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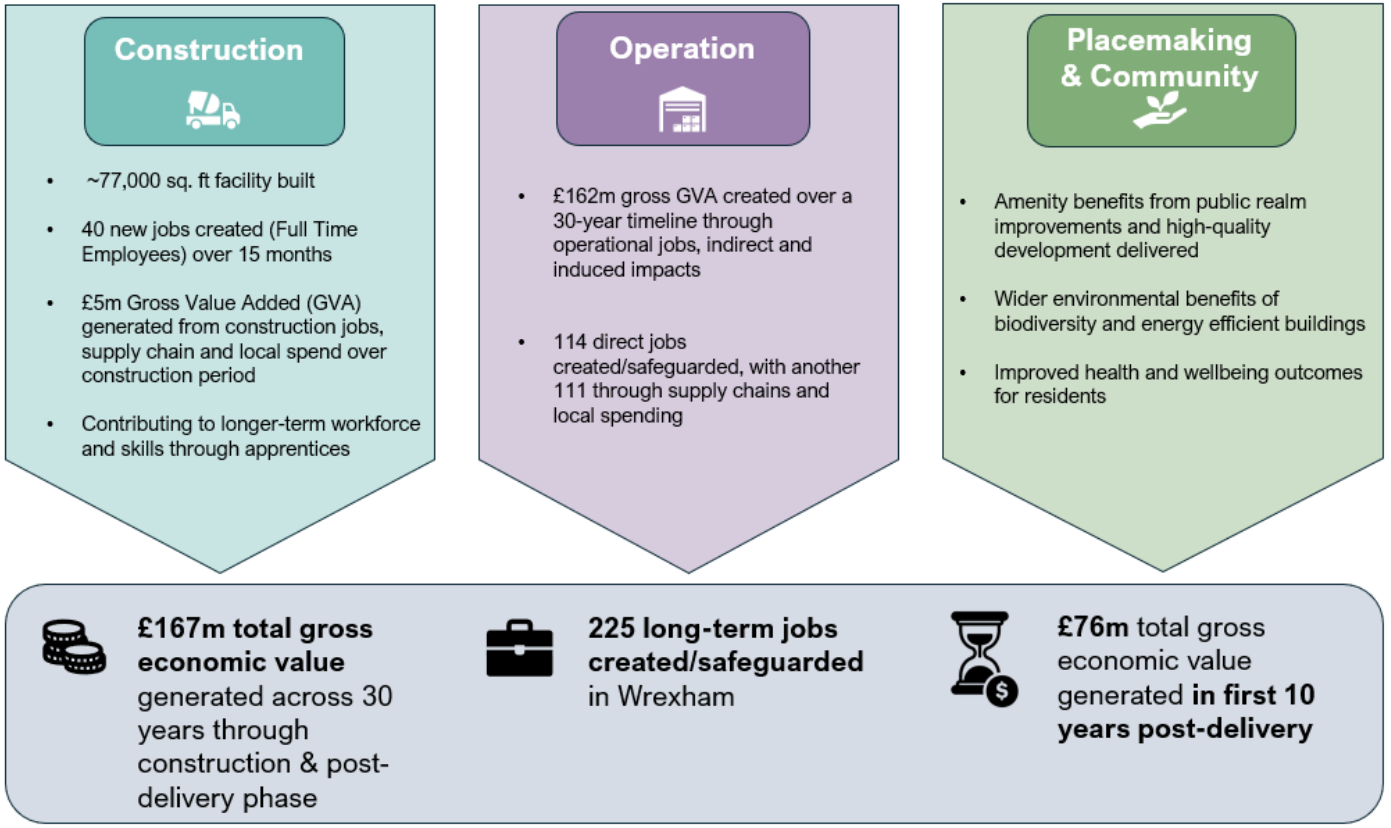
THE OAKS – HIAB Economic Impact Assessment

A report produced by Metro Dynamics for FI Real Estate Management as part of The Oaks – HIAB planning application to Wrexham Council.

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Economic Impact Assessment Summary



The Proposed Project

About FIREM and HIAB

FI Real Estate Management (FIREM) is an established UK commercial property development and asset management company, with a portfolio exceeding £1.2bn and a strong track record of delivering high-quality industrial and commercial spaces. FIREM's investment at Wrexham Industrial Estate has brought over 2.5 million sqft of high-quality space to market, supporting more than 340 businesses and 10,000 jobs.

FIREM is now submitting a planning application for a new, purpose-built headquarters and logistics facility at Wrexham Industrial Estate, designed to provide high-quality employment space and support the area's continued economic growth.

HIAB, the proposed tenant, is a world leader in on-road load handling equipment, with a global presence and over 4,000 employees. The company pioneered the world's first hydraulic truck-mounted crane in 1947 and has since grown through innovation and strategic acquisitions, now operating in over 10 countries with 4,000 employees across 15 R&D sites, multiple production facilities, and 62 service centres worldwide. In the UK, HIAB employs 218 staff across operational centres in Ellesmere (current UK headquarters), Northallerton, Dudley, and Cumbernauld, as well as 23 approved service centres throughout the UK and Ireland.

HIAB's UK headquarters at Ellesmere, Shropshire, has served the company for over 20 years but is now outdated and no longer fit for purpose. The existing site comprises multiple old units on a shared, historic industrial estate, originally a WWII military depot. Key issues driving the need to relocate include:

- Outdated and inflexible accommodation that cannot be expanded and is constraining growth
- Lack of modern office and production facilities
- Security concerns due to the shared nature of the site
- Desire for a market-leading, customer-focused headquarters with the ability to showcase products, deliver training, and foster customer relationships

HIAB is seeking a new headquarters to safeguard and support its long-term growth ambitions. The new facility at Wrexham Industrial Estate will serve as HIAB's UK headquarters, providing state-of-the-art customer service, installation, and training facilities, and supporting a larger employee base to meet future business growth targets.

The Oaks site was identified as the optimum location due to its scale, the opportunity to deliver a bespoke, high-quality headquarters and production facility with significant ecological benefits, excellent transport links, and opportunities for collaboration with local colleges, universities, and other advanced engineering businesses on the estate.

The Proposed Employment Development Site

The developer is proposing a comprehensive, high-quality employment development at The Oaks site, Wrexham Industrial Estate. The scheme comprises a single 77,276sqft (7,179m²)

B8 warehouse and associated office accommodation, set within a 53.5-acre (21.6-hectare) site.

The land is currently unoccupied and overgrown, and the development will bring a previously underused site into productive use, supporting the regeneration of the wider industrial area. The site is not designated as protected green space, and the proposals align with the comprehensive planning of the Wrexham Industrial Estate, which is home to over 340 businesses and forms a key part of the local economic strategy.

The site is deliverable and benefits from excellent connectivity to the local highways network, with access from Oak Road. The site is also accessible via public transport, walking, and cycling.

Figure 1. The Proposed Site



The Proposed Intervention and Site Plan

The new facility will consolidate HIAB's UK operations, providing state-of-the-art assembly, manufacturing, warehousing, and office space, as well as welfare facilities, external storage, a fenced test area, and high-quality landscaping. The design is fully bespoke to HIAB's operational needs, supporting staff retention, future growth, and the company's reputation for engineering excellence and innovation.

The development aims to extend the existing Wrexham Industrial Estate, providing much-needed jobs, and supporting the area's role as a hub for advanced manufacturing and logistics. The scheme will deliver:

- 77,276sqft of B8 warehouse and office space in a single building
- Inclusive pedestrian access and high-quality public realm
- Large HGV service yards with access from Oak Road for all users
- 82 dedicated car parking spaces and secure cycle shelters for staff and visitors

- Landscaped external works and extensive ecological enhancements, and dedicated areas for tree planting and biodiversity net gain

The landscape design will integrate the site into the wider ecology area, with grass and wildflower meadows, swales, trees, and hedgerows creating a sustainable framework around the new building. A picnic area for lunch time breaks and walking routes will offer recreation and wellbeing opportunities for staff and local residents, offering opportunities to walk around the site and enjoy the natural environment.

Public transport, car-sharing, walking, and cycling will be encouraged. The development will also incorporate modern sustainability measures, such as renewable energy, electric vehicle charging points, and on-site ecology benefits.

A significant number of new jobs, training initiatives, and apprenticeships will be created during both construction and operation, with a commitment to working with local authorities, schools, and colleges to maximize community benefits. HIAB will collaborate with local colleges and universities on engineering initiatives, research, and apprenticeship programmes, ensuring that the new headquarters delivers lasting benefits for the local workforce and wider community.

Figure 2. The Oaks – HIAB Site Plan



Figure 3. Building and Ecological Zone rendering



The Strategic Opportunity for Wrexham

The proposed development is closely aligned with Wrexham County Borough Council's Economic Strategy and Local Development Plan (LDP). The Council's vision is to position Wrexham as "a world leader in advanced manufacturing, energy, and digital sectors; to attract and retain well-paid, sustainable jobs in the area, and to develop economic resilience."[1]

Ongoing collaboration with Ambition North Wales and the Welsh Government continues to drive investment in infrastructure, skills, and innovation. This partnership supports the borough's ambition to build a strong, prosperous, and resilient local economy, creating attractive conditions for business growth, fostering entrepreneurship, and generating local employment and wealth.

The Council's Placemaking Plan and Wrexham Local Development Plan (2013–2028) reinforce this direction, setting out a clear vision and strategic objectives for sustainable growth, enhanced connectivity, and economic resilience across the borough. These plans

[1] Developing the Economy | Wrexham County Borough Council

aim to deliver a "reimagined, vibrant, and attractive city centre, with principles that will spread benefits throughout the wider County Borough."

Wrexham is already recognised as a leading hub of industry and commerce in North Wales, boasting the fourth-highest GDP in Wales and a strong tradition of manufacturing excellence. Its strategic importance has been further strengthened by its inclusion in the new Flintshire and Wrexham Investment Zone, backed by up to £160 million in government funding. This initiative aims to attract £1 billion of private sector investment and create around 6,000 new jobs, with a particular focus on advanced manufacturing.

The proposed HIAB headquarters and logistics facility is uniquely positioned to act as a catalyst for further investment and business growth in the area. As a world leader in on-road load handling equipment, HIAB's decision to relocate its UK operations to Wrexham sends a strong signal to the market about the area's attractiveness for high-value, innovation-driven businesses. The new facility will not only safeguard and create jobs, but also introduce new skills, apprentices and training opportunities, and supply chain activity, supporting the Council's ambition to develop a globally significant advanced manufacturing cluster.

HIAB procurement strategy commits to sourcing labour and materials from within the Wrexham Industrial Estate wherever possible, maximising the economic benefits for the local area. Some of the local suppliers include Ash Waste, Excel Signs, Dragon Hydraulics, Minuteman Press, electrical wholesale suppliers, and the Food Hub. This approach will ensure that the benefits of the development are felt across the local business community, supporting existing firms and encouraging further investment.

The HIAB development will also contribute to the Council's wider placemaking and sustainability objectives, with significant investment in landscaping, biodiversity net gain, and active travel infrastructure. By working in partnership with the local authority, schools, and colleges, the project will help to ensure that local residents and young people can access the new opportunities created, supporting inclusive growth and community wellbeing.

Economic Impact Assessment

Approach to the Economic Impact Assessment

Benefits have been assessed over a 15-month construction phase plus the 30-year life span of the building. For the purpose of this appraisal, it is assumed that the intervention opening year will be 2027, with construction beginning in 2025. Below is a description and valuation of the impacts that can currently be quantified. Monetised economic benefits have been calculated in line with HM Treasury Green Book and MHCLG Appraisal Guidance, using a 3.5% discount rate. Where impacts cannot be quantified (monetised), a qualitative description has been provided.

Project Costs

The direct construction cost for the new HIAB headquarters and warehouse facility, inclusive of land and sunk costs, is estimated at **£12 million over a 15-month construction period**. This investment will be channelled into high-quality construction, sustainable design, and extensive landscaping, with a strong emphasis on using local supply chain partners based

within the Wrexham Industrial Estate, including Ash Waste, Excel Signs, Dragon Hydraulics, Minuteman Press, Electrical wholesale suppliers, and Food hub.

Project Outputs and Approach to Impact Quantification

Table 1 below sets out the outputs from the investment.

Table 1 – Outputs

Output Category	Outputs	Quantification Approach	Impact
Construction Employment	- 40 direct construction FTE jobs - 15-month build period - £12m direct construction spend	**Quantitative** (Economic benefit)	**Direct, indirect, and induced jobs and GVA** (using standard multipliers)
Operational Employment	- 90 current FTE relocating from Ellesmere - 24 new FTE jobs anticipated - Roles: mix of engineers, admin, finance, operations - 20-year lease term, 30-year design life	**Quantitative** (Economic benefit)	**Direct, indirect, and induced jobs and GVA** (using standard multipliers)
Floorspace delivered	- Total floorspace main unit (with integral offices): 7,179 m2 or 77,276 sqft - Existing ecological zone improvements	**Quantitative** (Economic benefit)	**Amenity benefits** (quantitative)
Apprenticeships / Skills	- Ongoing apprenticeship programme - Partnership with local colleges and training providers - Commitment to local recruitment and skills development	**Qualitative** (Wider socio-economic benefit)	**Workforce in training** (qualitative)
Business Rates (Fiscal benefits for Welsh government)	- Estimated £575,000 per annum	**Quantitative** (Fiscal benefit)	**Annual liability and total over lease term**
Use of local businesses / supply chain for operation	- Key suppliers: Ash Waste, Excel Signs, Dragon Hydraulics, Minuteman Press, local electrical wholesalers, Food hub	**Qualitative** (Wider socio-economic benefit)	**Agglomeration and cluster benefits**
Environmental enhancement	- 30-year Land Ecology Management Plan - S.106 agreement with North Wales Wildlife Trust for ongoing ecological management - BREEAM “Very Good” building (option to enhance to “Excellent”)	**Qualitative** (Environmental benefit)	**Biodiversity gain**

	- EPC uplift from F (existing) to A (new building)		
Provision for sustainable transport	- 15 cycle parking spaces - 10 EV charging points - 3m widened footpath at site frontage - Commitment to encouraging modal shift and sustainable travel	**Qualitative** (Environmental and wellbeing benefit)	**Active Travel Benefits**

Monetised Economic Benefits

The following section provides an overview of the benefits and key assumptions underpinning the monetisation of benefits.

Construction employment benefits

The Oaks project is expected to generate construction-related jobs, delivering a positive impact on the local economy. The £12m investment will support local businesses and create high-quality jobs both during construction and operation. In addition to direct employment, the project will stimulate indirect job creation through the supply chain and induced employment through increased local spending by construction workers. This activity is anticipated to contribute to an uplift in Gross Value Added (GVA) within the local area, supporting wider economic growth.

While construction jobs are typically temporary in nature, often associated with contractor-based employment, they nonetheless represent a meaningful economic boost and should be considered as a key component when assessing the benefits of a regeneration scheme.

Construction employment is estimated based on total investment costs.

Operational employment benefits

Once operational, the project will bring 114 jobs into the local area across a mix of warehousing, manufacturing, engineering, administrative and professional occupations. These jobs will drive wider indirect and induced impacts in supply chains and through employee spending – with HIAB committed to targeting procurement in the immediate local area.

For the purposes of impact analysis, it is assumed that jobs will persist for the duration of the design life. However, with business growth a factor in HIAB's decision to locate in Wrexham, there is scope for more jobs to be created in the future with c150 FTEs able to be accommodated on the site. These jobs will drive workplace-based GVA benefits and add to the attractiveness of Wrexham Industrial Estate as an important manufacturing and employment hub.

Fiscal benefits

The investment will generate business rate returns to the Welsh Government of approximately £575,000 per annum over the duration of the 20-year lease term. Tax returns to the Exchequer have not been considered as there is no immediate net gain at a national level. However, over time, the move to a larger and purpose-built site is expected to unlock

future business growth and expansion, with the current facility able to accommodate up to 150 FTEs.

Amenity benefits: MHCLG guidance recognises the benefits to society that stem from improvements to brownfield and underused / poor quality sites. The Oaks site is currently not in productive use or designated as protected green space. Its development will therefore bring wider amenity benefits to the area, with the potential to improve value perceptions.

Consistent with the MHCLG Appraisal Guide, it has been assumed that improvements to natural/semi-natural land has an economic benefit of £13,371 per hectare p.a. (2016 prices). This has been adjusted to 2025 prices and applied to the direct development site only (0.72ha) resulting in an amenity benefit of £13,288 pa.

Although the development is set within a wider site which will be actively managed through a Land Ecology Management Plan - providing 30-years phased plan of ecological betterment, this is not wholly attributable to HIAB's investment and has been excluded from the analysis as a monetisable benefit. There is however a clear qualitative benefit from the active delivery, management and maintenance of the ecology park in perpetuity, which has been agreed between FI and North Wales Wildlife as part of s106 obligations.

Amenity benefits have been assumed to persist for 10 years.

Non-monetised benefits

There are several benefits from the investment which it is not possible to robustly quantify or monetise, but which will support economic resilience, growth and place-making in Wrexham.

Cluster/agglomeration benefits: Agglomeration benefits arise when businesses and employees with complementary skills, products and services, work within close proximity. This creates opportunities for access to labour and labour retention within an area as well as local supply chain development. It can help to lever investment into the area by increasing the viability of sites, attracting housing development, and raising the attractiveness of the area to professional and other support services.

Wrexham Industrial Estate is already one of the largest industrial estates in Wales and home to numerous major manufacturing businesses. This investment will further establish the locality as a major hub for manufacturing, engineering and other high value industries, and support the future attraction of inward investment.

Biodiversity gain: Environmental and social value is embedded in the scheme, with a 30-year ecology management plan and a commitment to delivering a BREEAM "Very Good" building, with the potential to achieve "Excellent" through further fit-out.

Through the creation of green spaces, tree planting, and habitat-friendly landscaping the Oaks will deliver biodiversity gains. These measures will not only support local wildlife but also help mitigate the urban heat effect from new industrial building and improve air quality, enhancing the ecological resilience of the area.

Active Travel benefits: The project will enhance active travel infrastructure, supporting sustainable commuting and wellbeing for staff and visitors. The addition of 15 cycle spaces may encourage more uptake of cycling to and from work. This can lead to a number of benefits, including improved health outcomes for individuals, reduced absenteeism from

work and better environmental outcomes. The additional cycle spaces may also lead to improved security.

Apprenticeships / skills: The investment will support the creation of up to four apprenticeships which will provide entry level employment and skills development opportunities to people in the local area.

Summary of quantified benefits

Based on the above analysis, the summary appraisal over 30 years is set out below. Gross Present Value benefits of £175.4m will accrue to Wrexham and Welsh government from the development of the site and relocation of HIAB's HQ operations. Whilst these benefits are not wholly additional at UK level, the investment represents a significant boost to the local economy. If employment benefits are reduced to reflect only the uplift in employment enabled by HIAB's relocation, Net Present Value benefits are £47,219,164 which still results in a positive cost-benefit ratio of 3.4.

Table 1 – Summary of quantified benefits

Benefit	Persistency	Gross monetised benefits (£ Present Value Benefits[2] PVB) ['000]
Construction Employment Benefits	Temporary, during construction phase only	£5,030,775
Employment Benefits	30-year design life	£162,424,929
Amenity Benefits	10 years	£110,511
Fiscal benefits	20-year lease term	£7,883,157
Total (Gross)		**£175,449,371**

[2] Discounted at 3.5% as per HTM Green Book recommendation

Appendix – Impact Assumptions

Construction Jobs

The total number of construction jobs is based on data provided by IF Real Estate Management. GVA per construction job in Wrexham has been estimated based on sectoral GVA and jobs in the region using data from the ONS and the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). Indirect and induced construction employment effects have been quantified by applying construction Type 1 and Type 2 multipliers as outlined below.

- GVA per construction job at 2025 prices: £69,872
- Type 1 multiplier: 1.6
- Type 2 multiplier: 1.8

Employment multipliers

Standard government employment multipliers are used to calculate indirect and induced jobs[3]. Indirect jobs (Type 1 multipliers) are defined as jobs generated by the immediate suppliers and then further down the supply chain as a result of additional direct employment.

As a result of the increased level of household income in the economy created by direct and indirect employment, a proportion of this income will be re-spent on final products, creating induced employment (Type 2 multipliers). Examples of this include restaurant staff, childcare workers, grocery and clothing store jobs, and recreation and entertainment jobs.

The multiplier values used to calculate the total number of indirect and induced jobs was derived from an average across several relevant sectors including machinery and equipment, and repair and maintenance. There is assumed to be no time lag between the generation of direct jobs and multiplier employment effects.

- Type 1 multiplier: 1.6
- Type 2 multiplier: 2.0

GVA Calculations

Total additional GVA is the product of the number of jobs that will be located on the site, and the GVA that each job will produce. GVA per job has been calculated based on an average of sector GVA and jobs in warehousing, professional and manufacturing sectors (£39,829). Data was obtained using Business Register and Employment Survey data (BRES) and ONS Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: all ITL regions. Both BRES and GVA figures were taken from the year 2022 and inflated into 2025 prices taken from the Bank of England's inflation calculator.

[3]Multipliers from Scottish Government, Supply, Use and Input-Output Tables. https://www.gov.scot/publications/about-supply-use-input-output-tables/pages/user-guide-multipliers/#:~:text=The%20GVA%20multiplier%20is%20expressed,the%20economy%20as%20a%20whole. Scottish multipliers have been favoured over the ONS multipliers for completion (Type I and II). The ONS does not currently produce Type II multipliers.

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