

Report to Support the Build of a New Head Quarters for Long Ashton All Saints Scout Group



March 2019



Summary

Long Ashton Scouts are seeking planning permission to build a new headquarters on a green field site within the village. This report provides details of the current situation with regards to the issues that the group are facing in trying to secure a meeting place with sufficient availability to satisfy the increasing demand on the group. It also demonstrates the extent to which alternative options have been investigated including the exhaustive search for venues with sufficient availability and capacity, in addition to alternative plots of land with a view to building a new facility.

The group has been working with a local landowner who has offered a portion of land on which to build a new facility, subject to the planning application being approved. This report contains architectural schemes that illustrate the proposed appearance and construction of the facility and shows how it has been designed with an eco-friendly theme, keeping in mind its location within the surrounding area. Consideration has also been given to the traffic ingress/egress to the site, providing details of changes to the local highway and transport proposals to minimise disruption/traffic in the area.

This report demonstrates that the prospective land purchase and subsequent building of a new Head Quarters is the only viable option for Long Ashton All Saints Scout Group, if the organisation is to continue to grow and flourish within the village.

The intent is for this report to be used to support a planning application to North Somerset Council.

Contents

Summary.....	2
Introduction.....	5
Long Ashton All Saints Scout Group.....	5
Additional Venues to Support Scout Meetings.....	6
Sites Considered for a New Long Ashton Scout Headquarters.....	7
Proposed Location for the New Head Quarters.....	10
Traffic Management Schemes.....	10
New Scout HQ Schematics & Plans.....	10
Plan of the Proposed New Head Quarters for Long Ashton Scout.....	11
Schemes Illustrating the Construction and Design of the New Building.....	12
Typical Features of the New Building in Terms of Construction and Design.....	13
Conclusion.....	14

Introduction

Long Ashton All Saints Scout Group has been operating within Long Ashton for over 90 years and enjoys a huge level of support from its members and the wider village. The group is well recognised for the opportunities it provides for young people and also for the important role it plays within Long Ashton, through the charitable support it provides to the community.

Several years ago, the existing Headquarters located on Providence Lane was deemed unsuitable to hold Scout meetings by the Scout District Commissioner. The building was in a poor state of repair and too small to hold meetings in, given the increase in popularity and therefore the size of the respective groups that the organisation was enjoying at the time.

Birdwell School have kindly been accommodating the group on a regular basis since leaving the Providence Lane Headquarters. More recently Northleaze School have also offered the use of their school hall for one evening a week. However, this still represent a shortfall in terms of having a venue to satisfy the totality of the demand from Long Ashton Scouts.

With this in mind, the Scout Group in Long Ashton have been striving to find a longer term solution that would satisfy the immediate and longer term needs of the Long Ashton All Saints Scout Group.

The Long Ashton Neighbourhood Development Plan acknowledges the need to find new premises:

“For some time the community has wanted improved facilities for the main youth groups, the Scouts, Guides and Youth Club. Ideally, these would be purpose built, if sufficient funds and suitable locations could be found”

Long Ashton All Saints Scout Group

There are 4 groups that meet on a regular basis across a wide range of ages. There are currently 101 young people and 24 leaders currently involved in the Long Ashton Scout Group and this is made up as follows:

Group	Number of Young People	Number of Leaders/ Sectional Assistants	Day of the Week	Venue
Watkins Beaver Colony	20	5	Tuesday	Birdwell School
2 nd Beaver Colony	16	4	Wednesday	Northleaze School
Cubs	31	8	Tuesday	Birdwell School
Scouts	34	7	Thursday	Birdwell School
GSL & Exec Committee		6		
Total	101	30		

There is potential to grow the group even further on the proviso that additional accommodation could be found. This can be demonstrated by the large number of children/young people that are currently on the waiting list. Unfortunately, due to the size and extent of the waiting list, a large number of children/young people will never get a place in Scouts, which is saddening, given the benefit Scouting brings to young people.

See below for a breakdown of the Long Ashton Scout Waiting List

Age Group	Number of Children/ Young People
4 – 6 Years	20
Beaver Age	14
Cubs Age	32
Scout Age	31
Total	97

There is an ongoing task to expand the group to include an additional Cub Pack (with 4 leaders) and another Scout Group (with 2 leaders) and possibly an explorers section. This, along with the need for leaders & the Executive Committee to meet on a regular basis, would bring the total number of meetings per week to 8.

This expansion would reduce the waiting list significantly to around 34 (mainly in the 4-8 yrs old range). However, the lack of accommodation within the village is severely hampering this expansion of the group.

Additional Venues to Support Scout Meetings

The Executive Committee have been working incredibly hard in order to secure additional venues to support new Scout Group meetings. A number of options for additional accommodation have been investigated within the village. The basic accommodation requirements for Long Ashton Scouts are as follows:

- Size – The meeting area needs sufficient space to hold activities & games
- Storage - There needs to be adequate storage for materials, equipment, etc.
- Availability – Due to the voluntary nature of the Scouting organisation, the regular meetings need to be held on weekdays to facilitate leader support & availability of the children/young people.

On this basis, a number of venues were discounted following initial investigations. These venues included the Youth Hut (too small), the Village Hall (only available in Fridays). Other venues are also currently well used, with only limited availability at best, i.e.:

Venue	Day	Activity
Keedwell Church	Monday	Weight Watchers
	Tuesday	Church Meetings
	Wednesday	Reserved
	Thursday	Reserved
	Friday	Available

Venue	Day	Activity
Church House	Monday	Dance
	Tuesday	Orchestra
	Wednesday	Dance
	Thursday	Dance
	Friday	Dance

Venue	Day	Activity
Guide HQ	Monday	Rainbows & Guides
	Tuesday	Brownies & Band
	Wednesday	Brownies & AA
	Thursday	Dance
	Friday	Dance

The existing venues, Northleaze School & Birdwell School are used by other groups and organisations within the village and cannot offer additional slots to hold Scout meetings. In addition, the arrangement with the schools is informal, with no written tenancy agreement. This presents a risk, as the offer of accommodation could in theory be withdrawn with little or no notice.

Sites Considered for a New Long Ashton Scout Headquarters.

A number of alternative sites for the new Head Quarters have been investigated. The criteria for what would be considered a suitable site are as follows:

- Size – adequate for a new building, with parking, storage and to allow outdoor activities.
- Cost – The Scout Group are looking to make the purchase of the land and to fund the new building from the proceeds of selling the old Head Quarters, which has been out of use for a number of years due to its condition and lack of space.

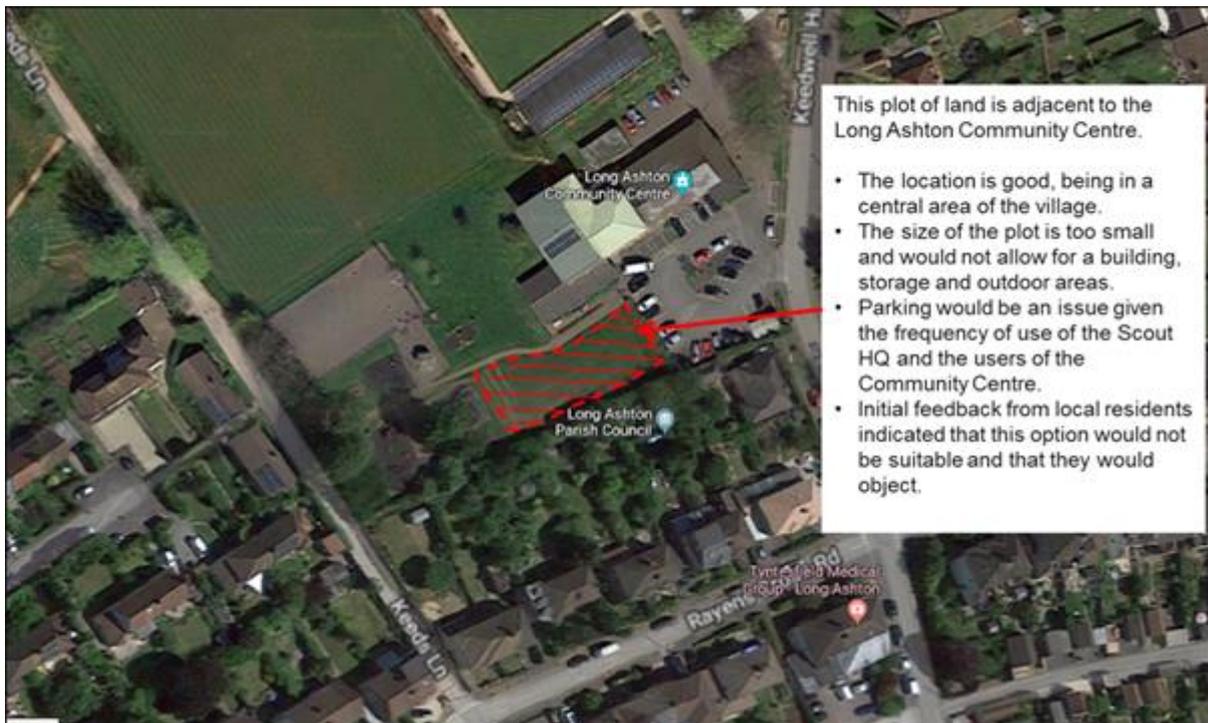
As such, due to the limited resources and money available, the purchase of the British Legion building with a view to convert it for Scouting purposes was discarded on the grounds of price.

There were three other options that have been considered to date. These are shown below:

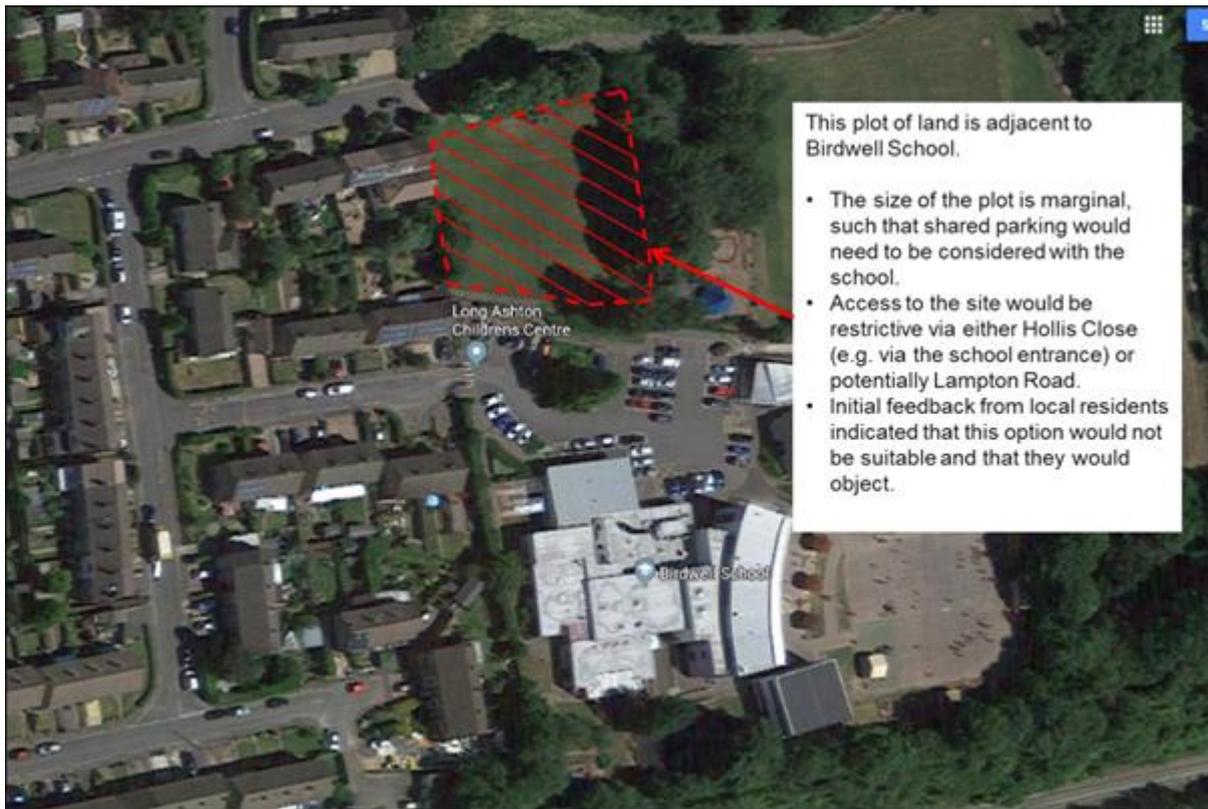
Option 1) Plot of land adjacent to the Long Ashton Guide Hut



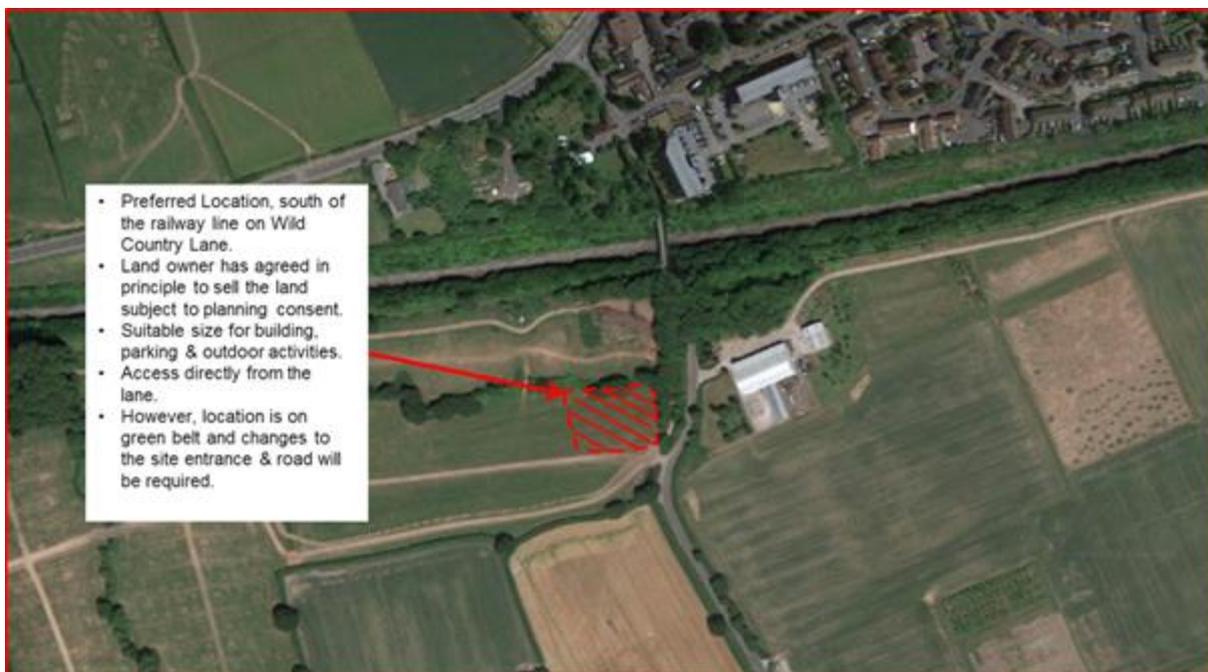
Option 2) Land adjacent to the Village Hall



Option 3) Land adjacent to Bidwell School



Option 4) Land just off Wild Country Lane, south of the railway line



Proposed Location for the New Head Quarters

Option 4 is considered to be the preferred location. Discussions with the land owners have progressed to a point where a price has been agreed to purchase the land subject to planning permission. Planning consultants and architects have since been engaged in order to ensure that the proposed building would be in keeping with its surroundings and fully embrace energy efficiency and other environmentally friendly features.

In addition, our main aim is to become a truly inclusive and leading organisation for the Scout movement. The new building allows us to do this, as it will be designed to support the needs of young people regardless of disability, through the provision of suitable access and facilities, allowing more to benefit through being involved in Scouting.

In light of this a number of architectural drawings have been created in order to support a pre-application for planning. These drawings include a plan view of the vicinity of the proposed site, providing details of the size, layout and the means of access/egress. In addition, schemes illustrating the various elevations have also been created. These show in some detail, 2 different designs that are being considered that detail the construction and appearance of the building.

The main theme for the construction of the building is that of conservation, where eco-friendly features such as solar panels, wooden construction and integrated bird boxes are very much part of the overall theme in order to minimise the impact on the surrounding environment

In terms of highways, consideration has been given to the way in which the site would be accessed, including the provision of a thoroughfare on site allowing parents to drop off their children and return on to the carriageway in a continuous flow. This minimises the risk associated with traffic queueing on Wild Country Lane in order to access the site.

In addition, the current gated entrance to the land would be relocated (moved in a southerly direction) in order to maximise the visibility and therefore safety, for parents and approaching motorists. It is also suggested that the 30 MPH sign is moved to the southern approach to the site entrance in order for full compliance to current Highways regulations to be maintained.

Traffic Management Schemes

In order to minimise the impact of traffic caused by parents dropping off or collecting their children during an evening meeting, a number of traffic management concepts have been considered:

- A web-based lift share scheme is to be created, allowing parents to arrange and share drop-offs/pick-ups in order to minimise the number of vehicles visiting the site.
- There will be minibus pickups, that will collect and drop off at pre-determined locations, such as the carpark on Theynes Croft and that of the Village Hall.
- The use of the recently improved pedestrian walkways along Wild Country Lane will be encouraged.

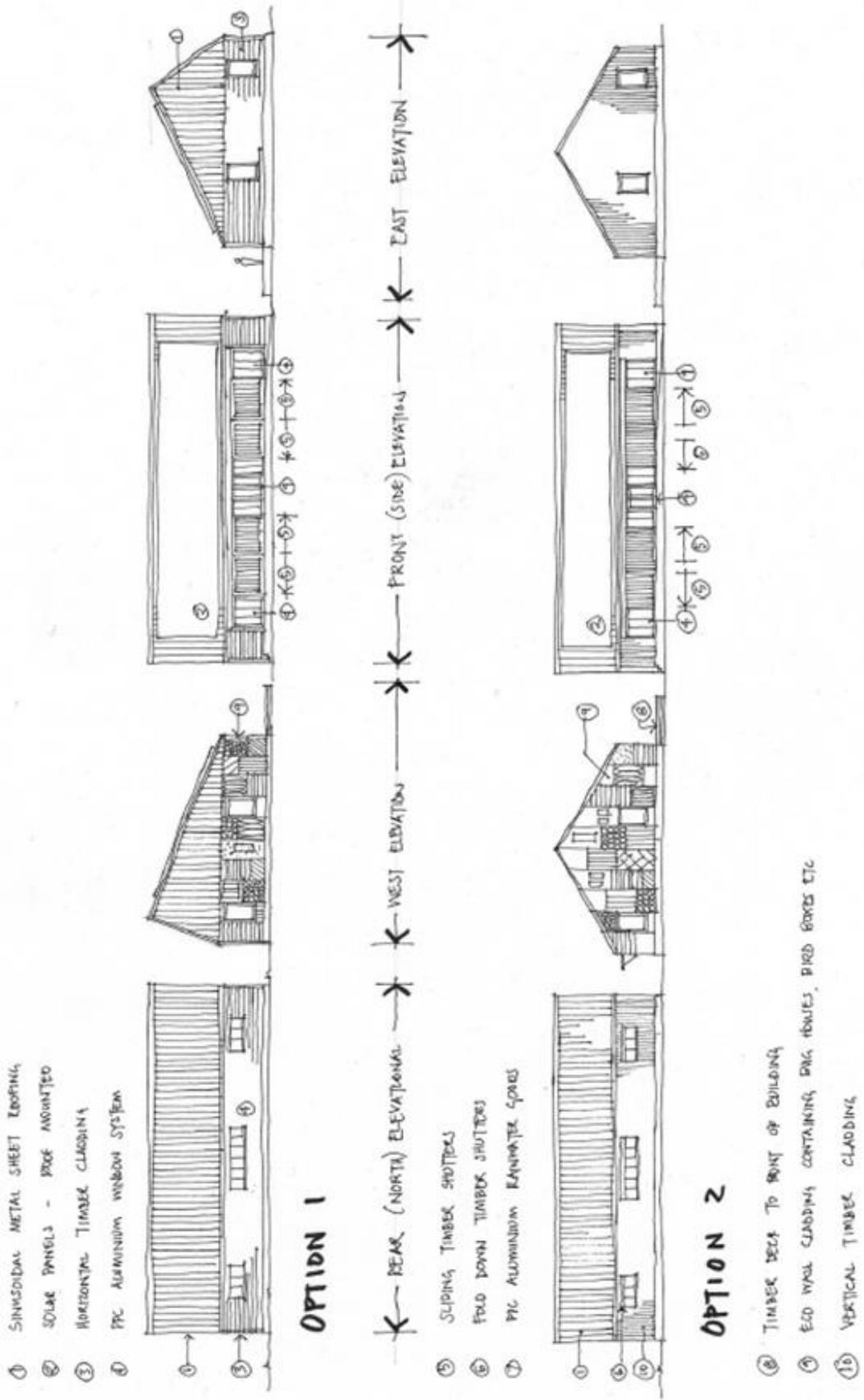
New Scout HQ Schematics & Plans

The following section provides details of the proposed layout of the new HQ and details of how it might appear in terms of style and construction.

Plan of the Proposed New Head Quarters for Long Ashton Scout



Schemes Illustrating the Construction and Design of the New Building



Typical Features of the New Building in Terms of Construction and Design



Conclusion

The Long Ashton All Saints Scout Group is a growing organisation that needs a new building to support the increasing demand from the village. The group have actively considered a number of options, both in terms of using existing venues and securing green field sites in order to build a new venue, with the site on Wild Country Lane being the preferred location for the new Scout HQ.

Schemes providing details of the building construction and site layout have been generated. Consideration has been given to minimising the impact of such a building on the local environment and indeed aspects of traffic management.

It is hoped that with the approval of appropriate planning authorities and local councils that this project could be made into a reality to serve the village and it's growing population of young people.