

Part 3

Applications recommended for the Observations of the Area Committee

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Application Number:	S/2006/0107		
Applicant/ Agent:	SERCO DEFENCE AND AEROSPACE LTD		
Location:	DSTL PORTON DOWN SALISBURY SP4 0JQ		
Proposal:	DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OFFICES, DATA CENTRE, FIRE STATION, EXTENSION TO EXISTING RESTAURANT AND ASSOCIATED PARKING AND LANDSCAPING.		
Parish/ Ward	IDMISTON		
Conservation Area:		LB Grade:	
Date Valid:	16 January 2006	Expiry Date	13 March 2006
Case Officer:	Mr A Madge	Contact Number:	01722 434541

Members should note that this application has been submitted in the form of a Notice of proposed development (NOPD), (circular 18/84 application) which is the current procedure to be followed for applications to develop crown land; as such members need to consider whether to raise or not raise objections to the application. The content of the application is otherwise identical to that which would have been submitted had current legislation permitted a planning application to be put forward.

Members should also note that after consideration by the Northern area committee the application will go on for a final decision on whether to raise objections or not, to this councils planning and regulatory committee as it is considered that the application is likely to have effects outside of the Northern area that may impact other parts of the district.

REASON FOR REPORT TO MEMBERS

HDS does not consider it prudent to exercise delegated powers

SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

The site for this proposal is DSTL's land at Porton Down. There are currently three agencies working at Porton down, DSTL, The Health Protection agency (HPA) and the Porton Bioscience and Technology centre Ltd (PBTC). DSTL is by far the largest organisation at Porton Down both in terms of employees and land area. DSTL's main buildings lie to the north of East Gomeldon Road, to the east of the village of Idmiston and south east of the village of Porton. Access to the site is primarily from the A30 to the east of the site with an alternative access through the village of Porton from the A338 to the west. There is a further entrance directly to the west through Idmiston village and the Idmiston arch which is open at certain times of the day. The main line railway borders the built part of DSTL's site to the west.

At Porton Down DSTL is located to the north of the built up area of the site, the Health Protection Agency are located to the west. Whilst to the east there is an area of land allocated in the adopted local plan for a science park. (policy E8B)

Within DSTL's site it is proposed that the new office building as part of this development will be positioned to the north of building 109 which is the listed building at site. To the west of this it is proposed to extend the existing staff restaurant facilities whilst to the north west again a new data centre is proposed. A new car park is proposed to the east of building 109 whilst further east again a new fire station is proposed.

The main site is located within an area of archaeological importance and a Special Landscape Area as set out in the local plan. Although not part of the site much of the surrounding land is designated as an SSSI.

THE PROPOSAL

Overview

The proposal is for the relocation of some 800 staff from various sites around the country but primarily from Farnborough to DSTL's current headquarters at Porton Down. Effectively this will increase the current staff level by 800 (this is a reduction in numbers from the initial number quoted of 1031 after significant concerns were expressed by the district and county councils over the impact of the initial figure). The relocation of these staff will be in stages over a period of some months to a new building, which is the subject of this application.

The new staff are to be accommodated in a large new three storey building which is to be built to the north of the listed building 109 on the site of the former fire station and social club at the existing site. The fire station will be relocated to the east of the present site in a new single storey building whilst to the west a new data centre will be built and to the south west a single storey extension to the existing restaurant facilities is proposed.

New car parking spaces will be provided to the east of the site for 437 vehicles (again this has been reduced from the originally proposed 610 parking spaces) see highways below.

The relocated employees will be office, administrative and laboratory staff employed in similar areas of work to that currently undertaken at the site.

The Main building

The main building, the subject of this proposal, will be located on the site of the former fire station which was a single-storey building of modern construction and which it is intended to move elsewhere on the site (see below). The other building, which it replaces, is the sports and social club which was a two-storey building of early twentieth century design and which it is not presently proposed to replace.

The new building will have a floor area of under 21,000 sq ft (the building has been reduced as a result of the reduced number of employees proposed at the site). The entrance to the building is proposed on the northwest elevation and is highlighted by use of a cantilevered extension to the first and second floors of the proposed building. It is proposed to use a simple modern form of architecture which consists of rendered concrete elevations in a white colour to reflect the white colour of the listed building 109 which exists to the south of this one. The building will have windows on all elevations with a 'brise-soleil' to the east and west elevations to prevent unwanted passive solar gain.

The building will be of a flat roof construction with plant above the northern elevation where the science laboratory is located.

The fire station

The new fire station is set to replace the former fire station which was in the position of the main building above. The new fire station will be located approximately 500m east of the existing building next to an existing utility compound. The fire station is proposed to be a single storey metal profiled building with accommodation for three fire vehicles.

The Data Centre

The proposed new data centre is to be located on an area of brownfield land to the west of the site. This area is available as a result of the demolition of previous structures at the site. The data centre will be a two storey building consisting of cream coloured render to the elevations with a secure data centre on the ground floor and offices on the first floor again the building will be flat roofed and the simple modern design is intended to tie in with the design of the other buildings on the site.

Extension to the restaurant

There is an existing restaurant on site known as the Stone Curlew restaurant. This however is only of a size large enough to accommodate the existing population at the site and therefore needs to be extended in order to cater for the increased number of workers at the site. It is proposed that the restaurant be extended in the same style as the existing building as it is considered that the existing building is well located in terms of suitability for the new uses.

Parking and Highways

It is proposed that 437 new parking spaces are provided to serve this development. The number of parking spaces is substantially reduced from the number of new employees because the applicant intends to implement a green travel plan. The new parking spaces will be situated in an area to the east of the new building where they will be directly accessible to the new structure.

In addition, because of substantial concerns that were initially raised by Wiltshire County Council's highways department because of the traffic implications of the proposal, the applicant is prepared to enter into a legal agreement in order that they covenant to carry out the following (in summary):

Develop a green travel plan which builds upon the travel plan submitted with this application which encourages methods of travel to work other than by car.

To provide a shuttle bus service to the site between agreed locations to commence at first occupation of the new building.

To promote car-sharing for commuter and business journeys.

To seek active car park management that rewards car-share and motorcycle users.

To coordinate travel arrangements with the Health Protection Agency (HPA).

To fund works to provide traffic light control signals at the Winterslow Road railway arch.

To restrict the levels of traffic using the Idmiston railway arch to levels previously agreed with Wiltshire County Council and the district.

DSTL to pay for a traffic regulation order that may be required to govern the level of traffic that travels to or from the site from the Gomeldon or Idmiston roads.

The highways authority will monitor the junction onto the A30 road at the Pheasant Road junction for the second year following occupation. If delays to traffic regularly exceed a time to be agreed between the parties at the evening peak then signal controls may be required to be installed at the expense of DSTL.

The new development shall provide for junction improvements at the Manor Farm Road/ Pheasant Road junction, which shall have capacity for at least 10 years after its construction.

DSTL shall within one year of the development make good the unadopted part of the Pheasant Road in full.

Construction traffic shall, wherever it exceeds 7.5 tons, enter and leave the site via the Pheasant Road.

(This is a brief summary of the main points proposed for traffic before and during construction which is summarised for reasons of conciseness, however the full undertakings of DSTL are provided as an appendix to this report).

PLANNING HISTORY

Porton Down has a significant planning history of applications submitted under crown land procedures.

CONSULTATIONS

WCC Highways - The issue of the poor location of the site is not one that can readily be overcome. DSTL have however acknowledged that there are important transport matters to be addressed if the proposal is to overcome an objection.

The provision of a new railway station to serve the site has been considered and dismissed. Whilst detailed study work has not been undertaken there are robust strategic reasons that justify this.

DSTL have taken on board the need to secure a travel plan for the site that is properly managed by a dedicated travel plan co-ordinator. DSTL are prepared to commit by way of a legal agreement to the establishment of a plan that accords with industry best practice. This will include the provision of a bus service to and from the site.

The impacts of the development have been recognised by DSTL and we would therefore recommend that notwithstanding the remoteness of the site and accessibility problems for sustainable transport modes, that the proposal be not opposed subject to DSTL entering into a legal agreement that binds them to the Heads of Terms agreement that they have submitted under separate cover and subject further to the financial caps in that document being amended to reflect more accurately costs that represent the provision/delivery of the measures to which they refer.

WCC Library/ Museum - Initial comments received from the archaeology officer suggested an archaeological evaluation of the site should be undertaken prior to the determination of the application. However since being told that the existing buildings on the site have already been demolished. The County archaeologist has requested that if the local authority is minded to raise no objections that a watching brief be carried out at the site during construction works.

Wessex Water Authority - In view of the fact that the applicant intends to maintain and extend the existing private on- site sewage treatment facility and that the existing private borehole water supply is adequate for the proposals. No further comments.

Environment Agency - No objections subject to suitable conditions to control surface water run off and water efficiency measures.

South Wiltshire Economic Partnership – Express their support for the expansion plans at Porton Down. One of the key aims of SWEP is a world class Salisbury research triangle and science parks. As a partnership we fully recognise the contribution the SRT companies make to the local economy, the opportunities that exist for further business development and investment and the international reputation it brings to South Wiltshire. The extra staff at DSTL will bring with them a whole range of additional skills and expertise and those staff and families that relocate will be adding to the local economy in terms of additional spending and other positive benefits.

We see the expansion of DSTL as a major step towards achieving SWEP's aim for a world class SRT and science park.

REPRESENTATIONS

Advertisement	Yes expired 16/2/06
Site Notice displayed and in the village of Porton.	Yes site notices displayed at the main entrances to the site and A30 Expired 16/2/06
Departure	No
Neighbour notification	Yes

49 separate letters of objection, summarised as follows:

Highways

Concern has been expressed about the number of additional employees by a further 1000, which will significantly increase the volume of traffic through the village.

Currently there is inadequate provision for existing traffic on the Winterslow Road, which makes it difficult to get out of driveways. This can take anything up to 15 minutes to achieve at peak times.

Roads leading to/from the site were not designed for the present level of traffic. They are already dangerous, inadequate and poorly maintained.

Traffic often breaks the 30mph speed limit.

There are frequent delays under the railway bridge and instances of road rage and dangerous driving.

The junction with London Road causes frequent delays and is dangerous without any traffic calming system or lights.

Access from London Road should carry the larger volume of traffic.

There will be an increase in pollution from the vehicles and light pollution from the offices which villagers should not have to tolerate.

The speed limit on Porton Road is 60mph in certain sections. Traffic is already heavy and extremely difficult to enter and exit properties the application proposed will make this worse.

Consideration should be given to opening the railway station at Porton.

A bus service should be provided for employees.

If this application is a *fait accompli* will SDC and WCC please insist on safer traffic measures in Porton?

Suggest that MOD should construct a roundabout on Winterslow Road at the bottom of Camp Hill and a feeder road to join an upgraded road over the downs to exit at a new roundabout on the A30 London Road by Firs Road.

The MOD should not try to close the Pheasant Road to local people as they have a right to use this road.

The MOD should close the Winterslow Road where it joins the MOD road all the traffic from the establishment would go from the A30 on the MOD road as this road is clear of houses the extra traffic would not upset anyone. This would bring peace back to the village.

Congestion at present for approximately two hours in the morning around Idmiston, which has to be seen to be believed.

MOD should upgrade the Pheasant Road and ensure that their staff then use that road. There should be stricter restrictions on the 30mph speed limit as well.

Local housing amenities

Where are the extra 1000 houses going to be built?

It would appear no provision has been made for the large number of children who will need school places. Local schools do not have the capacity to cope.

Has the MOD made provision for extra dental and medical facilities?

Church Road is not a suitable road for vehicles to DSTL. There is no footpath on any part of the road, there are numerous concealed driveways, there are blind bends, it is very narrow and it has inadequate street lighting. This combined with excessive speed an aged population, young children walking to school, dark winters evenings and untreated roads in icy conditions, has the potential for substantial amount of accidents involving traffic along a country lane.

At the least, reduction in the speed limit along Church Road to 20mph should be introduced together with the construction of a pedestrian footway.

The reopening of the battery hill entrance should be considered.

Could also upgrade the entrance to Porton Down by the Allington Farm entrance and this could be opened to all employees when the farm buildings are demolished.

The road by the church in Idmiston is part of a bus route used by double decker buses that have, on more than one occasion, nearly caused an accident whilst traversing the blind bends.

Other matters

Fully support the objections of Idmiston Parish Council

Consider the expansion of DSTL should be considered as part of the SDC draft sustainability scoping report, which will then feed into the local development framework.

Considered that there should be significant planning gain achieved from such a large development.

Do not wish to lose anymore of our countryside to another new town.

The conservation area in Porton will be severely affected by noise, traffic and light pollution.

Buildings should be constructed in a style that is aesthetically compatible with the downland landscape.

The present level of floodlighting is already more than sufficient to protect the perimeters of the existing establishment and any increase will affect the local residents. This is surely going against the government and environmental policy of reducing light pollution and saving energy. Extra staff levels will mean larger car parking facilities and extra lighting.

Whilst supportive of boosting the economy of Salisbury we do not agree when it is at the expense of local communities and ruining village life.

Noise pollution already impacts the local community with the constant background hum from air-cooled air conditioning units. Suggest any new equipment is sited and equipped so as to reduce further noise to a minimum.

House prices will increase as more people move into the area, forcing up the already over inflated house prices in Salisbury.

Additionally a petition signed by 175 residents of Idmiston, objecting to the application on the grounds that:

Whilst understanding that DSTL need to relocate staff to Porton Down for efficiency reasons there are still major concerns about the additional burden on local infrastructure. Parents now reluctantly have to drive their children to the local school because of the danger from traffic while walking their children. With the doubling of traffic through the village these dangers would increase.

Sat Nav systems now direct drivers through Porton to DSTL's site. This is a situation that is likely to be made worse with further vehicles unless DSTL, through its industrial connections, can get amendments made to the Sat Nav system.

It is suggested that a robustly enforced 20mph speed limit through the village of Porton would help prevent accidents where drivers at present have difficulty viewing around parked cars and blind corners.

Wish to ideally see the Idmiston entrance to the Porton Down site closed totally to traffic but if this is not achievable wish to see the local authorities and DSTL cooperate in evaluating measures to minimise the impact of the proposed development on the existing infrastructure.

Other third party responses Yes

One letter of support:

Although has concern about several points in the circulated leaflet by Idmiston Parish Council, considers there will be a net benefit to the community.

We cannot stop this development even if we wanted to and therefore firmly support the planned development as it will provide jobs and increased prosperity to the local area in the long term.

Should seek a partnership with DSTL to get the best possible benefit to the local community and minimise the impact of the change. Would like to see very firm conditions.

Parish Council response Yes

Members should note that these comments from the parish councils were made before the amended plans and draft heads of terms for the legal agreement were circulated. As such any further written comments that any of the parishes wish to make in the light of the amendments will be brought to members under late correspondence as at the point of writing this report the parishes' time to respond had not yet expired.

Idmiston Parish Council

No objection to the design of the proposed buildings, however strong objections are raised to the following issues:

No proposals have been put forward to mitigate commuter traffic either at all or through neighbouring villages. Car parking is to be provided for 610 vehicles. This level of additional commuter traffic will have an enormous impact upon the local population.

No proposals to upgrade or replace the local inferior standard roads. Church Road in particular is very narrow and incapable of taking further traffic. The use of Idmiston arch should be permanently closed to traffic. The current impact of Porton Down traffic affects most road junctions within a 2-3 mile radius. The Parish council has long advocated the reopening of Battery Hill Road as a means for traffic to avoid all local villages.

There are no proposals to improve the public transport system within the area, whether trains or buses, and the reinstatement of Porton Station should be considered as a serious option.

On site nursery or crèche facilities should be provided as DSTL currently share existing facilities with the HPA. DSTL have stated that they will give their staff vouchers to use in local nurseries, which are already oversubscribed.

No solid proposals have been put forward for a green travel plan. At present there are only promises of looking into such a plan.

No proposals have been put forward to mitigate light pollution, either from the building or from the car park. The existing site is already a problem and if there were a way to bring this under control this would be a beneficial gain.

There are no proposals to overcome a total absence of footpaths and cycle tracks to sustain green travel.

These concerns have long been raised by the parish council as potential concerns about any expansion at Porton Down.

Strongly recommend and urge that this application be totally rejected and that DSTL be made to resubmit a full planning application covering all issues raised above and including a detailed programme of road, footpath and cycle track improvements, which once agreed would be a legally binding commitment.

Laverstock and Ford Parish Council

Whilst the parish council support this application we are concerned that considerable increases in a number of areas will result:

i.e. Traffic is bound to increase on the A30 and A338. Consideration should be given to installing roundabouts on both of these roads.

Housing – The demand in this area will increase. Does MOD have their own scheme to help with this?

Education – The schools at Laverstock are already over capacity (using mobiles). Are there plans for a new school?

Allington Parish Council

2 members objected to the application, 4 members were supportive of the application.

General comments were that there was concern about increased traffic through Porton and on the A338.

It is invisible from the parish, it would go through anyway, would bring benefits to the neighbourhood. Proposal will be a blot on the landscape. Present DSTL structures are an eyesore with promised screening inadequate.

Firsdow Parish Council

Thanks for sending plans to the parish but no comments on the scheme.

MAIN ISSUES

Highways impact

Visual impact

Impact on local facilities

Economic impact

Other considerations

POLICY CONTEXT

The following policies of the adopted Salisbury local plan are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- G1 - Sustainable development
- G2 - General Development control criteria
- G5 - To ensure a satisfactory means of drainage
- G8 - Protection of water resources
- G12 - Development within MoD land
- D1 - Standard of Design
- D8 - Provision of public art
- CN19 - Environmental Improvement Schemes
- CN21 - Archaeology
- C12 - Development affecting protected species
- E8B- Employment allocation at Porton Down
- E19 – Enlargement of existing employment sites

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Highways impact

It is clear that the largest impact is likely to be felt on the local highways network. It is quite clearly and quite rightly the biggest concern of local people in particular those living in Porton and the surrounding villages. It is also clear that there will be a significant impact on the highways system directly surrounding the Porton Down site. Villagers in Idmiston in their representations summarised above have outlined their concerns that the existing road network is not suitable for the existing level of traffic let alone an increase of what is now an additional 800 employees and by the

submission of this application for 400 additional parking spaces likely to be a substantial number of additional vehicles.

If any such development is to take place at this site the impact of the additional traffic needs has to be carefully considered and suitable mitigating measures need to be put in place in order to ameliorate the substantial effects of any increase in traffic. What both the district council and county council need to seek if there is any prospect of accepting this development in its current form is the assurance that the traffic implications of such a scheme have been carefully thought out and that substantial measures have been put in place to deal with highways implications.

It also has to be borne in mind when members are assessing this application, that it potentially has the scope to improve the existing arrangements at the site. In a number of areas, villagers in Porton have highlighted the dangers of traffic in and around Porton caused partly by the Porton Down site at present; therefore some of the measures now proposed by DSTL could well make the current situation better in some areas.

It should be noted that Wiltshire County Council initially raised significant objections to these proposals both on sustainability and highway safety grounds as DSTL, other than providing a green travel plan, had proposed little in the way of mitigating measures to ameliorate the effects of such a development at that time. Since that point extensive negotiations have taken place between DSTL and the local highways authority to the extent that, providing the developer enters into a legal agreement as per that outlined in appendix A, Wiltshire highways authority are content that such a development could take place without substantial impacts that would warrant raising an objection from this authority.

Church Road/Idmiston arch

Those Idmiston parishioners living in Church Road have raised substantial objections to what they see as any further increase in traffic movement along Church Road. They argue that Church Road is at present without pavement for much of its length and although the times of opening of the arch are at present restricted to morning and evening peak times the amount of traffic using this entrance way at present (particularly at morning peak) is already too much. It is for that reason that DSTL have covenanted to agreeing to restrict the flow of traffic through the Idmiston arch to a predetermined traffic level that is to be agreed with the local highways authority based on surveys that have already been carried out on the levels of traffic using that arch. This should ensure that there is no substantial increase in traffic using this route into and out of the site.

Winterslow Road railway arch

The other major bottleneck is the Winterslow Road railway arch as you head out of Porton eastwards. As local members will be aware, and as residents letters have testified, if driving into Porton from the direction of Porton Down at the moment during the morning peak there can be a substantial hold up to residents needing to use this route because of the current priority arrangements underneath this arch. It is therefore proposed that DSTL fund the installation of new traffic light signals underneath this arch in order to alleviate the current problem and provide a better solution to this arch than currently exists. This should bring about a positive highway improvement over and above the existing situation.

Idmiston Road and Gomeldon Road

The big concern of local people is that the route along Gomeldon Road/ Idmiston Road to get to the site will increase with traffic when the new development is completed. In order to ensure that such traffic does not reach an unacceptable level DSTL propose that they will if necessary fund a Traffic Regulation Order to prevent the level of traffic reaching an unacceptably high level. This will be determined by the local highways authority in consultation with the parish councils concerned, and this should prevent traffic reaching an unacceptably high level.

It should be noted that several parishioners in Idmiston favoured closing this road through Idmiston to DSTL traffic altogether, although conversely there were several letters from people who specifically did not wish to see this happen. The problem with closing the road altogether is that although this would reduce the amount of traffic through the village so making the road through the village quieter and safer, it would also deprive the village of its access to the A30. Secondly, it would also have the knock on effect of increasing the amount of traffic using the junction at the A30 so making this a more dangerous junction. It would be very near impossible to restrict the route

through Porton to only local traffic so that no DSTL traffic can use it, as this is likely to be difficult to police.

A30 junction with Pheasant Road

If there are delays to right turn traffic as a result of this project at this junction, DSTL have undertaken to provide funds for traffic lights in order to ease the flow of traffic at this junction.

Winterslow Road/Pheasant Road

As residents have pointed out the unadopted section of Pheasant Road is currently in a poor state of repair and clearly adding more traffic to this road is only going to make the situation worse. It is time the road was repaired and this is what is being proposed by this development. Clearly it does not make sense to repair the road prior to the completion of the new buildings at Porton Down as there is likely to be a significant volume of site lorries using this road which would, over time, break up any new surface that is laid. It is therefore proposed that within one year of the new buildings being completed the road surface be upgraded to a reasonable standard. This again will make the situation better than at present.

Construction traffic

It is proposed that all vehicles above 7.5 tons gross weight use the Pheasant Road to access the site therefore no major traffic or large lorries will need to access the site from the Porton direction. This should therefore alleviate any concerns about construction traffic entering the site from Porton.

Green Travel Plan

Perhaps one of the most important measures DSTL is proposing, but the one which is least tangible, is the implementation of a green travel plan. This travel plan includes the provision of shuttle bus services to and from the Porton Down site for a trial six-month period to encourage use by employees. It also includes the promotion of car sharing for commuter and business employees and active car management that rewards car share and motorcycle users. It will include measures to work with the travel plan coordinator at the HPA site next door in order to encourage a campus-wide approach to car sharing and green travel issues. This type of travel plan in coordination with the other measures outlined above should help to significantly reduce the traffic impact of this new development on surrounding roads.

New station at Porton/Idmiston Halt

Several of the letters of objection to this scheme have brought up the issue of the reopening of the station at Porton or the former Idmiston Halt. This is an issue that DSTL have now looked at and that has been the subject of previous studies. DSTL's conclusions on this issue are attached as appendix B to this report. In summary it concluded that the cost of the station at anything between 3.5 and 4 million pounds was not a good use of public money because of the disbenefits that it perceives spending such money on a new station would have.

The disbenefits they concluded would be:

1. The cost involved in building a new station.
2. The possibility that a train operator would not be willing to operate a service without heavy subsidies to cover the operating losses.
3. The likelihood that a new station would attract existing commuters away from Grately, Andover and Salisbury with a further negative impact on the road systems around Porton Down.
4. The increase in personnel at Porton Down (800) might not provide sufficient critical mass to justify the investments required.
5. Only a small minority of the population relocating to Porton Down will choose to live in an area served by the Salisbury/London Waterloo main line and so any benefit to DSTL employees will be relatively small.

Weighed against this are the benefits of such a scheme:

1. These include a more sustainable form of transport for employees to get to the site in view of the sites at present relatively unsustainable position.
2. The benefits for people living in Porton and surrounding villages of once again having a rail link directly to London/Andover/Salisbury etc so providing another means of getting to these places other than using the car.

Having looked at the Pros and Cons of such a proposal the applicants have concluded that carrying out a further rail study is unlikely to be warranted by the increase in personnel from this scheme.

Officers, having reviewed the information put before them, consider that unfortunately the likely number of additional rail commuters from this development is unlikely to justify the significant costs incurred in carrying out another feasibility study into Porton Station as the likely number of users from this development would not justify a new station on the basis of this application alone.

Conclusion

In concluding the transport issues, officers consider that the applicants have, after readdressing the highways issues, gone as far as they can in mitigating the effects of this proposal. Whilst clearly there will be an increase in vehicular traffic to an extent, any harmful effect of such new vehicular movement should be mitigated by the measures put forward in the draft heads of terms as submitted under (appendix A). Any disbenefits accrued from any increase in traffic have to be viewed against some clear gains such as the upgrading of the road between Porton and the A30 and the introduction of new traffic lights at the Winterslow Road railway arch. It also needs to be viewed in light of any other benefits – see below. It is therefore concluded that the local authority could not raise highway objections to this development because any increase in highway traffic has been adequately mitigated.

Visual impact

The proposed new building is relatively tall at 3 storeys with plant on the roof, although, as the plans and diagrams submitted with the application show, this will be no higher than the buildings already situated at the site. The height of the building was something that was specified and discussed at an early stage with DSTL and the (at that time) bidders for the project. Given the roof line will be no higher than existing buildings it is considered that the height including plant on the roof is acceptable.

The new building is to be positioned in what the local authority has designated a Special Landscape Area and therefore the building's visual appearance has to be well considered. Having said this, the only public view of the building will be when travelling down the Pheasant Road to Porton Down and the applicants have provided computer enhanced images to show the affect of the new building and how much will be seen from this public view. To a large extent the building will be seen against the backdrop of other buildings at the site and from this perspective it is difficult to distinguish the new building from the old.

The building is to be rendered a white colour. This has been chosen to reflect the similar colour of building 109, which is one of the oldest buildings on site, and will sit next to the new build. Building 109 is a listed building and therefore when building anything close to this it needs to, to some degree, reflect and be respectful of this building. The chosen colour of white reflects and represents the "old" of building 109 and the "new" of the new headquarters building. Being white does make the building stand out to a certain extent but this is considered to be less visually harmful than if the building had been built using stronger colours.

Prior to the submission of an application the architects and applicants presented the proposed scheme to the council's design forum. In view of the building's context situated some way away from the nearest public views, they considered the building to be fit for its purpose and raised no objections to the design. The design forum were however very keen to ensure that, given that this is a government-backed project, it should go some considerable way to being as sustainable as

possible. This is something that the architects and designers have fully taken on board and are aiming for a BREEAM excellent rating.

Given the limited public views of the new building the fact that the designers have kept the building no higher than the existing tallest buildings at Porton Down and the fact that the modern design and architecture reflects the purpose for which it is to be built, it is considered that there can be no fundamental objections in architectural or visual appearance terms to this scheme.

Impact on local facilities and housing

After highways concerns perhaps the second most important concern that residents and objectors to this application have raised is that of the additional impact of the 800 employees in terms of housing and local facilities in the area. At present the additional demand for housing and other local services and facilities such as schools, doctors' surgeries, crèches etc is hard to quantify. At present it is unknown how many of the existing employees who are due to work at the new facility will actually move to the area and choose to relocate and how many will choose to either commute from their existing home or relocate to somewhere either in or out of the district. This is, to a certain extent, something that will not be able to be quantified until people start work when the facility is due to open in 2008.

The local plan under policy E8B identifies land for a science park as part of the Salisbury research triangle at Porton Down. This land has yet to be developed and appears unlikely to be developed during the remaining lifespan of the current local plan. As such, although the local plan included within it housing allocated as a result of the need for additional accommodation for the science park, this is unlikely to be required during the lifespan of the local plan. Given this, at present there is substantial additional capacity within the existing allocations in the local plan for housing to cope with any increase in demand for housing as a result of this new development.

The housing as already provided for in the local plan also has the appropriate provision for schools and other facilities with it and therefore, at present, the capacity exists for the allocated housing in the local schools. It is not therefore considered necessary to provide further facilities in addition to those that exist or are already allocated.

Other facilities such as a crèche or a shop, which could potentially be provided at Porton Down for use between the different agencies at Porton Down, are included within the overall Porton Down Masterplan which is currently undergoing consultation. This sets out the need to expand the existing crèche facilities at Porton Down and to seek to achieve further shared facilities at the site.

In conclusion, whilst this development will have an effect on housing in the local area, at present it is difficult to assess to what degree this will be. Local plan allocations already have spare capacity for housing which included capacity for the Science Park at Porton Down. As this has yet to commence, there is substantial spare capacity already contained within the allocated sites from the current local plan to adequately cope with this development.

Economic Impact

The economic impact of this proposal will be substantial. The proposal as it currently stands entails 800 jobs relocating to the area with the subsequent economic impact that this will have in terms of enhanced trade and spin off economic benefits to local businesses and the local community.

One of the key objectives of the adopted local plan is "to encourage a diverse and healthy economy by providing opportunities for a range of employment activities through concentrating major development in Salisbury and Amesbury, promoting sites in other larger settlements where new housing is proposed and providing scope for local employment in the more rural parts of the district". This the proposal seeks to do and would be a substantial employment opportunity missed if members were minded to raise objections to this application.

Clearly the site is not in a very sustainable location. It is not located close to a main line railway station and at present has very limited bus links to the site (although this is intended to be improved see highways above). However, the nature of the jobs proposed and the types of work undertaken mean that they need to be located in this type of area, remote from surrounding housing and other civil activities. Therefore, although the objectives of the local plan require new employment uses to be mainly located in Salisbury and Amesbury, this is considered to be a special case which requires a site remote from built up areas because of the nature of the work.

Policy E19 states "proposals to redevelop or enlarge existing employment sites in the countryside will be permitted where the proposed development would take place within the existing boundaries of the site". This does therefore comply with that policy and would meet the aims and objectives of the local plan.

In summary, the proposed site of the development, although not in the most sustainable of places, will bring substantial spin off economic benefits to the area including the proposed 800 jobs. The specialised nature of the work carried out at Porton Down does, in officer's opinion, mean that substantial weight should be given to these considerations despite the unsustainable location.

Porton Down Masterplan

There is at present, which will shortly be undergoing consultation, a masterplan which has been prepared between the three major partners at Porton Down, DSTL, the Health Protection Agency and Tetricus. This masterplan takes a forward look at possible future development over the next few years and tries to formulate a basis on which future development should take place. It envisages the possible growth of Porton Down including the three agencies at the site and the way that this growth may take place and how it can be controlled. It also goes on to look at ways in which the three agencies at Porton Down can work together in the future in order to try and coordinate facilities such as an enlarged crèche, a shop or conferencing facilities.

At present this masterplan can be given very limited weight in any consideration for this application because of its unadopted status and the fact that neither members nor the public have had the opportunity to see the plan or comment on it. However the masterplan does take into account the scenario if this application were to go ahead.

Clearly it would have been more useful had the masterplan at Porton Down been through the consultation process and been adopted prior to this application being brought before members for a decision, as the application would then have been able to be considered within this framework. However, this is a matter that is out of the control of the local authority and whilst it would have been better had that plan been adopted first, the situation is that it has not been and therefore this application has to be judged without reference to that plan.

Lighting

A number of objectors' letters referred to the issue of lighting at Porton Down. They refer to the fact that at present the area is already highly illuminated at night with the amount of lighting at the site, most of which is required for security purposes. It is clearly important that any further development does not add significantly to the existing level of illumination, and although it has to be borne in mind that lighting will also be needed for security at this new development, this should be designed so as to provide the minimum level of lighting required for the function of the site and in order to achieve a restricted level of illumination. This is something that can be achieved via the imposition of a suitable condition.

CONCLUSION

The Salisbury District Local Plan recognises the importance of the Salisbury Research Triangle (policy E8B) specifically in terms of new development at Porton Down for a science park (now more usually referred to as a bio-science centre). The Employment objectives (5.1) also recognise a past reliance on the MOD for local employment in the north of the district, referring to more traditional 'army' activities. Given the significant investment potential of the hi-tech/bio-technology industry for the future the opportunity for further development of the Salisbury Research triangle, in this instance via DSTL, should in officer's opinion be fully supported.

Members in this instance clearly have a difficult decision to make. The body of this report runs through the main issues of local concern regarding infrastructure provision and in particular highway matters. There is no doubt that this development will put considerable further pressure on the local highway infrastructure if left unchecked. However officers of this council and the local highways authority consider that DSTL have gone a considerable way towards ameliorating the affects of this development and that such a commitment through a legal agreement from DSTL, providing it is properly adhered to, is sufficient to allow this development to go ahead with the significant economic benefits this will bring.

RECOMMENDATION: That the local authority:

Raise no objections - subject to the applicant entering into a legal agreement with the local authority under section 299A (1) and Section 106 of the town and country planning act 1990 under the heads of terms as contained within appendix A.

And subject to the following:

1. No development shall take place until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the buildings hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. (D03A)
2. No development or demolition works required to implement the proposals approved under this notice of decision shall take place until the applicant, or their agent, or their successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.
3. No development approved by this notice of decision shall be commenced until a scheme for the provision and implementation of surface water run-off limitation measures has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved programme and details.
4. No development approved by this notice of decision shall be commenced until the applicant has submitted to, and had approved in writing, a detailed scheme for the re-use or disposal of all waste materials arising from the demolition and construction works required to implement the approved scheme, and the development shall subsequently accord with the approved scheme.
5. No development approved by this notice of decision shall be commenced until an Energy and Water Management System plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
6. No development approved by this notice of decision shall be commenced until a Scheme for the future management, minimisation, re-use and recycling of waste materials generated or deposited within the application site has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the management of waste disposal shall thereafter accord with the approved scheme unless amended management and disposal proposals are subsequently agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
7. Prior to the first occupation of any new building approved above, a statement setting out how that building has achieved and / or will achieve the BREEAM Excellent Rating, validated by BRE (or its successor) or by an independent BRE approved assessor shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.
8. The detailed landscaping plans to be submitted shall include a 1/200 scale plan showing the position of any trees proposed to be retained and of all pipes, drains, sewers, and public services, including gas, electricity, telephone and water. Once approved there shall be no departure from these positions without the prior approval of the Local Planning Authority. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order, 1995 (or of any Order revoking and re-enacting or amending that Order) no such runs or services shall be dug or laid into the ground subsequently without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.
9. No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority within one year of the occupation of the first new building approved as a result of this notice of decision and its subsequent reserved matters submissions. The scheme shall be carried out in accordance with a scheme of phasing to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority before development commences. Any trees or plants which within a period of five years die, are removed, or become

damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

10. No development shall take place until there has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority indications of all retained trees and details of their protection during the course of construction. The method of protection and locations of protective fencing shall be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the fencing shall remain in place until the concurrent phase of construction and landscaping has been carried out.

11. Any external lighting shall be installed and operated in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority.

12. No development approved by this permission shall commence until a scheme for water efficiency has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed details.

Reasons

1. To ensure that the external appearance of the proposed new buildings will relate appropriately to that of the existing building.

2. To ensure that any archaeology at the site is adequately recorded.

3. To prevent the increased risk of flooding and to protect the water environment.

4. To ensure that the development is undertaken in a sustainable manner reducing the needs to transport waste materials off site where possible in the interests of the control of pollution and efficient waste management.

5. To ensure that the development represents a sustainable development and management proposal and to accord with the commitments set out within the Environmental Statement upon which the application has been assessed.

6. To ensure that the most appropriate techniques are adopted in the interests of the wider environmental amenity and the use of best practice waste management techniques.

7. To ensure that the most appropriate techniques are adopted in the interests of the wider environmental amenity and the use of best practice construction design and management techniques.

8. To ensure the retention of trees on site in the interests of visual amenity.

9. To ensure a satisfactory landscape setting for the development.

10. To ensure the retention of existing trees in the interests of visual amenity.

11. To enable the local authority to exercise control over the level of illumination in the interests of visual amenity.

12. In the interests of sustainable development. Salisbury District council's supplementary planning guidance on achieving sustainable development" promotes the prudent use of natural resources. It is necessary to minimise the local demand for water to protect future supplies, which policy G3 in the adopted Salisbury District Local Plan supports.

In addition the site falls within the catchment of the Hampshire Avon River. This is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is protected under the EC Habitats Directive. The river suffers from low flows caused by over-abstraction of groundwater resources throughout the catchment, which in turn affects the habitats/ species within the designation. Therefore a reduction in water demand will be of benefit to the river and its habitats.

INFORMATIVE

The development should include water efficient appliances, fittings and systems in order to contribute to reduced water demand in the area. These should include, as a minimum, low flush toilets, water butts, spray taps, low flow showers (no power showers) and kitchen appliances (where installed) with the maximum water efficiency rating.

And in accordance with the following policy/policies of the adopted Salisbury District Local Plan:

- G1 - Sustainable development
- G2 - General Development control criteria
- G5 - To ensure a satisfactory means of drainage
- G8 - Protection of water resources
- G12 - Development within MoD land
- D1 - Standard of Design
- D8 - Provision of public art
- CN19 - Environmental Improvement Schemes
- CN21 - Archaeology
- C12 - Development affecting protected species
- E8B- Employment allocation at Porton Down
- E19 – Enlargement of existing employment sites

**Dstl Porton Down
HQ Consolidation – Circular 18/84 NOPD**

1. Travel plan

Dstl covenants to:

- appoint and maintain until otherwise agreed a competent Travel Plan Coordinator who will be resourced to enforce Dstl's travel plan as agreed with the Dstl site's local Highways Authority;
- develop a Travel Plan that builds on the principles set out in the draft Travel Plan, submitted under Dstl's NoPD reference SO60107. Dstl commits over time to establish a culture within Dstl that fosters recognition of the benefits, both organizational and personal, of encouraging travel to and from the site by methods other than as single car occupants. In making this commitment both parties recognise the constraints posed by Government policies, and the need for consultation with staff organisations to address Trade Union consultation protocols;
- subject to a six month trial which commences at first occupation provide work or shuttle buses between agreed locations where there is a reasonable prospect of an agreed minimum patronage and where that patronage warrants the investment of public funds;
- promote car-sharing for commuter and business journeys;
- seek active car park management that rewards car-share and motorcycle users;
- provide ablution facilities for pedestrian, pedal and motorcycle users.
- use reasonable endeavours to secure as close a working relationship with HPA's Travel Plan Coordinator as can be permitted with the constraints of Dstl and MoD's security considerations, and to operate a 'campus' approach to travel planning.
- to establish the Travel Plan in accordance with industry best practice and to include within the Plan provisions to offer incentives to staff who elect to travel more sustainably, and disincentives to staff who travel as single occupants of private cars.

2. Winterslow Road Railway Arch

- Prior to the first occupation of the development, Dstl shall, at the Highways Authority's request supply them with a formal works order to supply and commission traffic signal controls at either end of the railway arch on Winterslow Road. Dstl undertakes to fund the full costs of the Council's works to an actual cost not exceeding £25,000.

3. Church Road, Idmiston – Control of Traffic Flows

- When the development has been substantially completed Dstl shall within one year make arrangements (to be agreed) with the Local Planning and Highway Authorities, that endeavours to ensure that the traffic flow on Idmiston Arch Road at the site entry is restricted to a level as set out in the arrangement and which has been established through past surveys (as submitted to the Authorities). Dstl reserves the right to modify the opening times of the Idmiston Arch gates and access rights to same to manage the levels of usage. In the event of other alternative routes to the

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Porton Down site being unavailable as a result of events beyond the control of Dstl, such restrictions shall be suspended for the duration of such unavailability.

4. Idmiston Road and Gomeldon Road

- Dstl will undertake to cover the actual costs to a limit of £15,000 for the (i) consultation, design and (ii) legal, administrative and the Highway Authority's implementation costs associated with any Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) that might be required to govern the volume of traffic that travels to or from the site via the Gomeldon or Idmiston Roads. The requirement for, and nature of, any TRO shall be determined¹ by the Highway Authority in consultation with the two affected Parish Councils. If no TRO has been agreed with the Parish Councils within the three year period, then the requirement for Dstl to pay other than committed consultation and design and abortive TRO costs will fall away. Payments due to be paid within 1 month of an appropriate invoice being served by the Highway Authority.

5. A30 Junction Alterations

- The Highways Authority will monitor the performance of the A30 / Pheasant Road junction for the second year following full occupation² of the development proposed under Project INSPIRE. If delays to right turn traffic onto the A30 regularly exceed a time to be agreed between the parties during the evening peak, then it may call for signal controls to be installed at the expense of Dstl. If such a requirement is made then Dstl shall, at the Highways Authority's request supply them with a formal works order to supply and commission. Dstl will undertake to cover the actual costs to a limit of £55,000. It is agreed by the parties that any demands placed upon Dstl will be based upon the findings of impartial and independent expert advisors.

6. Manor Farm Road/Pheasant Road

- When the development has been substantially completed Dstl shall fund and install mutually agreed junction improvements at the Manor Farm Road / Pheasant Road junction. These improvements will be required within one year of being advised by the Highways Authority that traffic flows cause the ratio of flow to capacity, as measured by PICADY analysis, to exceed 0.9 on any individual arm of the junction. The new junction's form shall have capacity for forecast traffic for at least ten years beyond its construction. If a junction improvement is required it shall be constructed in accordance with the terms of:
 - the Highway Authority's s278 agreement if the road has been adopted by; or

¹ within the three years following the relocation of more than ¾ of the anticipated staff numbers to occupy the development

² Full occupation is defined as all of the 798 staff residing at Porton Down having fully and permanently migrated from their current site

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- by private contract if the road remains maintained at the expense of Dstl, in which case the junction alteration shall be approved beforehand by the Highway Authority.

This covenant to fall away if the Highway Authority has not made a request for junction improvements within three years of full occupation of development.

7. Making good to Pheasant / Winterslow Road

- When the development has been substantially completed Dstl shall within one year fund in full and make arrangements for the unadopted section of Pheasant / Winterslow Road to be made good to a standard which will be agreed with the Highway Authority. In addition Dstl covenant to work with the Highways Authority to agree the Road's title. Any commitment to upgrade the road's condition is made without prejudice to the ongoing title negotiations and is conditional on the scope of any such works **not** breaching any by-laws associated with Dstl and MoD's operation of Porton Down. Dstl shall provide such warning and directional signs as may be required to clearly indicate closure and alternative routes to Porton which shall be agreed with the highway authority, and establish a management plan that sets out how planned closures will be advertised and operated.

8. Construction Traffic

- Dstl shall ensure that suitable provisions are included in its prime Contractor's construction contracts and will thereafter use best endeavours to ensure that no construction traffic in excess of 7.5 tonne gross vehicle weight approaches or leaves the site via the A338 at its junctions with Church Road, Winterslow Road or Gomeldon Road. Contract conditions shall provide for disincentives against the contract of any Contractor in breach of the routing constraints. During the works temporary signs shall be erected at Dstl's expense (to maximum actual cost of £5,000) and at locations to be agreed with the Highway Authority, to indicate to Contractors approaching and leaving the site those routes subject to Dstl restrictions. Pheasant Road shall be kept in a sufficient state of repair during the works contract to enable continued and safe use by other traffic, and adequate warning signs used as appropriate to comply with prevailing health and safety and legislative obligations.

**Project INSPIRE: Dstl's Analysis Of The Issues Surrounding The Reopening
Of The Porton Railway Station**

Background: The draft Rail Feasibility Study (RFS), commissioned by Dstl prior to the work to produce a comprehensive Traffic Assessment and Travel Plan for Project INSPIRE, concluded overall that there were minimal benefits in re-introducing a railway station in Porton village. This paper serves to highlight the limitations of that study. This paper also sets out Dstl's concerns about the impact a new station would have on the surrounding communities; an aspect that was not explored by the study and may in fact prove detrimental to the Villagers' ways of life.

The RFS served as a outline, high level study and was not a study of sufficient depth or quality such that Dstl felt sufficiently confident in its content and analysis to allow its publication along with Dstl's Travel Plan.

The impetus of a study for re-opening Porton Station existed prior to what is now specifically known as Project INSPIRE, and a new station is mentioned in the Salisbury District Local Plan (adopted 2003) as part of a Green Commuter Plan. Consultations with Wiltshire County Council confirmed the need to include feedback as part of the Dstl's 18/84 NOPD. This paper serves to provide that feedback.

Study Analysis: By and large, the primary question which the draft study sought to answer was, 'could a rail station be re-opened at Porton village?' which in effect pre-empted the question of the benefits of such a move, i.e., 'should a rail station be re-opened at Porton village?' This is borne out in the RFS itself which focuses almost entirely on matters such as an option analysis of six potential sites, supporting information regarding costings, previous Railtrack studies, network limitations, signalling, etc., all drawn together by a rail specialist obviously focusing on the necessary infrastructure required for a new station at Porton village. It is only mainly in the concluding remarks where one finds the attempt to draw in opportunities and issues that a new station would present. Reference is made to the findings of a staff survey conducted concurrently with the RFS by another transport specialist, with the results (not surprising given the lack of transportation options for Porton Down)

showing some possibility for transference from road to rail travel among Dstl employees. Beyond this link however there was no attempt nor even stated intention at a full benefit analysis of a new station and it would be a gross misinterpretation to seek to apply this study as a justification basis with which to initiate the reopening of the Porton station.

Further limitations stated in the study itself are that no official contact was possible with Network Rail (who in any event indicated that they would wish to appoint their own Project Manager for any formal feasibility study). Similarly, no substantive relationship was established with the main train operator, South West Trains beyond determining the principle that they would not contribute financially to any such studies.

The draft RFS went on to summarise the considerable challenges faced, and gives a good indication of the minimum amount of work required to enable the project to become reality.

- A detailed assessment of the project costs needs to be undertaken;
- A detailed cost benefit analysis is required including operational, financial, economic and social as well as environmental concerns relating to reopening of the station in Porton;
- A determination of potential funding partners in the project, for instance South West Regional Development Agency, Wiltshire County Council, Salisbury District Council, Network Rail and South West Trains;
- An agreement or “heads of terms” with Network Rail’s major projects and investment organisation will be necessary prior to any analysis commencing to underwrite Network Rail’s development costs; and,
- Procurement action and hence tenders need to be prepared for a station design, construct and (optionally) operate contract to be issued. This needs to include the writing, submission and acceptance of a Construction Safety Case an Operators Safety Case; itself a significant amount of work.

There are also numerous other practical concerns not explored or discussed in the RFS, which compound and complicate the initiative. In no particular order these are as follows:

- Dstl is of the opinion that by reopening the station in Porton Village it will attract far more commuter traffic (motor cycles, cars and vans) to Porton village than it experiences today. Porton village could become a railhead for Amesbury, Salisbury, Lark Hill, Durrington, Bulford, Boscombe Down, and all the surrounding villages, all of which could naturally use it to commute to along the South West Train's London route. The RFS states a possible initial usage (derived without any detailed analysis) of 175 passengers / day comprised of 20% London commuters, 50% local users and 30% Dstl / HPA and thus the new station would attract potentially 122 additional cars to the village (70% of 175). This RFS projects this to increase to 300 – 400 passengers / day in 10 years. Quite counter-intuitive to the rationale that a prime benefit of a new station for Project INSPIRE is that fewer cars would be travelling through the villages of Porton and Idminton.
- Currently the station premises are the freehold property of a private individual and so the compulsory purchase of land is required in order for the station to be recommissioned. Dstl does consider it justifiable to use Public funding for this purpose.
- A bus shuttle service would have to be in operation (say) between 7am and 7pm. Dstl personnel are on a flexi time system (including Saturdays) and hence there is not necessarily a rush hour at peak times for rail commuters. This is not only expensive, but will impact on local traffic patterns.
- The reality of persuading the operator to introduce additional stops for a maximum population of incoming 798 into their schedule for a new station some 4.5 miles distant from an existing main line station (Grately).

Conclusions: Whilst the study established a new station was theoretically possible Dstl considers that the benefits are outweighed by the dis-benefits. The concluding factors are:

Benefits:

- Due to the influx of Dstl employees to a site poorly served by public transport, a new station may prove beneficial, albeit:
 - regular (to cope with flexible working) transport links between the new station links between the actual Porton campus would need to be established and funded

Dis-benefits

- The cost of the engineering works to construct and commission the new station is estimated to be >£5M ? (the Hyder report quoted £3.5 – 4 million)at today's prices;
- It is possible that the train operator would not be willing to operate a service without heavy subsidies to cover their operating losses;
- It is likely that a new station in the village of Porton will attract commuters away from the main line stations of Grately, Andover and Salisbury which will a negative impact on the road and car parking infrastructure of Porton and Idminston;
- The population expansion (798) at Dstl Porton Down might not provide sufficient “critical mass” to justify the investments required the amount of take up from existing employees is not considered material; and,
- Only a small minority of the population relocating to Porton Down will choose to live in an area served by the Salisbury / London Waterloo main line and so any benefit to Dstl employees will be relatively small.

Finally and after considering all of the issues, Dstl does not feel there is sufficient or compelling grounds to pursue, without intensive scrutiny as to its viability, further work to assess the re-opening of the Porton Railway Station. In addition and based on the foregoing Dstl is of the opinion that it is not a good use of public funds and hence is not in the public interest to invest Dstl's money in progressing the RFS to its next stage.