

# Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board Agenda

Fylde Council  
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**Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board meeting on Thursday, 8 December 2022 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** (Pages 3- 7)  
To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting.
4. **Matters Arising**
5. **Presentation - Offshore Windfarm Consortium**  
A presentation on this topic will be given by Wendy Dodds, Stakeholder Engagement Advisor at BP.
6. **Innovation Catalyst**  
An update on this topic will be given by Tony Doyle, Head of IT - Blackpool Council.

## **7. Fylde Coast Green Growth Opportunities – Update**

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

## **8. Local Authority Economic Updates**

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

- Blackpool Council
- Fylde Council
- Wyre Council

## **9. 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".

## **10. Blackpool Airport EZ Progress report (standing item) (Pages 8-16)**

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

## **11. Hillhouse Technology EZ Progress report (standing item) (Pages17-24)**

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

## **12. Any Other Business**

## **13. Date and time of the next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 2 March 2023 at 14:00 in the Reception Room at the Town Hall, St Annes.

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# MINUTES

## Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board

<b>Date:</b>	Thursday, 13 October 2022
<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, Leader - Wyre Council Councillor Mark Smith, Blackpool 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 Rob Green - Head of Enterprise Zones, Blackpool Council Steve Peters - Managing Director - Blackpool Airport Scott Butterfield - Strategy, Policy & Research Manager - Blackpool Council Marianne Hesketh - Corporate Director of Communities - Wyre Council Tony Doyle - Head of ICT - Blackpool Council Paul Evans - Assistant Director - Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Charlie Richards - Head of Projects & Regeneration - Fylde Council Lyndsey Lacey Simone - Notetaker - Fylde Council

### 1. Welcome

The Chairman, Councillor Karen Buckley welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### 3. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

### 4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the last meeting.

### 5. Review of Economic Prosperity Board's Priorities

Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director - Blackpool Council presented the report which sought to review the Economic Prosperity Board's (EPB) future work and priorities against its role and remit. A copy of the report was circulated with the agenda.

In summary, the report set out background information which included the purpose and remit of the EPB; governance arrangements and the four priorities agreed at the July 2018 meeting. It was reported that the Board last reviewed its priorities in December 2020 and an extract of that resolution was included on the agenda.

The Board were reminded that the current four priorities were as follows: Accelerated Growth focusing on our Enterprise Zones (ii) Connectivity (iii) Marketing and Investment and (iv) Housing Growth and Quality of Life.

Included as an appendix to the report was an Agenda Tracker which identified the range and frequency of issues discussed at the EPB since the last review. The Board was advised that these still relate closely to the first 3 priorities agreed by the EPB primarily because the focus of business had been on issues of common interest that affect the whole area. However, since the last review, there had been an increasing focus on climate change and associated matters which was deemed to be a potential new fourth priority.

The Board recognised the importance attached to the housing element but acknowledged there had been little collective focus on housing through the EPB directly as this was supported by other bodies. In view of this, it was deemed appropriate to remove that priority and replace it with a new fourth priority on Climate Change. Mitigation and Adaptation and its economic opportunities.

It was RESOLVED: To note the progress made by the Economic Prosperity Board and support the updated priorities as outlined above.

#### 6. Presentation - Blackpool Airport

Steve Peters, Managing Director of Blackpool Airport provided the Board with a PowerPoint presentation relating to the ongoing work and on-going development opportunities at Blackpool Airport.

Some of the key areas highlighted at the meeting were: the licensing arrangements at the Airport and details of the strands of revenue streams including the anchor contract, general aviation and corporate aircraft. In addition, other financial related matters incorporating a 10-year plan were discussed. Details relating to the market scope and opportunities including MRO; pilot training; cargo; specialist charters; corporate operators; GA growth; scheduled domestic flights and HNW operator together with details of the special mission ops; FBO; events; electric innovations and delivery and infrastructure requirements were also highlighted in the presentation.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Chairman invited questions. These included matters relating to commercial flights; the airport's hydrogen and investment strategy/links to other users; impact of the closure of other small airports and the associated financial implications. Mr Peters addressed these points in turn.

It was RESOLVED to (i) note the report and thank Mr Peters for his presentation and (ii) to circulate the presentation slides to the Board.

#### 7. Economic Opportunities of Climate Mitigation and Adaption

Scott Butterfield, Strategy, Policy and Research Manager at Blackpool Council updated the Board on matters concerning the economic aspects of the climate change mitigation and adaptation agendas. In doing so, he reminded the Board of the following four key actions highlighted at the 9 June meeting. He went on to expand on those key actions.

- Explore opportunities for collaboration on baseline studies and shared evidence base (e.g. Local Plan Reviews and the Duty to Cooperate)
- Officer group to work with Net Zero Hub on a Fylde Coast basis...
- Prepare list of sub-regional projects for consideration.
- Share details of internal and external funding opportunities.

Mr Butterfield then went on to highlight the Duty to Cooperate requirements; the work of the Local Energy Northwest Hub together with details of the various projects that would require or benefit from input from the hub or close collaboration. In addition, reference to internal and external funding opportunities and the work of the Lancashire Climate Officers Group was highlighted.

It was also reported that Lancashire County Council are leading on a piece of work to produce a Lancashire 2050 plan, which included Environment and Climate Change as a key theme. It was suggested that this would likely to lead to collaborative opportunities as detailed work is undertaken on a county-level action plan.

The Chairman enquired about the various working groups dealing with the topic of climate mitigation. She asked that the notes of those meetings be circulated (as appropriate) to the Board. This was agreed.

Clarification on the future of offshore wind turbines was sought. In addition, details about the use of Shared Prosperity Fund and the impacts of the New Energy Security Bill and the Government's stance on fracking was also raised.

It was RESOLVED to note the updated report.

## 8. Innovation Catalyst

Mr Tony Doyle, Head of ICT, Blackpool Council provided the Board with a PowerPoint presentation on the 2023 Vision to deliver a new kind of digital eco system that is sustainable leading to significant economic growth and social prosperity to the area.

An overview of progress made of developing digital infrastructure along the Fylde Coast and the associated international fibre connectivity was given.

In brief, the report highlighted work undertaken by a team of researchers from Lancaster University and a sustainability consultancy; the impact of current Data Centres/ Net Zero Data Centres on carbon footprint; digital growth and trends in ICT; details of the Innovation Catalyst (funded by Community Renewal Fund) and links to the Symposium session held on 15 September. In addition, an overview of existing investments in the area was highlighted. It was suggested that the Fylde coast area could:

- Become the UK's leading sustainable digital eco-system.
- Become the home of ethically powered data.
- Power the compute and AI for the Northwest due to the ultra-low latency fibre networks.
- Can be a major Internet exchange point as an alternative to London.
- Generate and store renewable energy= share at a low price per kwh.
- Can re-use energy and waste heat to benefit the community.
- Establish a co-operative to share and re-use energy.
- Continue to build on the co-operative to share digital infrastructure.
- Educate and train young people for futures jobs in sustainability and digital- Energy HQ on EAZ.
- Attract, high value jobs in digital, sustainability, advanced manufacturing and research.
- Establish the developing knowledge and research quarter on the EAZ as a centre of excellence for climate-tech one of the most exciting fastest growing parts of the economy being driven by innovators who want to use technology to save the planet (climate tech-hub)

The following opportunities were also highlighted:

- High-capacity bandwidth local and international fibre.
- Ultra-low latency local and international- closer to New York than London and Slough.
- Sustainability – Offshore wind and solar, energy storage and energy reuse (wind, solar and heat)
- The convergence of offshore wind and international fibre at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone (EAZ)
- Greenfield in terms of data centres but all the other ingredients there (existing data centre will struggle to adapt)
- Advanced dialogue with investors to build liquid cooled compute suitable for AI and Robotics at the EAZ
- Next wave of the Internet- the democratisation of AI and robotics – the need for a local (edge) cloud and a sustainable Internet.
- Blackpool Energy HQ on the Blackpool EAZ – district heating
- Enterprise zone with a knowledge research quarter in development
- High value jobs.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the Chairman invited questions. These related to the following areas: the impact of the shift to a digital climate on the Enterprise Zone together with renewal fund and investor opportunities. Mr Doyle addressed each point in turn.

It was RESOLVED to (i) note the report and thank Mr Doyle for his presentation and (ii) to circulate the presentation slides to the Board.

9. 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.

10. Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone - Progress Report

Rob Green, Head of Enterprise Zones, presented the Board with an update on the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and its future work and priorities against its role and remit. A copy of the report was circulated with the agenda.

Mr Green was asked to provide an overview of any updates since the publication of the agenda. The following areas were highlighted: planning consent granted by Blackpool Council regarding remodelling the highways works at Division Lane/Common Edge Road and the application being submitted to the Secretary of State re greenbelt. In addition, the first phase of the new grass sports pitches and changing rooms at the site together with details of airport renewal sector; data centre market; renewal energy; battery storage; windfarms and job gains were also discussed at the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to note the updated report.

The Chairman thanked Mr Green for his report and contribution.

11. Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone Progress Report

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

Some of the key areas highlighted at the meeting included the work being undertaken with Network Rail, LCC and Wyre Council on the Fleetwood/ Poulton railway line, Infrastructure costs and the work continuing with NPL to safeguard jobs at Hillhouse.

It was RESOLVED to note the update.

The Chairman thanked Mr Green for his report and contribution.

12. Any Other Business

An update on the Investment Zone submissions that were being made by the deadline of 14<sup>th</sup> October by the Upper Tier authorities of Blackpool and Lancashire County Council (which included areas in Fylde and Wyre and both Enterprise Zones) The potential consequences of an Investment Zone in terms planning was also highlighted.

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting

To note the date of next meeting as Thursday, 8 December 2022 at 2pm.

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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>8<sup>th</sup> December 2022</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

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, reflecting the impact of changes in third party ownership across the site, and changes required to satisfy Sport England and address highway and transportation concerns. The Masterplan retains flexibility to respond as new opportunities arise continues to be kept under review. Work is presently underway to refine the proposals for delivery on the new operational infrastructure at the airport which will enable release of land fronting Squires Gate Lane for development. The proposals will be presented to the Airport Board for approval in principle before being tested with the Civil Aviation Authority for compliance with CAP791 (The purpose of this document is to give guidance on the procedures to be used to notify the CAA of changes at an aerodrome, covering both infrastructure and management system changes in accordance with EU and National Regulations Status). The next area for review will be to detail proposals for the Knowledge Quarter on the site of the existing airport hangars and apron. A full review of the Masterplan will be undertaken in 2025/26, following completion of the enabling infrastructure to phase one centred on Common Edge.

A revised Delivery Plan and annual progress report was approved by Blackpool Executive on 7th February 2022, reflecting updated modelling of the forecast retained business rates income, to pick up changed layouts and delayed delivery dates for built development. A further report will be presented to Blackpool Executive on 5<sup>th</sup> December updating on progress and seeking support for revised funding requirements to support continued delivery to the end of financial year 2023/24. The present volatile economic climate necessitates regular review of finances and there is enhanced monitoring of all income and expenditure as all elements of the project remain subject to value engineering. 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 adversely on 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 is now back to full strength, following recruitment of a new Project and marketing manager, and receives additional support is received from an embedded Finance Officer. The core team is supported by other team members of Blackpool Council's Growth and Prosperity team and external consultants Cassidy and Ashton and WSP.

### **c) Fiscal Incentives**

Whilst the EZ rates relief fiscal incentive has now drawn to a close from 31st March 2022 – the Enhanced Capital Allowances remain available in designated areas the EZ until November 2023, (although HM Treasury suggest this may only now apply until 31st March 2023). A national study identified that Blackpool Airport EZ was one of the top performing of all EZ's in terms of its application of the rates relief benefits. It is clearly evidenced that the rates relief was instrumental in the success in attracting SME and micro business to backfill much of the previously vacant accommodation within the EZ area – helping increase rental values which in turn encouraged the return of speculative development (e.g. Dakota Court and Enterprise Court) alongside the sought after bespoke development. Brief prospects that the EZ could have formed part of a wider Blackpool Investment Zone have now disappeared following the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, but the delivery team will continue to explore and lobby for any other potential grant funding or fiscal incentives.

### **Phase one current activity**

Conlon's Construction have now completed development of the new Common Edge changing facilities with all utility connections now complete. The planning conditions applied at the request of Lancashire County Highways prevent the facility opening until junction improvements have been completed. Following extensive negotiations Lancashire Highways have now conceded that work to upgrade Division Lane junction can be undertaken by the EZ and work will commence on the 9<sup>th</sup> January, which will see intensive traffic management in place on Common Edge Road/Queensway for circa 10 weeks, which should see the new facility in use for the 2023 Blackpool Cup event at Easter. 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 spring 2023.

Work is progressing on the Floodlit 3G pitch and rugby league facilities, with the 3G pitch scheduled to enter use from April 2023, use of the new Rugby league pitch is likely to be delayed until Autumn 2023 as recent heavy rain has prevented the planned seeding of the pitch which has now to be delayed until Spring 2023. Alternative Rugby League facilities will be maintained at Common Edge until the new pitch and training areas are available.

The line of the new Eastern Gateway access road has now been fixed following agreement with statutory undertakers for diversion and protection of services – with the detailed design to be finalised over the next two months as the results of ongoing intrusive site investigations become available. The site investigations will impact on Common Edge Queensway in the period up to the Christmas break as agreed with Lancashire highways and will then continue across the playing fields and Amy Johnson way in the New Year. The present programme for the main highway construction works indicates a

major start in June 2023 after prior completion of service diversions by United Utilities and Electricity northwest, with efforts being made to accelerate their programmes.

The outline planning application for the new highways, was submitted in March, and approved by Blackpool Council on 7th October and Fylde Council on 2nd November. As parts of the application site are located within the Blackpool Greenbelt – the application was referred to the Secretary of State for confirmation. On the 10<sup>th</sup> November the Secretary of State confirmed that they would not be calling in the application and it has therefore been granted. Work is now underway to satisfy the 39 planning conditions appended to the consent several of which need to be discharged prior to commencement on site.

A second planning application is in preparation for submission to Fylde Council in early 2023 to seek consent for the junction from Amy Johnson Way to provide access to the eastern sector of the Airport and enable development of new hangar accommodation commencing the process of releasing land on the Squires Gate frontage for new development.

#### **e) Social Value and Environmental Activity**

Volunteers at the New Langdale Green Team have been engaged with the new Common Edge Sports Changing Facilities to help with an exciting new project. Based on Whitegate Drive at the Blackpool Centre for Independent Living (BCIL), the New Langdale Green Team, made up of passionate volunteers with a range of disabilities, have completed a project to design and build a range of environmental features such as bird boxes, bat boxes and bee hotels. These have been installed on the new changing rooms and spectator pavilion at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone.

BCIL supports the local disabled communities of Blackpool with a fully accessible centre, information and signposting service. The centre’s workshop provides a place to learn new skills and interact, and its woodworking team assists a whole host of projects across Blackpool.

The new changing facilities at Common Edge are the first in a line of landscaping projects that the EZ will be working on over the next few years, as the Eastern Gateway and the new access road is built out, which the New Langdale Green Team can get involved in.

Previously, these environmental features would have been purchased from outside the town through suppliers, but now the items can be produced in the local community, keeping the wealth local, and promoting a self-sustaining workshop that will provide future opportunities for people from all backgrounds to contribute to Blackpool’s prosperity.

#### **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 in December. 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.

#### **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 much of 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.

#### **h) Communications Infrastructure**

The Aquacomms base station facility is operational. There are presently seven ongoing enquiries for data centres with the largest for a 10Mw facility. The most advanced project is for a 4MW facility designed to demonstrate world leading liquid cooling technology as part of a special demonstrator project which will also incorporate research and incubator space for the ICT sector. The new technology has the potential to substantially reduce energy consumption by up to 60% and can provide heating to adjacent properties via a local district heating system which it is hoped can extend too much of the future phases of the EZ. The biggest immediate obstacle to satisfying the identified demand from the data sector is the availability and timescales for provision 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 50MW primary Sub Station to meet future requirements from both the data sector, development at the Knowledge Quarter & relocated airport and also to support the export of power to the grid of power from the planned Solar farm, battery storage facility and potentially an offshore wind farm feed. Work with Lancaster University on the Innovation Catalyst which supported the “Blackpool home of ethically powered data” initiative is continuing following a successful symposium on 15th September. Work continues to progress design and assess feasibility for providing a holistic sustainable energy provision with a 25-30MW solar farm, a 50 MW battery storage facility and connectivity to new offshore wind farms.

#### **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 one other growth business in Blackpool is in negotiation for a new 70,000 sqft manufacturing facility. A drinks manufacturer who was also 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 remains 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 will shortly commence to refresh the existing estate boards with the new branding and work is being undertaken via Marketing Lancashire to update the four websites for the Lancashire Enterprise Zones.

A summer newsletter was issued on 5th August 2022 with the winter edition due in December. A business engagement event for EZ occupiers is in preparation jointly with the North and West

Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, and a public engagement event will be staged on the 19th December at South Shore Cricket and Squash Club on Division Lane West to inform local residents and business of the activities and inevitable highway disruption in 2023.

Colliers have submitted a proposal for a 12 month international marketing plan to be implemented by the design agency Richard Barbers & Co and Marketing Lancashire with support from the EZ delivery team and via the ongoing Blackpool Makes it work campaign. The quote provides a menu of activity to be agreed collectively between the three EZs. Some elements proposed e.g. the refresh of estate signage and a marketing brochure for Blackpool EZ has already been instructed directly with Barbers and therefore won't be required.

Top enquiries are:

Date of enquiry	Target sector	Size	Type of enquiry	Progress to date
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, O - Other

### j) Blackpool Makes It Work

Work has now been completed to update the website [www.businessinblackpool.com](http://www.businessinblackpool.com) which went live on 26<sup>th</sup> August, featuring a strong portfolio of case studies from successful target sector businesses around the Fylde Coast. Online engagement and followers of the campaign continue to increase month on month.

Lancashire Business View ran a five page feature article on Blackpool in the March/April edition with Blackpool Makes It Work as the main sponsor and it can be viewed online here:

<https://content.yudu.com/web/3uxek/0A3uxel/MARCHAPRIL2022/html/index.html?page=68&origin=reader whilst Blackpool Makes it Work sponsored a Built environment conference at Blackpool FC on 29<sup>th</sup> September>

The EZ exhibited at the UK REiiF Expo in May 2022, a three- day real estate conference in Leeds where development and investment opportunities on the Fylde Coast were promoted. The event was a success with over 4,000 delegates in attendance and both Fylde Coast Enterprise Zones showcased were well received. Post event de-briefing and review of all contacts is ongoing. Following the success of UK REiiF 2022, the Fylde Coast EZs will be represented again at next year’s event under the Blackpool Makes It Work investment marketing campaign where there will be an opportunity to promote investment, property and land available at each of the sites

A new and updated inward investment marketing brochure, profiling Blackpool’s £1bn+ Growth & Prosperity Programme was produced to aid conversations on the stand and will be used across digital and print channels and at future events.

### j) Blackpool Airport

Steve Peters, the new Managing Director has agreed a ten year business plan with shareholder Blackpool Council to return the airport to profitable operation, with the emphasis on securing new commercial opportunities. Initial interest has been good and delivery will be dependent upon provision of new enabling infrastructure and commercial hangar accommodation. The plan will see the focus on growing existing business sectors with increased executive/corporate aviation, MRO activity and aviation training, with the ability to resume regional air services also possible in the future. 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 new 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 first quarter 2023. Discussions are also progressing with a number of aviation

businesses keen to explore Blackpool as a base for aircraft engineering support, which could require the development of several larger hangars capable of accommodating code C aircraft.

Studies are ongoing to determine the best option for a new Air Traffic Control facility and consultants have been appointed to advise on options for a relocation of the existing physical tower or an onsite digital facility with a report due before year end.

Consultants WSP have been leading a review of the 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.

### **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 133 businesses have located to the Enterprise Zone since April 2016.
- A gross cumulative total to date of 2137 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 23<sup>rd</sup> September via MS Teams. The next meeting will take place on line in early December

### **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, the conflict in Ukraine and the recent turmoil in the financial markets which have 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:

<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	Clear marketing strategy defined and implementation underway with robust delivery schedule for serviced plots with

uncertainty and the commercial viability of development.	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 the 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)	C 1800 - Difficult to estimate as it is an existing business park with over 200 businesses located on site	5,000	2137 (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	133**	
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	£29.5m*	

Gross Value Added (£m)	N/A	£2bn cumulative	N/A	
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\*current financial approval of £29.5m committed to be prudentially borrowed to cover initial costs of new road and infrastructure, following further approval of Delivery plan on the 7th 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 <sup>th</sup> Sept	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
Focused marketing of Common Edge Phase 1 commences – launch at UK REiiFF May 2022	ongoing
Proposition and identifying opportunities for data centre market	ongoing
Land / property acquisitions x 4 (three complete one in legal )	Nov 2022
Architectural feasibility study & design work for airport complete	January 2023
Release of existing sports pitches and commencement of highway and utility infrastructure	March 2023
Site investigations commence on upgrades to junction at CER & Division Lane	Aug 2022-May 2023
Appointment of engineer	Complete July
Outline planning approval for highways	Complete November23
Outline planning app submitted for airport redevelopment (Phase 1 – P2 car park)	February 2023
3G pitch designed and tendered	Complete
Airport Control tower, system review commenced - to complete December	Nov 2022
12 month construction contract for EGA access road commences	May 2023
Replacement hangar development commenced	July 2023**
Decision on first airport redevelopment planning application	July 2023 **
Completion of airport redevelopment works	Autumn 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>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> December 2022</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)

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 opportunities to undertake a partial revamp of masterplan to reflect the loss of Vinnolit and the potential to amalgamate smaller sites in a series of mini masterplans is presently being explored.

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

#### b) Getting Building Fund

NPL, who have secured funding from the Getting Building Fund toward the costs of essential infrastructure upgrades to enable the new speculative development to progress, have received planning permission from Wyre Borough Council and are progressing with all the works, however some elements, notably the new security gatehouse, have fallen behind schedule due to issues beyond NPL's immediate control but work is scheduled to recommence shortly.

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.

The works are progressing to budget and designs have been completed for all three elements, sub-station, water pipeline and gatehouse move. The design for fibre broadband is also complete and installation will commence in January 2023 and is expected to take one month to complete. The water pipeline works have been completed – with commissioning underway and trench backfilling to conclude prior to Christmas. Work on the new gatehouse has commenced, with an expected March 2023 completion date. The substation has been installed ready to feed new developments.

### **c) Residential Development**

BXB have purchased the former Sainsbury retail site and a planning application has been lodged for the main site for residential development of up to 250 homes and a smaller district retail centre which will support employment and provide some retained business rates growth. The planning application is expected to be considered by Wyre planning committee in December 2022 and discussion on contribution to road and rail bridge design is ongoing as part of both contractual obligations and S106 Discussions.

If approved, this development should see the further extension of the northern access road to the Fleetwood/Poulton railway line. A decision is anticipated Q4 2022 and BXB are commencing plans for an additional acre 'island' site with a view to submission Q4 2022 with a sale lined up subject to planning for commercial/ local service retail development that would commence in 2023.

Substantial progress has been made by Dickie & Moore with their residential development plans for the former Thornton AFC site. The first show home was completed in Feb 22 and a large proportion of the site has now been developed with good sales being achieved. 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. In addition Dickie and Moore, NPL, Hillhouse remediation and Breck Developments have an agreement to sweep and maintain Bourne road.

### **d) Fleetwood/Poulton Rail Line**

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. The Department of Transport have confirmed receipt of the Feasibility Study. Network rail are now progressing the next phase of the detailed feasibility study and are involving local partners in regular update meetings. This remains the major practical constraint to progressing key infrastructure to open up the Northern part of the 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. A topographical survey has been commissioned as the first stage in progressing indicative designs for the new road and rail bridge – with engineers also preparing proposals for the completion of concept designs. Whilst a bridge option would now be acceptable to all parties funding beyond the initial concept feasibility study has still to be identified and there would likely be a three year plus lead time to development, which will limit development potential of the whole site for some time. An Outline Planning application for the road and bridge are targeted for Q4 2023.

### **e) Marketing & Enquiries**

Barbers have been instructed to refresh the main estate signboard for Hillhouse which is located at the junction of Bourne Road and Fleetwood Road. The fence signage that is adjacent to the existing gatehouse hasn't been included in the refresh at the moment. The team will assess the area surrounding the new gatehouse when built, and identify a suitable location.

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 BC.

Colliers appointed by LCC/LEP to lead international marketing of Lancashire's four EZ's have started assembling technical data for each site and will require help from NPL and Wyre BC to complete this task.

Regular newsletter updates continue to be issued by Wyre 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
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	Progressing to option
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	HOT agreed progressing to purchase

Jan 2021	Waste to energy recycling project	Up to 2.5 acres	HOT agreed progressing to option
Jul 2021	Window frames manufacturer	1 acre	HOT agreed
Jul 2021	Energy from waste project	5 acres, £50m investment	HOT agreed
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, held its first meeting of the year on 22nd March 2022, 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 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 at Wyre Borough Council's Civic Offices. NPL have a comprehensive plan to deliver 10MW Hydrogen manufacture and storage on site by 2024, with 100MW by 2025.

#### **g) Vinnolit**

Majority landowner NPL Estates have acquired the vacant property of the former Vinnolit site and the property is currently been 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 with the events company already having occupied one warehouse.

All elements of the ex Vinnolit property, both land and buildings are now under HOT and are progressing. Within the Vinnolit site occupants have been secured for 5 of the old buildings, which were originally planned for demolition.

The uses on the site are:

- Karpa - a heavy engineering company 7000sqft building and 10 new staff
- Express Windows - windows manufacture - 18,000sqft building and up to 40 new jobs

- Daly Cranes (crane hire) 2000sqft building and 5 new jobs
- Events company 12,000sqft building and 5 new jobs
- A - Waste to Energy company about to start refurbishment of a 90,000sqft warehouse to convert to a WTE plant - expected 20 new jobs.
- Bottom ash recycling - 10 new jobs. This is progressing to legals and is expected to be signed within the next 30 days.
- Engineering company - 5 new jobs

**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 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 Q1 2023.

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. Lancashire University have been approached as a potential partner as have Blackpool and the Fylde College.

**j) EZ Board Meetings**

A Board meeting took place on 16<sup>th</sup> September, online with a group of stakeholders including Hillhouse tenants. No date has been set for the next meeting at time of reporting, however is expected to take place in early December 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
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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
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	137	105	
Construction Jobs	N/A	N/A	N/A	

New Commercial / Employment Space (SQM)	N/A	450,000 sqft	N/A	
Refurbished Commercial / Employment Space (SQM)	N/A	13,000sqft	4,600 sqft	
New businesses located on EZ (over baseline)	c45	10	N/A	
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	N/A	
Public Sector Investment (£m)	N/A	N/A	N/A	
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 December 2022
Construction commences for utilities infrastructure and new gatehouse	Underway
Planning application for energy from waste plant HH North	December 2022
Planning Application for energy from waste plant ex Vinnolit store	December 2022
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 *	Q3 2023
Planning application for new training centre to replace demolished buildings	Q3 2022
Planning application for new rail bridge crossing	Q4 2024
Completion of electric and water main upgrades	Jan 2023

\*Habitat assessments to be undertaken between Nov 22-Mar 23

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 northern 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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