

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KDDF-G

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-02-21 16:52:08**

Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

Phillip

Surname:

Smith

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):

I tend to agree but struggle to fully agree with the objectives due to the lack of foundation level infrastructure. Being a resident of a Dunster, within a very short drive to the largest coastal population centre, I daily struggle to justify this status. I have a mobile phone signal amplifier to get 2g reception in the house. I pay an inordinately high price for my relatively slow internet speed. I cannot park in the street or catch a bus after 18:00 in the evening to travel from Minehead to my home. There is no cinema, bowling alley, swimming pool etc available to me. The gym facilities for maintaining health are woeful but suggest a commercial tea room or bike park and all are in support. The foundation stones for growth and healthy living are not in place; please prioritise accordingly.

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?

Slightly more time (e.g. by 2030)

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):

As noted earlier, carbon neutrality is a laudable goal, but I have access to 2 buses per day from west Dunster to Minehead and none from Minehead to Dunster

(A39) after 18:30, I must rely on self power means of transport or my car, carbon neutrality can not be achieved without significant investment in infrastructure improvements

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):

In principle, the problem with this type of stratagem is that it automatically directs the most attention and hence investment to the urban centres, not supporting the county wide distribution of wealth and investment, making places like Minehead and Dunster, second class citizens. As experienced in the London centric vision for England. The strategy, as in this document could quite easily deliver a Taunton centric result.

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?

Leave housing distribution the same

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

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

The housing growth seems generally in line with the current population densities but I reiterate growth without infrastructure development is an inverse pyramid. The foundations need to be in place rather than just deliver more people into the same area to meet some central government directive or climate emergency scaremongering.. ultimately, this strategy would deliver multi storey, sub surface development, centralised in urban centres, "close to everything", using heat pumps for energy, etc.,etc. With no "less sustainable" rural locals. Not a pleasant fusion of the future

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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):

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):

My personal experience of transient travellers is not positive, but, I still think, that supported locations with facilities could still provide an opportunity for travellers to integrate better with society.

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):

My concern, is that the burden on society is disproportionately high and that the term "disabled" can be routinely abused as in the blue badge parking scheme, where there are approx 2.5million blue badges in circulation and parking, whether needed or not is allocated disproportionately to these users without rigorous needs testing.

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

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):

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):

As a rural resident in a village it is obvious that career opportunities while staying in the area are limited, moving white collar opportunities out of the urban centres would stimulate the relocation areas and help justify infrastructure development

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):

As above de urbanisation of major towns would help infrastructure development rather than the multi tier approach, by default leaving less developed areas, even less developed and supported and with fewer facilities

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):

Foundation structure first in hand with population increase.

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):

A more balanced approach to planned development. It may be commercially prudent to have a town with 10 tea/coffee shops but without a grocer/corner shop, residents have to travel to an urban centre, if there are no bus services....

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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):

The delivery of a commercial independent development, dispensing chemist/medical centre, cycle park etc., on a greenfield site, inherently impacts the local environment negatively. They should be made to deliver in a brownfield site, if they are not then commercial, then they will not develop. Minor planning conditions re environment, landscaping should be rigour tested at planning approval stage for delivery practicality, rather than allowed to disappear at construction phase as minor planning changes

Question 7b: 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):

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

As a resident of Dunster, even within the Minehead catchment there are limited fitness options, there is not even a swimming pool and the pricing/ availability of gymnasiums is woeful. Perhaps a collaboration between local government and Butlins could be beneficial to the area

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):

Taller buildings should be limited to 5/6 stories which developers may be unwilling to deliver. I still believe that car free developments are impractical for May reasons, out of town shopping, visitors, deliveries, you may well create an environment where people end up sitting in there hutch, pressing buttons for food deliveries, entertainment etc., seeing no one and socialising by electronic means. Not a way to deliver a balanced culture in my opinion.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

12. Policies for our places: Wellington

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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):

My previous comments are wholly applicable to the Minehead environment, poor facilities and poor transport link to and from