

HOLT PARISH COUNCIL – RESERVED MATTERS RESPONSE

Application: PL/2025/08648 – Land North of Melksham Road, Holt

Holt Parish Council (HPC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on this Reserved Matters application. We appreciate the constructive way in which Redcliffe Homes and their design team have engaged with HPC, including pre-submission meetings in June and September. Several of HPC's priorities are now reflected in the reserved matters application PL/2025/08468, and the submission represents meaningful progress from the outline stage.

A number of matters still require refinement to ensure the development integrates appropriately with Holt's character and delivers safe, inclusive and high-quality living conditions. These relate in particular to:

1. The design and landscaping of the parking for plots 47–52.
2. The specification, inclusivity and oversight of the LAP; and
3. The highways matters summarised below, particularly the early delivery of the TRO, visibility splays and a further review of a controlled crossing provision.

HPC has already raised these concerns with Redcliffe. In their recent email, Redcliffe acknowledged these concerns and confirmed they are awaiting further feedback from the LPA before refining the details. HPC welcomes this constructive approach and clarifies the issues that require resolution. HPC sets out its position on each below.

1. Parking for plots 47-52

HPC agrees with Wiltshire Council's Urban Design Officer (04.12.2025) that the current frontage for plots 47–52 requires revision. The layout creates a visually dominant run of ten vehicles with minimal green relief, which is not characteristic of Holt, or any of its affordable housing parking, is inappropriate for such a prominent village-entrance location and is contrary to Wiltshire Design Guide. HPC therefore considers this the most important design matter still requiring attention.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTION

- a) Redesigned arrangement that breaks up the long frontage, distributes parking more effectively reflecting the village of Holt and Wiltshire Design Guide expectations.
- b) If remodelling is not achievable then significant landscape mitigation reflecting the Urban Design Officer's recommendations to include green relief to at least one landscaped space per four parking bays with strategic tree planting to soften views and reinforce the rural gateway character.

2. LAP

The LAP is a critically important element of the Redcliffe scheme, as it will be the only safe, accessible play space for younger children given the distance to Holt Recreation Ground and the lack of any controlled crossing of the B3107 to Bewley Homes LAP and trim trail.

For context, the Bewley Homes development (88 dwellings, to be constructed 2026–2029) on the opposite side of Melksham Road will include its own equipped play space and trim trail, but there is no controlled crossing to link the two sites. Earlier iterations of Redcliffe’s access strategy did include a toucan crossing, removed later at Wiltshire Council Highways’ instruction.

While HPC recognise site constraints, the LAP must still provide a meaningful inclusive play space that meets S106 expectations. One key omission is the absence of a perimeter fence to provide a safe, dog-free and contained environment for younger children. The LAP’s position should also be revisited as it is in the lower corner of the site offering limited natural surveillance.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTIONS:

- A) Ensure LAP meets Wiltshire Council Fixed Play Area Characteristics as detailed in the s106
- B) At least two modest pieces of equipment suitable for ages 2–6,
- C) At least one additional inclusive item (e.g., cradle swing, accessible rocker, ground-level sensory play),
- D) Cycle/scooter storage,
- E) Surfacing that is durable and accessible year-round,
- F) HPC requests sight of the final LAP specification before conditions relating to landscaping are discharged.

3. Highways

HPC recognises that Redcliffe are keen to support the TRO and they originally proposed a controlled crossing, after initial WC advice, and that its removal reflects WC Highways’ position rather than Redcliffe’s. We welcome their commitment in the Construction Management Statement (CMS) to route all construction traffic from the east via the A350, thereby avoiding Holt village and no HGVs will be permitted to wait on the B3107.

Our Highways concerns however are firmly rooted in evidence, including Redcliffe’s own traffic data, national guidance, Decision Notice conditions, and lived experience of the B3107. The Reserved Matters submission must still ensure safe and suitable access for all residents, including children, older people, and disabled users.

Our concerns focus on

- a. Timing of TRO to 30mph
- b. Visibility splays for 50mph instead of 30mph
- c. Lack of controlled pedestrian crossing

a. Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) – 30mph speed limit

The Decision Notice requires the new 30mph limit and gateway features as part of providing all highway works shown on Site Access Drawing 22044-GA01A. However, Holt will experience an extended period of construction activity from both the Redcliffe and Bewley sites with significant contractor and HGV movements occurring long before any Redcliff Homes are occupied. TROs commonly take many months. HPC

therefore asks that the TRO be initiated now to provide improved safety for contractors, construction operatives and drivers negotiating HGV turning movements at the site entrances. This would also protect pedestrians accessing the bus stops, children walking to Holt Pre-School and Primary School, disabled residents and those with limited mobility,.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTIONS

- the required TRO to extend the 30mph speed limit along Melksham Road is made, advertised, and confirmed prior to the commencement of any construction works on site.
- Informative 31 (relocation of Holt's existing gateway signs further east) is incorporated at an early design stage.

b. Visibility splays

HPC notes that the submitted splays appear to be based on the current 50mph environment rather than the proposed 30mph village gateway that will apply once the TRO is in place. Designing splays to a 50mph standard for the lifetime of the development (Condition 15) risks more hedgerows being removed than is necessary, which would erode the rural character of this approach to Holt.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTIONS

- Any visibility splay should explicitly reflect the intended long-term speed limit, to avoid unnecessary hedge removal that will arise from applying 50 mph standards to a road that is intended to function permanently as a 30mph village entrance.

c. Controlled pedestrian crossing

HPC remains concerned about the absence of a controlled pedestrian crossing on the B3107 whilst noting Redcliffe had proposed one at outline due to Wiltshire Council advice and then subsequently removed it due to WC advice.

HPC would like to note that:

- Redcliffe's own Transport Assessment demonstrates a level of pedestrian activity that, when combined with vehicle flows, results in P×V values above recommended thresholds for informal crossing.
- The lack of gap availability on the B3107 at peak times means that reliance on informal, unprotected crossing movements will not be safe for all users.

Redcliffe's Transport Assessment identifies peak-hour pedestrian flows of around 20–25 people and traffic volumes of approximately 820–900 vehicles per hour. This results in P×V values in the range of 12,000–25,000, well above the national guidance threshold where controlled pedestrian facilities should be considered. HPC therefore considers the evidence to clearly support revisiting whether a controlled crossing is appropriate at this location.

We have found out that National guidance (LTN 1/95 and CD 143) indicates that values above 2,000 warrant consideration of a controlled crossing, and values above 10,000 represent a strong case for such provision.

These points are reinforced by national policy and best practice guidance. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that developments must provide “*safe and suitable access for all users*” (para. 115) and that decision-makers should ensure places are “*safe, inclusive and accessible... with a high standard of pedestrian and cycle routes*” (para. 118). Manual for Streets and LTN 1/95 also identify controlled crossings as appropriate where operating speeds are high or unpredictable, pedestrians include vulnerable users (children, older people, disabled people, wheelchair users) and P×V values indicate that waiting times or gap acceptance become unreasonable or unsafe.

ALL these circumstances apply at this site.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTION:

- the LPA and Highway Authority revisit the provision of a controlled crossing.

HPC wishes to acknowledge several positive elements of the Reserved Matters submission and the constructive changes made through pre-application engagement.

1. Appointment of Thrive Architects

HPC shared how Thrive had produced the approved Bewley scheme. Redcliffe appointing Thrive has resulted in a more coherent approach across both developments and supports a consistent character at the eastern entrance to Holt.

2. Central green space

The central green is a welcome improvement on the outline layout and provides a clear focal point for the development. As seen on the neighbouring Bewley scheme, which reduced from 90 to 88 dwellings to achieve a more successful design, a small reduction here could similarly allow this space to become even more generous or potentially incorporate the LAP within a more overlooked and supervised location.

3. Appropriate and locally responsive material palette

The materials shown in the DAS, including recon stone, brick, render and slate/tile roofs, are well-chosen and reflect the palette already established in Holt, helping ensure the development sits comfortably within its context.

4. Well-handled parking arrangements across most of the site

Aside from plots 47–52, parking has generally been broken up into smaller courts or on-plot arrangements, reducing visual dominance and supporting a more landscape-led street scene.

5. Cock-and-hen boundary walls

The inclusion of numerous cock-and-hen stone walls is a strong and locally distinctive feature. This treatment reflects Holt’s character well and provides a high-quality edge to several streets and frontages.

6. Sensitive placed bungalows

The two bungalows on the western boundary are appropriately located to protect neighbour amenity and demonstrate a thoughtful response to the interface with existing homes.

HPC welcomes the positive aspects of the Reserved Matters submission and the applicant's constructive engagement to date. A number of refinements, however, are still required to ensure the scheme fully reflects Holt's character and provides safe, accessible movement for future residents.

HPC therefore asks the LPA and Redcliffe Homes to consider:

- The design and landscaping of the plots 47–52.
- The specification, inclusivity and oversight of the LAP; and
- The highways matters summarised above, particularly the early delivery of the TRO, visibility splays and further review of a controlled crossing provision.

Addressing these points would, in the Parish Council's view, strengthen the scheme and ensure that it aligns fully with the principles of the Wiltshire Design Guide, relevant planning policies and the expectations of Holt's community. Appendix 1 provides our suggested resolutions for each area.

HPC remains willing to continue constructive dialogue with the applicant and the Local Planning Authority as the Reserved Matters progress and subsequent conditions and S278 details are prepared.