

Response ID ANON-8CC9-KDSG-Z

Submitted to **Local Plan Issues and Options**

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Your details

What is your name?

Forename:

Maureen

Surname:

Smith

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

Organisation

If individual, please tell us what type:

Name of organisation:

West Somerset Community Land Trust

Please choose one from the drop-down list:

Community Group

What is your (personal/organisational) address?

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[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?

Not Answered

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

Carbon neutrality

We agree with the government's aim to increase the energy efficiency requirements to future-proof homes with low carbon heating and ambitious levels of energy efficiency by 2025.

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):

Renewable energy infrastructure

Solar panels

There should be specific sites for small community use, including community Energy companies which could utilize other renewable resources.

Electric cars

Charging points should be frequent and regularly maintained. There should be efforts to reduce the length of time needed to charge cars.

Retrofitting

We favour retrofitting of existing buildings, but government funding via Homes England is not available for this form of community led development.

Wind farms

Our preference is for them to be offshore.

3. Sustainable locations

Question 2a: Do you agree with the tiers that identifies Taunton followed by 6 tiers covering the other settlements?

Not Answered

If not, what changes would you make and why? (200 words max):

Without improved road links major developments in Watchet and Williton should not be considered. West Somerset has a disproportionate number of people of retirement age. Public transport between Minehead and Taunton is unsatisfactory and particularly difficult for older people. Consideration should be given to creating a by-pass around Dunster.

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):

as above in 2a

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):

Of the 6,177 dwellings identified by the Council, how many are affordable? CLTs offer an alternative opportunity to keep homes in community ownership and not sold on the open market. Does the annual figure take into account the number of market homes which will be second homes or holiday lets?

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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?

Not Answered

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

CLTs offer an alternative opportunity to keep homes in community ownership and not sold on the open market. Does the annual figure take into account the number of market homes which will be second homes or holiday lets?

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

Apply rural exceptions criteria for small scale residential sites where pitches which would be affordable in perpetuity; and/or

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

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 percentage should be assessed by a survey of local need. In view of the ageing demographic in West Somerset it is likely to be higher than the national average.

Lifetime home design should be incorporated into all plans.

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, 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):

Where there is a major need for housing, available sites should be allocated for social housing as people opting for self build are likely to be better off.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

We support the use of small sites and recycling of previously developed land.

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?

Align with the Heart of the South West growth ambitions (deliver a shift towards a significant increase in overall job numbers including higher value jobs)

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

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):

A realignment of land use which reduces commuting and enhances quality of life, would be the ideal and avoid the problem as in Bristol, where huge numbers have to travel across the city from home to work.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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:

3

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

4

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

This is a false choice. All are top priority and impact on other essential areas..eg, residents unable to leave hospital due to unsuitable, badly designed homes.

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 safe footpaths to access public transport and subsidise or run appropriate sized flexible bus services.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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):

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

9. Thriving coastal and rural communities

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

Have a policy which is a hybrid of (i) and (ii) where there are settlement boundaries only in areas of greater development pressure i.e. parts of the District that are more accessible - closer to the M5, Taunton and Wellington areas.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

10. Wellbeing of our residents

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

Sustainable, secure well designed homes are the basis of Wellbeing. "Homes are Health Care !

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 should be implemented in conjunction with improved affordable public transport.

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

Please provide comments (250 words max):

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):

Minehead and West Somerset's connectivity is not as good as portrayed. The popularity of the area with retirees increases the age demographic more than the rest of Somerset and makes homes less affordable. The need for social rented homes is acute, but national government has not acknowledged this.