

Welcome to the Woodford United Exhibition

This exhibition is about change.

It is about the inevitable and necessary regeneration of a redundant industrial site at the heart of our community.



But it is also about how that change could be managed and shaped to build a better place which integrates new and existing and creates an enlarged village which will continue to be one of the most attractive places to live in the conurbation.

Ever since BAe Systems announced the closure of their facility, work has been going on to explore how the site can be redeveloped to create this better place. Consultations, workshops and public meetings undertaken with the owners and SMBC have explored many options over the last couple of years concluding that a mixed development combining housing and employment would offer the most successful framework for future development. This solution gained widespread community support.

Recently however, Harrow Estates working jointly with Redrow Homes acquired the development rights and have put forward a proposal for an almost wholly residential development with no new employment uses, amounting to over 900 new households and trebling the size of the village, the so called 'Woodford Garden Village'.

Stockport's SPD - which should provide guidance for any future development of the site, align with established policies and take account of community interests - appears to have fully accepted this proposal and the draft document now undergoing consultation promotes the same 'garden village' concept put forward by the developer.

We think there is a better way and this exhibition explains the policy context of any future development, expresses our concerns and gives our recommendations for the future of our village.

Thank you for your interest.

Introduction to Woodford United



Woodford United is the working group set up by Woodford Community Council to harness the expertise, skills and energy of local residents to represent the community in its resistance to the current proposals of SMBC and Harrow Estates/Redrow to build 950 houses on the ex-BAE Woodford Aerodrome site.

Woodford United members include two ex-Chief Town Planners, four practising architects, legal support and a range of other professionals. It is working closely with local MP, Mark Hunter and local ward councillors, Bryan Leck, Brian Bagnall and Paul Bellis, as well as with representatives of the other local councils bordering onto the Aerodrome site.

Woodford United has recently conducted a survey of all local residents within the Woodford Parish to determine their opinions on this development proposal. The results of this survey are available here today. If you are a Woodford resident and didn't complete and return the survey, then please consider completing the brief questionnaire now.

If you wish to be kept informed on progress, then please complete a contact form available at this exhibition.

We strongly recommend that you make your comments on the draft SPD within the Consultation Process as soon as possible.

www.woodfordcommunity.co.uk
e: info@woodfordcommunity.co.uk

Woodford United gratefully acknowledges the generous donations made by Woodford residents, without which this exhibition would not have been possible.



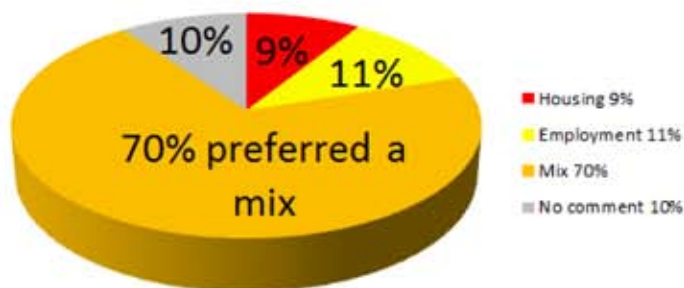
Results of Our Residents' Survey

50% of households responded

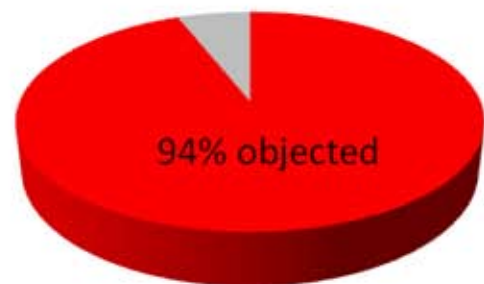
98% of respondents were aware of the proposals

96% were willing for WCC to represent their views

Q. Would you prefer housing, employment or a mix of both housing and employment?

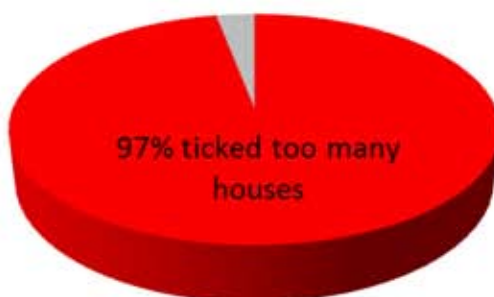


Q. Do you object to the proposals for 950 houses?



Residents' primary concerns

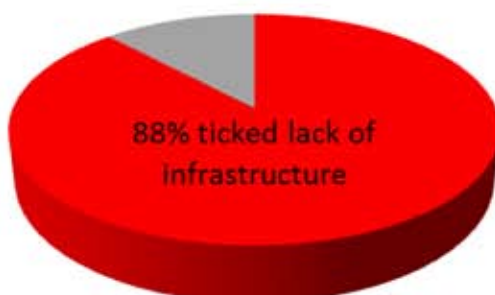
Q. There are 550 houses in Woodford. If you consider that the proposed development of 950 additional houses would be detrimental to Woodford, what would be your primary concerns?



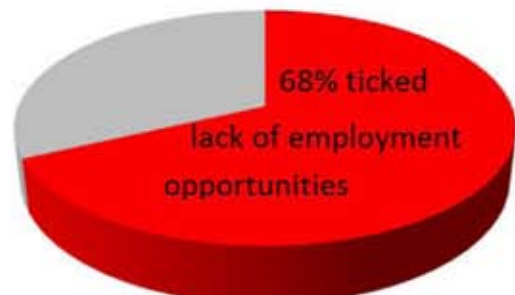
Too many houses



Traffic impact



Lack of infrastructure



Lack of employment opportunities

Residents' Comments

950 houses would change Woodford beyond imagination; we only have infrastructure to support 100 houses.

There must be more than one exit from the site. Church Lane will be used as a short cut.

We should seek a balanced community. Greenbelt laws have for decades restricted development.

Main issue traffic, maintenance of public amenities, wildlife harm, drainage/infrastructure issues, THE COVENANT what happened?

Greenbelt part of site needs to be carefully considered.

Concerned about drop in house prices

Woodford needs employment not a housing estate

The proposed redevelopment would result in the complete destruction of Woodford

No objection to number of houses provided facilities and road infrastructure in place. Mixed development preferable.

All link roads should be completed first.

Missed opportunity for outdoor leisure facilities and alternative energy production.

A555 to be completed before any development

Thank you for forming a suitable group to represent residents.

Concerned about environmental impact, particularly on wildlife

Traffic chaos will be largest impact. This has been down-played. Direct link to MAELR essential.

Paul Lawrence said on 20th Oct 2011 that there is no shortage of housing in Stockport & that we should have no concerns re large scale development.

SMBC's Core Strategy's first objective and overarching principle

The draft SPD states that "The Stockport Core Strategy has sustainable development as its first objective and overarching principle. It seeks to ensure that future development of the Borough is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable....."

Woodford United asks how proposing a 950 houses estate, with around 3800 residents, in a semi-rural area with next to no employment opportunities, poor public transport and already congested roads can possibly adhere to that "first objective and overarching principle".

We do not believe that this draft SPD achieves that, and believe it should be redrafted to ensure that it does.



Stockport Council's Core Strategy Says

**A mix of houses and
employment**

**This does NOT mean a
development of
950 houses only!**

**Have we been led up the
Garden Village path?**

Yes we have!



Housing or Employment Uses

The Core Strategy says: A key target is to maintain the low unemployment levels in the Borough and ensure that there is sufficient land in order to accommodate potential future economic growth. Existing employment areas have been identified as being the best located in the Borough for future employment development.

There is limited land available within Stockport for employment development. This site is identified as an 'Employment Centre'.

Therefore it is important that those areas identified for this purpose are not lost to other uses. Were that to happen it would risk employment development opportunities being missed and in the longer term could result in the need for Greenfield and Green Belt being released in order to provide additional employment land.

The SPD says: The Development Objectives are to encourage the creation of a high quality sustainable balanced community by providing a broad mix and tenure of housing. To make the best use of previously developed land, whilst addressing local housing choice and demand in a manner that protects the Green Belt. To provide an appropriate range of uses including new education provision and community facilities. The SPD specifically says: 'A substantially residential development is more appropriate'. There is no other reference to the potential to create employment opportunities.

SMBC now say: (letter 17th August 2012) The SPD does nothing to stop continuation of the current commercial and industrial uses – it merely suggests a way of meeting requirements of current planning policies. The fact that the SPD sets out a preferred approach of a primarily residential redevelopment does not preclude other schemes from being considered acceptable, so long as they accord with all relevant development plan policies.

Woodford United says: There is considerable ambiguity in the Council's approach to the preparation of the SPD and their approach to determining the appropriate use for the site. We believe that options to continue the use as a site for employment should be clearly set out and not dismissed as inappropriate. The Core Strategy is clear that this is an important site which should continue to include valuable opportunities for employment



Woodford United recommends that the SPD is based on Core Policies and, in guiding site development, makes it clear that uses which require employment be an essential part of any proposal.



SMBC Core Strategy

States that the Council will encourage employment development in rural areas where it is of an appropriate type and scale, including the encouragement of new economic development. It also recognises the need for existing employment sites to be used for employment purposes rather than non-employment uses.



Current Proposals

State that a substantially residential development is more appropriate because:

- Use of the site for offices and manufacturing is liable to encourage car commuting.
- Site is not well located in relation to the potential workforce and markets.



Woodford United Recommends

a mixture of housing with the provision of space to provide well located employment units for local people to develop their businesses which will contribute to minimising traffic movements. The SEMMMS extension will make Woodford more accessible to the potential workforce and markets.

**Stockport Council's
Development Plan says:**

No change to Green Belt.

**So why is our Green Belt
being encroached upon?**

**Have the residents been
led up the Green Streets
path?**

YES they have!



Protect the Green Belt



SMBC Core Strategy

States that the Council believes that the future use or redevelopment of Woodford Aerodrome should be considered only within the limits permitted by current Green Belt policy for this site.

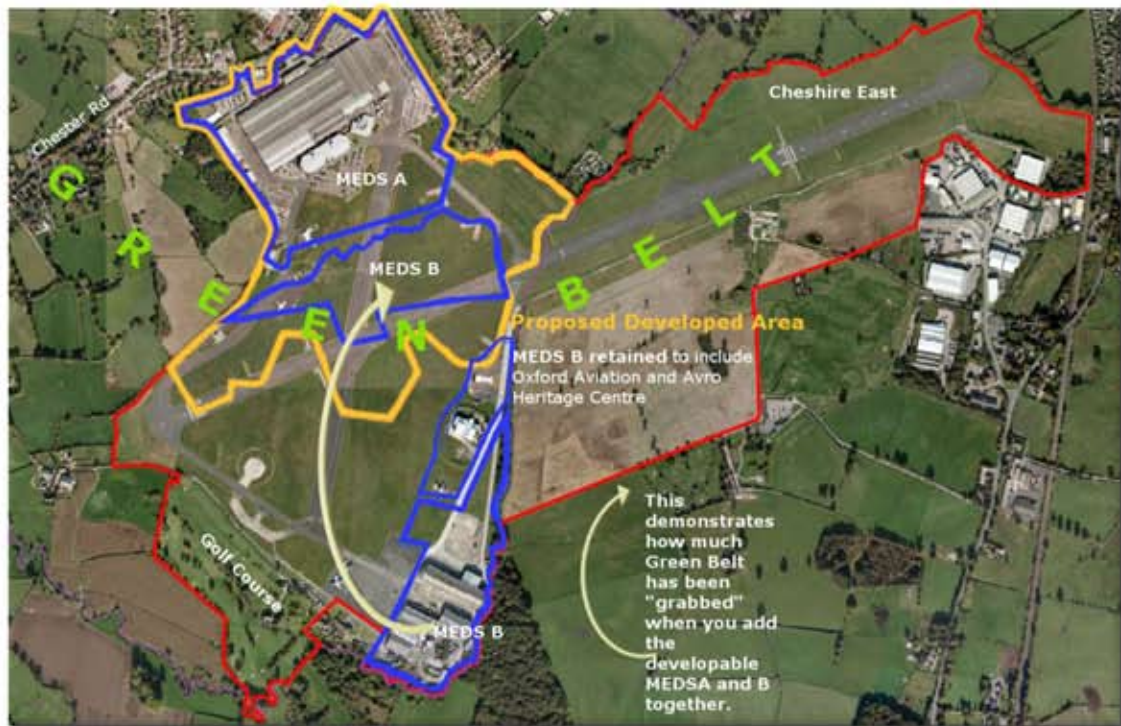
Current Proposals

State that the design principle should be 'To enhance the openness and purposes of the Green Belt' but then suggests that the NPPF would support wider development, that it does not restrict the redevelopment to defined MEDS boundaries and refers to previously developed sites, which in the Woodford case would be the whole aerodrome.

Woodford United Recommends

The protection of the Green Belt and preservation of its openness, the continued separation of the MEDS areas and an appropriate limit on the development area which should not exceed the area of the two MEDS.

Loss of Green Belt



Woodford United estimates that approximately 11.5 hectares of Green Belt have been included in the proposed developed area. This is about a 30% increase above the estimated 39.5 hectares area of the existing MEDS A and B, excluding Oxford Aviation and The Heritage Centre.



How Woodford will look with 950 houses on the aerodrome.

Transport and Sustainability

The Core Strategy and SPD say: The site and the surrounding area of Woodford is currently poorly served by public transport and there are issues relating to the immediate highway access and links to wider highway network.

Stockport's Own Guidance on Transport & Highways

says: In order to be accessible and sustainable, the location of housing developments should comply with at least one of the following: -

- be within 800 metres walk of an existing significant shopping centre
- be within 400 metres walk of a bus stop on a high frequency route or
- be within 1000 metres walk of a railway station with frequent service.

The Woodford Aerodrome site does not comply with any of these criteria and hence must be deemed unsustainable.

The SPD says: All vehicular access to the site will be through the two existing adjacent gates on to Chester Road. It envisages that 3800 people will live on the estate and that the developer can assume that both the SEMMMS is in place and need only assess the vehicle usage over the 2001 BAe activity levels. It confirms that no traffic modelling to assess the impact on local roads has been carried out.

Woodford United says: Our roads are currently congested enough with queuing a daily occurrence and that's with no traffic at all from the BAe site. This site does not comply with any of these criteria and is therefore unsustainable. The traffic pattern of a housing estate is significantly different to that of a single large industrial unit. No valid traffic assessment has been carried out.



Woodford's busy bus timetable



We believe the size of the development should be smaller to reduce the inevitable traffic congestion and increased pollution caused by tripling the number of houses and where 950 of those would be on one estate with a single point of access / egress.

Village Character Should Be Retained

Woodford is Open and Linear

The linear nature of Woodford and its degree of openness, with visible fields and paddocks viewed through gaps is what gives the village its distinctive character. This has effectively been preserved by planning policies which still do seek to limit any development.

A new 950 unit housing estate

- Triples the size of the village.
- Will be grossly out of scale.
- Will have limited connection with the existing village



Woodford United Recommends

That the style of any development on the site responds effectively and sympathetically to the existing village in terms of scale and layout.

The SPD states that there should be improvements to roads and public transport and that a primary school, a day nursery etc may be built.

It does not state at which point these improvements and facilities will be provided, instead relying on developers to suggest phasing strategy in their planning application.

Woodford United recommends more controls are incorporated into the SPD to ensure that:

- Boundaries should be better defined and restrictions put in place to prevent any future encroachment into other areas to avoid development spread. For the avoidance of doubt, the SPD should clearly state that the proposed developable area on the SMBC side of the site will not exceed the currently developed area of MEDS A and B.
- A primary school is provided at a predetermined scale of development. Further discussions and agreement with existing primaries in the area are carried out to set these appropriate limits.
- Additional negotiation with the Local Health Trust results in accessible and local, additional medical provision and facilities.
- The developer must support a public transport service and assist negotiations with transport providers before development. Bus stops must be included in the development, and service to and from them guaranteed.
- The SPD should clearly state the maximum number of houses which can be built in advance of SEMMMS completion. Any additional development after that will accommodate additional access and egress points to the site.
- Any housing development must be balanced to include a suitable mix of property types, all of consistent high quality, throughout all stages of construction. This must take into consideration the current existing and potential requirements of local residents.
- Evidence must be available to demonstrate a concerted approach to attract the business community both locally and nationally.
- A formal agreement with any developer is reached concerning the upkeep and maintenance of public spaces and facilities, both now and in the future.
- All recreational facilities are identified and included as a pre-requisite in advance of other construction.
- Defined practices such as environmental matters and the minimising of impact on existing residents are defined and subsequently enforced during any site preparation or development, including but not be restricted to working times and access routes.
- The SPD clearly sets out developer liabilities and any future planning applications are compliant with these, and deviation is not permitted, if at the expense of public benefit.
- It is inappropriate for the SPD to quantify housing numbers without a formal infrastructure plan and inclusion of a directive which addresses the above issues.

Stockport Council's Core Strategy Says

A mix of houses and employment.....

This does NOT mean a development of 950 houses only!

Can you do anything to help change this situation?

YES you can — Respond to the Consultation!

Write to SMBC

Write to our local councillors

Write to our MP Mark Hunter.

Don't just assume that someone else will write, it's vitally important that as many people as possible put pen to paper!

Your opinion counts, please let it be heard!



Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood planning is a new right for communities introduced through the Localism Act 2011.

For the first time, local people can now have a major say in helping to shape development in the areas in which they live.

Neighbourhood planning empowers communities to shape the development and growth of a local area through the production of a neighbourhood development plan.

Once a neighbourhood plan is in force, it carries real legal weight. Decision-makers will be obliged, by law, to take what it says into account when they consider proposals for development in the neighbourhood.

With a neighbourhood plan, communities can establish detailed planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood. They will be able to say, for example, where new homes and offices should be built, and what they should look like.

The neighbourhood plan will set a vision for the future. It can be detailed or general, depending on what local people want.



Tree planting day at the Community Centre



Christ Church summer fair 2012 at the Community Centre

If the local planning authority says that an area needs to grow, then communities cannot use neighbourhood planning to block the building of new homes and businesses. They can, however, use neighbourhood planning to influence the type, design, location and mix of new development.

The local council must organise a referendum on any plan that meets the basic standards. This ensures that the community has the final say on whether a neighbourhood plan comes into force.

Woodford United has taken the first steps in setting up a neighbourhood forum, which can lead to the creation of a neighbourhood plan.

**Woodford United
gratefully
acknowledges the
generous
donations made
by Woodford
residents, without
which this
exhibition would
not have been
possible.**



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