

A close-up photograph of a cricket ball resting on a lush green lawn. The grass is covered in small, glistening dew drops, and the lighting is soft, creating a serene atmosphere. The cricket ball is the central focus, with its characteristic raised seam and textured surface clearly visible. The background is a soft-focus expanse of green grass.

Farington Cricket Ground

Design & Access Statement

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Lancashire Cricket and Lancashire County Council are working together to build a new high-quality professional and community cricket facility on the Woodcock Estate in Farington.

The proposals will give Lancashire Cricket a second ground in the heart of the county, bringing together elite and community cricket in one high quality sports facility.

This Design & Access Statement illustrates the exciting design proposals in detail.

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1.0 Introduction

The vision for these ambitious proposals for Farington Cricket Ground is to create a new sustainable home for Lancashire Cricket which is accessible to all in the Lancashire region and beyond in the widest sense, and encourages sport, fun, spectator and sporting participation and activity within a beautifully designed, safe and attractive environment.

BDP and the wider design team have been commissioned by Lancashire Cricket (LC), Lancashire County Council (LCC) and Eric Wright Construction (EWC) to lead the design of a new cricket facility at the Woodcock Estate in Farington.

The exercise has been carried out working in close partnership with Lancashire Cricket as the end user, with input from a wider stakeholder group including the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) to set out the core requirements of the project to support the creation of a brand new focal point of cricket excellence in Lancashire:

- Provide a main cricket pitch to host occasional county cricket and T20 matches for crowds up to c.5,000 people and making spatial infrastructure provision to scale-up to host such events.
- Provide a secondary pitch for mens and womens youth and development squad training, along with wider community use.
- Provide adequate accommodation in the form of a new Pavilion building to service both pitches, with a dual aspect and permanent spectator viewing to serve day-to-day use.
- Provide a partially covered external practice area to support cricket training.
- Consideration of support requirements to service the cricketing activities, grounds maintenance, servicing and logistics, permanent and temporary car parking, event overlay, and so on.

In developing the project framework the design team have explored the opportunities and constraints not only within the proposed site, but also the wider development context. The adjacent land to the east has been identified as 'Lancashire Central' by Lancashire County Council and we understand a design code has been produced as a framework for the development of this site. The proposals for the new cricket facility will be enhanced by this development context, and the design team have taken due cognisance of this wider strategic development in our approach to the proposals

The design team have worked closely with the LCC and Lancashire Cricket in shaping the proposals around the needs of the local community and key project stakeholders in developing the scheme, alongside a wide range of site investigations and surveys necessary to inform, refine and validate the developing design.

The resulting proposals will create a special and welcoming addition to the local community, encouraging sporting participation and engagement from the aspiration of youth talent through to the inspiration of elite sporting ability. The design of the Pavilion building, pitches and landscape will be designed to sit comfortably within the existing green setting, working with the existing topography to carefully nestle the proposed interventions sympathetically within the landscape, reinforcing the open and green character of the existing setting.





The Vision

A Green Oasis for Community & Cricket

The ambition for the site is to create a new sustainable community facility within Central Lancashire which is accessible to all in the widest sense, and encourages sport, fun, participation and activity in a safe and managed environment.

This will be done in a manner befitting the local character and respecting the environmental and cultural assets of the area by creating a natural green enclosure around the cricket pitches. This approach will be mutually beneficial to the creation of a sheltered microclimate for the sporting setting, whilst also providing natural visual and acoustic containment of the sporting activities within the shaped landscaped bowl.

In addition to the proposed cricket ground, our approach to the arrangement of the site aims to provide a flexibility to cater for surrounding development proposals which integrates with the surroundings, helping to revitalise and activate the Farington local area in a sustainable setting, and improve connections to the local centres of Farington, Lostock Hall, and further afield with new facilities provided to support a new growing community, engaging in sport, wellbeing and activity through cricket.

The adjacent selection of images illustrates other examples of the long standing tradition of playing cricket in green settings, ranging from a range of relevant examples here in the UK to parkland cricket settings further afield in Australia and New Zealand.

It is our vision to create a beautiful and naturalistic green setting for cricket in Lancashire.





AERIAL VIEW LOOKING NORTH-EAST OVER THE FIRST CLASS PITCH, WITH THE PAVILION, PRACTICE NETS AREA AND COMMUNITY PITCH BEYOND

2.0 Lancashire Region Context

Central Lancashire is already home to thriving entrepreneurial, national and international businesses. Sitting at the heart of the £29bn Lancashire economy - one of the largest outside London - it supports more than 136,600 jobs in 9,055 businesses.

Before we look in further detail at the proposed site, its constraints and opportunities, it is worthwhile to contextualise the wider Lancashire regional context. Beyond the green agricultural character of the proposed site, the local area is also the home of many successful national and international businesses. Companies choose to base themselves here because of the area's connectivity – including access to major motorways, airports, sea ports and the rail network – the talent pool and the quality of life.

Central Lancashire boasts generational capability in advanced manufacturing and engineering and has long been referenced as the administrative hub of the county, generating work for the business and professional sector.

Businesses thriving here include sectors from aerospace and advanced manufacturing to agri-food and professional services, including world-class companies such as BAE Systems, Leyland Trucks, Baxi, Dr Oetker and Amazon. Those businesses which are in close proximity to our site & making history are shown to the right.

In 2013, the City Deal was secured by a partnership between Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, Lancashire County Council, Preston City Council, South Ribble Borough Council and Homes England. The value of City Deal is £434m, aimed at transforming the transport infrastructure in Central Lancashire, creating a raft of new development opportunities that will enhance the Preston and South Ribble area.

The City Deal is Central Lancashire's biggest investment in over 50 years. It's game-changing. It is based on the premise that there is great potential for this rate of growth to continue. Transformed infrastructure will provide the extra capacity further significant growth requires. It's predicted 20,000 jobs will be created over the lifetime of City Deal.

The proposed development of the cricket facility at Farington will support and enhance the regional development context with the creation of new jobs and opportunities, further details of which can be found within the Assessment of Benefits Report prepared by Amion.



10 year vision for Preston and South Ribble



£434m infrastructure investment into Preston and South Ribble



The construction of 1,000,000 sq m of employment space



Creation of 20,000 private sector jobs



Creation of a new motorway junction and major roads



17,000 new homes



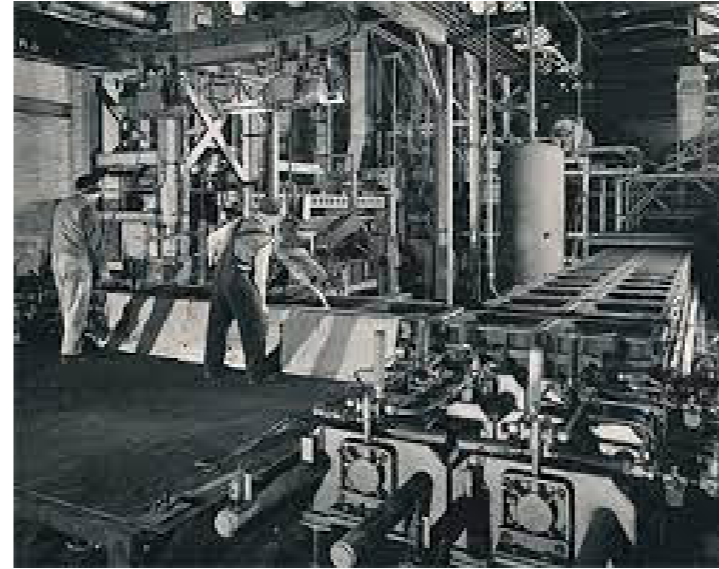
New schools, open spaces and health facilities



Better public transport, more road space and reduced congestion



Stimulating £1bn of economic growth in the region

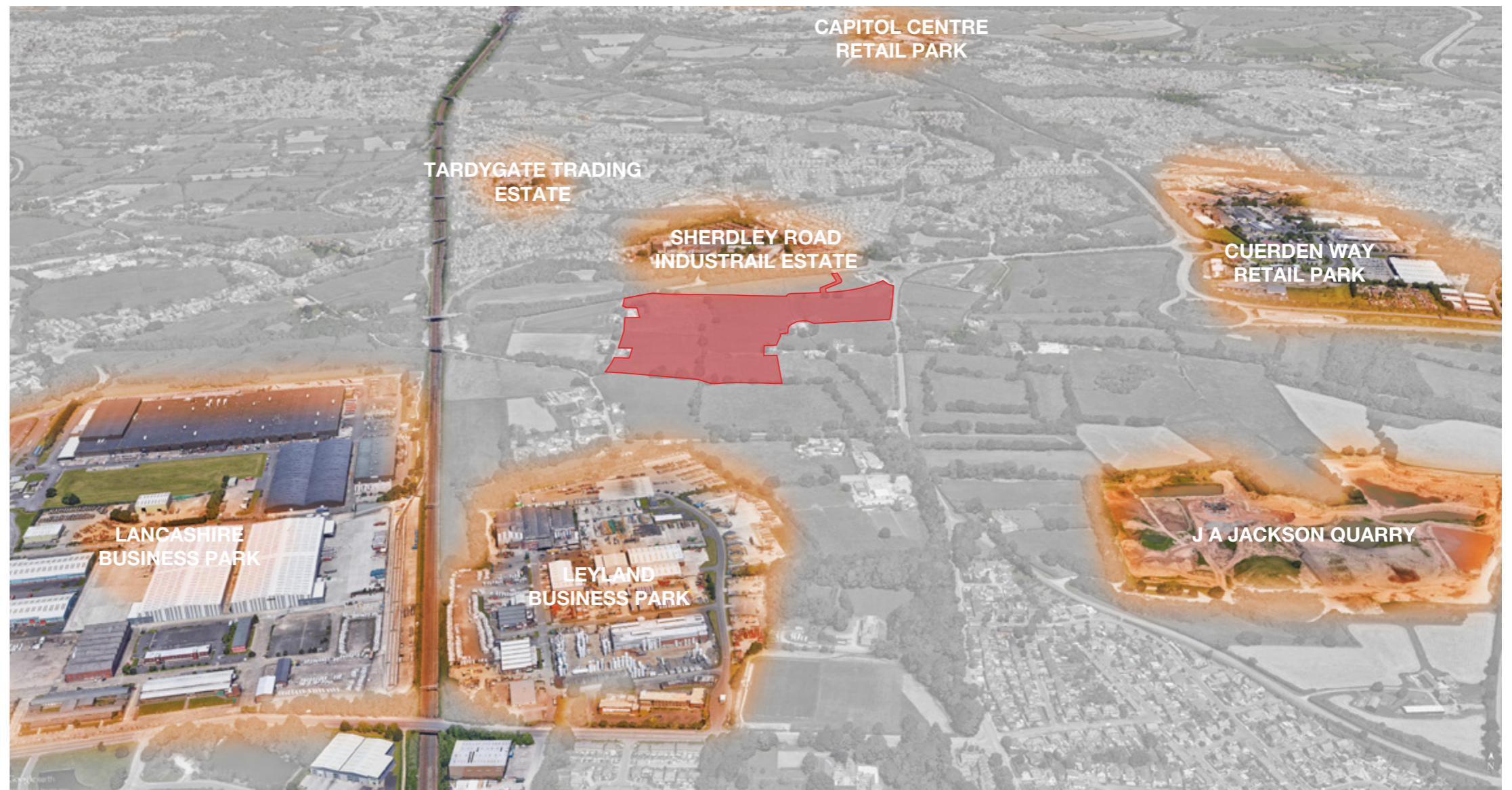


Industrial Heritage

In many ways the strong industrial history of Leyland, directly adjacent to the proposed site in Farington acts as an anchor point which has its roots in the industrial revolution due to its close connections to Preston and Central Lancashire, with excellent transportation connectivity directly linked to the M6/ M65, and adjacent to rail connections and the west coast main line.

Modern industrial businesses including those highlighted earlier have occupied sites adjacent to those existing, capitalising on the success of the location & stimulating growth for the local economy.

The proposed development site is located in the space in between these well established business and industrial destinations, anchored by the towns of Leyland and Farington to the south and Lostock Hall and Bamber Bridge to the north, with the city of Preston just beyond.



Agriculture & Parklands

In addition to the broader spectrum of industrial activity, the areas surrounding Leyland, Farington, and Lostock Hall are linked to agricultural farmland, some of which became parkland and/or woodland when developed to provide residential housing.

Some farms highlighted are still very much active today in supplying the UK food industry with livestock, fresh produce including eggs. However, some of this farmland has been lost over time, with some changes of use with conversion into spacious high end residential dwellings.

With the proposed site located within this area of green separation, the proposals will through their nature as a traditional countryside cricket setting and sensitive design seek to maintain the open and green character separating the areas of development to the north and south. In addition, careful landscape design will seek to preserve the green setting through green open space, whilst enhancing the setting for nature and biodiversity with landscaped features, new planting and other landscape elements.



Cricket in Lancashire

In addition to the physical characteristics of the setting, the other important element of context for the proposed development of a new cricket facility in Lancashire is the broader history of cricket within the county.

Cricket was said to have been played in Preston in 1821 and in the 1830's the early matches were played on the Marsh, Penwortham against Manchester, Liverpool and Broughton. They also played two matches against an England Eleven, the home side fielding 22 players. The most tangible reminder of these matches is the water colour painting by Nicholas Wanostrocht who played in the game. The original artwork resides at Lord's.

In 1859 the original ground of West Cliff was purchased and was at the time only swampy waste land. Great efforts by the members through the years brought the ground up to the standard required for first-class cricket and in 1936 Preston were rewarded with their first county match against Gloucestershire. They brought with them the great crowd puller Wally Hammond and Lancashire were at full strength. However, wet weather and a drying pitch meant that batsmen were always at a disadvantage. Hammond scored 65 out of 138 and Lancashire collapsed for only 45. They were set 307 and lost by 175 runs.

1937 saw a visit from the New Zealanders who were well beaten by an innings and 74 runs. Centuries from Jack Iddon and Buddy Oldfield with Eddie Paynter making 94 helped Lancashire to 443. 1938 saw a rain-spoilt match with Sussex resulting in a draw and in 1939 with war clouds gathering Glamorgan were beaten by ten wickets. Eddie Philipson made his highest score of 113 and Dick Pollard took a hat-trick. 1952 was the last first-class match with Glamorgan the visitors in a drawn match spoilt by rain, Don Shepherd having match figures of 11-101.

The ground continues to host club-level cricket to this day, but is not of the size or standard suitable to host modern first class cricket.

Lancashire Cricket represents the county of Lancashire in cricket's County Championship.

Formed in 1864, the leading members of the Manchester Cricket Club (who had moved to Old Trafford in 1857) organised a meeting at the Queen's Hotel for the purpose of forming a County club. Thirteen clubs were represented and on the 12th January 1864 Lancashire Cricket was born. The idea of playing matches in different parts of the county was adopted, "By this means it is hoped to introduce other good cricket into every part of Lancashire".

Since formation in 1864, Old Trafford has been the principle base for the club's cricketing activities, and the club played their inaugural first-class match in 1865, beating Middlesex at Old Trafford. However, in support of those original aspirations to bring cricket to the whole of the wider county, first team cricket has always been regularly played at other venues around the wider region, right through to the present day.

In addition to Emirates Old Trafford, Lancashire Cricket's current outground venues include Aigburth (in Merseyside), Blackpool (in Fylde) and Sedbergh (in Cumbria). Outground venues do not currently include a cricket ground in the club's home county of Lancashire.

The opportunity to play cricket in Lancashire is a valuable one, reconnecting the club with their natural home whilst creating opportunities to nurture local talent. This opportunity has become a necessity in the context of significant changes to the game of cricket, with the significant growth of new cricketing competitions such as T20 and The Hundred, along with the overwhelming success of Emirates Old Trafford as a multifunctional international cricket and events destination.

The proposal to create a brand new cricketing centre of excellence at the heart of Lancashire Cricket's home county creates a solution to the above imperative, and creates the framework to support the development of the club's sporting pedigree, drawing upon the local region's talent, and providing a nationally significant facility that the local community can be proud of.





3.0 Site Context

Having looked at the wider strategic context for the project and the site, and the drivers which underpin the proposed vision, this chapter of the report starts to look in greater detail at the physical characteristics of the proposed site, and the opportunities and constraints posed which will inform the site development.

Key elements of the proposed site's qualities explored within this chapter include the following:

- Description of the site extents
- Site overview and analysis
- Site photography and boundary conditions
- Site levels and topography
- Site history
- Surrounding land uses
- Landscape characteristics
- Built form and massing
- Transportation and linkages



THE CHARACTERISTIC OPEN GREEN SITE WITH HEDGEROW AND TREE LINED PERIMETER WILL BE RETAINED WITHIN THE PROPOSALS



AERIAL VIEW OF EXISTING SITE FROM THE SOUTH



AERIAL VIEW OF EXISTING SITE FROM THE NORTH, SET IN BETWEEN LOSTOCK HALL TO THE NORTH FROM LEYLAND TO THE SOUTH AND WEST



AERIAL VIEW OF PROPOSED SITE FROM THE NORTH, ILLUSTRATING HOW THE CHARACTERISTIC GREEN OPENNESS OF THE SITE IS SENSITIVELY PRESERVED WITHIN THE PROPOSALS