

Alresford & Cheriton Scout Group

Proposal for new Scout Headquarters

3 March 2017



Executive Summary

- The existing Scout headquarters, owned by the Scouts, is no longer fit for purpose and is restricting the provision of Scouting in the District. All sections (i.e. Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers) have substantial waiting lists;
- A new facility would allow expansion of the Scout Group and could also provide a facility for wider use in the community, by other organised groups or individuals;
- The land on which the existing headquarters is located, in the heart of the town, will be released to enable additional residential development and to provide funding for the new facility;
- New facilities will be more sustainable, designed for purpose, built to modern standards, and allow easier and safer access for users;
- The Scout Group is requesting a gift, or peppercorn lease, of appropriate land extending to at least two acres on which to locate the new facility.

Introduction

Alresford & Cheriton Scout Group was formed in 2005 through the amalgamation of the Alresford Scout Group with the Cheriton Scout Group, both of which had a long history dating back to the early 20th century. The two Groups have provided outdoor adventure and learning for hundreds of local children under the guidance of the Scout Association in the UK for over 100 years.

Scouting has been growing rapidly over recent years and currently there are over 450,000 members in the UK including both boys and girls, Scouting having been open to all children for many years. Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development. This is founded on a set of values including integrity, respect for others, care, co-operation and involvement in local communities and with activities focused on outdoor adventure. Learning is delivered through the vehicle of fun. Young people are encouraged to take responsibility and to undertake new and challenging activities. Our Chief Scout, the adventurer and TV personality Bear Grylls, emphasises the importance of children engaging with their surroundings and working together to learn and grow.

In Alresford and Cheriton the Scout Group caters for over 110 children and young adults from ages six through to eighteen. At present the Group operates two Beaver Colonies (6-8 year olds), two Cub Scout sections (8-10 year olds), a Scout section (10-14 year olds) and an Explorer Scout section (14-18 year olds). In addition to this, however, there are another 30 people on the waiting lists who cannot be offered a space. Scouting is operational in the existing HQ building every week on Monday to Thursday evenings, with some evenings hosting two meetings, and also on many weekends throughout the year.

Existing Scout Headquarters

The Alresford & Cheriton Scout Group is headquartered in dedicated premises located off Bridge Road bordering the Perins Secondary School playing field. The building and land are owned by the

Scouts. The building is a pre-fabricated, single storey concrete building comprising a hall, a small meeting room, a kitchen and toilets. A garage was recently added to provide additional storage for camping equipment. We estimate the building to be around 40 years old and, while it is structurally sound, internally it is in a state of poor repair.

More importantly, its design, layout and location are increasingly inappropriate for effective delivery of Scouting for the following reasons:

- The size of the hall limits the size of our sections, meaning that we are unable to offer Scouting to all those in the area who would like to join. For instance, a typical Cub Pack might cater for 36 children, but the size of our existing hall creates a practical limit of around 24 per meeting.
- The design of the hall, with a concrete floor and walls and asbestos roof, results in an environment with very poor acoustics (an obstacle to learning and at times quite unpleasant).
- Poor ventilation leads to build up of condensation in the winter creating a slippery and dangerous floor.
- The facilities – kitchen and toilets – are in dire need of an upgrade simply through age and regular use.
- The location, 500 metres up a narrow lane, causes access problems with associated safety issues for parents bringing children by car.
- The limited access to dedicated outdoor space affects the programme possibilities for the sections. This has recently been exacerbated by the erection of a fence around Perins' school playing field, preventing access to crucial open space.
- Without modern insulation, the building is very expensive to heat and wasteful of resources.

Proposal

The Alresford & Cheriton Scout Group is proposing re-location of the headquarters to a modern, purpose built facility in a more appropriate location in Alresford. It is envisaged that the new headquarters will have the following features:

- A main hall large enough to house a Scout section of 36 members, sufficiently large to allow, for instance, a game of badminton or basketball;
- Ancillary facilities to match the needs of the sections, including meeting rooms, changing rooms, toilet facilities, daily storage, camp equipment storage, a kitchen, an office, etc.;
- Modern insulation and sound-dampening with effective (and sustainable) heating and power;
- Ease of access for members with sufficient car parking, a drop off zone, bicycle parking and suitable, safe walking access, along with direct access to dedicated outdoor space for Scout activities;
- A building that meets modern access and safety requirements, including disabled access not currently available;
- A secure site area or compound of at least two acres so that children can engage safely in outdoor activities;
- Immediate access to the greater outdoors for larger scale activities such hiking or cycling;
- Flexibility to allow other interested parties to use the facility.

The building would be a dedicated Scout Headquarters facility, designed for the delivery of Scouting, but would be flexible to enable use by other organisations. Examples of this use could include sports or fitness sessions – badminton club, aerobic exercise classes, yoga, etc. – or drama club or music instruction and rehearsals.

Contributions to funding required to create the new facility will be achieved through:

- The sale of the existing Scout HQ plot, which has been designated as prime development space which will be suitable for residential development;
- Local fund-raising organised through a dedicated committee of members; and
- Support from the Lottery and other charitable organisations.

Request for support from the Town Council

In line with discussions, the Scout Group is requesting that appropriate land be made available from the Town Council's resources on which to locate the new facility. Ideally this would be adjacent to the proposed "park and stride" car park to the north of the "employment zone" on the Sun Hill Lane development site. This would:

- enable the car park to be used for access to the Scout facility;
- provide direct access from the new facility to the proposed open spaces; and
- provide dedicated space for camping, games, campfires and other Scouting activities.

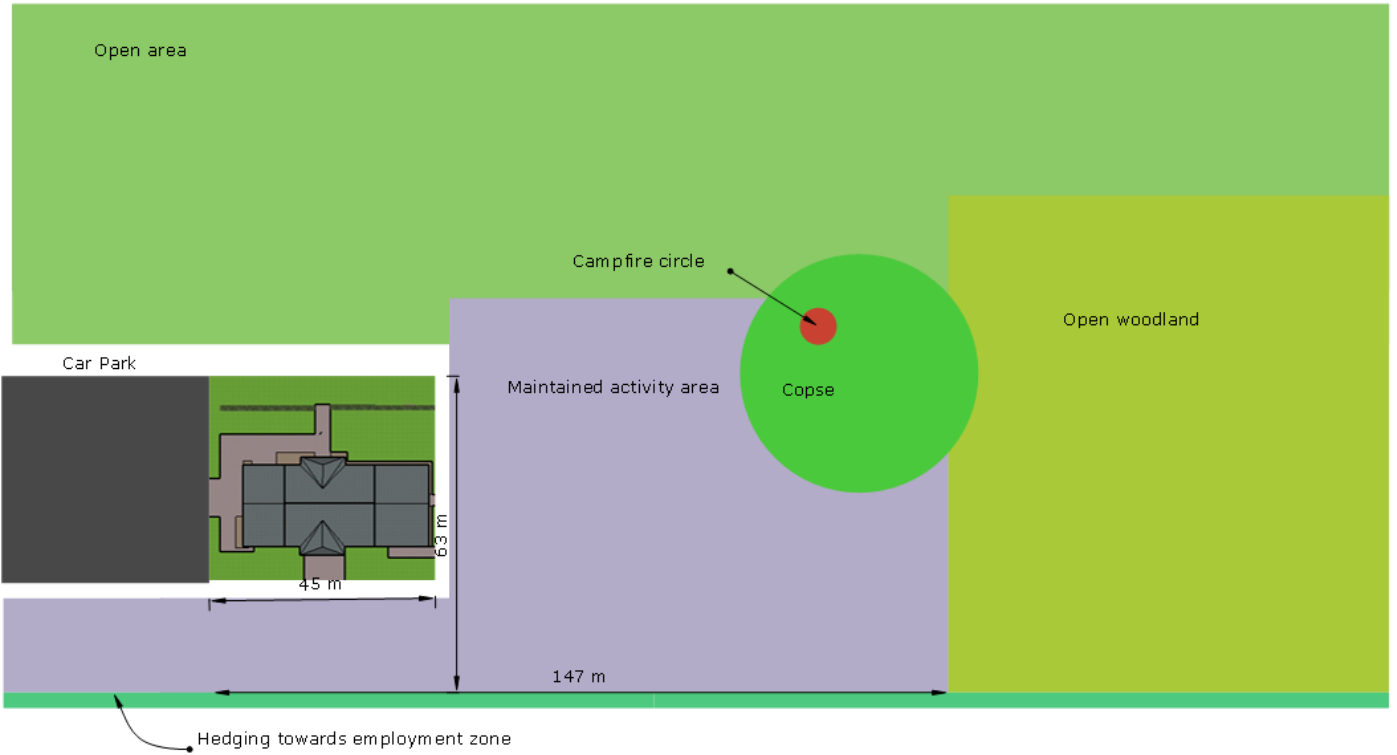
The space required would be of at least 2 acres, excluding car parking, but could further include an area of open woodland suitable for Scouting activities and general use.

Attachments

The following attachments are included with this proposal document to illustrate the new Scouting HQ facility (building and secure site area):

- Potential layout of Scout facilities, to include parking, hut, activity space, wooded area, campfire circle.
- Block plan of potential Scout facilities.
- Visualisation of facility in the style of farm buildings, as suggested in Seawards proposals for the employment zone
- Internal visualisations.

1. Potential layout of Scout facility.



2. Block plan of potential building.



3. External visualisation in the style of farm buildings.



4. Internal visualisations.



