

Clarification Information about the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Referendum on Thursday 4th November 2021

There has been some confusion about the content, format and implications of the NDP so the following information should provide further clarity to address some of the questions raised in recent days. Full information about the plan and its development is available on the HVPC website:

https://www.holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk/Neighbourhood_Plan_22997.aspx

PURPOSE AND FORMAT OF THE NDP

- The NDP is a planning document designed to be used by the Kirklees and Peak District National Park planners when making decisions on applications within the Holme Valley. If adopted, they will have to consider those policies written specially for the Holme Valley as well as the Local Plan and National Planning Policies.
- The Holme Valley NDP is one of the largest in the country because we are a large parish council area and a NDP has to be led by a 'qualifying body'. Many NDPs cover one village whilst ours seeks to identify the unique landscape, heritage and community which makes the Holme Valley special. This has made the process and the resultant document lengthy and detailed. This is also the first NDP to be produced in Kirklees so every stage has been new for everyone involved adding to the time involved in its preparation.
- Its preparation has been overseen by a steering group of parish councillors and community group representatives (including Honley Civic Society, Holme Village Residents Association, Scholes Future Group, Holmfirth Transition Town and others). They have reported into the Parish Council's Planning Committee and decisions to progress the plan through each formal stage (including submission) have been taken by the Full Council.
- The steering group was appointed by the Parish Council with no involvement from Kirklees or the Peak District National Park. Members are unpaid and have not received any expenses: all members have given their time and effort freely. They have been advised by an expert planning consultant who was paid to support the steering group in turning the community's ideas into concrete impactful planning policies that met the permitted conditions of a neighbourhood plan (it cannot contradict a Local Plan or National Planning Policy Guidance). The majority of the costs of the development of the NDP have been paid by Central Government grants applied for by the Parish Council.

PREPARATION OF THE NDP AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- The NDP has not been written by Kirklees. However, we have had extensive discussions with both planning authorities to make sure the policies are clear and consistent. This is important so that planners understand Holme Valley priorities and can utilise them to justify planning decisions without the risk of appeals on the basis of ambiguity or conflict with the Local Plan.

- At every stage of the NDP's development, from deciding what priorities to focus on to developing the detailed policies, the community has been consulted. This has included specific consultation events and communications in 2017, 2018 and 2019 and no-one has been excluded from this process. Details of all these steps and the consideration given to every representation received are given in the Consultation Statement (https://www.holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/NDP/Consultation%20Statement%20for%20HVPC%20approval_compressed.pdf) on the website.

- An Independent Planning Examiner reviewed the NDP earlier in 2021 and confirmed that "the HVNDP reflects the views of the community and will set out a clear vision and suite of policies and proposals for the Neighbourhood Area". His report is available on the HVPC website (<https://www.holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk/UserFiles/Files/NDP/Holme%20Valley%20NDP%20Examiners%20Report%20v%20Final.pdf>) and also details all the modifications instructed by the Examiner to make a more robust plan.

IMPACT OF THE POLICIES

- There are 13 policies in the NDP which all have to focus on planning related matters: none of them challenge or undermine the integrity of the Green Belt.

- There is a strong focus on protecting and enhancing our landscape and built character as well as our local heritage assets including specific buildings in Holmfirth and Honley identified as of particular value. Policies outline the need for high quality public spaces and provide design principles for shopfronts and advertisements stressing the importance of designs being sympathetic to the character of the area.

- No new housing development sites are proposed (they are set in the Local Plan and cannot be removed by a NDP) so the housing policy outlines how these future developments should be shaped to address the identified local housing need in terms of density, size and tenure. It also highlights the desire to make use of brownfield sites, former mill buildings and provide affordable housing.

- Policies on economic activity and development in Holmfirth, Honley and our local centres outline the support for and value of local businesses whilst the policy on local community

facilities highlights the importance of our range of community halls, churches, parks, healthcare services, schools and cultural venues. In addition 4 Local Green Spaces in Scholes (Sandy Gate; Well Garden, Marsh Rd), Wooldale (Wooldale Chapel Field) and Hade Edge (Hade Edge ground opposite Bay Horse NB. we had to keep the original name used in consultation rather than amend to the Boshaw Trout) are identified for additional protection from development

- Policies on transport, accessibility and local infrastructure stress the importance of new schemes protecting the key characteristics of the area and highlight the need to connect new developments effectively to public transport, pedestrian and cycle routes as well as consider parking appropriately.

- Addressing climate change and sustainability is reflected through the NDP and in specific policies which outline how major developments are required to prepare sustainability statements outlining how they will use renewable energy, achieve energy efficient designs etc.

PROCESS OF THE REFERENDUM

- The decision on whether to adopt the NDP, and make the planning policies within it apply in future planning decisions in the Holme Valley, is made by the electors of the Holme Valley so it is a democratic process. It is not a decision by Kirklees, the Peak District National Park or the Holme Valley Parish Council.

- If 50% + 1 of all the votes cast are in favour, it will be adopted. If not, it will not proceed and the status quo will remain. This would mean that planning applications in the Holme Valley will continue to be considered by Kirklees and Peak District National Park planners as they are today using their district wide Local Plans and National Planning Policy Guidance.