

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Background

This document relates to the Glasgow Airport Rail Link Bill introduced in the Scottish Parliament in 2006. It has been prepared by Faber Maunsell on behalf of the Strathclyde Passenger Transport Executive (SPT) to satisfy Rule 9A.2.3(c)(iii) of the Parliament's Standing Orders. The contents are entirely the responsibility of the Promoter and have not been endorsed by the Parliament.

SPT commissioned Faber Maunsell to provide Preliminary Design and Parliamentary Submission services for the Glasgow Airport Rail Link (GARL) project. This project seeks to provide a fixed railway link with sufficient capacity to enable a dedicated train service to operate every 15 minutes between a new station at Glasgow Airport and Glasgow Central Station, calling at Paisley Gilmour Street (see Figure 1.1).

The line will run from an elevated station that will be constructed at Glasgow Airport on a viaduct that crosses the M8 and the St James Playing fields to join the main Inverclyde line just to the east of Paisley St James station.

The service will then use the existing rail corridor via Paisley Gilmour Street to Glasgow Central Station. However, work undertaken by FaberMaunsell has shown that the section between Paisley Gilmour Street and Central Station does not have sufficient capacity to accommodate additional services and therefore extensive remodelling of Wallneuk and Arkleston Junctions and construction of an additional line within the existing rail corridor will be required. This bi-directional third line, which will be constructed in the space between the two existing lines, will be built between Arkleston Junction and Shields Junction. In addition, changes at a number of other main line junctions will be required.

Finally at Glasgow Central Station the existing platform 11A will be extended into the train shed area of the station to be used for the Airport service.

Note that as part of the works the existing airport aviation fuel farm will be decommissioned, as it falls within the branch line alignment. An alternative fuel farm, which will be a like for like replacement for the existing facility, is proposed for a site to the west of St Andrew's Crescent on BAA operational airport land.

The overall objective of the GARL is to deliver a successful heavy rail link between Glasgow Airport and Glasgow Central Station with a target opening year of 2009.

## 1.2. The Environmental Impact Assessment of GARL

SPT is to seek powers from the Scottish Parliament, by means of a Private Bill, to construct GARL between Glasgow Airport and Glasgow Central Station. As part of the application for the Private Bill, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is to be undertaken to identify the effects of GARL. This document, the Environmental Statement (ES), summarises the findings of the EIA.

## 1.3. The EIA Process

An explanation of the approach to undertaking the EIA and producing the ES is set out in Chapter 3. However, in summary, EIA is the process of compiling, evaluating and presenting all the significant environmental impacts of a proposed development. The assessment is designed to help produce an environmentally sympathetic project by detecting potentially significant adverse environmental impacts thus leading to the identification and incorporation of appropriate mitigation measures into the scheme design. The main steps in the assessment procedure can be summarised as follows:

- Examine the environmental character of the area likely to be affected by the development through baseline studies;
- Predict the possible effects on the environment, both beneficial and adverse, of the development;
- Introduce design and operational modifications or other measures to avoid, reduce or offset adverse effects, and where possible, enhance positive effects; and
- Summarise the results of the EIA in the ES. A Non-Technical Summary of the ES is also produced.

## 1.4. Authors

The EIA team has been led by Faber Maunsell, with the assistance of the consultants listed below. The roles were as follows:

- Faber Maunsell - Project management of the EIA, air quality, ecology, noise and vibration, surface water, hydrogeology, geology, soils and contamination, land use, planning policy, socio-economics, and traffic and transport. Responsible for specialist surveys such as bat and badger.
- ASH Ltd – landscape and visual amenity, landscape mitigation.
- CFA Archaeology Ltd - archaeology and heritage.
- The Wildlife Partnership Ltd – specialist amphibian survey

In addition, supporting information was provided by:

- Land Aspects – Land Referencing Information
- Roger Tym & Partners – Socio-Economics
- Austin: Smith Lord – Architects

### 1.5. Structure of the ES

The assessment described in this ES relates to the design of the scheme as it stands in September 2005. The ES is published in four volumes:

- Volume 1 Non-Technical Summary;
- Volume 2 Environmental Statement: Main Report;
- Volume 3 Figures; and
- Volume 4 Appendices to Main Report.

A summary of the ES is provided in Volume 1, the Non-Technical Summary. This is intended for review by the general public. It is brief and includes a description of the proposal, a summary of the environmental effects and proposed mitigation measures.

Volume 2 is structured around the following chapter headings:

1. Introduction
2. Scheme Description
3. The EIA Process & Environmental Issues
4. Policy Context
5. Land & Land Use
6. Socio Economics
7. Landscape & Visual Impacts
8. Archaeology & Heritage
9. Ecology & Nature Conservation
10. Surface Water
11. Geology, Soils, Contamination & Waste Management
12. Traffic & Transport
13. Noise & Vibration
14. Air Quality

Volume 3 is a stand-alone document containing all of the figures referred to in the main text of the ES (Volume 2). It should be noted that the GARL alignment shown on the Figures is not definitive and reference should be made to the Parliamentary Plans and Sections. Volume 4 includes appendices and supporting information cross-referenced from Volume 2.

Copies of the ES are available for £58.00, or on CD for £5.00 plus postage and packaging. These can be purchased from:

Strathclyde Passenger Transport  
 Consort House  
 12 West George Street  
 Glasgow  
 G2 1HN

The Non-Technical Summary of the ES is available separately at a cost of £3.00 from the same address.

### 1.6. Jargon

This ES covers a whole range of specialist technical areas and throughout the authors have tried to minimise the use of technical language and jargon. Most of the more technical discussion has been placed in the Appendices (Volume 4) of the ES. However, in some cases use of jargon had been unavoidable. Therefore to help the reader a glossary of technical terms and a list of abbreviations and acronyms have been provided at the end of the ES.