

# **Report shows that aviation is critical for Scottish economy**

**A report commissioned by the owners of Edinburgh Airport concludes that aviation is critical for the Scottish economy and to reduce flights would be damaging to most industries.**

The report's author, Professor Duncan Maclennan, Emeritus Professor of Urban Economics at the University of Glasgow, also found that the capital's airport is lagging behind when it comes to a wider connectivity and infrastructure strategy.

Professor Maclennan found that a barrier for Edinburgh Airport is the lack of ways of getting to and from the airport by sustainable means. He said: "There are great decarbonised transport options to and from Edinburgh Airport and the city itself. However, unlike other cities that have better connectivity strategies, Edinburgh hasn't developed good transport links to the surrounding metropolitan areas. Through my interviews and research, I've found this to be because our decision-making here in Scotland is too localised and not joined-up enough."

Although Edinburgh to London by train is around four hours or so, there is little doubt that the journey from the Highlands to Wales for example is not well connected by rail or other sustainable transport options.

Maclennan writes in his report: "The Edinburgh focussed City

Deal improved road access around the airport. The main rail lines connecting west and north-south from Edinburgh speed, unhalting, past the western and eastern ends of the Airport runway...

“The Scottish Government, Edinburgh, and surrounding municipalities, need to refocus, urgently, on how new geographies of mobility, infrastructure and economic activity could flatten the trade-offs in simultaneously achieving net zero, economic and wellbeing objectives. This would involve considering how the airport could be better connected to the metropolitan suburbs and regional rail network..through decarbonised mobility systems. In some scenarios for technological change in aviation, expanding the airport may be the solution and not the problem. The Scottish Government should be exploring the options for maintaining the connections of Scotland’s thriving, new patterns of spatial development, to the wider world.

He also said: “Enhanced high speed rail capacity is now unlikely to be supplied to Edinburgh by 2050, as made evident by the UK government’s late 2023 decimation of the HS2 proposal. That will become a barrier to investment and jobs in important sectors of the Edinburgh economy.”

View the Future flying: Up in the air? report [here](#).

