

Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Alice Collinson Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder and Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	05 Sept 2022

<b>Hillhouse Enterprise Zone</b>
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**1. Purpose of report**

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

**2. Recommendation/s**

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the report.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 Hillhouse Enterprise Zone sits alongside Blackpool Airport, Samlesbury and Warton Enterprise Zones (EZ) and continues to play a key role as one of Lancashire's strategic sites in retaining Lancashire's position as a national leader for high value industrial activity.
- 3.2 Hillhouse Enterprise Zone came into existence with effect from 1 April 2016 and has just had its sixth anniversary, with EZ Rates relief incentives having now expired. Located entirely within the Borough of Wyre with Wyre Council acting as accountable body, the site has minimal public ownership and development is primarily driven by the private sector.

## 4. Project Updates

### 4.1 New Companies On Site (as outlined in Enterprise Zone Governance Committee Report August 2022):

- Majority landowner NPL Estates have acquired the vacant property of the former Vinnolit site and the property is currently being marketed jointly by Avison Young and Robert Pinkus & Co LLP. There is strong market interest in occupying former Vinnolit buildings which are to be retained and upgraded – all elements of the ex-Vinnolit property, both land and buildings are now under Heads of Terms and are progressing.
- A fast-growing transport company has located at Hillhouse and has also taken additional office space.
- An engineering upcycle company has also located on the Hillhouse site.
- An expanding company that delivers large events and concerts in Europe have taken additional storage space and are again seeking to expand.

### 4.2 Job Creation (as outlined in Enterprise Zone Governance Committee Report August 2022):

- The EZ team continue to liaise with NPL Estates on any new or safeguarded jobs on the site.
- All elements of the ex-Vinnolit property, both land and buildings, are now under HOT and are progressing.
- NPL and Addisons, supported by Wyre Council, are exploring the opportunity to set up a training centre/centre of excellence for workplace development at the Hillhouse site to cover all aspects of training; providing school experience placements/leavers opportunities and workplace development to include all aspects of the workforce from apprenticeships through to management training. The plan is to improve the availability of suitable candidates for job vacancies for all businesses in the area and the Hillhouse site. An initial meeting with Lancashire Local Skills Improvement and Lancashire Skills Hub has been held. A planning application has been submitted to start the demolition of the old buildings to make space for the planned new building.

### 4.3 Hydrogen Steering Group:

- NPL, who are the lead on hydrogen activity, held meetings in March & May 2022 at the Civic Centre, with attendees from many Lancashire businesses including Victrex, Blackpool Transport, AB, and Westinghouse, in addition to Lancashire LEP, Wyre 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.

**4.4 Hillhouse EZ Board Meetings:**

- Board meetings regularly take place online with a group of stakeholders including Hillhouse tenants. The August meeting was postponed due to a high number of stakeholders being on summer leave. The next meeting is due to take place in September.

**4.5 Fleetwood to Poulton Rail Line:**

- The Government recently announced that plans to reinstate the Poulton to Fleetwood railway line will progress to the next stage of the Restoring your Railway fund programme. Of an initial 199 bids in the Ideas Fund round of the programme, the Poulton to Fleetwood railway line is one of nine schemes which will now receive funding to carry out further development work. An initial business case was submitted to government in April 2021 outlining three potential options to reopen the line including heavy rail, light rail and a tram system. This next phase will now see a more detailed business case put forward identifying the preferred option and associated costs.
- An initial study undertaken by LCC leaves all three options on the table and as this includes heavy rail the requirement for a bridge over the track bed to enable the northern access road continues to be a constraint in progressing development.

<b>Financial and legal implications</b>	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

**Other risks/implications: checklist**

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
community safety	<b>x</b>
equality and diversity	<b>x</b>
sustainability	<b>✓</b>
health and safety	<b>x</b>

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
asset management	<b>x</b>
climate change	<b>✓</b>
ICT	<b>x</b>
data protection	<b>x</b>

## Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection

### List of appendices

N/A