

North Somerset Local Plan 2038 Challenges and Choices Part 1: Challenges for the Future

A new Local Plan for North Somerset is being prepared, which will guide housing, jobs and business investment, transport, community facilities and supporting infrastructure in the area until 2038.

The first stage of consultation in the new plan's preparation focuses on the challenges and issues that need facing in North Somerset, such as:

- climate emergency
- how and where to provide jobs and homes
- how to ensure development is located in sustainable places
- how to protect and enhance our green and blue space
- future role of the Green Belt

Tickenham Parish Council have responded to this consultation as detailed below.

Note:

Words from the North Somerset Council consultation document are shown in blue.

Proposed Tickenham Parish Council responses are shown in black.

Questions posed by North Somerset Council together with responses from Tickenham Parish Council:

1	<p>What are your hopes and fears about having new development near where you live?</p>
<p>Worried about the effect of traffic generated from new development outside of Tickenham Parish on the existing road network through Tickenham. The B3130 is sub standard in all aspects: width, dwelling access directly onto the highway, adjacent school, insufficient and/or non-existent footpaths, no cycleways, poor road surfacing causing local flooding and spray, no 20 mph limit (North Somerset Council has been slow in bringing the speed limit problem to the fore and we are unsure, as a village, that we have sufficient funds to implement a scheme). This Parish receives no monies from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) so is entirely dependent on monies received through the annual precept – part of the council tax levied on local taxpayers. This income is limited and unlikely to increase in any meaningful manner.</p>	
2	<p>What changes over the next 15 years do you think will affect how we need to plan for residents, businesses and communities?</p>
<p>Income to assist residents, businesses and the community is limited as we are almost entirely dependent on the annual precept in the region of £8k which does not go very far. We are concerned about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase in traffic on the B3130 (c) • provision of sufficient suitably sized houses to allow existing residents to downsize and stay in the Tickenham village and to attract the young families we need to continue to make our community thrive • better internet provision to continue to allow remote meetings and remotely managed but local governance 	
3	<p>Are you concerned that climate change may impact you or your family, business or local community in the future? And if so in what way?</p>
<p>We all need to consider our effect on the planet. Some ideas to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More efficient, better and more encompassing waste collection so that the need to drive to a local recycling centre is significantly reduced or completely removed by collecting from the curb side • Better standards of housing to control energy use • Reduction of single use plastic 	

4	How should we plan for how you and your family will work in the future, or the future needs of your business?
Where possible, more working from home should be encouraged to reduce commuting. To aid this, better and more reliable internet connections are required. Reduced commuting from outside of Tickenham would reduce the traffic load that the village has to absorb (see answer to Question 1 above)	

5	What sort of types and sizes of houses do you think will be needed for your community in the future?
Houses built within the Parish should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller and more affordable to attract for new residents and to allow older residents to downsize and stay within Tickenham • Houses should be as energy efficient as possible 	

6	What do you think makes a good community?
A community that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comes together at times of leisure and at times of crisis • has more local businesses for people to support resulting in less commuting. • supports community activities such as provision of the Village Hall and Village Field and playground, Flower Shows, Open Garden Events, etc. • uses local footpaths and facilities • looks after its old and young inhabitants • supports local businesses 	

7	Do you agree with these? Are there any others which are important to you?
Agree in general with these aims (shown below in blue) which are laudable but consider the aims need amending/adding to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to continue the provision of new and better roads. In particular, a link from the M5 at junction 20 to the west end of Nailsea and parts of Backwell, etc. would serve to provide goods/freight to and from Nailsea and other areas without the need to push more traffic on the already overused B3130 through Tickenham and to reduce traffic in the "horse and cart" design that leads to and from Stone Edge Batch from all directions. • Housing developments should also include provision for the extra local facilities required, such as school places, doctors, nursery provisions, etc. • Public transport should be provided on a not for profit basis • The Green Belt should be rigorously defended from use for development. 	

Building on brownfield land in towns and through the reuse of existing sites and buildings. We already prioritise this and will continue to ensure that as much housing as possible is provided on pre-developed land. However, realistically this will only provide a small amount of the land needed.	When greenfield land is needed, limiting new development to locations where it is possible to make the most use of that land and avoid sprawl. 'Greenfield' means land that has not been built on before and is different to 'Green Belt' which is an area of land surrounding Bristol and Bath which has special protection from most new development.
Developing in places where schools, jobs and services are accessible by foot and cycle or new neighbourhoods where walkability is central to the design and promotes exercise.	Ensuring there is access to open space.
Making sure there is effective public transport that can be enhanced or where new frequent high-quality public transport can be provided. This could also mean locations where new public transport can be provided if there were enough homes.	Developing in towns and near public transport hubs where higher densities use less land and support public transport. This not only reduces the need to travel but in turn makes meeting our day to day needs more convenient.
Ensuring there is easy access to a range of job opportunities, ideally by walking or cycling or via sustainable public transport.	Being certain that new essential transport, digital and social infrastructure can be delivered.

8	We have come to value our local footpaths and green spaces more since Covid-19. How can we ensure that future residents benefit from access to green spaces?
<p>Tickenham has laid plans for the provision of better footpath links but as a Parish Council we are limited by our small budget and statutory powers. We are concerned that good and sensible ideas will remain just that without the assistance and buy in from North Somerset Council.</p> <p>We would seek to discuss making The Causeway one way towards Nailsea to provide safe walking/cycling.</p>	

9	Should we be thinking about adjusting the Green Belt boundary if necessary?
<p>If the Green Belt really has to be adjusted to accommodate more development in North Somerset, we would expect to see new areas re-designated to compensate for the loss.</p> <p>We are happy that Tickenham remains in (is washed over by) the Green Belt and do not want to see the Green Belt developed.</p> <p>Tickenham currently has no Settlement Boundary but we are out to local public consultation about its possible re-instatement and, if accepted by North Somerset Council, we would not want to see development outside of the new Settlement Boundary.</p>	

10	The previous sections set out the six challenges that we feel the Local Plan should address (shown below). Are there any other challenges you feel we need to address through the Local Plan?
<p>Challenge no. 7: Ensuring that adequate infrastructure is in place to support new housing developments, ideally prior to occupation of new homes.</p> <p>The 6 challenges below are laudable and sensible but we are concerned that attention is needed to the movement of freight (which cannot and will not be carried by public transport, or by foot or by cycle). Roads should be designed to cater for Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs). The B3130 was built to cater for the horse and cart and does not allow for current Heavy Goods Vehicles that travel from the Motorway at Junctions 19 and 20 via Tickenham Parish to service Nailsea and Backwell.</p> <p>We are concerned that once COVID-19 has been "sorted" with an immunisation programme, that normality will prevail (traffic levels in Tickenham on weekdays appear to have already crept back to pre-COVID levels) and that provision must be made to reduce traffic through Tickenham using a motorway link from Junction 20 of the M5 to Nailsea and Backwell.</p>	
CHALLENGES	
1: Climate emergency	2: Supporting our economy Challenge
3: Providing homes and creating communities	4: Creating a sustainable future
5: Protecting important green and blue spaces	6: The future role of the Green Belt

11	In light of the world we now live in, is this vision still appropriate for the future?
<p>Tickenham Parish Council believe the vision is appropriate for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>VISION FOR 2038: By 2038 there will be a transformation in the way we live which reflects a more responsible attitude to climate change and the use of resources. New homes, buildings and communities will be highly sustainable, accessible and attractive places with higher quality standards. There will be more diversity in terms of the form and type of new development to increase variety and choice to better meet the needs of all, create jobs and to tackle inequality. Regeneration will transform and breathe new life into existing towns and valued areas will be protected. People's well-being, a strong sense of community, opportunity and fairness will be at the heart of all development in North Somerset.</p>	

12	Do these reflect your aims, those of your family, community or business?	
The North Somerset Council aims, shown below, reflect the aims of Tickenham Parish Council		
<p>Tackle the climate change challenge: We have a climate emergency. How we use and re-use resources will be very different in the future. Buildings will be carbon neutral. More renewable energy will be generated locally. Fewer journeys will be made by cars. Energy and land will be used more efficiently. More emphasis will be put on reducing flooding, sustainable drainage and ensuring development is resilient to the impacts of climate change. Walking, cycling and effective public transport will become the normal way to travel. There will be more employment in green technologies and solutions.</p>	<p>Build sustainable development: We have a responsibility to provide enough homes to meet the needs of our future residents. The target figure is calculated by government and for North Somerset is very challenging – it would require us to almost double the number of homes built per year from the average of around 740 per year over the past five years to just under 1,400 per year. Sustainable and attractive communities will need to be created with homes, jobs, schools, transport, shops and all the requirements which combine to make them great places to live. They will need to be designed to be inspiring, distinctive, vibrant and beautiful as well as friendly, inclusive and caring where people can enjoy life, live healthily, participate, make choices, be safe and are proud of. But we also need homes people can afford so that we have fewer people living in crowded bedsits, sofa surfing or stuck living with their parents well into adulthood.</p>	
<p>Treasure valued assets: Existing historical, built, and cultural features will be enhanced, protected and used to develop a greater sense of identity and enjoyment for local people, appeal to tourists and attract investment. The special character of existing towns and villages will be retained.</p>	<p>Raise design quality: People often complain about bland housing estates and poor-quality buildings. Better design approaches which meet the needs of future users and enhance local identity and character and look great are required.</p>	
<p>Regenerate our towns and communities: Most of our town centres have been badly hit by shops shutting down. Town centres are the heart of the community and encouraging jobs, new uses and revitalising centres is essential. Enabling people to live and work in the centre and creating attractive places where people socialise and spend their leisure time are becoming increasingly important for both new and existing residents.</p>	<p>Improve the life prospects of local people: Quality homes with a choice of locations, tenures, sizes, affordability and suitability need to be provided where there is access to a wide variety of services and facilities. Ensuring there is a range of job opportunities for workers in places they can get to easily is also important. Designing high quality, accessible, attractive, healthy places which enable active lifestyles and encourage social interaction will contribute to improving people's quality of life.</p>	

13	Have we identified the right priorities and are there any missing, which do you think are the most important and why?	
<p>Tickenham Parish Council support the North Somerset Council priorities, shown below, but note that this question on priorities provides a rare mention, in this consultation, of transport infrastructure (only Question 7 refers to this vital requirement).</p> <p>Tickenham Parish Council particularly applaud Priority 4 and 7 but are concerned that transport infrastructure, which is of particular concern to Tickenham, does not appear to be discussed in detail until this last question.</p> <p>Tickenham Parish Council are particularly concerned that transport infrastructure is provided in step with development. Unfortunately, our experience to date, is that not only is the provision of essential transport infrastructure, not in step with development, we are not convinced that North Somerset Council has any plans for the planning or delivery of suitable and effective local and strategic transport infrastructure necessary as a result of development. Recent correspondence on the Engine Lane development, Nailsea, demonstrated a reluctance for early engagement with developers to mitigate the traffic generated by large developments on the surrounding road network.</p> <p>Tickenham Parish Council welcomes initiatives to foster people to grow their own produce and for productive commercial sustainable horticultural sites within the village.</p>		
1. To deliver the zero-carbon ambition by maximising, for example, the opportunities for low carbon development and the use of renewable energy.		2. To prioritise the location of new development close to places with a wide range of services, facilities and job opportunities to encourage walking and cycling, or with easy access to high-quality and effective public transport.
3. To deliver a diverse range of housing in a variety of tenures, sizes and forms to meet future needs at locations where they are most needed		4. To deliver essential new strategic transport infrastructure to support regeneration and job creation and significantly reduce out-commuting, particularly from Weston-super-Mare to Bristol.
5. To increase the number and range of job opportunities at Weston-super-Mare and in the north of the district.		6. To prioritise the importance of the green infrastructure network when considering new development, support priority habitats and species and safeguard areas at risk of flooding.
7. To provide essential infrastructure in step with development, both transport and community infrastructure such as schools.		8. To deliver higher residential densities through good design, particularly at town centres and transport hubs.
9. To address the decline in the town centres of Weston-super-Mare, Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead through supporting regeneration and place-making initiatives which revitalise these places as the focus for retailing, community uses, housing and jobs.		10. Developing new and existing communities in a way which enhances health and wellbeing, reduces inequalities and is child and family friendly.

Other questions/comments that need to be addressed by North Somerset Council as a result of this consultation:

- 1) Lack of Strategic Plan
 - a) North Somerset Council is now responsible for compiling the Local Plan to 2038 without the benefit of a Strategic Plan arising from the dismissal of the ill-fated Joint Spatial Plan fiasco for the four local authorities. How much of the JSP will be retained is not clear.
 - b) There is a need for North Somerset to provide some 20,000 dwellings (that is, two Clevedons). Quite difficult, if one excludes the Green Belt, the Flood Plain and an Area of Outstanding Beauty. The set target is 1369 dwellings built each year.
 - c) Transport policies are with the West of England Combined Authority, but will form a significant part of the Plan. The current consultation, however, is only aimed to flush out the challenges. The programme is for a draft Local Plan in 2021 with adoption in 2023.

- 2) The Council welcomes the production of the Challenges document as a start to the development of the Local Plan, but the timing of the consultation will present difficulties for some. August is a bad month as many groups, etc, are on shutdown (including Parish Councils unless there is urgent business). Six weeks from the end of the summer term, say 22 July, to the start of the autumn, say 6 September, is not a good period to hold consultations. Similarly, 15 December to 6 January should be discounted as part of a six-week, period!
- 3) The main fear of the Parish Council and all villagers is the severe impact of developments outside the village for which any mitigation factors are quite frankly just not possible. In particular this relates to transport routes of all types of vehicles. The main existing residential area which has been subject to ribbon development over the years is totally unacceptable, particularly in terms of freight routes (the B3130 through Tickenham is the only B category road so designated), lack of footpaths, no cycling facilities, proximity of houses close to the highway with high NOx and CO2 levels, dangerous access to village school etc, etc. In addition, there are serious problems at Stone Edge Batch with a difficult incident junction and narrow carriageway on B3130. The Council supported the proposal in the submitted Joint Spatial Plan solution of a highway from west (southwest) Nailsea to link to Junction 20, M5 at a point where there are 80 hectares of potentially developable outside the Green Belt but removed from the Joint Spatial Plan proposals. Without notice or consultation, the Consortium withdrew that option in an amendment submitted to the designated Inspectors at a later date.
- 4) Green Belt. In effect all of Tickenham is within the Bristol Green Belt and its policies. In extreme circumstances, it might be possible to identify a small amount of land for housing development within the revised Settlement Boundary (currently under consideration) which would have very little visual impact on the Green Belt. Otherwise the Council fully supports the retention of the existing Green Belt in which Tickenham lies.
- 5) The Council would support some development to rebalance the current demographic profile of the village by provision for both young families and those wishing to downsize.
- 6) There is a need to ensure that high quality wifi is made available throughout the village particularly when we seem to be entering a period of more work at home rather than regular commuting to work. Providing more training in that field is required so that nobody is left out.
- 7) Local Plans 2038 Challenge Conundrum. North Somerset hopes to have its plan adopted in 2023. The government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' wants to set the period for preparing Local Plans as three months. WECA is telling the other three districts that their Local Plans must be consistent throughout with the upcoming Spatial Development Plan (SDS); it took seven years to get the Joint Spatial Plan to the Examination stage (2012/2019). How will North Somerset reconcile the challenge?
- 8) The consultation document is 20mB in size – quite a large document. We would have preferred an offering which listed only the text (which would have reduced the size to probably 0.5mB) in addition to the artwork full consultation document that is all that is on offer. Using simple software, commonly available, I have reduced the size of the consultation document to 7.5mB (about a third of the original size) with no discernible reduction of quality. As we move to more use of digital data and conversations, it is important to consider the size of documents in terms of data usage, something that North Somerset Council appears to have no policies on (and quite frankly little knowledge of) as we are constantly receiving pretty but large documentation that with suitable software could be reduced in size or a text only version provided.



John Banks – Chair – Tickenham Parish Council
28 August 2020