

RAF Scampton - Feasibility Study for an Aviation Heritage Attraction and related Site Development Options - Brief – March 2013

If you live in Lincolnshire the sights and sounds of the RAF are never far away: the Red Arrows practising a new manoeuvre over Lincoln, the eye catching shape of AWACS around Waddington and the formidable Euro fighters out of RAF Coningsby.

To see in our big skies the Lancaster, Hurricane and Spitfire of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight returning after a weekend display stirs images of dark, but heroic days and is evocative of a proud and far reaching heritage.

Military flying in Lincolnshire began in World War I when both the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) and the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) established airfields. By the end of WWI there were 36 airfields or landing strips in the county. Outside of London, Lincoln was the second largest aircraft manufacturing centre in the country during that period. During World War II there were 45 airfields. Lincoln Cathedral was the iconic landmark that told a returning bomber crew that they had made it back.

There are stories to tell here: from the very personal, through aviation engineering excellence, to those of our national security. The story is also current; we are “RAF Lincolnshire” with a concentration of RAF bases and home to many service staff, their families and many more civilians whose livelihoods depend upon this presence.

RAF Scampton has a rich and significant history, continued RAF presence and current airspace and airfield capacity. The social and economic success of the Scampton site is important to the area. These two perspectives meet in this study, as we ask....

Can Lincolnshire create an enhanced aviation heritage attraction and aviation centre of excellence of national importance, whilst also ensuring that the site’s continued use as an RAF base further benefits the local area by regenerating facilities and bringing them back into community and economic use by utilising the site’s specific characteristics?

In short, Lincolnshire’s aim is to see RAF Scampton remain an important operational base and fulfil its potential as a valuable cultural, historic and economic asset for the county.

1. Introduction

1.1 Whilst the future of RAF Scampton, four miles north of Lincoln, has often been uncertain and under discussion, there have been indications that the RAF will continue to base the Red Arrows there “until the end of the decade”. Beyond that the future of the air base is not clear. Agreement has been reached with the RAF that the timing is right to commission a feasibility study to establish how to bring back into use, and maximise the social and economic potential of the site in conjunction with its operations as and RAF station. At its heart, is the feasibility of developing and operating an aviation heritage attraction and centre of aviation excellence at RAF Scampton in partnership with the RAF.

- 1.2 RAF Scampton has a rich history we want to tell. Aviation activity at Scampton began after the First World War, through which it developed as a Royal Flying Corps station, and will mark its centenary in 2016. World War II saw transfer to Bomber Command, the 617 Squadron, the Dambusters and Guy Gibson; post war there was US Strategic Air Command in the late 40's. Moving on to the Cold War era, it was home to the Vulcan Bomber in the 50's and 60's through Strike Command and many Cold War stories. Of course today it is home to the most high profile RAF activity all - the Red Arrows.
- 1.3 We want to examine the unique potential of the site's past and present to contribute to the area's social and economic development. The critical point is that RAF Scampton remains operational and, through intensification and shared use, the site fulfils its potential as a valuable and integrated cultural, historic and economic asset for Lincolnshire. A specific feature of the site which might attract employers is its location on the A15 and the security offered as being part of an operational RAF base. We see three main areas of potential:
1. Creating an aviation heritage facility, which enhances what has been instigated by dedicated volunteers, at the heart of an aviation centre of excellence
 2. Broadening and intensifying use of the airfield and airspace
 3. Regeneration of un-used, underused and ancillary facilities on the site for the benefit of the local and wider community, to create and retain jobs and to generate value to the local economy.
- 1.4 This brief sets out the Vision and Concept, Context and Requirements for the study, and the outputs and timescales that need to be met.

2. Building on success - The Lincolnshire Partnership and Investment Context

- 2.1 Lincolnshire County Council has a strong partnership ethos and track record of developing, investing in, and operating heritage attractions. A notable example is our relationship with the RAF at the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight in Coningsby. With thousands of displays and tens of thousands of fly-pasts, the BBMF proudly represents the nation's aviation heritage and the visitor centre has welcomed over 400,000 visitors.
- 2.2 Another high profile example of joint working and investment in the County and City of Lincoln's heritage is the current £20million investment in Lincoln Castle to bring about a step change in the offer by 2015. Within its unique historic uphill Lincoln setting, we are creating a world class visitor attraction which is a catalyst for economic and cultural development in the City and County.
- 2.3 Showcasing the iconic Magna Carta and the area's rich history, we are creating one of the Country's top historic attractions. The Heritage Lottery Fund has allocated a grant of £12m for the major programme of improvements, which include creation of a new vault to showcase Magna

Carta and the Charter of the Forest; completion of a circuit of medieval wall walks and opening up the Victorian prison. This is steered by the historic Lincoln Partnership involving Lincolnshire County Council, Lincoln Cathedral, University of Lincoln, Bishop Grosseteste University, City of Lincoln Council, Visit Lincoln and Lincoln Business Improvement Group.

- 2.4 On strategic planning, the Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Committee and Joint Planning Unit are in place developing Local Development Framework documents, notably a Joint Core Strategy involving 4 local authorities (Lincolnshire County Council, City of Lincoln Council, North Kesteven District Council and West Lindsey District Council).
- 2.5 Scampton lies in the West Lindsey district in Lincolnshire. The County Council and West Lindsey District Council have strong ties and the common aim of securing a successful future for Scampton. Other military bases in West Lindsey have become a problem for the area –poor housing stock, isolated communities, and under/unutilised land. We do not want Scampton to become a problem; we see it as an opportunity.
- 2.6 It is important that the feasibility study's scope considers the short to medium term relationship between Lincolnshire Local Government and other local partnerships with Scampton RAF station, the RAF and MOD more broadly, and other possible aviation and aviation heritage partners (for example, the RAF museum, Imperial War Museum, Vulcan Trust etc). It also, however, needs to consider the longer term possibilities for the site and operations in the event of RAF and MOD change or withdrawal of use.
- 2.7 The RAF hosted a conference of tourism businesses in 2010 with a view to discussing how Scampton can be used to attract tourists – this underlines all partners' commitment to achieving more with the site in the longer term.
- 2.8 There is already a popular visitor attraction on the base, where volunteers, with RAF support, have created a station museum. It is housed in one of the original WW2 hangers and contains over 400 artifacts (including a Blue Steel Missile). Entry is free, but visitors must be escorted and need to agree visit times so that the volunteers can be available to accompany them.

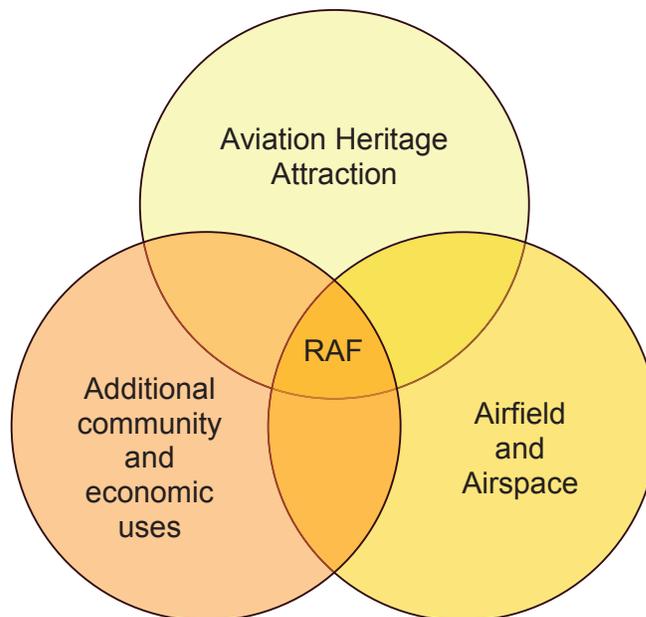
3. Vision and concept

- 3.1 We want to ensure RAF Scampton's unique potential to contribute to the area's social and economic development is fulfilled. Critical to this is that we see RAF Scampton remaining operational and, through intensification and shared use, it fulfils its potential as a valuable and integrated cultural, historic and economic asset for Lincolnshire. We see three main areas of potential:
 1. Creating an aviation heritage facility of national and regional significance and centre of excellence which enhances what has been instigated by dedicated volunteers
 2. Broadening and intensifying use of the airfield and airspace

3. Regeneration of un-used, underused and ancillary facilities on the site for the benefit of the local and wider community, to create and retain jobs and to generate value to the local and Lincolnshire economy.
- 3.2 We place a strong emphasis on achieving a high quality of development and ensuring environmental quality and green technology is prioritised in any development or refurbishment proposals. The sustainable development of RAF Scampton, set within its wider location context, is an important principle to be applied.
- 3.3 **How** the RAF, MOD, local authorities and other partners work together in partnership is as important as defining **what** it is possible to achieve for the Scampton site, so from this feasibility study stage, the work should inform and support a partnership approach if the case is made for development.
- 3.4 The strength of the partnership working that has been established to date leads to our requirement that this study should include Imperial War Museum, Duxford as a sub-contractor to provide their experience and expertise from feasibility work and master planning of the Duxford site.

4. Aims of the Study

- 4.1 To consider how the physical and historical assets at Scampton can be utilised to develop the above vision and concept. The three strands need to be explored individually and brought together into an integrated whole.
- 4.2 **Aviation Heritage Attraction and Centre of Excellence** – Explore feasibility and options for an aviation heritage facility at RAF Scampton and the feasibility of operating such an attraction in conjunction with its operations as an RAF Station. We want to explore the story that should be told, how this should be interpreted, and the likely audiences for it and how any such facility can be commercially successful. We anticipate a strong focus on people – both in the emphasis on stories to be told and to the interests and needs of likely visitors. We expect young people and educational visits to be an important target audience.
- 4.3 Important dates for consideration in implementing any plans include:
 - The centenary of the formation of the RAF
 - 75th anniversary of the Dambusters raid
- 4.4 The broad title to include Centre of Excellence includes recognition of the aviation engineering strengths of the area – indeed broader engineering strengths – from past expertise which grew out of agricultural engineering to war time consolidation to current RAF and Military operations. The wider connections to Siemens and the Engineering school they have set up with the University of Lincoln are also connections that can be made.



- 4.5 **Broadening and intensifying use of the airfield and airspace** -Investigate the market and operational opportunities to make more use of the airfield and airspace, working in close conjunction with the RAF. Examine any constraints and practical difficulties in more intensive usage.
- 4.6 **Regeneration - ancillary uses for community and economic benefit -** Review and identify scope for re-use, more intensive use and refurbishment of the site and buildings to reinvigorate community life and economic contribution of the site to the area and to Lincolnshire as a whole. The site's regeneration has two important elements: ensuring the social/community facilities that the base provides for the community are secured over the long term; and to ensure under used buildings and land help the wider economy of the area. The latter could include attracting technology based industries which could benefit from the site's security and synergy with other uses on the site..
- 4.7 **We encourage an imaginative view when developing the concept and scope,** and also that this should be tested with potential stakeholders. The study should consider what the scale and nature of such a facility should be in order to succeed on a practical and commercial basis. It would need to explore the following:

- What would be necessary for the RAF to integrate with such a facility (commitments over Red Arrows etc.) to make it viable for the medium to long term?

- What layout would be proposed? The legibility of the site needs to be considered in a number of ways, not least that most historic parts of the site are “behind the wire”, but there are a range of options which will need to be considered to accommodate where parts of the site can be separated, where shared civilian and military use is in place in secure areas and relationship to community and civilian areas.

4.8 The object will be to determine whether there is indeed a viable option, identify what needs to be provided to ensure viability, and by whom, and – if the concept does stack up – prepare a case to be put to the MoD and the Councils that can be used as a basis for decision making on whether to commit to a highly detailed analysis and full business case.

5. The History of the site

5.1 The site’s origins as an airfield date back to 1916 when it was first built and used for training and as a Home Defence Flight station. The site currently comprises approximately 800 hectares one of the longest runways in the country, and which should perhaps be considered to be a unique selling point.

5.2 A lot of information is available on the history of the site, but those commissioned to undertake the study are expected to identify which particular aspects should be brought to the fore and be the focus for a feasible heritage attraction and shape interpretation themes and stories, including consideration of the style, content and delivery that should be deployed.

6. Context of the Site

6.1 The study should research and assess information which does, or could have, impact on the site’s development as an aviation heritage attraction and other relevant and related uses. The following scope of information to be included is set out as a starting point:

- Size, Location, Connectivity and Access
- Site Title and Ownership, statutory listing, restrictions and covenants, site characteristics, constraints and current use
- Planning Context of the site and its wider context
 - Planning framework and policy context (District, Central Lincolnshire, Lincolnshire and wider)

- Economic Development and Tourism Strategies and plan relevant to the site (see references to available information)
- Other current or planned projects and investments relevant to Scampton (see references to available information below)
- RAF, MOD and Defence Infrastructure Organisation current and future motivations, plans and views on development (for example on Freehold/leasehold options)

7. Requirements

- 7.1 To deliver a robust feasibility study which provides high quality presentation of development options for the site which can be used to inform decisions about the site's development in the manner set out as the Vision and Concept. A sufficient scope and depth and financial and commercial appraisal should be provided to enable preparation of business cases for any budget or investment decisions from interested parties
- 7.2 The study is expected to examine and report on all strands of the Vision and Concept we have set out and how these can be brought together into an integrated development:
1. Creating an aviation heritage facility of national and regional significance and centre of excellence which enhances what has been instigated by dedicated volunteers
 2. Broadening and intensifying use of the airfield and airspace
 3. Regeneration of un-used, underused and ancillary facilities on the site for the benefit of the local and wider community, to create and retain jobs and to generate value to the local and Lincolnshire economy.
- 7.3 The study should develop and test the stated Vision and Concept for RAF Scampton through research, analysis and stakeholder engagement:
- For the site
 - For the partnership and governance arrangements
 - For development principles – ie sustainable development, strong emphasis on environmental quality and green technology, balancing needs and benefits of secure site with legibility and ease of access and movement
 - Development options
 - Infrastructure requirements
 - Financial feasibility and funding options
- 7.4. The study should explore and put together the story and how it should be interpreted. The product(s) that best enable that story to be told should be developed and a Market Analysis undertaken for the elements of the project and overall:

- Aviation Heritage and Tourism - especially as a major “gateway” site to Lincolnshire’s aviation heritage. National and local market, including competitor analysis; gaps in the market and provision; scope for relocation or co-location of established offers, scope for collaboration or extension of existing provision
- Visitor attractions market – set within national analysis, the degree to which aviation heritage could be part of a wider visitor attraction, where Lincolnshire could be a location to fill a national gap in the market and/or opportunities to showcase wider aspects of Lincolnshire’s current economy and/or and economic history (especially Aviation and engineering)
- Technical Training opportunities, especially in collaboration with the Royal Air Force Museum
- Taking the site and location as a whole, potential for ancillary complementary uses, including:
 - Housing - any unique housing product opportunities related to aviation facilities
 - Employment – taking account of current employment uses and facilities, potential for further development (aviation related and otherwise);
 - Commercial property assessment – specific analysis of the potential for use of buildings on the site, eg Officers Mess
 - Non-military aviation
 - Leisure, culture, tourism and heritage activities and attraction(s)
 - The study should include a sensitivity analysis based on worst, best and mean case projections

7.5 What infrastructure investment would be required?

- Provide an assessment of the capital costs required to establish the project and suggest possible phasing and sources of funding
- Assess the potential market for the heritage attraction
- Outline revenue income and expenditure projections for a new facility, including an indication of the optimum size of attraction to achieve a self-financing business model
- What, if any, commercial enterprises would be required to support the viability of the heritage centre

In assessing and testing the scope and gaps in the market for an aviation facility, the study will need to engage with possible partners (e.g. RAF Museum, IWM, Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire, the Vulcan Trust etc.) to see what might be acceptable, necessary or possible in terms of relocation or new investment to achieve critical mass and viability at RAF Scampton and to

assess potential for co-location, cross-promotion or complementary offers, both from within Lincolnshire but also in the national context.

7.7 Site and operational appraisal

The site's current and potential future ability to accommodate an aviation heritage attraction and/or any of the identified market opportunities should be examined and set out, including any infrastructure or other requirements identified (for more detailed investigation if necessary). The RAF and MOD's views on how any additional development on the site would operate should be sought and appraised, along with any other partners or potential partners identified in the course of the study.

7.8 Concept and Operational Feasibility, including Development Options and Initial Financial and Development Appraisals

The concept, market, site development and operational analysis should be brought together (through SWOT, PEST or other appropriate methodologies) to present the findings and make recommendations on if/how the concept should be developed. If recommendations are to proceed to a full business case, the scope, emphasis and further work required should be clearly identified.

The partners and stakeholders (current or potential) should be clearly identified, their views and likely terms of further engagement set out and partnership and governance recommendations made which reflect the priorities and views identified. Initial financial and development appraisal findings should be set out, including highlighting possible public and private sector funding, capital and revenue streams that are critical to development and on-going viability of an attraction specifically and the site generally.

7.9 The next steps – how to take the work forward

Depending upon the findings of the feasibility study, the consultants should work with LCC as the client to set out the next steps in developing not only **What** could be delivered, but **How** and **When**.

8. Outputs

8.1 A robust feasibility study which provides high quality presentation of if and how the concept and vision can be delivered, development options for the site, with indicative plans, which can be used to inform decisions about the site's development in the manner set out as the Vision and Concept.

8.2 The study's report should provide sufficient scope and depth and financial and commercial appraisal to enable preparation of business cases for any budget or investment decisions from interested parties. Any second stage, more detailed analysis requirements should be identified and quantified. Recommendations on partnership, governance and other working and commercial relationships necessary to proceed should also be included

9. Timescales

The study should be completed by end of September 2013

10. References

English Heritage/Atkins *RAF Scampton Historic Characterisation* (October 2004)

Francis, Paul *RAF Scampton An Operational History and Gazetteer of Surviving Structures* (June 2004)

Lincolnshire County Council *A Big Vision for RAF Scampton*

Lincolnshire County Council *Aviation Heritage Lincolnshire leaflet*