**BRA Bulletin 26th October 2017**

**Please note – there is a further delay in the announcement of the Farleigh Fields Public Inquiry decision – 21st Nov is now the expected date.**

**Land to the West of Backwell – proposal for 700 houses**

This bulletin covers this single important topic. Backwell currently has 1800 households, so we are looking at a 40% increase!

**Summary** For about 2 years, we have mentioned in our bulletins the long-term plan for this area, known as the Joint Spatial Plan – covering the “West of England”, an area formed by the following 4 councils - North Somerset, Bath and NE Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire. BRA has commented on earlier drafts of these plans, which showed 800 houses around Grove Farm, and we suggested that land near the new link road off the Long Ashton Bypass would be a better option. Our response is given in <http://bit.ly/2iAEJxK> However, the latest draft still has major housing at Backwell.

These plans, up to 2036, have now been given a new urgency, with meetings and consultations planned for the next few months, and a target date for the end of consultation of 10th January 2018.

The draft plans for North Somerset have new “communities” in only 4 areas – Banwell, Churchill, Backwell and Nailsea. The North Somerset website says:

*“If the locations for these new communities are confirmed then the new North Somerset Local Plan will need to set out the proposals in more detail.*

*We would like to discuss with you how we plan for these now so that we can move quickly to the new local plan policies. The aim of the consultation will be to get views on how to shape the new community.”*

The above suggests that there is some momentum behind the plan and it may be difficult to change it.

**Interested residents are encouraged to go to the Parish Hall on Nov 9th and Nov 30th to see the proposals in detail (see below).** It should be stressed that this is currently a long-term strategy, but that the clear intention is to convert it in due course into a detailed plan. So now is the time to understand the proposals, and to seek local views and opinions.

**Where is the land?** It is on a continuation of Moor Lane into the fields, bounded by the railway line, and Chelvey Road.

**Where can we see the JSP?** The draft JSP runs to some 400 pages (covering the whole region) and can be viewed on

<https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/so-welep-uploads2/Item%209%20-%20Joint%20Spatial%20Plan%20COMBINED%20DOCs.pdf>

Key pages relating to Backwell, are Policy 7.4, which is on pages 43 and 44, and the Strategic Development Location – Backwell, which is from pages 23 to 30 in this section.

**Important dates**

October 30th A formal meeting in the Guildhall, Bath, where the top people in the 4 councils approve the draft JSP.

November 9th Backwell Parish Hall 2.30pm – 7pm

Taylor Wimpey will give more detail on their proposals (e.g. timescale and access points), shown in a static exhibition, with TW staff on hand.

November 30th Backwell Parish Hall 4pm to 8pm

This is a very important part of the consultation. Members of NSC will answer questions individually, on a drop-in basis, with display boards etc around the room.

December 7th Nailsea Consultation at the Tithe Barn 2pm to 6.30pm

The “Nailsea Community” will have some 2,600 new houses to the SW of the existing town. It is much bigger than the Backwell community, and not very far from Backwell, so is of interest to us.

**Other Key Points**

1. The infrastructure changes to go along with the new housing, such as schools, station improvements, roads etc are given in very general terms. They include a new crossing of the railway line, and a new A370 junction, near Chelvey. Also, an improved connection to the M5.
2. If the land is designated for housing, it will be difficult to have this designation reversed.
3. The tentative dates for building at Grove Farm in the JSP is the period 2028-2036, with a peak building rate of 100 houses a year.
4. We understand, however, that the developer, TW, has aspirations for a much earlier start to the work, by submitting an outline application in the very near future.
5. We will advise members on how and when to comment on the JSP in early December, after the consultation days. We urge you to attend, because these proposals will have a major impact on our village, and we are likely to only have a short time to consider them.

Best wishes

From your BRA Committee 26th October 2017

**Email us at** **backwellresidents@btinternet.com**

**Visit our website on** [**www.backwellresidents.org.uk**](http://www.backwellresidents.org.uk)