

[See the attached file]

Hello <Contact:26>

**LONDON ASHFORD AIRPORT SUBMITS PLANNING APPLICATIONS
FOR NEW
TERMINAL BUILDING AND RUNWAY EXTENSION**

London Ashford Airport today (Friday 15 December) submitted two planning applications to Shepway District Council as part of its phased multi-million pound redevelopment programme for the site at Lydd in Kent.

The applications are for a new terminal building capable of handling up to 500,000 passengers a year and also a proposed extension to the existing airport runway.

The airport is licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority for general aviation, passenger flights and freight transport, and its existing terminal building can support up to 300,000 passengers per annum. The proposed runway extension will allow planes to operate at Lydd with full payloads, thus enabling the airport to offer a greater range of more distant destinations to passengers.

LAA proposes to increase the length of the existing runway by just under 20%, from 1,505m to 1,799m, adding a new starter extension at its northern end. The cost of the runway extension is put at ?2m and it is expected to take around four months to construct.

Airport managing director Zaher Deir said the runway extension would not affect the type of aircraft or numbers of passengers would pass through the airport, but would allow any aircraft flying out of Lydd to carry greater fuel loads thus permitting a greater range of destinations to be serviced than at present. "The increase in runway length will also have an added benefit of allowing the same number of passengers to be carried as previously with a

smaller number of aircraft movements.

"As part of our overall redevelopment proposals for Lydd, separate applications are also being submitted for the construction of a new two-phase terminal building. The first phase would allow for up to 500,000 passengers a year, and the second would increase this capability to allow two million passengers to pass through the airport each year," added Mr Deir.

The proposed new terminal building is subject to two separate planning applications, each covering the two phases of building development.

Phase one is a detailed planning application for a new terminal building of two linked rectangular structures with shallow curved roofs and floorspace of 81,860sq ft (7,605sqm) to accommodate 500,000 passengers a year. The construction period for phase one of the terminal is scheduled to last around 18 months from 2009, becoming operational in 2010.

A huge number of jobs will be created if the applications are approved. The runway extension will provide four full-time equivalent construction jobs, with an additional 180 direct jobs created when the extension is operational and the airport is accommodating 300,000 passengers a year.

In addition, it's estimated that phase one of the terminal building will create 28 full-time equivalent construction jobs and once operational 300 direct jobs. Phase two will support 15 full-time equivalent construction jobs and during operation some 1,200 direct jobs - making a total of 43 construction and 1,500 direct jobs created as a result of phases one and two.

Zaher Deir said: "These employment vacancies should be taken up by the local labour market on Romney Marsh and the surrounding districts and this will do much to help regenerate the regional economy and breathe new life into local communities.

"The development of Lydd airport should also promote inward investment

and benefit local companies through the option of flying from LAA to a wider choice of locations than at present. A thriving airport is also expected to influence new businesses in their choice of location due to improved services offered by the airport," he added.

The applications are supported by a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment. The EIA covers a wide range of issues including land use, ground conditions, water resources, terrestrial and aquatic ecology, bird conservation and hazard management, landscape and visual amenity, traffic and transport, air quality, noise and vibration and socio-economic issues.

Shepway District Council will be advertising details of the planning applications in the local press and on its website (www.shepway.gov.uk) - copies of Lydd's applications will be made available for the public to study.

For more information about LAA's development plans, e-mail frontdesk@lydd-airport.co.uk, call 01797 322411 or visit www.lydd-airport.co.uk

Notes to editors:

Over the past three years more than ?20m has been spent on helping to transform London Ashford Airport (Lydd) into a modern regional airport. This has included investment in resurfacing the runway, upgrading instrument landing systems, the creation of an aircraft parking apron covering a 13 acre site, a new air traffic control system and new VIP terminal, as well as new departure and arrival facilities for commercial traffic and establishing offices for Immigration and Customs.

PRESS CONTACTS:

For more information, call Leah Taylor or Jeff Sims, at Edwards Harvey PR, on 01622 604600 or e-mail leah.taylor@edwardsharvey.com or jeff.sims@edwardsharvey.com

To unsubscribe please reply with unsubscribe in the subject line.