Woodford Neighbourhood Forum

2013 -2026

13th AGM



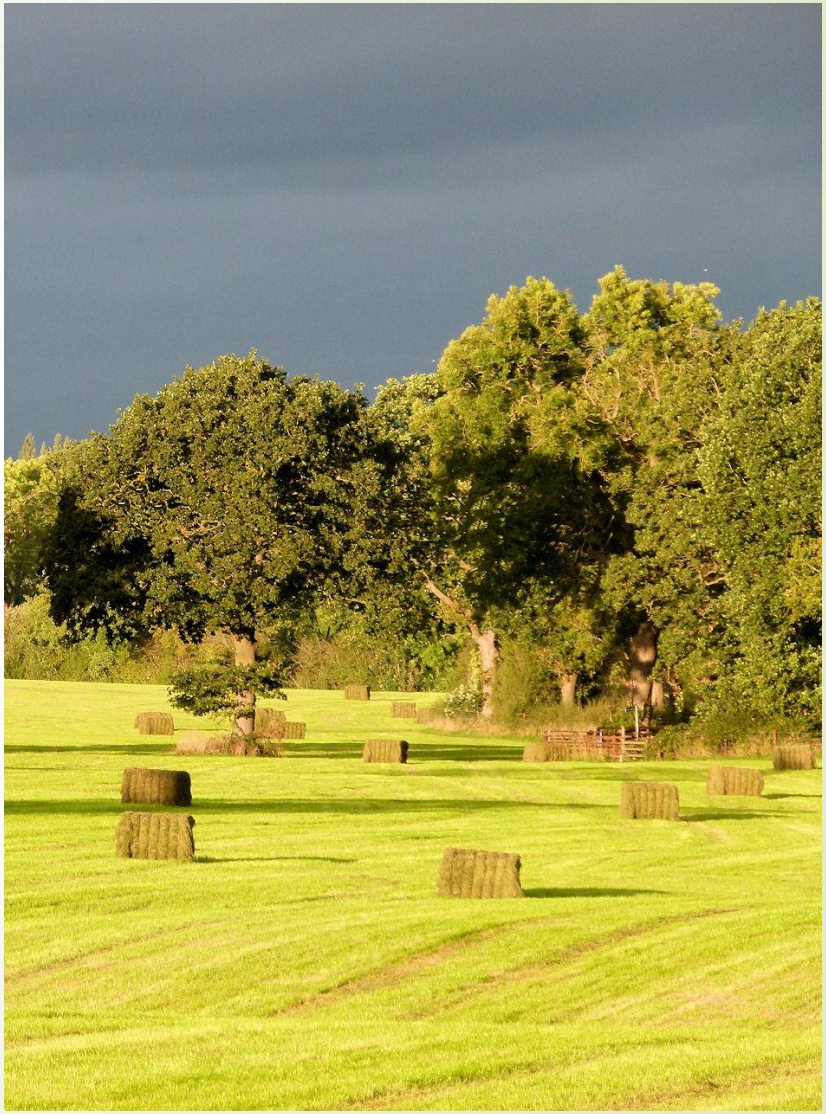
Agenda

AGM

- Chairman's Report
- Approval of 2025 Minutes
- Approval of Accounts
- Election of Management Committee

Update

- Annual Monitoring Report
- Guidelines and Regulations
- Development Proposals
- Stockport Local Plan



Barr Green Farm

Chairman's Report



Fields behind Church Lane

Approval of minutes of 2025 AGM



WOODFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM
FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR TO 30 JUNE 2026

	2026 £	2025 £
Bank		
Balance 1 July 2025	543	690
Share of summer fair surplus	200	-
Donation	10	-
	753	690
Website host renewal	-	147
Balance 30 June 2026	753	543

R B Berriman FCA
24 August 2026

Nominations for Committee 2026/27

1. Terry Barnes	Chair
2. Evelyn Frearson	Hon Sec
3. Robin Berriman	Treasurer
4. Jude Craig	
5. Janet De Vecchis	
6. Chris Coppock	
7. David Berry	
8. Paul Goodman	Co-opted Expert
9. Brian Bagnall	Co-opted Expert
Paul Rodman	Corresponding
Zoe Jones	Corresponding

Welcome to David Berry who joined us last year.

Many thanks as always to our planning advisor, Paul Goodman, without whom our task would be very much more difficult.

There are vacancies on the committee if anyone would like to join

Close of AGM



Update Meeting



Monitoring Report

- Changes in planning rules
  - Housing targets
  - Grey Belt
- Changes in Council committee regulations
- Large development proposals
- Approval of small sites
- Meetings with planning officers and elected representatives
- Responses to planning applications
- Future of WNP
- Stockport Local Plan



Threeways Farm

Planning Rules Hierarchy

- Government rules: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Government guidance on how to apply the rules: National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)



- Local Authority (Council) Plans: Stockport Local Plan



- Neighbourhood Plans: Woodford Neighbourhood Plan
- Lower tier plans must comply with higher tier plans

Changes in Government Rules

- First National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): 2012
- Six subsequent revisions under successive administrations
- Rapid succession of revisions in recent years
- NPPF 2024: Aimed to reduce barriers for development
- Introduced Grey Belt concept
- Government changed method of calculating housing needs aiming to achieve manifesto target of 300k new homes per year
- Imposed mandatory housing targets on local councils
- NPPF 2026 published in August: even greater emphasis on support for development

Mandatory Increased Housing Targets

- Government's calculation formerly based on Office of National Statistics population predictions with an adjustment factor
- Now based on existing housing stock with an adjustment factor based on the ratio of house prices and average income in the borough
- Now mandatory for a council to use the targets when making a new Local Plan
- Stockport Council's housing target increased from 18,500 (derived by the previous method in 2021) to 31,790 by the end of the new plan period in 2042.
- Stockport Council's housing land supply instantly dropped from 3.2 years to 1.77 years with profound implications

Grey Belt

- Grey Belt is identified as land in Green Belt which does not fulfil any of these 3 purposes of Green Belt:

  - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
  - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
  - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

- The area of the site for development to be assessed, not the wider Green Belt parcel

- The harm to remaining Green Belt to be assessed against Green Belt in the whole borough

Requirements for development in Green Belt

- Utilise grey belt land
- Not undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan
- A demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed (until new Local Plan is adopted Stockport has a large shortfall in housing land supply due to increased housing targets)
- The development would be in a sustainable location (criteria for sustainability very much more relaxed)
- Major development (10 or more dwellings or more than 0.5ha) has to meet the 'Golden Rules'

Golden Rules

- Major development on land released from Green Belt must provide:

  - Increased provision of affordable housing*
  - Necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure
  - Provision of new, or improvements to existing, green spaces that are accessible to the public.

* the default will be a 50% affordable housing provision.

NPPF 2026

- Completely restructured
- Local Plan duration is amended from 15 years to 10 years.
- Local Plans have to be reviewed no later than 5 years after adoption.
- Failure to demonstrate the Government's required housing land supply, or housing delivery rate is treated as evidence of unmet housing need
- Presumption in favour of sustainable development (replaces tilted balance) based on location:
  - strong support for development within settlement boundaries
  - selective support for development outside settlement boundaries
  - support for development near stations
- WNF committee still assimilating implications

Versions of NPPF in play

- Stockport Local Plan was prepared under NPPF 2024 rules and will be assessed for soundness against NPPF 2024
- Council will make decisions on current planning applications using NPPF 2026 rules

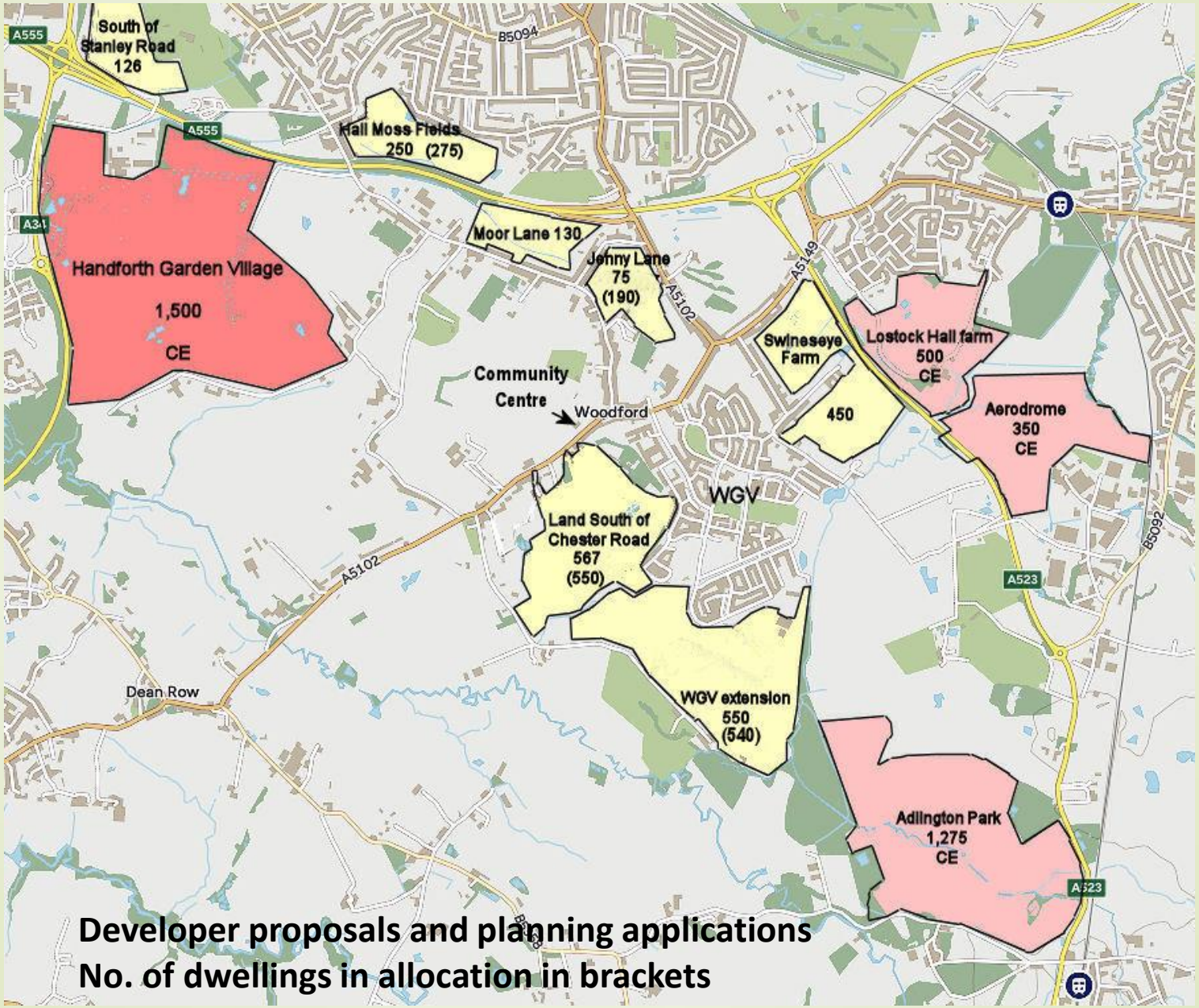
Pressure to increase development

- Many councils have shortfall in housing land supply following increased housing targets
- Several councils under ministerial direction with imposed timetable for new local plan and threat of loss of decision powers
- Reviews of appeal decisions nationally reveal inspectors classing sites as Grey Belt and approving applications
- Minister of State for Housing and Planning sent letter to SMBC imposing deadline for local plan.
- Recent letter from Minister to Planning Inspectorate encourages approval of development proposals

Effects in Woodford

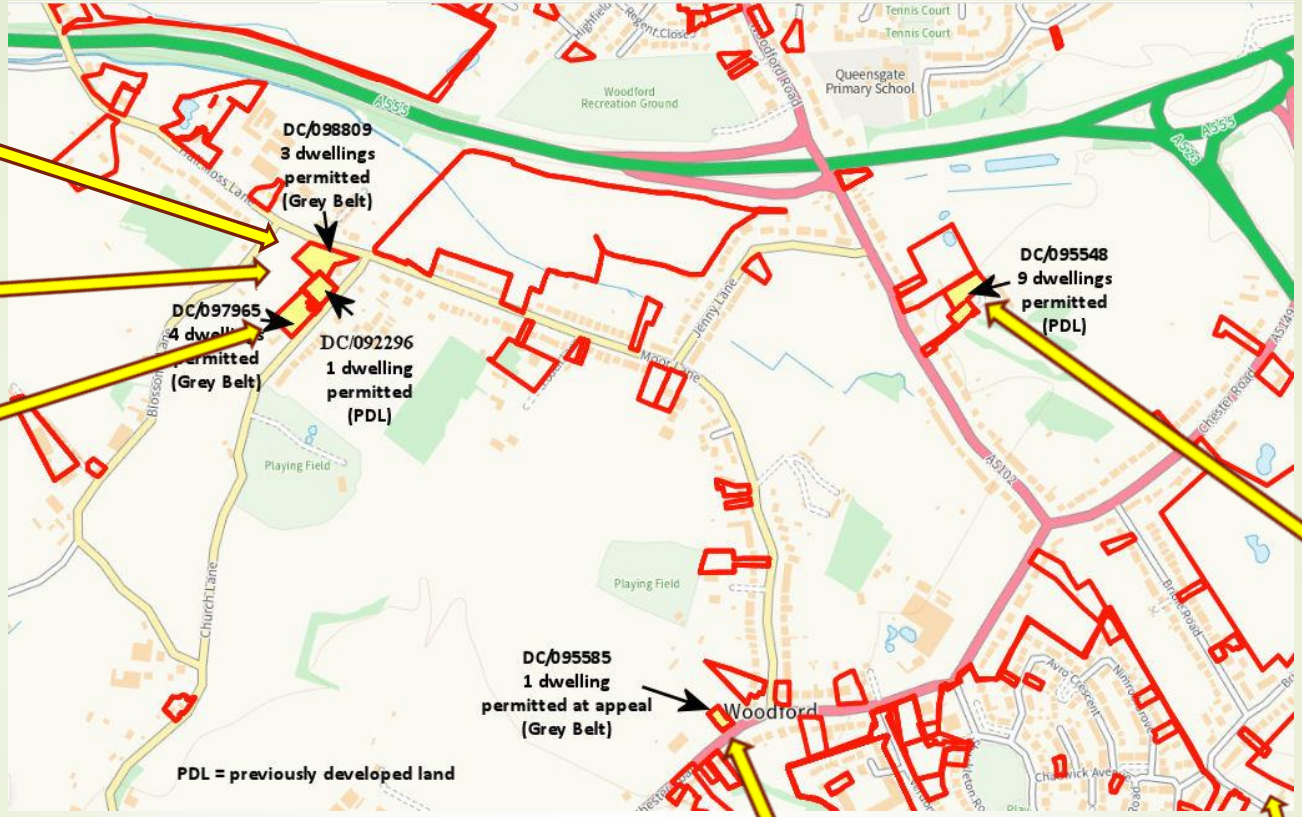
- Large development proposals exploit favourable climate due to Grey Belt concept and new shortage of housing supply
- Smaller development proposals under 10 dwellings also avoid Golden Rules
- Many developers submitted planning applications ahead of the new Local Plan
- Stockport Local Plan had to be revised to meet the new housing target
- Sites allocated in Green Belt to meet the shortfall in previously developed land (brownfield)

Large Development Proposals



Developer proposals and planning applications
No. of dwellings in allocation in brackets

Smaller Development Proposals



3 dwellings

1 dwelling PDL

4 dwellings

9 dwellings PDL

1 dwelling



Classed as Grey Belt

1 dwelling

8 dwellings

Concerns for Woodford

- Planning applications submitted ahead of Local Plan disrupt co-ordinated plan led development
- Some sites may be permitted before the Local Plan is examined
- Small sites likely to meet Grey Belt criteria. Could result in incremental Green Belt loss
- Stockport Local Plan allocates Green Belt sites in Woodford
- Loss of extensive areas of green fields
- Cumulative impact of over-development on infrastructure,
- Financial and physical feasibility of mitigation of impacts

Meeting with Tom Morrison MP

- Meeting with Tom Morrison MP and Cllr Dallas Jones in June
- Raised concerns about the effect of the increased housing targets and Grey Belt concept on Woodford
- Asked whether there was anything he could do as our rep in Government
- He promised to explore potential to garner support for change from other MPs
- Minister of State for Housing and Planning, Mathew Pennycook MP is resistant to suggestions for change

Area Committee Meeting 22 October

Land South of Chester Road planning application

- Officer recommended approval judging that benefits outweighed the harms
- Members asked probing questions, and raised strong points

on transport, healthcare, education, green space, loss of Green Belt

- Concluded that the harms far outweighed the benefits
- Recommended refusal to the Planning & Highways Committee

Upper Swineseye Farm planning application

- Officer recommended refusal in a very comprehensive report
- Members concurred with and amplified the reasoning
- Recommended refusal to the Planning & Highways Committee

Thank you from WNF

- Special thanks to Cllr Peter Crossen, Cllr Jeremy Meal and Cllr Mark Jones for their diligence in expressing the concerns

Changes in law for council committees

- Changes in way Councils make planning decisions from 31 Oct
- Reduction in the involvement of elected councillors in decisions
- Council officers will make decisions on minor development
- To go to committee needs agreement between nominated Chair of Planning Committee and the Chief Planning Officer
- Only large developments which raise local plan, economic, social or environmental issues proposal will go to Area Committee
- Area Committee will not make decisions
- Local ward members able to make comments on applications in their areas as and make recommendation to main committee

Stockport Local Plan

- Council under “ministerial direction”
- Government declined request to reduce mandatory housing numbers (32,317 dwellings) and set deadline for submission 31st December 2026
- Non-compliance would result in Council losing planning decision powers
- Regulation 18 consultation ran from November to December 2025
- Officers analysed 5,758 comments from 2,132 respondents
- Conducted further work on viability, public transport modelling, traffic modelling, updating flood risk, employment land review and extending forecasting to 2042
- Officers held briefing meetings for the four neighbourhood forums
- Regulation 19 version consultation underway 23 September to 8 November 2026

Local Plan Regulation 19 version

- Three sites deleted , three sites added, numbers changed in several sites
- Now achieves 24,253 homes = 75% of target numbers (80% at Reg 18)
- Full need cannot be met without substantial harm
- Approx. 8,000 in Stockport Town Centre, 7,500 on small sites/district centres
- Woodford sites remain in the plan, same numbers
- Hall Moss Lane site reduced from 400 to 275
- Sites listed in Allocations Topic Paper which includes:
  - Estimated delivery trajectory
  - Requirements for development e.g.

  Transport mitigation, flood risk assessment, drainage strategy, heritage assessment, dialogue with United Utilities, ecological corridors

Regulation 19 Policies Map



Stockport Local Plan Allocations

Details can be found in Allocations Topic Paper

HOM 2a WGV extension

- Planning application DC/094533
- Housing numbers: 540
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2026-31: 50
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2031-36: 400
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2036-42: 90
- Higher Viability Area
- Applicants must engage with United Utilities to consider risk of flooding
- Marginal part of the site washed over by 'Nature Network Opportunity Areas'
- Buffer zone and screening for Heritage assets
- Applications for development must be accompanied by heritage assessment

Details in Allocations Topic Paper

HOM 2.38 Chester Road, Woodford

- Planning application DC/095675 (EIA Scoping) and DC/096927
- Housing numbers: 550
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2026-31: 125
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2031-36: 350
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2036-42: 75
- Higher Viability Area
- Transport mitigation measures: priority junctions, bus width roads, upgrade pedestrian and cycle routes
- Surface water drainage strategy to accommodate development and manage any increases in offsite flood risk as a result.
- On-site, functional ecological corridors and stepping stones that connect to the wider ecological network

Details in Allocations Topic Paper

HOM 2.27 Jenny Lane

Planning application DC/099650

- Housing numbers: 190
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2026-31: 50
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2031-36: 140
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2036-42: 0
- Higher Viability Area
- Transport mitigation measures: upgrade junctions, 3m shared footway/cycleway, PRW 11HGB upgrade, bus provision upgrade
- Surface water drainage strategy to accommodate development and manage any increases in offsite flood risk as a result.
- Early dialogue with United Utilities
- Risk of sewer flooding could affect the developable area
- TPOs, Linear Ecological Network, half site Nature Opportunity Area
- Applications for development must be accompanied by a heritage assessment

Details in Allocations Topic Paper

HOM 2.15 Hall Moss Lane

Planning application DC/097442

- Housing numbers: 275
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2026-31: 50
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2031-36: 225
- Estimated delivery trajectory 2036-42: 0
- Higher Viability Area
- Traffic: evaluation of the impact on surrounding roads, active travel links, bus stops, controlled crossing, Quiet Lane
- Surface water drainage strategy to accommodate development and manage any increases in offsite flood risk as a result.
- Early dialogue with United Utilities
- Risk of sewer flooding could affect the developable area
- Three quarters of site Nature Opportunity Area
- Applications for development must be accompanied by a heritage assessment

Stockport Local Plan Consultation

Regulation 19 consultation deadline 8 Nov 2026

- Final stage before Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State for examination by a Planning Inspector
- Not to collect views on the content
- To assess whether it has been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is sound. A local plan is sound if it is:

  - positively prepared
  - justified
  - effective
  - consistent with national policy

- Council says please use the consultation portal to respond

Stockport Local Plan Consultation

Regulation 19 in lay terms

- Relevant laws include those concerning public consultation, climate, environment, habitats, heritage and equality

- Aspects of soundness of process in non-jargon terms include:

  - Will the Plan meet the borough's needs?
  - Does the evidence support the conclusions?
  - Do the policies support the aims?
  - Have points raised in consultation been addressed?
  - Has appropriate infrastructure been planned?
  - Will the Plan be feasible and deliverable?
  - Does the plan comply with NPPF 2024?

Stockport Local Plan Consultation

Thoughts for response

- The Plan proposes disproportionate development in the south of the borough
- Sites in Woodford and Bramhall total well over 1,600 dwellings, representing a population increase of more than 30% in a short period, far exceeding any other ward in Stockport
- Insufficient evidence that all alternative strategies have been explored *[Check]*
- Insufficient evidence that mitigation of the high cumulative impacts in the south of the borough will be funded or feasible.
- When plans in Cheshire East are added into the equation, the number of additional dwellings in a short radius increases to over 5,000. Has this been taken into account?
- The Plan does not propose mechanisms to ensure that necessary infrastructure requirements are in place at the start of any new development

Stockport Local Plan Consultation

Thoughts for response

- Inaccuracies found in some evidence documents raise doubts about their reliability e.g. Green Belt Assessment 2024
- Classification of sites as Grey Belt in LUC Green Belt Assessment 2025 was subjective
- Poor co-ordination with the Transport Plan - doesn't relate to the proposed developments
- No apparent spatial strategy to the plan - allocates Green Belt sites in a random fashion spread across different settlements.
- Allocations in Woodford do not represent sustainable development because, despite proposed mitigations, they will encourage car travel and harm Green Belt without producing low-priced homes. They conflict with Strategic policy 1: Spatial strategy and Strategic, policy 3: Sustainable development and NPPF 2024

- WNF response – work in progress

Meeting with Council planning officers

- Meeting with Emma Curle, Assistant Director of Planning and other senior planning officers at end of September

WNF:

- Raised concerns about the effect of the concept of Grey Belt
- Raised concerns about implications of recent planning decisions for Woodford and WNP
- Agreed to explore simple update to wording to bring WNP in line with NPPF
- Noted the policy alignment between new Local Plan and WNP

Council officers:

- Stockport one of 9 councils under ministerial direction
- Several Local Plans to be submitted by 31st December 2026
- Planning Inspectorate recruiting large numbers of new Inspectors to handle work load
- Government aware that plan achieves 75% of target

Future tasks for WNF

- Respond to Local Plan Consultation
- Maintain vigilant watch on planning applications
- Update WNP to be consistent with NPPF
- Update WNP to be consistent with new Stockport Local Plan



Shire horses near Church

Development in Cheshire East

- Handforth Garden Village

Amended planning application submitted to CEC

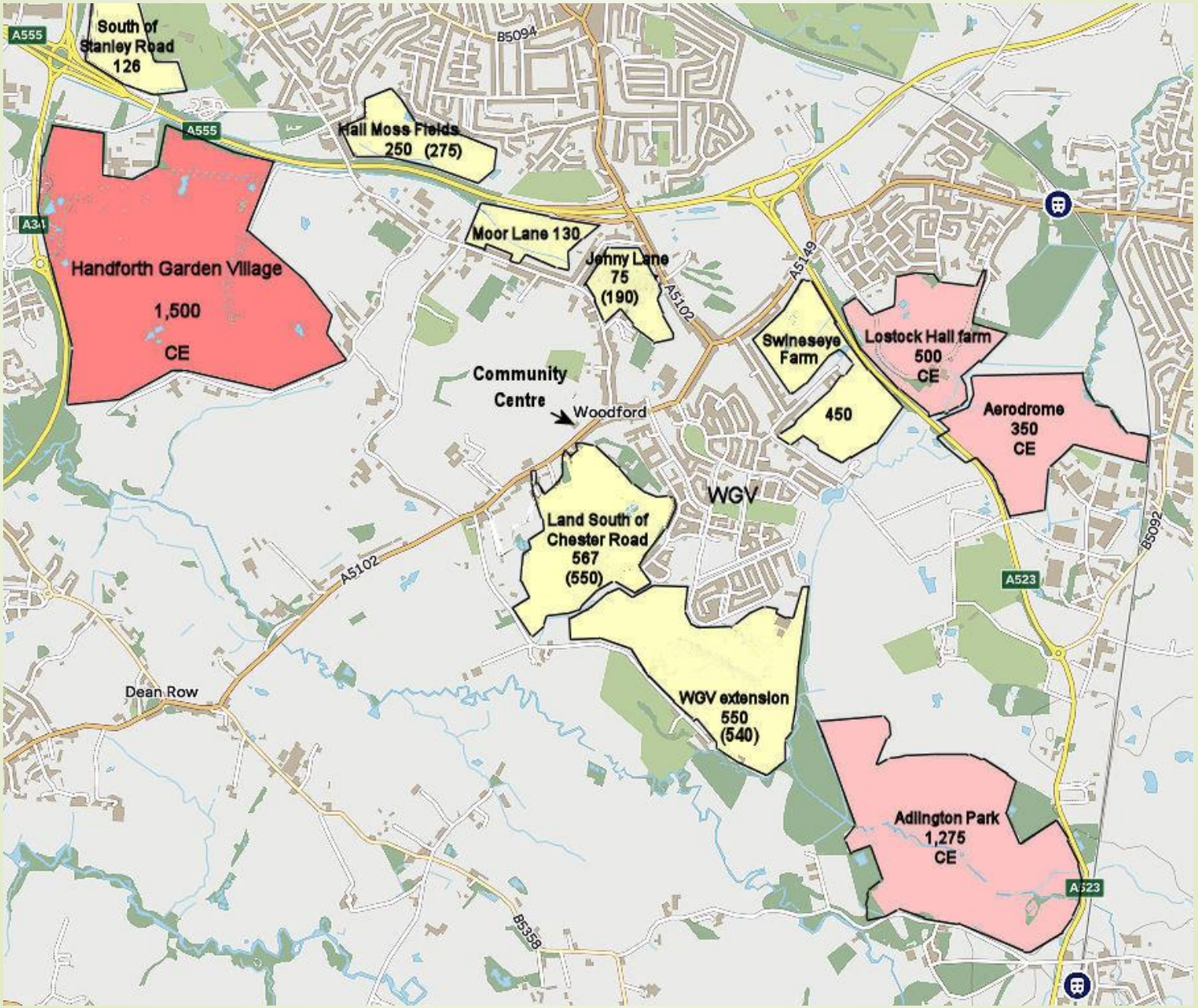
- Adlington Park

EIA Scoping Report application for 1,275 dwellings on site on the north-western edge of Adlington between London Road (A523) to the east and Mill Lane to the south submitted to CEC

- Poynton

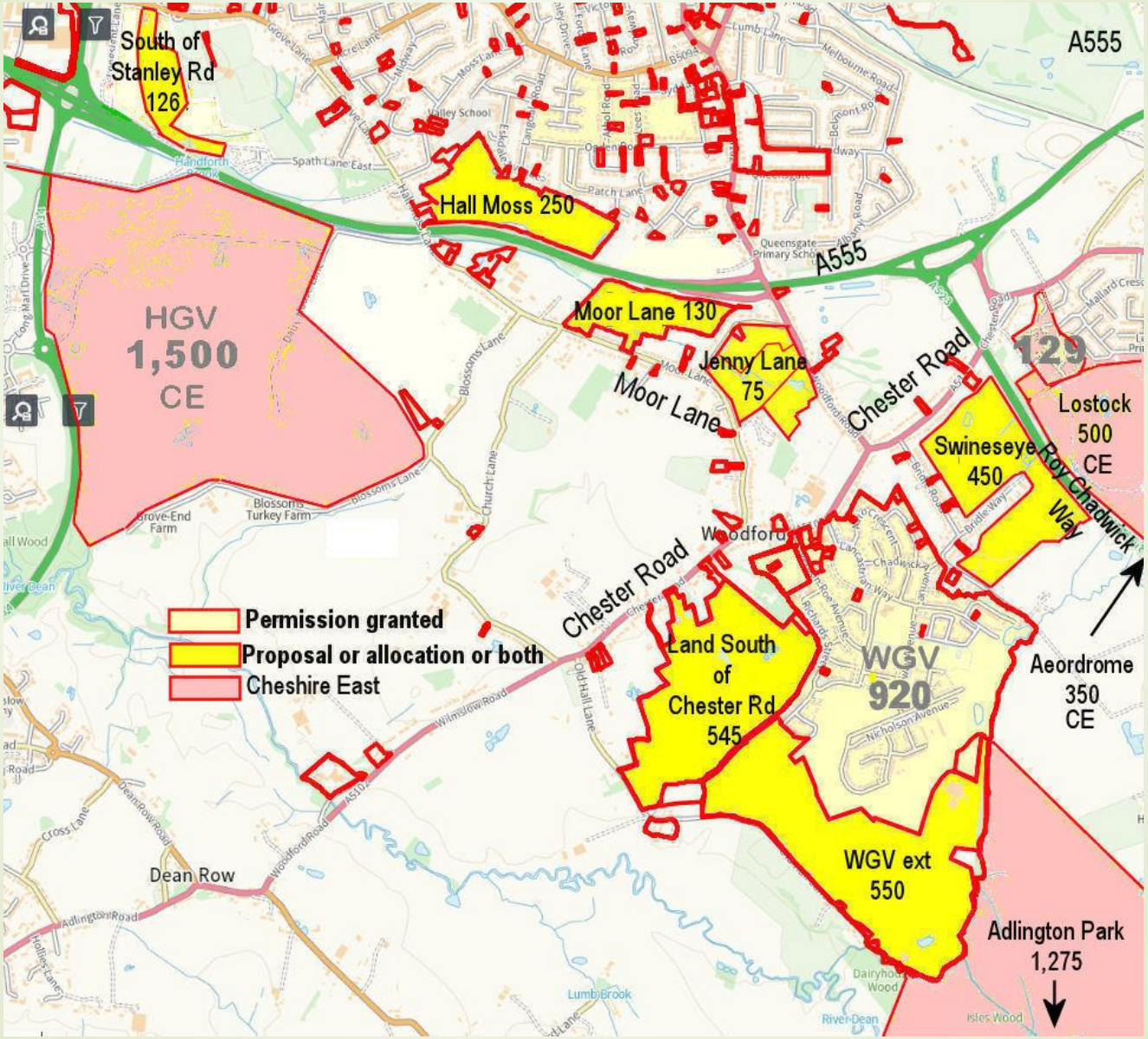
Meeting with Poynton Town Council in July to discuss development proposals adjacent to Roy Chadwick Way

Cumulative Impact




Discussion
and Questions
Rainbow over Hill Top Farm

43 Development Proposals in Cheshire East



Adlington Park EIA master plan

