

# Minutes

## Cammo Estate Advisory Committee

Edinburgh 5 November 2019

### Present:-

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

**Representing the City of Edinburgh Council** – Councillors Hutchison and Work.

**In Attendance:-** Nick Benge, Simon Gillam (Friends of Cammo), David Kyles (Natural Heritage Officer) and Susan Dickon (Senior Natural Heritage Officer) (Place) and Blair Ritchie (Committee Services).

**Apologies:-** Peter Scott.

### 1. Minute

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Cammo Estate Advisory Committee of 12 June 2019.

#### Decision

To approve the minute as a correct record.

### 2. Matters Arising

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#### 2.1 Relationship between the National Trust and Cammo Estate.

David Chamberlain indicated that the National Trust had been reorganising. Consequently, it had been difficult to make a report and he would try to identify and contact the new representatives of the organisation and report back to the next meeting.

### 3. Cammo Estate Management Plan

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

#### 3.1 General Maintenance:

- General path edge maintenance had been undertaken over season, which included “ad-hoc” additional definition of field grass paths.
- The Annual Survey of Cammo Lodge had been undertaken by Skanska and minor recommendations would be made.

- A presentation seat had been installed at the top of North Field – requests would be considered on an individual basis. The first metal seat would be installed and the use and behaviour would be monitored.

### **3.2 Forthcoming Activities:**

- There would be consideration of Phase 2 works proposals for the Improvement Project, which included: paths not yet renewed, stables, office/piggery, Cammo Cottage, Canal inlet, grassland enrichment and wetland/boardwalk creation.
- A bulletin update / a website information update would be provided regarding progress and proposed activities.
- A site meeting with CEC Road Safety Assessors would take place, regarding proposals to reduce traffic along Cammo Road and to introduce appropriate road crossing infrastructure at the North Access linking with the River Almond.
- Green Team volunteers would be undertaking iCONic tree maintenance on 19 November.
- Corporate volunteer group would be undertaking plug planting on 19 November.

### **3.3 Cammo Improvement Project**

- Phase 1 path creation and upgrades were now complete.
- Fencing at the North Access, along Cammo Walk boundary, the boundary between fields and Cammo towards the water tower (existing car park to stables) and the top corner by Turnhouse Golf Club (TH GC) wall was underway.
- There had been three wall breaches in the stone wall boundary with TH GC to complete
- The Regeneration Capital Grant Fund application had been made, but had been unsuccessful.

### **3.4 Edinburgh Archaeological Field Society (EAFS)**

- EAFS had been working tirelessly over the last few years at Cammo.

It was explained that the Natural Heritage Officer would continue to work the EAFS. Once they have finished in Cammo Cottage, they would start in the Piggery and other areas, where buildings had been situated in the past. (see appendix 1)

Discussion took place in respect of the following issues:

- Tree planting.
- The unsuccessful application for the Regeneration Capital Grants Fund.
- The possible creation of ponds and the maintenance of wetland.
- Improvement to the habitat to attract bird life.
- Funding issues.
- Consideration of improvements to the estate as part of Phase 2.
- Improvements to road safety and funding for road modification.

- The impact of the proposed new housing estate.

### **Decision**

- 1) The Natural Heritage Officer to identify preferred aspects as part of the Phase 2 works proposals of the Improvement Project for the next meeting.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to set up meeting on site with the Archaeology Officer, Environmental Scotland and the Friends of Cammo to discuss Phase 2 Works.
- 3) The FOC to liaise with The Natural Heritage Officer regarding their eligibility for grants.
- 4) The FOC to check out about the Landfill Tax.
- 5) The Natural Heritage Officer to engage with the Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Natural Heritage about funding/permission for the Wetland Proposals.
- 6) The Senior Natural Heritage Officer to contact Edinburgh Lothian and Greenbelt Trust about funding/permission for the Wetland Proposals.
- 7) The Convener to contact the Botanic Gardens about the maintenance of Iconic Trees.

## **4. Walled Garden**

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The Natural Heritage Officer indicated that there were no new developments to report in respect of the Walled Garden (WG).

Discussion took place and the following issues were raised:

- That the WG should be considered as part of Phase 2.
- The cost of stabilising the WG and how to secure funding for this.
- The cost for de-vegetation.
- The possible “repointing” of sections of the wall and other solutions.

### **Decision**

- 1) To recommend building fences on both sides of the wall, to stabilise the Walled Garden and the Natural Heritage Officer to inform the National Trust about this recommendation.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to set up meeting with the National Trust regarding the future of the Walled Garden.

## **5. Interpretation of the Estate**

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The Natural Heritage Officer gave an update on the Interpretation of the Estate. He indicated that an interpretation workshop was held in September with stakeholders

present and who were involved in the discussions. New way markers and directional signage were received and put in storage. Arrangements for this and new threshold signage were to be installed over the autumn/winter period as ground conditions/temperature allowed.

## **Decision**

To note the update.

## **6. Work of Friends of Cammo**

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The Natural Heritage Officer gave an update the work of Friends of Cammo (FOC). He explained that concerted efforts had been made towards woodland floor habitat improvement, site cleanliness, wildflower and meadow management. There had also been continual liaison with CEC Officers.

The representative of the FOC explained that the work carried out by the FOC on woodland floor habitat improvement enabled them to put wood chip to constructive uses on the estate.

Discussion took place and the following issues were raised:

- The positive benefits of good path work.
- The cancellation of the Fun Day on 11 August 2019, because of inclement weather.
- The impact of Forest Kindergarten being on site.
- The need to control dogs and to prevent dog fouling.

## **Decision**

- 1) The Friends of Cammo to seed certain areas of the estate.
- 2) The Natural Heritage Officer to ask the designated individual to carry out their grass-cutting duties as agreed.
- 3) The Natural Heritage Officer to ask the Friend of Cammo for help with the overflowing bins, caused by activity at the Forest Kindergarten.

## **7. Nature Conservation**

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

- The Enrichment Project through capital receipt, which included plugs and seeds.
- An additional bee hive had been located within the Walled Garden.
- A Harris Hawk training request in Cammo had been turned down.
- There had been woodland ground layer habitat promotion and creation through deadwood provision (Nick Bengé and the FoC helped carry this out).

- The South West Meadow and Larch Tree meadow had been cut (no arisings had been removed).

The representative of the FOC indicated that it been a good year overall for nature conservation. Additionally, deadwood was helping with biodiversity.

### **Decision**

To note the update.

## **8. Any Other Urgent Business**

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### **8.1 Forest Kindergarten**

The Natural Heritage Officer reported on the Forest Kindergarten. He indicated that after successful pilot periods throughout several parks in Edinburgh including Cammo, Forest Kindergartens would become long term features 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 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 require 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 Heritage Service had insisted on landscaping of some kind surrounding the units. A type 1 pad had been constructed by the North Entrance to accommodate the structures once the specification had been agreed.

### **Decision**

To note the update.

## **9. Date of Next Meeting**

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Tuesday 11 February 2020 at 10.00 am in Cammo Lodge.

## **Appendix 1 - EAFS story of Cammo Cottage so far**

“On the 25<sup>th</sup> June we decided to shelve our weekly visits to Cammo for a summer break. For some this was a big rift as they had been regular excavators at Cammo all year. We have had occasional visits at weekends over the summer and intend to return to regular Monday visits from September the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

This year’s work has taken the story of ‘the offices’ much deeper. We are now fairly certain that the East end of the row of buildings was the ‘Cammo Cottage’ mentioned in the census of 1911. Then a Margaret Wright, a 70 year old spinster who was described as a ‘Cook/Domestic’, was the only person living on the estate. From the myriad finds we have retrieved from this part of the building, a picture of Margaret emerges.

There are the tools of her trade, pots and pans, jelly moulds and a griddle iron. She kept her knives sharp with a whetstone and doctored herself with Seaweed tonic and embrocation. She liked perfume and had an inkwell and bottle on her shelf. She used hairpins to keep herself tidy. A small range at the west end would have provided warmth and a place to cook. But it must have been a lonely life. Perhaps the gardeners lived out and came to work during the day? Perhaps she had the occasional visitor? – a jar of an infant milk product was another of the finds.

We had some help from the City of Edinburgh rangers who arranged for some of the larger stones from the Central area to be removed, which has opened up another area for investigation. We are interested to find what may lie under the rubble of the collapse here. It seems to be a much lower floor level and there is no sign of the superb flagstones found at the East end. Some corrugated iron sheets and the remains of a large piece of wood have come to light and will need to be recorded and given further work.

Some areas of the building are less accessible due to weak walls, but a great deal more is known about this multiphase and probably multipurpose building than when we started removing the complete cover of ivy a year ago. The Society can be well satisfied with progress at Cammo and the dedication of the volunteers that have worked hard to uncover the story both by excavation and research. There is still more to find.”