



# Woodford Neighbourhood Forum

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Planning Services  
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council  
Town Hall, Edward Street  
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SK1 3XE

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To: Planning Officer

**Reference:** DC/091053

**Proposal:** Construction of single-storey side extension, single-storey link extension between house and annex and single-storey detached garage

**Location:** Laneside, Blossoms Lane, Woodford, Stockport, SK7 1RE

## 1. General comments

- i. The planning history for this site reveals that a series of planning applications have been submitted over many years. When granted permission, they were not actioned but each was subsequently followed by an amended application for an increased amount of development, until the existing dwelling plus annex was granted permission in 2012. This seems to represent gradually escalating aspirations for a much larger development than the original farmhouse.
- ii. Some members of the forum committee are longstanding Woodford residents and can recall that in the 1980s the original Laneside farmhouse was much smaller in volume and height than the existing dwelling. We question whether the volume increase resulting from the proposals should be calculated in comparison to this original dwelling, rather than in comparison with the existing dwelling, as has been presented in the Planning Statement?
- iii. The 2006 Decision Notice on amended plans ref no. DC/021549, noted the volume increase compared with the original dwelling. The notice includes several conditions including this one:

*“5. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning ( General Permitted Development ) Order 1995 ( or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order ) no development falling within classes A to D of Part I of Schedule 2 of the Order shall be carried out.*

*Reason 1. Since the total of the volumetric content of the replacement dwelling will be increased over and above that of the existing dwelling, through the implementation of this permission and in order that any proposals for future extensions/alterations can be assessed in the context of policies relating to the Green Belt.*

*Reason 2. In order to safeguard the character and the visual amenities of the Green Belt.*

- iv. Blossoms Lane is a very narrow lane in Green Belt on the periphery of the village with low density housing and a rural character. This character is sensitive to change. Apart from the existing dwelling at Laneside, which is 2.5 stories high,

dwellings on the lane have a low roof line, reducing the impact on the Green Belt. See photographs and satellite images in section 6.

- v. Traffic safety is an issue in this location in terms of access to dwellings and number of vehicle trips. This was noted in 1991 in a Decision Notice for application no 52021, for business use of a farm building at Laneside. Reasons for refusal included:

*“Reason 1*

*The proposed development is likely to generate additional traffic along Blossoms Lane, a very narrow single track road without footways, to the detriment of road safety. Furthermore visibility at the proposed access to the site from Blossoms Lane is severely restricted and its intensification of use would also, therefore, be detrimental to road safety.”*

- vi. The Planning Statement does not refer to the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan. Relevant policies are referred to below.

## **2. Policies relevant to the application**

We believe that planning policies relevant to this application include:

- i. NPPF 2021
- ii. Stockport Development Plan:
  - o Woodford Neighbourhood Plan 2019
  - o Saved UDP 2011
  - o Core Strategy 2011

## **3. Woodford Neighbourhood Plan**

We believe that the following policies are relevant:

DEV3: Extensions to Existing Dwellings

DEV4: Design of New Development

ENV3: Protecting Woodford’s Natural Features

ENV4: Supporting Biodiversity

### **i. DEV3: Extensions to existing dwellings**

*“Residential extensions should be in keeping with the host property and its surroundings. Development that would reduce an existing gap between properties should not create an incongruous “terracing” effect.”*

### **Assessment**

Further development, including an orangery, link between the house and the annex and a garage along the street line in this location will not be in keeping with the surrounding.

### **ii. DEV4: Design of new development**

*“All new development in Woodford Neighbourhood Area should achieve a high standard of design. New residential development proposals should demonstrate how they respect and respond to the Neighbourhood Area’s rural character, to its ecology and to its landscape. Where appropriate and viable, the development of sustainable drainage systems, the retention and enhancement of landscape, wildlife and ecological networks and the achievement of high environmental and energy standards will be supported.”*

### **Assessment**

The site is in a sensitive rural location in Woodford with fields to the rear and side. Should permission be considered, then it would be important to determine how the proposal will enhance the landscape, wildlife and ecological networks.

We have queries about the quality of the design, including access to the garage.

#### **iii. ENV3: Protecting Woodford's natural features**

*"The protection and/or enhancement of Woodford's natural features, including those identified in the Table below, will be supported."*

### **Assessment**

The site is bordered to the north east by a native hedgerow and footpath 28CG. This natural feature and local amenity should not be impaired by development.

#### **iv. ENV4: Supporting biodiversity**

*"The conservation, restoration and enhancement of biodiversity, including that found in open spaces, trees and hedgerows, in order to promote and support wildlife and other forms of biodiversity will be supported. Development should, where viable and deliverable, achieve net gains in biodiversity."*

### **Assessment**

We welcome the introduction of a pond at the periphery of the site associated with a previous application. Any further development should be associated with further enhancements in biodiversity.

#### **4. Stockport Saved UDP 2011**

We leave it to the council planning officer's expertise to assess the proposal against these policies, but we note that the following may be relevant:

#### **TD2.2 Quiet Lanes**

*"Developments and highway improvements that have an impact upon rural roads, which would detract from their character and their value as Quiet Lanes, will only be permitted where they can be justified on safety grounds. Any development that would result in a significant increase in traffic or conflict between different users of these lanes will not be permitted."*

The use of Blossoms Lane for walking, cycling and equestrian activities by residents from Woodford and the surrounding areas has increased in recent years. It provides an important source of outdoor recreation and access to nature. These users are vulnerable to traffic.

**LCR1.1 Landscape Character Areas**, which requires that development in the countryside should not adversely affect the landscape quality of the area.

#### **5. NPPF 2021**

The proposal does not comply with Section 13, including the following paragraphs:

**Paragraph 137** which emphasises the great importance the Government attached to Green Belts. *“The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.”*

**Paragraph 147**, which seeks to prevent harm to the Green Belt.

#### Assessment

The proposal would harm the openness of the Green Belt by creating increased development along the street by the addition of an orangery, link between the house and the annex and a garage.

**Paragraph 148**, which advises Planning Authorities to give substantial weight to any harm caused to the Green Belt and notes that special circumstances only exist where any harm is outweighed by other circumstances.

#### Assessment

Significant weight should be given to the harm caused to the Green Belt, which we believe is not outweighed by exceptional circumstances.

## 6. Photographs

### Character of Blossoms Lane



Fig 1: Blossoms Lane south of the site



Fig 2: Traffic hazard due to soft verges and deep ditches



Fig 4: Walkers on Blossoms Lane south of the site



Fig 5: Vulnerable users north of the site



Fig 6 and 7: Satellite images of Laneside Blossoms Lane

Footnote: There are two dwellings on Blossoms Lane where the name of Laneside is used. One is the site of this proposal. The other is The Lodge on Blossoms Lane, which is listed as Laneside Farmhouse by Historic England:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1241493>

Searching the SMBC website for Laneside Farm produces results for The Lodge as well as the dwelling in the current proposal.

Yours sincerely,

*E.M. Frearson*

Evelyn Frearson On behalf of Woodford Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee