



**PRESS RELEASE**

**24 JULY 2008**

## **VSM ESTATES HAS PLANS APPROVED FOR DEVELOPMENT AT RAF BENTLEY PRIORY**

VSM Estates, a joint venture between VINCI PLC and St Modwen Properties PLC, was last night granted detailed planning and listed buildings consent by Harrow Council for the redevelopment of RAF Bentley Priory in Stanmore.

Bentley Priory is one of six MOD sites being disposed of as part of Project MoDEL, Defence Estates' flagship scheme for London. VSM Estates was appointed by the MOD in 2006 to deliver Project MoDEL, and Bentley Priory is the third of the six sites to be granted consent, following RAF West Ruislip and RAF Eastcote.

RAF Bentley Priory is famous for its pivotal role as Lord Dowding's Fighter Command Headquarters during the Battle of Britain and comprises 57 acres (23 hectares). Consent follows Harrow Council's adoption of its Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the site in October 2007. The plans include:

- 103 homes of exceptional quality, designed by award winning architects Robert Adam Architects to respond sensitively to the character of the area.
- The restoration of the Grade II\* listed Priory building and Italian gardens and other open space within the grounds, which together comprises 57 acres of registered parkland with mature landscaping and stunning panoramic views across London.
- 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.
- Conserving and enhancing the historic landscape setting of the Mansion House.

Guy Gusterson, Land Director at VSM Estates and St Modwen Properties PLC, said:

"This will be a superb development that secures not only the history of Bentley Priory and the Mansion House but also provides a viable solution for its future. It will preserve and promote Bentley Priory's significant heritage while delivering some of the most exciting luxury residential homes to be built in London for years, enjoying a stunning mature setting and views across London.

“St Modwen, as part of VSM Estates, is delighted that Harrow Council has approved these plans and the decision follows many months of hard work with all of our partners associated with this fascinating development opportunity.”

VSM Estates will now begin the marketing of this historic site ahead of appointing a suitable and specialist developer to implement the plans. Although VSM is mindful of current conditions affecting the housebuilding industry, it expects a positive response from the market due to the exceptional nature of the site and its historical significance.

In July 2007, VSM Estates was granted outline planning consent for RAF West Ruislip for 415 residential units and an 80-bed retirement facility. The site was sold to CALA Homes in November 2007.

Consultation on the future of RAF Uxbridge, another Project MoDEL site, is ongoing and consultation is scheduled for late 2008. RAF Uxbridge is one of the most significant development sites to be released in the Capital, and at 110 acres, it is the largest in West London. Consultation on the Inglis Barracks site in Mill Hill will get underway in late 2008. Also over 100 acres, a residential-led masterplan is being developed for the site, including land adjoining the Barracks.

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#### **For further 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 in Greater London being disposed of by VSM on behalf of the MOD 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 21<sup>st</sup> century operational output.
2. Project MoDEL is consolidating the MOD's estate in London onto a fit-for-purpose site thereby generating a number of benefits in terms of reducing running costs, improving efficiency and consolidating resources. The redevelopment of RAF Northolt will relocate personnel from 40 units across all three Services, and 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 single living accommodation, catering facilities, welfare, physical and recreational training areas, offices, and technical/operational facilities including a five-bay hangar. Consolidating resources will improve efficiency across the Estate. The redevelopment of RAF Northolt will relocate personnel from 40 units across all three Services. The construction work at RAF Northolt is funded by the value of the disposal sites.
3. Project MoDEL is releasing the following sites for future development:

- RAF Uxbridge
  - RAF Bentley Priory (has outline consent)
  - 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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 was designed by Sir John Soane, and the creation of a museum about the Battle of Britain and history of the site.