



## PRESS RELEASE

**EMBARGO: 00.10 hrs 17 October 2008**

### **Airport accused of contempt for locals**

Campaigners have today accused Bristol airport of showing complete contempt for local concerns about its expansion plans as BIA attempts to plough ahead with a controversial 'walkway' in defiance of the planning authority's demand it seeks proper planning permission.

The Stop Bristol Airport Expansion campaign (SBAE) has said that BIA's action in ignoring North Somerset Council's May vote calling for a full planning application for the walkway demonstrates a complete disregard for local people, for the local council and for local democracy.[1]

SBAE's criticism has been prompted by BIA's determination to avoid public scrutiny of its walkway by using an obscure process to by-pass the usual planning procedures which would give the airport legal immunity from future enforcement action once building has begun, and to avoid all forms of planning control or financial contributions being set.[2]

The campaigners believe that the airport fears planning controls will limit their annual passenger throughput in turn limiting its growth – a condition that SBAE is campaigning for.

SBAE spokesperson Jeremy Birch said: "It seems that BIA will not take 'no' for an answer. Despite being told by North Somerset Council that they must apply for planning permission for the walkway, the airport are now using another arcane trick to get what they want without ever taking the risk of having constraints placed on them.

"The airport is determined to ride roughshod over the concerns of local people. Its previous consultations and gestures of working with local communities are mere window-dressing. 'No' should mean 'no'."

The airport has previously claimed plans to build a two-storey walkway more than four times the length of the existing terminal should be considered as 'permitted development', but campaigners and local residents argued the walkway would increase airport capacity.

Councillors at a meeting in May of North Somerset's Southern Area Planning Committee agreed, stating unequivocally that the walkway clearly created the potential for more passengers and flights.

SBAE spokesperson and Chair of the Parish Councils Airport Association, Hilary Burn said: "If BIA had any real respect for local people, local businesses and the local environment, they would be prepared to accept conditions to mitigate their impact on neighbouring communities."

Full planning permission ensures that conditions can be set to limit passenger numbers, night flights, traffic congestion, noise and loss of green belt land that are eroding the quality of life for local residents.

## **ENDS**

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For further information on SBAE visit: [www.stopbia.com](http://www.stopbia.com)

### **Notes for editors**

1. BIA has applied for a formal Certificate of Lawful Proposed Use or Development (CLOPUD). This is a formal certificate that can be issued by the local planning authority confirming that a particular proposed use or development does not require planning permission. The effect of issuing the certificate is to grant immunity from enforcement of action in the future.

Full planning applications gives councils the opportunity to thoroughly investigate what local impact a development will have and to set conditions before granting the go-ahead to build. Where a development will have a major impact, such as increasing road traffic, it is usual for a council to negotiate financial input for any required mitigation, such as road widening and building.

2. Link to documents on North Somerset Council's Website: <http://wam.n-somerset.gov.uk/MULTIWAM/findCaseFile.do;jsessionid=B96959ABBCA982DC71434FEDE449E37C?appNumber=08%2FP%2F2149%2FLDP&appType=planning&action=Search>