



Woodford Neighbourhood Forum

c/o Woodford Community Centre, Chester Road, Woodford, Stockport, Cheshire, SK7 1PS

Email: woodfordneighbourhood@gmail.com

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

Reference Number: 19/0623M

Type Of Application: OUTLINE PLANNING

Location: Land East of the A34 and South of A555, Handforth, Cheshire

Case Officer: Adrian Crowther

1. Context

Woodford Neighbourhood Area lies immediately adjacent to the east of the application site and is almost entirely washed over by part of the Greater Manchester Green Belt designated in 1984. Woodford Neighbourhood Plan 2019 includes policies which seek to protect the residential amenity, rural character, green spaces, biodiversity and ecology of the Woodford Neighbourhood Area. The Handforth Garden Village development will have a substantial impact on the Neighbourhood Area and its residents due to close proximity, loss of green space, loss of wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors, which are contiguous with those in the Woodford Neighbourhood Area. Therefore, the Woodford Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee wishes to comment on this planning application.

2. Policy Context

We appreciate that the policies in neighbourhood plans for neighbouring communities do not have a direct bearing on this application. However, Woodford and Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plans should perhaps be included in the Planning Statement under Other Background Documents, in order to provide the wider context.

We note that the Planning Statement refers to GMSF as a plan under development which currently carries little weight. This name has now been removed and this should be updated to refer to proposals to develop “Places for Everyone” as a joint plan for nine of the Manchester boroughs with the Stockport Local Plan being developed separately by Stockport Council.

3. Comments and Concerns

3.1. We welcome the proposal for a green buffer around the south and east perimeter of the site and request that it includes tree native species, some coniferous tree species, such as Scots Pine and species-rich native hedgerows. This is of high importance to Woodford residents for the following reasons:

- **Residential Amenity and Rural Character:** It will protect the residential amenity and rural character of the adjacent countryside in Woodford.
- **Importance of Nature:** It will retain a small element of the natural wilderness character of the site currently very much enjoyed by walkers from the boroughs of Stockport and Cheshire. We are increasingly aware of the physical and mental benefits of exposure to nature, which have been highlighted by the Covid pandemic.

- **Wildlife Habitats and Corridors:** The site is currently part of an area of countryside spanning the boundary of Woodford and Handforth, which provides habitats and green corridors for wildlife. Ponds, trees and hedgerows support mammal, bird, reptile and insect populations on both sides of the border. Species observed by residents include bats, owls, buzzards, crested newts and at least eight different species of dragon fly. Ideally the green corridor should connect with Hall Wood adjacent to the River Dean. Ecological mitigation measures off site in Wilmslow and Styal will not compensate for the loss of continuity of countryside and green corridors locally, so it will be important to do as much as possible on site.
 - **Reduction of light, noise and air pollution:** The proposal will introduce light, noise and air pollution into the Woodford Neighbourhood Area. This will have a negative impact on wildlife and residential amenity. A wide border of trees, which includes evergreen species, will help to mitigate those negative pollution impacts. Evergreens will provide screening, even in the winter months, and the inclusion of birch trees would help to absorb particulate traffic pollution.
 - **Climate Change Mitigation:** A large number of existing trees will have to be felled to make way for this development. This will have a negative impact on carbon dioxide absorption. New tree planting will be important to mitigate this negative impact. Scientists now have evidence that trees have to be more than a decade old before they produce a net reduction in carbon dioxide, so it will be important to plant new trees as soon as possible to set them on their way towards producing a positive benefit in the future.
- 3.2. Our members are local residents who are acutely aware of local water logging and surface flooding in wet weather, both on site and in the local area. Significant steps will be needed to improve drainage and avoid run off into to local roads and streams.
 - 3.3. As locals, we are also acutely aware of the problems of traffic congestion on local roads, especially the A34. Significant mitigation measures will be required in order to minimise this, but it is hard to see how that will be possible in built up areas, such as at the Gatley/A34 junction traffic lights.
 - 3.4. Many of our residents are members of Total Fitness and we request that the development respects and supports that business enterprise.
 - 3.5. We note the discovery of a low level of radiation, assumed to be contamination from luminous aircraft parts dating back to when parts of the site were used as an RAF base. We request that any danger to the public is avoided and that all appropriate measures are taken to mitigate any local impacts.
 - 3.6. We raised concerns about the precise location of the boundary of the Handforth Garden Village in a letter dated 21September 2020, which is appended. We did not receive a response.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of Woodford Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee



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To:

Adrian Crowther
Case Officer
Cheshire East Council

21 September 2020

Dear Mr Crowther,

Re: North Cheshire Garden Village (Reference Number 19/0623M)

We are seeking clarification on the following issues:

1. The boundary of the NCGV in relation to Blossoms Lane

Maps of NCGV in various documents show variations in where the boundary is drawn with respect to Blossoms Lane (Handforth branch), as shown in the document appended.

Whether Blossoms Lane is inside or outside of the NCGV will make a huge difference to residents along the lane and is important to the residents of Woodford as a whole. Therefore, we should be grateful if you could confirm that Blossoms Lane (Handforth section) is not within the boundary of the North Cheshire Garden Village.

2. Areas of land to be released from Green Belt

We note that some maps of the NCGV are at variance with the adopted Local Plan Strategy. Additional areas are drawn within the boundary of the NCGV at Handforth Dean, A34 bypass, Hall Wood, eastern boundary with Woodford and Blossoms Lane in the following:

- Map shown in Design Access and Supporting Statement Volume 1,2 and 3 & ES Contents associated with the Planning Application
- Map shown in CEC Cabinet Meeting Agenda, 7th July

We should be grateful if you could clarify the Green Belt status of these additional areas, which are shaded in yellow in the appended document.

Yours sincerely,

Honorary Secretary
Woodford Neighbourhood Forum

Boundary of North Cheshire Garden Village

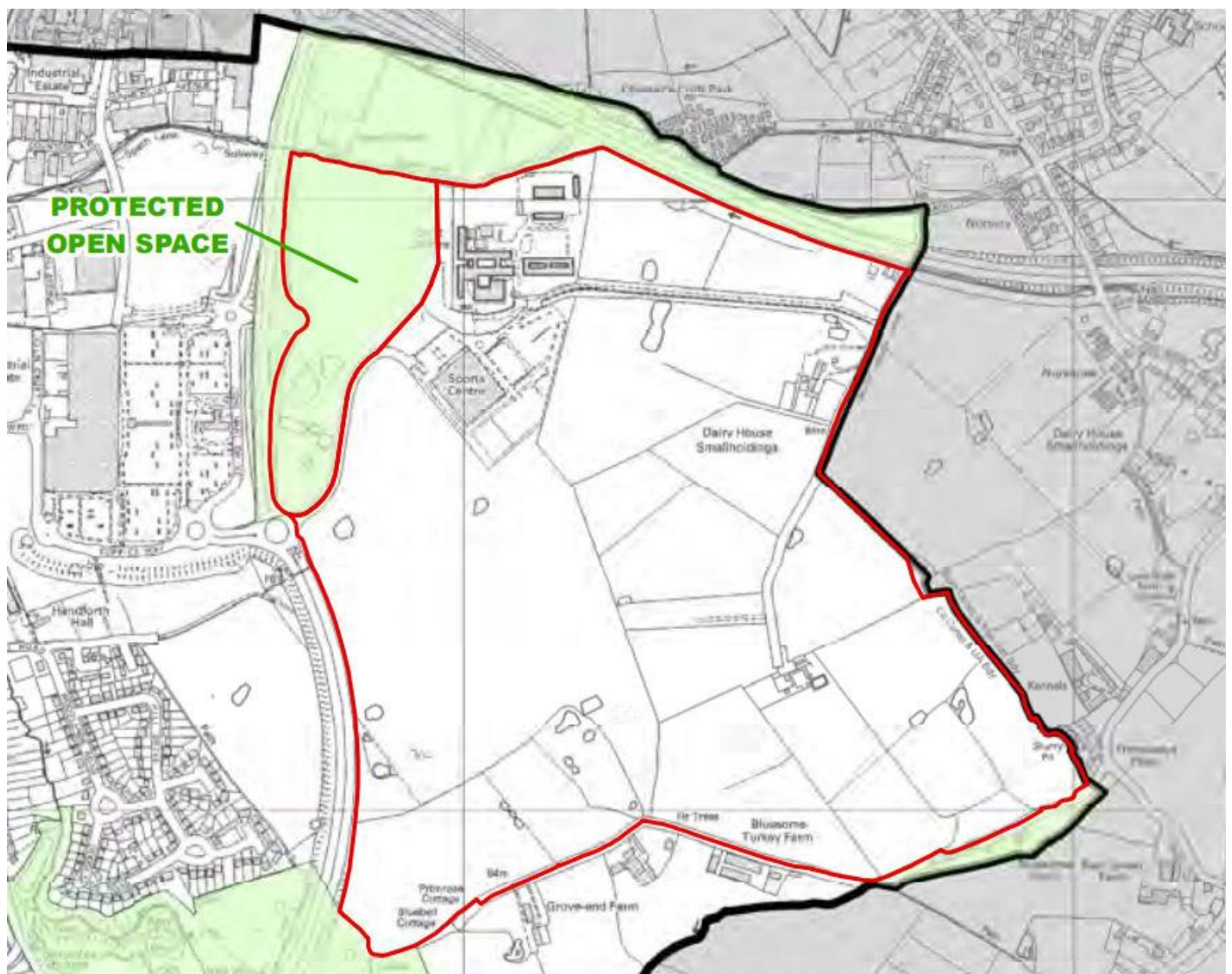
Maps of NCGV in various documents show differences in where the boundary is drawn. We wish to seek clarification.

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CEC Local Plan Strategy LPS33 (page 294)

Map of North Cheshire Garden Village (NCGV)



Engine of the North Exhibition Boards January 2019

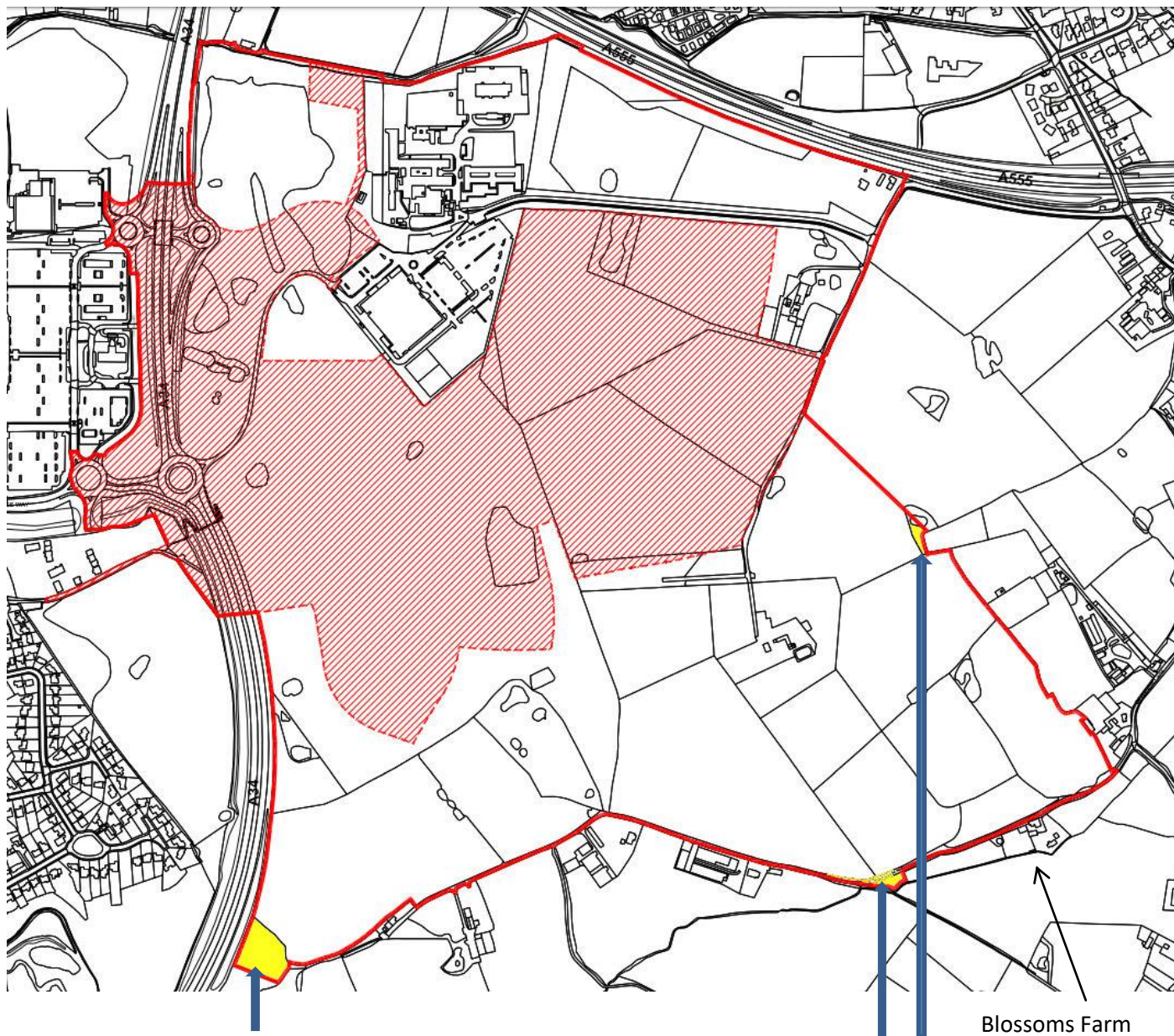


Close up of boundary with Blossoms Lane and Hall Wood in the south



NCGV Planning Application

Map shown in Design Access and Supporting Statement Volume 1,2 and 3 &ES Contents



Additional areas within boundary compared with LP Strategy shaded in yellow and indicated with arrows.

Additional areas are shown as lying within the boundary of the NCGV compared with LP Strategy, at Handforth Dean, A34 bypass, Hall Wood, eastern boundary with Woodford and Blossoms Lane (the latter three involve Green Belt land and are shown in yellow above). The boundary has been drawn along the route of Blossoms Lane, so it is not possible to ascertain whether it is outside of the NCGV.

