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SOUTH HUMBER GATEWAY: NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE IN LINE FOR MULTI-MILLION POUND JOBS BOOST

Just weeks after leading councillors on North Lincolnshire Council were told of major investor interest in the South Humber Gateway – the largest site for development in the north of England facing a deep water estuary – comes the news of a multi-million pound investment that is set to create in the order of 5000 jobs, phased over the next 10 years.

It represents a huge development and vote of confidence in the local economy.

It covers around 1,500 acres. By any stretch of the imagination, it is a massive development. Even more so in the present economic downturn, when most parts of the country are losing jobs.

The whole of the South Humber Gateway, 80 per cent of which falls in North Lincolnshire, covers nearly four square miles.

A planning application by Able UK – a major landowner on the South Humber Gateway– has now been submitted to the council. If approved, it would signal direct investment by the company of around £100m.

But it would trigger much greater levels of investment.

The project would see the creation of transport depots, warehousing and external storage areas, together with offices, a business park linked to the estuary, motel and truck stop restaurant. The area will be landscaped to both encourage and protect wildlife.

Under the plans – which must go through the council's normal planning process – Able UK will invest around £100m over the next ten years.

The Humber Sea terminal – close to the planned development – provides a gateway to Europe and has also recently expanded. The South Humber Ports of Grimsby and Immingham handle 66m tonnes a year, making it the UK's busiest ports complex.

Cllr Mark Kirk, leader of North Lincolnshire Council, said:

“The South Humber Gateway is of great national and international importance. It is the largest development site in the north of England and has the UK's fastest growing ports and logistics centre. It is also the location of a

quarter of the UK's refinery capacity – and with the Humber Sea terminal, provides a gateway to Europe.

“Able UK is major local company. It says a lot that at a time of economic uncertainty, the company is seeking to invest millions of pounds to further develop the South Humber Gateway.

“In North Lincolnshire, unlike other parts of the country, we are bucking the national trend in terms of investment. Just recently we saw the opening of CanPack – a £60m can manufacturing plant in Scunthorpe that created over 300 jobs. We also recently secured £140m to improve access to the South Humber Bank on the A160.

“While I welcome the broad thrust of the plans, it is important to stress that they have yet to go through the planning process. The council, public and other interested parties, will have their say. This is very important. So there is still a long way to go before anything is decided.”

The company has been in discussions with residents in East Halton and North Killingholme, and with the local business community, Yorkshire Forward, and environmental and wildlife interests. This will continue.

Charles Lewis, chair of the Humber Economic Partnership, said: “This is exactly the economic news the Humber needs. It represents a massive vote of confidence by the private sector in this part of the UK. North and North East Lincolnshire will benefit enormously but the challenge is to ensure both banks of the Humber share in the benefits.

“The South Humber Gateway is a tremendous asset for the Humber and we must do everything possible to realise its potential. Full marks must go to Able UK. I commend the company's vision.”

Note to Editors:

The location for the proposed Able UK investment on the South Humber Gateway fronts the estuary between the Humber Sea Terminal and the East Halton Skitter. It is north of Chase Hill road behind the power stations.

Such is the strategic importance of the South Humber Gateway site, that a board has been created to drive forward ambitious plans for the location. The board comprises the leaders and chief executives of North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire councils, plus the directors of economic development from the two councils, and an executive director from Yorkshire Forward, the Regional Development Agency.

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