

## **BRISTOL INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

### **MASTER PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT TO 2015 AND BEYOND**

#### **FURTHER QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

7<sup>th</sup> November 2006

This Questions and Answers document gives more details on some of the issues raised during the consultation process. Further information can be obtained from the Master Plan pages on the Bristol International web-site: visit [www.bristolairport.co.uk/masterplan](http://www.bristolairport.co.uk/masterplan).

***Q: Why is this expansion needed?***

A: Because more people want to fly from Bristol International. There is continuing demand to fly to and from Bristol International, and we have to expand facilities to enable us to meet that demand. The facilities at the airport at present will allow us to handle around six million passengers a year. Already, the airport is handling some five and a half million passengers a year.

***Q: Why are you publishing this Master Plan?***

A: This Master Plan sets out how we intend to improve the facilities to allow the airport to handle up to around nine million passengers a year, which we expect to reach in ten years time. This Master Plan also gives some outline plans for possible further development to the year 2030.

***Q: What's being proposed?***

A: The most significant changes are:

- **Extended Terminal:** we are going to extend the Terminal at each end, to make it larger, with more check-in desks;
- **Improved Car Parking:** we intend to build two new multi-storey car parks on the existing car parking space near the Terminal, and put decked car parking on the rest of the area;
- **Replace the old Terminal building:** to create more space for parking aircraft, and create new offices the other side of the Terminal;
- Build an **airport hotel** near the Terminal

Almost all the development required to 2015 will occur within the existing airport boundary.

***Q: Have you taken account of comments made during consultation?***

A: Yes – we have been consulting with people across the region, having launched the draft Master Plan in October 2005. As a result of comments, we have looked again at many aspects of the development, and made a number of significant changes to the final Plan to address the issues of most concern. We have also undertaken more detailed economic, environmental and traffic studies, all of which have informed the final plan.

***Q: What has changed since the draft Master Plan?***

A: We have:

- reassessed the review of economic benefits of the airport, which has strengthened the case for the airport continuing to meet regional demand;
- substantially revised our car parking proposals, with a greater proportion now being focussed on the northern side of the airport (where most parking is currently).
- strengthened our proposals for managing the impact of aircraft noise
- undertaken a detailed transport assessment, which has reconsidered the public transport strategy, and the impact on the road network of further airport growth. Specific proposals to mitigate the effect of road traffic growth in the local area have been developed.
- calculated the impact on greenhouse gas emissions of flights from the airport and have set out how we intend to address these.

***Q: Will expansion help regional tourism and the local economy?***

A: Yes, because most of the new flights which expansion will deliver will be scheduled services. Unlike charter services, scheduled routes not only allow people from this region to travel elsewhere, but they bring significant numbers of visitors from other parts of the UK and the world to the South West.

In terms of local jobs in companies which work with us, the airport already works closely with all sorts of local companies, from building contractors to food suppliers – expansion of the airport will directly benefit them.

***Q. Should the airport expand, when there is concern about the impact of air travel on global climate change?***

A: We recognise that climate change is a significant issue, and that aviation has to play its part in reducing the impact of man-made CO<sub>2</sub> on the environment.

At the same time, the region aspires to creating higher levels of economic growth: air travel will be a vital tool in delivering this growth. The aim must be to deliver sustainable aviation growth in the long-term.

The aircraft using Bristol international contribute 0.4% of the total man-made CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the South West of England. By 2015, we anticipate this figure will still be well below 1%.

We welcome the conclusions of the Government Stern report that improved technology and improved market mechanism are two key tools in addressing this issue. We are signatories to the UK aviation industry's Sustainable Aviation Strategy which aims to minimise the impact of aviation in terms of global warming through the use of new technologies and more efficient operational procedures. We support the inclusion on aviation in the European Emissions Trading scheme, effectively putting a price on the emissions from aviation. We also recognise that carbon off-setting – for example paying to reducing carbon emissions elsewhere when buying an air ticket – has a role to play in balancing out the impact of air travel.

We are also planning to minimise the airport's own "carbon footprint" through improving our energy conservation, greater use of renewable energy, significantly enhanced use of public transport by passengers and staff, and, where practicable, low carbon building techniques.

We believe that the development of Bristol International, with the economic and social benefits this will bring, can be achieved with little or no adverse environmental effects.

***Q: Some people argue that low cost, short-haul leisure flights are frivolous trips which cannot be justified, given the potential environmental damage they cause.***

A: We don't accept this analysis. Who's to decide what is a "permissible" trip? We know that millions of people use Bristol International for business trips, trips to visit friends and family, for romantic weekends, for educational purposes, as well as for holidays. The presence of a successful airport in this region brings not only economic benefits, but also often untold but nevertheless real social benefits – like the opportunity of seeing some of the world's most beautiful cities, or experience life in a different culture.

Alternative means of transport to short-haul destinations are not practical options for people in the South West. The alternative to flying is for people in the region to become cut off from the rest of the world, or to travel – usually by road - to the London airports.

***Q: Are the low-cost airlines the problem?***

A: Cheaper air travel has enabled all sorts of people to visit places and have experiences which would have been out of reach to many just 20 or 30 years ago.

Importantly, the low costs airlines tend to:

- have efficient operations which minimise fuel burn
- use standardised, modern, more fuel efficient and quieter fleets of aircraft
- focus on uncongested regional airports, which have fewer delays requiring aircraft to circle in a holding pattern; shorter taxi times; and whose passengers travel shorter distances than would otherwise be the case
- carry less payload, because they are "no frills", further reducing fuel burn
- carry more passengers per flight, and therefore less fuel and emissions per passenger

The low cost airlines operating scheduled services at Bristol International operate with a young aircraft fleet which is associated with more efficient engines and lower fuel consumption per passenger kilometre, and therefore less CO<sub>2</sub>.

***Q: Will expansion help regional tourism?***

A: Yes. The new services which a larger airport will support will be mostly scheduled rather than charter flights, and a significant proportion of the seats will be for visitors travelling to our region.

It's important to remember that international tourists tend to use public transport and focus their activities around Cities. Those who want to restrict the ability of people in the region to take trips elsewhere forget that domestic tourists tend to travel by car, and visit rural areas, which are less able to cope with the influx of these visitors than cities.

***Q: How will the planned expansion help the local economy?***

A: The presence of a successful, flourishing airport is widely recognised by businesses and policy-makers across the region as important for the local and regional economy. Major businesses and business organisations have stressed the importance of air links

to their own success, and to help attract business, and regeneration funds, into the region.

Commenting on the Master Plan, Chris Murray, Director of the Government's Core Cities project, said:

*“Bristol is one of England's eight Core Cities. It is a regional capital and the urban and economic core of a wider surrounding area. As such, the economy of the region relies on the success of Bristol and transport flows are absolutely key to this, not just locally and nationally, but internationally as well. Climate change means that travel will be managed differently in the future and this is important, but it is hard to think of any economically viable major city that is not in close proximity to a well functioning airport. In a global economy with increasing mobile workforces, good international access is basic to economic success.”*

More specifically, currently some 2,800 people now (November 2006) work at the airport. Staff surveys indicate that up to 40% of these live close to the airport, in North Somerset, with significant number from Weston, Nailsea, Portishead and Clevedon, and from other local villages as well as South Bristol. Expansion of the airport, in line with demand, will safeguard these jobs, and add others – we anticipate direct employment at the airport will be over 3,800 by 2015.

The airport also already works closely with all sorts of local companies, from building contractors to food suppliers – expansion of the airport will also directly benefit them.

**Q: The roads around the airport are already congested. Should the airport be allowed to grow before the road network is improved?**

A: The whole of Bristol and the immediate region is affected by road congestion. This is not the fault of the airport, but is created by people commuting and travelling around and through the region.

In fact, the airport contributes only a small amount of traffic to its immediate road network. Moreover, the expansion will have only a minor impact on local congestion, because most of the road traffic it creates occurs at times other than during the rush hour in, out and around Bristol. And the growth in traffic will be gradual over the next decade or so – it won't all arrive at once on the road network as it currently stands.

We have highlighted that the A38 outside the airport needs some local improvement, whether the airport expands or not. In so far as airport traffic contributes to local congestion on the A38, we are willing to pay a proportionate contribution to any works which will be required to improve traffic flow.

**Q: What about Barrow Gurney?**

A: Congestion in Barrow Gurney occurs during the Bristol rush hour. Traffic in Barrow Gurney is predominantly general traffic, not airport traffic, moving in and out of Bristol and East and West around Bristol.

However, we do accept that there is a significant proportion of airport traffic passing through Barrow Gurney during the day which contributes to problems for the village. We are prepared to support the village in delivering a traffic calming scheme which will be of some help. But the real solution to Barrow Gurney's problems would be the construction

of the proposed A38/A370 link road, and the completion of the South Bristol ring road, both of which we support. This is currently under consideration by the local authorities and Government.

***Q: Can't more people travel to the airport by public transport?***

A: Yes – and we want to encourage this significantly. A rail link direct to the airport is not economically feasible, but we do want to see more bus services, for passengers and staff.

We are aiming to quadruple the number of people using public transport to travel to and from the airport, and will provide a subsidy for some new services to get them up and running, as we did for the now successful Bristol Flyer coach service. This connects Temple Meads station, and a number of other locations in Bristol, direct with the airport, and is a quick and efficient public transport link.

At present the best way of travelling from Bath to the airport is by train to Temple Meads and then via the Flyer. As demand rises, there may be a case for a direct bus route, and we will keep this under active review. The same is true for Weston. We'd also like to see bus services to Worle Parkway or Nailsea and Blackwell stations, and will explore these in the future.

***Q: What's happening to the car parking?***

A: We have radically altered our plans from those set out in the draft Master Plan, in response to comments made during consultation. As a result, we will be enhancing the car parking facilities already in place to the north of the Terminal, including adding innovative "green roofs" – comprising green vegetation such as sedum – over much of the area. This will be the first major use of such green roofs at an airport in the UK, and possibly anywhere in the world. This innovation will have a major positive effect on the visual impact of the new developments.

We require some more space to the south of the airport, not least to accommodate some extra cars while the new multi-storey car parks are being built.

***Q: Will more flights mean more noise disturbance?***

A: No. While there will be some more flights – on average some three take-offs and landings an hour - as time goes on aircraft will get quieter. Our modelling work shows that the noise footprint around the airport at nine million passengers a year will be no greater than it was in 2004, thanks to the introduction of quieter aircraft. This is already having an effect - for example, the number of the most noisy flights over Congresbury – i.e. above 85 decibels – almost halved in 2006 compared with to 2005, from 173 in the 13 months to end of August in '05, to 94 in the 13 months to end August 06.

We are also going to extend our noise monitoring and will provide financial incentives, through our charges to airlines for them to use quieter aircraft. We will also introduce a penalty system for aircraft which breach noise minimisation procedures, with any money raised going into the airport's Community Fund.

We are also going to build an acoustic barrier, to limit the effects locally of ground noise from aircraft engines.

***Q: Will the expansion mean more noise at night, from increased night flights?***

A: No. There will be no change to night flying restrictions and the night quota will be capped at the current level. We do not anticipate any increase in night flights, and would be happy to accept a suitably worded planning condition in respect of night flying restrictions.

***Q: Will there be any problems with air pollution as a result of the expansion?***

A: Our studies have shown that the proposed growth will not compromise air quality standards.

***Q: What about the local ecology?***

A: The airport already operates a Nature Conservation Management Plan, aimed at safeguarding the wildlife and nature conservation value of land it owns. We plan to undertake work which will actually improve the local biodiversity compared with the situation now. For example, our environmental assessment has shown there are opportunities to enhance the areas to the south of the airport which are used for feeding by bats – including greater and lesser horseshoe bats.

***Q: Does this Master Plan represent your planning application?***

A: No, it is an indication of what we are intending to bring forward, via formal planning applications, over the next few years.

***Q What happens now – when will the building start?***

A: The next step is for the local authority and central government to consider our Master Plan. No building can start until we have planning permission. The first works will be to expand the Terminal building to accommodate more check-in desks, and additional facilities for passengers.