

Chantry Wood Campsite

Options Appraisal in Detail

1. Option A: Fully refurbish campsite with upgraded facilities

1.1. Description:

- 1.1.1. This option includes the provision of a fully refurbished campsite including toilets, kitchen, washroom and showers. It includes the necessary refurbishment of the toilets, allows multiple party bookings and opens the campsite facility to a wider audience. Heating of indoor space is not included in the estimate for the refurbishment, making this facility summer use only.
- 1.1.2. Ancillary works such as a necessary upgrade of the access track have not yet been priced. Upgrading the track to accommodate higher traffic volumes will have a significant impact on the trees in this area and requires further investigation. However, a figure is included as an estimate.

1.2. Assumptions made:

- 1.2.1. The cost estimates are based on the quotes obtained by the building surveyor's team.
- 1.2.2. Estimated visitor numbers are based on previous bookings and local comparisons with other campsites. The potential occupancy rates are estimates based on other studies, namely the feasibility work to re-furbish and expand the campsite at the Basingstoke Canal Centre.
- 1.2.3. Operational costs assume that a broader audience attracted by additional facilities is less self-sufficient and requires an increased staff presence on site.

1.3. Capital Cost:

- 1.3.1. Funds available from a Capital bid and S106 are currently £209,000. There is shortfall of £105,000 to achieve a full refurbishment of the campsite.

1.3.2. Capital cost:	Total:	£313,000
	Refurbishing and strengthen existing barn	£17,000
	Services (Electricity, Drainage, Plumbing)	£96,000
	New water main	£78,000
	Internal improvements including installation of Kitchen and Equalities Act compliance	£18,000
	Fire and Lighting protection:	£8,000

Preliminaries	£27,000
Contingency	£18,000
Professional fees	£21,000
Upgrade of access track including tree works (estimate)	£30,000

1.4. Estimated Operational Cost: Total: £25,000

Wardening:	£6,000
Cleaning:	£5,500
Admin: (Assuming an automated booking system is in operation)	£2,000
Management Re-charge:	£500
Facilities: Electricity, Water, Cesspit emptying, Legionella checks etc.:	£6,000
R&M:	£3,000
Services: Fire Wood supply, Waste Removal etc:	£2,000

1.5. Potential Camping fees:

1.5.1. The average camping fee in the local area is ca. £17/ pitch (2 adults with small children with car). It is expected that this fee could be achieved with a fully refurbished campsite. A different pricing structure would apply for school and community groups in line with similar campsites in the area. Fees would be around £5 (incl VAT) per person. For the purpose of the income estimate, the current low numbers of bookings by such groups would have little impact on the estimated income.

1.5.2. Based on similar estimates locally (Surrey County Council report on Basingstoke Canal Campsite), the campsite can provide an occupancy rate of 30% over 6-7 months (Summer) with capacity of 25 pitches.

1.5.3. This could achieve an annual income of £27,500.

1.5.4. It should be noted that there would be a deficit due to booking costs if the booking process cannot be fully automated.

1.6. Impact:

- I. This option would allow multiple party bookings and opens the campsite facility to a wider audience
- II. Achieving an operational profit would require an average of 8 family bookings per night for 7 months of the year.
- III. The estimated costs are based on an average occupancy over the summer. We would expect that the campsite is fully booked every weekend, with fewer bookings on weekdays. There would be a requirement for around 45-50 car

journeys through the woodland per weekend/ day. The increased traffic may also affect the local roads.

- IV. An increase in noise levels that impact on the tranquillity of the woodland and the wider AONB in the Tillingbourne Valley is expected even with controls regarding music and similar in place.
- V. There would be a visual impact of tents and cars on the AONB/ Tillingbourne Valley.
- VI. This option may limit the opportunity for school and community group use.
- VII. Potential decrease in SANG capacity

1.7. Risks:

- I. Negative impact on surrounding area
- II. Potential decrease in SANG capacity
- III. Limits the opportunity for school and community group use.
- IV. High investment with low return
- V. Occupancy rates may not be achieved
- VI. Occupancy may need to be restricted to limit impact on neighbours and surrounding area.
- VII. Traffic volumes in woodland represent an increased safety and environmental risk.
- VIII. IT issues have so far prevented an automated booking system
- IX. Potential presence of Oak Processionary moth in future years may restrict use

2. Option B: Continue current operation with small facility improvements

2.1. Description:

- 2.1.1. This option includes refurbishment of the toilets in order to allow two parties of up to 50 people to book at the same time and provide hand washing facilities. There would be no electricity supply at the campsite. An upgrade of the water supply to the site is not included, which limits the number of washing facilities.

2.2. Assumptions made:

- 2.2.1. The cost estimates are based on the quotes received by the building surveyor's team. Estimated visitor numbers are based on previous bookings and local comparisons with other campsites.

2.3. Capital Cost:

- 2.3.1. Funds available from a Capital bid and S106 are currently £209,000. This option would free up S106 funds of £38,500 to be spend elsewhere.

2.3.2. Capital Cost Total:	£58,500
Refurbishing and strengthen existing barn:	£17,000
Replacement of existing toilet	£12,000
Internal improvements including hand washing facilities and Equalities Act	

compliance	£14,000
Fire and Lighting protection:	£3,000
Preliminaries	£5,000
Contingency	£3,500
Professional fees	£4,000

2.4. Estimated Operational Cost: Total: £12,000

Wardening (incl cleaning)	£6,000
Admin: (without automated booking system)	£2,500
Management Re-charge:	£500
Facilities: Electricity, Water, Cesspit emptying, Legionella checks etc.:	£1,500
R&M:	£1,000
Services: Fire Wood supply, Waste Removal etc:	£500

2.5. Camping Fees:

- 2.5.1. The camping fees could increase slightly from the current charges to £4 / person, as the facilities will remain the same but refurbished.
- 2.5.2. We would expect to be able to double the number of private parties but expect the similar levels of school/ group bookings as current.
- 2.5.3. The achievable income would be approximately £8-10,000/ annum. Therefore, it is expected that the Council would subsidise the facility at a cost of approximately £2-4,000/ annum.

2.6. Impact:

- I. Visitor numbers could realistically increase to 2,500 per year. There is a limited demand from school and scout groups. It is expected that any increase in visitors would be through family bookings.
- II. Less impact on Chantry Wood and the AONB than option 1, but review of conditions for use required.
- III. Increased Ranger presence required.
- IV. An increase in noise levels that impact on the tranquillity of the woodland and the wider AONB in the Tillingbourne Valley is expected even with controls regarding music and similar in place.
- V. There would be a visual impact of tents and cars on the AONB/ Tillingbourne Valley.
- VI. This option may limit the opportunity for school use if private bookings are made well in advance.
- VII. This option will not achieve cost recovery, and will remain a subsidised operation.

2.7. Risks:

- I. The replacement of the toilet requires building control approval, which is unlikely to be obtained without electricity supply. This would make this option undeliverable.

- II. Negative impact on surrounding area.
- III. Potential decrease in SANG capacity
- IV. Occupancy rates may not be achieved
- V. Operation of 2 party bookings may not be feasible, for example due to safeguarding issues.
- VI. Increased bookings may increase the need for warden patrol on site and costs could be higher than estimated.
- VII. Potential presence of Oak Processionary moth in future years may restrict use

3. Option C: Continue current operation including small scale refurbishment, but without changes to the facilities.

3.1. Description:

3.1.1. This option would require essential safety works to the barn and refurbishment of the toilets. The number and layout of the toilets would remain the same, and consequently this option does not require planning or building consent. The current operational system of one party only booking would remain.

3.2. Capital Cost:

3.2.1. Funds available from a Capital bid and S106 are currently £209,000. This option would free up S106 funds of £61,000 to be spend elsewhere.

3.2.2. **Capital Cost Total:** £36,000

Refurbishing and strengthen existing barn:	£17,000
Refurbishment of existing toilets	£4,000
Internal improvements including hand washing facilities and Equalities Act compliance	£4,000
Fire and Lighting protection:	£3,000
Preliminaries	£3,000
Contingency	£2,000
Professional fees	£3,000

3.3. Estimated Operational Cost: Total: £10,000

Wardening (incl cleaning)	£5,000
Admin: (without automated booking system)	£2,000
Management Re-charge:	£500
Facilities: Electricity, Water, Cesspit emptying, Legionella checks etc.:	£1,000
R&M:	£1,000
Services: Fire Wood supply, Waste Removal etc:	£500

3.4. Camping Fees:

- 3.4.1. The camping would remain on the same level as present.
- 3.4.2. The achievable income is £4-5k/ annum. Therefore, it is expected that the Council would subsidise the facility at a cost of approximately £5k/ annum.

3.5. Impact:

- I. In this option, the visitor numbers and their impact on the woodland and surrounding area remain unchanged.
- II. Uses existing utility infrastructure

3.6. Risks:

- I. No change from current subsidised operation.
- II. Potential presence of Oak Processionary moth in future years may restrict use

4. Option D: Carry out small scale refurbishment, as in option C, to lease area for forest school use (preferred)

4.1. Description:

- 4.1.1. Initial discussion with potential providers have provided guideline figures to assess this option.
- 4.1.2. This is the preferred option because it provides a community/ educational facility that has a positive impact on the Woodland and the Surrey Hills AONB that also represents an investment in the future of the woodland use through education.
- 4.1.3. This option proposes to use lease the current campsite and surrounding areas to a Forest School provider as educational facility. The current toilet blocks would be refurbished.
- 4.1.4. A full time Forest School would run five days a week from 08:00 till 18:00 for children aged three to five. The Forest School would be run by a qualified Forest School Leader and two additional employees.
- 4.1.5. Groups would be small to ensure the appropriate ratios of adult to children are maintained and the impact on the environment minimised. In addition, a shuttle bus service from Guildford will be offered by the provider to keep parking disruption to a minimum.
- 4.1.6. Current existing structures at the campsite would be utilised to accommodate the Forest Schools needs in keeping with the low ecological impact ethos of Forest School, this could be done for example by insulating the current structures with straw. The fire pit nearest the existing building would be kept, and this would be used for cooking where possible.
- 4.1.7. There is an option to run Forest School birthday parties at the weekend and during holiday periods as well as training courses for childcare professionals who would like to complete their Level 3 Forest School qualification and outdoor learning workshops to the local education sector.

4.1.8. There is an initial interest from Forest School providers to lease the site. Nevertheless, the facility should be marketed openly to achieve best value.

4.1.9. Consideration should be given that the Forest School provider engages disadvantaged communities.

4.2. Assumptions made:

4.2.1. The costs are estimates based on quotes received. Income estimates are based on initial estimates from discussions with potential providers. In addition, Crosthwaites produced a report on rental value of the Chantry Wood Campsite based on income estimates.

4.3. Capital Cost:	Total:	£36,000
Refurbishing and strengthen existing barn:		£17,000
Refurbishment of existing toilets		£4,000
Internal improvements including hand washing facilities and Equalities Act compliance		£4,000
Fire and Lighting protection:		£3,000
Preliminaries		£3,000
Contingency		£2,000
Professional fees		£3,000

4.4. Operational Cost:

- I. Potential income: £8-10,000/ annum
- II. Operation costs would mainly be borne by Forest School operator.
- III. Client management is required from the Council but expected to be minimal.
- IV. Maintenance work to building would be required: Estimated at £1,000/ annum
- V. Uses existing utility infrastructure
- VI. This option would provide an annual surplus of £7-9,000.

4.5. Impact:

- I. Complies with existing Strategy and Policies
- II. Self sufficient
- III. Existing interest by providers
- IV. Low impact on woodland and AONB. Forest schools already operating in Chantry Woods
- V. Supports Community involvement
- VI. Educational value (Research had shown that prolonged participation in Forest School sessions provides children with an opportunity to experience a different and often new way of learning, in a hands-on environment. Forest School encourages children to take turns and problem solve whilst building positive relationships with their peers.)

- VII. Promotes value and awareness of Woodland and Countryside
- VIII. Opportunity to increase nature conservation area
- IX. Potential to remain camping options for scout groups etc.
- X. Reduced traffic in woodland compared to current situation.

4.6. Risks:

- I. Removal of existing facilities may not be supported by all site users.
- II. Forest School operator may not be able to achieve the estimated income.
- III. Forest school operator may not be able to comply with planning policy and consents.
- IV. Potential presence of Oak Processionary moth in future years may restrict forest school operations

5. Option E: Lease area for forest school use without facility improvement

5.1. Description:

5.1.1. Initial discussion with potential providers have provided guideline financial figures.

5.1.2. The operational impact of this option is the same as above.

5.1.3. This option includes basic refurbishment of the Barn Building in order to make the building secure to be used as a storage facility.

5.1.4. Forest school provider would

- update the toilet blocks
- bring in their own water as and when needed
- continue to allow the current groups of Scouts to use the campsite and deal with the administration to facilitate this.

5.2. Assumptions made: The costs are estimates based on quotes received.

5.3. Capital Cost: Make Barn Building structural secure: £17,000

5.4. Operational Cost:

- I. Potential income: £5,000/ annum
- II. Operation costs would mainly be borne by Forest School operator.
- III. Client management is required from the Council but expected to be minimal.

5.5. Impact: As option D above.

5.6. Risks:

- I. Removal of existing facilities may not be supported by all site users.
- II. Forest School operator may not be able to achieve the estimated income.
- III. Forest School operator may not be able to deliver enough income to provide a safe environment, e.g. toilet and handwashing facilities
- IV. Forest School operator may not have the competency in undertaking building improvements

- V. Potential presence of Oak Processionary moth in future years may restrict forest school operations

6. Option F: Return site to grassland/ woodland

6.1. Description:

- 6.1.1. This option would include removing all buildings and allow the site to develop into a grassland habitat with woodland edge. Additional fencing would allow carrying out conservation grazing on site.

- 6.2. **Assumptions made:** The costs are estimates based on similar work.

6.3. Capital Cost:

- I. Removal of buildings: estimate £8,000.
- II. Conservation grazing fence if required approx. £4,000

- 6.4. **Operational Cost:** Covered by existing revenue budget for Chantry Woods.

6.5. Impact:

- I. Increases usable woodland area for visitors
- II. Biodiversity Benefits
- III. Reduced disturbance to Woodland tranquillity.

6.6. Risks:

- I. Removal of existing facilities may not be supported by all site users.

7. Option G: Consult on options

7.1. Description:

- 7.1.1. The council could consider putting the options above out for stakeholder consultation.

- 7.1.2. There is a risk that stakeholders may not be represented to reflect a wider community need. For example, the site users of Chantry Woods are the biggest stakeholder group of residents that would be impacted by the proposals, but are not a user group that uses the campsite itself.

7.2. Impact:

- I. The future impact will depend on the outcome of the consultation.
- II. This option would require further resources in addition to the option above.
- III. This option would most likely delay delivery of option by another season.

7.3. Risks:

- I. Stakeholders interest is unlikely to reflect the wider community need
- II. Affected user groups are expected to be resistant to support most sustainable solutions
- III. Stakeholders may be unequally represented
- IV. Delay of delivery