

Minutes

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee

Edinburgh 4 November 2016

Present:-

Representing the National Trust for Scotland – Christopher Cassels (In the Chair)

Representing the City of Edinburgh Council – Councillors Keil and Work.

In Attendance:- Peter Scott (Cramond and Barnton Community Council), Simon Gillam (Friends of Cammo), Margery Naylor (Cramond Association), Steven Webley (Forestry and Natural Heritage Manager), David Kyles (Natural Heritage Officer), (Services from Communities) and Blair Ritchie (Committee Services).

Apologies:- David Chamberlain, and Jenny Hargreaves.

1. Chair

In the absence of the Convener, Christopher Cassels of the National Trust was appointed to the Chair.

2. Minute

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee of 3 August 2016.

Decision

To approve the minute as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

Item 5 – Vision Statement

It was reported that there had been nothing submitted from the Friends of Cammo on the Vision Statement.

4. Review of Service

The Forestry and Natural Heritage Manager provided an update on the review of the Natural Heritage Service.

He indicated that the Forestry and Natural Heritage Service (FNH) was now operating across the distinctive areas within the city, North, South and Pentlands. Cammo Estate

lay within the North area and would be managed by full-time two Natural Heritage Officers and a part-time Senior Natural Heritage Officer. Office space at Cammo Lodge would be utilised more often with the team based more locally at Inverleith Farmhouse in Inverleith Park. An Estates Team had also been established to assist with general estate maintenance in the Natural Heritage Sites across Edinburgh.

It was explained that if there was a need to contact the service in the event of an emergency, there would still be a seven day service from the Hermitage of Braid. The present system would continue. Additionally, there would be an emergency tree squad to carry out tree work.

Decision

To note the Review of the Service.

5. Cammo Home Farm

The Advisory Committee had previously considered the sale of the Home Farm. It was explained that there was nothing further to report on the sale of the Home Farm from Estates.

The Natural Heritage Officer indicated that FNH has been actively engaging with the new owners of Cammo Home Farm regarding access provision and additional work associated with the removal of the three trailers and diesel tank situated at the bottom of Home Field. Tree works should be concluded within seven days and demolition was due to be completed in four weeks time.

Discussion took place on the granting of planning permission, the receipt of money from the sale of the Home Farm, ring-fencing of funding, and the Edinburgh Fund.

Decision

- 1) The Forestry and Natural Heritage Manager to confirm the amount of funding available for Cammo, from the sale of the Home Farm.
- 2) The representative from the National Trust to check out the status of the Edinburgh Fund.
- 3) Committee Services to check out the status of the Edinburgh Fund from the previous minutes.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 3 August 2016 (item 4).

6. Cammo Estate Management Plan

The Natural Heritage Officer gave an update on the Cammo Estate Management Plan.

6.1 Estate Management Plan

The Natural Heritage Officer thanked the members for sending their comments. All comments had been considered and some of these had been incorporated into the

current Management Plan. The Work Plan element has been brought up to date with current actions.

It became apparent through considering the many comments received, that major changes and omissions to the document were put forward. When the document had been drafted, there had been consultation. Opportunity for major changes would have been more appropriate at that time or when a new plan was to be formulated. There were also completed actions, which had been measured against some of the prescriptions indicated for removal.

It was agreed that some kind of landscape development plan should be produced to include future objectives/suggestions that might not necessarily be included in the current management plan. It would then be hoped that the draft landscape plan could be used as a basis for Heritage Lottery funding to then be further developed as part of the bid's first phase.

6.2 Local Nature Reserve Declaration

The Transport and Environment Committee, which met on 1 November 2016, supported the declaration of Cammo Estate as a Local Nature Reserve. The declaration notice once signed off by the Executive Director of Place would be displayed at Waverley Court, Drumbrae Hub, Cammo Lodge, and advertised on various websites for a period of 30 days. Thereafter Cammo Estate would become Cammo Estate Local Nature Reserve.

6.3 Cammo Canal

The Friends of Cammo (FoC) successfully bid for Postcode Lottery funding to use to enhance the canal. As the canal was a Scheduled Ancient Monument, Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) was required for the work to be undertaken. This process, alongside Tree Preservation Order exemption, was time consuming. SMC has been approved with various conditions: firstly the full spec for ramped access was to be sent through to Historic Environment Scotland and secondly, a watching brief was required throughout the duration of canal silt removal. An initial survey undertaken by Headland Archaeology indicated an approximate depth of 75cm of silt was safe to remove along with all the debris.

Discussion took place and the following points were made:

- There were some amendments required in Management Plan(MP), however, the major changes to the text would not be implemented yet.
- Consultation on grazing had taken place, but there were other issues to consider, such as water supply and the proposed housing development of 3000 houses.
- One long term objective was to manage the estate more effectively.
- Professional dog walkers were concerned because grazing would affect their business as dogs and cattle did not mix well.
- There was concern about grazing, because of modern uses of the site and the large number of people who wanted to walk round the fields.

- It would be possible to reconsider grazing, but the overall view was negative.
- At Cramond, once cattle were allowed to graze in the field, then people would not use the field.
- It was necessary to keep the historic feature, now that the house was gone. Over time, there had been different uses of the site and it might not be desirable to revert to grazing, now that the landscape had changed.
- It would be beneficial to see grassland used productively, but many people used the land differently and it was necessary to take this into account.
- It was hoped to generate income and save money by not cutting the grass, but there would be costs involved to erect a fence to enclose cattle.
- It might be advantageous to propose various options, have a consultation and then come to a decision.
- The funds from the capital receipt could not be used for routine site maintenance.
- There was only three years of the plan to run. There would probably be no fencing in the next three years, but this might be considered at a later date.
- Any deficiencies in the recreational aspect of the MP had been included in the comments.

The Natural Heritage Officer then presented the Ranger Report.

6.4 Site Management

- The damage to a height restriction barrier and an adjacent wall at entrance to the car park had all been fixed.
- Subsequent damage: the birds mouth fencing round the car park had been hit by a stolen car (now fixed), the field gate at the car park has been smashed open (new gate and posts had been ordered through Inverleith Workshops), the car was then driven to the new raised area of path at the South West corner of the site and set alight. The new raised path had been damaged and mature oaks had been scorched. The car was recovered roadside and uplifted by Taskforce.
- Lodge gutters had been cleared.
- Price attained from DK Smith stonemason to re-attach Pinetum wall sculptures with longer dowels to prevent removal. There had been some minor re-pointing of internal wall at Cammo House where some damage to stonework had occurred due to people picking off and removing stone and mortar.
- Benches in front of the house and canal had been replaced with some large pieces of Swedish Whitebeam, milled on the upper surface to form a flat seat, pinned in place to prevent movement.

- Works order had been raised to replace the timber sleeper steps at Cammo House.
- Pinetum tree enclosures had been weeded and mulched.
- East Drive – some overhanging/encroaching vegetation had been cut back.
- Trees in Home and North Field had been assessed for structural integrity. Actions to re-route informal desired paths to prolong the life of the trees were to be implemented

6.5 Projects/Events

- Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society (EAFS) met with FNH and the City Archaeologist regarding the possibility of using Cammo Estate as a focal point for archaeological investigations through 2017 – the Year of Archaeology. FNH looked at the important features within the site, EAFS members were due to come back over December/January and form a project brief detailing areas of the site in which they had a particular interest or saw potential.
- Scottish Ballet had been using the site on various occasions over the period Sept – Nov, the last dates were 29/11 and 01/12 where filming would take place. Gorgie Mills Special School were the benefactors of this.
- City of Edinburgh Community Access to Schools within the Community Education team had been undertaking various environmental activities within the site
- The Green Team's Green Shoots programme had been using the site undertaking various low-key conservation tasks
- Past to the Future Paranormal, a newly established ghost hunting group had held several sessions during the night in various locations throughout the Estate with supposed "interesting results".
- The Friends of Cammo Barbeque had been a "roaring success".

In response to question, it was confirmed that the 75 cm of silt from the canal would be deposited in the Low Meadows.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to forward the Work Plan and Management Plan to Committee Services for circulation.

6.6 Events at Cammo

The Forestry and Natural Heritage Manager raised the issue of possible events being held at Cammo to raise income.

Discussion took place and it was confirmed that there had been some events, such as small scale theatrical productions and a Superdog event. It was thought that park management, and the lack of infrastructure and personnel might be obstacles to this.

7. Interpretation of the Estate

At the previous meeting, it had been agreed that the representative of the Barnton and Cramond Community Council bring back a draft and an illustration of the proposals for the interpretation boards

The draft and an illustration of the proposals for the interpretation panel were circulated. It was proposed to first use illustration A first (Cammo House from 1794 painting), then illustration C (Cammo House from 1910 painting), then illustration D (Cammo House and canal from 1900) and finally, E (Cammo House after 1977 fires and before demolition).

It was explained that the Friends had applied to Edinburgh Airport for a funding bid. They had also applied for a grant for a covered bench and for another interpretation board for the hedgerows, but the top priority would be the Interpretation Panel.

Decision

Members to send comments about the panels/wording to the representative of the Barnton and Cramond Community Council as soon as possible.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 4 August 2016 (item 6)).

8. 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.

The representative of the Friends reported that there had been a successful barbeque, with about 300 people in attendance. There had been activities such as an environmental work session and there would be litter picking. There had also been a grant for canal work, planting trees and hedgerows. Additionally, it might be possible for Cammo to meet the criteria for the Open Space Standard in future.

Concern was expressed about possible housing development at Turnhouse Road which could have a detrimental effect the estate. There would be an increase in the volume of traffic and the views for the estate could be adversely affected.

Decision

Committee Services to check out if the Advisory Committee could make comment on developments near the estate.

9. Nature Conservation

The Natural Heritage Officer reported on nature conservation. He indicated that there had been monitoring of badger activity on other sites and there had been a considerable amount of this activity on the Estate.

- Honey bees were very active earlier in the week
- Badgers were very active
- The Home Field, North Field, South Field and West Park were all cut by an external contractor.
- The South West Meadow and Larch Tree Meadow had been cut by the Estates Team

Decision

To note the ongoing work on nature conservation.

10. Natural Heritage Lottery Fund Bid

The Natural Heritage Officer reported on progress on the Natural Heritage Lottery Fund Bid. He indicated that it was necessary to produce a landscape design plan.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 10 February 2016 at 1.00 pm in the Cammo Lodge.