



**The real home of aerospace:** An aerial view of Filton airfield, the home of Concorde, and a major base for European plane manufacturer Airbus and aero giant Rolls-Royce

Welcome to  
**Wolverhampton**  
City Centre

THE HOME OF AEROSPACE



**'Pompous and pretentious':** The sign that may greet people to Wolverhampton

Anger at Filton as Wolverhampton sees fit to rebrand itself 'The Home of Aerospace'

# How dare they?

**FILTON** is locked in a heated row with Wolverhampton over who has the right to be called *The Home of Aerospace*.

The West Midlands city is attempting to rebrand itself as the hub of Britain's aero industry, but it seems Bristol will not give up without a fight.

Filton - home of Concorde - is a major base for European plane manufacturer Airbus and aero engine giant Rolls-Royce, and is steeped in more than 100 years of aviation history.

Wolverhampton - which has RAF Cosford, a training centre for the air force during the Second World War and now home to an aviation museum - wants to put *The Home of Aerospace* on its civic signs at the gateways to the city if it wins the race for a multi-billion pound contract to create the Ministry of Defence's new Centre of Excellence.

However, its claim on the title has been derided as "pompous and pretentious" by Filton councillor Roger Hutchinson, who argues Bristol remains the true Home of Aerospace because of its proven aviation heritage as the birthplace of Concorde.

Wolverhampton's site at RAF Cosford is bidding head-to-head



**Difference of opinion:** Left, Filton councillor Roger Hutchinson, and right, the Mayor of Wolverhampton, Phil Bateman



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against St Athan in South Wales for what would be a major accolade to go alongside its current aviation-based industries, which include Smiths, Goodrich and HS Marston.

Wolverhampton's mayor, Phil Bateman, boasted that if it wins the prize it will "undoubtedly" make it the Home of Aerospace.

He said: "We are already leading the way with Boeing's ongoing projects at Smiths Aerospace, and

we are trying to build on that. If the plans for RAF Cosford go ahead then Wolverhampton will undoubtedly be the home of aerospace. We are extremely excited about this."

It could create 2,000 new jobs and attract other aerospace companies to invest in the site.

Wolverhampton's shadow economic chief Wendy Thompson said rebranding itself was exciting: "It would involve rewriting road signs and at the railway stations as well, so it becomes known throughout the country."

The city has even launched its

own website, [www.letsfly-cosford.com](http://www.letsfly-cosford.com), to promote its prospects and let people register their support.

But Mr Hutchinson said the idea that Wolverhampton could rival Bristol's unchallenged claim to be the Home of Aerospace was simply preposterous.

He said: "Frankly, I'm speechless. They have come on the scene very late."

"We have been building aeroplanes since before they had a football team."

"We build the wings for the Airbus A380 and, quite frankly, they are probably bigger than the entire factory at Wolverhampton."

"We have been designing and building aircraft through the ages, from the biggest, like the Brabazon, to the fastest, like Concorde."

"Apart from that magnificent achievement, we've made rockets, missiles and satellites, and Filton is now facing a massive expansion for the Airbus family of aircraft and Rolls-Royce military engines."

"Filton is already a centre of excellence for both research and design and will remain at the cutting edge of new technology."

"But I do look forward to the day when Wolverhampton does grow up to challenge us."

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## You have to laugh

YOU have to admire the cheek of those folk in Wolverhampton.

To try to con the rest of the country into thinking it's the home of aerospace just because it has a tin shack - most notable for being the one-time home of indoor athletics, RAF Cosford - is laughable.

You only have to look at the credentials of Filton to see that it surely has a more pressing claim to be "Home of Aerospace".

Has Wolverhampton not heard of Concorde, Rolls-Royce, Airbus and BAE Systems?

As Roger Hutchinson quite rightly points out Filton has been synonymous with aircraft building since the industry first started in the years before the First World War.