

DELEGATED REPORT

APPLICATION NUMBER	S6/2006/1392/DE
LOCATION	Land at Mosquito Way, Hatfield Business Park, Hatfield
PROPOSAL	Reserved Matters application pursuant to outline application reference S6/1999/1064/OP for the erection of a building to provide a total of 9,241sqm of accommodation for purposes within use Class B1 (Business), together with associated car parking, access and landscaping.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Outline planning permission for development on the former Hatfield Aerodrome site was granted on 29th December 2000 reference S6/1999/1064/OP being the permission for the overall development of the former airfield site. The outline permission reflects the land use allocations and scale of development detailed in the Hatfield Aerodrome Supplementary Planning Guidance adopted in November 1999.
- 1.2 The current application seeks permission for reserved matters details under outline permission S6/1999/1064/OP details of which were submitted to the Council within the nominated time limit prescribed under Condition 2 of the outline permission.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The 1.85ha application site is centrally located within the Hatfield Aerodrome site located on the eastern side of the main spine road with frontages on Mosquito Way and Tamblin Way. Immediately adjoining the site to the east and north-east lies the vacant 6.2ha Eisai site which has the benefit of planning permission for a B1/B8 use subject to the completion of a S106 agreement. To the south of the site opposite Tamblin Way lies the Listed Hanger, while to the west and north-west opposite Mosquito Way lies more vacant land, the new Howe Dell School which is currently under construction and further B1/B2/B8 uses.
- 2.2 The application site is located wholly within the Commercial Area as identified within the adopted Hatfield Aerodrome masterplan. The site is currently vacant and undeveloped.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application proposes the development of a company headquarters site for Three Valleys Water to accommodate the corporate merging of existing operations at two sites in Hatfield and Watford to a single company office in the Hatfield Business Park.

- 3.2 The application seeks consent for a four-storey office building totalling 9,241 square metres of office accommodation – Use Class B1 (a), along with associated car parking, access and landscaping.
- 3.3 The layout of the proposal has the main office building centrally located within the plot, with principal elevations facing both Mosquito Way and Tamblin Way set back approximately 30m from both frontages. Access to the site is via two entrances on Tamblin Way, no access is provided onto Mosquito Way. Car parking surrounds the main building though is more heavily distributed to the rear and corners of the plot adjoining the boundaries with the Eisai site. Landscaping is evenly distributed around the site including within car parking areas though is measurably strengthened along Mosquito Way. To the rear of the building is land reserved for an outdoor café terrace which immediately adjoins the servicing area and the generator compound.
- 3.4 The elevational details have the main office standing four-storeys in height (17m at eaves level) with an additional plant room to measure a total of approximately 21m in height. Modern in architectural design, the building will be heavily glazed and is treated with horizontal brise soleil to most elevations. The main or north-west elevation facing Mosquito Way displays a curved feature of glazed curtain walling marking the main entrance to the building which in turn houses an internal triple height atrium called the 'Winter Garden'. External stairs feature on two elevations and full height stonework panels feature on three elevations. The plant room is louvred and set back some 10m from all sides of the main building footprint.
- 3.5 The proposal provides details for 365 car parking spaces and 10 additional spaces for larger operational and emergency response vehicles. The majority of parking requirements will be accommodated to the rear of the site, including the operational vehicles along the eastern boundary with the Eisai site. 13 disabled car parking spaces are provided to the front of the site adjacent the main entrance while 60 enclosed cycles spaces are provided in an ancillary building just to the north of the main building. A further 13 motorcycle spaces are provided for. Details of car parking figures and calculations used are detailed within the accompanying planning statement.
- 3.6 Details of proposed landscaping are outlined in a landscaping plan which illustrates substantial planting in front of the main entrance of the building which is proposed in addition to the 6m structural landscaping of the business park along Mosquito Way. Outdoor amenity space is proposed with a grassed area and seating integrated into the landscaping design. Boundary planting is proposed to the boundaries with the adjoining Eisai site.
- 3.7 A generator is proposed to be located to the rear of the building to service the building's energy requirements. This will be housed in a timber enclosure and ancillary to the main building. An underground grey water storage tank will also be installed underneath the rear service yard.
- 3.8 An external lighting scheme has not been submitted as part of the application.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 S6/1999/1064/OP – Demolition of existing (unlisted) buildings, removal of runway and other hard standing areas and redevelopment for the following

purposes: As a business park comprising uses within use class B1, B2, B8 and sui generis; housing; new university campus (use class D1 and D2) to include replacement de Havilland sports and social club and associated playing fields; two hotels; primary school and associated facilities; district centre; works of conversion to enable recreation use of existing listed hanger; aviation heritage centre. Together with associated highway, transport and service infrastructure (including a strategic transport corridor), landscaping and open space, diversion of Ellenbrook. Means of access to be determined.

5.0 RELEVANT POLICIES

- 5.1 Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005)
Policy HATAER1 – Sustainable Development of the Site
Policy HATAER2 – Mixed Use
Policy EMP1 – Employment Areas
Policy EMP2 – Acceptable Uses in Employment Areas
Policy EMP13 – Design Criteria for Employment Development
Policy D1 – Quality of Design
Policy D8 – Landscaping
Policy SD1 – Sustainable Development
- 5.2 Hatfield Aerodrome Supplementary Planning Guidance (1999)
Section 14 – Business Park Area Planning Brief

6.0 PUBLICITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.1 The application was advertised in the local press upon application registration and by site notice on 23 October 2006. Notification letters were sent to neighbouring occupiers including T-mobile, Herts Constabulary and the Next Generation Club. No comments from neighbouring occupiers were received.
- 6.2 De Havilland Residents Association & Sanctuary Housing Association – No comments.
- 6.3 Thames Water – No objections, informatives attached.
- 6.4 Herts County Council (Highways) – No objections, 6 conditions proposed and informative attached.
- 6.5 Environmental Health Officer – No objections, 5 conditions proposed.
- 6.6 Herts County Council (Environment) – No objections. Reference is made to policies outlined in Waste Policy 3 (Waste minimisation and new developments), Waste Policy 7 (Re-use of waste arising from new developments) and Waste Policy 8 (Use of recycled materials in new developments).
- 6.7 Landscape (WHC) Department – No objections.
- 6.8 Environment Agency – No objections, subject to (outline) conditions.
- 6.9 English Heritage – No objections.
- 6.10 Built Environment Advisory and Management Service (BEAMS) – No objections.

7.0 DISCUSSION

- 7.1 In assessing the reserved matters proposal, I have made regard to the guidance contained within the Hatfield Aerodrome Supplementary Planning Guidance 1999 concerning the Business Park area planning objectives, land use proposals, urban design principles, sustainability principles, landscaping strategies and car parking. Guidance contained within the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005 has also been taken into account with regard to the Hatfield Aerodrome site, employment development, sustainability and design criteria.

Land use and Employment Floorspace

- 7.2 Discussing firstly the principle of the proposed land use in this location, the development falls wholly within that area identified as the 'Commercial Area' in the adopted Hatfield Aerodrome SPG, where development classified under Class B1 (a) use is considered appropriate.
- 7.3 The proposed floor space of the development classified as Class B1 (a) is 9,241 square metres, which when calculated in aggregate with existing the T-mobile development (49,861sqm) and the approved Eisai development (23,130sqm) does not exceed the maximum permitted quantum of Class B1 (a/b) development of 96,300sqm as outlined in the Hatfield Aerodrome SPG and the original S106 agreement.
- 7.4 The proposal of a B1(a) land use of the above floor space in this location is therefore considered acceptable and in accordance with the relevant planning guidance.

Layout and Access

- 7.5 Turning to the layout design, the proposal is appropriately sited with the main frontage facing Mosquito Way, the principal spine road for the Hatfield Business Park. This accords to a main objective of the Business Park specified in the SPG which is to maximise frontages along the A1001 and the Spine Road for commercial uses.
- 7.6 Car parking is distributed around the main building though predominantly to the rear of the site, thereby enhancing views to the main frontage and building entrance from the main road junctions. This is in accordance with the adopted urban design principles of the SPG, which seeks the siting of main landscaped areas to be adjacent the principal road network.
- 7.7 Access to the site will be via two entrances on Tamblin Way with no vehicular access available from the main spine road Mosquito Way. No objection was raised by the Highway Authority to the two access points, the second of which will provide access for operational vehicles. No objection is raised regarding the siting of building and waste servicing arrangements which is effectively located away from public view.

Car and Cycle Parking

- 7.8 Guidance relating to maximum car parking provision contained within the Hatfield Aerodrome SPG and the original S106 agreement identifies a ratio of 1:40 being 1 no. car space to each 40sqm of gross external floorspace

classified under Class B1 (a). This equates to a maximum of 232 car spaces for the 9,241sqm development.

- 7.9 Details for a total of 365 car parking spaces + 10 large operational spaces, however, were agreed and approved by the Highway Authority during pre-application discussions to be wholly contained within the site.
- 7.10 The justification for the on-site provision of an additional 133 car spaces is contained within the accompanying planning statement in detail. A key requirement of the merged company headquarters is the need for operational car parking spaces in addition to general business parking requirement. This includes provision for: emergency response scenarios including emergency health and no-threat-to-life incidents, where the proposed site becomes the emergency control centre; day-to-day field-based man-in-the-van operators including meter readers, customer service technicians, leakage controllers, street work teams; and visitors spaces for the headquarters site for 3rd party clients, agencies, standby vehicles and customers. The site will also house the company training centre which requires a further element of operational parking.
- 7.11 Whilst the proposed car park provision exceeds the standards set out in the SPG planning guidance and the original S106 agreement, the Council is minded to take the recommendation of the Highway Authority of 365 car spaces + 10 larger operational spaces for larger vehicles having considered and agreed the essential business and operational requirements of the utility company during pre-application negotiations. 266 spaces will be reserved for business operations calculated at the Highway Authority recommended ratio of 1:35 (approximately 34 spaces greater than when calculated at 1:40), while 99 spaces will be provided for operational needs and 35 spaces will be reserved for visitors parking. The County Council has indicated that this level of parking provision sufficiently complies with regional policy guidelines and is within reasonable limits as specified in the outline permission and SPG, and in the absence of an objection from the relevant Highways Authority, the Council is satisfied that permission for the proposed level of parking provision may be granted.
- 7.12 To ensure on-site parking is utilised as intended, additional details were submitted (drawing SK-72) illustrating the separation between business and operational parking bays including the location of controlled access with swipe card activation. Further details will be required under planning condition regarding the means of controlled access into operational parking bays to be provided prior to occupation of the development.
- 7.13 The submission of a Green Travel Plan will also be required by County Council in accordance with the adopted approach for other commercial occupiers on the Hatfield Aerodrome site. This requirement is covered by way of planning condition under the outline permission.
- 7.14 60 covered cycle spaces will be provided which is in accordance with the relevant cycle parking standards, on-site shower facilities are appropriately provided on all three floors.

Elevations and External Appearance

- 7.15 Turning to the external appearance of the development, it is considered that the proposal reflects the urban design principles as set out by the Hatfield Aerodrome SPG and is appropriate to the business park setting. In terms of its height, the four-storey building is comparable with its neighbouring buildings at 17m including the Grade II* listed Hanger, T-mobile offices, the approved Eisai development and the new flats at Clarkson Court and as such no objection is raised in terms of its height. A roof plant room increases the height to just under 21m however this is set back from the building edges as appropriate. Careful attention was given to height of the building being located directly opposite the listed hanger and having sought the views of English Heritage and BEAMS it is not considered to have a detrimental impact to the setting of a listed building.
- 7.16 In terms of external materials and architectural detailing, the proposal represents a modern development that is considered to be appropriate to the business park environment. The elevations are heavily glazed with forward projecting aluminium brise soleil elements for variation and depth, which complements the contemporary feel and appearance of the reconstituted stonework cladding elements featured on all elevations. The feature entrance housing an internal atrium fronting Mosquito Way provides sufficient definition to the building and when viewed from the main spine road, the proposal is considered to be legible and well integrated into the business park setting. Full details and samples of finishing materials will be required and a suitable condition has been imposed.
- 7.17 The details and features provided in the landscaping scheme are welcomed by the Council and despite the absence of a water feature to the front of the building the proposal is acceptable to the Council. Reedbeds will feature to the main frontage of the building as will grassed amenity space and seating. The reinforced landscaping to the frontage along Mosquito Way is most appropriate adding clarity and definition to the site.
- 7.18 A scheme of external lighting has not been submitted as part of the application. Details of a lighting scheme is required by the Council under the outline planning permission.

Residential Amenity

- 7.19 It is not considered that this development will give rise to any detrimental impacts to the residential amenity of the neighbouring Clarkson Court development in terms of loss of views or direct sunlight, being located some 80m away.
- 7.20 Noise from this development is most likely to arise from the arrival and departure of servicing vehicles and operational vehicles. Restrictions will be imposed on the hours of servicing and delivery to standard operating hours however no such condition will be imposed on operational vehicles. A further noise condition relating to background noise will be imposed to ensure noise emissions from plant equipment does not raise the background noise to an unacceptable level.

Sustainability

- 7.21 Being the regional headquarters site for Three Valleys Water, particular emphasis was placed on achieving the sustainability objectives as set out in the Hatfield Aerodrome SPG. More specifically, the Council expressed the need for the applicant as a utility company to accord with the sustainability objectives of water resource management and lead the way in water saving principles.
- 7.22 With regard to water efficiency, the development will use pumped greywater to serve the internal WC's using water recycled from rainwater drainage. Other water saving devices include aerated taps, dual flush toilets, infra red detection on taps and urinals. The proposed reed beds to the front of the building will be functional and will be incorporated into surface drainage water systems.
- 7.23 Regarding energy efficiency, the development will feature air handling units with heat recuperation, active chilled beams for cooling, solar shading to reduce cooling loads, solar water heating panels designed to achieve 60% of the capacity of hot water heating and office lighting sensors.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Having considered the submitted details in respect to land use, employment floorspace, layout, access, car parking provision, design, external appearance, residential amenity and sustainability concerns it is considered that the proposed scheme is an acceptable development in its location within the Hatfield Business Park. The reserved matters application is in accordance with the outline permission for the wider site and is in accordance with the policies contained within the Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Hatfield Aerodrome site.

9.0 OUTLINE PLANNING CONDITIONS

- 9.1 Planning conditions already imposed on outline permission S6/1999/1064/OP which relate to this development cover the following matters; full details (Condition 1), time limit (Condition 2), car and cycle parking (Condition 3) waste minimisation (Condition 4), storage of oils/fuels (Condition 5), landscaping (Condition 6), contamination (Condition 9), archaeology (Condition 18), drainage (Conditions 19 & 21) soakaways (Condition 20), retention of parking spaces (Condition 23), open storage (Condition 24) and external lighting (Condition 25).

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 It is recommended that the reserved matters application for the erection of a building to provide a total of 9,241sqm of Class B1(a) accommodation together with associated car parking, access and landscaping be **approved** pursuant to outline planning permission S6/1999/1064/OP subject to the imposition of the following additional conditions:

1. Before first occupation of the approved development, details of all access arrangements serving the development including controlled access into operational bays shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with Local

Highway Authority specifications. The approved details shall be implemented in full prior to the occupation of the development and retained thereafter.

REASON – To ensure that the access is constructed to the current Highway Authority's specification as required by the Local Planning Authority and to comply with those policies of the development plan.

2. Prior to the commencement of development, details of the provision of appropriate vehicle cleaning facilities shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Best practical means shall then be taken to ensure that all vehicles leaving the development site are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway in accordance with the approved details.

REASON – To minimise the impact of construction vehicles and to improve the amenity of the local area.

3. Details, including acoustic specifications, of all fixed plant, machinery and equipment associated with air moving equipment, compressors, generators, or plant or equipment of a like kind installed within the site, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before installation.

REASON – To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring premises.

4. Noise resulting from the use of the plant, machinery or equipment shall not exceed a level of 5dBA below the existing background level (or 10dBA below if there is a tonal quality) when measured according to BS4142:1997, at a point one metre external to the nearest residential building.

REASON – To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring premises.

5. Deliveries by commercial vehicles shall only be made to or from the site between 0800 hours and 2000 hours Monday – Friday/Saturday, and at no time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays, without the prior agreement in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON – To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring premises.

INFORMATIVES

All areas for parking and storage and delivery of materials associated with the construction of this development shall be provided within the site and the use of such areas must not interfere with the use of the public highway.

Reason for Grant of Permission:

It is considered that the submitted reserved matters details in respect to land use, employment floorspace, layout, access, car parking provision, design, external appearance, residential amenity and sustainability concerns are acceptable and that the development will not have an unacceptably harmful impact on the character of the area in which it is located.

11.0 APPROVED DRAWINGS

- TP-01 (Boundary of Reserved Matters Submission), stamped 17 Oct 2006
- TP-02 (Existing Site Survey), stamped 17 Oct 2006
- TP-03 Rev A (Site Layout Plan), stamped 21 Dec 2006
- TP-04 (Proposed Ground Floor Plan), stamped 17 Oct 2006
- TP-05 (Proposed First Floor Plan), stamped 17 Oct 2006
- TP-06 (Proposed Second Floor Plan), stamped 17 Oct 2006
- TP-07 (Proposed Third Floor Plan), stamped 17 Oct 2006
- TP-08 (Proposed Roof Plan incl. Plant Room), stamped 17 Oct 2006
- TP-09 (Proposed Elevations), stamped 17 Oct 2006
- TP-10 (Site Section), stamped 17 Oct 2006
- TP-11 (Proposed Materials), stamped 17 Oct 2006
- TP-12 Rev A (Ancillary Buildings), stamped 21 Dec 2006
- TP-13 Rev A (Perspective Views), stamped 21 Dec 2006
- 829-003D (Landscape Master Plan), stamped 21 Dec 2006

Signature of author.....

Date.....