

# Response ID ANON-8CC9-KD1W-E

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-03-11 21:27:59**

## Your details

**What is your name?**

**Forename:**

Kay

**Surname:**

Collis

**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:**

Mr

**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?**

Agree

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

In addition to addressing local housing needs, the climate emergency needs to be taken into account. This is the most desperate situation we are facing as we will lose homes and farmland etc etc. This is where the most money needs to be spent especially on the coast.

I am disgusted with the millions spent on the merger of West Somerset and Taunton Councils, and the chaos this has caused. This money for a start could have been used to shore up the cliffs from Dunster Beach to Watchet and beyond preparing for sea level rises and extra storms. It also means the previous local plan is obsolete, another huge amount of work and expense wasted. We also hear that parking charges are to go up in Minehead and money creamed off to go to Taunton. Exactly what one expect with this merger which most people wish had never happened! I suppose any more mergers will also waste millions.

If something aint broke don't try to fix it!

## 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 are near a National Park and AONB with many traditional buildings. Carbon neutral Buildings should blend in with this. There have been some hideous modernist structures erected that stand out like sore thumbs. The holiday makers like the traditional character of the area and so do the residents. That is why we came to live here. Don't kill the goose that lays the golden egg with architects' ghastly dreams!

### 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):**

I do not think Minehead, Alcombe, Willaton, Watchet and villages should be looked upon as suitable for major development. There is quite enough of all types already with planning permission. There are no jobs to talk of so it is ideal as a busy holiday and retirement area. The roads to Taunton and Bridgwater are terrible with accidents most days. You are thinking of an hour's drive to commute at peak times. Hardly helping with carbon neutral goals! Taunton and Wellington should be the towns for development and for younger working people and families to live. Houses should be built as near as possible to places of employment to limit car use.

**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):**

Coastal areas should be special. This is where most holiday makers wish to go. They should not be made the same as everywhere else. The traditional feel of the holiday areas are what people want, to get away from the reality of everyday life and the horrendous amount of building that is taking place everywhere often in the most unsuitable areas.

**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):**

See above.

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

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

Yes the major developments should be next to the M5 corridor. Taunton and Wellington have ease of transport up or down the M5 and more employment opportunities. Minehead to Taunton is an hour's commute on a dangerous road at peak periods.

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

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

I agree with 1,2 and 3 but need more info. on 4.

### 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):**

This should be the minimum. The actual requirement appears to be less in many areas and the development should be to match the areas needs not Government figures covering beautiful countryside in unnecessary buildings.

**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):**

This is a difficult issue as many people believe these people are not true travellers and can leave the sites in a filthy state. True gypsies never did this and were actually welcomed in the area.

**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):**

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

**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):**

Demand leading is surely the way forward not just targets set by Government.

## **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):**

In new developments new trees should be planted, but where sites have existing trees and/or hedges of some size and worth, these should also be preserved and building works should be planned so as to incorporate them. Open spaces of grass should also be included. Any existing streams, or brooks, should not be piped but should be incorporated into the development. Also wild flower sections should be planted and maintained. In housing developments when any trees are considered to be diseased, or unsafe, and require felling, then replacements should be planted. Where possible certain areas should also be left untouched / wild. Wildlife underpasses between green areas should be provided under busy roads.

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

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

Seems OK

## **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):**

Particular attention should be paid to coastal erosion and coastal flooding, avoiding building developments altogether in these areas as the situation will only become worse as global warming continues, sea levels rise and weather extremes become more commonplace. It would also be most helpful if work could be carried out to defend / reinforce cliffs which are eroding and which will soon lead to the loss of roads, such as between Blue Anchor and Watchet.

I am very concerned about the erosion of the soft cliffs at Dunster Beach, Blue Anchor and Watchet. I saw on the news today that people are losing their homes in to the sea at Watchet and they will have to pay for the removal. The pub at the far end of Blue Anchor, which was one of the few places one could sit in the garden and watch the sunset over the sea has had to close and the car park is eroding in to the sea, and the pub will go in too eventually. This is right next to the road. The footpath at Dunster beach will soon be no more if we get more gales and rise in sea levels. This is a tourist area, the main source of income, why is nothing being done, let alone people losing their homes. Shoring up of the softer cliffs should be an immediate emergency.

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

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

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

Agreed

## **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):**

I would not wish to see too much development in Minehead or Watchet in view of the poor road access. Also care should be taken to avoid spoiling the historic nature and character of these coastal settlements. I would like to see greater care taken by the planning authorities when applications are made for new, out of character, buildings in the conservation area. Such building applications should be refused and only those which are of a traditional style should be given any consideration at all. No further building work should be allowed on low lying areas such as Dunster Marsh. The houses which were recently built there are bound to be flooded as we see the effects of global warming and rising sea levels and more extreme weather events. Similarly, the SHLAA identifies an area at Culvercliffe, Minehead (SO15) as being a possible site for building development. This is totally unsuitable, being a low lying area right next to the sea and forming part of the coast path. When it comes to enhancing the waterfronts, Watchet Marina desperately needs dredging as it is full of very deep mud, making it both

unsafe and unsightly. It is off-putting to tourists and to boat owners, who are choosing to relocate because of this problem.

The land at Beacon Road North hill Minehead should be removed from the SHLAA

as the visual impact would be dreadful in a Conservation Area, roads are very narrow with hair pin bends, loss of trees including those with preservation orders and slippage and subsidence due to the steep geology and the increasingly wet weather due to climate change.