

**From:** Hengrove and Whitchurch Park Neighbourhood Planning Forum

**To:** Conservation Section

Bristol City Council

**Date:**

**Subject: Nomination of the Hengrove Runway as a structure of local historic interest for inclusion on the Local List for Buildings and Structures of historic interest.**

We are writing to request that the Council add the Hengrove Runway to the Local List. We have been working on a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Hengrove and Whitchurch Park Area, and consultation for this document has revealed strong local support for maintaining the runway as a point of historic interest for Bristol, and South Bristol in particular.

You will be aware that the runway was associated with the first Bristol Airport (known as Whitchurch Airport), and is the only significant remaining feature of it. The Council has stated that

‘In terms of the Historic Whitchurch Airfield, this is regarded as an asset of national significance in terms of its role during the Second World War as one of, and possibly the only, wholly civil airfields in the country.’

During the Second World War it remained operational for civilian flights to neutral countries, as well as being a base for wartime airport transport activity. The precursor of British Airways (BOAC) flew out of Whitchurch, and famous visitors using the airport included Bob Hope, Bing Crosby and Eleanor Roosevelt.

The feature is of particular importance for local people as the area is lacking historic references and features. Our neighbourhood plan area has only two listed buildings, both Grade 2. When our survey of public opinion asked the question ‘should the runway space remain in any new development’ a large majority wanted the runway to remain, even if it was not to be just as it is now. Only 10% of respondents felt it should go.

We look forward to hearing from you that this important relic of Bristol’s Past will be added to the local list of buildings and features of historic interest. It is accepted that some alterations to the surface and other adaptations may be necessary as part of future development, but the retention of the historic monument in a still recognisable form and space is a strong aspiration of the local community.