

Dundry Parish Council OBJECTS to Bristol Airport Planning Application 26/P/0686/OUT for the following reasons:

Dundry Parish Council has seen a long history of passenger increases at Bristol Airport. Each time a planning application was submitted, possible impacts were highlighted, but each time the resulting measures were either insufficient or made use of the easiest option available, such as creating further incursions into the Green Belt. Strong and substantiated objections from local communities were not taken into account in the past.

1. Traffic infrastructure

The main problem with BA operations is the traffic to and from the airport. Being the eighth busiest airport in the UK and having only a single lane road for access is wholly inadequate. We do not share BA's assessment that the A38 will be able to cope with a passenger increase to 15mppa. This is an increase of a further 25% in traffic and does not take into account the cumulative effect of the EPIC development near Long Ashton and the proposed housing site at Woodspring. During severe congestion, drivers will of course look for alternative routes through even less suitable country lanes in Dundry, Winford, Felton and Brockley Combe. Most other airports are served by a railway/rapid transit, motorway or at least a dual carriage way. As none of these exist near BA, this should be considered an ultimate limiting factor. No further expansion should be allowed until a railway, or rapid transit connection is operating.

2. Off-site parking problems

The same conclusion applies to parking. If there is not enough parking available at the airport or it is perceived to be too expensive, people will resort to off-site parking in fields and residential streets in local communities. On the other hand, the answer to increased parking demand cannot be just further land grab into the green belt. It would rather have to be achieved by intensifying the use of existing sites through decking or multi-storey car parks. Parking fees should be capped to make this the most attractive option for travellers.

3. Lack of traffic alternatives

We note that the public modal transport share is set to increase from currently 19 percent to 26 percent in 2038. However, this implies that three quarters of passengers will then still use their cars, which is not a very ambitious target.

Ultimately, the aim should be to move away from car movements and towards a mass transport system that provides a regular and reliable flow of transport such as a light rail system. While this has been discussed several times in the past, there are no solid plans yet. Suitable space or a corridor should be reserved in the proposed housing development at Woodspring, which currently is not the case.

4. Night time noise disturbance

Apart from the traffic problems outlined above, the proposed BA expansion exacerbates various environmental problems, in particular noise disturbance. The current allowance of 4000 night flights per annum is to increase to 4975, with the majority of them being in the summer holiday season. As bad as this is for local residents, it does not take into account special dispensations that have increased twentyfold from 43 in 2019 to 863 in 2025. This is no surprise as many flights are scheduled in the shoulder period from 2300 to 2330 hrs and can easily run late. But they add to nighttime disturbance for humans and wildlife alike. Even more modern, quieter aircraft will not

make much difference as they still cause disturbance events as they fly over. It should also be noted that larger aircraft approaching BA at a lower altitude will have an even more detrimental effect. DPC is very surprised that BA claims this change is “technically” not part of their planning application. Its effects are not negligible and should of course be considered by planning officers.

5. Light pollution, effect on Felton Common

In order to operate such larger aircraft, BA plans to install approach lighting on Felton Common, thus fracturing this common land and creating further light pollution. Dundry Parish Council strongly objects to this installation.

6. Air pollution from expanding air travel

In light of the air pollution caused by air travel, it should be asked whether such a passenger expansion, mainly fuelled by holiday flights, is really desirable or whether air travel should actually be curbed and restricted to essential journeys. To us, it seems to be a prime example of economic interests (i.e. the drive towards “growth”) taking precedence over environmental concerns.

Conclusion

In summary, Dundry Parish Council strongly objects to the proposed increase from 12mppa to 15 mppa.

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Chair
Dundry Parish Council