*EMBARGOED 0001 TUESDAY 6 AUGUST*

**INDEPENDENT REPORT CHALLENGES CLAIMS ABOUT BRISTOL AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT**

**05 August 2019**

A new study carried out for CPRE by the independent New Economics Foundation casts major doubt on the potential economic benefits claimed for the proposed expansion of Bristol Airport. The NEF study concludes that:

* The proposed development of the airport is incompatible with inevitable and essential future constraints on air travel because of climate change.
* Claimed benefits for the West of England region have been overstated by almost 50%.
* Claimed benefits for the wider South-West region and Wales have been overstated by as much as 70 %.
* Much of the methodology used by the Airport’s advisers appears to be inconsistent with the methods recommended and used nationally.
* Using Dept for Transport standard models, traffic at Bristol Airport in 2030 is likely to be only 8.5 million passengers a year, not the 12 million suggested by Bristol Airport Ltd.
* Most of the additional traffic will come from “displaced” activity from other airports that already have spare capacity.

Commenting on the report, David Worskett, Chair of CPRE Avonside, said:

“This independent study by NEF aviation specialists shows that one of the principle justifications for expanding Bristol Airport – the claimed economic benefits – is simply not sound. Nor can the proposals be squared with recent national and local commitments on climate change. To incur all the damage involved – to the Green Belt, to the tranquillity of the whole region, to the levels of congestion and pollution, when the benefits are simply not there would be highly irresponsible. Far from enhancing the region’s economy the net result would be to harm it. N Somerset Council must turn down the application. If they don’t, then central Government must. It is time to ensure that the full environmental impacts of aviation are properly reflected in any new proposals.”

Dr. Alex Chapman (Consultant at the New Economics Foundation]) said:

“Our analysis identified a number of concerning inconsistencies in the Airport’s business case. We believe these have led to a significant overestimate of the potential economic benefits of the scheme, and a significant underestimate of its potential carbon costs. Current and future generations of the South West region

deserve far better. Indeed, on the findings of our report, and the council’s own review, we would expect to see this application rejected.”

The full report can be found on the NEF website at:

[https://www.nefconsulting.com/cpre-expansion-of-bristol-airport](https://www.nefconsulting.com/cpre-expansion-of-bristol-airport/)

and on the CPRE Avonside website at:

[http://avonside.cprelocalgroups.org.uk](#_top)

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Notes for Editors

CPRE Avonside is the CPRE registered charity for the Bristol, Bath, N.E Somerset, N Somerset and S Gloucestershire areas. It campaigns for a thriving, sustainable countryside that serves the needs of rural residents and provides an invaluable asset for the residents of the region’s main cities.

The New Economics Foundation is a charitable think tank. It is wholly independent of political parties and committed to being transparent about how it is funded.