

Airports Commission  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Sanctuary Building  
20 Great Smith Street  
LONDON  
SW1P 3BT

25 July 2014

Dear Sirs

### **Discussion Paper 6: Utilisation of the UK's Existing Airport Capacity**

We are pleased to submit the comments of Robin Hood Airport Doncaster Sheffield (RHADS), which is owned by Peel Investments (RHADS) Limited, part of the Peel Group.

These representations should be read alongside those of the following organisations:

- 1 Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership, with whom the Airport works closely to ensure it maximises its contribution to the local economy.
- 2 The Regional and Business Airport Group (RABA), of which the Airport is a member and which represents the interests of smaller regional airports.
- 3 Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, the Local Authority within which the Airport is located.

We have considered the questions raised by the Airports Commission in Chapter 7 of the Discussion Paper on a topic basis and our comments are set out in the separate note attached. In this cover letter, we set out the particular attributes of RHADS and how it can contribute to an overall delivery strategy for additional aviation capacity.

We enclose two copies of our document "*Vision for Growth – Least Cost, Least Congestion, Least Carbon*", a prospectus prepared in July 2013 and submitted to the Commission in an earlier consultation, which describes the potential of the site to accommodate future growth. This provides an analysis from the point of view of strategic connectivity and the role RHADS could play in providing transitional capacity, whilst new airport development in the South East is planned and comes on-stream (which will take a number of years). This is relevant in particular for that part of the catchment north of London, which has convenient access to Doncaster via the M1, A1(M), M18 and also can be reached quickly by rail - from Peterborough in 48 minutes, Stevenage in 1 hour 18 minutes and London in 1 hour 34 minutes.

The Airport is situated within the Sheffield City Region, an economy which has an output of £24.7 billion annually and is home to 55,000 businesses. Sheffield, the UK's fourth city, has a strong representation in the specialist metals, advanced manufacturing and logistical sectors, including international companies in the aviation sector. RHADS is identified as a spatial priority in the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan and forms part of the UK Logistics Hub (<http://www.logisticshubuk.com/>). We would be pleased if you would consider these proposals in the context of the phasing and delivery of new capacity in the South East. The proposals have been endorsed by the Mayor of Doncaster, Ross Jones, and James Newman, Chair of the Sheffield City Region LEP. Our scheme advisors are the IBI Group, who have worldwide experience in airport development and their experience is described in the brochure.

A new link road called the Finningley and Rossington Regeneration Route Scheme (FARRRS) is currently under construction and this will provide a direct link to the Airport from the M18. The £67 million FARRRS road will significantly reduce journey time between Doncaster Sheffield Airport and Sheffield City Centre. Construction began in October 2013, with completion expected in January 2016. When complete, the journey time will reduce to just 25 minutes. The project delivers transformational benefits to the Airport catchment, bringing a further 500,000 people to within 30 minutes' drive time (an increase of 80%) and a further 1 million people within a 60 minute drive time (an increase of 20%). The potential also exists to take a rail spur from the East Coast Main Line, which is close by, directly through the site and to build a railway station adjacent to the terminal - which would be only 1 hour 20 minutes travel time from Kings Cross. This has been costed at £30 million to construct, a modest sum compared to some infrastructure schemes.

As one of the UK's newest airports, opened in 2005, RHADS is future proofed for expansion (the terminal is a modular design) and with an unconstrained site, has the ability to accommodate a throughput of 24 million passengers per annum (with a second terminal). With £150 million invested on site in up-to-date airfield infrastructure and a further £123 million of investment delivered or planned to enhance surface access, the site is poised for growth, which could be delivered immediately at a very manageable cost.

The runway at almost 2,900 metres (with the scope to extend to over 3,000 metres) is a particular asset and the Airport already accommodates medium haul routes. The Airport has also developed a specialism in routes to Eastern Europe and is the second UK base for Wizz Air.

There already exists planning permission for Business Park developments within the wider Airport estate totalling 250,000 square metres and the site also possesses the ability to accommodate a freight transshipment hub of 45,000 square metres and a Maintenance Repair Overhaul facility of 55,000 square metres. All the land needed for the development of these proposals, 1,760 acres in total, is in the ownership of the Peel Group. The site has the advantage of not being in a semi-rural area and it is therefore not constrained by noise or air quality issues.

The Sheffield City Region is also one of the UK's leading logistics locations within the new iPort development by Verdion, accessed from FARRRS, creating one of the UK's largest multimodal freight facilities. Logistics already contribute c£930 million to the Sheffield City Region economy and is identified by the LEP as one of the region's top five priorities and the fastest growing sectors in terms of private sector job creation. Doncaster Sheffield Airport's central location and facilities offer the capability to serve the UK's air freight needs.

We would also refer you to the submission of Durham Tees Valley Airport, also part of the Peel Group, in which we make some wider policy points relevant to regional airports.

We would be pleased to have the opportunity to meet with the Commission to discuss further our Vision for Growth proposals.

Yours sincerely



Peter Nears  
Strategic Planning Director

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