



Woodford Neighbourhood Forum

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

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To Planning Officer

Reference: DC/094762

Proposal: Erection of flag pole and flag. Height of the pole 6.2m. Flag 1.7m in length.

Location: 1 Moor Lane, Woodford, Stockport, SK7 1PW

1. General comments

- As with the previous application DC/090425, we note that on the planning application form, the applicant has still answered “No” to the question “Have you consulted your neighbours or local community?” As we stated in our response to DC/090425, this is surprising given that the flagpole has caused concern in the past. It would seem an important courtesy to consult the neighbours and community about this proposal.
- We note the height has been amended from 8 m to 6.2 m in the current application and the position has been changed to be further towards the front of the curtilage and close to trees.
- We note the comments on the application form:
Paula's latest comment:
“I do consider these to be improvements to the previous refusal. Obviously, any new application would be subject to public consultation and an assessment against the relevant local and national planning policies. As I am sure you can appreciate there are no guarantees on receiving an approval. I will place our correspondence on the previous file for whoever picks the app up next.”
- The proposed flagpole is conspicuous and not in keeping with the local character:
 - The flagpole is black.
 - It is 30 cm in diameter, which is substantial.
 - The top section is a 1.25 m gold finial, which would be highly visible from a distance and difficult to camouflage behind tree foliage.
 - The proposed flag is black with gold text
- A key consideration in this application is the visibility of the flagpole and the flag to neighbours and the community. This should be carefully assessed. The amended proposal may still be visible for the following reasons:

- At a height of 6.25 m it may still be visible to neighbours, particularly from first floor windows. The new position close to trees will provide some screening. However, it needs to be assessed whether they are of sufficient height to screen the top of the flagpole.
 - There are tall conifers to the south and west of the proposed site which are evergreen, but lower deciduous trees to the east of the site lose their leaves in winter and would provide less effective screening, especially in the winter.
 - If any of the trees were lost in the future, this would remove some of the screening.
 - It may be visible from the corner of Moor Lane and Chester Road, and from the opposite side of Chester Road at the junction. Please see images in section 6 below. Figure 5 shows the flagpole with flags flying in October 2021 prior to a retrospective application for planning permission for a flagpole 11.1 m high plus a 0.8 m finial. The site was similar to the site now proposed, so this photograph may aid assessment of the visibility of the proposed 6.25 m flagpole.
- We welcome the planning officer's very thorough assessment of the previous application against the relevant planning policies and the decision for refusal.
 - As it is not in keeping with the local character, we believe that if any part of the flagpole, including the conspicuous gold top, and the proposed flag, would be visible to any members of the community, then the application should be refused on similar grounds to the previous application.

2. Policies relevant to the application

We believe that planning policies relevant to this application include:

- i. NPPF 2024
- ii. Stockport Development Plan:
 - Woodford Neighbourhood Plan 2019
 - Saved UDP 2011
 - Core Strategy 2011

3. Woodford Neighbourhood Plan

We believe that the following policies are relevant:

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

We feel that the proposal is not in keeping with the Woodford village character or the local street scene.

ENV1: Respecting views and vistas

Development should respect local character. In doing so, it should recognise and take into account the importance of the views and vistas listed in the Table and indicated on the Map below.

Assessment

We feel that, if it is visible to the local community, the proposal is not in keeping with the Woodford village character or the local street scene.

We leave it to the planning officer's expertise, to assess the proposal against the NPPF, Stockport Core Strategy and Stockport UDP, but believe that policies cited in the officer's Delegated Report for DC/090425 apply again to this current application.

As with the previous application, we note that the following may be particularly relevant:

4. Stockport Core Strategy

Policy SIE1 advises of the need to provide, maintain and where suitable, enhance the levels of privacy and amenity for neighbouring residents.

5. NPPF December 2024

Section 12, Paragraph 135

135. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and

disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Assessment

We leave interpretation to the planning officer's expertise, but we believe that the proposal may contravene paragraphs b), c), d) and f).

6. Images

Fig 1: Applicant's 3-D drawing annotated to show types of trees and potential sight lines

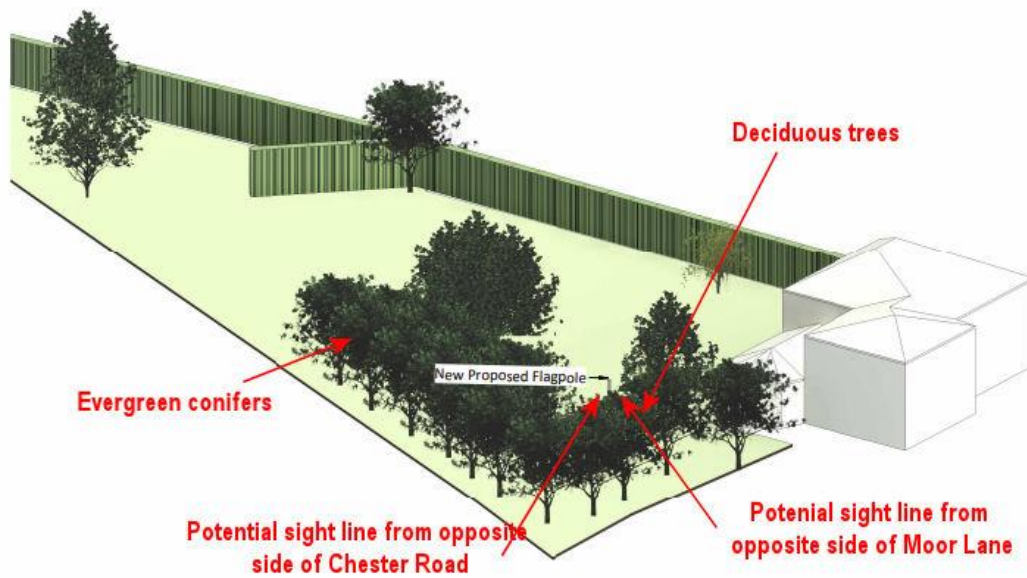


Fig 2: Satellite image of the location and potential visibility of the flagpole

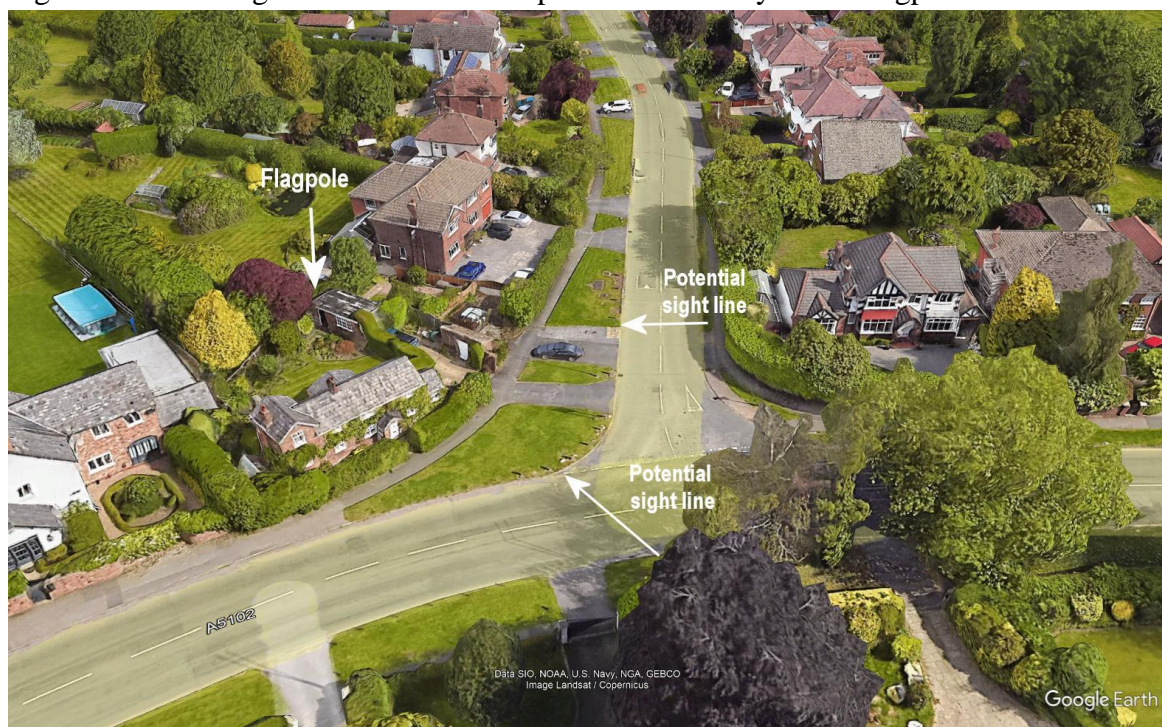


Fig 3: Photograph of the site from Moor Lane near junction with Chester Road



Fig 4: Photograph of the site from the opposite side of Chester Road



Fig 5: 11. 1 m flag pole with flags sited in similar location in October 2021 prior to a retrospective application for planning permission



Yours sincerely,

Evelyn Frearson On behalf of Woodford Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee