

## Response ID ANON-8CC9-KDN9-D

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-01-27 13:47:51**

### Your details

**What is your name?**

**Forename:**

Mike

**Surname:**

Russell

**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?**

██████  
██████████████████

### 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?**

Identify suitable areas through criteria based policies

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

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

Assuming that Q1a refers to new build only.

### 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?**

Increase housing in Taunton and Wellington; and reduce in Minehead and Rural Centres

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

Taunton and Wellington are connected with existing travel facilities being routes that can - and should be greatly improved - eg serious cycle / electric car route Wellington - Taunton  
New Taunton periphery to centre FREE electric bus routes from new Taunton developments.

Minehead, Watchet, Williton supported in new subsidiary commercial enterprise ie supporting activities in Taunton area NOT commuting to Taunton. Also tourism, outdoor activities.

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

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

Agree, generally points i to vi  
BUT free electric travel being the not too distant target.

Exhausting commute (expensive plus CO2 damage) damages communities.

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

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

Generally support except for 2b/3.  
I have witnessed close up\* how high density town centres don't work through lack of consideration for quality of Space.  
Too big a topic to comment further.

(\* New Addington - new town S London; Chalk Farm, LBof Brent; Thamesmead. )

Good example high density / quality of space; Barbican Redevelopment, City of London.  
Of course top spend but an example.

#### **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):**

Too difficult to comment

**Question 3b: How should we proactively plan for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches?**

Apply rural exceptions criteria for small scale residential sites where pitches which would be affordable in perpetuity; and/or

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

Better provision might reduce the occasional conflict if tied to reasonable regulations.

**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):**

No comment necessary. Better provision for accessibility urgently required.

**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):**

All above options have a value. I provided Self Build help but interested parties often misunderstood what Self Build involves. Add better promotional advice to above.

**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):**

The benefits of Hinkley point and associated nuclear training / research plus improving academic options plus tourist options are strong attractions. Existing commerce and main transport links are strong.

If enlargement can group all above with the splendour of outdoor options in Exmoor and the proximity of Exeter and Bristol, employers and employment levels should increase.

**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?**

Not Answered

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

I dont feel technically able to comment on these options. I think the first two options should be amalgamated.

**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:**

2

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

3

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

4

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

1

**Question 5b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

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

5a/ policy area is impossible to unravel!

Logic should imply that local facility infrastructure must exist before you have houses. And some of the houses must be affordable including a degree of access bility.

Climate change is a national problem - of course new housing build standards will have best insulation, conservation and renewable features BUT

local facility infrastructure - if not first, near the top.

5b/ No comment on the headings listed except to say S106 income should always be used on infrastructure relevant to the development 'charged'.

## 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):**

Provide free continuous electric bus services on usable routes, increase taxes to fund, ban cars in town centre. Existing Park and Ride schemes too ineffective. Support rural 'self help' mini bus schemes to enlarge.

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

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

No.

**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):**

Trees! Now a national topic. Tree planting programmes should be a major factor. All street elevations improve with trees. Places are bare without trees. Natural woodland can be a better community place than tended parks.

Japan has discovered 'forest living'.

And all the above promote all aspects of biodiversity.

(Years ago, I took a newscutting about a psychologist who took his patients into Hyde Park - with trees, to talk about mental problems!

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

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

Protect and promote our heritage, our inheritance, part of our quality of life.

**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):**

10 pages of Topic Paper 2 haven't helped my response.

Rural and Coastal settlements need 'commonsense' decision making on the ground. All settlements need a nucleus, wether a simple pub (with cmc encouragement if necessary) or a community centre - no matter how small - related to size of community. The nucleus should offer a health, Post Office and social facility, no matter how small.

Transport to include subsidised bus service on two days p/wk min. A 'supported' taxi facility should be available.

I know many community centres in the SW, established by volunteers. I set up a community centre in the 70's.

**10. Wellbeing of our residents**

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

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

My earlier entries refer to many aspects of wel being of residents.

Healthy life styles are very important. I think that LA's could be more proactive. Promote better awareness of simple sports such as Short Mat Bowls, Petanque, Park Runs, explorer walks, country hikes etc. All low cost but very healthy.

I run a Short Mat Bowls Club with active members in their 90's and the sporting and social element is greatly enjoyed and appreciated.

Most of these events are run by volunteers; active support by LA's would help.

**11. Policies for our places: Taunton**

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

Positively encouraging taller buildings (subject to impact upon the skyline); or

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

High rise housing has nearly always been a problem due to bad implementation and stewardship. I think there is still time to build quality High Rise.

These would be for couples, young families and elderly. An option for growing families with teenagers would be to move to traditional low level housing - a logistical challenge yes.

High rise towers would be high quality design, 24 hour monitored, private park style ground space, altogether a desirable place to live.

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

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

For the purpose of this Consultation, all headings under 10b/1 to 10b/10 are agreeable with exception of /5, parking. Travel into Taunton to be made far more attractive by using free public electric bus transport.

## 12. Policies for our places: Wellington

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

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

Section 5.11 preamble states Wellington town centre is healthy - it is not. It is struggling with closing shops, withdrawing banks, on street parking choking attempts at shopping, currently no Post Office.

Large housing schemes are under way with little balance in terms of facility infrastructure improvement and car parking expected to get worse.

The Town Council is losing its voice against the enlarged SWT District Council and is, or has, become a satellite town.

5.11 does admit that the 'general environment is poor' so it is fair to say that there is some confusion in regard to the status of Wellington.

The ambitions referred to in 5.11 read well but positive action is now required.

## 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):**

The issues mentioned in 5.12 are all relevant but complex.

Exmoor, the Quantocks, the amazing coast are a major tourist draw (I am bringing visitors from Australia and the Bahamas this summer) but the travel connections are poor. How to improve tourist movement without destroying the environment is key.

Major support for a linked up Taunton - Minehead rail connection with local tourist buses along the A39 to Lynmouth is a thought?

The SW Coastal Path is a great success (I have walked it). More support for this and the other outdoor facilities will increase the tourist income and thereby the local economy.

Real active support for volunteer action groups like Visit Exmoor (I was a member) would help.

Maybe a Somerset tourist Tzar is necessary. But how to improve the tourist economy without damage to the region is a challenge.