

Holt Neighbourhood Plan

Version 2.3

Holt Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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BACKGROUND TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Brief history of Holt

Holt is an old village – there is an early Bronze Age settlement in Great Bradford Wood (see the scheduled ancient monument on the Parish map), traces of Roman farming, and of scattered post-Roman and medieval farmsteads. By the 11th century the village existed and had a church – the font in St Katharine’s Church is from this period. In the 12th century, 37 named people lived here, and in the 13th century, a manor had been created, held by the de Holt family. The name of the Three Lions inn goes back to the 14th century.

The village continued as an agricultural and weaving centre, then in the 17th century the spa waters were discovered, and there was a summer ‘season’ for people to take the waters. In the mid-18th century, Holt had seven alehouses for the 50 houses in the village, James Beaven founded the Tannery and the glove factory followed soon after. There was a cloth mill at The Courts.

The 1831 census recorded 839 residents.

Development of the Neighbourhood Plan

More recently, Holt village has a history of looking at itself and working out what should change in future. In 1998, an ‘Appraisal’ of the village was undertaken by a small working party, who distributed a questionnaire to every household, achieving a 74% return. Then, as now, the majority valued the rural environment and the community’s spirit, and did not want the essential character of the village to change. Many of the major concerns raised then resonate with today’s issues. The report of the appraisal was widely circulated within the parish and to relevant parts of local and national government.

In 2009, the idea that Holt should produce a Parish Plan, as encouraged by local government guidance, gained acceptance, and two public meetings were held to recruit volunteers who would help to produce this, and to get some idea of what villagers wanted. A Steering Group was set up and in the autumn of 2009, the people of Holt were asked to complete a preliminary questionnaire which asked what they liked most and disliked most about living in the village, and what ideas they had about the future of the village. This produced a comprehensive ‘wish list’ of ideas which has informed the writing of this Neighbourhood Plan.

It was envisaged that a more formal questionnaire, covering in depth the topics raised in the original answers, would be devised, which would eventually result in a Parish Plan for the next five to ten years. This would be used to approach Wiltshire Council and other organisations for help in the implementation of desirable developments.

However, at about that time, there was a change in the environment in which the project had started:

- locally, as has been long expected, the owners of the old Tannery site decided to develop it. This had been designated as an 'Area of Opportunity' by local authority planners some years ago, meaning that a mixed development of housing, business and commercial premises should be undertaken, and this has been endorsed by the new planning authority, Wiltshire Council (WC) in its emerging Core Strategy¹.
- there was a change of government and different ideas about how local planning should be conducted emerged;

The redevelopment of the old Tannery site

This issue has loomed large in discussions by the Parish Council, so that the overall Parish Plan was moved to the back burner for some time, because of the need to contribute to the planning process for the site.

The Tannery site, the former J and T Beaven's leather factory situated in The Midlands in the centre of the village, is a five-acre/two-hectare site. It currently has a mix of old stone and brick buildings (some listed) plus more recent brick and corrugated constructions, some of which are semi-derelict. The traditional leather processing activity has long since ceased but some limited packaging and distribution work still happens, plus some units have been sublet to new businesses.

In addition to the main tannery buildings, there is a separate, smaller site, The Old Glove Factory, situated across the stream in Brook Lane. This has been redeveloped for commercial use and a further expansion has been agreed, with limited-use additional car parking for employees and visitors, and work is due to start in 2015. There are no plans for housing on this site.

In 2010 the current owners of the Tannery began work on more detailed plans for the main Tannery site, producing various outline proposals for mixed-use development. In response, the Parish Council tasked the Holt Parish Plan Steering Group to consult with the village across a whole range of issues. The full report of this consultation, published in September 2011, is included as Appendix 1 (available via the village website).

Decision to develop a Neighbourhood Plan

¹ Area of Opportunity 5.36

“an 'area of opportunity' in Holt (designated in the West Wiltshire District Plan) will be retained as it continues to offer a suitable location for mixed use development in accordance with Core Policy 1. Development of this site should be delivered through a comprehensive master planning process, and should be focused on providing live/ work or local employment opportunities to help reduce the need for commuting”

Whilst the above was taking place, other important matters became clearer. The government enacted the 'Localism Act' in 2011 which simplifies and enables a stronger local voice in the process of plan making.

There are several options in the localism legislation for an area which wishes to plan for its future viz: a Neighbourhood Plan, a Village Design Statement, or a Neighbourhood Development Order. There is no set pattern for a Neighbourhood Plan. A Village Design Statement is about ensuring that developments fit in with the general ambience of an area, whilst a neighbourhood Development Order is about planning permission for specific initiatives.

Discussions over a long period of time with many people from the village interested in influencing what might happen and the wide-ranging scope of the issues felt to be important, led the Parish Council to decide that a comprehensive Neighbourhood Plan (in general conformity with Wiltshire Council's emerging Core Strategy and in accordance with legislative provisions) was the option that should be pursued.

The newly constituted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group decided that it would build on the previously produced 'wish list' and Tannery survey to develop the Neighbourhood Plan. The existing research was used to produce a Scoping Study for a Neighbourhood Plan which formed the basis for further consultation within the village – see below for an outline of this process. Following this, a formal application was made to gain approval from Wiltshire Council to proceed with the development of the full Neighbourhood Plan and, via their website, initiated the consultation with our surrounding parishes. The development of the full plan has followed the statutory processes of consultation during its development.

Geographic scope

The parish of Holt falls within the Bradford on Avon Community Area ([see map on pxx](#)). In the Wiltshire Core Strategy, Holt is categorised as a 'large village' which is defined as having: a population of 1000 plus, with local employment, a shop, a PO, a primary school, church(es), village hall, pub(s), mobile library, reasonable transport links, some leisure and recreational facilities, and developable land.

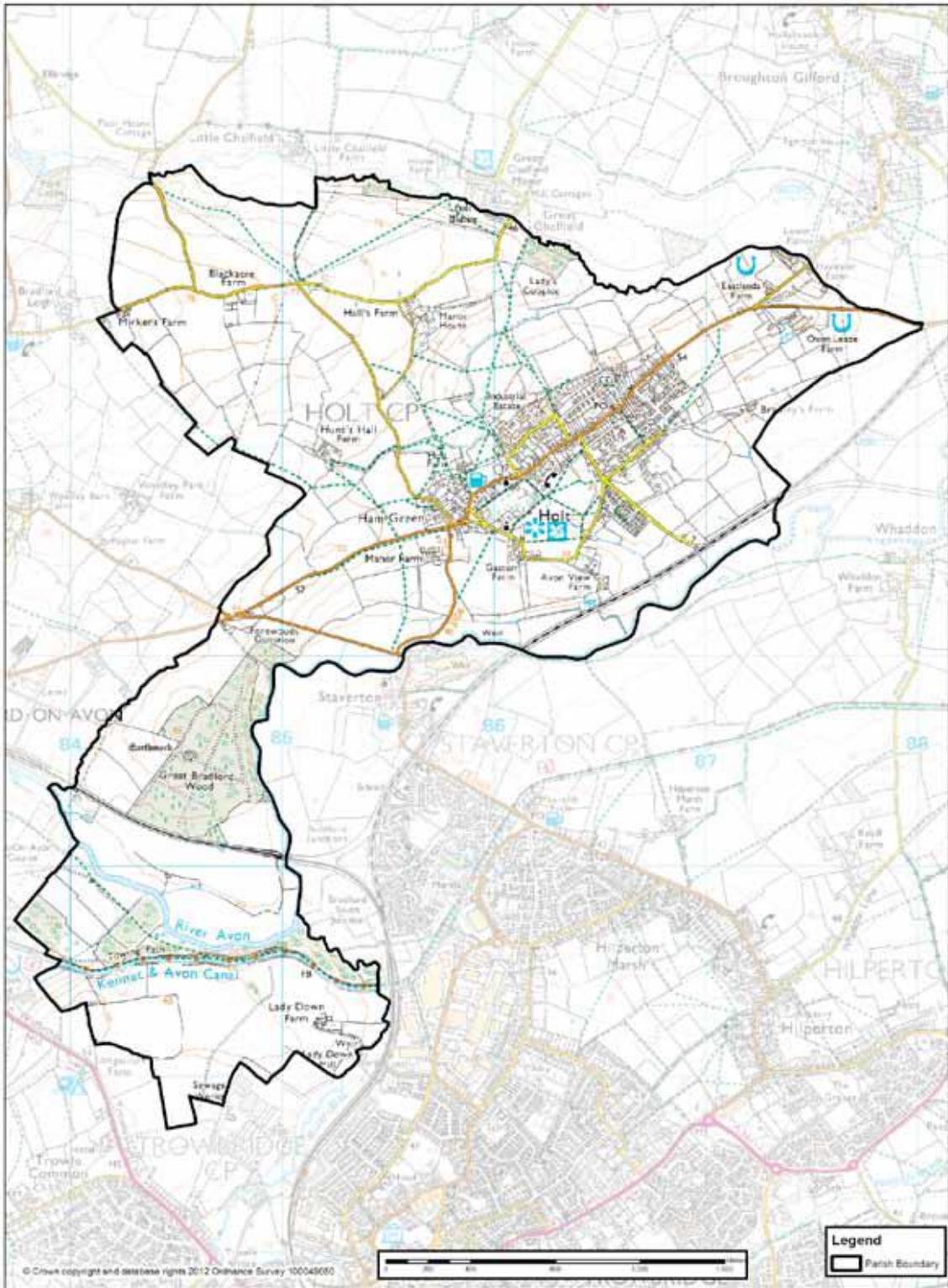
The parish itself has an odd shape ([see map on pxx](#)) with a large but sparsely populated area to the southwest of the village itself, stretching towards Staverton and Bradford on Avon.

Major development is about to start at Kingston Farm on the outskirts of Bradford on Avon, close to the western boundary of Holt Parish, which will certainly impinge on traffic flows – see Section 2. Work on the Hilperton Gap Relief Road started in autumn 2014 having been "in the pipeline" for many years, and offers opportunity to re-route some traffic flows which currently pass

along the B3107 through Holt. There are no other major building developments (that we are aware of) planned in the other parishes contiguous with Holt.

Whether or not the Neighbourhood Plan should cover the whole Parish, or just the built-up area, was discussed, and the conclusion was that because of the importance placed on the rural setting of the village by the people who live here, and the flow of traffic across the Parish, the Neighbourhood Plan should be concerned with the entire area. This was agreed by Wiltshire Council. The contiguous parish and town councils have been kept in touch with the Neighbourhood Plan as it developed.

Holt Parish



A VISION FOR HOLT

To make Holt:

- A village with the same settlement boundary as today, surrounded by green spaces and farmland as well as preserving the existing green spaces within the village.
- Within this boundary, a moderately enlarged population housed mainly by the development of brownfield sites and specifically avoiding building new infill or on greenfield sites.
- A village which is a better and safer place for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders by reducing the intimidation caused by traffic; with adequate parking for residents, workers and visitors; encouraging walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- A village with a thriving local economy offering employment, including opportunities for residents.
- A village with an enhanced environment, protected green spaces and a commitment to developing appropriate renewable energy.
- A village which sustains its strong sense of community, supported by good local resources and facilities which should be protected and improved.

OBJECTIVES OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

We have developed our objectives under five broad headings to encompass the needs and desires of the people who live or work in the village.

Housing

Traffic, Parking and Other Transport

Commercial and Economic

Environment, Energy and Green Spaces

Community Amenities

NB Details to be added when finalised.

SECTION 1: HOUSING

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

1.1 Current housing stock and tenure in Holt

Holt is an expanding village with a current population of 1,757 (up 14.8% from 1530 in 2001) with 736 households (a 13.2% increase from 2001). The housing stock ranges from old stone terraced cottages (the oldest being c.300 years old) to new apartments and large detached houses. There is no single architectural style which dominates, though specific streets and areas have their own characteristics. A part of the village around Ham Green is designated a Conservation Area ([see map on page xx](#)). There are 54 Grade 2 listed buildings and other structures spread through the village and St Katharine's church is Grade 2*.

Types of housing (from the census):

- 850 people (48.3%) lived in detached houses
- 507 (28.8%) in semi-detached
- 316 (17.9%) in terraces
- 46 (2.6%) in flats
- the remainder in two communal establishments.

These data can be augmented by a survey conducted in March 2012 by Wiltshire Council (to assess the need for affordable housing in the village) and provides the most up-to-date and accurate picture of the current tenure situation:

- 84% of respondents are owner occupiers (significantly more than the national average)
- 8.9% rent from a social landlord
- 6.6% rent from a private landlord.

In terms of house size:

- 76.3% live in houses with three or more bedrooms
- 19.4% have two bedrooms
- 4.3% have one bedroom.

The 2011 census data also show that Holt has fewer residents in the 20–29 age range, compared with the average for the South West:

Aged 20–24 – 2.3% in Holt; 6.3% in the South West

Aged 25–29 – 3.0% in Holt; 5.8% in the South West

This could be linked to a perceived shortage of affordable starter homes.

1.2 Affordable housing in Holt

The March 2012 survey categorised 99 of the houses within the village as affordable. This is 13.6% of the total housing stock, lower than the Wiltshire average of 19.2%. These are rented properties, the majority managed by Selwood Housing, and are divided between family homes and those for older people. This has since been increased 2014 by an additional 12 affordable homes developed by Jephson Housing, at Star Ground off Station Road. There is still an unmet need from people with connections with Holt for both affordable housing to rent plus low cost housing to buy (possibly with some form of shared ownership). The latest data (based on the Housing Register and the 2012 Survey) shows a further 10 applications on the Register with a local connection to Holt (using exception site planning criteria) are seeking affordable rented homes in Holt. Another 7 are interested in some form of shared ownership, including one sheltered unit suitable for older people.

1.3 Recent new builds in Holt

Recent new housing in the village has mainly been built on brownfield sites in The Midlands: 37 units (houses and apartments) forming the Spa, on the site of an old bedding factory; and 15 houses on an old builder's yard, Lion's Orchard. There has been no single major house building development on a greenfield site for some years. The largest is the new development, Star Ground, (completed in 2012) of 12 affordable houses on fields off Station Road. In addition, there has been a significant number of individual new houses built either on the sites of older houses which have been demolished, or by sub-dividing gardens. This piecemeal development has led to the loss of green spaces, increased density of housing and (in some cases) has contributed to on-street parking congestion.

1.4 Wiltshire housing need

The emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy has revised upwards its requirement for new housing between 2006 and 2026 for the Bradford on Avon Community Area ([see map on page xx](#)) to approximately 780 units. Of these, approximately 595 dwellings should be provided in the town of Bradford on Avon, including those on the land at Kingston Farm. The remaining 185 (approximately) should be provided in the rest of the area (i.e. Holt, Westwood, Winsley, Limpley Stoke, Monkton Farleigh, Staverton and Wingfield) of which 95 are already planned or built, which leaves another 90 to be built on sites as yet unspecified. Holt Neighbourhood Plan will support the Wiltshire Core Strategy by supporting an appropriate and sustainable level of new development, based on this Plan in terms of location, tenure and design.

1.5 Development of the Tannery site in Holt

The Tannery site, the former J and T Beaven's leather factory situated in The Midlands in the centre of the village, is a five-acre/two-hectare site. It currently has a mix of old stone and brick buildings (some listed) plus more recent brick and corrugated constructions, some of which are semi-derelict. The traditional leather processing activity has long since ceased but some limited packaging and distribution work still happens, plus some units have been sublet to new businesses.

In 2010 the current owners of the Tannery began work on more detailed plans for the main Tannery site, producing various outline proposals for mixed-use development. These plans have continued to evolve and develop. In response, the Parish Council tasked the Holt Parish Plan Steering Group to consult with the village across a whole range of issues. The full report of this consultation was published in September 2011. The key conclusions on housing are summarised below:

- a) The village wanted the site to become a mixed-use development, approximately 50:50 commercial and housing.
- b) The village's preferred options for the types of housing were:
 - Smaller starter homes – 29%
 - Family houses – 28%
 - Retirement housing – 26%
 - Apartments/flats – 17%
- c) The village's wishes on the type of ownership of new housing on the site showed a clear majority (58%) wanting a mix of properties to buy and to rent.
- d) The village's requirement for affordable housing should be met with a mix of properties to buy and to rent on this site.

VISION

- A village with the same settlement boundary as today, surrounded by green spaces and farmland and preserving the existing green spaces within the village.
- Within this boundary, a moderately enlarged population housed mainly on the development of brownfield sites rather than with new infill building or on greenfield sites.

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Housing Objective 1

Ensure the provision of suitable new housing appropriate for both the growing younger and ageing populations, and including affordable housing.

Policy H1.1: This Plan supports the development of new housing on the Tannery site provided it reflects the wishes of the village (see Housing Para 1.5) and meets the following criteria:

- a) the development will occupy the shaded area on [map on pxx](#) and not exceed these boundaries;
- b) the site will be a mixed-use development, approximately 50:50 commercial and housing;
- c) the development will reflect the village's preferred options for the types of housing which are, in order of preference:
 - smaller starter homes
 - family houses
 - retirement housing
 - apartments/flats;
- d) the development will include sufficient affordable housing (both rented and shared ownership) to meet the identified need within the village, see Housing Para 1.2 for figures; see below, Policy H1.2, for more detail;
- e) the development will reflect village's wishes on terms of ownership, with a clear majority (58%) wanting a mix of properties to buy and to rent.;
- f) the development will meet the design standards set out below in Policy H2.1;
- g) the developers will address concern about possible contamination on this site by undertaking a thorough environmental survey and analysis and making public the full results of this before any development work takes place; and
- h) the developers will ensure that concomitant infrastructure development takes place alongside any new housing and is in progress before the build is finished. Specific concerns include:
 - *Road access* – see Traffic Policies T.1, T1.1 and T1.2.
 - *Sewage, drainage and flood control* – the developers will undertake a hydrological survey to ensure that any new building will not exacerbate existing problems with surface water flooding and will undertake remedial action if required– see Section 4. A survey of sewage volume should be undertaken and any requirements undertaken and funded by the developer prior to occupancy being certified.
 - *Village school* – the developers will engage in discussion with Wiltshire Council and the Head and Governors of the village school to ensure there will be adequate capacity for new pupils so all village children can attend their local school.

In light of the county-wide needs stated in the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the (limited) information available from the developers to date, Holt PC believes that new housing on the Tannery site will be sufficient to meet the needs (both affordable and commercial) within Holt for the lifetime of this Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy H1.2: This Plan supports the provision of affordable housing in Holt on the following basis:

- a) the first option for meeting evidenced need within Holt (see Housing Para 1.2) to be the inclusion

of such housing within the development of the Tannery site;

b) if additional need within Holt is subsequently identified, the development of the second part of the Jephson site, Star Ground off Station Road ([see map on p xx](#)) shall be considered; and

c) affordable houses in the Parish shall only be occupied by persons (and their dependants) whose housing needs are not met by the open market and:

- who have a minimum period of 5 years permanent and continuous residence in the parish; or
- who are not now resident in the parish but have a local connection with the parish including a period of permanent and continuous residence of 5 years or more within the last 10; or
- who have an essential need to live close to another person who has a minimum of 5 years permanent and continuous residence in the parish, the essential need arising from proven age or medical reasons; or
- who need to live close to their place of work in the parish.

Housing Objective 2

Ensure that all new housing delivers high quality standards of sustainable design and is similar in scale, bulk, density and separation as the existing housing within the village.

Policy H2.1: This Plan requires all development to demonstrate good quality design.

All new development is to demonstrate good quality design and respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Development that fails to take the opportunities available for enhancing the local character and quality of the area and the way it functions shall not be permitted.

All new development will:

- a) be of a high standard of design;
- b) be built from good quality materials sympathetic to the local style;
- c) be of a scale and size to fit with existing housing (as opposed to commercial buildings) within the village;
- d) be well-spaced and landscaped and include gardens;
- e) be sustainable and incorporate appropriate green technologies;
- f) retain as many as possible existing trees and hedges within sites and along the boundaries ;
- g) include adequate off-street parking i.e. at least two off-road bays/garages per dwelling whilst not reducing existing on-street parking capacity; and
- h) ensure safe access for pedestrians, cyclists and road users.

Housing Objective 3

Ensure that the current village settlement boundary and existing green spaces within it are protected.

Policy H3.1: This Plan will support new infill housing subject to any such proposals being well designed and meeting all relevant requirements set out in other Policies in this Plan and the Wiltshire Core Strategy, and where such development:

- a) fills a small, restricted gap in the continuity of existing frontage buildings or on other sites within the built-up area of the village where the site is closely surrounded by buildings;
- b) will not involve the outward extension of the settlement boundary of the village;
- c) will not involve the loss of any significant green space within the village;
- d) is not considered to be backland or unneighbourly development that requires unsuitable access, reduces the privacy of adjoining properties or is inconsistent with the character of the locality; and
- e) will not involve the loss of small properties e.g. by conversion of two small properties into one; the creation of smaller properties by the sub-division of larger properties is encouraged.

Policy H3.2: This Plan does not support new housing on greenfield sites for the following reasons:

- a) The village wishes to retain the existing settlement boundary and green spaces within this as amenities. It believes that adequate new housing can be delivered on existing brownfield sites. The only exception to this which may be considered is the provision of additional affordable housing on the site at Star Ground off Station Road – see above.

Policy H3.3: This Plan supports the conversion of redundant farm buildings to housing provided any such developments:

- a) Meet the criteria for good quality design (Policy H2.1) and adequate infrastructure provisions are in place.

SECTION 2: TRAFFIC, PARKING AND OTHER TRANSPORT

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

2.1 Traffic [NB Map to be inserted]

Holt is largely a ribbon development along the B3107 which carries traffic – mainly commercial and commuters – between Melksham and Bradford on Avon as well as providing access to commercial enterprises in Staverton and the Canal Road industrial estate in Trowbridge. Within the village, the B3107 forms junctions with a number of other roads. Apart from the Staverton Road and Leigh Road crossroads at the western end of the village, all other minor connecting routes to the B3107 only provide access to areas within the village and are not through roads. The Leigh Road junction is residential at the village end, and then continues on through farmland to Great Chalfield and Bradford Leigh.

Although the B3107 was downgraded from ‘A’ status over a decade ago, it remains a busy road carrying about 10000 vehicles per day, (surveys conducted by the Parish Council in 2014). In the morning and evening peak hours, the flow is between 760 and 815 vehicles per hour. Of these vehicles, approximately 2% (about 200 vehicles) are HGVs. This equates to one HVG a minute during the peak hours. The majority of the HGVs are simply passing through the village, but some are accessing the existing industrial areas within The Midlands and other village-based businesses. There is documented damage to both houses and pavements from this heavy traffic.

There is also a new concern about the impact of traffic generated by other new developments – specifically at Kingston Farm – see the Wiltshire Core Strategy:

Appendix A Kingston Farm Development – paragraph 5.36

“...a transport assessment is required for major applications and must include an assessment of the likely future impacts of the Kingston Mills development and demonstrate how development will not exacerbate the existing Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

Consideration is also needed for any impacts from development on the high traffic volumes along the B3107 (Holt Road).”

Some traffic calming measures have been introduced at either end of the village – a central island and narrowing at the Melksham end plus a mini-roundabout at the Tollgate junction – these have slowed vehicles entering the village. On-street parking, which reduces the road to single carriageway in stretches, also keeps speeds down in places. The zebra crossing near the junction of Station Road also slows traffic down, especially when children are going to and from school.

Most of the pavements alongside the B3107 are narrow (or absent) and poorly defined by low profile kerbing. This contributes to the strong feeling of intimidation by large vehicles and an

equally strong feeling that vehicle speeds in general are too fast even though they may be travelling within the 30mph limit.

The residential roads within the village are mainly fairly narrow and are often further restricted by on-street parking. Great and Little Parks suffer from overflow parking from the main road. Although the parking at the side of the main road has the benefit of slowing through traffic, it can also lead to queuing as vehicles wait to pass and some mount the pavement (especially by the Recreation Ground) in order to squeeze by.

The proposed redevelopment of the Tannery site has intensified these concerns and in 2012 a traffic consultation and workshop were commissioned by the Parish Council from SKM Colin Buchanan. The outcomes of this report (see Appendix 3) have informed the proposals in this section.

2.2 Parking

Most of the older houses within the village have no facility for off-street parking, so many residents are forced to park on the road or convert front gardens into car parking. Even for newer houses, which do have parking provision, residents may choose to park on the road either because it's more convenient or they have more cars per household than the parking available. There are currently few restrictions on roadside parking. The village has a higher ratio of cars/vans per household at 1.62 than the average for the South West which is 1.327. This is firmly believed to be linked to the relatively poor public transport links – see below.

There is a car park attached to the Village Hall which has approximately 46 parking spaces for users of the Village Hall. A space is allocated for the permanent parking of the Holt Community bus. Parking for The Courts is permitted in the Village Hall car park on most days, for cars but not for coaches. No charges apply to people using this facility. In the summer months, when The Courts is open, there is simply not enough space for visiting cars and there is a major problem of street parking causing obstructions to traffic and properties, and potentially hazardous situations, especially on the sharp bend at the western end of The Midlands and at the entrance to The Midlands by the Village Hall. Planned double yellow lines at these locations may alleviate this problem but may also shift the parking overload – possibly to even less appropriate locations.

The parking problem becomes even worse when there are also events at the Village Hall, sports matches or events at the recreation ground, Bowls Club or URC, when the parking flows out onto both sides of the main road.

Informal overflow car parking for visitors to The Courts has been opened in the Tannery site and in a field in Manor Farm across from the Tollgate pub, but these are seriously under-used

probably because the signage and online directions have been very poor. The parking at Manor Farm may also be too far for some people to walk to The Courts.

Some new, shared provision for parking for Courts visitors is being offered at the enlarged car park attached to the Glove Factory, but it is too soon to evaluate its effectiveness.

Almost all the main venues which require parking for visitors and events – the Village Hall, the sports grounds, the Bowls Club, The Courts, the Glove Factory – are concentrated in a relatively small part of the village (at the western end of The Midlands and the junction with the main road) which is why the problem is so acute in this area. The proposed major re-development of the Tannery site also falls within this area.

The other area where parking has been an issue is around the school in The Gravel. This is confined to the morning and afternoon drop-off and collection times during term-times. The recently painted zig-zag lines have alleviated this for residents of The Gravel, but there is now much more episodic parking in Station Road.

2.3 Other Transport

Buses

Public transport services through Holt are relatively limited. There are a number of bus services but many of them only operate once a day (school buses) or on one day of the week. The only service that provides regular buses throughout the day Monday to Friday is the ZIGZAG service. There are eight buses in each direction that link Trowbridge to Corsham via Bradford on Avon, Holt and Melksham. Occasional buses also extend from Corsham to Chippenham. There are five buses in either direction on a Saturday, and once-weekly buses to Tesco and Sainsbury's. None of these buses is accessible to wheel-chair users – i.e. with a low floor. Holt Community Bus has recently started a once weekly service to Chippenham available to villagers.

Cycling

There are no formal cycle routes or facilities within the village, although Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge and Melksham are all within a 5 kilometre cycling distance, which means cycling could be an alternative to the car for reaching these towns. However, the existing carriageway widths on some parts of these routes (especially the direct route to Trowbridge via the Tollgate turning and the road to Bradford) are not 'cycle friendly' because of the narrowness of the roads, traffic volumes and speeds.

Trains

The station in Holt was closed back in the 1960s, although the line is still open with regular trains running between Melksham, Trowbridge and stations beyond. The nearest stations are at Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge or Melksham.

VISION

- To make Holt a better place for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders by working with regulators and developers to introduce schemes that will reduce the intimidation caused by traffic; to provide adequate parking for residents, workers and visitors; to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND TASKS

Traffic Objective 1

Make Holt a better place for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders by working with regulators and developers to reduce the intimidation caused by traffic.

Policy T.1 This Plan supports any changes to the B3107 ([see map on pxx](#)) which mitigate the impact of vehicular traffic on the village and any such changes should conform to the general plan produced by the traffic workshop held on 23 July 2012.

Policy T.2 In order to mitigate the traffic impacts associated with the development of the Tannery site, appropriate and suitable provisions will be required to accommodate the traffic that will be generated during its construction and occupation. Such provisions will be delivered through the any subsequent planning application process in accordance with the standards operated by the Highway Authority.

Policy T.3 Any road improvements for the western junction of The Midlands with The Street should include a safe pedestrian crossing to The Courts.

Policy T.4 This Plan supports any proposals to re-route HGV traffic away from the village.

Traffic Tasks

Task T.1 Relocate the northern pavement by the recreation ground inside the hedge ([see map on pxx](#)).

Task T.2 Negotiate a 20mph limit throughout the village.

Task T.3 Limit the speed of traffic leaving the village eastwards by reducing the width of the carriageway by the junction with Little Parks, and thus creating additional parking on the northern side of the road ([see map on pxx](#)).

Task T.4 Create a parking area sheltered by build-outs on the northern side of Melksham Road to

limit the carriageway width (see map on pxx).

Task T.5 Upgrade the village gateway and improve the signage for the mini-roundabout at the western end of the village.

Task T.6 Review and amend the signage along the B3107.

Task T.7 Negotiate a ban on vehicles of over 8.5 tonnes MGW on the B3107 once the Hilperton Gap relief road is complete.

Parking Objective 1

Provide adequate off-road parking for residents, workers and visitors.

Policy P.1 Any new commercial or housing development or change within the village must be completely self-sufficient in terms of off-road parking, which means:

- a) New residential development must include more than one parking space per dwelling, either garage or off-road spaces.
- b) New businesses, or existing businesses which expand, must provide adequate off-road parking for employees and visitors, which will be more than the statutory minimum.
- c) Not reduce existing streetside parking e.g. by provision of new access.

Policy P.2 Any road improvements for the western junction of The Midlands with The Street should include facilities for short term parking outside the village shop on both sides of the road.

Parking Tasks

Task P.1 Introduce single white lines to discourage parking in places where it is particularly undesirable, such as outside the URC entrance, along Station Road by the Gravel (to create a safe dropping-off point for the school), etc.

Task P.2 The Parish Council will negotiate with the National Trust to provide sufficient off-road parking for all of the 45,000 and rising annual visitors to The Courts, by using their own property, or providing new parking spaces elsewhere. Any scheme should include good walking access to The Courts, and parking for disabled people. Good signage is to be formally approved for roadside use before erection and clear directions are to be provided in NT publicity, on-line and on paper.

Other Transport Objective 1

Encourage walking, cycling and the greater use of public transport.

Policy OT.1 Any development proposals must take into account the need for safe cycling routes within the village and provide appropriate contributions towards the provision of links to other communities and improvements to the National Cycling Network.

Other Transport Tasks

Task OT.1 Campaign for better public bus services, which should also link more usefully to train services in Bradford on Avon and Melksham.

Task OT.2 Consider whether Holt Community Bus could provide more services for villagers.

Task OT.3 Investigate the possibility of providing cycle lanes on the B3107, B3106 and local unclassified roads.

Task OT.4 Research the possibility of reopening Holt railway station to take advantage of the increased services on the line.

SECTION 3: COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

3.1 Current commercial sites

Holt has always been a working as well as a residential community. Although two of the largest and most visible employers based in the village – Beaven’s Tannery and the Norian Beds factory – have either scaled-back or closed completely, there is still a considerable amount of business and commercial activity within the village. The three major sites are still concentrated in The Midlands – (see map on pxx):

- *The Midlands Light Industrial Estate* – with 20 units, currently housing 10 businesses, including the recently arrived Box Steam Brewery.
- *The Glove Factory* – a newly renovated site which offers office and studio space to about 45 individuals, companies and organisations, mainly involved in the high-tech or creative industries, together with an ancillary café; a major expansion of this resource has already been agreed and is scheduled to start building in 2015.
- *The Tannery site* – which includes the remaining Beaven’s business plus small units let out to other enterprises including a stonemason, a joiner, a furniture store and garage; additional refurbished office/studio/retail units have recently been created here.
- *The old Holt Station site* – situated at the far end of Station Road, this large area is used to a limited extent as a commercial site with a coal and buildings materials yard. There is also a newer candle manufacturing business. Further development here would have the advantage of not increasing the pressure on The Midlands. However, access via Station Road is limited and awkward (particularly during school drop-off and collection times) which reduces its potential.

In addition to these, there are many smaller hubs of economic activity spread throughout the village and surrounding countryside, providing both employment opportunities and goods and services to the village.

3.2 Current commercial activities

This range of commercial activities within the parish boundary includes:

- Hospitality and tourism – two pubs, two cafes, bed and breakfasts, holiday accommodation, the National Trust Courts Gardens;
- Agricultural – farming, stables and equestrian centre;
- Retail – village shop and post office, gift shops, furniture shop; flooring outlet;

- Motoring – garage selling cars, garages providing servicing, driving lessons;
- Building services – joiners, builders, stonemasons, plumbers, roofers, electrical contractors, flooring, fireplaces, painters and decorators;
- Domestic and gardening services – domestic cleaners, window cleaners, gardeners, tree surgeon, pet services, soft furnishings;
- IT and financial services – website design and development, IT maintenance, financial advice;
- Creative – designers, artists, printmakers, potters, marketing and communication specialists;
- Education – the village school, pre-school, Tiny Tots and Sing and Sign;
- Personal care and services – nursing home for the elderly, sheltered accommodation for adults with learning disabilities, therapists, hairdressers.

Plus there are a number of other individual and quirky businesses. The 2011 Holt Village Guide identified over 60 businesses within the village and this does not include those who are simply self-employed, working full- or part-time from home offices or workshops within the village. In the survey conducted in 2011 (on the redevelopment of the Tannery site), 11.6% of respondents identified themselves as working or studying within the village.

3.3 Current employment profile

The employment profile of Holt as described in the 2011 census reinforces this with 16.1% within the village identified as self-employed, significantly higher than the 11.2% average for Wiltshire. The other striking statistic from this census is the qualification profile with 41.5% of villagers having Level 4 and above qualifications, as against the county average of 29.5%. This suggests a well-educated and entrepreneurial population. However, it is important that the village offers opportunities to enable people with a range of skills and employment needs to both live and work within the village to create an economically sustainable community which is not wholly dependent on commuting. We would like to see opportunities for school leavers, unskilled, semi-skilled as well as skilled jobs, apprenticeships, holiday and weekend jobs, part-time work (especially for young mothers), as well as full-time jobs. There is a need for businesses offering employment opportunities plus additional premises for those either self-employed or already running a small business and looking to expand.

Holt Neighbourhood Plan supports the objectives of the Wiltshire Core Strategy:

Strategic objective 1: delivering a thriving economy

And specifically: **Workspace – 6.7**

Sites will contribute to the delivery of flexible and affordable workspace across all the B uses, particularly small and start up units with some ‘follow on’ space, to provide continuing

opportunities for small business, business start-ups and continuation. Start up or incubator units should be supported by shared business infrastructure relevant to the use class.

VISION

- A village with a thriving local economy offering employment opportunities for residents.

OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND TASKS

Commercial and Economic Objective 1

Build on the existing local commercial and business activity by creating new opportunities for premises and employment.

Policy CE.1 This Plan will retain the Midlands Light Industrial site as a B.1 commercial site which will:

- a) offer opportunities for more manufacturing-based businesses, with factory and warehouse space, providing a range of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled employment; and
- b) require any new business on this site to be sensitive to its close residential neighbours in terms of traffic, noise, smells, litter, refuse and working hours.

Policy CE.2 This Plan supports the commercial development of the Tannery site provided it reflects the wishes of the village and meets the following criteria:

- a) the site will be a mixed-use development, approximately 50:50 commercial and housing; and
- b) the preferred priorities for usage are creative/studio space, retail, offices and light industrial.

Policy CE.3 This Plan requires concomitant development of infrastructure to support business expansion, including:

- a) high speed broadband and improved mobile phone coverage
- b) better public and green transport links and
- c) adequate surface water drainage and sewage.

Policy CE.4 This Plan supports the further commercial development on the old Holt railway station site.

Commercial and Economic Tasks

Task CE.1 The Parish Council will pursue business-related projects as follows:

- a) explore the possibility of offering preference or incentives to existing Holt-based businesses in any new developments, especially those that may be displaced by such development;
- b) optimise the number of residents being employed within the village to maintain a sustainable community and limit the commuting both into and out of the village by, for example, having a jobs page in the magazine and on the website, a noticeboard outside the village hall (also for job seekers) and supporting business networking events.

SECTION 4: ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND GREEN SPACES

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

4.1 Environment

Holt is a thriving village with a population of 1,757 with 736 households within a parish which covers a total area of about 784 hectares . The village is surrounded by agricultural land with some pedestrian access and is close to the river Avon and the Kennet and Avon Canal. There is access to the river but no riverside walk. A proportion of the village is in a conservation area (see map on pxx) and 54 individual buildings and structures are listed – see Section 1. Overall, the built environment of the village is attractive and must be improved and preserved.

The traffic issues caused by the busy B3107 road and the car parking problems in the village have been noted in Section 2 above. Both these impact negatively on the overall environment of the village. The village is close to the Wiltshire cycle network but there are no bespoke cycle ways that avoid busy roads.

Within the village, the large brownfield site that is the old Beaven’s Tannery, is currently under active redevelopment – see Sections 1 and 3. Given its industrial past, there is concern about contamination within the Tannery site and beyond, in an area known as the Pits, situated at the end of The Midlands, behind Hawcroft. Current plans for redevelopment include a full environmental assessment.

Specific sites within the village have also been affected by localised flooding, caused by a variety of factors, such as blocked or inadequate drainage, overflowing brooks, unfavourable gradients for surface water and (in 2012, 2013 and 2014) the sheer volume of rain water. Some flood attenuation work is being undertaken by the owner of the Glove Factory, which should help the situation here, but there are other areas of the village which remain vulnerable.

4.2 Energy

The emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy (Core Policy 41 and supporting text) states that any new development should contribute towards sustainable construction and stand-alone renewable energy installations will be encouraged.

It is noticeable that increasing numbers of houses are installing PV panels on roofs. There are, as yet, no larger scale renewable energy systems within Holt. A planning application for a solar panel farm at the southern end of the parish (near the sewage works) has been approved. Additional applications have been submitted.

The 2011 survey asked villagers about the sustainable energy measures they would like to see in any new development. Energy efficient housing came top with an 89.7% positive response, followed by solar panels with 76.4%. There was considerably less support for measures such as a combined heat and power plant (34.2%) and wind turbines (27.3%), which may not in any case be economic or practicable. Better facilities for recycling (which indirectly support energy efficiency) were also strongly supported.

4.3 Green spaces

Within Holt there are a number of valued green spaces whose continuity in perpetuity needs to be assured – (see map on pxx). Key areas are:

- the village green and the little green;
- the playing fields, bowling green, sports courts and children’s play area, including the community orchard which has been planted with commemorative fruit trees at the western edge of the recreation ground;
- the fields behind St Katharine’s church and The Courts, enclosed by Station Road, Gaston and The Star;
- the green space at the southern end of Little Parks;
- Dawes Pond, situated in The Midlands, which is currently being improved to maintain its water levels;
- National Trust gardens at The Courts, to which villagers have free access.

Many of the assets and land of community value are already owned or controlled by local charities, trusts or the Parish Council and all should be protected under The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012 (see Appendix 4).

There is a network of footpaths from Holt into the surrounding fields, including pleasant walks to Chalfield Manor to the north of the village. Two additional rights of way have been registered after a legal process culminating in a public hearing in 2014. Maintaining and improving these is a high priority.

As noted above in Section 1, there have been a significant number of new houses built either on the sites of older houses which have been demolished, or by sub-dividing gardens. This piecemeal development has led to the loss of green spaces and increased density of housing and is another cause of some concern.

Although many of the houses within the village have adequate gardens, there has been a longstanding wish from some residents for allotments to be established. In the 2011 survey 25% of respondents said they would use this amenity. Various attempts have been made, but none has succeeded.

VISION

- A village with an enhanced environment, protected green spaces and a commitment to developing appropriate renewable energy.

OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND TASKS

Environment Objective E.1

Ensure any proposed new development delivers maximum positive outcomes for the environment.

Policy E.1 Proposals for new development will be supported provided they:

- create open green spaces and safe play areas
- preserve existing trees and hedges as far as possible
- plant new trees on green spaces and play areas
- create cycleways and pedestrian friendly routes
- support green energy.

Environment Objective E.2

Ensure any proposed new development includes an analysis of its effects on the village infrastructure and offers appropriate solutions.

Policy E.2 Proposals for new development will be supported provided they address their impact on energy and water supply, drainage, waste disposal, transport routes, the school.

Environment Objective E.3

Any measure to prevent or reduce future flooding will be supported and the Parish Council will work

with Wiltshire Council, Wessex Water and any other appropriate responsible bodies to reduce the risk of flooding.

Environment Task E.3

- a) Identify and publish the responsibilities of landowners and public bodies to maintain drainage and local watercourses.
- b) Appoint flood wardens to monitor and notify potential flood risks (blocked drains and the like).
- c) Ensure routine maintenance to drains and gullies is carried out by Wiltshire Council and Wessex Water as appropriate.

Energy Objective EN.1

Encourage appropriate renewable energy installations.

Policy EN.1: The installation of renewable energy projects and energy efficiency measures on existing housing stock will be supported, but not to the detriment of the built environment within the village.

Policy EN.2: The installation of appropriate renewable energy projects will be supported but not at the expense of green spaces; appropriate local energy provision does not include wind turbines.

Green Spaces Objective GS.1

Protect and improve rural footpaths and improve access to farmland and rural walks.

Green Spaces Task GS.1

- a) Develop measures and/or agreements that will ensure unhindered access across existing public rights of way; encourage landowners to remove unnecessary/illegal barbed wire fencing from public rights of way; encourage landowners to ensure footpaths and styles are accessible to dog walkers and disabled users; encourage landowners to waymark and signpost footpaths.
- b) Campaign to establish new rights of way; seek to establish a recognised and accessible riverside walk alongside the river Avon; research the possibility of providing more safe walking routes out of the village to neighbouring communities; research the possibility of providing more bridleways.

Green Spaces Objective GS.2

Use potential 'planning gain' monies to secure, maintain and improve the open green spaces in and around the village.

Green Spaces Task GS.2

- a) The Parish Council will survey and register all existing green spaces with public access within the Plan area;

- b) identify new areas suitable for adoption or designation as green spaces under The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012;
- c) identify open spaces suitable for new or additional, appropriate tree planting;
- d) develop costed design and planting proposals for existing and potential sites where necessary, particularly to include the Dawes Pond area and village 'gateways';
- e) consult with residents to identify priorities; and
- f) obtain necessary permissions and funding.

Green Spaces Objective GS.3

Encourage the development of allotments

Green Spaces Task GS.3

- a) Establish the scale of support and number of residents who would use allotments;
- b) identify suitable land for allotments, engage and negotiate with landowners;
- c) obtain necessary permissions and funding; and
- d) establish an Allotment Users Association to develop and run the allotments.

SECTION 5: COMMUNITY AMENITIES

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

5.1 Physical amenities

It is very clear from the surveys that have been undertaken, and from the experience of living in the village, that one of the key aspects of village life that is most valued is the strong sense of community that Holt provides. In the survey conducted in 2011 60% of respondents said they did not want the village atmosphere to change. Much of what creates this positive atmosphere may be intangible, but there are many identifiable physical facilities and resources that contribute to this. These include:

- Four community venues – the Village Hall, the United Reformed Church Hall, Church House (or its replacement) and the Bowls Club
- Two churches - St Katharine’s Church and the United Reformed Church
- Educational facilities - Holt Primary School, Holt Pre-School and Holt Tiny Tots
- Shopping facilities - Holt Superstore (which includes the Post Office), vegetable and gift shops
- Public houses and cafés – the Old Ham Tree, the Tollgate Inn, the Glove Factory café, the Courts café
- Sports and recreation facilities – the recreation ground with pavilion, football pitch, tennis and netball courts, children’s playground, Bowls Club, exercise studio
- Sheltered, retirement and care homes – Firlawn Nursing Home, The Elms, Phoenix House and Maulton Close
- Gardens and green spaces – the National Trust Courts Garden (to which villagers get free entrance), the countryside and footpaths in and around the village.

Many of the assets and land of community value are already owned or controlled by local charities, trusts or the Parish Council. Others should be protected under The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012. If an asset is listed and then comes up for sale, these regulations give communities six months to put together a bid to buy it. This improves the probability of communities saving important local facilities.

5.2 Community clubs, societies and activities

It is easy to gauge the importance of these physical facilities by looking at a snapshot of the social activities they support.

- Community venues – two luncheon clubs, WI, bridge club, flower club, dramatic society, community choir, yoga, Pilates, karate, Tai Chi, ballroom dancing
- Churches – communal worship, bellringers, coffee mornings, fellowship meetings, outreach events
- Sports – football and netball clubs, tennis coaching and tournaments, Bowls Club
- Youth groups – youth club, Brownies, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers, Junior Church and Sky 1, BMX Warriors
- Several book groups
- Pub quiz teams
- Plus many other activities and social groups that are not linked with a specific venue such as the Holt Morris, the British Legion, Holt Walkers, Holt Community Bus, Holt Magazine.

The Holt Village Guide published in 2014 listed around 30 village clubs and voluntary organisations. Although, in comparison with many other similar villages, Holt is already well-provided with community amenities, there could be a better geographical balance – there is very little at the eastern end. Recent surveys have highlighted some additional facilities or improvements that would contribute to village life. Holt PC has agreed that part of any monies arising from from the Community Infrastructure Levy and New Homes Bonus from new developments should be devoted to improvements to the environment and leisure facilities of the village.

VISION

- A village with a strong sense of community supported by good local resources and facilities which should be protected and improved by the creation of additional facilities such as cycleways, and leisure and sporting opportunities for older children.

OBJECTIVES, POLICES AND TASKS

Community Amenities Objective CA.1

Identify existing assets which should be protected under The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012.

Policy CA.1 Identify and register those assets to be protected; these could include:

- The Village Hall
- The Tollgate
- The Old Ham Tree
- St Katharine’s Church
- Church House meeting room (or its replacement)

- The URC Church and Meeting Hall
- Holt School and pre-school
- The Courts gardens and tea room
- The Village Shop and PO
- Glove Factory cafe

Community Amenities Objective CA.2

Work with the community to prioritise spending on new community facilities.

Community Amenities Task CA.2

Establish priorities which could include:

- Additional facilities for young people, such as a meeting place or skate park
- Allotments – see Section 4
- Improvements to update the sports pavilion
- A new Village Hall/community centre.

Timeline of the Neighbourhood Plan Development and Consultation Process

Date	Event	Outcome
June 2009	Parish Plan public meeting	Steering Group established
Dec 2009	'Love it/Hate it' questionnaire circulated to over 600 households, Year 6 at the School, and the Youth Club	Response rate of 25% and a consensus emerged about the major likes and dislikes, together with a long list of suggested actions
Nov 2010	Tannery development plans start to emerge and survey planned	Steering Group works on questionnaire with some professional input
Mar 2011	Two copies of a questionnaire delivered to 711 households	348 were returned, making a return rate of 26% of questionnaires distributed and 49% of households
Sept 2011	Report published and circulated to village	See Appendix 1
End 2011	Parish Council decide Holt should produce a Neighbourhood Plan	Parish Plan Steering Group was converted to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, reporting to the Parish Council.
Jan–May 2012	HNPSG meets	The work done so far was expanded to become a 'Scoping Study'
May 2012	Public meeting to launch the Neighbourhood Plan	Steering Group is expanded
May 2012	Traffic Workshop involving PC, HNPSG, Tannery developers,	Holt Traffic Consultation Report – see Appendix 3

	consultants	
June 2012	Presentation of initial plans for Tannery site from developers	
July 2012	Public meeting to discuss Tannery plans	Locality-based focus groups set up
July 2012	HNPSG release 1st draft of Scoping Study	
July–Sept 2012	Locality-based focus groups meet	These consider the draft Scoping Study for the Plan and the Tannery proposals and report back to HNPSG
Oct 2012	HNPSG release 2nd draft of Scoping Study	
Feb 2013	Formal application to proceed with development of a NP is submitted to WC	
May 2013	End of 6 week consultation period	Application is approved by WC
May–Dec 2013	Work on turning the Scoping study into a NP continues	
Jan 2014	Draft 1.1 of the Neighbourhood Plan circulated to PC, HNPSG, Holt Tannery Liaison Committee, and other interested parties	Comments back to Chair
Jan–Apr 2014	Work to refine draft in light of Feedback	First draft for public consultation finalised

14 April	Grant from Community Development Foundation to fund printing and consultation	Production work on draft Plan, feedback forms, display etc
May 2014	Printed copies of HNP Draft 1.5 for public consultation circulated to all households and posted on website	
31 May 2014	Whole day consultation in Village Hall	Over 80 people attended and completed feedback forms
7 June 2014	Consultation at village Music Festival	More people comment both verbally and in writing
30 June 2014	Close of consultation on HNP Draft 1.5	
July-Oct 2014	Collation of feedback	
Nov 2014	HNPSG considers responses to feedback	Complete feedback and responses are published on website
Nov-Dec 2014	HNPSG amends Plan in light of feedback to create Draft 2	
Nov 2014	2 nd grant from Community Development Foundation to fund expert advice and further consultation with village	
27 Nov 2014	Revised plans for Tannery site are presented by developers	

Dec 2014	Planning consultants are invited to bid for work	
Dec 2014	XX consultants are appointed to advise on HNP Draft 2	

HOLT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GOVERNANCE

Terms of Reference for the Steering Group

1. Purpose

- The job of the Steering Group is to manage the production of a Neighbourhood Plan within the terms of the Localism Act 2011 for the parish of Holt in Wiltshire.

2. Accountability

- The Steering Group will make regular progress reports to the Parish Council.
- The draft Neighbourhood Plan will be submitted to the Parish Council for approval before onward transmission to Wiltshire Council and subsequent official consultation.
- The Steering Group will undertake consultation events with people and organisations in the village during the production of the Plan as they deem appropriate.

3. Geographical Area

- As already agreed by Wiltshire Council, the Neighbourhood Plan will cover the civil parish of Holt.

4. Objectives

- To build on the Scoping Study already approved by Wiltshire Council to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the future of Holt, which reflects the aspirations of the residents of the parish, and accords with the policies expressed in the developing Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- To engage the local community as both individuals and in groups, whether locality or interest-based, in debate about the key local economic, social and environmental issues.
- To record the process and participants thereof by which the Neighbourhood Plan is produced, to ensure it is based upon sound and objective evidence.

5. Method of Working

- The Chair will produce an agenda for each meeting of the steering group and notes recording decisions reached.
- The Steering Group and its members will undertake consultation and discussion with individual stakeholders and groups as appropriate.
- The Steering Group may set up subgroups to examine particular topics, who will report back to the group.
- The group will endeavour to work by consensus. Disagreements will be referred to the Parish Council for resolution.

Membership

- The Steering Group will consist of individual volunteer residents of the village and two ex officio parish councillors.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Results of the HVPSG Tannery Survey 2011

Appendix 2 Housing Need Survey 2012

Appendix 3 Holt Traffic Workshop Consultation Report 2012

Appendix 4 Assets of Community Value

Appendix 5 Feedback and Responses to Consultation on Draft 1.5

All these are available to view on the Village website: www.holtvillage.info/