

Minutes

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee

Edinburgh 10 February 2017

Present:-

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

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

In Attendance:- Peter Scott (Cramond and Barnton Community Council), Nick Benge and Simon Gillam (Friends of Cammo), David Kyles (Natural Heritage Officer), (Services from Communities) and Blair Ritchie (Committee Services).

Apologies:- Margery Naylor

1. Minute

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee of 4 November 2016.

Decision

To approve the minute as a correct record.

2. Matters Arising

Item 2.2 – Cammo Home Farm (item 5)

The Convener reported that there had been a lack of communication from the National Trust regarding the sale of the Home Farm. They needed to be made aware of this.

Additionally, it might be beneficial if the National Trust was made aware of the Heritage Lottery Fund bid.

Decision

- 1) The Convener to liaise with the National Trust regarding the sale of the Home Farm.
- 2) The Convener to ask for note about the Edinburgh Fund which was received from the Sale of the House.

Item 2.3 – Work of the Friends of Cammo (item 8)

It was confirmed by Committee Services that the business of the Advisory Committee was confined to the estate itself.

Discussion took place and it was thought that the substantial external development at West Craigs Road would impact on this estate, as this was a special landscape area and would affect the views of Cammo.

The Convener suggested that if they were minded, people should object to the proposed development as it would adversely effect the historical aspect of the estate, as well as its design landscape and special landscape area.

Decision

- 1) The Convener to check out the Edinburgh Fund to clarify the source and purpose of the fund.
- 2) To note that in view of the environmental impact on the estate, the five community groups represented and the National Trust would have the opportunity to put in their objections to the pre-application report (16/05742) for the proposed development at West Craigs Road.

3. Review of Service

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

He outlined the new structure of the service, the staff who were in place and his own duties. This would affect Cammo as tiers of management had been removed and there were more staff on the ground.

Decision

To note the Review of the Service.

4. Cammo Home Farm

The Advisory Committee had previously considered the sale of the Home Farm.

The Natural Heritage Officer confirmed that there had been no further communication with the new owners.

The representative from the National Trust indicated that the new house on the estate would have a substantial footprint, however, he hoped that this would not cause an excessive impact on the views or on the environment at Cammo. A planning condition had been imposed specifying that there should be no trees or bushes removed.

Discussion took place on the need to protect the trees and for screening and planting round the new house and for screening of sections of the fence round the land for the new house.

The National Trust indicated that there was a limit to what could be done. It would be possible to take action, but it was necessary to know of any concerns. It was explained that the Heritage Service had a strong say in screening.

Further discussion took place about identifying the person responsible for the fence along the road, the need for a tree plan, landscaping issues and for liaison with the new owner. It was explained that the developer was different from private developers and it might be beneficial to arrange a formal meeting with them, the owner, the FOC and the community councils.

Decision

- 1) The National Trust to check out the new development.
 - 2) Members of the Advisory Committee to send their comments about the new house to Bruce Kingsley in the National Trust.
 - 3) The FOC to send e-mail to the Convener regarding the developer's care of the trees round the new house.
 - 4) The Natural Heritage Officer to liaise with the developer and ask about their intentions regarding screening of the new house.
 - 5) The FOC to liaise with the developer to express their concerns.
 - 6) The Natural Heritage Officer to send contact details of the developer to the FOC.
- (Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 4 November 2016 (item 5).

5. Cammo Estate Management Plan

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

5.1 Cammo Estate Management

- Local Nature Reserve (LNR): from 28 December 2016 Cammo Estate had been declared a Local Nature Reserve. Threshold signage, display posters and website references were to be updated to reflect the new status. An article was to be produced for the next edition of Scottish Natural Heritage's LNR Bulletin. International Biodiversity Day is Monday 22/05/17 and could provide a platform to hold a low-key celebratory event highlighting LNR status; possibly a rep from Scottish Natural Heritage, Butterfly Conservation activity, FoC, National Trust representative, local elected members, a gentle walk with some communications being circulated thereafter, detailing/highlighting the day and local press involvement.
- Steps to the house had been refurbished.
- Capping and repointing undertaken to Cammo House.
- 3 pinetum wall sculptures had been re-attached after vandalism incident.
- Mature beech had been located between the canal and walled garden, suffering from previous limb failure and found to be compromised structurally – it was felled.

- The old diesel tank and trailers (in hedgerow above Cammo Home Farm) had been removed from site.

5.2 General - Projects/Events/Enquiries

- Cammo Canal – the project was almost complete: selected trees and vegetation had been cleared from the immediate vicinity, silt and debris had been removed and spread on the Low Meadow, stone wall failures had been documented and stone recovered where possible, the archaeological brief kept with reporting would be forthcoming. The project was funded through Friends of Cammo (FoC) Postcode Lottery grant supported by Forestry Natural Heritage (FNH). Works order raised with the Estates Squad to clear remaining stone, logs and old infrastructure from the vicinity. Seeding of banking had been scheduled. The Reintroduction of rarer aquatic plants and wildlife had been scheduled.
- The Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society (EAFS) was to produce a brief of proposed activities for the Year of Archaeology – there would be a meeting on 19.02.17 to further develop ideas, with the FoC supporting.
- Edinburgh South Orienteering Club (ESOC) events were held on 14/01/17 and 05/02/17. This was very successful, well attended and there had been no reported issues.
- The Green Team scheduled for low key conservation activities in March.
- The “Dirty Weekenders” (Edinburgh University Conservation Students) were scheduled for 26/02/17 to repair damage to paths caused by heavy plant, associated with tree works and canal rejuvenation.
- There had been several enquiries regarding Cammo Lodge: this included use by nursery; use for art classes, use for food outlet/coffee shop – CEC Estates were to discuss possibilities and look at compiling a lease document.
- There had been an enquiry regarding replicating something similar, (but smaller in scale) to the Enchanted Forest at Pitlochry – a site meeting had been arranged.
- There had been an enquiry locally regarding wood carving producing sculptures from wood available at Cammo to then be installed on site – a site meeting had been suggested.
- A Paranormal Activity Group had again been scheduled for 19/02/17 – there had been still no results submitted from them yet.

Discussion took place on the work that had been done on the canal, the amount of space cleared, possible constraints for replicating the enchanted forest at Cammo, the type of wood available for producing sculptures and issues involved in the use of the lodge. There was further discussion about the possible allocation of funding for a fence from the visitor centre to the car park, the necessary road works/restrictions, and how the funding would be allocated for this.

5.3 Paths on the Estate

The Natural Heritage Officer said that there were concerns about the state of the paths, however, this was not a priority and there was a lack of funding to address this.

However, there were volunteers to help scrape the paths and there was a machine which could help with this. At some point this might form part of the HLF bid.

Discussion took place and it was suggested that when people were in the country, they expected to see muddy conditions. Additionally, thanks to social media, Cammo was more heavily used at the weekend than previously, which probably contributed to the state of the paths.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) The National Trust to note that this was the Year of Archaeology.
- 3) The Natural Heritage Officer to contact the Locality Roads Team, to check if they could help fix the fence and to seek funding
- 4) Councillor Work to raise the issue at the Almond Neighbourhood Partnership to obtain funding for roads and fencing in part funding.
- 6) The Natural Heritage Officer to monitor the state of the paths.

6. Interpretation of the Estate

At the previous meeting, it had been agreed that members should send comments about the interpretation panels/wording to the representative of the Barnton and Cramond Community Council as soon as possible.

The FOC reported that although two of the panels had been approved, the FOC were unsuccessful in their bid to Edinburgh Airport for funding for £3700, covering design of a Cammo House interpretation panel, production as a lectern panel, a carved bench and production of hedgerow panel. It was now necessary to consider other funding options. Some of it could be funded, perhaps as part of a larger project, from the money received from the sale of Cammo Home Farm.

He then explained how the shortfall in the funding might be met, such as from Crowd Funding Scotland, ring fencing of Home Farm funds and applying to the Neighbourhood Partnership for match funding,

Decision

To thank the Interpretation Working Group for their work and to hope that they continued to proceed with the interpretation panels.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 4 November 2016 (item 7)).

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.

He reported that over 200 small-leaved lime and other species, and shrubs were planted by volunteers to fill a gap between two woodland blocks, beyond the ridge above Home Field. This route was often used by deer, therefore, the planting would require deer guards. Additionally, the inside of the lodge had been painted and cleaned by the FOC and the electrics had been fixed.

Additionally, Harry Taylor, who was formally a member of the Advisory Committee, was stepping down from the FOC.

Decision

- 1) To thank the Friends of Cammo for their ongoing work on the estate.
- 2) The Convener to send a letter to Harry Taylor, who was resigning from the Friends of Cammo, wishing him well.

8. Nature Conservation

The Natural Heritage Officer reported on nature conservation. He indicated that Dutch Elm diseased trees had been felled and removed/chipped, there had been canal improvements, there were plans to restrict access under two “over” mature oak trees in Home and North Fields due to “Meripilus Gigantaeous” rather than them being felled/removed, through barriers and signage. Additionally, the FoC Postcode Lottery funded tree planting in corner of West Park had been completed.

In respect of the walled garden, it was reported that the walls were crumbling.

Decision

- 1) The Natural Heritage Officer to put up barriers and signage to inform members of the public about the two mature Oak Trees in the Home and North Fields and to restrict access.
- 2) The Friends of Cammo to e-mail their members explaining the restrictions.

9. Natural Heritage Lottery Fund Bid

The Natural Heritage Officer reported on progress on the Natural Heritage Lottery Fund Bid. He indicated that there had been a meeting on 19 January, instigated by FoC with Heritage Lottery Officers employed by the Council on the Saughton Park (HLF funded) project, Forestry and Natural Heritage staff and Cramond and Barnton Community Council. There had been discussions and a realistic picture had emerged about the best way to proceed with the project and the funding and time required.

The Parks, Greenspace and Cemeteries Manager was now committed to the project and was intending to deploy staff time towards the first phase of a Parks for People HLF bid. A further meeting was scheduled for 2 March to initiate the process. The money from the sale of the Home Farm could perhaps help to fund the first part of the process.

Discussion took place about the possible purchase of the land that was formally part of the estate and the need to contact the neighbouring farmer as part of the process. It was explained that there various options regarding ownership/leasing of the neighbouring land. Also, there were issues regarding the possible upgrading of Cammo Walk, due to the new development.

Decision

- 1) The Natural Heritage Officer to clarify the situation regarding Cammo Walk.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to liaise with the owner of the neighbouring farm regarding the neighbouring land.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 26 May 2017 at 1.00 pm in the Cammo Lodge.