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**foundation** : wigan borough regeneration  
westwood park

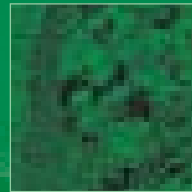
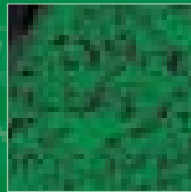
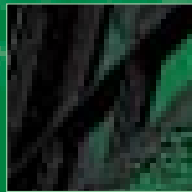


**foundation**  
westwood

## introduction

Wigan Council is promoting the redevelopment of an extensive brownfield site close to Wigan town centre for commercial and business uses. The site provides an opportunity to create an exciting and high quality scheme which will attract investment and generate high quality job opportunities. The Council, as the major land owner and recipient of grant aid for land reclamation and initial infrastructure, is seeking interest from developers, operators and investors to progress the development of Westwood Park.

This document outlines the Council's current thinking on this site and the information contained in this brochure is correct at the time of going to press. However due to the inherent nature of the project certain information may evolve.



## background

Westwood Park covers an area of 44 hectares less than a mile from Wigan town centre and less than two miles from Junction 25 of the M6 motorway. The site was previously the location of Westwood Power Station. It is one of the largest remaining predominately brownfield sites within Wigan Borough and represents a significant development opportunity. The former power station covered 33 hectares with the residual land occupied by former terraced housing, older mining activity and the still present Westwood Hall and Westwood Lodge. The site also incorporates stretches of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal, River Douglas and areas of mature woodland. The former industrial activity has created substantial water bodies, known collectively as Wigan Flashes, immediately adjacent to the main employment area. This combination of water and woodland constitutes a Site of Biological Importance and provides an attractive setting to the proposed area for development. Wigan Flashes will provide a complementary “softer” area for quiet water and wildlife based pursuits.

The power station closed in 1986 and Wigan Council entered into negotiations for the acquisition of the site, eventually taking possession of 90 acres through an unopposed Compulsory Purchase Order. This acquisition was funded through a Derelict Land Grant.

A substantial demolition and land reclamation contract commenced in 1988. Since the completion of this contract the site has remained untouched with the exception of a development for Alliance & Leicester in the early 1990's. There are two major reasons for this, namely restricted site access and lack of internal infrastructure which both required considerable funds to resolve satisfactorily. As such development to date has been limited.

As the main landowner Wigan Council secured funds in 2001 and 2002 to address these two main issues which have hindered extensive development. A two year project commenced in autumn 2003 to provide internal infrastructure and improve site access.

The mixture of size, location and natural environment has created a first class opportunity for a prestigious business park. This is a key site for the borough as it aims to attract high growth/knowledge based industries, creating further economic diversification and enhanced employment opportunities. The site has also been acknowledged by the North West Development Agency as a site of Regional Economic Significance.



**new office development**

Westwood Park entrance

## foundation

### Foundation for growth

Foundation is a major regeneration initiative which brings together a collection of brownfield sites and industrial buildings within one of the North West's fastest growing areas, Wigan Borough. As one of the region's fourteen designated Economic Development Zones, Foundation has been created with financial assistance from the European Regional Development Fund.

Wigan Borough started to tackle the problems of its industrial legacy over a decade ago, dispelling a number of negative perceptions in the process. The success of past initiatives means that today the borough can offer a more attractive environment, skilled workforce and cost effective property, not forgetting its enviable location.

However as a forward thinking borough efforts are now being focused on laying the foundations for future, sustainable growth. The Foundation vision is the creation of a high quality environment which becomes a sought after business location and one of strategic economic significance.

### Foundation for business

Foundation introduces exciting development and investment opportunities. Substantial amounts of funding have been secured to progress these opportunities and provide businesses with the chance to lay their own foundations for stability and growth.

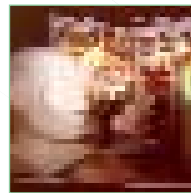
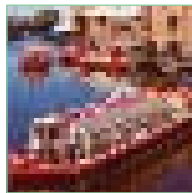
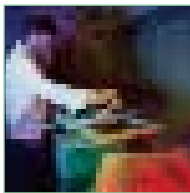
Westwood Park represents one of these opportunities.

### Foundation for partnership

The key to the success of the Foundation vision is partnership. Many public and private sector organisations have worked successfully together to develop the Foundation programme. These same organisations will be looking to work in partnership with any company that may be considering a relocation or expansion into the borough through the Foundation programme.

### Foundation for people

Wigan Borough enjoys a well deserved reputation for the quality and loyalty of its workforce. The Foundation programme seeks to attract new companies and encourage the expansion of existing businesses to provide accessible and wide ranging employment opportunities for local residents.







## facts and figures

### site investigation

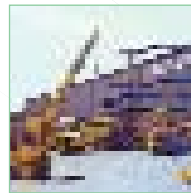
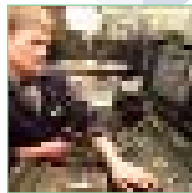
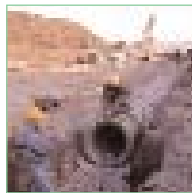
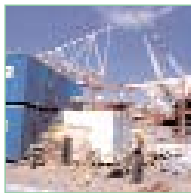
Various investigations and risk assessments have already been carried out to understand the geological, geotechnical, mining, landfill gas and contamination settings of the proposed development areas. The findings from these investigations would appear, at this stage, to be such that they would not preclude any form of development on the site. It should be recognised, however, that these various investigations have looked at the site as a whole with no specific development proposal in mind. Further detailed investigations will therefore be required, as the details about the layout and nature of proposed developments become clear in order to specify appropriate foundations, treatments and protections measures.

### transport assessments

A Transport Assessment (TA) has been carried out to support all future planning applications to further develop the site. The TA has considered the impact of additional traffic generated by the development of the site on the surrounding highway network. This assessment shows that, although the proposed development generates a significant amount of additional traffic, the proposed highway improvements are sufficient to accommodate this additional traffic and will allow up to 57,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office development to be created.

### utilities and site service

Preliminary investigations have already been carried out to locate suitable utility supplies in and around the site. The loading requirements for the type of development proposed have also been calculated and the means to meet these requirements have been agreed with the relevant utility providers. During construction of the new and improved road access from the A49, new services will be brought into the site to a point from which all future development can be fully serviced.





## planning UDP and acceptable users

Westwood Park is allocated as a Strategic Employment Site under Policy EM1A within the Unitary Development Plan. The allocation covers an area of 44 hectares and is classed as a brownfield site. The Council's vision is to create a high quality environment which becomes a sought after commercial location of regional economic significance, attracting businesses involved in knowledge based industries. These industries are high growth and offer high quality employment opportunities. Planning guidance states that:

“getting [brownfield] land back into beneficial use is important to the **regeneration of towns and cities**. Optimum use should be made of potential sites in urban areas. Local planning authorities should identify such areas and indicate their appropriate uses, including **industrial and commercial uses, in their development plans.**”

Knowledge based industries have been identified as target growth sectors within the Regional Economic Strategy produced by the North West Development Agency.

The target sectors identified are as follows:

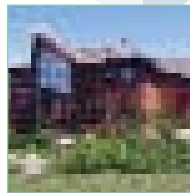
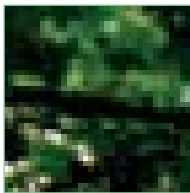
-  Environmental technologies
-  Life Science Industries (biotechnology and pharmaceutical)
-  Medical Equipment and Technology
-  Financial and Professional Services
-  Computer Software and Services/Internet based Services
-  Creative Industries (media, advertising and public relations)

Any development must consider and be sympathetic to the environmental factors on the site particularly the proximity of the Site of Biological Importance and Site of Special Scientific Interest. No development will be permitted on or close enough to adversely affect these areas.

Acceptable users will include B1 and B2. In addition small scale complementary uses that would provide a service primarily to local employees and businesses e.g. gym, day nursery, restaurant.

The Borough is widely considered to be deficient in hotels. There is a clear opportunity for a water side hotel alongside the canal.

Large scale retailing will be discouraged.







## existing infrastructure

As stated the existing infrastructure consists of a restricted site access and a limited internal road. However a £13 million capital project is currently underway on the site to provide a high quality entrance and maximum access to developable areas. By opening up this key development site up to 2,000 jobs could eventually be created.

The new Westwood access will also act as a link between the site and the proposed A5225. This will provide a high quality route from Wigan Town Centre to the M6 at Junction 26.

The Phase 1 work includes the construction of a new bridge at the site entrance and the southward extension of the main A49 route which passes the site. The extension will consist of a roundabout which will connect to the existing internal road creating a new internal spine road through the site.

Phase 2 includes the construction of a 900m stretch of dual carriageway from the A49 into Westwood Park. This involves the construction of three bridges over the Leeds-Liverpool Canal, Leigh Branch Canal and the River Douglas. It will also provide a major new junction for the existing Wigan Pier Business Park.

## A5225

There is a proposal to construct a road from Junction 26 of the M6 motorway running west-east across Wigan Borough to the A579 Atherleigh Way, Leigh.

Westwood Park will benefit from the construction of this road as the route design incorporates a major junction serving the site and connects with the Wigan Town Centre Link Road. The stretch of road from the M6 to Westwood Park will be dual carriageway with only one interim junction. It will have a design speed of 50mph and will be two lanes in each direction.

The proposed A5225 will bring major transportation, environmental and regeneration benefits to the borough.

A planning application for the first stretch of road from the M6 to Westwood Park will be submitted in early 2005. It is anticipated that if planning permission is granted construction of the first phase will commence in 2008.

## design guidance issues

A very high standard of building design and landscaping will be required throughout the development. A variety of building forms, roof lines and detailing will be required to generate and maintain interest.

Landscaping will be required to be of a high standard and co-ordinated with existing site features and structural landscaping. The routing of footways and cycle ways through sites will be encouraged to provide circulation routes within and across the development.

Design and co-ordination of all forms of street furniture will be an important consideration. Street lighting and the main sign posting and sign boarding will be selected or designed by the Council.

Specific design guidance will be produced to coincide with the phased release of land.



 **westwood**  
office space - industrial units - leisure

### ownership & disposal

The majority of Westwood Park is already in the ownership of Wigan Council. Out of a total site area of 44 hectares the local authority owns 33.8 hectares. The remaining 10.2 hectares is owned by Alliance and Leicester and a local private developer.

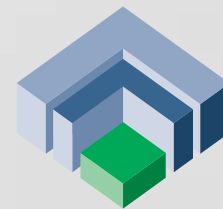
The Westwood Park site will be disposed of freehold and on the basis of a phased release. Development will be achieved through a set of principles formally confirmed as part of the outline planning consent and incorporated within an appropriate disposal and development agreement. These principles, in addition to providing detail on phasing, will also translate into guidance on more physical aspects of the development including a landscape framework, public realm structures, the uses, scale and general appearance of development.



New office development at the entrance to Westwood Park.



Phase 1 infrastructure works at Westwood Park



**foundation**  
westwood



please note this site plan is for illustrative purposes only and is not a true representation of Westwood Park



## borough information

### Overview

With a population of over 300,000 the borough is a lively and friendly collection of towns and villages with Wigan and Leigh the two largest towns.

### Location

The borough of Wigan offers an excellent strategic location. It lies midway between Manchester and Liverpool in the North West of England and enjoys excellent road, rail and air links.

At seventy seven square miles in size, major motorway and road networks such as the M6 and A580 cross the borough and the M61, M62, M58, M65 and M56 are only a few minutes away.

The main West Coast railway line from Wigan Town Centre provides direct access to London and Scotland and a second regional station provides links to most of the North West's main towns and cities.

Both Manchester International Airport and Liverpool John Lennon Airport can be reached within thirty minutes drive time.

### Borough Economy

The borough has a strong and diverse economy with 5,000 businesses involved in a variety of sectors including a growing service sector. A sure sign of the diversity and performance of the borough's economy is the number of recognisable national and international companies located in the area not to mention our home grown successes. Originally SME's these companies continue to go from strength to strength both nationally and internationally.

These success stories are a reflection of the large proportion of SME's within the borough which are the lifeblood of any economy.

Companies based within Wigan Borough may be eligible for Selective Finance for Investment (SFI) as the borough has Assisted Area Status. SFI in England is provided by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and is available to businesses located in (or intending to locate) in an Assisted Area. Financial support is available to businesses of all sizes that are investing in manufacturing or involved in service industries at a national level, for investment projects that lead to long-term improvement in productivity, skills and employment. The scheme within the North West is administered by the North West Development Agency.

### Borough People

A key element for any business is a skilled and flexible workforce. Access to such a workforce can have a positive impact on your business. Wigan Borough can offer your company this resource.

Employment is concentrated in the Public Administration, Education & Health and Distribution sectors accounting for 27.4% and 23.2% of the working population respectively. Manufacturing now employs 15.1% of the working population.

Unemployment has continued to decrease over the past decade and is now only marginally above national levels. The borough has a solid economic base with a skilled workforce, ideal conditions for continuing growth now and in the future.

### Education & Training

Wigan Borough has a number of organisations that provide education and training services.

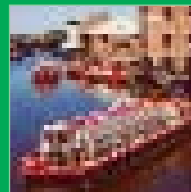
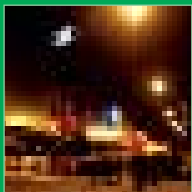
Wigan & Leigh College offers a complete range of basic skills, vocational, academic and professional courses. As one of the largest further education colleges in the country the training and employment opportunities are wide reaching.

ProCo NW Ltd works with existing companies and those looking to relocate into the borough to provide educational and training solutions to meet their requirements.

Business Link North Manchester covers the boroughs of Wigan, Bolton, Bury, Rochdale and Oldham.

Business Link North Manchester provides advice, information and resources to local businesses. Business Link has an extensive network of local partners and accredited consultants.

A rich heritage combined with a keen desire for progress has created a forward looking borough with an exceptional lifestyle to match. Sustained investment and regeneration have helped Wigan Borough to prosper and emerge as a key location in which to live and work.



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**foundation** : wigan borough regeneration  
wigan investment centre  
waterside drive  
wigan  
wn3 5ba

**t** 01942 705 303

**f** 01942 705 464

**e** [enquiries@foundationwigan.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@foundationwigan.co.uk)

**w** [www.foundationwigan.co.uk](http://www.foundationwigan.co.uk)



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