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Statement on the Decision of CCW Not To Support National Nature Reserve Status for Penrhos Coastal Park Holyhead

8 November 2012

We are very disappointed to learn that the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) has concluded that Penrhos Coastal Park does not meet the criteria for designation as a National Nature Reserve (NNR).

We would point out that the Park has long been managed as a nature reserve following the agreement reached between Ken Williams (deceased) and the Board of Anglesey Aluminum. We support the call for Anglesey Aluminum/Rio Tinto Zinc to bequeath the Park, along with associated areas ('the estate'), to the people of Wales in perpetuity, with a modest trust fund to assist in maintaining it. Under those circumstances the Park would qualify for NNR status under Section 35(1) of the Wildlife Countryside Act 1981 if it were managed by an approved conservation body.

Regardless of current eligibility for NNR status, we strongly support the continued management of the Park as a wildlife reserve and asset for local people. It is of unique value in the area in this respect, and, in conjunction with the adjacent Beddmanarch-Cymyran SSSI and the coastal path, forms a greatly appreciated facility with unlimited and free public access.

We are very concerned about loss of public spaces in the Holyhead area due to developments that appear attractive by virtue of claimed job opportunities. Once a public space is lost, it will be lost indefinitely. This is true of both Penrhos Coastal Park and Newry Beach. We believe that local politicians and planners need to see beyond the short-term benefits, whether real or imagined, and consider the long-term consequences of developments such as that proposed at Penrhos Coastal Park.

We therefore hope that Penrhos Coastal Park will continue to be managed as a nature reserve, freely accessible for local residents, schoolchildren and others.

R. Mills
Secretary
Môn a Gwynedd FoE