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NEWS RELEASE

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**Independent expert to discuss EMAS findings with public**

ISLANDERS will be able to learn more about the essential maintenance and improvements planned for Guernsey Airport at a public drop-in session next week.

Graham Ruddock, author of the recent independent review of options for the improvement of the current safety areas, will be among the experts on hand to answer questions. Guernsey Airport management and Public Services' project design consultants will also be available.

The project includes the reconstruction of the runway and other hard surfaces, and the replacement or refurbishment of the drainage system, airfield lighting and other key operational systems. It also requires longer safety areas at either end of the runway, which will see the current airport boundary extended to the west.

A review by international engineering consultants Mott MacDonald, published last week, found that the planned improvements to the safety areas were essential, and could only be achieved within the existing boundaries by shortening the current runway. This, it concluded, would have a serious and unacceptable impact on local air links.

Mott MacDonald also outlined an alternative using a collapsible concrete system, known as EMAS, which is designed to bring an aircraft overrunning the runway to a controlled halt. It estimated this would cost at least an £6 million more than the planned improvements.

Information will also be available on the findings of a comprehensive environmental impact assessment (EIA). This looked at the potential effects of the development, which in most cases were negligible, minor or moderate, and also identified possible mitigation measures to reduce these.

Deputy Flouquet said every aspect of the project was being planned in great detail, and this included assessing any impacts during the construction phase and longer term.

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‘This is one of the most complex and extensive engineering projects that has ever been seen locally. I am sure that there are many aspects which islanders want to learn about or understand better, and the drop-in will be an opportunity for them to do this,’ he said

The drop-in will be held in the Airport Conference Room, upstairs in the terminal building, and will be open from 12pm to 8pm on Thursday (17 February), and from 12pm to 5pm on Friday.

ENDS

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