

**Application No:** [W 18 / 1717](#)

**Town/Parish Council:** Baginton

**Registration Date:** 12/09/18

**Case Officer:** Lucy Hammond

**Expiry Date:** 12/12/18

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**Land to the north and south of the A45 (between Festival and Tollbar junctions) and land at the A45/Festival Roundabout, the A46/Tollbar Roundabout and at the junctions of the A444 with the A4114/Whitley Roundabout.**

Application for the approval of reserved matters (details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to condition 1 of planning permission ref: W/16/0239 for the construction of the government funded UK Battery Industrialisation Centre (UKBIC) facility, with associated access, landscaping and parking arrangements at Whitley South (within Development Zone 4 on the parameters plan). FOR Coventry and Warwickshire Development Partnership and UKBIC

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This application is being presented to Committee due to an objection from the Parish Council having been received.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission be granted subject to conditions listed at the end of this report.

**DETAILS OF THE DEVELOPMENT**

This is a reserved matters application seeking approval for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the construction of a large new building for research and development purposes with ancillary offices pursuant to the original outline permission, for which approval was obtained in 2016 under ref. W/16/0239.

The building, known as the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre (UKBIC) is intended to provide the expertise and capability for the UK to manufacture prototype, pre-series/low-volume production electrodes, cells, modules and packs for automotive applications to process viability at industrially relevant rates. The development includes all necessary on plot car parking, infrastructure, services and landscaping. Car parking is provided for 200 individual spaces and landscaping is proposed around the site's entire perimeter. There are ancillary structures proposed as part of the application as well, which form a necessary part of the delivery of the UKBIC facility. These comprise sprinkler tanks, pumphouse, electrolyte pump and cold store.

The main UKBIC facility building would measure 249m in length by 67m in width with a flat roof height of 10.5m. Attached to the north facing (front) elevation

would be an ancillary office extension, measuring 85m in length by 10.5m in width with a two storey height matching the main building.

## **THE SITE AND ITS LOCATION**

The application site on which the UKBIC is proposed sits to the southern edge of the wider Whitley South proposals but is in fact very close to the northern edge of the Warwick District administrative boundary. The site is accessed off Rowley Road and sits on the southern side of the road. It is approximately 500m south of the A45 Stonebridge Highway which travels east to west from Tollbar Island to Festival Island respectively, the latter junction being the connection between the A45 and the A46 that runs north to south.

The site of the proposed UKBIC is approximately 300 metres from the nearest residential properties that lie on the eastern edge of the village of Baginton which is located to the west side of the application site and Coventry Airport lies to the south of the site. There are no particular land designations or specific site constraints that are of relevant consideration in the determination of this application.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

Although there is some relevant history to the wider site and associated development proposals, the only directly relevant record to this current application is the previously approved outline application, pursuant to which this reserved matters submission has been made. The outline application is summarised below:

W/16/0239 - Comprehensive development comprising demolition of existing structures and the erection of new buildings to accommodate offices, research & development facilities and light industrial uses (Use Class B1), hotel accommodation (Use Class C1), car showroom accommodation, small scale retail and catering establishments (Use Classes A1, A3, A4 and/or A5), new countryside park, ground modelling work including the construction of landscaped bunds, construction of new roads/footpaths/cycle routes, remodelling of junctions on the existing highway network, associated parking, servicing and landscaping (Outline application discharging access with all other matters reserved) - Approved 10.07.2017

## **RELEVANT POLICIES**

- National Planning Policy Framework
- The Current Local Plan
- DS1 - Supporting Prosperity (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- DS3 - Supporting Sustainable Communities (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- DS4 - Spatial Strategy (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- DS5 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- DS8 - Employment Land (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)

- DS9 - Employment Sites to be Allocated (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- DS16 - Sub-Regional Employment Site (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- PC0 - Prosperous Communities (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- EC1 - Directing New Employment Development (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- SC0 - Sustainable Communities (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029 - Publication Draft April 2014)
- BE1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- BE3 - Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- TR1 - Access and Choice (Warwick District Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- TR2 - Traffic generation (Warwick Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- TR3 - Parking (Warwick District Local Plan - 2011-2029)
- HS1 - Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- HS2 - Protecting Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- HS4 - Improvements to Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- HS6 - Creating Healthy Communities (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- HS7 - Crime Prevention (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- CC1 - Planning for Climate Change Adaptation (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- CC3 - Buildings Standards Requirements (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- FW1 - Development in Areas at Risk of Flooding (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- FW2 - Sustainable Urban Drainage (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- NE1 - Green Infrastructure (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- NE2 - Protecting Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- NE3 - Biodiversity (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- NE4 - Landscape (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- NE5 - Protection of Natural Resources (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- DM1 - Infrastructure Contributions (Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029)
- Neighbourhood Plan
- Baginton & Bubbenhall Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2029

## **SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS**

**Baginton Parish Council:** Objection based on the following reasons:

- The car park and loading bay will always be the busiest, noisiest, most highly illuminated and most polluting area of the proposed development; it is unacceptable that this area of the site is closest to Baginton residents,
- Relevant policies state that residents should be protected from unnecessary intrusions via good development planning and not via mitigation,
- The UKBIC is very prestigious and is the type of development the PC hoped the Whitley South project would attract, however, the site could be designed

differently to minimise cumulative effect of noise, light and pollution on Baginton village,

- The original illustrative plan for Zone 4 implied 4 separate buildings set in leafy roads with individual parking areas,
- The current proposal is unrecognisable from those plans,
- In summary, objection is raised to the layout.

**Stoneleigh and Ashow Parish Council:** No objection

**WCC Highways:** No objection

**Lead Local Flood Authority:** No objection subject to conditions

**Environmental Health:** No objection subject to condition

**Coventry City Council:** No objection

**Coventry Airport:** Request for additional information

**Design Out Crime Officer:** Comments and standing advice

## **ASSESSMENT**

The main issues relevant to the consideration of this application are as follows:

- the background to this proposal and why it is proposed here;
- the impact on the living conditions of nearby dwellings;
- the impact on the character and appearance of the area;
- car parking and highway safety; and
- other matters

### Background to this proposal and why it is proposed here

Policy DS16 of the Local Plan allocates land in the vicinity of Coventry Airport totalling 235 hectares as a major employment site (use classes B1, B2 and B8) of sub-regional significance. An earlier outline planning application (W/16/0239) was approved for a comprehensive development comprising the demolition of existing structures and the erection of new buildings to accommodate offices, research & development facilities and light industrial uses (Use Class B1), hotel accommodation (Use Class C1), car showroom accommodation, small scale retail and catering establishments (Use Classes A1, A3, A4 and/or A5), new countryside park, ground modelling work including the construction of landscaped bunds, construction of new roads/footpaths/cycle routes, remodelling of junctions on the existing highway network, associated parking, servicing and landscaping.

As part of this original outline planning application it was envisaged that to the north of Coventry Airport, on land either side of Rowley Road between the airport and the A45, a technology campus would be provided. The proposed technology campus would accommodate up to 53,976 square metres of business floorspace (Use Class B1) and it was envisaged that this would comprise primarily research & development and light industrial uses as opposed to offices.

A new publicly accessible countryside park covering approximately 21.5 hectares was approved under the outline permission to the immediate west of the technology campus. Where this countryside park adjoins the technology campus, its topography would be characterised by large mounded areas designed to reduce the visual impact of the proposed built development in terms of views from the Lunt Roman Fort and Baginton Village.

The UK Battery Industrialisation Centre (UKBIC) is being established by Coventry City Council, WMG at the University of Warwick and the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The LEP is the body established by the government for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in the sub-region. The LEP supported the outline application, advising that the development of this site is a key element of the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and that without the development of this area the LEP will be unable to meet its expected overall growth ambitions. The SEP, published in 2014, identified the "Coventry and Warwickshire Gateway" as the priority employment site for the delivery period of the economic plan and the site covered by the outline application formed one part of that priority site, without which, the LEP would be unable to meet its expected employment growth.

The SEP also states that advanced manufacturing and engineering is the foundation of the SEP, and in particular automotive technologies. The outline proposals already permitted therefore fit well with the priorities of the LEP, both in terms of the location of the site and the type of development proposed. Specifically, and in relation to this site, the subject of the reserved matters submission, the form of development comprises advanced manufacturing and engineering, and in particular automotive technologies, which is the key priority sector for the SEP.

The principle of development therefore has already been established through the approval of the outline permission, however, for the purposes of considering this reserved matters submission, it is important to understand what the UKBIC is and what it seeks to provide within the proposed building.

The UKBIC is part of the UK Government's Faraday Battery Challenge. On the 29th November 2017, the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the RT Hon Greg Clark MP, announced the consortium of Coventry City Council, Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, and WMG, at the University of Warwick, had been awarded £80 million, through a competition led by the advanced propulsion centre and supported by innovate UK, to establish a new national facility for battery manufacturing development.

Business and Energy Secretary Greg Clark has said, *"Battery technology is one of the most game-changing forms of energy innovation and it is one of the cornerstones of our ambition, through the Industrial Strategy and the Faraday Battery Challenge, to ensure that the UK leads the world, and reaps the economic benefits, in the global transition to a low carbon economy. The new facility, based in Coventry and Warwickshire, will propel the UK forward in this thriving area, bringing experts from academia and industry together to deliver innovation and R&D that will further enhance the West Midlands' international reputation as a cluster of automotive excellence."*

The UKBIC intends to provide an open access bespoke facility for the purposes of:

- Development of battery cell, module and pack manufacturing
- Proving battery materials, cell design and process techniques
- Client led, prototype campaigns of battery manufacturing
- Enable users to developed manufacturing processes and train staff

Although the principle of development is already accepted through the established outline permission it is important to recognise the strategic and national importance of this particular proposal.

#### Impact on the living conditions of nearby dwellings

In considering the impact on nearby dwellings, it is important to bear in mind that the wider site has outline planning permission for a comprehensive development that includes A1/A3/A4/A5, B1 and C1 uses together with other uses not coming within the aforementioned use classes (e.g. car showroom, retail and catering establishments).

Since the principle of this type of development is already accepted, it falls to consider whether or not the proposed siting and scale would result in material harm to the residential amenity of any nearby properties or other neighbouring buildings in the vicinity.

Notwithstanding the scale of the proposed building, the nearest residential property in Baginton is some 300m away to the west, separated by areas of open space/country park and landscaping. Immediately adjacent the new research and development facility will be the substation, recently approved under W/18/0539, so this will become a further intervening physical feature separating the UKBIC from the nearest residents of Baginton. Moreover, there is a bund measuring 9m in height to the west which creates a visual screen as well as providing some sound attenuation. This physical distance, when added to the physical features that separate the site from the edge of Baginton village is such that the proposed building would not result in any demonstrable harm to residential amenity by reason of overbearing, loss of light or loss of privacy.

In terms of noise that may be generated by the proposal, the Environmental Health Officer has considered the application, read the submitted documents and had regard to the previous outline permission, attached to which are conditions that must be adhered to in any case, and has therefore confirmed that there is no objection to the development on noise grounds.

In terms of any proposed external lighting that forms part of this proposal, the Environmental Health Officer is satisfied that the assessments carried out and submitted with the application are accurate and the proposed lighting will be unlikely to cause any unacceptable light impacts to sensitive receptors. On this basis there is no objection subject to a condition requiring the lighting scheme, as part of the development approved, to be implemented in accordance with the submitted reports.

Subject to the recommended condition being attached to any forthcoming permission, officers therefore consider the development is acceptable in terms of

noise and general disturbance and there would be no material harm arising in this regard.

Having regard to the above it is therefore concluded that the development would not result in any detriment to the amenity of residential properties or other neighbouring land uses/buildings and as such the development is considered to accord with the relevant provisions of the Development Plan, principally, Policies BE3 and NE5.

#### Impact on the character and appearance of the area

The UKBIC is proposed off Rowley Road and would be immediately adjacent the recently approved substation which sits to the west of the application site. According to the applicant's submitted Design Statement, a number of site specific constraints have influenced the formation of the development and the building's orientation has regard to solar gain and environmental strategies. The building's area and height are determined by the Parameters Plan, approved as part of the earlier outline permission.

The design of the building has been developed over a period of time; evolving and being amended accordingly in response to design briefs, surveys and site constraints as well as discussions with other similar battery facilities who have experience of the relevant issues and considerations.

The site layout places service areas away from the main road frontages and the main service area would be well screened by the new bund. The site design leaves substantial areas of soft landscaping, particularly facing the new roundabout on Rowley Road.

Design development of the elevations has focused on the office element, which is proposed on the building's principal (front facing) elevation. A large frame is proposed to reduce the scale of the office, making a distinction between it and the main building behind. This framing element wraps around vertical windows and overhangs towards the car park. A smaller frame further emphasises the visitor entrance and reception area. The main building walls would be treated with horizontal cladding in bands of monochrome colours, graded from dark at the ground to a light centre, back to dark under the roof which is intended to disguise the large number of Louvres required for the internal processes. The roof has been reduced in height since the earlier design conceptions and has now been enclosed with a parapet which results in a more cohesive rectilinear form to match the offices. The heights meet the parameters of the outline permission.

The proposed materials are all specified within the submitted drawings and supporting statements and are considered wholly appropriate for the character of the area and the type of facility proposed within the site.

A detailed landscape design statement and drawings accompany the application. The design is intended to respect the adjoining local landscape and ecology, soften the open parking and service yard areas and respond to the differing contexts offered on each frontage. The area of soft landscaping to the eastern end would interconnect with the existing landscape mounding.

No objections are raised in this regard and overall, officers are satisfied that the development would not result in any detriment to the visual amenities of the area or wider surrounding character and landscape. The appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are therefore considered to be acceptable and as such the development is considered to accord with the relevant provisions of Policy BE1 of the Local Plan.

#### Car parking and highway safety

The vehicle and pedestrian access remains unchanged from the outline permission; the single access is proposed off Rowley Road, which is subject to the national speed limit but has good visibility in both directions.

With regard to car parking, a development of this site, in accordance with the adopted Parking Standards, would normally require a higher number of parking spaces than the 200 proposed. However, this is quite an anomalous proposal insofar as parking is concerned and it is relevant to revisit the outline permission again.

A Parking Management Strategy was submitted and approved as part of the outline application, a primary purpose of which seeks to restrict parking on site so as to limit the proportion of employees travelling to the site as car drivers. The overall parking provision across the entire Whitley South development was limited to a maximum of 2,500 spaces and this was secured by way of a condition attached to the outline approval. Additionally, there is a package of measures to promote sustainable transport measures set out within the Parking Management Strategy. Moreover, the ratio of parking spaces to floorspace across the site is broadly in line with the Councils Vehicle Parking Standards.

Having regard to the above therefore, while this particular development may propose a lower number of parking spaces, this forms only one part of a wider scheme which has a primary objective of promoting sustainable modes of transport. The S.106 Agreement attached to the outline permission includes the following measures that need to be put in place prior to the occupation of the development:

- A contribution of £300,000 towards improvements to cycling/walking in the locality;
- Approval of a Public Transport Infrastructure Strategy to include a new bus route to the site from Coventry City Centre;
- Implementation of a Travel Plan;
- Contributions towards parking restrictions in the locality; and
- Approval of an Access Restriction Strategy for Rowley Road to prevent vehicles from the development from travelling through Baginton Village.

The reason the amount of parking was restricted in the outline application therefore was to take account of the above sustainable transport measures. It follows therefore that the level of parking proposed here is in line with the limited amount proposed in the outline and is therefore acceptable.

Moreover, there is no objection from the County Highways Authority in respect to either the access arrangements or the amount of parking proposed for the



development, and officers are satisfied that the development is acceptable in this regard and would not be detrimental to highway safety.

The development is therefore in accordance with Policies TR1 and TR3 of the Local Plan.

#### Other matters

##### *Flooding and Drainage*

The Lead Local Flood Authority initially requested some additional information/clarification regarding the drainage and surface water management. Following the receipt of additional information, the LLFA has confirmed there is no objection to the development subject to two conditions being attached to any forthcoming permission requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted FRA as well as confirmation at the appropriate time of agreement from Severn Trent Water to connect to their assets. Subject to these conditions the development is acceptable in this regard and therefore accords with Policies FW1 and FW2 of the Local Plan.

##### *Coventry Airport*

The Airport, whilst not raising objection to the development, expressed a small number of concerns, for which additional information and/or clarification was required. The applicant has provided additional information in response to the points raised and the Airport has already confirmed that some of their concerns have been suitably dealt with. It is anticipated that their final comments in relation to the few remaining points will be available as an update to committee. That said, it is not envisaged that there will be any outstanding matters in this regard and it is proposed to attach informative notes to any forthcoming permission that encapsulates the standing advice of the Airport in relation to matters such as the potential need for mobile or tower cranes during the construction phases of the development.

##### *Baginton Parish Council comments*

The comments and concerns of the Parish Council are noted, however, as the relevant section of this report demonstrates, in the absence of any objections from the Environmental Health officer and together with the considerations set out in the report, the development is not considered to result in any material harm to residential amenity.

Furthermore, the Parish Council has referred to the indicative plans submitted with the outline application, to which this application bears no resemblance. However, it is important to acknowledge that on an outline permission, indicative plans are only ever intended for illustrative purposes and should not be relied on with regard to the detailed layout and appearance. There are no expectations for the subsequent reserved matters submissions to follow the indicative layouts previously shown; the development must be assessed on its own merits, based on the detailed plans submitted and officers must be satisfied that the development will not result in any material harm as a result.

## **SUMMARY/CONCLUSION**

The development forms a detailed part of the wider site development approved under an earlier outline permission. The principle is therefore acceptable subject to an assessment being made of the other relevant planning considerations. There are no environmental health concerns about the proposal in terms of noise and general disturbance and therefore together with the distance to the nearest neighbouring properties and the intervening features of the substation and a 9m high bund, officers are satisfied that the UKBIC would not result in material harm to residential amenity. The development is also considered acceptable in terms of its visual impact and the landscaping proposed is acceptable. There are no issues arising from the development in terms of flooding/drainage and previous concerns raised by Coventry Airport have since been addressed. Overall therefore, the recommendation is to approve planning permission.

## **CONDITIONS**

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details shown on the site location plan and approved drawing(s) 01 Rev.B, 02 Rev.C, 03 Rev.C, 04 Rev.C, 11 Rev.P3, 12 Rev.P3, 13 Rev.P1, 14 Rev.P1, 15 Rev.P1, 16, 17 Rev.P1, THDA-DR-0500-500 Rev.B and 150 Rev.D, and specification contained therein, submitted on 5 September 2018 and approved drawing CPW-180802-E-EXT-210-00-01 Rev.P5, and specification contained therein, submitted on 19 October 2018. **REASON:** For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policies BE1 and BE3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.
- 2 The lighting scheme approved as part of the development hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with the submitted 'External Lighting Report 180802' produced by Couch Perry Wilkes and the approved 'Proposed External Lighting Layout' drawing CPW-180802-E-EXT-210-00-01 Rev.P5. **REASON:** To ensure that any lighting is designed so as not to detrimentally affect the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties in accordance with Policy BE3 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.
- 3 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) *UK Battery Industrialization Centre, Coventry\_THDA\_B18222C-(P0048)THDA-RP-FRA-Rev 1\_October 2018*. The mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing and phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme. **REASON:** To prevent the increased risk of flooding; to improve and protect water quality; to improve habitat and amenity; and to ensure the future maintenance of the sustainable drainage structures in accordance with Policies FW1 and FW2 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.

- 4 Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted, evidence to show an agreement from Severn Trent Water to connect to their assets shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority. **REASON:** To demonstrate the development has a viable outfall for the drainage system in accordance with Policy FW2 of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029.
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