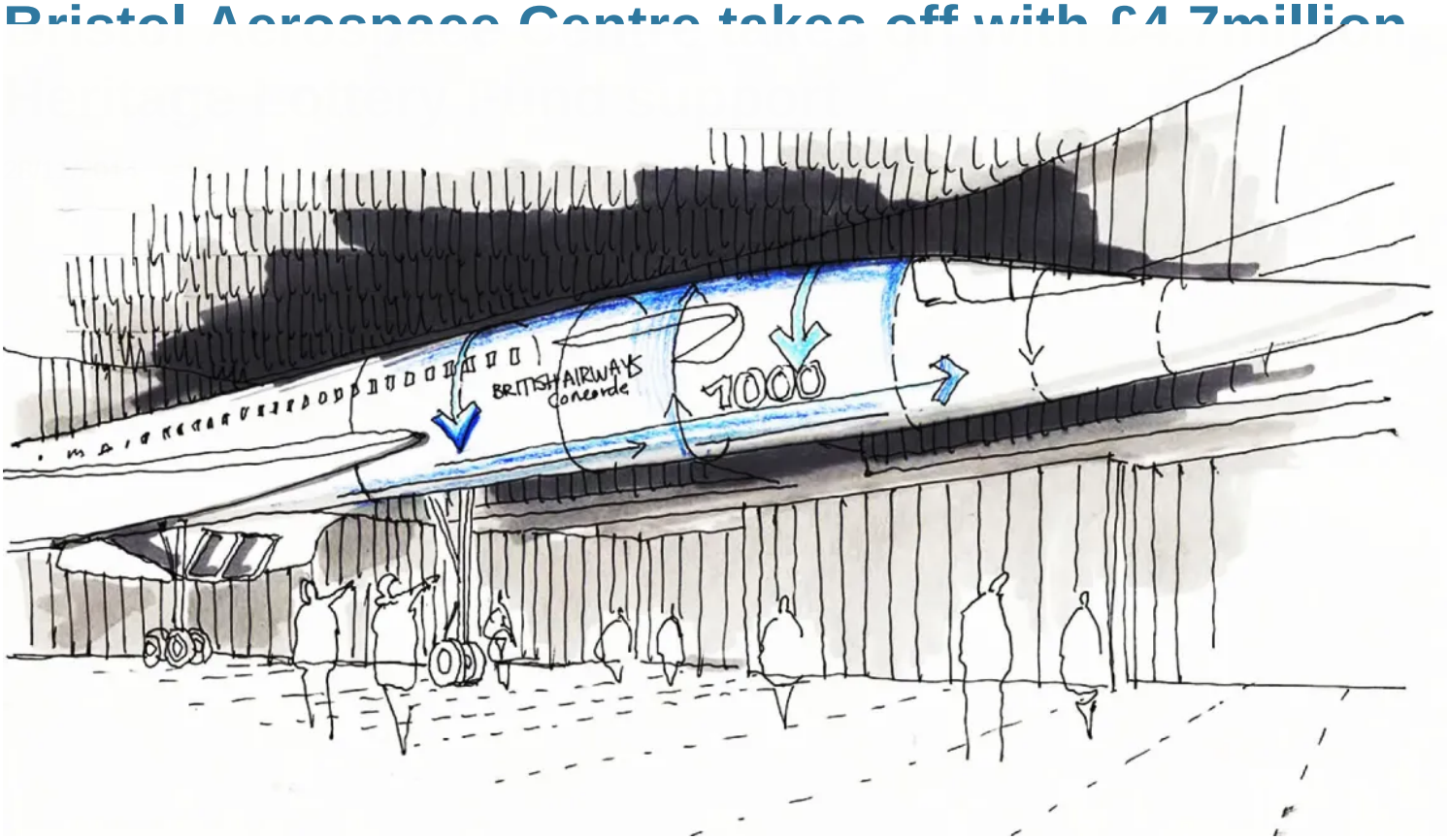
Bristol Aerospace Centre takes off with £4.7million Heritage Lottery Fund support



An artist's impression of Concorde 216 on display at the Bristol Aerospace Centre

The new centre will tell the story of Bristol's aerospace industry from 1910 to the present day and into the future, displaying several important heritage collections. It will create a permanent home where people can access Concorde 216, the last British Concorde assembled at the Filton site which led the design, testing and production of the supersonic airliner.

Lloyd Burnell, Project Director of the trust, said: "We're delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded us this grant. The Bristol Aerospace Centre at Filton, which provides a permanent home for Concorde, will be a fantastic attraction for the region and provide enormous learning and volunteering opportunities for a wide range of people, from school pupils to local groups and retired workers . The fascinating collections, many of which will be made accessible to the public for the first time, include thousands of important objects and nationally-significant archives which trace over 100 years of technical innovation and engineering brilliance, along with the social history of the people who've worked in the industry."

The project will conserve 9.5 acres of Filton Airfield, along with two listed hangars dating back to the First World War and described by English Heritage as 'the most complete of any in existence'. The atmospheric spaces will be refurbished to provide a first-class aerospace industrial museum with hands-on 'making and doing' activities, interactive galleries, learning centre and workshops. The project will also provide an important focal point for the local community

with facilities such as meeting places, outdoor play areas and event spaces. In addition a major new building will create a permanent home for Concorde which will be presented in an exciting and dynamic way, along with a 'futures' technology exhibition, corporate facilities and lecture theatre.

Bristol entrepreneur Sir George White established the British and Colonial (later, Bristol) Aeroplane Company in 1910. It went on to employ hundreds of thousands of people in the region and across the globe . The centre will, for the first time, chronicle the social history of those who worked at Filton and the impact of the industry on the wider area.

As well as encouraging people to learn more about this remarkable and previous untold history , a major aim of the centre is to inspire the next generation of scientists, engineers, technicians, innovators and entrepreneurs. The Bristol Aerospace Centre will be working in partnership with schools, colleges and universities to provide a programme of learning, bringing together art and design, science and engineering, and local and world history.

Nerys Watts, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South West, said: “From First World War fighter planes to the ground-breaking Concorde, British aviation was born and bred at Filton Airfield. HLF’s investment of £4.7m will breathe new life into this site, making it a centre of excellence where the industry’s heritage can be truly celebrated. People have a deep connection and pride in the technical innovations that have come out of the Bristol area, and we particularly welcome plans to record the unique stories of the airfield and its workforce.”

Iain Gray, Chair of the trust, added: “Concorde was largely designed and built at Filton, with the first British flight taking off in 1969 and the final supersonic flight of any Concorde in the world landing at the airfield on 26 November 2003. She has been tremendously well cared for by Airbus in the intervening time but this grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund is a great birthday present for this icon of British design and innovation. On behalf of us all we are very grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund trustees, to all our funders and hardworking volunteers for their commitment which will see the Bristol Aerospace Centre become a reality in 2017.”

The total cost of the project is £16million and Bristol Aero Collection Trust has already received significant pledged support from BAE Systems, Rolls-Royce, Airbus, South Gloucestershire Council as well as a number of local and national charitable trusts and major donors.

Howard Mason, Heritage Manager BAE Systems, said: “The Bristol site is a key component in the history of BAE Systems and we are very happy that the trust will protect and exploit the historical material from the site in telling the story of bold aerospace innovation in Bristol over the last century. We are extremely pleased to have reached this milestone, and remain committed to the success of the project.”

Mark Stewart, Airbus General Manager and Human Resources Director, said: “Airbus is a long-term supporter of the Bristol Aero Collection Trust and we have been the custodians of Concorde since its last landing in 2003. It is great news that funding is secured for the heritage museum and learning centre; and we look forward to being able to move Concorde under cover and making it accessible to many people in the future.”

Nick Britton, Rolls-Royce Director of Marketing & Communications – Defence, said: “As a longstanding and consistent supporter of the plans to establish the Bristol Aerospace Centre we are delighted with this decision. As well as showcasing Concorde and the tremendous contribution that this region has made to aviation, we believe that this centre has a vital educational role in helping to inspire the next generation of aeronautical pioneers.

Our work with the centre will help us to achieve our target to reach 6 million people through our Rolls-Royce STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & maths) education programme and activities by 2020.”

In a joint statement, South Gloucestershire Council leaders Cllrs Matthew Riddle, Ruth Davis and Pat Rooney said: “We are delighted to hear that the Heritage Lottery Fund application has been successful and the funding for the Bristol Aerospace Centre has now been approved.

“For many years we have supported plans for a dedicated centre to celebrate Filton’s aerospace heritage and provide a fitting home for Concorde 216. Our local residents have deep connections with Concorde and the aerospace industry, and we are very pleased to be able to support the centre with the council’s £1.1m contribution, which will be funded by reinvesting business rates generated in the new Filton Enterprise Area.

“The area is the birthplace of the UK’s aerospace industry and remains an internationally-renowned centre of aviation excellence, hosting giants such as Rolls-Royce, Airbus and GKN. Filton’s aerospace cluster is one of the largest employers in South Gloucestershire and a major contributor to the regional and national economy.

“The centre will help to protect this distinguished heritage for generations to come while also inspiring a new generation of young people who will become our aerospace engineers of the future.”

Neil Cottrell, British Airways’ Head of Planning, said: “We are very pleased that Concorde Alpha Foxtrot will be going to a permanent, purpose built home. She has been kept in excellent condition by Airbus in Filton but this will provide a fantastic opportunity for a wider audience to get up close and learn more about this iconic aircraft.”

Notes to editors

Bristol Aero Collection Trust
Bristol Aero Collection was formed in 1988 by a group of like-minded individuals, all passionate about aviation heritage at Filton, and in 1992 it became a registered charity. In May 2012 it merged with fellow charity, The Concorde Trust to create Bristol Aero Collection Trust.

The trust is chaired by Iain Gray CBE, Chief Executive of Innovate UK and previously Managing Director of Airbus UK.

The heritage collections are currently stored in the Brabazon Hangar where conservation and other work is being carried out by up to 70 volunteers.

The project has already received pledges of:

- £2.35million from BAE Systems
- €1million from Airbus
- £1million from Rolls-Royce
- £1.1from South Gloucestershire Council

The 9.5 acre serviced site on Filton Airfield has been pledged by BAE Systems on a long-term lease.

British Airways has selected Bristol Aero Collection Trust to take over the lease of Concorde 216 from Airbus UK on completion of the Bristol Aerospace Centre.

Further information

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