Dear Member

Please forgive a communication from BRA so soon after the last, but much is happening on the planning front at the moment.

**Farleigh Fields Appeal at Weston Town Hall**

**First Day** Today was an important day, as the 5-year housing supply in North Somerset was discussed. North Somerset Council (NSC) argued that there are sufficient sites with planning permission to satisfy its needs. The Appellant (Persimmon) argued that this is not the case meaning NSC needs the Farleigh Fields land to meet its housing targets. They suggested that NSC has a “catalogue of development failure”. A number of possible housing sites across North Somerset were discussed in some technical detail, so it one of the less interesting days for Backwell residents. One has no idea what view the Inspector is taking, and her judgement is not given until her report some time after the appeal has closed.

**Future Timetable** This is given in the attachment to this email, where we have annotated the official “legal “timetable with items in red to explain what will be covered. For example, tomorrow, Wednesday, NSC will present its case on the impact of the development on the character of Backwell. These issues will be of local interest. The timetable also gives the sessions where our residents will be making their statements,

**Resident statements**

The following people will be speaking.

Friday 18th March   Session -from End of Lunch to 3.15pm

Barbara Harland

Lorraine Hopkinson

Jane Kearny (statement to be  given by Lorraine Hopkinson)

Mike Mogford

Chris Perry

Mike Rose

Tuesday 22nd March Session – from Mid afternoon to close

Kathryn Crawford

Peter Hoare

Jayne Kirkbride

Karim Malik

Mark Mallet

**General Public Attendance**

Today, the public gallery was very quiet, which was understandable given the technical content.

**We are aware that the Inspector will note the level of interest from the general public, and even though the Inquiry is not being held in Backwell, we should be impressing her by taking the trouble to attend. In particular residents giving statements have worked on these to give passionate reasons for refusing permission and they deserve our support. If at all possible please visit the Inquiry in person**.

Please note the following:

* Make sure you sign in, so your presence is recorded.
* The public seats are behind the participants, and you can arrive and depart whenever you need to. You do not have to attend the whole day, or even a whole session.
* A simple way to go to the Town Hall is via the X1 bus, which runs regularly from Backwell. Please note the normal bus stop to Weston at Backwell lights is not used at present – there is one by the Leisure Centre and a temporary one opposite Rodney Road.
* Parking is available at the multi-storey near the Town Hall. It is “pay and display” at £5 for 4 hours, and £12 all day.

The link to the Inspectorate website is given below. It has all the papers, and the links to the YouTube streams.

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planning-applications/land-farleigh-farm-backwell-planning-inquiry>

**STOP PRESS**:

**Bristol Airport Expansion to 12 million passengers per annum (mppa)**

Last month we heard that Planning Inspectors upheld Bristol Airport’s appeal against NSC’s decision to refuse permission to expand. Consequently, Bristol Airport can increase to 12 mppa. It will also achieve fully coordinated status resulting in more night flights, substantially more aircraft movements with little in the way of conditions or mitigation. Today we heard that NSC do not intend to contest this. However, another interested party **Bristol Airport Action Network (BAAN)** who took an active role in the appeal against airport expansion will aim to challenge this decision in the High Courts. For more details and how you can get involved [BAAN – Bristol Airport Is Big Enough (wordpress.com)](https://bristolairportactionnetwork.wordpress.com/)