

## Response ID ANON-8CC9-KD5V-H

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-03-16 14:15:57**

### Your details

**What is your name?**

**Forename:**

Christopher

**Surname:**

Durham

**Are you making an individual response or on behalf of an organisation?**

Individual

**If individual, please tell us what type:**

Resident of Somerset West and Taunton

**Name of organisation:**

**Please choose one from the drop-down list:**

**What is your (personal/organisational) address?**

██████████  
██████████  
██████████  
██████████  
██████████

**What is your email address?**

██████████  
██

### 1. Overview and objectives

**Do you agree that these are the right Objectives for the Local Plan?**

Disagree

**Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):**

1. Objective 6 may well be overtaken by electric vehicles and battery trains and their developing technology, which will render travel, especially to and from West Somerset less objectionable or neutral in climate terms.

2. Objectives 3 and 8 potentially conflict, given the adverse effect of large scale new development on the tourist landscape round Minehead and elsewhere.

Objective 5 needs to be strengthened. Development should go forward only when necessary infrastructure enhancements are going forward or firmly committed.

### 2. Carbon neutrality

**Question 1a: Should we aim to require that all newdevelopment is 'zero carbon' by as soon as possible (e.g. by 2025) or give slightly more time (e.g. by 2030) for developers to adapt their design approaches, materials and suppliers?**

As soon as possible (e.g. by 2025)

**Question 1b: Should we allocate sites for specific renewable energy development or identify broad areas which we consider suitable?**

A combination of both of the above

**Question 1c: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

None at this time

### 3. Sustainable locations

**Question 2a: Do you agree with the tiers that identifies Taunton followed by 6 tiers covering the other settlements?**

Yes

**If not, what changes would you make and why? (200 words max):**

Subject to 2b

**Question 2b: Do you think Watchet and Williton should be seen as associated settlements for the purposes of the Local Plan due to their close proximity and in complementing the services of each other (and therefore be in a higher tier to Bishops Lydeard and Wiveliscombe)?**

Yes - Watchet and Williton should be seen as associated settlements

**Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):**

1. Proximity linked with the need to avoid duplicate supporting provision.
2. Enhance transport links with Taunton town centre.

**Question 2c: Do you think we should carry on with the way housing is currently distributed across our area (see pie chart) or should we be doing something different, such as one of the three options suggested below?**

Increase housing in Taunton and Wellington; and reduce in Minehead and Rural Centres

**Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):**

Adverse effect of new development on tourist landscape of West Somerset

**What else do you think about housing distribution in our area?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

Yes to iv) , v) and vi).

**Question 2d: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

The emphasis on reducing travel is overdone. Outside Taunton/Wellington/M5 corridor travel is inevitable for jobs, shopping etc.

### 4. New and affordable homes

**Question 3a: Should our housing requirement figure match the Government's minimum figure of 702 dwellings per year or should we have a higher figure?**

The housing requirement should be the Government's minimum figure of 702 dwellings per year

**Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):**

The availability of housing land in WST is significantly constrained by the National Park and the 702 figure is therefore probably too high. Sadly the coronavirus may release a significant number of dwellings for family or non-family occupation.

**Question 3b: How should we proactively plan for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches?**

Allocate sites specifically for pitches.

**Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):**

Any pitches should be sited so as to avoid any adverse effect on values and amenities of existing and new "ordinary" dwellings.

**Question 3c: Should we require that all new housing developments include a percentage of new homes that are designed to be accessible, adaptable and wheelchair accessible?**

Require a proportion of dwellings to meet the category standard as set out in Building Regulations Part M.

**Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):**

But only once the need has been assessed by reference to numbers of local people.

**Question 3d: How should we provide for custom self-build plots? Should we:**

Include a positive encouragement policy, including for community-led projects, and leave the housing market to deliver plots as and when demand arises; and/or

**Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):**

It is not clear how the fourth objective would be achieved. A right of pre-emption in favour of the housing authority, for instance, could not be for more than 21

years, from recollection.

**Question 3e: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

There must be doubt as to whether it is possible to achieve a stable tenure mix, to judge from the experience in Seaward Way. But equity sharing can help towards owning one's own home and avoid a too high ratio of tenants.

**5. A prosperous economy**

**Question 4a: Should we ensure the growth of our local economy through an increase in the proportion of higher value jobs (with limited increase of jobs overall) or through a significant increase in the number of jobs?**

Develop bespoke and realistic growth ambitions linked to the Council's Economic Development (Prosperity) Strategy (i.e. increase the proportion of higher value jobs within existing overall job numbers and not pursue a significant increase in job numbers overall); or

**Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):**

SWT is a one-off and the HSW area and needs are too disparate.

**Question 4b: Should we keep all of our existing employment sites and allocations in employment use or should we allow the loss of some to other uses? How should we decide which ones to lose?**

Develop flexible policy allowing for the loss of any existing/ proposed employment site subject to specific criteria

**Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):**

Management flexibility

**Question 4c: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

The contraction of retail points to concentrating on one centre, for which Taunton seems the only realistic choice.

**6. Infrastructure**

**Question 5a: On what infrastructure should we prioritise developer contributions? (Please rank in order of priority)**

**IO - 5a - ranking - Affordable housing:**

3

**IO - 5a - ranking - Designing for the Climate Change Emergency:**

1

**IO - 5a - ranking - Accessible, Adaptable and Wheelchair Accessible homes:**

4

**IO - 5a - ranking - Strategic Infrastructure (schools, transport, community facilities):**

2

**Question 5b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

There need to be capital road improvements between West Somerset and the M5 corridor to support the rest of the plan, ameliorated by electric vehicles.

**7. Connecting people**

**Question 6a: How can we encourage people not to use their car when travelling into our towns for shopping and work? How can we provide more opportunities for using public transport in rural areas?**

**Please provide comments (200 words max):**

1. Less scope than is generally suggested. Buses are not attractive to many, and provision has anyway declined. S 106 (and CIL) money should be used to improve roads and not facilitate buses.

2. rail investment could be more productive.

**Question 6b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

6b/2 is wrong and might anyway be supporting revenue from capital, only possible for a limited time.

## 8. The natural and historic environment

**Question 7a: Are there any specific measures that you would like to see new developments deliver to improve biodiversity locally?**

**Please provide comments (200 words max):**

No, thanks..

**Question 7b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

No, thanks.

## 9. Thriving coastal and rural communities

**Question 8a: How should we manage development in rural areas? Should we:**

Have settlement boundaries across the District; or

**Question 8b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

8b/1 and 8b/2 potentially conflict.

## 10. Wellbeing of our residents

**Question 9a: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

With respect , given limited local government resources, this sounds too much like "motherhood and apple pie". More important or achievable priorities elsewhere?

## 13. Policies for our places: the Coastal Strip

**Question 12a: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

The area needs better road, and, if possible, rail access to prosper. These approaches are unlikely to work on their own.