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Blackpool Council



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20 September 2023

BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD

Thursday, 28 September 2023 at 2.00 pm
in The Boardroom, Blackpool and the Fylde College, Park Road

A G E N D A

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Board Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state the nature and extent of the interest.

If any Board member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Lennox Beattie, Executive and Regulatory Manager, Blackpool Council in advance of the meeting.

3 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

If the discussion during items 8,9 or 10 of this agenda involves the disclosure of "exempt information", as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Board wishes to move to confidential session, it may at any point pass the following resolution: "That the public and press be excluded from the meeting whilst the agenda item(s) is/ are considered, on the ground that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in category 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information) of Part 1 of Schedule 12(a) of the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Variation Order 2006 and, that in the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in

disclosing the information”.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 29 JUNE 2023 (Pages 1 - 8)

To consider the minutes of the last meeting held on 29 June 2023.

5 FYLDE COAST GREEN GROWTH (Pages 9 - 10)

To update the Economic Prosperity Board on the progress of work under its Green Growth priority.

6 ETHICALLY DRIVEN DATA CENTRES

Further to the last meeting to receive a verbal update on progress made on the trial of Ethically Driven Data Centres

7 LOCAL AUTHORITY ECONOMIC UPDATES

To receive verbal updates from representatives from each Council.

8 BLACKPOOL AIRPORT ENTERPRISE ZONE: PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 11 - 22)

To review the work of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit.

9 HILLHOUSE ENTERPRISE ZONE: PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 23 - 32)

To review the work of the Hillhouse Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit.

10 LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WINDING UP

Board Members to discuss the recent winding up of the Lancashire Economic Partnership and any actions for the Board.

Blackpool Council



MINUTES OF BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD MEETING - THURSDAY, 29 JUNE 2023

The minutes of the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board (EPB) meeting held on 29 June 2023 at Bickerstaffe House

EPB members present:

Councillors:

Councillor Karen Buckley, Leader, Fylde Council
Councillor Michael Vincent, Leader, Wyre Council
Councillor Lynn Williams, Leader, Blackpool Council

Chief Executives:

Rebecca Huddleston, Chief Executive, Wyre Council
Neil Jack, Chief Executive, Blackpool Council
Allan Oldfield, Chief Executive, Fylde Council

Co-opted Private Sector Representative:

Neil Farley, Fylde area representative

Other councillors present:

None

Others present:

Lennox Beattie, Executive and Regulatory Manager, Blackpool Council
Scott Butterfield, Strategy, Policy and Research Manager, Blackpool Council
Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration, Blackpool Council
Tony Doyle, Head of ICT, Blackpool Council
Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director, Blackpool Council
Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities, Wyre Council
Adam Ogden, Communications Manager, Blackpool Council
Charlie Richards, Head of Regeneration Projects, Fylde Council

One member of the public and no press attended the meeting

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Board considered the appointment of a Chair for Municipal Year 2023/24.

Resolved:

That Councillor Lynn Williams, Leader of Blackpool Council, be appointed Chair for Municipal Year 2023/24.

2 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed Board members and officers to the meeting and lead introductions.

The Chair thanked the outgoing Chair, Councillor Karen Buckley of Fylde Borough Council, for work throughout her term as Chair.

3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

The Board considered the appointment of a Vice-Chair.

Resolved:

That Councillor Michael Vincent, Leader of Wyre Borough Council be appointed Vice-Chair of the Board for Municipal Year 2023/24.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

5 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved:

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting whilst

agenda items 10 and 11- Blackpool Enterprise Zone Update and Hillhouse Enterprise Zone are considered, on the ground that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in category 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information) of Part 1 of Schedule 12(a) of the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Variation Order 2006 and, that in the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

6 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON THE 2 MARCH 2023

The Board considered the minutes of the last meeting held on 2 March 2023.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the last meeting held on 2 March 2023 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

7 FYLDE COAST GREEN GROWTH

The Board received an update on the Fylde Coast Green Growth from Mr Scott Butterfield further to the meetings on the 2 March 2023 and the 8 December 2022.

Mr Butterfield highlighted that as previously reported the three Councils had committed to identifying usable assets and finances to reduce their carbon footprints and improve environmental sustainability.

Mr Butterfield highlighted the particular progress on work from Blackpool's Strategy and Climate Team which had highlighted the potential benefits of using Wyre Borough Council's assets to generate solar power. A list of assets under consideration would now be refined in light of local knowledge. A workshop to explore the activity required in detail would take place in July 2023.

It was noted that Fylde and Wyre Borough Councils were both separately progressing work with East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint.

Blackpool Council had created a draft proposal seeking to deliver a package of business support on green issues tailored around business size and readiness to act has been circulated for internal discussion, with a tender exercise to follow.

Mr Butterfield also emphasised the synergies with the next item on the agenda regarding the ethically-powered data centre

8 BLACKPOOL INNOVATION CATALYST- THE DEVELOPMENT OF ETHICALLY POWERED DATA

The Board received a presentation from Bob Burgoyne, Connected Places Catapult, on the development of sustainable data centres. Mr Burgoyne explained the present situation where data centres required large amounts of electricity but also generated large amounts of excess heat.

Mr Burgoyne explained that previously data centres had been located in major centres like Manchester or London. Additionally, generally the heat generated escaped into the atmosphere rather than being reused. The development of too many such centres in close proximity had placed stress on local infrastructure and these issues had resulted in many cities not wishing to allow further centres. Equally providers of data centres were keen to reduce their carbon footprint and minimise the negative impact.

Mr Burgoyne explained the opportunities that this presented to capitalise on the Transatlantic fibre connectivity, future renewable energy sources such as offshore Wind, Solar and energy storage at the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone as well as feed heat recovered from the data centres into a heat network for wider community benefit.

Mr Burgoyne highlighted that the trials that had been proposed at the Solaris Centre and in other locations to reuse heat in domestic properties. If this trial represented a success then the potential opportunity to replicate this in other locations and particularly within social housing developments was also noted.

9 LOCAL AUTHORITY ECONOMIC UPDATES

The Board received the following updates:

Blackpool Council

Mr Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director provided an update on the Blackpool Town Deal and £2bn Growth and Prosperity Programme in which he highlighted the three strategic objectives namely: Town Centre Regeneration with the primary project of Talbot Gateway, Extending the Tourism Season with the primary project being Blackpool Central and Jobs in Growth Sectors (with the primary project being the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone. Mr Gerrard explained the total funding of £136.7m which had been allocated including the 7 Town Deal schemes. Mr Gerrard emphasised the continuing developments within the Talbot Gateway including the progress in the Civil Service building and further car parking developments.

Mr Gerrard spoke briefly on the Edge project on Church Street which sought to combine protecting and repurposing a locally listed building with providing space and expertise to assist in business start-ups.

The rejuvenation of the famous Blackpool Illuminations was also highlighted with Mr Gerrard explaining that the improvements both included new and improved attractions but also a reduced carbon footprint.

The presentation concluded by outlining the progress in delivering the site assembly for the Revoe Sports Village and the Multiversity.

Fylde Council

Mr Allan Oldfield, Chief Executive, and Mr Charlie Richards, Head of Regeneration Projects provided a brief update on the initiatives being undertaken by Fylde Borough Council. Mr Oldfield reminded members of three key investment themes for the £2.6m of UK Shared Prosperity Funds namely Communities and Place, Local Business, and People and Skills- the balanced approach between short term “quick wins” and longer terms solutions. Mr Oldfield also highlighted the recent success of the Lytham Festival.

Wyre Council

Ms Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director of Communities updated the Board on issues within Wyre Borough. Ms Hesketh reminded members of the significant funding that had been secured for Fleetwood market to fund a project which combined the reinstatement of historic features with improved energy efficiency and decarbonisation. The approach of Wyre to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund with a focus on arts and cultural themed events to drive town centre regeneration and business support. The Rural England Prosperity Fund from which Wyre Council had successful bid for £140,000 to supercharge growth and create employment opportunities in more rural areas.

10 BLACKPOOL AIRPORT ENTERPRISE ZONE: PROGRESS REPORT

Mr Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council presented the Board with the progress report. A copy of the report had been circulated with the agenda.

Mr Green highlighted from the report as follows:

- A further review of the Delivery Plan is being undertaken and will be presented for consideration by Blackpool's Council's Executive later in 2023. This will allow adjustment to costs and included contingencies following receipt of tenders for the major highway and infrastructure work.
- The Common Edge Sports Village had been now completed with the exception of the new floodlit rugby league pitch where the late seeding of grass due to weather will be playable from October 2023. The new pavilion would be formally opened on the 30 June 2023 and the facilities having been in use since completion of the Division Lane Junction in the first week of June. The new grass pitches have completed their second season of use – and again hosted a very successful Blackpool Cup youth tournament over Easter and May bank holiday weekends.
- The Aquacomms base station facility had now become fully operational. There were now nine outline expressions of interest in the development of data centres at the Enterprise Zone in phase two the Knowledge quarter – Silicon Sands – the largest being for a large 10MW facility.
- Industrial enquiries had reduced in the light of the recent economic turbulence but are expected to pick up once stability returns to the markets and once the final design for the Eastern Gateway highway is confirmed allowing proactive

marketing campaigns to commence

- Blackpool Airport Operations Limited had agreed a ten year business plan with shareholder, Blackpool Council, to return the airport to profitable operation, with the emphasis on securing new commercial opportunities. Initial interest has been good and delivery will be dependent upon provision of new enabling infrastructure and commercial hangar accommodation.

11 HILLHOUSE ENTERPRISE ZONE: PROGRESS REPORT

Mr Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, presented the Board with an update on the Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit. A copy of the report had been circulated with the agenda.

Mr Green highlighted the following key areas:

- Network Rail had submitted the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to the Department for Transport in February 2023 for the re-opening of the Fleetwood/Poulton-Le-Fylde rail line. This Strategic Outline Business Case indicates that a Tram/Train option is the most impactful in terms of Benefit/Cost analysis. However this would only become a preferred option if the relevant Minister approves the project to progress to the next stage.
- BXB's planning application for residential development of the site originally allocated for development of a large food store and district centre had been refused, with the developer having now submitted a revised application to run in parallel with a pending planning appeal and an ongoing application for commercial development on the adjacent 'Island' site with decisions anticipated in July 2023.
- Majority landowner NPL Estates had acquired the vacant property of the former Vinnolit site in 2022 and having cleared much of the former production facilities have refurbished and actively marketed the remaining buildings, the majority have now been let. The revised Masterplan for Hillhouse would identify the availability of new development plots in this area.
- Finalisation of the implementation and delivery plan has been delayed pending the completion of a full masterplan review and a decision by Government on the Rail Reinstatement Project for the Poulton to Fleetwood line, Consultants WSP have been commissioned to undertake a concept design for the Northern access route –

incorporating the worst case cost option of a rail overbridge and thereafter to undertake a full refresh of the masterplan, to include recent new developments – the clearance of the former Vinnolit site and emerging opportunities within the energy and sustainable waste management sectors. An update would be brought to a future meeting.

12 UPDATE ON FUTURE ISSUES

The Board received a brief update on future and developing issues.

The Board noted the progress being made towards the identification of development sites for the Lancashire 2050 review. The Board noted that a report would be brought to a future meeting but would include identification of sites to be brought forward in the short, medium and long terms.

13 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Board agreed the dates of future meetings as follows:

Thursday 28 September 2023 2pm

Thursday 7 December 2023 2pm

Thursday 14 March 2023 2pm

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 3.45pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:

Lennox Beattie, Executive and Regulatory Manager

Tel: 01253 477157

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Report to:	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board
Relevant Officer:	Scott Butterfield, Strategy and Climate Lead, Blackpool Council
Date of Meeting	28 September, 2023

FYLDE COAST GREEN GROWTH

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update the Economic Prosperity Board on the progress of work under its Green Growth priority.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note the report.

3.0 Background information

3.1 The Fylde Coast Green Growth report to the June 2023 meeting noted that much of the potential for shared work on the climate and sustainability agendas does not directly relate to the Board's Green Growth priority. It suggested that work would be progressed separately on these topics, with governance structures to be considered as required. In view of this, Blackpool Council convened a workshop on 28th July, which explored potential collaboration opportunities.

3.2 The workshop identified several projects with clear benefits to wider collaboration. Two already have lead organisations identified:

- **Exploring the use of Hydrogen Vegetable Oil as an interim fuel technology** to reduce emissions from vehicle fleets, pending widespread availability of battery or other technologies at a lower cost. Wyre Council are already progressing work in this area and will share their progress with Fylde and Blackpool to seek opportunities for joint procurement and collaboration;
- **Domestic energy use reduction and support.** Blackpool Council has earmarked an amount of Shared Prosperity Funding to develop the Blackpool Eco Hub concept. The Hub brings together Cosy Homes In Lancashire and Blackpool Eco Coaches to deliver a household-centred approach to reducing carbon emissions and energy costs. This covers significant physical intervention such as the installation of heat pumps and insulation, as well as smaller scale changes such as the use of energy efficient appliances, draft proofing, and room layout and furnishings. With a physical base at Palatine Library showcasing energy saving technology, the long-term intention is to start using other libraries and facilities across the town. Delivered by Groundwork, the scheme could be scaled up to cover other boroughs, and potentially funded by any successor to the current Shared Prosperity Fund;
- **Prioritising project rollout to school sites.** Blackpool Council has a dedicated eco-schools officer, and they will work with sites in Wyre and Fylde via Lancashire County Council where

suitable schemes become available;

- **Solar panel joint procurement, site selection and installation.** Covered in previous reports, this was being led by the Low Carbon and Sustainability Officer at Blackpool Council, who has subsequently left the organisation and will not be replaced in the short term due to funding constraints. In the absence of a lead officer, asset management teams will be encouraged to collaborate across the Councils on any planned procurement exercises.

- 3.3 A report is being prepared for the consideration of individual Council Management Teams to assess their interest in participating. This will include other projects highlighted at the workshop which are at a more formative stage, to assess the appetite for developing common approaches: exploring the creation of a shared “green team”, and the joint commissioning of research into sites suitable for renewable energy installations.
- 3.4 All Councils are now progressing work to support businesses on the green agenda via the use of Shared Prosperity Funding. Blackpool Council has launched a procurement exercise for a Net Zero Academy which looks to deliver quality advice and guidance for established businesses looking to decarbonise their business, improve productivity and support wider growth ambitions. Businesses must be looking to explore the benefits of improving green credentials to support wider business growth plans, such as supply chain opportunities, and meeting changing business/consumer preferences. Businesses will benefit from a Decarbonisation Action Plan and tailored business advice. Support services are expected to start in October.
- 3.5 Fylde and Wyre Councils both have projects underway via East Lancs Chamber of Commerce. At the time of their last report, Fylde Council had engaged with 34 Fylde businesses, with plans in development to hold business events within the borough, and the potential to hold joint events with other districts if appropriate. Wyre Council are planning a launch event for early October to raise awareness and provide details of the scheme, with regular lunch and learn events for businesses on different topics relating to reducing emissions. Businesses can also be linked up with the RedCAT project they have, which supports the development of new low carbon technology in Lancashire. There’s potential to link up across the Fylde coast with these events, particularly with a more detailed training programme they have called Green Rose, which engages businesses over 6 half day sessions once a month from their venue in Blackpool to go into more depth on how to reach net zero.

Report to:	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board
Report Author:	Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council
Title:	Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone: Progress Report
Date of Meeting:	28September 2023

1.0 Purpose of the report:

To review the work of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit.

2.0 Recommendation

That the Board notes the report.

3.0 Progress

a) Masterplan and Delivery Plan

Blackpool Council's Executive approved the refreshed Enterprise Zone Masterplan in December 2020. The Masterplan for the Eastern Gateway development has been fixed, with the detailed technical masterplan for relocation of airport infrastructure being finalised by October 2023. A detailed review of the masterplan for Silicon Sands (formerly the Knowledge Quarter - replacing former airport operational facilities) has commenced and will be completed by December 2023, in parallel with an ongoing study into future utility requirements. In particular, this is also looking at impacts and opportunities presented by the proposed routing of Morecambe and Morgan Windfarm transmission routes via the airport and confirmation by Electroof their provision of the new 32MVA Primary substation. The plan retains flexibility to respond as new opportunities arise, particularly from the data energy and aviation sectors. A full review of the Masterplan will be undertaken in 2025/26, following completion of the enabling infrastructure to phase one centred upon Common Edge.

A revised Delivery Plan was approved by Blackpool Council Executive in December 2022 – accepting an anticipated whole life spend of £80m plus the cost of prudential borrowing against a projected income (reflecting 30% optimism bias) of £72m. New spending of up to £21 m, to the end of financial year 2023/24 was also approved, bringing the level of anticipated total investment to £44m by March 2024, which includes the cost of acquiring Blackpool Airport. However, delays in progressing the new Eastern Gateway link road and in securing planning for an access road and new hangars at the airport will see a lower spend incurred in the financial year to March 2024. An updated delivery plan and financial forecast is in preparation and will be presented for consideration by the Executive in December 2023. The current approved business plan does not take direct account of the value of retained assets on completion of the Enterprise Zone project. As much of the Enterprise Zone development is funded in the early years by Prudential Borrowing the increases in interest rates applicable to borrowing will, along with high building material cost inflation, have had a significant negative impact on the viability of the overall project. Work is underway to identify areas of intended investment that can be deferred or removed from the programme without significantly affecting income generation from retained business rates growth and land sales.

Therefore, the pace of future phases will be dependent on ability to generate sufficient income to cover the cost of delivery.

The approved marketing strategy will continue to be implemented for the Enterprise Zone and where appropriate will be updated in line with the revised masterplan and emerging opportunities and guidance from Marketing Lancashire. A refresh of the Enterprise Zone websites has commenced, with new digital prospectus having been produced alongside a marketing brochure for the Eastern Gateway development, and marketing activity is being supplemented via the Blackpool Makes it work campaign..

b) Project Management

The Enterprise Zone delivery team presently comprises five full time staff, with part time financial officer support. The core team is supported by other team members of Blackpool Council's Growth and Prosperity team and external consultants, Cassidy and Ashton and WSP.

c) Fiscal Incentives

Whilst the EZ rates relief fiscal incentive ended from 31st March 2022 – the Enhanced Capital Allowances remain available in designated areas the Enterprise Zone until November 2023.

Between 2016 and 2022 Blackpool Council (as the accountable body for the EZ and on behalf of Fylde Council) awarded a total of £2.7m in business rates relief to 75 local Fylde and Blackpool businesses, supporting more long term, sustainable and highly skilled jobs for the local community, and helping businesses to grow and prosper. The Councils are committed to awarding a further £1.6m in legacy relief until 2027, taking the estimated total to £4.3m over the lifetime of the scheme.

d) Phase One current activity

The Common Edge Sports Village is now complete with the last element the floodlit rugby league pitch having been handed over by the contractor in the last week. The new pavilion opened on the 30th June 2023 following completion of the Division Lane Junction improvement works, which was delayed by a number of unforeseen issues. The new grass pitches have completed their second season of use – and again hosted a very successful Blackpool Cup youth tournament over Easter and May bank holiday weekends. Traffic management during the junction works was hampered by the unexpected collapse to an Lancashire County Council Highway drain, which required temporary reopening of Midgeland Road access to Division Lane East prompting some divisions in the local Community, about 50% of whom want the access permanently reinstated, and which has prompted a new consultation amongst local residents and businesses which will commence and complete before Christmas.

The existing Jepson Way changing facilities will be utilised as the construction compounds and offices until late 2024 when they will be demolished and make way for a small circa 36-unit residential development.

Following completion of site investigations, the majority of design work has been completed, the horizontal alignment of the road has been fixed and the remaining design activity is focussed on the highway foundation. Early Contractor Involvement is now at an advanced stage, working also with the key statutory undertakers to finalise the programme and contract value and to identify cost savings. This involves close collaboration with statutory undertakers for diversion of existing services and provision of new connections, which alone will exceed £3.5m in cost. Final contract award is

anticipated in December 2023 with commencement of work on an anticipated 15-month build for the Eastern Gateway and School Rd/Common Edge up-grade, commencing in January 2024, once gas monitoring and pre-commencement planning conditions have been satisfied. The pacing item for commencement of main construction being the ability of the key statutory undertakers ENWL, UU Cadent and Zayo to undertake their diversion and protection works to programme, before the main construction activity can commence.

The outline planning application for the new Highways, submitted in March 2022 was approved by Blackpool Council in October 2022, and Fylde Council in early November 2022 with the Secretary of State confirming on the 10th November 2022. The Final planning decision notice was provided by Fylde Council in July.

A second planning application has been submitted in August to Fylde Council in respect of new highway access from Amy Johnson way to the eastern sector of the airport, and seeks outline planning consent for five aircraft hangars and a small office facility. Fylde officers have requested design details for the proposed hangars before the application can be validated. Whilst the hangars will ultimately be designed and constructed by third party investors – work has commenced to produce indicative designs. The award of planning consent is therefore likely to be delayed and may not be secured until the end of March, which will in turn affect the route for contract award. The eventual provision of new hangar accommodation will allow the commencement of releasing land on the Squires Gate frontage for new development. The application will seek consent for the re-alignment of the existing highway, a new estate road, a new business premises, three aircraft hangars of 20,000 sqft each and two ‘Code C’ hangars of circa 90,000 sq ft. Initially only the roads, the business facility and two northernmost hangars can be constructed. The access road will open up the potential for developing land to the west of the ‘J-Max’ hangar for Code C hangars capable of accommodating aircraft up to A321 and B737 size.

Work has also continued with support from consultants WSP, to determine power requirements to serve future phases of the Enterprise Zone – with specific focus on opportunities to provide sustainable power solutions with a combination of onsite Solar PV, battery storage and potential connections to offshore wind farms. Design studies are also underway for the provision initially of a new 2MW substation to serve the first smaller data centre for the Airport Silicon Sands, whilst engagement with ENWL has seen them agree to construct the new 32MVA 2N primary substation and associated grid reinforcement at their own costs. Discussions continue to finalise agreement and to ensure that the new infrastructure will serve and benefit the planned new solar farm and battery storage.

The pace of discussions with BP and Offshore Wind regarding the delivery of the Morgan and Morecambe offshore windfarms and a potential routing of transmission cables via the airport has stepped up with the establishment of specialist working groups to review technical issues and commercial arrangements. There are a number of very significant concerns over the impact that construction of the transmission assets may have on airport navigational aids and indeed on the continuity of operations, which will have to be mitigated. It is hoped that commercial negotiations will result in some direct benefits as well as improved social value outcomes for the Fylde, with power purchase agreements benefiting not only the data sector at the Enterprise Zone but the wider populations.

e) Social Value and Environmental Activity

Social value outputs are monitored for all activity at the Enterprise Zone with Social value comprising 20% of all tender assessments.

The Eastern Gateway design guide will establish clear requirements for the provision of bio-diversity net gain, the utilisation of suds in all drainage – with the Eastern gateway access road incorporating drainage swales to either side – as part of a balanced drainage design which will limit surface water run off to existing greenfield run off rates.

f) Town Deal

The Eastern Gateway highway and plot development project has secured £7.5m funding from the Blackpool Town Deal allocation of £40m, as a contribution to an initial £18m project, additional works particularly around service diversions and new connections plus a 26% in material costs has seen the overall project price escalate to in excess of £22m . The costs of the increase in match funding met by Blackpool Council will be funded by way of prudential borrowing. The Town Deal project covers the remodelling of Common Edge Road between School Road and Division Lane incorporating traffic signalled junctions, and the construction of the Eastern Gateway access road to link Amy Johnson Way and Common Edge, opening a further 10.5ha land for commercial development. The project will also enable two new access points to be constructed off Amy Johnson Way to the eastern side of the airport to support development of new aircraft hangars.

These works as outlined above have secured planning consent with the first works underway, whilst slightly behind the original programme the works will complete before the fund deadline on March 2026.

g) Communications and digital Infrastructure

The Aquacomms base station facility is operational. There are now nine expressions of interest in the development of data centres at the Enterprise Zone in phase two which has been branded as Silicon Sands – the largest being for a 20MW facility. The pace of negotiations will be escalated as soon as the timescales for availability of power from the grid via the new primary substation are confirmed. The most advanced project within Silicon Sands is for a proposed 4MW facility designed to demonstrate world leading liquid immersion cooling technology, which will substantially reduce energy consumption and allow surplus heat to be utilised for an EZ district heating. This project, which is presently being led by Blackpool Council's ICT and EZ delivery team, proposes to include research facilities for Lancaster University and Innovation/commercial floorspace. The intention is to finalise the concept and identify the site and then seek expressions of interest from a range of interested parties, from whom delivery and operational partners will be selected. The site, which can accommodate a building of up to 24,000 sq ft, has been identified, with initial clearance work of old garages completed and work in hand to relocate and upgrade the existing airport administration offices and VSP. Opportunities for grant and other funding to support the project /Lancaster University are being explored.

With support from the Connected Places Catapult a grant of £250,000 has been secured from the Fast Followers government fund to enable the employment of a specialist officer. Dr Andy Pickard has now commenced in post, and external consultants engaged to develop the detailed District Heating concept for both the Enterprise Zone, commercial sites in central Blackpool and some social housing schemes.

Work will continue with the Connected Places Catapult and Lancaster University to refine and deliver development opportunities for an energy efficient data sector cluster at the EZ providing both Edge computing capacity to meet local demand and to support wider industrial applications of robotics, AI, med-Tech /digi-health and agri-tech across Lancashire and the wider Northern-Powerhouse. Longer term ambitions are that this capacity will also provide support to the likes of the National Cyber force and in the sphere of command and control requirements for the emerging UAV / drone delivery sector. This activity will allow the Enterprise Zone to be positioned as a transitional Enterprise Zone to support businesses journey toward a low carbon economy.

A new and more detailed Masterplan for Silicon Sands is in preparation utilising consultants WSP and Cassidy and Ashton, and will be presented to a future meeting of the Economic Prosperity Board along with the interrelated proposals for the reconfiguration of Blackpool airport to release land for the Silicon Sands development.

h) Marketing

Industrial enquiries have reduced in the light of the recent economic turbulence but are expected to pick up once stability returns to the markets and once the final specific plot design for the Eastern Gateway highway is confirmed, allowing proactive marketing campaigns to commence. The Enterprise Zone team continues to keep dialogue open with interested parties whilst work moves forward to opening up new development land. Several existing Enterprise Zone occupiers are also looking to move to larger units as they continue to grow and expand. A drinks manufacturer who was also interested in a c70,000 sqft manufacturing facility has taken short term leases of alternative accommodation within the Enterprise Zone as they could not wait for new development to be available – they do however continue to consider the need for a future new build.

Overall demand is still far greater than the present availability of stock or development plots. Whilst financial viability of new development in the current period of rapid inflation and higher interest rates remains the greatest barrier to translating enquiries into delivered development. Marketing support will also be available to assist the developers of the three smaller unit schemes, which have recently secured planning consent.

Enterprise Zone delivery spearheaded Blackpool’s attendance at UK REiIF in May, which saw the launch of the digital prospectus and the marketing campaign for the Eastern Gateway development. In addition to the Blackpool Enterprise Zone, the team also promoted the opportunities for Hillhouse EZ as well as and supported a wider Lancashire consortium on the adjoining stand. Blackpool has committed to attend next year’s event in May 2024, as have Lancashire County under the Marketing Lancashire banner.

An updated masterplan graphic of the Enterprise Zone has been created to give a more recent version incorporating new and upcoming developments while a refreshed marketing approach has increased reach and impressions on social media, whilst the Enterprise Zone also features in a new ‘fly through’ of Blackpool’s major regeneration development.

A critical piece of marketing work that needs undertaking is refreshing the Enterprise Zone website, which is still in the phase one state from its initial creation. As a result, content is outdated and isn’t optimised to promote enquiries or interest in the site. Unfortunately, there has been little recent progress made following Colliers appointment as international marketing agents and property advisers for all four Lancashire Enterprise Zones, with a proposal submitted by them for a 12 month

international marketing plan awaiting approval and funding, with the design agency Richard Barbers andCo to assist Marketing Lancashire in the development of the web sites and additional marketing collateral focussed on the international market. As a result, Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone will be looking to update the website content itself and obtain prices for some small development work to support the marketing of the site.

Top enquiries are:

Date of enquiry	Target sector	Size	Type of enquiry	Progress to date
May 2023	AV	20 acres	Aviation Manufacturing	Initial Discussion
March 2023	DC	4 acres	Data / Energy Campus	Initial Discussions.
February 2023	DC / E	15,000 sqft	Data / Energy	Initial Discussion. Progress subject to progression of Knowledge Quarter.
January 2023	DC	5-30,000 sqft	Data Facility	Initial Discussion. Follow up meeting due in October 23.
January 2023	ADM	25,000 sqft	Manufacturing Facility	Initial discussions undertaken. Awaiting refined plans.
December 2022	ADM	10,000 sqft	Manufacturing Facility	Initial discussions undertaken. Awaiting refined plans.
November 2022	L	10,000 sqft	Leisure Facility	Early stage discussions. Concerns with planning.
November 2022	O	20,000 sqft	Self Store facility	Early stage discussions
November 2022	O	20,000 sqft	Showroom facility	Early Stage discussions
October 2022	O / E	20,000 sqft	Office facility for a Energy company	Early stage discussions
October 2022	E	7-10 acres	Data campus	Early stage discussion
September 2022	ADM	30,000/60,000 sqft	Aviation parts manufacture and distribution	Early stage discussions.
September 2022	FM	70- 100,000 sqft	Food sector manufacturer	Initial discussions on Design and Build options in progress
March 2022	E	16,000 sqft	Warehousing, manufacturer renewable energy	Initial discussions initiated
Feb 2022	ADM	20,000 sqft	Furniture manufacturer	Initial discussions
Feb 2022	ADM	7-10,000	Signage manufacturer	Initial discussions

Jan 2022	ADM	20,000 sq ft	Roofing merchants/trade counter	Initial discussions
July 2021	DC	Up to 30,000 sq ft	D&B LH for data centre facility, adjoining tech hub using green energy	Update October 2022: Discussions ongoing and preliminary design commenced pending planning application
Nov 2021	O	20,000 sq ft	Online bank	Discussions ongoing
Sep 2021	ADM	25,000 sq ft	Springs manufacturer and engineering	Discussions ongoing
June 2021	ADM	15,000 sq ft	Engineering	Discussions ongoing
June 2021	ADM	8-12,000 sq ft	Storage and manufacturer of flues	Discussions ongoing
Nov 2020	FM	70,000 sq ft	D&B lease for fast growth, local target sector company	Discussions ongoing
Dec 2020	ADM	50,000 sq ft	D&B sale for established local manufacturers constrained at existing premises	Update October 2022: Contact re-established, discussions ongoing with overseas parent company

SECTORS: ADM - Adv. Manufacturing & engineering, AV - Aviation, OA - Office administration, FM - food manufacturing, E - Energy, DC – digital and creative, L – Leisure, O - Other

i) Blackpool Makes It Work

The new Blackpool Makes It Work website, www.businessinblackpool.com went live in August 2022, aimed at promoting inward investment to the Fylde coast. Work is now taking place to increase web traffic, awareness and engagement in the campaign, with a view to generating more inward investment enquiries. This work includes creating a strong portfolio of case studies and videos from businesses across the area, plus strategically attending key events to raise the profile of local investment. Recently, interviews discussing local investment and opportunities with Jane Cole, Blackpool Transport, and Mark Dickinson, Inspired Energy, have been published through the campaign. Future case studies are expected throughout the year.

Blackpool Makes It Work was represented at the UK Real Estate and Inward Investment Forum (REiiF) from 16-18 May 2023. The event welcomed around 8,500 delegates, specifically focused at developers and inward investment. For the second year, Blackpool Makes It Work exhibited at a specific stand, while a Lancashire consortium of local authorities also took the adjacent stand.

The event was a success from Blackpool’s perspective, with plenty of useful conversations being progressed following the event, both with existing and potential new developers. In addition to the exhibition stand, Blackpool led on a range of speaking opportunities throughout the conference, including investment facilitation sessions, a roundtable discussion for the built environment media, and a specific conversation on building the digital economy.

For the event, a range of materials were updated to promote the current activity and opportunities in Blackpool. A video showing the main Blackpool projects was given its first viewing at the event, along with an updated Growth and Prosperity prospectus. Additionally, an updated brochure for the Enterprise Zone's Eastern Gateway commercial plots was published, while a new digital brochure was also created to facilitate discussions around the Enterprise Zone's Silicon Sands

In addition to Blackpool's presence at UK REiIF, a consortium of Lancashire's Economic Development Directors exhibited a stand at the conference, and held one speaking panel, involving representatives from Lancashire County Council, Lancaster Council, Preston Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council, Burnley Council and UCLan.

j) Blackpool Airport

Steve Peters, the new Managing Director has agreed a ten year business plan with shareholder, Blackpool Council to return the airport to profitable operation, with the emphasis on securing new commercial opportunities. Initial interest has been good and delivery will be dependent upon provision of new enabling infrastructure and commercial hangar accommodation. The plan will see the focus on growing existing business sectors with increased executive/corporate aviation, MRO activity and aviation training, with the ability to resume regional air services also possible. The energy issues following the Ukraine conflict are also likely to see an extension in the life of the Irish Sea gas operations by Spirit and ENI. Discussions are ongoing with a number of parties interested in constructing and occupying the proposed larger new Code C hangars on the eastern and western flanks of the airport – these proposals are presently being assessed against CAA criteria, whilst a planning application for access roads a small business units and five aircraft hangars was lodged with Fylde council in August. Discussions are also progressing with a number of aviation businesses keen to explore Blackpool as a base for aircraft engineering support, and for aircraft painting, with one announcement possibly due within the next month.

Consultants WSP have been leading a review of the airport operational masterplan and infrastructure proposals to ensure these both meet CAA requirements and are operationally optimised, with locations identified for the provision of a new fire and rescue centre and new fuel farm – with the intention that the latter provides facilities to cater for future electric/battery powered aircraft and Hydrogen cell technology.

k) Business Enquiries and Jobs

To date:

- A review of all live enquiries is ongoing to assess the viability of each requirement. An internal matrix of enquiries has been developed to identify the top enquiries based on potential investment, deliverability, size of development, job creation and strategic implications.
- Some 145 businesses have located to the Enterprise Zone since April 2016.
- A gross cumulative total to date of 2471 new jobs have been enabled on the Enterprise Zone, this figure includes jobs new to the area, safeguarded jobs within Blackpool and construction full time equivalent jobs.

l) Project Team

The latest meeting of the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone Stakeholder Panel was hosted online on 9 June 2023 via MS Teams. The next meeting is scheduled to take place via MS Teams on Friday 22 September.

m) Risk Register

The Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone risk register is reviewed regularly with Blackpool’s corporate risk team, the Project Board and the Programme Board (EPB) every quarter (see summary below)

Many of the main risks are external and ubiquitous to development in the UK and outside the direct control and influence of the Enterprise Zone team such as, Brexit and latterly the conflict in Ukraine which has in recent months seen a significant increase in the cost of living, energy and interest rate costs and logistical interruptions to supply chains adding inflationary pressure to the cost and availability of materials. Strategies to mitigate impacts from such risks are dependent on specific factors pertaining at any one time and these potential impacts are reviewed in all project meetings. As a standard practice construction contracts now all include clauses relating to delays from pandemics and promised delivery date have to extend to account for this, whilst additional levels of contingency for costs inflation are being built into delivery plan budgets.

Key Risks:

Risk and Issues	Mitigation and Actions
Slight delays to construction due to Covid-19 or other imposed working restrictions	Safety guidelines in place and work continuing.
After short period of uncertainty, property enquiries are returning but overall lack of market demand due to Covid-19/Brexit/Energy cost/Interest rate stability, Cost of living issues and market uncertainty and the commercial viability of development.	Clear marketing strategy defined and implementation underway with robust delivery schedule for serviced plots with specific emphasis on future data/digital sector opportunities external marketing lead by dedicated in-house team.
Increased construction and material costs are affecting viability of development projects. Interest rates rises will adversely impact upon cost of delivering enabling infrastructure and will reduce short term demand and business confidence. High 26% plus inflation cost for construction materials – risk project affordability and financial viability.	Work with contractors and architects on regular value engineering to ensure viability and ensuring that adequate contingencies are built into estimates –ECI undertaken on highway contracts. Ongoing value engineering and review of timescales for delivery to defer non critical expenditure. Regularly revised delivery plan budgets have included 25% allowance for material cost inflation.

Due to delays in ability to progress the Common Edge infrastructure, interest may find alternative sites.	Regular communication with prospective occupiers and interested parties - work scheduled to commence January 2024 – now allows more accurate project planning in negotiations.
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o) KPIs & Milestones

KPI / Metrics	Baseline (2016)	Target (2041)	Actual (2016-2022)	RAG
Jobs created / Jobs Safeguarded (FTE)	C1150 (2018 figures recorded at 1800)	5,000	2471 (inc 150 construction fte jobs). Full business occupier job survey undertaken March 2023.	
Construction Jobs	N/A	N/A	c150	
New Commercial / Employment Space (SQM)	N/A	450,000 sqft	c198,000 sqft	
Refurbished Commercial / Employment Space (SQM)	N/A	N/A	1,900,000 sqft (primarily the former Wellington Bomber Factory)	
New businesses located on EZ (over baseline)	c260	140	145**	
No. of businesses receiving EZ business rates relief (£ rates relief awarded)	N/A	N/A	75 (£4.3m)	
Net amount of EZ business rate growth received (£m)	£2,373,000 (2016)	N/A	£2,205,000***	
Private Sector Investment (£m)	N/A	c £300m	c £41m	
Public Sector Investment (£m)	N/A	c £80m	£44m*	
Gross Value Added (£m)	N/A	£2bn cumulative	N/A	

*current financial approval of £44m committed to be prudentially borrowed to cover initial costs of new road and infrastructure, following further approval of Delivery plan on the 5th December 2022 February.

** this figure includes a significant number of smaller businesses occupying space within the existing small unit developments and at Squires Gate Industrial estate

*** this is the net figure after accounting for backfilling shortfalls against the baseline (i.e. due to voids and Covid-19 reductions).

Milestones	Dates
Appoint international marketing agents LAMEC brand	Complete
Changing rooms and car park/3G pitch planning application decision	Complete
Changing rooms and 3G pitch contractor appointed – start on site 6 th Sept- complete March 23	Complete
No. 12 grass football pitches ready for use	Complete
40,000 sq ft development handover for client fit out (Multiply)	Complete
Design and submission of outline planning application for eastern gateway access	Complete
Land / property acquisitions x 4	Complete
Release of existing sports pitches and commencement of highway and utility infrastructure	Complete
Site investigations commence on upgrades to junction at CER & Division Lane	Complete
Appointment of engineer	Complete
Outline planning approval for highways (Approved Nov 2022)	Complete
3G pitch designed and tendered	Complete
Airport Control tower, system review commenced	Complete second stage study underway together with funding review
Proposition and identifying opportunities for data centre market /appointment of Connected Places Catapult	CP Catapult report received & digital prospectus published – occupier negotiations ongoing- EOI for private sector partners in preparation
Focussed marketing of Common Edge Phase 1 commences – launched at UK REiiFF May 2023	Complete. UKREiiF booked for 2024.
Architectural feasibility study & design work for airport complete – Silicon Sands Masterplan to complete December 2023	Ongoing September 23 –delayed by ATC review
Outline planning app for airport redevelopment (Phase 1 – Airport East) submitted August 2023 (validation awaited)	Expected January 2024
Outline planning app for airport redevelopment (Phase 2 – Airport West (P2 car park)) – feasibility ongoing	Q1 2024

12 month construction contract for Eastern Gateway Access road. ECI with preferred contractor (off framework) ongoing.	January 2024 commencement on site anticipated
Completion of airport redevelopment works (of existing accommodation)	August 2027

** Subject to satisfactory CAA consultation*

Objectives over 2-3 years (end 2026)

- Phase 1 (airport) infrastructure complete
- Phase 1 (airport) spec and bespoke developments commenced and pre-lets secured
- Phase 2 (airport) infrastructure complete
- Phase 2 (airport) developments complete and pre-lets secured
- Commenced relocation of aviation operational infrastructure to enable new development
- Commenced upgraded utilities including PV solar site and new primary sub station
- Full data sector and sustainable energy proposition for Silicon Sands identified and implemented
- Sustainable Data centre tech Demonstrator completed and operational
- New Air Traffic Control system agreed and actioned

Objectives over 5 years (end 2028)

- Eastern Gateway Phase 1 development complete – all plots occupied
- Residential development off Common Edge underway
- Relocation of airport existing operational property stock and infrastructure complete
- New airport spec development in planning stages
- Airport Solar Power development underway (outside of designated Enterprise Zone)
- First phase of the ‘Silicon Sands’ ongoing with a number of small ‘demonstrator’ plots developed.

Objectives over 10 years (end 2032)

- Continued spec development of remaining plots airport site
- Continued development of the Knowledge Quarter
- Squires Gate Industrial Estate – spec proposals for future development

Report Author

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Report to:	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board
Report Author:	Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council
Date of Meeting:	28 September 2023

1.0 Purpose of the report:

To review the work of Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That the Board notes the report.

3.0 Hillhouse Enterprise Zone: Progress Report

a) Delivery Plan

Finalisation of the implementation and delivery plan has been held in abeyance pending the findings of interested parties in developing large areas of the Enterprise Zone and a decision by Government on the Rail Reinstatement Project for the Poulton-Le-Fylde to Fleetwood line, which is presently subject of further studies being led by Network Rail. Potential to undertake partial revamp of masterplan to reflect the loss of Vinnolit and opportunities presented. With Consultants WSP commissioned to refresh the current plan

Wyre Council have held discussions with interested parties for significant redevelopment of areas of the Enterprise Zone, these parties are now in contact with Lancashire County Council to better understand the Rail Reinstatement Project and its impact upon their ambitions, with Network Rail now leading next round of studies and quarterly liaison meetings established.

Wyre Council will lead on the Delivery Plan refresh once the position on Rail Reinstatement is clarified, but assumption is now that a rail bridge will be required.

b) Getting Building Fund

NPL, who have secured funding from the Getting Building Fund toward the costs of essential infrastructure upgrades to enable the new speculative development to progress, have received planning permission from Wyre Borough Council and are progressing with all the works, however the new security gatehouse, which had fallen behind schedule following issues with original contractors is now complete.

The project has been allocated funding of £630,000, comprising £504,000 Getting Building Funding, with additional match funding provided by Wyre council and NPL at £63,000 each.

c) Residential Development

BXB have purchased the former Sainsbury retail site. Wyre Council granted planning consent in June for a social housing development to be undertaken by Places for People and work on up to 130 units will commence in the near future. A further site in the ownership of BXB is the subject of an ongoing planning application for a small retail development and petrol filling station, with development likely to commence shortly after the grant of a planning consent.

Dickie and Moore have made substantial progress with their residential development on the former Thornton AFC site, with the site now nearing completion. Developers of an adjacent site, part of the former ICI works but out-with the designated Enterprise Zone boundary, has also seen rapid progression of new housing units. The works to complete Bourne Road, the main access route to Hillhouse, to become an adopted Highway has commenced following final agreements with Lancashire County Council Highways. NPL has introduced a number of measures to reduce traffic speeds on Bourne Road, including a competition to involve the local children to design roadside signage.

d) Fleetwood/Poulton Rail Line

Network Rail submitted the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to the Department for Transport in February 2023 for the re-opening of the Fleetwood/Poulton rail line. This SOBC will show that a Tram/Train option is the most impactful in terms of Benefit/Cost analysis. However, this would only become a preferred option if the relevant Minister approves the project to progress to the next stage. This ministerial decision was due in March/April, but is still awaited. Network rail appointed consultants are continuing to develop the proposals for a Tram/Train option organising series of technical workshops held in early June. This remains the major practical constraint to progressing key infrastructure to open up the Northern part of the Enterprise Zone with one prospective developer directly engaged with Lancashire County Council to try and progress a decision. Cost of a bridge across the line will be circa £7m up from original estimates at the start of £3.5-£4m. Consultants WSP have undertaken a study and concept design for a new Northern approach road and bridge over the rail line – which is now being assessed by developer NPL, with further development of the proposal likely commissioned prior to the Year-end. Funding still needs to be identified for the construction of the bridge and there would likely be a three-year plus lead time to development. Outline Planning application to be targeted for Quarter 2 2024.

e) Marketing & Enquiries

The main Enterprise Zone site signage has been refreshed in line with the recently adopted Enterprise Zone standards additional signage will be provided in proximity to the new gatehouse when this is completed.

Workshops are ongoing to inform updates to the four websites to reflect each of the current Enterprise Zones' sites and their commercial development land and property availability. Marketing Lancashire and the Local Enterprise Partnership will continue to lead on this activity, with support from the Blackpool Enterprise Zone delivery team and Wyre Council.

Regular newsletter updates continue to be issued by Wyre Council's Communications team.

Following the success of UK REiiF 2022, Hillhouse Enterprise Zone was represented under the Blackpool Makes it Work campaign banner at UK REiiF (Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum) in Leeds, 16-18th May 2023, which served as an opportunity to promote investment opportunities across the two active Fylde Coast Enterprise Zone. Blackpool have confirmed their attendance at REiiF in May 2024 and will again promote opportunities at Hillhouse.

Hillhouse Enterprise Zone was represented at the UK Real Estate and Inward Investment Forum (REiiF) from 16-18 May 2023. The event welcomed around 8,500 delegates, specifically focused at developers and inward investment. For the second year, Blackpool Makes It Work exhibited at a specific stand, while a Lancashire consortium also took the adjacent stand.

Hillhouse was represented through the Enterprise Zone delivery team, with its current masterplan and prospectus exhibited at the conference, along with a video shown at the stand throughout the conference explaining the details and opportunities at Hillhouse.

In addition to Blackpool's presence at UK REiiF, a consortium of Lancashire's Economic Development Directors exhibited a stand at the conference, and held one speaking panel, involving representatives from Lancashire County Council, Lancaster Council, Preston Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council, Burnley Council and UCLan. Hillhouse was also represented within the Lancashire 2050 Investment Prospectus.

Current enquiries:

The updated schedule below has been provided by landowners NPL and includes a number of projects subject to Non-Disclosure agreements, the nature of many of these larger scale enquiries means that negotiations and conversion of interest into legal agreements takes some considerable time, with planning responsibilities split between Lancashire County Council (e.g. waste and energy projects) and Wyre Council - and with external infrastructure factors including availability of utilities, grid export connectivity and capacity and short term highway restrictions, adding to complexity and delay.

Date of enquiry	Target sector	Size and type of enquiry	Progress update
Feb 2023	Construction Concrete Manufacture	£1m investment	Site design assessment arranged
Feb 2023	Machine tool manufacture	£300k investment	Expected to complete negotiation in Dec 23
Jan 2023	Waste recycling	£400m investment	HOT / Due Diligence
Jan 2023	Laser Manufacture	£1.5m Investment	Not progressing
Jan 2023	Environmental support	£600k investment	HOT/ Review
Dec 2022	Chemical production	£600k investment	HOT/ Review
Nov 2022	Transport and shipping	£1m investment	Complete
Nov 2022	Syn Gas production	£6m investment	HOT issued

Oct 2022	Power production & CCUS	£10m investment	HOT under review
Sept 2022	Battery Storage (x 3)	£10m	Connection appraisal
Aug 2022	Recycling	£50m investment	HOT / Due Diligence
Aug 22	Green Energy	£100m investment	Modelling
July 2022	Solar power	£10m investment	HOT
July 2022	Battery storage	£7m investment	Project scoping
July 2022	Hydrogen production	£10m investment	HOT / Project scoping
July 2022	Hydrogen generation	£10m investment	HOT / Project scoping
June 2022	Workshop	£300k investment	Complete
May 2022	Transport	£500k investment	Complete
April 2022	Green rubber innovation centre and recycling facility via DIT	£30m investment, 180 jobs, 36,000 sqft	Submitted proposal via LCC, awaiting response
Feb 2022	Low carbon power generation (small modular reactor SMR) via DIT	£100m investment	Not progressing
Jan 2022	PPT recycling plant via DIT	20 acre £30m investment	Shortlisted to final 4
Jan 2022	Battery Storage*	£1m	HOT agreed
Jan 2022	Manufacturing	£500k, 1 acre	HOT agreed
Feb 2021	Waste to energy project	10,000 sqft	purchase complete, permit progressing
Jan 2021	Waste to energy recycling project	Up to 4 acres	option signed progressed to planning
Jul 2021	Window frames manufacturer	1 acre	In operation
Jul 2021	Energy from waste project	5 acres, £50m investment	Purchase complete
Oct 2021	Engineering manufacturer	60,000 sqft workshop	Not progressing
Oct 2021	Asphalt production	2.5 acres, £2m investment	Not progressing
Nov 2021	Housing and retail	10 acre £30m investment	New Planning Application submitted by BXB Ltd for housing development
Jan 2020	Business park	60,000 sq ft	Spec devt by NPL, HoTs in discussion, subject to funding

f) Hydrogen Project and Steering Group

NPL who is the lead on hydrogen activity, hold regular meetings, at Wyre Borough Council's Civic Offices, with attendees from many Lancashire businesses including, Victrex, Blackpool Transport, AB, and Westinghouse, in addition to Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership, Wyre Council and Enterprise Zone representatives from Blackpool and Hillhouse. Added impetus to the work of the group is anticipated in the wake of Government announcements about the new green agenda and the role of hydrogen as a clean fuel source for transportation. The next meeting is expected to be held in late 2023 at Wyre Borough Council's Civic Offices. NPL have a comprehensive plan to deliver 10MW Hydrogen on site by 2024, with 100MW by 2025.

NPL is to launch their Hydrogen strategy for the Hillhouse Enterprise Zone, 'The Hylane Project' - 'Hylane – The pathway to H2 in Lancashire' is initially a 10MW electrolyser and will provide Hydrogen to the Hillhouse existing companies to replace methane use on the site. This will be extended to 100MW, where up to 70% of the Hydrogen produced will be used within the EZ, with the remaining Hydrogen being used locally or sent to grid. Finally, the project will develop to GW scale Electrolyser with CCHT power production.

Discussions are progressing with several major power companies in the UK, Germany and Japan to establish timescales, investment and delivery programmes.

g) Vinnolit

Majority landowner NPL Estates has acquired the vacant property of the former Vinnolit site and the property is currently been marketed, with strong market interest for the refurbished warehouse properties all of which are now let / purchased and interest in the cleared sites for Waste to Energy facilities and bottom ash recycling.

The users of the former Vinnolit units on the site are:

- Karpa - a heavy engineering company 7000sqft building and 10 new staff - Complete
- Express Windows - windows manufacture - 18,000sqft building and upto 40 new jobs - Complete
- Daly Cranes (crane hire) 2000sqft building and 5 new jobs - Complete
- Events company 12,000sqft building and 5 new jobs - Complete
- A - Waste to Energy company about to start refurbishment of a 90,000sqft warehouse to convert to a WTE plant - expected 20 new jobs. – Building works commenced.
- Bottom ash recycling - 10 new jobs. Option is agreed and progress and agreement now subject to planning.

New companies on site:

- A fast growing transport company has located at Hillhouse and also have taken additional office space.
- A small engineering upcycle company has located on the Hillhouse site.
- An expanding company that delivers large events and concerts in Europe have taken additional storage space.
- Express windows now operational

- Work started on EFW building
- Environmental consultant on site
- Medical services company now on site
- Civil construction engineer expansion
- 2x Crane Hire / Support companies
-

h) Job Creation

The Enterprise Zone team will continue to liaise with NPL Estates on any new or safeguarded jobs on the site.

NPL and Addisons, supported by Wyre Council, are exploring the opportunity to set up a training centre/centre of excellence for workplace development at the Hillhouse site to cover all aspects of training; providing school experience placements/leavers opportunities and workplace development to include all aspects of the workforce from apprenticeships through to management training. The plan is to improve the availability of suitable candidates for job vacancies for all businesses in the area and the Hillhouse site. An Initial meeting with Lancashire Local Skills improvement and Lancashire Skills Hub has been arranged to progress. Planned implementation in Q4 2023.

i) EZ Board Meetings

An online Board meeting took place on Friday 7 July 2023 with a group of key stakeholders including Hillhouse tenants in attendance. Next meeting is due to take place Friday 29th September on-site, kindly hosted by Addison Project.

k) Risk Register

The Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone risk register is regularly reviewed by Wyre Borough Council's Corporate Risk Team and will be reviewed again at the upcoming Project Board. Copies will be available upon request.

Key risks:

Risk and Issues	Mitigation & Actions
Uncertainty over change of key personnel at Wyre BC.	Clarify role and ongoing support from Blackpool EZ Delivery team with new SLA to be put in place and strengthening Wyre support team.
Lack of market demand due to Covid-19 / Brexit / Energy uncertainty and the commercial viability of development with existing scheme such as Energy from waste / Biomass plant which are in development being cancelled or postponed long term.	Allocated government Getting Building funding to help kick start essential infrastructure to better market the site to potential occupiers and stimulate private investment. Regular responses to DiT large scale enquiries.
Continuing delays in applying for and securing planning and highway approvals and potential land contamination issues that need to be	Close liaison with NPL, Wyre (accountable body) and LCC, refresh of EZ Project board and securing additional delivery support resource –

overcome. Highway usage impacted by proximity of residential accommodation.	seeking to implement series of overarching survey report e.g. Topographical survey Environmental flood risk transport to benefit all applications , and progression of design feasibility studies for northern access road and rail bridge.
Requirement for flood mitigation measures and utility upgrades across the site and issues surrounding the ability construct western access road over Fleetwood-Poulton railway line. Delay in commissioning essential pre-planning surveys.	Close liaison with NPL, Wyre (accountable body) and LCC and securing additional delivery support resource.
Failure to secure purchase or rights over the Fleetwood rail line will impact upon ability to construct Northern Access road and add significant costs.	Close liaison with NPL, Wyre (accountable body), LCC and Network Rail- concept design commissioned and ongoing favoured Tram/Train solution.
Decision on future use of rail line will impact on cost and timing of western access road if bridge is required.	Participation in Fleetwood and Poulton working group chaired by LCC ongoing dialogue with LCC.

I) KPIs & Milestones:

KPI / Metrics	Baseline (2016)	Target (2041)	Actual (2016-2022)	RAG
Jobs created / Jobs Safeguarded (FTE)	C 1650	3700	133	Yellow
Construction Jobs	N/A	N/A	C 150 FTE	Yellow
New Commercial / Employment Space (SQM)	N/A	450,000 sqft	N/A	Yellow
Refurbished Commercial / Employment Space (SQM)	N/A	13,000sqft	36118 sqft	Green
New businesses located on EZ (over baseline)	c45	10	12	Yellow
No. of businesses receiving EZ business rates relief (£ rates relief awarded)	N/A	N/A	0 N/A	Yellow

Amount of EZ business rate relief received (£m)	£2,500,000	N/A	£0N/A	
Private Sector Investment (£m)	N/A	N/A	Circa £30m	
Public Sector Investment (£m)	N/A	N/A	£2m	
Gross Value Added (£m)	N/A	N/A	N/A	

Milestones	Dates
Forsa Energy completion of build and commissioning	Completed
Getting Building Fund grant fund agreement - LEP/NPL agreed	Completed
Appointment of joint international marketing agent LAMEC brand	Completed
Planning application submitted utilities and infrastructure upgrade including new gatehouse	Completed
Planning permission granted for utilities infrastructure and new gatehouse	Completed
Demolition and clearance of Vinnolit plots complete	Completed
Procure subsidy control advice once Implementation plan complete	TBC
Completion of revised Delivery Plan and masterplan refresh	Ongoing
Risk Register updated regularly by Project Board	Ongoing
Construction commences for utilities infrastructure and new gatehouse	Ongoing
Planning application for energy from waste plant HH North	Complete
Planning application to demolish old buildings (Lab)	Complete
Topographical survey of Northern site	Complete
Completion of electric and water main upgrades	Complete
Concept design Rail Bridge and Northern Access road	Draft proposal received /ongoing
Planning Application for energy from waste plant ex Vinnolit store	Q3 2023
Planning application submitted for 60,000 sqft development	Awaited September 2023
A flood risk assessment to be scoped and commissioned for the entire site subject to identification of funding	Q4 2023
A transport assessment be scoped and commissioned for the entire site subject to identification of funding- subject to progress on study of options for Fleetwood Poulton rail route	Q4 2023
An Environmental and Ecology study to be scoped and commissioned for the entire site subject to identification of funding *	Q4 2023
Planning application for new training centre to replace demolished buildings	Q1 2024
Planning application for new rail bridge crossing	Q4 2024

*subject to habitat assessments to be undertaken between Nov 23 -Mar 24

Objectives over 2 years (by end 2024):

- Local Full Fibre Network roll out across site complete
- All full site supporting studies (topographical, flood/utility transportation, ecological and environmental) commissioned and completed
- Commencement of spec dev build of 60,000 sq ft multi-use units
- Utilities and infrastructure work including new gatehouse complete
- Railway Line purchase or access agreement completed following decision on future rail options
- Major development agreed for former power station site
- Energy from waste operator(X2) confirmed and large scale facility developed
- Housing Development on former Thornton AFC and Sainsbury sites completed – circa 200 dwellings
- Concept design of Rail Bridge and western access road completed

Objectives over 5 years (by end 2027):

- Phase 1 spec build complete and fully let
- Phase 2 new spec development in planning pipeline
- Northern Access Road Constructed
- International business centre redevelopment

Objectives over 10 years (by end 2032):

- 50% of site built out and thriving business hub

Report Author

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