

# **Expansion of Bristol Airport to 12mppa – Planning Appeal**

PINS Ref. APP/DO121/W/20/3259234

Planning Application Ref.: 18/P/5118/OUT

LANDSCAPE (Mendip Hills AONB and setting)

PROOF of EVIDENCE

for XR Elders

## **SUMMARY**

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**XR/W5/3**

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## SUMMARY

- 1.1 My evidence specifically focuses on landscape impacts and visual impacts on the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and its rural setting, arising from proposals associated with Outline Application No. 18/P/5118/OUT. Others - most notably North Somerset District Council, the Parish Council's Airport Association, and BANES - are focusing on other reasons for refusal.
- 1.2 The AONB boundary, at its' closest, is at Butcombe just under 3km to the south of the airport. The landscape impacts and effects and visual impacts and effects that are likely to harm the AONB and its setting, will arise from<sup>1</sup> –
- *'an increase of 10,420 flights per year'* – aircraft noise, visual impact
  - *'an additional 2 million passengers per year growth'* – harm caused by associated road traffic, such as noise, movement, light pollution, air pollution, erosion of the fabric of the landscape (road verges, stone walls), effects on the Conservation Areas

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<sup>1</sup> ES Non-Technical Summary para. 2.3

and communities along rural roads and lanes, (as traffic cuts through the Chew Valley and the Mendip Hills, for example, from the A 37 and A 39 to reach the A38 via the A 368, B 3134, B 3114, and the B 3130).

- additional built development with associated lighting – light pollution.

I focus most especially on: the Mendip Plateau and the northern parts of the AONB, that are located to the south of the airport, and; the adjacent rural landscapes to the north of the AONB that comprise its setting.

- 1.3 The Baseline - With reference to Landscape Character Assessments, the characteristics / elements and, in the case of the AONB, the special qualities, that will be most affected by the proposals in the characteristically rural environment are ascertained predominantly as: tranquillity; dark skies; views / long views; rural lanes and rural roads; remoteness; naturalness. From the character descriptions it is clear that Bristol Airport, is already adversely affecting character and the visual resource within the AONB and its rural setting.

- 1.4 The Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan is a material consideration and I conclude that the proposals adversely affect the Mendip Hills AONB Landscape Quality Objectives that relate to the AONB and its setting: L3; H1; R1; R2; D1, and; D2.
- 1.5 I discuss relevant Government Legislation and related Government guidance, then go on to outline the Planning Policy Context. The proposals fail to satisfy National and Local Policies. Concerning the National Planning Policy Framework, the proposals fail to deliver against policies 170, 172. And 180. Concerning the North Somerset Council Core Strategy, the proposals conflict with CS 1, CS 3, CS 5, CS 6, CS 10, CS 23, and CS 26. With reference to North Somerset Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 – Development Management Policies, the proposals conflict with policies DM 10, DM 11, DM 12, DM 24, and DM 50.
- 1.6 The sections of the Environmental Statement (ES) that I have focused on, inform my findings that those parts of the ES are poor. They fail to be objective and serve to underestimate the significance of adverse effects associated with the proposed development on various interests of acknowledged importance, notably concerning the Mendip Hills AONB and its setting.

1.7 In my Summing Up I conclude that impacts and effects arising from the outline proposals, will have a significant adverse impact upon the essential character and setting of the AONB and fail to ensure the AONB and its setting are conserved and enhanced, thus natural beauty will be harmed. The outline proposals will have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated. The proposals thus fail to satisfy national and local policies.

1.8 I then respectfully request that the Outline Application is rejected and the Appeal dismissed.

END 14/6/21