

NWB



Nuweiba International Airport... Saving East Sinai !

In order to counter the severe decline in the tourism industry of the Gulf of Aqaba coastal areas, (from Dahab to Taba, including St Catherine and Nuweiba), and to rejuvenate the economy of the area, as well as to safeguard against any possible rise in crime or fundamentalism, a new centrally located airport should be built in Nuweiba itself, that will serve the whole area of East Sinai, that is from Dahab to Taba, including St Catherine and Nuweiba, and which will replace both Taba Airport and St Catherine Airport.



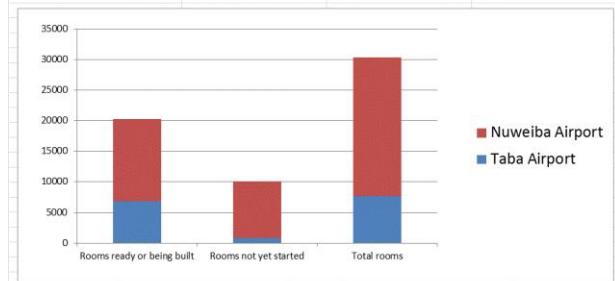
The cost would be dependent on the final designs of the airport, but would be offset by the savings made from not having to invest further in either Taba Airport or St Catherine Airport, both of which would no longer be needed commercially as those airports are, quite frankly, too remote and isolated, as well as from savings made through reduced demand and pressure being placed on Sharm el Sheikh airport.

The Egyptian tourism industry would benefit enormously, as there are about 10000 hotel rooms in the area, within less than one hour's drive from the new airport site, and mostly suffering from near zero occupancies, several thousand more rooms under construction, and the potential for a further 10000 rooms to be built on empty, but already assigned, plots of land. Furthermore, the local Bedouin communities would be saved from financial ruin, security in the area would be easier to maintain and business for Nuweiba Port would also be greatly improved, as a sharp increase in tourists would be expected in the area as well as an increase in regional trade.

Graph showing number of hotel rooms reachable within one hour's drive from Taba Airport compared to Nuweiba Airport

A modern, successful tourist destination needs to be close to an international airport - present day tour operators do not want their guests being driven more than one hour at most. Shorter journey times means happier tourists, vehicles and staff not being tied up needlessly and thus greater savings !

	Rooms ready or being built	Rooms not yet started	Total rooms
Taba Airport	6858	800	7658
Nuweiba Airport	13387	9250	22637



Nuweiba Airport could serve more than twice the number of rooms as Taba Airport !
Once all development is nearing maturity, especially at Rowad Dahab, Nuweiba Airport would serve three times the number that Taba could possibly serve !!



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There are different possibilities for the exact location and layout of the airport, some of which have been explored before and subsequently rejected. There is, however, one location that stands above the rest, and which would have almost no negative environmental impact and would be the least expensive to build and to operate.

The location would be at sea-level, on empty flat land and an old dis-used farm that is located on the south-eastern area of Nuweiba, close to the port, with a 2300 metres runway running from where the old road between the port and the Nuweiba Hilton is, in a northerly direction towards the sea, (20 degrees north-north-east). The area is protected from any floods by a very effective flood channel built some 15 years ago. It also has the necessary local infrastructure, such as housing, businesses and a local population to support an airport.



This layout could easily accommodate a 2300 metres runway, plus additional safety areas of 350 metres at each end of the runway.



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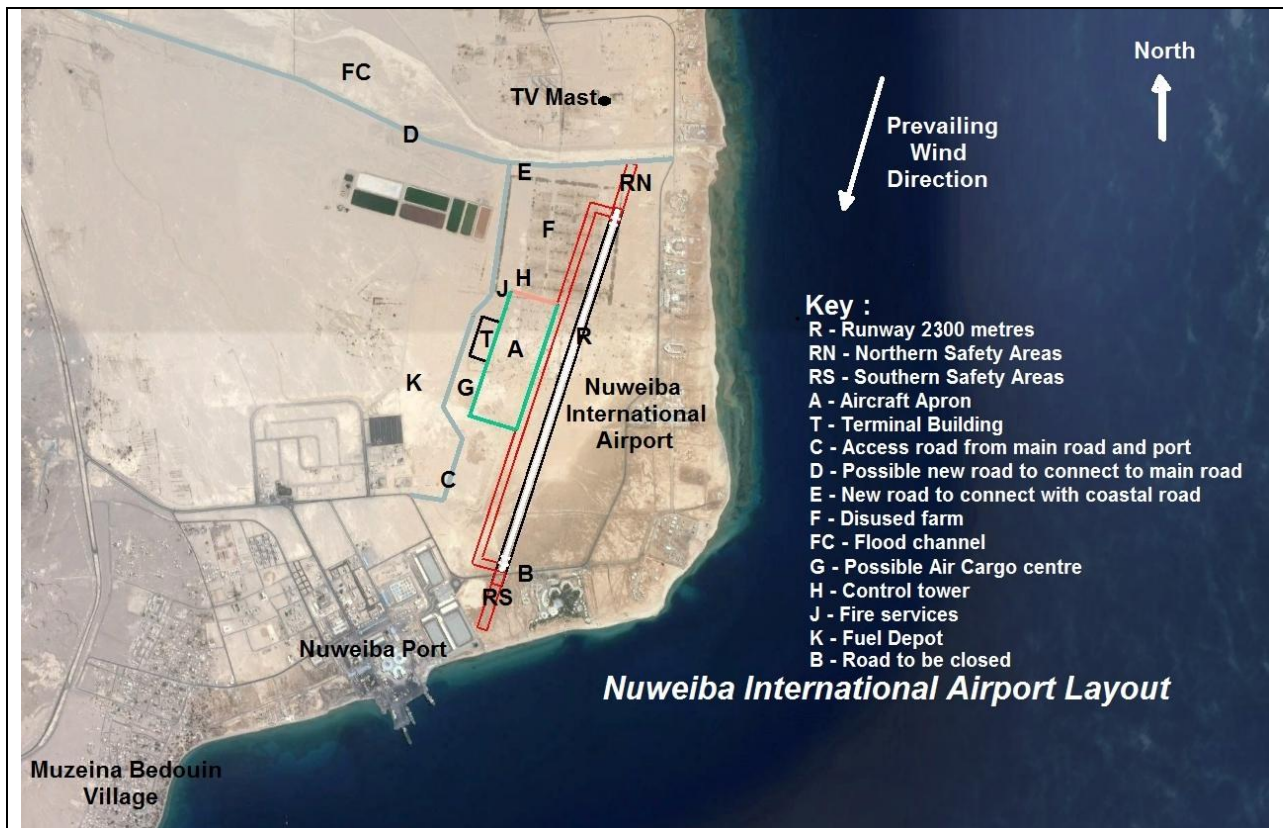
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This would be more than adequate as it would be sufficient for over 90 % of all aircraft types currently using Sharm or Hurghada Airports, notably the Embraer E-170, the Boeing B737-300/800, the B757-200 and the Airbus 319 – 321). The runway would follow the normal prevailing wind direction, with most take offs and landings being in a south to north direction.

The only changes to the area that would have to be made would be the cancelling of the 300 metre long road between Nuweiba Port and the Hilton Hotel, a road that has become difficult to use due to the traffic coming from or to the port, and a secondary electric transmission cable. There is a telecommunications mast of ca 120 metres in height some 700 metres north of the end of the runway (15 degrees north-westerly direction) which, if it is deemed a hazard, could be re-located. This mast is 30 years old and probably will need to be replaced in due course. Apart from that, the land is currently unused with no habitation and only the remnants of the old disused farm in one corner of the site. The flight paths leading to and from the airport do not encroach on any residential areas, schools or hospitals, and just pass over some small, desolated and empty hotels – the owners of which would welcome the airport as it would be so instrumental in increasing tourism to the local area.

Furthermore, it could be possible, though at quite substantial cost, to extend the runway northwards up to 3000 metres in length. This option would require diverting one branch of the flood channel. However, we do not believe that it is actually needed or would be commercially viable.



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There is sufficient flat, empty land to the west of the runway for the location of the airport terminal, the aircraft aprons, administrative buildings, (such as the air tower control, emergency services and office administration), car-parks and an access road leading straight to the Dahab – Taba road, with another access road to the port. There is also enough space to build a cargo-centre as there is land between the Dahab – Taba road and the airport location to build a free-zone with light industry being encouraged to the area which would benefit from the excellent air and sea links.

There are almost 14000 hotel rooms ready or under construction in the area, with possibly another 10000 that could be built on the empty plots. With such an airport, and an average annual occupancy of those hotels being conservatively estimated at 65 % full, and mostly occupied by two or more persons, this means that the annual number of passengers passing through the airport could easily be in the region of 1.27 to

Estimated number of passengers for Nuweiba Airport			
The below table shows the number of potential passengers that could use Nuweiba Airport. This assumes an occupancy of 65 % of hotel occupancy with an average length of stay of ten days. These figures could be greatly enhanced by day trips coming from or to Cairo.			
	Rooms ready or being built	Rooms not yet started	Total rooms
Number of rooms	13387	9250	22637
Average number of guests per room	2	2	2
Total number of guests	26774	18500	45274
Average hotel occupancy %	65	65	65
Estimated number of guests per day	17403	12025	29428
Total guests in a year	6352132	4389125	10741257
Average length of stay in days	10	10	10
Number of airport arrivals	635213	438913	1074126
Number of airport departures	635213	438913	1074126
Total passenger in a year	1270426	877825	2148251
Basically, this means that there would realistically be enough demand for an airport in Nuweiba of between 1 and 2 million passengers every year during the first years of operation, or between 2 and 5 times the demand that Taba Airport could ever possibly achieve.			

2.15 million – which is almost 3 to 5 times the amount that Taba Airport ever achieved. These figures do not even take into account the number of guests that would be visiting on a day-trip – i.e. from Cairo to St Catherine or from East Sinai to Cairo, or the possibility of business visitors and freight moving through in conjunction with business at the nearby Nuweiba Port.



Looking NNE from the southern end of the runway



Looking SSW from the northern end of the runway

The cost of a new airport is immense – but so are the rewards. Investors would return to the area, the many unfinished hotel resorts that litter the coast-line would be finished as tourists visit the region en masse, thus securing full employment for the local Bedouins as well as the many thousands of Egyptian workers that will be needed – and so will the State benefit... with an enormous boost in tax revenues from the upturn in the economy of East Sinai as well as improved safety and security in the region.

Nuweiba International Airport is the solution to all the problems of East Sinai !



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