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## **Airport decision still in balance**

Campaigners fighting against Bristol Airport's (BIA) ambitious expansion plans have welcomed North Somerset Council's (NSC) move last night to delay making a decision on the proposals, saying that the final outcome remains uncertain and there is still everything to play for.

Stop Bristol Airport Expansion (SBAE) said that NSC have done the responsible thing in referring the BIA's planning application to a more senior planning committee as district councillors made it very clear that the application still has many serious unresolved issues.

The group highlighted that BIA's application contravenes many of NSC's own local planning policies and that there is a vacuum in NSC's planning policies to support BIA's plans

They also emphasised their concern over one Councillor's summing up at the end of the discussion which suggested that turning down the application could lose money offered by BIA for traffic improvements.

SBAE spokeswoman Hilary Burn said:

"We're very pleased with the outcome of last night's meeting. The decision has not yet been made and we still have everything to play for. There are still major issues to be resolved such as a lack of coherent Council policy guidance.

"We are also particularly concerned that certain district councillors appear to be more interested in gaining funds than properly weighing up the impacts of the airport's expansion. Councillors should be focusing on the impacts and not on any financial incentives from the airport."

The campaigners also said that BIA has not yet proved the "very special circumstances" that would allow it to park cars on green belt land and that the alternatives have not been properly examined.

Hilary Burn said: "Instead of planning a hotel, which would be in direct competition with other local businesses, BIA could easily preserve green belt land by using the space for car parks, which should also be double decked as was originally promised."

**ENDS**

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