**Dear Member**

After a period of relative peace, apart from the changes to Station Road, we need to remind members of the ongoing proposal to put 700 houses on Grove Farm to the West of Backwell, along with some new roads to help achieve this. This bulletin attempts to summarise where we are with the hundreds of pages produced to explain this. There are 2 separate but linked strands to this planning process.

One is the **Joint Spatial Plan (JSP)**. This is the proposal which has been created by the 4 councils (Bristol City, Bath and North-East Somerset, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset (NSC)) known as “West of England”. The JSP allocates housing across the area up to 2036. The other is the **North Somerset Local Plan (2036),** which has reached the stage of what it calls an “**Issues and Options Document”.** These documents are considered in turn:

**Joint Spatial Plan (JSP)**

This the key document as it sits above the NSC Local Plan which needs to be consistent with the requirements of the larger region.

The JSP was presented in a 400-page document in Nov 2017 which can be viewed on <http://www.backwellresidents.org.uk/joint-spatial-strategy/>

BRA gave a 23 page response, available on <http://www.backwellresidents.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/JSP-BRA-BR-Representations.pdf> and encouraged members to comment by the deadline of Jan 10th 2018. Many members and other residents did respond and NSC has reported back on these responses as follows:

They were:

* extremely critical of the proposed development location (i.e. Grove Farm)
* concerned re the impact on existing road network and resulting congestion
* aware of the detrimental environmental impact of new roads on Backwell Common, particularly Backwell lake and environs
* conscious of an additional flood risk
* concerned about the lack of existing services and facilities in the village to support the level of growth proposed

There is also a widespread view that land adjacent to the new Bristol South link road near Long Ashton known as “The Vale” would be much more suitable for a major housing development. It could provide much easier access to jobs and services than from green fields west of Backwell, without the need for considerable new roads, and other transport infrastructure.

The JSP is currently being reviewed and will be open for further comment from this month to spring 2019, following which there will be a public hearing in summer 2019.

**Commenting on the JSP will be crucial** and we will advise members when this is needed and points you might like to consider.

**North Somerset Local Plan (2036),** - **“Issues and Options Document”.**

This document runs to 95 pages, and can be viewed on

<http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Local-Plan-2036-Issues-and-Options-Document-1.pdf>

The Local Plan is at a very early stage. The Issues and Options Document states “It is not a draft plan and does not contain detailed policies or site allocations”. This is frustrating since the “devil will be in the detail” on such matters as the route for a new road, what improvements are proposed for current bottlenecks (e.g. A370 crossroads) and the creation of a “transport hub” at Nailsea & Backwell station. This Local Plan will show in more detail how NSC will play its part in the JSP, and currently includes the 700-house development at Grove Farm. There will be further consultation on the Local Plan, which will happen during 2019, presumably after the JSP has been agreed. A long process!

**This first stage of Public consultation for the Local Plan is open until December 10th** **2018** and comments can be made in the following ways:

**Email** planning.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk

**By Post** Planning Policy Team, Post point 15, Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, Weston-Super-Mare, BS23 1UJ

**On-line** via E-consult (accessed from [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/localplan2036](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/localplan2036) )

Backwell Parish Council (BPC) has employed a planning consultant to produce detailed comments on relevant sections of the Issues and Options document. BRA has contributed to this both financially and through input to the BPC 2018 - 2036 Working Party. When complete, the BPC response will appear on both the BPC and BRA websites.

Members may wish to make their own representations now, but we feel it may be more effective to await the publication of more detailed proposals during 2019.

**Caution !!** As with the Farleigh Fields campaign, members will need to make their views known several times over the next year or so to both NSC and the JSP, and repeat your views if they have already been submitted. You may like to save time by using “cut and paste” for some of your views for use in subsequent comments. It would be tragic if there was a widespread feeling of “comment exhaustion” and as a result we ended up with a Backwell that was not how we would wish it to be!

Best wishes

From your BRA Committee 2nd November 2018