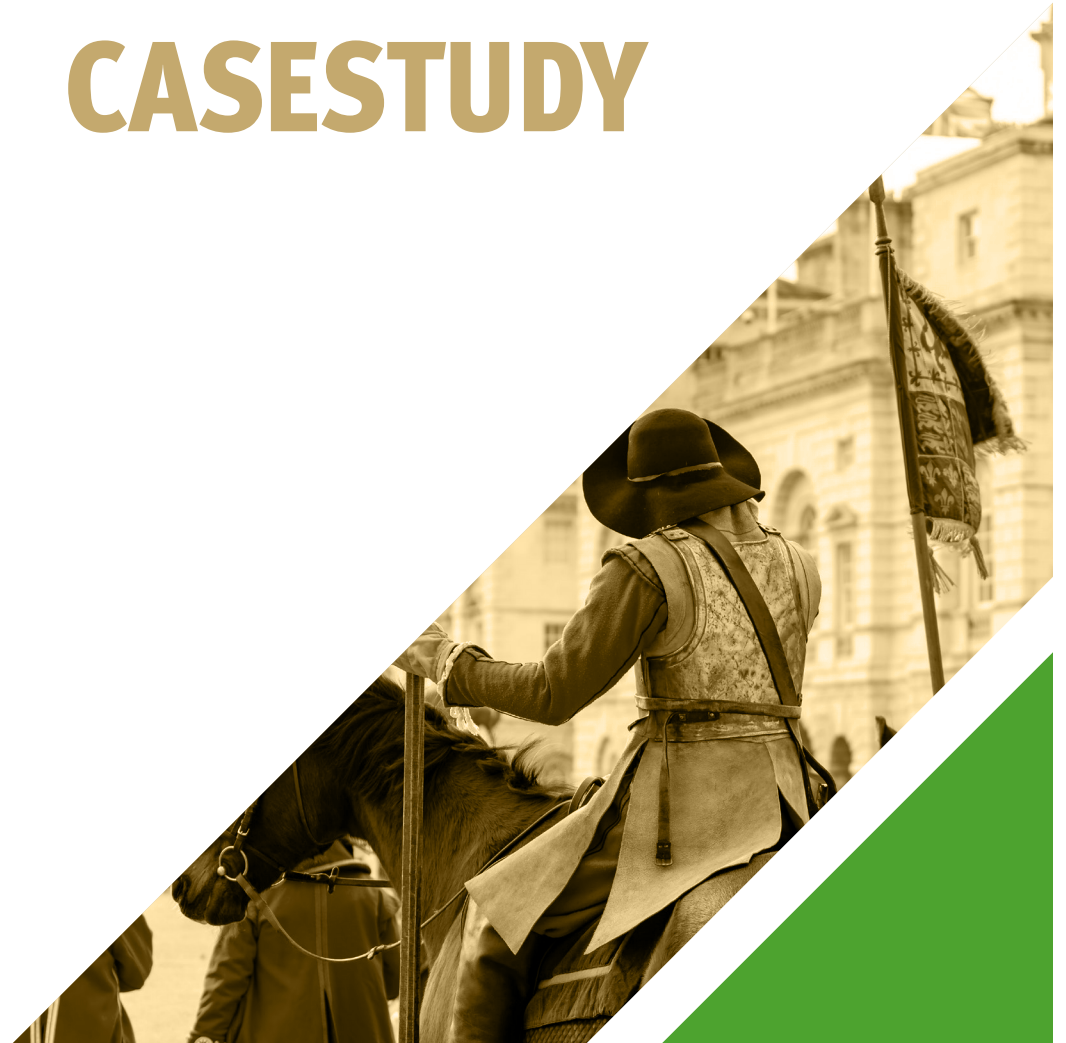


# CASTELL CAERNARFON'S KING'S GATE

 **HOCHIKI**  
CASESTUDY





A WORLD HERITAGE SITE, CASTELL CAERNARFON'S KING'S GATE, IS A MAJESTIC MEDIEVAL GATEWAY BUILT IN THE 1280S DURING THE REIGN OF KING EDWARD I OF ENGLAND, MAKING IT ROUGHLY 740 YEARS OLD. THIS HISTORICAL STRUCTURE STANDS SHOWCASES WALES'S RICH HISTORY AND ATTRACTS HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF TOURISTS EACH YEAR WHO COME TO MARVEL AT ITS GRANDEUR AND LEARN ABOUT ITS PIVOTAL ROLE IN THE REGION'S PAST. AS A CHERISHED HISTORICAL LANDMARK, THE PRESERVATION OF THE KING'S GATE, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF FIRE SAFETY, IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE. THIS ENSURES THE CONTINUED PROTECTION OF ITS ARCHITECTURAL SPLENDOUR AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

### A Historic Restoration: Protecting the Past with Modern Fire Safety

Castell Caernarfon's iconic King's Gate, a symbol of Welsh heritage, underwent a monumental restoration project. This £5 million endeavour, led by renowned UK architects Buttress, aimed to revitalise the historic site and make it more accessible to the public for the first time in centuries.

The project, which spanned five years, faced numerous challenges including extensive archaeological investigations and the unexpected delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, despite this, Cadw's (meaning 'to keep' or 'to protect' in Welsh), the Welsh Government's historic environment service, goal remained steadfast: to restore the gatehouse to its former glory while ensuring its safety for future generations.

A critical component of this restoration was the installation of a state-of-the-art combined fire safety and emergency lighting system. Given the building's historical significance and complex architecture, the system had to be both effective and discreet. Snowdonia Fire and Safety, recognising the unique demands of the project, recommended Hochiki's FIREscape+ system. Dafydd Greasley, of Snowdonia Fire and Safety commented

*"The FIREscape+ system is the perfect solution for protecting a historic site like the King's Gate. It's discreet in aesthetics, reliable, and ensures the safe evacuation of visitors and staff should a fire be detected."*

Castle walls are made of porous materials like stone or brick. These materials absorb moisture from the surrounding environment, such as rain or humidity, which can impact the performance of some safety components. Mick Hall from Hochiki Europe explains how the challenge of working within these ancient walls was overcome:

*"Working in such old buildings such as Castell Caernarfon, there is a risk that the structure itself can damage any fire safety systems installed due to humidity. We overcame this potential risk by using Hochiki's MBB-2 marine back box to protect against condensation ingress from the stone walls of the castle"*

FIREscape+, a cutting-edge combined solution, offered several key advantages for a historic site like the King's Gate:

- **Minimal Impact on the Structure:** The system's innovative design allowed for discreet installation, minimising any damage to the historic fabric, with one control panel and one

type of cable for both fire detection and emergency lighting devices

- **Advanced Navigation Features:** FIREscape+ features an intelligent wayfinding technology, which guides occupants to safety, even in smoke-filled conditions, ensuring a smooth and efficient evacuation.
- **Reliability and Durability:** The system's robust construction and advanced monitoring capabilities provide peace of mind, providing assurance that the complete life safety system is always functioning optimally.

Commenting on the success of the project, Chris Wilson, Head of Conservation for Cadw told us:

*"It's reassuring to know that such a significant historical site is protected by a state-of-the-art life safety system like FIREscape+. This project demonstrates the team's collective commitment to preserving our history."*

By selecting Hochiki's FIREscape+, the design team ensured that the King's Gate would be protected for centuries to come. This project stands as a testament to the harmonious blend of historical conservation and modern technology, safeguarding a cherished piece of Welsh heritage.

To find out more about the products used at Castell Caernarfon's iconic King's Gate head to the Hochiki website.

