

Case reference	NOD-RFS-002
Application details	Erection of business park development (in principle), to include advanced manufacturing, research and development and aviation services, comprising of primarily Class 4 business, Class 5 general industrial. And Class 6 storage and distribution uses; ancillary service, education and trading provision; plus associated car parking, access, landscaping, infrastructure works, public realm and open space
Site address	Netherton farm, Abbotsinch Road, Renfrew
Applicant	Renfrewshire Council
Determining Authority	Renfrewshire Council
Local Authority Area	
Reason(s) for notification	Direction
Representations	1
Date notified to Ministers	18 January 2019
Date of recommendation	6 March 2019
Decision / recommendation	Clear

Description of Proposal and Site:

- Planning permission in principle is sought by Renfrewshire Council for the development of a business park at Netherton Farm, directly adjacent to the runway of Glasgow Airport.
- The proposal forms part of a wider vision for the area which is to create a new Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District for Scotland (AMIDS).
- The National Manufacturing Institute for Scotland (NMIS) and the Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre (MMIC) are proposed to be located on the site. The underlying idea behind AMIDS is to use NMIS and MMIC as anchors to attract high value, advanced manufacturing inward investment to Renfrewshire and Scotland.
- Of the 52 ha site approximately 15-20 ha is allocated for NMIS and MMIC and 5-7ha for roads/parking/services, leaving approx. 25ha for potential inward investment. The indicative masterplan submitted with the application illustrates the western boundaries of the site as being suitable for airport uses such as for hanger space, aircraft maintenance or other ancillary support services. The remainder of the site is indicated for industrial/business related development, including advanced manufacturing, research facilities, life sciences, engineering, green technologies and other airport related uses.
- The site is within a National Development identified in the National Planning Framework 3 (2014) (NPF3) - National Development 10 – Strategic Airport Enhancements.

EIA Development:

- Renfrewshire Council's screening opinion (Ref: 17/0854/EO) on the need for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) determined that EIA was not required on 9 February 2018 as the proposed development is unlikely to have significant environmental effects within the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 2017.

Consultations and Representations:

- While Glasgow Airport Limited (GAL) supports the principle of the proposed development, it submitted a holding objection to Renfrewshire Council (27 July 2018) stating that there were elements of the application that required clarification. Following further engagement, GAL confirmed (4 Dec 2018) that they maintained their position of objection as matters had not been addressed in relation to policy alignment of the proposed land uses; the Framework Masterplan and Development Guide submitted with the application. The correspondence clarified that the objection does not fall within the remit of the Airport/NATS discharging statutory consultee activities. GAL requested in a letter submitted by Brodies LLP to PAD, dated (x) that the application be called-in. That letter set out GAL's concerns about the consistency of the proposal with the long standing plans for future airport expansion given that the airport's requirements are site specific and cannot be accommodated elsewhere underlying the critical importance of the application site. GAL consider that the objective of enabling the growth and the expansion of the airport seems to be overlooked in the written material submitted in support of the planning application. They state that it is important that provision for airport expansion is made explicit to prevent confusion and risk of compromising the airport's ability to grow as outlined in the Glasgow Airport Masterplan (2011). GAL state that the indicative masterplan for the site submitted as part of the planning application has not previously been shared with them. GAL note that there is a secondary east/west road which appears close to the airport perimeter and airport manoeuvring area where safety considerations should be taken into account. And, that the Development Guide supporting the application does not make provision for airport operational and related uses explicit and reference should be made that these uses should support the growth of the airport. Other areas cited by GAL as requiring clarification include public and active travel links, emergency access, pedestrian routes and the narrow descriptions for the character areas.
- There have been no further objections following consultation by Renfrewshire Council with the following bodies - National Air Traffic Services (NATS), SEPA, Transport Scotland, Scottish Water, SNH, The Coal Authority, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, West of Scotland Archaeology Service (WOSAS), Environment and Infrastructure Services (Design Services), Environment and Infrastructure (Roads/Traffic), Environmental Protection Section, Renfrew Community Council, Inchinnan Community Council, Paisley North Community Council, Paisley West and Central Community Council, Paisley East and Whitehaugh Community Council.

Assessment:

1. Scottish Government issued a notification direction, on 14 January 2019, requiring Renfrewshire Council to notify this application to Scottish Ministers if they were minded to grant planning consent. The application was duly notified, on 18 January 2019. Scottish Government requested notification due to the proximity of the development to Glasgow Airport which is identified as a national development in NPF3 (National Development 10 - Strategic Airport Enhancements).

2. The key consideration in this case is whether the application raises issues of national importance in terms of the strategic objectives of NPF3 that merit calling in the application for determination by Scottish Ministers.
3. The Scottish Government recognises the national strategic importance of both Glasgow Airport and the provision of an Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland (AMIDS).
4. Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires that when determining planning applications, it must be done in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development is a national development, it also requires that the application must be made in accordance with the statement by Ministers of their reasons for why there is a need for the national development and any other matters in the statement.
5. NPF3 identifies the proposal site as being within National Development 10 – Strategic Airport Enhancements. NPF3 Page 76 Statement of Need and Description explains that a development within one or more of the Classes of Development described in paragraph (2) (a) to (f) is designated a national development. The proposal meets development class c): construction of buildings for business, general industrial or storage and distribution use requiring a near airport location where the gross floor space is or exceeds 10,000 square metres or the development is or exceeds 2 hectares in the area identified for associated business development at Glasgow Airport. NPF3 Statement of Need page 77 sets out that this class of development supports the key gateway and hub function of the airport, references Glasgow Airport Masterplan, and states that areas adjacent to Glasgow Airport have been identified for commercial and mixed uses supporting the economic development opportunities.
6. Renfrewshire Council consider that the proposals are entirely consistent with the principles set out in NPF3, SPP, Clydeplan and Renfrewshire Local Development Plan. Renfrewshire Council consider that the principles and elements outlined in the Draft Glasgow Airport Masterplan (2011) form an integral component of the illustrative masterplan submitted in support of the proposed development. Renfrewshire Council does not consider that this application for planning permission in principle (PPiP) compromises the airport's functionality or growth. They consider that the Parameter Plan and vision set out in the Development Guide that accompanies the planning application states that the aspiration of the proposal is to facilitate the continued growth and expansion of the Airport. It is noted that Renfrewshire Council consider that the illustrative masterplan also sets principles that allows flexibility, capable of future proofing the area to ensure that it can adapt to changing circumstances and demands which is considered to be what is required given the draft status of the Airport's Masterplan. It is noted that Renfrewshire Council consider that the illustrative masterplan which accompanies the planning application establishes a potential framework for future land uses along with a Development Guide aiming to meet the needs of different sectors and sizes of business and investment, including Glasgow Airport. Renfrewshire Council's Board Report explains that the final design, layout, scale and uses will be determined by subsequent detailed planning applications which can be influenced as the site develops over the short, medium and long term, allowing Glasgow Airport and others to continue to shape the development as trends, demands and situations change and that on-going engagement will be undertaken with Glasgow Airport Limited to influence the layout of the site as it develops. Overall, the planning authority considers that the proposal set out in this planning application presents delivery of an early outcome of City Deal investment, assisting in strengthening and growing the City Region's economy and is therefore aligned with the Development Plan framework.

7. It is noted that Renfrewshire Council's Communities, Housing & Planning Policy Board granted planning consent on 7th November 2017 for the planning application (Ref: 17/0485/PP) for the main Glasgow Airport Investment Area (GAIA) works. This consent permits the construction of a new high quality boulevard into the investment area through re-alignment of Abbotsinch Road as well as a new two-lane link bridge over the White Cart linking communities and development sites on the east of the river to the investment area. It is also noted that a separate planning application for the GAIA project (18/0483/PP) comprising a new cycling and pedestrian bridge over the Black Cart was also approved in August 2018.

Conclusion

8. This application could arguably be considered to be of national significance. The project is within a national development identified in NPF3, it is a core component of the City Region Deal, it is nationally significant in terms of the wider vision of AMIDS for employment and economic development.
9. NPF3 recognised that city deal proposals would be coming forward for the city-region and designated the enhancement of the airport as well as business development on land within a wider defined boundary around the airport as a National Development. SPP includes a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development, and also favours development leading to sustainable economic growth. Clydeplan supports investment in SEILs, including the proposal site, Netherton Farm. The proposal in principle appears to support the vision set out in NPF3 and Clydeplan. The planning authority consider that this PPIP application establishes an appropriate framework to deliver these significant investment opportunities. Renfrewshire Council's Planning Board Report explains that the final design, layout, scale and uses will be determined by subsequent detailed planning applications which can be influenced as the site develops over the short, medium and long term, allowing Glasgow Airport and others to continue to shape the development as trends, demands and situations change and that on-going engagement will be undertaken with Glasgow Airport Limited to influence the layout of the site as it develops.
10. As a National Development in Scotland, NPF3 supports the enhancement of Glasgow Airport and careful consideration has been given to GAL's concerns and to the potential for conflict with strategic airport enhancements and the aims of NPF3. On balance, it is considered that the objectives of NPF3 and national development 10 – Strategic Airport Enhancements are not under threat by this PPIP application given that aviation uses are part of the proposed uses specified in the application, and further applications as the vision develops, can ensure there is no potential for adverse impacts on well-established national, regional and local policy objectives.

Decision/Recommendation:

- It is recommended that the application is cleared back to Renfrewshire Council.