



Registered Scottish Charity No. SC033394

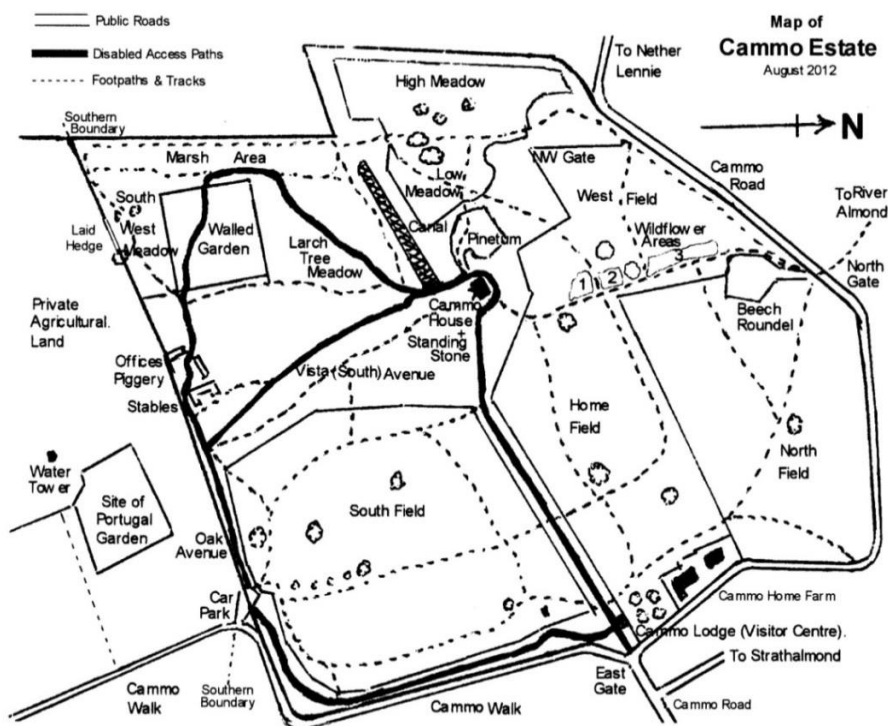
## FRIENDS OF CAMMO VISION FOR CAMMO ESTATE “COUNTRY IN THE CITY”

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to set out a Vision for Cammo Estate that may then inform any future decisions on capital spending in the Estate.

In particular, the sale of Cammo Home Farm and a possible Heritage Lottery Fund bid present “a once in a generation” opportunity to invest in Cammo Estate in a way that can conserve and enhance its natural environment and built heritage, whilst making the landscape and visitor facilities more robust and fit for the future.

The need for a Vision for Cammo is also made more pressing by the fact that, in the near future, there may be over 3,000 new households within a mile of the Estate, with the possibility of developments including Maybury and West Craigs, Craigiehall and Cammo fields. This will significantly increase the number of people using the Estate and may well degrade the Estate unless steps are taken to prepare it for heavier use.



**Cammo Estate is managed by City of Edinburgh Council as a public park, in accordance with a conservation agreement with the National Trust for Scotland.**

# THE VISION

## This is our vision for Cammo Estate in 2030

### **Value to the Public**

Cammo will be highly valued by the local community and visitors for its landscape, wildlife and historical values and for the opportunities it offers for low-key recreation, enjoyment and outdoor education. The Estate will continue to be appreciated because of the range of woodland, meadow and other habitats and countryside experiences it offers within a relatively small area and in close proximity to the City.

### **Extension of the Estate**

The Estate will have been extended to reconnect with the historical features of Mauseley Hill, the Water Tower and site of the Portugal Garden.

### **Built Structures**

The ruined Stables will have become a centre designed for activities related to education and conservation of the Estate. The Walled Garden will provide fruit for visitors and be a secluded haven. The walls and fences of the Estate will be safe and in good repair. The Canal will be attractive and clean and there will be a new water feature. Other historic features will be more prominent.

### **Landscape and Wildlife**

The Estate will continue to consist of a mosaic of woodland, hedgerow and wildflower habitats providing high biodiversity value. Action will have been taken to ensure that this high biodiversity value is maintained or increased despite increased public use. Key elements of the historic landscape (e.g. avenues of trees) will have been conserved and strengthened.

### **Public Access, Orientation and Interpretation**

Cammo will cater for the needs and interests of a broad visitor base, including young people and less able members of the community. There will be a well-maintained path network, good visitor facilities and increased parking. The Estate will form part of West Edinburgh's green networks of multi-use paths and wildlife corridors, such as the River Almond Walkway. High quality orientation, using signs and other media, will guide visitors around the Estate. Interpretation of key features will enhance visitors' awareness and appreciation of the Estate's wildlife, landscape and social history.

### **Education, Community Engagement, Volunteering and Sustainable Management**

Cammo will have become a centre for education and training, based on its good quality, varied natural habitats. Cammo will be used by the local and wider community for guided walks and other events. Friends of Cammo, members of the local community and other volunteers are actively involved alongside the City Council and the National Trust for Scotland in the management of the Estate and development and implementation of a far-sighted, long-term management strategy.

“In ten/twenty years' time, when Cammo is largely surrounded by new housing, it is hoped that Cammo will still be a little bit of “Rus In Urbe” (Country in the City) and that children will be able to enjoy the simple pleasures of climbing trees, looking for certain flora and fauna, and running about in woodlands and fields, while their parents are able to enjoy the peace, quiet, stillness and birdsong of countryside.”

Harry Taylor  
a long-time Friend of Cammo

## **ACHIEVING THE VISION**

### **FUNDING**

A capital sum of around £400,000, ring-fenced for Cammo, will be received by City of Edinburgh Council in 2016 from sale of Cammo Home Farm. This alone would enable many improvements to be made at Cammo. Additional funds would be required to achieve the full extent of this Vision, including restoration of the Walled Garden and Stables. City of Edinburgh Council intend to develop a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid for this, following their successful HLF bid for Saughton Park.

### **DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES**

The Local Development Plan (LDP) for Edinburgh identifies West Edinburgh as a strategic development area for additional housing. The LDP recognises that Cammo Estate and the neighbouring land including Mauseley Hill should not be developed, but recommends areas for housing at Maybury/ West Craigs with up to 2000 units and the Cammo fields next to Maybury Road with up to 700 units. These proposed developments in the green belt, particularly Cammo fields, have met considerable opposition, and alternative locations may be favoured when the LDP is finalised. However there are new proposals for housing developments in the area going beyond the LDP, including up to 1200 units in a new Craighiehall Village centred on the army base, and increasing the housing capacity of the International Business Gateway east of the airport to over 2000 units. Taken together, these potential developments will greatly increase the number of local residents for whom Cammo Estate will be an attractive green space.

### **EXTENSION OF THE ESTATE**

Extend the Estate to include the Water Tower, Mauseley Hill and the site of the Portugal Garden, which were historically parts of the estate. The additional area should be managed in a similar way to the rest of the Estate. This will:

- provide better access to these historical features from the rest of the Estate;
- enable the features to be safeguarded, conserved and managed in accordance with the strategy/plans for the Estate;
- absorb some of the additional visitors expected from nearby developments;
- reduce conflicts between visitors and agricultural use.

### **BUILT FEATURES**

Establish a longer-term plan and programme to reinstate (as required), enhance, conserve, manage and interpret the key historic features of the Estate, and increase their contribution to other objectives.

- a) Ensure that all built features, including particularly the Walled Garden, Stables, other ruins, walls and fences are, as a minimum, safe to prevent injury to visitors and without Heras fencing that detracts from the historic feature.
- b) Walled Garden:
  - Expand the area of Scottish fruit, adding to the 2015 planting of apples, pears and plums to include raspberries, blackcurrants, blackberries, gooseberries etc. Visitors should be free to pick these and the Friends of Cammo to make jams and other products to sell.
  - Create a Sensory Garden with quiet and sheltered seating areas.
  - Provide an area for use as a seedling nursery, in which groups of children could propagate trees and bushes for later planting elsewhere at Cammo.
  - Within the total area of 2.5 acres (1 hectare) maintain significant areas of native plants and trees including snowdrops amenity value. There should be no introduction of allotments and no formal planting.

- c) Look at the potential for restoring the Stables in order to use it as a classroom/ laboratory/ studio/ educational, arts and nature centre.
- d) Ensure that the Canal is kept relatively clean and flowing without excessive organic build-up that leads to impoverishment of its biodiversity and amenity value.
- e) Convert the Water Trough at the bottom of South Field into a water feature with sheltered seating and a wheelchair accessible path from the Lodge.
- f) Clear the Golf Tee at the north-west corner of the Estate to bring out this feature of the early twentieth century golf course in order to illustrate an aspect of the changing land use and provide a new view point.
- g) If the Estate is to be extended, assess the conservation and maintenance requirements for the Water Tower and ensure these are adequately funded. Enhance access to the Water Tower and to Mauseley Hill.
- h) Create a modest-scale, outdoor events area with natural seating (e.g. an outdoor auditorium with seating on grass slopes).

### **LANDSCAPE FEATURES**

- a) Maintain and undertake new planting to strengthen the historic tree avenues: East Avenue from Lodge Gate to Cammo House, Vista (south) Avenue from House past Stables, Oak Avenue from Car Park to Stables.
- b) Continue to offer the Pinetum as a location for new planting of exotic conifers, through the Botanic Garden's programme for endangered conifers and for other appropriate planting.
- c) Where appropriate, plant native species and assist natural regeneration, to maintain mixed-aged woodland and consolidate woodland fragments.
- d) Increase the protection of veteran trees and make more of a feature of them.
- e) Create additional hedgerows, both following historic lines of the estate and, where appropriate, following paths and desire lines, including screening the Home Farm development.
- f) Create additional wildflower areas, following the good practice developed at Cammo since 2011.
- g) Seek to have wildflowers established in other large, grassy areas and manage the fields as wildflower meadows.

### **WILDLIFE**

- a) Ensure that the Estate is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).
- b) Adopt, as a fundamental policy of the Estate, the tenet that the habitat it provides for flora and fauna is central to its value. This is both because of the pressing need to keep an area of enhanced biodiversity close to an increasingly large urban centre, but also because, in so doing, we increase the amenity and educational value of the Estate to its users.
- c) Increase the areas of the Estate that are under the three most valuable habitats in terms of biodiversity: the mixed-age woodland; the hedgerows; and the wildflower banks and meadows.
- d) Create a wetland and boardwalk complex in South Field using the outflow from the canal. Open up this outflow from its current piped condition to an open stream.

### **ACCESS AND ENJOYMENT BY ALL**

Promote accessibility for all, including less able members of the community and families with young children.

- a) Paths:
  - Ensure that an appropriate network and mix of paths is established and maintained, some suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs and some more natural.
  - Expand the number of surfaced paths so that all visitors can see the main features of the Estate. To include new surfaced paths between Cammo House and North Gate to provide access from that gate, along the west side of the Estate to allow a full circuit of the estate, and

- along the north side of Home Field and back to the Lodge to provide a short loop for viewing wildflower.
- Ensure that all paths are maintained in reasonable condition and that those designed to be suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs are maintained in suitable condition for this use.
  - Where possible, improve path design to reduce problems such as waterlogging, vegetation creep and erosion. Ensure that path construction is tree-friendly to prevent root damage.
  - Install handrails and additional seating, in keeping with the natural environment, where this would be of most benefit to visitors.
- b) Improve parking:
- Increase the amount of parking available on-site to cope with increased visitor numbers and reduce on-street parking. The least disruptive option on-site would be to expand the current car park into the corner of South Field. A hedgerow to surround the new car park would mitigate the visual and biodiversity impacts.
  - Provide designated disabled parking.
- c) Improve on-site visitor facilities:
- Visitor facilities are open for much longer than the current Lodge opening hours.
  - Facilities at the Lodge and possibly also at a new Stables development.
  - To include toilets (including disabled toilets) open at the main visiting times.
  - Lodge to provide a welcoming entrance facility for the estate, information about the Estate, indoor exhibits and interpretation.
- d) Promote suitable walking and cycling routes to Cammo Estate and management of these paths from current residential areas, new housing developments and the wider path network.
- Promote links with the River Almond Walkway, including its potential extension upstream beyond Grotto Bridge.
  - Press for traffic free routes to be included in the Local Development Plan and planning applications.
- e) Provide a cycle rack at the Lodge to encourage access by cycle rather than car, and to give these visitors the option of walking rather than cycling within the estate.

## **ORIENTATION AND INTERPRETATION**

Provide orientation and interpretation of key features, on-site and on-line.

- a) Ensure that there are sufficient orientation and way-markers on-site for visitors to find their way to key features of the Estate.
- b) Provide interpretation panels at key features, to help visitors better appreciate these features. Includes the Pinetum, Wildflower areas, Hedgerows, Cammo House and other features such as the Canal, Stables, Water Tower, Walled Garden and Veteran Trees.
- c) Provide information and interpretation through digital media such as QR codes and apps, to enable additional features to be highlighted to users of these apps without the cost and potential clutter of excess panels, and to allow the information to be more easily updated.
- d) Establish and maintain a website to provide more extensive information about Cammo Estate, to complement the current Facebook page.
- e) Develop an improved map showing the layout of the Estate and the main features, and make it available in a free leaflet and on-line.

## **EDUCATION**

- a) Promote the use of the Estate by schools taking children out of the classroom to learn from nature including the sorts of activities provided through “Forest Schools”.
- b) Encourage the use of the Estate by youth groups such as Scouts, Girl Guides etc.
- c) Encourage involvement in wildlife research and monitoring through relationships with local universities and interest groups.

- d) Provide an indoor centre where groups can work on material collected in the Estate (for example in the Stables Block.)
- e) Provide facilities for younger visitors for natural play rather than a formal play area.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEERING**

### **Community:**

Encourage the use of Cammo Estate for activities by the local and wider community:

- a) Continue with the annual Friends of Cammo barbecue, bringing more of the local community, especially families, into Cammo Estate.
- b) Enable the green in front of Cammo House to act as an arena to host additional arts and cultural events, e.g. a summer musical evening.
- c) Provide illustrated talks at the Lodge or elsewhere, to entertain and inform about topics related to Cammo (e.g. bees, wildflowers, wildlife).
- d) Organise and facilitate guided walks for particular groups including natural history and school groups and themed guided walks centred on biodiversity or historical features.
- e) Promote the suitability of Cammo for health walks by organised groups.
- f) Maintain the facilities for orienteering events encouraging community participation.
- g) Promote collaboration between the Natural Heritage Service and community groups to put on joint events.

### **Volunteering:**

- a) Continue with Friends of Cammo volunteer activities including tree and hedgerow planting, wildflower area creation and maintenance, litter picking, Lodge opening etc and seek greater participation from members to increase these activities.
- b) Encourage the use of Cammo for volunteer activities by other supervised groups.
- c) Train some volunteers to undertake a wider range of duties (conservation work, patrolling and giving advice), as “Voluntary Rangers” under Friends of Cammo and City of Edinburgh Council auspices.

### **Educational and Training Programmes:**

Develop training facilities and programmes, for example, training in conservation, woodcrafts and orchard management for special needs groups and schools, possibly with the Stables as a base.

## **SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT**

- a) Develop a far-sighted, long-term management strategy, supported by appropriate management plans and annual work plans.
- b) The Friends of Cammo and other community groups should continue to actively represent community and user interests at regular meetings with representatives of the City Council and National Trust for Scotland in respect of their management and guardianship roles.
- c) The City Council should continue to provide adequate financial and staff resources, supported by the Friends of Cammo and other volunteers, to ensure effective management of the Estate.
- d) The Council and other funding sources should support conservation and development projects which are consistent with the agreed Vision and Management Plan.
- e) The Local Development Plan and sensitive planning of surrounding areas should continue to provide robust and long-term protection of Cammo Estate’s special values, i.e. its LNR status, overall biodiversity benefits and designed landscape, and also its wider setting, e.g. views to Mauseley Hill.