

REPORT OF HEAD OF DISCOVERY

SUBJECT: ORIGINS AT CASTELL HENLLYS

Purpose of Report

To advise Members of progress on this Environment for Growth externally funded project.

Introduction/Background

Under the “Makers of Wales” prehistoric strand of the Cadw pan-Wales Interpretation Plan, Castell Henllys has been awarded £238,500 from the European Union together with £41,500 TMF funding from the Welsh Government with a view to redeveloping the Centre to act as a hub for the interpretation and understanding of prehistoric Pembrokeshire.

This report sets out progress on that project.

A Steering Group (chaired by the Director of Park Delivery and Discovery) has been set up to manage the project and has developed a package of works to include:

- Redevelopment of the Llys Annwn building to provide reception, retail, café, toilets and exhibition spaces with new biomass heating system.
- Redevelopment of the Pant Glas building to provide offices, rest rooms and storage facilities.
- Development of new guidebook and leaflet
- Development of exhibitions in the new visitor centre
- Development of a comprehensive interpretation scheme to include seven prehistoric satellite sites in North Pembrokeshire (Pentre Ifan, Carreg Coetan Arthur, Foel Drygarn Hillfort, Carn Meini, Dinas Mawr Promontory Fort, Gors Fawr Stone Circle, Crugiaau Cemmaes).
- Development of 20 new signage and interpretation panels
- Removal of in total of over 50 existing interpretation panels.
- Total removal of all panels and other interpretation elements from the village itself.

Progress:

Extensive consultations and stakeholder involvement have led to the development of a Strategy document, an interpretation plan, Concept Designs, Brand Strategy, Identity Guidelines, plans for orientation, visitor centre and children’s area

All of the design work is now complete and statutory consents have been obtained. The two main contracts (building works and interpretation) have been advertised on the Sell2Wales website and following full procurement procedures the contracts will be awarded imminently. Works will then commence on site in April with completion targeted for September 2014.

Comparisons

N/A

Options

N/A

Financial considerations

Capital - The Authority has committed contributions of £288,000 capital and £50,000 staff time towards the cost of the project. The project remains on programme (completion is by September 2014), however as there is currently no financial contingency for the project it is considered expedient to transfer £50,000 of surplus funds from the Carew Castle earmarked reserve to a specific earmarked reserve for the project.

Revenue - A key aim of the project is to increase visitor numbers so this should have a positive impact on income streams.

Risk considerations

The project presents numerous risks and these are being carefully managed. A full risk log will be presented at the meeting.

Compliance

The project is being undertaken to aid the understanding and enjoyment of prehistoric Pembrokeshire and thereby help support its on-going conservation.

Human Rights/Equality issues

While the steep access to the hill village will obviously remain, the new visitor centre and car park have level access with disabled parking, toilets etc.

Biodiversity implications/Sustainability appraisal

Great care will be taken in the design, timing and execution of the project to ensure that the special features of the site will not be adversely affected.

Welsh Language statement

All site signage and interpretation will be bilingual.

Conclusion

Members will be kept advised of progress as the project develops.

Recommendation

Members are asked **note** this report and **endorse** the virement of funds to the project.

Background Documents

None

(For further information, please contact Philip Roach)