



Press Release: 19/12/2008

CARLISLE AIRPORT – LET’S TAKE FLIGHT

REGENERATION organisations Cumbria Vision and West Lakes Renaissance have expressed delight at Carlisle City Council’s decision to grant Stobart Air Ltd planning permission to develop Carlisle Airport.

The city council’s Planning Committee approved the plans, subject to a Section 106 agreement, at a meeting today (Friday, December 19). Stobart Air Ltd is set to invest £19 million in moving the Stobart Group’s headquarters to the airport site and bring the airport back to a standard that will enable commercial passenger flights to recommence.

As a long-standing supporter of the Carlisle Airport scheme, Cumbria Vision commissioned *The Economic Impact Appraisal for Carlisle Airport* to assist Stobart Air Ltd’s application. The study – which was quoted extensively in the report which went before the Planning Committee today – revealed the scheme could create and safeguard 1,500 jobs and contribute over £38 million to the County’s economy each year*. It also said the development would help Cumbrian businesses to grow and become more efficient; attract inward investment; and help draw more “high value” visitors from London, the South East and Europe.

Simon Sjenitzer, Strategy Director at Cumbria Vision, said: “The development of Carlisle Airport is a major building block in Cumbria’s economic future and we are delighted that Stobart Air Ltd has been given the green light.

“In the current economic climate, an airport offering freight and commercial flights would be a real boost and help make businesses in Cumbria more competitive on the national and international stage. Along with plans to utilise the County’s links to the M6 and West Coast Mainline, it will also help fuel Carlisle’s exciting transformation into the Cumbria’s commercial hub.

“We now look forward to Stobart Air Ltd realising the potential of one of Cumbria’s best economic assets.”

West Lakes Renaissance – the Urban Regeneration Company for Furness and West Cumbria – has also lobbied Carlisle City Council to approve the Carlisle Airport development as a key component of the Britain’s Energy Coast™ Masterplan. The airport is one of 29 regeneration projects contained in the Masterplan – which aims to transform West Cumbria into a major low carbon energy production hub for the United Kingdom.

Bob Pointing, Chief Executive of West Lakes Renaissance, said: “Carlisle Airport holds huge potential for West Cumbria’s future prosperity by improving the area’s access to new and existing business and tourism markets.

“Not only will it help businesses already in West Cumbria, but strengthen the area’s appeal to those companies looking to capitalise on the many opportunities that will arise from the Energy Coast initiative.

“Improving transport links – whether air, rail or road – will be vital to the success of the Energy Coast vision. West Cumbria must now ensure it makes the most of one of Cumbria’s greatest untapped business assets.”

The development of Carlisle Airport is one of the major projects included in the Cumbria Economic Plan – the first ever County-wide strategy for regeneration published by Cumbria Vision last year. The plan identifies the airport as a key catalyst for other regeneration projects in Cumbria, such as Carlisle Renaissance and the Britain’s Energy Coast™ Masterplan – a £2 billion package of regeneration projects that build on West Cumbria’s nuclear expertise to diversify into other energy technologies, including off shore wind, tidal, wave, biomass, oil and gas. Locally the Masterplan could create 16,000 jobs and boost Cumbria’s economic performance by £800 million*, while on a national scale it will help meet the Government’s response to the challenges of climate change and energy security.

Ends

NOTES TO EDITORS

*Cumbria’s economic value in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) – the measure of the value of the goods and services produced in the economy. It is the preferred way of monitoring and measuring the economic well-being of an area.

The Economic Impact Appraisal for Carlisle Airport can be downloaded from the Carlisle Airport page under ‘Major Projects’ at www.cumbriavision.co.uk.

1: For further information contact Luke Diccico, PR and Communications Manager for Cumbria and West Lakes Renaissance on 07799035390 or email luke.diccico@cumbriavision.co.uk

2: For more information on Cumbria Vision visit www.cumbriavision.co.uk; for West Lakes Renaissance visit www.westlakesrenaissance.co.uk; and for Britain’s Energy Coast™ visit www.britainsenergycoast.com.

3: Cumbria Vision and West Lakes Renaissance are supported by the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA), which leads the economic development and regeneration of England’s Northwest and is responsible for: Supporting business growth and encouraging investment; Matching skills provision to employer needs; Creating the conditions for economic growth; Connecting the region through effective transport and communication infrastructure; Promoting the region’s outstanding quality of life. www.nwda.co.uk

4: Cumbria County Council is a founding partner of and the accountable body for Cumbria Vision and West Lakes Renaissance. www.cumbria.gov.uk