

## Response ID ANON-8CC9-KDNY-D

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

Submitted on **2020-01-20 11:59:58**

### Your details

**What is your name?**

**Forename:**

Tony

**Surname:**

Westbrook

**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?**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**What is your email address?**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### 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):**

### 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):**

Focus on micro generation rather than big projects. House roof mounted solar panels on all new housing, fewer restrictions on retrofits, consideration of listed building compliance.it Commercial, retail park and agricultural buildings should only be permitted with roof solar panels, and ways to retrofit the huge number of such buildings sought.

### 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)?**

No - Watchet and Williton should be seen as separate settlements

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

Watchet has a unique character which should be preserved to encourage tourism etc...

**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):**

Unless you can guarantee reliable, comprehensive, sustainable and affordable transport options to smaller population centres, any expansion of building there carries a commensurate carbon emission increase now and in the future. For example, bus services to my nearest minor rural settlement are expensive and infrequent. New houses mean more car journeys. How can this be changed and guaranteed?

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

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

Adequate transport links are essential. A map of the region with proposed transport links with pricing and travel times might help to choose the right places for further settlement. For example, Wellington could be another centre for more development if road/rail transport between it and Taunton can be improved.

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

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

Critical that all brownfield sites are exploited fully to control urban sprawl.

#### **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 higher than 702 dwellings per year and determined by economic growth strategies, infrastructure improvements and unmet need from neighbouring planning authorities

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

The policy has to reflect demand

**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):**

More, smaller pitches in locations which avoid conflict.

**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?**

Do not require specific measures for adaptable, accessible and wheelchair homes.

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

I don't know what regulation M defines, but would it be possible to set standards which allow houses to be upgraded to the standard without subsequent major building work?

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

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, Allow self-build plots on Rural Exception sites provided that they are secured as affordable housing for ever

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

The location of rural exception sites should still meet all local, conservation and landscape considerations.

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

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

Some quality standards to ensure new building exceeds minimum design and quality standards. There is a lot of new, ugly, poor quality housing being constructed as our legacy

## 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):**

To retain the unique rural nature of this area

**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):**

Employment requirements have changed radically. We must also change. Ex employment sites are potential brownfield residential sites.

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

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

Get high speed broadband fixed throughout the area. To not be able to get it even within some areas of central Taunton is a disgrace, and a non-negotiable requirement for high value tech industries.

## 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):**

Allowing building without adequate associated infrastructure is creating a problem for the future. We've already seen plenty of it in Taunton Deane.

## 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):**

Make public transport more frequent, cheaper and quicker. You cannot rely on walking and cycling as the prime solution to the problem of rural connectivity.

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

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

High speed broadband needs to be everywhere: town and country; new and existing developments; domestic and commercial. This is vital.

## 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):**

Stronger measures to manage and control damaging agricultural practices. For example, field and slurry runoff is endemic in areas close to the Levels. Very little

replacement of tree cover lost to Dutch Elm disease has ever been undertaken by more large landowners.

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

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

Owners of historic properties that contribute to landscape, also need assistance to meet tighter environmental standards. This means a more supportive approach, grants etc for solar panels, double glazing etc etc on older and listed buildings.

**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):**

There needs to be better control of huge buildings being constructed in random rural locations for agricultural purposes. These are ugly and often misplaced, damaging valuable and rare countryside and tourism income. They also contribute to increased slurry generation, faster rain runoff and flooding acceleration.

**10. Wellbeing of our residents**

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

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

New controls for industrial farms at least equivalent to those required of heavy industries. Big livestock operations often operate 24/7: floorlights, heavy machinery, pumps and tractors through the night etc etc

**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):**

Discourage taller building. The towers of Taunton is a distinctive and attractive feature of the town and should not be compromised. Car free developments should also be created with care share services on site.

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

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

Through future planning decisions, reduce the retail town centre area to make it more vibrant, intense and interesting. This would mean less retail on East Reach and The northern end of Station Road. Adequate parking will always be required.

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

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

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

A new station at Wellington? A fast reliable high frequency shuttle service between Taunton and Wellington?

**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):**

Watchet and Minehead have very different characters and these should be preserved in any ongoing development. A rapid modern rail shuttle between Minehead and Watchet might serve both communities and tourists well and help fund the excellent private railway.