



# Woodford Neighbourhood Forum

c/o Woodford Community Centre, Chester Road, Woodford, Stockport, Cheshire, SK7 1PS  
Email: [woodfordneighbourhood@gmail.com](mailto:woodfordneighbourhood@gmail.com) Web: <http://woodfordnf.co.uk>

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

24 February 2026

To: Marcus Shingler

**Reference:** DC/097965

**Proposal:** Permission in principle for up to 4 residential units - use class C3

**Location:** Land Adjacent To Green Hedges Church Lane Woodford Stockport SK7 1PQ

## 1. Comments and Concerns

We were not notified about this application, although it is in the Woodford Neighbourhood Area. We noticed it on the planning portal and wish to make the following comments.

### a) Site Location

- Members of the forum committee are long-standing Woodford residents who know the site well.
- It is in a peripheral location in Woodford, not close to the limited amenities in the centre of the village as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Satellite image showing peripheral location of site of DC/097965 in Woodford**



- The site is not in an accessible location.

- The nearest shop is Budgens, which is 1.4 k away on Chester Road opposite Woodford Garden Village.
- Woodford is not well served with public transport, with just one bus route through the village which runs hourly and goes to Manchester but not Stockport. The nearest bus stop to the site via tarmacked pavements is 1.2 k away on Chester Road. A bus stop on Woodford Road is 860 m away via public right of way 16CG, which can be muddy in wet weather. The nearest railway station is 1.8 k away in Bramhall.

#### b) Rural setting of the site

- The site is on the west side of Church Lane, which is a narrow country lane with Quiet Lane status. Sections of the road near the site are too narrow for cars to pass in opposite directions without pulling to the side. There are no pavements or footways adjacent to the road in many places.
- This part of Woodford has a rural feel, bounded by fields and low density housing.
- It is frequently used by walkers, joggers, cyclists and horse riders, so highway safety is particularly important here. See Figure 3.
- Stockport planning policies do not encourage development on Quiet Lanes.
- The west side of Church Lane has particularly sparse housing with just four houses along a 500 m stretch of the lane to the junction with Blossoms Lane, namely Green Hedges, a site with planning permission for one dwelling (DC/092296), Long Acre and Pear Tree Cottage. See figures 2 and 4.

**Figure 2: Satellite image showing location of site of DC/097965 on Church Lane**



**Figure 3: Vulnerable road users in Church Lane near the site**



**c) Planning history**

- The application form from Urban Imprint Limited on behalf of Abode Property Developments Limited inaccurately states:  
*“Site is a flat field currently used for the keeping of horses that fronts Church Lane (south). To the north-east it abuts the property of Green hedges, to the south-west the site boundary abuts Longacre.”*

We note that the site does not abut Green Hedges, as can be seen in figures 4 and 5, and there is no longer access to the field for keeping horses because the only access to the field is now not available because it is part of the new property and under different ownership.

**Figure 4: Satellite image showing location of site of DC/097965 relative to other applications and Green Hedges**

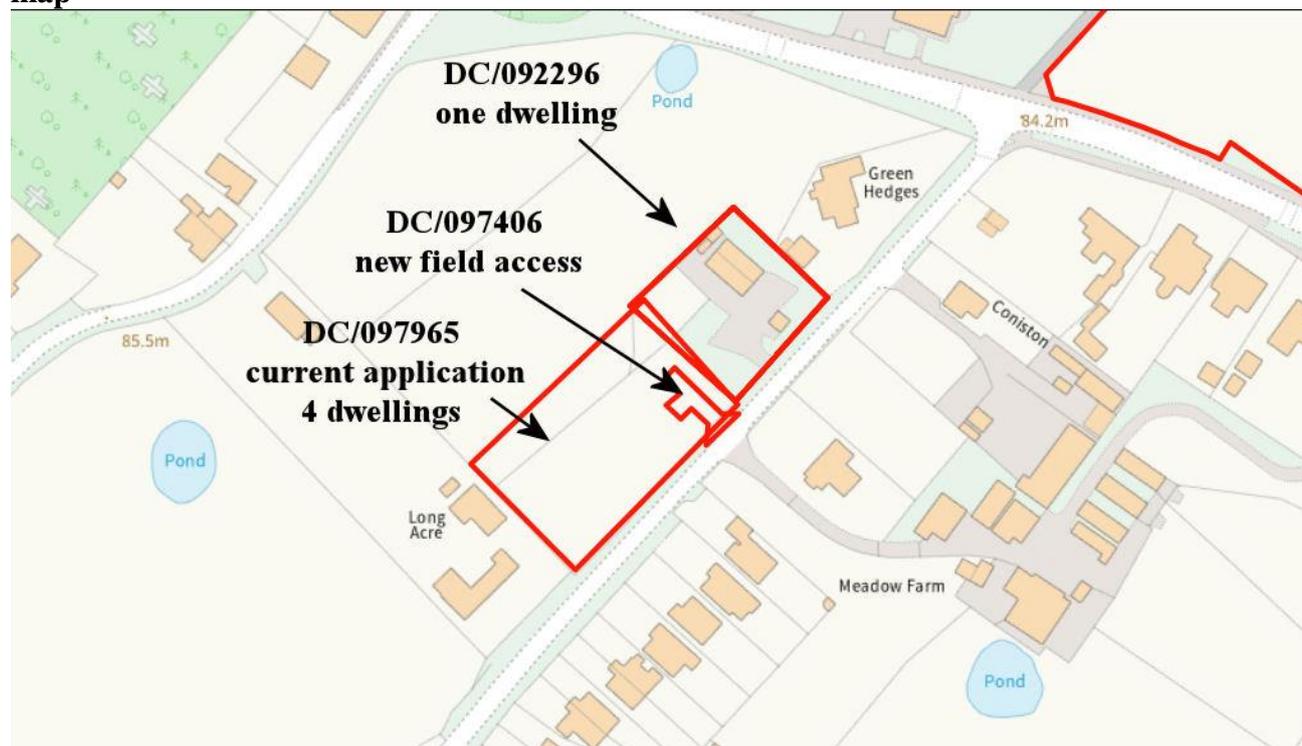


- There is a history of several development proposals for the field at or around this site:
  - DC/067276 (infill 4 dwellings) in 2017 was withdrawn
  - DC/076613 (infill 2 dwellings) in 2020 was refused and appeal dismissed
  - A proposal for a campsite in 2021 was refused by the Camping and Caravanning Club
  - DC/092296 (1 dwelling on PDL) in 2024 was permitted
  - DC/097406 new access to the field
  - DC/097965 current application for PIP for 4 dwellings

See Figure 4.

- Planning permission was granted in 2025 to the Daylesford Trust for one dwelling on the site of a small stable block (DC/092296) adjacent to the site of this proposal.
- A new access to the field is the subject of planning application from the Daylesford Trust, reference DC/097406.
- We note that the red line boundary for the new access, DC/097406, falls within the red line boundary for this application for PIP for 4 dwellings, DC/097965. See Figure 5.
- We particularly note the case history of the previous application for 2 dwellings at this site in 2020 (DC/076613), which and refused by the Council and dismissed at appeal by a planning inspector in 2021 (Appeal Ref: APP/C4235/W/21/3268543). The reasons for refusal by the inspector included lack of compliance with Woodford Neighbourhood Plan policy DEV1 on infilling and, in his view, the site lay outside of the settlement boundary, so infilling in a village did not apply. This situation has not changed and is not likely to change when the new draft Stockport Local Plan is adopted.

**Figure 5: Red outline of recent planning applications at this field shown on SMBC planning map**

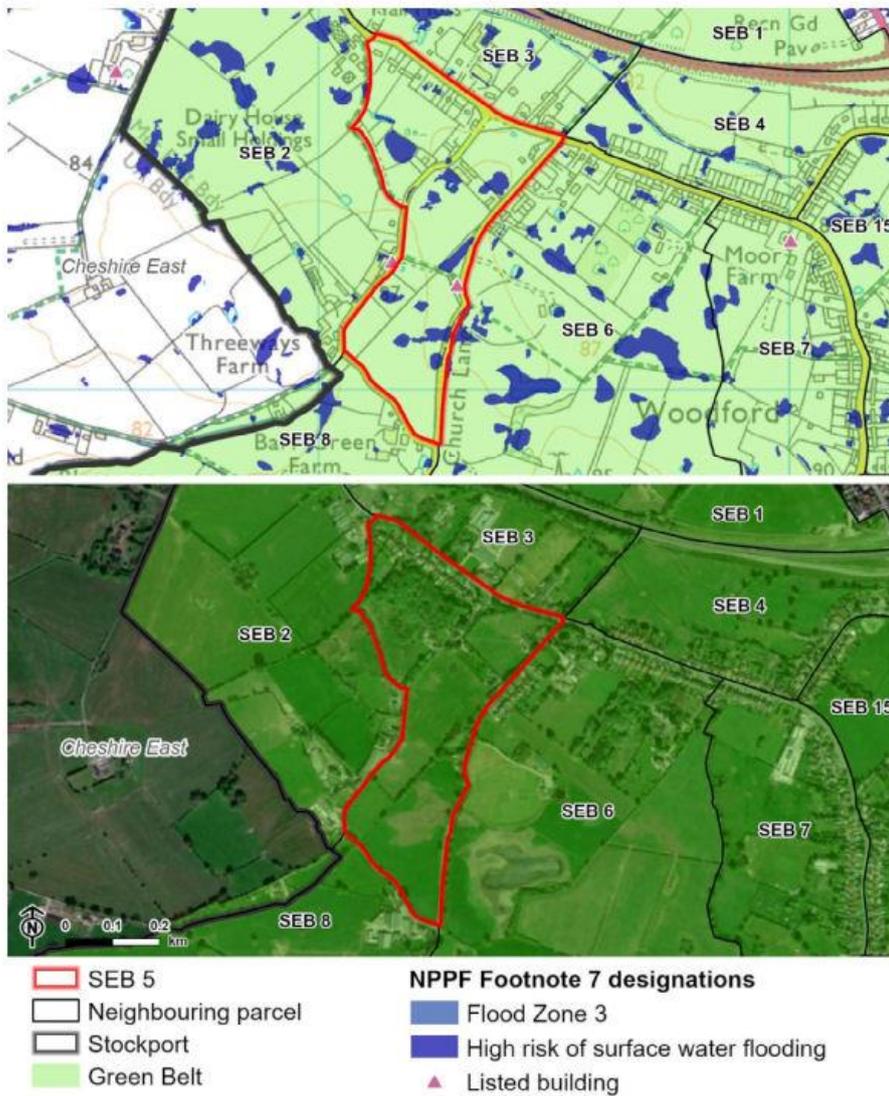


#### d) Green Belt status

- The site is within Green Belt and subject to policies controlling development in Green Belt in NPPF 2024 and the Stockport Local Development Plan.
- The site is within parcel SEB 5 in the Green Belt Assessment conducted by LUC on behalf of Stockport Council in 2025. See pages 567-570 of the report and Figure 6 below.

**Figure 6: SEB 5 in LUC Green Belt Assessment**

**Contribution of land in Parcel SEB 5**



- The assessment concluded:

**Contribution to the Green Belt purposes**

Purpose A	Purpose B	Purpose C	Purpose D	Purpose E	Grey belt
Strong	Strong	Strong	Weak/No	Equal	No

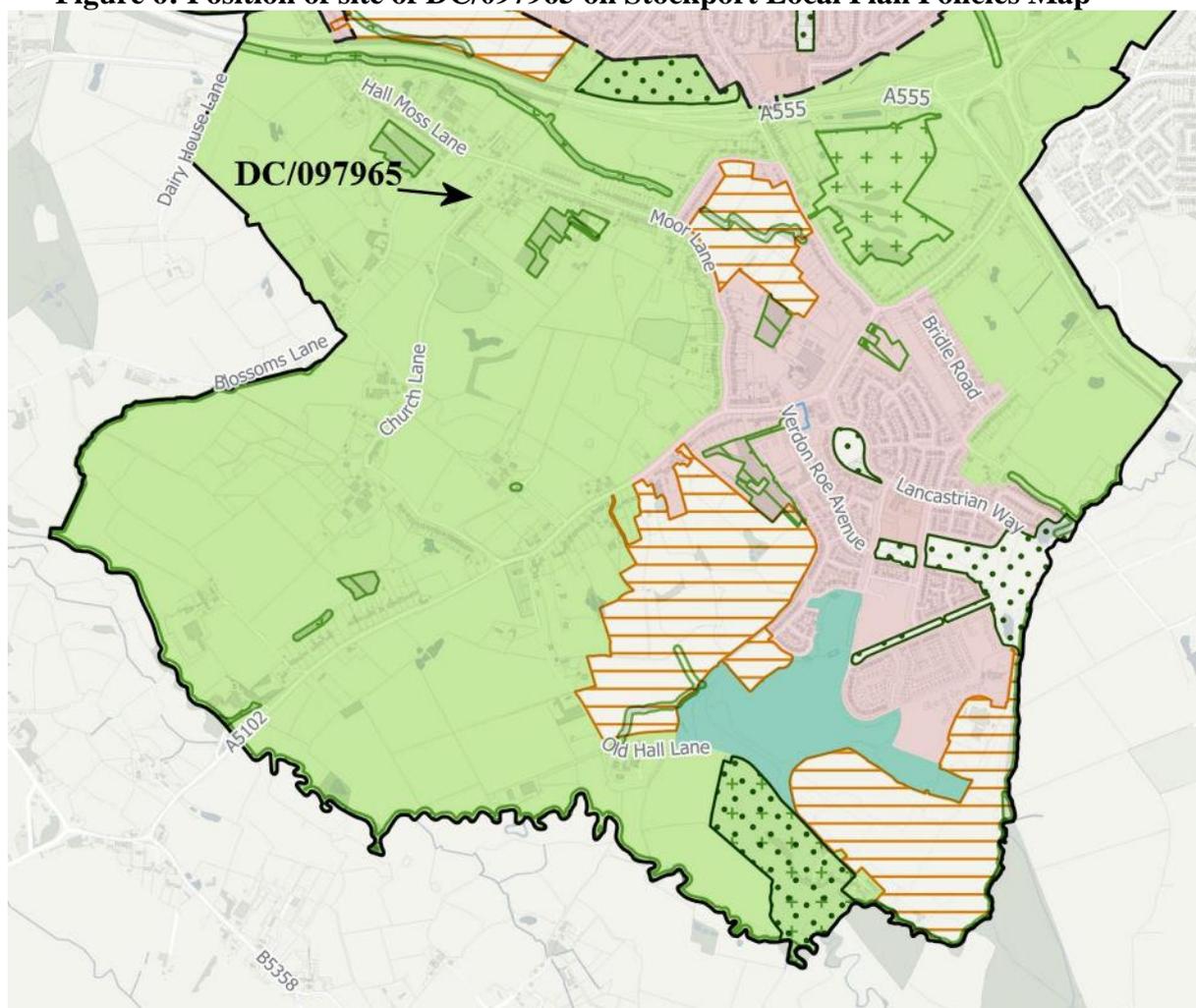
*“The parcel makes a strong or very strong contribution to Green Belt Purposes A and B and therefore does not meet the definition of grey belt land.”*

- The surrounding parcels SEB 2, 4, 6 and 8 are also assessed as making strong contributions to the Green Belt, which could be harmed by development in SEB 5.
- The site lies within SA ID SA25-0741 in the interactive Green Belt Assessment map produced for the consultation on the emerging Stockport Local Plan (<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/assessment-of-sites-in-the-green-belt>), which under Further Information is described as follows:  
*“Site ID SA25-0741  
 Suitable for residential development? No  
 Suitable for commercial development? No  
 Suitable for protection? Yes*

*Protection use. Green Belt uses Notes Land does not contain grey belt and is remote from shops, services and public transport. Within proximity of a large number of protected and priority species. Should remain protected as Green Belt.”*

- The emerging new Stockport Local Plan proposes to denote “Predominantly Residential Areas”, shown in pink in the Policies Map, which do not have Green Belt status. The site of the proposal does not fall within the pink area and would remain in Green Belt. See Figure 5 below.

**Figure 6: Position of site of DC/097965 on Stockport Local Plan Policies Map**



We realise that the new draft Stockport Local Plan is at regulation 18 consultation stage and therefore at an early stage to carry much weight in planning decisions. Nevertheless, it reveals the Council’s thinking about the best use of this site.

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

We believe that planning policies relevant to this application include:

### 2.1. NPPF 2024

### 2.2. Stockport Development Plan:

- Woodford Neighbourhood Plan 2019
- Saved UDP 2011
- Core Strategy 2011

### **3. NPPF 2024**

We believe that the proposal does not comply with policies, including but not limited to, the following:

Paragraph 143, which seeks to prevent encroachment into the countryside

Paragraph 153. Which suggests that planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness.

Paragraph 154, which sets out the exceptions for inappropriate development in Green Belt.

### **4. Stockport UDP**

We believe that the proposal does not comply with policies, including but not limited to, the following policies concerning control of development in Green Belt:

Paragraph GBA1.1, which includes Woodford in the extent of the Green Belt.

Paragraphs GBA1.2, GBA1.5, GBA1.6 and GBA1.7, which list criteria for the control of development within Green Belt.

Policy LCR1.1, which does not permit development in the countryside unless it protects or enhances the quality and character of the rural area.

### **5. Woodford Neighbourhood Plan**

<http://woodfordnf.co.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>

The following policies are relevant:

#### **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.” See Appendix 9 for the Views and Vistas map from WNP.*

#### **Assessment**

The Woodford Neighbourhood Plan notes *“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”*.

One of the viewpoints requested for retention by residents was the view from Hall Moss Lane across the fields between Church Lane and Blossoms Lane. The proposed development marked in red Figure 7 below would have an impact of this view and the view across the fields towards Church Lane from Blossoms Lane. (Appendix 10 and 11 in WNP). The proposal does not respect local character and does not take into account the importance of views and vistas. Therefore, it does not comply with ENV1. See Figure 7 below.

**Figure 7: Left: Image extracted from the views and vistas map in WNP Appendix 9. Proposal outlined in red. Right: View from Blossoms Lane across the field to Longacre**



### **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."*

### **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
4.	Grass verges with daffodils and wildflowers, such as bluebells
5.	Native hedgerows visible along roads, tracks and public rights of way across farmland
6.	Ponds visible along roads, tracks and public rights of way across farmland (12)

### **Assessment**

The table includes trees and hedges bordering Church Lane, which should be protected.

### **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**

Native hedges and trees play an important role in absorbing carbon emissions and particulate pollutants, as well as providing excellent habitats for wildlife. Any potential losses should be a consideration in the decision and mitigated.

**DEV1: Limited infilling**

Limited infilling in the Neighbourhood Area, comprising the development of a relatively small gap between existing dwellings for one or two dwellings, will not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, subject to such development respecting local character. Limited infilling should comprise the completion of an otherwise continuous and largely uninterrupted built frontage of several dwellings visible within the street scene where the scale of development is compatible in character to that of adjoining properties. Limited infilling should be built along similar building lines as adjoining properties.

**Assessment**

The proposal does not meet the criteria for this policy.

**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**

Any detailed application would need to meet the criteria set out in this policy.

**7. Summary**

We believe that this proposal should be refused for the following reasons:

- The site is in an inaccessible location in Green Belt.
- The proposal does not comply with policies in NPPF 2024 and the Stockport Development Plan which seek to control development in Green Belt.
- It would harm the openness of the Green Belt and adjacent areas in Green Belt.
- The proposal does not comply with policies in the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan which seek to protect natural features, local views and vistas and the rural character of the Neighbourhood Area in peripheral locations such as this.
- The site is on a Quiet Lane where development should be restricted and highway safety is a primary concern to protect vulnerable road users.
- The site is in a sensitive location in Woodford, which is vulnerable to change.
- The addition of 4 dwellings would not make a significant contribution to the housing supply, which is being addressed by the emerging Stockport Local Plan.
- Speculative development proposals threaten to undermine development in an organised and planned manner, as set out in the draft Stockport Local Plan.
- There are no very special circumstances that would justify the harms that would result from this proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Evelyn Frearson On behalf of Woodford Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee