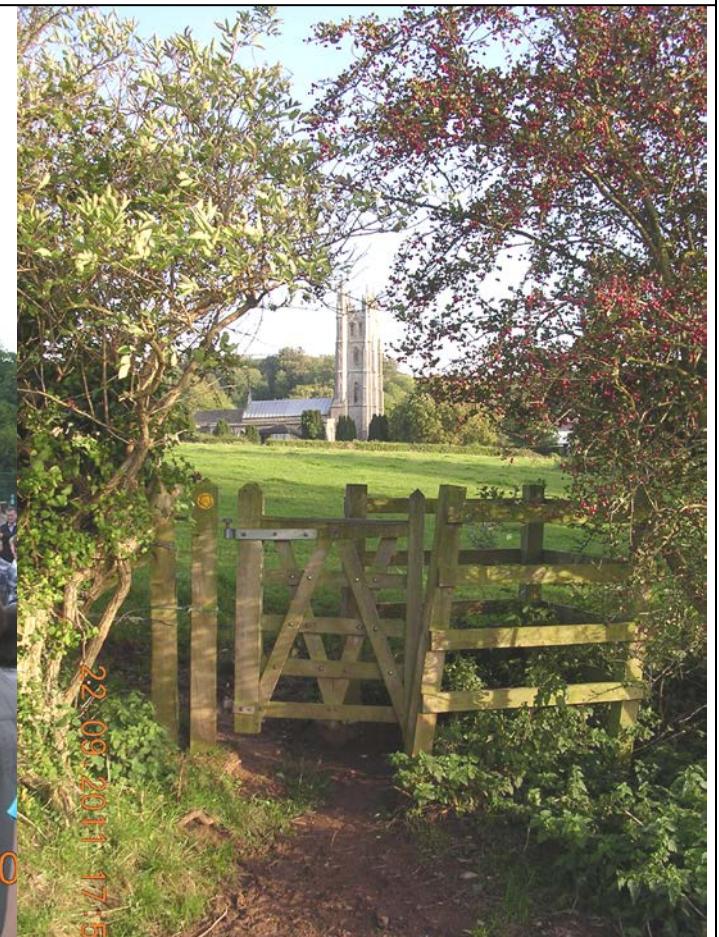


BACKWELL FUTURE

**Backwell Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2026
Pre-examination version: March 2014**



Foreword by Bob Taylor Chair of Backwell Parish Council

In 2010 Backwell produced its Community Plan. I am delighted that this has been upgraded to *BACKWELL FUTURE* the Backwell Neighbourhood Plan that provides a blueprint for Backwell from 2014 to 2026.

I place on record my thanks, on behalf of the Council, for the work of the Steering Group that developed the Plan over the last two years.

This version of *BACKWELL FUTURE* is largely consistent with the November 2012 Draft Plan when the community indicated majority support for the proposals. It is inevitable, however, that some residents will not welcome all of the Plan's proposals.

BACKWELL FUTURE addresses environmental, economic and social issues. It proposes positive growth in excess of the minimum indicated in the North Somerset Core Strategy. This is balanced by a number of sustainability initiatives, notably the Backwell Traffic Mitigation Strategy, the retention of the existing Green Belt, and by designating as Local Green Space areas that are special to the community.

Backwell residents who are on the electoral role will have the opportunity to vote for or against *BACKWELL FUTURE* at a referendum. The referendum will be arranged by North Somerset Council and details will be announced in due course.

I hope that when deciding how to respond at the referendum, residents will consider whether, taking the proposals as a whole, *BACKWELL FUTURE* is in the best interests of Backwell and its community.

Please use your vote when the time comes.

Bob Taylor



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BACKWELL FUTURE is supported by a series of other documents as listed opposite.

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1 WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND WHY DOES BACKWELL NEED ONE?

- 1.1. The Localism Act 2012 provides a new planning regime that allows Parish Councils to draw up Neighbourhood Plans, such as *BACKWELL FUTURE*.
- 1.2. A Neighbourhood Plan allows communities to influence the planning of the area in which they live. It offers the community the opportunity to:
 - Develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood;
 - Identify where new homes, shops and any other development should be built;
 - Designate important Local Green Spaces for protection;
 - Identify other requirements such as car parking and community facilities.
- 1.3. Neighbourhood plans are explained in the Communities and Local Government Plain English guide to the Localism Act viz::

'Provided a neighbourhood development plan is in line with national planning policy, with the strategic vision for the wider area set by the local authority, and with other legal requirements, local people will be able to vote on it in a referendum. If the plan is approved by a majority of those who vote, then the local authority will bring it into force.'*

[The strategic vision * is explained in North Somerset Council's Core Strategy 2012] See: http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/Environment/Planning_policy_and-research/localplanning/Pages/Core-Strategy.aspx

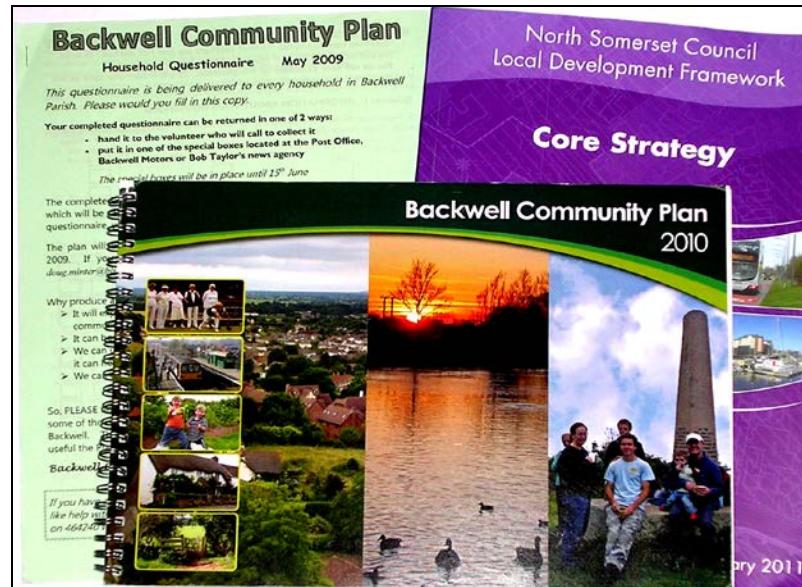
2. VISION STATEMENT: To safeguard Backwell for future generations as an attractive place to live with a sustainable village-feel in proximity to the countryside.

OBJECTIVES

- ❖ Formulate *BACKWELL FUTURE* based on community views;
- ❖ Develop *BACKWELL FUTURE* to support, and be consistent with, the North Somerset Core Strategy 2012-26;
- ❖ Promote a healthy community through the support of community and recreational facilities, protect and where possible enhance green infrastructure, and encourage walking and cycling;
- ❖ Verify that schools, health and leisure facilities are adequate for community needs;
- ❖ Identify housing needs by number and type, taking into account demographic change, and where development should take place;
- ❖ Promote appropriate opportunities for local employment;
- ❖ Ensure shops, offices and light industry are able to develop to provide a sustainable local service to the community;
- ❖ Promote sustainable transport including the creation of safe cycling and walking routes, and public transport;
- ❖ Where possible address highway, congestion and parking problems (including through promotion of sustainable transport);
- ❖ Protect the environment by safeguarding/enhancing areas important for nature conservation, heritage or landscape value;
- ❖ Safeguard the best and most versatile agricultural land in order that it is available for sustained food production;
- ❖ Promote more efficient energy use and renewable energy.

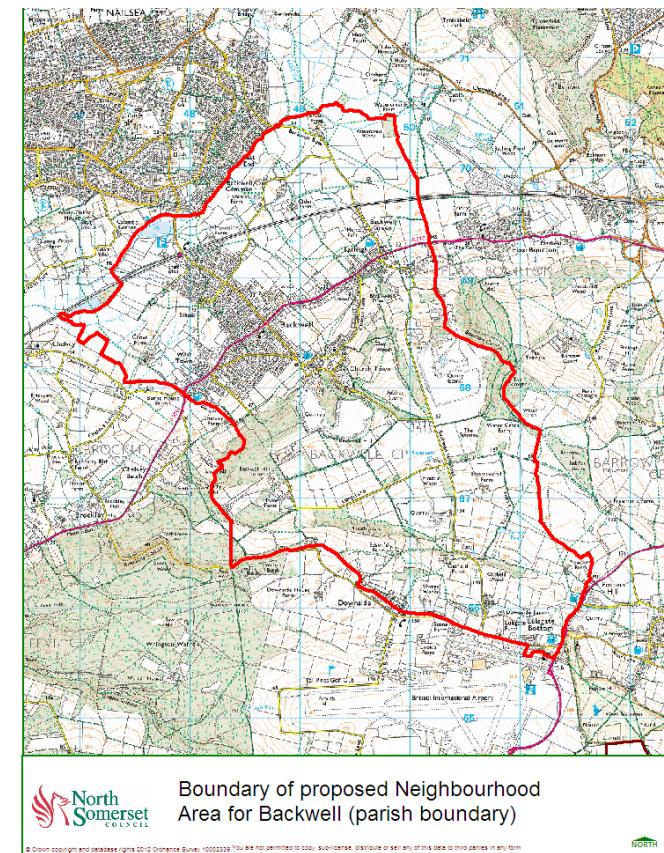
3. HOW 'BACKWELL FUTURE' WAS PREPARED

- 3.1. Backwell Community Plan 2010 (BCPlan) is the foundation from which *BACKWELL FUTURE* has been developed. It is based on extensive community consultation and is available on the Parish Council website www.backwell-pc.gov.uk



- 3.2. The BCPlan, underpinned by a database of residents' answers and comments, is both recent and robust. Further research and consultation has however been conducted to inform on issues that were not included in the BCPlan or which required greater exploration or updating.
- 3.3. **The Steering Group.** In July 2011 Backwell Parish Council set up a Steering Group to develop *BACKWELL FUTURE*. The Group included Parish Councillors and former members of the BCPlan Steering Group. The Council advertised within the community for others who possessed appropriate skills and experience to join the Group or to assist as observers.

- 3.4. **North Somerset Council (NSC).** Officers of NSC worked with the Steering Group and provided specialist and technical advice and information necessary to develop *BACKWELL FUTURE*.
- 3.5. **Consultations.** Stakeholders have been consulted throughout the preparation of *BACKWELL FUTURE*, and particularly with the November 2012 DRAFT PLAN. Details are summarised in EVIDENCE BASE R the Consultation Statement.
- 3.6. **Area covered by *BACKWELL FUTURE*.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* covers the Parish of Backwell.



4. THE NORTH SOMERSET CORE STRATEGY

- 4.1. The Core Strategy sets out the broad long-term vision, objectives and strategic planning policies for North Somerset up to 2026. Following an examination, conducted by an independent Inspector, the North Somerset Core Strategy was found 'sound' and was formally adopted in April 2012. It proposed the provision of a minimum of 14,000 new homes by 2026.
- 4.2. Following a legal challenge, Policy CS13 (scale of new housing) was found to be unlawful and this matter was remitted back to the Planning Inspectorate for re-examination. As a consequence the following policies are no longer adopted - CS6, CS13, CS14, CS19, CS28, CS30, CS31, CS32 and CS33.
- 4.3. North Somerset Council, with the assistance of specialist demographic analysts, subsequently reviewed the housing requirements. Taking account of this new information North Somerset Council agreed, at its meeting on 12th November 2013, that the Council's position at the re-examination into the remitted policies will be that the housing requirement is increased from 14,000 to 17,130 dwellings.
- 4.4. North Somerset Council informs that the revision to 17,130 dwellings can be delivered on sites which are consistent with the existing spatial strategy, as demonstrated through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and the Consultation Draft Sites and Policies Plan.
- 4.5. The indications are that sufficient sites can be made available to meet the latest requirement without affecting the policy for Service Villages (Policy CS32) that includes Backwell. This is evidenced by a submission by North Somerset Council to the Planning Inspectorate in August 2013:
- "The Council's position is that even if the housing requirement is increased, the flexibilities in the plan mean that this is likely to be able to be accommodated without changing the spatial strategy (i.e. with no change to the remitted policies other than CS13) and*

with no change to the Green Belt. For example, the Sites and Policies Plan Consultation Draft (February 2013) made provision for an anticipated supply of 18,099 dwellings over the plan period, a significant boost to housing supply of nearly 30% over the minimum of 14,000 dwellings set out in Policy CS13. Evidence was also given at the original examination that around 18,000 dwellings was also the ceiling in terms of the total amount of dwellings which could be practically delivered within North Somerset over the plan period given current economic forecasts and lead-in times for new housing sites. Furthermore, whilst the 2008 trend-based projections were pointing to an undeliverable 32,000 households (which would have had significant adverse consequences for the key objectives of more sustainable employment-led growth, reduced out-commuting and improved self-containment), latest objectively assessed evidence is likely to show a substantially lower requirement. In our submission there are very convincing reasons why any necessary change to CS13 is likely to be accommodated within the existing spatial planning framework."

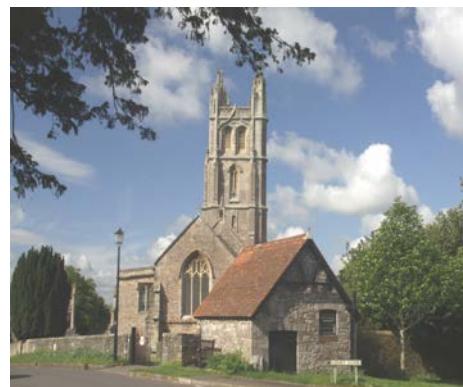
[http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/Environment/Planning_policy_and-research/localplanning/Documents/Council's%20response%20to%20Inspector's%20initial%20letter%20\(pdf\).pdf](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/Environment/Planning_policy_and-research/localplanning/Documents/Council's%20response%20to%20Inspector's%20initial%20letter%20(pdf).pdf)

- 4.6. **BACKWELL FUTURE.** The National Planning Policy Framework, at paragraph 184, prescribes that '*Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan*'. **BACKWELL FUTURE** therefore needs to be consistent with the North Somerset Core Strategy.
- 4.7. The view has been taken that there is sufficient flexibility in the Core Strategy, and the existing spatial strategy, for **BACKWELL FUTURE** to proceed to independent Examination. At least two recent Examiner's reports* have found that there is no need to delay progress with Neighbourhood Plans to await the finalisation of a Core Strategy or Local Plan.
- *This was a matter considered in both the Tattenhall (Cheshire) and Rolleston on Dove (Staffordshire) Neighbourhood Plan examinations.
- 4.8. Evidence Base S provides a detailed assessment of how **BACKWELL FUTURE** conforms to the North Somerset Core Strategy.

5. THE BACKWELL COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT

- 5.1 **A brief history of Backwell.** Backwell is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. In the 18th century the parish comprised the hamlets of Church Town, Farleigh, West Town, Downside and Moorside (Backwell Common).

The oldest settlement is Church Town. St Andrew's Church dates from the 14th century. The road from Farleigh to Church Town to West Town was the medieval highway. The track from Farleigh to West Town was improved in the 18th century and is now the A370. Most of the modern housing was constructed in the period 1950-80.



- 5.2 **The Backwell Community** resides in a vibrant village with a multitude of social, recreational, sporting and spiritual organisations. The 2011 census informs the following:

Age group	Number of residents
0 - 4	201
5 - 9	296
10 - 15	412
16 - 24	422
25 - 44	855
45 - 64	1343
65 - 74	566
75 and over	494
Total	4589

Source: North Somerset Council and the Office for National Statistics

- 5.3 **The Backwell environment.** The village experiences high levels of commuting, mainly by road transport, especially to Bristol 7 miles distant, and congestion through the village centre. The village offers a semi-rural environment that is in contrast to endemic traffic problems and residents place great value in the open spaces and attractive landscape that are features of the village.



- 5.4 Residents and local walking groups make extensive use of the many public footpaths. In 2011 the Parish Council published a booklet of local walks taking in local footpaths and bridleways. It proved so popular that two reprints were necessary.

- 5.5 *Backwell Environment Trust* manages an extensive area of woodland on Backwell Hill. *Sustainable Backwell* is a group taking action to deal with issues of sustainability. Both organisations have made inputs to *BACKWELL FUTURE*.

- 5.6 Residents wish to safeguard Backwell for future generations as an attractive place to live with a sustainable village-feel in close proximity to the countryside. Residents' wishes are the basis of the Vision Statement shown at Section 2.



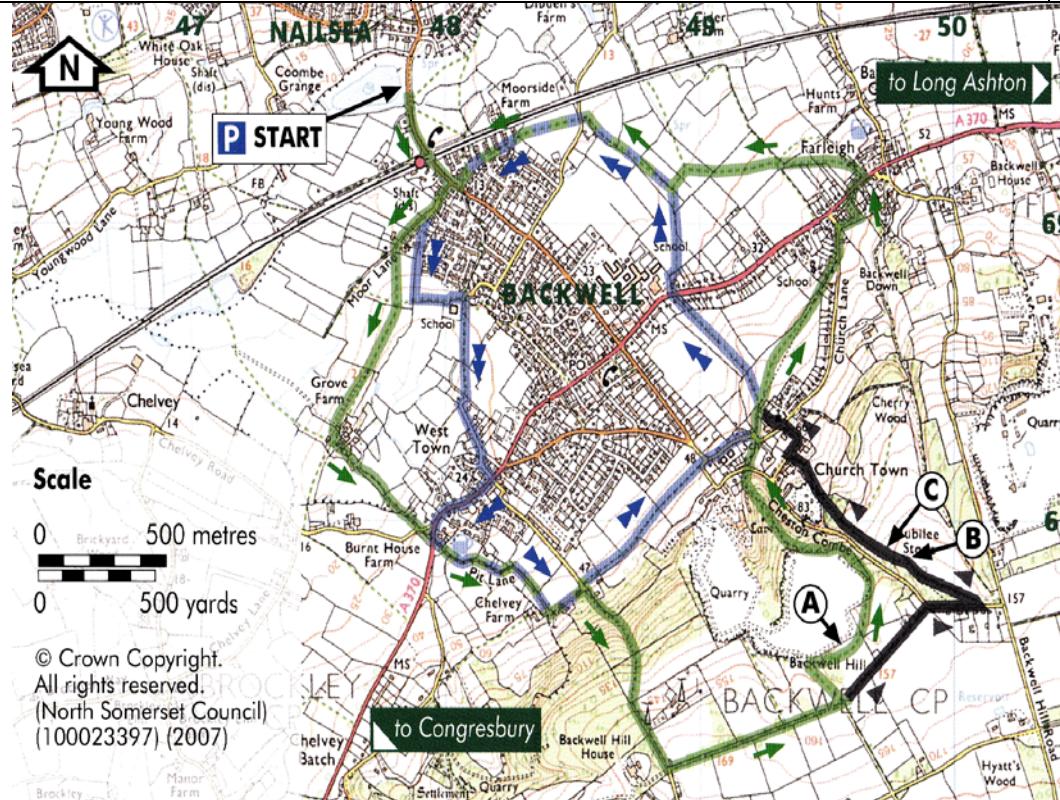
Backwell Round: below Recycling Centre



Public Footpath: Backwell Common



Backwell Round: Jubilee Stone view point



Backwell Round Walking Route

Key

Walk 1

Walk 2

Option 1

A Viewing point

B Jubilee Stone and viewing point

C Remains of lead mining and lime kilns

6. LIVING WITHIN ENVIRONMENTAL LIMITS: Sustainability, Green Belt, Strategic Gap

NPPF Introduction:

The UK Sustainable Development Strategy 'Securing the Future' set out five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development: living within the planet's environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly

Core Strategy policy CS1:

North Somerset Council (NSC) is committed to reducing carbon emissions and tackling climate change, mitigating further impacts and supporting adaptation to its effects.....

This section of *BACKWELL FUTURE* provides an overview and a summary of key points. Greater detail is provided in:-

EVIDENCE BASE C: Living within environmental limits.

6.1. North Somerset Council's environmentally focused objectives in the Core Strategy are:

- reducing unsustainable carbon emissions;
- making all buildings more sustainable;
- encouraging sustainable transport patterns; and
- planning for a sustainable distribution of land uses.

6.2. Reducing unsustainable carbon emissions. *BACKWELL FUTURE* responds to the government's target that 15%* of our energy demand will be met by renewable energy, in the most cost effective way, by 2020. * National Renewable Energy Action Plan.

PLANNING POLICY: SUSTAINABILITY 1. Proposals for the generation of renewable energy will be supported provided the adverse impacts are satisfactorily addressed. Appropriate community led renewable energy schemes will be encouraged.

6.3. Making buildings more sustainable. The Government plans to move towards zero carbon for all new homes by 2016 and all non-domestic buildings by 2019 through a 10 year programme of change to the Building Regulations. There are indications however that Government may change the approach to Code levels requiring that policies in CS2 will need to be modified.



6.4. The Core Strategy Policy CS2 for new development requires:

- a) designs that are energy efficient;
- b) the use of on-site renewable energy sources to meet a minimum of 10% of energy use;
- c) a minimum Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 for all new dwellings from October 2010, Level 4 from 2013, rising to Level 6 (zero carbon) by 2016;
- d) developments of 10 or more new homes to be constructed to the Lifetime Homes standard from 2013.

6.5. *BACKWELL FUTURE* supports these objectives as follows:

PLANNING POLICY: SUSTAINABILITY 2. New dwellings will be required to meet the requirements of CS2, and new standards, as these are introduced by the Building Regulations. [see 6.3]

PLANNING POLICY: SUSTAINABILITY 3. Proposals that make existing properties more sustainable will be supported provided the aesthetic impact, noise and emissions are environmentally and socially acceptable.

- 6.6. **Drainage.** Climate change and other factors present an increasing flood risk. Some areas of the village, mainly highways, already experience flash flooding and it is vital that run-off from new development does not exacerbate the situation.



PLANNING POLICY: SUSTAINABILITY 4. New development should include sustainable drainage systems to reduce or eliminate surface water run-off to ensure that the development does not increase the flood risk. Environmental infrastructure should be integrated into the design of building and landscaping features, and be easily maintained.

- 6.7. **Encouraging sustainable transport.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* supports the Core Strategy at CS10 :

CS10: Transportation and movement

Travel management policies and development proposals that encourage an improved and integrated transport network and allow for a wide choice of modes of transport as a means of access to jobs, homes, services and facilities will be encouraged and

supported. Transport schemes should:

- enhance the facilities for pedestrians, including those with reduced mobility, and other users such as cyclists;*
- deliver better local bus, rail and rapid transit services in partnership with operators;*
- develop innovative and adaptable approaches to public transport in the rural areas of the district*

- 6.8. A more frequent X1 bus service has been recently introduced but it is notable that no significant improvements are proposed to the major highways through Backwell. Problems of congestion in Backwell are described in the Highways and Transport section of this Plan.

- 6.9. A local cyclist reports:

'the existing road network in Backwell is an overwhelmingly hostile environment for cyclists and not suitable for less confident cyclists and children'

- 6.10. The Parish Council will therefore set up a Working Party to develop a plan to encourage residents to reduce reliance on private motorised vehicles by supporting initiatives to increase the use of public transport, cycling, walking, car sharing and other sustainable transport modes [see EVIDENCE BASE D: Transport and Highways].

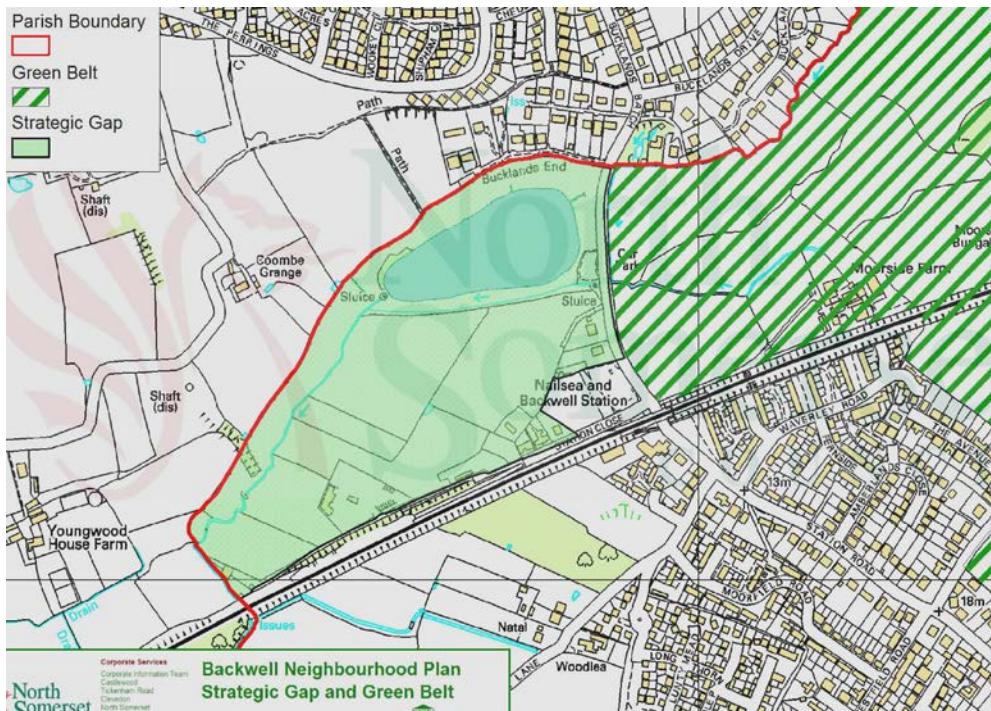
Planning for a sustainable distribution of land uses.

- 6.11. **Green Belt.** The Core Strategy policy CS6 prescribes no change in the Green Belt and this is supported by *BACKWELL FUTURE*.

PLANNING POLICY: SUSTAINABILITY 5. Development that would harm the purposes of the Green Belt will not be permitted.

- 6.12. **Strategic Gap.** Core Strategy policy CS19 protects strategic gaps to help retain the separate identity of settlements. It identifies the area between Backwell and Nailsea but does not specify the

boundary. *BACKWELL FUTURE* defines the area of the strategic gap to the north of the railway line and within Backwell Parish as shown on the following map.



Backwell - Nailsea Strategic Gap

- 6.13. It is expected that Nailsea Town Council will define the northern area of the gap within Nailsea Parish.
- 6.14. The Strategic Gap excludes the Station car park and proposed extension. The Gap would not preclude the construction of an appropriate new pedestrian and cycling route between Backwell and Nailsea.



**Backwell Lake
is part of the
Strategic Gap**

PLANNING POLICY: SUSTAINABILITY 6. Development that would harm the purposes of the designated Strategic Gap will not be permitted.

- 6.15. **Local Green Spaces.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* proposes that high quality open spaces are secured for recreation in order to contribute to the well-being of the community and preserve essential landscapes (see Local Green Space at section 12).
- 6.16. **Agricultural Land.** EVIDENCE BASE T explains that, in considering proposals for development on agricultural land, priority will be given to keeping the best and most versatile land. These land areas are identified in the Evidence Base.
- 6.17. **Other sustainability initiatives.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* proposes:
 - the creation of a local trader / supplier directory, to reduce 'food miles';
 - the provision of allotments, additional to those available at Fairfield Road, when the waiting list justifies this;
 - the provision of community orchards, if sites are available, to offer potential income, recreational activity and an educational resource for the village.

7. TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS

NPPF paragraphs 30 and 32: *In preparing Local Plans, local planning authorities should therefore support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport.....Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the Residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.*

North Somerset Core Strategy policy CS10: *Transportation and movement. Travel management policies and development proposals that encourage an improved and integrated transport network and allow for a wide choice of modes of transport as a means of access to jobs, homes, services and facilities will be encouraged and supported.*

This section of *BACKWELL FUTURE* provides an overview and a summary of key points. Greater detail is provided in:-

- EVIDENCE BASE D: Transport and Highways
- EVIDENCE BASE E: Report by TPA (Transport Planning Associates)
- EVIDENCE BASE Q: Walking and cycling

7.1 Overview. This section sets out:

- a) The conclusions from a report by highway consultants TPA commissioned by the Parish Council;
- b) Initiatives to reduce the use of private cars;
- c) Key policies.

7.2 THE REPORT BY TPA March 2012. The full report is at [EVIDENCE BASE E: REPORT BY TPA \(Transport Planning Associates\)](#). This has provided evidence to assist in the development of objectives and policies in *BACKWELL FUTURE*.

7.3 TPA's main findings are:

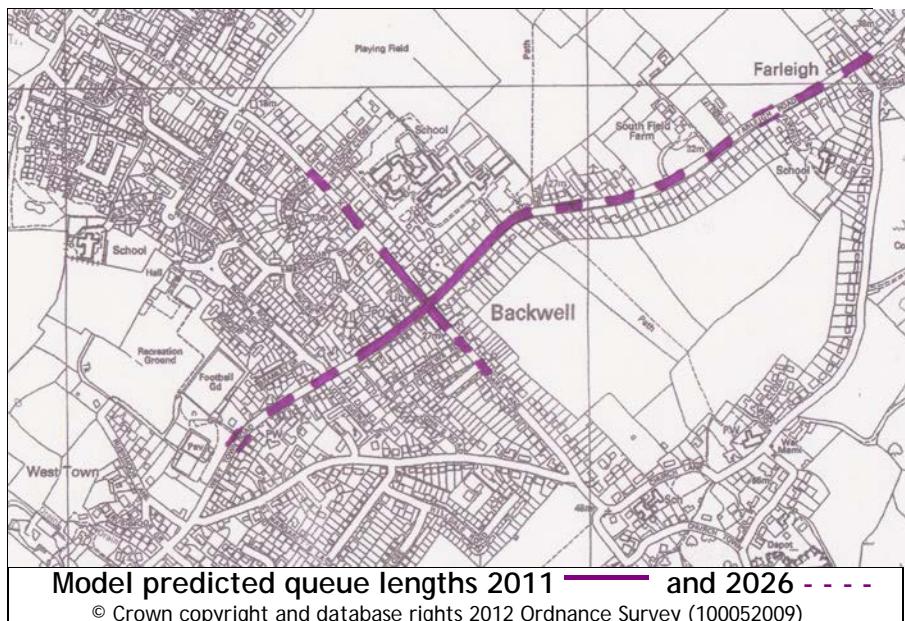
- a) Even without residential growth in Backwell, the growth in the general sub-region could result in the length of traffic queues on the A370 at the village cross roads, increasing in length by a factor of about three by 2026;
- b) Transfer of more traffic to alternative routes through residential areas ('rat-runs') is likely to occur due to increased delays at the light controlled village cross roads;
- c) Further initiatives need to be taken to reduce car use.

7.4 2026 traffic flows. Future flows at the cross-roads have been estimated using a computer model that forecasts traffic flows taking account of planned development in the sub-region and other factors. Scenarios have also been modelled that use the 2026 predicted traffic flows and the additional traffic generated by between 50 and 100 new dwellings in Backwell.



7.5 Compared with the 2011 queues, by 2026 queue lengths are predicted to increase on all roads approaching the traffic lights. Most notably the queue lengths increase from:

- a) 138 to 402 metres on West Town Road in the morning peak
- b) 252 to 936 metres on Farleigh Road in the evening peak

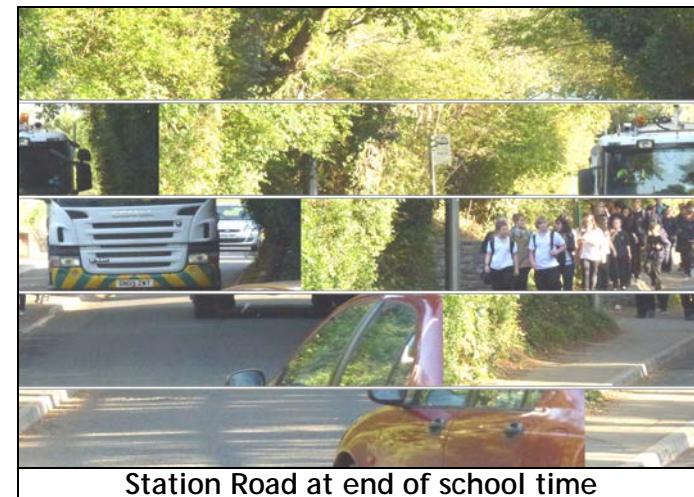


7.6 With regard to the cross-roads TPA conclude:

- a) 'The analysis demonstrates that even without any further major residential development in the village, or growth in traffic from e.g. Bristol Airport's expansion, forecast growth in the sub-region will cause very substantial increases in queues and delays at the junction, which in turn will lead to the length of the peak periods extending as drivers seek to minimise their journey times, and to the prospect of rat-running in order to avoid the delays that would be encountered at the junction.'
- b) *The prospect for air quality deterioration in the vicinity of the*

junction, owing to stationary traffic volumes increasing, should be considered.

- c) *There are no readily achievable improvements that can be implemented at the junction to improve throughput. Given concerns about traffic already on Station Road, and the issues related to its substandard nature, it is arguable that increased capacity at the A370 junction could have undesirable consequences in the neighbourhood.'*



7.7 'RAT-RUNNING'. When faced with queues at the village cross-roads many motorists use alternative routes through residential streets notably: Rodney Road, Embercourt Drive, Moor Lane, Church Lane.

7.8 The forecast increase in queue lengths at the cross-roads is likely to result in a significant increase in the use of these 'rat runs'. It appears likely that additional traffic calming measures will therefore be required. The highway safety benefits of introducing more traffic calming measures would be undoubtedly welcomed by many residents. However, making these routes less attractive to vehicular traffic would increase pressure on the A370. Origin-destination surveys would be necessary to quantify the local and through traffic using these routes.

- 7.9 **BACKWELL TRAFFIC MITIGATION STRATEGY.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* proposes that a traffic mitigation strategy be developed. The Parish Council will set up a Working Party to evaluate mitigation measures to ensure that they are practical and realisable. The Working Party will:
- a) Develop an Action Plan to encourage residents to reduce reliance on private motorised vehicles by supporting initiatives to increase the use of public transport, cycling, walking, car sharing and other sustainable transport modes;
 - b) Traffic Calming/ Alternative Routes (Rat-Runs): Carry out a review with local residents of the need for additional traffic calming and other measures to reduce traffic;
 - c) Public Transport: Raise awareness of residents to the benefits of public transport;
 - d) Cycling and Walking: Work with schools, local organisations and North Somerset Council with the aim of developing schemes to improve safe cycling and walking facilities.
- 7.10 *BACKWELL FUTURE* supports the concept of creating a network of cycling and walking routes.
- 7.11 Backwell Parish Council considers that the Mitigation Strategy may offset some of the additional transport and movement effects arising from the scale of development proposed in *BACKWELL FUTURE*.
- 7.12 Most traffic passing through the village on the A370, or rat-runs, is of distant origin however over which the Parish Council has no influence. Mitigation measures may not therefore reduce traffic levels, sufficient to achieve reasonable queue lengths at the cross-roads, and arrest the use of rat-runs by through traffic.
- 7.13 The Core Strategy contains no improvements to the A370 and Station Road during the Plan period up to 2026. Furthermore, North Somerset Council has confirmed that the delivery of infrastructure improvements at Backwell crossroads is extremely

challenging and that increasing the capacity of this junction could have adverse traffic generation impacts and other adverse consequences.

- 7.14 The Parish Council considers that without highway improvements mitigation measures, even if successful with Backwell residents, will not achieve sustainable operation of the principal village highways that carry through traffic. It considers that mitigation measures alone are an inadequate response to the unsustainable situation arising with traffic traversing the village, and that planning policy for Backwell should address this.
- 7.15 **CONCLUSIONS ABOUT HIGHWAY ISSUES THAT INFLUENCE PLANNING POLICY.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* concludes:
- a) residents' traffic concerns (reported in the 2010 Community Plan) about the A370, Station Road and 'rat- runs' are borne out by the findings of TPA;
 - b) growth in through traffic together with planned development in Backwell is predicted to triple queue lengths at the village cross-roads and is a major concern;
 - c) the consequential increased use of residential streets as 'rat-runs' will prejudice safety and the quality of village life;
 - d) the situation will become unsustainable.
- 7.16 While it is unlikely that any particular phase of development within North Somerset will be shown to be critical to the operation of Backwell cross-roads, TPA's modelling shows that the cumulative effect is critical and the cause of a predicted tripling of queue lengths and greater use of Backwell's residential streets and lanes as 'rat-runs'.
- 7.17 TPA confirms that '*There are no readily achievable improvements that can be implemented at the junction to improve throughput.*' Given that it is the 'cumulative effects' of developments, impacting on the A370, that will lead to an unsustainable traffic situation in Backwell, the provisions of the NPPF at paragraph 32 apply (paragraph 32 is shown at the start of this section).

7.18 *BACKWELL FUTURE* supports the North Somerset Core Strategy that Service Villages such as Backwell, 'are places where a small amount of development....may be appropriate.' *BACKWELL FUTURE* develops this Strategy into a policy for Backwell as follows:

- a) Because of the traffic predictions, and TPA's advice that '*There are no readily achievable improvements that can be implemented at the junction [the village cross-roads] to improve throughput*', *BACKWELL FUTURE* proposes constraint on new development in the village;
- b) The reason for constraint is straightforward. If, due to development elsewhere in North Somerset, more traffic will try to pass through Backwell along the A370 and Station Road, it makes no sense to plan for major development in Backwell itself that will cause local traffic to interrupt this stream by seeking to join it;
- c) *BACKWELL FUTURE* policy is that future development should therefore be limited to meeting Backwell's needs as a Service Village with a presumption against development to meet demands from elsewhere.
- d) The quantum of new development proposed in *BACKWELL FUTURE* to 2026 is based on Backwell's needs. It is in excess of the minimum indicated in the Core Strategy and is therefore consistent with that Strategy. [EVIDENCE BASE G refers at G.9 and G.59]

7.19 EVIDENCE BASE D contains further information.

7.20 *BACKWELL FUTURE* policy is therefore that housing development in Backwell will be at a level commensurate with that of a 'Service Village' and focussed on Backwell's priority needs. Infilling, defined as one or two additional dwellings, will also be acceptable. Business development, appropriate in scale and character in relation to the village, providing local employment, will be supported.

Explanatory note: While beyond the scope of this 2014 to 2026 Neighbourhood Plan, *BACKWELL FUTURE* envisages that this planning policy will remain in force until major traffic

management (including mitigation measures) or highway improvements, sufficient to significantly reduce through traffic in the village, have been carried out and shown to be effective in reducing traffic queues and the use of rat-runs by through traffic.

This is the basis of policy DEVELOPMENT 1 that appears in the NEW DEVELOPMENT section of *BACKWELL FUTURE*.

7.21 *BACKWELL FUTURE*: HIGHWAY POLICIES.

PLANNING POLICY: HIGHWAY 1. A transport assessment will be required to support any planning application for development in Backwell that is forecast to generate 30 or more two-way trips in the network peak hour.

PLANNING POLICY: HIGHWAY 2. The Parish Council will, with regard to proposals for new development in Backwell, encourage early engagement by the promoters with the Council and with North Somerset Council to ensure that transport infrastructure is provided (within and where appropriate outside of development sites) in a timely manner to meet the needs of traffic generated by the development.

PLANNING POLICY: HIGHWAY 3. The Parish Council will set up a Working Party to develop a *BACKWELL TRAFFIC MITIGATION STRATEGY*. It will work with North Somerset Council to establish and support, where appropriate, regular monitoring to determine the effectiveness of that strategy.

PLANNING POLICY: HIGHWAY 4. The Parish Council will support the creation of an appropriate network of cycling and walking routes. New developments will be required to include safe walking and cycling routes where this is feasible. The objective is to work towards creating a network of cycleways/footpaths and public transport routes that ensure safe, convenient and direct access to local services and linkage with neighbouring settlements.

8. CAR PARKING

North Somerset Core Strategy policy CS11.

Adequate parking must be provided and managed to meet the needs of anticipated users (residents, workers and visitors) in usable spaces. Overall parking provision must ensure a balance between good urban design, highway safety, residential amenity and promoting town centre attractiveness and vitality. New developments must seek to maximise off street provision, assess where on-street provision may be appropriate, demonstrate that buses, service and emergency vehicles are not restricted, and ensure that the road network is safe for all users.

This section of *BACKWELL FUTURE* provides an overview and a summary of key points. Greater detail is provided at:-

- **EVIDENCE BASE F: CAR PARKING**

8.1 Backwell has a shortage of car parking and the 2010 Backwell Community Plan (BCP) identified needs for additional car parking spaces at:

- The Railway Station
- Near the shopping areas at Rodney Road, West Town Road and Backwell Cross Roads

8.2 *BACKWELL FUTURE* contains proposals for additional car parking at Nailsea and Backwell Railway Station:

- a) The Station car park is inadequate. Cars park at nearby locations including Moor Lane, Long Thorn, Waverley Road, Amberlands and Backwell Lake. Some drivers park in these areas by choice; others only when the Station car park is full. Residents complain that cars parked in these areas cause obstruction and are a safety hazard. North Somerset Council (NSC), responding to the BCPlan and other requests, propose to construct a car park extension in 2014. The project will be financed by parking charges.



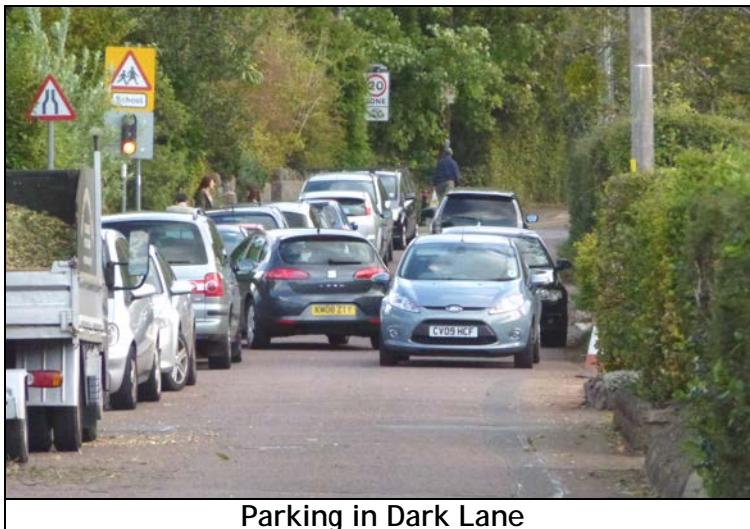
Parked cars along Moor Lane

- b) Backwell Parish Council considers that there is a high risk that more motorists will seek to park in nearby locations in order to avoid the Station parking charges. *BACKWELL FUTURE* therefore proposes that parking restrictions are introduced in appropriate areas. [For more detail see EVIDENCE BASE F].
- 8.3 *BACKWELL FUTURE* proposes additional parking at Rodney Road:
 - a) Currently cars park parallel to the pavement in the lay-by between the Off-Licence and Newsagents. By reducing the width of the pavement, cars would be able to park at 45° to the shops and an additional 7 car spaces can be created.



Rodney Road near the off-licence

- b) The Parish Council has agreed, since the November 2012 Draft Plan, that this option should proceed. North Somerset Council Highways Dept is developing the design.
- 8.4 No options have been identified for additional parking near the Post Office or the village cross-roads.
- 8.5 **Parking restrictions.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* recommends that in order to secure parking availability for shoppers and help sustain the viability of local businesses, parking restrictions should apply:
- a) 2 hour time limit at all lay-bys;
 - b) 2 hour time limit in the Rodney Road car park;
 - c) Parking restrictions need to be enforced with penalties.
- 8.6 **Parking near the Junior School.** There is a staff car park at the rear of Backwell St Andrews Junior School, but there are no nearby lay-by or off-road parking spaces. Consequently parents park their vehicles for considerable distances along Church Lane and Dark Lane. Congestion occurs at School drop-off and pick-up times and when there is a special event at the School.



- 8.7 The owners of the disused Coles Quarry propose to redevelop that site. Part of the scheme would provide school parking near the rear of the Junior School. This proposal has both benefits and drawbacks that are referred to in more detail in the Development section of this Plan. These issues had not, at the time of going to press, reached the stage where details could be considered for inclusion in *BACKWELL FUTURE*.
- 8.8 All car parking plans will be subject to the North Somerset Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document.

BACKWELL FUTURE's strategy is to reduce the need for car parking where practical and to provide additional parking spaces where necessary. The strategy includes:

1. Promoting initiatives to reduce car travel;
2. Provision of more cycle racks where appropriate;
3. Requesting local businesses to review arrangements for the parking of staff cars away from the lay-bys near shops;
4. Consulting residents and businesses about parking restrictions and the arrangements for enforcement;
5. Implementing a scheme to widen lay-by parking in Rodney Road in conjunction with North Somerset Council;
6. Parking provision, adjacent to key services, for people with restricted mobility;
7. Require the provision of customer parking when shops, business and service premises are re-developed in the Local Centre. [Section 11 refers to the Local Centre]

9. NEW DEVELOPMENT

NPPF policy [paragraph 184]:

Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with.....the Local Plan.....Neighbourhood plans.....should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan.....

Core Strategy policy CS32:

Service Villages are places where a small amount of development....may be appropriate. New residential development will generally be acceptable....within settlement boundaries, provided it respects the scale and character of the village and the site's location.

Note that CS32 is no longer adopted. Section 4 of *BACKWELL FUTURE* explains.

This section of *BACKWELL FUTURE* provides an overview and a summary of key points. Greater detail is provided at:-

- EVIDENCE BASE G: New Development

9.1. Housing. The Core Strategy contains no numerical targets for new development in Backwell. *BACKWELL FUTURE* therefore makes proposals based on local need and proposes up to 60 new dwellings in the period 2013 to 2026 at defined sites. Additional small scale infilling within the Settlement Boundary will be supported if appropriate.

9.2. Proposed housing development in the Service Village of Backwell exceeds that implied by the Core Strategy. Backwell is however unsuitable for larger scale development due to the inadequacy of existing highways, congestion, and use of 'rat-runs' that take through traffic along residential streets and narrow lanes. This has been verified by the independent highway study carried out in 2012 [see EVIDENCE BASE E] that refers to deteriorating traffic conditions at the light controlled village cross roads on the A370 trunk road.



A370 West Town Road

- 9.3. Because of a predicted 3-fold increase in queue lengths at the village cross-roads, and inadequate pavements along Station Road, *BACKWELL FUTURE* policy is:

PLANNING POLICY: DEVELOPMENT 1. Housing development in Backwell is to be at a level commensurate with that of a 'Service Village' and focussed on Backwell's priority needs. Infilling, defined as one or two additional dwellings, will also be acceptable. Business development, appropriate in scale and character in relation to the village, providing local employment, will be supported.

Explanatory note: While beyond the scope of this 2014 to 2026 Neighbourhood Plan, *BACKWELL FUTURE* envisages that this planning policy will remain in force until major traffic management (including mitigation measures) or highway improvements, sufficient to significantly reduce through traffic in the village, have been carried out and shown to be effective in reducing traffic queues and the use of rat-runs by through traffic. The focusing of development upon Backwell's needs therefore includes a presumption against development to meet demands from elsewhere.

- 9.4. BACKWELL's need is for more smaller dwellings comprising:
- starter homes for private purchase;
 - affordable (social) housing for rent or shared ownership;
 - dwellings suitable for older residents to downsize.

PLANNING POLICY: DEVELOPMENT 2. Housing policy is that new development should favour smaller dwellings having an internal floor space not exceeding 100 square metres.

9.5. Affordable Social Housing (ASH)

Core Strategy CS16: *Affordable social housing comprises social rented and intermediate housing [shared ownership] provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.*

- 9.6. In Backwell, including Downside, existing ASH comprises 94 dwellings plus 23 sheltered units at Lawnside.
- 9.7. *BACKWELL FUTURE* is based on a target of 15 to 20 additional ASH dwellings. This is double that implied by the Core Strategy and in excess of Backwell's current need as indicated by the HomeChoice register maintained by North Somerset Council.
- 9.8. Delivery of ASH will be through mixed developments. A benchmark of 30% ASH will be sought to meet local needs on all residential developments of 10 dwellings or more, and as specified in more detail in CS16. The level of affordable housing will be determined by individual site viability analysis.
- 9.9. *BACKWELL FUTURE* makes adequate provision for new ASH within the existing Settlement Boundary. A *Rural Exception Site* outside of the Settlement Boundary is not currently required. However this will be kept under review dependent on the ability to deliver sufficient ASH on the identified development sites.

PLANNING POLICY: DEVELOPMENT 3. On-site Affordable Social Housing provision will be sought to meet local needs on all residential developments of 10 dwellings or more (or on sites of 0.3 hectare or above). A benchmark of 30% will be sought. On sites of 5-9 dwellings on-site provision or a financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing will be negotiated. [Consistent with Core Strategy CS16]

PLANNING POLICY: DEVELOPMENT 4. Exception sites to provide Affordable Social Housing will be considered only if the social housing proposed in *BACKWELL FUTURE* is proven to be inadequate to meet local needs or is undeliverable, and no further sites are available within the Settlement Boundary. A sequential process will be followed: sites will be considered outside of the Settlement Boundary provided that they are not in the Green belt; failing this, Rural Exception sites in the Green Belt will be considered in accordance with the NPPF.

PLANNING POLICY: DEVELOPMENT 5. The allocation of Affordable Social Housing to tenants will use the cascade system contained in NSC's Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (November 2013). In this policy the 'parish' is Backwell and the adjacent parishes are those parishes that share a common boundary with Backwell Parish.

- 9.10. Retirement housing. Demographics suggests an increasing need for housing provision for the elderly in the future. Current evidence, from the HomeChoice register, shows no significant need for additional Sheltered Accommodation in Backwell and Registered Social Landlords have expressed no interest in developing additional sheltered accommodation in the village.
- 9.11. Backwell has no Care Homes. Planning consent has been obtained for a Continuing Care Retirement Community at the former Barrow Hospital (within Backwell Ward). This will provide approximately 136 Assisted Living Units, 38 Specialist Care and a

56 bed nursing home. It is anticipated that this will meet local demand for the foreseeable future.

- 9.12. In order that older residents can continue to live in the village, suitable accommodation must be available near to essential services. *BACKWELL FUTURE* policy is to limit the extension of *future* new smaller houses to prevent over-enlargement.

PLANNING POLICY: DEVELOPMENT 6. Future new properties with 100 square metres or less floor space, within easy walking distance of the Local Centre will be protected from subsequent major extensions in order that they remain smaller properties. This would be achieved by the removal of permitted development rights in the Planning Consent. [The Local Centre is explained in Section 11]

- 9.13. 'Greenfield' sites.

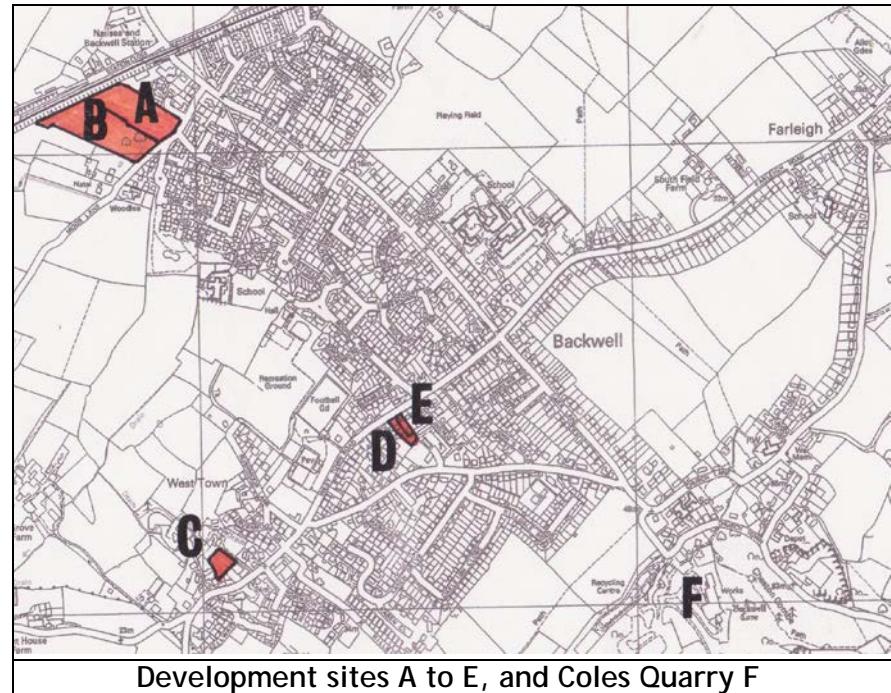
PLANNING POLICY: DEVELOPMENT 7. In considering proposals for development on agricultural land, priority will be given to keeping the best and most versatile land (grades 1, 2 and 3a) available for agricultural use.

- 9.14. Gated developments.

PLANNING POLICY: DEVELOPMENT 8. Communal entrance gates to new developments of more than one residence will not be permitted. This policy will not apply to apartments.

- 9.15. Development sites. The locations of proposed development are shown on the adjacent plan. Details are at EVIDENCE BASE G. Proposals based on meeting local needs, and subject to detailed design and layout considerations for sites A to E, comprise:

- Market Housing: up to 40 dwellings
- Social Housing: up to 20 dwellings
- Employment: 1 hectare within sites A and B



- 9.16. Coles Quarry and flexibility in *BACKWELL FUTURE* for Development. A detailed planning application to redevelop Coles Quarry (for offices, light industry and public car parking at location F) was submitted to North Somerset Council on the 6th February 2014 with a consultation expiry date of 4th April 2014. *BACKWELL FUTURE* has gone to press before the outcome of this planning application is known.

- 9.17. If planning consent is granted: a) *BACKWELL FUTURE* will be amended to include the Quarry redevelopment; b) the 1 hectare of land at Moor Lane allocated for employment (at 9.15) will instead be reserved for housing development post 2026. Land designated for housing development at Sites A and B Moor Lane will remain unchanged at 1.5 hectares in the period 2014 to 2026. EVIDENCE BASE G, at G.44, and the Addendum-Coles Quarry that follows at G.60 provides greater detail.

10. EMPLOYMENT

NPPF paragraph 22:

Planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed....applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits....

Core Strategy policy CS32:

....the Core Strategy approach provides the opportunity for appropriate new service and employment uses within the settlement boundaries of Service Villages (but not in the Green Belt)New employment development must be located within settlement boundaries and be of an appropriate scale and character in relation to the village, and contribute towards improved self-containment.

Note that CS32 is no longer adopted. Section 4 of *BACKWELL FUTURE* explains.

- 10.1. Local employment in Backwell is limited. *BACKWELL FUTURE* considers that more local employment would improve the local economy and reduce traffic that commutes out of the village.

10.2. Planning Policy:

PLANNING POLICY: EMPLOYMENT 1. Proposals for new and the extension of existing employment sites within the village will be supported, provided that the scale, type of business and locations are compatible with the local environment, and provided that supporting infrastructure, for example access and car parking, are appropriate.

- 10.3. EVIDENCE BASE H describes policies that encourage the retention of retail and commercial businesses in the 'Local Centre'. The car parking section of *BACKWELL FUTURE* provides for additional parking spaces in the 'Local Centre' to help maintain the viability of local shops and businesses.

10.4. Potential sites for new businesses include:

a) **Moor Lane.** 3 hectares of land at Moor Lane were designated B1 for office/research/light Industry many years ago, and confirmed in the 2007 Replacement Local Plan, but development has not materialised. It is proposed that this designation is retained for 1 hectare and that housing is allocated on most of the remainder. By allocating land for housing development, this should enable access and services to be provided so that development of the area reserved for offices etc. becomes economically viable. The change to mixed use development is therefore considered advantageous in the quest for new businesses. [EVIDENCE BASE G at G.44 refers].

b) **Site of the former Ettrick Garage.** This site is in new ownership and it is understood that the new owners, after exploring commercial re-development options, favour residential re-development. Liaison is ongoing.

- 10.5. **Coles Quarry.** A detailed planning application to redevelop Coles Quarry was submitted to North Somerset Council on the 6th February 2014 with a consultation expiry date of 4th April 2014. *BACKWELL FUTURE* has gone to press before the outcome of this planning application is known. EVIDENCE BASE G at G.60 explains how *BACKWELL FUTURE* responds to the proposed quarry redevelopment and the possible impact upon the provision of employment at Moor Lane as described at 10.4 a) above.

- 10.6. **Employment growth in the area.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* notes the Core Strategy's provision for employment that is essentially centred on Weston-super-Mare with nominal growth in Service Villages (CS32). The Core Strategy takes account of planned expansion of Bristol Airport and the Royal Portbury Dock.

10.7. Bristol Airport and The Bristol Port Company are two of the largest employers in the area with significant growth prospects. In November 2011 the Parish Council wrote to these companies enquiring whether they envisaged that their planned expansion would require business premises and/or housing for employees in Backwell. Both companies answered that they did not foresee a significant impact on Backwell. Their replies are available for reference.

10.8. **Employment Initiatives.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* will:

- Support Government initiatives for fast and extended broadband connections to existing and potential work-places within the village, to encourage home working (to reduce travel especially during peak times);
- Support Government and Local Government initiatives to provide appropriate grants and financial support for appropriate new small businesses in Backwell.
- Encourage businesses to promote alternatives to car use including cycling/walking, via Bike to work schemes etc.

10.9. *BACKWELL FUTURE* encourages initiatives to improve vocational training, apprenticeships and links between industry and educational establishments, to help those entering the workplace. In particular it will seek to promote and develop business links with Backwell School.

10.10. *BACKWELL FUTURE* supports the appropriate improvement of existing commercial space to provide office units for suitable small undertakings.

10.11. **Business Representative.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* recommends that Backwell Parish Council appoints a Business Representative. This could be a member of the Council or a community volunteer working with the Council. The role of the Business Representative would include:

a) Liaison with the local business community, trade associations and other relevant bodies to:

- bring to the attention of the Council business matters where the Council has the necessary powers and resources to make a difference to the viability of local businesses and the employment that they bring;
- advising about the availability of specialist employment agencies such as NSC's Business Liaison Officer, Business West, etc.;
- encourage businesses to review arrangements for parking staff cars away from lay-bys near shops and encourage walking, cycling and Bike to Work schemes.

b) Promotion and development of business links with Backwell School.

11. VILLAGE SHOPS, SERVICES and the LOCAL CENTRE

NPPF paragraph 70:

To deliver the services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should..... ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community.

Core Strategy policy CS21:

The..... council will resist the loss of small-scale shops including neighbourhood and village stores, eating and drinking establishments that support the needs of local communities, and support self containment. The Sites and Policies Development Plan Document will define exact boundaries to the retail centres...

This section reviews the adequacy of local services to meet future demands. It is a summary of EVIDENCE BASE H.

The key policy is the designation of a 'Local Centre'.

11.1. Shops, businesses and services in Backwell. These include:

- a) Backwell Medical Centre;
- b) Backwell Dental Care;
- c) 24 shops and a Post Office;
- d) 3 public houses and a village club;
- e) 2 restaurants, two takeaways;
- f) Various businesses including 3 garages/car sales;
- g) Play-groups, Infant, Junior, Secondary Academy and private school.

11.2. In recent years the number of village shops has declined. This is not only damaging to the local economy but can lead to social deprivation, particularly for older residents and those without transport. It can also reduce the sense of community.



Shops at Dark Lane and the Cross Roads

11.3. The Post Office is critical to the village particularly as the last remaining bank, HSBC, closed in autumn 2011. The Library also closed in 2010 (a mobile library service is now available on Monday afternoons at the Leisure Centre). There is no optician.

11.4. *BACKWELL FUTURE* introduces policies to safeguard the vitality and viability of local shops, businesses and services. *BACKWELL FUTURE* designates a 'Local Centre' and specific policies will operate in this area.

Planning policy: CENTRE 1. The area shown in blue on the Backwell Local Centre map is designated the 'Local Centre'.

[The map follows on a separate page.]

Planning policy: CENTRE 2. Development proposals for shops and businesses in the Local Centre will be supported provided that they are appropriate to the size and character of the village, support the creation of a safe, attractive and accessible shopping and business environment and improve the mix of uses in the Local Centre. An additional consideration will be whether nearby parking is adequate or more is provided. Appropriate proposals for mixed use, with apartments or flats, will be accepted where this is necessary to improve the viability of commercial premises.

Planning policy: CENTRE 3. Proposals resulting in the loss of shops or businesses in the Local Centre will need to demonstrate that:

- the vitality and viability of the Local Centre is not adversely affected; and
- adequate provision remains to meet local needs.

Planning policy: CENTRE 4. Proposals for retail and business use outside of the Local Centre will need to demonstrate that:

- the uses could not be located within or on the edge of the Local Centre; and
- they would have no adverse impact on the viability of the Local Centre.

11.5. Adequate customer parking is essential to the viability of the Local Centre. EVIDENCE BASE F describes current deficiencies, makes proposals for improving parking near village shops, and refers to the NSC Parking Standards SPD.

Planning policy: CENTRE 5. Within the Local Centre proposals for redeveloping non-residential premises, or for changes of use of residential properties to retail or business uses, will be permitted provided that provision is made where practical (for example on land near the road frontage) for customer parking for the benefit of the Local Centre.

11.6. **Schools.** Enquiries have been made to determine whether the village schools are able to accept additional pupils associated with new development. The Education Authority, North Somerset Council, advises (email 16/4/12): '*the Infant, Junior and Secondary school facilities serving Backwell will have sufficient capacity to address local needs without any changes to its current infrastructure.*'

11.7. Enquiries were also made directly with the local schools and the findings, reported in EVIDENCE BASE H, indicate limited spare capacity.

11.8. In November 2013 North Somerset Council announced planned extensions to West Leigh Infant School.



Coaches in Station Road after leaving Backwell School

11.9. The 'coaching-in' of pupils from other areas to Backwell School may need to be adjusted so that pupil demand is within the school's capacity. There is a safety concern about Station Road pavements, between the A370 cross-roads and the railway station, leading to Backwell School. These are narrow, limited to one side of the road, and discontinuous necessitating road crossing near to the Backwell Common junction [EVIDENCE BASE D refers].

Backwell 'Local Centre' shown in blue

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12. LOCAL GREEN SPACES (LGS)

NPPF paragraph 76:

Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances.

Core Strategy policy CS9:

Policy reflects the importance of green infrastructure and its value for health, biodiversity, landscape and climate change..... Clear priorities will be established through an overarching Green Infrastructure Strategy which will incorporate local open space standards, map green infrastructure and set out principles guiding development and management of green infrastructure.

This section of *BACKWELL FUTURE* is a summary of EVIDENCE BASE J which is supported by EVIDENCE BASES K and L.

12.1. Overview. *BACKWELL FUTURE* responds to residents' desires for substantial areas of Local Green Space to secure an environment that offers respite from the nearby Bristol conurbation, Bristol Airport and through traffic that traverses much of Backwell village.

12.2. The identification of Local Green Space. *BACKWELL FUTURE* builds on the 2010 Backwell Community Plan (BCPlan) which showed that residents attached the greatest importance to:

'Farleigh Fields especially the field below St Andrew's Church' and 'Fields in the Moor Lane/Backwell Vale/West Leigh area' [EVIDENCE BASE A: 2010 BCPlan at page 23]

12.3. *BACKWELL FUTURE* is based on TWO subsequent and complementary studies employed to verify the conclusions drawn in the 2010 BCPlan. These studies are:

a) The approach developed by Backwell Residents Association (BRA) and Backwell Environment Trust (BET). BRA and BET are two of the largest voluntary organisations in Backwell. These organisations developed a Local Green Space plan that satisfies

the NPPF criteria.

- i) The over-arching principle is that, to comply with the NPPF, LGS areas need to be of sufficient size to effectively safeguard the attributes special to the community. For example:
 - views of the landscape cannot be safeguarded through the protection of small areas such as an individual field. Larger areas are required sufficient to protect the views;
 - habitat areas need to be adequate to maintain the existing wildlife and biodiversity. Small areas will result in a reduction in species [EVIDENCE BASE J at J.7 refers].
 - ii) Details of the approach are at EVIDENCE BASE K and include BRA's survey which shows that 169 member households support the LGS proposal for two areas of LGS, at Farleigh Fields and at Moor Lane Fields as shown in yellow on the map at 12.20.
- b) Parish Council Questionnaire 2012. This Questionnaire identified 24 sub-area fields and it invited residents to nominate areas that are special and evidence their reasons.
- i) 291 Questionnaires were submitted from which the Council concluded that 18 fields were special to the community but 6 others were not [EVIDENCE BASE L]. The 18 fields shown to be special are the same fields proposed by BRA and BET above, as shown on the Local Green Space map at 12.20;
 - ii) A copy of the Questionnaire and summaries of the information returned are at EVIDENCE BASE L.
- 12.4. The Parish Council concludes that the evidence contained in the BRA submission [EVIDENCE BASE K] and the Council's Questionnaire [EVIDENCE BASE L] provides a strong case for two areas of LGS as shown on the map at 12.20 comprising:
- a) Farleigh Fields LGS;
 - b) Moor Lane Fields LGS.

12.5. Farleigh Fields LGS. This group of fields:

- a) provides the best and most far reaching views available from any open space in the village;
- b) contains hedgerows of historical significance [EVIDENCE BASE K section 9];
- c) is important for numerous recreational activities [EVIDENCE BASE J at APPENDIX A page 3];
- d) provides habitats for rabbits, foxes, badgers, over 55 species of birds, and the endangered *Horseshoe Bats* [EVIDENCE BASE K section 11];
- e) is part of the historic Manor of Backwell [EVIDENCE BASE J at APPENDIX A page 3].



12.6. In addition to the testimony of residents that Farleigh Fields are demonstrably special, the land is some of the best and most versatile agricultural land in Backwell [EVIDENCE BASE T].

12.7. The primary reasons for the designation of Farleigh Fields are their recreational and landscape value.

12.8. Moor Lane Fields LGS. This group of fields:

- a) offers excellent views to the south taking in the woodland of Backwell Hill, and to the west across moorland towards Grove Farm and beyond;
- b) has hedgerows which are of historical significance and pre-date the Enclosures Act of 1812 [EVIDENCE BASE K section 9];
- c) is popular for recreational walking;
- d) provides exceptional recreational value for wildlife observation. The fields are particularly rich in birds including red and amber listed 'Birds of Conservation Concern' and the Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats. [EVIDENCE BASE K section 11 refers].



12.9. The primary reasons for the designation of Moor Lane Fields are their recreational value and richness of wildlife.

12.10. Sustainability of LGS areas. In designating areas of LGS it is a condition of the NPPF that Local Green Spaces should '*be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period*'. Adequate land

areas are available for any longer term development, beyond the scope of *BACKWELL FUTURE* (i.e. after 2026) and sufficient for 200 years [EVIDENCE BASE J Appendix A]. These areas are:

- not within the Green Belt;
- not within the Flood Plain;
- not covered by the areas proposed for LGS designation.

12.11. In the longer term the Settlement Boundary could be adjusted to include appropriate areas for development. The proposed areas of LGS are therefore sustainable.

12.12. **Community support.** The NPPF prescribes that LGS should only be used '*where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community...*'. The community's support is described at:

- EVIDENCE BASE J at J.28 to J.30 and Appendix A
- EVIDENCE BASE K at section 8
- EVIDENCE BASE L at L.14 to L.16

12.13. **Objections from land owners and developers.** Objections to the Draft Plan's proposed areas of LGS were received from land-owners and developers during the consultation period. The issues raised are summarised in the Consultation Statement [EVIDENCE BASE R LGS section]. All the objections relate to land outside of the Backwell Settlement Boundary.

12.14. **Advice from North Somerset Council.** The Council has indicated provisional support for Farleigh Fields LGS but has reservations about the proposed extent of the Moor Lane LGS. The Council's advice is at EVIDENCE BASE J at J.32.

12.15. **Considerations.** Backwell Parish Council has considered:

- a) the rationale presented at EVIDENCE BASE J including the summary of evidence provided in APPENDIX A.
- b) the BRA/BET study at EVIDENCE BASE K;
- c) the 2012 Parish Questionnaire results at EVIDENCE BASE L;
- d) the level of Community support;
- e) the objections;

f) the advice from North Somerset Council.

12.16. The Parish Council concluded that two land areas (shown at 12.20) are each demonstrably special to a community. These are:

- a) Farleigh Fields;
- b) Moor Lane Fields.

12.17. It concludes that these two areas meet the requirements of the NPPF and are:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community served
- demonstrably special to a community
- local in character and not extensive tracts of land
- capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period

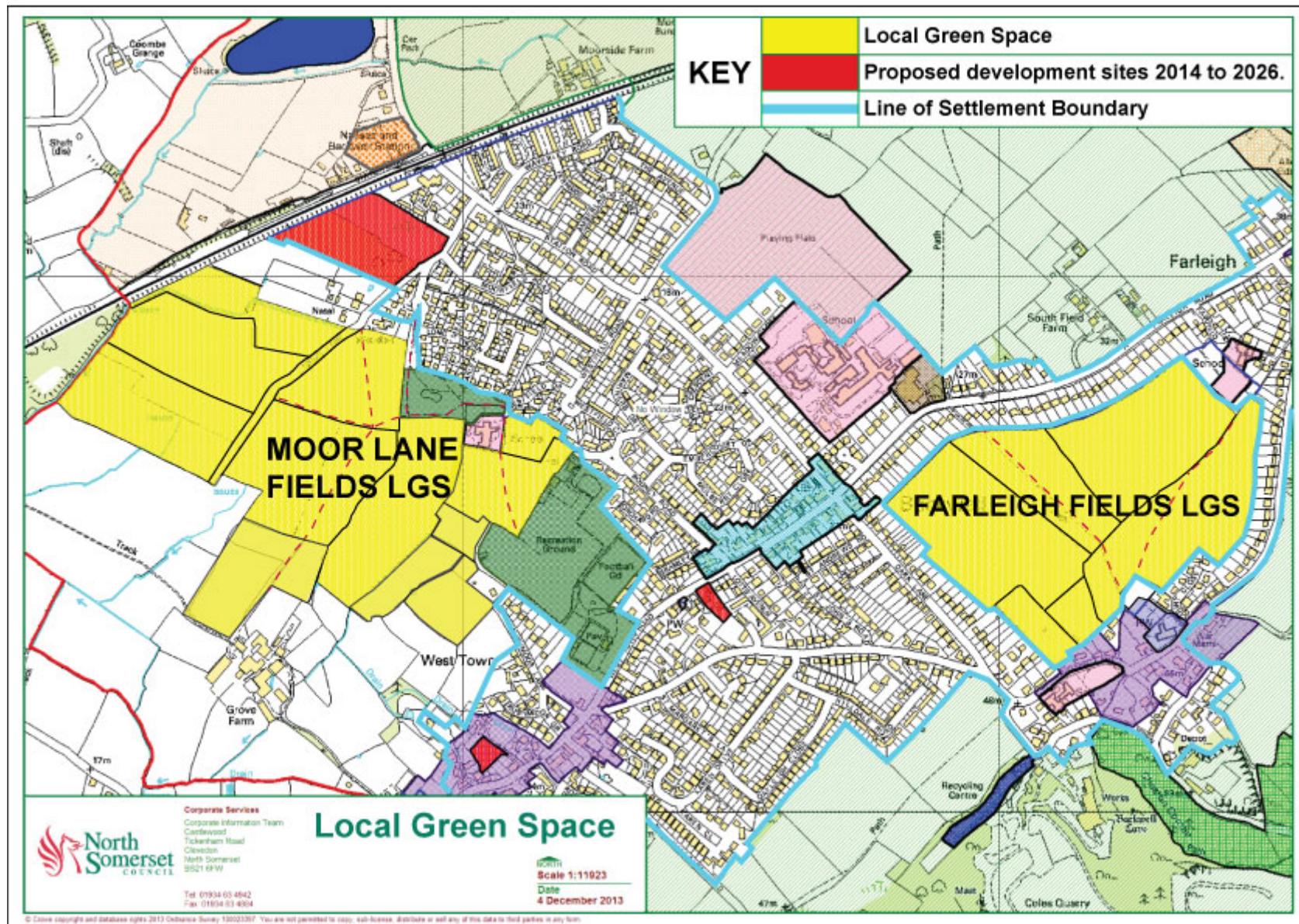
12.18. Backwell Parish Council considers that the proposed areas of LGS strike a reasonable balance of land use taking account that:

- a) the LGS proposals meet the NPPF requirements;
- b) the quantum of proposed new development in *BACKWELL FUTURE* significantly exceeds the minimum required by the Core Strategy 2014 to 2026 [EVIDENCE BASE J at G.5];
- c) other land areas are available for post 2026 development [EVIDENCE BASE J Appendix A];
- d) most of the LGS land areas comprise the best and most versatile agricultural land and for this reason should not be lost to food production [see EVIDENCE BASE T].

POLICY: LOCAL GREEN SPACE. Two land areas, one at Farleigh Fields and the other at Moor Lane, are designated Local Green Space. The designated areas are those shown on the Local Green Space Map. Development or changes in the existing use of Local Green Space areas that would harm the purpose of the designation will not be permitted.

12.19. **BACKWELL FUTURE POLICY.** The above policy has been developed with the expectation that land designated LGS should continue to be suitable for the purpose it currently serves (agriculture), and the traditional pattern of recreational use by the community safeguarded to secure a sustainable co-existence.

12.20. Local Green Space Map



13. RECREATION, SPORT, COMMUNITY FACILITIES and HERITAGE ASSETS

NPPF paragraphs 70 and 73:

Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities....planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities...

This section of *BACKWELL FUTURE* is supported by:
EVIDENCE BASE M.

13.1 The Backwell community enjoys numerous recreational, sporting and spiritual organisations and facilities. The principal facilities are located at:

- The Parish and WI Halls; • Backwell Playhouse;
- Backwell Leisure Centre; • Backwell Village Club;
- Children's play areas at Moor Lane and Downside;
- Churches (3); • Scouts and Guides Hut;
- Backwell Playing Fields Charity:
 - Bowls Club, Tennis Club, Judo Club;
 - Senior Football Club;
 - Junior Girls and Boys Football Club;
 - Children's play areas (2), Youth Club.

13.2 Local facilities are essential for the sustainability of the community and they minimise transport needs. Adequate investment is needed to replace and upgrade facilities and three notable areas of concern have been identified:

a) **Backwell Youth Club.** The Parish Council considers that the Youth Club is an essential community facility. It has approved funding of £12000 in 2014/15 to sustain the Club and expects to continue funding in future years provided the successful management arrangements continue.

b) **Backwell Playing Fields Charity.** This not-for-profit organisation is run by local volunteers. Income is insufficient to make major improvements.

- The Parish Council provided £21,000 for car park surfacing in 2013;
- Recently the Charity announced that long standing Trustees were standing down and that its future management arrangements were in doubt. The Parish Council agreed, in principle, to make a donation to cover the first year cost of a part-time management post to safeguard the future of the Charity. The Council will consider future funding when each annual budget is reviewed.

c) **Backwell Leisure Centre.** The 2010 Backwell Community Plan identified the importance of these facilities to the community. It is of concern that no major funding for long term upkeep is contained in North Somerset Council's plans.

13.3 The Localism Act contains measures to achieve a substantial shift in power away from central government and towards local communities. It should therefore be expected that the Parish Council will receive greater powers and responsibilities within the timescale of *BACKWELL FUTURE*. Therefore real increases in the Parish Precept may be required to deliver the services that the Localism Act requires are locally managed.

13.4 Although some funding may be available from the future Community Infrastructure Levy, it remains to be seen whether an affordable Parish Precept can meet the community's aspirations.

- 13.5 **Possible future Community Centre.** Functions are held at many venues in the village notably at the Parish and Women's Institute Halls, West Town Methodist Church, St Andrew's Church, rooms at local schools and the Backwell Playhouse.
- 13.6 The existing Backwell halls are well used, well run, have been improved over the years and are appreciated. They are however limited in scope by their design and facilities. Their modest size, limited kitchen facilities, lack of committee rooms and inadequate car parking can be problematic. There are plans for improvements to the Parish Hall.
- 13.7 The 2010 Backwell Community Plan records that 61% of residents who expressed an opinion agreed that Backwell should aspire to a multi-purpose Community Centre.
- 13.8 Nearby villages have newer, larger, better equipped halls and are focal points for children, young people and adult groups.
- 13.9 **Consideration of Community Centre Options.** The November 2012 Draft of *BACKWELL FUTURE* outlined these conceptual options viz:
- Expansion of existing facilities at the Parish and WI Halls;
 - Upgrading Backwell Leisure Centre;
 - Constructing a Community Centre on a new site.
- 13.10 The Parish Council reviewed these options and considers that upgrading Backwell Leisure Centre to provide multi-use facilities is the best option. It proposes setting up a Working Party to prepare a Feasibility Study for this option.
- 13.11 **St Andrew's Church.** The Parochial Church Council proposes to extend the graveyard into the south-eastern corner of the field to the north of the Church. The landowner, Persimmon, has agreed to make the land available.

13.12 **Heritage assets.** *BACKWELL FUTURE* proposes no change in existing conservation areas and listed buildings. These are retained for the enjoyment of the community present and future. *BACKWELL FUTURE* retains the existing conservation areas as shown on the 2007 Replacement Plan and the Nature Reserves at Jubilee Stone Wood and Badgers Wood managed by Backwell Environment Trust.

13.13 Community Action Policies:

Backwell Parish Council will continue to provide financial support for community and recreational facilities when appropriate and within the capacity of residents to pay.

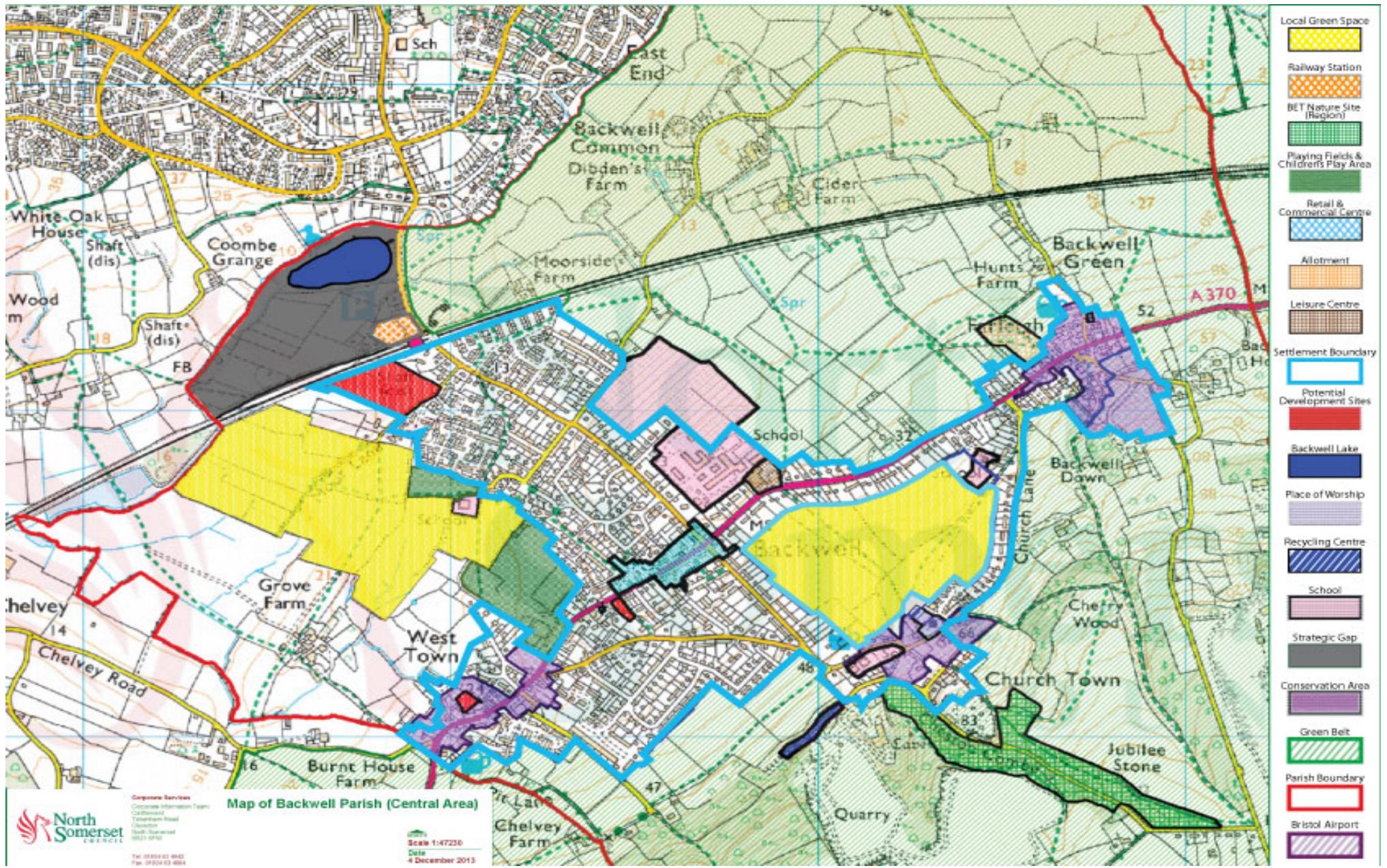
Backwell Parish Council will set up a Working Party to manage a feasibility study of upgrading Backwell Leisure Centre to provide multi-use community facilities.

13.14 Planning policy

Planning policy: COMMUNITY ASSETS. Community assets will be safeguarded from alternative use unless suitable alternative facilities can be made available or the existing facilities are surplus to requirements.

13.15 Examples of facilities that will be safeguarded, some of which are shown on the village map on the next page.

- Backwell Playing Fields;
- the Moor Lane open space and children's play area;
- the Downside children's play area;
- the extension to St Andrew's Church graveyard;
- the Green by Backwell Village Club;
- Local Green Spaces (see Section 12);
- Conservation areas.

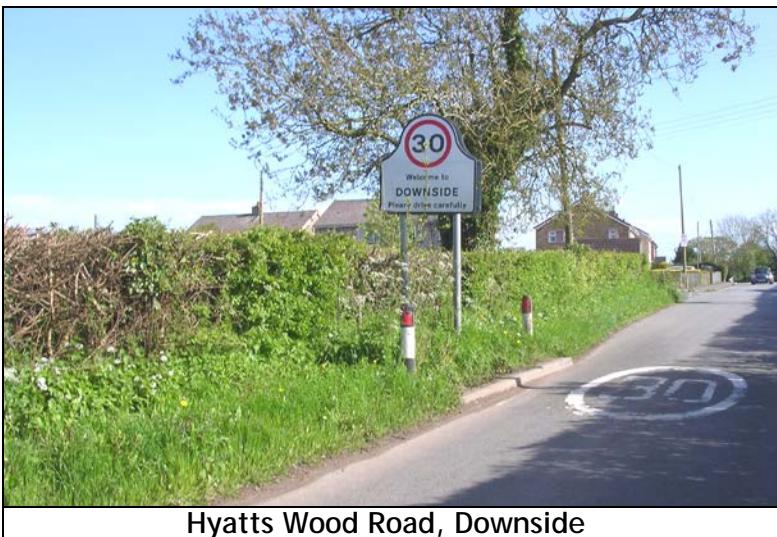


14. DOWNSIDE

Core Strategy policy CS33:

Within those smaller settlements and the countryside where there are no residential development boundaries, new housing will be strictly controlled.

- 14.1 The hamlet of Downside lies within the southern boundary of Backwell Parish adjacent to Bristol Airport. The hamlet contains approximately 100 dwellings including 15 social dwellings. Integration of the communities of Downside and Backwell main village is difficult because of the distance of the hamlet from the main village.



Hyatts Wood Road, Downside

- 14.2 **Planning Status.** Although Core Strategy policy CS32 applies to the 'Service Village' of Backwell, it is inappropriate for Downside. Core Strategy Policy CS33 is relevant because Downside is 'washed over' by Green Belt and is outside of the Backwell Settlement Boundary. There is no latitude for new development other than under agricultural or rural provisions. Recent applications for business use as off-

airport parking have been firmly quashed. Green Belt status implies that properties can only be redeveloped on their existing footprint.

- 14.3 **Retail outlets and employment.** There are no retail outlets, other than a concessionary short term parking arrangement allowing access to Bristol Airport land-side shops. Local employment opportunities, other than at the airport, are few.
- 14.4 **Bristol Airport.** Downside Road forms the northern boundary of Bristol Airport but the airport itself is within the parish of Wrington. An additional 1,000 jobs are forecast by 2030, arising from the airport expansion, and should provide vacancies for a wide range of skills when delivered.
- 14.5 **Highways.** North Somerset Council plan to provide traffic signal control at the junction of the A38 and Downside Road. The installation of signals will be funded from the planning agreement for the proposed expansion of the airport which requires that this work is completed before the extensions to the passenger terminal building are brought into use.
- 14.6 The 2010 Backwell Community Plan records the high priority that Backwell residents attach to improving the Hyatt's Wood Road junction with Downside Road where visibility from the former road is very restricted. The Parish Council will press for these improvements to be made.
- 14.7 **Community Action Policies:**

Backwell Parish Council will:

- a) Press for the A38 highway improvements to be made at an early stage of the planned airport expansion;
- b) Press for improvements to be made at the Hyatt's Wood Road and Downside Road junction;
- c) Promote initiatives to achieve greater community cohesiveness of Downside and Backwell main village.

15. FUNDING THE 'BACKWELL FUTURE' PLAN

NPPF paragraph 173. *Pursuing sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision-taking.*

- 15.1 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).** The CIL is a new planning charge that came into force through the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.
- 15.2 Most new development will be liable to pay the levy. The Regulations provide 100% relief from the levy on chargeable development intended to be used as social housing.
- 15.3 The money can be used to fund a range of infrastructure that is needed as a result of development. This includes transport schemes, flood defences, schools, hospitals and other health and social care facilities, parks, green spaces and leisure centres.<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/applications/howtoapply/whattosubmit/cil>
- 15.4 North Somerset Council (NSC) completed the first stage of consultation in January 2013. The CIL will partially replace the current system of Section 106 obligations. Work on the CIL is currently on hold pending the re-examination of the Core Strategy.
- 15.5 The proceeds that will flow to Backwell Parish Council from the levy are currently uncertain. However a preliminary draft charging schedule produced for consultation in November 2012 indicated a levy of £60 per square metre.
http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/Environment/Planning_policy_and-research/Pages/Community-Infrastructure-Levy-FAQ's.aspx
- 15.6 The Government has announced that communities will benefit through the direct allocation of 25% of the levy funds where a Neighbourhood Plan is in place.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/giving-communities-more-power-in-planning-local-development/supporting-pages/community-infrastructure-levy>
- 15.7 Based on the market housing proposed in *BACKWELL FUTURE*, the CIL could amount to around £200,000 of which perhaps £50,000 should be available to Backwell Parish Council. There is however a relief where a developer can demonstrate that the CIL is not affordable due to exceptional circumstances.
- 15.8 **The New Homes Bonus (NHB).** This is a grant from government to local authorities. It is intended to give an incentive to councils and communities to encourage house-building. There is no legal restriction on NSC passing the NHB onto the Parish Council. However there are a large number of calls on the funding and the share for Backwell remains to be agreed.
- 15.9 **Section 106 agreements.** Until the CIL is in place, NSC will be reliant on 'Section 106' agreements to secure funding for infrastructure required as a result of development. S106 agreements are legally binding agreements between the Council and a developer. They set out the contributions that the developer will make to mitigate any negative impacts of their development. S106 agreements are usually only applied to developments of more than 10 homes or large commercial developments. Councils must have regard to the financial viability of a development, which in practice can sometimes mean reducing the contributions to affordable housing or infrastructure. S106 agreements will continue after the CIL has been introduced, but will be used less than at present.
- 15.10 **Backwell Parish Council.** The major highway problems affecting Station Road and the A370 cannot be overcome by funding on the scale available from the CIL. Backwell Parish Council will allocate its CIL receipts after taking account of the priority of need and value for money. Possible examples are contributions towards:
 - improved buildings for the Youth Club,
 - support for the creation of safe walking and cycling routes.
- 15.11 The ongoing support of local voluntary organisations will maximise the benefit of such funds as they become available.

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