

Section 5 Pro-active Communications



Glasgow Airport Rail Link Consultation Report, March - December 2005

5. Pro-active Communications

Since March 2005, the GARL Communication Team has sent out a number of pro-active letters to ensure that as many relevant individuals and groups as possible were aware of the ongoing consultation and encouraged to participate.

This section details the lists of individuals and organisations and the communication that was sent to them.

Pro-active communications included:

BAA letter

April 2005

Letter to BAA tenants outlining the proposed route as it affects the airport and surrounding area

Construction compound letter

May 2005

Letters were sent to properties near the Paisley Viaduct, Arkelston, Cardonald, Gas Holder, Shields Junction and Barshaw Golf Course to let them know that their land lies adjacent to an area proposed to be authorised as a working site or construction compound, should the Bill be passed.

Elderslie Loop letter

August 2005

Letters were sent to households in the Elderslie area to let them know that the existing freight loop at Elderslie would be extended as part of the Glasgow Airport Rail Link, should the Bill be passed.

Letter about impact on St James playing fields

September 2005

Letters were sent to playing fields associations and relevant sports organisations to let them know that all of the 22 pitches at St James playing fields will still be available during and after construction of the rail link, should the Bill be passed.

Letter to Central Station organisations

September 2005

The majority of parties in the Central Station area received consultation letters previously regarding the potential impact of GARL. These letters were sent out following a land referencing exercise that highlighted further parties.

Letter to Murray Business Park organisations

September 2005

The majority of parties in the Murray Business Park area received consultation letters previously regarding the potential impact of GARL. These letters were sent out following a land referencing exercise that highlighted further parties.

A number of media releases were also issued by SPT:

Glasgow Airport rail link gains 82% support	3 March 2005
SPT set to submit draft Glasgow Airport Link Bill to Scottish Parliament	21 May 2005
SPT chooses viaduct for St James Park crossing	14 June 2005
Glasgow Airport Rail Link could bring 700 jobs to Paisley	21 June 2005
Airport Rail Link Project to protect all 22 Football Pitches	19 August 2005
SPT Ready to Submit Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill to Scottish Parliament	3 October 2005
SPT welcomes Renfrewshire Council's decision to support Rail Link	15 December 2005

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In addition, a release was issued by Paisley University in July 2005, entitled, 'Rail Link will be "net benefit" for Paisley, says University'.

SPT letters and releases are listed below.

Letter to Key Stakeholders

BAA letter, April 2005

Our ref:
Your ref:
Direct 0141-333-3569
Direct fax: 0141-333-3284
Email: john.halliday@spt.co.uk

21 April 2004

Dear Sir/Madam

Glasgow Airport Rail Link

Strathclyde Passenger Transport consulted with regards to the Glasgow Airport Rail Link between November 2004 and February 2005. We are now working on the detailed proposal which will form our Bill submission to the Scottish Parliament seeking approvals for the works.

I attach a copy of the plan for the proposed route as it affects the airport and surrounding area. Further plans and information are available from the download section of the website at www.spt.co.uk/garl.

We are aware that BAA will have contacted you to consult with you on their forthcoming master plan, this will include integration of the forthcoming rail link within the masterplan. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss directly any questions you have arising from the proposals for the rail link.

If you wish to contact us to discuss the proposals please call the GARL communication team on 0800 085 2109 or email at garl@spt.co.uk.

Yours sincerely

John Halliday
Head of Transport Planning & Integration

enc

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Consultation Report, March - December 2005

Construction compound letter, May 2005

Name

13 May 2005

Dear xxxx

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill

I am writing to you on behalf of Strathclyde Passenger Transport (SPT).

SPT is in the final stages of preparing a Bill and accompanying documents for submission to the Scottish Parliament in June 2005 to give SPT the authority to construct a rail link between Glasgow Airport and Glasgow Central Station. If the Bill is passed it is estimated that construction will not start before the end of 2006.

Our records show that your property lies adjacent to land proposed to be authorised as a working site or construction compound as shown on the attached plan.

If you have any questions or should you require further background information about the proposals, please contact the Communications Team on freephone 0800 085 2109 or alternatively log on to www.spt.co.uk/garl

Yours sincerely

The GARL Communications Team

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Consultation Report, March - December 2005

Elderslie Loop letter, August 2005

Name

3 August 2005

Dear Householder

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill

I am writing to you on behalf of Strathclyde Passenger Transport (SPT) with regard to the potential works in the Elderslie area associated with the Glasgow Airport Rail Link.

SPT is in the final stages of preparing a Bill and accompanying documents for submission to the Scottish Parliament to give SPT the authority to construct a rail link between Glasgow Airport and Glasgow Central Station. If the Bill is passed it is estimated that construction will not start before the end of 2006.

Should the Bill be passed for the construction of a rail link between Glasgow Airport and Glasgow Central station, the existing freight loop at Elderslie would be extended as part of the project. This will enhance the capability of the loop, which enables freight services to pull off the mainline and allow faster commuter services to pass. This is required as an existing loop at Arkleston is being removed to allow other works to proceed.

Our records show that your property lies in the vicinity of the land proposed for the works. However there is no requirement to acquire any of your property or gain access on to your property.

The works will be within Network Rail land and will be located at the east end of the existing Elderslie loop to the north side of the mainline. A map is enclosed which shows the proposed works area.

This final letter is part of the statutory consultation that SPT must undertake in advance of submitting the Bill to Parliament. If you have any questions in relation to this letter, please contact the Communications Team on freephone 0800 085 2109.

In terms of background, consultants have been investigating the feasibility of building a direct rail link to Glasgow Airport for some 15 years and a preferred route has been identified, which mainly follows existing rail lines.

The proposal is to upgrade 9 km (5.4 miles) of existing track between Shields Junction and Paisley Gilmour Street Station and to lay 2 km (1.2 miles) of new track between Paisley St James Station and Glasgow Airport. The new track will cross St James Park and the M8.

If you have any questions or should you require further background information about the proposals, please contact the Communications Team on freephone 0800 085 2109 or alternatively log on to www.spt.co.uk/garl. You can also write to us at GARL, Freepost NAT21436, Glasgow G3 6BR.

Yours sincerely

GARL Communications Team

Encl.

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Consultation Report, March - December 2005

Letter about impact on St James Playing Fields, September 2005

Mr Hugh Knapp
Administration Office
Scottish Amateur Football Association
Hampden Park
Glasgow
G42 9DB

2 September 2005

Dear Hugh

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill

Further to our previous communication, I am writing to you on behalf of Strathclyde Passenger Transport (SPT) to thank you for your input during the consultation with regard to the proposals for the Glasgow Airport rail link (GARL) and to outline the proposed impact of the link on the St James playing fields.

SPT is in the final stages of preparing a Bill and accompanying documents for submission to the Scottish Parliament to give SPT the authority to construct a rail link between Glasgow Airport and Glasgow Central Station. As a result of the public consultation, 81% favoured a viaduct rather an embankment to cross the playing fields. We have taken cognisance of this and will include the viaduct option in the Bill.

Under SPT's proposals, all of the 22 pitches at St James playing fields will still be available during and after construction of the rail link. The plans include the following:

20 pitches will be available at St James playing fields after the link is constructed. Two additional football pitches will be provided at Ferguslie Park. All pitches will meet league standards. Playing fields will be reconfigured to enable 20 pitches to be available after construction of the rail link. In order to accommodate this, the changing facilities will also have to be re-provided nearer the viaduct.

During construction, 11 football pitches will be provided at St James playing fields to the west side of the proposed viaduct. 11 further temporary pitches will be provided at alternative locations, which are being discussed in detail with Renfrewshire Council.

The eastern side of St James Park will be required for construction purposes. On completion of the works, the pitches will be re-provided and will include new drainage.

In terms of background, consultants have been investigating the feasibility of building a direct rail link to Glasgow Airport for some 15 years and a preferred route has been identified, which mainly follows existing rail lines.

The proposal is to upgrade 9 km (5.4 miles) of existing track between Shields Junction and Paisley Gilmour Street Station and to lay 2 km (1.2 miles) of new track between Paisley St James Station and Glasgow Airport. The new track will cross St James Park and the M8.

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If you have any questions or should you require further background information about the proposals, please contact the Communications Team on freephone 0800 085 2109 or alternatively log on to www.spt.co.uk/garl. You can also write to us at GARL, Freepost NAT21436, Glasgow G3 6BR.

Yours sincerely
GARL Communications Team

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Consultation Report, March - December 2005

Letter to Central Station organisations, September 2005

name

30 September 2005

Dear

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill

I am writing to you on behalf of Strathclyde Passenger Transport (SPT) with regard to the Glasgow Airport Rail Link (GARL).

SPT is in the final stages of preparing a Bill and accompanying documents for submission to the Scottish Parliament to allow SPT the authority to construct a rail link between Glasgow Airport and Glasgow Central Station. If the Bill is passed it is estimated that construction will not start until the end of 2006.

This letter is part of the on-going consultation exercise that SPT are undertaking in advance of submitting the Bill to Parliament. If you have any questions in relation to this letter, please contact the GARL Communications Team on freephone 0800 085 2109.

Should the Bill be passed, the existing Platform 11a at Glasgow Central Station would be extended into the main covered area of the station to the same length as adjacent platforms 12 and 13. The existing in-station / platform car parking will be removed. Parking will remain available on existing on-street and surrounding multi-storey car parks. Detailed discussions are currently ongoing with Glasgow City Council to provide set down and pick up on the surrounding streets, which will as a minimum include the existing Union St facility.

A map is enclosed which shows the proposed scheme at Central Station.

In terms of background, the feasibility of building a direct rail link to Glasgow Airport has been investigated since the early 1990s and a preferred route has been identified, which mainly follows existing rail lines.

The proposal is to upgrade 9 km (5.4 miles) of existing track between Shields Junction and Paisley Gilmour Street Station and to lay 2 km (1.2 miles) of new track between Paisley St James Station and Glasgow Airport. The new track will cross St James Park and the M8.

If you have any questions or should you require further background information about the proposals, please contact the Communications Team on freephone 0800 085 2109 or alternatively log on to www.spt.co.uk/garl. You can also write to us at GARL, Freepost NAT21436, Glasgow G3 6BR.

Yours sincerely

GARL Communications Team

Encl.

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Consultation Report, March - December 2005

Letter to Murray Business Park organisations, September 2005

name

30 September 2005

Dear

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill

I am writing to you on behalf of Strathclyde Passenger Transport (SPT) with regard to the Glasgow Airport Rail Link (GARL).

SPT is in the final stages of preparing a Bill and accompanying documents for submission to the Scottish Parliament to allow SPT the authority to construct a rail link between Glasgow Airport and Glasgow Central Station. If the Bill is passed it is estimated that construction will not start until the end of 2006.

This letter is part of the on-going consultation exercise that SPT are undertaking in advance of submitting the Bill to Parliament. If you have any questions in relation to this letter, please contact the GARL Communications Team on freephone 0800 085 2109.

Should the Bill be passed, a new branch line would be created off the main Inverclyde line just before Paisley St James station, before running through the Murray Business Park and travelling over the St James' playing fields towards Glasgow airport.

A map is enclosed which shows the proposed scheme at Murray Business Park.

In terms of background, the feasibility of building a direct rail link to Glasgow Airport has been investigated since the early 1990s and a preferred route has been identified, which mainly follows existing rail lines.

The proposal is to upgrade 9 km (5.4 miles) of existing track between Shields Junction and Paisley Gilmour Street Station and to lay 2 km (1.2 miles) of new track between Paisley St James Station and Glasgow Airport. The new track will cross St James' Park and the M8.

If you have any questions or should you require further background information about the proposals, please contact the Communications Team on freephone 0800 085 2109 or alternatively log on to www.spt.co.uk/garl. You can also write to us at GARL, Freepost NAT21436, Glasgow G3 6BR.

Yours sincerely

GARL Communications Team

Encl.

Press Release

Glasgow Airport rail link gains 82% support, 3 March 2005

Airport rail link gains 82% support

The proposal to build a rail link to Glasgow Airport has received 82% support from those consulted since November last year.

Nearly 3,000 individuals and organisations were involved in the process both locally and nationally.

The process also revealed that 81% of those consulted preferred the crossing of St James Park by means of a viaduct.

“The consultation has allowed SPT to have a close dialogue with a huge range of individuals, interest and community groups, businesses and industry partners,” said Cllr Alastair Watson, Chair of SPT. “These discussions have highlighted many important issues which we will now seek to address in our preparation of a Bill to be introduced to the Scottish Parliament in late spring.

“The rail link will have an impact on Central Station in Glasgow, the existing rail line to Paisley, the Murray Industrial area, St James Playing Fields, the M8 and the airport. At each area we are drawing up detailed plans and speaking to those who will be directly affected.

“We are working closely with Renfrewshire Council and other stakeholders to identify an appropriate way of mitigating against the effects of the rail link crossing the playing fields. Over the next few months we will come forward with detailed proposals that will ensure the continued provision of these important football facilities.”

SPT will continue to speak to interested parties throughout the Bill process. A detailed report into the consultation results will form part of the information that is submitted to Parliament.

The initial high-level results of the consultation were as follows:

What do you think about the Glasgow Airport Rail Link?

Strong support	69%
Support	13%
Not Sure	2%
Against	3%
Strongly Against	13%

Which option do you prefer for crossing St James Park?

Embankment	19%
Viaduct	81%

There was a total of 1638 formal responses. An additional 284 people attended public meetings and focus groups and 917 people visited the exhibitions stands at various locations in Glasgow and Renfrewshire.

The public consultation into SPT's plan to build an airport linking Glasgow Airport and Glasgow Central station began on Monday 1 November.

The consultation has seen more than 20,000 information leaflets distributed to homes and businesses along the route of the proposed link. A further 15,000 leaflets were distributed on local train services. A series of public exhibitions and meetings have been held and a website has also been established.

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Consultation Report, March - December 2005

SPT will submit a bill to the Scottish Parliament in late spring. Objectors will then have 60 days to register their concerns. If the bill is given the green light by MSPs, it is estimated that the link could be operational by the end of 2008.

Passenger numbers at Glasgow Airport are predicted to virtually double, from 8.2 million passengers a year in 2003, to over 15 million passengers a year in 2030. At the moment, 95% of these passengers travel to the airport by road.

The rail link will help to contribute to the continued growth of Glasgow Airport, which is a major employer and is one of the biggest wealth generators in the west of Scotland.

Consultants have been investigating the feasibility of building a direct rail link to Glasgow Airport for some 15 years and a preferred route has been identified, which mainly follows existing rail lines.

The proposal is to upgrade 9 km (5.4 miles) of existing track between Shields Junction and Paisley Gilmour Street Station and to lay 2 km (1.2 miles) of new track between Paisley St James Station and Glasgow Airport. The new track will cross St James Park and the M8.

Notes to editors

Further information:

David McLavin

Tel: 0141 333 3153, Mobile: 07771 647118, E-Mail: david.mclavin@spt.co.uk

Strathclyde Passenger Transport (SPT) is Scotland's only passenger transport authority and executive, investing in rail, bus, Subway and ferry services for 42 per cent of the nation's population. We finance ScotRail passenger services in the west of Scotland and set train fares and timetables. We run the SPT Subway and Renfrew-Yoker Ferry. SPT currently subsidises about 150 bus services in areas where local communities are not already served by commercial operators.

Ends

Press Release

SPT set to submit draft Glasgow Airport Link Bill to Scottish Parliament, 21 May 2005

SPT Set to Submit Draft Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill to Scottish Parliament

SPT is set to submit its draft Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill to the Scottish Parliament this Friday 10 June.

The draft Private Bill will be submitted to the Scottish Parliament's Parliamentary Bills Unit. SPT will then work closely with the bills unit, the Scottish Executive and people affected by the link before submitting its final bill for introduction in October, after the Parliament's summer recess. Following the bill's introduction, objectors have 60 days to register their concerns.

Cllr Alistair Watson, Chair of SPT, said: "We had originally hoped to submit the final bill before the Scottish Parliament went into recess for the summer. However, as the Parliamentary Committee will not work on the Bill during the summer we are going to spend this time working closely with both the Scottish Executive and the Parliamentary Bills Unit to finalise the draft bill. We will also be continuing our exhaustive consultation with those people and organisations affected by the link.

"Importantly, this should have no impact on the proposed Glasgow Airport Rail Link timetable. We still hope to have the rail link operational end 2008."

SPT has held a formal public consultation – which ran from November 1 to February 28 – into the proposed rail link, with 82 per cent of respondents supporting the link. There was a total of 1638 formal responses. An additional 284 people attended public meetings and focus groups and 917 people visited the exhibition stands at various locations in Glasgow and Renfrewshire.

The consultation has seen more than 20,000 information leaflets distributed to homes and businesses along the route of the proposed link. A further 15,000 leaflets were distributed on local train services. A series of public exhibitions and meetings have been held and a website has also been established.

Consultants have been investigating the feasibility of building a direct rail link to Glasgow Airport for some 15 years and a preferred route has been identified, which mainly follows existing rail lines.

The proposal is to upgrade 9 km (5.4 miles) of existing track between Shields Junction and Paisley Gilmour Street Station and to lay 2 km (1.2 miles) of new track between Paisley St James Station and Glasgow Airport. The new track will cross St James Park and the M8.

Passenger numbers at Glasgow Airport are predicted to virtually double, from 8.2 million passengers a year in 2003, to over 15 million passengers a year in 2030. At the moment, 95% of these passengers travel to the airport by road.

The rail link will help to contribute to the continued growth of Glasgow Airport, which is a major employer and is one of the biggest wealth generators in the west of Scotland.

A recent study by economic development consultants Roger Tym & Partners estimated that the Glasgow Airport Rail Link would bring around £260m of economic benefits to Glasgow, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde and lead to the development of 135,000 sq ft of office accommodation in Paisley town centre. In addition the link could also bring 52,500 additional UK and overseas visitors and contribute towards £10m in additional visitor expenditure every year to Glasgow, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde. The link would also support Glasgow's estimated £115m conference sector.

Notes to editors

Further information:

David McLavin

Tel: 0141 333 3153, Mobile: 07771 647118, E-Mail: david.mclavin@spt.co.uk

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Ends

Press Release

SPT listens to public and chooses viaduct for St James Park crossing, 14 June 2005

SPT Listens to Public and Chooses Viaduct for St James Park Crossing

SPT – the organisation promoting the Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill – has listened to the public and chosen a viaduct to cross St James Park in Paisley.

As part of the recent public consultation into the proposed £140m **Glasgow Airport Rail Link**, SPT asked whether an embankment or viaduct should be used to cross the park. Eighty-one per cent of respondents favoured a viaduct.

The viaduct option was considered not only more visually appealing but also meant fewer – up to four of a possible 22 – playing fields would be lost at St James Park after the link is constructed.

SPT included the viaduct option in the draft bill, which was submitted to the Scottish Parliament last Friday (10 June). SPT continues to work closely with Renfrewshire Council – the owner of the playing fields – and users of the park such as football leagues to ensure that the effect on football facilities is mitigated both during and after construction of the link.

Cllr Alistair Watson, Chair of SPT, said: “The public came out resoundingly in favour of a viaduct to cross St James Park and after careful consideration we have decided that this is the option to put forward in our bill to the Scottish Parliament.

“We appreciate the strength of feeling surrounding St James Park and are working closely with partners to identify appropriate ways of mitigating against the effects of the rail link crossing the playing fields.”

During the formal public consultation – which ran from November 1 to February 28 – there was a total of 1638 formal responses. An additional 284 people attended public meetings and focus groups and 917 people visited the exhibition stands at various locations in Glasgow and Renfrewshire.

The consultation has seen more than 20,000 information leaflets distributed to homes and businesses along the route of the proposed link. A further 15,000 leaflets were distributed on local train services. A series of public exhibitions and meetings have been held and a website has also been established.

SPT’s final Glasgow Airport Rail Link bill will be submitted to the Scottish Parliament in October. Following the bill’s introduction objectors have 60 days to register their concerns. If the bill is given the green light by MSPs, it is estimated that the link could be operational by the end of 2008.

Consultants have been investigating the feasibility of building a direct rail link to Glasgow Airport for some 15 years and a preferred route has been identified, which mainly follows existing rail lines.

The proposal is to upgrade 9 km (5.4 miles) of existing track between Shields Junction and Paisley Gilmour Street Station and to lay 2 km (1.2 miles) of new track between Paisley St James Station and Glasgow Airport. The new track will cross St James Park and the M8.

Passenger numbers at Glasgow Airport are predicted to virtually double, from 8.2 million passengers a year in 2003, to over 15 million passengers a year in 2030. At the moment, 95% of these passengers travel to the airport by road.

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The rail link will help to contribute to the continued growth of Glasgow Airport, which is a major employer and is one of the biggest wealth generators in the west of Scotland.

A recent study by economic development consultants Roger Tym & Partners estimated that the Glasgow Airport Rail Link would bring around £260m of economic benefits to Glasgow, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde and lead to the development of 135,000 sq ft of office accommodation in Paisley town centre. In addition the link could also bring 52,500 additional UK and overseas visitors and contribute towards £10m in additional visitor expenditure every year to Glasgow, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde. The link would also support Glasgow's estimated £115m conference sector.

Notes to editors

Further information:

Pamela McTaggart

Tel: 0141 333 3152, Mobile: 07773 389980, E-Mail: pamela.mctaggart@spt.co.uk

An artist's impression of the proposed viaduct across St James Park is available from Pamela McTaggart via e-mail.

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Ends

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Press Release

Glasgow Airport Rail Link could bring 700 jobs to Paisley, 21 June 2005

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Could Bring 700 Jobs to Paisley, Says SPT

Glasgow Airport Rail Link could bring 700 jobs to Paisley town centre by 2012, according to research carried out by consultants working on the project.

Economic development consultant Roger Tym & Partners estimates that Glasgow Airport Rail Link would support the development of 135,000 sq ft of office accommodation and could bring between 675 and 700 jobs to Paisley town centre three to four years after the link starts operating. These figures are on top of the 650 jobs already predicted to be created by the link in Glasgow and Renfrewshire.

In addition, it is estimated that Glasgow Airport Rail Link will create £84m of economic benefits in Renfrewshire alone during its first 10 years of operation.

Cllr Alistair Watson, chair of SPT, commented: "This is great news for Paisley and shows how important the Glasgow Airport Rail Link could be for both the town's future. The benefits of improved rail connections will also open up more opportunities for those living in Ayrshire and Inverclyde.

"If the link is given the go ahead, trains running between Glasgow Airport and Glasgow Central will make just one stop, at Paisley Gilmour Street. This not only provides easy access to people living in Paisley and working at the airport but also means Paisley could be the first stop for the 8.2 million-and-rising people who travel from and to Glasgow Airport every year."

SPT sent its draft of the Bill to the Scottish Parliament on 10 June 2005. Following the Bill's introduction objectors have 60 days to register their concerns. If the Bill is given the green light by MSPs, it is estimated that the link could be operational by the end of 2008.

The proposal is to upgrade 9 km (5.4 miles) of existing track between Shields Junction and Paisley Gilmour Street Station and to lay 2 km (1.2 miles) of new track between Paisley St James Station and Glasgow Airport. The new track will cross St James Park and the M8.

SPT's formal public consultation into the Glasgow Airport Rail Link ran from November 1 2004 to February 28 2005 – there was a total of 1638 formal responses. In addition, 284 people attended public meetings and focus groups and 917 people visited the exhibition stands at various locations in Glasgow and Renfrewshire.

The consultation has seen more than 20,000 information leaflets distributed to homes and businesses along the route of the proposed link. A further 15,000 leaflets were distributed on local train services. A series of public exhibitions and meetings have been held and a website has also been established.

Consultants have been investigating the feasibility of building a direct rail link to Glasgow Airport for some 15 years and a preferred route has been identified, which mainly follows existing rail lines.

Passenger numbers at Glasgow Airport are predicted to virtually double, from 8.2 million passengers a year in 2003, to over 15 million passengers a year in 2030. At the moment, 95% of these passengers travel to the airport by road.

The rail link will help to contribute to the continued growth of Glasgow Airport, which is a major employer and is one of the biggest wealth generators in the west of Scotland. The link will also benefit the tourist industry. According to Roger Tym & Partners, Glasgow Airport Rail Link could help

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bring 52,500 additional UK and overseas visitors and contribute towards £10m in additional visitor expenditure every year to Glasgow, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde. In addition, the link would support Glasgow's estimated £115m conference sector.

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Further information:

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Ends

Press Release, Airport rail link project to protect all 22 football pitches, 19 August 2005

Airport Rail Link Project to Protect all 22 Football Pitches

Following extensive consultation SPT – the organisation promoting Glasgow Airport rail link (GARL) – has drawn up its proposals for St James Playing Fields in Paisley.

Under SPT's proposals, 22 pitches will still be available during and after construction of the rail link. The plans include:

- 20 pitches will be available at St James Playing Fields after the link is constructed. Two pitches and new changing facilities will be provided at Ferguslie Park.
- All pitches will meet league standards.
- New changing facilities will be built at St James Playing Fields, replacing the existing ones.
- During construction, 11 football pitches will be provided at St James Playing Fields. Eleven further temporary pitches will be provided at alternative locations.
- A modern drainage system will be provided for the area immediately east of the proposed viaduct crossing St James Playing Fields.

The news follows SPT's recent announcement that a viaduct had been chosen to cross the fields. SPT's proposals are now with Renfrewshire Council – which owns St James Playing Fields.

SPT chairman Alistair Watson said: "Throughout the consultation we have consulted widely with the community and local football leagues and taken their concerns on board. We believe this proposed solution would allow football to continue to flourish in this area of Scotland and we are delighted that these proposals would mean that no football pitches would be lost to Renfrewshire as a result of the Glasgow Airport Rail Link.

"We are now in discussions with Renfrewshire Council over the finer details and are working hard to provide them with the detail and reassurance they require in their role as custodians of the playing fields. We will continue to work closely with Renfrewshire Council and I am confident that we can develop these proposals and achieve a good solution not only during the construction period but also for the long-term."

Following the introduction of the Private Bill for the rail link to the Scottish Parliament – set for October 2005 – objectors will have 60 days to register their concerns. SPT would like to see the rail link operational by the end of 2008.

The proposal is to upgrade 9 km (5.4 miles) of existing track between Shields Junction and Paisley Gilmour Street Station and to lay 2 km (1.2 miles) of new track between Paisley St James Station and Glasgow Airport. The new track will cross St James Park and the M8. The upgrade on the Shields Junction to Paisley Gilmour Street section will also enable more services to be developed for the Ayrshire and Inverclyde routes.

SPT's formal public consultation into the Glasgow Airport Rail Link ran from November 1 2004 to February 28 2005 – there was a total of 1638 formal responses. In addition, 284 people attended public meetings and focus groups and 917 people visited the exhibition stands at various locations in Glasgow and Renfrewshire.

The consultation has seen more than 20,000 information leaflets distributed to homes and businesses along the route of the proposed link. A further 15,000 leaflets were distributed on local train services. A series of public exhibitions and meetings have been held and a website has also been established.

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The consultation is ongoing. SPT will be talking to businesses, local people other affected groups throughout the passage of the Bill in Parliament, in the lead up and throughout the construction period and afterwards. Liaison groups and forums will be set up to allow community groups and individuals to speak to SPT and the contractors.

Consultants have been investigating the feasibility of building a direct rail link to Glasgow Airport for some 15 years and a preferred route has been identified, which mainly follows existing rail lines.

The Department for Transport estimates that passenger numbers at Glasgow Airport are predicted to almost double, from 8.2 million passengers a year in 2003, to over 15 million passengers a year in 2030. The airport owners' – BAA Scotland – latest forecasts are even higher and indicate that passenger numbers could rise as high as 24 million by 2030. At the moment, 95% of these passengers traveling to Glasgow Airport do so by road.

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Notes to editors

For further information and e-mailable graphics:

David McLavin

Tel: 0141 333 3153, Mobile: 07771 647118, E-Mail: david.mclavin@spt.co.uk

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Ends

Press Release, SPT ready to submit Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill to Scottish Parliament, 3 October 2005

SPT Ready to Submit Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill to Scottish Parliament

--- Inflation sees cost of project increase from £140M to £160M ---

SPT – the organisation promoting Glasgow Airport Rail Link (GARL) – is ready to submit its final Private Bill to the Scottish Parliament promoting the building of a rail link between Glasgow Central and Glasgow Airport.

A report will be submitted to Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority on Friday 7 October seeking approval to submit the bill to the Scottish Parliament's Private Bills Unit. SPT is hoping a slot will become available in the Parliamentary timetable in November.

SPT chairman Alistair Watson said: "We are ready to submit the GARL Bill and are just waiting for a firm date from the Private Bills Unit, which we hope will be in November 2005."

The report also outlines an increase in the estimated cost of building a rail link between Glasgow Central and Glasgow Airport: from £140M to £160M. SPT cites inflation as the main reason for the cost revision.

SPT chairman Alistair Watson said: "We have previously reported a headline estimate of £140m. This has now been revised to take into the account the most up-to-date prices. The costs of the project have remained stable. The bulk of the estimated increase is due to inflation in construction materials such as steel and concrete, which have risen sharply over the past two years."

SPT's estimated cost of £140M for GARL was based on spring 2002 prices. The revised £160M figure has been drawn up on the basis of winter 2004 prices – the latest figures available.

Cllr Watson added: "In addition to inflationary increases, £8M of additional costs have been identified during the year-long rigorous process that has taken Glasgow Airport Rail Link from a concept to the stage where we are now ready to submit the finalised Private Bill to the Scottish Parliament. These additional costs are due to the cost of junction alterations on the existing main line and the fact we have had to change the location of the airport station."

Following the introduction of the Private Bill for the rail link to the Scottish Parliament, objectors will have 60 days to register their concerns. SPT would like to see the rail link operational by the end of 2008.

The proposal is to upgrade 9 km (5.4 miles) of existing track between Shields Junction and Paisley Gilmour Street Station and to lay 1.9 km (1.2 miles) of new track between Paisley St James Station and Glasgow Airport. The new track will cross St James Park and the M8. The upgrade on the Shields Junction to Paisley Gilmour Street section will also enable more services to be developed for the Ayrshire and Inverclyde routes.

SPT's formal public consultation into the Glasgow Airport Rail Link ran from November 1 2004 to February 28 2005 – there was a total of 1638 formal responses. In addition, 284 people attended public meetings and focus groups and 917 people visited the exhibition stands at various locations in Glasgow and Renfrewshire.

The consultation has seen more than 20,000 information leaflets distributed to homes and businesses along the route of the proposed link. A further 15,000 leaflets were distributed on local train services. A series of public exhibitions and meetings have been held and a website has also been established.

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Consultation Report, March - December 2005

The consultation is ongoing. SPT will be talking to businesses, local people and other affected groups throughout the passage of the Bill in Parliament, in the lead up and throughout the construction period and afterwards. Liaison groups and forums will be set up to allow community groups and individuals to speak to SPT and the contractors.

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Press Release, SPT Welcomes Renfrewshire Council's Decision to Support Rail Link, 15 December 2005

SPT Welcomes Renfrewshire Council's Decision to Support Rail Link

--- Council backs SPT's plans for St James Playing Fields ---

SPT – the organisation promoting Glasgow Airport Rail Link (GARL) – has welcomed today's decision by Renfrewshire Council to support the building of a rail link between Glasgow Central and Glasgow Airport.

At a council meeting this morning (Thursday 15 December) Renfrewshire councillors voted in favour of supporting the link, citing "significant benefits...i.e. improved train scheduling, improved access to the airport, creation of direct jobs and the enhanced facilities at St James Park".

SPT chairman Alistair Watson said: "We have been working closely with Renfrewshire Council for the past couple of years to come up with a solution that delivers the appropriate level of mitigation of the impacts of the rail link in Renfrewshire. We believe that the Renfrewshire people, in particular those groups who will use the St James Playing Fields, will be pleased with the proposals that have been hammered out between SPT and Renfrewshire Council.

"We recognize the concerns that Renfrewshire Council have about Paisley Gilmour St Station and would like to see improvements. We intend to look into this and if improvements can be made we will discuss this with Network Rail and the new transport agency for Scotland,

"We still have to dot the i's and cross the t's with the Council but today's decision marks the culmination of a lot of hard work and we are really pleased that Renfrewshire Council has recognised the economic, environmental and transport benefits of a new, fast, direct rail link between Glasgow Central, Paisley and Glasgow Airport."

The decision hinged on SPT's plans for St James Playing Fields, which will see 22 football pitches available during and after construction of the link:

- 20 pitches will be available at St James Playing Fields after the link is constructed. Two pitches and new changing facilities will be provided at Ferguslie Park.
- All pitches will meet league standards.
- New changing facilities will be built at St James Playing Fields, replacing the existing ones.
- During construction, 11 football pitches will be provided at St James Playing Fields. Eleven further temporary pitches will be provided at alternative locations.
- A modern drainage system will be provided for the area immediately east of the proposed viaduct crossing St James Playing Fields.

Alistair Watson said: "St James Playing Fields have for many years been an important facility for people across the west of Scotland and coming up with a solution accepted by all playing field users was an important priority for us in putting together our Bill for the Scottish Parliament.

"We have consulted widely with the community and local football leagues and taken their concerns on board. These proposals would not only mean that no football pitches would be lost to Renfrewshire as a result of the Glasgow Airport Rail Link but would also allow football to continue to flourish in this area of Scotland. We are delighted that the owner of St James Playing Fields – Renfrewshire Council – has supported our plans."

Based on 2004 prices, SPT estimates that the cost of building a rail link between Glasgow Central and Glasgow Airport will be £160M.

Glasgow Airport Rail Link Consultation Report, March - December 2005

Following the introduction of the Private Bill for the rail link to the Scottish Parliament – set for January 2006 – objectors will have 60 days to register their concerns. The project is expected to be completed by end 2009.

The proposal is to upgrade 9 km (5.4 miles) of existing track between Shields Junction and Paisley Gilmour Street Station and to lay 1.9 km (1.2 miles) of new track between Paisley St James Station and Glasgow Airport. The new track will cross St James Park and the M8. The upgrade on the Shields Junction to Paisley Gilmour Street section will also enable more services to be developed for the Ayrshire and Inverclyde routes.

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