



<b>Application Number:</b>	20/02559/FU		
<b>Address:</b>	Leeds Bradford Airport LS19 7TZ		
<b>Comment Type:</b>			<b>NEUTRAL</b>
<b>Comment:</b>			
<p>The Leeds Civic Trust Planning Committee has considered the above planning application for a new terminal and associated works and wishes to make the following comments on the proposal (drawings as displayed on 4 May 2020).</p>			
<b>1. THE LONG-TERM FUTURE OF THE AIRPORT</b>			
<p>The Trust appreciates that LBA operates within a policy framework and economic environment which sees the development of opportunities for people to travel by air as a benefit to the region and the nation - this has been the objective of a wide variety of stakeholders for many decades. However, in recent years there has been a sea-change in attitudes to flying as evidenced by the growing environmental movement - people are looking more carefully at alternatives to flying, as best demonstrated in Sweden. New high-speed rail services will allow more European trips to be made with a lower carbon footprint (the rebirth of continental sleepers is evidence of this trend) and these will be extended to the UK within a decade.</p> <p>To that end, is there a need for a fundamental review of the nation's approach to flying, which is acknowledged as being the most damaging source of CO<sub>2</sub> per passenger carried, albeit lower than road traffic by quantum? Should flying be 'rationed' to those journeys which cannot be made by other means? Would such an approach result in a concentration of flights into a number of regional super-hubs which would be reached by low carbon ground transport? "Taking the train to the plane" has become commonplace for many continental airports.</p> <p>If such an approach were to be adopted, is there a future for LBA given the development of a high-speed rail service which will take passengers to Manchester Airport in 40 minutes? We appreciate that this will involve a radical rethink of national policy but is that coming anyway, particularly following the Covid19 crisis? Should we really be investing significant capital in infrastructure which may not be required within a decade?</p>			
<b>2. THE EXISTING TERMINAL AND ITS FUTURE</b>			
<p>We appreciate that the existing terminal is not an attractive building and difficult to operate, and that there have been several unsuccessful attempts to modernise and/or extend the building. However, there is significant embedded carbon in the building. Given this and the changed situation for air travel with the Covid19 pandemic, we suggest that the option of development of the existing terminal should be given further consideration.</p>			



We suggest that consideration could be given to the following:

- 'filling in' the open area between the two wings to create extensive new customer facilities while utilising the existing terminal for back-of-house facilities. We acknowledge that the work could mean significant disruption for some time but key facilities would be included in the new build element
- it is suggested that the existing arrangement leads to extensive busing of passengers or long walks along the 'bus shelter' - however, as the proposed terminal is also at one end of the new walkway, this 'long march' would also be required for many passengers using the new site and a better walkway could be provided from the existing terminal
- the existing terminal is in a better location for bus access from the Harrogate Road, whilst not being significantly further from any proposed or existing rail station - the new terminal would lengthen journeys from Bradford to Harrogate as buses would need to deviate further to serve the airport and the new terminal will be further away from the Viking Car Park area (so generating additional traffic and pollution)
- we note that additional information has been provided on the long-term future of the existing terminal area should this be taken out of use but the proposals made are very sketchy - there should be further clarity on the type of commercial development proposed as this could impact upon general transport infrastructure and any resulting travel plans.

### **3. DESIGN OF THE NEW TERMINAL BUILDING**

The Planning Committee has had the benefit of an early presentation of initial plans and it is pleased to note that several of the suggestions we made at the time have been adopted in the submitted design.

- The overall concept for the terminal building is appropriate for the site and, were it to go ahead, it should provide a far better passenger experience and a more acceptable gateway to Yorkshire for visitors - the location offers opportunities for extensive views out which will make the terminal lighter and more pleasant for users.
- We welcome the relocation of the bus stops to the front of the terminal. It is important that consideration be given to the 'comfort' of those arriving by public transport, which should be the default route. If this mode is to be encouraged, facilities should be on the lines seen at many European airports. Therefore, we would like to see covered bus/taxi drop-off areas with covered links to the terminal incorporated in the design - this is particularly important given the airport's exposed location. As a minimum, a fully enclosed bus shelter running the length of the bus bays should be provided, rather than the short 'single-stop' versions shown on the plans - as a waiting room is provided for those using the remote parking facility, should this building be extended to provide space for bus passengers rather than this being provided some way away in the main terminal entrance area?



- To casual users of airports, the layout at ground floor level (level 05) seems clear and simple - however, as the same lifts take people from the lower ground to check-in and then security, could there be some confusion amongst users?
- The first floor (level 10) is mainly voids and equipment but the layout seems clear enough - our only concern is that there should be sufficient toilet provision between the planes and the immigration queue as this is the first place many passengers visit after landing (the space allocated on the plan seems rather small).
- With regard to the second floor (level 15), we have some suggestions as to how this could be improved to enhance the passenger experience:
  - relocate the lounges to the zone identified for F&B immediately beyond the Duty-Free shop - here there could be views out over the void above the check-in hall and then out to the countryside beyond
  - relocate the F&B areas displaced above into the space now occupied by the lounges where, given appropriate design and levels, waiting passengers could have views out over the PBZ to the planes beyond - without this, there is no location for those waiting for gates to be announced to wait with daylight or views
  - relocate the toilets to the far north end of the concourse so that passengers called to their gates pass immediately close by to them before descending to the pier.
- Along the pier, while some people may like a longer walk to/from the plane before spending hours cramped into a metal 'tube', we feel that consideration should be given to moving walkways along all or part of the route to/from the gates - we assume that buggies will be available for those with limited mobility.
- While we understand that the space required along the pier for departures is far greater than for arrivals (so putting the former on the ground floor for economy is an obvious solution), it is unfortunate that, being at a lower level, there is very little daylight in or views out from the PBZs where people could be waiting for some time. Is there an opportunity to open up views out of the airport from the outside of the pier given the levels are such that there will be little opportunity to look in?
- We are concerned about the absence of appropriate toilet facilities in the PBZs. Many passengers use toilets immediately before boarding their flight and, although there are some accessible WCs provided along the pier, these would be insufficient to serve a couple of full planes, particularly if these are delayed. The alternative is a long walk back to the terminal building (will there be up escalators?) and this could result in delays if passengers are missing when flights are called.
- With regard to the overall appearance of the terminal, we feel this has the potential to be an outstanding building if appropriately designed, detailed and constructed. A key will be extent of glazing to solid panels, with a higher proportion of glazing helping to deliver a 'beacon effect on the skyline. We welcome the improved elevational design of the pier leading to the gates (since the initial presentation) - this will be a very prominent element on the skyline and as such has the potential to be a defining marker for the airport.



- Overall, we welcome the plans for landscaping. Given the upland location of the airport and the prevalence of wind we suggest the plans be reviewed to ensure that there is sufficient screening e.g. in the plaza area which is quite open.

#### **4. TRAVEL PLANS**

Reference is made to the existence of a travel plan but this does not appear to have been made available as part of the planning application. We feel that this is a major omission. The following comments are based on the environmental statement.

- We welcome the stated intention to provide a Sustainable Travel Fund, some of which is proposed to be used for improvements to bus services including more frequent services. We feel that it is important that this be covered by a Section 106 agreement.
- A related issue is that we understand that rerouting of the 747 bus is being proposed via the new tendering process. The route through Yeadon is valuable for airport workers as well as those flying from LBA. A concern is that these changes seem to be being made without any consultation with local residents and amenity groups.
- There seems to be a discrepancy between the application form which indicates provision of cycle spaces is to be increased from 20 spaces to 120 and the Design & Access statement (para 5.2.2) which proposes provision of 20 spaces at the new terminal and 20 at the old terminal. Given the expected number of employees (stated as 3,870 FTE) and the city's strategy to increase levels of cycling, we would see 120 spaces as being the minimum required. We accept that not many passengers will cycle to the airport but this might be an option for some and secure cycle parking should be provided (lockers alongside valet parking building?).
- Regarding car parking, we note and welcome the intention to limit the number of parking spaces to the current 7,601, some of which will be relocated to the Viking Car Park to enable construction of the new terminal building. Provision has been made for an additional 737 car spaces if demand proves this to be 'absolutely necessary'. We think it essential that this eventuality is covered by a Section 106 agreement and that this should ensure that any increase in car parking would be depend on proposals for improved public transport having been implemented. The additional parking should not be permitted to extend right up to the A658 roundabout, with provision made for a landscaped bund to screen parked vehicles from passing traffic.



- The application refers to the proposed Airport Parkway station and we welcome the passive provision for a shuttle bus route into the terminal site. We suggest that this requirement should be covered by a Section 106 agreement. However, the Trust still feel that the proposed station is not the best use of limited investment capital. There is already a station at Horsforth some 1.5km south of the proposed location at Bramhope Tunnel and this can be reached by a dedicated busway through open country. Space for appropriate facilities at Horsforth can be created by relocating the existing Woodland Timbers complex to an alternative more suitable site, at what we would assume would be a lower cost than building a new station from scratch. The use of Horsforth would have a number of other advantages:
  - the shuttle bus journey time would not be significantly longer than from the proposed site
  - there are already long platforms here so the London to Harrogate trains are able to stop, as are the fast Leeds/Harrogate services
  - there is an existing turnback siding, so a Leeds to Horsforth shuttle could provide a more frequent service - perhaps a tram-train running into the city centre and maybe, in the longer-term, an extension of the siding to reach the airport?
  - existing bus services pass Horsforth station, so providing a route for travellers from a wide area of North Leeds to reach the airport - there is also a large walk-in/cycle-in population in the immediate vicinity
  - any parkway station designed to capture those driving in from Wharfedale and beyond could be built in a more accessible location closer to main roads (e.g. Arthington).
- Para 4.12 in the Summary of Planning Case (Quod) states: '*Whilst the delivery programme for the new station is not yet fixed, this application demonstrates the replacement terminal is not reliant on it*'. This should not be the case with the proposed expansion of the number/times of flights, reinforcing our point that there should be a S106 agreement to ensure that there is a shuttle bus link to a station in Horsforth prior to the opening of the new terminal.



## 5. EXTENSION OF OPERATING HOURS

With regard to the extension of operating hours, the Trust is unable to give a definitive view on this matter given the technical nature of the arguments. However, we feel that the whole development strategy for the airport needs to be resolved first, particularly given that major changes in travel patterns are likely following the Covid19 pandemic and the overall response to the climate emergency.

The key justification in the planning application appears to be alignment with other airports in the UK but there is no simple explanation of current restrictions/penalties which are applied at competitors (e.g. proportion & number of night-time flights, fines on noisy operators, a realistic night flight noise quota, etc). It would be valuable to see some typical timetables which could be implemented at LBA with and without the revised operating hours (perhaps minimum change, expected case and worst case - the latter would be if relaxed restrictions were to be utilised to the maximum) - how many flights per hour over what periods?

While new aircraft are getting quieter, there is concern that the current Covid19 situation will have a major impact on airline finances, with many putting off aircraft replacement as fuel is now cheaper. Some argue that the present model of filling planes with cheap seats could become totally unviable. If this is the case and planes need to fly with fewer passengers, will airlines seek to keep them in the air over longer hours, so increasing night flights? Or will the higher fares which would be required, limit the number of passengers flying to the extent that routes/airlines will disappear?

It is essential to consider the impact on local communities and any regulatory regime must be fair to those living and working under the flightpaths. Any agreement must involve monitoring stations along key flightpaths (standard and alternative) up to 10km from the airport, linked to appropriate penalties for infringements.

## 6. GENERAL COMMENT

Clearly a large amount of material has been made available for this planning application as is appropriate for a major scheme such as this. However, it appears on the planning portal in what seems to be a random order, e.g. components of the design and access statement do not follow on from each other, with appendices separated from the main document and not in sequence. In the interests of promoting accessibility of such plans to the public, we suggest that it would be helpful if documents were loaded onto the planning portal in a logical sequence, particularly for a major planning application such as this.

Comment by:	
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