



Fund setback: An artist's impression of the art gallery planned for Wakefield to feature the work of Dame Barbara Hepworth, inset.

# Blow to Hepworth gallery

Joanne Ginley

PLANS to create a new waterfront art gallery in Wakefield to showcase sculptures by Dame Barbara Hepworth in the city where she was born have been dealt a blow.

Trustees of Dame Barbara's estate have given some of her works to the gallery which, it is proposed, will be the centrepiece of the city's planned regeneration of the waterfront area to the south of the city. But last night it emerged the Heritage Lottery Fund has rejected Wakefield Council's bid for £7m. Council chiefs believe the open-

ing of a museum celebrating the work of the internationally renowned sculptor, and also showing off the city's own collections, will prove a big draw for visitors. Last night the authority stressed it was still determined to go ahead with the £23m project.

Carole Souter, director of the lottery fund, said: "This was a difficult decision. Barbara Hepworth is one of our best-loved 20th-century sculptors and Wakefield, as her home town, would have been a fitting location to house some of her work.

"But after careful consideration we felt unable to commit such a

large sum of money to this project as we were concerned about whether it would deliver sufficient heritage and public benefit and value for money."

The Hepworth Gallery, is designed by leading architect, David Chipperfield and is scheduled to open in 2008.

Council Leader Coun Peter Box said: "We are disappointed and surprised that the fund's trustees chose not to support this project which is so important for the people of Wakefield.

"The project has already received a grant of £5m from the Arts Council England in 2004 and

we shall be making appropriate representations to the Heritage Lottery Fund with a view to the bid being re-considered later in the year.

"The council is also optimistic of receiving support from Yorkshire Forward and the European Regional Development Fund."

John Foster, the council's chief executive, said: "Developing the Hepworth Gallery is part of the council's commitment to open up access to Wakefield's heritage and improve the city's cultural facilities, environment and urban spaces as part of attracting new investment and jobs into the district."