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# THALES

**Thales**  
350 Longwater Avenue, Green Park,  
Reading, RG2 6GF  
<http://www.thalesgroup.com/uk>

9<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**Re: Severn Edge and the siting of STEP**

Dear Prof. Ian Chapman

On behalf of Thales UK, I would like to affirm my strong support for the Severn Edge nomination, to be the future home of STEP. We passionately believe that bringing STEP to the Severn region will ensure it has the industrial and scientific capabilities, as well as the existing and future skills capacity it needs to be successful.

Thales is a world leader in critical infrastructure and cyber resilience and has already collaborated with UKAEA on cyber resilience and other related topics, crucial to the success of STEP. In the same way that STEP has recognised it will need to invest heavily in creating the skills and workforce of tomorrow, Thales has created the National Digital Exploitation Centre (NDEC), a digital hub in Ebbw Vale, co-developed by the Welsh Government, the University of South Wales and Thales.

The centre exists as a cornerstone of Thales' cyber capabilities within the UK and aims to support the Welsh Government's programme of digital investment and transformation. It does this by providing support, training and project space to large organisations, SMEs and individuals, research and development opportunities, and by helping to win work-share within Wales.

The first research and development facility of its kind in Wales provides the perfect setting for SMEs and microbusinesses to test and develop their digital concepts while big multinationals can benefit from use of the research lab to develop major technology advances and exploit the global opportunities of digital transformation.

In addition to our deep knowledge in cyber resilience, we would be happy to share our knowledge of NDEC and how its federated model could be a template for STEP, by creating a hub and spoke model with Oxfordshire Advanced Skills, Berkeley Green UTC and other skills centres of excellence, yet to be established.

Best regards,



Tony Burton  
**Director of Cyber Security & Trust**  
**Secure Communications & Information Systems (SIX)**  
**Thales UK**

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