

Mr Burnett 5/7

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Pl. PA GVC. legl

Cathy

5/7

800/d4



MOYLE  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

Mr Michael Burnett ACII FCILA FUEDE LAE  
Regional Director  
Cunningham & Lindsay  
MacNeice House  
75 Malone Road  
Belfast  
BT9 6SH

Cathy M. Gentry

Good to see that we are

proceeding this with vigour. We should

29<sup>th</sup> June 2005.

Dear Michael

follow up as necessary.

Re Giants Causeway Visitors Centre - Insurance

9 4/7

Following our last meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> April, I would like to provide you with an up-to-date picture of where we are at the moment.

As you are aware, DETI are now taking the lead role in the project, and will be investing more than £10 million. Council will be submitting their insurance monies (reinstatement value) to the overall scheme. It is envisaged that the building will be constructed on the lands where the current facilities are located, and it is expected that the size of the building will be somewhere in the region of 1800 sq metres.

In terms of timescale, the International Architectural Design Competition has been launched, and the competition was officially published on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May. Further important dates to note are as follows:

- Decision on Competition Entries – September 2005
- Tender for Build on Competition Entries – March 2006
- Contract for Build of Visitors Centre – April 2006
- Completion of new facilities – Autumn 2007

DETI and Council have now agreed on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which sets out clearly the role and contribution of each party will have to ensure the success of the project. I have attached a copy of this document for your information. Council have agreed in principle to provide the land for the new Giants Causeway Visitor Facilities and work is now ongoing on this basis. A new company has been established called Giants Causeway Visitor Facilities Ltd (GCVF Ltd) to oversee this process.



R. G. Lewis, B.Sc. (Econ), C.P.F.A.  
Clerk and Chief Executive

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In terms of the Insurance contribution, DETI are now requesting this financial input from Council (reinstatement value) be released as soon as possible.

In anticipation of a favourable response I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

*Maura Quinn*

Maura Quinn  
Director of Finance & Administration

Cc Robin Mc Minnis, DETI  
Ciaran Mc Garrity, DETI

Enc Memorandum of Understanding  
DETI News Release 23.03.05

# News Release



Department of  
**Enterprise, Trade  
and Investment**

[www.deti-ni.gov.uk](http://www.deti-ni.gov.uk)

23 March 2005

## **INTERNATIONAL DESIGN SOUGHT FOR NEW GIANT'S CAUSEWAY VISITOR FACILITIES**

Enterprise Minister, Barry Gardiner MP today launched an international competition for the design of new visitor facilities at the Giant's Causeway.

Mr Gardiner said: "Northern Ireland's tourism industry has enjoyed unprecedented growth over the last decade. Providing new, world-class visitor facilities, at the Causeway is vital to ensure the continued, sustained growth of the industry.

"The competition for this major signature project is open to architects from across Europe and will be conducted under the auspices of the Union of International Architects. Our aim is to ensure that the new visitor facilities reflect the status of the Giant's Causeway as a World Heritage Site and provide visitors with a truly memorable and rewarding experience. The project forms the centrepiece of the Masterplan for the Coast and Glens areas, and promises to enhance the attractiveness of the area for visitors, benefiting the local and wider Northern Ireland economy."

"I am very pleased that all the key stakeholders – Moyle District Council, the National Trust, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and the Departments of Enterprise and the Environment - have committed in principle to working together to facilitate the achievement of the project."

Netheleigh, Massey Avenue, Belfast BT4 2JP

The first step in launching the design Competition involves placing a formal notice in the Official Journal of the European Union seeking expressions of interest. The Competition forms the third strand of the joint Ministerial Initiative for the Causeway launched in 2003: the others being the Causeway Coast & Glens Tourism Masterplan published last year, and the World Heritage Site Management Plan, which has recently been submitted by DOE to UNESCO. The architectural design competition will be followed in the near future by a separate international competition to select a designer for exhibition and interpretative design.

Commenting on today's announcement, Environment Minister Angela Smith said: "I am very much looking forward to the competition producing a very exciting design for the new facilities at the World Heritage Site. The World Heritage Site Management Plan, submitted to UNESCO in January 2005 set out a framework for the integrated management of the World Heritage Site in a structured and unified manner. The proposed new visitor facilities should complement the natural beauty of the World Heritage Site and the surrounding area and is an important element of the three strand initiative announced by the Government some time ago."

Mr Gardiner concluded: "Later this week stakeholders involved in the development of tourism in the Causeway Coast and Glens Region are due to attend the inaugural meeting of the Causeway Coast and Glens Masterplan Forum. They will be briefed on progress on all three strands of the Ministerial Initiative, the purpose of which is to enable the area to capitalise on the huge potential that tourism can offer.

"I am delighted at the collaborative approach to these developments and I would encourage all interested parties to continue to work together

towards the achievement of our common goal of having world class facilities at the Causeway."

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

The competition is being administered using the UNESCO Standard Regulations by Locum Destination Consulting and the Union of International Architects.

This is the first time the Union of International Architects (UIA), Paris, has been engaged in an official capacity in a Northern Ireland architecture project. The jury to judge the competition will be drawn from across Europe, and will include a representative of the Royal Society of Ulster Architects.

Further details of the international Competition for the design of the visitor facilities and the separate competition for the designer of the exhibition and interpretative design will be provided when the competition briefs are published. The competition brief for the architectural competition will be published in late May 2005.

Full details of the International Jury and the timetable for the twin competitions will also be made available at that time.

All media enquiries to DETI Press Office Tel 028 9052 9604.

RESTRICTED

Dated the 15 day of March 2005

- (1) DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE TRADE AND INVESTMENT
- (2) DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
- (3) NORTHERN IRELAND TOURIST BOARD
- (4) MOYLE DISTRICT COUNCIL
- (5) THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR PLACES OF HISTORIC INTEREST  
OR NATURAL BEAUTY

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Re: Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast  
World Heritage Site and proposed new Visitor Facilities

L'ESTRANGE  
&  
BRETT  
SOLICITORS

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING is dated the       day of       2005

**BETWEEN:**

- (1) **DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE TRADE AND INVESTMENT ("DETI");**
  - (2) **DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT ("DOE");**  
together the **"Departments"**;
  - (3) **NORTHERN IRELAND TOURIST BOARD** an agency of DETI established as a non-departmental public body and constituted by the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 (the **"Tourist Board"**);
  - (4) **MOYLE DISTRICT COUNCIL** a local government district council established pursuant to the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 1972 (the **"Council"**); and
  - (5) **THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR PLACES OF HISTORIC INTEREST OR NATURAL BEAUTY** established by the National Trust Act 1907 (the **"National Trust"**);
- together with the Departments known as the **"Stakeholders"** and individually as a **"Stakeholder"**.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast is designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The UNESCO Convention 1972 established certain requirements, principles and guidelines concerning the protection of the world's cultural and natural heritage which include the formulation and implementation of an integrated management plan for World Heritage Sites.
- 1.2 DOE acting through its Environment and Heritage Service is the body approved by Department of Culture, Media and Sport to be responsible to UNESCO for the continued designation of the Giant's Causeway as a World Heritage Site and has submitted an integrated management plan for the Giant's Causeway as a World Heritage Site to Department of Culture, Media and Sport for submission to UNESCO.
- 1.3 The Giant's Causeway is, in addition, recognised as the premier tourist and visitor attraction in Northern Ireland. DETI is committed to the commissioning of an international competition for the design of new world class Visitor Facilities to the Giant's Causeway which will cater for the needs of visitors and enhance visitor experience.
- 1.4 The Tourist Board is responsible for the development, promotion and marketing of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination. The Council is landlord and operator of the current Visitor Facility at the Giant's Causeway and, in addition, is responsible also for the promotion of tourism to and the management of other visitor facilities within Moyle District. The National Trust is endowed with a statutory responsibility as owner of the major part of the World Heritage Site.
- 1.5 The Departments and the other Stakeholders are, in their respective capacities, each therefore charged with certain roles and responsibilities in relation to the overall management and conservation of the Giant's Causeway, the management of visitors to the Giant's Causeway and/or the promotion of tourism generally within Northern Ireland and, accordingly, each has a vested interest in the successful attainment of the stated commitments of the Departments.

- 1.6 The Stakeholders each acknowledge and agree that the objectives of implementing an integrated management plan for the Giant's Causeway and the provision of world class Visitor Facilities will be most efficiently accomplished by the Stakeholders operating and engaging together in a spirit of partnership.
- 1.7 This Memorandum of Understanding has therefore been prepared and entered into by the Stakeholders to record their individual and collective commitment to the attainment of the objectives stated in paragraph 1.6 and, in particular, the delivery of world class Visitor Facilities at the Giant's Causeway.

**THE STAKEHOLDERS HEREBY AGREE:**

**2. DEFINITIONS**

In this Memorandum of Understanding, including the Introduction and Appendices, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>"Building Design Competition"</b>       | means the planned international competition for the design of the external fabric, landscaping and access for the Visitor Facilities on the Site;                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>"Company"</b>                           | means a private company limited by guarantee to be incorporated and owned by the Tourist Board;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>"Competitions"</b>                      | means the Building Design Competition and the Interpretative Design Competition;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>"Interpretative Design Competition"</b> | means the planned international competition for internal design and interpretative elements at the Visitor Facilities;                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>"Objectives"</b>                        | means the stated objectives of the Project as set out in paragraph 1.6 above and, in the case of the provision of the Visitor Facilities, detailed in the objectives paper annexed to this Memorandum of Understanding as Appendix 1, which has been agreed and accepted by all of the Stakeholders;                                |
| <b>"Project"</b>                           | means the project for the joint objectives of firstly implementing the WHS Management Plan for the World Heritage Site; and secondly the commissioning of each of the Building Design Competition and the Interpretative Design Competition and the subsequent construction, commissioning and operation of the Visitor Facilities; |
| <b>"Site"</b>                              | means the site on which the Visitor Facilities are to be constructed and subsequently operated shown surrounded by a red line on the Site Plan;                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>"Site Plan"</b>                         | means the plan of the Site annexed to this Memorandum of Understanding as Appendix 2;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>"UNESCO"</b>                       | means the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation;                                                                                     |
| <b>"Visitor Facilities"</b>           | means the proposed new Visitor Facilities to be constructed and operated at the Site;                                                                           |
| <b>"WHS Management Group"</b>         | means the group established pursuant to the WHS Management Plan for the overall management of the WHS;                                                          |
| <b>"WHS Management Plan"</b>          | means the integrated management plan which has been prepared for the protection, conservation and preservation of the World Heritage Site;                      |
| <b>"World Heritage Site" or "WHS"</b> | means such part of the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast as is inscribed as a natural site on the World Heritage List pursuant to the 1972 UNESCO Convention. |

### 3. OBJECTIVES

The Stakeholders each confirm their common desire to achieve the Objectives and more specifically:

- 3.1 to facilitate the conduct of the Competitions having regard to the overall timetable for the Project outlined in Appendix 3;
- 3.2 to use their respective endeavours to implement the WHS Management Plan;
- 3.3 to give their support and co-operation in relation to the attainment of the Objectives and the advancement and delivery of the Project and to work together in utmost good faith and in a spirit of partnership in accordance with this Memorandum of Understanding.

### 4 DEPARTMENTS' UNDERTAKINGS

Pursuant to the stated Objectives the Departments hereby specifically undertake:

- 4.1 in the case of DOE, to oversee the implementation of the WHS Management Plan;
- 4.2 in the case of DETI to make all necessary and appropriate preparations for the holding of the Competitions and to endeavour to ensure that the Building Design Competition and the Interpretative Design Competition are launched generally in accordance with the timetable outlined in Appendix 3;
- 4.3 in the case of DETI to provide such financial assistance as may be necessary to secure the implementation of the Project having regard to the Council's financial contribution under sub-clause 6.3 and other available sources of funding.

### 5 TOURIST BOARD UNDERTAKINGS

Pursuant to the stated Objectives the Tourist Board using its statutory powers, hereby specifically undertakes:

- 5.1 to procure the incorporation of the Company, the Board of Directors of which shall represent a wide range of interests and consist of persons with the appropriate knowledge and experience to meet the Project objectives;
- 5.2 to procure that the Board of Directors of the Company shall consult on a regular basis with the WHS Management Group in relation to issues of common interest to the World Heritage Site and the Visitor Facilities;
- 5.3 to procure that the constitution of the Company shall provide that any surplus revenue generated from income at the Visitor Facilities, following deduction of all reasonable costs of operation and maintenance, shall be retained by the Company and shall be used for the continued renewal of and investment in the Visitor Facilities and to improve the attractiveness of the Giants Causeway as a visitor attraction through investment in the WHS and the local area;
- 5.4 to procure that the Company shall take all action within its power and authority to implement the WHS Management Plan insofar as such implementation falls within its scope of responsibility;
- 5.5 to procure that the Company shall assume all liabilities and responsibilities of DETI in relation to both the Building Design Competition and the Interpretative Design Competition;
- 5.6 to procure that the Company shall grant to the Council a lease of a portion of the Visitor Facilities for the purposes of operating a tourist information centre and other such functions as may be agreed for a rent and subject to appropriate performance criteria and covenants (to ensure that the world class nature of the Visitor Facilities is maintained) and on such other terms as may be agreed between the Company and the Council;
- 5.7 to procure that the Company shall grant to the National Trust a lease of a portion of the Visitor Facilities for the purposes of operating a gift shop/café and such other functions as may be agreed for a rent and subject to appropriate performance criteria and covenants (to ensure that the world class nature of the Visitor Facilities is maintained) and on such other terms as may be agreed between the Company and the National Trust.

## 6 COUNCIL UNDERTAKINGS

Pursuant to the stated Objectives, and on the premise that there shall be established the WHS Management Group the Council hereby specifically undertakes:

- 6.1 to make available to the Company by way of long lease at a nominal rent such of the lands located within the Site as are within its ownership without payment to the Council (other than to the extent agreed in relation to professional fees properly incurred by the Council in the transfer of the ownership of these lands to the Company), to permit the Competitions to proceed and, subsequently, to facilitate the development, construction and operation of the Visitor Facilities on the Site;
- 6.2 to consent to the demolition of existing buildings owned by it on the Site and also the storage units without compensation;
- 6.3 to contribute the net proceeds of insurance obtained following the destruction by fire of the visitor facility originally built on the Site, towards funding for the development, construction and operation of the Visitor Facilities;
- 6.4 to enter into a lease with the Company of a portion of the Visitor Facilities on the basis stated in sub-clause 5.6

## 7 NATIONAL TRUST UNDERTAKINGS

Pursuant to the stated Objectives, and on the premise that there shall be established the WHS Management Group the National Trust hereby specifically undertakes:

- 7.1 in accordance with the WHS Management Plan to strive to diligently conserve and manage that part of the World Heritage Site within their responsibility with the specific objective of retaining the World Heritage Site status of the Giant's Causeway;
- 7.2 subject to agreeing satisfactory terms with the Company for a lease of a portion of the Visitor Facilities for the purposes of operating a gift shop/café and such other functions as may be agreed, to surrender its' interest in the remainder of the existing lease of the existing building housing the gift shop and the café which have been granted to it by the Council, without compensation other than the grant of a new lease;
- 7.3 to consent to the demolition of existing buildings on the Site owned or occupied by it and also the storage units without compensation;
- 7.4 to ensure that access for visitors to the World Heritage Site is available at all times unless reduced or prevented for bona fide reasons connected with the conservation of the World Heritage Site;
- 7.5 to enter into a lease with the Company of a portion of the Visitor Facilities on the basis stated in sub-clause 5.7;

## 8. CONFIDENTIALITY

This Memorandum of Understanding is confidential to the Stakeholders and their advisers and accordingly its terms shall not be disclosed to any third party without the remaining Stakeholders written consent. This shall not prevent the Departments or the Tourist Board from disclosing information required to be disclosed pursuant to their statutory responsibilities or requirement of law or of the UK Parliament/Northern Ireland Assembly.

## 9. STATUS OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Stakeholders each acknowledge the status of this Memorandum of Understanding as a clear statement of their individual and collective desire to achieve the Objectives but recognise that this Memorandum of Understanding is not intended to create legally binding obligations on each of the Stakeholders. Notwithstanding this the Stakeholders acknowledge the gravity and importance to the Project of fulfilling their respective commitments and accordingly re-affirm their intention to do so.

This Memorandum of Understanding has been authorised and signed on the date stated above.

SIGNED by  
for and on behalf of  
DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE  
TRADE AND INVESTMENT

A. McMillin

SIGNED by  
for and on behalf of  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Rev Rogers

SIGNED by  
for and on behalf of  
NORTHERN IRELAND  
TOURIST BOARD

Tom McBrat

SIGNED by  
for and on behalf of  
MOYLE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Richard Harris

SIGNED by  
for and on behalf of  
THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR  
PLACES OF HISTORIC INTEREST  
OR NATURAL BEAUTY

Paul Mullin

## APPENDIX 1

### Objectives

*NB: Terms used have the same definition as given in the Competition Brief for the Building Design Competition*

The project objectives, as agreed by the Steering Group early in the development process are included below.

It is important to note that the individual objectives should not be read in isolation as their meaning could be taken out of context. Nor should an individual objective be ranked, since their relative weighting may differ depending on the stakeholder perspective. Nevertheless, read together as a set, the objectives represent an agreed statement of the Project Steering Group's shared objective for the development.

The project objectives will help to frame future development decisions and against which, future assessment and evaluation can be benchmarked.

#### **Objective: Environmental Sustainability**

Given the "visitation" objective outlined below, it is imperative that the solution for the World Heritage Site Visitor Facilities is delivered in an environmentally sustainable fashion that demonstrates excellence in terms of built form structure and landscape context at the same time as giving due consideration to issue of care and conservation of the World Heritage Site itself.

The operational paradox must also be recognised and managed appropriately. On the one hand visitor throughput must be encouraged in order to generate financial surplus (for re-investment and operation) whilst on the other, the volume of use must not be so great as to put the long-term preservation and conservation of the World Heritage Site at risk.

The issue of a sustainable solution for the World Heritage Site and the associated Visitor Facilities is paramount and the Steering Group acknowledge that this must be addressed not only in terms of a design solution, but also the operational management regime.

#### **Objective: Financial Sustainability**

The new facilities must be financially self-sufficient. Revenues accrued from the Visitor Facilities will be used to assist in the ongoing conservation and preservation of the World Heritage Site, support continued renewal and investment in the Visitor Facilities and experience, and support investment in the regional tourism infrastructure, as identified by the Tourism Masterplan.

The short-list of preferred solutions must all be demonstrably viable from a financial perspective.

#### **Objective: Visitation & Economic Regeneration**

The new Giant's Causeway Visitor Facilities will support growth in tourism for Northern Ireland and the Causeway Coast and Antrim Glens region by ensuring that the World Heritage Site becomes an even greater "must see" attraction.

Such success must not only result in an increased penetration of the target markets but must contribute to the growth of the tourism base as defined by NITB's growth targets. It is recognised that the new Visitor Facilities will not only raise public awareness (regionally, nationally and internationally) of both the World Heritage Site but Northern Ireland tourism more generally.

Success at the Giant's Causeway should therefore:

- Build on the Giant's Causeways' status to support growth in tourism for the Giant's Causeway Coast and Glens region.
- Assist in broadening the seasonal distribution and regional dispersal of social and economic benefit derived from tourism.
- Assist in increasing Northern Ireland's level of tourism GDP.

#### **Objective: Visitor Experience**

The new Visitor Facilities must improve the quality of the visitor experience at the Giant's Causeway World Heritage Site. The new facilities should deliver a high quality interpretation, education provision and visitor facilities and services to a world class standard commensurate with the status of the World Heritage Site itself.

#### **Objective: Best Practice**

To deliver a "world-class" facility, that achieves best practice standards in terms of:

- Landscape Context, Location and Infrastructure.
- Architectural and Interpretative Design.
- Delivery (design development process and construction).
- Operation and management.

The UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Site Convention provide important reference and guidance to support the delivery of "best practice".

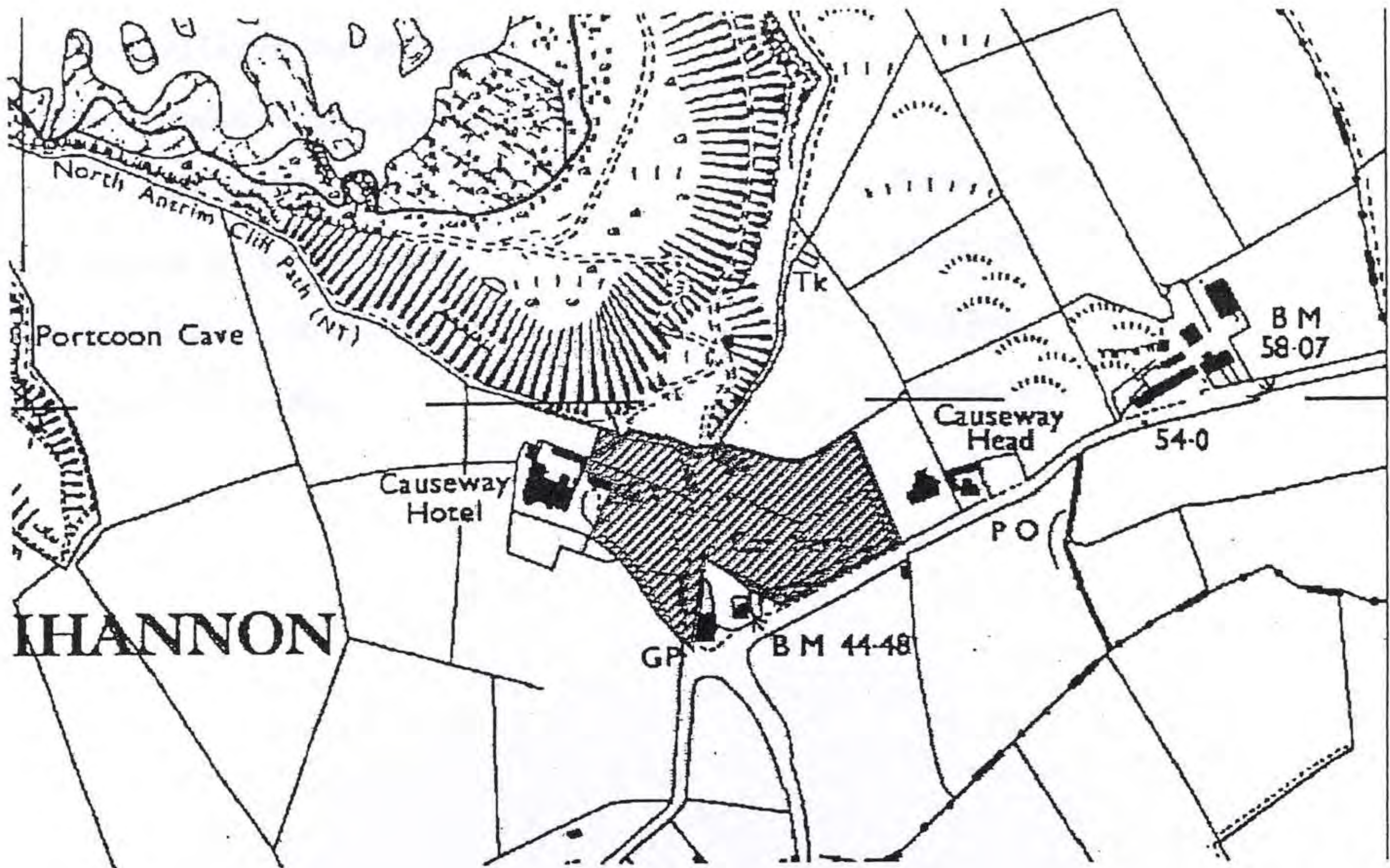
In addition, the Steering Group will be cognisant of all other documentation relating to the Giant's Causeway and its context.

#### **Objective: Civic Pride and Community Engagement**

The new Visitor Facilities must be of relevant to communities in the Causeway Coast and Antrim Glens region and assist in stimulating and supporting civic pride.

APPENDIX 2

Site Plan



### APPENDIX 3

#### Timetable

|                                                |                |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Launch Building Design Competition Brief       | March 2005     |
| Launch Interpretative Design Competition Brief | August 2005    |
| Decision on Competition Entries                | September 2005 |
| Tender for Build of Visitors Centre            | March 2006     |
| Contract for Build of Visitors Centre          | April 2006     |
| Completion of new facilities                   | Autumn 2007    |