

# Woodford Neighbourhood Plan



**Pre-submission Consultation Draft, May 2018**

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Prepared by Woodford Neighbourhood Forum, May 2018

Duration of the plan: 2018 - 2033

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## **1. Acknowledgements**

The Woodford Neighbourhood Plan was inspired by lifelong Woodford resident, Stephen Taylor. Sadly, Stephen passed away in 2014 and so this plan is dedicated to his memory.

The Woodford Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee would like to extend their grateful thanks to Woodford's residents for their support. Without their valuable input this Plan would not have been possible.

Thanks are also due to the local businesses, charitable groups, clubs, societies and other long-standing Woodford organisations for their time given to answering questionnaires, many leaflet deliveries, envelope stuffing and general support.

Our thanks are also extended to Woodford War Memorial Community Centre (WWMCC) for meeting and exhibition space facilities and The Deanwater Hotel for meeting space.

Photographs are courtesy of members of the Management Committee.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the help of two planning advisors who sat on the Management Committee on a voluntary basis and whose help and advice were invaluable in the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan:

John Knight and Paul Goodman

## 2. Introduction

As part of the government's Localism Act, local communities are being given the opportunity to develop their own local Neighbourhood Plan covering land use planning matters. Neighbourhood Plans can be prepared by Parish Councils, or in areas that do not have a Parish Council, by a Neighbourhood Forum.

Woodford Neighbourhood Forum arose as an initiative by Woodford Community Council (WCC) in 2013. Members of the WCC Management Committee enlisted 24 supporters from within the Woodford community and submitted the application to become a forum to Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC). The Forum and its Neighbourhood Area (which is the former Parish of Woodford, excluding the Aerodrome site and land needed for A6MARR and the Poynton Relief Road, shown in map below) were approved in October 2013. A management committee was formed and officers elected at the first Forum meeting in May 2014. In April 2018, membership of the Forum stands at 93.

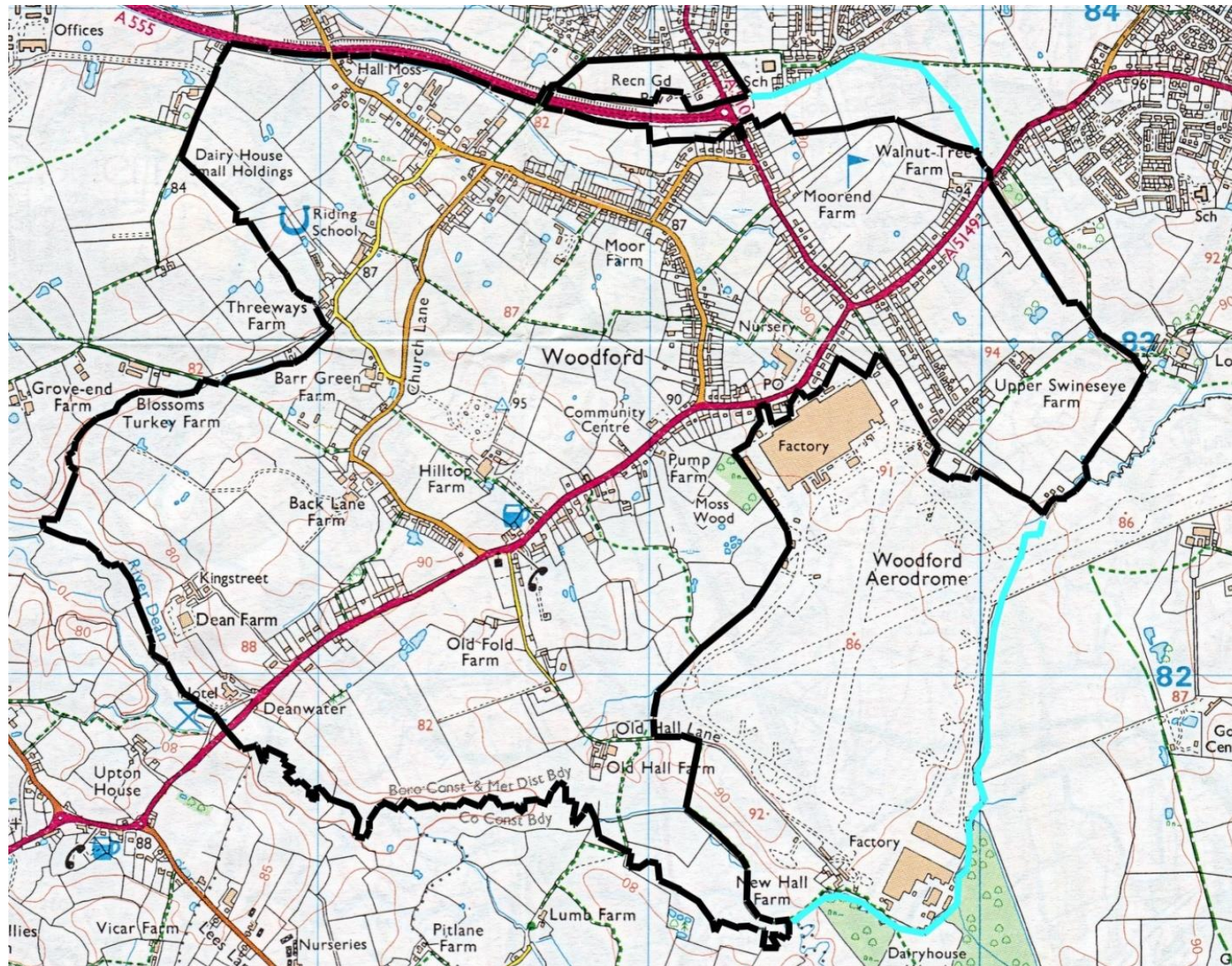
In 2014, Woodford Neighbourhood Forum embarked on the development of the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan. This consultation document is part of that process. Ultimately, after completing its various stages of drafting, the Neighbourhood Plan will be put to a local Referendum, which will determine whether it is appropriate that it is made (approved and adopted) and implemented.

Once the Neighbourhood Plan is made it becomes part of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council planning policy. Any proposal for development will be considered against national policies, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council policies and the policies in the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan also provides a vehicle for expression of aspirations, which are not direct planning policy issues, but which are important to the community. You will find these in the Village Action Plan in Section 9.



**Map showing Woodford Neighbourhood Area** (outlined in black, turquoise line shows areas of the parish not within the Neighbourhood Area)



### 3. Current Consultation

This is your opportunity to have a say about housing and related policies affecting Woodford, so please do take the time to read and consider the implications of the policies in this draft plan. These proposed policies will be considered in the determination of planning applications alongside those prepared by Stockport Council.

At this stage of the Plan process we are seeking views from all people who live, work or carry out business within Woodford as well as the prescribed consultees, including public agencies. However, it is important to stress that, when it comes to any referendum on a final proposal, only the residents who live the Neighbourhood Area of Woodford and whom meet the eligibility criteria to vote in a local election will be entitled to vote.

We need your response by enter date 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018 which you can make by email to:

[woodfordneighbourhood@gmail.com](mailto:woodfordneighbourhood@gmail.com)

or by letter to:

Woodford Neighbourhood Forum  
Woodford Community Centre  
Chester Road  
Woodford  
Stockport  
SK7 1PS

If, before responding, you would like to ask a question, you can send an enquiry to the email or postal address above, providing a contact phone number or email address. A member of the Woodford Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee will get in touch with you and may be able to answer your questions and address any concerns you may have.



## 4. Introduction to Woodford

Woodford is a settlement located on the southern boundary of the Metropolitan Borough Council of Stockport in Greater Manchester, bordering Cheshire. The Neighbourhood Area is designated as Green Belt. The first impression gained by anyone passing through Woodford along the main road in a car does not reveal the true character of the place or its people. This brief overview aims to provide a deeper glimpse into the bigger picture.

### 4.1. Geology

Woodford is 5 kilometres west of a geological fault at Poynton, where the millstone grit of the Pennines dropped by 200 metres around 300 million years ago, during the Carboniferous Period. As a result, the aspect is open and flat with height in the range 90 – 95 metres above sea level. The land slopes gently down to the east, affording excellent, unobstructed views of the Pennines from many locations in Woodford, which are very much treasured by residents and visitors.

The area was covered with glacial sediments as the glaciers of the last Ice Age retreated, forming the Cheshire Plain. The soils of Woodford consist mostly of clay, with pockets of sand, including running sand. Drainage is poor and in many areas the ground becomes water-logged and prone to flooding in wet weather.

Woodford lies on an aquifer consisting of ground water held in porous sandstones laid down 200 million years ago in the Triassic period, sand and marl (a crumbly mixture of clay and limestone). The aquifer is part of a series of deep basins throughout the UK, including the Cheshire Basin, which are important sources of ground water. The base of the Triassic sandstone layer varies from above sea level in outcrops at the surface, such as Alderley Edge, to deeper than 2,500 m below sea level in the centre of the Cheshire Basin. Environmental studies conducted on the former Woodford Aerodrome site indicate that the site lies on an aquifer consisting of permeable, solid sandstone and pebble beds with high capacity for water storage. Above this, layers of sand and gravel hold some ground water, while extensive layers of clay are impermeable with very low capacity for water storage.

The Cheshire Wildlife Trust notes that Woodford falls within the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain National Character Area, which is described as a pastoral area of rolling agricultural plain. (Environment Justification and Evidence section ref 29) At the end of the last ice age, this area was largely underwater. The water eventually drained away, but it left behind a wetland landscape of meres, mosses, rivers and ponds, which is of international importance for its wetland wildlife. Remnants of the some of the mosses (meres that gradually filled up with peat and then were covered by vegetation) are still here today, located near Church Lane, Hall Moss Lane and on the former aerodrome site. They are

marked on Map 8 in the Cheshire Wildlife Trust report: Protecting and Enhancing Woodford's Natural Environment. (Environment Justification and Evidence section ref 14)

## **4.2. History**

In the Middle Ages, Woodford was part of the royal hunting forest and, in 1248, the manor of Woodford was one of several in the Barony of Stockport. In 1300, the forest stretched from Leek in the south to Marple in the north and was 10 miles wide along the western Pennines. Land was cleared and improved for agriculture in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century and a corn mill existed by 1296. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Woodford (known as Wideford or Wydeford) was a subordinate manor in Poynton held by the Stokeports. In 1355, land at Woodford was granted to the Davenport family. At this time Woodford was a hamlet on the edge of the Macclesfield Forest.

The Davenports originally lived in Old Hall on Old Hall Lane which is now Old Hall Farm. The date is uncertain, but it was known to be there in 1370, much of the original building having been destroyed by fire. The Davenports built New Hall further down the lane in 1630. Their initials and Coat of Arms appear above the entrance. It was used by the family until it was purchased by AV Roe company in 1924.

Woodford was in the middle of a densely wooded area and, as the name implies, there was a ford where the footpath now crosses the River Dean near to Old Hall Farm, providing a route to Macclesfield.

In the 19th century, in addition to agriculture, many residents in Woodford were engaged in trade and industry. There was a blacksmith, a brick maker and a calico printing mill. Silk weaving was a domestic industry carried on in a number of homes, including some of the old cottages which remain in Woodford today.

In 1837, the Dean Water calico printing mill was built where Wilmslow Road crosses the River Dean. Deanwater House (now the Deanwater Hotel) was built as the manager's house and cottages for the workforce were built in Kingstreet. The name formerly referred to this hamlet, rather than the road. The mill closed in 1848 and burnt down in 1851. 172 people were employed at the mill, of which half lived in the parish of Woodford.

Christ Church was built in 1841, a primary school was built in 1847 at the instigation of the Bromley-Davenport family. Farms, small holdings and cottages on the Woodford Estate were rented by tenants and many local names appear in the list of tenants, including Hallworth, Worthington, Shatwell, Jepson and Holland. In 1922, the estate was sold by the Davenports and purchased by Arthur Fifette, who put it up for auction in 52 lots. Many former tenants purchased their properties. The sale of the estate allowed new dwellings to appear in Woodford, resulting in small

developments along the main streets, such as Chester Road and Moor Lane, which were originally country lanes. The structure, character and community of Woodford reflect that history and descendants of those families still live here today.

The Davenport Arms, known locally as the Thief's Neck carries the Davenport Coat of Arms, which includes an image of a felon with a rope around his neck. In a Scrap Book of Woodford 1953, members of the WI and friends reported that old inhabitants could recall the current Davenport Arms being built to replace an earlier one, which was a thatched building destroyed by fire.

Woodford Aerodrome was a major landmark. The airfield was created from farmland by AV Roe during late 1924. In the mid-1930s several new buildings were erected prior to the start of the Second World War. Planes manufactured there include Avro Ansons, Lancasters, Vulcan nuclear bombers, civil airliners and the Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft. From 1968 to 2000 an annual air show was held at the Aerodrome, organised by the Royal Air Forces Association. In 1989, 3000 people were employed on the site, but in 2012 BAE Systems closed the site with the loss of the remaining 630 jobs. The site was purchased by Harrow Estates and the buildings have been demolished to make way for houses. The Avro Heritage Museum has been created on site with an excellent display, including a static Vulcan.

Woodford War Memorial Community Centre was built in 1953 on a 4 acre plot on Chester Road as a memorial to those who lost their lives during World War II. The money was raised by interest free loans from members of the community and fund raising activities. Now under the custodianship of the Charities Commission the premises and operation are covered by a constitution, with daily running organised by a committee of volunteers. The roof shape was designed with acoustics for amateur dramatics in mind and, while it is generally acknowledged that the building is not a thing of beauty, the facility is precious to the community.

District boundaries have changed over time. In 1866 Woodford, was part of the parish of Prestbury, in Macclesfield. In 1939, it was incorporated into the district of Hazel Grove & Bramhall, which included the hamlet of Moor End and in 1974 it became part of the Metropolitan Borough of Stockport.

The population of Woodford was around 300-400 in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, with a marked increase over the last 100 years. Census data show that the population was 430 in 1851, 392 in 1861, 304 in 1901, 801 in 1931, and 1,211 in 2011. The electoral register in 2014 included 1,157 people in Woodford. The number of dwellings has increased with the population. According to census data, in 1861 there were 83 dwellings (9 unoccupied) in Woodford, compared with 610 dwellings in the Woodford Neighbourhood Area in 2015, as calculated by the WNF management committee.

### 4.3 Woodford Today

In the present day, Woodford is home to some 1,200 residents on the electoral register. The settlement adjoins suburbia in Bramhall and Cheadle Hulme and comprises ribbon development along the A5102 and A5149, but it still retains some of its village character and farming community, with a network of winding country lanes off the beaten track.

The Neighbourhood Area, which does not include the former Aerodrome site, occupies approximately 1,140 acres. It is predominantly agricultural land which, together with a small amount of recreational land, comprises 885 acres, representing more than three quarters of the area. The built environment (domestic and commercial curtilage and roads) comprises 255 acres, representing less than one quarter of the area.

Farms, small holdings, lanes, hedgerows, trees, old cottages and listed buildings, intermingled with more recent development and roads, reflect the long history of a settlement at Woodford. The openness of the countryside and wide gaps in the housing curtilage provide views across farmland to the Pennine hills to the east. These features contribute to the landscape character of Woodford.

Poor drainage is a feature of Woodford, resulting in many permanent ponds and large seasonal floods in farmland and private gardens (see map of surface flooding below). This is a mixed blessing. On the one hand, permanent and seasonal ponds are an important aesthetic feature of the landscape with high value for wildlife. The most notable in these two aspects is the seasonal pond to the southeast of Church Lane, which is home to a number of red listed bird species. On the other hand, poor drainage creates problems for access because sections of many of the footpaths across farmland and Church Lane are regularly flooded in wet weather. The high water table and propensity for flooding are also issues for any form of construction.

Housing takes the form of ribbon development of varying densities. The highest densities are to be found along the main Chester Road, Wilmslow Road and Woodford Road, which form the spine of the settlement, and Moor Lane and Bridle Road, which branch off them. Frequent gaps in the housing line provide views into the countryside behind. Comprising around 600 houses, the Neighbourhood Area provides a wide range of housing types, including large detached houses with four to seven bedrooms and large gardens, two and three bedroomed semi-detached houses, terraced houses and bungalows, and a small number of flats. Low density housing is to be found along the rural lanes, including Church lane, Blossoms Lane, Old Hall Lane and Kingstreet. The majority of dwellings in Woodford overlook farmland at the rear. There has been incremental growth and change in the form of limited infill, barn conversions, replacement dwellings and extensions. The turnover of houses via market sales (Zoopla website accessed 2017, [www.zoopla.co.uk/](http://www.zoopla.co.uk/)) in the Neighbourhood has averaged at twenty per year over the last ten years.

A potentially unique feature of Woodford is the recent arrival of a large housing development on the former Aerodrome site, adjacent to the Neighbourhood Area. Planning permission for 920 dwellings plus a 100-unit care facility and commercial premises was granted in 2015 and building work has commenced. This large development offers a different type of housing compared with the Neighbourhood Area, comprising modern executive houses in the range of three to five bedrooms with small gardens, in a “garden village” style setting. The site will also include 15% affordable housing. Therefore, the new development will increase both the number and type of housing in the immediate locality. The population in the parish of Woodford will triple as a result of this development, posing challenges for the community facilities and for integration of new and existing residents.

The majority of commercial activity is focused along the spinal main roads and includes the Davenport Arms, Olivers Restaurant, the Deanwater Hotel, Budgens convenience store, Chrome of Woodford car show room, Woodford Notcutts Garden Centre, which includes a café, and a small parade of shops. In addition, there are many small businesses and professionals working from offices at home.

Community and leisure facilities include the Woodford War Memorial Community Centre, Christ Church and the Church Hall, located on Chester Road; a scout hut, British Legion premises, and Woodford Cricket Club on Moor Lane; and Bramhall Cricket Club on Church Lane. Although there is no longer a village school, which was once a focus of community interaction, there remains a strong sense of community in Woodford, with social interaction arising as a result of the community leisure facilities and the Church. Local groups include the Woodford Community Council, Woodford Neighbourhood Forum, Woodford War Memorial Community Centre committee, Parish Church Council, Woodford Community Players, the Women’s Institute and many other social groups.

The rural setting of Woodford is one of the most important features to residents and it provides a rich natural environment. The Neighbourhood Area is particularly rich in mature native trees, species-rich native hedgerows and ponds, which provide good habitats and corridors for wildlife connecting to adjacent rural Cheshire and providing ecological links into the more urban setting of Stockport. Detail maps of the locations of these features have been prepared for this Neighbourhood Plan.

Chester Road, Wilmslow Road and Woodford Road currently carry heavy traffic volumes and the lanes have become commuter rat runs at peak times. The impact of relief roads and new housing developments on the traffic through Woodford remains to be seen at the time of writing. Traffic volume and safety in the Neighbourhood Area were key issues raised during community consultation. Increasing traffic on the wider major road network resulting from current and proposed large developments in the surrounding area is also an issue of concern to Woodford residents.

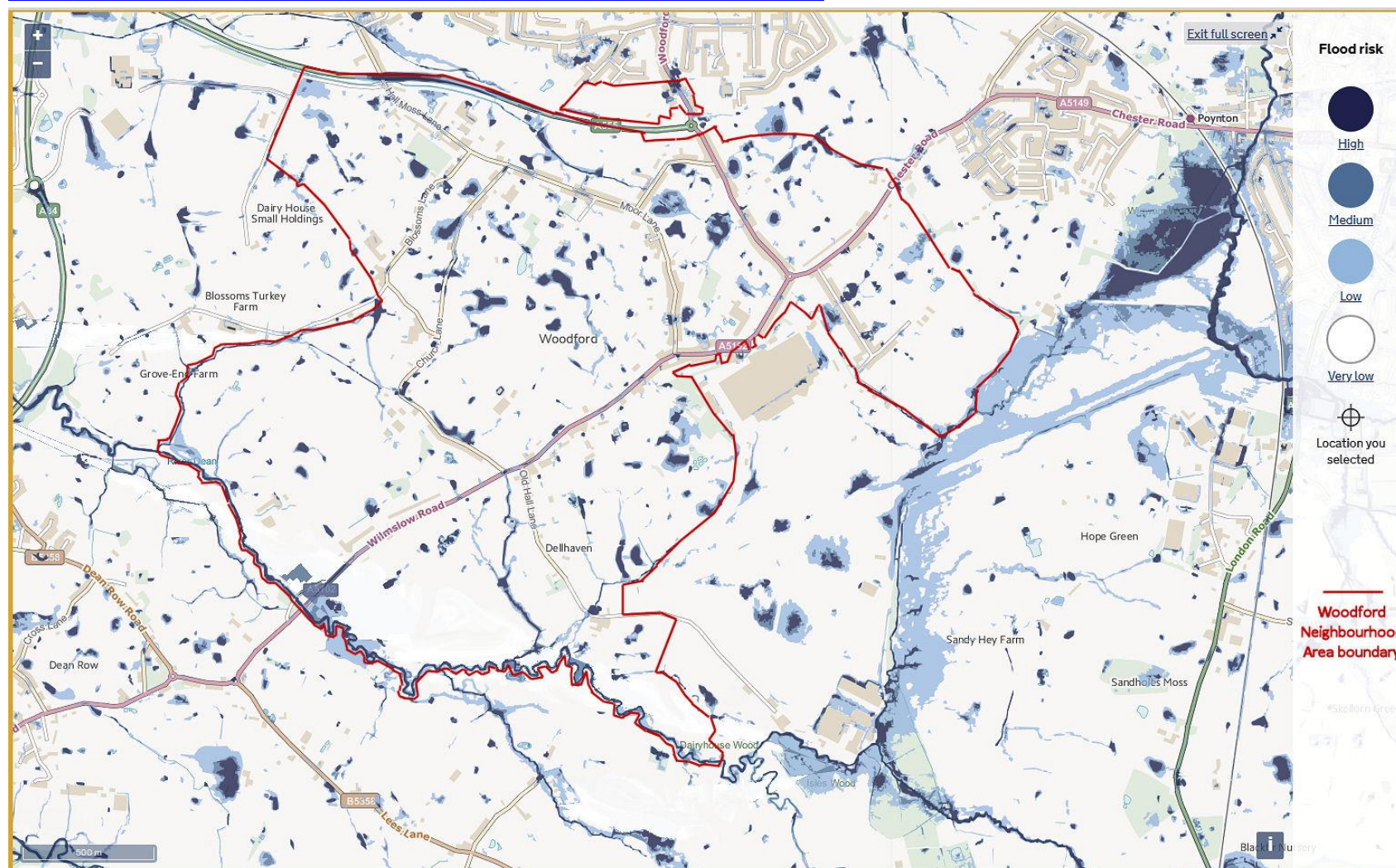


Public transport is limited, with just one bus route (into Manchester) running at half-hourly intervals. The nearest railway stations are Bramhall (0.9- 2.7 miles), Poynton (1.0 - 2.6 miles) and Wilmslow (2.3 - 4.5 miles). Hourly train services operate between Bramhall and Manchester.

Woodford has twenty public rights of way, which provide a network of pleasant short walks connecting one side of the village to the other, some passing through green fields and woodland and some with views of the Pennines. They connect with footpaths into neighbouring Cheadle Hulme, Bramhall, Poynton, Adlington, Newton, Wilmslow and Handforth, providing the scope for much longer walks. There are currently no cycle lanes or cycle tracks in Woodford.

Map showing surface flooding risk in the Woodford Neighbourhood Area (Woodford Neighbourhood Area boundary shown with red line)

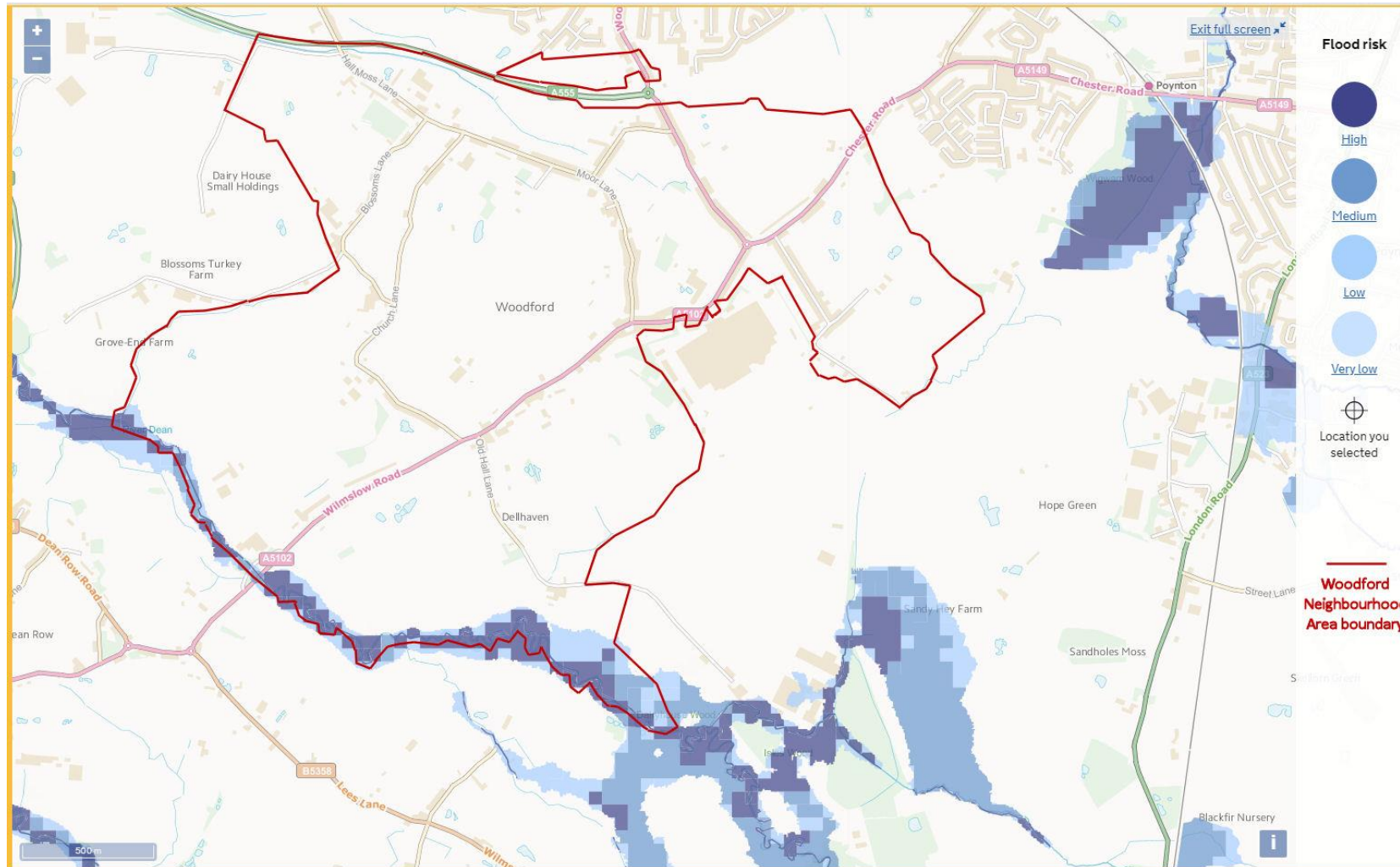
<https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map>



Areas adjacent to the River Dean and land adjacent to the Neighbourhood Area are at high risk of river flooding, as shown in the map below.

**Map showing fluvial flooding risk in Woodford Neighbourhood Area** (Woodford Neighbourhood Area boundary shown with red line)

<https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map>





## **5. Community Engagement and Consultation**

Community consultation has been conducted via questionnaires, flyers, newsletters, a workshop, an exhibition, the website, email circulation, and public meetings. All the evidence to support the Plan and the minutes of committee meetings are available to view on the website:

<http://woodfordnf.co.uk/>

### **5.1. Residents' Questionnaire, 2014**

Consultation with residents began with a comprehensive questionnaire delivered to every household in the Neighbourhood Area in June 2014. The questionnaire included general questions about the aspects of Woodford which people valued, aspects which could be improved, community services, community facilities, public transport, protecting the environment, sustainability, housing needs, jobs and the economy, and an option to raise any other issues.

### **5.2. Forum AGM and Update Meeting, 2014**

The results were analysed by members of the management committee using Excel spreadsheets and presented to residents at the AGM and update meeting in September 2014, which was open to all. A representative of SMBC attended.

### **5.3. Forum Workshop, 2015**

In January 2015, the management committee enlisted the help of planning consultants, Kirkwells Town Planning. They ran a workshop for Forum members where the vision and objectives identified as a result of the questionnaire and options for different types of Neighbourhood Plan were discussed. Kirkwells prepared reports based on these discussions, which were circulated and made available on the website.

### **5.4. Public Exhibition, 2015**

In May 2015, the management committee presented a public exhibition at the Woodford Community Centre, where the draft vision and objectives were displayed. Members of the management committee were present to answer questions and a short exit questionnaire was issued to gather residents' reactions to the vision and objectives.

### **5.5. Charity Survey, 2015**

In February 2015, eight leisure organisations were identified which are run as charities in Woodford, including the community centre, two cricket clubs, the scouts and guides, the British Legion, the WI and the Church. A questionnaire was sent to these organisations, aiming to discover any local issues of importance to them.

### **5.6. Business Survey, 2015**

In the summer of 2015, a survey of what were judged to be the top twenty businesses in Woodford was carried out by interview and questionnaire by members of the management committee. Questions aimed to discover the nature of the business, the number of employees, how the employees travelled to work, any proposals to change or expand the business and any local issues of importance from a business perspective.

### **5.7. Forum AGM and Update Meeting, 2015**

In September 2015, the vision and objectives were presented to the residents and a representative of SMBC at the AGM and update meeting held at Woodford Community, which was open to all. The local MP attended.

### **5.8. Consultation on Draft Policies, 2016 -2017**

In September 2016, outline draft policies and evidence gathered to support them were presented to residents, a representative of SMBC and the local MP at the AGM and update meeting. They were sent via email to forum members (now numbering 80), with a request for feedback, and made available for public view on the Forum's website, with an option to submit comments. The draft policies were also submitted to SMBC for comment.

In September 2017, ongoing work to fine tune the policies, following feedback from residents and SMBC, was presented at the AGM and update meeting at the British Legion premises in Woodford, which was attended by Forum members and a representative of SMBC and the local MP.



## 6. Vision, Objectives and Aims of Policies and Aspirations

A vision and objectives arose from consultation with residents.

### 6.1. Vision

The Vision for the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan is:

**To manage and support beneficial change whilst retaining and enhancing Woodford's rural identity, character quality of life and sense of community.**

### 6.2. Objectives

The objectives identified to achieve this vision were divided into four themes, where planning policies specific to Woodford have been developed, as follows:

#### **Environment:**

To preserve and protect the openness of the Green Belt, the rural character, the landscape, important views, natural features and biodiversity.

#### **Employment:**

To seek to protect and support local employment.

#### **Community:**

To preserve and enhance recreational and heritage assets to promote a healthy community.

#### **Development:**

To provide variety and mix that meets local needs and manage limited infilling, including residential, employment and community uses.

These objectives are presented in the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan Policy section.

### 6.3. Aspirations

Other community aspirations, which are not matters of planning policy, have been presented in the Village Action Plan and are as follows:

**Movement:**

To create safer roads, streets and lanes and increase public access to countryside by foot, cycle and bridleway and to encourage sustainable transport.

**Integration:**

Ensure integration and linkage between the existing village and the Aerodrome development to achieve an enhanced, enlarged community.

**Environment:**

Supporting clean air

## 6.4. Aims of Policies and Aspirations

### Summary of aims of policies in the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan

Policy	Aims
Policy ENV1	To protect and enhance views and vistas within and out from the Neighbourhood Area.
Policy ENV2	To protect and enhance countryside and green spaces and public access to them.
Policy ENV3	To protect and enhance natural features, which are key aesthetic components of the landscape.
Policy ENV4	To increase biodiversity and habitats for wildlife and to avoid, or compensate for any losses.
Policy ENV5	To minimise light pollution and ensure environmentally friendly lighting is used, with particular reference to bats.
Policy EMP1	To permit and promote small-scale employment, which has no negative effects on the environment.
Policy EMP2	To retain existing employment.
Policy EMP3	To reuse redundant buildings for employment as a priority over new-build.
Policy COM1	To allow provision of new community facilities, provided that no harm is caused to other village features that are valued by the community.
Policy COM2	To prevent loss of, or harm to, existing village features that are valued by the community. To allow improvement, relocation, or addition of new village features of value to the community, provided no harm to existing features of value is caused.
Policy COM3	To conserve and enhance the heritage value of heritage structures or buildings and their setting.
Policy DEV1	To define development that may be considered acceptable as rural exceptions in Green Belt.
Policy DEV2	To provide the criteria for small-scale infilling in Woodford, consistent with Green Belt policy.

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Aims</b>
Policy DEV3	To define the criteria/conditions for supporting development of affordable housing in Woodford.
Policy DEV4	To define the criteria for supporting the complete redevelopment of farm buildings into new housing.
Policy DEV5	To define the criteria for supporting the replacement of existing dwellings with new dwellings.
Policy DEV6	To define the criteria for supporting extensions to dwellings.
Policy DEV7	To define the criteria for supporting sub-division of existing dwellings into self-contained residential units.
Policy DEV8	To achieve a high standard of development design, compatible with the rural landscape, environment and ecological network and to achieve high standards of energy efficiency, aimed at reducing carbon emissions.
Policy DEV9	To define the criteria for an additional dwelling in tandem with or behind an existing dwelling within an existing garden.

#### **Summary of aims of aspirations in the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan**

<b>Aspiration</b>	<b>Aims</b>
Aspiration 1	To create a safe and secure network of walking routes around and within Woodford and improve links with surrounding areas.
Aspiration 2	To create a safe and secure cycling network.
Aspiration 3	To achieve better quality and more frequent bus services for Woodford with a greater range of destinations.
Aspiration 4	To achieve improved safety for all road users, and to encourage increased levels of walking and cycling, including speed reduction schemes where appropriate.
Aspiration 5	To support the provision of accessible information about facilities, services and activities throughout the extended village and its communication to new residents.
Aspiration 6	To encourage and support the development of physical infrastructure, which facilitates linkages throughout the extended village.
Aspiration 7	To establish and maintain a dialogue with the land owner, developer and local authority and with the community to promote effective integration of the old village and new development.
Aspiration 8	To achieve clean air in Woodford by avoiding the burning of waste and supporting initiatives that would reduce levels of air pollution on roads and in homes.

## 7. Woodford Neighbourhood Plan Policies

### 7.1. Introduction

The following section includes the policies which support the four policy topic areas within our **Objectives: Environment, Employment, Community and Development**, together with the rationale behind them.

Detailed justification and evidence to support these policies can be found in the section entitled Justification, Evidence and References for Policies. The numbers in brackets refer to references, which can be found in this section.

### 7.2. Environment Policies

#### Rationale

In summary, Woodford comprises ribbon development along a network of roads and lanes through countryside, which falls within the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain National Character Area, which is described as a pastoral area of rolling agricultural plain. (29) This structure and setting, are an integral part of Woodford's character, which is treasured by residents and visitors. Development is largely low density with significant gaps in the housing line along roads and lanes, with the result that there are far reaching views from public lanes, footpaths and private residences across farmland and to the Pennine hills. The area is low lying and poorly drained, resulting in numerous permanent and seasonal ponds, ditches and streams, which are an intrinsic part of the character of the landscape and important wildlife habitats. The countryside is characterised by numerous mature native trees, particularly oaks, and a network of native hedgerows. As well as the aesthetic value, the vegetation in the countryside and gardens in Woodford helps to offset the damaging effects of humans in our environment by absorbing carbon dioxide and pollutants. In addition, the vegetation provides important habitats for wildlife, thereby supporting biodiversity in the largely invisible ecological network that we are part of. The policies in the Environment section aim to protect and enhance these important features of Woodford.

In more detail, Woodford is a settlement with a long history, rural nature and beautiful landscapes. Woodford lies within the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain National Character, which is described as a pastoral area of rolling agricultural plain. (29) The land slopes gently down to the east, affording excellent, unobstructed views of the Pennines and vistas across open fields from many locations in Woodford, which are very much treasured by residents and visitors. -Twenty footpaths form a network in the Neighbourhood Area, many crossing farmland. The rural lanes and footpaths are used by walkers, joggers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers. In this way, Woodford provides an outdoor recreational facility for

people, including families with children, from Woodford and the wider community. The views and vistas from the lanes and footpaths are an important part of this facility.

The countryside and green spaces are a key component of the character of Woodford. The built environment in Woodford comprises 22% of the Neighbourhood Area. The remaining 78% is mostly open agricultural land with a network of footpaths plus recreational open spaces. The pattern of green spaces and distinct gaps in the ribbon development along Woodford's roads and lanes contribute to the openness of the Green Belt.

Natural features are another key component of the landscape in Woodford. Farms, small holdings, lanes, hedgerows, trees, ponds, ditches, old cottages, street trees and wide grass verges are intermingled with more recent developments, business premises and roads. These features reflect the long history of a settlement at Woodford and contribute to the landscape character. As well as their aesthetic value, the natural features in Woodford have been identified as important wildlife habitats.

According to the Cheshire Wildlife Trust Report for Woodford the area was largely underwater at the end of the last ice age. The water drained away leaving a wetland of meres, mosses, rivers and ponds. This landscape is recognised as being of international importance for its wetland wildlife. (14)

Significant areas of surface flooding are a notable feature in Woodford, with many seasonal ponds persisting through the winter months, providing aesthetic value and wildlife habitats, as well as causing problems for accessibility.

Woodford is very rich in mature and veteran trees, notably oaks, many of which are at least 200 years old, with some specimens older than that, in the range 300 to 400 years old. Native hedgerows subdivide the farmland and there are numerous ponds. These natural features are an intrinsic part of the countryside and contribute to its mental and physical benefits for residents and recreational users from other parts of the borough, recognised and protected by national and local policies. (1-6)

Native trees, native hedgerows, ponds, rivers and streams were identified as key natural features, which make a significant contribution to the aesthetic character of Woodford. Together with ditches, unimproved grassland and arable field margins, these features are also important habitats for wildlife in Woodford, many of which are listed as Priority Habitats (or Habitats of Principal Importance) in the Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act (19), which incorporates the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) (16) and the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Project (18). Therefore, detailed on-the-ground surveys of these features were conducted by a small team of volunteers who are Woodford residents, which included two professional biologists. The Neighbourhood Area was divided into ten sections, which were scrutinised in detail individually on the ground. Each feature was given a unique code number and its location marked on a map. The species making up the hedgerows in the farmland were



identified and any section of 30 metres or more containing four or more species was classified as species-rich. Mature native trees are abundant in field boundaries in Woodford and were too numerous to count, but any which stood out for special habitat or aesthetic value were identified for species and marked on a map. No less than seventy permanent and seasonal ponds of varying sizes were found in Woodford.

The WNF Landscape and Environment Surveys (12) found the following in the Woodford Neighbourhood Area, some of which are also recorded in the National Biodiversity Network Atlas (33):

- Seventy permanent and seasonal ponds in farmland and recreational land, varying in size and vegetation cover.
- More than thirty different woody species present as trees and in hedgerows. (see Appendix)
- Many miles of native hedgerows around farm fields, some of which were species rich, containing four or more different native species in 30 metres, or exceptionally species-rich, with eight to ten different native species in 30 metres.
- Abundant native trees, which are especially associated with hedgerows and field boundaries.
- Many mature and veteran trees, notably oaks, many of which are at least 200 years old, with some specimens older than that, in the range 300 to 400 years old. Mature oaks provide a habitat rich in biodiversity, supporting more life forms than any other native trees, hosting hundreds of species of insect, and supplying many British birds and mammals with an important food source.
- Native herbaceous species in uncultivated arable field margins, including wildflowers, such as the native English bluebell, which is a protected species of international importance. (24)
- Small areas of native mixed deciduous woodland, including an area of wet woodland.
- Bird sightings reported by locals and the Manchester Birding Forum included twenty four red listed, twenty six amber listed and nine protected species, including the near-threatened curlew. (12, 30-33) (See Appendix)
- The common toad, which is a UKBAP and Greater Manchester Biodiversity protected amphibian species. (16, 18) (12, 16, 18)
- Dragon flies and damsel flies. (12, 33) (See Appendix)

Specific locations are marked on the WNF Key Natural Features Map. (12)

The survey reports and maps were supplied to the Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT) and helped to inform their desk-top survey of Woodford. (14)

The CWT report highlighted that the important wildlife habitats in Woodford are associated with the River Dean and its tributary south of Blossoms Lane, the grasslands, woodlands, hedgerows and wetlands found across the parish. The report notes the value of species-rich hedgerows, particularly

in the vicinity of Blossoms Lane and to the west of the former aerodrome site. It also notes that recent development on the adjacent aerodrome site will disturb breeding curlews, which are a globally near threatened species, and brown hare which is a species of county importance. (14)

There is an area of relatively young woodland to the west of the aerodrome and pockets of woodland along the river Dean and its tributary (south of Blossoms Lane). A small area of wet woodland with species such as willow and oak lies in the north east corner of the parish under the route of the proposed relief road. A larger block of woodland south of Hall Moss Lane has willow, oak, ash, hawthorn and birch. (14)

The CWT report mentions some of the bird species found in the Woodford Neighbourhood Area, of which eight are red listed, seven are amber listed, one protected and one near threatened (curlew). Four species of bat (all European Protected species) have been reported in Woodford. Protected amphibian species found in the Woodford Neighbourhood Area include the great crested newt and the common toad. (14)

Ponds in Woodford have been highlighted by the CWT report as a habitat of medium importance, which should always be retained where possible when land is developed. The high density of ponds will support breeding populations of the common toad, which is a UK Biodiversity Action Plan species regularly observed in Woodford. For example, the report highlights the importance of the Church Lane seasonal pond, which supports red listed herring gull, redwing and fieldfare and amber listed oystercatcher, shell duck, lesser black backed gulls, greylag geese and teal. The report observes that the highest density of ponds is found in the Blossoms Lane area and the area to the west of the former aerodrome and the notable dragonflies and damselflies associated with the more open ponds. There are records of great crested newts in the north eastern are of the parish and it is likely that a proportion of the ponds will support this species which is of Principle Importance and a European Protected species. (14)

The study attributed habitat distinctiveness values to all land parcels in the Neighbourhood Area, which should be taken into account when planning decisions are made. Several parcels of land were identified as high distinctiveness. These are priority habitats of Principal Importance. A large number of land parcels were identified as medium distinctiveness. These are usually rich in wildlife and act as ecological stepping stones and wildlife corridors. Most of the areas of priority habitat in Woodford are pockets of deciduous woodland often around ponds or clusters of ponds. The report recommends that further detailed ecological survey work is undertaken to evaluate further the habitats of medium distinctiveness. (14)

The CWT study identified a wildlife corridor which provides ecological connectivity between woodland, wetland, grassland and waterside habitats within and beyond the neighbourhood area. It supports a wide range of species including birds, mammals, amphibians and invertebrates that are in decline both locally and nationally. Some of the most notable are the curlew, skylark, lapwing, European brown hare, brown long-eared bat, dragonflies and damselflies, which depend on the semi-natural habitats highlighted in the report. (14) CWT recommended that the corridor, is identified in Woodford Neighbourhood Plan and protected from development. (14)

The CWT report recommends that future development of Woodford should respect the natural environment. The most intact landscapes, in terms of biodiversity, landform and historical/cultural associations should be valued highly when planning decisions are made. Protection and enhancement of Woodford's natural assets is of crucial importance for nature conservation, the ecosystem and the enjoyment of future generations. (14)

Analysis of the Woodford residents' questionnaire revealed that an overwhelming majority of 276 respondents (83%) said that they wanted enhanced protection of the landscape and positive management of the varied local wildlife. Over 60% cited the rural environment as a reason for choosing Woodford as a place to live in the first place. From comments received it was also clear that Woodford's open, rural environment is highly valued. This message was reinforced by the public exhibition in 2015. Unsympathetic development was identified as an issue that threatens the views and vistas in Woodford. In responses to the Woodford residents' questionnaire, open and green were very frequently used words. It was clear that Woodford's open spaces and rural environment are highly valued. Protection of natural features, especially the large number of mature trees, and wildlife were requested in community feedback. (7-11)

Community engagement gave rise to the Environment objective:

**Objective: To preserve and protect the openness of the Green Belt, the rural character, the landscape, important views, natural features and biodiversity.**

The policies which arose from this objective reflect national and local government policies on landscape and the environment and aim to provide protection for aspects specific to Woodford. (1-6)

Policies ENV1 to ENV4 are consistent with NPPF, SMBC, policies and advice from DEFRA, Natural England and RSPB (1-6, 15-22). They are supported by voluntary and professional studies, including voluntary Environment and Landscape surveys, a professional Heritage and Character Assessment carried out by AECOM and a professional report prepared by Cheshire Wildlife Trust. (12-14)

Policies ENV5 aims to minimise light pollution in Woodford. These policies are in line with residents' wishes to retain the rural character and protect wildlife and with national and local policies (1-3, 7-11 and 17-19)

Full details of justification, evidence and references are provided in the Environment Evidence and Justification Section

**ENV1: Protecting views and vistas (1-13)**

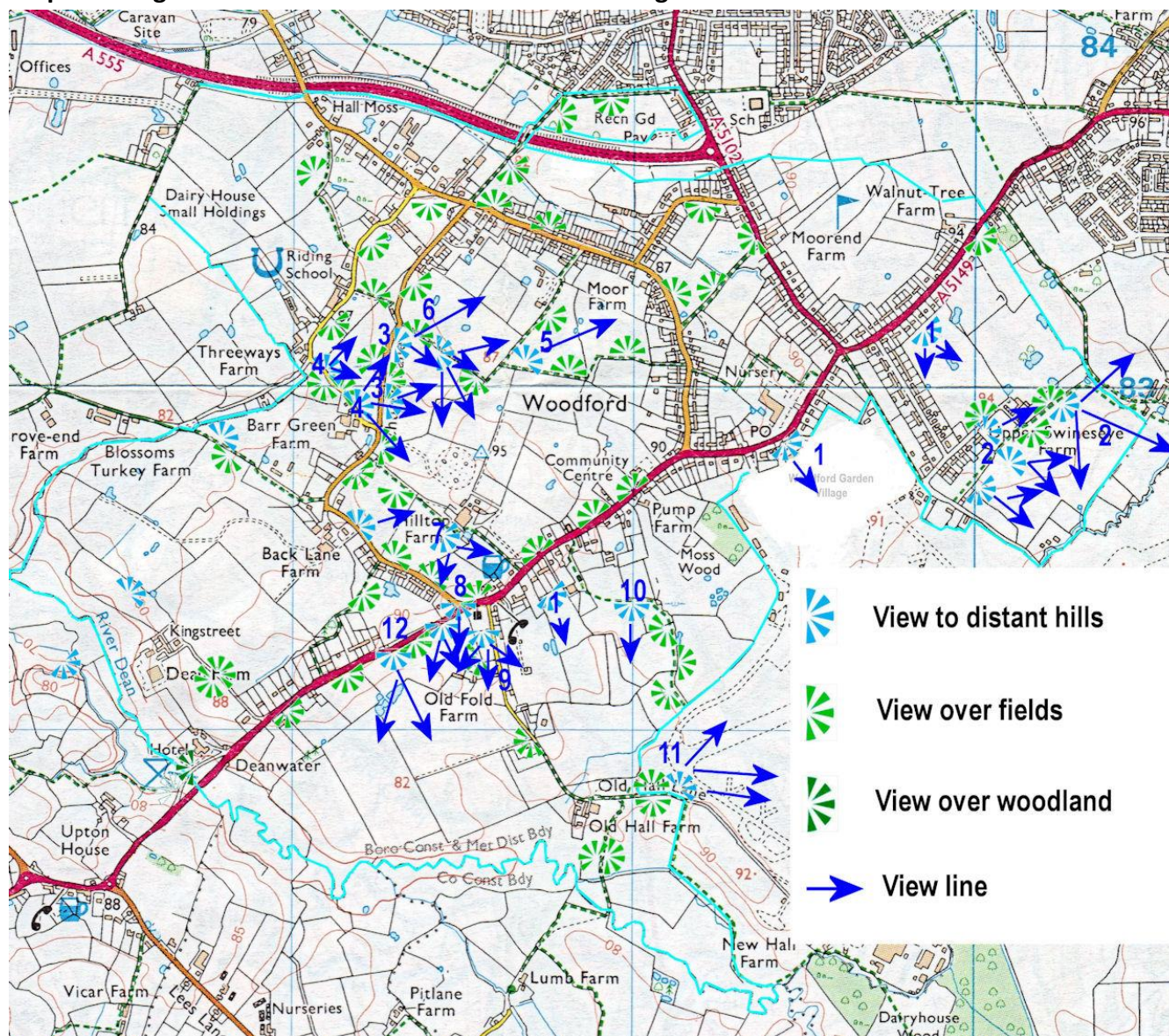
- a) New development shall be permitted, provided that it does not affect the openness of the Green Belt and that it respects and enhances the local landscape quality, ensuring that important local views and vistas within and out from the Neighbourhood Area and the rural skylines are maintained, as listed in the Views and Vistas table and shown on the Views and Vistas Maps.
- b) Any development that enhances access to the views and vistas from public rights of way shall be encouraged.

**Numbers associated with blue arrows on the Views and Vistas Map below indicate these views:**

1. View of Hills from the back of properties on Chester Road	Pennines: Lyme Park, Macclesfield Forest, White Nancy
2. View of hills from Bridle Way and footpaths 101 and 107HGB	Pennines: Kinder Scout, Lyme Park
3. View of hills from Church Lane (middle section) and Blossoms Lane	Pennines: Kinder Scout, Lyme Park, Shining Tor, Macclesfield Forest, White Nancy
6. View of hills from footpath 8HGB	Pennines: Kinder Scout, Lyme Park, Shining Tor, Macclesfield Forest, White Nancy
7. View of hills from footpath 7HGB	Pennines: Macclesfield Forest
8. View of hills from Church Lane (southern end)	Pennines: Macclesfield Forest, White Nancy
9. Views of hills from Church graveyard	Alderley Edge
10. View of hills from footpath 99HGB	Pennines: Croker Hill
11. View of hills from Old Hall Lane at end of former runway	Pennines: Saddleworth Moor, Kinder Scout, Lyme Park
12. View of hills from Wilmslow Road	Pennines: Shining Tor, Macclesfield Forest, White Nancy, Alderley Edge



## Map showing Views and Vistas within and from the Neighbourhood Area



Click [here](#) for a larger view.



## Some of the Views and Vistas within and out from Woodford



### Views and vistas out from and within Woodford



Central Woodford



West Woodford



River Dean



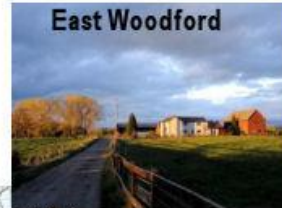
Alderley Edge



Kinder Scout



East Woodford



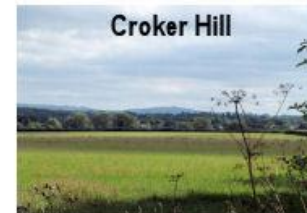
Lyme Park



Lyme Park



Croker Hill



Shining Tor



White Nancy





## Sight lines from Woodford



## ENV2: Protecting the countryside and green spaces (1-13)

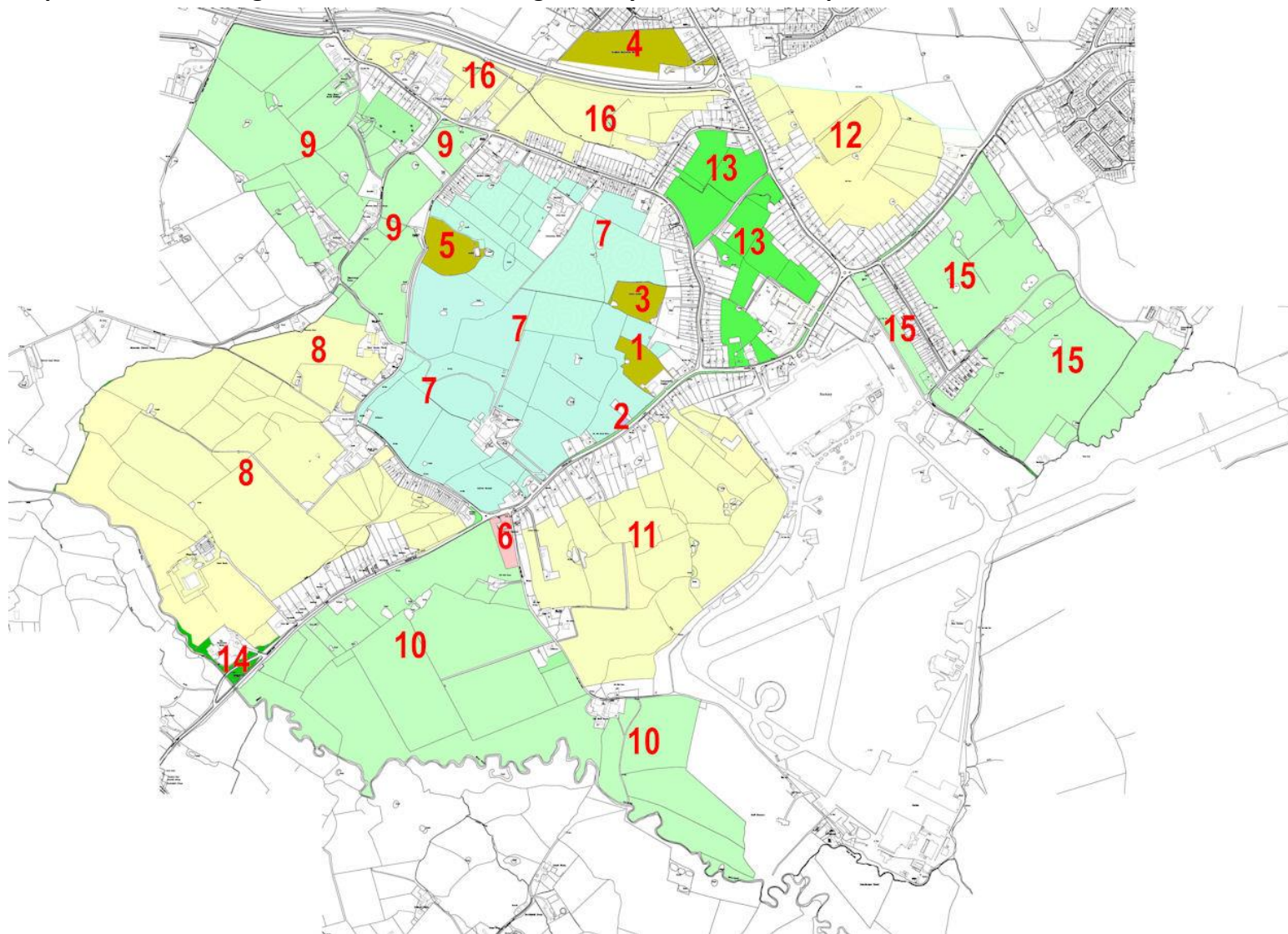
- a) Development will be permitted provided that it has no detrimental impact on the countryside or green spaces shown on the Countryside and Green Spaces Map and in the Countryside and Green Spaces Table, which contribute to the rural character of the village or have sporting, recreational, amenity or aesthetic value.
- b) Improved access to the countryside and green spaces via public rights of way will be encouraged.

### Countryside and Green Spaces in Woodford Neighbourhood Area (key to map below)

Area on map	Location (refer to map below)
Area 1	Community Centre field
Area 2	Grass verges on Chester Road
Area 3	Woodford Cricket Club field
Area 4	Woodford Recreation Ground
Area 5	Bramhall Cricket Club field (in Woodford)
Area 6	Christ Church Woodford: Church yard
Area 7	Fields which form the centre of the village between Moor Lane, Chester Road and Church Lane.
Area 8	Fields between Blossoms Lane, Wilmslow Road and the River Dean.
Area 9	Fields between Church Lane, Hall Moss Lane and the road to Total Fitness.
Area 10	Fields between Wilmslow Road, River Dean, Old Hall Lane and South Eastern boundary of Neighbourhood Area and Chester Road.
Area 11	Fields between Old Hall Lane, Chester Road, and Woodford Aerodrome.
Area 12	Fields between Woodford Road, Chester Road and A6MARR.
Area 13	Fields between Jenny Lane, Woodford Road, Chester Road and Moor Lane.
Area 14	Valley of the River Dean, near the Deanwater Hotel.
Area 15	Fields between Chester Road, boundary with Cheshire East, and Aerodrome site, including land behind the houses on both sides of Bridle Road
Area 16	Fields between A555, Jenny Lane and Moor Lane/Hall Moss Lane



## Map of Woodford Neighbourhood Area showing Countryside and Green Spaces



Click [here](#) for a larger view

**ENV3: Protecting natural features which are a key aesthetic component of the landscape (1-4, 7-11, 12-13, 21)**

- a) Proposals that protect and enhance natural features, which are a key aesthetic component of the landscape shown in the table of Natural Features of Aesthetic Value , shall be permitted, provided that they do not impair views and vistas listed in the table and maps in ENV1.

**Table showing Natural Features which are a key aesthetic component of the Woodford Landscape**

1	Trees in public places and bordering roads, in pavements and in grass verges along Chester Road, Wilmslow Road, Bridle Road, Church Lane, Blossoms Lane, Moor Lane, and Hall Moss Lane
2	Trees and woodland with Tree Preservation Orders or Ancient Woodland
3	Mature & veteran trees described and /or marked on maps in the WNF Landscape and Environment Survey report (12)
4	Grass verges with daffodils and wildflowers, such as bluebells
5	Native hedgerows visible along roads, tracks and public rights of way across farmland (12)
6	Ponds visible along roads, tracks and public rights of way across farmland (12)

#### **ENV4: Supporting biodiversity\*** (1-4, 7-19, 23-26, 30-33)

\*The variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable.

- a) All planning proposals should be able to demonstrate that the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, mitigate, compensate) has been followed.
- b) All planning proposals will be required to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity.

This will be achieved by applying the following measures:

- i) Protecting and enhancing high value features identified in the CWT Habitat Distinctiveness Map and all wildlife corridors identified in the CWT Wildlife Corridor Map.
- ii) Protecting and enhancing habitats identified as supporting Priority Species under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006/British Action Plan (UKBAP), or Greater Manchester Biodiversity Project.
- iii) Retaining where possible all features identified as medium distinctiveness in the CWT Habitat Distinctiveness Map.
- iv) Retaining where possible all natural features shown in the WNF Natural Features map and table.
- v) Areas identified on the CWT Habitat Distinctiveness Map as supporting high distinctiveness habitat, and wildlife corridors identified in the CWT Wildlife Corridor Map should be protected by at least a 15 m buffer zone
- vi) The areas identified as supporting high distinctiveness, medium distinctiveness habitat, and the wildlife corridors will require a comprehensive ecological evaluation if they are put forward for development.
- vii) Any proposals that involve the removal of hedgerows or sections of hedgerows or their associated features (e.g. ditches, banks, standard trees) should be supported by an assessment to ascertain their status in relation to The Hedgerow Regulations. Should the Local Planning Authority grant permission for removal, compensatory hedgerows should be provided.
- viii) Incorporating wildlife features into the design of the proposals including, enhancing or restoring existing wildlife features, planting of native species that benefit pollinators, incorporating bird and bat boxes and hedgehog friendly fencing and minimising light pollution.
- ix) Where there are unavoidable losses of biodiversity once the mitigation hierarchy has been applied, compensatory measures will be required.

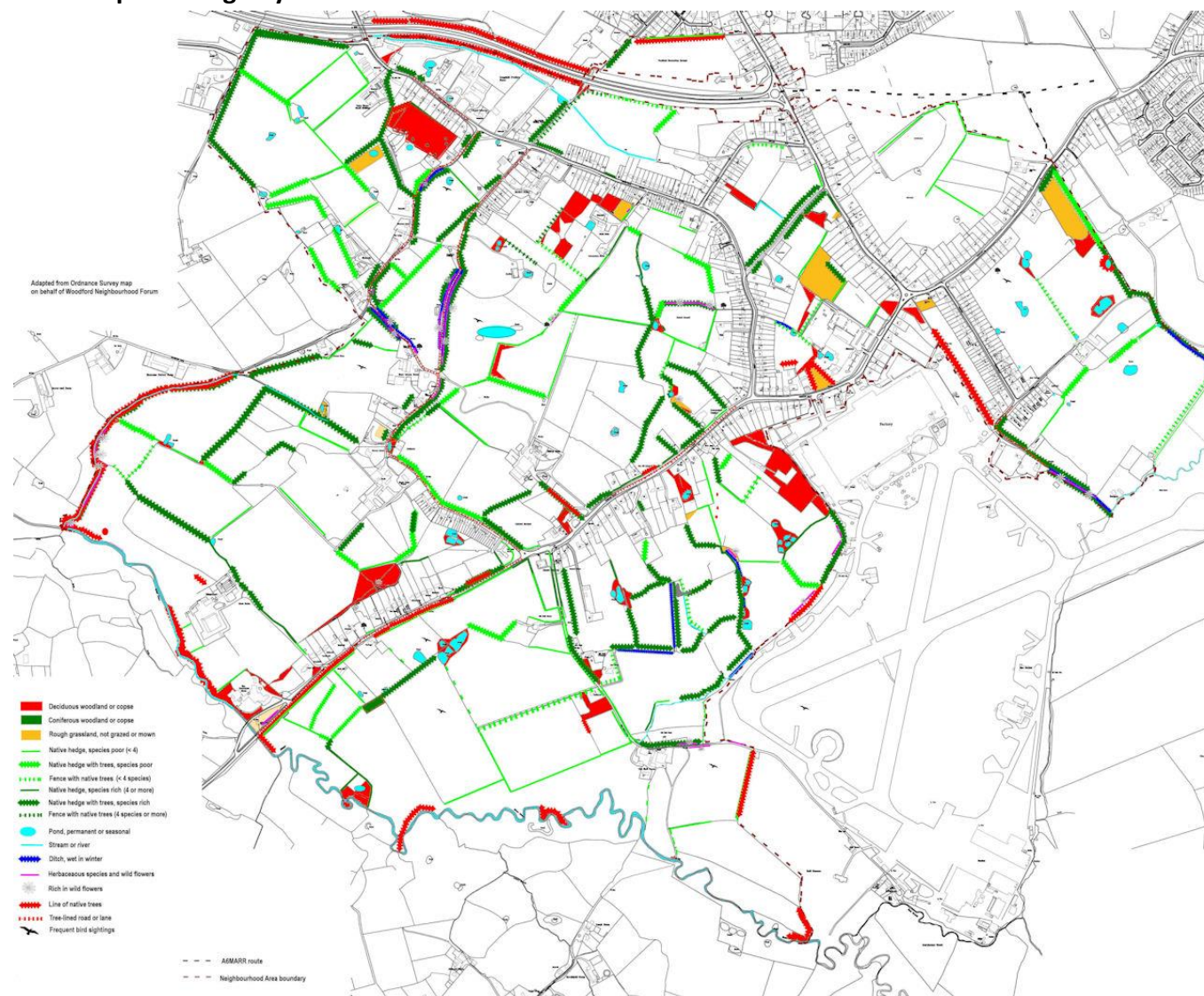
See WNF Key Natural Features table and Map and CWT Habitat Distinctiveness Maps below.



**Table of Key Habitats for wildlife as shown in the WNF Natural Features Map**

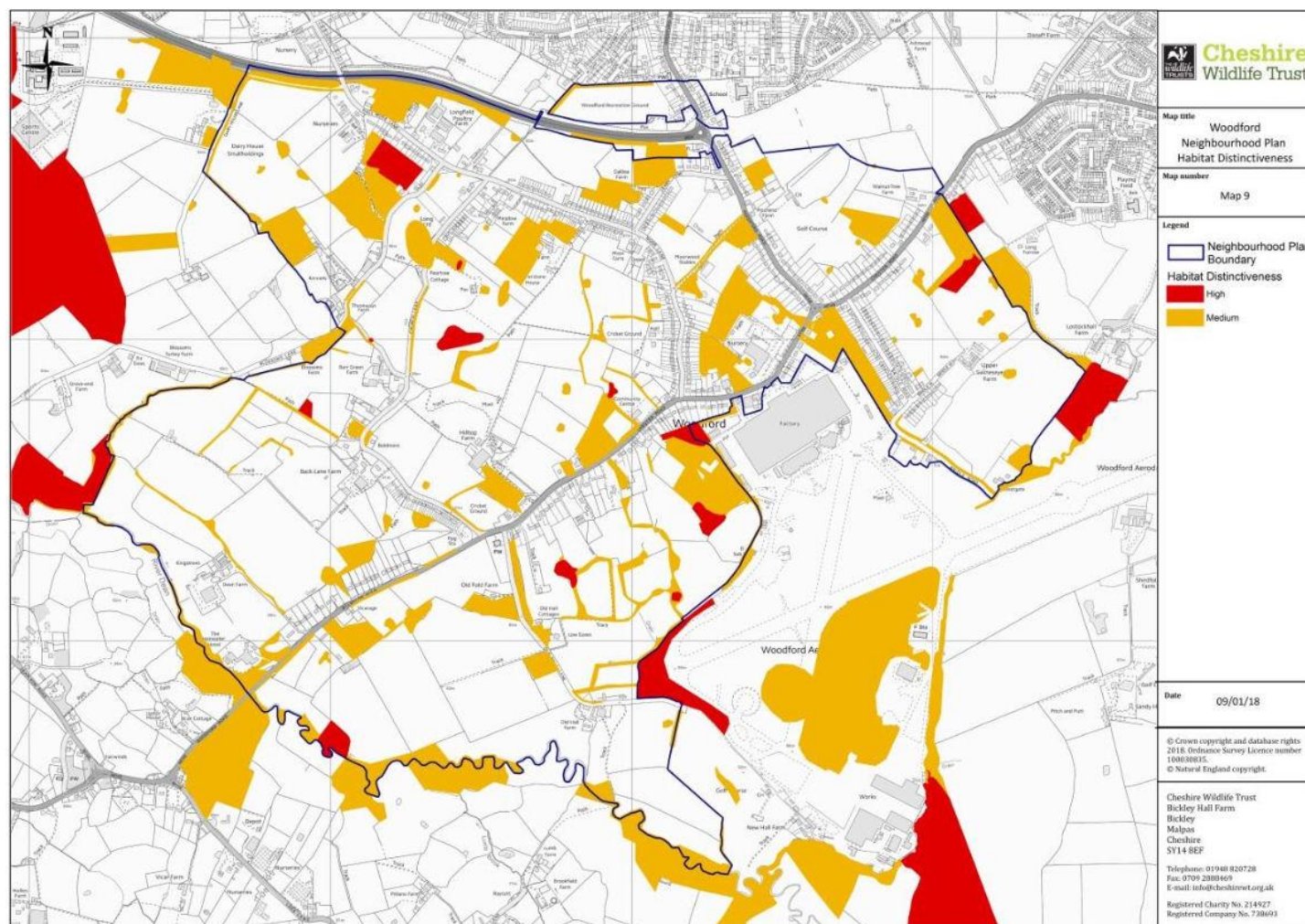
1	Native hedges, especially those which are species-rich
3	Mature & veteran native trees
4	Native woodland and copses
6	Rough unimproved grassland
7	Areas rich in wildflowers
8	Ponds (permanent and seasonal)
9	Ditches
10	Streams
11	Rivers

## WNF Map showing Key Natural Features in Woodford



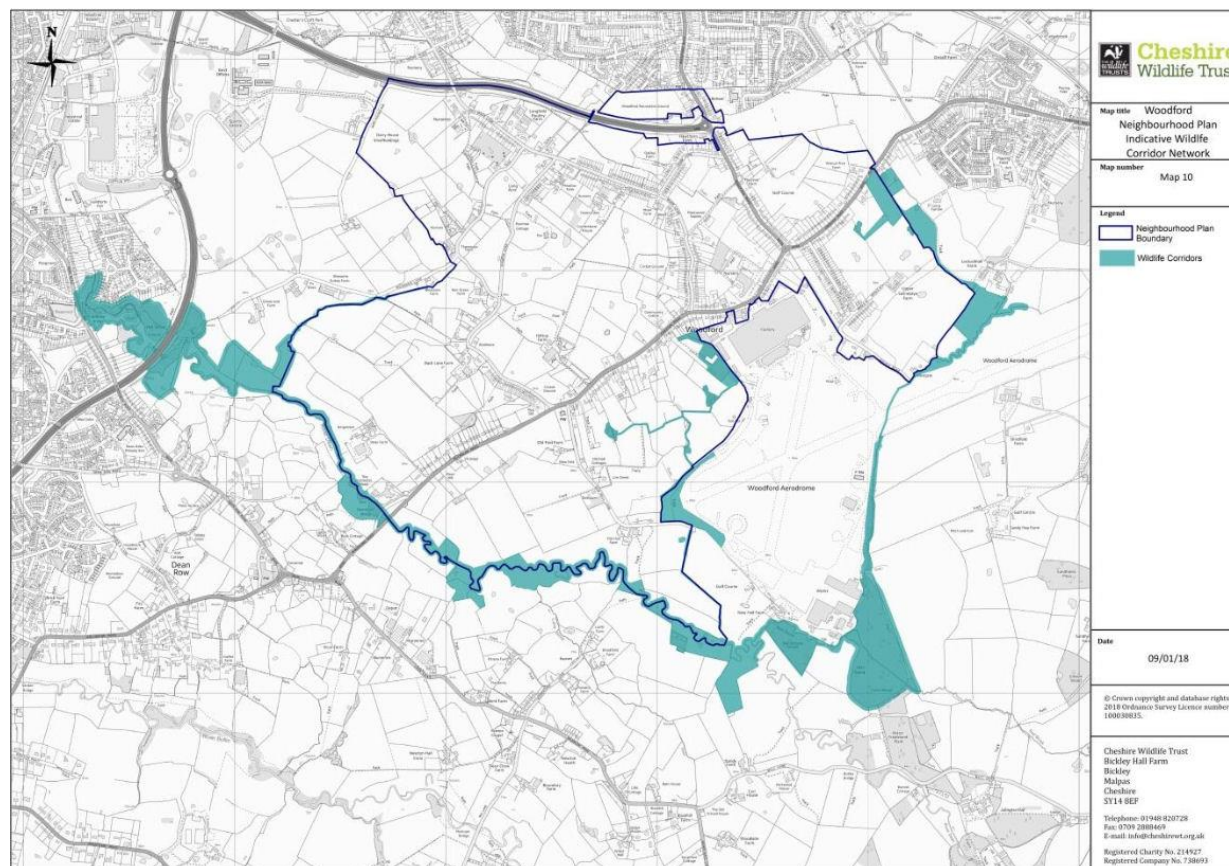
A high resolution version of this map can be viewed on our website [here](#).

**CWT Map showing area of Habitat Distinctiveness (red indicates high level, orange indicates medium level).** Reproduced with permission from Cheshire Wildlife Trust





**CWT Map showing Wildlife Corridors (marked in blue). Reproduced with permission from Cheshire Wildlife Trust**



**ENV5: Reducing light pollution (1-3, 34)**

- a) New development or change of use that does not minimise light pollution created through its proposed use shall be refused.
- b) If floodlights are required, use of environmentally friendly floodlights, which reduce overspill, in private and public places, and in areas with wildlife value shall be encouraged.
- c) Security lighting shall be designed to reduce light spillage beyond the site curtilage and minimise impact on amenity of adjoining properties and the wider area.
- d) Planning officers or developers, when dealing with applications for lighting in an area of suitable bat habitat (eg. woodland, old pasture, linking hedgerows and water habitats), should seek information on bat roosts in the area, because certain forms of lighting can have adverse effects on bats.

### 7.3. Employment Policies

#### Rationale

Woodford is a rural community on the southern tip of a major conurbation surrounded on three sides by Cheshire countryside. 78% of the Neighbourhood Area is farmland plus a small amount of recreational land.

Until 2011, there was a significant amount of employment in Woodford courtesy of British Aerospace at the former Woodford Aerodrome. In its hey-day there were 3000 people employed there, most of whom commuted in from surrounding areas. The aerodrome site, which is outside our Neighbourhood Area, is now being developed into a 940 unit housing estate. This obviously reduced the employment opportunities in Woodford, which are currently somewhat limited. However, Woodford does boast some very successful retail outlets, including a thriving Garden Centre, a bathroom sales shop, a nursing home, a hotel, a car sales outlet, a golf driving range, two beauty parlours, a hairdresser, a livery stables with competition facilities, a builders and plumbers' merchant, working farms, a supermarket, a motor vehicle MOT and repair garage, two restaurants, three dog kennels / catteries, a garden maintenance company plus a plethora of small enterprises, which are run from private residences, such as architects, dressmakers, craftsmen and consultants. Overall, some 110 businesses have been identified in Woodford, spread through the whole community. Woodford does not have a business park or multi-occupancy office building that provides an employment centre.

Transport links are poor which requires employees outside the Woodford area generally having to drive to work, this in turn increases pressure on available parking space at their place of work. It was evident from our residents' survey (12) that existing brownfield sites were the preferred option (13) for any new employment sites and the former aerodrome site would be the most obvious place for any such sites. Evidence from the same source (13) also confirmed that residents did not wish to see further loss of employment and that better broadband provision would be a positive asset to business. From our surveys there is clearly very limited appetite for further development in order to provide employment unless it was on brownfield land on the former aerodrome site but there was clearly support for the re-use and refurbishment of existing buildings. As far as future employment in Woodford was concerned residents principally favoured small shops, tourism and pubs and restaurants.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out to maintain, support and encourage the sustainable growth of small businesses and enterprises, rural tourism and local facilities within the Neighbourhood Area, which respect the rural character of the area, comply with Green Belt Policy and will benefit the local economy and the wider community.



## Community Feedback

A survey of what were judged to be the top twenty businesses in Woodford was carried out by interview and questionnaire. Of these, 85% were standalone businesses, two a branch of a larger organisation and one a subsidiary. Only one company employed more than 25 people. During this survey period one company closed down and moved away from Woodford, although this was initiated by the redevelopment of the BAe site. No significant un-met needs were identified apart from those that would shortly be completed – the A6MARR, Poynton Relief Road and completion of the high-speed broadband implementation. Therefore no specific action for employment is planned but the policy is rather to support local business initiatives, such as farm diversification, the addition of an office or small workshop to a residential property, providing they are consistent with the character and style of the existing development and conform to other planning requirements.

Community engagement gave rise to the Employment objective:

### **Objective: To seek to protect and support local employment**

The policies in the Employment section comply with NPPF and SMBC policies (1-3) and are supported by community consultation. (4-9) Full details of the justification, evidence and references can be found in the Employment Justification Evidence and References section.

#### **EMP1: New Businesses within the Area (1-9)**

Proposals shall be permitted that extend or promote existing and new small-scale employment opportunities within the Neighbourhood Area and that benefit the local community and the local economy, provided that:

- a) Proposals do not adversely impact upon the environment; and
- b) Proposals do not adversely affect the character and appearance of the locality or the amenity of adjoining properties; and
- c) All new development will be required to make provision for high speed broadband and other communication networks; and
- d) Proposals will not generate heavy goods traffic and must demonstrate, with the assistance of a Transport Statement, that the proposal will not have an unacceptable traffic impact within the village; and
- e) Proposals must include, where applicable, adequate parking, loading / unloading, servicing and manoeuvring areas. The site should have good access to public transport and make secure, covered provision for cycles.

**EMP2: Loss of Employment** ((1, 2, 4-8)

Loss of existing local employment sites through change of use or redevelopment would only be permitted where the applicant for any change of use:

- a) Provides evidence that the employment use is no longer viable; and should provide evidence of efforts made to either save or sell the business as a going concern e.g.: marketing strategy and business plan and details of consultations with professional advisers, such as the company's bank manager, accountants, solicitors, HR consultants, FSB, local Chamber of Commerce made over a period of a minimum of six months.

**EMP3: Use of Rural Buildings** (1, 4-9)

Wherever possible the reuse of redundant buildings should be a priority over new-build.

Any reconstruction / improvement works should provide evidence for proposed low carbon technologies, in order that the building's carbon footprint be reduced. Examples of this are double / triple glazing, increased insulation, the use of LED lights and lights that automatically time out in corridors and toilets etc, new boilers for heating systems and up to date "white goods"; and

Schemes that create employment by the re-use, conversion and adaptation of permanent, structurally sound, rural buildings of substantial construction for small business purposes, recreation or tourism shall be permitted; and

Applications for the change of use for agricultural buildings, including stables, within 10 years of completion of the building will not be permitted unless accompanied by evidence that the building was used during that period for the intended agricultural use and that the proposed changes of use will not generate the need for a replacement structure; and

Proposals will not generate heavy goods traffic on unsuitable, rural lanes and must demonstrate, with the assistance of a Transport Statement, that the proposal will not have an unacceptable traffic impact within the village; and

Proposals must include, where applicable, adequate parking, loading / unloading, servicing and manoeuvring areas.

## 7.4. Community and Heritage Policies

\*For the purposes of this Plan the policies under the heading Community and Heritage focus on features and facilities of value to, or reflecting the history of the community.

### Rationale

Community and heritage are grouped together in this section because it has been shown that the social benefits of heritage range include increased social cohesion, a greater sense of identity and to improved wellbeing. Protecting landscapes through heritage also delivers a range of environmental benefits, which contribute to quality of life. (12)

Woodford is blessed with a number of community and recreational facilities, including the War Memorial Community Centre and field, Woodford Cricket Club, Bramhall Cricket Ground, the Royal British Legion Club House, the Davenport Arms and a Scout Hut. These and others are listed in the Features of Value to the Community table associated with policy COM2. There is currently no school in Woodford.

As noted in the Introduction to Woodford, the village was formerly part of the Davenport Estate. Farms, small holdings and cottages on the Woodford Estate were rented and many local names appear in the list of tenants, including Hallworth, Worthington, Shatwell, Jepson and Holland. When the estate was sold off by auction in 1922, many former tenants purchased their properties. The sale of the estate allowed new dwellings to appear in Woodford, resulting in small developments along the main streets, such as Chester Road and Moor Lane, which were originally country lanes. The structure, character and community of Woodford reflect that history and descendants of those families still live here today, providing continuity with the past.

Analysis of community engagement via questionnaire revealed that, when asked what could be done to improve living in Woodford, the second most highly ranked choice (after improved public transport) was recreation. When asked what the Neighbourhood Plan should encourage, the top ranking choices were footpaths, road safety and public transport. The Community Centre was highly ranked in fourth place, with 45% of respondents ticking this option. It dates back to 1943, when the idea first arose and is very dear to the hearts of people in the community. Funds were raised by the Home Guard, donations by A.V. Roe company, local residents and further fund raising events. In 1953 the Centre, as it is known locally, was opened on its current site and the charity is run by volunteer trustees. It continues to be a hive of activity. Whether it be amateur dramatics, badminton, bridge, football, cycling, running, dancing, dog training, car boot sales, meetings, parties, or weddings, there is always something going on. The community centre is not run or financed by the local authority, but is a charity run on a voluntary basis by trustees and financed by rental of the facilities and fund-raising events. Any improvements would need to be paid for from these funds, or from additional contributions or donations.

The word community appeared frequently in free narrative responses, many of which referred to the Community Centre. A sense of community came over as important to many people, indicating that it was one of the main reasons why people enjoyed living in Woodford. There were a large number and variety of suggestions for improving the buildings, facilities and activities. Suggestions included social and sporting activities, more activities for young and older people, clubs, cafes, post office, medical centre, parks, play areas and many more. (3-7)

Special features in Woodford that were noted by residents included open spaces, footpaths, grass verges and trees. When asked which buildings were important to protect answers included the Church and old cottages (which are listed buildings), the Community Centre, the Davenport Arms and Avro Heritage (although this is outside of the Neighbourhood area). (3-7)

Community engagement gave rise to the Community and Heritage objective:

**Objective: To preserve and enhance recreational and heritage assets to promote a healthy community**

The policies in the Community and Heritage section comply with NPPF and SMBC policies (1,2), legislation (8) and Historic England Advice (10), and are supported by professional studies (8) and community consultation (3-7). Full details of justification, evidence and references are provided in the Community Justification, Evidence and references section.

#### **COM1: Provision of new community facilities (1-8)**

Proposals for the provision of new community facilities shall be permitted provided that they would not have significant harmful impact on Features of Value as listed in COM 2 or residents or on other neighbouring uses, and are within the constraints of the Greenbelt Policy.

#### **COM2: Development of Community Facilities (1-12)**

Any development that has a significant adverse effect on, or results in the loss of, any of the assets that are listed as Features of Value to the Community shall be refused. (See Features of Value to the Community table below)

Any measure to improve, relocate, or add new Features of Value to the Community for the benefit of Woodford shall be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no loss, or there will be an equal or greater level of value to the community, and provided that the proposals would not have significant harmful impact on residents or on other neighbouring uses.

### Features of Value to the Community

1	Woodford War Memorial Community Centre and field
2	The Davenport Arms known locally as the Thief's Neck
3	Woodford Cricket Club and field
4	Bramhall Cricket Club and field
5	The Royal British Legion Club House
6	The Scout Hut
9	Woodford Recreation Ground
11	Grass verges
12	Trees in grass verges and pavements
13	Public footpath network
14	Heritage assets including statutory and locally listed buildings

#### **COM3: Local Protection of Heritage Assets (1-3, 10-12)**

Any development affecting a heritage asset within Woodford should aim to conserve and enhance the heritage value of the structure or building and its setting. Heritage assets are defined as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing). Additions to this local list are being made as part of a local list review, which is being carried out in phases by SMBC. At the moment there are no local listings in Woodford. The Woodford Community will support SMBC with local listings where the property has:

- a) Architectural interest, such as buildings which are locally or regionally important for the interest of their architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship; also important examples of particular building types and techniques, and significant plan forms; or
- b) Historic interest, such as buildings which illustrate important aspects of local or regional social, economic, cultural or military history, or
- c) Close historical association with local or regional important people or events; or
- d) Group value, especially where buildings comprise an important architectural or historic unity, or are a fine example of planning (such as squares, terraces and model villages).

## 7.5. Development Policies

\*For the purposes of these policies the term Development refers to growth or change in the built environment.

### Rationale

The whole of Woodford Neighbourhood Area is currently designated as Green Belt. The Green Belt in the Woodford area was originally established in 1961 as part of an amendment to then Cheshire County Development Plan, which considered the Green Belt in the north of the County. The Written Statement set out the reason for its designation, these being to prevent the further major spread of development into Cheshire and

“ to preserve as far as possible the undeveloped breaks between existing towns and settlements”. That principle has been retained in all subsequent statutory plans for the Woodford area, including when it became part of the Stockport Borough Council in 1974.

Therefore, planning decisions for the Woodford Neighbourhood Area must be in accordance with national planning guidance regarding development in the Green Belt and the UDP. There is a presumption within the Green Belt against inappropriate development (including housing) unless very special circumstances apply.

Community engagement revealed that these constraints are very important to residents and there was a strong message that they wished the Green Belt status to remain for the Neighbourhood Area.

The Woodford Neighbourhood Area is unusual (possibly unique) in having a large housing development lying immediately adjacent within the Parish of Woodford. The site is identified in the Stockport Core Strategy as the Woodford Aerodrome Opportunity Site (2) and a Supplementary Planning Document [SPD] has been prepared to guide redevelopment. (4) Two areas of Woodford are allocated within the UDP as Major Existing Developed Sites [MEDS] in the Green Belt, where the principle of infilling and redevelopment can accord with national and local planning guidance. (3) Planning permission has been granted for a large redevelopment, including around 950 houses, a care facility and a small amount of commercial development on an area of the Aerodrome site that includes the MEDS. (12)

Community engagement showed that residents believe that this large development, which will ultimately triple the size of the original village, should more than suffice in terms of growth in Woodford. It was clear that many felt the Neighbourhood Plan should allow minimal development in the Neighbourhood Area, through limited infill consistent with Green Belt policy, in order to provide a mix of housing sizes and types, employment opportunities and an alternative to the development on the Aerodrome site, particularly for local families who wished to remain in Woodford.



A housing needs assessment prepared on behalf of Woodford Neighbourhood Forum by AECOM concluded that housing need for the Woodford in the period 2011-2026 is in the range of 20 to 25 net additional dwellings, and noted a potential opportunity to rely on the future housing need for Woodford Neighbourhood Plan Area to be satisfied by the Woodford Aerodrome development. The dwellings being provided on the Aerodrome site are all of a particular type. It is felt that development which may be allowed in the Neighbourhood Area as acceptable rural exceptions within the Green Belt, as outlined in the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan, will provide the required variety of sizes, types and tenures in Woodford.

Community engagement showed that residents were keen to maintain the character of the built environment in the Neighbourhood Area, 99% of respondents to the initial questionnaire wanting new development to be in keeping with the existing development. A Heritage and Character Assessment of Woodford Neighbourhood Area, conducted by AECOM on behalf of Woodford Neighbourhood Forum, included the following as positive features of the landscape: the variety of architectural detailing of buildings; well vegetated gardens which enhance the quality and verdant character of the streets; well-maintained residential boundaries including gates, brick and stone walls and hedgerows; and open countryside surrounding the ribbon of settlement contributing to the rural setting of Woodford. The report included building frontages, rooflines and boundaries among the features which are sensitive to change. (11)

Community engagement gave rise to the Development objective:

**Objective: To provide variety and mix that meets local needs and manage limited infilling including residential, employment and community uses.**

These policies reflect and reaffirm national and local government policies on development in Green Belt and add detail specific for development in Woodford. They comply with NPPF and SMBC policies (1-3, 13-15), are supported by professional studies (10, 11) and community consultation (5-9). Full details of the justification, evidence and references are provided in the Development Justification, Evidence and References section.

### **DEV1: Exceptions for new housing development (1-3, 5-11)**

Development is not permitted in Green Belt apart from certain exceptions which are listed in national and SMBC policy. The policies below reflect these national and local policies.

Allowable development in Woodford, within the Green Belt, includes the following which may be considered acceptable as rural exceptions to Policy DEV1:

a) Limited infilling.\*

\* Infill: The development of a relatively small gap between existing buildings, for no more than one dwelling.

b) The redevelopment of previously developed land and buildings (subject to appropriate environmental safeguards and mitigation) whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings) which would not have greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

c) Conversion of existing buildings provided the buildings are of a permanent and substantial construction (subject to the preservation of the surrounding countryside).

d) Limited affordable housing schemes for local community needs which meet the criteria for Local Plan rural exception sites or according to policy DEV5.

### **DEV2: Limited infilling in Woodford village (1-3, 5-9, 10)**

National and Development Plan policies apply the principles of Green Belt protection to the whole of Woodford village. The NPPF states that the openness of the Green Belt is one of the essential characteristics of the Green Belt and therefore any infilling should not therefore compromise the openness of the Green Belt. The boundary of the village of Woodford is defined as the whole village. Development within the village is limited to small scale infilling which should satisfy all the following criteria for any exception to allow development to be permitted:

a) Any proposed development should preserve and not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt; and

b) Small scale infilling only will be permitted and is defined as the completion of an otherwise substantially built-up road frontage; and

c) Small scale infilling would only provide for the filling of a narrow gap normally capable of taking one or two dwellings only; and

d) The scale of any development should be compatible in character with the adjoining properties; and

e) Any development should be built along the same building line as other adjoining properties and not forward of any adjoining property; and

f) Limited infilling will not be permitted in low density areas where gaps between dwellings form part of the character of the area and contribute to its openness.

\* Substantially built up road frontage is defined as an otherwise continuous and largely uninterrupted built frontage of several dwellings visible within the street scene.

### **DEV3: Affordable Housing\*** (1, 2, 5-9, 10)

\* Includes social rented and intermediate housing (e.g. shared ownership), provided to households at a cost low enough for them to afford.

Households eligible for affordable housing are those who cannot afford open market housing. (SMBC definition)

Affordable housing shall be provided within the Plan area and/or within the former aerodrome area to meet Woodford's housing needs as follows:

- a) Where the site size threshold of any new housing site is more than 5 dwellings, 50% affordable housing shall be provided on site.
- b) On rural exception sites, which are defined as:

Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

- c) All proposals for affordable housing needs within Woodford shall be justified by a recent Housing Needs survey which identifies the number and the type(s) of dwelling required.
- d) Affordable housing shall be made available to persons who satisfy the local connection (to be known as the Woodford connection and defined below\*) for a minimum period of 6 months on completion and a minimum period of 3 months on subsequent re-letting or sale. .

\*The Woodford Connection is defined for the purposes of affordable housing in accordance with policies DEV4. For the purposes of this Neighbourhood Plan, a local housing connection is classed as being of a residency nature only. Residency qualification is defined as any individual who satisfies the following criteria:

- i. Has been resident in Woodford for 3 out of the previous 5 years at the time of application; or
- ii. Has close family (defined as mother, father, sister, brother, adult children or grandparent) who have been resident in Woodford for a continuous period of 5 years and continue to be so resident at the time of application.

**DEV4: Redevelopment of farm buildings or farm complex (1, 3)**

The complete redevelopment of related farm buildings or within a farm complex into a new housing scheme within Woodford shall be supported where:

- a) The site is currently occupied by agricultural buildings which are not capable of re-use without extensive re-building, or has previously been occupied by agricultural buildings which have outlived their usefulness for agricultural purposes; and
- b) The location and proposed nature of the scheme are both sympathetic to the character of the open countryside and would have minimal visual and environmental impact; and
- c) The redevelopment does not extend beyond the site area previously or currently occupied by agricultural buildings; and
- d) The housing scheme reflects a mix of housing based on meeting the needs of different groups within the Woodford community and is based on a recent Housing Needs survey of the local area.

**DEV5: Replacement of existing dwellings (1-3, 5-11)**

The replacement of one permanent and substantially constructed house by one dwelling (or two semi-detached dwellings in one building) may be allowed provided the new building is not materially larger than the building it replaces. The following criteria are also required to be satisfied:

- a) The new dwelling would be sited within the house and garden and its design would create a visual enhancement of the site; and
- b) The new dwelling by virtue of its siting, design, external appearance and any access arrangements would respect the traditional character and openness of the surrounding countryside; and
- c) Existing landscape features are retained and appropriate additional landscaping carried out which reflects the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside; and
- d) Any additional freestanding buildings shall not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside; and
- e) The new dwellings shall respect the privacy and other existing amenities of any adjacent dwellings.

**DEV6: Extensions to existing dwellings (1-3, 5-9, 11)**

Planning permission for extensions to existing dwellings in Woodford shall be granted provided that:

- a) The proposed extension is well-designed and has appropriate regard to the scale, style, appearance and materials of the existing dwelling; and
- b) The proposed extension is not disproportionate to the original dwelling and would not result in significant detrimental effect upon either the character or identity of the original dwelling.
- c) Any side extension to any house shall normally retain a gap of at least one metre to the site boundary in order to prevent the creation of a terraced street effect.

**DEV7: Subdivision of existing houses (1, 3, 5-11)**

Planning applications for the sub-division of existing dwellings into self-contained residential units shall be treated as would an application for a new dwelling or extension. Any grant of planning permission should seek to retain the character, identity and appearance of the original dwelling so the additional unit does not require substantial extensions. Personal circumstances (including disability and family) should be taken into account when considering any grant of permission. Applications will be assessed on their merits having regard to the following criteria:

- a) Existing or recently constructed dwellings are eligible for subdivision provided building works have been completed.
- b) The proposed layout both internally and externally should provide for a satisfactory level of amenities for prospective occupiers in terms of floor area, light, outlook and shape.
- c) The proposal should not materially and/or adversely affect the amenities of adjoining or neighbouring properties, in particular having regard to potential noise transmission through the juxtaposition of living and sleeping accommodation.
- d) The proposal should not materially affect the character of the local area, particularly the openness of the Green Belt or overconcentration of such subdivisions changing the character over a period of time.
- e) The proposal should seek to incorporate some degree of private open space to which all residents may have access.
- f) Proposals will be required to show that the subdivision can be accomplished without the need for any substantial extensions or additions to the building or its curtilage.
- g) On-site parking and access arrangements should be in accordance with national and Borough standard and should not be compromised to achieve an increase in the number of units for its own sake.



**DEV8: Design of new development** (1-3, 5-9, 11, 13-15)

Any new development in Woodford shall seek to achieve a high standard of design. The new development should be compatible with the rural nature of Woodford, the Landscape Character Assessment, the WNF Key Natural Features Map, CWT Habitat Distinctiveness Map and CWT Wildlife Corridor Map for Woodford and the emerging Landscape Character Assessment for Stockport.

The layout and design of new housing should satisfy the following local design principles:

- a) Reflect local rural character of the Woodford; and
- b) Respect the form, layout, materials, siting, height, scale and design of the adjoining and surrounding buildings, the setting and countryside; and
- c) Be sympathetic to the character of the local environment, the rural street scene, the linear and street frontage layout of development; and
- d) Achieve environmental and energy standards with a view to achieving zero carbon buildings and a sustainability standard of Gold in accordance with the SMBC Sustainability Checklist; and
- e) Retain or enhance existing landscape, wildlife features and coherent ecological network features.

**DEV9: Backland\* and tandem development** (1, 5-9, 11)

\*Backland development: Development of 'landlocked' sites behind existing buildings, such as rear gardens and private open space, usually within predominantly residential areas. Such sites often have no street frontages.

A Proposal for an additional dwelling in tandem with or behind an existing dwelling within an existing garden should satisfy the following criteria:

- a) A satisfactory and separate means of access to the new dwelling can be obtained to an existing public highway; and
- b) The amenities of residents of existing and proposed dwelling would be safeguarded as a consequence of the proposed development; and
- c) The proposed dwelling would not result in the creation of an over intensive development to the area and detract from the openness of the Green Belt at this point; and
- d) The plot size of the proposed dwelling should be appropriate to the size of the dwelling and the character of the immediate local area.

## **8. Justification, Evidence and References for the Policies**

### **8.1. Introduction**

This section provides the detailed justification and evidence from national and local policies, professional studies, volunteer studies and community feedback, which supports the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.

### **8.2. Environment Policies: Justification, Evidence and References**

Woodford comprises ribbon development along a network of roads and lanes through countryside, which falls within the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain National Character Area, comprising rolling pastoral farmland. (29) This structure and setting, are an integral part of Woodford's character, which is treasured by residents and visitors. There are significant gaps in the housing line along roads and lanes, with the results that there are far reaching views from public lanes, footpaths and private residencies across farmland and to the Pennine hills. The natural features in Woodford are an intrinsic part of the countryside and contribute to the mental and physical benefits for residents and recreational users from other parts of the borough.

As well as the aesthetic value, the vegetation in the countryside and gardens in Woodford help to offset the damaging effects of humans in our environment by absorbing carbon dioxide and pollutants. In addition, important habitats for wildlife are provided, thereby supporting biodiversity in the largely invisible ecological network that we are part of. Habitats and species in Woodford include UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) Priority Habitats and Priority Species (15, 16), which are now covered by the Natural England and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (19), the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (18), Protected Species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (32) and Birds of Conservation Concern (31). More details are shown in the Appendix. The policies in the Environment section aim to protect and enhance these important features of Woodford.

Woodford is a settlement washed over by Green Belt. Therefore, planning policies for Woodford must comply with the Green Belt policies in the NPPF, which includes policies which protect the landscape. In addition, the SMBC Core Strategy and UDP include policies that protect the landscape and environment.

The Woodford Neighbourhood Plan aims to support these national and regional policies and give them relevance to Woodford by reference to specific sites and features.

The Environment section objective is:

**Protect the area's Green Belt and preserve the open and rural character. Protect the landscape and important views.**

**8.2.1. ENV1: Protecting views and vistas (1-13)**

- b) New development shall be permitted, provided that it does not affect the openness of the Green Belt and that it respects and enhances the local landscape quality, ensuring that important local views and vistas within and out from the Neighbourhood Area and the rural skylines are maintained, as listed in the Views and Vistas table and shown on the Views and Vistas maps.
- c) Any development that enhances access to the views and vistas from public rights of way shall be encouraged.

See maps and table of Views and Vistas within and from the Neighbourhood Area in the Policy Section. (Section 7)

**Justification and Evidence**

Woodford is a settlement with a deep history, rural nature and beautiful landscapes. The land slopes gently down to the east, affording excellent, unobstructed views of the Pennines and vistas across open fields from many locations in Woodford, which are very much treasured by residents and visitors. Twenty footpaths cross the fields in the Neighbourhood Area. The rural lanes and footpaths are used by walkers, joggers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers. In this way it provides an outdoor recreational facility for people, including families with children, from Woodford and the wider community. The views and vistas from the lanes and footpaths are a key part of this facility.

The Woodford Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect these views and vistas for the benefit of the local and wider community, in accordance with NPPF and SMBC policies. The justification and evidence for policy ENV1 is as follows:

Policy ENV1 complies with:

1. A main planning objective of the NPPF, namely conservation of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and NPPF paras 81 and 101, which seek to positively enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, retain and enhance landscapes and visual amenity, contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. (1)
2. NPPF para 79 in seeking to preserve the openness of the Green Belt. (1)

3. SMBC Core Strategy, which seeks to preserve, recognise and enhance the intrinsic values of the borough's countryside and natural landscape areas. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.307 requires development to have regard to the natural environment, views and vistas, while para 3.28 seeks to work with local communities, to protect, develop and enhance an integrated network of green infrastructure that will improve health and well-being. (2)
4. SMBC Saved UDP Policy LC1.1 in seeking to control development in the countryside, which will not be permitted unless it protects or enhances the quality and character of the rural areas. It complies with para 2.8, which includes Woodford as a named Landscape Character Area. (3)
4. The DEFRA white paper, The Natural Choice. The aims include main-streaming the value of nature across our society by facilitating greater local action to protect and improve nature. (4)
5. The mounting evidence for the physical and mental benefits of exercise in the countryside. Natural England Notes EIN020, and EIN018. (5, 6)

Policy ENV1 is supported by:

1. Evidence from community feedback outlined in Kirkwells Reports and WNF01-03. Analysis of the Woodford residents' questionnaire revealed that an overwhelming majority of 276 respondents (83%) said that they wanted enhanced protection of the landscape and positive management of the varied local wildlife. Over 60% cited the rural environment as a reason for choosing Woodford as a place to live in the first place. From comments received it was also clear that the Green Belt and Woodford's open, rural environment are highly valued. This message was reinforced by the public exhibition in 2015. Unsympathetic development was identified as an issue that threatens the views and vistas in Woodford. Community engagement gave rise to the environment objective and policies. Draft policies were made available on the WNF website for a consultation period during the autumn of 2016 and no objections to this policy were received. (7-11)
2. Evidence presented in WNF Landscape and Environment Studies reported in WNF04, which records the key views and vistas in Woodford. (12)
3. The Heritage and Character Assessment carried out by AECOM, which notes in sections 4 and 5.4 that the open views of the surrounding rural landscape and South Pennines, from within the settlement and public rights of way, are key positive features which are sensitive to change. Some of these are marked in Fig 4 in the AECOM report, which is reproduced in this Neighbourhood Plan document in the Section 7 under ENV2. (13)

#### **8.2.2. ENV2: Protecting the countryside and green spaces (1-13, 24, 25)**

- c) Development will be permitted provided that it has no detrimental impact on the countryside or green spaces shown on the map and in the table, which contribute to the rural character of the village or have sporting, recreational, amenity or aesthetic value.
- d) Improved access to the countryside and green spaces via public rights of way will be encouraged.

See tables and maps of Countryside and Green Spaces in the Policy Section. (Section 7)

### **Justification and Evidence**

The countryside and green spaces in Woodford are a key component of the character and benefit of the Green Belt. The built environment in Woodford comprises 22% of the Neighbourhood Area. The remaining 78% is mostly open agricultural land with a network of footpaths plus recreational open spaces. The pattern of green spaces and distinct gaps in the ribbon development along Woodford's roads and lanes contribute to the openness of the Green Belt. In addition, the Green Belt in Woodford provides a recreational facility for the wider community. The rural lanes, rural footpaths and a bridle way passing through the countryside are used by walkers, joggers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers. Open recreational areas are used for cricket, football, horse riding, golf and other organised recreation as well as informal play. In this way, the countryside and green spaces in Woodford provide an outdoor recreational facility for people from Woodford and the wider community and contribute to the mental and physical benefits for residents and recreational users from other parts of the borough.

The Woodford Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect and enhance the countryside and green spaces in Woodford, in accordance with NPPF and SMBC policies, and to encourage improved access via well-maintained public rights of way, in order to:

- Protect the openness of the Green Belt.
- Protect the landscape character of rural areas.
- Protect informal recreational use of the countryside and improve access on country footpaths, bridleways and lanes.
- Protect open spaces for outdoor recreation, including a 4-acre field belonging to Woodford War Memorial Community Centre, Woodford Cricket Club ground, Bramhall Cricket Club ground, Woodford Recreation Ground, Moorend Golf Course and Dean Valley Farm Ride (see Community policies).

The justification and evidence for policy ENV2 is as follows:

Policy ENV2 complies with:

1. NPPF paras 73 and 74, which acknowledge that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. (1)

2. NPPF para 75 which notes that planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, and seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks. (1)
3. NPPF para 79 in seeking to preserve the openness of the Green Belt. (1)
4. SMBC Core Strategy, which seeks to preserve, recognise and enhance the intrinsic values of the borough's countryside and natural landscape areas. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.286 seeks to work with local communities, to protect, develop and enhance an integrated network of green infrastructure that will improve health and well-being. (2)
5. SMBC Saved UDP policies paras L1.1 and L1.5, which seek to protect land used for active recreation, and para 2.8, which includes Woodford as a named Landscape Character Area. (3)
6. The DEFRA white paper, The Natural Choice. The aims include main-streaming the value of nature across our society by facilitating greater local action to protect and improve nature. (4)
7. The mounting evidence for the physical and mental benefits of exercise in the countryside reported in Natural England Documents Notes EIN020, and EIN018. (5,6)

Policy ENV2 is supported by:

1. Evidence from community feedback reported in Kirkwells Reports and WNF01-03. In responses to the Woodford residents' questionnaire, open and green were very frequently used words. It was clear that the Green Belt and Woodford's countryside and rural environment are highly valued. This message was reinforced by the public exhibition in 2015. Community engagement gave rise to the environment objective and policies. Draft policies were made available on the WNF website for a consultation period during the autumn of 2016 and no objections to this policy were received. (7-11)
2. Community engagement, which has identified that unsympathetic development is a key issue which threatens the open spaces in Woodford reported in Kirkwells Reports and WNF01-03. (7-11)
3. WNF Landscape and Environment Studies reported in WNF04, which include maps showing the countryside and recreational open spaces in Woodford. (12)
4. The Heritage and Character Study conducted on behalf of WNF by AECOM. This study notes in section 4 that positive aspects of character, which should be sustained, reinforced or enhanced, include the open rural aspect of the landscape. It also notes that unsympathetic development could result in a loss of openness. Countryside gaps to be retained are marked in Fig 4 in the AECOM report, which is reproduced in this Neighbourhood Plan document in the Section 7 under ENV2. (13)



5. The SMBC Rights of Way Improvement Plan, which aims to assess the extent to which local rights of way meet the present and likely future needs of the public; the opportunities provided by local rights of way for exercise and outdoor recreation and the enjoyment of the district; the accessibility for blind and partially sighted people and others with mobility problems. (27)
6. The Greater Manchester Moving programme, which is a comprehensive plan to reduce inactivity and increase participation in physical activity and sport, with the aim of improving the health of residents. (28)

### **8.2.3. ENV3: Protecting natural features which are a key aesthetic component of the landscape (1-14, 29)**

- b) Proposals that protect and enhance natural features, which are a key aesthetic component of the landscape shown in the Natural Features table and maps , shall be permitted, provided that they do not impair views and vistas listed in the table and maps in ENV1.

#### **Justification and Evidence**

Community engagement revealed that the natural features in Woodford, particularly the mature trees, are highly valued for their aesthetic contribution to the landscape and character.

Natural features which are an intrinsic part of and key aesthetic component of the landscape, contributing to the mental and physical benefits for residents and recreational users from other parts of the borough in Woodford, include:

- Trees in public places and bordering roads, in pavements and in grass verges.
- Mature & veteran trees, many of which are at least 200 years old with some oak specimens which are 300-400 years old, which are described and /or marked on maps in the WNF Landscape and Environment Survey report.
- Grass verges alongside roads and lanes.
- Native hedgerows which are visible along roads, tracks and public rights of way across farmland.
- Ponds which are visible along roads, tracks and public rights of way across farmland.

The Woodford Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect these important natural features which are an important part of the landscape, in accordance with NPPF and SMBC policies. The justification and evidence for policy ENV3 is as follows:

Policy ENV3 complies with:

1. NPPF paras 17, 81, 109, 156, 170, which seek to retain and enhance landscapes and enhance the natural environment. (1)

2. SMBC Core Strategy, which seeks to preserve, recognise and enhance the intrinsic values of the borough's countryside and natural landscape areas. SMBC core Strategy para 2.2 refers to open countryside on the eastern and southern parts of the borough which provides valuable 'green lungs' and opportunities for informal recreation, walking and cycling. SMBC core Strategy paras 2.45, 3.286, 3.287, 3.293, 3.345, 3.346, 3.347, 3.361, 3.370 are all concerned with protection of the natural environment. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.286 seeks to work with local communities, to protect, develop and enhance an integrated network of green infrastructure that will improve health and well-being. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.361 includes hedgerows, trees, tree belts, ditches and ponds in the list of natural features to be protected. (2)
3. SMBC Saved UDP policies para LCR1.1, which seeks to enhance the natural environment. (3)
4. The DEFRA white paper, The Natural Choice. The aims include main-streaming the value of nature across our society by facilitating greater local action to protect and improve nature. (4)
5. The mounting evidence for the physical and mental benefits of exercise in the countryside reported in Natural England Documents Notes EIN020, and EIN018. (5, 6)

Policy ENV3 is supported by:

1. Evidence from community feedback via the Woodford residents' questionnaire and correspondence with the Neighbourhood Forum, indicating that the natural features in Woodford, particularly the many mature trees, are highly valued. Community engagement has identified that unsympathetic development is a key issue, which threatens the natural features in Woodford, as reported in Kirkwells Reports and WNF01-03. Draft policies were made available on the WNF website for a consultation period during the autumn of 2016 and no objections to this policy were received. (7-11)
2. WNF Landscape and Environment Studies reported in WNF04, which provide evidence of the importance of the natural features in Woodford to the landscape and to the environment and maps of their locations. (12)
3. The Heritage and Character Study conducted on behalf of WNF by AECOM. This study notes in sections 4 and 5.4 that mature trees and hedgerows are a key characteristic of the farmland in Woodford, which are sensitive to change, as are mature street trees. (13)
4. Protecting and Enhancing Woodford's Natural Environment Report prepared on behalf of WNF by Cheshire Wildlife Trust. (14)  
the Shropshire, Cheshire and Staffordshire Plain National Character, which is described as a pastoral area of rolling agricultural plain. (29)

#### 8.2.4. ENV4: Supporting biodiversity\* (1-4, 7-19, 23-26, 30-33)

\*The variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable.

a) All planning proposals should be able to demonstrate that the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, mitigate, compensate) has been followed.

b) All planning proposals will be required to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity.

This will be achieved by applying the following measures:

- x) Protecting and enhancing high value features identified in the CWT Habitat Distinctiveness Map and all wildlife corridors identified in the CWT Wildlife Corridor Map.
- xi) Protecting and enhancing habitats identified as supporting Priority Species under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, or the British Action Plan (UKBAP), or the Greater Manchester Biodiversity Project
- xii) Retaining where possible all features identified as medium distinctiveness in the CWT Habitat Distinctiveness Map.
- xiii) Retaining where possible all natural features shown in the WNF Natural Features map and table.
- xiv) Areas identified on the CWT Habitat Distinctiveness Map as supporting high distinctiveness habitat, and wildlife corridors identified in the CWT Wildlife Corridor Map should be protected by at least a 15 m buffer zone
- xv) The areas identified as supporting high distinctiveness, medium distinctiveness habitat, and the wildlife corridors will require a comprehensive ecological evaluation if they are put forward for development.
- xvi) Incorporating wildlife features into the design of the proposals including, enhancing or restoring existing wildlife features, planting of native species that benefit pollinators, incorporating bird and bat boxes and hedgehog friendly fencing and minimising light pollution.
- xvii) Where there are unavoidable losses of biodiversity once the mitigation hierarchy has been applied, compensatory measures will be required.

See table showing Key Habitats and their locations marked in the WNF Key Natural Features Map, the CWT Habitat Distinctiveness Map and the CWT Wildlife Corridor Map in the Policy Section (Section 7). Measures to achieve the objectives of these policies are outlined in the CWT Report (14) and outlined in the justification and evidence below.

## Justification and Evidence

Protecting and enhancing biodiversity are key elements in local, national and European policies. Natural features in Woodford make a significant contribution to biodiversity and provide important habitats and corridors for wildlife. They are a key part of the borough's green and blue infrastructure.

Native trees, native hedgerows, ponds, rivers, streams, ditches, unimproved grassland and arable field margins were identified as key natural features, many of which are listed as Priority Habitats in UKBAP (15) and Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan (18) because they provide good habitats for wildlife, supporting a wide range of species. In addition, all green plants play an important role in maintaining the vital supply of oxygen in the atmosphere and in absorbing carbon dioxide, thus helping to offset the damaging effects of human activity and climate change. Animal wildlife was not formally surveyed in this study but reported sightings of birds and protected species were recorded.

The WNF Landscape and Environment Surveys (12) found the following in the Woodford Neighbourhood Area, some of which are also recorded in the National Biodiversity Network Atlas (33):

- Seventy permanent and seasonal ponds in farmland and recreational land, varying in size and vegetation cover.
- More than twenty different woody species present as trees and in hedgerows. (See Appendix)
- Many miles of native hedgerows around farm fields, some of which were species rich, containing four or more different native species in 30 metres, or exceptionally species-rich, with eight to ten different native species in 30 metres.
- Abundant native trees, especially associated with hedgerows and field boundaries
- Many mature and veteran trees, notably oaks, many of which are at least 200 years old, with some specimens older than that, in the range 300 to 400 years old. Mature oaks provide a habitat rich in biodiversity, supporting more life forms than any other native trees, hosting hundreds of species of insect, and supplying many British birds and mammals with an important food source.
- Native herbaceous species in uncultivated arable field margins, including wildflowers, such as the native English bluebell, which is a protected species of international importance. (24)
- Small areas of native mixed deciduous woodland, including an area of wet woodland.
- Bird sightings included twenty four red listed, twenty six amber listed and nine protected species, including the curlew and fieldfare. (12, 30-33) (See Appendix)
- The common toad, which is an NERC protected amphibian species. (12, 16, 18)
- Dragon flies and damsel flies. (12, 33) (See Appendix)

Specific locations are marked on the WNF Key Natural Features map in the Policy Section.

The Cheshire Wildlife Trust (CWT) study supported the findings of the WNF Landscape and Environment study. In addition, it identified a wildlife corridor network, which provides ecological connectivity between woodland, wetland, grassland and waterside habitats within and beyond the Neighbourhood Area. The wildlife corridor supports a wide range of species, including some that are in decline locally or nationally. (14)

Areas of Habitat Distinctiveness were identified and marked on a map in the CWT report. Several parcels of land were identified as high distinctiveness. These are priority habitats of Principal Importance. A large number of land parcels were identified as medium distinctiveness. This term is applied to areas which are rich in wildlife and act as ecological stepping stones and wildlife corridors. Most of the areas of priority habitat in Woodford are pockets of deciduous woodland often around ponds or clusters of ponds. The report recommends that further detailed ecological survey work is undertaken to evaluate further the habitats of medium distinctiveness. (14)

The CWT report noted the Priority and Protected Species in Woodford recorded in the WNF Landscape and Environment Surveys. Additional Priority and Protected Species included the greater crested newt, the brown hare and four bat species. (14)

The National Biodiversity Network Atlas has records of four species of bat, six species of dragon flies and damsel flies and numerous resident and migratory birds which have protected status. (33)

The Woodford community supports the Northern Forest initiative, which aims to create a new Northern Forest that will comprise over 50 million trees over 25 years and will stretch from Liverpool across to Hull, embracing the major cities of Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Chester and Hull as well as major towns across the north. Stockport and Woodford are included in its area.

The Woodford Neighbourhood Plan seeks to retain and enhance biodiversity in Woodford, in accordance with NPPF and SMBC policies.

Policy ENV4 complies with:

1. NPPF paras 7 and 9, which seek to promote sustainable development, including improvements in biodiversity, and paras 81, 109, 114, 117, and 143, which seek to retain and enhance biodiversity. (1)
2. NPPF para 118, which seeks to protect ancient woodland and veteran trees. (1)



3. NPPF para 109, 114 and 117, which state that local authorities should plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure; and seek to identify and protect wildlife corridors. (1)
4. SMBC Core Strategy objective 5, and paras 3.286, 3.296, 3.345 3.361 and 3.364, which seek to protect and enhance the borough's biodiversity. (2)
5. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.286, also seeks to protect and connect existing and potential sites of nature conservation value and to protect and provide appropriate natural space to connect landscapes and allow wildlife to move through them. (2)
6. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.370, which notes that trees and woodlands perform the important roles described above. (2)
7. SMBC Saved UDP policies para NE3.1, which requires that full account is taken in making land use decisions of the need to protect and enhance habitats and biodiversity. It also requires that adequate steps are taken to protect existing trees and woodlands when new development is proposed and that opportunities are taken to increase tree and woodland cover in appropriate locations. (3)
8. SMBC Saved UDP policy NE3.1, Protection and Enhancement of Green Chains, also states that development which would detract from the wildlife or recreation value of the Green Chains identified on the Proposals Map will not be permitted. Main objectives in para 3.56 include enhancement of the value of Green Chains as wildlife corridors and management to overcome any negative ecological effects associated with wildlife corridors, for example, dominance of habitats by invading species. (3)
9. DEFRA white paper, The Natural Choice, which aims to achieve net gains in biodiversity. (4)
10. UK Biodiversity Action Plan and UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (now subsumed into the NERC 2006 Section 41 species NERC = Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act), which aim to protect and achieve net gains in biodiversity, recognises the importance of trees, hedgerows and ponds as habitats and the importance of green and blue infrastructure as habitats. (15-17, 19)
11. Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan, which plays a key part within the UK BAP process by focussing on local priorities and implementing national biodiversity targets. (18)
12. RSPB, RITP, CIEEM document, Planning Naturally, which focuses on the need for sustainable development which preserves and enhances biodiversity and the natural environment. (23)
13. Amendments to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which seek to protect native species and prevent the establishment of non-native species that may be detrimental to native wildlife. (24)
14. The 2011 Association of Local Government Ecologists (ALGE) Biodiversity Toolkit. (25)

Policy ENV4 is supported by:

1. Community engagement, which revealed an interest in encouraging habitats for wildlife in Woodford, especially trees, and hedgerows, as reported in Kirkwells Reports and WNF01-03. Draft policies were made available on the WNF website for a consultation period during the autumn of 2016 and no objections to this policy were received. (7-11).

2. Volunteer WNF Landscape and Environment Studies reported in WNF04, which identified high levels of species diversity in hedgerows and trees in Woodford. The report provides lists of species found and detailed maps showing their locations. Many of the habitats recorded are UKBAP Priority Habitats and support UKBAP Priority Species in Woodford. (12)
3. The report prepared on behalf of WNF by Cheshire Wildlife Trust, Protecting and Enhancing Woodford's Natural Environment, which makes the following recommendations:
  - a. Future development of Woodford should respect the natural environment. The most intact landscapes, in terms of biodiversity, landform and historical/cultural associations should be valued highly when planning decisions are made. Protection and enhancement of Woodford's natural assets is of crucial importance for nature conservation and ecosystem services but it is also important for the enjoyment of future generations. (14)
  - b. The Wildlife Corridor is protected from development and that the Neighbourhood Plan provides guidance on ecological networks. (14)
  - c. Hedgerows which meet certain criteria are protected by The Hedgerow Regulations, 1997. Under the regulations it is against the law to remove or destroy 'Important' hedgerows without permission from the Local Planning Authority. Removal of a hedgerow in contravention of The Hedgerow Regulations is a criminal offence. The criteria used to assess hedgerows relate to its value from an archaeological, historical, landscape or wildlife perspective. (14)
  - d. Any proposals for the development of sites, which lie adjacent to high distinctiveness habitat or a wildlife corridor, should demonstrate substantial mitigation and avoidance measures to lessen any potential impacts on wildlife. This should include measures such as installing bat/otter sensitive lighting schemes, installing durable bat/bird boxes and hedgehog-friendly fencing and ensuring surface water is directed away from sensitive areas and into SuDS schemes. (14)
  - e. Opportunities should be explored to restore or create more wildlife friendly habitat especially where connectivity with other areas of valuable habitat can be achieved or where valuable sites can be buffered. Larger areas of better connected habitat support larger and healthier species populations and help prevent local extinctions. Ways to enhance connections or to buffer sites could include the restoration of hedgerows, creation of low maintenance field margins and sowing locally sourced (local genetic stock) wildflower meadows. (14)
  - f. Woodland expansion is desirable to buffer existing woodlands, but may be of limited value if new plantations are isolated from existing woodland due to slow colonisation by woodland species. It is vitally important that tree planting should only occur on species-poor (low value) habitats and away from the edges of watercourses including ditches and ponds. Professional advice

should always be sought when creating new habitat particularly when designing the layout, position and composition of new woodland and how to use local woodlands as a 'reference'. (14)

4. The Heritage and Character Assessment carried out by AECOM, which notes in para 5.4 that the intactness of the hedgerow network is sensitive to change. (13)
5. The Northern Forest initiative, which would bring environmental, public health and aesthetic benefits. (26)

#### **8.2.5. ENV5: Reducing light pollution (1-3, 34)**

- a) New development or change of use that does not minimise light pollution created through its proposed use shall be refused.
- b) If floodlights are required, use of environmentally friendly floodlights, which reduce overspill, in private and public places, and in areas with wildlife value shall be encouraged.
- c) Security lighting shall be designed to reduce light spillage beyond the site curtilage and minimise impact on amenity of adjoining properties and the wider area.
- d) Planning officers or developers when dealing with applications for lighting in an area of suitable bat habitat (eg. woodland, old pasture, linking hedgerows and water habitats) should seek information on bat roosts in the area, because certain forms of lighting can have adverse effects on bats.

#### **Justification and Evidence**

Woodford is comprised of 22% built environment and 78% agricultural and recreational fields. The countryside is dark at night with the result that large areas of Woodford currently make a minimal contribution to light pollution. While street lighting has advantages for safety, light intrusion at night can disturb human sleep-patterns, reduce visibility of the night sky and confuse the behaviour of wildlife.

The Woodford Neighbourhood Plan seeks to minimise light pollution, without compromising road and pedestrian safety in Woodford, in accordance with NPPF and SMBC policies.

Policy ENV6 complies with:

1. NPPF para 125, which seeks to minimise the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation. (1)
2. SMBC Core Strategy Objective 5d, which seeks to safeguard residents from unacceptable levels of light and paras 3.298, 3.348 which seek to ensure development avoids introducing environmental hazards, including light. (2)
3. SMBC Saved UDP policies para 2.17, which seeks to control the impact of light pollution on the character of rural areas. (3)

Policy ENV6 is supported by:

1. Community engagement. Draft policies were made available on the WNF website for a consultation period during the autumn of 2016 and no objections to this policy were received. (7-11)
2. The Bat Conservation Trust report on Bats and Lighting in the UK, which highlights the adverse effects on bats of certain forms of lighting and provides advice for planners and developers on suitable forms and regimens of lighting. (34)

#### 8.2.6. Supporting References for Environment Section

Ref number	Document	Web Link
1	NPPF	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf</a>
2	SMBC Core Strategy	Available by google search which brings up link to old SMBC website: <a href="http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategydpd">http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategydpd</a> Note: Not yet accessible via SMBC's new website
3	SMBC Saved UDP Policy	Available by google search which brings up link to old SMBC website: <a href="http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/udppolicieshatstillapply">http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/udppolicieshatstillapply</a> Note: Not yet accessible via SMBC's new website
4	DEFRA The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature. June	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228842/8082.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228842/8082.pdf</a>

	2011	
5	Natural England NE EIN018, Links between natural environments and mental health: evidence briefing. First edition 14 July 2016	<a href="http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5748047200387072">http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5748047200387072</a>
6	Natural England NE EIN020 Links between natural environments and physiological health: evidence briefing. First edition 14 July 2016	<a href="http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5456259805872128">http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5456259805872128</a>
7	Kirkwells Town Planning WNF Residents' Questionnaire 2014	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf</a>
8	Kirkwells Town Planning Neighbourhood Plan Scoping Report 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Scoping-Report-.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Scoping-Report-.pdf</a>
9	WNF01: WNF Neighbourhood Plan Exhibition 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan-exhibition/">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan-exhibition/</a>
10	WNF02: WNF Interim Analysis of Data 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Interim-Analysis-of-Vision-and-Objectives-2-Dec-15.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Interim-Analysis-of-Vision-and-Objectives-2-Dec-15.pdf</a>
11	WNF03: WNF Progress Report 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf</a>
12	WNF04: WNF Landscape and Environment studies 2015/2016	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Woodford-Landscape-and-Environment-Report-Part-1-April-2018_opt.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Woodford-Landscape-and-Environment-Report-Part-1-April-2018_opt.pdf</a>
13	AECOM Heritage and Character Assessment 2016	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NP-Woodford-HCA-FINAL-LR-160815.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NP-Woodford-HCA-FINAL-LR-160815.pdf</a>
14	Cheshire Wildlife Trust Protecting and Enhancing Woodford's Natural Environment Report	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CWT-report-for-WNF-Protecting-and-Enhancing-Woodfords-Natural-Environment-Jan-2018.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CWT-report-for-WNF-Protecting-and-Enhancing-Woodfords-Natural-Environment-Jan-2018.pdf</a>
15	UK Biodiversity Action Plan- Priority Habitats	<a href="http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140714115720/http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5706">http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140714115720/http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5706</a>
16	UK Biodiversity Action Plan – Priority Species	<a href="http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605093420/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx">http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605093420/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx</a>
17	UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework	<a href="http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/UK_Post2010_Bio-Fwork.pdf">http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/UK_Post2010_Bio-Fwork.pdf</a>
18	Greater Manchester Biodiversity Action Plan	<a href="http://www.gmbp.org.uk/site/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=">http://www.gmbp.org.uk/site/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=</a>



		<a href="#">view&amp;id=9&amp;Itemid=27</a>
19	Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006, Part 3 Wildlife, Biodiversity	<a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/part/3">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/part/3</a>
20	Clean Air Act 1993	<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/11/contents">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/11/contents</a>
21	Impact of Roadside Tree Lines on Indoor Concentrations of Traffic-Derived Particulate Matter. B Maher, <i>et al.</i>	<a href="http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es404363m?journalCode=esthag">http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es404363m?journalCode=esthag</a>
22	GOV.UK Garden bonfires: the rules	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/garden-bonfires-rules">https://www.gov.uk/garden-bonfires-rules</a>
23	RSPB, RITP, CIEEM Planning Naturally	<a href="http://www.cieem.net/data/files/Resource_Library/News/Planning_Naturally.pdf">http://www.cieem.net/data/files/Resource_Library/News/Planning_Naturally.pdf</a>
24	The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	<a href="http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1377">http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1377</a>
25	2011 Association of Local Government Ecologists (ALGE) Biodiversity Toolkit	<a href="http://www.biodiversityplanningtoolkit.com/stylesheet.asp?file=621_what_are_nationally_protected_species">http://www.biodiversityplanningtoolkit.com/stylesheet.asp?file=621_what_are_nationally_protected_species</a>
26	Northern Forest	<a href="https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/mediafile/100820890/northern-forest-overview.pdf">https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/mediafile/100820890/northern-forest-overview.pdf</a>
27	SMBC Rights of Way Improvement Plan	<a href="https://www.stockport.gov.uk/stockport-public-rights-of-way/rights-of-way-improvement-plan">https://www.stockport.gov.uk/stockport-public-rights-of-way/rights-of-way-improvement-plan</a>
28	Greater Sport Plan. Greater Manchester Moving plan	<a href="http://www.greatersport.co.uk/get-active/greater-manchester-moving">http://www.greatersport.co.uk/get-active/greater-manchester-moving</a>
29	Natural England National Character Areas	<a href="http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6076647514046464?category=587130">http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6076647514046464?category=587130</a>
30	Manchester Birding Forum	<a href="http://www.manchesterbirding.activeboard.com/t34463332/woodford-area/">http://www.manchesterbirding.activeboard.com/t34463332/woodford-area/</a>
31	Birds of Conservation Concern 4. JNCC, RSPB, BTO	<a href="http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/BoCC_tcm9-217852.pdf">http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/BoCC_tcm9-217852.pdf</a>
32	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, SCHEDULE 1 Birds which are Protected by Special Penalties	<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/1">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/1</a>
33	National Biodiversity Network Atlas	<a href="https://nbnatlas.org/">https://nbnatlas.org/</a>
34	Bats and lighting in the UK. Bat Conservation Trust	<a href="http://www.bats.org.uk/data/files/bats_and_lighting_in_the_uk_final_version_version_3_may_09.pdf">http://www.bats.org.uk/data/files/bats_and_lighting_in_the_uk_final_version_version_3_may_09.pdf</a>

### 8.3. Employment Policies: Justification, Evidence and References

Employment in Woodford currently includes a range of retail outlets, including a large Garden Centre, a nursing home, a hotel, a car sales outlet, a golf driving range, two beauty parlours, a hairdresser, a livery stables with competition facilities, a builders and plumbers' merchant, working farms, a supermarket, a motor vehicle MOT and repair garage, two restaurants, three dog kennels / catteries, a garden maintenance company plus a plethora of small enterprises, which are run from private residences, such as architects, dressmakers, craftsmen and consultants. Overall, some 110 businesses have been identified in Woodford, spread through the whole community. Woodford does not have a business park or multi-occupancy office building that provides an employment centre.

Consultation with residents revealed a wish to maintain the quiet, rural character of Woodford. There was support for measures to retain existing employment opportunities and encourage new ones, provided they are appropriate in scale and type for a rural village setting. (4-8)

Consultation with twenty of the larger businesses revealed no specific unmet needs, although better transport links and good broadband were mentioned as potential improvements. (9)

Community engagement gave rise to the Employment objective:

**Objective: To seek to protect and support local employment**

#### 8.3.1. EMP1: New businesses within the area (1-9)

Proposals shall be permitted that extend or promote existing and new small-scale employment opportunities within the Neighbourhood Area and that benefit the local community and the local economy, provided that:

- a) Proposals do not adversely impact upon the environment; and
- b) Proposals do not adversely affect the character and appearance of the locality or the amenity of adjoining properties; and
- c) The best available broadband "packages" should be installed in order that the new business is best supported on a technical front thus increasing its chances of viability; and
- d) Proposals will not generate heavy goods traffic and must demonstrate, with the assistance of a Transport Statement, that the proposal will not have an unacceptable traffic impact within the village; and

- e) Proposals must include, where applicable, adequate parking, loading / unloading, servicing and manoeuvring areas.

### **Justification and Evidence**

Policy EMP1 complies with:

1. NPPF 3 para 28, which aims to support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. It recommends that neighbourhood plans support sustainable growth in rural areas, promote development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses, and promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages. (1)
2. NPPF 4 para 37, which states that planning policies should aim for a balance of land uses within their area so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities. (1)
3. NPPF 5 para 42, which notes that high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth and that the development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services. (1)
4. NPPF para 79, which seeks to protect the openness of the Green Belt. (1)
5. SMBC Core Strategy, Core Policy CS1, which sets out the overarching principles of sustainable development, including maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth and employment. (2)
6. SMBC Core Strategy AED-4, which encourages employment development in rural areas, where it is of an appropriate type and scale. This includes new economic development and the need for existing employment sites to be used for employment purposes rather than non-employment uses, thus maintaining the supply of employment sites in these areas. (2)
7. SMBC Saved UDP Policies, Policy GBA2.3 regarding farm diversification, which permits farm diversification provided that the activity is appropriate in the countryside and does not have an adverse effect on the landscape character. (3)

Policy EMP1 is supported by:

1. Community engagement. More than half of respondents to the questionnaire did not wish more land in the Neighbourhood Area to be used for employment and a very large majority wished employment sites to be located on brownfield sites, and sites previously used for employment. The Aerodrome site was frequently cited as a suitable site for employment opportunities in Woodford, although this is outside of the Neighbourhood Area. Options for employment most frequently chosen in the questionnaire included shops, tourism, and pubs and

restaurants. Narrative responses suggested suitable employment would be in agriculture and diversified farm businesses. Road safety and traffic volume emerged as key issues for residents, with a wish to keep Woodford quiet and rural. Good broadband facilities ranked sixth in facilities that the neighbourhood plan should aim to encourage and were mentioned in narrative responses. (4-8)

2. The Woodford Business Survey, which identified no specific unmet needs and concluded that the neighbourhood plan should aim to support local business initiatives, such as farm diversification, or the addition of an office or small workshop to a residential property, provided that they are compliant with Green Belt policy, other planning requirements and consistent with the character and style of the existing development. (9)

### 8.3.2. EMP2: Loss of employment (1, 2, 4-8)

Loss of existing local employment sites through change of use or redevelopment shall only be permitted where the applicant for any change of use:

- a) Provides evidence that the employment use is no longer viable, or
- b) In the case of loss of employment being a result of an apparent failure of the business, provides evidence of efforts made to either save or sell the business as a going concern e.g. marketing strategy and business plan and details of consultations with professional advisers, such as the company's bank manager, accountants, solicitors, HR consultants, FSB, local Chamber of Commerce made over a period of a minimum of six months.

### Justification and Evidence

Policy EMP2 complies with:

1. NPPF para 22, which states that planning policies should avoid the long-term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. (1)
2. SMBC Core Strategy AED-4 para 3.270, which notes the need for existing employment sites to be used for employment purposes rather than non-employment uses, thus maintaining the supply of employment sites. (2)
3. SMBC Core Strategy AED-6 para 3.277, which notes that proposals for the change of use or redevelopment of employment sites outside designated employment areas will not normally be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the current use is no longer viable, the proposal will not adversely affect the operations of neighbouring premises, or lead to significantly longer journey to work patterns. (2)

Policy EMP2 is supported by:

1. Community engagement, which supported measures to retain existing employment. (4-8).

### **8.3.3. EMP3: Use of rural buildings (1, 4-9)**

Wherever possible the reuse of redundant buildings should be a priority over new-build.

Any reconstruction / improvement works should provide evidence for proposed low carbon technologies, in order that the building's carbon footprint be reduced. Examples of this are double / triple glazing, increased insulation, the use of LED lights and lights that automatically time out in corridors and toilets etc, new boilers for heating systems and up to date "white goods"; and

Schemes that create employment by the re-use, conversion and adaptation of permanent, structurally sound, rural buildings of substantial construction for small business purposes, recreation or tourism shall be permitted; and

Applications for the change of use for agricultural buildings, including stables, within 10 years of completion of the building will not be permitted unless accompanied by evidence that the building was used during that period for the intended agricultural use and that the proposed changes of use will not generate the need for a replacement structure; and

Proposals will not generate heavy goods traffic on unsuitable, rural lanes and must demonstrate, with the assistance of a Transport Statement, that the proposal will not have an unacceptable traffic impact within the village; and

Proposals must include, where applicable, adequate parking, loading / unloading, servicing and manoeuvring areas.

### **Justification and Evidence**

Policy EMP3 complies with:

1. NPPF para 17, which outlines core principles, including support for the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. It encourages the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourages the use of renewable resources, for example, by the development of renewable energy. (1)



2. NPPF 3 Para 28: 28, which supports the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings. (1)

Policy EMP3 is supported by:

1. Community consultation, which revealed that a very large majority of respondents wished employment sites to be located on brownfield sites, and sites previously used for employment. (4-8)
2. The Woodford Business Survey, which concluded that the neighbourhood plan should aim to support local business initiatives, such as farm diversification, the addition of an office or small workshop to a residential property, provided that they are compliant with Green Belt policy, other planning requirements and consistent with the character and style of the existing development. (9)

Note: The justification for policy EMP3 is also covered by the justification for policy DEV4: Redevelopment of farm buildings or farm complex.

#### 8.3.4. Supporting References for Employment Section

Ref number	Document	Web Link
1	NPPF	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf</a>
2	SMBC Core Strategy	Available by google search which brings up link to old SMBC website: <a href="http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategydpd">http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategydpd</a> Note: Not yet accessible via SMBC's new website
3	SMBC Saved UDP Policy	Available by google search which brings up link to old SMBC website: <a href="http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/udppolicieshatstillapply">http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/udppolicieshatstillapply</a> Note: Not yet accessible via SMBC's new website
4	Kirkwells Town Planning WNF Residents' Questionnaire 2014	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf</a>
5	Kirkwells Town Planning Neighbourhood Plan Scoping Report 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Scoping-Report-.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Scoping-Report-.pdf</a>
6	WNF01: WNF Neighbourhood Plan Exhibition 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan-exhibition/">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan-exhibition/</a>
7	WNF02: WNF Interim Analysis of Data 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Interim-Analysis-of-Vision-and-Objectives-2-Dec-15.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Interim-Analysis-of-Vision-and-Objectives-2-Dec-15.pdf</a>

8	WNF03: WNF Progress Report 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf</a>
9	Woodford Business Survey Report	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Woodford-Buisness-Survey-Report.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Woodford-Buisness-Survey-Report.pdf</a>

## 8.4. Community and Heritage Policies: Justification, Evidence and References

The whole of the Neighbourhood Area is washed over by Green Belt, so planning policies for Woodford must comply with the Green Belt policies in the NPPF. However, the NPPF allows limited infilling, replacement buildings, extensions, and provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, provided that they would not harm the Green Belt. The SMBC Core Strategy and UDP, include policies that protect the Green Belt and historical environment.

The Woodford Neighbourhood Plan aims to support these national and regional policies and give them relevance to Woodford by providing local comment on how management of change should be handled.

The Community and Heritage objective is:

**Objective: To preserve and enhance recreational and heritage assets to promote a healthy community**

### 8.5.1. COM1: Provision of new community facilities (1-8)

Proposals for the provision of new community facilities shall be permitted, provided that they would not have significant harmful impact on the existing community facilities, or residents, or on other neighbouring uses, and are within the constraints of the Greenbelt Policy.

#### Justification and Evidence

During consultation with the community, it was noted that existing community facilities were very much appreciated, but could be improved. Public transport, medical facilities, and additional recreation facilities were also high on the wish list of potential improvements for Woodford. It was clear that the existing Woodford War Memorial Community Centre should be the place where many of these additional facilities should be found. (4-8)

The community centre is not run or financed by the local authority, but is a charity run on a voluntary basis by trustees and financed by rental of the facilities and fund-raising events. Any improvements would need to be paid for from these funds, or from additional contributions or donations.

This policy seeks to protect existing facilities in Woodford and encourage further investment for the benefit of the community, including enhancement of the existing community facilities. This policy is supported by analysis of community feedback from the questionnaire reviewed by external consultants, followed by subsequent consultations and reports by members of WNF committee. (4 -8)

Policy COM1 complies with:

1. NPPF paras 69 and 70, which aim to create opportunities for meetings between members of the community and guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services. (1)
2. NPPF paras 73 and 74, which recognise the importance of, and aim to provide, the open space, sports and recreational provision that is required. (1)
3. NPPF paras 89, which states that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate in Green Belt, but exceptions to this policy include the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, provided that it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. (1)
4. NPPF paras 90 and 111, which encourage the re-use of buildings, provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction, and encourage the reuse of land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value. (1)
5. SMBC Core Strategy paras 3.152-3.155, which promote and safeguard accessible, quality indoor sports, education and community facilities, and para 3.190 which seeks to facilitate improvements to them. (2)

Policy COM1 is supported by:

1. Community engagement. In responses to the questionnaire residents noted that the Centre was in need of modernisation and could consider additional activities to attract local residents. The Centre management committee have noted that extension of the Centre may be needed to accommodate the tripling of the population, which will be the result of the Aerodrome development. (4-8).

#### **8.5.2. COM2: Protection of community facilities (1-12)**

Any development that has a significant adverse effect on, or results in the loss of, any of the assets that are listed as Features of Value to the Community (see Features of Value to the Community table below) will be refused.

Any measure to improve, relocate, or add new Features of Value to the Community for the benefit of Woodford shall be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no loss, or there will be an equal or greater level of value to the community, and provided that the proposals would not have significant harmful impact on residents or on other neighbouring uses.

### Features of Value to the Community

1	Woodford War Memorial Community Centre and field
2	The Davenport Arms known locally as the Thief's Neck
3	Woodford Cricket Club and field
4	Bramhall Cricket Club and field
5	The Royal British Legion Club House
6	The Scout Hut
9	Woodford Recreation Ground
11	Grass verges
12	Trees in grass verges and pavements
13	Public footpath network
14	Heritage assets including statutory and locally listed buildings
16	Community Heritage Assets (see COM3)

### Justification and Evidence

This policy seeks to protect existing facilities and features in Woodford.

Policy COM2 complies with:

1. NPPF paras 70 and 74, which seek to provide and protect community facilities. (1)
2. NPPF paras 126 -141, which aim to conserve the historic environment, including Listed Buildings. (1)
3. NPPF para 169, which aims to maintain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in the local area and use it to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment. (1)
4. NPPF para 170, which states that landscape character assessments should be prepared, integrated with assessment of historic landscape character, and for areas where there are major expansion options, assessments of landscape sensitivity. (1)
5. SMBC Core Strategy paras 3.152-3.155, which promote and safeguard accessible, quality indoor sports, education and community facilities, and para 3.190, which seeks to facilitate improvements to them. (2)

6. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.187, which lists the restricted circumstances when redevelopment of existing community uses for other uses will be permitted, including availability of appropriate facilities elsewhere and lack of interest in occupancy of the site for the existing use. (2)
7. The Historic England Advice note 7, which states that the Localism Act requires local authorities to maintain a list of assets of community value that have been nominated by the local community. Assets on a local heritage list may also qualify as assets of community value, as long as they meet the requirements set out in the Act. (9)

Policy COM 2 is supported by:

1. Analysis of community feedback by external consultants and members of WNF committee. The features in the table arose from residents' responses to the questionnaire and management committee discussions about features of value to the community in Woodford that should be protected. (3-8)
2. The Heritage and Character study carried out by AECOM. Para 5.2 notes that wide grass verges and mature trees within private gardens, along streets and within the open countryside, are positive aspects of the character of Woodford, and para 5.4 notes that mature street trees are sensitive to change. (9)

#### 8.5.3. **COM3: Local protection of heritage assets** (1-3, 10-12)

Any development affecting a heritage asset within Woodford should aim to conserve and enhance the heritage value of the structure or building and its setting. Heritage assets are defined as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing). Additions to this local list are being made as part of a local list review which is being carried out in phases by SMBC. At the moment there are no local listings in Woodford. The Woodford Community will support SMBC with local listings where the property has:

- a) Architectural interest, such as buildings which are locally or regionally important for the interest of their architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship; also important examples of particular building types and techniques, and significant plan forms, or
- b) Historic interest, such as buildings which illustrate important aspects of local or regional social, economic, cultural or military history, or
- c) Close historical association with local or regional important people or events, or
- d) Group value, especially where buildings comprise an important architectural or historic unity, or are a fine example of planning (such as squares, terraces and model villages).



## Justification and Evidence

This policy seeks to protect heritage assets in Woodford.

Policy COM3 complies with:

1. NPPF paras 126 -141, which state that there should be a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats, and it should set out the considerations concerning heritage assets when determining planning applications. (1)
2. SMBC Core Strategy paras 3.300-302, which recognise the unique place the historic environment holds in Stockport's cultural heritage and the multiple ways in which it supports and contributes to the economy, society and daily life. It is noted that the historic environment is a non-renewable resource and that conserving and managing it is a key component of the wider principle of sustainable development. (1)
3. SMBC Core Strategy paras 3.352-354, which welcome development that preserves or enhances the special architectural, artistic, historic or archaeological significance of heritage assets and discourages development which would harm them. (2)
4. SMBC Core Strategy paras 3.388-3.94, which explain that the aims of the Conservation & Heritage Strategy for Stockport are to identify and raise awareness of Stockport's heritage assets, promote the opportunities for those assets to contribute to the wider regeneration and development of the Borough, and foster their continued use, enjoyment and access for present and future generations. The policies seek to retain the use of a Listed Building unless change can be justified. (2)
5. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.393, which seeks to retain and enhance heritage assets which, whilst not justifying statutorily designated status, are of local or regional significance (non-designated heritage assets). (2)
6. SMBC Saved UDP Policy section 4, which aims to ensure that Listed Buildings and other buildings of historic interest are suitably protected and re-used. (3)
7. The Historic England Advice note 7, which provides the following definition: In some areas, local planning authorities have created a 'local list' of 'non-designated heritage assets', as suggested in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (paragraph 39). Non-designated heritage assets are 'buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by local planning authorities as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated'. Para 11 notes that, whilst local listing provides no additional planning controls, the fact that a building or site is on a local list means that its conservation as a heritage asset is an objective of the NPPF and a material consideration when determining the outcome of a planning application (NPPF, paragraph 17). (10)

8. Policy COM 3 will be governed by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 Part 5, which provides legislation covering planning regulations with regard to Listed Buildings. (11)

Policy COM3 is supported by:

1. The Heritage and Character study carried out by AECOM section 4, which notes the comprehensive survival of historic buildings in Woodford with a rich variety and high architectural quality; and para 5.4, which notes that heritage assets and their setting in Woodford are sensitive to change. Heritage assets and their setting for protection are marked in the Constraints and Opportunities map in the AECOM report, which is reproduced in this Neighbourhood Plan document in the Section 7 under ENV2. (8)
2. Community feedback. In narrative responses to the questionnaire, listed buildings noted for protection were Woodford Church and the Deanwater Hotel. (4-8)
3. The Government Heritage statement of 2017: The Government statement champions our heritage and notes that it requires careful protection and sympathetic conservation. The focus will be on the investment to protect, conserve and enhance our heritage and safe guard it for the future. It seeks to ensure that our heritage helps to create great places to live, work, visit, and do business, as well as contributing to our economy, our wellbeing and the regeneration of our communities. (12)

#### 8.4.4. Supporting References for Community Section

Ref number	Document	Web Link
1	NPPF	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf</a>
2	SMBC Core Strategy	<a href="http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategyd.pdf">http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategyd.pdf</a>
3	SMBC Saved UDP Policy	<a href="http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/udppolicieshats tillapply">http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/udppolicieshats tillapply</a>
4	Kirkwells Town Planning WNF Residents' Questionnaire 2014	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf</a>
5	Kirkwells Town Planning Neighbourhood Plan Scoping Report 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Scoping-Report-.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Scoping-Report-.pdf</a>
6	WNF01: WNF Neighbourhood Plan Exhibition 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan-exhibition/">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan-exhibition/</a>

7	WNF02: WNF Interim Analysis of Data 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Interim-Analysis-of-Vision-and-Objectives-2-Dec-15.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Interim-Analysis-of-Vision-and-Objectives-2-Dec-15.pdf</a>
8	WNF03: WNF Progress Report 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf</a>
9	AECOM Heritage and Character study	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NP-Woodford-HCA-FINAL-LR-160815.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NP-Woodford-HCA-FINAL-LR-160815.pdf</a>
10	Historic England Advice note 7	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/">https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/</a>
11	Enterprise and Regulatory Reform act 2013	<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/24/contents/enacted">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/24/contents/enacted</a>
12	Heritage Statement 2017 issued by the Department of Digital, Culture Media and Sport	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664657/Heritage_Statement_2017_final_-_web_version_.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664657/Heritage_Statement_2017_final_-_web_version_.pdf</a>

## 8.5. Development Policies: Justification, Evidence and References

\*For the purposes of these policies the term Development refers to growth or change in the built environment.

The whole of Woodford Neighbourhood Area is currently in Green Belt. Therefore, planning decisions for the Woodford Neighbourhood Area must be in accordance with national planning guidance regarding development in the Green Belt and the UDP. There is a presumption within the Green Belt against inappropriate development (including housing) unless very special circumstances apply. A Housing Needs Assessment conducted by AECOM considered qualitative and quantitative aspects of future housing needs in the Neighbourhood Area. It concluded that, within the constraints of Green Belt policy, Neighbourhood Plan policies should aim to allow a mix of sizes and types of housing. The study recommended that housing need for the Woodford in the period 2011-2026 is in the range of 20 to 25 net additional dwellings and noted a potential opportunity to rely on the future housing need for Woodford Neighbourhood Plan Area to be satisfied by the Woodford Aerodrome development. Community engagement revealed that the majority of responders suggested that the Neighbourhood Plan should encourage market-price, owner occupied 2-bedroom properties. A small number of households with members looking for a new home in Woodford, included people wanting a smaller property, accommodation suitable for first time buyers, retirement accommodation, a bungalow, a flat or an apartment. The dwellings being provided on the

Aerodrome site are all, of a particular type. It is felt that development which may be allowed in the Neighbourhood Area as acceptable rural exceptions within the Green Belt, as outlined in the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan, will provide the required variety of sizes, types and tenures in Woodford.

The range of 20 to 25 additional houses in Woodford identified as local housing need for Woodford in the AECOM study would be spread out over the plan period of 15 year amounting to an average increase of between one and two dwellings per year. It is considered that this rate of development can be achieved whilst still being compliant with national Green Belt policy. The NPPF allows for certain limited exceptions in which new buildings, including for housing use, may be permitted. The possible exceptions are set out in para 89 of the NPPF along with their constraints. For example, limited infilling the complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land) are permitted, provided that they do not have having a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it than the existing development. Housing completions achieved by other means including windfall sites through planning appeal decisions or through “very special circumstances” would also make a contribution to the housing need.

**Objective: To provide variety and mix that meets local needs and manage limited infilling including residential, employment and community uses.**

These policies reflect and reaffirm national and local government policies on development in Green Belt and add detail specific for development in Woodford.

#### **8.5.1. DEV1: Exceptions for new housing development (1-3, 5-11)**

Development is not permitted in Green Belt apart from certain exceptions which are listed in national and SMBC policy. The policies below reflect these national and local policies.

Allowable development in Woodford, within the Green Belt, includes the following which may be considered acceptable as rural exceptions

a) Limited infilling.\*

\* Infill: The development of a relatively small gap between existing buildings, for no more than one dwelling.

b) The redevelopment of previously developed land and buildings (subject to appropriate environmental safeguards and mitigation) whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings) which would not have greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

- c) Conversion of existing buildings provided the buildings are of a permanent and substantial construction (subject to the preservation of the surrounding countryside).
- d) Limited affordable housing schemes for local community needs which meet the criteria for Local Plan rural exception sites or according to policy DEV5.

### **Justification and Evidence**

Policy DEV1 complies with:

- 1. NPPF para 89, which includes the criteria for rural exceptions, including limited infilling in villages. (1)
- 2. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.127, which states that the Council will negotiate to achieve a proportion of 40% affordable housing in areas with the highest property prices, such as Woodford. (2)
- 3. SMBC Saved UDP Policy paras GBA1.2, GBA1.5, GBA1.6 and GBA1.7, which list criteria for the control of development within Green Belt. (3)

Policy DEV1 is supported by:

- 1. The Housing Needs Assessment conducted on behalf of WNF by AECOM in 2015. This study considered qualitative and quantitative aspects of future housing needs in the Neighbourhood Area. It concluded that, within the constraints of Green Belt policy, Neighbourhood Plan policies should aim to allow a mix of sizes and types of housing. The study recommended that housing need for the Woodford in the period 2011-2026 is in the range of 20 to 25 net additional dwellings and noted a potential opportunity to rely on the future housing need for Woodford Neighbourhood Plan Area to be satisfied by the Woodford Aerodrome development. (10)
- 2. Community consultation. Narrative responses to the residents' questionnaire supported limited infill and redevelopment of previously developed land. Responses to the questionnaire support a small number of affordable homes (housing association to let, sheltered homes, shared equity). (5-9)
- 3. AECOM's Heritage and Character Assessment, section 5.5. Character Management Principles, which states particularly that: Any new development should respect the layout, scale, mass and appearance of neighbouring buildings and buildings across the neighbourhood area; the materials proposed for any new buildings should be responsive to the character of existing buildings and the vernacular materials used in the area. (11)



### 8.5.2. DEV2: Limited infilling in Woodford village (1-3, 5-9, 10)

National and Development Plan policies apply the principles of Green Belt protection to the whole of Woodford village. The NPPF states that the openness of the Green Belt is one of the essential characteristics of the Green Belt and therefore any infilling should not therefore compromise the openness of the Green Belt. The boundary of the village of Woodford is defined as the whole village. Development within the village is limited to small scale infilling which should satisfy all the following criteria for any exception to allow development to be permitted:

- a) Any proposed development should preserve and not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt; and
- b) Small scale infilling only will be permitted and is defined as the completion of an otherwise substantially built-up road frontage; and
- c) Small scale infilling would only provide for the filling of a narrow gap normally capable of taking one or two dwellings only; and
- d) The scale of any development should be compatible in character with the adjoining properties; and
- e) Any development should be built along the same building line as other adjoining properties and not forward of any adjoining property; and

\*Substantially built up road frontage is defined as an otherwise continuous and largely uninterrupted built frontage of several dwellings visible within the street scene.

Limited infilling will not be permitted in low density areas where gaps between dwellings form part of the character of the area and contribute to its openness. Limited infilling will not be permitted in low density areas where gaps between dwellings form part of the character of the area and contribute to its openness.

#### Justification and Evidence

The whole of the Woodford area contains both ribbon development and small groupings of houses and other uses all of which are “washed over” by the Greater Manchester Green Belt. The NPPF states that limited infilling in villages is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt provided it preserves the openness of the Green Belt. The village of Woodford has not been identified in any development Plan documents prepared by Stockport Council. All such currently used documents pre-date the National Planning Policy Framework which introduced the new category of limited infilling in appropriate circumstances within villages as an exception to the generic national Green Belt policy of a presumption against such development.

All settlements within Stockport Borough will be assessed by the Borough Council based on the range of local facilities and services available at the commencement of the Local Plan process due Summer 2017. It is expected that the village of Woodford may be considered a candidate for definition

as a village due to the number and type of local facilities available locally. At present there is therefore an absence of any Borough –wide criteria for establishing villages capable of limited infill development. In such circumstances it is considered that the only appropriate policy compliant with the NPPF is one which defines the settlement of Woodford as the whole village but then sets out the criteria listed above against which planning applications in the Woodford area would be assessed.

Policy DEV2 complies with:

1. NPPF para 89 which allows limited infilling in villages. (1)
2. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.108, which does not permit infill sites in ribbon development within Green Belt. (2)
3. SMBC Saved UDP policies para GBA1.2, which allows limited infilling in villages. (3)

Policy DEV2 is supported by:

1. Community consultation. Responses to the questionnaire showed support for small amounts of limited infill, in keeping with the character of the area. (5-9)
2. AECOM's Housing Need Assessment, para 153 which concluded that the housing needs of the Neighbourhood Area could be satisfied by the Aerodrome development, but this could be complemented by a small amount of limited infill development within the Neighbourhood Area. (10)

### 8.5.3. DEV3: Affordable housing\* (1, 2, 5-10)

\* Includes social rented and intermediate housing (e.g. shared ownership), provided to households at a cost low enough for them to afford. Households eligible for affordable housing are those who cannot afford open market housing. (SMBC definition)

Affordable housing shall be provided within the Plan area and/or within the former aerodrome area to meet Woodford's housing needs as follows:

- a) Where the site size threshold of any new housing site is more than 5 dwellings, 50% affordable housing shall be provided on site.
- b) On rural exception sites, which are defined as:

Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

- c) All proposals for affordable housing needs within Woodford shall be justified by a recent Housing Needs survey which identifies the number and the type(s) of dwelling required.
- d) Affordable housing shall be made available to persons who satisfy the local connection (to be known as the Woodford connection and defined below\*) for a minimum period of 6 months on completion and a minimum period of 3 months on subsequent re-letting or sale)

\*The Woodford Connection is defined for the purposes of affordable housing in accordance with policies DEV4. For the purposes of this Neighbourhood Plan, a local housing connection is classed as being of a residency nature only. Residency qualification is defined as any individual who satisfies the following criteria:

- i. Has been resident in Woodford for 3 out of the previous 5 years at the time of application; or
- ii. Has close family (defined as mother, father, sister, brother, adult children or grandparent) who have been resident in Woodford for a continuous period of 5 years and continue to be so resident at the time of application.

#### **Justification and Evidence**

Policy DEV3 complies with:

- 1. NPPF para 89, which permits limited affordable housing in Green Belt for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan. (1)
- 2. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.126 which states that the Council will negotiate to achieve a proportion of 40% affordable housing in areas with the highest property prices, such as Woodford. (2)

Policy DEV3 is supported by:

- 1. Community consultation. Owner occupied, market-price homes were the most popular choice among residents who responded to questions about the type of new dwelling needed in Woodford. However, the options of sheltered homes, shared equity and housing associations homes were chosen by a very small number of respondents. (5-9)
- 2. The AECOM Housing Need Assessment, which noted that there does not appear to be a significant demand for affordable housing within the village and that some affordable homes are being delivered as part of the Aerodrome development, which would provide affordable homes adjacent to the Neighbourhood Area. (10)

#### 8.5.4. **DEV4: Redevelopment of farm buildings or farm complex** (1, 3)

The complete redevelopment of related farm buildings or within a farm complex into a new housing scheme within Woodford shall be supported where:

- a) The site is currently occupied by agricultural buildings which are not capable of re-use without extensive re-building, or has previously been occupied by agricultural buildings which have outlived their usefulness for agricultural purposes; and
- b) The location and proposed nature of the scheme are both sympathetic to the character of the open countryside and would have minimal visual and environmental impact; and
- c) The redevelopment does not extend beyond the site area previously or currently occupied by agricultural buildings; and
- d) The housing scheme reflects a mix of housing based on meeting the needs of different groups within the Woodford community and is based on a recent Housing Needs survey of the local area.

#### **Justification and Evidence**

There are a number of existing farms in Woodford which reflect its rural character. DEV4 seeks to reflect the area's proximity to the Stockport and wider Greater Manchester area as well as its designation as wholly within the Green Belt. The future of existing farm buildings poses particular challenges.

Any redundant barns associated with farms in the Neighbourhood Area have the potential to be developed for housing. This contributes to the housing needs of the Neighbourhood Area and allows the village to grow incrementally and organically.

Policy DEV 4 complies with:

- 1. NPPF para 51 in planning for a wide choice of homes to reflect local demand and para 79 in seeking to protect the openness of the Green Belt and 89. (1)
- 2. DEV4 also reflects one of the Core Planning Principles set out in the NPPF Para 17, namely that of taking account of the different roles and character of different areas and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving communities within it. (1)
- 3. SMBC Saved UDP Policy paras GBA1.2, GBA1.5, GBA1.6, which list criteria to control development in Green Belt. (3)

#### 8.5.5. DEV5: Replacement of existing dwellings (1-3, 5-11)

The replacement of one permanent and substantially constructed house by one dwelling (or two semi-detached dwellings in one building) may be allowed provided the new building is not materially larger than the building it replaces. The following criteria are also required to be satisfied:

- a) The new dwelling would be sited within the house and garden and its design would create a visual enhancement of the site; and
- b) The new dwelling by virtue of its siting, design, external appearance and any access arrangements would respect the traditional character and openness of the surrounding countryside; and
- c) Existing landscape features are retained and appropriate additional landscaping carried out which reflects the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside; and
- d) Any additional freestanding buildings shall not have an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside; and
- e) The new dwellings shall respect the privacy and other existing amenities of any adjacent dwellings.

#### Justification and Evidence

DEV5 complies with:

1. NPPF para 79 in seeking to protect the openness of the Green Belt; para 89 allows for one building to be replaced by another building provided Green Belt impact is mitigated by the same use and the replacement is not materially larger. The replacement of one large detached dwelling by two semi-detached smaller properties would meet the community's aspirations for a choice of smaller houses to meet local demand for smaller facilities at a more affordable price. Attached dwellings to form one building in two separate households can be achieved through a number of design solutions – a pair of semi-detached adjacent or a horizontal or vertical split for example into apartments. (1)
2. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.112, which requires that design should respond to the landscape character of the local area in terms of layout, scale and appearance and should provide privacy, safety and security for new and existing occupants. (2)
3. SMBC UDP para GBA1.2 and GBA1.5, which permit replacement of existing buildings, provided that the scale and character of the property are not significantly changed. (3)

Policy DEV5 is supported by:

1. Consultation with the community, whose wish to retain the character of the village is reflected in the Vision. In the questionnaire 96% of respondents felt design of buildings should reflect the scale and character of the village. The consultation also identified a need for smaller homes to be provided with a particular demand for dwellings of 1 or 2 bedrooms. (5-9)
2. The Housing Needs Assessment conducted on behalf of WNF by AECOM in 2015 which states that 'Housing mix policy could aim to encourage increased provision for semi-detached properties' and that 'a range of dwelling sizes including smaller dwellings (1-2 bedrooms) suitable for older people' should be provided (Table 22). (10)
3. AECOM's Heritage and Character Assessment, section 5.5. Character Management Principles, which states particularly that: Any new development should respect the layout, scale, mass and appearance of neighbouring buildings and buildings across the neighbourhood area; the materials proposed for any new buildings should be responsive to the character of existing buildings and the vernacular materials used in the area. (11)

#### **8.5.6. DEV6: Extensions to existing dwellings (1-3, 5-9, 11)**

Planning permission for extensions to existing dwellings in Woodford shall be granted provided that:

- a) The proposed extension is well-designed and has appropriate regard to the scale, style, appearance and materials of the existing dwelling; and
- b) The proposed extension is not disproportionate to the original dwelling and would not result in significant detrimental effect upon either the character or identity of the original dwelling.
- c) Any side extension to any house shall normally retain a gap of at least one metre to the site boundary in order to prevent the creation of a terraced street effect.

#### **Justification and Evidence**

The reduction in width or sometimes the total loss of space between properties can often create a 'terracing effect' where two properties join to create the impression of a continuous building frontage. This terracing effect can be out of character with the street scene and the open character of Woodford, particularly where houses were originally built as semi-detached or detached properties as many were. The policy seeks to protect the character of non-terraced streets and to ensure that extensions are subordinate in scale and do not result in a terracing effect. Two storey and first



floor side extensions should be set back at first floor level from the front wall of the original house by a minimum of 1 metre, and have a lower ridge line than the existing property. This would also help to avoid unsightly matching in of the new walls and roof with the old brick and roof tiles.

DEV6 complies with:

1. NPPF para 79 in seeking to protect the openness of the Green Belt; para 89, which permits the extension or alteration of a building, provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building; and para 55 which promotes sustainable development in rural areas, provided that the design is sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area. (1)
2. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.112, which requires that design should respond to the landscape character of the local area in terms of layout, scale and appearance and should provide privacy, safety and security for new and existing occupants. (2)
3. SMBC UDP para GBA1.5, which permits extension of existing buildings, provided that the scale and character of the property are not significantly changed. (3)

DEV6 is supported by:

1. Consultation with the community, whose wish to retain the character of the village is reflected in the Vision. In the questionnaire 96% of respondents felt design of buildings should reflect the scale and character of the village. (5-9)
2. AECOM's Heritage and Character Assessment, section 5.5. Character Management Principles, which states that: Any new development should respect the layout, scale, mass and appearance of neighbouring buildings and buildings across the neighbourhood area. The materials proposed for any extension should be responsive to the character of existing building and the vernacular materials used in the area. (11)

#### **8.5.7. DEV7: Subdivision of existing houses (1, 3, 5-11)**

Planning applications for the sub-division of existing dwellings into self-contained residential units shall be treated as would an application for a new dwelling or extension. Any grant of planning permission should seek to retain the character, identity and appearance of the original dwelling so the additional unit does not require substantial extensions. Personal circumstances (including disability and family) should be taken into account when considering any grant of permission. Applications will be assessed on their merits having regard to the following criteria:

- a) Existing or recently constructed dwellings are eligible for subdivision provided building works have been completed.
- b) The proposed layout both internally and externally should provide for a satisfactory level of amenities for prospective occupiers in terms of floor area, light, outlook and shape.

- c) The proposal should not materially and/or adversely affect the amenities of adjoining or neighbouring properties, in particular having regard to potential noise transmission through the juxtaposition of living and sleeping accommodation.
- d) The proposal should not materially affect the character of the local area, particularly the openness of the Green Belt or overconcentration of such subdivisions changing the character over a period of time.
- e) The proposal should seek to incorporate some degree of private open space to which all residents may have access.
- f) Proposals will be required to show that the subdivision can be accomplished without the need for any substantial extensions or additions to the building or its curtilage.
- g) On-site parking and access arrangements should be in accordance with national and Borough standard and should not be compromised to achieve an increase in the number of units for its own sake.

### **Justification and Evidence**

There are larger houses within the Woodford area which may be capable of being sub-divided into smaller units without substantial harm being done to the openness of the Green Belt. Furthermore, due to the area's location within the Green Belt, there are very limited opportunities for existing residents who would wish to live in a smaller property locally, or reduce the size of their property and remain living within Woodford. For former residents who wish to return to the area for family or other reasons, the option of a smaller property within a larger dwelling would also prove attractive. The policy would also support the conversion and some extension of larger properties to meet this local need which has been identified by the housing work undertaken. In terms of sustainability, this policy would bring potential further benefits in terms of reducing the number of car borne trips made for family and other reasons and more efficiency in terms of delivery of local services and facilities, particularly given the developing Aerodrome site, which offers a different type of housing.

Planning permission is likely to be required to subdivide one property into more than one. It may also be required if there is a change of use from one particular type of residential accommodation to another. Residential use is not a single broad classification but comprises a number of different types.

Policy DEV7 complies with:

1. NPPF para 50, which supports the delivery of a wide choice of homes, along with the widening of opportunities for home ownership and the creation of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. A range of size, type and tenure is expected to reflect local demand. This policy

reflects local consultation and the needs to different groups within the community who wish to continue to live locally but are limited by Green Belt policy in meeting their housing needs. (1)

2. SMBC Saved UDP Policies GBA1.5 and the Core Strategy 2011 which retains it. This concerns potential exceptions to development in the Green Belt and allows the subdivision of houses for form smaller units of accommodation as one of the exceptions. The policy sets out a number of safeguards to be addressed including parking, highway safety, character and appearance of the Green Belt and amenities. The policy also notes that such exceptions may contribute to meeting housing need and may not harm the purposes of Green Belt. (3)

Policy DEV7 is supported by:

1. Community consultation. Market price, owner occupied 2-bedroom houses were the most popular option selected in answer to a question asking what type of homes the Neighbourhood Plan should encourage. (5-9)
2. The Housing Needs Assessment conducted on behalf of WNF by AECOM in 2015, which states that 'Housing mix policy could aim to encourage increased provision for semi-detached properties' and that 'a range of dwelling sizes including smaller dwellings (1-2 bedrooms) suitable for older people' should be provided (Table 22). (10)
3. The AECOM Heritage and Character Assessment, section. 5.5, Character Management Principles which states that: Proposals to alter existing buildings should demonstrate an understanding of the architectural history and design qualities of the buildings and provide a clear rationale for how this is taken account of in the design of the alterations proposed; proposals should conserve and protect heritage assets which contribute to the historic character of the area and their setting. The materials proposed for any extension should be responsive to the character of existing building and the vernacular materials used in the area. Heritage assets are marked in the Constraints and Opportunities map in the AECOM report, which is reproduced in this Neighbourhood Plan document in the Section 7 under ENV2. (11)

Note. In respect of new houses in the Green Belt, NPPF (para 89) refers to them as "construction of new buildings" and accordingly there is the presumption against that construction. The NPPF does not state any planning policy objection to the creation of an extra unit of accommodation within an existing house. The point at which accommodation becomes so self-contained as to be a "separate dwelling" is a matter of fact and degree. A number of considerations need to be taken into account. If there is no complete physical separation of accommodation with some services being shared and some being separate (such as a kitchen), then a separate dwelling is likely to have been created. This policy seeks to acknowledge that there may be scope for downsizing some properties in Woodford for those in later life.

#### 8.5.8. **DEV8: Design of new development** (1-3, 5-9, 11, 13-15)

Any new development in Woodford shall seek to achieve a high standard of design. The new development should be compatible with the rural nature of Woodford, the Landscape Character Assessment, the WNF Key Natural Features Map, CWT Habitat Distinctiveness Map and CWT Wildlife Corridor Map for Woodford and the emerging Landscape Character Assessment for Stockport.

The layout and design of new housing should satisfy the following local design principles:

- a) Reflect local rural character of the Woodford; and
  - b) Respect the form, layout, materials, siting, height, scale and design of the adjoining and surrounding buildings, the setting and countryside; and
  - c) Be sympathetic to the character of the local environment, the rural street scene, the linear and street frontage layout of development; and
  - d) Achieve environmental and energy standards with a view to achieving zero carbon buildings and a sustainability standard of Gold in accordance with the SMBC Sustainability Checklist; and
- Retain or enhance existing landscape, wildlife features and coherent ecological network features.

#### **Justification and Evidence**

Policy DEV8 complies with:

1. NPPF para 17, which seeks to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity, to take account of the character of the area, protect the Green Belt, recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and support rural communities within it. It also complies with para 56, which attaches great importance to good design. (1)
2. NPPF para 59, which notes that neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. (1)
3. SMBC Core Strategy para 3.112, which requires that design should respond to the landscape character of the local area in terms of layout, scale and appearance and should provide privacy, safety and security for new and existing occupants. (2)
4. SMBC Core Strategy Core Policy CS3 para 3.10, which seeks to ensure that all development meets an appropriate recognised sustainable design and construction standard where viable to do so, in order to address both the causes and consequences of climate change. In particular, all development will be required to demonstrate how it will contribute towards reducing the Borough's carbon footprint by achieving carbon management standards. (2)

5. SMBC Saved UDP Policies, Policy LCR1.1, which does not permit development in the countryside unless it protects or enhances the quality and character of the rural area. It notes that development should be sensitively sited, designed and constructed of materials appropriate to the landscape character area in which it is located. (3)
6. SMBC para 7.31 which states that, in areas of historic, architectural and landscape value (including within the green belt and near listed buildings) it is particularly important that their character is not eroded through unsympathetic development. (15)

Policy DEV8 is supported by:

1. Consultation with the community, whose wish to retain the character of the village is reflected in the Vision. In the questionnaire 96% of respondents felt design of buildings should reflect the scale and character of the village. Responses showed concern for the protection of the landscape (83%) and historic features (70%), use of traditional materials (70%) and energy conservation (55%). (5-9)
2. AECOM's Heritage and Character Assessment, section. 5.5 Character Management Principles, which requires that any new development should respect the layout, scale, mass and appearance of neighbouring buildings and buildings across the neighbourhood area and that the materials proposed for any new buildings should be responsive to the character of existing buildings and the vernacular materials used in the area. Furthermore, it states that high quality materials and a high standard of workmanship should be applied in the repair, or other works, to pavements and the public realm; and that new high quality green spaces that provide a variety of functions and diverse habitats should be included in future proposed residential developments. (11)

Note: The SMBC Sustainability SPD provides up to date guidance to reflect the provision of information and resources to support delivery of sustainable design and delivery of buildings in the Borough. (13)

The SMBC Sustainability Checklist is designed to help developers and building professionals working in Stockport to evaluate the sustainability of their projects. (14)

#### 8.5.9. **DEV9: Backland\* and tandem development** (1, 5-9, 11)

\*Backland development: Development of 'landlocked' sites behind existing buildings, such as rear gardens and private open space, usually within predominantly residential areas. Such sites often have no street frontages.

A Proposal for an additional dwelling in tandem with or behind an existing dwelling within an existing garden should satisfy the following criteria:

- a) A satisfactory and separate means of access to the new dwelling can be obtained to an existing public highway; and
- b) The amenities of residents of existing and proposed dwelling would be safeguarded as a consequence of the proposed development; and
- c) The proposed dwelling would not result in the creation of an over intensive development to the area and detract from the openness of the Green Belt at this point; and
- d) The plot size of the proposed dwelling should be appropriate to the size of the dwelling and the character of the immediate local area.

### **Justification and Evidence**

Backland development sites (also referred to as tandem development or development of 'landlocked' sites) behind existing houses or other buildings such as on rear gardens and private open space and usually within the more residential parts of Woodford are also subject to Green Belt policy. Such sites often have no street frontages.

Policy DEV9 complies with:

- 1. NPPF para 79, which seeks to protect the openness of the Green Belt. (1)
- 2. The NPPF Annex 2 Glossary, which sets out the definition of 'previously developed land'. Residential gardens are classed as land that has not been previously developed ('greenfield land'). 'Tandem or backland development' is where one house is built directly behind another and shares the same access. Such development can result in a detrimental impact on the character of an area. Within the Green Belt of the Woodford area, such development may harm both essential characteristics of the Green Belt (para 79 of NPPF) being its openness and permanence. (1)

Policy DEV9 is supported by:

- 1. Community consultation. In the questionnaire, two thirds of respondents were not in favour of backland development. (5-9)
- 2. AECOM's Heritage and Character Assessment, section 5.3, which regards 'Outward expansion of settlement encroaching into the surrounding countryside' as an issue to be addressed to prevent erosion or loss of the characteristic openness of the village. (11)



### 8.5.10. Supporting References for Development Section

No.	Document	Web Link
1	NPPF	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf</a>
2	SMBC Core Strategy	Available by google search which brings up link to old SMBC website: <a href="http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategydpd">http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategydpd</a> Note: Not yet accessible via SMBC's new website
3	SMBC Saved UDP Policy	Available by google search which brings up link to old SMBC website: <a href="http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/udppolicieshatstillapply">http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/udppolicieshatstillapply</a> Note: Not yet accessible via SMBC's new website
4	SMBC Woodford Aerodrome site SPD 2013	<a href="http://stockport-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/pp/woodfordspd/woodfordspd?pointId=2268939">http://stockport-consult.objective.co.uk/portal/pp/woodfordspd/woodfordspd?pointId=2268939</a>
5	Kirkwells Town Planning: WNF Residents' Questionnaire 2014	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf</a>
6	Kirkwells Town Planning: Neighbourhood Plan Scoping Report 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Scoping-Report-.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Scoping-Report-.pdf</a>
7	WNF01: WNF Neighbourhood Plan Exhibition 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan-exhibition/">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan-exhibition/</a>
8	WNF02: WNF Interim Analysis of Data 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Interim-Analysis-of-Vision-and-Objectives-2-Dec-15.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Interim-Analysis-of-Vision-and-Objectives-2-Dec-15.pdf</a>
9	WNF03: WNF Progress Report 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf</a>
10	AECOM: Housing Needs Assessment 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AECOM-Woodford-Housing-Policy-Advice-2015.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AECOM-Woodford-Housing-Policy-Advice-2015.pdf</a>
11	AECOM: Heritage and Character Assessment 2016	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NP-Woodford-HCA-FINAL-LR-160815.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NP-Woodford-HCA-FINAL-LR-160815.pdf</a>
12	Woodford Aerodrome site planning permission 2013	<a href="http://planning.stockport.gov.uk/PlanningData-live/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&amp;keyVal=ZZZYGXPJTA934">http://planning.stockport.gov.uk/PlanningData-live/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&amp;keyVal=ZZZYGXPJTA934</a>
13	SMBC Sustainable Design and Construction SPD	<a href="https://assets.contentful.com/ii3xdrqc6nfw/tV7Wphmx1YeaKqS8kcQg4/6017b94cf0696411da19e3899c32168d/susdesconspdpdf.pdf">https://assets.contentful.com/ii3xdrqc6nfw/tV7Wphmx1YeaKqS8kcQg4/6017b94cf0696411da19e3899c32168d/susdesconspdpdf.pdf</a>
14	SMBC Sustainability Checklist	<a href="https://assets.contentful.com/ii3xdrqc6nfw/AXSSD5pskg8Q8ikSqw4ou/">https://assets.contentful.com/ii3xdrqc6nfw/AXSSD5pskg8Q8ikSqw4ou/</a>

		<a href="https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/live-iag-static-assets/pdf/LDF/SupplementaryPlanning/Design+of+Residential+Development+Supplementary+Planning+Document.pdf">e1a4844ab30cc1dbfc4f9789fb321e1a/susdesandcons3sustainabilitychecklist.pdf</a>
15	SMBC The Design of Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document, 2007	<a href="https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/live-iag-static-assets/pdf/LDF/SupplementaryPlanning/Design+of+Residential+Development+Supplementary+Planning+Document.pdf">https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/live-iag-static-assets/pdf/LDF/SupplementaryPlanning/Design+of+Residential+Development+Supplementary+Planning+Document.pdf</a>

Additional information regarding flood risk and ground surface permeability can be found on these links:

	DCLG Guidance on the permeable surfacing of front gardens, 2008	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7728/pavingfrontgardens.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7728/pavingfrontgardens.pdf</a>
	DCLG Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework, 2012	<a href="https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/538/755/1929/6478/4134512612.pdf">https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/538/755/1929/6478/4134512612.pdf</a>

## 9. Village Action Plan

### 9.1. Introduction

A number of Aspirations arose from our consultation with the community and these were translated into specific Objectives. While these are not the subject of planning policy, they do reflect the community's wish to improve the quality of life of in the village in terms of our health and social wellbeing. These particular Objectives relate to: **Movement, Environment and Integration** (of the existing community with the new community on the Aerodrome development). These aspirations together with the rationale behind them and the justification and evidence to support them have been assembled in the Village Action Plan.

### 9.2. Movement Aspirations

#### Community Feedback

When asked what the Neighbourhood Plan should encourage, the Questionnaire responses revealed that four of the top five most important issues related to movement around and in and out of Woodford. 'Public footpaths' heads the list with 'Road Safety' a close second. 'Public Transport' features in third place with 'Cycle Paths' in fifth. (1, 2)

The short questionnaire that accompanied the Exhibition in June 2015 also demonstrated an overwhelming response in favour of changes which can improve the footpaths and linkages, restricting traffic and traffic speeds and providing improved public transport in terms of frequency and connections. Many wanted to see measures to improve road safety. (2)

The following objective arose from this consultation:

**To create safer roads, streets and lanes and increase public access to countryside by foot, cycle and bridleway and to encourage sustainable transport**

#### 9.2.1. Aspiration 1: Walking provision

The Community will work with SMBC, Redrow Homes, Cheshire East and developers (who will be expected to contribute financially to effect this provision) to create a safe and secure network of walking routes around and within Woodford and improve links with surrounding areas.

This will provide direct links between homes and health, education, employment, retail and other important amenities, and aesthetic walking routes, away from main roads, typically with greenery, and providing access to informal recreation opportunities. This network includes existing footways associated with roads and a number of existing public rights of way across the Neighbourhood Area. See Footpath map below.



### **9.2.2. Aspiration 2: Cycling provision**

The Community will work with SMBC, Redrow Homes, Cheshire East and other developers (who will be expected to contribute financially to effect this provision) to create a safe and secure cycling network.

The network will provide direct cycling routes linked to the surrounding area, including the new long distance cycle and walking lane associated with the A6 MARR to the North and that which will lie alongside Poynton relief road to the East, routes on quieter roads and off-road links, which are required for recreational cycling, utility cycling\* and less confident cyclists. Where appropriate, cycle parking facilities will be encouraged.

\* Utility cycling: Any cycling done simply as a means of transport rather than as a sport or leisure activity.

### **9.2.3. Aspiration 3: Public transport provision**

The Community will work with SMBC, Redrow Homes, the LHA, Transport for Greater Manchester [TfGM], Cheshire East and others to achieve better quality and more frequent bus services for Woodford with a greater range of destinations. We will support the extended provision of services in the evenings and at weekends to encourage the use of public transport for access to leisure opportunities.

### **9.2.4. Aspiration 4: Traffic calming**

The Community will work with SMBC, the LHA, TfGM, Redrow Homes, Cheshire East and others to produce a programme of schemes designed to improve safety for all road users, and to encourage increased levels of walking and cycling. This will include speed reduction schemes where appropriate.



### **Some Suggestions for Potential Specific Road and Traffic Improvements**

1. Improved pedestrian crossing facilities on Woodford Road Incorporating tactile paving.
2. Improved pedestrian crossing facilities in Chester Road (between Moor Lane and Church Lane), including additional pedestrian refuges, particularly related to bus stopping points.
3. Junction improvements at Chester Road/Woodford Road roundabout, including enhanced pedestrian crossing points.
4. Junction improvements at Chester Road/Church Lane (bus turn-round) Measures to provide traffic calming and a 'gateway' to the village.
5. Village "entrance feature" at village boundaries on Wilmslow Road, Chester Road, Woodford Road and Hall Moss Lane.
6. Speed limit reduction from 40 mph to 30 mph from Deanwater Hotel to Moor Lane potentially associated with the introduction of central refuges (as 2) and cycle lanes (as 7).
7. Introduction of cycle lanes to Chester Road between Old Hall lane and Moor Lane.
8. Where possible extend the existing road restrictions on heavy vehicles.

### **9.2.5. Movement Aspirations: Justification Evidence and References**

The Woodford Neighbourhood Plan aims to support the wishes of the community in improving the ability to walk and cycle around the village and if possible adopt public transport where services are available. Encouraging walking and cycling responds to a national priority to improve health and well-being.

The Movement section objective is:

**To create safer roads, streets and lanes and increase public access to countryside by foot, cycle and bridleway and to encourage sustainable transport**

This aspiration is supported by:

1. The National Institute for Healthcare Excellence guidelines, which encourage people to increase the amount they walk or cycle for travel or recreation purposes to benefit their health. They also encourage a modal change towards walking and cycling. (3)
2. The Department of Health's report 'Start Active, Stay Active' states that 'regular physical activity can reduce the risk of many chronic conditions, including coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, obesity, mental health problems and musculoskeletal conditions. Even relatively small increases in physical activity are associated with some protection against chronic diseases and an improved quality of life', and 'the benefits of physical activity extend further to improved productivity in the workplace, reduced congestion and pollution through active travel, and healthy development of children and young people. These health benefits will only be achieved by building activity into our daily lives. (4)
3. Increased physical activity is also encouraged in SMBC Core Policies. 'Active People' is a key plank in 'A Healthy Stockport', which is a priority of the Stockport Sustainable Community Strategy, Policy 3.3.6 – Safeguarding and Improving the Environment. (5)
4. In addition, SMBC Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (April 2012) reinforces the need to build activity into our daily lives to support the Stockport Healthy Weight Strategy (para 3.33) and through Stockport's Walking Strategy (para 3.34). (6)
5. The lanes and network of footpaths are regularly used by residents and neighbouring communities for recreational walking, cycling and riding. This also aligns with the provision in the NPPF para 81 to support the beneficial use of the Green Belt by providing opportunities for access. (7)
6. Planning and implementation policies also encourage the development of safer walking and cycling provision, enabling its choice as the preferred mode of travel. One of the core planning principles of the NPPF in achieving sustainable development is to 'actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling.....' (para 17). Sustainable Transport should be promoted which 'support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport' (para 30). Plans should 'give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities' (Para 35). (7)
7. Key guidance for the design of highways and footways, Manual for Street 2 (MfS) re-affirms that 'encouraging walking has many benefits including reduction in vehicle emissions and traffic collisions and improvements in personal health (Para. 5.1.2.). The priority for walking

and cycling is an adopted MfS Principle: 'Applying a user hierarchy to the design process with pedestrians at the top. This means that the needs of pedestrians should be considered first when designing, building, retrofitting, maintaining and improving streets, (Para 1.2). (8)

8. A study was commissioned by Woodford Neighbourhood Forum (WNF) and undertaken by Peter Brett Associates [PBA] to provide advice with regard to potential measures to be implemented that could improve the pedestrian and cycling environment in Woodford. PBA recognised that 'the Relief Road will result in significant reductions in existing traffic flows in the village, particularly along Woodford Road and Chester Road. It will also help to remove strategic heavy goods vehicle movements from the roads in the village. These reductions will provide quieter routes and therefore help to improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists.' However, they noted that 'there are a series of smaller interventions which could be considered by SMBC to further enhance the environment for pedestrians and cyclists, some of which are related to maintenance.' These are listed in PBA Woodford Movement Study: Section 4. (9)
9. The Heritage and Landscape Character Assessment undertaken by AECOM echoes a number of these concerns, particularly raising issues relating to the busy Chester Road and Wilmslow Road, which are dominated by traffic, exacerbated by a lack of crossing points for pedestrians; congestion at peak times from vehicles using Chester Road and Woodford Road (as noted by PBA, likely to improve with the opening of the new road scheme); lack of designated cycleways; and a public realm, which is often limited to narrow asphalt pavements adjacent to busy roads which abruptly end in some locations. AECOM also note that the number of Public Rights of Way (ProW) through the village as a key characteristic and that they provide a recreational resource linking Woodford to the wider countryside. (10) The Public Rights of Way within the Neighbourhood Plan Area are an intrinsic part of the footpath network which gives access into the wider landscaped area within or beyond the road network. The Forum wish to see these retained, enhanced and maintained, where appropriate improving key routes to accommodate the needs of people with impairments.
10. The SMBC Saved UDP Policy L1.710 is supported by the Forum. This gives protection from development for all existing routes with maintenance and improvement of the existing network the Council's first priority. Fred Perry Way, a Strategic Recreation Route which passes through the Area, will be 'safeguarded and enhanced' under policy L1.8. (11) The Forum has undertaken a survey of the existing ProW network and identified where improvements or maintenance are required. (12)
11. The development of the rights of way network in the Stockport district in the next five to ten years will be advised by the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) which was adopted by the Council Executive in November 2007 and responds to the requirements of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The backdrop to this assessment is the need to maintain the rights of way network, the promote routes and publicise walks to encourage walking, cycling and riding. (13)
12. The Greater Manchester Moving Plan is a comprehensive plan with the aim to reduce inactivity and increase participation in physical activity and sport that is aligned to the Greater Manchester Population Health Plan priority themes. (14)

13. The Made to Move report whose first priority is the leading of policy, legislation and systems change to support active lives and ensure that physical activity becomes a central feature in policy and practice relating to planning and transport. (15)
14. Sustrans report, Bike Life 2017 Greater Manchester, recognises that cycling is an essential part of a sustainable and efficient transport network, making Greater Manchester a more attractive and healthy place in which to live and work. (16)

#### 9.2.6. Supporting References for Movement Section

Ref number	Document	Web Link
1	Kirkwells Town Planning	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf</a>
2	WNF03: WNF Progress Report 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf</a>
3	National Institute for Healthcare Excellence. Public Health Guideline PH41. Physical Activity: Walking and Cycling	<a href="https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph41">https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph41</a>
4	Department of health. Start Active. Stay Active 2011	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/216370/dh_128210.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/216370/dh_128210.pdf</a>
5	SMBC Core Strategy	Available by google search which brings up link to old SMBC website: <a href="http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategydpd">http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategydpd</a> Note: Not yet accessible via SMBC's new website
6	SMBC Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (April 2012)	<a href="http://www.stockport.gov.uk/2013/2994/developmentcontrol/planningpolicy/LDF/SPD/susdesconspdpdf">http://www.stockport.gov.uk/2013/2994/developmentcontrol/planningpolicy/LDF/SPD/susdesconspdpdf</a>
7	NPPF	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf</a>
8	Department of Transport. Manual for Streets 2 2010	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets-2">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets-2</a>
9	Peter Brett Associates Movement Study 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Woodford-Movement-Study-Final-02.12.15-lowres-.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Woodford-Movement-Study-Final-02.12.15-lowres-.pdf</a>
10	AECOM Woodford Heritage and Character	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NP-Woodford-HCA-FINAL-LR-160815.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NP-Woodford-HCA-FINAL-LR-160815.pdf</a>

	Assessment. 2016	
11	SMBC Saved UDP Policy	Available by google search which brings up link to old SMBC website: <a href="http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/udppoliciesstillapply">http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/udppoliciesstillapply</a> Note: Not yet accessible via SMBC's new website
12	Woodford ProW. Condition survey. 2017	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Woodford-Footpath-Survey-Report.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Woodford-Footpath-Survey-Report.pdf</a>
		<a href="https://www.stockport.gov.uk/stockport-public-rights-of-way/rights-of-way-improvement-plan">https://www.stockport.gov.uk/stockport-public-rights-of-way/rights-of-way-improvement-plan</a>
13	SMBC Rights of Way Improvement Plan	<a href="http://www.greatersport.co.uk/get-active/greater-manchester-moving">http://www.greatersport.co.uk/get-active/greater-manchester-moving</a>
14	Greater Sport Plan. Greater Manchester Moving plan	<a href="http://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/463/made_to_move.pdf">http://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/463/made_to_move.pdf</a>
15	Greater Manchester's Cycling and Walking Commissioner Made to Move report	file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/Made_to_Move%20(1).pdf
16	Sustrans Bike Life 2017 report	<a href="https://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/file_content_type/bike-life-greater-manchester-2017-report.pdf">https://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/file_content_type/bike-life-greater-manchester-2017-report.pdf</a>

### 9.3. Integration Aspirations

The completion of the whole of the proposed development on the Aerodrome site over the next decade or more will result in a considerable enlargement of our community. It will also result in the creation of new open spaces, amenities and services, and new facilities, including a primary school, playing fields, play spaces and more frequent bus services.

Our community will be larger and our village will change, but the Forum would like to ensure that this has the minimum impact on our lives, which may in other ways be enhanced.

The necessary additional services to support our community from public, private and voluntary sectors may need to be delivered by developing the existing and providing new facilities, both within the Neighbourhood Area and within the adjacent development. Facilities planned to be provided within the new Aerodrome development will play their part.

## Community Feedback

Integrating the new development on the Aerodrome site with the existing village was identified as a key issue arising from earlier consultation in the workshop conducted by Kirkwells Town Planning, who noted in para 51 *'The need to mitigate any of the impacts arising from the Aerodrome Opportunity Site and ensuring there is integration and linkage between the existing Woodford community and the new community that would arise from development at the Aerodrome'*. (1)

An aspiration for integration of the whole village emerged which states:

### Ensure integration and linkage between the existing village and the Aerodrome development to achieve an enhanced, enlarged community

In our 2015 Exhibition to consult on the emerging Vision and Objectives for our Plan, we asked: Do you agree that the Neighbourhood Area should be extended to embrace the new development? What do you think would help to enable a fully integrated, enlarged village? 87% of the responses agreed that the Neighbourhood Area should be extended to embrace the new development, with only 6% against. (2, 3)

The Forum committee believes that there are three key themes which should be addressed in enabling the better integration, both physically and socially, of the existing village and the new development:

- 'Informing and sharing' supported by good communication;
- Ensuring good physical linkages between old and new; and
- Promoting a well-planned, effective interface.

#### 9.3.1. Aspiration 5: Informing

The provision of accessible information about facilities, services and activities throughout the extended village and its communication to new residents will be supported by the Forum.

The existing village supports a range of activities, not least those offered by the Community Centre. The new development will also provide additional activities and services which will be accessible to existing residents – a new school, playgrounds and playing fields and improved bus services. New residents throughout the village should be provided with information about access to services and activities through printed or electronic media. This will also be of value to existing residents.



### 9.3.2. **Aspiration 6: Connecting**

The development of physical infrastructure, which facilitates linkages throughout the extended village, will be encouraged and supported. Creating and making linkages between new and existing parts of the village and their facilities will be advocated and consistent with the Forum's aspirations for safe movement around the village. The integration of the footpath network, with the restoration of historic routes which link beyond the aerodrome site, and the creation and extension of pedestrian and cycling routes through the new development will be encouraged.

Structurally, Woodford has an extended, linear form with no obvious centre. The key route through the village is Chester Road, which extends almost 3 kilometres from the West at the Deanwater Hotel to the East at the border with Poynton. Towards the West at the junction of Church Lane and Old Hall Lane with Chester Road is located the Church and a number of commercial premises: a public house, a restaurant and a car showroom, the latter formerly the site of the village 'smithy'. Towards the East, and between the junctions with Moor Lane and Woodford Road are a series of commercial premises, a supermarket, a row of four retail units and a garden centre of sub-regional scale. It is along this latter length of road that the two connections into the new development are located. The new development will effectively shift the centre of gravity of the village to this general location.

### 9.3.3. **Aspiration 7: Interfacing**

Establishing and maintaining a dialogue with the land owner, developer and local authority and with the community to promote the creation of a masterplan for development at the interface of the old and new villages to support effective integration of the two parts will be encouraged.

The Forum believes that there is an opportunity to provide an enhanced 'centre' of the village at this interface with the new development. This might build on the commercial content of the Approved scheme for the Aerodrome site which includes retail and commercial space, a public house and a care home. The development area might also embrace the former Bodycote site which has a direct frontage to Chester Road and falls within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Forum recommends that this area is considered in its context at the interface between the new development and the existing village and effectively master-planned to create a distinct 'centre' to the village.

Considerations will include improved connections across Chester Road, a reduced speed limit, the proximity to existing bus stops and clear signposting to the Avro Museum [an important local cultural asset].

#### 9.3.4. Supporting References for Integration

Ref number	Document	Web Link
1	Kirkwells Town Planning	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf</a>
2	WNF03: WNF Progress Report 2015	<a href="http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf">http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf</a>

### 9.4. Environment Aspirations

#### 9.4.1. Aspiration 8: Supporting clean air (1-6)

- a) The Community will support the rigorous enforcement of the Clean Air Zone in Woodford, particularly with regard to the burning of any business waste and materials likely to produce smoke that can have long-term damaging effects on health, such as plastics.
- b) The Community will resist the burning of garden waste.
- c) The Community will support initiatives which would reduce levels of air pollution on roads and in homes in Woodford e.g. roadside tree planting.
- d) The Community will resist development proposals which would increase levels of air pollution on roads and in homes in Woodford.
- e) The shift of transport mode from the private car to walking, cycling and the use of public transport will be encouraged, as outlined in the Plan's Movement Aspirations ( 9.2) and will contribute to improved local air quality.

#### 9.4.2. Environment Aspiration: Justification and Evidence

Woodford lies to the east of Manchester Airport and the A34 bypass. These features will result in air pollution from planes and road traffic, particularly as the prevailing wind is westerly. In addition, high levels of traffic on Chester Road, Woodford Road, Wilmslow Road and the A6MARR will result in air pollution in Woodford. The impact of carbon dioxide and nitrous oxides present in traffic fumes on the environment are well documented. In addition, there is recent evidence for the damaging effect on human health of micro-particulates present in traffic fumes, particularly from diesel engines.

Tree planting, particularly with birch trees, has been shown to reduce levels of traffic pollution. Not only do they absorb carbon dioxide, but they also absorb micro particulates, which are present in traffic fumes. Levels of these particulates in houses built close to busy roads have been shown to be reduced by tree planting.

The burning of waste produces smoke which is a danger to public health. This includes short-term effects for those with conditions affecting breathing. More importantly, burning of waste which includes plastics can have potential long-term effects on public health due to carcinogens present in the smoke.

The Woodford Neighbourhood Plan seeks to minimise air pollution in Woodford, in accordance with NPPF and SMBC policies. The Environment Aspiration is supported by:

1. NPPF para 109, which seeks to prevent both new and existing development from contributing to, or being put at unacceptable risk from, unacceptable levels of air pollution. It complies with para 124, which seeks to sustain compliance with and contribute towards EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants. (1)
2. SMBC Core Strategy para 2.75 and Objective 5c, which seek to control air pollution and improve air quality. (2)
3. The Clean Air Act 1993. (3)
4. A study reported by the BBC that roadside trees could reduce levels of air pollution inside buildings alongside roads. Birches were particularly effective in this regard. (4) The Greater Manchester Low Emission Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan (xx) which takes a long-term approach to carbon emissions and air quality, aiming to reduce emissions from transport and encourage sustainable travel including public transport, cycling and walking. (4)
5. There are no laws against having a bonfire, but there are laws for the nuisance they can cause. The Government website notes that you can't get rid of household waste if it will cause pollution or harm people's health. This includes burning it. Your council can issue an 'abatement notice' if a neighbour's bonfire is causing a nuisance. A bonfire must happen frequently to be considered a nuisance. Fines can be up to £5,000. (5)
6. The Greater Manchester Low Emission Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan which takes a long-term approach to carbon emissions and air quality, aiming to reduce emissions from transport and encourage sustainable travel including public transport, cycling and walking. (6)

#### 9.4.3. Supporting references for Environment Aspiration

Ref number	Document	Web Link
1	NPPF	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf</a>
2	SMBC Core Strategy	Available by google search which brings up link to old SMBC website: <a href="http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategyd.pdf">http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategyd.pdf</a> Note: Not yet accessible via SMBC's new website
3	Clean Air Act 1993	<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/11/contents">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1993/11/contents</a>
4	Impact of Roadside Tree Lines on Indoor Concentrations of Traffic-Derived Particulate Matter. B Maher, <i>et al.</i>	<a href="http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es404363m?journalCode=esthag">http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es404363m?journalCode=esthag</a>
5	GOV.UK Garden bonfires: the rules	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/garden-bonfires-rules">https://www.gov.uk/garden-bonfires-rules</a>
6	Transport for Greater Manchester Low Emission Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan	<a href="https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/airquality">https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/airquality</a>

## 10. Glossary

### 1. **Affordable Housing:**

Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

### 2. **Back-land development:** Development of 'landlocked' sites behind existing buildings, such as rear gardens and private open space, usually within predominantly residential areas. Such sites often have no street frontages.

[https://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory\\_record/119/back-land\\_development](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory_record/119/back-land_development)

### 3. **Biodiversity:** The variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable.

### 4. **Gold Standard:** Score 45 or above with a minimum of 23 gold scores on a checklist compiled by SMBC to help developers and building professionals working in Stockport to evaluate the sustainability of their projects. It includes 8 topics covering location and transport, site layout and building design, materials, waste, energy, water, landscape and biodiversity and health and well-being. Details can be found on this link: <http://www.stockport.gov.uk/2013/2994/developmentcontrol/planningpolicy/LDF/SPD/susdesandcons3sustainabilitychecklist>

### 5. **Habitat of High Distinctiveness:** An area of high ecological value. Habitat of Principal Importance as defined in section 41 of the NERC Act. A site of crucial importance for priority species. (CWT definition)

### 6. **Habitat of Medium Distinctiveness:** An area of medium ecological value. Semi-natural habitats and habitats with potential to be restored to

### 7. **Habitat of Principal Importance** (UKABP Priority Habitats): These are all the habitats in England that were identified as requiring action in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) and continue to be regarded as conservation priorities in the subsequent UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. Fifty-six habitats of principal importance are included on the S41 list. These are all the habitats in England that were identified as requiring action in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) and continue to be regarded as conservation priorities in the subsequent UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.

Homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes. (NPPF)

8. **Infill:** The development of a relatively small gap between existing buildings.  
([https://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory\\_record/305/infill\\_development](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory_record/305/infill_development))  
Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.
9. **Low carbon:** Reduced emission of carbon dioxide (which contributes to climate change) from energy use for heating, domestic hot water, lighting and household appliances.
10. **Open space:** All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity. (NPPF)  
Priority quality. Includes field ponds. (CWT definition)
11. **Rural exception sites:** Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding. (NPPF)  
Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency. Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
12. **Species of Principal Importance (UKBAP Priority Species):** There are 943 species of principal importance included on the S41 list. These are the species found in England which were identified as requiring action under the UK BAP and which continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.
13. **Sub-regional scale:** a sub region is a subdivision of a region. A 'region' in planning terms can be administrative or at least partially functional, and is likely to include a network of settlements and character areas.



14. **Sustainable Development:** Development which meets the needs of the present generation without harming the ability of future generations to meet their needs; to do this, such development limits damage to the environment, and keeps the consumption of natural resources to levels manageable in the long term. (SMBC)
15. **Sustainable transport:** Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport. (NPPF)
16. **The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act:** This Act came into force on 1st Oct 2006. Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The list has been drawn up in consultation with Natural England, as required by the Act. The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605093420/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>
17. **UKABP Priority Species and Habitats:** UK BAP priority species and habitats were those that were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). The original lists of UK BAP priority species and habitats were created between 1995 and 1999, and were subsequently updated in 2007, following a 2-year review of UK BAP processes and priorities, which included a review of the UK priority species and habitats lists. <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5705>
18. **Utility cycling:** Any cycling done simply as a means of transport rather than as a sport or leisure activity.
19. **Wildlife Corridor:** A wildlife corridor is a link of wildlife habitat, generally native vegetation, which joins two or more larger areas of similar wildlife habitat. Corridors are critical for the maintenance of ecological processes, including allowing for the movement of animals and the continuation of viable populations. They enable species to move between areas to feed, disperse, migrate or reproduce. Connectivity need not just come from linear, continuous habitats; a number of small sites may act as 'stepping stones' across which certain species can move between core areas.
20. **Zero carbon:** Zero net emission of carbon dioxide from energy use for heating, domestic hot water, lighting and household appliances.

Further definitions of planning terms can be found on the following links: [https://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory/4/a\\_to\\_z/B](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory/4/a_to_z/B)  
<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/policy/achieving-sustainable-development/annex-2-glossary/>

## 11. Appendix

**Biodiversity data** from WNF Environment and Landscape Study (1), Cheshire Wildlife Trust report (2) and National Biodiversity Network Atlas (3)

**Table of bat species, which are all UKBAP Priority Species (4), sighted in Woodford Neighbourhood Area**

Pipistrelle
Soprano Pipistrelle
Noctule
Brown Long Eared

**Table of dragonflies and damselflies sighted in Woodford Neighbourhood Area**

Azure Damsel
Blue Tailed Damsel
Brown Aeshna
Common Darter
Brown Bodied Chaser
Four Spotted Chaser

**Table of native and naturalised woody plant species found in hedgerows and as specimen trees in Woodford Neighbourhood Area**

Alder	Damson	Plum
Ash	Dogwood	Poplar
Aspen	Elder	Rowan
Beech	Hawthorn	Scots Pine
Birch	Hazel	Spindle
Black Poplar	Holly	Sycamore
Blackthorn	Hornbeam	Whitebeam
Cherry	Lime	Willow (several species)
Chestnut	Maple	Yew
Crab Apple	Oak (several species)	Ivy

**Table of bird sightings in Woodford Neighbourhood Area**

Common Name	BOCC4 Listing	Protected status		Common Name	BOCC4 Listing	Protected status		Common Name	BOCC4 Listing	Protected status
Barn Owl		P		Grey Heron				Raven		
Blackcap				Grey Wagtail				Redshank		
Blackbird				Greylag Goose				Redstart		
Black-Headed Gull				Herring Gull				Redwing		P
Blue Tit				Hobby				Reed Bunting		
Brambling		P		House Sparrow				Robin		
Bullfinch				House Martin				Rook		
Buzzard				Jackdaw				Sand Martin		
Canada Goose				Jay				Shelduck		
Chaffinch				Kestrel				Siskin		
Chiffchaff				Kingfisher		P		Skylark		
Coal Tit				Lapwing		P		Snipe		
Collard Dove				Lesser Black-backed Gull				Song Thrush		
Common Gull				Lesser Redpoll				Sparrowhawk		
Cormorant				Linnet				Spotted Flycatcher		
Coot				Little Grebe				Starling		
Crow				Little Owl		P		Stock Dove		
Dab Chick				Little Ringed Plover				Stonechat		
Curlew				Long Tailed Tit				Swallow		
Dunlin				Magpie				Swift		
Duncock				Mallard				Tawny Owl		
Fieldfare		P		Meadow Pipit				Teal		
Goldcrest				Mistle Thrush				Tree Creeper		
Golden Plover				Moorhen				Tree Sparrow		
Goldfinch				Mute Swan				Waxwing		
Great Crested Grebe				Nuthatch				Wheatear		
Great Spotted Woodpecker				Oystercatcher				Whinchat		
Great Tit				Partridge (grey)				Whitethroat		
Green Plover				Peregrine		P		Wigeon		
Green Sandpiper				Pheasant				Willow Warbler		
Green Woodpecker				Pied Wagtail				Wood Pigeon		
Greenfinch				Pink Footed Goose				Wren		
Greenshank		P		Pintail				Yellow Wagtail		

Red and amber shading = Birds of Conservation Concern (5); P = Protected Species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (6)

### **Additional species reported in the Woodford Neighbourhood Area**

Twenty six species of bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) are listed by the National Biodiversity Network Atlas. (3)

Wild flowering plants found during the WNF landscape and environment surveys include English bluebell, red campion, white campion, ragged robin, stitchwort, foxglove, speedwell, daisy, creeping buttercup, meadow buttercup, herb robert, dandelion, angelica, lesser hogweed, figwort, marsh woundwort, snakes head fritillary, celandine, ladies smock, thistle, hedge parsley, yellow flag iris, bindweed, mallow, rosebay willow herb, lesser willow herb, greater willow herb, red shank, corn camomile, marsh marigold. (1)

Invertebrate sightings include several species of bee, including honey bee, red-tailed bumble bee, white-tailed bumble bee; butterflies, including peacock, tortoiseshell, red admiral, painted lady, meadow brown, large white, small white, common blue, comma; and moths, including white ermine, elephant hawk moth, burnet.

Amphibians found include frog, common toad, smooth newt, greater crested newt. (1, 2)

Ten species of fish are listed by the National Biodiversity Network Atlas. (3)

Mammals reported by CWT and local residents include brown hare, badger, fox, rabbit, rat, mole, mouse, shrew and stoat. (1, 2)

### **Supporting References for Appendix**

1. WNF04: WNF Landscape and Environment studies 2015 -2017. [http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Woodford-Landscape-and-Environment-Report-Part-1-April-2018\\_opt.pdf](http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Woodford-Landscape-and-Environment-Report-Part-1-April-2018_opt.pdf)
2. Cheshire Wildlife Trust Protecting and Enhancing Woodford's Natural Environment Report. <http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/CWT-report-for-WNF-Protecting-and-Enhancing-Woodfords-Natural-Environment-Jan-2018.pdf>
3. National Biodiversity Network Atlas. <https://nbnatlas.org/>
4. UK Biodiversity Action Plan – Priority Species. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605093420/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>
5. Birds of Conservation Concern 4. JNCC, RSPB, BTO. [http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/BoCC\\_tcm9-217852.pdf](http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/BoCC_tcm9-217852.pdf)
6. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, SCHEDULE 1 Birds Protected by Special Penalties. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/1>