

Backwell Residents Association's (BRA) comment on application 20/P/2896/APPCON | Submission of addendum to Environmental Statement and associated documents by Bristol Airport Limited in relation to its appeal against the decision of North Somerset Council on 13.3.2020 to refuse planning application 18/P/5118/OUT for outline planning permission (with reserved matters details for some elements included and some elements reserved for subsequent approval) for the development of Bristol Airport to enable a throughput of 12 million terminal passengers in any 12 month calendar period and operating within a rolling annualised cap of 4,000 night flights between the hours of 23:30 and 06:00 with no seasonal restrictions (see North Somerset Council website for full description of development) | Bristol Airport North Side Road Felton Wrington BS48 3DP

Backwell Residents Association (BRA) an independent organisation with a paid up membership of over 400 households representing up to 700 residents. Bristol Airport land adjoins Backwell Parish.

We have read Bristol Airport's new evidence but find no reason to change our position on the 18/P/5118/OUT application and like our parish council object to this submission. We fully support the position of North Somerset Council's decision to REFUSE expansion, an additional 2mppa would not be in the best interests of residents' health and well-being and is contrary to policies CS3, CS23 and CS26 of the North Somerset Core Strategy 2017.

After a global pandemic which has devastated the aviation industry with recovery at best projected towards the end of 2022 -23 we believe this application is untimely and inappropriate at a time when limited public resources should be better spent. Focus for Bristol Airport should be on rebuilding to 2019 levels whilst taking a much more considered view to the green economy and environmental impact.

BRA therefore reiterates our previous objection from 2nd January 2020 (see below)

Bristol Airport Planning Application 18/P/5118/OUT

Writing on behalf of Backwell Residents Association (BRA), which is a membership organisation representing over 440 paid up households in the Parish of Backwell and which seeks to safeguard and promote the collective interests of Backwell residents in matters concerning social, economic and community life and the character of the Village.

We wrote to you on 18 January 2019 expressing our serious concerns, but overall deciding not to object to the application. This decision has now changed –see the final paragraph of this letter.

Whilst recognising the convenience of a good regional airport and its contribution to employment and the economy, BRA is seriously concerned about several adverse factors which will be exacerbated by further expansion.

1. **Surface Transport.** The airport already generates a very significant volume of traffic. This is bad enough through Downside and along Brockley Combe but is even worse on the narrow,

inadequate roads down to Backwell and Backwell Farleigh. Taxis often drive too fast and in an inconsiderate manner. The proposed road improvements will do nothing to improve these current problems. In the absence of any major changes to the means by which most passengers arrive and depart, the proposed increase from the current 8mppa to 12mppa seems likely to cause an increase in surface transport which could be as much as 50%. This will further increase road travel risks and general inconvenience for local residents, particularly in Downside and along the narrow lanes. BRA also considers it likely that the proposed expansion would lead to more passengers arriving from ever more distant locations by car, leading to more parking requirements – see below. In the absence of any suitable, affordable mass transit systems in the foreseeable future, these issues should be considered a major obstacle to further expansion.

2. **Aircraft Noise.** Quieter engines and different flight paths might be helping a little, but aircraft noise is already very intrusive at certain times in our Parish, particularly in Downside. BRA is well aware that the situation under the flight path is much worse. Our members also complain about aircraft noise when out enjoying local open spaces some distance away, such as Cadbury and the sea wall south from Clevedon. Currently the airlines using Bristol Airport have only invested in four quieter planes, so even if planes continue to get quieter, it seems inevitable that up to 50% more passengers and associated increased flights - estimated aircraft every three and a half minutes - the noise problem will only get worse. More and/or larger aircraft will generate more noise overall, even if they have quieter engines.

3. **Night Flights.** Night flying is a disturbing nuisance to local residents and should not be allowed at this airport. National reports link disturbed sleep to adverse mental health and less productivity in the workplace. Night flights have been occurring against extant permission since 2016; to date no penalties have been issued by the Airport, which says much about Bristol Airport's priorities.

4. **Air Pollution.** We are all increasingly aware of air pollution and global warming and it is widely acknowledged that air travel is a huge contributor to this problem. There are national targets to reduce emissions. We also hear of more local problems under the flight path such as a strong smell of kerosene in the air. None of us should be turning a blind eye to these local, national and international problems. BRA is pleased to note the advice North Somerset Council (NSC) gave to residents in the Jan/Feb 2019 issue of North Somerset Life: “take trains and buses instead of planes”. NSC has declared a climate emergency. Noting all the above, is it responsible to contemplate further airport expansion?

5. **Green Belt Encroachment.** BRA is concerned to note Bristol Airport's excessive use of the permitted development applications within its extant planning permission, a number of which adversely encroach into Green Belt, with irreversible and devastating impact on local wildlife, including the bat population. BRA is very disappointed that the airport has somehow already been allowed to build a huge, ugly office block on the south side of the site, in Green Belt, and to create car parking areas in the Green Belt. Whilst these latest builds may be carbon neutral, these structures cause additional light and traffic air pollution and destroy local habitat. These factors are not considered adequate in Bristol Airport's supporting documentation. The Airport should not be allowed to cause any further intrusion into the Green Belt.

In Conclusion. BRA acknowledges the airport's significant benefits to the local economy and convenience to local users, but these advantages are not sufficient to justify further expansion. The airport should not be allowed to cause any further intrusion into the Green Belt and should make more effective use of the hard structures and landscaping that already exist,

and start mitigating more actively against all aspects of the adverse effects of the extant planning permission.

In view of all the above disadvantages, BRA considers that any further increase beyond the current 10mppa cannot possibly be judged to be 'sustainable' and certainly outweighs the advantages. The airport is seriously constrained by its location, local topography, and very poor road infrastructure. Increased use of air travel cannot be allowed to continue un-checked. The time has come to call a halt to further expansion.

In the last few weeks BRA has undertaken a survey of its members. Members have been provided with extensive background information and were asked to either support, object or remain neutral to the application. **Responses from 204 households (46%) were received and of these, 86% objected to the application.**

In the light of the weight of evidence produced in the last 12 months against expansion of the Airport, BRA's membership survey (above), and your Authority's failure to justify sufficient counter-arguments, BRA has changed its view from neutral to now being opposed, **and we therefore are objecting to the application.**

Submitted via NSC planning portal 31/12/20