

LONDON CITY AIRPORT

NEWS

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London City Airport unveiled its plans for the future when the British Aerospace 146 'Whisper Jet' was demonstrated at the airport on the 24 July 1988.

Two of the 'World's Quietest Jet Airliners' landed at LCY, flown by BAe test pilots. The first to land was in the colours of Loganair, part of the Airlines of Britain Group and sister company to London City Airways, who have strongly advocated the future use of the 146 at LCY. The second 146 was the development Series 200 in the colours of British Aerospace. This aircraft then carried out a combination of take-offs, flyovers and landings, which, for comparison, were matched by a Dash 7, currently the preferred aircraft type at LCY.

The whole purpose of the exercise was to involve local people with their neighbourhood airport and to give them the opportunity of seeing and hearing the BAe 146 for themselves. Jet-engined aircraft are conventionally perceived as being unacceptably noisy and rudely intrusive — characteristics of aircraft types which are delightfully absent at LCY and always will be!

Some 70 000 local residents of Newham, Tower Hamlets and Greenwich received invitations to come to the demonstration, to learn of the airport's proposals and to join in a day of fun and festivity which, fortunately, remained fine and sunny throughout. Two exhibition



caravans had toured the neighbourhood for the previous two weeks, as part of the airport's consultation with local residents.

Several organisations carried out noise monitoring surveys to establish the relative differences between the BAe 146 and the

Dash 7 on the day, and these comparisons are likely to be of value in any future public inquiry. The likelihood is that the airport will apply shortly for planning permission to extend the concrete runway, by 169 metres, to 1199 metres, the maximum development possible. Some slight relaxation on permissible noise levels will also be needed to accommodate the BAe 146.

Special permission for the demonstration flights was obtained by the airport authorities, from the London Docklands Development Corporation. The airport has always been seen by the Corporation as the vital ingredient to the successful regeneration of the vast, but derelict area of the Royal Docks.

The BAe 146, a British-built airliner which is enjoying considerable success in world markets, is now a real contender to operate from London City, in parallel with the de Havilland of Canada Dash 7. LCY's overall journey timesaving to close destinations, such as Paris and Brussels, cannot be matched by any competitors, but without an aircraft like the 146 the airport is unable to extend its competitive range. The 146 offers twice the range and speed of the Dash 7 and, by way of a bonus, 90 odd seats compared with 44. Airlines will then be able to serve destinations such as Oslo, Copenhagen, Milan, Rome, Munich, Geneva, Basle, Lyons and Nice, and London City Airport will truly be London's gateway to Europe.



