

Minutes

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee

Edinburgh 12 June 2019

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), David Kyles (Natural Heritage Officer) and Velda Weir (Natural Heritage Officer) (Place) and Blair Ritchie (Committee Services).

Apologies:- Councillor Hutchison and Nick Bengé.

1. Minute

Cammo Estate Advisory Committee of 13 February 2019.

Decision

To approve the minute as a correct record, subject to amendment of Item 6, bullet point 1 from “100 wildflower plants” to “1200 wildflower plants”.

2. Matters Arising

Item 2 – List of Species

The Convener confirmed that he had circulated the list of species, found in the Bio Blitz, to all interested parties, including the Friends of Cammo.

Item 3.1 – Enquiry Received for Commercial Interest in the Lodge

It was confirmed that nothing had been received regarding the enquiry about the commercial interest in the Lodge. If it was to be marketed, the persons making the enquiry would be notified. However, the matter would have to be first considered by the Advisory Committee.

Item 3.2 – Pinetum Sculptures

It was confirmed that the Pinetum Sculptures had been re-attached.

Item 8 - Relationship between National Trust and Cammo Estate

The Convener indicated that he had been unable to check out the relationship between Cammo Estate and the National Trust, due to the change of personnel.

Decision

Colin Wren to liaise with Stewart Maxwell, the new manager, to confirm who was dealing with Cammo and the Convener to contact Colin Wren to clarify matters.

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 still being encountered but less frequently over this period. Instances should be reported to the Forestry and Natural Heritage and/or Police Scotland 101.
- Redundant post and wire fence removal was ongoing.
- Pinetum sculptures were re-attached; the East Bridge Pier had been repaired.
- Interpretation planning – see below.

3.2 Forthcoming Events:

- Path and boundary improvement works were planned for late summer/early autumn.

Discussion took place about a possible path into the car park at Cammo and the generation of income by visitors to the site. There was further discussion about the offer from the Tree and Woodland officer to attach boxes in trees, for the next season.

3.3 Cammo Regeneration Project

- Plans for Phase 1 path network, boundary and access point improvement had been finalised and tendered.
- Enrichment of larger field areas underway through cutting, seeding and plug planting.
- Regeneration Capital Grant Fund application had been made for phase 2 improvement work, which would include consolidation of historic site features and improvements to the walled garden, access from the car park and enlargement of the current car park to the south of the site.

Discussion took place about the following issues:

- How extra car parking would effect dog walkers.
- The successful enrichment of the larger field areas through seeding.
- The submission of the Regeneration Capital Grants Fund.
- The need to tell the story of Cammo and the best way to achieve funding.

- The need to focus on cultural heritage and the Walled Garden (WG).
- If a successful application was made, to address the WG requirements.

3.4 WREN Application

A submission was made for funding to undertake a percentage of the Phase 1 infrastructure improvements detailed above to WREN. Unfortunately, the decision was not favourable and was refused.

3.5 Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society (EAFS)

There had been continued work behind the stables, Cammo Cottages were now visible with many indicative finds, relating to usage and habitation, some correlation with historical records were being undertaken. There was an open weekend in March with over 150 people visiting the site. There had been a visit from schoolchildren from Kirriemuir currently studying archaeology June 2019.

Discussion took place and it was confirmed that the Natural Heritage Service would continue to consolidate the work of EAFS, who had been very productive.

Decision

To note the update.

4. Walled Garden

The Natural Heritage Officer indicated that there was nothing of significance to report.

Discussion took place regarding funding and the following points were made:

- How to make best use of the money for the Walled Garden (WG) and to source other funding.
- That the funding should be used to make the WG secure, which could then be used for various activities and permit people to use the WG.
- That there should be a declaration of money, before commencing work.
- There was a substantial amount, however, it was necessary to set out the spending intentions.
- The funding would be also used for items such as the boundary walls and fences.

Decision

To note the update.

5. Interpretation of the Estate

An interpretation workshop was planned (this had been postponed due to holidays etc) led by interpretation specialist James Carter. The aim was to establish a theme, designs and the latest technology to fully implement the interpretation strategy. Members from CEAG would be in attendance

The Friends of Cammo indicated that they had tried Crowd Funding, but it had only raised £265. Nevertheless, it had been a worthwhile exercise and the panel would go ahead.

Discussion took place and the following points were made:

- It might be possible to source alternative funding.
- An interpretation panel would be commissioned for Cammo House.
- Those attending the workshop should bring substantial ideas back to the Advisory Committee.
- The Interpretation Sub-Group did consult on an interpretation strategy but did not get a very good response.
- Half of the funding would come from the Capital Fund. It had to be decided to proceed with the full design or something less expensive.

Decision

- 1) The representative of the Friends of Cammo to send the Convener information about Crowd Funding.
- 2) After the Interpretation Workshop, the Interpretation Sub-Group would come back to the Advisory Committee with proposals on interpretation.

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:

- Litter clearance.
- Biodiversity improvement through Enrichment Project Phase 1.
- Relocation of bee enclosure, introduction of a new hive and training for care
- There had been wildflower planting on 28 April, where 60 volunteers helped to plant 1200 plants.
- The Beehive had been installed in the new enclosure in the WG. There was training for care and June was a crucial month for bees to thrive.
- The FoC Website has been launched. It had been designed by former high school pupils and was a good piece of work.
- The 3rd edition of the Pinetum booklet had been launched and the new self-guided walk booklet was on sale in the Lodge.
- There would be a family summer event on 11 August, which would replace the Barbeque and would be called a Fun Day.
- There would be live music, but no tables and chairs or burgers, to avoid possible financial loss.

Discussion took place and the following points were made:

- The Event was widely advertised by various methods such as the FoC Facebook page, the website and notices on some of local notice boards.

- Usually, there were 300 people in attendance, which could be extended to 800.
- The organisers only wanted to take money on the day and did not want to have to refund people if they were unable to attend.
- The cakes were freely contributed by members, so there was no financial loss – the hire of chairs might have caused the potential loss.
- This was not a money-making exercise, it was about bringing families to estate.

Decision

To thank the Friends of Cammo for their continuing work on the estate and for arranging the Fun Day and bringing this to the attention of the residents.

7. Nature Conservation

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

- An enrichment project through capital receipt: this included plugs and seeds.
- The Bee hive was now relocated to the preferred area within the walled garden.
- There was tree planting to the west of the Pinetum and within the wilderness area – sp. Taxodium and Metasequoia.

Discussion took place and the following points were raised:

- There was concern that planting exotic trees in the vicinity could endanger the canal, however, the opposite bank of the canal had a similar type of trees. Nature conservation did not restrict the planting of non-native species.
- The Management Plan (MP) seemed to indicate that there should be native species to help with biodiversity, rather than exotic species. However, the Woodland Officers had indicated that this was not the case. Additionally, there was a historic precedent as Pinetum was a feature on the estate.
- The Natural Heritage Officer would listen to any concerns from the local community. The new planting had been carefully considered.
- Although there should be adherence to the principles of design landscape, the renovation of the Pinetum was a feature of the estate.
- It might be better to re-locate the exotic trees to the Low Meadow and despite concerns about shading, the forestry officers were content with the proposals.
- There had been exotic trees planted in the past, such as the European Larch.
- There had been a big tree-planting program in the late 1970's. Some of the more inappropriate planting had been cleared, but there was more to be done.
- The MP was now 10 years old and there had been a slight change of tack.
- Although the percentage of the site affected by this planting was very small, the context was significant as the planting was right next to the canal.

- It might be possible to use some of the Capital Funding for the Design Landscape Plan. It was necessary to raise money to get a report to get recommendation for future management.
- There should be guidance provided, but with some flexibility. Some non-native species might be better for the estate.

Decision

- 1) The Natural Heritage Officer to liaise with the representative of the Cramond and Barton Community Council regarding the concerns about the location of the exotic trees and take appropriate action, if necessary.
- 2) To note that the Advisory Committee has some concerns about the location of the exotic trees.
- 3) That discussion took place to clarify that the Natural Heritage Service was working towards a specific Management Plan.
- 4) To congratulate the Natural Heritage Officers for their ongoing work on the estate.

8. Any Other Urgent Business

8.1 Forest Kindergarten

The Natural Heritage Officer indicated that after successful pilot periods throughout several parks in Edinburgh including Cammo, the Forest Kindergarten would become a long-term feature within Edinburgh parks. Streamlining the processes for access/ drop-off/collection, lunch provision, materials and storage, and welfare had been discussed and a decision to provide better more secure facilities had been agreed. To this end, bespoke units were being constructed that would consist of secure storage, welfare and shelter and were to be located within good logistical access of entrance points to sites and areas being used for activity. The units did not require services to be connected but would include facilities such as a log burning stove and compost toilets that would be required to be serviced. The units were to be painted or clad in materials suitable to the environment and setting and would require planning permission. The Natural Heritage Service insisted on some kind of landscaping surrounding the units.

Discussion took place and the following points were made:

- Cammo Estate would be the first site in Edinburgh do have these structures.
- The completion of the car park would clarify the direction of further work.
- Forrest Kindergarten had indicated the benefits of their approach. Their success meant that it was being rolled out across the City.
- There would be more people on the site, but of a more diverse range.
- The Natural Heritage Service had cleared the area of hazards. The Kindergarten could be moved around or be located on one dedicated area.

- Each site would only have the capacity for 30 children.
- Local groups would support this initiative.
- The company that constructed the units was an arm's length company. They used unemployed teenagers, to help them learn a trade.
- It was necessary to keep children away from dog fouling. All dog walkers should be aware that there were children nearby and keep away from the site. However, there had not really been any reports of any issues.

Decision

To note that the Advisory Committee supported the Forest Kindergarten initiative in principle.

8.2 Work on Lodge

It was reported that there had not been much progress on work around the Lodge. It was explained that the disposal of building assets needed to go through a procedure in the Council and there were various phases to be worked through.

Decision

To note the update.

8.3 Feu Charter

It was reported that no work had been carried out in relation to the Feu Charter and the overall management protocol associated with Cammo.

Decision

To note the update.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 2 October 2019 at 2.00 pm in Cammo Lodge.