

8 August 2024

TRUST CALLS FOR SUPPORT IN BATTLE FOR BANNOCKBURN

Conservation charity, the National Trust for Scotland is asking its 330,000 plus members and the public to support its campaign to protect one of the last remnants of the Bannockburn Battlefield in Stirling.

Last week, Stirling Council recommended approval for a development proposal for a horse harness-racing track and its associated buildings and car parking, on fields close to the Battle of Bannockburn Centre and the listed monuments designed to commemorate the battle.

The National Trust for Scotland is shocked and dismayed by this decision and has written to Scottish Ministers asking for them to urgently call in the proposal which, if permitted, would destroy one of the last remaining areas of open landscape on which the historic battle took place in 1314.

The charity is also asking for its members and the public to support this call by writing to Scottish Ministers.

In a piece published on www.nts.org.uk, Director of Conservation & Policy Stuart Brooks, said:

“We believe Scotland thinks more of its heritage than this, and we need as many people as possible to stand with us to defend this special place now and for the future.

“The fields in question are on the national Inventory of Historic Battlefields and although they don’t fall within the land owned and cared for by the Trust, they are within the known boundaries of the 1314 conflict. They are integral to the experience of visitors who come from near and far to learn about this special aspect of Scotland’s heritage. These fields are not just fields, but a living testament to the historical and cultural significance of the Battle of Bannockburn.

“If they are developed, we will not just lose a part of our history, but also a connection from the present to the past. The loss will be intolerable and we will be left with a void in our heritage and a stain on our nation’s reputation.

“If you agree that this important site of Scottish history should be protected from this damaging proposal, we are asking you to please write to Scottish Ministers explaining why you think the battlefield is important, why this development is so damaging, its inappropriateness for the location and finally, asking that the decision is called in as a matter of urgency.

“Time is ticking on this – Scottish Ministers have until just 26 August to make their decision. Please help us ensure that they understand how strongly the public feel about protecting this important place.”

The National Trust for Scotland has also highlighted a number of concerns about the procedure followed in this case.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

Images: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/133918740@N04/0v7tZ9FFSG>

The National Trust for Scotland is asking the public to email scottish.ministers@gov.scot, asking that the Scottish Government call in Stirling Council's decision as a matter of urgency.

A letter from the National Trust for Scotland Chief Executive, Phil Long to Scottish Government is available on the Trust's website: <https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/were-in-a-battle-about-bannockburn-and-we-need-your-support>.

It would be helpful in any emails to state:

- The importance of preserving the field of battle at Bannockburn due to its significance for Scottish history;
- Concern that one of the last remaining undeveloped portions of the historic battlefield will be lost;
- That under the National Planning Framework, the proposed development is inappropriate for such a culturally and historically important site;
- That Stirling Council did not base their decision on an adequate landscape impact assessment;
- That Stirling Council's decision should be called in by Scottish Ministers as a matter of paramount urgency.

The full reference for the Stirling Council planning decision is:

23/00612/FUL | Formation of Trotting Track (Class 11 Assembly and leisure), including associated drainage and erection of amenity facility for the provision of toilets and including a licensed bar and hot food and drink, all takeaway (Sui Generis) and also the formation of competitor and spectator vehicular/footway accesses and parking areas | Land West Of New Line Road And South Of Fairhill Road Whins Of Milton.

Bannockburn is one of the pivotal events of Scottish history: it was the most significant victory over the English monarchy's ambitions to subsume the country within its territories. It emerged as a literal landmark in asserting Scotland's claim to be a nation in its own right, setting the course for the treaty of Edinburgh-Northampton in 1328, at which point the English finally recognised the legitimacy of Scotland's independence and the rightfulness of Robert I's kingship.

About the National Trust for Scotland

Established in 1931, the National Trust for Scotland is Scotland's largest conservation charity and cares for, shares and speaks up for Scotland's magnificent heritage.

Over the last 90 years the Trust has pioneered public access to and shared ownership of some of the most magnificent buildings, collections and landscapes in Scotland. It cares for more than 100 sites, from ancient houses to battlefields, castles, mills, gardens, coastlines, islands, mountain ranges and the plants and animals which depend upon them.

In March 2022 the National Trust for Scotland launched *Nature, Beauty & Heritage for Everyone*, its ten-year strategy which sets out the ambitions of the charity over the coming decade. From speaking up for Scotland's heritage which doesn't have a voice, to improving the lives and wellbeing of people across the country, and responding to the climate and biodiversity crisis, the Trust will build on its work in recent years to grow its impact and conserve and restore more of Scotland's heritage, as it moves towards its centenary in 2031.

For more information on the National Trust for Scotland visit www.nts.org.uk.

The National Trust for Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC 007410.