

Giant's Causeway Access Statement

Address:

Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre
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Introduction

The Giant's Causeway is a World Heritage Site, National Nature Reserve and Northern Ireland's premier tourist attraction. The site is an outcrop of approximately 40,000 basalt columns shaped by volcanic activity millions of years ago. It is evidence of a tumultuous and important period in our earth's history.

The stones and 15 miles of footpaths along the Causeway Coast are managed and maintained by the National Trust, who will also manage the Visitor Centre and on-site carpark (rented from the local council).

PLEASE NOTE:-

1. Mobile phone: Reception is fairly-good around the Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre. It can be intermittent along some of the Ulster Way and causeway walking trails and therefore shouldn't be depended on (always let someone know where you plan on walking and an estimated arrival time at your destination, particularly if walking alone). Visitors should also be aware that some networks will roam to Republic of Ireland due to our proximity to Donegal, in the Republic of Ireland. To avoid incurring charges roaming should be turned off when visiting the Giant's Causeway.

2. Emergencies: In the event of an emergency onsite, please flag down a National Trust member of staff who can administer first aid and also radio the emergency services and the coastguard.

3. Dogs: We are fully dog-friendly. Dogson leads are welcome within the Visitor Centre and across the site and on all the walking trails. Water bowls are available at front and rear of Visitor Centre. Owners are required to clean up after their dog and asked to dispose of waste responsibly.

4. Maps: Area maps at various locations around the site (entrance to Visitor Centre, Visitor Centre roof, to the rear of building).

5. Storage: Limited storage facilities for backpacks and large bags at the Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre for ticket-holders.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Onsite parking is reserved for Visitor Experience ticket holders, members and Local Community Pass holders. While some facilities and services are offered to non-paying visitors (e.g. external toilets, access to the causeway stones, access to the various walking trails) on-site parking, entrance to the Visitor Centre, access to the facilities therein (café, shopping area, exhibition, audio and guided tours) are part of the Visitor Experience offer and are therefore subject to admission fee. Ways of accessing the Giant's Causeway by public transport are detailed herein.

6. Walkers: On-site parking reserved for Visitor Experience ticket holders and members; for those who walk on-site, external toilets are available at the Visitor Centre 'groups' entrance (open during Visitor Centre opening hours).

NOTE: These toilets are serviced by our team periodically throughout opening hours.

External toilets at the Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre >>>>



7. Footwear & clothing: Appropriate footwear for walking is advised; trainers are not the best option for walking on muddy and slippery surfaces, walking pikes might be useful for certain parts including uneven surfaces and steps. A raincoat or waterproofs are often a good idea, even in summer where weather is unpredictable.

Arrival & Parking Facilities

Signposting: The Causeway Coastal Route will be marked by brown signs coming from both Larne and London-Londonderry directions, and the Giant's Causeway will be signposted within a few miles of the site; the nearest village is Bushmills, with Portrush, Ballintoy and Ballycastle also in the vicinity.



Disabled parking and provision: Car Park 2 (closest to the main entrance of the Visitor Centre and located directly in front of the Causeway Hotel) provides 15 accessible designated bays. 15 bays equates to 5% of the total car parking provision. Three of the bays are adjacent to the main entrance. The maximum travel distance from the bays to the Visitor Centre entrance is approximately 70m. The spaces are clearly marked and signposted.

The car park is a paved surface with sloped kerbstones (1200mm) for ease of access on to and off the footpaths (The bays are located on as level a ground as possible with a gradient of 1:40 or less). Resting areas are provided along the routes from the parking bays to the Visitor Centre entrance. Disabled visitors not partaking in the Visitor Experience can be dropped off and collected at the Giant's Causeway, but the vehicle must be parked offsite. There is no free disabled parking at the Giant's Causeway (in line with laws and policies nationwide).

Public transport: The nearest bus stop to the Giant's Causeway is 'Aird, Giants Causeway, The Nook' on Causeway Road, approximately 200 metres from the Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre. You should check the Translink website for most up-to-date travel information (www.translink.co.uk) and bus service number (e.g. 172 service).

Drop-offs: There are no designated drop-off points within the Giant's Causeway car park due to space restrictions and impractical waiting times at peak season. Traffic wardens are on patrol on the roads around the causeway and unauthorised parked vehicles are liable to be ticketed. Unauthorised parking/drop offs are at visitors' own risk.

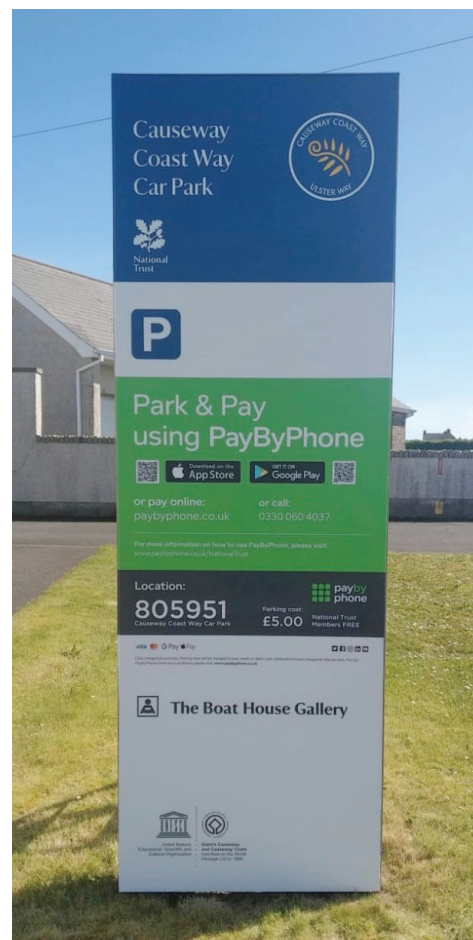
Causeway Coast Way Car Park:

This car park is located on the Causeway Road, past the main entrance to the Visitor Center, and is available for walkers.

It operates a PayByPhone system and the location code is **805951**.

Car parking charge is £10 and spaces are limited and allocated on a first come, first served basis.

This car park is staffed during opening hours and the car park is open 24 hours/day.



Internal & external washroom/toileting facilities

Internal toilets (for Visitor Centre patrons)

Visitor toilets, including accessible toilets, parent room and Changing Places (adult changing facilities - key available on request) are located together within the Visitor Centre.

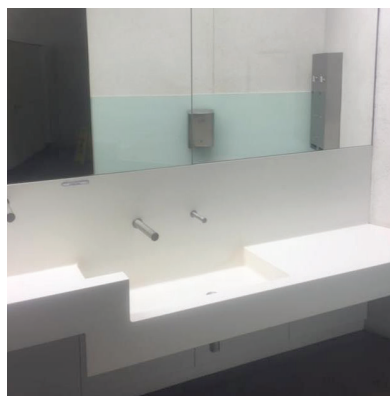
- There are **14 female toilets** (including two slightly larger, accessible cubicles)
- There are **3 male toilets** (including one slightly larger, accessible cubicle); there are **4 urinals** (one of which is a lower level than the standard)

Within each single sex block there is an enlarged ambulant cubicle (larger than average toilet cubicle for people requiring more space to manoeuvre in, alone or with a caregiver). They also contain a wash basin.

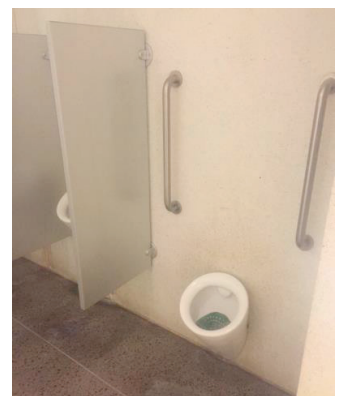
Due to the width required to provide a basin and suitable circulation/ manoeuvring space, a drop down rail is provided instead of a wall mounted rail to one side.



Sink heights are 800mm to the lip, with one lowered sink at a height of 740mm to the lip as required by regulations. >>



Within the male toilet a lowered urinal, with associated grab rails. >>>>





Unisex wheelchair accessible WC (above)



Parent and child room (above)

A **unisex wheelchair accessible WC** is provided with dimensions 1.5 m x 3m (62 inches x 128 inches)

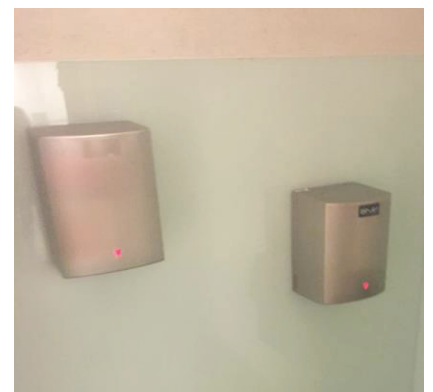
The **parent and child room** is within close distance to WCs. Nursing mothers are welcome to breastfeed anywhere in the Visitor Centre. Both have been designed conform to the guidance within law and regulations.

A **unisex Changing Places** (Adult Changing - left) facility is provided adjacent the unisex accessible WC. The changing places unit comprises of a peninsular WC, adjustable height changing table, sink, shower and overhead hoist. The design has been developed in conjunction with Enable NI. These facilities are available for all visitors' use. Just advise a member of the team that you require access to the Changing Places facility.

Low energy LEDs light the WCs parent and child room, Changing Places and corridor leading to these facilities. This is in keeping with sustainable plan for the building. Lockers and storage units are located along the corridor leading to the WCs and facilities.



Fixtures and fittings, such as wash basins, taps, door handles and so forth are in visually contrast from their surrounds and situated at the appropriate heights in accordance with recommended standards. All doorcontrols/locks, toilet flushes, taps and so forth are suitable for a use by those with limited dexterity.



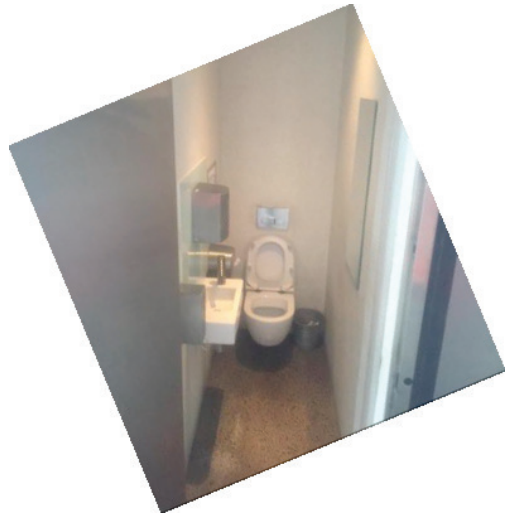
The maximum travel distance to a WC is approximately 48m.

- Due to the nature of the Visitor Centre and the requirement to provide uninterrupted exhibition space within a limited footprint, travel distances to the public accessible WCs will exceed 40m in some parts of the building.

External toilets (for non-paying members of public)

One female, one male and one unisex disabled toilet are located to the rear of the Visitor Centre for public use during Visitor Centre opening hours (close to side entrance, known to staff as Groups entrance).

Changing Places facilities within the Visitor Centre are open to ALL members of the public, paying or non-paying, and are available during Visitor Centre opening hours.



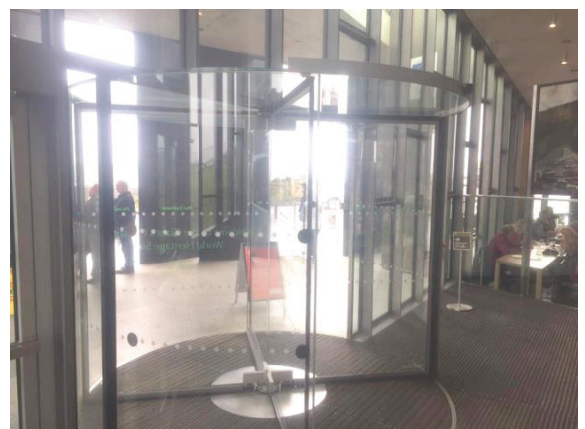
Visitor Centre

1. What materials are used in the building and paths?

The materials of the Visitor Centre are recycled concrete, glass, basalt and stainless steel. There are no soft furnishings aside from rubber floor covering at both entrance and exit to the building.

2. What is the entrance like?

The main entrance has a level approach under a covered external courtyard area, conforming to typical recommendations for a canopy over entrances. Sloped kerbs outside provide access to those with mobility issues. There are no impassable steps within the building. The Visitor Centre façade is comprised of mullions set at an angle to the building. At the entrance these are further than 2m apart and allowing easy access through them to the main entrance and do not present a barrier.



The entrance is made apparent through clear signage positioned on the outside kerb.

3. How wide is the entrance door? Is the entrance door automatic, power-operated, or manual opening?

The main entrance doors are a revolving door and adjacent pass doors, activated and opened electrically by a large button. The pass door is specifically designed for a wheelchair user to pass through and this is reflected in its width (110cm wide). It opens outwards. There are pass doors at the entrance to the Visitor Centre and in the café.

4. How wide is the exit door and does it open inwards or outwards? Is there an alternative way to access the building?

The door to the rear of the building can act as both exit and entrance for those returning from the causeway stones. It is a sliding door, wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair (130cm wide).



5. How is the area lit - is there lots of natural light, what is the artificial light like, are there fluorescent bulbs)

The lighting has been specified to ensure that lighting does not result in significant glare or create pools of light or shadows. Lighting at communication points is designed to ensure ease of lip reading by staff and visitors.

The design of the building optimises 'solar gain' and for that reason, there is a lot of glass and natural light entering the building through the walls, doors and roof.



Artificial lighting sources are low energy LED and T5 fluorescent strip lighting.

8. Are there chairs available? Do any of the chairs have armrests?

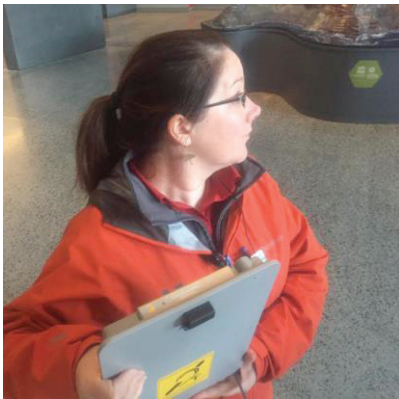
There is bench seating in the Visitor Centre; chairs with armrests available from the café. Bench seating is available in front of the cinema screen in the exhibition area.

9. Is there an induction loop available at the reception desk?

A portable induction loop is available.

10. Is there an induction loop available at the membership recruitment desk?

There is no designated membership recruitment desk; portable induction look available.



11. Is there an audio guide, virtual tour, tactile model, large print, Braille or other types of interpretation? Are there guided tours? Do the guides use induction loops, other communication such as BSL?



The interpretive exhibits within the Visitor Centre improve access to the Giant's Causeway for many disabled people who would be unable to access it due to the physical constraints posed by the natural landscape. (e.g. 3D coastal model.)

Sound reinforcement systems, such as induction loops, to assist hearing aid users, are provided through the exhibition area.



A portable induction loop is available on guided walking tours; there is an audio guide for the visually impaired.

The majority of the exhibits are tactile, interactive and/or available in Braille.

12. If there is more than one floor, what is the means of access to the upper floors?

Internally, the Visitor Centre is one floor with areas of a few steps; ramped areas reflect changes in gradient and provide a way for people with mobility issues to circumnavigate steps.

Visitors can also get on to the roof of the building if desired; they can access from either a steep external grassed ramp or a shallower but longer graded route which runs along behind the Causeway Hotel. External steps to the rear of the building also lead to the grass roof.

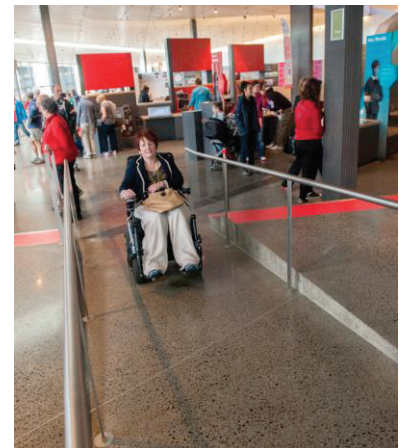
13. Are there any narrow corridors and doorways on each floor? Is there space to turn a wheelchair easily in each room?

No corridor or passageway is less than 1200mm wide and so conforms to the regulatory requirements. A clear 1200mm space (minimum) is provided top and bottom of ramps and clear of door swings.

Floor surfaces will be slip resistant. In order to help people with visual impairment appreciate the size of a space they have entered, or to find their way around there will be visual contrast between the wall and the ceiling and between the wall and the floor.

14. Are manual wheelchairs or powered mobility vehicles available for loan? How many? Do visitors need to book?

There are three manual wheelchairs available for loan; as well as three powered mobility scooters. The powered mobility scooters are for use on the Green Trail and the Red Trail to the top of the Shepherd's Steps and return along the Red Trail. These items are available to loan for Visitor Experience ticket holders at no additional charge and are available on a first come, first served basis from the Visitor Welcome desk within the Visitor Centre.



15. Are there any restrictions on access for powered wheelchairs or powered mobility vehicles inside the Visitor Centre?

Powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters are welcome in all areas of the Visitor Centre.

16. Are there any quiet areas where people can sit if they don't want to do the same amount of the visit as other members of their group?

If so, state where. There are no designated quiet spaces within the Visitor Centre; however, people of all denominations are permitted to pray wherever they feel appropriate. The duty manager can advise.

Café area

Questions 1 – 6 as above in Visitor Centre section

7. Is the counter height higher than 850mm, if so is there a lower counter level to assist wheelchair users?

The service counter heights in the café are approximately 855mm (34 inches). Wheelchair users generally position themselves at an angle in order to be served. The Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre café is a cafeteria-style facility with no waitress service. Visitors are expected to tidy their tables off after use. However, if not travelling with a companion, staff are able to help those with limited mobility - for example, coming to their side, asking their express permission to help, delivering food to their tables etc. The tables in the café are 737mm (29 inches) and 790mm (31 inches).

8. Is there circulation space between the tables of around 1200mm?

All tables and chairs in the café are movable and can be rearranged to make room for wheelchairs and those requiring more space.

9. Are there chairs available? Do any of the chairs have armrests?

Chairs without arms, chairs with arms and chairs of wider than standard width are available in the café. The maximum capacity of the café at any one time is approx. 90 people.

10. Is there an induction loop available in the cafe?

A portable induction loop is available.

11. Will staff assist visitors as required; can visitors be seated if they experience difficulty?

Staff will assist and offer their help to those in need.

12. Are menus available in large print and Braille?

Menus and specials are usually presented in chalk boards and in large print above service areas and tills. Menus are not available in Braille.

13. Is large handled cutlery, double handled mugs, straws available?

There is no specialist cutlery available; guests with these requirements are advise to bring from home what utensils they prefer to eat with, as well as specialist drinking cups. Straws are available.

Retail zone

Questions 1 – 6 as above in Visitor Centre section

7. What are the heights of counters and display counters desk?

The counter heights in the retail zone are approximately 855mm (34 inches), 813mm (32inches) and 660mm (26 inches.)

8. Is there circulation space of 1200mm between the display stands?

There is space to turn at the end of each display row.

9. Are there chairs available?

There are benches along the corridor adjacent to the retail zone and behind it (close to the Rangers Station.)

10. Is there an induction loop available in the retail zone?

A portable induction loop is available.

11. Do till points have induction loops?

A portable induction loop is available.

12. Will staff assist reaching down items to view if they cannot be reached by customers?

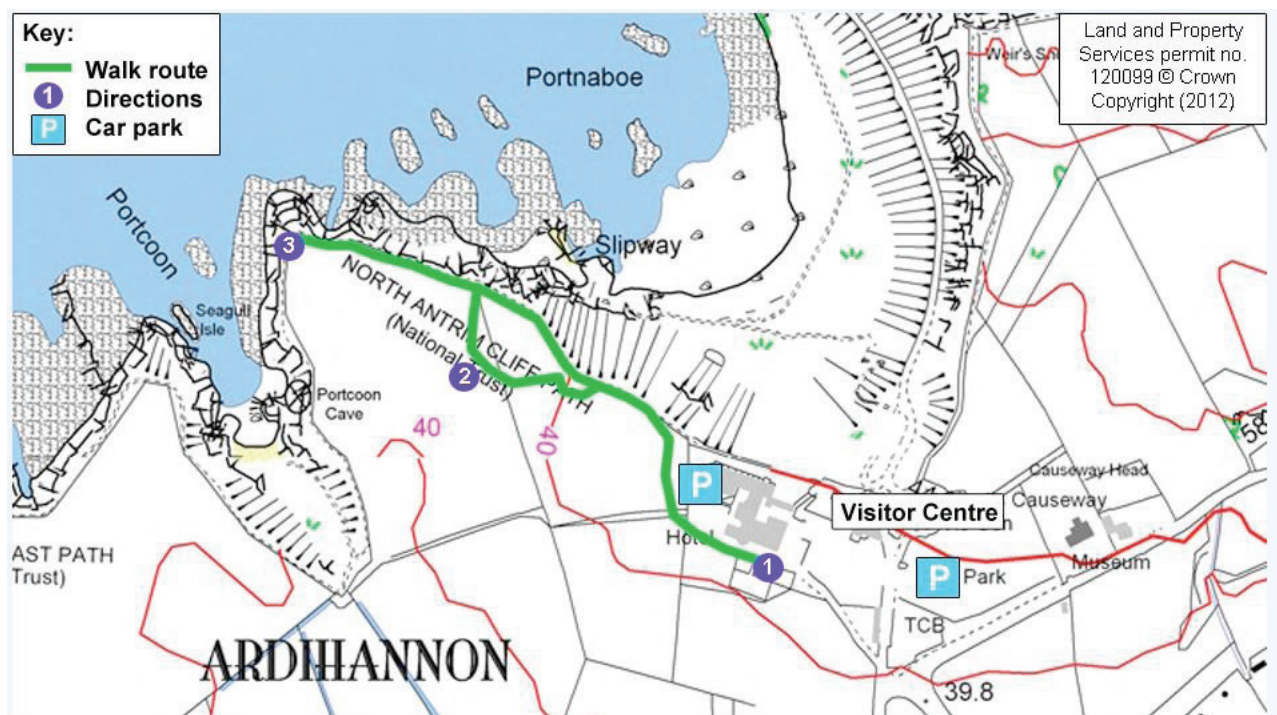
Yes

13. Is there a large print version of the price list or can staff assist with telling visitors the price of items?

There is not a large print version of the price list; staff will assist visitors in finding out prices and looking at the various items for sale, whether they are on high up shelves or behind display cabinets.

Trails

The looping section of the Green Trail (also known as Runkerry Trail) is the only DDA compliant trail section at the Giant's Causeway. It is accessible for prams and wheelchairs; however some help from a carer may be necessary on parts of path where there are loose stones.



Green Trail (cont.)

Please note:

- There are no steps, stiles or gates along the looping section of this trail
- There are no handrails; some post and rail fencing
- There are some loose stones on otherwise hardcore surface
- The gradient is DDA compliant, however some help from a caregiver for manual wheelchair users may be necessaryoThere are tactile models of the coastline along this trail
- There are sea views
- There are rest spots and a picnic area along this trail

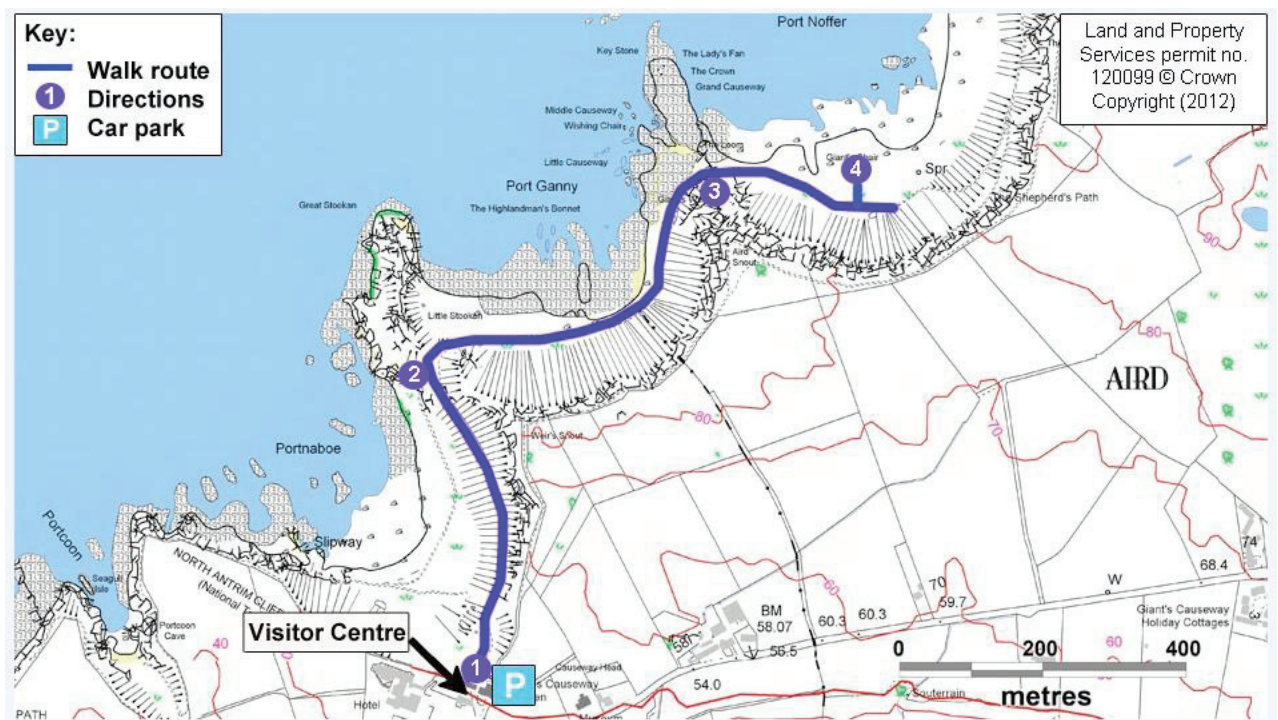


The Blue Trail

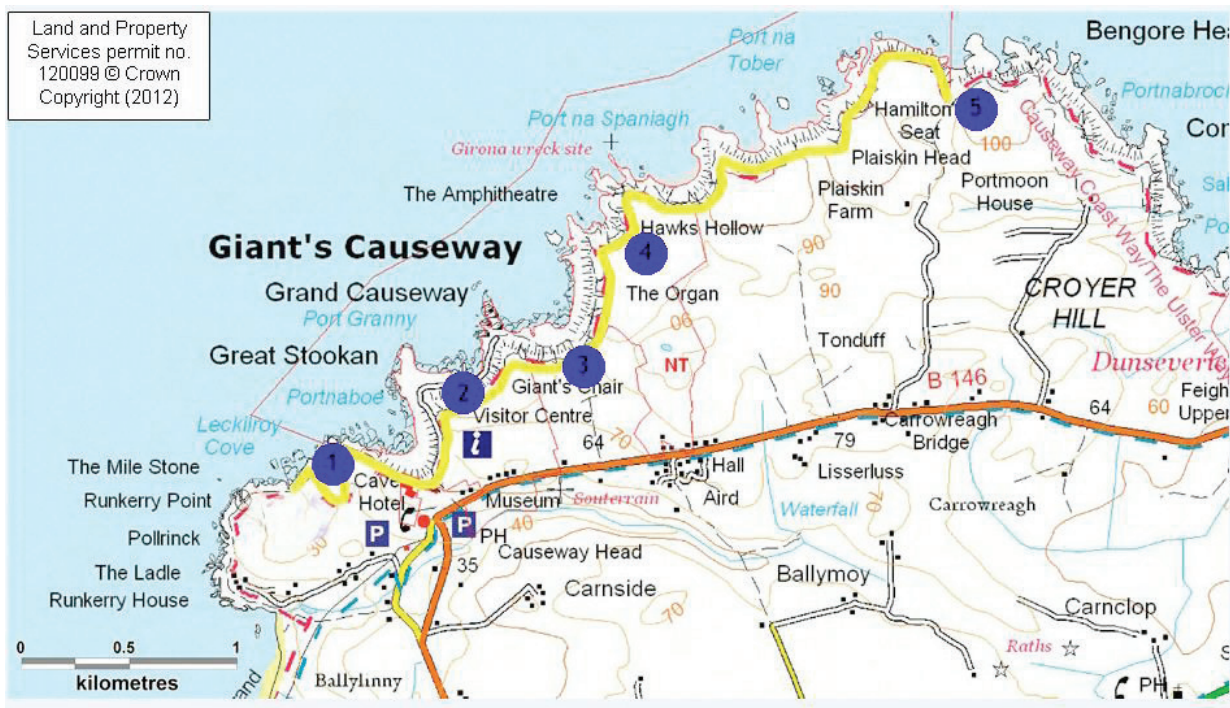
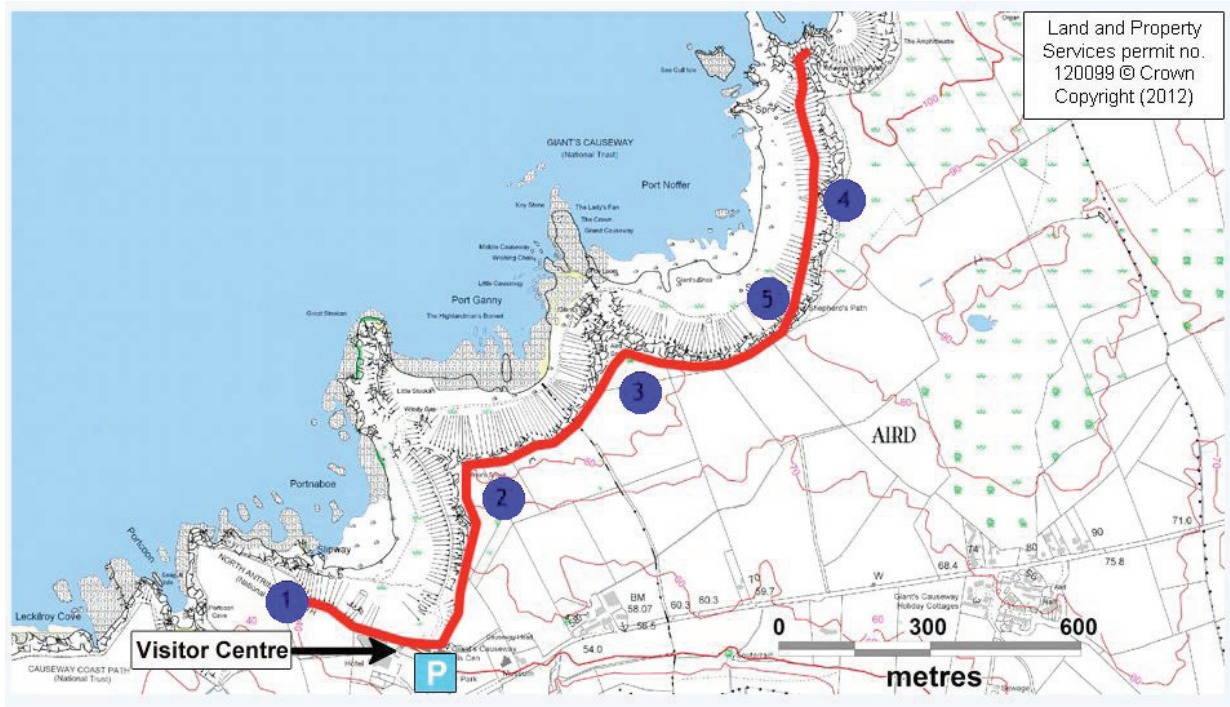
The **Blue Trail** is the most direct route to the Causeway stones, however the trail has some steep inclines which may not be suitable for wheelchair or mobility vehicle users. The Green Trail is the only DDA compliant trail on the World Heritage Site.

Please note:

- There are no steps, stiles or gates
- There are no handrails
- The route is pavestones, some dropped kerb and gravelly in places
- There are various seating areas along the route which also double as interpretation (e.g. seating 'cubes')
- There are sea views, taking in three of the causeway's baysolt is not recommended that wheelchairs, those with mobility issues, or pushchairs, venture on to the stones



The Red Trail and Yellow Trail (part of the Causeway Coast Way) run adjacent to the causeway headlands and are not considered suitable for wheelchairs or those with limited mobility. See the downloadable PDFs of these trails on our website.



Trail safety

- Be aware of children running ahead who may not realise the sheer drops; dogs should be kept on leads for the same reason.
- The clifftop walk should be avoided in extreme rain, wind or when visibility is poor. Many people do not realise the strength of the wind, which can change direction in a matter of seconds (going from onshore to offshore).
- It can be intermittent along some of the Ulster Way and causeway walking trails and therefore shouldn't be depended on (always let someone know where you plan on walking and an estimated arrival time at your destination, particularly if walking alone).
- To avoid incurring charges, roaming should be turned off when visiting the Giant's Causeway.

Map

Diagram of exterior Visitor Centre and adjacent car park (Car Park 2)

Listed buildings, the Causeway School (right) and Causeway Hotel (left)



Figure 2: 3D rendering of the scheme