



VERTICAL AEROSPACE UNVEILS VALO ASSEMBLY CENTRE TO SUPPORT NEXT PHASE OF AIRCRAFT DEVELOPMENT

News / Manufacturer



Vertical Aerospace has unveiled a new Aircraft Assembly Centre at Cotswold Airport, reinforcing its transition from aircraft development and testing to certification and early-stage production of its Valo eVTOL aircraft. Opened on National Manufacturing Day in the UK, the facility fulfills a previously announced strategic milestone and underscores the company's growing focus on scaling manufacturing capabilities ahead of commercial operations.

The £1.5 million investment expands Vertical's footprint at Cotswold Airport by 60,000 square feet, bringing its total operational space at the site to around 130,000 square feet. The combined facilities support a broad range of activities, including engineering, aircraft assembly, ground testing, and flight operations, positioning the company for the next chapter of its electric aviation journey.

A phased strategy for manufacturing expansion

The new Aircraft Assembly Centre represents the first step in Vertical Aerospace's long-term manufacturing scale-up strategy. The facility will support the production of certification-conforming aircraft required for regulatory compliance and verification testing as the company progresses toward securing Type Certification for its Valo eVTOL aircraft, targeted for 2029. Construction of the first certification-standard aircraft is scheduled to begin in the fourth quarter of 2027.

In addition, the Centre will play a key role in advancing Vertical's hybrid-electric ambitions. One of the company's prototype aircraft is set to undergo modification at the facility ahead of hybrid-electric flight testing planned for the first half of 2027. The UK Ministry of Defence has already expressed interest in Vertical's hybrid-electric and autonomous aviation technologies.

Following certification, the facility is expected to support the company's initial commercial deliveries, with the capability to assemble more than 25 Valo aircraft per year during the early production phase. As demand grows, large-scale manufacturing will transition to a dedicated high-volume production facility, details of which Vertical Aerospace plans to unveil in the fourth quarter of 2026.

Stuart Simpson, Chief Executive Officer at Vertical, commented: "Opening our Aircraft Assembly Centre is an important step in Vertical's transition from prototype developer to aircraft manufacturer, and another milestone delivered as we advance Valo towards certification. This facility gives us the capability we need to assemble our certification aircraft and support initial customer deliveries, while maintaining capital discipline as we prepare for higher-volume production. Bringing a new category of aircraft to market is a once-in-a-generation opportunity, and it is especially rewarding to do that here in Great Britain, drawing on the country's proud aviation heritage. By bringing aircraft assembly and flight testing together at Cotswold Airport, we can work more efficiently, reduce execution risk and remain focused on our target of certifying Valo in 2029."

Fabrice Brégier, Chair of Vertical Aerospace, who attended the opening, said: "I am delighted to be here today for one of my first engagements as Chair of Vertical. Having spent much of my career bringing complex aircraft programmes into production, I know how important it is to develop manufacturing capability in step with certification. This is tangible evidence of the Company's progress as it moves from prototype development towards becoming an aircraft manufacturer."

Integrated assembly and flight testing enhance certification efficiency

The new Aircraft Assembly Centre will serve as the hub for final assembly of Vertical Aerospace's Valo eVTOL aircraft, bringing together key components and technologies from industry partners. These include airframe structures supplied by Sonaca, electric propulsion systems developed by Evolito, Vertical's proprietary battery technology, and Honeywell Aerospace's flight control and aircraft management systems, all integrated into flight-ready aircraft.

By co-locating aircraft assembly with its existing engineering, ground testing, and flight-test operations at Cotswold Airport, Vertical is creating a streamlined development and certification environment. The integrated setup will enable aircraft to transition efficiently from assembly to ground and flight testing, while fostering closer collaboration between manufacturing, engineering, and flight-test teams.

This approach is expected to accelerate problem-solving, shorten development feedback cycles, reduce integration risks, and support the efficient execution of the company's certification programme as it advances toward commercial operations.

Investing in the future of UK aerospace manufacturing

Vertical Aerospace is set to further strengthen its manufacturing capabilities with the planned opening of its expanded Vertical Energy Centre later this year. Once fully developed, the facility is expected to triple the company's battery production capacity, supporting the development and manufacture of Vertical's proprietary battery technologies.

Together with the new Aircraft Assembly Centre, the expanded Vertical Energy Centre forms a key part of Vertical's phased investment strategy, providing the infrastructure needed to certify, produce, and deliver its next-generation Valo eVTOL aircraft.

Beyond supporting the company's growth, these investments are expected to contribute significantly to the UK economy. According to independent analysis by Frontier Economics, Vertical Aerospace could generate as much as £3 billion annually for the UK economy by 2035, support more than 2,000 highly skilled jobs, and establish itself as a major export success story, with approximately 90% of future sales projected to come from international markets.

Minister for Reindustrialisation Blair McDougall MP said: "The opening of Vertical Aerospace's new Aircraft Assembly Centre at Kemble is exactly the kind of investment we want to see more of as we work to reindustrialise Britain, creating high-skilled local jobs and strengthening our manufacturing base. Through our Modern Industrial Strategy and the ATI Programme, we're backing UK aerospace businesses to invest and grow. This new facility will help turn British innovation into British manufacturing, and it's great to see Vertical Aerospace's ambitions take flight."

Suzannah Harvey, CEO Cotswold Airport, said: "We are delighted to support Vertical Aerospace as it enters this important new phase. The opening of the Aircraft Assembly Centre strengthens Cotswold Airport's growing role as a hub for aerospace innovation and brings aircraft assembly and flight testing together in one location. We look forward to continuing to work closely with Vertical as it progresses Valo towards certification and commercial production."

Stephen Phipson, Chief Executive of Make UK, said: "Vertical Aerospace embodies the ambition, innovation and technical excellence that define modern British manufacturing. The company is demonstrating that Britain remains at the forefront of aerospace innovation and has the capability to turn pioneering technologies into world-leading products. The opening of this new assembly centre is a significant milestone not only for Vertical Aerospace but for UK manufacturing. We are proud to count Vertical Aerospace as a member of Make UK and to support a business that is leading the way in one of the most exciting areas of advanced manufacturing. As manufacturers look to invest, grow and compete internationally, facilities such as this create high-value jobs, strengthen supply chains and showcase the UK's ability to develop, industrialise and manufacture the technologies of the future. On National Manufacturing Day, this investment is a powerful example of British engineering ambition being translated into industrial reality."

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