

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KD47-H

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-02-11 13:14:25**

Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

Paul

Surname:

Atkinson

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:

Community Group

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):

With regards to Objective 6, you must also change the culture of society and individuals to embrace and support alternatives to self drive. We are aware of significant anti social behaviour and aggression from drivers against those who choose to walk and cycle on the roads and lanes of West Somerset.

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 be turned into real tangible plans setting out how you will achieve these objectives. For example are you prepared to fund/ help fund the retrofitting of existing homes and relax planning laws where these are at odds to achieving a low energy home. E.g. Listed Building and National Park restrictions.

Also will you help fund individual householder's electric charging points, renewable energy and micro-generation schemes where central government has failed to do this.

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):

By tagging Minehead as a Tier 3 Coastal Town are you not guilty of increasing the isolation of this town which prior to the merger of the 2 authorities would have been the largest settlement in West Somerset?

If this classification is used to determine transport needs there is a real danger that Minehead will become even more isolated?

Improvements should be made to provide greater choice of public transport by re-opening the National rail Network to include Minehead.

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):

They are closely associated by distance and in the event that coastal erosion leads to the loss of the coastal road to Blue Anchor it is essential that Watchet is associated with Williton

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):

The housing need is driven by centralisation to towns and communities with good transport links and hence where businesses choose to base themselves.

If businesses are encouraged to base themselves to outlying towns then people who live in these towns will have less reason to travel elsewhere for work and the money will stay in the local economy providing a more sustainable community.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

If you focus all your attention on Taunton it will be detrimental to the outlying communities leading to greater use of carbon to travel to and from work opportunities which will be similarly focused on Taunton.

This taunton centric approach needs to be reversed.

Consider the change in central government policy to spread the wealth from London to The North to reverse the trend for the UK to be London centric.

Avoid repeating the same mistake with Taunton and the rest of Somerset.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

There are several large business sites (Tyre Bay and Car Dealer) occupying huge old brownfield areas inappropriate for their current use which are located in the centre of Minehead which could be relocated to the periphery creating the opportunity for more housing in the town centre?

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):

See responses to earlier questions

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):

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):

Why not apply the criteria to all new homes making it cheaper and easier to adapt homes to suit the needs of an occupier throughout their full lifespan, avoiding the cost and upheaval of moving home as residents grow older?

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):

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

3e/1 The compulsion to provide affordable housing in this way diminishes land values and is always a target to be circumvented by developers. Better to collect a levy from those developers which can be used by local authorities to provide affordable homes in locations where the local authority owns the land and can control the development

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):

Offer greater incentives for new businesses to locate to coastal communities thereby encouraging a more diverse age range in the population, reduce travel and greater sustainability for the coastal community.

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):

See responses to previous questions and the example of moving town centre brownfield business sites to purpose built alternatives and replace with town centre residential.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

None

6. Infrastructure

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

IO - 5a - ranking - Affordable housing:

4

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

1

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

3

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):

By ordering in the way I have selected by ranking Design for the Climate Change Emergency as No. 1, will ensure the following 3 alternatives will deliver solutions which align with the No. 1 priority

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):

We need to change the culture of our society away from self centric transportation (e.g. owning cars) to that of using sustainable transport suitable for the nature and distance of a journey.

This will mean provision of better and more efficient public transport supported by infrastructure which encourages cycling, walking and car sharing (e.g. cars cease to be a sole ownership asset to a public asset ensuring maximum utilisation of a car throughout the working day.

The use of technology to manage demand via via smartphone apps should ensure we have the right transport asset in the right location.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Remove obstacles such as ancient laws and land owners refusal to allow their land to be used to improve the cycling infrastructure. E.g. strips of land immediately adjacent to roads and railways where the land value is least attractive in any event. Combine with appropriate planting to encourage wild life corridors along the cycle routes.

Cycle routes MUST BE CONTINUOUS and not throw cyclist out into dangerous road situations.

Cycle paths MUST BE PROPERLY MAINTAINED to avoid vegetation encroaching onto the cycle path and regular sweeping to remove debris thrown on to the path by passing vehicles which cause hazards and inconvenience to cyclists. E.g. Glass, grit, thorns etc all of which lead to punctures and loss of control of the bike.

Access/ egress to cycle paths MUST BE FLUSH WITH THE ADJOINING SURFACE to avoid accidents caused by e.g. lips on dropped kerbs which cause the bike wheel to skip sideways resulting in a fall

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):

I volunteer for the NT Holnicote Estate.

Learn from their Riverlands Project to mitigate flooding and also the creation of wildlife corridors, management of animal numbers to avoid overgrazing etc.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

None

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):

None

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

None

11. Policies for our places: Taunton

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

Encouraging car-free developments (which could include allocating specific sites for car-free developments).

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

Supports the Climate Change strategy

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

None

12. Policies for our places: Wellington

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

None

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):

See earlier responses and in particular avoid the region becoming Taunton centric. Coastal communities need to have employment, transport links and housing fit for the future, not just be seen as a tourist destination.

Its is unfortunate that you selected a picture of the wheel which was a temporary structure for a short period of time, is abhorred by most of the community and is an old fashioned view painting Minehead as a an adventure them park!!!

Should have recognised the health and well being links which Minehead has to Exmoor, SW Coast Path, sailing, swimming, surfing etc.