

APPLICATION BY BAE SYSTEMS

**SITE AT BAE SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY PARK
ELETTRA AVENUE**

PLANNING STATEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This planning statement has been prepared by Vail Williams LLP to support the Outline Planning Application by BAE Systems which proposes the mixed use development of the BAE Systems Technology Park site at Elettra Avenue, Waterloooville.

1.2 The purpose of this document is to draw together the various supporting reports which accompany the application and set out the planning policies applicable to this site and demonstrate why the application complies with those policies.

1.3 This statement needs to be read in conjunction with the series of reports which accompany the Planning Application comprising the following:-

- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Site Waste Management;
- Noise Assessment;
- Utilities Assessment;
- Sustainability Appraisal;
- Odour Assessment;
- Travel Plan;
- Transport Assessment;
- Marketing Report;
- Employment Report,
- Design and Access Statement
- Sequential Report and Impact Assessment;
- Planning Statement.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning Consent was granted to Marconi 1982 for 28,300 sq mtrs of light industrial and research in development uses with ancillary buildings. Marconi were subsequently purchased in 2000 by BAE Systems. This consent was implemented generally as approved and remains largely unchanged today.
- 2.2 Over recent years a significant portion of the site has become surplus to operational requirements leaving much of the building virtually unoccupied. Extensive marketing has failed to find alternative occupiers and the redevelopment proposals subject of the application have therefore being prepared in order to rejuvenate this site.
- 2.3 The Planning Department at Havant Borough Council have been fully involved in the future development aspirations for the site. The sits was discussed at meetings in October 2009 and February 2010 as well as through the Local Development Framework process proposals were submitted and the subject of discussion at **pre application meeting** on 14th January 2012 attended by representatives of the Planning and Economic Development Teams. Written advice was received on 7th February 2012 and as a result of these comments, the scheme modified to address the Council's concerns and provide the required level of detail to enable the Council to determine the application.
- 2.4 Additionally, upon the advice of the Council and the Planning Team, the applicant's consultant team presented to the **Waterlooville Community Forum** on 10th May 2012 and took part in the debate which followed regarding the details of the proposals and matters

considered by the Forum important to take into account. The minutes of this meeting are appended to the Sequential approach and Impact Assessment report.

3.0 THE SITE

3.1 The BAE Systems Technology Park site forms an island of some 5.7 hectares bounded by Elettra Avenue, Hambledon Road and Silverthorne Way. The site currently contains the following buildings:-

- Main Building - 19,498 sq mtrs of B1(b) land use;
- Restaurant - 973 sq mtrs of ancillary use that is not currently occupied but historically catered for employees on site;
- E Block - 6,726 sq mtrs of B1(c) land use which is currently partially occupied by tenants;
- Beam Plot - 927 sq mtrs of B1(c) land use which remains in BAE operational use;

There is also an extensive parking area comprising 863 parking spaces largely located to the south western side of the site.



- 3.2 Of the total site area of 5.7 hectares, approximately 1.3 hectares which contains both E Block and Beam Plot buildings, is excluded as these buildings are to be retained in operational use. The remaining 4.42 hectares are the subject of the Planning Application and would involve removal of all existing buildings within this area.
- 3.3 The main access to the site is via Elettra Avenue served by a dedicated arm of the roundabout junction. There are secondary accesses via Silverthorne Way.
- 3.4 The site is screened by landscaping around the majority of the site boundaries. Much of this landscaping is located on grass embankments built up along the road frontage which greatly assists in screening the buildings on site.
- 3.5 The main building rises to three storeys in height and is an extensive building of approximately 160 metres in length running along the Hambledon Road frontage. E Block and Beam Plot are single storey in height.
- 3.6 More generally the site is situated within the Brambles Farm Industrial Estate which lies 1 km to the west of Waterloo town centre. Surrounding uses are mixed, Wellington Retail Park lies south east of the site off the B2150 Hambledon Road and The Horizon Leisure Centre lies approximately 200 metres to the BAE site.

4.0 PLANNING PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The application is submitted in outline form with access and siting to be determined. The application proposes the redevelopment of 4.42 hectares of the Systems Technology site following the demolition of the existing buildings comprising the Main Building and its annexe, the ancillary restaurant building, associated visitor/security building and the existing parking areas.

4.2 The proposed development would comprise the following mix of uses:-

- Buildings for Class B uses;
- A 60 bedroom hotel;
- A restaurant adjoining the hotel;
- A drive thru restaurant facility;
- A car showroom and forecourt;
- Access via Elettra Avenue;
- 324 parking spaces.

4.3 The existing access via Elettra Avenue continues to serve the development and will remain unchanged. E Block and Beam Plot are retained for their current usage.

4.4 The detailed breakdown of the proposals is as follows:-

Class B Uses

The western side of the site will be developed to provide a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses. The master plan identifies a range of building sizes, which would be dedicated to particular uses as follows:-

- Buildings A - 5 units, each of 186 sq mtrs providing a total of 929 sq mtrs of B1(c) use
- Buildings B - 10 units, each of 325sq mtrs providing a total of 3251 sq mtrs of B2 use
- Building C - a single building of 742 sq mtrs for B2 use
- Buildings D - a single building of 1858 sq mtrs for B8 use
- Buildings E - a single building of 1807 sq mtrs for B8 use.

- 4.5 The B uses would therefore total 8,588 sq mtrs of gross internal floor space, 9,085 sq mtrs gross external floor space.
- 4.6 The buildings would be laid out in a courtyard of development. A single building would be located adjoining the roundabout junction to the site; the central portion of the site would be occupied by a U shaped courtyard of units. Two further units are located towards the southern end of the site.
- 4.7 Parking areas are provided within and around the complex of buildings together with HGV access and turning facilities.

Car Showroom

- 4.8 A car showroom of 1,020 sq mtrs (gross external) is proposed on the eastern side of the Elettra Avenue access. The building would be single storey, 22 parking spaces would be provided for this use behind the building.

Drive Thru Restaurant

- 4.9 A drive thru restaurant of 240 sq mtrs (300 sq mtrs gross external) is proposed at the northern corner of the site served by 24 parking spaces. The building would be single storey.

Hotel/Restaurant

- 4.10 The hotel and associated restaurant are proposed along the eastern side of the site adjoining Hambledon Road. A proposed hotel would provide 60 bed spaces and would rise to 3 storeys in height. The restaurant would adjoin the hotel at its southern end, this building would be single storey and would have a total gross internal floor area of 650 sq mtrs (685

gross external) providing both dining area and kitchen/service area. 65 parking spaces would be provided for this element of the development.

- 4.11 The existing landscaping and grass banking around the periphery of this site would be retained in its entirety, especially along the Hambledon Road/Elettra Avenue frontages.
- 4.12 The entire site would be served by 324 parking spaces, parking areas are associated with each of the individual uses including parking provision for the existing buildings which are retained.
- 4.13 All elements of the proposal would be served by the existing Elettra Avenue access. The existing emergency access points to Silverthorne Way are retained but would not provide alternative permanent access to the site.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 This section addresses the relevant national and local planning policies for the site.

National Policy

- 5.2 The recently published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the relevant national guidance. The key aim of the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development. Indeed the document includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This includes consideration of the economic, social and environmental role of proposals.
- 5.3 Maintaining and sustaining the economy is a key requirement. One of the Core Planning Principles (paragraph 17) is to pro-actively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units that the economy needs.

- 5.4 Paragraph 19 indicates that the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. *Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the needs to support economic growth through the planning system.* In hand with sustainable development is ensuring the vitality of the town centres, which means recognising that town centres should be the primary location for new development and policies should be sent out for the consideration proposals for main town centre uses which cannot be accommodated in or adjacent to town centres.
- 5.5 Development should also support sustainable transport measures; this includes solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and congestion, providing safe and suitable access for all and, where appropriate, providing transport statements or transport assessments.

Local Plan

- 5.6 The Havant Borough Core Strategy was adopted in March 2011.
- 5.7 Chapter 3 of the Core Strategy concerns promoting Havant Borough's economy. This includes promoting and protecting a dynamic, diverse and knowledge based economy and raising the skills, level and employability of the borough's workforce and encouraging the tourism economy.
- 5.8 **Policy CS2** seeks to encourage new business development, prioritises in the use of previously developed land for new employment floor space including promoting existing business clusters, providing jobs, and supporting proposals which generate wealth or produce an economic output on existing employment sites. Existing employment sites that are fit for purpose should be protected from non employment uses and, where existing

employment sites are not fit for their current purpose, permit development which would provide jobs, generate wealth or produce an economic output.

- 5.9 The spatial distribution of new employment floor space which is set out in table 3.2 indicates that the vast majority of new floor space is located in Havant and Leigh Park. Only around 5% is to go to Waterlooville.
- 5.10 The priority for employment use is previously developed land within the urban area. The employment land review indicated that this approach was to be supported on sites where new floor space can be provided through a more efficient provision of car parking.
- 5.11 Whilst the policy stance is to protect existing employment sites, the Council recognises in paragraph 3.24 that there is a need for flexibility in order to respond to changes in business requirements. Any proposal to redevelopment an existing employment site for non employment uses must provide robust and credible evidence on viability and marketing that the site is no longer fit for purpose as an employment site. The criterion which must be met is set out in **Policy DM3** discussed below.
- 5.12 Paragraph 3.25 indicates that once it has been established that an existing employment site is not fit for purpose then other types of economic development should be considered. Such uses must provide jobs, generate wealth or produce an economic output.
- 5.13 Economic development is defined in the Core Strategy glossary as:

“Development that achieves at least one of the following objectives: provides employment opportunities; generates wealth or generates an economic output or product.”

- 5.14 **Policy CS3** concerns skills and employability, it indicates that a planning permission will be granted for proposals which raise skills levels and increase employability; the key aim being to provide a range of job opportunities to meet the needs of the Borough.
- 5.15 **Policy CS4** concerns town, district and local centres. This policy identifies Havant and Waterlooville as the district's principal town centres. The challenges for Waterlooville town centre are integration with the Major Development Area (MDA) and improved connectivity with Wellington Retail Park.
- 5.16 **Policy CS5** is supportive of new tourism development including the provision of hotel and other types of tourist accommodation. Reference is made to the Havant Hotel Futures report which identifies the need for hotel accommodation at Waterlooville.
- 5.17 Specific guidance on the protection of existing employment in tourism sites is set out in **Policy DM3**. In relation to employment sites the policy stance is to protect existing employment uses unless it can be demonstrated through an active and exhaustive marketing process covering at least 18 months that existing employment uses unviable. Where existing employment uses are to be lost then it is recognised that other forms of development can provide employment opportunities and therefore redevelopment should give a preference to uses which provide jobs, generate wealth or product an economic output.

6.00 ASSESSMENT

- 6.01 The existing site is an employment use. It falls within the Brambles Farm Industrial Estate, albeit that surrounding uses are a mix of uses including car showroom, residential, leisure

and the town centre to the north. However, it is recognised that the starting point in this instance is the existing employment use of the site.

- 6.02 Given the approach set out in Core Strategy Policy CS2 and DM3 the retention of the existing employment use is the starting point. Where it is proven that existing employment uses are unviable then alternative uses which generate jobs and an economic output will be favoured.

Marketing

- 6.03 In this particular case the Council is well aware of the history of this site and the extensive marketing that has been undertaken with a view to securing occupation of the Main Building which occupies the site.
- 6.04 The issue here is that there is a poor office market in Waterlooville and the Main Building is a bespoke design for Marconi who originally occupied the site. Whilst it met their specific needs it is a very large building, designed to accommodate the particular working requirements of Marconi and the processes which it undertook. As a consequence it has proven impossible to secure an alternative occupier for the building.
- 6.05 The marketing campaign for this building has been undertaken by Vail Williams and is set out in detail in the accompanying Marketing Report. In summary, the office accommodation has been available in the market since July 2001 with the marketing activity rebranded in early 2009 to stimulate more interest. This extensive marketing campaign, both offering the building as a whole and as individual bespoke floor space options, has only resulted in one letting of 2,973 sq m. The vast majority of the building, approaching 80%, has been vacant for the entire period and remains so.
- 6.06 As the Marketing Report identifies the significant office space is to some extent a historic anomaly and does not reflect market requirements in Waterlooville. Alternative office accommodation is favoured in neighbouring centres such as Havant and Portsmouth which is generally newer and higher grade. Waterlooville is simply not seen as an office location, either as head quarters location or for smaller bespoke suites.

- 6.07 The marketing campaign therefore fulfils and far exceeds the Council's requirements set out in Policy DM3.

Employment

- 6.08 However, as Policy DM3 and CS2 recognise where employment uses are to be lost then the preference would be for redevelopment which provides jobs and an economic output. Clearly this has been the thinking behind the current mixed use redevelopment proposals.
- 6.09 As evident from the application a significant amount of replacement employment floor space is proposed within the development. The uses proposed on the western side of the site will provide a mix of B1(c), B2 and B8 units. These units will meet market demand by providing newer smaller units within a courtyard development with servicing and parking. The range of units ensures a flexibility in the marketing campaign and will secure a range of occupiers and hence job opportunities suited to different forms of employment use.
- 6.10 The associated uses within the development proposals comprising the drive through, hotel and restaurant are also forms of economic development. Each will provide employment opportunities, these opportunities being both full time and part time and within a range of market sectors.
- 6.11 The accompanying Employment Study provides a breakdown of the likely employment generation from the proposed development, this is likely to be in the range of 300 full time jobs although it is considered that these figures may well be an under estimate and do not take into account any part time job opportunities which are likely to be prevalent in the restaurant, drive through and hotel proposal.
- 6.12 Importantly, the range of jobs will assist in meeting the range of employment needs in the immediate vicinity and meeting Core Strategy objectives.

Sequential test

- 6.13 In relation to the drive through and hotel/restaurant elements of the proposal these are recognised as town centre uses which should normally be located within a town centre location. This point is fully understood and raised at initial pre-application discussions.
- 6.14 In order to address this point the application is accompanied by a Sequential and Impact Assessment which assesses these elements of the proposal. The findings of this Report are that there are no suitable alternative locations with the Waterloooville town centre despite an extensive search and in depth consideration of the various sites known and suggested by the Council.
- 6.15 Despite the above analysis proving that there are no suitable alternative sites it is not considered that the particular forms of development proposed within this scheme would in any way be damaging to the town centre. The hotel and associated restaurant in particular are part of a package and are complimentary developments which commonly take place hand in hand and are equally commonly found on business parks. As the Sequential Report identifies there are no competing hotel or restaurants in the town centre and as such the proposals will introduce a new complimentary facility to Waterloooville and will not detract from those currently in the town centre.
- 6.16 Likewise the drive thru restaurant proposed meets a longstanding market requirement for such a facility within Waterloooville. However, again the town centre sites are not available and in many ways would not prove suitable for a drive thru restaurant which, of necessity, requires a roadside location.
- 6.17 The overall scale of the drive thru restaurant is in any event minimal and of itself unlikely to give rise to any detrimental impact upon the town centre.

Mixed use

- 6.18 The range of facilities proposed within the mixed use proposal are complimentary to each other and complimentary to the business park and not unusual forms of development within such a location and indeed the mix of uses surrounding.
- 6.19 The hotel and restaurant in particular are part of a package and will compliment and enhance the Brambles Farm Industrial Estate providing primarily for the needs of business

customers attending both the industrial estate and Waterlooville town centre. The hotel and restaurant therefore gain support in relation to tourism policies and also the employment opportunities provided. The Drive Thru will serve the Industrial estate, as well as the wider population. The employment element of the proposal including the car showroom, which forms the larger part, is clearly well suited to this location.

- 6.20 The overall layout of the site and mix of uses has been carefully considered in relation to meeting market requirements and taking account of the site characteristics and neighbouring uses.

Amenity

- 6.21 Although the site lies within the industrial estate there are residential properties nearby off Hambledon Road. In order to address any possible impact upon these residential properties noise surveys and odour assessments have been undertaken, principally to ensure that the drive thru restaurant will not give rise to any unacceptable odour and the uses proposed would not cause any noise intrusion. As these reports indicate there would be no unacceptable impact. The nearest properties are over 80 metres distant and separated by the Hambledon Road. Potential noise emissions are not considered to give rise to any significant detrimental impact, odour emissions can be controlled through the use of suitable ventilation equipment. The overall conclusion being that the proposed mix of uses will in no way have any detrimental impact upon residential amenity.

Transport

- 6.22 The site falls within the industrial estate and as such industrial and employment development is acceptable in principle. The other uses proposed are complimentary and indeed provide employment opportunities. The scale of development and recognition that employees will attend the site has necessitated the need for a Transport Assessment and associated Travel Plan. The Transport Assessment in particular concludes that the quantum of development proposed will result in traffic generation little different to that of the existing site.
- 6.23 The overall conclusion is that the proposal does not create any meaningful additional traffic movements on the road network and will not give rise to any additional congestion compared to the existing use. This assessment takes into account not only the traffic generated by the

proposed uses but also additional traffic generated now and anticipated in the future as a result of recently approved schemes such as the Sainsbury's at Wellington Retail Park and new housing and employment as part of the major developed area.

- 6.24 Notwithstanding the above conclusions the Travel Plan identifies the various means by which employees can be encouraged to reduce car usage including encouraging car sharing, making employees aware of alternative forms of transport available such as bus routes and cycle provision. In fact, the assessments within both the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan clearly identify that there are currently a range of sustainable methods to access this site including bus routes, cycling and footpath routes to neighbouring shopping and town centre locations.
- 6.25 The proposal itself also includes cycle parking provision throughout the site, improved cycle and pedestrian routes from the site to those existing which in turn lead to the town centre and adjoining employment areas. If necessary some improvement can be made to crossing points to further improve access.

Sustainability

- 6.26 In terms of sustainability the site has been assessed for flood risk, the availability of utilities and the proposed scheme itself has been assessed for sustainability credentials.
- 6.27 The Flood Risk Assessment which accompanies the application identifies that a small element of the site is subject to flooding and this has been addressed through the provision of building location and flood storage/attenuation in the form of a swale which actually improves upon the current situation.
- 6.28 Additionally, the provision of new buildings and the associated improvements to measures such as water recycling, energy efficiency and waste management all ensure that the proposed development will greatly improve energy efficiency and re-use and recycling of materials is a priority for the site.

Layout

- 6.29 The layout of the development takes account of the current features of the site. The existing access point via Elettra Avenue is retained as the principal point of access to the site. Development is accommodated within the main body of the site allowing the existing vegetation and grass banking around the site to be retained. This allows the development to assimilate easily with the character of the area and also the existing landscaping to maintain a screen to the surrounding area.
- 6.30 The proposal involves the much more efficient use of this site removing the vast parking area which currently dominates half of the site. This much more efficient use of the site is perfectly achievable within the proposed layout and providing parking to meet current standards.
- 6.31 The proposed buildings are predominantly single storey with the hotel rising to 3 storeys. Currently the site is dominated by the single three storey main building which presents a monolithic unrelieved elevation of some 160 metres to the site. The master plan layout of units much more closely accords with the layout of surrounding development in the industrial park, market demands and user requirements.

7.00 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.01 The application proposes the mixed use employment generating development of an employment site which is now largely vacant.
- 7.02 The current site is an inefficient use of land within the urban area and, as demonstrated through the marketing campaign, has little if any prospect of future re-use without redevelopment.
- 7.03 The proposed mix of uses provides employment opportunities, proposes uses complimentary to Waterloo town centre and the Brambles Farm Industrial Estate and provides a viable mixed use development for this site allowing its regeneration in an acceptable manner, meeting market demands and ensuring the site no longer remains vacant.

- 7.04 A comprehensive suite of reports support the application addressing the concerns raised by the Council in relation to the uses proposed including the impact on matters such as amenity, traffic generation, alternative sites and marketing. All demonstrate conclusively that the proposed use is acceptable.
- 7.05 The proposal represents a genuine opportunity to secure an important development for Waterloooville providing new and economically orientated uses which will compliment the industrial estate, town centre and borough bringing both direct and indirect employment.
- 7.06 The proposal is considered to accord with national and local planning policies and provides a form of sustainable employment development for which approval should be granted.