
Midlands Regional Airport.

- Abbeyshrule

Preliminary
business brief.

Draft National Planning
Framework Submission.
November 2017.



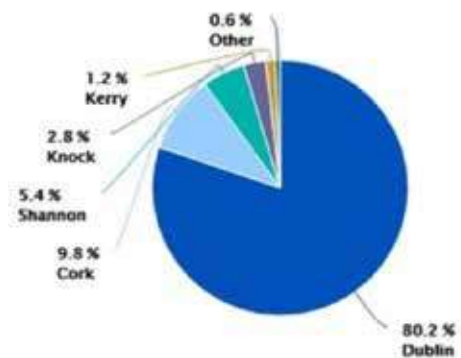
Introduction.

Proposed upgrade of existing airfield facilities and infrastructure at Abbeyshrule airfield to service commercial operations including – Passenger, Cargo, Corporate transport and expansion of the existing flight training services.

Overview.

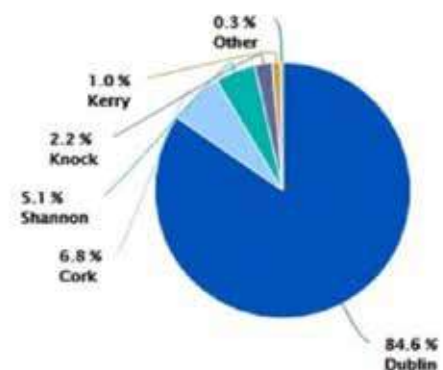
Abbeyshrule airfield located at the heart of Ireland has the potential to change the economic landscape of the Midlands and bring benefits to the entire country. Ireland currently relies on Dublin airport for the transport of over 84% of the country's entire passenger transfers and over 91% of air freight, but Dublin airport is smothering under its own success due to the lack of a suitable alternative airport as traffic growth exceeds capacity leading to congestion, reduced service and economic damage.

Figure 2: Passenger number distribution by airport, 2012 (23.8 million)



Source: CSO Ireland

Figure 3: Passenger number distribution by airport, 2016 (32.8 million)



Source: CSO Ireland

Market Assessment.



Population catchment area within 90 mins car journey time. 2,275,406.

The upgrade of the existing runway and airport infrastructure at Abbeyshrule would offer a low cost and accelerated solution to the current capacity crisis facing Ireland’s densest population area. The positive economic effects would be seen across the local and national economy:

Directly -

The impacts associated with the operation and management of activities at the airports including companies on-site at the airport and airport related businesses located near the airport e.g. airlines, ground handlers and airport security.

Indirectly -

Impacts generated by down-stream industries that supply the airport e.g. oil service activities for jet fuel and food manufacturing for airport catering.

Induced -

Activity generated by employees directly or indirectly connected to the airport spending their income in the national economy e.g. groceries and leisure activities.

Catalytic effect -

The airport facilitates the business of other sectors of the economy by increasing connectivity, for example through trade, investment, tourism and productivity improvements. These have the largest economic impact.

Commercial Passenger Market.

Using the Midlands Regional Airport to develop a point to point route network which could complement rather than compete with Dublin airport, allowing Dublin to focus on its core business and filtering point to point traffic originating from outside of the main Dublin City area away from Dublin airport avoiding the congestion and offering a more efficient and valuable customer experience and releasing more suitable capacity back to Dublin airport.

Point to point passengers should consistently plan to arrive at the airport 50 minutes prior to departure in the knowledge they will not be delayed by carpark transfers, check-in and security congestion. This can be achieved in a clean sheet and customer focused terminal design at Midlands Regional Airport.

Air Freight.

Using the Midlands Regional Airport to develop Ireland's air cargo route network. Ireland transports over 25% of Air freight by road to the UK or main land Europe for transfer on to destination by air. Over 91% of all Air freight from Ireland is transited through Dublin airport, which again highlights how out of balance Ireland's air transport market has become.

Midlands Regional Airport could allow central processing of cargo from Ireland point to point across Europe away from the heavily congested Dublin road network and Airport cargo terminal. Reducing the cost and transport time and therefore leading to growth in the Irish Air freight market.

Air freight classified by national and international traffic handled by main airports, 2016.

Traffic	Cork	Dublin	Knock	Shannon	Total
National freight traffic	0	4,416	0	4,337	8,753
International freight traffic	15	129,791	16	8,254	138,076
All freight	15	134,207	16	12,591	146,829

Table 11.

Business Aviation Market.

Dublin City does not have a business airport to offer specialist handling, parking and hangarage services to business customers. These customers are required to negotiate the delays in the air and on the ground at Dublin airport. Aircraft operators must manage the restricted parking and hangarage available.

Midlands Regional Airport could provide these services at a lower cost and greater availability at just over an hour from Dublin with no restrictions and also offer helicopter taxi on to further destinations in Ireland. Hangar space would also generate interest in the purchase of new aircraft and allow the setup of new charter operators and sales/maintenance facilities.

Plan outline:

- **Develop the existing runway infrastructure - minimum 1,800 metres.**
- **Develop and extend the existing ramp area to allow for larger aircraft and increased traffic.**
- **Develop a new terminal with a clean sheet design focusing on the transfer of passengers rather than retail sales, that offers a new standard of efficient hassle free customer experience.**
- **Develop new hangarage to service both maintenance and corporate customers.**
- **Develop a new industrial park and cargo logistics terminal.**
- **Green energy solutions powering the airfield to lower emissions - investigate harnessing the hydroelectric potential of the River Inny surrounding the airfield.**
- **New Air Traffic Control, Fire fighting and security facilities.**
- **Install Low visibility, all weather airfield approach equipment - Low Visibility Procedures (LVP's) with a minimum CAT II capability. RNav approaches.**

Location - Identification and Selection.

1.

The midlands and Dublin needs a low cost/high value relief airport offering an alternative to Dublin International Airport (EIDW). Dublin Airport is already congested and running beyond even its future predicted capacity, carrying over 27 million passengers in 2016 over 84% of the Irish market.

4.

Centrally located under 30 minutes from Athlone, Mullingar and Longford.

7.

It would attract investment and employment to the Midlands.

10.

It would dilute the local infrastructure investment costs, such as roads that are currently planned and give further justification for the investment.

2.

Midlands Regional Airport would allow redirection of a large number of regional point to point, non-transfer passenger traffic, corporate aircraft, cargo traffic away from the congested ground and air space at Dublin, freeing up slots and capacity for larger aircraft.

5.

Abbeysrule has Ireland's largest catchment area within a 90 minute journey time exceeding even Dublin airport at over 2.2 million.

8.

It would complement existing investment in the Midlands, a recent example being Centre Parc's 230 million development located 9 km away and the 138 million proposed development of the Vault whiskey store at Moyvore just 11km away.

11.

There will be a major competitive upheaval between the airports located in the West due to the impact of new motorway openings on traditional airport catchment areas on the western seaboard. The extension of the M17/18 motorways will allow Shannon airport greater access to Ireland West Knock airport's catchment area. If Ireland West was no longer viable, it would leave the north west and north Midlands area unserved

3.

Passengers originating in the midlands and Dublin commuter belt would no longer have to travel to Dublin airport to make point to point journeys between Ireland, the UK and mainland Europe. Reduce unnecessary travel times and the stress on Dublin transport infrastructure.

6.

Abbeysrule is a low cost development option.

9.

Abbeysrule has achieved planning permission in the past for runway developments.

Runway Requirements.

While 1500 meters (5000 feet) similar to London City Airport could support turbo-prop aircraft such as ATR 42/72, it is at the minimum required length for regional jets. At 1500m the new Bombardier C-series could operate from Midlands Regional Airport with 160 passengers and a 3000 mile range, but 1800m (5900ft) would allow a performance margin and allow the operation of Airbus and Boeing aircraft as used by Aer Lingus and Ryanair, though this would be at the limit for these types and greater than 1800m would be preferred. 2000m or greater would allow transatlantic type operations similar to the Norwegian Cork – Boston on the Boeing 737 Max.

Air Traffic Control.

Investigation and collaboration with the IAA on the remote tower initiative recently successfully trialled at Cork and Shannon airports.

Passenger Terminal.

Modular terminal concept -

The concept of the modular airport allows the development of expandable and flexible facilities that can meet or exceed requirements in a cost-effective manner.

Southampton Regional Airport is an example of the modular airport terminal concept. Allowing future expansion without any disruption to the existing operations. Modular construction should allow rapid construction at a lower cost due common building construction.

