GEORGE BEST BELFAST CITY AIRPORT FORUM

Minutes of Meeting No.63 Held on Wednesday, 23rd February 2011 in Conference Room 1 at 7.00pm

Present: Mr. Alan Crowe Chairman

Mr. Alan Walker Deputy Chairman

Mr. Brian Ambrose George Best Belfast City Airport
Mr. Gordon Wright Holywood Residents' Association
Dr. Daniel V. McCaughan Cultra Residents' Association

Dr. Colm McNamee Park Road and District Residents' Association

Mr. Terry Hoey Palmerston Residents Association

Mrs. Lisa Toland Belfast City Council
Cllr. Cathal Mullaghan Belfast City Council
Mrs. Julie Allen Belfast City Council

Mr. Sean Coulter Department for Regional Development

Capt. Ian Ewer Base Captain Bmi

Mr. Mark Doherty Belfast Harbour Commissioners

In attendance:

Ms. Laura Duggan Forum Secretary

Mr. David McCullough Department for Regional Development

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

Alderman Leslie Cree North Down Borough Council

Cllr. Robin Newton Belfast City Council

Mr. Christopher McFerran Helen's Bay & Crawfordsburn Residents'

Association

Mr. Scott Kennerley
Mr. Andy McClenaghan
Mrs. Laura McCorry
Mr. Paul Ferguson
Northern Ireland Consumer Council
Northern Ireland Tourist Board
Flybe Ground Operations

Mr. John Moore Belfast Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Scott Symington Planning Service

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting.

2. REPORT FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUB GROUP

The Chairperson of the Environmental Sub Group (ESG), Mrs. Allen, gave a summary report to Members on the points of interest and actions from the last ESG meeting on 24th January 2011:

- The invitation to DOE Air & Environmental Quality Unit to join the BCA Forum had been declined on the grounds that DOE operate the NI Environmental Noise Directive Steering Group to take forward the implementation of END and all the Competent Authorities including GBBCA are members.
- GBBCA are to publish a list of facts about the Airport's Noise & Track Monitoring System (NTMS) in the next issue of Community News.
- GBBCA have agreed a specification with Topsonic to enhance the NTMS to:
 - o Detect and record all non-compliances with noise abatement procedures.
 - To email reports of such non-compliances.

A provisional date of May 2011 has been indicated for project completion.

- The ESG reviewed the 2010 Noise Contour Report and noted the following:
 - There had been an increase of 6% in ATMs since 2009
 - o The change in aircraft mix in 2010 with an increase in turbofan operating at GBBCA.
 - Soft ground setting had been used in the Integrated Noise Model as per Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) advice. The 2009 contours were recalculated using this setting to compare like with like and this resulted in a 10% reduction in the area of the 57 Laeq 16 hr contour.
 - There has been a 17% increase in population exposed to the 57 Laeq 16 hr contour from 9,754 in 2009 to 11,422 in 2010. 57 Laeq is considered to be the onset of significant community annoyance.
 - There has been a 60% increase in the population exposed in the 60 63 Laeq 16 hr contour, from 1,979 in 2009 to 3,192 in 2010. This represented a 16% increase in area.
 - The 2010 validation exercise found that modifications were required for several aircraft types to better model their operation at GBBCA.
 - There is zero population exposed to more than 63 Laeq 16 hr contour. This is the trigger for a noise insulation scheme as per government guidance.
- GBBCA advised that their current focus in addressing noise issues is being implemented in line with the current noise management programme. The Airport has also developed a Noise Action Plan as a requirement under END which will be in place until 2013.

Dr. McNamee queried why the airport would not be taking additional measures despite the fact that noise exposure at the 60 Laeq 16 hr contour has increased by 60%. Mr. Ambrose clarified that it was a 60% population increase rather than the increase in noise by 60%. The levels of population exposure need to be considered in comparison with other airports. Furthermore, no

population is exposed to the 63 Laeq 16hr contour which is the threshold where mitigating measures should be instigated as per UK Government guidance.

Dr. McCaughan pointed out that the introduction of BMI Baby's 737-300 into the aircraft mix at GBBCA could result in a further increase in noise as they are generally 6-10% louder than other aircraft.

In discussing the Bias over Belfast Lough, GBBCA confirmed a one-way system tends to be in operation at any one time with aircraft either using Runway 04 or 22 depending mainly on three factors: wind speed and direction, flight destination and prevailing air traffic (including traffic operating to/from Belfast International Airport (BFS)). During periods when there is only traffic in one-way, for example, early morning departures and late evening arrivals it is sometimes possible to route all flights over Belfast Lough – prevailing winds dependent.

GBBCA stated that the runway extension would likely favour Belfast Lough departures and arrivals because of shorter back track times.

The Forum Chairman remarked that the Belfast Lough bias had deteriorated since the relocation of the terminal from the old Victoria apron as well as the change in the flow of traffic operating to/from BFS.

Dr. McNamee queried why the bias over Belfast Lough had deteriorated. Mr. Ambrose stated that it is due to the increase in traffic volumes which requires a one-way system to operate as aircraft cannot take off and land in the same direction within short intervals. Wind direction plays a big factor also as aircraft can only tolerate a certain tail wind. That being said, approximately 80% of arrivals take place over Belfast Lough.

Mr. Crowe referred to a paper that Mr. Young from the Air Traffic Control department at GBBCA had prepared on the Belfast Lough Bias. It was agreed that the Forum Secretary would circulate this to Forum Members.

Action: Forum Secretary

GBBCA gave an update on recent environmental initiatives including the installation of a metering and monitoring system, introduction of recycling bins in the terminal, GBBCA's involvement in the AOA Aircraft on the Ground CO2 Reduction Programme (AGR) and interest in the NI Plugged in Places (electric car scheme).

Discussions are still ongoing between the Airport management and the Planning Service regarding the agreement of the Indicative Contour as per the 2008 Planning Agreement.

Dr. McCaughan queried why the Indicative Contour which was originally proposed as part of the Examination in Public in 2005 had still not been agreed. He added that according to the CAA

report by Peter Havelock, the Indicative Contour as proposed in the EIP is likely to have been breached already.

Mr. Ambrose stated that GBBCA has fully engaged with Planning Service on this matter and has presented to them a proposal for an Indicative or 'Control' Contour for agreement. This has been based on a modelled forecast taking into account the aircraft mix in operation at GBBCA and the cap of 48,000 movements.

Dr. McCaughan queried how the 'Control Contour' that GBBCA has proposed to Planning Service compares with the current situation in terms of noise contours in the 2010 report.

Mr. Ambrose stated that once a Control Contour had actually been agreed that this comparison could be made.

 The 3rd Addendum to the runway extension application was submitted to Planning Service in December 2010. The purpose was to provide assessments of new aircraft mix forecasts and supply additional information requested by Planning Service in relation to the potential environmental impacts in the areas of noise, ecology, drainage, human health, socio-economic and surface access.

The agreed actions from the ESG meeting were as follows:

- Mr. Hooke is to query with Bickerdike Allen Partners why dispersion assumptions in the Noise Contour Reports had not been validated since the completion of installation of the NTMS.
- Ms. Duggan is to research the origins and purpose of the DOE Indicative Noise Contour
- Mr. Crowe is to locate and circulate to Members the report on the bias over Belfast Lough prepared by Alan Young in Air Traffic Control.

3. MINUTES OF THE FORUM MEETING HELD ON 17TH NOVEMBER 2010

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 The Chairman and the Forum Secretary met with Mr. Prifti for lunch before Christmas and presented him with a token of appreciation for his long service to the Forum.
- 4.2 As requested, the Report from the ESG was circulated by the Forum Secretary to Forum members in advance of the meeting.
- 4.3 An update is required from Mr. Moore regarding the outcome of his enquiries into seeking greater representation of business interests on the Forum.

Action: Mr. Moore

Mr. Wright expressed the desire to have a representative from Titanic Quarter given the investment and development taking place there at present and its proximity to the Airport which will serve as a key gateway.

5. Mr. Ambrose briefed Forum Members on the recent incident at Cork Airport involving the scheduled Manx 2 Belfast City Airport to Cork service.

6. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Mr. Ambrose delivered an update to members on the following:

6.1 2010 / 2011 Forecast:

 2.7 million passengers were recorded for 2010. This represented a modest increase in passenger numbers on 2009 but an achievement nonetheless given that most other UK airports reported a drop in passengers over the period.

The Chairman sought an update from the last meeting on the impact of Ryanair's withdrawal from GBBCA. Mr. Ambrose stated that while the airport had experienced a significant drop in passenger numbers immediately following Ryanair's departure, the situation had improved since then with the introduction of new routes by Flybe and the commencement of BMI Baby in January 2011. It was fortuitous that BMI decided to consolidate its base in Northern Ireland and that it chose GBBCA as otherwise the Airport's London Heathrow service might have been lost. Passenger numbers are still down in 2011 on last year but on the positive side, BMI Baby is to commence operating the London Stansted route at the end of next month.

The aviation environment is unpredictable but GBBCA's committed to investing in its facilities and focusing on quality and good customer service so that the Airport will be an attractive offering for airlines and passengers.

Mr. Walker raised the matter of the increase in Air Passenger Duty (APD) in the UK and the discriminatory effect that this will have on the region. Mr. Ambrose stated that for domestic routes it will not be such an issue at £12 per flight. However, for international destinations APD will be up to £120 per flight for first class travel. In contrast, the Republic of Ireland has announced they will reduce their levy from €10.00 to €3.00 commencing 1st March 2011.

Of further concern is the proposed increase in airport fees at London Heathrow for domestic services to bring them in line with international fees. These charges coupled with APD will result in charges for a domestic return fare totalling over £50 before the airline even considers a ticket price or for a family of 4 would equate to £200.

APD coupled with the increase in Heathrow domestic fees will have a wider economic impact for Northern Ireland as the Heathrow service provides vital linkages for NI to mainland UK.

Approximately 1 million passengers travel between Northern Ireland and London Heathrow each year.

Mr. Ambrose assured Forum Members that the three airports in Northern Ireland are lobbying MPs and MLAs on this matter.

6.2 Retail Development:

- House of Ireland which specialises in upmarket giftware from the island of Ireland is to open in the airside lounge shortly.
- O'Brien's Sandwich bar is scheduled to open airside at the end of March
- WH Smith has just opened a bookshop at the far end of the airside lounge opposite World Duty Free.

6.3 Capital Expenditure:

£4 million capital investment is planned for 2011. This will include:

- New navigational aids
- Expansion to the airfield fuel farm
- Acquisition of new winter snow equipment
- Aforementioned terminal forecourt protection required by CAA

7. AIRPORT STATISTICS

Mr. Ambrose gave an update on the Forum Reports:

- Historical summary of movements post 21:30 hrs
- Analysis of delays post 21:30 hrs
- Bias of flights over Belfast Lough
- Analysis of movements post 23:00 hrs local
- Movements by aircraft type
- Analysis of noise related complaints 2009-2010 / 2010-2011

Mr. Ambrose highlighted the significant number of extensions in December 2010 which were attributed to the severe and adverse weather conditions including heavy snow and ice that disrupted operations at GBBCA and most UK airports. Extensions in most months in 2010 have mirrored the previous year with this exception and January 2010 where similar exceptional weather conditions were experienced and consequently the overall number of extensions in 2010 was greater than in 2009. However, extensions have reduced considerably in 2011 to date.

Dr. McCaughan queried why a greater number of extensions occur with the Flybe Birmingham and Manchester routes. Mr. Ambrose clarified that these routes account for a greater proportion of aircraft movements.

Mr. Wright highlighted the fact that the majority of extensions take place between 21:31 hrs and 22:00 hrs.

Mr. Ambrose drew Forum Members attention to the zero delays after 23:00 hrs in January 2011. Dr. McNamee queried what fines are applied to flights after 21:30 hrs and where could the information be found on the GBBCA website. Ms Duggan advised that these had been reported in the previous minutes but would query the website location.

Action: Forum Secretary

Mr. Ambrose reiterated that the Airport imposed substantial penalties on airlines requesting extensions to reflect the cost to the Airport of remaining open after 21:30 hrs and these penalties are over and above Community Fund penalties. As such, it is in the best interests of airlines to keep to the scheduled operating hours.

Members noted the significant drop in noise complaints in the last quarter. However, Dr. McNamee stated that this was because people think that nothing will be done. Mr. Ambrose responded by saying that all complaints are recorded, investigated and responded to. If the Airport is not performing to agreed standards – e.g. compliance with Noise Abatement Procedures – then the airport will seek to address this. However, aircraft operate at the Airport and they generate noise and given the range of functions that must be reconciled for each turnaround, from check-in to baggage, to aircraft fuelling, etc., it is inevitable that there will be delays from time to time. Therefore, if there is the expectation that there will be no noise or delays beyond 21:30 hrs then this expectation cannot feasibly be met.

Dr. McCaughan queried how GBBCA compared with other airports in terms of night flights and delays. Mr. Ambrose responded by saying that the industry definition of night time is 23:00 hrs and GBBCA have very few flights delayed beyond this time. In addition, most of GBBCA's flights are short haul domestic which tend to experience fewer delays than international flights which may travel in a number of different sectors throughout the day.

8. UKACCS ANNUAL LIAISON MEETING 2011

The Chairman gave Forum Members background information to the UKACCS Annual Liaison Meeting which is due to take place in Aberdeen on 8th and 9th June 2011. The Chairman will be attending to represent the BCA Forum. The Chairman requested Members to put forward items that they wish to raise at this meeting. Members agreed that the previously discussed matter of APD and Heathrow London fees and the matter of 'environmental' taxes should be put forward.

9. AOB

The Chairman welcomed Dr. Daniel McCaughan to the Forum who will be taking over from Mr. Knatchbull as the Cultra Residents' Association representative.

Dr. McCaughan tabled a query as to whether GBBCA is about to take Thomas Cook or Thomson as a customer, and that they will be flying Boeing 757s or similar larger aircraft this summer. Mr. Ambrose said that without going into the details of negotiations of a commercially

sensitive nature the business objectives remain unchanged and there are no plans to operate anything larger than narrow bodied aircraft and even though the B757 is a narrow bodied aircraft there are no plans to operate 757s this summer at GBBCA.

Mr. Wright queried if the aerodrome safety will be improved with the runway extension. Mr. Ambrose responded that there are no safety issues with the current runway. Capt. Ewer agreed with this point.

Dr. McCaughan requested that it be noted for the record that Cultra Residents' Association is opposed to the decision by the Environment Minister to remove the Seats for Sale limit at GBBCA. Dr. McNamee seconded this on behalf of Park Road & District Residents' Association. Mr. Ambrose stated that the Seats for Sale limit was an artificial constraint placed on the airport due to the restrictions of the old terminal. These restrictions have now been removed with the new terminal and as such it is not valid. Furthermore, GBBCA is the only airport in the world to have such a constraint.

Dr. McNamee queried if the Airport had a response to the questions that were submitted to the Forum Secretary in advance of the last Forum Meeting. The Forum Secretary circulated a document to all Members with the responses to these questions.

10. DATE FOR 2011 MEETINGS

Proposed dates:

- o Wednesday 22nd June 2011
- o Wednesday 16th November 2011

Signed

ALAN CROWE (Forum Chairman)

Date: 22nd June 2011

AC/ld