



Cllr Donald Davies  
Leader  
North Somerset Council  
Town Hall  
Walliscote Grove Road  
Weston-super-Mare  
BS23 1UJ

30 January 2020

Dear Cllr Davies

As organisations representing businesses in North Somerset - from SMEs to PLCs - we are writing to express our strong support for proposals to raise the capacity of Bristol Airport so it can continue to provide the international connectivity which is vital to so many of our members.

Flying connects us all with the world. At a time when being open for business has never been more important, supporting the sustainable growth of our regional gateway will send a strong signal that we continue to welcome trade, tourism and investment from overseas.

As well as being the front door for visitors to our region, Bristol Airport has a catalytic effect on our economy, with investment creating jobs and opportunities in the supply chain far beyond the airport boundary. The current proposals will support an additional 800 jobs on-site, more than 5,000 in the wider regional economy, and support £2.4 billion in GVA.

We share your objectives to tackle the climate emergency and create clean growth and jobs but note that Bristol Airport is leading the way in its sector with an ambitious approach to tackling its carbon emissions. Our region is also home to an aerospace cluster which is working hard to deliver a low carbon future for aviation. By enabling Bristol Airport to make the most efficient use of its site we can secure the benefits of air travel while limiting and mitigating the impacts.

However, constraining our region's airport risks cutting our businesses off from the world or forcing them to use airports in London, putting us at a competitive disadvantage by increasing travel time and costs, with the unintended consequence of increasing carbon emissions from road journeys to airports outside the region. Furthermore, by limiting growth opportunities for airlines, there is a very real risk that Bristol's route network will not only stagnate but decline over time.

For these reasons, we urge North Somerset Council to help secure the benefits which air travel brings to our region by approving Bristol Airport's planning application to serve up to 12 million passengers a year.

Ben Rhodes  
Deputy Director  
CBI South West

Lee Nathan  
South West Regional Chairman  
Federation of Small Businesses