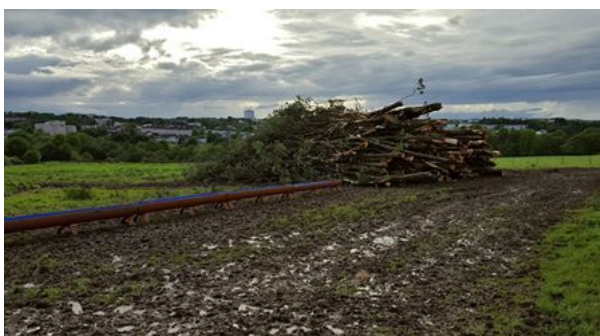
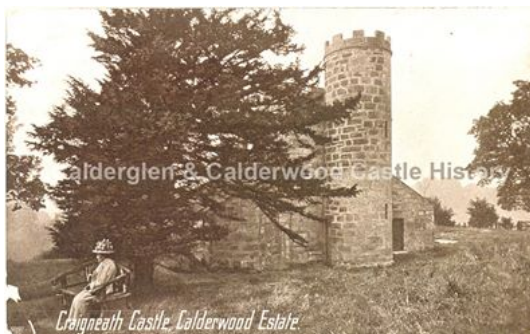


Folks, I know this is (just) outside the calderglen boundary area, but do you know about this. Particularly in relation to the potential wildlife crime implications, Not to pass on the loss of mature habitat trees, ponds hedgerows and dry stone dyke or indeed the history of the glen.

<https://www.facebook.com/323243911193021/posts/1116404525210285/>

And

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Calderglen & Calderwood Castle History Like Page

Yesterday at 02:00 ·

WANTON DESTRUCTION! CRAIGNEITH CASTLE, MATURE TREES, NEWBORN BIRDS, A MEDIEVAL ENCLOSURE, AND DYKE BOUNDARY ALL DESTROYED BY A FARMER AND HIS DIGGER

Earlier I ventured out to confirm and survey the extent of damage to Craigneith Castle. What I found was the complete and unnecessary wanton destruction of heritage and wildlife.

Craigneith Castle which existed in its later form since the late 18th century has occupied an important part in East Kilbride and Blantyre heritage for generations. Latterly a ruin it formed a registered building of historic interest under the old County Council, and has an active site record with Historic Environment Scotland where it is listed as 'Medieval'. The building was certainly mapped by William Forrest and Thompson to suggest an earlier larger castle stood at the site.

This was because of the dyke enclosure, the layout style being characteristically Medieval, and it's delineation separated the inner area with various humps and bumps from the outer area covered in Medieval rig and furrow - thus demonstrating the great antiquity of the enclosing wall.

This feature, and perhaps the most important aspect of the site, was completely erased off the surface of the earth over the past two days by the farmer in Basket Farm using an Advance Construction digger. I began to head in that direction from Calderwood today where the vehicle could be seen active in the field, and by the time I reached the field was parked outside the back barn of Basket Farm where it has stayed.

Large patches of woodland mostly comprised of willow and Birch which formed an extension of the woodland forming part of Calderglen has been ripped out and

stacked up. This has occurred in places which are too steep and rocky to plough, and such trees offer important livestock shelter against the elements. It seems the thirst to destroy these trees had some sort of other motive.

So to the mature Hawthorn and Elder trees have been ripped out of the ruin of Craigneith Castle, and the site had a number of recently hatched bird eggs lying about the debris. At this time in June the species will not have fledged and judging by the site appearance the dead birds will likely be in the stacked vegetation and earth piles around the site. Before this damage the thick shrubbery around the ruin were normally filled with nests at this time of year.

Only the rough footprint of the main Craigneith Castle remains, with the until recently best surviving and tallest walls now pulled down. The courtyard adjoining the building to the north along with the remnants of its corner folly capped well-houses, designed originally to resemble aspects of French 16th-17th century bastions have been obliterated. The fallen carved remains forming the well-house structures are no longer visible on the ground and could not be located. Further rubble has been piled in to the structure and overall the building now just appears as a pile of rubble.

In addition to this horrifically upsetting mess, the former large formal dyke banks which formed an ancient boundary of the lands in this area has been completely removed and replaced by a pole and wire fence. This feature stood over 10 feet tall and formed a linear bank following the field boundary. These dykes are rare and typically date back to the middle ages. It was surmised that it probably coincided with the original granting of the lands to the Knight's Templar by the King of Scotland - probably either David I in the 1100s or William the Lion in the 1200s. These types of boundaries would mark very long tenures in formal instruments conventionally designed to last 1000 years. This is the sort of landmark we can expect from prestigious permanent grants of land to the Templars. We no longer have the original transaction involving these ancient Temple Lands, but that dyke could have told our generation and countless generations to come about our past. This information is now irrecoverable.

Now it is lost for the sake of private gain.

A ridge and furrow field never ploughed in centuries and well preserved has been completely bulldozed as has the drystone wall which bounded it on the north-west. Rig and Furrow are relatively common and it is understandable that some are periodically removed through modern farming, especially as they typically offer relatively little distinct archaeology of any use - but in this case the small pocket lying on damp ground had been left intact for generations where it was surrounded by gorse, and overlooking the drop to the river.

Only now a wealthy construction company with no prior association with the area has acquired the land and set out to capitalise on that land at the cost of destroying the very integrity that makes Calderglen a special place, as well as our future ability to list the landscape to increase funding for local and wider community benefit.

The last couple of weeks has saw this set of ancient sites simply wiped off the face of the earth.

.
I have contacted WOSAS and HES about this. Current processes are going on with the latter to look into this for protecting what is left. SLC planning have requested images from the site so that it may be decided what to do. The horrific news that animals have likely been killed by these actions has yet to be responded to by authorities, and I may hear more tomorrow. They had asked me to provide images and observations for their records prior to their involvement.

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In the paraphrased words of one onlooker - "it looks as if he has just gone mad with his digger destroying everything".

Advance Construction directed my contact to [REDACTED] who is currently abroad and I was advised is responsible for the site. Yet in email response he has advised that the site is owned by a [REDACTED] residing adjacent to the site. I am seeking further answers on this as the digging equipment used is Advance and it was publicly acknowledged not long ago that Advance had purchased the land and were carrying out 'improvements'.

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This comes not too long after a fire ripped through Auchentibber Farm nearby for the second time resulting in just the empty shell still standing.

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Historic Environment Scotland, the Government authority handling all matters of built and archaeological heritage in Scotland are pursuing the highly important stone cross and ritual spring site. The wildlife incident resulting in the loss of native trees and harm to bird life has been reported to SNH.

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[REDACTED] the farmer of Basket in the mid 20th century did a lot of work to preserve areas around the farm, despite the eager eye of people driving to the area to steal stone from the ruined building. He took an active part in historical research and preserved old documents relating to the estate. He was the main man behind putting Calderglen forward to be scheduled as a site of Special Scientific Interest, which was confirmed in 1990 - to represent Calderglen as one of the finest continuous sequences of Carboniferous fossils in the world.

I currently hold most of the surviving records of the farm thanks to a kind donation. Those records make it clear that Jimmy was a lover of the landscape, and if he were alive today to see this then I can't imagine how he would react

.
Something incidentally that the park's department for the Heritage Trust ignore or really just are ignorant to whilst they invite families along to dig up plastic dinosaur bones in their conservatory!

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It is surprising that I seemed to be the only person visiting the site today or taking online action despite a population of over 70,000 people in East Kilbride. Surely more people knew about this or saw what was happening from their windows? It seems the lack of attention this side of the gorge has been receiving has enabled the landowner to attempt such destruction in a way which would cause uproar in other areas.

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Hopefully this post communicates well enough the loss.

It is safe to say that a part of me and my research died today, and the wider loss to the community of Craigneith and its associated sites cannot be underestimated - not for local or wider history, and certainly not for the wildlife which have suffered.

These photos make for upsetting viewing. This is an absolute crime to wildlife and our shared culture and past. Some show the sites recently as compared with yesterday where they have been completely destroyed.

Please if you can contact your local Councillors and the authorities. I am doing my best, 24/7 so far, but the authorities do not monitor Facebook pages. Unless you speak up about your disgust then there may be further imminent mayhem. Sharing on FB will do nothing as it is not an official platform considered traditionally like newspapers, letters, phone calls and emails are. Advance Construction are based in Bellshill and can be contacted. Planning are already looking into this too. thanks for your help.

Top of Form

7 comments

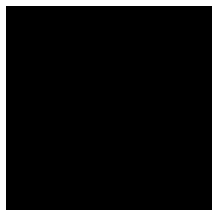


South Lanarkshire Countryside Rangers

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Comments



We visited it with [redacted] on Monday night and its just a scene of total destruction!

Delete, hide or report this



Like

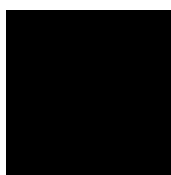


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8h

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South Lanarkshire Countryside Rangers Thanks [redacted] - we'll check with Planning to see if this is an issue for them to deal with.

1

Edit or delete this

▪ [redacted]

Like

- [redacted] · Reply
- [redacted] · Commented on by Louisa Maddison
- [redacted] · 1h
- [redacted] · Edited



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