Automotive to Aerospace: Energy Security Must Be at the Heart of Britain’s Manufacturing Transition

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e2 Energy Partners says manufacturers diversifying into aerospace and defence must tackle one of their biggest underlying business risks – energy – if they are to capitalise on unprecedented UK defence investment.

UK, September 2026 - As automotive manufacturers increasingly look towards aerospace and defence to protect jobs, skills and production capacity, e2 Energy Partners is calling for energy security to become a fundamental part of the UK's manufacturing diversification strategy.

The opportunity is significant.

The Government's Defence Investment Plan, published in June, sets out almost **£298 billion of Ministry of Defence spending over the next four years**, supported by an additional **£15 billion investment package**.

The Government expects the programme to create almost **60,000 additional direct and indirect UK industry jobs by the end of the decade**, while explicitly seeking to bring more British SMEs into defence supply chains.

And the money is already reaching UK industry. Government figures published this month show defence spending with British industry reached a record **£34.1 billion in 2025/26**, with **£1.3 billion spent directly with smaller businesses**.

For manufacturers under pressure from declining automotive volumes, global competition and rising operating costs, aerospace and defence represent an enormous opportunity.

But e2 Energy Partners warns that diversification alone will not secure their future.

Energy has to be part of the strategy.

Automotive, aerospace and defence manufacturing are all energy-intensive industries. CNC machining, casting, heat treatment, presses, robotics, paint facilities and advanced manufacturing processes require huge quantities of reliable electricity.

Moving into a sector offering longer order books and Government-backed investment while leaving one of the largest and most volatile operating costs exposed to the wholesale energy market simply replaces one commercial risk with another.

David Roberts, Chairman of EVTEC Group and founder of the industrial model behind e2 Energy Partners, is calling on Government to actively support automotive manufacturers capable of transitioning into aerospace and defence.

“Britain already has the factories, engineers, equipment and manufacturing expertise. We should not allow that capability to disappear simply because the automotive market is changing.”

“The Defence Investment Plan presents a generational opportunity to redirect that capability into aerospace and defence, protect skilled jobs and strengthen sovereign UK manufacturing.”

“But Government support for diversification needs to look beyond winning the first contract. These businesses need to be internationally competitive for the next ten, fifteen and twenty years. Energy security is fundamental to that.”

“We need to help manufacturers cross the bridge into these new markets — through procurement, accreditation, investment and energy security — rather than watch strategically important British manufacturing capacity disappear.”

There is already evidence that diversification can work.

Midlands manufacturer Grainger & Worrall recently reported securing more than **£30 million of new**

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orders across aerospace, defence and energy after diversifying away from its traditional reliance on automotive work.

Government policy is also increasingly focused on building resilient domestic defence supply chains, backing UK-based businesses and increasing opportunities for SMEs.

For e2 Energy Partners, that makes energy security a strategic issue rather than simply a procurement decision.

Energy security can strengthen the business behind the bid

Companies positioning themselves for aerospace and defence opportunities will increasingly need to demonstrate that they can deliver reliably, competitively and at scale.

Long-term energy certainty can support that proposition.

Through the private energy market, businesses can potentially secure long-term renewable energy directly from generation assets rather than remaining wholly dependent on repeated short-term retail energy contracts.

e2 Energy Partners' model combines renewable generation with shaping and balancing to match a manufacturer's demand profile, with infrastructure capable of being funded without the manufacturer providing the upfront capital expenditure.

For companies simultaneously investing in aerospace accreditation, machinery, people, quality systems and production capability, removing or reducing the requirement for additional energy infrastructure CAPEX can be particularly significant.

David Roberts added:

“If a manufacturer is going to invest millions transforming a facility for aerospace or defence production, why would it leave the energy powering that facility exposed?”

“The DIP gives British industry an extraordinary opportunity. We should use it not simply to create more defence suppliers, but to create stronger British manufacturers.”

“That means protecting their skills, their margins, their energy supply and their ability to compete.”

The UK's Defence Industrial Strategy specifically identifies the creation of a **resilient UK industrial base, stronger critical supply chains, greater participation from UK businesses and faster procurement** as priorities.

Major aerospace programmes demonstrate the potential scale. The Government has committed **£8.6 billion over four years to the Global Combat Air Programme**, the UK-Italy-Japan programme developing a next-generation combat aircraft, while a further £708 million announced in July is expected to involve a UK supply chain of around **600 companies**.

For automotive manufacturers capable of transferring expertise in precision engineering, fabrication, composites, tooling, electronics, automation and advanced production into aerospace and defence, the opportunity is clear.

The challenge now is ensuring those businesses are strong enough to take it.

David Roberts concluded:

“We have spent decades building some of the best manufacturing capability in the world. We now have a choice: allow parts of that capability to disappear as automotive changes, or redeploy it into the industries Britain is investing in for the future.”

“Government has opened the door through the Defence Investment Plan. Industry now needs the support and the infrastructure to walk through it.”

“And you cannot talk seriously about industrial resilience without talking about energy security.”

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