

Press Release

May 23rd 2006

No breach of High Court ruling at Weston Executive Airport

Following recent comments in the Dail and in the media Weston Executive Airport and its Chairman, Mr Jim Mansfield would like to make it clear that there is no breach in any way of the High Court ruling in relation to planning issues.

Mr Mansfield said: “The accusation that I have breached any High Court ruling is completely untrue.”

“The Judge found nothing wrong with 8 of the alleged planning violations and no fine, sanction, order or penalty was imposed in relation to these.

“When I took over Weston Executive Airport my first priority was to regularise all outstanding issues relating to the enhancement of safety at the request of the Irish Aviation Authority. These included the fact that there was no control tower, no security fencing and there were obstructions on approach and departures.

“Planning permission was applied for to demolish all existing hangars on the south side of the airport and build new purpose built hangars and buildings on the north side of the airport for which full planning permission was granted by South Dublin County Council and later modified by the Bord. The remaining works were exempted development. The outstanding requirements of the IAA were also addressed in this application,” he said.

“However, Combined Action on Weston Aerodrome did not accept that certain works in connection with the operation of a licensed airport in the Planning and Development Regulations were exempted development. My interpretation was subsequently found to be correct and supported by the High Court. Why enforcement orders were issued for what was exempted development is not understood.”

The High Court orders were as follows:-

- a. a hangar along the western boundary, Bord Pleanala required that this hangar be removed within 3 months of the new development becoming operational. The Judge was in agreement with our interpretation of the commencement date of the 3 month period. This building for which planning permission was sought to demolish has now been demolished in accordance with planning permission which we originally sought and in accordance with the court ruling.

b. the High Court also made an order relating to the erection of a temporary first floor dormer extension and side extension to a bungalow and control tower. The High Court ruled that this building could only be used as a dwelling house and the bungalow originally built in 1941, be reinstated to its original state, or that a planning application be made for Retention which has been applied for.

c. The last of the three orders was for the reduction of the size of the car parking to the front and rear of the bungalow. This reduction has been made.

There are no outstanding planning issues in relation to the High Court ruling at Weston Executive Airport. No fine, sanction or penalty was imposed in any way and we were never “in breach” of any High Court ruling.

The Judge at the time during the court proceedings suggested that the matter might be best settled out of court but the County Council did not agree.

It was clear to Weston Executive Airport that this case had unnecessarily wasted court time and public funds. The Judge ordered that the county council pay two days court expenses with zincographer costs. The County Council also requested the High Court to make an order directing that a planning application be made even more works that were deemed to be exempted development. This Judge refused this application.

Mr Mansfield added: “Every single time we have applied to make the airport safer it has been appealed which has in turn caused delays on safety measures being implemented, such as the VOR/DME navigation aid.

“Even the acoustic barrier (earth mound) around the airfield installed to reduce noise was objected to. And also the Airport Fire and Rescue Station were objected to – one of the grounds being that it was a fire hazard.

“It seems to be a policy of Combined Action on Weston Aerodrome to object to all efforts to improve the airfield and make it a safe, environmentally friendly facility. Not alone that but there has been a barrage of unnecessary insinuations and innuendos in relation to the airport. This is a waste of time and taxpayers’ money.

“In spite of all this all safety matters have been substantially enhanced at Weston Executive Airport since I bought it five years ago.

“Even at this late stage, I and Weston Ltd, are prepared to reactivate the Liaison Group and we invite all interested parties to come and meet with us and discuss their concerns. It was a great pity that the original attempt was not successful.

“Our aim has not changed in any way since I purchased Weston. I reiterate, we want a state-of-the-art executive airport that Ireland can be proud of. I can confirm that I have

adhered to my original plan to reduce the amount of aircraft movements and substantially enhance the safety environment at Weston.

“I am also delighted to say that the VOR/DME will be switched on in early June 2006 after a mandatory testing period. The introduction of this navigational aid was also delayed for more than 12 months by objections. This is a significant investment in safety and a great asset to Weston Executive Airport,” said Mr Mansfield.

VOR/DME – what it is.

The new €1.2m navigational aid - VOR/DME - will be turned on at Weston Executive Airport in early June 2006. It is currently undergoing mandatory rigorous and prolonged testing. This VOR/DME is probably the only privately owned navigational aid of its kind in the world.

These are two very significant navigation aids – a VHF Omni directional Range for indicating to the pilot the direction to Weston Executive Airport and Distance Measuring Equipment to advise him how far he is from the airport.

These aids are primarily to assist the navigation of aircraft flying visually near Weston Airport and will greatly improve flight safety, assist Dublin Air traffic Control, Military Operations from Baldonnell and other air traffic transiting through the airspace.

The basic principle of operation of the VOR is very simple, the facility transmits two signals at the same time. One signal is constant in all directions, while the other is rotated about the station.

The aircraft's equipment receives both signals, looks (electronically) at the difference between the two and interprets the result as a radial or direction from the station. The DME operates like a little radar interrogator timing the signal from the aircraft to the ground station and displaying it as a distance to the pilot.

ENDS

Media queries:

Kevin Davy

086-6008736

Email: kevnavy@gmail.com