

# **Backwell Future**

## **Backwell Neighbourhood Development Plan**



## **Sustainability Appraisal**

**December 2012**

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<sup>1</sup> The footnote to Annex 1 of the SEA Directive states that “These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.”

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## **Purpose of the Sustainability Appraisal**

As Backwell Future is not a Development Plan Document it does not formally require a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to be completed. The procedures for preparing a sustainability appraisal have been followed however in order to better inform the Backwell Future Neighbourhood Development Plan. All land use plans which are likely to have **significant** effects on the environment are , however, required to undergo a Strategic Environmental Assessment process (SEA) (European Directive 2001/42/EC). There is no requirement to assess a land use plan for a small area at local level unless its environmental effects are expected to be significant. The report also includes assessments of social and economic criteria alongside the environmental, which widens it to a full sustainability appraisal.

The report only looks at whether the policies of the plan have any negative, neutral or positive effects on selected sustainability criteria (see Scoping Report section below). In some cases some ways of improving how the policy performs against these criteria are discussed. It does not make recommendations as to whether the policy is well worded, necessary, or whether it could be improved in any other way. This is outside of the scope of the SA.

## **The Scoping Report**

The methodology for preparing the SA was developed and set out in a scoping report which was published for consultation in September 2012. Comments received have enabled a clearer understanding of a number of issues whilst undertaking the SA. The Scoping Report itself has not been edited to take into account any suggested amendments but the additional information has been used in the completion of the assessment. Only one additional Sustainability Objective has been suggested by Natural England namely a sustainability objective relating to green infrastructure. No additional or alternative indicators were identified. Responses received to the Scoping Report can be viewed on the council's website.

The Backwell Futures SA Scoping report (and additional information from comments received to consultation) identified the baseline characteristics of Backwell Parish based on the topics identified in annex 1(f) of the SEAD. Key sustainability issues were identified as likely to relate to any search for sites to meet local housing needs and potential measures to resolve perceived traffic conflicts and congestion.

## **Method**

Each of the objectives and policies in the Backwell Future plan has been assessed against the sustainability objectives (and indicators) identified in the scoping report (and comments received on it). Although not numbered in the draft Plan they have been numbered in the SA in the order in which they appear in the document. There are exceptions to this however and some objectives and policies which are not land use based or are simply a repetition

of existing higher order policies have been excluded. The list of excluded objectives and policies and reasons is given in Appendix 5.

Each of the policies needs to be judged against “reasonable alternatives” to assess whether the policy approach chosen would be the better i.e. more sustainable, means of achieving the policy aim. In each case one alternative is taken to be “no plan” i.e. no Backwell Future, relying on existing Policy guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), North Somerset Core Strategy (CS) and North Somerset Replacement Local Plan (RLP) and the other is an alternative means of achieving the objective of the particular policy. This alternative is identified at the beginning of each table. Where no reasonable alternative is considered to exist this is explained and a “x” indicated in the relevant place in the table.

The scoring method is as follows

++	positive in principle; no suggestions for enhancing effect
+	positive but can be enhanced
=	mixed effect
?	uncertain effect
0	no significant effect
-	negative but can be mitigated
--	negative in principle; no suggestions for mitigating effect

The results are set out in a series of tables which form Appendix 3 (objectives) and Appendix 8 (policies) to this report. They are also summarised in the non-technical summary set out below as required by the SEA Directive.

## Non-technical summary

### a) Overview of Backwell Future proposals and objectives and relationship to other relevant plans or programmes

The stated objectives of the Backwell Future Plan are given in Appendix 1 to this report and relationships to other plans and programmes are set out in Scoping Report p5 and appendix 1.

### b) Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution without Backwell Future

The parish characteristics and issues effecting Backwell were set out in section 3 of the Scoping Report. The table below sets out the likely evolution of these environmental, social and economic characteristics without the Backwell Future plan. These are based on the “no plan” option in the SA tables.

The Backwell Future plan has been prepared within the framework of the recently adopted Core Strategy and NPPF. As such the BF policies, where they differ, simply add more local detail. Much of the preparatory work for the BF plan has coincided with work on the preparation of the emerging Sites and Policies DPD. The latter document has aimed to reflect the BF plan aspirations as such as they are appropriate and will contain similar policies should the BF plan not be pursued to adoption. Until such a time as the emerging Sites and Policies DPD is adopted the development management policies of the Replacement Local Plan are still relevant, meaning that there is little likelihood of a policy vacuum. There are few cases where the absence of the BF plan would result in a less sustainable outcome.

The table below sets out the likely evolution of the environment without the Backwell Future Plan.

Biodiversity, flora and fauna (nature conservation)	Core Strategy policy CS4 seeks to protect important habitats and enhance biodiversity in new developments, Would allow development in some cases provided satisfactory mitigation possible. NPPF seeks to protect only most important sites from development.
Landscape and green space	Without LGS policy some locally demonstrably important green spaces may be lost to development pressure if other factors prevail.
Heritage and culture (archaeology and architecture)	Core Strategy and Replacement local Plan policies protect recognised buildings and areas. The BF plan does not contain policies which would afford any greater protection.
Air and Climate	Local air quality will be adversely affected by the increased use of motor vehicles and resultant

	“background traffic” through Backwell (TPA report to Backwell Parish Council <sup>2</sup> )
Water	Policies in CS and RLP deal with water quality and ground water source protection as well as water efficiency measures and flood risk.
Soils	NPPF protects best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land
Population-human characteristics and health	There are no BF policies directly affecting human health. CS26 directly supports healthy living and the provision of healthcare facilities.
Material assets (incl roads, transport and access to services)	BF policies aim to enhance access to local services through promoting sustainable transport and securing improved village centre parking. In the absence of local level policies there would be no impetus to address this locally identified problem. BF also seeks to address local transport issues through monitoring the use of rat runs and traffic congestion. Although the majority of traffic is “through traffic” and not within the scope of the BF plan, the plan does seek to avoid additionally exacerbating perceived problems by restricting housing growth within the village to a level identified on the plan. Without this policy link, development pressure may result in a greater level of traffic generation which could adversely affect congestion in the village.
Economic characteristics-employment and jobs	RLP also contains an allocation for an employment site at Moor Lane, although this has remained undeveloped since 1990’s. BF plan attempts to stimulate development of this by re-allocating the site for mixed use.
Social infrastructure	CS policy CS27 and RLP policy CF/4 protect existing facilities from alternative use.
Housing	Although the CS contains policies to encourage housing to meet local needs in villages, as a strategic plan it cannot allocate sites. There are no specific allocations for local needs housing in Backwell in the RLP. The emerging Sites and Policies DPD intends to similarly re allocate the Replacement Local Plan site E24 from Employment to mixed use housing and employment, although this document is in the early stages of preparation.
Interrelationship between the above	There exists considerable development pressure around Backwell. The BF plan seeks to rationalise the local development needs and direct it to the most sustainable available locations, where sites exist. In most cases the absence of BF would not have a material effect on identified characteristics due to alternative policies to promote or protect development. However in relation to identifying appropriate levels of development and suitable sites to locate it there would be less certainty and the

<sup>2</sup> TPA transport and Highways report for Backwell Neighbourhood Plan March 2012

	potential for less sustainable development without it.
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**c) Characteristics of any parts of the environment likely to be significantly affected by proposals within the Backwell Future plan.**

The Appraisal Tables demonstrate that in the vast majority of cases there are no significant effects on sustainability objectives. There are three cases where a negative score has been obtained on traffic generation and effect on the promotion of sustainable transport, namely Policies 5b and 8 and Policy 14iii. Negative in principle effects are predicted in relation to the promotion of sustainable transport for policy 14iii. Creating additional village centre parking opportunities may dissuade customers from adopting sustainable travel options to use the village centre services. Attractiveness and viability of the village centre was seen as a greater priority than mode of transport, however in preparing the BF plan and therefore no mitigation measures are suggested. Other BF policies encourage measures to increase sustainable access to the village centre.

Policies 5b and 8 seek to minimise additional traffic levels by restricting the amount of additional housing within the village, However any housing will always to some extent have the potential to add to traffic congestion in the village (and therefore score a single negative, meaning that mitigation may be possible against SO 19). This was understood when devising the policy and the aspiration to keep traffic growth and congestion down was part of the reasoning behind limiting housing growth within the village. Other BF policies seek to address some effects of potential traffic congestion and rat runs.

**d) Any existing environmental problems**

Key issues and areas likely to be significantly affected were discussed in the Scoping Report section 5.

**e) Environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation**

The BF plan does not significantly differ from the higher level document the Core Strategy and this identifies relevant objectives. These were considered in preparing the Core Strategy, both directly and in consultation with the key environmental agencies. Many protective policies are well-established and the Core Strategy refines these rather than start afresh and the Backwell Future Plan does not significantly deviate from these.

#### **f) The likely significant effects<sup>3</sup> on the environment, and the interrelationship between them**

The Appraisal Tables in Appendix 8 set out any likely significant effects identified, which are also summarised in Appendix 6.

Effects on European nature conservation sites will be assessed separately through a Habitats Regulations Assessment screening report and HRA Assessment if required.

#### **g) Mitigation measures**

An explanation of any potential mitigating measures is given in the Appraisal Tables and in the summary of results in Appendix 6.

#### **h) Reasons for selecting the alternatives**

The alternatives are identified separately for each policy at the beginning of each SA table. The common alternative is the “no plan” option which is simply the case should the BF plan not exist. This involves applying the existing alternative policy framework found in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) the North Somerset Core Strategy (CS) and the North Somerset Replacement Local Plan (RLP)

Some policies do not appear to have a viable alternative. A requirement of the BF Plan is that it should comply with the national policy and the strategic policies of the local plan. This rules out any more radical policy options. In this case the ALT option is simply marked with “X” in the relevant tables.

#### **i) How the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in providing the right information.**

The assessment was done on behalf of Backwell Future Steering group by North Somerset Council. The main difficulties encountered were that:

- The prediction of future effects is to some extent inherently subjective
- Economic and social predictions are less accurate to predict than environmental ones since human behaviour is difficult to be certain of.
- The SA only addresses protected habitats as designated in the RLP. There is only two site allocations which potentially may impact on the European Bat SAC and any potential impact of this will be evaluated through an HRA screening report with potentially an HRA assessment if required. Evidence points to a full HRA not being required as the area

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<sup>3</sup> The footnote to Annex 1 of the SEA Directive states that “These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects.”

affected is small and in one case the site is a reallocation of a previous employment site to mixed use. This is the only potential negative effect. Further evidence on any nature conservation interest likely to be further protected by the alternative Local Green Space designations may be presented as part of the plan consultation

### **k) Monitoring the effects**

Article 10 of the SEA directive requires that any significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan be monitored in order to identify at an early stage any unforeseen adverse effects and in order to be able to take appropriate remedial action. The draft plan does not currently contain a monitoring framework, but it is intended that the sustainability indicators used in this report be used as a basis for monitoring. It is suggested that this be done yearly upon adoption as good practice.

### **Next steps**

Although the preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal is not a requirement it is being published along side the draft Backwell Future Plan for comment. Consultation on the draft Plan closes on 12 January. Although no significant adverse effects have been identified, a number of potential improvements are highlighted in Appendix 6 which can be taken into consideration following consultation on the draft Plan.

Comments on the SA, as well as on the Draft Backwell Future Plan will be used to inform the final version of the plan.

The consultation period is six weeks and comments must be received by the end of **Monday 21 January**.

The three statutory environmental agencies are being consulted (English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency). We also welcome comments from other sources.

### **Where should I send my response?**

By email [planning.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk)

By post :

Planning Policy Team  
North Somerset Council  
Town Hall  
Walliscote Grove Road  
Weston-super-Mare  
BS23 1UJ

**Contact Planning Policy**

01934 426244

## Appendix 1 Sustainability objectives and indicators

Sustainability Objective Headings	Sustainability Objective	Indicators
Required by Legislation (RL) if SEA is required		
Biodiversity, Fauna and flora	1) Avoid development in environmentally sensitive areas	Effect on national and local designations ( +ve, neutral or –ve effect) Effect on other known habitats (+ve neutral or –ve)
Population and Human health	2) Meet local needs locally 3) Enable Backwell Parish residents to access a range of housing especially affordable housing and retirement dwellings	Existence of opportunities ( +ve, neutral or –ve effect)
Soil	4) Minimise the loss of productive land, especially best and most versatile farmland	Area of BMV agricultural land developed
Water	5) Preserve and enhance local drainage features (Backwell Lake) 6) Minimise flood risk	+ve, neutral or –ve effect  Area of land developed in flood zone 2 Area of land developed in flood zone 3a or b
Air and Climatic factors	7) Improve local usage and/or access to renewable energy sources?	Existence of opportunities ( +ve, neutral or –ve effect)
Material assets (infrastructure)	8) Promote sustainable travel options For transport see Backwell specific objectives below 8a) Protect existing green infrastructure and where possible seek	Existence of opportunities (+ve, neutral or –ve effect)  Existence of opportunities (+ve, neutral or –ve effect)

	enhancements which provide local benefits and contribute to the wider network.	
Cultural heritage	9) Achieve a net gain in cultural and heritage features in Backwell Parish	+ve, neutral or –ve effect
Landscape	10) Preserve and enhance sensitive or locally valued elements of landscape and heritage 11) Increase access to these landscapes and heritage without harming their overall value	Features affected (+ve, neutral or –ve effect)  Access opportunities created/enhanced (+ve, neutral or –ve effect)
Backwell Specific (BS)		
Sustainability Objective Headings	Sustainability Objective	Indicators
Outlying areas	12) Not disadvantaged by development in Backwell	+ve neutral or –ve effect
Positive sense of place	13) Develop a sense of place both physically and socially	Existence of opportunities (+ve, neutral or –ve effect)
Enable the village centre to thrive in social and economic terms	14) Increase access to shops and services by car, cycle or foot 15) Improved quality or quantity of shops/services 16) Ensure the village retains or improves upon its supply of community facilities (recreational educational and cultural)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measures to improve access ie parking, cycle racks etc</li> <li>Number of shops services (+ve, neutral or –ve)</li> </ul>
Employment	17) Increase employment opportunities to enable more people	Existence of opportunities (+ve, neutral or –ve)

	<p>to work locally</p> <p>18) Enable growth of existing businesses whilst providing opportunities for new ones</p>	
Transport	<p>19) Reduce congestion at peak times and use of rat runs</p> <p>20) Locate new development on sites and access them in ways that will not add to traffic congestion</p> <p>21) Improve village centre parking</p>	<p>Number of traffic movements increase/decrease (monitoring of vehicle numbers)</p> <p>Existence of cycle routes, train and bus services</p> <p>Existence of opportunities (+ve, neutral or -ve)</p> <p>Existence of opportunities (+ve, neutral or -ve)</p>

## **Appendix 2 Backwell Future objectives**

Although not numbered in the Backwell Future Plan they are numbered here in order to make identification easier.

1. To formulate Backwell Future based on community views of residents;
2. To develop the Backwell Future plan to support, and be consistent with, North Somerset Council's Core Strategy 2011 to 2026;
3. To promote a healthy community through the support of community and recreational facilities and the provision of high quality and accessible open spaces;
4. verify that schools, health and leisure facilities are adequate for community needs.
5. identify housing needs, taking into account demographic change, and where new development should take place;
6. promote appropriate and modest opportunities for local employment;
7. To ensure that existing shops, offices and light industry are able to develop and modernise appropriately to provide a sustainable local service to the community;
8. To promote sustainable transport including cycling, walking and public transport;
9. take account of highway congestion and parking problems;
10. protect the environment by safeguarding areas designated for their nature conservation, heritage or landscape value;
11. safeguard high quality agricultural land in order that it is available for sustained food production;
12. Promote more efficient energy use and renewable energy;















SO 9 Achieve net gain in cultural and heritage features

BF objective 4 is only to ascertain if facilities are adequate with no indication of whether inadequacies will be rectified, whereas objective is for net gain.

Improvement to BF objective could be to identify where inadequacies exist and then put forward proposals to address this, but depends on this being the intention of the plan. Could address this issue following consultation.

SO14 increase access to shops, SO 20 not increase traffic congestion and SO 21 Improve centre parking

BF 9 seeks to take account of highway congestion and parking problems, but not to affect them in any way. The corresponding BF policies seek to remediate or reduce future exacerbation of problems so this may point to a change in wording of the objective to better reflect this, following consultation on the draft plan.

## **Appendix 4 Backwell Future Policies**

### **Sustainable Backwell**

#### **Policy 1**

Safeguard Backwell for Future Generations, as an attractive place to live; with a sustainable village feel in close proximity to the countryside.

#### **Policy 2**

*BACKWELL FUTURE* policy supports the generation of renewable energy provided the aesthetic impact, noise and emissions are environmentally and socially acceptable.

#### **Policy 3**

*BACKWELL FUTURE* policy supports CS2 with the following exception. Current Building Regulations require new dwellings to be constructed to Code Level 3. It would appear that moves towards higher standards are likely to be delayed. *BACKWELL FUTURE* will seek developments to Code Level 4 and will require higher standards as they are introduced in Building Regulations.

Policy 4 New development will therefore need to include sustainable drainage systems to reduce surface water runoff. The environmental infrastructure needs to be integrated into the design of the building and landscaping features, and be easily maintained.

### **Highways and transport**

#### **Policy 5 a)**

The Parish Council will engage with promoters and policy makers to ensure that transport infrastructure is satisfactory within any proposed development.

#### **Policy 5 b)**

Housing development in Backwell must be modest and focussed on local priority needs (see Section 7). Housing development, in excess of that proposed in this Plan, should not be considered until major highway improvements, sufficient to significantly relieve the village of through traffic, have been carried out and shown to be effective in reducing traffic queues and the use of 'rat-runs'. Appropriate business development providing local employment and reducing commuting will however be supported.

#### **Policy 5 c)**

The Parish Council will encourage residents to adopt more sustainable travel as outlined in Section 5 (Sustainability).

#### **Policy 5 d) Station Road**

The Parish Council will keep under review the pavements in Station Road and will, when necessary, prepare plans to have any encroaching banks and

hedgerows removed. This will maximise the usable width of pavements and improve safety for pedestrians. It will liaise with residents and NSC in preparing, executing and enforcing any plan.

**Policy 5 e)**

The need for traffic calming, and other measures to reduce traffic, along Rodney Road, Church Lane and other 'rat-runs', will be monitored. Residents will be consulted before any works are decided.

**New development**

**Policy 6**

BACKWELL FUTURE policy is for no change in the Green Belt consistent with Core Strategy Policy CS6.

**Policy 7**

BACKWELL FUTURE policy is that development, that would harm the purposes of the designated gap, will not be permitted.

**Policy 8 (duplicate to 5b)**

Housing development in Backwell must be modest and focussed on local priority needs. Housing development, in excess of that proposed in this Plan, should not be considered until major highway improvements, sufficient to significantly relieve the village of through traffic, have been carried out and shown to be effective in reducing traffic queues and the use of residential 'rat-runs'. Appropriate business development providing local employment and reducing commuting will however be supported.

**Policy 9**

BACKWELL FUTURE Housing policy is that new development should favour smaller dwellings.

**Policy 10**

BACKWELL FUTURE policy is therefore that priority be given to residents of Backwell and the immediate adjacent parishes, and to those with very close family or employment connections, implemented through local lettings agreements made at the time of development approval.

**Policy 11**

BACKWELL FUTURE policy is that new smaller properties within or near to the Local Centre (see Section 9) should be protected from major extensions in order that they remain smaller properties. This would be achieved by the removal of permitted development rights through an Article 4 Direction, under the Town and Country Planning Act, made by the planning authority.

## **Employment**

### **Policy 12**

*BACKWELL FUTURE* policy is to support the development of existing and new employment sites within the village, 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.

## **Village shops and services**

### **Policy 13**

To support future planning proposals for additional retail outlets, provided the locations are suitable for the types of business and nearby parking is adequate or more is provided.

### **Policy 14 (i) Designation of a 'local centre'.**

The map below shows the area that *BACKWELL FUTURE* designates the 'local centre'. Development proposals for suitable shops, businesses and services in this centre will be supported provided that they:

- are of an appropriate size;
- support the creation of a safer, more attractive and accessible shopping and business environment;
- improve the mix of uses in the centre.

### **Policy 14 (ii)**

Proposals resulting in the loss of shop, business or service outlets in the local centre will need to demonstrate that:

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

### **Policy 14 (iii)**

When shops, business and service premises are re-developed, or a change of use is proposed from an existing residential property, in the local centre, the opportunity will be taken to secure, within the premises, customer parking for the benefit of the local centre.

Note: Adequate customer parking is essential to the viability of a local centre. Section 10 describes the current deficiencies and makes proposals for improving parking near to the village shops.

## **Car parking**

### **Policy 15**

*BACKWELL FUTURE* policy is that, having regard for the likely availability of financial resources, a parking strategy is implemented in the following order:  
1. The Parish Council, with assistance from Sustainable Backwell, promote initiatives to reduce car travel and the need for car parking spaces. An example would be the provision of more cycle racks.

2. Local businesses are encouraged to review arrangements for the parking of staff cars away from the lay-bys near shops.
3. The Parish Council consults residents and businesses about proposed parking restrictions, and funds the cost of traffic regulation orders.
4. The Parish Council seek to secure public car spaces on the Ettrick Garage frontage should a planning application be received to redevelop that site.
5. The Parish Council develops a scheme to widen layby parking in Rodney Road in conjunction with North Somerset Council.

## **Local Green Space**

### ***Policy 16***

*BACKWELL FUTURE* policy is for no change of use, or land management, for the LGS areas. The land should continue to be farmed and the traditional pattern of recreational use, by the community, safeguarded to secure a sustainable co-existence.

## **Recreation, sport and community facilities**

### ***Policy 17***

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

### ***Policy 18***

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

### ***Policy 19***

Backwell Parish Council will safeguard, by designation on the *BACKWELL FUTURE* village map, areas of the village that are reserved for recreational, sport, community or spiritual use and, in particular:

- 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 11);
- Conservation areas.

## **Downside**

### ***Policy 20***

*BACKWELL FUTURE* policy is to:

- 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) Make an appropriate input to any regional or district review of the Green Belt whenever this occurs with a view to establishing a settlement boundary;
- d) Promote initiatives to achieve greater community cohesiveness of Downside and Backwell main village.

### **Additional policy considerations- development sites**

The draft Backwell Future Map identifies sites for development, however there is no policy relating to these site allocations, rather an explanation in the text. For the sake of completeness the SA addresses the site allocations. The criteria for assessing the suitability of sites was based on sustainability considerations although not the SO's identified in the SA. These criteria were as follows

- Not in the green belt
- Not in a strategic gap
- Within the settlement boundary
- Not on land with an environmental designation
- Within an area of acceptably low flood risk
- Not on land designated Local Green Space
- Site is available with the prospect of delivery
- Not containing the best and most versatile agricultural land.

The assessment of the BF option therefore takes into account that the resulting sites meet these criteria (with one exception as identified) in assessing against alternative options.

## **Appendix 5 Objectives and policies not appraised**

There are exceptions where policies or objectives have not been appraised against the Sustainability Objectives and these are as follows:-

### **Objectives**

#### **Objective 1 to formulate Backwell Future based on community views of residents**

A process objective, rather than a land use objective.

#### **Objective 2 To develop the Backwell Future Plan to support and be consistent with North Somerset Council's Core Strategy 2011 to 2026.**

The Core Strategy has already been the subject of a sustainability appraisal and therefore nothing would be achieved by appraising this objective.

### **Policies**

#### **Policy 1 Safeguard Backwell for Future generations, as an attractive place to live; with a sustainable village feel in close proximity to the countryside**

Policy too general to assess.

#### **Policy 5 c) The Parish Council will encourage residents to adopt more sustainable travel as outlined in Section 5 (Sustainability).**

The encouragement is non-land use and the policies themselves are appraised separately (policies 2, 3 and 4).

#### **Policy 6 BACKWELL FUTURE policy is for no change in the Green Belt consistent with Core Strategy Policy CS6.**

CS 6 has already been the subject of the Core Strategy sustainability appraisal and BF policy 6 makes no change to this.

#### **Policy 17 Backwell Parish Council will continue to provide financial support for community and recreational facilities when appropriate and within the capacity of residents to pay.**

This is not a land use policy but a financial commitment therefore not the subject of the SA.

#### **Policy 18 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.**

The setting up of a working group is not a land use issue.

## **Appendix 6 Summary of results for policies and objectives**

### **Objectives**

No negative scores were obtained. In general the BF objectives do not have a significant effect on the Sustainability Objectives. Where there is an effect this is positive with no suggestions for improvement. Three score a positive but where effects could be enhanced.

- Firstly by inserting the words “green infrastructure” into BF objectives 3 and 8 (SO 8a).
- Secondly an improvement to BF objective 4 (SO 9) could be to identify where inadequacies exist and then put forward proposals to address this, but depends on this being the intention of the plan.
- Thirdly in relation to BF objective 9 (and SO’s 14, 20 and 21) , the corresponding BF policies seek to remediate or reduce future exacerbation of problems so this may point to a change in wording of the objective to better reflect this, following consultation on the draft plan.

In relation to SO13 Sense of place, there may be an indirect effect which increases residents’ sense of place in relation to many of the BF objectives, but this is not the intent of the objective and therefore a “0” no significant effect has been given. The same approach has been followed for the Policy appraisals.

### **Policies**

In general most of the policies have no significant effect on the majority of the SO’s indicators.

There are a great many more instances where the policy scores the maximum positive score against the Sustainability Objective than negative score. In fact there are only 3 occasions where a negative score is attributed against an SO.

The policies score highest in terms of meeting local needs locally because they add specific detail to the “ no plan” options, as may be expected e.g Policy 5b and 8, policy 9, policy 10, policy 11 and policy 14. For this reason they generally also score higher than the “no plan” or “alt” options.

There are a notable number of cases however where the BF policy does not add to any existing strategic or national policy in terms of sustainability objectives (but potentially also in planning policy terms, although this beyond the remit of the SA).

Since the policies of Backwell Future need to conform to strategic local policies i.e. Core Strategy as well as National Policy NPPF, there are in a number of cases, no reasonable alternatives to the policy approach. In this case the policies were compared against the “No Plan” option only. As is the case with BF 14 ii (and others) the BF policy does not add anything to the existing approach and therefore the results are the same.

### **Policies with negative score against SO’s**

#### **Policies 5b and 8 which limit housing to modest levels indicated in the BF plan and focussed on local priority needs.**

Although the policy seeks to minimise additional traffic levels, additional housing will always to some extent have the potential to add to traffic congestion in the village (and therefore score a single negative meaning that mitigation may be possible against SO 19). The “no plan” and “ALT” options score more negatively because they are not related to growth in congestion. This was understood when devising the policy and the aspiration to keep traffic growth and congestion down was part of the reasoning behind limiting housing growth within the village. Other BF policies therefore seek to address some of the effects of potential traffic congestion and rat-running.

#### **14 iii-which seeks opportunities to increase village centre parking in proposals affecting the village centre.**

Negative effects are predicted in relation to the promotion of sustainable transport. Creating additional village centre parking opportunities may dissuade customers from adopting sustainable travel options to use the village centre services. Attractiveness and viability of the village centre was seen as a greater priority than mode of transport, however in preparing the BF plan and therefore no mitigation measures are suggested. Other BF policies encourage measures to increase sustainable access to the village centre.

### **Areas where improvements to policies are suggested and resulting action**

#### **Policy 5a** (on site transport infrastructure for new developments)

There are no significant effects of this policy, however there is potential to promote a positive effect on S08 (rather than uncertain) by widening the remit of the policy to include off site transport infrastructure. This is something that could be considered following the results of consultation on the draft BF Plan.

#### **Policy 5e** (The need for traffic calming monitored and consultation undertaken to decide what measures to be taken).

This policy has a positive effect which could be enhanced by stating that action will definitely be taken as a result of monitoring. However the policy states that the intention is to act following consultation which means there can be no certainty that actions would be supported. There is therefore no policy change suggested.

#### **Policy 16** Local Green Space

The LGS policy has the effect of safeguarding the designated area from development. NPPF allows allocation of LGS but none exist in current planning policy documents. The “no plan” option relies on existing nature conservation policies CS4 and RLP ECH/11 (protects nationally or internationally protected habitats or species) or ECH/12 (SAC’s). These do not necessarily rule out development provided satisfactory mitigation measures can be implemented. The LGS policy on the other hand rules out development and effectively treats the area as green belt, so is a more effective policy in preventing development which may affect known habitats or protected areas. The existence of a LGS policy on the other hand has a positive in principle effect for both the BF and ALT options.

The greater the extent of the LGS designation the greater the area protected (primarily bat SAC) under SO 1 and also BMV agricultural land SO4. The NPPF precludes the designation of extensive areas, however which is the limiting factor. Consultation on the draft BF Plan will establish which option or variation thereof will be chosen, so no changes to the policy are indicated at present.

### **Tension within SA objectives**

As the compatibility matrix in the SA Scoping Report established there is a tension between SO’s in relation to increasing the number of car parking spaces in and around the village centre (a non-sustainable option) in order to enhance the viability of local services (a sustainable objective) by creating better access to them.

The SA role is to highlight this obvious conflict and suggest ways of resolving during plan preparation. The ideal way would be to avoid the need for additional parking (as proposed in BF policy 14ii and BF15) by concentrating on promoting alternatives. This is already done in policy BF15 but is undermined in 14ii which seeks additional parking from any village centre redevelopment where this is possible to secure. Parking was perceived as being such an important issue in the preparation of the BF Plan that it was not considered appropriate to await the outcome of policy 15 prior to implementing policy 14ii. This tension therefore remains.

## Appendix 7 Compliance with SEA requirements

References to 'Annex 1' are to Annex 1 of the SEA Directive

Source	Requirements	Compliance	Notes
Annex 1 (a)	Provide an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	Scoping report (September 2012)	
Annex 1 (b)	Provide information on the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme	This SA report	
Annex 1 (c)	Provide information on the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	Scoping report (September 2012)	
Annex 1 (d)	Provide information on any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	SA Template  See also Habitats Regulations Assessment	
Annex 1 (e)	Provide information on the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its	Strategies & Initiatives Document  Section 3	

	preparation		
Annex 1 (f)	Provide information on the likely significant effects (see below), including on issues listed (see below)	Appraisal Tables	
Annex 1 (f) (footnote 1): likely significant effects to include	Provide information on secondary effects		Secondary effects will be identified where possible but this is rare, given the high degree of uncertainty associated with some outcomes
	Provide information on cumulative effects		<p>Cumulative impacts on any of the identified issues are likely to be very minor, evidenced by the relatively few uncertain/mixed effects identified in relation to any indicators. They will not in themselves combine to create any adverse significant effects.</p> <p>Particularly sensitive receptors are the protected habitats, namely the bat SAC protection zone: the effects of Backwell Future on this are being assessed separately through a Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment and a full HRA Assessment if necessary. This could be adversely affected by site allocations, although a positive effect is achieved through other policies.</p>
	Provide information on synergistic effects		See above in relation to bat SAC.
	Provide information on short-term effects	All effects are assumed to be short to medium	

			term unless there is evidence to the contrary. 'Short-term' is to be understood as in the early years of the period being planned for.
	Provide information on medium-term effects		All effects are assumed to be short to medium term unless there is evidence to the contrary. 'Medium-term' is to be understood as in the later years of the period being planned for.
	Provide information on long-term effects		All effects are assumed to be short to medium term unless there is evidence to the contrary. 'Long-term' is to be understood as extending beyond the period being planned for. National policy is assumed to endure for the long-term. It is also appropriate to consider Green Belt policy as long-term. Some climate change effects will also be long-term.
	Provide information on permanent effects		All effects are assumed to be permanent unless there is evidence that they are temporary.
	Provide information on temporary effects		All effects are assumed to be permanent unless there is evidence that they are temporary.
	Provide information on positive effects		These are indicated with either a single or double plus, or an equals sign where effects are mixed.
	Provide information on negative effects		These are indicated with either a single or

			double minus, or an equals sign where effects are mixed.
Annex 1 (f): issues to include	Provide information on the likely significant effects on biodiversity, fauna and flora		Sustainability Objective 1
	Provide information on the likely significant effects on population and human health		Sustainability Objectives 2 and 3
	Provide information on the likely significant effects on soil		Sustainability Objective 4
	Provide information on the likely significant effects on water		Sustainability Objectives 5 and 6
	Provide information on the likely significant effects on air		Sustainability Objective 7
	Provide information on the likely significant effects on climatic factors		Sustainability Objective 7
	Provide information on the likely significant effects on material assets		Sustainability Objectives 8 and 8a
	Provide information on the likely significant effects on cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage		Sustainability Objective 9
	Provide information on the likely significant effects on landscape		Sustainability Objectives 10 and 11
	Provide information on the likely significant effects on the interrelationship between the above factors		The Appraisal Tables, in appraising each policy, refer to cross-cutting issues where relevant
Annex 1 (g)	Provide information on the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce, and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the		The Appraisal Tables, in appraising each policy, make judgements on the extent to which it seeks to minimise negative effects. Where

	environment of implementing the plan or programme		<p>possible, they also suggest possible improvements to the BF policy. Improvements to other options or “no plan” are not suggested, as these are not options that we plan to take forward, or is within the remit of this plan.</p> <p>Where no entry is made in the ‘Adjustments’ column it is marked with an ‘X’ to demonstrate that the matter has been considered but no change identified.</p>
Annex 1 (h)	Provide an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with	Alternatives considered in appraisal tables.	
	Provide a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information	Section i of SA report	
Annex 1 (i)	Provide a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Article 10	Section k of SA report	
Annex 1 (j)	Provide a non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	Non-technical summary within SA report	

## **Appendix 8 Appraisal tables Backwell Future policies**

**(Due to the size of these tables they have been reproduced as separate documents)**