

Farnborough Business Park

Urban regeneration
and architectural project
Bruce Gilbreth Architects

Landscape consultant
for the Business Park
Clive Macdonald

Farnborough, United Kingdom

Not far from Farnborough airport, on a site once occupied by the RAE (Royal Aircraft Establishment) factory, purchased in 1999 by Slough Estates Group as an industrial area for regeneration, stands Farnborough Business Park. The former RAE site in Farnborough boasts the oldest airship hangar in the United Kingdom. An ambitious project has transformed this historically important site into a new business park, complete with shops, recreation units and offices. The firm Bruce Gilbreth Architects was appointed to undertake the urban planning and architectural design of the entire industrial area, with the aid of Clive Macdonald as landscape consultant. The firm Julian Harrap Architects, responsible for the urban planning and architectural design of the historic centre, restored the historic monuments and the previously existing landscape

in conjunction with Peter Fischer Landscape Design. Allies & Morrison restored one of the historic buildings, and added two new complexes to accommodate offices. Light Bureau suggested lighting solutions for the public areas, the landscape and the facades of the buildings, as well as concept design services for several of the key indoor areas. The lighting design consultancy provided by Light Bureau led to the creation of a lighting system capable of meeting the many and varied requirements of the various parties involved: the two firms of architects, the landscape consultants, the client (who was working to a tight budget) and English Heritage, Farnborough Air Science Trust and the Civil Aviation Authority. Light Bureau started work according to an initial concept by JHA for a modern interpretation of



1

Restoration and renovation
of historic buildings
JHA - Julian Harrap Architects
Peter Fischer Landscape Design

Other renovation work
and office building project
Allies & Morrison

Lighting consultancy
Light Bureau

Partners Assistance
iGuzzini illuminazione UK Ltd.

Photo: James Newton

1. Building Q134
2. Arches of the hangar
3. View of the area

the lanterns that were originally installed on the site. Produced by iGuzzini and designed to order by Light Bureau, the luminaires were made with standard components and used for lighting the streets in the Heritage Quarter, one of the three main areas of the complex.

Light Bureau modified the luminaires using a street optic and sanded glass for the cone. This gave a respectful nod to tradition while at the same time delivering excellent colour performance and a pleasant atmosphere, thanks to the use of metal halide light sources. Post-mounted luminaires were completely eliminated from the area of the Square, while light was used to draw attention to the arched structure of an airship hangar with an impressive height of 29 metres. The hangar was lit using 150W Maxi Woody

projectors, mounted in purpose-built wells at the foot of each arch and equipped with a refractor to distribute the flow of light elliptically. Light Bureau also worked with JHA on the design of a special grid that would not only attenuate glare but would also prevent litter from getting into the well and would hide the luminaires. Furthermore, to ensure the level of lighting required by safety standards, other lights were fitted in the surrounding area under the benches and among the plants, and particular attention was paid to lighting the surrounding vertical surfaces: in this way, the perceived levels of light in the entire area actually exceed real levels. This area also accommodates the new office buildings, 200 and 250, which provide the backdrop for the hangar and the square. Between buildings 200 and 250 stands



3



2

the imposing Q134, a structure at the centre of the Hub which accommodates the former control tower. Light Bureau proposed lighting the long façade of the building with ground-recessed lamps arranged in alternating columns to punctuate the length of the building rhythmically.