

Minutes

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee

Edinburgh 13 February 2019

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) Paul Vine (Trees and Woodlands Officer) and Velda Weir (Natural Heritage Officer) (Place) and Blair Ritchie (Committee Services).

Apologies:- Councillor Hutchison, Susan Dickson and Nick Bengé.

1. Minute

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee of 14 November 2018.

Decision

To approve the minute as a correct record.

2. Matters Arising

Item 7 – List of Species

The Convener to circulate the list of species, found in the Bio Blitz, to all interested parties, including the Friends of Cammo.

3. Cammo Estate Management Plan

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

3.1 Cammo Estate Management Plan (Including General Maintenance)

- Anti-social behaviour was persistently encountered over the December/January period (especially holidays). The Lodge window had been smashed (now repaired), there was damage to stone bridge pier, litter bins had been dragged into the site and torched and hundreds of cans and bottles left. Police Scotland reported that upwards of 70 youngsters had been dispersed on several occasions. Youngsters have been moved on from Inverleith Park, Saughton Park and were now congregating at Cammo coming from all over the city, being

dropped off in taxis. This had now tailed off slightly, although Forest Kindergarten were finding fire debris and bottles occasionally in the mornings.

- Redundant post and wire removal was ongoing.
- Bughtlin Burn debris had been cleared, but there was more to do. The Green Team Volunteers had been tasked for this.
- The Canal outlet had been bunged and the water level was now normal.
- The ESOC annual event took place successfully in early January: the permanent orienteering control point no.2 had been replaced.
- An enquiry had been received for commercial interest in the Lodge.

3.2 Forthcoming:

- The Pinetum Sculptures were due to be re-attached – Watergems would provide a quote.

3.3 Cammo Regeneration Project

- Draft plans and specifications were almost completed for Phase 1. There was path improvement work and car park creation at the North Gate.
- Enrichment of field areas was underway through cutting, seeding and forthcoming plug planting.
- Boundary vegetation had been marked for clearance to enable boundary consolidation work to progress.
- The Regeneration Capital Grant Fund draft application had been made. CEC Economic Development was assisting with the process.

3.4 Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society (EAFS)

- There was continued work behind the stables, with some clearance work of piggery/kennels to take place before nesting season.

Discussion took place and the following points were made.

- The damage caused by disruptive youngsters created a bad impression for visitors, it was time consuming to clear up afterwards, but local residents and the Friends of Cammo had helped to clear it up.
- There was general satisfaction at progress being made. Some of the activities had to be put off, but these would soon be actioned.
- It had been possible to use the funding now available to make some improvements.
- The Edinburgh Biological Field Society wanted to explore and reveal the footprint of building, and gather more information. If there were any significant finds, they were not sure whether to relocate it or to leave it where it was to protect it.

Decision

- 1) To not the update.
- 2) To thank the Natural Heritage Officer for the extra effort he put into clearing the debris/damage caused by the disruptive youngsters.

4. Walled Garden

The Natural Heritage Officer provided an update on the Walled Garden. He indicated that there had been more problems with the wall and the Elm Tree was almost touching the path. The enclosure for the honey bee hives had been dismantled and was now sitting within the walled garden. In the longer term, a large proportion of the Capital Garden Regeneration Fund would be used to stabilise the wall. There had been no further progress with the allotments. This could be considered in the future, but not as Phase 1 of the Plan.

Discussion took place and it was indicated that the Friends of Cammo had not attempted to thoroughly clear the area round the fruit trees, as it would allow animals to damage them. It was also thought that the only possible way to stop deers damaging the trees, would be with special fencing.

Decision

To note the update.

5. Interpretation of the Estate

The representative of the Cramond and Barnton Community Council presented a consultative draft on the Cammo Estate Local Nature Reserve Orientation and Interpretation Strategy. This included the following:

- The aim of the Strategy was to enhance visitors' awareness, understanding, care for, and enjoyment of, Cammo Estate's wildlife, cultural heritage, historic landscapes and opportunities for informal recreation.
- Proposals for new or enhanced orientation and interpretation provision included orientation provision, on-site interpretation, publications and information and communications technology (ICT) and events and training.
- The Next Steps in progressing the Strategy included consulting and seeking support of partner organisations, interest groups and Estate users, further developing proposals, obtaining formal consents, sourcing funds and contract preparation and management and installing signage.
- Approval was sought for this strategy and to proceed with this program. The priority for the first two years was signing of Paths and Interpretation Boards.

Discussion took place and the following points were made:

- There were various options for funding such as Crowd Funding and Paths for All, but some of these involved competing with other groups.
- Most funding was currently being allocated to disadvantaged areas, however, even small amounts of funding would be beneficial.
- The cost for the Finger Posts was not very high and would come from the Natural Heritage budget.
- There was new standard for finger posts and it was intended to have them in the same style as Cramond.
- It was still necessary to decide on illustrations and text.

Decision

- 1) To thank the Interpretation Sub-Group and to supported them in their work.
- 2) The Interpretation Sub-Group to make further investigation into the issue of funding.
- 3) Members to provide feedback to the Interpretation Sub-Group by the end of March 2019.

6. Work of Friends of Cammo

The representative of the Friends of Cammo (FOC) provided an update of their ongoing work on the estate, which included the following activities.

- As part of Cammo Estate Regeneration, the FOC were establishing wildflower areas in the middle of the large fields, to increase the floral diversity in the park. Areas were cut short in December raked and Yellow Rattle had been sown to weaken the grass. On Sunday 28 April, volunteers would assist in planting 100 wildflower plants – Knapweed, Cowslip, Oxeye Daises and Scabious. There would be further planting in the autumn.
- The Bee Enclosure had been moved from the roundel near the north Gate to a corner of the Walled Garden and a hive would soon be installed. There were now 10 member of a Bee Group to assist with this project
- The FOC website would be ready by the end of February. A third edition of the Pinetum Booklet should be available in March. A third self-guided walk leaflet was being prepared, themed on nature (including wildflowers).
- Their work also included litter clearance, biodiversity improvement through the Enrichment Project Phase 1 and the relocation of bee enclosure and engagement with new beekeepers/providers

Discussion took place and it was explained that instead of a barbeque for midsummer, the FOC were holding a fair or a jamboree. It would avoid the cost hiring tables and chairs and there would be no cooking, just music and events and this should attract

families to the park. There was some concern about the issue of dog walkers and it was thought that donation box might be beneficial. It was explained that this was a significant issue. There already was voluntary code of conduct for dog walkers, which specified a maximum of 8 dogs per walker.

Decision

To thank the Friends of Cammo for their continuing work on the estate.

7. Nature Conservation

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

- An enrichment project through the capital receipt.
- Normal water level had been achieved in the canal
- There had been an offer to climb large trees for the installation of raptor boxes from the Trees and Woodlands Officer. Capital farm money would be used as Phase 1 biodiversity improvements
- There had been a new offer of honey bee hives.

Discussion took place and the following points were raised:

- That it might be advantageous to record the visitors' experience.
- That there were useful resources for untrained individuals.
- The Heritage Service did not carry out as many guided walks as much as before, due to the lack of resources, however, other groups provided that service.
- The FOC carried out guided walks and would continue to do so, but these might be linked to promotional activity.
- There had not been much progress with the Wetland Area. The SNH had concerns and the introduction of open water/wetland area might affect the airport.
- An officer from the Botanic Garden indicated that he would supply more material for the Pinetum.
- Clearing out of trees could be done, but it was a big undertaking and would be carried out during Phase 3 of the Management Plan.
- It might be beneficial for there to be some planting in future, to strengthen some of the avenues of trees. Although there were some problems, this should be kept under review as part of the Management Plan.

Decision

- 1) To note the update.
- 2) To thank Nick Bengel of the FOC for progressing the Honey Bee Hives.

8. Any Other Urgent Business

- Cammo Lodge – the lease agreement was in place with the Forest Kindergarten Initiative. A suggestion had been made for consideration for a better mechanism to provide lunch and to limit vehicle use as much as possible on site.
- No work had been carried out in relation to the relationship of the Cammo Estate with the National Trust.
- Budget deficits: the Council was looking at significant cost savings and was very interested in income generation. A donation scheme has been up and running for some time in the Pentland Hills Regional Park, which would be replicated through the Natural Heritage Estate in Edinburgh, most likely at honey pot sites and car parks.
- The Authority did not own the Water Tower it, however, access could be gained from main road. It would be close to the proposed new housing development.
- There was a strip of land between Camo Walk and the Cammo Development site that was owned, by the council. This might be affected by the proposed housing development.

Decision

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

9. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 22 May 2019 at 2.00 pm in Cammo Lodge.