

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KDX7-N

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-03-16 04:24:35**

Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

jane

Surname:

Souter-Frost

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?

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What is your email address?

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██████████

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):

The amount of house building is far greater than need or affordability for local people.

I strongly object to any thought of planning for dwellings outside the settlement boundaries. The proposed developments which already are earmarked for Taunton will cause huge disruption to the local area. There is insufficient transport links of which is outside of the council control. Bus routes are being cut, there are no new lanes or areas put aside for separate cycle paths therefore the only mode of transport is the car.

I am further concerned that Taylor Wimpey has brought a swathe of land for the purpose of another huge characterless development. Please complete the estates before considering anymore development The land around Taunton is precious and unique. The current Coronavirus crisis demonstrates how important farming and food security to the UK is removing more countryside will be foolish.

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):

3. Sustainable locations

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

No

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

The council can grant planning permission for as many houses as it likes but the affordability factor needs to be recognised. Taunton is a town with minimal employment opportunities that provide a living wage. There is a need for social housing and housing for emergency workers and teachers who can not afford the expensive houses which will be built by the developers. There should only be minimal development in the villages and again be mindful of providing housing in the rural centres with little or no employment unless there are for retirees.

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)?

Not Answered

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

Watchet and Williton are separate places and any changes should be made independently of each to preserve their separate identities.

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):

None of the above. Too much housing the overall total needs to be reviewed and bearing in mind every council across the country is doing the same.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Housing needs to be built where there is a need for it. Taunton is already overly congested and by building further houses there will be a massive increase in traffic on the roads. Don't be deluded that people are going to cycle to work. It would make sense to consider building houses closer to Bridgwater to support Hinkley Point.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Too many houses are planned already which are way out of reach of the average young person in their twenties who has a low paid job in Somerset.

There is a need for social housing but for low paid workers who provide a service to the community such as emergency workers and teachers.

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):

I would prefer less housing and the government figure is too high.

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):

I think Somerset should follow same lead as other European countries which is minimal.

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):

I would like to see a greater proportion of properties built for older people such as bungalows rather than houses.

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):

Self build projects are an excellent way for people to build their homes which are more affordable than standard houses and are individual and are aesthetically pleasing.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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 only way to keep young people in the council area is to ensure there are jobs that pay a living wage. Multiple cafes, bars, convenience shops provide low wages on zero hours contracts and no job security. Residents need permanent employment on a living wage.

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):

The economy is in a state of flux and it would be foolish of the council to keep to arrangements agreed years ago. There is no point in having acres of employment sites if they are empty. The centre of Taunton requires urgent gentrification to attract visitors and residents.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

6. Infrastructure

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

IO - 5a - ranking - Affordable housing:

4

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

3

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

1

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):

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):

No cars - no people - no jobs - deprivation

In an ideal world everyone would leave their car at home and walk or cycle. Real life isn't like that. People have to travel to where the jobs are which means driving. People want to do this as quickly and cheaply as possible. There is no mention in the plan about getting a decent rail service between the towns in Somerset. The trains would make a huge impact on the reduction of vehicles. If people could travel from Wellington to Taunton by train it would be a huge benefit to residents. Getting rid of the park and ride buses was going to be a disaster. The bus service is not fit for purpose and the only way to get around is by car.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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):

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

I am very concerned that Taylor Wimpey has purchased land outside of the Taunton Settlement boundary with a view to build yet more homes. Taunton already has three significant estates in various stages of development and this does not include the planned housing in Wellington. The land where Taylor Wimpey has purchased should be a conservation area not destined for yet more housing. This area needs to be protected because it prevents flooding to Orchard Portman, Stoke St Mary, Henlade and Creech St Michael. There are a tremendous amount of trees on this land as well as wildlife such as bats, deer, otters and beavers. I agree that all policy approaches to meet Objective 7 should be included in current plans.

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):

I strongly object to any amendments to policy for when development in the countryside outside of settlement limits would be acceptable otherwise anyone will be able to build anywhere. Residents need protection from developers who have no interest of local wishes. There only concern is to make a profit and move on.

I also object to 8b/5 and 8b/6

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Wellbeing of residents is extremely important especially as you have highlighted that the council covers an area where there are a higher proportion of senior citizens. Transport is important to everyone but you can't expect an 80 year old to cycle to the shops therefore you need to consider transportation for everyone. Frequent local buses are key.

As a new resident of Taunton I like exploring the Blackdown hills travelling by car to the various car parks and enjoying the open spaces.

11. Policies for our places: Taunton

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

Requiring a housing mix skewed towards dwellings with fewer bedrooms; or

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

I support the increase of housing densities in central Taunton as more people wish to live in the centre of town.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

If Taunton continues to make cars the enemy people will go elsewhere for shopping and leisure. Exeter has an excellent park and ride service and Crabb Causeway has free parking. Taunton needs to provide quick links from the M5 and A38 to the centre of town and provide adequate parking not less parking.

Bridgwater has redeveloped the centre of town and now has additional shops with parking adjacent. Shops include, Mark & Spencer, Lidl and Aldi.

Taunton is a county town and needs to embrace the local heritage by not carving up the countryside and filling it with unimaginative modern housing estates which is exactly the same as every other council in the land. Every junction on the M5 is having major developments and if Taunton is going to compete it needs to offer something unique because at the moment the town centre is less desirable.

12. Policies for our places: Wellington

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):