

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee

Edinburgh 11 June 2017

Present:-

Representing the National Trust for Scotland – David Chamberlain (Convener), and Colin Wren.

Representing the City of Edinburgh Council – Councillor Work.

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

Apologies:- Councillor Hutchison, Nick Bengé and Paul Vine.

1. Minute

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee of 5 December 2017.

Decision

To approve the minute as a correct record, subject to amendments (see appendix).

2. Matters Arising

2.1 Nothing to report.

3. Cammo Home Farm

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

The Natural Heritage Officer reported that concerns had been raised with Forestry and Natural Heritage and others regarding boundary earth levels, fence construction and “spoil” outwith the Cammo Home Farm boundary. As a previous planning breach was investigated in 2017 in relation to similar concerns, there was no intention to repeat this. All works which were undertaken adhered to planning conditions. Assurances were sought from the new owner regarding soft landscaping to the rear of their property, which were given. Planting had occurred as agreed and supplementary planting has been undertaken in the area by the Friends of Cammo, in agreement with the Council and the Cammo Home Farm owner. Additionally, some additional ditching had also been agreed. The Council had no maintenance obligation.

Decision

To note the report

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 5 December 2017 (item 3).

4. Cammo Estate Management Plan

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

It was reported that several groups recently been utilising Cammo lately and some issues had been reported. General maintenance and enhancement work had been undertaken over this period in line with management plan prescription. The following activities took place:

4.1 Cammo Estate Management Plan

- Green Team clearing vegetation and mulching of iCONic trees in Pinetum.
- New Stone Pine had been planted in Pinetum. Planting in failed tree enclosure, donated by Friends of Cammo member. Suckering of sycamore growth and crowding of new Chilean pine needed to be removed.
- Friends of Cammo (FoC) installation of more robust tree guards in West Park.
- FoC purchase and installation of new habitat boxes.
- Removal of some old fence spikes was beginning to protrude through the path surface by the car park.
- Redundant post and wire removal was ongoing.
- FoC updated site information provision – new self-led walk leaflets.
- The Edinburgh South Orienteering Club event 13/01/18 went well.
- Fungus Group of South-East Scotland carried out survey on 04/02/18
- There had been a site meeting with Linda Wigley (NTS Area Manager).
- There had been a site meeting with CEC Economic Development regarding improvement work.
- There had been a site meeting with SNH Operations Officer for Forth area and a colleague from Placemaking re site management and planned improvement.
- There had been a site meeting and discussions with CEC Estates, Property and Facilities Management, Investments Portfolio Manager regarding the use of Cammo Lodge.
- Access was restricted through replacement fencing on boundary between Home and North Fields, restricting public access underneath an over mature oak tree. Signage had also been appended in the North Field by the Oak Standard to deter people from walking beneath. Continued use of these desired routes would result in the trees being felled.
- Heras Panels had been placed over breaches in boundary wall with Turnhouse Golf Club.
- Improvements had been made to path surface at gate on Cammo Road.

- Pauline Quirk Academy (Theatre) used the site/lodge for 3 successive weekends in late March/April. A donation had been made to FoC.
- More enquiries had been received from CEC Communities and Families regarding Forest Kindergarten and the use of the site and Lodge for this purpose.
- Firewood recovery from site had been reported – signage would be produced detailing the importance of deadwood in the woodland environment and why it should not be removed or burnt.
- There had been instances of anti-social behaviour resulting fire damage to trees, litter and drunk teenagers. Emergency services were forced to cut padlocks to gain entry on a number of occasions. Corstorphine Hill, Ravelston Woods, Craiglockhart Dells, the Hermitage of Braid had all encountered similar behaviour with the recent good weather.
- Persistent dog fouling had been raised as a current issue, however, engagement with the Environmental Wardens resulted in increased site monitoring by them, with new signage and stickers giving details of punishments.
- Adjacent development discussions had taken place with developer and planning regarding the boundary.

4.2 Forthcoming Activities

- Bughtlin Burn debris clearance.
- Pinetum sculptures due to be re-attached by colleagues within Cemeteries as soon as temperature rises to enable secure bonding.
- Seasonal path edge maintenance.
- End of season meadow cutting.

4.3 Heritage Lottery Funding Bid

The Natural Heritage Office reported that since the last meeting, the type of grant being applied for had changed. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Parks for People Grant, for which the service had intended to apply, had been withdrawn. HLF were re-structuring the way they administered their grant funding. There were still grants suitable for their type of application i.e. a Heritage Grant or Our Heritage application but their final masterplan for the site was required to be split into smaller projects specific to a part of the site or historic or environmental theme.

Despite this, the service continued with the consultation event which ran in January over a 3-day period at the Lodge, it was well attended and comments had been made about many aspects. A consultant was analysing the data with a view to producing a final draft masterplan, associated activity, business plan and associated indicative costs. Due to recent revision and subsequent additional work in preparing a document, which had been tailored for grant applications for specific smaller aspects of the overall project, there had been a delay. Draft masterplan options were available to view (various maps and

options displayed in the Lodge) and on the following link – <http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cammo>. It seemed to be local regular park users wishing some sympathetic improvements, with less regular visitors to the park suggesting a café, play area and other aspects, highlighting site interests to be made available.

There was now focus on finalising business and activity plans, associated with the overall masterplan. Additional time had been given to LUC to prepare these plans to be able to focus on certain aspects: the walled garden, car parking and infrastructure and environmental improvements. The service was also currently investigating Cammo Lodge use and possible income generation. It was hoped to have indicative costs, enabling a focussed attempt at attaining suitable grant funding.

A new information briefing was available to download from the website.

4.4 Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society

It was reported that Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society (EAFS) had been conducting investigations at Cammo throughout 2017 and into 2018. Some notable discoveries included a Victorian child toy, belt and shoe buckles, an ornate/carved plinth/base which would might have supported an urn or vase, a George V coin and many finely slabbed floors, especially in the building behind the stable block. Their work would hopefully continue to uncover useful information that would support funding applications and demonstrate the high level of community interest in the history and archaeology of Cammo. EAFS had a general allowance where there was evidence of cultural historic interest in the site to explore outwith any areas of environmental sensitivity or in areas that may have an element of poor structural integrity. Vegetation would cease through spring/summer due to nesting season.

4.5 Cammo Lodge

In respect of Cammo Lodge, there was a desire to investigate current use and whether the building met the criteria for commercial letting. If this was to occur, the Conservation Agreement and Planning Consent regarding change of use had to be investigated first. Any rental income would be counted as revenue for the park.

Discussion took place and the following points were made:

- There seemed to be a considerable amount of activity on the estate.
- When would the Master Plan for Cammo be ready?
- The Advisory Committee should be able to see the Master Plan before it was finalised.
- What were the priorities, what amount would be spent on the Car Park and would there be an extension to the Lodge?

- There should be an intermediate meeting to discuss this, possibly in August.
- There could be two stages - to agree priorities as headings and then have them priced.
- The focus over the next period would be the Walled Garden.
- There would be possibilities for improved car park designs.
- The next meeting of the Advisory Committee should be on site to look at the various options, as these designs may not be appropriate for the site.
- There were concerns about the amount of money being spent on certain projects and the members should be able to see a list of projects, so they could decide on priorities.
- Was the HLF Project still appropriate at this stage?
- What would the amount of money that would be spent on the Walled Garden and would seed funding be required?
- Regarding the Lodge, was there any specification for the use of the Lodge?
- There were concerns about the future use of the Lodge. If it were a café, this would be welcomed, but if it was very popular, this might disturb the neighbours.
- There were issues of accessible parking and toilets.
- The revenue generated by the café could be used for improvements on the estate.
- There should be a feasibility study, but the views of the Friends of Cammo and of local groups should not be ignored.
- The Lodge was a grade 2 listed building.

Decision

- 1) To note the report.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to send the draft Masterplan to Committee Services to be circulated to the members in advance of the special meeting in August.
- 3) The Natural Heritage Officer to include details of proposals and costings for the Masterplan.
- 4) The Advisory Committee supported in principle, the investigation into the re-use of the Lodge.

5. Interpretation of the Estate

At the previous meeting, amongst other aspects of Interpretation, discussion had taken place about the work of the Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society.

It was reported that due to the nature of the HLF bid and the likelihood of an interpretation plan being developed for the site as part of this, it was agreed to postpone any activity towards this aspect of site improvement. It was thought that perhaps with the change of circumstance to funding, a sub-group/committee members might form to take this forward at an earlier date.

The representative of the Friends of Cammo reported that a sub-group had been set up two years previously, in respect of interpretation, but that there had been no activity or a year and they were quite happy to re-convene the group to work on certain aspects of the estate.

Discussion took place and the following points were made:

- Aspects would be broken down into themes.
- The extent to which the Sub-Group would be involved with the design.
- It was necessary to look at all sources of funding.
- How it would be possible for the Friends of Cammo to raise money.
- Would it be possible to apply for matrix funding?
- Should the priorities be car parking or facilities as it might be difficult to get funding for of car parks?
- The present car-parking arrangements were unsatisfactory.
- There would be priorities for cyclists as this came under the Active Travel.

Decision

To re-convene the Sub-Group on Interpretation.

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

6. Work of Friends of Cammo

The representative of the Friends of Cammo outlined the activities of the Friends for six months to June 2018, which included the following:

- Yellow Rattle Seed had been spread in fields, and they had put up three Jackdaw Boxes and six Starling Boxes.
- In February, they had replaced 130 tubes with taller green mesh, to try to prevent deer damage to the trees planted in West Field in 2017.
- In April, they planted over 100 trees and some wildflower to enhance the screening of the new house on Cammo Home Farm site and helped block the path past an old oak tree.
- Friends of Cammo meetings in December and June now included illustrated talks; this included the Review of Cammo in 2017 and Bees and Beekeeping. Cammo Loge was opened by a volunteer on five Sundays over the Christmas break for the first time, filling a gap in the weekly opening.
- Debris had been removed from the Canal on two occasions so far in 2018. They continued with a litter pick twice a year.
- The Annual Barbeque would be on Sunday 12 August. Last year was the most successful so far, attracting around 400 people.
- They had produced two new self-guided walk leaflets, on sale at the Lodge.

The Natural Heritage Officer reported that support was offered where required, in relation to boundary issues, any reports of anti-social behaviour, wildlife recording,

assistance with biodiversity project improvements, tools/material provision, reporting to OGM's and heavy involvement with HLF process from the outset. The work of the Friends of Cammo was greatly appreciated by Forestry and Natural Heritage Service and all people who enjoyed the Cammo Estate. It was hoped that this healthy relationship would continue to grow.

Decision

To thank the Friends of Cammo for their ongoing work for all their efforts.

7. Nature Conservation

The Natural Heritage Officer reported on nature conservation and outlined the following:

- The Honey bee hive had died over the winter. The service would review the situation with Environmental Manager in FoC and the beekeepers. It seemed likely that a more sheltered position with better light and less wind was required. Another beekeeper had recently enquired about site suitability.
- Canal rejuvenation looked to be very positive with regular reported sightings of the Kingfisher. There were also Robins feeding from people's hands at the canal-side. The water plants seemed to be recolonising quickly and there were astounding numbers of tadpoles.
- There had been a suggestion that the Edinburgh Natural History Society would conduct some biological recording events in the summer season.
- Butterfly transect surveying begun in April, assistance this year from 2 local volunteer recorders.

Decision

To note the update.

8. Any Other Urgent Business

8.1 Bio Blitz

The Convener indicated that the Botanical Society of Scotland would like to run a "Bio Blitz" on Sunday 19 August. If the Friends of Cammo wanted to be involved, they should let him know. He then outlined what could be done with this activity.

The Natural Heritage Officer welcomed the proposals and he would help to process the event by printing some posters, perhaps asking the Friends of Cammo to circulate notices and by arranging "Walk Rounds". The Friends of Cammo also welcomed the proposals and would inform their members.

8.2 Items on Agenda

The Representative of Cramond and Barnton Council raised the issue of Community Councils being able to submit items for discussion on the agenda. After some discussion, it was agreed that this should be permitted.

Decision

- 1) To note that the Advisory Committee welcomed the Bio Blitz.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to e-mail the Convener to provide details for individual to be contacted to help with the Bio Blitz.
- 3) To agree that Community Councils should be able to submit items for discussion on the agenda.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 20 August 2018 at 2.00 pm in the Cammo Lodge.

Appendix

Matters Arising

Item 2.2 – Former Member of Friends of Cammo (item 7)

Should be amended to: “The Friends of Cammo (FOC) indicated that they had not provided information to the Convener about the member, who was resigning from the FOC Committee, so no letter had been written. “

Item 6 – Work of Friends of Cammo

Sentence 1 of paragraph 2 of item 6 should be amended to: “It was reported that a new edition of a Short History of Cammo had been produced and that they were working on a replacement for the Self-Guided Walks booklet to make it more user-friendly.”