

Penzance Heliport Ltd.



Penzance Heliport Ltd is planning to reinstate the popular scheduled helicopter service between Penzance and the Isles of Scilly.

To operate the service, it proposes to build a new heliport at Jelbert Way, Penzance near to the site of the former heliport on Eastern Green.

The helicopter service will complement existing transport services to the Isles of Scilly, re-establishing a multi-modal, weather resilient transport system to the islands and help grow visitor numbers. The flights will serve all the islands through St Mary's Airport and will also restore a direct link to Tresco.

A planning application for the proposed £2 million private investment will be submitted in autumn 2016 with a decision expected early 2017.

Please take a look at the proposals – we're here to answer any questions you may have. We'd also be very grateful if you could complete a feedback form before you leave.

Background



Helicopter services to the Isles of Scilly started in 1963 from Land's End aerodrome and relocated to Eastern Green, Penzance in 1964, where the service operated reliably and successfully until 2012. For 48 years the helicopter was a very important and profitable service. It played a significant role in the visitor economy of west Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and was the springboard for the islands' post-war regeneration.

Since the loss of the helicopter service there has been a decline in visitor and air passenger numbers to the Isles of Scilly which has impacted both west Cornwall and the islands' local economies. Residents, visitors and businesses have all been affected by the loss of the service and there have been calls for its reinstatement ever since.

For many years the helicopters, the fixed-wing planes and the ferry worked in harmony – the various services complemented each other and provided a resilient transport system. The new service hopes to recreate this situation and bring benefits to all the communities that it will serve through providing greater travel choice and flexibility.

Aims



The primary aim of reinstating the service is to grow the overall visitor numbers to the islands by enhancing travel options for visitors, businesses and residents.

Improve transport reliability and resilience in poor weather

Provide easier transport for locals and visitors with limited mobility

Enhance customer confidence and repair reputational damage which has reduced visitor numbers to the Isles of Scilly

Grow overall passenger numbers to the islands by expanding the travel options, tourist season and regaining the winter market

Grow income, trade and both permanent and seasonal employment opportunities in west Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

Assist with medical transfers to reduce reliance on the emergency services for routine transfers, whilst re-instating a weather-resilient west Cornwall refuelling facility for emergency helicopters

Encourage private sector investment in the islands by improving infrastructure and access

Re-establish a truly multi-modal, resilient and customer-focused transport system in cooperation with the fixed-wing plane and ferry provider

Why Penzance?

The proposed location for building the new heliport is at Jelbert Way, near to the site of the former heliport on Eastern Green.



Many sites across Cornwall have been considered for a replacement heliport. Penzance is deemed the most suitable site for many reasons, including excellent access by road and rail; established tourism offering; good infrastructure, and close proximity to the islands providing quick flight times, and affordable fares.

The Jelbert Way site itself is also low level (only 15 feet above sea level) which has major advantages for operations and there are no environmental designations or constraints.

The businesses of Penzance will benefit from increased trade year-round from users of the heliport who are likely to use local shops, restaurants and accommodation.

Residents of the Isles of Scilly will benefit from easy access to facilities such as social and healthcare plus financial and professional services they require on the mainland.

The helicopter service will also create a number of jobs both during construction of the heliport and in the operational phase on both St Mary's and Tresco, and in Penzance. It is expected Penzance Heliport will directly employ approximately 25 people.



Environment

Landscape

A landscaping scheme will integrate the built development with the surrounding area.

The heliport will not be a prominent feature in the local or wider landscape. The terminal building is single storey and the hangar is similar in height to an agricultural barn.

The helicopter will be visible in flight for very short periods, just as it was when the previous British International operation ran.

Ecology

A number of technical surveys covering habitat, wintering and breeding birds, bats and reptiles have been carried out on site. We are talking to Cornwall Council's ecologist, the RSPB and Natural England about our plans.

We have also assessed the effect of the development on Marazion Marsh, a European designated site, and Mounts Bay Marine Conservation Zone as well as locally designated County Wildlife Sites.

The proposal includes replacement of a section of Cornish hedge, provision of habitats for birds and enhancement measures for reptiles as well as a sensitive lighting scheme for bats.

Noise

Noise tests have confirmed the AW139 is significantly quieter than the previous S61 models which serviced the route. The heliport has also been designed to shield noise.

A baseline noise survey was undertaken at locations surrounding both the development site and the wider area. Live test flights to establish noise levels at a variety of distances from the replacement heliport were also undertaken. The results of these surveys will be used to develop a computerised noise model to assess the effects of a variety of suitable different flight paths.

Transport

Access will be from Jelbert Way. The access will be a simple priority junction.

Daily traffic associated with the heliport in the peak summer season will be about 25 car trips each hour between 08:30 – 16:30. That's less than one car each minute.

There will be approximately 250 spaces on-site.

Air Quality

Baseline surveys are being undertaken to establish the effects of the scheme on local air quality. Using atmospheric dispersion modelling software, we can predict future air quality levels in the area arising from the operational heliport. This will include an assessment of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter.

Lighting

The proposed lighting scheme for the replacement heliport will be designed to provide a safe environment for the site operations and aircraft landing when natural lighting levels fall and to limit light obstruction in order to avoid detriment to the local amenity.



How will the service operate?

The Penzance helicopter will service St Mary's Airport and Tresco, offering another option for travel for those wishing to visit any of the islands.

The helicopter flight paths have been carefully considered to avoid flying directly over any residential properties.



Frequency

It is expected there will be a daily service operating year-round with a reduced service on Sundays. Journey time will be approximately 15 minutes from take-off to landing.

As with the former helicopter service, the number of flights per day will vary depending on the season; during the peak summer season there will be up to 17 return flights from Penzance Heliport per day between 07.30 and 19.30 with approximately one take-off at Penzance every 45 minutes. During the off-peak season, there will be fewer flights.

Helicopter model

The service will be operated using the AW139 15-seater helicopter. This is the market-leading intermediate twin-engine helicopter and is considered the benchmark for safety, performance and reliability all over the world.

The AW139 is equipped with state of the art navigation systems. It has far superior performance levels and is faster and quieter compared with the previous S61 helicopters that used to service the route.



Next steps



The application will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Cornwall Council, at the end of September 2016. There will then be a formal 21-day consultation period. This will provide an opportunity for anyone to make representations to the Council. We hope that the application will be determined in January 2017.

Subject to planning permission being granted, it is hoped that the construction of the heliport will be complete and the helicopter service operating in 2018.

Please do complete a feedback form and post it in one of the boxes provided. Your comments will help inform the final scheme. You can also write to the Council after the application has been submitted.

Members of the team are on hand to provide factual information and answer any queries you may have.

Thank you for coming.



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