

Monthly Planning Update for Backwell Parish Council

March 2024

Issued 21.03.24

North Somerset Executive and Council Meetings

No Executive or Council meetings were held during March. There are no matters of particular relevance to Backwell raised through other committees this month.

NSC Local Plan 2038

The consultation responses to the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Local Plan consultation have been published by NSC and are available on the website. The Plan is being prepared for submission to the Secretary of State.

Emerging Planning Policies

The Council is currently consulting upon its waste strategy and parking management. The consultations do not raise any issues of specific relevance to BPC, although the introduction of parking charges in Nailsea would affect Backwell residents. The deadline for both consultations is 7 May.

NSC Stakeholder Workshops

No workshop this month.

Government planning policy updates

No Government policy updates this month. However, Matthew Pennycook MP (Labour's Shadow Minister for Housing and Planning) spoke this month about Labour's intentions for the planning system if they win the General Election. These promise:

1. Mandatory housing targets that "bite on individual local planning authorities";
2. "Decisive and early" action to "reverse" the December 2023 NPPF changes;
3. To evolve the current "discretionary" system and replace it with a zonal system;
4. To introduce an "effective mechanism for cross-boundary strategic planning" – compared with the current system with the "inherent flaws of voluntary spatial development strategies". This suggests a tier of mandatory rather than voluntary cross-boundary strategic planning.
5. Reintroducing a strategic approach to green belt release.

This statement indicates some fundamental changes to the planning system which could have significant implications for Backwell through mandatory Government calculated housing requirements, likely reinstatement of the 5 year housing requirement, formalised requirements for cross-boundary planning and spatial planning, requiring NSC to be accountable for helping to meet Bristol's housing needs which cannot be met within its administrative boundary.