



**Lake District  
National Park**

**5**

**Report from the Head of Development Management to the  
Development Control Committee**

Application number:	<b>7/2025/5043</b>
Application type:	Advertisement Consent Application
Applicant:	Ms Mary Nixon, Wordsworth Trust
Location:	Dove Cottage, Foyle Room Conference Facilities, Grasmere, Ambleside, Westmorland And Furness, LA22 9SH
Grid reference:	334182 506996
Proposal:	Wayfinding and information signage
Report prepared by:	Kelsey Blain, Planner
Report agreed by:	Kevin Richards, Planning Manager
Recommendation:	APPROVE with conditions

**1 About this report**

- 1.1 The case planner has prepared this report, assessment and recommendation taking into account our policies (known as the Development Plan), written representations we have received, and any other material considerations.
- 1.2 Material considerations are things that are relevant to our decision making and which we are able to take into account – for example site specific factors, or Government planning policy (the National Planning Policy Framework) and Government planning guidance (the National Planning Practice Guidance).
- 1.3 The Development Control Committee will determine the application at its meeting having regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, representations we have received, and all other material considerations, following a verbal and visual summary of the application by the case

planner and, where applicable, after hearing any verbal representations made in accordance with our Policy for Public Speaking at Meetings.

- 1.4 Most applications are decided under powers delegated to the Head of Development Management. A small number of significant or more contentious applications are considered by our Development Control Committee as set out in our Scheme of Delegation.

## **2 Background and proposals**

- 2.1 This application is being reported to Committee as the recommendation to approve with conditions is contrary to the objections of Lakes Parish Council.
- 2.2 This application relates to the Wordsworth Trust's site at Wordsworth Grasmere (formerly Dove Cottage), a tourism business operating within the Grasmere Town End Conservation Area and centred around the Grade I listed Dove Cottage and Grade II listed Wordsworth Museum, to the east of the A591.
- 2.3 An application for advertisement consent for the erection of 15 wayfinding and information signs was submitted in September 2024 (7/2024/5467) but was withdrawn following advice that the application was likely to be recommended for refusal as it was considered that the design, scale, illumination, location and number of proposed signs would cause harm to the Grasmere Town End Conservation Area and the Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District World Heritage Site, resulting in harm to the visual amenity of the area.
- 2.4 The proposals were subsequently amended and split into two applications for advertisement consent submitted in January of this year.
- 2.5 Application 7/2025/5049 sought advertisement consent for 3 no. signage banners along the car park entrance, however this application was withdrawn following advice that the application would be recommended for refusal.
- 2.6 This application (7/2025/5043) originally sought advertisement consent for 10 wayfinding and information signs, of an amended design and varying degrees of illumination. However, following discussions with Officers, this application has been amended, reducing the number of proposed signs to 5, reducing the size of sign B, and removing all illuminated signage.

## **3 Representations**

- 3.1 Historic England have chosen not to offer advice on this application. This should not be interpreted as comment on the merits of the application.
- 3.2 Lakes Parish Council acknowledge that the proposal is an improvement from the previous application (7/2024/5467), particularly in terms of colour, but maintain their objection on the following grounds:

- Insufficient changes have been made to the scheme to reduce the potential harm caused by the development.
  - The development does not reflect the character and historical significance associated with the location. The design appears corporate in nature, straying from the traditional Wordsworth aesthetic, detracting from the primary purpose of the site, to promote and celebrate the legacy of Wordsworth.
  - The U5526 roadside interpretation panel is of particular concern. This will likely attract visitors to pause and read, creating a safety hazard for pedestrians and road users.
  - The quantity of signage remains excessive, with questionable need. This overabundance of signage is unsympathetic to the setting and would set an undesirable precedent for the area.
  - Inclusion of LED panels is inappropriate in this setting, creating distractions for drivers and causing visual disruption, particularly within the designated Dark Skies area. This element of the proposal does not align with the environmental and aesthetic sensitivities of the location.
  - The application is contrary to Policies 05 and 06 of the Local Plan as it fails to demonstrate a sympathetic approach to the conservation area and would result in harm to the local environment.
- 3.3 The Local Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority have no objection and have provided the following comments:
- The applicant states that luminance levels will not exceed 600cd/m<sup>2</sup> and so the previous objection to application 7/2024/5467 is withdrawn. The conditions recommended in their previous response should still apply.
  - The layout details shown on the submitted plan are considered satisfactory from a highway perspective.
  - The applicant must ensure that no obstruction to the PROW occurs during, or after the completion of the site works.
  - Any works within or near the Highway must be authorised by the Council and no works shall be permitted or carried out on any part of the Highway, including Verges, until the applicant is in receipt of an appropriate permit from the LHA Streetworks team.
  - The highway outside and/or adjacent to the proposal must be kept clear and accessible at all times.
- 3.4 Grasmere Village Society object for the following reason:
- The proposed banner is too large and made of material unsympathetic to the rural character of the buildings.
  - The size and material are not in keeping with the heritage and natural beauty of Dove Cottage and its surrounding area.
- 3.5 Friends of the Lake District have provided the following comments:
- Recognise the changes that have been made since the withdrawal of the original scheme (7/2024/5467) in response to concerns about the quantity, design, size, lighting and colour-scheme of the proposed signage. The proposed scheme does represent an improvement, with particular note given to the reduced number of car park banners and the removal of a large banner on the rotunda.
  - However, they share the concerns of the Parish Council and question the need for the overall quantity of new signs proposed, the need for illuminated signage (particularly illuminated to this level) and the

appropriateness of the setting. In particular the car park banner masts and the sign proposed to be attached to the historic dry-stone wall alongside the U5526 as this is removed from the rest of the Wordsworth site and will not appear as a contiguous part of it.

- No reference is made to the Cumbria Good Lighting TAN which includes a recommendation of maximum luminance values of 100cd/m<sup>2</sup> for illuminated signs compared to the references to 600cd/m<sup>2</sup> and 300cd/m<sup>2</sup> referred to in the application. It is important that the TAN is followed and that sufficient information is provided to confirm this, accompanied by appropriate conditions if approved.

3.6 We have received one letter of objection on the grounds that the proposals would degrade the conservation area.

#### **4 Development plan policies and other relevant guidance**

4.1 The relevant Development Plan comprises:

- The Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035

4.2 The following Lake District National Park Local Plan policies are relevant to this application:

- Policy 01: National and international significance of the Lake District
- Policy 02: Spatial strategy
- Policy 05: Protecting the spectacular landscape
- Policy 06: Design and development
- Policy 07: Historic environment

- Design Code Supplementary Planning Document

4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

4.4 There is no community plan in this area.

#### **5 Main issues and assessment**

5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework establishes clear requirements for the assessment of advertisement control applications. Paragraph 141 of the NPPF states that:

The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

##### Amenity

5.2 For the purposes of advertisements, amenity relates to the effect of an advertisement on the appearance of an existing building or within the area in which it is to be erected or displayed. In this case, the proposed signage

is within an area of special advert control; a National Park, which enjoys the highest level of landscape protection; the English Lake District World Heritage Site, a heritage asset of the highest significance; and the Grasmere Town End Conservation Area. The site also lies within the setting of two listed buildings; Wordsworth Museum, Town End (Grade II) and Dove Cottage at Town End (Grade I).

- 5.3 Under section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 the Local Planning Authority has a duty in the exercise of its functions with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 5.4 The NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
- 5.5 The application site comprises a range of traditional stone and slate buildings and is recognised within the Grasmere Town End Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as being a site of international significance as a centre for Wordsworth heritage, making an important contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area.
- 5.6 The site also makes an important contribution to the Outstanding Universal Value of the English Lake District World Heritage Site, displaying attributes of Theme 2: A landscape which has inspired artistic and literary movements and generated ideas about landscape that have had global influence and left their physical mark, particularly in relation to sites and collections associated with the Picturesque and Romanticism.
- 5.7 This application originally proposed the installation of 10 wayfinding and information signs throughout the site, including two digital screens and one illuminated sign. However, following negotiations with Officers the scheme has been amended, reducing the number of signs to 5 and removing all digital screens and illumination from the proposals.
- 5.8 Sign E (as identified on the site plan) would replace the existing car park entrance totem and would be of a similar scale to the existing sign with an amended design, incorporating timber to match the cladding applied to the adjacent Learning Space building. Sign D would consist of individual cut 25mm Fret Cut Black Acrylic Block lettering attached to the timber cladding on the Learning Space building to read 'Wordsworth Grasmere'.
- 5.9 Sign C would consist of a vinyl cover applied to the ground floor window of the Jerwood Centre and, if applied to the inside of the window, is unlikely to require advertisement consent.
- 5.10 Sign B would consist of a 0.96 square metre interpretation panel erected on a stone boundary wall along the U5526, an unclassified highway which runs along the eastern edge of the site. The panel would contain information about William Wordsworth and the Wordsworth Grasmere centre. The sign

would include a small section of timber cladding to tie into the Learning Space and other signage proposals within the site.

- 5.11 Finally, sign A would consist of a double-sided PVC banner with an area of 0.54 square metres and hung 3.3 metres above ground level on powder coated arms, anchored into the wall of the café.
- 5.12 The proposed signage would utilise colours and materials reflecting the local vernacular and existing buildings within the site and is considered to be of an acceptable scale. The proposals would be used for identification and to provide information about the centre, enhancing the visitor experience.
- 5.13 While Sign B may appear less well-related to the existing business than the rest of the proposed signage, the proposed site plan shows that the sign would be well related to the group, close to the centre of the attraction and would provide information to visitors about this part of the site.
- 5.14 I am therefore satisfied that as amended the scale, location, volume and design of the proposals would conserve the character and appearance of the area, satisfying the requirements of Local Plan Policies 01, 02, 06 and 07, and the NPPF.

#### Impact on public safety

- 5.15 In this location, the principle public safety consideration is whether the signs would impact on highway safety. National planning policy guidance points out that “All advertisements are intended to attract attention but proposed advertisements at points where drivers need to take more care are more likely to affect public safety. For example, at junctions, roundabouts, pedestrian crossings, on the approach to a low bridge or level crossing or other places where local conditions present traffic hazards. There are less likely to be road safety problems if the advertisement is on a site within a commercial or industrial locality, if it is a shop fascia sign, name-board, trade or business sign, or a normal poster panel, and if the advertisement is not on the skyline.”
- 5.16 The proposed signage would be located within the existing Wordsworth Grasmere site and while visible from adjacent highways, would not be located in close proximity to a junction, roundabout or crossing. All illumination has been removed from the proposals and while concerns have been raised about the location of Sign B in relation to highway safety, the Local Highway Authority have confirmed that they have no objections to the proposals.
- 5.17 I am satisfied that the proposals would be acceptable in relation to public safety, specifically in relation to highway safety.

## **6 Conclusion**

- 6.1 Having regard to the provision of the development plan, in particular Lake District National Park Local Plan Policies 01, 02, 05, 06 and 07, the Design

Code SPD and other material considerations (including the provision of the NPPF), the development is considered to be acceptable, subject to the conditions recommended.

**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE with conditions**

**Conditions/Reasons**

- 1 The advertisements hereby permitted shall not be installed otherwise than in conformity with the following submitted plans and details:  
Proposed Site Plan (Received 02/04/2025)  
Proposed Signage Details Version 13 (Dated March 2025)

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt.

**NPPF decision notice requirements**

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 Article 35(2) statement.

The Local Planning Authority have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner by seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the application by agreeing amendments to the application including reducing the volume and scale of the proposals, omitting illuminated signage and amending the proposed design.

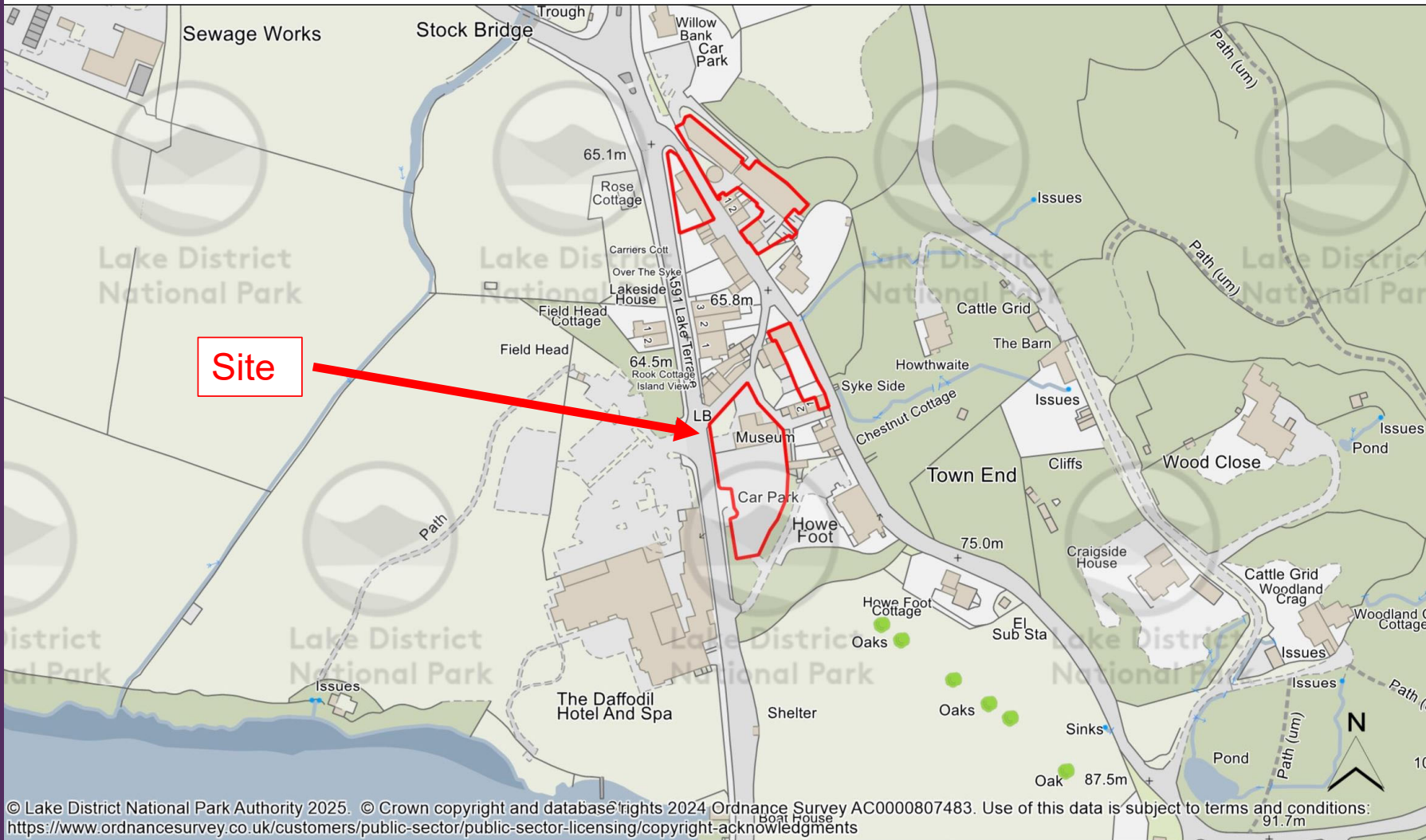
**Background papers**

Background papers are available for inspection on the planning application file unless otherwise specified on that file as confidential by reasons of financial/personal circumstances in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

7/2025/5043

Dove Cottage, Foyle Room Conference Facilities,  
Grasmere, Ambleside, LA22 9SH

Wayfinding and information signage



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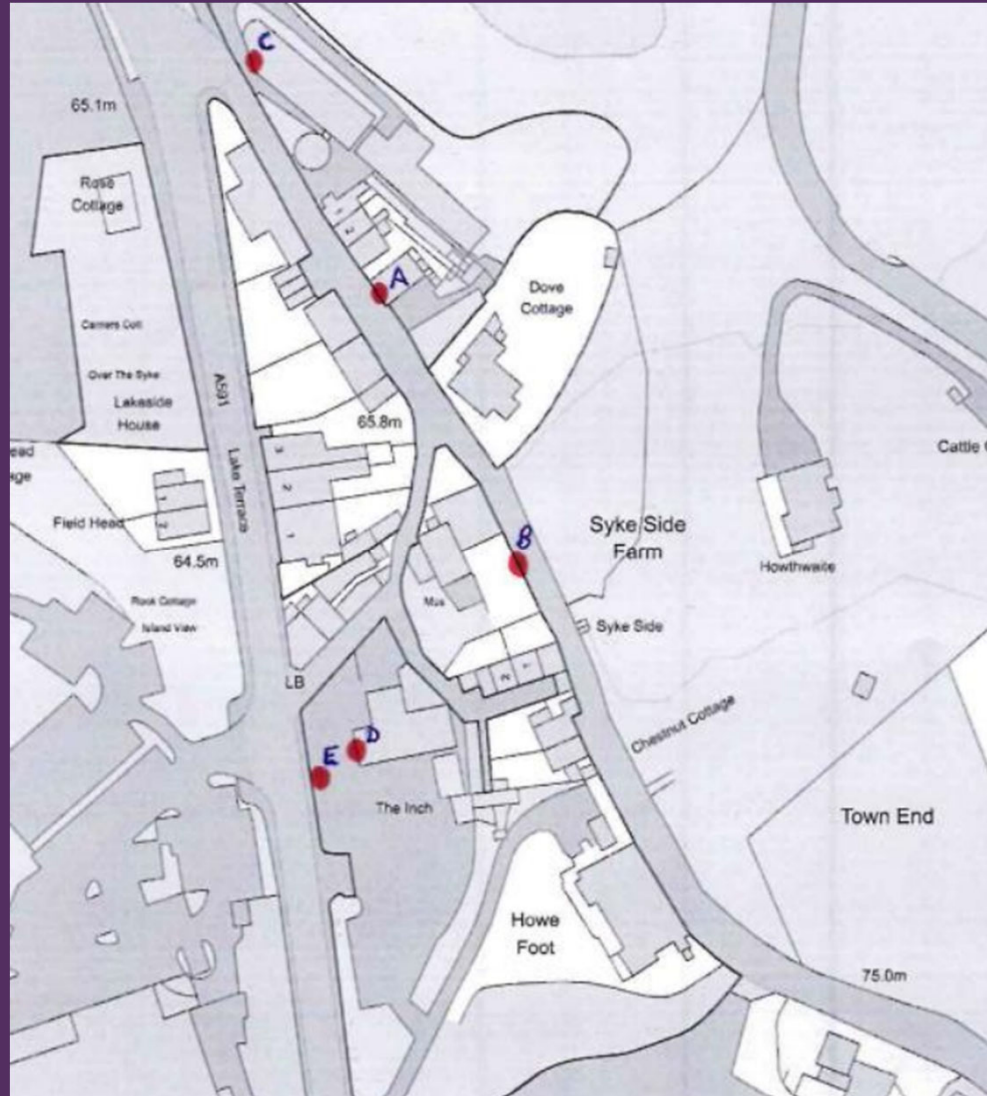
# Application Site



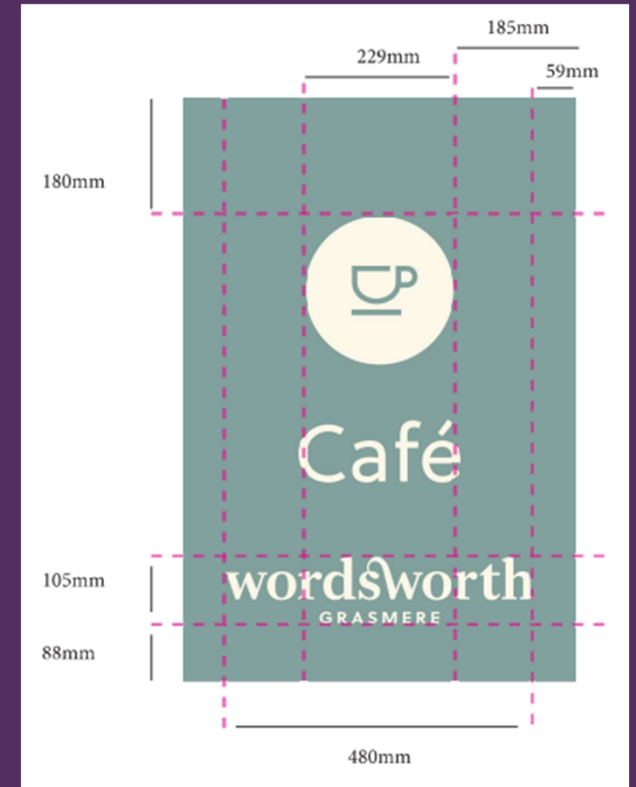




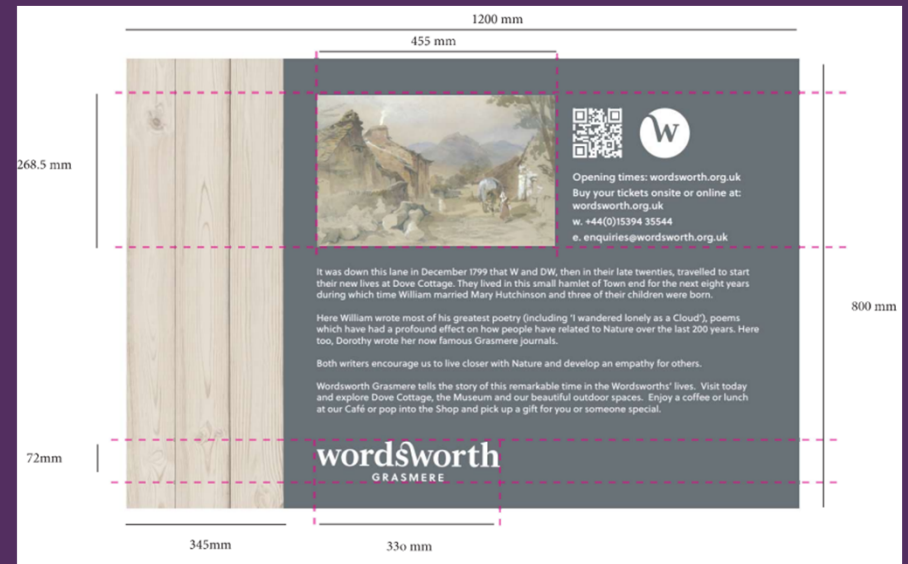
# Proposed Site Plan



# Proposed Sign A



# Proposed Sign B



# Proposed Sign C



# Proposed Sign D



# Proposed Sign E

