**Backwell Residents Association**

**Development in Backwell 2026 – 2036**

[**www.backwellresidents.org.uk**](http://www.backwellresidents.org.uk/) **backwellresidents@btinternet.com**

Many of us are understandably confused by all the planning terms such as core strategy, site allocations plan and joint spatial plan – along with vision, strategy and sustainability. This bulletin will try to concentrate on words we all understand, such as houses, roads and jobs. Some detail will be lost, but at least people may read beyond the first paragraph!

**Background** Following the BRA Bulletin emailed to members Nov 17th, there was a good attendance at the exhibition in the Parish Hall on Tues Nov 22nd, arranged by Backwell Parish Council, when North Somerset Council (NSC) planners explained **the current consultation which closes on Monday 19th Dec.** There are 2 documents– both relate to the period **2026-2036** and to the region called the **West of England**, which covers 4 local authorities (Bath & N.E. Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.)

The documents are:

**West of England Joint Spatial Plan -** where new houses should be built

**West of England Joint Transport Study** – what changes to the infrastructure could be made to enable people to move around and get to work etc.

The two are obviously closely related. They can be found on: <https://www.jointplanningwofe.org.uk/consult.ti>

We encourage you to look at them if possible, as they have plenty of diagrams and maps of explanation. BRA supports the concept of long term planning, but has serious concerns on the suggestions emerging from these documents.

**The Proposals**

**Housing** (from the Spatial Plan) There is a map which shows just 10 “strategic development locations” for the whole West of England Region, including 3 in North Somerset. Amazingly, this includes Nailsea (2,800 new houses), and Backwell (800 new houses), which would increase the size of Backwell by 50% over the 10-year period! BRA believes that Backwell is being unfairly targeted.

The housing for Backwell is shown as a “blob”, without an exact boundary, but is to the west of Moor Lane at Grove Farm, on the fields between Backwell, and Chelvey and Brockley.

The Spatial Plan is light on detail. However, BRA has recently become aware of a Taylor Wimpey proposal to develop land on and around Grove Farm to create 650 homes. This may be viewed on

<http://www.backwellresidents.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Grove_Farm_Issue_and_Options_Promotion_v1-4.pdf>

**Transport Vision.**The map shows a new road (and Metrobus route) from the M5 at Clevedon, through the Backwell/Nailsea 'strategic gap', by the lake, crossing the railway and joining the A370 somewhere near The Jubilee Inn in Flax Bourton. It also shows a junction off this road southwest of Nailsea, crossing the railway and joining the A370 between Backwell and Brockley - this presumably to tie in with the proposed 800 house 'strategic development site'. These new roads might alleviate some Backwell 'through traffic', but we consider such conceptual proposals to be completely unaffordable. The map shows Nailsea and Backwell train station being 'improved' but it is not clear what type of improvement is envisaged.

**Reasons for Objecting**

        Adding 800 more dwellings, i.e. 50% increase, to Backwell in a 10-year period would completely change the character of our village

        The plans lump Nailsea and Backwell together as a sub-region, which is not helpful to either. There is currently an important strategic gap between them. The two communities (town and village respectively) are very different in size, character and in housing needs.

        Backwell has very few employment sites. The new properties would create major commuting journeys of typically 8 to 20 miles to reach employment centres.

        The extra 800 dwellings would have a huge impact on traffic movements within Backwell village, given that the A370, Station Road, Dark Lane and other roads are frequently congested already.

**An Alternative** In contrast to the proposal to put 800 houses in the countryside West of Backwell, there is proposal that has been produced, also by Taylor Wimpey, to use land close to the new A370/A38 link road. This may be seen on <http://www.thevale-northsomerset.co.uk/index.html> The full development would provide some 4,800 houses. Now the new road has been built, this land has less amenity value. Much of it is Green Belt but BRA feels that it is not particularly special – for example the landfill site. One huge advantage of this site is that excellent road and public transport links, such as the Metrobus, are already there, or very close. Additionally, the site is close to employment areas in Bristol with minimal commuting distance, and with short cycling routes to the city. It would be a sustainable development, unlike that in Backwell.

**How to comment** There are several ways to do this. Once again, your views are extremely important in influencing Backwell’s future development. Please make sure your name and address is quoted.

**E Mail** Comments may be sent to comment@jointplanningwofe.org.uk

**By Post** West of England Joint Planning Consultation, c/o South Gloucestershire Council
PO Box 299, Corporate Research and Consultation Team, Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 0DR

**On line survey** See the joint planning website as above

**Please send in your views, and encourage as many other residents to do likewise, by the closing date - Monday 19th Dec 2016.**