

A Global Gateway



Aviation and economic growth in Manchester and the North West

AVIATION'S IMPACT IN NUMBERS



51,000

The Greater Manchester Combined Authority area has 51,000 jobs directly generated by aviation.



6,075 jobs

Of these, Wythenshawe and Sale East constituency has the largest share, with 6,075 jobs.



66,000 jobs

The wider North West region boasts 66,000 jobs directly generated by aviation.



£8.4 billion

Manchester Airport contributes £8.4 billion in GVA to the Northern economy, from operations and wider connectivity benefits.



31 million

More than 31 million passengers travel through Manchester Airport every year.

INTRODUCTION TO AVIATION IN MANCHESTER

Aviation is a fast-growing sector in the UK. It supports key industries like advanced manufacturing, tech, life sciences, and tourism – many of which the Government's Industrial Strategy identifies as growth-driving sectors.

Manchester Airport, owned by Manchester Airports Group (MAG), is the North's global gateway that connects the region to over 200 destinations and serves 31 million passengers a year. A £1.3 billion upgrade is nearing completion, boosting capacity and passenger experience.

The airport strengthens the region's global connectivity by giving direct access to business destinations across the world. This year's launch of a new service to Mumbai makes Manchester the only Northern airport with a direct route to India – and strengthens the UK's ties with one of the world's fastest-growing economies.

The airport powers a thriving aerospace cluster in Manchester and the wider North West. Fast-growing sectors like advanced manufacturing, life sciences, digital tech, and green innovation rely on its global links to reach markets, attract investment, and collaborate with international partners.

“Manchester Airport is a *critical infrastructure asset* and key driver for internationalisation and economic prosperity in Greater Manchester and the wider North.”



SUSTAINABLE AVIATION IN MANCHESTER

The aviation industry has a clear and credible plan for decarbonising the sector. This includes more efficient planes, flying more efficient routes, ramping up the use of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) and using new zero-emission technologies such as hydrogen. Research from Sustainable Aviation shows a homegrown SAF industry could boost the UK economy by £1.8 billion by the end of the decade and create 10,300 green jobs. The industry could grow to employ more than 60,000 people and support over £10 billion in GVA in the next 25 years.

The North West is helping lead the shift to cleaner aviation. The production and distribution of SAF in the region has the potential to provide more than 1,500 green jobs and contribute over £219 million to the regional economy.

As part of this, Manchester Airport is supporting a SAF production facility proposed at Stanlow; this project could be the first of a number in the region which supply SAF to the airport. The North West's HyNet project, meanwhile, aims to help industry decarbonise by producing low-carbon hydrogen and developing carbon capture and storage (CCUS) sites.

THE UK'S GLOBAL GATEWAY IN THE NORTH

Manchester airport

Manchester Airport is a major driver of economic growth in Greater Manchester. It supports high-value jobs, boosts exports, strengthens supply chains and drives tourism. It also plays a key role in building the region's future workforce by investing in skills and training. This includes:

- An interactive education centre, The Aerozone, which gives local young people the chance to explore careers in aviation. This includes a Jet Zero curriculum with a focus on sustainable fuel and airspace modernisation.
- A partnership with Trafford & Stockport College Group delivers a two-week programme at the Airport Academy, offering an immersive introduction to aviation for those facing barriers to stable employment

Investment and exports

Manchester Airport is unlocking new global trade opportunities through smart partnerships. Working with MIDAS (the region's inward investment agency), MAG has aligned new flight routes with investment priorities, leading to major economic gains. Marketing Manchester have also developed a new visitor economy strategy, supporting place-making and growth in the city.

A campaign to attract new direct routes from Manchester Airport to China led to the value of goods exported to China growing by 41% to £1.29 billion in just two years. Meanwhile, with the potential for Manchester Airport to secure direct flights to 50 world-leading cities in the coming decades, these new links would drive increases in exports and inward investment.

Manchester Airports Group's (MAG) Sustainability Strategy

MAG's Sustainability Strategy: Creating a sustainable future for all includes a headline target to reach net zero carbon (scope 1 and 2) in its own operations by 2038 – in line with Greater Manchester's own target. The Strategy also includes a target to reduce aircraft emissions intensity by 27% by 2035.

HOW AVIATION SUPPORTS GREATER MANCHESTER'S ECONOMIC AMBITIONS

Manchester Airport's success is directly tied to Greater Manchester's growth and it is a key economic asset for the region.

The airport works with local partners to drive growth. It was a founding member of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership and plays a leading role in initiatives like the North West Business Leadership Team and the Manchester India Partnership. It also partners with MIDAS to promote innovation and attract inward investment.

Greater Manchester's economic strategy highlights the need to grow international trade, partnerships, and research. Backing Manchester Airport's continued development is essential to boosting international trade, investment and the local economy.

