

Transport and Environment

10am, Tuesday, 3 June 2014

Declaration of Cammo Estate as a Local Nature Reserve

Item number	7.16
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	Almond

Executive summary

This report outlines the Council's legislative power to declare Local Nature Reserves and seeks the Committee's approval to consult on the declaration of Cammo Estate as a Local Nature Reserve.

A Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is an area of land declared under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, by a local authority, because of its special nature interest and/or educational value.

Links

Coalition pledges [P48](#)

Council outcomes [CO19](#)

Single Outcome Agreement [SO2](#), [SO4](#)

Declaration of Cammo Estate as a Local Nature Reserve

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee approves the proposal to consult on the declaration of Cammo Estate as a Local Nature Reserve under the provisions of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

Background

- 2.1 Local authorities possess statutory powers to set up and manage Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
- 2.2 The selection and designation of new LNRs accords with the Scottish Biodiversity Duty Section of the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan (EBAP). This contains an action to 'Continue a programme of developing and designating Local Sites.'
- 2.3 Cammo Estate lies in the north-west of the City of Edinburgh and is within the West Edinburgh Neighbourhood. The proposed LNR is 39 hectares in size and comprises a mosaic of farmland, semi-improved grassland, broadleaved woodland and ponds.
- 2.4 Cammo Estate is in the ownership of the City of Edinburgh Council and is currently managed by Parks and Greenspace in Services for Communities.

Main report

- 3.1 Local Nature Reserves are areas of high natural heritage interest, which are not just protected but are managed and improved, with the conservation of nature as a priority concern. In recent years, community participation, education and informal recreation have also become established as desirable management objectives.

- 3.2 Cammo Estate is located on the north-western side of the City and within the Almond Neighbourhood Partnership Area. In the proposed Edinburgh Local Development Plan it is designated as a Local Biodiversity Site. It is a rural park comprising of farmland, semi-improved neutral grassland, semi natural broadleaved woodland, plantation woodland and ponds. It contains protected mammals, a high abundance of bird species, for its size, and two locally notable plants.
- 3.3 It is surrounded to the north by the environs of the River Almond and some low density housing, to the west by farmland, to the south-west by Turnhouse Golf Course and to the south by farmland. To the east, the site abuts the established residential area of Cammo and to the south-east lies the greenfield land identified for new housing development in the proposed Local Development Plan (ref HSG20). If this site is developed, green network connections will be created through the housing site. Together with enhanced off-site links, this will improve connectivity to the Cammo Estate from the wider residential areas lying to the east.

Criteria for designation as a Local Nature Reserve

- 3.4 In order to meet the legislative requirements of the 1949 Act, it is essential that a proposed LNR should:
- a) consist of land (interpreted to include the foreshore above low water mark of ordinary spring tides or inland waters);
 - b) be managed;
 - c) provide special opportunities for study and research of British flora and fauna and the conditions in which they live, and for study of earth sciences of special interest in the area; and/or preserve the special natural or earth science interest in the area;
 - d) consist predominately of British flora or fauna;
 - e) have the study and research into, or preservation of, nature or the earth sciences as a priority objective and not as an incidental land management consideration;
 - f) lie within the jurisdiction of the local authority concerned;
 - g) be owned or leased by the local authority, or under an agreement from the owner or tenant; and
 - h) be the subject of consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage.

- 3.5 Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) also recommends that sites should be selected which:
- a) provide accessible, positive, current (or potential) informal opportunities for raising people's awareness, understanding and enjoyment of, and involvement with, their local natural heritage; and
 - b) be (or have the potential to be) of special natural heritage interest in the area, through good management and safeguarding of the site.
- 3.6 Cammo Estate meets the legislative requirements of the 1949 Act and fulfils the additional site recommendations by SNH. Ownership of Cammo Estate was transferred to the City of Edinburgh Council in 1979 from the National Trust for Scotland (NTS).

Current Management

- 3.7 The site is managed by the Council as publically accessible, natural greenspace and the Natural Heritage Service produced a comprehensive 10 year management plan for the site in 2011.
- 3.8 An advisory committee for the management of Cammo Estate was set up to fulfil the terms of the transfer of the estate to the Council from NTS. Members include local Councillors, Council officers, National Trust for Scotland, Cramond Association and the Friends of Cammo Estate.
- 3.9 The City of Edinburgh currently has six Local Nature Reserves: Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park, Corstorphine Hill, Easter Craiglockhart Hill, Hermitage of Braid and Blackford Hill, Meadows Yard and Ravelston Woods. They are all managed by the Natural Heritage Service. Burdiehouse Burn Valley Park was the most recent declaration in January 2007.

Natural Heritage

- 3.10 The diversity of habitats found at Cammo Estate is very high in the urban fringe context and this is enhanced by the connection of the site to the River Almond woodland. The site still retains a general rural feel with meadows bounded by hedges and dykes. There is also exceptional habitat interest in the veteran trees which can support scarce flora and fauna that are restricted to old and dead wood.
- 3.11 The estate supports an abundant and diverse bird population for its size including species identified as experiencing significant population declines nationally such as grey partridge, lapwing and skylark. These species are included in actions within the EBAP. Woodland bird species rare to the Lothians

area are also found on the estate, including Green Woodpecker, Blackcap and Chiffchaff.

- 3.12 The site is in the unusual position of supporting two badger social groups with their main setts as little as 200 metres apart. The open habitat of the estate provides important feeding grounds for both these social groups. At least three species of bat are known to forage in the park and it is very likely roosts are also present. Badgers and all species of bat are protected through legislation and subject to species plans within the EBAP.
- 3.13 Two notable plant species are known from the site, Hornwort and Upright Broom.

Landscape and Built Heritage

- 3.14 Cammo Estate is subject to a number of landscape and built heritage designations. The current landscape and built heritage designations within the proposed LNR boundary are:
- a) Historic Garden and Designed Landscape;
 - b) Area of Great Landscape Value;
 - c) Two Scheduled Ancient Monuments;
 - d) Four Category B Listed Buildings; and
 - e) One Category C Listed Building.
- 3.15 The LNR designation will not result in any degradation of commitment to maintaining any of these other designations. It will be the responsibility of the advisory committee to ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved between the responsibilities imposed by all designations and that all are taken into account during management considerations.

Interpretation

- 3.16 Interpretation on site is currently available at the visitor centre but this has limited opening hours. Further visitor information is provided in two booklets which detail information on self-guided walks and the history of the estate. Maps are displayed at entrances to the park.
- 3.17 The message portrayed by any future interpretation, as detailed in the current management plan, should reflect the estate's history and importance as a former home and its role today in supporting a surprisingly wide range of animals and plants.

Next Steps

- 3.18 It is important to obtain the views of the local community as its input will be crucial in making the LNR a success. The final format of any public consultation is still to be determined. It is likely to include materials displayed locally and on site, as well as via the Council website and Edinburgh Outdoors. It is thought this would be for up to eight weeks. Local community groups and any other interest groups known to use the park will all be formally consulted. The LNR proposals were recently presented to the Cammo Estate advisory committee and were received positively.
- 3.19 Under Section 21(6) of the 1949 Act, a local authority may only declare a LNR after consultation with SNH, although the Act does not specify when or what format the consultation should take. Any comments made by SNH are taken as advice and it has no mandatory powers regarding site selection and management. However, its support is considered to be significant in that it is able to offer management advice.
- 3.20 Following consultation, a notice of declaration must be published 'in a manner which appears best suited to informing the persons concerned'. In this instance, it will involve placement of certified copies of the declarations in public libraries and in appropriate Council offices.
- 3.21 The results of the public and SNH consultation will be subject of a further report to this committee with notification of the declaration.
- 3.22 The declaration of this LNR should raise public awareness of the park and put in place measures to protect and manage it for the benefit of both local people and the wider population of Edinburgh. It will also contribute towards achieving many of the aims and targets of the Habitat and Species Plans contained within the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan.

Measures of success

- 4.1 The measure of success will be the declaration of Cammo Estate as an LNR in 2014.

Financial impact

- 5.1 There are no financial implications to consulting on the LNR declaration of Cammo Estate.

- 5.2 All management works as a result of LNR status will be carried out under existing budgets.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The declaration of Cammo Estate is supported by the Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 6.2 There are no risk, compliance or governance impacts identified.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 The aim of the local nature reserve declaration is to enhance and manage Cammo Estate for the benefit of both people and biodiversity. This has the potential to improve the quality of life, improve health and wellbeing, provide environmental education and volunteering opportunities, and supports sustainable communities.
- 7.2 There are no predicted negative impacts on rights and equalities.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The impacts of this report in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered, and the outcomes are summarised below. Relevant Council sustainable development policies have been taken into account and are noted at Background Reading later in this report.
- The proposals in this report will have a neutral impact on carbon emissions. Carbon emissions will neither increase nor decrease during the process of LNR declaration. It may be worth noting however that the management of the grasslands on site as traditional meadows may increase carbon sequestration.
 - The proposals in this report will increase the city's resilience to climate change impacts because it will increase the protection of a semi-natural greenspace.
 - The proposals in this report will help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh because they will give people the opportunity to enjoy the natural

environment, delivering benefits to health, education and wellbeing to those that visit.

- Economic wellbeing is not considered to impact on the proposals in this report because overall the local nature reserve will be used by and involve those already living locally. There may occasionally be visitors or tourists from further afield but their impact on the local economy due to low numbers would have such a small, immeasurable effect.
- The proposals in this report will help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh because it will increase the protection of a site positively managed for biodiversity and public enjoyment.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Consultation will be carried out in the local community for a period of up to eight weeks, with Scottish Natural Heritage and with other relevant Council departments.

Background reading / external references

[Local Nature Reserves in Scotland. A Guide to their Selection and Declaration – Scottish Natural Heritage 2000](#)

[Cammo Estate Management Plan 2011 – 2020](#)

[Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan 2010 - 2015](#)

[Edinburgh Climate Change Framework](#)

[Sustainable Edinburgh 2020](#)

Mark Turley

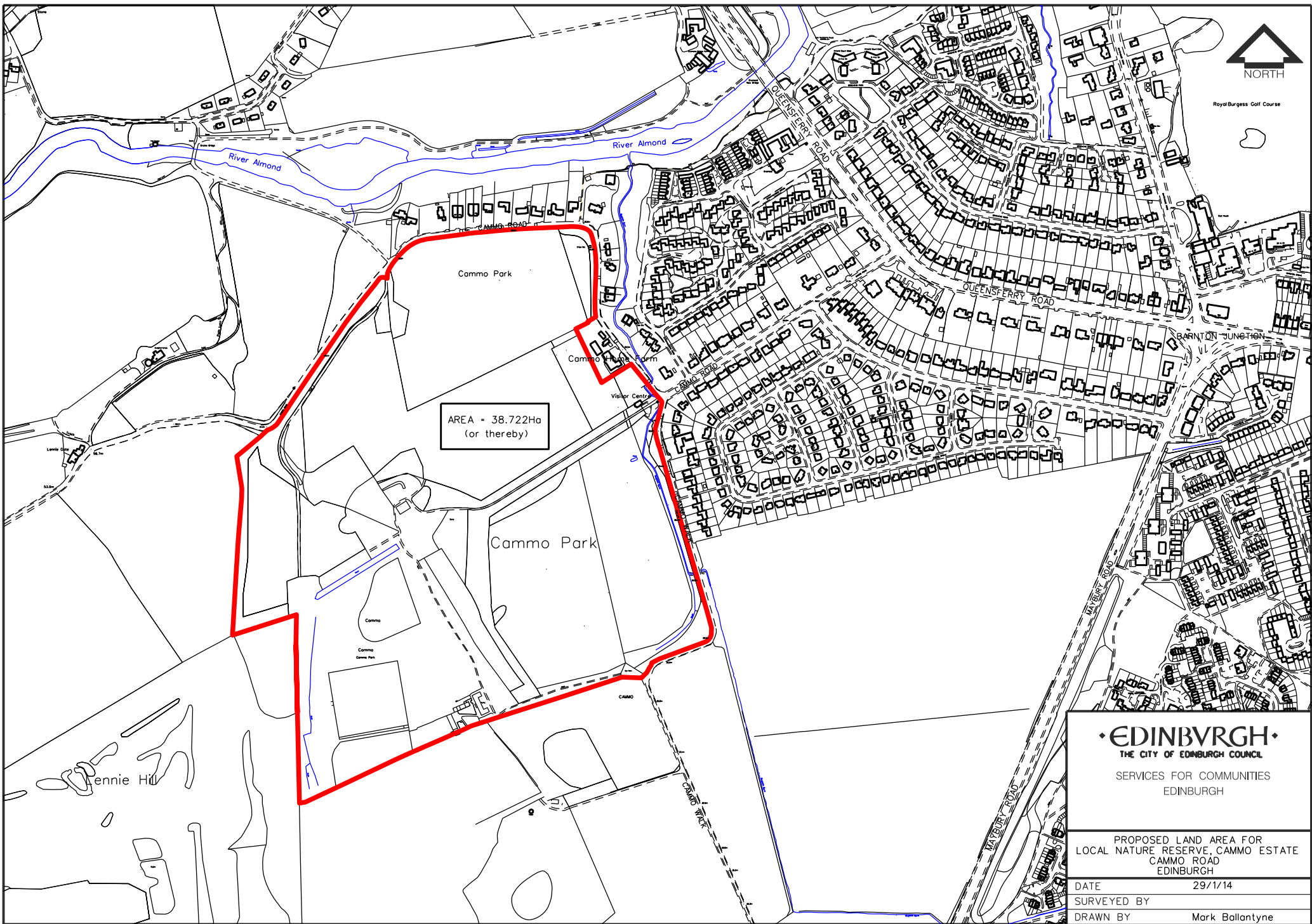
Director of Services for Communities

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Links

Coalition pledges	P48 – Use green flag and other strategies to preserve our greenspaces.
Council outcomes	CO19 – Attractive Places and Well Maintained – Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and the delivery of high standards and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm.
Single Outcome Agreement	SO2 – Edinburgh’s citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health. SO4 – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric.
Appendices	Cammo Estate Proposed Local Nature Reserve Boundary



Royal Burgess Golf Course

AREA = 38.722Ha
(or thereby)

• EDINBURGH •
 THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
 SERVICES FOR COMMUNITIES
 EDINBURGH

PROPOSED LAND AREA FOR LOCAL NATURE RESERVE, CAMMO ESTATE CAMMO ROAD EDINBURGH	
DATE	29/1/14
SURVEYED BY	
DRAWN BY	Mark Ballantyne
SCALE	NOT TO SCALE
NEG. NO.	A3/1422

LOCATION PLAN

PHOTOGRAPHICALLY REDUCED NOT TO SCALE

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