

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

<b>Name of Committee</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date of Committee</b>	<b>23rd February 2006</b>
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Birmingham International Airport Draft Master Plan: Towards 2030</b>
<b>Summary</b>	<p>Following the Government's White Paper on the Future of Air Transport, which was published in December 2003, Birmingham International Airport (BIA) has published its consultation draft Airport Master Plan for 2030. This report sets out the County Council's proposed response to the consultation, particularly in terms of its implications for surface access to BIA.</p> <p>Cabinet is invited to authorise that a formal response be made to the consultation based on these observations.</p>
<b>For further information please contact</b>	<p>Adrian Hart          Transport Planning          Tel. (01926) 735667          adrianhart@warwickshire.gov.uk</p>
<b>Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?</b>	Yes/No
<b>Background Papers</b>	The Future of Air Transport – Department for Transport (December 2003)

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-** *Details to be specified*

- |   |                                     |   |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| Other Committees  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | .....   |
| Local Member(s)<br>(With brief comments, if appropriate)                                  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | .....   |
| Other Elected Members   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Councillor K Browne    )<br>Councillor Mrs E Goode ) for information<br>Councillor Mrs J Lea    ) |
| Cabinet Member<br>(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Councillor M Heatley  |

- Chief Executive  .....
- Legal  I Marriott – comments incorporated
- Finance  C Holden – comments incorporated
- Other Chief Officers  .....
- District Councils  .....
- Health Authority  .....
- Police  .....
- Other Bodies/Individuals  .....

**FINAL DECISION**                      **YES/NO**      *(If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)*

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :**

*Details to be specified*

- Further consideration by this Committee  .....
- To Council  .....
- To Cabinet  .....
- To an O & S Committee  .....
- To an Area Committee  .....
- Further Consultation  .....

**Cabinet – 23rd February 2006**

**Birmingham International Airport Draft Master Plan:  
Towards 2030**

**Report of the Strategic Director of  
Environment and Economy**

**Recommendation**

That Cabinet authorises the Strategic Director of Environment and Economy to submit a response incorporating the points summarised in Section 5 of the report.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In response to the Government's Air Transport Consultation, the County Council resolved at its meeting on 21st November 2002 to support the progressive development of Birmingham International Airport (BIA), subject to measures being taken to mitigate the environmental impacts and manage demand, including improvements to surface access. In its response to the consultation, the County Council also urged Government and BIA to work with all adjoining Local Authorities to secure an acceptable modified option for a second runway.
- 1.2 Subsequently, when the Government endorsed the expansion of BIA in its December 2003 White Paper 'The Future of Air Transport', it adopted the modified (i.e. a shorter second runway) option proposed by BIA, with adjoining Local Authority support, in response to the 2002 consultation (see paragraph 9.19 of the White Paper).
- 1.3 Airport operators are recommended in the White Paper to ".. maintain a master plan document detailing Airport development proposals." (paragraph 12.7). Whilst this Master Plan will not itself have the status of a statutory development plan document, Government considers that the level of detail in the Master Plan is essential to inform the local development framework and local transport plans (LTP) (see paragraph 12.9 of the White Paper). The County Council received the consultation draft Master Plan from the Airport in November 2005. The County Council must respond to the consultation by 31st March 2006 to ensure that its comments are fully considered in the preparation of the Final Master Plan document.
- 1.4 The expansion proposals being put forward in the BIA Master Plan essentially detail the modified option endorsed by Government in the 2003 White Paper. The environmental impacts it identifies, especially in terms of the aircraft noise impacts, are essentially the same as those identified in 2002/2003. In particular, the extent to which the 'community annoyance' 57dB noise contour impinges on

Warwickshire from an expanded BIA has not increased and remains confined to a very small area at Honiley. The economic benefits of BIA's expansion - to the Region, Sub-Region and Warwickshire - have been well rehearsed in recent years and confirmed in a recent report commissioned from Advantage West Midlands by consultants York Aviation. However, the key outstanding issue at both the Air Transport consultation and the subsequent White Paper stages has been the identification of measures to manage the surface transport implications of the proposed expansion in air passenger traffic at BIA.

- 1.5 From the Warwickshire perspective, the strategic planning issues around expansion of BIA in terms of its wider environmental and economic impact have been dealt with in the Air Transport White Paper, and surface access now remains the main and most important outstanding issue for the BIA Master Planning exercise to address. The White Paper says that Airport Master Plans, in setting out proposals for Airport development up to 2015, " .... should detail proposals for surface access ...." (paragraph 12.8). In particular, the White Paper highlights the need for a robust strategy to be developed for improving surface access to BIA (paragraph 9.21), through close working between the Airport and the road and rail transport delivery agencies, to address improvements to public transport usage and the capacity of motorways and other roads serving the Airport (paragraphs 9.21 and 9.22). The remainder of this report therefore sets out the County Council's assessment of the Airport's surface access proposals contained in the draft Master Plan.

## **2. BIA Surface Access Proposals**

### **Background**

- 2.1 Section 9 of the Draft BIA Master Plan sets out the Airport's proposals for surface access to accompany its proposed expansion.
- 2.2 The Master Plan recognises that the growth of BIA will place increased demands on the surface transport network and systems. The document sets out the strong position that the Airport is in, in terms of its proximity to the motorway and trunk road network and the West Coast Main Line. The draft Master Plan sets out the current surface access arrangements at BIA, and the investment that has been made over the last ten years in making improvements to multi-modal interchange, bus and coach facilities, and the Air-Rail Link between the Airport and Birmingham International Railway Station. The Plan identifies the need for the Airport to continue to work in partnership with others to deliver further improvements to surface access for both users and employees.
- 2.3 The current Surface Access Strategy for the Airport was prepared in 2000, and covered a five-year period up to 2005. The draft Master Plan makes a commitment to produce a new Surface Access Strategy by the end of 2005. The Airport has subsequently confirmed that this new Strategy will now not be available for consultation until later in 2006. The County Council's main observations on surface access issues have therefore been necessarily limited at this stage to the information provided in the draft Master Plan. Whilst the new Surface Access Strategy will only provide proposals for the period up to 2010, it is hoped that a number of the concerns of the County Council set out below will

be more satisfactorily addressed than is done so at present within the draft Master Plan.

- 2.4 The Airport has taken advice from consultants on a number of issues in relation to the proposed expansion of the Airport during the preparation of the draft Master Plan. The technical work to support the development of the surface access proposals has not been made available to the County Council or any other of the Airport's key stakeholders. This issue is of concern to the County Council and has contributed towards the limited analysis that is possible of the material which is presented in the draft Master Plan.

### **Highway Access and Car Parking**

- 2.5 Whilst the Airport acknowledges that their proposals would produce extra traffic within the vicinity of the Airport and on roads managed by the Highways Agency (i.e. motorways and trunk roads), the document does not include any quantification of this impact. Given the location of the Airport, it is likely that any increases in traffic will be felt most noticeably in Solihull and Warwickshire. However without any evidence from the Airport on predicted changes to highway flows it is difficult to predict what the scale of this impact on the County will be.
- 2.6 Increasing the size of the Airport and providing more long haul flights will undoubtedly mean passengers will switch from other airports. This in turn will mean more traffic will access the Airport from a longer distance. Currently airports in the south of England (i.e. Gatwick and Heathrow) tend to cater for the majority of long haul flights for people in the Midlands. There is limited mention in the draft Master Plan of this issue, and what the scale of this switch is likely to be. The draft Master Plan does however predict that passengers within a 90 mile radius of BIA are likely to be attracted away from the congested routes into airports such as Luton, Stanstead, Gatwick and Heathrow. This assumption is not however quantified.
- 2.7 There is no information regarding mitigation measures to alleviate any problems caused by the extra traffic associated with the airport, or any commitment towards funding the delivery of such measures.
- 2.8 The draft Master Plan proposes a significant increase in the amount of car parking at the Airport. By 2030, the Plan suggests that even with a proposed public transport modal share of 25% (see below), a total of 41,350 parking spaces will be needed to serve BIA. This would be made up of short and long stay customer parking, staff/employee parking and car hire spaces. The future year extra staff/employee car parking spaces appear to be out of proportion compared to estimated National Traffic Forecasts for 2030. It is also felt that this scale of parking will undermine the provision and use of sustainable modes to access the Airport, particularly for employees.

### **Public Transport**

- 2.9 Integration between all public transport modes is important in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the transport network to access BIA, and should be given greater emphasis in the document. In addition the draft Master Plan

does not make reference to passenger information improvements. Furthermore the document does not provide details of an implementation plan/programme for the proposed public transport improvements or how the Airport intend to fund them.

- 2.10 The draft Master Plan recognises that there is a need to expand and improve the 'Airport Bus Network' particularly in meeting the needs of Airport employees and to provide better non-car access. Whilst this is welcomed, it is felt that greater reference should be made to the key Birmingham International Airport North East Catchment Area (BIANCA) study recommendations, which BIA has previously endorsed. Reference should also be made to the County Council's LTP Bus Strategy proposals, particularly those which have a direct relationship to the Airport including the development of links to BIA/NEC from both the north and south of the M42 corridor, and the dedicated coach link to Coleshill Parkway.
- 2.11 Coleshill Parkway is recognised in the draft Master Plan as delivering significant improvements to accessing BIA. The County Council continues to be one of the key drivers to the successful delivery of Coleshill Parkway, and considers that it will be mutually beneficial to work with the Airport to deliver the LTP Passenger Rail Strategy, particularly in view of the likely increased travel demand between the County and the Airport. It is also considered that the draft Master Plan should give a greater commitment in relation to the improvements in the following rail corridors:-
- (i) Birmingham – Leicester – Peterborough; and
  - (ii) Coventry – Leamington – Oxford – Reading and the South Coast.
- 2.12 The document makes only a passing reference to the 'International Connection' rail line reinstatement between Whitacre Junction (near Shustoke) and Birmingham International, which would provide direct access by rail between the East Midlands and BIA/NEC. Although this is a long term recommendation of the BIANCA study, it is the type of sustainable surface access proposal which the Airport should be considering in relation to the planned expansion of BIA.

### **Public Transport Mode Share**

- 2.13 Modal share for access by public transport to/from the Airport for users and employees is currently 18% based on data from 2005. The draft Master Plan sets a target to increase this to 25% by 2030, although it is not clear how this figure has been identified and what benchmarking against similar targets for other comparable airports has been undertaken. The document does not provide specific details as to how the target will be achieved, or what elements of the Airport expansion will trigger specific surface access improvements.

### **Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles**

- 2.14 The draft Master Plan contains a short paragraph which recognises the important role that taxis and private hire vehicles play for business travellers and tourists using the Airport. A commitment is made in the Plan to continue to

provide facilities for taxis and private hire vehicles. The County Council's Aviation (Surface Access) and Public Transport Interchange Strategies contained within the LTP both seek a commitment to improve the level of provision for taxis and private hire vehicles at the Airport, particularly in terms of providing better waiting facilities and other user requirements.

### **Cycling and Walking**

- 2.15 The coverage of pedestrian and cycling issues in the draft Master Plan is brief and lacks any substantial detail on the opportunities that these modes offer to accessing the Airport by non-car modes. The potential for cycling as mode of transport to work for employees is not fully recognised in the Plan, and should be promoted for those who live within five miles of the Airport. There is also no mention of the proposed cycle link between Coleshill and BIA/NEC. The Airport has previously indicated that it is keen to work in partnership with both Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and the County Council to develop this scheme, which is identified as an aspiration in the Northern Warwickshire Area Chapter of the new LTP.

### **Travelwise and Green Travel Plans**

- 2.16 The Airport Company has a Green Commuter Plan (which includes a Green Travel Plan) and is a member of the Travelwise scheme. The draft Master Plan makes a commitment to the development of the Green Travel Plan for both passengers and employees, including the preparation of a new Green Commuter Plan for staff employed at the Airport.
- 2.17 With 79.2% of staff relying on private car to commute, it is clear that BIA will need to invest in both services and infrastructure to reduce this figure and meet their modal share targets for access by sustainable modes. The identification of possible charging/restrictions for staff parking should have an impact on travel choices, especially if the charging regime were comparable with bus or rail fares. Should the monies raised from charging be ring fenced, then they could be utilised to subsidise additional public transport services or fares. Clearly, the cheaper the tickets are, the more staff are likely to consider using public transport services and relying less on the private car.
- 2.18 It is suggested that the Airport consider operating a private flexi-minibus for staff that live within a 10 mile radius of the Airport, and whom cannot utilise conventional bus and rail services due to their shift patterns. Coventry Airport have recently begun operating such a service for its employees, and its popularity is understood to be increasing month by month.

## **3. Surface Access Policies**

- 3.1 The draft Master Plan contains a list of policies in relation to surface access, covering the preparation of policy documents, access by road, car and vehicle parking, access by public transport, and landside circulation (internal transport movements). While some of these policies mirror those within the LTP, a number would benefit from being more closely aligned with the County Council's proposals and aspirations for better surface access to BIA.

3.2 The key weakness of the surface access policies is that they are not reinforced with an Action Plan or any commitment towards funding specific proposals. The Airport has indicated however that it is keen to work with all its partners to deliver surface access improvements over the lifetime of the Master Plan.

#### **4. Commitment of the County Council to improving Surface Access to BIA**

4.1 The Warwickshire LTP 2006 contains a number of committed and proposed improvements which will be of direct benefit to improving non-car access to BIA. These include:-

- (i) Implementation of Coleshill Parkway railway station, which will be served by a network of new/enhanced bus services and infrastructure, most of which will serve BIA/NEC.
- (ii) Development of a dedicated coach link between Coleshill Parkway and BIA/NEC, to make public transport a valid alternative long distance access to the Airport, particularly from the East Midlands.
- (iii) Development of a strategic Quality Bus Corridor between Tamworth, Kingsbury, Hams Hall, Coleshill, BIA/NEC and Stratford-upon-Avon.
- (iv) Development of a dedicated cycle route between Coleshill and BIA/NEC.

4.2 These measures will be either implemented or developed further during the forthcoming LTP period.

#### **5. Conclusions**

5.1 It is recommended that in its response to the consultation, the County Council raise the following areas of concern with the Airport regarding surface access:

- (i) The lack of progress in producing a new Airport Surface Access Strategy.
- (ii) The lack of evidence presented alongside the proposals contained within the draft Master Plan, particularly in relation to predicted changes to highway flows on the motorway/trunk road network and local roads within both Solihull and Warwickshire.
- (iii) The significant number of parking spaces which are to be provided at the Airport by 2030, and the negative impact this may have on the provision and use of sustainable modes, particularly for employees.
- (iv) The lack of reference in the draft Master Plan to a number of key transport proposals which are promoted in the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan, particularly public transport and cycling schemes.



- (v) The lack of substantive evidence to support how the 25% future year public transport mode share target has been identified and how the target will be achieved.
- (vi) The lack of any specific proposals to support access to the Airport for taxis and private hire vehicles, including passenger waiting facilities.
- (vii) The impact of a number of the draft Master Plan proposals in potentially undermining the Airport's Green Travel Plan and its commitment towards the Travelwise initiative; and
- (viii) The overall lack of specific commitment by the Airport to funding surface access mitigation measures to support the airport expansion detailed in the draft Master Plan.

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9th February 2006