

Application No: 16/4268N

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

Proposal: Installation of solar panels on a dedicated car ports situated on existing car park

Applicant: Mr Andrew Robertson, Bentley Motors Ltd

Expiry Date: 30-Nov-2016

**SUMMARY:**

The site has permission for car parking for employees of the Bentley Motors manufacturing facility.

The NPPF requires that Local Planning Authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources.

The proposal would satisfy the economic and social sustainability roles by providing energy from a renewable, low carbon source.

The development is considered to be acceptable in terms of design, highway safety and amenity.

It is considered that the scheme represents a sustainable form of development supported by local policy and the NPPF and that the planning balance weighs in favour of supporting the development subject to conditions.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Approve subject to conditions.**

**PROPOSAL**

This application is for the installation of solar panels on car ports, a wind sensor pole and 11k Distribution Network Operator (DNO) building, on the existing employee car park.

**SITE DESCRIPTION**

The site is adjoined to the east by a large staff car park for Bentley Motors as well as 'The Legends Sports and Social Club'. The main production plant is further to the east across Sunnybank Road. On the opposite side of Pym's Lane to the north, is the Pym's Lane Waste

Recycling Centre as well as other industrial and commercial units and associated parking further along. To the south is the Crewe to Chester railway line which runs within a cutting. There is a domestic property situated along the western boundary of the site and the proposed development would wrap around the rear garden of this dwelling.

The site falls entirely within the settlement boundary of Crewe as designated in the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011 and occupies part of a larger site waste allocation as designated in the Cheshire Waste Replacement Local Plan.

## **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:

P06/0022 - Outline Planning permission approved for Industrial Storage and Distribution (B1, B2 and B8) on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2006.

12/4373N - New build showroom with associated car parking approved on 6<sup>th</sup> 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 30<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> May 2013

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 03-Jun-2013

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

## **NATIONAL & LOCAL POLICY**

### **National Policy:**

The National Planning Policy Framework establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Of particular relevance are paragraphs 93 to 98.

### **Development Plan:**

The Development Plan for this area is the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011, which allocates the site as being within the within Open Countryside.

The relevant Saved Policies are: -

BE.1 – Amenity

BE.2 – Design Standards  
BE.3 – Access and Parking  
BE.4 – Drainage, Utilities and Resources  
BE.5 – Infrastructure  
NE.19 – Renewable Energy

The saved Local Plan policies are consistent with the NPPF and should be given full weight.

### **Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy Proposed Changes (Consultation Draft) March 2016 (CELP)**

The following are considered relevant material considerations as indications of the emerging strategy:

SD 1 Sustainable Development in Cheshire East  
SD 2 Sustainable Development Principles  
SE 1 Design  
SE 2 Efficient Use of Land  
SE 8 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy  
SE 9 Energy Efficient Development  
SE 12 Pollution, Land Contamination and Land Instability  
EG1 Economic Prosperity

### **CONSULTATIONS:**

#### **Network Rail:**

Make comments relating to land adjacent to the existing operational railway.

#### **Minshull Vernon Parish Council**

No objection.

### **REPRESENTATIONS:**

At the time of report writing, no objections have been received relating to this application.

### **APPRAISAL**

The key issues to be considered in the determination of this application are set out below.

#### **Principle of Development**

The principle of car parking on this site has already been established under application numbers 12/4426N and 13/5114N which have now been implemented.

The issue in question is whether this proposal represents sustainable development and whether the requirements of other policies contained within the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

#### **Sustainability**

There are three dimensions to sustainable development: - economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

***an environmental role*** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy

***an economic role*** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

***a social role*** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and

*These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependent.*

## **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

### **Design & Layout**

The proposal involves the car park being laid out as previously approved with the addition of the solar panel 'car ports' being installed. These would have some visual impact on the area, but it is not considered that it would be any worse than the visual impact of parked vehicles on the site.

The proposal is therefore considered to be in compliance with Policy BE.2 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan.

### **Highways**

The proposal would not result in the loss of parking provision at the site; therefore there are no highway implications. The proposal is therefore in compliance with Policy BE.3 of the adopted local plan.

### **Renewable Energy**

The proposal is for solar panels for the production of renewable energy, which meets the requirements of Policy NE.19 of the adopted local plan and policy SE 8 of the emerging local plan.. The NPPF supports the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and in paragraph 93 states that it is “*central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.*” As such in these terms it is considered to be acceptable.

## **ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY**

The Framework includes a strong presumption in favour of economic growth.

Paragraph 19 states that:

‘The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth’

With regard to the economic role of sustainable development, the proposed development will provide renewable energy to the Bentley facility to the economic benefit of the company and therefore the economy.

## **SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

As stated in the Environmental Sustainability Section, paragraph 93 considers the provision of renewable and low carbon energy to be central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

### **Built Heritage**

This site lies close to the locally listed Art Deco design Bentley’s building. Whilst the proposed height of the mounts will make the solar array more visible than is usual, the distance of the proposed array from the locally listed building, the presence of other buildings between the array and the locally listed building and the presence of the existing boundary hedges to Pyms Lane will all serve to reduce the impact of the current proposals upon the locally listed building and its setting.

### **Conclusion – The Planning Balance**

The site is already used for car parking for employees of the Bentley Motors manufacturing facility.

The NPPF requires that Local Planning Authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources.

The proposal would satisfy the economic and social sustainability roles by providing energy from a renewable, low carbon source.

The development is considered to be acceptable in terms of design, highway safety and amenity.

It is considered that the scheme represents a sustainable form of development supported by local policy and the NPPF and that the planning balance weighs in favour of supporting the development subject to conditions.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Approve subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. Time limit**
- 2. Approved plans**
- 3. Materials in accordance with the details submitted with the application**

**In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Planning (Regulation) has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Southern Planning Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.**

