# Central Lancashire Local Plan

Representations to the Regulation 19 Publication Version Consultation – Cuerdale Garden Village

## Story Homes

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# Contents




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**Our reference**
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# Executive Summary

This representation relates specifically to Story Homes' (Story) land interests at Cuerdale Garden Village (CGV), South Ribble and provides comments and observations on the Regulation 19 Consultation on the Central Lancashire Local Publication Version Plan (R19 LP) and its supporting evidence base in so far as relevant to CGV.

This includes a critique of the planned provision of employment land in the R19 LP and a report which considers the potential economic implications of the National Cyber Force Campus (NCF) at Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. This representation is intended to be read in conjunction with Story's core representation on the R19 LP and Central Lancashire Housing Need and Housing Land Supply Assessment reports, both prepared by Stantec.

Story engaged in the preparation of the Local Plan, in the context of land interests at CGV across two previous consultations, most recently the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Local Plan (R18 LP) consulted on in early 2023. The R18 LP notably featured CGV as a 'Growth Option' under Policy Direction 5 'Longer-Term Large-Scale Development Options'. In doing so the R18 LP recognised the strategic reasoning for Green Belt release in this location. Despite this, the R19 LP has omitted reference to CGV in its entirety and does not propose any Green Belt release across the three authorities' boundaries.

There is limited justification within the R19 LP and supporting documentation for taking such a notable step back with respect to the Plan's ambition. The presented justification for not taking forward CGV is that sufficient non-Green Belt land exists to meet development needs – although it is important to note this is only within the Plan period and not beyond as per the intentions of Policy Direction 5, omitted through the R19 LP.

It would also appear that opposition to the inclusion of CGV in the R18 LP has been a factor in the Authorities' reasoning. This approach is in stark contrast with prevailing national planning policy updates that have placed greater emphasis on supporting economic growth and delivering housing. One of the key mechanisms is to reconsider the thresholds where release of Green Belt land is deemed acceptable or appropriate in Development Management terms.

Story's analysis of employment land provision within the R19 LP, and the supporting 2022 Employment Land Study, demonstrates that the methodologies for calculating employment land requirements present limitations that ultimately underestimate the quantum of employment land required. Notably the quantum of employment land in the R19 LP is 36% less than the evidence base supporting the R18 LP suggested would be required. In broad terms there is considered to be insufficient employment land within the R19 LP to meet future needs within and beyond the Plan period, particularly for large-scale developments.

There is limited consideration of strategic-scale investment such as that associated with the NCF. This is a significant omission given that the NCF represents a once in a generation opportunity which will have a transformational positive impact on the local and regional economy. It is the Local Plan's role to respond to this opportunity and ensure it is fully realised and its benefits maximised. It fails to achieve this in its current guise.

These matters are particularly pertinent within the context of an enhanced push for growth within the Labour Government's amended National Planning Policy Framework (the

Framework). The Framework lends significant weight to accelerating economic growth, through supporting the needs of a modern economy and releasing strategic-scale sites in order to achieve the industrial strategies of local areas.

**It is concluded that the R19 LP is at odds with the growth ambitions of Framework and a range of initiatives established at both national and county level. It is considered to be unsound by virtue of not planning for immediate and longer-term development needs as a result. It also fails to give due regard to the very significant effects which will be brought about by the NCF; a strategic omission in the plan which is, as a result, lacking ambition and which undermines the economic growth of the area.**

**It is a plan which it at odds with its own vision for growth and which doesn't translate ambition into delivery. It represents a significant backwards step, failing to respond to market signals in relation development demand and to properly take account of and respond to the growth opportunities before it. This is fundamentally inconsistent with national planning policy and the Plan is thus unsound.**

It is Story's view that CGV should be allocated as a strategic mixed-use allocation within the R19 LP. This represents the most sustainable means of meeting the additional development needs during the plan period and beyond as identified in this representation both in the context of the progression of the NCF (and the delivery of additional development needs arising from this) or indeed without any consideration of the NCF and its effect on existing development needs.

CGV will build on the established and expanding role of this location as a key economic focal point of Central Lancashire. It can deliver the additional development needs of Central Lancashire in a way which maximises the beneficial effects of this through the co-location of existing, emerging and proposed employment uses with residential development and an effective integration of these uses.

It will do so through utilising a site which possess unique locational advantages, being located adjacent to the M6 Junction 31 making it attractive as a business location and accessible to both Preston and Blackburn, enabling existing populations to benefit from the employment opportunities that the growth corridor will provide. It will deliver the critical mass of development in a single location enabling improved public and active transport connections to existing communities to be viably funded and so ensuring future employment opportunities are accessible to all and enabling the critical civic infrastructure to be built into the development.

CGV represents a development of strategic scale, able to fund and provide the services and infrastructure needed to achieve a high level of self-sufficiency and so avoiding adverse impacts on existing communities and services in the spirit of paragraph 77 of NPPF. It does so building from a base of this area already possessing a concentration of employment generating development and having a growing role in the economy of Central Lancashire through the delivery of the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. The enterprise zone has been a recognised growth location for over 20 years but has now reached capacity.

The scale of the opportunity enables the development to capitalise on the 'Garden Village advantage', providing the full range of accommodation (business and residential) which Central Lancashire needs. It can do so in a way which creates a high quality and liveable environment through a masterplanning approach which embraces the Garden Village model, incorporating amenities and services accessible to all residents and users.

The CGV represents the most sustainable approach to meeting Central Lancashire's immediate and longer term development needs, particularly so where accounting for the implications of NCF. It provides significant advantages over the alternatives of a more dispersed pattern of development where planning and delivering the necessary infrastructure to support growth is a constraint to the level of development different areas can accommodate. This is recognised within the Integrated Assessment of the Central Lancashire Local Plan (January 2025) which highlights the benefits of a new settlement over other growth options relating to existing urban areas, with the key determinantal factor being the impact on landscape. Further, no other single site possesses the attributes of this location having regard to its baseline economic role and contribution.

# 1. Introduction and Context

1.1 This representation to the R19 LP is submitted by Turley on behalf of Story. It relates specifically to Story's land interests at 'Cuerdale Garden Village' and is supported by Story's main RL19 LP representation report and Central Lancashire Housing Need report, both prepared by Stantec.

1.2 CGV is a strategic land promotion covering 284ha of land, entirely within the local authority area of South Ribble. Story's proposition is a new settlement with capacity for 2,300 residential dwellings, 429,000 sqm of employment floor space plus supporting amenities, civic infrastructure and extensive open space.

1.3 CGV is fully deliverable and would address a unique opportunity to reap the wide-ranging benefits of a substantial economic investment that comes in the form of the NCF in addition to accommodating a need for additional large-scale employment land allocations during the Plan period as indicated within this representation. As the three Central Lancashire Authorities will be aware, there is a live planning application for a 'Phase 1' of CGV currently being determined by South Ribble Council (LPA ref. 07/2022/00451/OUT).

**Story Homes**

1.4 Story has actively engaged in the preparation of the Local Plan to date. They submitted comprehensive representations to the Issues and Options consultation carried out in 2020 as part of 'call for sites' exercise and the Preferred Options Part One Consultation carried out in 2023 when CGV was featured as a 'Growth Option'.

1.5 Story is a privately owned house builder. Founded by Fred Story in 1987, it has a long and successful reputation of building high quality and high specification homes across the North West. The family-owned business has grown in size and status but remains grounded, built on its original ethos of 'doing the right thing' and creating a brand synonymous with quality.

1.6 Story currently builds c.1,000 dwellings per annum across Cumbria, North West and North East England and Southern Scotland. The Carlisle-headquartered company also has regional offices in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Chorley, directly employing more than 380 staff.

1.7 For nearly 40 years Story has been the name most often associated with aspirational houses for sale throughout Cumbria, South Scotland, the North East and Lancashire, and it is rapidly expanding across the whole of the North of England. A passion for quality and excellence has seen Story become a multi award winning UK property developer; with modern, open plan homes that offer flexible living spaces that instantly inspire buyers.

1.8 Story have consistently been awarded the top '5 star' rating in the housebuilding industry's annual customer satisfaction rating. The company's success is underpinned by a determination to understand the needs of the communities where they build, with a goal to deliver design quality and high-quality building specifications that enhance locations.

1.9 The Story family name extends beyond just housebuilding, with Story Homes' associated company, Story Contracting.

1.10 Story Contracting operates through several key divisions, each specialising in distinct areas of expertise – including construction, rail, plant hire, geotechnical engineering, and energy. The Construction division at Story Contracting delivers high-quality civil engineering and infrastructure projects across the UK, with a strong focus on collaboration, safety, and customer satisfaction. With extensive experience across sectors – including highways improvements, building projects including retail parks and office spaces, bridges, drainage, public realm, and flood defence – the team has built a solid reputation for delivering complex projects on time and to budget.

1.11 Working closely with clients such as local authorities, private developers, and national agencies, the Construction division provides end-to-end project delivery – from initial design and planning through to construction and handover. With a skilled, multidisciplinary workforce and a commitment to excellence, Story Contracting is trusted to deliver infrastructure that makes a real difference to communities.

1.12 The company has a strong record of delivery and is well placed to bring forward the proposed development.

### This Representation

1.13 This representation provides a case for CGV to be allocated within the R19 LP, in the first instance as a strategic mixed-use allocation, or secondly as a strategic reserve allocation along a similar vein to the 'Growth Option' which the three Central Lancashire Authorities considered within the preceding R18 LP. The representation addresses the strategic case for the A59 Growth Corridor and CGV, emphasised by an under provision of employment land provision within the R19 LP, and the absence of proper consideration of the significant impacts and opportunities associated with the emerging NCF at Samlesbury Enterprise Zone.

1.14 The representation is thus supported by the following documents:

- Critique of the Planned Provision of Employment Land in the Draft Central Lancashire Plan, prepared by Turley (See Appendix 1); and
- Potential Economic Implications of the NCF on Central Lancashire, prepared by Turley (See Appendix 2).

1.15 This representation is also supported by a refreshed Development Framework, prepared by Turley (see Appendix 4) demonstrating how CGV can come forward in a sustainable manner and achieving a quality of place unmatched in Central Lancashire through the garden village model of development. This replaces the equivalent documents submitted as part of Story's 2020 and 2023 representations.

### Regulation 18 Preferred Options Local Plan

1.16 The three Central Lancashire Authorities consulted on a R18 LP in early 2023. Story made representation to the effect that CGV represented a sustainable option to delivering strategic-scale development capable of supporting substantial economic growth within the A59 Corridor and the emerging NCF. The R18 LP recognised this and included CGV as a Growth Option within the Local Plan under Policy Direction 5 'Longer-Term Large-Scale Development Options'.

1.17 Nevertheless, CGV has been omitted outright from the R19 LP with limited justification for doing so, which is inexplicable given the greater emphasis on economic growth set out within the amended Framework, as detailed further below.

1.18 The few reasons for omitting CGV, or any strategic Green Belt release in fact, from the R19 LP are set out within the Preferred Options Consultation (Reg 18) Consultation Statement Main Report (November 2024):

- "*Site* [CGV] *not proposed for allocation following site assessment process due to sufficient housing supply being available outside the Greenbelt.*"
- "*Growth in the Local plan is* [to be] *concentrated in previously developed and urban areas, promoting regeneration and policies will direct development away from rural areas outside of the settlement*."
- Substantial opposition including objections / concerns raised by the following 'statutory consultees':
    - "*Samlesbury and Cuerdale Parish Council and CPRE are in opposition to the allocation.*"
    - "*United Utilities stated that uncertainty concerning this option makes it difficult to assess the impact of development of their infrastructure."*
    - "*Blackburn and Darwen Council suggested an alternative site allocation.*"

### Wider R19 LP Representations

1.19 This representation is intended to be read alongside Story's core RL19 LP representation report and Central Lancashire Housing Need report, both prepared by Stantec.

1.20 With respect to the former this makes the following headline points of relevance to CGV having reviewed the policies of the R19 LP and supporting evidence base and statements:

- The R19 LP is fundamentally contrary to the national imperative to build more homes and the strong guidelines set out by Government in the form of the Framework and Planning Practice Guidance;

- The R19 LP artificially adjusts its approach to housing to seek to benefit from the transitional arrangements contained within Framework;

- The Plan period is insufficient and Safeguarded Land should be incorporated beyond the Plan period;

- The Plan's Spatial Strategy and distribution of housing is skewered by prioritising development of non-Green Belt land and not allocating land for development where needs arise;

- Application of the site selection process is inconsistent with site having been omitted or taken forward contrary to decisions on other sites.

1.21 The Central Lancashire Housing Need report makes the following observations of relevance to CGV:

- Housing requirements within the R19 LP have been arbitrarily adjusted to benefit from the NPPF's transitional arrangements;

- The R19 LP housing requirement does not guarantee the delivery of much needed affordable and specialist housing based on historic rates of delivery – assuming less than 50% of affordable housing need will be met across the Plan period;

- The R19 LP should at least meet the standard methodology requirements for the three districts;

- The R19 LP housing requirements is based on assumptions in economic growth defined by Cambridge Econometrics – that being 16,660 new jobs. This is deemed cautious with Oxford Economics forecasts estimating an increase of 26,550 (60% higher);

- Furthermore, introducing the new / additional 1,500 jobs expected from the NCF to Oxford Economics forecasts means 24,996 additional dwellings would be required across the Plan period. In terms of dwellings per annum this translated to 1,388 dwellings when compared to the 825 dpa required by Cambridge Econometrics forecasts.

1.22 In summary the conclusions of the Housing Need report confirm there to be an immediate need for further land to be allocated for housing within the R19 LP, and a higher still quantum to support the requirements and knock on effects of NCF.

# 2. The Framework and Spearheading Economic Growth

2.1 The new Labour Government published an updated Framework in December 2024, with a further minor update in February 2025. The updated Framework seeks to encourage substantial economic growth and increase house building via the following means:

- Adjusting the method against which housing need is determined, applying a 'stock-based method'. The result of this is an increased housing requirement of 1,643 dwellings per annum across the three Central Lancashire authorities compared to 944 dwellings based on the previous standard method and higher still than the 1,314 dwellings proposed within the R19 LP.

- Reintroducing mandatory housing targets and the Five-Year Housing Land Supply test removed by the previous Government in 2023.

- Increased emphasis and policy support for a range of specific employment generating uses including "development to meet the needs of a modern economy, including by identifying suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics".

- Providing greater opportunity for development in the Green Belt through the introduction of the principle of grey belt and lowering the threshold for harm to openness concerning development on Previously Developed Land. The Government considered that the introduction of this policy was necessary in order to address the housing crisis and ensure other development needs are met. Development of sites on land which is categorised as grey belt based on the Annex 2 definition and meet the criteria of paragraph 155 including the "Golden Rules" for major development are deemed appropriate development in the Green Belt. This includes the development of homes, commercial and other development where there is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed.

2.2 Paragraph 85 of the Framework states that "Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential."

2.3 The expectation of the following Paragraph 86 is that Local Plans should set out a clear economic vision and strategy which "positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to the national industrial strategy and any relevant

Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration". The paragraph expects Local Plan policies to identify strategic sites to deliver this strategy and support a 'modern economy'.

2.4 Paragraph 87 is also of direct relevance to GCV in stating that policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. "This includes making provision for:

a) clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for new, expanded or upgraded facilities and infrastructure that are needed to support the growth of these industries (including data centres and grid connections);

b) storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods, especially where this is needed to support the supply chain, transport innovation and decarbonisation; and

c) the expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience."

2.5 With regard to Green Belt release, paragraph 145 states that "*Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified through the preparation or updating of plans*." This is as per wording of the previous iteration of the Framework, nevertheless the introduction of Paragraph 146 marks a fundamental change in direction from the 2023 Framework which enabled Local Authorities to not meet housing targets if it required Green Belt release. Paragraph 146 states "*Exceptional circumstances in this context include, but are not limited to, instances where an authority cannot meet its identified need for homes, commercial or other development through other means*."

2.6 In considering the release of land from the Green Belt, Local Authorities must first consider the availability of Previously Developed Land within the Green Belt and then land constituting grey belt, before resorting to greenfield Green Belt land.

2.7 Whilst this representation does not seek to make a direct case for CGV as appropriate development within the Green Belt – this will be addressed through Story's current Phase 1 planning application, the abovementioned national planning policy context is of high importance considering the lack of growth ambition within the R19 LP relative to that of the Framework as set out within Story's core representation report.

2.8 The Framework continues to lend support for the strategic release of Green Belt in the form of new settlements. Paragraph 77 states that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through "*planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities*".

2.9 In summary, whereas the previous iteration of the Framework sought to deliver economic growth, it also placed obstacles in the way of being able to do so through the planning system and an approach which placed greater emphasis on Green Belt protection particularly. It also represents a step-change in the role of Local Plans as enablers of growth and being strategies which should respond to opportunity and maximise economic benefit.

2.10 Local Plans are no longer vehicles for doing the bare minimum and the balance between these are regulators and facilitators of growth has evidently shifted. Local Plan must work harder as a result, seek out opportunity and present a strategy for realising this. This requires Local Plans to properly consider and define these opportunities in the context of that location. It cannot ignore them. This is highly relevant to the consideration of CGV and more broadly to the definition of the development requirements of Central Lancashire.

2.11 The Labour Government's changes to the Framework provide a clear expectation for planning policies and decisions to support the nation's growth. As detailed within Story's core representation, the R19 LP does not deliver on the Framework's clear impetus to deliver growth, in particular Paragraphs 85, 86 and 87 as detailed above. There is a clear lack of ambition within the R19 LP when considering the implications of the substantial investment that NCF would deliver which the Framework expects the three Authorities to plan positively for. The Framework seeks to accelerate economic growth and states significant weight should be given to the delivery of strategically scaled and located development which respond to local industrial strategies. CGV is a prime example of such development and it has been wholly disregarded from the R19 LP.

# 3. What Is Cuerdale Garden Village?

3.1 Story is the principal promoter of the CGV, located to the east of Junction 31 of the M6 and forming part of the prospective A59 Growth Corridor. It has land extending to 284ha under option in this location. This land is controlled by a single landowner, removing common ownership challenges in delivering developments of scale.

3.2 CGV comprises several ‘parcels’ of development land which, in combination, can deliver a holistically planned, sustainable new settlement along the A59 Growth Corridor to meet the long-term development needs of South Ribble.

3.3 An outline planning application for the development of the first phase of the CGV was submitted by Story in May 2022 (application reference 07/2022/00451/OUT). This is presently being determined by South Ribble Council. This proposes the development of:

- Up to 1,300 dwellings
- Up to 164,000sqm of employment floorspace
- A local centre, park and ride facility, primary school
- Extensive public open space and recreational facilities.

3.4 The first phase application is principally focused on land to the south of the A59 which runs east-west from Junction 31 of the M6 towards the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone (future home of NCF) which would represent the eastern termination of an A59 Growth Corridor. The first phase would expedite delivery of CGV by providing a critical mass of development to support NCF and the A59 Growth Corridor as soon as possible.

3.5 Further land to the north of the A59 forms the balance of the land promoted by Story to create CGV. This land has the ability to deliver:

- A further 1,000 dwellings
- 88,800sqm of employment floorspace
- A Community Hospital
- Local Centre
- Primary school
- Supermarket
- Family Restaurant
- Extensive public open space and recreational facilities

3.6 Further land (circa. 28ha) which would represent an eastern extension of the CGV is being promoted by Logik Developments as part of the overall Garden Village proposal. The proposal is subject to a live planning application submitted to South Ribble Council in January 2023 (application reference 07/2023/00035/OUT). Story and Logik Developments are joint promoters of the Garden Village and have worked collaboratively to present a comprehensive masterplan for the combined area as shown in the Development Framework submitted with this representation. Logik Developments' current outline planning application[1] has the capacity to provide:

- Up to 170,000sqm of B2/B8
- Up to 10,000sqm for a hotel
- Up to 7,5000sqm of office floorspace
- Up to 5,000sqm of retail floorspace.

3.7 As noted, the development parcels have been masterplanned as a comprehensive whole to reflect the delivery of single, integrated Garden Village. The parcels work together to realise this, achieving a balanced and complementary mix of uses with shared infrastructure and facilities.

3.8 In its totality, CGV has the capacity to deliver:

- 2,300 high quality homes of varied type and size, including affordable homes, older persons accommodation and other specialist housing, including self-build plots;
- 429,500 sq m of varied employment space, suitable for a range of businesses operating in different sectors. This includes larger scale logistics space through to smaller scale SME sized facilities, including office, research and development and advanced manufacturing space;
- 2 no. new primary schools;
- 2 separate local centres, including retail and community facilities;
- c1,800 sq m supermarket plus 5,000sqm of retail floorspace;
- Hotel;
- Family Restaurant;
- Community Hospital;
- 3,600 sqm of playing pitches;

[1] Note Logik is promoting a further later phase/ parcel as indicated within the Cuerdale Development Framework

- A 500 space Park and Ride facility;
- Six childrens' play areas; and
- 122 ha of public open space.

3.9 The plan at Appendix 3 shows the full extent of the Garden Village and identifies the land subject to the first phase planning application, the balance of the land controlled by Story and the land being promoted by Logik Developments.

3.10 Story supports the full extent of the Garden Village and the strategic case set out below is made in the context of the land being considered for allocation through the Local Plan, comprising that being promoted by Story and Logik Developments. In considering the deliverability of the Garden Village, comments provided are limited to Story Homes' land.

# 4. Responding positively to opportunity: the A59 Growth Corridor and National Cyber Force Campus

4.1 CGV benefits from a strategic location adjacent to junction 31 of the M6 and positioned centrally within the A59 'Growth Corridor' stretching from Blackpool to Blackburn, via Preston and taking in Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. The corridor has been previously branded as the 'Lancashire Arc of Prosperity' by the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and encapsulates a number of the county's enterprise zones. The corridor's importance is reiterated within the Lancashire Growth Plan, Consultation Version (February 2025) published by the Lancashire Combined County Authority.

4.2 The strategic importance of this location is set to grow through the future delivery of the NCF at Samlesbury, providing significant levels of new, highly skilled employment in the area. This represents a £5 billion investment in the Central Lancashire economy.

4.3 The Lancashire County Council Economic Strategy 2023 – 2025 confirms the Council's commitment to: *"bring forward strategic sites, support business growth and deliver the skills to realise these ambitions" highlighting that "Lancashire has a significant, multi-billon pound development and infrastructure pipeline together with a mix of high-performing, well-established businesses, with log and settled roots in the Lancashire economy, a new wave of low carbon and security-based investments is supplementing Lancashire's economy, typified by the UK government's decision to locate the new National Cyber Force headquarters in Samlesbury".*

4.4 The R18 LP contained a policy direction (no. 5) which sought to develop a policy for longer-term strategic developments beyond the Local Plan period in order to sustainably deliver future growth. CGV was included as a 'Growth Option' within the R18 LP which noted "*The Cuerdale site provides an opportunity for a large scale mixed use housing and employment site which would meet the longer-term housing needs of Central Lancashire and could provide a regional significant site for development on a parr with Buckshaw village*".

4.5 Despite a clear and enhanced emphasis on economic growth within the amended Framework, the R19 LP has taken a step back by excluding a policy relating to meeting development needs beyond the Local Plan period and underproviding in terms of employment land provision in the case of both a policy-on and off approach. In particular, there is very limited consideration of NCF and the associated significant development opportunities, with only passing mention under paragraph 5.11 of the R19 LP:

"*In 2021, the Government announced that Samlesbury will be the home of the National Cyber Force, a partnership between the MoD and GCHQ. The Councils understand that the intention is to build on the cyber sector already existing in Manchester and bring high-skilled and well-paid jobs to the area. The Councils are working with Lancashire County Council to understand the opportunity this establishment will create, the timescale and how it might affect the wider economy*."

4.6 Failure to take account of the substantial economic investment delivered by NCF means that the three authorities will fail to capitalise and secure the associated wide-ranging benefits, GVA and job creation. Ultimately this could lead to investment being directed to other locations within the north west.

4.7 This failure to properly consider NCF, the growth stimulant it represents and to take steps to maximise the benefits resulting from this once in a generation strategic investment into Central Lancashire is the antithesis of the new Framework and the direction it provides as to planning for economic growth. It is indicative of a plan which lacks ambition and which is focused on constraining and regulating rather than facilitating growth. This cannot be reflective of the combined ambition of the Central Lancashire Authorities.

4.8 In the context of the above, on behalf of Story, Turley has undertaken a critique of the provision of employment land within the R19 LP, with a particular focus on CGV. In addition to a report into the potential economic implications of NCF on Central Lancashire.

### Employment Land Critique

4.9 In the first instance it is important context to note that the R18 LP identified an "*objectively assessed need for a minimum of 225 hectares of net additional employment land*', equivalent to circa 15.0ha per annum over the plan period then proposed (2023-38). This was based on an update to the Employment Land Study (ELS) which had been completed in February 2022.

4.10 A further update has now been published, as of February 2025, leading the R19 LP to a much smaller need of only 173ha of employment land, claiming also that this captures '*both local and wider strategic employment needs*'. This reduction has come despite the plan period having been extended by three years to 2041, with the average annual need over this longer period some 36% lower than previously reported at only 9.6ha per annum.

4.11 The R19 LP proposes to meet and indeed exceed the reported (and significantly reduced) need by allocating around 218ha of employment land throughout Central Lancashire.

4.12 The employment land critique report considers that the methodologies adopted within the 2025 ELS have limitations that threaten to significantly understate the amount of land needed over the period to 2041. This includes extrapolating take-up rates since 2010, whilst failing to account for the fact that almost four times as much employment land was intended to be developed over the same period, based on an existing Core Strategy that set an overall target nearly three times larger than now proposed (454ha versus 173ha).

4.13 The ELS also uses a different method to estimate the need for land suited to offices. The critique identifies a number issues with the ELS including lack of consideration to strategic projects such as NCF.

4.14 In relying on this trend-based approach to determining employment land requirements, the R19 LP will simply sustain undersupply. There is consequently an inherent assumption that the rate of development will not increase, contrary to the ambitions of both the Government via the amended Framework and ambitions of Lancashire County Council. The trend-based approach also fails to take account of specific large-scale investments including NCF.

4.15 In terms of the identified sites within the R19 LP, these have limitations, particularly in terms of size since even the largest is smaller than several of the strategic sites allocated through the existing Core Strategy.

4.16 The proposed allocations each offer only 12.8ha on average, but this falls by over two thirds to only 4.2ha when the four largest sites are excluded and nearly half of them all are smaller still. Beyond a likely shortfall of need the profile of allocated land fails to respond to Lancashire Combined County Authority's explicit identification of a need for a new generation of large strategic sites to be planned for to realise its economic growth ambitions and capitalise on planned investment, including but not limited to the NCF.

4.17 Given its location at the heart of the arc of growth in Lancashire, and the concentration of investment in the growth sectors in the cyber and defence sectors within Central Lancashire, this omission represents a significant failure to plan positively, as required by the Framework.

4.18 In summary the proposed employment land supply within the R19 LP is insufficient to meet future needs, reduced further when accounting for a 'policy-on' approach which supports strategic-scale investment, including that associated with NCF. As noted, the plan lacks ambition and is evidently designed to do the bare minimum, and more specifically has been curated to purposefully avoid Green Belt release from the outset. This is clearly a driver of the plan, the result of which is a strategy which takes Central Lancashire backwards, slowing down its economic growth, diversification and progress.

4.19 A sound plan would face into a proper consideration of what Central Lancashire needs to thrive, to maintain and accelerate its growth and of the opportunities that present themselves. It would respond to this context positively as a plan for growth, not a plan which seeks to avoid making difficult decisions.

4.20 Set against this backdrop, there is an important role for CGV which proposes to deliver a range of quality employment space on the A59 Growth Corridor, close to the NCF within Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. CGV will ultimately provide floorspace (at scale) for existing local businesses and also attract complementary investment, taking what is a unique opportunity to create a new cluster of businesses, academics and others operating in the cyber security and defence sectors.

**National Cyber Force Campus**

4.21 The previous UK Government announced the establishment of the new NCF in November 2020. It was subsequently announced that a permanent base for the NCF would be established and located at Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. It has the potential to be a £5 billion investment in Central Lancashire[2]. This scale of public sector investment in a facility of this type in the north of England is unparalleled. Its potential role in stimulating the rapid development of a new cyber security branch of the Lancashire economy cannot be overstated. It will be a significant influence on the local and region economy, and on demand for housing and business accommodation. A Local Plan with a role to support and facilitate economic growth cannot simply ignore this.

4.22 The NCF is currently under construction within the Enterprise Zone and is anticipated to be gradually occupied from 2025, with the first jobs on site currently advertised. It is expected that the facility will accommodate personnel from GCHQ, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) the Secret Intelligence Service and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory.

4.23 The decision to locate at Samlesbury recognises that the region is already home to related assets in the form of GCHQ's Manchester office and the Digital Security Hub (DiSH). Furthermore, leading defence and intelligence companies like Raytheon, BAE Systems Applied Intelligence and Northrop Grumman are already embedded in the regional economy. It is expected that such businesses will seek to leverage growing supply chain opportunities arising from the NCF where key initiatives have already been established to capture wider benefits such as the North West Cyber Corridor and the North West Cyber Security Cluster.

4.24 The new Government's Industrial Strategy, *Invest 2035*, identifies eight growth-driving sectors which are considered to represent the services and manufacturing industries that present the greatest opportunity for outputs and productivity growth over the long-term. The 'defence' sector, along with 'digital and technologies' make up two of these sectors.

4.25 Cyber security is big business within the North West which has the UK's largest cyber security ecosystem outside of London and the South East. Research undertaken by Plexal, as commissioned by Lancashire County Council in 2024, sets out that whilst it is challenging to pinpoint the exact number of people employed in the cyber sector, estimates suggest that around 900 individuals work in core cyber roles, with an additional 1,300 in related positions. In 2022 there were around 2,218 vacancies in cyber-related roles.

4.26 The Plexal research included predictions as to the level of employment that could be expected to be accommodated both directly within the NCF and indirectly because of multiplier effects in the wider economy.

4.27 The outputs of this research are set out in the below table.

**Table 4.1: Plexal predictions of employment impacts of the NCF**

| Direct Jobs | Indirect Jobs | **Total** |
|---|---|---|
| 2,000 | 1,120 | **3,120** |

[2] National Cyber Force announces £5bn Lancashire campus - Place North West

*Source: Plexal*

4.28 The direct jobs referenced above are identified as being made up of personnel from:

- GCHQ
- Ministry of Defence
- Secret Intelligence Service
- Defence Science and Technology Laboratory.

4.29 It is estimated that the GVA that could be generated by NCF is approximately £112.6 million per annum, with this based on a cautious assumption that each job on average will generate £22,000 of GVA. This marks an exponential increase on the county's already sizeable cyber security economy and is expected to act as a catalyst in attracting new and established cyber security-focused businesses to Lancashire.

4.30 The table below provides a summary of estimated employment impacts of cyber security growth across the North West as a whole as predicted by the North West Cyber Corridor Innovation Impact Study.

**Table 4.2: Estimated Employment Impacts of Cyber Security and Ecosystem in the North West**

| | Current (2022) | Target (2035) |
|---|---|---|
| Employment | 12,000 FTEs in the wider cyber ecosystem<br>(i.e. 5,000 in cyber security and 7,000 in broader economy) | 30,000 FTEs<br>(13,000 in cyber sector and 17,000 in broader economy) |

4.31 The 'Potential Economic Implications of the NCF on Central Lancashire' report prepared by Turley considers how comparable economic investments within cyber-security have impacted on localised economies and generated economic growth and demand for supporting employment and residential floorspace. One of the key examples cited is 'GCHQ Cheltenham and the Golden Valley'.

4.32 GCHQ which opened in 2003 has attracted a substantial cluster of related industries and in 2020, Cheltenham Borough Council and its partners adopted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Cyber Central Garden Community – also known as the "Golden Valley". Provision was made for 1,100 new homes and 45ha of employment land, reflecting the underpinning evidence produced by the Councils which recognised the land requirements of GCHQ.

4.33 It is clear from the experience in Cheltenham, and other locations, that the provision of a facility such as the NCF has the potential to attract a significant quantum of complementary employment activity and business growth. These businesses will require accommodation and facilities reasonably close to the new development. This includes providing sufficient high-quality housing in a sustainable and accessible location.

4.34 CGV offers a unique opportunity to capitalise on the investment being made by the NCF and provide complementary commercial floorspace that, as with the examples identified, can provide businesses with the opportunity to co-locate in proximity to the NCF and existing and developing cyber and defence eco-system on Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. The phasing of delivery will ensure that this space is provided in parallel with the occupation of the NCF and in alignment with the Government's anticipated investment and growth in the sector within the UK and region.

4.35 Similarly, the proximity of the Garden Village to the NCF and other employment opportunities – within Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and in the Garden Village itself – offers a unique opportunity to provide housing to attract and retain workers in close proximity. It will provide an attractive residential environment offering which will be of considerable value in helping to attract workers to locate to the area and reducing the need to travel.

4.36 The Central Lancashire Housing Need report, prepared by Stantec, considers that the economic growth forecast within the R19 LP are overly cautious and could mean a requirement for 8,813 no. additional dwellings are required over the Local Plan period high growth scenario – with at least a further 1,337 dwellings required to support NCF.

4.37 The Local Plan must respond to this context and be an enabler of the economic growth potential derived from the NCF. At present, it does not do so, presenting a significant deficiency in the plan and rendering it unsound. A positive response would see a plan which is proactive in identifying and seeking to deliver the additional accommodation requirements – housing and business space - which enable the economic growth potential catalysed by the NCF investment to be realised. This will only happen through the supporting infrastructure necessary for the business activity associated with and spinning-off NCF to take place. This requires investment in business accommodation and a residential environment that can attract skilled households to the area. Doing the bare minimum will not suffice.

# 5. Cuerdale Garden Village: sustainable delivery of homes and jobs

**Development Principles**

5.1 A Development Framework for CGV is submitted as part of Story's representation to the R19 LP. This sets out an overall vision for the Garden Village and an intended masterplan which shows how this could come forward during and beyond the plan period.

5.2 This demonstrates that, in its totality the Garden Village has the potential to provide the level and mix of development summarised in section 2.

5.3 The masterplan outlines how this mix and quantum of development can be delivered in a manner which follows the Garden Village principles, including ensuring all dwellings has access to the open space and everyday facilities they need to create a liveable residential development with co-located employment uses.

5.4 The masterplan as submitted has been informed by a thorough environmental analysis of the area and responds positively to opportunities and constraints identified as explained in the Development Framework. This includes in relation to:

- Points of access
- The site's landscape setting and the need to work with the prevailing landscape features
- Areas of ancient woodland
- Areas of ecological sensitivity
- Flood risk and drainage characteristics of the site
- Archaeological potential
- HSE consultation zones
- The site's Green Belt context
- Noise and odour constraints from surrounding uses.

5.5 The masterplan presented represents a deliverable form of development which avoids significant adverse environmental effects.

5.6 Alongside the main components of the development, the masterplan incorporates significant areas of open space, bringing areas of currently inaccessible land into public access, two primary schools, two local centres, sports pitches and a Park and Ride, improving public transport access into Preston and Blackburn.

5.7 CGV will seek to deliver affordable housing in line with Paragraphs 67, 156 and 157 of the Framework and the 'Golden Rules' which concerns development of land released from the Green Belt, unless this would make the development of unviable. CGV is of a scale which allows it to accommodate the full breadth of accommodation needed to deliver a truly mixed community. This represents a further advantage of delivering development at scale in one location.

5.8 The masterplan provides the advantage of being capable of phased delivery, with the initial focus on land defined as Phase 1 (predominantly to the south of the A59) which is subject to an outline planning application, with Phase 2, comprising the balance of the Garden Village, expected to be commenced towards the end of the Local Plan period. The phases work together to deliver a comprehensive Garden Village proposal but each accommodating the everyday facilities to be a sustainable development in its own right – e.g. primary school, local centre etc.

5.9 Further work will be undertaken to define a public transport improvement package which is necessary to ensure effective integration of the scheme with surrounding communities, including those in Blackburn and Preston and particularly in ensuring the job opportunities provided as part of the Garden Village (and indeed the NCF) benefit the communities most in need.

5.10 The full Garden Village is deliverable over a 15-year period. A phasing strategy is provided in the Development Framework.

## Green Belt Considerations

5.11 The scale of the land available and in single ownership in this location provides the flexibility to ensure the masterplan approach responds positively to its landscape and Green Belt context, including avoiding areas of greatest sensitivity and building in defensible boundaries to ensure the long-term integrity of the retained areas of Green Belt beyond the Garden Village. Minimising the development's harm in this respect has been a key driver of the masterplan approach.

5.12 An Open Land Designations Study Green Belt Assessment (October 2022) was published alongside the R18 LP, it has not been updated since. This considers the function of the Green Belt in Central Lancashire at the strategic level and the relative contribution made by different defined Green Belt parcels. This represents a high-level appraisal which notes that account is not taken of individual sites and their ability to accommodate development in a manner which avoids Green Belt harm. It is an initial piece of work to therefore inform the assessment of individual candidate allocations.

5.13 Whilst the protection of the Green Belt is a well-established priority of national planning policy, this needs to be considered as a material consideration in the selection of sites alongside wider sustainability considerations and the benefits of development proposals in question. Minimising Green Belt harm cannot be the sole driver of the Local Plan and the process of site selection, particularly in light of the provisions of Paragraph 146 of the Framework and shortfall of housing and employment land as set out within the core Story representation and Central Lancashire Housing Need report.

5.14 CGV falls within Parcels 12, 14 and 61 of the Green Belt Assessment. This records that these parcels make a 'limited' contribution (the lowest rank) to Purposes 1 (To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas), 2 (To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another) and 4 (To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns) and a 'significant' contribution (the highest rank) in respect of Green Belt Purpose 3 (To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment).

5.15 Following amendments to the Framework, National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was subsequently updated in February 2025 providing guidance for the undertaking of Green Belt and grey belt assessments. The PPG states that when defining Green Belt land to be assessed, the review needs to '*ensure any assessment of how land performs against the Green Belt purposes is robust, assessment areas should be sufficiently granular to enable the assessment of their variable contribution to Green Belt purposes*'. The current Green Belt assessment parcels (as per the Open Land Designations Study Green Belt Assessment) that cover the Site are not 'sufficiently granular', and as a result the assessment is considered to be out of date.

5.16 On this basis, Turley has undertaken a site-specific assessment against the Green Belt purposes and NPPG criteria. We have set out in the subsequent tables the approach to assessing the contribution towards purposes (a), (b) and (d), with reference to the guidance in the PPG and Turley's initial response to the 2025 PPG criteria.

**Purpose A - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas**

<table>
<tr><th>Illustrative features (2025 PPG)</th><th>Turley assessment against PPG criteria (2025)</th></tr>
<tr><td>Strong - 'Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely to be free of existing development, and lack physical feature(s) in reasonable proximity that could restrict and contain development.<br>They are also likely to include all of the following features:<br>- be adjacent or near to a large built up area<br>- if developed, result in an incongruous pattern of development (such as an extended "finger" of development into the Green Belt)'</td><td rowspan="2">Site is not adjacent or near to a large built up area (the closest are Preston c.1km away and Blackburn c.4km away at the nearest points).<br>The Site is free of existing development. There are physical features in reasonable proximity that could restrict or contain development including major road corridors and the river valley.<br><br>Conclusion: Site meets definition for Weak Contribution as it is not adjacent or near to a large built up area.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Moderate - 'Assessment areas that contribute moderately are likely to be adjacent or near to a large built up area, but include one or more features that weaken the land's contribution to this purpose a, such as (but not limited to):<br>- having physical feature(s) in reasonable proximity that could restrict and contain development</td></tr>
</table>

| | |
|---|---|
| *- be partially enclosed by existing development, such that new development would not result in an incongruous pattern of development*<br>*- contain existing development*<br>*- being subject to other urbanising influences'* | |
| ***Weak or None*** *- 'Assessment areas that make only a weak or no contribution are likely to include those that:*<br>*- are not adjacent to or near to a large built up area*<br>*- are adjacent to or near to a large built up area, but containing or being largely enclosed by significant existing development'* | |

**Purpose B - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another**

| Illustrative features (2025 PPG) | Turley assessment against PPG criteria (2025) |
|---|---|
| ***Strong*** *- 'Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely to be free of existing development and include all of the following features:*<br>*- forming a substantial part of a gap between towns*<br>*- the development of which would be likely to result in the loss of visual separation of towns'* | The Site is located in a gap between Preston and Blackburn. This gap is c.8km and the Site forms a relatively small part of this gap. |
| ***Moderate*** *- 'Assessment areas that contribute moderately are likely to be located in a gap between towns, but include one or more features that weaken their contribution to this purpose, such as (but not limited to):*<br>*- forming a small part of the gap between towns*<br>*- being able to be developed without the loss of visual separation between towns. This could be (but is not limited to) due to the presence or the close proximity of structures, natural landscape elements or topography that preserve visual separation'* | The site is able to be developed without the loss of visual separation between towns due to intervening undulating topography, areas of mature woodland and sporadic areas of development that preserve visual separation.<br><br>Conclusion: Site meets definition for **Moderate** contribution as it is located in a gap between towns but as described above includes features that weaken the contribution to this purpose. |
| ***Weak or None*** *- 'Assessment areas that contribute weakly are likely to include those that:* | |

| | |
|---|---|
| *- do not form part of a gap between towns, or*<br>*- form part of a gap between towns, but only a very small part of this gap, without making a contribution to visual separation'* | |

**Purpose D - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns**

| Illustrative features (2025 PPG) | Turley assessment against PPG criteria (2025) |
|---|---|
| ***Strong*** *- 'Assessment areas that contribute strongly are likely be free of existing development and to include all of the following features:*<br>*- form part of the setting of the historic town*<br>*- make a considerable contribution to the special character of a historic town. This could be (but is not limited to) as a result of being within, adjacent to, or of significant visual importance to the historic aspects of the town'* | Site does not contribute to the setting or special character of any towns.<br>Conclusion: **Weak/No Contribution** |
| ***Moderate*** *- 'Assessment areas that perform moderately are likely to form part of the setting and/or contribute to the special character of a historic town but include one or more features that weaken their contribution to this purpose, such as (but not limited to):*<br>*- being separated to some extent from historic aspects of the town by existing development or topography*<br>*- containing existing development*<br>*- not having an important visual, physical, or experiential relationship to historic aspects of the town'* | |
| ***Weak or None*** *- 'Assessment areas that make no or only a weak contribution are likely to include those that:*<br>*- do not form part of the setting of a historic town*<br>*- have no visual, physical, or experiential connection to the historic aspects of the town'* | |

5.17 The analysis above demonstrates that the Site does not make a strong contribution to Green Belt purposes a, b or d.

5.18 The PPG does not provide assessment criteria for purpose c (*to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment*) as it is not one of the purposes that are relevant to identifying grey belt land. The parcels that include the Site in the Open Land Designations Study: Green Belt Assessment were assessed as making a significant contribution to purpose c. It is agreed that the Site does makes a strong contribution to purpose c. Development of the Site would introduce a large scale development within land that is currently open. However, the area is heavily influenced by existing major road corridors and industrial and commercial uses in close proximity which detract from the countryside character. Due to the measures integrated into the masterplan, the extent of impact on the countryside would be relatively contained, with areas of surrounding Green Belt away from the Site itself maintaining an open character.

**5.19** The PPG does not provide assessment criteria for purpose e (Assisting in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land) as it is also not one of the purposes that are relevant to identifying grey belt land. The analysis in the Open Land Designations Study: Green Belt Assessment, states that '*All Green Belt land is considered to make an equal contribution to this purpose*'. This is agreed and it is not considered necessary to provide an additional assessment against this purpose.

5.20 When considering the impacts on the Green Belt across the Local Plan area as a whole, it should be noted that South Ribble has a very high proportion of land designated as Green Belt at c.7,610 hectares[3] as per 2022 report. The Site covers an area of c.164 hectares which equates to c.2% of the Green Belt across the Local Plan area. As a result, a large extent of the Green Belt across South Ribble would be unaffected by development within the Site. It is considered overall that the impacts on the Green Belt as a result of development within the Site would be localised and would not affect the ability of all the remaining Green Belt across the area of the Local Plan from serving all five purposes in a meaningful way.

5.21 The remaining Green Belt land would continue to prevent the outward sprawl of Preston and keep important land on this edge of this built up area, and in the wider gap between Preston and Blackburn, permanently open. It is therefore considered that the Site could be removed from the Green Belt without fundamentally undermining the purposes of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan.

[3] Green belt land

# 6. Strategic Allocation

### Immediate Allocation

6.1 The preceding sections of this representation, the core Story representation and the supporting economic reports all demonstrate that R19 LP is **unsound** as it fails to account for development needs across the Local Plan period and beyond. The R19 LP relies on an evidence base that does not properly consider the need for employment land whilst failing to take account of a substantial investment project the NCF. It is Story's case that there is a clear need to allocate additional land within the R19 LP and to align the Local Plan more suitably with the growth ambitions of the Framework and Lancashire County Council.

6.2 The Preferred Options Consultation (Reg 18) Consultation Statement Main Report (November 2024) sets out how the Central Lancashire authorities can purportedly meet development needs within existing urban boundaries which is considered to be a flawed assertion. In addition to this the R19 LP fundamentally lacks in ambition and that the objections received to the R18 LP consultation are not insurmountable so as to preclude allocation of CGV.

6.3 Whilst the full representations to the R18 LP have not been published the summary within the Consultation Statement Main Report suggests that Samlesbury and Cuerdale Parish Council and the Campaign to Protect Rural England have objected on points of principle and development within the Green Belt As detailed within this representation, there are circumstances in which Green Belt release is justified and it is considered that CGV meets and exceeds the threshold of 'exceptional circumstances' as per Paragraph 145 of the Framework, given the R19 LP fails to accommodate development needs during and beyond the Plan period, fails to encourage economic growth in the spirit of Paragraphs 85-87 of the Framework, and fails to take account of NCF.

6.4 The neutral comment from United Utilities should not weigh against allocation of CGV which will be capable of addressing matters of drainage capacity at detailed design stage.

6.5 The final point relates to Blackburn with Darwen Council identifying an 'alternative location'. Story is familiar with the site Blackburn with Darwen Council are promoting which is a very small-scale site (i.e. <6ha versus 284ha) under their ownership already and allocated within the adopted South Ribble Local Plan for 'Village Development'. This does not fundamentally address Story's case that CGV is a unique proposition that presents the opportunity to deliver a sustainable new settlement at scale.

6.6 The Framework includes a clear expectation for policies and decisions to support economic growth and that such growth should be afforded significant weight. The development of strategic-scale sites to support a modern economy and local industrial strategies is of vital importance to fully realise the economic opportunities of Central Lancashire. The Integrated Assessment of the Central Lancashire Local Plan considers the impacts of a new settlement and notes their benefits over more traditional urban extensions. This reflects the Framework's position that adopting such a spatial strategy is a key tool in achieving sustainable development and meeting substantial development needs.

**6.7 First and foremost this indicates that Green Belt release is necessary as exceptional circumstances exist in order to justify the allocation of land to meet immediate needs during the Plan period.**

6.8 CGV represents the most sustainable means of meeting the additional development requirements identified in this representation both reflecting the shortfall in developable land relative to the need identified by the Councils and the additional need arising from the delivery of the NCF.

6.9 CGV will maximise the benefits arising from the delivery of the Government's investment in NCF which enables the development requirement to be accommodated without placing pressure on existing services and infrastructure through a new settlement approach. It is promoted against the baseline of the A59 Corridor already having a critical economic function and in building on this, represents a truly sustainable means of meeting the additional growth requirements identified.

6.10 The Garden Village approach provides long term certainty for the communities of Central Lancashire and allows the authorities to plan for the delivery of additional development needs in a controlled manner. Its physical co-location with the NCF and opportunities to deliver an integrated and connected development area across the A59 Growth Corridor, building on the critical mass of development already emerging in this location, will ensure the long-term sustainability of this growth area is optimised.

6.11 Distributing this additional development in a more dispersed manner would represent a less sustainable approach in planning and delivering the infrastructure needs of this additional development requirement. No other single area benefits from the locational attributes of CGV, reflected in its relationship with the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and the NCF, its situation at Junction 31 of the M6 and its accessibility to Preston and Blackburn via the A59 and A677. The site is unique in its ability to deliver the additional development needs of Central Lancashire in a sustainable manner and maximising environmental, economic, and social benefits in the process. Exceptional circumstances are considered to exist to justify its release from the Green Belt on this basis.

## Strategic Reserve Policy

6.12 The Framework requires plans to include flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances to anticipate and respond to requirements and opportunities which may present themselves looking ahead and within the timeframe of the Local Plan. Building in resilience and adaptability to local plan policies reduces the likelihood of plans being needed to be updated or only requiring a limited part of a local plan to be updated; providing costs and resource savings for local authorities.

6.13 If the emerging Local Plan did not sufficiently plan for release of suitable sites for employment, infrastructure and housing needs, it could well lead to an undersupply of housing and employment sites in the context of above standard growth requirements emerging in the future due, as an example, to the effects of a public sector strategic economic investment which may be committed or one which may emerge in the future in the context of a Government Levelling Up agenda.

6.14 Story's primary position is that the CGV should be allocated for the reasons set out in this submission. However, as an alternative, a strategic scale reserve site will provide Central Lancashire with a competitive advantage in being able to capitalise on any future one-time but otherwise footloose investment opportunities which may emerge and which need a site of strategic scale to be accommodated.

6.15 This is in the context of Central Lancashire's historic success in growing its economy through supporting strategic scale mixed use development and in recognition of the need for the area to make provision for the next wave of strategic sites if this success is to continue into the future. The Councils will wish to plan proactively for growth and change in circumstances and so there is a compelling case for a strategic reserve site policy as an alternative to a site allocation for CGV.

6.16 Strategic reserve sites are well understood mechanisms to help prevent speculative and unplanned for development from happening. If CGV were taken forward as a strategic reserve site, it would be brought forward for development if (and only if) specified circumstances/trigger events occur that require its activation and release from strategic reserve. Reserve sites also provide certainty to communities as to where alternative or additional development will take place rather than having to react to speculative applications or appeals. Strategic reserve site policies are a relatively common tool in local plan making across England.

6.17 A strategic reserve site policy could either:

- release the CGV from the Green Belt at the point of adoption of the local plan and impose of a strategic reserve site policy setting out trigger events. Exceptional circumstances for release of the Green Belt, and therefore the release of the site from the Green Belt, would be established through the local plan process; or

- impose a strategic reserve site policy which operates as follows:

    - firstly, the principle of an exceptional circumstances release of CGV from the Green Belt would be assessed through the local plan process and pre-determined that if any of a number of circumstances/triggers were to occur then this would trigger exceptional circumstances for green belt release;

    - secondly, in relation to Green Belt set out trigger events such that if one is triggered it has the effect of releasing the site for development and also triggering an exceptional circumstance for release of the Green Belt.

6.18 To assist the three Councils, draft wording for a strategic reserve site policy for CGV covering both options above is set out in **Appendix 5**.

# Appendix 1: Critique of the Planned Provision of Employment Land in the Draft Central Lancashire Plan

# Critique of the Planned Provision of Employment Land in the Draft Central Lancashire Local Plan

Cuerdale Garden Village

April 2025

Turley

# Contents



**Client**
Story Homes

**Our reference**
STOM3025

April 2025

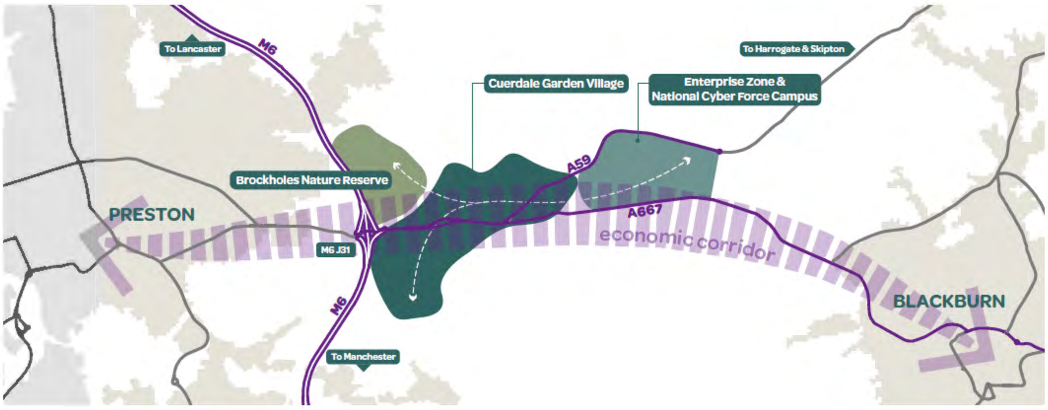
# 1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been commissioned by Story Homes to support representations to the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan, concerning its proposals for Cuerdale Garden Village.

### Cuerdale Garden Village

1.2 Cuerdale Garden Village is located within the A59 Growth Corridor, adjacent to Junction 31 of the M6 and near the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. The Development Framework identifies the potential to deliver a broad range of high-quality employment space, co-located with residential development in a liveable environment, supported by accessible infrastructure. Figure 1.1 shows the strategic location of the proposed development.

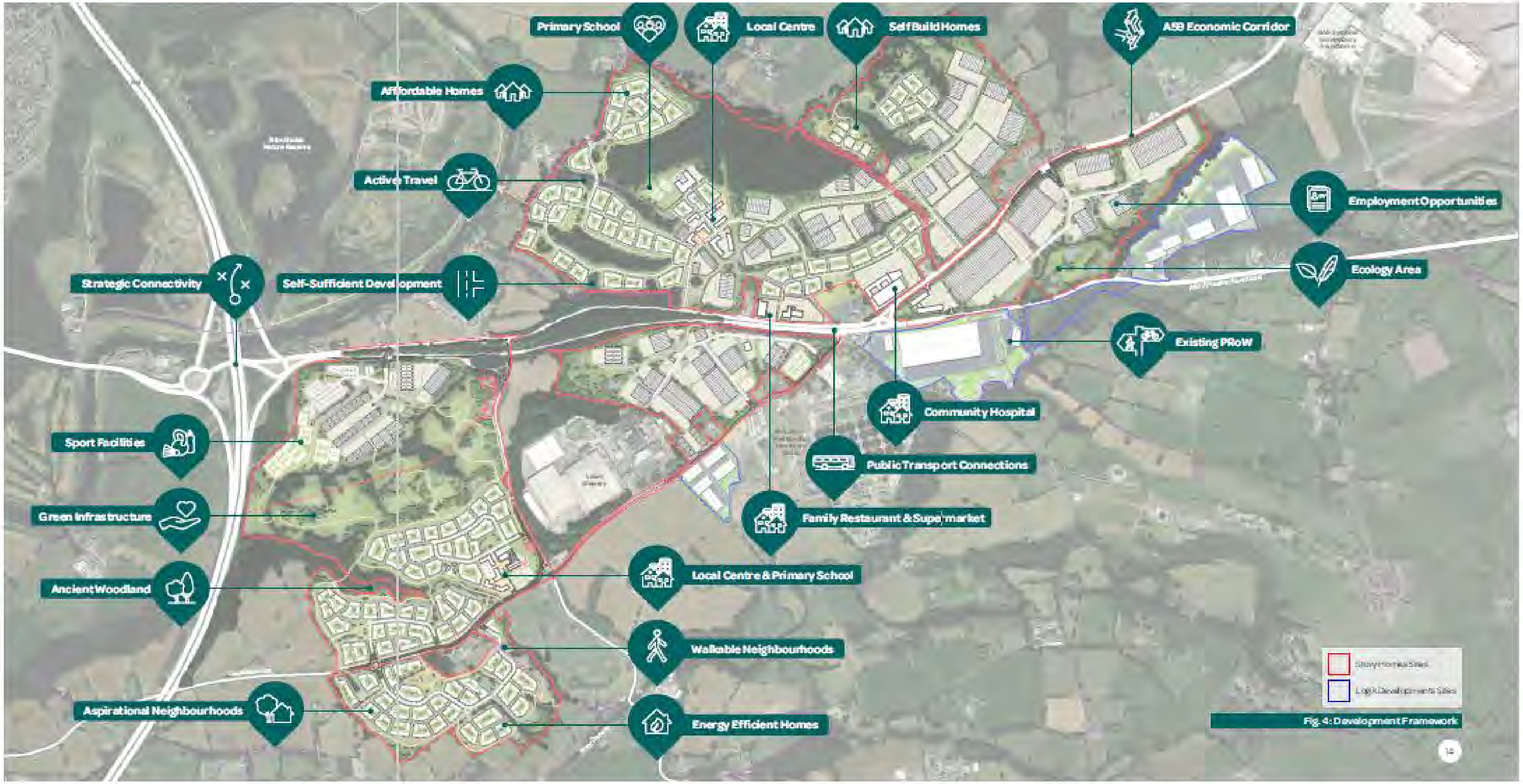
**Figure 1.1: A59 Growth Corridor**




*Source: Cuerdale Garden Village Development Framework Document*

1.3 The Development Framework for Cuerdale Garden Village provides a visual illustration of the uses envisaged, which is replicated at Figure 1.2 overleaf.

**Figure 1.2: Cuerdale Garden Village Development Framework**




*Source: Story Homes*

1.4 The proposed development has the capacity to provide in the order of:

- 429,500 sqm of employment floorspace, measured as gross internal area (GIA). This includes larger scale logistics space through to smaller scale SME sized facilities, including office, research and development and advanced manufacturing space;
- 2,300 high-quality new homes of varied type and size, including affordable homes; and
- Supporting social and green infrastructure.

1.5 The above development quantums account for the land being promoted by Story Homes, which extends to 284ha, and includes the development sought through an outline planning application, representing a first phase, which was submitted by Story Homes in May 2022[1]. It also includes what has been referenced as an eastern extension which is being promoted by Logik Developments as part of the overall Garden Village proposal, which is also subject to a live planning application submitted to South Ribble Borough Council in January 2023[2].

### Report scope

1.6 This report critiques the proposed approach towards employment land provision within the draft Local Plan ("R19 LP"), which anticipates a more limited need than the previous version that was subject to consultation in December 2022 ("R18 LP").

1.7 The R19 LP seeks to justify the reduction in need with reference to the findings of an updated Employment Land Study[3] (ELS) which is therefore reviewed and critiqued in this report.

1.8 Particular consideration is given to the impact of the ELS having not allowed for major investments, such as the National Cyber Force (NCF) headquarters coming forward within the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone.

1.9 Story Homes has separately commissioned B8 Real Estate (B8RE) to undertake a high-level review of the employment land supply identified in the ELS, and the allocations proposed within the draft Local Plan. This report draws out the headlines of this assessment, included at **Appendix 1**, identifying key concerns around the sites' collective ability to meet needs in full over the plan period. It also identifies a failure to respond to the Lancashire Combined County Authority's (LCCA) explicit identification of a need for a new generation of large strategic sites to be planed for to realise its economic growth ambitions.

1.10 Drawing on agency insight from B8RE the report identifies that there is currently a pressing need for employment land across Central Lancashire. This is expected to be

[1] Planning application reference 07/2022/00451/OUT

[2] Planning application reference 07/2023/00035/OUT

[3] BE Group (February 2025) Central Lancashire Employment Land Study – Land Supply and OAN Update 2024; Preston City Council, Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council (February 2025)

sustained, not least to capitalise on potential occupier interest and economic benefits arising from the NCF, with the supply of employment land currently identified considered unlikely to meet needs in full over the plan period. This report outlines the opportunity presented by Cuerdale Garden Village within this context, noting its spatial proximity to the NCF and strategic road corridors.

1.11 The identified limitations of the evidence and its translation into planning policy result in a failure to plan positively and support the needs of the modern economy, as required explicitly by the NPPF (paragraphs 85 and 86).

### Report Structure

1.12 This report is structured as follows:

- **Section 1:** Introduction
- **Section 2:** Proposed approach of the Local Plan and informing evidence
- **Section 3:** Strategic context
- **Section 4:** Critique of the reported need
- **Section 5:** Critique of the identified supply
- **Section 6:** Conclusion

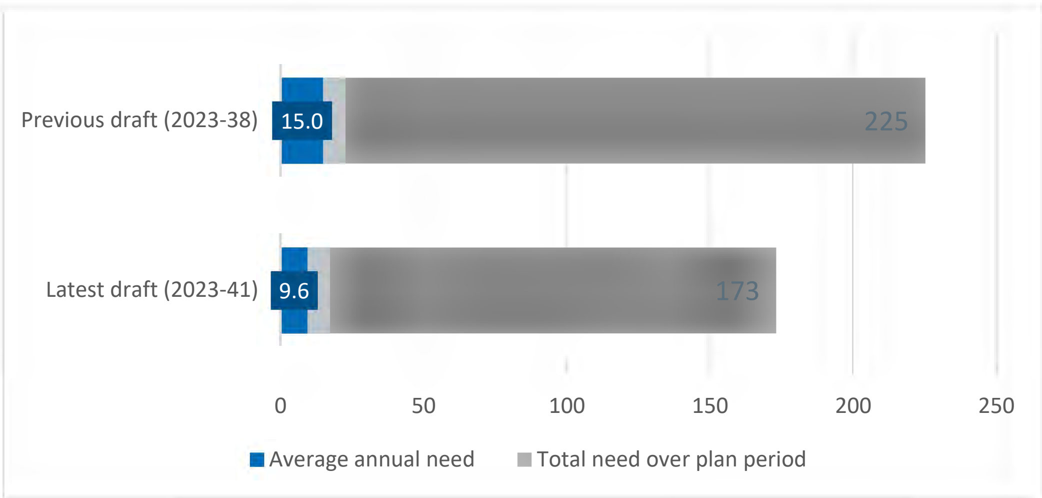
# 2. Proposed Approach of the Local Plan and Informing Evidence

**Reported need for employment land**

2.1 In previously consulting on Preferred Options for the new Local Plan, in December 2022, the Councils reported that there was an '*objectively assessed need for a minimum of 225 hectares of net additional employment land*', equivalent to circa 15.0ha per annum over the plan period then proposed[4] (2023-38). This was based on an update to the Employment Land Study (ELS) which had been completed in February 2022[5].

2.2 A further update has though now been published, as of February 2025, leading the R19 LP that is currently subject to consultation to refer at Policy EC1 to a much smaller need for only 173ha of employment land, claiming also that this captures '*both local and wider strategic employment needs*'[6]. This reduction has come despite the plan period having been extended by three years to 2041, with the average annual need over this longer period some 36% lower than previously reported at only 9.6ha per annum.

**Figure 2.1: Evolution of Reported Need for Employment Land (total and annual)**




*Source: Central Lancashire authorities; Turley analysis*

[4] Preston City Council, Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council (December 2022) Central Lancashire Local Plan: preferred Options – Part One Consultation, p58

[5] BE Group (February 2022) Central Lancashire – Employment Land Study Update

[6] BE Group (February 2025) Central Lancashire Employment Land Study – Land Supply and OAN Update 2024; Preston City Council, Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council (February 2025) Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041, p86

2.3 The R19 LP indicates that the greatest need is for industrial and warehousing land, with circa 154.6ha reported to be needed between 2023 and 2041. This is over eight times the reported need for land suited to offices (18.2ha).

**Table 2.1: Reported Need for Employment Land (ha; 2023-41)**

| | Chorley | Preston | South Ribble | Central Lancashire |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Industrial/warehousing | 34.97 | 68.43 | 51.23 | 154.63 |
| Offices | 6.48 | 6.00 | 5.76 | 18.24 |
| **Total** | **41.45** | **74.43** | **56.99** | **172.87** |

*Source: Central Lancashire authorities*

2.4 The latest iteration of the ELS not only suggests that '*a substantially revised forecast methodology*' has been used, compared to the previous version completed in 2022, but also confirms that different approaches have been used to separately estimate the need for land suited to offices and industrial/warehousing space[7]. The need for:

- **Offices** has been calculated using a '*labour demand*' model, underpinned by a '*baseline or policy-off forecast*' from Cambridge Econometrics – developed late in 2023 – which makes '*no allowance for major public policy interventions*'[8]. Jobs are converted into full-time equivalents (FTEs) before those likely to need office space are identified, with an attempt having also been made to allow for greater homeworking. A buffer equivalent to an extra five years' job growth is also believed to have been applied.

- **Industrial and warehousing land** has been based on past take-up over the period from 2010 to 2023, in a notable change from the previous ELS which extrapolated the much longer-term trend over thirty years back to 1991. A gross, rather than net, figure has been favoured for Preston to allow for the replacement of losses but this has not been deemed necessary for Chorley or South Ribble, since neither are considered to have lost stock at the same rate[9]. A buffer equivalent to a further five years' take-up has though been added for each authority and allowance has also been made for a return to the level of vacancy needed in '*a well-functioning commercial property market*'[10].

2.5 It is of note that neither an approach based on past take-up, nor one derived from a baseline forecast which makes no allowance for interventions, allow for the impact of major investments like the NCF. The ELS openly admits that such '*strategic projects*' have not been taken into account, blaming this on a lack of '*clear forecasts of the jobs growth resulting from these schemes which could inform a Policy On forecast*'[11]. The

[7] BE Group (February 2025) Central Lancashire Employment Land Study – Land Supply and OAN Update 2024, paragraph 1.11

[8] *Ibid*, paragraph 5.9

[9] *Ibid*, p87-89

[10] *Ibid*, p85-86

[11] *Ibid*, paragraph 3.8

R19 LP similarly takes no account of their impact either on need or supply, only stating – in the context of the NCF – that '*the Councils are working with Lancashire County Council to understand the opportunity this establishment will create, the timescale and how it might affect the wider economy*'[12].

**Proposed supply**

2.6 The R19 LP proposes to meet and indeed exceed the reported need by allocating around 218ha of employment land throughout Central Lancashire, with the Cuerden site in South Ribble alone responsible for almost a quarter of this total (50ha). It notably does not include any land at the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone, likely due to the latest ELS having reported that '*the National Cyber Force Campus will now take up a high proportion of the remaining land*' such that it is '*not clear what, if any, land will remain to meet further requirements*'[13].

**Table 2.2: Identified Employment Land Allocations and Strategic Sites**

| | Strategic allocations | Employment allocations | Mixed use allocations | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Policies | SS5 | EC2-4 | EC5-6 | |
| Chorley | – | 7.68 | 12.66[14] | 20.34 |
| Preston | 63.30 | 73.20 | – | 136.50 |
| South Ribble | – | 11.30 | 50.00 | 61.30 |
| **Central Lancashire** | **63.30** | **92.18** | **62.66** | **218.14** |

*Source: Central Lancashire authorities*

**Summary**

2.7 The R19 LP references a need for around 173ha of employment land throughout Central Lancashire over the period from 2023 to 2041. This has fallen from what was reported during the previous consultation, even with that having covered a shorter period only to 2038, with the average annual need now expected to be some 36% lower.

2.8 This has seemingly been caused by a further update to the Council's Employment Land Study, which was published in February 2025 and claims to have used '*a substantially revised…methodology*'. It anticipates the greatest need being for industrial and warehousing land, basing this on historic take-up between 2010 and 2023 with allowances made for healthier vacancy rates and the replacement of losses in Preston, in addition to a buffer. There is reported to be a substantially smaller need for offices, with this having been based on an unadjusted forecast that makes '*no allowance for*

[12] Preston City Council, Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council (February 2025) Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041, paragraph 3.8
[13] BE Group (February 2025) Central Lancashire Employment Land Study – Land Supply and OAN Update 2024, p137-138
[14] This is reported as 2.66ha in Policy EC5 but this is believed to have been a typographical error

*major public policy interventions*' like the NCF – blamed on uncertainty regarding associated job creation – but does attempt to allow for greater homeworking, before applying a buffer.

2.9 The R19 LP proposes to meet and indeed exceed the reported need by allocating around 218ha of employment land throughout Central Lancashire. This does include the Cuerden site in South Ribble but wholly excludes the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone, having been reasonably assumed that the NCF will fill most if not all of the remaining land.

# 3. Strategic Context

3.1 Before the proposed approach of the R19 LP is critiqued, this section summarises the strategic context in which it has been produced. It highlights an increased emphasis on supporting and enabling economic growth over the past year, and particularly since the change of Government in July 2024, with this being viewed as critical to improving resilience in every corner of the UK.

3.2 Within Lancashire itself, the changing national agenda has been reflected through the development of ambitious economic growth agendas, with various publications setting out the anticipated scale of investment and the support that is required at both the national and local level. In the case of the latter, it is clear that robust and positively prepared Local Plans are seen to be critical to successfully enabling growth, reflecting their role in providing the infrastructure – such as land – that is required to attract and retain investment of businesses and individuals.

**Background**

3.3 Since its election in July 2024, the Government has been clear in its view that '*sustained economic growth is the only route to improving the prosperity of our country and the living standards of working people'*[15]. It has stated that its *'central mission'* is to '*restore economic growth'* and it also aims to deliver the infrastructure that the country needs[16].

3.4 It has established an aim *'for the highest sustained growth in the G7 – with more people in good jobs, higher living standards, and productivity growth in every part of the United Kingdom'*[17].

3.5 In setting the milestone for measuring progress, it has arguably retained the essence of the previous Government's commitment to "levelling up" by acknowledging that *'growth must be felt by everyone, everywhere, so we will track GDP per head at both a regional and national level to drive prosperity across the United Kingdom'*[18].

3.6 In this context, it affirms that *'the main route to higher living standards is through good, productive jobs, stable employment, and a thriving business environment, and we believe that growth must be felt in every nation and region'*[19].

3.7 In setting out its approach to realising this mission, the Government has stated that it will, *inter alia*:

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[15] MHCLG (August 2024) Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system

[16] Speeches by the Chancellor, The Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP, on 5/8 July 2024

[17] https://www.gov.uk/missions/economic-growth

[18] *Ibid*

[19] *Ibid*

- Work in partnership with businesses, creating the right conditions for investment through the National Industrial Strategy (considered below);

- Work with devolved governments and partner with mayors to develop local growth plans to give them the tools needed in areas like adult education, skills and employment support;

- Drive innovation, investment and the adoption of technology; and

- Help people get a job, stay in work, and progress in their careers, with good employment opportunities across the country. This is to be supported by the newly established Skills England and the Industrial Strategy Council, along with a reformed jobs and career service.

3.8 The delivery of the mission to kickstart economic growth is also predicated on the Government achieving a commitment to "rebuild Britain". The Treasury clearly anticipates that '*the government's housing targets, coupled with investment in supporting infrastructure, will remove barriers to economic growth'*[20].

### National Planning Policy Framework

3.9 The Government quickly expressed an intention to '*reform*' the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) shortly after its election, in order to '*kickstart economic growth*'[21]. It launched a consultation on proposed reforms within weeks[22].

3.10 Following this consultation, the Government implemented wide-ranging and ambitions reforms to the NPPF in December 2024, with the primary aim of increasing housebuilding in England[23]. The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) expects these changes to increase gross domestic product by 0.2% by 2029-30 – adding £6.8 billion to the economy – and by over 0.4% in 2034-35[24].

3.11 The Government has been clear to set out that changes to the NPPF are just a first step in its ambitious package of reforms to get Britain building again, secure affordable quality homes for all and drive economic growth.

3.12 While the above signals an implicit step-change in national planning, the Central Lancashire authorities do intend for their own Local Plan to be examined in the context of the NPPF that was published in December 2023, taking advantage of transitional arrangements in the latest iteration[25].

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[20] HM Treasury (January 2025) 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy Working Paper – A Cross-Government Plan for Infrastructure, page 1

[21] Speech by the Chancellor, The Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP, on 8 July 2024

[22] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (August 2024) Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system

[23] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework

[24] HM Treasury (March 2025) Spring Statement, p2

[25] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework, Annex 1

3.13 Policies relating to economic growth and employment land are though very similar in both documents, with each setting a clear expectation that '*planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt*'[26]. Both confirm that:

*"Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential"*[27].

3.14 Both expect planning policies to *inter alia* '*set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period*'[28]. They are also expected to '*address potential barriers to investment*' and '*be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan*', so as to '*enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances*'[29].

3.15 There are though also some differences, with the newer version more explicit for instance in requiring planning policies to:

*"…pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a modern economy, including by identifying suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics"*[30]

3.16 It also expects planning policies and decisions to '*recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors*', for instance by making provision for:

- Clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for new, expanded or upgraded facilities and infrastructure that are needed to support the growth of these industries (including data centres and grid connections);
- Storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods, especially where this is needed to support the supply chain, transport innovation and decarbonisation; and
- The expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience[31].

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[26] Paragraph 85 of both the 2023 and 2024 NPPF
[27] *Ibid*
[28] Paragraph 86 of both the 2023 and 2024 NPPF
[29] *Ibid*
[30] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 86c
[31] *Ibid*, paragraph 87

### Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy

3.17 The latest version of the NPPF also updates an historic reference to the previous Government's Industrial Strategy, which could arguably have already been interpreted as a reference to the equivalent document of the new Government – published for consultation in October 2024[32] – even without this being explicitly stated.

3.18 It is nonetheless now clear that "Invest 2035" is intended to be '*the UK's modern industrial strategy*', with an expectation that planning policies have regard to this document in developing '*a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth*'[33].

3.19 While the strategy could technically change following last year's consultation, with the Government believed to still be '*analysing…feedback*' and intending to publish a final version alongside the Spending Review in June, the NPPF explains that a series of '*priority sectors for growth and support*' have been identified[34]. Amongst them are defence and digital technologies, both of which are highly relevant to the NCF.

3.20 Invest 2035 acknowledges that '*the UK's defence sector is a global leader*', providing '*good, well-paid jobs*' which benefit the entire country given that all but a third of its spending with UK industry and commerce goes outside of London and the South East. Defence is clearly seen to be a driver of innovation – leading to '*positive spillovers across the economy*' – and it can also '*boost the prosperity*' of UK residents, with '*a better, more innovative and more resilient defence sector*' allowing '*opportunities presented by the technologies of the future*' to be seized for example[35]. Reference is made to a forthcoming Defence Industrial Strategy that will both strengthen the sector and align '*security and economic priorities*', and while this is still awaited at the time of writing the Ministry of Defence has published a "Statement of Intent" which makes clear the aim to '*drive economic growth and create new long-term partnerships between government and business*'[36]. The Spring Statement continues to signpost the future publication of this strategy, which is expected to transform the defence sector into '*an engine for growth*' capable of benefiting people in all nations and regions of the UK[37].

3.21 Digital sectors and other technologies are described as having '*transformed*' the economy making it '*fundamentally different to where it was a decade ago*'[38]. The sector is seen to be '*at the forefront of geopolitical competition*' such that '*developing its strengths can enhance the UK's security and prosperity*'. The Government clearly views the country as being '*well positioned to build on its success and develop the next wave of groundbreaking digital and technology companies*', aided by its '*world-leading*

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[32] UK Government (October 2024) Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy

[33] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 86a and footnote 43

[34] *Ibid*, footnote 43; https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/invest-2035-the-uks-modern-industrial-strategy; HM Treasury (March 2025) Spring Statement, paragraph 2.57

[35] UK Government (October 2024) Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy, p23-24

[36] *Ibid*, p23-24; Ministry of Defence (December 2024) Defence Industrial Strategy: statement of intent

[37] HM Treasury (March 2025) Spring Statement, paragraphs 2.8 and 2.10

[38] UK Government (October 2024) Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy, p24

*research, strong culture of innovation, and thriving start-up system, backed by a deep talent pool and the investment required to grow and scale sustainable businesses globally*'[39].

3.22 Advanced manufacturing is one of the other eight growth driving sectors. Recognising the regional and Lancashire strengths in the sector it is of note that the national strategy recognises that majority of manufacturing jobs lie outside of London and the South East and that the sector is an important driver of innovation. The Strategy states that: *'The UK is entering a major investment cycle, where the net zero and digital transformations present considerable opportunities for UK manufacturing investment.'* It proceeds to highlight, however, that the UK faces global competition and there is a requirement for the Government to ensure that the UK has a competitive offer across all of the factors that influence investment, removing barriers and building on UK strengths. It identifies that these strengths include the world-class network of universities and research institutions. This is important in the context of the location of Lancaster and Central Lancashire Universities as well as facilities such as the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) on Samlesbury Enterprise Zone.

### Lancashire Economic Strategy

3.23 Lancashire County Council (LCC) is clearly committed to delivering economic growth and prosperity, as set out in its Economic Strategy for the period from 2023 to 2025[40].

3.24 This confirms, amongst other things, a commitment to '***bring forward strategic sites,*** *support business growth and deliver the skills to realise these ambitions'*[41] (emphasis added).

3.25 It highlights the ongoing programme of investment across the county, stating that:

*"Lancashire has a significant, multi-billion pound development and infrastructure pipeline together with a mix of high-performing, well-established businesses, with long and settled roots in the Lancashire economy, a new wave of low carbon and security-based investments is supplementing Lancashire's economy,* ***typified by the UK government's decision to locate the new National Cyber Force headquarters in Samlesbury"***[42] (emphasis added)

3.26 It specifically recognises the importance of having a supply of employment land to facilitate growth. It confirms that LCC will *'maintain and enhance an infrastructure and range of employment sites*' in order to:

- Allow enterprise to flourish and employees to engage in the economy wherever they live in the county; and

[39] *Ibid*, p24

[40] Lancashire County Council (2023) Lancashire County Council Economic Strategy 2023 – 2025

[41] *Ibid*, Foreword

[42] *Ibid*, executive summary

- Realise the growth potential in existing and emerging key sectors, and to attract increased investment[43].

### Emerging Lancashire Growth Plan

3.27 The Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) – comprised of LCC plus the unitary authorities of Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen – was officially established in early 2025, and it has already launched a consultation on a Growth Plan for the period from 2025 to 2035[44].

3.28 The Plan establishes its intent to provide *'a platform to restate our ambition, our potential, our innate strengths and the unique contribution we can make to our national growth mission.'*[45]

3.29 It recognises Lancashire's existing strengths, observing that:

*"With a population of 1.53 million and a Gross Value Added (GVA) of £40 billion, Lancashire is the second-largest economy in the North West, with growth potential of national significance still to be unlocked"*[46]*.*

3.30 It proceeds to identify that the Lancashire economy is defined by strengths in advanced engineering and manufacturing; nuclear energy; cybersecurity; artificial intelligence; and sustainable industries. These strengths are broadly reflected in five identified priority sectors.

3.31 The Plan sets out a 10-year investment package valued at over £20 billion overall, stating that:

*"If supported, both locally and nationally, this investment will transform Lancashire's economic prospects and contribute to the Government's mission to supercharge the nation's growth performance"*[47]*.*

3.32 In setting out the support required from national Government, it requests national recognition of the strategic importance of local industrial strengths and the opportunities provided to leverage further national investments, referencing *inter alia*:

- BAE Systems' Global Combat Air Programme, Eurofighter Typhoon and F35 Lightning contributions;
- Leyland Trucks' commercial vehicles;
- Enhancing supply chain capabilities for these and similar sectors, including the Government's AUKUS submarine; and

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[43] *Ibid*, "Our 2025 Vision"

[44] Lancashire Combined County Authority (February 2025) The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025 – 2035, consultation version

[45] *Ibid*, Foreword 1

[46] *Ibid,* Executive Summary

[47] *Ibid,* Executive Summary

- New investment facilitating and leveraging the development of the NCF through unified programmes to support research, skills development, local industry engagement and key place-based initiatives.

3.33 The Plan identifies a number of '*foundations for growth'* or '*enablers*' of relevance to the whole of Lancashire, which include the need to:

> *"Develop transport, housing,* ***and strategic sites*** *to support and accelerate economic growth, focusing on* ***key clusters and corridors to enhance connectivity and collaboration***"[48] (emphases added).

3.34 The Plan includes what is referred to as the '*Growth Map*'. This restates the importance of the east-west arc stretching between Blackpool and Blackburn, with Central Lancashire – and notably the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone – at its heart as one of several '*Anchor Strategic Sites*'[49].

[48] *Ibid,* page 13

[49] *Ibid*, p16

**Figure 3.1: Lancashire's Growth Map**


*Source: LCCA*

3.35 This spatial plan emphasises the importance of delivering investment in infrastructure, not only in terms of transport but also housing which LCCA notes as being needed to sustain business investment and accommodate a growing labour force. It references a review of housing growth prospects across the county and notes that this has identified the *'potential for the new LCCA to help design and drive economic and housing growth* *plans in synergy with local planning authorities to deliver a much stronger and complementary set of outcomes for the region'*[50]*.*

3.36 It also proceeds to identify in the same context that:

*"There are nationally significant sectors and employment hubs within Lancashire, most notably focussed on clean energy, **defence, and cyber**. Many of these sectors are benefiting from major investment programmes. **Harnessing these to their fullest potential will require local housing markets to respond with an improved housing offer that is sufficiently diverse to attract high-skilled workers** and break down the skills and transport barriers that prevent social mobility and inclusive growth. **Supporting housing growth locations, in conjunction with robust Local Plans,** offers the potential for improved productivity across the county and could help intensify the use of existing infrastructure, drive regeneration and place-making across towns and cities, and make a significant contribution to the region's transition towards clean energy, Net Zero future"*[51] (emphases added).

3.37 Critically, in the context of this report and the focus on employment land provision, LCCA is clear to conclude that:

*"Although Lancashire has a good supply of strategic sites through to 2035 (subject to build out rates), this Growth Plan **recognises that additional sites for the post-2035 period need to be planned for now and informed by up-to-date Local Plans of local authorities. These could include new strategic sites and/or extensions to the portfolio of existing strategic sites**"*[52] (emphasis added).

3.38 LCCA is clearly aware of '*the trend for larger sites, especially from global firms*' who have historically invested in Lancashire, with the county noted as attracting '*a significant amount of foreign investment from the USA*'. It aims to address this by seeking to '***develop larger and more suitable sites** to accommodate a range of occupiers, both domestic and international, as well as large-scale international investors*'[53] (emphasis added). This would bolster what is acknowledged to be '*a short supply of large strategic sites across the north of England*', while also giving existing businesses the opportunity to move to new premises in order to '*operate sustainably and competitively in the future*'[54].

### Invest in Lancashire

3.39 Even prior to the formation of the LCCA, LCC has been promoting the strength of the county's economy and identifying opportunities for local businesses to invest. It published an Investment Prospectus in 2024, called "Invest in Lancashire", which identified the following opportunities in Central Lancashire:

[50] *Ibid*, p32
[51] *Ibid,* p32
[52] *Ibid*, p32
[53] *Ibid*, p32
[54] *Ibid*, p32

- **Samlesbury Enterprise Zone** – providing opportunities in advanced manufacturing, engineering, and research driven sectors such as cyber, robotics and future flight. LCC notes the investment of BAE Systems to date, including in its aviation engineering campus and the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre North West. It identifies that the establishment of the NCF means that Samlesbury is set to become a nucleus for cyber innovation. It also references the planed Innovation Hub, which is intended to work alongside the NCF to harness expertise in cyber technology, providing around 20,000sqft of space for businesses.

- **Preston City Centre / Stoneygate / The Harris Quarter / Preston Station Quarter** – a range of ambitious urban regeneration initiatives, the latter of which alone could provide up to 200,000sqft of new office space in its first phase alongside residential development.

- **Lancashire Central** – seen to be one of the biggest development opportunities in the North West, with the potential to generate up to 5,600 full time jobs. These jobs will include opportunities generated by the development of new commercial floorspace where it identifies the potential to deliver industrial, manufacturing and logistics units ranging from 17,500sqft to 670,000sqft.

### Summary and implications

3.40 The new national Government has expressly focused on delivering economic growth, which it sees as being critical to improving lives and addressing longstanding geographic inequalities. It has explicitly recognised the important role of planning in facilitating economic growth, with the introduction of planning reforms one of its first actions in Government. It continues to propose changes to national policy and guidance to ensure that planning supports its growth ambitions and does not act as an impediment.

3.41 The Government also rapidly consulted on a new industrial strategy, which provides clarity on the sectors of the economy that are seen to have the greatest potential to drive growth. These include advanced manufacturing, defence and digital technologies sectors, all of which are highly relevant to Central Lancashire with the latter two particularly applicable to the NCF.

3.42 The newly formed LCCA has sought to align its emerging Growth Strategy, currently out for consultation, with this new national agenda. It affirms the strengths of Lancashire in the above sectors, amongst others. It specifically recognises investment in Central Lancashire, particularly with the NCF coming forward in the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone, and affirms the importance of providing supporting infrastructure to realise associated benefits. It **clearly recognises the need for additional strategic employment sites, and the trend towards larger sites from global firms in particular**, and also aims to ensure that the right amount and type of housing is planned for to attract a highly-skilled workforce.

# 4. Critique of the Reported Need

4.1 The ELS confirms that different methods have been used to respectively estimate the need for industrial/warehousing and office space. Each are considered to have limitations that threaten to significantly understate the amount of land needed throughout Central Lancashire over the plan period to 2041.

**Perpetuating undersupply when extrapolating past take-up**

4.2 It has been noted in section 2 that the bulk of the reported need for 173ha of employment land in Central Lancashire is attributable to industrial and warehousing space, the need for which has been estimated based on take-up over the period from 2010 to 2023.

4.3 While there is generally agreed to be merit in such an approach, it does have the potential to simply sustain undersupply if recent provision has been insufficient.

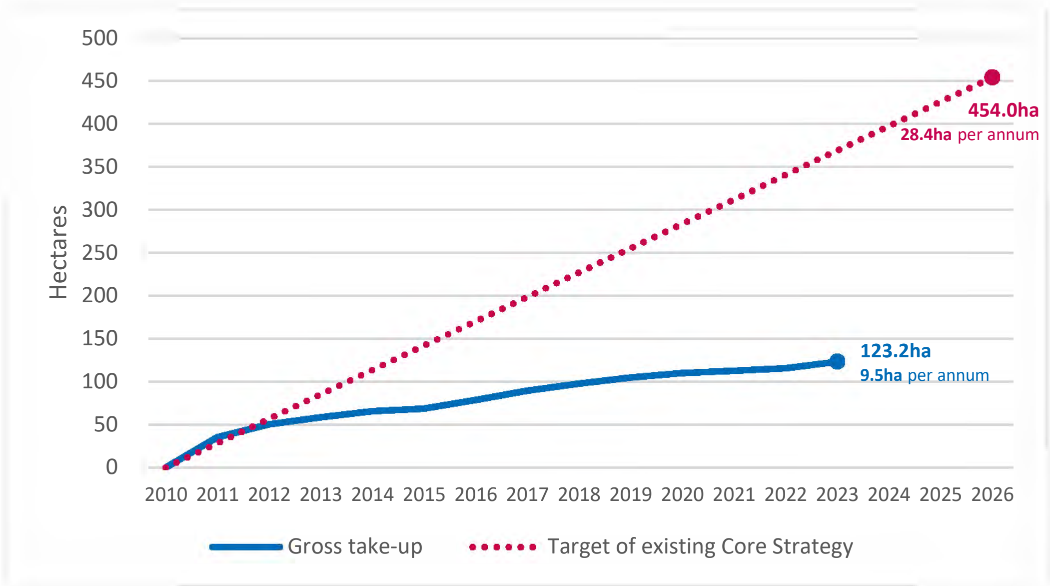
4.4 There is evidence to suggest that this has indeed been the case in Central Lancashire, with B8RE reporting a widespread view amongst the industrial property market of there having been '*a chronic shortage of new build space and "oven ready" development sites*' within this particular area. Their report at **Appendix 1** also identifies numerous outstanding requirements that are yet to have been satisfied, with the lack of suitable space in Central Lancashire forcing some to look elsewhere.

4.5 The Councils themselves appear to have accepted that the recent rate of development has been insufficient, in the context of what is still referred to as a '*target*' from the existing Core Strategy which aimed to provide some 454ha of employment land between 2010 and 2026[55].

4.6 While their monitoring still only covers the period to 2023, technically giving three further years in which to achieve the target, it is almost certain that the Councils will fall significantly short. They have collectively delivered only 123ha of employment land, gross – equivalent to barely a quarter (27%) of the target – and this has been occurring at an average annual rate that has been only around a third of what would be needed to meet it.

[55] Preston City Council, Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council (July 2012) Central Lancashire Adopted Core Strategy, Table 5; Preston City Council, Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council (2024) Central Lancashire Core Strategy Monitoring Report, covering the period April 2020 – March 2023, p9

**Figure 4.1: Past Take-up vs. Target of Adopted Core Strategy (2010-26)**




*Source: Central Lancashire authorities; Turley analysis*

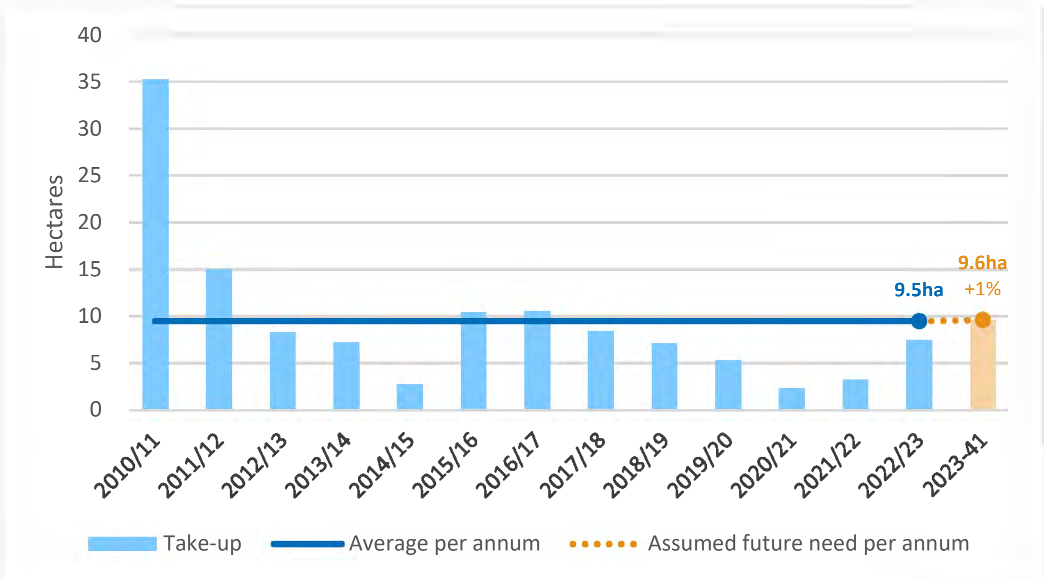
4.7 The Councils admit in their monitoring report that the take-up of employment land since 2010 has been '*below the Core Strategy target*', but this does not appear to have been taken into account or even acknowledged in an ELS that simply extrapolates this trend[56].

4.8 It is accepted that the ELS subsequently makes various adjustments in arriving at the conclusion that 173ha of employment land is needed, with allowances made for buffers and healthier vacancy rates for example[57]. An approach based on labour demand, as opposed to past take-up, is also ultimately favoured for offices. The overall outcome does though remain an implied level of need that is only 1% above the recent trend, on an average annual basis, with an assumption therefore having implicitly been made that the rate of development will not increase. This appears contrary to the ambitions documented in the previous section, as would the setting of a headline target for 173ha of employment land which equates to only 38% of what was previously planned over a shorter period.

[56] Preston City Council, Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council (2024) Central Lancashire Core Strategy Monitoring Report, covering the period April 2020 – March 2023, p9

[57] Story Homes is part of a consortium that commissioned Stantec to undertake an assessment of housing need in Central Lancashire, to inform representations to the ongoing consultation. This contains property market analysis which indicates that as of early 2025, industrial vacancy rates in Central Lancashire remain below what they consider to be the equilibrium (7.0%) which compares to the benchmark used in the ELS (7.5%)

**Figure 4.2: Past Take-up vs. Assumed Future Need**




*Source: Central Lancashire authorities; Turley analysis*

### Excessive deductions in labour demand model

4.9 As noted above, the ELS opts for a labour demand model to estimate the future need for office space, arguing that this is '*likely to best project…needs moving forward*' and claiming that it will also facilitate links with assessments of housing need, which will be at least partially informed by the same forecasts of job creation[58].

4.10 This arguably does not present the strongest case in favour of the chosen approach, nor for dismissing an alternative based on past take-up which – though not without its own issues – appears likely to have suggested a greater need. A continuation of gross take-up rates plus a five-year buffer would be expected to generate a need for some 34.6ha of land suited to offices, whereas the ELS concludes that barely half as much – only 18.2ha – will be needed[59].

4.11 Even if the merits of a labour demand model for offices were accepted – and the surprising use of only one forecast, rather than a range, was overlooked[60] – there are grounds to believe that the amount of space needed to accommodate the jobs envisaged by the chosen forecast will still be higher than estimated by the ELS, due to some of the methods that it has used.

4.12 It makes an adjustment, for example, to the baseline employment forecast that was produced by Cambridge Econometrics, with the aim of measuring only full-time

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[58] BE Group (February 2025) Central Lancashire Employment Land Study – Land Supply and OAN Update 2024, paragraph 3.54

[59] *Ibid*, Table 21. Average annual rates gross of losses have been multiplied by 24 years to reflect the 19-year plan period plus a buffer of five years.

[60] The assessment of housing needs commissioned by a consortium that includes Story Homes presents an alternative forecast from Oxford Economics, for example, which envisages around 10,000 more jobs being created throughout Central Lancashire over the period from 2023 to 2041

equivalent (FTE) jobs rather than all roles[61]. This in itself is not unreasonable, since the amount of space needed to accommodate a full-time role will realistically be less than a part-time one. The ELS does though appear to make a fundamental error at this stage of its calculation. It refers to a measure of '*full time jobs as a percentage of all jobs*' that existed in each area as of 2022, and appears to apply this ratio to the total number of jobs forecast in each sector, but such an approach automatically discounts any part-time jobs and assumes that they will not require *any* office space which is unlikely to be the case[62]. This could have been avoided, and typically is in comparable studies, by retaining half of whatever is discounted when the ratio is applied. This takes part-time jobs into account but reasonably assumes that they require less space, effectively assuming that two part-time jobs need as much space as a full-time one. If the ELS had taken this approach, it would have factored an additional 2,775 FTE jobs into its calculations which is some 25% more than have seemingly been taken into account, across all sectors[63].

**Table 4.1: Correcting Conversion of All Jobs to FTE**

| | Chorley | Preston | South Ribble | Central Lancashire |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Workforce jobs | 5,675 | 5,493 | 5,492 | 16,660 |
| **Reported FTE jobs** | **3,788** | **3,533** | **3,790** | **11,111** |
| Implied part-time jobs… | 1,887 | 1,960 | 1,702 | 5,549 |
| …converted to FTE[64] | 944 | 980 | 851 | 2,775 |
| **Corrected FTE jobs** | **4,732** | **4,513** | **4,641** | **13,886** |
| Difference | +944 | +980 | +851 | +2,775 |
| % difference | +25% | +28% | +22% | +25% |

*Source: BE Group; Turley analysis*

4.13 The ELS also appears to have made an excessive allowance for homeworking. It has taken the rates recorded at the last Census in March 2021 – a point during the COVID-19 pandemic when all were forbidden from travelling to work unless absolutely necessary – and seemingly assumed that the same proportion of those filling newly created jobs in '*office-based sectors*' will be exclusively working from home in future[65]. This serves to remove a further 1,709 FTE jobs from the calculations, reducing the overall number of additional jobs across all sectors by some 15%[66].

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[61] BE Group (February 2025) Central Lancashire Employment Land Study – Land Supply and OAN Update 2024, paragraph 3.21

[62] *Ibid*, p77-79

[63] *Ibid*, Tables 16-18

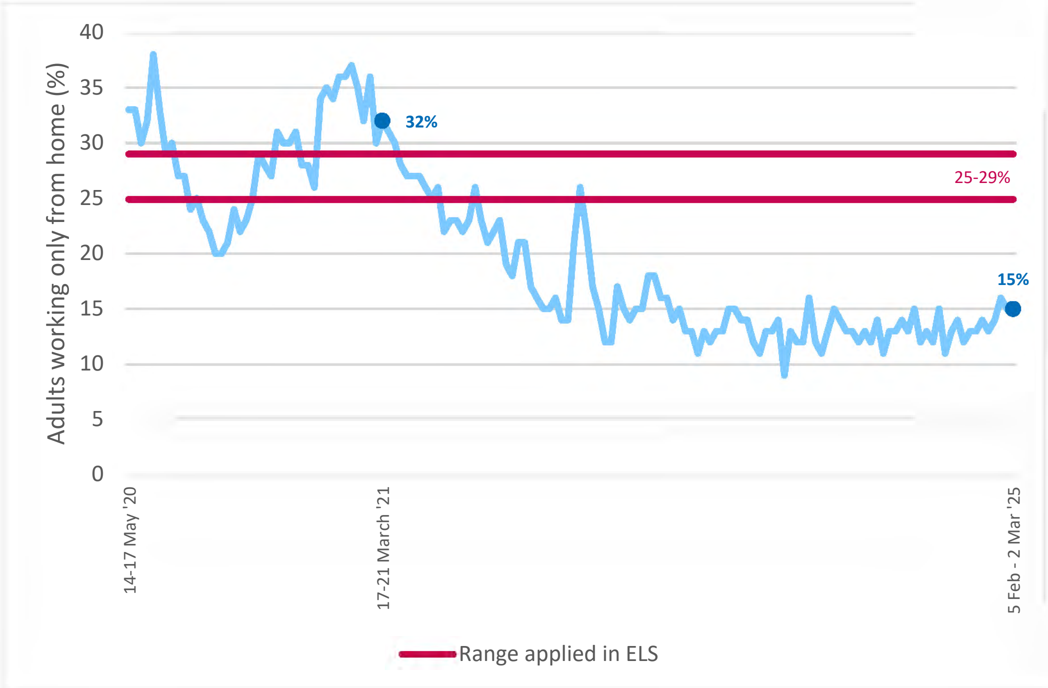
[64] Assuming that two part-time jobs equal one FTE

[65] BE Group (February 2025) Central Lancashire Employment Land Study – Land Supply and OAN Update 2024, paragraph 3.24

[66] *Ibid*, Tables 16-18

4.14 While it is not necessarily unreasonable to make at least some allowance for people that work only from home, who are agreed to not require office space, the ELS provides no evidence that such a large number will be doing so in future. It is inconceivable that homeworking will be continuing at the rates of 25-29% that were recorded in Central Lancashire at the height of the pandemic, in March 2021, given that nationally the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has found the proportion of adults working only from home to have more than halved since the week of the Census[67].

**Figure 4.3: Proportion of Adults Working Only from Home in Great Britain**




*Source: ONS*

4.15 The ELS does accept that the data collected through the 2021 Census may '*exaggerate present homeworking rates, much less homeworking levels moving forward to 2041*'[68]. It appears only to have used it out of necessity, with stakeholders having been unable to '*confirm what proportion of their staff now work mostly from home and what proportion work on a hybrid basis*'[69] (with the latter rightly noted as still requiring some office accommodation). A scenario that sustains the rates recorded in 2021 is crucially first introduced as one of two, designed to illustrate '*the uncertainties around present and future homeworking rates*', but this nuance is lost as the assessment continues and the scenario described as '*net of homeworking*' is ultimately favoured having been deemed '*more realistic at this time*'[70]. This does appear to imply that the other, so-called '*gross*' scenario makes no allowance for homeworking but this is not the case, as

[67] ONS (March 2025) Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: working arrangements

[68] BE Group (February 2025) Central Lancashire Employment Land Study – Land Supply and OAN Update 2024, paragraph 3.26

[69] *Ibid*, paragraph 3.26

[70] *Ibid*, paragraphs 3.27 and 3.56

it applies employment densities that were developed after '*a significant rise*' up to 2015, driven by '*growth in self-employment, improved broadband connectivity, property prices, commuting distances and efficiency and cost savings*'[71]. The ELS arguably could have opted for this as a more cautious scenario, or chosen a midpoint between the two rather than effectively assuming that homeworking will continue at an exceptionally high rate. This would have further increased the need for office space, especially in combination with the more accurate conversion to FTE employment, and thus elevated the headline need for 173ha of employment land.

### Omission of the NCF and other strategic projects

4.16 The reported need for employment land would have likewise also been higher if an attempt had been made to account for strategic projects, rather than simply using an unadjusted baseline forecast developed by Cambridge Econometrics.

4.17 As noted in section 2, the ELS accepts that its methods are '*policy off*' having made '*no allowance for any major public sector programmes which might generate jobs above the baseline*'[72]. It does acknowledge that there are '*strategic projects proposed in Central Lancashire…most notably the development of the National Cyber Security Centre [NCF] at Samlesbury*', but it reports there to be '*no clear forecasts of the jobs growth resulting from these schemes which could inform a Policy On forecast*' and thus makes no attempt to develop one[73].

4.18 It is accepted that the sensitive nature of the investment creates uncertainty around the economic impact of its development and any spin-off activities, which is unusual for a publicly funded investment of such scale. Estimates are though entering the public domain, as LCCA has recently stated in consulting on its emerging Growth Plan that:

*"While details about its deployment are sensitive, commissioned research and publicly available information suggest* ***a personnel base of 2,000 people****, including wider partners. This could result in an estimated* ***3,120 direct and indirect jobs*** *and a GVA contribution of £112.6 million"*[74] (emphases added).

4.19 It is understood that further detail regards the profile of employment directly employed within the new facility will continue to emerge as space is occupied. It is also understood that LCC intend to continue to assemble evidence that explores the opportunity for the investment to generate additional indirect economic benefits within the locality.

4.20 While it is unlikely that all of these jobs will be contained within Central Lancashire, or indeed even the wider county given the scheme's regional significance, there will still

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[71] Homes and Communities Agency (November 2015) Employment Density Guide: third edition, paragraphs 3.36-3.38

[72] BE Group (February 2025) Central Lancashire Employment Land Study – Land Supply and OAN Update 2024, paragraph 3.8

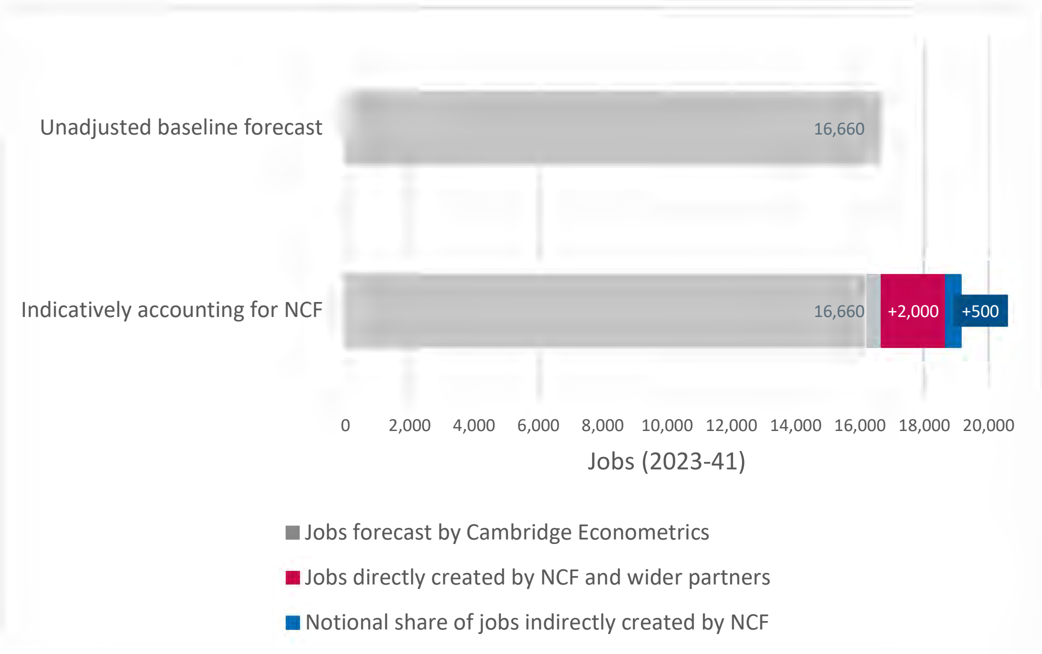
[73] *Ibid*, paragraph 3.8

[74] Lancashire Combined County Authority (February 2025) The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025-2035: consultation version

be a clear opportunity for the area to retain many of the spin-off activities and thus maximise the benefits of the facility being located here. This will though depend on suitable premises being available, emphasising why strategic investments like the NCF must be taken into account when estimating the future need for employment land. Failure to do so, as currently, would simply ignore a key ask of the emerging Lancashire Growth Plan which requires local support to realise its proposed 10-year investment package, outlined in section 3.

4.21 Even if only 500 of the jobs indirectly generated by the NCF are retained in Central Lancashire, equivalent to less than half, this would still combine with the number working on site or with wider partners to give an additional 2,500 workers in the area. Adding these jobs to a baseline forecast that does not take them into account but envisages 16,660 other jobs being created, would serve to increase it by some 15% and likely also increase the amount of employment land needed by a substantial amount.

**Figure 4.4: Potential Impact of NCF on Baseline Forecast of ELS**




*Source: Cambridge Econometrics; Plexal; Turley analysis*

**Summary**

4.22 The ELS uses different methods to estimate the need for land suited to industrial/warehousing and office use, but both have limitations that threaten to significantly understate the amount of land needed over the period to 2041.

4.23 The average take-up rate since 2010 has essentially been extrapolated to estimate the future need for industrial and warehousing land, but such an approach – though admittedly not without merit – wholly fails to account for the fact that almost four times as much employment land was intended to be developed over the same period, based on an existing Core Strategy that set an overall target nearly three times larger than now proposed (454/173ha). Extrapolating the recent trend threatens to simply sustain what the industry perceives to be a chronic undersupply, and this is not rectified even by the various adjustments made in the ELS – nor its favouring of a different approach for offices – given that the resulting annual need is only 1% above the recent trend. There is consequently an inherent assumption that the rate of development will not increase, contrary to the ambitions of both the Government and the newly-established LCCA which were documented in the previous section.

4.24 The ELS offers relatively weak justification for its use of a different model to estimate the need for land suited to offices, rather than using a past take-up approach that is admittedly imperfect but would still suggest a need for almost twice as much land (34.6/18.2ha). Even if its arguments in favour are accepted, and its consideration of only one forecast rather than a range is overlooked, the amount of land needed to accommodate jobs requiring office space will likely still be higher than estimated in the ELS, because:

- **A fundamental error appears to have been made in converting its preferred forecast into full-time equivalent jobs**, with part-time roles having seemingly been excluded rather than converted into FTE as is common in similar studies. This leads the ELS to wrongly discount some 2,775 FTE jobs across all sectors, the reinstatement of which would grow the number of additional FTE jobs to be accommodated by 25%.

- **An excessive allowance has been made for homeworking**, assuming that this will continue at the rate recorded in March 2021 – in the depths of the COVID-19 pandemic – when national evidence suggests that the tendency to work exclusively from home has since more than halved. The ELS admittedly makes this assumption only out of necessity, presenting it as one of two scenarios, but it does underpin its ultimate conclusion seemingly in the belief that the alternative would allow no homeworking, which is actually not the case. A more cautious approach could and should have been taken, so as not to exaggerate the number of jobs that will not require space in offices and in doing so disregard over 1,700 FTE jobs.

- **The forecast could and should have been adjusted to allow for strategic projects like the NCF**, despite claims to the contrary in an ELS that openly makes no attempt to take them into account blaming a lack of information. While there is acknowledged to have been an unusual amount of uncertainty around the economic impact of the NCF, due to its sensitive nature, estimates are now entering the public domain. LCCA has recently been consulting on a Growth Plan that envisages 2,000 personnel, including wider partners, and anticipates some 3,120 jobs being directly or indirectly created as a result of the investment. Not all will be contained within Central Lancashire or even the wider county, but even if, on a cautious basis, only 500 of the jobs indirectly generated are retained in the local area – taking the opportunity that will exist to retain at least some spin-off activities – then this, combined with the number working on site or with partners, would generate 2,500 extra workers in Central Lancashire who do not feature in the forecast used in the ELS.

# 5. Critique of the Identified Supply

5.1 As introduced in section 2, the R19 LP proposes to allocate sites that would collectively provide around 218ha of employment land. This is spread across some 17 individual sites, over half of which envisage employment coming forward alongside other uses.

**Table 5.1: Profile of Proposed Allocations**

| | No. of sites | Total land (ha) |
|---|---|---|
| Mixed-use allocations | 8 | 92.18 |
| Strategic mixed-use allocations | 1 | 63.30 |
| Employment allocations | 8 | 62.66 |
| **Total** | **17** | **218.14** |

*Source: Central Lancashire authorities; Turley analysis*

5.2 Figure 5.1 shows that the largest of the proposed allocations, specifically Preston West – covered at Policy SS5 – would offer circa 63.3ha of employment land[75]. While this is some 27% more than offered by Cuerden, as the next largest allocation – and over twice the size of the rest – it notably remains smaller than several of the sites allocated through the existing Core Strategy in 2012. The Samlesbury Enterprise Zone is believed for example to have then offered some 72ha of land, around 14% more than the largest allocation now proposed, and a further 65ha of land is also believed to have been available at Cuerden[76]. This calls into question whether the Central Lancashire authorities are truly answering LCCA's call – noted in section 3 – for a new generation of strategic sites for 2035 and beyond, or providing the larger sites that are known to be more attractive to global investors[77].

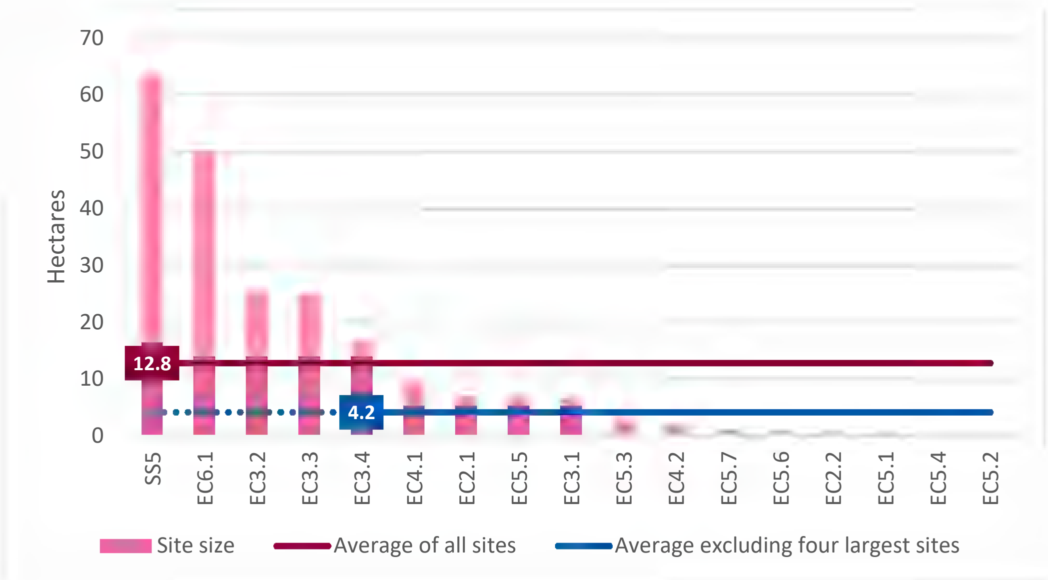
5.3 The employment sites proposed to be allocated now are circa 12.8ha in size, on average, but this is arguably skewed by the four largest sites since the others are typically less than a third as large averaging only 4.2ha. Eight sites, or nearly half of all proposed allocations, are smaller still.

[75] Preston City Council, Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council (February 2025) Central Lancashire Local Plan 2023-2041, Policy SS5

[76] BE Group (February 2022) Central Lancashire – Employment Land Study Update, paragraph 5.28

[77] Lancashire Combined County Authority (February 2025) The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025 – 2035, consultation version, p32

**Figure 5.1: Size of Proposed Allocations**




*Source: Central Lancashire authorities; Turley analysis*

5.4 The draft Local Plan also provides an indication of the uses that could come forward on each site. It suggests that all but one site would be suited to E(g) use, with the remaining 16 sites averaging 12.1ha in size. It is implied that general industrial development (B2) could come forward on 15 sites and warehousing (B8) on 13, but even if this was indeed a prospect – with B8RE disagreeing, as noted below – these tend to be only slightly larger on average at 14.4ha and 14.9ha respectively. Over half of the sites supposedly suited to these latter uses actually offer less than half as much land as these averages would otherwise suggest.

**Table 5.2: Reported Suitability of Identified Sites to Various Uses**

| Ref | Site | Size (ha) | Suited to E(g) | Suited to B2 | Suited to B8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SS5 | Preston West | 63.30 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| EC6.1 | Cuerden | 50.00 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| EC3.2 | Preston East Junction 31A M6 | 25.31 | × | ✓ | ✓ |
| EC3.3 | 11 Roman Road Farm | 24.94 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| EC3.4 | Riversway, Maritime Way, Preston | 16.60 | ✓ | ✓ | × |
| EC4.1 | Land north of Lancashire Business Park | 9.20 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| EC2.1 | Land east of M61, Chorley | 6.92 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| EC5.5 | Botany Bay/Great Knowley, Blackburn Road | 6.70 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| EC3.1 | Former Alstom Works and Wider Site | 6.35 | ✓ | ✓ | × |
| EC5.3 | Land at Bagganley Lane, Chorley | 2.65 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EC4.2 | Land at Leyland Business Park, Farington | 2.10 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| EC5.7 | South of The Green and Langton Brow, Eccleston | 1.19 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| EC5.6 | Woodlands, Southport Road, Chorley | 0.90 | ✓ | × | × |
| EC2.2 | Former Gas Works, Bengal Street, Chorley | 0.76 | ✓ | × | × |
| EC5.1 | Southern Commercial, Buckshaw Village | 0.54 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| EC5.4 | Land adjacent to Northgate Drive, Chorley | 0.38 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| EC5.2 | Cowling Farm, Chorley | 0.30 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | **Sites suited to use** | | **16** | **15** | **13** |
| | Average size (ha) | | 12.1 | 14.4 | 14.9 |

*Source: Central Lancashire authorities; Turley analysis*

5.5 As noted above, B8RE have concerns about whether industrial development could indeed come forward on sites claimed to be suited to such use. Their report at **Appendix 1** notes that much of the identified space will not be suitable for industrial occupiers due to its location. Many of the sites proposed to be allocated are observed as being in close proximity to residential areas, meaning they would likely have restrictions – around noise and operating hours, for example – that would no longer be tolerated by end users that increasingly operate 24/7. Several of the sites are also noted as being far from motorway junctions, bringing a risk of congestion issues and thus harming appeal to the wider industrial market.

5.6 B8RE also note specific issues at several of the individual sites proposed to be allocated. Land at Roman Road Farm, for instance, is acknowledged to have been partly presold following the granting of planning permission, but external funding is likely to be required to bring forward the remaining 20ha of this 24ha site creating uncertainty as to when this would actually become available to occupiers. Part of the sizeable Cuerden site is also believed to have been acquired, with talks ongoing around the acquisition of a further parcel, such that the remaining supply is believed to be closer to 35ha than 50ha. These concerns alone raise doubts about 35ha, or roughly a sixth (16%) of the reported employment land supply.

### Summary

5.7 The R19 LP proposes to allocate 17 sites that would collectively provide around 218ha of employment land. Each offer only 12.8ha on average but this is arguably skewed by the four largest sites, since the average falls by over two thirds when they are excluded and nearly half of them all are even smaller still.

5.8 Even the largest sites are smaller than several of those that were allocated by the existing Core Strategy, in a sign that the Councils have failed to respond to the LCCA's explicit identification of the need for a new generation of large strategic sites, to both support its growth ambitions and capitalise on planned investment.

5.9 The Councils also appear to have exaggerated the number of sites suited to industrial use. Having reviewed the identified supply, B8RE believe that most would in fact not be attractive to such occupiers, due for instance to the likely restrictions that would be in place due to the proximity of several to residential areas. Several are also far from motorway junctions, threatening congestion.

5.10 B8RE have also identified specific issues with a number of the sites proposed to be allocated. Cuerden is the second largest, reportedly offering around 50ha of land, but B8RE believe that the remaining supply is actually closer to 35ha following confirmed and proposed acquisitions of the wider site. The fourth largest of the proposed allocations, at Roman Road Farm, is separately believed to be largely reliant on external funding such that there is uncertainty around when all but 4ha of this 24ha site could actually come forwards to meet needs. These concerns alone raise doubts about 35ha, or roughly a sixth of the employment land supply claimed by the Councils. Where these sites were omitted the claimed supply would be a little over 180 ha and much closer to the need claimed in the ELS, notwithstanding the concerns raised in the previous section that this serves to underestimate the full need.

# 6. Conclusion

6.1 This report – produced on behalf of Story Homes in support of their plans for Cuerdale Garden Village – has reviewed the proposed approach towards employment land provision in the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan, currently out for consultation.

6.2 It has revealed **a likely underestimation of the need for employment land**, with the draft Local Plan citing an updated Employment Land Study – completed in February 2025 – in claiming that only 173ha is needed between 2023 and 2041. This is some 36% below the need reported during the previous consultation, when calculating an annual average to account for the extended plan period.

6.3 The Councils anticipate the greatest need being for industrial and warehousing land, with this having been estimated based on historic take-up between 2010 and 2023 plus allowances for healthier vacancy rates and the replacement of losses, in addition to a buffer. There is reported to be a substantially smaller need for offices, with this having been based on an unadjusted forecast that makes '*no allowance for major public policy interventions*' like the new headquarters of the NCF – blamed on uncertainty regarding associated job creation – but does attempt to allow for greater homeworking, before applying its own buffer.

6.4 This report has shown each of these methods to have limitations. The extrapolation of take-up since 2010, to estimate the need for industrial and warehousing land, wholly fails to account for the fact that almost four times as much employment land was intended to be developed over the same period, with the existing Core Strategy having set an overall target nearly three times larger than now proposed (454/173ha). Extrapolating the recent trend threatens to simply sustain what the industry perceives to be a chronic undersupply, and this is not rectified even by the various adjustments subsequently made – nor the use of a different approach for offices – given that the resulting annual need is only 1% above the recent trend. There is consequently an inherent assumption that the rate of development will not increase, contrary to the ambitions of a Government that is expressly focused on delivering economic growth to improve lives and address regional inequalities. The newly-established LCCA is also embracing this national agenda and aiming to build upon existing strengths, recognising the importance of infrastructure and site availability.

6.5 The need for land suited to offices – calculated using a different approach that is weakly justified and unusually based on a single forecast, rather than a range – also appears to have been underestimated. This is because:

- A fundamental error has been made in converting the underlying forecast into full-time equivalent jobs, with part-time roles having seemingly been excluded rather than converted into FTE as is common in similar studies;

- An excessive allowance has been made for people working only from home, ultimately but inexplicably assuming that this will continue at the rate recorded in the depths of the pandemic when national evidence suggests that the tendency to do so has since more than halved; and

- The forecast could and should have been adjusted to allow for strategic projects like the NCF, with newly available estimates suggesting that this investment alone could bring around 2,500 extra workers to Central Lancashire even if only some spin-off activities are retained in the area.

6.6 The likely underestimation of need raises **considerable doubt around whether an employment land supply totalling around 218ha will indeed be sufficient, as the Councils claim.** The identified sites also have limitations, particularly in terms of size since even the largest is smaller than several of the strategic sites allocated through the existing Core Strategy. The proposed allocations each offer only 12.8ha on average, but this falls by over two thirds to only 4.2ha when the four largest sites are excluded and nearly half of them all are smaller still. Contrary to the Councils' claims few of the sites appear suited to industrial use, according to agents B8RE, owing for instance to the likely restrictions arising from the proximity of many to residential areas and the distance from several to motorway junctions. Further concerns have also been raised about two sites, with Roman Road Farm noted as being reliant on external funding and Cuerden having already been partly acquired, and these alone raise doubts about 35ha or roughly a sixth of the employment land supply claimed by the Councils.

6.7 Beyond a likely shortfall of need the profile of allocated land **fails to respond to the LCCA's explicit identification of a need for a new generation of large strategic sites to be planned for to realise its economic growth ambitions** and capitalise on planned investment, including but not limited to the NCF. Given its location at the heart of the arc of growth in Lancashire, and the concentration of investment in the growth sectors in the cyber and defence sectors within Central Lancashire, this omission represents a significant failure to plan positively and support the needs of the modern economy, as required explicitly by the NPPF (paragraphs 85 and 86).

6.8 With the proposed supply appearing insufficient to meet a need that is almost certainly greater than claimed, there is clearly **an important role for Cuerdale Garden Village** where it is proposed to deliver a range of quality employment space on the A59 Growth Corridor, close to the NCF which is coming forward in the nearby Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. This means that it can not only meet the requirements of local businesses but also attract complementary investment, taking what is a unique opportunity to create a new cluster of businesses, academics and others operating in the cyber security and defence sectors[78]. It can also help to realise ambitions around advanced engineering and manufacturing, with the LCCA aiming to further support the strong and resilient supply chain of innovative businesses that has developed and diversified in recent years[79]. B8RE anticipate that the site will prove attractive to a wide range of occupiers, including national occupiers attracted by its excellent location and proximity to both the NCF and BAE Systems.

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[78] As referenced in section 2 'UK Security' is identified in the Lancashire Growth Plan as the first priority sector with the unique potential to create such clusters identified as being particularly integral to realising the county's growth potential in this field

[79] Lancashire Combined County Authority (February 2025) The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025 – 2035. Consultation Version, p8

# Appendix 1: B8 Real Estate Market Insights Report

B8 REAL ESTATE

www.b8re.com

# Market Insights report

**For**

Story HOMES

**In relation to**

# Cuerdale Garden Village,

# Samlesbury

# Lancashire

Prepared by B8 Real Estate

**April 2025**

# 1. INTRODUCTION

B8 Real Estate (B8RE) have been instructed to provide our industrial market knowledge on behalf of Story Homes, supporting discussions regarding employment land in the emerging Central Lancashire local plan.

This report provides up to date industrial property market commentary in relation to employment land and market needs for development within the A59 Growth Corridor, adjacent to Junction 31 of the M6 motorway, known as Cuerdale Garden Village.

In providing commentary, B8 Real Estate is a niche Warrington based practice specialising in the disposal and acquisition of industrial properties, sites, investments and general strategic property development advice across the North West regions.

We have over 20 years of experience in the sector and are regarded as the leading niche consultancy practice in the North West. As a practice we are currently advising on over 500,000 sq m stock and over 300 hectares of land across the region. As an agency, we are consistently ranked No 1 by Costar and EG the last 7 years as the most active agent in the region.

# 2. THE SITE

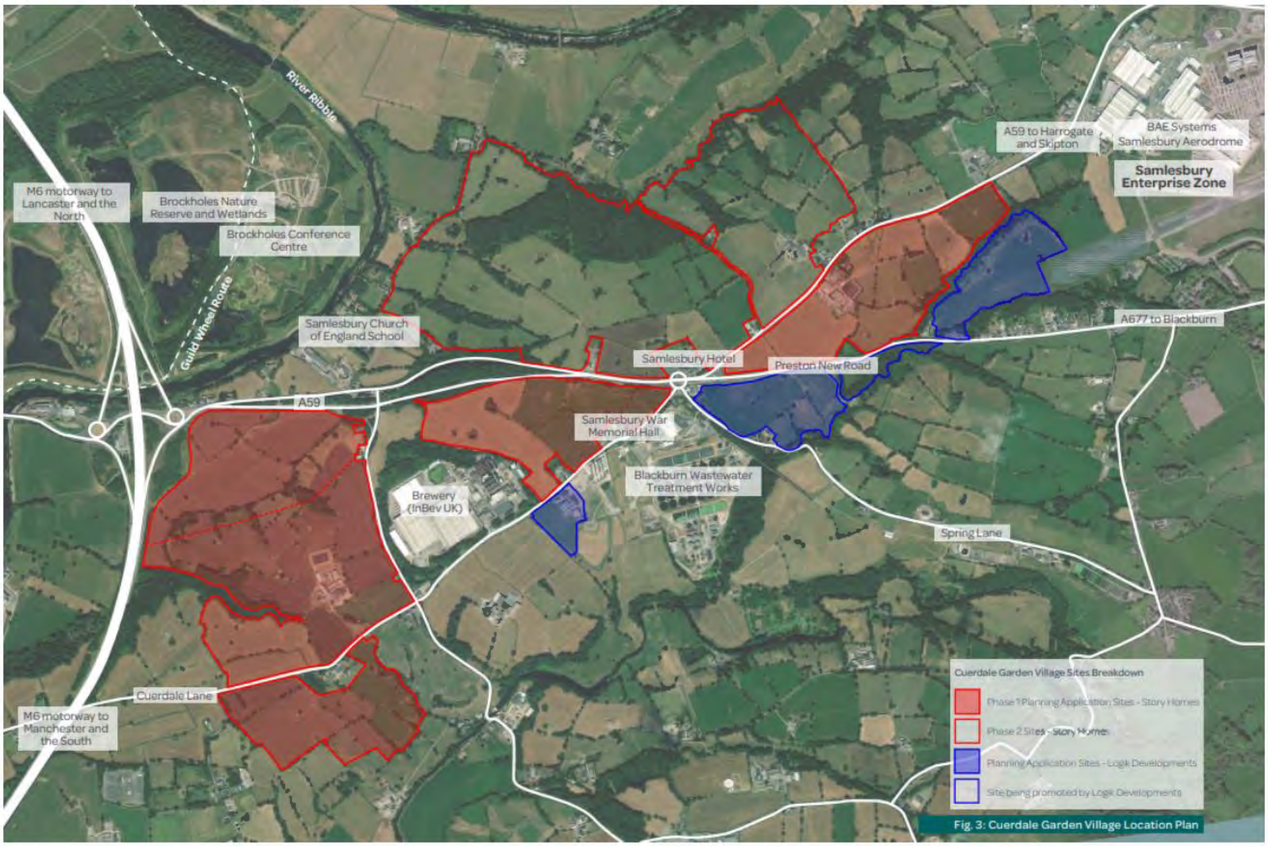

Fig. 3: Cuerdale Garden Village Location Plan

The site comprises 284ha of land positioned along the A59, leading to Preston city centre to the West and the Ribble Valley and Blackburn town centre to the East. The land benefits from immediate access to Junction 31 of the M6 motorway providing excellent connectivity to the rest of the region and national motorway network.

The employment site of Budweiser's bottling plant is positioned in the middle of the proposed development and BAE systems' significant aerospace operation sits to the East with the under construction National Cyber Force (NCF) Campus within the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone.

Phase 1 (subject to planning application ref. 07/2022/00451/OUT) of the proposed site comprises 5 parcels of land with proposed commercial development totaling 88.16 hectares / 164,000 sq m of development space.

Cuerdale Garden Village in totality provides for up to 429,500sqm of employment floorspace, 2,300 dwellings, a range of public amenities and extensive open space.

# 3. THE MARKET

### 3.1 North West Market Overview

Notwithstanding the current economic conditions and knock-on effects of Covid 19, the industrial and logistics sector has been extremely buoyant post pandemic as there has been a change in consumer habits, fueled by the rise of e-commerce through the trend of shopping online. This, along with Brexit has lead to an increase in companies 'onshoring' the storage of more products in the UK as a defensive position against worldwide supply chain issues.

Across all size ranges there has been strength and depth of demand which has reflected in several successive years of record take up of industrial space. However, despite continued rental growth, occupier demand has been cut back over the last 12 – 18 months, albeit still ahead of the rolling 5-year average. This drop has been influenced by factors in the wider macro-economic environment such as the inflationary cost of living crisis, rising interest rates and fears of a potential recession.

Despite the scale back in overall take up, supply of good quality industrial units remains low, particularly in the North West. What has been apparent is occupiers need and desire to take more modern space and for buildings to be functionally more sustainable complying with the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) requirements of businesses, as well as improving staff facilities. This combined with the expected EPC regulations, requiring a minimum rating of 'B' by 2030 is having a major impact on existing stock, occupier and investor perspectives and increasing the need for more development.

Occupiers requirements are now influenced by a number of technological factors as their buildings are now becoming more sophisticated leading to more bespoke requirements as handling systems are improving and consumer habits for quicker delivery times increases. This has led to a change in demand for e-commerce fulfillment, requiring buildings to be more strategically placed in 'last mile' locations near to urban areas, yet also have excellent connectivity routes to the motorway network as internet sales continue to increase leading to supply chain issues for some. Recent take up of big box demand (8,300 sqm +) demonstrates this need, with 68% of all big box demand over the last 24 months in the North West either new build or Grade A modern space.

**Central Lancashire Industrial and Logistics Market**

The Lancashire industrial market, attracts a wide range of local, regional and national occupiers due to its location being strategically attractive, benefitting from excellent accessibility to the national motorway via the M6 motorway and relative close proximity to Manchester & Liverpool, neighbouring Cumbria and also within easy reach of Scotland.

Known for its industrial heritage there remains a number of sizeable occupiers in Lancashire. This includes a large cluster of manufacturing users, most notably BAE Systems employing approximately 3,000 people.

The subject site sits in Central Lancashire, which for the purposes of this report is an area defined as a sub-region of the North West categorised as from Junction 26 of the M6 motorway at Wigan  through to Junction 31A at Preston, encompassing Chorley & Leyland & Blackburn. The main conurbation is the city of Preston.

It is widely accepted that there lies a chronic shortage of new build space and 'oven ready' development sites within Central Lancashire .  Where new build development has taken place in the sub-region, it has proven extremely popular, including one of the largest speculative developments in the North West.  Notable new build industrial and warehouse schemes developed in the last 5 years within Central Lancashire include;

- Farington Park, Leyland – 50,539 sq m speculative new build warehouse, let to Victorian Plumbing in January 2023 ahead of practical completion. This was one of the largest lettings in the North West over the last 10 years. Developed by Caddick Developments / Canmoor.

- Preston East -a 20,717 sq m scheme located just off J31A of the M6 motorway.  The 7ha site included a fully let terrace of units with purpose-built facilities for DHL and DPD pre-let ahead of practical completion. Developed by Henry Boot / Barnfield.

- Botany Bay, Chorley – a 8.5ha site with development comprising units from 120 sq m to 14,679 sq m.  The scheme achieved a letting to Donaldsons Timber ahead of practical completion. A local occupier re-locating from just two miles away.  The larger unit of 14,678 sq m  remains vacant albeit it is shell specification with aspirational quoting figures on par with the North West's prime industrial location, Trafford Park. Developed by FI Real Estate.

- Frontier Park, Blackburn – a 36ha site developed in Blackburn in 2021.  A phased development with units ranging from 15,000 sq ft up to 200,000 sq ft.  The scheme was fully let no later than 12 months each building practically complete.  Notable occupiers include, Staci, Fagan & Whalley and Science in Sport (SIS) and all have HQ's in the area.

As evidenced above, the last 5 years of development has proven to be hugely successful, demonstrating pent up demand and occupiers' need for better / more modern space across a range of sized units. The above highlights a number of significant occupiers already residing in Lancashire and whilst a number of deals were to national occupiers, the majority represented businesses that were already established in Lancashire / Central Lancashire. This shows the importance of the area in meeting sub-regional market demand and retaining facilitating businesses to grow as their requirements change.

Despite proven levels of demand at present there are only two new known new build units above 3,000 sq m in this area (Botany Bay, Chorley & Prime Point, Lower Darwen) and both are likely to be let within 12 months. Whilst there are a handful of schemes working towards getting their sites 'oven ready', given challenges in the macroeconomic market, we do not expect any new build development to take place in the next 12 months as a number of the strategic sites in the area either require external funding or will only develop out to lease buildings as opposed to freehold sales. This will result in a number of established occupiers in the sub-region start to look outside of the area as requirements for modern space for either expansion or efficiencies becomes essential.

**Unsatisfied property requirements**

B8RE are aware of a number of large unsatisfied property requirements in the market, specific to the Central Lancashire area that we believe would strongly consider Cuerdale Garden Village should the site have consent. These include;

| Company | Size (sq m) | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| James Hall Ltd (Spar) | 20,000 – 25,000 | Looking for additional space in close proximity to Junction 31A of the M6. Ongoing unsatisifeid requirement specific to the area |
| Amazon | 15,000 – 25,000 | Actively looking for a purpose-built fulfilment centre with a low site coverage specific to central Lancashire to serve the surrounding towns. Considering alternatives. |
| Booths | 24,000 | Looking to become more efficient operationally and require a purpose built cross docked facility. Located close to Junction 31A |
| BAE Systems | 40,000 | Immediate requirement for storage of parts. Their requirement can be taken across several buildings to facilitate ongoing work. Proximity to Samlesbury would be highly attractive albeit with no options currently available. They are considering alternative locations in the North West |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Tetrad | 7,000 | Furnishings business looking to consolidate and acquire more efficient space. |
| BM Steel | 5,000 | Centrally based in Preston and looking to relocate. Unable to find suitable location, albeit want to stay in local area. |
| BS Stainless | 5,000 | Large provider of stainless steel based at Walton Summit. Actively looking for a freehold purchase. |

The above list of requirements provides a snapshot of known companies who have active requirements in the Central Lancashire area. Occupiers such as BAE systems cannot find anything suitable in the immediate area so are being forced to look at alternative options in the Northwest and are expected to acquire space outside the Central Lancashire area. This was the case for the business last year, looking to be close to their existing operations either in Barrow in Furness or Preston. Instead they chose to locate to Bessemer Park in Sheffield a scheme sitting within Sheffield City Regions ' Advanced Manufacturing Innovation' District.

**Other Local Market Drivers**

Outside of traditional local / sub-regional market demand and the sector trends driving the sustained demand for industrial and logistics floorspace referenced above in the region, we are aware that Central Lancashire has successfully attracted significant national investment in the form of the National Cyber Force (NCF) headquarters within Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. In cross reference to JLL's research report on Advanced Manufacturing, Cyber, & security, we understand this will create a high degree of interest in the locality and provides the potential to generate new national occupier demands in related sectors such as technology companies attracting high skilled jobs to the area. Such demand would be additional to the above market trends and place further pressure on the local commercial market to meet the need of the once in generation opportunity to significantly boost the economic growth.

**Supply of Employment Land**

The current draft plan identifies circa 218.14 ha of supply of employment land in Central Lancashire. Having reviewed the identified parcels of land, much of the space identified in our expert opinion would not be suitable for industrial occupiers due to its location. A lot of the allocated sites are in close proximity to residential areas and likely to have restrictions such as a noise and hour of uses implemented. This is now unsuitable to most distribution end users, requiring 24/7 use as well as manufacturing occupiers on shift patterns.

A long with this, some sites aren't located nearby to motorways causing congestion issues and these factors are unlikely to appeal to the wider industrial market. A number of identified sites are as follows;

**Chorley**

- Woodlands Conference Centre, Southport Road, Chorley – 1.55 HA of employment is deemed unsuitable for industrial, due to Parklands High School opposite and congestion this will likely cause.

**Preston**

- Alstroms, Strand Road – 3.18 HA of employment land identified is centrally located in Preston and surrounded by out of town retail and residential dwellings.

**Leyland**

- Moss Side Test Track, Leyland – 5.7HA of employment land identified is in very close proximity to new build residential homes and industrial development over 1,000 sq m is unlikely to appeal to occupiers.

- Farington Moss, Land at Lodge Lane – 11.84HA of employment land identified sits in close proximity to new build residential

B8RE however refer to the following large-scale employment sites that we have good working knowledge on and in our opinion are more suitable for industrial development. In doing so it is our market view that as a result of the high and suppressed demand observed above, along with take-up by non-traditional business uses, that whilst they represent deliverable supply they are either sites that require external funding, meaning they are unlikely to be developed out in today's market or are expected to be quickly absorbed, presenting a risk that the identified supply will be quickly eroded where demand will be sustained and continue to grow. They are as follows;

**Roman Road, Farm** (**Known as 'Aptus'**) – totalling 24.94 ha, a joint development between Henry Boot & Barnfield Construction named Aptus. The scheme has planning and is capable of delivering 80,000 sq m. 4 ha of land has been pre-sold to tile and flooring solutions manufacturer Kerakoll, relocating from their nearby facility in Leyland. As part of the sale, the partnership is setting about delivering infrastructure and enabling works, making the site oven ready. External funding is expected to be required to bring further development for the remaining 20 ha meaning there is uncertainty when any additional industrial / logistics space will come to the market for occupiers.

**Samlesbury Enterprise Zone** – totaling 35 ha, it is expected that much of the designated employment land will be linked with the NCF agency in Samlesbury in an attempt to harness the benefits of the facility. With funding through Lancashire county council , a 2,500 sq m innovation hub to aid research and development linked to cyber security is to be built already absorbing immediately available supply. We expect this site to attract other businesses linked to cyber security with an advanced manufacturing research center also located here, and a range of mixed commercial, meaning little land could be left available for industrial / logistics.

**Cuerden Strategic Site, Preston 'Lancashire Central' –** totaling 50ha, the site now has outline planning consent and infrastructure / enabling works are taking place later this year (2025). Approximately 9ha of zoned employment land has recently been acquired by the NHS and a confidential retail occupier is in detailed discussions to acquire a circa 3ha of the northern part of the site. Already, the actual available supply at the site is approximately 35 ha and whilst the site has had many false starts, B8RE believe the remainder of the employment land shall be absorbed in the next 3 – 5 years.

In relation to employment land that we expected to be delivered in the next 24 months, is Junction 31A of the M6 / Roman Road Farm recently acquired by Monte Developments, the developer for both Frontier Park, Burnley and Blackburn. Totaling 25.31 ha, plans are being drawn up for up to 9,000 sq m of industrial development and we envisage planning consent to be submitted this year with meaningful conversations with occupiers already taking place. With funding readily available for development here, the unit sizes in the masterplan are expected to eclipse what can be built at Cuerdale Garden Village, meaning the sites will compliment each other and allow businesses from the nearby areas to expand or relocate across the majority of size ranges in the market.

**Conclusion**

Cuerdale Garden Village offers an opportunity to bring forward much needed employment space in Central Lancashire. The Central Lancashire area suffers from a chronic lack of modern / new build supply meaning occupiers are increasingly struggling to find suitable properties, having to widen their search, move out of the area, or simply put plans on hold.

It is our opinion that Cuerdale Garden Village shall appeal to a wide range of occupier requirements ranging from 1,500 sq m, targeting local occupiers up to 27,750 sq m harnessing interest from national occupiers due to the excellent connectivity and whilst there are a number of identified employment sites in the local plan, the amount of hectares available for industrial occupiers is less due to either unsuitable locations or occupier demand already acquiring space in the designated zones, absorbing availability.

Cuerdale offers a site directly off the M6 motorway that will appeal to most occupiers and the land shall compliment the NCF and BAE systems both in the immediate vicinity, promoting growth and additional jobs.

**Turley**
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Transmission
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Manchester
M3 3GS

[redacted]

# Appendix 2: Potential Economic Implications of the NCF on Central Lancashire

# Potential Economic Implications of the NCF for Central Lancashire

## Cuerdale Garden Village

April 2025

Turley

# Contents



**Client**
Story Homes

**Our reference**
STOM3025

April 2025

# Executive Summary

1. This report has been commissioned by Story Homes to support representations to the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan, concerning its proposals for Cuerdale Garden Village.

2. Cuerdale Garden Village is proposed to be located within the A59 Growth Corridor, adjacent to Junction 31 of the M6 and near the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone (EZ). The Development Framework identifies the potential to deliver a broad range of high-quality employment space (up to 492,5000 sqm), co-located with residential development (up to 2,300 homes) in a liveable environment, supported by accessible infrastructure.

3. The National Cyber Force (NCF) headquarters is currently progressing on Samlesbury EZ and is anticipated to be gradually occupied from 2025. It is expected that the facility will accommodate personnel from GCHQ, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) the Secret Intelligence Service and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory.

4. Recognising the scale of the investment in the NCF and the potential for Cuerdale Garden Village to accommodate additional floorspace requirements and future workers to retain associated benefits within Central Lancashire, this report explores the scale of potential complementary investment and arising needs. It draws upon work undertaken by Plexal in 2024 on behalf of Lancashire County Council (LCC) which has specifically sought to understand in detail how this nationally significant investment can create wider opportunities for the county. It also references other published materials which have sought to consider the importance of the defence and cyber security sectors, with a specific focus on the North West.

### Economic expectations of the NCF

5. The Government's Green Paper Industrial Strategy, *Invest 2035*, identifies the 'defence' sector, along with 'digital and technologies' as two of its eight defined growth-driving sectors. Its commitment to the sector has been enhanced by the recently stated commitment to see defence spending in the UK increase to 2.5% of GVP by 2027, with a view to further increasing it to 3.0% within the next parliament. It has also highlighted its intention to grow onshore production capability and support UK based businesses, including start-ups and SMEs. It recognises that this will require a strengthening of critical supply chains within the UK defence industry.

6. Aside from the South East and South West, the North West represents the largest concentration of defence expenditure and is home to a significant number of businesses and their employees in the sector.

7. The cyber security sector represents a significant and growing component of the overall defence sector and the North West also has a significant presence of businesses, institutions and partnerships in this sub-sector.

8. The Government has, in this context articulated the role it sees its investment in the NCF as supporting these sectors to grow, stating that:

*"Within the next few years NCF will establish its centre of gravity in the north west of England. It will contribute to driving growth in the technology, digital and defence sectors, and encourage the creation of partnerships between government, industry and universities in the region. This growth will allow us to enhance and broaden our collective skillset, deepening existing partnerships and forging new ones, strengthening the UK's cyber ecosystem"*[1].

9. Similarly, the Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) has recently consulted on a draft of a Growth Plan which confirms its view that '*the location of the National Cyber Force provides opportunity to harness new corporates, SMEs and talent into the region*'[2]. Indeed, in supporting this ambition it has already given it agreement to fund a £13.2 million innovation hub within the EZ, to complement the existing Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre North West already located on the site. This new facility is understood to have the capacity to deliver 27,000sqft of floorspace to provide '*multi-functional business premises*'[3].

### Case study precedents

10. The report has considered a range of case studies, recognising the unique nature of the investment in the NCF, to assist in framing an understanding of potential impacts and benefits. This initially included two case studies identified by Plexal in the work they have undertaken for LCC as representing comparable large-scale public-sector relocations. In reviewing these they show:

- the potential to generate indirect and induced employment opportunities in terms of supply chains but also more widely in attracting business investment which is keen to co-locate to benefit from proximity to public sector investment;
- that opportunities will be created for local recruitment; and
- that there are impacts on local labour-force demand with reasonable proportions of workers understand to live in reasonable proximity, albeit that a proportion of 'new' labour will travel from further afield but within a travel to work geography based on reasonable travel times.

11. The experience at Cheltenham and specifically the Golden Valley development which is near the GCHQ affirms the scale of opportunity perceived to capitalise on attracting business interest from within the Cyber sector and other sectors, drawn by the location of the Government's investment. The scale of the development is noted where it has the capacity to accommodate over 11,000 additional jobs along with new residential development, with commercial space primarily focussed on quality office provision within a campus location.

12. Two other global case studies, Maryland Viginia USA and Be-er Sheva in Israel, illustrate the potential scale of impact that the growing cyber sector can have on local

[1] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61b9f526d3bf7f05522e302e/Force_Explainer_20211213_FINAL__1_.pdf

[2] Lancashire Combined County Authority (February 2025) The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025 – 2035, consultation version, p36

[3] https://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/24878197.new-13m-innovation-hub-agreed-open-samlesbury/

economies where there is a combination of public, private and academic institutions and a clear ambition to capture an agglomeration of benefits.

### Estimating the potential economic impact

13. Work undertaken by Plexal on behalf of LCC suggests that the NCF will accommodate in the order of 2,000 direct jobs but will potentially generate a further 1,120 indirect jobs. This would suggest a total of 3,120 additional jobs within Central Lancashire being generated by the NCF.

14. Where this is based on assumptions around achieving indirect multipliers as other comparable developments, with reference specifically to Cheltenham / GCHQ it is understood, it is recognised that there is a potential to support further growth through the potential to plan for additional commercial floorspace in proximity to the NCF and Samlesbury EZ. This recognises wider forecasting of the potential scale of additional economic and employment growth in the cyber sector and more widely in the context of the Government's commitment to increased local spending in the defence sector.

15. JLL have considered the potential for such wider commercial market interest drawing on their experience of other clustering of commercial floorspace and in recognising the potential needs which could arise from the investment at the NCF and more widely in providing supporting housing development to accommodate additional labour.

### Appreciating other potential benefits

16. Through the creation of new jobs and attraction of investment the NCF will stimulate additional needs for infrastructure, including the provision of housing to accommodate a growing labour-force. The profile of employment opportunities generated can be expected to have an impact on the local housing market, creating additional demand for a range of types and tenures within Central Lancashire.

### Cuerdale Garden Village

17. The proposed development offers a unique opportunity to capitalise on the investment being made by the NCF and provide complementary commercial floorspace that, as with the examples identified, can provide businesses with the opportunity to co-locate in proximity to the NCF and existing and developing cyber and defence eco-system on Samlesbury EZ. The phasing of delivery will ensure that this space is provided in parallel with the occupation of the NCF, responding to additional needs which are generated, and in alignment with the Government's anticipated investment and growth in the sector within the UK and region. JLL have confirmed that the profile of space will align with potential occupier demands in the sector and considered potential types of occupier needs.

18. Similarly, the proximity of the Garden Village to the NCF and other employment opportunities – within Samlesbury EZ and in the Garden Village itself – offers a unique opportunity to provide housing to accommodate additional arising needs by attracting and retaining workers in close proximity. It will provide an attractive residential environment offering which will be of considerable value in helping to attract workers to locate to the area and reducing the need to travel.

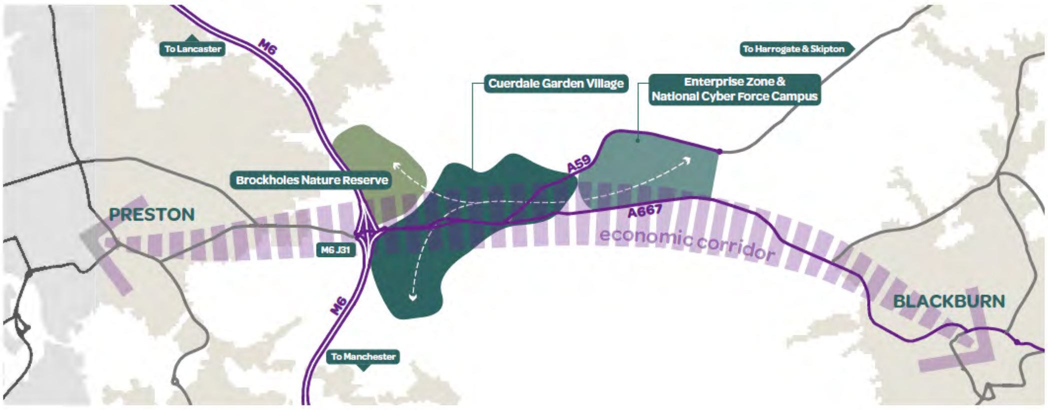
# 1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been commissioned by Story Homes to support representations to the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan, concerning its proposals for Cuerdale Garden Village.

### Context: the National Cyber Force Campus and Samlesbury Enterprise Zone

1.2 Cuerdale Garden Village is proposed to be located within the A59 Growth Corridor, adjacent to Junction 31 of the M6 and near the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone (EZ). The Development Framework identifies the potential to deliver a broad range of high-quality employment space, co-located with residential development in a liveable environment, supported by accessible infrastructure. Figure 1.1 shows the strategic location of the proposed development.

**Figure 1.1: A59 Growth Corridor**




*Source: Cuerdale Garden Village Development Framework Document (2023)*

1.3 The previous UK Government announced the establishment of the new NCF in November 2020. It was subsequently announced that a permanent base for the NCF would be established and located at Samlesbury EZ.

1.4 The NCF is currently under construction within the EZ and is anticipated to be gradually occupied from 2025, with the first jobs on site currently advertised. It is expected that the facility will accommodate personnel from GCHQ, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) the Secret Intelligence Service and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory.

1.5 The decision to locate at Samlesbury recognises that the region is already home to related assets in the form of GCHQ's Manchester office and the Digital Security Hub (DiSH). Furthermore, leading defence and intelligence companies like Raytheon, BAE Systems Applied Intelligence and Northrop Grumman are already embedded in the regional economy. It is expected that such businesses will seek to leverage growing supply chain opportunities arising from the NCF where key initiatives have already been established to capture wider benefits such as the North West Cyber Corridor and the North West Cyber Security Cluster.

## Scope and objective of this report

1.6 Recognising the scale of the investment in the NCF and the potential for Cuerdale Garden Village to accommodate additional floorspace requirements and future workers to retain associated benefits within Central Lancashire, this report explores the scale of potential complementary investment and arising needs. It draws upon work undertaken by Plexal in 2024 on behalf of Lancashire County Council (LCC) which has specifically sought to understand in detail how this nationally significant investment can create wider opportunities for the county and is referenced within the recently published Lancashire Growth Plan[4]. It also references other published materials which have sought to consider the importance of the defence and cyber security sectors, with a specific focus on the North West.

1.7 Where it is acknowledged that the nature of the proposed investment means that there is more limited publicly available information than would normally be expected, consideration is given to a range of case study material. This includes information which has been developed by Plexal for LCC and shared with Story Homes to support their wider research as well as commercial market insight from JLL's research team.

## Report structure

1.8 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2: Overview of the NCF**
- **Section 3: The Defence and Cyber Sectors in Central Lancashire**
- **Section 4: Comparable Case Studies**
- **Section 5: Estimating the Potential Economic Impact**
- **Section 6 Other Potential Benefits and Impacts**
- **Section 7: Cuerdale Garden Village**
- **Section 8: Conclusion**

[4] Lancashire Combined County Authority (February 2025) The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025 – 2035, consultation version

# 2. Overview of the NCF

2.1 The establishment of the NCF was confirmed by the previous Government in November 2020, as part of its Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy.

2.2 This section presents an overview of the NCF and the Government's expectations and ambitions of its role in elevating the UK's cyber security and economic growth.

**The NCF**

2.3 The NCF is a partnership between defence and intelligence. It is intended to operate *'in and through cyberspace to disrupt, deny, degrade and contest those who would do harm to the UK and its allies, to keep the country safe and to promote the UK's interests at home and abroad'*[5].

2.4 To facilitate the new partnership of agencies the previous Government identified the need for a new headquarters which it confirmed would be established and located at Samlesbury EZ. It is anticipated that the facility will accommodate personnel from GCHQ, the MOD, the Secret Intelligence Service and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory.

**The decision to locate in Central Lancashire**

2.5 The decision to locate at Samlesbury recognises that the region is already home to related assets in the form of GCHQ's Manchester office and DiSH. Local academic institutions, including Lancaster University – the lead academic partner in DiSH – also have reputations for delivering new qualified graduates in the sector and leading research and development (R&D) for instance through the Cyber Foundry project[6].

2.6 Furthermore, leading defence and intelligence companies like Raytheon, BAE Systems Applied Intelligence and Northrop Grumman are already embedded in the regional economy. It is expected that such businesses will seek to leverage growing supply chain opportunities arising from the NCF where key initiatives have already been established to capture wider benefits such as the North West Cyber Corridor and the North West Cyber Security Cluster.

2.7 The Government has facilitated the creation of the Lancashire Cyber Partnership to support the delivery of these initiatives with the express aim of shaping, supporting and promoting the cyber ecosystem in the region. It represents a partnership which includes, alongside the NCF, LCC, the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, the University of Central Lancashire, Lancaster University and BAE Systems[7].

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[5] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61b9f526d3bf7f05522e302e/Force_Explainer_20211213_FINAL__1_.pdf

[6] https://www.lancashirecyberfoundry.co.uk/

[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-partnership-for-cyber-collaboration

### Expectations for supporting wider growth

2.8 The new Government's Green Paper Industrial Strategy, *Invest 2035*, identifies eight growth-driving sectors which are considered to represent the services and manufacturing industries that present the greatest opportunity for outputs and productivity growth over the long-term[8]. The 'defence' sector, along with 'digital and technologies' make up two of these sectors.

2.9 The Government has continued to set out how it intends to drive sustainable economic growth, identifying sector-specific actions and strategies. This has included detailed consideration of the potential that the cyber security sector has, noting its alignment with each of the growth-driving sectors noted above. Its recently published sectoral analysis documents the growing global demand for services in this sector and its fundamental role in realising wider opportunities related to artificial intelligence, noting the importance of ensuring that systems are secure and trustworthy[9].

2.10 The NCF clearly aligns with the current Government's economic priorities, with it having described in explaining the investment that:

*"Within the next few years NCF will **establish its centre of gravity in the north west of England. It will contribute to driving growth in the technology, digital and defence sectors,** and encourage the creation of partnerships between government, industry and universities in the region. This growth will allow us to enhance and broaden our collective skillset, deepening existing partnerships and forging new ones, strengthening the UK's cyber ecosystem"*[10]

2.11 This ambition was originally articulated within the previous Government's Levelling Up White Paper which expected the NCF to *'boost the local economy and create jobs'*[11]. The same Government's National Cyber Strategy similarly anticipated that the investment would drive *'growth in the technology, digital and defence sectors outside of London and helping create new partnerships in the region'*[12]. This was followed by a commitment to *'increase…support for innovators and entrepreneurs outside of London and the South East to develop their products and services, grow their businesses and recruit skilled staff'.*

### Facilitating supply-chain investment

2.12 Success in stimulating wider economic growth will depend on attracting and retaining business investment, which is driven by the benefits of proximity and connectivity with the NCF.

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[8] UK Government (October 2024) Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy

[9] Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (March 2025) Cyber security sectoral analysis 2025

[10] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61b9f526d3bf7f05522e302e/Force_Explainer_20211213_FINAL__1_.pdf

[11] HM Government (February 2022) Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper, p269

[12] HM Government (December 2022) National Cyber Strategy 2022: Pioneering a cyber future with the whole of the UK, paragraph 80

2.13 The Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) has recently consulted on a draft of a Growth Plan which confirms its view that '*the location of the National Cyber Force provides opportunity to harness new corporates, SMEs and talent into the region'*[13].

2.14 Public sector investment aimed at facilitating agglomeration benefits has already been confirmed with the agreement to fund a £13.2 million innovation hub within the EZ, to complement the existing Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre North West already located on the site. This new facility is understood to have the capacity to deliver 27,000sqft of floorspace to provide '*multi-functional business premises*'[14].

2.15 Other infrastructure investment to support the NCF has included the provision of a new 33,000-volt substation at Samlesbury by Electricity North West, to support an expected increase in power requirements as businesses on the site grow and develop[15].

2.16 The wider opportunity presented to create associated employment was articulated by the pro-vice chancellor for research and enterprise at the University of Central Lancashire, Professor St John Crean, who is noted as identifying that the development of a wider cyberspace industry would bring the broadest benefits to the county, stating:

*"When you get something as influential as the National Cyber Force coming to Lancashire, setting up a huge security-based operation, suddenly you're going to become very attractive to the cyber security arena and all its adjuncts"*[16]*.*

2.17 He is further quoted as saying that:

*"…Lancashire has an opportunity to build an ecosystem – a connected set of businesses that have direct reliance on the cyber world – but also the wraparound services like project management, legal and ethics and accounting….We want to have a cyber workforce based in Lancashire, not commuting from outside the region".*

### Latest position

2.18 Recent headlines have indicated that the NCF is expected to open later in 2025, with expectations that it will deliver positive benefits for Lancashire[17]. Indeed, the Commander of the NCF is quoted as confirming the intention to recruit from within Lancashire and highlighting the breadth of job opportunities that will be provided. The same press release states an expectation that:

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[13] Lancashire Combined County Authority (February 2025) The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025 – 2035, consultation version, p36

[14] https://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/24878197.new-13m-innovation-hub-agreed-open-samlesbury/

[15] https://www.enwl.co.uk/about-us/news/latest-news-and-views/2020/electricity-north-west-to-begin-work-on-7.5m-investment-in-samlesbury/

[16] https://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/24920474.excitement-benefits-samlesbury-national-cyber-force-hq/

[17] *Ibid*

*"…having the NCF base at the heart of Lancashire will generate around 2,000 jobs within the next decade – not just those directly employed by the organisation, but in relevant businesses that it is hoped will cluster around the new HQ".*

2.19 It is understood that the first jobs on site were advertised in early 2025 ahead of the facility opening[18].

[18] It is noted that the GCHQ Careers website (accessed April 2025) included positions being advertised as located at Samlesbury. This included software developers and engineers.

# 3. The Defence and Cyber Sectors in Central Lancashire

3.1 The decision to locate the NCF within Central Lancashire was strongly influenced by the strength of the defence and cyber sectors within the North West and specifically within Lancashire.

3.2 This section reviews published materials which document the current strength of the sector within these geographies, and see this as providing a strong foundation from which to expect further growth.

### Defence sector in Lancashire

3.3 At a national level, the Government has identified the defence sector as one of eight priority growth-driving sectors, as noted in the previous section. This has been reinforced in 2025 with the Government's announcement that defence spending in the UK will be increased to 2.5% of GDP by 2027, with a view to further increasing it to 3.0% within the next parliament.

3.4 The Spring Statement allocated an additional £2.2billion of funding to the MOD in 2026 and committed to the publication of a Strategic Defence Review and Defence Industrial Strategy[19]. The latter is anticipated to provide further detail on how the defence sector will be transformed into an engine for growth, delivering benefits that will be felt by people in all nations and regions of the UK.

3.5 In this context the Government has already clearly highlighted its intention to grow onshore production capability and support UK based businesses, including start-ups and SMEs. It recognises that this will require a strengthening of critical supply chains within the UK defence industry.

3.6 In identifying the economic significance of the sector, the following key statistics are noted[20]:

- Government defence spending in 2022/23 supported around 434,000 jobs across the UK, equivalent to 1 in 60 UK jobs.
- The MOD spent £28.8 billion with UK industry and commerce in 2023/24. This represented an 8% increase to the previous year, when accounting for inflation. This included £8.7 billion in the technical, financial and other business services sector, representing a 34% increase compared to the previous year[21].
- The majority (68%) of defence spend with UK industry and commerce goes outside of London and the South East.

[19] HM Treasury (March 2025) Spring Statement 2025

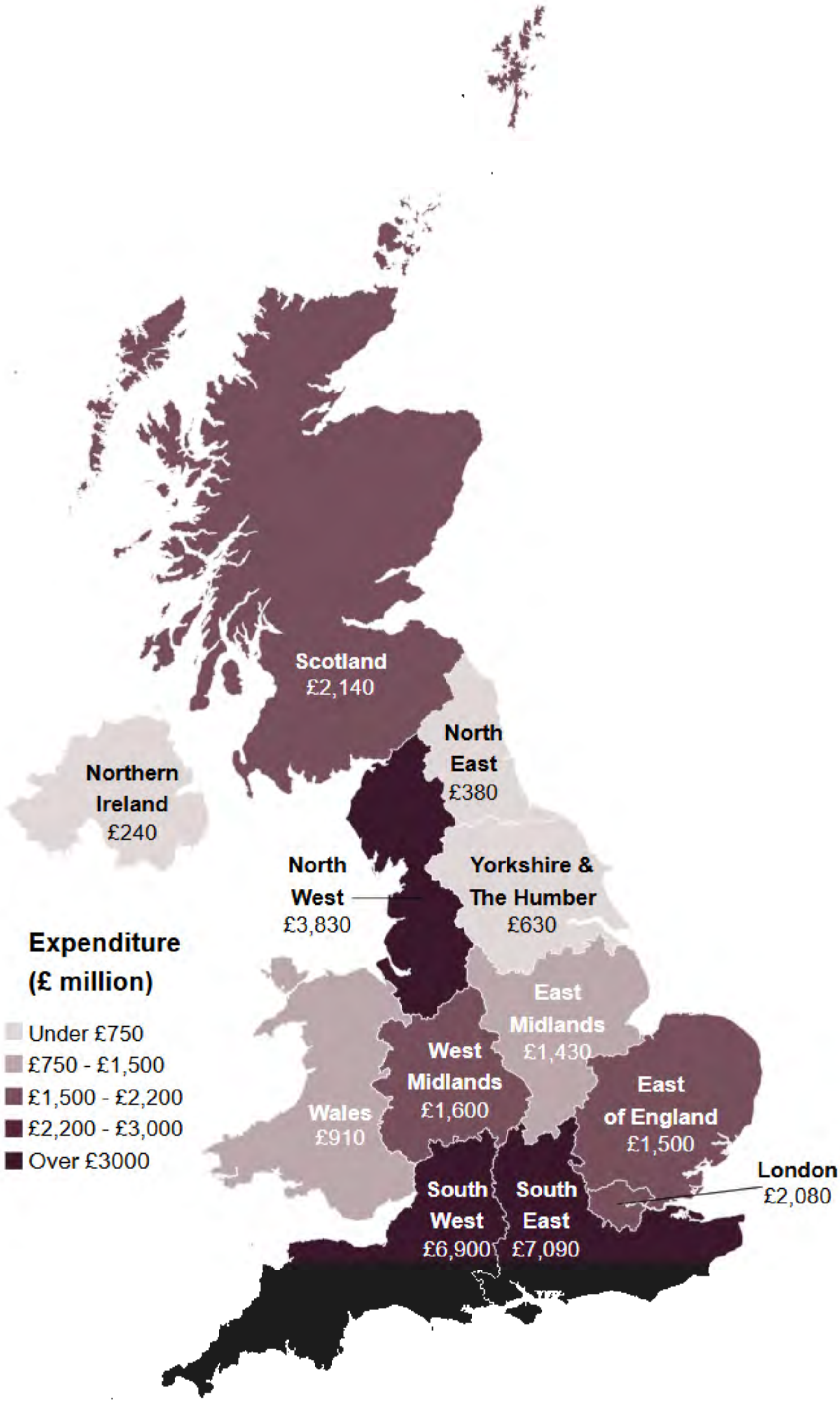
[20] Ministry of Defence (December 2024) Defence Industrial Strategy – Statement of Intent

[21] Ministry of Defence (November 2024) MOD regional expenditure with industry 2023/24

- Data from the largest UK defence companies in 2022 showed the training of 4,800 apprenticeships and 1,670 graduate trainees.

3.7 The following plan shows that some £3.8 billion of defence spending was in the North West, ranking behind only the South West and South East.

**Figure 3.1: MOD Expenditure with UK Industry by Region (2023/24)**



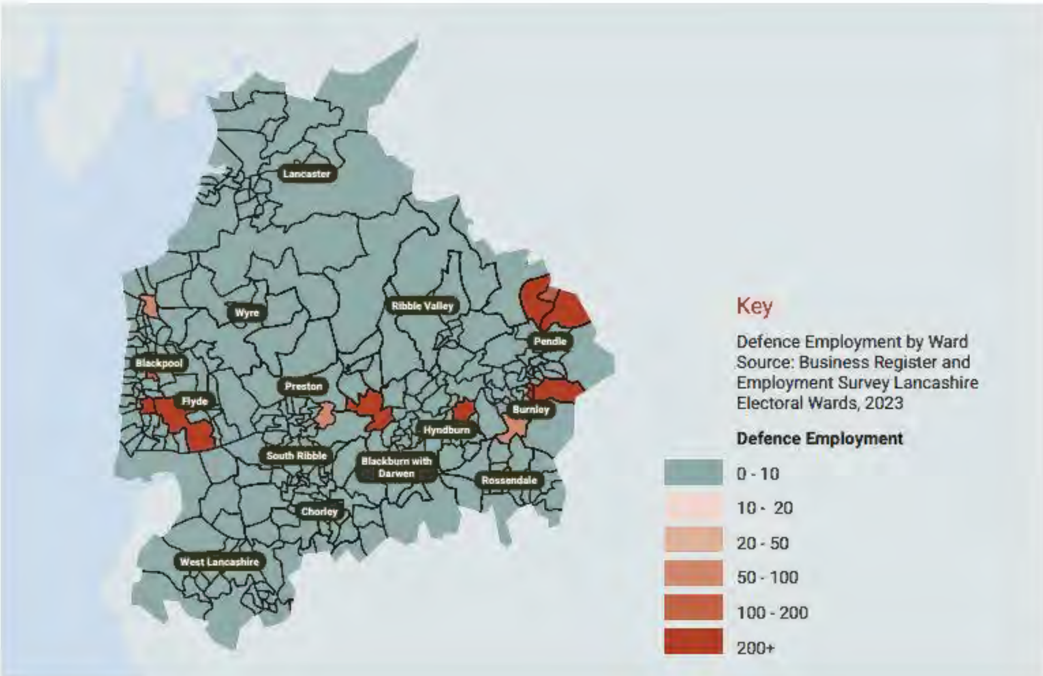

*Source: MOD Regional expenditure statistics (2023/24), Analysis Directorate*

3.8 Within the North West, Lancashire has a strong representation of businesses associated with the defence sector. The emerging Lancashire Growth Plan, being developed by the LCCA, sets as its first priority having *'an economy at the heart of the UK's security and resilience'*[22]. This specifically references existing strengths with regards the production of military aircraft, nuclear fuel and cyber capabilities. It states with reference to the central hosting of these industries in the county that:

*"These industries are powerful economic drivers locally, regionally, and nationally. By harnessing the intersections of these industries, and their underlying technological needs, we can establish unique clusters where industry, academia, and wider society collaborate to forge new products and capabilities that enhance national security"*[23].

3.9 The Growth Plan presents a map showing defence manufacturing employment distribution, which is replicated at Figure 3.2. This shows a concentration across an arc of Lancashire, with South Ribble and Samlesbury sitting at the centre of this important geographic cluster.

**Figure 3.2: Defence Manufacturing Employment Distribution**




*Source: Draft Lancashire Growth Plan (2024), page 191*

3.10 It is noted that this clustering of defence manufacturing employment closely mirrors the '*Arc of Prosperity*' previously defined by the former Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, which is shown at Figure 3.3. It reported that this area accounted for some 75% of the county's economic output.

[22] Lancashire Combined County Authority (February 2025) The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025 – 2035, consultation version, p18

[23] *Ibid*, p18

**Figure 3.3: Lancashire Arc of Prosperity**


*Source: Lancashire Enterprise Partnership*

3.11 It also broadly mirrors the main identified '*economic corridors*' in the Growth Plan, as shown in Figure 3.4 overleaf.

**Figure 3.4: Lancashire's Growth Map**


*Source: LCCA*

3.12 Several components are identified as underpinning the strength of the defence sector currently in Lancashire, including the military air sector, the NCF and the AUKUS supply chain. Further consideration is given specifically to the cyber sector in the second half of this section but these other specialist areas of the economy are considered further below.

3.13 Within the military air sector BAE Systems evidently represents a critical component of this part of Lancashire's economy. A detailed study of the impact of its air sector business on the UK economy was recently produced by Oxford Economics[24]. This indicated that its military air sector work, largely centred at sites in Lancashire:

- Contributes over £5 billion to UK GDP, alongside an additional £2.6 billion in exports – a figure that has doubled since 2016;
- Supports almost 70,000 jobs across the UK in highly skilled roles, including combat air design, engineering, support, and training, with 20,000 of these jobs in the North West;
- Partners with 1,400 UK suppliers, returning nearly £2.5 billon to UK businesses through its supply chain; and
- Offers highly skilled roles throughout its air sector business, in which approximately 69% of staff are employed in engineering or related operations roles. These workers had an average productivity of £82,000 in 2023, which is approximately 15% above the UK average.

3.14 The Government's commitment to defence spending has been exemplified by the commitment to the production of the SSN-AUKUS, which will be the largest advanced submarines the Royal Navy has ever operated. Manufacture of these submarines is expected towards the end of the decade with the award of the contract resulting in significant infrastructure investment at BAE Systems' site in Barrow-in-Furness. The Growth Plan identifies that this investment, plus further investment in the supply chain, could result in the recruitment of more than 5,000 people, with a workforce predicted to peak at 12,000.

3.15 The above highlights the important inter-connections between the defence sector and wider parts of the economy, specifically capabilities and strengths in manufacturing, including advanced manufacturing, as well as professional services which complement and have developed to directly respond to the specific needs of the sector. The ecosystem related to the defence sector within the region and in Lancashire is therefore both sizeable and complex, and will be expected to further grow from its established base given the Government's commitments to the sector and its ambition to on-shore through procurement.

### Baselining the cyber economy in Lancashire

3.16 The Government's acknowledgement of the cyber security sector not only within the context of defence but also more widely – noting, as referenced in section 2, the relationship with emerging AI opportunities – is a demonstration of its rapid recent growth. It identifies that the sector now employs 67,300 people across the UK, having created 6,600 new jobs in the last year alone[25] (11% increase). These jobs are within 2,165 firms currently active, with the sector generating £13.2 billion in revenue and £7.8 billion in GVA.

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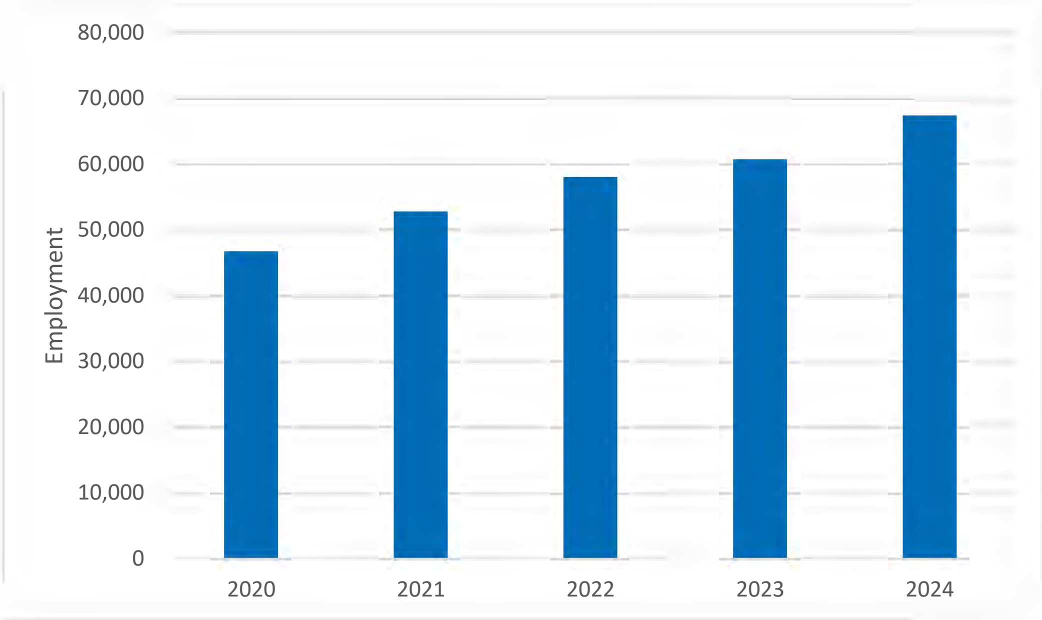
[24] Oxford Economics (November 2024) The Impact of BAE Systems' Air Sector Business on the UK Economy – An Independent Report

[25] Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (March 2025) Cyber security sectoral analysis 2025

3.17 Looking at employment, Figure 3.5 illustrates the rapid pace of growth nationally over the last five years.

**Figure 3.5: UK employment counts in the cyber security sector (2020-24)**




*Source: Department for Science, Innovation and Technology*

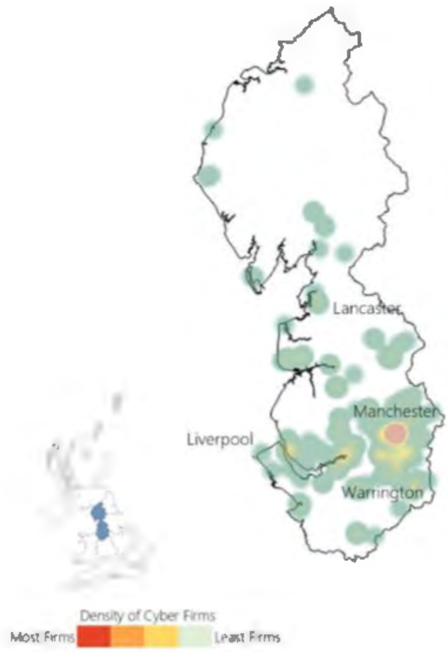
3.18 In its latest published analysis of the sector, the Government states that:

*"For the first time, the highest proportion of external investment was in the North West, home to a growing number of cyber businesses and soon to be home of the National Cyber Force in Lancashire"*[26].

3.19 A visual snapshot of the sector's representation in the North West is included within the Government's analysis and replicated at Figure 3.6 overleaf.

[26] *Ibid*

**Figure 3.6: North West Cyber Security Sector Snapshot**




**North West**

| Percentage of UK Cyber security offices | Estimated percentage of UK based cyber security employment | Mean Advertised Salaries (2024 in core cyber security roles |
|---|---|---|
| 8% | 10% | £54,600 |

*Source: Government's cyber-security sectoral analysis (2025)*

3.20 In the context of the relocation of the NCF, considerable work has been undertaken by several expert consultancies to understand the potential benefits and implications for the North West region and specifically Lancashire.

3.21 This has included work led by Perspective Economics which is captured within the published North West Cyber Corridor Innovation Impact Report, and accompanying Evidence Base[27]. It also includes work undertaken by Plexal on behalf of LCC, which is referenced in the Perspective Economics study and the emerging Lancashire Growth Plan. Reference is also made to the Government's latest published analysis of the sector, which is noted as having built on previous analysis published in May 2024.

3.22 These studies contain a wealth of detailed analysis of the cyber security sector, including an in-depth consideration of its current profile across the region and specifically Lancashire. Key aspects of this analysis are summarised below, with separate consideration given later in this report to expert predictions on future growth

[27] Perspective Economics (2023) The North West Cyber Corridor Innovation Impact Study: Evidence Base

prospects of the sector and the implications for the supply of additional floorspace and infrastructure.

3.23 With reference to the North West, the Perspective Economics analysis identifies that the region has:

- Approximately 300 unique cyber security companies, making it one of the UK's leading regions in cyber. It is estimated that the region is home to approximately 9% of the UK's cyber security sector (in terms of office count), with this translating to just over 5,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers in the region's private cyber security sector. At least 15% of UK registered cyber security businesses are reported to have at least one office in the North West. This data highlights that **the North West is the UK's largest cyber security ecosystem outside of London and the South East.**

- Over 150 public, defence, and research assets relevant to cyber security. These are not typically 'cyber security businesses' but include a wider range of organisations critical to the success of the ecosystem. These include for example business clusters in Greater Manchester, research excellence in Lancaster and cyber degree apprenticeships in Sellafield.

- Circa 12,000 FTE jobs across the cyber security sector, capturing the private and public sectors as well as academia, with over £550m paid in salaries each year and £760m of GVA generated per annum.

- A broadly even split between cyber security companies that are "pure-play" (52%) – providing only cyber security – and those that are "diversified", offering products and services across verticals (48%). The latter is identified as being much higher than for the UK as a whole (28%) which highlights how strongly cyber security capabilities are embedded within broader sectors in the North West. Specific reference is made to BAE Systems, Cisco and other service providers including Deloitte and PwC.

- Over a third of cyber security employers that are either large (250+ staff) or medium (50+ staff). This is identified as suggesting the opportunity to build the skills pipeline through entry-level pathways into cyber among key employers, including the NCF and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC).

- Recently experienced a sharp increase in demand for cyber security professionals. The analysis suggests that there were at least 4,500 job postings for technical cyber security roles in the region in 2022, almost twice the number in 2020. The research also identified a further 5,100 job postings within the North West in 2022 which requested some knowledge of cyber security, even if they were not a core or technical cyber security role. It observes that this *'highlights the significant demand for cyber security talent within the region, and this is only set to grow with incoming investments by GCHQ, NCSC and NCF in the region, who will require considerable volumes of talent to resource new centres* *of excellence in areas such as threat intelligence, risk, programming, incident response, and offensive cyber'*[28]*.*

- Ten Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) offering cyber security and computer science courses, placing it as a top region for skills provision. The number of graduates in the region in cyber and computer science is reportedly growing by circa 15% per annum, with more than 3,400 graduates in 2020/21.

3.24 The latest analysis produced by the Government considers the scale of investment at a UK and regional level[29]. It highlights that in 2024 the highest proportion of investment was in the North West (49%) with six deals to the value of £102 million. It observes that this was largely due to the £88 million raised by Cheshire-based web application firm PortSwigger, as well as firms such as CultureAI, Cytix, CloudGuard, and Zally. Investor views were sought through the Government research, with a venture capital investor noted as stating for example that:

*"We're very bullish on the growth for cyber security. Cyber security is not going away. More and more things are being done online, everything is becoming digital. AI is starting to change the world and that's going to lead to security issues and the need for security around all that new infrastructure. We think that there's going to be a huge number of very attractive companies to continue to invest in for years to come"*[30]*.*

3.25 The aforementioned work by Perspective Economics specifically identifies the strong complementarity between the region's cyber capabilities and other sectors, including aerospace and defence, energy and nuclear, finance and professional services and manufacturing. It states, however, that the *'data also highlights that the region could benefit from further external investment and collaboration with these adjacent sectors*'[31]. This is an important consideration and reinforces the observations above with regard to the defence sector more widely.

3.26 Within Lancashire specifically, Plexal have more recently supported LCC in appraising the opportunity presented by the NCF and the actions required to capitalise on the investment. It has drawn from the above data to outline the county's current assets in cyber security and its profile of businesses and employees. This revealed that:

- Lancashire is home to approximately 36 business premises which are occupied by cyber security companies. It is observed that since some of these spaces are occupied by the same companies, it is host to around 30 distinct cyber security businesses.

- A higher proportion of these businesses are dedicated solely to cyber work (78%) than is noted above as being typical across the North West (52%).

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[28] Perspective Economics (2023) The North West Cyber Corridor Innovation Impact Study: Evidence Base, p41

[29] Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (March 2025) Cyber security sectoral analysis 2025

[30] *Ibid*

[31] Perspective Economics (2023) The North West Cyber Corridor Innovation Impact Study: Evidence Base, p27

- Lancashire's cyber businesses tend to be smaller in size compared to those in the wider region, with 58% classified as 'micro' businesses employing no more than ten people.

- While it is challenging to pinpoint the exact number of people employed in the cyber sector in Lancashire, estimates suggest that around 900 individuals work in core cyber roles, with an additional 1,300 in related positions. A total of 2,200 people are therefore estimated to be working in the sector in Lancashire.

- The cyber sector is estimated to contribute around £79m to the county's GVA.

- In 2022 there were around 2,218 vacancies in cyber-related roles.

- Lancashire is home to over 40 assets that contribute to the local cyber economy. These include significant sites like BAE Systems, the Lancashire Cyber Partnership and the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre in Samlesbury.

- Lancaster University is involved in delivering over £10m of funded cyber projects, which comprises 34% of the total in the North West, more than any other area. These include over 20 grants that have been used to set up their Academic Centre of Excellence in Cyber Security Research, conduct research projects such as 'Dynamic Polices for Shared Cyber-Physical Infrastructure under Attack' as well as working on collaborative R&D initiatives.

**Figure 3.7: Plexal illustration of the cyber economy in Lancashire**


*Source: Plexal*

**Summary**

3.27 The Government has committed to increasing defence spending and aims to on-shore investment and related economic outputs. Aside from the South East and South West, the North West represents the largest concentration of defence expenditure and is home to a significant number of businesses and their employees in the sector.

3.28 The cyber security sector represents a significant and growing component of the overall defence sector and the North West also has a significant presence of businesses, institutions and partnerships in this sub-sector. The investment in the NCF has already stimulated complementary investment and will be expected to further expand Lancashire's presence and specialism in this sub-sector.

# 4. Comparable Case Studies

4.1 The nature of the NCF investment means that whilst there is some information in the public domain there are limitations to what is available on its anticipated economic impact, and what the investment could mean for host local economies and the population. Given the sensitive nature of the project this is not considered to be unusual. As described in section 2, however, where information has been made available it is evident that it implies a strong expectation that investment will translate into positive local economic impacts and have a catalytic effect in line with national economic objectives.

4.2 Plexal, referenced in the preceding section, have in preparing evidence for LCC sought to consider several comparable case studies to address this gap and provide reasonable insights to inform the future planning of infrastructure and support the investment to achieve the spin-off value sought by the Government. These are summarised in this section, drawing on additional sourced material where appropriate, along with a higher-level consideration of further case studies cited in another comparable assessment, relating to the GCHQ facility in Cheltenham, which whilst not directly comparable falls within the same economic and sectoral sphere.

### Large-scale public-sector relocations – Plexal case studies

4.3 Two of the case studies which were identified by Plexal are summarised here. Both are noted as having been driven by the 'Places for Growth' programme which aimed to decentralise Government departments away from London and the South East, and stimulate economic growth in other parts of the country.

**Met Office HQ – Exeter**

4.4 In 2003 the Met Office moved over 1,000 employees from its previous location in Bracknell to Exeter, circa 150 miles away. The new site provided a state-of-the-art office building with enhanced sustainability credentials and improved amenities for staff.

4.5 In terms of key metrics of relevance to the NCF, Plexal drew upon a 2005 Economic Impact Assessment[32]. This identified that:

- The Met Office employed 1,087 FTE staff in Exeter at the time, over 200 of whom were local people recruited as a result of the move to this area. This suggests that in the order of 80% of staff relocated.

- Of the circa 1,000 employees, 422 (or approximately 40%) lived in Exeter, whilst the remaining 665 lived outside of the city, primarily within Devon. It is of note in this regard that Exeter as a city is comparatively small and that, similar to the NCF, the new site of the Met Office was chosen for its accessibility being located off a junction on the M5.

[32] Exeter City Council (November 2005) Economic Impact of the Met Office: Report to Economy Scrutiny Committee

- The average wage of directly employed staff was considerably above the average local wage in Exeter and Devon, with many of the jobs relatively highly skilled and knowledge based. It noted that of the more highly paid jobs in the Met Office, over 70 (full-time and part-time) had gone to people recruited locally.

- Some 1,395 FTE jobs had been created in Exeter as a consequence of the Met Office's presence in the city, injecting around £32 million of GVA each year. Over 1,700 jobs had been created throughout the South West region, including Exeter, where over twice as much GVA was generated. This is summarised in the following table.

**Figure 4.1: Economic Impact of the Met Office in Exeter and the South West**

| | FTE employment | | GVA per annum (£m) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Exeter | South West | Exeter | South West |
| Direct | 422 live and work in Exeter<br>665 work in Exeter but live elsewhere | 1,087 | £18.09 | £46.26 |
| Indirect | 146 | 245 | £6.82 | £11.38 |
| Induced | 162 | 378 | £7.05 | £16.44 |
| **Total** | **1,395** | **1,710** | **£31.96** | **£74.08** |

*Source: Exeter City Council*

4.6 The assessment also highlighted the role of relocation in elevating the perception of and confidence in the city. It is noted as having helped to anchor private sector investment from energy companies, provided impetus for the modernisation of local schools and helped to progress plans for the development of the now established Exeter Science Park which makes a large contribution to Exeter's science and knowledge economy. The Science Park is now a STEMM business park and conference venue which is host to 45 STEMM focussed companies and offers around 100,000sqft of high quality office and lab space[33].

**Darlington Economic Campus (DEC)**

4.7 The previous Government facilitated the opening of the circa 30,000 DEC, to accommodate staff from the Treasury and departments for business, local government and trade. The campus is estimated to accommodate 1,400 employees with approximately 20% relocating from London, circa 240 miles away.

4.8 In 2023 the Institute for Government produced a report titled *'Settling in: Lessons from the Darlington Economic Campus for civil service relocation'*. This drew on a range of

[33] https://exetersciencepark.co.uk/

data and stakeholder interviews to explore the lessons which could be learnt from the relocation. The following are considered pertinent:

- At the time of reporting the facility was expected to accommodate around 1,400 officials, in addition to the 700 existing Department for Education (DfE) staff based in the town. As of 2023 it was observed as accommodating 600 staff from multiple government departments in addition the 700 DfE staff.

- There were around 35 senior civil servants based at the campus, including two director generals and Beth Russell one of the Treasury's then second permanent secretaries. It was noted that approximately 2.7% of the DEC's staff were senior civil servants, higher than the average across the whole civil service of 1.5%. This represented a point of difference to previous relocations which have mainly focused on dispersing low and mid-level administrative functions.

- The presence of senior staff has contributed to a greater potential ecosystem forming around the area, including private sector investment.

- Approximately 80% of staff were recruited from the north of England, with the remaining 20% being relocated from London. It notes that many of the 80% of staff recruited from the north of England are from Darlington's travel-to-work area, rather than directly living in the town.

- It observes that the economic benefits of attracting the DEC are most obviously seen in the demand for office space in Darlington town centre, which has increased since the campus was established. In this regard it was noted that Deloitte announced that they could open a small office with circa 200 jobs in order to access the DEC.

**GCHQ Cheltenham and the Golden Valley**

4.9 The above case studies have highlighted, with reference to the Met Office relocation, the potential to generate considerable spin-off investment and growth.

4.10 The development of a new GCHQ in Cheltenham – which opened in 2003[34] – provides another useful case study in this regard, noting the direct alignment in terms of the nature of employment opportunities created.

4.11 Where the analysis in the previous section highlighted the existing concentration of cyber security and defence activities within the south, this includes GCHQ which is accepted as having helped to establish Cheltenham as a '*global hot spot for cyber and digital business*' with '*the largest concentration of businesses in this sector in the UK outside London*'. This cluster is some eleven times larger than the national average[35] and made up of over 200 organisations[36].

[34] https://www.gchq.gov.uk/section/locations/cheltenham

[35] https://movingtocheltenham.com/

[36] Golden Valley Development Supplementary Planning Document: a Garden Community Development and home of Cyber Central UK, July 2020, p8

4.12 GHCQ was acknowledged by the former GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership – now subsumed into Gloucestershire County Council – as having '*created a large pool of skills and talent with benefits that spill over into finance, computing and management consultancy micro-businesses in high-growth sectors*'[37]. Its presence alone has been seen to create:

*"…opportunities for people and ideas spinning out of GCHQ into local businesses and start-ups. These businesses are at the forefront of high-tech research and development into opportunities such as artificial intelligence and big data, which promise to revolutionise the economy"*[38].

4.13 The Cheltenham Local Plan was adopted in 2020 and the Economy Background Paper identified the beneficial impact and potential arising as a result of the GCHQ facility, stating:

*"There is a large concentration of employment in Defence and the strongest employment growth has occurred in this sector. There is likely to be a continuing demand for subcontracting and supplier arrangements focussing in and around Cheltenham over the next 5 – 7 years. In this regard, GCHQ runs a small business innovation programme, which is a mechanism for procuring innovative new solutions from technology and innovation-based Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and there is considerable growth sector potential for the cyber security industry"*[39].

4.14 It was identified through the plan-making process that *'the challenge will be to use the planning system to help nurture and support this potential'*[40]. To this end, the Local Plan included a specific policy seeking to positively promote the location of appropriate businesses within Cheltenham, taking advantage of immediate opportunities related to GCHQ and its supply chain, but also to provide suitable sites and premises for new and expanding suppliers or new and existing SMEs in this cluster.

4.15 In July 2020, Cheltenham Borough Council and its partners adopted a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Cyber Central Garden Community – also known as the "Golden Valley" – which sought to capture the next phase of related growth and investment. This described Cyber Central UK as:

*"…a campus that integrates high-tech workplaces with academic facilities, accommodation and leisure, attracting and developing the best talent. These cutting edge facilities will be set within a new garden community with homes of all tenures and types, contributing significantly to local housing needs"*[41].

4.16 The Golden Valley was allocated for employment, housing and wider mixed-use development under Policy A7 of the adopted Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury

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[37] GFirst LEP (2019) Draft Local Industrial Strategy, p24

[38] *Ibid*, p43

[39] Cheltenham Borough Council (January 2018) Economy Background Paper: The Cheltenham Plan 2011 – 2031, paragraph 1.18

[40] *Ibid*

[41] Golden Valley Development Supplementary Planning Document: a Garden Community Development and home of Cyber Central UK (July 2020)

Joint Core Strategy. Provision was made for 1,100 new homes and 45ha of employment land, reflecting the underpinning evidence produced by the Councils which recognised the land requirements of GCHQ.

**Figure 4.2: Golden Valley / Cyber Central Allocation**


*Source: Golden Valley Development SPD*

4.17 The Councils' Employment Land Assessment, updated to support the Core Strategy through the examination, noted that:

*"GCHQ has written to the Inspector…setting out its objectives for future growth. The letter states that the availability of suitable land which is well located in relation to the existing site is necessary for its own future operations and the expansion of its supply chain"*[42]

4.18 It also proceeded to confirm that:

*"Although the quantum of land needed for the supply chain is not known, GCHQ has identified a requirement for additional land to meet its future operational requirements. It has expressed its support for the early release of the safeguarded site to the west of Cheltenham. This area has the capacity to accommodate the level of growth required by GCHQ together with a business park oriented to serve the cyber security sector and thereby enable Cheltenham to compete with other areas on the M5 corridor that are actively seeking to attract GCHQ supply chain businesses. This is a*

[42] NLP (2015) Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury JCS: Employment Land Assessment Update, paragraph 2.23

*critically important sector and provision should be made to accommodate its increasing needs"*[43].

4.19 Cheltenham Borough Council subsequently commissioned an impact study of Cyber Central which was published in 2020[44]. This included an estimate of the potential impacts of development, replicated at Figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3: Cyber Central potential development impacts**


*Source: Hatch Regeneris*

4.20 It is evident from the above that providing a significant amount of new commercial floorspace (185,000 sqm of B1a) could generate some 11,700 new jobs, bringing with them substantial economic value. The study identifies by way of context that the NCSC, a part of GCHQ, was estimated at the time to have in the order of over 6,000 employees on site. This suggests that the realisation of the planned growth of the additional development area would have a pronounced impact on the cumulative scale of employment, with the study identifying strong growth potential within the cyber sector to support the provision of new floorspace.

4.21 In October 2023 Henry Boot Development submitted an outline planning application on the southern parcel of the wider Golden Valley site, which is due for determination in 2025[45]. This seeks permission for 125,000 sqm of non-residential space for a variety of commercial uses as well as 576 new homes and publicly accessible open space. The illustrative masterplan is shown at Figure 4.4 overleaf.

[43] *Ibid*, paragraph 2.24

[44] Hatch Regeneris (May 2020) Gloucestershire Cyber and Digital Sector Impact Study

[45] Planning application reference 23/01875)/OUT

**Figure 4.4: Golden Valley Illustrative Masterplan (Outline Planning Application)**


*Source: https://www.goldenvalleyuk.com/2025consultation*

4.22 A reserved matters application has also been subject to consultation this year, including detailed design proposals for an innovation centre along with a mobility hub and supporting infrastructure. The innovation centre is proposed to provide around 15,000 sqm of commercial office space and event spaces.

4.23 It is clear from the experience in Cheltenham that the provision of a facility such as the NCF has the potential to attract a significant quantum of complementary employment activity and business growth. These businesses will require accommodation and facilities reasonably close to the new development.

## Other global case studies

**Maryland Virginia, USA**

4.24 Maryland is the primary location of the US National Security Agency. It is also home to a number of other related assets including the Annapolis' Cyber Innovation Center and the Baltimore Cyber Range, the latter of which is a state-of-the-art training facility.

4.25 Virginia is home to over 650 cyber security companies, the highest per capita in the United States, with an estimated 67,850 people working in cyber security alone and many of Virginia's universities at the forefront of cyber security research and development[46]. It is noted in this regard that Virginia – which has a similar population to the North West of England – has a cyber security workforce approximately five times larger, highlighting the scale of opportunity to replicate the impact of the sector in a local economy.

4.26 Within this context it is noted that an ambitious urban redevelopment project within Port Covington originally branded itself as CyberTown USA, with the focus on attracting significant investment from industry in the sector. It has rebranded more recently as Baltimore Peninsula with development of the 235-acre part of the town commencing in 2019 and attracting significant private sector investment and a clustering of businesses. The masterplan proposes provision for[47]:

- Under Armour's 50-acre, 3.9 million sqft global headquarters;
- Additional 1,500,000sqft of office space;
- 500,000sqft of 'maker' and industrial / light manufacturing space;
- 1,500,000sqft of destination, attraction, entertainment and speciality retail; and
- More than 7,500 residential units.

**Be-er Sheva, Israel**

4.27 Be'er Sheva is located in Israel's desert region and is an expanding cyber hub which has established itself as the country's newest cyber capital and successfully becoming a magnet for related investment.

4.28 Its growth has been driven by the relocation of Government assets making it home to a unique ecosystem which includes Ben Gurion University, the Cyberspark Innovation Arena, Cyber Security Research Center and Government agencies such as the National Cyber Directorate.

4.29 The city has attracted a range of large multinationals and start-ups, such as Oracle, Deutsche Telekom, Paypal and Lockheed Martin.

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[46] Perspective Economics (2023) The North West Cyber Corridor Innovation Impact Study: Evidence Base, p58

[47] https://www.southbmore.com/2018/10/18/port-covington-touted-as-cyber-town-usa-as-three-startup-building-companies-announced-for-chapter-1/

4.30 The agglomeration of investment is reflected in Margalit Startup City Be-Er Sheva which promotes itself as pioneering the next wave of cyber security and big data companies progressing from the original Cyber Center[48].

**Summary**

4.31 This section has presented information drawing from a range of case studies. It has initially considered two case studies identified by Plexal as representing comparable large-scale public-sector relocations. In reviewing these they show:

- the potential to generate indirect and induced employment opportunities in terms of supply chains but also more widely in attracting business investment which is keen to co-locate to benefit from proximity to public sector investment;
- that opportunities will be created for local recruitment; and
- that there are impacts on local labour-force demand with reasonable proportions of workers understand to live in reasonable proximity, albeit that a proportion of 'new' labour will travel from further afield but within a travel to work geography based on reasonable travel times.

4.32 The experience at Cheltenham and specifically the Golden Valley development which is in close proximity to GCHQ affirms the scale of opportunity perceived to capitalise on attracting business interest from within the Cyber sector and other sectors, drawn by the location of the Government's investment. The scale of the development is noted where it has the capacity to accommodate over 11,000 additional jobs along with new residential development, with commercial space primarily focussed on quality office provision within a campus location.

4.33 Two other global case studies are used to illustrate the potential scale of impact that the growing cyber sector can have on local economies where there is a combination of public, private and academic institutions.

[48] https://margalitsc.com/cyber-in-beer-sheva/

# 5. Estimating the Potential Economic Impact

5.1 It is apparent from the previous sections that Governments have long had significant expectations regarding the economic benefits that could be stimulated by the decision to locate the NCF in Lancashire.

5.2 This section draws on available information, including the aforementioned work by Plexal, to establish reasonable estimates of the potential scale and nature of benefits for the local and wider economy. With this report informing representations to the Central Lancashire Local Plan, particular consideration is given to impacts generated at this scale, albeit whilst recognising that the investment is of a national scale and will therefore have benefits which extend beyond this geography.

### Plexal predictions of direct and indirect employment generation

5.3 The Plexal research included predictions as to the level of employment that could be expected to be accommodated both directly within the NCF and indirectly because of multiplier effects in the wider economy.

5.4 The outputs of this research are set out in Table 5.1 and are directly referenced within the Lancashire Growth Plan[49].

**Table 5.1: Plexal predictions of employment impacts of the NCF**

| Direct Jobs | Indirect Jobs | **Total** |
|---|---|---|
| 2,000 | 1,120 | **3,120** |

*Source: Plexal*

5.5 The direct jobs referenced above are understood as being made up of personnel from:

- GCHQ
- Ministry of Defence
- Secret Intelligence Service
- Defence Science and Technology Laboratory.

5.6 In calculating the number of jobs that could be indirectly generated, it is understood that Plexal have drawn upon published Government reports which have indicated that NCSC in Cheltenham – introduced in section 3 – has triggered a 1.5 – 2.5 multiplier as a result of stimulating start-ups and other business investment. It is also understood that consideration has been given to data from the Office for National Statistics which suggests that public sector investment in related sectors generates multiplier effects of

[49] Lancashire Combined County Authority (February 2025) The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025 – 2035, consultation version, p19

between 1.43 and 1.87. These multipliers align with the derived calculation of 1,120 indirect jobs from the 2,000 direct NCF on-site jobs.

5.7 The addition of these jobs, as shown in Table 5.1 overleaf, suggests that the composite effect would be the generation of over 3,100 jobs as a result of the NCF. The Growth Plan also references that the NCF investment is expected to represent a GVA contribution of £112.6 million.

5.8 It is noted that these indicative figures are slightly lower than the Councils' own initial assessment, with the consultation on Preferred Options for their new Local Plan suggesting in December 2022 that the NCF *'is likely to provide around 5,000 jobs during the plan period'*[50].

### Forecasts of wider growth in cyber jobs across Lancashire and the North West

5.9 The Innovation Impact Study, introduced in section 4, includes a consideration of the potential growth potential associated with cyber security and its associated ecosystem.

5.10 With reference to the Cyber Corridor initiative, this estimates the potential to support over 30,000 FTE jobs by 2034, generating £2.7 billion per annum in direct GVA. As shown in the following table, extracted from the report, this represents an additional 18,000 jobs from a 2022 base position. This provides an important framing context for the Plexal estimate of the additional jobs associated with the NCF specifically, where it is stated that the Innovation Impact Study takes account of the NCF investment within its estimates.

**Table 5.2: Estimated Employment Impacts of Cyber Security and Ecosystem in the North West**

| | Current (2022) | Target (2035) |
|---|---|---|
| Employment | 12,000 FTEs in the wider cyber ecosystem<br>(i.e. 5,000 in cyber security and 7,000 in broader economy) | 30,000 FTEs<br>(13,000 in cyber sector and 17,000 in broader economy) |

*Source: North West Cyber Corridor Innovation Impact Study*

5.11 These estimates of future growth are based on the application of the following annual growth rates:

- **Cyber security sector** – circa 10% per annum until 2030[51] and 5% per annum thereafter (until 2035)

[50] Preston City Council, Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council (December 2022) Central Lancashire Local Plan: preferred Options – Part One Consultation, p32

[51] It is noted that this rate of growth has been seen typically since 2017 when the Cyber Security Sectoral Analysis was first published.

- **Cyber security professionals in wider sectors in the region** – mid-growth estimate of 7% per annum to 2035. It specifically notes that much of wider growth within the wider security ecosystem in the North West is expected to be generated through investments made by NCF in Samlesbury, and GCHQ in Manchester.

5.12 The study is clear to document that achieving this level of growth in the sector *'will require significant investment in skills and workforce planning to ensure that the region develops greater volumes of talent, and attracts people to the North West'*[52].

5.13 Importantly, it also highlights the role of 'crowding-in', where public investments in cyber security may further attract inward investment. It notes that access to external investment and growth should be supported by initiatives such as Cyber Runway, DiSH, and NCSC for Start-Ups but encourages further support to businesses engaging with R&D and innovation projects in the sector.

### The growing defence sector

5.14 As set out in section 3 the Government has committed to an increase in defence spending and procurement approaches which would see an increase in on-shoring of spending. Where further information will be available through the Spending Review scheduled for June 2025 it is already the case that significant additional investment and spending has been committed to Lancashire in Barrow and that the increase in monies available would be expected to have a positive impact on other defence-based industries, including BAE, which are a key part of Central Lancashire's economy.

5.15 An increase in investment and contracts would be expected to create further employment opportunities, directly but also within the wider supply-chain. Such growth would be expected to have implications for the demand for commercial floorspace, specifically recognising the distinct requirements of the sector. This is considered further in the final part of this section.

### Stimulating potential additional commercial floorspace requirements

5.16 Where the above both anticipate the generation of spin-off business investment in sectors related to the NCF, there is an implicit expectation that this in turn will generate additional requirements for commercial floorspace.

5.17 The consideration of case studies, and the research undertaken by Plexal, both emphasise the value and precedent of agglomeration within the sector. This infers that businesses see a benefit in co-locating. As referenced earlier in this report this has already been recognised in the funding support provided to deliver the Innovation Hub at Samlesbury EZ in parallel with the NCF. Where this provides a modest amount of floorspace the scale of growth and investment suggested above would indicate a more pronounced requirement for commercial floorspace, catering for a range of potential occupiers.

[52] The North West Cyber Corridor: Innovation Impact Study (2023), Perspective Economics, page 63

5.18 JLL were commissioned by Story Homes to undertake a commercial floorspace impact study, with their report included in full at **Appendix 1**. In recognising the NCF as a nationally significant development the study specifically explored how proximity to such a strategic facility would be likely to generate strong demand from businesses and occupiers seeking to benefit from agglomeration economies. The study arrives at several key conclusions, including identification that:

- The development is uniquely positioned to benefit from agglomeration economies in the cyber security and defence sectors, given the proximity to the NCF and the established Samlesbury EZ.
- Growth in these sectors, combined with the site's geographical advantages, could see Cuerdale Garden Village evolve into a hub of innovation and high-skilled employment.'
- In providing a range of modern, high-quality commercial spaces, Cuerdale Garden Village could attract businesses and talent, potentially accelerating the growth of cyber security and defence sectors in the region. This in turn would be expected to promote further innovation, economic growth, and employment in the local economy.

5.19 JLL cite a number of case studies, including the Birchwood Park Nuclear Cluster (Warrington), Manchester Airport and Moderna – the Innovation and Technology Centre (MITC) in Oxfordshire, as demonstrating the power of industrial clustering and agglomeration economies.

### Summary

5.20 The above analysis presents the outputs of work undertaken by Plexal for LCC which suggests that the NCF will accommodate in the order of 2,000 direct jobs but will potentially generate a further 1,120 indirect jobs. This would suggest a total of 3,120 additional jobs within Central Lancashire being generated by the NCF.

5.21 Where this is based on assumptions around achieving indirect multipliers as other comparable developments, with reference specifically to Cheltenham / GCHQ it is understood, it is recognised that there is a potential to support further growth through the potential to plan for additional commercial floorspace in proximity to the NCF and Samlesbury EZ. This recognises wider forecasting of the potential scale of additional economic and employment growth in the cyber sector and more widely in the context of the Government's commitment to increased local spending in the defence sector.

5.22 JLL have considered the potential for such wider commercial market interest drawing on their experience of other clustering of commercial floorspace and in recognising the potential needs which could arise from the investment at the NCF and more widely in providing supporting housing development to accommodate additional labour.

# 6. Other Potential Benefits and Impacts

6.1 The preceding section outlines the substantial benefits that the NCF investment is expected to generate in reinforcing the local economy and specifically in creating new jobs both directly and through the likely attraction of supply chain businesses and the creation of indirect employment opportunities. As a number of the case studies in section 4 articulate, as indeed do the policy ambitions considered in section 3, the benefits and impacts associated with investment in the NCF will extend beyond the creation of employment and commercial floorspace needs.

6.2 The implied growth in the size of the local workforce will have implications for the local housing market, for example. This section considers from a high-level perspective the nature of such impacts, highlighting again the importance of fully understanding and planning for these impacts if the related benefits are to be realised locally and in a sustainable way.

### Accommodating a new workforce

6.3 The emerging Lancashire Growth Plan is clear to identify the important role of housing in facilitating and enabling its vision to deliver economic growth, alongside other forms of infrastructure. It establishes an expectation that LCCA will help to design and drive economic and housing growth plans in synergy with local planning authorities to this end.

6.4 With direct relevance to the NCF the Plan is explicit in highlighting that to support the employment hubs, focused amongst other things on defence and cyber, *'will require local housing markets to respond with an improved housing offer that is sufficiently diverse to attract high-skilled workers and break down the skills and transport barriers that prevent social mobility and inclusive growth'*[53].

6.5 In this regard it recognises the need to support *'housing growth locations, in conjunction with robust Local Plans'*[54].

6.6 The previous section outlined an expectation that the NCF will accommodate circa 2,000 jobs directly, with a further 1,120 jobs conservatively estimated as being created indirectly.

6.7 The case studies identified by Plexal in their work for LCC, referenced in section 4 of this report, included consideration of the drive-times seen amongst staff at other public sector facilities that have relocated. While there will inevitably be differences in the profile of employees between such facilities and the NCF, Plexal are believed to have used this analysis to conclude that it would be reasonable to assume that under 50% of Government employees (i.e. a component of the 2,000 direct jobs) would be likely to choose or need a home within the immediate area, assumed here to be

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[53] Lancashire Combined County Authority (February 2025) The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025 – 2035. Consultation Version, p32

[54] *Ibid*

Central Lancashire[55]. The remainder of staff would be likely to live elsewhere in Lancashire and potentially into Greater Manchester and Merseyside. This would suggest that fewer than half of the 2,000 directly created jobs would be filled by people needing homes nearby.

6.8 It is, however, also reasonable to expect a proportion of those taking up indirect jobs to live within the immediate area. Where this proportion could be lower, with the work by Plexal implying that the majority of such jobs would be located elsewhere in the region, even if, on a cautious basis, 40% was assumed this would equate to circa 500 of the jobs filled by people living in the immediate area. This would suggest **a total of 1,500 additional jobs filled by people needing a home in the immediate area**.

6.9 In considering the above it is acknowledged that:

- Some of the jobs filled may be taken by individuals already residing in close proximity and not needing a new home. However, the fact that a proportion of the jobs directly created are understood to involve relocations of roles would strongly suggest that a reasonable proportion would be new residents to the area;
- A range of jobs will be likely to be accommodated within the NCF, given the profile of the cyber sector as discussed in section 3. It is reasonable to assume, based on the profile of employment in this sector, that this will include relatively well-paid jobs affirming the importance of offering housing that matches aspirations as identified in the emerging Lancashire Growth Plan; and
- If supporting infrastructure is provided, as noted in section 5, there is a reasonable chance that more jobs will be created as a result of enabling agglomeration benefits and recognising the wider opportunities presented by a growing defence sector within the local economy, including at Samlesbury EZ. This in turn would be expected to create additional needs within the local housing market.

6.10 Drawing on the above it is firstly clear that the accommodation of the NCF and the scale of the investment and wider economic benefits will have an impact on the local housing market. It is therefore important, as per the emerging Lancashire Growth Plan, that this need is assessed in seeking to understand the wider need for housing in the host area and here the Central Lancashire Local Plan. A failure to do so will run the risk of creating issues in the local housing market and potentially undermining investment by constraining the ability to attract and retain the labour required to sustainably support growth.

6.11 It is also apparent that whilst there is a degree of uncertainty around the scale of the additional housing need which will arise, a set of reasonable assumptions can be made to inform an evidential assessment of housing need. Separate consideration is given later in this section to an exercise undertaken by Stantec to consider this issue, on

[55] It is noted that as of April 2025 the job advert for software developers to work at the Samlesbury facility confirmed that the job would be full-time office-based role, due to the sensitivity of the nature of the work involved and that applicants would need to live within a commutable distance.

behalf of a consortium of housebuilders making representations during the current consultation.

### Evidencing a higher need for housing in Central Lancashire

6.12 Story Homes, as part of a consortium of housebuilders, commissioned Stantec to prepare an assessment of housing need across Central Lancashire to inform representations to the Draft Local Plan[56].

6.13 This considered a range of different potential drivers of housing need and concluded that over the plan period there was a need to provide for at least 1,643 homes per annum, or 29,574 homes in total (2023 – 2041). This represented a higher level of housing provision than the Councils' independent evidence concluded and that was currently proposed as a housing requirement.

6.14 In arriving at this conclusion Stantec identified that a higher level of housing would be needed, than was concluded in the Councils' evidence base, to support forecast employment growth. This recognised the strong economic growth potential of the plan area, with a baseline growth of in the order of 26,550 additional jobs identified as reasonable. This again represented a higher level of job growth than the Councils' evidence had identified.

6.15 Stantec were clear to observe that even this higher level of job growth took no account of the positive additional benefits of major planned projects or investment, including but not limited to the NCF where the report also highlighted the anticipated growth of the University of Central Lancashire over the plan period and the jobs this would be expected to create.

6.16 Specific consideration was given in the study as to the potential for the additional jobs associated with the NCF, and detailed above, to create an elevated level of need for housing within Central Lancashire. The report concluded, based on the indicative assumption stated above that of the 3,000 + additional direct and indirect jobs associated with the NCF in the order of 1,500 of these would be filled by people needing a home in Central Lancashire, **that approximately 1,500 additional homes would be needed above that needed to support the baseline economic forecast**.

6.17 The study observes that these additional homes are not currently provided for within the draft Loal Plan nor the Councils' informing evidence base. It estimates that accommodating a reasonable level of economic growth and the additional investment represented by the NCF would require the Plan to provide for in the order of 27,555 homes, or 1,531 homes per annum over the plan period (2023 – 2041).

6.18 A failure to provide for these homes would present a risk for the recruitment of staff to the NCF and the encouragement of less sustainable transport patterns where there would be an elevated level of workers living outside of Central Lancashire and having to commute in to access their work.

[56] Stantec (2025) Central Lancashire Housing Need

6.19 The study, alongside identifying the additional need arising from supporting economic growth over the plan period, identifies a significant and elevated need for affordable housing and a specific need to accommodate specialist housing for older people. These are recognised as representing separate and complementary drivers of housing need which will place pressures on the local housing market.

**Summary**

6.20 This section has highlighted that along with the creation of additional employment opportunities and growth within the local economy the investment in the NCF will create additional needs for infrastructure, including importantly the provision of housing to accommodate a growing labour-force.

6.21 The profile of employment opportunities in the NCF can be expected to have an impact on the local housing market, creating additional demand for a range of types and tenures within Central Lancashire. This has been specifically identified in work commissioned by Story Homes, along with a consortium of housebuilders, that has concluded that the generation of additional employment opportunities associated with the NCF investment would generate a higher level of housing need than the Councils' evidence has considered. A failure to provide for these homes would present a risk for the recruitment of staff to the NCF and the encouragement of less sustainable transport patterns where there would be an elevated level of workers living outside of Central Lancashire and having to commute in to access their work.

# 7. Cuerdale Garden Village

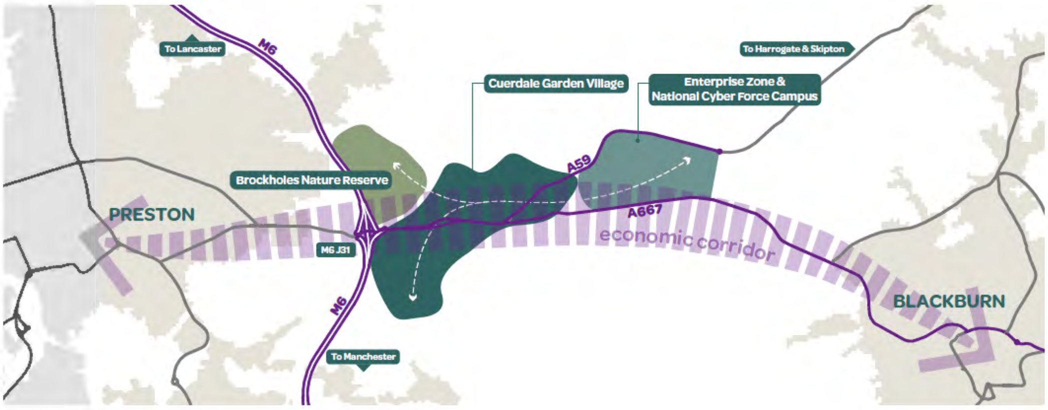
7.1 The preceding sections have affirmed the Government's expectations regarding the growth potential of the defence and cyber security sectors, and highlighted the critical role of the NCF in enabling its ambitions both in growing the sectors but also in ensuring that the benefits extend beyond London and the South. It has also affirmed that substantial benefits could be generated within Lancashire and Central Lancashire, albeit recognising that to capture these in full will require supportive investment in infrastructure including commercial floorspace to accommodate new businesses and new homes to house a growing labour force.

7.2 This section considers the unique role that Cuerdale Garden Village can play in responding to arising needs and providing the infrastructure and space to optimise the value generated by the NCF investment.

### Location: Supporting agglomeration effects

7.3 Cuerdale Garden Village is located within the A59 Growth Corridor, itself forming part of the Lancashire Arc of Prosperity which extends up to Lancaster, as referenced earlier in this report. This Corridor includes Samlesbury EZ, which as referenced throughout this report accommodates the NCF. The geographic proximity and connections are shown in Figure 7.1.

**Figure 7.1: A59 Growth Corridor**




*Source: Cuerdale Garden Village Development Framework Document*

### Potential profile of development

7.4 Cuerdale Garden Village is comprised of several parcels of development land which, in combination, can delivery a holistically planned, sustainable new settlement.

7.5 An outline planning application for the development of an initial phase was submitted in May 2022 and is currently being determined by South Ribble Borough Council[57]. This proposes up to 1,300 homes and up to 164,000 sqm of employment floorspace along with supporting social infrastructure and amenities. Further land to the north of the

[57] Planning application reference 07/2022/00451/OUT

A59 forms the balance of land promoted by Story Homes to create the Garden Village, with this land having the ability to deliver a further 1,000 homes (2,300 in total) and a further 88,800 sqm of commercial floorspace (252,800 sqm in total), along with additional supporting infrastructure. It is of note that further land, representing an eastern extension, is also being promoted by Logic Developments which would add additional commercial floorspace, with the potential to accommodate a further 175,000 sqm of B2/B8 and office floorspace.

7.6 In total Cuerdale Garden Village could therefore have the capacity to deliver 2,300 high quality homes of varied type and size and 429,500 sqm of varied employment space.

7.7 It therefore provides a strong potential supply of both homes and commercial floorspace to support the investment and additional associated needs which can be expected to arise from the NCF based on the analysis in this report, along with local demand from the local economy more widely.

### Complementary phasing of development

7.8 Within the Development Framework consideration has been given to the indicative phasing of the development within the broad phasing implied above, with regards the initial application and subsequent phases. This is illustrated at Figure 7.1 below. Phases are indicatively presented in numeric order. This shows early phased delivery of employment floorspace along the strategic road corridor, including space in closest proximity to Samlesbury EZ, as well as the M65 junction. This space would provide early accommodation for spin-off and supply chain business needs generated as the NCF grows and expands, which would be complementary to the more limited provision that can be accommodated on residual parcels of the EZ.

**Figure 7.2: Indicative Phasing Strategy Plan**


*Source: Cuerdale Garden Village Development Framework Document (2025)*

7.9 The phasing plan also suggests the potential to see the early parallel delivery of new residential communities which will be sustainably connected to the new employment areas and the EZ.

### Complementary new commercial floorspace

7.10 The JLL market report (**Appendix 1**) identifies that the Garden Village has an important role to play in supporting the growing cyber-sector and defence eco-system where it can provide a wide portfolio of commercial spaces, offering choices for businesses at different stages in their evolution.

7.11 It identifies that most jobs relating to cyber security are office-based but that that the real estate needs of companies in these and other related sectors including defence are varied and include office space, R&D facilities, good manufacturing practice (GMP) compliant manufacturing units, specific storage facilities and distribution centres.

7.12 JLL estimate that a growing cyber security sector will generate significant additional demand for office floorspace, estimating that across Lancashire the sector could generate 270,000 sqm of floorspace across the North West and circa 43,000 sqm in Lancashire alone. It asserts that these forecasts should be seen as conservative projections of the minimum future office requirement.

7.13 Where the above relate primarily to the impact of additional needs generated by the attraction of businesses related to the NCF investment it is important to recognise that a large component of the demand for commercial floorspace will reflect more general local or sub-regional demand, recognising the strategic connectivity of the site to the motorway network and proximate existing urban centres.

### A quality of place to attract and retain a new workforce

7.14 The previous section highlighted evidence that identifies that the additional employment opportunities generated by the NCF will have implications for an increased need for housing within the locality.

7.15 The proximity of the Garden Village to the NCF and other employment opportunities – within Samlesbury EZ and in the Garden Village itself – offers a unique opportunity to provide housing to attract and retain workers in close proximity. It will provide an attractive residential environment offering which will be of considerable value in helping to attract workers to locate to the area and reducing the need to travel.

7.16 Where a range of types and tenures of homes will be provided it is important to recognise that this will enable it to respond to the additional needs generated by workers retained or attracted to live within the area. In line with the study referenced in section 6, this will include affordable housing, where this suggests there will be a significant need for this tenure of housing alongside market housing. It will also allow for the accommodation of housing which can meet the needs of older cohorts, which the study similarly identifies that there will be a significant and growing need.

# 8. Conclusion

8.1 This report has been commissioned by Story Homes to support representations to the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan, concerning its proposals for Cuerdale Garden Village.

8.2 Cuerdale Garden Village is proposed to be located within the A59 Growth Corridor, adjacent to Junction 31 of the M6 and near the Samlesbury EZ. The Development Framework identifies the potential to deliver a broad range of high-quality employment space (up to 492,5000 sqm), co-located with residential development (up to 2,300 homes) in a liveable environment, supported by accessible infrastructure.

8.3 The NCF headquarters is currently progressing on Samlesbury EZ and is anticipated to be gradually occupied from 2025. It is expected that the facility will accommodate personnel from GCHQ, the MOD the Secret Intelligence Service and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory.

8.4 Recognising the scale of the investment in the NCF and the potential for Cuerdale Garden Village to accommodate additional floorspace requirements and future workers to retain associated benefits within Central Lancashire, this report explores the scale of potential complementary investment and arising needs. It draws upon work undertaken by Plexal in 2024 on behalf of Lancashire County Council (LCC) which has specifically sought to understand in detail how this nationally significant investment can create wider opportunities for the county. It also references other published materials which have sought to consider the importance of the defence and cyber security sectors, with a specific focus on the North West.

### Economic expectations of the NCF

8.5 The Government’s Green Paper Industrial Strategy, *Invest 2035*, identifies the ‘defence’ sector, along with ‘digital and technologies’ as two of its eight defined growth-driving sectors. Its commitment to the sector has been enhanced by the recently stated commitment to see defence spending in the UK increase to 2.5% of GVP by 2027, with a view to further increasing it to 3.0% within the next parliament. It has also highlighted its intention to grow onshore production capability and support UK based businesses, including start-ups and SMEs. It recognises that this will require a strengthening of critical supply chains within the UK defence industry.

8.6 Aside from the South East and South West, the North West represents the largest concentration of defence expenditure and is home to a significant number of businesses and their employees in the sector.

8.7 The cyber security sector represents a significant and growing component of the overall defence sector and the North West also has a significant presence of businesses, institutions and partnerships in this sub-sector.

8.8 The Government has, in this context articulated the role it sees its investment in the NCF as supporting these sectors to grow, stating that:

*"Within the next few years NCF will establish its centre of gravity in the north west of England. It will contribute to driving growth in the technology, digital and defence sectors, and encourage the creation of partnerships between government, industry and universities in the region. This growth will allow us to enhance and broaden our collective skillset, deepening existing partnerships and forging new ones, strengthening the UK's cyber ecosystem"*[58].

8.9 Similarly, the LCCA has recently consulted on a draft of a Growth Plan which confirms its view that '*the location of the National Cyber Force provides opportunity to harness new corporates, SMEs and talent into the region'*[59]. Indeed, in supporting this ambition it has already given it agreement to fund a £13.2 million innovation hub within the EZ, to complement the existing Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre North West already located on the site. This new facility is understood to have the capacity to deliver 27,000sqft of floorspace to provide '*multi-functional business premises*'[60].

### Case study precedents

8.10 The report has considered a range of case studies, recognising the unique nature of the investment in the NCF, to assist in framing an understanding of potential impacts and benefits. This initially included two case studies identified by Plexal in the work they have undertaken for LCC as representing comparable large-scale public-sector relocations. In reviewing these they show:

- the potential to generate indirect and induced employment opportunities in terms of supply chains but also more widely in attracting business investment which is keen to co-locate to benefit from proximity to public sector investment;
- that opportunities will be created for local recruitment; and
- that there are impacts on local labour-force demand with reasonable proportions of workers understand to live in reasonable proximity, albeit that a proportion of 'new' labour will travel from further afield but within a travel to work geography based on reasonable travel times.

8.11 The experience at Cheltenham and specifically the Golden Valley development which is near the GCHQ affirms the scale of opportunity perceived to capitalise on attracting business interest from within the Cyber sector and other sectors, drawn by the location of the Government's investment. The scale of the development is noted where it has the capacity to accommodate over 11,000 additional jobs along with new residential development, with commercial space primarily focussed on quality office provision within a campus location.

8.12 Two other global case studies, Maryland Viginia USA and Be-er Sheva in Israel, illustrate the potential scale of impact that the growing cyber sector can have on local

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58 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61b9f526d3bf7f05522e302e/Force_Explainer_20211213_FINAL__1_.pdf

59 Lancashire Combined County Authority (February 2025) The Lancashire Growth Plan 2025 – 2035, consultation version, p36

60 https://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/24878197.new-13m-innovation-hub-agreed-open-samlesbury/

economies where there is a combination of public, private and academic institutions and a clear ambition to capture an agglomeration of benefits.

### Estimating the potential economic impact

8.13 Work undertaken by Plexal on behalf of LCC suggests that the NCF will accommodate in the order of 2,000 direct jobs but will potentially generate a further 1,120 indirect jobs. This would suggest a total of 3,120 additional jobs within Central Lancashire being generated by the NCF.

8.14 Where this is based on assumptions around achieving indirect multipliers as other comparable developments, with reference specifically to Cheltenham / GCHQ it is understood, it is recognised that there is a potential to support further growth through the potential to plan for additional commercial floorspace in proximity to the NCF and Samlesbury EZ. This recognises wider forecasting of the potential scale of additional economic and employment growth in the cyber sector and more widely in the context of the Government's commitment to increased local spending in the defence sector.

8.15 JLL have considered the potential for such wider commercial market interest drawing on their experience of other clustering of commercial floorspace and in recognising the potential needs which could arise from the investment at the NCF and more widely in providing supporting housing development to accommodate additional labour.

### Appreciating other potential benefits

8.16 Through the creation of new jobs and attraction of investment the NCF will stimulate additional needs for infrastructure, including the provision of housing to accommodate a growing labour-force. The profile of employment opportunities generated can be expected to have an impact on the local housing market, creating additional demand for a range of types and tenures within Central Lancashire.

### Cuerdale Garden Village

8.17 The proposed development offers a unique opportunity to capitalise on the investment being made by the NCF and provide complementary commercial floorspace that, as with the examples identified, can provide businesses with the opportunity to co-locate in proximity to the NCF and existing and developing cyber and defence eco-system on Samlesbury EZ. The phasing of delivery will ensure that this space is provided in parallel with the occupation of the NCF, responding to additional needs which are generated, and in alignment with the Government's anticipated investment and growth in the sector within the UK and region. JLL have confirmed that the profile of space will align with potential occupier demands in the sector and considered potential types of occupier needs.

8.18 Similarly, the proximity of the Garden Village to the NCF and other employment opportunities – within Samlesbury EZ and in the Garden Village itself – offers a unique opportunity to provide housing to accommodate additional arising needs by attracting and retaining workers in close proximity. It will provide an attractive residential environment offering which will be of considerable value in helping to attract workers to locate to the area and reducing the need to travel.

# Appendix 1: JLL Research

Report
United Kingdon | April 2025

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# Cuerdale Garden Village

**Commercial floorspace impact study**

# Foreword

JLL have been commissioned by Story Homes to conduct a commercial floorspace impact study for the proposed development of Cuerdale Garden Village in Central Lancashire. This report aims to assess the potential demand for commercial floorspace in the local vicinity, with a particular focus on the influence of the new National Cyber Force (NCF) headquarters located in Samlesbury.

The NCF campus represents a nationally significant development that is expected to act as a catalyst for economic growth in the region. This study explores how proximity to such a strategic facility is likely to generate strong demand from businesses and occupiers seeking to benefit from agglomeration economies.

Our analysis draws upon research into floorspace demand associated with employment across various sectors, with a specific emphasis on the cyber security industry. We have also assessed the impact of 'off-shoot' sectors such as defence (with BAE Systems being located nearby) and the impact of the overall development itself in terms of the need for logistics and warehousing to serve the proposed circa. 1,300 homes in phase one and further 1,000 in phase two. Additionally, we examined relevant case studies that demonstrate the impact of similar nationally significant developments on local demand for commercial floorspace.

By leveraging this data and applying it to the unique context of Cuerdale Garden Village, this report provides an idea of the anticipated commercial floorspace requirements. The findings of this study will highlight the economic potential of Cuerdale Garden Village and its role in supporting the growth of the cyber security sector in Central Lancashire.

# Contents

# Executive summary

The proposed Cuerdale Garden Village development presents a significant opportunity to meet the forecasted growth in commercial floorspace demand in Central Lancashire. Strategically located near the National Cyber Force (NCF) campus and the established Samlesbury Enterprise Zone, the development is uniquely positioned to benefit from agglomeration economies in the cyber security and defence sectors.

The site's proximity to these institutions is key in promoting growth and could attract a diverse range of businesses and occupiers looking to benefit from clustering.

Analysis suggests strong growth potential in the cyber security and defence sectors, driven by increased government investment and rising digital security needs. This growth, combined with the site's geographical advantages, could see Cuerdale Garden Village evolve into a hub of innovation and high-skilled employment.

Further to this, the development itself could generate its own demand for logistics and warehousing to service the residential aspect, creating further jobs for the local economy.

In providing a range of modern, high-quality commercial spaces, Cuerdale Garden Village could attract businesses and talent, potentially accelerating the growth of cyber security and defence sectors in the region.

In conclusion, by capitalising on the already strong sectors in the region and providing space for agglomeration in these high-growth sectors, the Cuerdale Garden Village development would promote further innovation, economic growth, and employment in the local economy, should the development go forward.

# Introduction

The first phase of the proposed Cuerdale Garden Village development represents an opportunity to develop approximately 1,300 homes and circa. 164,000 sq m of commercial floorspace to the south west of Preston, alongside other community amenities and green space.

The second phase of the development, located to the north and running parallel to the A59, proposes a further 1,000 homes and 88,000 sq m of commercial floorspace, bringing the total development to 2,300 homes and 252,000 sq m.

The site is shown in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: Cuerdale Garden Village Masterplan**


The masterplan for phase one indicates that most land is located to the south of the A59 and adjacent to junction 31 of the M6 motorway. A further parcel of land is to the north and located between the A59 to the north and A677 to the south. The site is split into four parcels, providing both residential and commercial floorspace. Parcel A (north), B and C which run alongside the A59 will provide commercial floorspace whilst parcels A (south) and D will be majority residential development.

The Cuerdale Garden Village development presents a significant opportunity to stimulate local economic growth and employment. Story Homes estimates that the project will generate £430 million in GVA during the construction phase and £515 million per annum once operational with a further 5,670 jobs in a range of occupations.

Strategically located next to an established employment zone, which includes the new NCF campus and companies like BAE in the defence sector, Cuerdale Garden Village offers the potential for clustering new businesses around the Enterprise Zone. This proximity to key employers and the opportunity for agglomeration economies makes Cuerdale an attractive location for commercial development.

JLL has been commissioned to assess the impact that Cuerdale Garden Village could have on the need for commercial floorspace in the area to allow this growth to occur. This study will examine how the development can capitalise on its location to foster economic growth, create employment opportunities, and meet the evolving needs of businesses in the region. By analysing market trends, sector-specific demands, and the potential for business clustering, this report aims to provide an understanding of the commercial floorspace requirements of the Cuerdale Garden Village development.

# Innovation geographies and agglomeration economies

The opportunity to attract and drive defence and cybers ecurity employment at Cuerdale is underpinned by shifts in the location considerations behind knowledge economy sectors. Leveraging critical characteristics set out in the excerpt below from the ***JLL Innovation Geography 2024*** report, knowledge industry (KI) employment will be redistributed along new geographies that can best reflect these attributes.

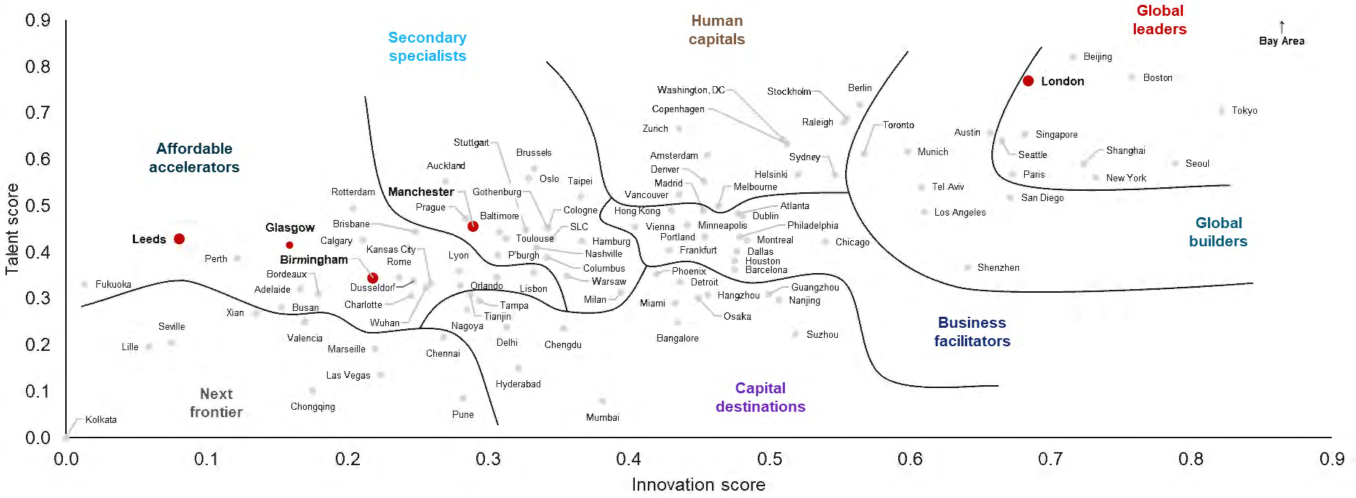
T*he convergence of the technology sector, knowledge-based industries and research institutions is more critical than ever in driving commercial real estate demand and reshaping the built environment.*

- *Migration of innovation and talent to affordable and lifestyle-centric cities continues apace, leading to sustained growth in secondary and tertiary real estate markets.*
- *Real estate occupiers and investors alike are diversifying and optimizing their footprints and portfolios in response to talent availability, maturing markets and greater business and research specialization.*
- *Exposure to AI and other emerging sectors will be critical for occupiers and investors looking to harness this growth as new technologies are deployed, and the digitisation of traditional sectors accelerates.*
- *Geopolitics and onshoring are reshaping the global business landscape at a profound pace and opening up opportunities for new clusters of advanced manufacturing and R&D.*
- *Institutions and companies in highly knowledge-intensive sectors are anchoring sustainability-focused regeneration and bolder public-private partnerships*.

This is a profound opportunity for KI employment occupancy at Cuerdale. As part of the combined Manchester region, there are core strengths in talent, innovation and a relatively younger professional population that can be leveraged to support an induced demand for specialist defence and cyber security locally.

JLL Research classifies Manchester as a Secondary Specialist within the global hierarchy of innovation geographies. Accelerating post-pandemic, talent shortages, rising home prices and regulatory pressures have catalysed digital economy expansion into lower-cost markets, aided by more flexible working patterns and technology.

## Global Innovation Hubs Classification




Source: JLL

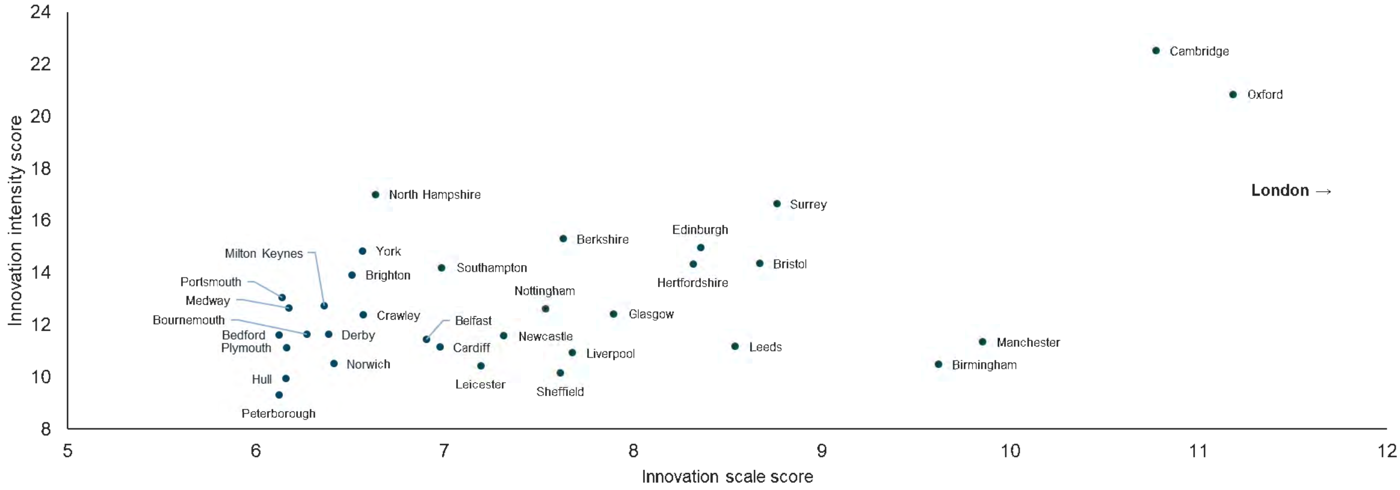
The geography of innovation is further being shaped by external geopolitical forces. Trade policy in the United States is accelerating an already emerging trend for onshoring and domestic production of critical industries. Tied to the specific need in the UK and across Europe to increase defence spending following pressure from the US, this sector will experience outsized growth in investment within the UK.

These shifts are critical for Cuerdale, as the convergence of innovation geography growth factors are poised to benefit from this acute pressure for solutions to this need within the UK. As outlined elsewhere in this report, increased defence spending will accrue at specific and established nodes.

Given the North West already has a significant presence in the UK defence sector, it would prove prudent that the region would benefit from increased spending and the growth set to be delivered. The North West is home to numerous global aerospace and defence companies including BAE systems and Rolls Royce with over 400 companies involved in the supply chain, according to Invest in Lancashire.

Further to this, Manchester ranked fourth in JLL's innovation cities index, see below. This ranking is based on a variety of factors including tech-specific business count, patent applications, and STEM employment. This demonstrates Manchester's capacity to attract innovative businesses and talent, creating fertile ground for knowledge-intensive industries to thrive.

**UK Cities Innovation Score**




Source: JLL

This innovation in Manchester doesn't exist in isolation but forms part of a broader, regional network that extends its benefits throughout the North West. The North West's, and in particular Lancashire's globally significant aerospace and defence industry is primed to benefit from the growing defence sector and there are already complementary characteristics in place with higher education institutions and international businesses.

By leveraging its proximity to both the NCF campus and the Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone, Cuerdale can position itself as an attractive location for businesses seeking to benefit from both the innovative environment of Manchester and the aerospace and defence specialisation of Lancashire

# Agglomeration economies

The concept of agglomeration economies is particularly relevant to Cuerdale Garden Village, given its strategic location near the NCF campus and Samlesbury Enterprise Zone – home to companies such as BAE Systems. This proximity presents a significant opportunity for Cuerdale to leverage the benefits that arise when firms cluster together, potentially driving substantial economic growth in the area.

The advantages of clustering include supply chain efficiencies which can be realized through the creation of a robust network linking NCF, BAE Systems and related businesses with a concentration of cyber security and defence expertise in the area. The presence of NCF and BAE Systems as anchor institutions provides Cuerdale with a unique opportunity to evolve into a hub for cyber security and defence related industries. This could attract complementary businesses seeking to benefit from proximity to these significant establishments. The concentration of expertise could also lead to increased innovation, potentially spawning new startups and technologies in these sectors.

The success of an ecosystem relies on its capacity to provide a wide portfolio of spaces, offering choice for those at different stages in their evolution. Cuerdale can facilitate this with a wide range of commercial floorspace. In addition, the supply chain is critical to achieving success with proximity to suppliers, manufacturers and customers.

Further to this, the potential cluster can benefit from the wide pool of talent in the region. According to the North West Cyber Corridor Innovation Impact Study, the North West has ten Higher Education Institutions that offer cyber security and computer science courses with the number of graduates in the region growing. Cuerdale could enable a growing cluster around the NCF campus with opportunity for the site to attract employment from local, highly skilled workers.

The key fundamentals of a successful cluster are an ecosystem of talent, funding, and commercial real estate. The real estate needs of companies are varied and includes office space, R&D facilities, good manufacturing practice (GMP) compliant manufacturing units, specific storage facilities and distribution centres. Furthermore, the stage of commercialisation that companies reach also dictates the type of space they require.

Unlike many other specialist clusters, Cuerdale is not part of an existing and mature urban environment, although there are examples of more disparate knowledge hubs in the aerospace, defence and advanced manufacturing sectors that underscore the potential for the Garden Village.

### Case Study: Dulles Toll Road Corridor

> *In the United States, the Dulles Toll Road Corridor is a linear suburban artery containing the world's largest collection of data centres as well as key institutions in cyber security and defence, most notably the Pentagon, headquarters of the CIA and multiple FBI and ancillary government departments. This, in turn, drove growth in the defence contracting industry throughout the mid-2000s to the present day, as evidenced by the presence of Leidos, Booz Allen Hamilton, General Dynamics and Northrop Grumman, amongst others.*

This intersection of high-value corporate and employment growth in the intelligence and advanced tech manufacturing worlds, interfacing with major public and quasi-governmental organisations in a peripheral location, also exists in Kanata outside of Ottawa (Nordion, Ericsson), Macquarie Park in Sydney (Optus, Philips) and Saclay to the south of Paris (EDF, CEA).

The commercial floorspace at Cuerdale Garden Village could provide the opportunity to grow and contribute to a significant cluster in the region, offering a range of spaces that can accommodate businesses at various stages of development and across different sectors within the cyber security and defence industries.

# The impact on commercial floorspace demand

## Growth from the NCF

The establishment of the NCF campus in Samlesbury would impact the demand for commercial floorspace in the surrounding area and the Cuerdale Garden Village development presents an opportunity to gain from this. The NCF, and the wider growth of the cyber security sector in the North West, is anticipated to create a substantial number of high-skilled jobs which in turn is likely to drive demand for modern, high-quality commercial space.

Most jobs relating to cyber security are office-based given the nature of working with computers/software and robust IT infrastructure. The presence of the NCF could attract related businesses and services to the local area to be in the vicinity of a national significant establishment.

To understand the potential scale of this demand and its impact on the local property market, we have examined the current office stock in the region and recent trends in the commercial property sector. This context will help frame the opportunities that Cuerdale Garden Village could capitalise on in meeting the growing demand for office space driven by the NCF.

**Baseline office stock**

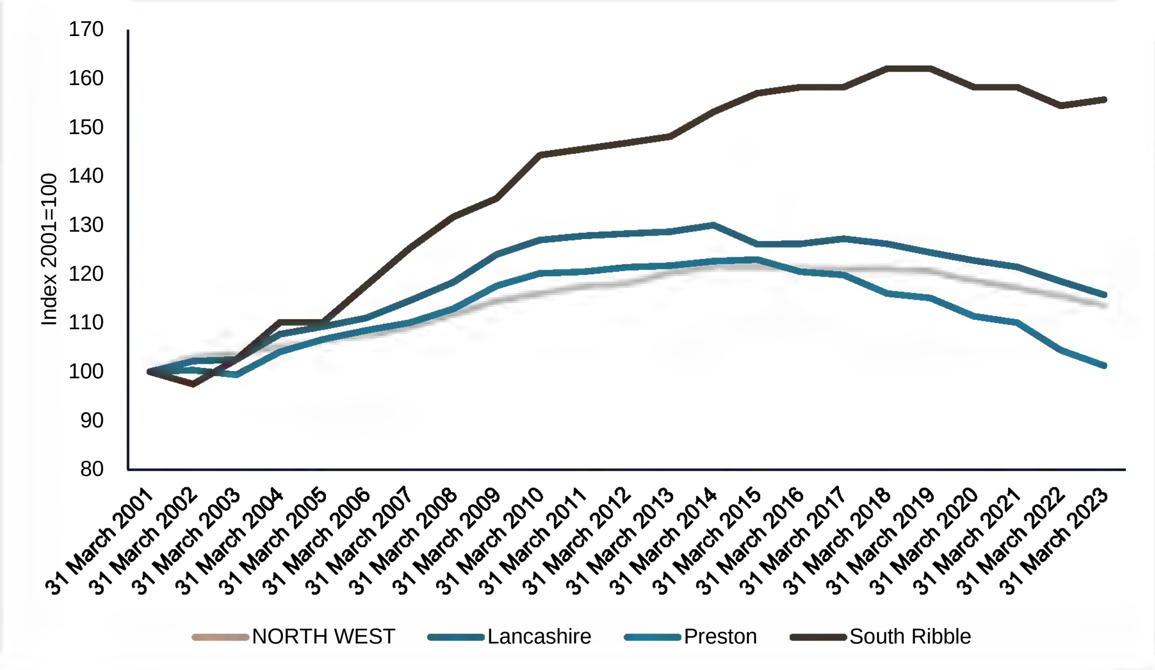
The office stock in Lancashire is estimated to be 1,215,000 sqm (NIA), which accounts for c12% of the office stock in the North West. The Borough's office stock peaked in 2014 at 1,365,000 sqm and has recorded a gradual decline since then, contracting by 11% but remains a larger office market than back in 2001.

Preston, as the largest office market in Lancashire, has an estimated office stock of 322,000 sqm, which has contracted by almost 18% since its peak of 391,000 sqm back in 2015. Much of this decline has been evident since the pandemic, with the stock declining by 9% from March 2020 to March 2023.

In comparison, South Ribble is a smaller office market of just 123,000 sqm, which has declined marginally from a peak of 128,000 sqm back in 2018. This 4% decrease in stock is one of the smallest percentage falls out of any of the Lancashire borough's and compares to an average decline of just under 12% across the region- albeit many of the boroughs are smaller less established office markets.

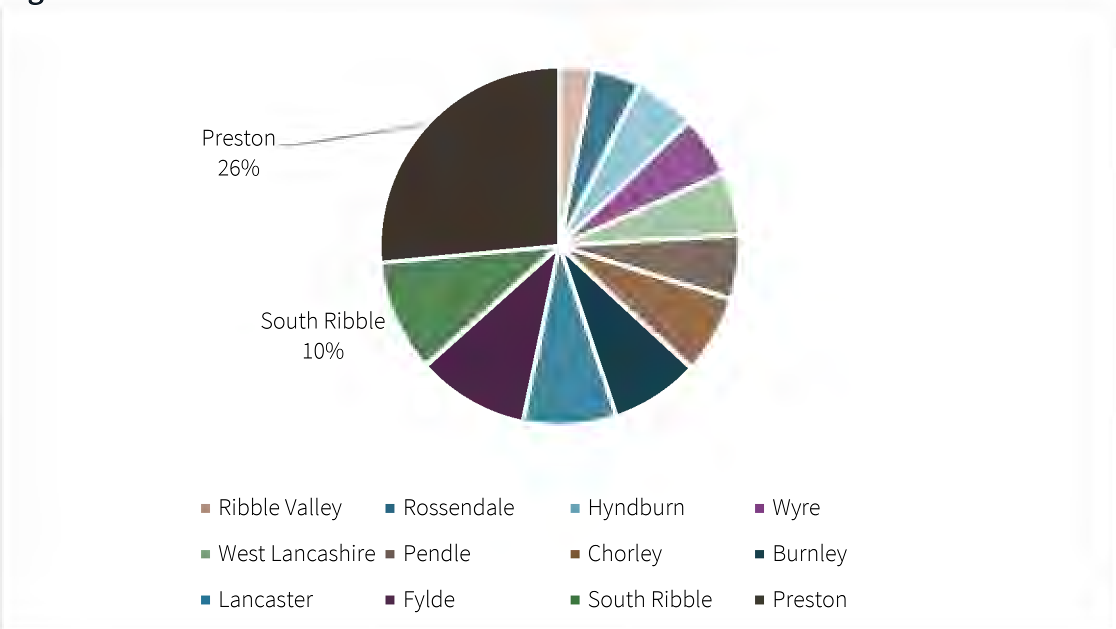
These divergent trends are illustrated in the graph below which includes the Lancashire trajectory and reinforces the contraction in office stock over the recent past.

**Figure 2: Change in office stock**




Source: JLL/VOA

**Figure 3: Distribution of Lancashire Office Market Stock**




Source: JLL/VOA

According to CoStar, less than 100,000 sq ft of new build space has been delivered in both Preston and South Ribble over the last ten years. This suggests that most of the existing stock will not be in direct competition with the new commercial space being proposed at Cuerdale Garden Village and implies that the development represents an opportunity to develop as a location for business in comparison to other parts of the region.

The evolving needs of office-based sectors will require adjustments in office supply, and future developments will need to adapt to the requirements of these industries to attract and accommodate burgeoning sectors. Companies searching for space today have different requirements to the traditional office occupier base. Workplace design, health and wellbeing, sustainability, amenity, and flexibility are all considerations. In the current economic climate, many occupier relocations will be driven by moves to take advantage of lower rents and occupancy costs, as well as being closer to where their employees live.

## Assessing demand for offices

When evaluating the prospects for demand, the first step involves analysing the anticipated growth in output of business sectors that traditionally utilise office space.

Future demand prospects for the office sector appear robust across Lancashire, with growth expected across the local economy. Office based employment is expected to outpace the average all-employment growth rate over the next five and ten-year periods. Professional, Scientific & Tech (which covers software companies including Cyber Security) is anticipated to generate substantial employment opportunities, increasing by 1.8% per annum over the next five years to 44,420 jobs, and at just over 1% over the longer term to reach 47,200 by 2035, which will maintain demand for office space with increases in jobs and higher gross value add in the next 5-10 years.

Oxford Economics do not separate cyber security from the wider employment sector, so using data outlined earlier in the report suggests that within Lancashire there are around 2,200 people employed in the sector (900 in core roles and 1,300 in related positions) and c12,000 in the wider North West Region.

**Table 1: Current and forecast employment trends**

| | Employees (current) | Additional jobs |
|---|---|---|
| North West cyber security direct* | 5,000 | 8,000 (target 2035) |
| North West cyber security indirect* | 7,000 | 10,000 (target 2035) |
| Lancashire direct** | 900 | 2,000 (Impact of NCF) |
| Lancashire indirect ** | 1,300 | 1,120 (Impact of NCF) |
| Lancashire professional, scientific and tech*** | 40,930 | 6,260 (2035) |

* Source: Perspective Economics (2023) The North West Cyber Corridor Innovation Impact Study: Evidence Base

** Source: Plexal

*** Source: Oxford Economics

Forecasts of employment growth show a net addition of 18,000 total cyber security jobs between 2023 and 2030 across the North West. These forecasts have been used to estimate the net additional need for office space to accommodate the rise in employment and assume an average occupational density of 10 sqm per worker (British Council for Offices (BCO) Guide to Specification 2023).

Plexal predict that the employment impacts of the NCF would lead to an additional 3,120 jobs in the wider economy. These forecasts have also been used to extrapolate the anticipated increase in demand for office space, assuming all indirect jobs are office related.

**Table 2: Estimated office demand based on employment forecasts**

| Expansion based on Cyber security employment growth | Additional floorspace requirements total (no additional employment growth or space density change) | Additional floorspace requirements total (assume worker space density increase by 20%) | Additional floorspace requirements (assume additional 15% employment growth) | Additional floorspace requirement (Assume increased density and additional 15% employment growth) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| North West cyber security total 2022-2035 | 180,000 sq m (1.937 million sq ft) | 216,000 sq m (2.325 million sq ft) | 225,000 sq m (2.422 million sq ft) | 270,000 sq m (2.906 million sq ft) |
| Lancashire cyber security total 2022-2035 | 31,200 sq m (335,800 sq ft) | 37,440 sq m (403,000 sq ft) | 35,880 sq m (386,200 sq ft) | 43,056 sq m (463,450 sq ft) |
| Lancashire professional scientific and tech | 62,600 sq m (674,000 sq ft) | 75,120 sq m (808,600 sq ft) | 68,860 sq m (741,200 sq ft) | 82,632 sq m (889,500 sq ft) |

Source: JLL based on employment growth projections (numbers rounded)

In the base case scenario outlined, which assumes no change to occupational densities, the additional future requirement for office space is 180,000 sq m between 2022 and 2035 across the North West. In a realistic scenario where average density per worker rises by 20% (to 12.0 sq m) due to greater levels of de-densification and provision of extra collaboration space, the potential additional office requirement is 216,000 sq m (2022 – 2035).

However, this requirement for additional office floorspace does not account for the uplift which arises because of developing a previously underutilised site. If employment growth is assumed to increase by an extra 15%, which is a very conservative assumption considering the uplift in new jobs that has occurred in some of the example case studies, this takes the total additional floorspace requirement to 225,000 sq m (2022 – 2035). This increases further to 270,000 sq m when factoring in a higher space per worker of 20%.

In addition to the expansion in headcount, demand for space will also be derived from occupiers already based in the region upgrading on lease expiry and although some occupiers will choose to renew existing leasing arrangements the majority will be looking for alternative accommodation. Based on current headcount estimates, the current floorspace occupation of Cyber Security firms is around 120,000 sq m in the North West, of which 24,000 sq m is potentially occupied in Lancashire.

These forecasts should be seen as conservative projections of the minimum future office requirement. They do not reflect any net addition to office space that is required to replace the ageing and increasingly obsolete stock, which is of lower quality, does not fit with space requirements of occupiers, and does not comply with regulatory standards.

It is important to note that whilst the majority of demand derived from the NCF is expected to be office-based, the cyber security sector may also generate demand for other types of commercial space. This could include laboratory and R&D facilities for developing and testing new technologies, as well as manufacturing space for producing cyber security related hardware.

# Defence Sector

The new NCF campus is located within the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone which is also home to BAE System's aircraft engineering campus. This enterprise zone offers an opportunity for Cuerdale Garden Village and its commercial development to facilitate businesses to capitalise on the growing defence sector and clustering opportunities around two significant entities.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) spending supports around 434,000 jobs in the UK, or, one in 60 UK jobs[1] and was identified as a growth driving sector in the government's *Invest 2035: the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy* report. Further to this, announcements on the 25th February from Sir Keir Starmer indicated that the UK's defence spending would increase to 2.5% of GDP from 2027 with an ambition to reach 3.0% by the next parliament – the largest sustained increase in defence spending since the Cold War.

With growing investment in the defence sector from the UK government, Cuerdale Garden Village represents an opportunity to take advantage of agglomeration economies and offer businesses commercial floorspace near established occupiers.

According to Invest in Lancashire, the county represents the largest single concentration of aerospace production in the UK, employing 14,000 people and home to over over 400 companies in the supply chain.

Following the recent announcement from the government of plans to invest in SME's in the defence sector with further spending and accessing the defence supply chain, Cuerdale presents an opportunity to expand and grow on an already globally established industry. The site being located so close to BAE

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-sets-out-biggest-sustained-increase-in-defence-spending-since-the-cold-war-protecting-british-people-in-new-era-for-national-security

systems facilities and Academy for Skills and Knowledge at the Samlesbury Aerospace Enterprise Zone would provide huge benefits for smaller businesses in the industry as highlighted above from clustering.

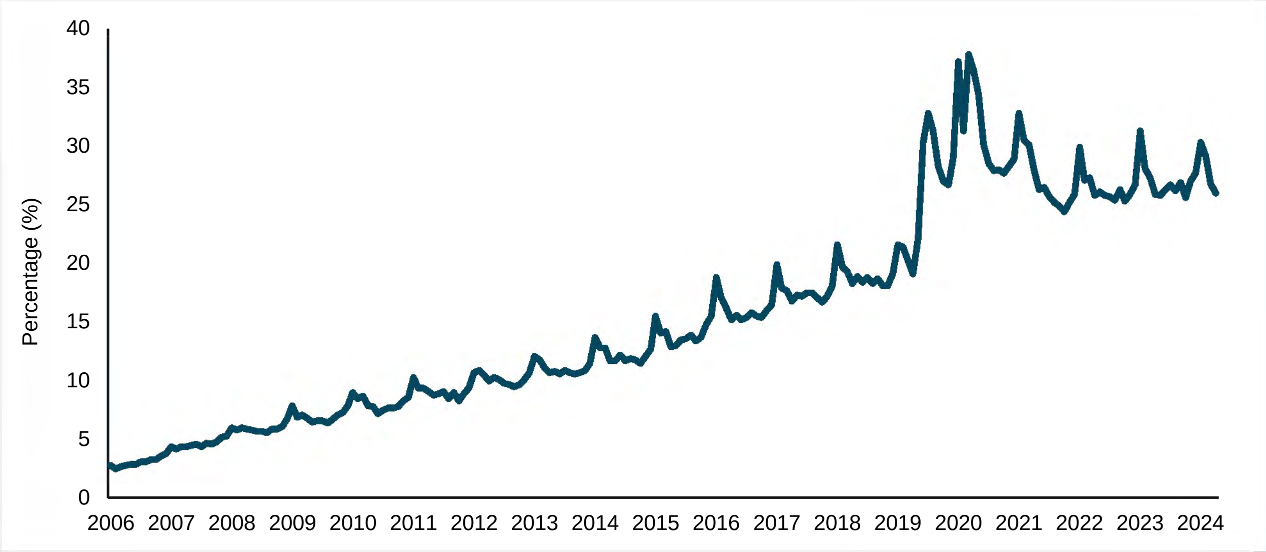
# Last-mile logistics and servicing households

Alongside employment growth and the need for commercial floorspace derived from the NCF and the defence sector, the Cuerdale Garden Village development itself would promote the need for further industrial and logistics floorspace. The proposed development of approximately 1,300 homes in phase one and the further 1,000 in phase two would create a necessity for warehousing in close proximity to service these households.

The industrial and logistics sector plays a critical role in servicing both businesses and households. Company supply chain models typically involved large distribution centres, regional fulfilment centres and smaller 'last-mile' facilities in the vicinity of areas of population. With evolving consumer habits and the growth of e-commerce, the last-mile local delivery hubs have become even more important to service households.

The e-commerce sector has seen substantial growth since the pandemic, fundamentally changing shopping habits across Great Britain and leading to a greater need for warehousing. Figure 4 below shows how internet sales as a proportion of total retail sales has grown over time. At the beginning of the pandemic (February 2020) e-commerce sales accounted for 19.1% of total retail sales across Great Britain. As the population was forced to stay at home, our shopping habits changed, and the proportion reached a peak of 37.8% in January 2021. Whilst this has decreased, most recent figures are still way ahead of pre-pandemic levels with e-commerce sales in February 2025 accounting for 26.0%. This shift towards online shopping has created an increased demand for efficient logistics networks, including parcel hubs and last-mile delivery centres.

**Figure 4: Online sales as a proportion of total retail sales**




Source: ONS

With online shopping, retail supply chains typically involve a number of facilities including large e-fulfilment centres for holding stock; parcel hubs and local parcel delivery centres for final mile delivery. With the proposed development, warehousing floorspace will be needed to service the circa. 2,300 homes and to support the local economy.

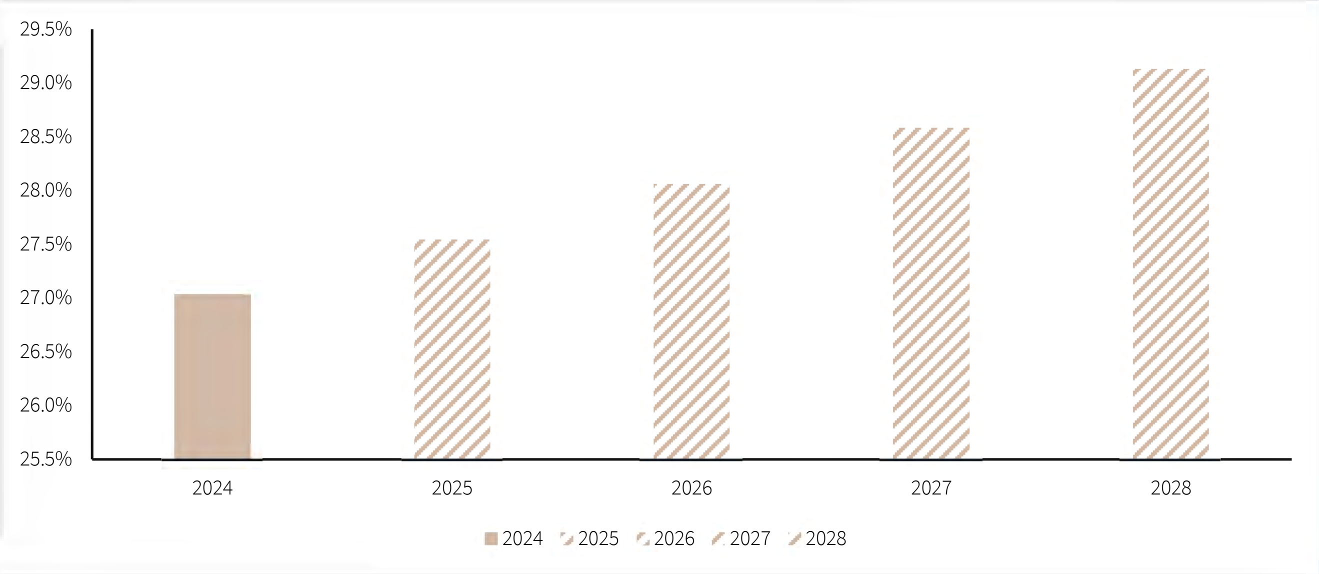
Not only has online shopping grown in the UK but also consumer expectations of quicker, on-time and same-day delivery.

A report conducted by Turley for the British Property Federation in 2019 suggested that there was 69 sq ft of warehouse floorspace per home in England and this figure increased to approximately 85 sq ft for the North West. It is noted that this figure may increase due to the growing demand from 'pureplay' online retailers however, we can use it as a conservative baseline for estimating the logistics space needed for the new development.

Using the 69 sq ft per household metric, the proposed 1,300 homes of phase one would generate a demand for approximately 8,333 sq m (89,700 sq ft) of warehouse space. Including the total development and increasing this figure to 2,300 would equate to 14,744 sq m (158,700 sq ft). These figures represent the minimum amount of industrial and logistics floorspace that would be required to adequately service the proposed residential development. These figures are likely to grow in the future due to the increasing demand for online retail in the UK.

According to GlobalData's Global Retail Market Data, online expenditure in the UK is forecasted to grow by a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.0% per annum for the next four years (2025-2028). As shown in figure 5 below, this would mean online sales in the UK would increase from 27.0% in 2024 to 29.1% in 2028 as a proportion of total retail expenditure. This reiterates the growing demand for warehousing and logistics to service changing consumer behaviour and the need for further floorspace to accommodate the population.

**Figure 5: Online expenditure as a proportion of total retail in the UK**




Source: GlobalData

Given the consistent growth in e-commerce and the potential for further increases in online shopping, it would be prudent to consider allocating space for additional logistics infrastructure beyond the baseline estimate. This approach would help future-proof the development and ensure it can meet the evolving needs of its residents.

# Case studies

The analysis presented above outlines the potential gains from the Cuerdale Garden Village development. The scheme represents an opportunity to develop commercial floorspace that will benefit from close proximity to the NCF campus and Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. By leveraging the principles of agglomeration economies, Cuerdale is well positioned to create a business ecosystem that capitalises on the presence of these major institutions and the growing cyber security and defence sectors.

The following case studies demonstrate how similar scenarios have resulted in strong economic growth, more so than even local economies (see Cambridge life sciences), employment gains, and successful commercial developments (Manchester Airport). These examples illustrate the power of agglomeration economies in action, showing how strategic developments can attract related businesses, foster innovation, and drive regional economic growth.

### Birchwood Park Nuclear Cluster, Warrington

The Birchwood Park Nuclear Cluster in Warrington, UK, serves as an exemplary case study demonstrating the power of industrial clustering and agglomeration economies. Birchwood Park illustrates how concentrated expertise can drive innovation, economic growth, and employment in a specialised sector.

The cluster's success is based on key agglomeration factors: knowledge sharing, specialised workforce, shared infrastructure, supply chain development, and collaboration. These elements have promoted innovation and technological advancements in the nuclear sector.

The park has diversified while maintaining its nuclear focus, encompassing related sectors like cyber security and engineering services by providing modern office and lab space. It leads in nuclear innovation, contributing to projects such as Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and advanced waste management techniques. It's a significant source of high-skilled employment in the region, particularly in nuclear engineering and related fields and benefits from close proximity to both Manchester and Liverpool universities.

Significant occupiers at Birchwood Park include:

| Company | Sector |
|---|---|
| Jacobs | Engineering & Nuclear Services |
| Cavendish Nuclear | Nuclear Services |
| National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL) | Research & Development |
| Rolls-Royce Nuclear | Nuclear Engineering |
| Nuvia | Nuclear Engineering & Services |
| Sellafield Ltd | Nuclear Decommissioning |
| Wood (formerly Amec Foster Wheeler) | Engineering & Consulting |
| Assystem | Engineering |
| Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) | Government Body |
| Westinghouse Electric Company | Nuclear Power |
| AECOM | Engineering |
| Mott MacDonald | Engineering Consultancy |
| Ansaldo Nuclear | Nuclear Decommissioning & Waste Management |

### Manchester Airport

Manchester Airport and the surrounding area is home to a thriving logistics industry encompassing several developments including, the World Freight Terminal, Global Logistics at Airport City, Alpha @ Airport City and Ringway Trading Estate. These schemes benefit from their proximity to Manchester Airport, acting as a significant anchor, attracting a diverse range of businesses to the area.

Planning restrictions requiring occupiers to have an airport-related focus at the Airport City scheme has resulted in a specialised business environment, ensuring that the space is occupied by businesses that directly contribute to or benefit from the airport's operations.

Across the schemes there are numerous air cargo handling companies, freight forwarders, logistics providers and major e-commerce companies. This concentration of related businesses facilitates efficient cargo processing, customs clearance, and multi-modal transport connections.

Occupiers across the schemes include:

World Freight Terminal

| Unit | Occupier | Area (sq ft) |
|---|---|---|
| Building 3 | DNATA Limited | 146,629 |
| Building 4 | Swissport GB Limited | 92,000 |
| Building 401 | Dunwoody Airline Services Limited | 84,098 |
| Building 402 | DNATA Catering UK Limited | 87,184 |
| Land | DNATA Catering UK Limited | 52,272 |
| Unit 1 & 2 | Goldstar Heathrow Limited | 7,973 |
| Unit 3, 4 & 5 | Goldstar Heathrow Limited | 12,032 |
| Unit 6 | World Courier (UK) Limited | 3,956 |
| Unit 7 | Sandalwest Limited t/a TQ Express | 3,980 |
| Unit 8 & 9 | GAC Services (UK) Ltd | 7,995 |
| Unit 10 | Davies Turner Air Cargo Limited | 3,969 |
| Unit 11 | Jet2.com Limited | 3,972 |
| Unit 12 | Alvest Equipment Services (UK) Limited | 3,968 |
| Unit 1A | GBA Services Ltd | 4,719 |
| Unit 1B | Blacksmith Freight Services Limited | 4,093 |
| Unit 2 | Aero MAG 2000 MAN Limited | 4,156 |
| Unit 3-4 | UCH Logistics (Manchester) Limited | 8,048 |
| Unit 5 | Blacksmith Freight Services Limited | 3,983 |
| Unit 6 | Manchester Airport Plc | 3,990 |
| Lockup Unit 1 | Col Services Limited | 532 |
| Unit 3, 4, 5 & 6 | ABM Aviation UK Limited | 2,096 |
| Unit 7, 8 & 10 | Radiocoms Systems Limited | 1,456 |
| Unit 3-9 | UCH Logistic (Manchester) Ltd | 30,254 |
| 314 | Air Menzies International Limited | 19,867 |
| 315 | Newrest-All Limited | 19,881 |
| 316 | Newrest-All Limited | 30,077 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Building 317 & 318 | Kuehne + Nagel Limited | 39,771 |
| Building 319 | DNATA Catering UK Limited | 57,805 |
| Building 320 | Manchester Airport Plc | 29,099 |

Global Logistics at Airport City

| Occupier | Area (sq ft) |
|---|---|
| Amazon | 260,000 |
| DHL | 37,000 |
| The Hut Group | 765,000 |
| Alpha LSG | 103,000 |

Alpha @ Airport City

| Unit | Occupier | Area (sq ft) |
|---|---|---|
| Alpha 1 | Storage World | 21,000 |
| Alpha 2 | Move Dance (Online Retail) | 17,366 |
| Alpha 3 | EVRi | 21,000 |
| Alpha 4 | Jet 2 | 21,746 |
| Alpha 5 | Jet Glow | 17,366 |
| Alpha 6 | Fed Ex | 34,916 |

Ringway Trading Estate, Wythenshawe

| Unit | Occupier | |
|---|---|---|
| Unit 1A | Crecy Publishing | 6,250 |
| Unit 1B & 2 | Sterling Event Group | 11,165 |
| Unit 3 | Kanns Logistics Limited (Air Freight) | 5,000 |
| Unit 4 | DGS (Air Freight) | 5,000 |
| Unit 5 | EFE Electronic Commerce (UK) Ltd | 5,259 |
| Unit 6 | Mitie Ltd | 5,313 |
| Units 7 & 8 | Sterling Events Group | 21,110 |
| Unit 9 | European Worls (UK) Limited | 5,616 |
| Unit 10 | Drivalia UK Ltd | 12,192 |
| Unit 11 | Lloyds Autobody | 16,104 |
| Unit 12 | Bridges Worldwide | 21,490 |
| Unit 14 | Arnold Clarke Finance Ltd | 34,861 |

This case study demonstrates how strategic planning and the presence of a significant anchor like Manchester Airport can create a thriving environment for business. The airport focused planning restrictions have ensured a high concentration of related businesses, fostering synergies and driving economic growth in the region.

Moderna – Innovation and Technology Centre (MITC) – Harwell Campus, Oxfordshire

In 2023, Moderna, a biotechnology company pioneering messenger RNA (mRNA) therapeutics and vaccines, selected Harwell Campus, as the location for its Moderna Innovation and Technology Centre (MITC).

The Harwell Science and Innovation Campus is a 700-acre science and technology campus in Oxfordshire, located around 15 miles to the south of Oxford. This was originally the site for the UK Atomic Energy Authority, although as the nuclear facilities have been decommissioned the site has been transformed into a broader science-focussed park.

The park is orientated on four main sectoral clusters: Space, Energy Technology, Health Technology and Quantum research.

The MITC development will encompass a research, development and manufacturing facility, providing the UK public with access to cutting-edge mRNA vaccines for a wide range of respiratory diseases, pending regulatory assessment and licensure.  The MITC will also include a clinical biomarker laboratory - a prefabricated modular laboratory constructed in Northumberland which will then be installed on the campus.

Construction of the 150,000 sq ft scheme commenced in Q1 2023 and was completed two years later in early 2025. This will result in Moderna becoming one of the largest occupiers within the Harwell Campus

The investment by Moderna in their purpose-built facility will create hundreds of jobs across Oxfordshire and the UK and will cement Harwell Campus as a national health tech hub for the pioneering research and development of mRNA and other nucleic acid therapeutics. Moderna is the latest organisation to join Harwell's thriving Health Tech cluster which has grown to over 70 life science organisations since it launched in 2016.

Knowledge Economy – Life Science Cluster, Cambridge

The 'golden triangle' between Cambridge, Oxford and London is the largest Life Science cluster in Europe and is a critical region for UK knowledge economy growth, with outsized proportions of this sector relative to the wider UK economy. Cambridge is a critical node for life science employment across the golden triangle and this has translated to a considerable wider economic benefit for the region. The following information is an extract from Growth in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough economy 2018-24, CBR & Cambridge Ahead, March 2025:

*The corporate economy of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough achieved robust growth in the six-year period to 2023-24. KI sectors were a major driver of this growth. Corporate employment in KI sectors grew consistently by about 5% pa. Non-KI sectors had a dip during the Covid years but were quick to recover when the economy opened.*

**Table 3: Corporate employment and turnover growth in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, 2018-2024**

| Six years | % KI | Empl change | Employment | | | Turnover | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| District | 2023-24 | 2018-24 | KI | Non-KI | All | KI | Non-KI | All |
| Cambridge | 47% | 11,704 | 8.3% | 3.1% | 5.3% | 10.3% | 6.0% | 9.0% |
| South Cambs | 52% | 14,348 | 5.1% | 2.9% | 4.0% | 7.5% | 3.6% | 6.0% |
| *Greater Cambridge* | *50%* | *26,052* | *6.2%* | *3.0%* | *4.5%* | *8.6%* | *4.4%* | *7.1%* |
| East Cambs | 18% | 2,815 | 2.7% | 2.3% | 2.4% | 6.5% | 5.6% | 5.7% |
| Hunts | 15% | 3,243 | 1.5% | 1.3% | 1.3% | 5.9% | 4.9% | 5.0% |
| Peterborough | 20% | 11,581 | 0.6% | 4.5% | 3.7% | 2.1% | 0.4% | 1.0% |
| Fenland | 6% | 1,642 | 3.7% | 1.4% | 1.5% | 3.8% | 3.3% | 3.4% |
| Combined Authority | 31% | 45,333 | 4.6% | 2.8% | 3.3% | 7.2% | 3.5% | 5.1% |

Source: Growth in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough economy 2018-24, Cambridge Ahead and CBR

*These figures portray a thriving corporate economy in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough against an unfavourable economic backdrop nationally. The superior performance of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough region compared to the nation was driven by a fast-expanding KI economy. At the same time, non-KI sectors in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough also slightly outperformed non-KI sectors nationwide. This evidence suggests that non-KI sectors might have benefited from the increase in demand generated by the successful KI economy in Greater Cambridge and beyond.*

This research demonstrates the clear indirect employment and economic benefits that accrue in locations that have attracted an above average proportion of highly-skilled workers as part of the overall employment mix. For Cuerdale Garden Village, this offers an example of what may be possible with a successful offer for defence and cyber security employers.

# Conclusions

The Cuerdale Garden Village development presents a promising opportunity to address the potential commercial floorspace needs in the local area, particularly in light of the National Cyber Force (NCF) campus and the existing Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. The development's proximity to these key institutions is advantageous and provides the opportunity for growth in the local economy.

The presence of the NCF campus and the established defence sector, including BAE Systems, creates a favourable environment for growth in cyber security and defence related industries. This concentration of expertise would attract complementary businesses and suppliers, generating demand for modern, high-quality commercial space which the Cuerdale Garden Village development could accommodate. The scale and pace of this growth will likely depend on various factors including government policies, the ability to attract and retain skilled talent, and broader market conditions.

The development and commercial floorspace in the proposed scheme offers the opportunity to provide modern, high-quality commercial space across a range of asset types to facilitate the growth of the local economy and take advantage of the proximity to the established employment zone.

Successful examples, such as the development around Manchester Airport and the Cambridge Life Science sector showcase the benefits of agglomeration economies and the impacts of clustering on the local economy.

In conclusion, the Cuerdale Garden Village development represents an opportunity to meet anticipated demand for commercial floorspace, particularly in relation to the growth of the cyber security and defence sectors. Its strategic location and the projected sector growth suggest that Cuerdale could play a role in the region's economic development, providing commercial space that allows this growth to happen. It is important to consider that an array of asset types would be beneficial to allow for growth in the sector, and service the development itself, to attract business to the opportunity presented.

JLL SEE A BRIGHTER WAY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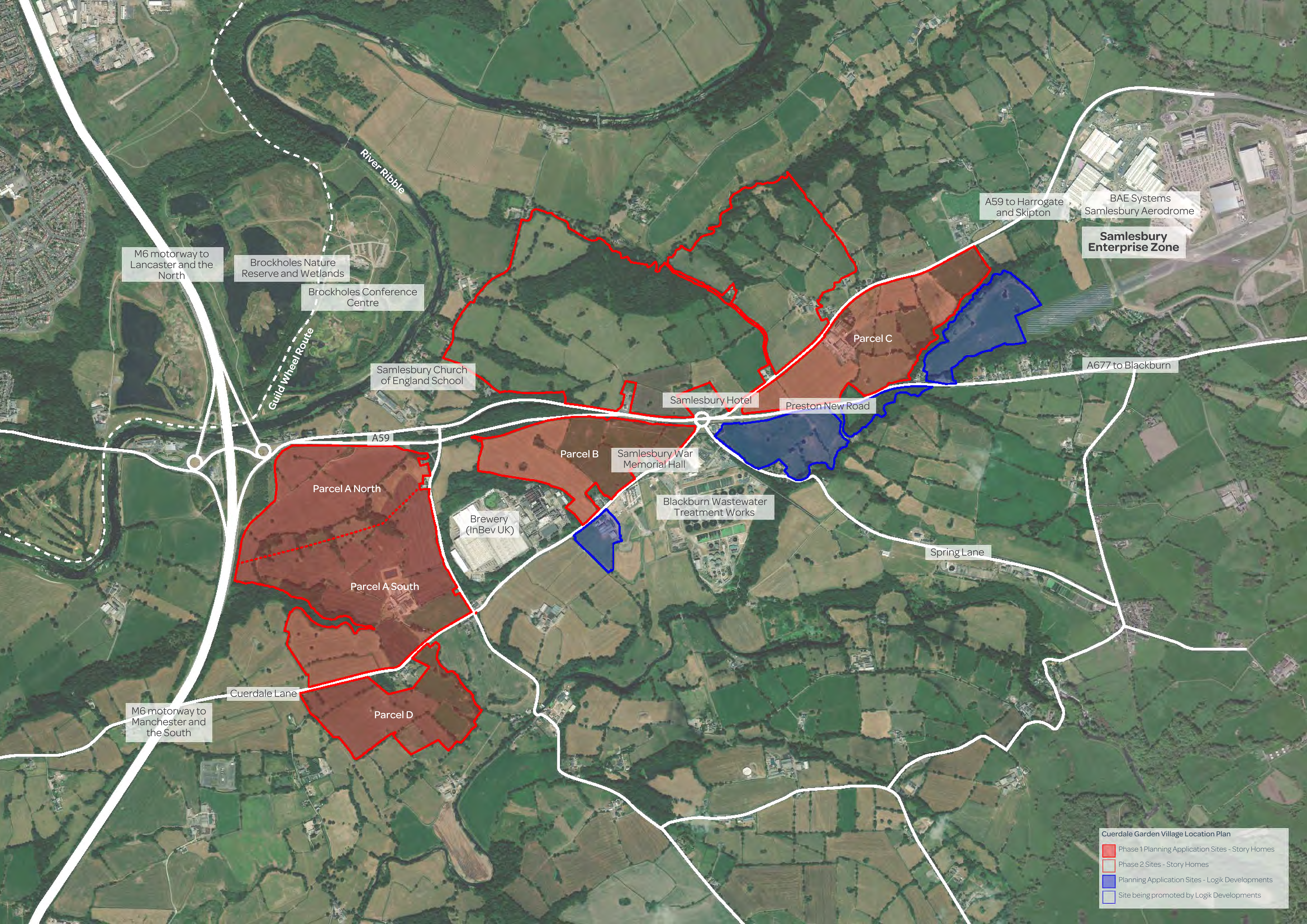
# Appendix 3: Cuerdale Garden Village Spatial Definition


River Ribble
M6 motorway to Lancaster and the North
Brockholes Nature Reserve and Wetlands
Brockholes Conference Centre
Guild Wheel Route
Samlesbury Church of England School
A59 to Harrogate and Skipton
BAE Systems Samlesbury Aerodrome
Samlesbury Enterprise Zone
Parcel C
A677 to Blackburn
Samlesbury Hotel
Preston New Road
A59
Parcel B
Samlesbury War Memorial Hall
Parcel A North
Brewery (InBev UK)
Blackburn Wastewater Treatment Works
Spring Lane
Parcel A South
Cuerdale Lane
M6 motorway to Manchester and the South
Parcel D
Cuerdale Garden Village Location Plan
Phase 1 Planning Application Sites - Story Homes
Phase 2 Sites - Story Homes
Planning Application Sites - Logik Developments
Site being promoted by Logik Developments

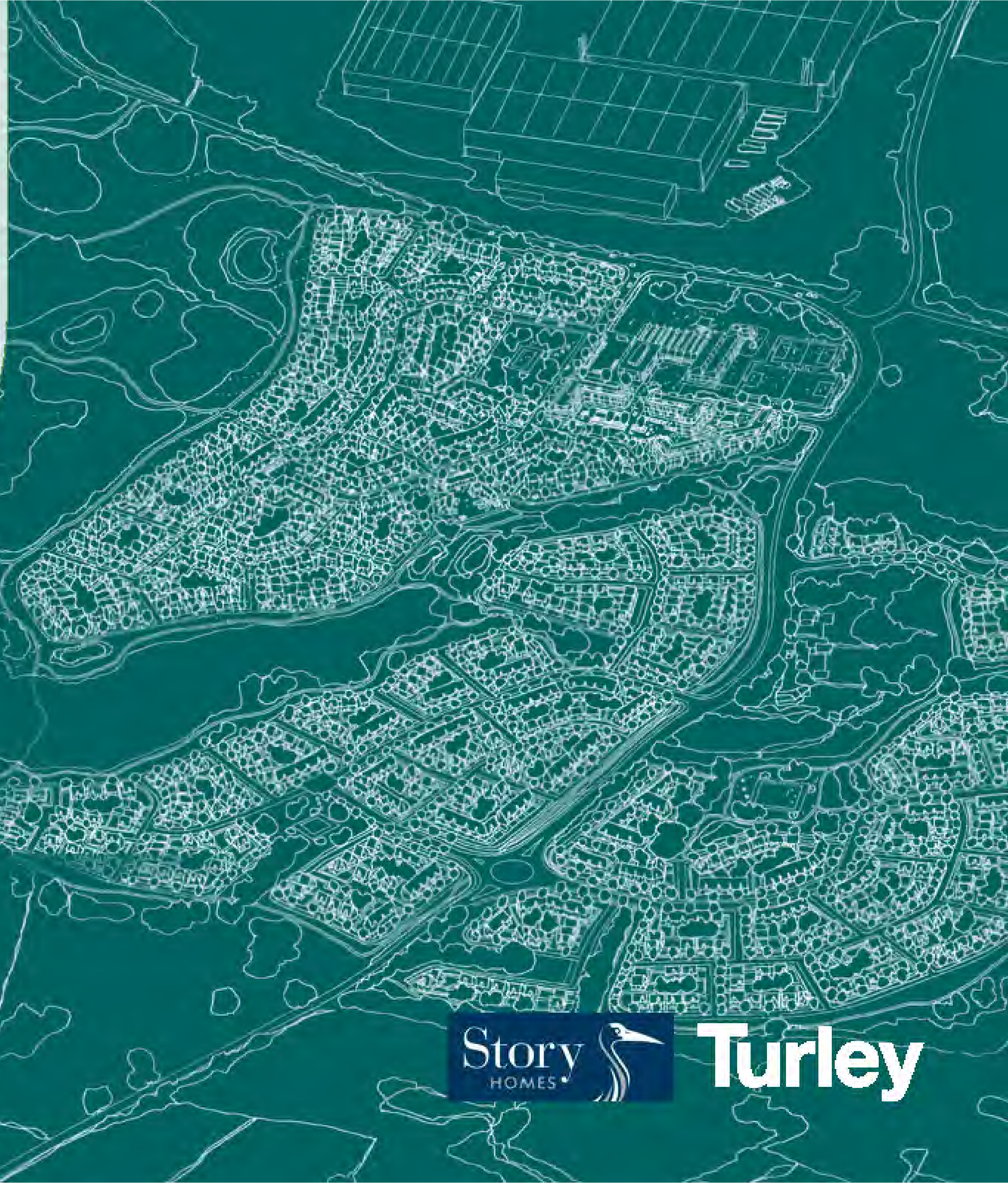
# Appendix 4: Development Framework

# Cuerdale
GARDEN VILLAGE

Samlesbury,
South Ribble

**Development Framework Document**

April 2025



Story HOMES

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**Date of issue**
April 2025

**Job Reference**
STOM3025

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C G V

# CUERDALE GARDEN VILLAGE


The Cuerdale Garden Village presents a unique opportunity for South Ribble and Central Lancashire. Forming part of a strategically important Central Belt, it will deliver a broad range of high quality employment space, co-located with residential development in a liveable environment, supported by accessible infrastructure.

Cuerdale Garden Village builds on the existing and growing economic importance of Central Belt as a strategic link between Burnley and Blackpool, adjacent to Junction 31 of the M6 and as the location of the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and location of the National Cyber Force Campus (NCF). Its economic importance is established and is set to grow through the NCF; a £5 billion investment in a purpose built campus generating several thousand new jobs.

Cuerdale Garden Village responds to this context, providing housing and employment space which will optimise the success of this key location whilst contributing to meeting Central Lancashire's wider development needs through a new settlement model.

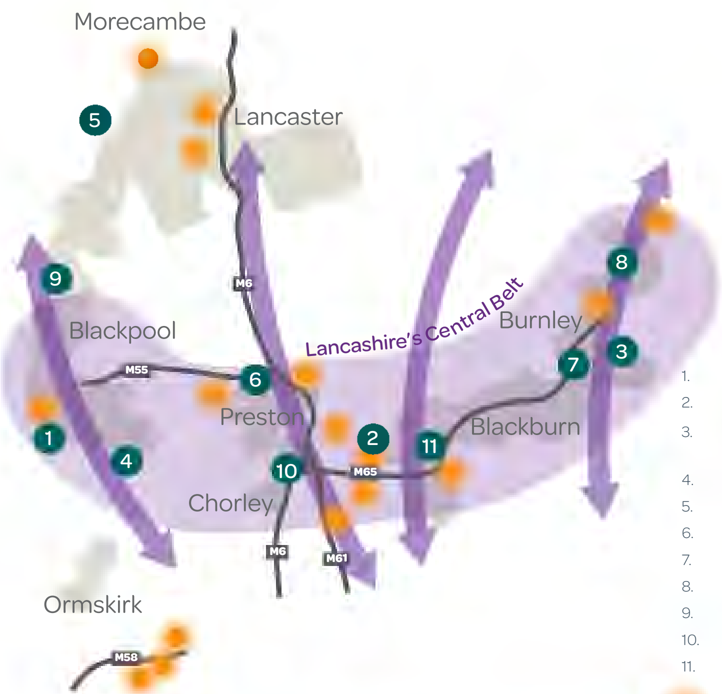
Cuerdale Garden Village goes beyond just seeking to meet numerical development requirements. Its scale enables its qualities and attributes to genuinely enhance the quality of life and opportunity for all of its residents. It represents both a response to an immediate development need and a response to a unique set of circumstances which combine to present the Borough with an opportunity to develop a high value and sustainable economy.

Visualisation of 'Neighbourhood Character Area'

# LANCASHIRE'S CENTRAL BELT : A CATALYST FOR THE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE'S ECONOMY

**1.1** Cuerdale Garden Village is being promoted for development as part of the designation of **Lancashire's Central Belt,** through The Lancashire Growth Plan.

**1.2** The Central Belt is positioned at the epicentre of the county's combined economic drivers, strategically accessible via the M6 and along the M55-M65 corridor. This area accounts for some 75% of the county's economic output.




1. Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone
2. Samlesbury Enterprise Zone
3. Burnley Town Centre and Canalside Masterplan
4. Warton Enterprise Zone
5. Heysham Gateway
6. Preston Station Quarter
7. Burnley Bridge and Burnley South
8. Lomeshaye Extension
9. Hillhouse
10. Cuerden
11. Blackburn Town Centre / Growth Axis

Complementary Strategic Sites

Fig. 1: Central Belt

**1.3** The Central Belt is now on the pathway to increasing its economic function and contribution to a level beyond any other comparable area of Central Lancashire through the NCF investment. The effects of the NCF cannot be overstated. It represents one of the largest single public sector investments ever made into the north of England and has the potential to truly transform the Central Lancashire economy. It does not represent the incremental growth of an existing part of the economy rather will create a new part of the economy from a relative standing start.

**1.4** The key infrastructure to support the NCF is therefore not yet in place and will need to be planned and provided at an accelerated pace in order to enable its successful delivery over the next ten years. Failure to do so will constrain the NCF and prevent its transformational economic effects from being realised.

**1.5** The scale of development need arising from this location will be subject to further assessment work undertaken by the Councils. However, given the stimulus of 5,000 additional jobs, and considering the type of jobs and economic activity generated by the NCF, this additional need is expected to be very significant.

**1.6** Whilst the direct accommodation needs of the NCF are expected to be met through development principally within the Enterprise Zone, the allocation of a wider Central Belt proposal, including the Cuerdale Garden Village, has the ability to respond to the need for additional development arising from the NCF investment in a sustainable manner.

**1.7** More broadly, the Central Belt occupies a strategic location in the context of the County of Lancashire, benefiting from direct access to the M6 and situated within easy reach of both Preston to the west and Blackburn to the east, providing the opportunity to provide jobs which can be accessed from both major areas of population.

**1.8** The Garden Village and NCF investment together can contribute to delivering a sustainable ambition for the Central Belt, a major contributor to meeting Central Lancashire's development. Their locational proximity means the Garden Village is able to directly complement the NCF, through a strategy which seeks to maximise the potential for sustainable linkages between areas within the Central Belt and to key population centres beyond.

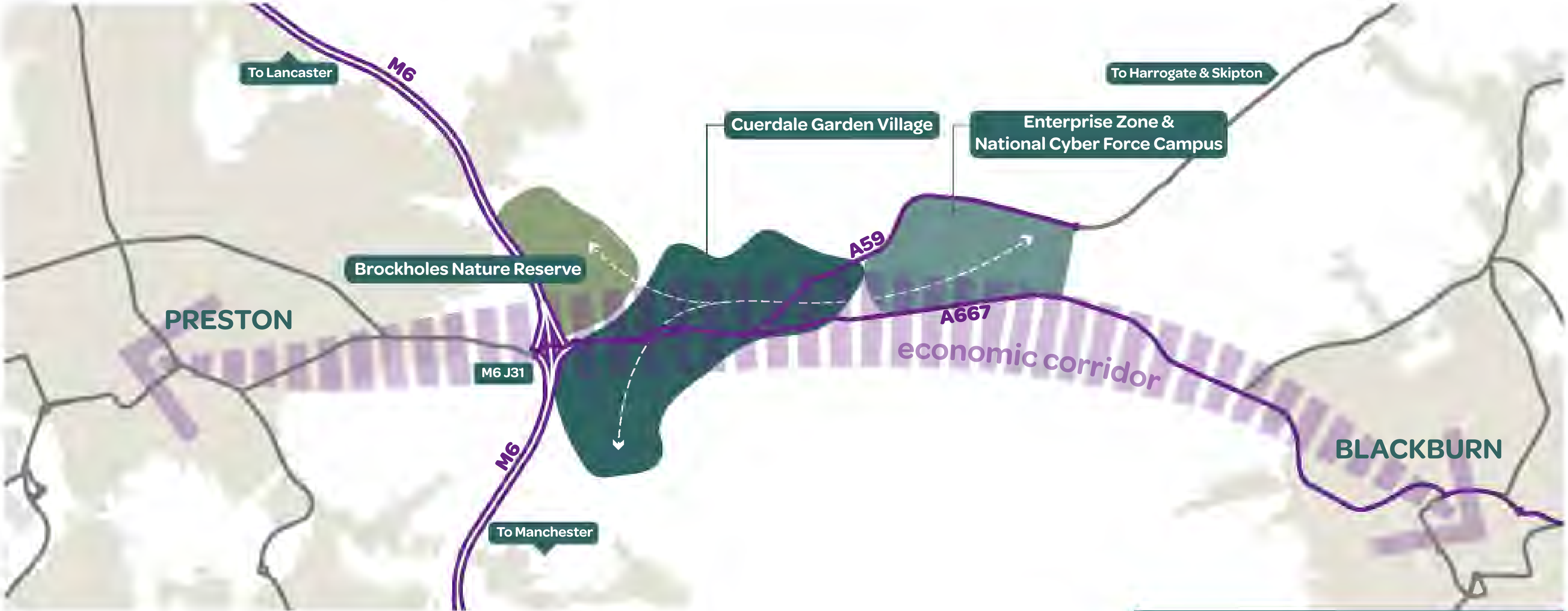



Fig. 2: Strategic Location along the Central Belt

## DEFINING THE CUERDALE GARDEN VILLAGE

**1.9** Story Homes is the principal promoter of the Cuerdale Garden Village. It has land extending to 284 ha under option in this location. This land is controlled by a single landowner, removing common ownership challenges in delivering developments of scale.

**1.10** The Cuerdale Garden Village comprises several 'parcels' of development land which, in combination, can deliver a holistically planned, sustainable new settlement to meet the long-term development needs of South Ribble.

**1.11** An outline planning application for the development of the first phase of the Cuerdale Garden Village was submitted by Story Homes in May 2022 (application reference number: 07/2022/00451/OUT ). This is presently being determined by South Ribble Council. This proposes the development of:

- 1,300 dwellings
- Up to 164,000sqm of employment floorspace and ancillary uses
- A park and ride facility
- Outdoor recreational facilities
- Publicly accessible open space
- A local centre
- A two form entry primary school

**1.12** The first phase application is principally focused on land to the south of the A59 which runs east-west from Junction 31 of the M6 towards the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. Further land to the north of the A59 forms the balance of the land promoted by Story Homes to create Cuerdale Garden Village as outlined in this document.

**1.13** Further land which would represent an eastern extension of the Cuerdale Garden Village is being promoted by Logik Developments as part of the overall Garden Village proposal. Story Homes and Logik Developments are joint promoters of the Garden Village and have worked collaboratively to present a comprehensive masterplan for the combined area as shown in this Development Framework document.

**1.14** The plan overleaf shows the full extent of Cuerdale Garden Village and identifies the land subject to the first phase planning application, the balance of the land controlled by Story Homes and the land being promoted by Logik Developments.

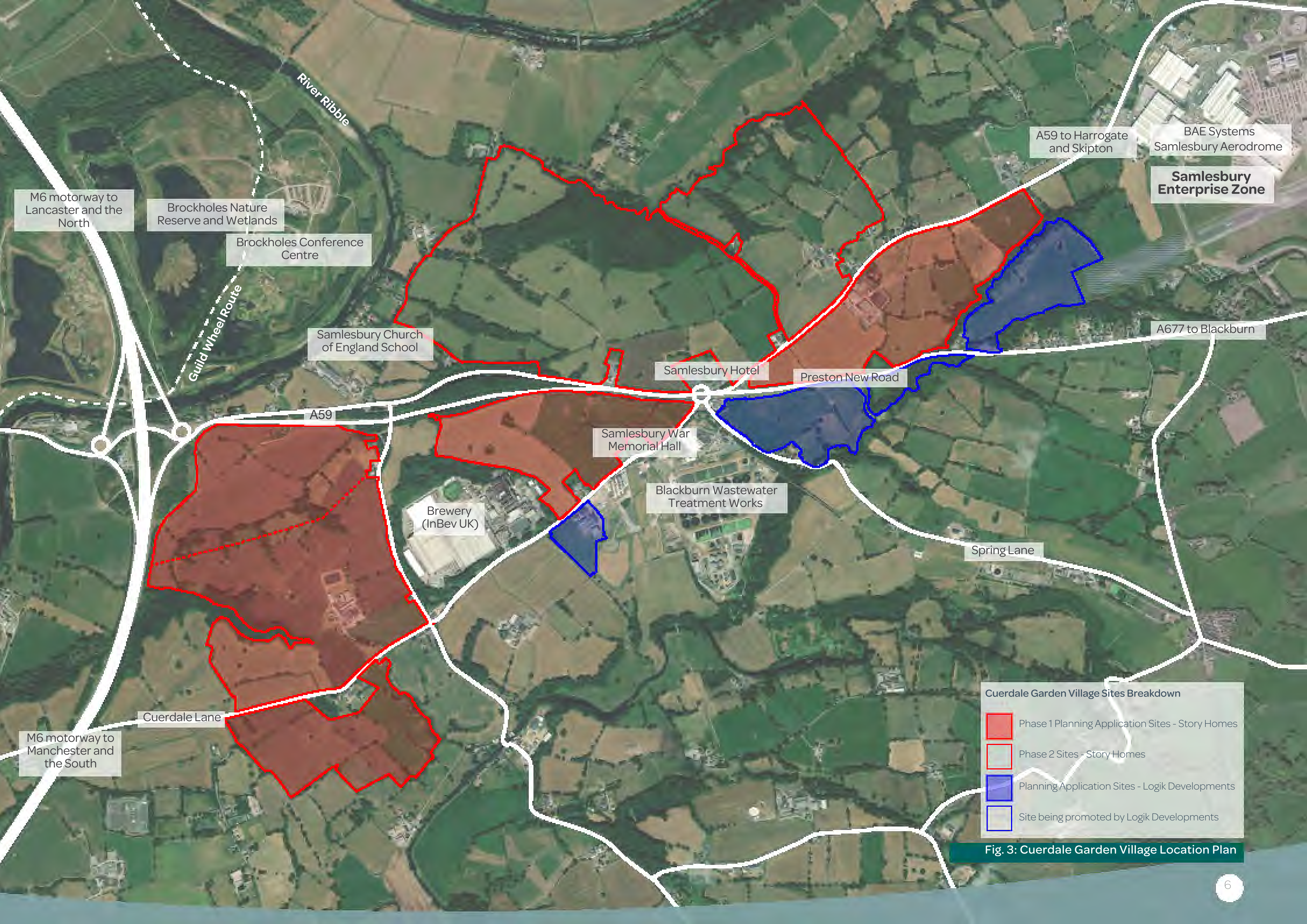



Fig. 3: Cuerdale Garden Village Location Plan

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT WITH THE EMERGING LOCAL PLAN

**1.15** The Cuerdale Garden Village is being promoted as an allocation through the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan.

**1.16** The Regulation 19 Local Plan sets out a vision that:

> *'Central Lancashire will be a place where people want to live, visit, work and invest. New development will be sustainable, supporting our ambitions of carbon neutrality and addressing climate change. Growth and regeneration of our city and town centres and delivery of new employment opportunities will continue to strengthen economic prosperity, making Central Lancashire a key economic centre for the North West. A wide range of high-quality sustainable new housing and supporting infrastructure will meet the needs of our diverse communities, delivering vibrant and distinct places. Community wealth building and inclusivity will be at the heart of Central Lancashire's growth. Our heritage assets will be conserved, and our natural environment will be protected and enhanced for its intrinsic value whilst providing opportunities for recreation and leisure. Throughout Central Lancashire, people's health and well-being will be enhanced through the creation of well-designed developments, delivering homes, jobs and prosperity'*

**1.17** 11 'Strategic Objectives' are defined which flow from this vision.

**1.18** Cuerdale Garden Village is a unique proposition in Central Lancashire. It does more than meeting development needs but does so in a way which enables it to contribute positively to the above vision and the defined strategic objectives.

**1.19** This is a result of its scale, the breadth of accommodation it provides (both housing and employment), its ability to build in the civic infrastructure needed for it to be a model of a sustainable place, its location within the Central Belt and contribution to the long term success of this key location in growing and transforming the economy of South Ribble and Central Lancashire. This is reinforced by the masterplanning approach taken to the site focused on garden village principles and the creation of an inclusive, liveable residential and working environment.

**1.20** Reflecting the balance of social, environmental and economic aims inherent within them, the Cuerdale Garden Village will achieve a very clear alignment with and positive contribution to the Local Plan's strategic objectives.

**Strategic Objective 1: Climate Change**

*To ensure new development is resilient to and mitigates against the effects of climate change by achieving our goal to be at least carbon neutral. Reducing vulnerability to flooding, promoting sustainable forms of surface water drainage, minimising natural resource and energy use, and incorporating sustainable construction and water efficiency practices.*

The development:

- Comprises buildings designed to meet Future Homes Standard and reduce carbon emissions by 75% beyond current standards:
- Will be 'gas free'
- Targets homes to be net-zero carbon from regulated energy sources
- Includes commercial buildings which meet BREEAM standards
- Includes sustainable surface water drainage which takes account of climate change
- Will deliver a net gain in biodiversity
- Will provide key infrastructure on site to enable residents to meet their needs locally reducing the need to travel
- Will include local public transport improvements connecting the site and local job opportunities provided with surrounding communities

**Strategic Objective 2: Sustainable Patterns of Development**

*To focus development at sustainable locations accessible by active modes of travel. Making the best use of existing land, infrastructure, facilities, and services wherever possible, and ensuring that any necessary mitigation or improvements to meet future needs are identified, appropriately funded, and brought forward in a coordinated and timely manner.*

The proposal delivers development in a location which is already established as a key economic area and generator of employment – set to grow through the NCF - improving its sustainability through the co-location of additional employment and housing in this location and associated facilities.

**Strategic Objective 3: Sustainable Communities**

*To create healthy, vibrant, safe, and sustainable communities with a diverse range of housing to meet future needs. Providing a scale and mix of housing types and sizes and a variety of tenures in a range of locations to meet economic aspirations and local housing needs.*

The development's scale enables it to provide the full breadth of housing needed in Central Lancashire, including specialist forms of housing for older people, self-build plots and affordable homes. It will be a diverse residential community. Designed on garden village principles, the masterplanning approach to the site will promote community cohesion and integration with everyday facilities accessible on site to all via walking and cycling routes. The level and type of open space creates an attractive living environment whilst promoting recreational activity and promoting well-being.

**Strategic Objective 4: Economic Prosperity**

*To provide a range of employment and economic growth opportunities in sustainable locations. Promoting Central Lancashire as the economic centre for Lancashire, protecting and enhancing Preston City Centre's role as Lancashire's key shopping, leisure, tourism, and cultural destination and recognising its strategic importance within the wider Lancashire region and beyond. Prioritising building on the infrastructure improvements within City Deal, delivering enhanced digital connectivity, attracting inward investment, and delivering community wealth building.*

The proposal builds on the site's locational advantages adjacent to Junction 31 of the M6, the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and the site of the NCF to provide the employment space needed for a new wave of investment to be attracted to South Ribble. The location is wholly unique in this regard, enabling the economic growth stimulus provided by the NCF to take full effect for the benefit of the Borough.

## Strategic Objective 5 : Sustainable Transport

*To encourage development in sustainable locations where the layout, and design of new development reduces the need to use a car and enables more walking, cycling, and public transport use. Prioritising active travel and public transport promotes the use of sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and public transport) ahead of the private car, especially for shorter journeys, and supports improved accessibility and connectivity.*

The development will deliver homes and new employment in a co-located setting, close to existing areas of employment and the site of the new NCF. It represents a holistically planned new settlement, designed along garden village principles including providing a walkable and attractive environment within which new civic facilities will be accessible to all.

It proposes a new Park and Ride facility to improve public transport connections into Preston and Blackburn and investment in expanded public transport facilities to connect existing communities in the wider area to the existing and emerging employment opportunities in the A59 Growth Corridor.

## Strategic Objective 6: Place Making

*To protect and enhance the rich diversity of the character and appearance of Central Lancashire's landscape and townscape. Maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place for the many different types of settlements across the area and for new development.*

Cuerdale Garden Village utilises an area of Green Belt land which is, in relative terms, not sensitive to development and in the process will contribute positively to ensuring more sensitive locations on the edge of main urban areas and strategic gaps are protected and the overall integrity of the Green Belt maintained.

The masterplan for the site has been carefully curated to respond to and work positively with the local landscape to ensure the area's green and open character is protected as far as possible. The scale of the development site provides this opportunity in being able to shape the development to work with the landscape.

## Strategic Objective 7: High Quality Development

*To create the highest quality design, which is sustainable, accessible, and safe, and supports active, healthy lifestyles. Promoting built design form that supports inclusive and active communities (objective 11) and a strong sense of place (objective 6) through the relationship of buildings with each other and the spaces around them, and in response to the prevailing character of the area, including scale and density.*

Quality of place is at the heart of the vision for the Cuerdale Garden Village. It embraces the principles of a garden village to deliver the best possible version of a place; an inclusive environment, accessible to all and one which enhances the quality of life for its users. It does this through a number of measures, include a design ethos which focuses on creating a liveable environment where people can meet their every day needs without the need to travel by car, using safe and attractive walking and cycling routes. It will deliver a socially diverse development reflected in the breadth of residential and employment accommodation provided, supporting a range of business types and a place for all.

**Strategic Objective 8: Historic Environment**

*To conserve, and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets (including those of local significance) and their settings. Conserving and creating enjoyment of the historic environment which will ensure our historic assets are sustained and enhanced, so the valuable contribution they make to the character and special interest of the area and their cultural, artistic, economic, and environmental benefits can be realised.*

Cuerdale Garden Village is not constrained by heritage assets in the locality. It avoids development within the setting of historic towns or villages whilst the masterplan for the site has been carefully developed to ensure that the setting of any listed or other historic buildings is not impacted by the proposal. In doing so, it helps direct development away from more sensitive urban edges in this regard.

**Strategic Objective 9: Natural Environment**

*To conserve and enhance the natural environment including designated and un-designated landscapes and biodiversity. Promoting a connected green and blue infrastructure network that plays a role in managing flood risk, delivers measurable net biodiversity gains and improves access to nature, parks, and open spaces for all.*

The development will achieve a biodiversity net gain through on site measures, improving the significant areas of retained green infrastructure across the site. It does not involve the development of land which is sensitive in landscape terms

**Strategic Objective 10: Education & Skills**

*To build on the existing education, training, and skills attainment at all levels. Supporting the provision of high-quality education facilities and training opportunities offered across the area and vocational and apprenticeship opportunities.*

The economic focus of the development will ensure it provides a varied range of job and training opportunities. It can provide the space needed for new business activities attracted by the NCF to move into the area, generating benefits for existing communities. Story Homes is committed to working with South Ribble to development a robust 'Employment and Training Action Plan' which will focus on ensuring local communities are able to access employment and training opportunities which result from the development either on site or in the supply chain.

**Strategic Objective 11: Healthy Lifestyles**

*To help ensure that development contributes to the reduction of health inequalities, whilst improving social inclusion and equal opportunities for all. Promoting healthy lifestyles to maximise health and well-being to meet the needs of existing and future communities, including inclusive, active design and access to sport, leisure, recreation, and community facilities.*

The scale of Cuerdale Garden Village and the design ethos adopted will ensure it is a place for all, providing a very broad spectrum of accommodation, including affordable and special needs homes, co-located with accessible employment. The quality of place is reflected in its focus on providing accessible services as part of the development and significant and varied areas of green space for formal and informal recreation. A walkable and liveable residential environment will be created which all residents with varying needs can benefit from, enabling everyone to partake in community life. This is the garden village advantage. It represents a model for inclusive and 'healthy' development.

# OUR GARDEN VILLAGE VISION



Integrated community infrastructure including local centres, sports facilities, a Park & Ride, a community hospital, primary schools, a supermarket and family restaurant will deliver a sustainable development that responds to the needs of existing and future generations. The proposed new settlement will deliver a mixed use scheme which co-locates mutually-supportive uses – new homes and employment floorspace – within an outstanding parkland setting in a key strategic location in Central Lancashire.

## OUR VISION

**2.1** Cuerdale Garden Village is inspired by the Garden City concept, a holistically planned new settlement which enhances the natural environment and offers high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible jobs and facilities in healthy and sociable communities.

**2.2** The diagram to the right identifies the key objectives to deliver a sustainable and successful Garden Village at Cuerdale. It has been developed through an understanding and application of the National Model Design Guide's, 'well-designed place' characteristics. These objectives are focused on:

- **People**: to provide a better life for all, including the offer of affordable homes, accessible local jobs and a pipeline of employment space to meet future needs
- **Place**: to create a distinctive, innovative and aspirational Garden Village at Cuerdale, with a sustainable environment that supports healthy lifestyles and species-rich habitats.
- **Movement**: to promote the use of sustainable modes of transport through new investment in infrastructure.

BEAUTY OF NATURE
+
LOCALLY ACCESSIBLE JOBS
+
AFFORDABLE HOMES WITH GARDENS
+
A WIDE LEISURE AND RETAIL OFFER
+
AN EFFECTIVE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE
+
HEALTH AND SOCIABLE COMMUNITIES
=
**A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL**


Place
People
Movement
A healthy environment
extensive tree, hedgerow and woodland block planting establishing green lungs which improve air quality
Diverse habitats
achieving a "net gain" in biodiversity, protecting existing habitats and providing new
An aspirational place
setting a new benchmark in design and identity, creating a settlement of distinction through a specific Design Code
Energy saving
addressing the climate change emergency by embracing the latest sustainable technologies, carbon zero homes and low energy bills
Strategic connectivity
access to the M6 and A59 corridors, away from the congested/polluted 'central spine'
Modal shift
reduce dependency on car travel and promote more sustainable habits
Public transport
promote the use public transport with a regular bus service and a Park & Ride
Mixed use
create a critical mass of uses within a 20 minute walk to reduce the need to travel long distances
Active travel
promote health and well-being through active movement including cycle lanes and an extensite footpath network
Employment
a diverse mix of employment floorspace and job opportunities (offices, light manufacturing, industrial/logistics)
Social infrastructure
two schools for 840 children, two local centres and community facilities
2,300 new homes
well-designed high specification family and affordable homes (35%) to meet the needs of all
Diverse community
a mix of uses to create a place to live, work and play
Leisure
new facilities for recreation and healthy lifestyles including 6 playgrounds and 10 sport pitches
Unique Location
Economic connectivity establishing an A59 economic corridor
Accessible green space
opening up the countryside to the community, with links to bridleways, public rights of way and the Guild Wheel

# OUR GARDEN VILLAGE PROPOSALS

**2.3** Our proposal is for the development of a new Garden Village in Samlesbury. Considering the Site's unique characteristics, our vision and the Garden Village aspirations, our proposals will deliver:

- A vibrant and balanced community where residents can live, work and play.
- A parkland setting, c.122ha in size, which integrates the existing natural assets, including ancient woodlands, tree belts and open grassland, with numerous landscape enhancements such as extensive tree planting and habitat improvements, alongside new areas of public open space, recreation facilities and an extensive foot and cycle path network.
- A vibrant mix of house types to reflect local identified need, including homes for first time buyers and homes designated for later living.
- Approximately 2,300 high-quality new homes. Story Homes is committed to providing affordable homes in line with policy requirements. This is currently 35% and equates to 805 affordable homes.
- Two local centres to act as a focal points for the new community, combined they will offer c. 4,300sqm of a mix of convenience retail as well as food and beverage establishments, doctors, dentists, pharmacies etc.
- A small c.1,800sqm supermarket and family restaurant offer community uses with frontages activating the A59.
- A community hospital will provide local health care provision for new residents and the wider community of South Ribble.
- Two new two-form entry primary schools with the capacity for 840 pupils.
- Sports facilities including playing pitches and ancillary storage space / clubhouse and car and cycle parking for ease of access for the wider community.
- Approximately 252,500sqm Gross Internal Area (GIA) of employment floorspace, including industrial, storage and distribution, retail and office space. Additionally, small employment amenity buildings which will include functions such as café, cycle hub, bookable meeting rooms and flexible workspace.
- A range of sustainable transport solutions, including a Park & Ride facility with 500 parking spaces, bus station and cycle parking, as well as bus stops around the Site and a commitment to include sustainable transport to surrounding areas.
- A successful, sustainably led development fit for the future. Commitment to delivering a well-connected place which facilitates sustainable travel, a low carbon and no gas place which mitigates and adapts to climate change and a naturally resilient place which protects and enhances the Sites biodiversity through green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems.

## Logik Developments

- The three Logik parcels subject to the current planning application can deliver an additional floorspace of 184,200sqm (GEA). To meet market demands, this could be distributed as:
  - up to 170,000sqm (GIA) of Industrial Employment Use B2/B8.
  - up to 5,000sqm of Retail Use E(b);
  - up to 7,500sqm of Office Use E(g); or
  - up to 10,000sqm of Hotel Use C1.

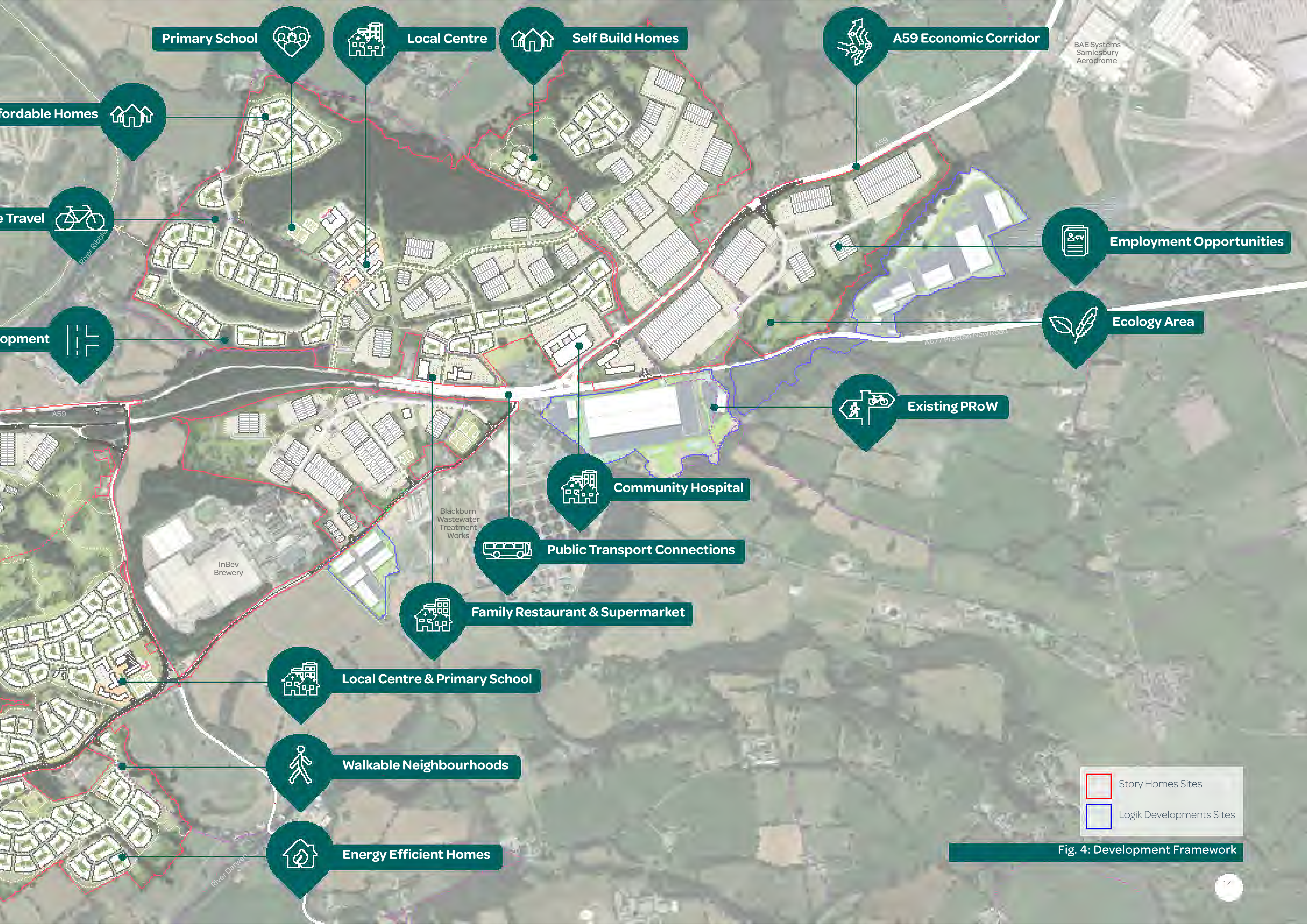



Fig. 4: Development Framework

# THE BENEFITS

03

## ECONOMIC BENEFITS

### Construction Phase

**£775 million**
**Investment**
In the scheme's construction

**265 gross direct jobs**
Full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs supported on average during construction (c. 20 years)

**Including 170 net direct jobs**
FTE jobs in Lancashire, including 90 for South Ribble residents

**Plus 85 net indirect/induced jobs**
FTE jobs Lancashire, including 20 for South Ribble residents

**£430 million**
**Productivity boost**
Total GVA[1] economic output during construction including £360 million in South Ribble

### Operational Phase

**4,900**
**Residents**
Living in new, high-quality homes

**£45.3 million**
**Retail and leisure expenditure**
Annually by residents, supporting local businesses

**£4.4 million**
**Council Tax**
Collected annually by South Ribble Borough Council

**Capturing market demand**
Providing the right type of employment accommodation with the locational qualities needed to capture footloose business investment

**5,670**
**Jobs on site**
In a range of occupations, including education, distribution, manufacturing and R&D

**£515 million**
**Productivity boost**
GVA economic output annually, including £438 million in South Ribble

**£5.7 million**
**Business Rates**
Collected annually by South Ribble Borough Council

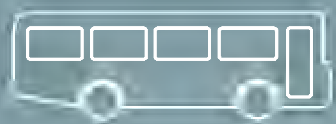
**Providing critical infrastructure to optimise the beneficial effects of the NCF**
Providing employment space which enables spin-off business activities associated with the NCF to develop and grow, maximising the locally felt benefits from this investment

# ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

## Sustainable design and location

- Buildings design to meet Future Homes Standard and reduce carbon emissions by 75% beyond current standards
- Target for homes to be net-zero carbon from regulated energy sources and commitment to no gas use
- Commercial buildings to meet BREEAM standards
- Sustainable surface water drainage taking account of climate change
- Achieving a net gain in biodiversity

## Promoting sustainable transport choices



- New 500 space Park & Ride facility providing sustainable connections to Preston
- Investment in bus services to connect the site with employment and key service centres
- Retention of PROWs and creation of extensive integrated pedestrian and cycle routes
- Direct link to the Guild Wheel (National Cycle Network Route 622) and close proximity to Routes 55 and 61

# SOCIAL BENEFITS

## Creating a diverse and cohesive community

- Providing  up to 2,300 new homes which offer a broad range of housing types
- Providing up to 805 affordable homes in line with policy requirements of 35%
- Providing accommodation for households with different needs and at different life different life stages

## Achieving a high level of self-sufficiency

- Civic amenities (including two primary schools and healthcare provision) built into the development
- Avoiding pressure on existing infrastructure

## Promoting healthy lifestyles

- A walkable neighbourhood with access to all services within a 20 minute walk for all residents
- 122 ha of green infrastructure which includes:
- c.111 ha of publicly accessible natural and semi-natural greenspace and amenity greenspace
- 4.60 ha of formal parks and gardens
- 0.36 ha of children's play - 4 LEAPs and 2 NEAPs
- 6.30 ha of playing pitches

# SITE SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS 04

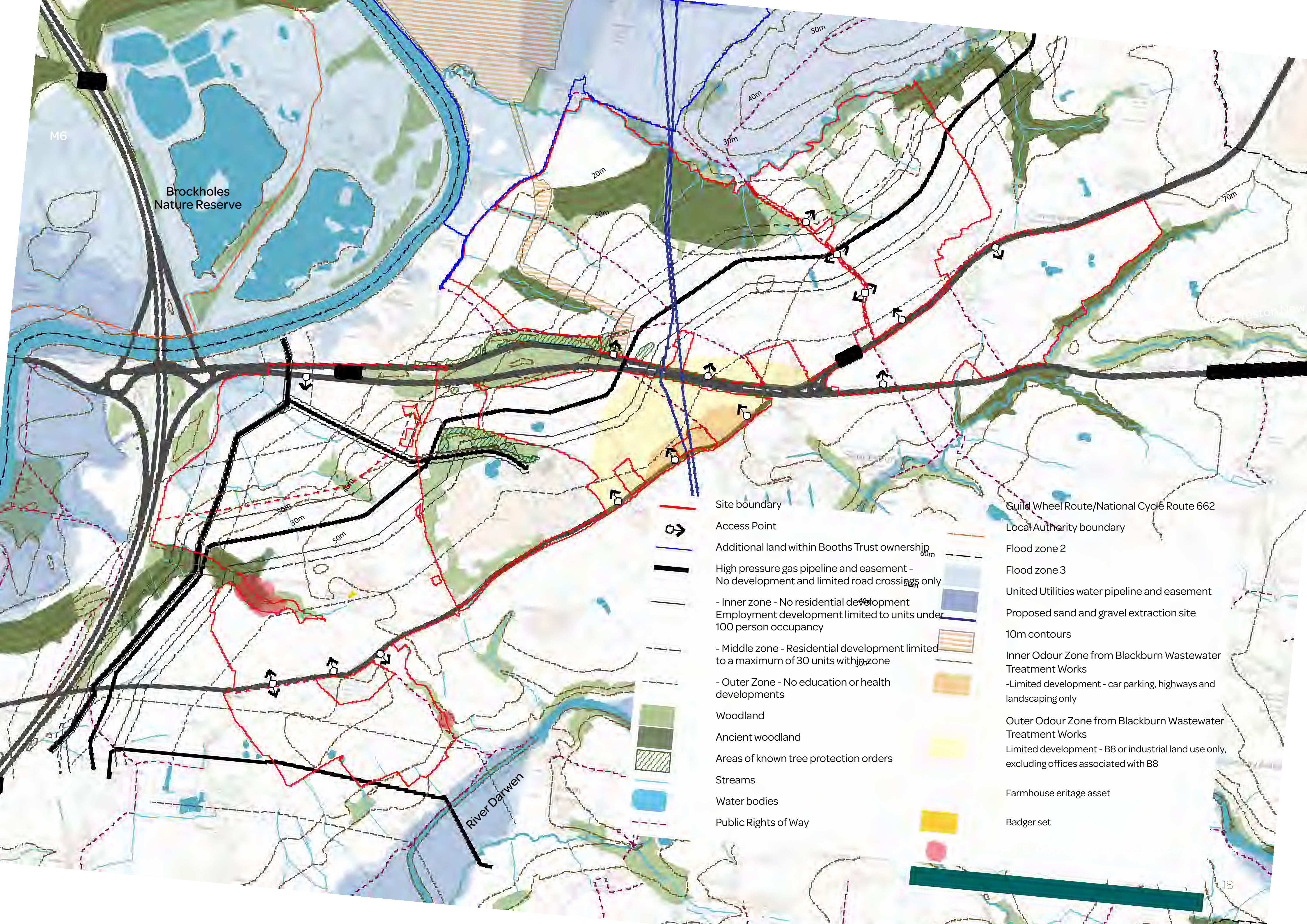
**4.1** The site specific spatial constraints and technical considerations have been identified and brought together to form a comprehensive constraints plan that has helped to inform the masterplanning design principles on the following pages. The masterplan has sought to respond positively to the various considerations and will:

- Reduce adverse visual effect of proposed development by preventing development in visually sensitive areas of the masterplan. Appropriate landscape buffers will also be provided to reflect the rural character of the site.
- Consider limiting development and building height in sloping parts of the Site which are visible in longer distance views from the surrounding Public Right of Way network. Maintain open views in parts of the Site from the Public Right of Way that cross the parcels.
- Work harmoniously with the existing topographical context of the Site.
- Serve the development with access points taken off the A59, the B6230 Cuerdale Road, Vicarage Lane and the A677 Preston New Road.
- Retain or reroute Public Rights of Way which pass through the Site. Create enhanced pedestrian and cycle networks across Cuerdale Garden Village.
- Retain and observe a 20m buffer to Ancient Woodland and a 15m buffer to all other woodland. Retain Category A and B trees where possible as well as strong boundary vegetation. Replace all tree loss at a ratio of 2:1.
- Retain and buffer Great Crested Newt ponds and wildlife ponds across the Site. Retain badger setts and where possible apply a 30m buffer.
- Retain the integrity of Policy G16 Wildlife Corridor. Retain Biological Heritage Sites.
- Ensure the masterplan provides a biodiversity net gain by promoting additional green and blue infrastructure, creating high quality habitats of flora and fauna
- Avoid built development within Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- Create a comprehensive flood mitigation strategy, through Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) such as attenuation basins and permeable surfaces. Attenuation Basins will be designed to respond to the sites flood risk as well as an allowance for climate change.
- Respect Walmsley Fold Farmhouse non-designated heritage asset by carefully designing housing typology to respond positively to the local context. Appropriate scale and massing will also be adopted within the setting of the farmhouse.
- Respect the setting of New Southworth Hall (Grade II Listed Building), Rowley Fold Farmhouse (Grade II Listed Building), Roman Catholic Church of Saint John Southworth (Grade II Listed Building) and New Hall Lodge (Non-Designated Heritage Asset).
- Observe the various restrictions on development associated with the High Pressure and National High Pressure gas mains and their HSE easements, Inner, Middle and Outer Zones.
- Observe the odour constraints from Blackburn Wastewater Treatment Works, limiting development to car parking, highways and landscaping only within the Inner Odour Zone and limiting development to B8, industrial or commercial land uses only in the Outer Odour Zone.
- Offset residential development from InBev Brewery service yard.

## Consultation feedback on the submitted outline application

**4.2 An outline planning application for the development of the first phase of the Cuerdale Garden Village was submitted by Story Homes in May 2022 (application reference number: 07/2022/00451/OUT ). The below responses from the statutory consultees have so far been obtained, all of which have no objections to the outline application development:**

- **Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (as principle ecological advisor), subject to conditions including a Habitat and Landscape Creation and Management Plan.**
- **The appointed Tree Officer who advised that subsequent applications to be accompanied by a detailed Arboriculture Impact and Method Statement.**
- **The HSE and Cadent have confirmed they do not object to the outline application development as conditions set out in the HSE Land Use Planning Methodology have been met.**
- **Natural England have no objection to the outline application.**
- **The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)**
- **Historic England and the Council's Conservation Team have no objection to the outline application.**


M6
Brockholes
Nature Reserve
River Darwen
20m
30m
40m
50m
60m
70m
Site boundary
Access Point
Additional land within Booths Trust ownership
High pressure gas pipeline and easement -
No development and limited road crossings only
- Inner zone - No residential development
Employment development limited to units under
100 person occupancy
- Middle zone - Residential development limited
to a maximum of 30 units within zone
- Outer Zone - No education or health
developments
Woodland
Ancient woodland
Areas of known tree protection orders
Streams
Water bodies
Public Rights of Way
Guild Wheel Route/National Cycle Route 662
Local Authority boundary
Flood zone 2
Flood zone 3
United Utilities water pipeline and easement
Proposed sand and gravel extraction site
10m contours
Inner Odour Zone from Blackburn Wastewater
Treatment Works
-Limited development - car parking, highways and
landscaping only
Outer Odour Zone from Blackburn Wastewater
Treatment Works
Limited development - B8 or industrial land use only,
excluding offices associated with B8
Farmhouse eritage asset
Badger set

# DESIGN PRINCIPLES

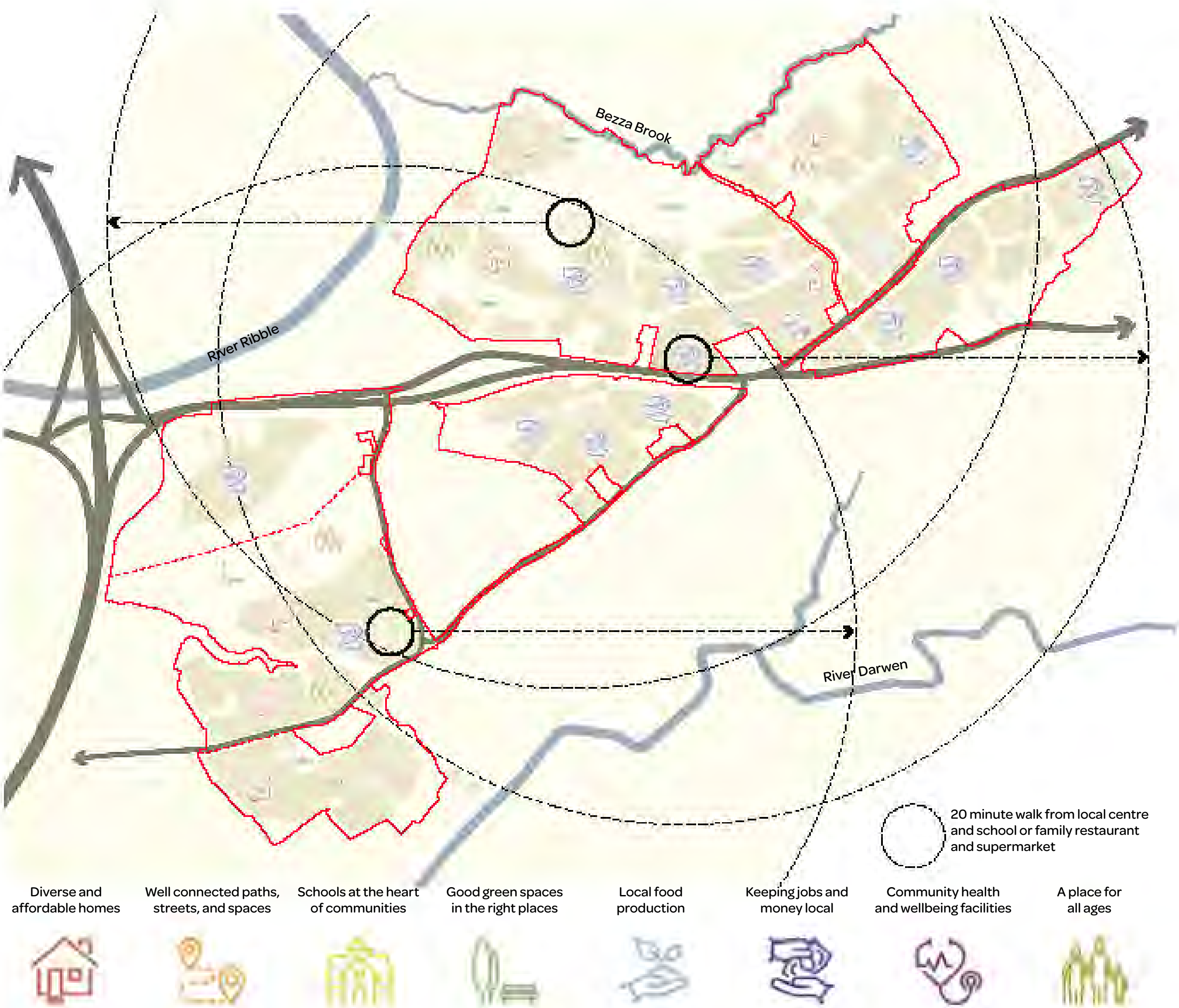


## A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

- Cuerdale Garden Village will provide a vibrant mix of uses to support a diverse community. Of the 284.33ha site, c.59ha will be dedicated to employment uses, c.58ha will be residential,c.14ha will be community uses (including schools, community hospital, local centres, supermarket, family restaurant and the Park & Ride) and 122ha will be green infrastructure.
- Cuerdale Garden Village will be a catalyst for the sustainable growth of Central Lancashire's economy as part of the designation of a Central Belt from Burnley to Blackpool. Cuerdale Garden Village will establish a key gateway within the Central Belt with employment uses, including storage, distribution, industrial and retail uses being located on and within close proximity to the A59. Uses will have direct access to the surrounding road and motorway network and to local markets and labour force.
- To further support the A59 as an economic corridor, a supermarket, family restaurant and community hospital will all have active frontage to the road. These proposed uses will complement and integrate with the existing Salmesbury Hotel, Esso Garage and Roman Stone Tile Company into a cluster of community facilities.
- Sports facilities, including playing pitches and clubhouse, and a Park & Ride will also be accessed directly off the A59 for ease of access for the wider community; with pedestrian and cycle links to the residential parcels.
- Two areas of mixed-use development will be predominantly residential supported with centrally located two-form entry primary schools and local centres.
- The local centres will include a variety of facilities such as shops and local independent businesses run by the residents of the community.

## WALKABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS

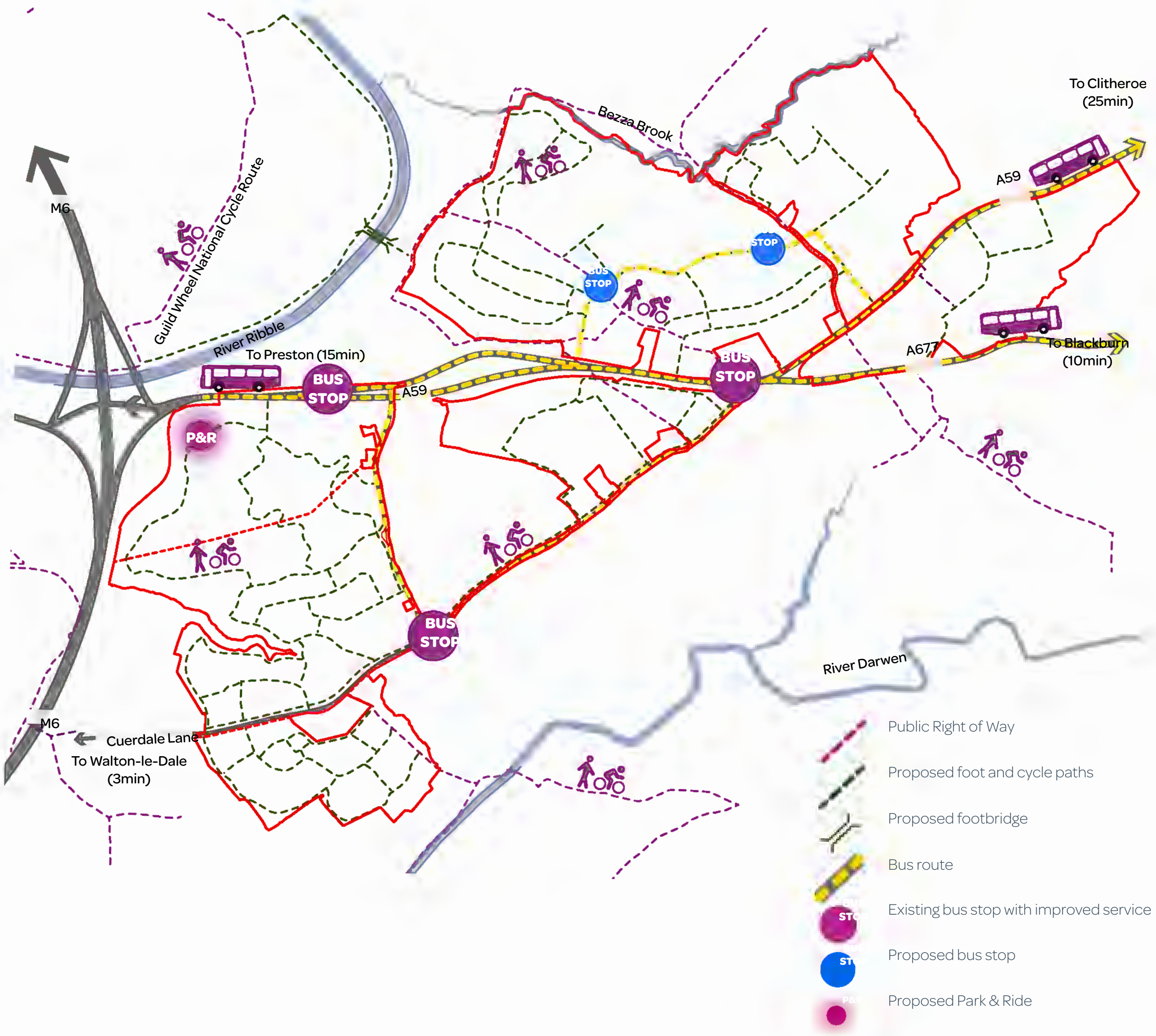
- The facilities provided at Cuerdale Garden Village, as set out on the previous page, will all be located within a "walkable" distance from residential properties, encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport.
- A fundamental principle of Cuerdale Garden Village is that it creates a self-sustained community, minimising the need to travel to other towns and the dependency on the private car.
- Cuerdale Garden Village will fulfil the principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods, as set out in Central Lancashire's Local Plan Policy Direction 10, by creating and sustaining active, healthy, inclusive, safe, and sustainable communities.
- At Cuerdale, this will be achieved by providing:
  - sustainable transport options and active travel connections;
  - employment opportunities which are accessible via sustainable and active travel;
  - local centres which are accessible via sustainable and active travel;
  - access to primary health and social care networks;
  - community provision including childcare, community venue and parks which are accessible via sustainable and active travel; and
  - spaces and places for active lives, including green and blue infrastructure, public realm and sport and recreation facilities.




Central Lancashire Local Plan - 20 Minute Neighbourhood Features

## A CONNECTED COMMUNITY

- An extensive network of pedestrian and cycle routes will provide safe and direct connectivity across the Garden Village, between residential development and employment areas and to the key facilities. The A59 will have enhanced pedestrian and cycle crossing points to ensure safe movement between the parcels. Routes will link areas of open space with destinations such as the primary schools, local centres and sports facilities.
- Cuerdale Garden Village will ensure walking and cycling is easy, comfortable and attractive for all users, so these are seen as the first choice travel method on local journeys. The development will offer continuous, clear, direct and attractive walking and cycling routes both within the Site, to key destinations, to public transport and the surrounding area.
- Proposed pedestrian and cycle routes will cohere with the existing Public Right of Ways to offer easy access to a wide-ranging path network across South Ribble. A potential footbridge link across the River Ribble to Brockholes Nature Reserve will establish a safe and direct connection to the Guild Wheel Route.
- Sustainable transport solutions will include a Park & Ride facility with 500 parking spaces and cycle parking. Frequent bus routes and stops are found along the A59. Bus services will be diverted along Vicarage Lane and Cuerdale Lane and through the northern extent to support the development. These routes will connect the Site with key economic centres of Blackburn and Preston. Bus stops will be located by key community facilities and at regular intervals along the bus routes.
- To facilitate sustainable travel the development will provide secure cycle storage in all homes and the installation of electric vehicle infrastructure in houses as well as in public spaces to help serve general usage.



# A SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE

- The well-established natural asset network formed by woodlands, ancient woodlands, tree belts, hedgerows, grasslands and ponds defines the landscape character of the Site. Retention of these natural assets is a fundamental element when considering the design of the new settlement and creating a publicly accessible parkland setting for Cuerdale Garden Village extending to c.122ha.
- A generous green infrastructure network will be established across Cuerdale Garden Village. The variety and extent of open spaces will offer multiple benefits: for biodiversity and natural landscape; for sport and recreation; for the health and well-being of residents and for sustainable water management.
- The existing wildlife corridors will be retained and enhanced and supplemented with additional green links across the Site as well as dedicated ecology areas to achieve a biodiversity net gain. Improved grasslands and habitat ponds will support species found within the Site and surrounds.
- The topography of the Site is dynamic with some characterful topographical changes relating to the valleys of River Ribble and Bezza Brook to the north and River Darwen to the south. Development will be located on the predominantly flatter extents of the Site and will avoid visually sensitive slopes. The development will maximise long distance views over river corridors with footpaths and viewpoints in key locations. Utilising the topography will appropriately locate sustainable drainage mitigation measures.

# DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK 06

Cuerdale Garden Village will deliver a beautiful, high quality, sustainable and mixed-use new settlement with integrated community infrastructure within an outstanding parkland setting. A beautiful place to live, work and play, Cuerdale Garden Village will create an inclusive community for everyone, that responds to the needs of existing and future generations.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Site Area:** | 284.33 ha |
| **Residential Development:** | up to 2,300 homes |
| **Tenure Mix:** | |
| • Market Housing (65%) | 1,495 |
| • Affordable Housing (35%) | 805 |
| **Employment Development:** | up to 252,500 sqm (GIA) |
| **Other Community Uses:** | |
| • 2no. Primary School | 2 ha / 420 pupils per school |
| • 2no. Local Centre | up to 2,300 sqm per centre |
| • Supermarket | c. 1,800sqm / 0.5 ha site |
| • Family Restaurant | 1 ha site |
| • Community Hospital | 3 ha site |
| • Park & Ride | 500 spaces & bus station |
| • Playing Pitches | c. 3,560 sqm & clubhouse |
| • Public Open Space | 122 ha |
| • Children's Play | 2 no. NEAP and 4 no. LEAP |

1. Residential neighbourhood
2. Executive homes / self build
3. Employment site
4. Mixed use local centre
5. Primary school
6. Park & Ride
7. Supermarket
8. Family restaurant
9. Community hospital
10. Public open space
11. Community sport pitch provision
12. Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP)
13. Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP)
14. Primary road
15. Secondary road
16. Residential streets, lanes and drives
17. Public Right of Way (retained or rerouted)
18. The Guild Wheel route
19. Foot and cycle paths
20. Opportunity for pedestrian footbridge connection to Brockholes Natural Reserve
21. Active travel route
22. Green pedestrian and cycle corridor link to local centre
23. Retained local heritage asset
24. Retained trees / woodland / ancient woodland
25. Retained hedgerows
26. Proposed trees / woodland
27. Proposed hedgerows
28. Proposed attenuation basins and habitat ponds
29. Retained Wildlife Corridor
30. Ecology area

Fig. 6: Development Framework

## CHARACTER AREAS

**8.1** The Development Framework demonstrates how Cuerdale Garden Village can be delivered in a spatial form that is locally inspired, unique to the Site's attributes, policy compliant and technically sound. However, when implementing our vision for the Site, focused on People, Place and Movement, it is key to explore character and appearance as well as function.

**8.2** Defined by variations in design with regard to uses, built form, streets and landscape, the Development Framework can be divided into five broad character areas as follows:

- Employment
- Local Centre
- Neighbourhood
- Hamlets
- Countryside Edge

**8.3** Each character area responds to its unique landscape-led setting, and reflects key attributes of the surrounding area, creating distinct and memorable places within the proposal. The adjacent plan shows the spatial distribution of the character areas across the Site.

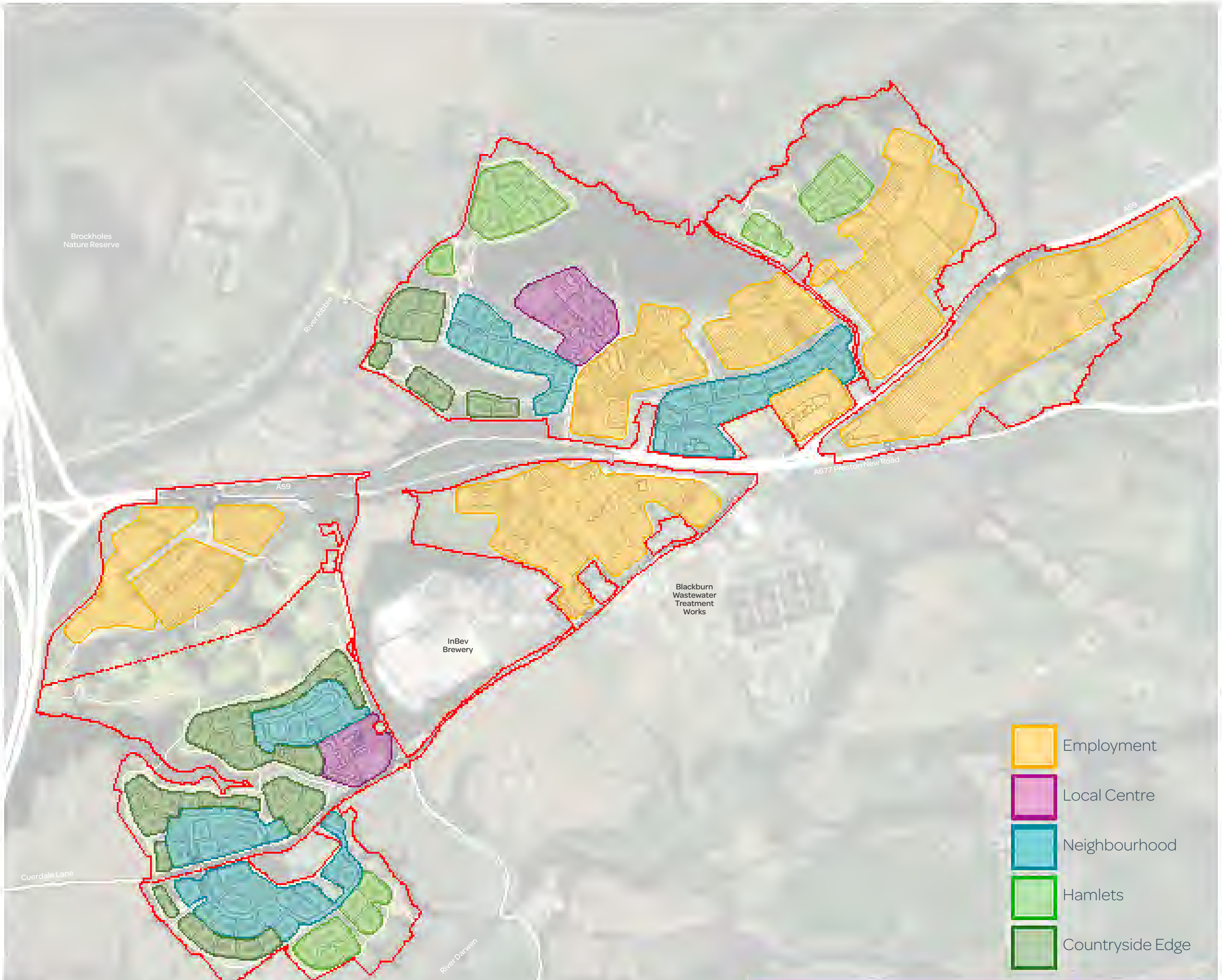



Fig. 7: Character Area Plan

## CHARACTER AREA: EMPLOYMENT

“A positive approach to providing the employment land required to address local needs."

"Numerous landscape enhancements, including areas of public open space, sport pitches and foot and cycle paths, will support the health and wellbeing of employees and create a great place to work in an attractive parkland setting.”

**6.4** Cuerdale Garden Village will provide 252,500 sqm (GIA) of employment floorspace. The development will support a number of different employment uses including General Industry (Use Class B2), Storage and Distribution (B8) and Commercial, Business and Service (E).

**9.5** The parcel at the fork of the A59 and A677, is highly prominent and lends itself to becoming a landmark office or research and development building.

**6.6** Employment development within Cuerdale Garden Village will be capable of responding to the range of needs in the local and regional market in both the short and long term as well as the anticipated demand that could come from its proximity to BAE Systems, the nearby Enterprise Zone and the emerging National Cyber Force Campus. This will be achieved by offering a variety of flexible unit and workspace types and sizes and close proximity to key arterial routes, the A59 and M6 Motorway.

**6.7** The employment development has an efficient land coverage; approximately 45% of the net developable area will be utilised for buildings. The building layout has been carefully located and appropriately sized to positively respond to

Industrial shed for B2/B8 employment uses

High quality outdoor spaces for employees

High quality outdoor spaces for employees the landscape, ecological and topographical setting, whilst also considering underground utility constraints, specifically national gas and water pipelines.

**4.8** The proposed employment development meets the conditions set out in the HSE Land Use Planning Methodology in relation to the gas pipelines passing through the Site. Buildings within the HSE Inner Zone would be less than 3 storeys and would have less than 100 occupants in each building. There are no restrictions in the Middle and Outer Zones on employment development.

**6.9** To serve the areas of employment, amenities in addition to the local centres, will include Local Convenience, Food and Drink Uses (E) and amenity buildings with cafés, cycle hubs, bookable meeting rooms and flexible workspace.

## Sustainable Travel

**6.10** Areas of employment have been located within a walkable distance from residential properties, encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport. High quality foot and cycle paths and regular bus services minimise the need to travel to other towns and the dependency on the private car.

**9.11** A Park & Ride facility will be provided within the eastern most parcel and will include a bus turning circle and bus station alongside 500 car parking spaces (including disabled bays) and cycle parking. A Park & Ride will ensure the employment areas are easily accessible by the wider local labour force.

**9.12** Story Homes is committed to supporting the growth of low and zero carbon based means of travel and will provide electric vehicle charging points to all employment uses.

## Landscape and Sport

**9.13** The landscape setting of the employment development aims to provide an appropriate and sensitive framework for new development that encourages well-being for all employees, protects and promotes wildlife, is appropriate to the local landscape character context and optimises opportunities for landscape enhancement and connectivity.

**9.14** Employment development will be encompassed within the parkland setting. The parkland setting will integrate the existing natural assets including ancient woodland, tree belts valley side woodlands, hedgerow network and open grassland with numerous landscape enhancements, new areas of public open space and a foot and cycle path network.

**9.15** A large sports facility, including playing pitches and ancillary storage / clubhouse will be provided within the eastern most parcel. Additional playing pitches will also be provided throughout the employment areas.

## Community Hospital

**6.16** A community hospital also forms part of the employment offer within Cuerdale. Community Hospitals are small local hospitals that provide an appropriate range and format of health care facilities and resources for the defined community. The community hospital may include in-patients, out-patients, diagnostics, treatments, day care, primary care and outreach services for patients provided by multidisciplinary teams. They may also provide service concerned with wellbeing and health promotion, and also provide a base for third sector services

**6.17** Cuerdale community hospital will be appropriately sized and designed to meet the healthcare needs of the local population. Its objectives should be to meet the local community's non-specialist health needs, to take a holistic approach to patient care and to work towards maintaining patients in the community wherever possible.

Clubhouse for sports facility

Courtyard outdoor spaces at community hospital

Community hospital


Flexible workspaces of varying scale


Modern takes on traditional barn style architecture to reflect local vernacular


Soft planting with wildlife friendly species


Industrial shed for B2/B8 employment uses


Landmark office or research and development building


Attractive landscaping to car parks


Wildlife ponds within ecology areas adjacent to employment areas

## CHARACTER AREA: LOCAL CENTRES

"Situated to establish a walkable neighbourhood, the local centres host a vibrant mix of uses, including apartments, retail, convenience stores, small businesses, places to eat and drink, and primary schools, all in a high quality setting and within easy walking and cycling distance from the surrounding community."

**6.18** The local centres establishes a focus, identity and sense of place for Cuerdale Garden Village. Centred on a pedestrianised public square and pedestrian priority high street, high quality lighting, paving, planting and street furniture will be used to promote a vibrant day and night time locations within the development. The village squares will enable people to live, work and interact in outside spaces thus creating a sense of community and belonging. The squares are sufficiently sized to support pop-up events such as village markets alongside spill out space for ground floor uses such as cafés.

**6.19** The local centres comprise high density mixed-use buildings which create a strong frontage to the primary streets and vibrant squares. The buildings have active ground floor uses which spill out into the squares, with apartments above overlooking this active space. Housing typologies such as Live Work units and townhouses will also be located in local centres.

**6.20** The two 2-form entry primary schools will support the families within Cuerdale Garden Village and the surrounds as well as providing local employment opportunities. The schools will each occupy a 2 ha site, accommodate 420 pupils and have inspiring architecture and outdoor environments.


FRUIT SHACK

## CHARACTER AREA: NEIGHBOURHOOD

"The streets and spaces of the Neighbourhood are designed for pedestrian and cyclist priority and to create a welcoming sense of place which promotes community, inclusivity and well-being for residents."

**6.21** The Neighbourhood creates a safe environment with low traffic speeds which encourages children to play in the street and neighbours to interact with one another.

**6.22** This will see occasional planted verges with seasonally interesting trees, dedicated parking bays and narrow carriageway widths. Key nodal points throughout this area are defined by shared surface raised tables to act as tactile traffic calming and to create a more pleasant pedestrian environment. Swales will feature across the neighbourhood to collect and clean surface water run-off and add further greening to the street.

**6.23** Houses will be close to the street with generous privacy strips, relaxed building lines, planting to soften dwellings and parking located off-street and behind building lines. Dwellings will be a varied mix of detached, semi-detached and townhouse properties up to 3 storeys in height to create a human scale environment.

**6.24** Residential perimeter blocks will be interspersed with areas of public open space and pocket parks, these will be green and leafy destinations with children's play facilities and seating. Importantly they will be overlooked by properties to establish natural surveillance and be well lit in the evening. The green spaces add to the distinctive character of the Neighbourhood and assist in the legibility of the proposed design.

## CHARACTER AREA: HAMLETS

"These areas will have a bespoke identity with characterful mews streets and shared spaces, serving a close-knit community overlooking the River Darwin and Bezza Brook."

**6.25** The Hamlets character area is inspired by the numerous clusters of farmsteads and small hamlets surrounding the Site which are attractive urban arrangements worth reflecting in this proposal.

**6.26** Building lines in the area are relaxed, interrupted by larger front gardens and tree planting. Parking is to be located off-street primarily behind the building lines on side-of-property driveways to reduce the visual impact parking will have on the areas character. Housing types in the area are varied with a mix of semi-detached and detached dwellings. Building heights range up to 2 storeys. Densities across the Site are at their lowest in this character area with a density of up to 30 dph due to the increase in detached properties.

## CHARACTER AREA: COUNTRYSIDE EDGE

*"A low density, informal edge to the Site characterised by trees and greenery filtering into the development, creating a gentle transition between residential area and countryside."*

**6.27** The Countryside Edge character area places residential development adjacent to the neighbouring countryside so a sensitive and well considered design approach has been applied to these areas.

**6.28** The development within this character area is predominately low density, detached, large family homes arranged with organic building lines and varied roofscape. The properties are accessed via narrow, shared surface lanes and have large planted front gardens with concealed side parking resulting in a green and leafy pedestrian friendly environment. These elements aim to establish a soft and attractive frontage overlooking areas of public open space. Dwellings have been orientated to overlook the open countryside to provide an natural surveillance to areas of public open space.

**6.29** The landscape of this character area provides enhanced boundary planting to support existing natural assets and screen the development from external views where required. The extensive footpath network is easily accessible, providing for low intensity recreational activities such as cycling, running and walking.

## LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

### Objectives

**6.30** A landscape-led approach to masterplanning has underpinned the proposals for Cuerdale Garden Village. Conservation and enhancement of existing natural assets within and surrounding the Site is the primary objective of the landscape strategy. This is to:

- Protect and increase the ecological value of the retained habitats and biodiversity across the Site
- Preserve the sense of the Site's semi-rural character
- Integrate the proposed development within the existing landscape structure
- Retain and respect the characteristic pattern of river corridor and valley side woodlands
- Visually soften the proposed development into its landscape setting.

**6.31** The secondary objective is to establish a strong green infrastructure network of new and existing areas of high quality, multi-functional green space and other green features as an integral part of the development which is presented as a cohesive parkland setting. This objective will offer multiple benefits for biodiversity and natural landscape; for sport and recreation; health and well-being of residents and for water management.

The new development at Cuerdale will be encompassed within an outstanding parkland setting of c.122ha in size to benefit residents, employees and the wider community.

### Parkland Setting

**6.32** At present the Site is in private ownership with no public access beyond Public Rights of Way, the scheme will therefore open up substantial areas of the countryside for public use.

**6.33** The parkland setting will integrate the existing natural assets including ancient woodland, valley side woodlands, hedgerow network, tree belts and open grassland with numerous landscape enhancements, new areas of public open space and an extensive foot and cycle path network. The variety and extent of open spaces will offer multiple benefits: for biodiversity and natural landscape; for sport and recreation; health and well-being of residents and for water management. The parkland will ensure the new development is appropriate to the local landscape character context and links the Site to neighbouring areas such as wooded corridors associated with the River Ribble, River Darwen and Bezza Brook, gently undulating open pastures, designed landscapes and parkland and wetlands and meadows at Brockholes Nature Reserve.

**6.34** The parkland setting will create an enhanced landscape achieving a net gain in biodiversity. Native neutral grassland meadows, extensive tree, woodland and hedgerow planting and wildlife ponds will complement the existing ecology, provide new habitats for birds, bats and amphibians, increase landscape connectivity and protect areas of highest ecological value.


Fig. 8: Landscape Strategy Plan

## Green Infrastructure Network

**6.35** Cuerdale Garden Village will open up significant areas of green space for public access, providing a generous green infrastructure network across the new development . The green infrastructure will be formed by a number of key landscape typologies that reflect identified environmental features of the existing landscape. These include; woodlands, hedgerow and hedgerow trees, ecology areas, semi-natural open space and amenity parks.

### Woodlands

**6.36** The existing c.17.50ha of Ancient Woodland, c.9.0ha of UK Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodlands and significant lengths of tree belts and groups of trees will be conserved and enhanced within the proposals.

**6.37** The proposals will promote the planting of new small mixed woodlands to link existing woodlands and tree belts to contribute to overall wooded appearance of the landscape and link to habitats beyond the boundaries. Important wildlife corridor connections will be made between areas of Ancient Woodland and woodland associated with the A59 and Bezza Brook as well as tree belts running down the valley to the River Darwen. The creation of woodland blocks, particularly on valley slopes, will reflect an existing characteristic of the landscape and provide screening of both residential and employment development in visually sensitive areas. This will correspond with guidance provided in the Lancashire Landscape Strategy.

### Hedgerows and Hedgerow Trees

**6.38** The distinctive rural hedgerow network will be retained where possible and replaced along roadsides where removal is required for highway improvements. The hedgerows provide sheltered habitats which are important links between woodland blocks and wooded cloughs. The proposals will promote the re-planting of gaps in existing hedgerows and incorporate the planting of new hedgerow trees. This will conserve the retained hedgerow network in accordance with guidance provided in the Lancashire Landscape Strategy.

## Ecology Areas

**6.39** C.57ha of Cuerdale Garden Village will become dedicated ecology areas to meet the needs of the Site's existing species and provide enhanced habitats to attract future wildlife. The ecology areas will see the retention of Biological Heritage Sites, Wildlife Corridors and most Great Crested Newt Ponds as well as the installation of new wildlife ponds, wetland attenuation basins, extensive tree, hedgerow and scrub planting and enhancement of existing grassland.

**6.40** The Landscape Strategy Plan locates five generously sized areas dedicated to enhanced ecology habitats alongside the existing Wildlife Corridor between Walmsley Fold Wood and the River Darwen. These areas will be accessible to residents and employees but limited paths will be provided to ensure the level of usage is relatively low to minimise disturbance to wildlife. Additional ecological enhancements will be applied across the village.

**6.41** The proposed development has been assessed using Natural England's Metric to ensure that it can deliver a net biodiversity gain.

## Semi-Natural Open Space

**6.42** Semi-natural open spaces are to be kept informal so the landscape appears to flow organically around the Site; paths meander, grassland is only lightly managed, wildflowers and bulbs create a carpet of seasonal colour and tree planting is arranged in informal drifts. Located to the perimeter of the developed areas and in between residential and employment blocks, the space is to be kept open to emulate the local landscape character. Semi-natural green space will also provide development setbacks from the site boundaries and road corridors of Cuerdale Lane, Vicarage Lane and the A59 to allow field boundary vegetation to be retained or replaced where lost to highway improvements. The semi-natural open space will be multi-functional, not only providing for human interest through walking and cycling routes, trim trails and community spaces for residents to enjoy the landscape; but also accommodating hydrological, visual and further ecological integration and mitigation.

## Amenity Parks

**6.43** The Landscape Strategy Plan locates six amenity parks within the residential development and are associated with children's play opportunities and community social spaces as well as attenuation basins and retained landscape features. The parks provide opportunities for recreation activities and community cohesion which supports health and well-being whilst further diversifying the green infrastructure network. Play opportunities include two centrally located Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (NEAP) and four Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAP) set within formal areas of public open space.

**6.44** An extensive area of playing pitches alongside ancillary community facilities/clubhouse with car and cycle parking are located to the western extent of the site. Further public playing pitches are located within employment areas to provide employees with space to exercise and maintain their well-being.

## SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE CHANGE

**6.45** Cuerdale Garden Village aims to deliver a sustainable and locally responsive development where people can live, work and play. The proposed development will provide social and economic opportunities for local people, while respecting the local environment and biodiversity. Cuerdale Garden Village will also mitigate and adapt to climate change through providing homes that are net-zero in operational energy and resilient to the risks posed by a changing climate.

### Mitigating Climate Change

**6.46** Cuerdale Garden Village will mitigate climate change through the provision of energy efficient, low carbon homes. Houses will aim to meet the requirements of the full Future Homes Standard from day one, delivering a 75% reduction in carbon emissions beyond Part L of the 2013 building regulations. Homes will also aim to be net-zero carbon in regulated operational energy. This will be achieved through fabric efficiency measures, reduced air leakage, maximised passive solar gains, the use of solar PV, and air source heat pumps.

**6.47** Carbon emissions will be further reduced through promotion of sustainable transport. Essential services will be provided within walking distance for residents, helping to reduce the need to travel by car or reliance on private vehicle journeys. While the provision of well-connected pedestrian and bicycle routes, cycle storage spaces, a potential extension of bus routes into the heart of the development, and EV charging points will help to minimize transport-related carbon emissions.

### Adapting to Climate Change

**6.48** The development is designed to be resilient to the effects of a changing climate. To manage water consumption, measures such as dual flush WCs, water meters, low flow fittings, and water efficient equipment have been proposed, enabling homes to limit water usage to an average of 110 litres or less per person per day.

**6.49** To mitigate flood risk, a drainage strategy will be designed to withstand a 1 in 100-year storm event including a 40% allowance for climate change. The drainage strategy includes a sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) comprised of attenuation basins and swales to achieve greenfield runoff rates.

**6.50** To reduce the risk of overheating, the design will adhere to glazing ratios or use software modelling to demonstrate the ability of homes to withstand rising summer temperatures in line with the UKCP18 climate projections.

**6.51** Finally, proposed green infrastructure and biodiversity measures will help to improve ecosystem resilience and enhance protection against future climate change through passively controlling building temperatures and regulating surface runoff.

## Environmental Protection and Enhancement

**6.52** Cuerdale Garden Village will aim to protect and enhance the local environment. Ancient woodland will be protected, existing trees and hedgerows will be retained where possible, and habitats will be enhanced, a biodiversity net gain will be achieved onsite. These measures will help to improve the resilience of the local environment to climate change, as well as provide carbon sequestration benefits and localised cooling effects. Sustainable materials will be specified to reduce the environmental impacts of construction. Sustainable waste management measures will also be incorporated throughout the construction and operation of the development, to reduce pollution, minimise waste, and ensure recycling.

## Economic and Social Benefits

**6.53** The development aims to provide a range of economic and social benefits to both new and existing residents.

- During the construction phase, the proposed development is expected to provide 265 gross direct jobs and a £430million productivity boost.
- During the operational phase, the proposed development is expected to provide 5,670 gross direct jobs and a £515million productivity boost.
- Up to 2,300 new homes will be built, including affordable homes in line with policy requirements. This is currently 35% and equates to 805 homes. This will generate £4.4 million in council tax annually for South Ribble.
- Up to 252,500sqm of employment floorspace also provides related employment opportunities. This will generate £5.7 million in business rates annually for South Ribble.
- The creation of new facilities and services, such as two local centres with retail and food and beverage outlets, two primary schools, a community hospital, a family restaurant, a supermarket, a park & ride, multifunctional green infrastructure with play areas and sport pitches, will enrich the neighbourhood for new and existing residents. It will also see £45.3 million retain and leisure expenditure annually by residents supporting local businesses.
- A sustainable transport strategy encourages walking and cycling around the Site, delivering potential associated benefits to health and well-being whilst improved bus services also provide a reduction in localised air pollution.

## Building for a Healthy Life

**6.54** The well-being of residents will be enhanced through design in accordance with the Building for a Healthy Life principles, which aims to promote best practice in making places better for people and nature.

# PHASING

07

## This indicative phasing strategy offers an interpretation of how the Site could be brought forward and delivered in the future.

**7.1** The following table and diagram illustrate a phasing sequence for up to 2,300 homes and 252,500sqm GIA of employment space. The phasing sequence also includes a Park & Ride, two local centres, two primary schools, a community hospital, a family restaurant, a supermarket, community playing fields and a series of public open spaces with children's play facilities.

**7.2** This phasing strategy is indicative to remain flexible to move with the market and respond to required delivery rates, helping to adapt to local needs as they arise. This indicative phasing strategy allows development parcels to come forward in a logical sequence in order to provide a natural growth pattern where one neighbourhood or employment area naturally extends into the next.

**7.3** The phasing strategy is based on approximately 150 units per year, assuming three house builders delivering housing simultaneously. Where numbers per year increase beyond 150 units per year, this assumes the A59 South Sites are being delivered alongside A59 North Sites with up to five house builders or this reflects the higher density areas, that feature different typologies such as apartments, being delivered.

**7.4** The development is expected to be delivered over a fifteen to twenty year period, which includes an initial period to deliver essential infrastructure. Detailed phasing plans will come forward with subsequent applications.

| Phase | Year | Number of Homes Built | Cumulative Number of Homes | Sqm of Employment Space | Cumulative Sqm of Employment Space | Community Facilities |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 125 | 125 | 30,869 | 30,869 | A59 South Sites Commence Construction |
| | 2 | 125 | 250 | 38,603 | 69,472 | Park and LEAP |
| 2 | 3 | 140 | 390 | 16,920 | 86,392 | Park & Ride, Park and LEAP |
| | 4 | 180 | 570 | 27,750 | 114,142 | Local Centre, Primary School and Playing Fields |
| 3 | 5 | 130 | 700 | 0 | 114,142 | |
| | 6 | 130 | 830 | 0 | 114,142 | |
| 4 | 7 | 230 | 1,060 | 23,343 | 137,485 | A59 North Sites Commence Construction |
| | 8 | 245 | 1,305 | 21,614 | 159,099 | Park and NEAP, Park and LEAP |
| 5 | 9 | 205 | 1,510 | 20,056 | 179,155 | Playing Fields, Park and NEAP |
| | 10 | 200 | 1,710 | 21,745 | 200,900 | Supermarket and Family Restaurant |
| 6 | 11 | 100 | 1,810 | 15,200 | 216,100 | Local Centre and Primary School |
| | 12 | 100 | 1,910 | 7,200 | 223,300 | |
| 7 | 13 | 150 | 2,060 | 14,000 | 237,300 | Park and LEAP |
| | 14 | 150 | 2,210 | 15,200 | 252,500 | |
| 8 | 15 | 90 | 2,300 | 0 | 252,500 | Community Hospital |


Residential
Employment
Local Centre
Public Open Space
Children's Play Area
Ecology Area
School
Park & Ride
Community Playing Fields
Community Hospital
Family Restaurant
Supermarket
Site Boundary
Phase

Fig. 9: Indicative Phasing Strategy Plan

# OUR COMMITMENT TO DELIVER 08

Cuerdale Garden Village presents a unique opportunity for South Ribble and Central Lancashire. It will deliver at scale a diverse range of high-quality housing, supported by accessible civic infrastructure to serve the new community, co-located with a broad range of employment development with the potential to attract new investment in high value and growing sectors. It will be a place that Central Lancashire can be proud of.

**8.1** Central Lancashire has a significant need for new housing and employment development. It is facing considerable economic, social and environmental challenges which its development strategy will need to respond to and capitalise upon.

**8.2** Central Lancashire must continue to look forward and plan for the next wave of strategic sites which can continue and accelerate its economic success.

**8.3** Cuerdale Garden Village is the truly unique development Central Lancashire needs.

**8.4** Cuerdale will meet development needs through a single, large scale new settlement, effectively pooling needs in to one location where a critical mass of development can be delivered to enable key services and infrastructure to be planned into and funded by the development. Importantly, taking the pressure off other areas.

**8.5** Capitalising on the location's strategic assets, the site is located adjacent to the M6, the growing and strategically important Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and location of the proposed National Cyber Force Campus. These combine to put the site in a unique position to respond positively to market demand for high quality, flexible employment accommodation.

**8.6** In the context of the area's growing economic importance, the co-location of housing and employment is an inherently sustainable approach to meeting the future housing needs of Central Lancashire, providing a place to live, next to places of work.

**8.7** The Site's location between Blackburn and Preston along the A59/A677 Central Belt puts it in an advantageous position in its ability to improve east-west movement through this part of the county and the Ribble Valley, connecting several strategically important anchor sites.

**8.8** Cuerdale Garden Village will primarily deliver community infrastructure, green and blue infrastructure and energy efficiency from the outset. It will be delivered to the highest environmental standards and it will create new beautiful and better homes for everyone within a walkable neighbourhood. It will be designed to enable all new residents to live in an environment and community for a whole lifetime and beyond.

**8.9** Story Homes will act as master developer for the Cuerdale Garden Village and will deliver a significant component of the supporting infrastructure and residential development. It is anticipated that development partners working with Story Homes will deliver the balance of the scheme.

**8.10** Story Homes is a privately owned house builder with a long and successful reputation of building high quality and high specification homes across the Cumbria, South Scotland, the North East and Lancashire. The family-owned business has grown in size and status but remains grounded, built on its original ethos of 'doing the right thing' and creating a brand synonymous with quality.

**8.11** Story Homes' success is underpinned by a determination to understand the needs of the communities where they build, with a goal to deliver design quality and high-quality building specifications that enhance locations.

**8.12** The master developer role ensures overall control of the development, enabling Story's commitment to quality and place making to be front and centre of all detailed proposed for the Garden Village as they come forward.

**8.13** It is our aspiration, as a dedicated group of people, to create and deliver an exceptional community anchored on people, place and movement.

**8.14** This is our vision for Cuerdale Garden Village.


Brockholes
Nature Reserve
River Ribble
A59
A59
A677 Preston New Road
Blackburn
Wastewater
Treatment
Works
InBev
Brewery
Cuerdale Lane
M6
River Darwen

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

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# Appendix 5: Strategic Reserve Policy

**Policy SR1 Cuerdale Garden Village Strategic Reserve Site**

Cuerdale Garden Village offers a range of facilities, homes and employment floorspace which are detailed below set out in Part A of this policy.

The Cuerdale Garden Village proposed development is identified as a strategic reserve site and, if released, shall be expected to meet the requirements in Part A of this policy. The requirements for release and resulting allocation as a strategic site are specified in Part B of this policy:

**Part A: Cuerdale Garden Village**

Development within Cuerdale Garden Village will be expected to come forward in accordance with the requirements set out below,

- Approximately 2300 new residential dwellings including:
  - 50% affordable housing subject to viability;
  - a mix of types and sizes of market housing in accordance with policy HS6; and
- Approximately 252,500 spm of employment floorspace for Class E, B2 and B8 uses together with additional small employment amenity buildings which may include functions such as café, bookable meetings rooms and flexible working space;
- A 500 space park and ride facility to be located close to the A59 and the Junction 31 of the M6 motorway;
- Two, two-form entry primary school with associated sports facilities;
- Two local centres which may include a mix of uses such as Class E, Class F2, Class C3 and other types of food and beverage establishments ;
- Small supermarket (approximately 1800sqm) and/or restaurant;
- Accommodate land for a community hospital.
- Green infrastructure including a parkland, enhanced woodland and accessible open space;
- Sports facilities including playing pitches and ancillary storage space/clubhouse and cycle parking;
- The potential for approximately:
  - 10,000sqm of C1 hotels;
  - 5,000sqm of Class E(b) retail use in addition to that within local centres;
  - 7,500sqm of Class E(g) office use in addition to that within local centres and set out above; and
  - 170,000 sqm of B2 and B8.

**Part B: Overarching Requirements for Cuerdale Garden Village**

Development proposals across all the phases referred to in Part A above will be expected to provide contributions towards new or improved infrastructure (including the infrastructure referred to above) identified as required for this allocation in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and this policy.

Development proposals shall:

(a) Include measures to improve accessibility by non-car transport modes including the provision of internal walking and cycling routes linked to existing external routes, the public rights of way network and the cycle network, with direct cycle access to the Preston town centre and the provision of public transport early in the delivery of the proposed development;

(b) Ensure adequate infrastructure is provided for sewerage (on and off site) and surface water drainage and produce a drainage strategy;

(c) Include opportunities where possible to secure the creation and management of linkages between and/or to existing wildlife corridors;

(d) Secure the delivery of 10% biodiversity net gain across Cuerdale Garden Village or off-site if it cannot be delivered on-site;

(e) Include provision for sustainable design and construction in line with Policies CC1 and CC3, demonstrating how carbon emissions have been sought to be kept as low as possible in construction and how the development proposals will operate working to Future Homes Standards; and ensures the development is resilient and mitigates against the effects of climate change;

(f) provide a mix of housing types and sizes and variety of tenures; and

(g) provide training and apprenticeship opportunities either during construction or operational phases of the development.

Proposals to develop land within all phases of Cuerdale Garden Village must incorporate details of phasing and trigger levels for the provision of required infrastructure consistent with this policy and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. This must incorporate proposals for (as appropriate to the phase):

(i) the number and phasing of dwellings to be permitted, and the timing of housing delivery to be linked to the planned delivery of infrastructure; and

(ii) the number and size of employment buildings together with their proposed uses and phasing, and the timing of the employment floorspace delivery shall be linked to the planning delivery of associated infrastructure.

This will be agreed (and conditioned) through the planning application process, in consultation with the Local Planning Authority.

CGV shall be delivered as a single strategic development however this may be by way of multiple planning applications where each application demonstrates how it helps deliver an overall place, meets the overall policy objectives, does not prejudice future phases of development or infrastructure, and may require provision of infrastructure or proportionate contributions towards site wide infrastructure, facilities and services.

**Part E: Strategic Reserve and Release**

The Cuerdale Garden Village Strategic Reserve Site shall be released for development as a whole or in parts, [*and exceptional circumstances for its release from the Green Belt shall be considered to exist*[4]], if one or more of the following numbered circumstances occur:

**Employment:**

A. **Employment Need and Progression of the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and/or National Cyber Force Campus -** an identified need for employment land, in addition to that which has already been allocated within this Local Plan, has been evidenced to address a shortfall in up to date needs for employment provision across the Central Lancashire Local Plan area. This may include an identified need for employment land to create additional capacity for companies providing supply chain products or services supporting (i) an expansion of existing or new companies located in the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and/or (ii) the proposed National Cyber Force campus; or

B. **Employment Need to Address Under Delivery -** to address under delivery of employment land which has been allocated within this Local Plan. This may include under delivery due to a variety of reasons such as delivery of allocated sites stalling, allocated sites cannot accommodate the full quantum of floorspace expected by allocation policies within this Local Plan, change in market demand for employment use types and/or locations of allocated employment sites or other reasons for a shortfall in delivery of employment provision to meet demand.

C. **Strategic Regional Employment -** to create a significant opportunity or catalyst for a regional employment cluster or strategic employment location or similar employment offer which may respond to or which may create a strategic opportunity for the Central Lancashire Local Plan area to support and accommodate employment uses that may offer competitive advantage to the economy of Central Lancashire which may include relocation of large employment uses, opportunities to attract grants or other financial or other types of incentives, identification of the next strategic locations for employment growth.

D. **Specific Employment Need**- to address a specific demand for employment uses or floorspace to be located in a single location that may not otherwise be capable of being accommodated within the Central Lancashire Local Plan area within one of the allocated employment sites in this Local Plan.

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[4] Should a strategic reserve site approach be taken then there are two options:

A) determination at date of adoption of the local plan that there are exceptional circumstances now to release the site from the Green Belt (e.g. as a result of the combination of circumstances (i) there is highly likely to be a need for housing and/or employment purposes for the proposed development's contribution, even if the need is not definitively crystallised, (ii) the Council do not wish to be exposed to future speculative development resulting in a preference to have strategic reserve site(s) that can be planned for and release should the need arise, (iii) the extent of the benefits being offered by the proposed development). With a strategic release policy being utilised to manage the actual release for development.

B) Pre-determination through the local plan process of the Green Belt exceptional circumstances position that if one or more of the circumstances listed in the strategic reserve site policy are triggered, that exceptional circumstances will be crystallised at that point.

The wording in brackets would be included if using Option B only

**Housing:**

E. **Housing Need and Progression of the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and/or National Cyber Force Campus -** the housing forming part of the proposed Cuerdale Garden Village development may be required to contribute to meeting projected housing needs arising from or associated with:
    a. expansion of employers or businesses, including existing or new employment development, within the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone; or

    b. the progression of the proposed development of the National Cyber Force campus; or other employment provision at or within the vicinity of, or connected to, the Cuerdale Garden Village Strategic Reserve Site.

F. **Housing Need to Address HMA or Wider Area Shortfall**- the housing forming part of the Cuerdale Garden Village proposed development may be required to contribute to meeting a shortfall in housing from:
    a. within the Central Lancashire Housing Market Area; or

    b. outside the Central Lancashire Housing Market Area in any neighbouring authorities where unmet need may be identified.

G. **Housing Need for Specialist Housing Provision**-the provision of evidence demonstrating that the Cuerdale Garden Village proposed development may provide specialist housing needs additional to any Local Plan policy requirement or where there has been an under delivery on allocated sites in this Local Plan resulting in unmet need. Specialist housing may include older persons' accommodation, custom and/or self build, build to rent, key worker or other types of specialist housing for which it may be demonstrated there is a need in the Central Lancashire;

H. **Housing Need to Address Affordable Housing-** the provision of evidence demonstrating that the Cuerdale Garden Village proposed development may provide for affordable housing needs in ways additional to the affordable housing requirement in Policy HS7 or which may help to address a shortfall of affordable housing which may arise due to under delivery of affordable housing on allocated sites in this Local Plan

I. **Housing Need to Address Housing Supply Shortfall**- the provision of evidence that the Council's housing supply falls below 5 years (applying the appropriate buffer), or the Council's Housing Delivery Test trajectory shows that delivery is expected to fall below 100% in the following [*three/five*] years and Cuerdale Garden Village proposed development may help to address in part or whole the deficit;

**Provision of Other Significant Benefits:**

J. **Other Significant Benefits**- the provision of evidence that demonstrates that the Cuerdale Garden Village proposed development will deliver significant benefits for the sub-region or local areas for example a Park & Ride scheme which is of a size and scale and functionality that provides a strategic transport benefit to the east of Preston and/or may secure significant beneficial impacts on the local road network.

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