

Plan to develop Wolf's castle

A REMOTE island fortress — once the lair of the notorious Wolf of Badenoch — is to be developed as a tourist attraction by Lord Cawdor.

Highland Region's libraries and leisure services committee agreed yesterday that their archaeologist, Mr Bob Gourlay, should participate in the project and two other private initiatives.

Mr Gourlay's work will involve survey and excavation work.

Lord Cawdor's scheme, which he hopes to carry out in association with the Manpower Services Commission, is to provide car parking and ferry facilities at Lochindorb Castle, on Dava Moor, near Glenferness.

The castle will be partially restored and staffed by Cawdor Estates. The earl's own castle — with its MacBeth associations — is already

one of Scotland's top tourist attractions.

In a report, Highland director of libraries and leisure Mr Harold Wilkinson said the project would create "a unique visitor experience of wide-ranging interest in a part of the region otherwise poorly provided for in this respect".

Later, Mr Wilkinson revealed that the project also held exciting potential for Mr Gourlay as it had never been excavated before.

Mr Gourlay will also participate in work on the well, chapel and crypt of the former Cromary Castle, owned by Mr Michael Nightingale, and of the chambered cairn in the garden of a Farr farmer, Mr G. Sutherland.

He believes there may be an even earlier tomb on adjacent land which would become a feature of a holiday-home development he is planning.

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British Museum set to take wraps off classical treasures

THE BRITISH Museum is planning to bring about 2,000 Greek, Roman and Etruscan antiquities out of storage and put them on display as part of a major re-organisation of its permanent exhibitions on the classical world.

Four new permanent exhibitions are to be opened in one of the largest injections of exhibits into the museum's gallery for the past 50 years. Half of the 2,000 objects due to be brought out of storage have not been seen by the public since before the Second World War.

The first of the new permanent exhibitions will open in June and will feature more than 800 antiquities, ranging from high-quality bronzes to spectacular gold

By David Keys

jewellery and fifth century BC coins — some of the finest made.

Although the Greeks developed a brilliant civilisation in the south of Italy and despite the fact that most of the world's best preserved Greek temples are not in Greece but in southern Italy, the British Museum's new gallery will be the world's first comprehensive exhibition on the subject.

In December an exhibition will open on Cyprus, describing the ancient cultures of the island from the New Stone Age through to the Roman period — a span of 3,000 years. The £250,000 exhibition is being sponsored by a

Cypriot-owned UK trading company — A G Leventis — which hopes to make Britain's 200,000-strong Cypriot community more aware of its cultural roots. It is only the third time that the British Museum's Greek and Roman department has received private sponsorship for a permanent exhibition.

The other two new galleries — both due to open in 1989-90 — will cost £1m between them and will cover the "Etruscans and Pre-Roman Italy" and "Rome-City and Empire". Among the Roman exhibits will be fourth-century silver treasures from France, spectacular mosaics from North Africa and objects from Roman Ephesus and Egypt.

Castle boost for Cawdor



Earl of Cawdor . . .
leisure backing

THREE private owners of Highland ancient monuments have been promised help and encouragement in developing these properties for public enjoyment by the regional council's leisure services committee.

The committee has given its blessing to limited involvement by regional archaeologist Bob Gourlay on project work, including survey and excavation work at Lochindorb Castle, a possible chambered tomb at Farr and Cromarty Castle.

The Earl of Cawdor, who owns Lochindorb Castle, between Forres and Grantown, is seeking to consolidate and make accessible to the public the island in Lochindorb and its historic mediaeval castle, with possible aid from the Manpower Services Commission.

In a memo to the leisure committee Mr Gourlay stated that the cooperation of the regional council and MSC with Lord Cawdor — who is willing to spend a considerable amount of his own money on the project — might result in further help from Ancient Monuments and the Countryside Commission for Scotland "to provide a unique visitor experience of wide-ranging interest."

Carefully

Croftcroy is owned by signwriter Duncan Sutherland, who already has a ruined burial cairn on his property, which says Mr Gourlay "he manages carefully and with taste."

As part of a proposal to build holiday homes on adjacent land he has asked for professional opinions on possible archaeological sites there and he believes there may be a Neolithic chambered tomb of an earlier date than the example in his garden.

He has promised help with labour and up to £1000 for investigation of the site prior to any work starting.

Kent businessman Michael Nightingale, the laird of Cromarty, proposes 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 visitor complex, along with St Regulus' Chapel and burial crypt.