

Application No: 11/1042N

Location: Bentley Motors Ltd, PYMS LANE, CREWE, CHESHIRE, CW1 3PL

Proposal: Installation of Roof Mounted Solar PV System

Applicant: Mr Andrew Robertson, Bentley Motor Cars

Expiry Date: 13-Jun-2011

Date Report Prepared: 18 May 2011

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Approve with conditions

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Design - Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Streetscene
- Impact on Amenity of adjacent properties
- Other Matters – Highways

1. REASON FOR REFERRAL

This application is to be determined by Southern Planning Committee as it is a proposal on a site area which exceeds 1ha.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application site is a large industrial site for the manufacturing of motor vehicles located within the settlement boundary for Crewe. The factory site consumes a significant area which is contained by Pym's Lane to the north, a railway to the south, Sunnybank Road to the west and an area of open space to the east. There are other areas outside of this area which are within the applicants ownership for car parking and ancillary development. There are numerous large factory buildings within the site. The application site itself relates to five large buildings within the site.

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This application proposed the installation of solar PV panels to be fixed to the south facing roofs of the five buildings covering a large surface area of 40,000m². The projection of each solar panel would be 46mm and would have a dark blue appearance. This would achieve a potential annual output of 4050MWh. The proposals would generally be used to meet on site demands but on

occasion would be fed into the National Grid. There would be a potential saving of 2150 tonnes of carbon per year.

4. RELEVANT HISTORY

Extensive site history across factory site, none of which are relevant to this proposal.

5. POLICIES

Local Plan Policy

NE.19 (Renewable Energy)
BE.1 (Amenity)
BE.2 (Design Standards)
BE.3 (Accessing and Parking)

Other Material Considerations

PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development
PPS: Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1
PPS22: Renewable Energy

6. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Strategic Highways Manager – No objection

Environmental Health – None received at time of writing report

Civil Aviation Authority – None received at time of writing report

7. VIEWS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

None

8. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

None received at time of writing report

9. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Design and Access Statement submitted, the salient points being:

- Located on existing south facing roofs
- Used to meet on site demand and on occasion fed into National Grid
- Would save 2150 tonnes of Carbon per year
- Site can be seen for some distance but site is consistent and tidy geometry to grid iron layout.
- Open fields to east with residential development beyond, to south is the Crewe to North Wales mainline railway and beyond that is residential development.

- Will be installed on buildings A1, B2, B3, C2 and E3 and would be mechanically fixed to the roof through a light-weight support framework.
- No generation of noise or increased traffic movements
- Output potential of 4050MWh and would cover 40,000m² of roof space

10. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

Policy NE.19 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan states that development which is for the generation of renewable energy sources will be permitted, subject to satisfying a number of criteria relating to impact on the character of the area, highway safety, the amenities of nearby properties and landscape considerations. The proposed development of solar panels is therefore acceptable in principle providing there is no significant harm to those areas identified.

Developments for renewable energy schemes which help to address climate change are encouraged in national planning guidance contained within PPS1, the Climate Change supplement to PPS1 and PPS22.

The main issues in this instance are therefore whether the proposed development would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and the amenities of nearby properties. There are no landscape considerations due to the nature of the site and, as the proposals do not create additional floorspace and are contained within the site complex, there would be no highways implications.

Design - Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Locality and Streetscene

The application site is a large factory sited on the edge of Crewe. The scale of the site means that it is visible from a wide area. The proposed solar panels, which would total approximately 40,000m² would be sited completely on the south facing roofs of five factory buildings. Views of the south facing roofs are available from nearby residential streets and properties. The proposed development does not create any additional floorspace but would project by 46mm from the existing roof slope. This increase in bulk of the building would be imperceptible from the surrounding area. The existing roofs are varying shades of grey in colour. The proposed development would alter this appearance to a dark shade of blue. Whilst the buildings are visible from the surrounding area the amount of roof space visible would generally be limited. It is considered that in this large factory setting, the scale of solar panels proposed in a dark blue colour, would not significantly alter the overall character of the site or cause a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The proposed development would provide significant benefits through the reduction of carbon emissions, this would outweigh any harm in the change in character and appearance of the site.

Impact on the Amenity of adjacent properties

The proposed development covers a substantial area of roofspace. There are residential properties located to the south which at their closest are 140m from the proposed development. The proposed development is a renewable energy source which does not generate any significant

noise output. In any event, the site is a largescale industrial premises which manufactures motor vehicles. Furthermore, there is railway line between the site and residential properties. Due to the nature of the development there would be no other amenity issues relating to disturbance, pollution, visual intrusion or traffic generation.

11. CONCLUSIONS

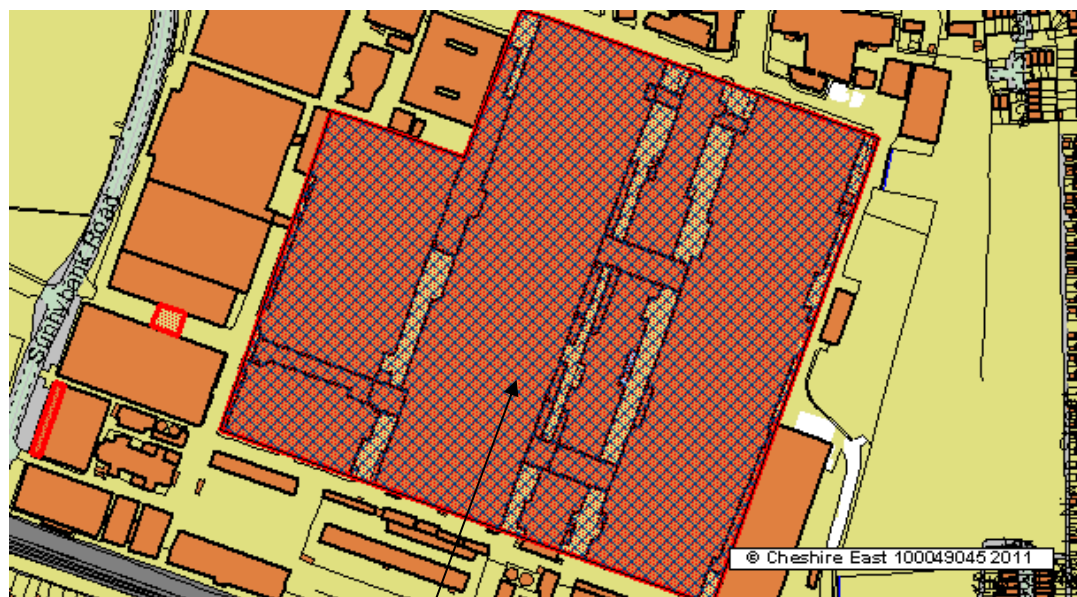
The proposed development is for a largescale solar panel installation on the south facing roofs of Bentley Motors. The scheme would provide significant environmental and economic benefits. The setting and nature of the site would mean that the proposed development would not cause any significantly detrimental harm on the character and appearance of the area. There would be no amenity issues arising from the proposed development. The proposed development is therefore considered to be in compliance with Policies NE.19 (Renewable Energy), BE.1 (Amenity), BE.2 (Design Standards) and BE.3 (Access and Parking) of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011 and guidance contained within PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development, PPS: Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1 and PPS22: Renewable Energy

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

APPROVE with conditions

- 1) Standard time limit**
- 2) Plans**
- 3) Materials as submitted**

Location plan



The Site