



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**EMBARGO 1.00 hrs 10 January**

### **Thousands object to airport expansion plan**

More than 3000 people have voiced their objections to Bristol International Airport's (BIA) expansion plans in the public consultation run by North Somerset Council in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Final figures for the consultation show 3067 objections against only 110 letters of support. There were a further 73 comments.

Georgie Bigg from the Stop Bristol Airport Expansion campaign (SBAE) said: "These results have confirmed what we already knew – that there is massive local opposition to the airport's expansion plans. It also shows that despite BIA's claims, few members of the public are going out of their way to support this development.

"Local people are deeply concerned about the impact airport expansion will have on the local environment. They don't want more noise from planes, they don't want more traffic congestion and they don't want new roads chewing up Wrington Vale to service an airport they don't believe should grow.

"This opposition isn't just coming from people living close to the airport - preservation of green belt land and climate change are also big issues for people right across Bristol, Bath and the Chew Valley. There are many who feel there are inconsistencies in the airport's Master Plan, which make it an unreliable document on which to base this development.

"With forecasts suggesting that aviation could account for up to a quarter of the UK's contribution to global warming by 2030, and the predicted growth in airlines' carbon emissions now a serious threat to government plans to cut emissions by 60% by 2050, many in the area are opposed to BIA's expansion because of their concerns over climate change.

"Local MP's Dr Liam Fox and John Penrose have also been vociferous in their concern, saying that there are no studies available to show how expansion of a regional airport might benefit a regional economy and that they do not believe that BIA has made a good enough case for expansion.

"BIA's Master Plan will now be put in front of several area meetings before going to a full meeting of North Somerset Council (NSC) on 16 January (6pm) and the Planning and Regulatory Committee on 18 January (2.30pm). A decision will be made at one of these meetings as to whether the document can be considered as evidence to back up subsequent planning applications. Members of the public will be able to attend both meetings.

“SBAE are strongly urging North Somerset councillors to listen to their electorate – who have clearly expressed their opposition to the airport’s expansion – and to uphold the recommendation made by their own planning and economic development policy and scrutiny panel before Christmas – that BIA's expansion should not go ahead until full and independent studies into the environmental and economic impacts of the expansion have been undertaken, and only then if those studies show that economic benefits outweigh the considerable environmental costs.

“We are also asking NSC to consider last Friday’s hard-hitting stand taken by Environment Minister Ian Pearson, when he attacked major airlines for refusing to take climate change seriously – signalling a much tougher approach from the government on climate change and aviation.”

**ENDS**

For media enquiries contact: Susan Pearson on 07891 460942.

For further information on the Stop Bristol Airport Expansion campaign, visit:  
[www.stopbia.com](http://www.stopbia.com)