

SURFACE ACCESS PROJECTS AT AIRPORTS

INTRODUCTION

1. The problems of securing good surface access to airports, notably by public transport, remains a matter serious of concern to many consultative committees. We are therefore delighted that Ms. Lola Fadina, Airports Policy Division, DfT, will be at the meeting to explain how airports are being considered in the context of the Eddington Study and the next steps.
2. In preparation for this we have annexed to this paper a note of the Government's view of the responsibilities of Airports in relation to surface access projects. This includes a note on Airport Transport Forums and Airport Surface Access Strategies.
3. Individual airports have been asked to provide the Secretariat with an update of the surface access schemes at their airports and any issues which remain to be resolved. These contributions are being gathered into a separate note which will be distributed shortly before the meeting.

BACKGROUND

4. The continuing problems faced by some airports over surface access are clearly reflected in the minutes of the last annual meeting at Manchester where it is noted that delegates reiterated the need for positive support and investment from all key stakeholders to ensure schemes were delivered in a timely manner. A number of delegates also referred to problems in encouraging air passengers to use public transport when travelling to and from airports. There were a number of issues that needed to be addressed in respect of encouraging rail usage - such as longer trains, longer platforms and carriages capable of accommodating passengers with luggage. There was also a need to improve the quality and capacity of services but this was difficult as freight and commuter traffic was also growing and competing for any additional capacity on the network.
5. The DfT's representative at the 2006 Meeting, David Hart, recognised the challenge in ensuring that all parties worked together on surface access issues and noted that the DfT had set up project boards at key airports where expansion was supported in the White Paper (i.e. Stansted and Birmingham) and also at Luton Airport where a replacement runway was proposed. He referred also to the *Surface Access Forum* being organised jointly by the DfT and the Airport Operators' Association as this would provide an opportunity for key stakeholders to share concerns, experiences and good practices in achieving sustainable surface access. Delegates felt that these were important steps forward in trying to break the deadlock in establishing responsibilities, priorities and funding between airport operators, the Government and transport providers.
6. In the DfT's *Future of Air Transport Progress Report* published in December 2006 (see also the paper reported elsewhere on this agenda), an update was given on the progress made in taking forward the sustainable surface access agenda. The DfT believe that airport operators have made a positive start by developing surface access strategies and that a number of airports have set challenging targets for increasing the use of public transport by passengers and people working at the airport. The DfT also reported on the outcome of the Surface Access Forum which took place in July 2006. Delegates will be pleased to note that agreement was reached to develop performance indicators and share best practice nationally on sustainable surface access

improvements. However, no details have yet emerged on the performance indicators being developed or the means by which best practice will be shared nationally. This is an area delegates may wish to explore further with the DfT's representative at the meeting.

DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT BILL

7. On 21st May 2007 the Secretary of State for Transport published for consultation and Parliamentary pre-legislative scrutiny the draft of the proposed Local Transport Bill which contains legislative proposals which the Government believes will to help tackle congestion and improve public transport. The draft bill and other related documents can be seen on the Department's website¹. The Bill is applicable to England only. The Scottish and Welsh administrations have separately reformed their sub-national arrangements through the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 and Transport (Wales) Act 2006 respectively.
8. Not all of the Bill is directly of interest to airports and consultative committees but there are proposals for the reform of the arrangements for local transport governance in major conurbations, "to ensure strong local leadership and a coherent approach to transport across individual local authority boundaries and across different transport modes." Notably the draft Bill allows for:
 - reforms to the existing responsibilities of Passenger Transport Authorities and district councils in major conurbations outside London to enable a more coherent integrated approach.
 - new Passenger Transport Authorities in areas where they do not currently exist, and changes to the boundaries of existing Authorities where it makes sense to do so.
 - the abolition of Local Transport Plans in the Metropolitan areas. Instead there would be a duty on the Passenger Transport Authority (PTA) to prepare an *Integrated Transport Strategy* (ITS) and accompanying implementation plan.
9. As airports often lie on the edge of conurbations, the proposed reforms for local transport governance across boundaries is to be welcomed.
10. The consultation period on the Bill ends on Friday 7th September 2007. It may be that the Liaison Group would wish to respond to the consultation document to remind the Government that airports are a key part of the transport infrastructure and that good surface access to airports by public transport is crucial. Neither should be overlooked in the governance arrangements or the ITS's.

CONCLUSION

11. Surface access to airports gives rise to issues of great importance and it is suggested that the Liaison Group continue to monitor the progress being made at airports on their surface access schemes and where necessary to highlight to the Government the problems being experienced in promoting and securing funding for schemes.

**Secretariat
May 2007**

ANNEX Surface Access Schemes - Note on Responsibilities of Airport Operators

1. According to the Government the responsibility for bringing forward surface access proposals and securing funding lies with airport operators, working closely with the

¹ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/localtransportbill/>

Department for Transport, Network Rail, the Highways Agency and regional and local bodies. This is re-stated in the White Paper which goes on to say that in taking forward proposals there needs to be effective collaboration between these bodies. In particular it will require:

- development or revision of long-term surface access strategies to accompany the preparation of airport master plans reflecting the conclusions of the White Paper;
 - project development, option appraisal and consultation, with a view to identifying preferred schemes, along with funding arrangements;
 - airport surface access strategies and schemes being reflected, as appropriate, in regional transport strategies within Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks and Transport Plans in England and equivalent planning processes in the devolved areas and, in the long-term, the strategies of the relevant transport delivery agencies;
 - development of detailed design, costing, environmental impact assessment, value for money appraisal and funding plans;
 - application for approvals (including Compulsory Purchase Orders) through normal planning procedures, or where appropriate through Transport and Works Act (1992) and Highways Act (1980) procedures or, in Scotland, private bill procedures - including where necessary a public inquiry; and
 - commissioning and construction.
2. All airports in England and Wales with more than 1,000 passenger air transport movements a year are required to set up an Airport Transport Forum and prepare an Airport Surface Access Strategy. The strategy should set out short and long-term targets for decreasing the proportion of journeys to the airport by car and increasing the proportion by public transport, for both air passengers and airport workers. The Government has asked that existing Surface Access Strategies be reviewed to reflect the conclusions of the White Paper and the development proposals set out in Airport Master Plans.
 3. As regards the funding of surface access projects, the Government expects in some cases that it will be appropriate for the airport operator to pay in full for a particular enhancement or improvement. But it is also acknowledged that where there are wider benefits or the airport is not the primary contributor to the problem the scheme is designed to address, there will be a need for a broader funding package including public sector and/or other developer contributions where their projects would also benefit from improved surface access.