

DIRECTOR

ARCHAEOLOGIST

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT WORK: OWNER'S INITIATIVES

In response to several initiatives from persons whose land contains an Ancient Monument, the opportunity has arisen, with their cooperation and involvement, to provide new and/or improved facilities for the public to visit and enjoy. Such provision would require the involvement of the Archaeologist on selected project work which might include survey and excavation work on a limited scale. The end result of such involvement could be the accessibility of hitherto unvisitable sites and monuments of general public interest. The approval of Committee is therefore sought for the Archaeologist to undertake limited involvement in such projects where these are seen to be beneficial to the development of the archaeological heritage of the Region for public access and enjoyment. Three such initiatives are outlined below:-

LOCHINDORB CASTLE, LORD CAWDOR

This proposal seeks to consolidate and make accessible the island and castle in Lochindorb through the involvement of this department and the Manpower Services Commission backed considerably financially and personally by Lord Cawdor, who owns the site. Such cooperation might result in further input from Ancient Monuments and the Countryside Commission for Scotland to provide a unique visitor experience of wide-ranging interest in a part of the Region otherwise poorly provided for in this respect.

CROMARTY CASTLE, MICHAEL NIGHTINGALE

This proposal seeks to establish and mark out the foundations of the former Cromarty Castle for public access and information. The Castle well, which still survives, would be incorporated into the complex, along with St Regulus' Chapel and burial crypt. On a less ambitious scale, this has much in common with the proposal for Lochindorb, and might also attract support from Manpower Services. The owner suggests that some financial assistance could be forthcoming from the Cromarty Trust, while other local amenity bodies might also be approached.

CROFTCROY CHAMBERED TOMB, FARR, Mr G SUTHERLAND.

Mr Sutherland already has a ruined Clava-type burial cairn within his property, which he manages carefully and with taste. As part of a proposal to erect holiday homes on adjacent land, he has asked for opinions on possible archaeological sites contained therein. While uncertain at present, this might contain a Neolithic chambered tomb of earlier date than the example in his garden. He has promised support in help with labour, and a sum of up to £1,000 for investigation of the site prior to any work proceeding. Further, should the site prove worthy of preservation, he is prepared to lose one of the proposed buildings in order that it might be retained for public enjoyment. Mr Sutherland's proposal is to provide a holiday base for specialised holidays embracing archaeology and history. He will provide approved information on other sites and places of interest in the area while making those on his property a feature of the development.

In view of such initiatives, rare at a time when most owners simply see sites of this nature as obstructions, it seems appropriate to encourage involvement of this kind where this is in keeping with the main Heritage objectives of the Council.

RB Gourlay, Jan 1986