Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Representor Number: 34485

Hearing Session 7: 2 December 2026

Matter 8: Site allocations: GN7 Cawdor Barracks including the former Brawdy Airfield.

1. What are the constraints affecting the site, and are these constraints significant obstacles to development within the Plan period?

The Cawdor Barracks site is less than 400 metres from the boundary with the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and therefore development on this site has the potential to have significant landscape and visual impacts on the National Park and its special qualities.

Policy GN 7 states that for the area of the airfield ('outside the wire') a number of uses will be considered, including solar photovoltaic arrays. It also states that a part of the 'outside the wire' is specifically allocated for a solar PV array by policy GN 5, but the potential for such use also exists on other parts of the 'outside the wire' site.

GN 5 does not specifically allocate solar PV arrays to Brawdy airfield, but states at paragraph 5.49 the possibility of a further solar array on part of the airfield and the renewable energy target has been increased in expectation of delivery in excess of the baseline position.

Criterion 1c) of policy GN 7 states that due account will be taken of the potential landscape impact on the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and this is repeated at 2 h) for the area 'within the wire'.

The reference to the potential landscape impacts on the National Park are welcomed, but it is considered by PCNPA that the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park exhibits high levels of visual sensitivity as a result of being the only UK National Park designated for its coastal landscapes. Development of Cawdor Barracks including the former airfield would result in a noticeable change in some of the key characteristics in highly sensitive National Park landscapes and seascapes and views from the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail. Viewpoints from the coast path are considered to exhibit high levels of visual sensitivity and as such even small magnitudes of visual change, including changes visible over long distances, have the potential to result in significant effects. At some viewpoints it is not possible to distinguish the National Park boundary and development on the site has the potential to dominate the view.

The Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Partnership Plan (2025-2029) defines the special qualities of the National Park as:

- Landscapes and seascapes of exceptional quality and diversity
- Outstanding coastal scenery

- Distant, uninterrupted views and open horizons
- Beaches
- Spectacular geology and geomorphology
- Rich and varied wildlife
- Tranquillity, soundscapes and wildness
- Dark skies
- Rich heritage and culture
- Welsh language and Pembrokeshire dialects
- Historic patterns of settlement and buildings
- Historic patterns of land use and traditional boundaries
- Excellent opportunities to enjoy and experience the National Park
- A comprehensive network of Rights of Way
- The combination of special qualities
- A sense of community and stewardship

Development at Cawdor Barracks has the potential to adversely affect a number of these special qualities through visual intrusion, light and noise pollution. As dark skies, tranquillity and soundscapes have been identified as special qualities, it is considered that these represent constraints to development on this site.

Section 61 of the Environment Act (1995) sets out the statutory purposes of the National Park as follows: -

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and
- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park.

The Act also states that in pursuing these purposes the Authority has a duty to seek to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities.

In accordance with Section 62(2) of the Environment Act (1995), any relevant Authority shall have regard to National Park purposes when performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in a National Park. Relevant Authorities include public bodies, government departments, local authorities and statutory undertakers.

The PCNPA therefore considers that the proximity of Cawdor Barracks to the National Park has the potential for significant effects on its special qualities which form constraints to development that must be carefully considered through any future development proposals.

PCNPA have considered constraints to development on the site only in the context of the National Park. It is considered that there may be other constraints on this site that PCNPA have not commented on; any such omission should not be considered as a view to the Examiner on whether the authority consider other constraints exist or not.

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority consider that examination questions 2 to 7 relating to Cawdor Barracks are for Pembrokeshire County Council to answer and therefore have no comment to make.