

Job No 00262820

**London Ashford Airport,
Lydd, Kent
Terminal Development**

Audit of Transport Assessment (2)

**Prepared for Lydd Airport Action Group
(LAAG)**

March 2007
Report No. 262820/02

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Owen Williams Consultants have been commissioned by the Lydd Airport Action Group (LAAG) to undertake an audit of a Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the planning application Y06/1647/SH for the development of the existing terminal facilities at London Ashford Airport (LAA), Lydd, Kent. This application has been submitted in conjunction with another planning application Y06/1648/SH for the extension of the existing runway facility at the airport.
- 1.2 The TA was prepared by Steer Davies Gleave on behalf of London Ashford Airport. The proposed development comprises the construction of a new terminal building with a capacity of up to 500,000 passengers per annum. This report assumes that the concurrent application for the runway extension mentioned above has been accepted and implemented.
- 1.3 The TA outlines the history of the airport before stating that in 2004 the airport served more than 3,000 passengers and dealt with 24,400 air traffic movements.
- 1.4 The TA, therefore, assesses three separate scenarios; which are:
 - Baseline – Assesses the local highway network and infrastructure with existing levels of passengers using the airport,
 - Do nothing – Assesses the impact on the local highway network and infrastructure of an increase in passenger numbers to 300,000 per year with the runway extension in place in year 2009.
 - With Development – Assesses the impact on the local highway network and infrastructure of an increase in passenger numbers to 500,000 per year as a result of the development of the terminal facility.

2 Discussion

(a) Development Proposals

- 2.1 The proposed development comprises the construction of a new terminal facility designed to accommodate 500,000 passengers per annum.
- 2.2 The new terminal building would include passenger arrivals and departures processing functions on a single floor level. These would be processed side-by-side in the main concourse of the building.
- 2.3 The proposed terminal building would also include 510sqm of retail floor space, and departure lounge area for passengers once they have passed through the security screening area.
- 2.4 Outside of the terminal building it is proposed to provide formal pick-up/drop-off area, a taxi rank and increased level of parking provision.

(b) Policy Context

2.5 Please see section 2(b) in Owen Williams report 262820/01.

(c) Existing Conditions (On-site)

2.6 Please see section 2(c) in Owen Williams report 262820/01.

(d) Existing Conditions (Local Transport Network)

- 2.7 Please see section 2(d) in Owen Williams report 262820/01.
- 2.8 Additionally this TA assesses the junction of the A2070/A259 at Brenzett as well as the A259/B2075 Hammonds Corner junction. The junction at this location is in the form of a roundabout and as such has been assessed using industry standard modelling software ARCADY. The results of the junction assessment show that the roundabout is currently operating well below capacity on all of its arms.

(e) Passenger Catchment

2.9 Please see section 2(e) in Owen Williams report 262820/01.

(f) Trip Generation

- 2.10 This chapter of the TA sets out in detail the proposed numbers of trips that would be attracted to the airport, by different modes, were the proposed terminal development and associated increase in passenger numbers go ahead. This 'With Development' scenario is compared within this chapter to the 'Do Nothing' scenario outlined in section 1.5 of this report.
- 2.11 Several assumptions have been made in order to forecast the number of passenger trips generated by the airport with the runway extension in place. The 500,000 passenger movements per annum have been proportioned down by month, day and hour based upon passenger profiles at Leeds Bradford International Airport (LBI). Furthermore, a potential fleet mix of aircraft has been devised by LAA in order to estimate the number of flights necessary to accommodate 500,000 passengers. **Whilst the assumptions made may be appropriate, the TA provides no evidence to support any of them.**
- 2.12 Further assumptions have been made relating to the patterns of passenger arrival and departure times and also the mode of transport by which passengers will travel to the airport. The forecast passenger mode of travel split is contained in Table 7.5 of the TA. The mode split shows high proportions of passengers using bus and taxis, 10% and 20% respectively, to travel to the airport. **Bus and taxi facilities at the airport are minimal at present. How does the developer expect air passengers to use non-existent facilities or services?**
- 2.13 In order to forecast the future number of staff and their likely trip generation a number of similar assumptions have been made. Once again the number of staff predicted to use the bus to travel to work is high considering the current level of provision and also that most are likely to arrive by car, given the airports isolated location. Further estimates have been provided of future servicing and delivery levels. These assumptions seem to be sound.
- 2.14 Based on the assumptions summarised above and provided in Chapter 7 of the TA, the forecast number of trips for passengers and staff by different modes are given comparing the 'Do Nothing' and 'With Development' scenarios. The number of passenger car trips associated with the proposed terminal development has been forecast as 365 two-way trips per day compared to 219 two-way trips associated with the runway extension within the 'Do Nothing' scenario.
- 2.15 The methodologies used to predict the likely numbers of trips generated by the proposed development are sound.

(g) Car Parking Provision

- 2.16 Chapter 8 of the TA considers the levels of car parking provision required to accommodate the forecast number of car trips as a result of the trip generation exercise in Chapter 7.
- 2.17 The forecast level of parking provision has been calculated based on the number of passenger car trips predicted in the trip generation exercise and also on varying lengths of time the passengers will be leaving their vehicle for. Table 8.1 of the TA provides assumed proportions of passenger length of trip based upon data provided by the CAA.
- 2.18 From this the forecast demand for car parking at the airport has been calculated resulting in a requirement of 860 parking spaces in total comprising 680 long-stay spaces, 60 short-stay spaces and 120 spaces dedicated for staff. This is compared to the 510 spaces proposed within the 'Do Nothing' scenario. The report does not provide the definitions of long-stay and short-stay, however, and also does not provide explanation of how the required level of staff parking was achieved. Has this calculation taken account of the peak demand for staff parking which is likely to be the overlap period between shifts?
- 2.19 The report also states that 4% of the total proposed parking stock plus four spaces will be dedicated for disabled users and will be located as close as possible to the terminal building. This allocation seems to be reasonable and is in line with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements.

(h) Highway Network

- 2.20 Chapter 9 of the TA outlines how the additional vehicular trips associated with the proposed development will be distributed on the local highway network and examines their impact on the surrounding junctions.
- 2.21 The report states that the junctions to be assessed with this section are the A259/B2075 Hammonds Corner junction and the A2070/A259 Brenzett junction. The report acknowledges that Junction 10 of the M20 to the North of the development is currently close to capacity and that the development proposals will increase the flow of traffic through this junction. ***The report does not state whether this assessment scope has been agreed with Kent County Council (KCC) as the highway authority.***
- 2.22 The forecast additional trips have been distributed on the highway network based upon the catchment area analysis in Chapter 6 of the TA. The distribution of the additional car trips are shown on Figure 9.1 of the TA. It is our opinion that the additional trips associated with the development have been distributed in a reasonable way.
- 2.23 The A259/B2075 Hammonds Corner junction has then been assessed using the forecast additional traffic flows associated with an increase to 300,000 passengers per annum in the 'Do Nothing' scenario and up to 500,000 passengers per annum in the 'With Development' scenario. The assessment also includes local committed development related flows such as the Lydd Hotel development and the Dungeness 'A' decommissioning programme. In both scenarios the junction is shown to operate above capacity and therefore would be likely to experience congestion and excess queuing.
- 2.24 The TA then assumes that the planning application relating to the extension to the existing runway has been approved and implemented. The improved A259/B2075 Hammonds Corner roundabout, as discussed in Owen Williams report 262820/01 section (j), is then assessed for both the 'Do nothing' and 'With Development' forecast traffic flows. The proposed roundabout junction has been assessed for both scenarios showing it to operate below capacity on all of its individual arms.
- 2.25 The A2070/A259 Brenzett roundabout has also been assessed for both the 'Do Nothing' and 'With Development' forecast traffic flows. The 'Do Nothing' scenario flows, with 300,000 passengers per annum and the proposed runway extension in place, shows the existing junction to operate well below capacity on all of its arms. Similarly the 'With Development' scenario flows, with an increase to 500,000 passengers per annum, the junction operates within capacity in both the AM and PM peak hours.
- 2.26 Although the junction itself has not been assessed, the TA estimates the number of additional flows that would be experienced at Junction 10 of the M20. Existing flows at this junction have been derived from the South Ashford

Transport Study (SATS) and particular focus has been placed on the A2070 approach and the western off slip from the London direction.

- 2.27 In the worst case scenario, with the airport accommodating 500,000 passengers per annum, the TA forecasts the maximum increase in flows would be on the A2070 northbound where a 2.5% increase in flows would be experienced. As a result of this exercise the report concludes that the terminal development would be unlikely to compromise the operation of the junction. It is not clear from this section of the report how these additional flows were calculated and distributed at this junction. A more detailed explanation how these flows were derived and what assumptions have been made should have been provided to back up the figures within table 9.8 of the TA.
- 2.28 The TA states that the Highways Agency commenced works to improve Junction 10 in September 2006. Improvement works will provide greater capacity by widening existing approaches and carriageways. Further longer term improvements are also planned to facilitate a series of land use proposals up to 2031. These include a replacement junction 10A on the M20 Motorway.
- 2.29 It is our opinion that methodology used to assess the impact of the additional traffic on the highway network is sound.

(i) Construction Impacts

- 2.30 Chapter 10 of the TA examines the impact of the proposed construction period on the local highway network. It has been programmed that the construction period would last for eighteen months and would commence in 2009, with the construction due to be completed in 2010.
- 2.31 It has been forecast that the construction of the terminal building would be done in four main stages with somewhere between 20-40 HGV movements per day for a period of 15 weeks. However, the impact on the local highway is stated to be negligible as the overall proportion of HGV's on the surrounding roads does not rise to 10% even during 'worst case' assessment. Although the TA has carried out an assessment of the impact of additional HGV traffic, it is unclear where the existing baseline figures for HGV traffic on the surrounding network have been derived from.
- 2.32 By way of mitigation it is proposed to set up an agreed route for construction vehicles so as to minimise the disruption to the surrounding highway network. This is shown within Figure 10.1 of the TA.

(j) Mitigation Measures

- 2.33 Chapter 11 of the TA sets out proposed mitigation measures to reduce the impact of the additional flows associated with the development proposals on the operation of the local highway network.
- 2.34 It has been assumed within the TA that the improvements to the Airport Access Road/B2075 junction and the A259/B2075 junction have been implemented as a result of the application relating to the proposed runway extension.
- 2.35 The TA also proposes to implement a signage strategy in order to route all traffic to the airport via the A259 and B2075. The purpose of this is to minimise the impact of the development on the 'C' and unclassified roads surrounding the airport. The signage strategy should encourage the majority of airport traffic to travel by the recommended route, however, any passengers travelling to the airport who know the area may still take the shortest route to the airport on quieter roads.
- 2.36 The TA also states that an outline Travel Plan has been submitted as part of the Planning Application with the aim of maximising opportunities for travel by alternative modes of transport other than private car for both staff and passengers. No details of the content or aims of the Travel Plan are provided within the TA.
- 2.37 It is our opinion that the mitigation measures proposed within this section of the TA are appropriate, should the terminal development be implemented.

3 Summary and Conclusion

- 3.1 The TA assesses the proposal to construct a new terminal building at London Ashford Airport. It is also proposed to provide additional car parking facilities, dedicated pick-up/drop-off facility and a taxi rank as part of the development. In auditing this report we have drawn the following conclusions:
- 3.2 The TA measures the impacts of the proposed terminal building development against the 'Do Nothing' scenario, which assumes that the runway extension proposal has been approved and implemented. If the arguments put forward within the TA supporting the runway extension proposals can be questioned (please see Owen Williams report 262820/01 sections 3 and 4), the basis of the comparison within this TA can also be questioned.
- 3.3 The methodology used in order to calculate forecast trip generation is sound although certain assumptions are questionable. For example the assumed mode of travel split show relatively high proportions of passengers travelling by bus and taxi with no statement as to how these would be achieved.
- 3.4 It is assumed within the report that if the runway extension proposals were in place, an increase to 500,000 passengers per annum could be achieved with minimal measures being taken in terms of mitigating impact upon the surrounding transport network. The report does not demonstrate, however, how the local public transport network can support the numbers of passengers stated within the report. No details of additional bus services or dedicated taxi facilities were suggested within the runway extension proposals.
- 3.5 The methodologies used to forecast required car parking provision and impact of additional traffic on the local highway network are also sound.
- 3.6 The proposed mitigation measures seem appropriate should the development go ahead. It is considered that the A259/B2075 Hammonds Corner junction will require improvement in capacity terms in the near future with or without the development proposals in place.

4 Recommendations

4.1 We believe that there may be benefit in addressing the following issues:

- The core argument of the report is questionable. The 'Do Nothing' scenario which is used to compare the impacts of the proposed development against seems unfeasible for a number of reasons.
- The report assumes that the runway extension is in place and that 300,000 passengers are using the airport per year. If this assumption were questionable, as stated in Owen Williams report 262820/01 section 4, and subsequently flawed, the basis of the argument within this TA would then be invalidated.
- Further details regarding public transport levels are required as part of the outlined development proposals. If, as proposed, 500,000 passengers per annum were using the airport how will 10% and 20% of that number be accommodated by local bus and taxi services respectively?

Owen **Williams** Consultants
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