



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01696

Name of petitioner

Jack Gallacher MA on behalf of Bothwell Historical Society

Petition title

Preserving Scottish Battlefields

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to introduce legislation to prevent the development on battlefields as listed on Historic Environment Scotland's Inventory of Historic Battlefields.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

We have discussed the issues raised in the petition with Margaret Mitchell MSP.

Petition background information

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) has designated 39 significant battlefields as sites worthy of preservation. Local planning authorities may take this into consideration when applications are made for developments on these sites but despite the recommendations of HES, the battlefields are not protected by any legislation enacted by Parliament. We consider that these battlefields are an important part of the national heritage and should be protected by legislation for the benefit of present and future generations.

In common with many other historical communities, we are aware of the economical benefits of tourism and that many people visit our country because of its history. We would suggest that our turbulent history as represented by our battlefields is worthy of protection, not only for their heritage value but also for the potential for economic benefits they might provide for local people.

The Bothwell Historical Society was formed to promote interest in the history of Scotland and in particular to provide information about, and to protect, 'Historic Bothwell'. In 2005 there had been a planning application for a luxury housing development on the Covenanters Field, the last remaining undeveloped portion of our local battlefield, the 1679 Battle of Bothwell Bridge. This application was refused thanks to local opposition. Again in 2013, the Field was subject to a planning application for a housing development.

Thanks to a continuing vigorous local opposition and the support of HES's designation of the field as a site of historical significance, the application was withdrawn. Our belief is that developers take the long term view and are happy to await the opportunity to submit further application. We also appreciate that cash strapped local authorities may be tempted to a short term view and sell these sites to developers. We are also aware that developers use the history of these sites as a selling point. Our experience has led us to conclude that the people of Scotland are interested in their heritage but that we need the support of Parliament to protect it.

The Bothwell Historical Society exists to promote an interest in community spirit through developing an awareness not only of our local heritage but also in the history of our country. We are aware of other communities across Scotland who share our concern for the future of our heritage and our submission is that all battlefields designated by Historic Environment Scotland should be protected by, and benefit from, parliamentary legislation.

We have links to other local organisations, the churches and particularly local schools with whom we have a very close involvement. A local sister group has plans for how the Bothwell Bridge battlefield might be used for heritage purposes. We are sure that similar plans are in place at other battlefield sites. Our Honorary President, Professor Sir Tom Devine and local South Lanarkshire councillors are aware of our concerns for the battlefields.

Unique web address

<https://www.parliament.scot/GettingInvolved/Petitions/battlefieldpreservation>

Related information for petition

Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?

YES

How many signatures have you collected so far?

0

Closing date for collecting signatures online

25 / 06 / 2018

Comments to stimulate online discussion

Do you agree that it is vital that legislation is laid down now before any further inappropriate developments on any of the battlefields as listed on the Inventory of Historic Battlefields?