

Application No: 12/4319N

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

Proposal: Erection of a two storey temporary office accommodation with links to an existing building to accommodate existing staff relocated on site.

Applicant: Mr Andrew Robertson

Expiry Date: 07-Feb-2013

### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

**Approve with conditions and subject to a Planning Obligation for provision of pedestrian crossing(s)**

### **MAIN ISSUES**

- **Principle of Development**
- **Design, Character and Appearance**
- **Parking, Highway Safety and Traffic Generation**
- **Impact on Amenity of Adjacent Properties**

## **1. REASON FOR REFERRAL**

This application is to be determined by Southern Planning Committee as the proposal exceeds 1000 square metres in floorspace.

## **1. 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 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 applicant's ownership for car parking and ancillary development. There are numerous large factory buildings within the site. The application site itself relates to a portion of land situated along the eastern boundary of the site, to the rear of buildings fronting Pym's Lane. Some of the buildings fronting the site are Art Deco and are on the Council's Local List of Historic Buildings. The site falls entirely within the settlement boundary of Crewe as designated in the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011

## **2. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

This application proposes the erection of a two storey temporary office building with links to an existing building to accommodate existing staff relocated on site.

### **3. RELEVANT HISTORY**

There is an extensive history for the site.

### **4. POLICIES**

#### **Local Plan Policy**

BE.13 (Buildings of Local Interest)

BE.1 (Amenity)

BE.2 (Design Standards)

BE.3 (Accessing and Parking)

E.4 (Development on Existing Employment Areas)

TRAN.3 Pedestrians

TRAN.8 Existing Car Parks

TRAN.9 Car Parking Standards

#### **Other Material Considerations**

National Planning Policy Framework

### **5. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)**

**Strategic Highways Manager:** No objection subject to the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities.

**Environmental Health:** None received.

### **6. VIEWS OF THE TOWN / PARISH COUNCIL**

N/A

### **8. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS**

None received at time of writing report

### **9. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Design and Access Statement

### **10. OFFICER APPRAISAL**

#### **Main Issues**

The main issues in this instance are whether the proposed development is acceptable in principle, whether it would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area, the locally listed buildings, and the amenities of nearby properties, and also highway considerations.

## **Principle of Development**

The proposed temporary office accommodation is needed to assist the relocation of existing staff at the site. Bentley Motors are a large local employer who are seeking to improve and reconfigure their facilities in order to work more effectively and efficiently within the main office and production areas of the plant to enable future growth. The proposals will therefore assist in the economic growth of the existing business and the area as a whole.

In terms of the local plan policy, the site is within in the settlement boundary where development is acceptable provided that it is compatible with surrounding uses and accords with other relevant local plan policies.

In terms of compatibility, the use would be for a purpose which is ancillary to the existing employment use at Bentley Motors and is therefore considered to be acceptable and complimentary in principle when considering the proposal against the Crewe Local Plan. The proposal would be well related to the operations and built development as it would attach and link with the existing buildings on the eastern edge of the site. Whilst there are residential properties located to the east of the site, the proposed office use would be less intense than the existing operations and by their nature, would not conflict with neighbouring uses.

Ultimately, the proposal will assist in the longer term vision and future expansion of Bentley Motors being realised. There are clear benefits arising from the scheme that would support job creation and the economic growth of the locality and the Borough. It is considered that such benefits are in line with the local plan and the aims of the NPPF and as such, the principle of the development is deemed to be acceptable.

## **Design - Character and Appearance**

Given that the application relates to the site of a large factory, the size and scale of the proposed office accommodation would appear subordinate to the main plant. Further, its positioning midway back along the eastern boundary means that it would not be prominent from Pym's Lane, as it would be tucked away behind existing built development.

In design terms, the proposed building would be two-storey, of modular construction and would be configured in an 'L' shape arrangement where it would wrap round the corner of an existing building. In terms of height and scale, the proposal would not be out of keeping with adjacent buildings. With respect to visual appearance, the proposal would be clad with grey metal cladding and would take on a contemporary style. Similar style modular office accommodation has been constructed elsewhere on the site.

Having regard to pattern and character of the existing development in the area, in design terms, it is not considered that the proposals will harm the visual appearance of the site or surrounding area or locally listed buildings. Subject to appropriate materials, which could be secured by condition, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in design terms.

## **Parking, Highway Safety and Traffic Generation**

Policy BE.3 deals with access and parking and states that development will only be permitted where proposals provide:

- safe pedestrian access
- the provision of any off street parking
- manoeuvring and operational space should be designed to minimise visual impact
- safe vehicular access and egress arrangements

The Strategic Highways Manager has viewed the application and is satisfied that any additional vehicular movements and parking requirements as a result of the proposals could be catered for by the existing parking provision on the opposite side of Pym's Lane. It is important to note that one such temporary car park has recently had approval to make it permanent with an increase in provision.

Whilst there are no concerns with respect to parking arrangements, there is concern for the safe pedestrian access and egress to the site by existing and future employees. Currently, there are no pedestrian crossings catering for such pedestrian movement from the existing car parks on the northern side of Pym's Lane over to the main factory plant on the southern side. This proposal would exacerbate this situation and would result in additional harm. To that end, the Strategic Highways Manager has requested that provision should be made for some crossings to accommodate these movements.

It is considered that such measures are required to mitigate the harm generated by the proposals and as such, would be in line with the relevant tests outlined in the Community Infrastructure Levy.

The applicant has agreed to this, and therefore subject to Unilateral Undertaking (which is currently being drafted) or failing that, a S106, the proposal is deemed to be acceptable in respect of highways.

### **Impact on the Amenity of Adjacent Properties**

There are residential properties located to the east of the site, comprising a recently built cul-de-sac development. However, the nearest property side's onto proposed eastern boundary of the site where the office accommodation would look out. There is a strip of land separating the site from the nearest neighbour, and the nearest properties do not have any primary windows that directly face the site. The proposal would meet the minimum separation distances advised in the Council's guidance relating to new residential development, and therefore it is not considered that proposal would materially harm neighbouring amenity by reason of loss of light, direct overlooking, visual intrusion or noise.

## **11. CONCLUSIONS**

The principle of the development is compatible with surrounding land uses and would facilitate the delivery of new jobs and economic growth for Bentley Motors, a large local employer. The design of the proposals would not impact detrimentally on the character, appearance or landscaping of the site or locally listed buildings. The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact upon residential amenity, and subject to the provision of pedestrian crossings, is acceptable in highways terms. The proposal therefore complies with the relevant local plan policy requirements and accordingly is recommended for approval.

## **12. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**APPROVE** subject to completion of a Unilateral Undertaking or S106 Agreement to secure pedestrian crossing(s) and subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Standard time limit (3 years)**
- 2) Development to be carried out in accordance with approved plans**
- 3) Materials / colours to be submitted**
- 4) Hours of construction limited**
- 5) Hours of piling limited**
- 6) Acoustic Enclosure of any Fans / Compressors to be submitted**

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