

## **CHEW MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 26/P/0686/OU2**

**26/P/0686/OU2: BRISTOL AIRPORT, NORTH SIDE ROAD, FELTON, WRINGTON. BRISTOL AIRPORT LIMITED HYBRID PLANNING APPLICATION (FULL AND OUTLINE ELEMENTS) WITH ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT FOR THE EXPANSION OF BRISTOL AIRPORT TO ENABLE A THROUGHPUT OF 15 MILLION PASSENGERS PER ANNUM, OPERATING WITHIN A ROLLING 12 MONTH CAP OF 99,931 AIR TRANSPORT MOVEMENTS AND 4,974 NIGHT FLIGHTS BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 23:30 AND 06:00.**

**The above application is seeking approval for a substantial increase in all key operational areas of Bristol Airport, including passenger numbers, flight movements and night-time activity.**

Chew Magna Parish is within Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) and is around 4 miles from Bristol Airport. Chew Magna is just south of the main approach path to Bristol Airport from the east, passing over Dundry and North Wick which is within the Parish.

Chew Magna Parish Council (CMPC) objects to airport expansion from 12mppa to 15 mppa as this would lead to:

- Traffic: Even greater congestion of traffic on the narrow lanes including the B3130 which is the major “rat run” from the A37 to the A38.
- Noise: A substantial increase in aircraft noise both during the day and at night time resulting in further sleep deprivation with the proposed increase in the number of night time flights.
- Encroachment on to Greenbelt for parking could increase flooding risk in villages which are already subject to flooding. There is no multistorey carpark as part of this application.
- Lighting: Chew Magna is a dark skies village and the proposed lighting scheme on Felton Common will be seen literally for miles.
- Biodiversity: The resilience of the population of the Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats is being put at risk.
- Health Impact Assessment needs to be done as there has not been one since the increase to 10mppa and there is a 50% increase in passengers proposed to 15 mppa.
- Climate Change: Further expansion of airports in the UK, including that of Bristol Airport, is putting the 7<sup>th</sup> carbon budget and net zero targets at risk.

### **Traffic congestion**

Bristol has the 9<sup>th</sup> largest airport in the country. All the other 8 UK airports are served by either a motorway, a dual carriageway and/or a rail link. Bristol Airport is served by a single carriageway road (A38) that connects with the M5 to the South after 18 miles, and to the North

via the A4 to the M5 (13 miles away). The table below illustrates the transport links to the top 10 airports in the UK.

**Top 10 UK Airports and their transport links.**

|    |                |                                            |
|----|----------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Heathrow       | M4, M25, rail link                         |
| 2  | Gatwick        | M23, rail link                             |
| 3  | Manchester     | M56, rail link, Metrolink                  |
| 4  | Stansted       | M11, A120 (dual carriageway), rail link    |
| 5  | Luton          | M1, rail link                              |
| 6  | Edinburgh      | M9, M90, A90 (dual carriageway), Tram link |
| 7  | Birmingham     | M42, A45 (dual carriageway), rail link     |
| 8  | Glasgow        | M8, A737 (dual carriageway)                |
| 9  | <u>Bristol</u> | <u>A38 (single carriageway)</u>            |
| 10 | Belfast        | M2                                         |

Currently, at 10.7 mppa, there is no mass transit, rail, dual carriageway or motorway junction close by. The location of the Airport, on an elevated limestone plateau which runs between the A38 and A370, naturally constrains growth. Any further road improvements surrounding the A38 will have severe environmental implications. This point has been highlighted with each planning consent: the 10mppa and the 12mppa application and should be recognised.

In this application, there is some tweaking to the A38 but no dual carriageway is possible. With the increased housing in the villages south of the airport, the proposed 889 houses east of Backwell in the North Somerset Local Plan 2041 Pre-submission Plan, plus the EPIC development on the Greenbelt and the road works on the A38 to improve it, it will be difficult for the airport to expand further than 12mppa as we are already struggling at 10.7mppa.

In every application to expand the airport there is no consideration as to how people get to the A38. No consideration is given to the connections to the East or West of the airport. To the East the connection from the A37 tends to be minor B roads and sat navs direct cars on to the B3130 which pass through Chew Magna. These country roads (particularly along the B3130) narrow down to a single lane in a number of places including the Belluton Narrows, the bridge before entering Chew Magna, the entrance, middle and exit to Chew Magna and two in Winford. Currently, the airport has 10.7mppa and the increased congestion already caused by the volume of traffic in Chew Magna is evident by complete grid lock for many minutes which is common place. Even if further expansion to 15mppa was not allowed then there will still be an 11% increase in traffic to 12mppa and a further 25% to 15mppa. Common sense would dictate that no expansion approval should even be considered until substantial improvement to the road infrastructure is in place, rather than vague promises of future development (which have been regularly discussed for the past 20+ years).

There is no direct public transport from Chew Magna to Bristol Airport. The only viable way to travel to the Airport from Chew Magna is by car or taxi.

Drivers traveling to and from Bristol airport tend to drive faster than locals who know the road conditions.. Accidents have often occurred on the B3130 in the past which have led to B&NES imposing lower speed limits. Despite this, cars often overtake dangerously on this stretch of road and there have been fatalities.

CMPC object to the planning application as it will increase airport-related traffic onto the rural B3130 which is to the detriment of the people who live or work in Chew Magna Parish.

### **Increase in Airport Related Noise**

The planning application from 12mppa to 15mppa will see the following:

- Increase in the annual cap on air transport movements from 85,990 to 99,931, facilitating an additional 13,941 movement per year
- Increase in permitted night flights (23:30–06:00) from 4,000 to 4,974 movements within a rolling 12-month period which is an increase of 24%
- Retention of existing shoulder period controls and quota count system, but applied to a higher overall level of activity
- Associated intensification of airport operations, including increased aircraft movements, passenger numbers, surface access trips and on-site activity

Bristol Airport carried out noise surveys in November 24 (the least busy month) with 4,732 flights whilst in the summer period there were 7,500 flights per month. It is well known that the Airport flies in more modern aircraft which are less noisy for this exercise. It is not representative of the peak season. There was additional monitoring in January to March 26 but this excluded the busiest period.

At 12 mppa the cap on air traffic movements (atms) is 85,990 per annum and the proportion of older generation atms will be 19%. At 15 mppa the cap on atms is 99,931 per annum and the proportion of older/noisier generation rises to 22%. This represents an increase in atms by noisier aircraft of 6000. Therefore, noise gets worse.

The use of modern, quieter fuel-efficient aircraft at Bristol Airport has only reached 35.3% of all movements. <https://www.bristolairport.co.uk/media/ojbpf21b/annual-monitoring-report-2025-published-version.pdf>

Other airports such as Gatwick insist that operators use modern, quieter fuel-efficient aircraft. CMPC suggests that this should be the criteria for all new carriers or new routes at Bristol Airport.

CMPC object to the application as further expansion would lead to an unacceptable growth in daytime and nighttime aircraft noise and sleep deprivation affecting our parish residents.

**Unnecessary Encroachment on to the Greenbelt** which could increase flooding risk in villages which are already subject to flooding.

The planning application from 12mppa to 15mppa will see the following:

- Expansion of the Silver Zone car park, including approximately 1,960 additional spaces (block parking)
- Construction of a new staff car park providing approximately 1,720 spaces
- Provision for additional decked parking structures within the Silver Zone and car rental areas (outline)
- Extension of car rental parking areas and associated facilities

CMPC objects strongly to the unnecessary expansion of the Silver Zone car park into the Greenbelt when the whole rather than part of the Silver Zone could have a decked (or a multi decked) car park to save the loss of more Green Belt Land. This could reduce the risk of flooding in villages already subject to flooding.

The Silver Zone will become grey belt as in North Somerset Local Plan 2041 Green Belt Review Paper. April 2026

<https://n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-04/Green%20Belt%20background%20paper%20update%20-%20April%202026.pdf>

There is no plan for a multistorey car park which has been part of the applications in the expansion to 10mppa and 12mppa.

The Airport makes a “big noise” about the fact that a considerable proportion of their staff travel on the bus services for free to work at the Airport. It is difficult to reconcile this with a new car park for staff with a requirement of 1720 spaces which will be built on greenbelt fields next to the A38. CMPC objects to the size and location of the carpark on greenbelt which could be greatly reduced if there was vertical rather than horizontal expansion

NSC Policy CS6 – North Somerset’s Green Belt, seeks to maintain the openness and permanence of the Bristol and Bath Green Belt and resist inappropriate development unless exceptional circumstances exist. In the context of Bristol Airport, the policy is important because it recognises the sensitivity of further expansion within the Green Belt and confirms that additional amendments to Green Belt boundaries should only occur following proper evidence of need and exceptional circumstances.

NSC Policy CS23 – Bristol Airport relates specifically to development at Bristol Airport and supports airport development where environmental impacts are satisfactorily addressed, particularly in relation to surrounding communities and surface access.

## **Lighting**

**Chew Magna Parish Council considers that the proposal to acquire Common Land ( i.e. part of Felton Common which is a designated site of historical interest ) for the erection of landing lights, to be totally unacceptable.**

Chew Magna is a dark skies village and the proposed lighting scheme on Felton Common will be seen literally for miles. CMPC therefore oppose and object to the proposed runway extension and the lighting which although it will occupy a small proportion of space it will affect a considerable proportion of Felton Common.

NSC Policy DM11 – Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty seeks to protect the landscape character, scenic beauty and setting of the Mendip Hills AONB (now National Landscape). Development proposals should avoid adverse impacts on the special qualities of the designation. This is highly relevant given the visual relationship between Bristol Airport and viewpoints within the Mendips, particularly in relation to lighting, large-scale built form and parking infrastructure.

NSC Policy DM12 – Development in the Green Belt sets out the Council's detailed development management approach to Green Belt proposals and resists inappropriate development unless very special circumstances exist. The policy gives substantial weight to the protection of openness and prevention of encroachment into the countryside.

Felton Common and Cooks Farm remain in Green Belt as in North Somerset Local Plan 2041 Green Belt Review Paper. April 2026

<https://n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-04/Green%20Belt%20background%20paper%20update%20-%20April%202026.pdf>

**Biodiversity:** The resilience of the population of the Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats is being put at risk. There is a loss of grazed land for the bats to forage. Bat habitats are being squeezed with the development of the Airport and the need for housing in North Somerset. Due to the substantial loss of land (39.02 ha) currently supporting the population of the Lesser and Greater Horseshoe Bats. It is imperative that offsite land is made available before any

construction work commences and fulfills the foraging requirement and to ensure that it is in the required distance of SAC and roosts. (ref May 2026 NS and Mendip Hills Bats SPD)

**Health Impact Assessment** needs to be done as there has not been one since the increase to 10mppa and there is a 50% increase in passengers proposed to 15 mppa.

This means residents will suffer from a 50% increase in all impacts (road, ground noise, air noise, loss of greenbelt, reduction in air quality etc) due to growth from 10 to 15 mppa and a proposed increase in night flights to 4,974, approximately a 25% increase. The health impacts have not been, and should be, properly and independently assessed.

The latest Government study published 7 May 26 titled “ The impacts of airports on local residents” recognises that aviation noise is a stressor affecting health and a public health nuisance. The report highlighted that children attending noisy schools have poorer learning. It found that the increase in aircraft noise causes a decrease in reading ability. No comparison of reading ability within the local schools surrounding the Airport has been carried out

**Climate Change** Further expansion of airports in the UK, including that of Bristol Airport, is putting the 7<sup>th</sup> carbon budget and net zero targets at risk.