

Air cargo drone start-up secures investment

20 / 01 / 2022

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Impression of Urban-Air Port hangar. Copyright: Urban-Air Port

The UK urban air cargo drone market could be boosted by new investment secured by London start-up Urban-Air Port Ltd (UAP).

UAP said it has secured funding from Supernal, previously the urban air mobility division of Hyundai Motor Group, that will help support its plans to develop 200 vertiport sites across the world in the next five years and deliver on the companies' shared vision of integrating advanced air mobility (AAM) into existing transit networks.

UAP's vertiport sites are expected to provide essential infrastructure to help enable mass adoption of eVTOL (electric vertical take-off and landing) aircraft – such as cargo drones and air taxis – as public acceptance of these grows and the way goods are transported around urban areas changes.

The world's first fully operational hub for eVTOLs, Air-One, will open for public visitation in Coventry city centre in April. The demonstration is anticipated to show how AAM can help unlock the potential of sustainable mobility and how the industry will work to help reduce congestion, cut air pollution and decarbonise transport.

The urban air mobility market is forecast to grow by 9% annually, reaching US\$12.7bn by 2027 and up to US\$1tn in the next 20 years, said UAP. However, lack of ground infrastructure remains one of the biggest barriers to the growth of the AAM industry.