

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5 December 2005 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 4.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Evans (Chair); Councillors Ashford, Mrs Blacklock, Mrs Compton, Ms De-Lara-Bond, Kinson, Mrs Knight and Windybank.

644. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute Number 645 – Coventry Airport, Land adjacent to South Apron, Siskin Parkway West, Middlemarch Business Park, Coventry

Councillor Ashford declared a personal interest because he worked for Parcellforce.

645. COVENTRY AIRPORT, LAND ADJACENT TO SOUTH APRON, SISKIN PARKWAY WEST, MIDDLEMARCH BUSINESS PARK, COVENTRY

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Planning and Engineering regarding Planning Application W2004/1939. The purpose of the report was to advise Members of an additional offer of public transport provision put forward by the appellant (WMIAL) and to seek Members views on whether the improved public transport offer overcame their concerns on this matter as expressed at the meeting of 22/28 September 2005 (Minute number 480 refers).

As the Inquiry was to commence on the 10th January 2006, the date of 9th December 2005 had been set by the Planning Inspectorate for the exchange of proofs of evidence. In order to be able to finalise the preparation of evidence by that date, it was necessary for the Committee to take a view on the revised, public transport offer.

The approach to the development of public transport at airports was set out in government advice which required all airports with scheduled services to establish an Airport Transport Forum (ATF):

“to draw up and agree challenging short and long term targets for decreasing the proportion of journeys to the airport made by private car while increasing the share of journeys made by other modes including buses and coaches, trains and light rail, taxis and private hire vehicles, bicycle, walking and combinations of these modes.

To devise a strategy for achieving those targets, drawing on the best practice available. Where appropriate, this should cover the management of traffic on local and trunk roads providing access to airports as well as promoting alternatives to the private car. The strategy should also include green transport plans to cover commuting and business travel for all employees based at airports and to oversee implementation of the strategy.”

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The draft S106 agreement follows the pattern required by government advice and sets out the way in which the approach to public transport will be developed. At the meeting of the 28th September 2005, members considered that the level of public transport (an hourly service between the airport and Coventry rail and bus stations) to which the airport was committed at that stage was insufficient to meet the RSS policy requirement.

Further discussions have been held with the airport which had resulted in the offer of additional commitments to public transport provision, as set out in the letter received on 24 November 2005. The improvements related to two different sources of passengers/employees

a) Airport links to Coventry. – doubling of shuttle bus frequency to every 30 minutes

At the time of the Committee of the 28th September, the draft Heads of Terms of the S106 agreement proposed an hourly bus shuttle from the city to the Airport. It was then proposed to double the frequency of the provision. The increase to this level of frequency will remove the need to consider timing of arrival with a specific bus departure time and make use of the bus a more attractive option for passengers and employees of the airport.

b) Creation of public transport links between the airport and the Warwick/Leamington area

The airport recognized the benefits of improving potential public transport links to the Warwick/Leamington area. The issue had been the point at which the likely passenger flows from this area are such that the provision of public transport would be justifiable. This was not a matter that could be immediately determined as it would require review of passenger flow movements, future scheduling developments and assessment of the most effective routing and stopping points etc. All was properly within the remit of the ATF to consider as it develops its work. However, in recognition of the need to commit to the provision of public transport linkages, the airport had proposed the following:

- that before the opening of the new terminal, a trigger point of passenger/employee numbers from the urban areas of Warwick District will have to be agreed with the Council, taking advice from the ATF and its continuing work
- That upon reaching that trigger point, the airport will be committed to submit details of an appropriate level of bus transport from the urban areas of Warwick District to be agreed with the Council, taking advice from the ATF on the necessary level of provision, and within a six month period of agreement to that provision, provide the service for a period of 5 years.

Both these proposals were significant additions to the public transport offer that was previously before the Committee. They were targeted at both the main areas of population from which passenger/employee generation can be expected. Whilst these were both positive improvements to the provision of public transport, they were not necessarily all the improvements that may be likely to come about as annual passenger numbers increase. It was not unreasonable to expect further developments to come via the work of the ATF

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in the longer term. However, the above were two specific improvements to the public transport offer that were not before members in September 2005.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The additional public transport proposal put forward by WMIAL, namely the doubling of the frequency of the shuttle bus from Coventry and the provision of public transport from the Warwick/Leamington area upon the achievement of a threshold number of passengers and employees to be agreed before the opening of the new terminal meets the concerns of the Committee in respect of the bus service as expressed at its meeting of 22/28 September as set out in minute number 480 (3).
- (2) Subject to the incorporation of the additional proposals into a formal obligation otherwise including all the Heads of Terms as referred to at the meeting of 22/28 September (see minute number 480 (3)(1a)) and the imposition of appropriate conditions, the Council considers that the development is considered in accordance with the development plan, subject to the relevant Highways Authorities and Highways Agency being satisfied with regard to the Surface access impacts of the development and surface access mitigation measures offered by the applicant (see minute number 480 (1b)).

(The meeting ended at 4.40 pm)