Dear Member

Since our previous bulletin dated 26th October, new information has come to light regarding the possible intentions of the developer Taylor Wimpey (TW) for an early start. The Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) runs to 2036, which encourages complacency as it is so far away – but in fact its implications could begin in the near future.

We encourage everyone to see the proposals for 700 homes at Grove Farm, West Backwell.

**Thursday November 9th Backwell Parish Hall 2.30pm – 7pm**

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

Thursday November 30th Backwell Parish Hall 4pm to 8pm

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

It is worth comparing this proposal with that for **Farleigh Fields**, where we wait with fingers crossed for a decision on Nov 21st. In this case, there was a specific outline application by the developer to build 220 houses on Farleigh Fields. NSC refused the application, which then went to a public inquiry. Several factors were in our favour in this case:

·         Farleigh Fields is a well-known location that has been targeted for several decades. Many residents objected, as did BRA and Backwell Parish Council

·         The development was contrary to the Backwell Neighbourhood Plan, which goes up to 2026.

·         **Crucially NSC opposed the development**, and their officers were busy collecting information and supporting their lawyer at the Inquiry.

In contrast, the **Grove Farm** proposal has different characteristics and the eventual outcome will be a huge development, on the edge of our village.

**For Grove Farm**:

·         The proposal is being made through the process of the long term Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) for a large region, including North Somerset – running up to 2036. Land selected for development would normally receive planning permission when requested if the JSP had allocated it for housing.

·         Many residents we have spoken with are not sure where Grove Farm is, and where the houses are planned to be built. In 1998, a similar proposal was put forward, and many people objected to such a large development, **which would increase the village by some 40%.**

·         The JSP is not specific in much of the detail for the development, but does suggest that the first houses could be built in 2028. TW has indicated they would hope to start before this. The JSP and TW recognise that 700 extra homes will need infrastructure improvements.

·         Crucially, NSC has been part of the process to create and agree the draft JSP. Any opposition to this JSP would therefore not have their support.

**Key Points for Members**

1.    Please go to the meeting **this Thursday**, where Taylor Wimpey(TW) will give some details of what they have in mind, though at this stage there is no formal application. It is an excellent way of seeing precisely which fields are being proposed for development.

2.    Please consider whether you think the JSP should be opposed (which can be done up to Jan 10th 2018).

3.    The BRA committee will decide on a course of action after the consultation meeting on Nov 30th. **We are keen to have the views of members**. It will take a large effort from Backwell residents to influence the JSP, which has the backing of NSC. We will, in any event, make strong representations on the timing of the development and on the essential infrastructure improvements.

4.    Find out what possible infrastructure improvements are being suggested, and the timing of these in relation to the house building (some will need to be in place before the extra traffic starts!)

5.    Ask about start dates. **TW have suggested that they might put in an outline application in the near future to enable building to start significantly before the JSP date of 2028.**  This makes it all the more important to learn as much as we can this month, before making representations.

Best wishes

From your BRA Committee                                                            7th November 2017