

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee

Edinburgh 16 December 2015

Present:-

Representing the National Trust for Scotland – David Chamberlain (Convener) and Christopher Cassels.

Representing the City of Edinburgh Council – Councillor Karen Keil.

In Attendance:- Peter Scott (Cramond and Barnton Community Council), Nick Bengel and Simon Gillam (Friends of Cammo), Keith Logie (Parks Development Manager), Lesley Price (Estates Manager), Jenny Hargreaves (Senior Natural Heritage Officer) and David Kyles (Natural Heritage Officer), (Services from Communities) and Blair Ritchie (Committee Services).

Apologies:- Councillor Work, Kingsley Bruce and Margery Naylor.

1. Minute

Decision

The minute of the meeting of 26 June 2015 was approved as a correct record.

2. Cammo Stables - Application to Purchase

The Estates Manager provided details on the proposed purchase of the Cammo Stables. She indicated that there had been an enquiry from a member of the public on this matter. One individual was interested in the purchase of the stables so that it could be restored and used for residential purposes.

Discussion took place and the representatives from the National Trust for Scotland (NTS), the Friends of Cammo and the Barnton and Cramond Community Council all indicated that they thought their organisations would oppose to the proposals. It was thought that the proposed purchase might mean a loss of the historical aspect of the estate. Additionally, if the NTS opposed the proposal, the conservation agreement itself would prevent the sale.

Decision

To note that the Advisory Committee was opposed to the proposed purchase of the Cammo Stables.

3. Cammo Home Farm

The Advisory Committee had previously considered the de-listing process for the Home Farm and the possible remarketing of the property.

The Estates Manager provided details on the progress on the sale of the Home Farm, indicating that there had been various offers, which were being considered.

A report to the Finance and Resources Committee on 2 February would recommend that the Council accept an offer which was not subject to planning consent but was subject to the approval of the NTS. Discussion took place about the process and timescale for the proposed sale of the Home Farm.

Decision

- 1) Committee Services to inform the members of the Advisory Committee when the Finance and Resources Committee report could be viewed on the Council's website and when the sale of Home Farm was agreed.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Service to dispose of the sheds and the oil tank near Home Farm.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 26 June 2015 (item 4).

4. A Vision for Cammo

The Parks Development Manager gave a presentation on a Vision for Cammo, which included the following:

- Issues
 - Features of Cammo were in decline.
 - West Edinburgh would change radically, with major developments.
- Challenges
 - Resources from the Council would diminish.
 - Deterioration of built heritage.
 - More visitors to the estate.
 - Tree disease with the possible loss of the Ash and Elm trees.
- Opportunities
 - Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).
 - The growing importance of Cammo, in the context of developments in Western Edinburgh.
 - Connectivity – the development of green transport corridors.
- The Options
 - Continue as present, with slow degradation of built heritage.
 - Restore Cammo, conserving key features of built heritage.
- Some Other Gardens
 - Corstorphine Hill Walled Garden.
 - Palace Stables in Armagh.

- Castlemilk in Glasgow.
- Next Steps
 - Have a public consultation about restoration.
 - Aim to understand how the public want to use Cammo in the changing context of West Edinburgh.
 - Appoint a consultant.
 - Group members to be involved in hosting a consultation.
- Beyond
 - Develop a stage 1 application to HLF.
 - Restore the Walled Garden.
 - Restore the Stable Block.
 - Restore and conserve the designed landscape as far as possible.

Discussion then took place and members raised the following points:

- There was an opportunity get match funding from HLF.
- Crowd funding might be an option.
- An individual would have to lead the project
- The Council would eventually have to play a central role.
- There was a group in Cramond who were experienced in this type of activity.
- It was necessary to involve people with the right experience.
- Volunteers and local groups should be involved.
- A consultation would be good idea, but it was necessary to reconcile different viewpoints.
- The way in which the Council carried out the consultation was important.
- There had to be parameters about conservation agreements.
- People needed to be informed about the consultation.
- It was necessary to retain the bio-diversity and wilderness aspect of the estate.

Decision

- 1) To thank the Parks Development Manager for his presentation.
- 2) To note that the Advisory Committee was supportive of a public consultation of the Vision for Cammo and the appointment of a consultant.
- 3) The Advisory Committee agreed with the proposal with the possibility of a Heritage Lottery Fund application being made.
- 4) A report on the proposals would be submitted to the Finance and Resources Committee by the Department of Services for Communities
- 5) The minute of the Advisory Committee to be submitted to the Finance and Resources Committee of 3 February, as an appendix.

5. Cammo Estate Management Plan

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

5.1 Site Management:

- Weekly patrols being carried out onsite (including farmhouse checks, car park checks, litter pick up and site health and safety). Breaches in fencing and boards had been reported to Estates for repair at farmhouse. Fly-tipping had been cleared from car park and from boundary on Cammo Road to the North West. Fly tipping was scheduled to be removed from yard area at farmhouse.
- Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) installation within Cammo Estate and associated works on Cammo Road were progressing: works comprised of road resurfacing and improved run-off/gully improvement and repairs to poor conditioned post and wire fence at north corner of North Field.
- Framework contract edge maintenance: there were 2 cuts undertaken on path edges, office/piggery treated with herbicide and the walled garden had been cut.
- Poor conditioned slab path had been removed outside the Visitor Centre (VC), timber post and rail installed, Mavisbank seed had been sown.
- Poor conditioned timber post and rail over Bughtlin Burn culvert had been replaced.
- Pinetum trees had been weeded and enclosures mulched.
- Canal willow had been cut back and large debris removed from the canal.
- Split and hung up tree over path from VC to car park – CEC Forestry had made safe.
- Impromptu dog waste bins had been removed.
- Graffiti had been removed from the Cammo House ruin by CEC Specialist Services using special chemicals, for use on listed structures, intended to be as sympathetic to the stone as possible.
- There had been NFU local officer engagement regarding access over agricultural fields in production towards the Tower/Mausley Hill.
- Green team conservation volunteers were removing redundant post and wire fencing towards the rear of the Pinetum.

5.2 Nature Conservation:

- Butterfly transects were being undertaken on Thursday's when the weather allowed.
- Support and preparation work had been given to Friends of Cammo (FoC) regarding fruit tree planting within the Walled Garden (WG).
- Evidence of Ash Dieback was widespread: this included Cammo and Corstorphine Hill. Trees and Woodlands Officers were monitoring this, with the most probable implementation of cut and burn.
- Home, South and North Fields and West Park had all been cut.
- 3 Roe Deer had been witnessed regularly in High/Low Meadow vicinity.

- The Owl/Raptor box was rotten and had fallen from supports in the shelter belt above the High Meadow: there was the possible Community Service Volunteering Application Earth Grants.

5.3 Projects:

- The implementation of CONFIRM was continuing – this was new asset management software. The service was continuing to update site asset information.
- State Street Corporate Volunteer Day – this included various tasks.
- Path Improvement works: A successful bid had been made for additional funding to formalise muddy path through the South West Meadow with type 1 and whindust; there had been scrape back path surface and clear associated drainage at SW corner, a scrape back and infill with type 1 any depressions and dust back path by GC wall; and the creation of a new path surface at wet point above canal leading to High/Low Meadows and the installation of culvert and pipe.

5.4 Forthcoming activities:

- Local Nature Reserve (LNR) designation – there had been an initial meeting held between Planning and senior officers within the Natural Heritage Service. Planning had managed to fill the vacant shared post of Biodiversity Officer starting in 06.10.15, however priorities and workload were currently unknown. A summary document would be produced detailing why the Council considered Cammo Estate to be declared a LNR, including formal statement of declaration. The period of consultation would be conducted for 30 days, utilising the consultation hub, local Neighbourhood Partnership and FoC. There would be a small display in the VC.
- A spare 2 tonnes of type 1 has been deposited outside the VC: this was to be laid and compacted on paths local to VC area.
- A percentage of emergent and overhanging vegetation was to be removed from the canal and canal edges: currently there were no corporate volunteers available.
- Dirty Weekenders path scraping day would possibly be in January 2016.
- SGM were to cut and lift SW Meadow and Larch Tree Meadow. This had been scheduled for late October/early November but was still to be done. This was a late timescale but was still worthwhile.
- Work with FoC members was ongoing to improve the Lodge appearance/facility.

Discussion took place on the application for LNR and Country Park status and the possible benefits for each of these for Cammo,

Decision

- 1) To note the report by the Natural Heritage Officer.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to progress the Local Nature Reserve Designation.

- 3) Committee Service to circulate the paper by the Regional Park Manager on the difference between Local Nature Reserve and Country Park status.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Officer's Report).

6. Interpretation of the Estate

At the previous meeting, consideration had been given to the future direction of Cammo in respect of Interpretation.

Details were provided on the Management Plan, which provided guidance and indicative costs. Reference was made to the Discussion Paper on Interpretation by the Cramond and Barnton Community Council, which focussed on current provision and management plan proposals, initial ideas for on-site Interpretation and possible next steps to be considered.

Discussion took place on the role of Interpretation in the HLF bid, the need for staff resources and the possible creation of a small working group. It was explained that the group could foster a planned approach and would include the Cramond and Barnton Community Council and the Friends of Cammo. Further discussion took place on different methods of promoting interpretation, such as QR Codes, websites, local newspapers and local churches.

Decision

- 1) To note the update.
- 2) To set up a working group to develop Interpretation on the estate, to be chaired by the representative of the Barnton and Cramond Community Council.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 26 June 2015 (item 6)).

7. Work of Friends of Cammo

The Friends of Cammo indicated that they had a new chairperson. They also thanked the Natural Heritage Officer for keeping them informed of work which was being carried out on the estate.

It was reported that the work undertaken by the Friends included mulching of trees, treating fields and cutting wildflower. They had also had been able to get a price for cleaning the canal

Decision

To note the ongoing work of the Friends of Cammo and to thank them for the work they carried out on the estate, especially for their work on the canal.

8. Nature Conservation

The Natural Heritage Officer reported on nature conservation. This included Butterfly Transects which were being undertaken, fruit tree planting within the Walled Garden, and evidence of Ash Dieback and the proposed treatment for this. Additionally, the Home, South and North Fields and West Park had been cut, three Roe Deer had been witnessed and the Owl/Raptor box had fallen from supports above the High Meadow.

Some discussion took place regarding the best method for the disposal of diseased trees

Decision

To note the ongoing work on nature conservation.

9. Walls Condition Survey

It was reported that a walls condition survey had taken place which was part of a city wide Parks and Greenspace programme and that it had been established that there was a decline in the condition of the walls on the estate. In some areas Herras fencing had been erected, however, significant funding was required as these were historic walls.

Discussion took place on the date when the repairs should take place and the need for work on the pineapple sculptures.

Decision

- 1) The Natural Heritage Officer to liaise with the Parks and Greenspace Manager to establish timescales for priority works.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to arrange for repairs to the pineapple structures.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 6 April 2016 at 2.00 pm in the Cammo Lodge.