



Scottish Council for
Development and Industry

POLICY SUBMISSION

RESPONSE TO GLASGOW PRESTWICK AIRPORT DRAFT MASTER PLAN

December 2008

SCDI is an independent and inclusive economic development network which seeks to influence and inspire government and key stakeholders with our ambitious vision to create shared sustainable economic prosperity for Scotland.

For more information on this response please contact the SCDI Policy Team at

Campsie House
17 Park Circus Place
Glasgow
G3 6AH

e policyteam@scdi.org.uk

t 0141 332 9119

1. The Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the above document. SCDI is an independent membership network that strengthens Scotland's competitiveness by influencing Government policies to encourage sustainable economic prosperity. Its membership includes business, trades unions, local authorities, educational institutions, the voluntary sector and significant players in the Scottish tourism and transport sectors. SCDI has been closely involved with the establishment, development and improvement of air services for many years. Indeed, the development of air services was one of SCDI's objectives in its original prospectus over 70 years ago. In 2002, SCDI submitted a detailed response to the Air Transport White Paper and has responded to the consultations on the Edinburgh Airport Outline Master Plan, the Glasgow Airport Outline Master Plan and the Inverness Airport Outline Master Plan over the last few years. A response has not been provided to every question in the document. Those questions to which an opinion has been given precede each response.

Vision for Growth

Question: What do you think are the potential benefits of our Airport's development?

2. In addition to the significant economic benefits that accrue at the local and national level from Glasgow Prestwick Airport's operations in the way of job creation, income generation and contribution to Gross Value Added (GVA) as detailed between pages 28 and 31 of the draft Master Plan, SCDI would highlight the benefit of providing a high quality airport infrastructure and affordable direct air links to other centres of economic activity for both business and leisure purposes as among the principal benefits associated with Glasgow Prestwick Airport. An increasingly competitive international environment increases the importance of the role of air services in Scotland's economic development to ensure worldwide access for Scottish products, services and people and aiding inward investment. Furthermore, the ability of visitors to access Scotland as efficiently and directly as possible is important in ensuring Scotland can continue to compete effectively in the international leisure and business tourism market.
3. The existence of air cargo services that meet the needs of Scottish business is also important to economic growth and as an attraction for inward investment. Scotland is a trading nation with over 30% of its GDP exported. SCDI data shows that manufacturing exports were valued at £15bn in 2006. Glasgow Prestwick Airport's cargo facilities are an important benefit for the Scottish economy with around 52% of Scottish air freight handled at the airport. With 31,517 tonnes of freight being carried by Glasgow Prestwick Airport in 2007 according to Scottish Transport Statistics 2008 and the draft Master Plan forecasting this could grow to over 100,000 tonnes in the longer term, the airport's contribution in ensuring Scottish business is integrated into the global marketplace is set to rise.
4. The main issue regarding Glasgow Prestwick Airport's development is in its ability to comfortably accommodate and facilitate the passengers that use the Airport. SCDI agrees that it is important for appropriate modelling methodology to be used in forecasting passenger numbers and that the "bottom up" approach used in the draft Master Plan is correct. However, the assumptions and data that underpin each of the forecasts must be regularly reviewed to ensure they are still relevant. Forecasts must be adjusted accordingly as new data is obtained over time in regard to underpinning assumptions and this is especially the case given that the ambitious high growth scenario has been taken as the basis for the developments set out in the draft Master Plan.
5. In regard to cargo, SCDI welcomes the forecast that cargo handled by Glasgow Prestwick Airport is forecast to grow at a rate of 4% as this suggests a successful Scottish manufacturing sector with good demand for cargo services.

Plans to Achieve Growth

Question: What are your views on our approach to future land use planning and surface access arrangements?

Medium Term 2009-2018

6. SCDI is content with the land use planning approach as outlined in the draft Master Plan to 2018 based on a growth in passenger numbers to 5.7 mppa. A single main runway will be utilised with the development of passenger facilities in and around the existing terminal infrastructure.
7. The statement in the consultation that, the existing departure lounge is now at capacity and is congested during peak hours operation, indicates the need to address the capacity constraint and ensure that the facilities provided to the passenger at Glasgow Prestwick Airport are of high quality and their travelling experience is pleasurable.
8. The ability to continue to accommodate the largest freight aircraft at Glasgow Prestwick Airport is very important. The forecast growth in freight tonnage is encouraging and it must be ensured that the facilities provided by Glasgow Prestwick Airport to comfortably handle and encourage this growth continue to be developed. Furthermore it is vital that both freight and passenger growth can be facilitated with no interference between each. SCDI, therefore, agrees with the strategy outlined in the draft Master Plan.
9. In its response to the Air Transport White Paper consultation, SCDI stated that the aerospace cluster that has grown up around Glasgow Prestwick Airport, including Ryanair's maintenance base, is also an important source of employment in the area and a major contributor to Scotland's skills base. SCDI recommended that development in and around Glasgow Prestwick must be supported and encouraged to ensure this considerable asset is sustained and enhanced. SCDI welcomes the statements in the draft Master Plan that the Airport is being actively marketed as a site for maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) business and that there is provision for expansion.
10. As with railway stations, bus stations or sea ports, SCDI believes that airports should be considered as part of an integrated transport system. The development of a range of transport links to airports should be encouraged where sufficient market demand exists. With passenger numbers to Glasgow Prestwick Airport expected to grow considerably over the timescale of the draft Master Plan the necessity to ensure a broad range of transport options is made available is increasing.
11. SCDI notes that Glasgow Prestwick Airport is the only airport in Scotland currently served by a direct rail link and has always highlighted this as a good example of intermodal transport provision. SCDI certainly supports the objective of increasing the amount of passengers accessing the Airport by rail to 30%. The required investment in the rail link must be made available to ensure that the quality of the experience for those passengers choosing rail is as high as possible. The actions listed on page 50 of the draft Master Plan to improve the rail service are all supported by SCDI. It is unfortunate that the recently released Strategic Transport Project Review (STPR) does not include the full development of the Glasgow Crossrail scheme. SCDI understands that Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) will be meeting with the Scottish Government early in 2009 to discuss this decision and it is hoped that the Glasgow Crossrail scheme will be supported by Government.
12. Nonetheless, it is recognised that accessing Glasgow Prestwick Airport by private car will remain the dominant mode for passengers and others accessing the airport. Passengers and freight travelling to and from Scotland's airports require a quality road system. The proposed road developments contained in the draft Master Plan, such as an extension of the M77 and the trunking of the A79, would seem to be a much needed requirement. It should be highlighted that these will not only aid the private motorist, but also road based public transport such as buses and taxis.

Longer term 2018 - 2033

13. It is correct not to bring forward firm proposals for the 2018-2033 period in the draft Master Plan. Possible developments such as a High-Speed Rail Line between central Scotland and London and one into western mainland Europe, if progressed, could have a significant bearing on demand for air travel from Scotland's central belt airports and may need to be factored in to longer term forecasts.

Other Issues - Wind Farms

14. SCDI welcomes the statement in the draft Master Plan that Glasgow Prestwick Airport is revising the wind farm safeguarding map to help provide better guidance to developers and planning authorities as to the preferred location for wind farm development. A recent report by SCDI on Scotland's electricity needs has highlighted the requirement for a large increase in the amount of onshore wind farms to ensure Scotland meets its demand for electricity alongside its climate change targets. Reducing uncertainty for wind farms developments and providing clarity as to where they can safely and sensibly be located through guidance such as the safeguarding map should help to reduce the amount of objections raised against wind farm developments.

Iain D Duff, Chief Economist and Policy Manager, SCDI

19 December 2008