

Woodford Village Aspirations

September
2018



Woodford
Stockport

Woodford Village Aspirations

Post Consultation Draft

Prepared by Woodford Neighbourhood Forum, September 2018

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1. Introduction

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 July 2018, membership of the Forum stands at 76.

In 2014, Woodford Neighbourhood Forum embarked on the consultation and development of the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan. From that process a number of aspirations emerged, which are not direct planning policy issues, but which are important to the community. These aspirations are the basis of this document which is separate from, but should be read as a supplement to, the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan.

An introduction to Woodford, its history, geology and present form can be found in the Introduction to the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan.

For the purposes of this document, Woodford Village refers to the designated Woodford Neighbourhood Area (as shown in the map in the Appendix).

2.1. Objectives

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 Woodford Village Aspirations

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 Neighbourhood Area and the Aerodrome development to achieve an enhanced, enlarged community.

Environment:

Supporting clean air

2.2. Summary of Aspirations

Aspiration	Aims
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.

2.3. 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

2.3.1. Aspiration 1: Walking provision

The Community will work with SMBC, Cheshire East and developers (who will be expected to contribute financially to enable this provision) to create a safe and secure network of walking routes around and within the Neighbourhood Area 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.

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.

2.3.3. Aspiration 3: Public transport provision

The Community will work with SMBC, 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.

2.3.4. Aspiration 4: Traffic calming

The Community will work with SMBC, the LHA, TfGM, 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.

2.3.5. 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)

2.3.6. Movement section supporting references

Ref number	Document	Web Link
1	Kirkwells Town Planning	http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Woodford-Questionnaire-Results.pdf
2	WNF03: WNF Progress Report 2015	http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Annual-Progress-Report-2015-2-Dec-15.pdf
3	National Institute for Healthcare Excellence. Public Health Guideline PH41. Physical Activity: Walking and Cycling	https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph41

4	Department of health. Start Active. Stay Active 2011	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/216370/dh_128210.pdf
5	SMBC Core Strategy	Available by google search which brings up link to old SMBC website: http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/ldfcorestrategydpd Note: Not yet accessible via SMBC's new website
6	SMBC Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (April 2012)	http://www.stockport.gov.uk/2013/2994/developmentcontrol/planningpolicy/LDF/SPD/susdesconspdpdf
7	NPPF	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf
8	Department of Transport. Manual for Streets 2 2010	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets-2
9	Peter Brett Associates Movement Study 2015	http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Woodford-Movement-Study-Final-02.12.15-lowres-.pdf
10	AECOM Woodford Heritage and Character Assessment. 2016	http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NP-Woodford-HCA-FINAL-LR-160815.pdf
11	SMBC Saved UDP Policy	Available by google search which brings up link to old SMBC website: http://old.stockport.gov.uk/pdf/planningpolicy/LDF/udppolicieshatstillapply Note: Not yet accessible via SMBC's new website
12	Woodford ProW. Condition survey. 2017	http://woodfordnf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Woodford-Footpath-Survey-Report.pdf
		https://www.stockport.gov.uk/stockport-public-rights-of-way/rights-of-way-improvement-plan
13	SMBC Rights of Way Improvement Plan	http://www.greatersport.co.uk/get-active/greater-manchester-moving
14	Greater Sport Plan. Greater Manchester Moving plan	http://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/463/made_to_move.pdf
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	https://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/file_content_type/bike-life-greater-manchester-2017-report.pdf

2.4. 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.

2.4.1. 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 Neighbourhood Area 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.

2.4.2. 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 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.

2.4.3. Aspiration 7: Interfacing

Establishing and maintaining a dialogue with the land owner, developer and local authority and with the community to support effective integration of the Neighbourhood Area and the new development on the Aerodrome site 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. 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].

2.4.4.. Supporting References for Integration

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

2.5. Environment Aspirations

2.5.1. 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 and will contribute to improved local air quality.

2.5.2. 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)

2.5.3. Supporting references for Environment Aspiration

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

2. Glossary

- 1. 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)
- 2. Utility cycling:** Any cycling done simply as a means of transport rather than as a sport or leisure activity.

3. Appendix

Map showing Woodford Neighbourhood Area (shaded)

