

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KDDP-T

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-03-07 12:10:36**

Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

Mr J

Surname:

Hosking

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?

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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):

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?

A combination of both of the above

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

The policies need to substantially reduce current energy demand (e.g. through energy efficiency measures) and ensure far more local self-sufficiency in power and heat generation and use via small-scale and micro facilities. Also all transportation needs urgent decarbonisation.

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)?

Yes - Watchet and Williton should be seen as associated 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 reduce in Minor Rural Settlements

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

Minor rural settlements cannot cope with more traffic generated by new housing.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

All housing developments must be locally self-sufficient to the maximum possible degree (e.g. energy generation and use, water, drainage, food supply, nature/wildlife/green space/woodland/trees, transportation modes, etc).

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Agree with additional policy approaches 2b/1 to 2b/4 inclusive EXCEPT that not all Neighbourhood Plans should be expected to allocate small sites. Some neighbourhoods are already at (or above) their capacity to accommodate new additional development and a zero allocation of small sites must be clearly acceptable in such circumstances.

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):

Definitely not any housing requirement figure above the minimum imposed by the Government. The current housing stock within SW&T is already far too unsustainable.

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

Require a proportion of development sites to provide an area for residential Traveller pitches; and/or

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

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):

Good idea but this must be matched by ensuring ALL other developments are also designed to be accessible and adaptable.

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

Include a requirement for all housing development sites over a threshold to include a proportion of plots as self-build plots; and/or, Allow self-build plots on Rural Exception sites provided that they are secured as affordable housing for ever

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

Rural Exception sites should be subject to a local community referendum approval before any permission is granted.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Beware developers just sequentially applying for sites holding 9 dwellings per application to avoid the affordable housing requirement. Viability Assessments must NOT be permitted to be revised after any permission (including outline ones) has been granted, e.g. in order to reduce the affordable housing requirements. It is

obvious that 'viability' will always be enhanced by having no affordable housing or social housing requirements.

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):

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):

Maximise clean LOCAL energy generation and use, LOCAL Circular/Zero Waste Economy, Mixed uses (including upper floors residential) in town centres, re-use of vacant properties (including substantial grants and/or other incentives (e.g. rates/Council Tax reliefs) to enable renovation to modern standards), Flexible and Multiple uses, Live-Work units, etc.

6. Infrastructure

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

IO - 5a - ranking - Affordable housing:

3

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

1

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

4

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

2

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Stop viability assessments being used vexatiously by developers to reduce and avoid their responsibilities to both local communities and the wider environment. Developer contributions must be sufficient to maximise LOCAL energy generation, storage and use (as well as flexible community facilities, water supplies, sustainable drainage, fibre-optic broadband connections, safe cycling and walking routes, etc.).

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 cheap clean very regular public transport options using electric buses/cars/small min buses, etc. with convenient pick-up and drop-off points (which themselves have reasonable shelter from excess rain/wind/sun, etc.).

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Ensure plenty of car parking spaces have electric vehicle charging points and, where suitable, simple PV roof coverings over car parking areas to generate the power to charge up the electric vehicles.

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):

Yes.

- 1). Allocate specific sites for new ponds, small lakes and watercourses and restore, and thereafter maintain, all existing ones; and
- 2). Explicitly include Agricultural/Horticultural/Silvicultural biodiversity (sometimes referred to as Genetic Diversity) in the form of DIVERSE cultivatable crop plants/bushes/trees (e.g. fruit trees, bushes and canes) and the wild relatives of such plants. Also, the DIVERSITY in native breeds of farmed livestock species (e.g. cattle, sheep, goats, equines, pigs and poultry breeds). The DIVERSITY of all these plants and animals needs to be conserved and geographically spread out whilst monocultures are reduced to very small areas. Make all settlements much more 'edible' (e.g. Transition Town Wellington). Make all new hedges 'edible' for people and wildlife to find food.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

- 1). Allocate specific sites for new hedges, ponds, small lakes and watercourses and restore, and thereafter maintain, all existing ones; and
- 2). Explicitly include Agricultural/Horticultural/Silvicultural biodiversity (sometimes referred to as Genetic Diversity) in the form of DIVERSE cultivatable crop plants/bushes/trees (e.g. fruit trees, bushes and canes) and the wild relatives of such plants. Also, the DIVERSITY in native breeds of farmed livestock species (e.g. cattle, sheep, goats, equines, pigs and poultry breeds). The DIVERSITY of all these plants and animals needs to be conserved and geographically spread out whilst monocultures are reduced to very small areas. Make all settlements much more 'edible' (e.g. Transition Town Wellington). Make all new hedges 'edible' for people and wildlife to find food.

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):

Remove all permitted development rights in rural areas unless the proposed developments fully comply with ALL local plan policies (e.g. climate change resilience, sustainability, changes of use, no size exemptions, traffic generation on local highways, noise, lighting, appearance, materials, landscaping, self-contained drainage, self-sufficient renewable power generation, substantial net biodiversity gains, etc.). Support for farm diversification and 'transformation' must be conditional on fully addressing climate change impacts and mitigation. Exclude removal of occupancy conditions where the developments previously permitted 'gamed' the planning and development control system in any way.

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Generally agree with the policy approaches to meet Objective 9. Expand 9a/6 to specifically include hedge planting, pond creation, traditional orchards and individual fruit trees.

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):

Should also encourage car-free developments as part of requiring a housing mix. The upper floors of town centre buildings need urgent conversion to appropriate residential uses in many cases and this should be specified in the policies. There should not be any empty or under-utilised built property in the town centre especially.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

There must be effective policies to encourage GARDENS in these "garden communities" ! What does "Garden Town" mean if there are no policies to create and enhance a substantial network of GARDENS ? Additional policies are definitely required to address this omission.

12. Policies for our places: Wellington

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

The above policy approaches appear to be devoid of any GREEN and BLUE wedges, GARDENS, policies to encourage hedge, traditional orchard and tree planting, etc. This is a list of policies for a BROWN Wellington when it should be very GREEN !

There are no policy proposals for specific green landscaping enhancements or any improvements to air quality, pollution, noise, excessive lighting of the night sky, traffic generation, safe walking and cycling, local (within the town) food production, etc.

Also, there must be specific policies to eliminate empty and under-utilised upper floors of town centre and other built properties - especially to provide new/refurbished residential accommodation in such places.

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):

Must encourage UNIQUE and DISTINCTIVE LOCAL products and services based on local self-sufficiency principles. Visitors look forward to finding interesting high quality and clearly DIFFERENT products, services and experiences.

Must make far more use of local DIVERSE sources of food & drink products (from both locally grown plant and animals). For example, there are around 3000 varieties of apples grown in the UK but how many can we find in the shops ? - and many are traditional to Taunton Deane & West Somerset. There are around 40 breeds of UK native cattle, and several are local to Taunton Deane & West Somerset, but are their traceable and identified products on sale here? The same is true for UK native breeds of sheep, etc.