



Woodford Neighbourhood Forum

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

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Minutes of Meeting of Woodford Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee Woodford Community Centre 1st December 2025

Attendance	Present	Apologies received
Mr Robin Berriman (RBB)	✓	
Ms Evelyn Frearson (EF)	✓	
Mr Paul Goodman (PG)	✓	
Mr Terry Barnes (TB)	✓ via Zoom	
Ms Jane Sandover (JS)		✓
Mrs Jude Craig (JC)	✓	
Ms Maxine Wood (MW)		✓
Mrs Janet DeVechis (JDV)	✓	
Ms Zoe Jones (ZJ)		✓
Mr Chris Coppock (CC)		✓
Mr Brian Bagnall (BB)	✓	
Mr David Berry (DB)		
Mr Paul Rodman (PR)		Corresponding*

*Corresponding members wish to be kept in the loop but cannot routinely attend meetings

1. Declaration of conflicts of interest

None.

2. WNF response to Stockport Local Plan consultation

This meeting was focussed on a single agenda item in order to prepare a response by the 21st December 2025 deadline.

There was a wide ranging discussion about the draft plan and points to be raised in the response.

The following actions were unanimously agreed:

- Consult forum members.
- Give notice by sending email to members informing them we were preparing a draft response which would be circulated to members for comments.
- Prepare draft WNF response in time for members to comment before the deadline
- Submit response via email by the deadline

The WNF response would:

- Acknowledge the challenges the Council faced in achieving the Government's target number of 32,000 new homes plus new grey belt criteria.
- Challenge the aspects we considered to be incorrect
- Say which aspects we liked.
- Make recommendations about how the plan could be improved.

The following points were raised during the discussion.

Challenges to the plan included:

- The draft local plan is too long, complex and unwieldy. No summary has been provided. This makes it very difficult for the general public to read, absorb, and comment on. It also will make it difficult to apply the policies thoroughly when reviewing planning applications against those policies in the future
- We were led to believe that the pink area labelled Predominantly Residential Area on the policies map is to be taken out of Green Belt in Woodford. If so, then it is legal requirement for the Council to conduct a consultation first. Also the area needs to be very clearly identified for the avoidance of doubt about which specific properties are included.
- Have they fulfilled Duty to Cooperate obligations recently?
- Has the consultation been adequately advertised?
- As a long established neighbourhood forum, with an adopted neighbourhood plan and now acting as a consultee on planning applications, we are disappointed that that Council has chosen not to consult us at an earlier stage in the plan preparation process
- Challenge the statement that WNP is out of date. WNP is still the most up to date plan for the neighbourhood area.
- Note that the plan contradicts the WNP.
- Note that WNP has some policies that are very specific for the neighbourhood area (DEV1, ENV1 and ENV3) that would not be replaced by proposed local plan policies.
- Woodford has a disproportionate amount of proposed development compared with other parts of the borough. This should be reviewed and distributed more equitably. The fact that Woodford also borders the significant, planning approved, Handforth Garden Village, which is in Cheshire East should taken into consideration.
- The proposals for Woodford will have a severe impact on road infrastructure and traffic, which is already a problem and will get worse if the local population is increased.
- Look at traffic modelling data and impact on Chester Road in particular.
- The proposals will increase the burden on health and education facilities. A key component, which is currently missing, is careful calculation of the extra facilities that will be needed in order to avoid an overload.
- We can't assess the plan properly because it does not cover infrastructure requirements. Surely the plan should cover infrastructure requirements.
- The plan does not demonstrate that there are exceptional circumstances which outweigh

the harm caused by the proposed development.

- We cannot find among the evidence the results of assessment of brownfield sites in the SHLAA for suitability for development.
- Have town centre densities been optimised?
- We note a number of items are not yet included

Potential solutions included:

- Increase densities in town centre and district centres.
- Remove limits in old plan on height of upward development in town centre and build upwards to reduce land area needed. Include district centres and other urban areas?

Good points included:

- We welcome the significant areas of Green Belt that are marked for retention and protection. Implies we are happy with what's been taken out.
- We hope that this will be used against speculative development proposals on remaining Green Belt sites.

Points specific to allocations in Woodford to be included:

HOM 2.4 Woodford Garden Village extension

- The site currently includes large areas of open space, including grassland. The proposal would have a negative impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- We do not believe that there are very special circumstances to justify the harms to Green Belt that would result from these proposals.
- Allocation of the site breaks an agreement associated with the planning permission for Woodford Garden Village to reinstate the fields and hedgerows in the current proposal site, which was made when permission for Woodford Garden village was granted. It was an important part of the agreement in order to retain the openness of the Green Belt.
- If this area of the site is developed, important mitigating elements for the WGV development will be lost, including the openness of the Green Belt, improving the visual impact of the site and contribution towards environmental mitigation, including carbon capture, wild life corridors and biodiversity.
- The site is inaccessible [include distances to facilities]
- There would be limited employment opportunities on site and in the surrounding area.
- The allocation does not represent sustainable development.

HOM3.28 Chester Road, Woodford

- We believe that the site contributes significantly to Green Belt purpose a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas. Although it is not one of the three purposes

used to identify grey belt, the site also contributes significantly to purpose c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

- Removal of the site from Green Belt would harm the Green Belt adjacent to the site.
- Development of the site would harm the openness of the Green Belt. Therefore, the proposal represents inappropriate development in Green Belt.
- Very special circumstances do not exist to justify the harm
- Development of the site would result in over-development in Woodford.
- The allocation is contrary to the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan.
- Part of the site is class 3a agricultural land, which should be retained for agricultural use.
- The site is not accessible, therefore the proposal does not constitute sustainable development.
- The allocation does not comply with the Woodford Neighbourhood Plan.
- The site lies within the Woodford Landscape area which would be harmed by the proposed development. It is also part of the iconic landscape character of Woodford village with large expanses of open fields with mature native trees, native hedgerows and ponds and views to countryside and the Pennines beyond.
- The proposal would harm important habitats and wildlife corridors identified by the Cheshire Wildlife Trust.

HOM 2.27 Jenny Lane

- The Green Belt assessment for this site concluded that the parcel does not make a strong contribution to the Green Belt purposes a, b or d and therefore has the potential to be grey belt land.
- Openness of the Green Belt is an important feature of this site which will be harmed by the development.
- The site contributes significantly to the rural village character of Woodford, providing an open area between Woodford Road, Jenny Lane, Moor Lane and Cinder Track.
- Development will be constrained by the underground pipeline from the fuel storage facility to Manchester Airport which crosses the site.
- The site is prone to surface flooding.
- Development of the site would contribute to over-development in Woodford.
- Development of 190 houses feeding onto Woodford Road and Moor Lane would increase traffic congestions on these routes.

HOM 2.15 Hall Moss Lane

Include challenges to this allocation.

Actions

EF to prepare draft response. EF and JC to meet to compare notes and fine tune response. EF to circulate response to committee for approval. EF to circulate draft response to members via mailchimp 10 days before deadline for comments. EF to submit WNF response to Council via

email by 21st December.

Evelyn Frearson from notes circulated on 2 December 2025