BENTLEY MOTORS DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND MASTERPLAN

CONSULTATION REPORT

MARCH 2017
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Bentley Development Framework and Masterplan details the vision of Bentley Motors Ltd to create an advanced manufacturing and business ‘campus’ in Crewe to safeguard and support future growth of Bentley in the town. This vision has been developed in consultation with Cheshire East Council, and supported by the Skills and Growth Company.

In order for Cheshire East Council to decide whether to endorse this vision, a consultation was required. This consultation has enabled local residents and stakeholders to state their views on the vision, and also input into Bentley Motors’ plans at an early pre-planning stage.

The consultation was undertaken over a 6 week period between the 3rd January 2017 and 14th February 2017, avoiding the Christmas break and is the standard timescale for a planning application. During this time 369 formal submissions were received and an additional 10 letters received.

Given the early stage of development of this vision, the consultation asked only two quantitative questions on the principles of the campus and growth of Bentley Motors, and importantly allowed for an open response to ensure that all issues were captured.

Overall the consultation showed that;
- 70% of respondents indicated that they would tend to support or strongly support the growth of Bentley Motors.
- 48% of respondents supported the creation of the campus, whilst 39% objected.

We received a range of responses, including a significant number of positive submissions. These raised the following considerations:
- Concerns over the impact of the road closures on already congested roads;
- Closing access points to the public but leaving them open for Bentley staff;
- Parking of Bentley employees on residential streets close-by;
- Phasing of road closures with highways improvements and other works across Crewe;
- Access to the Household Waste Recycling Centre and where it could move to;
- Accessibility for emergency vehicles and bus services.

All comments have been reviewed and responded to in this report, and the consultation has resulted in a number of changes being made to the Development Framework (changes to the revised Development Framework are illustrated in blue for new text and red to show removed text in the document), in particular:
- Greater clarity has been provided over the status of the masterplan, the reasons for the proposed campus structure, and the effects this will have.
- Further emphasis has been placed on highways mitigation measures needed in the surrounding area, and the need to support sustainable transport to reduce travel to and from the site.
- Further detail has been provided on the process that will need to be followed in order to apply for planning permission for the proposed changes.
- Further areas have been added to the map detailing areas where mitigation work is likely to be needed.

This report has been provided to Bentley Motors and Cheshire East Council to inform the decision on whether to endorse the Masterplan, any future planning application made by Bentley Motors.
BACKGROUND TO THE MASTERPLAN

The Bentley Draft Development Framework and Masterplan has been prepared to provide a structure which will underpin development, and support a vision for the future growth of Bentley in Crewe. It sets out Bentley’s aspirations over the next 30 years to improve their site and secure their ability to adapt and grow. In order to facilitate this they are seeking to create a ‘campus’ area surrounding and encompassing the current facilities on Pym’s Lane.

The Bentley Development Framework and Masterplan has full regard to adopted and emerging local planning policies, national planning policy and the surrounding site context. It does not replace a planning application, or allow for the creation of the campus. The masterplan itself will form a material consideration for future planning applications, including any planning application which proposes the stopping up of Pyms Lane or Sunnybank Road. These future planning applications will be subject to further technical assessment, including transport impact assessments, and will be required to undertake consultation with the local community.

The decision to produce a Development Framework and Masterplan was made in order to consult at an early stage with all stakeholders locally around Bentley’s vision, so that Bentley and Cheshire East Council can better understand the concerns and feelings of the public, local residents and stakeholders.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Bentley Draft Development Framework and Masterplan will not form part of the adopted Development Plan; however, it will be a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications at the campus including the proposed closure of Pyms Lane or Sunnybank Road. Following best practice, the Development Framework has been subject to a significant degree of consultation and publicity. The process adopted is broadly in line with that carried out for Supplementary Planning Documents as set out in the Cheshire East Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

The Cheshire East Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) adopted on 14th October 2010, sets out how Cheshire East Council will consult when producing planning documents including Supplementary Planning Documents.

The consultation consisted of:

- A dedicated webpage on the Cheshire East website from the 29th November 2016 through to the 14th February 2017.

- A page on the consultation portal was provided.

- A simple questionnaire available in hard copies and available online, covering the campus and the growth of Bentley in Crewe, and an open section to canvas the widest range of views from respondents.
- **A Key Questions Answered** document was provided with the online survey link and accompanying the hard copy Masterplans and questionnaires in order to provide answers to some basic questions about the Masterplan (Appendix 4).

- **Press coverage**, including the front cover of the Crewe and Nantwich Chronicle (Appendix 1).

- Hard copies delivered to the main council offices and all libraries within the Borough and provided for members of the public to review.

- Social media with links to the Cheshire East Council’s Website and details of the public consultation events posted by both The Skills and Growth Company and Cheshire East (Appendix 3).

- Specific emails were sent to stakeholders and councillors which informed them of the consultation, the events and the method to complete the questionnaire.

- **A Briefing Session** at Bentley Motors on the 23rd November 2016, for Borough Members and Crewe Town Council, and additional one-to-one sessions with Members as required.

- Two **public consultation events** were held at Bentley Legends Conference Centre, one being on a Thursday evening (12th January 3-8pm) and the second on a Saturday (14th January 10am-2pm).

During the consultation period further press coverage was received with articles in local newspapers and coverage on two local television news programmes, also the Public consultation events received attention on **local radio**.

In addition there was a good amount of engagement in discussions on **social media** in relation to the plan. Although social media comments have not been separately recorded within the consultation responses the discussions centred on themes which are brought out in the questionnaire and letter responses which are shown in Appendix 5.

Outside of the consultation, local councillors also organised a community meeting at St George’s Community Centre on 6th February 2017, and attendees were encouraged to complete the online questionnaire.
Given the early stage of development of the Bentley vision, the questionnaire was kept very high level to canvas for the widest possible range of views from residents and other stakeholders.

Two measurable questions were included to gauge overall support for the growth of Bentley Motors in Crewe, and support for the creation of the campus. Respondents had the ability to rank responses from ‘Strongly Support’ to ‘Strongly Object’.

The open ‘comment’ box was specifically used so as not to lead respondents into answering questions in a certain way, and so that the widest range of responses possible was gained.

The questionnaire then went on to ask for some personal circumstance information for review of the respondents.
CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The overall response to the consultation activities were:

- 369 responses to the consultation were received through the paper or online questionnaire.

- Approximately 100 residents attended the consultation events held at Bentley Legends on Thursday 12th and Saturday 14th January.

- 10 letters were also received and incorporated into the response matrix.

RESPONSES - MAPPING

The geographical split of the responses received overall can be seen on the map below.

The majority of responses were received in proximity to the Bentley site in Crewe; however, responses were also received from further afield including Alsager, Wrexham and Chester.

Additional maps are available in Appendix 6 showing the full range of responses there are also three additional maps showing the postcode ranges of three of the main response themes, Highways issues (HW1), Highways phasing (Mitigation H F) and general objections.

Again these maps demonstrate the number of areas from which consultation responses were received.
RESPONSES - QUESTIONS

In respect of the quantitative questions the results of the survey can be seen below. The results would tend to indicate that the majority of respondents to the questionnaire are supportive of the growth of Bentley Motors in Crewe with over 70% of respondents indicating that they would tend to support or strongly support this - below.

![Chart showing responses to the growth of Bentley Motors in Crewe]

The vision to create an internal campus received less support with 48% of respondents strongly supporting or tending to support, and 39% tending to object or strongly objecting. Most notably the question of Bentley’s vision to create an internal campus received a contrasting response with the largest group strongly supporting the proposal and the next largest group strongly objecting – below.

![Chart showing responses to the vision to create an internal campus]
For both questions approximately 10% of respondents neither supported nor objected to the proposals.
RESPONSES - COMMENTS

In addition to the quantitative questions, respondents were provided with a comments space in order to record considerations. This was well used with almost 60% of respondents providing some commentary.

The comments submitted and the correspondences received were thematic and those themes are shown below in order of numerical significance. Many comments dealt with two or more themes.

A narrative and response on each of these thematic comments is provided below. In addition, all representations are listed in Appendix 5.
HIGHWAYS

The most prevalent theme was the ability of the highway network to cope without Sunnybank Road and Pyms Lane as through routes. This issue was raised in 38% (89) of responses. Many respondents reported that they had experienced issues with traffic at peak times and expressed concerns that these issues would be exacerbated by the proposed changes.

Traffic modelling has been carried out in the area around Pyms Lane and Sunnybank Road and this has demonstrated that there are places around the Bentley site where some traffic issues are anticipated. This detailed modelling work has demonstrated that, in the short term, the delivery of junction and corridor improvements at identified pinch points on the existing highway network can accommodate the traffic diverted from Pyms Lane and Sunnybank Road in order to maintain a good flow of traffic. The precise mitigation measures required would be set out in any future planning application proposing the closure of either Pyms Lane or Sunnybank Road. Further consultation will be carried out as part of the planning application process which will give interested parties further opportunity to comment on the proposals and associated mitigation. More detail on the strategic highways implications are provided in Section 7 of the Development Framework.

POSITIVE

Slightly over 14.7% (34) of respondents expressed a positive view of the proposals or confirmed their support for Bentley and their growth.

This is reflected in the quantitative question results.

OBJECT

Slightly fewer than 14.4% (33) of respondents expressed a general objection to the proposals and again this would reflect the results seen above.

This is reflected in the quantitative question results.

MITIGATION (PHASING)

11% (27) of respondents expressed concern over the phasing of highway works.

It is accepted that certain highway mitigation will need to take place prior to any closure of Pyms Lane and Sunnybank Road, the detail and extent of mitigation measures will not be clarified until a detailed planning application is put forward and further modelling activity is carried out. Any planning consent provided by the Council for the closure of Pyms Lane and Sunnybank Road would detail conditions to be met prior to development commencing and the roads closing.

The Council will continue to coordinate all highways works across Crewe to minimise the impact on residents and businesses.

TRAFFIC ENTRANCES AND EXIT POINTS

A number of respondents reported a concern with the location of the entrance and exit points as shown within the Masterplan document. With 10% (24) of respondents raising this as a concern, a wish to see no Bentley traffic entering or exiting the site from residential areas such as Sunnybank Road and the Badger Avenue end of Pyms Lane.

Bentley arranged for traffic modelling work in respect of the current proposals to have been carried out on the basis of the three existing entry points to the site. However, whilst the masterplan shows three site entrances including Pyms Lane (east), Pyms Lane (west) and Sunnybank Road, Bentley will develop its access strategy as part of any future planning application, having regard to the comments received as part of the consultation exercise. The full detail of any road closures will be proposed as
part of a detailed planning application and associated stopping up order; and subject to further and more detailed transport modelling to understand the impact on the local highways network.

CAR PARKING

A number of respondents, circa 9.5% (22) noted existing issues with Bentley staff parking on surrounding residential streets rather than within the designated parking areas on the Bentley site. Suggestions were put forward that this would be exacerbated by the proposals put forward in the Masterplan. While this would appear to be a problem separate from the Development framework and masterplan it is understood that workforce growth and site re-design could both impact on the issue.

Bentley is working to address the concerns of local residents regarding parking by some members of staff and contractors working at the Bentley site. Any future planning application will require a Travel Plan to minimise the impact on neighbouring roads, including parking.

RECYCLING CENTRE

9% (21) of respondents have requested clarity on the future of the recycling Centre, noting the facility is not shown on the site diagram within the Masterplan.

The household waste and recycling is an important facility for Crewe. The redevelopment of Cheshire East Council’s household waste recycling centre at Pyms Lane lies within the long-term ambition for the Bentley campus. However, there are no plans to close this centre and any future change to the facility would have to be consistent with the household waste and recycling requirements of Crewe – and would require a future approval.

MITIGATION (HIGHWAYS)

Almost 20 (7.8%) respondents provided suggestions as to how the highway network could be amended in order to accommodate the Masterplan.

A detailed plan for mitigation measures will be included as part of any planning applications proposing the closure of Pyms Lane and Sunnybank Road, and the ideas submitted provide useful background and considerations to assist with this process.

EMERGENCY

Some respondents (7.3%) expressed a concern that it would become difficult for ambulances and other blue light services to travel in the area affected by the Masterplan and queried the action being taken to address this issue.

Recognising the proximity of both Leighton hospital and the Ambulance station there has been contact made with, and representations sought from the ambulance service. These discussions will continue through any detailed planning application and, if necessary, conditions will be put in place to ensure that care to residents is not compromised.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

The issues of pedestrians and cyclists were raised by 12 (5%) respondents.

Any planning application will need to be accompanied by a Travel Plan which will detail how Bentley intends to ensure the sustainable commute of its staff. In respect of local residents it is recognised by Bentley Motors that pedestrians and cyclists need to be catered for in addition to motor vehicles, in addition Cheshire East Council has policies supporting sustainable transport. The sustainable travel options will be covered within a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan submitted as part of any planning application, in accordance with local and national policy. The proposed Connect2 cycle
route to the west of the site and the existing Leighton greenway provision to the East and north provide safe alternatives for cyclists.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Some respondents (4%) felt that the consultation process had not been sufficiently robust and noted that they were unaware of the process and/or the consultation meetings. It was noted by respondents that no leafleting campaign was undertaken by Cheshire East Council or Bentley Motors to raise awareness of the consultation, instead a reliance being placed on local media, social media and word of mouth.

During this initial stage it was not felt that this was a necessary step as endorsement of the Bentley Development Framework and Masterplan does not, of itself, result in any changes or permissions. Once a detailed planning application is made a more formal process of public consultation will begin and this will include notices to individual addresses in the local area.

BUS ROUTES

Seven (3%) respondents had concerns over bus connectivity from the area around Sunnybank Road/Marshfield Avenue to Leighton Hospital, noting the no.78 bus currently travels up Sunnybank Road and along Pym’s Lane.

An Assessment and Travel Plan would need to be included as a part of a formal planning application, however it is considered that there are options to re-route this service which would not result in a loss to local residents.

FUTURE

A small number of respondents expressed concerns over the future, some in respect of the potential implications of leaving the European Union and some in respect of the effect on Crewe of such a major employer choosing to move on.

By working to develop their site and seeking to expand their operation Bentley are demonstrating a desire to consolidate their future within Crewe and put the facility in the best position to compete for the production of new model lines and expand their production.

MITIGATION (TUNNELS)

5 respondents felt that a better solution to the issues behind the Bentley Masterplan would be to place subway tunnels under Pym’s Lane to allow for the free movement of staff around the site.

In this case the desire to close Pym’s Lane and Sunnybank Road stems from a need to develop the land on which the roads currently sit and re-route the traffic routes around the site.

OTHER ISSUES

In addition to the issues listed above several other issues were raised by one or two respondents each. These included the suggestion that Bentley relocate to a new site, queries over an over-arching plan for Crewe and requests for conformation that the sanctity of the cemetery will be respected.

The responses to these points are shown with the full list of comments in Appendix 5.