

City of Edinburgh Council

**Edinburgh**  
Survey of Gardens and Designed Landscapes

**034 Cramond**  
(Nether Cramond)

**Consultants**

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**034 - Cramond**



Key			
	Site boundary		Essential setting
	Ruined buildings		Site of former house
	Principal buildings		Main drive
	Gardens		Principal views or vista
	Water		Panoramic View
	Woodlands		
	Parkland		

**EDINBURGH**  
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

**SURVEY OF GARDENS AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES**

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**034 Cramond**  
(Nether Cramond)

Parish Cramond, later Edinburgh

NGR NT 191 768

NMRS No NT17NE 34.00

Owners House and core landscape private and institutional.  
Surrounding land now in divided ownership, including Cramond Kirk, Church of Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council, Cramond and Harthill Estates and other private.

Designations

Listing Cramond House B  
Cramond House Gateway & Lodges, Cramond Road South B  
Cramond Tower B

Scheduled Ancient Monument Part overlies The Monument known as Cramond: Roman Fort and Civil Settlement' (Ref. MID 98 1375)

Cramond Conservation Area (western part of site only)

Green Belt

Area of Great Landscape Value

Ancient and Important Woodland (CEC designation)

Firth of Forth Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), RAMSAR site and Special Protection Area (SPA) adjoins north boundary

Local Nature Conservation Site

Heritage Trees

**REASONS FOR INCLUSION**

A long-established estate, developed around an important house, the landscape setting of which makes a major contribution to views on the western fringe of Edinburgh, and to the rural character of north shore of the Firth of Forth. Much of the area is accessible and well-used as a public open space.

**LOCATION, SETTING AND EXTENT**

The Cramond estate is located immediately to the east of the mouth of the river Almond on the Firth of Forth. The estate landscape area, most of which slopes down gently northwards to the shore, is cut into by one or two narrow gullies, the steeper slopes of which are largely wooded. The designed landscape occupies a broadly triangular site, bounded to the west and south by Cramond Glebe Road and the Caer Amon housing development under construction (in 2007-08)



*Cramond from Forth shoreline  
looking west*

on the recently vacated site of Moray House College of Education / Dunfermline College of Physical Education; to the east by Marine Drive and agricultural land associated with and overlooked by Lauriston Castle; and to the north by the Cramond foreshore. Access from Queensferry Road, via Whitehouse Road and Cramond Glebe Road; via Quality Street, Cramond Road South, Cramond Road North and Cramond Glebe Road; or via Silverknowes Road and Marine Drive.

The western section of the designed landscape, incorporating Cramond House, Cramond Kirk, Cramond Tower, immediately adjacent woodland and part of the Cramond foreshore, is included within the Cramond Conservation Area. The site lies wholly within the Green Belt and an Area of Great Landscape Value. Site area 51.5ha.

## MAIN PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

17th century origins on a site with a much longer history of settlement; developed during 18th and 19th centuries; decline and fragmentation in 20th century.

## HISTORY OF LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT

There has been human activity and settlement on the site from pre-historic times, with a strong Roman presence during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. Although there is likely to have been some planting and cultivation around the later medieval settlement of Bishop's Cramond, the present landscape is more likely to have its origins in mid-to-late 17th century, when Cramond House was built next to the 15th century Cramond Tower. The landscape of tree-lined grazing parks and a small rectangular *wilderness* plantation, which developed in the early 18th century as the setting for the new mansion, have provided the framework within which later development and planting took place. This included the formation of a new southern approach (now extinguished) from an arched gate-lodge of c1770, and additional planting within the park and policies during the 19th century. The 20th century has been characterised by prolonged neglect and a fragmentation of ownership, resulting in a gradual decline in the condition and integrity of the designed landscape.

During medieval times the land of Caer Amon and associated settlement were given to the Bishops of Dunkeld as a residence, and (according to some sources) came to be known as *Cramond Episcopi* or *Bishop's Cramond*, as distinct from nearby *Cramond Regis* or *King's Cramond*. The estate passed through the hands of one Archibald Douglas, before coming into the ownership of Edinburgh merchant James Inglis (d.1637) in 1622. James' son John Inglis commissioned a new mansion house that was built alongside the old tower-house and which still forms the core of the present house. The property continued in the ownership of the Inglis family, whose links with the Cockburns of Ormistoun may have influenced the agricultural and other improvements that they made to the estate during the late 18th century. As well as adding a new east front to the house c1760, Sir John moved the village further away from the house, and protected it with walls and new planting. Further additions were made to the house c1772 by his son Sir Adam Inglis, whose brother John succeeded him, and who is said to have made yet more improvements to the estate. John's Inglis' daughter Anne Lady Torphichen inherited, making more additions to the house c1826 and further strengthening the separation of house and village.

By the time of the *New Statistical Account* for the Parish of Cramond (c1840) Cramond House was described as a '*... handsome and commodious mansion ... the trees which surround the house are remarkable for their size and beauty, more particularly considering their vicinity to the sea*'. On Anne Lady Torphichen's death in 1849, without issue, the estate passed by succession to the Craigie-Halkett family who occupied the house for much of the remainder of the 19th century. That said, a C C H Inglis of Cramond is recorded as being a subscriber to the Oregon Botanical Association c1853. Thereafter another description by James Grant (1888) spoke of Cramond as '*... a fine old house within a woodland domain*'.

Ordnance Survey 6" map  
1852-53



The house was used as a military hospital during the First World War. Although it remained in the ownership of the Craigie-Halkett family until the 1950s, the house became neglected, coming into the ownership of the Church of Scotland in 1971 with some of the surrounding land. The house has been restored and is used partly as a private residence and partly as offices. The ruinous Cramond Tower was purchased by a new owner in the 1970s, and has been restored as a private residence. Following these and other changes, responsibility for the remaining land is divided between Cramond Kirk, the Church of Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council, and Cramond and Harthill Estates.

### Maps and Graphic Evidence



Roy c1750

Although *Nether Kramont* appears as a name on Blaeu's map (1654), it is only on Adair's map (1682) that *Nedder Cramond* is shown as a mansion house with a walled or fenced enclosure and associated planting, to the east of a small cluster of houses. By the time of Roy's map (c1750) there was a much more extensive designed landscape, typical of the contemporary push for 'improvement', comprising a small, rectangular star plantation or wilderness to the south-east of the mansion house, cut through with radiating walks, an east-west avenue aligned on the distant eye-catcher of North Berwick Law and centred on the house, around which were grouped ten tree-lined parks, some used as grazing, others as arable. Although subsequent maps prior to the Ordnance Survey, such as those by Armstrong (1773), Knox (1816) and Sharp, Greenwood & Fowler (1828), are rather unhelpful with regard to dating development, it would seem that additional parkland planting of standard oak, sycamore, pine etc. took place in the late 18th century and/or early 19th century, both supplementing and incorporating some of the field boundary trees seen on Roy's map. Maps from c1800 show a new south approach to the house, which led through parkland from the arched 1770s gate-lodge which stands at the angle made by Cramond Road South and Cramond Road North, at the west end of Double Dykes Plantation, where the Cramond Estate marches with the neighbouring Barnton Estate.

The Ordnance Survey (1853) shows Cramond House, with nearby Cramond Tower as a ruin, with two blocks of stables and/or offices to the west, with a walled garden with a summer house at its south-eastern corner, all surrounded by parkland with one or two outlying built features, including a 'tombstone', 'bower' and 'bubbling well'. The parkland is shown with standard trees. A few small areas of denser woodland lie to the south of the house and around the walled garden, in a single small clump to the west of the south approach, at the

north-east extremity of the parkland on steeper ground close to the foreshore, and in the form of a narrow strip running along the foreshore itself. Subsequent maps show a progressive loss of land to development on the western edge of the estate, with the creation of Cramond Glebe Road and Terrace c1900, of Moray House College of Education / Dunfermline College of Physical Education in the 1960s, of Cramond Glebe Gardens c1971, and, most recently, of the Caer Amon residential development on the site formerly occupied by the college buildings. Maps and aerial photographs also reveal a gradual degradation of the parkland.

## COMPONENTS OF THE DESIGNED LANDSCAPE

### Cramond House / Kirk and Environs

The mansion house and kirk, with associated buildings and car parks, stand in an area of ground maintained largely as mown grass, in which the remains of a Roman settlement are marked out with stone and gravel. Mature broadleaved planting serves to screen the house from Cramond Glebe Road. A few mature trees – lime and sycamore – stand in the lawns to the south of the drive that runs round to the north of the mansion. The east front of the house and car parking area are partially screened from the neighbouring parkland by ornamental planting.

### Cramond Tower and Garden

The restored tower house and its immediate environs are fenced off and maintained as a private house and garden.

### Kennels Wood and Car Park

This area, to the east of Cramond Glebe Road, and to the north of the drive to Cramond House, incorporating the unroofed ruins of the so-called kennels building, is characterised by mixed broadleaved woodland, in a severely neglected and degraded condition, with informal paths leading down through it towards the car park and foreshore. A modern sewage treatment plant stands at the north edge of the car park, partly screened by recent planting, but with a rooftop viewing platform offering extensive prospects towards Cramond Island and across the Firth of Forth.

### Garden Wood

This area, to the south and east of the mansion house, is characterised by an area of mixed, mostly broadleaved woodland, much of it in a neglected and degraded condition, clustered around the now empty walled garden. The woodland is of mixed age, incorporating some very old trees, including a few veteran sycamores, together with a good deal of Victorian planting, some shrub planting and a few very recent ornamental exotics in the northernmost part of the wood. Within the wood is a large irregular mound of dumped rubble, now largely overgrown and covered



*Cramond House 1955 (The Scotsman)*

*Cramond House, Scottish Wildlife Trust HQ, from south-west*



*Cramond Tower 1955 (The Scotsman)*

*Cramond Tower and garden*

*South-east gateway*



*Kennels wood*



*Condition of parkland*

with self-seeded trees. The woodland is criss-crossed by a network of mostly informal paths. Litter and localised vandalism are evident, especially around a bicycle track and jumps within the central part of wood.

### **East Wood**

This irregularly shaped area of woodland marks the north-east boundary of the designed landscape, partly determined by the local topography, which includes a small burn and steep-sided gully running down to the foreshore, and adjacent field-edges. The mixed-age woodland, including horse chestnut, sycamore, lime and alder along with holly, hawthorn and blackthorn, is in a neglected and degraded condition, with some fallen trees. There are some unattractive barriers at the entrance to the wood from Marine Drive, with informal, scrub-lined paths and litter.

Much of the policy woodland and the neighbouring parkland with standard trees associated with Cramond House is recognised by City of Edinburgh Council as Ancient and Important Woodland.

### **Parkland**

The surviving parkland, within the northern undeveloped part of the designed landscape, is characterised by a scattered single standard parkland trees in mostly rough grassland – including oak, Austrian or Corsican pine, beech, sycamore and lime, many of the trees mature to over-mature, and some falling apart. Although some new parkland trees have been planted within the last 10-20 years, the poor condition of many of the surrounding tree-guards point to a low level of after-care.

### **Water Features**

*Vista from park to Cramond House*



*Cramond foreshore walks*

The Firth of Forth adjoins the site on the north and is a dominant feature in the landscape. The high-water mark is the boundary of the Firth of Forth SSSI, SPA and RAMSAR site, with run-off from the designed landscape and adjacent farmland falling directly into the Forth.

#### Views and Vistas

Within the pattern of planting is preserved the line of the late-17th century or early-18th century avenue or vista from the house, aligned on North Berwick Law. There is also a less formal visual link from the house to Arthur's Seat. The parkland planting is particularly important in the foreground of views southward from the Cramond foreshore, and is significant, with the surrounding policy planting, in the middle-ground of longer views southward from the grounds of neighbouring Lauriston Castle.

#### Archaeology

Part of the designed landscape overlies the Scheduled Ancient Monument known as 'The Monument known as Cramond : Roman Fort and Civil Settlement' (Ref. MID 98 1375), concerned with the sub-surface archaeology dating from the Roman period, specifically excluding the immediate environs of Cramond House, Cramond Tower, Cramond Church, Manse and Church Hall, but including ground underlying the walled gardens, ruined court of offices and immediately surrounding woodland. There are additional post-Roman features of archaeological interest identified and described in a database compiled by Headland Archaeology for City of Edinburgh Council.

#### PUBLIC ACCESS

The area is promoted as a visitor attraction by Edinburgh City Council's Ranger Service under the heading *Sites and Trails, Cramond Shore*, and more generally in tourist literature. It is heavily used by sightseers, dog walkers, horse riders and runners – whether from the local community or visitors to the area. Although there is little in the way of formal provision beyond the car parks at Cramond

*Path from Marine Drive car park**View from Lauriston Castle to Cramond*





*Ramp to foreshore*

Village and Marine Drive, and the bitmac-surfaced Cramond / Silverknowes Esplanade, there is effective and unrestricted *de facto* access to much of the historic designed landscape. Within the area, Cramond Tower and Cramond House stand within enclosed ground, maintained as private gardens. Otherwise there is more-or-less open access to both woodland and parkland from several points – from Cramond Village and the adjacent public car park, from Cramond Glebe Road via Kirk Cramond, from Cramond Road North by a footpath running between neighbouring housing developments, and from the public car park at the west end of Marine Drive. Formal guidance and interpretation is limited, and is mostly focused on pre-history, together with the history of the Roman settlement and the kirk. Lack of security and the comparatively low level of maintenance means that much of the existing built infrastructure is neglected, and some is potentially unsafe. Outwith the area surrounding the mansion house and kirk, with the exception of the south access from Cramond Road North, the footpaths are largely informal, unsurfaced and liable to become muddy in places in wet weather. Although there are ageing and veteran trees in both woodland and parkland areas, there is little sign of them being actively managed for their heritage and/or habitat value, or of measures being taken to protect the public from potential hazards. There is a good deal of litter, whether that dropped by visitors, or blown in from the neighbouring building site. There is vandalism, whether deliberate or casual, to built structures and trees, and fly-tipping of rubbish in the car parks at Cramond Village and Marine Drive. All this is difficult to reconcile with the Council's description of the area as '*... a tranquil world of unspoilt meadowland and woodlands*'.

#### FUTURE MANAGEMENT POTENTIAL

In spite of its inherent qualities, and the heavy public use of the area, the existing infrastructure of car parks, paths, fences and interpretive provision lacks coherence, and appears to be poorly maintained. With the exception of the area around Cramond House, Cramond Tower and Cramond Kirk, there is an all-pervading sense of neglect and decay, augmented by the amount of litter and localised vandalism. The area would benefit greatly from a more coherent approach to its management, to improve the built infrastructure of car parks, paths and viewpoints; to enhance the interpretive provision; to improve the character and quality of the woodland and parkland through a more positive management regime; and to reduce the effects of littering and vandalism. There may be potential to achieve this through partnership between the co-owners of the site, the local community, the Scottish Wildlife Trust (who have their headquarters in Cramond House), and other interested parties.



*Litter, fly-tipping and neglect*



*Litter and misuse*

**ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE****Overall**

The combination of historical features, mature woodland and parkland planting, together with the location of the designed landscape in a visually prominent position on the south side of the Firth of Forth, gives the site a high regional value.

**Work of Art**

Little

**Historical**

Outstanding

**Horticultural / Arboricultural / Sylvicultural**

Some

**Architectural**

High

**Scenic**

Outstanding

**Nature Conservation**

High

**Archaeological**

Outstanding

**Recreational**

High

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NLS National Library of Scotland [www.nls.uk](http://www.nls.uk)

RMS Reg Mag Sig Register of the Great Seal of Scotland, Edinburgh

NMRS National Monuments Record of Scotland

SCRAN Scottish Cultural Resource Access Network [www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk)

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