Construction of Terminal Two (T2) at Dublin Airport could begin within weeks following An Bord Pleanála's decision to grant planning permission for the €609m ($830.7m) project, the Dublin Airport Authority (DAA) has confirmed.

"On behalf of all our passengers, we welcome the fact that we have now received the go-ahead," said DAA Ceo Declan Collier. "Subject to a review of the planning conditions by the Board of the DAA and its approval of initial construction contracts, we hope to begin preliminary construction work on T2 very shortly," he added.

He also welcomed the fact that the DAA’s plans for a new parallel runway were approved. "The timely addition of a new runway is essential to allow Dublin Airport meet the growing needs of our airlines and passengers," he added.

The construction of T2 and the new runway are part of the DAA’s €2bn ($2.7bn) ‘Transforming Dublin Airport’ programme. This 10-year programme also includes a new boarding gate facility, Pier D, which opens this autumn, an extension to the existing terminal, and a wide range of other upgrades that will expand, improve and modernise Dublin Airport.

T2 will transform the passenger experience at Dublin Airport, giving travellers a "spacious, modern and cost-effective new terminal that will be a pleasure to use," according to Collier. He added that the opening of T2 would also eliminate congestion for passengers using the existing terminal (T1) and allow the DAA to modernise and refurbish it.

Construction of the new terminal will be completed towards the end of 2009. Following a rigorous testing and commissioning phase, T2 will open in April 2010.

The DAA has been granted a five-year permission for a new passenger terminal building. The new terminal will be located close to the roundabout on the existing approach road to T1.

The permission also includes a new pier (E), comprising a 24,000sq m boarding gate facility with parking spaces for up to 19 long haul and short haul aircraft. An upgrade of the airport campus road network, a new energy centre, and various other service enhancements are also included in the overall T2 project.

The new runway, which has a construction cost of €150m ($204.6m) at current prices, will be built 1.7km to the north of the existing main runway at Dublin Airport. The addition of the new runway, which will be completed within the next five years, will expand the potential airfield capacity of Dublin Airport to about 50 million passengers per year. However, growing the airport to that size would require a third terminal.

‘T2 and its related facilities have been designed to meet the business plans of our airline and other customers and to deliver balanced growth of short-haul and long-haul services at Dublin Airport. They meet the needs and expectations of the Government, of the business and tourism communities and of our passengers generally," said Collier.

He noted that only one commercial organisation continued to oppose the plans for T2 and suggested that its position was motivated by narrow self-interest rather than the interests of Dublin Airport, passengers, and the wider Irish economy.

The T2 planning decision represents the culmination of more than two years’ work by the DAA since the announcement of the Government’s Aviation Action Plan in mid 2005. Planning permission for T2 was sought in August 2006 and permission was granted by Fingal County Council ten months ago.
DAA to build Dublin T2

Work will start shortly on preparing the T2 site for construction, building site access roads and establishing the necessary site compounds. Once this preparatory phase is complete, excavation works will begin and construction proper will get underway.

The new terminal and pier will facilitate the provision of significant additional long haul routes linking Dublin with North America, the Middle East and Asia. The development will incorporate a new US Customs, Border and Protection (CBP) facility, allowing transatlantic passengers to clear full US customs and immigration at Dublin Airport. This new Dublin facility, one of only two such facilities in Europe, will make Dublin a more attractive location for US-bound traffic.