



## **Securing the Future of GA**

### **Asland Walks Energy Park Supporting Statement**

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# Supporting Statement

## Non-Technical Summary

### 1. Introduction and Strategic Context

GA Pet Food Partners commissioned Brookdale Consulting to examine the company's long-term economic contribution and the role of the proposed Asland Walks Energy Park. GA has grown from a small family enterprise into one of the UK's leading manufacturers, exporting to 33 countries and employing nearly 700 staff at Plocks Farm. The company's integrated model, from sourcing and processing raw materials through to manufacture and distribution is embedded in its current location and would be difficult to replicate elsewhere. Sustaining this success requires stable energy costs and progress towards net zero.

### 2. Economic Story of GA

Over 33 years, GA has invested heavily in technology and innovation, creating a vertically integrated operation unique in the UK pet food sector. Turnover has reached £150m, with direct supplier spend of £110m and total capital investment since 2012 exceeding £188m. GA supports 678 jobs, including 600 locally, and contributes significantly to UK exports. However, rising energy costs, which peaked at £13.7m in 2024, threaten competitiveness and highlight the need for a local renewable energy solution.

### 3. Policy and Strategic Fit

GA's growth aligns closely with national and regional priorities. The UK's Industrial Strategy emphasises advanced manufacturing, clean energy, and innovation, which are all areas in which GA operates. Lancashire's growth plans promote high-value jobs, sustainable industry, and rural diversification, to which GA is a proven contributor. At the local level, Chorley's economic strategy seeks to combine innovation, new technologies, and net-zero, as directly reflected in GA's proposals. Asland Walks is therefore not only essential for GA but also supports wider industrial and climate objectives.

### 4. Local Impact of Global Uncertainty

Energy price volatility and climate imperatives present existential risks to GA. The company has reviewed alternatives but concluded that only the Asland Walks site can deliver the scale and resilience required. Combining wind and solar ensures a balanced year-round supply, protecting against future shocks. Without this development, GA faces escalating costs, reduced competitiveness, and potential contraction. With it, the business secures long-term viability, sustains exports, and anchors skilled employment in Chorley.

### 5. Socio-Economic Impact of Asland Walks Energy Park

The £27m investment in Asland Walks will generate substantial economic benefits. Construction will support 423 job-years and £27.9m in GVA, of which 229 jobs and

£15.1m GVA will be local. Over its lifetime, the Energy Park will support permanent maintenance roles, contribute £3m GVA, and deliver operational savings of £34.1m, freeing capital for reinvestment in GA's core business. These impacts strengthen GA's role as a key regional employer and exporter.

**6. Environmental and Community Benefits**

Asland Walks will save an estimated 13,500 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e, valued at £3.76m, supporting GA's journey to net zero. Five per cent of energy generated will be supplied directly to Bretherton, enhancing local energy security and resilience. The scheme also includes the creation of a circular walking and cycling route with educational features, opening green space and promoting community wellbeing. Together, these measures demonstrate a clear commitment to local benefit as well as corporate sustainability.

**7. Conclusions – Very Special Circumstances**

This report demonstrates that GA's case for Green Belt development rests on robust and exceptional grounds. The company's unique, non-transferable operations, its role as a major local employer and exporter, the urgent requirement for energy resilience, and the wider environmental and community benefits together constitute "very special circumstances." The Asland Walks Energy Park is therefore essential to GA's future competitiveness and to delivering national, regional and local policy objectives.