

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KDQD-U

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-02-16 20:07:47**

Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

John

Surname:

Ainsworth

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?

██████████
████████████████████

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):

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):

The objectives are what I would hope the council can achieve. As a priority I see the need to ensure that all new developments whether council owned or those by other organisations meet the requirements set out. It may be that retrofitting other properties takes longer but it needs to be an aim. Is there a way that private home owners for example can have a financial incentive to retrofit? That may be difficult for many to afford.

In terms of agriculture there need to be incentives to farmers to protect soil quality and to plant trees.

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):

Yes in principle but I am not sure where Norton Fitzwarren fits as it is not listed yet is a community that has doubled (I estimate) in the 17 years since we moved here. Is it included in Taunton. As Henlade is separately listed as a village I think Norton Fitzwarren should be.

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):

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 have no strong opinions on this

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

I think the most important issue is the accessibility of housing to public transport and cycling and walking as easy options both for getting to work and leisure activities. I am happy for smaller places to have limited development so long as this is met.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

See previous answer

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 higher than 702 dwellings per year and determined by economic growth strategies, infrastructure improvements and unmet need from neighbouring planning authorities

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

It should take account of housing needs for specific groups

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):

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):

With the increase in numbers of those with need for accessible accommodation there should be a proportion dwellings specified

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):

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?

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):

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):

There needs to be flexibility in deciding on sites for employment

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

I hope that so far as is possible there is encouragement for the use of clean energy and for employment sites to be located near residential sites or within easy reach of public transport. Town centres need to be used for a variety of purposes if retail units are not needed but any new retail units need either to be in town centres or existing smaller centres and not on new out of town sites with no public transport

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):

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):

There need to be financial incentives to use public transport (including disincentives to park in town centre unless people have a need because of disability or work such as carers visiting clients). Some of this may be through working with the county council over reintroducing subsidies to bus companies and cheaper season tickets as well as retaining park and ride services. Good signposted cycle and walking routes are needed

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

All new developments should include requirements to be public transport and cycle/walking friendly

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):

Requirements for developers to include natural/wildlife friendly areas; a robust oversight of their requirements so that developers adhere to agreements; planting of trees in both urban and rural areas and seeking connectivity between areas of natural environment/habitats

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Agree with these. Work with those responsible for areas upstream to ensure land is used in ways that retain water e.g. planting trees. good soil management

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):

All good ideas. Particular concern about proposals for Hinkley Point C power station ensuring net gain for biodiversity

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Priority must be given to those less mobile or older in all developments and no encouragement for car use. Housing should be away from main roads which produce high air pollution. Need for schools to be away from high air pollution - if needs be by restricting traffic in their immediate vicinity

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):

Along with car free developments we need to ensure there is adequate public transport till late in the evening and at weekends unlike now

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

A good mix of ideas. More pedestrianisation needed so long as there is still good access for people with mobility needs - perhaps an increase in facilities such as the Compass Disability scheme with mobility scooters for hire including for longer periods into the evening

12. Policies for our places: Wellington

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Retaining the historic character is a good idea. Construction of relief road should help to reduce town centre traffic so that High street is for buses and those with limited mobility only. New railway station is excellent but there needs to be easy access from all areas of the town and villages nearby with public transport as well as car parking

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):

In view of the narrow roads and poor public transport, I hope SWAT will take an active part in looking at the feasibility of restoring a regular train service into Taunton. Although there are a number of issues to resolve over this, the West Somerset Railway is a resource for the area that can be better utilised for residents. Other public transport improvements may include returning the 28 bus service to a half hourly Saturday service all year and the Sunday one to at least hourly. The route from Minehead to Lynmouth is a tourist asset but now reduced to 2 months in the summer.