

## Response ID ANON-8CC9-KD8R-G

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-03-10 08:51:10**

### Your details

**What is your name?**

**Forename:**

Heather

**Surname:**

Bryant

**Are you making an individual response or on behalf of an organisation?**

Organisation

**If individual, please tell us what type:**

**Name of organisation:**

Ruishton and Thornfalcon Parish Council

**Please choose one from the drop-down list:**

Parish Council

**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):**

Each objective you have presented is a must and much has to be done to meet them. If we are to succeed in bringing Carbon Neutrality down by 2030 we have to encourage people out of their cars. In Objective 2 and 8 the term 'affordable' housing is used but the term 'affordable' doesn't appear to be defined. We would like to see Social Housing included. We also need to protect communities from flooding and with proposed new developments it is evermore important that this is at the forefront of all planning considerations.

### 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):**

1a) The 2030 date is proposed as consultations are still in progress to increase energy efficiency requirements.

1b) The need is to identify broad areas as specific sites will slow down progress. Sites need to be in the most productive places, be it for wind, solar or water power.

1c) We should encourage sustainable retrofits by offering financial inducements.

### 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):**

Agree with Ruishton and Henlade being positioned in Tier 6 and Thornfalcon in Tier 7 in line with our emerging Neighbourhood Plan

**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)?**

No - Watchet and Williton should be seen as separate settlements

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

There isn't the infrastructure to support a larger conurbation in the area. The topographical nature of the area is also unsuitable.

**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):**

Regardless of housing distribution infrastructure must be planned and deliverable before areas for development are agreed. Existing villages, especially those adjoining Taunton, must be protected from development that is not in line with the village's natural requirements and needs and their individual identities must be recognised and protected. Ruishton & Thornfalcon Parish Council are in the final stages of drawing up a Neighbourhood Plan that reflects this. Known areas that are prone/liable to flooding should most definitely be protected.

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

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

Ref - 2b/1 – mix of use is admirable but checks must be in place to ensure that changes of use from employment land to housing can be resisted effectively.

Ref - 2b/3 Support higher densities in town centres and on public transport routes but as public transport is in the hands of private enterprise this aim will be impossible to control. Witness the number of rural bus services that have been cut.

Ref - 2b/4 must also respect Neighbourhood Plans that have not allocated small sites.

2c The mix is good but changes of use from employment to housing should be resisted

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

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

No problem with the policy approaches. However we are concerned that the infrastructure, even with the rather pointless 'improvements' being made, mainly to facilitate a proposed employment site off J25, will not be produced if SWT and SCC Highways efforts so far are anything to go by

### 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):**

The current level of development (995 per year) has shown that the necessary infrastructure needed to support it cannot be delivered or guaranteed. We see no reason whatsoever of exceeding the Government's minimum figure of 702 dwellings per year.

**Question 3b: How should we proactively plan for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches?**

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

None of the suggested actions will provide a solution as Gypsies and Travellers do not wish to be on a controlled site. The allocating of sites will have a detrimental effect on communities and lead to conflict. Much better to spend monies working with and understanding the actual needs rather than the perceived needs of the travelling community.

**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):**

The South West has an ageing population and measures must be put in place to make it easier for them to stay in their own homes should they so wish.

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

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

Prefer to see a positive encouragement policy, including for community-led projects, and leave the housing market to deliver plots as and when demand arises. Do not favour self-build plots on Rural Exceptions as do not believe they will be kept to affordable housing only.

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

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

Agree with the additional policy approaches

## **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):**

The way forward seems to be to encourage higher value jobs within existing overall job numbers which will help control housing numbers and protect the existing infrastructure. Would not wish to see alignment with the Heart of the South West growth ambitions (to deliver a shift towards a significant increase in overall job numbers including higher value jobs) which given the population mix and infrastructure would not benefit the existing communities.

**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?**

Not Answered

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

The existing sites were included in the existing Plan to support large scale housing development and minimise travel to work, change of use from employment use to housing can only be seen as failing the Local Plan so SWT should not remove or allow a change of use.

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

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

Agree with these additional policy approaches

## **6. Infrastructure**

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

**IO - 5a - ranking - Affordable housing:**

1

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

2

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

4

**IO - 5a - ranking - Strategic Infrastructure (schools, transport, community facilities):**

3

**Question 5b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

No additional comments; there are merits in all points.

## 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):**

There should be provision for a reliable public transport system, including Park and Ride and for the creation of safe, well-lit routes for walkers and cyclists. In the absence of a truly public owned bus service routes to all villages in the District to receive subsidies to make them viable to the Bus Companies.

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

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

No additional comments, all look good

## 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):**

Retention of existing ancient hedgerows with more being created for wildlife corridors. More native species planted.

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

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

Support policies 7b/1 to 7b/12 and strongly support policies 7b/7 and 7b/8 that seek to reduce flood risk and to Focus development away from the areas at most risk of flooding. Ensure that flood risk is not exacerbated from increased surface water flows.

## 9. Thriving coastal and rural communities

**Question 8a: How should we manage development in rural areas? Should we:**

Not Answered

**Question 8b: Do you have any comments on these policy approaches?**

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

Question 8a -Keep settlement boundaries, especially important for those settlements close to Taunton. Noted that Ruishton, Henlade and Thornfalcon have been mis-designated as higher order settlements when in fact they are designated Tier 6 and Tier 7 settlements

Question 8b - No Comment

## 10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

Agree with policy approaches

## 11. Policies for our places: Taunton

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

Not Answered

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

Definitely not taller buildings. Totally out of character with the sky line and landscape. Building small car-free developments may be the first step. These developments should be cheaper too so should encourage the next generation to use healthier transport methods. However vastly improved bus services, cycleways and high quality well light foot paths would need to be put in place before any car-free developments are proposed. More housing can only be introduced into the town centre if supported by improved employment opportunities.

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

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

No comment

## **12. Policies for our places: Wellington**

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

**Please provide comments (250 words max):**

No comment

## **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):**

No comments to add but support all policies