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Dear Chris

RE: Arran & Campbeltown Mainland Port Appraisal

Thank you for providing us with a copy of the responses to the draft Arran & Campbeltown Mainland Port Appraisal from Associated British Ports (ABP), North Ayrshire Council, Peel Ports and South Ayrshire Council. Whilst we have informally provided you with detailed comments to each individual point by return, as per your invitation, we thought it would be useful to provide a summary of the central points made by relevant parties and our responses to these.

For each issue pointed out below we have:

- Grouped the issue into one of four key themes covered in the study – reliability, connectivity, socio-economics & cost to government.
- Set out which party commented and the substance of their comment.
- Laid out our considered response or clarification to the point made.

Conduct of the Appraisal

At a very general level, we would ask that the following points are noted and / or reiterated:

- Although this was a complex, pressured and politically charged project, we made every effort to ensure that our approach and outputs were prepared in an evidence-based and objective manner. Throughout the appraisal and in the subsequent written responses, both parties made a number of comments in relation to what the appraisal should consider and how this should be carried out. In many cases, the inputs of both parties were at odds with each other. Throughout the appraisal, we attempted to present the evidence dispassionately, clearly setting out our assumptions and any risks.
- Our commission involved the gathering and development of evidence to support the deliberations and ultimate decision of the Minister for Transport & the Islands. Our role on this commission was **not** to act as a technical assessor of either submission. In our professional opinion, there are risks & challenges associated with both submissions which have been identified and set out. We have been entirely transparent on the assumptions we have used in our assessment and the potential risks & weaknesses with these.
- There were a number of comments from both sets of parties in relation to the development of detailed socio-economics (e.g. impact of any move on prices in the shops) and other material (e.g. traffic impact assessments). Whilst we covered these points at a high level, and developed



additional socio-economic material to support the review, the level of detail requested in some areas was the beyond the agreed scope of this study, and would have required an additional detailed study in its own right (and in many cases evidencing the anecdotal points made and proving causality would be difficult).

Reliability

Consultation with CalMac Masters

The response from ABP pointed out that CalMac Masters had not been consulted on their views. We engaged with CalMac and requested permission to speak with the Masters early in the study. However, as this was a competitive proposal situation and CalMac will ultimately operate from the chosen mainland port, it was considered inappropriate for individual crew members to comment on this issue. The potential ramifications for the Masters if their views were made public (even if these views were essentially anonymised) were also considered in making this decision.

The decision was therefore taken to assess reliability through a combination of the simulations (which were deemed to provide a definitive data-based position on reliability), published reliability data for comparable CalMac services and the opinions of a number of Master Mariners familiar with both ports. Where opinions were provided by Master Mariners, we were clear on who had commissioned their input and whether the individual(s) in question had received any remuneration.

Engagement with P&O Ferries

In their response to the draft report, ABP noted that a strong letter of support supplied by P&O Ferries was overlooked. However, following a referral from ABP at our initial meeting with them, we liaised with the author of the P&O letter in late December 2016. P&O Ferries very helpfully facilitated contact with Captain Hywel Jones, who was deemed the most appropriate (former) P&O Master with whom to speak. Captain Jones had lengthy experience of operating to & from both Ardrossan and Troon.

Transport Scotland considered this to be an avenue worth exploring and provided additional fees of £1,000 to PBA to meet with Captain Jones in Cardiff. The PBA Project Manager had a lengthy meeting with Captain Jones who explained the operations aspects in detail and provided & approved the balanced contribution attributed to him in the report.

Captain MacLean Report

The ABP response notes that the assumption made by Captain MacLean that each port's proposal "will address any current marine infrastructure issues" is clearly incorrect.

It is important to clarify here that this assumption was **not** made by Captain MacLean. His report is focussed on berthing at the current ports and it was PBA's statement that Captain MacLean addresses berthing at the current facilities. Our report was merely pointing out that Captain MacLean's commentary relates to the pre-investment situation and a number of the points raised by him will be addressed through the proposed investment at either port.

Cancellation Data

The response from South Ayrshire Council expressed surprise that the report focuses on the annual cancellation rate, and recommends reviewing the cancellation data on a monthly basis.

For clarification, data were considered not just on a monthly basis but on a sailing-by-sailing basis over eight years and aggregated to monthly and annual levels for reporting. Our analysis of the CalMac data is likely to be the most comprehensive review of the performance of the Ardrossan – Brodick route in the context of the wider network undertaken to date.



Connectivity

A number of points were made in reference to the analysis contained within the 'Onward Transport Connectivity' chapter. Whilst specific points are considered below, we would emphasise that our analysis is of a level of robustness above that presented in the two submissions. Our analysis made use of industry standard accessibility modelling tools, which in turn are based on a full set of published timetables, road characteristics and observed data. There can therefore be a high degree of confidence in the outputs.

In terms of specific points:

- Both North Ayrshire Council & Peel Ports view the 10-minute bus transfer from 'gangplank to station' associated with Troon as being unrealistic, whilst ABP note that this will be delivered. We must stress that throughout the study, we took the claims of **both** submissions at face value (as we were not employed in a technical review role) but highlighted the risks associated with these assumptions (with sensitivity testing carried out where appropriate).
- ABP noted that the chapter is focussed on total journey times as opposed to both the onward connectivity from the mainland port. This is correct – the chapter title is potentially misleading as the analysis actually refers of onward transport connectivity from Brodick. In order to ensure a robust analysis, the study considered all journeys from a common starting / finishing point of Brodick and / or Campbeltown.
- The ABP response notes that “the report does not adequately quantify the sheer scale of improved rail connectivity offered by Troon”. For clarity, this is picked up in the public transport accessibility analysis through the allocation of a lower headway (7.5 minutes at Troon compared to 25 minutes at Ardrossan), as is standard practice in public transport modelling. The 25-minute figure at Ardrossan was determined from a detailed analysis of current ferry to train interchange times, weighted by travel volumes.
- In their response, North Ayrshire Council noted that the Network Analyst accessibility modelling only provides information on existing journey times, not picking up forthcoming road improvements in the vicinity of Ardrossan. This is correct, as the road-based accessibility modelling is based on observed data. The noted road improvements will further enhance road-based connectivity from Ardrossan.

Vessel Speeds & Crewing Costs

The ABP response noted that the crewing cost calculations are measured entirely on the current vessels steaming at a speed of circa 14.5 knots. The response raised the issue of whether faster vessel operating speeds should be considered to offset additional crewing.

We did consider this issue. However, CalMac advised that we should not consider a 16.5 knot vessel as the anticipated speed of the new vessel would be comparable to the current vessel. In addition, whilst a faster vessel may partially (although likely not entirely) offset the need for additional crew when steaming to Troon, it would (for the same amount of revenue resource) provide for more services on the Ardrossan route. A common speed had to be assumed when making a like-for-like comparison, and the rationale for this is clearly set out in the report.

Crossing Time to Troon

The analysis in the report was based on an additional crossing time from Brodick to Troon (compared to Ardrossan) of 15 minutes. This was advised by CalMac Ferries at the outset of the study and cross-referenced against our own calculations. As this study drew to a close, further research by CalMac suggested that a 20-minute crossing differential may be more appropriate.

As all of the analysis to date had been predicated on a 15-minute differential, this was retained in the final reporting. However, the potential uncertainty around this crossing time was highlighted in the 'Risk & Uncertainty' chapter.



Cost to Government

As the majority of the cost to government material was deemed commercially confidential (and hence redacted), the comments in relation to this section of the report will be addressed separately by Transport Scotland.

One point of clarification that has been addressed since the receipt of comments is the terminal lease charge to be paid at Ardrossan. This has now been split out from the overall Ardrossan costs and presented separately in Tables 8.1 and 8.2, as well as the corresponding tables in the summary. This does not make any material change to the reporting or outcomes.

Public Engagement

ABP noted that no direct consultation has taken place with the people of Arran. At the outset of this process, PBA did commit to ABP, Peel Ports, North Ayrshire Council, South Ayrshire Council, the Arran Ferry Committee and Visit Arran that public engagement in both Arran & Campbeltown would be undertaken. Given the detailed analysis contained in the Interim Report produced in January 2016, it was agreed with Transport Scotland that it was unlikely that further public engagement would be required.

Conclusion

Thank you again for inviting our comment on the responses submitted by ABP, Peel Ports and the respective local authorities. We are hopeful that the narrative set out above will assist Transport Scotland in addressing the comments and questions provided by the respective parties.

For completeness, other than our revision to Tables 8.1 and 8.2 (and the corresponding tables in the summary section), we can confirm that no substantive changes are required to the analysis or reporting as a result of the feedback received. By extension, the conclusions of the reporting remain unchanged.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if we can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Canning
Associate – Transport Planner & Economist
For and on behalf of
PETER BRETT ASSOCIATES LLP