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**To:** [Strategy](#)  
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**Subject:** SWT Enabling Team  
**Date:** 24 February 2020 17:07:38

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Strategy Team,

Please find attached comments on the Local Plan Issues and Options Paper from the Enabling Team.

Regards

Gordon

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## Issues and Options Consultation

### Development Enabling Response to Issues and Options Paper February 2020

Section	Comments
1a	No comment
1b	Policy on delivering low carbon infrastructure – Why make it site specific when the issue is across the board. Therefore better to use criteria based policies.
1c	No comment
2a	How have you defined 'Minor Rural Centres' vs 'Villages'. There needs to be set criteria for each . For example why are Oake and Kingston St Mary not in minor rural centre as they are similar in services and size to for example Churchinford and Washford? Why aren't Minehead and Wellington both in the Sub-strategic town category?
2b	No comment – we would consider each as a rural centre in its own right.
2c	Carry on with the current policy as housing need is a reflection of requirements across the whole District. i.e. housing need in Minehead might indicate that greater provision is need in that area.
2d	No further comment. All seem sensible.
3a	If the higher figure is chosen the Council should ensure that this also delivers associated benefits such as increase in affordable housing.
3b	Allocate sites specifically for pitches. These should be sensitively located and meet an alternative requirement to rural exception sites e.g. pitches could be in an urban as well as rural setting.
3c	Yes. We already secure 10% of affordable housing as adapted in for former TD area on sites above 25 affordable units. This should be extended to the whole SWT area and extended to open market housing. Policy D10 already makes reference to a percentage of adaptable, however this has only ever been secured through affordable housing routes. Development enabling have a design specification which builds upon part 4M Cat 3 building regs and this could be incorporated into design policy. We could also adopt the principles of Lifetime Homes. In terms of percentage should be viable i.e. should not reduce the number of affordable homes (and reflect housing need). An element of flexibility on numbers could be introduced into policy which is negotiated based on needs led. i.e. no of affordable could be negotiated against number of adapted units.
3d	Yes allocate sites for self- build. However clear parameters are required to work within and timescales for deliver i.e. not half built houses after 20 years. Affordable self-build could be urban as well as rural site policy. This need to be assessed against ongoing

	assessment of need and delivery. There needs to be adequate Council support for this policy.
3e/1	No. We should be setting our own threshold according to viability and need. i.e. in previous policy WS was 2 or more in rural areas and in TD it was 5 or more net dwellings.
3e/2	No. A set percentage gives the Council a starting point to enter into negotiations. Without this, little will be delivered.
3e/3	There should be a fixed tenure percentage. With experience of working in WS (where there isn't one) and TD (where there is), it is far better to have a fixed tenure as a starting point to work from.
3e/4	Yes, but for both open market and affordable. We already have this in our affordable.
3e/5	Yes, we agree with support. Support should be available in both urban and rural communities and champion mixed communities in rural areas.
3e/6	Yes to government space standards as a minimum.
3e/7	Yes
4a	4a – align with Heart of SW as there needs to be both an increase in the higher value jobs, but also an increase in jobs generally (as not all will have the qualifications for the higher value jobs)
4b	4b – keep all employment sites unless alternative land is provided elsewhere and link to Inward Investment and identification of employment sites
4c/1	Yes
4c/2	Yes
4c/3	Yes
4c/4	No requirement for home offices (as you just use a bedroom space). There are issues with specific 'Live-work' units which are difficult to sell and difficult to get a mortgage on. For affordable housing it could impact on allocation policies (e.g. bedroom policy).
4c/5	Yes.
4c/6	Be wary of introducing a policy that will detract business from locating anywhere near the area.
4c/7	Agree
4c/8	Agree
4c/9	Agree
5a	There is a need to recognise that there are other factors that affect viability. For example highways or education could give rather than affordable housing. Cost efficiencies could be introduced through new building methods.  There should be a balanced approach with flexibility on a scheme specific basis.
5b/1-4	Agree that additional details are required and these should be in line with national policy.
6a	Encourage safe off-road transport networks
6b/1	Agree

6b/2	Depends on whether it replaces travel plans. These need to be rural proofed. There needs to be a sustainable funding model with longevity, rather than use of S106 to fund a bus for a few months/years.
6b/3	Agree
6b/4	Yes, full fibre digital should be included in areas where it is possible.
6b/5	Yes, where appropriate
7a	No comment - not
7b 1- 12	No comment
8a	Keep settlement boundaries across the district with a clear exception site policy. This will help meet the identified housing and service needs of local communities. This provides clarity to developers and communities and council officers.
8b1	Yes. Criteria based incorporated within an exceptions policy with regard to what the community needs and wants i.e. neighbourhood plans / community led housing groups.
8b2-8	No comment – not our area of expertise
9a/1	How does this add value to the emerging policies that will already be in place? Is this over-bureaucratic?
9a/2	Yes
9a/3	Agree
9a/4	Yes
9a/5	Agree
9a/6	Agree
9a/7	Agree – This should apply to the who district, not just Taunton
10a	Yes, with a mix of open market and a range of affordable housing and this should be integrated. Also subject to fire risk assessments.
10b/1	Agree
10b/2	Agree
10b/3	Agree
10b/4	Agree
10b/5	No comment
10b/6	Agree
10b/7 - 10	No comment
11a/1	Agree
11a/2	Agree
11a/3	Build in flexibility to encourage occupation and respond to changes in retail habits
11a/4	Agree
11a/5	Agree
11a/6	No comment
11a/7	No comment
12a/1	Agree
12a/2	Agree
12a/3	Agree