

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KD42-C

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-02-06 23:51:01**

Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

Robert

Surname:

Wetheridge

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?

██████████
████████████████████

██████████
██████████

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):

Provided all of 2-10 are implemented in sustainable fashion and with full commitment to achieving objective 1 by 2030 at the very latest.

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?

Allocate sites for specific renewable energy development

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

There's a need to take action asap. Identify the sites, promote the benefits, implement change.

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):

Provided councillors and officers respect their unique cultures and needs as well as their shared requirements.

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 Wellington; and reduce in Minehead and Rural Centres

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

Major town developments are more likely to create efficiencies in terms of economies of scale.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

i) Yes

ii) Yes

iii) More housing needs careful planning to minimise additional road traffic in Taunton. Investment in traffic flow solutions for present levels of traffic should be considered eg Castle Creech junction, town centre..

iv) Yes.

v) There are significant sustainability issues, particularly with regard to services and infrastructure affecting both Watchet, Williton. Over development of these communities will also have a negative impact on smaller communities within West Somerset and may have a noticeably adverse effect on the neighbouring Quantock Hills, Brendon Hills and Exmoor NP. These areas should be protected and enhanced in terms of their landscape, wildlife, dark hours, and they should be protected from additional highways development and congestion.

vi) Yes.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

2b/4 there needs to be consideration for

i) bringing into use all buildings that have fallen into disuse

ii) encouraging elderly couples and singles out of family homes and into suitable small scale builds designed to appeal as alternative, local, energy-efficient accommodation

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):

Overdevelopment in the area is not efficient in terms of the national effect. City and urban development is the priority for a national solution and international solution to development issues.

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):

I think sites should be specified and the area where sites are located should have appropriate services available shared / integrated with local residents.

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):

It seems right, but I don't know what the relevant statistics of need are.

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, Identify and allocate specific sites for self-build plots in locations related to where people want to live according to our self-build register; and/or, Include a

requirement for all housing development sites over a threshold to include a proportion of plots as self-build plots; and/or

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

I believe there has been a growth in interest in 'self-build' and that there may well be evidence that current self-builds produces better quality and more sustainable housing.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Yes. There's a need also to protect garden and personal outdoor space for dwellings. Some of this space may of course be shared provided maintenance issues are sustainable.

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):

I struggle to see where a significant increase in overall job numbers can be delivered. Too many jobs are low-paid and have poor status in terms of contract conditions and worker's rights. A significant increase in such jobs is likely to be an overall burden on infrastructure and support services increasing frustration and unhappiness.

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):

Provided alternative uses contribute to overall environmental and ecological sustainability / protection.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Yes.

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):

Yes.

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 well-connected public footpaths and cycleways which are safe and enjoyable to use. They need to be well-maintained.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Yes.

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):

Develop wildlife corridors at area and local level.

Encourage more untidiness and less machinery and chemical use on land.

Carbon sequestration: appropriate action re trees, hedgerows, farming, carbon capture technologies.

Promote community woodlands and community food production.

Support more sensitive tb testing for dairy cattle and promote vaccination against culling.

Support efforts to value, celebrate, protect and reintroduce wildlife species.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

7b/4 if active conservation of the 'special characteristics' of the moors and Levels undermines climate goals we should allow for the possibility of allowing nature to take its course if this is calculated to provide additional benefit in terms of the primary objective of reducing global warming.

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):

Yes.

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Yes.

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):

We need to develop appropriate individual and public transport solutions that do not require the use of private cars. Increasing road capacity and car-parking availability usually increases traffic and congestion.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

All looks sensible and good.

12. Policies for our places: Wellington

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Wellington has potential for significant development that makes good use of existing 'brownfield' sites.

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):

Any increase in car parking for seasonal visitors requires careful consideration. The last thing these areas need are town centre and access road congestion or empty tarmac spaces during the winter months. Housing development should focus on town centre and existing development infill rather than expansion into

neighbouring fields or ribbon development between currently separate settlements.