

Design and Access Statement.

Erection of Replacement Activity Building, Silverwood Scout Camp, Barnsley Road, Silkstone.

Background

The existing timber building, which occupies 59 sq m, was erected some 50 years ago when the Silverwood camp site came into the possession of the Barnsley Scouts. At that time part of the scouting regulations required the provision of a storm hut, the principle of which was to provide a refuge for Cub Scouts, who are younger members of the movement (age range 8-10), in the event of storm conditions damaging canvas tents. Cub camps of the day would typically be for up to 20 - 30 people

More recently, as the Scout movement has become fully co-educational there has been a tendency towards larger camps where 200 – 500 people can be on site and on a number of occasions there have been over 1000 people on site. During these larger camps and it is not unusual for there to be up to 100 young people for whom storm accommodation must be provided. In these circumstances the existing timber building is clearly inadequate.

The existing building is also used regularly by BMBC Education Department as a base for the Forest School Programme for children in the age range 3 years – 11 years when up to 30 children and the necessary adult supervision are present on site.

Over the years this building has also been used for an increasing number of Training Courses, both for adults and young people and also as a food preparation area for camps involving younger members of the movement. Whilst this has continued for a number of years, recent Gas Safe regulations require that the 6 ring gas cooker is no longer used within a timber building.

The progression of safety and child safeguarding issues, within Scouting, has led to an increased requirement for adult leader training, and problems are being experienced accommodating the necessary courses. The ongoing re-assessment of Scout Leader skills accreditation is another area where there is no longer adequate indoor provision and the new Activity Centre is intended to address these requirements

Silverwood Scout Camp makes a significant contribution to tourism into the Barnsley area, attracting a total of 5,500 – 6000 persons annually. People attending the site are from the length and breadth of the UK.

The proposed Activity Building will be 112 sq m in extent, which represents an increase on overall area of slightly less than twice. Construction is to be undertaken as part of a Community Training Programme.

CONTEXT

Physical context

The Surrounding Area:

To the east and south of the camp site are extensive woodlands, with a public footpath running alongside the eastern boundary. On the northern boundary is a hedge

interspersed with small trees, and beyond open countryside. On the western is a hedge, again with open land beyond. The land falls away to the north and east, so that the camp site and any buildings within it are not visible from outside the site.

The Site:

This is a long established scouting camping site, comprising many open grassed areas interspersed with much tree planting. On the western boundary is a group of buildings, mostly single storey, providing ancillary facilities including a toilet block, an office, a training/ activity building and some sleeping accommodation. At the northern end of the row of buildings is a timber building with felt roof, used for training and activities.

Planning policies

The following policies have been taken into account in the submission of this application.

National policies

Planning Policy Guidance Note 2

Paragraph 3.4 The construction of new buildings inside a Green Belt is inappropriate unless it is for the following purposes:

essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries, and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it (see paragraph 3.5 below);

Paragraph 3.5 Essential facilities (see second indent of paragraph 3.4) should be genuinely required for uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it.

Planning Policy Statement 7

Paragraph 35(ii) – (Local Planning Authorities should) allow appropriate facilities needed to enhance visitors' enjoyment of a particular countryside feature or attraction, providing they will not detract from the attractiveness or importance of the feature, or the surrounding countryside.

Paragraph 36 - Facilities requiring new buildings in the countryside may be justified where the required facilities are needed in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction; they meet the criteria in paragraph 35(ii); and there are no suitable existing buildings or developed sites available for re-use.

Local policies

The site lies within an area allocated as Green Belt and Area of Borough Landscape Value in the Barnsley Urban Development Plan.

The following policies were considered to be relevant when producing the design for this development: Policy GS7, GS8, GS8B, GS9, GS13 and BE6.

INVOLVEMENT OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS

There are no residents that it would be appropriate to consult in respect of this proposal.

DESIGN OF THE SCHEME

Use

Is this justified in terms of:

Site and surroundings – The countryside is the appropriate location for Scout camps, a predominantly outdoor recreational activity, and ancillary buildings for this large camp site are therefore themselves appropriate in the green belt. It is genuinely required for this use, as is demonstrated by the fact that it replaces an existing building having the same use.

Land use –no change in the use of the land is involved in this proposal.

Amount

is there justification for:

How much development is proposed - the building has a floor space of 112.5m². While the timber building was adequate for the site when built 50 years ago, it is now much too small to meet current need.

Layout

The impact of the building will be limited as it is sited in the corner of the camp, when visible, it will be seen in conjunction with the adjoining two storey building, and from the main approach will be largely screened by that building. Moreover, it is replacing an existing building on the same site.

Gradients and topography – the location on a hillside enables the building to be screened from outside the site by rising land levels.

Scale

Are the following justified:

The size of the building in relation to its surroundings - The building is of comparable size to the other nearby buildings.

Landscaping

Landscape principles and details – the surrounding area has been extensively planted with trees, and no further planting is proposed.

Appearance

With respect to the architecture /style, design / detail – the design is almost identical to the previously approved toilet block close by, and will match the simple design of the other nearby buildings. Overall the appearance of the site will be improved by the removal of a dilapidated building, constructed in materials that are at odds with the remainder of the buildings. The building will not be visible from outside the site, and will be significantly screened from within the site by the adjacent building and extensive tree planting within the camp.

Materials / colours/ textures – the Brown Carlton Main brick will match that of the adjoining building and the toilet block, as will the brown profile sheet roofing materials.

Access

The development will not result in any increase in traffic to this long established site.

The new hut will be built with ramped access to the main door.

Fire and refuse vehicles have unimpeded access to the site.