

Report to Mousehold Heath Conservators
Report of Interim executive head of neighbourhoods
Subject St Williams Chapel site management and upkeep

Item

11

Purpose

To report progress on issues raised at a recent itinerant meeting and proposed management objectives for St Williams Chapel

Recommendation

To approve the management plan covering vegetation management, improvements to public access and interpretation for the site of St Williams Chapel.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority City of character and culture

Financial implications

Any financial implications arising from this report will have or will be met from approved budgetary provision

Contact officers

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Background documents

None

Background

1. St Williams Chapel an important heritage site and attracts visitors to the heath.
2. Part of the forward planning is to manage the shrubs and vegetation to expose the mounds to enable visitors to find the site more easily.
3. At the itinerant meeting in 2015 Conservators discover how difficult it was to find the four corners of the chapel after visiting to view the newly installed interpretation panel. This was due to the site being for some time, considerably over grown.
4. Following these discussions, officers have drafted a site management plan for consideration – see appendix 1.

Management plan

The maintenance and upkeep of St. Williams Chapel site

Aims

To improve and maintain public access routes and the interpretation of St. Williams Chapel site situated on Mousehold Heath.

Objectives

To keep pathways clear for improved public access and interpretation of the site, by removal of vegetation with hand tools and a brush cutter from all pathways identified on map below, fig 1. This will also include the removal of small trees from the banks and ditches marking the inner and outer boundaries of the chapel, ref fig 1. These works will be followed up appropriate stump treatment to prevent re-growth.

Community involvement

Local community groups will be involved in the completion of this works including the Mousehold Heath Defenders, TCV and Community Green Gym supervise by the Mousehold Heath Wardens Norwich City Council under the guidance of David Robertson Norfolk County Council's Historic Environment Service.

Protection

There will be no breaking of the ground surface taking place whilst carrying out these tasks so not to compromise the site, ensuring its integrity. Breaking the ground surface in anyway would require Scheduled Monument Consent from the Department of Media Culture and Sport.

Tasks for completion

Vegetation

To improve public access by removing vegetation including bramble, scrub and sapling growth impeding pathway access for the visiting public including banks and ditches of the inner and outer mounds for improving interpretation of the site.

All scrub including brambles and saplings should be cut on a regular basis to prevent them spreading and causing root damage.

Saplings and scrub should be cut as close to the ground surface as

Possible, with roots and stumps left *in-situ* and treated to prevent regrowth.

Trees

Established trees growing on the site of the chapel building/buildings will be retained, selected trees will be removed with roots left *in-situ* and treated preventing regrowth. Any ivy growing on the trees will be monitored. Where necessary, ivy will be cut back to restrict growth and to prevent trees collapsing under its weight. Ivy should be cut as close to the ground surface as possible, with roots left *in-situ* and treated to prevent regrowth.

Selected trees growing on key sight lines from the interpretation panel will be removed along with overhanging branches. Roots left *in-situ* and treated to prevent regrowth, ref fig 2.

Cut vegetation including brash and cut timber can be taken off site and burnt in adjacent woodland.

Piles of cut timber and branches can be left in selected locations to serve as invertebrate habitats or used to close minor paths for protection against erosion.

Site of Chapel

Allow nettles to grow on the site of the chapel building/buildings It is hoped this will prevent users of mountain, BMX and motorbikes from causing damage to the building earthworks and below ground archaeological remains.

The nettles should be strimmed once a year and the arising's removed from site.

Nigel Hales Mousehold Heath Officer, Norwich City Council

David Robertson, Norfolk Monuments Management Project, Norfolk County Council

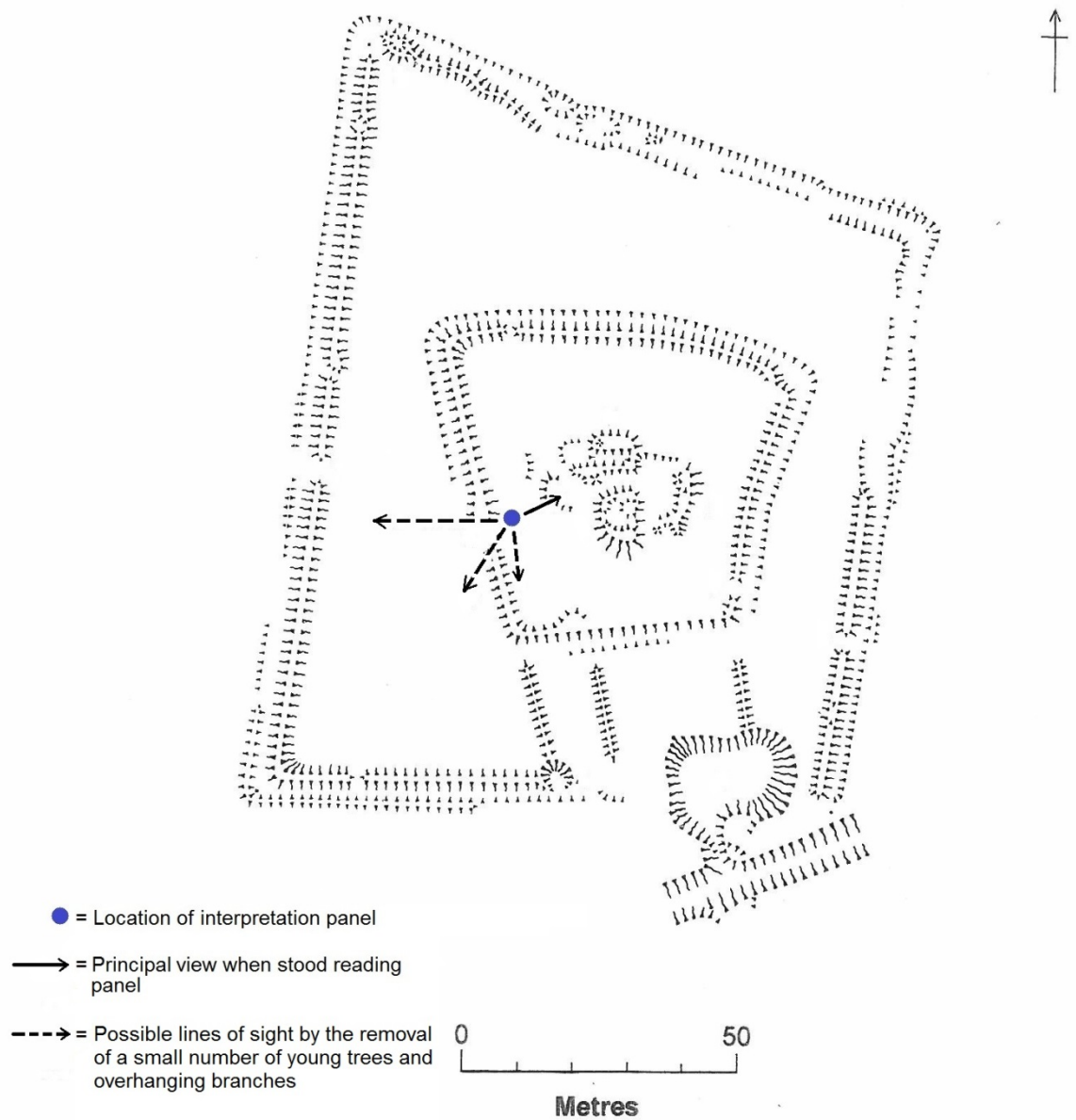
Fig 1



Fig 2

St William's Chapel

Mousehold Heath



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Fig 1 including an illustration produced by Jason Gibbons used courtesy of Norfolk County Council.

Fig 2 including an earthwork survey produced by Brian Cushion used courtesy of Norfolk County Council