

Application No: 23/2225N

Location: Bentley Motors Limited, PYMS LANE, CREWE, CW1 3PL

Proposal: Construction of a new paint shop on the site of an existing colleague carpark including a four story office annex. Work includes the construction of two bridge links over Sunnybank Road, plant annexes and a roof terrace.

Applicant: Mr Andrew Robertson, Bentley Motors Ltd

Expiry Date: 01-Nov-2023

SUMMARY

The proposal is for a new production and manufacturing building for the existing Bentley Motors campus which would also require the building over of the existing car park to the west of the existing paintshop to provide for construction of a new paintshop building and attached offices.

This proposal would bring economic benefits and investment in an area with a longstanding association with the manufacture of motor vehicles. Bentley Motors are a major employer located within one of the principal growth areas of the Borough where national / local plan policies strongly support such development. Although a small segment of designated public open space would be lost to the south of the site this has to be balanced against the economic benefits of the proposals and the aspirations of the Council to realise the growth potential of Crewe and to allow for the growth of employment on this strategic employment site as defined in the Development Plan by encouraging investment in the area. The proposal prefigures the production of new electric vehicle products in the next few years within the Volkswagen/Bentley group and would allow for the Cheshire manufacturing site to prepare a business case to the VW Board in Germany in respect of this to bring manufacturing to Cheshire East.

The proposal is compatible with the surrounding development and the design, scale and form of the proposals would not appear incongruous within their context. The impact of the proposal on trees and hedges would not be significant and environmental considerations relating to flooding, drainage, land contamination, noise, public open space, and ecology would be acceptable subject to conditions and the inspection of further clarification the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) to be reported in the committee update for this application. The impact on neighbouring residential amenity would be acceptable and owing to the generous separation with the nearest neighbouring properties and having regard to the context of the area as a centre for automotive manufacturing. Satisfactory access and parking provision can be provided and the development would not result in material harm on the local highway network. A section of land owned by Bentley, as shown on plan 'Bentley Land take rev R1', that sits alongside the A530 is required to deliver the cycle/pedestrian scheme. To mitigate the highways impact of the proposal the applicant has agreed to contribute this land to the council, and this will be secured so that the land is delivered prior to the development being occupied or brought into use. This is to be achieved through developer contributions through section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to be agreed if the application is resolved to be approved by the Strategic Planning Board.

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS), the policies of the Cheshire East Site Allocations and Development Plan Document and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Approve with conditions.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

This application relates to the site of Bentley Motors, a large industrial site for the manufacturing of motor vehicles located on Pyms Lane, Crewe. The Crewe Bentley campus has been in situ for over 70 years and hosts the full lifecycle of motor car production, including design, research and development, engineering and manufacturing. The wider site is expansive and runs from Middlewich Road at the west, along Pyms Lane, now closed to traffic, to the border of residential housing estate to the east. The south of the wider site is bounded by the railway line. The whole site is covered by the Strategic Employment Site policy EMP1 in the Cheshire East Site Allocations and Development Policies Document, and the designated employment site CRE1 - Land at Bentley Motors - in the Cheshire East Site Allocations and Development Policies Document. The site is within the settlement boundary of Crewe.

The site edged red for this application is located largely on an area of existing car parking to the west of the existing paint shop, as part of the main factory complex. The existing paint shop and application site is divided by Sunnybank Road, closed to public traffic. To the south lies the recreation ground and sports/social club, known as 'Legends', for the use of Bentley workers and to the north Pyms Lane; beyond which there are office buildings associated with Bentley. To the west there is an area of further car parking, proposed to be retained, with a parking plaza, solar panels and the Bentley visitors centre further still to the west by Middlewich Road.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This is an application for full planning permission for the construction of a new paint shop with an approximate footprint of 166m by 70m, and total height of 22.5m. The proposal for the new building would have a floor area of over 15,000sqm in place of a large section of the car park, with access to remain from within the Bentley site. The proposed building would run parallel to the existing paintshop, essentially achieving broadly the same length as the existing factory floors of the main Bentley complex. It would include ancillary workshops on the ground floor but otherwise the paintshop itself which would be open throughout the sectional equivalent of three floors and the upper roof space. An additional four storey block would protrude from the northern elevation providing staffing facilities and offices on the third and fourth floors.

The building would be linked to the existing paintshop at the plant by two link bridges, the northernmost of which is annotated on plans as 'Link Bridge no.1', across Sunnybank Road, built at approx. 7.3m from ground level, some 5m in width and of approx. 40m length west to east. A second link to the south of the building, known as Link Bridge no. 2, would be built at a similar height above the perimeter road/Sunnybank Road, but would then angle 90 degrees to run for some 50m to the existing workshop to the south of the existing paintshop.

Bentley Signage is proposed to be displayed at the left hand side of the west facing side elevation, to be visible from the visitors centre and point of access to the site from Middlewich Road. This would be subject to separate advert consent.

To the south of the building the existing 6.5m approx. width service road currently dividing the car park and the sports ground would be extended a further approx. 50m to the existing car park to the west. New grass verges and a turning area for forklifts would be sited to the south of the building. A small existing building with conservatory associated with the sports centre would be demolished to make way for this.

RELEVANT HISTORY

There is an extensive planning history for the Bentley Motors site. However, the only applications of relevance to this proposal are as follows:

21/4054D Discharge of condition 24 of app 17/4011N - Hybrid Planning Application for - Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for means of access and layout for Production and Manufacturing Facility 2) for the erection of 2 no. production and manufacturing facilities; two covered links connecting one of the production and manufacturing facilities with Bentley's existing manufacturing facility; an engine test bed facility together with associated car parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure. Full planning application for the erection of a gatehouse, security fencing, pedestrian turnstile and associated turning facilities to the west of the existing Bentley Motors site on Pyms Lane; the erection of a gatehouse, security fence, pedestrian turnstile, bin store, reconfiguration of visitor parking and associated turning facilities to the east of the existing Bentley Motors site on Pyms Lane; the erection of a gatehouse, security fence, cycle store, pedestrian turnstile and associated turning facilities together with a further gate on Sunnybank Road *Approved 01/SEP/2021*

19/0680D Discharge of conditions 20, 24 and 25 on application 17/4011N - Hybrid Planning Application *Approved 09/APR/2019*

18/0228N - Construction of two 7,200sqm, 4 storey office blocks and related external works – Approved 26/APR/2018

17/4011N Hybrid Planning Application for - Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for means of access and layout for Production and Manufacturing Facility 2) for the erection of 2 no. production and manufacturing facilities; two covered links connecting one of the production and manufacturing facilities with Bentley's existing manufacturing facility; an engine test bed facility together with associated car parking, landscaping and associated infrastructure. Full planning application for the erection of a gatehouse, security fencing, pedestrian turnstile and associated turning facilities to the west of the existing Bentley Motors site on Pyms Lane; the erection of a gatehouse, security fence, pedestrian turnstile, bin store, reconfiguration of visitor parking and associated turning facilities to the east of the existing Bentley Motors site on Pyms Lane; the erection of a gatehouse, security fence, cycle store, pedestrian turnstile and associated turning facilities together with a further gate on Sunnybank Road. *Approved with conditions 09/APR/2019*

17/3150S EIA Screening request for proposed production & manufacturing development EIA Opinion Issued 22/NOV/2021

16/0341N - Demolition of all existing on-site buildings and structures, the construction of a five storey engineering technical centre comprising offices at the front of the building and

warehousing at the rear, the construction of a two storey design centre comprising offices and a workshop together with associated works – Approved 27-Oct-2017

15/4141N - Alterations to E1 Car Park, realignment of internal road, construction of a vehicle test building, relocation of Gate 3 Security Lodge and amendments to gate arrangement, installation of 5 No. entry gate positions and relocation of cycle and motor cycle shelters – Approved 18-Nov-2015

15/3869N - It is proposed to convert the existing field into a private car park for Bentley Motors. The site is an existing green area which will be converted to hard standing material to suit the needs of a car park. The car park will be enclosed with fences. North east and south of the proposed car park, a 14m width band will be dedicated for planting – Approved 18-Mar-2016

15/3665N - Construction of a 4 storey office building on the site of an existing carpark – Approved 28-Oct-2015

14/5262N - Proposed pre-fabricated building, complete with services to be installed as office and restrooms for lorry park on site at Bentley Motors – Approved 09-Feb-2015

14/2944N - Construction of a new Painted Body Store Warehouse and ancillary accommodation totalling approximately 5060sqm gross internal floor area. The relocation of fuel tanks and a fuel filling location. The proposed building comprises a large warehouse with one and a half portal frame structure, a single storey office annex to the North elevation with rest and WC facilities, an enclosed link to the existing adjacent warehouse to the east and an enclosed bridge link above the private road to the adjacent property to the North. A 10m overhanging canopy will be provided for the full width of the building to the west elevation and a 2m deep canopy to the north side of the east link – Approved 29-Aug-2014

13/5114N - Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) on application 12/4426N (proposed development of the site to provide a permanent car park with a total of 1817 car parking spaces plus lorry parking for up to 14 HGV's) – Approved 18-Feb-2014

12/4426N - Proposed development of the site to provide a permanent car park with a total of 1817 car parking spaces plus lorry parking for up to 14 HGVs – Approved 03-Jun-2013

12/4373N - New build showroom with associated car parking approved on 6th February 2013

12/3418N – Full planning permission approved to develop site to provide a permanent car park with a total of 478 parking spaces on 30th November 2012

12/4319N – Resolved to grant full planning permission (subject to S106 Obligation) for the erection of a two storey temporary office accommodation with links to an existing building to accommodate existing staff relocated on site on 1st May 2013

POLICIES

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS)

MP 1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

PG 1 Overall Development Strategy

PG 2 Settlement Hierarchy

PG 7 Spatial Distribution of Development Policy

SD 1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East Policy

SD 2 Sustainable Development Principles Policy

IN 1 Infrastructure

IN 2 Developer Contributions

EG 1 Economic Prosperity

EG 3 Existing and Allocated Employment Sites

SE 1 Design

SE 2 Efficient Use of Land

SE 3 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

SE 4 The Landscape

SE 5 Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

SE 6 Green Infrastructure

SE 7 Built Heritage

SE 9 Energy Efficient Development

SE 13 Flood Risk and Water Management

SC 2 Indoor and Outdoor Sports Facilities

CO 1 Sustainable Travel and Transport

CO 2 Enabling Business Growth Through Transport Infrastructure

CO 4 Travel Plans and Transport Assessments

Appendix C - Parking Standards

Cheshire East Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD)

EMP1 - Strategic Employment Area

EMP2 - Employment Allocations

GEN1 – Design Principles

PG9 - Settlement Boundaries

HOU12 - Amenity

REC1 - Open Space Protection

ENV1 - Ecological Network

ENV2 - Ecology

ENV5 - Landscaping

ENV6 - Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

ENV7 - Climate Change

ENV12 - Air Quality

ENV16 - Surface Water Management and Flood Risk

ENV17 - Protecting Water Resources

HER 7 Non Designated Heritage Asset

INF1 - Cycleways, Bridleways and Footpaths

INF3 - Highway Safety and Access

CRE1 - Land at Bentley Motors, Crewe

Neighbourhood Planning

There is no Neighbourhood Plan for Crewe.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

CONSULTATIONS

Environmental Protection - no objection subject to conditions on securing recommendations of noise report

Cadent Gas - no objection; recommends informatives relating to gas mains

United Utilities - no objection subject to conditions on drainage and SUDs.

Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) - holding objection until further information has been clarified; this has been submitted by the applicant and will be reviewed by the LLFA prior to the committee update

Environment Agency - no objection

Active Travel England - no consultation response

Greenspaces on behalf of Cheshire East Council (formerly known as ANSA) - requests mitigation for loss of open space

Nature Conservation - no objection subject to conditions

Highways - no objection subject to agreed s.106 agreement with applicant

Crewe Town Council - *'Whilst the committee did not object to the development, concern was raised relating to the use by those accessing the site on Sunnybank Road. It is sought that traffic accessing via Sunnybank Road is re-routed to reduce the impact on residential neighbours from employee and delivery traffic'*

REPRESENTATIONS

Ward Councillor Pratt - comments on parking availability - asks how the removal of the colleague car park will impact parking availability locally

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

Chapter 2 of the NPPF introduces the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which is the focus of policy MP1 of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS). This policy stipulates that proposals that accord with policies in the Development Plan will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Policy SD2 of the CELPS is the overarching policy in relation to the design of all proposals, requiring them to contribute positively to an area's character and identity in terms of design and the

relationship to the future and neighbouring occupiers. These considerations, along with others, are addressed in the following sections in this report.

The application site is within a designated strategic employment area. Site allocation CRE1 of the SADPD, 'Land at Bentley Motors, Pyms Lane', states that this site is allocated for employment purposes to support further investment by Bentley Motors in design, research and development, engineering and production facilities. Development proposals for the site should:

1. retain the existing sports facility, playing field and associated area of existing open space unless they are proven to be surplus to need, or suitable improved provision is created having regard to the requirements of LPS Policy SC 2 'Indoor and outdoor sports facilities';
2. as part of a travel plan, improve walking and cycling routes through the site and seek to maximise connections for pedestrians and cyclists to and from the site including, for cyclists, the Connect2 Crewe to Nantwich Greenway;
3. be sensitively designed to make sure that the amenity of residents in the vicinity of the site is not unacceptably affected; and
4. avoid any harm to heritage assets and their setting in accordance with LPS Policy SE 7 'The historic environment' and Policy HER 7 'Non-designated heritage assets' and having regard to the advice on mitigation measures contained in the Heritage Impact Assessment for the site submitted with the SADPD.

These considerations will be considered throughout the analysis of this proposal in the respective sections of the report. Particular attention should be paid to each of these criteria in the site allocation as they are directly addressed by the proposal following negotiations and discussions by officers to add value to the scheme.

Policy EMP1 of the SADPD states that these strategic employment areas are of particular significance to the economy of Cheshire East and will be protected for employment use as set out in CELPS Policy EG3 on existing and allocated employment sites. The proposal enhances the employment provision of Bentley Motors at this site and very substantial weight is afforded to the proposal in light of this.

The proposal is for a new B2 (industrial) advanced manufacturing building and associated infrastructure within a settlement boundary. Subject to all other relevant material considerations there is no policy reason to undermine the principle of development. In line of the presumption in favour of sustainable development outlined in the NPPF and CELPS policy MP1 the principle of development is considered acceptable subject to material considerations as set out below.

Design and Impact on Character of the Area

Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy Policy SD2 states that all development will be expected to contribute positively an area's character and identity, creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness in terms of;

- Height, scale, form and grouping
- Choice of materials
- External design features
- Massing of the development (the balance between built form and green/public spaces)
- Green infrastructure; and
- Relationship to neighbouring properties, street scene and the wider neighbourhood

Policy SE1 of the CELPS advises that the proposal should achieve a high standard of design and, wherever possible, enhance the built environment. It should also respect the pattern, character and form of the surroundings.

Policy GEN1 (Design Principles) sets a number of design principles that development proposals should meet. This includes the following; 1. create high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places, avoiding the imposition of standardised and/or generic design solutions where they do not establish and/or maintain a strong sense of quality and place; 2. create a sense of identity and legibility by using landmarks and incorporating key views into, within and out of new development; 3. reflect the local character and design preferences set out in the Cheshire East Borough Design Guide supplementary planning document unless otherwise justified by appropriate innovative design or change that fits in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

The main pattern of development on site is that of a tight, regularly arranged grid of warehouses and workshops. The proposed paintshop would extend this built form to the west and would read as a visually logical addition to the main factory complex when viewed from Pyms Lane to the north, the access from Middlewich Road and the visitor centre to the west; and points within the site to the south. The bulk of the existing factory would obscure view of the new structure from any point beyond to the east. The proposed structure would be significant in bulk and scale although when read from the public highway to the west it would not appear visually overbearing given the existing built form on site. Moreover, the existing paintshop reads as somewhat 'higgledy-piggledy' with a variety of chimneys, flues and roof apparatus which the proposed new paintshop would entirely screen, lending a tidier, rather more 'slick' appearance to the industrial campus.

The new building would be of contemporary and modern design. The proposed materials palette would be entirely in keeping with this advanced manufacturing facility and befits this strategic employment site and key part of the industrial base of Cheshire East. The facing materials at the walls would be white and dark grey composite flat aluminium panels set in a horizontal orientation, and similar white and dark grey composite profiled aluminium panels set in a vertical orientation., Metal rainscreen panels. aluminium feature panels fixed to the west elevation and an aluminium louvred screen for plant areas complete the appearance. Two green walls are also provided alongside the four storey block on the northern elevation. Minor amendments to the elevations have been received during the course of the application in line with the applicant's requirements which do not present material changes to this assessment.

In line with the requirement of site allocation CRE1 and policy HER7 of the SADPD and policy SE7 of the CELPS consideration has been had to the locally listed building at Bentley Motors. This would be located well beyond the site edged red to the east and would not be impacted in any way.

Overall then the proposal would comply with the above policies on visual amenity.

Impact on Residential Amenity

Policy SE12 of the CELPS states that the council will seek to ensure all development is located and designed so as not to result in a harmful or cumulative impact upon air quality, surface water and groundwater, noise, smell, dust, vibration, soil contamination, light pollution or any other pollution which would unacceptably affect the natural and built environment, or detrimentally affect amenity or cause harm. Developers will be expected to minimise and mitigate the effects of possible pollution arising from the development itself, or

as a result of the development (including additional traffic) during both the construction and the life of the development. Where adequate mitigation cannot be provided, development will not normally be permitted.

Policy HOU12 of the SADPD states that with reference to the residential standards set out in Table 8.2 'Standards for space between buildings', the Cheshire East Borough Design Guide supplementary planning document and other policies where relevant, development proposals must not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of adjoining or nearby occupiers of residential properties, sensitive uses, or future occupiers of the proposed development due to: 1. loss of privacy; 2. loss of sunlight and daylight; 3. the overbearing and dominating effect of new buildings; 4. environmental disturbance or pollution; or 5. traffic generation, access and parking.

The proposed industrial unit would generate a workforce of some 350 employees. The physical manufacturing process that would occur would be the painting of car bodies. Air handling units and local chillers will be installed in the building as part of the Mechanical Ventilation Strategy serving the manufacturing areas, offices and plant spaces. The application has stated that separate waste stream bins will be provided throughout the building which will be emptied daily and taken to the on-site recycling centre for treatment. The waste is then separated into bulk waste stream bins for recycling off site.

The Council's environmental protection team has reviewed the submitted noise report and environmental health detail and has no objection, subject to appropriate conditions in relation to this.

The proposed paint shop is within an existing complex of entirely industrial use buildings with no neighbouring residential uses. There is a sports/social club sited to the south but the introduction of further built form would not introduce any material amenity impacts on this given the existing use of the wider site.

Matters relating to parking and access will be discussed in the relevant section further in this report. Subject to this it is therefore found that policy HOU12 of the SADPD and policy SE12 of the CELPS would be complied with.

Public Open Space

Site allocation CRE1 states that proposals will be supported where it would retain the existing sports facility, playing field and associated area of existing open space unless they are proven to be surplus to need, or suitable improved provision is created having regard to the requirements of CELPS Policy SC 2 'Indoor and outdoor sports facilities'. The neighbouring sports facility falls outside the site edged red and would be retained.

This application triggers Policy SE6 requirements for open space provision. The location plan currently uses a colleague carpark but also encompasses an area of open space in the south classified as part of the outdoor sports facilities.

The Proposed Site Plan encroaches into the open space proposing a forklift truck service area, sprinkler tank, hardstanding and VIP drop off area.

This open space is protected within the SADPD Policy REC 1. Criterion 2 - The types of opens space to which this policy applies includes: existing areas of open space shown on the adopted policies map, such as formal town parks, playing fields, pitches and courts, play areas, allotments and amenity open space; other incidental open spaces, which are too small

to be shown on the adopted policies map. Development proposals that involve the loss of open space, as defined in Criterion 2 will not be permitted unless:

- i. in assessment has been undertaken that has clearly shown the open space is surplus to requirements; or
- ii. It would be replaced by equivalent or better open space in terms of quantity and quality and it is in a suitable location; or
- iii. The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss.

Consequently, there are two parts to this application from an open space perspective - a need to provide open space for the development and secondly to address the loss of existing open space in line with REC 1.

A roof terrace provides a green roof with paved terrace. An access strip of paving around the green roof is provided however it is understood to be a VIP area so it has been commented by the Council's open space team that it is questionable if current employees will benefit to mitigate the loss of the existing open space. Green walls and general landscaping are provided in areas 1, 2 and 3 in the visitor areas but again this does not directly benefit employees.

It has been recommended by the public open space officer that the design is revisited to provide increased open space provision for employees in terms of a 'break out' space.

In response, the applicant has provided detail identifying the existing and proposed green spaces on the site. The calculations as per the drawings are noted below.

Existing site: – mainly hedges and an inaccessible spoil heap

Perimeter hedge: 321,421m length

Green area (Grass and plants/small bushes): 564m²

Grass spoil heap: 1,640m²

TOTAL: 2,204m²

Proposed scheme: - New grass areas, planting, shrubs, trees, green roof and green walls.

Green grass area and planting: 1,735m²

Shrubs and planting: 238m²

Green roof: 834m²

TOTAL: 2,807m²

Green Walls: 350m²

None of the existing green spaces are useable by workers on site. The current space referred to by the public open space as 'lost' space at the southern part of the site is actually a spoil heap from the build of the 'Legends' sports facility, it is not accessible for colleagues and is hedged on all sides. The applicant has stated that the new proposal provides more accessible green space for colleagues to use than on the existing site. The loss of hedgerow will be replaced by shrub planting around the perimeters. This can be conditioned as per the remarks in the trees/ecology section of this report.

In addition to the landscaped areas at ground level, Bentley are providing a substantial area of green roof (834m²) and adjacent paved terrace (310m²) which is accessible for all Bentley workers to enjoy via the dedicated entrance to the south east of the building. (VIP is just a term used for areas that are part of the VIP tours around the site). As well as this, the

scheme provides 2 large green walls at the front of the site creating more visual interest and greenery.

The applicant has stated that there will be 'plenty of external amenity and sport areas recently added to the adjacent site in the last 12 months, this also includes greenhouses, beehives and allotments etc.' In terms of policy REC 1: Open space protection, it is therefore important to fully assess the proposal in light of this. The response to each criterion is noted below

Policy REC 1: Open Space Protection:

1. *Development proposals that involve the loss of open space, as defined in Criterion 2 below, will not be permitted unless:*
 - i. *an assessment has been undertaken that has clearly shown the open space is surplus to requirements;*

The development provides more green space and useable green space.

- ii. *it would be replaced by equivalent or better open space in terms of quantity and quality and it is in a suitable location;*

The green space proposed is useable whereas the existing mound is not. The applicant has stated that the new proposals offer better quality and variation of green spaces; planting, green roof, green wall.

- iii. *the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss.*

The applicant has provided a plan showing the new outdoor sports, amenities, allotments, greenhouses and bee hives directly to the south of the site.

2. *The types of open space to which this policy applies includes: existing areas of open space shown on the adopted policies map, such as formal town parks, playing fields, pitches and courts, play areas, allotments and amenity open space; other incidental open spaces, which are too small to be shown on the adopted policies map, but which are of public value for informal recreation or visual amenity; and open spaces provided through new development yet to be shown on the adopted policies map.*

The applicant has stated that the proposals provide more accessible and useable green spaces than the existing site, that also provide greater visual amenity. The proposals also include gabion walls to deal with the changes in levels which provide further visual benefits to the site.

The impact on the land designated as green space then must be considered in the context of what use that space currently serves and the context of the wider Bentley site which has extensive sports and recreation facilities which would not be impacted by the proposal. Finally, this needs to be considered in the planning balance of the scheme as a whole, taking into account the substantial weight afforded to the site's employment designation, the economic benefits afforded by the scheme, and the added value secured by improvements to the Connect2 cycleway scheme, as detailed further in the report below.

Highways

Policy CO1 of the CELPS states, inter alia, that to deliver the council objectives of delivering a safe, sustainable, high quality, integrated transport system that encourages a modal shift away from car travel to public transport, cycling and walking; supportive of the needs of residents and businesses and preparing for carbon free modes of transport, the council will expect development to: 1. Reduce the need to travel by: i. Guiding development to sustainable and accessible locations or locations that can be made sustainable and accessible; ii. Ensuring development gives priority to walking, cycling and public transport within its design; iii. Encouraging more flexible working patterns and home working; iv. Supporting improvements to communication technology for business, education, shopping and leisure purposes and; v. Supporting measures that reduce the level of trips made by single occupancy vehicles.

Policy INF3 of the SADPD states that development proposals should: i. comply with the relevant Highway Authority's and other highway design guidance; ii. provide safe access to and from the site for all highway users and incorporate safe internal movement in the site to meet the requirements of servicing and emergency vehicles; iii. make sure that development traffic can be satisfactorily assimilated into the operation of the existing highway network so that it would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or result in severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network; iv. incorporate measures to assist access to, from and within the site by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users and meets the needs of people with disabilities; and v. not generate movements of heavy goods vehicles on unsuitable roads, or on roads without suitable access to the classified highway network.

Sustainable access

The site is within the wider Bentley site and footway access from the new building to the wider Crewe area will be available including to nearby bus stops.

SADPD site allocation CRE1 states that development proposals should as part of a travel plan, improve walking and cycling routes through the site and seek to maximise connections for pedestrians and cyclists to and from the site including, for cyclists, the Connect2 Crewe to Nantwich Greenway;

There is the existing Connect2 off-road cycle/pedestrian link that runs alongside the A530 Middlewich Rd, from Nantwich to Crewe then continues in an eastwards direction through Crewe. Cheshire East Council have plans to extend this route northbound and past the Bentley site and Pym's Ln, and onto the new Local Plan development sites around the Leighton area of northwest Crewe. This will provide additional cycle and pedestrian access from the Bentley site to Nantwich and areas of Crewe and will assist in mitigating the loss of parking provision and highways impact of the development by creating a safer cycle access and wider choice of travel modes to and from the site for Bentley staff.

Some land owned by Bentley, as shown on plan 'Bentley Land take rev R1', that sits alongside the A530 is required to deliver the cycle/pedestrian scheme. To mitigate the highways impact of the proposal the applicant has agreed to contribute this land to the council, and this should be secured so that the land is delivered prior to the development being occupied or brought into use. Cycle parking has not been mentioned and a condition for this is also required.

Policy CO2 of the CELPS states, inter alia, that the council will support new developments that are (or can be made) well connected and accessible by enabling development by

supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and / or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of development proposals including: i. Supporting schemes outlined within the current Infrastructure Delivery Plan / Local Transport Plan; ii. Where new or improved infrastructure is provided, supporting measures to improve the walking, cycling and sustainable travel environment on routes relieved of traffic; iii. Supporting improvements to communication technology for business, education, shopping and leisure purposes; iv. Supporting the improvement of rail infrastructure - especially facilities at railway stations; v. Supporting the improvement of national motorway network facilities, where appropriate; vi. Providing recharging points for hybrid or electric vehicles in major developments in order to reduce carbon emissions; and vii. For residential and non-residential development, where there is clear and compelling justification that it is necessary to manage the road network, proposals should adhere to the current adopted Cheshire East Council Parking Standards for Cars and Bicycles set out in Appendix C (Parking Standards).

Policy INF1 of the SADPD states that development proposals should seek, where feasible, to provide links to national cycle routes, long-distance footpaths, canal towpaths and rights of way network.

In this regard the proposed developer contribution towards the cycle scheme would not only mitigate for the loss of parking within the site but would also help the Council to meet its strategic goals in relation to sustainable travel and transport as outlined in policies CO1 and CO2 of the CELPS and policy INF1 of the SADPD.

Safe and suitable access

No new access will be created to the public highway and given the extent of the existing site, the existing access points are considered acceptable. Any HGV movement associated with the development will continue to use the access via Pyms Ln.

Parking

The development will be on an existing Bentley car park with the loss of 858 parking spaces, with no additional parking proposed. To justify this the applicant carried out a parking survey over the last week in August, outside of the Bentley's summer shutdown period, to determine the parking capacity and occupancy.

The surveys were carried out over 3 working days in the morning time, early afternoon and late afternoon, and included all the spaces south of Pyms Ln and west of Sunnybank Rd. The car parks have a total capacity of just over 3,400 spaces.

Of all the surveyed days and times, the peak occupancy was on day 1 morning with 2,342 spaces taken with 1,062 vacant spaces remaining. The 2nd busiest was day 2 early afternoon with 1,294 vacant spaces. Late afternoon was the least busy time with upwards of 2,500 vacant spaces. After the proposal is developed the surveys therefore indicate that there would be approximately 200 vacant spaces at the busiest time. These would cater for this current proposed development but in addition as mitigation for the loss of parking a contribution of land from the applicant to Cheshire East is required, which would help deliver the cycle scheme and encourage modes of travel to the site other than the car.

The current over provision of parking dates back to a 2012 application to construct the western section of the car park and also an R&D campus on the site of current proposal on the car park. The new carpark was completed around 2014 but the R&D campus was

instead developed to the north side of Pyms Lane rather than on the existing carpark. In addition, a significant number of Bentley employees now work from home post covid.

Subject to the transfer of land (to be secured through a legal agreement), from the information provided there will be sufficient parking within the Bentley site and the proposal will not result in parking over spilling onto the public highway, and is therefore acceptable with the appropriate conditions.

Drainage and Flood Risk

Policy SE13 of the CELPS, in line with chapter 15 of the NPPF, states that developments must integrate measures for sustainable water management to reduce flood risk, avoid an adverse impact on water quality and quantity within the borough and provide opportunities to enhance biodiversity, health and recreation, in line with national guidance. Policy ENV16 of the SADPD states, that in order to manage surface water drainage effectively and reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere, in accordance with LPS Policy SE 13 'Flood risk and water management', development proposals should satisfy the following criteria. It should be demonstrated how surface water runoff can be appropriately managed. Surface water runoff should be managed to achieve: i. on greenfield sites, at least no increase in runoff rates, and a reduction in rates where possible; and ii. on previously developed sites, a reduction in existing runoff rates in line with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (2015) or any subsequent replacement standards.

Bentley have Environmental Agency consent to discharge their waste via the foul drainage. There are no large quantities of trade effluent.

Cheshire East Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) has reviewed the application and based on the submitted information they would place a holding objection until the below conditions have been satisfied: Details of the party responsible for the maintenance of flood mitigation assets -The below pipes show flooding in the 1 in 100 + CC rainfall event. The LLFA has also stated that they will require evidence of how this flooding will be contained within the site boundary. A detailed surface water management plan is required to ensure that the development is in accordance with NPPF and local planning policies. It should be ensured that all major developments have sufficient surface water management, are not at increased risk of flooding and do not increase flood risk off-site.

To this end the applicant has submitted extensive technical detail to respond to the LLFA's comments which are being reviewed at the time of authoring this report and will be reported back in the committee update.

Trees and Ecology

There are no protected trees on site. A section of native hedgerow would be lost as a result of the proposed development with a co-responding loss of biodiversity. Native hedgerows are a priority habitat and hence a material consideration. If the loss of the existing hedgerow is considered unavoidable the LPA's ecologist has recommend that replacement planting be proposed as a means of compensating for its loss. This can be conditioned at discharge of conditions stage to make the development compliant with policies ENV6 of the SADPD and SE5 of the CELPS on trees and hedgerows, and to ensure appropriate landscaping is provided along the lines of the requirements of policy ENV5 of the SADPD.

The loss of the existing hedgerow and minor tree losses on site would result in a minor loss of suitable nesting bird habitat. If planning consent is granted a standard breeding birds condition would be required to safeguard nesting birds:

The proposed development would result in the demolition of buildings and a single tree would be lost that has been identified as having potential to support roosting bats. However, considering the nature of the application site and surroundings the Council's ecologist has advised that roosting bats are not reasonably likely to be present or affected by the proposed development.

Policy SE3 of the CELPS requires all developments to aim to positively contribute to the conservation of biodiversity and policy ENV2 of the SADPD requires developments to achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain. With the exception of the existing hedgerow the application site supports very limited semi-natural habitat, with only small areas of amenity grassland landscaping being present around the site which is predominantly buildings and hard standing. No detailed landscaping proposals have been submitted, but the proposed development, with the exception of the loss of hedgerow discussed above, is likely to be neutral in respect of biodiversity losses and gains.

The Council's ecologist has noted that the application site is located relatively close to the Crewe Swift Colony Local Wildlife Site, so the incorporation of features for this species might be beneficial and could be secured by means of the appropriate condition if consent were granted.

CIL REGULATIONS

In order to comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010, it is necessary for planning applications with legal agreements to consider the issue of whether the requirements within the S106 satisfy the following: a) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; a) Directly related to the development; and b) Fair and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. It is considered that the contributions required as part of the application are justified meet the Council's requirement for policy compliance. All elements are necessary, directly relate to the development and are fair and reasonable in relation to the scale and kind of development. The non-financial requirements ensure that the development will be delivered in full. On this basis the S106 the scheme is compliant with the CIL Regulations 2010.

CONCLUSION and PLANNING BALANCE

The considerations relating to the comments of all statutory consultees have been noted and addressed in the report, subject to a committee update from the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA).

Substantial weight is afforded to the clear policy support for the proposal at this site in the form of CRE1 Bentley Motors employment allocation. This proposal would bring economic benefits and investment in an area with a longstanding association with the manufacture of motor vehicles. Bentley Motors are a major employer located within one of the principal growth areas of the Borough where national / local plan policies strongly support such development.

Although a small segment of designated public open space would be lost to the south of the site this has to be balanced against the economic benefits of the proposals and the

aspirations of the Council to realise the growth potential of Crewe and to allow for the growth of employment on this strategic employment site as defined in the Development Plan by encouraging investment in the area. The proposal prefigures the production of new electric vehicle products in the next few years within the Volkswagen/Bentley group and would allow for the Cheshire manufacturing site to prepare a business case to the VW Board in Germany in respect of this to bring manufacturing to Cheshire East.

Planning officers have worked with the applicant to secure agreement to a section 106 agreement to provide for the Connect2 cycleway scheme at Middlewich Road which clearly fulfils the aspirations of local planning policy in relation to this key Strategic Employment site.

This planning application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to section 106 agreement to secure the following:

Section 106	Ask	Trigger
Highway improvements to Connect2 off road Nantwich to Crewe pedestrian and cycleway link	Transfer of section of land marked on Bentley Land Take drawing Rev R1	Prior to the development being occupied or brought into use

and the following planning conditions:

1. Time limit (3 years)
2. Approved plans
3. Materials
4. Submission of replacement planting/landscaping scheme
5. Accordance with recommendations of Noise Impact Assessment (NIA)
6. Foul and Surface Water Drainage
7. Submission of SUDs scheme prior to occupation
8. Survey for Nesting Birds
9. Biodiversity Net Gain - Nesting Birds
10. Cycle Parking

