

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee

Edinburgh 7 May 2014

Present:-

Representing the National Trust for Scotland – David Chamberlain and Kingsley Bruce (substituting for Christopher Cassells).

Representing the City of Edinburgh Council – Councillor Karen Keil and Norman Work.

In Attendance:- Nick Benge (Friends of Cammo), Marjorie Nail (Cramond Association), Peter Scott (Barnton and Cramond Community Council), Jenny Hargreaves (Acting Natural Heritage Manager, Services from Communities), Lesley Price (Estate Manager, City Development) and Blair Ritchie (Committee Services).

Apologies:- Christopher Cassels and Sinclair Williamson.

1. Chair

David Chamberlain of the National Trust for Scotland was appointed to the Chair.

2. Welcome

The Convener welcomed the new members from the Cramond Association, the Barnton and Cramond Community Council and the National Trust to the Advisory Committee.

2. Minute

Decision

The minute of the meeting of 15 January 2014 was approved as a correct record.

3. Cammo Estate Management Plan

The Acting Natural Heritage Manager gave a verbal update on the following issues:

3.1 Site Management:

- Weekly patrols were being carried out onsite (including a farmhouse check, car park checks, litter pick and site health and safety).
- Several more breaches at Cammo Home Farm were reported to the Estates Team and repaired.
- Heaters had been replaced at the Visitor Centre.
- There had been a report of youths with a fire and gun (for shooting rabbits), Lothian and Borders Police had been called and staff had cleared the small fire site the following day.

- There had been evidence of paintball gun use at the stables (central tower), debris had been cleared and paint reported to the CEC Specialist Services for removal.

3.2 Management Plan:

- All site works carried out had to be in accordance with the adopted Management Plan.

3.3 Volunteers:

- There was a Green Team of three adults and eight youths

3.4 Projects:

- The Meadows had been cut by SGM
- The Atlas Cedar had been monolithed and the spruce removed by CEC Forestry
- The replacement of tree protection in the Pinetum was underway.
- The Cut and Lift of North, South and Home Fields and West Park had taken place. No early cut had been pursued - the aim was to have a complete cut and lift in September/October of 2014.
- The Cammo Walk boundary fence costs was included within NHrS workplan.

3.5 Forthcoming activities:

- Costs were to be established for pineapples wall/sculptures
- On 15 May 2014, New Caledonian Woodlands and Lloyds Banking Groups' would hold a "Give and Gain Day". It was proposed that volunteers would improve the drainage and path condition between the car park and the south west corner.
- The Larch Tree Meadow chespaie fence removal was scheduled for the end of the nesting season.

The Convener indicated that this was a full programme.

Decision

To note the Natural Heritage Service Cammo Estate Officer's Report.

6. Interpretation of the Estate

The Advisory Committee had previously discussed the addition of Local Nature Reserve status to interpretation and the provision of feedback of the members' views on interpretation.

The Friends of Cammo indicated that they were keen to be involved in signage for interpretation and thought that there should be more emphasis on cultural aspects. It was explained that members had to send their comments on interpretation to the Natural Heritage Service, which would then be collated and costings could be made.

Discussion took place about the possible designation of Cammo as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). It was explained that this would be considered by the Transport and Environment Committee on 3 June and there would then be a public consultation.

It was reported that there were proposals to build on land adjacent to Cammo. If a significant number of houses were built, this would increase the number of people visiting the estate.

Discussion took place about possible LNR designation of this land, the use of the land near the tower, and the National Trust for Scotland registering an interest on plans for housing, in area.

Decision

- 1) That the Friends of Cammo contact the Senior Natural Heritage Officer about work on signage, to enhance interpretation.
- 2) That Councillor Keil forward information to Committee Services, on interpretation, for circulation.
- 3) That the National Trust investigate if they could express an interest on the planning application, for building near the tower, on the neighbouring estate.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 15 January 2014 (item 6.)

7. Cammo Home Farm

The Advisory Committee had previously discussed the proposed sale of the Home Farm.

The Estate Manager reported that the closing date for the submission of notes of interest for the sale of the Home Farm was 28 May 2014 and provided details of the number of notes of interest. It was hoped that the building would be restored. The conservation agreement would be safeguarded, as the National Trust for Scotland would have to give its consent to the application. Details were then provided of the process for dealing with the notes of interest and the timescales involved.

Discussion took place about the possible use of the land, the need to ensure a binding agreement, with the purchaser, and the use of the funds from the sale of the property. It was explained that funding was required for work which had to be carried out on the estate.

Decision

- 1) That the Estate Manager sends the details of the offers for the Home Farm to Committee Services, for circulation.
- 2) That the Estate Manager send the conservation agreement on the Home Farm with the plan of the estate to Committee Services, for circulation

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee January 2014 (item 7).

8. Any Other Business

8.1 Work Carried out on the Estate

It was reported that the Cramond Association was planning to tidy the woodlands around Cramond Kirk and would welcome advice from the Natural Heritage Service.

Discussion took place about the need to undertake work on the estate, such as on paths, and it was asked if this was part of the annual work program for the estate. It was explained that the Natural Heritage Service had a work plan, based on financial priorities. There were other sites which had to be considered and some of the work involved high spending. It was suggested that the work plan should be revised and clarified, on a yearly basis, to enable the local associations to coordinate their activities.

Decision

To note the position.

8.2 Friends of Cammo

The Friends of Cammo indicated that a large amount of work was being carried out by them, however, they would like to have more input in what work was allocated to them. They had, for example, an especial interest in environmental aspects. The Friends had a range of skills and resources, which could be utilised for the estate.

Decision

- 1) That the Friends of Cammo suggest to the Advisory Committee the type of work that they would want to be involved in and that this be considered by the Natural Heritage Service, which would provide a response.
- 2) That the work of the Friends of Cammo be included as a separate item on the agenda of the Advisory Committee.
- 3) That an additional item on nature conservation be included on the agenda.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 14 August 2014 at 11.00 am in the Cammo Lodge.