

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KDQE-V

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-03-07 16:57:13**

Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

Mark

Surname:

Terrett

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?

Disagree

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

The local economy cannot support the proposed house building programme.

The infrastructure is not set up for this expansion as it is mainly made up of retired or seasonal /agricultural workers.

There area cannot attract enough doctors/teachers etc as it is. This will make what is already a problem a critical issue.

There are numerous brown field sites that could be redeveloped rather than go against the supposed green policies where developer's are only interested in concreting over green space as it makes there profit margins greater.

The two councils made a hash over the merger to create SWAT but this plan threatens to dwarf that,apart from those with a vested interest in its rollout

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?

Slightly more time (e.g. by 2030)

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):

If the council really want to lower carbon emissions they should give developers incentives to develop only brown field sites and introducing an effective public transport service using low carbon vehicles . An efficient, regular service at a affordable price would keep many vehicles off the road ,helping the situation

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):

Williton & Watchet should be classed as minor rural centres

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):

Combining the two settlements would be a disaster environmentally, destroying masses of good pasture land and creating a bottle neck with no where to go.

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):

Taunton & Wellington have established infrastructures and good transport links.

Redeveloping brown fields sites and re assigning retail outlets to residential redevelopment would revitalise the ailing high street whilst building around those established infrastructure

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Taunton & Wellington have the transport links , infrastructure and can attract staff and companies from other areas to develop the area , having a population that are more able to buy their own homes.

Hinkley point is only a short term peak. Once construction is complete most of the new influx of talent and money will move on leaving just a small percentage to run the day to day operation.

Over development in the Williton and Watchet could lead to a ghost town in 15 years time where an over developed area would. be without the employable population to support the infrastructure

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Keeping the majority of the development around Taunton, Wellington and Bridgwater

with improved local transport services connecting to main line services and motorways will reduce travelling, creating pedestrian areas and increase trade within those boundaries. Use of the existing brown field sites, compulsory purchase of dilapidated properties and redevelopment of empty retail units in to affordable housing will reduce travel and retail green space to be enjoyed by all

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 area has a large retired or rural economy. A lot of the work is seasonal.

There is only a small percentage that will be able to buy their own homes.

The danger is that the majority of homes will be for HA and will be subsidised by the tax payer or be bought up by investors who will increase their hold in the private rental sector. Again, the people most likely to be able to buy there homes will be in the Taunton ,Wellington & Bridgwater areas.

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):

Another use from brownfield sites .these could be adapted and the travellers should pay the equivalent of council tax for the use.

These sites should be remote as we all know the issues with mess and theft that comes with these settlements.

Fines should be issued regarding any mess left that could be used to finance these pitches

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 an older population this is crucial.

these should be grouped together so as the elderly community can have peace ,quiet and easily accessible

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

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

Self build should be held accountable to planning rules as all developers are.

Priority should be given to brown field sites

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

affordable housing and social housing need to be kept separate as the social housing no matter how well its maintained will always have a stigma attached to it which will affect the sales and resale of privately owned properties whether they affordable or full market potential.

Redeveloping brownfield sites and incorporating green spaces within that redevelopment will not only house families in a healthier environment but will help the carbon footprint

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):

Developing growth in higher paid jobs where people can work from home will bring more self reliance to the local economy with out the carbon footprint of commuting

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):

retain the existing sites but develop less reliance on them

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

empty retail units and brown field site that cannot be allocated to housing should be revitalised as employment centres and low rent property for start up business.

6. Infrastructure

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

IO - 5a - ranking - Affordable housing:

1

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

2

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):

using brownfield sites ,empty retail units and deserted properties the developers should build affordable homes with in a revitalised green space which would not only reduce the building on good green pasture land but would best use the existing drainage and sewage systems ,with improvements built in to the developments

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):

The bus service is appalling and more park and ride facilities should be utilised.
People will not stop using there car unless there is a more cost effective option available.

A good bus service using vehicles with green credentials that is regular in rush hour and off peak times will encourage people to use the system. If they are overcrowded, too expensive or do not run at times to suit the population people will not use them.

If parking for there own cars becomes too expensive they will shop online , socialise locally and the high streets & town centre leisure business will die quicker than they already are.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Improving the digital connections will make it easier and more effective for an increased number of people to work from home.

This will reduce carbon emission's via travel to and from work but could isolate people in there own homes , bringing fresh problems.

There is a need to return to the local communities of previous generations. Homes with more than postage size gardens , plenty of green open spaces for people to walk and socialise woodland to help the lungs of the planet and all homes to have charging points in their garages or on their driveways.

Giving people more green space instead of cramming them into boxes like developers wish to do is just festering a problem that with come back and bite society in the backside.

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):

Green space should be preserved at all costs
Brownfields and empty/abandoned properties should be developed before using green space for development.
Dying retail units should be redeveloped for affordable living.
Flood plains/hedgerows and trees should be preserved at all costs for future generations.
Wildlife and flowers should be encouraged to thrive in a last ditch attempt to retain the eco balance of the countryside and inevitably the planet

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Objective 7 is a good starting point in moving forward to protect our environment and the historical landscape.

It would lay out a framework for further development in protecting the countryside and its wildlife so that policy makers can develop fresh ideas on how to create more suitable homes for the population without the sacrificing our heritage by a money grabbing minority with no thought of the future.

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):

What makes people from outside the local area visit and spend there money in our pubs , restaurants & hotels etc.
It is the countryside, the character villages and the coast line.

In a mainly agricultural economy with low wages , if we want to improve the living standards of the locals ,especially the young we need to play to our strengths.

This means maintaining those things that bring people to the region for leisure and to live.

If we can encourage growing companies to invest in setting up in our major towns, with good transport links into the countryside & coast close by they will bring in employees who will want to live and play in those areas. They will in turn spend money in our local villages ,bars & cafes.

If we can persuade people & businesses that their lives will be better moving from larger cities to our towns and thus bring that external income to the local economy we can start to thrive.

We need to encourage families that will make a contribution to the local society and business can offer a better standard of life to those employees and the rest will follow.

Watchet is a prime example. It could be developed into a thriving tourist destination bring jobs and visitors into its developing economy or it could end up a ghost town with a bad reputation .

It is on the cusp at present and depending on how much help it gets from local government and investors will make or break it!

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Green, safe places to walk ,socialise and exercise are essential to wel being to all residents

People need individual space . Cramming as many homes into developments is just creating a breeding ground of discontent ,frustration and disharmony.

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):

The most effective way of reducing the carbon footprint of the planet is to reduce the birth rate.

Less humans, less consumption

Building homes with fewer bedrooms would go some way to encouraging people to have smaller families

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Compulsory purchase of long term empty properties and empty retail units that could be converted to affordable homes. with or without parking depending on location would be an effective answer to housing shortage in areas that already have the infrastructure in place.

12. Policies for our places: Wellington

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Compulsory purchase of long term empty properties and empty retail units that could be converted to affordable homes. with or without parking depending on location would be an effective answer to housing shortage in areas that already have the infrastructure in place.

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):

Over development with affordable housing in this region will be counter productive.

As this is mainly an agricultural and seasonal economy a plethora of new homes will end up eating up green space that makes the area attractive to visitors who bring in much need money into the , area.

The majority of these proposed new homes will end up being snapped up by investors from outside the region ,trapping more people in the private rental market

or overloading the social housing market.

The way forward is developing the Watchet paper mill site with true affordable homes ,schools etc whilst also including building a new coastal road to replacing the one that is falling in to the sea which is vital for the area .

This in conjunction with the Onion Collective plan and efficient dredging of harbour would encourage tourism and all the investment that brings