

NOTES OF A PRE-INQUIRY MEETING CONCERNING A PLANNING APPLICATION FOR  
A SPOLPORT AT THE ROYAL DOCKS, NEWHAM HELD AT 10.30 AM ON  
FRIDAY 6 MAY 1983

1. The meeting was chaired by Mr M I Montague-Smith BArch MCD RIBA MRTPI, who has been appointed to conduct the forthcoming public inquiry due to open on 8 June 1983. He will be assisted by Air Vice Marshall B P Young CB CBE, who will act as assessor on matters of airport operations, noise, pollution and safety. A Programme Officer will also be appointed to act as liaison between the Inspector and other participants in the inquiry.

2. The following inquiry arrangements were announced:-

Venue: Terrapin Building, Albert Dock Basin.

Sessions: Tuesday to Friday inclusive.

Times: Start, first day 10.30 am, thereafter 10.00 am; lunch adjournment approximately 1.00 to 2.00 pm; finish each day at about 5.00 pm.

In response to a request from the Campaign Against the Airport, the Chairman agreed to hold one or more evening sessions in local community halls. These evening sessions will give the Inspector a chance to hear the views of local people who are unable to attend during the day, and the number of such sessions will depend on how many local people want to speak.

3. Mr David Pearson will be the contact at the Department of the Environment. He can be reached at room C8/15, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 3EB, telephone 212-3172.

4. The Chairman took the names of those representing the main parties at the inquiry and noted the number of witnesses likely to be called and the estimated time for each case. These are listed in Annex A to these notes.

5. The Chairman also made the following requests:-

a. Expert witnesses on both sides should agree as much factual material as possible before the inquiry starts.

b. Standard units of measurement should be agreed in advance.

c. Proofs of evidence and any technical appendices should be circulated at least one week in advance of their presentation (this was subsequently changed to at least two weeks in advance at the suggestion of Mr Hobson, to which there were no objections).

d. In addition to the documents and proofs of evidence submitted at the inquiry to the Inspector and his assessor, an extra copy should be given to the Programme Officer who will keep a library of inquiry documents for reference by the general public. The Chairman stressed the importance of only submitting essential and relevant documents to avoid a proliferation of paper.

e. Each of the main parties was asked to prepare a short, 10 minute summary of their position to be stated at the outset of the inquiry in order to set the scene on the first day.

6. The Chairman read the main issues identified in the Secretary of State's call-in letter and stated that he would need to be informed about:-

- a. The intended role of the Stolport and its likely catchment area.
- b. Land uses in the surrounding area.
- c. Access and transportation to the site.
- d. Terminal requirements, including runways, buildings, hardstandings, maintenance facilities, internal roads, car parks and access from public roads.
- e. Air traffic, including numbers of aircraft movements, passenger and freight, scheduled and charter flights, numbers of passenger movements, types of aircraft, navigation and landing aids.
- f. Environmental considerations, including Flight Paths (over flying residential and/or other sensitive areas), Safety (particularly clearances for take-off and landing flight paths), Noise (from aircraft on the field, taxiing and engine testing - noise contours - background noise levels - operating hours - need for insulating nearby houses - any noise reduction measures planned), and Pollution.

As well as other items (eg Employment) mentioned in the call-in letter.

#### The Inquiry Venue

7. There were a number of complaints about the present venue which was said to be too small, crowded, inconvenient and inaccessible. It would be too hot in June if the fans have to be switched off so that people can hear what is being said. It was pointed out that the only bus route passing the inquiry venue was the No. 101 which starts at the North Woolwich ferry. Any one from the Silvertown area or beyond would have to catch 2 buses. Elderly people without a car would find it impossible to attend. Alternative locations at EastHam Town Hall, at the Co-op building in EastHam, and a public hall in Rathbone Street and at the Canning Town Public Hall were all suggested.

8. Against this, it was said that the EastHam Town Hall was already booked over part of the inquiry period, but it had little storage space and very limited parking. The current venue was said to be the only available building. Local opinion was said to have been canvassed and most people appeared to want the inquiry held at the docks. It was anticipated that numbers attending would diminish after the first few days. The LDDC promised to install microphones and loud speakers, telephones and other necessary facilities in time for the inquiry.

9. The Chairman noted that the present site had the advantage of being sited in the docklands area, enabling him to walk around it and get to know the district during the course of the inquiry. He asked for a show of hands in the hall and, noting that a majority of about 2:1 were in favour of moving the venue elsewhere, he said that the possibility of an alternative location would be investigated.

#### Requests for postponement

10. Mr John Hobson, for the GLC, asked that the opening of the inquiry be postponed until at least September for a number of reasons. The GLC had been given insufficient time to prepare their case in such a complex matter, having had only 7 weeks formal

notification time. Issues such as Noise, Need, Employment and Transportation need more time. Also a consultant's report on the docks is due shortly and the draft review of the GLDP, amended following consultation, will not be ready until September. A current application for a heliport on the Isle of Dogs would benefit by being considered concurrently with this application. Finally a delay would give time to find a more suitable inquiry venue.

11. Lord Gifford QC, representing the Campaign Against the Airport, supported Mr Hobson's request. This is a novel form of development which would pre-empt alternative uses for the dock's area, and it should not be rushed through. There is no statutory local plan and a "People's Plan" is currently being prepared by the local community. However, this will not be ready before September or October. The Chairman indicated that his primary interest would be in assessing the benefits and effects of the proposal on the surrounding areas. This was not to be a local plan inquiry and alternative proposals for the area should not dominate the inquiry.

12. Support for postponing the inquiry was voiced by Mr Konrad Schiemann QC, for the London Borough of Newham, Mr M Dempsey for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and Doctor Bob Colenutt for the Joint Docklands Action Group.

13. Mr Raymond Sears QC, for the London Docklands Development Corporation, opposed any postponement. He outlined the consultations carried out by the LDDC since the end of 1981. A test flight had been carried out in June 1982 and the noise report had been with the GLC for a month. The GLC had since January 1983 to prepare their case which would not be heard until July.

14. Mr David Keene QC, representing John Mowlem and Company PLC, the applicants, also opposed any postponement. Mowlem's published their scheme in March 1982, with exhibitions, demonstrations etc in June. The LDDC consultant's report was published in August. In September 1982 the JDAG produced a paper, and called for "an immediate public inquiry" in December. The application, submitted in November last year, was accompanied by a 44 page report and extensive drawings. The objectors have known for 6 months that an inquiry was inevitable. The GLC have not sought any information on Noise and their consultant's report is a follow up of a previous report on cargo handling issued in May 1982. The heliport application has not yet been called in and may even be withdrawn like a previous application. The call-in letter of 25 January says that an inquiry will be arranged "as soon as possible"; Government policy is to eliminate delays in the planning system (Circular 22/80); and the applicants' expert witnesses have other commitments after the end of July and could not be re-assembled for at least 12 months.

15. Several members of the public spoke in favour of postponement and others (fewer in number) were against any postponement.

#### Consultation

16. Several people, including Mr W J Smyth, a member of WestHam Trades Council, expressed dissatisfaction at the level of consultation undertaken by the LDDC. Mr J H Large mentioned specifically a letter written to the LDDC on 6 January 1983 to which no reply had been received.

#### Pre-inquiry Statement

17. Mr Sears said that the LDDC's Pre-inquiry Statement would be distributed the following Monday (9 May) and he asked the opposing authorities to circulate Pre-inquiry Statement of their cases. Mr Hobson agreed to see if the GLC could comply with Mr Sears' request.

### Order of Cases

18. The following order of cases was suggested by Mr Schiemann and agreed by the other parties:-

1. The applicants John Mowlem and Company PLC.
2. The London Docklands Development Corporation.
3. Other bodies or groups supporting the application.
4. The Civil Aviation Authority.
5. The Greater London Council.
6. The London Borough of Newham.
7. Other bodies or groups opposing the application.
8. Individual members of the public.

### Assessors

19. Doctor Colemutt pointed out that several of the issues identified in the Secretary of State's call-in letter were related to community issues (eg Employment) rather than aeronautical issues, and he suggested that a second assessor should be appointed to look at these community issues. The Chairman said that he was not convinced of the need for a second assessor, but promised to forward Doctor Colenutt's suggestion to the Department of the Environment.

### Creche

20. The Chairman supported a suggestion by the Campaign Against the Airport that a creche should be provided during the inquiry to enable mothers' with young children to attend. He suggested that if the LDDC could provide a suitable room, local residents might be able to organise a system of supervision among themselves. He urged representatives of the LDDC and local groups to meet and discuss the arrangements.

### Notes of the Meeting

21. The Chairman said that he would circulate a note of the pre-inquiry meeting to the principal parties and to other groups or individuals who gave their names and addresses to Mr Pearson.

22. The meeting closed at approximately 1.45 pm.

May 1983

### PROGRAMME OFFICER

Mrs Jacqueline Hutchinson is the Programme Officer for the inquiry and can be contacted at the Terrapin Building, Royal Albert Dock, during the inquiry.

PARTIES REPRESENTED AT THE MEETING

## THE APPLICANTS, JOHN MOWLEM &amp; CO PLC

David Keene QC, with Mr Duncan Ouseley of counsel will call 6 witnesses. Estimated duration of case 4 days plus cross-examination (say, 2 weeks total).

## THE LONDON DOCKLANDS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (IN SUPPORT)

Raymond Sears QC, with Mr Daniel Robins of counsel will call 5 witnesses (plus possibly 2 more). Estimated duration of case 4 days plus cross-examination (say, 2 weeks total).

## THE GREATER LONDON COUNCIL (OPPOSED)

Elizabeth Appleby QC with Mr John Hobson of counsel will call possibly 6 or 7 witnesses. Duration of case unknown.

## THE LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM (OPPOSED)

Konrad Schiemann QC will call possibly 3 witnesses. Estimated duration of case 2 days plus cross-examination.

## THE CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY (NEUTRAL)

Mr Rupert Britton, of counsel, will present 5 witnesses who will give evidence on various aspects of the proposal and will be prepared to answer questions.

## THE BRITISH AIRPORTS AUTHORITY (OPPOSED)

The BAA were represented at the meeting by Mr R Everitt. Their case will be conducted by Anthony Anderson QC who will probably call one witness.

## THE LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS (UNCOMMITTED)

Mr M Dempsey, Principal Solicitor for the Borough, explained that the Borough Council would probably make a verbal or written submission and would not call witnesses.

## THE LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM (OPPOSED)

Mr R D Turnbull, Planning Department, stated that it had not yet been decided whether the Borough was to be represented at the inquiry.

## THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

Mr N S Organ, Highways Engineer with the Department, stated that their case would probably be presented by the Treasury Solicitor and might take one day.

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE

Mr T G Harris, for the Department of Trade, said that his Department would be sending an observer to the inquiry but did not intend to submit evidence unless requested to do so on matters of safety.

THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE AIRPORT (OPPOSED)

Lord Gifford QC with Ms Martha Cover will call a number of witnesses on behalf of the campaign and other groups and individuals opposed to the application.

THE JOINT DOCKLANDS ACTION GROUP (OPPOSED)

Dr Bob Colenutt stated that the group would present not more than 3 witnesses.

THE DOCKLANDS FORUM (OPPOSED)

Ms Susan Brownhill said that they would be represented by Lord Gifford but would present separate evidence, possibly calling 3 witnesses.

THE NEWHAM DOCKLANDS FORUM (OPPOSED)

Ms Lilian Hopes stated that they would be presenting evidence given by (possibly) 4 witnesses, mainly on alternatives for the area.

THE TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS UNION

Mr F R Higgs stated that the TGWU might be represented at the inquiry.

THE TRANSPORT ON WATER ASSOCIATION

Was represented at the meeting by Mr K H Reekie.

THE FEDERATION OF HEATHROW ANTI-NOISE GROUPS

The Chairman, Mrs Evelyn Attlee, estimated that their case might take about 2 hours to present.

THE NEWHAM SOUTH CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTY were represented at the meeting by Cllr W Dunlop, who stated that evidence would also be given at the inquiry by Cllr Ann King.

THE NEWHAM NORTH-EAST AND NEWHAM SOUTH CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATIONS were represented at the meeting by Mr D Maciver, who stated that Mr L Howells would also be giving evidence at the inquiry, as would Ms Helen Gardner, prospective parliamentary candidate for Newham North-East.

THE NEWHAM VOLUNTARY AGENCIES COUNCIL will be represented at the inquiry by the Rev Stephen Lowe.

THE CBI was represented at the meeting by Dr Geoffrey Williams who stated that evidence would be given at the inquiry by Mr G Yeates.

THE LONDON TRANSPORT PASSENGERS' COMMITTEE was represented by Mr R Barnes who stated that their views may be expressed in a written submission.

J H LARGE ASSOCIATES, Consulting Engineers, will be representing clients who wish to remain anonymous.

The Chairman apologised to those whose names he had been unable to record due to lack of time, and advised them to contact the Programme Officer in due course to register their wish to speak at the inquiry.