

2014 - 2031 Slinfold Neighbourhood Plan



Slinfold Scout Hut Background Paper May 2017



2 Land and Buildings

2.1 The Scouts have a lease on their site from the freeholder HDC which expires in 2024 with an option for HDC to break in 2019. The building was bought by the Scouts as second hand porta cabins and the lease length reflected the likely economic life of the building as forecast at that time. The premises are now beyond economic repair with much of the fabric integrity of the building failing – the building has a leaking roof, toilet facilities are inadequate and provisions for disabled access are sub-standard. In a catch-22, repairs and improvements cannot sensibly be funded until the Scouts are able to demonstrate security of tenure in excess of 25 years.

Consequently, new scout accommodation has been on the parish 'wish list' since the start of the Plan process.



Existing Hall above and some of the wants of repair below

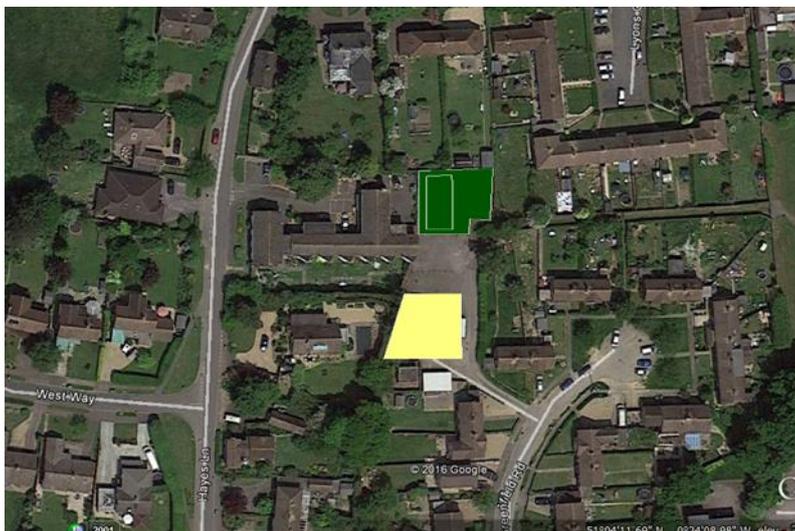
2.2 The Scouts have been exploring 3 options to attempt try and secure their on-going existence:

Option 1 Extend the current lease - the advantage of this would be the site is familiar to them but the disadvantage is that continuity could not be provided whilst the new scout hut was under construction. In an attempt to pursue this option, negotiations were opened with HDC but no formal commitment was forthcoming from HDC.



Option 2 Relocate the Scouts onto nearby garage site owned by Saxon Weald (SW) and HDC and SW could land-swap.

Discussions were opened between HDC and Saxon Weald back in 2015 about a potential deal but as of May 2017 talks were no further forward. The proposal to SW was that they could redevelop the land at the south east corner of their site occupied by the garages but included a potential land swap with the land owners of the scout hut (HDC) allowing the redevelopment of the entire site in a comprehensive manner and promoted in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan whereby a new scout hut would be delivered on the land formerly occupied by the garages. This arrangement would also give the Scouts continuity by allowing the Scouts to use the old hut while a new one was being built close by and retain a central location. .



Aerial view identifying existing scout hut and land (green) and replacement relocation site in yellow. Both areas approx. 3,500sqft

In April 2015, SW said they didn't have the funds so were not able to pursue a land exchange. The steering group did however consider that there was some redevelopment opportunity at the Cobblers site. It was felt that the idea could be incorporated into the NP as perhaps SW would sell their holding and another RSL would do it. It represented after all,

a good central site for the additional 10 units and so the Cobblers site is included in the emerging neighbourhood plan.

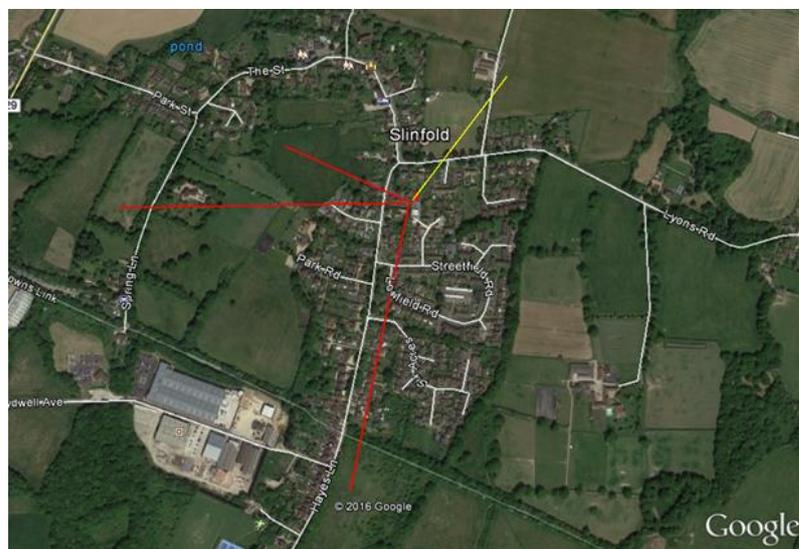


The scout hut was not included as part of Policy 14 in the plan there was insufficient certainty of delivery. In any case the site would be able to come though as a windfall as it lies within the BUAB.

As of May 2017, SW are now believed to be warming up to the idea as, like most other RP's strapped for cash by the Welfare Reform cuts, they are reportedly now considering the redevelopment in line with the Neighbourhood Plan.

Option 3 A new scout hut in a new location brought forward through the Neighbourhood Plan

As discussions between HDC and SW continued it was felt that a contingency was needed for the Scouts to prevent them becoming homeless in 2019 and so other sites were considered. Predictably EVERY developer said they could accommodate the Scouts in their plans so the NPWG had to decide which was the best site against the Scouts stated requirements (Appended).

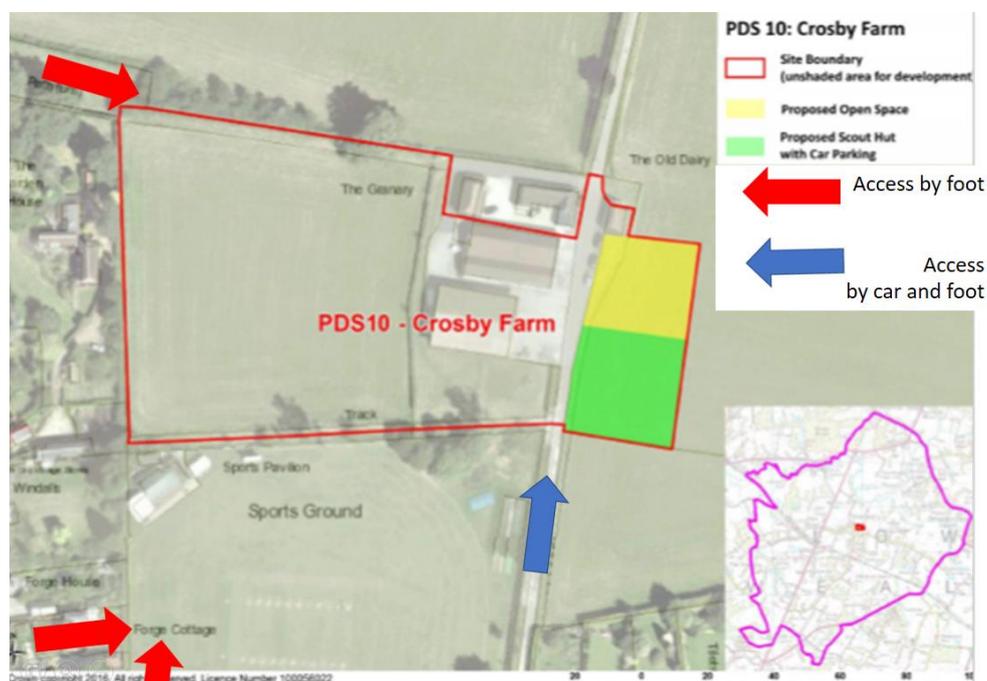


Sam Jozwiak (chair of Slinfold Scouts) and Kayla Glover were invited to attend a NPWG meeting on 14 June 2016, which they did. Whilst some of the other sites satisfied some of the criteria, the Crosby site was the most promising and closest to the existing facility in terms of pedestrian access. Given the Scouts needs (a site with some outside area) and the land owner had agreed in writing, Crosby Farm was taken forward as the preferred relocation site if a land deal could not be achieved at the existing site.

Site	Proximity to existing hut:	Ability to provide sufficient space	24 hr access	Safeguarding and child protection issues	Land Owner agreement
Cobblers	20m	✓	✓	✓	No agreement between HDC and SW
End of Westway	269m	✓	✓	Proximity to pub garden	✓
Crosby Farm	307m	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spring Lane	552m	✓	✓	✓	✓
East of Hayes Lane	569m	✓	✓	✓	✓

3 Considerations for Crosby Farm

The land allocated at Crosby Farm was confirmed in writing by the landowner on 27/7/2015 to include land for a scout hut and amenity space.



The rationale for the location on site was based on several factors including:

- Accessibility by foot and car is good and predominantly from the south.
- Proximity to other complementary cluster of outdoor uses (cricket pavilion) could promote better use of respective facilities.

- Respectful of existing residents along Lyons Road amenity, create some distance between the scout facility and resident homes and gardens. Not so critical for new residents into Crosby Farm development as they will come knowing the existence of the scout facility.
- Landscape impact. The Slinfold Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment DHA August 2015 reported minimal landscape capacity on the east side of the track and a 15m buffer zone to the West Sussex Literary Trail (running along northern boundary of Crosby site and then north up track).

Scout use is D2(e) under Use Classes Order 1987 ...”area for indoor or outdoor sports or recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms”, which aligns with Promoting Healthy Communities Para. 70 of the NPPF:

“To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

1. Plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments
2. Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs
3. Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community
4. Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services”

Policy 43 of the Horsham District Planning Framework seeks to guard against the loss of existing sites and premises. Given the state of the current facility there is a risk that this could arise. Under section 3a the loss of the existing facility would be considered acceptable provided that “ an alternative facility of equivalent or better quality and scale to meet community needs is available or will be provided at an equally accessible location within the vicinity”. In seeking an alternative location for the site, section 2 of the policy is also of value it states “Sites located outside built-up area boundaries will be supported where this is the only practicable option and where a suitable site well related to an existing settlement exists”. It is considered that the criteria listed above are consistent with the provisions of this policy.



There is an existing building on the site - a single storey triple garage of approx. 480sqft. The new scout building will be a single storey structure with higher eaves and apex. For comparison, a like for like size replacement of the existing scout building, would be less than 3 times the size of this existing garage building by footprint and 1/3 of the size of the largest of the two sheds on the west of the

track.

4 Funding

Subject to securing a long-term interest in a location (125 years is preferable to another 25 year lease, attention can be turned to sourcing funding for the new facility. Traditional sources of funding through the Scouting Association and Lottery funding will be explored. Additionally, Slinfold Parish Council has indicated a desire to contribute some of its CIL revenue (which could be up to 25% of total CIL receipts if the Plan is successfully 'made')

5 Conclusion

The Scouts desperately need a new facility and the approach taken through the Neighbourhood Plan has been formulated to maximise the chance of success. In order of preference; a land swap at the adjoining site, a new site at Crosby Farm or an extended lease at the existing site are all options open to the Scouts under the Plan. As ever the Scouts will have to be resourceful and take the initiative where it arises but the biggest risk facing them at present is if the Plan fails and the Scouts do not get their site and the Parish does not receive its CIL funding to help build a new hut.

Appendix

Slinfold Scout Hut, proposed relocation/rebuild Wish list

Location

A central village location to allow the young people and carers to be able to walk to the hut, in safety, 12 months a year.

24 hour vehicular access.

Parking and ability to store trailers, towers etc, currently we have a lockable compound.

Three Scout leaders run the Slinfold Minibus and it is currently stored securely at our existing hut.

The building/ storage area

Size 3,000sq ft to accommodate our growing groups. (currently 13 uniformed leaders, 90+ children and waiting lists)

Ideally a brick built building.

The main hall to be 1,200+ sq ft.

Outdoor space available to accommodate our outside activities eg. tent pitching.

Require a large hall for our meetings, large kitchen, loos, disabled loo and large internal/external storage areas to accommodate all our equipment, (camping, crates, pioneer poles, rope, climbing equipment etc).

A drying area for tents and equipment.

It would be nice to have a leaders room/office, showers and underfloor heating.

The Scout Hut use

Currently we have autonomous use of our hut.

Due to the complexities of running a group within Scouting Guide lines and all the aspects of Child Protection, we need to have control of who uses the hut and who has access to it and at what times. We welcome sharing our facilities with the wider community and we currently rent out our hut to other organisations such as:-

The Horsham Rural play scheme, who use it on a weekly basis.

The Cobblers (Slinfolds residential flats for the elderly) use our facilities on a regular basis. We have a very strong relationship with this group of people.

We rent out the hall to Church groups for meetings as well as a venue for parties for many of our children.

A local yoga group.

In the past the pre-school has been based in the Scout Hut twice. It is now part of the school and permanently based there.

* 'Wish requirements' in **bold** are of high priority to us.