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**PRESS RELEASE**

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**New Air Terminal, tunnel under the runway and new road leading to all parts of Gibraltar north of the runway**

The Government is to-day unveiling plans and construction timetables for the new Air Terminal and also for the new Main Road leading to North Front, to the Air Terminal and to the frontier with Spain and to all other parts of Gibraltar north of the runway.

**The New Air Terminal**

The New Air terminal is an attractive, modern, mainly glazing and steel structure. The terminal will be in excess of 20,000 square meters in constructed area, compared to the current terminal's approximately 5,000 sq metres. It will have two storeys.

The ground floor will mainly house passenger check-in facilities, baggage handling plant, arrivals hall and some retail and cafeteria facilities. The first floor will mainly house offices, passenger security facilities, extended retail facilities, catering and bar facilities, circulation spaces and lounges, baggage reclaim (three carousels) and customs control facilities.

The terminal will straddle (at first floor level) the new roads leading to the frontier loop and to Winston Churchill Avenue, both of which will pass beneath the terminal at ground level. In this way the terminal goes right up to the frontier line. This is illustrated on the attached diagrams. The vehicle and passenger frontier crossing points remain where they currently are. The Main entrance to the new air terminal is on Winston Churchill Avenue

Between the new terminal and Winston Churchill Avenue there will be a landscaped forecourt, and a multi storey car park for 220 vehicles on three levels. The project

also includes a new facility for commercial vehicles customs control and inspection, and customs offices, all located on and to the East of the new Air Terminal.

### New Road/Tunnel

Even with current airport use Gibraltar can no longer sustain a situation of severe traffic tailbacks, disruptions and delay every time an aircraft takes off or lands. This is even less acceptable in the context of increased use of the airport following the Cordoba Airport Agreement, which has enabled the normal operation of our airport.

Accordingly, the Government will also divert the main road leading to the north of the runway. This main road will no longer cross the runway at the centre, as at present. Instead, the new main road will take the route of Devils Tower Road, up to the junction with Eastern Beach Road. At that point there will be a large roundabout. The main road will then U-turn to the North through the site known as the Aerial Farm, passing parallel to Eastern Beach Road but behind the ex-Mediterranean Hotel building, and then passing under a tunnel at the Eastern end of the runway. Once it emerges from the tunnel on the north side of the runway the new road will run parallel to the frontier, passing under the air terminal fly-over section. It will then branch into two, with one road leading to the loop and the frontier, and another leading to the Air Terminal, North Front and Winston Churchill Avenue.

The new main road (including the tunnel section) will be four lanes (two in each direction) throughout all its length, similar to the present Winston Churchill Avenue. Eastern Beach road itself remains unaffected as a separate road running parallel to this new Main Road. Beach users will therefore not have to mingle with traffic on the new road.

The Road across the runway will remain in place, for exceptional, specific or emergency use. But it will not be available for routine day to day, private vehicular traffic. Pedestrians will not be required to travel via the new road/tunnel, and will continue to cross the runway at the present location.

### Parking

There will be a new car park for Eastern Beach users on the beach side of the new 4-lane road. There will be no overall loss of free public parking spaces as a result of this new road. Indeed, parking availability on Devil's Tower Road will be greatly enhanced by two new multi-storey car parks on Devils Tower Road. One will be located immediately opposite Laguna Estate, just to the east of the Cross of Sacrifice (on the site of the two long MOD buildings which currently sit along Devil's Tower Road); and a further multi storey car park will be located on the site of the present worker's hostel.

These car parks on Devil's Tower Road, which are part and parcel of these projects, will provide in excess of 500 spaces, compared to the current 229 spaces currently available on Devil's Tower Road. There will be a substantial increase in free public parking spaces along Devil's Tower Road, in addition to the parking facilities provided by the airport and eastern Beach car parks.

In addition to providing increased parking facilities for residents, these car parks will enable Government to provide 'Park and Ride' facilities for tourists, thus helping to decongest traffic and parking throughout Gibraltar.

### Cordoba Airport Agreement

The Cordoba Airport Agreement provides for a single air terminal and for that single air terminal to be in Gibraltar. It also provides for all passenger and flight services to be provided in and by that terminal, including all facilities and functions relating to airside and aircraft services, passenger check-in, baggage handling and passenger and baggage security. In other words all air terminal functions.

The Cordoba Airport Agreement also provides that passengers travelling between Gibraltar and airports in Spain only, who enter or exit the Air Terminal via Gibraltar, will receive their Schengen travel area entry/exit clearance in advance/deferred in Gibraltar. That arrangement applies only to flights to and from a Spanish Airport. It does not apply to flights to/from other Schengen destinations/countries which will be dealt with in the normal way. The Agreement provides for these checks in relation to flights to and from Spain to be carried out by Spanish officials, who will be located in Spain in a way facilitated by the design of the terminal.

I have previously explained and made clear that this will not involve either Spanish officials being in Gibraltar or the Gibraltar passenger having to enter Spain to do these Schengen entry/exit checks. Although I have previously explained orally and conceptually how this will be done, the architectural design plans that we are publishing to-day demonstrates it graphically.

The design of the terminal takes relevant passengers, in the normal course of their passage through the terminal, and thus without having to detour for the purpose, along a route that runs parallel to the frontier line but on its Gibraltar side. At that point there will be Spanish Officials located in a structure that is on the Spanish side of the frontier line. Hence the checks will be performed by the Spanish Officials who will be located in Spain but with the passenger remaining at all times in Gibraltar. This is illustrated in the attached diagram entitled "View of Interior with Passenger Flows."

Accordingly, the whole air terminal will be in Gibraltar except the bit to accommodate the Spanish Schengen control officials who will give passengers Schengen clearance into Spain or Schengen exit clearance out of Spain. The Government reiterates that these officials will not in any way control or determine entry into or exit from Gibraltar, since the passenger is at all times already in Gibraltar.

### Time Tables

The EU tender process for the Air Terminal is already under way. Physical construction works will begin at the end of October this year. The Terminal will be completed by the end of 2008. There will be minimal disruption to the use of the old terminal during construction of the new terminal, since their footprints do not coincide.

The Roads project tender process commences to-day with the issue of the EU tender notice. Works are expected to commence in January 2008 and will be fully completed during the first half of 2009. However, the tunnel and its approach roads will be ready at the start of 2009.

Chief Minister Peter Caruana said: -

“The current air terminal is too small, totally inadequate for Gibraltar’s needs and, as a building, well past its shelf life. Even without the Airport Agreement there would be a need to build a new one, as well as to divert traffic under the runway. This project will not just provide Gibraltar with a modern, state of the art Air Terminal of which we can be proud for our international airport for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It will also be a statement of Gibraltar’s prosperity, of our social and economic development as a community and of our presence in the mainstream of a modern European society. But it is more than even that. The project will make a huge, positive impact on traffic and parking decongestion in Gibraltar. From the viewpoint of international air communications, of parking facilities and of traffic management these projects represent a major investment in positioning Gibraltar for an even better future.”