

Development Management
Development and Environment
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Dear Sir/ Madam

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)

Proposal: Consultation from North Somerset for application 18/P/5118/OUT to increase the operational capacity of the airport to 12 million passengers per annum.

Location: Bristol Airport

Applicant: Bristol Airport Limited

Thank you for your letter of 24 April 2019 providing a further opportunity to comment on the above application.

Somerset County Council has been working closely with North Somerset Council and Bristol Airport to undertake the Bristol South West Economic Link (BSWEL) Study which is developing a long-term transport strategy to enable the future economic growth of the area and the expansion of Bristol Airport.

The Council strongly supports the principle of a phased approach to the growth of Bristol Airport which we consider will be of considerable benefit to the economy of the South West and the UK; subject to appropriate consideration and mitigation of any significant local impacts arising from the development.

The Council has submitted responses to consultations on the airport masterplan setting out the issues that we would wish to be considered and addressed through the planning process. We did not respond to the December 2018 consultation on this application on the basis that we considered the impact of the development on Somerset's local highway network was being appropriately addressed by the application.

The Council has subsequently noted the observations submitted by Highways England on the potential impacts of the development on the Strategic Road Network at Junction 22 of the M5 and has discussed the implications of this with the applicant. We have reviewed the applicant's technical note TN023 'Phased assessment of Junction 22' March 2019 and Highways England's further planning response 4 April 2019.

Having reviewed these notes it is our understanding that any impacts at Junction 22 arising from the development will be considered and mitigated by way of a planning condition which requires Bristol Airport to either provide a suitable scheme to mitigate the impacts of development traffic using the junction, which will be triggered when the airport reaches 11m passengers per annum; or provide a financial contribution towards a longer-term strategic improvement to the junction. The Council agrees that such a condition would be an appropriate mechanism to manage any impacts at Junction 22 and confirms that we would wish to be consulted on any improvement scheme.

We also note that a draft Section106 agreement makes provision for a major schemes fund to support the development of major strategic transport schemes within the region, a fund for the ongoing development of public transport serving Bristol Airport, and a fund to support the implementation of local highway improvements covering capacity and safety issues and footway/cycleway improvements.

The Council considers that these funds would provide an appropriate mechanism to support delivery of suitable infrastructure and public transport to enable the growth of the airport; and would welcome a discussion about how we can engage in the Governance arrangements for these funds. We would wish to see a specific reference within the S106 to public transport destinations in Somerset, noting that the document already refers to destinations in Bristol, Bath, Weston-super-mare, Devon and Wales.

The Council wishes to ensure that a cross-boundary approach is adopted in developing infrastructure and public transport solutions; and that the local highway improvements fund can be used to mitigate any capacity and safety impacts related to the development arising within the administrative area of Somerset and as such the fund should not be confined to the North Somerset administrative area.

Somerset County Council

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We welcome continued dialogue and engagement on these matters and reiterate the Council's support for the managed and continued growth of the Airport.

Yours sincerely

Mike O'Dowd-Jones

Strategic Commissioning Manager – Highways and Transport