



Press statement

21 April 2008

Plans to secure the future of RAF Bentley Priory submitted to Harrow Council

VSM Estates has submitted plans to secure the future of RAF Bentley Priory to Harrow Council. The submission follows extensive consultation with interested parties and local residents and represents a significant step forward towards establishing a sustainable and viable long-term solution for Bentley Priory that safeguards its significant heritage.

Discussions have been ongoing for the last 18 months with the Bentley Priory Battle of Britain Trust, Defence Estates, the London Borough of Harrow, the Prince's Regeneration Trust and others to develop viable proposals. VSM Estates and its team of specialist consultants have also been undertaking extensive research to ensure that the proposals fully respect the site's unique heritage, as well as its ecology.

The scheme includes plans for:

- A museum located in the historical rooms of the Mansion House, dedicated to the memory of those who fought in the Battle of Britain and the fascinating history of Bentley Priory
- 103 homes of exceptional quality, designed by award winning architects Robert Adam Architects to respond sensitively to the character of the area
- Conserving and enhancing the Mansion House and its historic landscape setting
- Measures to restore the Italian gardens and other open space within the site.

Colin Darby, Planning Manager at VSM Estates, said:

"Feedback resulting from Harrow Council's public consultation on its Special Planning Document (SPD) as well as our own consultation on the proposals has been constructive and positive, with the heritage and educational facilities proposed for the main Mansion House being a particularly welcome aspect of the plans. We look forward to continuing to work closely with all those with an interest in the future of the Priory to deliver a proposal that does credit to this unique site."

Agreement has been reached with the Bentley Priory Battle of Britain Trust for the Trust to operate the commemorative educational facility at Bentley Priory, which will be open for the public. The historic rooms will tell the story of the Battle of Britain and educate future generations about its significance.

Erica Ferguson, from the Bentley Priory Battle of Britain Trust, said:

“We are delighted with the exciting plans for the new educational facility at Bentley Priory. We have worked in partnership with VSM Estates to create a collective vision and deliver a detailed planning consent, part of which will allow us to operate a vibrant museum that will tell the story of Lord Dowding and his Fighter Command Headquarters at Bentley Priory during the War. The museum will allow the historic rooms within the Mansion House to be open to the public for the first time in around 80 years, and this will help educate future generations about the significance of the Battle of Britain and the people involved. “

VSM Estates has undertaken a full programme of public engagement to ensure that members of the community have had an opportunity to comment on the emerging plans. Public exhibitions were held at Church House on Old Church Lane in Stanmore in November and December 2007, and a presentation undertaken to members of the Stanmore Society.

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For further information

For more information please contact Paul Teverson or Pippa Savage on 020 7636 7366.

Notes to Editors

1. Famous for its pivotal role as Lord Dowding's Fighter Command Headquarters during the Battle of Britain, RAF Bentley Priory is one of six surplus sites acquired and due to be redeveloped by VSM in Greater London as part of the 'MOD Estate in London Project,' (MoDEL). MoDEL is a key MOD project aiming to implement the Department's Estate Strategy, by creating a fit-for-purpose defence estate for Greater London capable of delivering 21st century operational output.
2. Project MoDEL aims to consolidate the facilities occupied in London by the MOD onto a fit-for-purpose site thereby generating a number of benefits in terms of reducing running costs, improving efficiency and consolidating resources. Approximately 1,000 military and civilian personnel from the disposal sites will be directly affected by the move to RAF Northolt where they will benefit from improved accommodation and facilities. The consolidated site will enjoy new offices, new squadron accommodation, single living accommodation, catering facilities, welfare, physical and recreational training areas. Consolidating resources will improve efficiency across the Estate. The redevelopment of RAF Northolt will relocate personnel from 40 units across all three Services.
3. Project MoDEL released the following sites for acquisition:
 - RAF Uxbridge
 - RAF Bentley Priory
 - RAF Eastcote (under construction)
 - RAF West Ruislip (has outline consent)
 - Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill
 - Victoria House, Woolwich
4. VSM Estates is a joint venture between VINCI PLC and St Modwen Properties PLC established to deliver Project MoDEL, the Ministry of Defence's programme to create a 21st Century MOD Estate. Both VINCI and St Modwen Properties bring decades of project management, construction and development expertise coupled with a unique understanding of complex PPP projects. VSM Estates' fully integrated

approach to Project MoDEL has allowed for the optimum balance between the development at RAF Northolt and the disposal of the vacated sites, offering a best value solution. This expertise, complemented by the strength of the other project partners, provided the MOD with the confidence that VSM Estates could deliver Project MoDEL.

5. VINCI PLC forms part of VINCI, a world leader in construction, concessions and associated services with over 128,000 employees operating on more than 80 countries. A number of specialist subsidiaries operating throughout the UK, most notably Norwest Holst, enables VINCI PLC to offer a complete construction package from inception to completion of a project and beyond.
6. St Modwen Properties PLC is a property development and investment company concentrating on regeneration. It has four particular areas of specialism: town centre regeneration, partnering industry in its restructuring, renewal of brownfield land, and heritage restoration. It has high profile regeneration assets in London and UK-wide schemes. With over 5,000 acres of developable land and many town or district centre schemes under its control, the company is able to marshal a wide range of projects through the planning and development process.
7. The Bentley Priory Battle of Britain Trust is a charity registered in July 2006. Its objectives are to preserve Bentley Priory as a memorial to those who planned and flew in the Battle of Britain and as a centre of education about the Battle. The Trust was founded at the behest of the Battle of Britain Fighter Association, the official association of The Few, the pilots who flew in the Battle.
8. The Prince's Regeneration Trust has been playing a full and active role in the emerging proposals for Bentley Priory, coordinating all heritage aspects, while a planning application is being developed by VSM Estates. This includes the restoration of the mansion which was in part designed by Sir John Soane, and the creation of a museum about the Battle of Britain and history of the site.
9. The adoption of Harrow Council's Special Planning Document (SPD) has been a significant step forward in the planning process and towards delivering a sustainable and viable long-term solution for RAF Bentley Priory.
10. VSM Estates has a successful track-record of working in partnership with local councils and involving communities in the redevelopment of former MoD sites that have been released through Project MoDEL.