



FACT SHEET 5: Road Traffic and Airport Expansion

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The Fact Sheets are intended as a reference for issues raised by the threatened expansion of Bristol Airport. It will be updated regularly and additions or corrections are welcome.

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A summary of the Issues

1. Bristol Airport has no rail link and a limited public bus access. **So more than 87% passengers in 2017 travelled there by car.** Airport expansion to 12 million passengers a year will generate **an average of 9,500 additional vehicle movements per day and at peak periods around 13,000 more vehicles per day – that's 28,000 total private vehicle journeys per day or 10.2 million car journeys a year** through Central and Bristol, South Bristol and North Somerset.

The consequences of this traffic on the totally inadequate road system will be frequent gridlock on main roads and in the surrounding lanes.

2. **In 2010 Airport passenger numbers were capped at ten million passengers a year in 2010** because North Somerset Council believed the road network, particularly the A38, the A370 and surrounding rural roads and lanes could not cope with more traffic.

3. The Airport's planning application predicts **an increase 16% in the annual level of Airport-related private passenger vehicle emissions by 2026**, which may well be an underestimate. This at a time when North Somerset Council, Bristol and other West of England Local Authorities have committed to **reduce carbon emissions from all sources to meet net zero targets by 2030** following the adoption of the Climate Emergency policies.

4 The predicted 16% increase in vehicle emissions assumes that cars are going to become less polluting. Cars today are more efficient than those bought in 1990, but transport greenhouse emissions have fallen just 2% since 1990. (4a) The parliamentary Science & Technology Committee now recommends that the ban on petrol and diesel car sales should be brought forward to 2035 (4b)

5 The Airport's business model aims to maximize income from this highly profitable parking operation. **The planning application includes a proposal to expand its parking facilities further into the Green Belt to accommodate a further 2700**



cars. It is therefore not in the Airport's interests to promote public transport.

6 Bristol Airport has stated that **'we will seek, through the local plan process, to have all Airport operational and related land released from the Green Belt designation'**. In other words, expansion demands that the North Somerset natural environment and landscape should be trashed to increase income and profit for the Airport and its owners, the Ontario Teachers Pension Plan.

7 At 12 million passengers a year, **Airport traffic would account for 40% of traffic on the A38 'which would suffer high levels of congestion'**. All other key links would experience congestion due to high levels of background traffic, including the A370 and M5.

8 Apart from communities depending on the A38 almost every town and village in North Somerset is impacted in some way by airport traffic. Many passengers exit the M5 at Portbury and cut across country to Wraxall Hill into Nailsea to Backwell. Increased traffic also creates dangers where rural roads join the main road causing increased hazard for residents in the towns and villages close to the airport, especially when turning right onto the A38.

9 As well as greenhouse emissions, road traffic is one of the main sources of particulate matter: tiny 'black' particles suspended in the air that come from brakes, tyres and road surfaces. Some 29,000 deaths per year in the UK are brought forward by exposure to man-made particulate air pollution.

REFERENCES

- 1 *'Planning Application 18/P/5118/OUT: Parish Councils Airport Association (PCAA) Submission to North Somerset District Council (2019)', 'Transport Assessment – Cumulative' (para. 12) & 'High Priority Issues for Local Communities' (para. 6).*
- 2 *'Planning Application 18/P/5118/OUT: PCAA Submission to North Somerset District Council (2019)', 'National Planning Policy Framework', (para.26).*
- 3 *'Planning Application 18/P/5118/OUT: PCAA Submission to North Somerset District Council (2019)', 'Road Access,' (para. 10).*
- 4a *'Road to Zero Cleaner Road Transport: Department for Transport (2018)', 'Executive Summary.'*
- 4b https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/aug/22/uk-must-reduce-personal-vehicle-ownership-meet-zero-carbon-target-mps-report?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other
- 5 *'Planning Application 18/P/5118/OUT: PCAA Submission to North Somerset District Council (2019)', 'Transport Assessment,' (para. 12).*
- 6 *Master Plan Consultation – Stage II Development Proposals and Options (May 2018.) 'Bristol Airport.' 'Green belt and green infrastructure.'*
- 7 *'Bristol Airport Master Plan 2006 – 2030', 'Surface Access.'*
- 8 *'Planning Application 18/P/5118/OUT: PCAA Submission to North Somerset District Council (2019)', 'Road Access,' (para. 15).*



- 9 *'Statement on quantifying mortality associated with long-term average concentrations of fine particulate matter', 'Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants, (2018).'*

END

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