

Blackpool Council



wyre  
council

21 June 2023

## **BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD**

Thursday, 29 June 2023 at 2.00 pm  
in the Chief Executive's Office, Bickerstaffe House, Blackpool

### **A G E N D A**

**1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

To consider the appointment of a Chair for Municipal Year 2023/24

**2 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

**3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

To appoint a Vice-Chair for Municipal Year 2023/24

**4 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.

**5 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

If the discussion during items 10, 11 or 12 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".

**6 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON THE 2 MARCH 2023** (Pages 1 - 6)

To consider the minutes of the last meeting held on 2 March 2023.

**7 FYLDE COAST GREEN GROWTH** (Pages 7 - 8)

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

**8 BLACKPOOL INNOVATION CATALYST- THE DEVELOPMENT OF ETHICALLY POWERED DATA** (Pages 9 - 10)

To update the Economic Prosperity Board on the work undertaken by the Connected Places Catapult on the Strategic Outline Business Case for the development of sustainable data centres.

**9 LOCAL AUTHORITY ECONOMIC UPDATES**

To receive verbal updates from representatives from each Council.

**10 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.

**11 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.

**12 UPDATE ON FUTURE ISSUES**

To consider any updates on future and developing issues.

This item will include a brief verbal update on Lancashire 2050 Strategic Sites

**13 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

To consider and agree dates for the future meetings of the Board for Municipal Year 2023/24

Proposed Dates:

21 September 2023

7 December 2023

14 March 2024

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## MINUTES

### Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board

<b>Date:</b>	Thursday, 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2023
<b>Venue:</b>	Reception Room, Town Hall, St Annes.
<b>Economic Prosperity Board Members Present:</b>	Councillor Karen Buckley, Leader - Fylde Council Councillor David Henderson, representing the Leader of Wyre Council
<b>Chief Executive Officers Present:</b>	Allan Oldfield, Chief Executive, Fylde Council Neil Jack, Chief Executive, Blackpool Council Garry Payne, Chief Executive, Wyre Council
<b>Co-opted private sector representatives Present:</b>	Martin Long (Blackpool) Neil Farley (Fylde)
<b>Other Attendees:</b>	Nick Gerrard - Growth and Prosperity Programme Director - Blackpool Council Rob Green - Head of Enterprise Zones - Blackpool Council Scott Butterfield - Strategy, Policy & Research Manager - Blackpool Council Tony Doyle - Head of ICT - Blackpool Council Adam Ogden – Communications Manager - Blackpool Council Charlie Richards - Head of Projects & Regeneration - Fylde Council Christine Wood - Notetaker - Fylde Council Chris Miller – Power Harvest Infrastructure

#### 1. Welcome and apologies

The Chairman, Councillor Karen Buckley welcomed all attendees to the meeting. Apologies were received from Marianne Hesketh and Councillor Mark Smith.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

#### 3. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

#### 4. Matters Arising

##### Innovation Catalyst

Mr Nick Gerrard advised that since the previous meeting Connected Places Catapult had been appointed who were currently engaged on developing a road map for the initiatives previously discussed. Mr Gerrard further advised that this was a very important piece of work which would be carried out over the following weeks.

### Investment Zones

Mr Gerrard advised that following Blackpool and Fylde's expressions of interest to take advantage of the Government's new investment zones scheme, the Government was still considering this initiative and that it may be that the initiative would still go ahead but with a much-reduced number of zones than had been originally anticipated. Mr Gerrard advised that this may present an opportunity and that the Board would be updated as and when any guidance was published.

#### 5. Presentation – Power Harvest Infrastructure

Mr Chris Miller, Co-founder of Power Harvest Infrastructure (Phi) delivered a presentation to the Board. Mr Miller provided background to the Board about Phi advising that it develops 'Sustainable Technology Campuses (STCs)' bringing together Data Centres, renewable energy, energy storage and associated industries utilising the renewable energy resources and waste heat from the Data Centres, and green energy production; to support local district heating (residential and commercial), Greenhouse farming, AgTech and other clean tech/digital industry development.

Mr Miller also advised that Phi was a building platform business based on STCs that are developed and deployed in global locations that have the core criteria of grid infrastructure, extensive fibre connectivity, localised carbon neutral energy production and storage, local Government support and people talent.

The Board was provided with a summary of the first sites (8) currently targeted to be in Northern England, base cases including a location map and advised of the abundance of renewable energy locally. The presentation also included details of what was required from Regional/LA stakeholders and what Phi would bring.

The presentation also advised of 'what next' which would be to identify the most suitable near-term opportunities and work together to get what the region needs and deserves from the local unique capabilities/credentials and utilise potential assistance from the 'levelling up' agenda.

Mr Miller advised of the potential benefits that Phi could bring to the region as local investors were interested subject to the criteria being met. Mr Miller further advised that the Fylde Coast area was unique, all criteria was met. Mr Miller also advised that although Blackpool Airport was a site of interest, there were also obstacles and risks associated with airport locations.

A discussion took place in which Mr Miller responded to questions from the Board and advised that he had met with Fylde, Blackpool, and Wyre Councils and of the interest of working with Local Authorities and of the Digital Tourism options.

**It was RESOLVED to note the presentation.** The Chairman thanked Mr Miller for the presentation.

#### 6. Fylde Coast Green Growth

Mr Scott Butterfield, Strategy Policy and Research Manager, Blackpool Council presented the Board with a report presenting an outline of carbon emission reduction projects to be progressed by collaboration between Fylde Coast Local Authorities. A copy of the report had been circulated with the agenda.

Mr Butterfield referred to the previous meeting of the EPB on 8 December 2022 where he had verbally updated the Board on the workshop of a convened group of officers meeting that had taken place also on 8 December at the Solaris Centre in Blackpool to discuss potential opportunities, barriers, and projects. A summary of the session had been circulated to the Board separately. Mr Butterfield outlined to the Board a summary of the session including key themes emerging, ideas suggested at the workshop and projects developed based on suggestions from the workshop.

Attached to the report at Appendix 1 was an overview of the projects, which would be brought before individual Council management teams for a decision to proceed once further details were available. Mr Butterfield highlighted key issues from the overview.

Mr Butterfield also advised the Board of a fast forward bid that had been submitted the previous day requesting £300,000 of funding from UK RI. Mr Butterfield also referred to Climate Adaptation and Nature Positive Development work to date and next steps as outlined in the report at Appendix 1. Mr Butterfield also advised that Andrea Howe, Energy Projects Officer, Blackpool Council had been unable to attend the meeting as planned to provide advice on Government funding and options around reducing carbon emissions from housing but would attend a future meeting of the Board.

Councillor Buckley advised that the Councils and Leadership would be looking at the projects that had been put forward.

A discussion took place around the recommendation in the report at 2.1 “The Economic Prosperity Board requests that the relevant officers from the Authorities progress the identified schemes and provide updates to future Board meetings”.

The Chairman thanked Mr Butterfield for his report and contribution.

**Following discussion, it was RESOLVED: -**

**That the Economic Prosperity Board requests that the relevant Officers from the Authorities progress the identified schemes and provide updates to future Board meetings.**

## 7. Local Authority Economic Updates

The Board received the following updates:

### Blackpool Council

Mr Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director, Blackpool Council, updated on the **Talbot Gateway** Central Business District which was a major part of Blackpool’s £1bn+ Growth and Prosperity Programme.

- The Board was advised that the vision for Talbot Gateway was to create a Central Business District to secure more high-quality jobs not only to expand and drive footfall into the Town Centre (with the knock-on effects of encouraging the upgrading of the town centre retail, restaurant, and other facilities) but also to secure and increase job opportunities for local residents.
- The Board was further advised that the Council and Muse Developments Ltd had been working in partnership to develop the Central Business District since entering into a Development Agreement signed on 12 March 2009.
- Mr Gerrard updated on phases 1,2 (Holiday Inn, Tram Extension and Underpass), 3 (Civil Service Hub), 4 (Multiversity), and future phases on the Gateway and benefits of the scheme to Blackpool.

Mr Gerrard responded to questions from a Board Member relating to parking and potential park and ride schemes in Blackpool.

### Fylde Council

Mr Charlie Richards, Head of Projects and Regeneration, Fylde Council delivered a presentation which updated on progress since the previous meeting in December 2022 relating to **the St Annes-on-the-Sea Town Centre Masterplan** as follows:

- Round 2 Bid of Levelling Up Fund LUF) for £14.6m had been unsuccessful

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- A Leadership Board Workshop had taken place on 19 January 2023 to consider the next steps, lessons learned, challenges ahead and future delivery on the masterplan including consideration of resources available and feedback to inform a LUF Round 3 bid and to consider alternative potential funding sources for Active Travel which featured highly in the masterplan.
- The key steer from Members had been focus on St Annes Square. A bespoke project in the Square focussing on events space delivery, lighting, CCTV, signage, and wayfinding was to be taken forward following feedback received from Members, local businesses, and local groups within St Annes.
- Charlie would be speaking with the masterplan consultants around a feasibility study to take the project out of the plan without compromising the integrity of the plan.
- There was continuing dialogue with Lancashire County Council (LCC) as a key partner for potential funding towards the Island site via the Lancashire Economic Recovery Grant Scheme.

Mr Richards also provided an overview on the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund** as follows:

- Fylde's allocation of £2.6m to be spent until the end of March 2025. Mr Richards advised that a Local Partnership Group had been established to agree Fylde's priorities that would feed into the agreed Investment Plan. The Group had concentrated the funding in relation to the three key investment themes included within the programme (Communities and Place, Local Business, People and Skills).
- There were 14 projects that would make up the £2.6m allocation which were a mixture of Bespoke Fylde projects with emphasis on capital projects, particularly in the Public Realm.
- Mr Richards highlighted 'quick wins' – SLA for Northwest Aerospace Alliance, Ice Sculptures event, AFC Fylde delivering NEET support for Yong People.

### Wyre Council

- Mr Garry Payne, Chief Executive, Wyre Council updated advising that significant funding had been received for Fleetwood Market. Mr Payne further advised of the obstacles faced due to decarbonising the building and that cost would now be £3.2m. When the project was completed, service costs to tenants would reduce due to the reduction in costs of electricity supply.
- Mr Payne also referred to the Wyre Annual Business Award Ceremony and suggested that the Board may like to consider holding a combined Fylde Coast Business Award event. Mr Payne advised that the Wyre Business Awards was public sector lead and accepted private sector nominations for awards. The event was very well attended by approximately 240 attendees but was restricted to businesses in Wyre.

**1. It was RESOLVED that the Board would consider the suggestion of holding a combined Fylde Coast Business Award event; and**

**2. To note the updates.**

### 8. Exclusion of the Public and Press

As the public and press were not present at the meeting and the fact that the information was generally in the public domain, the Board decided not to pass the exclusion of the public and press resolution for the remaining items on the agenda as set out in Part 1 of Schedule 12(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Variation Order 2006.

### 9. Blackpool Airport EZ 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:



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- Work on the Division Lane junction had finally begun on 9 February following further last-minute delays from United Utilities and LCC. Mid-May 2023 was the anticipated date that the project would be finished but that there had been a further development that an LCC drain under the development had collapsed. Due to the collapsed drain, Divisional Lane East Access would need to be closed and Midgeland Road would have to be temporarily reopened.
- The 3G floodlit football pitch was due for completion this week and would probably be used for the Blackpool Cup, subject to a limited period relaxation of planning conditions – which had been applied for, the event may attract up to 10,000 visitors to the area,
- The Rugby League pitch would be ready for community use in March 2024.
- All site investigations had been completed for the main road. It was hoped to commence work in June 2023 on the Link Road subject to negotiations with United Utilities and ENWL on service diversions.
- A report on the Solar Farm was anticipated to be received on 10 April 2023.
- A meeting would be taking place on 13 March with BP and the two wind farms.
- Planning applications re the airport would be submitted to panel this month.

Mr Green responded to questions from the Board around traffic issues around Queensway.

**It was RESOLVED to note the update.**

The Chairman thanked Mr Green for his report and contribution.

### 10. Hillhouse Technology EZ 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:

- Fleetwood/Poulton Rail Line. Network Rail would be submitting the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to the Department for Transport in February 2023 for the re-opening of the Fleetwood/Poulton rail line. The SOBC was expected to show that a Tram/Train option was the most impactful in terms of Benefit/Cost analysis, but all options remained open for consideration.
- If the Tram/Train option became the option of choice, there was a possibility that a bridge would not be required which would speed up the delivery of the Western Access Road and reduce costs.
- Combined working with Wyre Council was taking place, who had set up a fund to support surveys with support from NPL. The first survey, Topographical of the site was now underway and would provide baseline information to support all development planning applications with further reports on transport assessment on drainage and utilities. Applicants would be required to contribute to access the reports.
- A number of discussions were taking place with Lancashire County Council as a Planning Authority in relation to waste to energy projects.

**It was RESOLVED to note the update.**

The Chairman thanked Mr Green for his report and contribution.

### 11. Any Other Business

#### Levelling Up Funding

Mr Gerrard advised the Board around criteria and potential challenges for round 3 bids for Levelling Up Funding.

Lancashire Economic Directors' Group

Mr Green advised that he was currently supporting the Lancashire Economic Directors' Group who were currently undertaking a strategic site study. Mr Green advised that the group was requesting identification of sites that were not currently known as part of the Lancashire 2050 Strategy.

12. Proposed provisional dates and themes for the municipal year 2023/24

The following dates were proposed for the dates for the municipal year 2023/24:

Thursday, 8 June 2023

Thursday, 7 September 2023

Thursday, 7 December 2023

Thursday, 7 March 2024

**It was RESOLVED that an alternative date in June 2023 would be identified for the first meeting and that the further potential dates would be considered at the June 2023 meeting. The meetings would be administered by Blackpool Council for the municipal year 2023/24. Details to be forwarded in due course.**

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<b>Report to:</b>	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Scott Butterfield, Strategy and Climate Lead, Blackpool Council
<b>Date of Decision/ Meeting</b>	29 June 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 At the meeting on 2 March 2023, the Board requested that officers develop schemes to install solar panels on suitable Council assets, and provide updates to future Board meetings.

3.2 Since the meeting, Blackpool Council's Strategy and Climate Lead has raised the issue with Management Teams at Wyre and Fylde Councils. Both committed to identifying officers with relevant expertise to progress the schemes, which will enable quicker progress to be made on project scoping in terms of usable assets and finances. Initial work by Blackpool's Strategy and Climate Team has highlighted the potential benefits of using Wyre Borough Council's assets to generate solar power, and the list of assets under consideration can now be refined in light of local knowledge. A workshop to explore the activity required in detail will take place in July 2023.

3.3 Given that this work is indirectly related to the Board's Green Growth priority, the group will also consider establishing project oversight and management structures, alongside identifying the staffing and financial resources required to support the exercise. Initial discussions have taken place on how shared resources can be used to deliver this agenda.

3.4 Updates will be provided to future board meetings on solar projects, but the primary focus of these updates will shift to discussion of the support of businesses and project operating in the field of sustainability, carbon reduction or associated technologies, and support of businesses in other sectors seeking to reduce their carbon footprints and improve environmental sustainability.

3.5 Both Fylde and Wyre Councils are progressing work to support businesses on the green agenda via the use of Shared Prosperity Funding. Since April, Fylde Council has been working in partnership with East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, who are delivering their 'Chamber Low Carbon' project to interested businesses across Fylde. The project aims to support them to reduce their carbon footprint

by developing a decarbonisation plan. The project is currently scheduled to run until March 2025.

- 3.6 Wyre Borough Council also appointed East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce to deliver a similar piece work looking to support businesses in calculating their carbon footprint, produce carbon management plans covering their value and supply chains, enabling adoption of new technologies which reduce emissions, and raise awareness of potential funding opportunities and resources to support further reductions. This will be accompanied by events aimed at specific business sectors and charities.
- 3.7 Blackpool Council is establishing some sector-specific groups, one of the aims of which is to better understand business requirements on the low carbon agenda. 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.
- 3.8 The potential ethically-powered data centre and accompanying heat network scheme on the Fylde/Blackpool border at the Airport Enterprise Zone, continues to progress with support from the Connected Places Catapult, and is covered in another paper on this agenda. In April 2023, Blackpool Council was awarded funding to participate in Innovate UK's Fast Followers fund, which will pay for staff time and a new post to oversee the development of a co-operative model for the ownership and operation of heat networks, and to participate in the national project with other funded partnerships.

<b>Report to:</b>	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Tony Doyle, Head of ICT Services, Blackpool Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	29 June 2023

## **BLACKPOOL INNOVATION CATALYST- THE DEVELOPMENT OF ETHICALLY POWERED DATA**

### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To update the Economic Prosperity Board on the work undertaken by the Connected Places Catapult on the Strategic Outline Business Case for the development of sustainable data centres.

### **2.0 Recommendation:**

2.1 To note the presentation to be given remotely by Bob Burgoyne from the Connected Places Catapult

### **3.0 Background information**

3.1 Last September, after a successful symposium was held at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool on the opportunity to develop Ethically Powered Green Data Centres and a wider high-tech/climate tech ecosystem, Blackpool Council engaged the services of the Connected Places Catapult to develop the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) and roadmap. This work was concluded in late April 2023.

3.2 Bob Burgoyne from the Catapult will be joining the meeting remotely to present the findings of the SOBC. The project aims to capitalise on the Transatlantic fibre connectivity, future renewable energy sources such as offshore Wind, Solar and energy storage at the Blackpool Airport Enterprise as well as feed heat recovered from the data centres into a heat network for wider community benefit. The project also creates opportunities to grow high value future jobs and bring cutting edge research in collaboration with Lancaster University into the area.

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone: Progress Report</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>29 June 2023</b>

## 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

To note the report.

## 3.0 Progress

### a) Masterplan and Delivery Plan

The refreshed Enterprise Zone Masterplan was approved by Blackpool's Executive 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 July 2023. A detailed review of the masterplan for the Knowledge Quarter to be known as Silicon Sands (replacing former airport operational facilities) will now commence in July 23, and an ongoing study into future utility requirements is underway. 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 a willingness of Electricity North West to now provide 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. A further review of the Delivery Plan is being undertaken and will be presented for consideration by Blackpool's Council Executive in in September 2023. This will allow adjustment to costs and included contingencies following receipt of tenders for the major highway and infrastructure work.

A continuous review of the delivery plan model is undertaken along with value engineering of all aspects of planned infrastructure works to mitigate the impact of high material costs inflation over the past six months. As much of the development is funded in the early years by prudential borrowing the recent increases in interest rates applicable to borrowing have had a significant negative impact on the viability of the overall project. Work is underway to identify areas of investment that can be deferred or removed from the programme without significantly impacting

upon income generation from retained business rates growth and land sales. The provision of the new Primary substation by Electricity North West will be of great assistance in narrowing the gap between costs and projected income, but further work is required as cost increases continue to ensure that development expenditure is contained within anticipated lifetime revenues. Therefore, progression of future phases will be dependent on the ability to generate sufficient income to cover 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 Lancashire Local Economic Partnership and Lancashire County Council in relation to the wider Lancashire Enterprise Zone cluster marketing strategy

#### **b) Project Management**

The Enterprise Zone delivery team presently comprises four full time staff, with part time financial officer support and a project support administration and marketing role presently in recruitment. 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. The cost of the delivery team and external consultant support are fully covered within the approved delivery plan financial model.

#### **c) Fiscal Incentives**

Whilst the Enterprise Zone rates relief fiscal incentive has now effectively ended with the ECA only available until November. The Enterprise Zone successfully utilised the Rates Relief allowances whilst available until March 2022; Blackpool Council (as the accountable body for the Enterprise Zone 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 exception of the new floodlit rugby league pitch where late seeding of grass due to weather will be playable from October 2023. The new pavilion will be formally opened on the 30 June 2023 and the facilities have 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 with the tournament again voted the best in Europe of its type.

The progress of the Division Lane junction works was hampered by a couple of external factors including the collapse of a Highway drain, which required temporary reopening of Midgeland Road access to Division Lane East prompting calls from some residents for this to remain a permanent change. Blackpool Highways team is therefore leading a review and public consultation.

The existing Jepson Way changing facilities will continue in use for the interim period until the new pavilion can be opened and are likely to close and be utilised as contractor compound and offices until September 2024 when they will be demolished.



Following completion of site investigations, the majority of the detailed Highway design work for the Eastern Gateway road, Common Edge and School Rd junction modelling has been completed. Early Contractor Involvement now underway with a contractor from the STAR framework to finalise design and build programme to secure cost savings. This involves close collaboration with statutory undertakers for the diversion of existing services and provision of new connections, which alone will exceed £3.5m. Final contract award is anticipated in August 2023 with commencement of work on an anticipated 12 month build for the Eastern Gateway and School Rd/Common Edge up-grade, commencing in October 2023. The pacing item for commencement of main construction being the ability of the key statutory undertakers Electricity North West and United Utilities to undertake their diversion and protection works to programme.

The outline planning application for the new Highways, submitted in March 2022 was approved by Blackpool Council in October 2022, and Fylde Borough Council in early November 2022 with the Secretary of State confirming on the 10th November 2022. Work is now underway to discharge some of the 39 appended conditions, where these are relevant to the highway construction. A detailed design guide to shape the public realm and the overall arrangement of buildings in the Eastern Gateway will be complete by the end of July 2023.

A second related planning application is in preparation for submission to Fylde Borough Council in July 2023 to seek consent for the realignment of the junction from Amy Johnson Way to provide access to the eastern sector of the Airport and enable development of new hangar accommodation adjacent to the existing J-Max hangar. The provision of new hangar accommodation will allow the process of releasing land on the Airport's 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 c20,000 sq ft each and two larger Code C hangars capable of accommodating larger aircraft of Boeing 737/Airbus A321 size for maintenance and overhaul. Initially only the roads, the business facility and two hangars will be constructed, until new Air Traffic control facilities and appropriate commercially viable business cases are in place.

Work has also continued with support from consultants WSP and JBRE, 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 power, battery storage and potential connections to offshore wind farms. Design studies are also underway for the provision initially of a new 2 Mva substation to serve the first smaller data centre for the Airport Knowledge Quarter, whilst engagement with Electricity North West has seen them agree to construct the new 32mva 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 has stepped up with the establishment of specialist working groups to review technical issues and commercial arrangements, whilst the windfarm developers continue the process of applying for planning consent via the Nationally Significant Infrastructure route. There are a number of very significant concerns of the impact that construction of the transmission assets will have on airport navigational aids and restriction of operations. It is hoped that commercial negotiations will result in some wider direct community benefits and improved social value outcomes for the Fylde, potentially with power purchase agreements to allow access to lower priced energy.

#### **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 to the planned scope of works particularly around service diversions and new connections plus a 26% in material costs over the past six months has seen the overall project price escalate. The costs of the increase will be met by Blackpool Council utilising 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. Whilst slightly behind the original programme the works will complete before the fund deadline on March 2026.

#### **g) Communications Infrastructure**

The Aquacomms base station facility is operational. There are 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. 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 is for a 2MW facility designed to demonstrate world leading liquid cooling technology which will substantially reduce energy consumption. The potential for surplus heat from a number of planned data centre facilities within the EZ that could enable the construction of a district heating system to support office and commercial development on the Airport Phase 2 site, and detailed proposals are now being prepared utilising some £250,000 of funding from Innovate UK's Fast Followers Fund.

The Connected Places Catapult have completed their road map for the delivery of an integrated Data centre and sustainable energy on the Enterprise Zone. This is being evaluated and will be utilised to guide the development programme for Silicon Sands and has informed the first edition of the Enterprise Zone digital prospectus which was launched at UK REiiF. The Connected Places Catapult has also produced guidance and advice for Blackpool Airport in terms of its ambition to be an early adopter of both battery powered and hydrogen fuelled flight. Work will now continue with the Catapult and Lancaster University to refine and deliver development opportunities for an energy efficient data sector cluster at the Enterprise Zone providing both Edge compute capacity to meet local demand and to support wider industrial applications of robotics, AI, digi-health and agri-tech across Lancashire and the wider Northern- Powerhouse, with longer term ambitions 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.

Work has also continued with Lancaster University to scope the research facility that they hope to base within the technology demonstrator development. Whilst a second company developing immersion cooling server technology has been identified and who are also keen to place their equipment in the technology demonstrator – which will in addition house a Tech hub to host start up and Small and Medium Enterprise businesses in the digital sector. Whilst full design, planning consents and commercial agreements are being finalised pending confirmation of funding, work has commenced on site preparation of a site for the demonstrator project with the demolition of a redundant former fire station and garage buildings at Blackpool Airport.

The Masterplan for Silicon Sands will be shaped to best meet the requirements of the digital sector

#### **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 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. .

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.

Work to refresh the existing estate boards with the new branding and work and update the four websites for the Lancashire Enterprise Zones is now complete. The Enterprise Zone delivery team spearheaded Blackpool's attendance at UK REiiF 16-18 May, which is covered in more detail below.

Local communication and marketing has of necessity been restricted during the pre-election period which ended on the 4 May 2023 and will now be stepped up with a regular series of press releases and showcases of local businesses via the Blackpool Makes It Work web site and marketing campaign.

The Enterprise Zone delivery team is also looking to accelerate the pace of work with Lancashire County Council (formerly Marketing Lancashire team) on the updating of the Enterprise Zone web sites in alignment with the recently approved Enterprise Zone marketing strategy.

Unfortunately there has been little recent progress made following Colliers appointment as international marketing agents and property advisers for all four Lancashire Enterprise Zone with a proposal submitted by them for a 12 month international marketing plan awaiting approval and funding, with the design agency Richard Barbers and Co to assist in the development of the web sites and additional marketing collateral focussed on the international market.

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 June 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 August 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 August 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](http://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 and will be formally launched this summer, 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 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 larger new Code C hangars on the eastern and western flanks of the airport – these proposals are presently being assessed against CAA criteria. 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.

Studies are ongoing to determine the best option for a new Air Traffic Control facility and consultants THINK have advised that a traditional Tower be selected ahead of a digital solution - a second study by WSP has now been completed and has identified three options for the construction of a new physical control tower facility, the preferred operational location is by way of provision of a combined Fire station and ATC building as part of the Eastern hangar development, however detailed funding and a resolution to impact upon sight lines from the existing tower remain under consideration..

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 2469 new jobs have been created 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 will take place on line in Late July 2023.

### **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. Strategy to mitigate impacts from such risks is 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:**

<b>Risk and Issues</b>	<b>Mitigation and Actions</b>
Slight delays to construction due to Covid-19 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/recession 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 August 2023 – 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	2469 (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)

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Dates</b>
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 <sup>th</sup> 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
Proposition and identifying opportunities for data centre market /appointment of Connected Places Catapult	CP Catapult report received – digital prospectus prepared – occupier negotiations ongoing
Focussed marketing of Common Edge Phase 1 commences – launch at UK REiiff May 2023	Ongoing - brochure prepared- UK REiiff Participation for 2024 booked
Architectural feasibility study & design work for airport complete	Ongoing July 23 –delayed by ATC review
Outline planning app for airport redevelopment (Phase 1 – Airport East) submitted	Expected July 23
Outline planning app for airport redevelopment (Phase 2 – Airport West (P2 car park))Submitted	Q3/Q4 2023
12 month construction contract for Eastern Gateway Access road commences	August 2023
Completion of airport redevelopment works (of existing accommodation)	Q4 2026

\* Subject to satisfactory CAA consultation

#### Report Author

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Hillhouse Enterprise Zone: Progress Report</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>29 June 2023</b>

## 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):

To note 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 completion of a full masterplan review and a decision by Government on the Rail Reinstatement Project for the Poulton to Fleetwood line, which is presently subject of further studies being led by Network Rail. 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.

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, has continued to progress activities where funding has been secured from the Getting Building Fund, providing essential capacity upgrades to both water supply and electrical power distribution networks, extension of the fast fibre broadband network around the perimeter of the site – together with the construction of a new security gatehouse facility , which will assist rapid secure access and egress to the site. The gatehouse facility will be finally be completed in August following delays with external contractors. A decision has yet to be taken as to when the existing facility on Bourne road will be completed and how security will be effected to restrict unauthorised access to the Northern portion of the wider Hillhouse site.

The Getting Building Fund project has been allocated a total grant of £630,000, comprising £504,000 Getting Building Funding, with additional match funding provided by Wyre council and NPL at £63,000 each. Wyre Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership team are continuing to monitor progress and expenditure.

### **c) Residential Development**

BXB's initial planning application for residential development of the site originally allocated for development of a large food store and district centre was unsuccessful, 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. The outcome of the planning application for the residential site is of significance because of the contractual obligation of the developer to construct a section of the new Hillhouse Northern Access road. WSP who have been appointed to prepare the concept design for the new Northern Access route to Hillhouse will ensure that the residential road design is compatible with the requirements for what will become the main HGV access route to the Commercial site, with appropriate screening and sound attenuation alongside service corridors /cycleway etc. A full topographical survey of the northern site and route of the access road was recently completed to inform design of the new road and associated services, and will contribute to the revisions of the masterplan and flood risk assessments that are to be undertaken shortly by SEP.

Substantial progress has been made on the three other residential sites accessed via Bourne road – with all including the Dickie and Moore development close to completion – which will then see final works to bring Bourne road up to adoptable standards. Bourne road will continue to be utilised as the main HGV access route to Hillhouse until the Northern road is complete. NPL has introduced a number of measures to reduce traffic speeds on Bourne Road, including a competition to involve the local children to design road side 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 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. This ministerial decision originally due in March/April, is still awaited but network rail and their advisors continue to develop the technical proposals on the assumption that a Tram/Train will be approved, to enable indicative costings to be worked up as a precursor to seeking funding. It's likely to be several years before a definitive timetable for the provision of a new service can be confirmed.

Whilst there is a possibility with the potential adoption of a Tram/Train solution would permit the use of an at grade crossing for the northern access road – the lack of certainty at this point necessitates planning for the construction of a road overbridge – which may see total costs for the road/ bridge being in the region of £7m at current costs – with full funding for the project still to be identified. The lack of certainty over delivery of both the road and rail solutions remains the major practical constraint to progressing key infrastructure to open up the Northern part of the Enterprise Zone. An outline planning application for the Northern Road and bridge is targeted for Q4 2024.

### e) Marketing and Enquiries

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

Further Workshops are planned to inform updates to the four Enterprise Zone websites to reflect current progress and the current availability of commercial development land and property. The Enterprise Zone delivery team are awaiting clarity following the recent reintegration of Marketing Lancashire into Lancashire County Council as to who will lead combined marketing and liaison with appointed International property agents Colliers.

Regular newsletter updates continue to be issued by Wyre Council's Communications team and the next meeting of the Wyred Up business forum will be held at Hillhouse on the 4<sup>th</sup> July .

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 visit 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	Proposal
Jan 2023	Environmental support	£600k investment	HOT/ Review
Dec 2022	Chemical production	£600k investment	HOT/ Review
Nov 2022	Transport and shipping	£1m investment	Due to complete Feb 2023?
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	Project Scoping
July 2022	Battery storage	£7m investment	Project scoping
July 2022	Hydrogen production	£10m investment	Project scoping
July 2022	Hydrogen generation	£10m investment	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	Request for further information
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
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	To commence spring 23 subject to planning and funding
Oct 2021	Asphalt production	2.5 acres, £2m investment	Pre-application planning discussions held with Wyre

			Council and LCC progressing to option
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 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 LEP, 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. Next meeting is expected to be held in July 2023 at Wyre Borough Council's Civic Offices. NPL has a comprehensive plan to deliver 10MW Hydrogen production on site by 2024, with 100MW by 2025.

NPL is shortly due 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 then be extended to 100MW, where up to 70% of the Hydrogen produced will be used with the EZ, with the remaining Hydrogen being used locally or sent to grid.

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 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 will identify the availability of new development plots in this area.

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

- Karpa - a heavy engineering company 7000sqft building and 10 new staff - Complete relocation within Hillhouse to larger premises
- Express Windows - windows manufacture - 18,000sqft building and upto 40 new jobs – Complete expansion from existing Hillhouse facility at Burn Naze Industrial estate
- 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 to undertake 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. This is progressing to legals and is expected to be signed within the next Month.

#### **h) Job Creation**

The Enterprise Zone team continues to liaise with NPL Estates to record and support any new or safeguarded jobs on the site.

NPL and Additions, supported by Wyre Council, continue to develop proposals to establish an onsite 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. Initial meetings took place with Lancashire Local Skills improvement and Lancashire Skills Hub in June and a potential property for the facility identified. Planned implementation in Q4 2023.

#### **i) Enterprise Zone Board Meetings**

An online Board meeting took place on Friday 21st April with a group of key stakeholders including Hillhouse tenants in attendance. No date has been set for the next meeting at time of reporting, however is expected to take place in July via MS Teams.

#### **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:

<b>Risk and Issues</b>	<b>Mitigation and Actions</b>
Uncertainty over change of key personnel at NPL Estates and Wyre Borough Council.	Clarify role and ongoing support from Blackpool Enterprise Zone Delivery team with new Service Level Agreement in place and strengthening Wyre support team.
Lack of market demand due to Covid-19 / Brexit /Inflation of costs of living/construction materials , Energy uncertainty and the commercial viability of development with existing scheme such as Energy from waste /	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 DBT large scale enquiries.



Biomass plant which are in development being cancelled or postponed long term.	
Continuing delays in applying for and securing planning and highway approvals and potential land contamination issues that need to be overcome. Highway usage impacted by proximity of residential accommodation.	Close liaison with NPL, Wyre (accountable body) and Lancashire County Council refresh of Enterprise Zone Project board and securing additional delivery support resource – 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 Lancashire County Council 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), Lancashire County Council 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 Lancashire County Council ongoing dialogue with Lancashire County Council.

#### I) KPIs and Milestones:

KPI / Metrics	Baseline (2016)	Target (2041)	Actual (2016-2023Q1)	RAG
Jobs created / Jobs Safeguarded (FTE)	C 1650	3700	133	
Construction Jobs	N/A	N/A	C 150 FTE	
New Commercial / Employment Space (SQM)	N/A	450,000 sqft	N/A	
Refurbished Commercial / Employment Space (SQM)	N/A	13,000sqft	36118 sqft	

New businesses located on Enterprise Zone (over baseline)	c45	10	12	
No. of businesses receiving Enterprise Zone business rates relief (£ rates relief awarded)	N/A	N/A	0 N/A	
Amount of Enterprise Zone 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	Commissioned/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	Q4 2023
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 2025):**

- Local Full Fibre Network roll out across site complete
- All full site supporting studies (topographical, flood/utility transportation, ecological and environmental) commissioned and completed
- Masterplan review and update 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
- 10mw Pilot Hydrogen production facility complete

**Objectives over 5 years (by end 2028):**

- Phase 1 spec build complete and fully let
- Phase 2 new spec development in planning pipeline
- Northern Access Road Constructed
- International business centre redevelopment
- Commenced 100Mw Hydrogen production facility
- Firm proposals for Tram/Train on Fleetwood in place and funding identified

**Objectives over 10 years (by end 2033):**

- 50% of site built out and thriving business hub
- Fleetwood/Poulton Transport link operational

**Report Author**

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