

HOLT PARISH COUNCIL

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12th April 2016

Ms Anne Skippers
Planning Inspector

Dear Anne Skippers,

In submitting our Neighbourhood Plan we would like to draw to your attention to several concerns both the steering committee and Holt Parish Council have in relation to the way Wiltshire Council has dealt with the process of reviewing the plan in readiness for submission to a planning inspector.

As you are aware there are strict guidelines and processes to follow to ensure that a Neighbourhood Plan is a recognised legally binding document and Wiltshire Council has failed to complete many of these stages in a timely and professional manner.

We have enclosed a response to the points raised by Wiltshire Council on the final draft which the steering committee received in January of this year. You will see that the steering committee has responded to each comment in turn and will make the necessary amendments to the draft plan where required.

However, Wiltshire Council made no formal response to the steering committee during the six-week Regulation 16 consultation time period, a timeframe set by legislation and known to the Council who managed the process. This has resulted in a three month delay in the submission of the final draft plan. The comments once received were outside of their own deadline and some are in direct contradiction to their own policies as detailed on the enclosed response.

The steering group were also advised by Wiltshire Council in November 2015 following the submission of the draft plan that an additional three month delay would be incurred due to Wiltshire Council's failure to complete a Habitats Regulation Assessment. The steering group believed this had been completed back in May 2015 and at no time did Wiltshire Council advise the steering committee or the Parish Council of this oversight.

The completion of the plan has taken several years with many hours being deployed on a voluntary basis by parishioners who care about the environment in which they live and believe that a ratified Neighbourhood Plan best supports the future of the village. Wiltshire Council has confirmed in the past that they support the completion of these plans but both the

steering committee and the Parish Council are of the view that a complicated and detailed process has been made more difficult by Wiltshire Council's failure to act in a timely manner, to ensure that they comply with their processes and that their own feedback is in line with their own policies.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Pearce - Parish Councillor and Member of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group