

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

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-03-13 10:05:17**

### Your details

**What is your name?**

**Forename:**

Colin

**Surname:**

Fisher

**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:**

Mrs

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

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

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**What is your email address?**

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

### 1. Overview and objectives

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

Agree

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

The area needs controlled well thought out development

### 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?**

Identify suitable areas through criteria based policies

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

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

We should be building to the Future Homes Standard.

We should encourage small scale green energy. wind in industrial settings: solar in domestic settings, water in small turbines.

### 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):**

The maintenance of settlement boundaries and open countryside categories is essential for the tier 7 villages

**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)?**

No - Watchet and Williton should be seen as separate settlements

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

I don't know enough to comment. It should be a matter for the Parish/town councils to decide

**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 reduce in Minor Rural Settlements

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

Taunton needs to develop as a centre. The emission mitigation strategies depend on a denser settlement

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

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

The M5 is a boundary not a corridor. There must be no development which extends Taunton to the East of the M5

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

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

These are all sensible

#### **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 minimum figure is excess of the districts needs, is based on an overall number which the Government cannot justify and is not supportable by any economic strategy I have seen. We should only commit to 702 because we have to

**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):**

Travellers have been responsible for uncontrolled development where I have previously lived.

**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?**

Do not require specific measures for adaptable, accessible and wheelchair homes.

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

There should be allowance in development plans for provision according to actual demand. Last time I looked there were 600,000 wheelchair users in the UK of whom 250,000 were dependent on the chair. It is impossible to estimate the demand.

**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):**

as above, estimating real demand is almost impossible. Let the market provide

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

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

All of the above are sensible but they will not be delivered as long as we are dependent on developers to deliver them. The objective of 25% has never been met.

Over the last three years the level is 14%

## 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):**

The Heart of the South West objective requires a completely unrealistic growth rate. Our unemployment rate is below the national average; our average incomes are below the UK average. We don't need more jobs, we need better jobs.

**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?**

Retain all existing and currently allocated employment sites; or

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

I am doubtful about the Districts ability to control a flexible policy. if you can then be flexible

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

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

We have to allow change in town centres. So long as we have concentration and not sprawl the centre will re-invigorate

## 6. Infrastructure

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

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

2

**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):**

3

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

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

The Council will be unable to reconcile these priorities by working through developers. we have not achieved the one objective of affordable housing. How will we be able to meet the climate objectives as well?

All developments should be

\*required to measure their embodied carbon

\* meet the Future Homes Standard

\*operate full disclosure of costs and margins in an open book approach before planning is granted

## 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):**

Open a Station at Wellington. Reconnect the West Somerset railway. Intensify settlement in Taunton so as to support bus travel. Look at Milton Keynes for the separation of cycle, pedestrian and motor travel. Licence Uber

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

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

All good

## 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):**

The recognition that the District as a whole is distinctive because of its natural landscape. The valleys between the hills should be declared Areas of High Landscape Value. Even though this has no statutory basis it can be the framework for the development of policies to encourage bio-diversity such as the restoration of hedgerows. It can also be the framework for planning reducing the risk of large scale development.

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

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

All good

## **9. Thriving coastal and rural communities**

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

Have a policy which is a hybrid of (i) and (ii) where there are settlement boundaries only in areas of greater development pressure i.e. parts of the District that are more accessible - closer to the M5, Taunton and Wellington areas.

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

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

The villages and settlements around Taunton are different from the West Somerset villages and are under much greater pressure from large developers. They need the minimal protection that settlement boundaries and the open country designations offer. Criteria based policies, whilst good in principle, are a recipe for developer interests. I would need convincing they were enforceable.

## **10. Wellbeing of our residents**

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

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

I like all of these but fear they are not compatible with the resources the Council can command. I think we are setting ourselves up to fail.

## **11. Policies for our places: Taunton**

**Question 10a: How do you think we could introduce more housing into Taunton Town centre?**

Not Answered

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

We seem to have abandoned an objective assessment of need. The last I can find is 2016. I am in favor of intensifying development in Taunton but have no idea which of these options is the best way of delivering it

**Question 10b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

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

All good again

## **12. Policies for our places: Wellington**

**Question 11a: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

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

The Wellington town council is best placed to answer these questions

## **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 opinions of the Parish councils along the coast should be the frame for policies there