

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KD81-F

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

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Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

Michael

Surname:

Waite

Are you making an individual response or on behalf of an organisation?

Individual

If individual, please tell us what type:

Resident of elsewhere

Name of organisation:

Please choose one from the drop-down list:

What is your (personal/organisational) address?

[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]

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What is your email address?

[REDACTED]
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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):

As high level Objectives for the Local Plan these issues are probably the most pressing. However whilst it is important to be ambitious in setting Objectives it is essential that they are attainable, otherwise they become self defeating.

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?

Identify suitable areas through criteria based policies

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

As part of its Paris Agreement obligations the Government has legislated for what it believes is a realistic and deliverable national objectives that balance the potential conflicts between economic need and responding to the Climate Emergency. These targets will be demanding enough without lower tiers of local

government seeking to impose yet more stringent policies as political gestures. To do so would put the deliverability of the other objectives of the plan at risk as well as distorting local economic patterns.

For example, the Government has gone to considerable effort and expense to consult on changes to the Building Regulations that are consistent and economically balanced. We feel that the Local Plan should respect these National Standards wherever they exist and only seek to impose additional (realistic) targets in relation to matters that lie outside National governance and are distinctively Local.

1c/5 This policy must comply with the national environmental protection Act when it becomes law so that the technical standards required do not exceed the nationally prescribed standards

1c/6 We generally support this Policy although the Policy proposal infers that farmers current "practices" need to be changed.

Careful thought needs to be given to this Policy so that it does not become too specific and is flexible enough to weigh the balance of food security with other societal "goods"

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)?

No - Watchet and Williton should be seen as separate 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):

We strongly support Topic Paper 1 Option B which represents not only the highest score of the Options proposed but reflects the reality of the status quo being substantially derived from the historic development patterns of the district, based as they are on the fine balance of economic and social factors that bear on the districts residents. Opportunities for reducing work travel (eg technology), as well as enhanced and reduced carbon transport (public and private) should be sufficient to enable the lower tier settlements to sustain their current patterns of growth to the benefit of these communities, and the provision of choice.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

2b/1 This policy will need to have exceptions otherwise it could fundamentally conflict with the settlement strategy. The emphasis of the policy should be to identify what can be viably be achieved within the settlement strategy and not be capable of being used to over-ride other policies

2b/2 This policy does contain just such a proviso

2b/4 Experience has shown that NHP's can be used to disrupt and fetter LP policies. We strongly encourage an approach that encourages NHP's to support policy compliant sustainable development

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):

We support the more evidence/aspiration based approach. The Governments minimum figure approach is, of necessity, broad brush (and derived to ensure that reluctant LPA's meet their MINIMUM obligations in terms of Housing Delivery. This District faces distinct economic pressures that can best be addressed through a positive approach to Economic Development.

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):

Attempts elsewhere to incorporate such sites within mainstream housing developments has led to significant funding difficulties, both at the development stage and in terms of the availability of mortgage finance to private and affordable housing alike.

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?

Do not require specific measures for adaptable, accessible and wheelchair homes.

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

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):

We support the option i) but would comment that successful schemes of this nature generally consist of detached plots and at lower densities to allow for some design individuality (one of the prime drivers of this activity).

Policy iv) could also be complimentary at the more affordable end of spectrum of delivery, and could be delivered and coordinated effectively by Registered Providers with development experience, as well as being combined with Local Labour Training.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

3e/4 Any such Policy should be "settlement sensitive" and respect both vernacular patterns as well as the different proportions of need for market and subsidised housing.

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?

Not Answered

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

We do not see this as a choice, the LP should support the growth in both quantity and quality of employment opportunity, recognising the role of entrepreneurship in both and recognising the need for and role of aspirational housing in attracting and encouraging talent to develop their businesses in the District

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):

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

4c/1 The role of technology (esp 5G) in reducing travel requirements for residents of Rural Communities is to be encouraged

4c/4 Such a policy is welcome however home offices should be configured flexibly to allow occupiers the choice/opportunity as to how space is used. We have seen policies which deal with light levels and space for desk/work surface in rooms of a proportion of dwellings in a development, together with the provision of telephone/data sockets adjacent.

6. Infrastructure

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

IO - 5a - ranking - Affordable housing:

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

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

IO - 5a - ranking - Strategic Infrastructure (schools, transport, community facilities):

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):

By encouraging financial support and or physical infrastructure/links to public transport nodes (bus stops etc)

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

6b/2 This policy requirement will need to be included in any viability assessment and may be more suitable for delivery via CIL

6b/4 Developers and Housebuilders are not internet service providers, they will not be able to provide full fibre digital connections where the local ISP network does not provide it. The best developers can provide is the ducting to enable full fibre connectivity in the future.

The 5g roll-out is likely to lead to the obsolescence of fixed line voice/data connections especially in more urban areas. 4G already provides significantly cheaper service speed for speed.

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):

The concept of net-gain is just yet one more burden being heaped onto a marginally viable industry (at least in this part of the world). It would be more sensible (absent national policy which if legislated would render LP policies unnecessary) to take a risk based approach which recognised (professionally applied) site specific risk factors to affected/lost/replaced habitat.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

7b/1 BNG should follow the procedure set out in the Environmental Protection Bill when this becomes law which will be in advance of the LP being adopted

7b/3 This policy will need careful crafting to ensure that it has some objective criteria against which to be assessed, together with exceptions and thresholds otherwise this could become an effective restraint to any development within any AONB – clearly not what is intended.

7b/6 We support this Policy which supports sympathetic development of and in the vicinity of Heritage Assets. We are not so clear that Enhancement of existing Heritage Assets should be included other than as an aspiration, as otherwise this policy too could be interpreted too literally to the exclusion of other potential benefits of development.

9. Thriving coastal and rural communities

Question 8a: How should we manage development in rural areas? Should we:

Not have settlement boundaries but instead have a criteria based policy to determine development proposals against; or

Question 8b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?

Please provide comments (250 words max):

8a Settlement boundaries automatically create areas of higher value and therefore increase the lack of affordability. A criteria based policy would be more effective and deliver more affordable homes in our rural areas.

8b/1 Support

8b/2 Is a restrictive policy which conflicts with 8b/3

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):