



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Angela Smith MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
Northern Ireland Office
Block B Castle Buildings
Stormont
Belfast, BT4 3SG

17th January 2005

PRIVATE OFFICE

DOE

Dear Angela,

Re: Belfast City Airport – Planning Agreement – Public Inquiry

First of all, I do apologise for the delay in responding to the consultation in respect of the proposed change to the Planning Agreement for Belfast City Airport. This delay in no way reflects upon the importance I attach to this issue, which affects so many of my North Down constituents.

Following representations from them, I am writing to support their demands for a public inquiry. It is worth noting that I did not receive a single letter in opposition to such an inquiry. On the contrary, all who wrote were urging that there be a full public inquiry, mainly because they regard the proposed increase in the number of passengers as very much the 'thin end of the wedge' in terms of progressive changes to the Planning Agreement.

In adding my support to their strongly held views, I sincerely hope that your Department will do the right thing in the circumstances and order a much needed public inquiry.

I look forward, as I always do, to hearing from you at your earliest opportunity.

Kindest regards,
Sybil
Lady Hermon MP