

Campaign for Better Transport welcomes Newquay Cornwall Airport report - Plymouth next?

Press release from Cornwall, Plymouth and District Campaign for Better Transport (1)

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Cornwall, Plymouth and District Campaign for Better Transport today welcomed the publication of a report commissioned by Groundswell Cornwall (2) into the case for expansion at Newquay Airport.

Speaking for Cornwall, Plymouth and District Campaign for Better Transport Roger Creagh-Osborne, the group coordinator, said “This independent report (3) analyses the proposed expansion without the rose-tinted spectacles and unjustified optimism of the County Council, and finds the case for investment severely challenged. Looking at the whole picture, continuing to pour Cornwall Council Tax payers’ money into this white elephant is completely unjustified.

Roger continued “Groundswell are to be congratulated for an excellent and thoroughly researched piece of work from Elizabeth Baines at Kings College London. It is completely damning of the direction that the council is proposing to take and must serve as a wake-up call to the people of Cornwall that their council is out of control on transport policy”

Currently the airport has been operating at a deficit of around £1million every year – this is funded by the county. In addition they are seeking investment of £44million to expand the airport.

If the money that the council proposes to invest (and has already wasted) on this white elephant were to be spent on improving transport links within the county we could have a regular free bus service serving every village in the county – this would have a dramatic benefit on the local economy and local people. The report shows that the proposed investment at the airport is completely wrong-headed on environmental and local interest grounds; and even the supposed business case is very weak, being based on wildly over-optimistic forecasts.

The County was supposed to open public consultation on the plans on 1st September – as yet nothing has happened. Campaign for Better Transport joins Groundswell in calling for a full public debate before any more of our money is spent”

In conclusion Roger added "A similar independent and wide ranging analysis of the situation at Plymouth airport should also be undertaken. With excellent rail links to the rest of the country and an airport that can never provide anything other than near domestic flights, Plymouth needs to seriously consider whether there is not a better

potential use for this land within the city."

ENDS

Notes

(1) Campaign for Better Transport is the new name for Transport 2000

<http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/>

(2) <http://www.groundswellcornwall.org/newquayairport>

(3) <http://www.mediafire.com/?9dytjtz5n2v>