

North Somerset Local Plan 2038 Preferred Options

Opened 11 March 22 Closes 29 April 22

(<https://n-somerset.inconsult.uk/PreferredOptionsMarch22/consultationHome>)

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Bleadon in Context

From general BOB feedback residents want to protect Bleadon's rural, farming heritage and its settlement character, for the whole parish, not just the village. As you will be aware Bleadon has been a settled community since the Bronze Age. The parish contains SSSIs, SNCIs, AONB, wildlife reserves, bat zones, special protection area, wildlife sites, woodland stock, Environment Agency Source Protection area, TPOs, Natural England Ancient Woodland, listed buildings, common land village greens and many fields are used for all forms of agriculture (http://map.n-somerset.gov.uk/map/Aurora.svc/run?embedded=true&nocache=0.5326501759700477&script=%5CAurora%5CDandE.AuroraScript%24&visible_layers=unitaryboundary&x=334031.000&y=156848.000&scale=32768)

According to the Dudley Stamp Land Use, Bleadon appears to be mainly grassland, followed by rough grazing, suburban and arable land (<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>) According to Natural England, and the South West Land Classification Bleadon is generally Grades 1, 2 and 3 with some 'Excellent' land along Shiplate towards Loxton, 'Very Good' between Celtic Way and Purn, and mainly 'Good to Moderate' land, over the levels and along the A370, all of which should be protected. Any 'poor' land can be improved within a season with the right land management, ensuring that our community, and potentially those beyond, has continued access to local food produce and therefore food security. Considering Bleadon's farming community we note that there isn't any Local Plan Consultation mapping for farming/agriculture, is there a reason for this?

In the UK Food Security Report 2021 the government stated, "In meat, milk, and eggs, the UK produces a roughly equivalent volume to what it consumes." Also, "The UK produces a significant proportion of the other domestic crops it needs, including 54% of fresh vegetables, 67% of sugar beet, 71% of potatoes, and 79% of oilseeds, though only 16% of fresh fruit". There is concern amongst some in the community about the loss of agriculture especially in light of the global references to food shortages, food importation restrictions, potential food rationing, etc. The Government clearly indicated this when it stated last November that "The Government is investing a further £500 million in a Household Support Fund for local authorities to use in supporting the most vulnerable with food and utility bills" (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/united-kingdom-food-security-report-2021/united-kingdom-food-security-report-2021-theme-2-uk-food-supply-sources>)

BOB appreciates that NSC is under pressure from the government to build, especially as NSC has a stated 'Duty to Cooperate' with neighbouring local authorities to help fulfil their quota. This consultation states that "*The Government has commanded North Somerset Council to provide 20,085 homes by 2038... the plan only proposes sites for 18,046 homes which is 90 per cent of the government's Target*" – i.e. it is currently 2K short of this quota. This scale of development should not be undertaken at the expense of Bleadon's rural identity, culture, heritage or food security, so it is appreciated that NSC still values and recognises the Bleadon Settlement Boundary. Any properties that are built should be properly insulated, to reduce heat loss by up to two-thirds, reducing the requirement for all types of energy.

Minerals/Fracking

Following a resident meeting, BPC declared Bleadon Frack Free in July 2019, resolving "... *that Clerk would write to the Leader (of NSC, Cllr Don Davies) and copy it to ALCA and DEFRA*" (July 2019 Min 324.11). Following the APM this month BOB asked BPC for a copy of this letter and response, but we're yet to receive an acknowledgement or reply. In the meantime, District Cllr Porter has confirmed that NSC will continue to commit to its 'Frack Free' position on fracking as indicated in its Climate Emergency Action Plan, i.e. to "*Pass a motion declaring North Somerset a Frack Free Zone to discourage the exploration and production of shale gas*". (<https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s3293/20%20Climate%20Emergency%20Progress%20Report.pdf>). Bleadon residents, and other members of the public who liaise with BOB, are truly grateful for this confirmation. We're assuming that NSC will also continue to ensure that "... *shale gas development of any type should not be classed as a permitted development*" either by the government or by any NSC policy or plan as stated in the Mercury 15 November 2018 (<https://www.thewestonmercury.co.uk/news/north-somerset-council-votes-for-government-not-to-decide-fracking-4534898>)

Renewable Search Areas

From the consultation 'Renewable Search Areas' mapping, NSC tries to address the government stated energy issues, by covering Bleadon parish with areas of Wind Turbines of various sizes and Solar Panels, but it seems that this is at the expense of the potentially greater food crisis that is looming. Why can't residential, business and local authority roof spaces be used instead of taking up much needed farmland?.

Page 49 of the consultation states, "**Proposals for wind turbines and solar photovoltaic arrays will be supported in principle within the Search Areas shown on the Policies Map subject to the other requirements of the Plan and it being demonstrated that there are no adverse impacts on living conditions including those from vibration, noise, shadow flicker, glint, glare and air quality**" Also, "Proposals for wind and solar PV farms to repower at the end of their operational life will be permitted, as long as the turbines and/or solar panels are replaced with new equipment of either the **same or larger installed capacity**". This implies that these search areas will just about guarantee subsequent submitted applications and their future expansions, which may equate to loss of farming/agricultural land and potential further food insecurity

Page 100 of the consultation states "... applicants will need to demonstrate that a full survey has taken place and the proposed site is **not within (land) grades 1, 2 or 3a**". As the overwhelming majority of Bleadon's current land classification is within these grades, and any poor quality can be improved if required, we see no reason for these 'renewable search areas' to exist in Bleadon parish. Any submitted application for wind turbines, solar panels, etc. should be reviewed on an individual basis and in relation to Bleadon's ability to ensure or further develop local food security.

Page 45 of the consultation states: "**Protect spaces for local food production, including allotments, community orchards, community gardens and identify opportunities for community composting ... A demonstration of adaptation measures, which improve the resilience of communities, reduce inequality, and bring a range of social benefits is required... Climate change adaptation statements will set out the measures to increase the resilience of that development to climate change. Changes will include... reduced soil condition with consequential impacts on food production**". All reasons to protect Bleadon's agricultural land, farming community and food security.

Page 74 of the consultation states: "*The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) states that GI [Green Infrastructure] is a **natural capital asset** providing multiple benefits including ... food ... production, urban cooling ... (Natural environment section paragraph 005).*" Again, reasons to protect Bleadon's agricultural land, farming community and food security, not to put it at risk!

Page 93, Older persons accommodation, the consultation states, "*Provides internal and external communal space as appropriate, including **space that gives residents the ability to grow plants and food.***" Why just 'older persons'? Why not allow these benefits and human rights to all ages?

BUT Page 101 of the consultation states: "*Farmers are encouraged to diversify their activities and supplement their income from **enterprises other than normal food production***". What is 'other than normal food production'? Is government moving us away from from natural to unnatural land and animal farming? From natural to to chemically derived proteins, aqua- and hydroponics that also use chemicals. (E.g. GB News on Farming /Food Propaganda https://www.facebook.com/GBNewsOnline/videos/509405577387392/?textid=NS-UNK-UNK-UNK-IOS_GK0T-GK1C) & UK Food Security Overview <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AfZZ2VAK8p0>) These large, closed, man-made buildings potentially remove outdoor farmland used by people and animals. These areas of 'farming' are growing at an unchecked and alarming rate (E.g. Controlled Vertical Food Systems <https://www.coreysdigs.com/global/new-controlled-food-system-is-now-in-place-and-they-will-stop-at-nothing-to-accelerate-their-control/>) How does this effect people's nutrition, health and allergies, especially if the seeds are genetically modified? What about the effect on the natural environment, ecology, wildlife, etc.? (E.g. UK Edible Insect Sector <https://www.foodnavigator.com/Article/2022/02/03/a-major-milestone-for-the-uk-edible-insect-sector-uk-edible-insect-makers-hope-for-novel-food-approval-by-2023>) Land is also being bought to turn into wildlife and tree reserves, presumably for carbon-offsetting, at the expense of food security. All these aspects need to be put at a higher priority than renewable energy in order to avoid food shortages and starvation of residents and the population as a whole.

Government is increasing its nuclear power from 15% to 25% Electricity by 2050. This month it was stated that the UK's, "... *new Energy Security Strategy to supercharge cheap renewables and new nuclear, while continuing support our North Sea oil and gas industry.*" The Energy Strategy states, "*Nuclear is the only form of reliable, low carbon electricity generation which has been proven at scale and returns more than a hundred times as much power as a solar site of the same size. We can only secure a big enough baseload of reliable power for our island by drawing on nuclear.*" If nuclear is expanding how will this effect Bleadon? (Secretary of State <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/delivering-great-britains-energy-security> & British Energy Security Strategy

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1069973/british-energy-security-strategy-print-ready.pdf & the Prime Minister <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/british-energy-security-strategy/british-energy-security-strategy>)

Bleadon Strategic Gap

NSC consultation page 29 states, “*Strategic Gaps have a broad similarity to some of the purposes of Green Belts in that they can help prevent the merging of settlements, assist in safeguarding the countryside from ‘encroachment’ regarding land between the settlements, and help to protect the setting and character of settlements...*” Hutton and Locking, Bleadon’s NSC Ward ‘partners’, have Strategic Gaps. Please consider creating a Strategic Gap for Bleadon to prevent encroachment, especially from the highly urbanised Weston Town Council area, to protect Bleadon’s Bronze Age heritage.

Air Travel & Safety

As you are aware in February this year (2022) airport owners won an appeal to enable, amongst other things, “... *operating within a rolling annual cap of 4,000 night-flights between the hours of 11.30pm and 6am with no seasonal restrictions*”, with proposals in December 2018 to boost passenger numbers to 12 million a year by the mid-2020s. An airport expansion doesn’t fit with the ‘Green Agenda’, with increased flights and associated passenger travel to and from the airport. Can NSC confirm whether there is a maintenance flight route over/near Bleadon from Bristol Airport to a location in Cardiff, and if so, how many flights are undertaken each year and at what time of day/night?

How is any geo-engineering over NSC, and in particular Bleadon, managed? What is the effect on health via potential pollution of the air, land and water? (E.g. UK Governments Geoengineering Regulation p15

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmsctech/221/221.pdf> & CIA Director <https://www.onenewspage.com/video/20220318/14530907/Cia-director-John-Brennan-admits-to-chemtrails.htm>)

Transport

In April 2021 NSC withdrew its Rural Lanes Traffic Regulation Order affecting the Yatton area after clear public protest and indignation, as seen via ‘Save our Access’ comments on facebook e.g.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/saveouraccess/permalink/139572181370214/>) Does NSC have any similar plans for Bleadon Parish, as BOB would expect similar resident objection?

General Summary of Comments received by BOB

- Use the precautionary principle - allow Bleadon to focus on food security and other locations to focus on energy security - Put solar panels on roofs not fields
- Protect Bleadon’s rural farming heritage and its settlement character - “*There is evidence of agricultural use of the land in the medieval period and probably from at least the Bronze Age*”
- Create a Strategic Gap for Bleadon
- Ensure community and local food security – protect air, land and water resources. Any new trees planted should be fruit trees, preferably community accessible
- Protect the diverse wildlife and countryside
- Improve parishioners understanding of farming to better support farmers

Comment on the Consultation Process

On the 11 Apr at Bleadon’s Annual Parish Meeting (APM) Bleadon Parish Council stated that it was not aware of this consultation, that North Somerset Council had not informed councillors. It was not on the Chairs published agenda, nor were any other planning items. If Bleadon Parish Council, as a Statutory Consultee, states that it was not aware of this consultation a month into a seven week consultation, how can it be fairly said that this was a public consultation? Why wasn’t a public deadline requested by BPC’s Chair, and an extension given, to enable residents to be made aware of the consultation and to more informed about its potential impact on their community up until 2038? BOB therefore hopes that any late comment submissions from members of the public will be still be considered, or will the deadline will be elongated?.

The North Somerset Council (NSC) website states that, “*The draft plan follows two public consultations in 2020*”, yet as far as we’re aware neither of these reached a BPC public Agenda or documented outcome, despite BPC pushing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). Residents have been waiting since 2018 for a public discussion on the NDP project, so public awareness of this Local Plan consultation is essential if Bleadon residents are to have any input into what will happen in their community up until 2038.

Following BOB raising this consultation at the APM, the Vice-chair was the only BPC councillor that attended the NSC Local Plan ‘drop-in’ at The Campus, where BOB and the councillor took the opportunity to briefly discuss the proposals and NDPs with a NSC planning officer. Following this ‘drop-in’ the Vice-Chair called an extraordinary council meeting on 26 Apr, three days before the deadline, stating “*To consider the potential impact on the village of Bleadon from the North Somerset Local Consultation Draft Plan and its preferred options 2038*”. BleadonBOB was kindly invited to present an overview of some of the feedback BOB had received, as indicated below so please include this document as consultation response.

From: Bleadon BOB Community Website <bleadon@live.co.uk>

Sent: 29 April 2022 16:28

To: planning.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk <planning.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk>

Subject: Consultation Submission - North Somerset Local Plan 2038 Preferred Options

Dear Planning Policy Team,

Please find our Local Plan 2038 consultation submission below in text format, and attached in PDF format.

Please confirm receipt of this email.

Kind regards,

Jo Crane