

Minutes

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee

Edinburgh 3 August 2016

Present:-

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

Representing the City of Edinburgh Council – Councillor Norman Work.

In Attendance:- Peter Scott (Cramond and Barnton Community Council), Nick Bengue and Simon Gillam (Friends of Cammo), Georgina Wiley (substituting for Margery Naylor, Cramond Association), David Kyles (Natural Heritage Officer), (Services from Communities) and Blair Ritchie (Committee Services).

Apologies:- Councillor Keil, Christopher Cassells, Margery Naylor, Susan Craig and Jenny Hargreaves.

1. Minute

1.1 Cammo Estate Advisory Committee of 6 April 2016

Decision

To approve the minute as a correct record, subject to the amendments detailed in the Appendix to this minute.

2. Matters Arising

Item 4 - A Vision for Cammo

The Convener indicated that he would liaise with the National Trust for Scotland to take action in respect of certain aspects of the Vision for Cammo such as landscape and the hard structure.

3. Review of Service

The Natural Heritage Officer provided an update on the review of the Natural Heritage Service.

The Natural Heritage and Forestry Service had been established. Details were provided of the new structure which included the creation of some posts and the removal of others, the arrangements for servicing of the Regional Park, management of the parks within the City and the support which would be provided from the Estates

Team. Re allocation of site responsibility would occur, no later than the end of the year and the Senior Trees and Woodlands Officer would become involved with larger aspects of site management in the future.

It was confirmed that there would continue to be immediate emergency cover to Cammo regarding forestry work. The new simplified management structure, should facilitate a more structured pattern of work, better decision making and greater flexibility for Natural Heritage Officers.

Decision

To note the new structure.

4. Cammo Home Farm

The Advisory Committee had previously considered, amongst other matters, the progress being made on the sale of the Home Farm and consultation with the National Trust.

Discussion took place about a planning application for Cammo Road, the need to wait for the planning agreement to be finalised and to wait for comments from the National Trust.

Decision

- 1) The Natural Heritage Officer to forward the link to the planning application to Committee Services for circulation.
- 2) Committee Services to liaise with the Estates Manager and ask if there was anything to report for future meetings on the sale of the Home Farm.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 16 December 2015 (item 3).

5. Cammo Estate Management Plan

The Natural Heritage Officer provided a brief update on the Cammo Estate Management Plan and thanked everyone for providing comments on the plan. The Senior Natural Heritage Officer was compiling the New Management Plan for the next meeting of the Advisory Committee and she would bring an updated Management Plan to the next meeting of the Advisory Committee.

In respect of Local Nature Reserve (LNR) Declaration, a consultation took place in June to determine opinion on the merits of declaring Cammo Estate a LNR. The vast majority of the formal responses were in favour of the proposal. A summary of the main responses would be provided to Scottish Natural Heritage for acknowledgement and to Planning to report to the Transport and Infrastructure Committee on 1 November 2016.

Discussion took place in respect of the Management Plan and the following issues were raised:

- It was necessary to get the views of the National Trust on LNR and the Senior Natural Heritage Officer would hopefully have received comments from the National Trust for Scotland on this.
- The Chair had discussed the matter with the appropriate senior officer of the National Trust, especially in respect of issues with the exterior features.
- The comments on the Draft Management Plan were positive.
- The Draft Management Plan should be discussed at the next meeting in depth as this was the midpoint in the Ten Year Management Plan.
- The Work Plan was being reviewed at the same time as the Management Plan.
- The National Trust for Scotland could still make comments on the Plan, if these were done quickly.
- The Fungus Society of Scotland would carry out a free fungal study, if necessary.
- The policies for disabled people should be strengthened.
- The removal of vegetation was not generally encouraged by the Friends of Cammo, however, if there were positive reasons for this, such as the promotion of allotments, then this could be discussed.

Further discussion took place regarding Local Nature Reserve Status and the following points were made:

- Only one Management Plan was needed to satisfy the requirements of a Local Nature Reserve Management Plan.
- The same LNR regulations for dog walkers would apply as in the National Code for Scotland and it would not restrict the activities of professional dog walkers.
- There were over 100 dog walkers signed up, to walk their dogs on Corstorphine Hill.
- Commercial dog walkers did not pay for using the estate and they were difficult to manage.
- Regarding the possible regulation of commercial dog walkers, this was a national issue, which would require legislation at this level.

5.1 Cammo Canal Maintenance.

Following the Friends of Cammo's successful bid for money to improve the canal, an archaeology specialist had been appointed to undertake core sampling along the length of the canal to determine silt depth and substrate. Once it had been determined, the methodology for silt and debris removal would be included in an application for Scheduled Ancient Monument consent to Historic Environment Scotland. Overhanging, encroaching and poorly formed trees within 5 metres of the canal banks would be either removed or crown lifted. An assessment and recording of wall and bank condition would be made. It was necessary to satisfy Historic Scotland that there was not much damage.

Discussion took place and the following points were made:

- Historic Scotland would check the condition of the canal walls, when the work was completed.
- The team leader from Forestry Squad would mark the trees on the bank of the canal with a view to removing poorly formed trees overhanging it.
- Possible damage to the bank by tree roots would be recorded.
- Once the work on the canal was completed, a groundwork company would come on site at the end of August or beginning of September.
- The company would remove everything from the canal. The canal was drained at the moment.
- The tree-work had to be completed before the company came on site.
- Other factors to be considered was that there had to be a 20 metre buffer for scheduled ancient monuments, which meant 5 metres on either side of the canal.

5.2 Site Management

- Fire and alcohol debris had been encountered and cleared on a few occasions.
- Damage had been done to the Western Boundary Wall with a neighbouring Golf Club.
- Three pineapple sculptures had been removed from supports and rolled into fire. They were now recovered to Head Quarters, jet washed and would be reattached with a longer spike.
- The seat in front of the house had been moved into the woodland, the seat at the canal was now rotten and unusable. Timber had been identified at Corstorphine Hill storage yard, to be milled and secured in place at the house and canal, within the next few weeks.
- Orienteering controls had been vandalised, two had been replaced, further damage had been encountered and required replacement. One control had been relocated slightly further away from a badger sett.
- There had been reports of shooting within the estate in the evenings. Any pest control undertaken in adjacent land had been done under license with contact details for licensed pest control given to Police Scotland. Many cleared fire sites had contained multiple aerosol cans which have exploded, this may have constituted some of the recent "loud bangs" encountered within the Estate.
- Single grounds maintenance cut had been undertaken by estate staff. No Framework contractor was available this year. The taskforce continued to cut formal areas. Further path edge maintenance was scheduled for 4 August 2016.

5.3 Projects

- Cammo Road carriageway improvements had been completed. Some 160 metres of poorly conditioned post and wire fence replaced from Cammo Home Farm top access gate to the start of hedge heading west. A self closing gate was to be installed at a later date.
- Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society were interested in conducting some work within Cammo Estate.

- There had been a meeting with the adjoining landowner, regarding access to the Tower area and Mausley Hill and damage to crops. There had been permission to place signs advocating responsible access on boundary and on private land if desired. He was agreeable to planting up marginal area at boundary with hedgerow trees.
- Regarding the capital receipt, the long term vision for Cammo Estate and possibility of Heritage Lottery Funding to be discussed once the transformation was concluded.

Decision

- 1) The Natural Heritage Officer to contact the Convener regarding the receipt of comments from the National Trust on the Management Plan.
- 2) The Senior Natural Heritage Officer to bring an updated Management Plan to the next meeting of the Advisory Committee.
- 3) The Natural Heritage Officer to liaise with the Senior Natural Heritage Officer about the need to consider the Work Plan in detail.
- 4) To note that the next meeting of the Advisory Committee should be dedicated to discussing the Management Plan and the Work Plan.
- 5) The Convener to send a copy of the Management Plan to the relevant officer in the National Trust for comments.
- 6) The Natural Heritage Officer to compile a summary of the themes of the responses and submit them to the Scottish Natural Heritage. A report would then be submitted to the Transport and Infrastructure Committee on 1 November 2016.

6. Interpretation of the Estate

At the previous meeting, it had been agreed that the representative of the Barnton and Cramond Community Council would contact the National Trust to provide details of the next meeting of the Working Group and a member of the Trust to attend the meeting.

The representative of the Barnton and Cramond Community Council indicated that there had been a useful meeting with the Heritage Service and the Friends of Cammo to discuss interpretation boards. It was reported that the proposed text on the board had to be checked for veracity and context and finalised. There were four illustrations, including a 1795 house and an 1860's house. There was a bid for funding for this, which would be subject of Friends of Cammo approval.

The representative from the Friends of Cammo indicated that funding options had not been discussed yet. He outlined other items which might be added to the bid, the amount of funding which should be requested, and the possible requirement to have seating for disabled people outside the panel. The Senior Natural Heritage Officer would provide estimates for the cost of the various components. The first priority was to go to the Friends of Cammo and put in the bid. There had been some success for

funding in the past. This included the Neighbourhood Partnership and from the Post Code Lottery.

Discussion took place about the need to prioritise interpretation boards, the bid which was being considered and interpretation for the House.

Decision

The representative of the Barnton and Cramond Community Council to bring back a draft and an illustration of the proposals for the interpretation boards to the next meeting of the Advisory Committee.

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

7. Work of Friends of Cammo

The representative of the Friends of Cammo informed the Advisory Committee of the work which was being carried out on the estate. This included the following:

- The bees in the top of the North Field were doing well.
- The Friends had received post lottery funding and a groundwork company would dredge the pond, which was now drained. Two archaeologists would try to “core” the pond.
- The Friends of Cammo Barbeque which would take place on 14 August had been advertised widely and it was hoped that there would be a good attendance.

7.1 Vision for Cammo

The Friends indicated that they were seeking endorsement for the Vision for Cammo, from the Advisory Committee. There had been discussions on this at the local community council meeting in September.

Discussion took place and the following points were made:

- This was an interesting document, some of which was covered in the Management Plan, however, the Vision looked promising.
- The Advisory Committee might endorse the Vision, if it interacted well with the Management Plan.
- There should be focus on what needed to be done.
- The Advisory Committee should be helping to set priorities for the Estate.

Decision

- 1) To note the ongoing work of the Friends of Cammo and to thank them for the work they carried out on the estate.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to liaise with the Senior Natural Heritage Officer and suggest that she should take account of the Vision for Cammo, when finalising the Management Plan.

- 3) The Heritage Lottery Fund bid should be standing item on the agenda and there should be a meeting dedicated to the Heritage Lottery Funding bid, possibly in the New Year.
- 4) The new Service Manager and the Senior Trees and Woodland Officer should be invited to the next two meetings of the Advisory Committee.

8. Nature Conservation

The Natural Heritage Officer reported on nature conservation. He indicated the following:

- Honey bees had arrived.
- Butterfly surveying was taking place with surprisingly poor results, possibly because of weather.
- A juvenile buzzard had been handed to a member of staff, returned to the original location as it would be the best way to hope that the parents would find it.
- Diversity and burst of colour within the wildflower areas and meadows was stunning. An example which was to be replicated as much as possible. The Edinburgh Natural History Society greatly enjoyed a recent outing to the site.
- Canal improvements.
- Badgers were very active.
- A herd of Roe Deer had been sighted.

Discussion took place regarding the de-oxygenation of the canal, due to the accumulation of organic matter and the need to reverse this. There was further discussion in relation to barn owls and the issue of grass cutting.

Decision

- 1) To note the ongoing work on nature conservation.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to liaise with the grass cutter, regarding the cutting of the fields.

9. Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed.

Appendix

Work of the Friends of Cammo

The amendment of sentence 2 in line 2 of page 5 to read “This included moving plum trees...”.

The amendment of line 10 of page 5 to read: “Regarding the volunteers on the canal project, there might be scope to clear some vegetation near the canal...”