

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KD41-B

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-02-04 16:47:59**

Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

N kki

Surname:

Watson

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:

None

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?

Agree

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

I agree in principle, but I am concerned that objectives are not very 'SMART' so there is no real pressure to achieve them (with the exception of carbon neutral target) or how will you 'enable and encourage'.

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):

Carbon neutrality needs to become the norm, not just a specific area or specific development. Developers should be partners in the conversation, not the town appearing to bend the targets just to encourage more developments - if they can't step up they shouldn't be in the business.

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):

If communities outside of town centres are to keep their younger people then they need to be able to live in their community. If communities are to thrive they need a small amount of constant growth and development, not all the focus should be on the current Tier 1 & 2.

If we expect communities to take care of their vulnerable residents - give them a reason to be around, don't drive them into the already packed towns.

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):

Residents should choose, not strategists

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):

What if I don't agree with the options given?

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

What other amenities are available to residents e.g. recreation, social, learning/education, community offerings?

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Public transport in Taunton is awful as it is unreliable, expensive and badly timetabled (especially if you are a disabled person - I can't go out with my disabled mother (wheelchair user) or invite her to come over for dinner on a Sunday because she can't get out of Priorswood or into Norton as neither have any Sunday bus service. Therefore these objectives shouldn't be looked at in isolation, but as a complete picture of all the areas and how they link to each other.

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):

This should definitely be a big picture element, you can't look at number of homes without looking at the type, affordability, location, infrastructure etc.

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):

What if my view is - to ask travellers rather than existing residents - I don't know what Gypsy, Traveller or show families would want!!!!

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 aging population this is a must! It would seem discriminatory if you ignored the level of need for our disabled or aged residents.

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

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):

I will never be in a position to build my own home (or even own my own home), but I would want those who can (not developers) to have the best chance of having a home they want in a location they want.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Again, it needs to be viewed in line with other policy developments and plans, not in isolation e.g. infrastructure, flood defenses.

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):

All those who want work should be able to access it locally according to the career aspirations so there needs to be a blend of jobs available both skilled, qualified and entry level.

However, don't forget that we have an aging population who will need good quality care in the future - how are we supporting those that will deliver that care - by pricing them out of the area with too many higher value jobs?

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?

Allow the loss of specific sites for alternative uses – with a high flexibility buffer (i.e. fewer sites lost); or

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

Some of this sounds like increasing red-tape, but it is important to me that sites should accommodate the many not the few - so flexibility is essential.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Employment locally is very limited in its scope - shops, restaurants, hair dressers or accountants - what is their for me (and others like me) that will allow me to progress my career with a reasonable salary? If and when I change jobs, I will probably work out of the area.

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:

4

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

2

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):

We can't have a thriving community without infrastructure, we can't have people in the community without catering for all residents (disabled people specifically), people need places to live that are suitable and affordable (not just in terms of rents/purchase prices, but in terms of running cost, safety, not damp, in good condition etc) and if we don't we won't be here to experience that damage we have done to the planet!

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):

1. Provide a reliable public transport service that can accommodate multiple wheelchair users, pushchairs, walking frames etc.
2. Provide public transport at times that support those who could use it for work and ensure that it runs on time so that people aren't late for work and lose their jobs!
3. Understand that some people need to use a car for shopping etc - buying in bulk can't be carried on the bus unless you shop everyday for a different item.
4. Ensure that public transport is affordable for those who could use it for work - particularly lower paid people who don't receive any benefits.
5. Enforce bus etiquette - particularly where students are concerned.
6. Make buses an attractive alternative to the car, special shopping offers, discounts for early morning/late evening travellers.
7. Digitalise bus stops, so if there is a delay the passengers know about it e.g how long until the next number 28 bus and where will it stop?

8. Have speedy journeys as well as frequent stopping ones
9. Make seats wide enough that I don't have to sit on the lap of the person sat next to me with my shopping bags

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

We are a two car family, we work in opposite directions on different shift patterns (none of which are compatible with the current public transport offering). Ensure every bus can have multiple option seating e.g. wheelchairs space with 'theatre style'

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):

Encourage more 'nature' based walking routes that are wheelchair/buggy suitable (not the 10 mile trek across the hills) where families and dog walkers can support the biodiversity of the area and publicise them not just online!

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

I love walking in the countryside but it is not easy to find suitable routes, not easy to find comfortable distance walks and circular! Most of the walks I do, involve getting in the car!

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):

This consultation is way too long and I am bored now!

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Ask those who have suffered from existing inequalities e.g. disabled people, those in rural communities, those who can't access amenities.

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):

Don't really agree with this at all

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Don't agree with it.

12. Policies for our places: Wellington

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Only residents of Wellington should have a say

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):