

Sensata Technologies planning £16.5M hybrid working R&D site outside Belfast

US sensor manufacturer Sensata Technologies is planning to build a £16.5 million research and development site outside Belfast to accommodate its hybrid workforce.

The company has launched a pre-application community consultation as part of the planning process for the Newtownabbey development at Global Point Business Park and appointed construction company JH Turkington.

Sensata, which bought Schrader Electronics in 2014, said the new facility will sit alongside its Antrim base and accommodate 450-500 people working two days from home and three days in the office.

It employs over 900 people in total in Northern Ireland, focusing on making sensors – such as tyre pressure monitors – for cars, planes, HGVs and buildings.

“There could be more than 50 of our sensors in one car alone,” Eric Sorret, Automotive Vice President at Sensata Technologies, said. “Due to the nature of this work, we are constantly researching, testing and improving our product lines so we need to build facilities which combine offices for our support staff and effective research and development spaces for our design, testing and process engineering teams.”

He said the building is part of a strategic plan to move to a more flexible working model for staff.

“We believe that the plans we are consulting on today are a good first step in our journey to develop a new workplace for many of our local employees,” he said. “This project is part

of our Back to Better post pandemic planning and aims to offer a safe and collaborative place for our employees to work.

“As a global company, we are also keen to be close to good transport links. Global Point offers the ideal location to welcome colleagues, customers, suppliers and visitors from around the world.”

Sensata said the planned two-year construction phase will support 150 jobs for suppliers and sub-contractors.

“We’re delighted to have been appointed as partners on this major new development,” Gary Turkington at JH Turkington & Sons Ltd, said. “We have been challenged to create a workspace that will accommodate Sensata Technologies requirements for practical, technical spaces alongside open plan offices and private spaces for meetings.

“We welcome any feedback from the community on the plans.”

The pre-consultation community consultation isn open until 7 December at 5pm.