

## APPENDIX 4

### OPEN FORUM WITH A QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

**Q.** Michael Pratt spoke about the expense that Backwell incurred in its high-quality defence against the JSP. He questioned the huge amount of money spent for something that was dismissed by the Inspectors and wondered how Backwell could recoup that money that we were forced to spend on the JSP's totally inadequate presentation.

**A.** Lucy White said that whilst there is an opportunity to recover monies spent if you are an aggrieved party in respect of a Planning Appeal there is no such mechanism for recouping the costs expended in representation in a Public Examination.

**A.** Mike Rose said that there has been some discussion at North Somerset and they are very keen to have more public input into the next Local Plan and more time will be allowed for the people of North Somerset to have their say before the next Plan is agreed.

**Q.** Drummond Forbes asked "Is there a danger that these two sites - the 700 Grove Farm houses plus the application for 65 houses behind the Scout hut - could be linked together to provide emergency access with other Grove Farm traffic then using the link to come out on to Rodney Road?"

**A.** Mike Rose said there **IS** a danger but Taylor Wimpey has stated there is no way these two sites would be linked. They have stated that access will not be via Moor Lane and Station Road as these are already over-used. Access will be to the far western end of the village.

**Q.** Mike Timms asked a question about the Railway Station and lack of access for disabled residents, prams and older residents.

**A.** Keith Riches reported that some of the campaigners, Alison Morgan, and a BPC Councillor had a meeting with our MP, Liam Fox, who took their comments to other MP's. GWR's latest position is very disappointing. They say that a lift would cost £10 million which we think is absurd. Alternatives may be considered in a couple of years' time. It is all very frustrating. We need to start another campaign and ask our MP to hold GWR to account as they are supposed to be providing a service and access for all groups of people. We will apply further pressure when we can. It is obviously very serious for people in a wheel chair or anyone with slightly reduced mobility and push chair users. In the last West of England Joint Spatial Plan, Nailsea and Backwell Station was proposed as a transport hub.

**A.** Steve Ledbrook, a wheel chair user, said that since he moved into Backwell the buses are running less and less. With Backwell Station having no wheel chair access trying to get around is a constant battle. He goes to London by train and gets

a taxi to Temple Meads and back home again. He asks "How can Backwell improve their transport?" Luckily, he drives.

**A.** Mike Rose said that Engineers established that the actual bank outside of the Station is structurally unsound and that is one of the reasons why they cannot put in a lift. There is talk about moving the Station slightly to the west.

**Q.** Chris Perry (the main architect of the Backwell Neighbourhood Plan) asked whether anyone knows what Bristol City Council are proposing to do about employing professional Engineering Consultants regarding their Highways Plans particularly regarding Cumberland Basin. He also commented on rising levels of CO2 at Backwell crossroads and wondered whether any research is being done on that issue. It might be a factor which ought to be taken into account in any future Highways Planning.

**A.** Bridget Petty said that Central road infrastructure is a nightmare and that Lucy White had made a number of good points on this. However, they are issues which we face and does not think it can remain as it is. We need to think hard about the future of our traffic as there will inevitably be more houses and it is a complex problem. We in North Somerset Council should be part of the conversation.

**A.** Keith Riches reported that the last bulletin had mentioned a couple of solutions being taken forward to the Joint Local Transport Plan. It is a really important step to get everybody's views. Station Road is too busy though it would be a pity to use more green spaces to put a road through Backwell Common.

**Q.** Richard Ivens raised a question about revision of the green belt. If we are going to have a new Joint Transport Plan there ought to be a ruling on the green belt before that happens.

**A.** Lucy White agreed that there ought to be a review of the green belt and hopefully the new NSC administration will address that. Before any decisions are made a review of the different parcels of land within the green belt should be undertaken. Under-performing land could be taken out of the green belt without hurting the environment. Central Government still appears to think that the green belt should not be tampered with. Proposals by large building developers for development on green belt land closer to Bristol need to be looked at again. North Somerset may find itself hamstrung by Central Government Policy in being able to alter it.

**A.** Mike Rose said that in simple terms all the land on the eastern side of Backwell is green belt and land on the western side is not green belt.

**Q.** Lesley Brassington asked if Backwell Common will be included in the 20-mph speed limit?

**A.** Bridget Petty replied "Not yet".

**Q.** Hugh Dale said that Taylor Wimpey had promised that there would be no link between 700 Grove Farm houses and 65 Rodney Road houses. If they did not hold to this policy it would push traffic wanting to go to Nailsea out on to Station Road via Rodney Road and Moor Lane. Also, up on to the A370 and down Station Road. The roads are not adequate for this.

**A.** Lucy White said this was a valid point. Representatives at the West of England Joint Spatial Plan Examination did not get a chance to say it verbally. Grove Farm development would have a major impact on the junction. There was talk of closing Station Road but it would mean using back routes. A new road link to Nailsea would not mitigate the impact of traffic from Grove Farm on the A370.

**A** Keith Riches reported that house building in Nailsea was increased back in the 1960's without proper road infrastructure and we are suffering for it now. Roads in Backwell are very narrow and were never expected to take such a large increase in traffic.

**Q.** Ann Heymans asked a question about the new Cumberland Basin Scheme and how it will impact on Backwell.

**A.** Mike Rose said that BRA strongly opposed it. Bristol City Council have valuable land around the Cumberland Basin and would like to reduce the roads to build a few thousand flats/houses. They have various ideas of how to get from the south of Bristol across the river. There would be an impact on anybody from Backwell and other areas. One of the ideas is to cross over much closer to the Suspension Bridge into a T junction with the Portway near to Clifton Rocks Railway. It would be a complete nightmare for people from this side of town.

**Q.** Bridget Petty asked three questions –

**1.** Should we examine Settlement Boundaries where they are out of date?

**2.** Are we interested in the Neighbourhood Plan of renewable energy?

Whether people in Backwell think a wind turbine would be a good idea for our village and where to put it.

**3.** How do people feel about changing the 40 mph on Farleigh Road to a 30mph limit?

**A.(1)** Lucy White said that the Settlement Boundary is a black line drawn around the main urban area of Backwell. Within it you can have infill development and outside of it you are then in open countryside with no extra housing. It has been in place about 20 years without a review. She could see an opportunity for developers who might argue that because we have not changed our boundaries, they could

push for development outside of it. BPC will need to look and see that the boundaries are robust.

**A.(2)** Mike Rose said that BRA has not got a policy at the moment on renewable energy. A number of years ago a wind turbine was suggested in the Chelvey Lane area. It was turned down as it was found to be in the flight path of bats coming from Brockley Hall. Noise was a further problem.

**A.(3)** Keith Riches said that changing the 40-mph limit on Farleigh Road to 30 mph is a tricky one as one of the elements in turning down the development on Farleigh Fields was the fact that the sight lines were inadequate because there was a 40-mph limit on the road. The 30-mph speed limit at present on the road could do with moving slightly as BRA members who live by the Sports Centre say it is pretty much on the apex of a bend and hidden by a tree.

Keith also stated that surveys have been done and shown that reduced limits produce a small reduction in speed of perhaps 2/3 mph which is better than nothing and produces a reduction in accidents. Speed bumps and narrowing of roads, however, have been found to increase pollution.

Drummond Forbes said that with regard to wind turbines he felt that it was more important to contain energy usage rather than encourage locally produced energy. Also, whether the speeds are 40, 30 or 20 they are pointless if you do not have the resources to police them.