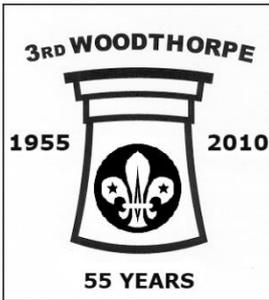


# 3<sup>rd</sup> Woodthorpe (St. Marks) Scout Group



[www.3wscouts.org.uk](http://www.3wscouts.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. 507206

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Date: 17 October 2014

Gedling Borough Council  
Planning and Environment Department  
Arnot Hill Park  
Arnold  
Nottingham NG5 6LU

Dear Sirs

## **Planning Application 2014/0915 Gedling Access Road (GAR)**

I write on behalf of the Trustees of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Woodthorpe (St Marks) Scout Group (3W). The Group owns the land, known as 'Pepperpots' adjacent to Arnold Lane and Mapperley Plains Road. In this letter I will first give a short description of the history and activities of the Group and why this site is important to both our members and the local community. I will then describe the Group's position relating to the GAR.

3W is the largest scout group, in terms of membership, in the Gedling area and one of the largest in Nottinghamshire. We run two colonies for Beaver Scouts (6-8 years); two packs for Cub Scouts (8 to 10.5 years) and two Scout troops (10.5 to 14 years). We work with our associated Peppers Explorer Scout Unit (14 to 17 years). We have around 120 young members and 20 adult leaders and helpers. The demand for places in our Group is very high and we have waiting lists for new members for beavers, cubs and scouts.

We have used Pepperpots since 1973 and we purchased the freehold of the site in 1977. Since then we have contributed many thousands of pounds and even more thousands of volunteer hours to make it one of the most evocative scout training sites in the county. The site is also used by other Scouting and Guiding units and by other organisations for young people, within the planning restrictions on the site.

Our position on the GAR is as it was in 2008. We wish to remain at this site, with its unique characteristics, and we will do all in our power to resist any proposals to move us elsewhere, away from the communities that we serve. We would be comfortable with an outcome that saw the abandonment of the GAR project. Our concerns about the nature of the scheme are contained in the letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008 from Andrew Martin Associates, who advised us on the 2008 proposals (2008/0459).

We are aware of the support for the GAR from all the main political parties in the area and the advanced state of proposals for its construction. Therefore, the remaining comments in this letter assume that the GAR will go ahead in a manner very close to the current proposals. The comments relate only to that part of the scheme affecting our land and we take no position regarding other parts of the GAR proposals.

We appreciate the discussions that we have had to date with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC). We have taken their comments in good faith and believe that we can agree a scheme with them that will protect the position and activities of the Group if the GAR scheme goes ahead. The key matters that concern us are indicated below.

First, the proposals will result in the loss of between one quarter and one third of our site. We therefore would want this land replaced. Our previous discussions have indicated a willingness of the authorities to give us land adjacent to Arnold Lane in mitigation of the land that will be lost to the GAR. Without this agreement the position of the Group and its facilities for young people will be severely diminished.

Second, the replacement land currently has an electricity sub-station and overhead cables. This makes it unsafe for many activities. These features need to be made safe for our users, perhaps by being removed or put underground.

Third, the GAR will be on a high embankment next to our site. This brings a number of dangers. Vehicles could come off the road and down the embankment onto our site. Strangers might walk along the road to look into our site and then seek to access our site to damage property or injure people. We therefore request the developers to give consideration to how these dangers can be eliminated or reduced, particularly to safeguard the young people using the site for both daytime and overnight activities.

Fourth, our camp fire circle was constructed in 2007/08, partly with a grant from Gedling BC. It will be lost as a result of the road construction. We would request that resources are made available for the camp fire circle to be reconstructed on a different part of our site.

Fifth, the area to be covered by the embankment will destroy all the trees and hedges at the lower part of the site. Aerial maps show that Pepperpots is one of very few areas at this section of the GAR route to have significant tree cover. We request that the developers ensure that the trees on our site lost to the GAR are replaced with new plantings on our site.

Sixth, we have maintained the grounds for many years without the use of herbicides and pesticides. The resulting flora and fauna supports the wildlife on the site; for example, we regularly see bats flying around the site. We are concerned that this environment will be severely damaged by the building of the GAR and then by both noise and light pollution when in operation. It is not clear to us how we will be helped to protect these features of the remaining part of our site.

Seventh, the increased traffic flow on Mapperley Plains Road will make access into and out of the site more difficult. We request that the entrance to our site be widened to allow in/out traffic simultaneously and to work with us to improve car parking facilities on our site. Furthermore, the current proposals do not include a pedestrian crossing from our side of Mapperley Plains Road to the corner with Gedling Road. We suggest that a pedestrian crossing be installed in this location.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ron Hodges', written in a cursive style.

Ron Hodges,  
Group Scout Leader.