

Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board Agenda

Fylde Council
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**Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board meeting
Thursday, 2 March 2023 at 14:00 in the Reception Room, Town Hall,
St Annes**

- 1. Apologies and Welcome by the Chairman**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**

Members will be invited to disclose any pecuniary and any other significant interests they may have in relation to the matters to be considered at this meeting.

- 3. Confirmation of Minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday, 8 December 2022**

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on [Thursday, 8 December 2022](#).

- 4. Matters Arising**
 - Innovation Catalyst
 - Investment Zones

5. Presentation by Power Harvest Infrastructure Ltd

A presentation will be given by Chris Miller, Director and Co-Founder, Power Harvest Infrastructure Ltd.

6. Fylde Coast Green Growth

An update on this topic will be given by Scott Butterfield, Strategy, Policy and Research Manager - Blackpool Council.

7. Local Authority Economic Updates

A brief summary on a particular topic will be given by each Council representative.

- Blackpool Council
- Fylde Council
- Wyre Council

8. Exclusion of Public and Press

If the discussion during items 10 and 11 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 a confidential session, it will need to pass the following resolution:

"That the public and press be excluded from the meeting whilst the agenda items are considered, on the grounds 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 the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information".

9. Blackpool Airport EZ Progress report (standing item)

Report of Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council.

10. Hillhouse Technology EZ Progress report (standing item)

Report of Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council.

11. Any other Business

Levelling Up Fund Round 2

A verbal update will be given by Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director, Blackpool Council

12. Proposed provisional dates and themes for the municipal year 2023/24 (subject to change)

Thursday, 8th June 2023

Thursday, 7th September 2023

Thursday, 7th December 2023

Thursday, 7th March 2024

Report to:	Blackpool Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board
Relevant Officer:	Scott Butterfield, Strategy Policy and Research Manager, Blackpool Council
Date of Decision/ Meeting	2nd March, 2023

Fylde Coast Green Growth

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To present an outline of carbon emission reduction projects to be progressed by collaboration between Fylde Coast Local Authorities.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 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.

3.0 Background information

- 3.1 The UK government is committed to reaching net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, with the Local Authorities on the Fylde Coast all having commitments to reduce their environmental impact in line with this timescale or earlier. In particular, Blackpool Council's Climate Emergency Declaration commits the Authority to "support and work with all other relevant agencies towards making the entire area zero carbon", as well as "influencing and inspiring partner across... the North West, and considering all possible actions which can contribute to delivery of this goal". These commitments have prompted work on a county and now sub-regional level through the Economic Prosperity Board, in part because Blackpool's urban nature means that achieving net zero within its own boundaries would be challenging.
- 3.2 The Strategy and Climate Lead at Blackpool Council convened a group of officers working on climate and economic development officers to discuss potential opportunities, barriers and projects at the Solaris Centre in Blackpool on 8th December 2022. The group sought opportunities to benefit the local economy both in terms of saving organisational resources to allow for greater value for money in service delivery, and the broader concept of supporting low carbon businesses, technologies and projects which would directly boost the local economy. A summary of the session was circulated separately to the Board.
- 3.3 Key themes emerging included:
- A lack of knowledge and professional experience developing and delivering projects wholly or partly for their green credentials;
 - Suggestions that greater co-ordination and support between officers and authorities would be essential to identifying opportunities and delivering schemes;

- The need to understand potential sources of funding;
 - The potential to upscale renewable generation, making the most of the Fylde Coast’s natural resources (sun, wind and tidal power)
 - The need to understand and engage with the business sector to support and encourage their adoption of net zero approaches.
- 3.4 The group recognised that the adoption of a “climate change” priority by the EPB at its 13th October 2022 meeting is now a clear sign of political support and buy-in for work in this area. However, the importance of other priorities, relative lack of resources dedicated specifically to this agenda, and an absence of initial work and evidence on potential options means that there are not currently any “shovel ready” projects, i.e. schemes which have already been designed and for which resources could be sought.
- 3.5 Based on suggestions from the group, the following projects will be developed initially:
- Development of a programme to install solar canopies on appropriate car parks, seeking economies of scale from joint procurement activity.
 - Development of a similar solar scheme to the above, but using appropriate public sector estate roof spaces.
- 3.6 The Appendix gives an overview of these projects, which will be brought before individual Council management teams for a decision to proceed once further detail is available. It also includes an initial outline of a potential further project developed by Blackpool following the workshop, which offers potential for collaborative working around climate adaptation and delivering nature-positive development.
- 3.7 Other ideas suggested at the workshop included:
- Retrofitting existing buildings to improve energy efficiency. There are examples in all three boroughs of where this has been delivered successfully, and we will start conversations about the potential for sharing knowledge or undertaking joint procurement exercises;
 - Developing a heat network scheme which joins up different developments in Blackpool - the Multiversity, Blackpool Central, Law Courts and ultimately connected to the “Ethically Powered Data” project at the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone on the border with Fylde, which the Board has been updated on previously. The long-term ambition would be to reduce locate small modular data centres to provide their excess heat to the network and reduce costs. The Connected Places Catapult have been engaged to progress this work through the development of a road map and a strategic outline business case.
- 3.8 I reported at the last meeting that Lancashire County Council did not feel it was in a position to lead on the Solar Together project, which seeks to encourage homeowners to join a group-buying scheme for solar and battery technology. Since this time, Wyre Council have initiated further discussions around the potential of the scheme, with Fylde also interested in participation alongside a number of other Lancashire councils. Options being discussed include participation in group-buying schemes being led by councils outside the county.
- 3.9 At the previous meeting, the Board sought advice on government funding and options around

reducing carbon emissions from housing. Andrea Howe, Energy Projects Officer, Blackpool Council will attend to provide an overview and take questions. The main Government Funding pots over the next 2 years are the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) and Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF). In addition to £8.5m of current HUG funding, Blackpool Council has bid for £41m of HUG funding on behalf of the Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL) consortia, which includes Blackpool and Wyre Councils, with remaining funding to be rolled over into this. Aimed at residents with a household income of less than £31k or living in a deprived area, delivery of the funding would start in April 2023 if the bid is successful. The project would run for 2 years, with the funds helping around 2000 energy inefficient properties without gas central heating (EPC band D, E, F and G) across the County to install insulation and clean heat measures, with a focus on Air Source Heat Pumps. A further £5m bid for wave 2 SHDF funding covering 500 properties across three Registered Providers in 7 boroughs, including Fylde and Blackpool, has been submitted, with 118 properties in Fleetwood having benefitted previously from external wall Insulation, loft insulation and a window and door upgrade.

- 3.10 Other government funding is available via the ECO4 and ECO Flex schemes, which offer whole-house energy efficiency solutions to low income households, and which includes properties on gas, unlike HUG. The forthcoming ECO+ scheme due to start in April 2023 is likely to open this up to a wider group of beneficiaries, including properties in council tax bands A-D with an energy efficiency rating of D or lower. Loft and cavity wall insulation (plus smart heating controls if one insulation is installed) are also offered to anyone who does not qualify through any other funding streams. CHiL will continue to apply for any funding pots that become available and develop partnerships across Lancashire with the voluntary sector, NHS, Charities and other relevant bodies to promote the brand and build referral mechanisms.
- 3.11 Arrangements differ for Fylde, who are delivering ECO4, ECO Flex, and from April 2023 ECO+ using two Council approved local companies. When applications are forwarded to the companies to be assessed for Affordable Warmth Grant, the surveyors carry out an ECO survey, if the applicant meets ECO eligibility they will use the ECO funding stream leaving the AFW grant available to those who do not. In addition, Fylde secured further funding of £50,000 from the Household Support Grant to increase the threshold for support up to a household income of up to £45,000. Conversations are also taking place to explore future collaboration on HUG between Fylde and other councils.
- 3.12 The Climate Change leads from Blackpool and Wyre are involved in discussions with Lancashire County Council on the delivery of an evidence base to inform the activity detailed above, with further evidence to be commissioned as part of the process of developing the Lancashire 2050 plan.
- 3.13 Recognising the scale of the activity needed, the workshop also suggested the need for a central resource on this agenda. Given current resource constraints, it is acknowledged that this is unlikely for the near future, and Blackpool Council will continue to lead this agenda across the Fylde Coast working closely with Fylde and Wyre officer leads pending the identification of suitable funding to jointly fund a post.

4.0 Background papers

- 4.1 None.

Blackpool Fylde and Wyre

Economic Prosperity Board:

Low Carbon & Sustainability Developments

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Solar Car Park Canopies

Solar canopies, also known as solar carports or photovoltaic canopies, are structures that are designed to provide shade or shelter for cars, bikes, or people, while also harnessing the power of the sun to generate electricity. They comprise of a series of solar panels mounted on a support structure that is placed above the parking lot, top floor of multistore carparks or outdoor space.

- The solar panels on a solar canopy are usually connected to an inverter, which converts the DC power generated by the panels into AC power that can be used to power homes, buildings, or the electric grid. Additionally battery storage and Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers can be included within solar canopy design.
- Solar canopies can be designed to fit a range of parking lot sizes and shapes, and they can be used in both residential and commercial settings. Designed correctly they can provide shelter from rain and sun for car park users
- Solar canopies can help reduce energy costs by providing renewable energy to the grid or to the buildings they are connected to, and they can also help reduce carbon emissions by replacing fossil fuel-generated electricity, with carbon free, locally produced renewable energy.
- In addition to their environmental and energy-saving benefits, solar canopies can also enhance the appearance of parking lots and outdoor spaces, and they can provide a unique opportunity for businesses and organizations to showcase their commitment to sustainability.

Work to date

- Solar Canopies identified as having substantial potential at the Fylde Coast Workshop event held at Solaris Centre, Blackpool on the 8th December
- Discussion with officers from all Councils held to discuss proposal related to council specific
- Initial list of public Council owned car parks produced
- Document sent to officers of each Council to identify any barriers to solar canopy development, with few barriers identified by initial exercise. Work would be needed on a site-by-site basis with Electricity North West and the relevant planning authority to establish any grid capacity and local planning restrictions.
- Discussions between Blackpool Council and Solar Canopy installers have been held to discuss feasibility in more detail, with an example car park being selected in Blackpool for the installer to calculate potential installation cost and benefits.

Next steps

- Discussion to be held March 2023 within Blackpool to explore the potential of another large carpark with multiple stakeholders, to understand how a project would function and how benefits would be shared amongst stakeholders.

- Upon receiving Blackpool solar canopy assessment from installer, share findings with other Council officers to allow for estimates of power output to be estimated for all potential car parks
- Engage with the District Network Operator (DNO) to explore any grid constraint barriers that would limit the uptake of solar canopies.
- Select optimal sites across the Fylde Coast, aiming to maximise emissions reduction, financial benefit and £/kwh, ensuring support across each Council and planning.
- Conduct a detailed exploration of the potential from each selected site
- Engage with finance colleagues to develop a scheme that provides the greatest return to each council, with the shortest possible ROI
- Develop shared procurement documents with an itemised list of initial sites for market testing

Roof Mounted Solar

The installation of roof-mounted solar panels on council-owned buildings has the potential to provide significant financial benefits. The council will be able to generate its own electricity, reducing its reliance on the grid and saving on electricity costs. Additionally, the council can earn money by selling excess electricity back to the grid. The cost of solar panels has decreased in recent years, making the investment in solar financially viable. In addition, the invasion of Ukraine has increased energy prices globally, and with energy prices expected to remain at the higher rate for the foreseeable future, the ability to generate renewable energy locally offers significant benefits.

Should the Fylde Coast Councils collaborate on the installation of roof mounted solar, it is likely through economies of scale to secure a better deal for each council, resulting in a significantly lower return on investment for the project. There are numerous financial options to fund such work, but several rely on the project being of significant scale and cost, before the funding can be accessed.

Work to date

- Blackpool Council procured consultants (Powercircle) to complete an assessment of all Blackpool's Housing stock, to consider how a combination of solar photovoltaics (PV) and battery storage could be utilised to reduce tenant energy bills and emissions, whilst also exploring the various funding models available. This work has since been completed, with Blackpool Councils senior staff proposing we continue to explore the potential for this project.
- Blackpool Council is in the early stages of developing solar schemes for some of its larger buildings and energy users.
- Due to the work conducted by Powercircle, Blackpool further procured a town-wide solar assessment of every rooftop in the town. This assessment utilises irradiance, roof details and Lidar data to provide a potential energy generation, cost, emission reduction and ROI for every rooftop in Blackpool, Enabling roofs to be further investigated, and grouped as a single works package.
- An initial discussion between Blackpool Council, Powercircle and the DNO has been held to explore grid constraints in the area with further meetings due to be completed in the coming months.
- Discussions have been held between Blackpool Council and Wyre Council officers, sharing the details of the above work, and contact made with Fylde
- A list of all Wyre Council assets has been shared with the Low Carbon & Sustainability officer for Blackpool Council, with the agreement that an initial investigation of rooftop solar potential for all assets can be preliminary assessed. Once completed, this can be combined with additional information to allow the selection of the sites that offer the greatest return and emissions reduction in Wyre

Next steps

- Low Carbon & Sustainability officer for Blackpool Council to complete solar assessment for Wyre Council, sharing findings with Wyre Council, with further details

provided by Wyre and a collaborative approach taken to quantifying the potential for each asset in Wyre, enabling the selection of those with the greatest potential returns and emissions reduction.

- Arrange discussions with officers from Fylde Council to arrange the same discussions as with Wyre and Blackpool Council.
- Engage planning from all Councils to outline any challenges, and identify suitable rooftops to develop solar PV.
- Upon completion all Council owned assets on the Fylde Coast should be quantified, giving estimates of costs, financial benefit, ROI and emissions reductions.
- Engage with the DNO (Electricity North West) to further outline any challenges relating to grid constraint.
- Investigate the inclusion of other stakeholders in any subsequent work packages to further maximise renewable energy generation across the Fylde Coast.
- Create work packages including rooftops across the Fylde Coast to benefit from economies of scale, and benefits for all Councils
- Engage with legal, asset management and finance teams across each Council to explore an arrangement that benefits all Councils
- Funding and payback models to be developed by finance and legal teams

Climate Adaptation and Nature-Positive Development

Nature positive development refers to a development approach that aims to enhance and preserve biodiversity, ecosystems, and natural resources while also providing economic benefits and improving community well-being. There are several benefits of nature positive development, including economic benefits, climate resilience, and reduced emissions, and community well-being.

One of the most significant economic benefits of nature positive development is increased ecosystem services. Ecosystem services refer to the benefits that people obtain from ecosystems, such as water purification, carbon storage, and pollination. By investing in nature, communities can enhance these services, which in turn can improve economic activities like agriculture, forestry, and tourism. For example, investing in regenerative agriculture practices can improve soil health and increase crop yields, benefiting farmers and local economies, creating space for nature can support rich species diversity attracting international tourists.

Nature positive development can also contribute to climate resilience, as the changing climate is leading to more frequent and severe weather events, which can cause damage to communities and infrastructure. However, healthy ecosystems can help absorb and mitigate these impacts. For example, wetlands can act as natural sponges, absorbing excess water and reducing the likelihood of flooding. Forests can also provide protection from strong winds, reducing damage from storms. Nature positive development could provide the Fylde Coast with long-term resilience against these numerous and increasing risks.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a critical part of addressing climate change, and nature positive development can play a role in this effort. Healthy ecosystems can act as carbon sinks, sequestering carbon from the atmosphere. Conserving and restoring forests, wetlands, and other ecosystems can be an effective way to mitigate and adapt to climate change, while also providing other benefits like improved air and water quality.

Nature positive development can also contribute to community well-being. Access to nature has been linked to improve mental and physical health, reduced stress, and increased social connections. Green spaces in urban areas can provide a space for recreation and relaxation, while also helping to reduce urban heat island effects. Additionally, investing in nature can provide jobs and other economic opportunities for communities, contributing to overall well-being.

Across the globe there is a need for urgent action to halt the loss of global biodiversity, and protect nature, with climate adaptation and resilience being heavily dependent on a functional ecosystem, meaning restoring nature is foundational to climate action. The Fylde Coasts' geography and presence of a number of protected areas makes this region of the UK well suited to a substantial push to increase nature positive developments. Such developments could see both land-based, aquatic and marine projects undertaken offering potential for the Fylde Coast to become a leader in nature restoration in the UK.

Work to date

- Blackpool Council officers have engaged with the Environment Bank exploring the potential financial benefits linked to nature based credits from nature positive developments
- Blackpool Council signed the Motion for the Ocean, an agreement that all decisions should consider marine biodiversity and ocean protection.
- Initial research conducted into a Blackpool Marine project, with discussions with artificial reef engineers, biogenic marine infrastructure designers and marine biodiversity researchers. An early draft is in the process of being written, relating to a potential project to be shared in due course, following input from further professionals
- Land based project research conducted by Climate team for Blackpool Council, led to a model of land recovery designed and verified by the forestry commission. This model enables a cost effect method to create areas of biodiverse land across the Fylde Coast.
- Funding identified that is applicable to a range of large-scale nature project.

Next steps

- Blackpool Council to finalise marine project report, verify methodology with professionals and share with Fylde Coast councils and EPD
- Land based nature positive methodology to be written and presented, following approval from Blackpool Council
- Engage more widely with stakeholders, Councils, third-sector and landowners to promote and accelerate nature positive developments.
- Seek further engagement between councils relating to nature

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:	2nd March 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

The refreshed EZ 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 spring 23. A detailed review of the masterplan for the Knowledge Quarter (replacing former airport operational facilities) will commence in April 23, and an ongoing study into future utility capacity is underway including for provision of a new 32 MW primary substation. The plan retains flexibility to respond as new opportunities arise, including from potential designation as an Investment Zone. 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 cost of prudential borrowing against a projected income (reflecting 30% optimism bias) of £72m. New spending of up to £21m, to the end of financial year 2023/24 was also approved, bringing the level of anticipated total investment to £44m by March 2024.

A further review of the Delivery Plan will be undertaken in June 2023 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 planned infrastructure works to mitigate the anticipated impact of high material costs inflation. As much of the development is funded in the early years by prudential borrowing the recent increases in interest rates applicable to borrowing have posed some significant challenges to 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 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 LEP/Marketing Lancashire and marketing consultants to incorporate LEP priorities.

b) Project Management

The EZ delivery team presently comprises four full time staff, with a 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 architectural and planning consultant role will be reviewed in March prior to expiry of the current contract in May.

c) Fiscal Incentives

Whilst the EZ rates relief fiscal incentive has now drawn to a close from 31st March 2022 – the Enhanced Capital Allowances remain available in designated areas the EZ until November 2023. There remains a slight hope that the applications from both Lancashire County and Blackpool Council for award of Investment Zone Status may be successful which could see a reintroduction of business rates relief incentives, a decision is likely in the upcoming March budget.

Between 2016 and 2022 Blackpool Council (as the accountable body for the EZ and on behalf of Fylde Council) has 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. These funding awards are covered by Central Government via the annual settlement in respect of business rates.

d) Phase one current activity

The Common Edge Sports Village is nearing completion. The new grass pitches have been in limited use since October 2021, the changing pavilion and car park have now been completed, but because of planning conditions imposed by Lancashire CC Highways cannot be brought into use until the junction at Division Lane has been modified, with the planning condition also specifying that the junction works cannot commence until the construction of the pavilion was complete. Work on the junction finally commenced on the 6th February following last minute delays from United Utilities who sought additional protection works in relation to an older asbestos water main. The issues have now been resolved with minor protection works agreed with UU. Unfortunately the additional works will increase the overall delivery programme for the work by some three weeks with completion now anticipated for late May 2023.

Work on the construction of the 3G floodlit football pitch is progressing well – with the floodlights erected and tested and will complete in mid-March. The completion of the floodlit grass rugby pitch will however be delayed until spring 2024 after bad weather prevented grass seeding before December 2022.

Division Lane West has also been upgraded and will be stopped up as a highway on completion of Division Lane Junction.

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 demolished in Q3 2023.

Design works for the Eastern Gateway access road and Common Edge Road, School Road junctions have progressed significantly with the horizontal alignment fixed. A full suite of site investigations are now completed and being used to finalise the design to fix the vertical alignment. Estimates for service diversion and provision of new supplies from both United Utilities and ENWL have been accepted and deposits paid, with design and indicative programmes awaited. Discussions continue with Cadent (whose existing infrastructure is less impacted) along with a number of Telecoms companies to finalise diversion and new supply costs, and to agree works programmes, with the first full coordination meeting with all statutory undertakers and telecoms companies held on the 2nd February 2023. The need to divert a small section of the major water main supplying Blackpool and St Anne's dictates that works on the Eastern Gateway route is unlikely to be able to commence until July or August 2023 and will take approximately twelve months to complete. Preparation of tenders and bills of quantities has commenced with construction tenders likely to be issued in April 2023.

The outline planning application for the new Highways, submitted in March 2022 was approved by Blackpool Council in October and Fylde Council in early November with the Secretary of State confirming on 10th November 2022 that despite its Greenbelt status the application would not be called in. Work is now underway to discharge the 38 appended conditions. 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 March.

A second planning application is in preparation for submission to Fylde Council in March 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 future development of new hangar accommodation. This will allow the commencement of land release on the Squires Gate frontage for new development. The application will seek consent for the realignment of the existing highway, a new private estate road, a new business premises, three aircraft hangars of circa 20,000 sq ft each and a new airport fire and rescue facility. Initially only the roads, the business facility and two hangars can be constructed, until such time as new Air Traffic Control facilities are provided. The access road will open up the potential for developing land to the west of the 'J-Max' hangar for up to three Code C hangars capable of accommodating aircraft up to A321 and B737 size, for maintenance and overhaul activity.

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 PV, battery storage and potential connections to offshore wind farms. Design studies are also underway for the provision initially of a new 2 MW substation and subsequently a 32MW primary substation.

e) Social Value and Environmental Activity

Social value outputs are monitored for all activity at the EZ with social value comprising 20% of all tender assessments. Conlon the contractor who completed the new Common Edge changing pavilion have exceeded their initial Social Value target by over £100,000 when assessed against the TOMS criteria. Liaison with Carrick/STRI and WSP with regards to their social value activity is ongoing.

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

An application as part of the Blackpool Town Deal for £7.5m toward the costs of an overall £18m project to provide new Highways and enabling utility infrastructure and drainage, was approved by the Town Deal Board and the Council's Executive and also formally signed off by DLUHC. The estimated cost of the project has now increased to £23.9m, from an initial £18m estimate as impacts of inflation and additional work packages are taken into account ; the increase being approved within the £44m whole life spend reported to Executive. The increase will be funded from prudential borrowing and is within the approval given at December 2022 Blackpool Council's Executive. 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 of March 2026.

g) Squires Gate Industrial Estate

The owners of Squires Gate Industrial Estate continue subdividing and letting units, whilst progressing the over-cladding of the building to improve appearance, and the property is substantially let. Fox Brothers who recently secured temporary planning consent for a large haulage yard following a retrospective planning application have now vacated the site. Initial contact has been made with site owners EP properties to discuss the potential for new build development and connection to the Eastern Gateway, subject to contribution but as yet has elicited no positive response.

h) Communications Infrastructure

The Aquacomms base station facility is operational. There are presently seven ongoing enquiries for data centres with the largest two being for a 10MW facility of unspecified dimension and for a 200,000 sq ft facility. The most advanced project is for a 4MW 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 is being explored. The Connected Places Catapult have been commissioned to produce a detailed road map to guide future activity to link the data and sustainable energy propositions at the EZ and convert into a digital prospectus – which will showcase the EZ as the best location for transition to a low carbon economy – with the Catapult's remit stretching to cover the potential for the airport to adopt new low carbon fuelling technologies as a pioneer in the sector.

Work with Lancaster University on the Innovation Catalyst which supported the "Blackpool home of ethically powered data" initiative is continuing following the successful symposium on the 15th September 2022 with additional grant funding being sought to support the planned research facility within the technology demonstrator. Work also continues to progress design and assess feasibility for providing a holistic sustainable energy provision with a 15-25MW solar farm, a 400 MW battery storage facility and connectivity to new offshore wind farms. The Horizon study into the proposed solar farm at the airport will now be received on the 10th April 2023.

The biggest immediate obstacle to satisfying the identified demand from the data sector is the availability of electrical power. Available headroom should support the development of the initial 4MW facility, and ENWL are engaged in a network study with the objective of providing a new 32MW primary substation to meet future requirements from both the data sector, development at the Knowledge Quarter & relocated airport along with export of power to the grid of power from the planned Solar farm, battery storage facility and potentially an offshore wind farm feed. The cost of the new substation will be circa £4.5m, with ENWL now engaged in discussion regarding potential contributions to network reinforcement and to speed up the projected four year delivery timescale.

The Masterplan for the Knowledge Quarter on the site of present Airport infrastructure will be substantially refined in coming months as this is reconfigured to meet accommodate the anticipated data driven requirements.

i) 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 EZ team continues to keep dialogue open with interested parties whilst work moves forward to opening up new development land. Several existing EZ occupiers are also looking to move to larger units as they continue to grow and expand. A drinks manufacturer who was interested in a c70,000 sqft manufacturing facility has taken short term leases of alternative accommodation within the EZ 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.

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.

A winter edition of the EZ newsletter was issued in January and a business stakeholder event staged on the 3rd February 2023 attended by over 50 local business representatives. A public engagement event on the 19 December 2022 also helped inform local residents of the activities and inevitable highway disruption in 2023.

The EZ project team will also be attending UK REiF for the second year in May 2023, and are already committed to a speaking panel on the future of data centre development as part of promoting the knowledge quarter. This will be accompanied with marketing material and networking to increase enquiries as the Eastern Gateway works progress, and potential additional speaking opportunities. Additionally, Blackpool Airport is presenting its growth plans at a specialist airport and aviation conference in March.

Top enquiries are:

Date of enquiry	Target sector	Size	Type of enquiry	Progress to date
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

j) 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. A minor amend to the website was made to reflect destinations in Fylde as raised at the previous meeting.

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, an eight page feature in North West Business Insider magazine was published, interviewing a number of businesses on the Fylde coast, while the campaign sponsored a Lancashire Development Update by Place North West on 9 February where it presented on current investment and opportunities.

k) 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 larger new Code C hangars on the eastern and western flanks of the airport – these proposals are presently being assessed against CAA criteria prior to planning applications being made, which are targeted for second quarter 2023. 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.

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. A study into optimum location for air traffic control facilities is also ongoing

l) 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 2145 jobs have located to the Enterprise Zone, this figure includes jobs new to the area, safeguarded jobs within Blackpool and construction full time equivalent jobs.

m) Project Team

The latest meeting of the Blackpool Airport EZ Project Team was hosted online on 25th January via MS Teams. The next meeting will take place on line in early 22nd February 2023.

n) 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.

Many of the main risks are external and ubiquitous to development in the UK and outside the direct control and influence of the EZ team such as, Brexit and latterly the conflict in Ukraine which has in recent months seen a significant increase in 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

Risk and Issues	Mitigation and Actions
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
Increased construction and material costs are affecting viability of development projects	Work with contractors and architects on regular value engineering to ensure viability and ensuring that adequate contingencies are built into estimates
Interest rates rises will adversely impact upon cost of delivering enabling infrastructure and will reduce short term demand and business confidence	Ongoing value engineering and review of timescales for delivery to defer non critical expenditure
Due to delays in ability to progress Common Edge infrastructure, interest may find alternative sites	Regular communication with prospective occupiers and interested parties

o) KPIs & Milestones

KPI / Metrics	Baseline (2016)	Target (2041)	Actual (2016-2022)	RAG
Jobs created / Jobs Safeguarded (FTE)	<i>C 1800 - Difficult to estimate as it is an existing business park with over 200 businesses located on site</i>	5,000	2145 (inc 150 construction fte jobs)	
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 £40m	
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
Focussed marketing of Common Edge Phase 1 commences – launch at UK REiiff May 2023	ongoing
Proposition and identifying opportunities for data centre market /appointment of Connected Places Catapult	ongoing
Land / property acquisitions x 4	complete
Architectural feasibility study & design work for airport complete	Ongoing March 23
Release of existing sports pitches and commencement of highway and utility infrastructure	April 2023
Site investigations commence on upgrades to junction at CER & Division Lane	complete
Appointment of engineer	complete
Outline planning approval for highways	complete / Approved Nov 2022
Outline planning app for airport redevelopment (Phase 1 – Airport East)*	March 2023
Outline planning app for airport redevelopment (Phase 2 – Airport West (P2 car park))*	Q3 2023
3G pitch designed and tendered	Complete
Airport Control tower, system review commenced	Complete
12 month construction contract for EGA access road commences	June 2023
Completion of airport redevelopment works	Autumn 2026

** Subject to satisfactory CAA consultation*

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:	2nd March 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 EZ 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. 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 Borough Council have held discussions with interested parties for significant redevelopment of areas of the EZ, these parties are now in contact with LCC 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 Borough 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. Wyre Borough Council have agreed that £150k from the EZ Business Rates Growth Reserve has been allocated for the updates to the masterplan and marketing materials, with expectation that this is part recovered from NPL and other third party developers. The first tranche is being utilised towards the topographical survey of the Northern area of the site and the Western access routes.

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 some elements, notably the new security gatehouse, has fallen behind schedule following issues with original contractors – work is now underway and a target completion of March 2023 has been set – with ongoing liaison with LEP and Wyre council to monitor progress .

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 and but were refused planning permission by Wyre Borough Council committee in February 2023 for an outline application of up to 103 dwellings. Their other planning application for retail development to the north of this site remains under consideration by Wyre Borough Council.

Substantial progress has been made by Dickie & Moore with their residential development plans for the former Thornton AFC site, with the site now nearing completion. Development of an adjacent site, part of the former ICI works but out-with the designated EZ 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 will commence in Q1 23 subject to final agreements with LCC Highways. In the meantime NPL have 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 intend to submit 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 is expected to show that a Tram/Train option is the most impactful in terms of Benefit/Cost analysis but all options remain open for consideration. However this would only become a preferred option if the relevant Minister approves the project to progress to the next stage. This ministerial decision is due in March/April. This remains the major practical constraint to progressing key infrastructure to open up the Northern part of the Hillhouse EZ with one prospective developer directly engaged with LCC to try and progress a decision. Cost of a bridge across the line will be circa £3.5-£4m. Consultants WSP have been asked to progress a proposal for the development of a concept design for a new bridge. 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 Q4 2023.

e) Marketing & Enquiries

The main EZ 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.

Workshops are ongoing to inform updates to the four websites to reflect each of the current EZs sites and their commercial development land and property availability. Marketing Lancashire and the LEP will continue to lead on this activity, with support from the Blackpool EZ delivery team and Wyre Borough Council.

Colliers have now submitted a proposal for a 12 month marketing plan to be implemented by Richard Barbers & Co. The proposal acts a shopping list of activity to be agreed collectively between the three Lancashire EZs. Some elements e.g. the refresh of estate signage has already been implemented.

Colliers have started assembling technical data for each site and will require help from NPL and Wyre BC.

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

Following the success of UK REiIF 2022, Hillhouse EZ will be represented under the Blackpool Makes it Work campaign banner at UK REiIF (Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum) in Leeds, May 2023, where there will be an opportunity to promote investment opportunities across the two active Fylde Coast EZs.

Current enquiries include:

Date of enquiry	Target sector	Size and type of enquiry	Progress update
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	Progressing to option
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	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 are 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 Borough Council and EZ 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 early 2023. NPL have a comprehensive plan to deliver 10MW Hydrogen on site by 2024, with 100MW by 2025.

NPL are to launch their Hydrogen strategy for the Hillhouse EZ, '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. 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 have acquired the vacant property of the former Vinnolit site and the property 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. This is progressing to legals and is expected to be signed within the next 30 days.

h) 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.

i) Job Creation

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

NPL and Additions, supported by Wyre Borough 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 Q2 2023.

j) EZ Board Meetings

An online Board meeting took place on Friday 13th January 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 late February 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:

Risk and Issues	Mitigation & Actions
Uncertainty over change of key personnel at NPL Estates and 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 overcome. Highway usage impacted by proximity of residential accommodation	Close liaison with NPL, Wyre (accountable body) and LCC, refresh of EZ 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 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
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	105	
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	34,500 sqft	
New businesses located on EZ (over baseline)	c45	10	9	
No. of businesses receiving EZ business rates relief (£ rates relief awarded)	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Amount of EZ business rate relief received (£m)	£2,500,000	N/A	N/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
Planning application submitted for 60,000 sqft development	Awaited March 2023

Construction commences for utilities infrastructure and new gatehouse	Underway
Planning application for energy from waste plant HH North	Q2 2023
Planning Application for energy from waste plant ex Vinnolit store	Q2 2023
Planning application to demolish old buildings (Lab)	Q1 2023
Topographical survey of Northern site	Q1 2023
A flood risk assessment to be scoped and commissioned for the entire site subject to identification of funding	Q2 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	Q2 2023
An Environmental and Ecology study to be scoped and commissioned for the entire site subject to identification of funding *	Q12 2024
Planning application for new training centre to replace demolished buildings	Q3 2023
Planning application for new rail bridge crossing	Q4 2024
Completion of electric and water main upgrades	Complete

*Habitat assessments to be undertaken between Nov 23 -Mar 24

Objectives over 2 years (by end 2024):

- LFFN 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
- 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 commenced – circa 200 dwellings
- Design of Rail Bridge and western access road commenced

Objectives over 5 years (by end 2027):

- Phase 1 spec build complete and fully let
- Phase 2 new spec development in planning pipeline
- Western 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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