

Background Information about the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan

This is a reference document providing key background information about the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan. It is divided into several key sections so you can refer to the details you are most interested in.

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1.0 Background

1.1 What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)?

NDPs were brought in by the Localism Act 2011 so are a relatively new part of the UK planning system. They allow communities to shape development in their areas and are confirmed by public vote through a referendum. Once made (adopted) it becomes part of the statutory development plan, and is used to help determine planning applications in the Valley, alongside strategic policies in the Kirklees Local Plan.

Its aim is to give local people more say in decisions about proposed developments in their area by encouraging their involvement in drafting local planning policies. These will give them a real influence over how, and where, development should happen over the 15 years from 2016 - 2031. It captures a vision and objectives and proposes planning policies which will help deliver development which meets local needs and aspirations.

1.2 How was it decided to do a Neighbourhood Plan for the Holme Valley?

Holme Valley Parish Council applied to become a designated neighbourhood planning body in September 2014. The neighbourhood area is the same as the Civil Parish boundary and was approved on 13th February 2015 by both Kirklees Council and Peak District National Park Authority.

1.3 What are the benefits for the Holme Valley in having a NDP?

Creating a NDP in an area increases the understanding of local views and gives people a formal opportunity to influence planning decisions in the Holme Valley. Alongside the practical impact of helping shape the nature of future developments, it also enables more of the money raised through development to be spent locally. By having a NDP, the Holme Valley will receive 25% of all money raised through the Community Infrastructure Levy as opposed to only 15% if it does not have a NDP. This means more money can be spent on local priorities and this draft Plan asks for feedback on these priorities.

1.4 Who writes the NDP and how is it paid for?

The Holme Valley NDP is being prepared by a steering group of local Parish Councillors and community group representatives. All members are unpaid volunteers. The group, formed in April 2016, developed its understanding of 'issues and options' which the NDP wanted to explore, secured the necessary funding and appointed planning consultants to provide specialist advice. It also sought technical expertise to identify the Valley's unique landscape and heritage and build the evidence base for the plan. Throughout the Plan's development, Government funding and technical advice has been sourced through Locality to support the process. Following publication of a draft plan for formal Regulation 14 consultation in summer 2019, we reviewed the feedback and had a series of meetings with Kirklees before updating the plan. The plan is now at submission stage, which means it seeks approval from the Parish Council before submission to Kirklees who publish it for further consultation (Regulation 16) and then it is considered by an Examiner.

Government support through 'Locality' is available throughout the development of a NDP. This is both through providing financial grants and access to technical experts and the Steering Group has applied for both through its development to date.

2.0 Current Status of the Neighbourhood Plan

2.1 How far through the process of development are we and how have local views been captured?

The Steering Group has been developing the plan since 2016 through collecting and collating information about the area both from objective studies commissioned or undertaken in recent years and from direct contact with local people. We appointed planning consultants, Kirkwells, to provide us with ongoing planning expertise and assistance with drafting the plan as the final plan is a formal planning document. We also secured technical specialist advice from AECOM who prepared a Heritage and Landscape Character Assessment in 2016 and a Strategic Environmental Assessment in 2019.

Local residents were asked for their views on a range of topics, from housing and infrastructure to green spaces and work opportunities, in a public consultation exercise held in summer 2017. They were asked what they valued and what they wished to change in the Valley. Responses were analysed and used to draft the proposed objectives and planning policies which are detailed in this draft Plan. The first informal draft plan was then shared with residents and local businesses during summer 2018 with a summary booklet of the policies entitled 'Your Valley, Your Voice' delivered to nearly 13,000 addresses. Views on the proposed policies were collated through a consultation questionnaire and that feedback analysed to inform the content of the draft Regulation 14 version published in summer 2019. This public consultation also included consideration by various statutory bodies from 15th July until 15th September 2019. The Draft NDP was also accompanied by a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Following review of the Regulation 14 formal consultation responses and further discussions with Kirklees, we updated the plan further and have now prepared our final submission plan which will be formally submitted to Kirklees Council and the Peak District National Park Authority.

2.2 What happens next?

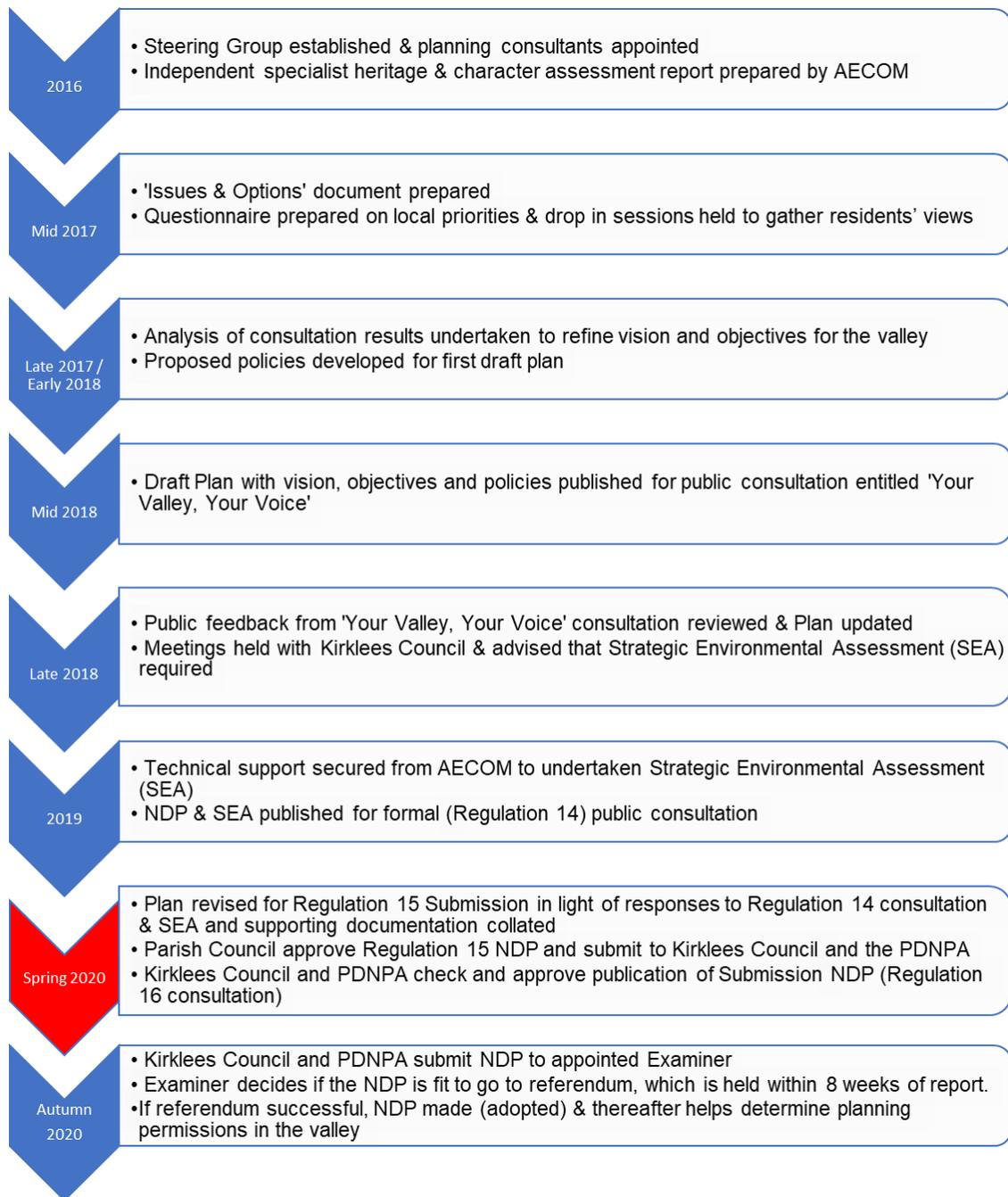
The submission NDP has been updated to the Regulation 15 version by the Steering Group and will be submitted to Kirklees Council and the Peak District National Park once it has been formally approved by the Parish Council in April 2020. This is accompanied by supportive documentation outlining the consultation responses and how the Plan has developed.

Kirklees Council and the Peak District National Park then review the Plan and publish it as the Regulation 16 version for a further public consultation in early 2020. The Plan is then submitted to an independent examiner who decides if the NDP meets the required basic conditions (subject to recommended modifications) and can go forward to a referendum.

A referendum for local voters is then held within 8 weeks which is estimated to be in June 2020. If more than 50% of those who vote, vote in favour of the NDP, it will be formally made (adopted) by Kirklees and used thereafter to inform planning decisions in the Holme Valley.

2.3 Time-line of the NDP

The diagram below outlines the development of the plan with our current phase highlighted:



3.0 Feedback from public consultation in 2017 & 2018

3.1 What did local people tell us in the first consultation in 2017?

A NDP has to propose policies which are shown to reflect local concerns and priorities and a number of key themes were identified through the consultation.

In summary, the responses highlighted that what people like most about living in the Holme Valley is the rural environment and its sense of community.

Looking to the future, responders wanted to see:

- improvements to traffic
- limited development
- improved shopping
- affordable and small houses
- additional houses spread around Valley with priority to brownfield sites
- more sustainable energy efficient homes
- housing and economic development to be sensitive to the Valley's character enforced through planning permission and law
- more people able to work in the Valley
- better public transport
- protection of the rural nature, green belt and fields.

3.2 How does the NDP reflect these views and how did you consult further?

The detail of the NDP discussed the feedback from the consultation alongside a range of other sources of local information on demographics, heritage, education and planning guidance. Supported by our professional planning consultants, Kirkwells, we have collated the evidence to identify planning policies which should help direct development in a positive way for the community. We have strengthened these through research into other NDPs being developed across the country and have sought examples of how other communities have addressed similar challenges in their areas.

We used all this feedback to prepare an informal first draft NDP which contained a proposed vision, 9 objectives and 16 planning policies which were all developed to address the issues raised by the community. This was shared with the community for further consultation in summer 2018 through the 'Your Valley, Your Voice' booklet. Alongside this community consultation, we sought the informal views of Kirklees and met with them to discuss our emerging policies.

3.3 What did local people tell us in the 'Your Valley, Your Voice' consultation in 2018?

Feedback from the 2018 informal 'Your Valley, Your Voice' consultation resoundingly endorsed the proposed policies and also provided us with proposals for Local Green Spaces. These areas of local significance can be protected from development and having assessed all the proposals against the National Planning Policy Guidance criteria, we have identified four locations for designation. We believe that unlike other proposed locations, they are not covered by any existing protection and that they meet the requirements of being close to the community, demonstrably special and local in character.

These are:

1. Scholes, Well Garden on Marsh Road
2. Scholes, Sandygate Fields between Sandy Gate & Scholes Moor Road
3. Wooldale, 'Chapel Field' between Bill Lane & Robert Lane
4. Hade Edge Gateway Triangle between Penistone Road & Dunford Road

Our website includes two documents: one collating public feedback and the other capturing Kirklees' advice. Each document indicates how this feedback has been used to update the 2018 plan to create the Regulation 14 Plan. The Plan contained 8 objectives and 13 planning policies as we refined and rationalised them to make the Plan more focused.

3.4 What were the main changes you made to the NDP following the 2018 consultation?

Feedback gave overwhelming support for the Neighbourhood Plan and we were delighted that all the policies were endorsed. However, we still made a number of changes to the Draft Plan having reviewed all our policies and updated them to reflect the feedback received from the public and Kirklees.

Details of how we addressed the various elements is detailed on our website but a summary of the key changes is given below:

- We retained all the important themes and key elements of the policies but rationalised them from 16 to 13 policies to avoid duplication and ensure that they were all mutually compatible.
- Wording of all policies was clarified to reduce ambiguity.
- Up to date references to the Kirklees Local Plan and its wider policies such as on biodiversity were added.
- We created a separate public realm policy and brought the economic elements of the night time economy, tourism and businesses under one policy.
- We combined two policies, recognising the relationships between transport, accessibility and local infrastructure.
- We also moved our 'shopfront and advertisements design guidance', which was previously provided as an appendix, into a specific policy to strengthen its content.
- We reviewed all the suggestions for local green spaces and short-listed four sites which did not already benefit from other forms of protection. Some of the proposals were already protected as a result of being in the Green Belt, identified by Kirklees as an Urban Green Space or covered by a wider Trees and Woodland Strategy or having some other status like Cliff Recreation Ground which is a 'Field in Trust'.

Additionally, we commissioned a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to help us improve how the plan supports the sustainability of our natural, historic and social environment in the Holme Valley.

4.0 Feedback from formal Regulation 14 consultation in 2019

4.1 What was the Regulation 14 consultation?

The Regulation 14 consultation was undertaken for 9 weeks from 15th July to 15th September 2019 and was the first formal engagement with statutory bodies as well as local people. It was widely publicised locally using posters, local newsletters, and on the Parish Council's website. Consultation bodies included Kirklees Council, Peak District National Park Authority, Historic England, utility providers and neighbouring parish councils who were all contacted by email or letter. Respondents were able to complete an on-line questionnaire or complete a hard copy or submit their written comments to a dedicated email address (holmevalleyndp@gmail.com) or post a hard copy to the clerk to the Parish Council (Holmfirth Civic Hall, Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth, HD9 3AS). The questionnaire asked respondents to suggest any improvements to the policies and whether they supported the overall aims of the plan and its future progression to referendum. It also asked for any specific comments on the Statutory Environmental Assessment report which was out for consultation in parallel.

4.2 What responses were received?

Responses were received from the following:

- 72 members of the public
- 2 community groups (Holmfirth Transition Town & Scholes Future Group)
- 1 developer (Gladman Developments Limited)
- 5 statutory consultees (Cawthorne Parish Council; Historic England; National Grid; Natural England; Sport England)
- Kirklees Council
- Peak District National Park Authority

Approximately 40 people attended the four drop-in sessions held in Holmfirth and Honley to ask the Steering Group for further information about the NDP.

4.3 How did you consider the consultation responses?

All the responses were collated into tables for analysis of each question and the detail of the plan as follows:

- Tables 1A & 1B Kirklees Council
- Table 2 Peak District National Park Authority
- Table 3 Consultation Bodies
- Table 4 Community Groups
- Table 5 Developers and Landowners
- Tables for residents' responses to each policy and general questions about the NDP and SEA

We considered all the feedback and captured how we updated the NDP accordingly in each of the tables. We also met with Kirklees Council for detailed discussions on the policy wording, justification and relationship with the Local Plan. Further details are available on our website in the document entitled Summary of Regulation 14 Consultation Responses.

4.4 What changes were made to the NDP as a result of the Regulation 14 consultation?

All NDP policies were reviewed and refined to make wording clearer and easier to interpret. The sustainability policy was amended to form two policies with a separate policy focused on protecting wildlife and securing biodiversity net gain so we increased the policies from 13 to 14. This was also informed by the guidance given in the Strategic Environmental Assessment: an independent report commissioned from AECOM in Spring 2019. This had recommended strengthening the plan to maximise positive effects by including policy commitments to the 'biodiversity net gain' principle.

The references to the technical evidence base and community consultations were revised, to include quotes from the public consultations and further detail about relevant Kirklees Local Plan and PDNPA policies. Overall, we revised the wording with more graphics or photographic images added to aid understanding. The Climate Change emergency was reflected throughout the document and up to date detail was provided on the Holmfirth Town Centre Access plan and current community activities. We also updated the Local Green Space maps for the Hade Edge Gateway Triangle & Scholes Sandygate Fields sites and provided clearer justifications for each site to align more clearly with the National Planning Policy Framework requirements.

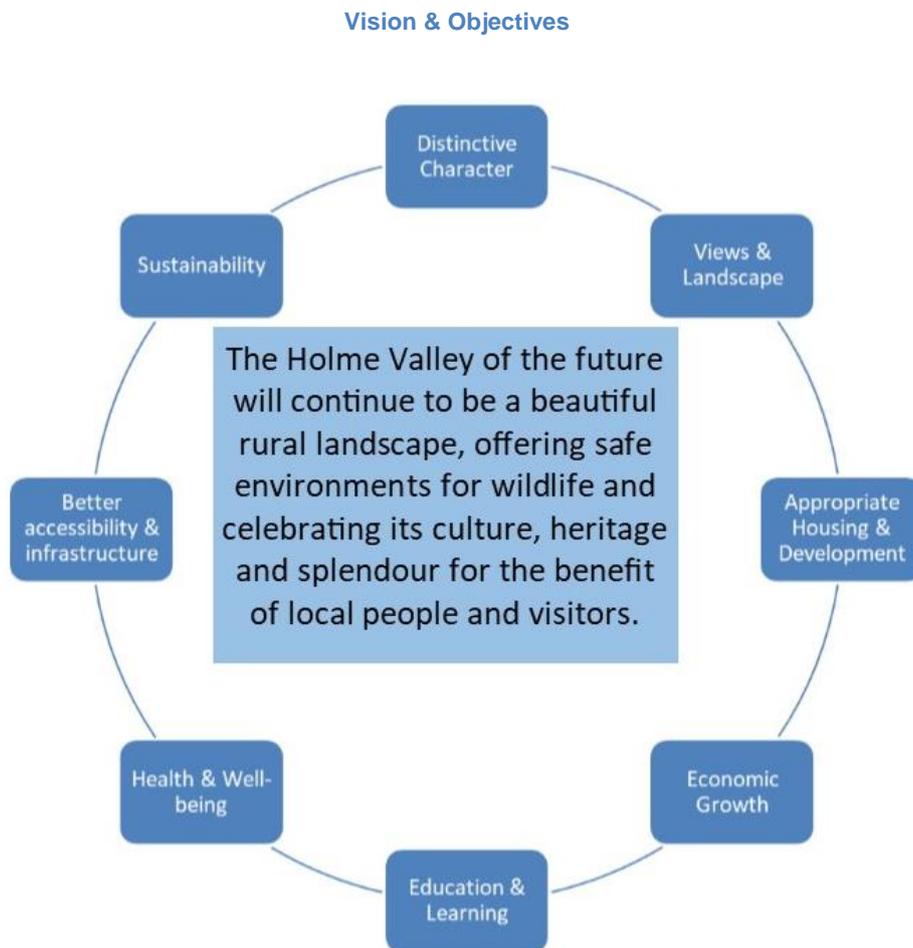
5.0 Detail of the content of the NDP

5.1 How is the NDP structured?

The NDP comprises a vision statement, a set of objectives and formal planning policies. These policies are accompanied by detailed commentary explaining the meaning of the policies and what they are seeking to achieve. The document addresses each policy area in turn, covering a range of areas including landscape, heritage, housing, the economy, education, transport and sustainability.

5.2 What is the proposed vision and objectives?

The vision is based on the steering group’s views, feedback from the groups to which they belong and the many consultation exercises carried out in recent years, and describes what we want to achieve over the next 15 years.



5.3 What are the proposed policies?

The policies flow from the objectives and will be used to determine planning applications submitted to Kirklees Council. The policies will help developers understand local priorities and aspirations. Each policy contains detail to guide planning decisions related to its overall theme.

PLANNING POLICIES

1. Protecting and enhancing the landscape character of the Holme Valley
2. Protecting and enhancing the built character and conservation areas of the Holme Valley and promoting high quality design
3. Conserving and enhancing local non-designated heritage assets
4. Design Codes for high quality shop fronts, and advertisements
5. Promoting high quality public realm and improvements to gateways and highways
6. Building homes for the future
7. Supporting economic activity
8. Facilitating development in Holmfirth, Honley and other local centres
9. Protecting and enhancing local community facilities
10. Protecting local green space
11. Improving transport, accessibility and local infrastructure
12. Promoting sustainability
13. Protecting Wildlife and Securing Biodiversity Net Gain
14. Focusing developer contributions on local priorities.

5.4 What else is in the NDP?

The NDP also includes 'actions' to be taken forward by the Parish Council alongside the NDP. These non-planning issues cannot be addressed through a NDP but they are still important concerns identified by the community: by capturing them, we can help inform future work by the Parish Council to deliver the overall vision and objectives.