

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KD8Q-F

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-03-10 11:28:54**

Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

graham

Surname:

sizer

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

Organisation

If individual, please tell us what type:

Name of organisation:

Minehead BID

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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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):

[My previous attempts at filling this section in seemed to have been lost]

I object to the steering of the question. Yes Taunton should be seen as Tier 1, but Minehead and Wellington should be seen as equal in status on tier 2. Sustainable settlements is not all about housing. It encompasses all that makes a settlement vibrant and viable. As a centre Minehead influences and serves a far greater catchment of people than Wellington. Minehead may not have much in the way of new available developable housing land, but because that stops it growing at the same rate as Wellington should not demote it when looking at sustainability. Minehead may not be close to the motorway and be ripe for high density housing, but due to natural footfall pressures it has, unlike Wellington, had to build 3 supermarkets, [with far more sq ft of space than the whole of Wellington 's shops] on the edge of town to satiate need. This proves it is more important to more people in SW&T than Wellington is and will be beyond 2040. Wellington acts as a feeder town to Taunton, with a far higher leakage in economic terms.

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)?

Not Answered

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):

Settlement hierarchy protection has always been a key element in planning. By changing emphasis unnaturally will open the floodgates to all sorts of other social and economic problems.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

New housing is needed in West Somerset or "the rural strip" as it has now been labelled, as much as it is needed closer to the motorway. Minehead, Watchet and Williton do have developable land and it should be promoted with equal enthusiasm. An ever aging demographic and lack of public transport make our tiny rural settlements more vulnerable. The "no minimal new housing" policy in Exmoor will put extra pressure on Minehead Williton and Watchet so that growing families can keep in touch and be able to access services.

Many of us did not want to join with Taunton Dean because we were so different to Taunton. It was only through necessity that it happened. This should always be prominent in planners minds.

Question 2d: 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?

Not Answered

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

Increase the value of jobs. This however doesn't necessarily mean hi-tec jobs. Taunton may need them but West Somerset needs to concentrate more on vocational jobs. An ever aging demographic puts pressure on West Somerset's service sector. There is a general shortage of electricians, handimen, mechanics, builders. Many of these are currently supplied by self employed people and are able to command wages above the average.

This situation will increase pressure in those areas. Hi Tech is not the answer to every economic problem. Where connectivity is lacking and vehicle movements discouraged, remote settlements, whether or not housing increases, will need extra help and vocational training facilities. This applies to W Som more than it does towards Taunton, but it is none the less important.

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 flex ble policy allowing for the loss of any existing/ proposed employment site subject to specific criteria

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

By ticking this option suggests planners should look in depth at the inefficiencies of aged historical sites. Flexibility should be allowed for changes of use where the modern age dictates change. eg In future in the face of on-line retail , there will be less shops needed. Already retail property prices are dropping. Empty shops make Wellington look unloved and shabby. They should be allowed , where appropriate, in secondary streets to be converted to housing, increasing densities and reducing further vehicle miles

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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):

Keep, things as they are for now.

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):

5.11 Paints Wellington as a Town with optimism where improvements in every direction of interest will be supported naing each specifically. 5.12 shows West Som differently. It mentions our poor road link but no plans to support improvements. It quotes existing stats, that there are private organisations doing things in Watchet and Minehead. It lists issues and challenges that impede progress, but unlike 5.11 where solutions are portrayed supported and actually happening in abundance, the Coastal strip just has problems with no answers except to support tourism. West Somerset for instance does have a high reliance on service industries, but no solutions to expansion needs. There has been a general lack of homework done on the Coastal strip. Before 2040 there will be 000s of Hinkley

workers wanting to filter back into the area. Big problem? No apparently not. What of the tourist accommodation that is being converted to Hinkley accommodation. How is that impacting visitor numbers and will it be encouraged to come back? Any mention of the £40M investment in Butlins? No. The whole Plan smacks of concentration in areas Councils officers and their consultants eg Peter Brett feel used to and more comfortable tackling, leaving West Somerset to its own devices. Sorry. You asked. My comments won't change things I am sure.