



**SOLOMON Further supporting information for Planning Ref 2012-0604**

**Existing sites** (See end of document for site maps of each)

**Head office site**

- Offices for all management, Administrative and Sales staff
- Three factories housing our panel pressing / panel trimming and box assembly plants
- Employees located on the Head Office site.
- 30 staff members
- Day shift 67 Employees
- Mid shift 16 Employees
- Night shift 38 Employees

NO FURTHER FACTORY OR YARD EXPANSION IS POSSIBLE ON THIS SITE. Further capacity is available from more even shift patterns utilising any under capacity hours. This is only possible with additional yard storage elsewhere.

**Kingsway Facility**

- One large factory housing our vehicle finished plant and current chassis storage facility.
- 4 staff members
- Day shift 70 Employees

NO FURTHER YARD EXPANSION IS POSSIBLE ON THIS SITE. However production capacity is available from more even shift patterns utilising and under capacity hours.

**Carr's chassis shop**

- One large factory housing our chassis production
- Day shift 27 employees

NO FURTHER FACTORY OR YARD EXPANSION IS POSSIBLE ON THIS SITE. Further capacity is available from more even shift patterns utilising and under capacity hours.

**Carr's bodyguard shop**

- 3 Management staff
- Day shift. 28 Employees

One factory housing our panel van production and repair facility. Self contained unit with little interaction with the other factories

NO FURTHER FACTORY OR YARD EXPANSION IS POSSIBLE ON THIS SITE. Further capacity is available from more even shift patterns utilising and under capacity hours.

**TOTAL EMPLOYEES WITHIN ROSSENDALE VALLEY CURRENTLY 283 people.**

There is a huge range of quality jobs within Solomon. Skilled and interesting commercial vehicle builders, through to management roles within the company. Solomon has a history of employing apprentices and promoting people from within. 98% of our management and staff roles are Rossendale people who started on the tools and have been promoted through the company. This is regardless of education and based on ability and commitment. It's given numerous people in Rossendale a chance to develop. A further 6 apprentices are due to start at Solomon this coming September from our local schools.

## **The Future?**

Solomon is a leading European manufacturer of temperature controlled vehicles and is the leading European manufacturer for Home Delivery vehicles. The growth Solomon has experienced can continue as the home delivery market is due to double in the next five years. In the medium term Solomon has enough factory space to produce more units but its greatest limiter is storage yard for the vehicles as they wait to go through the process. In order to grow Solomon needs vehicle storage in close proximity to its factory base. With this there will be further employment within Rossendale of quality jobs.

Short term 12 month – 18 month - 45 additional jobs

Medium to longer term - Further 95 additional jobs

## **Site Search**

Site criteria;

- Level open land required for storage of vehicles.
- Ideal size 3 – 4 acres. Land must be level in order to park vehicles. We require all this area for storage ie no buildings.
- Must be able to be made secure from theft.
- Ideally low profile site so as not to attract undue attention.
- Located ideally within a mile radius of our existing factory locations along the A56 by pass to minimise travel costs and maximise efficiency.
- Approach roads must be of suitable stature/ size to take commercial vehicles and ideally not through residential areas to access the site.

Our search area is located along the A56 corridor of Haslingden where we are currently based. Finding a site in this region keeps us in the Rossendale area.

We did commission a more exhaustive search through Nolan Redshaw to find sites for Solomon to grow into but we are keen to avoid these as they are out of Rossendale and once that first step is made the business will follow entirely. The Managing Directors of Solomon commercials are Rossendale people educated at BRGS and live in the valley. Their aim is to keep jobs and growth in Rossendale if at all possible.

## Results

<b>ROSSENDALE site search</b>			
<i>sites</i>	<i>Pro's</i>	<i>Cons</i>	<i>Decision</i>
Mayfield Chicks site	Level, land designated for employment, Large.	NOT FOR SALE. Owner contacted and confirmed they are holding onto it in the one day hope of residential permission	UNAVAILABLE
Hud Rake Haslingden	Level, land designated for employment, Large.	NOT FOR SALE. Owner contacted and confirmed they are holding onto it in the one day hope of retail development	UNAVAILABLE
Baxenden chemicals	Land designated for employment	Poor access through tight roads past residential housing. Not suitable for our use. Unclear on availability. Unsuitable units and possible chemical contamination?	NOT VIABLE
Pond site at Kingsway	Land already owned by Solomon	Inadequate size, Ecological opposition and very unpopular locally. We are unwilling to reconsider this. It left a very bad taste. It's not large enough for the effort and investment involved	NOT VIABLE
Land to the North of Kingsway on Grane Rd	Land adjacent to Solomon and designated as possible employment	The land owners have been signed up by Wimpey homes on the hope that it will get residential planning. UNAVAILABLE. This has been confirmed directly.	UNAVAILABLE
Blackburn Rd caravan site	Level land already used for open storage	Highly visible and considered a theft threat. Successful business in place unwilling to sell. Not large enough for significant growth. UNAVAILABLE. Confirmed conversation with land owner. This site did set the precedent though for yard storage in the greenbelt despite it not creating any jobs.	UNAVAILABLE
Stand athletic at Rising bridge	Level land	In the Flood plain and this uninsurable NOT VIABLE	NOT VIABLE
New Hall Hey	Level land and large enough	Poor access to our other sites, Owned by West Register who are unwilling to sell to Solomon. Might be a possibility long term if market conditions dictate CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE. Confirmed conversation taken place with West Register	UNAVAILABLE

Manchester Rd site ie Application site	Perfect size, perfect location close to our facilities on the A56 corridor, Low profile site that can be made secure, Very good access with wide roads and not through a residential estate, Level land. AVAILABLE	NONE other than overcoming any objections to a change of use.	ONLY VIABLE SITE IN ROSSENDALE
--	---	---	--------------------------------

### Wider area Site Search

**NOLAN REDSHAW FOUND NO VIABLE SITE IN ROSSENDALE DESPITE US STATING IT AS OUR PREFERRED CHOICE.**

<b>NOLAN REDSHAW Site SEARCH out of ROSSENDALE</b>	<i>pros</i>	<i>cons</i>	<i>Decision</i>
Burnley Bridge M65	Good access. Large and designated for employment. Large enough to take the whole of Solomon Commercials	Out of Rossendale and only to be considered if no rossendale site is available. Would lead to loss of employment in Rossendale	Possible
Roach bank Road Pilsworth	Good access and location. Large and designated for employment. Large enough to take the whole of Solomon Commercials	Out of Rossendale and only to be considered if no rossendale site is available. Dialog and early negotiations have taken place. Would lead to loss of employment in Rossendale	Possible
Preston Old Rd	Good site	Too far	Not Viable
Hollins Road Darwen	Good site	Out of Rossendale and only to be considered if no rossendale site is available. Would lead to loss of employment in Rossendale	Possible
former Michelin Premises Heasandford	Large site	Poor access and out of Rossendale	Not viable
Radcliffe M26 2XW	Large site	Poor access and out of Rossendale	Not Viable
Whitebirk 65	Large site	Out of Rossendale and only to be considered if no rossendale site is available. Would lead to loss of employment in Rossendale	Possible

Temlon Works Accrington	Large industrial site	Poor access close to residential	Not viable
----------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------------------	------------

## Conclusion

Despite being a Rossendale business born and bred the potential areas for employment expansion are limited if nonexistent currently. The Manchester Road site is the only viable choice Solomon has as a business to remain, grow and employ more people within the Rossendale valley. A Move away would take jobs out of Rossendale and a remove a key employer from the valley. Deeper thought should have been placed into the repercussions of old sites that were designated employment being given over to other uses like residential during the last ten years. Solomon tried to secure the airtours site but to no avail. There was a mill next to the woolpack that is now housing. The Tesco Haslingden site was employment to name but a few. The decision right now is support Solomon with the Manchester Road site or force them to move out of the valley?

## **Infilling of the pond at our Kingsway site.** Previous application

Whilst Solomon own that site keeping development costs low they were met with substantial opposition from the Environmental agency and Lancashire Ecology department. We also had substantial opposition from a number of locals some of which decided to jeopardise 285 jobs by writing damaging letters to our customer base questioning our company's ethics. Given the small area of storage this site would give us and the opposition we faced we do not agree that it is viable. We would rather take a more positive stance with this pond and encourage wildlife and endangered species to form a habitat there. We would be happy to do this as mitigation measures for developing the Manchester rd site. The pond is clearly not a viable option to us.

## **Why Solomon requires additional space**

Solomon commercials Ltd is a major Rossendale employer having been located in the valley since 1976. Today the company employs close to 300 people in a whole range of skills and responsibilities. Its main activities are the manufacture of refrigerated rigid vehicles for the food industry and particularly the grocery home delivery market. As part of this process the customers purchase and provide the brand new chassis cabs for Solomon to manufacture the bodywork on the back and thus storage of these chassis cabs at the start and end of the process is a necessity.

The major problem that the current factory space does not provide is enough outside storage space for the vehicles before , after and between stages of build. For the company to protect its current jobs and to facilitate future growth in its Rossendale factories the company needs additional storage in close proximity to its sites.

The current factory footprint is large enough to sustain more growth and employment if we can secure the additional parking. The facilities at these existing factories are large enough to accommodate the extra employees etc. As the market place polarises it's imperative that Solomon grows with demand to remain competitive and a valued employer in the valley.

There is no reason why Solomon given support cannot employ 500 people in the Rossendale valley over the next five to ten years. Solomon is at a crossroads. We very much want to remain in the

valley but if we can't continue to grow in Rossendale we will be forced to relocate in order to safeguard our business.

**A further very important reason for requiring added space is to safeguard the jobs we currently have. The home delivery bodies used to be manufactured by a competitor in France now they are manufactured by the people of Rossendale. In order to safeguard this business we want to give added value to our customer by offering to pdi their vehicles and deliver into their stores. This will mean we need additional storage to do this as the vehicles will stay with us a few extra weeks but it will be a major step to safeguarding 300 jobs in the Rossendale valley as this 'added value' would be above and beyond what the competition can offer.**

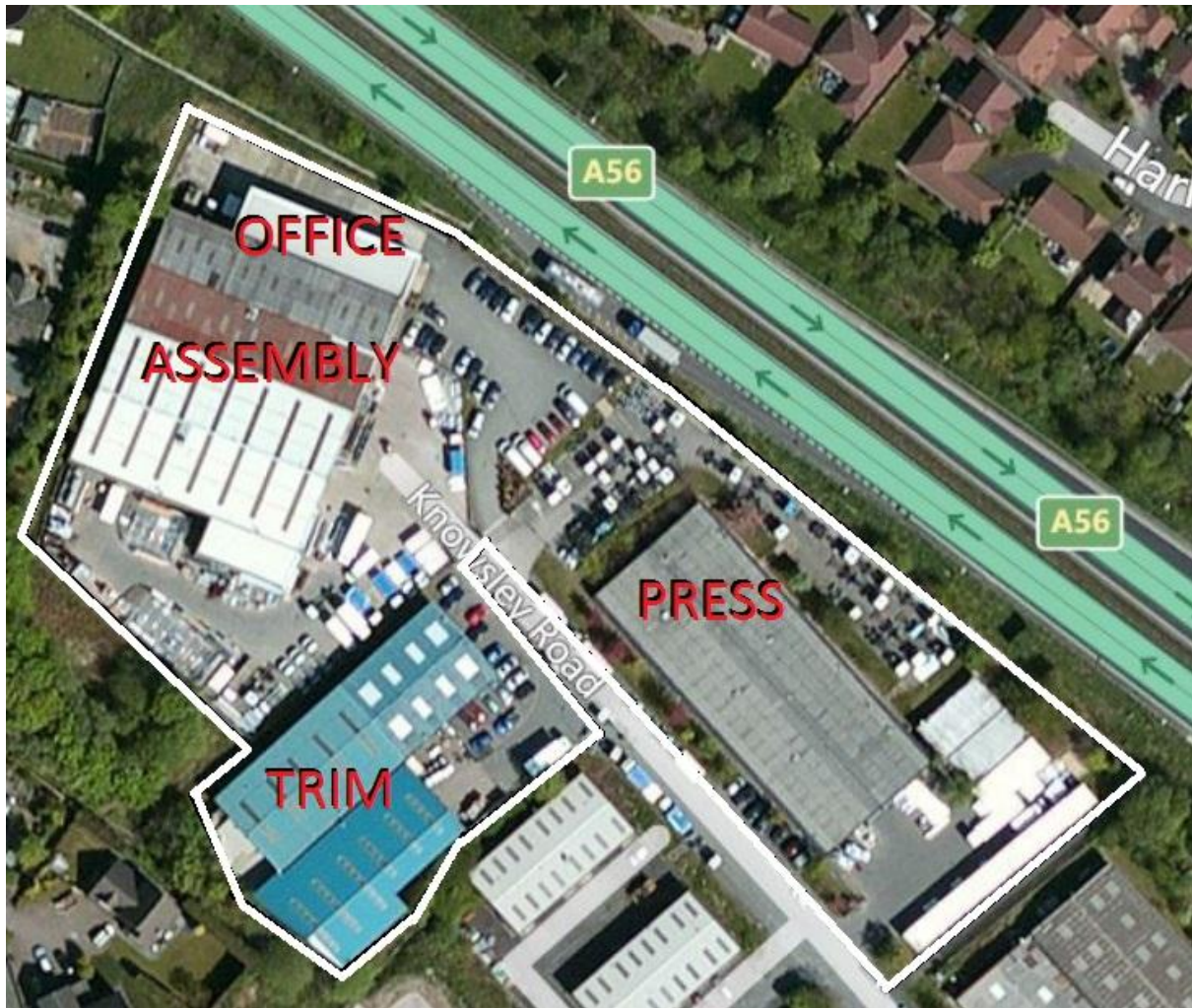
## **Current temporary Heywood storage facility**

It can hold approx twenty vehicles which is clearly not enough to support our business or promote further capacity and growth. We can terminate at any time and indeed need to as the costs are high as are the logistics of moving vehicles from Heywood to Rossendale. ITS A SHORT TERM FIX but will be axed the minute we get our longer term solution in place. We need a longer term solution as the current landowner is looking to develop that site and he has warned us that we will receive notice to vacate in the near future.

## **The Manchester Road site we want to convert to Vehicle Storage.**

The site is located right off the A56 roundabout that we use on a daily basis and sits comfortably within a mile of our factories. Its low profile and not overlooked and yet has great access with no residential area around it. The conversion of this land to vehicle storage will help protect close to 300 jobs in the Rossendale valley and will allow Solomon to increase capacity and meet the market demands keeping potential competition at bay. This increased capacity through the existing factory footprint will lead to more jobs in Rossendale in the short to medium term. The conversion of this yard is a significant investment by Solomon and further cements their place in the valley for years to come. Solomon feel a precedent was set with the Edenfield caravan storage site obtaining planning permission in the Greenbelt. This site is overlooked and highly visible and does not create any jobs? The Solomon site is not highly visible and will safeguard and create 45 additional jobs within the next twelve months? The existing field and wall is dilapidated and scruffy the planned landscaping will add to the area and not detract. Although its designated greenbelt it's hard to see why when looking at the site. We are not talking about the rolling fields and moors of Rossendale here? Instead a poorly drained agricultural field sandwiched between the A56 bypass and Manchester Road.

**Head Office Knowsley Road**



**This site is 100% utilised from a yard perspective. Again capacity and employment could be increased through further shifts if we had more storage facility for chassis elsewhere.**

## Carrs Industrial Estate



As can be seen both our carrs factories have little storage yard around them and whilst the factories themselves could employ more people and handle more throughput a way of storing surplus vehicles is necessary.



## Kingsway Site



Since this aerial map was taken the site is now fully utilised. The area noted as chassis parking is completely full and the whole site has no further room for expansion because of the yard restrictions. Again finding a storage solution elsewhere would allow us increase capacity and employ more people at this site. The pond area can also be seen which is clearly not large enough for the expansion in capacity we plan.