

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee

Edinburgh 25 March 2015

Present:-

Representing the National Trust for Scotland – David Chamberlain.

Representing the City of Edinburgh Council – Councillor Norman Work.

In Attendance:- Margery Naylor (Cramond Association), Peter Scott (Cramond and Barnton Community Council), Nick Bengé (Friends of Cammo), Keith Logie (Parks Development Manager), Jenny Hargreaves (Acting Natural Heritage Service Manager) and David Kyles (Natural Heritage Officer), (Services from Communities), Lesley Price (Estate Manager, City Development) and Blair Ritchie (Committee Services).

Apologies:- Councillor Keil and Christopher Cassells.

1. Minute

Decision

The minute of the meeting of 10 December 2014 was approved as a correct record.

2. Matters Arising

2.1 Meeting with National Trust

The Convener indicated that there had been a constructive meeting with the National Trust on the Estate on 23 January 2015. He suggested that the National Trust could provide useful advice for fund raising.

3. Cammo Home Farm

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

The Estate Manager gave an update on the proposed sale. She indicated that on 3 February, the Finance and Resources Committee instructed that, if the sale did not proceed, the Council should apply to Historic Scotland for the property to be de-listed before remarketing it for sale. This was being currently progressed by Estates.

Discussion took place about the de-listing process, the possible affect of this on the sale of the property and on green belt status. Further discussion took place on insurance issues, previous offers for Home Farm and the re-marketing of the property.

Decision

To note that the Advisory Committee approved of the action of Estates to prepare an application for de-lisiting the Home Farm.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 10 December 2014 (item 4).

4. Cammo Estate Management Plan

The Natural Heritage Officer gave a verbal update on the following aspects of the Cammo Estate Officers report:-

4.1 Site Management:

- Weekly patrols were being carried out onsite (including farmhouse checks, car park checks, litter picking and site health and safety).
- Two fire raising incidents: a stolen car was torched just on periphery of the car park in the crop field and fly-tipping was set alight in car park. There was no damage.
- There was large ash failure just outside the west perimeter wall. The failed stem was blocking the path, the remainder standing was to be felled due to instability. CEC Forestry undertook the work on 23/03/15.
- Heras fencing had been erected along an 8m section of the Walled Garden (WG) wall as detailed in recommendations from condition assessment by CEC Estates.
- Debris/blockage within Boughtlin Burn had been cleared.
- Car park – VC path had been scraped; GC wall path had been scraped – possible corporate group activity would take place to re-surface (to be confirmed).
- Redundant chespale fencing enclosures in Larch Tree Meadow had been removed.
- Willow had been harvested from canal banks.
- There had been liaison with the adjoining land owner regarding drainage problems at the car park. Preliminary work indicated a requirement for renewal of approximately 8-10m of drain pipe underneath the car park. This would be done through a land lease with full reinstatement specified, most likely (with) Glendinning Groundworks.
- There had been as site meeting with CEC West Neighbourhood Roads Officer and CEC Archaeologist regarding the possibility of installing a SUDS to deal with flooding on Cammo Road (around.34 Cammo Road) utilising the dry ditch. Full plans to be circulated.
- Comments had been received regarding irresponsible horse riders. The Natural Heritage officer would determine who they were and engage with them.

4.2 Nature Conservation:

- The South West Meadow and larch tree meadow had been cut and part lifted.

- The Friends of Cammo (FOC) bee project: there had been liaison regarding the installation of new fencing; clearance work had been undertaken under Tree Preservation Order exemption.
- Badger setts were regularly checked in terms of disturbance/activity.
- Butterfly surveying was completed for 2014 and records sent to BCT.
- Bee surveys did not take place 2014 due to lack of volunteer interest. Volunteers had been approached to undertake work this year.
- A pair of woodcock were spotted in the High Meadow.

4.3 Projects:

- ICONic tree project: a request had been made to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh for a replacement Chilean plum yew – awaiting tree.
- Work with FOC to develop the proposal for a heritage fruit tree establishment within the WG.
- Local Nature Reserve (LNR) designation – the Council was currently unable to pursue this, due to staffing levels.
- Implementation of CONFIRM – this was a new asset management software tool available to the Natural Heritage Service along with Roads, Waste and Specialist Grounds Maintenance. This would assess the site and accurately map all built and landscape features. Full implementation would streamline reporting mechanisms and provide a very accurate record of the current condition of all assets. More detail would follow at next the meeting of the Advisory Group.

4.4 Forthcoming activities:

- Costs were to be established for Pineapples Wall/Sculptures.
- Dropped limbs from standard trees within the Home and South Fields were to be cleared and removed to field marginal areas, retaining the formal element in line with designed landscape status – this was shelved until end of nesting season.
- The East Drive to be crown lifted to approximately 3-4metres to improve access – the works order had been raised with CEC Forestry and was more likely to be the end of the nesting season.
- Improve path surface towards the rear of the WG/GC wall.
- South Drive to be improved through the removal of overhanging/encroaching vegetation and condensing fallen tree debris into habitat piles. No chipping had been arranged. The contractor was Glendale. TPO exemption had been sought.
- The Mature Beech towards the north corner of the WG to be felled due to Meripilus.
- The Mature beech near GC boundary wall was to be reduced/made safer due to ganaderma.
- Hard standing at entrance points were to be treated with herbicide (as in the previous years).
- Historic Cammo guided walk would take place on 25/04/2015 10:00 – 12:30

Discussion took place and members made the following points:

- The possible replacement of the Cedar Tree should be considered.
- The Council forestry officers would only remove damaged Beech Trees if necessary, however, health and safety issues had to be considered.
- The Historic Cammo guided walk on 25 April would be advertised in the Events Brochure and on the Web Site.

- The Advisory Committee should have a good idea of what work was to be done in the next year.
- The Natural Heritage Service could produce a summary of the Work Plan and the associated costs, to help outline the work programme.
- A Work Plan was being compiled which would illustrate the relevant pieces of information.
- Actions carried out by the service were contained in the work plan.
- The Management Plan provided details of the work completed in each year.
- It was necessary to review and refresh the Management Plan, as there would be changes required, due to external influences.
- It would be useful for the voluntary groups to know the content of the work plan for the following years, as it would allow them to help.
- It was clear in the Work Plan element of the Management Plan what the service intended to do. There would be a midpoint review of the plan after five years.
- Not all the work carried out was in the Ten Year Plan, and this did not stop other activities from taking place.
- It would be possible to provide figures for the previous year and indicative costs for some items for revenue spending.
- Discussions should take place to establish a timeframe for funding application, with a possible application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).
- It was necessary to establish if an application for HLF should be made through the Council or the Friends of Cammo and to establish the constraints which would be imposed
- There were other potential sources of funding.
- It would be possible to direct corporate groups to certain tasks in some of the bigger projects.
- The service did have revenue funds for the cost of raw materials.

Decision

- 1) To note the report by the Natural Heritage Officer.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to liaise with the Friends of Cammo regarding the Significant Beech Tree on the estate, with a view to deciding how it should be treated.
- 3) The Acting Manager of the Natural Heritage Service to forward the Ten Year Management Plan to Committee Services to be circulated to the Advisory Committee.
- 4) The Convener to raise the issue of the Iconic Tree Project with the Botanic Gardens.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Officer's Report).

6. Interpretation of the Estate

At the previous meeting, members had discussed various aspects of Interpretation of the Estate. It was noted that a survey had taken place for the River Almond, involving the Cramond and Barnton Community Council.

It was then reported that the Senior Natural Heritage Officer was progressing Interpretation for 2015/16. Discussion took place and members made the following points:

- There was support for directional signage, however, there should be agreement on the quantity and type of interpretation that was required.
- Grants had been received for interpretation panels, but it was difficult to initiate new interpretation projects at this time.
- If there was support for proposals to develop a program, then funding could be made available, however, requirements had to be set out before an application could be made.
- The Advisory Committee had to decide on a vision for Cammo and on how interpretation fitted into the Ten Year Plan.
- It might be possible to put forward a lottery bid, however, it was necessary to first demonstrate the benefit to the community
- Interpretation was also present in the work plan.
- There was limited funding to pursue certain proposals and these should be put on hold until funding arrangements were more certain.
- Certain sources of funding were available to the Friends of Cammo, which were not available to the Council.

It was concluded that proper advice should be sought if there was to be bid for lottery funding. To develop the vision for Cammo, it was necessary to have discussions with all of the stakeholders and interested parties, with the Council taking the lead. It was also necessary to establish what funding was available. To progress this, the members should set out a process for discussing the vision, produce the necessary material and bring in specialist advice.

Decision

- 1) To add the future of the Cammo Estate as an item for the next meeting of the Advisory Committee.
- 2) To invite the Parks Development Manager to the next meeting of the Advisory Committee to provide advice on the future direction of Cammo.
- 3) The Parks Development Manager to report to the next meeting on the future of Cammo.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 10 December 2014 (item 3)).

7. Work of Friends of Cammo

The Friends of Cammo reported that they had received funding from the Almond Partnership and from the Airport for work on the estate. The work they had carried out included work on the Hedgerow, the top of the North Field and ongoing weeding of the wildflower. A quote had been requested by the Friends for Pear and Apple Trees. They also indicated that there would be a barbeque in August.

Decision

To note the positive contribution of the Friends of Cammo to the estate.

8. Nature Conservation

The Natural Heritage Officer reported on nature conservation. This included cutting in the South West Meadow and Larch Tree Meadow and planting. It was also necessary to deal with tree in the walled garden that was causing problems.

The Convener suggested that it might be possible to have a Bio Blitz, which could be used to raise public awareness about nature conservation.

Decision

The Natural Heritage Officer to discuss the possible planting of fruit trees and removal of brash and logs in the Walled Garden with the Friends of Cammo.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 26 June 2015 at 1.30 pm in the Cammo Lodge.