

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## Cabinet Member for Prosperity

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**Date of Meeting:** 13<sup>th</sup> September 2010  
**Report of:** Stuart Penny, Planning Policy Manager  
**Subject/Title:** Pre-Publication Partial Consultation on Manchester's Core Strategy

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### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out Manchester City Council's proposed policy approach to managing the growth of Manchester Airport through its Core Strategy, so that the growth requirements for the airport set out by the Government can be achieved i.e. of accommodating 45 million passengers per annum by 2030.

### 2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Prosperity approve that Cheshire East Council support Manchester City Council's policy approach to dealing with growth at Manchester Airport as detailed in its Core Strategy, subject to reference being made in the policy to ensure that detailed planning application proposals for airport expansion show that they would have no adverse impact on the highways network.

### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 In addition to making more efficient use of the existing operational area, Manchester Airport will need to expand its operational area over the plan period of the Core Strategy in order to grow to meet the capacity of 45 mppa as set out in the Future of Air Transport White Paper (2003) and amended in the UK Air Passenger Demand and CO2 Forecasts (2009).
- 3.2 The areas for expansion required to achieve this growth will no longer serve a Green Belt function over the lifetime of the Core Strategy, and there are exceptional circumstances which allow for revision of the Green Belt boundary through the Core Strategy.
- 3.3 The proposed South East Manchester Multi-Modal Study (SEMMMS) relief road will provide improved highway access to the airport from the east and assist the airport in meeting its expansion plans. However, funding for the scheme is currently uncertain and it is important that the policy is clear that the impact on the transport network, including the highway, will be a factor in determining planning applications for expansion.

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

4.1 All Wards but particularly Bucklow, Knutsford and Wilmslow South.

#### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

5.1 Councillors A Knowles, J Macrae, G Walton, O Hunter, T Ranfield, S Wilkinson, G Barton, W Fitzgerald and R Menlove.

#### **6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health**

6.1 N/A

#### **8.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

8.1 N/A

#### **9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

9.1 None for this Authority. Adjoining LPAs are required to consult this Council regarding the content of their Development Plan Documents.

#### **10.0 Risk Management**

10.1 N/A

#### **11.0 Background and Options**

11.1 Manchester City Council has published its 'pre-publication partial consultation' on its Core Strategy for consultation between 4<sup>th</sup> August and 15<sup>th</sup> September 2010. Following this partial consultation, statutory consultation on the 'Publication Draft' of the Core Strategy will take place in November.

11.2 Consultation on the 'Refining Options' stage took place in April and May 2009, followed by consultation on the 'Proposed Option' between November 2009 and February 2010. This Proposed Option put forward three possible options for managing growth at the airport, and this latest consultation now sets out the City Council's preferred option for the airport.

11.3 Cheshire East Council had previously supported the City Council's option 2 which broadly speaking was to:

*"review the Green Belt boundary in the current operational area against the tests in PPG2 to determine which areas meet PPG2 requirements. Remove any areas which have been identified as no longer serving a Green Belt function. Prepare an Area Action Plan to consider proposals for further expansion to meet the capacity targets of the Future of Air Transport White Paper. An Area Action Plan would be required to demonstrate:*

- *The need for and proposed use of specific areas of land*
- *There is no adverse impact on the highways network and surface access improvements are proposed to accommodate growth in passenger numbers*
- *Maximum possible reductions in noise*
- *Any adverse impact on areas of international or national conservation, ecological and landscape importance is avoided and where this is not possible appropriate mitigation measures are put in place to compensate for any adverse impact*
- *A further review of the Green Belt in areas identified for expansion and removal of the Green Belt only where it can be justified in terms of the tests of PPG2.”*

- 11.4 Following the publication of further evidence relating to the airport expansion and an independent review of the Green Belt in the vicinity of the airport, the City Council has chosen option 3 as its preferred approach. In addition to reviewing the Green Belt boundary in the current operational area, this option will also review the Green Belt boundary in the proposed expansion areas through the Core Strategy.
- 11.5 It is considered that the additional evidence published alongside this latest consultation addresses the points above that an Area Action Plan would have been required to demonstrate under the previous option 2.
- 11.6 In addition, PPG2 stresses the importance of establishing Green Belt boundaries that will endure. It is clear that in preparing new Development Plans, proposals affecting Green Belts should be related to a time-scale which is longer than for other aspects of the Plan. LPAs should be satisfied that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period and should consider ‘safeguarding’ land in this case. Although the format of Development Plans has changed since the publication of PPG2. It is clear that it is appropriate to set Green Belt boundaries which will endure over the lifetime of the Core Strategy.

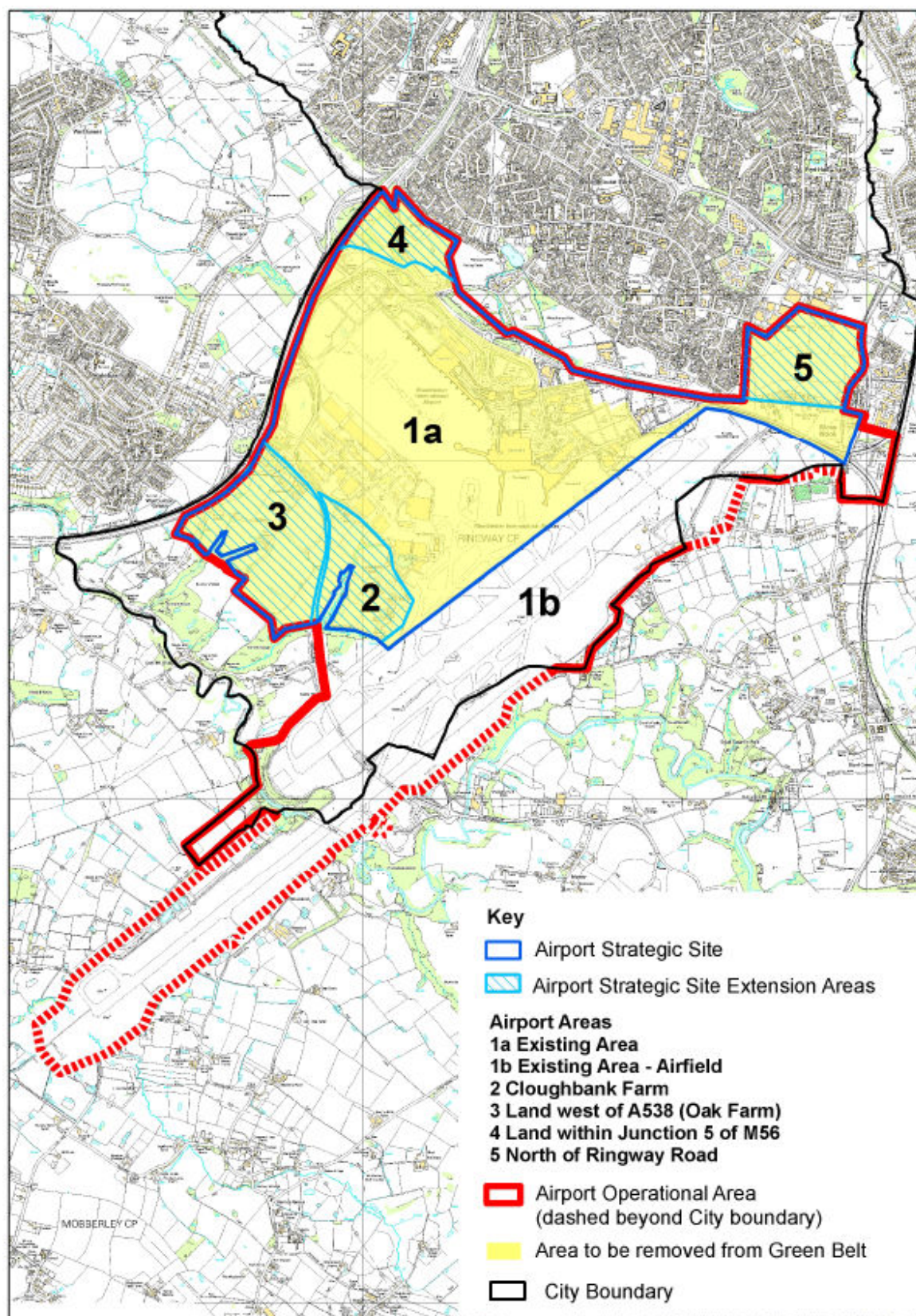
### **The Need For and Proposed Use of Specific Areas of Land**

- 11.7 National Policy on Aviation is set out in The Future of Air Transport White Paper (2003), which concludes that capacity at Manchester Airport “*should in principle continue to grow to accommodate additional demand up to around 50 mppa by 2030*”. This figure has more recently been reduced to 45 mppa in to take into account the impact of climate change policies and economic forecasts in the UK Air Passenger Demand and CO2 Forecasts January 2009. The principle of growth of Manchester Airport to accommodate this number of passengers has therefore been set. The question is how to accommodate the growth.
- 11.8 The on-site requirements for accommodating 45 mppa by 2030 are set out in some detail in the airport’s ‘Need for Land’ document but the main principle of development is of land-use efficiency and technological improvement. The approach is for redevelopment of land within the existing boundary as far as possible and activities that do not need direct connection to the airfield moved to the site periphery, or offsite altogether.

- 11.9 For its passenger throughput, Manchester Airport is already one of the most land-efficient airports in Europe. Despite this, much of the increased capacity will come from efficiency improvements within the current operational area. When running at capacity, the airport currently processes 40,000 passengers per hectare of operational area annually. By 2030, this is projected to increase to 62,500 passengers per hectare of operational area annually.
- 11.10 Appendix A in the Need for Land document sets out how operation uses at the airport will be developed in the most efficient manner.
- 11.11 In addition to the more efficient use of the current operation area, additional land will also be required. Areas proposed for expansion are shown on the map overleaf as areas 2, 3, 4 and 5. Area 1a is the existing built area and area 1b is the existing airfield.
- 11.12 The City Council propose to designate the whole of the existing and expansion areas (excluding the airfield) as a Strategic Site. It is also proposed to remove the Strategic Site from the Green Belt.
- 11.13 The table below shows which uses are expected to be accommodated in each area in 2030:

Area	Area reference in MAG Masterplan	Uses
1a – Existing Area	N/A	Terminal, taxiways, aircraft apron, ancillary operational facilities, offices, hotels and other uses, surface access and car parking
1b – Existing Area (Airfield)	N/A	Runways, taxiways, airfield, operational and ancillary facilities, landscape mitigation, utilities and car parking
2 – Cloughbank Farm	A	Taxiways, aircraft apron, aircraft maintenance, operational facilities, cargo facilities and landscape mitigation
3 – Land to the west of the A538 (Oak Farm)	E	Operational facilities, cargo facilities and car parking and landscape mitigation
4 – Land within and adjacent to Junction 5 of the M56	C	Commercial / cargo development including airline offices and hotel with a new vehicle access to Thorley Lane
5 – North of Ringway Road	B	Surface access and car parking with new vehicle access to Ringway Road and Styal Road

- 11.14 It is considered that the evidence set out in the Airport Masterplan and the Need for Land document demonstrates the need for and proposed use of specific areas of land.





## Highway & Transport Network Impacts

11.15 The Council's Strategic Highways and Transportation Section have been consulted and have provided the following response:

"The Ground Transport Strategy (GTS) will need to be updated to reflect the airport's growth aspirations setting out options to maximise access by sustainable modes of transport from Cheshire East. The strategy will need to reflect the decision on the South East Manchester Multi-Modal Study (SEMMMS) relief road scheme and, should the scheme not go ahead, or be substantially delayed, set out alternative options to provide improved highway access from the East. This may include capacity improvements to existing routes.

The strategy will need to demonstrate the extent to which surface access and car parking arrangements encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling. Options should include influencing the rail franchising renewal process to maximise connectivity and support the role of the airport as an emerging public transport hub. Service frequency from Crewe and beyond is currently poor, especially at weekends. Consideration should also be given to improving bus access, including assessing the potential for express services from areas of the borough which currently have limited access to the airport, such as Poynton and Macclesfield." Other options to consider may include suitable park and ride schemes, perhaps linked to the rail network.

11.16 The suggested policy for the airport in the Core Strategy makes no specific mention of the need to ensure that detailed planning application proposals for airport expansion show that they would have no adverse impact on the highways network. This is considered important in view of the current uncertainty over whether the SEMMS scheme is to proceed.

## Surface Access Improvements, Reductions in Noise and Impacts on Conservation, Ecology and Landscape.

11.17 The proposed policy wording requires that all future development proposed as part of the airport expansion would need to demonstrate that it contributes to the achievement of aims in these areas.

11.18 The proposed policy wording requires that:

*"All development proposed as part of the Airport expansion should seek to ensure that any environmental effects of development are assessed at the planning application stage to ensure these create no greater negative impact than those identified in the Axis Environmental Baseline and Assessment reports. Any effects should demonstrate they can be mitigated or compensated, in particular:*

- Minimise any adverse impact on areas of international or national conservation, ecological and landscape value. In particular, development should avoid the Cotterill Clough SSSI. Where it is not possible to avoid harm, mitigation measures to compensate for any adverse impact will be necessary. Development within the expansion areas must implement the mitigation measures agreed with the City Council, informed by an up to date environmental assessment;*

- *Retain or relocate the allotments in Area 4;*
- *Demonstrate the extent to which surface access and car parking arrangements encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling,*
- *Seek the maximum possible reductions in noise through compliance with the Manchester Airport Noise Action Plan and Manchester Airport Environment Plan;*
- *Demonstrate that the number of people affected by atmospheric pollution is minimised and the extent to which any impact can be mitigated; and*
- *Improve access to training and job opportunities particularly for people in Wythenshawe and the local area.*

11.19 In addition, Appendix D in the Need for Land document provides a detailed summary of site constraints for each of the proposed operational area extensions and sets out proposals for mitigation measures in each case.

### **Review of the Green Belt**

11.20 Entec has carried out a review of the Green Belt in the vicinity of Manchester Airport. The existing operational area and each of the proposed extension areas have been assessed against each of the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, as set out in PPG2. The outcomes are summarised in the table below.

11.21 Although the existing area (1a) no longer serves a Green Belt function, the report concludes that some parts of the proposed extension areas do serve a Green Belt function. However, PPG2 does state that existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless alterations to the structure plan have been approved, or other exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

Site	Purpose of including land in the Green Belt				
	Prevent Unrestricted Sprawl	Prevent Neighbouring Towns Merging	Safeguard Countryside from Encroachment	Preserve the Setting and Special Character of Historic Towns	Assist in Urban Regeneration
1a – Existing area	No harm	No harm	No harm	Limited harm	No harm
2 – Cloughbank Farm	Limited harm	No harm	Moderate harm	Limited harm	No harm
3 – Land West of A538 (Oak Farm)	Significant harm	Moderate harm	Moderate harm	Limited harm	Limited harm
4 – Land Within Junction 5 of M56	Limited harm	No harm	No harm	Limited harm	Limited harm
5 – North of Ringway Road	Limited harm	Moderate harm	Limited harm	Limited harm	No harm

11.22 Following the change of Government, the RSS was revoked by the Secretary of State in July 2010. However, it is considered that the evidence (and debate at the Public Examination) relating to the RSS remains a material considerations and a sound basis for developing policy. The RSS required that plans and strategies should support the economic activity generated and sustained by the region's airports and emphasised the importance of Manchester Airport as a key economic driver for the North of England. Development of the Manchester Core Strategy Proposed Option had followed the requirements of the RSS prior to its revocation in that *"in determining requirements for the expansion of an airport beyond its existing boundary, plans and strategies should take account of:*

- *The scope for intensification and rationalisation of activities and facilities within the existing boundary;*
- *The scope for relocating existing activities or facilities off-site;*
- *The scope for developing proposed activities or facilities off-site."*

11.23 In addition, as a result of evidence gathered through the RSS development process, the RSS policy on Green Belts made specific reference to the possibility of making detailed changes in Green Belt boundaries to accommodate the expansion of Manchester Airport.

11.24 In the case of Manchester Airport, it is considered that there are a number of exceptional circumstances which justify the review of the Green Belt through the Core Strategy:



- 11.25 There is clearly a conflict between the national policy set out in the Air Transport White Paper for the growth of Manchester Airport, and its designation within the Green Belt. However, the Inspector at North Somerset Replacement Local Plan Enquiry confirmed that the Air Transport White Paper can be considered as an exceptional circumstance to justify an amendment to the Green Belt boundary to ensure its delivery:  
*“Consequently, I consider that the test of PPG2 concerning a strategic basis for a change to the Green Belt boundary at Bristol International Airport is met. Even if this were not so, then I consider that the publication of the Airport’s White Paper as a statement of Government policy constitutes an ‘exceptional circumstance’ to warrant such action”*
- 11.26 By its very nature, operations at Manchester Airport are at a fixed location which cannot be accommodated elsewhere. Many operational uses require direct access to the existing airfield therefore must be on land directly adjoining the airfield. There are also no suitable non-Green Belt sites.
- 11.27 Within the city-region (including Cheshire East), Manchester Airport is a key economic driver, adding value to the attractiveness of the area for inward investment and indigenous businesses. The airport also plays an important role in attracting inbound tourism to the region, and is a significant provider of employment in its own right. The Airport have indicated that in 2009 it facilitated over 215,000 Business trips and 570,000 Leisure trips that originated in the Borough, as well as employing over 1300 of our residents i.e. almost 7.5% of the airports total workforce. Therefore, the growth of the airport can be considered a significant catalyst for the economic development of the city-region.

## **Access to Information**

- 12.0 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Stewart House

Designation: Principal Planning Officer

Tel No: 01625 504669

Email: [stewart.house@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:stewart.house@cheshireeast.gov.uk)

- Manchester City Council Pre-publication Partial Consultation on Manchester’s Core Strategy
- Manchester Airport – The Need For Land
- Axis Environmental Baseline Study
- Axis Environmental Assessment
- Entec Green Belt Review
- Manchester Airport Masterplan
- The Future of Air Transport White Paper
- UK Air Passenger Demand and CO2 Forecasts January 2009