

National Planning Framework 4 Team  
Scottish Government  
Area 2F South  
Victoria Quay  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QQ

30 April 2020

**By email only to [scotplan@gov.scot](mailto:scotplan@gov.scot)**

Dear Sir/Madam,

## **NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 4: CALL FOR IDEAS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This response is submitted on behalf of Glasgow Airport Limited (GAL), the operator of Glasgow Airport. GAL welcomes the opportunity to inform the new National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) to ensure that the nationally significant role and contribution of Glasgow Airport is recognised and supported.

Scottish aviation has never been so vulnerable, yet so vital. Perhaps of any business sector, aviation is bearing the brunt in depth and in extent of covid-19 impacts. The path to sustainable re-growth is uncertain. The context to this response has therefore changed immeasurably. However, the themes of low carbon growth, inclusion, innovation, connectivity and global participation remain compelling and NPF4 is an auspicious opportunity to provide the spatial vision required.

### **BACKGROUND**

Glasgow Airport handled 8.8 million passengers in 2019, making it one of the busiest regional airports in the UK. Around thirty airlines connect with over 120 worldwide destinations, including the hubs of Heathrow (10 per day), Amsterdam (5 per day), Dubai (2 per day), Frankfurt (2 per day), Munich, Dublin and Reykjavik. The connectivity provided by these routes is vital to Scotland's social and economic success, including objectives to increase trade, tourism and inward investment.

Glasgow Airport is an important freight hub, handling tens of thousands of tonnes of freight a year. While air freight accounts for a modest proportion of Scottish imports and exports in terms of volume, it represents a much greater proportion of freight by value. For example, Glasgow Airport handled more than £3.4 billion of goods in 2017, which is over 11% of Scotland's non-EU imports/exports.

A recent study by York Aviation<sup>1</sup> calculated that the activities and connectivity associated with the airport support over 30,000 jobs and £1.44 billion of economic activity across Scotland. This includes 5,300 people employed directly on-site, an increase of almost 1,000 jobs since the previous study was prepared in 2010.

Many leading companies have located in the vicinity of Glasgow Airport including British Airways Maintenance, Thermo Fisher, HP and Rolls Royce. Within this area, around 400 companies across a range

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<sup>1</sup> The Economic Impact of Glasgow Airport, York Aviation, 2019.  
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of key growth sectors employ over 15,000 people. Together with the emerging manufacturing innovation district, this marks Glasgow Airport as a major centre of economic activity and opportunity.

Given this scale of economic activity and opportunity, consecutive National Planning Frameworks have recognised Glasgow Airport as a national development. Designation includes a range of elements such as extension of the site boundary for airport operational uses, new and/or expanded terminal buildings and airport related business/industrial/logistics development. The approved Clydeplan also identifies airport related regional priorities across expansion, international connectivity, freight, economic investment opportunities and sustainable transport access.

Since the publication of NPF3, the airport has invested over £140 million at no cost to public authorities. This investment has delivered a number of enhancements identified in the airport masterplan across airfield, terminal and landside areas, some of which are referred to in the NPF3 Action Programme.

Glasgow Airport has therefore delivered significant national benefits since the publication of NPF3:

- 1,000 additional jobs;
- £1.44 billion GVA per annum;
- more passengers;
- better connectivity; and
- over £140 million capital investment in airside, terminal and landside infrastructure.

Looking forward to 2050, the airport is forecast to be handling over 17 million passengers, stimulating huge growth in jobs (+13,000), GVA (+£1 billion) and connectivity. The scale of opportunity is compelling, as is the need to ensure that growth is sustainable and inclusive. We have therefore set out below how and why Glasgow Airport should be retained within a refreshed list of national developments.

## STRATEGIC CONNECTIVITY ENHANCEMENTS

### Brief description of proposed national development

This national development supports the operation and growth of the country's key connectivity hubs linking Scotland to the rest of the world. In terms of Glasgow Airport, the national development designation should incorporate:

- Extension of the site boundary for airport operational uses
- New and/or expanded airfield, terminal and landside infrastructure and buildings
- Airport related business/industrial/logistics development
- Strategic sustainable surface access interventions
- On-site renewable energy generation infrastructure

### Location of proposed national development

Various to be agreed, including Glasgow Airport and its environs.

### What part or parts of the development requires planning permission or other consent?

New and expanded facilities and supporting infrastructure that do not fall within the airport's permitted development rights.

### Is the development already formally recognised?

The development of Glasgow Airport is widely recognised across the UK and Scottish policy spectrum, including NPF3, the statutory development plan and various planning permissions.

### Contribution of proposed national development to the national development criteria:

#### *Climate Change*

Glasgow Airport has implemented a number of initiatives across various emissions sources, including:

- energy efficiency measures, such as LED lighting replacement;
- sourcing 100% of electricity from renewable sources;
- a new, more efficient boiler system;
- a fleet replacement strategy that has increased the use of low emissions vehicles; and;
- investing in more sustainable active and public transport infrastructure and services for staff and passengers.

At a Scottish level, air passenger numbers have grown by 188% since 1990, representing a significant increase in connectivity. Over the same period, carbon emissions have grown by 58%, demonstrating the progress that has already been made decoupling connectivity and carbon.

Whilst Glasgow Airport has indeed reduced energy use, increased the proportion of renewable forms of energy and reduced carbon emissions as part of these improvements, the predicted increase in passengers requires a continued focus to maintain progress.

Glasgow Airport is therefore implementing a range of additional measures to further improve performance and ensure it contributes to Scottish, UK and international objectives. These include:

- becoming a carbon neutral Airport;
- delivering sustainable surface access interventions to achieve a step change in public transport mode share; and
- developing proposals for on-Airport renewable energy generation.

Becoming a carbon neutral airport will be the first step towards achieving net zero. Together with over 200 airports across Europe, AGS/Glasgow Airport is a signatory to ACI Europe's NetZero 2050 pledge. This is a commitment to achieve net zero for the carbon under our control by 2050. At Glasgow, we will align with the Scottish Government's 2045 target.

Glasgow is also a signatory to Sustainable Aviation's (SA) decarbonisation roadmap which sets out how the UK aviation industry can accommodate a 70% growth in passengers by 2050 whilst reducing net carbon emissions levels from just over 30 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year down to zero through smarter flight operations, new aircraft and engine technology, modernising our airspace, the use of sustainable aviation fuels and significant investment in carbon reductions through smart market-based policy measures.

Designating Glasgow Airport as a national development will enable further progress and in particular delivery of sustainable surface access and on-site renewables generation infrastructure.

### *People*

Aviation is an economic and social necessity for people to, from and within Scotland. This includes domestic and international connectivity and lifeline Highlands and Islands services. Physical connectivity is fundamental to meaningful global economic, social and cultural participation.

### *Inclusive Growth*

In 2018 Scotland was ranked in 16<sup>th</sup> place (out of 37 countries) for productivity levels amongst OECD countries. The Scottish Government has an ambition to reach the top quartile of OECD countries in terms of productivity. Since 2007, Scotland's productivity rank has remained unchanged in the second quartile.

Studies have confirmed that, despite geographic peripherality, Scotland's connectivity lags that of its competitors. That means exporting goods and services, investing and visiting takes longer, costs more and is less convenient, all of which contribute to stagnating productivity. Enhancing air connectivity and surface access will improve productivity and economic growth.

Glasgow Airport already provides employment for thousands of people, and future growth will create thousands of additional jobs. Roles within the aviation sector encompass a large range of skill sets and experience, providing a variety of opportunities.

The York Aviation study highlighted economic contrasts, with the Airport generating £1.44 billion of economic activity while a number of neighbouring communities suffer from some of the highest rates of deprivation in Scotland. The Airport seeks to build upon existing initiatives to ensure that as many people as possible can benefit from employment opportunities and the Airport is developing an employment strategy to outline how further progress can be made.

*Place*

Glasgow Airport is the first and last impression for many visitors and investors. Maintaining national development status will assist efforts to enhance the quality of place and experience for users through the airport's development programme.

**CLYDE MISSION**

Glasgow Airport is also supportive of proposals to designate the Clyde Mission initiative as a national development. Including the airport, the scale of opportunity and need associated with this initiative is transformational. Clyde Mission combines strategic economic and physical development potential with area regeneration, inclusive growth and low carbon infrastructure such as the City Metro.

We trust the above will prove useful and informative to the process of creating NPF4. Please do not hesitate to contact Ross Nimmo on 07500 102 225 or at [ross.nimmo@glasgowairport.com](mailto:ross.nimmo@glasgowairport.com) should you have any questions or wish to discuss anything further.

Yours faithfully,



Ross Nimmo MRTPI  
**Head of Planning and Development**

Encl. GAL Response to National Transport Strategy II  
GAL Response to the Infrastructure Commission  
Economic Impact of Glasgow Airport Report

