

Moray Economic Partnership Briefing – Locating the UK’s Spaceport at Kinloss

Introduction

This Moray Economic Partnership (MEP) Briefing sets out the context that defines Kinloss as the most appropriate location for the UK’s first spaceport.

The Moray Economic Partnership (MEP) includes Moray Council, Moray Strategic Business Forum, the Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Moray College, the Moray Chamber of Commerce and Skills Development Scotland

Kinloss – The ideal location for the UK’s first Spaceport

For a range of safety, economic, technical and environmental reasons the MEP believes Kinloss should become the site of the UK’s first Spaceport.

The key points underpinning the Kinloss bid are as follows:

Criteria	Detail
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncongested airspace • Low population density in a coastal location • Close proximity of emergency landing runway with full air traffic and fire support • Regional emergency response plan
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proven economic development vehicle with international reach • Local high tech industries, both national and international • Available specialist multi-spectral skills base • Complimentary strong local tourism offer and strategy
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established delivery mechanism with public and private sector partners at local and national level • History of the military co-existing with the local community
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well established aviation infrastructure, and ample development opportunities in immediate vicinity • 20 miles from Inverness airport with its links to London, Amsterdam and Dublin • 80 miles from Aberdeen Airport with easy access to the A96 • Superfast broadband connectivity
Environment and Meteorological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear skies and favourable cloud cover combined with reduced tendency of crosswinds • High number of flying days per annum • 25 years of aviation co-existence with a SSSI

Safety

Above all Kinloss offers a site that reaches the highest of safety standards:

- The nearby airspace is uncongested due to relatively low commercial air traffic levels and its distance from major international flight routes.
- The area is a coastal location with low population density.
- There remains capacity at RAF Lossiemouth for emergency landing provision.
- Kinloss is situated on the North East coast, and allows flights to take off and immediately be over open water.
- There are operational lifeboats and helicopter bases in the immediate vicinity

Economic Development

Moray has already attracted significant outside investment as a place to do business across a number of sectors. The key factors in ensuring the Spaceport reaches its full growth potential are as follows:

- Kinloss already has the corporate and executive infrastructure in place to develop through the Moray Economic Partnership and our on-going relationship with key partners, agencies and the local community

- Moray is home to a variety of high tech businesses across diverse sectors which all support Spaceport operations including; defence, electronics, engineering, life sciences and digital health
- Inverness, one of the fastest growing cities in the UK, is less than 30 miles away, with Aberdeen around 80 miles away
- With around 2500 military staff stationed at RAF Lossiemouth, there will be a continual churn of staff coming to the end of their military careers. We estimate that this would result in 100 highly skilled personnel per year entering the local economy.
- The region benefits from a strong complimentary tourism industry, established through the historic whisky heritage.

Partnerships

In order for the Spaceport to reach its full potential it needs collaboration and support from key partners in the nearby vicinity:

- The MEP emerged from the successful campaign run by the Moray Taskforce in 2010-11 to retain a military presence in the region due to the threat of closure of both RAF Kinloss and Lossiemouth. The campaign featured the local community, military, local government, public and private sectors working together to influence the decision to retain RAF Lossiemouth
- Moray has a long history of the military co-existing with the local community with aviation being part of the area's DNA.

Infrastructure

The site offers the best balance of low population density and connectivity but also has great potential for expansion in the environs:

- Kinloss has ample available land on site that could be developed, as required, for operations over the coming years, and in the surrounding area there are a number of business parks
- Inverness and Aberdeen airports are easily accessible and offer connectivity to major international hubs
- Kinloss is connected to the major road network by the A96
- Superfast broadband is being delivered in the area.

Environment and Meteorological

The existing military bases, and a future Spaceport, all benefit from favourable environmental and meteorological conditions. The following all apply to Kinloss and are all critical to the reliable running of spaceplanes:

- Frequent clear skies and favourable cloud cover ensure that Kinloss benefits from high levels of flying days each year – a key factor in the location of the two RAF bases
- Reduced tendency of crosswinds
- The MEP has taken proactive steps to talk with SEPA to ensure all environmental issues are competently managed
- Aviation has operated successfully alongside areas of Significant Scientific Interest for the last 25 years.

Summary

We strongly believe that Kinloss offers the best location for a UK Spaceport and recommend that the UK Government selects Kinloss as the preferred location. It has the environment and the ambition to deliver a national European Spaceport, which will benefit not just Kinloss, but the whole of the UK economy.

Ultimately, any site will need to meet the needs not just of 2018, but also of the coming decades. We believe based on the above, that the Kinloss site is able to do so, and stand the test of time. We have the track record on delivering new enterprise and high-tech business and although we understand that this task will differ, we feel confident that we have the experience, knowledge, skills and infrastructure to be the ideal location and a serious contender in this race.

If you have any further questions on the Kinloss bid for the Spaceport please contact Clare Fraser via e-mail at clare@cavendishpc.co.uk or on 02031785224.