

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KDQV-D

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-02-13 16:35:26**

Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

DOMINI

Surname:

JOHN

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?

Agree

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

Each objective you have presented is a must and much has to be done to meet them. If we are to bring carbon neutrality down by 2030 (Objective 1) we have to have safe cycle and walkways to encourage people out of their cars - at the moment there are clearly not enough. I agree with Objective 3 but developers are getting away with not building enough homes for first time buyers so the planning department needs to become much, much stronger. These big developers have very powerful legal teams behind them so we have to have the same.

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?

Allocate sites for specific renewable energy development

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

I agree with all additional policy approaches, in particular, that developers have to put in place more ways of making new homes more efficient for the environment right from the start of the build. They should automatically install solar panels, electric power points for cars, drains placed in a position where a

water butt can be situated (I mean not putting a down pipe where the back gate opens so not enabling a water butt to be used). 1c/3 should also be made easier to encourage residents to take up these additions for the residents benefit and for the local community and the wider environment. In fact, if developers were made to install solar panels etc on a new build the prices would come down allowing everyone the financial chance to install them.

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):

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):

I believe they should be seen as associated settlements because of their close proximity to each other so they can work together for the benefit of both.

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?

Leave housing distribution the same

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

I'm not sure of this one as more housing creates more pollution. If there had been a 4th option that said 'Leave house distribution the same as the current plan and increase around Williton' I would have clicked that option; they would have easier access to Bridgwater and Taunton and with more public transport in place it would make it less detrimental to the local environment. Taunton has many pollution problems because of all the road networks that flow into it and unless public transport is increased and numerous safe cycle and walkways are created then people are still going to use their cars, even if they live on the outskirts, increasing pollution further. Taunton doesn't need any more development without the infrastructure to go with it.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

I certainly think that more housing should be allocated to Wellington (iv) where there are many facilities already and it would become an even better choice if they had a railway station. As already mentioned above, I don't think Taunton needs further housing than that which is already planned or underway. Nor do I think it's a good idea to spread housing along the motorway corridor either, quite simply because the health of those residents are put in danger from pollutants.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

No, not really

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):

Reason being is that we have enough housing going up so we're cutting up our countryside which we need more than ever because of the changing climate. As I've mentioned before when these extra houses are built they must have good, safe cycle and walking amenities as well as green spaces for the residents.

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):

Traveller encampments should be kept on a small scale (just a few homes) thus enabling small pockets of land to be purchased It would also provide minimal amount of disruption to the local community thus not raise as much objection

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):

We have many elderly and disabled people living independently in the area. There has never been a time when there has been a greater need to build more

bungalows whether it's for people to buy or for social housing.

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

Identify and allocate specific sites for self-build plots in locations related to where people want to live according to our self-build register; and/or, Allow self-build plots on Rural Exception sites provided that they are secured as affordable housing for ever

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

Identifying and allocating specific sites would make it easier for people to see what's available; I think that there would be a fair amount of people, especially the younger buyer, who would like to secure a self-build plot as it would be a much cheaper way of getting a home.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

All good points but nothing to add

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?

Align with the Heart of the South West growth ambitions (deliver a shift towards a significant increase in overall job numbers including higher value jobs)

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

If we want to keep our young people in the area then we need to ensure that jobs are here for them. We should also want smaller industrial units to encourage more bespoke trades and for them to be affordable. We also need to make sure that there is an entertainment site such as a music arena (maybe on the Old Market site). This will not only provide jobs but will encourage our young people to stay and encourage more to the County Town. We need to entice a mix of businesses.

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):

We do need to be flexible in our need for employment but large businesses would have to be placed out of town thereby increasing the need for additional vehicles on the road thus more pollution. It would be good to see a wide range of smaller businesses thrive. What we don't want any more of is a large, out of town, shopping centre. Taunton itself is losing shops - could the vacant properties be used for 'pop-up' shops where business rates are not prohibitive

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

All look good. I especially agree with point 4c/4

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:

4

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

1

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):

No comments, all look good.

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):

Firstly we MUST provide safe routes for cyclists and walkers to get about because at the moment the networks for this group are either not there or do not work. If you cut parking spaces in town this would hopefully encourage people to use the Park and Ride at either end. Some people currently do use this but certainly the P&R at Gateway in Taunton is shocking and a very unpleasant place to wait for 20 minutes, especially when there is a wind blowing, which is often the case. It doesn't provide anything, apart from a parking space. There are no toilets, no decent shelter, no official on site to ask questions and to feel safe when waiting. It's barren looking and unkempt, very uninviting.

Public transport in rural areas is dire so why not increase the public transport, or in some cases where there is none at all, put it in place.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

They all look good, no comments

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):

It would be good that developers didn't rip out hedges and trees but, wherever possible, retain these within their building plan. It would also be good to see pockets of green space around and in-between housing and to be surrounded by more greenery (not to build houses so close together). If developers were made to have spaces for wildflowers, perhaps in corridors surrounding the development. Maybe put hedges between houses rather than fences which offer nothing for our wildlife.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

No additional comments; they all look 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):

I certainly think that on point 8b/7 development should be very limited because of the future sea level rises and because of the scant facilities in these areas.

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

New developments could allocate an area for allotments for those residents. Maybe all developments should provide allotment space plus more outside space for each property. Working on the land with others can enhance social and well-being as well as keeping people fit.

11. Policies for our places: Taunton

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

Encouraging car-free developments (which could include allocating specific sites for car-free developments).

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

With the transport network of bus and rail already in Taunton there is no reason why people living in town should need a car if their jobs are easily accessible by those transport links. However people are used to cars for their independence and it will take some time for people to learn not to rely on them but building small developments that are car-free may be the first step. These developments should be cheaper too so would be encouraging the next generation to use healthier transport methods.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

What you don't have on your policy approaches is making Taunton town centre a bus/pedestrian/cycling only zone. It would make the town more attractive to visit as well as cleaning up the air quality.

12. Policies for our places: Wellington

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Nothing to add

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):

No comments to add but agree with all