

Statement by Backwell Residents Association to the Planning Appeal for Bristol Airport – Appeal reference APP/D0121/W/20/3259234

My name is Barbara Harland. Thank you for this opportunity. I am speaking on behalf of Backwell Residents Association (BRA), a membership organisation representing over 400 paid up households with 700 members in the Parish of Backwell. BRA 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.

Bristol Airport is adjacent to Backwell boundaries and directly affects residents particularly those living in the Downside area of the parish.

In December 2019 BRA members gave the mandate to object to the expansion of Bristol Airport Planning Application 18/P/5118/OUT. Whilst recognising the convenience of a regional airport and its contribution to the economy, BRA is seriously concerned about several adverse factors which will be exacerbated by further expansion.

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 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.

1. Surface Transport. The airport is in a rural green belt area, poorly served by sustainable transport links. It already generates a significant volume of road traffic. Expansion will substantially increase traffic as most passengers arrive and depart by car. Traffic is bad enough through Downside and along Brockley Combe but is even worse on the narrow, inadequate lanes down to Backwell and Backwell Farleigh where Taxis often drive too fast and inconsiderately. The proposed road improvements on the A38 will do nothing to improve these current problems. Residents report having access to their homes hindered by holiday makers obstructing their driveways to avoid airport car parking charges, taxis outside houses or in gateways waiting for a flight to land, increased litter, and sleep disturbances in the night as people return to their parked vehicles in residential areas. Investment in Mass Transit Systems seems unaffordable and unrealistic in the foreseeable future. Thank you to the Appeal Inspectors for agreeing to visit our narrow country lanes.

2. Aircraft Noise. Quieter engines might be helping a little over time, but aircraft noise is already very intrusive in our Parish, particularly in Downside. Our members complain about aircraft noise when out enjoying local open spaces including areas some distance away, such as Cadbury Hill and Clevedon. Low flying helicopters and transport planes are also a noise nuisance. More and/or larger aircraft will generate more noise overall, even with quieter engines.

3. Night Flights. Night flying is a disturbance to residents particularly during the summer and should not be allowed at this airport.

4. Air Pollution. We are all increasingly aware of air pollution and global warming and

it is widely acknowledged that air travel is a major contributor to climate change. Residents report a strong smell of kerosene in the air.

5. Green Belt Encroachment. Bristol Airport's excessive use of the permitted development applications is of concern, with a number of new developments encroaching into Green Belt, that have a serious impact on local the wildlife which requires protection.

In Conclusion. BRA acknowledges the airport's benefits to the local economy and convenience to local users, but these advantages are not sufficient to justify further expansion. Indeed Bristol Airport overstates the economic benefits to the Region as the traffic is comprised principally of outbound tourism. Also that they are trying to attract business away from Cardiff and Exeter airports which would generate longer surface journeys from those areas. The airport should not be allowed to cause any additional intrusion into the Green Belt. To increase beyond the current 10mppa is 'unsustainable' and certainly outweighs the advantages. The airport is seriously constrained by its location, local topography, and poor transport infrastructure. Bristol Airport claims to be close to achieving carbon neutral status. **However aircraft carbon emissions and associated passenger journeys are omitted from their calculations. Air travel cannot be allowed to continue un- checked. The time has come to call a halt to further expansion. BRA calls upon the inspectors to uphold NSC's decision to REFUSE planning permission.**

Thank you

23rd July 2021