

COMMENTS UPON KENT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT'S MASTERPLAN

To: **Cabinet 17 June 2010**

Main Portfolio Area: **Economy and Culture**

By: **Director of Regeneration Services**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All**

Summary: **Following consideration by the Airport Working Party of the main changes between the draft and final Masterplan prepared by the Operator of Kent International Airport, this report provides the Working Party's response to the final Masterplan.**

For Decision

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Airport Working Party has been considering a Masterplan, developed by the airport operator. The document was received in draft and discussed at considerable length. Consultation took place with the Airport Consultative Committee in public, and at a public meeting at St. Lawrence Parish Hall. Recommendations from the Working Party, endorsed by Overview and Scrutiny resulted in considerable changes, especially on environmental information, to the final document.
- 1.2 The final version Master Plan has been received by the Working Party and Overview and Scrutiny Panel, this report recommends referral of the report to Council.

2.0 THE AIRPORT MASTERPLAN

- 2.1 The Airport Masterplan, prepared by Infratil, the airport operator was published in November 2009. The final Masterplan has been amended in response to public and statutory consultation responses and to relate to comments made by the Council in response to consultation on the Draft Masterplan published in October 2008.
- 2.2 Both the revised Masterplan and the schedule of comments and responses are available to members on request.
- 2.3 The Masterplan has been discussed at the last two working parties. The Airport Chief Executive attended last the Working Party meeting, giving Members the opportunity to discuss the Masterplan, and its response to the Councils requested amendments in more depth.

3.0 Masterplan Changes in Response to Comments Received

3.1 In responding to comments made by the Council and other consultees the airport operator has;

- confirmed that the present Masterplan is a predictive document
- reduced growth predictions
- retained original prediction techniques, based upon industry forecasts, market analysis and historic trends
- confirmed that detailed assessment of the environmental impacts of expansion proposals will be considered through planning applications
- acknowledged that the Masterplan is a stand alone document
- expressed a wish that it will form the basis for the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to the Local Development Framework at the appropriate time.

It is also pointed out that the Masterplan will be the subject of 5 year reviews, the first proposed for 2013, enabling it to be updated to relate to changing legislation, up to date growth predictions and developments in aviation technology. The Masterplan should not therefore be seen as a static document.

3.2 The main changes to the Masterplan are detailed below, with references made to the page within the document to which they relate.

- Growth predictions to 2033 are revised down to 4.7 million passengers (previously 6 million), 400,000 tonnes of freight (500,000 tonnes) and 6,000 jobs created (7,500). (Foreword)
- Reference is added to relevant legislation and guidance omitted from the initial masterplan, including the Emissions Trading Scheme and European Noise Directive. (p 13)
- The policy section of the Masterplan is amended to reflect the changing Planning policy framework since publication of the draft Masterplan. (p 13)
- The present annual passenger numbers have been revised down to 10,000 in 2009 (p 30)
- The immediate catchment population has been revised down from 1.5 million to 1.3 million. (p45)
- The forecast period for initial growth has been amended to an initial 8 year period to 2018. (p49)
- Scheduled services are predicted by 2014, this process has commenced with the introduction of a scheduled service to Edinburgh in May 2010. (p 49)
- Table 3 on page 51 and tables 4-6 on page 52 identify reductions in estimated passenger growth, freight tonnage and aircraft movements.
- Plans on pages 58 and 59 show minor amendments to development proposals, simplifying designations.
- Table 8 on page 61 revises predicted parking provision which, for example, reduces from 3920 spaces to 3200 spaces for 2018.
- Table 9 on page 62 provides details of triggers for infrastructure provision, associated applications required and costs/square metre at present rates for infrastructure provision
- A new expanded 'Connectivity' section considers the contribution of the airport to the growth of the local economy (p 73)

- The document has been amended to include a section on 'Environmental Controls', with specific reference to the issues covered within the existing section 106 agreement. (p 84).
 - Table 15 on page 90 provides indicative thresholds for assessment of identified environmental issues.
- 3.3 The above list is by no means exhaustive; the document has also been changed to relate to other detailed issues as identified in the schedule of comments and responses.

4.0 Response to Amendments Requested by the Council

- 4.1 Revisions requested by the Council and the airport operators responses are detailed below, with comments made where appropriate. The operator also specifically responded to issues raised within the report to Council, details of these responses can be read in the consultation response document, item 90.
- 4.2 **Council Request:** More specific measurable targets with regard to, sustainability, carbon neutrality and emission controls (including proposals relating to airline offsetting measures).

Operator Response: Table 14 includes sustainability commitment targets.

Comment: It is considered that this table forms the basis for more detailed consideration through the planning application process and the preparation of a supplementary planning document as part of the Local Development Framework that can look in more detail at issues such as airline offsetting measures

- 4.3 **Council Request:** More specific details are requested with regard to the establishment of an Air Transport Forum and the development of a Surface Access Strategy to cope with predicted growth.

Operator Response: The operator agrees the establishment of an Air Transport Forum when 1000 air traffic movements (ATM's) per annum are achieved. It also confirms that a transport model would be prepared at planning application stage.

Comment: The operators agreement is welcomed. Clarification will be sought relating ATM's, the figure refers to passenger flights, in which case, according to table 5, page 52, the forum would need to be established in 2013 based upon Masterplan predictions. This is relevant as parking and highway issues will require careful consideration.

- 4.4 **Council Request;** Reference should be made to the impact of the present economic conditions on predictions for short-term development.

Operator Response: All predictions have been amended to reduce estimated growth to reflect current economic conditions.

- 4.5 **Council Request:** The inclusion of more specific proposals for the phasing of development and associated infrastructure provision required as a result of those proposals for the period up to 2018, with details of approximate costs at today's prices.

Operator Response: Table 9 of the report provides details of development proposals related to growth thresholds, with associated infrastructure costs and required environmental studies.

Comment: Bearing in mind the high level nature of the Masterplan it is considered that the table provides sufficient information against which to assess the implications of infrastructure development. These issues can be considered in more depth through both the planning application process and the development of a Supplementary Planning Document.

- 4.6 **Council Request:** That more specific proposals are put forward for the implementation of environmental studies to assess the implications of phased growth and preparation of mitigation proposals where required.

Operator Response: Table 15 of the report provides details of environmental assessment proposals related to growth thresholds.

Comment: Bearing in mind the high level nature of the Masterplan it is considered that the table provides sufficient information. These issues can be considered in more depth through both the planning application process and the development of a Supplementary Planning Document.

- 4.7 **Council Request:** That the status of proposals in the Masterplan that do not accord with the present extant policy documents, (ie: the Northern Grass, potential offsite highway improvements and parking proposals) are clearly identified as such in the Masterplan. The Masterplan should make it clear that these proposals are aspirations to be pursued through the LDF process.

Operator Response: The Masterplan acknowledges that some proposals are outside the airport boundary and the operator comments that it will promote these proposals through the LDF process (p76). With regard to the change of use of the Northern Grass reference is made on page 75 to the intention to lobby for change of use through the LDF process.

Comment: These issues are being considered through the Core Strategy, where the airport has been identified to be of strategic importance.

- 4.8 **Council Request:** That the Masterplan defines how it aims to meet all the requirements of the Section 106 agreement.

Operator Response: The operator has revised the document to include a section relating to the section 106 (p 84).

Comment: It is considered that the Masterplan relates better to the existing section 106 document. The issue of night flying is addressed; the submission of a night flying proposal by the operator is enabling consideration of elements of the section 106 agreement at present.

- 4.9 **Council Request:** That the Masterplan be amended with reference to the permitted development rights available to the airport.

Operator Response: The potentially misleading paragraph relating to PD rights has been omitted from the Masterplan.

- 4.10 **Council Request:** That more specific reference is made to the implications of the introduction of Public Safety Zones (PSZ's) at either end of the runway.

Operator Response: The operator has confirmed that PSZ's will be considered by the Department for Transport when appropriate and that their designation is not for the operator to determine.

Working Party Conclusions

- 5.1 In summary the Working Party considered that the operator has amended the Masterplan to reflect the concerns of the Council as far as it is able to do so, bearing in mind the high level nature of the Masterplan and the long timescales for growth. The operator has made it clear that the Masterplan is the airports plan and that it wishes to liaise with the Council as Planning Authority to develop an SPD to the Local Development Framework. This is an important step forward in establishing a policy framework for the development of the airport and enables the Council to receive the Masterplan.
- 5.2 The Masterplan refers to issues of specific concern to members, for example references to the need for positive steps to ensure aircraft adhere to specified routes and radar improvements based upon airport growth that will provide more certainty for local residents.
- 5.3 The Masterplan also starts to address environmental concerns, with particular reference to protection of ground water. These issues are not appropriate to address in detail in the Masterplan, however their early resolution remains a Council priority and will need to be addressed in the near future in detailed discussions relating to the preparation of supplementary planning guidance, the section 106 agreement and future development proposals.
- 5.4 The Masterplan is an airport document and there is an identified need to prepare a supplementary planning document relating to the development of the airport to provide a policy basis for the Council to steer airport growth in a manner that is environmentally acceptable. The Council can therefore resolve to accept the document on this basis.

6.0 OPTIONS

- 6.1 Cabinet can determine whether to forward the working party's conclusions on the Masterplan to Council with the recommendation that they be approved and the Masterplan be received by Council.

7.0 CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial Implications

- 7.1.1 There are no financial implications relating to this decision.

7.2 Legal

- 7.2.1 It is not considered that there are any legal implications, should the Council resolve to accept the Masterplan. Liaison with the Airport Operator subsequently to develop proposals for the Central Island, including Airport development within the context of the LDF process will be subject to the legal requirements of that process.

7.3 Corporate

- 7.3.1 Part one of the Corporate Plan relates to Thanet's economy. A major project relating to attracting employment opportunities to Thanet is the support to the aviation sector, including receiving and approving the Masterplan for Kent International Airport.

7.4 Equality and Diversity

- 7.4.1 In the opinion of the writer, there are no Equality or Diversity implications with regard to this report or its recommendations.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Working Party's conclusions, including their recommendation that the Council receive the Airport Masterplan are referred to Council for approval

9.0 DECISION MAKING PROCESS

- 9.1 This is a key decision to be considered by Council

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Background Papers

Draft KIA Masterplan	October 2008
KIA Masterplan	November 2009
Schedule of comments and responses to the Kent International Airport Draft Masterplan	November 2009
Civil Aviation Act 2006	November 2006
DfT Guidance on the Preparation of Airport Masterplans	2004
Air Transport White Paper and Progress Report	2003 and 2006
Draft South East Plan	2008
Report to Council on Draft Masterplan	April 2009
Thanet Local Plan	2006
Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Statements	

