SUBMISSION FROM MIKE DOOLEY

Having provided a written submission to the public consultation process and subsequently studied the findings of this consultation, it was very apparent, that previously identified significant weakness in the proposed scheme, had been ignored by the promoters.

It was also apparent from a study of the Guidance Notes, provided to those who wished to object to the contents of a private bill, that because of where I resided, any submission I might have made, would not have met the criteria as set out in the guidance notes. I was therefore advised by your offices, that it would be correct for me to bring to the Committee's attention, matter(s), which I believed would be of importance to their deliberations.

You are therefore requested to present this letter and the attached document (Appendix A), to each of the Committee Members - Andrew Arbuckle MSP, Marlyn Glen MSP, Margaret Jamieson MSP, Michael Matheson MSP and Brian Monteith MSP.

APPENDIX A

GLASGOW AIRPORT RAIL LINK - DRAFT BILL

Submission to Examining Committee

Examination of the Public Consultation Document as provided by Strathclyde Passenger Transport Executive and its Agents, and subsequent documentation, including the Draft Bill, gives clear indications, that there are major weaknesses in its content, which have not been addressed, even though representation has been made. Furthermore, factors which should have been considered appear to have been ignored or dismissed as irrelevant.

The matters of concern are set out below.

1. The Consultation Document. This document consults solely on one subject, the proposed route and method of construction of the rail lines through the area of St James' Park. No other part of the total development is set out for consideration or debate. This is confirmed, by the content of the questionnaire provided with the consultation document.

2. Operational Issues. No opportunity was provided to comment on the provision of additional line capacity between Paisley Gilmour Street and Sakeld St/Glasgow Central Signalling Centre, and which if constructed would consume a substantial segment of the projected costs, and at the same time fail to deliver the projected 15 minute service due to the intermediate stations and variable speeds of other services including freight traffic. At no time has any account been taken of the existing 'bottleneck' between Shields Junction and the former Bridge Street Junction. Existing problems within Central Station and the proposed use of Platform 11a are not considered worthy of debate. Added to this are the delays imposed on trains waiting to access the Station platforms, due to long term problems with existing overhead gantries used to support signalling and overhead cables, and the lack of adequate crossovers and points. It should also be noted that Scot Rail in a recent letter to Mr Brian Donohoe MP are not of the firm opinion that expenditure on the Glasgow Airport Rail link, would provide enhancements to the Ayrshire services, a platform quoted as part justification for the proposed expenditure.

3. Airport Station. It is of public record that BAA/Glasgow Airport has not yet agreed to the site or to the funding of the airport station - surely an essential part of the project. Furthermore BAA has not yet completed its Airport Master plan, but in the draft editions has put a high priority on the development of new car parking facilities and extensions to existing ones. Currently BAA is the subject of possible take-over bids, and the probability of new ownership, may change priorities as to what should or should not be in their development programmes.
4. Demographics/Surface Access Demand. Glasgow Airport has for most of its existence, drawn both passengers and staff from the following areas of Scotland - West Coast, e.g. Oban; North East, e.g. Perth/Dundee; East, e.g. Edinburgh/Lothians; and the South West and Borders. With the exception of the latter two, all the other areas have train services into Queen Street Station. Passengers and Staff from the Glasgow Suburbs and surrounding Towns will travel directly to the Airport. This information which appears to have been ignored can be found in the RAS Study 3, prepared on behalf of DfT/Scottish Executive/Scottish Enterprise in July 2002. Furthermore if the current policy of closing down the network at midnight, then the proposed service will be of no use to late arriving passengers and shift workers.

5. Finance & Utilisation. In the Scottish Executive Information Document, issued July 2002, and signed off by Ian Gray MSP and Lewis Macdonald MSP, lists an important objective for an airport rail link, in that operating costs, should, at least, be covered by revenues etc, etc. In the RAS Study 3 document, predicted passenger utilisation of an airport rail link to Glasgow Airport, indicates that it would not rise above 4.4% even by 2030. Once again this information appears to have been ignored throughout the consultation process and the subsequent preparation of the Draft Bill.

6. Conclusion. The above five areas of concern, outline what must be considered as major flaws in the consultation processes and subsequent preparation of the Draft Bill. It is equally apparent that close examination of the financing package, details of which are very thin on the ground, need to be re-examined. The draft Bill in its current format leaves a lot to be desired and it is respectfully suggested that the project be returned to the promoters for a total re-appraisal.