



Airport Plans



Last year the airport held consultation meetings on its proposed Master Plan. These proposals include an increase to 20 million passengers per year, expansion of the site with more car parking together with a possible rail or metrobus link or widened A38.

Not everyone realised that the airport would apply for an increase to 12 million passengers (from its present 8 million), together with more car parking on fields to the south BEFORE its Master Plan application.

An extra 4 million passengers will clearly lead to more flights and more road traffic. But this application does NOT include improved road or rail access, so that road congestion is bound to increase. Local residents are also worried about increased carbon emissions and aircraft noise especially at night.

Carbon emissions are a national issue, and airport traffic, noise etc extend beyond North Somerset's boundaries. This application 18/P/5118/OUT is due to be decided by NSC in the next few months, unless it is called in for decision by the Secretary of State for Transport.

If NSC does decide this application, will the councillors remember their commitment for NSC to be carbon neutral by 2030?
(See overleaf)

The planning application for Bristol Airport's Master Plan may be made later this year.

Appeal for Lord Nelson?

Jon Tout now says that he intends to appeal to the Planning Inspectorate following delays and a likely refusal for the Lord Nelson application by NSC.

In fact the recent delay was due to the amended plans from Tout Ltd, which were submitted on 5th February.

These plans consist of a smaller building for the shop/café/office, with opening hours reduced to 7am to 11pm, 7 days a week, instead of overnight opening.

Jon Tout blames "political pressure" on the delay for a decision.

Smallway surgery

Plans for the proposed surgery opposite Cadbury Garden Centre were approved by NSC in January. But there is still uncertainty over the pedestrian crossing. Residents and many councillors are convinced that a crossing with traffic lights is needed for the safety of patients, many of them children, elderly or disabled.



But NSC highways officers say that guidelines do not allow for light-controlled crossings when there is a lot of traffic but not many pedestrians using the crossing for much of the day. They claim that drivers would ignore red lights on a crossing and put pedestrian lives in danger. So they recommend a crossing with a traffic island but without lights.

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Artwork or Advertisement?

A Banksy-type mural appeared on a house in Winford in January, with the words “Europe says Please don’t go.”

But the householder was astonished to receive a letter from NSC in February describing the mural as an advertisement and threatening fines if it was not removed. The words have now been painted over.

The mural had apparently annoyed a resident who reported it. But was it really an advertisement? It did not ask anyone to do anything or try to sell anything – it just reflected the householder’s feelings.

It is also surprising that NSC considered the mural important enough to send a letter so quickly. NSC usually puts roadside advertisements at the bottom of their priority list, leaving them for months or even years.

High priority is generally given to unauthorised building works and airport car parks, not roadside advertisements.

Why did NSC think this mural was so important?

In or Out in April?

Will we be in or out of Europe in April?

Theresa May has been gambling with Britain’s future by hoping that MPs will vote for her deal rather than crash out with a disastrous no deal.

But will MPs agree, or will they put off the date to leave?

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn sits on the fence . Labour and Conservatives are split into different factions.

But Liberal Democrats are united in campaigning for a People’s Vote on the terms of the deal.

Nobody voted for No Deal.

A Better Way to Budget

North Somerset Council agreed its 2019/20 budget in February with a 2.75% Council tax increase. Liberal Democrats were disappointed that their alternative proposals for additional investment in neglected services were not included. These were:

- More support for the homeless including prevention
- Public transport subsidies
- Cycling / pedestrian improvements
- Green action fund
- Park and ride feasibility study, for the airport and Weston
- Reductions in parking charges in the towns

These would be paid for by savings including:

- Reductions to consultancy fees
- Reductions to councillors allowances
- Green waste collection charge £25 per year

Cllr Mike Bell, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group said: "The Lib Dem Alternative Budget was a chance to invest in key neglected services while keeping the Council Tax rise below inflation. Our fully-costed plans would invest in vital services that the Conservatives have ignored: plans for fairer parking, tackling homelessness and backing our community groups trying to make North Somerset cleaner & greener."

NSC's Emergency Climate Motion

In February NSC councillors voted unanimously to recognise climate change as an emergency and ask the Government for the resources to make North Somerset carbon neutral by 2030.

Cllrs Tom Leimdorfer (Green) and Mike Bell (Lib Dem) put forward the Climate Emergency motion, and then agreed an amendment by Conservative Council Leader Nigel Ashton. The amendment asked officers for a report on what actions NSC could take to cut carbon emissions, and what the cost would be.

Several other Councils including Bristol have passed similar Climate Emergency motions.