

Minutes

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee

Edinburgh 14 November 2018

Present:-

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

Representing the City of Edinburgh Council – Councillor Work.

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

Apologies:- Councillor Hutchison and Susan Dickson.

1. Minute

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee of 20 August 2018.

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 Natural Heritage Officer reported that, recently, there had been very little liaison with the owners. Instruction had been given to clear the retained access route to the North West of the new property to allow grass cutting machinery access to the site. Heras fencing had been cleared with a large stone pile still insitu. The area looked untidy and could lead to flytipping

Discussion took place about the need to clear the retained access route and for further access.

Decision

To remove Cammo Home Farm from the agenda.

(Reference – Cammo Estate Advisory Committee 20 August 2018 (item 3)).

4. Cammo Estate Management Plan

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

4.1 Cammo Estate Management Plan

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

- The Green Team had been clearing vegetation and mulching iconic trees in the Pinetum, the New Stone Pine *Pinus Pinea* had been donated and planted in the collection.
- Redundant post and wire removal was ongoing.
- A Drone Pilot Intern was undertaking aerial mapping to gather information such as 2D and 3D mapping, elevation mapping so it was possible to see how the site was changing over a set period, volume of materials, measurements and area of certain features/possible construction works amongst others, which was all 4k imagery.
- Woodchip provision for mulching establishing trees.
- Large field areas had been cut (some tree damage had been encountered).
- Storm and high wind tree debris had been cleared as the service encountered (several large limb failures, hanging branches over paths and roads, Poplar limbs were down and made safe in South Field, Elm was down in Walled Garden to clear also affecting wall, the Turkey Oaks below the Stables had failed).
- The encroaching vegetation on lighting poles along Cammo Walk had been arranged to be removed.
- Crumbling stonework had been repaired on Cammo House ruin.
- Environmental Wardens regular patrols were to cease: "You may like to know that 2 of the professional dog walkers have started cleaning up other people's dog fouling in Home Field. This may be why we have found no evidence of fouling on our high visibility foot patrols of Cammo Estate Unless we find evidence of the problem, resources must be directed elsewhere due to service demand".
- A member of the public had been encountered planting daffodils in field beside her father's tree. An explanation was given that as land managers the Natural Heritage Service had to be notified and permission granted for this type of activity: Inappropriate location, the owner's car parked in the park and general poor attitude had been shown to advice given.

Forthcoming Events:

- Bughtlin Burn debris clearance.
- Pinetum sculptures due to be re-attached.

- 12/01/19 ESOC annual event.
- Edinburgh College students filming early December over 3-day period.
- Improvements associated with Cammo Regeneration plan.
- Orienteering control point no.2 was missing, the Natural Heritage Officer to replace it.
- Canal inlet clearance, repair to the bung - (sandbags) at outlet.

4.2 Heritage Lottery Funding Bid

On 11 October, representatives of the Friends of Cammo and Cramond and Barnton Community Council met Forestry and Natural Heritage staff to discuss the Cammo Estate Regeneration Project. All agreed that the priorities should be (a) boundary walls and fences, (b) path upgrades, (c) a small car park near north gate and (d) signs, seating and natural play. Environmental improvements to fields and a wetland area should also be investigated. Other sources of funding would be sought to supplement capital available from the sale of Cammo Home Farm. Options to extend the south car park would be looked at later. The potential Heritage Lottery Fund bid for the Walled Garden would not be taken forward at present. If this approach was agreed by others, progress could be made quite rapidly.

The Walled Garden addendum finalisation was almost complete, there were some blanks to fill in and polish. This, alongside the initial whole site plan, would be used for a demonstration of local consultation along the various themes discussed, implementation of certain desired improvements and reference points for grant applications. A potential Heritage Lottery Fund bid could be made towards the end of the site fabric improvements with the remainder of capital spend.

4.3 Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society (EAFS)

Since the spring when they finished recording the 'offices', they had been concentrating on Cammo House. They had followed many maps and plans and now felt they had a good idea of the actual wall lines of the House before it was demolished. Some of the trenches they had dug had been confusing but through robust discussions and looking at the map/plan evidence, they had made sense of them.

Some of the wall footings had been robbed out but some were still there to be found.

There had been many visitors to their excavations and a few had even stayed to help. They have had new people join the society and they had made strong links with Edinburgh University Archaeology students. The Scottish Detectors Club were also helping them. Unfortunately there were not the great "finds" that there had been the first time they had been invited – the Cammo Crocodile for

example. But they kindly checked the “spoil heap” and surveyed the area behind the House.

They now had to develop a plan for the winter months. Currently they were looking at more geophysical survey and maybe concentrating on the walled garden in that period between the end of nesting birds and the start of the snowdrop season. Their main research question was ‘Where is the medieval?’.

EAFS would like to resurrect their regular Tuesday activities at Cammo throughout the winter period, which were used last winter to investigate the 'offices'. This time EAFS would look at clearing and recording the 'piggery'. There were also plans for some geophysics, actions to be firmed up soon with an activity plan which would be forthcoming.

During discussion, members raised the following issues:

- The potential for Heritage Lottery Funding (HLF) funding for the walled garden.
- The need for good communication/relations between the Ranger Service and the Botanic Gardens.
- The need for care of the Pinetum.
- The offer of arial mapping of the estate by the Drone Pilot Intern.
- The issue of dog fouling.
- Clearance of debris in the Bughlin Burn.
- The canal inlet clearance.
- The need to prioritise spending.
- The need for match funding.

Decision

- 1) The Natural Heritage Officer to get more information regarding the arial mapping by the Drone Pilot Intern and how best to use the information.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to liaise with the individual dealing with the clearance of the Bughlin Burn.
- 3) That the Walled Garden should be a separate item on the agenda.

5. Interpretation of the Estate

It was reported that the Interpretation Sub Group was to take forward a strategy for site with capital spend available and a possible grant application for topping up.

Discussion took place about the following:

- Whether the format should be story-telling or limited to providing information.
- The need to strike balance between boards and leaflets.
- The possible inclusion of Interpretation in the Management Plan.

Decision

- 1) The Convener to ask the National Trust for Scotland if one of their officers could deal with Interpretation.
- 2) At the next meeting, the Advisory Committee to have each item costed and to check out the sources of funding.
- 3) The Natural Heritage Officer to have the specifications ready for the Management Group in December.

6. Work of Friends of Cammo

It was reported that support was offered from the Friends of Cammo, where required in relation to boundary issues, 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 was greatly appreciated by Forestry and Natural Heritage and all who cared about Cammo. It was hoped that this healthy relationship would continue to grow.

Discussion took place and the following points were made:

- Work was being carried out such as mulching of trees, replacing the shelter and cutting the Wild Flowers.
- A new website was being developed.
- The Second edition of the "Private World of Cammo" was being published in January 2019.
- A box had been put up to promote membership and another one might be put up at the car par.

Decision

To note the work of the Friends of Cammo

7. Nature Conservation

The Natural Heritage Officer reported on Nature Conservation which included the following:

- Volunteers undertook butterfly recording onsite and records were submitted to TWIC.
- New tree plantings had been mulched.
- Large field areas had been cut.
- Water levels within the canal had been monitored. It seemed likely there was an undesired outflow of water perhaps through the sluice boards or bottom plug. Sand bags were to be deposited and burst at outflow.

Discussion took place and the following points were raised:

- The Bio Blitz had been held, which was quite low key, but recorded 300 species.
- The birds had been ignoring the small box that had been put up.
- The Tawney Owl had been returning every year.
- Bird bins were quite expensive and difficult to put up.
- It should be emphasised that the Heritage Service was linking with other bodies.

Decision

- 1) The Convener to send the lists of species to interested parties.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Office to produce a list of the activities being undertaken.

8. Any Other Urgent Business

- Cammo Lodge – a lease agreement was in place with Forest Kindergarten Initiative within CEC Children and Families through to the end of 2018, notification had been received that the intention was to begin Forest Kindergarten at Cammo on the 26th of November. There remained a desire to repurpose/enhance the facility.
- Investigations were to be made into the management protocol of Cammo Estate, the Conservation Agreement, Feu Charter and the general management of the park.
- If it was possible to drop “Estate” from the park title – Cammo Local Nature Reserve/Cammo Park Local Nature Reserve. The word estate could give the wrong impression about the site suggesting a private working estate.
- Cala/David Wilson Homes development – there had been a communication suggesting improved access along Cammo Walk in line with previous discussion with Council Planning and developers. Suggestions had been made by Cramond and Barton Community Council and the Friends of Cammo.
- A butchered deer had been recently discovered on Corstorphine Hill, with only the head, upper torso, intestines and stomach left and scattered next to the main path. This had been reported to Police Scotland Wildlife Crime. Members were asked to look out for any individuals that they may have suspicions about (intentions in a site like) in areas like Cammo/River Almond Walkway or surrounding farmland.

Discussion took place regarding the number of children in the Forest Kindergarten Initiative and the possible financial benefits for the Council from the Kindergarten.

Decision

- 1) The Convener to check out the relationship between the National Trust for Scotland and Cammo Estate.

- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to check out the Conservation Agreement for Cammo Estate.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 13 February 2019 at 2.00 pm in the Cammo Lodge.

Appendix

Item 4.1 - Cammo Estate Management Plan

Page 3, paragraph 4 should be amended to:

“In relation to funding, there was a substantial amount from the sale of the Home Farm, the HLF Group would meet to discuss the HLF bid and there had been an indication for a possible contribution from a local developer to provide some funding for components of the estate, such as a car park.”