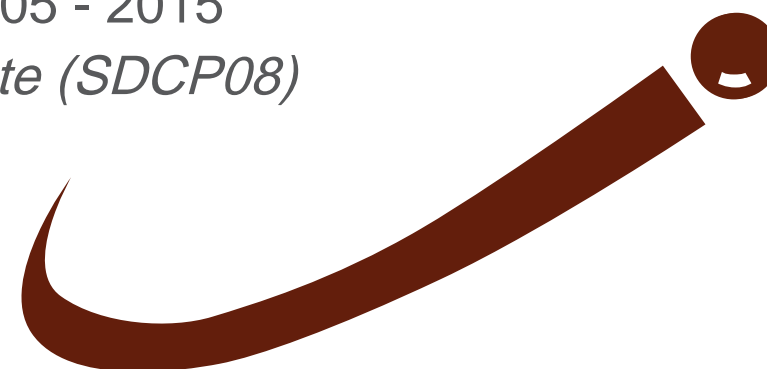


AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield

Site Development Context Plan (SDCP)

2005 - 2015

Update (SDCP08)



APRIL 2008

“

The Government made clear last year its commitment to maintaining the effectiveness and safety of the nuclear deterrent including making the necessary investment in the facilities at the Atomic Weapons Establishment and Aldermaston and Burghfield.

To that end agreement has been reached with AWE Management Limited (AWE ML) to take forward a programme of investment in sustaining key skills and facilities at the Atomic Weapons Establishment. This will include the provision of necessary extra supporting infrastructure. Local Planning Authorities will be consulted on this work in the normal way, under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase act 2004.

The purpose of the investment of some £350 million over each of the next three years is to ensure that we can maintain the existing Trident warhead stockpile throughout its intended in-service life. In the absence of the ability to undertake live nuclear testing given that the UK has signed and ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, it is necessary to invest in the facilities at AWE which will provide assurance that the existing Trident warhead stockpile is reliable and safe

”

John Reid
Secretary of State for Defence
19th July 2005

summary



In July 2005 the Government announced an investment programme to secure the replacement and refurbishment of the ageing facilities at AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield.

A Site Development Context Plan (SDCP) was subsequently published in November 2005. This identified the principal, physical components of this programme and the way in which they are proposed to be accommodated at the sites.

The SDCP was accompanied by a Strategic Sustainability Appraisal (SSA) that identified the main environmental and related issues that are likely to arise in the course of implementation of the programme.

Both documents provided the context in which elements of the programme would be brought forward over the following three years. The programme as a whole is expected to be completed by 2015. This document is the first update of the 2005 SDCP that incorporates progress made and some new developments. The two documents are referred to as SDCP05 and SDCP08

Since November 2005 considerable progress has been made. At Aldermaston the Orion Laser facility is under construction. Work on a new office campus has also commenced with first occupations expected in mid 2009. In the context of the latter project significant resources have been secured principally in respect of transport related improvements that will have significant benefits for the local community. In the Aldermaston Eastern Area a proposal consolidating existing explosive activities received planning permission in February 2008. At AWE Burghfield consent was granted for a small scale component manufacturing facility in November 2007. Various other ancillary projects have also been completed including temporary office accommodation and computer facilities. Proposals for further, schemes are in preparation.

Since the publication of SDCP05, the removal of Crown Immunity in June 2006 has also brought the AWE sites within the scope of normal planning controls. All relevant projects will thus now be the subject of planning applications and a number of proposals have already been considered and approved through this process. West Berkshire Council's consistent performance in relation to the determination of applications has been a major factor in the success of the programme to date. The processes and procedures that are in place to maintain these high standards have proved to be an excellent framework for preparing and considering individual applications on the AWE sites.

In accordance with the commitment in the SDCP05, this document updates the position. Whilst the programme remains fundamentally unchanged, there have been some refinements that include a minor adjustment in the location of one project and the introduction of one new build project where the previously planned refurbishment of existing facilities was not feasible. The opportunity has also been taken to update the two framework plans including the addition of more detailed information where projects are sufficiently advanced.

As indicated in SDCP05, whilst there will inevitably be impacts, there will also be benefits arising from implementation of the programme. This has proved to be the case. Measures introduced to minimise the impact of issues such as construction, have been effective and positive benefits in terms of improved presentation of the Aldermaston site and various transport related initiatives are already making a noticeable difference.



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1. introduction



background

- 1.1 The Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) is located at sites at Aldermaston, Burghfield and Blacknest in the administrative area of West Berkshire. AWE has played a central role in national defence for more than 50 years and is responsible for the entire life cycle of the United Kingdom's nuclear warheads, from initial research and design, through component manufacture and assembly, to in-service support and final decommissioning and disposal.
- 1.2 AWE plc manages and operates the Atomic Weapons Establishment on behalf of the Secretary of State for Defence under a 25-year contract that commenced in April 2000.
- 1.3 AWE's core mission is to build and maintain the warheads for the submarine-launched Trident ballistic missile system that today forms the United Kingdom's sole nuclear deterrent. AWE is also required to maintain a capability to design a successor warhead to Trident should it ever be required in the future.
- 1.4 In July 2004, the then Secretary of State for Defence affirmed to Parliament the UK Government's commitment to maintaining the safety and effectiveness of the current nuclear deterrent, including making the necessary investment at AWE, and to keeping open options for the future.
- 1.5 In July 2005 a three-year investment programme, amounting to extra average annual expenditure of some £350m was announced in order to:-

“... maintain the existing Trident warhead stockpile throughout its intended service life. In the absence of the ability to undertake live nuclear testing given that the UK has signed and ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, it is necessary to invest in the facilities at AWE which will provide assurance that the existing Trident warhead stockpile is reliable and safe”.
- 1.6 The Secretary of State also confirmed that the Local Planning Authority would be consulted in the normal way on the land-use aspects of the programme in the context of current planning legislation.
- 1.7 Since this announcement, all AWE sites have been brought within the scope of general planning legislation following the removal of Crown Immunity in June 2006. This major change has been a significant influence in relation to the implementation of the investment programme. The transition to full engagement with the main stream planning system has been successfully achieved with beneficial results in relation to AWE's operational activities and its relations with stakeholders.



1. introduction

aim

- 1.8 In November 2005 AWE published the first Site Development Context Plan (SDCP), the primary purpose of which was to define the broad parameters of the Government's investment programme in land use terms and facilitate early discussion and consultation with the relevant planning authorities and other stakeholders.
- 1.9 The first SDCP included a 10 year Illustrative Site Development Framework Plans for each of the two principal sites at Aldermaston and Burghfield. These plans set out the principal land-use proposals that were the subject of the investment programme at an end date of 2015. No specific, significant proposals are involved in respect of the much smaller AWE Blacknest site.
- 1.10 An accompanying Strategic Sustainability Appraisal (SSA) was also published at the same time as the SDCP. This describes the key areas of potential effects on the environment and those who live and work around the site. The SSA also identifies how these issues will be addressed and managed by AWE as the programme progresses.
- 1.11 The SDCP and SSA represented the first step in a continuous review process to ensure that the context for more detailed proposals is up to date and the likely overall impact of the investment programme can be assessed at all relevant stages.
- 1.12 Significant progress has been made since the publication of these documents. This first update of the SDCP reviews this progress against the aims and objectives of the original document and sets out some minor changes principally in relation to the timing of specific projects. To distinguish between the original SDCP and this update they are referred to as SDCP05 and SDCP08 respectively.
- 1.13 As the SSA is a fixed reference for future, more detailed work it does not require updating in the same way as the SDCP. It remains as the high level framework in relation to sustainability against which more specific work is being undertaken that also relates to AWE's wider commitment to improve the sustainability of the sites and the associated operational activity. A summary of the initiatives that are aimed at addressing the issues identified in the SSA is set out in paragraphs 2.21 and 2.22 below.

1. introduction



historical development

- 1.14 Very briefly, the history of development at Aldermaston and Burghfield is as follows.
- Pre 1939 – the Aldermaston site was a mediaeval deer park known as Aldermaston Common and Burghfield was predominantly farming land.
 - 1939-1950 – both sites were initially requisitioned by the Ministry of Supply, with Aldermaston ultimately operating as a base for the US Army Air Force Troop Carrier Groups and Burghfield becoming an Ordnance Factory.
 - 1951-2002 – both sites were selected to support the UK Atomic Weapons Programme with Aldermaston primarily involved in research and Burghfield producing various component parts and assembling the weapons. Direct employment at both sites is estimated to have peaked at around 6000 people.
 - 2002 – Site Development Strategy Plan (SDSP) published including transfer of all activity to AWE Aldermaston.
 - 2003 – decision to retain AWE Burghfield for operational reasons.
 - 2005 – Secretary of State announces investment programme to modernise existing facilities.
 - 2006 – Crown Immunity removed from AWE sites requiring planning applications to be submitted for most development projects.

document format

- 1.15 SDCP08 follows the same basic format as SDCP05. Section 2 briefly describes the nature of the overall programme and identifies its key components. It also sets out the progress in relation to the programme as identified in SDCP05 and some minor changes to the location and scale of some of the projects as well as setting out progress made in relation to the issues identified in the SSA.
- 1.16 Section 3 re-visits the key constraints and opportunities that have influenced the general approach to both sites and the specific proposals, including those related to landscape, transport, legacy and sustainability considerations and addresses their continued relevance.
- 1.17 Section 4 addresses the land use principles that have been applied in formulating the illustrative framework plans and the way in which the implementation of specific projects is following those principles.
- 1.18 Section 5 explains the intended sequencing of new development which will be the subject of further planning applications to West Berkshire Council as the programme rolls forward.



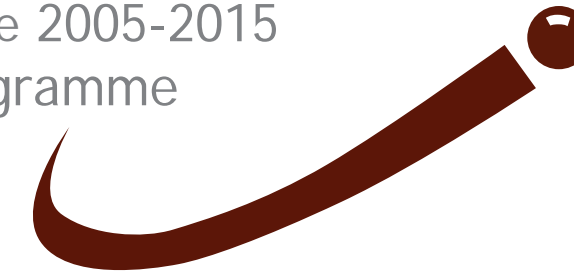
2. the 2005-2015 programme

introduction

- 2.1 The overall approach to the modernisation of AWE Aldermaston and AWE Burghfield put forward in this programme is based on refurbishing and replacing facilities constructed principally in the 1950s and 60s.
- 2.2 The key elements of this approach are:-
- Improving standards of design
 - Enhancing environmental performance
 - Reducing environmental impact
 - Managing traffic
 - Maximising community benefits
- 2.3 The programme involves the re-use of previously developed or "brownfield" sites in accordance with one of the major themes of Government Policy.
- 2.4 This re-use needs to be achieved whilst maintaining continuity in relation to the activities and processes occurring on the sites and having regard to important issues such as decommissioning, safety and security which are all carried out in the context of nuclear site licences and other stringent controls.
- 2.5 These factors support the view that there is no practicable or sustainable alternative to AWE's continued presence at Aldermaston and Burghfield.
- 2.6 Both sites have a long history of positive co-existence with the local community and provide significant employment and other economic benefits. Following the removal of Crown Immunity, West Berkshire Council elected members have become key decision makers as it is they, as the Local Planning Authority, who determine planning applications. This change has been a positive one to the extent that decisions in respect of AWE development are now made at the local level in the same way as all other planning proposals. West Berkshire's excellent record in determining planning applications within relevant timescales and the processes and procedures that are in place to achieve this have also been major factors in the success of programme implementation to date.



2. the 2005-2015 programme



previous proposals

- 2.7 In SDCP05 reference is made to the previous Site Development Strategy Plan (SDSP) as the context for the document. The SDCP has proved to be a robust framework for the implementation of the AWE investment programme and, as such, now represents the principal basis for moving forward.
- 2.8 The components of the programme remain set in the context of the same safety, operational and environmental principles that lie behind all aspects of AWE site development. As set out in SDCP05 they can be placed under the following five main headings:-
- Manufacturing/production
 - Testing/research
 - Computing/communications
 - Offices and business support accommodation
 - Environmental proposals and programmes
- 2.9 In addition AWE will continue an on-going programme of modernisation of the service infrastructure within both sites. For example, the long-term aim remains to remove the majority of the above ground steam supply system. Some 2 km has been already been removed.

principal programme components

- 2.10 The main elements of the programme have been split into those requiring new buildings and those involving significant in situ refurbishment of existing buildings and plant. As far as the latter are concerned, the framework plans only show the major examples to indicate where there will be significant construction and related activity. More minor refurbishments will take place at both sites over the period to 2015 and these will be taken into account in arriving at estimates of overall construction related activity and associated traffic movements.
- 2.11 Where refurbishment involves material changes to the appearance of any building or plant, individual applications will be submitted.
- 2.12 The principal "new build" elements in the programme are set out in the following tables (A – Aldermaston, B – Burghfield).
- 2.13 Their general, proposed locations are shown on the respective framework plans AWE1 (Aldermaston) and AWE2 (Burghfield) which accompany this document.
- 2.14 Where projects have been completed since the publication of SDCP05 or are under construction, a note is included to that effect and the framework plans have been updated to include the footprints of the buildings.



2.the 2005-2015 programme

new build projects

Manufacturing/Production

Reference (See Illustrative Framework plans for site locations)	Location	Indicative floor space (m2)	Indicative height (m) (building only)	Status
1	A	13,000	5-10	Relocated
2	A	8,500	10-15	Programmed 09
3	A	4,000	5-10	Permitted
4	A	1,500	5-10	Programmed 10 on
5	B	3,000	5-10	Programmed 10 on
6	B	1,500	5-10	Permitted
7	B	12,000	10-15	Programmed 08
7a	B	10,000	10-15	Programmed 08

Testing/Research

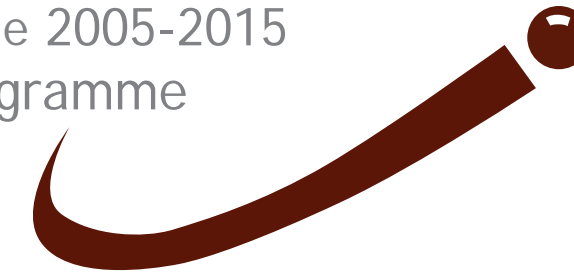
Proposal	Location	Indicative floor space (m2)	Indicative height (m) building only	Status
8	A	2,500	20	U construction
9	A	3,000	5-10	Programmed 09
10	A	15,000	15-20	Programmed 09
11	B	500	5-10	Programmed 10 on
12	B	9,000	5-10	Programmed 10 on

Computing/Communications

Proposal	Location	Indicative floorspace (m2)	Indicative height (m) (building only)	Status
13	A	4,500	5-10	Programmed 10 on
14	A	100	5-10	Complete
15	A	100	5-10	Complete



2. the 2005-2015 programme



Office and Support Accommodation

Proposal	Location	Indicative floorspace (m2)	Indicative height (m) (building only)	Status
16	A	21,000	15-20	U Construction
17	A	12,000	15-20	Programmed 10 on
18	A	9,000	5-10	Complete
19	A	600	5-10	Complete
20	A	1500 spaces approx.	N/A	U Construction, Partially complete
21	A	500 spaces approx.	N/A	U Construction Partially complete

Environmental proposals and programmes

Proposal	Location	Indicative floorspace (m2)	Indicative height (m) (building only)	Status
22	A	N/A	N/A	Programmed 09
23	A/B	N/A	N/A	Programmed 10

2.15 The principal changes since SDCP05 are as follows:-

- The commencement of construction of the Orion laser at Aldermaston (Project 8) following detailed approval.
- The granting of detailed planning permission for two phases of office accommodation at Aldermaston (project 16) and commencement of construction.
- The relocation of project 1 at Aldermaston to a position slightly to the west of its previous location to relate it to the approved project 16 building.
- The addition of a further conventional manufacturing facility proposal at Burghfield in the north eastern part of the site as an alternative to refurbishment of existing buildings (project 7a).
- The completion of the computing and temporary office facilities of Aldermaston (projects 14, 15 and 18).
- Commencement of the rationalised car park provision of Aldermaston (projects 20 and 21).

2.16 In addition, there have been other minor developments, such as new dog kennels at Burghfield, not specifically related to the investment programme.



2. the 2005-2015 programme

employment

- 2.17 Most of any additional direct employment is still expected to arise in the context of the proposed office accommodation at Aldermaston, the majority of which is programmed for completion during 2009. For both Burghfield and Aldermaston, it is also still envisaged that the implementation of the programme will not lead to levels of direct employment greater than those associated with the sites in the past.
- 2.18 The construction process will obviously involve employment levels over and above the operational workforce whilst building occurs. The impact of the construction process itself and the additional employment it involves will be assessed and managed in accordance with a co-ordinated overall strategy for both sites.
- 2.19 Increased employment and the activity associated with construction will involve significant economic benefits particularly in respect of the local community.
- 2.20 In addition to the principal new build projects and the major refurbishments, further studies will be undertaken in the early part of the programme focused on the western part of the Aldermaston site. These studies will deal primarily with the future use and operation of the West Gate and the area utilised by the Recreation Society. These are both related to the potential for creating a higher quality entrance to the Aldermaston site.

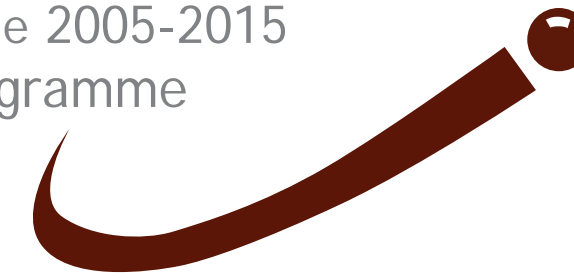
further studies

- 2.21 SDCP05 indicated that, in addition to the principal new build projects and major refurbishments, further studies and assessments would be undertaken to support the programme and address the issues identified in the SSA.

- 2.22 A great deal has been achieved in this regard since 2005, notably in relation to transport and construction related issues. These include:-
- A preliminary evaluation of the overall transport implications of the SDCP.
 - A travel plan for all AWE sites.
 - Architectural Design Principles.
 - A Code of Construction Practice.
 - A surface water strategy for AWE Aldermaston.
 - An energy strategy for AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield.
- 2.23 Work is also well advanced in relation to the following exercises:-
- Heritage management.
 - Biodiversity.
 - Recreation.
 - Boundary Assessment.
 - Strategic Landscaping.
 - Integrated Waste Strategy
- 2.24 This series of completed and emerging supporting studies has been invaluable in ensuring that planning applications submitted to West Berkshire Council are comprehensive and capable of positive determination within the relevant timescales. The completion of an extensive range of environmental strategies and related initiatives has also proved to be invaluable in supporting and developing AWE's existing sustainable management measures.



2. the 2005-2015 programme



a dynamic programme

- 2.25 Inevitably, with a project of this complexity, there are likely to be modifications and variations to the schedule of proposals and the associated framework plans as the programme develops. However, the overall context for the proposals represented in this document is not expected to change materially.
- 2.26 If other developments come forward outside the context of the programme set out in this document, the local planning authority and other key stakeholders will be involved at an early stage.
- 2.27 SDCP05 also suggested that there were likely to be modifications and variations to the schedule of proposals and the associated framework plans as the programme develops. As outlined in the preceding paragraphs and the accompanying tables, some minor modifications have indeed occurred. However, these do not affect the nature of the overall programme that has not materially changed and the principal stakeholders have been kept fully advised in respect of any refinements as they have arisen.
- 2.28 AWE will continue to review the detail of the programme and keep key stakeholders informed of any additional alterations that may be required. These will be incorporated in further SDCP updates as necessary and appropriate.



3. opportunities & constraints

introduction

- 3.1 The accompanying plans (AWE3 and AWE4) reproduced directly from SDCP05 show the principal opportunities and constraints affecting both sites. Given their respective locations and characteristics Aldermaston and Burghfield give rise to different issues and challenges.

site specific constraints and opportunities

Aldermaston

- 3.2 Aldermaston can be divided into three broad functional areas. The eastern part of the site to the east of the main north south access road (Griffin Road) is principally devoted to activity associated with conventional explosives and is currently licensed by the Ministry of Defence Ordnance Safety Group (DOSG). These arrangements will become the responsibility of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) from April 2008.
- 3.3 To the west of Griffin Road the site splits generally in to two areas. To the north is the Nuclear Storage and Processing Area (NSPA). This is devoted mainly to the nuclear aspects of the site's activities and is subject to additional levels of security.
- 3.4 To the south the area is principally characterised by business support activities including the majority of the existing office accommodation on the site. This is referred to below as the Business Support Zone. The area of this zone within which most redevelopment is proposed is referred to as the West End.
- 3.5 For a variety of operational and practical reasons there is little scope or need to depart from the overall land-use pattern at Aldermaston. Indeed, there is merit in seeking to accentuate and reinforce these distinctions.



Aldermaston Business Support Zone

- 3.6 For the Business Support Zone there is a significant opportunity to improve the presentation and image of the site without unduly compromising its historic layout. In this latter regard, Aldermaston is unique in land use terms. It has evolved in a particular historical context rooted in the 1950s and 60s and it is considered important to retain the overall character of the area whilst at the same time taking the opportunity to maintain and develop the world class status of its scientific and engineering community.

- 3.7 The construction of the Orion laser and the new office accommodation are already contributing to an increased feeling of quality and identity in the western part of the Aldermaston site.

Aldermaston NSPA

- 3.8 The primary considerations relating to this area must be focused on safety, security and operational efficiency. Inevitably, therefore, the area will continue to have a functional appearance.

Aldermaston Eastern Area

- 3.9 Constraints in this part of the site are also dominated by safety, security and the need to maintain functional continuity during construction.
- 3.10 This creates a potentially complex picture related to the Safeguarding Areas (SAs) that must be maintained around buildings licensed to process and handle explosives. The amount and type of material involved and the nature of the buildings in which they are located defines the extent of the SA and the number of people permitted within it.

3. opportunities & constraints



general issues

- 3.11 This means that during the project period, maximum flexibility must be maintained to move material and activities within the licensed area to minimise the restrictions associated with SAs. In addition, in the context of the current regulatory regime the licensed area could not be significantly reduced without prejudicing the implementation of the proposed new facilities and the overall operation of the area.
- 3.12 Restricted access to the eastern area does however have the benefit that, in nature conservation terms, it includes some valuable habitats.
- 3.13 With appropriate management there is the potential opportunity to protect and enhance these resources, both now and in the long term, without affecting operational capability.

Burghfield

- 3.14 A significant site-specific constraint at Burghfield arises from its past history as a location for the processing and production of conventional explosives and munitions. This legacy will require a long-term programme of characterisation and subsequent clearance which is already under way.
- 3.15 In addition, any new buildings needs to be located in close proximity to the existing assembly facilities to ensure continuity of operations and appropriate levels of security at all stages.

Traffic and Transportation

- 3.16 A survey was undertaken in the context of the SDCP05 of the existing work force to assist in the formulation of a travel plan and inform development of the SDCP and the SSA.
- 3.17 For both Aldermaston and Burghfield it is fully recognised that transportation, including access, is a significant and important issue, particularly during the construction period. Whilst the latter involves temporary impacts, construction will occur over an extended period and will require careful management and control. Further work on this has been undertaken since the publication of SDCP05 with the development of the Code of Construction Practice (COCP). This provides a robust framework for the management of construction activity and is being successfully applied.
- 3.18 Since the publication of SDCP05 individual Transport Assessments have also been prepared for specific projects in the context of an overview of the effects of the programme as a whole in transport terms.
- 3.19 In addition, a Travel Plan has been prepared with a commitment on the part of AWE to implement a range of measures aimed principally at reducing use of the private car. These measures include:-
- Sustainable transport choices for staff, contractors and visitors.
 - Improved accessibility to the development by walking, cycling, passenger transport and car sharing; and
 - A reduction in the need to travel, especially alone by car; and
 - A reduction in vehicular movements within the sites.



3. opportunities & constraints

3.20 These objectives fully accord with national, regional and local planning policies and are linked closely to the planning permission granted for additional office accommodation at Aldermaston in March 2007 (project 16). This consent also delivers a comprehensive package of physical, off-site enhancements aimed at improving highway safety and making it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to access the site.

Landscape

3.21 A Landscape and Vegetation Appraisal has been undertaken for both sites. Further detailed assessment is being undertaken of the individual elements of the project.

3.22 Aldermaston is a large site which has few immediately recognisable reference points or landmarks. The industrial nature of many of the buildings and the homogeneity of much of the mid 20th century architecture can also be confusing for those trying to navigate the site and who do not already know it well. The site is evident in views from some public viewpoints, visible within a well wooded landscape context.

3.23 In this regard there is an opportunity to enhance the legibility of the site through the design and treatment of the open space network and also improve the quality of the external environment through the introduction of additional structure planting and upgrading the hard landscape materials. A site wide landscape strategy has been prepared to guide and inform both improvements to the site landscape infrastructure and the implementation of landscape associated with individual projects.

3.24 Burghfield is smaller although it too lacks clear reference points. This will become less of an issue, however, as the current operational area contracts and the grid pattern of access ways that characterises the site becomes less dominant.

3.25 For operational and security reasons the boundary fences will remain clearly visible. As opportunities arise the site boundary planting is being supplemented and renewed to retain and enhance landscape enclosure. As with AWE Aldermaston, a site wide landscape strategy is the context for individual schemes.

3.26 Overall, the programme will continue to address opportunities within the sites to:-

- Respond to and enhance the existing local landscape setting.
- Maintain existing landscape character.
- Maintain existing landscape features.
- Reinforce landscape structure.
- Improve landscape structure through additional planting and upgrading the approach to hard surface treatment.
- Retain, where possible, all important and healthy trees.
- To provide additional boundary planting where appropriate.
- Ensure that all future planting, in the context of any future development or landscape management, is of a sufficient scale, to significantly enhance the landscape context of both sites.
- Achieve a more attractive and high quality external presentation whilst ensuring that security is maintained.



3. opportunities & constraints



Sustainability

- 3.27 Significant opportunities were identified in SDCP05 to meet wider sustainability objectives as the development programme for Aldermaston and Burghfield proceeds. The current building stock is generally inefficient in relation to energy consumption and other infrastructure such as the above ground steam distribution system which will require replacement. In addition the SSA identified a range of strategies that would be developed to further the aims of AWE's corporate approach to sustainability. Considerable progress has been made in this regard that is not reaping real benefits in respect of areas such as energy use, surface water management and travel and movement.
- 3.28 The development programme will involve significant improvements to the ageing utility infrastructure. The following opportunities are being addressed in respect of all development and infrastructure proposals:-
- Maintaining the status of both sites as "good neighbours" within their host communities including maximising economic and social benefits.
 - Providing employees with modern and attractive facilities that are safe, comfortable and an aid to recruiting high quality staff.
 - Continuing to minimise the impact on the environment of operational and construction activity.
 - Continuing an on-going programme of de-commissioning, demolition and decontamination consistent with the above principles.
- 3.29 Significant progress has been made in all these areas. The introduction of the Code of Construction Practice (COCP) has been a major step forward in maintaining an appropriate relationship between

construction, the environment and the community. The provision of further, high quality office accommodation in buildings designed to high levels of energy efficiency also represents substantial progress towards making AWE's operations more sustainable. With the increased emphasis on climate change since SDCP05 this issue will become more important as the programme proceeds.

Demolition and Decommissioning

- 3.30 There are few examples of contamination arising from the operation of either site in the context of their current or historical uses and none which significantly constrain the implementation of the investment programme.
- 3.31 Since the beginning of 2003, AWE has demolished more than 100 facilities on both sites. This leaves over 1100 buildings on the Aldermaston site and over 360 at Burghfield, many of which date back to the 1940s. Surveys continue to identify further buildings for demolition. Since the publication of SDCP05 demolition has continued.
- 3.32 As the programme proceeds, and indeed beyond 2015, there will be significant opportunities where practical to continue the decommissioning and demolition that will improve the appearance of both sites as well as reducing maintenance and utility costs. In the meantime, any new floorspace created is being offset against the cessation of the use and eventual clearance of older, more dispersed buildings.
- 3.33 During demolition work great care is taken to minimise the environmental impact and avoid disruption to neighbours. Wherever possible, material resulting from demolition is being re-used within the sites to avoid unnecessary traffic movements and conserve natural resources.

3. opportunities & constraints



The community

- 3.34 AWE enjoys a close relationship with the local community and the established liaison arrangements continue to work effectively. The removal of Crown Immunity in particular has necessitated a close working relationship with West Berkshire as Local Planning Authority as AWE seeks to meet challenging programming objectives. The fact that West Berkshire is one of the best performing authorities in the country in terms of the determination of planning applications has been a major factor in the progress made since 2005.
- 3.35 Every effort will continue to be made to keep local people informed and to implement the investment programme in a way that minimises the impact on the host community. The Local Liaison Committee (LLC) is an important forum for providing information on the programme and identifying key issues from the community based stakeholders.



4. land use principals&strategies



Aldermaston – General Approach

- 4.1 The overall approach to the Aldermaston site depicted on the accompanying revised framework plan (AWE1) is to recognise and reinforce the functional split as set out in SDCP(05).

Aldermaston - Business Support Zone/West End

- 4.2 New office accommodation is being provided between the two main access roads in the high quality campus style form envisaged in SDCP05. The detailed design and orientation of the buildings has also created the opportunity to relocate project 1 to the east of the new offices to create a more coherent urban design approach in conjunction with the Orion laser. As previously proposed, the eastern section of the Business Support Zone will be retained in its current form and layout for the foreseeable future reflecting the development of Aldermaston in the 1950s and 60s.
- 4.3 Work on the car parking areas to the south of the Business Support Zone has also commenced. The aim remains to create a pedestrian priority area linking the car parking area to the new development to the north and to generally improve the public realm as proposed in SDCP05.
- 4.4 Work is also continuing to re-examine the role of the West Gate in relation to the potential for creating a new “gateway” to the site and how that may relate to the use of the existing Recreation Society facilities. This will need to have regard to junction improvements to the existing access points at the West Gate associated with the planning permission for the new office accommodation.
- 4.5 Overall, significant progress has been made towards achieving the objective of creating a high quality focus at the western end of the Business Support Zone. The Orion laser and the new office accommodation are set to transform the appearance

and presentation of the site in this area, providing a solid platform for further development and environmental improvements in this area.

Aldermaston NSPA

- 4.6 The most appropriate location for new buildings in this area is in its southern section. Within the NSPA there are three major refurbishments proposed. The remainder of this part of the NSPA is affected by an on going de-commissioning programme, which does not facilitate redevelopment within the programme timescale.

Aldermaston Eastern Area

- 4.7 As proposed in SDCP05 all conventional explosive related activity is to be consolidated on the Aldermaston site. Overall, the aim is to concentrate facilities with the largest potential explosive inventories in the centre of the licensed area. Project 3, which received full planning permission in February 2008 will bring together most of the significant activity in the area in the context of a new landscape management plan for the area as a whole. In the light of the current regulatory regime, uses that involve smaller or non-existent SAs can be located on the periphery. The general principle must nevertheless be to maintain maximum dispersal and keep SAs contained within the licensed area boundary as much as possible.
- 4.8 Within the operational constraints operating within the eastern area, there is an opportunity for some additional tree planting in the context of an overall management plan. Many of the existing scattered birch trees are now over mature. Proposals for planting groups of mixed predominantly deciduous trees are being developed to compliment the heathland and woodland character of the area.



4. land use principals&strategies

4.9 Management plans for the eastern area will be prepared to support planning applications to ensure the existing landscape and habitat resources are protected, supplemented and enhanced where possible. In particular, a grass cutting management regime will be explored which, taking into account the regulatory requirements, allows the original heath land habitat to be restored wherever possible.

Burghfield – General Approach

- 4.10 The overall approach to Burghfield (Plan AWE2) involves the consolidation of operational uses in the northern part of the site, progressive characterisation and subsequent clearance and decontamination of the remainder of the site generally working from north to south. This remediation work will extend beyond 2015.
- 4.11 At present AWE's high precision manufacturing capability is spread across a number of individual facilities at Burghfield and Aldermaston. It had originally been intended that future requirements in relation to this aspect of AWE's existing operation would be met by refurbishing existing buildings at both sites. However, following further detailed consideration of the matter it has been concluded that a new build approach is likely to be a more cost effective solution. A proposed new consolidated facility has thus been incorporated in to the SDCP. The location for this new building is in the north eastern corner of the Burghfield site.
- 4.12 Whilst the site is set within a well established landscape network, and therefore limited in views from the wider landscape, opportunities have been identified for additional planting to reinforce the site's enclosure, especially along the western edge.

common issues

Demolition and Clearance

- 4.13 A significant amount of demolition will be required to facilitate new building and the refurbishment of some facilities on both sites. Given the levels of construction activity that are likely over the project period, significant clearance work not directly related to the implementation of the investment programme will need to be carefully managed.



4. land use principals&strategies



- 4.14 The framework plan identifies specific, longer term clearance areas at Aldermaston where the aim is to eventually remove existing buildings and structures. These proposals will be kept under review in the light of progress on the main construction and refurbishment programme.

Transport

- 4.15 The Transport Strategy will involve the adoption of demand management through more control of on-site parking, the implementation of a travel plan and by managing movements both on and off site.
- 4.16 Development of a travel plan has progressed for all AWE sites
- 4.17 Key elements of the strategy include:-
- Introducing a gate and parking permit system that allocates drivers to a specific car park and a gate. This is most relevant at Aldermaston and has already been implemented at Portland House.
 - Consolidating car parking in specific locations as shown on the illustrative framework plans.
 - An overall gate access strategy taking into account operational, movement and security considerations.
 - Confirming dedicated gates for construction traffic and associated management.
 - Reducing Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV) (through car sharing, bus travel, improved walking/ cycling links and adoption of flexible working where possible).
 - Staff and community consultation at an early stage of the process of implementing travel initiatives.

- 4.18 The local authority and all relevant stakeholders will be closely involved in the process of developing and implementing the strategy.

Landscape Strategy

- 4.19 As indicated above, there is a clear need for substantial landscaping in key locations to reinforce the urban design principles, setting the development into a coherent and high quality landscape structure.

Construction

- 4.20 The framework plans have been prepared on the basis that construction activity would be contained within both sites in terms of compounds and lay-down areas. In this regard potential areas at both Aldermaston and Burghfield are identified on the respective plans.
- 4.21 In addition construction related traffic movements require detailed management, both within and outside the site, having regard to impact on the relevant highway networks, security and operational continuity. This has involved defining temporary self-contained construction areas that are subject to specific arrangements in the context of the Code of Construction Practice.

5. development sequence



approach

5.1 The confirmation of the development programme will involve the submission of further planning applications to West Berkshire over the next three years. Experience to date has demonstrated that detailed, pre-application discussions are an essential part of the process and these will continue as proposals are prepared and submitted in sequence. The broad timing of application submission is as follows:-

1. Project 7a – mid 2008
2. Project 7 – late 2008
3. Project 2 - early 2009
4. Projects 9/10 – mid 2009
5. Projects 1,4, 5 11-13,17 late 2009 on

5.2 AWE will continue to keep the programme updated in further revisions to the SDCP as necessary and appropriate.







AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield

Site Development Context Plan (SDCP)
2005 - 2015
Update (SDCP08)
EDMS 1/80137/D12/B/SD2005