**Backwell Residents Association Guide**

**to the NSC Draft Local Plan consultation.**

**Backwell faces a 60% increase, ‘stay a *village not a town’***

**Have your say in the online consultation by 29th April** [North Somerset Local Plan 2038 Preferred Options - North Somerset Council Consultations (inconsult.uk)](https://n-somerset-pp.inconsult.uk/PreferredOptionsMarch22/consultationHome)  **Help Backwell be heard!**

**The consultation isn’t easy to complete, it has 150-time consuming questions some of which are quite technical. Having listened to residents we have put a short guide together.**

1. Use the link or search the sentence ‘North Somerset Local Plan Preferred Options’. *You should see Draft Local Plan Preferred Options March 2022.*
2. It is a good idea to have thoughts compiled beforehand, copy and pasting makes it easier when on the site however **YOU CAN WRITE, SUBMIT, AND RETURN TO THE CONSULTATION** another time although your previous comments aren’t visible.
3. You will need to log in or register for consultations if you haven’t done so before. (This is not the same as *‘your NSC my account’* for council tax. The survey is not phone friendly, so you need access to a computer or tablet)
4. Once logged in, either in front of you or on the menu to the FAR left - choose or click on **‘open’** and then **‘preferred options’** **You are now in the consultation. Scroll down to start, click on consultation document.**
5. Topics included in the guide below can be found on the menu to your left, they are named after various policies for example **Vision and priorities, 3.SP1**
6. **To navigate up and down just click on a question or policy you are interested in from the menu on the left.**
7. **The questions highlighted specifically for Backwell are LP3, LP4 & Under SCHEDULE 1 see Backwell although there are other pertinent questions as you see below.**
8. Choose, ‘Support’, ‘Support with amendment’ OR ‘Object’ for each question.
9. **Press** **Submit** **after each comment ensures your comments are saved. You will receive an email with each submission. ‘Return to document’ takes you back to the consultation.**
10. The LAST item on the menu is ABOUT YOU! Demographical information. If this section is available hit **FINISH** to end.

**The following are some pointers we have been asked to produce by members – not by any means an exhaustive list, there are many other valid points for and against, please use your own ideas and phrasing for maximum impact.**

**Draft Local Plan – Backwell Residents Association. Topics are matched to the relevant consultation question shown in RED. You will notice some overlap between questions.**

1) We recognise the challenge of the governments housing target for NS but we say more should be done to get the target reduced. **Vision and priorities, 3.SP1 & SP8**

2) The most important issue is the proposal to put 1100 more houses at Backwell during the plan period (60% more than present). We say this is an unacceptable increase and would turn Backwell from village to town. This number is imposed by the plan and is nothing to do with the needs of the community. **SP3 & LP3**
3) We do accept the need for modest growth, preferably smaller developments, up to a total of about 200/300 extra dwellings during the plan period. We think sites could be found. The priority should be on small and medium sized houses, suitable for first-time buyers and ‘down-sizers’. **LP3, LP4 & SCHEDULE 1 Backwell**

4) Green Belt ('East of Backwell’) - Does the situation actually meet the ‘exceptional circumstances' test? [Why not use Ashton Vale which has much better transport links and is closer to existing employment areas?] **SP7 & LP8**

5) The current level of information about proposed transport infrastructure in the draft plan is totally inadequate for any proper assessment. It is clear that Backwell (and Nailsea) have a problem *now*, and that something must be done to accommodate even modest growth, let alone growth on the scale proposed. In particular, Station Road and Backwell crossroads need relief, but it is hard to see how this can be achieved without a vastly expensive new road over the railway. And we are not in favour of the resultant impact on Backwell Common. **LP3, Vision and priorities & 3.SP1**

6) We support all genuine attempts to: retain valued landscape and wildlife habitats; produce enhanced biodiversity; moves towards reduced emissions and ’net zero’.
Therefore we agree many of the ‘green’ aspirations in the plan, but we say the proposals for Backwell fail to comply (add examples) **DP32 & DP5**

a) Not ‘sustainable’ because not close to jobs. Despite a good bus service on the main road and a train station, it is inevitable that there will be a significant increase in commuting traffic along the A370 and joining from Nailsea, mainly heading towards Bristol. **Vision and priorities & 3.SP1**

b) It is wrong to build large numbers of houses on extensive tracts of good quality agricultural land, because this land should be used to produce food – it is more sustainable to grow food locally. **DP53** Additionally, much of this open land (adjacent to the village) is important to the wellbeing of people who use the networks of footpaths, and wildlife, including protected species. **DP57**

7) Encouraging employment at sustainable locations – we support this. Such initiatives should have access to appropriate roads and should not be on good quality agricultural land. **SP9 & Schedule 2 employment**

8) We support all improvements to active travel. **DP14 & DP15**

9) We support all encouragement of top quality building standards and more renewable energy in suitable locations. **LP4**

10) Other areas of interest for residents for comment include **‘Accessibility’** we draw your attention to **DP 15 & 16** or Bristol Airport, **LP 11. LP12 & D19** or Climate Change **DP5-7, DP9** or Conservation **DP32**

**OR if you prefer, email your comments to** planning.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk

Quoting Preferences & Options in the subject line. Giving your name and postcode with your comments.