

Lindisfarne Castle Ticket Office Northumberland



A new timber-built ticket hut has been completed for the National Trust's property at Lindisfarne Castle which sits romantically on the highest point of Holy Island off the coast of Northumberland, and can be reached from the mainland only at low tides by a mile-long causeway. Although mediaeval in origin, the Castle was substantially remodelled by Sir Edwin Lutyens in the early 20th century and now attracts a multitude of visitors every year. Admissions to the Castle were originally dealt with in its entrance hall at Lower Battery level, which could only be accessed by way of a long external ramp and staircase. In order to manage and control the ever-increasing number of visitors, and to accommodate some modest interpretation displays, the National Trust commissioned Simpson & Brown to design a purpose-built and accessible ticket hut and reception building at the base of the external ramp, on a very sensitive and exposed site adjacent to the much-photographed and recognisable storage sheds built from three 'sawn-off' and upturned boat hulls.



The design deliberately eschews the opportunity to build a fourth upturned hull. It does, however, attempt to respond to its unique setting between the tall, harsh, angular stone revetments of the Castle and the low, softly curved profiles of the sheds. The result is a wedge-shaped building with a sculptural black 'crinkly tin' roof which dips towards the rear as the plan form widens. The building is framed in timber and clad with untreated oak boards, graduated in size, which unfurl to create louvred screens over the windows. The large outer door swivels on a central pivot. When closed it provides security and shelter to the exposed lobby area; when open it engages with the distinctive riven oak fencing, inviting visitors into the hut on one side as they approach, and directing them towards the Castle on the other side once they have purchased their tickets. The interior is simple, workmanlike and unpretentious. The wall claddings and fittings are in oak and the roof purlins are left exposed.

The building was the Best Small Project in the 2008 Wood Awards.

