

**Representations on Central Lancashire Publication Version
2025**

**Land to the West of Wigan Road
Leyland**

LAND TO THE WEST OF WIGAN ROAD
LEYLAND

1. Instructions

- 1.1 This firm is instructed for and on behalf of the landowner, Mr Glenn Stafford to submit representations in respect of land at Wigan Road, Leyland seeking to support its inclusion as a suitable site in the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan (2023 to 2041) and beyond this plan period.
- 1.2 These representations seek to promote the Site for inclusion within the submission draft Central Lancashire Local Plan and to also have consideration to the purpose of this consultation, which is to address whether the Local Plan is:
- Legally compliant – whether the document has been prepared with all relevant legislation
 - Soundness – whether the content of the document represents a ‘sound’ document with regard to whether the document is:
 - i) Positively prepared
 - ii) Justified
 - iii) Effective
 - iv) Consistent with National policy

2. The Parties

Landowner’s details:
Mr Glenn Stafford.
c/o Agent

Agent’s details:
Mr. Robert Rawlinson
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3. The Site

Name: Land to the West of Wigan Road
Leyland
Lancashire

Size: 1.2885 ha (3.184 acres) or thereabouts defined by the area edged red on the attached plan.

Ordnance Survey Grid Reference: Easting: 355480
Northing: 422906

4. Proposed Future Use of the Site

- 4.1 We are instructed to promote the Site for employment allocation within the emerging Central Lancashire Local Plan.
- 4.2 The site is situated in the town of Leyland, with built form development to each boundary of the Site.
- 4.3 There is hardstanding and nursery land along the northern boundary of the Site.
- 4.4 There is employment development long the eastern boundary of the Site.
- 4.5 There is residential development to the south of the Site.
- 4.6 The M6 Motorway bounds the west of the Site.
- 4.7 The Land's boundaries are clearly defined with the Site having built form development on all sides.
- 4.8 The primary access point is through the existing employment development to the east, Thorntrees Business Park. Access to the business park is taken from Wigan Road.
- 4.9 The site is not subject to any difficult land ownership or access issues.
- 4.10 The site is well connected to the existing transport system and local amenities. This includes the M6 junction 28 of the M6 Motorway which is approximately 780m from the Site.
- 4.11 The location and characteristics of the site also support its inclusion within the settlement boundary in that it is:
 - i. Accessible to services and facilities of the settlement and by public transport.
 - ii. Adjacent to an existing employment Site.
 - iii. Accessible to Junction 28 of the M6 motorway and wider motorway network.
 - iv. There is access off Wigan Road.
 - v. Has no ecological constraints/nor is it at risk from flooding.
 - vi. Is in single ownership and is immediately available for development.
 - vii. Not visibly open, being highly contained by defined boundaries with limited public views into/from the land.
 - viii. Close proximity to existing residential development to the east.
 - ix. Will form a sustainable urban extension to the existing employment development.
 - x. Site is within the Key Service Centre (Tier 2 Settlement) of Leyland.
 - xi. Will assist with the delivery of the Central Lancashire Councils employment supply.

- 4.12 The Central Lancashire Publication Draft (2025) has classified this area as Tier 2 – Key Service Centre. The Tier 2 settlements are described as being the plans secondary focus for development, complementing the role of the Tier 1 Urban Area (Preston).
- 4.13 In terms of the Publication Draft Central Lancashire Local Plan, whilst we accept that the plan will be examined under NPPF23, we do feel it is important to acknowledge that regardless of this, current and future planning applications are considered under NPPF24.
- 4.14 Therefore, whilst the Draft Central Lancashire Local Plan may not be required to consider if land is ‘Grey Belt’, current and future planning applications would.
- 4.15 In the case of this application, we do consider it meets the definition of Grey Belt due to it being built up on all sides, with clear defensible boundaries. The Site is not making a contribution to any of the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt, as set out in Paragraph 143 of NPPF24.
- 4.16 We do consider that there is also a need for additional employment development in this area.
- 4.17 The Site is within a sustainable location, with good transport links for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists, private cars and employment related vehicles.
- 4.18 We consider that it is in the interest of the Central Lancashire authorities to ensure that there is sufficient land allocated to meet employment needs throughout the plan period. This is because whilst the Plan would be examined under NPPF23, future planning applications following adoption of the Plan would be considered under NPPF24 and failure to allocate sufficient land to meet employment needs under NPPF24 could result in development in less desirable locations and / or the plan needing to be reviewed soon after adoption and / or open to legal challenges.
5. **Market Interest**
- 5.1 The site is immediately available and deliverable, and all the landowner is committed to bringing this site forward within the immediate future.
- 5.2 There is existing market interest from parties that are seeking employment on the basis it is adjacent to an existing employment site and has lawful employment use.
6. **Planning Position**
- 6.1 The site is classified as Green Belt in the adopted Chorley Local Plan (2015). The Publication Draft Central Lancashire Local Plan is currently promoting the retention of this allocation.
- 6.2 Whilst the Plan would be examined under NPPF23, we do consider it appropriate to give consideration to NPPF24.
- 6.3 A revised National Planning Policy Framework was adopted in December 2024 (the ‘NPPF24’). The NPPF24 included a number of changes, including in relation to national Green Belt policy. NPPF24 introduces the ‘Grey Belt’, which is defined as follows: “For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, ‘grey belt’ is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143.”
- 6.4 The Site is considered to meet the definition of Grey Belt.

- 6.5 The Site meets the definition of Grey Belt due to it being bounded to the west by the M6, to the north, east and south by built form development the Site therefore does not check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas (NPPF24, Para. 143(a)) or prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another (NPPF24, Para. 143(b)). The Site also does not lie within or contribute to the setting and special character of a historic town (NPPF24, Para. 143(d)).
- 6.6 Allocation of the Site would therefore have no impact on the Green Belt in the Chorley authority area as its allocation would not prevent the Green Belt from serving any of its five purposes. Indeed, this site makes no contribution to the purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143 and therefore meets the definition of Grey Belt land.
- 6.7 NPPF24 Paragraph 148 states that “Where it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give priority to previously developed land, then consider grey belt, which is not previously developed, and then other Green Belt locations.”. Paragraph 148 also requires, when reviewing Green Belt boundaries, consideration to be given to the sustainability of a site’s location.
- 6.8 The Site is in a highly sustainable and accessible location due to its proximity to the M6, which runs along its western boundary. Wigan Road runs to the east and provides a significant opportunity for sustainable travel.
- 6.9 Furthermore, the Site is located within easy access of utilities and services.
- 6.10 The Site can be accessed off Wigan Road.
- 6.11 There are a number of bus services close to the Site, including along Wigan Road

7. Environment/Ecological Matters

- 7.1 The Site is not subject to the following constraints:

| Potential Constraint | Result |
|--|--|
| Flood Zone 3/2 | No – Not located within the Flood Zone |
| Site of International/National Nature Conservation | No |
| Historic Parks and Gardens | No |
| Coastal Erosion | No |
| Cemetery | No |
| Areas of Local Nature Importance (LWS or LGS) | No |
| Regional Important Geological Sites | No |
| Conservation Area | No |
| Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) | No |



| | |
|--|----|
| Listed Buildings | No |
| Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Sites of Archaeological Interest | No |
| Recreation Areas (playing fields and Golf courses) | No |

8. Regulation 19 Consultation

- 8.1 Included as an Appendix is the completed Regulation 19 Representation Form.
- 8.2 The Form confirms that we do not consider the current plan to be sound. This is our view that the current plan does not allocation sufficient land for employment purposes and therefore results in the Plan failing to be effective throughout the entirety of the plan period.
- 8.3 In terms of employment land, the Plan makes provision for 173ha which marks a substantial decrease on the 225ha identified over a shorter period within the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Local Plan. This is despite an increase in the total housing numbers proposed.
- 8.4 We do consider that it would be prudent for the Plan to seek to make provision for additional employment allocations to reduce the risk of legal challenges during Plan's term. Increasing the number of allocations would ensure greater certainty and longevity for the Plan.
- 8.5 There are two proposed residential allocations within Clayton-le-Woods (HS2.16 & HS2.17) for a combined total of 447 new dwellings. This Site sits just beyond the settlement boundary of Clayton-le-Woods and could provide proportionate employment to new residents.
- 8.6 There are just two proposed employment allocations within the entire Chorley authority area, both of which are located within the town of Chorley. The provision of additional employment sites outside of Chorley would help to promote sustainable communities and provide additional choice of employment to support the significant residential development proposed across the Borough.
- 8.7 To confirm, We agree that major employment opportunities should be directed towards the larger, higher tier settlements, but consider the smaller settlements also require the benefits of economic development in order to ensure sustainable growth of the economy across the Central Lancashire area.
- 8.8 There are seven mixed use sites proposed, five of which are located within Chorley.
- 8.9 The Site represents a suitable opportunity for a smaller employment development to meet localised needs. Development of this Site has the potential to attract interest from smaller and / or local businesses looking for new or expanded spaces and has the potential to cater to businesses that would not be well served within the larger settlements where they may be out-competed by larger or more national businesses with greater capital.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 The current Green Belt policy (being NPPF24), may permit employment development at this Site, as we do consider the Site to be Grey Belt.

- 9.2 However, Green Belt policy is inherently restrictive and therefore allocation of the Site for employment purposes would result in greater certainty for the landowner in looking to progress an application and greater chance that the employment capacity of the Site would be realised.
- 9.3 There is an existing employment site located to the east of the Site and there is a demonstrable demand for additional employment development in the locality.
- 9.4 The site is highly contained with the M6 motorway defining its western boundary and built form development to the north, east and south.
- 9.5 It is therefore considered that the Site does not make a contribution to the purposes for including land within the Green Belt and should be removed from the Green Belt.
- 9.6 Other than this policy allocation, given the above factors, the site has no significant insurmountable constraints to further its development. The development of this site would be of a scale appropriate to the locality and in line with the presumption of sustainable development contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 9.7 It is considered that this site is a logical urban extension and would be entirely appropriate.

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