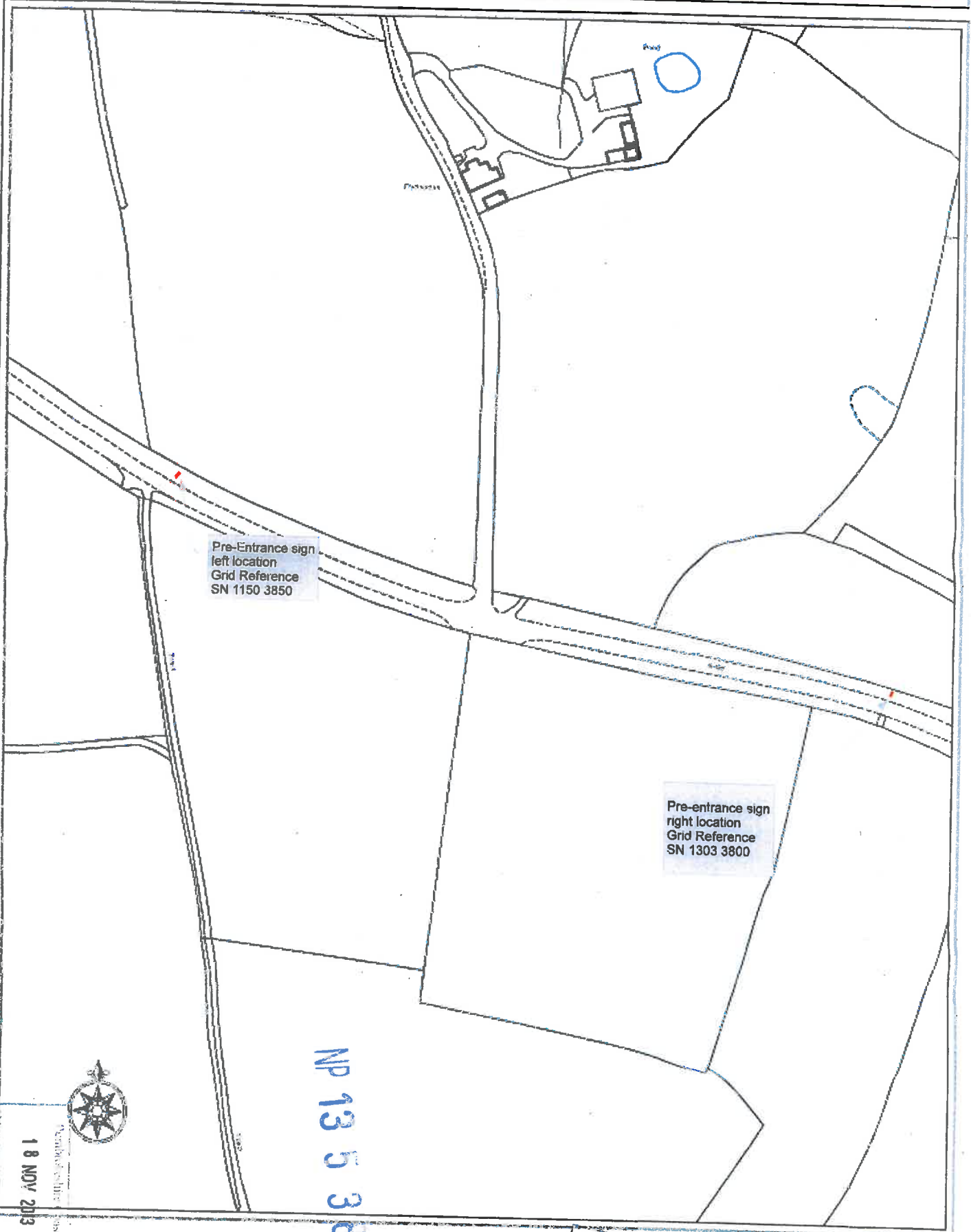
Drawings:

# Castell Henllys entrance

Item 6q)



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 38

18 NOV 2013

Dorsetshire Coast  
18 NOV 2013  
National Park



**Castell Henllys Arrival Signs**

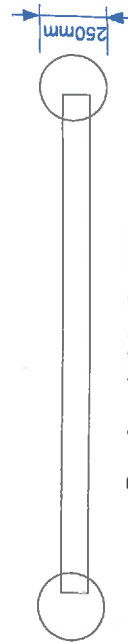
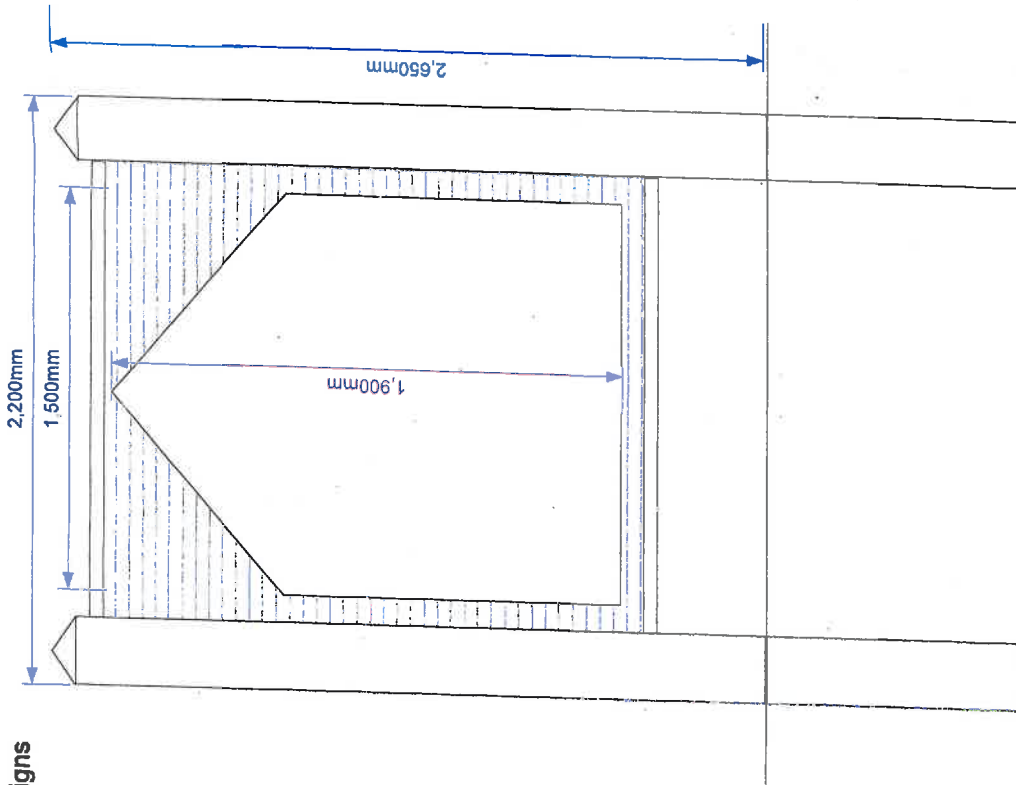
Green logged timber posts

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



Scale: 1:20 @ A3

Logos and Iconography  
Max size 450mm

Title Font: **Clan Ultra Bold**  
Max height: 250mm  
Colour: TBC

Photographic imagery TBC

Logos and Iconography  
Max size 450mm

Background colour: white



Front face

Rear face

NP 13 5 38

18 NOV 2013

Item 6q)

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Drawing issue:<br>For planning   |  |
| Drawn by: PDS<br>Checked by: PDS |  |
| Client: PCNPA                    | Date: 18 <sup>th</sup><br>September 2013 |