

Holt Neighbourhood Development Plan – Basic Conditions Statement

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1. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

The Holt Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Holt Neighbourhood Development Plan (HNDP) has been prepared in accordance with the statutory regulations required by Paragraph 8 (2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as applied by Section 38A of the Town and Country Planning Act 2004, as amended by the Localism Act 2011 and as embodied in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012).

It has been prepared by Holt Parish Council as the Qualifying Body. The detailed preparation and submission of this document to Wiltshire Council has been delegated by the Parish Council to the Holt NP Steering Group.

Plan Period

The plan period of the HNDP runs from 2009 to 2026. This period aligns the Plan with the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy prepared by Wiltshire Council.

Excluded Development

The HNDP proposal does not deal with county matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure or any other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Neighbourhood Area

The HNDP does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area. It relates to the Holt Neighbourhood Area as designated by Wiltshire Council in May 2013. There is no other Neighbourhood Development Plan proposed or in place within this neighbourhood area.

2. THE BASIC CONDITIONS

Part 5, paragraph 15 of the Regulations sets out the requirements for the qualifying body submitting a neighbourhood plan to the local planning authority as follows:

Where a qualifying body submits a plan proposal to the local planning authority, it must include:

- (a) a map or statement which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood development plan relates;
- (b) a consultation statement;
- (c) the proposed neighbourhood development plan;
- (d) a statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood development plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act.

Part (d) above is known as the 'Basic Conditions' and a draft order meets the basic conditions if:

- (a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the order,
- (b) having special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, it is appropriate to make the order,
- (c) having special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any conservation area, it is appropriate to make the order,
- (d) the making of the order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,

- (e) the making of the order is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area),
- (f) the making of the order does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations, and
- (g) prescribed conditions are met in relation to the order and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order.

3. COMPLIANCE

a. National policies and advice

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in sections 183 - 185 refers to Neighbourhood Plans and seeks that those plans have regard to the policies in the NPPF and to be in 'general conformity' with the Strategic Policies of the Local Plan. This section demonstrates that the Holt Neighbourhood Development Plan (HNDP) has regard to the twelve core planning principles in the NPPF (paragraph 14).

The twelve principles appear in shaded boxes followed by a brief note on compliance.

1. Be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area. Plans should be kept up-to-date, and be based on joint working and co-operation to address larger than local issues. They should provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency.

The HNDP is a community response to how proposals for development within the village should be managed in line with policy over the period up to 2026. The village is not opposed to development but wishes its priorities and concerns to be reflected in any proposals. The process began in detail in 2009 and, following the Localism Act in 2011, it was decided to develop a Neighbourhood Development Plan. A Steering Group was set up and after much local consultation a Scoping Study was submitted to WC in February 2013. Formal designation for the development of the HNDP was approved by Wiltshire Council in May 2013. Detailed work then continued to develop the full NDP covering all aspects of village life.

2. Not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives.

With the support of the Parish Council, as the Qualifying Body, the Steering Group has provided opportunities for the whole community to express views as to how development should progress over the period. This included consultation with parishioners, councillors, businesses, service providers and the youth of the village (see the Consultation Statement). Their views have been used to formulate the Plan. Those views can be summarised as harnessing development as a positive force, indicating how the community wants to grow, be improved and enhanced. The plan is designed to be a tool for decision makers and developers alike.

3. Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and housing affordability, and set out a clear strategy

for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities.

Holt is a designated a Large Village within the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (Core Policy 7) and has always offered both housing and employment opportunities. The HNBP seeks to develop the economic, social and physical well-being of the local population by appropriately and sustainably enhancing business and employment opportunities for its inhabitants.

Economic growth is seen as a positive force to drive the improvement and delivery of services and facilities for the village. Two of the major concerns surrounding development are:

- that the community gets the right quantity and mix of housing. In the past young people have very often had to move away from the area to both secure employment and find accommodation they could afford. A detailed Housing Survey carried out confirmed that some affordable housing is required. The Plan requires that any development will include sufficient affordable houses to meet local needs.
- that housing development and employment opportunities are kept in balance and if possible, employment opportunities are enhanced. Retaining Holt as a working village, where the need to travel is reduced, is seen to be central to the sustainability of development.

4. Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

The village of Holt has a varied mixture of architectural styles, listed buildings and various green spaces used for sport, recreation or simply as open areas. Part of the village is a designated Conservation Area. The Plan policies are very clear in that the historic nature of the village, its setting within open country, its architecture and its green areas should not, in any way, be adversely affected by development. Indeed any planning gain from development may be used to improve these facilities thus making a positive contribution to the form and character of the village. The Plan clearly states that any development must be of good quality design which respects the existing style and scale of buildings within the village.

5. Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it.

Part of the appeal of the Holt Neighbourhood Area is its rural setting. It is a Plan policy to ensure that any proposed development does not compromise the character and beauty of this setting and that any development will be contained within the current Settlement Boundary.

6. Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy).

Holt has been subject to several serious floods in the past and the Plan seeks to mitigate this risk (in line with local¹ and national policy²) and expects any development proposals to measure and take into account the possible effects of flooding, including the effects of Climate Change. Renewable

¹ Core Policy 67 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy

² The National Planning Policy Framework

energy development is welcomed, subject to compliance with other policies of the plan (and Core Policy 41 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy). All new buildings must be built to high environmental standards, limiting their impact on CO₂ emissions.

7. Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework.

The Holt Neighbourhood Area is largely rural. The land surrounding the village is high quality agricultural land and, where practicable, should be preserved as such in line with national policy.

The HNDP has considered the current Limits of Development (LoD) set out in the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (CS), but considers that the housing requirement for the Plan period will be found from within that line and on brownfield sites where at all possible, thus sparing agricultural land; protecting the integrity of the Western Wiltshire Green Belt (which extends up to the western margins of the village); and areas of countryside which support high value habitats.

8. Encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.

The major development identified within the HNDP is on a brownfield site known locally as The Tannery.

9. Promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production).

The opportunity of using sites for more than one type of development has been recognised in the Plan where the major development site (The Tannery) is considered suitable for housing as well as light industry or offices. The plan echoes national and local policy by welcoming mixed-use development.

10. Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

The village Conservation Area has been discussed above and appropriately addressed through the Plan. The village's historic buildings, the pattern of its streets, footpaths and public spaces will be conserved and enhanced. Key community facilities will, where appropriate, be identified and protected under the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012.

11. Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

Holt is essentially a linear village with the busy B3107 running right through its heart. Although not a designated freight route, large, heavy vehicles cause damage to road surfaces, verges, pavements and generate other traffic problems. Any development in the village will be expected to positively minimise and not exacerbate the adverse effects experienced by using roads not designed for such vehicles.

Holt as a rural area has relatively poor public transport links. For many journeys there is no practical alternative to the car. The Plan seeks to address the parking issues within the village which are exacerbated by the high numbers of people visiting the National Trust property at The Courts. Any new development will be required to provide adequate off road parking in line with adopted standards.

The Plan aims to reduce the need to travel by villagers and to enhance sustainable transport modes both within the village (e.g. cycleways and footpaths) and for major journeys outside (e.g. rail and the rural bus service).

Holt is served by an established network of footpaths and these will be retained and, where possible, enhanced.

12. Take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

Holt VC Primary School provides educational services for use by the village and surrounding area. The village also offers a wide range of formal and informal sporting and leisure facilities such as: football, tennis, netball, bowls etc. The churches and community venues support many thriving social and community activities. The Plan aims to preserve and enhance these facilities.

b. Contribution to achieving sustainable development

The NPPF states a presumption in favour of sustainable development. According to the NPPF, this means positive growth that contributes to the economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. The NDP has also had regard to the Brundtland definition of sustainability which in broad terms is taken to mean ensuring that any development that occurs today does not prevent following generations from enjoying the same or better opportunities and the same or better environment.

Accordingly, the HNDP pursues a balanced approach where, whilst welcomed, development is steered to the least damaging or constrained sites. Positive enhancement of the environment and facilities is sought in exchange. The aim is to sustain the strong sense of community within Holt.

The HNDP also seeks to underpin sustainability by balancing housing growth with employment development. Many people aspire to both live and work in the pleasant surroundings of the village. This is a sustainable ambition that would reduce the need to travel and the Plan supports it. For this reason mixed-use development is encouraged.

c. General conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan.

Holt's NDP is consistent with the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (CS). A good working relationship has been consistently maintained between the HNDP team and the spatial planning officers of Wiltshire Council. The Plan indicates clearly in tabular form at the end of each section how the policy has evolved alongside the Core Strategy.

Examples of this in relation to the Core Strategy's Key Objectives include:

Delivering a thriving economy

- New mixed housing and employment development at the Tannery site.
- Positive policies to retain other existing businesses in the village.

Addressing climate change

- By lessening the amount of travelling to other centres for employment and recreation, the community's carbon footprint will be reduced.
- Improving sustainable transport and green energy.

Providing everyone with the opportunity to reside in a decent, affordable home

- The HNBP identifies sufficient sites to positively meet anticipated, indicative housing requirements for the Bradford on Avon Community Area Remainder to 2026.
- Sites have been identified to meet a range of needs and choices, including affordable homes.
- The HNBP seeks to ensure a mix of new housing that meets the pattern of local housing needs identified in the survey carried out for the steering group by Wiltshire Council.

Helping to build resilient communities

- The HNBP identifies land for employment development which will help to diversify the village's economic base.

Protecting and enhancing the natural, historic and built environment

- The HNBP seeks to contain development within the current Limits of Development (LoD) to ensure that the historical setting and natural environment of the village is unharmed.
- The HNBP proposes to protect and enhance key community facilities.

Ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place to support our communities

- The Plan supports the appropriate use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and section 106 agreements to provide or improve the village's infrastructure and identify local priorities.

The strategy for the surrounding area

- The adjoining parishes have been circulated with key documents and have been given the opportunity to comment on drafts.
- Occasional reports and presentations have been given at Community Area Board meetings.

d. EU Regulations and obligations

Human Rights impacts have been addressed through an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) that has now been drafted.

Wiltshire Council has confirmed that the HNBP does not require a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA). However the Plan does seek to address sustainability issues in a positive and inclusive manner.

A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) has been completed by Wiltshire Council Environmental Department, the results of which are reflected in the Plan. The HNP does not require an HRA.

4. CONCLUSION

The Basic Conditions as set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 are considered to have been met by the NDP and all the policies therein. The Holt NDP therefore complies with Paragraph 8 (1a) of Schedule 4B to the Act.