



Vacancy: Head of Planning

VACANCY:	Head of Planning
DEPARTMENT:	Development
REPORTING TO:	Chief Development Officer
WORKING HOURS:	40 hours per week

The Head of Planning is a Senior Leadership role within the organisation & will provide strategic leadership for the airport's planning function, taking ownership of the development and delivery of planning strategy to enable the airport's 2040 Master Plan vision. As a high-level leadership role, the post-holder will act as a senior planning adviser to the Chief Development Officer, Executive Team and Board, identifying key planning risks, issues and opportunities, recommending strategic solutions, and influencing effective decision-making across the organisation.

The post-holder will influence Executive and Board decision-making, lead complex multidisciplinary workstreams, and ensure planning activity supports the airport's long-term growth, operational resilience, sustainability ambitions and strategic stakeholder relationships.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Provide leadership, direction and accountability for the airport's planning strategy, master plan and associated statutory processes, ensuring alignment with the airport's long-term growth objectives, operational priorities, sustainability commitments and commercial strategy. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:
 - lead the multidisciplinary consultant team, setting direction, expectations and priorities, and holding the consultant team accountable for delivery, quality, programme and outcomes across the master plan, planning, legal, environmental and design workstreams throughout the planning process;
 - report critical planning issues, programme risks, strategic choices and recommended solutions to the airport's Executive Team and Board, ensuring timely escalation, robust challenge and informed decision-making on matters affecting airport growth, investment, reputation and stakeholder confidence;

- support the Chief Development Officer in preparing for Board meetings, including briefing papers, planning updates, risk assessments, decision papers and responses to Board queries;
 - set, manage and track planning budgets, consultant spend and programme controls, providing clear financial forecasts, value-for-money challenge and early warning of budget pressures;
 - act as the strategic lead for design development and airport operational priorities for future growth, working closely with operations, environment, commercial, public affairs and communication teams to resolve competing requirements, shape strategic options and present recommended solutions to Executive and Board as required;
 - Own and oversee the airport's strategic planning risk register and mitigation plans.
 - lead the integration of inputs from relevant airport departments to support environmental, technical and assessment work, ensuring planning submissions are robust, coordinated and strategically aligned;
 - lead on the review of technical and assessment work to ensure it is of the required standard and prepared in a cost-effective manner, including coordination across the airport's internal functions and multidisciplinary teams;
 - chair and direct senior project meetings, ensuring workstreams remain aligned, risks are actively managed, decisions are captured and actions are progressed at pace;
 - alongside the airport's Public Affairs and Communication teams, support stakeholder engagement through any planning processes;
 - coordinate materials for, and attend, public consultation events alongside the wider airport team;
 - assume the lead on all technical meetings with statutory consultees (or other stakeholders as appropriate) and ensure relevant team and Executive members are represented as required; and
 - lead negotiations on any new Planning Agreements and/or conditions as required with support from CDO.
2. Lead the preparation, submission and strategic management of any future planning applications for airport infrastructure, operational changes and permitted development matters, taking ownership of planning strategy, risk mitigation and stakeholder outcomes and the long-term implications for airport growth and operational resilience.
 3. Provide expert strategic planning advice to the airport's Management Team, Executive Team, wider Management and CDO on onsite development, permitted development, planning risk, policy matters and emerging opportunities, ensuring planning advice directly informs organisational strategy, investment decisions and stakeholder positioning.
 4. Lead the airport's strategic response to planning policy, consultation and regulatory matters from local authorities, the Northern Ireland Executive and other statutory bodies, coordinating senior internal input and shaping the airport's corporate position.

5. Ensure all future development plans are consistent with the airport's sustainability ambitions with respect to the master plan, environmental commitments, net zero objectives and planning obligations.
6. Maintain a forward view of strategic planning constraints, dependencies and emerging policy changes, advising the CDO and Executive Team on implications for airport growth, investment decisions and stakeholder engagement.
7. Build and maintain strategic relationships with government departments, regulators, political stakeholders and industry bodies.
8. Represent the airport externally at a senior level on strategic planning matters, including engagement with statutory consultees, local authorities, community stakeholders and other key partners, working with the Public Affairs and Communication teams where appropriate to protect and advance the airport's strategic interests.
9. Actively contribute to the organisation's ESG and sustainability goals by supporting initiatives that promote environmental responsibility, social impact, and ethical governance.
10. Support the Senior Management team in staff engagement and corporate responsibility initiatives across the business, acting as an ambassador for the airport during key events.
11. Any other duty reasonably deemed to fall within the skill of the post-holder and remit of the role.

Essential Criteria:

- Hold a degree or Masters in Town Planning;
- Chartered member of the Irish Planning Institute or Royal Town Planning Institute;
- Minimum of 10 years post-graduate planning experience with a strong preference for someone operating at senior leadership level in complex infrastructure, aviation, transport or major development environments
- A thorough understanding of the Northern Ireland planning system and EIA legislation is desirable;
- Substantial experience operating at senior leadership level, with evidence of influencing Executive, Board, government, statutory and community stakeholders on complex planning, infrastructure or development matters, including situations involving competing priorities, significant risk, public scrutiny and long-term organisational impact.
- Demonstrable track record in successfully managing and coordinating Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA); planning applications and appeals;
- Good analytical skills and a proven ability to understand and resolve complex planning issues through collaboration and engagement;
- Comfortable delivering to challenging programme requirements with ability to work autonomously and as part of a large multidisciplinary/airport team

- Competent in using lateral thinking to manage and prioritise multiple inter-related complex challenges, often in parallel;
- Proven ability to build trusted senior relationships and successfully negotiate planning obligations and conditions with a range of internal and external stakeholders, including statutory bodies, local authorities and community representatives
- Ability to foster and maintain excellent working relationships with both co-workers and external stakeholders;
- Confident and competent individual, capable of representing the airport at stakeholder and other events;
- A good understanding of the political, consultation and community engagement aspects associated with complex planning applications.
- Excellent organisational skills with an ability to prioritise and manage workloads, work independently, and maintain accuracy and attention to detail;
- An ability to remain calm and focused when under pressure and display a pragmatic approach to problem solving complex issues;
- Exceptional interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills, with the credibility to advise, challenge and influence senior internal and external stakeholders on complex and sensitive planning matters;
- Comfortable working at pace in a small team environment;
- Demonstrates a flexible approach to work; and
- Experienced in use of Microsoft Office, particularly Outlook, Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

To apply, please submit your CV along with a cover letter, briefly outlining how you meet the criteria to the Human Resources Department by email at human.resources@bca.aero.

Closing date for submission of CV & cover letter by COB 23rd October 2026.

The Company employs people from all sections of the community and is committed to the appointment of the best candidate based on the merit principle alone.