

Land adjacent to M55 Junction 2

Proposed allocation for Motorway Service Area

**REPRESENTATIONS ON CENTRAL LANCASHIRE LOCAL PLAN
REGULATION 19 CONSULTATION**

APRIL 2025

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Appended plans:

Proposed Illustrative Masterplan (ref. 914/210 Rev E)

Proposed Site Plan (indicative) (ref. 914/201 Rev D).

/1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. PWA Planning has been instructed by Moto Hospitality Limited (herein referred to as Moto) to make representations in relation to a parcel of land located adjacent to Junction 2 of the M55 motorway ('the Site'). The Site is shown in the appended Proposed Illustrative Masterplan (ref. 914/210 Rev E) and Proposed Site Plan (indicative) (ref. 914/201 Rev D). It is proposed that the Site be allocated for the development of a Motorway Service Area (MSA) in the Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP).
- 1.2. Previous representation have been made on the Site as detailed in Section 3, for both the Site in question and the wider surrounding area.
- 1.3. Moto submitted a planning application for an MSA at the Site in December 2024, application reference 06/2024/1253. At the time of writing this application is as yet undetermined. This will be covered in Section 4.

About Moto

- 1.4. Moto is the UK's leader in motorway service areas, operating a national network of sites across the strategic road network at 70 locations throughout England, Scotland and Wales. Moto have been operating for 56 years and serve 20 million customers a year. Their partner brands include BP, Tesla Superchargers, Costa, M&S Food and Greggs.
- 1.5. In terms of their environmental aspirations, Moto aim to become a net positive business by 2050, putting more back into the environment and society than taken out. Their corporate goals include reducing the environmental impact of their business and leading the national transition to electric vehicles.

/2 THE SITE

- 2.1. The Site is located to the immediate northeast of Junction 2 of the M55 motorway. The Site is irregular in shape and extends to approximately 6.8ha, comprising portions of a number of fields in existing agricultural use. It should be noted that this Site area referred to herein differs from the larger 13.98ha site subject to the live planning application for the MSA, which includes adjacent land set aside for biodiversity net gain, which will be subject to a 30 year management period.
- 2.2. The Site's southwestern boundary borders the east-bound return slip road of the new junction. The remaining Site boundaries comprise agricultural land, some of which are lined with mature vegetation.
- 2.3. Junction 2 of the M55 links Edith Rigby Way with Riversway and the A583 Blackpool Road to the south. Edith Rigby Way is a 2.5 mile-long dual carriageway. Both Junction 2 and Edith Rigby Way opened in Summer 2023.
- 2.4. The Site is designated as Open Countryside in the Preston Local Plan 2012-2026. It is located in Flood Zone 1, where the risk of flooding is lowest. It is not subject to any ecological, historical or landscape-related designations. The surrounding landscape is predominantly agricultural on the northern side of the M55, with small villages, clusters of dwellings and individual properties interspersed with farmland. To the south of the M55 is the city of Preston and its suburbs.

/3 PREVIOUS REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1. As noted in Section 1, the Site and a wider surrounding area covering approximately 33ha was put forward during the Call for Sites Part 3 process in 2019/2020. This site was assigned the reference and title *19P246 – Land east of Rosemary Lane, Swillbrook* in the Preferred Options papers. It was suggested that the land could be used for employment purposes, allocated through the emerging CLLP. At that time, it was also recognised that the land represented a sensible location for a new roadside services, given its strategic location and proximity to the new Junction 2.

- 3.2. The Preferred Options Part One Regulation 18 Consultation (PO1) was published in December 2022. The PO1 provided the strategic framework for the new Local Plan, outlined emerging policies, and provided site allocations for housing and employment uses. Alongside the consultation on PO1, new site submissions as part of a 'Call for Sites Part 4' were invited.

- 3.3. Included within the PO1, a large number of sites in Preston were listed as 'discounted sites subject to review' in Appendix 2 of *Site Selection Process: Housing and Employment Land*, which is one of the supporting PO1 documents. This includes site reference 19P246 as referred to above. It is not clear why the larger site was discounted for employment use as that information was not made available as part of the PO1 consultation, however it has been noted that:

"A number of sites in Preston that were discounted under Stage 1(b) of the SHELAA are now subject to review as it is considered that the reasons for discounting them need to be explored further. These sites are set out in Appendix 2. They will be subject to the Stage 2 SHELAA assessment following the Part 1 Preferred Options Paper consultation, along with any new site suggestions received during the consultation and taken into consideration when revising preferred allocations in the Part 2 Preferred Options Paper."

- 3.4. The Preferred Options Part Two was due for publication in Summer 2023, but was never progressed.

/4 PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF THE SITE

- 4.1. It is noted that the Site has not been allocated for any purpose in the Publication Version of the CLLP. Nor has any of the land around the Site which was subject to previous representations. In the Preston area, the majority of allocations are for housing, including a small number of strategic site. There are also a handful of employment allocations.
- 4.2. It is proposed that the Site is allocated for use as a Motorway Service Area in the Central Lancashire Local Plan. The Site is ideally located for a new MSA to serve users of the M55 and specifically the new Junction 2 which links the M55 with west Preston and the Fylde via the new Edith Rigby Way. There are currently no MSA on the M55 and Moto have identified that there is a need for such provision in this location.
- 4.3. As set out in Section 1, there is currently a live planning application under determination for an MSA on the Site on behalf of Moto, planning application ref. 06/2024/1253. This was submitted in December 2024. Prior to this, the development of an MSA in this location was subject of two Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinions pursuant to Regulation 6 of the Town and County Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 in October 2023 (ref. 06/2023/0937) and May 2024 (ref. 06/2024/0380), both of which confirmed that EIA was not required for the proposed development.
- 4.4. Appended to this document is the Proposed Illustrative Masterplan (ref. 914/210 Rev E) and Proposed Site Plan (indicative) (ref. 914/201 Rev D) which was submitted with the planning application and which demonstrates that an MSA could be accommodated on the Site. An extract of the proposed site plan is also provided in Figure 1 below.
- 4.5. As per the live planning application and the above mentioned plans, it has been demonstrated that the Site can accommodate an MSA which would include the usual range of services typically found at such a facility. This includes an amenity building providing food and drink options, toilets, showers and other facilities; parking areas for car/vans, with separate parking areas for coaches, caravans and motorcycles; HGV parking area; petrol filling station and HGV fuel filling station; ancillary development including children's play area, landscaped areas and SuDS ponds. The planning application proposes that the MSA would be accessed from a new spur off the M55 Junction 2 roundabout located to the north

of the M55. The new spur road would be single carriageway and would extend northwards from the roundabout before bending eastwards into the main development area.



Figure 1: Extract of Indicative Proposed Site Plan

- 4.6. The Site is located in the Open Countryside as per the adopted Preston Local Plan, and is proposed to remain as such in the Regulation 19 Publication Version of the CLLP. It is noted that in the Publication Version, land to the south of Junction 2 is allocated as a strategic housing site to accommodate 1,100 homes, albeit this site already has planning permission. No land to the north of the M55 is allocated for development.
- 4.7. It should be noted that the locations of MSA are driven by two factors; firstly the requirement for such facilities to be located adjacent to the motorway, and secondly the need for the proposals at certain points on the strategic road network as dictated by policy.
- 4.8. The primary aim of MSAs is safety - to allow users of the SRN to stop and take a rest in a safe location. The provision of suitably spaced MSAs therefore plays a key role in the efficient and safe running of the SRN. The closest MSA to the Site are on the M6 north at

Lancaster, located 14.6 miles away, and the M6 south at Charnock Richard, 17.3 miles from the Site. Lancaster services are run by Moto, whilst the Charnock Richard services are operated by another provider. Regardless, Moto have identified a need for an MSA at Junction 2 of the M55.

- 4.9. It is pertinent to mention here that the '*Strategic road network and the delivery of sustainable development*' circular (December 2022)¹ which replaced the policies in the Department for Transport circular 02/2013 of the same title. With regards to roadside services, and particularly for those services providing HGV parking and facilities as would be the case here, the circular advises the following at paragraphs 79-81 [**PWA emphasis**], with paragraph 81 in particular referring to the need to allocate land for such facilities as part of the local plan process:

"79. Drivers of many heavy goods and public service vehicles are subject to a regime of statutory breaks and other working time restrictions, such that roadside facilities are critical enablers of compliance with such requirements.

*80. It is recognised that on certain parts of the SRN [strategic road network] and at certain times a shortage of parking facilities for HGVs can make it difficult for drivers to find safe space to stop and adhere to requirements for mandatory breaks and rests. **To alleviate the shortage, the expansion of existing facilities on the SRN is likely to be needed alongside the creation of new parking sites.** As a result, existing truckstops (including closed facilities) on or near to the SRN must be retained for their continued and future use unless it can be clearly demonstrated that a need no longer exists.*

81. In areas where there is an identified need , the company will work with relevant local planning authorities to ensure that local plan allocations and planning application decisions address the shortage of HGV parking on or near to the SRN. In these circumstances, local planning authorities should have regard to the following spacing requirements:

(i). the maximum distance between motorway facilities providing HGV parking (being service areas, rest areas or truckstops) should be no more than 14 miles; and

¹ [Strategic road network and the delivery of sustainable development - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/102444/strategic-road-network-and-the-delivery-of-sustainable-development-circular-2022.pdf)

(ii). the maximum distance between APTR [all-purpose trunk road] facilities providing HGV parking (being service areas or truckstops) should be the equivalent of 20 minutes driving time for HGVs.

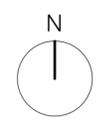
- 4.10. As above, the Site is located a touch over 14 miles from Lancaster services and over 17 miles from Charnock Richard services. It is important to note that whilst the distances in miles are a key factor, the driving time between services is also an important consideration. This issue is addressed in more detail within the planning application for the MSA, however it is known that at busy times of the year, particularly on weekends, during school holidays and when the Illuminations are in operation, Blackpool is an extremely popular destination. It is common for the M55 and M6 in proximity to Junction 1 of the M55 to be subject to significant traffic delays at certain times of the day. Accordingly, the time taken to access existing services on the M6, or to reach rest facilities in Blackpool or on surrounding routes, can be considerably in excess of those normally associated with a 14-mile journey.
- 4.11. Moto have identified a need for an MSA in this location and this is backed up by the guidance in the circular as referred to above.
- 4.12. It is recognised that the Site is currently on land designated as Open Countryside in the Preston Local Plan, and that the landscape and visual impacts of a development in this location are likely to be one of the main considerations. Accordingly, Moto have worked extensively with ecology and landscape consultants in the preparation of the planning application to demonstrate that these matters can be adequately managed and that the development would not have any unacceptable impacts in this regard. As above, the application is currently live, but no objections have been raised by the Council's landscape officers as part of those proposals.
- 4.13. The development of an MSA in this location would represent sustainable development. From an economic perspective, there would be benefits during the planning and construction phases of development, both directly and indirectly for local businesses and suppliers. Once operational, the MSA has the potential to generate up to 120 number of full-time equivalent jobs, in addition to business rates that would be paid to the Council.
- 4.14. In terms of social benefits, the MSA would provide much-needed facilities for visitors to the area and have related tourism benefits, used by people who may choose to stay in the area

rather than travel elsewhere to access roadside services. Any employment opportunities are likely to be taken-up by local residents. The MSA would be in a highly sustainable location, directly adjacent to a key road infrastructure project which is set to improve conditions on the strategic and local road networks.

- 4.15. With regards to environmental benefits, the proposals have the potential to provide biodiversity net gains on what is currently intensively farmed agricultural land of low ecological value.

Conclusions

- 4.16. It is proposed that the Site be considered as a specific allocation for an MSA. The Site is in a highly sustainable strategic location, adjacent to the new Junction 2 of the M55. An MSA in this location would serve the needs of local people using the existing and improved road network, and visitors to the area, notably those to Blackpool and the surrounds. There are currently no MSA on the M55 and Moto have identified a need in this location, which is evidenced by the Government circular which provides maximum distances between such facilities.
- 4.17. An MSA in this location has the potential to result in significant economic and social benefits for the local area, including 120 full-time equivalent jobs.
- 4.18. PWA and Moto would be happy to discuss the allocation of this site for an MSA in more detail with the CLLP team as matters progress, and in line with the current live planning application.



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Revision	Date	Revision note	Notes
A	03.06.2024	First Issue	
B	04.06.2024	Inclusion of HGV rapid charge	
C	14.06.2024	Access road amended	
D	06.08.2024	Boundary line amended	

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Project:
 New MSA Preston - M55
 Title:
 Proposed Illustrative masterplan
 Drawing number:
 914/210
 Client:
 Moto Hospitality

Scale:
 1:750 @A1
 Date:
 Feb 2024
 CAD Ref:
 PL01
 Drawn by:



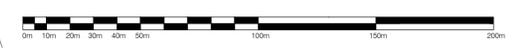


- existing pond - retained
- existing pond - relocated
- new pond
- retained tree (with RPZ)
- existing tree removed
- proposed soft landscaping
- proposed pavement

	Required	Shown	EV
Cars	389 (19)	391 (23)	365 (21)*
HGV	71	71	71*
Coaches	7	7	7*
Caravans	12 (1)	12 (1)	12 (1)*
M'bikes	12	12	0
AL HGV	1	1	1*

(Accessible spaces shown in brackets)

* 50 no EV car spaces provided at opening with remainder of spaces future proofed (with necessary cabling etc) for subsequent conversion when power available



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Notes

Project :
New MSA Preston - M55
 Title :
Proposed Site Plan (Illustrative)
 Drawing number :
914/201
 Issue :
D
 Client :
Moto Hospitality

Scale :
1:750 @ A1
 Date :
Oct 2023
 CAD Ref :
PL01
 Drawn by :





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