Response ID ANON-8CC9-KDXZ-R

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**
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Your details

What is your name?

Forename:
Graham

Surname:
Gleed

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

Organisation

If individual, please tell us what type:

Name of organisation:
Stoke St Gregory 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):
Gernerally agree, but this describes the strategic level. While there is in principle agreement that the objectives are broadly correct, the detail of implementation within these objectives will be where the most meaningful discussion will occur.

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):
Planning Policy needs to change now. To wait for the creation of a Local Plan will delay changes that need to be made immediately, for example energy supply to any new development that comes before Planning, either single houses or larger developments.
No more oil/gas only electicty from renewable, hence the reply to 1.b

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):
We agree with the tiers, but the definition of what is permissable and controlled at the tier level is the key consideration

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):
But that surely depends upon the wishes of the residents of these two settlements

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 suggestedbelow?

Leave housing distribution the same

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):
This is the least worst option. While it is important to retain the essential characteristics of rural settlements many of these are in decline due to loss of services. L ke many rural parishes, our housing stock is gradually becoming slanted towards larger and less affordable houses as the majority of planning applications are for extensions and no new housing has been allocated. We also have an ageing population needing to downsize. The plan should take into account these factors as a significant indicator for permitting limited smaller developments in even small rural communities. Opportunity should exist to refresh the demography of Rural Settlemts

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):
In a dispersed village l ke Stoke St Gregory, consisting of a number of hamlets, the concept of the Settlement Boundary has little relevance. The Parish Council has often supported proposals for infill development of small houses, which wold be consistent with the historical evolution of the village, but these have been opposed by Planning on the grounds that they lie without the Settlement Boundary.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):
The challenges for keeping a village sustainable are changing all the time, as transport links and social practices such as shopping habits evolve. We feel that rather than having a one-size-fits-all set of criteria for building allocation, the new Local Plan needs to take better account of the specific needs of local areas, particularly Tier 6 and 7. The Parish Council, being closest to the ground, is more familiar with what and would not be of benefit to their community, and we feel that far more weight should be given to their recommendations in planning applications than has hitherto been the case. This is especially true when PC's have a cogent case for supporting applications in the face of generic policy to oppose.

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):
Surely the driver should be the Housing Needs Assessment, but even this is a lagging indicator, meaning that the need is always trailing availability. Economic development and housing availaibity are inextricably linked, neither should either outpace or lag the other. There needs to be a much more dynamic process for meshing the two.
The model of subcontracting the delivery of affordable housing to the large developers is not working. The returns demanded by them for "viability" are too high so we are building too many houses and still not meeting our targets for affordable housing. There needs to be a more trigorous connection between as planned and as built, within a suitable legal framwork.

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):
For control and the prevention of opportunistic development

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):
A nessary provision for an ageing population

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

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):
Delegate powers to the Local PC

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):
No additional comments

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 arguement around high value jobs is somewhat misguided. High value jobs create an overall growth in jobs through trickle-down growth in services etc. To separate these two ignores the economic reality.

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?

Retain all existing and currently allocated employment sites; or

Please provide reasons for your answers (200 words max):
Surely this depends on such strategy that this consultaion creates

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):
No additional comments

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):
High speed broadband to rural communities
Community lead transport initiatives to rural settlements

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):
Low capacity high frequency public transport.
Incentives to car pool using app based technolgy
Support for community led transport
Maintain and develop local services avoiding some need to travel

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):
No additional comment

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 moors and levels are areas of unique biodiversity. Developers should be legally obliged to provide mitigation anywhere within the SWT region. This can be the restoration of hedgerows, the mitigation of chemical agriculture, tree planting, better management of waterways.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):
While maintaining central control the role of Parish Councils can be enhanced to address specific local needs.

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):
In a dispersed village l ke Stoke St Gregory, consisting of a number of hamlets, the concept of the Settlement Boundary has little relevance. The Parish Council has often supported proposals for infill development of small houses, which wold be consistent with the historical evolution of the village, but these have been opposed by Planning on the grounds that they lie without the Settlement Boundary.

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):
No additional comments

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):
This will require appropriate transport infrastructure

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):
No additional comments

12. Policies for our places: Wellington

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):
No Comments

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