

Hertfordshire Constabulary Headquarters Redevelopment

Operational Needs and Benefits

Supporting Statement prepared by Hertfordshire Constabulary

Operational Needs and Benefits

Quality Information

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Context

This statement has been prepared by Hertfordshire Constabulary to explain the need for and benefits of the proposed redevelopment of Hertfordshire Constabulary Headquarters at Stanborough, Welwyn Garden City.



01 Our investment objectives

The investment objectives for the project are aligned to the Community Safety and Criminal Justice Plan for Hertfordshire 2019-2024 and supporting vision for the Community Safety Campus, which has the following key aims relating to the site:

- To maximise the operational value of the site [that delivers a 5% increase in the number of staff working from the site by 2025, whilst allowing more flexible working practices];
- To provide a modern, accessible and flexible environment that is both functional and fit for purpose [that delivers a 20% increase in useable space by 2025];
- To make more effective use of the blue light estate through joint working arrangements [that delivers a 10% cost reduction by 2025]; and



02 Our existing arrangements

The current HQ facilities are now beyond their economic and intended design life with over half of the buildings being constructed in the early 1970s.

The site encompasses thirteen buildings with eight of these currently housing nearly 600 officers and staff located in ageing and highly inefficient buildings many of which have been re-purposed on a number of occasions. This is demonstrated by the fact that they occupy some 10,538 m² of gross space but only have 4,949 m² of usable space within them, representing 46% of the total footprint.

The existing HQ estate is currently occupied to capacity with a range of functions and departments spread over different floors or even buildings as the lack of suitable space dictates. Also, the lack of purpose-built provision sees many of these departments in overcrowded environments which are not conducive to team working, indeed by their very nature can undermine information sharing and collaborative working

Add to this the recent growth in our partnership working and collaboration across the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire forces, sees the site being used for a range of functions some of which are provided across all three force areas. Many of these functions have been located at HQ in the available space often not in proximity with each other.



An example of this is our Safeguarding command, whereby units are spread across the HQ estate which often require the need to offer each other support and resilience. Our new facilities will allow us to bring this command under 'one roof' for the first time.

Another significant issue presently limiting the use of the existing site is the inflexible nature of the buildings, with a large number of small cellular offices and office space that is difficult and costly to adapt and change.



03 Our operational needs

It is estimated that around half the Constabularies workforce visits or has cause to use the HQ site each year with nearly 1,400 officers and staff either working from or being based at HQ 24/7. Hence, there is a requirement to provide both sufficient space and an appropriate working environment to service this level of demand whilst ensuring continued levels of service provision.

The existing site also has minimal capacity to allow for the expansion of further collaborative working or the co-location of key blue light partners such as the Fire and Rescue Service. Similarly, the lack of suitable space hampers the ability to co-locate with wider partners such as the Probation Service or Trading Standards who we believe could benefit from a site capable of allowing joint working and being seen as a suitable location to meet and work collaboratively to the benefit of the County.

The new HQ would provide open and flexible space that can be utilised by a range of departments and functions, with office, desk and storage solutions being standardised across the vast majority of the site. Occupancy and utilisation of this new space will be increased through the use of modern and flexible open plan working arrangements that will see a range of multifunctional spaces and collaborative working areas.

The existing HQ site is home to a wide range of functions including operational, organisation and operational support departments, together with collaborated functions and some key partners. The HQ also presently delivers elements of staff training and the occupational health provision to the force. This combined with corporate and public events and a wide range of meetings sees the vast majority of officers and staff visiting or passing through the site each year.

With this level of occupancy and functionality as a baseline, Chief Officers wish to ensure that the 'new' HQ remains at the 'heart' of the Constabulary and is far more than an administrative or specialist crime centre, expanding both the utilisation and value of the site.

Finally, the Constabulary's ability to attract, retain and develop talent in a competitive labour market is hampered by offering poor working conditions. The prospect of an improved working environment and style, would be an important part of our 'wider offer' to those whom we want to work at HQ.

Significant new investment in policing is promising some 20,000 extra police officers across the Country in the next 3 years. On present assumptions this uplift in officer numbers whilst welcome in operational terms, will place significant further pressure on our estate.

Given this new pressure it is clear that the investment in HQ provides a timely opportunity to meet these additional demands, seeking to centralise further non-geographic functions to the centre and in doing so, freeing up valuable space across the operational estate whilst supporting a range of objectives including providing capacity for partners.



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