

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 27 AUGUST 2002

THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF AIR TRANSPORT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Report by Director of Development Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purposes of this Report are:-

- (a) To inform the Committee of the National Consultation Exercise being undertaken by the Department of Transport and the Scottish Executive regarding the future development of air transport in the United Kingdom.
- (b) To outline the key issues identified within the consultation document
- (c) To highlight some of the specific issues that relate to Prestwick Airport and
- (d) To recommend a process for the preparation of an appropriate detailed response.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In July, 2002 the Secretary of State for Transport announced to Parliament the publication of a series of consultation documents setting out a range of options for the future development of air services and airports in the UK over the next 30 years.
- 2.2 The documents presently cover the South East of England, the South West of England, the Midlands, the North of England, Scotland and Wales. Documents relating to Northern Ireland will be published shortly.
- 2.3 For each area there is a main consultation document, a summary and a questionnaire. The deadline for consultation responses is 30 November, 2002. It is requested that in addition to completing the NOP questionnaire responses are also made to the detailed questions contained in the main consultation document,
- 2.4 Following consultation the government intends to publish a new Air Transport White Paper that will provide a policy framework for the long-term future of both aviation and airports in the UK.

3. KEY ISSUES IDENTIFIED IN THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

3.1 The consultation seeks to address a number of important questions:-

- Should new capacity be provided at Scottish airports over the next 30 years, and if so, how much?
- If a new runway is required, where should it be located?
- What measures would be needed to control and mitigate the environmental impact of any airport growth?
- How should we address other important issues which will affect the future of aviation in Scotland such as, route development, access to South East airports, securing airport investment, improving surface access links to airports (particularly by rail) and improving the range and frequency of air services within the Highlands and Islands at acceptable cost?

4. ISSUES – PRESTWICK AIRPORT – PRELIMINARY COMMENTS

- 4.1 The main document provides a detailed analysis of the projected growth of passenger and freight traffic to the year 2030 for each airport in Scotland and considers the capability of each to accommodate that growth. A range of parameters is considered including runway, terminal, apron and car parking capacities at the airports and road and rail links to the airports.
- 4.2 In summary the study identifies a range of constraints regarding the ability of Glasgow and Edinburgh airports to accommodate their respective projected increases in demand and concludes that a new runway is required for Central Scotland. It considers a range of options as to how an additional runway might be provided at Glasgow and Edinburgh.
- 4.3 In relation to Prestwick the study identifies a range of strengths. Amongst other matters it concludes that :-
- ◆ The airport has the runway capacity and length to accommodate all the growth scenarios for the airport.
 - ◆ The airport has the longest primary runway and the most serviceable second runway of all the airports in Scotland
 - ◆ The airport is capable of accommodating expansion and improvements to its terminal buildings ,aprons and car parks if required
 - ◆ The catchment of population within various driving times is only marginally less than those of Glasgow and Edinburgh
 - ◆ It is served by a high quality road network with the capacity to accommodate the projected increases in traffic generation. This accessibility will be further enhanced with the upgrading of the A77 to Motorway standard.
 - ◆ It is the only airport with direct rail access.

- ◆ Prestwick airport is developing as a major centre for repair and overhaul of aircraft.
- 4.4 In spite of these advantages regarding accessibility and spare capacity Prestwick has not been considered as a basis for any of the strategic options. In addition the cost benefit analysis that has been undertaken for the provision of an extra runway at Glasgow or Edinburgh is limited in that it does not consider the costs of mitigating surface traffic constraints. The Regional Impact analysis is also limited failing to consider the balancing of regional development across the country.

5. DISCUSSION

- 5.1 This is a major consultation exercise which will influence the development of air services and airports over the next 30 years. Prestwick Airport has experienced major growth in recent years both in terms of freight and passenger traffic. It is a major component of the Ayrshire economy and will be an integral element of future regeneration strategies for each of the Ayrshire authorities and for Ayrshire in general. It has also become a major airport facility serving the West of Scotland and the whole of the Central Belt of Scotland.
- 5.2 It is vital therefore that the opportunities for the expansion and development of Prestwick airport are fully explored as part of this consultation exercise. An alternative strategic option for accommodating future air transport growth based on the full integration of Glasgow Prestwick into the airport infrastructure of Central Scotland is required.

6 PROPOSED CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 6.1 Given the importance of this consultation exercise the outcome of which will directly influence the future economic development strategies for East Ayrshire in particular and Ayrshire in general, it is proposed that
- ◆ The Ayrshire Economic Forum commission the preparation of an alternative strategic option involving the integration of Glasgow Prestwick into the airport infrastructure of Central Scotland
 - ◆ The Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan Team prepares a corporate response for Ayrshire including in association with the Ayrshire Local Authorities and Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire.
 - ◆ Within East Ayrshire Council a corporate response to the consultation exercise be prepared to compliment the Ayrshire wide response as well as to focus on those issues of direct relevance to East Ayrshire.

7 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None at this stage.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 It is anticipated that the fees for the proposed Consultants report be split between the members of the Ayrshire Economic Forum. The level of contribution from East Ayrshire Council is at present unknown but it is proposed that it will be met from the Development Services budget.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Nil

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That the Committee:

- (i) Note the position regarding the National Consultation on The Future Development of Air Transport in the United Kingdom.
- (ii) Approve the process for preparing an appropriate response as outlined in this report.

Stephen Chorley
Director of Development Services

DAH/PM/7/8/02

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (1) The Future Development of Air Transport in the United Kingdom – Scotland**
- (2) The Future Development of Air Transport in the United Kingdom – Scotland Summary**
- (3) The Future Development of Air Transport in the United Kingdom – Scotland Questionnaire**

For further information please contact Stephen Chorley, Director of Development Services on Ext 6011 or David Hewet, Senior Projects Officer on Ext 4608

AGENDA

Implementation Officer: Stephen Chorley