

# BACKWELL RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Hon Secretary Mike Veal, [REDACTED]

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18 January 2019

Planning Department  
North Somerset Council  
Town Hall  
Walliscote Grove Road  
Weston super Mare  
BS23 1UJ

Dear Sirs

## **Bristol Airport Planning Application 18/P/5118/OUT**

I am writing on behalf of Backwell Residents Association (BRA), which is a membership organisation representing over 400 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.

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. Even if aircraft continue to get quieter, it seems inevitable that up to 50% more passengers inevitably means that 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.

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 NSC gives to residents in the Jan/Feb issue of North Somerset Life: “take trains and buses instead of planes”. Noting all the above, is it responsible to contemplate further airport expansion?

5. **Green Belt Encroachment.** 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. 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. 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 outweigh 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 unchecked. The time has come to call a halt to further expansion. BRA therefore feels that it cannot support this application.

Yours faithfully

M J Veal  
Hon. Secretary, Backwell Residents Association

