



Value My Land

Maximising Returns for Landowners

Why Every Parcel of Land Must Be Assessed in Its Own Right

A Practical Guide for Landowners

Why adjoining or similar-looking land can have different planning potential, development capacity and value.



Value My Land

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Why Every Parcel of Land Must Be Assessed Individually

Every parcel of land has its own combination of planning, physical, legal, technical and commercial characteristics. Those characteristics determine whether the land can support development, what form it may take and what the opportunity may be worth.

Even adjoining fields of the same acreage can produce different conclusions. One may control a safe access and contain a largely unconstrained development area, while the next depends on third-party rights, carries title restrictions or loses substantial land to flooding, habitats, infrastructure or landscape mitigation.

A neighbouring permission, regional land value or simple price per acre is evidence to investigate - not a substitute for assessing the actual parcel.

Why is a parcel-specific assessment essential?

The assessment begins with the exact land and its boundaries, then examines the relationships and dependencies that affect whether it can function as a development site. It replaces assumptions based on a neighbouring permission, current land use or a broad price per acre with evidence attributable to the actual parcel.

- Identify the titles, boundaries, area, ownership and rights being assessed
- Review planning policy, designations and the relationship with the settlement
- Test access, levels, environmental constraints, utilities and infrastructure
- Distinguish gross ownership area from the realistic net developable area
- Assess planning certainty, costs, timing, market evidence and parcel-specific value

Where does it sit in the assessment process?

Define the parcel → review policy and context → map constraints and rights → test capacity → assess costs and value → decide the next strategy

[Read the full online Parcel Assessment Guide](#)

Assess the Parcel, Its Edges and Its Wider Dependencies

A registered title is not always the correct unit of planning analysis. One title can contain several fields with different access, policy or environmental characteristics. Conversely, a coherent development site can combine all or part of several titles.

The assessment should therefore start with the identified parcel, examine its boundaries and interfaces, and then test any wider dependencies. It should also consider the land independently and, where relevant, as part of a combined development opportunity.

The land itself

Review the area, shape, topography, current use, policy designations, habitats, flood risk, utilities, contamination and physical features located within the parcel.

The boundaries and interfaces

Check road frontage, visibility, neighbouring uses, hedgerows, trees, ditches, rights of way, boundary discrepancies and whether improvement works extend beyond the ownership.

The wider context

Consider settlement form, services, public transport, adjoining ownerships, off-site drainage, highway works, utility capacity, cumulative effects and whether the parcel depends on or unlocks a wider scheme.

The assessment boundary should reflect the land actually being considered while identifying every title, right and off-site dependency needed to deliver it.

Read: [Is My Land Suitable for Development?](#)

No Two Parcels Have the Same Opportunities and Constraints

Land is not a uniform commodity. A credible conclusion depends on the complete combination of circumstances attributable to the parcel rather than one label, designation or map layer. The same current use, postcode or acreage can conceal materially different opportunities, constraints and delivery risks.

Planning Position Allocation, settlement boundaries, Green Belt, neighbourhood policy and emerging Local Plan evidence can affect one parcel differently from another.	Access & Connectivity Frontage, visibility, pedestrian links, highway capacity and ownership of the access route are specific to the land being assessed.
Shape & Levels Dimensions, gradients, boundaries and existing features influence layout efficiency, drainage, accessibility and the net developable area.	Environmental Effects Flood risk, ecology, landscape, heritage, trees and ground conditions vary spatially and may affect only particular parts of a holding.
Ownership & Rights Covenants, easements, tenancies, wayleaves, access rights and third-party land can determine whether the opportunity is deliverable.	Development Economics Capacity, infrastructure, planning obligations, abnormal costs, sales values and timing determine the residual amount available for the parcel.

What should be reviewed together?

- Adopted and emerging planning policy, allocations, boundaries and evidence
- Relationship with the settlement, services, facilities and public transport
- Actual highway frontage, visibility, access control and sustainable connections
- Shape, levels, drainage, ecology, landscape, heritage and ground conditions
- Titles, covenants, easements, tenancies, wayleaves and third-party rights
- Utilities, infrastructure, abnormal costs, obligations and market demand
- Independent development potential and any contribution to a wider land assembly

A parcel should never be dismissed or valued by label alone. The individual evidence determines what the land may realistically contribute and what it may be worth.

Which Matters Are Properly Attributable to the Parcel?

A parcel-specific assessment should identify where each opportunity, constraint, cost and benefit arises. This is especially important where a wider scheme includes several ownerships or shared infrastructure and the physical location of a facility does not necessarily identify who should bear its full cost.

1. **Direct on-site matters** — Identify levels, contamination, habitats, trees, buildings, utility apparatus, drainage requirements and other matters physically located within the parcel.
2. **Boundary and interface matters** — Assess frontage, visibility, neighbouring amenity, hedgerows, ditches, edge treatment and works that cross or depend on the parcel boundary.
3. **Off-site dependencies** — Record highway improvements, utility reinforcement, drainage outfalls, easements and third-party rights required to make development possible.
4. **Shared scheme requirements** — Identify roads, schools, open space, strategic drainage and other facilities serving several parcels and requiring a fair allocation method.
5. **Parcel-specific benefits** — Recognise access control, development capacity, policy support or infrastructure contributed by the parcel that improves its own or the wider site's value.
6. **Timing and risk** — Consider the probability, evidence, expenditure and time required to resolve each matter and whether it should be attributed to one parcel or shared across the scheme.

Attribution does not mean that every cost physically located within one parcel should be borne by that owner alone. The purpose and beneficiaries of shared infrastructure must also be considered.

Read: Title Plans and Boundaries

Constraints Must Be Mapped Against the Actual Parcel

Constraints and opportunities must be mapped against the actual parcel. Their precise location, extent and interaction with the proposed layout determine whether they can be avoided, mitigated, shared or treated as a fundamental limitation. Broad mapping alone cannot establish the realistic capacity.

Settlement & Policy Context Check whether the parcel adjoins the built form, how policies and mapped boundaries apply and whether current plan-making evidence supports the location.	Access & Sustainable Connections Test actual frontage, visibility, gradients, road width, pedestrian and cycle links and legal control of every improvement required.
Flood Risk & Drainage Map river, surface-water and groundwater risks and allow sufficient land for avoidance, storage, SuDS, outfalls and maintenance.	Ecology & Biodiversity Identify habitats, ponds, hedgerows, protected species, survey timing, retention, mitigation, enhancement and biodiversity requirements.
Landscape, Views & Heritage Assess prominence, settlement character, important views, heritage setting, archaeology and the buffers or design response needed.	Ground Conditions & Topography Review levels, gradients, mining, contamination, made ground, instability and the foundation or retaining costs attributable to the land.
Utilities & Infrastructure Locate sewers, pipelines, cables, pylons and easements and investigate capacity, diversions, reinforcement and off-site connections.	Title & Legal Deliverability Confirm boundaries, covenants, rights, wayleaves, occupation, vacant possession, ransom strips and every third-party dependency.

Constraints should be considered together. Access, drainage, ecology, landscape, heritage, utilities, title and topography may compete for the same land, so a credible concept must show how all requirements fit simultaneously.

Gross Acreage Is Not the Same as Net Developable Area

The value and capacity of a parcel are normally driven by what can actually be accommodated after access, planning, design, infrastructure and environmental requirements are allowed for. Gross acreage is the starting point, not the final development area.

1. **Define the gross parcel** — Confirm the land, titles, ownership, physical boundaries, approximate area and rights included within the assessment.
2. **Provide access and movement** — Allow for the junction, visibility, estate roads, footways, cycle routes and any widening or connections required beyond the boundary.
3. **Manage water** — Reserve land for SuDS, flood storage, drainage routes, pumping, outfalls and long-term access or maintenance where needed.
4. **Respond to the environment** — Retain habitats, trees and heritage features and provide landscape, ecological and amenity buffers appropriate to the evidence.
5. **Provide supporting land** — Allow for open space, play, utilities, substations, community facilities and other infrastructure generated by the proposed scale of development.
6. **Test form and density** — Consider shape, width, levels, neighbouring character, housing mix or commercial layout and the efficiency of the resulting net area.
7. **Use a reasoned capacity range** — A concept plan should test whether all requirements fit together before one optimistic dwelling or floorspace figure is used for promotion or valuation.

A credible capacity and valuation should use the net saleable or developable output supported by the parcel, not simply multiply total acreage by a headline development-land rate.

Read: [Access and Highways for Development Land](#)

Read: [Topographical Surveys for Development Land](#)

Why Each Parcel Must Also Be Valued in Its Own Right

Development land valuation is an appraisal of a particular opportunity, not a universal rate attached to every acre in an area. The starting point may be existing use value, with hope or strategic value arising where the market recognises a credible but uncertain planning prospect.

An allocation or planning permission can increase certainty, but value still depends on the actual use and capacity, infrastructure, affordable housing, planning obligations, abnormal costs, conditions, timing and market. A residual appraisal should use assumptions supported by the parcel and proposed scheme.

A parcel-specific valuation should consider:

- The realistic net saleable output, development capacity and completed values
- Existing use, planning status, probability of success and promotion timescale
- Access, utilities, drainage, remediation, retaining works and mitigation costs
- Affordable housing, Section 106, CIL, professional fees, finance and developer return
- Comparable transactions adjusted for permission, density, costs and certainty
- The proposed sale, option, promotion, overage, collaboration or equalisation structure

Comparable evidence must be adjusted

A nearby sale or planning permission is useful evidence to investigate, but it may have a different access solution, planning status, development density, affordable housing requirement, abnormal cost profile or transaction structure. Those differences can materially change the value supported by the parcel.

Development value depends on the parcel's actual planning certainty, net output, obligations, infrastructure, abnormal costs, timing and transaction structure.

Assess the Parcel Alone and as Part of Any Wider Land Assembly

Some parcels can support an independent development. Others have their greatest importance because they provide access, drainage, infrastructure, open space or development capacity that enables a larger scheme. Both possibilities should be tested before the landowner enters negotiations or assumes a value.

A small strip can be strategically important if it controls the only practical route into a development area, while a much larger parcel can have limited independent value if it is landlocked or cannot support a complete layout. Strategic importance must still be assessed against legal rights, alternatives, planning need and commercial reality.

Independent parcel assessment

Test whether the land has its own access, policy route, development capacity, drainage solution, utility connections and marketable scheme. This establishes a baseline and protects the owner from assuming that adjoining land must always be included.

Combined site assessment

Test whether adjoining land creates a better access, more coherent settlement edge, shared infrastructure or sufficient scale for facilities. Where collaboration is needed, decision-making, promotion, costs, land contributions, valuation and division of proceeds should be documented before substantial expenditure.

A parcel may have one value and strategy independently and a different contribution, risk and value when combined with adjoining land.

[Read the Multiple Landowners Guide](#)

How an Individual Parcel Assessment Should Be Undertaken

An individual parcel assessment should become more detailed as the opportunity progresses. The first review records what is known, what is assumed and what remains uncertain, then identifies the proportionate evidence needed for the next planning, valuation or commercial decision.

Define the Parcel Identify the land, titles, ownership, approximate area, physical boundaries, access and any adjoining land included in the review.	Review Policy & Context Check the planning authority, Local Plan, neighbourhood plan, allocations, designations, settlement relationship and emerging opportunities.
Identify Constraints & Rights Review access, flooding, ecology, landscape, heritage, utilities, ground conditions, title restrictions and third-party dependencies.	Test Capacity & Options Consider alternative uses, the net developable area, concept layouts and whether the parcel works alone or within a wider site.
Assess Costs & Value Identify parcel-specific and shared costs, planning certainty, timing, comparable evidence and the appropriate valuation approach.	Set the Next Strategy Decide whether to monitor, submit through a Call for Sites, promote through a Local Plan, prepare an application, assemble land or obtain further evidence.

How Value My Land Reviews a Parcel in Its Own Right

We begin with the specific land rather than applying a generic conclusion based on county, acreage, current use or a neighbouring scheme. We review the planning authority, adopted and emerging policy, settlement relationship, access, shape, levels, visible constraints, infrastructure, title information and likely development route.

We also consider whether the parcel has an independent opportunity or could contribute to a wider land assembly. The initial review is not a substitute for formal planning, legal, technical or Red Book valuation advice, but it provides a focused basis for deciding whether further work is justified. Where a suitable promotion opportunity is agreed, we can fund and manage the agreed planning and technical process at our own cost and risk under the promotion agreement.

[Request a Free Parcel-Specific Review](#)



Ask Us to Assess Your Land in Its Own Right

Send us a postcode, map pin, what3words reference or plan showing the approximate boundary for a free, no-obligation initial review of the parcel's planning position, access, constraints, title dependencies, development capacity and potential next steps.

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**Value
My Land**

Parcel-Specific Evidence. Realistic Development Potential.

Further reading: [Parcel Assessment Guide](#) | [Land Suitability Guide](#) | [Title Plans and Boundaries](#) | [Multiple Landowners Guide](#)

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